

Clan AITON



ARMS

Argent, a cross engrailed between four roses Gules

CREST

A hand pulling a rose Proper

MOTTO

Decerptae dabunt odorum (Roses plucked will give sweet smell)

This name, perhaps more commonly spelled 'Ayton', probably derives from the lands of Ayton in Berwickshire. The name itself is given by Black to mean a town on the banks of the River Aye. The original progenitor of the family is believed to have been an Anglo-Norman knight, Gilbert, who obtained the lands of Aiton in the eleventh century and assumed the name as his designation. Steffan, son of Swan de Aeitun, granted lands to Coldingham Priory, around 1170. There is believed to have been an ancient castle at Ayton, which would undoubtedly have been the scene of many border disputes, and Matthew of Ayton is listed as a Scots prisoner held at Chester Castle in 1296. The principal family ended in an heiress who married George Hume and the greater part of the family lands then passed into that family until James, son of the sixth Earl of Hume, had his estates forfeited for following the Jacobite cause in the rising of 1715. Andrew Ayton is listed by Macgibbon and Ross as a 'Master of the Works' who made purchases for the king, collected the tax of spears in Fife and conveyed money to the Master of Artillery. He superintended works at Stirling Castle until 1511. According to Anderson, this Andrew was a son of the house of Ayton of that Ilk and he received lands at Denmuir in Fife. Sir Robert Ayton was a distinguished poet and some time ambassador to the German Emperor and secretary to Henrietta Maria, wife of the ill-fated Charles I. The traditional family lands are dominated by the great Castle of Ayton, which is one of the triumphs of Victorian baronial architecture. The present owner is a former Grand Master Mason of Scotland, who is no doubt proud of the connection through the land to a former Master of the King's Works at Stirling Castle.

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