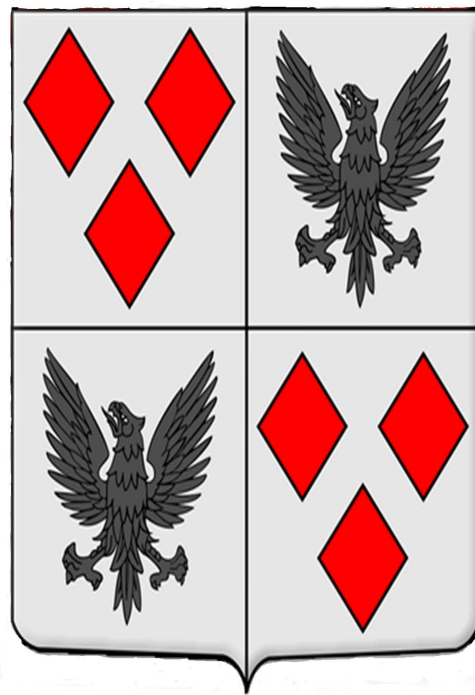


*THE HISTORY OF THE  
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*FAMILY BRANCH 5*

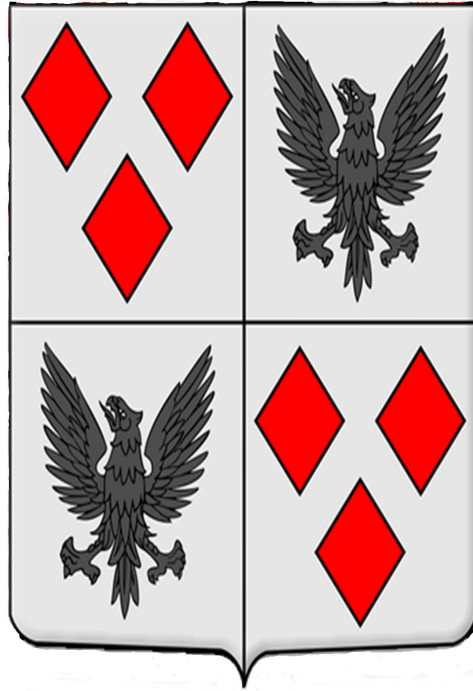
*ROBERT PITCAIRN OF DOUNFIELD.*



*Arms of Pitcairn of that Ilk and Forthar.*

## FAMILY BRANCH V.

### ROBERT PITCAIRN OF DOUNFIELD.



Arms of Pitcairn of that Ilk and Forthar.

In 1551 David Pitcarne sold a great part of the estate of Forthar-Ramsay to his son, Mr Robert Pitcarne, who became afterwards Commendator of Dunfermline, was distinguished in history, and whose life is given in full later on.

Charter by David Petcarne of Forthir,<sup>1</sup> whereby he sold to Mr Robert Pitcarne, his son, the lands of Forthir, with tower, fortalice. manor, gardens and orchards, and lands of Dunfield or Downfield, with tower, fortalice, manor, yards, and orchards in the shire of Fife. To be holden to the said Robert and his heirs-male of said body lawfully begotten, which failing, to Jon Petcarne, son of said David, and his heirs-male &. of the Queen, by the service of ward. Reserving to the said David the frank tenement of the lands, and to Elizabeth Dury the conjunct fee of the half of Dunfield, and the quarter of the 32nd part of Forthir, with a reasonable 3rd part of the remaining lands. Dated at Forthir 25th Jan. 1551-2. Confirmed by the queen at Edinburgh 27th Jan. same year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Forthar is often spelt Forthir.

Charter by Mary Queen of Scots, to David Petcarme of Forthir and his heirs, of the lands of Dunfield in the shire of Fife, of which the one part was resigned by John Wemyss of Pittencrieff, and the other by the same David. Reserving to Elizabeth Dury, wife of said David, her liferent of one-half. Dated at Jedburgh, 8th Nov. 1551.<sup>1</sup>

David Pitcairn had therefore sold to his second son Robert a great part of Forthar, although the freehold of the old house and some lands he still held for his lifetime, with his wife Elizabeth. He no doubt had made this disposition of his property to ensure it going in the male line instead of to the daughters of his eldest son Henry. As will be seen later on, when his son John succeeded to the property he paid Janet Pitcairn, the eldest daughter of his brother Henry, a large sum of money as an equivalent to any claim she might have on the Forthar estate.

John Pitcairn, fourteenth Lord of Forthar-Ramsay and Pitcairn, succeeded to his brother Robert Pitcairn, Commendator of Dunfermline Abbey to Forthar-Ramsay on his death in 1584.

John Pitcairn cared much for his second son, ROBERT. In the old charter granting him lands, on the 24 November 1581, he expresses the love he had for him. The charter says: -

Mr John Pitcairn of Forthar, for the love he had to his lawful son, Robert Pitcairn, and that he might live honourably, gave sasine to the said Robert of his lands of Dounfield in Fife: with the tower fortalice and manor, mill and lands thereof to himself (Mr John Pitcairn) and Agnes Aytoun his wife. The witnesses were Patrick Pitcairn and others.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of his father in 1593, Robert Pitcairn came into his inheritance, and on the 28th July 1598 his mother died. Her will was confirmed at Kettle, and she is called Agnes Aytoun, Lady Elder of Forthar. Her eldest son, Henry Pitcairn, had before this succeeded, on the death of his father, to the Forthar estates.

*NOTE:* - In 1629, therefore, all the Pitcairn lands near and in Dunfermline were now belonging to others, excepting Easter Gellet, which Henry Pitcairn's brother, Robert of Downfield, still possessed, and the lands of Pittencrieff, which belonged to the Phins, who were descendants of Henry Pitcairn, brother of the Commendator.

<sup>1</sup> Reg. Mag. Sig., lib. xxx. No. 733.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, No. 637.

It may be of interest to give here a slight description of the houses, towers, and fortalices, and the manner and customs of the nobles and gentry of this period.

The idea of the master or mistress of the mansion feeding or living apart from the domestics was at this period never entertained. The only difference between the servants and their masters was that the latter had the highest end of the board, and also the most commodious settle by the fire. The servants moved with deference indeed, but could join in the conversations unreprieved.

After the outdoor life was over, in the evening first the iron gate, then the inner door of the towers were fastened.

Every man in these days had his own carpenter and smith, as well as his own tailor and shoemaker. The lady of the house would sit at the distaff close to an iron candlestick, which supported a misshapen torch of domestic manufacture, and read from a book, perhaps her sole library. She would have learnt to read when she was at school in a nunnery.

“In each small village or town were several small towers, having battlements projecting over the side walks, and usually at an advanced angle or two, with shot-holes, for flanking the doorway, always defended by a strong door of oak studded with nails, and often by an exterior grated door of iron. These small pent-houses were ordinarily inhabited by the principal feuars and their families; but upon the alarm of approaching danger the whole inhabitants thronged from their own miserable cottages, which were situate around, to garrison these points off defence, though the cottages were badly-furnished, the families in themselves showed a degree of comfort, information, and independence which could hardly have been expected.

Their in-field supplied them with bread and home-brewed ale, their herds and flocks with beef and mutton. Each family killed a fat bullock in November, which was salted up for winter use, to which the wife could add a dish of pigeons or a fat capon. The garden gave kale and the river salmon; peat they had in plenty, as the bogs afforded turf, and wood gave logs. Bucks they were sometimes able to shoot with their crossbows.<sup>1</sup>

Perth and Stirling had their schools as early as 1173, of which the monks of Dunfermline were the directors, and at Aberdeen. It is certain that attached to the Cathedral Church, belonging to the Monastery of St Andrews, there stood a lyceum, where the youth were instructed in Latin; and that as early as 1293 the schools of St Andrews were under the care

<sup>1</sup> From Sir Walter Scott.

of a rector. A remarkable instance of this is to be found in the chartulary of Kelso, where “Matilda, Lady of Mull, in the year 1260, grants a certain rent to be paid to the abbot and the monks of this religious house, on the condition that they should board and educate her son with the best boys who were intrusted to their care.”<sup>1</sup>

The Chartulary of Kelso says that the schools in Roxburghshire were under the care of the monks of Kelso during the reign of David I, and that the rectorship of the school was an established office in 1241. The noblemen’s and gentlemen’s sons of that time were obliged to attend the grammar-schools for some years: there they were taught reading, writing, Latin, and a knowledge of the law, which latter proved very useful to them when they had to manage their estates later on.

After the school-days were over it was the custom for the sons and daughters of the gentry to be sent into the castles of those of higher rank than themselves, as pages and waiting-gentlewomen, to be reared in all manners and observances of polite society of those days. Edinburgh in the time of Mary Queen of Scots, was a very fine city, and many of the great nobles had their town houses there. The Royal Palace of Holyrood was the scene of many gay doings, and was inhabited by James IV, and it was here that all important transactions during the reign of Queen Mary and her son James VI, took place.

The sons of the younger branches of the Pitcairns are mentioned several times as pages to the head of the family (Pitcairn of Forthar), also as pages to Lord Seton, and to Prince Charles &c. Sir Walter Scott writes of these times: -

“The High Street of Edinburgh was long considered one of the finest and widest in Europe. In it was the old palace of Mary of Guise, Queen of James V, and mother of Queen Mary. The traders had open booths instead of shops. Here a lady in her muffler or silken veil, with golden ornaments, could be seen, a gentleman-usher making way for her, and a waiting gentleman carrying her Bible. Here were the citizens in short Flemish cloaks, wide trousers, high caped doublets, and bonnet and feather, and staid clergymen in black Geneva cloaks and bands. Gallant gentlemen were there in slashed doublets with poniard, and at the side a long sword, or perhaps with a mantle of crimson lined with rich fur, and on his head a crimson silk bonnet, looped up on one side, with a golden chain of many links thrice round the hat and fastened with a medal, a fashion among the grandees of that time. Behind them came a body of

<sup>1</sup> Tytler’s Hist. Edinburgh, 1829 vol. ii pp. 353, 354. The printed Dunfermline charter.

stout serving-men armed with sword and buckler, the latter being a small round shield having a steel pike in front.”<sup>1</sup>

In an account of James, the Good Regent, by Sir Walter Scott, he states, “On one occasion he wore a buff coat, richly embroidered with silk lace, a massive fold chain with a medal hung round the neck a black velvet bonnet which was decorated with a string of large and fair pearls, and with a small tufted feather. He also carried a long heavy sword which was girt to his side, and long gilded boots.”

So much for the manners and dress of the period.

“In 1537, 12th Jan., Sir Oliver Sinclair got by charter under the Great Seal the lands and barony of Pitcairns,”<sup>2</sup> Pitcairns here mentioned is not the “Pitcairn estate” in Fife but that in Perthshire, although “Pitcairns” in Strathearn had belonged to the family from a very early date.

In Aug. 1564 Queen Mary confirmed a charter, granted by “Sir David Petcarne and other stallarie of the choir and Cathedral of Glasgow, to Mr Michel Chesholme, of their lands of Kyndally and others in the territory of Glasgow.”<sup>3</sup>

David Pitcairn twelfth laird of Pitcarne and of the barony of Forthar-Ramsay, died ante 10th May 1569, when his will was proved in Edinburgh. He had three (four) sons – 1) Henry; 2) Robert; 3) John, (4) David of Wester Drummis) – and five daughters: Elizabeth, Elspeth, Isabel, Barbara, and Alison. His widow, Elizabeth Dury, married John Lindsay of Kirkforthar after Pitcairne’s death.

Henry, is eldest son, married Christian, second daughter of Andrew Seton of Parbroath. Henry died before his father David, and left only two daughters, Janet and Agnes. Janet married Robert Balfour of Dovan. Her will was made 19th Dec 1589. There was some litigation after Janet Balfour’s death, particulars of which, also of transfer of the Dovan lands, (see chapter VI) have been communicated to me by Mr Charles Balfour of Newton Don.<sup>3</sup>

On the 26th of December there is a Charter of Sale by Henry Pitcairn of that Ilk, with consent of Isabella Balfour his spouse, and his brother-german Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield, of the lands of Easter Gellet in the regality of Dunfermline. Dated at Forthar: witnesses, David Pitcairn, burgess of Dunfermline; James Pitcairne, son of the said Henry Pitcairne, &.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Abbot, Sir Walter Scott. <sup>2</sup> Douglas’s Baronage of Scotland, 1537, 1546.

<sup>3</sup> Reg. Mag. Sig. Lib. Xxx. No.733. <sup>4</sup> Laing Charters No.926 box 26.

Henry probably bought back the lands of Dounfield from his brother Robert, in exchange for the lands of Easter Gellet, which he sold to him the year before. At any rate Henry was possessed now of the lands of Dounfield, for he willed them later to David, his son, who succeeded him, and David in turn willed them to William, his eldest son.

ROBERT PITCAIRN, b.c. 1555, second son of John Pitcairn 14th Laird of that Ilk and Forthar, and Agnes Ayton, m.c. 1581, Elizabeth Gourley and had two sons, Henry and Thomas, who were witnesses to a deed, Dec. 6 1625, where they are called sons of the late Robert.

1) HARIE PITCAIRN, son of Robert of Dounfield, m. ISOBEL SYMSONE, issue, 1). Anna b. 26 Dec 1647 Kirkcaldy.

2) THOMAS PITCAIRN, m. 6 Jan 1624, Grizzell Gourlay

There is a Charter by Grizzell Gourlay, with consent of Thomas Pitcairn her spouse, to Robert Russell in Caldhorne, and Christian Ramsay his wife, of her quarter of the lands of Kingskettle, &. Henry Pitcairne of that Ilk is a witness in 1624.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Pitcairn of Downfield died, and his will was proved at Kettle, August 1620.

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Deacon of the Tailors Canongate - Robert Pitcairn.

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CALANDAR OF THE LAING CHARTERS –

1600. 26th December 1610. Charter of Sale by Henry Pitcairne of that Ilk, with consent of Isobella Balfour, his spouse, alienating to his brother-german ROBERT PITCAIRNE of Dounfield, his heirs, etc., the lands of Easter Gellet, with pertinents, in the lordship and regality of Dunfermline and shire of Fife; To be held of the granter for one penny blench. Dated at Forther, 26th December 1610, Mr. William Cranstoun, minister at Kingskettle, David Pitcairne, burgess of Dunfermline, (fb4) and James Pitcairn, the granter's son, being witnesses. Stephen Paterson and John Nicoll, notaries, signed for Isabel Balfour.<sup>1</sup>

1601. 16th January 1611. Charter by Henry Pitcairne of that Ilk and David Pitcairne, his eldest son in terms of a marriage contract between them on one part and Sir William Monteath, elder, of Kerse, knight, Sir William Monteath, younger, of Kerse, knight, and MARIOTA MONTEATH, daughter of the elder and sister of the younger Sir William, on the other part, dated 17th December 1610, for infesting Mariota, as future spouse of the said David, in liferent in the mill of Fruchy, mill lands, etc., in the lordship and Stewartry of Fife. Reddendo to superiors, £4 yearly feu-duty and 26s. 8d. augmentation. James Hepburn servitor to Sir William Monteath bailie for sasine. At Forthir, 16th January 1612. ROBERT PITCARNE of Downfield, Robert Ker, sheriff and burgh-clerk of Linlithgow, and others, witnesses.

1970. 5th December 1625. Instrument of Sasine following on a charter and precept (dated at Dysart, 5th December 1625) by Henry Pitcairn of that Ilk and David Pitcairn his son heir, for infesting Thomas Wood, master of the ship *The David off Londoun*, and Margaret Halkett, his spouse, in an annualrent of 180 merks from the lands of the Mains of Ramsay's Forthar, in the sheriffdom of Fife. Witnesses to charter, HENRY and THOMAS PITCAIRN, sons of the late ROBERT PITCAIRNE of DOUNFIELD, John Chrystieson, burgess of Dysart, and Mr David Kingorne, clerk of Dysart, with others. Sasine given by the said John Chrystieson, as bailie, George Lundie acting for Thomas Wood 5th, and recorded at Crail 20th December 1625. Witnesses, the said HENRY and THOMAS PITCAIRN, Henry Wilson, servitor of Henry Pitcairne of that Ilk, and William Arnott in Dysart. Notary, Mr David Kingorne.

<sup>1</sup> Laing Charters No. 506 box 15 and No. 559 box 16.

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443. Assigation by David Pitcairn son natural to Mr John Pitcairn of that ilk, to Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield, in reference to contract (No. 281) between said David and George Halket of Pitfirran, 20th august 1584, of an annual-rent of 50 merks and 30 merks from lands and mains of Pitfirrane, 8th April 1609.

444. Charters by said David Pitcairn to Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield of said annual-rent of 50 merks, 8th April 1609.

446. Disposition Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield to said (sic) Robert Pitcairn, tailor, eldest son of above designed David Pitcairn, of the said two annual-rents, 4th May 1609.

450 SASINE Robert Pitcairn, tailor above-mentioned, o charter from Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield of two annual-rents of 50 merks and 30 merks from mains of Pitfirrane, 21st august 1609. also 484, 486, 487.

490 DISPOSITION and ASSIGNATION Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield to Robert Pitcairn, tailor in Canongate, of the two annual-rents of 50 and 30 merks from lands and mains of Pitfirran, dated 28th June, registered in Books of Session 1st September 1617, also 491, 492, 493, 495, 496.

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*NOTE.* - This Branch has not progressed as to date we have failed to find descendants of Henry and Thomas Pitcairn sons of Robert Pitcairn of Dounfield.

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**BRANCH V.**

**ROBERT PITCAIRN**

**OF**

**DOUNFIELD**

**David Pitcairn = Elizabeth Dury**

12th Laird of I

That Ilk. I

\_\_\_\_\_ I

I

**John Pitcairn = Agnes Ayton**

14th Laird of I Lady Elder of

That Ilk and I of Forthar

Forthar I

I

I

I

I

**Henry Pitcairn = Christian Seton**

15th Laird of

The Barony of

Pitcairn & Forthar

**Robert Pitcairn = Elizabeth Gourlay**

of Dounfield I

m. 1581 I

dau of Sir Francis I Gourlay of Redcastle

I

I

I

**Robert Pitcairn =**

Taylor in I

Canongate I

I

I

I

I

**Henry Pitcairn = Isobel Symson**

I

I

I

Anna

b. 26 Dec 1647

**Thomas Pitcairn = Grizzell Gourlay**

m. 6 Jan 1624

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