

Melville [q. v.], chiefly on account of his moderate opinions, was preferred, Montgomery, although offered the office of lord justice clerk, so deeply resented the supposed slight that he determined at all hazards to have revenge, and immediately set himself to organise a political society called The Club, the main purpose of which was to concert measures against the government: In parliament he led with great ability and eloquence the opposition against Sir John Dalrymple, the two, according to Balcarres, frequently scolding each other 'like watermen' (*ib.* p. 59). Towards the close of the session he went to London with his closest confederates, the Earl of Annandale and Lord Ross, to present a declaration of Scottish grievances to the king, but the king declined to listen to their complaints. Thereupon Montgomery entered into communication with the Jacobite agent, Neville Payne [q. v.], and they concerted together a plot for the restoration of King James, known as the Montgomery Plot, each being, according to Balcarres, more or less the dupe of the other (*ib.* p. 57). Montgomery's coalition with the Jacobites proved to him rather a hindrance than a help in parliament, and as soon as his influence began to wane the Jacobites revolted against him. A quarrel ensued, and soon afterwards Lord Ross made confession of his connection with the plot to a presbyterian minister, who informed Melville. On learning this Montgomery went to Melville, and on promise of an indemnity confessed all he knew, making it, however, a condition that he should not be obliged to be 'an evidence or legal witness' (*Leven and Melville Papers*, pp. 457, 479, 520). Melville sent him, with a recommendation in his favour, to Queen Mary, to whom he pleaded for 'some place which might enable him to subsist with decency' (MACAULAY, *History*, ed. 1883, ii. 224). She wrote on his behalf to King William, but the king had conceived such an antipathy to him that he declined to utilise his services on any consideration (BALCARRES, *Memoirs*, p. 66). According to Burnet, Montgomery's 'art in managing such a design, and his firmness in not discovering his accomplices raised his character as much as it ruined his fortunes' (*Own Time*, ed. 1838, p. 561). After lying for some time in concealment in London, he passed over to Paris, where he was well received by the Jacobites (BALCARRES, *Memoirs*, p. 66). Some time afterwards he returned to London, and on 11 Jan. 1693-4 was taken into custody, on the accusation of being the author of several virulent papers against the government (LUTTRELL, *Short Relation*, iii. 252); but on the 18th he made his escape from the house of the

messenger where he was confined, the two sentinals who guarded the door leaving their arms and going with him (*ib.* p. 255). He escaped to the continent, reaching Paris by 15 Feb. (*ib.* p. 269), and he died at St. Germain before 6 Oct. 1694 (*ib.* p. 380). By Lady Margaret Johnstone, second daughter of James, earl of Annandale, he had two sons, Robert (1680-1731) [q. v.] and William.

Montgomery was the author of 'The People of England's Grievances to be enquired into and redressed by their Representatives in Parliament,' reprinted in 'Somers Tracts,' x. 542-6. The authorship of other political pamphlets attributed to him has been claimed by Robert Ferguson [q. v.] the Plotter; and in some instances there may have been a joint authorship. A portrait of Montgomery in armour has been engraved.

[Balcarres's *Memoirs*, Lauder of Fountainhall's *Historical Notices*, and *Leven and Melville Papers*, all in the Bannatyne Club; Burnet's *Own Time*; Luttrell's *Short Relation*; Carstares *State Papers*; Macaulay's *Hist. of England*; Ferguson's *Robert Ferguson the Plotter*; Noble's *Continuation of Granger*, i. 219-20; Douglas's *Scottish Peerage* (Wood), i. 509; Sir William Fraser's *Montgomeries, Earls of Eglinton*, i. 162-5.]
T. F. H.

MONTGOMERY, JAMES (1771-1854), poet, was born at Irvine in Ayrshire, 4 Nov. 1771. His family, originally Scottish, had for several generations been settled in Ulster, where his great-grandfather is said to have possessed and dissipated a landed estate. His father, John Montgomery, had at all events been born in the condition of a labourer at Ballykennedy, co. Antrim, in 1733. Having embraced the tenets of the Moravians, who had founded a settlement in the neighbourhood, to which they had given the name of Grace Hill, the elder Montgomery became a minister; married a member of the Moravian community in 1768, and at the time of his son's birth had just arrived at Irvine to take charge of the Moravian congregation, at that time the only one in Scotland. He returned to Ireland in 1775, and in 1777 James was sent to school at the Moravian establishment at Fulneck, near Leeds. His parents proceeded in 1783 as missionaries to Barbados, and there his father died of yellow fever in 1791. His mother, Mary Montgomery, had died at Tobago in the previous year.

Meanwhile James had met with some adventures. Neglecting the studies considered essential at Fulneck, he employed himself in the composition of two epic poems, one on Alfred, the other entitled 'The World,' in the manner of Milton. The principal incident in the latter was the Archangel Michael

Dictionary of National Biography, Volumes 1-20, 22 for James Montgomery

Record Index

Name: James Montgomery
Birth Date: 4 Nov 1771
Birth Place: Irvine, Ayrshire
Death Date: 30 Apr 1854
Father's Name: John Montgomery
Mother's Name: Mary

Source Information

Record Url: <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=DictNatBiogV1&h=41412>

Source Information: Ancestry.com. *Dictionary of National Biography, Volumes 1-20, 22* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. This collection was indexed by Ancestry World Archives Project contributors.
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taking Satan by surprise and lopping off one of his wings. The Moravians for a time clipped Montgomery's own wings by placing him with a baker; but the employment proved intolerable, and in 1787 Montgomery ran away with three and sixpence in his pocket and a bundle of verses, which proved more valuable than might have been expected, for a poem, written out fairly and presented to Earl Fitzwilliam, brought him a guinea. He was, nevertheless, soon obliged to apply for a character to his old instructors and to his master, who treated him with much kindness, and he obtained a situation in a general store in the little town of Wath. After a year he quitted this and made his way with his manuscripts to London, but, finding no encouragement from the publishers, returned to Wath, and remained there till April 1792, when, by answering an advertisement in the 'Sheffield Register,' he obtained a situation as clerk and book-keeper in the office of that newspaper. This change brought Montgomery into intellectual society; his literary talent began to be appreciated; he gradually became an extensive contributor to the paper; and an unexpected circumstance opened up the path to independence. This was the prosecution and flight of Mr. Gales, the proprietor and editor of the 'Register,' and an ardent reformer, on account of a letter found on the person of Thomas Hardy on his apprehension, and attributed to Gales, who was in fact cognisant of its having been sent, though he was not the actual writer. Gales escaped to America; money to carry on the paper was found by a wealthy townsman named Naylor, and Montgomery became the working editor of the journal, which endeavoured to disarm the hostility of the government by changing its title to the 'Sheffield Iris,' and adopting a more moderate line in politics. In 1795 Naylor retired from the paper on account of his marriage, and it became the property of Montgomery, who also entered into business as a general printer. Within a few years he was enabled to pay off the purchase-money of the journal, and to obtain a highly respectable competence. Before this was achieved, however, he had to bear the brunt of two prosecutions for libel, each of which resulted in his conviction and imprisonment for a term in York Castle, though neither could affix the least stigma to his character. The first prosecution (January 1795) was on account of a ballad in commemoration of the Fall of the Bastille, a few copies of which had been sold to a travelling hawkker; it had been printed by Montgomery's predecessor, and had in fact no reference to the

events of the day. It was subsequently shown by official correspondence that the prosecution was instituted as a means of intimidating the Sheffield political clubs. The second prosecution (January 1796) Montgomery undoubtedly brought upon himself by statements respecting the behaviour of a magistrate, Colonel Athorpe, in dispersing a riotous assemblage, which could not be fully justified, although the explanations he was ready to have offered would probably have been accepted but for the embittered state of political feeling at the time. After his release in July he published the 'Prison Amusements' which had enlivened his confinement, and in 1798 a volume of essays entitled 'The Whisperer,' under the pseudonym of 'Gabriel Silvertongue.' He subsequently destroyed every copy he could lay his hands on; while a novel, in four volumes, completed during his second imprisonment, was destroyed in manuscript.

For some time the 'Iris' was the only newspaper in Sheffield; but beyond the ability to produce fairly creditable articles from week to week, Montgomery was entirely devoid of the journalistic faculties which would have enabled him to take advantage of his position. Other newspapers arose to fill the place which his might have occupied, and in 1825 the journal passed into other hands. During the greater part of this period he had given more attention to poetry than to journalism. 'The Ocean' (1805) attracted little attention, but 'The Wanderer of Switzerland' (1806), founded upon the French conquest of Switzerland, took the public ear at once, probably on account of the subject, and from the merit of some of the miscellaneous pieces accompanying it, especially the really fine and still popular lyric, 'The Grave.' The principal poem is as a whole very feeble, though a happy thought or vigorous expression may be found here and there. The volume nevertheless speedily went through three editions, and its sale was not materially checked by a caustic review from the pen of Jeffrey (*Edinb. Rev.* January 1807); which indeed gained Montgomery many friends. He himself became a reviewer, taking an important part in the newly established 'Eclectic Review,' in which he afterwards declared that he had noticed every contemporary of note except Byron. His criticism evinces little insight; he is a tolerably safe guide where no guidance is needed, but is slow, though by no means through unwillingness to appreciate the merits of contemporaries. A more thoroughly impartial critic never wrote. The success of 'The Wanderer' brought him in 1807 a commission from

the printer Bowyer to write a poem on the abolition of the slave trade, to be published along with other poems on the subject in a handsome illustrated volume. The subject was well adapted to Montgomery's powers, appealing at once to the philanthropic enthusiasm in which his strength lay, and to his own touching associations with the West Indies. His poem entitled 'The West Indies' accordingly appeared in Bowyer's illustrated publication in 1809. It is a great improvement on 'The Wanderer,' and, although rather rhetoric than poetry, is in general well conceived and well expressed, and skilful as well as sincere in its appeals to public sentiment. On its first appearance in Bowyer's volume it proved a failure, but when published separately (London, 1810, 12mo) it obtained great popularity. 'The World before the Flood' (1812), also in heroic verse, is a more ambitious attempt, and displays more poetic fire and spirit than any of Montgomery's previous performances; nor is it so deficient in human interest as might have been expected in an epic on the wars of the giants and the patriarchs. The descriptive passages frequently possess great merit, which is even exceeded in Montgomery's next considerable effort, 'Greenland' (1819), a poem founded on the Moravian missions to Greenland. Montgomery's last important poem, 'The Pelican Island' (1826), also contains very fine descriptive passages, but with more preaching has less human interest than 'Greenland,' and is marred by being written in blank verse, of which the author was by no means a master. A considerable part of his reputation with the public at large rests upon his numerous hymns, which were collected in 1853. The finest were those written in his earlier years, including 'Go to dark Gethsemane,' 'Songs of praise the Angels sang,' and 'For ever with the Lord.' Over a hundred of his other hymns are still in use (JULIAN, *Dict. of Hymnology*, p. 764).

After retiring from the 'Iris,' Montgomery continued to reside at Sheffield, where he had come to be accounted a local hero, and grew more and more in the respect of his fellow-townsmen by his exemplary life and activity in furthering every good work, whether philanthropic or religious. In 1830 and 1831 he delivered lectures on poetry at the Royal Institution, which were published in 1833. They are, perhaps, of all his writings those which it is easiest to praise unreservedly, the opinions being almost invariably just, and conveyed with a force and sometimes even a poetry of diction which nothing in his previous criticisms had seemed

to promise. In 1831 he also compiled from the original documents the journals of D. Tyerman and G. Bennet, who had been deputed by the London Missionary Society to visit their stations in the South Sea Islands, China, and India. In 1835 he received a pension of 150*l.* on the recommendation of Sir Robert Peel, and about the same time contributed fairly adequate accounts of Dante, Ariosto, and Tasso to Lardner's 'Cabinet Cyclopædia.' The remainder of his life was devoted to religious and philanthropic undertakings. He died rather suddenly on 30 April 1854. He was honoured by a public funeral, and a monument designed by John Bell was erected over his grave in the Sheffield cemetery. He was unmarried.

Montgomery was emphatically a good man; greatness, whether intellectual or poetical, cannot be claimed for him. He had sound plain sense; his conversation, judging from the copious specimens recorded by his biographers, was instructive and entertaining, but neither brilliant nor profound; his letters, though expressive of his admirable character, are in general grievously verbose. As a poet he is only eminent in descriptive passages, for which he is usually indebted to books rather than his own observation of nature. There are some indications of creative power in 'The World before the Flood,' and the character of Javan is well drawn; but, as Mrs. Holland remarked, he drew from himself. The minor pieces which have obtained a wide circulation usually deserve it, but they are buried in his works among masses of commonplace which should never have been printed. He is largely indebted for his fame to the approbation of religious circles, better judges of his sentiments than of his poetry: this has, on the other hand, occasioned unreasonable prejudice against him in other quarters. On the whole he may be characterised as something less than a genius and something more than a mediocrity.

The best portraits of Montgomery are those respectively painted by the sculptor Chantrey in 1805, and by John Jackson in 1827. A full-length by Barber is in the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Institute.

The first collective edition of Montgomery's poems, edited by himself, appeared in four volumes, London, 1841, 8vo. This passed through several editions, the most recent being that of 1881. His poems form volumes in the 'Lansdowne Poets,' the 'Chandos Poets,' and the 'Chandos Classics.'

[The life of Montgomery has been written with the most formidable prolixity by his

friends, Dr. John Holland and the Rev. James Everett, in seven volumes, London, 1854-6. The compendious biography by J. W. King, 1858, is easier to consult, but is full of affectations and irrelevancies. Carruthers's Memoir, prefixed to the American works, is, on the other hand, too meagre. There are numerous references to Montgomery in Southey's Correspondence and similar contemporary collections. Cf. S. C. Hall's Book of Memories, 1833, pp. 81-93; and two essays by Mr. G. W. Tallent-Bateman—an estimate and a valuable bibliography—in the Papers of the Manchester Literary Club, 1839, pp. 385-92, 435-40.] R. G.

MONTGOMERY, SIR JAMES WILLIAM (1721-1803), Scottish judge, second son of William Montgomery, advocate, of Coldcoat or Magbie Hill, Peeblesshire, was born at Magbie Hill in October 1721. His mother was Barbara, daughter of Robert Rutherford of Bowland, Midlothian. After some schooling at the parish school at Linton, he studied law in Edinburgh, and was called to the Scottish bar on 19 Feb. 1743. In 1748, after heritable jurisdictions had been abolished, he was appointed the first sheriff of Peeblesshire under the new system, and on 30 April 1760, thanks to the influence of his friend Robert Dundas, then newly appointed lord president, he succeeded Sir Thomas Miller (1717-1739) [q. v.] as solicitor-general jointly with Francis Garden (1721-1793) [q. v.] In 1764 he became sole solicitor-general, and in 1766 lord advocate in succession to Miller, to whose parliamentary seat for the Dumfries Burghs he succeeded also. But at the general election of 1768 he was returned for Peeblesshire, a seat which he retained till he was raised to the bench. A learned lawyer and an improving landlord, he was peculiarly fitted to deal with the question of entails, which had now become pressing, owing to the extent to which entails fettered the practical management of land. The existing statute was Sir George Mackenzie's Act of 1685, and since it passed 485 deeds of entail had been registered under it. The public demanded a reform; the Faculty of Advocates had passed resolutions approving it. Montgomery accordingly introduced a measure in March 1770, which passed into law (10 Geo. III, c. 51) and considerably enlarged the powers of the heir of an entail in respect of leasing and improving the entailed lands, and even provided for the exchange of land in spite of an entail.

Though he remained in parliament, Montgomery took little further interest in its proceedings after the passage of his bill. In June 1775 he was created lord chief baron of the Scottish exchequer, and in 1781 he was

elected fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland; he resigned his judgeship in April 1801, and in July was made a baronet.

Montgomery was, like his father, skilled in farming, and in 1768 bought a half-reclaimed estate of Lord Islay's in Peeblesshire, originally called Blair Bog, but afterwards 'The Whim,' which eventually became his favourite residence. In 1767 he bought for 40,000*l.* Stanhope and Stobo in Peeblesshire, part of the estates of Sir David Murray, confiscated 1745. He thenceforward chiefly resided in the country, where his good methods of farming and the improvements which he promoted, notably the Peebles and Edinburgh road in 1770, gained for him the title of 'The Father of the County.' He died on 2 April 1803. He married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Robert Scott of Killearn, Stirlingshire, and was succeeded in the title by Sir James, his second son, afterwards lord advocate, his eldest son, William, a lieutenant-colonel in the 43rd foot, having predeceased him. Cockburn (*Memorials of his own Time*, p. 183), speaks of him as an 'excellent and venerable man,' and says that he was exceedingly benevolent. Two portraits of Montgomery were painted by Raeburn; another by John Brown is engraved in Chambers's 'Peeblesshire,' p. 437.

[Omond's Lord Advocates; Omond's Arntson Memoirs; Scots Magazine, 1803; Chambers's Peeblesshire; Kay's Portraits, i. 136-8; Anderson's Scottish Nation, iii. 182.] J. A. H.

MONTGOMERY, JEMIMA (1807-1893), novelist. [See TAUTPHUGUS, BARONNESS VON.]

MONTGOMERY, PHILIP (d. 1099), called GRAMMATICUS. [See under ROGER DE MONTGOMERY, EARL OF SHERWSBURY (d. 1093).]

MONTGOMERY, RICHARD (1736-1775), major-general, born in Swords, near Feltrim, co. Dublin, on 2 Dec. 1736, was third son of Thomas Montgomery, M.P. for Lifford, by Mary Franklin, and younger brother of Captain Alexander Montgomery ('Black Montgomery'), M.P. for Drogheda. Educated at St. Andrews and Trinity College, Dublin, he was, on 21 Sept. 1756, appointed ensign in the 17th foot, in which he became lieutenant on 10 July 1759, and captain on 6 May 1762. He served with his regiment at the siege of Louisburg, Cape Breton, in 1757, and in the expedition against the French posts on Lake Champlain in 1759, and was regimental adjutant in the force under General (then Colonel) William Haveland [q. v.], sent from Crown Point to join the forces under Murray and Amherst converging on Montreal. After the fall of Montreal he was present with his regiment at the capture of