

# The Last Earl of Callendar ?

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In 1641 Lord James Livingston of Almond was made Earl of Callendar by King Charles I. Lord Almond had followed an active career as a military officer on the Continent as well as in Britain. It is not surprising therefore to see that the coat-of-arms for the new Earldom had a crest composed of an armed hand and that the motto was "Et domi et foris" (At home and abroad).



**Illus 1: Arms of Livingston, Earl of Callendar –**

**ARMS** - quarterly: first and fourth argent, three cinquefoils gules, within a double tressure, flowered and counterflowered, vert, for Livingstone; second and third sable, a bend with six billets or, for Callendar; with a crescent in the centre for difference

**CREST** - A dexter hand holding a sword proper.  
**SUPPORTERS** - Two lions gules.

**MOTTO** – Et domi et foris

These coat-of-arms, with a crescent at the centre for difference, are displayed on Bleau's map of Stirlingshire which was dedicated to the Earl in 1654, three years after Callendar House had been partially destroyed by General Monck.

In 1674 James was succeeded in title and lands by his nephew Alexander Livingston and then by the third Earl, also called Alexander, who was the second son of the second Earl's half-brother. In 1693 James Livingston became the fourth Earl on his father's death. It was this Livingston who lost his estates and title in 1715 as a result of supporting the Jacobite cause. He died in exile in Rome aged only 35 years. His son having died in childhood, he was survived only by a daughter, Lady Anne Livingston, and so ended the direct male line. This event had been foreseen by James, the fourth Earl of Callendar and fifth Earl of Linlithgow, for in



**Illus 2: Coat-of-arms  
from Bleau's map of Stirlingshire: 1654.**

March 1715 he had written to his relative Alexander of Bedlormie and Westquarter in concern for the latter's son *"he is the nearest relation of the name I have, and should anything ail my son and me, must certainly succeed to the honours of Linlithgow"* (Livingstone 1920, 292). His son died in April of the year in which that letter was written, and later that same year he himself became a proscribed fugitive.

It was, however, only in 1784 that Sir Alexander Livingstone of Bedlormie and Westquarter, as the male representative of the House of Livingstone, laid claim to the attainted Earldom of Callendar on the plea that the forfeiture of the last Earl of Linlithgow and Callendar could not affect his right to the second title due to the wording on the last patent of that latter earldom. The case was placed before Lord Kenyon, the Attorney-General, who, after examining the proofs, gave it as his opinion *"that there being a failure of heirs-male of all the persons to whom the title of Earl of Callendar was limited, it appeared to him, that Sir Alexander Livingstone, the heir-male, was entitled to the honours conferred by the patent of 1660, and that his title was untouched by the attainder of the Earl of Linlithgow in 1716. Also, that Sir Alexander Livingstone, standing in the place of Alexander, son of Alexander, who took the remainder by purchase (as it is called in the law of England), therefore his title was untouched by the forfeiture of the collateral relation from whom he did not claim by descent."* (Douglas, Peerage, vol ii, 129, 130). The claim was never pressed, probably due to the considerable expense that would have been incurred.

Sir Alexander Livingstone's son, Thomas, did have a petition setting forth his claim to the Earldom presented to George IV who referred it to the House of Lord's Committee for Privileges in 1821. However, no more was heard of the case and in 1853 Sir Thomas died at Westquarter and with him ended the male line of that family and any claim to the Earldom of Callendar.



**Illus 3: Armorial stone at Westquarter Mansion from "Ancient Castles and Mansions of Stirling Nobility."**

Fleming in his book "Ancient Castles and Mansions of Stirling Nobility", published in 1902 gives an illustration of an armorial stone at that time built into the new House of Westquarter in 1883 at third floor level.

This he states to be the arms of the Earl of Linlithgow. However, the supporters in that case would have been two savages, with a demi-savage for the crest. Edwin Livingston noted the mistake in his book on the Livingston family and correctly identified it was the Callendar arms. It is noticeable that Fleming had difficulty drawing the stone:

*"From the height and weather-worn condition of the stone, the motto is undecipherable and was probably Et domi et foris, and the date 1641 would refer to the erection of additions to Callendar House, as that ancient mansion's history goes far back to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. As was common on change of ownership, the arms were probably removed from Callendar House when the estate was seized by the crown, on the Earl's attainder and sold to Mr. Forbes in 1783"* (Fleming 1902, 309).



The latter is clearly supposition despite Fleming's earlier hint that there was a 'tradition' that this had occurred. That tradition may only have gone back as far as 1879 when Richard Gillespie first printed it in his book "Round About Falkirk" and then in the edited version of Nimmo's History of Stirlingshire. Gillespie was fortunate enough to see the stone built into the garden wall at Westquarter and was able to read the inscription as "Et Domi, Et Foris, 1641". The idea of the stone's origin has been accepted by various authors since (eg. Livingston 1920, 459; Hunter 1937, 55; RCAHMS 1963, 405; Leask 1986, 44).

With the demolition of the House at Westquarter in 1936 by the Stirlingshire County Council the stone passed into the possession of the Burgh Museum in Dollar Park where it was examined by Her Majesty's Commissioners in 1959 for inclusion in their Inventory of Monuments in Stirlingshire (RCAHMS 1963 vol 2, 405 pl.211). It is now in the safe keeping of Falkirk Museum and can be inspected on request, as occurred as recently as 1986 for Leask's book on Westquarter.

Astonishingly, these later examinations failed to notice that the date ascertained by Fleming under difficult circumstances was erroneous. The date is not 1641 but 1790, and is accompanied by the initials "AL." The initials are those of Sir Alexander Livingstone of Bedlormie and Westquarter who, in 1790, was the male representative of the House of Livingstone. Given that he had received the opinion of the Attorney-General in favour of his claim to the title of Earl of Callendar, there is a context for his having commissioned the sculpture for Westquarter House. The stone would then have no direct connection with Callendar House at all.



Illus 4: The Westquarter armorial stone in Falkirk Museum (drawing by author)

The only point of discrepancy between the arms shown on the stone and those given by the Lyon for the Earl of Callendar is the crest. The stone bears the whole arm, as does the version on Bleau's map, but the Lyon Register shows it as little more than the hand. The arm on the stone emerges from a cloud and is provided with bands, which have been painted green and white in recent times (c1980).

It is safe to assume that the stone was carved to commemorate a claim to an Earldom which had been granted almost 150 years earlier and lost after half that time had expired. It may never have been incorporated into an earlier building. Gillespie described Westquarter as a mansion "of considerable size, circularly built, with steep slated roofs and notched gables... On the walls of the southern and more modern portion of the building are the dates 1626 and 1648" (Gillespie 1879, 273). This appearance is reflected in Fleming's sketch of the house executed after it had been replaced by the weak Scottish Baronial imitation. The general character of the buildings was still evident until 1936 in the form of the stable block, which was of similar design to the house.

In essence, Thomas Livingston of Westquarter was the last Earl of Callendar.



*West Quarter Old Mansion, from photo.*

**Illus 5: Drawing of Westquarter House by Fleming.**

## Bibliography

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