



Borthwick

Crest

*A moor's head couped Proper
wreathed Argent and Sable*

Motto

Qui Conducit (he who leads)

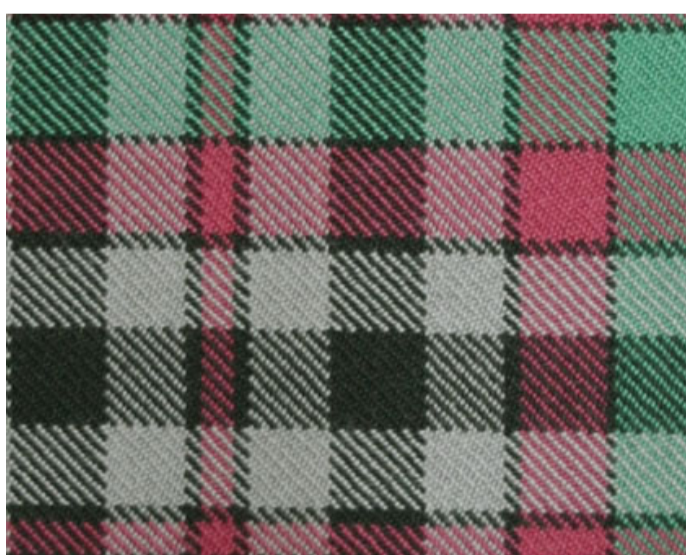


Clan History

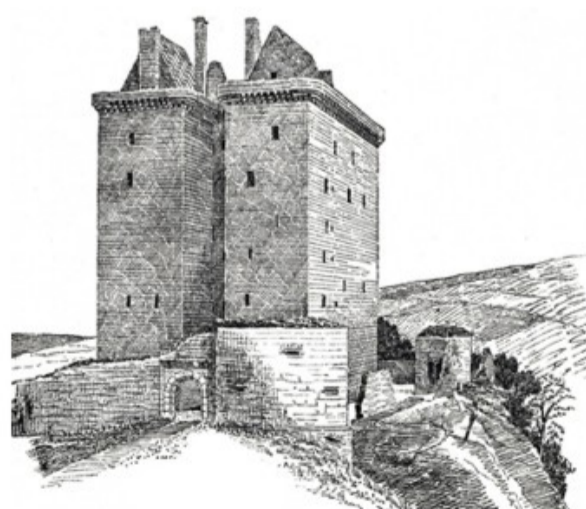
According to a family tradition recorded in the 1570s, the progenitor of this noble house was one Andreas, a Hungarian, who had accompanied the exiled Anglo-Saxon prince Edgar the Aetheling and his sister, Margaret to Scotland in 1067. The veracity of this is unclear, probably fanciful and perhaps unknowable. This name itself is of territorial origin, and it seems likely to have been assumed from lands on Borthwick Water in Roxburghshire, first mentioned c. 1200. Borthwick means something like 'Home Farm' (the farm that supplied the table of the local lord) or 'wood farm'. The first person with this surname in the records is Thomas de (of) Borthwick, who was granted lands in Midlothian between 1356 and 1367. It is likely he owned the lands of Borthwick and hence took the name as his designation. Thomas grandson, Sir William Borthwick possessed substantial lands in Midlothian and the Borders, and around 1410 obtained a charter that confirms he held the lands of Borthwick. During the fifteenth century, the Borthwicks acquired immense influence and became Lords of Parliament.

The first Lord Borthwick erected what remains one of the most impressive fortified dwellings in Scotland, Borthwick Castle. William, Lord Borthwick, succeeded his father, who had fallen at Flodden, was given command of the strategic castle of Stirling and was charged with the safety of the infant James V. His son, James, was a close friend and confidant of Queen Mary, who was a frequent visitor to Borthwick Castle. She took refuge there with her husband, Bothwell, but they were forced to flee before a substantial force under the Earls of Moray and Morton.

The Borthwicks adhered to the royalist cause during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms and their castle was besieged after the Battle of Dunbar in 1650. The splendid fortress was spared from destruction when Oliver Cromwell offered Lord Borthwick honourable terms of surrender. Various branches of the family disputed the right to the succession the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but in 1986 Major John Borthwick was recognised as Borthwick of that Ilk, chief of the name and arms of Borthwick. As with all Scottish families, branches established themselves all over the world. One of the more remarkable American Borthwicks was Martha 'Mamah' Borthwick, who attended the University of Michigan and worked as a librarian and translator. She was an activist for women's rights and was a lover of the architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Tragically, she was murdered in 1914 by a servant.



Borthwick Ancient



Borthwick Castle