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WILLIAM ARTHUR, M.D., BOTANIST TO THE KING IN
SCOTLAND, 1715-1716. By Professor BAYLEY BALFOUR,
F.R.S.

(Read 12th November 1914.)

Some years ago I presented to the Society a short history of the Royal Botanic Garden, of its Regius Keepers and of its Principal Gardeners, which has been the basis of the historic sketch which appears in the small guide for the use of visitors to the Garden. One interesting fact discovered in the course of the investigation for the preparation of the story was that the name of a Professor of Botany who was Regius Keeper had been dropped entirely from the published record. In the sketch which I present now I have brought together all the facts I have been able to gather regarding this Professor—Dr. William Arthur.

A septuagenarian numismatist, as was James Sutherland, King's Botanist, Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden, and Professor of Botany, at the close of the reign of Queen Anne, is not the person likely to be selected, if choice were offered, for the post of administrator of a Botanic Garden in which a collection of living plants had to be maintained on scientific lines up to date, nor is it likely that a course of instruction in Botany to youth would be efficiently carried on under a teacher of this description. It is not surprising, therefore, that on the accession of King George I the office of King's Botanist, with care of the Royal Physic Garden — a Household appointment, and therefore held only during pleasure,—which Sutherland had filled during the two preceding reigns, was not conferred upon him. The needs of political patronage probably operated in the direction of encouraging a change of personnel, but on the facts, even if Sutherland were not acquiescent in the change, it can hardly be protested that the time had not arrived when a new appointment was imperative.

The new appointment was not, as it happened, an advantage either to the Garden or to the teaching. We are introduced—as the warrant I transcribe here tells—to the name of Dr. William Arthur:—

“Dr. Arthur, Botanist, 28th July 1715.

“George &c. fforasmuchas Wee Considering yt. it is necessary that the physick Garden at the palace of Holyrood house be kept in good order and for that effect that all due Encouragement be given to a person skilled in Botany who may have the Inspection of the said Garden and may be oyrwise usefall to the lieges by Instructing them in the usefall Science of Botany And we being well Informed of the good Qualifications of Mr. Wm. Arthur, Dr. of Medicine as to his fitness for the office of Botanist and of his good affection to us and our Government Therefor witt ye us with the advice and Consent of the Lord Chiefe barron and remanent Barrons of our Exchequer in Scotland to have made Constituted and appointed Like as Wee by those presents Make Constitute and appoint the Said Mr. Wm. Arthur During our pleasure only to be our botanist within that part of our Said kingdom And Wee Give and grant unto him the oversight care and inspection of our said physick garden to the effect he may keep the Same in good Order With power to him to Sett up a profession of Botanic and materia medica and to Teach the Same and to have and Enjoy the haille fees Casualties priveleges and Immunities of the said office as fully and freely as the Same was possessed by Mr. James Sutherland heretofore And for the said Mr. Wm. Arthur his further encouragement Wee have given and Granted and hereby Give and grant to him During the Space forsaid the yearly Sallary of fifty pounds Sterling monie to Commence from the 25 day of March 1715 years and So furth thereafter to Continue During our pleasure as said is Given at our Court at St. James's and under our privy Seale of Scotland the 10th day of May 1715 in the first year of our reigne.

“Per Signaturam Signo manu Q.D.M. Regis Suprascript.

“Manibusque Barrons. Scaccarii Scoticae subscript.”

Of Dr. William Arthur information will be sought in vain in any botanical book. Not only this, but historians of the Botanic Garden and of botanical education in Edinburgh have failed to take account of any King's Botanist and Custodian of the Garden between the tenancies of James Sutherland and Charles Alston—the

date of the warrant appointing the latter being 30th June 1716. The short period of some thirteen and a half months covers that of Arthur's official life, and during it I imagine he performed few or none of its professional or other administrative duties, and the silence of botanical tradition is therefore readily accounted for.

But if Dr. William Arthur is unknown as an exponent of Botany and is unnamed in botanical history as a teacher and administrator, he is not without claims to notoriety, for the Professor became a political conspirator, and is no other than the physician in Edinburgh through whom, according to the historians, the Jacobite plot to capture the Castle of Edinburgh in 1715 was brought to disaster. From the published accounts of this enterprise I select to reproduce here for the purposes of my narrative of Dr. William Arthur the story as given by Sir Walter Scott in *Tales of a Grandfather*:—¹

"James Lord Drummond, son of that unfortunate Earl of Perth, who, having served James VII as Chancellor of Scotland, shared the exile of his still more unfortunate master, and been rewarded with the barren title of Duke of Perth, was at present in Edinburgh; and by means of one Mr. Arthur, who had been formerly an ensign in the Scots Guards, and quartered in the Castle, had formed a plan of surprising that inaccessible fortress, which resembled an exploit of Thomas Randolph, or the Black Lord James of Douglas, rather than a feat of modern war. This Ensign Arthur found means of seducing, by money and promises, a sergeant named Ainslie, and two privates, who engaged, that, when it was their duty to watch on the walls which rise from the precipice looking northward, near the sally-port, they would be prepared to pull up from the bottom

¹ The story will be found elsewhere with varying details in:—

Memoirs of the life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet.

Edited by John M. Gray for the Scot. Hist. Soc., 1892.

JOHN, MASTER OF SINCLAIR. *Memoirs of the Insurrection in Scotland in 1715.*

PATTEN. *History of the Rebellion in the Year 1715.* 3rd ed., p. 135.

RAE. *History of the late Rebellion, 1718.*

MAHON. *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle*, vol. i (1836), p. 220.

HOGG. *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland, 1821*, p. 230.

GRANT. *Old and New Edinburgh*, vol. i, p. 67.

certain rope ladders prepared for the purpose, and furnished with iron grapplings to make them fast to the battlements. By means of these, it was concluded that a select party of Jacobites might easily scale the walls, and make themselves masters of the place. By a beacon placed on a particular part of the Castle, three rounds of artillery, and a succession of fires made from hill to hill through Fife and Angus shires, the signal of success was to be communicated to the Earl of Mar, who was to hasten forward with such forces as he had collected, and take possession of the capital city and chief strength of Scotland.

“There was no difficulty in finding agents in this perilous and important enterprise. Fifty Highlanders, picked men, were summoned up from Lord Drummond’s estates in Perthshire, and fifty more were selected among the Jacobites of the metropolis. These last were disbanded officers, writers’ clerks and apprentices, and other youths of a class considerably above the mere vulgar. Drummond, otherwise called MacGregor, of Bahaldie, a Highland gentleman of great courage, was named to command the enterprise. If successful, this achievement must have given the Earl of Mar and his forces the command of the greater part of Scotland, and afforded them a safe and ready means of communication with the English malecontents, the want of which was afterwards so severely felt. He would also have obtained a large supply of money, arms, and ammunition deposited in the fortress, all of which were most needful for his enterprise. And the apathy of Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, then Deputy-Governor of the Castle, was so great that, in spite of numerous blunders on the part of the conspirators, and an absolute revelation on the subject made to Government, the surprise had very nearly taken place.

“The younger conspirators who were to go on this forlorn hope, had not discretion in proportion to their courage. Eighteen of them, on the night appointed, were engaged drinking in a tippling-house, and were so careless in their communications, that the hostess was able to tell some person who inquired what the meeting was about, that it consisted of young gentlemen who were in the act of having their hair powdered, in order to go to the attack of

the Castle. At last the full secret was entrusted to a woman. Arthur, their guide, had communicated the plot to his brother, a medical man, and engaged him in the enterprise. But when the time for executing it drew nigh, the doctor's extreme melancholy was observed by his wife, who, like a second Belvidera or Portia, suffered him not to rest until she extorted the secret from him, which she communicated in an anonymous letter to Sir Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, then Lord Justice-Clerk, who instantly dispatched the intelligence to the Castle. The news arrived so critically, that it was with difficulty the messenger obtained entrance to the Castle; and even then the Deputy-Governor, disbelieving the intelligence, or secretly well affected to the cause of the Pretender, contented himself with directing the rounds and patrols to be made with peculiar care, and retired to rest.

"In the meantime, the Jacobite storming party had rendezvoused at the churchyard of the West Kirk, and proceeded to post themselves beneath the Castle wall. They had a part of their rope ladders in readiness, but the artificer, one Charles Forbes, a merchant in Edinburgh, who ought to have been there with the remainder, which had been made under his direction, was nowhere to be seen. Nothing could be done during his absence; but, actuated by their impatience, the party scrambled up the rock, and stationed themselves beneath the wall, at the point where their accomplice kept sentry. Here they found him ready to perform his stipulated part of the bargain, by pulling up the ladder of ropes which was designed to give them admittance. He exhorted them, however, to be speedy, telling them he was to be relieved by the patrol at twelve o'clock, and if the affair were not completed before that hour, that he could give them no further assistance. The time was fast flying, when Bahaldie, the commander of the storming party, persuaded the sentinel to pull up the grapnel, and make it fast to the battlements, that it might appear whether or not they had length of ladder sufficient to make the attempt. But it proved, as indeed they had expected, more than a fathom too short. At half-past eleven o'clock, the steps of the patrol, who had been sent their rounds earlier than usual, owing to the message

of the Lord Justice-Clerk, were heard approaching, on which the sentinel exclaimed, with an oath, 'Here come the rounds I have been telling you of this half-hour; you have ruined both yourself and me; I can serve you no longer.' With that he threw down the grappling-iron and ladders, and, in the hope of covering his own guilt, fired his musket, and cried 'Enemy!' Every man was then compelled to shift for himself, the patrol firing on them from the wall. Twelve soldiers of the burgher guard, who had been directed by the Lord Justice-Clerk to make the round of the Castle on the outside, took prisoners three youths, who insisted that they were found there by mere accident, and an old man, Captain MacLean, an officer of James VII, who was much bruised by a fall from the rocks. The rest of the party escaped alongst the north bank of the North Loch, through the fields called Barefoord's Parks, on which the new town of Edinburgh now stands. In their retreat they met their tardy engineer, Charles Forbes, loaded with the ladders which were so much wanted a quarter of an hour before. Had it not been for his want of punctuality, the information and precautions of the Lord Justice-Clerk would have been insufficient for the safety of the place. It does not appear that any of the conspirators were punished, nor would it have been easy to obtain proof of their guilt. The treacherous sergeant was hanged by the sentence of a court-martial, and the Deputy-Governor (whose name of Stewart might perhaps aggravate the suspicions that attached to him), was deprived of his office, and imprisoned for some time."

That the physician-conspirator of this history is Professor William Arthur, King's Botanist, is established by his own confession, as will appear in the account I now proceed to give of what I have been able to learn about him.

William Arthur was a native of Fifeshire, the fourth son of Patrick Arthur of Ballone, near Elie. He was born in 1680.¹ His father, who was at one time Surgeon-Apothecary at Wemyss, and afterwards settled at Elie, must have

¹ William Arthur, son to Margaret and Patrick Arthur, was baptised 2nd of September 1680—Witnesses, David Leslie, Master of Newark; Dr. William Borthwick. (Baptismal Register, Elie Parish.)

been a man of some position, for he was a Commissioner of Supply for Fifeshire.¹ In view of aspects of our story that will appear later, it is interesting to know that James Cunningham of Barns, a lairdship near Elie, was appointed Commissioner of Supply at the same time as Patrick Arthur. William Arthur's mother, Margaret Sharp,² daughter of Dr. Sharp of Edinburgh, was related to Archbishop Sharp,³ whose daughter Isobel was the wife of John Cunningham of Barns, father of James. The Arthurs and the Cunninghams were therefore not only neighbours but connected by very close family ties. The pedigree table annexed gives such information of the family of Arthur as I have been able to obtain.

The Church, Medicine, and the Army were the vocations that attracted the sons of Patrick Arthur. William Arthur chose Medicine and went to Utrecht, then at the zenith of its reputation under Boerhaave, and obtained the diploma of M.D. there, on 12th March 1707, as we learn from the records of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, of which incorporation he became in time a Fellow.⁴

I gather that on his return to Scotland William Arthur engaged in medical practice at Elie, probably assisting his father; at least that is the inference I draw from the description of him in the record of Edinburgh marriages.⁵

¹ Scot. Act Parl., August 1707.

² Mr. Patrick Arthur and Margaret Sharp, both in the Parish of Elie, were contracted upon the 7th day of December 1672. They were married upon the 17th of December 1672. (Elie Parish Register.) Margaret Sharp was at the time widow of John Gourlay, second son to Sir John Gourlay of Kineraig, who had died in 1660 and to whom she was married in 1660.

³ In this connection Wood says in the *East Neuk of Fife*, ed. 2, 1887, p. 202: "In May 1679 the archbishop's daughter, also Margaret Sharp, afterwards Lady Salton, was paying a visit to Dr. Arthur in this house, when the news reached her of the murder of her father on Magus Muir. In her grief and anxiety, she set out without a moment's delay expecting to get at Colinsburgh a conveyance to St. Andrews, and, as tradition says, in order to make more speed, cast off her high-heeled shoes at the 'White Yett' (the old entrance to Elie House, somewhat south of the present one), and performed the rest of her journey on her 'stocking soles.'" (See *Elie Parish Register*. Wood, *East Neuk of Fife*.)

⁴ See copy of the Minute on p. 383.

⁵ The entry runs: "Mr. William Arthur, Doctor of Medicine in Elie Parish, in Fife, and Barbara Clerk, widow of John Lawson of Cairnmore in North-West Parish. Pro. 12th February 1710, M. 21st February 1710."

In support of this I may cite also the fact that his name appears as "of Elie" in documents of the day.¹

At the time of his marriage he could not be a practitioner in Edinburgh, because the privilege of the Royal College of Physicians to grant a licence to practise within the City and liberties of the City of Edinburgh was then strictly reserved, and Arthur had not applied for such a licence, and did not do so until three years later. That he had entry to the leading society in Edinburgh of his day is evidenced by his matrimonial alliance with the family of Clerk of Penicuik, his wife being sister of the distinguished Baron of Exchequer, John Clerk, second Baronet of Penicuik, who was then one of the most influential men in the capital of Scotland. The pedigree table included here shows the connections Arthur established by his marriage, and these have an interesting bearing upon the events I am about to relate. Through this connection, doubtless, we find Dr. Arthur attending the Baron professionally in company with Dr. John Clerk, first cousin of his wife. In his *Memoirs* ² (p. 85) Sir John Clerk says:—

"About the end of june 1713 I caught cold at the pouting on the moors, and fell into a feaver, which continued with me for 3 weeks. I was brought very low, but by the will of God and the assistance of Dr. Clerk and Dr. Arthur, two young physitians, I happily recovered. My chief pain and truble lay in my head, which I found vastly eased by the application of a Blister to my back, and a cataplasm of popies to my head. I have made a particular journal of my distemper, so shall say no more here."

It was in this year 1713, probably, that Dr. Arthur definitely settled in Edinburgh, for the records of the

¹ My references are mislaid. The following suggests residence:—Precept of Clare Constat by Robert Lundie of that Ilk, superior, in favour of Anna, Isobella, Sophia, Margaret, and Mary Lundie, as lawful daughter and nearest heirs of the late James Lundie, for infesting them in the Keirs and Damside and the Mains of Strathairlie, bounded and described as in former writs, No. 2544 and 2626 *supra*, being parts of the lands of Strathairlie.—At Lundin, 5th October 1708. Witnesses, Sir John Inglis of Cramond, Baronet; Mr. William Arthur, M.D.; Humphrey Lundin, Writer in Edinburgh, and others.—The Laing Charters, p. 703.

² *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik*. Edited by John M. Gray for the Scot. Hist. Soc., 1892.

College of Physicians show that he then applied for the necessary licence to practise in Edinburgh. By the courtesy of the President and Fellows of the College I am able to quote the following Minute:—

“EDINR., 23rd November 1713.

“Dr. William Arthur’s petition for a tryal.

“The said day the petitione presented to the Colledge by Mr. William Arthure Doctr of Medicine mentioning that he haveing for severall years past applyed himself to the practise of Medicine both at home and abroad, and being graduat Doctr of Medicine at ye University of Utrecht upon the twelft day of March 1701 years as his patent of graduatione produced has expressed and therefor craving that the Colledge would hold the ordinary tryall of his qualifications to practise Medicine and being found qualified to Licentiat him to practise Medicine within the City of Edinburgh and Liberties thereof which petitione being read heard and considered by the Colledge they grant the Desyre thereof and ordain him to be examined upon the institutione and appoynts Doers. Crawford and Montgomery to Examination yruon at any Dyet the President shall acquaint them with. The said Dr. Arthure haveing payed the Thesauror ane hundred merks gross in part of his Dues as a Licentiat and Lykewayes satisfied ye Clerk and officer.

“MATTHEW ST. CLAIR,
“P.C.R.M.E.

“5th Jany. 1714.—Dr. Arthur examd. upon the Institutions.

“19th Jany. 1714.—Dr. Arthur explained two aphorisms.

“9th Feby. 1714.—Dr. Arthur admitted as licentiate.

“1st June 1714.—Dr. Arthur admitted Fellow.”

We picture Arthur during the years 1713-1715 as a medical practitioner in Edinburgh, associating with the most influential people, many of them his patients, and beyond suspicion of any want of loyalty—against that his wife’s relationships protected him—at a period when the Hanoverian succession was not definitely established, and the prospect of a Stewart return by no means obscured.

There is no suggestion in any mention of him that has yet become known that he had made any particular study of Botany, or that he was more informed about plants for medicinal purposes than the ordinary physician of the day, who had to compound his own drugs, frequently also to grow the plants from which the drugs were obtained. Nevertheless, he was able to procure for himself in March 1715 the Household appointment which had been held by Sutherland and which carried with it the responsibility of keeping the Holyrood Garden and teaching there Botany and *Materia Medica*.

Then came the débacle of the Castle plot in September 1715. The histories say of Arthur that he was a recent convert to the Jacobite cause. This may be true so far as concerns any active share he may have taken in measures for a Stewart restoration, but he came out of a Jacobite nest.¹ His early associations were all with Jacobites. Prudence in relation to material prosperity may have induced dissembling of his real political thoughts, but one must believe that the Jacobite spirit was there, and only dormant until occasion called forth its exercise.

Of the part he played in the carrying out of the scheme of the conspirators we have his own account, written from Rome as a report to the Earl of Mar in 1716. The substance of this has appeared in the *Calendar of the Stuart Papers*, vol. iii, published by the Historical MS. Commission in 1907. In the condensation necessary for its publication

¹ Wood (*East Neuk of Fife*, 2nd ed., 1887, p. 202) says the whole family of Arthur were pronounced Jacobites. We have for this evidence also in the intimacy that existed between the Arthur family and the arch-Jacobite Dr. Patrick Blair. Thus Dr. Patrick Blair writes to Petiver, the distinguished London apothecary:—

“DUNDEE, *November 28, 1713.*

“I cannot express my concern that I have received nothing from you by this ship who has unloaded my drugs this day, especially what belongs to Dr. Arthur with whom I am like to lose credit for having taken his money and he having not yet got any of the effects.”—Sloane MSS. 3321, fol. 52.

And again—

“COUPAR, *February 27, 1714.*

“Dr. Arthur seems to be displeased with the parcel of Books you sent by Falconer. I wish he had got the rest of his copies.”—Sloane MSS. 3321, fol. 64.

The Dr. Arthur referred to is probably Alexander Arthur, brother of the Professor. See the pedigree at p. 381.

there, some personal touches and references to localities are omitted, and these, whilst of less moment to the general reader, are of sufficient local interest to justify printing here a literal transcript. By the graciousness of His Majesty the late King Edward VII, I was granted the privilege of a transcript of the whole MS. which is now in the Library at Windsor, and am allowed to reproduce it.

[DR. ARTHUR TO THE DUKE OF MAR.]

[1716, before October 17.]—"May it please your Grace Its the inseparable Fate of every one concerned in mis-adventures to bear a share of the dishonour however he acquitts himself. Tho' mine have been of such an unhappy nature that they strike at the two prime qualitis wherein one can be of use in any enterprize his Conduct and Courage the heaviest imputations that can fall upon a Character, yet I had too many Vouchers not to be proof against them had I been able to bear the thought of being consider'd to have had a guilty pairt in the King's misfortunes,¹ the only causes of all my sorrows and any im-

¹ Here we have Arthur defending himself against the accusation of betrayer of the plot. On a later page he returns to this when describing his parting from his wife (see p. 397). The historians have always made an effective use of the episode so gratifying to the instinct of "*cherchez la femme*." That the plot was betrayed from within the body of conspirators is attested by so good an authority as Baron Clerk, whose close relationship to Lord Ormiston, the receiver of the betraying communication, as well as to Dr. Arthur, is shown in the pedigree table at p. 381. In his *Memoirs*, p. 94, Baron Clerk says:—

"One publick incident I cannot but remember here, because some of my particular Friends were so unhappy as to be concerned in it, this was in September 1715, just after Mar came to Scotland and had begun the Rebellion, to surprise the Castle of Edin.

"As the appointed time drew near for accomplishing this enterprise, I belive some of the intended conquerors began to discover their want of adequet courage, and therefor, to prevent it, made a secret intimation of it to the justice clerk, then Lord Ormestone, he immediately gave notice of it to the Depute Governour, who ordered most of his Garrisone to go the round of the Castle Wall. This precaution hapned precisely in time, for just as the Garisone came to that part of the Wall which was to be scaled they found the above Serjeant Ainsley fixing the Ladders. He was immediately apprehended, and on the firing of a musket the Heroes below dispersed themselves. Most of them on this discovery fled the country, and the Serjeant was shortly after hanged at the place where he was taken."

This does not implicate Dr. Arthur directly, and as his brother Thomas Arthur was in the conspiracy, was married, and his wife knew of his Jacobite associations (see p. 390), it may have been, if the betrayer

patience I have ever express't, to which if I had the lest contributed I had been so far from ever having the Confidence of putting your Grace in mind of me that I should have counted it my greatest happyness as I would have made it my endeavour to be forgot for ever. And I must confess I had such a reluctance to that infamy which weakness I know your Grace will easily pardon that I was resolv'd as weel as others to doe myself Justice as to those points tho' by way of digression whatever way I was to make my exit out of the world. Your Grace remembers that from time to time we were forc't to alter our first Scheme according to the changes made in the Castle, till at last by confineing the numbers of the visitors there to three only at once we were oblig'd to think on the Scalad. My brother,¹ and I waited on Dr. Smith ² severall times for that purpose but he was grown so peevish that his secret had been at first neglected that we could get him to doe nothing. On which there was no time lost to let my Lord Drummond ³ know where we stuck who took immediate care to send one who was accounted ane ingenious workman ⁴

was an Arthur, and a lady, that it was through Mrs. Thomas Arthur the plot was discovered.

In this connection it may be said also that if the references to "Lady Arthur" in the Ormonde letters (see "The Jacobite attempt of 1719," Scot. Hist. Soc., 1895) are to the Professor's widow, they show that she was a Jacobite and, therefore, that she would not be likely to act in a way that would ruin alike her husband and the cause.

¹ My brother. Thomas, a younger brother. Ensign, Third Regiment of Foot Guards, 14th April 1712; out of regiment 24th March 1714 (see Dalton, vi, pp. 60, 62). Probably the Major Arthur mentioned in Cal. Stuart Papers, iii, pp. 195, 215 :—

"William Gordon to John Paterson.

"1716, November 9. Paris.

"I am glad Major Arthur has written. His friends are in great pain about him, for they have had him dead in Scotland as well as his brother."

² Dr. Smith. Is this a cypher name? On p. 396 there is a reference to Mr. Smith, which was the cypher name of Lord Stormont.

³ Lord Drummond. James Drummond (1675-1720), afterwards fifth Earl and second titular Duke of Perth.

⁴ "My Lord Drummond, who amongst the many good qualities he has inherited from his familie, has that of imagining nothing can be well done except he has the management of it, would undertake the direction of all; and for that effect made choice of a little broken merchant, Charles Forbes, a man according to his own heart, who was to be principall engineer and conductor of the affair."—Master of Sinclair's Memoir, p. 29.

to whom Barns¹ and my Brother gave the necessary instructions with the greatest exactness allowing severall fathoms in the length to come and goe upon. But he pretending that he cou'd doe the wooden and Iron work better at home tho' my Brother had provided a very convenient house for him of his own, we gave him leave to goe his ways; he promising to return with Mr. Forbes² leaving his directions with us concerning the largeness and length of the Ropes, that he said he cou'd adjust in two hours which very soon after Mr. A.³ took care to provide as likewise to bespeak a very convenient place for him in one Mr. Skeen's howse⁴ a mile from the town and as far from the destin'd place in the Castle. Your Grace knows the design had been long a foot and we not beeing then certain how soon

¹ Barns. Cunningham of Barns (see Patten's History, p. 38). Wood (East Neuk, p. 397) gives the following pedigree of the Barns family :—

This pedigree does not impress me as being correct. If James married in 1689, he would be, say, 21, and therefore born in 1668—but his next brother was born 1685, *i.e.* 17 years after. The Elie registers may decide.

² Mr. Forbes, James Forbes. Cypher names of Captain Henry (Harry) Straton (Stracton, Straiton), one of the most active Jacobites of the period, in the confidence of the Earl of Mar. See many letters and references in the Cal. of the Stuart Papers. He died in 1725. Thus Lockhart to the Pretender :—

"I gave you a few dayes ago ane account of H. Straton's death, my letter Dated 8th instant May 1725 went by the common post to Mr. Dundass, because I had no occasion of a ship from Leith and did not incline to lose any time in acquainting you of it: however it was so writ as to be of no consequences if intercepted. In it I told you all his papers were secured; but I am now to inform you that last week his wife, by the advice of Balmerinloch burnt all that had any relation to you or your friends."—Lockhart Papers, ii, p. 154.

It will become apparent in course of Dr. Arthur's narrative that he throws blame for the failure of the conspiracy upon Captain Straton.

³ Mr. A. Who was this? Not his brother Thomas. Perhaps James Arthur of Shanon's Regiment.

⁴ Mr. Skeen's house. The Master of Sinclair says, "They had employ'd a fellow in the Caltone to make the ladders."

the execution¹ might be necessary it was thought proper my Brother and I should make ourselves known to two or three noted torys of generall acquaintance with the youth in town, by which means we found to our satisfaction that in twenty four hours' warning we might command as many² as we needed for any loyall undertaking of that nature in which we acquiesc't without coming to particulars or insisting further at that time. But Shanons Regim[en]t³ arriving it was th'ot better we shoud have some Souldiers upon which by the advice of Mr. Stracton that we always obtained by Barns's means, and if I be not mistaken my Brother consulted the Earl of Northesk and Leven and my Lord Haddow. We got leave to break our mind sometime after to James Arthur⁴ our Cozen German then a Lieut[enant] in the fores[ai]d regim[en]t, who at lenth undertook to provide us with forty Grenadiers upon demand with their arms and ammunition, by which means we knew how to make up the Complement with the assistance of twenty

¹ Col. Allan Cameron in the narrative of "his going into England from the King, July 1715, which he wrote at Avignon from memory & gave Lord Mar 29 October 1716," mentions amongst the instructions he communicated to the King's friends this one, that if Government attempted to disarm or arrest them before the King set out for Scotland they should "put all their schemes of surprising Edinburgh Castle & other places in execution."—Cal. Stuart Papers, iii, p. 558.

Again on p. 559: "I had on my arrival at London two letters from my nephew who waited on you at Nancy. He had been amongst your friends and gave a full account that all things there were then in readiness and every one concerned had acted their part so well that their schemes were then ready for execution and that there seemed to be no fear of their miscarrying, and that Lord Marischal had prepared everything that could be done at Dunottar and Edinburgh Castle and other places there in a good way."

² "There were about 60 or 70 Gentlemen concerned in it, and tho' the attempt was extremely hazardous, yet they had resolved on it, and at many secreet meetings encouraged one another to persevere in it."—Baron Clerk's Memoirs, p. 94.

³ Shannon's Regiment. The 25th Regiment of Foot (King's Own Scottish Borderers), to which Viscount Shannon was appointed Colonel in 1715. It was raised in 1689 by the Earl of Leven, who was succeeded in 1694 by Colonel Maitland, and he in 1711 by Colonel Breton. Not to be confused with Shannon's Regiment of Marines which Viscount Shannon raised in 1702, and which was disbanded in 1713. See Dalton, Army Lists and Commission Registers, vols. iv and v.

⁴ James Arthur. Dalton gives Ensign James Arthur in this regiment in 1695; he became 1st Lieutenant, 25th August 1702. Is this the officer referred to? One would have expected him to hold higher rank in the regiment by the year 1715.

or thirty we expected with Balhady.¹ The time drawing near my Brother got one Ainsly a Serjant of the greatest interest in the Castle, Cozen Germ[an] to Blackhall² a Laird at Kelso whom I shall have occasion to mention afterwards, appoynted to meet him at a retir'd Alehouse without the walls that had for its' Sign 'Suum Cuique'³ where Barns Dr. Montgomery⁴ and I were waiting for him where taking him to a private Room, never parted with him till he got him perswaded to undertake the matter chearfully. He refus'd money alledgeing himself a gentleman, told my Brother that he needed only two Sentinells and gave him his best advice to whom he shou'd apply—Said he cou'd have the charge of the Guard when he had a mind and assign these men their proper posts, that it would be easy for him to nail all the arms but that they would be usefull to our selfs. The two Souldiers were soon engadg'd one of them was son to Holland⁵ who was design'd to be the Messenger of our Success who no doubt was the first who brought your Grace the fatall news. I spoke with the yowng Lad myself and did all I cou'd to animate him. Our affairs being brought to this happy posture we cou'd not refrain to hugg ourselves and my Brother pretending to his wife to goe see my Lord Leven at Melvill went as hard as he cou'd to inform my Lord Drummond of his good fortune. But missing Mr. Forbes at that time was in hazard of beeing apprehended he was oblig'd to follow him five miles higher up the Cuntry which made him a day latter in his return. His wife Concluding that he was gone over to your Grace and that I could not but be acquainted with it, did not spare

¹ William Drummond of Balhaldy (otherwise called MacGregor of Balhaldie). Nephew of Colonel Alan (Allen, Allan) Cameron, brother of Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel.

² Blackhall. Who?

³ Suum Cuique Alehouse. Where was this, and what its history?

⁴ Employed by Lockhart to go from Carnwath to Edinburgh to Captain Straton for information. Lockhart Papers, vol. i, p. 487.

Lockhart's wife was Lady Euphemia Montgomery, third daughter of ninth Earl of Eglinton—was she a relation?

⁵ The two soldiers were, according to the account in Rae's history, "James Thomson and John Holland," who had "received, the one 8 guineas and the other 4, with a Promise of a better Reward, if the Design should succeed." Holland, the father; "Old Holland," as he is afterwards called.

me indeed nor observe any discretion for twenty-four hours.¹ But as she never dream'd of the Castle his return remov'd all her fears and a visit to the Caledon[ian] Coffee house where he treated with Lindsey² about his Commission made all things weel with the Whiggs. Soon after orders came for the troops that lay in Park to march for Sterling the morning of that very day appointed us thursday the 8 of Sept[em]ber, it was our good fortune that we had two days advertisement We met Mr. Wallace³ and three or four others with whom we had kept a decent correspondence from the time of our first communing and letting them know everything that was necessary; some undertook for ten, other for fifteen who with those we had put up for ourselves by degrees with all imaginable caution amounted to a sufficient number for the attempt considering the interest my Brother had in that Garrison and I by his means, for I must say that never were two persons so happy or counted themselves more so in their Scituation to such an affair, having good reason to reckon the Castle in the King's possession if we cou'd be but once there ourselves with ten or twelve or the lest appearance to support us there beeing none there but Lindsey and Burnbank⁴ whom we could suspect would draw their Swords against us persons as litle regarded by the Garrison as fear'd by us; Places were assign'd to evry litle Comand? and those that wanted of their own were directed to a convenient house in their way in the back of Potterow Street where by Mr. Murray of Stenhop's⁵ care were laid for them thirty good pieces

¹ Tom Arthur was then married. His wife, too, knew about her husband's Jacobite proclivities. Was it after all Mrs. Thomas Arthur who peached?

² Lindsey. Presumably the Lindsey of the Castle afterwards referred to. Does it mean that Tom Arthur wished to re-enter the Army or at least suggested this as a cover to his conspiracy?

³ Mr. Wallace. Cypher name for whom?

⁴ Burnbank. Cypher name for whom? Or is this Porteous of Burnbank? See Dr. W. B. Blaikie's footnote below.

⁵ Murray of Stenhop. Dr. Walter B. Blaikie sends me the following note:—

“Sir David Murray of Stanhope and Ardnamurchan, 2nd Bart.

“He was out in the '15, but does not seem to have taken any very prominent part. He was a man of great energy, purchased the estate of Ardnamurchan from Campbell of Lochnell, and developed the lead mines of Strontian. Lockhart of Carnwath (Jacobite manager) thinking that owing to his active habits and constant moving about he would be a

with Screw'd Bayonetts and a great many other small arms and the Chiefs of the different tribes were appoynted to meet my Brother and me at Arthur Reid's Tavern¹ at 8 oc[lo]ck that evening before the attempt which was to be at eleven precisely the round beeing then always punctually at twelve headed by Lindsey for the most part, by my Lord Orm[istoun's]² renew'd Orders to keep them alert. Much about the time we were put to these Shifts Mr. F[orbes] and Balh[aldy] came to Town with about twenty five or twenty six men and the former assuring my brother that all things were right on his Side the man was immediately set to the knitting of his Engine. I paid them a visit with my Brother betwixt five and six that unhappy afternoon with whom I found Barns and Mr. A. according to assignation. Mr. F[orbes] after having entertain'd us with the first Scroll of a very long and positive description of all our proceeding not only for the that evening but for severall days to come which was to be sent the same night to my Lord Drummond by old Holland. He took his leave about six disguis'd in a Hacqueney Coach in order to visit the machine. Upon his return he seemed to be mightily discontented with the work which he s[ai]d he had order'd to be rectify'd. We complain'd very much that he return'd at all in that case.

suitable Jacobite agent, requested him to accept such a post. He declined, stating that after receiving his life (after 1715) from Government he would not occupy himself with plotting, especially as he wished to devote himself to developing his enterprises.

"He, however, added that 'when there's a push to be made I'll venture all with the first' (Lockhart Papers, ii, 249). He died in 1729.

"He married (1) Lady Ann Bruce, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Kincardine; (2) Margaret, widow of Thos. Scott of Whitlaid, and daughter of Sir Wm. Scott of Ancrum.

"By his second wife he was father of John Murray of Broughton, Prince Charles's secretary—the Traitor.

"His grandson, Sir David Murray, 4th Bart., was A.D.C. to Prince Charles in the '45. He was tried, condemned to death, but his life was saved, though his estates were forfeited and sold: the Stanhope property (Stobo, etc.) in Peeblesshire was bought by Jas. Montgomery, Lord Advocate, for £40,500.

"(Sir David Murray, 2nd Bart., was buried in the Canongate Churchyard, 7th February 1729.)"

¹ Arthur Reid's Tavern. What is history of this tavern?

² Adam Cockburn of Ormiston. Senator of the College of Justice, Lord Justice-Clerk, d. 1735. See pedigree table at p. 381 of these Notes for connection by marriage between him and Dr. William Arthur.

But all our interest could not persuade him to goe back nor could we all convince him of the absurdety of sending such a letter, or the impropriety of one so much labour'd from a person to be suppos'd in so great a hurry giving for his reason that it was no matter tho' some incidents vary'd and that his occupations within the rest of the night would not give him time to write. Formerly we had no other exception against him but for the accidents he was lyable unto by his beeing doubly obnoxious to the Messingers but now to our great wonder we found him invincibly possesst with the most unseasonable vanity that ever enter'd the heart of man, to which all considerations else were like to be a Sacrifice. We parted near eight not without abundance of Remonstrances and that he might meet us precisely under the wall at eleven. Barns gave him his watch which was set at the same time with my Brother's. I'm sensible now that I must trouble weary your Grace with a great many trifles most partly relating to myself for no other reason but because I would gladly lay the whole before y[ou]r Grace otherwise without any discontinuation or disjointedness which without that method I know not how to avoid. We all thought it necessary to have poor Wilson the Mathematician¹ but he not beeing fam'd for his talent of keeping Counsel I only orderd him by a billet to meet me at the Exchange Coffee house² at eight ocl[ock] from whence I led him to a private Room in the s[ai]d tavern. He exulted at the proposall and gave us some mirth by saying frankly that he had two books and that if he had other two he wou'd soon shew the town greater wonders than ever Archimedes did at Syracuse with a great deal of that kynd of sublime. I soon got the books and giving him directions to the house mention'd without the port where my brother and I was to call he went off with a lusty fellow from Leith. Dr. Montgomery had sent me with my promise to bring him a pair of fine brass blunderbuss pistolls which Barns had lying for his use at his house in the Potterrow Street. My other offices were to take up six men Aphosk³ promis'd

¹ Wilson the Mathematician. Who was he?

² Exchange Coffee House. Where was this, and what its history?

³ Aphosk. Cypher for whom?

to have waiting for me at a certain Alehouse in the same Street and after having arm'd myself at the house on the left side I was to visit the severall Decads as we call'd them by the way and give them the word and having united my men with the Souldiers my Brother's man s[ai]d he had engad'gd to dessert who were to be at the head of the garden opposete almost to our part of the wall and other three fellows from Leith had comprehended on with my Brother whom he said he would lodge in the Grey fryars Churchyard, I having put them in a convenient Station I had agreed on with my Brother, I was to be before at the foot of the wall in order to goe up first with him hard upon ten reakingon it our advantage to have all the gates shut after us. I met with one interruption which gave me abundance of perplexity and fatigue. One Mr. MacKenzie a lusty young Gentleman was sent to my Brother who it seems had fall'n very untimesously into a demurr about the authority we had for what we were about to doe and he not beeing satisfy'd with what my Brother could alledge, I durst not decline the imployment of trying if I coud still find Mr. Forb[es] and therefore made him run with all his speed, it beeing then very dark, down to the middle of the Cannongate where he lodg'd. But finding he was gone nine minuts and after having upbraided him and his company rudely enough at the foot of the stair begging him only to hold his peace for one hour I broke off from him at the former rate. He did all he coud to to overtake me. But hearing him blow at a terrible rate in a terrible manner I believ'd him resolv'd, and stop't about the trone Church. He begg'd only I would give him leave to bring his sword which he s[ai]d the wou'd doe in a minut I am not able to express the uneasyness I was in he stay'd a long while and ten was struck at which time they shut the Potterrow port. A thousand times I was like to break off but the thoughts of the importance these men might come to be of to us and how censureable I woud be if we suffer'd any thing by the want of them restrained me tho' not beeing acquainted with him I did not know but I might be betray'd. When he came I did not fail to chide him and finding they were all gone from the Tavern I made him begin his race

from the top of Bellswynd to the P[otterrow] Port, which we finding shut and the keye gone we return'd by the Cowgate to the gate of Bristow which was lockt likewise. But finding the old Porter as he was going away with the keye that knew I had several patients without, made the best despatch he cou'd to let us thro' a little wicket and returning by the wall at the old rate I gave my halfe dead Companion leave to draw his breath being sufficiently reveng'd, while I call'd for Aphosk's men. But neither he nor they had been there tho' I was told since that they went to the place. I got Wilson's Pistolls from Barns who came out with me in order to give my Brother ane account of my arriveall and fortune who was hard by Mr. M.,¹ Mr. Porteous of Glenkirk² and severall other friends and with a design to be a distant spectator only for affairs without beeing committed to his Conduct, and having delivered you and beeing heartily glad that I had overtaken my business. I charg'd my piece weel with three ball and hanging her on for the first time with the greatest pride in the world, tho with little skill, and went off with the first man that offerd to goe with me. I found the Gentleman cunningly plac'd amongst the Stacks of pease to whom I gave the parole as I went along and was glad to find that as I had left the town in profound Quiet that all things were so abroad. I traversd all the grownd where the deserters were to be with all the Speed I was able, but in vain and went into the Churchyard on my tiptoes and left not a monument nor a gate untryd, likewise to no purpose. On which I set myself directly to my business. There was a good number of our people on the grassy part of the ascent so weel conceald by the thistles that I was treading on their limbs before I was aware Alexander Stewart³ was there and spoke to me whom I was glad to see in y[ou]r Grace's service in Perth

¹ Mr. M. Perhaps Montgomery?

² Porteous of Glenkirk. From Dr. Walter B. Laikie I have the following note :—

“Porteous of Burnbank. There was a Porteous of Craiglockhart who had a brother a friend of Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn who was a Jacobite refugee in Paris in 1716 (Stuart Papers, ii, 345, and iii, 7), but there is no evidence that this is the same.”

³ Alexander Stewart. Who was this?

he having been one of them I had engag'd. They told me that it was some minuts after eleven and that the Sentry was begun to call, but that nobody had gone up the rock the Ladder not beeing as yet come, on which I scrambl'd up to him as fast as I cou'd in order to encourage him. Whenever he heard me he bid me welcome and letting down a rope with four or five pieces of lead hanging at the end of it desir'd me to dispatch supposeing I had the ladder. I told him over and over as loud as I cou'd venture that it was not yet come but he not seeing me nor hearing what I said the wind then blowing so very high fell a tugging, challenging me constantly say what I cou'd with the most wearysome repetition of these words.—'Is it on, is it fixt?' He told me he was not any of them my Brother had spoke with but that he was imploy'd by Ainsly the tothers being reserv'd for another use and that all things were in a noble dispo[siti]on for us but that we might expect Lindsey at eleven and thus we spent a longer time than twice our number might have gone in over. I desir'd the Gentlemen below the Rock to send me up some body, on which there came up two; they told me that my Brother and all the Company were as uneasy as the Sentry or myself, on which I begd' they wou'd desire my Brother ether to goe or send for it all in haste. In a litle one of them return'd telling me my Brother had taken the way as fast as he cou'd. Much about the time that I reakone'd one hour near elaps'd which was all we desir'd or expected I heard a confus'd noise of voices within, on which I concluded our whole affair ruin'd but beeing rather resolv't to perish than give the first suggestion of danger I conceal'd it to the End beeing firmly resolv'd to push it to the utmost counting it my glory to succumb in so honourable a design. Soon after my Brother dropt down at my Feet in a worse pickle than Mr. McKenzie had been in with this Expression 'My God, I'm quite spent.' After him came one with the Ladder wrapt round his shouldiers on the Sight of which I call'd up the Gentlemen who pleas'd me mightily with their alacrity. Whenever it was laid down my Brother knot it to the string with all expedition When the fellow was drawing it up I observ'd the blocks were so small contrary to orders, that the wind twisted the

ladder a thousand ways and neither they nor the hooks beeing cover'd with cloath as they were ordain'd to be, they made a very dissagreeable noise against the wall. But the fellow continuing to pull till he got all in over I believe furnisht us generally with one suggestion. The place from which the fellow let down the string was four or five paces from the Sally Port on the archt turn towards the west kirk and on the brink of a precipice where the wall seemed to be considerably higher and it beeing the Sally port at which we had agreed to goe up with the conveniency of a wall on each side we concluded that he had chosen the first place for his own greater ease in leaning over and taking up the Ladder, and that he was preparing to let it down where we had hopes it wou'd serve. But while we are in suspence about that, we heard a sudden noise on which the fellow threw our Ladder hastily over which made a dismall rattling for a long time, then fir'd his piece amongst us I don't doubt with sufficient resentment and after him we had a volley from the Patrole. I was grown so stiff with standing there so long after my former violent exercise that when I was got down I found myself alone and after having call'd on my Brother again and again and on the dearest Names to me in the Company to no purpose, not being able to step over the narrow ditch on the side of the way I made a Compass and sat down with my Gun in my hand on the first Sheaves. I had stumbled on a musquet which somebody had left on the Rock by which I had cut my left hand in two places bruis'd my thigh and tore out and shatter'd my pocket with a pistoll I had there. But my Soul was too much fill'd with grief and indignation to advert to anything of that nature. One Mr. Smith¹ returning in search of some friend to take his fate [*sic*] knowing my voice came to me and we going together by the way to the Dean met with Holland² and he beeing my old acquaintance and neighbour, with abundance of kyndness offer'd me his horse that was

¹ Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith was the cypher name of Lord Stormont; W. Smith, junior, that of his son James Murray. Their direct association with the plotters is nowhere stated—is it possible that one or other is referred to here?

² Holland was to have been the messenger conveying intelligence to Mar in the event of success of the plot.

waiting for him and told me where he had a Boat. But not beeing able to bear the thot of bringing y[ou]r Grace the first dismall tidings I chose rather to run any hazard in the Country not without some hopes of doing some service in the Border where I heard they needed to be prompted a little. We got Horses from a niece of mine at Palton¹ where I had made my wife believe I was to be all night and crossing the Pentland hills went to Sir Dav[id] Forb[es']² widow's house, ane Aunt of my Wife's eight miles distant from town where I got one of her Sons to goe in express to get the news and to tell my poor wife that I was well, whom I pity'd mightily having deluded her with so much success that we never had parted with such remarkable chearfulness and inearments and to whom I knew I had never given the lest suspicion by any imaginable token.³ She sent me a most Lamentable Letter telling me that she had been visited by my Lord Orm[istoun] Her Brother Baron Clerk and Sir Jo[h]n Ingles⁴ airly that morning, who finding her Ignorance too plainly by her inundable [*sic*] astonishment desir'd her to invite me home in their name with abundance of fine promises that I cannot think of yet without the utmost scorn⁵ which I desir'd her to let you understand⁶ My w[ife's] interest lying in the neighbourhood⁷ I got what money I demanded and her Factor's horse that he had lately bought out of the Greys. And meeting some Teviotdale Gentlemen at Lady Mary Scots⁸ House three

¹ Palton. I suppose Polton?

² Sir David Forbes of Newhall—married Catherine, aunt of Baron Clerk. (See pedigree table at p. 381.)

³ Again reference to the betrayal.

⁴ Sir John Inglis of Cramond, son-in-law of Lord Ormistoun and brother-in-law of Baron Clerk. (See pedigree table at p. 381.)

⁵ This trio to which Arthur refers with scorn was really a family party closely related to himself. Arthur married Baron Clerk's sister; Baron Clerk married Sir John Inglis' sister; Sir John Inglis married a daughter of Lord Ormistoun, to whom he was also stepson—so that Inglis was Ormistoun's son-in-law and also stepson; Clerk was Inglis' brother-in-law and the husband of Ormistoun's stepdaughter. The pedigree table at p. 381 shows the relationships. And then, as appears later in Arthur's narrative, to them he owed his appointment as Professor.

⁶ Had Mrs. Arthur communication with Mar?

⁷ This refers to Cairnsmuir. Mrs. Arthur's first husband was Sir John Lawson of Cairnsmuir. (See pedigree table at p. 381.)

⁸ Lady Mary Scot's House. Where?

or four days thereafter was recommended by them to Herries and other Friends in the Border who got me conveniently lodg'd in a little village on the English side of Tweed called Leronith¹; while I was at dinner at Cornwall² with a knott of these Merse Gentlemen five or six days thereafter kynd Heav'n sent me that Dear Creature Barns, from whom I never parted till I left whose wisdom fortitude and zeal that he exerted on all occasions Dean³ never thinks of without admiration. He told me that he met a Company of Gentlemen who having lost all patience in waiting for the Ladder were retiring to the Town and that with great difficulty he got them perswaded to return back. We were told by severalls at Perth⁴ that they met Mr. Forbes making towards the Castle a half mile from the Spot as they were making a Shift for themselves. My Brother told me that some Barbers and others of that gang were forming a Contrivance at their bottle of that sort six or seven months before, but I never heard that It took air among the Whiggs or cou'd observe that they lookt after it with any other air than as a place of importance which they might realy consider as a good prize tho' I had daily the best opportunitys. I din'd the Sunday before at my Lord Ormeystown, smoakt a pipe the same week with Major Aikman,⁵ in his Club at the King of France's "dredgy"⁶ as they call'd it which then they observ'd evry night, and I may add that Baron Clerk din'd with me the very day before, who at that time was inseparable from

¹ Leronith. Where?

² Cornwall. Where? Dr. Walter B. Blaikie has given me the following information:—

"*Cornwall*, I imagine, is really *Cornhill*, pronounced Cunnell or Cornell, a village (near Coldstream) on the English side of the Tweed, but I do not know *Leronith*. Perhaps a careful scrutiny of the Ordnance Survey Map might show a survival of the name somewhere in the neighbourhood of Coldstream. I have, however, little doubt that the word is a mistranscription of *Learmouth*, a place a little to the south of Cornhill."

³ Dean is, I take it, Arthur's cypher designation.

⁴ Arthur must have gone with Barns to Perth. Arthur refers to seeing Alexander Stewart "in yr. Grace's service in Perth." (See p. 394.)

⁵ Major Aikman. Probably James Aikman of Preston's Regiment. Perhaps related to Aikman the portrait painter (see pedigree table at p. 381).

⁶ King of France's "dredgy." Is there a history of this?

my Lord Ormestoun and who readily would have dropt something or other of it, My wife and I being his greatest favourites. But of my terms with these people I need give no other demonstration than that they had made but now lately procur'd me a Commission whereby they made me Professor of Botany and materia medica for N[orth] B[ritain], Sub-Keeper of the R[oyal] G[ardens] at Edinburgh and anything relating to that subject that I was pleas'd to put in the Commission myself exempting me likewise from the abjuration. Thus I have giv'n y[ou]r Grace a most dispassionat account of the whole affair so far as it came to my knowledge If there was anything more in it time and some other evidences will bring it to light. I shall leave it to y[ou]r Grace's Judgment without presuming to make any animadversions. Barns no doubt would give y[ou]r Grace ane accurate account of all that passt from our meeting till we saw y[ou]r Grace¹ and I'm hopefull that y[ou]r Grace will very shortly receive from his hand a more perfect deduction of what I am to undertake by y[ou]r Grace's command. He having besids an infinitely superior Judgm[ent] a much greater happyness in remembering time with the names of Persons and places" [9½ pages].

["*Endorsed.* A paper left by Doct. Arthur when a dying at Rome with Doct. Kenyon to be given to Lord Mar. R[ecieved] at Avig[non] Nov. 3rd, 1716."]

The two following extracts from the Marchmont MSS. published in the Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part III of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, are immediate postscripts to the story written by Arthur:—

(Page 163.)

"LETTER from Adam Cockburn, Lord Justice-Clerk, to (Lord Polwarth). Edinburgh, 11th September 1715.—Intimating the meetings of the noblemen in the north and the setting up of King James's Standard at Braemar by the Earl of Mar, who 'persists with great keenness in his designe. Whether the defeating the design, Thursday's night, they had on the Castle of Edinburgh will put a stoppe to their march southwards I doe not know. The

¹ Arthur and Barns met Mar then after the failure. Was this at Perth when they heard of the conduct of Forbes?

designe on the castle was very well laid, it was discovered about nine at night, and as they had concerted they begune to putt it in execution between 11 and 12. They were actually getting their ladder drawn up, by a sentinell they had corrupted within the garrison. We have gote the ladder and other materials with a number of arms they left when they rune. The Highland men, above 20 of them were at Kinross nixt day ere they halted. We are bussied to find out the plotters; there are several taken up; some were seised, one comeing from the wall with a fire lock in his hand without hat or wige, they call Captain McClean, another, Leslie, taken at the root of the wall, mistook the town guards for some of their own folks and gave the parolle which was St. Andrew. Had the castle been taken they were to a given the signal by three rounds of the guns, all their friends were to hasten hither and the body of the Highland army was to march presently for the south,'” etc.

(Page 164.)

“LETTER from ‘George Drummond’ (afterwards Provost of Edinburgh) to Lord Polwarth. ‘Munday, one a'clock, 12th September, 1715.’—Giving some reports of the rebel movements. He also states that in expectation of a second attack on the castle of Edinburgh ‘a lieutenant and 24 men of the town guard with 30 of us went out and kept guard at the back of it all night in Livingstouns yards, but we had the pleasure of coming into town safe in the morning without having seen an enemy. . . . On Saturday, one of Arthur’s accomplices called Johnstoun, an old servant of Leven’s was apprehended in the town: he confesses he was with him Thursday att 9 att night, went in quest of him att the back of the wall att 11, says he mist him, owns he lay att a stouk side all night, but will go no further. He is in close prison feeding on bread and water. The other centinell confessed all on Saturday, but the corporal continues yet a disingenuous dog.’”

Of Dr. Arthur’s movements subsequent to the flight he himself describes we know little. That he was in direct communication with and met the Earl of Mar we gather from his own statement, and also from the record by Patten of his arrival on the Borders:—

"There were no Hostilities used here, only the Horse going out a Foraging, went to a Seat of the Duke of Roxburgh's near the Town, and brought in some Hay. While they continued here, Dr. Arthur, a Gentleman concerned in that designed Attempt upon the Castle of Edinburgh, of very good Parts, and generous Education, and one Mr. Cunningham of Barnes, came from the Earl of Mar with Intelligence, and returned to him again; after which, the same Gentleman came again to the Rebels when at Preston."

We hear of him next in Italy, and from Rome he wrote the autobiographical account of the Castle plot reproduced above, and which was transmitted to Mar by Dr. Roger Kenyon, as the following letter—also transcribed from the Calendar of the Stuart Papers—explains:—

"Dr. Roger Kenyon to the Duke of Mar.

"1716, October 17. Rome.—Enclosed is the legacy of an honest man, and a very faithful subject, Mr. Arthur, who, after escaping a thousand dangers in the King's cause, met his death where he came for safety by eating a few figs, which threw him into a dysentery. The day before he died, he ordered these papers to be delivered me, and desired me to send them you with some excuse for their coming in a form so little fit for your perusal. Had God allowed him a longer time, that would have been amended, and you would have received with these an account of what passed at Preston in his observation. You will receive them just as they were delivered me, and I have only to add, that, several being named who may yet be in danger or unwilling to be generally known, he assured himself you would take care, that living or dying, he might be hurtful to nobody. I had known him only since my coming here, but, as far as I could judge, besides a true zeal in the King's cause, an excellent heart, and no talents wanting to have made him most useful in his station, he seemed to be a great lover of truth, not only so as not to alter it, but even to speak it, where it might not be over grateful. This may make his relation even in the lesser circumstances of it, of more regard, and, since it came to my hands, it has been seen by nobody. We had permission to bury him by the sepulchre of Cestius, a piece of an-

tiquity well known here and within the walls, which is esteemed a favour to us sort of people, and was procured by means of Cardinal Gualterio."

To this letter is appended a paper endorsed "Pour ensevelir à Rome un Protestant," of which the following is a transcript :—

"Nota della spese per il funerale del Mr. Arthour.

Per la croce		10	
Per il curato		20	
Per 12 sacer doti con cotta	1	20	
Per l'offitio con il curato e 4 sacerdoti		60	
Per la messa cantata		150	
Per la sepultura		150	
Per le campane		30	
Al beccamorto		65	
Per li banchetti solto il cata letto		40	
Per il sacco		20	
Per 2 fucchini		20	
Per 4 portatori		40	
Per la guardia	1	0	
Per cera :—			
8 torcie di lb 3	lb	24	
10 ceri in chiesa di lb 3	lb	30	
6 candele per l'altar maggiore	lb	6	
14 candele per l'altari bassi	lb	3·6	
1 candela per il curato	lb	1	
15 candele d'oz 2 per li sacerdoti	lb	2·6	
per il libera me, Domine	lb	2	
per la guardia	lb	1	18·20
			<hr/>
	lb	70	26·45"

For the presentation of the story which I now end, I have had to travel somewhat beyond my normal calling. I only wish that I could have devoted time to the editing Dr. Arthur's confession by the addition of explanatory notes referring to persons and places he mentions, and to further search for information to make the story more complete. I have held back the MS. for long in the hope of being able to do this, but as the prospect does not

brighten I put in print now what I have. All I claim in it is that I have removed doubts and uncertainties that have hung over a period in the history of my predecessors in the Keepership of the Royal Botanic Garden. Nowhere in any of the documents referring to Arthur is mention made of his having performed the duties of his Professorship. Possibly during the summer months after his appointment in May 1715, he may have given some attention to the Royal Garden and held colleges there before his obsession by the political scheming which ended in the abortive Castle Plot. We have no evidence. And we must bear in mind that from 1706 the direction of the Town's Botanic Garden and the Professorship of Botany in the University were in the capable hands of Dr. Charles Preston first of all, and then of his brother George Preston. Their teaching would be in rivalry of that in the Royal Garden, and doubtless they had acquired by the time that James Sutherland left the Royal Garden a practical monopoly of the teaching, inasmuch as Sutherland had given himself up entirely to numismatics. In any case Arthur's botanical work must have been of the slightest.

One cannot but feel on reading Arthur's story of his exploit that he was hardly of the stuff of which successful conspirators are made. That it was through him that information of the plot was conveyed to those who could stop it, is not, as I have pointed out, beyond question. He certainly suffered severely through the failure. The Earl of Mar's opinion and appreciation of his services are cynically shown in the following letter:—

"The Duke of Mar to Captain Harry Straton.

"1716, November 15.

"A countryman of yours, a very pretty young man, is lately dead at Rome, Dr. Arthur, and his brother Tom, who is at Francis' quarters (the Firth of Forth), has fallen so ill on it, that 'tis feared he'll die too. The Doctor at his death, I hear, declared he was a Presbyterian, but a loyal one, as he called it, which he thought was not at all inconsistent. You know what was his kind of loyalty. Pray are many of your Presbyterians of his opinion?"

Cal. Stuart Papers, iii, p. 215.

I wish to record my obligation to Mr. F. H. Blackburne Daniel, Editor of the Calendar of the Stuart Papers, to the Hon. J. W. Fortescue, King's Librarian at Windsor, to the Lyon King, and to the Rev. Henry Paton for help freely given in the compilation of this story of Professor Arthur.

I have also to thank Dr. Walter B. Blaikie for information which appears in the notes.

NOTES ON SOME SCOTTISH PLANTS. By JAMES FRASER.

(Read 7th October 1914.)

The following list of plants, observed during 1914 except where otherwise indicated, consists of "aliens" new to Britain (these are marked by a star), new records for vice-counties, and plants considered sufficiently interesting to have new localities for them put on record.

* *Arabis auriculata*, Lam.—Several near Musselburgh, v.c. 83.

Impatiens glandulifera, Royle.—Several by the side of a burn near Loanhead, v.c. 83.

Vicia tetrasperma, Moench.—Abundant on railway bank at Dirleton. A new record for v.c. 82.

Coronilla varia, Linn.—A colony 20 feet in diameter, near Loanhead, v.c. 83.

Epilobium angustifolium, Linn.—Several clumps near Loanhead and near Colinton, v.c. 83. Patches on railway banks near Aberfoyle (in 1913), v.c. 87. Patches on railway bank near New Luce, v.c. 74.

* *Vaillantia muralis*, Linn.—Several near Musselburgh, v.c. 83.

Carduus nutans, Linn.—Plentiful at Straiton, v.c. 83.

Petasites fragrans, Presl.—A large colony near the Esk at Inveresk; a colony on the left bank of the Water of Leith at Colinton, v.c. 83.

Symphytum officinale, Linn.—One clump with yellowish petals touched with purple, by the side of the Lyne two miles below West Linton, v.c. 78. Not hitherto recorded for Peeblesshire.