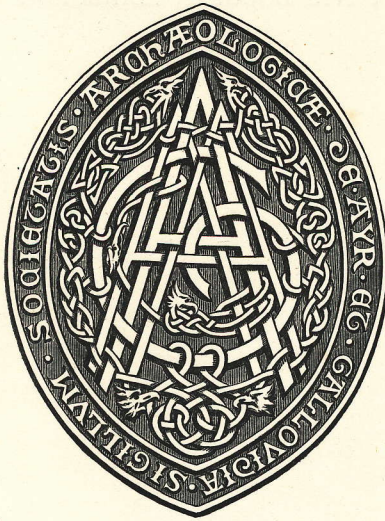


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III.

LETTERS BY JOHN FIFTH EARL OF CASSILLIS TO THE LAIRD OF BARNBARROCH.

1600-1615.

THE following letters, which have been preserved in the house of Barnbarroch, were written by John fifth Earl of Cassillis about the beginning of the seventeenth century. He was the elder son of Gilbert the fourth earl, by his wife Lady Margaret Lyon, daughter of Lord Glamis, and (his father having died in 1576) he was left a minor under the guardianship of his maternal uncle John Lord Glamis. On his death, 17th March 1577-8, Sir Thomas Kennedy of Culzean, his father's brother, was appointed tutor, and acted as such till 1589, which seems to have been the date at which the earl attained his majority, and to fix that of his birth in 1568; and this agrees with an old pedigree of the family printed with the old *Historie of the Kennedies* (edited by Robt. Pitcairn, Edinburgh, 1830), which states that he was eight years old at his father's death.

These letters are addressed to his cousin the Laird of Barnbarroch, son of Sir Patrick Vaus and his wife Lady Catherine Kennedy, a daughter of the fourth earl of Cassillis. They are remarkable for being entirely written with his own hand, and for being in perfect preservation. Careful as he was to give the day of the month or week, he has not in any of them given the year, and their exact dates are therefore matter of conjecture; but we know that Sir John Vaus succeeded his father in 1597, that the Earl of Cassillis married in the same year (3d November), and that he died in 1615. The dates must therefore fall within that period, 1597-1615. The first four are signed Johne Erle of Cassillis, and the style of writing, the quality of the paper, and the colour of the ink, are exactly the same, showing that

they were probably written about the same time. Some letters and documents, now at Barnbarroch, dated in and before 1602, are signed by him in the same way. The other letters are signed simply Cassillis, and are probably of later date.

The first letters relate to some difference or feud, in which the parties interested collected their friends "in feir of war," as was usual in those lawless times, to assert their rights by force of arms; they show that the Laird of Barnbarroch was on the side of Cassillis, that there was a gathering of friends on both sides with their followers, and a laying in of provisions and "hard meat" (*i.e.* oats or barley) for horses, but they do not show the cause of quarrel, or the parties to it. There is a passage, however, in the quaint old *Historie of the Kennedies*, mentioned above, in which the author gives an account of a feud between this Earl of Cassillis and his principal vassals in Galloway. He says, "Me lord having obtenit ane decreitt aganis all the gentill menne of Galloway of all their kyndlie rowmis, sic as the Lairdis of Gairsland (Garthland), Kenhilt, and Mertoun, with the Sheriff of Galloway, and their friendis, rydis to his houss of Inche in Galloway with fourte horss in geir, on intencion to put the same decreitt of his to executione. The gentill menne of Galloway, seeing the same, band thame selfis togidder in band to byde be utheris, and quhome on that me Lord began to dispossess, that they should all defend him with their forse. And first me Lord gart proclayme ane Court to be halden in Glenluse to dispossess the Laird of Gairsland of his [bruiking?] of the same; the quhillk the gentill menne of Galloway perseiffing send and desyritt me Lord to use thame kyndlie; but he refuissit the samin, and wald use nathing bot the rigour of the law. The gentill menne seing the same, and that he wald hald Court the morne, gadderitt thame selfis togidder, to the number of ane hunder horse in geir, and said 'Gif me Lord wald cum thair he suld be welcum;' bott the Laird of Gairsland said he wald be deputt. Now the way that thay war to cum bak was be the Loch-end of the Insche, quhair me Lord was; and me Lord had gaderitt sum ma of his menne to him or [before] thay com bak; and sa isschit (issued) out of the Loch, and thocht to put thame about the way thay com; Bot thay com that way, and wald nocht be stayitt; Quhairupone thair was sum meittingis amangis them; bot the samin fell nocht in blude. The Galloway menne, perseiffing the same, com that nycht and incloissit the Loche, and wald not latt nane out nor in, for thay knew he was not weill prowytit of the samin; For thay thocht

thair was nane that wald relieff him, for his freindis in Carrik and he was not in gude termis, and the Lairdis of Garleis and Lochinvar was thair awin." The *Historie* goes on to tell that my Lord was "hichlie offenditt," and could find no way to get out, but he had the Minister of Connell (Colmonell) in the "Yll" (Isle) with him, and he went out, saying he was going to his kirk, and was allowed to pass, and went with all speed to the Laird of Bargany, with whom the Earl was not on good terms at the time, bearing a request to him to come to his relief, and a promise that, if he would do so, their differences should be settled to Bargany's satisfaction. The Laird on this warned all his friends and vassals to follow him, and "lap on" (mounted) himself with forty horse, rode all night, and came in the morning to Kirkalffy (Craigcaffie), one mile from the Inch, when he succeeded in mediating between the parties, "and agreeitt thame to all thair contentmentis, and they all dynit with me Lord."

"The quhilk being done, my Lord drew on his bwittis (boots), and rode with the Laird to Ardstensar (Ardstinchar), being convoyit be the Galloway menne to Glannaip (Glenapp) quhair the Laird of Barganyis frendis and seruandis mett him ane gude number."

If, as is conjectured, the first four of these letters refer to the Earl of Cassillis's intention to remove his Galloway tenants from their "kindly rooms" (*i.e.* lands held for long on feudal tenure), they were written most likely in or about the year 1600, for the Laird of Bargany was killed in a skirmish with the Earl on 12th December 1601, aged only 24.

The next three letters seem to be connected, and refer to some difference between the Laids of Garlies and Barnbarroch, and the Earl offers the assistance of armed men. As there is extant a most friendly letter from Garlies to Barnbarroch dated 8th August 1602, and in the letter dated 23d October Cassillis alludes to his step-daughter (the Countess of Wintoun), who died 6th July 1609, these letters must be placed between those dates. This lady, Anne, daughter of the Chancellor Maitland (Lord Thirlestane), was married before March 1603, and she died six years afterwards, aged only twenty. Such early marriages were not uncommon in those days.

The remaining two letters do not call for much remark. The Mondork named in that dated January, was Uchtred M'Dowall of Mindork, who succeeded in 1560. He is said by M'Kerlie, in *Lands and their Owners in Galloway* (vol. i. p. 227), to have been alive in 1580, and to have married Lady Catherine Herries, widow of Alexander Stewart of Garlies, who was

killed at the surprise of Stirling 2d September 1571; and a letter from her to Sir Patrick Waus, at page 95 of his published correspondence, is dated from Mindork. He must have died soon after 1580, for at page 314 of the same work there is an agreement between the Laird of Barnbarroch and John Wallace of Dundonald, spouse of Dame Catherine Stewart, Lady Garleiss, dated 5th November 1584. In the last letter the word "vyrines" is a good example of the phonetic spelling and of the pronunciation of the time. The whole of these letters are written in a rather large, bold, and perfectly legible running hand, and the Earl's spelling more nearly approaches that of the present time than did that of the immediately preceding generation. For instance, he always writes "not" or "nott" for "nocht," and "if" or "iff" for "gif," which were the older forms, and instead of always forming the plural by adding "is," which was the invariable rule, he has in some instances omitted the "i," and has written "freinds," "evidents," etc. He had, however, one singular peculiarity, viz. that of doubling the letter "t" at the beginning of words, as "tto," "ttill."

R. VANS AGNEW.

I.

[Letter by John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Richt assurit cusing, efter my hartlie commendatiounis. I louikit ze suld haue spokein with me In zour home-passing. aluayis becaus the parliament is tto be haldin In Sant Johnestoune (Perth) the thrid off Juli, I man maist eairneistlie desyr zow thatt ze uald nott ffail tto be att me In Maybol apon foursday nixt tto accompany me, becaus I had neuer turneis off graitier Importance tto do boith tto my ueill and honor; and cair not ffor zour nvmer, Incaise ze had bot ane; and iff ze can nott be ueill prouydit Sa schortlie ze sall nott be disapointit. I louik ze uill nott ffail me, seing ze knaw quhow necessar itt is tto me tto haue sum honest men uith me nov (now). Sua commits zow tto god. Off the Inche the 21 off Juni. Zour is assuritt ffreind,

JOHNE ERLE OFF CASSILLIS.

be nott suyr¹ nov for I sall nott be suyr tto ryd and tak panes ffor zow agane.

To My assurit
cusing the Laird
off barnebarroche.

¹ Difficult, unwilling.

Consing efter my hartlie comendationis, ye is to let you vnder
stand yat upon ye earnest desire off some friends never
with affectionat to your effayis I contmbe, tna mchts
Langer ye sending off my servants, yat they mcht be ye better
preparat in your hors, Chawffor I pray you must earnestly
to fetherday, inxt at quylke ^{time} they salbe at you to pres to
nathing, bot I ombe attentiuely about, for your ye sal have
godwilling, and sufficient mber als with affectionat as your
self is to. any thing yat may be your honour and with
and In ye meane tyme purchas als merte hard met
as possible ye may have, in ye contri Sna for ye present
I comdt you to god Off Dmbr ye 22 off Inli

Your affurth friend
John erle off Carsillis

G. Waterson & Sons, Edin. Lith.

LETTER FROM JOHN 5TH EARL OF CARSILLIS.

II.

[Letter by John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Cusing, efter my hartlie recommendatiounis, this is to lett zow understand I am returnitt heir to carrik, and the suner ffor zour caus. Thairffor iff ze haue neid ather to be assistitt be men, or in sic number as ze sall think expedientt, send me uord and ze sall find assistance uith diligens, and my selff uith thame, iff ze requyr; sua uytt¹ yourselff iff ze laik helpe. I haue heir thri hunder markis, quhilk salbe send iff ze pleis, presentlie, and, iff ze may comportt ane lytill tyme, the haille salbe gottin toghithir. Sua to zour aduertismentt commits zou to god. Off Dinvr (Dunure) this 16 off Juli. Zour assuritt ffreind,

JOHNE ERLE OFF CASSILLIS.

To my assuritt ffreind
and cusing the Laird
off barnebarroche.

III.

[Letter from John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Cusing, efter my hartlie commendatiounis,² this is to lett zow vnderstand that upon the eairneist desyr of sum ffreinds, nevir ueill affectionat to zour effairis, I continvitt tua nichtis Langer the sending off my servants, that thay might be the better preparitt in thair hors. Thairffor I pray zow maist eairneistlie to setterday nixtt, att quhilk tyme thay salbe att zou, to pres to nathing, bot Louik attentiuellie aboutt; ffor thane ze sall haue goduilling ane sufficient number, als ueill affectionat as zour selff is to ony thing thatt may be zour honeur and ueill, and In the meane tyme purchas als mekill hard mett as possibillie ze may haue in the contri. Sua ffor the presentt I committ zou to god. Off Dinvr the 22 off Juli. Zour assuritt freind,

JOHNE ERLE OFF CASSILLIS.

To my assurit freind
the Laird off barnebarroche
Delyuer this.

IV.

[Order by John 5th Earl of Cassillis to Tenants to pay "victual" to the
Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Dauid kennedie in kennedye in knokda, this presep sein, ze sall nott fail to

¹ Wyte, blame.

² This 'is' might be 'e' elsewhere, but it is and is the same as the termination of the next not Lord C.'s final 'e' as shown in this letter, two words 'this is.'

ansuer Immediattlie efter the sichtt off my precep my ffreind the Laird off barnebaroch tuell bolis off uictuall mell, and tuell vtheris, outt off garvenen, and out calde; and ffarder as I sall iss zow (issue) command be my precep; and (if) this ze faill as ze uill be ansuerabill to obey my avne (own) hand urett. Att Dinvr the 21 off Juli.

JOHNE ERLE OF CASSILLIS.

and likuys command the tenent of Darmmov to pay the Laird his meitt.

To the reht honorabill
and his luifing broider
Barnbarrach.

V.

[Letter by John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Richt assuritt cusing, my hartlie commendatiounis remembritt, because I mynd na vay tto leff this cuntri, goduilling, quhyl zour turneis with garleis be att sum certainete: I uill desyr zow tto speik uith me upon sonday, thatt I may be the better resoluit quhow tto be preparitt tto discharge the partt off ane faithfull Freind, as deutie bindis me: ffor, god uilling, I sall Play my part honestlie tto the vttermest, and I dout nott bott ze uill remember quhat aperteneis upon zour partt. Sua, seaising farder tto meiting, I remane zour Uerie assuritt cusing,

CASSILLIS.

the Inche the 9 off october

To My uerie assuritt cusing
the Laird off barnebaroche.

VI.

[Letter by John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Rycht assuritt cusing, eftir my hartlie commendatiounis, seing zour nichtbour this day meitis uith his freinds, I uill desyr zow tto send bak aduertisment uith all diligens, quhat cours zour nichtbour takis, as ze can leirne, thatt I may uith expedition cum or send as the occasioun sall requyr; and have the berar bak att me be nyne houris In the morning, and keip yourself narlie quhyl my servantis be att zow, vse (use) quhat cours thay lyk. Sua tto zour ansuer I rest zour assuritt freind and cusing,

CASSILLIS.

the Inche this vednisday.

To my assuritt cousing,
the lard of barnebarroch.

VII.

[Letter from John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Rycht assuritt cusing, eftir my hartlie commendatiounis, I think lange tto vnderstand our nichtbour garleis meanies tto follow fourth, and I mak¹ sur ze haue sum off zour avne ueiluillers, quha vill sumthing lett zow be forseine off his Intentiounis : aluayis, In caise they uald cum upon thair muster dayis tto mak ony forme off prouocation, I pray zow be nott rache tto cast your self in ony lyklie Inconvenient, In respect ze haue nott sik number as suld be, and I sall haue sum ma att zow chortlie in better eguipage, that sall bringe men as neir their zetis (gates) goduilling, that thay lyk als lytill ; and iff ze sie materis lyklie to drav tto ony suddentie, aduertise me bak with diligens, and I sall nocht be cairles. iff zour turneis be nocht all the graiter in this cuntri att mertimes, I uald be glaid ze nicht be afeild with me, for me Lord argyl hes urettin ane uerie freindlie letter tto me tto be present att the endit off that blok² uith my guid dochter. sua tto the nixt occasioun, and euer, I rest zour uerie assuritt cusing,

CASSILLIS.

The Inche the 23 off October.

I haue desyritt my freind thomas off sinnes tto stay with zow ane quhyl vntill the tyme I send mo.

To my assuritt cusing,
the Laird off barnebarroche.

VIII.

[Letter from John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Rycht assuritt cusing, my hartlie commendatiounis remembritt, ze knaw I haue lange delayitt thatt siluer, quhilk I payitt ffor Mondork, and, seing ze kravitt na langer delay nor quhyl vitsonday nixt, I dout nott bott ze uill mak me sur thane off itt ttogither with the uther twa hundrith markis ; and Luik nott ffor ffarder delayis, ffor thair is uerie feu quha uald haue spairitt sua villinglie. I heir thatt ze ar tto cum ouer heir tto this cuntri, quhairoff I am glaid ; tto the quhilk tyme, and euer, I rest zour uerie affectionat cusing,

CASSILLIS.

Maybole the off Januar.

To My uerie assuritt
cusing the Laird
off barnebarroch.

¹ In original ma.

² Agreement or bargain.

IX.

[Letter from John 5th Earl of Cassillis to the Laird of Barnbarroch.]

Rycht assuritt cusing, my hartlie commendatiounis remembritt, I ressauitt zour letter, and uill neglect na office off loue (love) thatt I can, bott surlie thir kynd off remedis In my Jugment sall be off uerie small effectt ; and besydis Itt boith puttis men In the uors opinion off zour meaneing tto zour creditours, and itt is ouer graitt confidens upon zour partt tto do till ony man, altho he uer zour sone, as ze urett tto me, aluayis I haue urettin tto gilbertt Ros tto send the extract off my seaising ttill edinbruiche, iff itt be att home, and iff he haue itt nott, iff itt stand upon ane sudden necessite, I sall seik itt outt presentlie amang my evidents In edinbruiche. and think nott thatt I uill think itt a vyrines (weariness) tto go a thusand tymeis farder quhan itt may be tto ony guid vse (use) tto zou : thairfor urett bak tto me mair att Lenth off the speciall day quhan zour comprysing is tto be In hand, and goduilling ze sall finde the help can be done, iff thair be ony possibilite off remeid, sua I rest Zour affectionat cusing,

CASSILLIS.

balgrogen the 7 off august.

To My assuritt freind

and cusing the Laird
off barnebaroch.