

**SOME ACCOUNT OF
THE ANCIENT
EARLDOM OF CARRIC**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649319039

Some account of the ancient earldom of Carric by Andrew Carrick & James Maidment

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ANDREW CARRICK & JAMES MAIDMENT

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THE ANCIENT
EARLDOM OF CARRIC**

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OF THE
ANCIENT EARLDOM OF CARRIC,

BY

ANDREW CARRICK, ESQ. M.D.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
NOTICES OF THE EARLDOM AFTER IT CAME INTO THE
FAMILIES OF DE BRUCE AND STEWART.

BY

JAMES MAIDMENT, ESQ.

ADVOCATE.



EDINBURGH:
THOMAS GEORGE STEVENSON,
87 PRINCE'S STREET,
M.DCCC.LVII.

IMPRESSION LIMITED TO SIXTY COPIES.



EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY MACPHERSON & SYME.



Earldom of Carric.

THESE observations from the pen of the late ANDREW CARRICK, M.D., are in the form of a letter to the late GEORGE CHALMERS, author of "Caledonia," and relate to the ancient Earls of Carric. The old Earldom having devolved, like other ancient Scottish Peerages, on an heir-female, the title passed from the noble race of "De Carric," to become better known, and more illustrious, in that of "DE BRUCE."*

The accession of a noble and distinguished Englishman—for such in reality Robert de Bruce was—to the Scottish diadem, substantially extinguished the Earldom of Carric; but unwilling the title should remain in abeyance, King Robert conferred it on his brother Edward, absurdly styled King of Ireland. The grant by which the Peerage was transferred, is represented to have been in favour of the titular

* At the period of the English Usurpation, Edward I. conferred the Earldom of Carric on Henry Percy.

ruler of Ireland, and the heirs-male issuing of his body, and the heirs of these heirs-male, " Et tantummodo per lineam directam et masculinam continue descendentibus, nisi, in casu in quo plures fuerint fratres germani superstites, in quo casu decedente primogenito vel deficiente, sine heredibus masculis de corpore suo procreatis, secundo genitu in dictum comitatum hereditarie eidem succedat;" to return to the King and his successors in default of heirs.* This charter is represented as the one under which the three next Earls succeeded.

Edward, who may be styled sixth Earl of Carrick, had three sons successively Earls of Carrick. These sons are generally represented as illegitimate. Robert, the eldest, called by Wood the seventh Earl, was killed at the battle of Dupplin, 12th August 1332. The title was taken up by his next brother, Alexander, the eighth Earl, who married Eleanor, only daughter of Archibald de Douglas, by whom he had one daughter, Eleanor. Earl Alexander, with that versatility so characteristic of a Scottish noble of the olden time, forgetting his near relationship to David II., deserted him in the hour of need to join Edward Baliol, who struck a bold, and for a short time, successful stroke for the Crown of Scotland. Earl Alexander was captured at Annan by the Earl of Moray, and although he merited death, was saved by that noble-minded man, whose straightforward

* Douglas's Peerage of Scotland by Wood, vol. i. p. 320.

conduct affords a pleasing contrast to that of his time-serving and treacherous fellow peers.

Earl Alexander atoned for his apostacy by the gallantry he displayed at the battle of Halidonhill, 19th July 1333,—where he fell fighting valiantly against the English. His widow shewed her predilection for a married life by espousing—it is said—no less than five husbands.* Her second one was James Sandilands of Calder, by whom she had a son, the immediate ancestor of the Lords Torphichen,—who thus had the honour of being heir-of-line of the Douglas. The third husband was William Towers of Dalry.† The fourth, Sir Duncan Wallace of Sundrum, and the fifth, Sir Patrick Hepburn of Hailes. Such is the list given by Wood. Nevertheless, we have serious doubts as to the reality of the two last espousals, for reasons to be afterwards mentioned.

Thomas, the third brother, became ninth Earl of Carric. He was one of the associates of Robert, the Stewart, Guardian of Scotland, whom he joined with the flower of the gentry of Kyle. When he died is unknown, but on his decease, William de Cunningham, the husband of his *niece* Eleannora, became tenth Earl, and there is in the Register of the Great Seal, an “incomplete charter”‡ by David II., granting to him “Totum Comitatum nostrum de Carik.” In Robertson’s index of the lost charters, he is styled

* Wood’s Douglas. † Robertson’s Index, p. 51. ‡ Wood.

Earl of Carric. There appears also a confirmation by the same monarch, of a grant by William de Gunyngham, Lord of Carric, to James de Lekprewyk of half of the lands of Polkarne, in Kyng's Kyle. The confirmation is dated 5th December 1364.

Duncan Stewart* asserts that Helen (Eleanor) de Bruce had a second husband—Sir Duncan Wallace of Sundrum, but that she had no issue either by him or her first spouse. There is a charter dated 21st October 1368, in the chartulary of Glasgow, wherein Sir Duncan Wallace of Cnockfubill, within the Lordship of Bothwell "pro salute animæ mee, et animæ Eleanore de Bruys, Comitisse de Carrik, uxoris mee," and for the salvation of the souls of the deceased Thomas de Moravia, Knight, Lord of Bothwell, his over Lord, his ancestors and successors, creates a chaplainry within the church of Glasgow, for the support of which he gifts 12 marks sterling, to be levied from his lands of Cnockfubill. Duncan Stewart is evidently correct, and this lady was the daughter, and not the widow of Earl Alexander.

There is much confusion and obscurity in the whole details relative to the Earldom of Carric while in the family of De Bruce, and there is some room for impugning the authority of Wood, who asserts, that under the charter previously referred to, and the destination which has been quoted, the three

* History of the Family of Stewart, p. 36.

illegitimate sons successively took the Earldom. Heirs-male of the body, mean, *lawful issue male*,—a bastard is not the heir of his father. Therefore the three sons, if illegitimate, could not be “the heirs-male of the body” of Edward de Bruce.

Undoubtedly some other crown grant of the *Comitatus* of Carric may have existed, by which it was transferred to the natural issue of the titular monarch of Ireland. But is it certain that these three Earls were illegitimate? Wynton, no slight authority, assumes the want of lawful issue in the brother of Bruce—may it not have happened, that Robert, Alexander, and Thomas, were not born in wedlock, and were only subsequently rendered legitimate by the marriage of their parents. There is a papal dispensation to enable Edward de Bruce to marry Isabella de Ross, in 1317, though within the forbidden degrees.* Might not these sons have been the offspring of a previous connection with this lady!

By the original settlement of 1313, the crown, in default of the issue-male of the body of King Robert, was to devolve on Edward, and *his issue-male*, whom failing, on Marjory, the daughter of his majesty. After the death of Edward in Ireland, 14th October 1318, there was a new settlement in December, giving the crown, in the event of the failure of the issue-male of the body of the King, to the son of Marjory. Where was the necessity of a new settle-

* *Vide* Appendix, No. I.