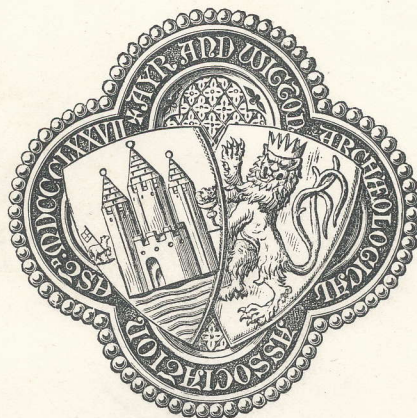


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## IX.

### THE HERALDRY OF WIGTOWNSHIRE.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

IN commencing a series of the armorial bearings of landowners in Wigtownshire, a few words are necessary, explanatory of the authority by which they are warranted.

The undoubtedly paramount authority in all Scottish heraldry, by which its conspicuous purity and simplicity have been preserved, is the Lyon King-of-Arms; on whom alone the power of granting, inspecting, and matriculating arms, and distinguishing them by proper marks of cadency, was conferred by the Statute 1592, c. 125.<sup>1</sup> These powers were confirmed and extended by the Statute 1672, c. 21,<sup>2</sup> and were secured on him by the 19th Article of the Treaty of Union. He is therefore the sole judge and arbiter in heraldry (under the Sovereign, the sole fountain of honour), although he cannot deprive any one of his coat of arms, nor infringe the rights of any gentleman by conferring his arms upon another.

The Register of the Lyon Office ought therefore to be the only source of authoritative information on Scottish heraldry; but it is unfortunately incomplete. Part of the Records is said to have been lost at sea in 1661, while being conveyed back to Edinburgh from London, whither they had been taken during the Commonwealth; and another portion is said to have been destroyed by fire about 1670.

The Act of 1672, in order to repair the losses caused by these disasters, enjoins all nobles and gentry to register their arms in the Office of the Lord Lyon, under pain of confiscation of all goods on which unregistered arms should be depicted.

The majority of the nobles and gentry conformed to this decree; but it

<sup>1</sup> *Act. Parl. Scot.* (folio edit.), vol. iii. p. 554,  
c. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. viii. p. 95, c. 47.



is to be regretted that to this day many of the most ancient and honourable families, as well as cadets of houses setting up as landed proprietors, have neglected to do so. However, as there can be little doubt that the arms of such families were included in the lost Registers, the writer has no hesitation in accepting the best authority, failing the Lyon Office, that may be available in such cases.

There is much greater difficulty in dealing with those cadets, or descendants of cadets, of noble or gentle families, who have acquired lands and become heads of families, without acquiring a patent from the Lyon King for arms duly differenced. It would be presumption in a high and illegal degree for an amateur to add abatements to the family coat according to his fancy; and the abatements for younger sons are temporary brisures, and cannot be handed down from father to son. Lastly, it should be understood that the right to the family coat, without abatement, is vested *solely* in the existing head of the family.

There is one common error to which it may be well to allude, and that is the confusion which exists in many persons' minds as to the difference between a "coat-of-arms" and a "genealogical pennon." In the former should be found only the bearings of the family, augmented it may be by quarterings of arms inherited with land, or granted as an honourable augmentation, or included in the shield, under patent, for some such cogent reason. As a rule, the fewer quarterings carried the better, both to avoid confusion and because the multiplication of quarterings tends to abate the dignity of the original coat. Indeed, for that reason, the arms of several good houses do not include some of the quarterings which they at one time carried, or were entitled to carry. The observance of this rule has tended to that simplicity which distinguishes the heraldry of Great Britain from that of some continental nations. In a genealogical pennon are represented the arms of every family whose blood runs in the veins of the bearer, and it is certainly neither in good taste nor heraldically correct to display such an achievement as a coat of arms.





The Arms of Galloway.



## PLATE I.—THE ARMS OF THE PROVINCE OF GALLOWAY.

## BLAZON—

Azure, a lion rampant argent; armed and langued gules; crowned with an antique crown, or.

Over the shield is placed an antique crown; and behind it are disposed in saltire a sword and sceptre.

NOTE.—Sir David Lindsay and Nisbet give this ancient coat without the external ornaments. It is uncertain when they were added, but they have been used since the latter part of the last

century at all events. These arms were formerly quartered with the paternal coat of Douglas, Lord of Galloway, but have never been assumed by the Stewarts, Earls of Galloway.



PLATE II.—THE ARMS OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE, Earl of Stair, Viscount of Stair and Dalrymple; Baron Newliston, Glenluce, and Stranraer, in the Peerage of Scotland; Baron Orenfoord, of Cousland, Edinburgh, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom; a Baronet of Nova Scotia; Knight of the Thistle; Lord Lieutenant for the Counties of Ayr and Wigtown.

BLAZON—

Quarterly, 1st and 4th or, on a saltire, azure, nine lozenges of the field—for Dalrymple.

2d and 3d or, a chevron cheque, argent and sable, between three water bougets of the third—for Ross of Balniel.

Crest—A rock proper. Motto—Firm. Supporters—Two lions gules.

Round the shield is disposed the collar and pendant of the Order of the Thistle.

NOTE.—This coat of arms is here given (with the addition of the supporters now borne) as registered by Sir James Dalrymple, Bart., who was afterwards created Viscount Stair; and no subsequent registration has been made, although several families and properties have become merged by marriage and inheritance. Sir William Dalrymple of Cousland registered his arms in 1720—

Quarterly 1st and 4th, Dalrymple, with a water bouget sable, in chief, for difference.

2d and 3d sable, a cross fleury, between four escallops argent, for Fletcher.

The supporters are differently given by various authorities. Douglas gives two lions proper; Nisbet, in the text, gives two storks proper, but in the engraving which he gives of the Earl of Stair's arms, the supporters are two lions gules. None are registered in the Lyon Office. The present writer has seen the supporters gules in some old embroidery, and has therefore followed it and Nisbet's engraving.

His lordship's arms are first in precedence of the County, as Lord Lieutenant thereof.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

THE AIRLOUR, WIGTOWNSHIRE,  
June 1878.





John, Earl of Stair.