

**1655 Letter from Arbroath confirming the legitimate births of Patrick Lyell's four sons. James, David, Adam and Henry.**

*Translation by Dr. Peter Maxwell-Stuart*

To each and every king, prince, duke, marqués, count, archbishop, bishop, noble, baron, abbot, sheriff, seneschal, magistrate and city councilor, as well as to each and every governor and administrator of provinces, regions, cities and towns, and the commanders of navies, ships, seas, bays and ports, and to those distinguished by any title of honor and dignity, and to any others exercising authority on land or sea, to whose attention this present letter comes: and especially to the most illustrious, distinguished and noteworthy lords - the sheriff, councilors and council of the renowned royal city of Stockholm under the authority of the most potent and most invincible King of Sweden: we the provost and Baillie's of the royal city of Arbroath in the kingdom of Scotland and other signatories, [wish] happiness and health perpetually in that situation in which the health of their people is most assured.

Since those to whom falls the administration of public affairs ought to pay special care and attention to providing testimony to the truth, particularly in those things where concealment can be prejudicial to the innocent. James, David, Adam, and Henry Lyall, merchants, (who are and have been brothers german, legitimately acknowledged and conceived of an unblemished marriage and marriage-bed), petition and ask us to be good enough to make public testimony to their legitimate births. Because it is our duty to report the truth concerning this petition, we have made investigation and diligent inquiry of sound, trustworthy witnesses, cited by our authority, with regard to this matter. They have appeared before us in the usual way in our official capacity of passing judgement and hearing cases. They touched the most holy Gospel, raised their fingers, stretched out their arms, and with solemn utterance, calling upon God to be their witness, they swore, gave evidence, and with unanimous agreement testified what is known to us as well - that they know for a fact that the foresaid James, David, Adam, and Henry Lyall were begotten of well-born parents joined in lawful matrimony, and are descended from repeatable families on both their father's and mother's side. Their father [was] the honourable and noble laird Patrick Lyall, Baillie of Arbroath; their grandfather, Adam Lyall, Baillie of the said city of Arbroath; their grandmother, Bessie Brovvn, Legitimate daughter of the honorable, distinguished James Brown, merchant of Arbroath; their mother likewise chaste and honorable, Luphemia Symson, born of notable stock; their maernal grandfather, James Symson in the parish of Arbroath within the county of Angus; their maternal grandmother, Janetta Rynnd legitimate daughter of an eminent and well-born man, James Rynnd. All of these were joined together in a legal bond of marriage, without any defect or stain of ill fame or dishonor, and have lived their lives honorably. They leave behind them a surviving generation devoted to virtue and the best type of behavior. They, relatives and sons are very well known to us and the said witness's personally. We have seen clearly from the deposition of the said witnesses which concurs therein that these things are true and so again we attest that they are true and bring this to the notice of all those who have an interest therein.

Consequently, having been asked and entreated by the foresaid James, David, Adam, and Henry Lyall, merchants, [to do so], we desire all of you, (saving your honor) to honor them with every courtesy of civilized behavior, honor and dignity and we shall do the like for you if you are willing to employ any of our help in this matter.

As a sign of trustworthiness and the attestation of each and every one of the foregoing, we have seen to it that our personal seal of the city is attached to this letter which has been signed at our instruction.

At Arbroath, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1655

-----, minister of the Gospel<sup>1</sup>

J. Octerloun. provost

R. Ramsav. baillie

David Octerloun. baillie

K. Benson, clerk

We have seen that this agrees with the original document.

F.A. Rebon John E. Bask

I have seen those things [with my own eyes?]<sup>2</sup>

John Bierchen