NOTES ON THE DE MORAVIA OR MORAY FAMILY.

By Joseph Bain, F.S.A. Scot.

Some years ago in a paper contributed to the *Proceedings* of the Scottish Antiquaries,[1] I drew attention to the labours of John Riddell, Cosmo Innes, and John Stuart on the subject of the several branches and their seniority, showing that various points in the accounts given by these learned gentlemen had been corrected since they wrote by undoubted authorities not published in their time. The general result appeared to be in favour of the Murrays of Polmaise in Stirlingshire, being now senior male representatives of Freskin the Fleming, of Duffus, from whom all Murrays claim descent.

There was, however, a matter more particularly concerning the Bothwell line, and how its great possessions passed into the hands of the Douglas family on the death of the last Lord of Bothwell, which was not cleared up then. It is now most satisfactorily explained by means of a recent publication, *The Laing Charters* (Edinburgh, 1899). And for the knowledge that they held the key of the secret, I have to thank the Editor, the Rev. John Anderson, Assistant Curator of the Historical Department in the General Register House, who was good enough to write to me on the subject, knowing my interest in it.

Authorities have hitherto concurred in saying that on the death of Sir Thomas Moray, last of the direct male line of Bothwell, Johanna, his only child, became wife of Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, afterwards third Earl of Douglas, carrying with her the barony of Bothwell. Mr. Riddell is very explicit on the point, for in his *Stewartiana*, 1843 (p. 97), he quotes from Gray's MS. *Obituary and Chronicle*, written early in the sixteenth century (in the Advocates' Library) to show that Sir Thomas Moray died at Newcastle on the Assumption of the B.V. Mary (*i.e.*, 15 August) 1366, and lies at Bothwell. Also that "Black" Archibald Douglas, who founded the College of Bothwell on Christmas Eve 1400, lies there. That this Archibald married the daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Moray, and brought her from England, first offering himself *ad duellum* with five Englishmen. And this he calls "a gallant and chivalrous" affair on Douglas's part, as it certainly was, if authentic. But Gray's *Chronicle*, though not more precisely dated than *early in the sixteenth century*, must therefore be 120 to 150 years later than these two events it records; and though called "valuable" by Mr. Riddell, is most inaccurate here, indeed romancing. For as a mere argument, is it likely that in the fourteenth century any Englishman would have proposed himself for a great Scottish heiress? Such public opinion as then existed, would have been rather against his success! But leaving this for hard facts—(1) according to Fordun and the Public Records, Sir Thomas Moray, then a hostage for the ransom of David II, died with others of them of the plague in 1361, five years earlier than the date

[1] "*Notes on the Male Representation of the Morays of Bothwell, Duffus*," etc.

given in Gray's *Chronicle!* It may, indeed, have been the year before, as no reference to him is found after 1359. (2) In the dispensation for the marriage between Sir Archibald Douglas and Johanna de Moravia, dated *x Kal. Augusti* (23 July) 1361, she is described as a widow, and *relicta* of Sir Thomas de Moravia.[1] These authorities alone are conclusive that Sir Thomas died certainly not later than 1361, and necessarily very early in that year, to have permitted the widow to obtain her dispensation from Rome by 23 July. And thus, though a mere liferentrix of the terce (or widow's jointure), she carried the great barony of Bothwell, with many detached members in other parts of Scotland, away from the rightful male line of the Morays, to the Douglases, who kept hold of it till their forfeiture in 1455—a unique occurrence so far as I know, in Scottish conveyancing.[2] Eventually, after passing through the hands of the Crichtons, Ramsays, and Hepburns, the castle and about one-third of the Lordship of Bothwell was granted in exchange for Hermitage and Liddesdale, to the Angus branch of Douglas, from which it has descended to the Earl of Home. So much was clear, but who Johanna of Moray was by birth was absolutely unknown, till revealed by these *Laing Charters* (No. 379, p. 97, etc.), as follows :—

On the 3d of July 1529, the Lords of Council ordered formal transumpts of certain deeds on the application of Alexander Ogilvy of Cullow, viz. :—

(1) Charter by Johanna de Moravia lady of Drumsargard in her free widowhood, to her beloved uncle Walter de Moravia, of her whole lands of Ardtouchill and Coulowe in the barony of Cortachy and County of Forfar, to be held of her and her heirs in blench farm for 1*d.* silver at Whitsunday yearly [*Place and date blank*].[3] Witnesses, Sirs Robert Erskyn and Duncan Walays, knights, Sir William Monypenny, rector of the church of Kambyslans (Cambuslang), and others.

(2) Charter by Johanna de Meneteth, Countess of Stratherne, and lady of Cortachy &c., confirming the charter (No. 1) of her dearest daughter Lady Johanna de Moravia to her uncle Walter de Moravia, which, as chief lady of the barony, in the free power of her widowhood, the Countess ratifies. [*Place and date blank.*] Witnesses, Sirs Roger de Mortuomari, Robert of Ramsay, knights, Sir William of Inverpeffray, rector of the church of Cortachy, &c.

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(7) Ratification by Margaret Stewart Countess of Mar and Angus, of a wadset[4] by William Hay of Lochquarret to Walter de Moravia of Drumsargard, of the lands of Glaskule and Turbryne in the barony of Kirriemuir and county of Forfar. Temptoloune 30th March 1389. [*No witnesses.*]

[1] Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta*, 1864, p. 318.

[2] It is, of course, just possible that Sir Thomas Moray put his wife in the fee of his estate, but without direct evidence, this cannot be assumed, and in those days was a most unlikely act.

[3] From the witnesses' names, probably at her Castle of Drumsargard, and before 23 July 1361.

[4] Equivalent to a mortgage.

There are in all nine original documents transumed, but these three are enough for the present object.

Johanna was thus by birth a Moray, owner of the barony of Drumsargard in Lanarkshire, and a suitable match for Sir Thomas Moray, owner of the adjoining barony of Bothwell. Her mother, also Johanna, came of a distinguished stock, being daughter of the well known Sir John Menteth, of Ruskie, the captor of Sir William Wallace. At the time when she confirmed her daughter's grant, she was widow of Maurice Moray, of Drumsargard, Earl (in right of his mother) of Stratherne, who was killed at the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346. Johanna Moray was evidently their only child, and consequently heiress of her father's barony of Drumsargard, and her grant to her uncle Walter Moray (No. 1), her father's brother, was doubtless in compensation for Drumsargard, which would have been his as heir of his brother, but for her existence. From the terms of the transumpt (No. 7) it would appear that he, or perhaps a son of the same name, had regained possession of Drumsargard, and must have retained it for some years, being still its owner in 1393-7 (transumpt No. 9). It is not improbable that his branch, having claims on the Bothwell succession, thus carried off by the Douglases merely by marriage of a widow, may have got Drumsargard and the Forfarshire lands, as compensation. But not for long—the Douglases were too strong for their neighbours in this reign (Robert III), and must have soon ousted these Morays, for in 1406[1] Drumsargard was held by Archibald, fourth Earl, the son of Johanna Moray, and they kept it till their forfeiture in 1455. The descendants of Walter Moray, however, retained other lands he had acquired in Forfarshire till 1588, when Alexander Murray and William, his son, resigned part at least to John Scrimgeour of Glaswell. In them, if still traceable, is the male representation of the Morays of Drumsargard to be found.

A remarkable impaled shield at the north spring of the arch of the east window of Bothwell Church, hitherto not explainable, is evidently the armorial bearing of Sir Thomas Moray and his wife Johanna. It exhibits (1) a shield charged with three mullets, 2 and 1, and as many on a chief, all surrounded by the royal tressure (Sir Thomas Moray's); impaling (2) another, charged with three mullets, 2 and 1 (Johanna Moray's). This church is said to have been built by Archibald, third Earl of Douglas, the second husband of Johanna, and besides his own shield, before he became Earl of Douglas, he placed those of his son and daughter on the same window, with the one commemorating his wife and her first husband—a very complimentary memorial.

The transaction is another instance of the grasping power of the Douglas family, even worse than the means by which, not long before their fall, they managed to secure the great Earldom of Moray on the death of James Dunbar, last Earl, ousting his only son.

[1] Charter printed by Andrew Stuart (*History of the Stewarts*, p. 324), dated b him in 1411, but from internal and other evidence, in 1406.