



Clan NESBIT

ARMS	Argent, three boars' heads erased Sable, armed Argent and langued Gules
CREST	A boar passant Sable, armed Argent and langued glues
MOTTO	I byd it
SUPPORTERS	(on a compartment embellished with acorns Proper) Two boars Sable, armed Argent, langued Gules
STANDARD	Azure, a St Andrew's Cross Argent in the hoist and of the livery Argent upon which is depicted the Badge along with the Motto 'I byd it' extended in the fly in letters Sable
PINSEL	Argent, displaying upon a Wreath of the Liveries Argent and Sable the Crest within a strap Sable, buckled and embellished Or, inscribed with this Motto 'I byd it' in letters of the Field, the same ensigned of a chapeau Azure furred Erimne and in the fly an Escrol Sable surmounting a sprig of oak fructed Proper bearing in letters of the Field the Slogan 'A Nisbet'
BADGE	A boar passant Sable, armed Argent and langued Gules

This name derives from the lands and barony of Nesbit near Edrom in Berwickshire. The lands are probably named after a geographical feature, possibly meaning nose-shaped hill or nose-bend. The name is now best known in clan circles through the work of Alexander Nisbet (1657-1725), one of the greatest Scottish authorities on heraldry. His *System of Heraldry* is still a classic work, and was reproduced in facsimile from as recently as 1984. He established his own connection with the chiefly line and must be regarded as authoritative on the pedigree of his own family. In his own words, 'the lands of Nesbit were of ancient denomination for, in the reign of King Edgar, son of Malcolm Canmore, in whose reign surnames came first to be hereditary, they were donated to the monks of Dunfermline to pray for the soul of his father, and for the health of his own'.

Black lists William de Nesbite as witness to a charter by Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, to Cold Ingham Priory around 1160. Thomas Nesbit was Prior of Cold Ingham from 1219 to 1240. Philip de Nesbit appears in the Ragman roll submitting to Edward I of England in 1296. James, John and Adam Nisbet also appear on the roll, and it is likely that Adam is the same person as Adam Nisbet of that ilk, who received a charter from Robert the Bruce to the land of Knocklies, the feudal obligation being the provision of one knight for the king's army. Adam, or perhaps his son and namesake, continued in royal favor, and distinguished himself in the service of David II, defending the southern borders. Adam was succeeded by Philip Nisbet, who appears in important charters of the Earls of Dunbar, and he, in turn, was succeeded by his son, Adam. Adam's great-great-grandson, Philip Nisbet, married a daughter of Haldane of Gleneagles, and their heir was Alexander Nesbit.

Alexander was a fervent royalist and was devoted to Charles I. He was appointed sheriff of Berwickshire, but when the king's policies led to military confrontation with his Scottish and English subjects, Nesbet and his sons joined the king's standard at Oxford. His eldest son, Philip, was abroad when the civil war began, but he soon returned, and was knighted and given command of a regiment. He was lieutenant governor of Newark-upon-Trent, which was besieged by the Scottish army under General Leslie. He left Newark and became one of the officers of James Graham, Marquess of Montrose, becoming one of his most trusted officers. Montrose was surprised by a strong force of Covenant cavalry and defeated at the Battle of Philiphaugh, where Nisbet was taken prisoner. He was subsequently executed at Glasgow on 28 October 1646, along with Alexander Ogilvie, the Younger, of Innerquharity at Glasgow. Ogilvie was barely twenty years of age, and his execution was considered an act of savagery, even in those bloody times. Two of Philip's brothers, Alexander and Robert, were also killed in the war. The youngest brother, Adam, survived to become the father of Alexander Nisbet, the heraldic writer.

Nisbet was trained as a lawyer but soon acquired a passion for history and heraldry. He published his first work, an essay on cadency, in 1702. His great work, *System of Heraldry*, was published in Edinburgh in two volumes in 1722, with more editions following in 1742, 1804 and 1816. He died in 1725.

There were numerous other distinguished families of this name, including the Nisbets of Paxton, Dean, Dirleton and Cairnhill. The Nisbets of Dirleton produced a line of distinguished lawyers, including two judges, Lord Dirleton and Lord Eastbank. The present descendants of the Nisbets of Cairnhill reside in the splendid Adam mansion of the Drum on the outskirts of Edinburgh.

In February 1994, the Lord Lyon recognized Robert Anthony Ellis Nesbitt as chief of the name and arms of Nesbitt (or Nisbet). The new chief established that he was the only grandson of Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, MP, who recorded arms in 1933, setting out his descent from the Reverend Philip Nisbet, grand-uncle of Alexander, the heraldic writer. He asserted that he was the heir of the noble house of Nisbet of that Ilk 'for aught yet seen'. His petition was accepted, and the undifferenced arms, with the grant of supporters, standard, badge, slug horns and pinsel, assigned to the new chief subject to the proviso that another claimant has ten years to seek to re-open the case, after which time the judgement is unassailable.

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Clan NISBET Septs - NAISBIT(T), NASBETT, NESBET(T) , NISBET(T)

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