THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF HOME, K.T., D.L., J.P.
A Great Border Family: The Homes

The great ancient Border family of Home—whose name, by the way, is pronounced and sometimes spelt Hume—is descended of the blood of the early Dunbar Earls of March, who, in turn, were descended from the still more ancient Earls and Kings of Northumbria. The name Home was derived early in the thirteenth century from the lands of that designation in Berwickshire, which formed the marriage portion of Ada, daughter of Patrick, sixth Earl of Dunbar, when she married first a gentleman of the name of Courtenay, and, after his death, William Dunbar, son of Patrick Dunbar of Greenlaw, second son of Cospatrick, fourth Earl of Dunbar and March. The son of William Dunbar and this Ada, who was his second wife, was known as William de Home. By a later marriage in the reign of King Robert III., Thomas, the lineal descendant of William de Home, acquired the lordship of Dunglass.

The family held its lands of Home, Greenlaw, Whiteside, and others in Berwickshire as vassals of the Earls of March until that elder line was forfeited in January 1435. The Homes then became direct vassals of the Crown, and, rising to power step by step, became the chief bulwarks of Scotland on the East Border, and were often appointed conservators of the peace with England. Considerable additional property came into the family by the marriage of Sir Alexander Home of Home, in the early part of the sixteenth century, to Mariota, heiress of Sir Robert Lauder of the Bass, and the eldest son of this couple, another Sir Alexander, was one of the most outstanding figures of his time. In 1456 he was appointed by the Prior of Coldingham to be Bailie, or secular administrator, of the Priory lands and lordships, an appointment which greatly increased his power and wealth; and upon the downfall of the Black Douglases at the same time, he succeeded to a considerable share of the lands and influence of that family on the East Border. In 1459 James II. sent him as Ambassador Extraordinary to Henry VI. of England. After the death of James he sat in the Estates as one of the barons, and in 1473 he was created a Lord of Parliament. Ten years later, however, he was among the barons who actively resented the efforts of James III. to foster the arts of peace in Scotland, and when this king proceeded to annex the revenues of Coldingham to the new royal chapel at Stirling, Home, who by this time had come to look upon the Priory as something in the nature of a family preserve, proceeded to open rebellion. He was one of the chief leaders in the rebel army at the battle of Sauchieburn, where James was slain. This first lord died in 1490, and was succeeded by his elder grandson, another Alexander, as second baron.

This lord also took part in the conspiracy against James III. He was made a Privy Councillor by the young King James IV. in 1488, and was Lord Chancellor of the Kingdom from that year till his death in 1506. A notable pilgrimage which he made to Canterbury in 1493 is on record, and when his royal master, James IV., was giving counterenue to the Pretender, Perkin Warbeck, Home made a raid into England in 1497. He also greatly raised the

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fortunes of his family. As a reward for his part at Sauchieburn he obtained a joint share of the administration of the Lothians and Berwickshire. Two years later he was appointed to collect the King’s rents within the earldom of March and the lordships of Dunbar and Cockburnspath, as well as throughout Stirlingshire and Ettrick Forest, and he also obtained lands in the constabulary of Haddington.

Another Alexander, the third baron, succeeded to his father’s office as Lord High Chamberlain of Scotland. As Douglas faction, he took a leading part in defeating Bucleuch’s attempt to rescue the young King James V near Melrose. Two years later still he took part with Argyll against Angus, and he was mixed up with many of the turbulent events of his time. Nevertheless he lived to do service to his country, for in 1542, along with the Earl of Huntly, he repulsed the incursion of Sir Robert Bowes and the Earl of Angus, and he also opposed and harassed the army led into Scotland by Norfolk. Lastly, in 1547, before the battle of Pinkie, he engaged in a skirmish with the English invaders, in which he received a wound that resulted in his death, his son being captured at the same time.

Like several of his ancestors, this lord had increased the family estates by marrying an heiress. Mariot, daughter of Patrick, sixth Lord Haliburton of Dirleton. After her husband’s death this lady defended Home Castle stoutly against the English, but the stronghold was finally captured and garrisoned by the English Protecteur, Somerset.

In the following year Alexander, the fifth Lord Home, recaptured the family stronghold by stratagem, and put the English garrison to the sword. This baron played a striking part in the troubles of Queen Mary’s time. He was made Warden of the East Marches in 1559, and nine years later was a commissioner for the Treaty of Upsettington. He was made a Privy Councillor by Mary Queen of Scots in 1561, and remained her staunch supporter till she married the Earl of Bothwell. It was he who made the attempt to capture Bothwell at Borthwick Castle in 1567, when that ambitious noble barely escaped, and was followed by Queen Mary dressed as a page. He was also one of the avenging lords at Carberry Hill, when the Queen gave herself up, and he afterwards prevented Mary’s escape at Edinburgh. He was a member of the Secret Council which compelled the Queen to abdicate, and he fought in the van against her at Langside, where, though several times wounded, he is said to have turned the fortune of the day. After Moray’s assassination Home changed to the Queen’s side, and as lieutenant to Kirkcaldy of Grange took part in the defence of Edinburgh Castle in her interest. Finally he was taken prisoner in a skirmish with the Regent Morton in the outskirts of Edinburgh, and, having been convicted of treason, died under attainder in 1575.

Three years later, however, Alexander, the son of this lord, was put into possession of the title and estates, and eleven years afterwards, when James VI. sailed to marry the Princess Anne of Denmark, he was among thenobles named as guardians of the public peace. Like his father, this lord played a stirring part in the intrigues and political turbulence of his time. He held the family offices of Warden of the East Marches from 1582 to 1590, and was one of the lords who engaged in the plot to seize the king by the Raid of Ruthven in the former of those years. That raid was an endeavour to detach James from the influence of his two early favourites, the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran, and not long afterwards Home is found opposing another of the plotters against the young king. He was imprisoned in 1583 for a brawl with Francis Stewart Hepburn, fifth Earl of Bothwell. Later he befriended Bothwell in disgrace, and along with him fortified Kelso for the banished lord in 1585; but later, as Captain of the King’s Bodyguard, he saved James from the attempted capture by Bothwell at Holyrood in 1591. In the feud which had broken out between the houses, Hepburn had slain David Hume of Manderstone, otherwise known as Davy the Devil, and on the other hand, Lord Home seized the strong border Castle of Hermitage, Hepburn’s last possession and retreat. For his services against the turbu...
lent Bothwell, Home received a grant of the temporalities of Coldingham, for which his family had once plunged Scotland into war. As a Roman Catholic he was sent by the king on an embassy to Rome. In 1603 he was one of the train of Scottish nobles who accompanied James VI. to England, being appointed Lieutenant of the Marches, and two years later he was created Earl of Home.

Another distinguished holder of the name at the same period was Sir George Home of Primrose Knowes, afterwards of Spott. He accompanied James VI. to Denmark in 1589, was Master of the Wardrobe in 1590, and Lord High Treasurer in 1602. Like Lord Home, he was a defender of the king against Bothwell, and he was made an English baron in 1604 and a Scottish peer as Earl of Dunbar in 1605. Among his services he carried through for the King a number of public movements, and was made K.G. in 1608.

The only son of the first Earl of Home died without issue in 1633, but the remainder of the earldom was to “heirs male whatsoever,” and the title accordingly reverted to a distant kinsman, Sir James Home of Coldingham, sixth in descent from John Home of Whatereyes and Ersliton, younger grandson of the first Baron Home. Sir James, this third earl, was distinguished for his loyalty during the Civil Wars, and was especially marked out for attention by Oliver Cromwell. After taking Edinburgh Castle in 1650, the Protector sent Colonel Fenwick with two regiments to seize the Earl’s castle of Home. On being summoned to surrender, Cockburn, governor of the castle, wrote back two replies which are still preserved. One of these runs:

I, Willie Waith,
Stand firm in my castle,
And a’ the dogs o’ your toon
Will no’ pull Willie Waith doun.

The other was more formal:

“Right Honourable, I have received a trumpeter of yours, as he tells me, without a pass, to surrender Home Castle to the Lord General Cromwell. Please you, I never saw your General. As for Home Castle it stands upon a rock. Given at Home Castle this day before seven o’clock. So resteth, without prejudice to my native country, Your most humble servant, T. Cockburn.”

The gallant governor, however, was presently forced to surrender, and the castle was garrisoned with Cromwell’s men.

The earl survived the Civil Wars, and at the Restoration in 1661 was reinstated in his possessions. He died five years later, and was succeeded in turn by his three sons, Alexander, James, and Charles. The last-named is remembered by his arrest of the Covenanters, Alexander Home, who was in consequence hanged at Edinburgh in 1682.

About that same period there was another distinguished holder of the name of Home who played a striking part in history. Sir Patrick Home, the second baronet of Polwarth, was the representative of a younger branch of the family, who, as member for Berwick in the Scottish Parliament of 1665, opposed Lauderdale’s episcopalian policy, and for his protest against the persecution of the Covenanters was imprisoned for five years and declared incapable of holding office. He joined Mommouth’s party in England, and escaped through Ireland and France to Holland. For taking part in Argyll’s ill-fated expedition, and in connection with the Rye House Plot, he was outlawed in 1685, and lay in hiding for a time, first in the family vault in Polwarth churchyard, and afterwards in a hollow excavated under a bed in his own house. While in hiding, and afterwards in exile in Holland, he owed much to the courage of his daughter Grisel, of whose adventures in carrying him supplies several interesting stories are told. In later and happier times she married Bailie of Jerviswood, and, as the author of a famous Scottish song, “Were na my heart light I wad dee,” she is remembered as Lady Grisel Bailie. Meanwhile Sir Patrick escaped to Utrecht, where he practised as a surgeon under the name of Wallace, and, becoming the adviser of William of Orange, accompanied him to Britain in 1688, where he made a Privy Counsellor and a Scottish peer, under the title of Baron Polwarth, in 1689. He was afterwards Sheriff of Berwickshire, a Lord of Session, and Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and was created Earl of Marchmont in 1697. Home Castle and its domains subsequently passed into possession of this branch of the family, and by the last Earl of Marchmont in the end of the eighteenth century was re-erected from its ruins mounds, and battledomed to present something of its ancient look of power and dignity. The second Earl of Marchmont was a distinguished politician and Lord of Session, while the third and last was Keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland, intimate with Bolingbroke and Chester-

SUN DIAL AT DOUGLAS CASTLE.

field, and the executor of Pope and the Duchess of Marlborough.

Meantime the main stock of the house of Home had suffered for its adherence to the Stewart dynasty. On account of his known Jacobite leanings, Alexander, the seventh earl, was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle from the outbreak of the rebellion of 1715 until the revival of the Haneas Corpus Act in the following year; and his brother James, the Laird of Aytoun, having engaged in the rising under the Earl of Mar, had his estate confiscated.

The seventh earl married a daughter of the second Marquis of Lothian, and of his eight children, the eldest

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and the youngest surviving successively inherited the
family honours. The latter, the Reverend Alexander,
tenth earl, married a daughter of the third Duke of
Bucie and Queensberry, and his eldest son and successor,
Cospatrick-Alexander, married Lucy Elizabeth, eldest
daughter of the second and last Lord Montague of Boughton.

THE HIRSEL, COLDSTREAM: BORDER SEAT OF THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL
OF HOME, K.T.

This lady’s mother was the daughter of Archibald Stewart,
Lord Douglas, winner of the famous Douglas cause, and
inheritor in consequence of the great Douglas estates in
Lanarkshire and elsewhere. In the possession of these
estates Lady Montague succeeded her three brothers, who
had all in succession been Barons Douglas, and upon the
death of his mother, accordingly, the Earl of Home succeeded
to the Douglas estates, the title of Baron Douglas having
been revived in her honour in 1875. His lordship is Major-
General of the Royal Company of Archers, the King’s
Bodyguard for Scotland, and he was Lord-Lieutenant of
Berwickshire from 1879 till 1890 and Lord-Lieutenant of
Lanarkshire from 1890 till
1915. He is also a Knight of the Thistle. It is
interesting to note that in his
person and heritage the
Earl of Home unites to-day
the blood and possessions of
the two great houses of the
East and West Borders who
by their deeds and friend-
ships in the feudal centuries made so much of the stirring history of Scott-
land.

Apart from the main stem
of the race, the name of
Home or Hume has been
made illustrious in many
fields throughout the cen-
turies. In the time of
James VI., Alexander
Hume, minister of Logie in
the Ochils, wrote, among
other fine poems, his
“Description of the Day
Estativall,” which in some
of its figures seems to have
afforded a model for Cole-
ridge’s “Ancient Mariner.” In the eighteenth century,
also, David Hume, philosopher and historian, may be said
by means of his writings to have changed the whole attitude
of human thought; while his contemporary, the Rev.
John Home, minister of Athelstaneford, by means of his
play, “Douglas, a Tragedy,” and his encouragement of
James Macpherson to collect, translate, and publish the
remains of Gaelic poetry in the Highlands, gave the first
impetus to the great Romantic movement which culminated
in the works of Scott, Byron, Goethe, and Victor Hugo.
There have also been distinguished men of the name in
many other fields, from that of the law, represented by the
famous Henry Home, Lord Kames, whose Decisions of the
Court of Session remain a standard to the present hour, to
Daniel Duglas Home, the spiritualist medium of last
century, whose demonstrations, or “levitations,” as he
called them, were attested by such scientists as Sir David
Browar and Sir William Crookes.

It is a strange story, this, of the long-continued and
widely varied energies of a race deriving its blood from
the stalwart breed of the old Northumbrian kings.

TERRITORIALS, VOLUNTEERS & CADETS

As was to be expected, the war has given a strong
fillip to all movements for the supply of training
in military matters, and in particular to the
organisation of Volunteer and Cadet units. It is satis-
factory, therefore, to find that the authorities are aware
of the desirability of guiding the future of these move-
ments on proper lines. Much may be hoped from the
conference held on the subject by Scottish County Associa-
tions of the Territorial Force held in Glasgow last month,
at which were present among others, the Duke of Montrose,
the Marquis of Breadalbane, Lord Inverclyde, Sir Hugh
Shaw-Stewart, Bart., Sir Thos. Glen-Coats, Bart., Sir Arch.
M’tines Shaw, Lord Provost Dunlop, Colonel R. C. Mac-
Kenzie, Colonel Donny, Colonel Mellis, and Major Harvie
Anderson. It is understood that important recommenda-
tions were framed for submission to the War Office.