

Hi Fordyce

Thank you for taking the time to provide insights to your research. With the exception of the last para of your reply I have found all the people you note – on that we are aligned. I will annotate your note and add any variations. I know I could be wrong, so hope I'm not leading you on a goose chase. I appreciate the opportunity to pressure test some of my thinking with someone who is so on top of their research.

Fordyce said – with my comments.

Ah! John Brash & Mary Wallace.... The couple that every descendant has got stuck on. I found it too difficult too, so this is stirring the embers with a stick hoping something will result! I take it the son you're referring to is John Brash recorded as born 26 Aug 1792 Abercorn (and he married Christine Clark). **Yes – the John Brash born 26 Aug 1792 is my GGGGGF – I guess that's written 4*GGF?**

Untangling all the John Brashes has been a complete headache for me too - in fact I wonder whether I've succeeded. There are other factors in the building of my Brash edifice, but one has been to distinguish between Brashes in Abercorn who were wrights and who were smiths. That is a very subtle distinction but it's had its uses. This occupational distinction comes into play later - read on. **I understand the logic of this. However I do wonder if this pattern breaks down in later dates due to the impact of Improvement which seems to have dislocated some of the old patterns and employment options?**

No, I have nothing on John Brash s/o John Brash (smith in Newton) & Christian Greenlaw. What I have decided is that his sister Elizabeth Brash is my 4xgtgdmother Betty Brash, making a bit of a judgment on available evidence (there are other candidates locally but none in Abercorn, including ** below). My smith/wright distinction is no help because she married Thomas Shatton who was always a farmer - which in fact implies I should perhaps have made a third distinction: smith/wright/farmer.]

Re your John Brash h/o Mary Wallace, I've long had five candidate parents with John Brash * & Janet McComie/McKomy being very much the prime candidates. I have noted John Brash & Agnes Smale (who marr Kirkliston 8 Nov 1717) as candidates to be his parents, such that he would have been born 5 Dec1718 Kirkliston. * You say that this John Brash was a soldier. Any other indications of his or his son's occupation? **]I have had a similar number of candidates. The John who married Janet McKomy in Abercorn 20/11/1753 was a soldier in Colonel Halkett's regiment. My military research suggests that this is the 44th ROF. I was surprised by this as this is the Essex regiment and I was looking in the Scottish lowlands regiments. But at that time I understand that there was a significant increase in army recruitment and the regiments were raised from a very broad geographic area. Halkett himself was from Fife Scotland. Per my last note I hope there might be army records that add more information to this picture. I was confused by the gap between marriage (1753) and the birth of their two sons (John 1767 and James 1769) but wonder if this is plausible given the timing of the regiments movements and potential gaps in data. I have not found any information on the son's**

occupation but I don't necessarily expect that he would be a soldier too. I'm currently reading an interesting Thesis on the British Army in the lowlands to try to get a better understanding of the how the military worked at that time. I am hypothesising that John joined the army at a young age but need data – maybe from the military records - to prove this. I've also tried to trace the son James hoping that might provide new data but have not had much success to date.

Re John Brash & Janet Thornton (or Thorntoun). This John Brash was a wright in Duntarvie then in Newton. Mortcloth Rights records show that he was s/o Alexander Brash in Lynnmiln and that proves him to be s/o Alexander Brash h/o Katherine Findlayson. Which is something definite for once. **Agree!** I have very little on the fate of John Brash & Janet Thornton and their six children.

But so far, mainly so confusing and inconclusive. It gets worse - or perhaps better.... A Mary Wallace, I believe your Mary Wallace, died 26 Jan 1797 in Crawstone, Abercorn, followed by Archibald Brash a child (presumably her child?) on 29 May 1797 in Crawston too. **Yes I found that data and drew the same conclusion.** Then I have her widower John Brash remarry to Elisabeth/Betty Brown 6 Jan 1798 in Kirkliston (also recorded in Abercorn) - and this couple then turn up in the 1841 census in Milton, Dalmeny, John Brash being a farmer. **Yes – Agree]**

Meantime, they had had a daughter Bathia (later Elizabeth) Brash in 1802 at Crawstone (and possibly a second in 1804). **Yes – in terms of the children of John and Betty Brown I have – according to the OPR birth records - Janet Born 1800 Crawstane, Bathia Born 1802 Crawstane. There is also a death record 17/10/1798 for a Betty Brash Duntarvie – so don't know if this is a child of theirs although the Death record doesn't note a child - if? There is also an Elizabeth born around 1803 Abercorn – who marries James Marshall (a farm labourer) 29/5/1827 he is from Linlithgow, she is from Dalmeny) and maybe a “seventh child” Jane/Jean on 2/9/1804 in Abercorn (although this BC shows the parents as John Brash and Isobel Brown. But the reference to 7th child makes sense in the context of the three children from the marriage to Mary Wallace and the three surviving children with Betty Brown.)**

The Death record of Agnes (Da of John Brash and Mary Wallace) says her father John was a quarryman. The other two children from that marriage died pre 1855 so death records don't provide information on parents. The son John (who married Christy Clark) who died 1/12/1835 in Newton 43YO - was also a limestone quarrier – based on the death certificate of his son John (who married Margaret Dowie) and died in 1865 – so death record provides details on parent.

In terms of the children of John B and Betty Brown, ie Janet, Elizabeth and Jane all lived past 1855. The death certificates of Janet and Elizabeth indicate their father was a Quarryman. The death record of Jane/Jean (with the mother Isobel) could be quarryman or dairyman. If the latter, that would suggest that she is not the da of John B and Betty Brown and the reference to “7th child” would include the three from the marriage to Mary Wallace and the perhaps that the Betty who died in 1798?

I then find the widow Betty Brash (née Brown or Broun) over at Easter Duntarvie in 1851, age 78 with a [step] gdchild Agnes Aiken (d/o John Aitken & Marion Finlayson where the latter is d/o William Finlayson & Agnes Brash one of the John Brash Mary Wallace family group). Agree. She died, as Betsy Brown, age 81 5 Dec 1852 in Duntarvie, probably Easter Duntarvie. I've been told that 'your' John Brash, who died 1 Apr 1850, died at Duntarvie, hence probably also Easter Duntarvie. **Yes – this one caused me a lot of work. There is a grave in Abercorn erected by Robert Brash (son of John Brash and Christy Clark) which mentions his father who died 2 Dec 1835 and his Grandfather who died 1 April 1850. The grave inscription is hard to read in the photo – so at first I thought it could be 1850 or 1859 but could not find a death record that matched. I subsequently found it in the OPR's which had been mis-recorded as a John Brown on Scotland's people. I have contacted them and it is now corrected to show John Brash. On the basis that he was 83 years old when married – that suggests born 1767 which is the year that John B and Janet McKomy's son John was born. I realise that due to holes in the surviving records, the fact that sometimes births were not recorded and that ages at death may or may not be correct, my linkage may be wishful – but it's the most feasible line up I've found. (Easter Duntarvie is where my Chatties had been tenant farmers from 1787 until 1821 when they moved to Trolleywells. I don't know whether this is anything more than a coincidence of place. The link to Duntarvie is something I'm still exploring to see if there is data to make this plausible.**

In 1841 John Brash was a farmer, but in 1895 a gtgdson claims he was a quarryman. But there's that farming distinction again. In fact, I have temporarily allocated your John Brash (farmer in 1841) with three siblings, those three seemingly all children of one 'John Brash farmer in Newton'. And this 'John Brash farmer in Newton' might be h/o Agnes Thomson (**) having married previously. By this time I'm going round in circles. **In relation to John B and Agnes Thomson, I have not found more information on this family to date, over and above the marriage and birth information. I have seen the reference to John Brash a farmer in Newton and you could be right. If any of their three children lived beyond 1855 (unlikely?) or left a detailed grave record might provide more data points? Could the John Brash (h/o Agnes Thomson) be the son of John B and Christian Greenlaw?**

How much of this accords with your research? **Quite a lot actually.**

Note that on at least two occasions, 'Bethia' or 'Bathia' has become 'Elizabeth'. I suppose that's not too exceptional.

A further thing to mention in passing is that Bethia/Elizabeth Brown Finlayson, Marion's sister, married George Chapman 26 Feb 1855 Dalmeny. And he is a gdson of Mungo Chapman & Agnes McKinley. And Mungo's sister Agnes Chapman married Thomas Shatton who is s/o Thomas Shatton & Betty Brash. Agnes Chapman & Thomas Shatton (whose surname became Chattie then Chatham or Chattam) are my 3xgtgdp. The Brown name keeps popping up. **This is new data to me as I have not been focussed on that line to date.**

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Hope I haven't wasted your time. Comments welcome.