

FERNACRES, NORTHUMBERLAND

ALEXANDER

UNDER East Teviotdale we have given the career of Sandy Pringle, son of William first of Torwoodlee, who in 1537 was called "The Curste," and who in August 1543 became a renegade and entered the service of the English, in order to save from execution Jok-a-Pringill, "a rank rider," who had been captured by them. Sandy, in fact, renounced his country in exchange for the life of a kinsman.

On 1st September 1543 Lord Parr, the English Warden, sends to Suffolk a dispatch from Sandy detailing what he saw and heard at the coronation of the infant Queen of Scotland in the chapel in Stirling Castle, that the lords would not deliver her into English keeping, and would not accept the treaty as made, that Argyle and the Cardinal said so and so, that the Cardinal told him that he had bought his release from the custody of Sir George Douglas by giving him 400 crowns, etc. (see the dispatch in the *Hamilton Papers*). On 17th September Suffolk proposes to invade Scotland, march with the army on horseback from Kelso to Edinburgh in a night, "but 26 miles of fair way as Sandy Pringle showeth," and demand the surrender of the Castle (H. L.). In January following Suffolk sends to the Council three other letters of Sandy's on affairs in Scotland; and he regrets they cannot employ him in France, as he does not know the language (H. S.). In 1544 some half-dozen letters are recorded as received from Sandy by English officials, and by them forwarded to the Earl of Hertford, now preparing to invade Scotland (H. L.). On 13th February 1545-6 Suffolk, writing from London to Shrewsbury, says, the King, liking the device for the annoyance of his enemies exhibited in writing by Sandy Pringhill, has sent the said Sandy north to execute it; Shrewsbury is to commune with him thereupon, see to his safe passage to such places as he may

desire, and the conveyance of advertisements from him. The King had given him letters of credit, 100 crowns reward, and appointed him a yearly pension of £25 (S. P. S.). Articles to subdue the realm of Scotland, and especially the frontiers of the same which do make war against England: 1. To send for the chief men of the Davidsons, Pryngelles, Taites, Youngs, Turnbulls, Robsons, Rutherfords, and Halls, in East and West Teviotdale, and those that will be sworn to the King, to lay in Pledges; and put out of Teviotdale the Kers and all others that will not be sworn to England. 2. In like manner to send for the chief Dicksons, Trotters, Broomfields, Redpaths, and Craws in the Merse, and cause them to expulse the Humes and others; and to give those that cause these two counties to obey England part of their lands. 3. To lay a garrison of 500 in Jedworth and Kelso in the Middle March, and a similar one in the places belonging to the Homes in the East March. 4. The Wardens of the East and Middle Marches, with Counsel with them, daily to see justice administered. 5 and 6. See Letters and Papers, Henry VIII. In April 1546 a son of Sandy's is captured in an ambush by Gilbert Swinhoe of Cornhill.

On 10th September 1547 was fought the disastrous battle of Pinkie. At the beginning of the fight, says Pitscottie, "the English cavalry having lost 200 men in their attack, fled back to the Protector (Hertford, now Duke of Somerset), saying: 'My Lord, it is impossible to break these Scots in battle as they stand, more than to break a stone wall.' At this saying the Protector was very discontent and afraid, and wished to God he and his army had been safe in England, and he gart tell a Borderer who was called Pringall (Sandy) and desired him to take his jennet in his hand, and convey him the best way he knew that he might be safe."

On 30th November 1547 Lord Gray writes from Norham to the Protector that a Scotsman, Patrick Kincaid, proposes to betray Edinburgh Castle for 1000 crowns, if he will send 50 horsemen from Hume Castle to the Boroughmoor at midnight. . . . Alexander Pringle, Scotsman, now with your grace, were a good guide, whom, if you approve, send me here with all haste, for I hear the Governor intends to lay a garrison there, who perchance may keep better watch (S. P. S.).

In June 1548 Sir Thomas Holcroft and Lord Gray write to the Lord Protector reminding him to grant a letter of possession to Sandy Pringle—who in all services shows himself a faithful Englishman—of the Chantry of Fernacres. In September 1548 Sandy is given £12, 10s. in respect of his good services (S. P. E.).

On 16th December 1548 Alexander, his sons Andrew, Thomas, and George, gentlemen, and Marion Pryngyll (alias Bradford) from Scotland, are naturalised English (*Huguenot Soc.*, vol. 8).

In June 1549 the English Exchequer pays Sandy £7, 10s., his expenses in coming from the north and returning. In September Sir Thomas Holcroft writes from Dunglass to the Protector, saying he had received his Grace's letter of the 18th inst. by the hands of Sandy Pringle, and that Sandy was riding this day to Jedworth to know the state of the country, and has promised to write to his Grace, and, where his Grace had ordered him, Mr Goore and Sandy to confer together as to what certain towns in the Merse and Teviotdale are able to do anent the furnishing of H.M.'s forts and places therein; he will advertise his Grace as soon as he has taken order thereanent (*Stevenson's Selections*, Maitland Club, 1837).

On 1st June 1558 the English Privy Council write to Sir Thomas Holcroft that they are sending down to him Sandy Pringle, who being ordered by the Lords, for certain good considerations, to withdraw himself from his house in the north, and remain till winter in some other part of the realm, did choose for the time to be with him, and they request Sir Thomas in his next letter to signify his arrival (S. P. E.).

Queen Mary's disastrous marriage with Bothwell after the murder of Darnley led to her abdication in July 1567, and imprisonment in Lochleven Castle. On 2nd May 1568, she escaped, and her partisans being defeated at Langside, she fled to England and was detained in Carlisle Castle from 16th May to 13th July. In the end of May Alexander Pringill writes from Fernacres to the Countess of Lennox, mother of Darnley: "Please your Grace, the laird of Riccarton, a Hepburn, the principal deviser of your son's death, came over the Tweed at Norham and is at Durham with the Bishop, and has brought money to furnish Lord Bothwell (fugitive). I wish you would get the Queen (Elizabeth) to stay him in the Bishop's hand, or

commission Sir John Forster to take him; also to get a letter to Lord Scrope to take the Laird of Ormiston and others who repair daily to the Queen (Mary) at Carlisle. I write by advice of Sir John Forster; and if it please your Grace to send me the letters I shall ride with them myself and get the answers" (S. P. E., Bain).

On 7th November 1574 the Privy Council write to the Lord Mayor: "Whereas their Lordships were given to understand that one Sandie Pringle, Scotsman, was imprisoned in one of the Counters (of the Poultry E.C.) for a greater sum of money than he ought to be, and that at the suit of some that had cozened him and enjoyed the greater part of the said money, their Lordships pitying the case as well in consideration hereof, as of his former services done to H.M., and her progenitors, thought meet to require his Lordship to send for the creditors, whose names will be given him by the bearer hereof, his son, and upon hearing the matter to see the best means he can to induce them to some reasonable composition according to law and equity, and so as the old man may be released from further imprisonment."

On 15th December 17th Elizabeth, or 1575, died Alexander Pringle; heir masculine, his lawful son Andrew Pringle.

ANDREW (SON)

On 15th March 1564-5 Randolph writes to Cecil that Queen Mary altogether disliked Bothwell's coming home without her leave. On the 25th Bedford writes: "Bothwell still lies at the Hermitage. When in France he used great and high words about "that Queen," and Murray and Lethington, for which talk one Dandie Pringle, son of Sandy Pringle, dwelling beside Newcastle, has been sent for, and has avouched the words he heard spoken by Bothwell" (S. P. E.). In June 1565 a servant of Bothwell's arrived by sea in Fife with many letters containing practices against Earl Murray, and was taken to him, says Randolph, with them all (S. P. E.).

In 1577 a brief is directed to James Bishop of Durham that he may give a mandate to his escheator to give to Andrew Pryngell sasine of the Chantry of St John and others, Fernacres, parish of Whickham, in the county of Durham.

Sir Francis Russell, son of the Earl of Bedford, who figures in "The Raid of the Reedswire" in 1575, was killed in a similar fray at a Border meeting between Sir John Forster and Thomas Ker of Fernihirst in 1585. Sir John's "Reasons to prove that the murder of Russell was premeditated" was signed by 33 persons, including Andrew and George Prynge (B. P.). In 1587 a Bill by Andrew Pringle is fyled against three persons on the Bowmont for the theft and reset of 3 oxen from Lesbury (B. P.). Andrew appears to have died in 1594; when Fernacres reverted to the Crown.

GEORGE (BROTHER)

On 4th June 1567 the Regent, James Earl of Murray, writes from Stirling to his half-brother, Sir William Douglas of Lochleven, "as to George Pringill, although we think there be no inconvenient howbeit he pass further or tarry in at his pleasure, yet till our returning from Dunbarton and hearing word out of England it is meet that he bide still, and so ye shall declare unto him" (Reg. de Morton, Bannatyne Club, 1853). On 6th January 1570 Allan King writes to Sir Henry Percy, Captain of Norham, "My Lord Northumberland (Sir Henry's brother) is in Edinburgh, not in ward, but in the keeping of my Lord Regent and a guard. He has of his own men George Pringell, James Swynho, and Wm. Burton; the rest, who number 17, have liberty to come at times" (S. P. E.). The Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, with the object of restoring the Catholic religion and liberating Queen Mary of Scotland, had collected a force and marched south; but as it met with no support it melted away, and they took refuge among the Scottish Borderers. Northumberland was delivered by Hector Armstrong to Regent Murray, who in January 1570 sent him to Lochleven Castle. Here he was detained till 1572, when, on being handed over to the English by Regent Morton, he was by them beheaded. In April 1572 Sir William Drury, marshal of Berwick, writes to Burghley: "George Pringle, son of Sandy Pringle dwelling near Newcastle, who was a servant of the Earl of Northumberland, and who is ready to pass into Flanders with the first wind, has promised to do any good he can in revealing the secrets of the Queen's (Elizabeth's) rebels there,

and if he meet with any matter worthy, either to bring or send it to you. Enclosed herewith is a Cipher he left. If he comes not himself, his messenger will be known by offering his left thumb and ruff of his shirt wrist" (S. P. E.). In July Drury sends to Burghley a letter from George, and in December another. In March 1573 Killigrew writes to Burghley, begging him to get a pardon for George, sometime servant to the Earl of Northumberland, lately executed. To cancel his fault in following his master in his wicked enterprise he had offered service to the marshal of Berwick and Mr Randall, by whom he was twice sent to Flanders for intelligence, and acquitted himself honestly, until being discovered he could no more go thither (S. P. E.).

THOMAS (BROTHER)

On 27th February 1588-9 the King, James VI., being in the Tolbooth with the Lords of Session, and at the point of rising, a packet was presented to the King sent from the Queen and the Council of England, containing letters from both, and other letters intercepted and found upon Colonel Sempill's man called Pringill, directed by Huntly and Erroll to the Duke of Parma and the King of Spain, and by Mr Robert Bruce to the Duke (Spanish Regent of the Netherlands), together with other letters directed by others; all tending to the overthrow of religion, and the bringing in of Spanish forces for that purpose. Thomas Pringall, examined by the English Privy Council, on 15th February—"being asked how long he hath served in Netherlands, saith 4 years under the States, and 8 years under the Duke of Parma. Being asked who sent him to Scotland, and for what purpose, he saith that he was sent by Col. Sempill with letters and money to the Earl of Huntly, to the end he might bring answer from him to the said Colonel, and that he arrived in Scotland about 6 weeks before Christmas." It was added: we mind Pringle hereafter to be at Berwick until the letters shall be communicated to the King, when, if he think fit, he may be sent thither, but not before, lest Bruce and his accomplices take warning. Huntly protested that the letters were forgeries made south of the Tweed, and that the originals were not produced because they did not exist (*Records of Aboyne*, 1894).