

SKENE

of CURRIEHILL

MR. JAMES SKENE OF WESTERCORSE, was father of,

1. Gilbert Skene of Wester Corse, was appointed physician to the King and was served heir to his father in the lands of Wester Corse, in the sheriffdom of Aberdeen, on 30 September 1600.¹ He *m.* Agnes Lawson and had issue, (*see that title*).
2. Sir John Skene, 1st of Curriehill, (*see below*).
3. Duncan Skene, became a notary public and at whose instance on 11 March 1594, letters of poinding were issued against James Guthrie of Balnabreich for non-payment of annualrents from the lands of Balnabreich and is then styled brother to Mr. John Skene, Clerk Register.

SIR JOHN SKENE, 1ST OF CURRIEHILL, *b.* in 1549 and studied at the Universities of Aberdeen and St. Andrews, following which he travelled in Demark, Norway and Sweden studying law. He passed as an Advocate in March 1575 and accompanied James VI. to Norway in 1589. He was Ambassador to the States General, and was appointed Lord Clerk Register in 1594.

Of him Sir Scotstarvet wrote: “He was well skilled in the laws before he was advanced to that place, and got a sole gift for printing the Acts of Parliament and *Regiam majestem* ; by which means he acquired a great deal of money from the country; for all heritors of lands were obliged to buy them : but it did little good ; for albeit he lived many years in the place, yet did he purchase but few lands, only he bought Currie Hill and Ravelrig, of no great value ; all which were sold by his son Sir James. He resigned his place to his said son in his old age: but Haddington, by his power, forced his son Sir James to resign the same in his

¹ C22/2/60.

favour, and got him made an ordinary Lord of the Session, which place Sir James brooked till his death, and was made President of the Session by King Charles. But being of a generous disposition, and having small means, he behoved to sell and dispone all, both in town and country, for defraying of his debts. Sir John's four daughters had little better success; only Sir William Scot's wife, who got nothing by her father, had best success. But the other three, one of them married to Robert Learmont, advocate, the second to my Lord Fosterseat, and the third to Sir Robert Richardson of Pentcailand, their sons have disponed all their father's lands, and nothing is left thereof at this day.”¹

He *m.* Helen, daughter of Sir John Somerville of Cambusnethan, and was father of,

1. Sir James Skene, 2nd of Curriehill, (*see below*).
2. John Skene, 1st of Halyards, was included in the remainder of a contract in favour of his uncle, Mr Duncan Skene, regarding annualrents due from the lands of Balnabreich on 12 June 1589 and to whom his brother James resigned his office of Clerk of the Bills on 5 March 1614. He acquired the lands of Halyards which were confirmed to him under the Great Seal on 22 January 1640.² He *m.* at Edinburgh, on 29 June 1603, to Alison, daughter of William Rigg, Merchant and Burgess of Edinburgh,³ and *d.* in December of 1644, having had issue,

2a) John Skene, 2nd of Halyards, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 28 November 1609 and to whom his grandfather, William Rigg, bequeathed £1000 in his Will of 1619. He had a resignation from his father for the lands of Halyards and Halbarns on 24 November 1641, and *m.* Mary, daughter of John Ker and sister of Thomas Ker of Mersington, (*c/m* at Edinburgh, on 14 October 1641⁴). He was father of,

¹ Staggering State, Sir John Scott of Scottstarvet, circa 1650.

² C2/46/115.

³ OPR – Edinburgh.

⁴ NLS Halyards Papers.

- 2b) John Skene, 3rd of Halyards, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 29 March 1644 and had a Disposition from his parents for the lands of Halyards on 31 July 1666.¹ He *m.* Janet, daughter of George Drummond of Carlowrie,² *d.* before August of 1708 and was father of,
- 2c) John Skene, 4th of Halyards, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 11 February 1675 and succeeded his father.
- 2c) George Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 18 June 1681.
- 2c) Alexander Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 12 October 1685.
- 2c) Alison Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 5 June 1676.
- 2c) Helen Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 7 July 1677.
- 2c) Elizabeth Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 28 September 1678.
- 2c) Anna Skene, *bap.* at Kirkliston, on 7 January 1680.
- 2b) Alison Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 30 August 1642.
- 2b) Helen Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 29 January 1650.
- 2a) William Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 17 February 1611.
- 2a) James Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 17 September 1622.
- 2a) Alexander Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 20 May 1625.
- 2a) Helen Skene, to whom her grandfather William Rigg bequeathed 600 merks to be spent on a gold chain on her wedding day.³ She *m.* John Coupar of Gogar, (*c/m* 18 May 1620⁴), and was buried in the Greyfriars, Edinburgh, on 21 July 1667⁵ having had issue.
- 2a) Jean Skene, *m.* on 6 April 1632, to Mr. Alexander Belsches, eldest son and heir of John Belsches, 1st of Tofts,⁶ (*c/m* 11 March 1631.⁷ He *dsp* in 1656), and had no issue.

¹ NLS Halyards Papers.

² NLS Halyards Papers.

³ NLS Halyards Papers.

⁴ NLS Halyards Papers.

⁵ Greyfriars Burial Register.

⁶ OPR – Canongate, Edinburgh.

⁷ NLS Halyards Papers.

- 2a} Katherine Skene, to whom her maternal grandfather, William Rigg, bequeathed 4000 merks in 1619. She *m.* William Murray, 1st of Langherdmiston, younger son of Gilbert Murray, 1st Elibank, (*c/m* 18 January 1628), and *d.* in October of 1632 having had issue.
- 2a} Margaret Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 19 June 1608 and *m.* William Fairlie of Brunstfield.
- 2a} Eupham Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 23 June 1612.
- 2a} Anna Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 30 January 1614.
- 2a} Alison Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 30 November 1615.
- 2a} Janet Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 5 December 1617 and *d.* young.
- 2a} Christian Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 25 January 1620.
- 2a} Elizabeth Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 11 October 1621.
- 2a} Janet Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 17 August 1626.
3. Alexander Skene, is styled son to Sir John Skene of Curriehill in a discharge by his father dated 3 December 1616.
4. William Skene, *d.* before 5 March 1614.
5. Jean Skene, *m.* at Edinburgh, on 7 May 1595, to Sir William Scott, 2nd of Ardross,¹ (he was widow of Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Hamilton of Priestfield, by whom he had issue; and also of Isabella, daughter of David Dury of that Ilk, by whom he had issue), and had issue.
6. Margaret Skene, *m.* on 28 February 1598, to Robert Learmonth, 1st of St. Nicholas,² younger son of Sir George Learmonth of Balcomie, and had issue.
7. Katherine Skene, *m.* at Edinburgh, on 14 January 1608, to Alexander Hay of Forresterseat,³ (*c/m* 14 December 1607⁴), and had issue.
8. Eupham Skene, *m.* at Edinburgh, on 4 January 1610, to Sir Robert Richardson of Pencaitland,¹ (*c/m* at Edinburgh, on 14 December 1609. He *d.* in April of 1635), and had issue.

¹ OPR Edinburgh.

² OPR – Edinburgh.

³ OPR – Edinburgh.

⁴ GD82/317

9. Rachel Skene, *m.* Archibald Douglas, eldest son and heir of Sir William Douglas of Cavers, (*c/m* 5 August 1629²).

SIR JAMES SKENE, 2ND OF CURRIEHILL, succeeded his father and followed in his footsteps, becoming one of the foremost legal minds of his time. He was appointed a Senator of the College of Justice and was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia on 16 January 1630 with remainder to his heirs male whatsoever.

He *m.* at Edinburgh, on 7 December 1603, Janet, daughter of Archibald Johnston of Warriston,³ (she survived him and *m.* secondly, to Sir George Winram of Libberton, whom she also survived, and thirdly, to James Inglis of Ingliston⁴), and was father of :

1. Sir John Skene, 2nd Baronet of Curriehill, (*see below*).
2. James Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 20 April 1615.
3. Thomas Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 25 June 1618.
4. William Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 19 December 1620.
5. Samuel Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 25 March 1624.
6. Eupham Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 9 March 1613 and *m.* on 7 April 1630, to Sir Alexander Inglis, 2nd of Ingliston.⁵ They had issue.
7. Helen Skene, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 24 October 1619 and *m.* firstly, to Robert Bruce, 1st of Broomhall, (he *d.* on 25 June 1652), by whom she had issue. She *m.* secondly, to Sir Charles Erskine, 1st of Alva, (he was widow of Mary, daughter of Thomas Hope of Craighall, whom he had *m.* on 5 February 1639, and by whom he had issue ; *d.* on 25 June 1652), and thirdly, to Sir James Dundas, 2nd of Arniston, (*c/m* 13 April 1666. He was widow of Marion, daughter of Robert, Lord Boyd, and of Janet daughter of Sir Adam Hepburn of Humbie, and *d.* in September of 1679). She *d.* in 1691.

¹ OPR – Edinburgh.

² RMS 1634-1651. No. 212.

³ OPR – Edinburgh.

⁴ RMS 1634-1651. No. 666.

⁵ OPR – Edinburgh.

SIR JOHN SKENE, 2ND BARONET OF CURRIEHILL, *bap.* at Edinburgh, on 24 August 1608 and succeeding his father, he was served heir to him in the lands of Curriehill on 16 December 1636,¹ which he disposed in 1637. He *m.* Rachel Speir and *dsp* in Germany, having levied a regiment at his own expense to serve there.

¹ C22/15/104.