

THE NAME AND FAMILY OF MORRISON

· 21 August 2013 ·

THE NAME AND FAMILY OF MORRISON The name of MORRISON, meaning "son of Morris", is believed to be derived from the ancient Welsh word Mawr, meaning "great", and rys, meaning "warrior", combined with the suffix ending son. The literal meaning to the name would, therefore, be "son of a great warrior". Many other derivations of the name are given by various writers, including one from the French Maurice and one from the Gaelic Moor, meaning "renowned or famous one". It is found on ancient English and early American records in the various forms of Moreson, Morysone, Moryson, Morreson, Morryson, Moorson, Morrisen, Moorison, Morson, Morrisson, Morisone, Morrisone, Murison, Morison, Morrison, and others, of which the last mentioned is the most generally accepted spelling in America today, while that immediately preceding it is still occasionally found.

According to family tradition the Morrisons are descended from one of the ancient Kings of Norway. The family was early located on the Island of Lewis, Scotland. Branches of this root-stock went into various parts of Great Britain and were to be found at early dates in London and in the English Counties of Lincoln, York, Northumberland, Hertford, and Lancaster; in many parts of Ireland; and in numerous localities in Scotland, including the Counties of Fife, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Kinross, and Sterling. Of the line of Lewis, one Mores, son of Makurich, son of one of the Kings of Norway, was the father of one Moreson or Morrison, from whom the family took its name. The chief of the clan was, for many centuries, hereditary brieve or judge of Lewis, holding that office, according to tradition, from before the thirteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Among the earliest records of the family in England are those of Ricardus Morrisson and William Moreson, of Yorkshire, before 1379. This line was represented before the year 1460 by another William Morrison, who resided at Chardwell, Yorkshire, and was the father of a son named William, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Roger Lee, and had issue by her of a son named Thomas, who settled in Hertfordshire and married a daughter of one Thomas Merry, of that county. Thomas Morrison of Hertfordshire, England, was the father of Sir Richard, Fines, and Anne, of whom the first married Bridget, daughter of John, Lord Hussey, and had issue by her of Jana Sibilla, Sir Charles, Elizabeth, and Mary, of whom the son, Sir Charles Morrison, was the father by his wife, Dorothy Clark, whom he married before 1587, of Sir Charles, who married Mary, daughter of Sir Baptist Hicks, Lord Viscount Cambden, in 1660 and left issue by her of Baptist, Hicks, and others.

Another branch of the family in England was represented in the early sixteenth century by George Morysone or Mor(r)ison, who resided in Lincolnshire and was the father there of a son named Thomas, who married Elizabeth Moyne and was the father by her of Edward, Thomas, Fynnes or Fines, Henry, Richard, Jane, and Faith, of whom the son Edward married Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Wingfield, and had issue by her of Thomas, Edward, Robert, Frances, and Elizabeth.

From the ancient Scottish line were descended the Reverend brothers, Donald and Kenneth Morrison, grandsons of the last judge of Lewis. The Reverend Donald Morrison died in the latter part of the seventeenth century, leaving a son, the Reverend Allan Morrison. The Reverend Kenneth was the father of a son, also named Allan, who was the father of Alexander, who was the father in the early eighteenth century of three

children, John, Donald, and Allan, of whom the last two emigrated to Canada in 1766 and were the ancestors of several families which went into the United States in the nineteenth century.

While it is not entirely clear in every case from which of the numerous lines of the family in the British Isles the first emigrants of the name to America traced their descent, it is recorded that the Morrisons were among the earliest settlers in the New World.

Among the first of the family in America were

Elizabeth Morrison, who came from Herfordshire to New England in 1635;

William and Robert Morrison, who settled in Virginia in 1635;

the brothers Major Richard, Lieutenant Robert, Colonel Francis, and Henry Moryson or Morrison (sons of Sir Richard and Elizabeth (nee Harrington) Moryson, of England), all of whom resided in Virginia between 1638 and 1650, the first, Major Richard, being appointed commander of the fort at Point Comfort in 1638 and leaving issue there by his wife Winifred of at least two sons, Richard and Colonel Charles;

one Hans Morrison, of Delaware, in the year 1670;

and Robert Morrison, of Rockingham County, N.H., who died in 1677, probably without issue.

About 1690 two Morrisons, probably brothers, Andrew and Daniel, emigrated to New England. The first made his home at New Haven, Conn., but left no definite records of his immediate family; and the second resided at Newbury, Mass., and was the father by his first wife, Hannah Griffin, of at least six children, Daniel, John, Hannah, Ebenezer, Abigail, and Mary. In 1707 he married, as his second wife, Mary Foulson, of Exeter, N.H. He then made his home at Rowley, Mass., and had issue there of Lydia and Beriah. Daniel, eldest son of the immigrant Daniel, removed to Wells, Me., at an early date and left issue by his wife, Abigail Kimball, whom he married in 1712, of a son named Daniel. John, second son of the immigrant Daniel, settled first at Exeter, N.H., and later at Haverhill and was the father by his wife, Lydia Robinson, of Bradbury, Daniel, David, Samuel, Ebenezer, Jeremiah (no further record), Hannah, Abigail, Lydia, Jonathan (died Young), Molly, and John. Ebenezer, third and youngest son of the immigrant Daniel, settled at Stratham, N.H., which was formerly a part of Exeter, and married Anna Spindelov, by whom he left issue of Spindelov, Daniel, Hannah, and Lydia, of whom the first son resided at Newbury and later at Stratham.

As early as 1717 the brothers Samuel and James Morrison came from the North of Ireland and settled in Drumore Township, in Lancaster County, Pa. Of these, Samuel left no issue, while James was the father of James Jr. and Daniel.

In 1720 one John Morrison came from Scotland to Londonderry, N.H., probably having been for a time in Ireland. By his first wife, whose name is not certain, he was the father of James, John, Halbert, and Martha; and by his second wife, Jean Steele, he had further issue of Samuel, Hannah, Mary, and Joseph. Of this line, it is said that the sons preceded their father to America, probably arriving in 1718 or 1719.

Thomas Moor(r)icon, of Londonderry, N.H., who is said to have been born in Ireland in 1710 and is sometimes called "son of John", settled at Lunenburg, N.H., at an early

date and left issue there by his wife, Mary Smith, of John, Elizabeth, Robert, Margaret, Jonathan, Thomas Sally, Samuel, Mary, and Ezekiel.

In 1719 one David Morison was warned out of Boston, and it is thought probable that he was the same as that David who was living at Londonderry, N.H., in 1730 with his wife, Martha Ann McAlister, but died without issue.

Robert Morrison came from Scotland to Londonderry, N.H., about 1719 and left issue there by his wife Elizabeth of Robert and William. Samuel Morison or Morrison, who came from Ireland to Londonderry, N.H., in 1723, left issue either by his first wife Martha or by his second wife, Margaret Henry, of Martha, Samuel, and Abraham.

Three brothers, of Scotch ancestry, William, David, and Hugh Morrison, immigrated from Port Rush, Ireland, to New Hampshire about 1726 and settled in the town of Nottingham. Of these, William brought with him from Ireland his wife, Mary Henry, who was also of Scotch ancestry, and their son James. They had further issue at Nottingham of William, Robert, James, Isaac, Henry, Hugh, John, Mary, Jane, and Martha. The immigrant brother David settled at Portsmouth, N.H., but left only female issue; while the immigrant brother Hugh was the father by his wife, Martha McCrellis, of Robert, John, Martha, and Samuel and made his home at Coleraine or Colrain, Mass.

Another immigrant of the year 1726 was another John Morison or Morrison, who came from Ireland to Londonderry, N.H., and had three children, Samuel, Joseph, and Hannah.

According to some records, another Samuel Morrison, who was born in Scotland, came from Ireland to Windham, N.H., about 1730 and left issue there by his wife Mary of Susanna, Samuel, Mary, and John.

Sometime before 1740 one Robert Morrison settled in America, and in that year he made his home at North Bridgewater, Mass., with his sons, William, Alexander, and John, of whom the first was married in 1748 to Sarah Montgomery, by whom he was the father of William, Robert, Alexander, John, and James.

Gabriel Morrison came to America about 1740 and settled in Pennsylvania, where he was married before 1743 to Martha Glen, who gave him several children, among whom were Sarah, John, and Alexander.

One Andrew Morison came (possibly with a brother named John) from Belfast, Ireland, to Orange County, Va., about 1747 and left issue there by his wife, Mary Organ, of a son also named Andrew, who was married in 1776 to Elizabeth Taylor, by whom he had issue of John (died Young), William, Thankful, Elizabeth, Nancy, Rebecca, Jane, Hannah, Andrew, and another John.

Shortly after 1765 the Reverend John Morrison came from Pathfoot, Scotland to Peterborough, N.H., whence he later removed to Charleston, S.C., but records of him are only fragmentary.

About 1770 another John Morrison, of Scotch-Irish Ancestry, came to America and settled in New York. By his wife, Prudence Gwyn, he was the father of a son named John, and possibly others.

The Reverend William Mor(r)ison came from Perthshire, Scotland, to Londonderry, N.H., before 1783 and married Jean Fullerton, by whom he had issue of William Fullerton, Jenny, Daniel, James, and Sally.

Edward Morrison came from the British Isles to Virginia before 1791 and resided at Staunton, where he was the father of, among others, a son named David, who made his home in the Monongahela Valley.

Still another John Morrison emigrated from Ireland about 1795. He resided in Virginia and was there married about 1798 to a Miss Bagley, by whom he was the father of Jane, William Anderson, Edwin Armstead, and James Horace. Samuel Morrison, a brother of this immigrant, is said to have located in Maryland, but his records are not complete.

Later representatives of these and other branches of the family in America have removed to every State of the Union and have aided as much in the advancement of American civilization as their forbears did in its first establishment on this continent. On the whole, they have been characterized by a love of adventure, by a natural ability to lead and to command, and by intellectual attainments. Among those of the name who fought as officers in the War of the Revolution were Captain Isaac Morrison, of New Jersey; Ensign James, Lieutenant Joseph, and Lieutenant Samuel Morrison, of Pennsylvania; Captain John Morrison, of Georgia; and Surgeon's Mate Robert Morrison, of New York. Andrew, John, William, Allan, Alexander, Donald, James, Robert, Joseph, David, Richard, Daniel, and Samuel are some of the Christian names most favored by the family for its male progeny.

A few of the many members of the family who have distinguished themselves in various parts of the world in more recent times are: William Ralls Morrison (1824-1909), of Illinois, lawyer. James Augustus Morison (1832-1888), English biographer and essayist. Henry Clay Morrison (1842-1921), of Tennessee, Methodist (South) bishop. James Dow Morrison (b. 1844), of New York, Protestant Episcopal bishop. Theodore Nevin Morrison (1850-1929), of Illinois, Protestant Episcopal bishop. John Frank Morrison (b.1857), of New York, Major General of the United States Army. John Tracy Morrison (b. 1860), of Pennsylvania, lawyer and politician. Arthur Morrison (b. 1863), English author. Samuel Eliot Morison (b. 1887), of Massachusetts, historian.

One of the several coats of arms of the Morrison or Morison family of Scotland, from which most of the families in America trace their descent, is that described as follows (Burke, General Armory, 1884): Arms—"Argent (another, azure), three Moor's heads coupéd sable, two and one, Banded of the first." Crest—"Three Saracens' heads conjoined in one neck, proper, the faces looking to the chief, dexter, and sinister sides proper."

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