

McKinneys in Nithsdale, Dumfriesshire

The earliest reference to the surname McKinney or McKenney is found in two writs, which both preserve the name of Malcolm McKenney, a juror at the sheriff court of Dumfries in 1347 and 1367. The medieval sheriffdom of Dumfries extended from Annandale on the east to the parish of Minnigaff in Galloway. To be a juror, Malcolm must have held property that placed an obligation of feudal service and required him to attend the sheriff's court when necessary. These jurors would have been picked from a group of men who would have had some knowledge of the lands under question, establishing if the claimant had a right to inherit the lands in question. The lands held by Malcolm himself in return for feudal service, would appear he held land in Galloway and Dumfriesshire and that he may have been the ancestor of many of the McKinney family who appear in the medieval records scattered from Dumfries to Wigtown, or at least genetically for most. From 1347 onwards then, there is more than sufficient time for Malcolm's offspring to have spread their wings along and across the Solway Firth, and later in the 1600s, for some to cross into Ulster.

Malcolm McKenney of the Sheriffdom of Dumfries

[1] April 23, 1347

Inquisition at Dumfries on Monday next before St. Mark's day 1347, before John de la More under-sheriff of Dumfries, by William son of Matilda, John of Dumfries, **Malcolm MacConyge**, Padin Smolan, **Malcolm McKenne**, Henry Demester, John Milner, William son of Roger, John Lauge, Alan of Bernard Castle, Martin Milner, Thomas son of Bridoc, **Adam Macayne**, jurors; who found that Henry de Malton father of John de Malton, was seised in the whole manor of Kircpatric *juxta* Traverglis, with the advowson of the church and services of freemen. Also of **Dorsqwen** and **Alisland** in the valley of Nithe. And that Thomas de Malton son of John de Malton, bearer of these presents, is the lawful heir of the said Henry.

[Bain, Joseph: Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland 1307-1357, Vol. III, p. 272, no. 1493]

Note: Several properties were being claimed by Thomas de Malton son of John de Malton, the lawful heir of Henry de Malton, who held land in Cumbria and Yorkshire in the north of England. Two properties are of interest, the lands of Dorsqwen and Alisland in the valley of the Nith (Nithsdale). Alisland is modern Ellisland in the parish of Dunscore, and is located about mile from Milliganton and a bit more to Dempsterton.

[2] June 30, 1367

Inquisicio capta apud Drumfresie die Mercurii ultimo die mensis Junii anno domini millesimo trecentesimo sexagesimo septimo per Johannem de Crauford, Johannem filium domini Mathei, Gylbertum McLolane, Gyllespy Mcmonuch, Johannem de Crauford filium Hugonis, Moricium Acrassane, Nicholaum de Drumfresie, Patricium Mcwrori, Gilbertum Acrassan, **Macolmum Mckenyn** et Johannem Elidun de Glena – Qui Jurati dicunt quod quondam Maria de Duglas filia et heres quondam Willelmi de Duglas de Lydelisdal militis consaguinea Jacobi de Duglas latoris presentium obit vestita et faysita vt de seodo ad fidem et pacem domini nostril Regis infra vicecomitatum de Drumfres de terries del Garuald et Dalfoble cum pertinenciis infra Baroniam de Kyrkmychel in antique extent xl libras et nunc valent xx libras. Item dicunt quod obit vestita et faysita in medietate baronie de Prestoun cum pertinenciis et valuerunt tempore pacis xl marcis et nunc valent decem libris. Et obit vestita et faysita de Baronia de Botill et valuit tempore pacis c libris et nunc valet xl libris. Et quod dictius Jacobus est legitimus et propinquior heres ejusdem quondam Marie consaguinee sue de eisdem terries cum pertinenciis et est legitime etatis et quod tenentur in capite de domino nostro Reg videlicet Baronia de Botill per seruicium vnus paris calcarium deauratorum nomine albe firme et terra de Prestoun per wardam et releuim et terra de Garwald et de Dalfoble per seruicium vnus libre peperis et nunc sunt in minibus domini nostril Regis racione obitus dicite Marie de Duglas a tempore obitus dicite Marie de Duglas. In cuius rei testimonium sigilla quorundam dictorum Inquisitorum presentibus sunt appensa vna cum sigillo vicecomitis. Data die anno et loco supradictis.

[Registrum Honoris de Morton, Vol. II, Ancient Charters, p. 64, no. 83]

Note: No. Relating to lands held in Annandale on the Scottish border with England and lands in Kirkcudbrightshire.

[3] November 4, 1529

Preceptum Remissionis **Donaldi McKenna** in Monkland, pro quibuscumque actionibus, proditoria traditione in personam regiam, communi furto, receptione furti, murthuro et homicidio infra spatium anni exceptis. Apud Dumfries.

[Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland 1529-1542 (Edinburgh, 1921), Vol. 2, no. 422]

[4] November 7, 1529

Ane Respite maid to James Campbell in Glengire, for slauchter of umquhill **Gilbert Makynyane**, and for all action and cryme etc. Apud Dumfries.

[Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland 1529-1542 (Edinburgh, 1921), Vol. 2, no. 429]

[5] October 20, 1535

Ane letter maid to Schir Petir Hutchesoun prebendare of Linclowdane, his airis and assignais ane or ma, of the gift of all gudis movabill and unmovable, quhikis pertenet to Johnne Amuligane, and now perterying or ony wis sall happin or may pertane to oure soverane lord be resound of escheat, throw being of the said Johnne fugitive fra the law and at the horne for the slaucher of umquhill Schir **Johnne McKennane**, chaplane and curate of Kirkbane, etc. At Stirling.

[Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland 1529-1542 (Edinburgh, 1921), Vol. 2, no. 1800]

[6] 1535

Account of vi s. bonorum eschaetorum Johannis Mulykynne, in manibus regis existentium et ad cornu suum positorum pro interfectione domini **Johannis McKenane**, concessorum domino Petro Hutcesoun.

[Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer 1531-1538, Vol. 6, p. 244]

[7] December 10, 1535

Preceptum Remissionis Johnnis Edgar pro arte et parte interfectionis quondam **Johnnis McKynnay**, etc. At Dumfries.

[Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland 1529-1542 (Edinburgh, 1921), Vol. 2, no. 1873]

[8] July 20, 1565

Instrument of Sasine in favour of Roger Greirsoun of Lag, as heir to John Greirsoun of Lag, his father, in the lands of the barony of Lag, under reservation of liferent of the 40 shilling lands of Brockloch to Elizabeth Gordon, relict of William Greirsoun of Lag; the said lands having been in the Queen's hands for six years and one term by reason of ward. At the fortalice of Lag. Witnesses: Cuthbert Greirsoun, tutor, John Greirsoun, James Kirkpatrik, Thomas Greirsoun, John Fuit, **John Makkynnay** and Oswald Portar.

[The Lag Charters 1400-1720 (Edinburgh, 1958), p. 28, no. 127]

[9] July 25, 1565

Instrument of Sasine, dated 8th November 1565, given by John Kirkaucht of Sundaywell, as bailie of the Commendator, to John Greir in Yonder Barschynvallay of the 5 s. lands of Yonder Barschynvollay now occupied by the said John Greir, in the parish of Dunscoir, held in terms of charter, dated 25th July 1565. Witnesses to the sasine were William Makfadyeane in Breirdwell, **Edward Makkynnay** and John Makfadyeane, John Lauder being notary.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 392]

[10] August 16, 1565

Instrument of Sasine, dated 16th August 1565, given by John Kirkauche of Sundaywoll, as bailie of Michael, Commendator of Melrose, to John Greir, son of Gilbert Greir in Dempstartoun of the 6 s. 3 d. lands of Dempstartoun which the said John Greir now occupies, in the parish of Dunscoir, held in terms of charter granted 28th July 1565. Witnesses to the sasine were William Makfadyeane, John Fute, **Gilbert McKynnay** and Oswald Portar, John Lauder of the diocese of Glasgow being notary.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 392]

[11] October 19, 1577

Instrument of Sasine, dated 19th October 1577, narrating that John Lauchlesone, feuar of the 7 s. 6 d. lands of Mekill Dempstartoun in the parish of Dunscoir and barony of Monkland, gave sasine to Thomas Kirkpatrik of Alisland of these lands in fulfilment of a contract made between them at Drumfreis on 14th October. Witnesses John Kirkpatrik, son of the said Thomas Kirkpatrick, John Gowrlaw in Nether Lagan, **Gilbert McKynway**, David Morron in Bischopeforrest, John Welsche in Swayd, William Lauchleson and John Grierson in Dempstartoun, Harbert Anderson, clerk of the diocess of Glasgow, being notary.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 390]

[12] September 24, 1590

Instrument of Sasine following thereupon, dated 24th September 1590, given by Andrew Cunninghame, sheriff depute of Drumfreis ; witnesses, John Merscheall, burgess of Drumfreis, **Gilbert McKynnay** in Edzairstoun, Cuthbert Fute, elder, Cuthbert Fute, younger, John Fute, his brother, and John Makcheyn in McCheynstoun, Herbert Cunningham being notary.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 393]

[13] March 26, 1595

Charter by King James vi. to Roger Kirkpatrik, burgess of Drumfreis, for good service rendered to the king's progenitors, of the 12 s. 6 d. lands of Edzertoun occupied by the deceased **Gilbert McKynnay**, William Edzar and Cuthbert Fute, younger, in the parish of Dunscoir, which lands formerly belonged to the Commendator, but now to the Crown by the act of annexation of church lands, to be held in feu farm for the yearly payment of 22 s. 8 d. as the old rent and 16 d. of augmentation, with duplication at entry of heirs ; dated Holyrood House, 26th March 1595.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 394]

[14] March 26, 1595

REX, pro servitio sibi suisque progenitoribus per Rogerum Kirkpatrik burgensem de Drumfreis et ejus predecessors impenso,—cum consensu etc.,—ad feudifirmam dimisit dicto Rogero, heredibus ejus et assignatis quibuscunque,—12 solidat. 6 den. terrarium antique extensus de Edyertoun (per quondam **Gilb. M'Kynnay**, Wil. Edyer et Cuthbertum Sute [vel Fute] juniorem occupatas), in parochia de Dunscore, vie. Drumfreis; que olim pertinuerunt ad abbatiam de Melros. Reddend. 22 sol. 8 den. firme antique, et 16 den. augmentationis; necnon duplicando feudifirmam in introitu heredum. Apud Halieruidhouse.

[Register of the Great Seal of Scotland 1593-1608 (Edinburgh, 1890), Vol. VI, no. 258]

[15] March 4, 1598

REX in feudifirma locavit Davidi M'Kynnay, filio et heredi apparenti quondam Andree M. in Skynfurde, 10 solidat terrarum antiqui extensus de Skynfurde, in baronia de Halywode, vic Drumfreis;—que olim ad abbatiam de Halywode pertinuerunt. Tenend. dicto Davidi et heredibus ejus de corpore legit. procreandis, quibus deficientibus, **Eliz. M'Kynnay** ejus sorori germane, et heredibus inter eam et Jo. Smyth in Ferdingrus ejus sponsum legitime procreatis, quibus def., heredibus dicti Jo. quibuscunque: Reddend. 18 sol. 4 den., et 20 den. augmentationis ; necnon duplicando feudifirmam in introitu heredum. Apud Halyrudehous.

[Register of the Great Seal of Scotland 1593-1608 (Edinburgh, 1890), Vol. VI, no. 677]

[16] May 6, 1602

REX,—cum consensu &c.,—ad feudifirmam dimisit ct quitteclamavit Willelmo Smyth servitori M. Joannis Skene clerici registri, heredibus ejus et assignatis quibuscunque,—2 mercatum terrarium de Over-Lagane (viz. 1 ½ mercatum per Nic. Greir, ½ mercatum per **Wil. M'Kynnay** occupat), in parochia de Dinscoir, vic. Drumfreis;—que olim ad abbatiam de Melros Pertinuerunt: Reddend. 4 mercas, et 3 sol. 4 den. augmentationis; ac duplicando feudifirmam in introitu heredum et assignatorum ad suprascripta. Apud Dumfermelin.

[Register of the Great Seal of Scotland 1593-1608 (Edinburgh, 1890), Vol. VI, no. 1307]

[17] June, 17, 1606

Crown Charter by King James vi. narrating that the predecessors of John Greirsoun, natural son of the deceased Roger Greirsoun in Amiligantoun, were old native tenants of the merk land of Amiligantoun alias Ferdindaunblaine, which were enjoyed by the said deceased Roger for these many years past, and therefore granting and confirming to the said John Greirsoun and the lawful heirs of his body, whom failing, the heirs whomsoever of the said deceased Roger, the said merk land of Amiligantoun alias Ferdindaunblaine, in the parish of Dunscoir, half of which merk land was occupied by the deceased Gilbert Greirson, and the other half by the deceased John Greir and Elizabeth McKubene, his spouse, and afterwards by the said deceased Roger Greirsoun ; which entire merk land formerly belonging to the Abbacy of Melrose now belongs to the Crown by the act of annexation ; paying yearly 24 s. as the old rent, and 32 d. of augmentation, with duplication at entry of heirs. Dated Edinburgh, 17th June 1606.

Crown Precept of Sasine following thereupon, dated 16th [sic] June 1606. (f. 161.)

Instrument of Sasine following thereupon, dated 30th April 1607, given by Robert Cunninghame, burgess of Drumfreis, as bailie ; witnesses, John Greirsoun in Tounfuit, Herbert McKubbene, **Herbert McKynnay** in Kirkland, and Roger Cunninghame in Drumfreis, Herbert Cunninghame being notary.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 395]

[18] January 13, 1607

REX,—cum consensu &c.,—in feudilirma dimisit Homero Maxwell commissario de Drumfreis, heredibus ejus et assignatis quibuscunque,—6 mercatas terrarum de Mekill Spadoche antiqui extentus, cum molendinis, silvis, piscationibus, cuniculariis, pratis, terras tie Threiplandis ad eas adjacentes (per dictum Ilom. occupat.), 5 eudaa lie MyIndameheid (inter terras domini de Conhaithe per Wil. M'Joir et Jac. Rig occupat.), vic. Drumfreis;—quo ex antiquo ad abbatiam do Halywodo pertinuerunt;—necnon 6 sol. 8 den. terrarium in Burneskarth (per Homerum Gaw et Phil. Colpland occupant.), 8 sol. 4 den. in Dempstartoun (per Davidem Morrane et **Jo. M'Kynnay** occupat.), 6 sol. in Barsivallo (per Tho. M'Murdie occupatas), 6 sol. in Killelago (per Tho. M'Murdy, Davidem Morrane et Jo. Sandersoun occupat.), vic. Drumfreis;—que ex antique ad abbatiam de Melros pertinuerunt; Reddend. pro Mekill Spaddocho 4 lib. 16 sol. 4 den., pro Threiplandis 3 sol. 4 den., pro 5 rudis 3 sol. 4 den., pro Burneskarthe 6 sol. 8 den., pro Dempstartoun 8 sol 8 den., pro Barsivallo 6 sol., pro Killilago 6 sol., et 6 sol. 8 den. augmentationis, cum aliis doveriis et servitiis debitis et consuet.; necnon duplicando feudifirmam in introitu heredum et assignatorum:—et rex voluit quod unica sasina apud Mekill Spaddocho capienda pro omnibus staret. Apud Edinburgh.

[Register of the Great Seal of Scotland 1593-1608 (Edinburgh, 1890), Vol. VI, no. 1834]

[19] February 14, 1607

Supplication by George Edzear, merchant burgess of Dumfreis, Gilbert Greirsoune in Little Dempstertoun, Cuthbert Greirsoune there, William Mckfedzeane there, Thomas Mckfedzeane there, Bessie Maxwell, **John McKinnay** there, and Janet McChachter, as follows:- William Greir of Lag, William Greir of Dulgono, Thomas Greir, his brother, Gilbert Greir of Dastairt, Gilbert Greir called Thomas Gibbie, James Maxwell of Porterak, Robert, John and Hamour, his sons, John Haning in Glenguber, Arthur Cunynghame of Craignestoun, "having consavit ane deadlie malice and haitrent againis us, not onlie bragis, boistis, schoiris and avovis to have our lyfes bot also havelie trublis and molestis us in the possessioun of our saidis landis [of] Dempstertoun pertening to us thairupoun beiris, lyik as they will not faile to tak some unhonnest advantage of us quhen occasion sall offer, quhairthrow we may not saifie hant nor repair in the country nather yet peaceable labour and mannour our saidis landis." They therefore crave that the persons complained upon may be charged to find caution for their indemnity within six days.

[On the back] "*Apud Edinburgh, xiiij Februarij, 1607. Fiat ut petitur* the laird of Lag under pane [of] jm lib., the within wreattin James Maxwell of Porterak, William Greir of Dalgono, Gilbert Greir of Dastairt, and Arthour Cunynhame of Cragnestoun, under pane of v lib., and ilkane of the remanent of persones under pane of iij merkis. (Signed) S. R. Cokburne".

Second copy of writ on next page.

[20] February 14, 1607

Supplication by George Edzear, merchant burgess of Dumfries, Gilbert Greirsoune in Little Demstertoun, Cuthbert Greirsoune there, William McFegzean there, Thomas McFedzeane there, **John McKinnay** there, as follows:- They possess heritably the lands of Little Demstertoun according to their infettments, and for long have enjoyed peace, until of late William Greir of Lag, William Greir of Dalgono, Thomas Greir, his brother, Gilbert Greir of Dastairt, Gilbert Greir called Thomas Gibbie, James Maxwell of Porterak, Robert, John and Hamour, his sons, John Haning in Glenguber, Arthur Cunynghame of Craigneston, "for quhat caus we knaw not intendis by oppin violence to debar us fra the possessioun thair of and to mak the same altogether unprofitable unto us, and for this effect, upon the ellevint day of Februar instant, they all boddin in feir of weir with swordis, lances, secretis, plaitisleivis and utheris waponis invasive come to oure saidis landis of Demstertoun, quhair we and our servandis wer gangand at oure pleugh in quyat and peacable maner, first utterit diverse and many injurioius and despytfull speiches aganis us, schoring and avowing to have oure lyfes incaice we lousit not oure said pleugh, and in end forcit and compellit us to leaf the saman, houndit and away chessit our goods and bestiall thairfra and with drawin swordis and lances invaidit and persewit us of lyfes, hurt and woundit me, the said Thomas McFegzeane, in diverse pairtis of my body to the effusioun of my blood in great quantitie. They therefore crave summons against them.

[On the back] "*Apud Edinburgh, xiiij Februarj, 1607. Fiat ut petitur.* (Signed) S. R. Cokburne".

[21] March 2, 1607, at Edinburgh before the Privy Council of Scotland

Sir William Greir of Lag for William Grier of Dalgonour, £500, and Thomas Grier, his brother 400 merks, not to harm George Edzer, merchant burgess of Drumfries, Gilbert Griersoun in Little Demstertoun, Cuthbert Griersoun there, William McFedyean there, Thomas McFedyean there, Bessie Maxwell there, **Johne McKynnay** there, or Johne McChachter there.

[Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1607-1608 (Edinburgh, 1887), 1st Series, Vol. VIII, p. 668]

[22] February 4, 1608, at Edinburgh before the Privy Council of Scotland

Complaint by **John McKinney in Little Demstertoun**, as follows:-

Upon 8th November last, Niniane Fergusoun in Knokauchy, and Johnne Fergusoun, called the goodman of Blaikistoun, with others, came at night to complainer's house, lured him forth "undir a pretext of freyndschip" and then with drawn whingers "maist fearslie" set on him and gave him "tua deidlie woundis, the ane in his schoulder and the uther in his body", so leaving him for dead. They then leapt on their horses and "over-raid the said complenairis spous and bairnis, trade thame undir their horse feit, and sua birsit the said complenairis said spous that scho is yit lyand bed-fast".

Complainer appearing, but none of the defenders, the order is to denounce them rebels.

[Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1607-1608 (Edinburgh, 1887), Vol. VIII, p. 46]

[23] The following are Abstract of Charters granted by Thomas, Earl of Melrose, about 1620

Charter to **John McKinnie** of the 30 d. lands of Meikle Dempstartoune, paying yearly 5 s., with triplication.

[Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose and from the Manuscripts of The Earl of Haddington 1547-1706, Vol. III, p. 406]