

EXTRACT'S FROM PETER DEWAR'S INTRODUCTORY SPEECH AT THE LAUNCH OF *BURKE'S LANDED GENTRY, THE KINGDOM IN SCOTLAND*

Pete and Dud

I can think of no better way of introducing the few remarks I want to make, than to let Peter Cook and Dudley Moore do it for me. Some of those of you present, who qualify for *Saga* insurance, will doubtless remember them. The only trouble is that, try as I may, I have failed dismally to get hold of the excerpt, having approached many different sources, including the BBC, record companies and even writing to Dudley Moore himself. However, sadly I understand that he is very unwell.

In fact, I understand that the skit was a discussion between Pete and Dud about the merits of *Burke's Peerage* in which one says to the other, "aren't Burke's those people who ask you to send them details all about yourself and your family, only for them, six months or so later, to sell that information back to you at an exorbitant price"!! So as you can see from that, little, perhaps, has really changed!

Changes

Well in one sense, very little indeed has changed, in that we are still carefully recording the lives and loves of the great families of the land as we have been doing for nearly 200 years. But in another sense, there have been some fundamental changes. Most important of all is the fact that *Burke's* publications will henceforth be included on the Internet, which I shall come back to in a moment. Secondly we have introduced alongside the traditional families section, a new biographical section of the good and the great rather along the lines of *Who's Who*; and thirdly we are launching this 19th series of *Burke's Landed Gentry* on a regional basis, which has not been done before.

The Peerage

Meanwhile the *Peerage* itself limped from one owner to another, via Nina and Frederick, the singers, and most recently in 1989 to Brian Morris, of Switzerland, who finally brought out a much needed edition two years ago in 1999, the first since 1970, before selling it on this year.

Internet

But this will no longer amount solely to the publication of the two big fat red stud books so beloved of yesteryear. For as I have said, as from today these publications will also appear upon the Internet, with different colours depicting each generation thus making it all much more user-friendly and understandable, as you will be able to see demonstrated here. More importantly, it will enable the editorial team to update, amend and add to the copy on a regular basis thus keeping it all up to date. The public worldwide will now be able to browse and search for a fee through an ever-expanding database as each new volume is published. Over the years, this should transform the economics of this type of publishing as the high level of initial expenditure is recouped and transformed into profit.

Moreover, it also lends itself to an expansion of electronic wizardry as more and more related subjects can be cross-referenced and accessed - e.g. related families, houses and properties, schools, universities, regiments, tartans, family web-sites etc., to name but a few. Indeed it could well become as useful and important to family history researchers in its way as the Mormon *International Genealogical Index*. It will surely pave the way for an increasing involvement in international genealogy, especially as so many New World countries have been peopled by emigrants from these shores.

The newly-acquired flagship *Burke's Peerage & Baronetage 1999* is also to be put on the Internet and will be available there from 1st January 2002. Over the following 18 months it is to be revised and updated with a view to publication in 2003. Charles Mosley will continue to be its editor.

Burke's Landed Gentry of Scotland

Never before has such a comprehensive work about Scotland been attempted, including Scottish peerage, baronetage and landed gentry articles. However, rather curiously the title of this book was suddenly changed at the last moment by the Publishers without any consultation and is now to be known as *The Kingdom IN Scotland*, although no one, least of all me as its Editor, seemed to know what it meant. I have only just learnt that following the Act of Union there was just one United Kingdom so that each part of it, Scotland and England became the Kingdom in Scotland or England as the case may be. However, for this launch today, we have received some 300 acceptances as well as nearly 1,000 advance orders. This Scottish volume, the first of its kind, includes within its 1,500 pages, a total of 650 peerage, baronetage and landed gentry families, supplemented by this new biographical section of the 'good and the great' i.e. nearly 1,000 individuals who have made a significant contribution to Scottish life (and including for instance that left-wing firebrand, Tommy Sheridan, MSP which gave the press such a field day a few months ago). Thus the book does claim with some justification to be a contemporary volume in tune with the demands and interests of the third millennium and includes a total of getting on for 20,000 living entrants.

In choosing Scotland to start off this series, we were conscious that Scotland has the great advantage of being a separate nation with its own separate legal, armorial and land tenure systems as well as its own legislature and Parliament. Of particular relevance is her own statutory legalisation relating to armorial matters, as well as the Court of the Lord Lyon King of Arms, which administers it. Most of the thorny decisions which might otherwise have fallen to me as editor, have therefore been made by the Lords Lyon of the day. The current population of Scotland is around 5 million and the innate interest in, and awareness of, matters genealogical by its citizens, makes it a perfect place to start.

Many people here today, and not least me among them, as editor of this series, will be exceedingly pleased and proud to see the launch of this volume. It is easy to gloss over the enormous amount of detailed research and work involved in tracking down the whereabouts of so many people and families who were last heard of some thirty years ago, a whole generation. Nor was it easy to persuade many of them to return the questionnaire so as to bring their own or their family details up to date. Indeed, the intricacies of getting proper forms of address right often seemed to prove too much for some of those concerned. It was also interesting to note that we received as many letters from people wanting their entries to be removed from the book as we did from others clamouring for inclusion. One family bickered so much between themselves that we had no option but to remove them for the sake of peace and quiet. But in fact there are some thirty new families whose entries were not previously included in the last series, many of them clan chiefs.

Who are the Landed Gentry?

Hitherto, *Burke's Peerage & Baronetage*, representing the titled nobility, has been published separately from the largely mis-named *Burke's Landed Gentry*, representing the untitled nobility. Other reference books such as *Who's Who* and *Debrett's People of Today* have listed the various 'movers and shakers' of their day. However, this 19th series of *Burke's Landed Gentry - including titled and untitled members of the modern establishment* - to give it its original full title, is an amalgamation of all these elements. In fact this largely echoes the full title of the earliest editions of the Landed Gentry, namely *Burke's Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry, or Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland enjoying territorial possessions or high official rank, but uninvested with heritable honours*, but to which, of course, the peerage and baronetage articles have now been added.

Indeed, the breadth and scope of the services rendered by so many and in so many fields is truly inspiring, whilst recognising that any Scottish clan or extended family includes within it those who are wealthy and landed as well as those who are humble and impoverished. Yet the sum total of all these individual contributions is awesome and humbling.

Of the 650 families, half relate to Scottish Peerages and Baronetcies and apart from the new families, the remainder were drawn from the three volumes of the 18th edition of *Burke's Landed Gentry 1965-72*. Many families still own and live on their ancestral acres, although many too have sold and as many again have bought. However, the Scottish system of Representation keeps alive many old

families which are still flourishing, even though their acres may have been sold long ago. It is always difficult to lay down established criteria for inclusion in such a work, especially at a time of great social change - indeed one person queried whether they still existed at all. It is not an exact science, but factors taken into consideration have included:-

- Whether the family is Scottish, however defined, and has been so for at least three generations? To this end Roddy Martine`s introductory article has been helpful. All too often someone acquiring a Scottish estate or title thinks of themselves as Scottish overnight or in one generation, whereas others believe that the family should have been resident and domiciled for three or more generations.
- Whether there are any Scottish territorial designations relating to the titles of Peers or Baronets or individuals (whether owners or representers).
- Whether there is any official recognition by the Lord Lyon King of Arms in the name and style and designation of an individual, or as the holder of a feudal barony.
- Whether and when and how often arms have been granted or matriculated at the Court of the Lord Lyon King of Arms.
- The overall status of the family, which is difficult to define, but factors such as education (schools and universities); membership of the professions; officers in the Armed Forces; Ministers of Religion; success in commerce, or industry, or civil administration, or academia, or medicine, or politics, or the arts; cross-references to other families in the series; and landowners; all of which assist in determining suitability.
- The size and legal status of Scottish landholdings - current or historical, whether for instance it is a feudal barony or superiority and whether the `caput` is still owned (all as referred to in David Sellar`s introductory article). It used to be held that 300 acres was the minimum warranting inclusion, but this needs to be viewed realistically in the light of location and current conditions.
- As you will see, the printed volume comes well presented in a smart red leather binding upon which some families have had their coats of arms emblazoned. Indeed the book is full of illustrations of coats of arms which have been comprehensively researched at the Lyon Office. There are some useful Scottish related appendices too, quite apart from three thought-provoking introductory articles.

Coats of Arms

Wherever possible, we have included illustrations of the coats of arms used by the heads of families and some of their members, as well as those in the Biographical Section. It should be remembered, however, that in Scotland there is no such thing as a `family` coat of arms, because an individual can have his/her own coat of arms. This can either be a new and unique grant of arms to the individual, or it can be a matriculation of a differenced version of the arms borne by the head of the family concerned.

It is regrettable to find how surprisingly few families have taken the time and trouble to bring their family pedigrees up to date and to matriculate arms at the Court of the Lord Lyon King of Arms. Hopefully, the publication of this work may prompt and facilitate them to do so.

Apology

For, in a book of this size and scope, there are, I am afraid, bound to be errors, for which I can only apologise in advance. If you let us know what these are we shall correct them on the Internet. But more important by far, is the wealth of detail on so many families that we have got right, thanks to the stalwart efforts of our small and dedicated editorial team and in particular to my deputy, Roger Powell.

Peter Beauclerk Dewar, RD, JP, FSA Scot, FHG (Hon), many times Falkland Pursuivant of Arms Extraordinary

Editor, Burke`s Landed Gentry The Kingdom in Scotland

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