



Clan JOHNSTON

ARMS

A silver shield with a black saltire and three gold cushions on a red chief.

CREST

Not available

MOTTO

Nunquam non paratus (Never unprepared)

JOHNSTON, JOHNSTONE. Shortly after 1174 John the founder of the family of Johnstone, gave his name to his lands in Annandale, Dumfriesshire, whence his son Gilbert took his surname. "Who John, the father of Gilbert, was it is now perhaps impossible to determine. He may have been a native settler who, when the Bruces were made lords of Annandale, elected to hold his lands from them,' or, as seems most likely, he followed his overlords from their Yorkshire, or more southern, estates, and was gifted with the lands to which he gave his name, and which, later, formed the parish and barony of Johnstone". Gilbert, son of John, appears in charters granted by William, lord of Annandale, 1195-1215. Within the same period he is also styled Gilbertus de Jonistoun, "thus in a brief space showing both the patronymic and the territorial surname". Gilbert, son of John, witnessed a charter by William Bruce to Adam de Carlyle between 1194 and 1214, and as Gillebertus de Jonistune he witnessed a charter of the lands of Pennersaugh within the same period. Robertus de Jonistoun witnessed a charter by Gilbert of Glencarny to Duncan of Feryndrawcht, c. 1281-98. Johan de Jonestone, knight of the county of Dunfrys, Gilbert de Jonestone of Dumfriesshire, and Thomas de Jonestone of Roxburghshire, rendered homage, 1296. The seal of Johan shows a shield with two garbs (?) and a canton dexter over a third; charges indistinct, S' *Iohis de Ionestone'militis*, while the seal of Gilbert is a gem bearing a head in profile, S' *Gilberti de Ionestovn*. Stephen de Johnston, called the Clerk, said to have been a younger brother of the laird of Annandale, was secretary to Thomas, earl of Mar who died in 1377. 453). Aye (= Adam) Jonson was present at the perambulation of the bounds of Kyrknes and Louchor, 1395, and William Jonson of Mourthull was one of the assizers on the marches of Woodwrae, 1388. Andrew Johnson (? for Johnston) called "Schaklok" was admitted burgess of Aberdeen, 1436, and Adam of Jonstoun was one of the conservators of the truce between Scotland and England, 1451. John Johnston alias Jonston, a native of the vill of Jonstone in Scotland, received letters of denization in England, 1463, and Adam of Johnston, Robin of Johnston, Gilbert of Johnston, and Mathewe of Johnstone, who petitioned for safe conducts to travel in England in the same year, probably derived their surnames from Perth which was often named Johnstoun or St. Johnstoun in record. Another territorial family of Johnstones took their name from the kinds of Jonystoun, now Johnstonburn, an estate in the parish of Humble, East Lothian. Hugh de Jonystoun witnessed a charter of these lands to the House of Soltre (Soutra), c. 1250. Between 1296 and 1324 John de Jonystoun "quondam filius Hugonis de Jonystoun" resigned to Soltre "totam terram meam de Jonystoun cum omnibus libertatibus et aysiammentis". Robert Johnstoun alias "Ding the Devill" in record, 1609. In former days the Johnstones formed one of the most powerful and turbulent clans of the West Border, and were at constant feud with their neighbors, especially the Maxwells, hence probably their ironical description, "the gentle Johnstones." Johnstoun 1609, Johnston 1616, Johanstoun 1450, Johnstoun 1493, Johnestoun 1530, Johnngston 1736, Johnnesone 1530, Johnnestoun 1608, Johnnestoun 1558, Johnnstoun 1503, Johnstounne 1575, Joneston 1245, Jonhesone 1491, Johnstone 1499, Joniston 1329, Jonstoun 1683.

Taken from "Surnames of Scotland", by Black, The New York Public Library.

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The Scottish Society of Louisville, Inc.
PO Box 32248
Louisville, KY 40232-2248

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