



## Clan SANDILANDS

### ARMS

Quarterly, 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, Argent, on a chief Azure an imperial crown Or, in base a thistle Vert flowered Gules; 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, counter quartered, (I) & (IV), Argent, a bend Azure

bandilands),

(II) & (III), Argent, a human heart imperially crowned Or, on a chief Azure three mullets of the Field (Douglas)

### CREST

An eagle displayed Proper

### MOTTO

Spero meliora (I hope for better things)

### SUPPORTERS

Two savages wreathed round the loins and temples with oak  
 branches holding in their outstretched hands a shield all Argent

**T**his name comes from the lands of Sandilands in Clydesdale. The family who were later to bear the name, may originally have fled to Scotland from Northumberland in the reign of Malcolm III. Sir James de Sandilands distinguished himself in the wars against the English, and was rewarded with a royal charter to his hands by David II. He married Eleanor, the only daughter of Sir Archibald Douglas, Regent of Scotland, who was the widow of Alexander Bruce, Earl of Carrick. Sandilands received from his brother-in-law, Lord Douglas, the lands of Calder in Lothian. Sir James was killed at the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333. His son, James Sandilands of Calder, was one of the hostages sent to England for James I, who was only returned to Scotland two years before his death. He was heir presumptive to the Douglas estates and should have inherited them on the death of the second Earl of Douglas, but they went instead to George, Earl of Angus, Douglas's natural son. James was succeeded by his son, John. The Sandilands found themselves in opposition to their Douglas relatives as they were unshakeable in their loyalty to James II. John Sandilands and his uncle, James, were assassinated at Dumbarton by Patrick Thornton in the orders of the Douglas faction. James Sandilands then inherited the estates and married an heiress, Margaret Kinlock of Cruvie. One of their sons, James Sandilands of Cruvie, established the line later to become Lords Abercrombie.

Sir James Sandilands of Calder, a friend of the Protestant reformer, John Knox, was also preceptor of the powerful religious and military Order of the Knights of St John, whose headquarters were at Torphichen in West Lothian. When in 1560 the Scots Parliament declared the abolition of all Papal jurisdiction Sir James found himself the legal representative of an isolated Catholic religious establishment marooned in a sea of fervent reformers. He also appears to have undergone a genuine personal conversion to the new faith. He was promptly excommunicated by Rome and stripped of his office in the Order. His successor was, of course, unable to take up his new post in Scotland and for all practical purposes, Sandilands was still responsible for the Order's affairs on a day-to-day basis. The dilemma was how to secure the future of hundreds of tenants and others who depended on the Order for their livelihoods from the horrors of piecemeal confiscation. The example of Henry VIII and the English monasteries was only too clear and recent a lesson to be ignored. Sandilands took the only legal steps open to him and resigned all the Order's lands to the crown and received a re-grant in his own name for the princely sum of ten thousand crowns and an annual rent of five hundred merks. He also deposited a large sum with Belgian bankers which ultimately made its way into the Order's treasury in Malta. The Preceptors of Torphichen had sat as peers in Parliament as 'Lord St John of Torphichen', an interesting example of a title vested in an office as opposed to a family. Sir James kept his parliamentary rank, being created a hereditary peer as Lord Torphichen. He died without issue, and the new title devolved on James, the grandson of his elder brother, who succeeded as second Lord Torphichen. The first Lord's half-brother, Sir James Sandilands of Slamannan, was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to James VI and later keeper of Blackness Castle. The second Lord had four sons, two of whom were to succeed to the family title. John, the fourth Lord, although a supporter of Charles I strongly advised against the plan known as the Engagement, which sought to invade England in 1648 to rescue the king, in return for certain conditions, after he had been handed over to Parliament by the Scots army. The plan was ill-conceived, and ended in disaster.

James, seventh Lord Torphichen, took his seat in Parliament in 1704 and was a supporter of the Treaty of Union. He served in the army on the continent only returning to Scotland at the outbreak of the rising of 1715. He fought at the Battle of Sheriffmuir. In 1722 he was appointed by George I one of the Commissioners of Police. His eldest

son was wounded during the campaigns of 1745 against the forces of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the 'Young Pretender', and he later died of consumption. His second son, Walter, who had embarked upon a career in the law, succeeded to the title while sheriff of Midlothian. James, the sheriff's son was a colonel in the Coldstream Guards and was elected a representative peer to the House of Lords from 1790 to 1800. He was succeeded by his first cousin, James, from whom the present Lord Torphichen, who still lives at Calder, is lineally descended.

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The Scottish Society of Louisville, Inc.  
PO Box 32248  
Louisville, KY 40232-2248