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## Bairds of Posso

The first established branch of the Baird family in the Borders of Scotland are the Bairds of Posso, located between five and six miles south-west of Peebles. They are of ancient lineage, the first on record being Thomas de Bard, who was sheriff of Peebles, in 1296, and who, with other Scottish nobles, obtained restoration of his lands after swearing fealty to Edward of England. His son Thomas received a charter from Robert III, King of the Scots [1390-1406] for the lands of Posso. Sir Laurence Bard married, about 1364, the 2nd daughter of Sir Thomas Somerville and Elizabeth, daughter of Sir James Douglas, of Lothian. He was born before 1343, and died in Posso, co. Peebles.

Then in 1487 August 6. William de Baird, de Posso, is witness to a charter upon the lands of Manorhope, in the shire of Peebles, by John Inglis to his son. 1 And in 1490 Gilbert Baird of Posso along with William Fraser of Fuir and Alexander Veitch of Dawick witnesses a charter by Margaret Inglis, sister to --Inglis of Murdiston, and widow to John Burnet for the lands of Barns and Burnet Land.

The one most known is Sir Gilbert Baird of Posso, his son Andrew Baird of Lavoroklaw was born 1475 and married Bessie Learmonth of Balcomy Fife. In 1534 he bought the Auchmedden estate from Stewart Earl of Buchan, and began the Auchmedden line of Bairds, he died on the 10th Feb 1543. see Auchmedden for more on this line.

His other son John of Posso married Janet Scott. It is recorded that on the 7th August 1520 a 'Title Instrument of sasine propriis manibus of John Barde of Posso, in favour of Jonet Scot, of the liferent of the lands of Posso, Langhaucht and Kyrkhope, in the sherifffdom of Peblis'.<sup>2</sup> Their father Gilbert fell at Flodden in 1513. John and Janet had a daughter Janet who married William Geddes and another daughter Elizabeth who married Sir Michael Naesmyth in 1544, at Edinburgh. Naesmyth, obtained half the lands of Posso and Glenrathnes, by right of his wife, being, the elder daughter and the absence of male descendants. Michael was Chamberlain to John Hamilton Archbishop of St Andrews. In 1574, the lands of Posso and Glenrathnes were granted to John Hay, 3rd of Smithfield.

During the intestine troubles in Scotland, in the reign of Mary, Sir Michael Naesmyth espoused the cause of the unfortunate Queen. He fought under her banner at Langside in 1568. He was banished, and his estates were seized by the Regent Moray. But after the restoration of peace, the Naesmyths regained their property. Sir Michael died at an advanced age. He had many sons. The eldest, Thomas, married Joana, daughter of William Veitch or Le Veitch of Dawick. By this marriage the lands of Dawick came into the family. He predeceased his father, and was succeeded by his son James, 2nd of Posso, the Royal Falconer. Sir Michael's second surviving son, John, was chief surgeon to James VI. of Scotland, afterwards James I. of England, and to Henry, Prince of Wales. He died in London in 1614, and in his testament he leaves "his herb to

his young master, the Prince's grace." Charles I., in his instructions to the President of the Court of Session, enjoins "that you take special notice of the children of John Naesmyth, so often recommended by our late dear father and us." Two of Sir Michael's other sons, Michael and John, were killed at Edinburgh in 1588, in a deadly feud between the Scotts and the Naesmyths. In those days a sort of Corsican vendetta was carried on between these families involving ownership of the lands of Posso and adjacent property.