

# The Genealogy of the Morrison Origins in Scotland:



**A critical evaluation of the historical evidence for the  
origins of the Morrisons in Scotland**

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## **Preface to The Genealogy of the Morrison Origins in Scotland**

One of the earliest attempts to detail the origins of the Morrisons in Scotland was by L A Morrison (1880). It was a noble endeavour made difficult by the fact that he was living in America and his research was conducted by mail across the Atlantic. Whilst he made significant findings into the genealogy of many Morrisons in America he also drew a fanciful conclusion about Scotland that has led to a proliferation of unsubstantiated claims based on an improbable supposition:

*"... let every Morrison distinctly remember that he is of Scotch descent; that his name is Scotch; and that the terms Scotch-English or Scotch-Irish, so far as they imply a different than Scotch origin, are a perversion of truth, and false to history. All evidence shows that the Island of Lewis, settled by Norsemen, was the cradle of the family; that members of it crossed to the mainland of Scotland, passed into England, Ireland, and spread from there over the earth" (p 70).*

Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality *"all the evidence"* that L A Morrison claimed unravels rapidly under the spotlight of a multidisciplinary approach which includes DNA, broad socio linguistic analysis and historical research. The facts are:

1. it is more probable that the origin of the name came to Scotland from England and spread North (with the Island of Lewis being the last region to adopt the name); which means
2. the name Morrison is not generally of Scottish origin but more likely Anglo-Norman with multiple variations;
3. there is no common Morrison progenitor as there are many different families with unrelated origins who adopted the name that has evolved from many different geographical regions; and finally
4. there is no DNA evidence to substantiate any Norse involvement in the origin of the name.

Most people at some stage in life ponder their origins. There is a Television program titled "Who do you think you are?" that has been syndicated in the UK (BBC1), Australia (SBS) and the USA (NBC) that traces a "celebrity's" family tree. There are numerous books on genealogy, professional researchers and

specialised commercial family tree making computer programs all designed to tap into this lucrative market.

The central finding of this research is that the Scottish Morrisons originated in the Lowlands, identified in historical documents dating from the early 1400s. The Isle of Lewis is not the "cradle of the family" as commonly proposed and has only comparatively recently (1640) become identified with the name Morrison.

The name Morrison is about the twentieth most common surname in Scotland today. The earliest record of the name Morrison so far located is that of "*Arthur Morison domino de Darleith*" as a witness to the "*Resignation by John MacRoger of Gleane MacKerne, in favour of John of Culquoune of Luss, of Gleane Mackecherne, etc. 7th February 1429*" (*The Chiefs of Colquhoun and their country* by William Fraser, Vol 2, Edinburgh 1869 p 287).

Eleven years later in the Aberdeen Burgh records in "**1440** Sept. 18. *Morison, Angus, of Kynkardyn (at request of laird of Drum) Council Register IV., 209*" (Munro, 1890, *Register of Burgesses of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1399-1631*, p 6) was the first of numerous entries found for Morrison in the Aberdeen Burgh register. These Aberdeen Burgh entries are discussed in detail later as they identify an established Morrison cluster in this region. Burgh records from Edinburgh and Glasgow at this time also show many Morrisons. Additionally the records of the Cistercian Monks in the Cupar Angus area during the 1400s identify Morrisons described as farmers.

There is no single definitive theory for the origin of the modern day Morrison spelling, however it is most likely to have evolved from a patronymic form of either (1) Maurice/Morris (from St Maurice) to become 'son of Morris' (Morrison), or (2) Moor/Moore/More to become Moresoun (Morrison), or (3) Moir/Muir to become Muirson (Morrison).

There are no doubt many people named Morrison who adopted the name for whatever reason just as there are those named Morrison who changed their name to another (such as the actor John Wayne). There are other curious origins such as the connection between the Buchanans and MacMaurices discussed later. There is no conclusive proof that has so far been found to support any one or more of these possibilities as being evidence for a single origin. In fact a single origin is a complete nonsense. On the balance of the evidence provided all of the above evolutionary origins demonstrate the more probable conclusion that the name Morrison has manifold origins in a range of territorial regions.

When names were first written they were recorded as they sounded to the writer along with the writer's own peculiar way of spelling. Many of the earliest records were written in Latin by monks whose works were later translated into Anglo Norman English or French, and finally Standard English. There are no doubt many families across Scotland who have surnames derived from a

translator's misunderstanding or even possibly imposed for the sake of convenience by giving a person a name who otherwise didn't have one at the time. Recognition must also be given as to whether the writer was from the Gaelic Highlands or the Scots English (Inglis) Lowlands since this also led to issues of accent, dialect and tradition in the way names were heard or written.

The modern form of the spelling Morrison did not become fixed until the latter half of the 1800s when Scottish records such as Census, Birth, Death and Marriage became standardised. This standardisation coincided with a generally higher level of literacy both amongst the recorders and the population in general, and led to the spelling of surnames that we recognise today. The name Morrison is more commonly found with the "RR" spelling, but some families use a single "R". There is no rule or origin that governs the different spellings. Claims to the contrary are completely erroneous.

This research has explored some of the more available historical records that identify the name Morrison in Scotland. Four prominent Morrison families from the 1500s and 1600s have been chosen as examples of the research process. These families made their mark in the affairs of Edinburgh and Aberdeen. In the Midlothians the Morrisons of Prestongrange and their cousins in Dairsie in Fife held important social and political positions by marrying into wealthy families. In Aberdeen the Morrisons of Bognie and later another unrelated family, the Morrisons of Pitfour, also made astute marriages. The Morrisons of Bognie still maintain a continuous unbroken family lineage dating from 1635, the oldest in Scotland.

In the early part of the 1600s following considerable violent clan unrest in the Western Hebrides and adjacent Highlands, particularly between the MacDonalds, MacCaulays, MacLeods, MacKays and MacKenzies, a number of families on Lewis and Harris and nearby Sutherland on the mainland who had allegiances with these clans saw fit to Anglicise their names from the Gaelic. Some families whose Gaelic names were McBref, MacGilleMhuire and O'Muirghesasain adopted the name Morrison. The name Morrison did not derive from nor is it a translation of MacGilleMhuire as often claimed any more than it is a translation of McBref or O'Muirghesasain.

All Scottish Morrison families have evolved from their separate and unrelated Lowland and Highland origins to become assimilated into a commercially manufactured umbrella 'clan'. There are numerous fanciful representations of the 'clan' descending from Norse Vikings. This mythical representation has no basis in fact. Unfortunately, the repeated publication of this myth in historical and commercial literature has taken on the persona of 'fact' and is promulgated relentlessly by family name websites and 'clan' societies.

The Morrisons of Prestongrange, Dairsie and Bognie all registered their heraldic family crests featuring three Moor or Saracen heads in the 1670s. Similar crests were also registered by the Murison and Muir families. This design featuring three Saracen heads was selected by the Clan Morrison Society of

Scotland in 1919. The motto attached to this crest is "Pretio Prudentia Praesat" (Prudence Excels Rewards).

Following the surge of Scottish nationalism in the early 1800s associated with Sir Walter Scott's prolific writing about Scottish heritage and the visit of King George IV in 1822 splendidly bedecked in tartan, Scottish clans and families were encouraged to develop their own distinct tartans. Three families from the Caithness and Sutherland regions (Gunn, McWilliam and Morrison) selected pattern sett variations of the green MacKay tartan of 1819. A different red Morrison pattern sett of unknown origin was also worn in the 1800s which allow Morrison families today a choice of two tartans, a green or a red. In addition to the myths about the origin of the Morrisons there have also been some spurious claims made about the evolution of the Morrison tartans, however the facts are that both the Green and Red tartans were in common use before 1879.

# The Scottish History of the Morrison Origins

*"There was, not surprisingly, a certain coolness from some who felt their illusions had been shattered and some who had vested interests in 'clanship'"*  
Gordon Donaldson (1995, p 89).

## Chapter 1

### Introductory comment

This research questions the origins of the name Morrison in Scotland. The findings that are presented reach an evidence based conclusion that the commonly published stories of the name originating on the Isle of Lewis are false. This conclusion is self evident after analysing historical and contemporary literature supported by DNA sampling and genealogical data. Generally speaking extensive quotations are by convention not academic practice, however in the context of providing readers with as much historical evidence and a feeling for the historical background this convention has not been followed. In some of the issues covered there are many unanswered questions created by the lack of primary evidence, however tentative answers can be arrived at on the balance of probabilities. What is definite is that the Morrison name originated on the mainland, most probably from the Lowlands, and has evolved into the current spelling from a variety of alternative spellings attached to numerous unrelated families over a broad regional landscape.

### Morrison DNA and the Settlement of Scotland

According to Moffat and Wilson (2012, p xiii) *"Until 9,000 BC, Scotland was empty of people and animals"*. Some of the earliest evidence of movement into Scotland comes from a dig at Cramond near to where modern Edinburgh stands today. Analysis of shells found there suggests settlement *"between 8,600 BC and 8,200 BC. These were the earliest traces yet found of the first people to come to Scotland... We are all, of course, descended from southerners, even those who live in Shetland, Iceland, Lapland and the very farthest extent of of human settlement in the north"* (Moffat and Wilson, 2012, pp 34-5). According to Magnusson (2001, p 3) the discovery of an arrow head in early 1984 in Kinloch dated to about 7000 BC *"was the earliest human settlement yet discovered in Scotland, dating from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) period, nearly nine thousand years ago"*. Then later, discoveries of standing stones on a site named Calanais on the Isle of Lewis date settlement there to around 3000 BC. The people of Lewis refer to these standing stones as *"Fir Bhreige ('False Men'): It is left by tradition that these were a sort of men converted into stone by ane Inchanter. Others affirme that they were sett up in places for devotione"* (John Morisone of South Bragar, c 1684, quoted in Magnussen, 2001, p 7).

The earliest settlements in Scotland therefore took root in the Lowlands before moving north to the highlands and across into to the Northern Isles as the climate continued to moderate and were populated by groups of simple hunter gatherers.

Moffat and Wilson (2012) argue that DNA shows M284 and M26 as some of the earliest markers. Other early markers include the Y DNA M423 and mt DNA U5 and the common H1 and H3 groups. Following these discoveries research shows the early settlers were followed by more persistent farming families carrying the M269 marker with its distinctive R1b which makes up about 70% of men carrying it in Scotland today. M269 is thought to have originated in Southeast Europe in the early Bronze Age. Other descendants of these farmers carry the M172, M201 and M35 markers and point to settlement in the south of Scotland where they still cluster today.

When examining the DNA distribution of Morrisons in Scotland it becomes clear that the idea proposed by L A Morrison (1880) that the cradle of the Morrisons was the Hebridean Isles of Lewis and Harris based on Viking mythology cannot be true. DNA distribution demonstrates the fallacy of this claim. If it is true that the Morrisons evolved from many different origins and that the name Morrison is about the 20th most common name in Scotland today then one might expect to find Morrisons carrying a variety of DNA. It would probably also mean that the majority of Scottish Morrisons would have as their DNA M269, the most common DNA in Scotland. Alternatively, if the Morrisons came from Norse Vikings as per the popular mythology and all came from a single progenitor then they would carry the Norse DNA. According to Moffat and Wilson (2011, p 183) "*In Lewis, there are many men with this particular marker [S142], some in a group known as the Ultra-Norse - clearly one with a Viking provenance*". None however are Morrisons. Of all 430 people tested (as at May 2015) as part of the Morrison DNA project not a single result demonstrates Norse origins.

Although far from being a statistically reliable study, if one takes the sample of Morrisons who are members of the Morrison DNA Project (<http://www.geneticousins.com/morrison>) it is evident that the so called "Clan Morrison" could not have originated in the Hebridean Isles of Lewis and Harris. Scottish Morrisons (that is, only those Morrisons who are identified with Scottish locations such as Lewis/Harris, Aberdeenshire or Fife for example) who have submitted their DNA, the following are some of the Haplo Groups identified: R-M269, R-L21, R-P25, I-L161, I-M253, R-L48, I-P37, R-M222, R-L1335 and R-P310. The DNA of those tested from Lewis/Harris is R-M269, I-M253, R-SRY10831.2, R-L48 and R-P310. The adjacent mainland around Eddrachillas has R-M269 and R-L47>Z159, families that were supposedly from the original settlement of Durness which is discussed later. These irregular samples would tend to support the general rule that the R-M269 DNA marker is the most common in the general Scottish population, and also amongst people carrying the Morrison name. Since M269 is one of the oldest identified DNA markers (according to Moffat and Wilson) in Scotland it suggests the original

Morrison in Scotland came from the South and slowly migrated North over the evolving years of human settlement.

The resultant population differentiation from the northward migration is given by Matheson (2014) who discusses at length the long history of political and military interference by the English in Scotland: *"England's prolonged attempt to subjugate her northern neighbour halted work on nation-building and crystallised the country into three distinct cultural zones: the Lowlands, the Highlands and the Islands. The most feudalised of these was the Lowlands in the south and east of Scotland. This was the heartland of the state ... [and] possessed the richest land for cultivation, the best trading contacts with Europe across the North Sea and the chief towns and ports, but it was also the most exposed to attacks from England. About two-thirds of the population lived here, wore the breeks ... and spoke Scots. [In] the Highlands ... people spoke Scots-Gaelic, were even more clannish than the Lowlanders, wore belted plaid ... and conducted a pastoral economy based on cattle and other stock. [The Isles] had only been added to the Scottish kingdom in the second half of the 13th century ... The people were Gallgaels (i.e. foreign Gaels) of Norse-Celtic stock who spoke in a Gaelic tongue and had a warlike Viking tradition of trading, raiding and piracy..."* (pp 79-80).

Looking back in Scottish history, the sociocultural ways of Lowland life were pushed North and accelerated by political forces. King David had at his disposal Anglo Norman warriors and English barons to enforce the feudal system on the Scots. About the year 1160 Malcolm IV, David's grandson, is said to have removed a large number of the old inhabitants of the district of Moray from their homes, and planted strangers from the Lowlands in their place. Then later in the 1200s and early 1300s the English King Edward 1, the "Hammer of the Scots", created panic in the Lowlands and no doubt many families fled north to escape his punitive raids.

As the pace of social and political change intensified during the 1400s the first Morrisons are identified by surname. The *Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, Vol 1 (AD 1306-1424)* identifies the name "Mauricius" in "Dunblanen". "Mauricius" is a Latin spelling, and could be an early form of the modern spelling Morrison derived from "Morris". However, some of the earliest Morrisons are more clearly identified such as "Arthurio Morison domino de Darleith" and "Morison, Angus, of Kynkardyn" and many others in the Burgh records of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow and in the records of the Cistercian Monks in the Cupar Angus area discussed below.

By the 1500s many Morrisons were identifiable in the historical Burgh records where they showed an active involvement as burgesses and merchants. In 1640 the first Morrison to be recorded on the Isle of Lewis and Harris was the Rev Donald Morrison. MacCoinnich (2015) hypothesises that for Lewis/Harris families originally named McBref, MacGilleMhuire and O'Muirghesasain anglicising or replacing their original Gaelic names to Morrison began after 1640. The practice of "rebranding" a surname was relatively common amongst



Scots who migrated from the Isles and Highlands to the Lowlands, either searching for work or escaping oppression. *"Shortening or dropping the prefix "Mc" or "Mac", or anglicising a gaelic surname, or indeed changing the surname altogether for a similar sounding English one, which would be easier to pronounce and would conceal one's origins, were quite common occurrences ... Lowland clergymen in charge in the Highlands or the Shetland Isles sometimes took the opportunity to anglicise a name in the records"* (Scotlands People: Scottish Surnames and Variants, 2016).

### **What's in a name?**

Some people hold a belief that a name somehow represents a common relationship between all others sharing that name. Thus, if your name is Morrison it follows that sometime in the past you shared a male relative whose name was Morrison. This belief is reinforced by writers of commercial Scottish clan histories who make fanciful claims about the origins of the clans.

Lenman (1984) in his detailed analysis of the Jacobite risings clarifies the oft misunderstood origin of the clans: *"The Gaelic term clann, meaning children, is as much a hindrance as a help when it comes to analysing the historical reality of the Highland clans, for though the concept of kinship which it implies was important as a cement within the clan society, it was never adequate as a binding agent in its own right, and in the early modern period it can be shown, in most cases, to be based mainly on make-believe rather than rooted in genealogical fact. In the case of northern clans such as Grants, Chisholms and Frasers, whose chiefs were probably all of Norman origin, there cannot possibly have been any blood-tie between the first chief and his people. The surnames which are the hallmark of modern clans were not in general use in the Highlands before the seventeenth century"* (p 138-139).

The most common myth about the origin of the Morrison name associates it with a group of Hebridean islanders who were reputed to be descended from Norse Vikings. The study of available scholarly literature and DNA evidence demonstrates that this claim is false.

The mythical fable about the Norse origin of the Morrison name suggests there was a single progenitor, meaning all people with the name Morrison are related. To reinforce this point by way of a tongue in cheek example, could we say that the 2010 President of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan, is related to David Jonathan of Sussex in the UK and Jacob Jonathan in Miami USA? They all share the same surname, therefore they must be related. But what if it turns out that David Jonathan adopted his name from his foster parents who raised him when his biological parents were killed in a German bombing raid in WW2. Jacob Jonathan from Miami got his surname from his father, a Polish refugee from WW2, who changed his name from Janusz Jarogniew to John Jonathan.

Consider also males named Morrison at birth who later changed to another name, for example, the legendary American screen actor John Wayne. He was

born Marion Robert Morrison, but when he began his acting career a producer convinced him to change his name to John Wayne. Does this mean people with the surname Wayne are related to John Wayne?

There is also this example in 1782 of a male surname being changed to the wife's surname when Isobel Morrison (eldest daughter of James Morrison of Naughton) married: *"Isobel Morison, of Naughton, Bogley, Drummie, Nydie, &c., b. 1760, m. William Bethune, of Blebo, eo. Fife. This gentleman, paternally Chalmers, m. 1st, in 1782, Margaret, sister and heir of Henry Bethune, of Blebo, and assumed that surname.. He afterwards took the additional surname of Morison, and had an only child, Isabella Maxwell Morison"* (Burke, Online, p 2117).

To help the reader understand the complexity of the anthroponomastics of the surname Morrison in Scotland, it is important to state from the outset there are a multitude of origins for the name Morrison, just like the name Jonathan above, and only a few close knit communities existing today have within them any kin who can at best be traced back a few hundred years. Unless you are related to one of the ancient kings or noble families of Scotland authenticated by the historical records then in reality who you descend from is anybody's guess. There are few reliable historical records available to verify family relationships dating back to early Scotland.

In terms of tracing Morrison family origins the often quoted myth about the Vikings who invaded the Hebrides in the 9th Century is, according to John Morrison (quoted in Thomas, 1876-78) and Captain F W L Thomas (1876-78), the starting point for all the Morrisons in Scotland. Should we blindly accept their assertions as fact?

This is how the myth began. The seventeenth century "indweller" John Morrison of Lewis (quoted by Thomas (1876-78, p 504)) wrote: *"The first and most ancient inhabitants of this countrie [Lewis] were three men of three several races, viz. Mores, the son of Kennanus, whom the Irish historians call Makurich, whom they make to be naturall son to one of the kings of Norovay, some of whose posteritie remains in this land to this day. All the Morrisons in Scotland may challenge their descent from this man"*.

L A Morrison (1880) appears to have blindly accepted this claim and by what he read in Thomas' article and concluded *"... These traditions all point in the same direction, and establish beyond reasonable doubt the common origin of the family, and Lewis as its early home"* (1880, p 20). As previously documented no Morrison DNA tested on Lewis/Harris or any other region show any Norse DNA, and it is also of importance to state that the Morrisons who claim Irish descent who have been DNA tested do not show any evidence of Norse genetics either.

Far from being the origin of the name Morrison in Scotland, the Morrisons of Lewis and Harris are a comparatively recent group of Morrisons who simply

adopted or Anglicised their Gaelic names some time early in the 1600's. Well before these families from the Hebrides there were people using the name Morrison who were settled throughout the Lowlands whose ancestors had probably moved north into Scotland at a time before 1400 when the name was first translated in historical documents "*Arthuro Morison domino de Darleith*" as a witness to the "*Resignation by John MacRoger of Gleane MacKerne, in favour of John of Culquoune of Luss, of Gleane Mackecherne, etc. 7th February 1429*" (Fraser, 1869, p 287). Other less recognisable but possible references can be found in the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland are "Mauricius" (Vol 1, 1306-1424) and "Makmurison" (Vol 2, 1424-1513). To put these dates into an historical perspective, the Scottish King James I was assassinated in 1437, and in 1446 William Sinclair commenced work on Rosslyn Chapel.

The origins of family names is not dissimilar to the geographic origins of Scotland. The Scottish BBC TV documentary presenter Neil Oliver gives an excellent overview about the beginnings of Scotland in the series titled '*A History of Scotland*' (2008-2009) from the time of the violent tectonic, glacial and volcanic actions upon the landscape, the peopling of the land and their ever so gradual and eventual intermixing and settled ways of life. Moffat and Wilson (2011) detail their theory of genetic migration into Scotland from the time of the melting of the ice that covered the landscape around 9,000 BC. What Scotland never had were pockets of discrete clans that emerged spontaneously dotted all over the map who were identified by tartans and traditions. The clans, identified by surnames, evolved slowly through history with changing allegiances and bloody clashes over ever changing territorial boundaries.

Moffat and Wilson (2011) give a compelling insight into the peopling of Scotland through DNA analysis: "*Every Scot is an immigrant. Until 9,000 BC, Scotland was empty of people and animals. For 15,000 years, ice, more than a kilometre thick in places, had crushed the land under pitiless white sterility where nothing could live. When the ice sheets finally retreated, small bands of pioneers moved north into a virgin landscape*" (p xiii). They further make the point that "*As well as Y chromosomes, men inherit surnames and, as these came increasingly into common use in the early modern period, they help set genetic findings against a familiar background. For example, Scotland's Highland clans often claim descent from a common name-father but recent research shows that some of these men may have been fathers in more than name only*" (p xiv).

Broad "family name" groupings that we recognise today as "clans" evolved over time, and even then they were subject to infusions of outside genetic material with the inevitable ebb and flow of boundaries and invasions. Added to this, not all members of a clan necessarily shared a common surname for it was normal practice for families living within the clan lands to adopt the name of their chief. The clan industry we see today is really a nineteenth century invention, fuelled by eager tourism marketers keen to profit from the sale of clan bric-a-brac and popularised by the Hollywood award winning film

*Braveheart* (Mel Gibson, 1995). *Braveheart* is littered with sentimental nonsense about William Wallace (1270- 1305) and historical inaccuracies. It even has a part for a Lanark villager named Morrison whose wife was the victim of a so-called practice of *Primae Noctis* in 1296. This filmic character would make him the first person in Scotland to have the surname Morrison, a name that did not become as a recognisable written surname until the early 1400s.

### **The multiple origins of the Morrison surname**

What does claiming to be Scottish mean? Scottish people have evolved from an amalgamation of Picts (northern Scotland down to the borders), Gaels (the Western Isles and South West Scotland), Britons (from the south moving north across the border country) as well as the Romans, Normans, Norse Vikings and Germanic peoples such as the Anglo-Saxons and Flemish who all had a significant influence on the genetic mix. Then there were the European traders such as the Poles and the Dutch who brought further ethnic mixes into the equation. The French had a significant impact around the time of Mary Queen of Scots. George F Black (1946) cites, for example, the origin of some families in Buckhaven in Fife being from a Dutch ship that was stranded about the time of Phillip II of Spain in 1556 (p xix). Modern Scots are therefore like the crystals in a kaleidoscope, the more you turn the viewer the more the pattern changes.

For some Scots, particularly in the Orkneys and Western Isles in the 9th Century the Vikings infused themselves into all aspects of their lives. The Scandinavians from this time held suzerainty over the Orkneys, the Western Isles and the Hebridean Isles (including Skye, Harris and Lewis) until 1266. However, the most fluid ethnic influences came from the ebb and flow across the lowland borders where successive waves of Angles, Romans, Normans and English swept into what is now Scotland attempting to either tame the "savages" or claim sovereignty. The Lowlands became a melting pot of genetic variety.

So who are the Morrisons? They are a blend of peoples who by history or desire either became known as Morrison or who changed or adopted the name. If you analyse the genetic makeup of people calling themselves Morrison today you see a spectrum of DNA meaning one thing, there is no common descent. They are a heterogenous mixture. These different people were drawn together in the 1800s by an institutional decree insisting on the uniformity of spelling surnames so that public documents could become reliable and traceable records, for example, births, deaths and marriages.

### **The Earliest Morrisons**

Buchanan (1723, p 2) wrote "*The existence of any Surnames as now used before the reign of King Malcolm Canmore, which commenced in the year 1057, is vigorously controverted by a great many of this age; and the first*

*surnames which commenced in, or shortly after that reign, were local surnames, or those denominated from the lands first acquired by the assumers of these surnames*". According to Black (1946, p xiii) "[T]he use of fixed surnames or descriptive names appears to have commenced in France about the year 1000, and such names were introduced into Scotland through the Normans a little over one hundred years later, though the custom of using them was by no means common for many years afterward". The first Scots to have surnames were those of noble lines and wealthy landowners.

To tie this in with historical reference points in Scotland in the years 1057-1093 AD Malcolm Canmore (who succeeded MacBeth) became Malcolm III, King of Scotland. King Malcolm III reigned for thirty-five years, and one of his historical legacies was the securing of the border country between Cumbria and Northumberland.

After the Normans arrived in Britain in 1066 their conquest drove many of the English aristocracy north into Scotland, including Princess Margaret of Hungary, the granddaughter of Edmund Ironside (half brother of Edward the Confessor). At this time Malcolm Canmore was a widower. When he heard that Edgar the Atheling and his mother and two sisters had landed in Fife he rode from Dunfermline to greet them. It is recorded that he fell in love with the flaxen haired beauty Margaret (one of Edgar's two sisters) and married her. This marriage produced children who became future kings of Scotland and princesses who married into English royalty (see Magnussen, 2001, p 65). The following years of Malcolm's reign saw many battles between the Scots and the English Normans which eventually led to Malcolm and his son Edward being killed by Robert de Mowbray. It is from this period of Scotland's history that the Norman influence becomes most noticeable, particularly during the reign of David I (1124-1153).

David I had many English friends such as the Bruces, Balliols and Stewarts to whom he gave large grants of land. His allegiances to the Benedictine and Cistercian monks saw their influence expand through the borders into the Lowlands by way of Abbeys and business enterprises, building settlements and employing many people. These settlements were based on Norman administrative structures of authority and management: a castle, walled settlement, tax collectors and well educated priests who controlled the local commerce and burgh affairs. So we have from Malcolm III to David I a rapid expansion of Norman influence throughout the fertile Lowlands. This was augmented by Henry II of England expelling all Flemish people in 1155. Many of their number ended up in Scotland, particularly in Fife around St Andrews and up into Aberdeenshire. Around 1160 Malcolm IV is recorded as "planting" many Lowlanders into the Moray region and forcing out the original inhabitants. Readers might like to keep this fact in mind when assessing the evidence of the possibility of the name Morrison originating in the Lowlands in much the same way Gilmore did.

From the time of David I onwards burgh settlements saw surnames of English and Flemish backgrounds appearing including some which were associated to trades such as "goldsmith". A document described by Cosmo Innes to date from 1200 identifies such names as Gilchrist (Gillecrist) and Gilmore (Gylmor) living in the Midlothians (Black, 1946, p xxi). The Ragman Roll of 1296 is remarkable for the recording of names that clearly show English ancestry (see Black, pp xxi-xxiv). Thus there is a clear and unambiguous pattern of the spread of Anglo Norman surnames into the Lowlands of Scotland.

## **Morrison Clusters**

Many Morrison clusters have been identified throughout Scotland after moving north from the Borders through to the Lothians, Fifeshire, Perthshire, Forfarshire, Aberdeenshire, then later in Ross and Cromarty before the final cluster on Lewis and Harris was established following their adoption of the name Morrison in the 1600s. Other areas around Glasgow, Stirling and Clackmannanshire saw early Morrison establishment. There are also strong associations with the name Morrison in Ireland and England. Today the name Morrison is recorded as about the twentieth most common name in Scotland, and is prominently seen throughout the UK via the Morrison chain of supermarkets and fuel distributors established in Yorkshire by an English Morrison family.

If one looks at all the evidence then any proposition that the name Morrison came from a single source is quite erroneous. There are in fact numerous distinct Morrison groupings that have been identified, but since the time of Walter Scott in the early 1800s they have somehow been subsumed under one umbrella "clan" to satisfy a market hungry for ancient myths. As has been shown, DNA testing demonstrates the diversity of origin.

David Moody attempts to disentangle the common belief that all members of a "clan" are related. Quoting Donaldson (1995) on the subject of surnames Moody suggests "*casual assumptions or guesses about kinship and descent based solely on surnames are no substitute for serious research into ancestry* (p 86). Further, he agrees with Donaldson's major point regarding the *unwarranted assumption ... that individuals sharing a surname have, or at some time had, blood relationship with one another*" (p 87) because it is based on a false assumption.

The key here is the difference between genealogy (the study and tracing of lines of descent) and etymology (the origin and meaning of names). That is, just because your name is Morrison does not mean you are related or that your early ancestors were Morrisons. This is further distorted by the origins of the name which suggests a variety of sources based on both the etymology and ethnography of human migration (that is for example, Pict, Gael, Germanic, Anglo-Saxon, Norse, Roman or Norman just to name a few!).

Cosmo Innes is quoted in the 'Miscellany of the New Spalding Club' which was printed as a 'Note on names in the Register of Burgesses' from his essay titled 'Concerning Some Scotch Surnames': *"I wish you would turn back with me to the twelfth or thirteenth century, and fancy your-selves dwelling in a Scotch town in the time of King William the Lion, or his son Alexander II. The place to which you will be pleased to bear me company is a little burgh by the sea-shore, and where a river's mouth gives shelter to a few rude fishing boats, and one or two barks of larger size"*. The "Note" goes on: *"He then goes on to ask how the people in his burgh were distinguished from each other by names. That Aberdeen was the burgh he had in view seems most likely. The list of Burgesses here given, beginning in the year 1399, is therefore most interesting, as the earliest list of names of Aberdeen folk known to exist. The date of it is considerably later than that selected by Cosmo Innes. Consequently the changes which were going on in nomenclature in William the Lion's time are now less apparent, and the methods of naming have, so to speak, become crystallised"* (Miscellany of the New Spalding Club, 1890, pp xl-xliii, Note on the Names in the Register of Burgesses).

Traditionally there are numerous ways a surname evolved. Cosmo Innes (1890, see the footnote for his examples) lists nine potential origins: (1) Territorial names, (2) Patronymics, (3) Trades or occupations, (4) Personal qualities, (5) Foreigners or travelled Scots, (6) Names from signs, (7) Names from Saints, Apostles etc, (8) Certain Norman Names belonging mostly to the Territorial Class, and (9) Celtic Names. Barber (1894, p 6) suggests at least eight ways that a surname could have come into being: (1) Nicknames, (2) Clan or tribal names, (3) Place names, (4) Official names, (5) Trade names, (6) Christian names, (7) Foreign names, and (8) Foundling names (See Footnote below for examples regarding Cosmo Innes' description of the origin of names, p 22).

Establishing the origin of many surnames in Scotland is no easy task since for some the name they were given bore no genetic link to paternity. From the list of early spellings of the name Morrison many Morrisons may have come from patronymic forms of Muir (Muirson), More (Moreson or Moresoun) or Maurice (Mauriceson). There are a host of spellings scattered throughout the historical documents of Scotland which have later been transcribed into the modern spelling of Morrison including Morison, Morisson, Morisone, Morrieson, Morriceson, Morason, Moorison, Morisoun, Moresoun, Murison, Muirison, Murieson, Murrison, Muresoun, Muirsoun and no doubt many other phonetic synonyms or Anglicised adaptations. A curious addition to this list could also include MacGillemorisone, a rare name found in Ardmanoch which no longer exists (Black, 1946, p 500).

In addition to patronymic derivations, some names have derived from personal characteristics and *"became detached from their descriptive meaning and took on a life of their own as what we call a surname, which is passed from father to son"* (Moody p 88). Buchanan (1723, p 173) gives the example of a man of large stature being named "Stooping" Maurice.

One of the most detailed and scholarly approaches to Scottish surnames is the outstanding work by George F Black: *The Surnames of Scotland, Their Origin, Meaning, and History* (first printed in 1946 at the New York Public Library). Black notes that "Morrison" derives from "son of Maurice" and "*Forms of Maurice (from Lat. Mauricius, 'moorish', the name of a saint martyred in 286AD) ... as introduced into Britain by the Normans among whom it was popular*" (p 612). He traces the modern Morrison form to Latin documents in Glasgow in 1450 when the name was "Mauricii". In 1463 he identifies Andreas Morison, a licentiate of law in St Andrews. In the sixteenth century Scots Guards records show the spelling as Maurieson. In Kirkcaldy in 1540 Moresone, and later Moresoune, Moriesone and Moriesoun, were alternative spellings. Other interesting variations are found in Aberdeen in 1448 as Mwryson, and 1448 in Kirkcaldy as Murysone (p 621). However, regardless of Black's scholarship, caution should be taken against automatically accepting that Morrison derives from "son of Maurice". The plethora of early surname spellings which we recognise as Morrison today serves as a timely reminder not to leap to single derivation conclusion.

Up until surnames became standardised they were often written as they sounded to the scribe. This no doubt contributed to the many variations of the spelling of Morrison. From this range of alternative spellings in Scottish documents over the past 700 years there are at least three modern surnames that can be distilled from the following list (discussed in detail in Chapter 2):

**de la More, Moore, Moir, Muir  
StMaurice, MacMaurice  
Mauricii, Morris**

**Mauricius, Maurieson, Marrson, Maryson, Merson, Morrison, Morison, Morisson, Morissone, Morcion, Morisone, Morsion, Moryson, Morrieson, Morriceson, Morishon, Morason, Morzon, Moorison, Morisoun, Moresoun, Moressoune, Morrowson, Murrion, Murison, Muirison, Murieson, Murrison, Muresoun, Muirsoun, Murson, Murescun, Murysone, Mwryson, Makmurisoun, M'Mursoun, MacMaurice**

**Morison**

**Morrison**

**Muirson**



Whilst the spelling of Morison or Morrison have been the more widely accepted modern corrections of the early variations of spellings given above, the name Muirson has also persisted as modern surname in its own right. There are grounds for suggesting that all three names are related in origin by virtue of their similar family crests featuring three Moor's heads. The difficulty in arriving at a consensus view on their origins would have to include research into the interrelatedness of the three surnames of Morris, Moore and Muir (and their various spellings) to determine if at any stage all three are but variations or not of one or more original surnames. Such a task may well prove impossible, and for many people named Morrison today determining which variant their name derived from may never be known. There are just too many "ifs", "buts" and "maybes" to ever arrive at a definitive answer. There are no doubt many Morrisons who were once written Muirson in the original records who were "tidied up" by a later scribe, and there is an equally probable chance that some Muirsons were early forms of Morrison who were "tidied up" in the opposite way.

To further demonstrate the point regarding the variations of the spellings of the same name, R R Stodart's 1881 work *"Scottish Arms, being a collection of armorial bearings AD 1370-1678"* changes the spelling from *"Moresoun of Darse; or Prestongrang [sic], 1643"* and then writes *"John Morison, bailie and treasurer of Edinburgh, who died in 1615, was called "the rich'..."* (p 155) in the next sentence. Stodart's citation of these two related Morrison families refers to the Morrisons of Dairsie and Prestongrange. Their history which began in Edinburgh during the mid 1500s is detailed later in Chapter 6 .

There are many references which predate Black's 1450 Glasgow claim. The earliest record of the name Morrison so far located is *"Arthur Morison domino de Darleith"* as a witness to the *"Resignation by John MacRoger of Gleane MacKerne, in favour of John of Culquoune of Luss, of Gleane Mackecherne, etc. 7th February 1429"* (Fraser, 1869 p 287).

Other early mentions include 1440 in the Aberdeen Burgh Records (*"1440 Sept. 18. Morison, Angus, of Kynkardyn (at request of laird of Drum) Council Register IV., 209"*, Register of Burgesses of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1399-1631, p 6) the name "Morrison" is also cited in the Coupar-Angus area in the Rental Books of the Cistercian Abbey monks (*Rental Book of the Cistercian Abbey of Cupar-Angus* edited by Rev. Charles Rogers, Vo 1, 1879) dated 1443 *"Redfurdhalch 21. A tack of two parts to Gothra Morison,.. Balmyle 22. A tack to Gothra Morison, Henry Androuson, Richard Morison,.."* (p 121). Then another entry *"Camsy with teind sheaves 56. 1449. The sixth part of Aberbothery is let to Symon Morison ..."* (p 127).

A final reference to consider regarding the evolution of the Morrison name comes from The Internet Surname Database: *"Recorded in several spellings including Morrison, Morrieson, Morison, and Moryson, this is an Anglo-Scottish surname, which is almost equally popular in Ireland. It is the patronymic form of the surname Maurice or Morris, deriving from the Latin "Mauritius", and*

*meaning swarthy, from "Maurus", a Moor. ..The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Robert Morisson. This was dated 1379, in the Poll Tax records of Yorkshire, during the reign of King Edward 1st, 1272 - 1307. Throughout the centuries, surnames in every country have continued to "develop" often leading to astonishing variants of the original spelling" (<http://www.surnamedb.com/Surname/Morrison>).*

The above reference for "Robert Morisson" is in fact "Ricardus Morisson" and is located in the Yorkshire Poll Tax records of 1379 described as the Morley wapentake (subdivision), Birstall Parish, Gomersall: "Ricardus Morisson and uxor [wife] iiii.d." (Yorkshire: Some of the Subsidy Rolls (Poll Tax) for the year 1379 (Peter Nelson/Colin Hinson, GENUKI), Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journals, the Yorkshire Archaeological Society).

The conclusion from this analysis of the Morrison name in Scotland implies that it is Anglo-Scottish, and the Morrisons from the Lowlands were probably the original bearers of the name in Scotland, complete with their crest of three Moor's heads. According to Moody (1988, p 19) surnames only became fixed in the Highlands in the eighteenth century. In other words highland surnames were still changing as late as the 1700s. Donaldson clearly makes the point that surnames are not an infallible guide to family relationship and pedigree: "The distinction between a Highland and Lowland origin has often been effaced when a Gaelic name has been translated into English... MacGille-mhoire becomes Morison which means that they are added to the host of unrelated patronymics spanning the whole country and with no affinity among them" (Gordon Donaldson quoted in "Scotland's History: Approaches and Reflections", James Kirk (ed), 1995, pp 89-94). Readers should be aware that Morrison is not a translation from the Gaelic name MacGilliemhoire as often claimed. Black (1946): "Equally baseless is the modern idea that "Morison" interpreted as "Mary's son," represents Gaelic Mac Gille Mhuire" (p 639).

### **Footnote regarding Cosmo Innes' description of the origin of names:**

*If one were to attempt to classify these early Aberdeen names, one would find them grouping themselves somewhat in this fashion:*

*1. Territorial names. These seem to have been introduced by the Normans, and originally had before them. Of the earlier names, the following seem to belong to this class: Balrain, i.e., Village of Rayne, now Old Rain, Burnet, Kyntor, Moir or More, i.e., Moor or Muir (Cosmo Innes thinks it is territorial and not the Celtic word = big), Inverory, Marr, Borthwick, Lownan (Lunan ?) Leith (Leith), Buchania (Buchan), Mirden (Myreden), Lambyntan (Lamington ?), Alves, Hervy (?) Petfour, Kent, Mernys, Polgowny (Balgownie ?), Moravia (Murray), Tulach (Tulloch), Cadiou (Cadzow), Liddale, Rettre (Rattray), Vaus (DeVaux), Greenlaw, Ruthirfurd, &c,&c. The "learned" Camden says: "Neither must all having their names from places suppose that their Auncestors were either Lordes or possessors of them; but may assure themselves that they originally came from them or were borne at them.*

2. *Patronymics.* This was an earlier form, and it is interesting to see it surviving so late as the beginning of the 15th century. To this class belong names like : —John, son of Henry, i.e., John Henryson ; John, son of Thomas, i.e., John Thomson ; John Man, i.e., John, son of Magnus, or John Magnuson (a Norse name). So we find Davidson, Johnson, Andrewson, i.e., Anderson, Alanson, Walterson, Williamson, Howison (Hughson ?), Smythson, Glenyson (son of some one from Glenesk?), Robertson. Sometimes names occur like William Andrew, which means William Andrewson, or Anderson. Besides the regular termination, son, added to the ordinary name, other forms are found, such as: for Dickson, Dickie, Dickens Jones, Jack, Jackson ; Lawson = Laurenceson.

3. *Trades and occupations.* Blyndcele (from sealing or covering the eyes of the falcons), Cf. Fowler, Falconer ; Bosser, Cf. Bouchier (Cotgrave's Diet., a butcher), Wodman(Woodman), Cury (Currier?), Banerman, De Camera (Chambers, Chalmers), Clerk, Sellar, Hukar (Hooker, in harvesting), Walker (= Fuller, Waulk Mills still preserve the name in many parishes), Sutar (Shoemaker, L. sutor), Huntar, Webster, Taillor, Scherar, Baxter (Baker), Dyer, Lorymer (Bridle-maker), Littstar (=Dyer), Cordonar, Masson, Coupar, Skynnar, Flegear ( Fletcher=arrow- maker).

4. *Personal qualities.* Strang (Strong), Sprint (Quick), Slynk (Lean), Yhung, Gray, Broun, Qwite (White), Smale (Small), Sperk (Sparrow-hawk), Gychon (Gudgie, short, thick set), Crusank (Crooked-shanks), Girk (Gurk ? same as gudgie), Coky, Leper, Hoggis, Wan, Sleich (= skilful, sly), Og (Celtic, young), Tode (Todd, fox), Red (Reid), Dog (Doak), Pyot, Ouhitbrow, Littlejohn, Wisman, Thin, Hardgrip.

5. *Foreigners or Travelled Scots.* Scot (a name the bearer had gained while residing furth of Scotland), Aberdene, Inglis (English).

6. *Names from Signs.* Before shops were numbered, they were distinguished by signs. Hence we get names like Bell, Lamb, Oliphant (?) (Elephant), Swan, Herrowne (Heron).

7. *Names from Saints, Apostles, &c.* Michaelis (afterwards Mitchell), Michaelson. Most of the Christian names are of this class, and these became surnames with son added — John, Thomas, Nicholas, Patrick, Andrew, Laurence, Philip.

8. *Certain Norman Names belonging mostly to the Territorial Class are found disguised.* Among these, Menzies (De Maneriis, Eng. Manners), Mowat (De Monte Alto), Vaus (De Vaux, i.e., De Vallibus), Bisset, Bruce, Cumyn, Hay (De La Haye).

9. *Celtic names are far from numerous. Indeed, the population would seem to have been mainly Teutonic. Macbeth is found. So also Donald, Duncan, Og, Farcharson, Kennedy, Gillespie, Kay, Mcrave (Macrae ?), Raa (Rae), Farquhar, Findelayson"*

(Miscellany of the New Spalding Club, 1890, pp xl- xliii, Note on the Names in the Register of Burgesses).

### **Note on the definitions of some Gaelic names**

**MacGilliemhoire**, the most commonly misrepresented translation is often erroneously suggested to be Gaelic for Morrison. The literal translation is "son of the servant of Mary". Black (1946): "*Equally baseless is the modern idea that "Morison" interpreted as "Mary's son," represents Gaelic Mac Gille Mhuire*" (p 639).

**MacGillies**, literal translation "son of the servant of Jesus" (Black, 1946 p 501).

**MacGilliebhrath** literal translation "son of the servant of judgement" (Black, 1946, p 502) which became MacGillivray. One could reasonably ask why this Gaelic name was never adopted on Lewis.

Finally, according to Colin Mark (2003, The Gaelic-English Dictionary) these two Gaelic spellings: **Moireasdan** and **Moireasdanach**, translate to Morrison.

## Chapter 2

### The Evolution of the Morrison name

The most heated academic debates often involve arguments that are contrary to a prevailing orthodoxy. If an opposing argument is strong enough it should overthrow the orthodoxy, but some adherents will never be persuaded as they cling desperately to their piece of "driftwood". This chapter presents arguments that challenge the orthodoxy regarding the origins of the Morrisons in Scotland commonly purveyed in commercial "clan" materials and literature and perpetuated via "clan" society websites. If one enters "Morrison" into a search engine the result is a cascade of syrupy myths about gallant Hebridean warriors who descended from Norse kings and became the administrators of justice in their capacity as brieves. This in part is misplaced nostalgia, celebrating Norse folklore rather than Scottish heritage.

Put plainly, all Morrisons did not originate in the Hebrides and are not descended from Norse Vikings. The Morrisons are a wide ranging loose collection of families with no essential genealogical or DNA connection. The most probable origin of the surname is an evolving amalgam of either St Maurice on the one hand, and/or the patronymic transformation of Muir or More. In between there are other colourful theories such as Sir Kenneth More and the Crusades. Over time the name Morrison has been synthesised from a variety of origins and become fixed. It could equally have become fixed as Moore, Moir, Muir or Murison, and certainly there are numerous other permutations of the name all around the periphery with some vague historical connection.

### What are the possible origins of the Morrison name?

Making sense of all that has been written about the name Morrison be it fable, speculation, history or fact requires a similar skill of being able to weave a recognised clan tartan from all its basic ingredients without a pattern. One of the more established theories about the origin of the name Morrison is that it has mutated from the Roman Moor Legion commander named Maurice who was later canonised by the Catholic Church to become Saint Maurice. This explains but one theory in the process of evolution of the name. Next is the tricky bit, how did a single Moor's head which was a symbol of bravery on medieval European armorials develop into three Moors heads in 1672 on the Morrison, Muirson and Moir armorials with a completely different symbolic meaning, namely gory trophies of battle?

The relevant ingredients for evolution into the Morrison name are:

1. St Maurice
2. Morrison and the Buchanan connection
3. The name Moir and More
4. Sir Kenneth More and The Crusades

## 1. St Maurice



**St. Maurice, Magdeburg Cathedral, Germany**

Maurice (of Aganaum) was a Moor after whom the name Maurice or Morris is said to have derived. According to legend he was a 3rd Century leader of the Roman Thebian Legion. Maurice came from the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes and was a Christian who joined the Roman army. From there he is supposed to have been ordered by the Roman Emperor Maximian to harass some Christians in the Swiss area of Aganaum. Maurice refused and he and many of his men were executed. For his act of martyrdom he was created a Saint.

Because Maurice was an Egyptian he is portrayed as a black man. He became the patron saint of the Holy Roman Empire from the beginning of the 10th century. According to European Heraldry the insignia of the black head was probably meant to represent Maurice the soldier saint since a majority of the arms awarded were knightly or military. Thus the origin of the Blackamoor (the black Moor head) on many coats of arms is a recognition of a church militant and champion of the Roman Church in a time when its authority was being challenged by Luther and Calvin.

The arrival of the name Maurice is reported as coming to England from Normandy with William the Conqueror about 1066. During the reign of David I of Scotland (1124-1153) a strong Norman influence was introduced into many parts of Scotland. This was a result of rewarding Norman warriors with land after they helped subdue the warring Moray family. The Normans also helped David I maintain control of the the border regions, including Carlisle which was for a time part of Scotland.

## 2. Morrison and the Buchanan connection

In a fascinating historical manuscript William Buchanan (1723, p 173) suggests there are two "Septs" of the MacMaurices who derived their name from the illegitimate children of two Buchanan Lairds:

1. Firstly, in the time of King Robert I (1306-1329) and King Robert III (1390-1406) there was an illegitimate son of the the Laird of Buchanan, Maurice (2nd Maurice) who was the 10th Laird of the Buchanans. His name was Arthur MacMaurice who is identified as a witness to a charter by Eugen MacKessan of Garchel some time between 1390-1406. These MacMaurices lived mainly in the Strathern, Strathallan and Callandar area.

2. "Stooping" (a personal or nickname given because of his large stature) Maurice, illegitimate son to Walter Buchanan (4th Walter) was the 15th Laird of the Buchanans who succeeded his father Patrick in 1474. A grand-child of Stooping Maurice was involved in a murder and was forced to flee to Scoon [Scone] in Perthshire and these descendants are now named Morreises or Morrison and live around this area through to Stirling and Culross.

*"There are two several Septs of these MacMaurices, descended off the Family of Buchanan at two different junctures of time. The ancestor of the first of these Septs, for any thing can be found, was an illegitimate son of Maurice, second of that name, laird of Buchanan, in the latter part of the reign of King Robert I. [1306-1329], and beginning of King David II. [1329-1371]. The first of these I find upon record, is Arthur MacMaurice, being witness in a charter by Eugen MacKessan of Garchel in favour of Celestin MacLachlan, and Arthur M'Neil, of that part of the estate of Garchel, called Auchintroig, Gartclach, & c. in the reign of King Robert III. [1390-1406]. Those of this race reside mostly in the heads of Straithern, and Strathallan, and a few of them in the parish of Callendar. The other Sept of these MacMaurices, is descended of one Stooping Maurice, illegitimate son to Walter, fourth of that name, laird of Buchanan, in the reign of King James III. [1460-1488]. This Maurice is reported to have been of very huge stature, but withal so very coarse and unhandsome, as gave occasion for his being little regarded; so that in the time of King James IV. [1488-1513], the Laird of Buchanan, with most of his name, having gone to the battle of Flowdon, left Maurice, with some other invalids to oversee affairs at home; there being at that time, some feud or variance betwixt MacKenzie Laird of Kintail and Buchanan; Kintail thought this a fit time to carry on the same, and sending for that effect, one Kenneth MacKenzie, a brother, or some near relation of his own, with eighty men, to harass Buchanan's lands, these came to a hill betwixt Drymen and Buchanan, in sight of the latter, and being fatigued, lay down among the heather to take some little repose. Mean while,*

*Maurice getting some notice of the advance of his party, went to get surer intelligence, and passing accidentally near the hill in which the party lay, Kenneth, the captain, observing him, went alone to him, to get information of the state of the country. Maurice seeming to take little notice of him, went still on, giving no satisfactory answer to any of his demands; which at length so exasperated MacKenzie, that he gave Maurice a stroak with his sword, not being at the trouble of drawing the same; which was no sooner done, than Maurice gave him such a stroak with his battle-ax, as clave his head to the teeth, whereupon he returned instantly to Buchanan, and alarmed the country. The party in a little time awakening, and finding their captain in that bad posture, returned with all speed back without doing the least violence. The place where this action was done, yet retains the name of Kenneth's plain. A grand-child of this Maurice, having killed a servant of my Lord Glencairn, who resided in Kilmaronock, was obliged to leave his native country of Buchanan, and go to the village of Scoon, north of Tay. His posterity in these parts, are termed Morreises, or Morrisons. Some of these came thence, and settled upon Forth, betwixt Stirling and Culross, of whom, are descended most of the Morisons in those parts. There are also some of this last Sept in the parish of Buchanan, who retain their ancient name of MacMaurice, but very few in number (pp 173-175).*

In stark contrast to the passionate writing of William Buchanan and his history of the clans, Adam (1908, p 296) in a similarly themed work also cites these two origins of MacMaurice in his description of the Buchanan Septs but does not mention the Morrison connection to Stooping Maurice. The Adam work also references the Morrison origins (p 276-7) but apart from quoting Sir Robert Gordon and Captain Thomas, repeats the mythology without any evidence. Overall it is a significant work that gives few references for the reader to evaluate the source of his theories and statements. William Buchanan's account of the Maurice/MacMaurice/Morrison history should be placed in the basket along with other unsubstantiated family myths since there is no verification of the veracity of the story.

### **3. The name Moir, More, Moor, Moore, Mure and Muir**

From his research Henry Paton (in Alexander Moir, 1913) believed the name More existed in England at the time of the Domesday Book in 1086 (written as de More). There are other names in the Doomsday book which also lend themselves to the possibility of corrupted pronunciations such as "Morin" (that is, son of Morin would become Morinson) and so also for "de Moriton" and "Moruain" if entered as "traditional soundex" options in the Statutory Registers of Scottish Births, Marriages and Deaths become Morrison. With regards to these "Doomsday" examples, these are very general and unproven connections



that are problematic in the sense that there is no body of proof available and should therefore be viewed with caution.

Norman names are well recorded in early historical documents, including those researched by Henry Barber (1894) such as "*Morries, Mourreis, Murrees. D.B. [Doomsday Book] Mauric\* [tenant in chief], Marais, loc. n. [place name in Normandy]*" (p 73). Later there is the reference to the name Morriss from the French Maurice or Morisse which appears in the Roll at Battle Abbey as Morries (Barber, 1894, p 166).

Paton (in Muir, 1913) goes on to say that it was "*in the form "de la More" or "Mora" that the name [More] came to Scotland. In 1213, an Adam de la Mora was sent by King John of England to the King of Scotland with a gift of gyrfalcons. It looks as if he, and perhaps some others of his name, had then settled in Scotland, for by the end of that century, when Edward 1 was dealing with the Scots about the succession of the Scottish Crown, there were a considerable number of "De la Mores," including an Adam de la More, in Ayreshire and Lanarkshire*" (in Alexander Moir, 1913, p 21).

It has not been possible to verify this gift in 1213 which would have been from King John of England to William I of Scotland. Oggins (2004, p 55) makes a mention of Henry I of England sending a gyrfalcon to William I in 1170. Whilst Oggins references an Adam de la Mora being a falconer, there is no mention of him being sent to Scotland. Rather, he was granted land in England by Richard I for falconry service (Oggins, p 168) some time before 1199. The name Adam de la More (del counte de Are) was a signatory to the Ragman Roll in 1296 in Scotland.

The Moir surname is linked to Morrison in Mitchell-Gill's paper "*The Surname of Moir or More in Moir Genealogy and collateral lines*" (Moir, 1913). Mitchell-Gill wrote:

*By the evidence of ancient charters, the orthography of this name seems to have been so various as to occasion some difficulty in distinguishing the different families who bore it, as we find individuals of the same family promiscuously designed by the name of Moir, More, Moor, Moore, Mure, Muir, sometimes contracted to Mr and even Moresoun, Morrison and Mureson. The name has a double origin, from Maure or Saracen, borne by foreign families in most of the continental countries of Europe, varied in accordance with the peculiar idiom of the country, and in Scotland from the Gaelic etymology Mohr, big or great, allusive to remarkable size of person.*

*Of the five entries in the Lyon Register, to families of the name of Moir or More in Scotland, all are connected with Aberdeenshire, and bear the three Moors' or Saracens heads.*

*The name of Morison in Scotland bears azure three Sarcens' heads, conjoined in one neck proper, the faces looking to the chief, dexter and sinister sides of the shield (p 16).*

If Morrison is a patronymic of Moir or More then the Burgess records from Aberdeen would suggest the adoption of the name Morrison took place some time around 1400 as a Patrick More (cautioner to Thomas Amfrey) is identified in 1400 as the first spelling of More in Aberdeenshire. It is shown later from these same Burgess records the name Moresoun and similar sounding spellings were quite frequent in Aberdeen. From the Colquhoun records it was Arthuro Morison in 1429 who is the first named Morrison. That is, Arthuro might have been the son of someone named More as the surname was often spelled as Moresoun. Looking at the different spellings of Morrison in early Scottish manuscripts the spelling "Moresoun" was common. This as a patronymic would be the son of More. Caution is advised before accepting this proposition since this is speculative theory and has no evidence to support it.

Quoting from the abridged article by Henry Paton in the "*Moir Genealogy and collateral lines*" (1913), he states "*There can be no doubt that the surnames Moir, More, Moor, Moore, Muir and Mure are but variations of one and the same patronymic. The form in which it first appeared in Scotland, and in which it persists for about two centuries, is More*" (p 22).

In fact six Mores were forced to sign the Ragman Roll in 1296:

- More (Mor) de Cragg, Reynaud (del counte de Lanark).
- More de Leuenaghnes, Douenal le fiz Michel (del counte de Dunbretan).
- More, de Thaugarfton, Symon de la (del counte de Lanark).
- More, Adam de la (del counte de Are).
- More, Gilcrist (del counte de Are).
- More, Renaud de la (Renaud) (del counte de Are).

In addition to More the name "Morref" could well have lent itself to becoming a broad metaphone for Morrison. There were 14 Morrefs who signed the Ragman Roll, for example, Morref, Huwe de (del counte de Edeneburgh) and Morref, Johan de (del counte de Fyf). The name Morref later became written as Murray, but given the latitude given to the broad sounding of names and their phonetic interpretation the son of Morref could easily have been transcribed from the patronymic form of Morrefson to Morrison (or Murray to Murysoun to Morrison). The SRO lists the name "Thomas Murysoun" as a broad metaphone for Morrison in Leith in 1602 (OPR Births and Baptisms 692/02 0010 0042). (The SRO lists eight options in a surname search: Exact surname, Wildcard, Narrow metaphone, Broad metaphone, Fuzzy matching, Surnames that begin with, Surname variants and Traditional soundex).

When assembling these phonetic possibilities together it is difficult to conclude with any level of confidence that the Morrison name derived solely from "More" or "Maurice", but the "More" connection certainly becomes one of the most logical if you also add the weight of heraldic evidence discussed below to it.

#### 4. Sir Kenneth More and The Crusades

Running counter to the image of St Maurice the martyr and patron saint of the Holy Roman Empire is the idea that the bloodied Moors heads on some Scottish coats of arms are traceable to the Crusades. Sir Kenneth More (de la More) was a champion knight who, in 1330, is said to have joined with Sir James "Black" Douglas and other Crusaders who voyaged to Spain with the heart of Robert Bruce. Their original intention was to sail to Santiago de Compostella which had been ordained as a holy town by Pope Alexander III (following the discovery of the remains of the Apostle James) with the promise of safe conduct from Edward III of England.

Their mission changed when they learned that the King of Castile and León, Alphonso XI, had laid siege to the Castillo de las Estrellas at Teba which was occupied by the Saracen Army of Mohammed IV, Sultan of Granada. The knights travelled to Seville and offered their support to Alfonso for his Crusade to rid the Iberian Peninsula of non-Christians. Somewhere in all this legend is the story that Sir James "Black" Douglas, Sir Simon Locard of Lee, Sir William de Keith, Sir William de St Clair and his younger brother John of Rosslyn, Sir Symon Glendonwyn, Sir Alan Cathcart and the brothers Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig and Sir Walter Logan were outnumbered and killed on the battlefield at Teba. Sir Kenneth More survived and transported home the remains of the fallen Scottish knights. Both Sir William de St Clair and his brother John's remains are buried at Rosslyn Chapel.



***Saracens and Crusaders.*** Illuminated manuscript from *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*.

This is but another legend that appears to be on shaky ground as there is no general agreement about the event or who was present. There is doubt about the presence of Sir Kenneth More at the Battle of Teba. For example, the members of the Crusade described above does not tally with the account given by Masson (1934) when she describes Sir James Douglas carrying Robert the Bruce's heart into battle with the Moors: "*The good Sir James fell, fighting the Moors in Spain, but the heart of the Bruce was taken back to Scotland by Sir Adam de Johnstone and Sir Simon Locaid to rest there with the bones of the Douglas at Montrose*" (p 161).

Another version of the Crusade party by Scott (1989) also omits Sir Kenneth More. Scott writes: "*Early in the spring of 1330, he (Douglas) set sail from Berwick in a ship fitted out in royal state so that all might know he was the bearer of the heart of Robert, King of Scotland, and on his way to lay it in the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. He had on board six knights, linked in friendship, neighbouring landowners from the Stewart domains: Sir William Sinclair of Roslyn, Sir Robert and Sir Walter Logan, Sir William Keith, Sir Alan Cathcart and Sir Symon Loccard of Lee, and one other knight unnamed. Twenty-six squires and gentlemen were there to serve them*" (Ronald McNair Scott, 1989, p 227).

The Moir armorial (depicted in the discussion on crests and mottos below) has three Moor heads 'in their gore cut proper with blood dripping arranged in a triangle'. From the question "Why three Moors heads?" comes the response "One Christian Moir slew three pagan Moors!"

There appears to be some degree of acceptance that the original name "de la More" has undergone a mutation to "Moir" with the Gaelic meaning of "brave and mighty one". The battle of Teba which is the basis for the story of Sir Kenneth More (Moir) is commemorated by a memorial made from Scottish granite that is situated in Teba's Plaza de Espana celebrating the connection with Robert the Bruce. A further connection to the Bruce is the fact that there was a Ranald de la More who was made the Bruce's Chamberlain in 1329. Sir Kenneth could possibly have been related to Ranald, and hence his devotion to the Bruce and reason for joining the crusade.

Remember these origin theories are just that, theories. There is a great deal of folklore surrounding the Crusades in much the same way there is about Norse genetics in Scotland. The more the story is repeated the more it becomes embellished. These origin theories are presented merely as possibilities. The reader has to weigh up the evidence for whichever theory they choose, including the very real possibility that there may be more than one possibility given the variety of spellings for Morrison up until the mid 1800s.



## CHAPTER 3

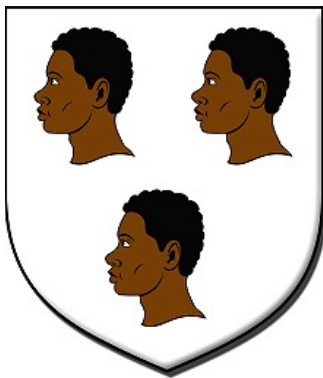
### CRESTS: THE THREE SARACEN HEADS

Let us now examine some of the earliest examples of the Morrison crest which traditionally incorporates three Moor or Saracen heads as depicted in these three examples:



The first example above left from "Virtuous Planet designs" depicts a stylised coat of arms, the second belongs to the author and the third example right is a photo taken at the Glasgow's St Columba Church (Highlander Cathedral). The silver brooch below belonging to the author depicts an original three saracen head Morrison design with the "Prestio Prudentia Praestat" motto, and finally a graphic from Fairbairn's (1905) crests.

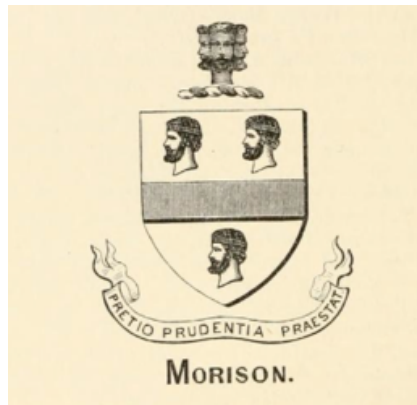
The following Moor or Saracen crests make for interesting comparison, from left to right the **Morrison of Prestongrange**, **Morrison of Dairsie**, **Morrison of Bognie**, **Murison** family, **Clan Morrison Society** of 1919 and the **Moir** family:



Adam (1908, p 277) claims the Bognie arms as being those usually presented to represent the Morrisons and describes the "Morison of Bognie" arms as "Azure, three Saracens' heads erased, conjoined in one neck, and wreathed with laurel, all proper, the faces respectively turned towards the chief dexter and sinister sides of the shield. Crest: A serpent proper. Motto: Praetia[o] prudent praestat (in price prudence predominates" (p 510). Adam (1908) repeats the traditional mythical account of the Morrison origins being descendants of the Brieves of Lewis (pp 276-277) using R N Thomas and Sir Robert Gordon of Sutherland (who incidentally never identified any clan Morrison let alone their origin) as sources.

Apart from the Muir family fable about the slaying of three Moors during the Crusades, research about the origin of saracen heads on some family coats of arms suggests the three black heads could depict the Mediterranean Moor Pirates also known as the Barbary Pirates that operated in the Levant where English and Scottish traders operated in the 1600s. Moors heads on coats of arms could be recognition about fighting Moors to protect the trading routes. MacKenzie (1903) suggested "The arms of the Morisons of Dersay (or Darcie) in Fife, the Morisons of Bognie, and the Morisons of Prestongrange, are three Moors' heads, an obvious pun on the word Morison, although tradition supplies a version of its own..." (p 62-3). The suggestion of "an obvious pun" of Moors heads and Morrison is a weak interpretation. A stronger interpretation follows the progression regarding the origin of the name Morrison (from de la Mora to Moir, to Muir, to Murison and to Morrison) incorporating the use of Moors heads seen on a variety coats of arms and the adoption of the three Moors heads into

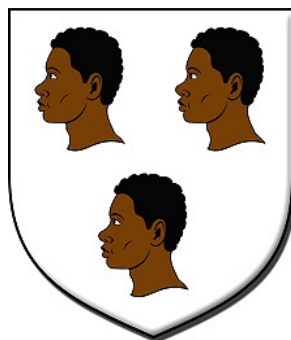
the crests depicted above. The picture below is taken from L A Morrison (1880, p 22) depicts yet another variation of the three saracen heads and "Pretio Prudentia Praestat" motto.



The Heraldic recordings of the association of Moors' or Saracens' heads with the name Morrison are generally only found with the original Lowland Scottish Morrison families. The only Morrisons who have not incorporated the Saracen heads are from Sutherland and Lewis. These Highland Morrisons have evolved their own separate crests. The English and Irish Morrisons also have alternative heraldic emblems.

The most influential of the overseas Morrison clan organisations are the American Morrisons who have aligned themselves to the non traditional crest from a Morrison family on the Isle of Lewis which features prominently in commercial bric a brac. The following references are to 3 Saracens Heads and Motto in Fairbairn's book of crests:

### **1672 MORRISON OF PRESTON GRANGE**



*Argent three moors' heads coupéd proper. Sir James Balfour Paul's Scottish Ordinary 1672-7.*

**1672** Henry MORRISON WS (**MORRISON OF DAIRSIE**)



*Argent three moors' heads coupéd proper. Sir James Balfour Paul's Scottish Ordinary 1672-7.*

**1673 MORRISON OF BOGNIE**  
(MORRISON OF BOGNIE AND MOUNTBLAIRY)



*Azure three saracens' heads conjoined in one neck Argent the uppermost face looking to the chief and affixed by a wreath to the other two which turn to the dexter and sinister. Source: Sir James Balfour Paul's Scottish Ordinary 1673 Stacie.*

**Other Morrison crests that include 3 Moor's heads are held by:**

Andrew MURISON OF ANCHORFIELD

Major Alexander MORRISON OF HEICS

DUNCAN-MORRISON OF NAUGHTON

MORRISON-DUNCAN OF NAUGHTON

WALKER-MORRISON OF FAWFIELD



- 1) BROWN-MORRISON OF FINDERLIE
- 2) BROUN-MORRISON
- 3) Henry de Annand BROUN-MORRISON OF FINDERLIE

CAMPBELL-MILLER-MORRISON OF HETLAND

BLACKHALL-MORRISON

MORRISON-LOW OF KILMARON

MORRISON-MACIVER-CAMPBELL OF BALLOCHMYLE

MORRISON Baron Margadale

GOLDIE-MORRISON

Of special interest is the **Clan Morrison Society** below which adopted "*Argent three Saracens' heads couped conjoined in one neck one affrontée the others looking to the dexter and sinister proper between three foils slipped Vert two in chief and one in base*":

**CLAN MORRISON SOCIETY** (18th July 1919)



Given that this is the official choice of the Clan Morrison Society it is strange that the Lewis/Harris family that was given the ceremonial title of "Clan Chief" disregarded the Clan Society crest in favour of their own personal design. With that, the power of modern marketing has pushed aside the legitimate Society crest to the point that apart from the few people who know about the history of the name Morrison in Scotland, most members of more recent clan Morrison groups probably believe all the folk tales written by popular websites and commercial publications that the Lewis/Harris crest is the Society crest.

Both the following families have near identical heraldic Scottish forms without Moors' heads:

MORRISON of RUCHDI and the Rt Hon William Shepherd MORRISON (Viscount Dunrossil, former Governor General of Australia)



**A version of the popular  
commercial "Clan Morrison" crest**

**The Motto**

Reference to James Fairbairn's book of *Crests of the families of Great Britain and Ireland* (1905) identifies The Motto ***Pretio Prudentia Praestat*** (In Price Prudence Predominates or The Price of Wisdom is Best) attached to several Morrison families as well as Monson and Richardson.

Fairbairn (1905) also lists various Morrison families and their crests on pages 398 and 399 (spelling of Morison) and page 400 (spelling of Morrison). On page 402 the names Moore "a Moor's head" and Muir "a savage's head" are found in some of their families. The name Monson (page 394) of Preston "*three saracens' heads conjoined in one neck, one each to the dexter and sinister, and one looking upwards*" with the motto "*Pretio prudentia praestat*" would appear to be variation of the the spelling of Morrison of Prestongrange. However, elsewhere Fairbairn spells the Morrisons of Prestongrange, Edinburgh "Morison" and describes their crest as "*three saracens' heads conjoined in one neck, the faces looking upwards and to the dexter and sinister with the motto "Pretio Prudentia Praestat"*" (p 399).

Thus it can be concluded that the Lowland Morrison families have a common link via the Heraldic Arms and Motto that they share. From the discussion above regarding the possible origins of the name, one was the theory that

linked the history of the name Morrison to St Maurice comes from the early Latin manuscripts which suggests the name was first written as "Mauricius" (Register of the Great Seal of Scotland). Linked to this is the proposition that "St Maurice" evolved to become the Norman name "de la More", and the Norman influence in Scotland after King David I saw this name established in Scotland. A Knight named Sir Kenneth Moir or Moor is the reputed to be behind the origin of the three Moors heads and the adoption of the three Moors heads on the family crests of the Moir and Morrison families.

The conclusion is therefore that the Morrison name in Scotland is most likely of Norman origin, neither Gaelic or Norse, and spread northwards from the borders and Lowlands where the first Morrison families were recorded. The fact that the Lewis/Harris Morrisons use an entirely different crest and motto lends weight to the fact this historically more recent Morrison group are a completely different family. The forebears of this family have been erroneously promoted as the origin of the Morrison name in Scotland which is analysed in depth in Chapter 4: The Clan Morrison Hoax of the Norse Origin on Lewis and Harris.

## **The Morrison Tartans**

There appears as much fable and fiction about the origins of the Morrison tartan as there is about the origins of the Morrison name. Willie Scobie (who writes for an organisation called the Scottish Tartans Authority) provides some interesting perspectives on the history of the Morrison tartan in two papers titled '*Mysteries of the Morrison Tartans*' and '*Territorial Tartans*':

*"The various stories behind the setts of the Morrison Clan provide what are surely some of the most strange and fascinating mysteries in all the long and complex history of tartan. We are left now with only scraps of written evidence, which are far removed from original sources and frustratingly lacking in coherence. It is evidence so fragmentary as to render any comment extremely speculative.*

*The impression given is of the quite extraordinary circumstance wherein this one clan appears to have given accounts of the relatively recent emergence of two tartans, when in one case an identical sett, and in the other case an almost identical sett, can be shown to have existed at prior dates.*

*This is all the more surprising because the reverse process is what one would more readily expect - i.e. when an ancient provenance is claimed for a tartan, but evidence argues for a more recent origin.*

*The elements of the story concerning the green Morrison tartan (ITI 1083, now known as "Morrison Society") seem relatively simple and clear. This tartan first appears in 1880 as a woven sample in the Clans Originaux swatch book produced by J. Claude Freres et Cie of Paris. Almost thirty years later, in 1909, (according to the records of*

*D.C. Stewart and the Clan Morrison website) precisely the same sett was invented for the Morrison Society, the alleged designer being J.G. Mackay.*

*Two things should be noted. Firstly, a new sett was required at this time because the Morrisons believed themselves to have lost their original clan tartan. Secondly, the design of the new sett was a simple variation on the "Mackay", this being so because some Morrisons had settled in Mackay clan territory.*

*The very obvious question we must ask is: why was this tartan declared to be new in 1909, when in fact it had been around - named as "Morrison" - since 1880, if not indeed for considerably longer? Given that the Clans Originaux collection is understood to have "disappeared" for a number of decades, it is perfectly possible (perhaps likely) that no one in the Morrison Society, including J.G. Mackay, was aware of the earlier existence of the sett. This leaves us with two possibilities. One is extremely far-fetched and the other is facetious -*

*1. J.G. Mackay designed an identical sett by sheer coincidence.*

*2. J.G. Mackay produced his design using psychic powers.*

*There is perhaps a third, which is more credible -*

*3. J.G. MacKay did know about the Clans Originaux "Morrison" tartan and he presented it to the clan. Later he was misrepresented as being the designer".*

A further point in the time line regarding the origin of the tartan is added to by Leonard A Morrison (1880, p 18) who wrote: *"From the pen of Mac Fhearghuis (Charles Ferguson), I take this account of the Morrisons. It was printed early in the year 1879, in the 'The Highlander', a paper published at Inverness, Scotland, by John Murdoch.... "They have two tartans, - a beautiful red clan tartan, and a green hunting tartan."*

It would therefore appear that J G MacKay and the Morrison Society have either inadvertently or deliberately misrepresented the origins of the tartan to the Tartans Authority as there are at least two credible sources, The Highlander and Clans Originaux, which clearly point to the existence of two Morrison tartans (one green, one red) before 1880.

Scobie goes on to make some uncomfortable findings regarding the origins of the Green and Red (which includes two red versions) Morrison tartans. Firstly, there is *"irrefutable evidence that the Green tartan predates the claim that it was created in 1909 for the newly formed Morrison Society ... (according to the records of D.C. Stewart and the Clan Morrison website precisely the same sett was invented for the Morrison Society, the alleged designer being J.G. Mackay)".*

Secondly, there are the conflicting stories regarding the two Red tartans (ITI 998 and 993). In brief, one story has it that the red tartan dates to *"a piece of tartan found in an old Morrison family bible. The bible contained a hand written reference to the tartan and was dated 1747, one year after the proscription of Highland dress. The discovery was made during the demolition of a Black House on Lewis in 1935"* (Scobie).

The other story cited by Scobie claims another discovery reported *"in the Sunday Mail of May 22nd 1938 (and presumably refer to events closer to that date than 1935). According to the newspaper a piece of tartan, measuring approximately six inches by four, was discovered among some stored clothing by a Miss MacDonald in her cottage in Portree, on the Isle of Skye. From the notes on the article there was no mention of a bible or of any written reference, and without any stated evidence to support the claim it was asserted that "the cloth must have been at least 250 years old. The notes give no indication as to how or why this tartan was identified as a Morrison sett"*.

Scobie presents further examples of where the red tartan came into being, all conflicting and with unsubstantiated origins. What is perhaps most damning is the fact that the most sensational claim regarding the old bible wrapped in red tartan on Lewis and a note as well as the tartan scrap from Skye no longer appear to exist, and render these "discoveries" about as credible as the fable regarding the Norse origin of the Morrisons. Besides, according to Charles Ferguson quoted above, the red tartan was known about in 1879 so this fact further demonstrates the so called 1930s discoveries as pure nonsense and invention.

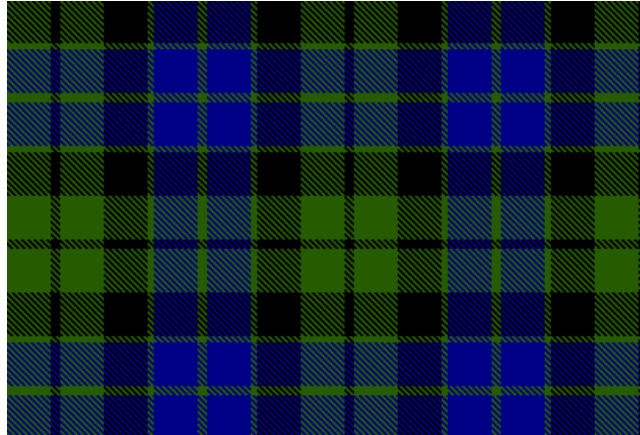
Finally, in terms of the Green tartan, Scobie makes some comparisons with the MacKay, Gunn, MacWilliam and Morrison tartans. Writing about the territorial nature of some tartans Scobie states:

*"It has long been widely (perhaps generally accepted) that distinctive tartan patterns were originally associated with districts rather than with specific clans or families. The observation of Martin Martin, writing at the end of the 17th century, that a Highlander's place of residence could be "guessed" by the tartan he was wearing, was a most important contribution to the history of tartan.*

*Given the territorial nature of clan society it is not difficult to see how a district association with a particular tartan could so easily have evolved into a clan association with the same sett"*.

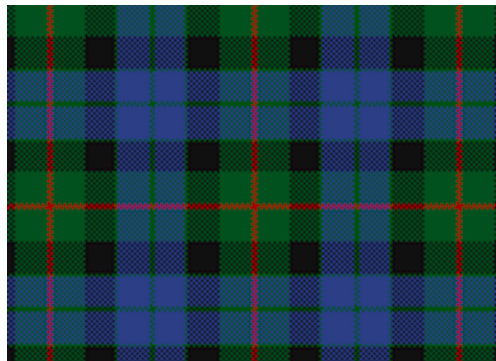
Scobie cites the far northern counties of Sutherland and Caithness associated with the MacKays, Gunns, MacWilliams and Morrisons as an example.

The Mackay Clan Tartan was registered with the Highland Society of Scotland around 1816. It appears in Wilson's Key Pattern Book of 1819.



Now compare this original MacKay with the following:

*The Gunn tartan was featured in the Cockburn Collection (1810-1820). The sett is essentially "Mackay", with a red stripe on the green instead of black.*



*The McWilliam tartan seems first to have been recorded in Clan Originaux, which was published in 1880. According to the STA notes - "This is MacKay (703) with the green lines changed to red."*



*The Morrison tartan (ITI 1083) featured in Clan Originaux in 1880, and in Tartans of the Clans and Septs of Scotland by W.&A.K. Johnston in 1906 with the red stipe replacing the green through the blue centres of the MacKay.*



For something completely different, the Morrison red tartan with one centred green stripe (ITI 993)



Scobie quotes the Scottish Tartan Authority notes relating to the green Morrison tartan (ITI 1083) where *"The Morrison website adds to the story: 'The green sett was developed by the Clan Society in 1909. Due to the loss of the Morrison original tartan around the 1700s, the Society selected a MacKay sett and added a red stripe.'* So there we have it. *It was just made up in 1909 !"* (Scobie, Territorial Tartans <http://www.tartansauthority.com>). The case for the red tartan appears to suffer from the same mysterious and fanciful origins as the Morrison Green.

## Chapter 4

### The Clan Morrison Hoax of the Norse Origin on Lewis and Harris

#### The Morrison Myth Makers

How do myths become facts? The answer is they never do but the persistence of a myth when it is repeated over and over gives it the mantle of fact. Take for example the classic film *"Casablanca"* where one of the memorable lines often attributed to Humphrey Bogart's character "Rick" says *"Play it again Sam"*. But is this accurate? The answer is no, nobody says these words. The closest line in the film is Ilsa saying *"Play it once, Sam. For old times' sake"*. Alternatively, Chinese whispers are an example of fact becoming fiction. The more stages the story passes through the more it becomes distorted. Either way, the Morrison myth is a long way from fact.

There are several authors who can be attributed as the major culprits in developing and spreading the myth that the "Clan Morrison" came into being from Norse warriors who settled on the Island of Lewis. The primary myth makers are L A Morrison (1880) and his two major sources: Captain F W L Thomas (1876-78) and John Morrison the "Indweller of Lewis". A more recent writer, Alick Morrison (1956) compounded the errors of these three authors, and since then various Morrison Clan organisations and commercial interests have embellished and propagated the mythology. The accelerant that helped ignite a plethora of clan myths in the 1800s was provided unwittingly by Sir Walter Scott, and once the Morrison fire was lit it has raged unchallenged and has been spread by uncritical "clan" fanatics.

Sir Walter Scott's place in Scottish history is celebrated in Edinburgh by a magnificent monument that dominates Princess Street near Waverley railway station. Scott rose to national fame in the early part of the nineteenth century through his prolific writing. It was undoubtedly his influence that saw King George IV bedeck himself in tartan during his state visit in 1822, 77 years after George's great-grandfather King George II had banned tartan: *"Sir Walter Scott introduced a Highland element, and members of the Clans wearing Highland dress filled the Edinburgh streets. The wearing of Highland clothing was forbidden after the failure of the 1745 Jacobite rising for the next 36 years. The visit of George IV in 1822 gave the naming of clan and family tartans a boost as Scott urged the Scots to wear their true tartan to meet the King"* (Receiving Royalty: The visit of King George IV, Edinburgh Museum, 2015). If you didn't have a tartan, then invent one, and better still, invent a myth to go with it.

In many of Scott's novels there are suggestions of an ancient Scotland steeped in romanticism that today's gift shop merchandisers feed on to sell to tourists.



For example, a passage from Scott's novel "Waverley" titled "Waverley Proceeds on his Journey" describes his idea of a highland chief around the time of the Jacobean uprising in 1745:

*When Fergus and Waverley met, the latter was struck with the peculiar grace and dignity of the Chieftain's figure. Above the middle size, and finely proportioned, the Highland dress, which he wore in its simplest mode, set off his person to great advantage. He wore the trews, or close trousers, made of tartan, chequed scarlet and white; in other particulars, his dress strictly resembled Evan's, excepting that he had no weapon save a dirk, very richly mounted with silver... His countenance was decidedly Scottish, with all the peculiarities of the northern physiognomy, but yet had so little of its harshness and exaggeration, that it would have been pronounced in any country extremely handsome. The martial air of the bonnet, with a single eagle's feather as a distinction, added much to the manly appearance of his head, which was besides ornamented with a far more natural and graceful cluster of close black curls than ever were exposed to sale in Bond Street (Chapter XVIII).*

The invention of the many clan myths and associated paraphernalia in the 1800s was a deliberate expression of national pride designed to demonstrate friendly relations with the Crown and paint over a turbulent and brutal past. It began a host of traditions that are celebrated today such as Burn's festivals, piping the haggis, Highland games and the kilt parades. More particularly it was during the 1800s that the kilt and the idea of a "family tartan" came into prominence. Tartan was originally a weaving technique that became distinctly Scottish and the various colours were a reflection of the dyes available in regional areas. The crude cloth was worn as a plaid from which the kilt became a later development. The association with regional tartans and clan areas developed into pattern books that locked in a family name to a specific tartan. Thus to be a true Scot one had to belong to a clan and wear a family kilt. For some, to belong to a clan required an ancient myth to give it prestige and respectability.

One of the most persistent and erroneous theories about the origins of the Morrisons being Norse is based on a myth that many people today blindly accept as being true. Clan societies, particularly those founded overseas, have become something akin to cult groups. Reading modern literature one is forgiven for believing the Morrison "clan" derived from a real event in the early 13th century of the history of Scotland. Folklore surrounding the origins of the Morrisons on the Isle of Lewis include this gushing account from the Clan Morrison website:

*"Eight centuries ago a Norse ship struggled in heavy seas off the Scottish island of Lewis. A proud Kintyre noblewoman named Lauon stood on deck cradling her newborn infant son, Gillemorrie, in her arms while her husband, Olaf the Black, shouted orders to the crew. Despite his Herculean efforts the ship foundered. Olaf, Lauon and their son plunged into the frigid waters and*

*clung to a piece of driftwood near their sinking vessel. Fortune smiled upon the stoic trio, and they were deposited safe but wet upon the stony Lewis shore” (Anon).*

## **Analysing the Fable**

The Morrison fable about Olaf supposedly occurred about 1217 after Olaf’s [Olaf the Black, 1177-1237] half-brother Reginald granted him title to Lewis during the reign of William the Lion of Scotland and later Alexander II of Scotland. MacKenzie (1903, pp 31-39) gives a full account of what he believes was the history of “Olave” [Olaf] and it is significantly different from the Morrison account. The closest story that can be found about a miraculous sea landing comes also from MacKenzie (1903) who wrote that whilst “Olave” was attacking the “Someredians” in the Sound of Islay *“they attacked a Lewis chief named Torquil, son of Tormod (Munch calls him “Torquil MacDermot”), and killed him with two of his sons. The third son, Tormod, managed to escape by jumping into a cask floating in the water, which drifted across to the mainland, whence he reached Lewis in safety”* (p 37). The fanciful account of the Morrisons of Lewis has fatal flaws that should be aired. The above fable has been copied relentlessly by Morrison clan societies and followers as though it was fact.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there is no definitive account of the reign of Olaf the Black a number of historians including MacKenzie (1903), Matheson (1980), Morrison (1986), Sellar (1998), MacLeod (2000) and Matheson (2014) have examined the available records, particularly as they relate to the origins of the MacLeods. One of the disputed theories about the origins of the MacLeods was that their lineage could be traced to Leod, son of Olaf the Black. According to MacLeod (2000) this is baseless:

*“Mr. Sellar’s paper [The Ancestry of the MacLeods Reconsidered] contradicts that of the Rev. Matheson at several points and it was out of respect for his colleague that Mr. Sellar withheld going public with his views until after the Rev. Matheson’s death. However, although their views differ at various points, these two scholars are in broad agreement over Leod’s ancestry, to wit, that in the male line Leod was not descended from the Kings of Mann & the Isles but was the great-grandson of a man named Olvir. This may surprise many clans folk because the ‘official’ MacLeod view is that Leod was the son of King Olaf the Black, one of the last of the dynasty. The main purpose of this article is to prepare its Clan MacLeod readers for a complete reappraisal of their origins by explaining why, in the field of early clan genealogy, the two most eminent scholars of recent times should agree that the theory of descent from Olaf the Black is quite simply untenable”* (Online, no page number).

It therefore follows that if the MacLeod history of Olaf the Black being the father of Leod is incorrect, then the claim by the Morrisons of Lewis and Harris must also be invalid since they also claim descent from Leod. Interestingly, not

one of these scholars associated Olaf as having a son named "Gillemorrie" as per the Morrison fable.

### **A Note on the Genealogy of Olaf the Black**

Since the above Morrison fable relies on Olaf the Black as the source of the Morrisons on Lewis some of what they claim as the history of Olaf might be useful. The Lewis Morrison story is that when Olaf's father Godred II (Godred The Black) died in 1187 the Kingship was passed to his illegitimate son Reginald because Olaf was only 10 years old. According to the *Chronicon Regum Manniae (1158-1223)*, Reginald assigned Lewis to Olaf, but Olaf found it to be unsuitable and complained. Reginald had him imprisoned by the Scottish King William and it wasn't until William died in 1214 that Olaf was released. He is then reported to have gone on a three year pilgrimage to St James of Compostella in the North of Spain.

Assuming this story so far is correct, this takes us to about 1217 and Olaf made peace with Reginald. According to Alick Morrison (1986) Olaf seems to have been married "before he was imprisoned in Scotland, to a 'lady of Kintyre', a cousin of the Queen of Man and the Isles [*The Chronicon Regum Manniae suggests it was "Lanon", the Queen's sister*]. According to Canon Roderick MacLeod, Leod, progenitor of the MacLeods, was a son of this marriage, in this particular, the Canon departs from MacLeod traditions (eg, *Manuscript Memorial of 1767, the Talisker Manuscript and the Bannatyne Manuscript*), which claimed that Leod was a son of Olaf's third marriage with Christina, daughter of Farquar, Earl of Ross. Some time after his return to Lodhus [Lewis], Olaf decided to marry again in 1218 to 'Jauon' (ie, Joan) a sister of the Queen of Man. Reginald [the son of Olaf's sister], the Bishop of the Isles, now took action and convening the Synod, demanded that Olaf must divorce his wife on the ground that she was cousin germain to his first wife. Olaf complained that his first marriage was not confirmed: Bishop Reginald was adamant: Joan had to go. In 1222, Olaf married his third wife, Christina daughter of Farquar, Earl of Ross, with issue four sons, Harold, Reginald, Magnus and Godfrey" [Godfrey died as a child] (pp 1 - 20).

MacKenzie's (1903) detailed "*History of the Outer Hebrides*" makes no mention of Olaf having a troubled landing with his "illicit" bride "Lauon" (who Reginald had arranged). MacKenzie states that Olaf died in 1237 and left three sons, Harald (the eldest), Reginald and Magnus (pp 29-39). MacKenzie makes no mention of a Leod or "Gillemorrie"!

There is considerable debate amongst MacLeod historians about Olaf, including one suggestion he had three wives and many children (Alick Morrison, 1986), but all agree there was no "Gillemorrie". Note also that the MacLeods originally claimed their decent through Olaf the Black from a child by Lauon named "Leod". The McLeod history claims that Olaf was forced to "divorce" Lauon and marry Christina. Depending on which account you subscribe to, Lauon was a relative of Reginald's Queen (either a sister or cousin), and the Queen

attempted to have Olaf murdered by her son for Olaf's treachery against Lauon.

MacLeod (2000) cites the Manx Chronicle which names the four sons of Olaf noting there was no "Leod" (or for that matter, "Gillemorrie") and writes that *"By the end of the thirteenth century, legal claims to the Isle of Mann were being pursued on behalf of daughters of the family, implying that the (legitimate) male line from Olaf the Black was then extinct. In short, there is no historical reason to believe that Leod was the son of Olaf the Black"*. If this is the case then it further substantiates the proposition there was no Morrison male line that could be traced to Olaf the Black because if there were then the Morrisons would have had legal claim over the Isle of Man. The genetics of the descendants of the King of the Isle of Man are referenced in the discussion below regarding the various interpretations of the name "Gillemorrie".

During the period of the Norse settlement the most influential clan on Lewis were the McLeods and as previously stated, claimed their origin from Leod. Sellar (1998) along with other researchers such as Morrison (1986) and Matheson (1980) have written extensively about the McLeod origins. Sellar examined four McLeod pedigrees, including one by the acclaimed genealogist historian Duaid MacFirbis (who gave a MacLeod pedigree in 1650) which is named "Pedigree A":

*"Pedigree A is alone in giving the name of Leod's father as Gillemuire. The others give another Olvir. Is Gillemuire then to be regarded as a mistranscription as Matheson believed? I would suggest not. Given that the Gaelic pronunciation of "son of Gillemuire" (mac (Gh)illemhuire) and "son of Olvir" (mac Olbhuir) is very similar, especially when spoken in the course of a long genealogical "run", it is easy to see how "Gillemuire" could have been assimilated to "Olvir", given the prominence of the latter name in MacLeod tradition. It is not so easy to explain a change of name in the other direction. In any case, pedigree A clearly does distinguish carefully between the two names, as it gives another Gillemuire as the father of Olvir Snoice. The name Gillemuire was certainly known early in the MacLeods lands, for the Harris Morrisons, to whom Alick Morrison belongs, have long been known as Clann MhicGillemhuire" (Sellar, 1998).*

MacLeod (2000) has the final word: *"Whether Leod's father was named Olvir or Gillemuire and whether or not Leod's great-grandfather Olvir was Olvir Rósta, the MacLeods are of the Sliochd Olbhuir and their royal Norse ancestry comes not from Olaf the Black but from Olvir's ancestress Helga, sister of Godred Crovan"* (Online). Thus it follows that the Morrisons of Lewis would also descend from Helga if as they claim they descend from the MacLeods. Recent DNA research identifies the MacLeods signature as R1b-S68/L165, a Norse pattern found in Norway, Sweden, Orkney, Shetland, Skye and Lewis and Harris. No Morrisons have this DNA.

## Who then was the Progenitor of the Lewis/Harris Morrisons?

L A Morrison began his research in America in the second half of the 1800s when Scotland was awakening with a new sense of nationalism. It would be unfair to criticise L A Morrison too heavily for his scholarly work titled *"The history of the Morison or Morrison family: with most of the "Traditions of the Morrisons (clan MacGillemhuire), hereditary judges of Lewis, by Capt. F. W. L. Thomas, of Scotland, and a record of the descendants of the hereditary judges to 1880"* since Morrison did not have at his disposal access to all the historical and scientific evidence that is readily available today. As he describes in the preface, his work was based on written correspondence across the Atlantic over many years to gather material that he relied on to write what he thought were the origins of the Morrisons in Scotland. As he stated in his general introduction *"Its design is to give a history the family of Morison or Morrison; to preserve its traditions; gather up the fading memories of its past, and transmit them to those who shall succeed us"*. This is a noble sentiment.

However, whatever it was that led L A Morrison (1880) to his absurd proposition that states *"... let every Morrison distinctly remember that he is of Scotch descent; that his name is Scotch; and that the terms Scotch-English or Scotch-Irish, so far as they imply a different than Scotch origin, are a perversion of truth, and false to history. All evidence shows that the Island of Lewis, settled by Norsemen, was the cradle of the family; that members of it crossed to the mainland of Scotland, passed into England, Ireland, and spread from there over the earth"* (p 70) is naive sentiment that fatally undermines his honest endeavours. Sadly, it is L A Morrison who is guilty of "a perversion of truth".

It could be argued that his conclusions were reached by "cherry picking" from F W L Thomas' (1876-78) work *"Traditions of the Morrisons (Clan Mac Ghillemhuire), Hereditary Judges of Lewis (pp 503-56)."* Thomas had collected oral accounts of the "Lewis Clans" during the 1860s. Thomas wrote that *"on the authority of those around me that time out of mind Lewis had been inhabited by three confederated clans—the Macleods, the Morrisons, and the Macaulays. This statement is confirmed in a "Description of the Lewis, by John Morisone, indweller there," which is inferred to have been written between 1678 and 1688. The "Indweller" states:—The first and most ancient inhabitants of this countrie were three men of three several races, viz., Mores, the sone of Kennanus, whom the Irish historians call Makurich, whom they make to be naturall son to one of the kings of Norovay, some of whose posteritie remains in the land to this day. All the Morrisons in Scotland may challenge their descent from this man"* (Thomas, 1876-78, pp 503-504). As MacCoinnich (2015) points out, the Indweller's claim *"given the climate of pedigree faking among his contemporaries has to be taken with a large pinch of salt"* (p 65).

L A Morrison selected the following quotation from Thomas regarding the origin of the MacLeods on Lewis: *"With regard to the Macleods, the tradition is*

*general that that family got dominion in Lewis by marriage with the heiress of Mac Nicol; but while willing to believe that Torquil increased his superiority by such marriage, I have shown in the Memoir on Lewis Place-names that Thormod Thorkelson was in Lewis, with wife, men, and goods, in 1231; and that the clan-name, Leod, in all probability derived from Liotulfr, who was a chief in Lewis in the middle of the twelfth century" (p 530).*

Thomas linked the MacLeods to the Morrisons in a footnote from an extremely dubious source: *"Norman Macleod, 'the bard', who believed himself to be acquainted with the builders of the Druidical Circles, and with the origin and history of the Lewis people from the fourth century, told that the Morrisons were originally Macleods [therein agreeing with the ancient genealogy]. The chief of Macleod had a son by a young woman of the name of Mary. The lady of Macleod could not tolerate that one so born should bear the clan-name, so the infant was called "Gille Moire", the son of Mary; hence the origin of the Morrisons. "I have also sent for another account of the origin of the Morrisons, from a Morrison patriarch, which will doubtless be more honourable than the bard's, the latter being a Macleod" (Letter, Rev. J. M'Rae, Stornoway, 12th Dec. 1860) (Thomas, 1878, p 505).*

This footnote from Thomas' paper above suggests the original Morrison was a bastard son of the chief of the MacLeods, and is at odds with the "Indweller" John Morrison who claimed *"All the Morrisons in Scotland may challenge their descent from this man [Mores, the sone of Kennanus]"* as quoted previously.

The story of the "bastard son" comes up in another variation of the MacLeod history, in particular the bloodthirsty family feud that became open warfare on Lewis between the MacLeods, MacGilleMuires and MacKenzies in the latter half of the 1500s. The bloodshed of this conflict was in part the rationale for the intervention of the Fife Adventurers in 1598. The "bastard son" was Torquil Connanach, and his history is outlined as follows:

Alick Morrison suggests *"For a better understanding of succeeding events it is preferable to give at once a genealogical scheme of Roderick's [MacLeod] many children. He married (1) Janet, illegitimate daughter of John MacKenzie of Kintail and widow of MacKay of Reay. She gave birth to a son: 1. Torquil (Torcall Cononach) (1990, p 7). MacPhail (1916) gives more detail: The facts seem to be these: Rorie [Roderick Macleod] married (i) Janet Mackenzie. She is said to have been a natural daughter of John Mackenzie of Kintail, and widow of Mackay of Reay. It is further said that she had an adulterous intrigue with the Brieve of Lewis, and that she eloped with John MacGillechalum of Raasay. She had a son Torquil, who was brought up among her kinsfolk in Strathconon, and therefore known as Torquil Connanach or Connaldach. Rorie Macleod denied that he was the father of this child, and alleged that he was the son of the Brieve" (1916, p 266). Matheson (2014), quoted below, has yet another account of Torquil's paternity.*

To set the issue in context, the history was that the then chief of the MacLeods, Roderick "Rory" Macleod disputed the paternity of the child born by his wife Janet MacKenzie and named Torquil Connanach. Rory claimed he was the bastard son of the Brieve who was supposedly a Mhic-Ghillie-Mhoir. Torquil was brought up by his mother's family under the control of the MacKenzie chief, Kenneth MacKenzie. When Torquil reached the age where he was able to claim his inheritance on the Isle of Lewis, family conflict erupted between Torquil and many of his half brothers, some who were also said to be illegitimate, the offspring of Rory's three marriages and other dalliances. Two of these were Neil and Murdo MacLeod. Since the Brieve and the MacKenzies supposedly had a relationship with Torquil, they too were drawn into the conflict. The Brieve and the MacKenzies conspired with Torquil Connanach to murder Torquil Dubh MacLeod. The Brieve and six of his kin were killed by John MacDonald-MacHutcheon. To avenge these deaths Gillie-Calum-Mhoir-Mac-Ian who became the head of Clan-Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir sought out John but was captured and beheaded by Tormaid MacLeod. Both W. C. MacKenzie (1903) and James Browne (1834) give full accounts of the bloody feuds of the intra MacLeod relationships and who killed who.

The history of the MacLeods on Lewis is disputed between various MacLeod historians arguing different origins, for example, as summarised by Sellar (1998) above. It is therefore not surprising that there are opposing views on who the father of Torquil Connanach was, the child rejected by Roderick (Rory) MacLeod as a bastard by his wife Janet MacKenzie. Alick Morrison (1990) claims Torquil was the bastard son of Hutcheon the Brieve of Lewis (who Alick Morrison says was a Morrison) and rejected by his father Roderick MacLeod.

Donald Gregory (1881) wrote that Janet, having eloped with "*John Macgillechallum of Rasay, chieftain of a powerful branch of Siol Torquil, was divorced by her husband, who, at the same time, disowned and disinherited Torquil Connanach, alleging that the latter was not his son, but the son of the Breve or Celtic Judge of the Lewis*" (p 210). He goes on: "*It has been mentioned that John Macgillechallum of Rasay, called "Ian na Tuaidh", or John with the Axe, carried off the first wife of his chief, Ruari Macleod of Lewis*" (P 211). Nowhere in Gregory's work does he mention the "Brieve" by any other name, and nowhere in the body of the book or his index does he cite the name MacGilleMoire or Morrison. This would tend to support MacCoinnich's (2015) argument that the name "Morrison" did not exist on Lewis before 1640.

Alister F Matheson (2014) agrees with Gregory and states that when the relationship soured between Roderick and his wife Janet MacKenzie (daughter of John of Killen) Janet took on a lover named "*John of the Axe*", a MacLeod from Rassay. When the male child was born he was named "Torquil". Roderick rejected him but Janet MacKenzie's family abducted the child who took him to "*their heartland of Strathconon in Easter Ross. Here he was brought up in the household of their chief, John of Killen, thereby becoming known as Torquil Connanach (Torquil of Conon), a man who was destined to play a major role in future developments for the Clan MacLeod of Lewis*" (p 160).

Thus we end up with different accounts, Alick Morrison claiming Torquil was a Morrison fathered by the Brieve, and both Gregory and Matheson infer Torquil was fathered by *Macgillechallum of Rasay* who was a MacLeod known as "*John of the Axe*", so who is correct?

Further to this dispute, McPhail (1916) sets out some of the historical records on the relationship between Rory and Torquil, including what is described as the deathbed confession of Hucheon (also referred to as Hugh, see MacCoinnich, 2015, p 50) the Brieve 'admitting' he was Torquil's father which MacCoinnich argues could well have been a political ploy by the priest who recorded the 'confession' and who had recently converted to Protestantism. Firstly, the document "*Instrument upon the Declaration of the Breve of Lewis anent the birth of Torquil said to be son to M'Leod of Lewis, dated August 22, 1566.*

*In Dei Nomine Amen—Per hoc presens publicum Instrumentum cunctis pateat evidenter et sit notum quod anno incarnationis Domini millesimo quingentesimo sexagesimo sexto die vero mensis Augusti vigesimo secundo anno regni supreme Domine nostre Regine vigesimo quinto In mei Notarii publici et Testium subscriptorum presentia etc. The Quhilk day Sr Patrik M'Maister Mairtin Persoun of Barwas deponit upon his aithe and [ ] that he being in Lewiss visiting Hucheoun Breue of Lewess that wes then in the poynt of dethe and in thay dayes wes confessour to the said Hucheoun attending to the consuetude vsit in yai tymes. That he sperit and requirit of the said Hucheoun anent yis sone Torquill borne be Makkenze's sister, as wes allegit, to Maccleod of Lewess hir housband Quhat ye said Huchoun's Jugement wes anent him and to quhome the said Torquill, as he belefitt, pertenit. Quha ansuerit to ye said Sr Patrik yat he culd nocht deny bot he had carnale copula<sup>o</sup>ne wt the said Makkenze in hir husband's tyme in dew tyme and seasoun afoir ye said Torquhillis birthe and yt the sd Huchoun's father afoir him tuik wt ye said Torquil to be ye said Huchoun's sone afoir his deathe. And in respect that the said Huchoun wes to depairt of this world in perell of deid he culd not do utherwayis nor his father afoir him had tane wt the said Torquill. That is that the said Huchoun wes his father naturall and that he culd not refuse him to be sone to him in tymes cuming. And this the said Huchoun grantit and confessit to ye said Sr Patrik in his confessioun being in danger of deathe. Upoun ye quhilk confessioun of ye said Sr Patrick and Vidimus of his Testificatioun ane honorabill man Donald Makdonald gorme of Sleat appearand and acclaim and ryt to be air of Lewess requirit fra me notar vndirwritten actis and instrumentis befoir yir witnesses ane ryt reverend man Mr John Carswell Bischop of ye Ilis, Hector Makclane Allansoun wt vyeris diuerss etc. etc.*

*Ita est Patricius Miller Notarius Publicus, etc"* (McPhail, 1916, pp 280-281).



MacCaulay (1980) states that it was Sir Patrick McMaster Martin who was the priest in Barvas in 1566 who took the confession. "*He is on record as having taken a confession of Uisdean, the Brieve, on 22nd August, 1556*" (p 19). MacCoinnich (2015) suggests there "*are several problems with the interpretation of this document*" including the proposition that it was politically motivated to support the MacDonalds of Sleat (p 50).

In June of 1576 after Rory had been held as Torquil's prisoner, Rory and Torquil signed a declaration in Edinburgh whereby Rory acknowledged Torquil as his son, however this pact didn't last long: "*Rorie M'Cloid of the Lewise and Torquill M'Cloid my sone and apperand air wt our handis at the pen led be the notar vndirwretyne at our command becaus we can nocht wreit our selffis. Ita est Alexander Hay notarius publicus de mandate dictorum Roderici et Tarquinii scribere rescientium*" (McPhail, 1916, p 288). Thus Torquil has two men swearing to be his father.

This is an extraordinary period of intrigue, deception and brutal murder. Given the high stakes for all the parties involved it is understandable the depths some of the participants were prepared to commit to in order to obtain an advantage, the ultimate prize being the ownership and control of Lewis. Since the *Clan-Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir* or *Clan na Breitheamh* was involved in the bloodshed one way or another it is important that this be noted since this clan group later changed their name to Morrison, in all probability to get away from the stigma of their involvement in the treachery and bloodshed. Through recognising their part in the carnage of Lewis it is understandable why they would want to begin afresh so to speak, and this also appears to coincide with some "Morrison" turning from judges to religion. MacCoinnich (2015, p 51) and MacPhail (1916, p 269 ) make the point that following the Brieve's decision to back the MacKenzies in overthrowing Torquil Dubh the result was even the MacKenzies "*heated the breiwe and his trybe*", and that "*the brieve and his kin perceawing yt they were hated of all men*" were unable to undo the consequences of their treason.

### **Inventing a legend: The *Ay Mac Hormaid* Myth of the Morrisons of Durness**

There were at least five Morrisons from the Sutherland and Ross regions who were recorded using the name in the late 1400s and 1500s: Donald Morrison the Chaplain of Morangie in 1486 (MacGill, 1909, p 3), Alexander Morrison the exhorter, parson and vicar in 1562 at Alness (Scott, 1950, p 658), Andrew Morrison the collector in 1597 at Avoch (Scottish Antiquary, Vol 5, p 30), "Jasper Moresone" who was a witness in 1580 to John Ross, minister at "Tayne" (MacGill, 1909, p 19) and there is a reference in 1545 in the Dallas family history to a "Willelmo Moresoun" in an instrument of sassin in Moray (Dallas, 1921, p 85). Who came first, the Lewis or Durness Morrisons? We know that the Morrisons from Alness and Avoch were appointed to the highlands from the lowlands (discussed later) so they were not related to the Lewis or Durness Morrisons. So where did the Durness Morrisons come from?

When reading the many articles written about the origins of the Morrisons on Lewis and Harris one could easily be led to believe the name was in common usage from the time of the first Brieves. On closer inspection we find this is not the case. Up until 1640 there were three Gaelic names, McBref, O'Muirghesasain and MacGilleMhuire that various authors such as Thomas (1878), who was probably influenced by the "Indweller", simply gathered together and renamed Morrison. Thereafter the transformation of these three Gaelic names into Morrison became uncritically accepted. Thomas' account of the Morrison history was based on the origins of the "Morrisons" by the "Indweller" John Morrison at some time around 1678. The "Indweller" was a relative of the Rev Donald Morrison of Barvas who was the first recorded Lewis man to use the name Morrison in 1640.

However, across the Minch the origins of the Morrisons around Durness in Sutherland is clouded in ambiguity and confusion. Where did they come from, and were they related to the Lewis/Harris Morrisons? Given the proximity of Lewis to the Highland regions of Sutherland, Ross and Caithness and the fact that many of the Lewis men made their living from fishing and trading it is entirely reasonable that there would be migration and settlement between Lewis and the mainland. The basis for the original migration was said to be a "Morrison" named *Ay Mac Hormaid (Aodh Mac Thormoid)* who traded between Stornaway and Thurso. The Durness region is known today as MacKay or Reay country by the locals. Is there any substance to the *Ay Mac Hormaid* claim?

1. Rev. John Thomson (in Sinclair, 1792, p 576) suggests that the Parish of Durness in Sutherland derived its name from the Gaelic *Durrin* meaning a storm, and that *Ay Mac Hormaid* gave it the name Durness after the Bishop of Caithness gave him the land after he married his daughter (or as Thomson says in that era she would have been referred to as "sister"). Thomson refers to this Lewis man named *Ay Mac Hormaid* as a "Morrison", but was he?
2. Thomas (1878) gives this account of the mainland connection: "*The tradition of their settlement there is that Ay Mac Hormaid (Aodh Mac Thormoid), a Morrison from Lewis, who was a handsome and good-looking fellow, went for a cargo of meal to Thurso, and there married the illegitimate daughter (or the sister) of the Bishop of Caithness, who bestowed upon the young couple the whole of Diurness, with Ashir. Ay Morrison brought over with him from Lewis a colony of no less than sixty families, mostly of his own name, to whom he gave lands upon his property; hence it is that the name of Morrison is prevalent in these parts, for though the property has fallen into other hands, the stock of the inhabitants remains*" (p 510). Note how Thomas quickly makes the translation of the Gaelic "Ay Mac Hormaid" to rename him "Ay Morrison."
3. MacRae (1921): "*In the sixteenth century the parish of Eddrachillis was inhabited by two clans, the Macleods of Assynt in the Scourie end,*

*and Morrisons, from Skye, in the Kinlochbervie end. Behind the historic account of how it came into the hands of the MacKays there is an intriguing romance that merits preservation. Huistean MacThormaid, the progenitor of the Morrisons, was a Skyeman, who traded between Stornaway and Thurso. At Thurso he had some business dealings with the Bishop of Caithness with whose sister he fell in love and married. With her as her dowry he received the church lands of Durness and Onshore, a large estate. Here he settled a number of his clansmen from Skye, who occupied it for generations. The last chieftain of the Morrisons married a daughter of Donald Ban Matheson of Shinness, but he died without an heir. The clansmen made the widow's life so unhappy that she fled to her father's home, taking care to carry with her the charter by which the Morrisons held the land from the Bishop of Caithness. In her distress she appealed to the Earl of Sutherland, who relieved her of her destitution - and also of the charter. Thus he came into possession of the property. He did not find it a valuable asset, for the Morrisons, backed by the Macleods and the MacKays, refused to acknowledge his title and to pay the rents which he demanded. So obstinate did they prove that the Earl was glad to get rid of it. For sixty merks a year he agreed to give the land to Hugh MacKay, Huistean Dubh na Tuagh (Black Hugh of the battle axe), father of the first Lord Reay (p 18)". MacBain (1900, p 137) gives an account of Donald Ban Matheson in his history of the Mathesons of Shiness, Achany and the Lews. There appears to be some confusion by Matheson historians regarding the correctness of each others accounts, but there does appear to be a consistent theme that the Mathesons and the MacLeods of Lewis and Assynt were variously connected through marriages (see MacBain, 1900, p 14). MacBain makes no mention of any family named Morrison. The second half of MacRae's account above regarding Hugh MacKay, Huistean Dubh na Tuagh (Black Hugh of the battle axe), father of the first Lord Reay, is dealt with later.*

4. Compare the Thomson, Thomas and MacRae story about *Ay Mac Hormaid* with the MacKay history of *Iye Mor Mackay*. According to the history of the Bishops of Caithness, Walter de Baltrodin was a 13th-century Scottish bishop: "*As is usual with bishops of Caithness, very little is known about Walter's episcopate. It is known he received a subsidy from the king taken from the profits of justice in the province. According to Clan Mackay tradition, Aodh Mór MacAoidh (or Iye Mackay), married a daughter of Bishop Walter, acquiring 12 davochs of land at Durness*" ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter\\_de\\_Baltrodin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_de_Baltrodin) and also Crawford, Barbara E., "Baltroddi, Walter of (d. 1270)", in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004). This is supported by "*According to the Blackcastle MS Iye Mackay's son was Iye Mor Mackay, 2nd chief of Clan Mackay who married a daughter of Walter, Bishop of Caithness in 1263*" (Mackay, Angus, 1906, pp 11-20). A "davoch" is equal to about 416 acres, so 12 davochs would equal nearly 5,000 acres.

5. Angus MacKay (1906) quotes Sir Robert Gordon who wrote that *"the Mackays sprang from 'one called Walter, reported by some to have been the bastard sone of the Lord Forbese'. This Walter, he proceeds, became chamberlain to the Bishop of Caithness, married his daughter, and obtained from the said bishop church lands in Strathnaver. From the long genealogical account which follows, Walter must have lived about 1150..."*(p 7).

Angus MacKay references yet another version coming from William Forbes *"House of Forbes"* (1667) compiled by Mathew Lumsden (1819): *"Ochonochar's third son, called Walter Forbes, went to Kaitness, and attended the Bishope thereof, and he being familiar with the Bishope's daughter, begat her with child, with whom, fearing the Bishop's wrath, he fled to Strathnaver, and possessed himself of the twelve davoch and land of Dromesos (Durness), then belonging to the Bishope; whereupon the Bishope, raising a number of men, went to Strathnaver, and possessed again with said lands..."* (pp 7-8). This story is said to establish the original link between the Forbes and MacKays. However, Angus MacKay believes the more probable lineage is that of Iye Mor MacKay marrying the Bishop's daughter in 1263 (p 18).

Firstly, it would be a remarkable coincidence that Ay Mac Hormaid, Iye Mor Mackay and Walter Forbes all happened to marry a daughter of a Bishop of Caithness and be allocated land around Durness. Given that the Thomson, Thomas and MacRae accounts give no dates and are embellished by descriptions such as *"who was a handsome and good-looking fellow"* and inconsistency about marrying the Bishop's sister, daughter or illegitimate daughter, a reasonable conclusion would be that the accounts given by Thomson, Thomas and MacRae are but a variation of the MacKay history.

Secondly, so far there has been an assumption made by Thomson, Thomas and MacRae that the events surrounding the early settlement at Durness was by a Morrison. It is noteworthy that the historian Sir Robert Gordon (1630) makes no mention of the name Morrison when he wrote about the Brieves in his work about the *"The Earldom of Sutherland"*. Instead, he noted the Brieves from Lewis came from the *"Clan-Wic-Gill-Woir"* [Clan Mhic Ghillie Mhoire] (p 269). Gordon also makes reference (p 136) to a warring *"tribe"* named *Slaight-Ean-Voyr* who MacRae (1921) incorrectly asserted were Morrisons. Gunn (1897, p 43) quite correctly translates *Slaight-Ean-Voyr* (*Sliochd Iain-mhoir*) as *MacLeod*, not *Morrison*. Gordon (1630, p 92) suggests that from *"this John Moir-Mackean are descended a race of people called Slaight-Ean-Voir"* (race of John the great). According to Gunn (1897) the MacKays *"had given Durness to them [MacLeods] in consideration of services rendered to the clan by the MacLeods of Assynt on several occasions"* (p 43). Gordon's reference to the *MacLeods* comes from a clan battle *"Torrán-dubh-riabhach"* in 1517 when John MacKay and his brother Donald assembled a number of tribes, including the *MacLeods*, to try and conquer the Earl of Sutherland's territory but were

defeated (pp 91-92). A fuller ancestry of the MacLeods is given by Gordon (p 262) from "Tormat Macloyd, Laird of Assint."

Identifying a family who later became known as Morrison is not made easy given the fact that there never was a "Clan Morrison" in the same way as the famous highland clans. Early families were generally identified by regional names and lesser families were simply enveloped under various powerful clan umbrellas where they intermarried and provided men for clan battles. For example, in the Sutherland region if there was ever a distinct Morrison family they could easily have been involved with the Gunns, Keiths, Mathesons, MacKays or MacLeods. Given the power of the MacLeods on both Lewis and the Assynt there would more than likely have been intermarrying between the two. Despite the treachery of the Brieve against the MacLeods of Lewis there may have been enough family sympathy in Assynt to give shelter to relatives on both sides of the Lewis conflict (Assynt lies due east of Lewis on the mainland, north of Ullapool and south of Kinlochbervie).

Gordon (1630) gives a graphic account about the demise of the Brieves following their treachery against "Torquill Dow Macloyd". Firstly the Brieve and six of his men were killed in Assynt by John Mack-Donald-Mack-Houcheon (p 272). This demonstrates the ease of migration across the Minch from Lewis to Assynt. After the Brieve was killed he was succeeded by Gilcalme-Moir-Machean as chief of the "Clan-Wic-Gill-Woir" [Clan Mhic Ghillie Mhoire]. However John Mack-Donald-Mack-Houcheon found him in Cogigh, killed most of his men, and took him back to Lewis where he was beheaded by Tormot Macloyd (Gordon, p 273). Thomas (1878) suggests these actions took place between 1601 and 1605 (p 517). These descriptions involve Assynt on the mainland which at least establishes that there were relations of the Brieve moving about the north western mainland in the late 1500s to early 1600s.

There is no satisfactory answer to the question why the Rev Donald Morrison (grandson of Donald Mc'Indowie [Donald Macillevore] the Brieve) of Barvas chose to adopt the name Morrison in 1640. The only Morrisons so far identified were in Alness, Merangie and Avoch. The Lewis history of Morrison suggests a connection between Lewis and the mainland area around Durness. Thomas suggests this probably took place at the height of the double crossing by the Brieve towards the MacLeods: *"those of the Brieve's descendants who had escaped the fury of the Macleods took refuge with the portion of of their clan that was settled in Lord Reay's country. When the Mackenzies had gained possession of Lewis, the relatives of the Brieve returned and established themselves again at Ness"* (see Thomas p 521). Thomas notes that when Rorie MacKenzie the *"Tutor of Kintail"* was granted the commission of *"Fire and Sword"* on 24 June 1630 one of the names on the writ was *"Donald Mc'Indowie [Donald Macillevore] Brieff"* (p 522). Ten years later his grandson Rev Donald changed his name to Morrison. Perhaps the shame attached to the Brieve was the catalyst. However, there is no evidence to suggest any of his relatives were using the name Morrison on the mainland at this time.

There appear to be many guesses regarding the origin of the name Morrison on the adjacent mainland. MacCoinnich (2015) identifies two authors who wrote about these Morrisons: *"There were 'Morisons', in Eadar a' Chaolais and Durness in Sutherland that, by the nineteenth century, claimed kinship to the Morisons of Ness (Mackenzie, 1903:,63). A group bearing the name 'Morison' claimed protection from the Bishop of Caithness in 1576 (Wormald, 1985, 249). However this was nearly seventy years earlier than the 'Morisons' of Lewis who were identified using 'Breif' and 'mac Breif' and variants thereof at this time in the 1570s and not 'Morison' or its variants. While it is possible that they may indeed have been 'related' the fact that both groups were calling themselves by different names in the 1570s suggests that caution should be exercised in relation to later claims of biological kinship. Only the family associated with the MacLeods of Lewis, however, to my knowledge, were known as 'britheadhan' during the sixteenth century"* (p 44).

Contrary to the claim above that *"There were 'Morisons', in Eadar a' Chaolais and Durness in Sutherland"* the fact is no families have been recorded on the mainland who might have been related to families on Lewis using the name Morrison before at least 1630, making it more probable they didn't use "Morrison" until after Rev Donald Morrison began using it in 1640. It was Mackenzie and Wormald quoted above who were the ones who made the translation to Morrison, not the families in the 1570s. The first records of the name Morrison in Caithness were Donald William Moirson in Spittle (1661), William Alaster Moirson in Subterbrael (1662), William Andrew Moirsoun in Borroastoun (1663), and another spelling variation was Murchow Mursone in Gerstone (1664) (Grant, 1902, p 5).

The only contemporary writer who could have identified people calling themselves Morrison was Gordon (1630). Throughout his writing he only refers to them as *"Clan-Wic-Gill-Woir"*. If they had been known as Morrison, Gordon would have identified them as such as he did with *"MackKay, cheeff of the Clan-wick-worgm"* (p 11) . MacKenzie (1903) repeated the hearsay myth to further promote the story about Durness and "one of their chiefs" marrying the daughter of the Bishop of Caithness and transporting sixty families to Durness and "Old Shores". We also have the conflicting stories of the family either seeking the protection of either the Bishop of Caithness or the Earl of Sutherland. Like all the later authors who repeated these stories no dates were given. The only date given about any form of mainland settlement was by Thomas who identified 1597 being the date of the Brieve's treachery towards the MacLeods.

More to the point, both MacKenzie and Wormald only add further examples of Morrison origin stories that have been quoted and gilded without supporting evidence. So what can we learn from the Durness history that may have some connection to the name Morrison? The answer can only be speculative as there are no records of this family comparable to those of other families from this region such as the MacKays, MacLeods, Gordons and Sinclairs. The lands of Durness were long under the control of the Earls of Caithness and patronage of

the Bishops of Caithness. At various times "Reay Country" was the centre of clan feuds between the Sinclairs, Gordons and MacKays along with their allies throughout the 1500s. None of their histories mention the name or clan "Morrison", and even the "clan-wick-gill-woir" only gets a fleeting reference by Gordon. In order to properly understand the clan relationships in the general area of Sutherland and Caithness the following principal families are identified:

- George Sinclair 4th Earl of Caithness (1527-1582) (chief of Clan Sinclair)
- George Sinclair 5th Earl of Caithness (1566-1643)
- John Gordon, 11th Earl of Sutherland (1525-1567) (chief of Clan Sutherland)
- Alexander Gordon, 12th Earl of Sutherland (c. 1552–1594). The Earl of Sutherland by heritable gift from the Duke of Lennox is lord superior of Stathnaver, Edderachilis and Durness
- George Gordon, 4th Earl of Huntly (1514-1562, chief of Clan Gordon)
- George Gordon, 5th Earl of Huntly (1534-1576, Lord Chancellor of Scotland)
- The Bishops of Caithness owned "davochs" of land at Durness in the area held by the Earls of Sutherland. Some of these Bishops included Bishop Robert Stewart (1542-1586) who was the brother of the Duke of Lennox, followed by Bishop Robert Pont (1586-1587) and Bishop George Gledstanes (1600-1604).
- The MacKays of Strathnaver, known as the Clan-wick-worgm (Gordon p 11). Their lineage is as follows:
  1. Donald MacKay of Farr (1529-1550), brother of John MacKay. Given charter of davach churchlands in Durness by Bishop Andrew in 1540.
  2. Y-Mackay (born about 1516, chief from 1550-1572) also known as Aodh or Iye Du MacKay, son of Donald. Married 1 Helen (d of Hugh MacLeod of Assynt), and 2 Christian Sinclair (d of John Sinclair of Duns)
  3. Hugh MacKay (chief from 1571-1614), son of Y-MacKay and Christian Sinclair. Also known as Huiston Du MacKay. Married 1 Elizabeth Sinclair (d of 4th Earl of Caithness), and 2, Jane Gordon (d of 12th Earl of Sutherland)
  4. Donald Balloch MacKay, eldest son of Y-MacKay and 1st wife Helen MacLeod (Y's first cousin) was unable to inherit as he was declared "illegitimate"
  5. Donald MacKay, son of Hugh Mackay, became 1st Lord Reay 1628

Some of the other families identified and named by Gordon (1630) during this period who became embroiled in the feuds between these clans included the Forbes from Aberdeen, MacLeans of Duart, MacKintoshes, MacKenzies, Murrays, Gunns, Keiths, Mathesons, MacLeods and Munros. The Scottish Reformation of 1560 was a significant ingredient in the clan conflicts as it pitted those aligned to the Pope against those aligned to church reforms. However, the bloodiest conflict that is relevant to the Morrisons of Lewis which spilled over into Assynt involved the MacLeods described by MacKenzie (1889) as "*one of the most barbarous, sanguinary, and fratricidal conflicts recorded in Clan history*" (p 298).

Thomas (1878) makes the assertion that "*the Morrisons were dominant in the district of Diurness, in Lord Reay's country*" (p 510). This statement is drawn from the myth about Ay Mac Hormaid and the sixty families from Lewis settling in the district after the Bishop of Caithness supposedly gave Ay Durness and Ashir (or "Old Shores") to him. A further migration to Assynt is based on the Brieve's betrayal of the MacLeods in 1597. This incident is said to have caused many families related to the Brieve to seek the safety of the mainland around Assynt. The clan-wick-gill-woir or Mhic Ghillie Moire could not have been as dominant as Thomas suggests since the only authoritative source for this period, Gordon (1630), only mentions them in passing in a reference to the Lewis upheavals. Like most minor families, their only contribution would have been conscription by the major clans to bolster numbers and pay rent. Gordon (1630) makes no other reference to the clan-wick-gill-woir (Mhic Ghillie Mhoire) in Stathnaver, Edderachilis and Durness where Gordon's family dominated. This is hardly a ringing endorsement of Thomas' proposition that the Morrisons were dominant in Durness.

MacRae (1921) makes numerous errors in his account of the history of the Durness region in his history of Kinlochbervie. His claims said to be about the Morrisons were in fact about the MacLeods:

1. For example, MacRae incorrectly claims it was Hugh MacKay who murdered the "Morrison clan chief" whereas in fact the murdered chief was a MacLeod. Another version of this crime is told by Gordon (1630) who suggested that the murder was committed by Y-MacKay (not Hugh) in 1556 of "*Tormat-Mack-ean-Woyr*" who was according to Thomas (1876-78, p 545) and Gunn (1897, p 43) the chief of the MacLeods. Gordon's version recounts that in 1556 "*the tryb Slaight-Ean-Voyr rose in Sutherland against Y-Macky, for slaying Tormat-Mack-ean-Woyr (the chieftain of the race), and violating his wife, after whom Macky lusted extraordinarily, and had a sone by her, called Donald-Balloch-Macky. Y-Macky did recunter with Slaight-ean-Woyr at Durines; wher, after a sharp skirmish, he overthrew, and took three of the chiefest men among them, whom he caused behead, after they yielded themselves prissoners; by whose deaths that tumult was appeased*" (p 136). Neither MacKay (1829), MacKay (1906), MacKenzie (1889) or Gunn (1897) add the story about the violation Tormat's wife because it didn't happen for the reason that Donald Balloch MacKay was the offspring of Y MacKay's marriage to his first cousin, Helen MacLeod (daughter of Hugh MacLeod of Assynt), along with another son John Beg MacKay, both of whom were later declared bastards as a result of the "incestuous" marriage.
2. A third variant of the MacRae and Gordon account is told by Rev Alexander Falconer (1793) in his "Statistical Account" of Edderachylis. Falconer's erroneous account included "Little John" MacLeod of Assynt slew both the Brieve and his brother at Inverchirkak and then went to Lewis and married the Brieve's widow (p 293). Falconer also gives a version of Hugh Mackay (father of Lord Reay) beheading a man so that he could "gratify his sensual inclinations" with the man's wife, "*and of that commerce was Donald McKay*



*begot, who was the first laird of Edderachylis of the name of McKay*" (pp 294-295). Falconer claims the MacLeods held sway in Edderachylis and were regularly quarrelling with "the Morrisons" of Ashir who Falconer says were related to the MacKays through the bastard son Donald (Hugh being the father). Further, Falconer suggests, the Morrisons formed a plot to get the MacKays and others to kill James MacLeod which they did. Falconer also has a version of the popish Bishop of Caithness' "tocher" to "Ay Morison, son of Norman" and the settling of sixty families from Lewis. He notes that after several generations the last chief died without an heir, and his widow (a daughter of Donald Bain Matheson) took the title deeds to the Earl of Sutherland who eventually ceded the title to the MacKays for a feu duty of 60 merks a year (pp 295-299).

3. MacRae's (1921) story about a "Black Hugh" murdering the chief of the Morrisons and marrying his wife is nonsense as are the Gordon (1630) and Falconer (1793) variations. MacRae said they then had a son Donald Balloch MacKay known as "spotted Donald" who had a red mark on his face because a balloch was said to be the blood of his mother's first husband, a Morrison, murdered by Hugh. Gordon (1630) identifies MacRae's "Black Hugh" MacKay as Y-MacKay. It couldn't have been Hugh MacKay as his two male children were Donald (who became Lord Reay) and John. Y-MacKay's "illegitimate" sons by his first marriage to his first cousin Helen were Donald Balloch and Jon Beg. MacKay histories do not mention any other "Donald Balloch" offspring or the Falconer version. It would indeed be strange that there could be two sons of Y-MacKay who were illegitimate with the same name. The only other MacKay that could possibly be implicated if such a story were true would be Y-Mackay's cousin John Mor who is recorded as being in the region around 1556 laying waste to territory. The Falconer (1793) variation was probably the foundation for the MacRae (1921) story.
4. MacRae's confusion gets worse stating that the above story was not the case and the facts were (p 20) that Hugh (incorrect, it was Y MacKay) married his cousin Helen in 1589, the daughter of Hugh Macleod of Assynt, and Donald Balloch was their son. Gordon (1630) suggests Hugh (son of Y MacKay and Christian Sinclair) repudiated his wife Elizabeth Sinclair for "adultery" (disputed by Angus MacKay p 114 footnote) and married Lady Jane Gordon, the daughter of the Earl Alexander of Sutherland. They had two sons, Donald (who became Lord Reay) and John. Gordon refers to "*Donald Ballogh Mackay of Scowrie*" (p 202) as the "*base brother of Hutcheon [Hugh] Mackay*" (p 203).

None of the accounts by Gordon, Falconer or MacRae are referred to by either of the two MacKay historians, Angus (1906) or Robert (1829). Y-MacKay was in Dumbarton prison from February to October 1555. Angus MacKay states that whilst Y-MacKay was in prison his cousin John Mor MacKay went to the lands of Sutherland and quotes Gordon saying "*with a company of the best and most resolute men in all Strathnaver, spoiling and wasting the east corner of Sutherland*" (Mackay, 1906, p 99).

However, given the accounts of Hugh MacKay by Gordon (1630), Falconer (1793) and MacRae (1921) it is only fair that a MacKay should have the last word on this family history. Like Sir Robert Gordon, Robert MacKay (1829) when writing about the history of the MacKays in the "Northern Division" of Scotland makes no reference to any person or clan named Morrison. MacKay gives a full and detailed account of Hugh MacKay (1571-1614), the son of Iye MacKay, and along the way makes several pointed comments of Sir Robert Gordon's history (such as "Sir Robert, with his usual liberality" (p 142), or "But this is one of his ranting tales, unworthy of any credit" (p 145). MacKay however does acknowledge the fact that Gordon had actually met Donald MacKay (footnote, p 145) which lends credibility and significance to Gordon's history of the time.

According to MacKay (1829) the genealogy of Hugh MacKay is as follows: His father Iye MacKay married twice, firstly to his cousin [Helen] (a daughter of Hugh Macleod of Assynt) and had two sons: Donald Balloch of Scoury and John-Beg. Secondly he married Christian Sinclair (the daughter of the laird of Dun) and had two more sons: Hugh, who succeeded him and William of Bighouse. He also had three daughters by his second marriage: Ellenora married Donald-Bane Macleod of Assynt, the second Jane married Alexander Sutherland of Berridale and Barbara Mackay who married Alexander Macdavid (chief of the Clan Gunn). Hugh also married twice: first, to Lady Elizabeth Sinclair, widow of Alexander Sutherland of Duffus, and second, in 1589, to Lady Jane Gordon, elder daughter of the 12th Earl of Sutherland. By his second wife, Hugh had a son, Donald, who succeeded him to become the first Baron Reay. He also had a son John and daughters Annas and Mary.

Neither of the two MacKay authors Angus (1906) and Robert (1829) make mention in all the dealings between any of the MacKays and a clan named Morrison. They both mention MacLeods, Gunns, Mathesons, Forbes, Sinclairs and Gordons who in different ways all have feuds between and within. There is no mention of the Earl of Sutherland taking the title to Morrison lands. Two historians, James Brown (1843) and Adam Gunn (1897) who wrote authoritatively about the western highlands, make no mention of any Morrisons. It is therefore impossible to verify or establish when the first Morrisons who may have been related to the Lewis Morrisons settled the adjacent mainland or if indeed they came originally from Lewis.

The only references that link the Brieve's family to the mainland are from the traditions (stories) about the Morrisons by Falconer (1793), Thomas (1876-78) and MacRae (1921). It can be seen from their differing accounts about the origins of the Morrison families located in the North Western mainland there is an elusive truth that is difficult substantiate. Oral histories are notoriously unreliable as each passing generation decorates and edits what they have heard. On balance, the evidence provided suggests that those responsible for recording the Morrison history in this region have borrowed elements from related clans and families and patched them into a record of events suitable for

their own purpose. Who will ever know what MacRae (1921) was attempting when he gave his interpretation. He managed to misrepresent the more commonplace myths by implanting differing origins such as Skye rather than Lewis, misinterpreted the Gaelic clan name for MacLeod and called it Morrison, and made factual errors regarding MacKay genealogy. His failure to reference his information places it in the category of unsubstantiated gossip at best and utter nonsense at worst.

There could be in all probability links by marriage between the MacLeods of Lewis and Harris and the Macleods of Assynt to various relations of the Brieve from Lewis. MacKenzie (1889) for example details a marriage between Alexander MacLeod of Meidle who married "*Marsaline, daughter of Torquil MacGilliemhuire or Morrison, Brieve of the Lewis...*" (p 204). MacKay family members also married MacLeods (for example, Ellenora MacKay married Donald-Bane Macleod of Assynt) thus further extending the web of family relationships. As previously mentioned commerce, particularly fishing, would have led to Lewis families quite probably marrying into other families on the mainland as they traded goods between coastal ports such as the legendary "*handsome and good-looking fellow*" who took his cargo of meal to Thurso. Thomas' mention of the Brieve's relations seeking refuge on the mainland following the treachery of the Brieve around 1597 could have been the high point in the establishment of a mainland "tribe", yet even here Thomas suggested most returned to Lewis after the troubles subsided.

## **The Fife Adventurers**

At the height of the troubles on Lewis in June 1598 the Privy Council under the contract of the King sanctioned a number of "gentlemen" including Patrick of Lindores, Sir James Learmonth of Balcomie, Sir James Anstruther, James Spens of Wormiston, Sir James Sandilands of SImannanmure, Captain William Murray, Sir John Forret of Fingast, Sir William Stewart of Pittenweem, Sir George Home of Wedderburn and his son David Home, and Ludovick the Duke of Lennox (a cousin of the King) to organise the "plantation" of Lewis. These "gentlemen" are referred to as the "Fife Adventurers".

Thomas (1878) gives an intriguing account of the Fife Adventurers although he makes an error with the date of their settlement and the capture of Sir James Learmonth of Balcomie: "*In October 1559 the Fife adventurers, with 500 or 600 soldiers, artificers, &c., sailed for Lewis, when Murdo Macleod captured the Laird of Balcolmy near the Orkneys, where soon afterwards the unfortunate gentleman died*" (p 517-8).

The Fife Adventurers first Lewis settlement was in 1598, not 1559, and continued on precariously in fits and starts through to their final forlorn retreat in 1609. The hanging of Neil MacLeod in Edinburgh in April 1613 ended the "*Troubles in the Lewis*" (Thomas, p 521). Part of Thomas' account records that some time in 1599 Neil MacLeod had a falling out with his brother Murdo, and Neil conspired with the Fife Adventures to betray Murdo who was later hanged,

drawn and quartered and his head affixed above the "Nether Bow" in Edinburgh after a trial at St Andrews for the treasonable capture of Sir James Learmonth, and the murder of a number of other Fife Adventurers including Joseph Learmonth. According to Thomas, Neil took the heads of 10 or 12 "Morrison" on pikes to Edinburgh.

In Moysie's account of this episode quoted by Thomas (pp 517-518) and MacKenzie (1903) no mention is made that the heads were of "Morrison", it simply states: "*Be the meanes of ane speciall hielandman off that ile there were ten or twelwe apprehendit of the speciall withstanders of that interpryse, and beheidit, and ther heids sent heir in a pok to Edinburgh, which were sett vpon the ports thereof.*" — Moysie's "Memoirs," p. 165 (*Ban. Club*) (p 518). Whoever the heads belonged to cannot be transformed from a "possibility" into a categorical claim such as Thomas' that they were "Morrison".

There is no historical evidence that can support Thomas' supposition that the heads were those of people named "Morrison" including the fact they were still known as "*Clan-Mhic-Ghille-Mhoir*" or "*Clan na Breitheamh*" at that time. MacCoinnich (2015, p 53) joins some of the dots by suggesting that Neil MacLeod had captured some of his brother Murdo's accomplices "*named by the Scottish Privy Council as Angus mKeane Bref, Jhone Dow mcBreif, Angus mcBreif*". Whether these were among the dozen heads of Murdo's followers executed by Neil MacLeod and taken to Edinburgh cannot be substantiated.

Quoting from Scott's "*Tales of a Grandfather*" (1842) we have this description of the failed colonisation of Lewis: "*The Hebrideans seem to have been accounted by King James a race whom it was impossible to subdue, conciliate, or improve by civilisation; and the only remedy which occurred to him was to settle Lowlanders in the islands, and drive away or extirpate the people by whom they were inhabited. For this purpose, the King authorized an association of many gentlemen in the county of Fife, then the wealthiest and most civilised part of Scotland, who undertook to make a settlement in the isles of Lewis and Harris. These undertakers, as they were called, levied money, assembled soldiers, and manned a fleet, with which they landed on Lewis, and effected a settlement at Stornaway in that country, as they would have done in establishing a colony on the desert shores of a distant continent*" (pp 348-9).

Morrison (1956) makes a reference to MacKenzie (1903) stating "*He [MacKenzie] noted in particular that a Morrison of Dairsie in Fife was employed as an arbiter by the MacLeods of Lewis and the Fife Adventures at the beginning of the seventeenth century*" (p 30). This claim by Morrison is not only a factual misrepresentation (as can be seen from what MacKenzie actually wrote) but also an invention as the "Morrison of Dairsie" did not exist at this time. This is what MacKenzie (1903) actually wrote: "*It is worthy of remark that a son of the laird of Darcie (Learmont) went to Lewis, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, to negotiate for the release of the Fife adventurers who were held as hostages. It is possible that this circumstance may form a*

*link between the Morisons of Darcie and the Morisons of Lewis*" (p 63). Later (p 203) MacKenzie clarifies this stating "*Eight months elapsed before James Leirmont, son of the Laird of Darcie, was sent to Lewis ...*" to presumably negotiate the release of James Spens and his son-in-law Thomas Moneypenny of Kinkell in 1607. Sir James Learmonth's brother John had a son James, and presumably this is the "son of the laird" that MacKenzie refers to. This "son of the laird" later became Sir James Learmonth, President of the Scottish Court of Session 1643-1647.

Sir James Learmonth of Balconie up until the time of his death in 1598 owned Dairsie castle. He had no children. James Melville (quoted in Wood, 1887) wrote that "*when the said James, being laird of Balcomie, lived many years in marriage without child, and being taken by the hielandmen coming out of Lewis, was siccarly bastoned, and sae hardlie used that soon thereafter died in Orkney, about the year 1598*" (pp 442-443). After the death of Sir James the Dairsie estate passed to his brother Sir John Learmonth of Birkhill. There is no link as MacKenzie postulates between the Morrisons of Dairsie and the Learmonth's or the Morrisons of Lewis.

It is shown later that the Morrisons only acquired the sobriquet "Morrison of Dairsie" when Sir George Morrison purchased Dairsie from Sir John Spottiswood in 1646. Furthermore, Morrison (1956) by misrepresenting MacKenzie about who it was that supposedly went to Lewis to negotiate for the release of hostages furthers the fake history and mythology regarding the Morrisons from Lewis. This is but one example of misrepresentation that undermines any credibility that the history of the Lewis Morrisons might have. To be historically accurate Morrison (1956) should have stated the fact that the Learmonth's sold Dairsie to the Spottiswood's in 1616 and they in turn sold it to the Morrison's in 1646. Sir James Learmonth of Balcomie was one of the Fife Adventurers who in 1598 sailed to get supplies for the Lewis settlers when he was captured by Murdo MacLeod and died soon after in the Orkneys. Why either Morrison or MacKenzie tried to connect the name Morrison to the Fife Adventurers fiasco is puzzling.

### **The Morrisons of Lewis and Harris: Irish or Norse?**

Deconstructing the historical myth about Norse origin is not an easy task in the light of all the uncritical published works and modern day Morrison websites that blithely quote the myth as fact. A typical example of these uncritical publications is Bain (The Clans and Tartans of Scotland, 1938, p 240) who wrote that "*According to tradition the Clan Morrison is said to be of Norse origin and descended from a family who were shipwrecked on the shores of the island of Lewis and saved by clinging to driftwood ...*" Bain, like so many authors, makes the assertion about Norse origin without any evidence, rather, he simply repeats the mythology as though it was an established fact.

Captain Thomas (1876-1878) emphasised the Irish connection to the name Morrison: "*In Ireland there was a Clan Mac Ghillemuire settled in Lecale (Leth-*

*Cathal*), County Down. On July 7, 1244, Henry III. requests—among others—that Mac Gillemuri himself, and with his forces, will join the Justiciary of Ireland about to depart for Scotland” (p 506). This suggests some Morrison families on Lewis are of Irish origin, not from Norse or MacLeod paternity.

Thomas attempts a linguistic analysis of the Irish origin as: *“Of the Morrisons, it is strange that the “Indweller”, himself a Morrison, should have ignored what he would have called the “ Irish ” name of his clan, which is from Gille-Mhuire, i.e., servant of Mary; from Gille, i.e., a servant, &c., and More, i.e., Mary. A Morrison in Gaelic is Mac Ghillemhuires, sometimes shortened to Gillmore, Gilmour; or translated Morrison, Maryson; or reduced to Milmore, Miles, Myles. The Morrisons are a numerous clan in Lewis, where, in 1861, they numbered 1402, or one-fifteenth of the whole population; in Harris there were 530, equal to one-seventh of the inhabitants. These numbers indicate a domination in the island of many centuries [It is an intriguing conclusion to suggest that one fifteenth of a population equates to domination]. There is no real tradition of their original settlement in Lewis, except that the founder was the inevitable son of King of Lochlann; but one remarkable genealogy of Macleod makes Gillemuire to have been the father of Leod; and before Raice (Rooke) and Olbair (Ulf 1) the Hwer, we have another Gillemuire. It is added that Ealga fholt-alainn, i.e., Ealga of the Beautiful Hair, daughter of Arailt Mac Semmair, King of Lochlainn, was the mother of Gillemuire”* (pp 504-505). Black (1946, p 639) condemns this analysis of the meaning of “Gille-Mhuire” as “baseless”. Adding to the intrigue about the derivation of names, and just as irrelevant, one could well ask was the name MacGillemorisone (Black, 1946, p 500) an original form of Morrison?

Thomas then suggests the Indweller’s account *“is only partially correct in stating that Kennanus Makurich, i.e., Cain Macvurich (Cathan Mac Mhurich), was the first Morrison in Lewis; for the current tradition throughout the island is that the heiress of the Morrisons, having determined she would only marry with a Morrison, Cain, who was a Macdonald from Ardnamurchan, passed himself off as a Morrison, became husband of the lady, and consequently brieve also. The Harris Morrisons claim to be of the original stock”* (p 508). If this is so, the question then becomes are these Harris Morrisons really MacDonalds?

Throughout the works of L A Morrison, John Morrison the “Indweller” and Captain Thomas there are confusing and contradictory accounts of the Morrison history on Lewis and Harris. Thomas made the claim that *“The Morrisons ... numbered 1402, or one-fifteenth of the whole population; in Harris there were 530, equal to one-seventh of the inhabitants. These numbers indicate a domination in the island of many centuries”* (p 505) yet later he comments that *“Many sanguinary battles, still recounted by tradition, were fought between the Macleods and Macaulays on one side, and the Morrisons on the other. At last the Morrisons were forced to leave Lewis, and take refuge with that branch of their clan which was settled in Duirness and Edderachyllis, in Sutherland, where still, in 1793, the natives were all, except a few, of the*

*three names of Mac Leay, Morrison, or Macleod*" (p 517). If Thomas is to be believed that the Morrisons were forced to leave Lewis then there must have been a significant number of Morrisons who remained on Lewis and Harris to breed up to nearly 2,000 by 1861 by Thomas' account. An alternative reason could be explained by a large unrelated number of people changing and anglicising their names to "Morrison" after 1600.

So we are left with a number of contradictory claims about the origin of the Morrisons on Lewis. Firstly, there was no child of Olaf the Black named "Gillemorrie", secondly the "Indweller" claims Norse decent from "Mores", thirdly Thomas (1876-1878) emphasised the Irish connection to the name Morrison via *Clan Mac Ghillemuire*, and finally the Thomas contention that the Morrison Brieves of Harris were descendants of a MacDonald.

The origin and meaning of "Gillemorrie", a personal name, is discussed below. However, based on credible research evidence the conclusion has to be that there is no definitive origin to the name Morrison in Lewis and Harris, but somewhere in the genealogy of the people identified nowadays in these isles as a Morrison there is every likelihood of some Irish genetic infusion into the general island population in much the same way there could have been Norse. The conclusion after examining the extensive academic debate is that the Morrisons do not descend from Olaf the Black, yet there is a general uncritical acceptance by many writers that claim this Morrison origin.

In Alick Morrison's (1956) opening chapter he writes *"The Clan Morrison is known in Gaelic as Clann MhicGillemhoire. The name is derived from the Gaelic personal name Gillemoire, which survived in the island of Berneray in the Sound of Harris as late as the last century. The living tradition on the island claims that Gillemoire was the Ceann Fine or progenitor of the Clan. The English form of the name Gillemoire is Maurice. Hence it follows that the surnames "MacGillemhoire" and "Morrison" are synonymous and literally mean the son or rather the descendent of Maurice"* (p 7).

MacCoinnich (2015) disagrees with this suggesting the 'Morisons' were not known as such by contemporaries during the sixteenth century. *"The earliest usage of the name 'Morison' for this family in Lewis dates from as late as 1640-1643, when Mr Donald Morison appears in the documentary sources as minister in Ness, Lewis ... The name given to members of this family in contemporary Scots and Latin documents prior to 1640 [and] 1643 was 'MacGilleVorie' and 'McBreif' and variants thereof rather than 'Morison.'* These names are clearly attempts at rendering the Gaelic forms 'MacGilleMhoire' and Mac a' Bhritheimh into Scots and Latin dress. Sir Robert Gordon, writing around 1630, referred to an incident around 1600 involving 'Gilcalme moir mac Iain (chieff of the clan wic Gill woir efter the death of the breiwe)...' (Weber 1813, 272). Another record relating to members of this family from 1598 named them as 'Angus m'Keane Bref, Jhone Dow McBreif, Angus Mc Breif' (RPCS xiv, p cxxiii)" (p 44).

MacCoinnich's reference to "an incident around 1600" above is detailed by Gordon (1630, p 272) where he writes about the double-dealing of the Brieve of Lewis in 1620: *"Now shall you see the Brieve of the Lewes justlie punished for killing and betraying his master, Torquill Dow Macloyd. John Mack-Donald-Mack-Houcheon, (befor mentioned,) accompanied only with four others, cam by chance into the house wher the Brieve, with six of his kindred, were lodged within the cuntrey of Assint ; either of them suspecting one another, being of contrary factions, and being now in one rowme, they expected who should be the first invader. John pursued the Brieve and killed him, with fyve of his men, without the losse of any of his owne company, which surelie was a hard mater to effectuat, being all vpon their guard; bot God deprived the Brieve and his company of courage or abilitie to resist. In revenge whereof Gilcalme-Moir-Mack-ean (chieff of the Clan-wic-Gill-Woir, efter the death of the Brieve), did search for John-Mackdonald-Mack-Houcheon to slay him; bot John, meitting by chance with this Gilcalme-Moir in the Cogigb, he invaded him, killed the most pairt of his men, took Gilcalme-Moir himself prisoner, and careid him into the Lewes to Tormot Macloyd, wher he was beheaded. This John Mackdonald-Mack-Houcheon died afterward in Strathnaver, the yeir of God 1620".*

Finally, in discussing the origin of the name Morrison on Lewis, Black (1946) gives the meaning and origin of *Ó Muirgheasan* as *"Descendant of Muirgheas', sea choice. A surname in Inishowen, county Donegal. At some unascertained date a branch of the family migrated from Inishowen to Scotland and settled in Lewis and Harris. Some of them became bards to the Macleods of Dunvegan... Later the name became O'Morrisonne and O'Morison. When the literary tradition with Ireland was broken the O' fell out and Muirgheasain was corrupted to Morrison. Their chief resided at Habost Ness in Lewis and became hereditary brief or judge of Lewis. Hutcheon Morrison was brief in 1551 and John Morrison in 1596. Little has been preserved of the early history of the family, which practically came to an end about 1600."* (pp 638-639).

Black (1994) identifies another family in Mull, 'Clann na h-oidhche' or *Ó Muirgheasáin* who adopted the spelling 'Morison' as an English form but were generally not believed to be related to the Lewis 'Morisons'. It therefore appears to be the case that some members of these "Morrison" families on Lewis and Harris are most likely completely unrelated. The effect of adopting a common name obscured their real histories and genealogies and most probably led to the development of far fetched or legendary tales to give meaning and glamour to their origins.

### **The Adoption of the name "Morrison" on Lewis and Harris**

Since the Morrison association with Olaf is false, where does this leave the whole history about the Morrisons of Lewis? Not only is there a problem with much of the mythical origins of the Morrison of Lewis, the name itself is problematic. MacCoinnich (2015) believes the name Morrison on Lewis did not exist before 1640. Prior to this time the families known as McBef, MacGilleMhuire and O'Muirghesasain formed different family groups on Lewis



and Harris. According to MacCoinnich the Morrisons of Ness were said to have been the hereditary *britheamhan* or judges associated with the McLeods of Lewis. MacCoinnich's chapter "*Dùn Èistean and the 'Morisons' of Ness in the Lordship of Lewis. The historical background, c.1493 – c.1700*" (2015) traces in great detail the evolution of the name Morrison around Ness, including the spelling of the name Morison with the one "r" which he suggests was the preferred spelling from the mid 1600s to the 1800s.

Regarding the use of a single "r" or double "rr" in the spelling of Morrison one author has proposed the difference is due to ethnic origins. According to MacCaulay (1980, p 164) the fertile soils around Pabbay were "*consecrated to the maintenance of the church. It was in such ecclesiastical connection that the name Morrison originated - Mary's son - Gaelic Moire and - Norse- son. Tradition says there were two septs of the Morisons, the Scandanavian and the Celtic. The Norse spelt it with a double 'r' - Morrison, and the Celtic with a single 'r' - Morison*". This is unsubstantiated fiction. There is no rule or 'tradition' regarding the single or double 'r' spelling. It has simply become an accident of history whichever form a family adopted.

MacCoinnich (2015) traces the evolution of the name from McBref or MacGilleMhuire to Morrison: "*The adoption of the name 'Morison' at some point during the first half of the seventeenth century was probably a matter of convenience in an increasingly anglophone world. It bore some similarity to MacGilleMhoire, anglicising it as 'Moire-son', in much the same pattern, perhaps, as names of neighbouring kindreds such as MacMhathain and MacMhurchaidh became Scotticised or anglicised as Matheson and Murchison respectively. Moreover, the form 'Morison' was free of overtones of a barbarous Gaelic past in a way that 'McBref', Mac Gille Mhoire and their variations were not. Sliochd a' Bhrithheimh were not the only clan to rebrand their names at this time. Those bearing the names 'MacNeacail' and 'MacBeatha' in the records from neighbouring Skye prior to the 1620s, for example, became Nicolsons and Beatons, respectively, although they had no connection to their namesakes in the south who bore these well-established lowland names... Not only were names re-packaged, but the past itself could be re-invented and parallel practice of pedigree faking was widespread in the highlands at this time (p 66). MacCoinnich's suggestion is supported by Bannerman (1998, *The Beatons, a Medical Kindred in the Classical Tradition*, pp 3-5), Sellar (1981, *Highland Family Origins, Pedigree Making and Pedigree Faking*, pp 108-113) and Black (1946 p 463 wrote that the MacCallum's of Poltalloch changed their name some time before 1850 from MacCallum to Malcolm 'for aesthetic reasons')*.

MacCoinnich quotes W C Mackenzie (1903) posing the possibility of this rebranding tracing back to either the Morrisons of Dairsie or Prestongrange (these two related families are discussed in detail later), but Mackenzie's speculation is misplaced. It certainly wasn't the Morrisons of Dairsie as they only came into being in 1646. The closest connection to MacKenzie's speculation was the marriage of Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange's widow

Helenor Maule to Sir James Monnypenny in 1637, a relative of Thomas Monnypenny of Kinkell who was held prisoner along with his father in law James Spens during the time of the Fife Adventures. However, these dates effectively rule out either the Dairsie or Prestongrange connection that MacKenzie was proposing.

The more likely explanation, according to MacCoinnich, was an Andrew Morrison of Avoch mentioned earlier, the chief collector. Andrew is referred to in 1606 as "*Andra Moresoun collector depute and factor to Mr David Lindesay Bisshop of Ross*" (Old Ross-Shire and Scotland, as seen in the Tain and Balnagown documents, B No. 57, 1606, p 32). References to "Andrew Moresone" of Avoch (a harbour village located on the south-east coast of the Black Isle on the Moray Firth) the Collector Depute in the northern parts of Scotland date to at least 1597 where *The Sottish Antiquary, Vol. 5*, identifies him (p 30). It also refers to his wife Barbara Ross whose father Thomas Ross was the Abbot of Fearn (a hamlet situated about 1 mile south of Loch Eye and 2 miles northwest of Balintore in eastern Ross-shire).

Andrew Morrison was born in Leith (Adam, 1991, p 200), was admitted as a notary in 1577 and appointed Collector Depute in 1589. According to Adam (1991) he was styled "*chamberlane of His Majesties rents benorth the Forth*" (p 201). Some time about 1593 he moved to Ross, and up until at least 1633 he was still active witnessing deeds. He married Barbara Ross, the daughter of Thomas Ross (the commendator of Fearn) and Isobel Kinnaird. The mother of Thomas Ross was Margaret Morrison (married to William Ross of Culnaha), the daughter of Henry Morrison of Pitchaldy, Fordyce, Banffshire. Margaret's brother Alexander Morrison was Abbot of Fearn in 1585 (Adam, p 139). This is most probably the same Alexander referred to as Alexander Morrison the exhorter, parson and vicar in 1562 at Alness (Scott, 1950, p 658) and *Origines Parochiales Scotiae: The Antiquities Ecclesiastical and Territorial of the Parishes of Scotland* (Innes, 1855).

The third son of Margaret Morrison and William Ross, Donald Ross, had two daughters. One of them, Elizabeth, married George Morrison of Little Allan, the son of Thomas Ross' uncle (Alexander Morrison, the brother of Margaret Morrison who was married to William Ross, Thomas' father). These two different Morrison families demonstrate a good example of the name moving north from Lowlands to Highlands.

Andrew Morrison can be connected to the Rev. Donald Morrison of Barvas through a friendship with William Lauder (born about 1614, Commissary Clerk of Ross who married Katherine, eldest daughter of Murdoch MacKenzie the chamberlain of Lewis) from Avoch. William Lauder's daughter Jean married Rev. Donald Morrison who became the minister of Barvas in 1640. In 1630 Andrew Morrison and William Lauder are mentioned as witnesses to the Charter of Confirmation by Patrick Lindsay, Bishop of Ross: "*Andrew Moresoun, burgess of said Canory; William Lauder, clerk of the commissariat of Ross...*" (Livingston, 1907, p 364). Andrew and Barbara's grandson, a

MacKenzie, was killed at the battle of Worcester in 1652 where coincidentally a Morrison from the Prestongrange family line was captured and transported to the West Indies.

The common connection between Rev Donald Morrison and Andrew Morrison the collector is conceivable through in-laws and family connections between the Mackenzies, Lauders and Morrisons. There is also the possibility that Rev Donald adopted the name Morrison whilst he was studying at St Andrews. His tutors may have urged him to abandon his Gaelic name for an Anglo Scottish name. The troubles of Donald M'Indowie [Donald Macillevore], the last Brieve on Lewis who was subject to an act of "Fire and Sword" in 1630, would have been fresh in the mind of Donald who probably left Lewis to attend St Andrews in the late 1630s. According to Scotlands People "*Lowland clergymen in a charge in the Highlands or the Shetland Isles sometimes took the opportunity to anglicise a name in the records*" (Scottish Surnames and Variants: [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/)).

Having already discounted the story about Ay Mac Hormaid as being an adaptation or misrepresentation of MacKay history and dismissing other accounts stemming from this story that used "Morrison" when in fact the name was not in usage, there is something of a vacuum of reliable source material to ascertain when it was that the "Durness" Morrisons adopted the name. The name Morrison was being used nearby by Donald Morrison the Chaplain of Morangie in 1486 (MacGill, 1909, p 3), Alexander Morrison the exhorter in 1571 at Alness (Scott, 1928, p 25), Andrew Morrison the collector in 1597 at Avoch (Scottish Antiquary, Vol 5, p 30) and "Jasper Moresone" who was a witness in 1580 to John Ross, minister at "Tayne" (MacGill, 1909, p 19) and in 1545 noted in the Dallas family history to a "Willelmo Moresoun". It is evident from the records in this region there were families of Morrisons who were spelling their name as Morrison as distinct from some Gaelic variant in and around Ross shire.

MacCoinnich (2015) says Rev. Donald Morrison was the grandson of the last Brieve named Donald Macillevore. This accords with MacKenzie tradition and Capt. F W L Thomas (p 32) who noted Donald M'Indowie [Donald Macillevore] Brieff was the last Brieve and was the subject of a 'Patent of Fire and Sword' dated 24th June, 1630 issued by King James VI of Scotland to Rorie (Roderick) MacKenzie of Cogac (the Tutor of Kintail) to subdue the West Highlands and in particular the Island of Lewis. L A Morison says the last Brieve was "Judge John Morrison" (p 55). However, according to MacCaulay (1980, p 27), Allan was the last of twelve heredity brieves or judges. Allan had a son Murdo who was a tacksman at Gress, and Murdo's son John (Ian Mhurchaidh Ailein) (born about 1630) became a tacksman at Bragar and later known as the "Indweller". Given the written record of the "Patent of Fire and Sword" in 1630 Donald Macillevore was most likely the last Brieve.

John Morrison the "Indweller" wrote *"I do remember in my tyme, when there was not three in all the country that knew A b by a Bible"* (quoted in MacCaulay, 1980, p 28 ). This indicates illiteracy was almost universal on Lewis up until at least 1650. Therefore the "Indweller" must have relied heavily on oral history. This also suggests there were no written family records before at least 1650. Oral histories are notoriously unreliable as they are subject to all manifestations of interpretation, embellishment and invention. He makes no mention in his telling of the family history when it was they began calling themselves Morrison.

Alick Morrison (1956) in discussing the worldwide diaspora of the Lewis Morrisons (p 29) quotes W C MacKenzie (1903) who wrote *"Whether or not these Morrisons are descended from the Lewis family, it is difficult to say, but traditions seems to support the suggestion"* (p 63). On this point Morrison (1956) omitted the whole point of MacKenzie's paragraph which led into the quote above: *"The chiefs of the Morisons of Lewis - the latter are sometimes called the Clan na Breitheamh - enjoyed the privileges of the judgeship for many generations, until their final downall [sic] early in the seventeenth century. The arms of the Morisons of Dersay (or Darcie) in Fife, the Morisons of Bognie, and the Morisons of Prestongrange, are three Moors' heads, an obvious pun on the word Morison, although tradition supplies a version of its own... "* (p 62-3). As shown later in the detailed discussion into the four families from Prestongrange, Dairsie, Pitfour and Bognie, there is absolutely no connection or tradition between them and the Lewis or Harris Morrisons.

Further to this, the prominent Scottish Moir family suggest that in their family history (Moir, 1913) *"There is no "Clan Moir". This is just another instance of the use of the adjective. The "Clan Mhic Gille Mhoir", of which Dr. Brown refers in his history of the Highlands, is explained by Sir George Robert Gordon, the contemporary writer, whom he is quoting, to be merely a sept or branch of the Clan MacLeod"* (Henry Paton, in Moir, 1913, p 23). Gordon did not make or infer this claim. Later writers have attempted to translate *"Clan Mhic Gille Mhoir"* as "Morrison". It is neither Muir or Morrison, and this false translation has been responsible for many of the spurious claims made about the origins of these two names in Scotland, particularly for the Morrisons of Lewis.

Whatever the reason or whoever it was that suggested the adoption of the name Morrison for the newly rebranded families on Lewis and Harris will probably never be known. It is a tantalising enigma that will no doubt vex the many adherents who believe that all Morrisons originated in Lewis and Harris. However, the consequential effect of the name change meant that these families were now able to trace their family trees back retrospectively, that is, they also changed the names of their forebears to Morrison as well. According to Thomas (p 508), *"Cain Macvurich (Cathan Mac Mhurich), was the first Morrison in Lewis"*. Had the families rebranded themselves, for example, 'Lauder' instead of 'Morrison' then this same person would have been claimed to be the first Lauder, and all the people who called themselves Lauder could say their progenitor was *Cain Macvurich (Cathan Mac Mhurich)*. This 17th

century name rebranding has created an historical distortion of extraordinary dimensions, particularly in terms of the effect on genealogy.

### **Should "Gillemoire" (Gilmour) be a Sept of the Morrisons?**

When distilling the many scholarly theories about the derivations and meanings of "Gillemoire" and the many spelling variations in relation to the name Morrison and its origin, how is one to draw reliable conclusions about true meaning or origin?

Just as the name "Morrison" appears in the Scottish records with many alternative spellings as described previously, "Gillemoire" also appears with many variations: *MacGilleMhuire, MacGilleMhoire, Mhic-Ghillie-Mhoir, Mac Gillemuri, MhicGillemhoire, Gilmor, Gylmor, Gillmore, Gillemorrie, Gillemuire, Gillemoire, Gilemur, Gael mor and Gille Moire.*

The Clan Morrison Society lists Gilmour as a "sept" of the Morrisons. Not only is the origin of the name Gilmour (or the spelling variant Gilmore) in Lewis unreliable, to link it with the name Morrison generally makes it even more so. Like the name Morrison, Gilmore was also in usage as a surname on the mainland long before it was used on Lewis and Harris. To summarise some of the conflicting origins and meanings of Gilmour, here are some examples found in the literature:

1. Black (1946) gives the origin of the name Gilmour as (or Gaelic, Gille Moire) "servant of (the Virgin) Mary" and dates it to around 1133 and 1156 when "*Gilmor, son of Gilander, founded the chapelry of Treverman (now Trierman) in the Parish of Walton, Cumberland*" (p 308). Furthermore, Black references Cosmo Innes in his introduction identifying the name Gilmour identified from "*the handwriting*" from around 1200 as "*Gilemur filius kercau aput corrokes*" and "*Gylmor hund aper Dauwic*" (p xxi) in a document of "*witnesses to the right marches between Stobbo and Hoperewe and Orde*" (p xx) which Black suggests are of Saxon or Old English origin. Black references many examples of the name Gilmour in the Lowlands of Scotland as well as scorning the "*philological gymnastics*" of Dr John Milne who had asserted that Gilmour is "*Gael mor, which was originally Chuit mor, aspirated, cattle-fold, and mor means big. Chuit was corrupted into white, which being regarded as an English name, was turned into Gaelic by geal, white!*" (p 308). See also point 10 below.
2. Sellar (1998) when writing about the MacLeod origins states that the Gaelic pronunciation of "son of Gillemuire" is (mac (Gh)illemhuire). Therefore, if the Morrisons were MacGillemhuires, that is, the sons of Gillemoire, then they would be by paternity MacLeods. The MacLeod DNA has been identified as S68/L165: "*Nevertheless, the MacLeods do not carry the M17 marker group. Theirs is a recently discovered sub-group labelled S68. It is found in Lewis, Harris and Skye, core Macleod territory, but also in Orkney, Shetland and Norway, with a few examples in Sweden. Despite extensive screening,*

*S68 is very specifically located, showing up only once in the east of Scotland and once in England. This is a classic pattern for a Viking marker in Britain, but one much rarer than M17. MacLeods determinedly claim descent from a common name father, a Norse aristocrat called Ljot, a relative of Olaf, King of Man. They are probably right to continue to claim that – science for once supporting tradition” (The Scotsman, 2 March 2011, Scotland’s DNA: Who do you think you are? - Part 4). It would be logical to conclude that if the Morrisons on Lewis were by paternity of MacLeod stock then they would carry this gene. So far no Morrisons have tested positive for this gene.*

3. Paton (1913) suggests *“The “Clan Mhic Gille Mhoir”, of which Dr. Brown refers in his history of the Highlands, is explained by Sir Robert Gordon, the contemporary writer, whom he is quoting, to be merely a sept or branch of the Clan MacLeod”* (p 23). The author of this research concludes Paton’s claim regarding Dr Brown and Sir Robert Gordon cannot be substantiated. Gordon (1630) stated that the Slight-Ean-Voir descend from John Moir-Mack-Ean (p 92), that is a MacLeod. MacRae (1921) incorrectly translated the Slight-Ean-Voir to be Morrisons, and it would appear Paton has made the same error.
4. Thomas, (1876-78) gives two meanings: *“... that the serfs or tenants on lands belonging to a church or monastery dedicated to the Virgin would be called the Gillies of Mary; hence the origin of the name; but in process of time it is evident that such names as Gillemuire were used as proper names, and without any reference to office or employment”* (p 505). Later he states: *“Gille-Mhuire, i.e., servant of Mary; from Gille, i.e., a servant, &c., and More, i.e., Mary. A Morrison in Gaelic is Mac Ghillemhuire, sometimes shortened to Gillmore, Gilmour; or translated Morrison, Maryson; or reduced to Milmore, Miles, Myles”* (p 504).
5. MacKenzie (1903) wrote *“... “Muire” appears to be St Mourie or Maelrubha (rather than the Virgin Mary) of whose name Rice (Raice) is known to be a variant. Such compound names as Gille-Muire, Gille-Colum, Gille-Anrias, Gille-Bride, and similar appellatives, were of frequent occurrence among the Celtic Christians during the Norse domination of the Hebrides; and after the conversion of the Norsemen to Christianity, they may have been applied by the Celts to Norwegians of rank in the Isles, who were distinguished for their devotion to the saints under whose patronage they had placed themselves”* (p 56). MacKenzie then goes on to weave the McLeods, Morrisons and Gilmores together: *“It is likely that the Morisons, as suggested by the Bragar genealogist, are descended from Norse forbears. It is far from improbable, indeed, that they were a sept of the Macleods. John Morison states the belief that the progenitor of the Macleods, and father of the progenitor of the Morisons, were both sons of the “King of Noravay”, or in other words, the Norse King of Man and the North Isles. The Gaelic name of the Morisons - Clan MacGillemhuire or Gillmuire - when taken in conjunction with the preceding remarks about St. Mourie and the Kings of*

*Man - appears to support the view that the relations between the Macleods and the Morisons were of an intimate nature. The name Morison is an English rendering of the word Gillemuire - servant or devotee of Mourie - and the original form survives in the modern name of Gilmour" (p 62).*

6. Black (1946) suggests that rather than being a translation, Morrison displaced the Gaelic Mac Gille Mhuire from "*which comes Macgillimore, Macgilmore, Macgilvory, MacIlvory, and Maclimore" (p 612). See also point 10 below.*
7. Sinclair (1899) suggests Gilleain was the progenitor the Macleans (p 40), and in discussing some of his heirs he references a "*Maolmorie, or Gillemoire, [which] means servant of Mary. Among the men who rendered homage to Edward 1 of England in 1296 was 'Gillemoire Mackilyn', apparently Gillemoire Mac Gille-Eoin, or Gilmory Maclean" (p 41). The 'servant of Mary' idea has been seized upon in populist literature to represent the origin of MacGillemhoire, and hence Morrison. Contrast this with what Black says in point 11 below.*
8. MacCoinnich (2015) outlined how he saw the evolution on Lewis of MacGilleMhuire to Morrison: "*The adoption of the name 'Morrison' at some point during the first half of the seventeenth century was probably a matter of convenience in an increasingly anglophone world. It bore some similarity to MacGilleMhoire, anglicising it as 'Moire-son', in much the same pattern, perhaps, as names of neighbouring kindreds such as MacMhathain and MacMhurchaidh became Scotticised or anglicised as Matheson and Murchison respectively" (p 66).*
9. Morrison (1956) states that "*The English form of the name Gillemoire is Maurice. Hence it follows that the surnames "MacGillemhoire" and "Morrison" are synonymous and literally mean the son or rather the descendent of Maurice" (p 7). Another derivation of "Maurice" in Gaelic is "Muirgheas" and the English form is "Maurice". The Library of Ireland defines it as "MUIRGHEAS, genitive -gheasa and -ghis, (Maurice); comp. of muir, sea, and -ghus, choice; formerly a common Irish name; now merged in Muiris, which see. Latin — Murgessius". See also point 10 below.*
10. Black (1946) makes a detailed analysis of the name O'Muirgheasain: "*Descendant of 'Muirgheas', sea choice. A surname in Inishowen, county Donegal. At some unascertained date a branch of the family migrated from Inishowen to Scotland and settled in Lewis and Harris. Some of them became the bards of the Macleods of Dunvegan ... Later the name became O'Morisone and O'Morison. When the literary tradition with Ireland was broken the O' fell out and Muirgheasain was corrupted to Morrison" (p 638). However, Black falls into the trap of backdating the beginning of the adoption of the name to Morrison when he states "*Their chief resided at Habost Ness in Lewis and became hereditary brieve or judge of Lewis. Hutcheon Morrison was brieve in 1551 and John Morrison in 1596. Little has**

*been preserved of the the early history of the family, which practically came to an end about 1600" (pp 638-9). Black gives no estimation of when this evolution of O'Muirgheasain to Morrison supposedly took place, however from MacCoinnich's research (point 8 above) we know it wasn't before 1640.*

11. Black (1946) then quotes the Indweller's assertion that the Morrisons descended from "*Mores the son of Kennanus*", stating "*Equally baseless is the modern idea that "Morrison" interpreted as "Mary's son", represents Gaelic Mac Gille Mhuire. Alexander Morrison (Heraldry of the Clan MacGillemhuiire) makes the wild statement that the name is from ancestors who were vassals or adherents of the jarls of More or Moeri in Norway!" (p 639).*

Adding Gilmore to the Morrison clan origin controversy by suggesting they are a sept of the Morrisons would on the evidence provided above, appear to be as equally spurious as the claim that all Morrisons originated in Lewis. The evidence is contrary to this claim, both the Scottish Morrison and Gilmore names originated elsewhere in England and Scotland as quite separate and unrelated family names. Like many names in Scotland they evolved and changed over the hundreds of years from when they were first recorded, eventually standardising during the 1800s. Their origins and histories are as manifold as their progenitors.



## Chapter 5

### The Origins of the Morrisons: From Lowlands to Highlands

Family research into the history of the Morrisons in Scotland is limited by the paucity of records for births, marriages and deaths prior to 1855. What records there are before 1855 consist of Old Parish Records (OPRs) and a variety of often unconnected historical accounts, family histories, parochial registers and official statutory documents. These are all far from comprehensive, and require lengthy cross-referencing to validate whatever claims may have been made about persons or events. Some family histories such as Bulloch's (1907) "The House of Gordon" or Dallas' (1921) "Family of Dallas" contain well researched cameo portraits of marriages and dates that detail family members and their parentage. There are also some written histories which contain incorrect information such as Wemyss (1799) who claimed it was Sir George Morrison who bought Prestongrange when in fact it was John Morrison (supported by Scottish records, and for example, Stodart, 1881).

It is not possible to determine who the first Morrisons were, there is simply no evidence that is capable of being verifiable. The most probable conclusion reached in Chapter 1 was that the Morrisons first settled the Lowlands of Scotland before pushing north and west into the highlands. The DNA evidence of the "M269 marker defines a group known as R1b and is predominant in Scotland ... [and the] overwhelming likelihood is that it came to Balbridie, Claish, Kelso and elsewhere..." (Moffat and Wilson, 2012, p 66) and was introduced by pioneering farmers. This pattern of settlement is balanced against the theories of the development of the name Morrison discussed previously. This Chapter looks at some of the earliest recordings of Morrison families, more particularly those of Prestongrange in the Midlothians, Dairsie in Fife, and Bognie and Pitfour in Aberdeenshire.

The earliest references to the identifiable form of the name Morrison in Scottish records has been discussed in Chapter 1. The Colquhoun family history, the Aberdeen Burgess records and the records from the Cistercian Abbey in Coupar-Angus predate all other recognisable Scottish recordings of the Morrison name in Scotland that have been reported by other writers. In addition to these early records, other early recordings include the Latin translation of *The History of Old Ross-shire* (Macgill, 1909) which identified Rev Donald Morrison Chaplain of Morangie in 1486 (p 3) and in 1580 a Jasper Moresone (p 19), the *Register of the Great Seal of Scotland* has in Edinburgh 1531 a Jac Morysone and *The Scottish Register* has Morrisons in Perth 1572, Aberdeen 1573, Stirling 1587 and Angus 1589. The following reference in 1563 is found in the *Protocols of the Town Clerks of Glasgow*: "John Moresoun, son and heir of q. John Moresoun, ratified and approved a sale and resignation made by him in his minority, with consent of q. Sir John Moresoun, his curator..." (Renwick, 1897, p 60). Note that the title "Sir" was often applied to the clergy around this time. These are but a few of a plethora of Morrison references prior to 1600.

As previously discussed, the Morrisons from Lewis and Harris adopted the Morrison name in the first half of the 1600s. It is not an Anglicised translation of MacGhilleMhuire as often claimed. If one looks at the gap in recording the name in Lewis and Harris from the other Scottish recordings of the name "Morrison" as distinct from other manifestations such as McBref it does lend some support to the theory that the Lewismen "adopted" the name and has no connection to the evolution of the name Morrison through the Lowlands and into Scotland generally. There was no simple Gaelic equivalent. MacCoinnich (2015) in *Plantation and Civility in the North Atlantic World: The Case of the Northern Hebrides 1570-1639* suggests that "One Lewis kindred identified variously as 'bref', 'brief', 'McBref' or 'Sliochd a' Bhritheimh', a heredity legal family, re-named themselves as 'Morison' sometime before the mid seventeenth century" (pp 505 - 506).

In the Lowlands there are numerous examples in historic records for Scotland that reference the name "Moresoun" (and many variations of the spelling now given as Morrison) in the 1500's. In the Miscellany of the New Spalding Club (Vol 1, Aberdeen, Printed for the Club 1890 Register of Burgesses of Burgh of Aberdeen, 1399-1631, p 1 and additional entries, 1601, p 161) the frequency of surnames in Scotland is discussed in a "note on names in register of burgesses":

*The order of frequency for the whole of Scotland, according to Mr. William Anderson's "Genealogy and Surnames" (Edinb., 1865), is as follows: Smith, Macdonald, Brown. Robertson, Thomson, Stewart, Campbell, Wilson, Anderson, Mackay, Mackenzie, Scott, Johnston, Miller, Reid, Ross, Paterson, Fraser, Murray, Maclean, Cameron, Clark, Young, Henderson, Macleod, Taylor, Mitchell, Watson, Ferguson, Walker, **Morrison**, Davidson, Gray, Duncan, Hamilton, Grant, &c:*

A chronology of the name Morrison (Moresone, Moryson) from the Aberdeen Burgh Records is as follows:

1440

Sept 18 Morison, Angus, of Kynkardyn (at request of laird of Drum)

1459-60

Galt, Andrew (caut. Walter Muryson)

1465

Sept 13 Moryson, Gilbert

1470.

Aug. 2. Moryson, John, of Dunbanane

1472

July 30. Morison, John (baker)

1483-4.

Murison, Andrew

1490-1

Mureson, Sir William (services dispensed with at "lott

scott, wak and ward") Baxter, Andrew, in Slains (at request of Sir William Muiresone)

1514-5

Moresone, William (servant to the Provost)

1575

Mar.21. Moresoune, George

1592

Sept 25 Moresone, Andro, eldest son of the umqill. John M.

1596,

Oct 8 Moresone, John (dyer)

1602

Sept 7. Muresoun, Thomas (ex gratia, caut. William Gray, baillie)

1606

Apr. 29. Moresoun, Walter (caut. George M.)

1612

Sept 22 Morriesoune, John (caut. George M.)

1616

Sept 13 Moresoune, George, eldest son of George M.

1617

Dec. 10. Moresone, Alexander (servant to George, Marquis of Huntly, ex gratia at his request)

1619.

Aug. i4.\*Moreson, William and Walter, sons of the late George M.

*\* It is to be rememberit that the said Willeame and Walter Moresonis, sons to the said umqill George Moreson, and the said Willeame Leysk, his sygniture, were admittet burgesses of gild gratis for the gude service doun to the toun be Barbara Fergusson, relict of the said umqill George during the tyme of my Lord Duke of Lenox his g. being w'in this burt, and for the len of hir hous and plinesching to that effect. —C. R. XLIX., 336. [These Morrisons became known as the Morrisons of Pitfour detailed later].*

1622

Mar 14 Moresone, Henry, at one time baillie of the burgh of Edinburgh (ex gratia) [A Morrison of Prestongrange].

1624

July 13. Moresone, Sir John, of Sauchtounhall (ex gratia) Dulsone, Patrick (servant to Sir John Moresone, ex gratia) [Father of Sir George Morrison of Dairsie].

Historically the name Morrison in all its different spellings is found throughout Scotland from 1429 onwards in a broad variety of records, for example:

The *Rental Book of Diocese of Glasgow AD 1509-1570* cite the name Willelmus Morisone on a document dated 1519 (p 34) and later (pp 413-414) cite the name "Johanne Morison" (Liber Protocollorum M. Cuthberti Simonis Notarii Publici et Scribae Capituli Glasguensis A.D. 1499-1513). Another example, dated 1529: "*Present there, Sir John Morisoun, chaplain and connotary in the premises, Michael Flemyng, Sir Thomas Flemyng, notaries public, William Hendersoun, John Gayne and George Burell, with many others witnesses to the premises called and asked...*" (in *Charters and other documents relating to the city of Glasgow*, p 109). There is a reference in 1545 in the Dallas family

history to a "Willelmo Moresoun" in an instrument of sassin in Moray (Dallas, 1921, p 85). In Stirling in the *Extracts from the records of the Burgh of Stirling* (R. Renwick, 1890, p 59) dated 1544-1550 a Kate Moreson, Johne Moreson, Jonet Moreson and a Robert Morison are identified.

Similar types of Burgh references to the name appear about this time in Glasgow, Dundee, Dunfermline, Aberdeen as well as Edinburgh where this research is concentrated. There also appear to be Morrisons associated with the Augustinian clergy as servants at the monastery of Holyrood Abbey (founded in 1128 by David I): "...the list of Robert's servants are Scots - Blackadder, Brown, Bruce, Crawford, Dickson, Dundas, Elphinstone, Henderson, Johnston, Kennedy, Kincaid, Lyle, Monteith, Morrison, Murray, Redpath, Robson and Stewart...While Donald Morisoun has not been identified, several persons of that surname were included among the servants of the previous commendator, Robert Stewart [son of James V of Scotland, 1st Earl of Orkney, Abbot of Holyrood 1539] (Anderson, 1982, p 137). Rubbish was dumped at 'Moresouns yett' (gate) following work at the palace in 1579 (WA i, 305)" (Gallagher, 1998, p 1090).

The earliest reference to a Morrison in the Edinburgh records is for a William Morrison in the *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses (1406-1700)*: "Morison, Wm., baxter, at the instance of Thomas Tod, provost 31 Dec. 1494-2 Mar. 1498-9" (p360). The *Edinburgh Burgh Accounts* give many references to the Morrisons in Edinburgh claiming expenses on behalf of the Council, for example, in 1549 to *Alexander Moresoun*, 1556 Item 97 to "Jhone Moresoun aucht pund" (p 67), in 1558 : "The viii dayis expenses maid upone Johnne Morisonis twa Slangis their irne werk..." (p 255), "Item, to Denne Morisoun for wynny of there lintels to the saids yetis..." (p 112) (Town Treasurer's Accounts 1552-1567, The Burgh Accounts: Vol 1).

The Preface to Edinburgh Burgh Accounts makes fascinating reading about the day to day activities of the Council in the mid 1500s. These were the years that the family that was to become known as the Morrisons of Prestongrange and Dairsie began in 1537 through John Morrison, Burgess of Edinburgh:

*"During the period embraced in these Accounts, the most momentous events were taking place, and influences the most powerful upon the country and character of the Scottish people were growing and strengthening. The name of John Knox figures prominently in the period, especially in connection with Edinburgh. The men who so prosaically penned the entries in the Accounts here presented, had witnessed the burnings and slaughter in the City in 1544, 1545 and 1547; they were familiar on the streets with the forms of Mary of Guise, Queen Mary, John Knox, and all the great ones whose names have come down to us from that stirring time. They doubtless discussed the strange new subjects which were agitating men's minds, and listened eagerly to the tidings of those events, the fame of which has reached us, and into the details of which every patriotic Scotsman is eager to inquire. It may be that, even in the prosaic entries now presented relating to City business,*

*these Bailies and Treasurers and Deans of Guild give some glimpses into the circumstances in which they lived, and the methods and customs of their age. They were not professing to write history, but their writings form valuable material, which may be utilised in the building up of Scottish history all the more valuable that it comes to us in dry details, which are free from all passion and partizan bias. This is the justification for the Town Council making these Records accessible to the public.*

*... In the same year [1558], a sum of Is. 6d. is entered as paid for cords and besoms with which to scourge three lads who had been engaged in the singular amusement of "playing at funeral," two of them carrying the third through the town "as he had been dead." Henry Wynd's wife was burnt at the stake (her offence is not stated), and details are given of the payments for the cords, stake, coals for the fire, tar and the labour barrels, rosait and of the men who made the pile, not omitting the ten pence to the lockman to drink. Some Frenchmen charged with making or circulating false coin were sentenced to be executed, or, as the phrase was, "justified," and the expenses of the scaffold and gibbet are given. It is mentioned that they were brought condemned from the Abbey. In 1559-60, the Treasurer, who had evidently come under ecclesiastical displeasure, enters the sum of five shillings, which he "had to expend before he could get from the Bishop an absolution from cursing.*

*On 8th May 1559-60, a payment of 40 is entered for the "honest sustenance and furnishing of the ministers of this Burgh." From the entries in 1560, it appears that two shillings Scots about six pence sterling was the ordinary wage per day paid to masons" (Preface, The Burgh Accounts: Vol 1)..*

## **The Scottish Lowlands 1550 to 1750**

The two hundred years between 1550 and 1750 were turbulent times for the family sometimes referred to as the Morrisons of Prestongrange and Saughtounhall and their cousins, the Morrisons of Dairsie, and another two unrelated families of Morrisons in Aberdeen, the Pitfour and Bognie lines. These families were part of the social, political and religious mix which set the course for the future of Scotland right up until today. The centre of the political and religious struggles in Scotland at this time was Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Burgess records identify William Morrison in 1494. In 1529 Paul and Thomson (1883, *Registrum magni sigilli*, p 167 and p 175) identify a "Will. Morisoun" and later in "*Hadingtoun a Joh. Morisone*". The Parish of Haddington in Haddingtonshire is part of the Midlothian region which contains the significant other Parishes of Prestongrange, Prestonpans, Dolphingstone, Dalkeith and Newbattle. It lies about 10 miles from Edinburgh and 13 miles from North Berwick. From the records of the time it is therefore confidently stated that there were well established Morrison families in Edinburgh and the Midlothians in the early part of the 1500s. Extracts From the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1528-1557 and 1557-1571 (Originally published by Scottish Burgh Records Society, Edinburgh, 1875) support this.

1494, *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses 1406-1700*: "Morison, Wm., baxter, at the instance of Thomas Tod, provost 31 Dec. 1494-2 Mar. 1498-9" (p360)

1529, Will. Morisoun, Joh. Morisone (Paul and Thomson, 1883, p 167 and p 175).

1537, August 7. The oldest record that identifies the "Prestongrange" Morrison family in Edinburgh is *The Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses 1406-1700* which records "Morison, John, B. and G. [Burgess and Guild brother], be r. of w. [relict or husband of wife] Beatrix, dr. [daughter of] of James Hill 7 Aug. 1537" (p 360).

1554, December 29. Recording "Ane thousand pund lent to Monsieur Dosell" signed and witnessed by "... Johnne Moresoun..", then

1555, September 13. "... Luke Moresoun.. " paid for minding the "Cowgait port"

1561, July 18. Moresoun, tailyeour. In presens of the baillies and counsale William Moresoun, tailyeour, being callit and accusit for suffering of George Durye, callit lord of obedience, and [blank] Cok, his seruandis, to pas furth with armour and wappinnis, and for resset and manteinance of thame, contrair the [ordinance and proclamation of 24th April, and having confessed] the said William is decernit to tyne his fredome and libertie, and to remane in ward within the tolbuith quhill the keyis of his buth be deliuerit to the baillies foresaid (p 118).

The port town of Leith was vital to Edinburgh as it provided the necessary infrastructure for the merchants to import and export the goods that they traded. The South Leith history 1560-1565 records John Moresoun, a reader, being paid a stipend of £20 Scots:

1562, January 24.—*Stipend to Mr David Lindesay £200 scots; to John Moresoun, reader, £20 scots.*

1574, October 5, Council Records of Edinburgh (vol. v. fol. 32) "Jhonn Moresoun" as an Edinburgh Councillor.

In 1579 King James VI, the son of Mary Queen of Scots, visited Edinburgh. The Burgh of Edinburgh was responsible for the cost of the visit, and the records identify John Moresoun as being the treasurer:

*Oct. 7. 1579, : The samyn day Ordanis every ane of the thretty twa honest nychtbouris of this brugh, comburgesses therof, efter mentionat, appoynted for bering of the Kingis Majesties pail, to be chairgit be the officeris to mak and prepair ane gounne of fyne blak, barrit witli welvous, lynit in the breistis with welvous, or govemis of fyne chamlott of silk, growgrane of silk or cierge, barrit with velvous, velvet coiles, or doubletis of saiten velvot, or dames tafetie hatis, and in sic uther decent apparrell as efferis; and that the samyn be ready within aucht dayes, and the baillies to tak visitatioun therof; ilk*

*person under the payne of fourty merkis unforgevin j and the baillies to tak diligent laubouris to se the samyn be nocht omitted, and to uplift the said un- law of the faillaris heirin but favouris (p 20).*

*Followis the names of the honest nychtbouris ap- poynted to beir the pail at the Kingis entrie to this burgh.*

James Adamsoun	<b>John Moresoun</b>
William Adamsoun	Johne Howesoun
Richart Abircrumby	James Nicoll
Gilbert Dik	William Hairvy
Robert Kar	William Nesbett
James Inglis	Alexander Scott
John Jhonnsoun	William Mauld
Michaell Gilbert	Robert Hereis
Henry Chariteris	Patrick Cochrain
John Arnott	Mark Kar
Andrew Sklater	Robert Gourlay
John Robertsonsoun	Johnn Fairlie
John Mayne	William Symsoun
John Wilky	Francis Kynloche
Mr Michaell Achesone	Robert Abircrumby.
Thomas Aikenheid	

1589, Sept. 5. RECEPTION for KING JAMES VI, (prior to his travel to Denmark):

*Nether The saitiin day, ordanis **Jhonn Moresoun**, thesaurer, to caus repair, with diligence, the Kether-Bow decent- lie, againe the Queynis entrie, and the expenses to be allowit in his compte.*

*Queynis The siatiin day. understandincr that it is fund guid be entrie. . . . the Kings Majestic and secreit counsall, that the Queynis Majesties mareage sal be maid within this burgh, in the hie kirk therof, and swa it behoveth hir Graces entrie to be the samin day: Thairfoir, it is necessar that all the toun prepare and mak reddy all things concerning the triumph of hir said entrie, and ordanis Jhonn Moresoun, thesaurer, to mak and deburse the expenses thairof upoun the wallis, ports, croce, trone, and other convenient places, at the sycht of Androw Sclater, master of wark, with all payntings and other furni- toures, concerning the solemnities thairof, and als wa to caus by and make ane payl of velvot, with all necessars belonging therto, with the bybill and psalme buik, and William Fairly, baillie, to assist and tak the care heirof, and the expensis of the premissis sail be allowet to the said thesaurer in his compte (Documents relative to the reception at Edinburgh of the Kings and Queens of Scotland, 1561-1650, Edinburgh, Online, p 36).*

Scanning through the OPRs, the oldest entry for a Morrison birth is "05/10/1565 Morisone, Johne. (Parent) Johne Morison, Canongate, Edinburgh City, Midlothian". The Edinburgh Marriage Register records Morrison marriages from 1595, and OPR Edinburgh deaths from 1617. James Grant's (1880) Old and New Edinburgh: "In 1555 the magistrates assigned the care of the

*Cowgate Port - the gate which closed the street on a line with the Pleasance - to Luke Moresoun for thirty shillings yearly..." (Vol IV, p 240).*

## **The Lothians and Edinburgh**

The territorial ownership of the border regions was very fluid during the 13th and 14th Centuries. The English dominated around the early 1300s under King Edward I, "The Hammer of the Scots", and took complete control of the major trade port of Berwick around 1330. Following the murder of James I in Perth in 1437 Edinburgh began to develop as the centre of government and the main royal residence. It therefore became imperative for the Scots to not only secure Edinburgh, but also to develop the port of Leith to enable trade and commerce.

By 1500 Edinburgh was paying sixty percent of Scotland's customs revenue. The town prospered to become a Royal Burgh, and grew in wealth by the hard work of the merchant burgesses and craftsmen who formed guilds to protect their interests. The "Prestongrange" Morrison family began in 1537 in Edinburgh where "*Morison, John, B. and G. [Burgess and Guild brother]*" (*The Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses 1406-1700* p 360) was the first of many in his family who distinguished themselves as burgh guild members.

In 1550 the population of Edinburgh and Leith was estimated to be about 15,000 out of the total Scottish population of about 1 million. More rapid growth was tempered by outbreaks of the plague in 1568, 1584 to 1588, and again in 1645, interspersed with punitive military campaigns with the most notorious being that by the Earl of Hertford in 1544. Given the utter devastation of Edinburgh by Hertford it is miraculous that any records of this period survived. There must have been a concerted effort by officials to keep safe whatever records they could gather up before they were destroyed.

The merchants, whilst strongly supporting their monarch, retained control of the town council from 1550 to 1650 despite the best interfering efforts of the crown. Becoming a burgess bestowed great social status, and could be transferred to their heirs or by a merchant's marriage into a burgess family. Becoming a burgess also required a member to be armed as they were obliged to take turns in "watching and warding" the town at night. The Burgess Roll refers to, for example, Isaac Morrison as a Burgess and Guild Brethren eldest son of John Morrison, as being armed with a "hagbute" (24 Nov 1601), or later John Morrison, the eldest son of the late "Harye M" who was armed with a "muskat" (20 Feb 1633). A fascinating insight into the Edinburgh Burgesses can be gained by reading the PhD thesis of J. K. McMillan (*A study of the Edinburgh Burgess Community and its Economic Activities, 1600-1680*, University of Edinburgh, 1984).

During the 1530s in Edinburgh a young merchant named John Morrison married Beatrix Hill, and probably witnessed first hand a string of volatile events in Scottish history. It is from John Morrison and Beatrix Hill that it is



possible to trace the Prestongrange and Dairsie families. The 1530s and 1540s were fierce and uncompromising years where bloody battles were not only fought between the armies of Scotland and England but also amongst the various religious factions of Catholics and Covenanters. At the death of King James V in 1542, his daughter Mary (later to be Mary Queen of Scots) was only a week old. She was protected by groups of nobles who jostled each other for power and influence. This tension was exacerbated by not only a dichotomy of Catholics and non Catholics, but also allegiances to France and England. These dichotomies affected the English King Henry VIII who was unsettled by Scotland's wavering. He attempted to sort out the instability by the Treaty of Greenwich in July 1543 whereby Mary would marry Henry's son Edward (who later became Edward VI) when he turned 11 years of age. However, within a very short time this all came horribly unstuck.



**Burgh life in the 1600s**

Religion appears to be the root cause of the many disasters that dogged Scotland for the next 100 years. Mary's mother, Mary of Lorraine, also known as Mary of Guise, was both French and a Catholic. Arran, the baby Mary's protector and Regent, second in line to the throne, was a Protestant. The Catholic cardinal for Scotland, David Beaton, was bitterly opposed to Henry VIII's Treaty of Greenwich, and garnered enough support to have the baby Mary crowned at Stirling in September 1543. Henry VIII was outraged when news came through, and in May 1544 he sent the Earl of Hertford with an army that landed at Leith and attacked the castle. Hertford torched Holyrood Palace and the town burned for three days. Following the destruction of Edinburgh the soldiers then burned crops and looted the surrounding areas. Those affected by all this carnage laid the blame squarely at the feet of Cardinal Beaton. This scale of destruction was followed up again in 1545 when

Hertford repeated the dose in Berwickshire. Towns and crops were burned, including 40 villages and the abbeys of Kelso, Melrose, Dryburgh and Eccles.

Had the Scots not been sold out by Cardinal Beaton there was every prospect for a long peace between a Protestant England and Scotland. This period in history holds one of the keys to the on again off again military confrontations between Scotland and England until the Union of Parliaments in 1707 and the final humiliation of Culloden in 1746 where the papist Prince Charles Stewart's Jacobite army was crushed by the Royalist Hanoverian army (Lenman, 1984).

As previously identified, there were many Morrison families established in the Lothians, with Edinburgh at its heart. A few miles to the south east of Edinburgh lay Haddingtonshire where the estate of Prestongrange was located. It was in the nearby town of Haddington that a Protestant named George Wishart chose to preach. One of the audience that gathered to hear him was a local named John Knox. When Cardinal Beaton heard about Wishart he decreed him a danger to Catholicism and had him strangled and burned in St Andrews, Fife, in 1547. When Wishart's followers learned of his ghastly death they broke into Beaton's palace at St Andrews and hanged him. Mary of Guise enlisted the help of France to punish these vigilantes, and after they surrendered they were taken to France where some of their number, including John Knox, were made galley slaves.

Henry VIII died in 1547, and Hertford, now Duke of Somerset, became young Edward VI's protector. Hertford felt obliged to make one more incursion into Scotland to teach the Catholic troublemakers a lesson, and the battle of Pinkie was the result. This battle took place near Mussellburgh, and the Scots were decimated. Once again nearby towns were given the full treatment of burning and looting. Haddington was in the thick of the conflict. For many Scots, although bitterly opposed to Catholicism, they supported Mary of Guise's intervention to secure the safety of the young Mary in France, and French intervention by way of a standing army based in Edinburgh to rid Scotland of Hertford.

Divisions between Catholics and Protestants continued to simmer until boiling point was reached when the Catholics attempted to stop people reading books. By this stage the English martyr, William Tyndale (sentenced by the Pope as a heretic, strangled and burned at the stake in 1536), who had translated the Bible into English left a legacy that saw many Scots now reading the Bible for themselves. One victim of the Catholic suppression was Adam Wallace who was burned at Castle Hill in 1550. No doubt some of the Morrison's, including John and his young son John (who later married Katherine Preston) and living in Edinburgh at his time may have witnessed this event.

In 1553 Mary Tudor acceded to the throne of England and her reign helped strengthen the reformation in Scotland. On 29 December 1554 John Morrison (Moresoun) is recorded in the "*Extracts of the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1528-1557*" (Marwick, 1871). In 1555 John Knox was released

from slavery in France and returned to Scotland. In 1557 four Scottish nobles, the earls of Argyle, Glencairn and Morton, and Lord Lorne (Argyle's son) signed "The First Covenant" and called themselves the "Lords of the Congregation", declaring their intent to make Scotland Protestant. The die was now cast, either Mary of Guise had to go along or choose her French ethnicity and Catholicism. As it turned out, only the sword was going to settle the dispute. In 1558 young Mary, still in France, married the Dauphin and secretly made an agreement that if she died before him he would become king of Scotland.

In the midst of all the intrigue about the Scottish crown and religion we find not only were the Scottish Catholic clergy exerting their power over the ordinary people, they were also amassing a fortune by way of land ownership and money. The abbots lived in luxury whilst they forced the poor to contribute to their excesses otherwise they would neither baptise, marry or bury them. Knox was appalled at their corruption and idolatry, and instigated uprisings in Perth and St Andrews to destroy Catholic images and statues. In 1559 the Edinburgh Town Council appointed Knox as the minister of St Giles.

Mary of Guise called in the French troops again but they were opposed by Lord James Stewart, the half brother of Mary Queen of Scots, along with the followers of the "Lords of the Congregation". They requested intervention by Queen Elizabeth (who had succeeded Mary Tudor on her death), and together they laid siege against the French garrison at Edinburgh's port city of Leith.

This was all in full view of the residents of Edinburgh, and in 1560 the French agreed to decamp back to France. A council of 12 was formed to rule Scotland until Mary Queen of Scots returned. They ended the Church of Rome in Scotland and began the Church of Scotland. In 1561, at the age of 18, Mary Queen of Scots, and still a professed Catholic, returned to Holyrood House after the death of the Dauphin in 1560. She was advised by her half brother Lord James Stewart that being openly Catholic would be inadvisable. Knox preached in nearby St Giles that Mary should not say Mass. The Scots wanted Mary to succeed Elizabeth as both Queen of England and Scotland, so being pro Catholic would not be an option if their desire was to succeed.

Mary's life was not a simple choice between being Catholic or Protestant, there were other human expectations that needed to be attended to. One such expectation was an heir to succeed her, and since she was a widow it would be an obvious consideration for her to choose a new husband. She chose Henry Stewart, known as Lord Darnley, the eldest son of the Earl of Lennox and like Mary, a grandchild of Margaret Tudor who was a sister of Henry VIII. This should have signalled the intention to unite the thrones of Scotland and England. But the match was not that cut and dried. For starters, Darnley was Catholic. This was hardly good news to the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, or for that matter the Earl of Moray who was eventually forced to flee Scotland.

To complicate Mary's life further, her enthusiasm for the ambitions of her husband Darnley cooled, and she befriended an Italian musician named Riccio. Without going into the lengthy description of their relationship and its effect on

the increasingly impetuous Darnley, it eventually led to the bloody murder of Riccio in front of Mary by Darnley and a group of nobles in 1566.

The following year after trying to patch things up with Darnley, Mary gave birth to an heir, the future James VI of Scotland and James I of England. Whilst this brought instant joy across Scotland, Mary and Darnley's dysfunctional marriage grew worse, culminating in the murder of Darnley. In 1567 Darnley had become ill and Mary persuaded him to recuperate in a house near to Holyrood. Unbeknown to Darnley, his estranged Riccio co-conspirators had returned to Scotland after their forced departure, and a plot was enacted to blow up Darnley's house. He was found dead in the garden. Three months after the murder of Darnley the capricious Mary married James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Bothwell was implicated in the plot to murder Darnley, but this did not appear to bother Mary. This began a period of great instability in allegiances throughout the Scottish nobility. Bothwell fled to Norway, Mary was imprisoned, escaped, then fled to England where she was again imprisoned. Mary's dramatic life finally ended on February 8 1587 after Elizabeth 1 signed the Warrant of Execution that saw her beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle at only 44 years of age.

During this time the Church of Scotland was founded in 1560. In 1563 trials began in Prestonpans that saw the eventual execution of 81 people who were declared witches. In 1572 John Knox died. Life was never dull in Scotland at this time, just staying alive would seem to be very much to the fore for many citizens. Apart from accusations of witchcraft that were liberally scattered about there were many other life threatening issues to be wary of. If you made the wrong decision about religion you could die, you daren't be seen reading books, there was the threat for young men to be conscripted into the army to fight either the English or French, or be conscripted to kill either Catholics or Protestants, or for the population generally to die from disease or hunger brought about by the privations of looting and burning and the occasional visitation of the Plague.

The issue of witches lingered on for many years. The Scottish historian Roy Pugh (2001) documented the execution of 81 Prestonpans residents convicted of witchcraft. The executions occurred between 1590 and 1679. According to Sherrer (2006) *"the actual number is believed to be much higher, but Pugh only included the verifiable cases for which records still exist. Pugh described the period from 1563 to 1727 in Scotland as a "mini-holocaust," since as many as 4,500 Scots were convicted of witchcraft and executed"* (Allan, 2005, quoted by Sherrer, 2006, pp 20-21). This is perhaps something of an exaggeration as Mitschele (2013) says that between 1563 and 1736 *"there were 3,212 accusations of witchcraft in Scotland"* (Abstract). In McNeill's (1902) history of Prestonpans *"Catherine Liddel exhibited a complaint against Rutherford, baron bailie to Morrison of Prestongrange, and against David Cowan in Tranent, bearing that they had seized upon her, and detained her under restraint as a prisoner; and that the said Cowan had pricked her with*

*pins in sundry parts of her body, and bled and tortured her most cruelly”* (p 101).

It is therefore difficult to comprehend that in these years Edinburgh somehow managed to rise from the ashes of military conflict, a bout of plague in 1569, and the vicious religious and social upheaval that prevailed to prosper as a trading hub for Scotland. The Edinburgh Morrisons somehow survived in this caldron, and began to sow the seeds of a thriving family that became well respected both socially and politically for the next 200 years. They were very much part of the thriving merchants who numbered around 400 by 1580. Despite all of the above carnage there were interludes of stability and prosperity that took hold in Edinburgh during the reign of Mary.

To gain some idea of social life in Scotland at this time Rogers (1884) gives an excellent account. For someone growing up in these times they would have seen the landscape of the Midlothians being almost treeless, and on the large tracts of marshy undulating ground there were crops of corn and oats interspersed with grazing cattle and sheep. It was a noticeable feature of farming in these times that there were no fences to demarcate ownership. The landowner lived in a house that was of stone construction and featured a hall, main room, kitchen and pantry. Their tenants lived in small stone and thatch crofts and typically only held the right to farm for a few years. They could be replaced by other tenants prepared to strike a better bargain. Consequently there was a relatively large and mobile rural workforce that basically lived from hand to mouth, and were often used to swell the ranks of military campaigns where life was cheap and more often than not, very short.

In the towns and Burghs the wealthier merchants lived in four room houses, the largest room being a hall with a counter where trading was conducted. Beds were mostly shared, and furniture in general was meagre. There would be a basic set of pewter plates, some pots, bowls and a quart measure. In Appendix 1 a stark contrast to these basic necessities is set out in the stocktake of goods and chattels once owned by Sir William Morrison following his death and the debtors sale of his Prestongrange estate.

Burghs were surrounded by walls, often surrounding a castle, and traders entered by a gate where they paid a toll. There was also a church and a tollbooth which served as a courthouse and prison. There were trading opportunities for people around the period of the 1550s to make something of their lives. This is obvious by the fact that the Morrisons in Edinburgh did extremely well which enabled them to establish the Prestongrange and Dairsie dynasties. John Knox arose from humble beginnings nearby in Haddington, as did George Herriot in Edinburgh. On his death in 1624, Herriot, a wealthy goldsmith nicknamed “jinglin’ Geordie”, gifted his fortune for the establishment of the George Herriot school in Edinburgh. Herriot served as a burghess alongside John Morrison “the rich”.





**Edinburgh 1582**  
(16th century engraving, Braun & Hogenberg, *Edenburgum, Scotiae Metropolis* c. 1581, British Museum, London)

## Chapter 6

### Examples of Significant Morrison Families During the The Reign of the Stewarts

#### 1. The Prestongrange and Dairsie Morrisons

One of the great enigmas of Scottish history is the mystique of the Stewarts, from Mary Queen of Scots through to "Bonnie Prince Charlie". Indeed, if one were to place these two as the bookends of the Stewart monarchy of James VI of Scotland/1 of England, Charles I, Charles II, James 2/7, Mary (and William) and finally Anne, a reasonable question could be asked "What benefits did any of these monarchs bring to Scotland?" Perhaps it was the flaw in the mirror of Catholicism that reflected the grotesque distortions of their failed regencies and the consequent miseries that befell the Scots.

The time line of the Stewart dynasty against which four Morrison families became prominent is as follows:

1566 Mary Queen of Scots gives birth to James I of England and VI of Scotland

1587 Mary Queen of Scots beheaded at Fotheringay Castle

1600 Charles I born in Dunfermline

**Note:**

The year 1600 has a significance in Scottish history that is often forgotten. This was the year the Scots chose to move the first day of the year to January 1st rather than March 25th as in the Julian calendar which the English still used. It was not until 1752 that both Scotland and England were aligned to the Gregorian calendar, matching their dates with Europe which had adopted this more accurate system in 1582.

1603 James VI of Scotland becomes James I King of England, the union of crowns.

1626 Charles I crowned at Westminster Abbey.

1633 Coronation of King Charles I at Holyrood.

1649 Charles I beheaded by order of the English Parliament, Oliver Cromwell rules and later assumes the title Lord Protector (1653).

1657 Richard Cromwell "Tumbledown Dick" succeeds his father.

1658 General Monk declared the protector of Scotland.

1661 Charles II returns to England and restored to the throne as King.

- 1685 James II of England and VII of Scotland (a Catholic), brother of Charles II, becomes King.
- 1688 James II deposed in a military coup by his daughter Mary and her husband William of Holland (William of Orange) who becomes King William III.
- 1690 The deposed James II under the patronage of Louis XIV of France attacks Irish Protestants (originally from the plantation of James VI of Scotland) but is defeated by William III at the Battle of the Boyne.
- 1702 King William III dies, Queen Anne (daughter of King James VII of Scotland) accedes to the English throne.
- 1707 Treaty of Union of English and Scottish Parliaments.
- 1714 The last of the Stewart line, Queen Anne, dies.
- 1720 Charles Edward Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) born in Rome.
- 1745 Charles lands in Eriskay at the start of the Catholic Jacobite uprising, occupies Edinburgh, and wins a famous battle at Prestonpans.
- 1746 April 16, Bonnie Prince Charlie defeated at Culloden and flees to France.

Much of the strife that accompanied this period of history was the persistent struggle between Catholics and Protestants. Ever since Henry VIII established himself as the head of the Anglican Church of England there was the ever present danger of Papist plotters seeking the return of the Catholic Church.

For most Scots, including the many Morrison families, living during this period from the mid 1500s to the mid 1700s they would have witnessed at first hand the dysfunction that the Stewarts brought. Mary Queen of Scots was betrayed as baby by Cardinal Beaton and her own mother, Mary of Lorraine. The religious feud that was played out from then on, manifesting its ugly dogmas as cold blooded savagery between Catholics, Covenanters, Episcopalians and Presbyterians during the Stewart reign brought nothing but misery to the majority of Scots, either directly or indirectly. Armed conflicts, murders, capital punishments, vigilantes, forfeiture of property, the list goes on, invariably touched all levels of society. Henry VIII's proclamation of his right as head of the Church of England left a legacy that the Stewarts failed to grasp as they vacillated between ideas of Divine Right through to reestablishing Catholicism.

When James VI of Scotland became King James I of England in 1603 he held the Protestant line, and even went so far as to establish a Protestant Plantation in Ireland. When Charles I became King he saw himself as possessing the divine right to his Kingship which angered the English Parliament and led directly to his beheading in 1649.

Keeping in mind the events outlined above, overall at a political level there were those who were either in the favour of the Crown and rewarded with land



and title, or those who were out of favour and suffered loss of land and title, jail, humiliation, torture or even execution. Oliver Cromwell (1651–1659) as Lord Protector enforced the incorporation of Scotland and Ireland as part of England:

*“Mid century saw civil war in England, Scotland and Ireland – for a range of reasons. There was a period of enforced union as Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector, and once again the Lothian area was used as a battlefield. The upheaval of war led to economic disruption, and the seventeenth century marks a distinct change in trading patterns, with the rise of numerous burghs of barony which competed in the domestic market”* (Sonia Baker, 2000, p 17).

After the Restoration, Charles II held true to his Protestant faith, but his younger brother James was swayed by the French to become Catholic. Thus when he became James II of England trouble was never going to be far away. Because the Stewarts were all of Scottish descent English troubles became Scottish troubles, and the religious divide created innumerable problems across all three nations of Scotland, England and Ireland.

The scoresheet for the Stewarts is dreadful. James the VI of Scotland fitness to take up the Crown of England was questionable given his obsession that witches were lurking in the shadows, some even had the power apparently to work up a storm at sea preventing his bride, Anne of Denmark, to sail to Scotland (Magnusson, 2001, p 394). James VI/I was also responsible for the destabilisation of protestantism in Scotland by favouring the Episcopalians over the Presbyterians. His successor, Charles I, most famously entered the book of English history by being the only English monarch to be beheaded by his Parliament. After the Restoration, Charles II became famous for his extra marital dalliances. His brother James VII of Scotland and II of England thought it a good idea to stack the government in Scotland with Catholics, and then tried to do the same in England. With the birth of Prince James Francis Edward Stewart in 1688, it became conceivable he would continue the Catholic monarchy that his father was reinvigorating. James’ daughter Mary who had married the Dutch Protestant William of Orange, then decided to act and staged a coup which overthrew James II and restored Protestantism on the grounds of “breach of contract”. Scotland rejoiced as mobs looted and ransacked James’ Catholic symbols in a moment of opportunity to vent anger. Scotland was far from stable, ferocious battles raged between James’ followers who became known as “Jacobites” (from Jacobus, James) and Royalists (including Killiecrankie 1689, Dunked 1689, and the Massacre of Glencoe 1692). James attempted a return via Ireland with French help but was crushed by William at the Battle of the Boyne (1690). William and Mary’s daughter Anne inherited the throne and was the last Stewart monarch, reigning from 1702 to 1714. Apart from The Act of Union in 1707, Anne had little to do with Scotland. It was reported that she found the Scots to be “strange” and “unreasonable” (Lenman, 1984, p 79).

Prince James Francis Edward Stewart, the son of James II, known as the "The Pretender", tried to make a Stewart comeback in 1708 at Burntisland in Fife where his Jacobite followers were to link up with his French convoy. That was thwarted by the English admiral Byng. In 1715, often referred to as "the '15", the Earl of Mar raised a sizeable Jacobite army in a second attempt to install the "Pretender", but this also ended in a fiasco as the Duke of Argyle outmanoeuvred Mar's Jacobites. Some years later in 1720 Charles Edward Stewart was born in Rome. Like his father, "Bonnie Prince Charlie" was no strategist and was humiliated at Culloden in 1746 by a combined force of Scottish and English soldiers. The penalty paid by many Scots for the Stewart legacy was enforced poverty, execution or loss of property. The only recorded Morrison at Culloden was Richard Morrison, the Prince's valet and wigmaker. He was captured and condemned to hang but escaped and fled to France.

Despite all this dysfunction, some prominent Morrison families in the Lothians made an impact during this period, rising through the social ranks by astute marriages and taking senior roles in Edinburgh Burgh affairs and the Judiciary. Some of the marriages saw unions forged between the Morrisons and such titled families as Arnot, Dick, Spottiswood, Ker, Preston, Mauld, Sinclair, Johnston, Boyd, Dallas, Arbuthnot, Trotter, Home, Nisbet and Bethune. There was also considerable intermarriage between these families which had the effect of forming a strong protective web binding them together.

For example, the pattern of relationships becomes evident in the will of William Nisbet of Craigtinnie and Dirleton. *"He executed an entail of the estate of Restalrig on 5th September 1722 to David Nisbet, son of his second marriage with Mrs Jean Bennet, daughter of Mr Robert Bennet, dean of the faculty of advocates, whom failing, to Walter Nisbet, the second son of his first marriage with a niece of Dame Jean Morrison, the third wife of Sir John Nisbet, first of Dirleton, whom failing, to Mrs Christian Nisbet, his eldest daughter, and Sir John Scott of Ancrum, her husband"* (Ross and Grant, Alexander Nisbet's Heraldic Plates - Part 5). The niece of Dame Jean Morrison was her sister Helen's daughter Christian who married Sir Henry Nisbet (son of Sir Patrick Nisbet of Deane). Helen was married to the 3rd Baron John Riddell. Another example is that of Janet Morrison (1609) who married John Trotter 2nd of Mortonhall. Their daughter Catherine married John Rocheid, the parents of Janet who was married to Sir William Morrison.

Finally, there is the example of Sir John Morrison's (sometimes incorrectly referred to as "of Dairsie") widow Nicola marrying John Dick. Henry Morrison, Sir John's uncle, was married to Christian Dick. Henry's sister Elizabeth was the wife of Sir William Dick. Their son Mr. John Dick, fiar of Braid, married the widow Nicola of his cousin-german Sir John Morrison. Sir Andrew Dick of Craighouse [born about 1650] married the daughter of Harrie Morrison [Christina] and younger brother of Henry, a rich merchant in Edinburgh, also a near relative. Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange, a senator of the College of Justice 1626-1631, was another brother of Elizabeth (pictured below with Sir

William Dick and their family) who was the wife of Sir William Dick. Sir William Dick's mother was Margaret Stewart (descended from the ancient family of Stewart of Rosyth).



**Sir William Dick of Braid in Prison visited by his family (from the private collection of Bridgeman)**

In 1645 an horrific outbreak of bubonic plague broke out across Europe, and through the trading port of Leith it spread into Edinburgh. It is estimated at least half of the population of Edinburgh were infected and died, and even greater numbers died in Leith. Once infected, a resident was either forbidden from leaving their home or banished to a designated quarantine area. Beneath the City Chambers in Mary King's Close it is recorded that up to 300 infected people were simply bricked in and left to die. The 1645 plague outbreak eventually petered out in 1647. These were the years not long after Sir Alexander Morrison married Jean Boyd and they began to have their seven children. It must have been the isolation at Prestongrange that gave them protection from the plague and similarly the Dairsie Morrisons in Fife.

However, just as the rise of the Morrison family was spectacular, so was its collapse. By 1636 Edinburgh had a population of about 30,000. A year later in 1637 Sir Alexander Morrison married Jean Boyd, and one of their children became the last of the titled Morrison line, Sir William Morrison. The decline of the Morrison family in Edinburgh began around the time of the Darien Scheme which was established by an Act as *The Company of Scotland* in 1695. Its subsequent failure caused massive economic consequences for Scotland when it collapsed in 1700. By this time the debts of Sir William were becoming unmanageable. With the death of Sir William Morrison in 1739 the Morrisons of Prestongrange were in reality no more. The two hundred years of the Morrison

family from the Midlothians began to wither at the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie's victory at Prestonpans in 1745, and ended with the forced sale of Prestongrange in 1746, the same year as the catastrophe of Culloden.

### **The Origins of the Morrisons of Prestongrange**

From the brief sketch of this family discussed above, let us now make a detailed examination. This family began in Edinburgh in the first half of the 1500s. From their ancestry in Edinburgh two related families grew to be known as the Morrisons of Prestongrange and the Morrisons of Dairsie, building reputations on either side of the Firth of Forth. The common link is John Morrison, an Edinburgh Burgess and later Baillie of Edinburgh (1581) and Treasurer (1588) who purchased some of the Prestongrange lands from the Kerr family in 1609. One of his sons, Lord Alexander Morrison, was a lawman who became Lord of Session in 1626. Lord Alexander's brother Isaac had a son who became Sir John Morrison, and his son Sir George bought Dairsie from the Spottiswoods in 1646. Lord Alexander married Helenor Mauld on the 6th September 1610 (Register of Marriages of the City of Edinburgh 1595-1700).

Lord Morrison's son, Sir Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange (1616-1683), married Jean Boyd (daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Lord of Kilmarnock, Robert Boyd) on 9 July 1637. Jean Boyd's sister Agnes married Sir George Morrison of Dairsie, the son of Sir John Morrison. Sir Alexander's sister Bethia married Sir Robert Spottiswood on 6 June 1629. Sir Robert's brother Sir John Spottiswood sold Dairsie to his relation by marriage, Sir George Morrison. These interwoven families are another example of how both of these Morrisons families built complex relationships with prominent Scottish families in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The family of John Morrison, Baillie and Treasurer of Edinburgh, was obviously skilled at making good marriages to important families. In addition to the Boyd and Spottiswood families, there was also a close tie in with the Dick family. Two of John Morrison's children, Henry and Elizabeth, married two of John Dick's children. Henry married Katherine Dick and Elizabeth married William Dick of Braid (15 June 1603, Register of Marriages of the City of Edinburgh 1595-1700). Their son, John Dick, married the widow of Sir John Morrison, Nicola, daughter of Sir George Bruce of Carnock. The Dick family traces its roots back to Denmark as Dyke-Graff, and then later they became well established in the Orkneys. John Dick was in 1628 an "*advocate and sheriff depute of Orkney*".

This therefore demonstrates how the Dairsie and Prestongrange families were related. Sir Alexander inherited Prestongrange from his father Lord Alexander, and married Jean Boyd around 1637, and Jean's sister Agnes married Sir George, presumably a few years later as their first child John was born in 1646, the year Dairsie was purchased. Sir Alexander and Sir George were second cousins since Lord Alexander was Sir John's uncle.

The historical references to the family identify Sir George as the son of Sir John Morrison. Apart from the reference to Sir John being married to Nicola Bruce, there is a reference to him which claims he was the grand son of John Morrison, Baillie of Edinburgh. This is verified by the Morrison's Monument in Greyfriars Cemetery - "*Here also lyeth Sir John Morison Knight, oye to the said John, and son to the said Isaac. He died the 29 year of his age, the 6 July 1625*". Given the relationship between Sir George Morrison and Sir John Spottiswood, and between the Boyd sisters Jean and Agnes, and cousins Sir Alexander and Sir George, it further demonstrates how the Morrison families made influential marriages. Since Sir Robert Spottiswood was married to Sir Alexander's sister Bethia, one could conclude that the Morrisons and Spottiswoods were friends, and this good relationship would most likely have been shared by his older brother Sir John Spottiswood. There is also a connection between the Morrisons and Sir William Sinclair of Roslyn because he married the sister of Sir John and Sir Robert Spottiswood, Anna, in 1610. Thus all three families - Morrisons, Spottiswoods and Sinclairs - are related by marriage. However, it was probably a friendship that caused discomfort some years later when the Spottiswood's political demise is discussed.

The document that cements the family connection between Prestongrange and Dairsie is R R Stodart's 1881 work "*Scottish Arms, being a collection of armorial bearings AD 1370-1678*" which provides the evidence of family lineage:

*"Moresoun of Darse; or Prestongrang, 1643, is added. John Morison, bailie and treasurer of Edinburgh, who died in 1615, was called "the rich;" he married Katherine Preston, daughter of the Lord President of the Court of Session, and had a large family. His grandson, Sir John of Dairsie, co. Fife, was father of Sir George of Dairsie; this family made alliances by marriage with houses of rank.*

*Mr Alexander, a younger son of the bailie, acquired Prestongrange in East Lothian 1628, and was a Senator of the College of Justice 1626. His son, Alexander of Prestongrange, registered arms 1672-78 -argent, three moors' heads coped proper. Henry, writer to the signet, a cadet of Dairsie, at the same time registered the coat with the three heads on one neck. The last of the Prestongrange family was George of Little Chalfield, Wiltshire, who d.s.p. 1788, his heirs being Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, and George, Earl of Glasgow.*

*In 1673 George Morison of Bognie, co. Banff, founder of a family still existing, was granted arms almost identical with those in this MS" (p 155).*

In this quotation above from Stodart reference is made to Henry as a Writer to the Signet (WS) and a cadet of Dairsie. The expression "cadet" identifies him as a relation of the family, in this case he is the grandson of Henry Morrison (a brother of Alexander and Isaac) and a nephew of Sir John Morrison (the eldest son of Isaac Morrison).



## The Morrisons of Dairsie in Fife

Isaac Morrison, son of John Morrison the Baillie and Treasurer of Edinburgh, had a son John Morrison (born 1596) who became Sir John Morrison. He is sometimes incorrectly referred to as "Sir John Morrison of Dairsie". The reason this title is incorrect is because Sir John was dead by the time his son George bought Dairsie in 1646. The more correct title is to style him "Sir John Morrison of Sauchtounhall". The family records begin with John Morrison who was a Baillie of Edinburgh in 1581 - his son Isaac - his son Sir John Morrison - then his son Sir George Morrison. Morrison families are still to be found in Dairsie, but whether they descend from Sir George is not possible to determine.

Thus the Morrisons referred to as the 'Morrisons of Dairsie' is the family of Sir John Morrison, grandson of John Morrison and Katherine Preston. Sir John's son **Sir George Morrison** bought Dairsie castle in 1646 from his relation by marriage, Sir John Spottiswood (whose brother Sir Robert was executed in St Andrews in 1646 followed by Sir John Spottiswood's own son John who was executed in Edinburgh in 1650. Both were executed for collaboration with the Royalist Marquis of Montrose, James Graham, for opposing the Covenanters). Sir George Morrison in turn sold Dairsie to Alexander Bruce in 1692 to whom he owed considerable debts.

The history of Dairsie castle according to Ruffle (1996), which lies midway between Falkland and St Andrews, describes how it became embroiled in the religious fallout within the Scottish church at that time, and was raided in 1639 by the Covenanters because of the association with Archbishop Spottiswood (who wrote "The History of the Church of Scotland" when he was at St Andrews). From historical accounts Sir George Morrison was also often in trouble with the church and the law.



**Dairsie Castle**

The Morrisons of Dairsie are recorded in the Old Parish Records (OPR) in 1646 when Sir George 'Morisone', married to the daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Lord of Kilmarnock, Agnes Boyd. Their children were:

- Johne 1646 OPR (24/03/1646, Johne Moresone, Sir George Moreson/Agnes Boyd FR155, 453/00 0010 0150, St Andrew and St Leonards), died 1/3/1688 and buried in the Morrison Tomb, Greyfriars cemetery.
- Nicola 1647 OPR
- Robert 1648 OPR
- George 1649 OPR
- Charles 1650 OPR
- William 1655 OPR
- Agnes 1658 OPR
- Christian 1661 OPR

### **The Timeline History of Dairsie**

1646 – Sir John Spottiswood sells Dairsie to Sir George Morrison, the same year his brother Sir Robert Spottiswood was executed in St Andrews.

1647 April 22nd – Sir John Spottiswood is summoned by the Presbytery of Cupar to answer charges of keeping company with malignants: *'being asked if he was in company with the enemy answered – He came from Cupar to them, to seik back his horses which they had taken from him...He was also enquired if he knew of any of his sons going to the enemy? Answered – That his second son went to General Ruthven when he was absent in England; that he had bought five or six years since an ensign's place for his third son, and sent him to Germany, and had never seen him since that time; but now of late, and lastly, that his eldest son went unto Montrose both against his knowledge and his will.'* Sir John fled to Northumberland. He died in Newcastle in 1677.

1650 – According to Ruffle (1996) Sir George Morrison was obviously tarnished with similar political preferences as the Spottiswoods. In July he acknowledges in the Presbytery records of St. Andrews *'that he had subscribed the Protestation against the Supplication of the Kirk; he professing his sorrow for the same...he is appointed to mak public declaration of his repentance the nixt Lord's day in the kirk of Darsy.'*

1655- Quoting from the Leighton's *History of the County of Fife* (1840, p 262) *"1655, Nov. 21st- Mr Jhone Sieus laird of Kembocke in Fife, was found dead att the water syde of Eden, in the place called the Haugh, neare to Erdries lodging. The most part of the day before he was drinking ale and strong waters at George Trumbell's house in Cuper, neare the tollbooth, with Sir George Moresone, laird of Dairsie, Achannachie, the laird of Mount, and divers others".* The reference then quotes a *"Diary p. 94 - The Kirk of session of Cupar as appears from the following entry in their records seem to have considered it their duty to enquire into this matter... Kemback came to Georg Trumbles house twixt 6 and 7 at night, and tarried till 8 hours, being in the*

*companie Sir Georg Morrison, Achnanok, Mount, Andrew Dick, brother to Dairsie, Peter Clerke, and Georg Knox, the session refers to the presbetrie..."*

1660: Sir George was required to take an oath on June 21st 'I, Sir George Morison, doe solemnly protest and swear by the most holy and dreadfull name of the eternal and everliving God, that I never had at any time, nor in any place, carnall dealing or copulation with Jonet Hamiltoun, sometime servant to my wyff; neither am I the father of the child brought forth by her, as she alledges.' In November 1661 the wayward Sir George was once more summoned by the presbytery 'for going to the single combate' with the laird of Lathoker.

1692 – Dairsie passes to the Morrison's largest creditor, Alexander Bruce of Broomhall, later Earl of Kincardine.

### **Historical note on the Spottiswood family**

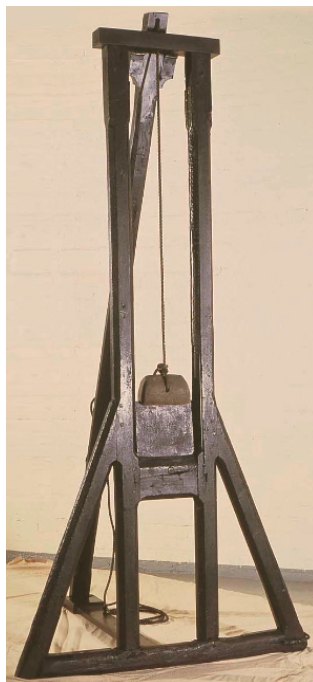
The biography of the Spottiswoods is one of those famous Scottish historical tragedies. John Spottiswood (1565-1639) was the Archbishop of St Andrews. His two sons were Sir John and Sir Robert. In 1638 he crowned Charles 1 at Holyrood. In 1635 he was appointed Lord Chancellor of Scotland, an office which he retained until 1638. He was opposed to the new liturgy mandated by Charles 1, but when he could not prevent its introduction he took part in enforcing it. He was present at the riot of St Giles (depicted below), Edinburgh, on the 23rd of July 1637 which began after the reading of the liturgy. It was then that Jenny Geddes threw her "cutty stool" at the head of the Dean.





In view of the considerable opposition to the new liturgy Spottiswood tried in vain to avoid a disaster by making concessions. After hearing the response of the Covenanters he perceived that *"now all that we have been doing these thirty years past is thrown down at once."* He escaped to Newcastle, was deposed by the assembly on the 4th of December 1637 on a variety of far fetched charges and died in London on the 26th of November 1639, receiving burial in Westminster Abbey.

Sir Robert Spottiswood (1596-1646) was the younger of John Spottiswood's two boys. He was well educated and rose to the position of Secretary of State in Scotland and Lord President of the Court of Session. Sir Robert Spottiswood married Bethia Morrison, the sister of Sir Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange. He was well regarded by Charles 1, but fell out with the Covenanters in Scotland. He sided with the Marquis of Montrose, but was captured at the Battle of Philiphaugh in 1645. He was taken to St. Andrews where he was tried by parliament on the charge of having purchased the office of secretary without the consent of the estates, and also with having joined with Montrose against the state. Sir Robert pleaded that he had taken the office of secretary at the king's command, temporarily and under pressure of necessity, and he urged that, though he had been with Montrose, he had not borne arms, and also that he had received quarter when he submitted himself. On 10 Jan 1646 the case came on for hearing. His defence was dismissed and, after long debate, Spottiswood was executed on 16 Jan 1646. He was beheaded by the infamous "Scottish Maiden" guillotine at the market cross of St. Andrews where it was reported he maintained his customary courage and dignity. The victims of this instrument were laid on their backs and watched as the blade plummeted towards their throat.



**The Scottish "Maiden"**

Sir John Spottiswood, the elder brother of Sir Robert and son of Archbishop John Spottiswood, succeeded to the estate of Dairsie, Fifeshire, which had been purchased by his father from the Learmonth family, and was one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber to James VI. He sold Dairsie to his brother-in-law by marriage, Sir George Morrison. His only son, Mr. John Spottiswood, was a faithful adherent of Charles I, and having joined the Marquis of Montrose, was taken prisoner with him, tried, condemned and executed for high treason in 1650. As a result of both his brother and son's executions, Sir John thought it expedient to take his family to England where he died in obscurity.

It is then reasonable to conclude from the closeness of the Spottiswood and Morrison families of Alexander and George that when Sir John Spottiswood fell on hard times he contacted his relation my marriage Sir George Morrison to see if he would be interested in buying him out. When all the heat of the Covenanters came to bear down on the Spottiswoods, Sir George no doubt was also affected. Sir George probably felt the need to lay low, and along with growing personal debts, was forced to sell Dairsie. One is left to imagine what became of Bethia Morrison, the wife of the executed Sir Robert Spottiswood. Perhaps she returned to Prestongrange under the protection of her brother and nephew.

Sir George Morrison most likely moved back across the Firth of Forth to Prestongrange. This scenario is supported by the geography. The Morrisons of Prestongrange owned a harbour, known then as "Morrison Haven". His cousin Sir William of Prestongrange had rebuilt Morrison Haven at Prestonpans. It is a relatively short boat crossing from any of the many harbour landings along the Fife coast from St Andrews around to Dysart, and then into the safety of the well established Prestongrange family.

The title of "Dairsie" distinguishes both George and his father Sir John from their Prestongrange relations of Lord Alexander and Sir Alexander of Prestongrange. There are references in court documents in 1654 and 1689 to George (son and heir to Sir John Morrison) which associate him with Prestongrange and Sauchtounhall which is the basis for assuming he had business dealings outside of Dairsie.

### **Sir John Morrison's Family**

Sir John Morrison was born in 1596 and died quite young in 1625 at the age of 29. His widow Nicola, daughter of Sir George Bruce of Carnock, married again to John Dick of Braid in 1630 (the son of William Dick and Elizabeth Morrison). The Morrison family of Sir John's can be traced from his grandfather John Morrison and grandmother Katherine Preston who had seven children: Isaac (married Helen Arnot on 11 May 1595, Register of Marriages of the City of Edinburgh 1595-1700, Sir John's father), Henry (married Christian Dick on 17 June 1606, Register of Marriages of the City of Edinburgh 1595-1700), Elizabeth (married William Dick of Braid on 15 June 1603, Register of Marriages of the City of Edinburgh 1595-1700), Alexander (later Lord Alexander, married Helenor Maule), Sarah (married James Inglis 12 October

1609 EMR), Catherine (married Sir William Scott 4 October 1621 OPR) and Helenor Morrison (married Samuel Johnston of Scheines 24 September 1617 EMR).

Sir John was the son of Isaac Morrison and Helen Arnot. Henry (reported as Sir John Morrison's "cadet", born about 1638) was a Writer to the Signet and eldest son of John Morrison and Margaret Nicholson and grandson of Henry Morrison and Christian Dick, registered the Dairsie Arms in 1672 at the same time as his cousin Sir Alexander registered the Prestongrange Arms. The following year, 1673, Sir George Morrison of Bognie registered a similar set of Arms. Given the proximity in time and similarity of design could it be that all three families were related? To date no evidence has been found to demonstrate any family relationships the Bognie Morrisons. For a brief time Henry Morrison and Sir John Morrison were both Baillies of Edinburgh and Aberdeen. This is described later under the heading "Aberdeen".

### **Biography of the Morrisons of Prestongrange**

Records of the time identify John Morrison the elder as a reader: *"1562, January 24.—Stipend to Mr David Lindesay £200 scots; to John Moresoun, reader, £20 scots. 1565.—The Tolbooth was erected in Leith by order of Mary, Queen of Scots. Her arms, originally built therein, are now within the Tower of South Leith Church"*. (South Leith Records).

When Robert Kerr, the second Earl of Lothian, succeeded to his father's estates he apparently had financial trouble that forced him to sell a portion of Prestongrange in the year of his father's death (1609) to John Morrison (who is reported as a rich merchant of Edinburgh and bailie (1581) before becoming treasurer of the city (1588)).

John Morrison, the son of John Morrison and Beatrix Hill, was a wealthy Edinburgh merchant whose eldest son, Lord Alexander, achieved high status in the law as Lord Prestongrange in the Court of Session from 1626. Hayton, Cruikshanks and Handley (2002) state that Alexander took his designation "Lord Prestongrange" from a Haddingtonshire estate acquired from the indebted earls of Lothian, the Kerr's. He also owned a property of some 13,000 acres in Peeblesshire. His eldest son, Alexander, succeeded him in 1631, and was later knighted by Charles I. According to Hayton, Cruikshanks and Handley (2002) Sir Alexander became an important figure in local and national politics.

*"He served on various committees of war from 1643 and supported the Engagement of 1647. He was fined, but 'lived peaceable', under the Cromwellian regime. A post-Restoration account of his conduct during the Civil War naturally emphasised his royalism. In a petition to the Scottish privy council in 1682 he claimed to be the only person still living who had voted against 'that execrable and horrid act of delivering up his Majesty's sacred person' and had 'signed the Duke of Hamilton's commission when he went with the army to England'. As a Presbyterian,*

*he came into increasing conflict with the authorities, and was fined for failing to support episcopal authority in his locality.*

*One of Sir Alexander's earlier achievements had been to secure a suitable match for his heir, Sir William. This action also brought him into conflict with the authorities, since the intended bride, Janet Rocheid, was under age. Although her marriage to William had long been in contemplation, swift action was necessitated by the death of her father and the interposition of an uncle wishing to marry her off to his own son, who was only nine years old. Janet and William were secretly conveyed to Berwick to be married in 1677, staying there 'some two or three months, till she completed her 12 years of age, after which the marriage could not be dissolved'. The inviolability of the marriage did not, however, preclude prosecution. A total of 10,000 merks in fines was imposed on the guilty parties: William himself being liable for 1,500 merks and 'sent to prison till it should be paid'. His father, though punished via his son's fine, was cleared of all charges, whereas the bride's mother was fined heavily. She was still seeking restitution in 1690, conveniently jumping on the bandwagon against 'arbitrary' rule in the wake of the Revolution.*

*By the time of his father's death in 1683, William Morrison had been married for six years and was already a father himself. Entering upon an economically diverse inheritance, he had been brought up to "appreciate the advantages of equivocation and opportunism" as a means of political survival. Some of his ventures included a glassworks and the expansion of the port now known as Morrison's Haven at Prestonpans. He was not a man of high principle, being repeatedly guilty of sharp practice in business, but his Presbyterian background was strong enough to induce a Whiggish cast to his political outlook. During the Revolution he served as a commissioner of militia, and entered the Scottish parliament in 1690. In 1702 he transferred from Haddingtonshire to Peeblesshire and sat for that county until the Union. Sir William Morrison had acted consistently with the Court party until his fortunes were turned sour by the Darien disaster, having in 1696 invested the sizeable sum of £1,000 in the Company of Scotland. He was never truly a member of the Country party, but rather one of the so-called 'honest men' driven into opposition over the Darien issue. In 1700 he subscribed the petition for the summoning of parliament and later presented the Haddingtonshire remonstrance on Caledonia. Nominated by the opposition to the committees of trade in 1700-1, he soon reverted to the Court party, accepting the proposal for an address rather than an act of parliament over Caledonia. Morrison also remained with the 'rump' of courtiers in 1702 and even followed Queensberry's line on the succession in 1704, when the Duke, finding himself temporarily out of office, was engaged in undermining the 'New Party' experiment. Morrison was rewarded, following Queensberry's return to power, with a place on the union commission of 1706 (which was eventually worth £500 Scots) and with*

*elevation to the Scottish privy council in May 1707". (Hayton, Cruikshanks and Handley, On Line, 2002)*

William's debts, many incurred from gambling, left his estate bankrupt. Prestongrange was acquired for £134,000 in 1746 by William Grant.

*"Morrison had been representative of the Barons of Scotland as a Commissioner for the Union and sealed the Articles of Union on 22nd July 1706. But it was a sad fact that although he had subsequently sat for many years as a Member of the Union Parliament in London for Haddingtonshire, his obsession with gambling had finally squandered everything his family had possessed for four generations since 1609. His father and grandfather had both in their turn been Lords of Session as Lord Prestoungrange [an office in which William secretly hoped to follow them one day], and his great grandfather Treasurer of Edinburgh" (Prestoungrange, 2009, p 8).*

The Morrison estate William Grant acquired included the Crown Baronies of Prestoungrange and of Dolphinstoun with some 10,000 acres of fine agricultural land as well as extensive coal reserves, oyster farming, very significant salt pans and their own harbour at Morrison's Haven with a vigorous import/export trade.

### **Some Historical Asides**

As an aside, one relative of the Prestongrange Morrison family named George Morrison (ostensibly a ship's captain from Prestonpans according to McUre, 1736) is said to have married Margaret [or Marion] Young, the eldest daughter of John Young and Margaret Lyon, a merchant in Glasgow. There appears to be contradictory evidence whether her name was Margaret or Marion. The McUre (1736) reference states her name as Margaret. In the the Glasgow Commissariat (1547-1800) there are references to a George and Marion being Glasgow Burgesses (p 359: Morrison, George merchant and burgess 15 Aug 1620, and p 545: Young, Marion spouse to George Morrison, merchant, burgess of Glasgow 26 Nov 1614) and Dobson's (1983) "Directory of Scots..." name her as Marion. It is estimated George must have been born in the late 1590s (there is no record of his parentage). Whether or not George was a ship's captain, he is also listed as a Glasgow Burgess (p 359) in the Commissariat of Glasgow (p 359). They had four children: James, Isabel, Margaret and Marion. According to *The History of Glasgow* (McUre, 1736, p 104) George died at sea. His son James became a Lieutenant in the cavalry. He married Margaret Logie. It is written in *The History of Glasgow* (McUre, p 104) that in 1651 James Morrison and many of Charles' followers from Midlothian and Angus marched towards Worcester with the Earl of Dunfermline's Horse from Dunfermline with other Scottish regiments where they were defeated by Cromwell's Parliament Army on September 3rd 1651. Charles 11 escaped and fled to France. James and many of those captured were sent as prisoners to Barbados. James died of a fever before a plea for his release could be arranged. David Dobson's "*Directory of Scots Banished to the American*

*Plantations 1650-1775* identifies James: "*Morrison, James, son of Marion [Margaret] Young in Glasgow, tra. to Barbados before 1654. [GR/1654/283]*".

The debacle at Worcester has another Morrison connection. In the early part of the 1600s there was an Andrew Morrison who was the "collector in the north". He was married to Barbara Ross (daughter of the Abbot of Fearn, Thomas Ross). One of their daughters, Barbara, was married to Kenneth McKenzie of Dingwell. They had a son who was killed at Worcester fighting for Charles.

As a further aside and quite coincidentally a century later there was a "Captain George Morrison" who is recorded in the 1830s as being in charge of a ship named the "Midlothian" which took many settlers from Skye to Australia. There is no record of his ancestry.

### **Prestongrange and Ireland**

An even more curious coincidence relates to the following historical reference. The Morrisons and the Riddells were related by the marriage of Helen Morrison (daughter of Sir Alexander) to John Riddell, 3rd Baronet of Riddell in 1661. This marriage was 10 years after the battle of Worcester. However, the reference below would tend to give credence that some of the Morrison family from Prestongrange supported Lieutenant James Morrison of Glasgow at the battle of Worcester when he was captured.

According to Gwynn Socolich (2010) who quotes from Walter Riddell Carre (Riddell-Carre, *Border Memories*, 1876):

*"I have some information about descendants of the old house, who flourish in Ireland, as well as in America, but I cannot say when or how they came off the parent tree. The Irish Riddells settled in Ulster, and intermarried with the Morrisons, who were forced to leave Scotland for their adherence to the royal cause after the battle of Worcester."* (Riddell Carre, 1876, pp 202-203)

Gwynn Socolich says "*The Morrisons were from Colraine, Londonderry, Northern Ireland. They also lived in the Shankhill area of Belfast. This family also came to settle in Londonderry, New Hampshire as did the Riddells*".

*(The Mystery Parish of Londonderry, Northern Ireland Ballymeath or Ballaymeath. What evidence is there or where should it be and it is not there? by Gwynn Socolich gsgenealogy@yahoo.com © 1 November 2010)*

Having Morrisons in Ireland who were from Prestongrange gives some plausibility to the claim by L A Morrison (1880) who made a similar connection back in the early 1800s. However, L A Morrison's account is tainted with his persistent belief that all Morrisons originated on Lewis, and his story about Andrew Morrison has some fatal flaws which are nothing but wild speculation. He discusses the travels of Andrew Morrison (p 427) in 1715 who was forced to flee from Aberdeen (no reason given) to the Isle of Lewis "*which he regarded as the cradle of his race, and settled in the north of Ireland*" (p 427). What made Morrison think Andrew believed Lewis to be "the cradle of his race"? It is one of the fanciful embellishments Morrison is prone to. He writes that some

time after Andrew died his grandson, a Hans Morrison, was approached by two gentlemen from Scotland who *"urged his grandson to claim a baronetcy, to which they asserted he was the heir as the representative of Sir Alexander Morrison, Bart., of Preston Grange, in Scotland, whose daughter Helen married Sir John Riddell"* (p 428). L A Morrison states *"This family [Hans Morrison] is descended from the Morrisons of Preston Grange, Scotland"* (p 430). He makes this claim based on a story and then details the family of Andrew and Hans as though the story was true and they were the legitimate heirs of Prestongrange.

Sadly this fanciful assumption by L A Morrison is only that. Close scrutiny of his assumption reveals basic factual errors. According to all the birth records of the children from John Morrison and Margaret Preston down through Lord Alexander Morrison, Sir Alexander Morrison and Sir William Morrison, that is, the direct line of descent from Prestongrange, there is not one Andrew. Therefore this Andrew who L A Morrison describes as a Highlander from Aberdeen (again a further disqualification as the Morrisons were Lowlanders, and Prestongrange is in the Lothians and not in Aberdeen) could not lead any researcher to conclude he had any right of inheritance unless all the identified male children associated with the main line died without issue before about 1800, and that it also assumes Hans Morrison, Andrew's grandson, could have proved a family relationship. Further to this, Sir Alexander had an heir, Sir William, and Sir William in turn had heirs (William and his son George), so Andrew could hardly be *"the heir as the representative of Sir Alexander Morrison, Bart., of Preston Grange"*.

Secondly, from the recorded history of Sir William Morrison who died in 1739, we know two things. The first one is the Morrison connection with Prestongrange ceased after Sir William died in 1739 and ownership passed to William Grant in 1746 (who was later granted the title "Lord Prestongrange" in 1754). There never was a Baronetcy or other title for any Morrison to inherit after Sir William. It has to be understood that the Barony of Prestongrange was *"a feudal barony, involving nothing less than tenure of lands from the Crown in chief, with as root of title a Charter under the Great Seal erecting the barony, and granted under the royal sign manual"* (Peskest, 2010). The owner of the land was not a titled Baron, it was the land that was referred to as a Baronetcy, so therefore there never was a title to inherit when Prestongrange was sold.

The second thing we know is that Sir William had at least five sons: Alexander, William, John, Henry and James. The last recorded member of this family was George Morrison of "Little Chalfield" who was born 1718 and died in 1788, the only child of William Morrison's first marriage to Amarinta (no other information about this marriage). One has to question why two mysterious gentlemen came to Ireland (presumably after George died, the last recorded male Prestongrange Morrison). If there had been a title to inherit then any of Sir William's survivors would have been in line, but none of them sought or had a title. The last of the Prestongrange children to have titles were Sir William's daughters who gained them through marriage (Lady Catherine of Strathnaver, Countess Helen of Glasgow and Jean, Viscountess of Arbuthnot).

If the "two mysterious gentlemen" story is true then they were nothing more than charlatans. The indisputable fact is there was no title or Baronetcy to inherit, so L A Morrison's story is a rather feeble tale of nonsense. By contrast, the Bognie Morrisons do have a heritable title and were established around Aberdeen. However, to fit the time frame of this mysterious Andrew it is worthy to note that he could not have been from this family as neither George Morrison (1620-1699) and his eldest son Theodore (1685-1766) had any children named Andrew. There were, however, several Andrew Morrisons associated with Aberdeen at this time but there is no record of which family they belonged to.

## **The Prestongrange Lineage**

**John Morrison** (About 1515, died 16 Dec 1573) described in Edinburgh records as the elder, a merchant and burgess of Edinburgh, married about 1537 to Beatrix Hill. She died on 9 Sept 1587. John was a Burgess and Guild Brother in Edinburgh from 1537. Records from South Leith report "1562, January 24.—Stipend to ... to John Moresoun, reader, £20 scots". There is a Will in the Scottish Records Office for Morisoun Johne Burgess of Edinburgh 16 December 1573.

**John Morrison** (Abt 1545-1615) was a Bailie of Edinburgh 1581 and Treasurer 1588, married 1570 Katherine Preston (Abt 1552 - 1595), the daughter of John Preston, an Edinburgh Burgess. There are references to John Morrison being the son of John Morrison and Beatrix Hill. The Edinburgh Burgess Records of 1406-1700 indicate that John Morrison and Beatrix Hill were already married by 1535 when John was a Burgess and Guild Brother (p 359).

### **Note:**

From the Forrester history (Paul, 1907) comes an example of John Morrison's wealth: "*Henry Forrester of Corstorphine was served heir to is brother, August 20, 1589. On December 21, 1598, he sold to John Moreson, merchant of Edinburgh, the Plewlands and Sacristan's lands, otherwise Broomhouse, the lands of Whitehouse at Corstorphine and the hill there (pp 89-90).*"

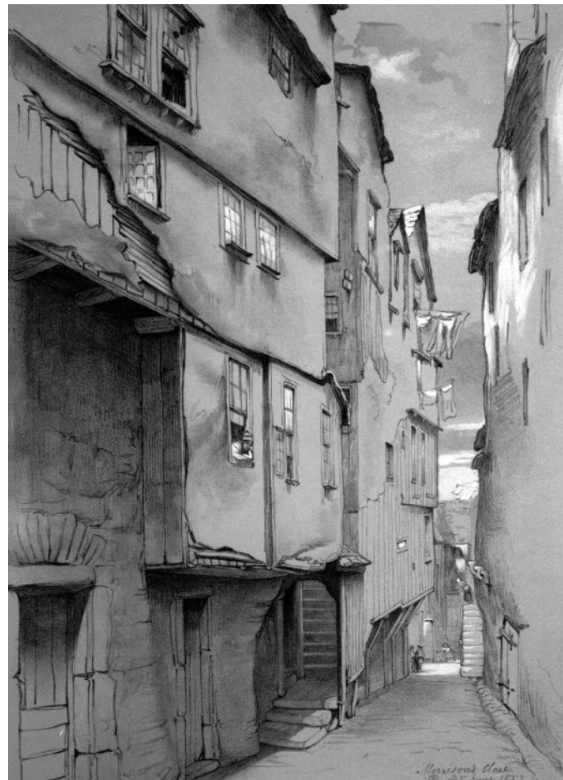
According to the Prestongrange Museum resource notes, "*On his father's death in 1584, Mark Ker's son, also Mark, was confirmed in his right to the Newbattle lands by King James I and VI. In 1587 the king issued a charter granting Mark Ker the younger and his heirs the title to the lands of Newbattle monastery and the baronies of Newbattle and Prestongrange. He was given the title Lord Newbattle and in 1606 was created Earl of Lothian. On his death in 1609, his estate was worth almost £37,000. Although his wife, Margaret Maxwell, is recorded as having died at Prestongrange in 1617, their son Robert, 2nd Earl of Lothian, did not continue the family's involvement with the estate, probably due to the crippling burden of debt resulting from the effort to maintain a*



*noble lifestyle. In 1624, he killed himself at Newbattle, having sold off the Prestongrange Estate some years before”.*

Robert Ker, the 2nd Earl of Lothian, sold some of the Prestongrange lands in the year of his father's death [1609] to John Morrison, a merchant of Edinburgh who was treasurer of the city in 1588 and three times a Bailie. He was the ancestor of a succession of Morrisons who owned Prestongrange down to 1746. In 1644 the Morrisons sold 64 acres of their lands to John Jowsie, a merchant burgess of Edinburgh, who was married to Henry Morrison and Katherine Dick's daughter Catherine.

Writing about the history of Edinburgh Stuart Harris (1996) records 117 High Street Edinburgh: *“Morrison's Close is listed on Edgar 1742 and recorded in 1750 as having a great house on its East side, owned of old by John Morison, merchant, and after him by John Morison of Dairsey. These may possibly have been the John Moresoun who was bailie in 1582 and served on the town council in various capacities (including that of old or depute provost in 1590) until about 1603, and another John Morrison, merchant and member of town council in the 1630s, who was certainly connected with the close, being listed in 1635 as owner of the property in it -albeit on the west side, not east”.* (from Stuart Harris, 1996, Place Names of Edinburgh, p 443)



**Morrison's Close, 117 High Street, Edinburgh**

(Photographic copy of drawing of Morrison's Close from James Drummond's "Old Edinburgh")

"The Close is named after John Morrison, a merchant, who lived there in the early 18th century. The core of the buildings was stone, but many had timber extensions, which made the streets narrower and darker, but provided more space for those living above" (<http://canmore.org.uk/collection/460295>).

The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (1923) suggests "Property in this close was owned by John Morrison, merchant. On the east side was the great house, owned of old by John Moriesone, and, after him, by John Moriesone of Dairsey, the town wall lying to the north of the close" (Vol 12, p 43).

John Morrison is listed as an Edinburgh Councillor in 1574 and 1582, and Treasurer in 1588-9, for example:

*2 July 1589. Capitane of the Castell, Lord Mortoun.*

*Ordanis Jhonn Moresoun, thesaurer, to caus ansuer the Lord Mortoun and the capitane of the Castell, ilk ane of twa mylne staynes furth of the commoun mylnis, vpoun thair resonabill expenssis. (Appendix: List of officers, 1573-89, in Extracts From the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1573-1589, ed. J D Marwick (Edinburgh, 1882), pp. 574-580 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/edinburgh-burgh-records/1573-89/pp574-580>).*

There is a Will in the Scottish Records Office for "*Moresone Johne 17 July 1615 Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh*".

Children of John Morrison and Katherine Preston:

- I. John 1571-1642 (died 19/12/1642 Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh)
- II. Henry 1572- married Christian Dick 17/6/1606 OPR and EMR, then secondly Jonet Spottiswood (Ref. Commissariat of Edinburgh 1601-1700, p 379)

Children of Henry Morrison and Christian Dick:

1. John 1608 OPR, married Margaret Nicholson (daughter of Baron Thomas Nicholson of Carnock and Isabel Henderson)  
He is listed in the Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses (1406-1700, p359) as "*John, B and G, mt (muskat), as eldest s to umq Harye M, mt, B and G, 20 Feb 1633*". (father of Henry Morrison WS who married Agnes Wilkie in 1672, and submitted the coat of arms for the Morrisons of Dairsie).

Edinburgh Burgh Records state: *22nd June 1638. Apointes to visit the armorie deyne of gild Archibald Tod Chairles Hammiltoim **Johnne Moresoun** Thomas Quhytt and Johnne Scott, and to separat the muskettis according to thair bore and to report to the counsall.* (Extracts form the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1936, p 204) and 4th October 1637.

**Note:**

*[Baron bailies of Leith, William Reid and Patrick Baxter; water baile, William Reid. Council for the year 1637-38: Provost, Sir John Hay; Bailies. William Gray, Robert Fleyming, William Wilkie, John Trotter, younger; Dean of Gild, Sir John Sincler; Treasurer, James Roucheid; Council, William Dick, James Cocheran, Andrew Ainslie, John Smith, Charles Hamiltoun, Archibald Tod, George Suittie, **John Moresoun**, James Murray, yo., James Rae, yo, Thomas Inglis, pewterer, Gilbert Somervill, tailor; Deacons, Thomas Quhytt, armorer, James Guthrie, skinner, Thomas Patersoun, tailor, David Douglas, Surgeon, John Scott, goldsmith Patrick Aitkyn, shoemaker; Extraordinary Deacons, Thomas Weir, furrier, John Frank, wright, John Mylne, mason, David Nisbett, baker, John Boutcher, flesher, James Forrester, weaver, Daniel Robertsoun, waulker, Robert Lauchlane, bonnet- maker.]*

(Extracts form the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1936, p196)

## Children of John Morrison and Margaret Nicholson:

- a. 1638 OPR Henry, (WS), submitted the coat of arms for the Morrisons of Dairsie, married Agnes Wilkie 22 Nov 1672 (EMR, p 491)  
Child of Henry and Agnes:
    - i. Henry 1674 OPR.
  - b. Margaret 1639 OPR
  - c. Christian 1640 OPR married 21 June 1664 (EMR) George Stewart of Auldhame, buried Greyfriars 10 May 1676.
  - d. William 1642 OPR
2. Janet 1609 OPR d 31 Oct 1675, married 10/11/1625 OPR, EMR John Trotter 2nd of Mortonhall (their daughter Catherine married John Rocheid, parents of Janet who married William Morrison)
  3. Margaret 1613 OPR
  4. Catherine 1614 OPR who married 19/9/1633 OPR John Jowsie of West Pans
  5. Harrie 1615 OPR (married Jean Drummond)  
Child:
    - a. Jonet 1638 OPR
  6. Catharine 1617 OPR

## Children of Henry Morrison and Jonet Spottiswood:

1. Christiane 2 Mar 1620 OPR
2. Alexander 20 Jan 1622 OPR
3. Elizabeth 11 April 1624 OPR

**Note:**

*Morisone - Henry - Advocate, to his Niece Christiana Morisone (Wife of George Stewart Advocate) who died - Heir Special in Tenements of Crocehouse on the north of the High Street of Edinburgh - dated 24th April 1677.*

(Decennial Indexes to the Services of Heirs in Scotland 1700 - 1859, Volumes 1 - 4.)

III. **Isaac** 1574-1611, married Helen Arnot 11/5/1595 OPR (after Isaac died Helen married Sir George Home of Manderston)

**Note:**

There is a Will in the Scottish Records Office: "*Moresoun Isaac 31/01/1611 Merchant, Burgess and Baillie of Edinburgh*".

Children of Isaac Morrison and Helen Arnot:

1. John 1596 OPR who became **Sir John Morrison** (sometimes incorrectly titled "of Dairsie") died 6 July 1625 aged 29, married to Nicola Bruce (d of Sir George Bruce of Carnock) - two of their children being:
  - a. George Morrison Abt 1617 who married Agnes Boyd, became **Sir George Morrison of Dairsie**
    - i. Johne 1646 OPR (24/03/1646, Johne Moresone, Sir George Moreson/Agnes Boyd FR155, 453/00 0010 0150, St Andrew and St Leonards), died 1 March 1688, buried in Morrison Tomb, Greyfriars cemetery.
    - ii. Nicola 1647 OPR
    - iii. Robert 1648 OPR
    - iv. George 1649 OPR described as an Advocate
    - v. Charles 1650 OPR
    - vi. William 1655 OPR
    - vii. Agnes 1658 OPR
    - viii. Christian 1661 OPR
  - b. Katherine Abt 1618 (A reference in the Northern Notes and Queries in Hallen (1891, p 5) notes Katherine was the daughter of Sir John Morrison) Katherine married Sir James Stewart, son of Sir Lewis Stewart of Kirkhill and Strabrock and Margaret Windram. (Sir Lewis married a second time, Marion Arnot, widow of James Nisbet of Craigentiny. Sir Lewis' sister Margaret married John Dick).
2. Margaret 1599 OPR married Abt 1618 Sir Alexander Home of Manderstoun (son of Sir George and 1st wife Isobel, his 2nd wife was Helen Arnot former wife of Isaac Morrison, d of Sir John Arnot of Beswick), was appointed 1651 by King Charles II, Gentleman of is

Majesty's Bedchamber and Master of the Household to Princess of Orange and Earldom of Dunbar. Died 1627 (SRO will)

3. Alexander 1601 OPR

4. Katherine 1603 OPR

5. Marioun 1606 OPR

6. Isaac 1607 OPR

7. Harie 1608

8. James 1609-1626 (SRO, Will dated 11 Sep 1626, lawful son to umqhhile Isaac M, Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh)

IV. Alexander 1579-1632 who became **Lord Alexander of Prestongrange** (married 6//9/1610 OPR Helenor Maule)

V. Elizabeth 1584 married Sir William Dick of Braid 15/6/1603 OPR, their son John Dick married Sir John Morrison's widow Nicola (1630, 17 Oct. - "Collected at the marriage of Dame Nicola Bruce with Mr John Dick" Extracts from Culross Church Accounts 1629, The Scottish Antiquary, Northern Notes and Queries, Vol V, p 117)

VI. James d 1631 (SRO will) OPR married Janet Ker 4/10/1627 Parish of Holyroodhouse or Canongate Register of Marriages 1564-1800, (Will SRCO18/06/1631). Birth records show:

a. James 1628 OPR

b. Jean 1629 OPR

c. Samuel 1630 OPR

VII. Sarah (married James Inglis, merchant, 12 Oct 1609 EMR)

VIII. Catherine (married Sir William Scott 4/10/1621 OPR, see Note below:)

**Note:**

*Sir William Scott, of Clerkington, Lord Clerkington (d 1656), judge, was the eldest son of Laurence Scott of Harprig. He succeeded his father in December 1637 and was knighted by Charles II in November 1641. He was a member of the committee of war in 1644, 1646, 1647, and 1649 and, after the enactment of the Act of Classes (1649), barring from office those involved in the engagement with Charles I, was appointed an ordinary lord of session on 7 June 1649, taking the title of Lord Clerkington. He was a member of the committee of estates and planters of kirks (1649, 1651), and a commissioner to parliament for the shire of Edinburgh in 1650-51. He joined Argyll in March 1651 in unsuccessfully opposing moves to admit some of those excluded from civil office since 1649 to the committee to manage the army. He was a commissioner of supply in 1655. Contemporaries considered him competent, and he was described by Nicoll as 'a very guid judge' (Nicoll, 188). Scott and his first wife, Catherine, daughter of Morison of Prestongrange, whom he married on 4 October 1621,...)*

(J. Rock, 2008, Historical notes on Bonnington House, Ratho, p 5).

- III. Helene 1595-1627, married 24/9/1617 OPR and EMR Samuel Johnston of Skene who was the son of Rachel Arnot (d of Sir John Arnot of Birswick and sister of Helen Arnot [who was married to George Home whose son Alexander was married to Margaret Morrison] who was married to Archibald Johnson, Lord Wariston)
- IV. Harie 1584-1623 married Katherine Stewart (daughter of William Stewart Burgess 1609).

Children of Harie Morrison and Katherine Stewart:

1. Isaac Married Janet Goodfellow
  - a. Margaret 1627 OPR
2. Harie 1605-1673, advocate, Burgess 1660 married Isobel Nisbet 13/2/1645 OPR, Edinburgh Marriages.
3. Alexander
4. Janet
5. Margaret
6. Katherine 1609-
7. Christian -d 1 Feb 1650, married 26/03/1638 OPR Sir Andrew Dick of Craighouse (son of Sir William Dick) (After the death of Christian in 1650 he married Jean Leslie). Only child: Elizabeth Dick.

**Note:**

Reference to John Morrison and his son Isaac in the will of Walter Cant: "*is signed and dated at Edinburgh, on the 18th July 1594. Among the witnesses are John Moresoun, burgess there, and Isaac Moresoun his son*" (Smith, 1898, p 24).

The following reference examples are given to substantiate the information regarding Henry and Harie Morrison:

*"Two months later [October 1616] a ship of Leith belonging to William Robertson was searched and tallow was found therein, along with candles and other forbidden goods belonging to Harry Moresoun, merchant: the ship and her illegal cargo were arrested"* (McMillan, 1984, p 115).

Monumental Inscriptions (1834): "*Here lyeth Harie Morison, youngest son to John Morison; he was baillie of this burgh; died the 1 August 1623, the 39 year of his age*".

There is a Will in the Scottish Records Office for *Moresone Harie 19/02/1624 Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh*.

"1624, June.—Warrant in the King's name to his sheriffs On complaint of Isaac, Harie, Alexander, Jonet, Margaret, Katherine and Christian, the children of umquhile Harie Morisone, merchant of Edinburgh" (Lomas, 1909, pp 205-6).

Henry Morrison and Sir Andrew Dick of Craighouse: "He was bred to the law, and became an advocate in the Court of Session; and having married his cousin Christina, only daughter and heiress of Henry Morrison, a wealthy merchant-burgess of Edinburgh, with her he received a large accession to his estate, 4000 merks of yearly rent in houses in Edinburgh, and 59,000 merks in money.' But their married life was of short duration, and their only son William died very young. Upon the death of his wife Christina, Mr. Andrew Dick was left with one little daughter, called Elizabeth (The Grange of St Giles, 1898, p 92). Note also that Andrew Dick is mentioned in 1655 as being in the company of Sir George Morrison of Dairsie following the suspicious death of "Mr Jhone Sieus laird of Kembocke in Fife" (The Grange of St Giles, pp 92-93).

There appears to be a name issue whereby Henry and Harie become interchangeable spellings. Some time after 1672 Agnes Wilkie who married Henry Morrison WS took court action against her sister in law (Henry's sister) Christian who was married to George Stewart (Stuart) of Auldhame (in Haddington).

According to John Gough Nichols (1874, p 259) "...They [Stewarts] had a daughter, Katharine, omitted in the Baronage, who married Henry [in fact it was Harie] Morrison, merchant and bailie of Edinburgh, and had issue. The Morrisons were like the Dicks, a family of wealthy merchant-burgesses of Edinburgh, and rose a little earlier... Henry's [Harie's] sister Elizabeth was the wife of Sir William Dick; [their son] Mr. John Dick, fiar of Braid, married the widow [Nicola] of his cousin-german Sir John Morrison of Dairsie, Fife; and Sir Andrew Dick of Craighouse [born about 1650] married the heiress of Henry Morrison [Christina], a rich merchant in Edinburgh, also a near relative. Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange in East Lothian, a senator of the College of Justice 1626-1631, was brother of Sir William Dick's wife [Elizabeth Morrison]. These Morrisons are repeatedly designed of Saughtounhall in the Baronage".

The name Henry and Harie often appear to be interchanged in various Edinburgh records. It is not altogether reliable to state categorically which is which when linking these two names to marriages, however for some Harie/Henry births particular families have been identified because the parents names are given. One example of a Harie whose parentage is known is the marriage and birth references to Henry then Harie Morrison. Henry became Harie when he married secondly Janet Spottiswood (parentage unknown) who had children Christian 1620 OPR, Alexander 1622 OPR, and Elizabeth 1624 OPR. It was later established this was in fact Henry Morrison whose first marriage had been to Christian Dick. The discovery of this fact was found in the Commissariat of Edinburgh 1601-1700 account (p 379). There are no indications in the records of the time who Jonet's parents were as there are no

references to John Spottiswood's family tree to a daughter Jonet. There was at this time a rug merchant in Edinburgh whose surname was Spottiswood. Again, there is no reference to suggest these two different Spottiswood's were related.

There is a similar coincidence of the Morrison and Arnot names with the marriage of John Morrison and Grissell Arnot on 7 Dec 1620. It is not known which Morrison family John came from, or for that matter whether or not Grissell was a relation of Isaac Morrison's wife Helen Arnot.

**Lord Alexander Morrison** (1579-1632) married 6 September 1610 Helenor Maule (1581-1664), daughter of William Maule a merchant and Dean of Guild of Edinburgh (the son of Robert Maule and Isabel Arbuthnot) and Bethia Guthrie (daughter of Alexander Guthrie, town-clerk of Edinburgh). See the note below regarding Helenor's second marriage to Sir James Monnypenny after Lord Alexander Morrison died. Lord Alexander was the brother of Isaac Morrison who also became a Baillie of Edinburgh (and whose son was Sir John Morrison). Lord Alexander no doubt benefitted from the establishment of Edinburgh University in 1583 which began its early life as a College of Law.

**Note:**

There are numerous references to Alexander in the Scottish Records, for example: Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 10th January 1627.

*"[The voluntary contribution by new burgesses to St. Paul's Work amounts to £134, 6s. 8d.]*

*1 Pp. 10-12 supra.*

*2 See Crawford, pp.106 and 111. The office of rector had been held previously by Mr Alexander Ramsay, professor of divinity, elected in 1620 for one year only, but who held what he admitted to have been an empty title, for six years (Bower, i. pp. 47 and 48). This office was ill-defined at this time. Bower states that Mr Robert Rollock was both principal and rector, but without quoting his authority. Mr Alexander Morison was a son of John Morison, several times bailie of Edinburgh, and Katherine, daughter of Sir John Preston, Lord President in 1609. He was admitted an ordinary Lord in 1626. He died in 1631.... [As] a member of Scotland's legal elite, Alexander Morison's history is better known and recorded. Born in 1579, he died at Prestongrange on 20 September 1631; his wife was Helenora, daughter of William Mauld, merchant and burgess of Edinburgh, whom he married 6 September 1610. [after the death of Alexander, Heleanor married Sir James Monneypenny 18th of Pitmillie in 1637] Admitted to the Faculty of Advocates on 25 January 1604, he became a lord of session - Lord Prestongrange - on 14 February 1626. The following year, Alexander Morison appears with the title of Senator of the Court of Justice, and was elected rector of Edinburgh University". (p18)*



There is a Will recorded in the Scottish Records Office: *Moresone Alexander 16/3/1632 of Prestongrange, Senator of the College of Justice.*

Children of Alexander Morrison and Helenor Maule:

1. John 1612 OPR
2. Bethia 1613 OPR (married 1629 Sir Robert Spottiswood, Lord Duniplace)
3. Katherine 1611 OPR
4. Katherine 1615 OPR (became Lady Wedderburn when she 1st married 1635 Lt Col George Home of Wedderburn (slain at the Battle of Dunbar 3/9/1650). 2nd married Sir William Montgomery (Clerk of Session of the privy Council, died 1656). 3rd Katherine married James Bethune of Balfour, 1656 (see reference below in Notes at "248").
5. Alexander 1616 OPR who became **Sir Alexander**
6. Helene 1617 OPR
7. Elizabeth 1618 OPR
8. William 1621 OPR
9. Helenor 1622 OPR
10. Heleanor 1626-1660 OPR married 1657 Robert Gordon (son of Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonston) (Ref House of Gordon p 30 (138))
11. Nicola 1624 OPR
12. John 1627 OPR, died 1698, tailor, buried Greyfriars Morrison Tomb
13. William 1628 OPR married 1650 Jean Kennedy
14. James 1629 OPR married Jonet Gordon 1659

Children of James and Jonet:

- A. William 1660 OPR
- B. Rachel 1666 OPR
- C. Thomas 1668 OPR

15. Robert 1631 OPR (married Margaret Home, 1/6/1665 OPR)

Children of Robert Morrison and Margaret Home:

- A. John 1666 OPR
- B. Jonet 1668 OPR
- C. Jean 1669 OPR
- D. Alexander 1671 OPR
- E. Agnes 1675 OPR
- F. James 1677 OPR
- G. Marion 1677 OPR

**Note:**

[Robert Ker 2nd Earl of Lothian] ... in 1622 *disponed the lands and Barony of Prestongrange, under reversion, to Alexander Morison, Advocate, who had a*

*Charter [of novodamus] pass the Great Seal [29 August 1622 of tetras et baroniam de Prestoungrange].* (Peskest, 1997, *The Barony of Prestongrange*, 2.3).

### The 2 Marriages of Katherine Morrison (1615 - )

1. *"George Home, younger of Wedderburn, was married to Katherine, daughter of Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange... "* (Historical Manuscripts Commission. Report on the Manuscripts of Colonel David Milne Home of Wedderburn Castle, N. B., Mackie and Co. Printers, Edinburgh, 1902, p 7)

2. *"Sir William Montgomery, the eldest, was knighted by Charles I, in 1641. He was successively Clerk of Session, of the Privy Council, and was member of Parliament for Haddington in 1645, admitted an ordinary lord, June 8, 1649, and one of the commissioners for the county of Edinburgh in 1650. He was one of the Committee of Estates which met at Perth in 1651, and appears by his votes to have belonged to the party which, under the Marquis of Argyle, opposed the admission of those then called Malignants to share in the defence of the country. He died December 2-3, 1656. He was twice married; first, to Katherine, daughter of Alexander Morison of Prestongrange, whose mother was Katherine, daughter of Sir John Preston of Fenton Barns, Lord President from 1609 to 1616. Alexander Morison was elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh in 1627. Katherine Scott, the wife of Hugh Montgomerie, was a child of this first marriage. Sir William's second wife was Barbara, daughter of Sir John Dalmahoy of that Ilk, by whom he had several children, and is the ancestor of the Blairs of Blair, and of the Scotts of Malleny"* (Montgomery, p 78).

3. *"248. Contract of Marriage dated at Edinburgh, 27th February, 1656, between James Beattone, fiar of Balfour, with consent of John Beattone of Balfour, and Katherine Halyburton, his spouse, father and mother of the said James, and Katherine Moriesone, Lady Wedderburn, with consent of Sir Alexander Moriesone of Prestongrange, knight, her brother germain, and Sir James Monniepennie of Pitmillie, knight, her brother-in-law [married to Heleanor Maule after the death of Alexander Morrison in 1631]. She is to be provided in liferent in the lands of Kennoquhie and others in life; and she conveys to her future husband her liferent interest in Wedderburn. This is also James Beattone's second marriage. Among the witnesses are Sir John Moncreiff of that Ilk, Sir James Murray of Skirline, and Mr. Robert Gordoune, one of the clerks of Exchequer. At a later date there is a further security made to Katherine Moriesone by her husband, James Bethun, younger of Balfour, and David Bethun of Creich, his son, on the occasion of the latter's marriage to Rachell Hop ; dated at Balfour, 29th July 1669; witnesses, John Bethun of Blebo, David Lyndsay, fiar of Kirkforthar, and David Bethun, younger of Bandon "* (Historical Manuscripts Commission, p 105).

Note above the reference to Sir James Monnypenny being [Katherine's] "her brother-in-law". It appears that after Katherine's brother Alexander died in

1631 his wife Heleanor married Sir James Monnypenny in 1637 and had two sons, John and Alexander. Sir James died in 1657.

**Sir Alexander Morrison** (of Prestongrange, 1616-1687) married Jean Boyd 9/7/1637 OPR daughter of 7th Lord Robert Boyd and 2nd wife Lady Christian (Hamilton) Lindsay.

There is a Will registered to *Sir Alexander Moriesone of Prestongrange dated 18/4/1687* in the Scottish Records Office.

**Note:**

The Boyd family have a prominent role in the history of Scotland dating back to the Battle of Largs. The Boyds were loyal followers of Robert the Bruce, implicated in the death of Lord Darnley, and Robert Boyd was highly favoured by King James V.

"Seventh Lord Robert Boyd (died 1628) married, first, Margaret, daughter of Robert Montgomerie of Giffen, relict of Hugh fifth Earl of Eglintoun, without issue (she died in 1615); secondly, Lady Christian Hamilton, eldest daughter of Thomas first Earl of Haddington, relict of Robert tenth Lord Lindsay of Byres..." (Reference: A genealogical account of the principal families in Ayrshire, more particulary (sic) in Cunninghame, Vol 1, A Constable and Co, Edinburgh, George Robertson, 1823, p 109).

Some references only mention four daughters, omitting Agnes:

"...Robert [Boyd] his Son and Heir, and four Daughters, Jean married to Sir Alexander Morison of Prestongrange, and had Issue. Isobel to Sir John Sinclair of Stevenson, and had Issue, Christian to Sir William Scot of Harden, and had Issue, Marion to Sir James Dundass of Arnistoun, and had Issue". Reference: George Crawford, Esq. (1710) The peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that Kingdom (<http://name.umdl.umich.edu/004896390.0001.000>)

Cracroft's Peerage notes that "*Robert by his second wife Lady Christian Lindsay had seven children, Robert (later 8th Lord Boyd), Helen (died unmarried), Agnes (married before 17 April 1647 Sir George Morrison of Dairsie), Jean (married Sir Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange), Marion (married after 12 Nov 1641 Sir James Dundas of of Arniston), Isabel (married after 29 May 1638 John Sinclair of Stevenston) and Christian Boyd (married after 26 Oct 1641 Sir William Scott of Ardross)*" (<http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/online/content/boyd1454.htm>).

James Paterson (1852, p 180) confirms the Cracroft account of the Morrison and Boyd marriages.

Alexander is the first cousin of Sir John Morrison.

## Children of Sir Alexander and Jean Boyd:

1. Janet, married David Wilkie (Dean of Guild) 14/1/1658
2. Jean ,married 1670 Sir John Nisbet of Craigentinnie, Dean and Dirleton (his third marriage), died 18 Nov 1695. Buried Kirk of Prestonpans 25 Nov 1695.
3. Catherine
4. Christian, married William Bennet of Grubet in 1665.
5. Helen, married 1661 John Riddell (his 2nd of 3 marriages), 3rd Baronet of Riddell (son of Walter Riddell and Christian Nisbet). They had a daughter Christian who married Sir Henry Nisbett (see p 59 above).
6. William (born 18 April 1663-1739) who later became **Sir William Morrison** married 1676 Janet Rocheid,
7. Thomas

According to Hayton, Cruikshanks and Handley (2002) William was the first surviving son of Sir Alexander and Jean Boyd.

**Note:**

In the list of members to the *A History of Writers to Her Majesty's Signet*, (p 149) the following reference is given: " 16th August 1671. Moresone, Henry. Apprentice to James Allan - Eldest son of John Moresone, Merchant Burgess, Edinburgh. Died 1674. Mar. Agnes Wilkie." It has so far not been possible to establish beyond doubt which John Morrison this was, but the reasonable assumption is that it is John Morrison born 1608 who was married to Margaret Nicholson, eldest son of of Henry Morrison who was married to Christian Dick. There are numerous historical references to "Henry Morrison WS".

Helenor (daughter of Lord Alexander Morrison) married Robert Gordon of Gordonston (see note below re Debt Discharge). There is another reference to a Helenor of Prestongrange who married Robert Gordon of "Cluny" (sic). In "*The House of Gordon*" Helenor is specifically identified as belonging to "*Mr Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange*". She died at Edinburgh 1660, and had three children: Robert Gordon born in 1658 who married Catherine Arbuthnot in 1687, and two girls who died young. The date here would indicate Helenor married about 1657. This connection with the Gordons and Arbuthnots comes up again with Helenor's nephew William and his daughter Jean.

*NAS GD6/2156 1634 Debt Discharge GD20/1/813 1668 Assignment by Master Robert Gordon to Sir Alexander Morison who, on a bond dated 16, 17, 18 March 1668, borrowed 14,000 merks Scots – this bond reappears on 6 April 1717 in GD20/1/813.* (Ref: Sonia Baker Prestongrange House Prestoungrange University Press <http://www.prestoungrange.org>)

*"Sir John Nisbet, son of Sir Patrick Nisbet of Eastbank, senator of the college of justice, was born in Edinburgh 1st July 1610; admitted advocate 19th November 1633; acted as sheriff-depute of the county of Edinburgh in 1639, and was afterwards appointed one of the commissaries of Edinburgh. In 1641, when Montrose was prosecuted by the committee of estates on a charge of treason, John Nisbet was one of the three counsel whom the prisoner petitioned to be allowed to plead for him, the other two, who were greatly Nisbet's seniors, being Sir John Gilmour and Sir Lues Stewart. He purchased the estate of Dirleton 1663. He married (3) dame Jean Morison, daughter of Sir Alexander Morison of Prestongrange". Reference: Ross and Grant (1982).*

**Sir William Morrison** 19 April 1663-1739, died abroad (married 1676 Janet Rocheid 1665-1713, d of Catherine Trotter and John Rocheid of Craigleith). Janet was 12 when they married. See the historical note below about the scandal surrounding this marriage and their young ages. William is the second cousin Sir George Morrison of Dairsie. He held the following offices:

Hereditary burgess, Peebles; burgess, Edinburgh 1684, Glasgow 1707. MP [S] Haddingtonshire 1690–1703; Peeblesshire 1702–7.

Children of William Morrison and Janet Rocheid:

1. Alexander 1683 OPR died 1703 (interred in Preston Kirk 8 May 1703)
2. Catherine 30 Sept 1684 OPR (Lady Strathnaver, m 9 Oct 1705 William Gordon, Lord Strathnaver)
3. Jean 1687 OPR (Viscountess Arbuthnot, married Abt 1710 5th Viscount John Arbuthnot, the son of George Gordon 15th Earl of Sutherland)
4. Helen 1688 OPR (Countess of Glasgow, m 11th Feb. 1707 2nd Earl John Boyle of Glasgow)
5. William 1690 OPR of Craigleith. Married twice, first Araminta about 1716.  
 Child of William Morrison and Araminta:  
 George Morrison born 15 May 1718, Marlybone, London, died 26 August 1791.  
 Married 2nd on 31 July 1730 Henrietta Dallas of St Martins (daughter of James Dallas of St Martins and 2nd wife Barbara Cockburn), no issue.
6. John 1691 OPR
7. Henry 1692 OPR
8. James 1693 OPR

**Note:**

The marriage between Helen and John Boyle (2nd Earl of Glasgow) in 1707 produced 12 children. These children were the 1st cousins of George Morrison (the last direct male descendant of Prestongrange) who was the son of William, Helen's brother). Thus George Morrison had as one of these cousins, John Boyle (1714-1775), who became the 3rd Earl of Glasgow after his father's death in 1740. George's aunt, Helen, Countess of Glasgow died in Edinburgh 7 July 1767. The 3rd Earl was succeeded by his son George Boyle 4th Earl of Glasgow (1766- 1843) who styled himself Lord Boyle.

## Historical references regarding Sir William Morrison

Sir William Morrison married at the earliest legal age possible. The following account of his marriage which was contracted by his father is detailed as follows by David Wilkinson (2002):

*One of Sir Alexander's earlier achievements had been to secure a suitable match for his heir, William. This action also brought him into conflict with the authorities, since the intended bride, Janet Rocheid, was under age. Although her marriage to William had long been in contemplation, swift action was necessitated by the death of her father and the interposition of an uncle wishing to marry her off to his own son, who was only nine years old. Janet and William were secretly conveyed to Berwick to be married, staying there 'some two or three months, till she completed her 12 years of age, after which the marriage could not be dissolved'. The inviolability of the marriage did not, however, preclude prosecution. A total of 10,000 merks in fines was imposed on the guilty parties: William himself being liable for 1,500 merks and 'sent to prison till it should be paid'. His father, though punished via his son's fine, was cleared of all charges, whereas the bride's mother was fined heavily. She was still seeking restitution in 1690, conveniently jumping on the bandwagon against 'arbitrary' rule in the wake of the Revolution.*

*By the time of his father's death in 1683, William Morison, although not yet 21, had been married for six years and was already a father himself. Entering upon an economically diverse inheritance, he had been brought up to appreciate the advantages of equivocation and opportunism as a means of political survival. He was not a man of high principle, being repeatedly guilty of sharp practice in business, but his Presbyterian background was strong enough to induce a Whiggish cast to his political outlook. During the Revolution, he served as a commissioner of militia, and entered the Scottish parliament in 1690. In 1702 he transferred from Haddingtonshire to Peeblesshire and sat for that county until the Union. Morison had acted consistently with the Court until turned sour by the Darien disaster, having in 1696 invested the sizable [sic] sum of £1,000 in the Company of Scotland. He was never truly a member of the Country party, but rather one of the so-called 'honest men' driven into opposition over the Darien issue. In 1700 he subscribed the petition for the summoning of parliament and later presented the Haddingtonshire remonstrance on Caledonia. Nominated by the opposition to the committees of trade in 1700-1, he soon reverted to the Court, accepting the proposal for an address rather than an act of parliament over Caledonia. Morison also remained with the 'rump' of courtiers in 1702 and even followed Queensberry's line on the succession in 1704, when the Duke, finding himself temporarily out of office, was engaged in undermining the 'New Party' experiment. Morison was rewarded, following Queensberry's return to power, with a place on the union*

*commission of 1706 (which was eventually worth £500 Scots) and with elevation to the Scottish privy council in May 1707. In a contemporary squib he was satirized as supporter of the Union, the humour turning upon his physical 'bulk' and alleged stupidity. (Reference: David Wilkinson, published online in the History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715, D Hayton, E Cruikshanks and S Handley (eds), 2002).*

## **The Downfall of Sir William Morrison**

Sonia Baker (2000) has written a most detailed account of the history of Prestongrange, and makes this summary of Sir William Morrison:

*There is little doubt that William was a man who would exploit any opportunity to his advantage: he is recorded as being perhaps hesitant to pay his dues relating to the coal road access across the neighbouring Pinkie lands. And with about 63% of his non-agricultural income being derived from salt, Morison was certainly guilty of by-passing the laws on salt duty, being twice found guilty between 1719 and 1721. Evidently the penalties charged – £430 Scots – were minimal compared with the profits gained. However, while Green puts his demise down to the fact that in London, William Morison unfortunately took to gambling and lost his money, with the result that he became moody and strange and he indeed owed an enormous amount of money to Colonel Charteris – a noted gambler – there was more to William Morison's downfall than just gambling. One of Alexander Morison's debts, relating to money borrowed by him from Nisbet of Dirleton, in 1691, was only resolved in William Morison's favour in 1703. A very complex case developed alongside this one, this time between William Morison and Nisbet of Dirleton, which appears to have lasted from the 1690s through to 1733; it concerned monies gifted to William Morison's sister, Joan, who had married into the Nisbet of Dirleton family and, in the process acquired a step- daughter. This lady, Lady Scott, because of the law of entail, could not inherit her father's estate, and felt that the heir of entail – who had agreed to give the bond to Joan Morison – had no right to do so. In spite of numerous discharges of the bond, and deaths of Lady Scott, the original pursuer, the case continued being heard in court, appealed against, and returning to court, until 1733, when the records, though not the case, end.*

*By the second decade of the eighteenth century, a further agenda appears to this case, when letters are being sent, by the Nisbet faction, to various members of the aristocracy appealing for their support. They were successful in getting the Duke of Roxburghe, Lord Belhaven and, through the last, the Duke of Argyl and Lord Islay on their side against Morison. William Scot's comment is also revealing about the way that the Anglophile, post-Union parliament operated all the entreat in my power is useless against the English... the lawiers in the house determines it seldom or never coming to a vote. PS as [to] my own opinion, I must indeed say that*

*Prestongrange will reverse the decree, it having to my judgement little foundation in law.*

*The same document also records a letter from Robert Dundas, solicitor, who agreed to act for Nisbet, even though he had already been approached by Morison to act on his behalf. It looks rather as if the Scottish establishment were acting as a unit to condemn someone who perhaps was not actually, in this instance at least, guilty.*

*Nevertheless, other surviving documents do suggest that William Morison was living beyond his means. Perhaps he was a man who lived on the edge of what was legal, as his affairs on death proved to be a nightmare to sort out. Important documents that would have clarified whether his (sizeable) debts to the family of Colonel Charteris had been discharged, were noticeably absent. Because of the state of his affairs on his death, various official papers were drawn up relating to the estate, providing later readers with almost as many questions as answers.*

*The Minutes for the Creditors of Prestongrange show that, by 1716, Morison had two bonds from Colonel Charteris, totalling £14,305 sterling, with no evidence of them being discharged. It is well known that Prestongrange had no funds to pay such a sum, but out of the rents of his estate here in Scotland so that if either Prestongrange or his factors had applied so considerable part of the rents towards payments of these 2 debts it is incredible but that proper documents of such payments would have been taken.*

*It cannot be alleged that Prestongrange's writings have been abstracted or embezzled, and as no documents are produced, or any the least evidence offered to instruct payment of so considerable sum other than this null-doquet subjoined to the Act which, if genuine, appears to have been instituted in the view of a sale of lands which never took effect.*

*It is indeed possible that Prestongrange would have another duplicate, what became of that the creditors cannot tell. There would have been repeated diligences for recovery [in] Prestongrange's writings, but considering in what great confusion his affairs were, how negligent he was, and yet his residence was very uncertain, sometimes at Edinburgh, sometimes in the country, very frequently in London, there can scarce be any doubt that many of his writings have been mislaid or lost which probablie will never be recovered.*

*Acting as a curator for Francis Charteris of Ampsfield (Colonel Charteris' grandson) was the Lord Justice Clerk, Andrew Fletcher of Miltown, who managed to locate copies of the bonds in the Charteris papers. He also located a further bond for £1746 19 shillings 5 pence sterling dated 26.5.1726, and another for £820 dated 22.6.1722.*



*Other documents indicate that the rot did not stop there: Morison appeared to request assistance over a loan for £15,125,69 and an appraisal of the debts due to the creditors was, by the 1740s, given at £24,472 5 shillings 8 pence, while the estate was valued at around £26,000.70". (Sonia Baker, 2000, pp 19-21).*

**Note:**

*"Morison - William - Sone of Wm. Morison of Prestongrange to his Mother Janet Rothead or Morison of Craigleith who died - September 1713 - Heir Special in Craig of Innerleith, Morsmelling, Guilsknow etc. - Edinburghshire - dated 1st April 1715". (Index to the Services of Heirs in Scotland 1700-1799). William gained the lands of Craigleith in 1730.*

William Morrison is identified as the "younger of Prestongrange" as inheriting the lands and estate of Craigleith on 21 July 1730, registered on 14th February 1731 (*An Accurate Alphabetical Index of the Registered Entails in Scotland*, 1884, p 95).

*"Henrietta [Dallas, daughter of James Dallas of St Martins], served one of the heirs portioners of her father, 28th May 1746. She married (1) William Morrison of Craigleith, and (2), on 10th November 1763, George Dallas, merchant, London. William Morrison of Craigleith, son of William Morrison of Prestongrange, had three sisters, (1) Katherine, wife of Wm. Lord Strathnower, eldest son of the 15th Earl of Sutherland, (2) Helen, wife of John, 2nd Earl of Glasgow, and (3) Jean, wife of John, 5th Viscount Arbuthnott, who were appointed heirs portioners of his estate, showing he left no issue. Under their post-nuptial contract of marriage, dated 31st July 1730, and only registered 15th December 1749, Wm. Morrison, younger, of Prestongrange provided her with a yearly income of 1400 marks in the event of no issue. One of the witnesses to the deed was Mn. Boyle of Shewalton, brother to the Earl of Glasgow. The Trustees were John, Lor Boyle, and Robert Dundas of Arniston". (Reference: Dallas family history p 349).*

Note also that in 1687 George Morrison of Pitfour married Margaret Dallas (daughter of George Dallas WS of St Martins and Margaret Abercromby. George Dallas's grandson James had by his second marriage to Barbara Cockburn a daughter Henrietta Dallas who married William Morrison, son of William Morrison and Janet Rocheid. Thus James, a nephew of George Morrison of Pitfour was the father in law of William Morrison of Craigleith).

*Margaret Dallas, bp. 16th November 1662, m. (1) 29th March 1687, George Morison of Pitfourie, (2) R. Murray of Pulrossie before 1696. (Ref. Dallas family history p336)*

George Morrison of Pitfour married Margaret Dallas 29/3/1687 (d of George Dallas of St Martins and Margaret Abercrombie). The Pitfour line is detailed under the Morrisons of Pitfour.

John, fifth Viscount Arbuthnott. He married Jean, second daughter of William Morrison of Prestongrange, and died s.p., 8th May, 1756.

The Hon John Arbuthnot, 5th Viscount of Arbuthnot. Known as "the Good Lord". Dsp 8 May 1756. Married Jean Morrison, daughter of William Morrison of Preston Grange (sister of both Helen, Countess of Glasgow and Catherine, Lady Strathnaver)

**Note:**

Regarding the Arbuthnot family:

*THIS Family hath been of great Antiquity in the Shire of Kincardin, and long possessed of the Barony of Arbuthnet there. The Name hath been originally written Aberbothenoth, Duncan de Aberbothenoth is Witness in a Grant by King Alexander II. to the Abbacy of Aberbroth, anno 1242. In the Time of Alexander III. Hugh de Aberbothenoth, gave in pure alms to the Monks of Aberbroth the Patronage of the Church of Garvoch pro salute animae suae, Anno Dom. 1282 anchor, and Philip de Aberbothenoth Dominus ejusdem, was a Benefactor to the Church of Aberdeen, in anno 1367 in the Time of King David II. He married Margaret Daughter of Sir James Douglafs of Dalkeith anchor, from whom by lineal Succession, was Sir Robert Arbuthnet of that Ilk, who manifesting his Loyalty to K. Charles I. was by that Monarch created Viscount of Arbuthnet 16 November, 1641. He married first Marion Daughter to David first Earl of Southesk, by whom he had Robert his Son and Heir, and by Margaret his second Wife, Daughter of Simon Lord Lovat he likewise had Issue, and dying anno 1659, was succeeded by Robert his Son and Heir, who married Mary Daughter of William Earl Marishal, by whom he had Robert, who succeeded him in his Estate and Honour; also by Katharine his second Wife, Daughter of John Gordon of Pitlurg, he had Issue John Arbuthnet of Fordon, Alexander, who changed his Surname to Maitland, by his Marriage with the Heretrix of Pitrichie, he's now one of the Barons of Her Majesty's Exchequer [page 30] in Scotland, 3d Thomas; also several Daughters. This Lord dying anno 1684, was succeeded by Robert his Son, who departed this Life in 1692, leaving Issue by Anne his Wife, Daughter of George Earl of Sutherland, Robert his Son and Heir, who died unmarried anno 1710, and John the present Viscount of Arbuthnet who married Jean Daughter of William Morison of Prestongrange.*

*(THE PEERAGE OF SCOTLAND: Containing an Historical and Genealogical ACCOUNT OF THE NOBILITY of that Kingdom.*

*Collected from the Publick Records of the NATION, the Charters and other Writings of the NOBILITY, and from the most approved Histories.*

*By GEORGE CRAWFURD, Esq*

*EDINBURGH: Printed for the AUTHOR: Sold by George Stewart, at the Book and Angel in the Parliament-Clofe. 1716, pp 29-30.)*

*John Lord Boyle is married with Helen, Daughter of William Morison of Prestoungrange.*

There is a reference to Helen Morrison of Prestongrange being married to John Boyle, 2nd Earl of Glasgow. This is William's daughter Helen (1688) (Reference: [www.mydunlap.net/Alexander%20Dunlap.html](http://www.mydunlap.net/Alexander%20Dunlap.html)).

William Nisbet of Craigintinnie and Dirleton. (For marriages and children see Dirleton pedigree.) *"Infeft in the remaining eight oxengates of the lands of Restalrig, described as the south-east and middle rooms of Restalrig, on 24th October 1712. He executed an entail of the estate of Restalrig on 5th September 1722 to David Nisbet, son of his second marriage with Mrs Jean Bennet, daughter of Mr Robert Bennet, dean of the faculty of advocates, whom failing, to Walter Nisbet (see No. VI.), the second son of his first marriage with a niece of dame Jean Morison, the third wife of sir John Nisbet, first of Dirleton, whom failing, to Mrs Christian Nisbet, his eldest daughter, and Sir John Scott of Ancrum, her husband. He was succeeded by his son Walter"*.

The niece of Jean Morrison referred to above is her sister Helen's daughter (Helen Morrison and John Riddell), Christian, who married Sir Henry Nisbet of Dean.

### **The end of the Prestongrange Morrisons**

From all the accounts available the Morrison "Barony of Prestongrange" came to an end seven years after the death of Sir William Morrison. The forced sale of Prestongrange explains why Sir William's son William was unable to become the heir to Prestongrange. Perhaps he could see the writing on the wall in so far as the protracted legal action against his father had the potential to ruin him as well as the estate. Whatever the reasons may have been, all the emphasis for the eventual demise of the Morrisons of Prestongrange appears to fall squarely on Sir William Morrison.

Sir William Morrison, the eldest son of Sir Alexander Morrison, whose financial difficulties are detailed above, died overseas in 1739. Murray (1966, p 4) claims when "William Morrison died in 1739" he was "... succeeded by his son Alexander who sold Prestongrange to an Edinburgh advocate, William Grant...". This is factually incorrect as Alexander died in 1703. It was not William's son who sold Prestongrange in 1746, rather it was William Grant who legislated for its sale as a Charter of Vendition to himself. Thus the Scottish families of the Morrisons of Dairsie and Prestongrange finally came to an end when "Grant bought the Baronies of Prestongrange and Dolphinstone on 19 May, 1745" (Baker, 2000, p 24).

The Norman family, de Quincy, had the estate of Prestongrange until they supported the losing side in the run-up to Bannockburn. It then went to the Abbey of Newbattle and, in turn, to the families of Kerr, Morrison and Grant.



**Prestongrange House today, now used as a clubhouse for the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club**

## **The Barony of Prestongrange**

Hugh Peskett gives the following historical account of the Barony of Prestongrange:

*"2.1. Prestongrange was part of the lands of Newbattle Abbey and within the Abbey's Barony of Newbattle. For example a charter of James V in 1526 granted the Abbot licence to build a harbour to protect from storms the fishers super litus maris infra terras de Prestoun-grange in baronia de Newbotle, and on suppression of that Abbey the lands were granted to Mark Kerr (who sometimes used the designation "of Prestongrange") by Charter under the Great Seal 1587; in 1591 King James VI ratified a charter ..de terris de Prestoungrange cum manerie et villa ... and other lands . . . omnes dictas terras &c erigendo in liberam baronial de Prestoungrange . . . and incorporated this into the lordship of Newbattle, at the same time creating Mark Kerr a lord of Parliament as Lord Newbattle.*

*2.2. In 1606 Lord Newbattle was created Earl of Lothian, and in 1620 his son Robert 2nd Earl of Lothian had a Charter of novodamus which incorporated the lands and barony of Prestongrange into the lordship of Newbattle, with a further charter incorporating other lands into the lordship in 1621. He then in 1622 disponded the lands and Barony of Prestongrange, under reversion, to Alexander Morison, Advocate, who had a Charter pass the Great Seal with the lands and Barony of Newbattle in Special Warrantice, the Earl having made provision for his countess, whose marriage contract had been secured on Prestongrange. Alexander Morison had this in security for 40,000 merks advanced under a contract dated 24 December 1622, registered in the Books of Council and Session 23 July 1623.*

*2.3. Robert 2nd Earl of Lothian renounced the reversion 1 August 1623 (Alexander Morison obtained a Decreet of Declarator that the right of reversion was void 29 November 1628), and Alexander Morison had a*

*Charter of novodamus pass the Great Seal 29 August 1622 of tetras et baroniam de Prestoungrange ... incorporated de novo into the liberam baroniam de Prestoungrange, with the lands and barony of Newbattle (likewise incorporated de novo) in special warrandice. This Charter of novodamus in favour of Alexander Morison, Advocate, is for present purposes the root of title of the Barony of Prestongrange.*

*2.4. Alexander Morison of Prestongrange was served heir to Alexander Morison of Prestongrange unius senatorem supremi senatus, his father, 3 January 1632, and William Morison of Prestongrange was served heir to Sir Alexander Morison of Prestongrange, his father, 31 December 1684.*

*2.5. Thereafter the Barony of Prestongrange came into common ownership with the Barony of Dolphinston, and both were contained in a Charter of Vendition in favour of William Grant, 1746". (The Barony of Prestongrange, Hugh Peskett, 1997, pp 3-4)*

Murray, Apted and Hodkinson (on line) claim that when William died in 1739 he was succeeded by his son Alexander who sold Prestongrange to William Grant in 1746. William did have an eldest son Alexander, however, there do not appear to be any records regarding his entitlement to Prestongrange, and Alexander died in 1703. However, his younger brother William is named in the disposal of Prestongrange as being the only lawful heir:

*"... the Lords of Council and Session upon the Thirtieth day of July One thousand seven hundred and forty five years In a process of Ranking and Sale at the Instance of John Viscount of Arbuthnot Against the said William Morison Elder of Prestongrange & his whole Creditors therein mentioned and all others having or pretending to have Interest and also after the decease of the said William Morison Elder Against William Morison younger of Prestongrange his only lawfull son and apparent heir Duely and Lawfully ADJUDGED DECERNED AND DECLARED to pertain and belong to the said William Grant Esqr (in the said Decreet designed Mr William Grant Advocate) and his heirs and assignys heretably and irredeemably as the highest offerer and lawfull purchaser of the same upon his paying or consigning the Sum of One hundred and twenty four thousand One hundred pounds Scots money ..." (SRO: SIG1/70/2, quoted by Peskett, 1997, p 8)*

### **George Morrison of "Little Chalfield" or not?**

According to all the accumulated historical references in this paper, the Morrison of Prestongrange lineage finally ends with George Morrison of "Little Chalfield, Wiltshire". The sobriquet "Little Chalfield" appears somewhat odd with what little we know of George. According to Bedwell (1920) the information about "Little Chalfield" and his reputed death in Kent in 1788 was supplied by other contributors to the *Scottish History Review* of (1919, Vol 17 p 103). There is no official record of a death date and place, neither are there any records to substantiate the sobriquet "Little Chalfield". The "other contributors" referred to include Professor R K Hannay, George Neilson, Francis

Steuart (sic), Hon Robert Boyle, Miss Haldane, David Baird Smith and J Bulloch.

George Morrison is described as being elected to the Scottish Middle Templars: "1732-3 9 Jan. George Morison, only son (by his wife Aminta) of William M. of Preston Grange, North Britain. Of Little Chalfield, co. Wilts, and thereafter of Sundridge, Kent. Died 1788" (Bedwell, p 105). George is reported in the *Commissariat Record of Edinburgh 1701-1800* as having a will dated 26 August 1791 (Register of Testaments. Third Section-1701-1800, List of Burials excerpted from Register in possession of the Registrar of the Canongate).

There are historical records verifying George found in the Birth and Christening records such as Saint Mary-St Marylebone Road, St Marylebone, London, England identifying George born on 15 May and Christened on 17 August 1718, parents William and Araminta (London, England, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812).

*Name: Geo Morrison*

*Gender: Male*

*Christening Date: 17 Aug 1718*

*Christening Place: SAINT MARY-ST MARYLEBONE ROAD,ST*

*MARYLEBONE,LONDON,ENGLAND Father's Name: Wm Morrison*

*Mother's Name: Araminta*

"*England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975*," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:J3C3-XBV>; accessed 7 February 2016), Araminta in entry for Geo Morrison, 17 Aug 1718; citing SAINT MARY-ST MARYLEBONE ROAD,ST MARYLEBONE,LONDON,ENGLAND, reference; FHL microfilm 580,904, 580,905.

An alternative date is also given for the Baptism of George in the *Ancestry.com* files (FHL Film Number 918606): George, male, Birth Date 15 May 1718, Baptism Date 15 June 1718, Baptism Place Saint Anne Soho, Westminster, London, Household Members George Morison, Aremintha, William Morison.

George Morrison is mentioned in the *Commissariat of Edinburgh* (Grant, 1899) as follows: "*Morrison, George, sometime of the Middle Temple, London, son of William M., sometime of Prestongrange 26 Aug. 1791*".

This therefore suggests William was married to Araminta before he married Henrietta Dallas in 1730. The Dallas history states that William and Henrietta "had no issue".

The Scottish Middle Templars were a recognised society of eminent Legal scholars given status by King James: "*In 1608 King James granted a patent, dated August 13th, to the Inner and Middle Temples, which is the only formal document concerning the relations between the Crown and the Inns. In it they are said to have been 'for a long time dedicated to the use of the students and professors of the law, to which, as to the best seminaries of learning and*

*education, very many young men, eminent for rank of family and their endowments of mind and body, have daily resorted from all parts of this realm, and from which many men in our own times, as well as in the times of our progenitors, have by reason of their very great merits been advanced to discharge the public and arduous functions as well of the State as of Justice, in which they have exhibited great examples of prudence and integrity, to the no small honour of the said profession and adornment of this realm and good of the whole Commonwealth". (Bedwell, p101)*

The will of George Morrison is as follows:

*1791 Morison, George (reference CC8/8/128 Edinburgh Commissary Court)*

*26 Aug 1791 Test. Dative Geo Morison Esq.*

*The Testament Dative and Inventory of debt and sum of money which was debited and resting owing to Umquill George Morison Esquire sometime of the Middle Temple London son of William Morison sometime of Prestongrange at the time of his descense which George Morison died upon the ...day of ... seventeen hundred and ... years Faithfully Made and Given up by Lady Helen Sutherland or Colquhoun and Lady Helen Sutherland otherwise Sinclair niece of the said umquill George Morison as being only surviving children of William Lord Strathnaver by Katherine Morison Lady Strathnaver his spouse who was sister [Aunt] of the said umquill George Morison. As also given up by the hon, Patrick Boyle of Smeaton and Lady Boyle otherwise Douglas his sister nephew and niece of the said defunct as being surviving children of John Earl of Glasgow by Helen Morison Countess of Glasgow his spouse who was also sister [Aunt] of the said umquill George Morison. Which Lady Helen Sutherland or Colquhoun, Lady Janet Sutherland or Sinclair, Patrick Boyle and Lady Helen Boyle otherwise Douglas are only executors dative qua nearest in him decerned to the said umquill George Morison their uncle and that by decret of the Commissaries of Edinburgh as the same dated the tenth day of November seventeen hundred and ninety years in itself more fully bears.*

*Follows the Inventory*

*In the first the said umquill George Morison had addebted and resting owing to him at the time of his decease the sum of Fifty pounds Sterling being part of the balance due to him on a Bond dated the twentieth day of July seventeen hundred and forty two for the sum of two thousand one hundred pounds Sterling and interest due thereon granted by William then Earl of Sutherland and for the contents of which Bond the said umquill George Morison and Mr John Hamilton writer to the Signet as his attorney on the eighth day of December seventeen hundred and fifty two obtained decret of the Lords of Council and Session against William then Earl of Sutherland the son and heir of Earl William the granter and father of Elizabeth present countess of Sutherland.*

*Extending the said sum of Fifty Pounds Sterling in Scots money to six hundred pounds.*

*Summary of the Inventory*

*Master Andrew Balfour of the Cautioner James Horn Writer to the Signet - dated twenty sixth day of August seventeen hundred and ninety one years.*

## **Who were the George Morrisons of Prestongrange?**

Within the families associated with Prestongrange and Dairsie the name George Morrison can be found, but there also appear to be many other references that associate the name with Prestongrange without identifying what the connection is. These George Morrisons cannot be readily identified as belonging to any particular family. For example, there are two historical documentary references to a "Sir George Morrison of Prestongrange", one in 1654 and one in 1667. Keep in mind Sir George Morrison of Dairsie gained the "Dairsie" title after he bought the property in 1646 which he later sold in 1692 to pay off some of his debt.

Firstly, there is a reference in "*An Ordinance of Pardon and Grace to the People of Scotland [12 April 1654]*" in which Sir George Morrison of Prestongrange [as distinct from Dairsie] has to pay Two Thousand Pounds to the Deputy Treasurer in Leith. There is a further reference to George Morrison of Prestongrange in the Parliamentary Register of Edinburgh on 27 April 1689 in the Act for Raising Four Months' Supply. It had become fashionable in Scotland at this time to "style" oneself according to the region where you held property. However, the historical documents didn't always get this correct and family names could become ascribed to property no matter who in reality held it. This is the case with Sir George Morrison, correctly styled "Dairsie" rather than "Prestongrange". It is also curious to note Sir John Morrison "of Dairsie" died in 1625, 21 years before Sir George bought Dairsie in 1646. Authors who have styled him Sir John "of Dairsie" are inaccurate.

References to "George" can be found in the Scottish records:

*1. An Ordinance of Pardon and Grace to the People of Scotland.*

*[12 April 1654]*

*His Highness the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the Dominions thereunto belonging, being desirous that the Mercies which it hath pleased God to give to this Nation, by the Successes of their Forces in the late War in Scotland, should be improved for the good and advantage of both Nations, and the People of Scotland made equal sharers with those of England in the present Settlement of Peace, Liberty and Property, with all other Priviledges of a Free People, Doth Ordain and Declare, and be it Ordained and Declarced by his Highness the Lord Protector, with the Consent of his Council, That all persons of the*



*Scotch Nation, of what degree or quality soever they or any of them are (except the persons hereafter in this Ordinance particularly excepted) shall be, and are hereby, and from and after the first day of May in the year, One thousand six hundred fifty four, freed, acquitted and discharged from all Forfeitures, Pains, Penalties, Mulcts, corporal or pecuniary, Restraints, Imprisonment or Imprisonments, Punishment or Punishments whatsoever (other then is hereafter in this Ordinance expressed) for any matter or thing by them or any of them, committed or done by Sea or Land, in relation to the late War, or any preceeding Wars between the two Nations; And that for the matters aforesaid, there shall be from and after the said First day of May aforesaid, no Sequestration, Confiscation, Fine, Penalty, Forfeiture or Punishment, imposed or continued upon them or any of them, (otherwise then as is hereafter in this Ordinance expressed) but the same shall be put in perpetual Oblivion.....sterling. Sir Patrick Cockborne of Clarkington, two thousand pounds sterling. **Sir George Morison of Preston-Grange, two thousand pounds sterling.** Murrey, Laird of Stanhop, son to Sir David Murrey deceased, two thousand pounds sterling. All and every which sum and sums of money, shall be paid unto George Bilton, Deputy Treasurer at Leith; one moyety thereof, on or by the second day of August, One thousand six hundred fifty four; and the other moyety, on or by the second day of December, then next ensuing; and in default of such payment, all and every the real and personal estate of every person and persons so making default, shall from thenceforth be absolutely confiscate; and the Commissioners for Sequestrations are hereby empowered to seize the same accordingly.*

Secondly, there is a further reference to George Morrison of Prestongrange (Parliamentary Register of Edinburgh on 27 April 1689) in the Act for Raising Four Months' Supply from 1667.

2. Act for raising 4 months supply, 1667. William II and Mary II:  
Translation

1689, 14 March, Edinburgh, Convention Parliamentary Register, Edinburgh 27 April 1689, Legislation Act for raising four months' supply.

*Forasmuch as the estates of this kingdom finding it necessary, as well for the security of the Protestant religion as for the common safety and defence of the kingdom against foreign invasions and intestine insurrections, that a competent number of forces be raised and kept up within the same, they have ordained certain troops of horse to be levied from the several shires and, upon the voluntary offers of sundry noblemen and gentlemen, have given warrant for levying some regiments of foot and troops of horse and dragoons, and seeing these forces cannot be kept up and maintained without a considerable charge and expense, and the cess imposed by all former acts being now extinct and not due in time coming; therefore the said estates in this juncture do ordain the sum of £288,000 Scots to be raised and uplifted from the shires and burghs of this kingdom at the term of Whitsunday [May/June] next, according to the proportions imposed upon each shire and burgh by the act of convention of estates in the year 1667.*

*And for the effectual and speedy bringing in of the said imposition the estates do nominate and appoint the persons after-named to be commissioners within the respective shires, for ordering and uplifting of the same, as follows:*

For the Shire of Haddington.....*George Morrison of Prestongrange...*

*and later in the same act*

For the Sheriffdom of Aberdeen...*George Morrison of Pitfour...* (see the Pitfour Morrisons below)

### **Factual Errors made in some Historical References**

The reason for noting the last two references to the George Morrison of Prestongrange and George Morrison Pitfour relates to a reference found in The Statistical Account, Additions to Volume XVII, No. VI. Page 61 Parish of Prestonpans by W. Wemyss (p 252), and a more recent work titled *Industrial Ownership and Relations at Prestongrange* by Alan Burnett.

Examining the writings of Wemyss, he makes three errors when he asserts *"The estate of Prestongrange, part of the Barony of Preston, was acquired early in the 17th century by Mr George Morrison, whose father had the lands of Troup in Banffshire, and of Pitfour in Aberdeenshire, as his descendants have had the estate of Bognie in Banffshire, which anciently was called Fren draught, and belonged to Chancellor Crichton as far back as James II.'s reign."* (p 252, General Appendix Vol xvii)

1. Firstly, part of the Prestongrange lands were purchased in 1609 by John Morrison, and then later his son Alexander (who became Lord Alexander) who took possession of all of Prestongrange in 1622, and in turn passed the land to his son Alexander who was granted the title "Sir Alexander of Prestongrange" who in turn passed Prestongrange to his son "Sir William Morrison".

2. Secondly, the only lands that have been found in the records for George Morrison was the acquisition of Dairsie in 1646. To accept Wemyss's account then it would have to have been Sir John Morrison who had the lands of Troup and Pitfour who then passed them on to his son George who in turn passed them on to his sons George and William. However this conflicts with other references that state that George Morrison of Pitfour inherited the lands from his father George Morrison of Barak (son of William Morrison, burgess of Aberdeen), and that he in turn passed them to his son William. There are no records that support Wemyss' claims, and it would appear that the Pitfour Morrisons have no direct family relationship to the Prestongrange Morrisons apart from the later relationship by marriage between William Morrison the younger who married Henrietta Dallas (daughter of James Dallas, grandson of George Morrison of Pitfour).

3. Finally, the assertion by Wemyss regarding the purchase of Prestongrange is at odds with earlier writings and official records about the history of Prestongrange. References quoted above show that John Morrison purchased part of Prestongrange from the debt ridden Kerr family in 1609. Later court documents state full ownership was given to Alexander Morrison in 1622 from the "*Charter of novodamus in favour of Alexander Morrison, Advocate, is for present purposes the root of title of the Barony of Prestongrange*". There is no mention of any George Morrison owning Prestongrange. The only George Morrison recorded is the son of Sir John Morrison, and his son George. Wemyss could have been confused, thinking Sir John and John Morrison (Baillie of Edinburgh) were the same person, wherein in fact they were father and grandson. However, neither of these John Morrisons had any land ownership in Troup or Pitfour.

Based on the evidence of records that clearly show Sir Alexander gained title to Prestongrange in 1622 brings into question Wemyss' assertion about George's father owning Troup in Banffshire and Pitfour in Aberdeenshire, and there being a family connection between Bognie and Prestongrange. The only George Morrison that fits this timeframe is Sir George Morrison of Dairsie who was born about 1617, son of Sir John Morrison. The only record connecting Edinburgh and Aberdeen are records of Henry Morrison and Sir John Morrison being Burgesses both in Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The records of Aberdeen Baillies states Henry Morrison, "at one time bailie of Edinburgh" also becoming a bailie in Aberdeen in 1622 (The Miscellany of the New Spalding Club Vol 1). This was most probably Henry (1572) who married Katherine Dick as the Dick family were also prominent in this region. Henry's cousin Sir John Morrison is also listed in the Aberdeen Burgh records at the same time, but there is no description given as to why they both were in Aberdeen.

To add further information about George Morrison of Pitfour (discussed more fully later), he was the son of William Morrison, a burghess of Aberdeen. This George gained the designation when he bought the Pitfour estate in Aberdeenshire. One of his sons, William, later sold the estate some time early in the 1700s. These dates do not line up with the Dairsie Morrisons suggested above, so this rules them out.

There is a Will in the Scottish Records Office for "Morisone George 12/12/1693 Mr, of Pitfour, Advocate". The Edinburgh Marriage Register 1595-1700 (EMR) records Mr George Morison of Pitfour marrying Margaret Dollas [Dallas] on 29 March 1687. According to records of the Scots Peerage by Sir James Balfour Paul, George Morrison (styled George Morrison of Barak) married Janet Gordon on 8 November 1659 who had previously been married to Sir Robert Innes of Balvenie (Sir James Balfour Paul (1904), volume I, p 87). George of Barak was the father of George of Pitfour.

In addition to the inaccurate work of Wemyss discussed above, a more recent work (which appears to be based on Wemyss) also contains numerous factual errors. In his *Industrial Ownership and Relations at Prestongrange*, Alan Burnett repeats the same errors analysed above.

From pp 8-9, Burnett writes incorrectly that:

*"Around the same time an extensive programme of restructuring of landholding was being undertaken by the crown. This process resulted in the creation of the Barony of Prestongrange in 1609 which seems to have been accomplished by severing the lands of Preston from its ancient bond to Tranent, and then dividing it in two. The new lands may have initially been named East and West Preston, but became known as Preston and Prestongrange respectively. In 1617, the barony of Preston was granted by charter to Sir John Hamilton, and it included the village of Preston and town of Prestonpans, while the new baronetcy of Prestongrange had already been acquired by one Sir George Morison. [This is incorrect, John Morrison originally bought a portion of Prestongrange from Robert Ker and Lord Alexander Morrison later consolidated the entire title as documented above]*

*This first Baron of Prestongrange [At the time there were no "Barons" in the heraldic sense of Prestongrange, and there is nothing to connect Bognie and Prestongrange, this information is simply wrong] came from the north-eastern corner of Scotland. His father held the lands of Troup in Banffshire and Pitfour in Aberdeenshire. Comparatively little is known about George Morison himself, as indeed is the case with the subsequent Morisons of Prestongrange. It seems that they continued, however sporadically, to work the coal at Prestongrange. They also took over Achesons Haven, renaming it Morisons Haven, and continued trading through that port. [There are better and more accurate accounts available through other Prestongrange publications including Aitken (2000), Baker (2000) and Prestoungrange (2009)]*

*George Morison [incorrect, George Morrison had nothing to do with the ownership of Prestongrange, this should read 'Alexander'] was succeeded by his son, Alexander. The Prestongrange lairds were the patrons of the parish of Prestonpans and records show ministers being presented with office by Sir Alexander in 1638 and 1647. In 1682 the next [no, it was still the same Sir Alexander] Sir Alexander Morison of Prestongrange was fined 900 merks for failing to prevent a riot from occurring when the local schoolmaster took the pulpit under the direction of the diocesan Bishop. The minister, James Buchan, had been deprived of his office for his involvement in the religious controversies of the time. Alexander could count himself lucky – his neighbour Sir William Hamilton of Preston had been fined 1800 merks "for looking on and laughing".*

*Around 1710 the parish minister, the Rev. Robert Horsburgh, complained that his church was unsafe because of the extent of the coal "wastes" beneath. For some months his congregation was obliged to meet in a barn at Preston. Repairs were eventually executed after long litigation. Meanwhile, in 1711, Sir James Morison [incorrect, it was Sir William Morrison] of Prestongrange, who had recently been involved in a dispute over the rights to the Prestongrange Coal Road access, married his*

*daughter [Jean Morrison] to John 5th Viscount Arbuthnott, later a Jacobite who supported Prince Charles in the '45 Rising.*

*The estate passed out of the hands of the Morison dynasty and, in 1746, was purchased by William Grant, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, at a judicial sale. William was one of three sons and five daughters of Sir Francis Grant of Cullen, a judge and political writer" (Burnett, pp 8-9).*

In the *History of the County of Fife* (1840, p 262) Leighton incorrectly states that " *Sir George Morrison married Agnes, daughter of Robert 6th lord Boyd; and his successor Sir John Morrison married Nicholas daughter of Sir George Bruce of Carnock ancestor of the Earls of Elgin*". Sir George was the son of Sir John who died in 1625, not as the other way around as Leighton asserts. Sir George had a son named John who was buried in the Morrison Tomb at Greyfriars in 1688. There is no record to indicate John had a title like his father and grandfather.

### **George Morrison's cited as parents in the Birth OPR for Edinburgh**

George Morrison and Helen Brock (Jonet 9/10/1636, Barthomew 5/5/1639, Johnne 27/9/1640, Marione 27/8/1643, James, 29/10/1644). George, weaver married Helen 20/8/1635 OPR Edinburgh marriages.

George Morrison and Marjorie Vautrolier (David 7/10/1651, Chrystian 30/4/1654, Eupham 17/8/1656)

George Morrison and Jonet Home (Lues 26/8/1640). George, merchant, married Jonet 9/7/1640 OPR Edinburgh marriages.

George Morrison and Marjorie Waterlile (Margaret 19/12/1648)

George Morrison and Helen Milne (Thomas 10/3/1639, Adam 21/4/1641, Alexander 16/2/1643, William 26/3/1645). George, a flesher, married Helen 8/13/1637 OPR Edinburgh marriages.

George Morrison and Eupham Scott (Eupham 27/3/1653, Agnes 13/3/1655, Margaret 28/2/1658, Robert 19/1/1662, Elsbeth 5/3/1665). George, writer, married Eupham 29/7/1652.

George Morrison and Elizabeth Gordon (Eupham 17/10/1697, Elizabeth 10/9/1704, William 2/11/1705, George 31/12/1707, Elizabeth 18/12/1709, Alexander 18/10/1711)

George Morrison and Margaret Neilson (James 18/1/1709)

### **Parents of a son named George Morrison in the Birth OPR for Edinburgh**

Andrew Morrison and Katherine Brough (George, 22/11/1612)

Adam Morrison and Janet Campbell (George, 14/3/1614)

George Morrison and Elizabeth Gordon (George, 31/12/1707)

Richard Morrison and Elizabeth Henderson (George, 8/4/1709)

Alexander Morrison and Helen Craw (George, 31/10/1714)

John Morrison and Margaret Burnett (George, 4/12/1726)

### **Marriages of George Morrison in OPR Edinburgh not previously mentioned**

George Morrison and Marion Young (24/6/1675)

### **Morrison Burials in Edinburgh**

Isaac Morrison's son Sir John Morrison died in 1625 and the family had a tomb built at Greyfriars. He is one of a number of Morrisons buried in the Morrison Tomb at Greyfriars. There is also monument which bears the following inscription:

*John Morison the father, and Isaac the sone, are both buried in this tomb. Both rich in wealth, and honours of the town, With issue: to their glory and renown. In wisdom great, they spent their passing days, Holy at death, to their immortal praise. Son, youth and bailie twice, went off the stage; The father full of honours and of age.*

*Here lyeth Harie Morrison, youngest son to John Morison; he was bailie of this burgh; dies the 1 August 1623, the 39 year of his age.*

Parallel with that of Harie Moreson southwards:

*Here also lyeth Sir John Morrison Knight, oye [grandchild] to the said John, and son to the said Isaac. He died the 29 year of his age, the 6 July 1625.*

At the foot southward, on a long stone:

Hic jacet honorabilis vir Magister Alexander Moreson de Prestongrange, unus Senatorum supremi senatus qui obiit 20 Septemb. Anno Dom. 1631. aetatis suae 52.

*Here lyes an honourable man, Mr Alexander Moreson of Prestoungrange, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, who died as above.*

The Morrison Tomb at Greyfriars Cemetery lists a number of Morrison's buried in the Tomb (Greyfriars Burying-ground, Edinburgh, pp 462-463):

*David, a child of Dairsie, 28 Feb 1697*

*John, of Dairsie, 1 March 1688*

*David, writer, a child, 31 May 1688*

*David, writer, a child, 11 Sept 1689*

*David, writer, a child, 13 Mar 1695*

*David, writer, 2 March 1700*

*David, writer, a child, warrant, 27 Dec 1700*

*George, writer, a child, 13 Dec 1694*

*George, writer, a child, 21 Jan 1700*

*Helen, Indweller, 7 Nov 1694*

*Hugh, saddler, a child, 7 Feb 1693*

*Hugh, saddler, a child, 30 Mar 1696*

*Hugh, saddler, a stillborn child, warrant, 21 May 1698*

*Hugh, saddler, a child, 18 Dec 1700*

*James, a child, 9 Aug 1692*

*James, poor, warrant, of a decay, 30 April 1699*

*John, tailor, a child, 5 Jan 1693*

*John, tailor, 24 May 1698*

*Margaret, Indweller, warrant, 26 June 1686*

*Marton, soldier, a halflin, 7 July 1690*

*Patrick, warrant, 11 April 1689*

*Robert, baker, 13 July 1689*

*Robert, tailor, a child, 2 Oct 1700*

### **Edinburgh Records referring to Morrison**

Commissariat of Edinburgh (1514-1600)

*Morrison, Alexander, keeper of our Sovereign Lord's powder veschell. See Knox, Margaret. (Knox, Margaret, sometime spouse to Alexander Morrison, keeper of our Sovereign Lord's powder veschell, 26 April 1587)*

*Morrison, John, burgess of Edinburgh, 16 Dec 1573*

*Morrison, elder, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh. See Hill, Beatrix. (Hill, Beatrix, relict of John Morrison, elder, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh, 9 Sept 1587)*

*Morrison, William, tailor, burgess of Edinburgh, 29 April 1586*

Commissariat of Edinburgh (1601-1700)

*Morrison, Mr Alexander, of Prestongrange, senator of the College of Justice, 16 Mar 1632. (see also Maule, Helenor).*

*Morrison, Sir Alexander, of Prestongrange 18 April 1687.*

*Morrison, Christian, sometime spouse to to Mr Andrew Dick, of Craighuse 1 Feb 1650.*

*Morrison, Mr George, of Pitfour, advocate 12 Dec 1693.*

*Morrison, George, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh (see Home, Jonet)*

*Morrison, Harry, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh (see also Dick, Christian (sometime spouse to to Harry Morrison 30 Mar 1619), and Spottiswood, Jonet relict of Harry Morrison 22 July 1622)*

*Morrison, Harry, customer at the Potterraw-port of Edinburgh 23 Jan 1646*

*Morrison, Helen, sometime spouse to Mr Samuel Johnstoun, of the Cheines, beside Edinburgh 6 March 1627*

*Morrison, Isaac, merchant, burgess and bailie of Edinburgh 31 Jan 1611*

*Morrison, James, lawful son to umquile Isaac M., merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 11 Sept 1626.*

*Morrison, James, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh, and Jonet Kerr, his spouse 18 June 1631*

*Morrison, Janet, Lady Mortonhall 20 Mar 1676*

*Morrison, John, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 17 July 1615*

*Morrison, John, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 19 Dec 1642*

**Other Morrison names mentioned in the records of Edinburgh:**

*Morrison, John, flesher, burgess of Edinburgh, and Janet Quhattane, his spouse 20 April 1646*

*Morrison, Jonet, sometime spouse to Thomas Inglis, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 14 Feb 1609*

*Morrison, Jonet, relict of John McRankane, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh, 3 Aug 1696*

*Morrison, Margaret, sometime spouse to John Kier, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 20 Sept 1615*

*Morrison, Margaret, lawful daughter to umquhile Harry M., merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 21 July 1627. (This could be the daughter of Harie Morrison and Katherine Stewart).*

*Morrison, Sarah, sometime spouse to to James Inglis, younger, merchant, burgess of Edinburgh 28 Feb 1618. Daughter of John Morrison and Katherine Preston.*

*Morrison, Thomas, doctor of medicine, indweller in Edinburgh 12 July 1603*



## Cautionary Note

It is cautioned that the commonality of given names such as George and Alexander around this time do not in any way mean that the George Morrison and Alexander Morrison references in the historical documents of Edinburgh were related. For example, in the Burgess records for Edinburgh of 1557-58 there is a reference to an Alexander Morrison. There is no record that links him to John Morrison who was the father of Lord Alexander. These records, and Burgess records in Aberdeen, cite the name Morrison on many occasions. For example in Edinburgh there a Donald Morrison in 1573 who was a Burgess of Cannongate, and a Luke Morrison who had control of the Cowgate Port at the Pleasance.

In Aberdeen, for example, there are numerous references to Morrisons in both the Burgh and Sheriff records. For example, taken from "*Selections From of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen*" records of 26 May 1651 state "*George Morisone, younger, burgess of Aberdene, compeirand yesterday, being the Lordis day, befor the pulpit in the old church, in sackcloth, contest his leud and wicked cariddge in railing against the covenant and ministers of Aberdene, his ordinary drunkennes, and cursing and blaspheming the name of God; craves the Lord humble pardon for the said guiltiness and promised, by the grace of God, newer to fall in lye sines in time cuming*" (Selections From of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen. Printed for The Spalding Club. M DCCC XL VI.W. Bennett, Printer, Aberdeen).

It is possible this is the young George Morrison of Barak, but there is no evidence other than coincidence. It is interesting to compare his plight with his namesake in Dairsie who was also hauled over the coals by the kirk accused a year earlier in 1650 '*that he had subscriyved the Protestation against the Supplication of the Kirk; he professing his sorrow for the same...he is appointed to mak public declaration of his repentance the nixt Lord's day in the kirk of Darsy.*' (see notes above on the History of Dairsie). Sixty-five years later Theodore Morrison of Bognie and his mother also found themselves being in dispute with the church.

Finally, apart from church associated references to the name Morrison in the Moray and Ross regions previously mentioned, the Wedderburn History mentions a "*Patrick Morrison, M.A., priest of Aberdeen diocese, being notary*" as a witness to a Sasine dated 30th December 1522 in favour of David Home of Wedderburn. Other references to Morrisons associated with the church can be found in the history of Holyrood Abbey where there is a "Morrisons Gate" dating back to the early 1500s (Gallagher, 1998, p. 1090).

## Chapter 7

### 2. Aberdeen Morrisons: Bognie and Pitfour

The lands around Aberdeen and Banff appear to have been settled by Morrison families some time around the 1400s. The most logical account for these families would be that they had continued moving north from the south eastern border regions either by land or by sea where Morrison families had earlier settled in the Midlothians and Fife. It has been established from the Cistercian rent records that there were Morrisons in the Cupar-Angus region in the 1440s.

In the records of the "*Register of Burgesses of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1399-1631*" (p 6) we find the following entry: "1440 Sept. 18. Morison, Angus, of Kynkardyn (at request of laird of Drum) Council Register IV., 209." (Kincardine is in Fife on the banks of the Forth River near Clackmannon). Further on in 1464 there is a reference to Gilbert Moryson (p 19), 1470 John Moryson of Dunblane (p 22), 1472 John Morison, baker (p 23), 1483-4 Andrew Murison (p 31), 1490-1, Baxter, Andrew, in Slains (at request of Sir William Muiresone), Sir William Mureson (sevices dispensed with at "lott scott, wak and ward") (p 35), 1514-5 William Moresone (servant to the Provost) (p 45), 1592 Andro Moresone, eldest son of umquil John M.) (p 83), 1594 Hay, Thomas (caut. George Moresone) (p 84), 1596 John Moresone (dyer) (p 89), 1602 Thomas Muresoun (ex gratis, caut. William Grey, bailie) (p 96), 1612 John Morriesoune (caut. George M.) (p110), 1616 George Moresoune, eldest son of George M. (p 116), 1617 Alexander Moresone (servant to George, Marquis of Huntly, ex gratis at his request (p119), 1619 William and Walter Moreson, sons of late George M. (*It is to be remember it that this saudis Willeame and Walter Moresonis, soneis to the said umqul George Moreson, and said Willeame Leysk, his syruitturre, were admitted burgesses of gild gratis for the guide service down to the town be Barbara Fergusson, relict of the said umquil George during the tyme of my Lord Duke of Lennox his g. being with this burt, and for the len of her hous and plinesching to that effect. -C.R. XLIX, 336.*) (p 122).

From the above reference to William and Walter, sons of the late George Morrison, we find they are mentioned in detail in the "*Introduction to Register of Burgesses*, Munro, 1890 p xxxvi" in Aberdeen where we find this quotation: "A large number of noblemen and others, including the Duke of Lennox, paid a visit to the burgh in 1619, and the expenses of their entertainment must have been heavy. The Council on this occasion were fortunate in getting part of their debt cancelled without cost to themselves\*, for among those admitted on the 14th August that year are the names of William and Walter Moreson, who, as a memorandum in the register informs us, were admitted gratis for the good service done to the town be [sic] Barbara Ferguson, relict of umquile George Moreson, during the time of my lord Duke of Lennox, his grace being within this burgh, and for the "len" of her house and plemishing to that effect" (\*The

account paid by the Treasurer amounted to the large sum of £425 12s Scots) (p xxxvi).

Further on in the Burgess records we find a reference to Henry Moresone in 1622 being "*at one time bailie of the burgh of Edinburgh (ex gratia)*" (p 130). This would be Henry Morrison who was first married to Christian Dick, who at the time of 1622 would have been married a second time to Jonet Spottiswood since their first child was born in 1620. In 1624 another Edinburgh connection is revealed when "*Moresone, Sir John, of Sauchtounhall (ex gratia)*" and his servant "*Patrick Dulson*" are mentioned (p 137). This would be Isaac Morrison's son who is often incorrectly referred to as Sir John Morrison of Dairsie who was married to Nicola Bruce and died in 1625. The "Sauchtounhall" title is more correct since Sir John was never involved with Dairsie, it was his son Sir George who bought the estate in 1646 from the Spottiswood's.

Given the references to George Morrison referred to above (married to Barbara Ferguson), the father of William and Walter, establishes the fact that he was the grandfather of George Morrison of Pitfour. The Records of Aboyne (Gordon, 1894, p 276) state that George Morrison, a burgess of Aberdeen and his wife Barbara Ferguson "*had Sasine on the lands of Tillicorthie, Tillery, and others in 1602, and George Morrison the younger had Sasine on the lands of Colliston, 12th August 1618 (Aberdeen Sasines, vol. i). George Morrison, burgess of Aberdeen, and his spouse had Sasine on the half lands of Dyce, the Kirktown thereof, and the half lands of Pitmedden, on 3rd April 1627 (Ibid)*".

There does not appear to be any evidence of a family connection between the Bognie and Pitfour Morrison families. Of the two, the Bognie family continues to maintain an unbroken line to the title Baron of Bognie.

## **The Morrisons of Bognie**

The following notes draw heavily on the work of William Temple (1894) in his work "*The Thanage of Fermartyn*".

There is a considerable history of early Scotland in Aberdeenshire, including the lands of Bognie. It is probable that the English destroyed many of the records dating back to the period before 1300. However, one of the names that the Morrisons became associated with is Fren draught. Janet Dunbar, daughter of James Dunbar, Earl of Moray, married Sir James Crichton, Lord Chamberlain of Scotland. He became Lord Crichton, Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and brought into that family the lands of Fren draught:

*He [Crichton] received from King James VI the honour of a knighthood, and had the family estates made over to him in his life-time, receiving charters of the lands and baronies of Fren draught, Conveth, Auchingoul, Bognie, etc., to him and his heirs male, 10 August, 1599, where he is styled eldest son of James Crichton of Fren draught (Temple, 1894, p 144).*

There are many famous families which the Bognie Morrisons married into, including the Crichton's, the Duffs and the Gordons. The name Frendraught, or Forgue/Forge as it is also known, became part of a title inherited by the Morrisons.

History of the line of the Knightly House of Ferendrach De Ferendrach records that the earliest notice of Frendraught is about 1202, when Michael de Ferendrach is a witness to a charter given by William the Lion. This Michael de Ferendrach also witnesses a charter of Alexander II, 1226. In 1257, Pope Alexander IV confirmed to the Abbot and Convent of Arbroath a grant made by William de Ferendrach of the fruits of the benefice of the Church de Ferendrach. Besides the lands of Ferendrach, from which the family derived their surname, they had other lands in Perthshire. There is a charter of date 1282, confirming the lands of Cuparmacultin, Fordui, and others, by the Abbot of Dunfermline, to Malcolm de Ferendrach, in such wise as they were held by John de Ferendrach. In 1286, in a charter given by Simon, Thane of Aberchirder, Malcolm de Ferendrach and John de Ferendrach are mentioned as witnesses.

History also records many other Norman names in the area such as John de Gairdyn in the 1300s. He could well have been an early relative of Alexander Garden who was a Professor of Philosophy in King's College, Aberdeen and appointed minister of Frendraught in 1645. His sister Elizabeth Garden married Alexander Morrison, the 1st Baron of Bognie.

The Morrisons from Bognie in Aberdeenshire have an impressive continuous lineage:

**1st Baron Alexander Morrison of Bognie** married Elizabeth Gordon.

According to Temple (1894, p 154) "*Alexander Morrison of Bognie acquired the lands of Bognie from Sir James Crichton and his wife, Elizabeth Gordon, in 1635. The charter is "Jacobus Crichton de Frendraught consensu et assensu mete conjugis Elizabethan Gordon, Alexandre Moresone in Bognie et Elizabethan Gairden ejus spouse diutius viventi totas et integras villas E. and W. Bognie, cum domibus, etc." From the above charter, we find that his wife's name was Elizabeth Gairden, a sister of Rev. Alexander Gairden, minister of Forgue. He married secondly, Katharine Gordon, and mention of her is made in the session records of Forgue. Alexander Morrison signed the Solemn League and Covenant, and also signed the Duke of Hamilton's bond in defence of King Charles 1. This latter act incurred the extreme displeasure of the Presbytery of Turriff, and he was summoned before them. "1650, January 31. Comperit Alexander Morison of Bognie, a man whose affection to the Covenant and cause of God was notour to all the brethren, yet through uncircum- spection had subscribed the band for carrying out the unlawful engagement, and being accused of the same, answered that he conceived the band did impart nothing prejudicial to the Covenant. He submitted to the judgment of the Presbytery, and after a time was received according to the common order."*

He had the following family :

1. George Morrison (2nd of Bognie)

2. Alexander Morrison

Alexander Morrison of Pennyburn is mentioned in a charter in the possession of the laird of Bognie, also in the proceedings regarding the murder of Alexander Gregory by Francis Crichton (the brother of Viscount Fren draught) in 1663, the son of the Rev John Gregory mentioned below. Alexander had attempted to protect Alexander Gregory.

**2nd Baron George Morrison** (1620-1699) married Christian Urquhart, Viscountess Fren draught (second daughter of Alexander Urquhart of Dunlugat, afterwards of Cromarty, widow of Lord Rutherford, who, after the Viscount's death, married George Morison of Bognie (Temple, 1894, p 152)

David Gregory was heir to his brother Alexander Gregory (who had been murderd by Francis Crichton in 1663), "on 21st of July, 1677, he disponed the wadset of a large portion of the estates, including all and hail the Mains of Fren draught, the tower and fortalice of Fren draught, etc., to George Morison of Bognie, who disponed them in life-rent, November 5, 1678, in favour of Christian Urquhart, widow of James, second Viscount Fren draught, for her life-time" (Temple, 1894, p 152).

George Morrison of Bognie was a witness in the Crichton murder trial recorded in the court records of Edinburgh 4 July 1664 (Scott-Moncrieff (ed), 1905, pp 100-105)

Historical Note: *"The first Presbyterian minister that we read of at Forgue after the Revolution was the Rev. John Maitland. This reverend gentleman and his brother, James, minister of Inverkeithney, were both deposed by the General Assembly, in a summary manner, on the 9 May, 1715, because they espoused the cause of the Pretender, refusing to observe the Thanksgiving for the accession of George I on the 20 January, 1715. In both parishes, the greater part of the parishioners took part with the ministers, and resented so deeply their deposition, that the clergymen appointed to announce it, were not only prevented entering the churches, but even the churchyards of the parishes. The Viscountess Fren draught and her son, Theodore Morison of Bognie, also espoused the cause of the deposed ministers. The Viscountess possessing herself of the keys of both churches, locked the doors, and prevented the Presbytery of Turriff, who zealously exerted themselves, from supplying the vacancies,' and her ladyship only gave up the keys after a threatened civil action. After a time the Presbytery resolved to institute ministers to the vacant charges; and they began with Forgue first, selecting the Rev. Alexander Forbes as minister"* (Temple, 1894, p 181).

George Morrison registered the Bognie Arms of three moors' heads in 1673.

1. Susanna Morrison 1680-1789 (married John Forbes 3rd of Boyndlie)

2. Theodore Morrison 1685-1766

**3rd Baron Theodore Morrison** (1685-1743) married Katharine Maitland (daughter of Sir Charles Maitland of Pittrichie).

“He lived without an enemy, and died without a groan” (Tayler, 1914, p 391)

1. Alexander Morrison 1724-1801 (4th of Bognie)
2. George Morrison of Haddo (married Jean Abercromby, daughter of General James Abercromby of Glassaugh and Mary Duff of Dipple. She married 2nd Robert Duff of Fetteresso) (from her 2nd marriage her son Robert William Duff married her daughter of her marriage to George, Mary Morrison (Book of Duff 1914, p 317) See Note below regarding Abercomby-Duff-Morrison.
  - i. Mary (married Robert William Duff, son of Robert Duff and Jean Abercromby)
3. Sir William Morrison
  - i. William Morrison
  - ii. John Morrison Caroline Morrison
  - iii. Amelia Morrison
4. Jane Morrison (married John Forbes Leith of Whitehaugh)

**4th Baron Alexander Morrison** (1724-1801) married Katharine Duff (1732-1803) (daughter of John Duff of Culbin and Helen Gordon).

1. Theodore Morrison (became 5th of Bognie)
2. John Morrison (became 6th of Bognie) of Auchintoul
3. George Morrison, unmarried.
4. James Morrison of Strawberry Vale (1770-1840) (married 1. Ann Victorie de la Marre), known as “The Hygienist” for his “Vegetable” pills
  - i. Anna Jaquette Morrison (married Baron Von Rosenberg of Dresden)
  - ii. Alexander Morrison (became 8th of Bognie)
  - iii. John Morrison (became 9th of Bognie)
  - iv. Catherine Morrison
  - v. Caroline Morrison  
(and married 2. Sharmer Jemima Clarinda Cotter)
  - vi. James Augustus Cotter Morrison
5. Alexander Morrison who died young.
6. Helen (married a Grant of Artamford)

7. Katherine Morrison (married John Forbes 5th of Boyndlie)
8. Jane (married 1. James Ogilvy of Escreavie, 2. Alexander Gordon of Newton)
9. Mary
10. Magdalen (married John Shackleton)

**5th Baron Theodore** (1750-1801) didn't marry and passed on the Bognie title to his brother, John. He acquired the lands of Mountblairry in 1812.

**6th Baron John Morrison** (1757-1835) (of Auchintoul and Bognie, younger brother of Theodore) married Jane Fraser (daughter of Alexander Fraser, 8th of Strichen).

See Note below which outlines his Parliamentary career and rather scandalous assertions that he fathered numerous bastard children.

1. Alexander Morrison (became 7th of Bognie)

**7th Baron Alexander Morrison** of Bognie and Mountblairry (1802-1874) married Jessie Eliza Duff (daughter of Garden Duff, 8th of Hatton and Louisa Dunbar). Died without issue.

**8th Baron Alexander Morrison** (1810-1879) married Mary Catherine Young (daughter of Colonel Keith Young). Known as Alexander Morrison of Bognie and Mountblairry. This family was instrumental in building the new church of St Margaret's in 1856. He was the son of James Morrison and cousin of Alexander.

*"In the church on the north side there are four marble tablets to the memory of the Bognie family. The first two were removed from the mausoleum in the churchyard of Forge by desire of Alexander Morison of Bognie, having been replaced there by facsimiles in granite.*

*On the first tablet there is the inscription: Within this sepulchre, erected by his desire, lies the body of George Morison of Bognie, who died in the year 1699. Here also are interred Theodore Morison of Bognie, only son to the said George Morison, who died in June, 1766, aged 81 years. Also Katharine Maitland, daughter of Sir Charles Maitland of Pitrichie, and spouse of the said Theodore Morison, who died in 1743, aged 48 years. Here also lie the remains of Alexander Morison of Bognie, son to the said Theodore Morison, who died 16 September, 1801, in the 78th year of his age. Also Katharine Duff, daughter of John Duff of Cowbin, and spouse of the said Alexander Morison, who died April 1803, aged 71." (Temple, 1894, p 187).*

He died without issue.

**9th Baron John Morrison** (1812-1886) married Mary Jane Wetherell (daughter of Thomas Wetherell). He was the second son of James Morrison.

1. Frederick de la Marre Morrison (became 10th of Bognie)

**10th Baron Frederick de la Marre Morrison** (1842-1911) married 1. Janet Forbes Gordon (daughter of Alexander Gordon).

1. Alexander Edward Forbes Morrison (became 11th of Bognie)
2. Isobel Gordon Morrison Married Brig-Gen Claude John Percival)
3. Duncan Maitland Morrison (married Sarah Margaret Copeland)
  - i. Alexander Gordon Morrison (became 12th of Bognie)
  - ii. Donald Fraser Morrison

**11th Baron Alexander Edward Forbes Morrison** (1874-1932) married Clementina Graham Stuart (daughter of Alexander Stuart of Inchbreck).

He died without issue.

There was a gap in the father-son line at this point whereby a search of ancestors then uncovered the family of Duncan Maitland Morrison who had migrated to Canada.

**12th Baron Alexander Gordon Morrison** (1920-2013) and 12th Laird of Fren draught and Mountblairy, married Yvonne Isabelle Angus (daughter of Ian McLean Angus).

1. Diane Yvonne Morrison
2. Cheryl Jeanne Morrison
3. Alexander Morrison (became 13th of Bognie)

**13th Baron Alexander Morrison** (1952- ) married Bona McKenzie Murray.

#### **Note:**

#### **Biography of John Morrison, 9th of Bognie (from J. R. Fisher (2009))**

*"Morison was descended from a family which had been established in north-west Aberdeenshire since at least the mid-seventeenth century ... John Morison's life before he became a parliamentary candidate remains largely obscure, but he is known to have been sometime a merchant at Riga, on the Baltic, in partnership with his brother James and one Drachenham. It was there that his 'only legitimate son' Alexander (who entered Trinity College, Cambridge in 1820 and Lincoln's Inn in 1822) was born in about 1802. By Michaelmas 1811 he was on the freeholders' roll of Banffshire as the proprietor (by purchase) of the estate of Auchintoul. In April 1825 he declared his intention of standing for the county at the next election, and he duly did so when Parliament was dissolved in June 1826, backed by the Tories Colonel Francis Grant\* and the 4th duke of Gordon. He made no reported political pronouncements and was defeated by the sitting Member Lord Fife, but was seated on his petition claiming a majority of legal votes in April 1827.*



*Morison was almost entirely inconspicuous in the 1826 Parliament. He voted with the Wellington ministry against inquiry into chancery delays, 24 Apr., and presented a constituency petition for the continuance of the herring bounties, 12 May 1828. As expected, he divided for the government's concession of Catholic emancipation, 30 Mar. 1829, though he was reported to have stated in the House earlier that day that he would 'vote against' it. He was returned unopposed at the 1830 general election, after which ministers listed him as one of their 'friends'. It was almost certainly James Morrison rather than he who voted in Parnell's minority of 39 for reduction of the duty on wheat imported to the West Indies, 12 Nov. He was absent from the division on the civil list three days later which brought down the government. He also absented himself from the divisions on the second reading of the Grey ministry's English reform bill, 22 Mar., and Gascoyne's wrecking amendment, 19 Apr. 1831. According to his constituent John Macpherson Grant, the son of George Macpherson Grant\* of Ballindalloch, on the first occasion he was actually in the House ... but went home ... on the pretence of age and indifferent health ... The real cause ... I suspect to be a fear of offending by his vote whichever way it was given. Colonel Grant had been attacking him warmly for some time, which terrified him from voting for the bill, and the knowledge that ... many of his constituents were favourable to it had made him afraid of voting against it. I had a note from him next morning expressing a wish to see me ... He seemed to be all in a fidget ... and ready to speak on any subject but the bill. I ... let him know what I thought of the measure and of his own shilly shally conduct and sounded the alarm of an early dissolution in his ears.*

*George Ferguson† of Pitfour, who had the support of Colonel Grant and the 5th duke of Gordon, declared his candidature for the next election in the second week of April, but Morison's wife (whose identity is unknown) told him that her husband had 'no intention of giving up'; he publicly confirmed this a week later. John Macpherson Grant, a reformer, speculated that if Morison, 'a perfect cipher' in Parliament, lost Colonel Grant's backing, he might start his 'indolent and careless' son Alexander, who had moved the resolutions approving reform at the recent county meeting (Morison presented its petition on 20 Apr.). When Parliament was dissolved a few days later Morison stood his ground and claimed the support of local reformers. On 4 May he wrote to The Times to contradict its designation of him as being 'against' reform: 'I never voted against the reform bill, but, on the contrary, I am decidedly in favour of it'. In a riposte the following day Ferguson, who also claimed to be 'a reformer', commented that this would come as a surprise to Morison's constituents, whose interests had gone effectively unrepresented in the last Parliament. Morison secured the support of John Macpherson Grant and other reformers, declared under questioning at the election meeting that he was 'a favourer of the bill' and approved of the disfranchisement of 'rotten boroughs', the enfranchisement of large towns and an extension of the franchise, but said he disliked the proposed £10 Scottish county voting qualification. He defeated Ferguson by seven votes in a poll of 33.*

*Morison was barely more active than previously in the 1831 Parliament. He paired for the second reading of the reintroduced English reform bill, 6 July, for its details in at least three divisions and for its passage, 21 Sept. He was present to vote against use of the 1831 census to determine the disfranchisement schedules, 19 July, and for clause 15, giving urban freeholders a county vote, 17 Aug. 1831. His next known votes were not until those for the enfranchisement of Tower Hamlets, 28 Feb., and Gateshead, 5 Mar., and the third reading of the revised English reform bill, 22 Mar. 1832. He was in the minorities for a reduction in the West Indian sugar duties, 7 Mar., and against the malt drawback bill, 2 Apr. He voted for the address calling on the king to appoint only ministers who would carry reform unimpaired, 10 May. He divided against increasing the Scottish county representation, 1 June, and presented a Banff reform petition, 4 June. He was in the government majorities on the Russian-Dutch loan, 12, 20 July 1832.*

*By then he was in severe financial trouble, with 'great' debts, which forced him to sell his Banffshire property. He retired from Parliament at the 1832 dissolution. His much altered will of 25 July 1830 reveals a notably unconventional and disordered private life. He left all his real and personal estate, except his 'small remaining property in Russia', to Alexander, but made provision for a battery of his bastards produced by various women: five by Sarah Cole of Southampton Row, Marylebone, whom he was thinking of 'perhaps legitimating by acknowledging a marriage' with her; a 'natural son Alexander', currently thought to be at Riga; two children with Menzies Munro; two with Matilda Palmer of Fordyce, and one with Mary White of Brompton, Middlesex. His personalty was sworn under £4,000 in the province of Canterbury, 23 July 1835, but a marginal note of 1846 on the death duty register entry indicates that liabilities amounted to £18,254. Morison nominally succeeded his brother Theodore to the entailed Aberdeenshire estates in October 1834, but he died four months later and it was his legitimate son Alexander who was served heir of line to Bognie on 4 Dec. 1835".*

D.R. Fisher, (ed). (2009). Published in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1820-1832*. (Online: <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/morison-john-1757-1835>)

From The Book of the Duffs (Taylor, 1914, Vol 2) an excellent overview of the interconnectedness between the Abercromby-Duff-Morrison families is set out:

#### **ABERCROMBIES and MORRISONS**

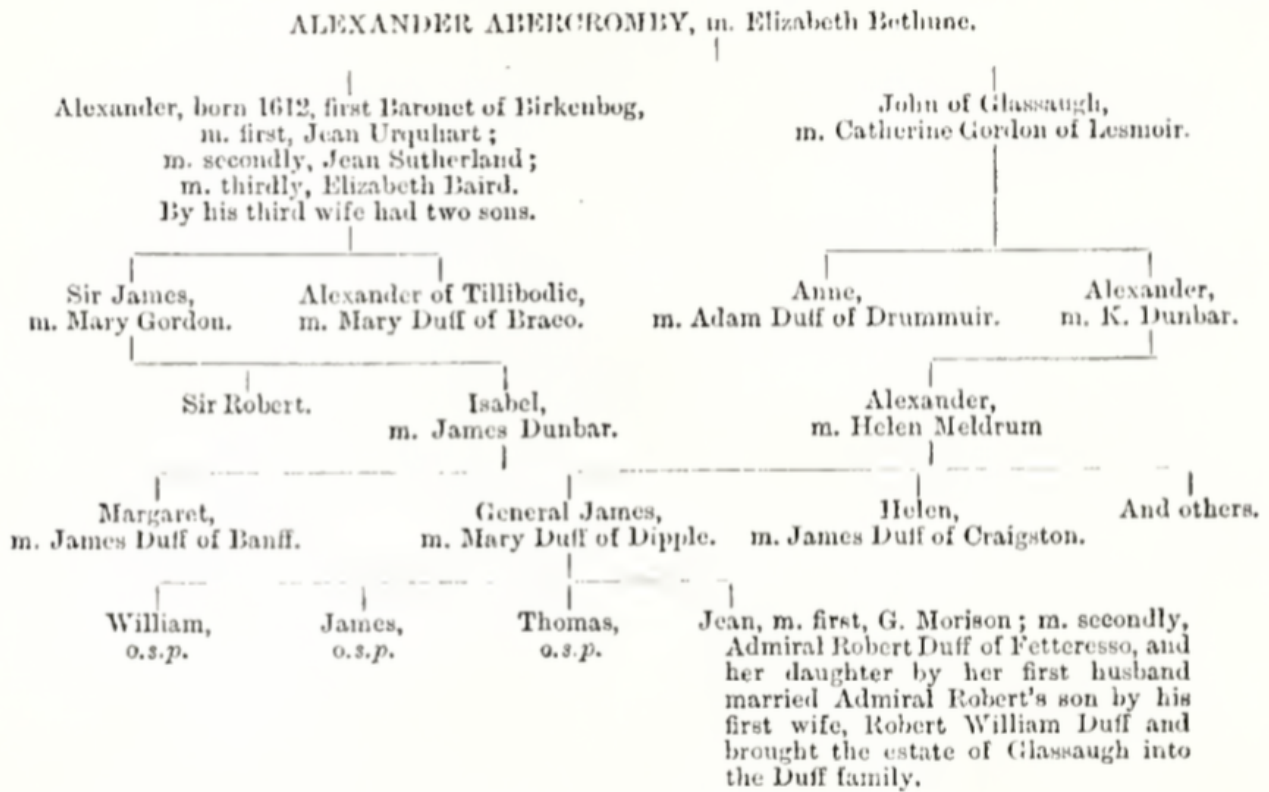
*The family of Abercromby also has been so much connected with the Duffs for three centuries that a brief table showing the intermarriages seems almost necessary.*

*The family, which is one of the oldest in Scotland, had its origin, like the Duffs, in Fifeshire, but came north at a later period.*

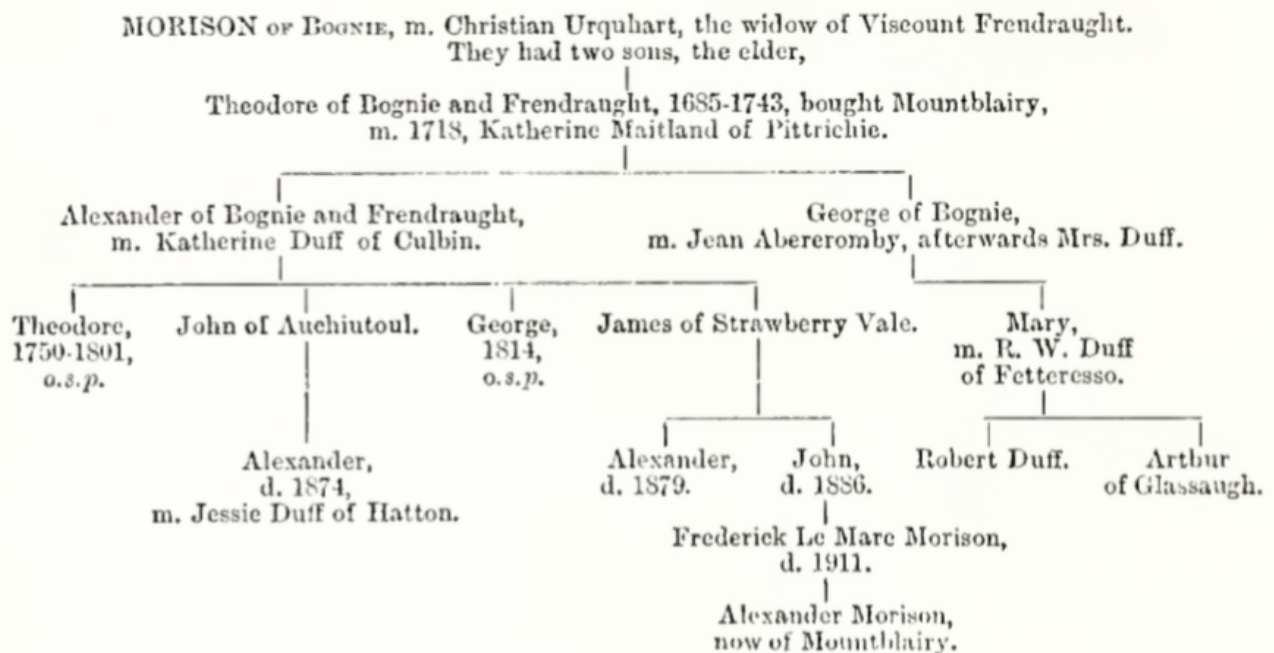
*Alexander Abercromby (falconer to Charles I.), who owned the estate of Birkenbog, married Elizabeth Bethune of Balfour. His two elder sons were Alexander and John. (p 562)*

## ABERCROMBIES AND MORISONS

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With the Abererombies are also connected the Morisons, three of whom married Duffs.



## The Morrisons of Pitfour

This family came from a line that was well represented in the Burgh records of Aberdeen, beginning with George Morrison and his wife Barbara Ferguson. The last of the name associated with Pitfour was George and his brother William, the son of George Morrison and his first wife Janet Gordon. George Morrison of Pitfour (the elder) died in 1689 and was buried in East Liberton Tomb, Greyfriars cemetery (Greyfriars Cemetery Records).

The lands of Pitfour were purchased by George Morrison (of Haddo) in 1667 as written in the the records of the time: "*...the barony of Pitfour ... according to charter under the great seal granted by Charles II. of date 22 February 1667 ... in favour of George Morrison of Pitfour*". The estate was sold in 1700 by William Morrison, brother of George: "*Morison - William - of Pitfour, to his Brother George Morison of Pitfour Adv. - Heir Male of Tailie and Prov. Genl. - dated 31st Jan. 1702*" (Indexes to the Services of Heirs in Scotland 1700 - 1799). These were the sons of George Morrison of Pitfour who died in 1689. More detail of their relationship is as follows:

From the "*Illustrations of the Topography and Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff, fourth volume, Printed for the Spalding Club, Aberdeen 1862*":

*June 19 1700. Special service of William Morison as nearest heir of his brother-germain George (afterwards designed Mr George) Morison of Pitfour advocate in ...the lands and barony of Toux and Pitfour comprehending ... the lands commonly called Toux and Pitfour Mill of Leggat mill lands a strict multures and sequels ... Cairneurchies Drumies Braikeshill Bumbmill Tietswall Gachinwives with the manor place of Pitfour the whole houses ... and pertinence ... lying in the parish of Deer and shire of Aberdeen united ... and incorporated into one barony to be called the barony of Pitfour ... according to charter under the great seal granted by Charles II. of date 22 February 1667 ... in favour of George Morrison of Pitfour father of the said William Morison (therein designed eldest lawful son of the late William Morison burgess of Aberdeen) and Janet Gordon his spouse and the longest liver of either of them in conjunct fee and life rent ... and after their death respectively in favour of said George (afterwards designed Mr George) Morison their eldest lawful son brother german [sic] of the said William Morison now of Pitfour in fee and the heirs male of his body and assignees whomsoever whom failing John Morison their second son now dead and the heirs male of his body and assignees whomsoever whom failing said William Morison their third son and the heirs male of his body and assignees whomsoever whom all failing the said George Morison senior his nearest and lawful heirs and assignees whomsoever ...Which said lands and barony of Pitfour are held of the King in fee and heritage perpetually for yearly payment of the services formerly used and wont...(pp 47-48).*

A reference in *"A Book of the Parish of Deir: The Lands of the Parish and Their Owners"* (Lawson, 1896) verifies the ownership of Pitfour in 1667 by the Morrisons: *"These ten heritors of the year 1635 have considerably changed in the course of a generation. We find new names, along with several familiar ones, in the valuation of 1674, which gives what is to this day called the valued rent. The lands of Pitfour had been made a barony by Charles II. on 22nd February, 1667, when they were purchased, apparently from Thomas Bodie and Innes, by George Morrison, son of William Morrison, burgess in Aberdeen. They at that time included Toux, Pitfour, Mill of Leggatt, Cairnourchies, Drinnies"* (p 85).

The name of George Morrison appears in the dealings of the Gordons and Cluny Castle in Aberdeenshire around 1636: *"This seems to have been only a temporary answer for by 1636 the control of the Cluny property had passed out of Sir Alexander's [Gordon] hands. In that year a precept under the Great Seal was given to the Sheriff of Aberdeen to infeft George Morrison in the Mains and Manor place of Cluny as apprised by him from William Coutts of Auchtercoul for a debt of 5,600 merks"* (Slade, p 455). There is no direct evidence to determine whether or not this is the same George who married Barbara Ferguson. In 1636 George Morrison of Barrak would have been too young. In the following paragraph there is a reference to a George Morrison the elder in 1602 and a George the younger around the years of 1618 and 1627.

From the Burgess Records the Morrisons of Pitfour family lineage would indicate that this line was begun by George Morrison and Barbara Ferguson in Aberdeen (Register of Burgesses, p xxxvi). This is also confirmed in The Records of Aboyne (Charles, 1894): *"We have Precept under the Great Seal, given by King Charles 1., to the Sheriff of Aberdeen to infeft George Morrison, burgess of Aberdeen, in the Mains and Manor place of Cluny, etc, as apprised by him from William Coutts of Auchtercoul for a debt of 5600 marks. George Morrison, the elder, burgess of Aberdeen, and Barbara Ferguson his spouse, has Sasine on the lands of Tillicorthie, Tillery, and others in 1602, and George Morrison the younger had Sasine on the lands of Colliston, 12th August 1618 (Aberdeen Sasines, vol. i). George Morrison, burgess of Aberdeen, and his spouse had Sasine on the half lands of Dyce, the Kirktown thereof, and the half lands of Pitmedden, on 3rd April 1627 (Ibid)"* (p 276).

William Morrison (son of George and Barbara), a burgess of Aberdeen in 1619, had a son who was styled George Morrison of Barak who married Janet Gordon (her second marriage who was first married to Sir Robert Innes of Balvenie). A contract for the marriage of Janet Gordon and George Morrison was signed on 8 November 1659. (Janet Gordon was the daughter of Sir John Gordon of Haddo and Mary Forbes, however the *Faculty of Advocates in Scotland* p 156 says Janet was the daughter of Thomas Gordon of Broadland. Thomas Gordon married Margaret Bodie of Pitfour. The Morrisons bought Pitfour from the Bodies). George and Janet had five children all recorded in the OPR for Aberdeen: George 1661 (who became George Morrison of Pitfour), John 1662, William 1663, Jean 1666 and Charles 1667. The above quotation from the

Spalding Club (1862, pp 47-8) identifies this lineage except for Jean and Charles. From the *Faculty of Advocates in Scotland* records (p 156) George of Barak later married a second time Margaret Dallas in 1687.

**Note:**

*"The expenses incurred occasionally in entertaining distinguished strangers must have been a severe tax on the slender resources of the Common Good funds, and many were the devices resorted to for raising the necessary means to defray the cost of such entertainments.*

*A large number of noblemen and others, including the Duke of Lennox, paid a visit to the burgh in 1619, and the expenses of their entertainment must have been heavy. The Council on this occasion were fortunate in getting part of their debt cancelled without cost to themselves, for among those admitted on the 14th August of that year are the names of William and Walter Moreson, who, as a memorandum in the register informs us, were admitted gratis for the good service done to the town by Barbara Ferguson, relict of umqhile George Moreson, during the time of my lord Duke of Lennox, his grace being within this burgh, and for the "len" of her house and plenishing to that effect".*

(Spalding Club: xxxvi Introduction to the Register of Burgesses)

- George Morrison married (9 June 1584) Barbara Fergusson:
  - i. George Morrison (died 1658) married (26 May 1624) Jean Buchan (died 1664).
 

George Morrison of Kirkhill and Pitfour was the Provost of Aberdeen between 1652-1654, eldest son of George Morrison and Barbara Ferguson. George Morrison is mentioned in the Aberdeen Bailies in December 1649. See the Note below regarding his election as Provost of Aberdeen.

    - a. Jean Morrison (died 28 July 1664) married William Forbes (Laing, 1828, p 108)
  - ii. Isobel (21 Nov 1585)
  - iii. Elspeth (23 Feb 1588)
  - iv. David Morrison (31 Dec 1590)
  - v. Katherine Morrison (2 Oct 1604)
  - vi. Janet Morrison (6 Feb 1606)
  - vii. William Morrison (5 Feb 1607)
    - a. George Morrison (circa 1635-1689) of Barrak married Janet Gordon (Daughter of John Gordon of Haddo and Janet Forbes of Tolquhoun) "Jonet, contracted 8 November 1659 to George Morrison of Barrak" (Sir James Balfour Paul, *The Scots Peerage: founded on Wood's edition of Sir Robert Douglas's The Peerage of Scotland* (Edinburgh, Scotland: David Douglas, 1904), volume I, p 87). Sir John Gordon of

Haddo was executed and his property forfeited in 1644 being found guilty of high treason for opposing the Covenanters. George Morrison of Barrak was heir to his Uncle George of Kirkhill and Pitfour and purchased Pitfour in 1667.

He married a second time Margaret Dallas in 1687 (Dallas Family History).

*Margaret Dallas, bp. 16th November 1662, m. (1) 29th March 1687, George Morison of Pitfourie, (2) R. Murray of Pulrossie before 1696. (Ref. Dallas family history p 336)*

1. George Morrison (1661), Advocate,
2. of Pitfour
3. John Morrison (1662)
4. William Morrison (1663) of Pitfour, sold the title in 1700
5. Jean Morrison (1666)
6. Charles Morrison (1667)
7. Robert Morrison (1669)

viii. Walter Morrison (20 Aug 1608 - 1683) married Margaret Nicolson, 2 Dec 1632, Saint Nicolas, Aberdeen:

- a. Elspet (1633)
- b. Barbara (1635)
- c. Jean (1639)
- d. George (1637) married Marjorie Moir (4 Aug 1662)
  1. George (1664)
  2. Robert (1665)
  3. John (1667)

ix. Male Morrison (8 Dec 1609)

x. Female Morrison (5 June 1612)

**Note:**

*17th March, 1652-54.*

*Lxxvi. (George Morison of Kirkhill and Pitfour (Council Reg., LIII, 347, 361, 398, 428).*

*"The Council thus elected chose George Morison to be provost, as one who was qualified and weill affected for the weill and peace of this natioun."*

*Provost Morison was the eldest son of George Morison, burgess, by his wife, Barbara Ferguson, and was admitted a Guild brother on the 13th September, 1616. His younger brothers, William and Walter, were admitted three years later, gratis, in consideration of the good service done to the town by their mother in giving up her house for a lodging to the Duke of Lennox while he was in the town. Provost Morison was married to Jean Buchan, and their daughter Jean was married to William Forbes, a brother of Thomas Forbes, baillie. Besides the lands of Kirkhill and Pitfour, the Provost held others, at*



least for a short time, for on 30th March, 1655, he had a precept of sasine from " Oliver, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the domineenes thereto belong- ing," of the town and lands of Gilcomston, over and nether, with the mill and mill lands, together with the lands and town of Ardo and the town and lands of Jackston in the parish of Banchory-Devenick. The Provost, by his last will and testament, dated 1st May, 1658, left a sum of five hundred merks for the poor of the burgh, and a hundred merks to the hospital for decayed brethren of guild. The Provost's death occurred about five months after this date, and his remains were interred within the Church of S. Nicholas on the 24th September, 1658. His wife, who survived him, died on the 26th July, 1664, and two days later was buried beside her husband in the church. On the 12th November, 1662, George Morison of Baroch or Barra was served heir to his uncle, Provost Morison, in the town and lands of Ardo and Jack- ton, with the salmon fishing on the Dee (Retours and Sheriff Clerk's Records).

A curious case respecting the authority of the Council to enforce the municipal statutes made from time to time for regulating the weight and price of articles sold, took place about this time. The Council had fixed the weight of bread at fifteen ounces, but the baxter trade did not see how "they could mack ane lyff" by selling their bread at such a weight, so the trade fixed the weight at an ounce to an ounce and a half less, and turned out their bread accordingly. The magistrates at once took up the matter, and the deacon of the craft was summoned and censured, and was to be dismissed on giving his word that the craft would not so offend in time coming. The deacon, however, would neither acknowledge that any fault had been committed, nor would he give any undertaking for the future, and so by a special ordinance of the Council he was sent to prison until he should acknowledge his fault, and the "mistak of his hail traid."

No election took place at Michaelmas, 1652, and at the meeting in September, 1653, convened for the election, a letter was submitted from Colonel Lilburne, intimating that the Council of Estates thought fit that all civil officers now in office should continue without any new election. This warrant was obeyed, the office-bearers being continued as before, and this procedure was repeated at the Michaelmas meeting in the following year. At the Michaelmas meeting of 1655 no instructions were to hand, and the election was continued in the usual manner, but on the 3i'd October, some nine days after the election. Provost Morison submitted a " Declaration of his Highness Counsell in Scotland," which had just reached him that day. This Declaration premises that no election had taken place, and proceeds to declare that all prohibitions as to the election of magistrates were now taken off", and the ancient privilege of election restored to those rightfully entitled to use it. After warnings against electing any person who would be dangerous to the Commonwealth, the Declaration provides that in the case of burghs which have not received timely warning as to the present measure, an election shall take place on that day fort- night. This intimation was considered by the Council equivalent to a warrant for a new election, and notwithstanding that they had already made choice of office-



*bearers for the ensuing year, they ordered a new election to be made on the 10th October. At this second election, Thomas Gray was chosen provost”.*

Lord Provosts of Aberdeen (Munro, 1897, pp 165-167)

None of the above documentation makes a link to any of the other Morrison families from Prestongrange, Dairsie or Bognie.

However, as previously noted above when discussing Sir William Morrison of Prestongrange, in 1687 George Morrison of Pitfour married Margaret Dallas (b 1662), daughter of George Dallas (1634-1701) WS of St Martins and Margaret Abercromby (daughter of James Abercromby of Pittencrieff). George Dallas and Margaret Abercromby who married in 1660 had a grandson named James Dallas (thus a nephew of George Morrison) who had by his second marriage to Barbara Cockburn a daughter named Henrietta Dallas (James' first marriage was to Elizabeth Riddell). She married William Morrison (his second marriage) in 1730, the son of Sir William Morrison and Janet Rocheid. Thus James Dallas, the nephew of George Morrison of Pitfour, was the father in law of William Morrison (son of Sir William Morrison and Janet Rothead). This is the closest relationship between the families of Prestongrange and the Aberdeen Morrison families that has so far been identified.

Given the generally localised nature of many families in and around Aberdeen it is possible, for example, that Barbara Ferguson (wife of George Morrison) was related to the Ferguson's who later bought Pitfour from William Morrison in 1700. There is also the possibility of a relationship between families connected to the marriage of George Dallas who was married to Margaret Abercromby (daughter of James Abercromby of Pittencrieff) and the Abercromby family that was associated with the Bognie Morrisons (George Morrison of Haddo married Jean Abercromby, daughter of General James Abercromby of Glassaugh and Mary Duff of Dipple) and to George Morrison of Pitfour who married Margaret Dallas.

Additional references to George Morrison of Pitfour include:

Will in the Scottish Records Office for “Morisone George 12/12/1693 Mr, of Pitfour, Advocate”.

The Edinburgh Marriage Register 1595-1700 (EMR) records Mr George Morison of Pitfour marrying Margaret Dollas [Dallas] on 29 March 1687.

According to records of the Scots Peerage by Sir James Balfour Paul, George Morrison (styled George Morrison of Barak) married Janet Gordon on 8 November 1659 who had previously been married to Sir Robert Innes of Balvenie (Sir James Balfour Paul (1904), volume I, p 87). George of Barak was the father of George of Pitfour (the younger).

Act for raising 4 months supply, 1667. William II and Mary II: Translation 1689, 14 March, Edinburgh, Convention Parliamentary Register, Edinburgh 27 April 1689, Legislation Act for raising four months' supply.

For the Sheriffdom of Aberdeen...*George Morrison of Pitfour...*

The date of 1667 coincides with the date that George Morrison (of Haddo) purchased Pitfour.

**Note:**

There is an interesting Morrison connection with the Aberdeen region of Garvock. In the 1588 a Walter Morrison was the minister at Garvock (1588). His son James became Minister in Kirkwall in the Orkneys before moving to Edinburgh. The Commissariat Records for Orkney and Shetland (1611-1684) lists 18 Nov. 1663 "*Morisoun, William, merchant, burges of Edinburgh, resider of Kirkwall*" (p 35). This William was the son of the Rev James Morrison who was the Minister at Evie and Rendall in 1621, educated at Aberdeen University (MA, 1616). James fell out with the Church over a number of political issues, and eventually resigned in 1666 for immorality. His son William was a child of his first marriage to Annas Horrie. After his falling out with the church James moved to Edinburgh where he became a burges, and was followed by his son William. By his second marriage to Margaret Scollay he had two more sons, Harry and Walter.

James is listed in the *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses (1406-1700)* as follows: *Morison, Mr James, B, late minr. in Orkney (minr. of Evie and Rendall, presby. of Kirkwall, adm. prior to 1624, d. 1675), gratis (in M.S. index) 1 July 1668 (p 359)*. The Burgess rolls identify only one William who might have been the son of James in 1657 but this is by no means conclusive.

## Chapter 8

### Other Morrisons who made significant contributions in Burgh Affairs

The Morrisons of Prestongrange, Dairsie, Bognie and Pitfour are all well documented for their contributions to the Burgh affairs of Edinburgh and Aberdeen. When scanning through the historical burgh documents of the east coast of Scotland other Morrison families in Aberdeen and Dundee also made significant contributions in addition to the four previously mentioned Morrison families. The following is a brief outline of their genealogy.

#### 1. The Morrisons of Naughton

The first record shows that William Morison of Dundee had a son William Morrison, a Bailie in Dundee, who became the owner of Naughton by judicial sale from Robert Hay in 1737:

*"The old castle of Naughton already alluded to is equally now the "Shadow of a Shade" all that remains of it being a few fragments of the lower parts of the side walls. This place is said to have been built by Robert de Lundon a natural son of King William. Soon after Naughton was acquired by John de Haya the third son of William de Haya the first of the family of Errol. The Hays are mentioned as Lairds of Naughton about King Alexander III's [3rd] reign. In 1494 Sir Patrick Chrichton got the lands in marriage with Janet the daughter and heiress of Sir James de la Hay. From the Chrichtons Mr. Peter Hay a son of the Laird of Megginsh purchased the lands in the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the year 1737 the estate was brought to a judicial sale by the creditors of Robert Hay of Naughton and purchased by William Morrison Esq. the great grandfather of the present proprietor Mrs. Bethune Morison."* (**The New Statistical Account of Scotland**. (1845). Vol IX, (Fife-Kinross), William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, p 587).

The family genealogy is as follows:

1. William Morison, thread maker of Dundee, died 1779, married Jean Fleming.
2. William Morrison of Naughton m Elizabeth Gray (Dean of the Guild 1757-8 and 1761-2, Treasurer 1746-7).

(William had a brother Alexander, also a merchant in Dundee. This Alexander had two sons who became Dundee Burgesses: Alexander (Jr) and William).

3. James Morison 1738-1816 (Manufacturer and Magistrate of Dundee) married 1759 Isabella Maxwell, only child of the Rev. David Maxwell, of Strathinartine, Forfar, by Isabel his wife, daughter of Alexander Duncan, of Lundie. They had 1 son and 4 daughters:

4. William Maxwell Morison 1761-, Col of Tayside Fencibles, unmarried.

4.i. Isobel 1760-1850 (see 4.i below)

4.ii. Elizabeth

4.iii. Catherine married Henry Stark of Teases

4.iv. Anne (Mrs Skene) of Pilour

4.i. Isobel married Willian (Chalmers) Bethune of Blebo who took the surname of his first wife, then took Morison as his surname after marrying Isobel. Only child:

5. Isabella Maxwell Morison 1795-1818

As Isobel Bethune Morrison of Naughton, Bogley, Drummie, and Nydie outlived her daughter Isabella and husband William she entailed Naughton to her kinsman Captain Adam Alexander Duncan, grandson of Admiral Adam Viscount Duncan, who also assumed the additional surname Morison and Morison arms. He died in 1855 and was survived by his only child Catherine Henrietta Adamina Morison Duncan of Naughton. As Isobel had also inherited the two titles of property of her husband (which he had in turn inherited from his first wife), entailing Bogley (which she entailed to Captain James Walker of Falfield) and secondly Drummie and Nydie in Fife (which she entailed to Major Robert Bethune, younger son of General Bethune of Blebo).

The Bogley inheritance of Captain James Walker of Falfield which began the Walker-Morison of Falfield line is as follows:

David Walker of Falfield married Jane Chalmers only daughter of Rev. John Chalmers, of Raderny, Fife, minister of Kilconquhar, 1760-91, by Ellen his wife, daughter of Sir Alexander Anstruther and Hon. Jean Leslie, his wife, usually styled Baroness Newark, and had issue,

I. Bethune James Walker d 1868, his heir, married Johanna Wright.

II. Captain James Walker, of Falfield.

III. John Walker, died unmarried in the West Indies.

I. Janet Walker, married Andrew Pitcairn of Pratis and Pitcullo, Fife

The eldest son, Bethune James Walker, an officer R.N., inherited Falfield from his younger brother Captain James Walker of Falfield, by whom it had been purchased, and on the death of Mrs. Bethune Morison, widow of his mother's brother, William Chalmers, Writer to the Signet, of Raderny, afterwards styled Bethune of Blebo, and finally Bethune-Morison, inherited under an entail executed by her, the Perth property, and assumed the surname and arms of Morison. He married 12 August, 1846, Johanna, daughter of Rev. George

Wright, minister of Kingsbarns, and d. 13 March, 1868, leaving issue, two sons and one daughter:

I. James Walker-Morison, of Falfield, d. 9 Nov. 1876, aged 23.

II. Bethune George Walker-Morison. The Bogley lands later became the property of Bethune George Walker-Morison of Falfield after the death of James, continuing the pattern of adopting the surname to Morrison.

III. Anna Jessie, married 4 June, 1872, John P. Wright, Writer to the Signet.

Note regarding James Morison of Dundee:

James Morison obtained a crown charter of the estates in 1778 and was the builder of the present mansion house at Naughton. He held office as a bailie of Dundee as his father William Morison had been before him. His daughter Isabel married William Bethune of Blebo and took on the estate when her father died in 1816. She died in 1850 in her ninetieth year. It passed to Adam Duncan and on his death to his daughter Miss Morison-Duncan from 1855 onwards.

## **2. The James Morrison Provosts of Aberdeen**

Two James Morrison's became Provosts of Aberdeen as father and son. They were not related to George Morrison of Pitfour who was Provost of Aberdeen from 1652-1654.

1. James Morison of Donside (1665-1748) was admitted as a burgess of the Guild in Aberdeen in 1690. James (Snr) was elected Provost of Aberdeen from 1730-1731. He married Anna Low in 1692 and had six sons and four daughters:

Robert

John

James 1698 (died in infancy)

Thomas 1699

Alexander 1701

James 1708-1786

Anna 1696

Jannet 1703

Christian 1705 and

Catherine 1705

2. James Morison (1708-1786) married Isobell Dyce (1717-1781), the eldest daughter of of James Dyce of Disablair, merchant in Aberdeen. James (Jnr)

was elected Provost 1744-45 and 1752-1753. James and Isobell had five sons and eleven daughters.

Three of the sons died young:

James, 1741

William Augustus 1746 and

Alexander.

The other two were:

Thomas (a distinguished surgeon) and

George (Rev Dr George Morison who entered the ministry and died in 1845, see detailed note below).

The 11 daughters were:

Helen

Agnes 1736

Amelia

Jean 1744

Janet 1747

Anne 1738

Isobel 1739

Mary 1742

Katherine 1750

Sophia

Rachel

### **Notes** concerning James Morison (Jnr) and his family

1. Watt (1900) writes that in the latter part of the sixteenth century onwards there was a prosperous trade between Aberdeen and the Baltic ports, particularly Danzig, where Scottish merchants developed close ties with their Polish counterparts. One such example involved "*Robert Low, merchant and postmaster of Danzig, was brother-in-law of the first provost, **James Morison** of Aberdeen, and uncle of the provost who withstood the Jacobites at the Market Cross in 1745*" (p 313). James' father had married Anna Low, and Robert Low was the brother of Anna's father.

2. With regard to the reference to the Jacobites and the Market Cross in 1745 above, James was the subject of a famous incident during the Pretender's push to establish himself as the rightful heir to the Crown. Watt (1900) wrote:

*And while there was a prevailing indisposition among the county families of the north-east to follow the lead of the Murrays and Drummonds, who were at the head of the rebellion, the attitude of the general body of the people was that of decided aversion to the appeal to arms. Cope had left the town ten days when John Hamilton, the Duke of Gordon's chamberlain, arrived in Aberdeen (September 25) with a company of twenty-five horse and seventy foot to proclaim the Pretender. Some of the more ardent Jacobites among the citizens at once joined him, and the keys of the Market Cross having been obtained,*

*the provost, James Morison, younger, of Elswick, was sent for. The provost could not be found until a peremptory order was announced that unless he presented himself at once his house would be burned. He was then marched as a prisoner to the Town House, where some of the magistrates and council were already in compulsory attendance. The Jacobites ascended the cross, taking with them the provost and his colleagues, and thus appeared before the populace with the ostensible acquiescence and support of the civic authorities while the Pretender was proclaimed and the sheriff-substitute read his manifestoes (pp 298-299).*

A Note Regarding Rev Dr George Morison, son of James (Jnr) Morison, from William Paul (1881):

*Dr. GEORGE MORISON, my predecessor in this parish, was son of James Morison, who was Provost of Aberdeen at the time of the Rebellion of 1745, and grandson of Mr. George Morison [correction, this should be James Morison (Snr)], who in his time had also been Provost of Aberdeen. The following is an extract from the records of the Town Council regarding his father and grandfather:*

*Mr. George [James] Morison, Senior, was Provost during the years one thousand seven hundred and thirty and one thousand seven hundred and thirty-one. He was admitted into the Council, in one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, when he was elected Baillie, and continued in that capacity, with the exception of one or two years, until elected Provost. James Morison, his son, was Provost in the years 1744 and 1745. When the rebels took possession of the town, Provost Morison was hunted out of his house by the insurgents, marched along the streets amidst a guard of bayonets and drawn swords, and forced to mount the top of the Market Cross, where he was ordered to drink wine to the Pretender's health. The Provost, ever staunch to the House of Brunswick, refusing to do so, had the wine poured down his throat. The account of this matter given by the Provost himself, in a letter sent by him to President Forbes of Culloden, which is found in the Culloden papers, is somewhat different, and is as follows "I am just now at some distance from Aberdeen and from my family, not thinking myself safe to be in the way of those who had used me in so un reasonable odd a manner, as was my fate on the twenty-fifth past Sept. when, being seized upon by an armed party of Highlandmen, I was violently forced down to the Cross, and there, with some broad swords over my head, was obliged to stand till their proclamation was read and, because I refused to drink a health they proposed, I had a glass of wine spilt down my breast, which was, I acknowledge, making me suffer in a way, next taking my life, that none could have affected me more". In reply, the Lord President says "The useless insolent usage you met with at your Cross, and your resolute behaviour, I had formerly heard, and sufficiently approved of nor need you doubt it shall be properly represented in due time". The Provost seems to have had the same determination in ruling his family as in resisting the enemies of his country. He used to teach them the Shorter*

*Catechism on the Sunday evenings, and his son George, who was at the time too young to take part in the exercise, used to tell that, "while the teaching was being proceeded with, apples were being coddled before the fire as part of the Sunday evening's meal, and that, when my Father was scolding, and sometimes laying on hands on the others, I amused myself watching the coddling of the apples".*

*Dr. Morison was originally minister of Oyne, in the Presbytery of Garioch, where he was settled in the year 1782, and was translated in 1785 to the parish of Banchory-Devenick, in the Presbytery of Aberdeen, situated partly in the county of Kincardine, and partly in that of Aberdeen, the parish being intersected by the river Dee. He was a man of bland and courteous manners, and of a large and benevolent heart. He was, moreover, possessed of a sound understanding, and good business habits, and was most attentive to all the duties of his office, and much attached to his people. During the latter period of his ministry he inherited a good fortune, which enabled him to do what few of his profession could, and what fewer probably would do if they had the means. He erected a school, with a schoolmaster's house attached to it, entirely with his own means, at Portlethen, a remote district in his own parish, containing nearly 1800 souls. He erected and partially endowed two other schools to supply educational wants in the northern districts of the parishes of Fetteresso and Fintray, where his lands of Elsick and Disblair were situated. To teachers and scholars in these schools a great amount of good was done by their beneficent founder; but all the good thus effected was small compared with the benefit conferred upon his parishioners by the introduction of vaccination into the parish. This he was enabled to effect through the advice and directions of his brother, then a physician in London, at a time when it was scarcely known elsewhere.*

*There were at first great prejudices in the parish against it. Some thought it was a sinful attempt to thwart an appointment of God's providence sent in the way of chastisement; and it, no doubt, often failed at the outset by unskilfulness in the operation, improper treatment after it, and bad matter. In order to secure success, as far as possible, Dr. Morison took the whole work upon himself. He was, as a proof of his success, furnished with the following pleasing evidence. At the time of the introduction of vaccination, and from time immemorial previously, the young men of the fishing villages in the parish, viz, Findon, Portlethen, and Dounie, never used to engage in landward service.*

*One day meeting a fisherman, the Doctor asked him how his sons were engaged, and being told they were in farm service, he said he thought that none of the fishers' sons were allowed to be so occupied. To which the fisherman replied "That used to be the case, but since they were vaccinated they had so many of them noo, they did na ken fat te dee wi' them." A ludicrous thing happened, when a man well on in years brought all his family, old and young, to be vaccinated. It having appeared that he had not been vaccinated himself, he was urged by the Doctor to submit to the operation first himself, but he refused, being apparently afraid of the pain. After all the children had been operated upon, he was again urged to submit, upon which*



*he said to the eldest boy—"Wast sair, Jock ?" "Na, nae verra", "said the boy. "Weel," said the father, "I wad nae care muckle to tak' a scrat o't mysel". As he was getting Old the Doctor' s hand got tremulous, and he devolved upon me the duty of vaccination, which I discharged till the Vaccination Act was passed, which made statutory provision for its discharge by others.*

*Dr. Morison also contributed liberally to the funds which were raised for the endowment of the Church of Portlethen, for the erection of a new church and manse, and the reclamation of the barren ground, in which the manse was situated, for a glebe. This has been a great convenience to that extensive district. During what was all but a famine, in the year think it was, Dr. Morison bought meal from other quarters, and lodged it in a granary in the neighbourhood, and the people who were in want were assembled and had it doled out with the Doctor's own hand from time to time; many being thereby saved from actual starvation. Dr. Morison's greatest and last act of philanthropy in his parish was the erection, in 1839, of the foot suspension bridge over the Dee, which now unites the two divisions of the parish. Previous to its erection the only public means of communication between the one side of the river and the other was a parish boat, which was only used on Sundays. It could not, however, always be depended upon, as the river was often impassable owing to ice and heavy floods. The total cost of the bridge was about £1400, and, with the exception of a contribution of £30 from Mr. Menzies of Pitfodels, which only sufficed for making the pathway between the south end of the bridge and the turnpike road, it was wholly defrayed by Dr. Morison. He bequeathed, moreover, a sum of money for keeping it in repair, which had accumulated to such an amount as to enable the trustees to lay out about £300 a short time ago for thoroughly re-painting and repairing it. In the circumstances I have mentioned I am disappointed to hear, from time to time, some of the classes who usually ride in their carriages, asking me, on passing the bridge, in a tone of complaint, "Why didn't Dr Morison when he was about the thing build a bridge for carriages?" and those who do not ride in these vehicles inquiring in an equally complaining tone, "I say, Doctor, fat for didna Dr. Morison mak' his briggy for caerts?" I cannot doubt my readers will be pleased with the information I have given them about this philanthropic, generous, and christian minded man. (pp 21-26)*

## Chapter 9

### The Morrisons of Lewis and Harris

#### The Morrisons who became Clergymen

The Rev. Murdo MacCaulay (1980) gives an excellent historical perspective of Christianity in the Western Isles and a detailed account of the religious history of Lewis up until the "Disruption of 1843". In part his work outlines the relationships of the many Morrisons who became ministers on Lewis and Harris. His work is a significant advancement on the preliminary attempt made by L A Morrison (1880, p 55) and Thomas (1878, pp 522-541).

The following is a paraphrased account of the dates and relationships of the Morrisons who became ministers after 1642 when the Synod of Argyll resolved to appoint three ministers: 1. Farquhar Clerk at Stornua (Stornoway), 2. Murdoch McHuistonne at Lews (Barvas), and 3. John MacPherson at Harris.

In 1643 Rev. Donald Morrison was admitted to Barvas and in 1644 transferred to Stornoway and was still there in 1676. He was descended from the family described as the Brieves on Lewis. He was born about 1613 and died about 1699. The genealogies given by Captain Thomas and L A Morrison are at odds with the genealogies outlined below taken from *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* and MacCaulay.

Donald graduated MA from St Andrews in 1640 and married Jean Lauder on 3rd April 1643. He was succeeded by his son Kenneth (whereas Thomas says he was succeeded by his son Allan and that Kenneth was his brother, p 523 ) who was born in Barvas, 1647 (graduated from Aberdeen in 1667) and became Stornoway's minister in 1689. Three of Donald and Jean's sons, (1) Kenneth, (2) Donald and (3) Allan became ministers. Scott's (1928) *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* confuses Rev Donald and his son Donald as it is wrongly stated on page 200 that Donald, son of Rev. Donald Morrison, married Jean Lauder.

(1) Kenneth (born about 1647) had two sons, Alexander and Murdoch (a merchant in Stornoway), and a daughter Margaret who married Rev Aulay MacAulay of Harris. Kenneth was succeeded in Stornoway by his second cousin Donald (or Daniel) of Barvas who was also known as Domhnull MacRuairidh, Mhic Aonghais, Mhic Ailein, Mhic a'Bhreitheimh (son of the brieve, who was the "Indweller" John Morrison). He married Christine Morrison in 1708, and transferred to Stornoway in 1724. They had two daughters, Isobel and Anne. Donald's wife was an alcoholic which caused many problems for Donald. He was supported in his troubles with the Synod by Rev. Aneas (Angus) Morrison who was the minister at Contin.

Another of Rev. Donald Morrison's sons, (2) Donald took over at Barvas about 1684, although according to MacCaulay (1980, p 64) there is some confusion over this as Donald is also referred to as Daniel by some informants.

MacCaulay suggests Rev. Donald had six sons who became ministers and a seventh who became a surgeon. There is no identification in the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* of any of the children, four who were reputed to have become ministers.

Finally, (3) Allan who graduated from Aberdeen in 1677 took over the parish of North Uist in 1688 as its minister. He married Margaret MacLeod. Allan was succeeded by his son Murdoch who was born about 1700 and ordained on Barvas in 1726. Murdoch was married twice, first to a MacAulay and second to Margaret MacKenzie of Gruinard. Murdoch had several children: Allan, Donald, John, Kenneth (1739), Katherine, Margaret, Colin, George (1745), Roderick (1748), Marion (1750) and Norman (1752). Murdoch Morrison's fourth son, Kenneth Morrison born in 1739 graduated from Aberdeen with an MA in divinity in 1763 but never entered the ministry.

Aneas was the second son of the "Indweller" and married Anne MacKenzie of Logie. They had a son named Donald and a daughter who became Mrs St Clair.

Rev. John Morrison, younger brother of Aneas, was the minister at Gairloch and Urray (died 1747). He married Mary, daughter of John and Christian MacKenzie and had two sons (grandchildren of the "Indweller"): Rev. Norman Morrison (born 1707, died 1777, became a minister at Uig in 1742) and Rev. John Morrison (born in Dull, Perthshire 1701 and died 1774, and became the minister of Petty and became known as the "Petty Seer". Rev. John Morrison married a second time after the death of Mary, Christian who was the daughter of Alexander Munro of Kilchoan and had two more children, Alexander and Christina.

Finally in Harris, John Morrison, Gobha na h-Earadh, born in Rodil in 1790, was a descendant of "the blind harpist" Roderick Morrison, and was a blacksmith by trade who was recognised as a god-fearing scholar who could write in Gaelic, English and some Latin. He was appointed as a Catechist in 1843.

This is not a comprehensive genealogy of the Lewis Morrison clergy, but nevertheless demonstrates how these particular Morrisons were the first family to become known by the surname Morrison on Lewis and Harris along with their connection to the 'bhrithemh' or brieves (judicial arbiters) who maintained a strong hereditary line of lawmen until 1613. They, along with brieves from other islands such as Skye, appear to have assumed some degree of respect and influence after the lawless Norsemen relinquished their claim to the Hebrides and Man after the "Treaty of Perth" on 2 July 1266. The Lewis brieves maintained their influence until the late 1500s when their alleged adultery and treachery against the MacLeods took place. MacCoinnich (2015, pp 44-50) gives a detailed account of the '*Sliochd a' Bhrithemh*' or Brieve Kindred history on Lewis.

## Appendix 1

**The contents of Prestongrange House** revealing the List of William Morison's goods described in his Will, 1741 Morrison, William [Reference CC8/8/104 Edinburgh Commissary Court]:

- 2 silver candle snuffers [and assorted other silver]
- a 1 lb piece of gold
- a blue mohair bed with yellow lining
- a feather bed
- 4 pairs English blankets in very bad state
- 4 pieces arras hangings
- one pair yellow window hangings
- a fine Japanese cabinet and table
- a fine glass
- 2 big chairs
- 4 small chairs
- 4 big pictures and gilded frames
- 3 other pictures 10 framed prints 4 unframed
- a grate
- old shutters
- 2 small bells
- pair of pistols

In the kitchen

- a large grate and gallows
- 3 spits
- one old brass pan, drainer and saucepan
- brass pot with cover
- copper oven pan and saucepan
- old white iron
- sconce
- marble mortar
- linen
- 2 tables in the room next the dining room
- 4 chairs and 2 sconces

In the dining room

- 2 tables, 4 chairs
- 5 pieces worsted arras and a small piece
- a grate

In the grey room

- bed with yellow mohair and a feather bed and bolster
- 3 pair of single blankets
- 2 armed chairs and 10 others
- a grate
- a table
- hanging of the room
- piece of glass
- chest of drawers, and another a table

In the high grey room

bed with silk hangings, feather bed mattress, bolster and pillow  
3 pair blankets  
hangings of the room  
chest of drawers  
a glass table  
3 armchairs  
6 other chairs  
and a table  
2 pictures  
a chimney

In the room of the gallery

a bed hung with Irish shot feather bed, a bolster, 2 pillows  
hangings  
a grate  
3 small and a big chair

In the gallery

one small cabinet  
a dutch ambrey chest of drawers  
Wardrobes  
5 old trunks  
2 old chests

In the first room of the staircase

one bed lined with green lining  
one feather bed, small and bolster  
one blanket and room hanging

In the 2nd room of the staircase

a bed hung with blew lining  
a feather bed and bolster  
grate,  
3 chairs and a table

Nursery

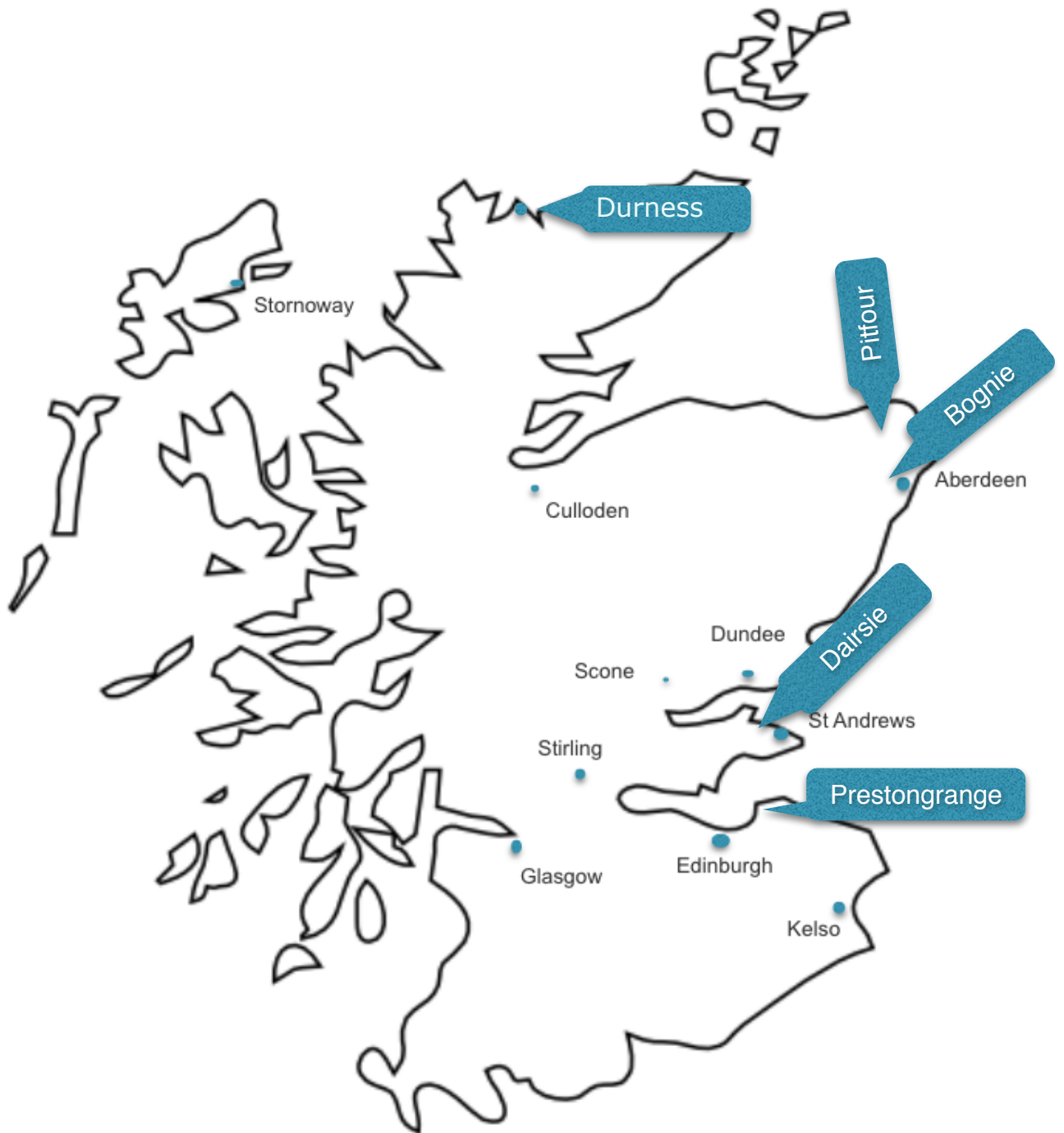
one old feather bed  
a table and timber box

Kitchen

a long list of linen and napery  
plates and trenchers

## Appendix 2

### Map of Scotland



## Appendix 3

### Lineages of the Morrisons of Prestongrange, Dairsie and Bognie

#### The Morrisons of Prestongrange and Dairsie

**John Morrison** (About 1530, died 16 Dec 1573) described in Edinburgh records as the elder, a merchant and burgess of Edinburgh, married about 1550 to Beatrix Hill. She died on 9 Sept 1587.

Children of John Morrison and Beatrix Hill:

**John Morrison** Abt 1550-1615 (Baillie of Edinburgh 1581 and Treasurer 1588) married 1570 Katherine Preston (the d John Preston of Fentonbarns, Lord President of the Court from 1609 to 1616).

Children of John Morrison and Katherine Preston:

- I. John 1571-1642 (died 19/12/1642 Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh)
- II. Henry 1572- married (a) Christian Dick 17/6/1606 (OPR and EMR), then secondly (b) Jonet Sottiswood (Commissariat of Edinburgh 1601-1700, p 379)

(a) Children of Henry Morrison and Christian Dick:

1. John 1608 OPR (married Margaret Nicholson, daughter of 1st Baron Thomas Nicholson of Carnock and Isabel Henderson)

Children of John Morrison and Margaret Nicholson:

- A. 1638 OPR Henry, (WS), married Agnes Wilkie, 22 November 1672 OPR, EMR, p 491)

Children of Henry Morrison WS and Agnes Wilkie:

- i. Henry 1674 OPR.

B. Margaret 1639 OPR

C. Christian 1640 OPR (married 21 June 1664 (EMR) George Stuart of Auldhame), buried Greyfriars, 10 May 1676

D. William 1642 OPR

2. Janet 1609 OPR d 31 Oct 1675 (married 10/11/1625 OPR, EMR John Trotter 2nd of Mortonhall (their daughter Catherine married John

Rocheid, parents of Janet who married William Morrison). Buried at Greyfriars.

3. Margaret 1613 OPR
4. Catherine 1614 OPR (married 19/9/1633 OPR John Jowsie of West Pans)
5. Harie 1615 OPR (married Jean Drummond)  
Children of Harie Morison and Jean Drummond:

A. Jonet 1638 OPR

6. Catharine 1617 OPR

(b) Children of Henry Morrison and Jonet Spottiswood:

1. Christiane 2 Mar 1620 OPR
2. Alexander 20 Jan 1622 OPR
3. Elizabeth 11 April 1624 OPR

III. **Isaac** 1574-1610, married Helen Arnot 11/5/1595 OPR (after Isaac died she married Sir George Home of Manderston)

Children of Isaac Morrison and Helen Arnot:

1. John 1596 OPR who became **Sir John Morrison** (sometimes incorrectly styled "of Dairsie) and died 6/7/1625 aged 29 (married to Nicola Bruce (d of Sir George Bruce of Carnock).

Children of Sir John Morrison and Nicola Bruce:

- A. George Abt 1617 became **Sir George Morrison of Dairsie** who married Agnes Boyd (d of Robert Boyd and 2nd wife Lady Christian Hamilton and sister of Jean Boyd married to Sir Alexander Morrison of Prestongrange).

Children of Sir George Morrison and Agnes Boyd:

- i. Johne 1646 OPR (24/03/1646, Johne Moresone, Sir George Moreson/Agnes Boyd FR155, 453/00 0010 0150, St Andrew and St Leonards), died 1st March 1688 and buried in Morrison Tomb, Greyfriars cemetery.
- ii. Nicola 1647 OPR
- iii. Robert 1648 OPR
- iv. George 1649 OPR described as an Advocate
- v. Charles 1650 OPR
- vi. William 1655 OPR
- vii. Agnes 1658 OPR
- viii. Christian 1661 OPR



Note: Buried in Greyfriars cemetery is a David Morrison, child, of Dairsie, 28 Feb 1697 in the Morrison Tomb. Parents not known, presumably a child of any of Robert, George, Charles or William.

B. Margaret Abt 1618

C. Katherine Abt 1620 (married 1656 Sir James Stewart of Kirkhill, son of Sir Lewis Stewart and Margaret Windram, ref. Hallen (ed.) (1891), Vol V, p 5, notes she was the daughter of Sir John Morrison)

2. Margaret 1599 OPR (married Abt 1618 Sir Alexander Home, son of Sir George and 1st wife Isobel, his 2nd wife was Helen Arnot former wife of Isaac Morrison, d of Sir John Arnot of Beswick, was appointed 1651 by King Charles 11 Master of the Household to Princess of Orange and Earldom of Dunbar. Died 1627) (SRO will)
3. Alexander 1601 OPR
4. Katherine 1603 OPR
5. Marioun 1606 OPR
6. Isaac 1607 OPR married Janet Goodfellow
7. Harie 1608
8. James 1609-1626 (SRO, Will dated 11 Sep 1626, lawful son to umqhhile Isaac M, Merchant, Burgess of Edinburgh)

IV. Alexander 1579-1631 who became **Lord Alexander Morrison** (married 6//9/1610 OPR Helenor Maule, daughter of William Maule, merchant and Burgess of Edinburgh and wife Bethia Guthrie, daughter of Alexander Guthrie)

Children of Alexander Morrison and Helenor Maule:

1. John 1612 OPR
2. Bethia 1613 OPR (married 1629 Sir Robert Spottiswood)
3. Katherine 1611 OPR
4. Katherine 1615 OPR (became Lady Wedderburn when she 1st married 1635 Lt Col George Home of Wedderburn (slain at the Battle of Dunbar 3/9/1650). 2nd married Sir William Montgomery (Clerk of Session of the privy Council, died 1656). 3rd Katherine married James Bethune of Balfour, 1656.
5. Alexander who became **Sir Alexander of Prestongrange**, (1616-1687) married Jean Boyd 9/7/1637 OPR (d of 7th Lord Robert Boyd and 2nd wife Lady Christian (Hamilton) Lindsay)

Children of Sir Alexander and Jean Boyd:

- A. Janet (married David Wilkie 14/1/1658)
- B. William 18 April 1663-1739 who became **Sir William of Prestongrange** (married 1676 Janet Rocheid)

1665-1713, d of Catherine Trotter and John Rocheid of Craigleith. She was 12 when they married)

Children of Sir William Morrison and Janet Rocheid:

- i. Alexander 1683 OPR Recorded in the Index of Genealogies as "Alexander, the younger, of Prestongrange, who was interred in Preston Kirk 8 May 1703".
- ii. Catherine 1684 OPR (Lady Strathnaver, m 1705 William Gordon, Lord Strathnaver)
- iii. Helen 1688 OPR (Countess of Glasgow, m 1707 2nd Earl John Boyle of Glasgow)
- iv. Jean 1687 OPR (Viscountess Arbuthnot, married Abt 1710 5th Viscount John Arbuthnot, the son of George Gordon 15th Earl of Sutherland)
- v. William 1690-1762 OPR of Craigleith married
  1. Araminta (no further information, about 1716
  2. 1730 Henrietta Dallas of St Martins (daughter of James Dallas of St Martins and 2nd wife Barbara Cockburn. She remarried 1763 a George Dallas, merchant in London. Ref Dallas of St Martins p 349)

Only Child of William and Araminta:  
George, Born 15 May 1718,  
Marlybone, London.  
Died Sundridge, Kent 1788  
(Scottish Middle Templars, p  
105)

vi. John 1691 OPR

vii. Henry 1692 OPR

viii. James 1693 OPR

C. Jean (married 1670 Sir John Nisbet of Craigentinnie, Dean and Dirleton, his third marriage), died 18 Nov 1695. Buried Kirk of Prestonpans 25 Nov 1695.

D. Catherine

E. Christian (married William Bennet of Grubett in 1665).

F. Helen (married 1661 John Riddell, his 2nd of 3 marriages, 3rd Baronet of Riddell, son of Walter Riddell and Christian Nisbet)

G. Thomas

6. Helene 1617 OPR

7. Elizabeth 1618 OPR

8. William 1621 OPR

9. Helenor 1622 OPR

10. Heleanor 1626-1660 OPR (married 1657 Robert Gordon, son of Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonston, Ref: House of Gordon p 30 (138))

11. Nicola 1624 OPR

12. John 1627 OPR, died 1698, tailor, buried Greyfriars Morrison Tomb

13. William 1628 OPR (married 1650 Jean Kennedy)

14. James 1629 OPR (married Jonet Gordon 1659)

Children of James and Jonet:

A. William 1660 OPR

B. Rachel 1666 OPR

C. Thomas 1668 OPR

15. Robert 1631 OPR (married Margaret Home, 1/6/1665 OPR)

Children of Robert Morrison and Margaret Home:

A. John 1666 OPR

B. Jonet 1668 OPR

C. Jean 1669 OPR

D. Alexander 1671 OPR

E. Agnes 1675 OPR

F. James 1677 OPR

G. Marion 1677 OPR

V. Elizabeth 1584 (married Sir William Dick of Braid 15/6/1603 OPR, their son John Dick married Sir John Morrison's widow Nicola Bruce)

VI. James -1631 (married Janet Ker 4/10/1627 Parish of Holyroodhouse or Canongate Register of Marriages 1564-1800, Will SRCO18/06/1631).

Children of James Morrison and Janet Ker:

1. James 1628 OPR
2. Jean 1629 OPR
3. Samuel 1630 OPR

VII. Sarah (married James Inglis, merchant, 12 Oct 1609 EMR)

VIII. Catherine (married Sir William Scott, Lord Clerkington, 4 Oct 1621 OPR)

IX. Helene 1595-1627 (married 24/9/1617 OPR and EMR Samuel Johnston of Skene who was the son of Rachel Arnot and nephew of Marion Arnot (d of Sir John Arnot of Birswick and sister of Helen Arnot ((who was married to George Home whose son Alexander was married to Margaret Morrison)) who was married to Archibald Johnson, Lord Wariston)

X. Harie 1584-1623 (married Katherine Stewart, daughter of William Stewart, Burgess 1609)

Children of Harie Morrison and Katherine Stewart:

1. Isaac (married Janet Goodfellow)

A. Margaret 1627 OPR

2. Harie 1605-1673, advocate, Burgess 1660. Buried at Greyfriars.

3. Alexander

4. Janet

5. Margaret

6. Katherine 1609-

7. Christian - 1 Feb 1650 (married 26/03/1638 OPR Sir Andrew Dick of Craighouse (son of Sir William Dick) (after the death of Christian in 1650 he married Jean Leslie). Only child: Elizabeth Dick.

## **The Morrisons of Bognie**

The Morrisons from Bognie in Aberdeenshire have an impressive continuous lineage after they acquired the lands of Bognie in 1635:

**1st Alexander Morrison of Bognie** (Abt 1570) married 1. Elizabeth Garden, then 2. Katharine Gordon.

Children of Alexander and Elizabeth:

Barbara Morrison

Mary Morrison

George became the 2nd of Bognie

**2nd George Morrison** (Abt 1620-1699) married Christian Urquhart, Viscountess Frenchnaught (second daughter of Alexander Urquhart of Dunlugat, afterwards of Cromarty, widow of Lord Rutherford, who, after the Viscount's death, married George Morrison of Bognie)

Susana Morrison

Theodore Morrison became the 3rd of Bognie

**3rd Theodore Morrison** (1685-1766) married Katharine Maitland.

Christian Morrison

Alexander Morrison became the 4th of Bognie

Philip Morrison

James Morrison

Susana Morrison

**4th Alexander Morrison** (1724-1801) married Katharine Duff.

Theodore became the 5th of Bognie

John Morrison became the 6th of Bognie

George Morrison

James Morrison married Anne Victorie de la Marrre

Anna Jaquette Morrison

Alexander Morrison became 8th of Bognie

John Morrison became 9th of Bognie

Katherine Morrison

**5th Theodore** (1754-1834) didn't marry and passed on the Bognie title to his brother, John. He acquired the lands of Mountblairy in 1812.

**6th John Morrison** (1757-1835) (of Auchintoul and Bognie, younger brother of Theodore) married Jane Fraser.

Alexander Morrison became 7th of Bognie, died without issue

**7th Alexander Morrison** (1802-1874) of Bognie and Mountblairy married Jessie Eliza Duff.

**8th Alexander Morrison** (1810-1879) married Mary Catherine Young. Known as Alexander Morrison of Bognie and Mountblairy.

**9th John Morrison** (1812-1886) married Mary Jane Wetherall. He was the second son of James Morrison.

Frederick de la Marre Morrison became 10th of Bognie

**10th Frederick de la Marre Morrison** (1842-1911) married Janet Forbes Gordon.

Isabel Gordon Morrison

Alexander Edward Forbes Morrison became 11th of Bognie, died without issue

Duncan Maitland Morrison married Sara Margaret Copeland

Donald Fraser Morrison

Alexander Gordon Morrison became 12th of Bognie

**11th Alexander Edward Forbes Morrison** (1874-1932) married Clementina Graham Stuart.

There was a gap in the father-son line at this point whereby a search of ancestors then uncovered the brother of Alexander, Duncan, who had two sons, Alexander Gordon Morrison who was living in Canada, and Donald Fraser Morrison.

**12th Alexander Gordon Morrison** (1920-2013) and 12th Laird of Fren draught and Mountblairy, son of Duncan Maitland Morrison and Sarah Margaret Copeland, married Yvonne Isabelle Angus.

Diane Yvonne Morrison

Cheryle Jeanne Morrison

Alexander Morrison became 13th of Bognie

**13th Alexander Morrison** (1952- ) married Bona McKenzie Murray.

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