

(Letter from Chandler Furman to Lucy Furman, 11 Sep 1941, transcribed from the original by Gary S. Collins 2002. Some corrections were made in pencil on the letter, probably by Lucy Furman; these are enclosed in square brackets.)

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September 11, 1941

Miss Lucy Furman
411 Wapping Street
Frankfort, Kentucky

Dear Pearl:

My great-great-grandfather's name was James Scrimzeour. The name is variously spelled Scrymgeour, etc.; but my father spelled his name Scrimzeour, which, I believe, is the preferred spelling.

This James Scrimzeour was a younger son of George Scrimzeour of Thornhall, a Scotch Baronet. [*"Scotch Baronet" is circled, with sidenote "Wrong, he has no title".*] James Scrimzeour married a governess by the name of Morgandollar, a Cornish woman, and together they came to the United States shortly after the Revolution. This Morgandollar was a respectable woman as far as I have heard. James quarreled bitterly with his father over the marriage, however, and because of it, came to the United States. I do not know whether he had any money with him when he arrived but he left a sizable estate when he died in about 1805. The only child of his marriage was our great-grandmother, Eliza Scrimzeour, who married Samuel Furman, May 5, 1814.

A number of years after the marriage, advertisements were noticed in the newspaper asking for the whereabouts of James Scrimzeour or his heirs. A correspondence was entered into between Eliza Scrimzeour and her grandfather, George Scrimzeour. As a result of which she, her husband, and several of the older children went back to Scotland where they lived for a number of years.

The oldest daughter, Mary Furman, married a John Miller in Scotland and went with him to the West Indies: Here he died. Later she returned to South Carolina and married a Mr. Wittaker. [*Line drawn through "Wittaker", corrected to "Whittaker".*] You remember both Cousins Lillie and Ida, their daughters, who are now dead.

George Scrimzeour began legal proceedings to break the entail of the estate so that Uncle Richard could secure the title. Before the proceedings were completed, George Scrimzeour died. This was about 1835. The case was tried over the period of a number of years. It is my impression that it was finally heard by the Scotch House of Lords, before the union of the two parliaments. I am not sure when the union took place; but it is my belief that the Scotch House of Lords tried the case.

Finally it was decided that the entail was not properly broken and the title and entailed lands went to the male line, and the same was given to a Scrimzeour of Wedderburn, or Wedderbourne. I am not sure of the spelling. The other property was inherited by Eliza Scrimzeour and the family returned to the United States.

Uncle Richard was the grandfather of Lillie. His oldest son was Samuel Furman of South Carolina, who is now dead. I don't know who his oldest son is.

The Scrimzeours are, by right, the Royal Standard Bearers of Scotland; and I noticed in the London Illustrated Coronation issue that a Scrimzeour of Wedderburn carried the Royal Scotch Standard at the coronation of King George VI. This, of course, is a very great honor. As I recall, this gentleman was a major in the last war. Had the lawsuit gone otherwise, Cousin James's [*"James's" crossed out, corrected to "Sam's"*] oldest son would have had the right.

My father told me that he had heard that the action of the House of Lords was considered rather arbitrary and that arguments having nothing to do with the evidence were used effectively; particularly that the claimant, Richard Furman, belonged to a radical church, i.e. the Baptist; was a naturalized subject; and was the grandson of the notorious traitor, Richard Furman. However the case may be, the case was decided against our branch of the family and the title went to Scrimzeour of Wedderburn, together with the entailed lands which belonged, and probably still belongs, to the family. The property that great-grandmother got in the final settlement was not the entailed land, but it made her quite wealthy.

I have always heard it said that great-grandfather, Samuel Furman, inherited three large fortunes and managed to lose them all before his death. This is hardly fair as his last estate was destroyed by the Civil War. It consisted mostly of negroes and plantation property.

The Scrimzeour of Wedderburn has the title and is a member of the House of Lords by virtue of being a baronet in the Scrimzeour family which is one of the oldest of Scotch nobility. They were a lowland family and for many generations were Earls. However, their rank as Earls was lost because they were Jacobites in the Rebellion of '45. Most of their lands were later restored to a younger son on the death of the Earl and the attainder was removed against the property. The title of Earl was never restored. I know that Cousin Lillie, when in Edenborough, looked up the proceedings and she told me a great deal of what I have written you.

If James had lived, he would have been heir of the chief branch of the family. However, I know he died before his father and I am inclined to think he died before his older brother or brothers. The legal proceedings were all intended to make it possible for his oldest grandson to inherit through his daughter, Eliza S. Furman.

I would like to hear from some of the Scrimzeours in Scotland as I have always had a sort of curiosity in regard to them.

I won't enter into an argument over prohibition. While a noble gesture, I believe that it formed the basis of much of America's racketeering and political corruption, which undoubtedly grew by leaps and bounds from the war until repeal. Having practiced law during the latter part of this period, I must say that bootlegging and the politics that grew out of it was a nasty mess.

Mother and Henry are well and we trust that we sometimes will be able to see you again. We all join in love.

Your cousin,

(signed Chandler Furman)