



Born: 1531 Tranent, Scotland

Married: Isabel Hamilton

Died: 8 Jan 1586 Seton, Scotland

Parents: George Seton & Elizabeth Hay

The greatness of the family reached its highest point under the fifth lord, who bore their favourite name of George, and who has been immortalised in tradition and history, and, above all, in Sir Walter Scott's tale of 'The Abbot,' as the staunch supporter of the unfortunate Queen Mary, during all the mutabilities of her career. He entered upon public life at an early age, and in 1557 was nominated one of the commissioners appointed by the Scottish Parliament to proceed to Paris for the purpose of being present at the marriage of their young queen to the Dauphin of France. He seemed at first to be favourably inclined towards the Reformed faith, and was one of the nobles who went to hear John Willock, the Protestant preacher, explain from his sick-bed the doctrines of the gospel; but he ultimately adhered to the Romish Church, and joined the party of the Queen Dowager against the Lords. This step was naturally regarded with great displeasure by the Protestant party. Calderwood says: 'The Erle of Argyll and Lord James Stewart entered in Edinburgh, the 29th June, 1559. The Lord Seton, the Provost, a man without God, without honestie, and oftentimes without reason, had diverse times before troubled the brethrein. He had taken upon him the protection of the Blacke and Gray Friars, and for that purpose lay himself in one of them everie night and also constrained the honest burgesses of the town to watch and garde these monsters to their great greefe. When he heard of the suddane coming of the Lords he abandoned his charge.' Lord Seton held the office of Grand Master of Queen Mary's household, and was concerned in not a few of the most momentous events in her history. The night after the murder of Rizzio, when Mary fled from Holyrood, her first halting-place was Seton House, where Lord Seton was in readiness at the head of two hundred horsemen to escort his sovereign to the strong castle of Dunbar. A few days after the murder of Darnley, Mary repaired to Seton House, where she was entertained by its owner in person, and spent her time in hunting and shooting. On the Queen's escape from Lochleven, Lord Seton was waiting in the vicinity of the lake with fifty of his retainers, and attended her in her rapid flight to his castle of Niddry, on his Winchburgh estate in West Lothian, where she first drew bridle. He fought on her side and was taken prisoner at the battle of Lang-side, in 1568, which ruined her cause in Scotland. The Regent Moray, who seems to have respected Lord Seton for his fidelity to his sovereign, set him at liberty and permitted him to retire to the Continent, where he was indefatigable in his efforts to induce the French and Spanish Courts to interfere on her behalf. He was reduced to such a state of poverty in his exile that at one time he was obliged to drive a waggon in Flanders for his subsistence. A

painting of him in his waggoner's dress, in the act of driving a wain with four horses, which he caused to be made, long adorned the stately gallery in Seton House. He appears to have been fond of the fine arts, for he had himself painted also as Master of the Queen's household, with his official baton, and the following characteristic motto:- 'In adversitate patiens, In prosperitate benevolus.

Hazard yet forward.' On various parts of his castle he inscribed, as expressing his religious and political creed, the legend Un Dieu, Un Foy, Un Roy, Un Loy. A beautiful family-piece, by Sir Antonio More, representing this faithful adherent of Queen Mary surrounded by his children, was in the possession of Lord Somerville, and is published in Pinkerton's 'Scottish Iconographia.' After James VI. took the reins of government into his own hands, he appointed Lord Seton one of the lords of his household, and in January, 1584, sent him ambassador to France. His lordship died, in 1585 soon after his return from France, and was buried in Seton church, where there is a monument to his memory commemorating his fidelity and the prudence by which he thrice restored his house, thrice ruined by the foreign enemy. As the estates of the Seton family lay on the direct road from Berwick to Edinburgh, they suffered severely from the inroads of the English. When the Earl of Hertford invaded Scotland in 1544, and laid waste the whole of the eastern Border, his army 'came and lay at Seton, burnt and destroyed the castle thereof, spoyled the kirk, took away the bellis and organis, and other tursible [portable] thinges, and put them in their schippes, and brynt the timber wark within the said kirk.' The account given by the ruthless invaders of the rich vestments of the provost and inferior priests, and of the gold and silver vessels that the church contained, shows the splendour with which it had been furnished by the munificent founder and his successors. Lord Seton, it is said, declined the offer of an earldom from Queen Mary, being unwilling to forego what he considered a greater distinction. On which Mary wrote, or caused to be written, the following lines— 'Sunt comites, ducesque alii, sunt denique reges; Setoni dominium, sit satis esse mihi.' Which have been thus rendered— 'Earl, duke, or king to those that list to be; Seton, thy lordship is enough for me.'

Above information from online research at: Ancestry.com