

# Andrew's Family Website

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## Borthwicks

In the previous Scott pages I explained that my Great x 4 grandmother was Margaret Borthwick who married James Nicol Tait. They are both buried in Stobo Churchyard. These pages cover the ancestors of this couple.

I have to mention two distinct Tait families. There is the family of James Nicol Tait and there is the Tait family of his mother in law Mary Tait (1775-1853) from Tweedsmuir

This section will firstly deal with Mary Tait's family of the lower Tweed valley.



The picture above is of Fruid Water in Tweedsmuir. It was flooded to create a reservoir in 1969. Before then it was home to the Fruid and Carterhope sheep farms. The Carterhope farm laid on the south side of the valley and some walls and sheep pens can still be seen today in the higher unflooded slopes.

It was on this farm that Ann Welsh was born in 1747. Her parents were George Welsh and Janet Welsh.

Ann married Adam Tait in the spring of 1767. Adam was born over the hills as Roundstonefoot in 1742. Their oldest son John was born at Shortwoodend but we know that by the time their third child Mary was born the family were living back at Carterhope where Adam was known the Shepherd.

Adam died in 1821 and his wife Ann died in 1790 aged only 43. It is their daughter Mary (1775-1853) who was my great x 5 grandmother.

### The Ancestors of Margaret Borthwick



In the Tweedsmuir valley below Fruid lies Tweedmuir Kirk. The whole area of Tweedsmuir, Moffat and Kirkpatrick Juxta is sheep farming country. The high level on which this whole area sits means that in the 1700s there was little arable land for growing crops.

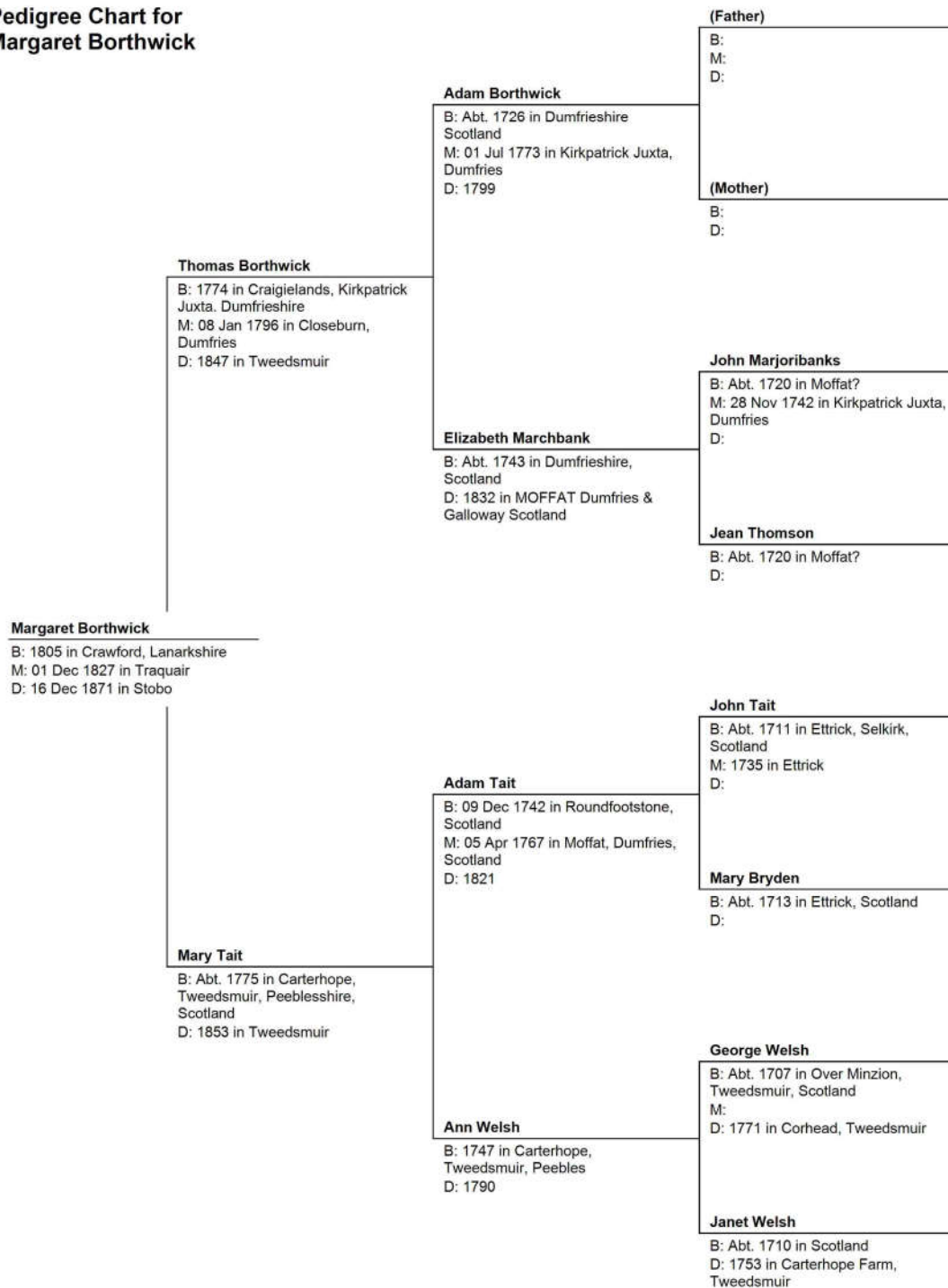
The area was covered in large sheep farms. Typically a shepherd would be responsible for 5-600 sheep. The conditions on the high ground were very harsh and at certain times extremely long hours would need to be worked. The owners and tenants had to employ shepherds they could trust and that is why again and again we see them employ men who were related, either directly or by marriage.

I believe they were well paid, it seems that all of the shepherds families could afford considerable headstones as you can see in the local churchyards. My great x 5 grandfather, Thomas Borthwick, left over £200 when he died in 1847.

The shepherd skills were in great demand and when widespread sheep farming was introduced to the highlands of Scotland. Often the sheep along with their shepherd were moved north as a working unit.

In those days large families were the norm and it was not uncommon to have up to 10 children. By the mid 1800's emigration started to increase significantly. Again skilled shepherds were in great demand this time in Australia and New Zealand. Throughout the 1800s dozens and dozens of my relatives made the long journey to new lives in South Australia or South Island, NZ.

## Pedigree Chart for Margaret Borthwick



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