THE DUNCANSON/LIVINGSTON PROJECT:
NOTICE REGARDING THE FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION OF A MONOGRAPH ON "THE LIVINGSTON ANCESTRY OF THE DUNCANSON SISTERS OF NEW NETHERLAND"

***by Adrian Benjamin Burke*[1]**

*Foundations (2012) **4**: 44* *© Copyright FMG and the author*

Readers of *Foundations* may be interested to learn of the success that an informal group of American descendants has had in tracing the medieval ancestry of Helen Livingston, the enigmatic spouse of James Duncanson, MA, Minister of St Mungo's, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, Scotland (*c*.1564–1624), eldest son of Rev John Duncanson, Minister to King James VI of Scotland and I of England. Helen and Mr James had four daughters who migrated from Scotland to New Netherland (later New York) via Amsterdam, where they established large families. The identification of their parents was made by Gordon L Remington, in "The Duncanson Wives of Four New Netherland Settlers,"[2] but Helen Livingston's origins remained a mystery despite several clues found in her children's baptismal records.

After three years of intensive research in Scotland and New York, conclusive proof of Helen Livingston's parentage finally emerged — along with legitimate descents from Robert III, King of Scots, on her father's side, and John Napier of Merchiston and his wife Elizabeth Menteith of Rusky, ancestors of John Napier, inventor of logarithm tables, on her mother's side. Historians of Mary, Queen of Scots, will be interested in the Protestant kinship networks embodied by Helen Livingston's parents, grandparents, and cousins; and the author's discovery of the close and somewhat unusual relationship enjoyed by Helen's mother and grandmother with Mary's son and successor James VI and I. The rise to prominence of two medieval merchant families in Edinburgh following the Reformation is also explored, along with their involvement in the political and dynastic turmoil that characterised sixteenth-century Scotland.

The Duncanson/Livingston Project[3] was founded by Adrian Benjamin Burke, principal genealogist and author, who was joined by Anthony Glenn Hoskins, author of "Mary Boleyn's Carey Children — Offspring of Henry VIII?"[4], John Howard Camp and Joseph V R V E Laux — all of whom co-financed original research conducted by Diane Baptie in the National Archives of Scotland, under the direction of Mr Burke. Noted Scottish genealogist Andrew B W MacEwen of Stockton Springs, Maine, consulted and contributed to the medieval aspects of the project.

Adrian Benjamin Burke's "The Livingston Ancestry of the Duncanson Sisters of New Netherland" will be serialised in *The Genealogist*[5] with the first of three parts appearing in the issue for Fall 2013, continuing through 2014.

---

1 *Contact email:* adrianbenjaminburke@gmail.com

2 *NYG&BS Record* 128 (1) (1997): 1-10.

3 For more information on The Duncanson/Livingston Project, visit its Facebook page and "Like" it at: http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Duncanson-Sisters-of-New-Netherland/160054204051567

4 *Genealogists' Magazine* 25 (9) (1997): 345-52.

5 American Society of Genealogists: http://www.fasg.org/TheGenealogist.html