The Dryden family of Canons Ashby House in Northamptonshire England have, in Visitations over the past 400 years, listed as their first known ancestors two generations of "Drydens" who lived in Cumberland. David Driden married Isobel Nicholson of Staffield Cumberland, probably a little before 1520, and David's father is listed as John Driden or Dreydon of Walton Cumberland. The family line stops with William and no significant clue seems to have been found in Cumberland of the earlier Dryden origins.

Since the name Dryden is undeniably Scottish there have been many attempts to find an earlier Dryden link in Scotland reaching back before 1500. There are in fact earlier archival records from Scotland that show individual versions of the Dryden name running from 1296 until 1488 - as de Driden, Draidon, Dredayne, Dridane and Drydane etc.

The location of Draidon (Dredden now Dryden) near Roslin and within the Saint Clair holdings has also given rise to a long held suspicion that at least one of the Dryden family lines descends from St Clair (or Sinclair) of Roslin. The reason is simple - there was a residence at Dryden where members of the Sinclair family sometimes lived & at least one of the historical names - Henrico de Driden from the Annals of Dunfermline in 1329 - has been identified with reasonable certainty as Henry St Clair of Roslin.

There are scattered records of "de Driden" churchmen occurring from 1390 through to about 1480, but they are proving more difficult to combine into a single family tree.

Then there are records of a "Sinclair of Dryden" family between 1447 and 1546 that form a cohesive "Dryden" family in Scotland at the time we are looking for.

There is also a 1488 reference to 3 Drydanes who seemed to have fought on the side of King James III in a battle that saw the Kings death and his son James IV take the throne. This paper starts with the more modest attempt to find links between the 3 Drydanes of 1488 and the Saintclairs (Sinclairs) of Dryden from Midlothian in Scotland.

The Pardons of 1488/9 - could the 3 Drydanes be the Sinclairs of Dryden

Letters Patent of Remission by King James IV dated 10 Feb 1488 (1489 -modern calendar)
"To John Drydane, William Drydane, Archibald Drydane and others, indwellers within the shire of Roxburgh, of rancor of heart, royal suit, and all actions for treasonable offences against him in the field and battle near Strieuelin, on St Barnabas day last"

"Strieuelin" translates into English as Stirling and this refers to the battle near Stirling now known as Sauchieburn on 11 June 1488 - when James III was killed and his son James IV placed on the throne. There were many pardons given to those who had legitimately sided with the King James III at the battle.

The only other mention of similar names from Scottish documents of this period seem to be of Sir John of Drydane knighted in 1502 (aka John Sinclair of Dryden) and his brother William Sinclair of Dryden. Documents dating from 1490 to 1514 also confirm that these 2 brothers were indeed of royal suit as courtiers and members of the royal household of James IV. Both may well have been members of the royal household of King James III before 1488.

Two of their first cousins from the Chisholm family, sons of Margaret Sinclair of Dryden are documented as belonging to the Royal suite of James III before 1488.

- James Chisholm was chaplain to James III and in 1486 made Bishop of Dunblane
- Sir James Ramsay of Balmaine, a particular favourite of James III was saved by the King on Lauder bridge ..."when Cocheran, Rogers and Homyll were hanged over the Bridge." - from Genealogy of the House of Drummond 1681
There is a record from 1506 of Patrick Sinclair of Dryden that names Edward (deceased) as his father, and several brothers - Sir John, William, George, a 2nd William & 2 illegitimate half brothers Patrick & Hector. That document relates to the inheritance of property in Galloway from Patrick Sinclair and would have named all his living brothers.

The missing elements from the 1488 pardon are Archibald Drydane and the connection with Roxburghshire. Lack of further records of Archibald Drydane leaves open several possibilities. We might conclude that Archibald was a brother who died young, or perhaps an uncle. These are missing elements & not necessarily obstacles to proving the pardon refers to the Sinclairs of Dryden.

Being of "royal Suite" - being referred to by the Dryden name - and with consistent dates - we might reasonably conclude that 2 of the pardoned Drydanes were indeed Sir John and William St Clair of Dryden.

The next task is to attempt to connect the contemporaneous records of William Sinclair of Dryden and William Dreydon of Cumberland. Can we trace the existing "Dryden" family line back to Scotland?

William Sinclair of Dryden - his story

- William Drydane "of royal suit" pardoned 1488
- Usher (Ostiarius) of outer door of Kings Chamber 1490 & again in 1503.
- Tenant of the mill of Culwen Galloway in 1492
- for good services receives land & a house in Edinburgh from the King
- Usher of the Queens Chamber 1508-1514
- Last record of William in the Queens household was 1514

Sir John of Drydane (an older brother William Sinclair of Dryden) was high in the esteem of the Scottish Court from 1490. There are reports of him playing bowls with the King - and of him and his wife receiving New Year gifts from the King and Queen. He was known to have Court positions that included Master of Spicery.

Records of Sir John last until 1513, but from the time of the marriage of King James IV to Margaret Tudor in 1503, Sir John's younger half brother Patrick starts his rise to becoming the Court favourite.

From the early days of her reign, Patrick Sinclair became the confidential envoy and courier for Margaret Tudor, the Queen of Scotland. Patrick was often granted safe passage within England by the Queen's brother Henry VIII - and enjoyed the confidence of that King of England. It is said that when they were in conference, Cardinal Wolsey was required to leave the King's chamber.

Archival documents show many of the events that Patrick Sinclair was involved in and explain many of his family and political relationships. His story helps to shine some light on what has up till now been the hidden story of his brother William, the usher to the Queen’s chamber.

The movement of brother William Sinclair to the Queens household before 1508 seems to be a reflection of events that saw the Sinclair brothers being drawn more into the "English camp" during the period of turmoil in Scotland that climaxed in the battle of Flodden and the death of King James IV in 1513.

The death of James IV at Flodden 1513 - & the flight of the Scottish Queen in 1515

King James IV of Scotland's will stipulated that his Queen (Margaret Tudor), should become Regent to her young son James V, provided she remain unmarried. Despite suspicions about her English origins the Scottish nobles allowed her to be made Regent, but within a year she had secretly married Archibald Douglas 6th Earl of Angus. When that marriage was discovered, she was stripped of the Regency.

Angus withdrew to his estates in Forfarshire, while the new Regent John Stewart the Duke of Albany arriving from France, besieged the Queen at Stirling, and required her to give up custody of her 2 young sons - heirs to the throne.

Margaret was then moved from Stirling to Edinburgh, but on the ground that her childbearing was near, she was allowed to go to Linlithgow, her own residence.

We can insert here the contents of a letter send by Thomas Dacre from Naworth castle on the borders in Cumberland to the English Privy Council dated 14 August 1515. He reported that - "Lord Home was fast and sure upon the Queen of Scots party". That confirms Dacre and the English were involved in a plot with sympathisers in Scotland to assist the departure of the Queen from Scotland.
On 23rd September 1515 Queen Margaret escaped with her husband Angus and a few male servants. They were indeed given protection by Alexander Home the Scottish Lord of the Marches who was antagonistic toward the Regent Albany. He supplied a small guard of "hardy, well-striking fellows" to escort the Queen east to her husband's castle of Tantallon on the coast of East Lothian, and then to Alexander Home's Castle further south at Blackadder.

Continuing the journey cross the English border from Coldstream the small entourage was expected & received by Thomas Lord Dacre, the English Warden of the Marches. Given the poor state of health of the Queen the group stopped at Harbottle Castle in Northumberland on 8th October 1515. (another date given is 30 September), rather continuing on to the well prepared & comfortable Morpeth Castle further south.

The dates for the Queen giving birth prematurely to a daughter (Margaret Douglas) varies from 15 to 30 October 1515. This Margaret would become the mother of Lord Darnley and the Grandmother of James VI of Scotland, later King James I of England.

Lord Alexander Home, the rebellious Warden of the Scottish Marches afterwards continued to work with the English Warden of the Marches Thomas Dacre, to overthrow the Government of the new Scottish Regency of Albany.

The relationships that tied William's brother Patrick Sinclair to Lord Home.

- After 1513 Patrick Sinclair had married Elizabeth Stewart, the widow of Alexander Home's cousin Mungo Home - & sister of Alexander Home's own new wife Agnes Stewart, both illegitimate daughters of the Earl of Buchan. Both of the Stewart sisters had lost their previous husbands at the battle of Flodden.

- Home's wife Agnes Stewart had first been a mistress of King James IV. She had then married John Maxwell, 4th Lord, in about 1490/91, she married 2nd - Adam Hepburn 2nd Earl Bothwell who died at Flodden in 1513 and married 3rd - Alexander Home not long after Flodden. A son of Agnes Stewart was the very prominent Robert 5th Lord Maxwell who became the Scottish Warden of the Marches in 1517. Patrick Sinclair, through his wife Elizabeth Stewart had become Robert Maxwell's Uncle by marriage.

And brother Sir John Sinclair of Dryden's connection to Lord Home - through the Maxwells

- There is another very strong connection documented between Robert Maxwell & the Sinclairs of Dryden. It was Sir John of Dryden (Patrick & William's older brother) who was the procurator for John Maxwell (Robert's father) & personally took his resignation as Steward of Annandale to King James IV in Holyrood Palace in 1513, renouncing it in favour of his son Robert Maxwell. The charter granting the Stewardship of Annandale followed on 10 June 1513. Annandale is within the Scottish Borders, immediately north of Cumberland. The Battle of Flodden was on 9 September 1513, meaning that Patrick's marriage into the Maxwell families followed after Sir John of Dryden's procurator role for the Maxwells.

- Sir John Sinclair of Dryden also disappears from the records from 1513-14 & there is some speculation that he too died at Flodden.

And brother George Sinclair of Dryden's connection to Lord Home - through the Hepburns

- Another brother George Sinclair had earlier been in the service of Patrick Hepburn, created the Earl of Bothwell & Steward of Kirkcudbright in Galloway in 1489. George Sinclair had been made the Deputy Steward (revenue collector) in Kirkcudbright from 1493. Patrick Hepburn is also the father of Agnes Stewart's 2nd husband.

William Sinclair's position

We can conclude that many of the Sinclair brother's acquaintances and relationships overlapped and that they were very well connected to the main "players" on both the Scottish & English sides of the Borders. Significantly, the relationships of Patrick & William show them to be allied with the "English" party in Scotland. They supported the Queen & her new husband Archibald Douglas the 6th Earl of Angus - against the "French" party that supported the Regency of the Earl of Albany who was resident in France.

William Sinclair is shown to have been employed within the Royal households for the 23 years from 1490 - and perhaps it was longer. From 1508 to 1514 he is Usher of the Queens chamber - obviously a long serving and trusted Courtier. William Sinclair of Dryden disappears from the records of the Scottish Court after 1514. Given William Sinclair's position at Court & his strong family connections to the English camp, he is likely to have been centrally involved - he may even have been one of the 4-5 "servants" who aided her escape. He may have even travelled with her to England.
Lord Home's fate
The risks that came with taking sides in Scottish power struggles were great. For example, Lord Alexander Home was reconciled with the Regent Albany by early 1516, but when visiting Edinburgh in September he was arrested and tried. He was executed on 8 October 1516 in Edinburgh and his head set up on the central Tolbooth building where it stayed for 4 years (Tolbooth was a traditional place for torture and executions overlooking Royal Mile in Edinburgh).

The English - Thomas Lord Dacre - his role and influence
Thomas Lord Dacre, 2nd Baron Dacre of Gillesland, Cumberland played an important role for the English in the battle of Flodden, after which he was awarded further lands around Lanercost in Cumberland. He was born in 1467 probably at Naworth Castle in Cumberland & buried in nearby Lanercost Priory in 1525. At the time of his death in 1525 the Dacres held 70,000 acres in Cumberland, 30,000 acres in Yorkshire & 20,000 acres in Northumberland. He was Lord Warden of the Marches from 1509-25 and known as Thomas, Lord Dacre of the North.

King Henry VIII certainly relied on Dacre to run affairs in the "Marches" near the Scottish border - and Dacre had become a friend & confident of Henry VIII. That is well evidenced with Thomas Dacre being made a Knight of the Garter in 1518, not long after the events around Margaret Tudor's flight from Scotland in 1515.

Thomas Dacre was more than just the local Lord, he was very much involved in the political events between England and Scotland during this period. He was one of the English party that escorted Margaret Tudor to Scotland for her marriage to James IV in 1503, and would have watched Patrick Sinclair's display at jousting as part of those festivities.
When King James IV visited Dumfries and the "Western Borders" in 1504 he met with Thomas Dacre again. The two played cards with Dacre winning 46s & 8d from the King.

Dacre knew the Scottish King well enough to be the one to identify the King's stripped & looted body on the battlefield of Flodden in 1513 and in the years after Flodden he was centrally involved in supporting the Scottish alliances that formed around the "English" Queen Margaret Tudor and her husband Archibald Douglas, the Earl of Angus.

The English influence represented by Lord Dacre operated well into Scotland, as events around Queen Margaret's return to Scotland show.

After the Scottish Queen's arrival in England, her husband Angus did not travel south with her to London but returned to Scotland & had made peace with the Regent Albany. All of Angus' power, wealth and influence was in Scotland - and to abandon the country would mean possible forfeiture for treason.

Queen Margaret remained in London from 3rd May 1516 until 15 May 1517. She then re-entered Scotland on 15 June 1517 via Berwick-on-Tweed and at the first Scottish location of Lamberton she met again with her husband the Earl of Angus. A treaty of reconciliation between the two had been agreed beforehand between the the Scottish Regent (the Earl of Albany), Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey.

There was obviously some strong negotiation from the English side that saw Angus consenting and signing an "Obligation", agreeing that he would not take revenues from the Queen’s lands. The objective was to secure for the Queen the payment of the income from properties that came from Angus as part of her marriage settlement. Angus also consented to a group of 2 English representatives and 2 Scottish representatives who "should possess and exercise the powers in the premises he could claim" in Scotland.

The Scottish men were Alexander Craufurde, Master of St Anthonys beside Leith & Robert Carr of Selkrigge. The Englishmen were Mr Thomas Magnus, Archdeacon of the East Riding & the English Ambassador to Scotland and Thomas Lord Dacre.

Dacre stands out as the dominant figure within that group. That "treaty" demonstrates how he was exercising considerable influence in events in Scotland proper, as well as in the Borders.

It also provides a potentially convincing reason why William Sinclair may have been drafted into the service of Lord Dacre. The Sinclair brothers were among many things, educated Courtiers and administrators. They were ideally suited and well-connected for carrying out the work of revenue collecting on behalf of the Queen, and the level of the task seems more suited to William, rather than Patrick the diplomat and envoy.
In 1517, brother Patrick Sinclair of Dryden still has a higher profile than William - appearing this time as Sheriff of Roxburgh - very much in the Borders and still active under his nephew Lord Maxwell, Scottish Warden of the Marches from 1517.

There is continuing evidence of Lord Dacre's involvement in the Queen of Scotland's financial affairs, as seen in a letter he wrote to Cardinal Wolsey from Harbottle Castle near the Border in Northumberland on 5 March 1518. The archives summary of that letter reads - "Evil treatment of the Queen of Scots: her safe conduct: her plate and jewels in pledge. Renunciation of all right to her property by Angus. Necessity of helping her."

However, the English under Henry VIII now moved their support more directly behind her estranged husband the Earl of Angus. The cause was clear enough.

After the Queen had realised the extent of her husbands infidelity & his spending of her money - she pushed for a divorce and turned to ally herself with the Regent Albany when he returned from France.

Both the Earl of Angus & his uncle Gavin Douglas (an adviser to the Queen) then fled to the "Borders". It is known that Dacre was again involved in providing protection, as Gavin Douglas's death from the plague is recorded at the London house of Thomas Dacre on 19th September 1522.

Patrick Sinclair was the Queen's private envoy to Henry VIII over a period of some years and it is well evidenced that Patrick and Thomas Dacre were acquainted.

"During all this scheming a Patrick Sinclair figured conspicuously in the State papers of Henry VIII. The references to him are quite voluminous. There are many letters written to, by and about him in the collection."

The Sinclairs of England - Nathan Augustus Cobb p.373

Dr Magnus the English Ambassador at the Scottish Court wrote to Cardinal Wolsey that Patrick Sinclair is one of the six nobles then wholly devoted as "right good Englishmen".

We now have good circumstantial reasoning to suppose that William Sinclair (of Dryden) might have transferred to the service of Lord Dacre. But for William Sinclair to be accepted as the same man as William Dryden we would need to see corresponding evidence of William Dryden's connection to Lord Dacre in Cumberland.

Why Walton as a destination in Cumberland?

It is recorded in the Northamptonshire visitations that William Driden lived near Walton in Cumberland. Walton is also a distance of only 2 miles from Lanercost & the Castle of Naworth. The link between Walton & nearby Naworth is Thomas Dacre himself - with the Dacre family seat located at Naworth Castle next to Lanercost in Cumberland - and after the battle of Flodden in 1513, Henry VIII gave Thomas Dacre further lands in the Parish of Lanercost.

There are no records of where William Driden lived precisely - but there are later records of a Dryden family living to the west of the river Kings Water at "Court Holme", paying land tax in the 1700s. Court Holme is less than a mile north-east of Walton and just north of Hadrian's wall. In those records it is listed as being in the Burtholme quarter of the Lanercost Parish - the parish in which the Dacre lands had expanded after 1513.

Thomas Dacre himself frequently resided at Kirkoswald Castle, a castle he preferred and where he undertook large improvements. Kirkoswald Castle in Cumberland is just over a mile from the village of Staffield in the Kirkoswald Parish where William Driden's son David married Isobel Nicholson, daughter of John Nicholson - and apparently took up residence.

These two Cumberland locations provide circumstantial evidence of the strongest order of the Dryden connections to Lord Dacre. With the extremely volatile border politics of the time, it would not be possible for anyone to take up residence in such close proximity to the "seat" of the English Warden of the Marches - without the express consent of Lord Dacre himself. A family of a Scottish Court with a Scottish name would obviously demand even more favour than usual.

At that time and place - the proximity of the 2 known Dryden residences to the 2 main Dacre residences in Cumberland cannot be co-incidental.
Given the Sinclair brothers and Lord Dacre’s respective involvements in the ongoing Scottish politics of the time, this evidence points toward William Sinclair of Drydane and his son David being drawn into the service of Lord Dacre and being granted Dacre controlled property holdings in Cumberland.

The name of Dryden was already in occasional use in Scotland to distinguish the Sinclairs of Dryden from the Sinclairs of Roslin - and it's use instead of Sinclair is easy to understand.

Margaret Tudor wrote numerous letters to her brother King Henry VIII of England, many of which have been preserved. For example, Queen Margaret’s letter of about 1520 in favour of Patrick Sinclair of Dryden to Henry VIII of England is a highly historical document, part of which runs...

"Wherefore I beseech your grace kindly to be his good prince for my sake, and that you shall give commandment to the Earl of Surrey and the Lord Dacres, that he may be received and well treated in your said realm, if he has need: and this you will do at my request".

That letter also demonstrates that Queen Margaret pleaded with Henry VIII to provide protection in England for Patrick Sinclair & further evidence of the Sinclair brothers being able to move between the 2 countries. In these circumstances, gaining permission to remain permanently in England would not have been difficult for William Sinclair of Dryden & his son David.

Walton in Cumberland has the added attribute of being a short diversion from the road from Edinburgh (& Dryden itself) to Galloway where Patrick and William Sinclair had a number of properties and mills. William Sinclair’s Mill at Culwen on the South Galloway coast across the Firth of Solway from Cumberland being an example.

Immediately after Flodden in 1513 the Scottish border region of Eskdale north of Walton was regularly ravaged by the English under Lord Dacre - he destroyed villages and farms and left it a wasteland. The young Lord Maxwell was as yet too inexperienced and not able to defend the area anyway after the heavy Scottish defeat and loss of much of it’s national leadership.

With Lord Robert Maxwell as Warden of the Scottish Marches and having his own family seat in Annandale near Galloway, we can also contemplate a role for William Sinclair of Dryden as an administrator or a "go-between" of the various parties in Galloway, Cumberland and Annandale just across the border - and back to Edinburgh where his brother Patrick retained favour with the returned Queen.

Patrick Sinclair seems to have held his Kirkcudbright property of Spottis (or Kingsgrange) in Galloway from his nephew Lord Maxwell, as Maxwell himself is named as being of Spottis in later charter of 1525.

The Battle of Solway Moss of 1542 adds another chapter to the Dryden story. Thomas Dacre's son, (also Thomas) lead an English contingent that again defeated a Scottish army. This time the English took control of the area around Dumfries and Kirkcudbright for another 10 years until 1552. This is the exact period after the dissolution of the Monasteries in England and would have seen the added English control of the wool trade from the Monasteries in Kirkcudbrightshire also channelled across the Solway Firth to Cumberland - following the long established link to the Cumberland Monastery of Holm Cultram.

The Sinclair brothers holdings and business in Kirkcudbrightshire had been considerable. Patrick Sinclair was "of" Spottis in Kirkcudbright, another brother George Sinclair has been Deputy-Steward of Kirkcudbright from 1493 (a revenue collection administrator) and William is recorded as being the tenant of a mill in Colvend on the coast of Kirkcudbright.

Spottis remained in the Sinclair family - falling to Patrick Sinclair's two Granddaughters in equal share. A residence in Walton Cumberland, along with the protection of Lord Dacre would have been an attractive proposition to William Sinclair and the remaining Sinclair network in Galloway.

William Drydane - William Sinclair of Drydane - William Dreydon - do the dates match?

William Drydane, pardoned in 1488 appears to be a younger brother to John Drydane (although that is speculation based only on name order) - suggesting a birth date of around 1460-65. That would see him as age 55-60 in 1520 - a good match for William Driden of Walton.

William Sinclair of Dryden in an identical period, is the 2nd brother after Sir John of Drydane the diplomat and there are records of William being part of the Scottish Royal household from 1490-1503 as Usher of the outer door of the King's chamber. Through the following period of 1508 -1514 he was Usher of the Queen's chamber. The marriage of James IV and Elizabeth Tudor took place in 1503.
William Sinclair is last noticed as "Usher of the Queens chamber " in Edinburgh in 1514 just before the Queen herself was stripped of her position as Regent in 1515 and fled to England. It was nearly 2 years later before she returned to Scotland on 15 June 1517. In such uncertain times it seems likely that 1515 was the time of William Sinclair's departure to England and the time of his move to the service of Thomas Dacre near the Dacre family seat of Lanercost in Cumberland. We can speculate too, that as a member of the Queen's household and a brother of Patrick Sinclair, he might actually have been part of the Queen's entourage when she fled.

William Dreydon is only listed as the grandfather of John Dryden in the 1564 Visitation of Northamptonshire as having lived in Walton - but no dates are supplied. We can assume William would have been there about the time of his son's marriage. The marriage of William Dryden's son David to Isobel Nicholson would probably have been a negotiated one. Possibly Isobel was the heiress of her father William Nicholson of Staffield.

The record of David Driden's 2nd son Thomas Dryden Esq having a property dispute with wool merchants in Shrewsbury in 1543 must place his father David Driden's marriage to Isabel Nicholson at more than 21 years earlier - & probably before 1520. That is assuming that both brothers would be in their 20s before moving south to continue their wool trading business. William was likely to have been born some 3 generations (75 years) earlier, in the 1460s. As the first of his line recorded in Cumberland we can conclude without much fear of contradiction that he was probably born outside that county.

**Consistency of Dates**
We can conclude that the records of William Drydane of 1488, the various records of William Sinclair of Dryden from 1490 to 1514 and the records of William Dreydon of Walton could all be reports of the same person. There is no contradiction in any of the evidence - and all the records can be read together chronologically with good sense. There is also a lack of any other candidate of a similar name being evident at this time in the north of England. There is no other evidence of a Dryden family before this time or at this time in Cumberland. William had to come from somewhere & with a Scottish family name, Scotland seems an obvious place of origin. In turn the only identified place of origin for the Dryden family name to date seems to be Dryden near Roslin.

**Are there documents linking William Dreydon to Thomas Dacre in Cumberland?**
There are no property records discovered to date from the time of William Dryden's arrival in Cumberland. But there are some property transactions that have come down to us, each confirming that property of the early Dryden family in Cumberland was held from the Dacre family. This set of transactions record an irrefutable link between the two families.

1. These are the deeds to the property of Fish Garth Holme that David Driden's grandson Erasmus Dryden signed over to a Thomas Dryden in Cumwhitton, Cumberland in the 1590s. The land of Fish Garth Holme was later said to have been left in a derelict state, with a consequent reversion to the "Earl of Carlisle". The family records of the Howard family, Earls of Carlisle are now available for a later period and confirm several Howard family land transactions over rights to the Fish Garth Holme tenement in Cumwhitton from 1631 to 1777 when there was a final bargain & sale. This property "ownership" leads straight back to Thomas Dacre - as it was the Howard family who inherited all the Dacre family estates in Cumberland through marriages of the 3 Dacre daughters as the family heiresses. The Dacre ownership of Fish Garth Holme can therefore prove an earlier link existing between Thomas Lord Dacre and William Driden of Walton. William Driden (or more likely his son David of Staffield) would have held rights to Fish Garth Holme from the Dacre family.

2. In the "Naworth Castle accounts of household" under a date of 1619 there is the entry of a first payment of a fine by "David Dryden" to Lord William Howard. A fine is a payment for the transfer or a renewal of a property holding, generally made where the rent is low or minimal.
This evidence is also leads back to the Dacres - perhaps even in a more convincing way - as Naworth Castle and the surrounding Dacre estates moved from the Dacre family to the Howard family in 1560. We can guess reasonably accurately that this David Dryden must have been a Grandson of Thomas Dryden and a Great Grandson of the original David Dryden of Staffield in Cumberland. This Dryden family links to the Dacre estates seem inescapable.

3. Various further records exist within the Howard (Earls of Carlisle's) Cumberland papers recording property transactions involving (various) John Drydens of Court Holme Walton within Lanercost parish, dating between 1705-1797. Again this was property held by Thomas Dacre that had been passed down to the Howard family. This not only connects the Dryden Family of Cumberland to the Dacre family, it also connects William Dryden's place of residence to Dacre.

There are not many early property records for the Dryden family in Cumberland, but ALL of them point back to a connection with Thomas Dacre. The bonus is find Dryden held property in Walton that formed part of the Dacre estates. It looks very convincing so far.

**How many of the Dryden family arrived in Cumberland from Scotland?**

Surviving documentation and the information from the Northamptonshire visitations suggests that William Dryden of Walton and his son David were the sole members of the family to arrive from Scotland.

A later William Driden, described as a yeoman of Canons Ashby in documents of the 1560s, presents us with a small puzzle. He was obviously connected to John Dryden of Cannons Ashby in the recorded transactions, yet as a yeoman rather than an Esquire or Gentleman; suggesting he was a more distant relative. Since both of David Dryden's sons John and Thomas are described as Esquires, the entire family ought to be describing themselves as gentry at this time.

The answer might be that this William was an illegitimate son of either John of Canons Ashby or his brother Thomas of Cumberland. Significantly, it was John Dryden who settles property on this William and who held Hodnell in Warwickshire where William later lived.

**Comparisons & consistencies - Sinclair of Dryden & Dryden of Canons Ashby**

If the Dryden family are descended from William Sinclair a Scottish Courtier, are the lives of his immediate descendants consistent with that background?

**Property Ownership**

In terms of property owning and in business involvements, yes. There is some evidence that it was David Driden whose business had already extended south by the time his sons came to history's notice. Alice Dryden of the Turner-Drydens of Canons Ashby, writing in the early 1900s in Memorials of old Northamptonshire wrote:

"It is uncertain how this John Dridden acquired the lands on which he settled, seemingly immediately adjacent to the Monastery, afterwards the Cope dwelling house. In the middle of the 16th century it is recorded that he possessed there a mansion and a portion of an estate which is described as a 'parcel of his inheritance'\".

Wilkyns farm was across the road from Copes Ashbie and appears to be a property owned independently by John Dryden before his marriage to Elizabeth Cope took place. Copes Ashby continued within the Cope family, descending to Elizabeth's brother before finally being brought under Dryden control through the wardship of his nephews.

John Dryden's Canons Ashby House is an extension of the original house on "Wilkyns farm" - not a continuation of Copes Ashby located on the old Monastery site across the road.

The phrase "parcel of his inheritance" offers another clue to family property holdings, as well as dates, being the necessary death of his father for any inheritance to occur. As John Dryden arrives in Canons Ashby in about 1547-48, we might also conclude that his father David Driden died at about this time & John Dryden entered into control of the family's businesses & holdings.
Business activities
The original David Driden would have been in his early to mid-twenties on his marriage to Isabel Nicholson in Cumberland & in his late 40s when the dissolution of the monasteries occurred from 1537-43.

There is archival documents recording his 2nd son Thomas Dryden's property dealings with wool merchants in Shrewsbury from 1543 (one of them a "merchant of the Staple" of Calais) and of his son John holding property before arriving in Northamptonshire.

This is consistent with the Sinclairs having prior business interests in Kirkcudbrightshire - and the Sinclair of Dryden associations with the Dacre family would have given the Drydens of Cumberland access to the ex-monastery wool business.

In 1543 the Lanercost priory came to the Dacre family to which the Drydens had been closely connected. Another north Cumberland Monastery of Holm Cultram had holdings across the Solway Firth in Kirkcudbright where a number of the Sinclair of Dryden brothers' properties were co-incidentally located.

The later Dryden family presence in Holm Cultram Cumberland (a dissolved monastery), is evidenced by the earliest remaining church registry records of there. George Dridon married Margaret Tremell in Holm Cultram in 1583 and had 6 children baptised there in the 1580s & 1590s. On the available evidence this George Dridon would necessarily have been a son of Thomas Dryden

All these details might be brought together to create a picture of the earliest Dryden family headed by David Driden becoming successfully active in the Monastery-based wool trade from before 1540 and bringing his 2 sons into the business. The business may have been assisted with a Nicholson inheritance, but there were also known William Drydane prior holdings such as his tenancy of a mill in Culwen (Colvend) Galloway.

The Dridens seem to have profited by being heavily involved in an expanding private trade, opened up with the dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII.

Social status
The later Northamptonshire Visitations give only the locations of Walton and "Staff Hill". There is a sparse record of David Driden's family, that includes information about his wife Isobel Nicholson and their children. However, there is later Nicholson family of Waverley Abbey who were prominent in business and had a descent from Kirkoswald in Cumberland and claimed a relationship to the Drydens. They have a coat of arms and appear to be a long-established "county" family of the gentry.

The listed marriage of David's daughter to Thomas Warwick Gentleman, confirms the social rank of the Drydens as being part of the upper class - either Gentlemen or Esquires. As does the use of the title Esquire by John & Thomas Dryden when they moved south.

There is further evidence of the Dryden family of Cumberland being of the Gentry well before their arrival in Northamptonshire in that they have a coat of arms themselves. That is consistent with the standing of a cadet family of the Sinclairs of Roslin, where Edward St Clair of Dryden is named as an armiger (Esquire - or holder of a coat of Arms).

Inquiries made of the Windsor Herald at the the College of arms in London confirm that there is a long history and acceptance of the Dryden Coat of Arms belonging to the Family of Canons Ashby. However, there is no record of a grants of Arms in England - and the origin of the Dryden Arms have not yet been established.

Education
If the connection to the Sinclair de Driden family is assumed to be correct, then we can piece together a probable short history of David Driden's life. He would have been born in or near Edinburgh about 1490 & died in Cumberland about 1547. There would have been a good education for him, both as a son of a royal Courtier and as a member of the Sinclair of Dryden family. The Sinclairs and earlier "de Dridens" had very close links to St Andrews University - and we might further suppose a University education.

That would be consistent with his son John Dryden sending 5 of his own sons to Oxford University from Canons Ashby. His grandson David Driden (son of Thomas) is also known to have been university educated in England and to have become a teacher. University education certainly "ran" in both families.
Theology
The Sinclairs' ties to St Andrews University and to the Study of theology is reflected in John Driden of Canons Ashby's deep religious convictions and the continuing "Puritan" thread in following Canons Ashby generations. There were a number of earlier Churchmen in the Sinclair family who were "of Dryden". Most conspicuously Henry Driden, an illegitimate Sinclair son who studied in Paris in the 1390s and held prominent church positions as well as being a counsellor to the Regent of Scotland in 1420

Family names
Edward Sinclair of Dryden's legitimate sons are named as John, William, George & a second William. Two generations later in Northamptonshire, John Dryden names his sons Anthony, Erasmus, Edward, George, John, Thomas, Stephen and Nicholas.

Anthony and Erasmus are Christian names coming down from the Cope family, which leaves the next 3 sons with names matching Edward Sinclair's family. The following name of Thomas is that of John Dryden's brother. This displays a strong naming pattern - with 3 of 4 Christian names from the legitimate family of Edward Sinclair finding their way into the family of John Driden Canons Ashby in a sequence after the Cope family names.
The only omission from Edward Sinclair's family is William, although the name William does indeed appear in Canons Ashby and Hodnell in the same generation (with a William Dryden who is probably the oldest and illegitimate son of John Dryden) - and follows again in successive Canons Ashby generations.

John Driden of Canons Ashby's brother Thomas, seems to have had sons Thomas, David and George. Not quite as convincing but still consistent, as Thomas names his first 2 sons after himself and his father David - and the remaining name of George is again a duplication from Edward Sinclair's family.

Only Thomas is an additional name occurring prominently within the Cumberland Dryden family. But Thomas might easily be explained in a number of other ways such as a name coming from the Nicholson family through David's wife Isobel.
The more traditional names from the earlier Sinclair of Roslin family - William & Henry - by accident or not, also find a prominent place in succeeding generations of Canons Ashby Drydens.

Summary:
William Sinclair de Draidon, Courtier to the Queen of Scotland has been provided with a reason and circumstance in which to move to England. The precise dates of either the Queen's flight in 1515 or her return in 1517 also link in with the need for Thomas Dacre of Cumberland to utilise William's expertise & services. The two are connected through a long list of circumstances & sets of relationships centred on the flight of the Queen to England.
The Sinclair of Dryden family was related to and worked for many of the main players on the Scottish side. They belong to the "English" faction in Scottish politics - and have strong documented links to the central English figures of Thomas Dacre, Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII.

There is subsequent evidence of the Dryden family retaining property in Cumberland held from Thomas Dacre - both at Walton in the Lanercost Parish where the visitations of Northumberland say William Dryden lived - and also in the Cumwhitton Parish of Cumberland where there is evidence of this land passing through the possession of John Dryden of Canons Ashby.

Given the situation of a Scottish courtier from Edinburgh settling his family in the north of England, the following generations of the Dryden family show many of the expected aspects of social class, business dealings, education, religion and continuation of family names.

In terms of dates, the marriage of David Driden, nephew of both Patrick & Sir John of Drydane, probably to a Dacre retainer's daughter from Staffeld near Kirkoswald in the years after 1515, seems quite possible & even a natural consequence of the known events. The timing and the locations seem to be a perfect fit.

It remains open to conclude that the Sinclair descent is a reasonable explanation based on the known facts - and therefore we might be able to say that William Sinclair's son David Driden married Isobel the daughter of William Nicholson of Staffeld (near the Kirkoswald Castle of the Dacres) some time between 1515-20.