

# Eupham Scot and Dr. John Johnstone

by Edith Herbert Mather

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*Edith Herbert Mather*

In the article "At the Sign of the Unicorn,"<sup>1</sup> by Mr. Justice Parker in the July, 1929, PROCEEDINGS, pages 245-264, reference is made to a MS. by Miss Mather (on pages 251 and 254). We have secured this MS., and find it well to publish so much of it as is not fully embraced in the Parker article or in the previous article by Miss Mather upon "George Scot of Pitlochy"<sup>2</sup> in the PROCEEDINGS of 1922, pp. 260-278. The interested reader should refer to both the articles named. - EDITOR.

THE MORE ONE reads former-time chronicles and records the stronger becomes the humiliating conviction that our ancestors - even those who came to America before 1800 - were human beings instead of saintly demi-gods. If one can recover from this rude shock and regard these early settlers for the very human people they were, they cease to be bores to everyone but their descendants and assume interest and value in that mighty scheme of political evolution we call history.

The Colony of New Jersey did not pretend to be settled for a purely altruistic and holy purpose. It was a commercial venture of the Lords Proprietors, and the intrepid voyagers hither came frankly for the great advantages to be found here. There was absolute religious freedom forced on the Colony in spite of some opposition by King Charles II. The Indians were peaceful, the climate delightful according to contemporary accounts, the land fertile and cheap; so altogether it was a favorite haven.

The following is but a sketchy outline of the fortunes and misfortunes of one Eupham Scot Johnstone, daughter of George Scot of Pitlochie, a man who had more influence on early New Jersey history, in all probability, than we are in the habit of realizing.

Eupham Scot was born in Fifeshire, Scotland, of a long line of proud and aristocratic forebears. She must have been rather lovely, also, judging from a painting made of her when very young, having an intelligent face with very fair skin, blue eyes and auburn hair. Her father was George Scot, Laird of Pitlochie, or Sir George Scot, as he was often styled in contemporary records; a rather conspicuous figure during his short but stormy career.

The estate of Pitlochie included an attractive house and grounds pleasantly situated in the Howe, or Hollow, of Fife, a mile or so west of the village of Strathmiglo, near the head of the river Eden and north of the Lomond Hills.<sup>3</sup> It was later known as Edin'shead. Fife is one of the eastern shires of Scotland and juts well out into the North Sea. It is practically a peninsula, the Firth of Forth on the south and southwest and the Firth of Tay on the north; separated from Perthshire, together

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.DigitalAntiquaria.com](http://www.DigitalAntiquaria.com) | NJHS29C1

<sup>2</sup> See [www.DigitalAntiquaria.com](http://www.DigitalAntiquaria.com) | NJHS22D1

<sup>3</sup> Sibbald's "History of the Sheriffdoms of Fife and Kinross," p. 388.

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with the tiny counties of Kinross and Clackmanan, by the Ochill Hills.

George Scot was also a native of Fife, born at Pittodrie, April 19, 1643.<sup>4</sup> He was the son of Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet and his second wife, Margaret Melville, who was the daughter of Sir James Melville of Hallhill, distinguished courtier, diplomat and author. "Sir John Scot had a liberal education, was a man of extraordinary parts and made a great figure in his time."<sup>5</sup> He was a favorite at Court during the reign of James VI of Scotland (James I of England) by whom he was knighted and made a Privy Counsellor, which latter office he also held under Charles I. He appeared to be popular with these two Kings as his offices were numerous. He had been made Director of the Chancery as soon as he came of age, also extraordinary Lord of Session, ordinary Lord of Session, Senator of the College of Justice, and, in 1642, one of the Committee of Estates.

When Sir John Scot succeeded his grandfather, in 1592, he was John Scot of Knightspoltie and but seven years of age. It was a considerable estate, but he enlarged it greatly by obtaining several charters under the great seal of numerous lands and baronies, among them the lands of Tarvet, which he called Scotstarvet, and by which title this family was henceforth known. He built Scotstarvet Tower, a curious looking old structure that is still standing not far from the town of Cupar in Fife, and it became one of the chief seats of the family. Sir John was an ardent Loyalist and took the execution of King Charles very much to heart. He retired to his estates in the country during the whole of the Protectorate, devoting himself to their improvement and to literature. Cromwell fined him £1,500 for his loyalty, and, after the Restoration, he was fined by Charles II for not being loyal enough, and put out of his office of Director of the Chancery to make room for someone more congenial to the royal taste.

The Scots are said to have been one of the most intellectual families in Europe, and Sir John maintained the reputation of his family by adding several works to the literature of Scotland, the best known being the "Staggering State of Scotch Statesmen."

Old Sir John must have been susceptible as well as engaging, as he was married three times. His first wife was Anne Drummond, of the Drummonds of Hawthornden, cadets of the house of Perth; the second was Margaret Melville, before mentioned, the mother of George, of Pitlochrie, and his third wife was Pitlochrie's mother-in-law, the widow of William Rigg of Aithernie. Sir John Scot died in the year 1670, leaving five sons and seven daughters.

The ancestor of the Scots of Scotstarvet was Sir David Scot of Buccleuch, of the eleventh generation of that illustrious house in a direct male line. It was the father of this Sir David who established the residence of the Buccleuch family at Branxholm Castle about the year 1446, and which was held in pawn for the payment of a red

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<sup>4</sup> Royal Hist. Soc. Trans., Vol. I, pp. 278-429.

<sup>5</sup> Douglas, "Baronage of Scotland."

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rose. The modern Branhholm is very much changed and modernized, the large square tower being all that remains of the original castle, so beautifully described in Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstral."

"Nine and twenty Knights of fame  
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;  
Nine and twenty squires of name  
Brought them their steeds to bower from stall.

"Nine and twenty yeomen tall  
Waited, duteous, on them all;  
They were all Knights of mettle true,  
Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

"Ten of them were sheathed in steel,  
With belted sword and spur on heel;  
They quitted not their harness bright  
Neither by day, nor yet by night  
They lay down to rest,  
With corslet laced,  
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;  
They carved at the meal  
With gloves of steel,  
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

"Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,  
Waited the beck of wardens ten;  
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,  
Stood saddled in stable day and night,  
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,  
And, with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow;  
A hundred more fed free in stall:  
Such was the custom of Branksome Hall."

The Scots of Buccleuch died out in the male line of succession and the heiress, Anne, Countess of Buccleuch, was married to James, Duke of Monmouth, eldest son of Charles II. She was considered the most desirable match in the Kingdom and Charles made them Duke and Dutchess of Buccleuch, the Duke taking the name of Scot. As he had no particular name of his own he was most fortunate in being able to adopt one so illustrious.

The succession of Scot of Scotstarvet has also become extinct in the male line. General Scot, dying in 1775, left three daughters, the eldest of whom married William Henry Cavendish, Marquis of Titchfield, who afterwards became Duke of Portland and who always prefixed the name of Scot to his own. The third daughter married George Canning, who became Prime Minister of England in 1827.

The arms of Scot, of Scotstarvet are: Or, on a bend azure, a star between two crescents of the first; a bordure engrailed gules. Crest: A hand holding an annulet and

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therein a carbuncle, all proper (meaning in their natural colors). The carbuncle was a gem that was supposed to retain its light in darkness; hence the motto, *In tenebris lux*. Burke gives the arms, crest and motto of Scot of Pitlochrie as the same as Scot of Scotstarvet, adding a mullet in chief for difference.

The mother of Eupham Scot was Margaret Rigg, the daughter of William Rigg, of Aithernie, a man of good family and a merchant burgher of Edinburgh. His widow became the third wife of Sir John Scot, of Scotstarvet, and, incidentally, the stepmother of her future son-in-law.

It was in 1663 that Margaret Rigg and George Scot were married, when he was but twenty years old. Did his father and her mother make the match or did the young people make it themselves? Were the early years of their married life spent at Scotstarvet, or was Pitlochrie bestowed upon the bridegroom as a wedding present? It would have been a benevolent thing for Sir John to do and he seems to have been a kindly man. In either case the very early childhood of Eupham and her brother James must have been fairly happy. There may have been other children, but these two are all of whom there seems to be any record.

After the death of her grandfather in 1670, however, Eupham's parents seem to have been drawn into the ferocious politico-religious controversies of the times. Border and clan wars no longer furnished an outlet for exuberant vitality. The Scots appear to have had a certain amount of caution and Pitlochrie, being a scholar and fond of literary pursuits, would doubtless have been willing to make some concession for the sake of being left in peace. He might even have "sat" under an "indulged" minister. Not so the Aithernies! Lady Pitlochrie's cousin, Archibald Riddell, was one of the "obnoxious preachers" and had succeeded in imbuing her with his religious fervor and Scot became himself deeply involved. If people had any sense of justice in those days (which seems doubtful) it must have been constantly outraged at the extreme punishments inflicted for paltry offenses. For example:

"On the twenty-fifth of June, 1674, he and his wife were fined £1,000 for attending conventicles in the county of Fife, and were imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. The following month the fines were paid and they were released.

"Conditions in Scotland had been going from bad to much worse. The Kirk was rent in twain by the most bitter dissensions. The distracted country was being thoroughly misgoverned by the Duke of Lauderdale, a violent and corrupt man, cruel and rapacious, who had secured the most important and lucrative offices for himself and his family; while the affairs of the Church were run by James Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrews, described by his patron, Lauderdale, as 'a poltroon of serviceable ability, and a liar whose lies can be reckoned upon. ... When dirty work had to be done, he did it really well.' Both had been Covenanters at one time and brilliantly illustrated the 'one renegade' proverb."

Disorder increased to an alarming extent. Such severe laws were passed against "Conventicles" that they could not be enforced. Henceforth little Eupham's existence must have been filled with terrors and anxiety for her parents, doubtless privation

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also, as the fines were heavy and all too numerous. Her father and mother continued to "reset" and "intercommune" with rebels and attend Conventicles, (field meetings).

From February, 1677, to October of the same year, Scot was imprisoned in the Bass, a horrible prison perched on a huge rock in the Firth of Forth, two miles from shore. A landing could be made from only one side, the others being perpendicular. To escape was practically impossible. During his imprisonment Lady Pitlochie continued to attend Conventicles and incur fines. At length, through the efforts of his relatives, he succeeded in obtaining his liberty on condition that he "confine himself to his own land and live orderly." For the next two years this bond appears to have been kept, and it must have been a welcome respite to the children. By the time he was again arrested and fined, Eupham must have been fourteen or fifteen years old, quite a young lady. After repeated fines for his religious activities he was again imprisoned in the Bass, but finally liberated, after petitioning the Council for release and "engaging to go to the plantations, and promised to take with him Archibald Riddell, his wife's cousin."

Considering the state of the country and the activities of his spirited wife - not to mention Archibald Riddell - Pitlochie was fortunate not to have become involved in some of the conspiracies then rife, and which led into the torture chamber many of his friends and relatives. He owed his release to James, Earl of Perth, who had become, in 1684, the Lord High Chancellor of Scotland in place of Lauderdale. He, also, belonged to a persecuted sect and may have had some sympathy with his disaffected kinsman. He encouraged Pitlochie's scheme for planting a colony in New Jersey, as he was one of its Twenty-four Proprietors and financially interested in its development.

It must have been in Edinburgh that Eupham Scot met John Johnstone. It was here that Pitlochie spent most of his time after his final liberation from prison in 1684, and his family was with him, undoubtedly. He did not come in conflict with the government again, but devoted his time to writing his "Model of Government of East New Jersey" and preparations for his departure to this most desirable of all the Colonies, so well described in his book.

In Chambers' "Annals of Scotland," a gossipy chronicle, a rather curious incident is recorded. It seems there was a certain minister in Edinburgh who fell "besottedly in love" with Mistress Eupham Scot. His attentions annoyed her and she was at no pains to conceal it. The superstitious divine, however, was not to be discouraged, but, by bribing her maid, obtained possession of one of her garments, out of which he made himself a waistcoat and pair of drawers, which he wore, fully expecting this magic spell would bring him his heart's desire. But misfortune crowned his efforts and "thir fooleries" caused him to be suspended from his office.

It was not necessary for John Johnstone to pursue any such tactics. He also was interested in East Jersey and planning to emigrate thither. His brother, James Johnstone, of Spotswood, settled here in 1684 and wrote home glowing accounts of

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the Province. Scot published several of these letters in his "Model Government," and, of course, many conferences were necessary between the fair Eupham's father and the young "Druggist at the sign of the Unicorn in Edinburgh," preparatory to that momentous voyage.

John Johnstone was the second son (James, of Spotswood being the eldest) of the Rev. William Johnstone of Laverocklaw, in Berwickshire, and his wife, Isabel Maitland. As the Scots were bound up in the history of Fifeshire, so were the Johnstones in that of Dumfries.

"Within the bounds of Annandale  
The gentle Johnstones ride;  
They have been there a thousand years,  
A thousand more they'll bide."

This is from an old ballad and expresses very succinctly their position in the county. The word "gentle" had a different meaning in those days and did not by any chance refer to the disposition. A "gentleman" was one entitled to a coat-of-arms.

The first of the family known by the name of Johnstone was Hugo de Johnstone, whose son, Sir John de Johnstone, Chevalier of the county of Dumfries, presented the monastery of Saltray with some lands as early as 1296. They were descendants of Le Seigneur de Jeanville, who joined William the Conqueror and fought at the battle of Hastings. They settled in Scotland where the name was translated into Johnstone and they became identified with the county of Dumfries and one of the most powerful of the Border clans. They went on a Crusade with the elder Bruce and the saltire, or St. Andrew's Cross, on their shield is supposed to commemorate this event. Sir John de Johnstone, warden of the West Border, gained a great victory over an English army in 1370; and his son, John de Johnstone, fought with Douglas at the celebrated battle of Chevy Chase. They were generally staunch supporters of the Crown, and it was greatly owing to their assistance that the formidable Douglas rebellion was quelled. Later they were devoted to the cause of the beautiful Queen Mary.

The chief of the clan was known as the Laird of Johnstone, or "Johnstone of that Ilk." Their chief seat and stronghold was the castle of Lochwood, or Loughwood, a huge square tower of great strength situated on a hill in the midst of a morass that no stranger could penetrate without a guide. There were a number of other castles in their possession, also, as in the Sixteenth century this family numbered nine Lairds among its members in Dumfries and one in Lanark, which is more than any other family in that county could boast. They were related to the Maxwells, the Douglasses of Drumlanrig, the Hamiltons, the Scots of Buccleuch, the Carliles and others. They were always allies of the Scots of Buccleuch and the Gordons of Lochinvar, but with the Maxwells they were on fighting terms. Their quarrels with this clan resulted in a deadly feud which convulsed the whole of that part of Scotland and involved many

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other families as well. Lord Dacre in a letter to Cardinal Woolsey informs the prelate that the "debeatable land is clear waste" from the Maxwell and Johnstone feuds. At one stage of their disagreements Lord Maxwell set fire to Lochwood Tower, saying "he would give Lady Johnstone a light to set her hood by," - a witty remark, but what a sense of humor!

Another Maxwell set fire to one of the Johnstone's houses and burned him alive in it. The Johnstones were not slow to retaliate, but Lord Maxwell, being in favor at Court at the time, had Johnstone "of that Ilk" imprisoned in Edinburgh. That doughty chieftain, however, made his escape, returned to Dumfries, and, calling together their allies, prepared for battle. The Johnstones were joined by the Scots, Eliots, Grahams, Gordons, and Irvings, while Maxwell had the aid of the Douglasses, Hamiltons, and a detachment of the King's troops. The Scots of Buccleuch, nearly related to the Johnstones, were said to be "the most renowned freebooters, the fiercest and bravest warriors of the Border Tribes." Lord Maxwell offered a "ten-pound land" to whomsoever would bring him the head or hand of the Laird of Johnstone. That gentleman, not being able to afford a ten-pound land, but not to be outdone in courtesy, offered a "five-merk land" to anyone who would bring him the head or hand of Maxwell. The two clans, with their adherents, met in deadly affray in December, 1593, and the famous battle of Dryfe Sands was fought. It was indeed a fight to the finish. Sir James Johnstone displayed great skill and courage and gained a complete victory. As 700 of the Maxwells were slain in battle and most of the fugitives overtaken in headlong flight and massacred, it is not surprising that it was the last clan-battle of any note in that part of the country. Lord Maxwell was killed and the "five-merk land" won by a Johnstone of Wamphray, nephew of "The Galliard," whom Maxwell had hung a short time before. The following stanza, from Sir Walter Scot's "Border Minstrelsy," is in reference to these Johnstones of Wamphray:

"Now Simmy, Simmy of the Side,  
Come out and see a Johnstone ride!  
Here's the bonniest horse in a 'Nithside,  
And a gentle Johnstone aboon his hide."

Sir James Johnstone was immediately outlawed, but soon after was restored to all his honors and made Warden of the Marches. King James could not afford to offend so powerful a chieftain. He was murdered by Lord Maxwell's son and heir, who shot him in the back during a conference. Maxwell was executed for this and the feud died out.

Sir James Johnstone's son was elevated to the peerage as Lord Johnstone of Lochwood and Charles I made him Earl of Hartfell. He was a staunch royalist and suffered imprisonment and the loss of his estates in consequence. His son was reinstated after the Restoration and made Earl of Annandale, hereditary Steward of

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Annandale and hereditary constable of Lochmaben.<sup>6</sup>

Such was the background of these two young people, Eupham Scot and John Johnstone. Fife, not being on the Border or in the Highlands, the inhabitants did not have to devote all their time to fighting. St. Andrews was a seat of learning and gentlemen, like Scot of Scotstarvet and Gordon of Stralloch, could indulge a taste for scholarship and literature.

In 1603, only ten years after the terrible affray of Bryfesdale, James VI of Scotland succeeded to the throne of England as James I, thus bringing peace on the Border and a sad handicap to the chief diversion of the "riding" clans. Their talents had to seek new outlets.

Returning now to Edinburgh. In the year 1685, we find George Scot "at his lodging in Bailie Robison's land." He had published his "Model Government" early in that year and was making preparations for his great venture. His family must have been with him, as his estate of Pitlochrie had passed into the hands of his half-brother, Walter, who had changed the name to Edin'shead. Numerous and heavy fines had undoubtedly necessitated this transfer. Archibald Riddell was in the Bass, but with a promise of liberation if he would leave the country with Scot.

Scot had dedicated his book to the Earl of Perth, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, who was one of the Twenty-four Proprietors of East Jersey; to Perth's brother, Viscount Melfort, Secretary of State for Scotland and a member of the Privy Council, also a Proprietor, and to George Mackenzie, Viscount Tarbet, etc., Register of Scotland and one of the Privy Council. The last named (not the "Bluidy Mackensie" of evil memory), while not one of the Proprietors, owned a large number of shares and was interested in the Province. The book concludes with "A Brief Advertisement Concerning East Jersey in America."<sup>7</sup>

Under the "Advertisement" for going to America the time set was "against the 20 day of July, God willing," and the ship the "Henry and Francis." But events delayed the party until September, and affairs in Scotland had been and were in more of a turmoil than ever. James II of England had succeeded his brother Charles on the throne; even more jealous of the royal prerogative, he was without the "Merrie Monarch's" sense of humor. Conventicles increased in number and violence; conspiracies and plots were rife; prisons were overcrowded; and, if anything were needed to make the situation worse, Argyle furnished it in his ill-advised "rising" to support "Monmouth's Rebellion." He was executed and disaster overwhelmed his friends and a host of poor people who were not responsible in any way.

Nearly 200 unfortunate Covenanters, mostly peasants, men, women and children, had been imprisoned in Edinburgh, and, upon the threatened uprising of

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<sup>6</sup> Johnstone, C. L., "Historical Families of Dumfries."

<sup>7</sup> See the full "Model Government" and also the "Brief Advertisement," etc., in their reproduction in the "Collections of the N.J. Hist. Society," Vol. I (1846), pp. 239-333. A portion of the "Advertisement" also appears in the PROCEEDINGS of July, 1929, on Pages 255-256.

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Argyle, they were sent north and confined in Dunnottar Castle. This was a most forbidding stronghold on the rocky shore of Kincardine, and in charge of a monster of cruelty, one George Keith, deputy-sheriff of the Mearns. At the hands of this inhuman jailer they endured unspeakable sufferings. His wife interceded for them in vain, and even the Privy Council were moved to remonstrate. Many of them died and the survivors, about 160, were "gifted" to Pitlochie as settlers for his plantation. They were brought back to Edinburgh and put aboard the "Henry and Francis," then riding in the harbor of Leith preparing for the fateful voyage. Instead of leaving gladly the scene of so much suffering, they protested loudly at being banished from their native land, especially to an "uncovenanted" country!

All preparations being finally completed and the little band of adventurers, with what goods and chattels they could carry in the ship "without crowding," being safely on board, on the fifth day of September, 1685, the frail little ship sailed out so bravely into the North Sea, and what a burden of hopes and fears she carried!

Pitlochie had been granted 500 acres of land by the Proprietors, as a reward for his great services in writing the "Model Government." Doubtless he had visions of a lairdship greater than Scotstarvet itself and a peaceful, unharried existence that could be devoted to his favorite pursuits. Lady Pitlochie was resigned, but foreboding, without doubt. Eupham and her brother were full of the excitement of adventure; also, she may have been in love at the time. Let us hope so, as it would have been some comfort in the nightmare that the voyage became. There were also members of Lady Pitlochie's immediate family, her brother Thomas' widow, Lady Aithernie, with their son William and daughter Eupham. Archibald Riddell had been liberated from the Bass on condition that he join this company; so he and his wife were among the passengers. His body may have been weakened by persecution, but not his spirit. There were a number of other gentlemen, merchants, etc., who had embarked, but these constituted Scot's immediate circle.

The ship was advertised to sail from Leith and to stop for passengers at Montrose, Aberdeen, and Kirkwall in the Orkneys. This was when they expected to start on the 10th of July. As recounted by one of the passengers, the fever began to rage "after they had turned the Land End." If this means present Land's End, they must have sailed down the North Sea again and out into the Atlantic by way of the Channel. Presumably they proceeded yet a little further north and out into the Atlantic. ...

The survivors of the terrible journey were landed at Perth Amboy, at which place and nearby settlements they found refuge with relatives, friends, or kindly, sympathetic strangers. We have no direct evidence on the subject, but as the Gordons of Stralloch had been friends of the Scots for generations, what more natural than that Eupham and her brother should have been welcomed into the home of Thomas Gordon?<sup>8</sup> John Johnstone's brother, however, had been over more than a year and

<sup>8</sup> At Cedar Brook, located in present Plainfield, where the late Hon. James E. Martine lived. He went later to

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was evidently well fixed.

Some have expressed surprise that Johnstone and Eupham were not married until April, four months later. They would have had them marry as soon as they landed. It seems highly probable, however, that the lady was seriously ill. She had surely endured enough to kill an ordinary person, and, according to the accounts of the voyage everyone in the ship had fever in a more or less malignant form. She had seen both beloved parents die within a short space of time and their bodies thrown into the sea. Soon afterwards her aunt and cousins suffered the same fate, as did the wife of Archibald Riddell and doubtless other friends. They were two lonely orphans and their first Christmas in East Jersey must have been an exceedingly sorrowful one.

Dr. Johnstone, himself, had his hands full in that stricken ship. As he seems to have been the only one on board qualified to administer to the sick, he was surely overworked. Even if he did not have the fever, he was sadly in need of the rest and refreshment his brother was able to give him, either at his plantation in the "Blew Hills," or, nearer by, on a tract which he named "Spottswood" for his Scotch estate.

It was not until the 26th of February, 1685-6, that Eupham had her fathers will recorded.<sup>9</sup> He left all his real estate in this country to her; also, personal property brought over on the ship, merchandise, servants, etc. To James, who was not yet of age, he left one hundred pounds sterling and all his interest in Scotland. To assist and counsel his daughter in her affairs, he appointed "James Dundas, brother to the Laird of Armastonn, Robert McLelland of Bellmackachan, James Raymy, Mariner, and John Johnstone, Apothecary." The will was dated "the last day of October this year" (1685), and he calls himself "Sir George Scott." He was only in his forty-third year. This untimely end to his troubled career just on the eve of realizing a cherished dream made it a tragedy.

On April 18, 1686, Eupham Scot and John Johnstone were married.<sup>10</sup> They then went to New York to live, a better field for Dr. Johnstone's profession. According to some accounts there was nothing in East Jersey requiring a doctor's services, except occasionally "some cuffed legs and fingers." Perth Amboy was somewhat primitive in those days - very different from Edinburgh or Aberdeen; there were probably not more than twenty or twenty-five houses there. However, some of them were of stone and there was a degree of comfort. Thomas Fullerton, in a letter written the previous year to a friend in Scotland, informed him that "This place is not altogether boorish, for at New York you may have railing and gallantry enough; the inhabitants are generally great spenders."

After a few years of New York life they returned to New Jersey where they had a plantation, but for a number of years their time seems to have been rather evenly divided between the two places. Dr. Johnstone prospered greatly in this new land. He

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Perth Amboy and died in 1722. - EDITOR.

<sup>9</sup> Middlesex Co. Wills. It may be noted that in this will the name Scot is spelled "Scott."

<sup>10</sup> Family records.

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was a man of affairs and a very able one. He was gifted with the talent of statecraft and acquired great influence in the Colonies of New Jersey and New York, holding office in one Province or the other for more than thirty years.

Their New Jersey plantation consisted of about 13,000 acres of land in Monmouth county, which Dr. Johnstone had patented as remuneration for his own and Scot's losses; or, as stated, "In consideration of the great loss they did suffer by importing the s'd people upon the proprs' incouragement & wh. has contributed very much to the good of this province." Eupham had inherited her father's five hundred acres, granted to him by the Proprietors for his eminent services, and it may have been included in this tract. This plantation they named "Scotschesterburgh," and it was their favorite residence up to the time of their going to Perth Amboy, when the tedium and monotony of country life was relieved by the arrival of a pirate in the neighborhood. This was an affair of some moment and created much excitement in the community. Doctor Johnstone wrote a letter to the honorable Council informing them of the whereabouts and depredations of this "pyratt."

One of those living in the vicinity of "Scotschesterburgh" was Lewis Morris,<sup>11</sup> that irascible Welshman, who was always being summoned before the Court for "fencing in the King's highway." His place was called "Tintern," named for his home in Wales. He and Dr. Johnstone were great friends, and it was for him that the Doctor's youngest son, Lewis, was named. Besides Scotschesterburgh, Johnstone bought numerous proprietary shares, and, together with George Willocks, purchased of three Indians, Tallquapie, Nicholas and Elalie, in 1761, about 10,000 acres of land in Somerset county. This was known as the Peapack Patent, and comprised some of the loveliest portions of New Jersey. It extended from the North Branch of the Raritan up into Morris county, Basking Ridge, Pluckemin, Peapack, Mendham and numerous other towns and villages occupy the ground included in this Patent. He seems to have fancied the Raritan, as he located the stately mansion he built at Perth Amboy on the banks of that river rather than on the Bay that looks out through the Narrows. It was a luxurious home for the times, - a large square house, two stories in height, built of brick from England for that purpose. This old place was entirely destroyed shortly after the Revolution, but, as late as the "gay nineties," there was still a depression in the ground where it had stood, and a few old trees yet remained of the once fine orchard.

Another one of the Johnstone's intimate friends was Governor Hunter, also a Scotchman, and very partial to his Perth Amboy residence. He was a Brigadier-General in the British Army when sent over in 1710, as Governor of New York and New Jersey. The Gordons, Barclays, Hamiltons, Kearneys, Skinners (who were really McGregors), Lawrences, Bownes, Parkers, Warnes, Hartshornes, all belonged to this aristocratic circle of large landed proprietors who ran the affairs of the Colony. It is

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<sup>11</sup> See "Lewis Morris, First Colonial Governor of New Jersey," Proc. N.J. Hist. Soc. (July 1928): [www.DigitalAntiquaria.com](http://www.DigitalAntiquaria.com) | NJHS28C1.

# Eupham Scot and Dr. John Johnstone

*Edith Herbert Mather*

no wonder so many of them were Tories at the outbreak of the Revolution.

Evidently Dr. Johnstone was a conformist, as he and Eupham attended St. Peter's Church in Perth Amboy, paying six pounds and some shillings a year for their pew. Eupham's Presbyterianism could not have been as strong as her mother's, or there would be interesting family traditions on the subject. His backsliding cousin must have been a sore trial to the Rev. Archibald Riddell, who seems to have taken up his residence in Woodbridge and abandoned his relatives to their own destruction.

Governor Hunter prevailed upon Dr. Johnstone to return to New York and take part in administering the government there.

Accordingly, in 1714 he succeeded Caleb Heathcote as Mayor of that city. Where did they live? Perhaps in Gold street. That was a fashionable part of town in those days and the Doctor purchased land there about that time. The Doctor had a large family of children by that date. John, the eldest son, and Andrew, next oldest, were very eligible young men, and two or three attractive young daughters rendered the family an important addition to the social life of the city. John soon fell a victim to the charms of David Jamieson's daughter, Elizabeth, and they returned to East Jersey and settled on a plantation in Monmouth county, the gift of his father and a part of Scotschesterburgh. Their second son, Andrew, became a merchant in New York and married Catherine, one of the seven beautiful daughters of Stephanus Van Cortlandt, who were conspicuous figures in New York society in those days. Another of Mayor Johnstone's friends and associates was Caleb Heathcote, his official predecessor, whose daughter, Martha, young Lewis Johnstone afterwards married.

Governor Hunter and Doctor Johnstone went out of office together. The former returned to England, to the regret of his many friends, while the latter crossed the Hudson and resumed his abode in the home by the Raritan at "New Perth" (Perth Amboy). Here the Johnstones built a house for their son, Andrew, who soon returned to occupy it. It was a large and imposing brick dwelling, which the inhabitants always called "Edinburgh Castle," and it was standing in 1896 at 145 High Street. Andrew formed a partnership with John Parker, his brother-in-law; Parker having married Janet Johnstone. They were successful merchants and had a line of ships that traded with the West Indies, especially Barbadoes.

On Dr. Johnstone's return to Perth Amboy he was elected a member from that place to the New Jersey Provincial Assembly and was appointed one of the Commissioners for settling the boundary between New York and New Jersey. He retained his seat in the Assembly for thirteen years, up to the time of his death, and for ten years of that time he held the office of Speaker. His influence in the Province was very great and in the Assembly quite irresistible, especially when united, - as it usually was, with that of William Lawrence, of Monmouth, and one or two others he could always depend upon. Governor Hunter was succeeded by Governor Burnet, a very different type of man, and one with whom the Doctor was not thoroughly in sympathy. They were often opposed to each other and, when it came to a trial of strength in the

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Assembly, Doctor Johnstone usually won the day. This was a source of great annoyance to James Alexander, and when Johnstone was unanimously elected Speaker of the Eighth New Jersey Assembly, 1721-22, in the face of the Governor's open opposition, it was most distasteful. Alexander then took occasion to write to the former Gov. Hunter a number of rather whining letters, complaining of the Doctor and his aiders and abettors, William Lawrence and Hugh Hartshorne. He objects to the Doctor's "spirit and temper" and his attitude toward the Governor. Johnstone seems to have borne him no grudge for this, as he leaves the Rev. William Skinner and James Alexander to be executors to the codicil to his will, and, when the Doctor was dead, Alexander, like so many others when their words can have no effect on their object, was willing to speak kindly of him. He thus informs Hunter of the death of his friend, in a letter, dated Sept. 10th, 1732:

"Dr. Johnstone died the 7th of this month, being spent with age and fatigue in going about to serve those who wanted his assistance. I drew his will for him a few days before he died, when, although he was worn almost quite away, he retained his good sense and spirit, and so I am told he did to the last."

That was a sorrowful period for Madam Eupham Johnstone. Three sons and a daughter had preceded her husband to the grave within a comparatively short space of time. She was left a wealthy and distinguished dowager, but her beloved companion was gone. However, two devoted sons and two daughters were spared to her. Mary, being unmarried, made her home with her mother, so she was not alone. Also there were a number of grandchildren. They must have loved to visit grandmother's impressive home with its abundant orchards, and with interesting sideboards concealing crocks full of delicious Scotch cakes. Then there were wonderful stories she had to tell them of her life in Scotland; the great city of Edinburgh, the lovely Howe of Fife, conventicles attended, Covenanters "reset," the fearsome prisons, the Bass and the Tolbooth; of her terrible journey thither (but perhaps that was too painful to talk about); and what "New Perth" was like in the early days, as if it were not "altogether boorish" in 1685, fifty years must have brought great changes and transformed it into an altogether desirable place in which to live. For one thing, that delightful beverage, tea, had been introduced into the Colonies, and Madam Johnstone had imported a handsome silver teapot for her use. She could not have brought it over on the "Henry and Francis," because Europe had not yet become tea conscious. Even the "Mayflower" had no teapots in her cargo.

Feeling age creeping upon her slowly but surely, Eupham made her will, reading (the then usual capitalization omitted) "In the name of God, Amen. This fourteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and forty-one, I, Eupham Johnstone, widow, being, through the mercy of God, of sound mind and memory, considering the uncertainty of this life and my advanced age, do make this my last will and testament in manner following: Principally, I recommend my soul to

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God hoping for pardon of my sins through the merits of my blessed Redeemer, and my body I commit to the earth to be buried at the discretion of my executors. I desire all my just debts may be paid as soon as possible, and to that end I empower my executors or the survivor of them to sell and dispose of that three hundred acres of land (being part of a tract of two thousand and one hundred and eighteen acres) beginning near the meetings of Bear Brook with Passaic Brook in the county of Bergen, which was given and devised to me by the last will and testament of my deceased husband; and I do authorize my said executors or the survivors of them to seal and deliver proper and necessary deeds of conveyance to the purchaser or purchasers thereof, for the vesting the said land so sold in the purchaser or purchasers and their heirs and assigns forever, as if I myself had conveyed the same in my lifetime. I give and bequeath to my granddaughter, Eupham Smyth, twenty pounds; and all the residue of my estate, household goods, linnen, apparel, and the negro girl called Dorcas (my debts and funeral expenses being paid), I give and bequeath to my daughter Mary. I revoke all former wills, and I appoint my sons, Andrew and Lewis Johnston, executors of this my last will and testament. In Witness Whereof," etc.

The witnesses were William Burnet, Thos. Skinner and Lawn (Lawrence) Smyth. One year after this she added a codicil to her will. After the preamble it reads:

"My daughter Mary being deceased, I give my household goods, linen and apparel to my daughter, Margaret Smyth. And whereas, altho. I have not for several years heard from Scotland, I am verily persuaded I have some estate there. In case it can be recovered I give and devise the said estate, whither real or personal, to my sons, Andrew, Lewis, my daughter Margaret, and my grandson, Elisha Parker, and to their respective heirs and assigns forever in severalty. I give and bequeath all the rest and residue of my estate to my son, Andrew Johnston, his heirs and assigns forever," etc.  
Dated December 11, 1744."

The signature to the codicil shows Madame Johnstone's increasing age. It is very tremulous and wavering. Only three of her thirteen children outlived her.

Among the burials for 1745 in the parish register of Christ Church, Shrewsbury, N.J., there is this entry: "Dec. 6. Mrs. Johnson, widow, of Amboy, at Mr. Johnston's plantation at Freehold."<sup>12</sup> Taken in connection with other matters there is every reason to believe that this was Madam Johnstone, dying at the ripe age of eighty or more. Her will was not recorded until 1764, but it does not seem at all likely that she lived nineteen years longer.

She had realized most of her father's rosy dreams.

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<sup>12</sup> See "Historical and Genealogical Miscellany," by J. E. Stillwell, Vol. I, p. 165.