

## GREENKNOWE

### WALTER (THE COVENANTER),

was the youngest son of Robert Pringle first of Stitchill, and was born apparently at Baitingbus in 1625 in the Debateable Lands on the Scottish side of the Esk, where his father then resided. When about eleven years of age he was placed, along with his elder brother John, under the care of James Leckie, an ejected minister at Stirling, on whose death the religious impulses given him were followed by "several years of darkness and sinfulness, one of which was spent, or rather lost, at school at Leith, two at Edinburgh University, five at home, and as a volunteer in the wars, and two in France." He returned from France in June 1648.

In March 1649 Parliament ratified in favour of Robert Pringle of Stitchill and his son Walter, a charter of confirmation by George Marquis of Huntly, dated September 1639, of a charter granted by James Seton of Touch, dated November 1637, of the lands of West Gordon with the tower and manor place, commonly called Greenknowe, the mill of Gordon, Over and Nether Huntlywood, five husbandlands of West Gordon, and the quarter of Fans; to be held of the said Marquis and his heirs in free blench for ever by the said Robert and Walter (A. P.).

In May 1649 Walter's father died in Edinburgh, when he succeeded to the estate; and in November following he married Janet, daughter of James Pringle of Torwoodlee, at Stow, the minister officiating being the famous Covenanting martyr, James Guthrie of Lauder, afterwards of Stirling, who was executed after the Restoration, in 1661, and his head fixed on the Netherbow, Edinburgh, where it remained till taken down by a student in 1688 (Irving's *Eminent Scotsmen*, 1881).

For five years after his marriage Walter and his wife lived

chiefly at Stitchill, where he took the oversight of the children of his deceased brother John, and of his sister's son Robert Ker of Graden.

In 1650 Walter joined the Covenanters' army, and after its defeat by Cromwell at Dunbar on 3rd September, he took refuge in and about Torwoodlee, and when returning one night from Stitchill, along with his brother-in-law, he met and killed in fight a mounted English trooper. Thereupon, he took refuge for a few days with his cousin Major Pringle in Northumberland. Having returned to Stitchill after some further service in the Army, he was seized and carried before the Major of the trooper's regiment, who examined him and set him at liberty, on Torwoodlee and Whytbank becoming surety in £2000 sterling for his reappearance. Eventually the matter was settled by Walter paying the trooper's relatives £150 sterling. In March 1655 he removed from Stitchill to Greenknowe, and in 1656 under the Protectorate was appointed a J.P. and a Commissioner of Supply for Berwickshire (A. P.).

After the Restoration, in September 1660, Walter was sent prisoner to Edinburgh Castle "for aiding and partaking with the Remonstrators and other seditious persons," but in fifteen days was set at liberty.

In 1661 Janet, Walter's wife, got sasine in liferent of the eight husbandlands of Rumbletonlaw, and others in East and West Gordon (S. E.).

In July 1664 Walter was brought before the Court of High Commission. He was willing to take the oath of Allegiance, but could take that of the King's supremacy of the church only according to Bishop Usher's explication and its approval by James VI. (Wodrow). A heavy fine was imposed on him, and for not paying it he was on 24th November seized at Greenknowe and brought to Edinburgh tolbooth, but was shortly afterwards released on finding a bond to enter himself in the tolbooth of Elgin by Candlemas (P. C.). In May 1665 he was released from this tolbooth and granted the liberty of the town of Elgin and three miles round (P. C.). In February 1666 his friends, without his knowledge, procured his removal from Elgin to his own home at Greenknowe and three miles around, on payment of £200 sterling and a bond for his "peaceable and inoffensive behaviour" (P. C.).

*The Memoirs of Walter Pringle of Greenknowe*, written by himself for the edification of his children, was published in 1723, and re-published in 1751 and 1847, the latter edition edited by the Rev. W. Wood, M.A., with notes and appendix, published by W. P. Kennedy, Edinburgh. See also *Select Biographies*, Wodrow Society, vol. i., and Brown's *Covenanters of the Merse*.

Walter died on 12th December 1667. He and his wife Janet Pringle had issue:—

1. Robert, born December 1651, next laird.
2. James, born 1656, } lairds in succession.
3. John, born 1659, }
4. George, born 1661.
5. Walter, born 1663, died 1689; buried at Lauder.
6. Katherine, born 1650, marr. George Home of Bassendean, with a tocher of 6000 merks (S. E.).
7. Janet, born 1653.
8. Anna, born 1666, marr. Sir Alexander Don of Rutherford; and in 1687 was granted the liferent of 3000 merks furth of his lands.

#### ROBERT,

at the age of 16, succeeded his father Walter in the lands above mentioned, including Rumbleton, Rumbletonlaw, and Hexpeth. His curators were his mother, his cousin Robert Pringle of Stitchill, and his uncle George Pringle of Torwoodlee, the Covenanter. In 1669 the Lords order Scott of Hartwoodmyres to pay to him a bond for 2000 merks granted by him to his grandfather Robert Pringle of Stitchill in 1642, and assigned to his father Walter, with £200 expenses and the annual rents left unpaid and in time to come (A. D., Durie).

In 1670 Robert was sent abroad and made the tour of France and Italy.

He died apparently in 1672, unmarried (T., Lauder).

#### JAMES,

in January 1677 at the age of 21, succeeded his brother Robert (S. E.). In November following, he married at Stow his cousin german Sophia, daughter of James Pringle of Torwoodlee, who

had a tocher of 10,000 merks, when she got sasine of a liferent of 2000 merks furth of his lands (S. E.). In August 1680 the Privy Council fined seven Berwickshire heritors for not joining the army proceeding against the rebels (the Covenanters) at Bothwell Bridge in the previous year, including James in £1500, and his brother-in-law Home of Bassendean in 1000 merks (P. C.).

After the Revolution, in March 1689, James was appointed a Commissioner for calling up the Berwickshire Militia on 15th April, and in June 1690 a commissioner of Supply for the county (A. P.).

James's Testament, made by his widow Sophia, included the bond for 2200 merks on the lands of Eccles granted to his father, now amounting with annual rents to £2735 (T. Lauder).

James died in March 1694, and was buried at Gordon. He had issue:—

1. Walter, died young.
2. George, his heir, born February 1680.
3. Alexander, born 1681, died 1717, buried at Briel in Holland.
4. and 6. Robert, born 1683, and James (posthumous)—both died young.
5. Lewis, born 1686, a merchant in Edinburgh, died in 1721 unmarried.
7. Janet, born 1685, became proprietor of Greenknowe.
8. Anna, born 1687, marr. David Dickson, M.D., Edinburgh, died 1729.
- 9 and 11. Sophia, born 1690, died 1757; Katherine, born 1692, died 1760.
10. Isabella, born 1691, marr. Adam Fairholme of Greenhill.

#### GEORGE,

who was born in 1680, succeeded his father, James, at the age of 14, certain of his relatives acting as Curators. In 1698 Charles, Earl of Home, was ordered by the Lords to grant to George a precept of Clare Constat and infeft him in certain of his lands; and George was granted adjudication against Ninian Home, minister of Buncle and Preston, who refused to enter heir to his father in Bellshiel (A. D., Durie).

In 1700, when aged 20, George went on a tour abroad. In 1704 he was appointed a Commissioner of Supply for Berwickshire, also he was granted under the Privy Seal confirmation of his lands of Greenknowe and others (P. S.).

In 1710 George married Janet Riddell niece of Sir John Riddell; when she got sasine of an annual rent of 2000 merks furth of his lands (S. Berwick).

In 1720 Lewis, George's brother, died abroad, leaving to him, and his sisters Janet, Sophia, Isabel, and Katherine, in property and debts owing to him £5170 (T. E.).

George died in April 1724, aged 44. He had an only son James, who predeceased him.

### JOHN

in July 1724 was served heir to his nephew George in the lands of Greenknowe at the age of 65. In October of the following year he sold to Sophia, his brother James's widow, the £4 lands and mill of West Gordon, Over and Nether Huntlywood, the quarter of Fans, and Homebyres, and to Janet Pringle her eldest daughter, the lands of Rumbleton, Rumbletonlaw, and Hexpeth. John, having an annuity of 2000 merks furth of the lands, continued at his business of wine merchant in Edinburgh, and there he died in 1732 (T. E., 1735).

### SOPHIA AND JANET PRINGLE

Sophia, now of Greenknowe, had lived at Rumbletonlaw since the death of her husband James of Greenknowe in 1694. She died in 1733, and was succeeded by her daughter Janet; who at the age of 51 married in 1736 Robert Kennedy, Advocate, Edinburgh; to whom on her death in 1769 she left Rumbletonlaw, Rumbleton, and Hexpeth (the above-mentioned *Memoirs*, 1847).

The Greenknowe lands, having been bought from John with the condition that failing Sophia's daughters they should descend to Janet's cousin german on the mother's side, now devolved on George Pringle of Torwoodlee, who died in 1780 leaving Torwoodlee and Greenknowe to his nephew James

Pringle of Bowland, who in 1785 sold Greenknowe to George Fairholme of Greenhill.

In November 1818 George Fairholme of Greenhill married the Hon. Catherine Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Lieut.-General Lord Forbes.

Greenknowe Tower, a well-preserved ruin, consists of a main building 25 ft. long by 33 ft. wide, with walls 4 ft. thick, and a wing at the north-east angle containing the entrance doorway (still furnished with its iron yett), on the lintel of which is carved the initials "I. S." and "I. E." (James Seton and Jane Edmonston) and the date 1581. As a fine example of baronial buildings of the time, the Tower has been taken over for preservation by the National Monuments Commission of Scotland.