

GENEALOGY

A Gentleman Adventurer.

In 1771 Andrew Ker, the great-grandson of Walter Ker, was recognized by the Scottish courts. The Drummonds appealed to the English courts, but Andrew Ker died before the case came up. His son John fifteen years old, found himself an orphan and the estates of his family impoverished as the result of the long fight.

Being adventurous and disgusted at the injustice of the English courts, young Ker turned his eyes toward America.

One day a mysterious ship appeared off the British coast and word was spread that the dreaded John Paul Jones was its captain.

This was young Ker's opportunity, and he seized it, enlisting with Jones as a powder boy. At the end of the Revolutionary War Ker settled in New York and became wealthy in the shipping business.

He returned to Scotland in 1809 and instituted suit for the titles. The case dragged until 1830, when the brother of Andrew, William Ker, accompanied by Hamilton Fish, went to England to reopen the case.

Again Andrew Ker became disgusted, and in a fit of rage destroyed the documents that had been held for over two centuries by his family as evidence. He died twenty years later poor, and left but little to remind his sons of the fight for the family title and estates he and his ancestors had waged. A fragment of a letter from William Ker to Hamilton Fish, supposed to have been written in 1830 from England is all that remains of the correspondence and documents relating to the case now in the family's hands. It is neither a good specimen of spelling nor penmanship, but is fully as good as several specimens left behind by famous men. This fragment tells but little, but was evidently a part of