POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE NAME DUTHIE

There are no records to explain our origins. However, there are several possibilities and these will be considered here.

At the end of this epistle has been added findings related to DNA results analysed by a group sponsored by National Geographic and IBM to plot the distribution of humans (as we now know them, since origination some 60,000 years ago in central Africa.

By Shipwreck

It is of interest that some of the early first names, or perhaps nicknames, in the northeast of Scotland were of Dutch origin. These include - Alick, Alickie, Johnockie, Anicke or Anneke, but perhaps this has to do with the northeast custom to diminutive names. The Dutch certainly had a great interest in the northeast of Scotland. It is thought that they introduced herring fishing to the area. Scotland had traditional trading links with Flanders. In the mid 1500s, the Dutch offered several barrels of gold to purchase Keith Inch (an island off Fraserburgh harbour) as a base. This was not accepted.

According to “The Forgotten Monarchy of Scotland” by HRH Prince Michael of Albany, it mentions “As previously stated, the French union had been cemented through David I and wife Maud de Lens, but few historians comment on the importance of the resulting trading advantage. Scotland was actually attached to a monopoly situation, for Maud was not only a cousin of the Count of Flanders, she was also a cousin of Goddefroi de Buouillon, Guardian of the newly kingdom of Jerusalem.

A common tale in the northeast of Scotland is that the Duthies originally were survivors from the wreck of a Dutch ship. It is said that the local folks called them Dutchies and eventually Duthies. If this is the case then there is no single genealogical line to follow as there would have been several sailors from different families. Furthermore, this would unlikely explain why there were pockets of this name along the east coast and not inland. The writer does not feel that this story can be correct.

Immigration from Europe

From “St. Margaret Queen of Scotland” by David McRoberts “The pagan Vikings founded a settlement in northern France, accepted Christianity, and with the genius of there race for adaptation, they took the nascent feudalism and chivalry of France, the quickening of scholarship and the arts and the great spiritual revival of Cluny, welded them together and, from their Duchy of Normandy, propagated a new fashion of life throughout western Christendom”. The Norsemen (Normans) had settlements along the northern coast of France (Think of Norman as being Norseman). Many family names in Scotland originated in northern mainland Europe. Today, these names comprise of a large percentage of the Scottish population. The arrival of William the Conqueror in 1066 brought Norman names such as Barclay, Bruce (as in Robert de Bruce), Cumming (Comyn), Grant, Fraser, Gordon, Hay, Lindsay, Meston, Stewart, etc.

Is it possible that the Duthies had Viking connections?

There are less than 3,000 Duthie families in the whole world today. This would suggest that the name is of relatively recent vintage in the United Kingdom. The International
Genealogical Index (IGI) records of the British Isles of the 16th century only list a John Duthie born in Angus in 1584 and another of the same name born in Clackmananshire in 1592. However, in the years between 1570 and 1599 in Lincolnshire, and in no other shire, there were nineteen births with names sounding something similar to Duthie. These include Deughtie, Dewtie, Dewtye, Duty, and Dwty. Note that all the people with the above names were only living in coastal areas. Also, bear in mind that words were written as they sounded to the listener.

By the 1600s, there were naturally many more records available in the IGI records. In Scotland, we are still only seeing names spelled Duthie or Duthy in Aberdeenshire, Kincardineshire, Angus, Perthshire, Stirling, Clackmananshire, and Midlothian. All of these counties are on the east coast of Scotland. There is one of a “similar” name in London in 1661, a James Duthaies. In England we continue to find people of the same spelling as described in the previous paragraph.

Gordon Johnson of Aberdeen uncovered a book entitled The History and Regality of Musselburgh by James Paterson. A de Thomae Duchtie, known locally as Duthy, is recorded in Mussilburgh (old spelling) in 1534. However, the spelling of his last name is also given as Dughtie and Douchtie.

“Loretto, near Musselburgh (near Edinburgh) is celebrated as the sanctuary of the Virgin, of whom it had an image, and the residence of a holy man, a hermit, who, it would appear from a charter of James V, in 1534, was that actual founder. We learn that the hermit was called Thomas Duthy, or Duchtie, as he is styled elsewhere, of the order of St. Paul, first hermit of Mount Sinai, and that he had a grant from the Bailies of a petra, or stony piece of land, in the territory of Musselburgh, for the erection of a chapel in the honor of God and the Virgin Mary of Loretto. There can thus be no doubt that Thomas Duthy, who had brought an image of the Virgin from Loretto, in Italy, was the founder of the chapel. The circumstance, in fact, is recorded in the “Diurnal of Remarkable Occurants.

That Thomas was not only a Scotsman, but a native of Musselburgh, seems highly probable. Amongst the town’s papers there is a precept for infefting George Preston in “ane croft of land called Halleswalls, lying to the south of the village of Newbiggin, within the liberties of the town of Musselburgh, betwixt the lands some time of Thomas Dughtie, on the south of the arable lands of Inveresk on the west, &c. This precept is dated 6th January, 1523, ten years prior to the hermit’s arrival with the image. The individual here mentioned was probably himself or his father. If himself, he may have passed the intervening years fighting the Turks.”

In the novel “The Yellow Frigate” by James Grant, Routledge, London, reference is made of Thomas (no last name mentioned), the hermit of Loretto. The shrine eventually lost its good standing was torn down and the stone used to create the present tollbooth of Musselburgh.

A letter by the writer of August 2000 to Father Mullan of the Lady of Loretto and St. Michael Church in Musselburgh asking for any additional information has brought forth no response.

A few family members have said that Thomas Arthur Duthie (#58) had a genealogist work on the Duthie ancestry and reported that we are derived from a Saint Duthil or a
King Duthil. The family of Thomas are however, not aware of any such work being done nor has the writer found a Saint or a King by that name.

The only person of this surname that the writer has been able to find is a Sabaude Duthil born in Dax, Landes, France about 1689.

Now Duthil could easily be handwritten as Duthie and vice versa. There are two Duthils in Scotland. One is in parish #96B in Invernesshire (now known as Highland, and the other at parish #132 Elgin. I am not sure of the pronunciation of Gaelic but Duthil could be “cheatharnaich” – warrior’s glen. There certainly was no Saint or King associated with these wee places.

A Duvty is recorded as burgess of Aberdeen in 1507, while a Gilbert Duvty was also a burgess of the town in 1567. Could this name have become Duthie? Incidentally, there do not appear to be any people living today in Scotland named Duvty so this would add credence to the thought that the spelling was changed.

Perhaps the people with Duthie/Duty sounding names may have originated some-where in Europe – possibly France. A clue might be in the name of the hermit, “de Thomae Duchtie”. Perhaps, there is a link between the English written names of the 1500s; Deughtie, Dewtie, Dewtye, Duty, and Dwty and, the Scottish written names; Duhtie, Douchtie, Duvty, Duty and Duthie. As far as the writer is aware, only Duty and Duthie survive today. Interestingly, there appears to be none of the name Duty in Scotland and very few in England but very many in the USA. No genealogist, according to the Genealogical Research Directory (GRD), is researching these afore mentioned names except Duty and Duthie.

I, Fred (#1), am told that the name Duthie, in Inverallochy, was pronounced slightly differently some seventy years ago. One old person said it sounded like “Duthoy” while another said it was like “Duthi” with the “i” as in ink. To “spice up” interest the following is a picture taken from the side of a house at 13 Shore Street, Inverallochy. The house, when occupied by a Robert Duthie in 1779 was a single story. When the second story was added, the carving was raised. There is no written documentation but plenty of possibilities.
Of further interest, there are people by the name of Duthier and Duthiers. The names are known in France, Switzerland and the USA.

Of Ancient Scots
Here is an extract of *Surnames of Scotland*, page 234, by George F. Black, for the New York Public Library.

"DUTHIE. The name may commemorate S. Dubhthach of Tain. It is a shortened Anglicization of *MacGille Dubhthaigh*, "son of the servant of Dubhthach". The Gaelic name for Tain is *Baile Dhubhthaich*, "Dubhthach's town". Marjory Duthe had a tack of Hundclett in Holme, Orkney, 1492 (REO., p. 407). Seven of the name are recorded in Dunblane and neighborhood from 1598 (*Dunblane*). Patrick Duthie is in Insches, parish of Glenbervie, 1612, and four more of the name are in record (*Brechin*). David Duthie appears in Ballbrogie, 1744 (*Dunkeld*), and Alexander Duthie was a planter in Jamaica, 1769. The name is said to be common in Angus and it is also recorded in Banchory-Devenick."

(Notes – "may commemorate", also that the name was not common in the 1500s and then only scattered along the east coast. I would very much like to think our name has origins here as Black suggests. In Tain it is recorded that in 1560 "St. Duthac's relics, including ‘ane heid of silver callit sanct Duthois hede", are removed from Tain for safe keeping and never seen again.

Black also gives the following:

“DUTHAC. The Scoticized form of G. *Dubhthach*. The OIr. name is *Dubthach*, mod. Ir. *Dubhthach*, gen. *Dubhthaigh* as in *Ua Dubhthaigh*, usually Anglicized Duffy or O'Duffy, but rendered Duhig in county Cork, and Dooey, Dowey, and Duhy in Ulster. The Welsh is *Dyfodwg*. The earlier nominative is *Dubthoch* (as in Liber Armagh), and in ar. ogham inscription at Lamogue, county Waterford, *Dovatuc-eas*. In ON. spelled *Dufthakr*. Dubhthach was arch poet of King Laeghaire, converted by S. Patrick.
Dubhthach, coarb (comharba) of Columcille, died 7th October 938. Dubhthach Albanach (i.e. 'of Alba') 'chief soul friend of Ireland and Scotland', died 1065. (AU.). Duftach, "sacerdos", was one of the witnesses to confirmation of the church of Holy Trinity of Dunkeld to the Abbey of Dunfermline before 1169 (RD., p74). He is probably Dustah (f misread as long s), 'sacerdos et abbas', probably a Culdee abbot of S. Serf's, who appears as witness to the settlement of a dispute between the Culdees of Lochleven and Robert Burgonensis in the reign of David I (RPSA., 118). As forename: Duthacus de Carnegy, 1410 (REB., I, 27). Duthac Ker was burgess of Edinburgh, 1482 (Nuebottle, 304) and Duthac Rutherfurde was killed, 1495 (Trials, I, p.20). From S. Duthac comes the Gaelic name of Tain, Baile Dhu'aich (Dhubhthaich)."

tack - an attachment  coarb - see comarb - the head of the famies comprising an old Irish sept; the successor in an ecclesiastical office, abbot, vicar  sacerdos - priestly (sacerdotal)  liber - a book.

The Mearns of Old by James Crabb Watt, K.C., explains:
Duthac (Duthow, Dubtach) (d. 1065), bishop. Of Scottish origin, Duthac studied for some years in Ireland; on his return he was consecrated bishop. He worked mainly in Ross. He died on 8 March and was buried in Tayne. After seven years his body was found to be incorrupt and was translated to a more splendid shrine. William Worcester describes him as "the saint reckoned to be the most venerated in the land of Ross". Some of his miracle stories are picturesque. A guest at a party, who drank too much and had a headache, sent some pork to Duthac asking to be cured. His disciple left it on a grave with a gold ring while he prayed. A kite (hawk) stole them both, but Duthac conjured back the kite, returned the ring, but let the kite eat the pork. There are dedications at Arbroath, Kilduich, and Kilduthie; his shrine was by King James IV and many others. Feast: 8 March."

In a book entitled The Mearns, the place name Arduthie is described as follows: "Stonehaven Station (railway) stands on it. Formerly, Arduthoquye. Ard, a plateau, between Cowie and Carron; and Duthan, a saint, Duthac’s height. Or, tuath, graves; the height of the graves, meaning the ancient sepulchres, including the grave of King Malcolm. There are references in the Annals to tribal disturbances and slaughter in Fetteresso mentioned passim* in the text. Or, ard, dubh, and coy, the height where the dark marsh is. Here there was within living memory a marsh in the centre called the Lily Loch and Dews Loch. Or, Ard-dubhachaidh, blackfield point. Duthac was a fairly common name, and they were not necessarily all saints, and except in this name there is no trace of a Duthac here; but there are many modern Duthies here. There was St. Duthac, a contemporary of St. Patrick, 432; and the Tain man, with the holy shirt, at least 500 years later. Baldutho, Fife - Duthac’s Town. There was a Duthac Carnegy of Cookston, Forfar, who fell at the Battle of Harlaw."
* scattered

According to "Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland", St. Dubthach, otherwise St. Duthac, was born in Tain "in this region is the town called Thane, where the bones of Dutho, an holy man (as they say) do rest - - - The saint's shirt, known in Latin as "camisia Sancti Duthaci", was a noted relic in mediaeval times. It was preserved in one of the churches within the saint's sanctuary at Tain, and in the fourteenth century was worn by the Earls of Ross as a charm when going into battle".
If the origin of the Duthie name was, as George Black claims, "a son of a servant of Dubhthach", one might have expected records of Duthie-sounding names in the area around Tain. However, there are no Duthies, or any name even closely sounding as such, recorded in the LDS Family History Center for Ross & Cromarty or Inverness-shire even in the 16th and 17th centuries. There are not even names listed that sound anything close to Dubthach or even Dubh! Today, there are nine Duthies listed in the telephone directory for the area around Inverness compared to some 300 in the Aberdeenshire area alone.

Black also gives his interpretation of the name Duthac but even this surname also appears to have completely died out.

Now George Black (an American now deceased) did a fantastic work in the creation of his book. However, the writer questions his reasoning as to the origin of the Duthie name. Many Duthie families living in parts of the world outside of Scotland, for several generations, believe that the correct pronunciation of their name is as in “Doothie”. The writer has personally been called “Doothie” on many occasions by Americans who have never seen the written name before. It is possible that George Black was also one of these and interpreted the “Du” sound as “Dhu” as in “Dubh” meaning “black” which would be the beginning of many Gaelic names. The Gaelic word Dubhthach is, apparently, pronounced like Doothach. It is difficult to imagine this sound being like Duthie as it is said in Scotland. If Black were correct, the very first origination of people having a name resembling Duthie would be about the year 500 or 1,000 depending upon sources. In such case, the writer would have expected that there would be very substantially more than 3,000 families of the name today in the world.

Grant Hinshelwood (#615) has been of great support in trying to firm up a conclusion on this issue. He has solicited advice from specialists in the field of historical research. He mentions that “Alastair Macleod, Inverness Library and David Catto, Aberdeen County Library in Old Meldrum both think “my research into the origins of Duthie are about as far as one can go because of the paucity of written evidence from the 10th and 11th centuries.”

It was Grant who brought to my attention that Sir Fitzroy Maclean, the famous guerrilla leader in wartime Yugoslavia during WWII, in his book “Highlanders, a History of the Highland Clans” published in 1996, had written about the Grants. He mentions that in about 1300 “... Grants fighting manfully against the English invaders. This, with other evidence, all points to an Anglo-Norman origin for the Grants, by then clearly well established in north-eastern Scotland. One Grant married Bigla or Matilda, heiress of Gilbert Lord of Glencharnie, who brought with her Glencharnie (now Duthie) and half the Barony of Fruechie in Strathspey ...”. What is meant by “now Duthie” on page 102? Is this “now” referring to when the book was written? There is today only a Duthil in the general area mentioned. Checking the original manuscript, held by the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, there are questions on whether the “Duthie” should read “Duthil”.

While I would very much like to think the Duthie line was descended from such an ancient line I need more convincing. I plan to do more work and, in particular, determine the phonetic of the Gaelic names Duthus, Duthac, Duthow, Dubtach, Dhuthaich to see how they compare with that of Duthie.
Clan Association
The Duthie name is acknowledged as a Sept of the Ross Clan. Despite a great deal of effort, the writer has not been able find documentary evidence showing how, when, and where this association was formed. This information would have helped determine the origin of our name. The response from David Ross of Ross simply gave a copy of George Black’s version.

Grant Hinshelwood has been in touch with the National Archives of Scotland and the National Library of Scotland and conveys the following information:

“The Clan Mackay claim descent from Malcolm MacEth (or MacAed) Earl of Murray, of the race of the Mormaors of Murray who were/was Earl of Ross in 1160.

The Clan Ross claim descent from Fearchar Mac-an-t-Sagairt (Son of the Priest) hereditary Abbot of Applecross. He was knighted by Alexander II in 1215 and made Earl of Ross in 1226. The surname Ross is from the County name Ross after the Gaelic for promontory.

St. Duthus, St. Duthac, St. Duthow, St. Dubtach, or St. Duthaich, Patron Saint of Tain, Bishop of Ross, born in Tain c. 1000, educated in Ireland, died in Ireland on 8th March, 1068. His remains were brought back to Tain and interred in a Chapel near the sea.

His cousin in Ireland was Duthac 927 – 1038 patronomic “Mac Gill Dutaich, (son of the holy man), and a distant cousin of St. Columba, c. 521 – 597 who was born at Garton, Donegal, educated in Derry, and died at Iona.

In 1306 the Earl of Ross took prisoner the wife and daughters of Robert I of Scotland, who had sought refuge in the Sanctuary, and handed them over to the English.

The Laird of Freswick died in the fire at the Sanctuary when it was destroyed by the Earl of Ross in 1427.

For twenty years James IV of Scotland 1460 – 1488, made annual visits of pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Duthac in Tain.

There is a place in Inverness called Culduthil. There were religious houses dedicated to St. Duthac at Arbroath, Kilduich and Kilduthie precise locations not verified so far.

Lastly, there is the Church of St. Peter in Duthil, Highland was built in 1829. It stands on a burial ground dating back to the 13th century. The original Church was part of the diocese of Elgin Cathedral, built in 1224, and itself replacing the Cathedral of Spynie on the Lossie estuary, part of the see of Moray.


The following extracts from the story of Cairnbulg Castle, as told by Lady Saltoun, may just be worth mentioning until we learn more of the origin of the name:

“In the years before 1308-9, the Comyns, Earls of Buchan, held all the land in this part of Aberdeenshire which is still known as Buchan. Before the defeat of the Norse at the
battle of Largs in 1263 and the death of King Haakon in the following year, the coast of Buchan was exposed to their invasions. The Earls of Buchan were responsible for coastal defense and built a number of castles around the coast, of which the first stone castle here was probably one. In the Wars of Independence, the Comyns sided with the English against Robert I (The Bruce), and, after he had defeated them at the battle of Barra Hill in the winter of 1308-1309, he carried out an operation known as the Harryng of Buchan, in which he destroyed all the castles in the Earldom, so that they could never again be held against him, and he forfeited the Earldom and divided it up among various of his supporters. The Earl of Ross, who had eventually joined Bruce, received this part of Buchan and the ruins of the first castle."

It is suspected that at this time there would not have been a Duthy or Duthie in Scotland!

**Some other interpretations/notes:**

The "New Dictionary of American Surnames" by Smith, quotes DUTHIE (Scot.) Descendant of Dubhthach (black jointed).

"Surnames of the United Kingdom" by Harrison, mentions DUTHIE (Scotland) the first element is probably Gaelic Dhubh - black, the second is doubtful - Duthaich (country).

The New Dictionary of American Surnames by Smith, shows Duty (It.) Descendant of Duti, a short form of names beginning with Diot (God), as Diotajuti, Diotallevi, and Diotiguardi.

**Other Items of Interest**

It was in 1566 that the Protestant Dutch revolted against Catholic Spain. It was in 1588 that the Spanish Armada attacked the UK. Some Duthies were in Scotland just before these times so the Duthie sounding names were not from shipwrecks of the Armada.

Other Duthies that I have talked to say that they thought their ancestors were from Holland, Scandinavia, or Denmark. However, I have never met a person from these countries who recognizes the Duthie name as being from their country!

I would very much like to think that George Black was correct in his determination of the Duthie origin. I wish that I could talk things over with him.

In checking IGI records of France one finds several of the name DUTHEY in the late 1600s and early 1700s. I have been in touch with Michel DEVEZEAU in France who is researching the DUTHIE line. Michel records several Josephs with the surnames spelled DUTHI, DUTHYE, DUTHY and DUTHIE in Belgium. This is very interesting news and I will continue the correspondence with great expectations. Let us hope that the "chicken and egg" theory may be put to nest! <grin>

The fact that there only about 3,000 families alive at this time (2001) still gives us the prime clue to our origins if we can only determine what this is.

**My Own Hunch**

If I were to make a guess I would **suggest** that names such as Deughtie, Dewtie, Dewtye, Duty, Duthy and Duthie are from the same root originating in mainland Europe
before 1500. These settled along the east coast of England and in Scotland largely as fisher folk. Perhaps, someone else will be able to continue the research.

Tracing the family line in the northeast of Scotland is made all the more difficult because so many people used so few names – all with biblical roots. People found a way around this by giving people nick names (also called Tee-names or Bye-names). The use of Tee-names was even listed on census records.

I have just had an analysis of my DNA in a report from the National Geographic Genographic project and some interesting information has been given. The DN is coded Haplogroup R1b (M343). As soon as I have made a study this epistle will be updated.

Determining our origins, while of great interest, is not the main reason for this work. The prime objective has been to link family over the ages – most importantly, living folks. New generations will now not only know something about those before them and be able to reach out to living “cousins”.

Fred Duthie
26th October 2005
origin.doc