



## **William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden**

by Karen Baird Vierra, April 2015

The surname of Baird is not usually the first name that comes to mind when people gather to talk about Scotland. United Kingdom surname statistics rank Baird at about 370, depending on the census year. Meaning, 369 other surnames appear more frequently in the population. Baird's are, however, recognized by the Scottish government, through the Lyon Court, as an Armigerous Clan. The word "armigerous" means a clan without a chief. Wikipedia lists 352 Scottish Clans<sup>1</sup>, Baird among them.

The less common the surname, and the less prominent the individuals of that surname, the more difficult it is to research. For this reason, the genealogical work of William Baird is the foundation for what is known about Baird's in Scotland prior to 1770. Without a doubt, if not for William Baird's manuscript, knowledge of Baird history would be scant indeed.

Toward the end of his life, William Baird gathered his notes, artifacts, and tidbits of information he had received from others over the course of his lifetime, and began to record them in a single folio. He filled 191 pages with his tiny deplorable penmanship and bound them together within a leather cover to form a manuscript of lasting legacy. He titled it, *Genealogical Collections concerning ye Sir-name of BAIRD and the Family's of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Sauchtonhall; in particular - With copy's of old Letters and Paper's worth preserving, and account of several Transactions in this Country, during ye Two last Centurys*. In addition to the speculated origins of some Baird lines, the genealogies, and the letters, William also documented the traditions that are often repeated today. These are: His own recitation of the Baird who slew the bear (yes, BEAR) to save King William the Lion, for which he stated the bear's severed paw had been handed down in his family from as far back as his Cambusnethan ancestors; and also Rhymer's tradition that predicted eagles will only be seen on the cliffs of Pennan when a Baird resides at Auchmedden.



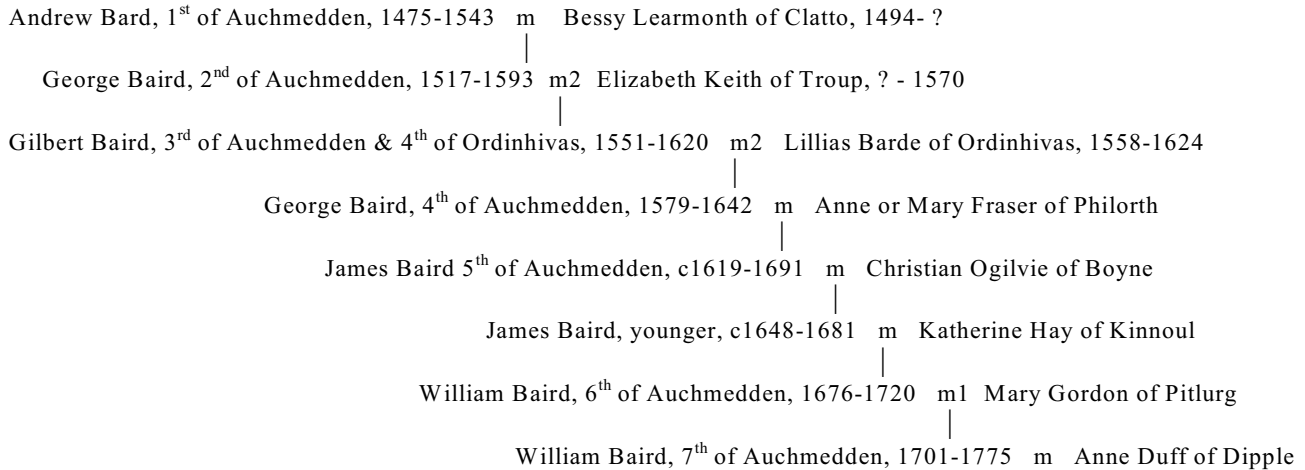
What led up to William Baird's decision to document, not only his own family, but all Baird's of Scotland? This paper will answer that question and outline some of William Baird's lineage, family,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Scottish\\_clans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Scottish_clans)

and circumstances. It will go beyond that to reveal facts never before known. Baird Heritage is proud to share our discoveries with interested readers regarding this pivotal Baird historian, William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden.

William was born August 30, 1701, the eldest son of William Baird, 6<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden and his first wife Mary Gordon. The simplified genealogy below may help to understand the descendancy of the chiefs of the Auchmedden line.



There is some discrepancy about the descendancy which requires further research. John Malcolm Bulloch, in his short publication *The Bairds of Auchmedden and Strichen, Aberdeenshire*, claims William 7<sup>th</sup>'s father to have been James, eldest son of James younger. Yet Sir James Andrew Gardiner Baird of the senior cadet branch of Saughtonhall, in his Stirnet.com contribution, shows this James to have died in Edinburgh at age 19, and James younger's fourth child William to have been 6<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden and father of William 7<sup>th</sup>.

James younger died of smallpox when he was only 33 and his son William 6<sup>th</sup> was only 5 years old. This is why the inheritance of Auchmedden skipped a generation, as the first James Baird, 5<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden survived his son's death and lived until 1691.

By the time William 7<sup>th</sup> was born in 1701, the process of unifying England and Scotland was nearing completion. Scotland's southern population was, by and large, heavily invested in the unification. This included many members of the Baird family residing in Lothian areas around Edinburgh, including those of the Saughtonhall and Newbyth cadet branches of Auchmedden. A few of these Baird men had been writers and attorneys, employed by the Scottish government to negotiate and draft the plans to incorporate the two country's governments.

The 1715 Rising, when William was fourteen, must have captured his imagination and left an indelible impression on such a young boy. He grew up well educated and was thought to have been of good humour. He could read Greek, Latin, French, and German. He had translated Thucydides.<sup>2</sup> When called

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<sup>2</sup> *The Bairds of Auchmedden and Strichen, Aberdeenshire* by John Malcolm Bulloch, 1934

upon, he offered others the use of his extensive library and made himself available to his guests, to read aloud in English, the books that had been written in Latin.

His father died August 22, 1720, just eight days before he turned 19, at which time he was served heir to Auchmedden. There is no known record of William Baird 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden having been knighted or that he held any titles. As the heir of a respectable estate, and head, or chief, of the leading Baird family in northeastern Scotland, he was a member of the Scottish middle gentry.

The Auchmedden Family was fortunate to have made a good alliance through what was undoubtedly an arranged marriage for young William to Anne Duff on October 21, 1721. William was age 20 and Anne was 16, a common matrimonial age for that period. She was the daughter of William Duff of Dipple by his second wife, Lady Jean Dunbar.

William Baird and Anne Duff had eleven children. Six sons and five daughters. William Baird's Bible is still in existence.<sup>3</sup> Inside the Bible is printed the following: (slightly reformatted here):

William Baird of Auchmedden, Esq., was Married with Mrs Anne Duff at Elgin, October 21, 1721; and had the following Children

William	October 1, 1722
Alexander	December 29, 1724
James	June 30, 1726
Charles	January 4, 1729
John	September 19, 1730
Jean	January 24, 1732
George	January 5, 1733
Helen	January 2, 1734
Katharine	January 27, 1735
Anne	August 28, 1736
Henrietta	October 18, 1738

Anne Duff's father died in 1722, and her elder half brother William (1697-1763) succeeded as heir to Dipple. He proved even more successful than his father, acquiring vast land holdings and was made 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Fife in 1735 by King George II, and Lord Braco of Irish Honours.



Duff

#### Anne Duff's Father

William Duff of Dipple, 1653-1722 was the second son of Alexander Duff of Keithmore. He attended Kings College in Aberdeen, completed by age 13, and was sent to Inverness to apprentice to his uncle, Provost William Duff of Inverness, whose business was in trade. Duff was then made partner with his uncle and Sir James Calder. William Duff married his first wife, Jean Gordon of Edinglassie in 1681 from whom he obtained sasine in the lands of Birkenburn. He served as Treasurer of Inverness in 1682. As his business and fortune grew, he began to turn it over to subordinates as he looked to investing in real estate, mostly in Moray. In 1684 he purchased Dipple, an ancient parish in Morayshire, on the west bank of the Spey, opposite Fochabers, after which, he would often say, he "liked very well to see a merchant turn Laird but he did not like so well to see a Laird turn a merchant." While he and his growing family lived predominantly in Inverness, they did live at Dipple for a time. Lady Jean Gordon bore him nine children, six daughters, three sons. Their eighth child was named William, born 1697, who afterwards became Lord Braco. Jean Gordon died between 1698 and 1702.

Dipple moved to Elgin when, in 1703, he married Jean Dunbar of Durn. She bore him one son and four daughters, providing Dipple a total of 14 children. Lady Jean Dunbar's first child was Anne Duff, born 1705, who married William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden in 1721 when she was 16 years old.

In a time before banking was introduced to Scotland, merchants and gentry who faced financial difficulties looked to wealthy noblemen to loan or underwrite their pecuniary needs. William Duff of Dipple was the person to whom the citizenry went for money. This then became a matter taking up much of his time until his death in 1722 at age 69.

<sup>3</sup> Edinburgh University Library, Rare Books Collection, Shelf mark E.97.54

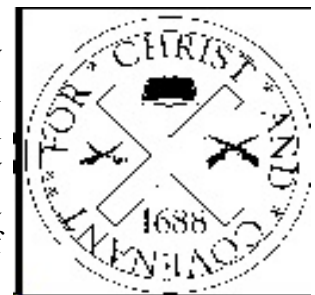
Powerful and wealthy men like William Duff were constantly besieged with requests for help from family, friends, and the people living around them. This included financial backing and loans, hosting the son of allied families, using their influence to recommend someone for school admittance, apprenticeship, or a job position, or any number of other favors.

William Baird of Auchmedden caused Duff, his brother-in-law, to sponsor young William Baird in his schooling. Duff wrote in 1735, “*I have Auchmedden’s son now on my hands and shall get part of his entry bond to pay.*”<sup>4</sup> It would seem William and Anne Duff Baird, and their children, were the constant and continual recipients of the gracious charity of William Duff, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Fife, and later his son James, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl.

However charismatic, intelligent, and well-meaning Auchmedden may have been, the letters preserved for us to study today reveal that long before William Baird may have contributed financially to the ‘45 Rising, he was not prudent with his money. In addition, it was a sore subject between he and his wife.

We do not know if William 7<sup>th</sup> supported the unification of Scotland and England but we do know he supported Charles Edward Stuart - or Bonnie Prince Charlie - in the fight to restore the Stuart’s to the throne instead of George II of the House of Hanover. He appears to have resolutely been a Jacobite.

The four tenets of Jacobitism were, the divine right of kings, the accountability of kings to God alone, the inalienable hereditary right, and the unequivocal scriptural injunction of non-resistance and passive obedience. Jacobites held that “right” was the basis for the law which was in conflict with the Whig party who held that “possession” was the basis of the law. William Baird was a Catholic, as were many Jacobites, although Episcopalians made up about half of those who joined the cause.



Freedom of religion was unheard of in William Baird’s time. The population was told what God they would worship, and under what church they would worship that God. No wonder so many Scots rejected government’s religious mandates or that citizens throughout Scotland met in secret settings in order to pray and worship as they saw fit. The Killing Times of Scotland show just how heavy the penalty was for those who defied the laws and it is during the later half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that we begin to see an exodus from Scotland, predominately to North America. A perilous journey and dangerous settlement adventure undertaken by either the brave decision of free men or the exiled sentences of convicted Covenanters.

The Auchmedden Branch of Baird’s were papists, as were many other clans in Banffshire and Aberdeenshire. In addition, William’s line of forefathers, and the ancestral Ordinhivas forefathers that

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<sup>4</sup> *The Book of the Duffs* by Alistair and Henrietta Tayler, Vol. I, 1914

preceded Auchmedden, were hereditary sheriffs and bailies<sup>5</sup> in Banff, the town 10 miles to the west of Auchmedden. During the times in which Roman Catholicism was tolerated in Scotland, Auchmedden Baird's would have found it easier to carry out their duties. When the practice of Catholicism was outlawed however, it must have been difficult for some Baird officers of the sovereignty to carry out religious edicts that were in conflict with their own personal beliefs. Whichever way the religious pendulum swung, their mandate to enforce the law would have rankled one side or the other.

Quite a tightrope to walk in a society that depended upon remaining in the good graces of their neighbors. Northern Aberdeenshire was seat to many renown clans such as Ogilvie, Duff, Abercrombie, Keith, Fraser, Harvey, Farquharson, Gordon, Grant, and Forbes. In cases of opposing religious or political factions, a lord's good standing in society often depended upon aligning himself with the side he thought had the best chance of prevailing. The wrong choice could destroy a family's reputation, sever alliances, and possibly result in the forfeiture of his lands. This is one of the reasons why we so often see Scottish families that vacillated radically in their support of one side or the other. The motivation may have been thought of as a matter of survival. An excellent example of this is Clan Fraser. While Chief Fraser of Lovat served on the King's behalf in the '45 Rising, he sent his eldest son to serve with the rebels.

As his children grew up, William Baird took his own perilous path. As stated on page 4 above, he joined the Jacobite rebellion along with many other clansmen who hoped to restore the House of Stuart to the unified English and Scottish thrones. William N. Fraser wrote, in the Preface of the book he distortedly edited from William Baird's manuscript<sup>6</sup>, that William was an officer of the Prince's body guard at the Battle of Culloden. Baird Heritage has not been able to confirm W.N. Fraser's claim.

Muster rolls are few and far between and only the men at the top ranks are mentioned in historical books. An interesting book titled, *History of the Transactions in Scotland in the Years 1715-16 and 1745-46*, Vol. II, by George Charles, 1817, closely details Prince Charles' movements between 1745 and 1747, naming many, many of the principal people who surrounded him during that period, but there are none named Baird. This suggests William Baird may not have been as close to the Bonnie Prince as Fraser portrayed him in his 1857 book.



Jacobite symbol, the White Rose Cockade

William did not include any autobiographical information other than his parents, marriage, and children, in his own 1770 manuscript. More research is needed regarding his Jacobite activities.

The Rising was defeated on April 16, 1746 at the Battle of Culloden on Drumossie Moor. As with all other Jacobites, William Baird may have been vulnerable to a claim of treason. He was in debt to his creditors, and in hiding for some time. However, King George II did not forfeit William Baird's land.

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<sup>5</sup> A Scottish municipal officer corresponding to an English alderman. [ME baillie < OFr. Baillif, bailiff.]

<sup>6</sup> *Account of the Surname of Baird, particularly of the Families of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Saughtonhall*, edited by William N. Fraser, 1857

Alexander Forbes, 4th Lord Pitsligo, 1678-1762



In this, he was luckier than many other noblemen. We have only to look to Auchmedden's neighbor, the renown and "Red Hot Jacobite" Alexander Forbes, 4<sup>th</sup> Lord of Pitsligo. He had been involved in the '15 Rising, and "went out" again for the '45, at 67 years of age. Pitsligo was a zealous recruiter and may have helped to persuade Auchmedden to volunteer. By September 1745, Lord Pitsligo had gathered 130 horse (cavalry) and two companies of Banffshire infantry, later incorporated in the Duke of Perth's regiment. He survived Culloden and went into hiding on his own estates for the rest of his life, dying in 1762. He became a local legend for his ability to lay in the mosses near Fraserburgh by day without being discovered, calling at his own castle in the guise of a beggar, served soldiers their breakfasts in the house in which he was hiding for a time. He served as a guide to search parties looking for him. Pitsligo lived for years in Cowshaven Cave in the coast-facing cliff where he cut through the granite floor to make a well so he would have a source of water. The cave is now known as Lord Pitsligo's Cave.

Shortly after May 7, 1746, Mr. John Stuart (under orders from the King's government) provided a list of persons concerned in the rebellion.<sup>7</sup> Included in this list is:

William Baird of Auchmedden, Deputy Lieutenant & Governour of Banff Shire under Lord Lewis Gordon, his whereabouts unknown.

In hiding, the Auchmedden's were assisted by Anne's brother William Duff, Earl of Fife, who, on May 25, 1746 wrote to Ludovick Grant of Grant at St. Andrews to ask him for, "*protection for my poor sister Lady Auchmedden.*" Afterwards Duff harbored them himself by allowing them to take refuge at one of his estates, Echt House in Banffshire.

Post Culloden, the King's soldiers searched for rebels, imprisoned some, hung others, and burned some estates. For nearly a year the elusive Prince Charles zigzagged across the hills and moors of Scotland, managing to stay one step ahead of capture before sailing to France. Yet amidst the suffering, death, starvation, and destruction, much of the domestic life of the gentry seemed to go on with near normality. Anne Duff Baird's sister Henrietta Duff wrote a letter from her home in Edinburgh to their mother, Lady Braco, July 16, 1746, which included a short mention of William and Anne's eldest daughter Jean. "*... we likewise expect Jeanie Baird in a month or two.*" Travel and visiting apparently continued uninhibited by patrolling troops.

1749 and 1750 were years that brought change and sadness to the Auchmedden family, beginning with William and Anne's son James, who drowned onboard a ship during a hurricane in April of 1749.

Historians repeat W.N. Fraser's claim that William Baird was forced to sell Auchmedden in order to pay the debts he incurred to support the 1745 Rising. The less romantic fact is he may have had to sell

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<sup>7</sup> *A List of Persons Concerned in The Rebellion Transmitted to the Commission of Excise by the Several Supervisors in Scotland in Obedience to a General Letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 1746 and a Supplementary List with Evidences to Prove the Same*, by Rev. Walter Macleod, 1890

Auchmedden in any case. Lady Anne Duff Baird, long at the mercy of her husband's imprudent spending, wrote her brother Lord Braco, (spelling and abbreviations are amended below to allow easy reading):

*.....as I ever said, so I'm resolved to do as your Lordship bids me, had Auchmedden taken my advice, he would have sold his estate some years ago, when he would have had a good deal more reversion, but that is what he must own he would never do.*

The letter is dated November 29 but no year is included. A best-guess is between 1747 and 1749. The root of Lady Anne's frustration in this letter is due to the money William Baird lavished on their eldest son, also named William. The letter goes on,

*I have for some years past expostulate with him in the strongest terms, against his answering his eldest son's demands, to the ruin of both, but so far in vain, that I have found out within some days, that his son has in a manner bullied him in to answer some new demands. Your Lordship will own it is hard for me to have spent my time, my fortune, and all in my power for the good of a family, and to see him and his son, go on spite of my teeth to ruin us all, God knows that is the case.*

*The enclosed will tell your Lordship a little more of this, if you will be so good as to take the trouble to read it, which if you are pleased to do, I must humbly beg you will let no other see it, but burn it immediately. I only want your Lordship to believe what is true that if Auchmedden had done his part as I bless God I have done mine, his son might have succeeded him, in the small fortune has been in the family for some generations.*

*Your Lordship's goodness and charity will lead you to think my condition very trying, and I hope will plead for me the blessing of your continuance, and my Lady's to me and mine. I really wish your Lordship or my Lady had time to caution him as to his eldest son, no mother can love a son more than I do him, but I ever thought his father has taken the way to ruin both, it is with great fear and concern I have presumed to trouble your Lordship with writing so much. You may depend on it I will not attempt it again, but will ever be as I ought, Your Lordship's most affectionate sister and obedient faithful servant, Anne Duff.*

*Your Lordship and my Lady are the only friends I have now my dearest sister Jessie [their sister Lady Janet who married Sir James Kinloch of Kinloch] is gone, if I or mine have any good offices from my mother it will be owing to your Lordship.*

Son and heir apparent William had been sent to the best schools throughout his life. Westminster, Trinity College, Cambridge, and then to the Bar. It was while he was attending trials at the Old Bailey that he fell victim to an epidemic and died on May 5, 1750 succumbing to what they termed pestilential fever. By this time, William and Anne had suffered the loss of their third child. Katherine had only lived three years and passed in 1738, James in 1749, and now William younger, for whom William senior had sunk so much of his fortune.

On the heels of misfortune, it must have been humiliating for Anne Duff Baird to write to her brother once again to prompt him for her sister's legacy. Henrietta Duff had never married although she'd had

many proposals. In her adulthood, she had lived an active social life in Edinburgh and passed away in 1748. September 15, 1750, Anne Duff, who was still at Auchmedden, wrote her brother:

*My Lord, It is with very great reluctancy I trouble your Lordship with my letters for I must know your time is taken up many ways but as your Lordship promised to me that how soon Mr. Patrick Duff came to Rothemay you would cause him settle the legacies my dearest sister Henie [Henrietta] left my children, so I hope your Lordship will not be offended at my putting you in mind of it, as it is now full time and Sir James Kinloch seems inclined to have it finished if your Lordship please to order my part of the interest to be paid me at Mart<sup>8</sup> next I would then have occasion for it but whatever you think fit in this and every other thing concerning me I am willing to submit.*

*It is now time for Mr. Baird to know where he and family are to go at Whit<sup>9</sup> next, if you can give us the house of Echt he seems much inclined for it, tho' I own I had much rather go to a town on account of my daughters educations if this is not thought proper I must be advised and will ever be grateful when your Lordship and my Lady are so good as take that trouble with me.*

*May God bless you and yours and preserve you long for a blessing to your family and friends. I am, with the utmost respect, My Lord, Your Lordships most affectionate sister and obliged obedient servant,  
Anne Duff.*

Shortly after this letter, William sold the estate of Auchmedden to Gordon, Lord Haddo, Earl of Aberdeen, and afterward moved the children still living at home to Echt House in Banffshire.

Young Anne, possibly William's favorite child, died in 1756, age 20. The other children grew up and spread out. Alexander initially worked in London in the mercantile business. Charles married at some unknown point, either before or after going to Antigua, where he received a commission as Comptroller of the Customs for the port of St. John. John was in the Royal Navy. At some point George traveled to Kingston, Jamaica where he set up a mercantile business. Helen married Robert Farquharson at Echt House in 1759. They would eventually have 2 sons and 2 daughters.

Anne Duff Baird wrote again to her brother Earl Fife, from Echt House, Banffshire, December 23, 1760. Here is a portion of that letter, once again, modified for easier reading:

*... I assure your Lordship, I will live frugally, while I live at all, but cannot live as a*

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<sup>8</sup> Martinmas, of the Old Scottish Term Days. The Feast of Saint Martin of Tours. This one marks the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> division of the legal year, November 11. Historically used as the days when contracts and leases would begin and end, servants would be hired or dismissed, and rent, interest on loans, ministers' stipends would become due, as well as marking the beginning of academic terms at universities.

<sup>9</sup> Whitsunday, marking the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the legal year in Scotland. This one was originally the Feast of Pentecost, when many christenings were performed. The exact day varied, often occurring around May 15-28.



*scoundrel and I shall be sure to let you see every article of the accounts you have enabled me to pay with our own money, then you will be convinced that no part has fallen to my share, nor any one article contracted that it was possible for me to prevent but mournings for my mother. There is one resolution I have taken which I must beg leave to tell your Lordship, it is that I'm determind to spend the remainder of my days in some town where we can have a house and other conveniences cheapest, the small farm here, the garden, etc. occasions us to have double the number of servants here that we would need there, this with the additional rent of window tax, provisions of every sort as dear here as at Aberdeen makes the place not cheap to us. ...*

Anne wanted to live in town but William enjoyed the estate of Echt, one of many estates owned by Anne's brother, William Duff, Lord Braco, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Fife. There exists correspondence from William Baird of Auchmedden to William Duff indicating he took an active role in overseeing the maintenance and improvement of the Echt estate.

It is thought that in April of 1761, their son Alexander, who by then had become a writer for the East India Company, had died. In October of the same year, youngest daughter, Henrietta, married Frances Fraser, 4<sup>th</sup> of Findrack at Lumphanan, Aberdeenshire. They would go on to have 4 sons and 1 daughter, and may perhaps have had as many as 11 children.

Eldest daughter Jean married John Cort from Lancashire in 1757 and gave birth to two sons while she was still living at Echt. William born in 1763, and James in May of 1764. William Baird added their names to his bible and included a note that the Cort's left Scotland August 25, 1764 to pioneer the Miramichi of New Brunswick. Jean would give birth there to another son and a daughter. Jean Baird Cort is the daughter whose existence was removed from W.N. Fraser's book of William Baird's manuscript. (Details on page 15.)

Anne Duff Baird's brother, William Duff, Lord Braco, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Fife died in 1763. Afterwards, his son James was served heir to the title of 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Fife.



In 1764, the noted genealogist Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet, issued a single folio volume entitled *The Peerage of Scotland*. In the preface, Douglas explained he had sent the portion of each individual peerage to the contemporary holder of it to request from them corrections and additions. Douglas also included in the preface his plan to issue a second part which would include a baronage of Scotland. The word “baronage” was used in this case to mean the Scottish gentry or lesser barons.<sup>10</sup> It appears William Baird 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden received a request from Sir Douglas for his genealogical and armorial information, for we find him corresponding with Sir Robert Douglas in 1767.

The letters discovered by Baird Heritage from William Baird to Sir Robert Douglas were written in the care of Mr. Robert Fleming whose address was written as, “Bookseller near the Cross.” This indicates the baronage book was most likely being compiled at Fleming's business in Edinburgh. Robert Fleming

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<sup>10</sup> See [http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir\\_Douglas,\\_6th\\_Baronet](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Douglas,_6th_Baronet)

was a printer and bookseller.

The letters shed light on Baird history as well and throw doubt upon subjects we Baird researchers have heretofore accepted as fact.

The first of the collection from William Baird is dated May 23, 1767. In it he acknowledged the May 9<sup>th</sup> letter from Sir Douglas and told him he would send a narrative of his family's genealogy. It can be surmised from this correspondence that William Baird must already have either begun to document Baird genealogy prior to 1767, or did so as a result of being contacted by Sir Douglas in May 1767. (A note here to remind readers that William Baird's comprehensive MSS was dated 1770.) A portion of the May 23<sup>rd</sup> letter is transcribed below, with its' spelling and punctuation preserved.

*I have no Writs of the Bairds of Ordinhnivas (of whom our Predecessor Gilbert Baird married the Heiress) older than 1464. Nor any of Gilberts ancestors older than 1532, when Regent Morray despond the Lands of Auchmedden to his grandfather Andrew Baird of Lavoroklaw below now Dundee, and I want much to know of what family this Andrew Baird was. There is some reason to think, but no proof, that he was of Ordinhnivas, pray write if you can inform me of this.*

The revelation that William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden did not know the pedigree of Andrew Baird is extraordinary. Andrew Baird of Lavoroklaw, 1475-1543, purchased Auchmedden in 1534. He was the progenitor of the Auchmedden Branch of Baird. William's own 1770 manuscript, later edited and published by William Nathaniel Fraser, claims Andrew Baird descended from the Baird's of Posso in Peeblesshire. Yet here we discover this may have been conjecture and therefore, it throws a "fact" relied upon for over 150 years into a quandary.

Having said this however, it validates the work of Bruce Baird, Sr., Baird scholar, and highly regarded friend of Baird Heritage, who wrote in February 2014<sup>11</sup> about the possibility, based on the seals used on documents, that Andrew Baird was not a Posso Baird.

Another letter from William was dated Nov. 4, 1767, the following is a partial transcript.

*In the account of Gilbert Baird's children by the Heiress of Ordininghnivas page 20 [referring to his own narrative he provided Douglas and Fleming] instead of 28 children make it 32 and add to those of them whose fate I have mentioned many of the sons went abroad in the church, and two settled in Orkney and some of the daughters were nuns. I will be glad to hear of this come to hand, and how soon you begin to print your baronage. I will really be sorry if there is but one volume of it for it is impossible that one volume can give any valuable account of all these gentleman's family's in Scotland.*

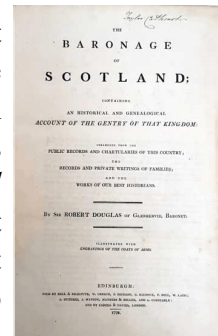
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<sup>11</sup> <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/CLAN-BAIRD/2014-02/1393533881>

Lillias Barde, born circa 1558, was the only child born within the marriage of Walter Barde, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Ordinhivas and Catherine Grant. Walter Barde was referred to as “our chief” by Lillias’ husband’s brother in letters he wrote from France circa 1579<sup>12</sup>. Baird Heritage recognizes Ordinhivas as the chiefly line of Baird in northeastern Scotland until the death of Walter in 1589, at which time Lillias became heiress to Ordinhivas and other lands that had been held by both her father and her mother.

William Baird wrote in his 1770 MSS that Lillias married Gilbert Baird, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Auchmedden in 1578 and together they had 32 children. The letter transcribed above instills doubt on how many children Gilbert and Lillias really produced. There are fourteen children named in William’s manuscript. It might be best to take the existence of the unnamed children with a grain of salt unless and until additional records are found.

Returning now to the subject of William Baird’s correspondence with Sir Robert Douglas. Although Douglas announced in the newspapers that the baronage was in the press, before the actual publication, he died. The project was set aside. Other men eventually published the book many years later, in 1795, long after William Baird’s death. The title is, *Baronage of Scotland: containing an Historical and Genealogical Account of the Gentry of that Kingdom*. The occasional first edition can be found at rare bookstores or online, albeit, for a lot of money. Baird Heritage has not found it available to download online and unfortunately, we have not had the opportunity to investigate whether the peerage of Baird is included.



It must have been disappointing for William Baird to learn Sir Douglas had passed away and his baronage would not be published at that time. His letters showed he was quite looking forward to seeing his family recognized in such a worthy book. This may have been the impetus that inspired him to pen two copies of his own 191-page manuscript. Although his title page is dated 1770, there are marginalia of additional information through 1774.



By 1772, the Auchmedden’s were living at Balvenie in Dufftown, in Mortlach Parish, Moray, south of Elgin and Cullen. This was the house called Balvenie New House<sup>13</sup> on the edge of town which had been built by William Duff, Anne’s brother, in 1723/4. The original Balvenie Castle, built in the 1200’s, inherited by Duff, who had supported the government in the Rising, had not been occupied since he had facilitated two companies of the King’s men to occupy it in 1746. Afterward, the castle was left to ruin.

<sup>12</sup> *Account of the Surname of Baird, Particularly of the Families of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Sauchtonhall*, Edited by William N. Fraser, 1857, p. 67, Letter III from Professor Andrew Baird

<sup>13</sup> Today, there are two buildings claimed to be Balvenie New House. One is in Dufftown which was absorbed by Balvenie Distillery in 1929 and is currently a part of Balvenie Glenlivet Distillery. The other one, pictured above, is on the outskirts of town.

It was from Balvenie New House that William Baird of Auchmedden wrote the following letter to his nephew James Duff, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Fife dated, “Balvenie, July 30, 1772”:

*My Lord, I take this opportunity of giving your Lordship hearty thanks for our good lodging these five weeks past, which I am afraid will make us take the worse with our pigeon holes at Aberdeen. We have been likewise much obliged to the civilities of all the neighbourhood, in your interest, and most of them my wife's relations. She finds now by experience that the country air and travelling is rather of more use to her than the goat milk and we proposed to have gone as far as Inverness and returned by the boat to Duff House, Hatton, etc., but without regard to my own health which would not make travelling my choice, my wife is become so lean and her health and strength so much failed that the easiest carriage now fatigues her and she is obliged to go home the nearest road and try what short airings will do.*

*We made only one trip last week to Elgin and saw Innes in our return where I observed with pleasure at every step the effects of your elegant taste, within doors and without. We happened to breakfast at the Sheriff Clerk when the new claims and new objections were given him and I am extremely glad to see that in all probability you will stand your ground both in that country and this.*

*Mr. Duff, Schoolmaster here, is a most obliging, friendly lad and most sensible of your goodness. He is just now at a loss for want of some books of divinity which his professor has recommended. His father's [Peter Duff of Mather Cluny] conduct has been very blameable and I hear his is conscious and ashamed of it himself but the story of his going with an axe to attack another man, was a malicious calumny for he was only carrying it home from one to whom he had lent it.*

*I knew John's<sup>14</sup> time of his cutter was out the 22<sup>nd</sup> of last month but wanted to know if he had any chance for promotion. I know he has made several applications by your advice, but its on your open friendship he principally depends. My wife and I join in our kindest compliments to our good friends and I am with the most sincere esteem and gratitude, My Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and most obedient humble servant, Will. Baird.*

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<sup>14</sup> William and Anne's son John Baird was in the Royal Navy, Commander of the cutter “Esther” that transported supplies in the Irish seas

Anne Duff Baird died the following January 1773 and in 1775 William died. Of their 11 children, the following survived them:

- Son Charles Baird<sup>15</sup>, living on Antigua, married, alive in 1775, death unknown, issue unknown
- Son John Baird, Lieutenant in the Navy, married, death 1806, no issue
- Daughter Jean Baird Cort living in New Brunswick, married, death 1788, 3 sons, 1 daughter
- Son George Baird<sup>16</sup>, merchant in Kingston, Jamaica, unknown marriage or issue, (see p.17)
- Daughter Helen Baird Farquharson, married, death 1808, 2 sons, 2 daughters
- Daughter Henrietta Baird Fraser, married, death 1801, 4 known sons, 2 known daughters

It is more accurate for history to record that William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden was last to *own* Auchmedden, not the last of his line.

### Legacy of William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden

There are three versions of William Baird's genealogical manuscript.

1. His own handwritten MSS, 1770:

Genealogical Collections concerning ye sir-name of Baird, and the Family's of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Saughtonhall; in particular. With coy's of old Letters and Paper's worth perserving, and account of several Transactions in this Country, during ye Two last Centurys. 1770

2. The book edited by William & Anne's great-grandson William Nathaniel Fraser, published 1857:

Account of the Surname of Baird Particularly of the Families of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Saughtonhall

3. The book re-edited from Fraser's book, by F.M.B.Smith, a descendant of Walter Barde of Ordinhivas through his natural son, and by him came the Chesterhall line. This book was published to expand upon his own genealogy, left out by Fraser. 1868:

Genealogical Collection concerning the Surname of Baird, and the family's of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Saughtonhall...

#### Baird Clan Chief

When William Baird died, the eldest living son would have inherited his coat of arms and any chiefship William may have held. Following the death of each eldest son, the coat and dignity would have matriculated to that son's eldest son, or, barring sons, to William's next eldest son. An eldest daughter could have petitioned the Lyon Court to inherit, provided she and her inheriting issue kept the Baird surname.

Beyond that, the Lyon Court will usually revert to the traditional primogenitor method of succession.

Based upon years of research, Baird Heritage's best guess for the individual who might currently be eligible to inherit the un-differenced arms of Auchmedden is Sir James Andrew Gardiner Baird, of Saughtonhall.

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<sup>15</sup> Charles was alive in March 1775 as he had written at least 4 letters between December 1774 and March 1775 seeking support from James Duff, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Fife. But the date of his death is, so far, unknown

<sup>16</sup> George is thought to have died after 1778 but was dead before his brother John died in 1806

The Fraser and Smith books are easily found online. Baird Heritage has located and obtained a copy of William Baird's hand-written manuscript. A side-by-side comparison of the three versions has been performed. They are not the same. The changes, omissions, and additions are intriguing. In addition, one might wonder, why would Fraser and Smith go to the trouble of publishing the books? What was their motivation?

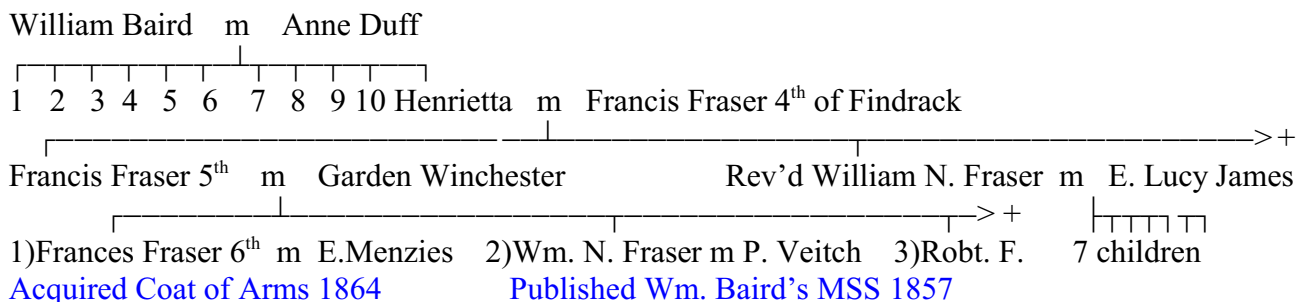
We know Capt. F.M.B.Smith's motivation because he wrote it in his publication. He seemed to have been annoyed that William Baird had not bothered to include the branch from which he had descended. In his Appendix, he wrote,

In the foregoing history Auchmedden traces the line of the Family of Ordinhnivas for seven generations, till the marriage of Lillias Baird, only daughter and heiress of Walter Baird, the 6<sup>th</sup> in descent, to Gilbert Baird of Auchmedden, who, though a name-sake, was of a different family altogether. The rest of the history is devoted to the descendants of this marriage, to the entire neglect of the male line of the older family, which still flourishes, and of which some account is here presented.

Smith expanded upon Baird and Fraser's work but apparently did not compare Fraser's book against Baird's manuscript to look for inconsistencies. Therefore, his book merely parroted the errors of Fraser's edition. Nevertheless, Smith's Appendix supplies historians with much appreciated additional genealogies.

What was Fraser's motivation to publish the genealogies of his great-grandfather's line? Surely part of it was due to the Victorian popularity of such books in the mid-19th century. But why Baird genealogy rather than the Fraser line? To answer that, it is necessary to explain who William Nathaniel Fraser was and place him and his family in context with the whole family dynamics in order to bring understanding to a series of events that, previously, may not have seemed related.

As stated before, William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden had eleven children. The youngest was Henrietta, who married Francis Fraser, 4<sup>th</sup> of Findrack and bore several children. Their eldest son was also named Francis, and he became 5<sup>th</sup> of Findrack at the death of his father. This Francis Fraser married Garden Winchester and they had several children. Two of those children were Francis Garden Fraser, who became 6<sup>th</sup> of Findrack and William Nathaniel Fraser, Esquire of Tornaveen in Kincardine O'Neil.



It was William N. Fraser of Tornaveen, a great-grandson of William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden, who in 1857, edited and caused to be published, his version of William's MSS. True to the term "edited",

the Fraser’s book is not an exact copy of Baird’s manuscript. He re-formatted Auchmedden’s layout, took out some information, and added other information.

Fraser’s most curious edits were clearly the conscious and concerted removal of any record of William Baird’s eldest daughter, Jean Baird and also the existence of the children born to Helen Baird Farquharson. Jean married John Cort and bore two sons while still in Scotland, and another son plus a daughter after emigrating to North America.

William Baird’s MSS	Fraser’s Published Book
n/a	In his Preface: “Mr Baird married Anne Duff, eldest daughter of William Duff, of Dipple, and sister of William, first Earl of Fife, by whom he had a numerous family, none of whose descendants now remain, with the exception of those of his youngest daughter, Henrietta, who married Mr Francis Fraser, of Findrack, in the county of Aberdeen.”
Of his own children, William wrote he had by Anne Duff: “and had by her, six sons and five daughters.”	“and had by her six sons and four daughters.”
Detailing each of his 5 daughters, he wrote: “And daughters. Jean married in 1757 to Mr. John Cort, merchant of London, and now settled in North America.”	No mention of Jean
Speaking of his daughters, he wrote: “The three that are married have issue.”	Fraser failed to mention Jean, Jean’s children, and Helen Baird Farquharson’s children but noted his grandmother Henrietta had issue

Jean Baird Cort’s line still exists today. Why were Helen’s children and Jean, herself, excised from Fraser’s book?

W.N.Fraser published his book in 1857, which may have, in part, been orchestrated to set the stage for readers to believe the Frasers of Findrack were the sole living descendants of the Baird line. Although the Baird’s had no particular honours or inheritance, they were intermarried with other clans who did. One person important to this issue is William Baird’s grandmother, Katherine Hay, who was the daughter of George Hay, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Kinnoul, who had been a member of King Charles’ Privy Council. Katherine had a sister who married George Keith, 8<sup>th</sup> Earl Marischal. And Katherine had a brother who became the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl. He had two sons, who in turn, became the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Earls of Kinnoul but the line failed when no further heirs were produced.

After Fraser’s publication of Baird’s MSS, W.N.Fraser’s elder brother, Francis Garden Fraser, 6<sup>th</sup> of Findrack, petitioned Scotland’s Lyon Court for a new coat of arms. A Petition for Arms requires the Petitioner to submit a comprehensive genealogy to support his request for arms. The Petition was granted in 1864. The Patent is long, complex, and revealing. It details lengthy genealogies of both the Baird and Fraser lines, strategically designed to show Francis Fraser as the sole representative of four Scottish families by virtue of the extinction of all inheritors before him. These are the lines of Fraser of Durriss, Gordon of Invergordon, Baird of Auchmedden, and Hay of Kinnoul. This then was how Fraser of Findrack was named representative of these families.

The result was a handsome coat of Fraser arms quartered and counter-quartered with Gordon of Invergordon of Delpholly; Hay, Earls of Kinnoul; and Baird of Auchmedden. In addition, he petitioned for supporters added to his arms, a highly respected distinction, granted as male representative of one of the minor Barons of Scotland prior to 1587.

If Fraser had submitted an accurate genealogy of Baird, he would not have been granted arms quartering Baird of Auchmedden, nor the more impressive, Hay of Kinnoul because the truth was that Jean Baird Cort's descendants were alive, giving them a prior right, and Helen Baird Farquharson's descendants may still have been alive then and would also have had prior right if Jean's family had become extinct.



It cannot be said that the Frasers of Findrack were unaware of the existence of Jean Baird Cort and her family. Here are a few examples to validate this statement. Until Helen Baird Farquharson's death in 1808, she corresponded with Jean's daughter Maria, and certainly knew Jean's family was large and thriving. The following is a portion of a letter from Helen to Maria:

*May 21, 1801*  
*My Dear Niece,*

*... It gives me great pleasure to hear that your eldest brother has got into a good situation in the West Indies. I have often heard he is a very deserving young man. I hope he will be successful. He has several relations by his mother in the Island of Jamaica who I hope he is acquainted with. I .... doing myself the favor of writing to him soon, by the ... you was so good as to send me. I hope you will get better accounts from your other two brothers than you seem to expect ...*

*... I never [dear Madam?] saw a picture of your mother nor do I think their was ever one done for her here. I know their was one of your father which I remember well was [extremely?] like, buy my sister Mrs. Fraser took it to her house in the country among many other family pictures some years ago. Mr. Fraser was here lately when I mentioned your request in a most particular manner on which he said that the dampness of his house had so ruined and defaced the whole and Mr. Cort's particularly, that scarsly a feature was to be known. Wish it had been in my custody, where it would have been quite safe and it would have given me much pleasure to have sent it to you by ....., and regret extremly that it is not in my power. Your Aunt Mrs. Fraser has been for some time past in a declining state of health. Mr. Fraser seems to think she can get the better of it.*

*... Your cousins joyns with me in kind complement to you ...*

*Your affectionate Aunt and Humble ...*  
*Helen Farquharson*



On April 24, 1835, the elderly Rev'd William Nathaniel Fraser wrote from his home on Jamaica to his nephew Francis Fraser in Aberdeen, mentioning that it had been awhile since he had heard from his niece Maria, and:

*“Nor can I give any information of course respecting the family - farther than her brother Mr. Cort is alive in this Island, and, in his old age, in very forlorn circumstance.”*

Jean Baird Cort was the eldest daughter of William and Anne. Henrietta Baird Fraser was the youngest child, and by that fact, Jean, and her descendants, were - and are - the true representatives of Baird of Auchmedden. And by extension, it was her family, not Henrietta's, that were due any honors that might properly have come from the Hay family, Earls of Kinnoull.

Baird of Auchmedden history was misrepresented and misdirected when William Nathaniel Fraser of Tornaveen edited and published his book in 1857 and the 1864 Fraser of Findrack Patent was granted.

When William Baird, 7<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden died, Charles, as the then eldest living son, would have been served heir and he would most likely have been sent any tangible items relevant to his new position as head of family/clan.

There is a letter from Rev'd W.N.Fraser to his brother Francis, 5<sup>th</sup> of Findrack. It was sent while the Rev'd was in London. Dated March 5, 1806, here is a portion of it:

*... Adam [one of their younger brothers] and I took a Walk one day to Walham Green and called on John Baird's Widow - the Poor woman - and she is ... so ... being in very bad circumstances behaved with very great kindness - gave me a Ring with the Family Arms which was poor George Baird's and a brace of very handsome portraits which latter I made an immediate hamper of to Adam. ...*

If the signet ring bearing the Arms of Auchmedden had been passed to Charles, he may only have had possession of it for a short time, as it is believed he died soon after his father. The next in succession was John but about this period, 1776/77, he was serving as Lieutenant under Commander Gidoin aboard the H.M.S. Richmond, which was being outfitted for foreign service in the American Revolution. So it might have been the case that George was given the ring after Charles died because of proximity, Charles on Antigua and George on Jamaica.

Later, at George's death, as indicated in the letter above, the ring found its way to John, who by then was retired and living with his wife in London and then died in 1806. After the extinction of all William's sons, one might wonder why the items were not forwarded to the son(s) of the eldest daughter Jean, instead of being kept by the Frasers.



Could the ring bearing the Arms of Auchmedden have been the source of the image used in Fraser's book? After his Preface, he included drawings of five images, four seals and one bookplate. (William's MSS only included the first three.) The description of the fifth, pictured to the right, is:

“V. - Is the Seal of the preceding.” [William Baird] “It has the addition of supporters - two winged Griffins. On the reverse side there is the head of Charles I., very well cut.”

A hand-held seal, used to endorse a document, would have had a short handle to hold so that the device could be pressed into wax to make the signet impression. The handle would prevent an image from being included on the top, or reverse, side of a seal. But the underside of a signet ring could contain an image, such as the one mentioned in the quote above.

Earlier Auchmedden Baird’s had a different coat of arms, as seen in the book’s first three seals. Also, at St. Drostan’s Old Kirkyard, the granite burial stone of George Baird, 2<sup>nd</sup> of Auchmedden shows his coat of arms, a fess, three mullets (stars) in chief, a boar passant in base. His son Gilbert Baird united two Baird families when he married Lillias Barde of Ordinhivas. Their eldest, George Baird, 4<sup>th</sup> of Auchmedden, presented the newer coat of, Gules, a boar passant Or, on his impressive memorial.

George 4<sup>th</sup> , 1579-1642, lived during the reign of Charles I, 1625-1649, so a Baird of Auchmedden signet ring made at this time, with the reverse image of King Charles I, is a reasonable assumption.

On the topic of coat of arms, Fraser accurately copied William Baird’s manuscript when he wrote about the tradition of the Baird that slew the bear and saved King William the Lion and for his reward received a coat of arms with a bear and the motto *dominus fecit*. William Baird wrote b-e-a-r, and went on to describe the size of the paw. However, it is a boar on the arms of Ordinhivas and Auchmedden. The confusion between the bear and boar is due to Fraser incorrectly adding, in his book, to the description of Seal #1 of Andrew Baird, by writing:

*“He appears to have carried a “Bear” passant, which corresponds with the tradition mentioned at page 10.”*

Fraser seems to have wanted to link the arms described in the tradition to the arms of Auchmedden by trying to pass an image of a boar off as that of a bear. But that is Fraser’s error and is not what William Baird wrote. Although there may have been an ancestor in the 12<sup>th</sup> century that possessed arms with an image of a bear and used the motto *dominus fecit*, there is no record of it, so far, discovered. The tradition remains one of the many real or imagined acts of selfless heroism and bravery associated with many Scottish Clans.



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*Read on for additional information*

# Auchmedden

Auchmedden lies on the wind-blown north-facing coast of Aberdeenshire. By all accounts it was a large tract of land, covering two fifths of Aberdour Parish. It is now more barren than it was 200 years ago. The bulk of the topography is open rolling hills with small clusters of dense forested vegetation of Scotch Fir, spruce, larch, alder, ash, elm, plane-tree, and mountain ash. Growth of trees was stunted where exposed to sea blasts

Quarries of granite and sandstone produced good income to the Baird's of Auchmedden. At one period, the stones from the rocks of Pennan were said to be the best in Britain and were sent to the south and west of Scotland. Sea fishing was a good source of income and food for residents. Farmers have grown potatoes, kale, and cabbage. Oats grown at Auchmedden were milled at Aberdour or Nethmill. Some cattle, ox, and sheep were raised. There was hunting of hare and partridge, and sea-fowl were killed to provide oil and feathers.

The terrain of Auchmedden drops sharply, perhaps 200 to 300 hundred feet, to the ocean. On a small crescent of sandy beach sits the fishing village of Pennan and its' harbour. The village and harbour were part of the lands of Auchmedden.



Auchmedden Old School on the Mains of Auchmedden



Pennan Harbour



Village of Pennan



Stone bridge over stream beside village

Nine generations of Baird's lived, or were at least born at Auchmedden. The dynasty began when Andrew Baird of Lavorocklaw in Fife purchased the lands of Auchmedden in 1534. There are no known drawings of the estate's home. It is said that as it fell into ruin during the nineteenth century, the stones were carried off to use in the construction of other buildings. Visitors to the area sometimes claim they can detect the remnants of foundation stones. Google Earth can take us to an aerial view of the site yet it does not reveal anything that might be considered a likely spot for the home.

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