

---

*John Johnston and Mary Campbell of  
Muirkirk, Ayrshire, Scotland:*

*Their Family and Descendents*

**William E. Johnston  
Kensington, California**

**Jan., 1999 Edition**

---

---

**© Copyright 1997, 1998, 1999 by William E. Johnston.**

The material in this book is from many sources, and the purpose of the copyright is to reserve the rights of all of those who have contributed previously unpublished material.

This document will be updated as more material becomes available, and this copy is

**Version 1.1, Jan., 1999.**

Previous versions have been given to:

Lester W. Johnston  
Francis L. Johnston  
Margaret Schroeder  
Willard L. and Jackie Johnston  
Dorothy Riegel

This document is maintained in Adobe FrameMaker and the images are restored using Adobe PhotoShop.

The author may be reached at:

313 Berkeley Park Blvd.  
Kensington, CA, 94707  
[wej@vdn.com](mailto:wej@vdn.com).

Some of the images from this collection will occasionally be placed on the Web site:

<http://ns1.nothingbutnet.net/~wej>

---

---

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b><i>Introduction</i></b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b><i>Ancient History</i></b>	<b>8</b>
2.1	The Antiquity of Scotland .....	9
2.2	Bloodthirsty and Repressed .....	13
2.3	Ancient History: The Wild Celts .....	13
2.4	Celtic or Gaelic - What Was the Ancient Language? .....	14
2.5	The Isle of Mull .....	17
2.6	The Johnston(e) Clan.....	19
2.6.1	The Origin of the Johnston(e)s.....	19
2.6.2	The Johnstons - Lowland Scots or Border Clan?.....	20
2.6.3	The Johnstons - Reivers or Farmers? .....	22
2.6.4	The Johnstones and Their Neighbors .....	25
2.7	Notes and References .....	31
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b><i>The Scotland of John Johnston and Mary Campbell</i></b>	<b>32</b>
3.1	Muirkirk in the 1840s .....	33
	From the Topographical Dictionary: 33	
3.2	Geography of Scotland .....	36
3.2.1	Parishes of Southwest Scotland.....	44
3.2.2	Muirkirk Area.....	46
3.3	Parishes of Ayr .....	49
3.3.1	Parishes of Kirkcudbright.....	52
3.3.2	Parishes of Dumfries .....	55
3.3.3	Parishes of Lanark.....	58
3.4	Photoessay .....	62
3.4.1	Muirkirk .....	64
3.4.2	Leadhills .....	72
3.4.3	<i>To A Mouse</i> .....	81
3.5	John and Mary in Muirkirk.....	83
3.5.1	John and Mary’s Bible Record.....	84
3.5.2	Muirkirk Parochial Records .....	86
3.5.3	Census Records .....	89
3.6	William Johnston’s Visit to Muirkirk.....	94
3.7	Mary Campbell’s Immigration to America .....	96
3.8	<i>A Glossary of Diverse Scottish Terms</i> .....	97
3.9	Notes and References .....	128
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b><i>William I. Johnston and Martha G. Hazelton, Their Family and Descendents</i></b>	<b>129</b>
4.1	William I. Johnston in “Past and Present of Will County” .....	130
4.1.1	William I. Johnston and Martha G. Hazelton.....	132
4.1.2	William I. Johnston and Friends, G. A. R. ....	134
4.2	The First Generation .....	136
4.2.1	William I. Johnston and Family, ca. 1890 .....	137

4.3	The Second Generation .....	143
4.3.1	The Sons of William I. Johnston, ca. 1905 .....	144
4.3.2	John Arthur Johnston and Sadie Gray .....	145
4.3.3	George Beckwith and Mary Almira “Minnie” (Johnston) Beckwith .....	147
4.4	The Third Generation .....	149
4.4.1	L. W. Johnston Photo Album .....	150
4.4.2	Charters, Johnstons, and Beckwiths, ca. 1944 .....	166
4.5	The Fourth Generation .....	169
4.5.1	Charters and Johnstons, ca. 1954 .....	172
4.6	The Fifth Generation .....	173
CHAPTER 5 <i>Geneology</i> - - - - -		174
5.1	Beckwith .....	175
5.2	Bloom .....	178
5.3	Grimes .....	192
5.4	Hazelton .....	204
5.5	Redmon .....	223
5.6	Sowder .....	224
5.7	Stevens .....	246
CHAPTER 6 <i>Pioneer Families</i> - - - - -		260
6.1	Family Intersections .....	260
6.2	Geography .....	263
6.2.1	Historical (1895) Will County .....	263
6.2.2	Wilmington Area .....	264
6.2.3	Wesley Township .....	265
6.2.4	Bloom Cemetery .....	267
6.2.5	Manteno Cemetery .....	268
6.3	Beckwith .....	269
6.4	Grimes .....	271
6.5	Hazelton .....	274
6.6	Johnston .....	277
6.6.1	Mary Johnston Freeland Article .....	278
6.6.2	Wilmington Octagon House Article .....	280
6.7	Stevens .....	282
6.7.1	Zenus and Amanda (Haughan) Stevens .....	283
6.7.2	The Stevens Sisters .....	287
CHAPTER 7 <i>The Johnston Farm: 130 Years and Five Generations of American Cornbelt Farming</i> - - - - -		288
7.1	Forward .....	289
7.2	The Farming of William and His Sons (1867-1915) .....	290
7.2.1	William I. Johnston .....	290
7.2.2	The Farm: 80 Acres of Wetlands .....	293
7.2.3	Farming With Horses .....	295

---

---

<b>7.3The Farming of William’s Sons and Grandsons (1915-1940)</b> .....	<b>306</b>
7.3.1Early Mechanized Farming - 1919-1930 .....	<b>306</b>
7.3.2Mechanized Farming in the 1930s .....	<b>315</b>
<b>7.4The Home Place</b> .....	<b>331</b>
7.4.1Spring .....	<b>334</b>
7.4.2Summer .....	<b>334</b>
7.4.3Fall.....	<b>334</b>
7.4.4Winter.....	<b>334</b>
7.4.5The House .....	<b>335</b>
7.4.6Transportation .....	<b>339</b>
7.4.7Home Life .....	<b>340</b>
7.4.8The Barn .....	<b>342</b>
<b>7.5The Farming of William’s Grandsons and Great-grandsons (1940-1998)</b>	<b>349</b>
7.5.1The 1950s: Emergence of Large-Scale Mechanized Farming .....	<b>349</b>
7.5.2The 1960s: The Quest for Power.....	<b>352</b>
7.5.3Farming into the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century .....	<b>357</b>
<b>7.6Notes and References</b> .....	<b>363</b>
7.6.1References .....	<b>363</b>
7.6.2Historical Currency Values .....	<b>364</b>
7.6.3Nebraska Tractor Tests.....	<b>365</b>
 <b>Appendices</b> - - - - -	 <b>369</b>
<b>A.Who Were the Celts?</b> .....	<b>370</b>



---

John Johnston and Mary Campbell started their family in Scotland (or possibly Ireland) in the 1820s. After John's death in 1847, Mary brought most of the children to the United States on the sailing ship Columbia. The family settled in the area of Joliet, Ill. The descendents of those children directly connect dozens of families in the United States today, and intersect many other family lines through marriage.

This book is a partial and informal history describing those branches of the family most closely related to the line from John Johnston (ca. 1800-1847) through the author, William E. Johnston (1946 -). (See section 6.1 - "Family Intersections" - on page 260.)

Much of the motivation for this book lies in the genealogical interests of Lester W. Johnston and Ann L. Johnston (Redmon) (parents of the author) and Francis L. Johnston (uncle of the author).

The material in this book is from many sources, and these sources are credited when they are known. The major contributors are Lester W. Johnston, Francis L. Johnston, Margaret Schroeder (Johnston), and Ann L. Johnston (Redmon), who have supplied photographs, genealogy, and oral family history.

References and credits are flagged with braces ("[ ]") and refer to the references and notes at the end of each chapter. For the figures that are derived from photographs that were originally annotated, the original annotation is provided, along with any annotation from other sources. When Web sites are referenced, typically only the URL is given - e.g. <http://ns1.nothingbutnet.net/~wej> .



**Figure 2.1**  
**Pict Warriors.**  
[Laing]

The peoples of the regions known today as Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, evolved from ancient migrations of war-like Celts from their original homes in Southern France and Northern Italy. The ferocity of these people may be seen in the fact that they fought the Roman army to a stand still and sacked Rome in 300 BC.

The Scottish branch of the migration to what is today called the British Isles maintained its primitive and savage ways the longest of the three groups, gradually evolving to the feudal clan system that we associate with the highlands of Scotland.

Many scholarly books have been written on these topics, and I am only somewhat familiar with this history. However, when I visited Scotland in 1989, in addition to exploring the area around Muirkirk where John and Mary lived, I learned a little about the history of Scotland. One cannot help but be struck by several aspects of the Scots: their blood-thirsty nature and the antiquity of their history.



## 2.1 The Antiquity of Scotland

For someone from a country with essentially a 250 year modern history, the sense of antiquity in Scotland is palpable. For me this was most apparent when visiting Iona. This tiny island off of the southwestern tip of Mull has a firm place in Scottish antiquity. The story is that the Irish Monk Columba introduced Christianity to Scotland from Iona in the 5th Century, and before Columba, the Druids used the island as a religious center. The Vikings raided the island for hundreds of years during the 7th - 10th Centuries, with the island returning to Scottish control in the 11th Century. The island became the resting place of kings:

*St. Oran's Chapel stands in the middle of the Relig Oran, the graveyard that is said to be the last resting place of sixty kings, forty-eight of the Scottish, four Irish, and eight from Norway. Duncan and his murderer, Macbeth lie here on*

*. . . Colme-kill,  
The sacred storehouse of his  
[Duncan's] bones.  
(Macbeth, Act II, Scene 4)*

*From "Welcome to Iona", J. A. Brooks*

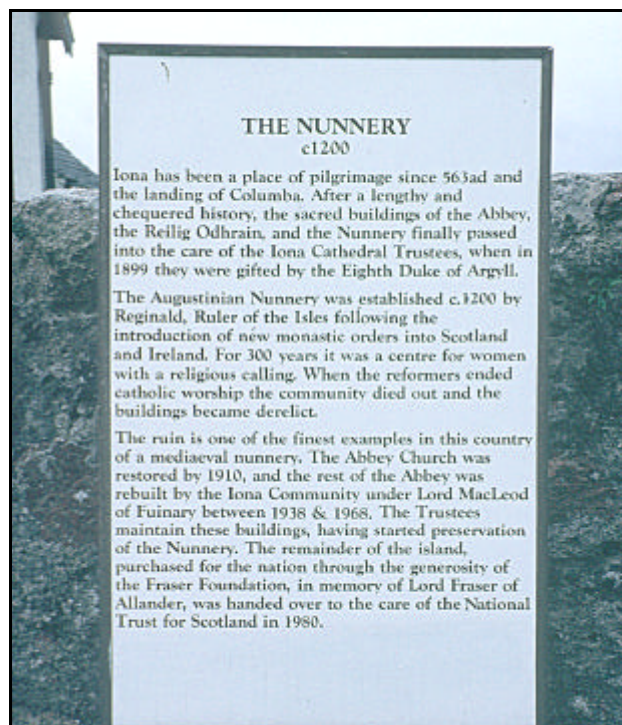
I have never before experienced a place with such a sense of history as Iona. It is said that

*When Edinburgh was a rock and Oxford was a swamp, Iona was famous...*

*ibid*



**Figure 2.3**  
Iona (in the foreground) is a tiny place - only a few miles across.  
[WEJ-1]



**Figure 2.2** Iona has been a place of importance since the 5th century, which for Scotland is not far from the history-archeology boundary.  
[WEJ-1]

### *Colmcille: A 1400-Year Legacy*

*By L.A. O'Donnell, The Irish Edition (<http://www.irishedition.com>)*

*The year 1997 cannot be allowed to end without recalling St. Columba who died 1400 years ago on 9 June in his chapel on the Island of Iona. He had just laid down his quill after transcribing from Psalm XXXIV, 10: "They that seek the Lord shall not want for any good thing." He then rested on his bed of flags with a stone for his pillow, answered the bell for matins and died in chapel while raising his hand to bless his fellow monks. (J.D. Killen, Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, 1875).*

*In 1982 my wife and I and son Dan visited Iona. We found it an island of peace and beauty, but did not realize that, in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., it was a dynamo for spreading Christianity through Scotland, England and beyond. It was as Thomas Cahill told us a few years ago: *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (Doubleday, 1995). In a message from the Vatican last June on the anniversary of the death of Colmcille, John Paul II said, "Through their love of study and their far-flung evangelizing efforts, the Celtic monks, more than any other intellectual force, determined the emergence of Christian Europe from the confusion of the German migrations."*

*Stamps commemorating Colmcille are being issued by the Royal Mail in England and, belatedly, by the Irish Postal Service, shamed into it by a public outcry and by the British decision to issue one. Colmcille (Dove of the Church), is one of the three patrons of Ireland along with St. Patrick and St. Brigid. Scotland and England also claim him as their patron saint.*

*Derry, much in the news of late, derived its name, according to legend, from Doire Colmcille meaning "Oak Grove of Colmcille." Indeed, a further legend has him receiving land on the River Foyle from a cousin, Ainmire, to build his first monastery where a beautiful grove of oak trees stood. His fondness for the oak grove moved Columba to locate his church in a spot requiring none of the trees to be cut down. The year was 546 A.D. This feeling for oaks bespeaks his love of nature; the lakes and glens, the hounds and fat salmon of old Ireland.*

*Born December 7, 521 near Gartan Lough in Donegal, Columba (christened Cruithain), was reared with a spiritual vocation in mind. Both his father, Felim, and mother, Ethna, were from high-born families. They placed their son in the care of a relative, a priest who nurtured his vocation. From there he went on to study under two celebrated Finians, first at the monastic school at Moville and next at Clonard. He was schooled in Latin, Scripture, the Greek and Roman classics, Irish history, poetry and the vernacular legacy of the bards. It is extraordinary that such an education was available in Ireland of the sixth century, where before the coming of St. Patrick, almost no Christian educational institutions existed.*

*Anyone acquainted with the life of St. Columba knows the tale called "Battle of the Book." Briefly, Columba borrowed a book of the Psalms from St. Finian (of Moville). He secretly copied it against his master's wishes. Getting wind of the deed, Finian demanded the copy. Columba refused. Humility, it seems was not yet one of his virtues. The dispute was submitted to King Diarmid at Tara. He found for Finian and pronounced the dictum "To every cow its calf and to every book its copy."*

*Columba was unrepentant. When King Diarmid ordered the death of a man who came to Columba for asylum (the man had slain a minion of the king), Columba was angered. When the order was carried out Columba, in a fury, raised a force of his clansmen and defeated Diarmid's army, which, legend has it, lost 3000 men; or so the story goes.*

*It must be remembered that Columba was, after all, descended from a long line of warring clan chieftains in Donegal. With such a lineage one does not become a man of peace overnight. Colmcille is said to have recaptured his copy of the Psalter, known as "Catach" or "Warrior" and it remained an heirloom of his family, the O'Donnells, for centuries.*

*In the aftermath Columba was excommunicated at the Synod of Teltown. It was, however, rescinded sometime later and, deeply penitent, he chose exile from his native land; a fate worse than death for an Irishman. In consequence and in sadness he sailed out of Lough Foyle in a curragh with 12 loyal monks vowing to settle on the first land from which Ireland could not be sighted. At Kintyre on a Scottish peninsula and then at Orsonay Isle, Erin was in view, but on the highest hill in Iona Ireland could not be seen. This small band of monks arrived May 12, 563 on an island only 3.5 miles long and 1.5 miles at its widest, but it became the launching pad for Christianity throughout primitive Scotland and much of England and on to the Continent; then sinking into the Dark Ages.*

*A first breakthrough came when Colmcille converted the, at first highly unreceptive, Brude MacMaelcon, King of the Picts at Inverness. Colmcille was not to be put off by a king or others of the ruling class. Tall, with a commanding voice, his was a most imposing presence.*

*Shortly, Scotland was gathered into the Christian fold. Northumbria (North England) followed under missionary efforts of Aidan, a monk trained by Columba at Iona. Oswald, King of Northumbria, temporarily dethroned, spent his days at Iona, was converted there, and, on regaining his crown, granted the Island of Lindisfarne to Aidan for a monastery. Under Aidan as abbot it became the hub of an expanding Christian culture through England; producing scholars such as the Venerable Bede and poets, Caedmon for example.*

*In these and literally hundreds of other monastic establishments the flame of Christianity was fostered and spread to pagan tribes. There were constant comings and goings between Ireland and England, Scotland and Ireland, back and forth by learned monastic missionaries. From the Continent came beleaguered monks fleeing with treasures of ancient literature and philosophy to protect them from barbaric hordes; and have them copied in Irish scriptoria.*

*Thus the wisdom of the ancients and the noblest of spiritual ideals were preserved and provided for the benefit of generations down through the centuries. A gift of untold value for which we owe St. Columba no small measure of gratitude.*

*<http://www.us-irish.com/colmcill.htm>*





**Figure 2.4** Top and middle: The Nunnery at Iona (see Figure 2.2).  
Right: Grave capstone from the burial place of Kings.  
(Currently in the courtyard of the restored Abbey Church,  
adjacent to the Nunnery).

The capstones were laid flat on the ground for the full length of the grave. [WEJ-1]



## 2.2 Bloodthirsty and Repressed

After its antiquity, one is struck by the bloodthirsty nature of the Scots. Their history - starting with the fierce Celts and Picts - seems to be one of continuous mayhem directed at both themselves and everyone around them.

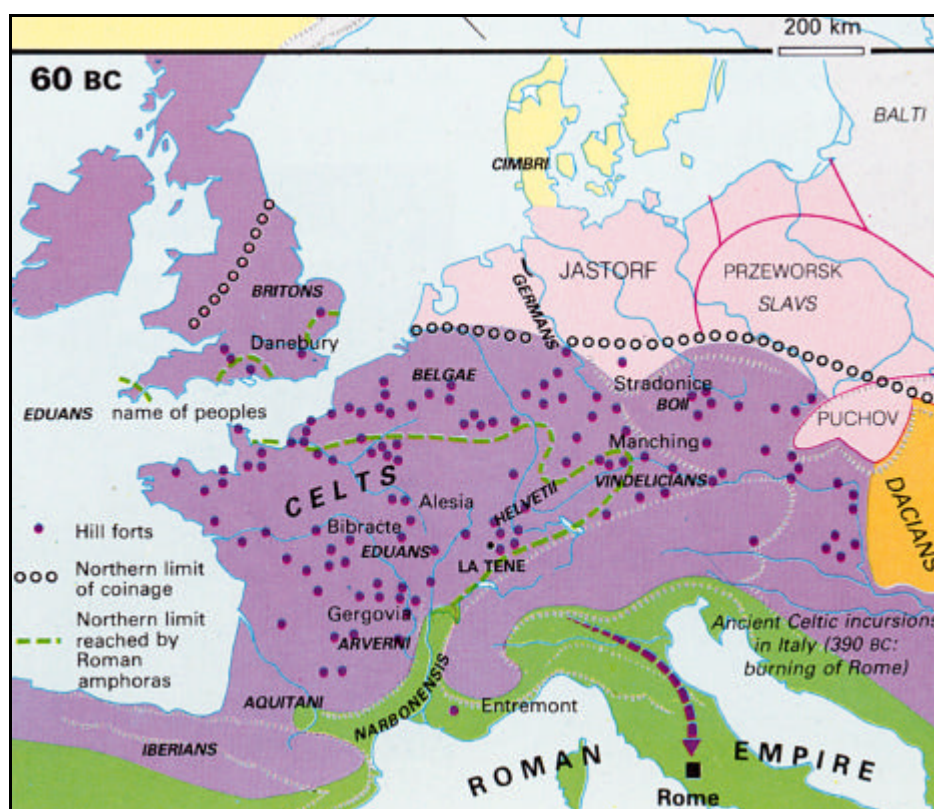
Another interesting aspect of Scottish history was the tyranny and bigotry of the English toward - in different ways - both the Scots and the Irish, that even today reverberates in the bloody history of 20th century Ireland. A class and religious war that has some, if not all, of its roots in the Clearances of the Highlands - when the English overlords effectively drove large numbers of Scottish peasants out to make room for more profitable inhabitants: wool producing sheep. The ensuing migration to northern Ireland created a Protestant enclave in that Catholic country that was later befriended by the English: circumstances which led to today's partition troubles.

I include this chapter for several reasons. First, it is always fun to contemplate the fact that your ancestors might have looked like the charming couple in Figure 2.1. Second, it is interesting to get behind the myth based imagery and ideas to see what things were really like. Third, this history has echoes in our lives. As recently as 30 years ago, relationships among Walter I. Johnston (1884-1963) and his farmer neighbors in Will Co., Ill. were shaped by who was Irish Catholic and who was Scots Protestant.

## 2.3 Ancient History: The Wild Celts

The wild and blood-thirsty nature of the Scots has clear roots in the history of their Celtic forbearers. The Celts started in south-central Europe and spread north and west. By 60 BC the Celts occupied much of what is today France, southern Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, as well as Britain. (See Figure 2.5.)

The following is a paraphrasing of a description of an early Celtic incursion into the Roman Empire that illustrates the ferocious



**Figure 2.5**

**Extent of the Celts in 60BC.**

From "The Harper Atlas of World History" [HAWH].

and war-like nature of the Celts. (See Appendix A., page 370.)

The Celts of southern Europe invaded the Po river valley in northern Italy, forcing out the Etruscans (and keeping them out, effectively ending the Etruscan civilization). The Romans sent envoys to the Celts, who, in turn, sent negotiators to Rome. The Romans agreed to let the Celts keep the Po valley, but as soon as the Celts left Rome, the Romans reversed themselves and agreed to help the Etruscans.

The Celts took umbrage at this and sent an army against Rome. After slicing through several Legions of Roman soldiers, the Celts took Rome. The Romans sued for peace to the tune of 1000 pounds of gold. During the weighing of the gold, the Romans objected that the Celts were cheating on the weights. Thereupon, the Celtic leader additionally threw his sword onto the weighted side of the scale, and expressed his opinion as “Woe to the defeated”. The Romans never withstood a more significant defeat.

The Roman Diodorus describes the Celts:

*Their aspect is terrifying...They are very tall in stature, with rippling muscles under clear white skin. Their hair is blond, but not naturally so: they bleach it, to this day, artificially, washing it in lime and combing it back from their foreheads. They look like wood-demons, their hair thick and shaggy like a horse's mane. Some of them are clean shaven, but others - especially those of high rank, shave their cheeks but leave a moustache that covers the whole mouth and, when they eat and drink, acts like a sieve, trapping particles of food...The way they dress is astonishing: they wear brightly coloured and embroidered shirts, with trousers called bracae and cloaks fastened at the shoulder with a brooch, heavy in winter, light in summer. These cloaks are striped or checkered in design, with the separate checks close together and in various colours.*

*[The Celts] wear bronze helmets with figures picked out on them, even horns, which made them look even taller than they already are...while others cover themselves with breast-armour made out of chains. But most content themselves with the weapons nature gave them: they go naked into battle...Weird, discordant horns were sounded, [they shouted in chorus with their] deep and harsh voices, they beat their swords rhythmically against their shields.*

*Diodorus also describes how the Celts cut off their enemies' heads and nailed them over the doors of their huts, as Diodorus states:*

*“In exactly the same way as hunters do with their skulls of the animals they have slain...they preserved the heads of their most high-ranking victims in cedar oil, keeping them carefully in wooden boxes.”*

<http://sunsite.unc.edu/gaelic/celts.html>

## 2.4 Celtic or Gaelic - What Was the Ancient Language?

I have always wondered about the relationship between Gaelic and Celtic. It is really quite simple.

*Gaelic is an English word for any of three languages which form one half of the Celtic language family group. These three gaelic languages are*

*Irish Gaelic (Gaeilge)*

*Manx Gaelic (Gailck)*

*Scottish Gaelic (Gàidhlig)*

*These three languages are spoken in Ireland, Man and Scotland. The Gaels are the peoples who speak these languages or did so in the past. Gaelic was in danger of being exterminated in many of the traditional gaelic speaking areas, but now a gaelic renaissance has slowed this trend if not yet reversed it.*

*<http://sunsite.unc.edu/gaelic/canan.html>*

**Table 1 Comparison of Scottish (Gàidhlig) and Irish (Gaeilge) Gaelic**  
(<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig/ga-ge>)

English	Gàidhlig	Gaeilge
I am	Tha mi	Tá mé
You are	Tha thu	Tá tú
He (or it) is	Tha e	Tá sé
She (or it) is	Tha i	Tá sí
We are	Tha sinn	Tá muid (or Táimid) (or Tá sinn)
You are	Tha sibh	Tá sibh
They are	Tha iad	Tá siad
I am not	Chan eil mi	Níl mé
Are you?	A' bheil thu?	An bhfuil tú?
Aren't you?	Nach eil thu?	Nach bhfuil tú?
I am (habitual)	Bidh mi	Bím
You are (hab.)	Bidh thu	Bíonn tú
I will be	Bidh mi	Beidh mé
I won't be	Cha bhi mi	Ní bheidh mé
Will you be?	Am bi thu?	An mbeidh tú?
Won't you be?	Nach bi thu?	Nach mbeidh tú?
I was	Bha mi	Bhí mé
I was not	Cha robh mi	Ní raibh mé
Were you?	An robh thu?	An raibh tú?
Weren't you?	Nach robh thu?	Nach raibh tú?
I would be	Bhithinn	Bheinn
You would be	Bhiodh tu	Bheadh tú
I am drinking	Tha mi ag òl	Tá mé ag ól

**Table 1 Comparison of Scottish (Gàidhlig) and Irish (Gaeilge) Gaelic**  
 (<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig/ga-ge>)

English	Gàidhlig	Gaeilge
I drink (hab.)	Bidh mi ag òl	Ólaim
He drinks (hab.)Bidh e ag òl	Ólann sé	
I am going	Tha mi ag dol	Tá mé ag dul
I go (hab.)	Bidh mi a' dol	Téim
You go (hab.)	Bidh thu a' dol	Téann tú



## 2.5 The Isle of Mull

Mull is at the southwest end of the “crease” that “cuts” Scotland from Loch Linnhe in the southwest to Loch Ness in the northeast. (See Figure 3.18 on page 63.)

Mull is an Island of Crofters holdings. I talked to people there who were still bitter about the impact of the Clearances of the Highlands on the 17th and 18th Century Scottish peoples. The people that I talked with blame the English, and their subversion of the Clan system that lead to the Clearances.

In this picture (and the next) you can see enclosed farm areas (unlike the Highlands where everything is open).



**Figure 2.6** Near Dervaig, Isle of Mull.

Tobermory, Mull, is a place where most place-names are still in Gaelic. I think that the English on the other side of the Bank says “Clydesdale Bank” -- the river Clyde goes through Glasgow, from the southeast.



**Figure 2.7** “Banca Dail Chluaidh”,  
Tobermory, North end of  
the Isle of Mull.



**Figure 2.8** A church with a clear Celtic influence,  
Tobermory.

## 2.6 The Johnston(e) Clan

There are several good books and an excellent Web site on the subject of the Johnston Clan prior to John Johnston:

*The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers* by George MacDonald Fraser [GMF]

*Gentle Johnstons .....*

The Clan Johnston Heritage Page - the Jeffery Johnston Web site at  
<http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/clan.html>

I will say that everything I have read indicates that the Johnstons - true to the Scottish tradition - kept the North West part of England effectively in a perpetual state of civil war in the 15th-17th centuries, and were roundly hated by the English:

[quote from the Bishop]

It is also clear that when the Johnstons weren't fighting the English, they were fighting with their arch enemies, the Maxwells.

### 2.6.1 The Origin of the Johnston(e)s

There are several comments in on-line texts that "Johnston" and "Johnstone" are equivalent names. This also appeared to be the case when I was looking at the Muirkirk Parish records while in Edinburgh -- the names Johnston and Johnstone are used almost interchangeably. This can also be seen from the headstones in Figure 3.23, where the name changes from generation to generation.

*Those with spelling "Johnson" are of Clan Gunn, while those with "Johnston(e)" are a lowland family, sometimes called a Border Clan as opposed to the Clan in the true sense, the Highland Clan.*

[http://www.ccn.cs.dal.ca/Heritage/FSCNS/Scots\\_NS/Clans/Johnston.html](http://www.ccn.cs.dal.ca/Heritage/FSCNS/Scots_NS/Clans/Johnston.html)

*Clan Johnstone, Gaelic Name: MacIain*

*Whenever there has been a Borders battle, the Johnstons have never been far away.*

*The first person recorded with this name was John Johnston, who, in 1174, gave his name to the land in Annandale, Dumfries-shire which he had been granted. He had a son Gilbert, whose name appears in records from 1194. Gilbert's grandson was Sir John of Johnston, a knight of the county of Dumfries.*

*When the Ragman Roll was drawn up to carry the names of those swearing fealty to England's Edward I in 1296, Sir John signed. However, Perth was at that time known as St. Johnston, and Johnston burn in East Lothian was then called Jonystoun. From these areas too, records began to show families taking the Johnston name as their own.*

*Thirdly, from Strathspey in the Highlands, Stephen the Clerk and Margaret, heiress of Sir Andrew Garioch, would marry and start a family which would eventually be known as Johnston.*

*But it was the fighting Johnstons of the Western Borders who would proliferate and develop their power greatest. Sir John's great-great-grandson, Adam, was Laird of Johnston around 1413, and in 1448 fought in the Battle of Sark. Adam's son supported James II in putting down the Douglasses, and won their lands of Buittle and Sannoch near Threave Castle as reward.*

*John, eldest son of Adam, was progenitor of the Annandale branch and his brother Matthew, marrying the daughter of the Earl of Angus, was progenitor of the Westerhall branch. John's offspring would become the main Johnston family. On 7th December 1593 was the Battle of Dryfe Sands near Lockerbie after a long-time feud between the Johnstons and the Maxwells. The Maxwells fared badly that day and Lord Maxwell, most powerful man in southern Scotland, was slain.*

*A meeting of reconciliation in 1608 was where the ninth Lord Maxwell avenged his father with Johnston's life. In 1614 he was brought to book and hanged. [See Section 3.4.6, "The Murder of the Laird of Johnstone, 1608"]*

*By the start of the 1700s the chief of the Johnstons had been raised to rank of Marquess of Annandale and Secretary of State and John, 2nd of Westerhall, was a baronet of Nova Scotia.*

*<http://www.sgiandhu.com/clans/online/clans/johnston.htm>*

### **2.6.2 The Johnstons - Lowland Scots or Border Clan?**

Jeff Johnstone of Rochester, New York has put together a very nice Web site with a wealth of information on the Border Clan Johnston(e). His Web page on Reivers ("That Old Gang of Mine", <http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/gang.html>) is an excellent example of a well designed and constructed Web document.

*Prior to 1822, most lowland Scots considered highlanders to be aboriginal savages, and did not even consider them fellow countrymen -- often referring to highlanders as "Irish." At an earlier time, the lowland Scots did not consider Scottish borderers to be fellow countrymen, either. An Act of 1587, c. 96, actually expelled borderers from the inland counties of Scotland, unless they could find security for their quiet deportment. The borderers reciprocated this feeling of derision. Since the experience of the borderers with their Kings was more frequently as avenging judge than as protecting sovereign, the borderers often referred to the Scottish monarchs as "Kings of Fife and Lothian" -- provinces the borderers were not legally entitled to inhabit.*

*This page [Jeff Johnston's Web site] concerns border Scots, who, as stated above, were not typical "lowlanders." In fact, the borderers were really from the Southern Uplands, which lie below the central lowland belt. Until the early seventeenth century, they maintained a very distinctive society of their own.*



*“The Clan Johnstone Heritage Page” -- Jeff Johnstone*

I surmise that the “Lowland” of Scotland is the belt of relatively flat land between Glasgow and Edinburgh. The “Southern Uplands” are south of the Lowlands, and are the border regions (and are marked “Southern Uplands” on the enclosed large-scale map.) The term “marche” refers to the border lands.

*The Johnstones did not live in the Gaelic highlands or Hebrides. In language and culture they were historically much closer to the Scots of the central lowlands than to those of the highlands or isles. They did not wear tartan or highland dress and were not led into battle to the strains of the highland bagpipe. However, prior to the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Johnstones did function as a tribal organization. McDowall (p. 283) writes: “By the middle of the fourteenth century an immense number of families bearing the Johnstone name were to be found in Annandale, all counting kinship with the Lord of ‘Lochwood’s lofty towers’: their relation towards him being in every respect more like that borne by Highland clansmen to their chief than the feudal vassalage of Norman origin that generally prevailed throughout the Lowlands.*

*Border clans naturally differed quite widely from Highland clans, who after all had an active existence that lasted a century and a half longer than that of the border clans, giving that much extra time for development. A main point of difference was the possession by the Highland clans of a Gaelic speech and culture of their own until 1745, which the clans of Galloway and Carrick did for a shorter time possess, but not those of the actual Borders. The Highlanders were also geographically much more isolated from the general course of Scottish history than the Marchmen were. Both Border and Highland clans, however, had the essential feature of chiefship, and had territories in which a majority of the clansmen lived.*

*Border clans did practice some Gaelic customs, such as tutorship when an heir who was a minor succeeded to the chiefship, and giving bonds of manrent. Although feudalism existed, tribal loyalty was much more important, and this is what distinguished the Borderers from other lowland Scots. In fact, the same is also true of the English Borderers.*

*The Johnstones were certainly referred to as a clan in contemporary documents. In 1587 the Parliament of Scotland passed a statute “FOR the quieting and keping in obiedince of the disorderit subiectis inhabitantis of the bordors hielands and Ilis.” Attached to the statute was a Roll of the Clans, and contained both a*

THE ROLL of þe clannis þat hes capitanes chieffis  
and chiftanes quhome on þai depend oftymes aganis  
þe willis of þair landislordis alsweill on þe bordo<sup>r</sup>e  
as hielandes and of sum spēale personis of brāches  
of þe saidis clannis

Middle marche	West marche	
Ellotis	Scottis of ewisdail	Carruþs
Armistangis	Batesonis	Grahmes
Niksonis	littlis	Johnistonis
Crosaris	thomesonis	Jardanes
	glendun̄gis	Moffettis
	Irwingis	latimeris
	Bellis	

*borders portion and a highland portion. Below is a copy of the borders part of the Roll, showing the Johnstones as a clan with a chief in the West March.*

*“Clan or Family?” -- Jeff Johnstone*

### 2.6.3 The Johnstons - Reivers or Farmers?

The farming flavor for the Johnston’s seems prevalent starting in the 18th or 19th Century, and seems strongest in the Western Marches.

*From the early 1600s, the pastoral Highlands, which had been supplying the Lowlands with cheese, increasingly turned to cattle rearing and droving to the Scottish Lowlands and England. Until the 16th century, in the Lowland areas outside the large estates the ferm-toun featured extensively, operating on the ‘run-rig’ system. An interesting account of life in a ferm-toun can be seen at Auchindrain, Argyllshire which had a continued existence of over 900 years.*

*By the beginning of the 18th century, developments such as the iron plough, threshing machine and underground tile drainage were to change for ever the farming landscape, especially in the south and west of Scotland. Individual farm holdings progressively enclosed the land, crop rotation was practised, a start was made on the selective breeding of cattle from which was to develop the Ayrshire cow.*

*“Cheesemaking in Scotland - a History” by John H Smith”*

Ayr -- known for dairy farming as implied above -- and its farming influence is closer to Muirkirk than are Dumfries and Annandale. However, as you go back in history to the 17th Century and before, while the Highlanders were killing each other with wild abandon, the Johnstons now seem to be more of the Reiver flavor.

*Motto and Slogan*

*The original warcry or slogan of Clan Johnstone was “Light Thieves All,” which was a demand to the enemy to dismount and surrender. This slogan was*

*also used as the first motto in the Chief's arms in the early seventeenth century. Later, the Chief adopted the current motto, Nunquam Non Paratus, which means "Never Unprepared." Sometimes the Chief's present motto is translated as "Ready, Aye Ready" or simply "Aye Ready," which is also used as a slogan.*

#### *Appellations*

*The Gentle Johnstones - used ironically*

*The Rough Footed Clan*

*"Clan or Family?" - Jeff Johnston*

*The word "Reiver" means a plunderer or raider. It comes from the same origin as the word "bereave". At the time of Shakespeare in the 1500's, while all was quite peaceful elsewhere in Scotland and England, the Borders area was dominated by clan families, such as Armstrongs, Douglasses, Scotts, Johnstones, Elliots, and many others.*

*Crossing the Border into England and stealing cattle and livestock was a favorite pastime, and much blood was shed as a consequence.*

*This is one of the reasons why there are so many Castles and fortified houses called "Peel Towers" in the South of Scotland . . . .*

The Johnston "crest" is a "flying" spur enclosed by a leather strap - a possible reference to the reiving activities of the Border Clan.

*.... Border families themselves were prone to steal from each other, especially when supplies ran short. It was the accepted custom that when this happened the women of the house, or castle, would bring to table a covered ashet (large plate - from the French "assiete") and place it before the hungry menfolk, only to reveal, when the cover was lifted, nothing but a pair of spurs! The message was clear, either mount up and go out reiving (rustling) or go hungry!*

*<http://www.itl.net/features/camelot/heritage/scclose.html>*

The reference to “nothing but a pair of spurs” above may provide the real motivation for the Johnston crest, however Jeff Johnstone points to a more “conventional” explanation:

*The Johnstone Clan crest badge consists of the Chief's crest (a winged spur) enclosed in a conventional representation of a “strap and buckle,” upon which is inscribed the Chief's motto.*

*<http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/tartbadg.html>*

*Johnstone: The crest of this family is a winged spur, or spur between two wings, leathered, with the motto. “Nunquam non paratus.” When King Edward I. was meditating treachery in favour of Balliol, Johnstone sent to Bruce (then in England) a spur with a feather tied to it. Bruce took the hint and fled, and when he became king conferred the crest on the Johnstone family.*



*The Dictionary of Phrase and Fable by E. Cobham Brewer  
(from the new and enlarged edition of 1894)*

*<http://www.bibliomania.com/Reference/PhraseAndFable/data/687.html#johnstone>*

Jeff Johnstone has collected a lot of material about the Johnston's as reivers, and what is below is typical. (~~The full selection is in Section 3.4, “The Johnston(e) “Clan” and Reivers”.~~)

*The Old Gang of Wamphray was notorious in the sixteenth century for cattle rustling and other antisocial activities. However, it was only one of numerous “red-handed” groups of Johnstones who banded together to conduct reiving operations. To keep such gangs under control, the authorities often forced them to hand over “pledges.” A pledge was a person who was actually held hostage, and who stood to lose his life or property if his gang misbehaved. Also, certain individuals served as “cautioner” (surety or guarantor) for the good conduct of their gangs. The number and composition of gangs varied from time to time, but the following is a list of gangs of Johnstones from the pages of the Register of the Privy Council of Scotland [RPCS]:*

*..... ~~[see Section 3.4 for the full list]~~*

*GANG OF WAMPHRAY. In 1595/96 pledges for the good conduct of the gang included Willie Johnstone son of Jockie of Kirkhill, and Gibbie Johnstone called Howgill's Gibbie*

*<http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/gang.html>*

A fragment from a Border Ballad (~~complete text in Section 3.4.5~~):

*THE LADS OF WAMPHRAY  
(Glenriddel MSS., xi, 34, 1791)*

*Twixt the Girthhead and Langwood-end  
Lived the Galiard and the Galiard's men.*



*It is the lads of Lethenha,  
The greatest rogues among them a'.*

*It is the lads of Leverhay,  
That drove the Crichton's gear away.*

*It is the lads o the Kirkhill,  
The gay Galiard and Will o Kirkhill.*

.....

<http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/ballads.html#Wamphray>

Kirkhill is a village situated about midway between the domains of the Johnstones and the Maxwells, and is about 40 miles southeast of Muirkirk (see Figure 2.9, "The Clans of the Border Marches - Geographic Context."). The ferocious nature of the Celts is well documented, so it does not come as any surprise that those characteristics persisted in the Scots up to the modern era (and one might say, I suppose, in the Irish even today).

## 2.6.4 The Johnstones and Their Neighbors

*Within the bounds of Annandale,  
The gentle Johnstones ride;  
They have been there a thousand years,  
A thousand more they'll bide.  
- - - Old Ballad*

<http://home.eznet.net/~jeff/clan.html>

(See the maps on the following pages.)

*The People of the Marches:*

### **JOHNSTONE (Johnston, Johnstoun)**

*Scottish, but possibly of English origin. Scottish West March.*

*Second only to the Maxwells in their March, the Johnstones were powerful reivers and also frequent Wardens. Their feud with the Maxwells was the longest and bloodiest in Border history. The "t" in their name sets them apart from other "sons of John", although even on the Border it was often dropped, and a famous grandson of the clan, Ben Jonson the poet, deliberately adopted his own spelling to avoid being confused with other Johnstons and Johnsons in London. (A very clan-conscious man, Ben walked all the way to Scotland to visit his ancestors' territory.)*

*Notables: James Johnstone, victor of Dryfe, and his father, John Johnstone.*

*Numerous and widespread.*

### **MAXWELL**

*Scottish. Scottish West March, Annandale.*

*The strongest family in the Scottish West March, until the Johnstones reduced their power late in the sixteenth century. As often as not a Maxwell was Warden, and their name runs steadily through Border and Scot.fish history. Deeply involved with the English in the 1540s.*

*Notables' Johnny Maxwell (4th Lord Herries), John, 8th Lord Maxwell.*

*Strong in Southwestern Marches today.*

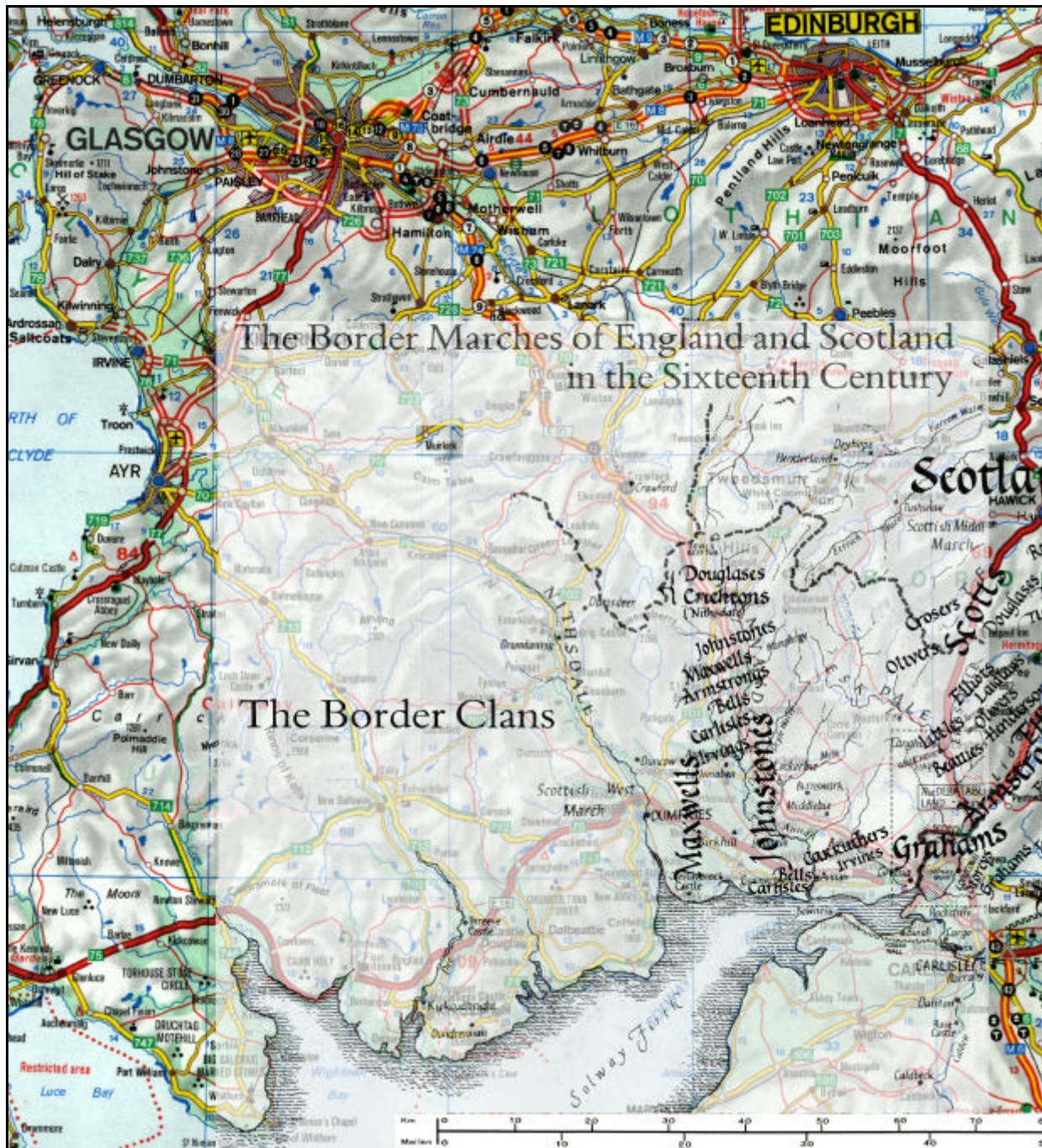
**IRVINE (Irving, Urwen)**

*Scottish. Scottish West March, Annandale, Lower Eskdale.*

*A very tough bunch indeed, the Irvines contributed much to the general disorder, despite their comparatively small numbers. Thoroughly involved in all the West March mischief.*

*Notables: Willie Kang, and his brothers Davy and Geordie. Widespread.*

*from "The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers" by George MacDonald Fraser [GMF]*



**Figure 2.9** The Clans of the Border Marches - Geographic Context.

Note that John Johnston and Mary Campbell's home town of Muirkirk is highlighted. The Border Clan information is from [GMF].

This figure is essentially a composite of figures Figure 2.10, Figure 2.11, and Figure 3.3 on page 36.



**Figure 2.10** **The Border Clans.**  
 (from "The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers" by George MacDonald Fraser [GMF])

**Figure 2.11**                      **The Border Marches of England and Scotland. (next page) [GMF]**

**Figure 2.12**                      **The Border Marches of England and Scotland. (cont. - second page) [GMF]**

## **2.7 Notes and References**

**GMF** *The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers*. George MacDonald Fraser. Harper-Collins, 1971. Available from Unicorn Limited. POBox 397, Bruceton Mills, WV, 26525 (304-379-8803, willowbend@mediasoft.net).

**HAWH** *The Harper Atlas of World History*. P. Vidal-Naquet, Ed. Harper and Row, New York, New York, 1987.

**Laing** *The Picts and the Scots*. Lloyd and Jennifer Laing. Alan Sutton Publishing, Phoenix Mill, Far Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1994.

**WEJ-1** *Scotland in 1989*. W. E. Johnston. These images are from 35mm slides taken on a trip to Scotland in Aug., 1989.



# The Border Marches of England and Scotland in the Sixteenth Century

Border records of the sixteenth century show fairly clearly where the limits of the six Marches ran, but there are some portions for which the evidence is conflicting or incomplete. For example, the line between the English East and Middle Marches cannot be established with complete certainty; contemporary authorities do not agree exactly, and I have drawn the boundary along what seems the most likely line. Similarly, local opinions differed about the boundary between the English West and Middle Marches, particularly where it touched the Anglo-Scottish frontier. I have used the Cumberland-Westmoreland line, which both evidence and common sense seem to favour, rather than an arbitrary line touching the Border at Kershopefoot.

