

## PENCAITLAND

IN 1555 Robert Hoppringill, rector of Morham, brother of George of Torwoodlee and Clifton, married Alison Harwood, widow of John Sinclair, tenant of Ewingston. They had three sons and three daughters:—

1. Robert, who predeceased his father in 1579, leaving by his spouse Margaret Ker a daughter Marion, whose Tutor was William Hoppringill of Westhousebyre (A. D., 1582).
2. William, in Milton, where his father died in 1582.
3. John.

## WILLIAM IN MILTON

died in 1635 (T. E., 1637). By his spouse Elizabeth Baptie he had issue, six sons and three daughters:—

1. Robert, of Templehalls and Woodhead, W.S.
2. John, in Milton; laird of Soutra and Blackshiels (see below).
3. John, the younger, of Magray, who died in 1629.
4. William, in West Pencaitland, who died in 1645.
5. George, in Magray, who died in 1630.
6. James, in East Spott Mill.

## ROBERT OF WOODHEAD (FOUNTAINHALL), W.S.

Robert Pringill, eldest son of William, appears to have served his apprenticeship in the office of John Gray, public notary, in Haddington, where in 1598 he writes a charter (G. S., 788). In January 1606 we find him a notary in the office of John Easton, W.S., Edinburgh (G. S., 1691). Between that date and March 1614 he wrote fourteen charters for Easton, was twice a donator of escheats and once an assignee of a debt. Easton was married to Margaret Cant of St Giles Grange.

Robert Pringill married Violet Cant of the same family. John Easton dying in 1616, Robert and Mr John Cant of the Grange, apparently his brother-in-law, act as curators of his son and heir John Easton (Charters, Soc. of Antiquaries). Robert succeeded John Easton as a Writer to the Signet, and became the leading W.S. of his time. As to his work, suffice it to say that he and his servitors or clerks, of whom some twenty are named, appear in the Register of the Great Seal alone some 230 times: and it is interesting to note that amongst his clientèle were included all the principal Pringills of his time, as those of that Ilk, Smailholm, Whytbank, Torwoodlee, Clifton, Stitchill, Greenknow, Buckholm, etc. Take this entry as an illustration of the times—"John Logan, angry that a bond for which he was cautioner had been assigned to a Robert Logan, came to Pringill's 'awne wreitting chalmer' on the 12th inst. at three in the afternoon, imperiously demanding if he had written the assignation, and, how he durst do the same. Pringill answered with that respect that became one of his calling, telling him that he was in a public charge to serve all His Majesty's subjects. Logan then became abusive, calling the said Robert and his servants false knaves, vowing and swearing that he should eat them all and have their lives. With that he minted to his whinger, and would have attacked Pringill had he not been protected by others present. He was put out of the chamber and down the stair: when coming directly upon Robert Logan, who was standing at the stair foot, he would have assaulted him also with the drawn whinger had he not been stayed"; on the 14th (June 1621) both parties compearing personally, the Lords find John Logan guilty, and commit him to ward in the Tolbooth (P. C., 1621).

In June 1625 Robert is at Milton, and writes the testament of his brother John, younger. In August 1629 Robert Porteous, for a certain sum of money, dispones to him for ever the whole kirklands of Pencaitland, with the old mansion of the same, barns, glebe adjacent, teind-sheaves, houses and pertinents (S. E.). In 1631 Robert has sasine of an annual rent of £1000 Scots furth of the barony of Salton. In 1633 he and his son John have sasine of certain acres in Newhaven, and the bailiary, but resign them shortly afterwards on being paid 5000 merks (S. E., 1633-34). In March 1634 Mr John Pringle and Joneta

Byres his spouse, and John Pringill in Milton, his uncle, have sasine of annual rents granted by Sir Robert Richardson, furth of his lands of Easter Pencaitland (S. E.). On 29th May 1635, at Edinburgh, Sir George Cockburn of Ormiston, by contract, sells to Robert Pringill, W.S., and his son and heir apparent Mr John, without reversion or regress, the lands of East and West Templehall, Huntlaw, and Dryburghland, as occupied by the late Mr Samuel and the late Francis Cockburn; also the lands of "Southwood *alias* Woodhead" and toft-houses, with the lands and acres called Parisflat and Vicarsfold pertaining of old to the Vicarage of Pencaitland, lately disposed by Sir Robert Richardson of Easter Pencaitland to Sir George; with the manor-place of "Woodhead *alias* Southwood"; houses, orchards, dovecot, coals, and coalheuchs, together with the teind-sheaves and other teinds great and small of all the above lands, and power to win limestone in the same quarries as Sir George's tenants, wherever situated (G. S.): sasine was taken in August following, Robert intimating that the lands were to be his son's in satisfaction of the 28,000 merks he had promised to give him on his marriage with Joneta Byres in 1633. In September 1635 Robert Pringill, W.S., has sasine of Nether Lugate and Meikle Hoprig, irredeemably and without reversion. In April 1645 Robert and his second son Robert, upon a precept granted by John Lord Borthwick, have sasine with actual possession of Dewar in the parish of Heriot, upon the resignation of James Pringill thereof. In August 1646 the King confirms to Robert Pringill of Templehalls, W.S., his heirs and assignees, the lands of Whitburgh and Blackhouse, possessed by William, James, and Thomas Borthwick, which William Earl Marischal resigned; also the lands of Bowshielhill, appraised by the said Robert in 1637, which Lady Lawson of Ednam resigned (G. S.). In 1647 Robert and his son Mr John are amongst the Commissioners of War appointed by Parliament for Haddingtonshire. Robert died in August 1652, having had issue by his spouse Violet Cant of the Grange: (1) Mr John, his heir; (2) Robert, of Dewar, admitted a W.S. in 1655.

It should be remarked here that Robert Pringle who bought Stitchill, and who was collector of fines for the Treasurer at the justice courts held at Jedburgh and Dumfries, and resided for upwards of twenty-five years at Baitingbush in the

Debatable Land as bailie to the Scotts of Buccleuch, is always erroneously referred to as a Writer to the Signet, in the belief apparently that he was one and the same person as his contemporary Robert Pringle of Woodhead, W.S.—an error which appears even in the List of the Society of Writers to the Signet, but which, on its being pointed out to them, we are informed, has now been corrected.

#### MR JOHN OF WOODHEAD

In August 1652 Master John Pringill, now of Woodhead, upon a charter granted by William Lord Cranston, has sasine of the lands of Cranstondean, Loanhead, Paistonburn, New Mains, and others, with the mills, lime quarries, coalheuchs, etc. (S. E.). In 1655 he is retoured heir of his father Robert in the lands of Whitburgh and Blackhouse. He died in 1659, and was buried on 18th January of that year in Greyfriars. He married first, Joneta Byres in 1633; second, Margaret Dickson; third, Jonet Bruce, whose second husband was Edward Wallace of Shewalton. Mr John left, according to his testament, farmstock and plenishing worth £1573, and bonds granted or assigned worth £29,165 Scots, amongst the debtors, being the Master of Gray, Viscount Kingston, the Earl of Winton, Sir John Ruthven of Dunglass, and William Lord Cranston—a great Royalist, whose lands were saved from confiscation by Cromwell at the intercession of the King of Sweden (T. E.). Mr John by Margaret Dickson had issue: (1) John, his heir; (2) David, born in 1645; and Susanna as youngest of the daughters; and by Jonet Bruce, a daughter Janet, born in May 1658.

Robert Pringle of Dewar, W.S., second son of Robert of Woodhead, W.S., after a somewhat inglorious career, was dead before November 1870, as was also his widow Margaret Ker, leaving no children.

#### JOHN OF WOODHEAD

John Pringle, now of Woodhead, retoured heir to his father Master John, and his curators, are successful in obtaining decreets for repayment by certain of the granters of the above

bonds. In 1666 he is appointed a Commissioner of Excise for Haddingtonshire (P. C.). "On 25th June 1674," says Wodrow in his *Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*, "I find another decret of the Council against the keepers of conventicles in the garner house of the laird of Stevenson . . . and in a house alleged to be made up on purpose for conventicles by Mr Robert Hodge, bailie of Lamington. The preachers at these places are . . . ; Pringle of Woodhead, for being at some of them, is find in a fourth part of his yearly valued rent, and some others; and a good many of the meaner people are ordered to be denounced for non-compearance. I find John Pringle of Woodhead is liberated from prison on 16th July upon paying £277 Scots." In 1678 John is appointed a Commissioner of Supply for Haddingtonshire (A. P.). A Privy Council paper of the date 13th September 1678 says: "Forasmuch as it is found by an assize that . . . (4 women), prisoners, are found guilty of the crime of witchcraft, and are decerned by us the Lords Commissioners of Justiciary to be taken to Paiston muir upon Friday next, the 20th day of this inst., between 2 and 4 in the afternoon, and there to be strangled at a stake till they are dead, and thereafter their bodies to be burned to ashes, these therefore require and command Sir Robert Hepburn of Keith and John Pringle of Woodhead to see the said sentence and doom put to execution as they shall be answerable." In June 1685 Parliament ratifies in favour of John Lauder of Fountainhall, merchant burgess of Edinburgh, and Sir John Lauder his eldest son, the charter granted to them by Charles II. on 13th August 1681, of all and hail the lands above mentioned, possessed successively by Robert, Mr John, and John Pringle of Woodhead, and resigned by the said John: also parts of the barony of Cranstondean, viz. Paistonburn, New Mains, etc., resigned by the late Lord Cranston.

John Pringle of Woodhead and his spouse Lilius Murray of Blackbarony had issue: (1) Alexander, born 1666; (2) Robert; (3) John; (4) . . . ; and three daughters, Margaret, Mary, and Violet. After the sale of Woodhead, John Pringle may have removed to his estates of Whitburgh and Blackhouse.

As to the name Fountainhall. The reason why Sir John Lauder changed the name is evident. It would never have

done for an advocate to be designed of Woodhead, or a Lord of Session to be called Lord Woodhead; the titles were too suggestive! It is believed that a strong spring near the house suggested the new name.

#### Soutra

A word as to Soutra and John Pringill, second son of William in Milton, and brother of Robert of Woodhead, W.S. In September 1635 he had sasine of the lands of Soutra, Soutra-hill, Soutrabarns, and Redhall, on a charter granted to him and his heirs by the Provost, Bailies, and Deacons of Edinburgh; also, in March 1644, along with his second son Robert, of the town and lands of Blackshiels, on a charter granted by Earl Marischal, Lord Keith, irredeemably. John died in December 1650. By his spouse Agnes Henderson he had issue: (1) William, of Soutra; (2) Robert, of Blackshiels; (3) John, in Milton; (4) George; born respectively in 1623, 1627, 1629 and 1632 (T. Hadd., Commissariat).

In October 1652 William, as heir of his father, and of age, is granted sasine of the lands of Soutra, by deliverance of earth and stone thereof, on a precept from the Provost and Bailies of Edinburgh, "reserving to us the orchard of Soutra for holding our Courts," paying a yearly duty of £35. William was succeeded within a few years by his brother Robert of Blackshiels.

Nor was Robert a long liver. He died before Whitsuntide 1669, leaving the lands of Soutra and Blackshiels to his three daughters, as heirs portioners: (1) Agnes, who married her second cousin, David Pringle, brother of John of Woodhead; (2) Margaret, who married Lieutenant Joseph Douglas of H.M.'s Lifeguards (Foot)—she died before March 1675, as also their son James Douglas, to whom his father became heir; (3) Catherine (T. E., 1670).

David Pringle and his spouse Agnes Pringle both died in 1686. They left an only child, Margaret, to whom, in the same year, James Pringle, as nearest of kin on the father's side, was retoured Tutor (T. Hadd., Commissariat).

David and his relict Agnes were buried on their own lands in Soutra Aisle, that fragment of the famous monastery that once overlooked the Lothians; and on the lintel of the door in



the north end can still be seen their initials and the date cut in bold characters, thus:—

16 D. P. A. P. 86.

Visitors, as is usual at such shrines, have been busy scratching their initials in the soft sandstone, and one of them by an added stroke has altered the second P on the lintel into an R.

In the opposite end of the Aisle is a slab, inserted in 1827, commemorating a "John Pringle of Beatman's Acre who died in 1777," who is credited in Carrick's *Newbattle Abbey* and Hunter's *Fala and Soutra* as a descendant, not of the Pringles of Soutra—as one would expect—but of a John Pringle, a shepherd, who had the good fortune to entertain and regale with roast chicken for supper, the benighted king, James V., who next morning, by way of thanks, granted him the piece of land called Beadman's Acre—a myth given currency to in a late ballad beginning:—

"Hae ye no heard o' the guid auld times,  
When Pringle was sae luckie  
To get a lump o' Soutra hill  
Just for a roasted chuckie?"

Indeed the two above-mentioned historians of the district seem to have known nothing of the Pringles, lairds of Soutra and Fala for half a century.

That Soutra Aisle should have escaped the hands of the despoiler during all these years, is no doubt due to its conversion into a burial place.

Soutra Aisle, recently repaired, has since been taken in charge by the National Monuments Commission of Scotland.

In the Parish Register of Pencaitland, between 1600 and 1800, there are recorded the baptisms of upwards of a hundred descendants of William Pringle in Milton, accompanied often by the names of one or two relatives who acted as witnesses. They were tenants of Milton and Templehall for several generations, and for various periods of Carberry Mains, Lam-puckwells, Hudds Mains, Abbey Mains, and Ballincrieff Mains; also lairds of Blegbie and of Borgue.

**Milton**

1. John, 3rd son of John Pringle of Soutra, in 1650 succeeded his father in his tenancy of Milton and his lien on Lord Cranston's lands. In 1668 he moved for the recovery of the movable goods and gear sold and assigned to him in 1667 by the late John Pringle of Woodhead, against Wallace of Shewalton, who had married his widow and was in possession of them; and the Lords ordained Wallace to surrender the goods or pay their value as given in the inventory, viz., £1306, 16s. 8d. (A. D.). John died before 1690. By his spouse Catherine Baptie he had several daughters, including Lilius, born 1667, who married David Pringle in Templehall, and a son David, born 1676, who succeeded him.

2. David died in 1754. By his spouse Catherine Ramsay he had several sons, including David and Andrew, twins, born 1713, the former tenant of Carberry Mains, the latter of Ballincrieff Mains, William who died in 1678, also two daughters, Catherine who marr. James Baillie, tenant of Blegbie, and Janet who marr. James Pringle, tenant of Lampuckwells (T. E., 1762).

3. John Pringle the younger, 4th son of William of Milton and brother of Robert of Woodhead, W.S., servitor to John Sinclair of Herdmeston, died in 1625. He had a wadset of Magray for 4200 merks, and left 2000 merks to be invested in land for his natural son John (T. E., 1626).

John Pringle by his spouse Isabella Pringle had several sons and daughters, born between 1652 and 1670, including Lilius born 1669.

**E. and W. Templehall**

Robert Pringle, between 1653 and 1666 had issue several sons and daughters.

David Pringle by his spouse Lilius Pringle, between 1696 and 1715 had issue five sons and three daughters.

David, indweller, by his spouse Janet Sibbit, between 1720 and 1739, had issue five sons and two daughters.

David Pringle by his spouse Catherine Yule, between 1727 and 1744, had issue, six sons, including Andrew, tenant in Templehall, George, M.D., Norfolk, born 1733, dead in 1798 (T. E., Mar. 1798), and James, tenant in Lampuckwells, born 1739, died 1789 who, by his spouse Janet, daughter of David



Pringle in Milton, left an only son David who died in Edinburgh in 1821, and two daughters Janet and Alison (T. E., 1789).

Andrew Pringle, tenant in Templehall and esquire of Blegbie, born 1730, died 1814, by his spouse Marion Carfrae had issue: Janet, born 1771; David, born 1772; and John, born 1775. David was served heir special in Blegbie in 1814.

Robert Pringle, also tenant in Templehall, by his spouse Marion Walker had issue: David, born 1760, tenant of Abbey Mains; also by Jean Williamson, John, born 1775.

#### Ballincrieff Mains and Borgue

Andrew Pringle, son of David in Milton, became tenant of Ballincrieff Mains in 1745. He died in December 1791. By his spouse Helen Hunter he had issue: Andrew, his heir; John, W.S., and Deputy Clerk of Session; and Margaret, born 1752, who married Archibald Hepburn, tenant of Hailes.

Andrew in Ballincrieff Mains bought Borgue in Kirkcudbrightshire about 1830. He wrote for the Board of Agriculture *A General View of the Agriculture of Westmoreland*, 1794. In 1840 he was served heir to his brother John, W.S., in Craigdow, parish of Glasserton. He was succeeded by his son Andrew.

Andrew of Borgue and Lann Hall, parish of Tynron, in Dumfriesshire, M.D., married Janet, daughter of Robert Hunter of Glenochar in Lanarkshire. He died at Notting Hill, London, in 1858, aged 35. He had issue:—

1. Andrew, born 1851, F.R.M.S., of Banstead, Surrey, well known in photographic and micrographic circles. His treatise *Practical Micro-Photography*, 1893, has gone through several editions.
2. Robert-Hunter was an Asst. Commissioner of the Royal Commission of Agriculture. In 1895 the *Quarterly Review* in an article on their Reports says, "Mr Pringle has gone more carefully into financial details than any other Asst. Commissioner, and his Reports have been extensively quoted," mentioning particularly those on the Isle of Axholme and Essex.
3. John-James, Dermatologist at Middlesex Hospital, London, and editor of important works relating to his subject. He died in New Zealand in 1922.