

## Agnew

A separate clan (according to The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs) and recognized sept of Clan Douglas listed in the 2009 CDSNA bylaws. *Agnew* was accepted by CDSNA as a sept in December 1988 based on its being noted as a sept in the 1954 publication ***Badges of the Scottish Clans***.

Wikipedia states...

*“During the 15th century, the Clan Agnew rose to power under the influential Clan Douglas. The Agnews of Galloway initially benefited when the Clan Douglas fell out of favour with the monarch. However this brought them into conflict with the Clan MacKie and the Clan MacLellan.”*

The **Scots Connection** article for Agnew states...

*A family of Norman origin from the Baronie d'Agneaux in Northern France, who first appeared in Scotland at Liddesdale in the 12th century, and from the 14th century were settled in Wigtownshire and Galloway. An alternate origin is credited to the O'Gnies of Ulster, hereditary bards of the Clannaboy O'Neills, who anglicised their name to Agnew. Although this would give the Agnews a common ancestry with Clan Donald and Clan Macdougall, there is no confirmation of the claim and the Norman descent is thought to be more plausible.*

*In 1426, Andrew Agnew was appointed Constable of Lochnaw Castle and, in 1451, was confirmed as Hereditary Sheriff of Wigtownshire. From the marriage of his second son to a daughter of the Macdowall Chief descend the Lochryan Agnews. The course of the 15th century saw the decline of the powerful House of Douglas, which greatly benefited the Agnews of Galloway.*

*[Seeing the reference given to the “Lochryan Agnews”, the similarity to the surname Lochrie/Lockery presents a curiosity and possibly another connection between Agnew and Douglas.]*

In another web article found titled *The Scottish Nation: Lochnaw* is found the following:

*The surname of Agnew is understood to be of French origin, a family of the name of Agneau having been, about the end of the tenth century, seated in Normandy, and there is a family tradition, confirmed by some ancient MSS., that the first progenitor in England of the Agnews came over with William the conqueror, although his name is not upon the list of barons. In the 12th century, soon after the subjection of Ireland to the English crown by Earl Strongbow, the famous warrior, Sir John de Courcy, the conqueror of the province of Ulster, was “accompanied, we are told, by Agneau, an Anglo-Norman like himself, who settled at Larne, in the conquered province; and it is well known that the family had very*

*extensive possessions in the county of Antrim, where they were called lords Agnew, or lords of Larne.” (Nisbet’s Heraldry, vol. i. p.162).*

*In the reign of David I, the first of the Scottish Agnews arrived at his court, and acquired the lands and castle of Lochnaw, then a royal castle, in the Rhinns of Galloway, being at the same time appointed sheriff of the county of Wigeon. He was also made heritable constable of Lochnaw castle.*

*The family appear in the 15th century to have held their possessions under the Douglas. Callers (Caledonia, vol. iii. p. 395), says, “Andrew Agnew was the first who obtained, in the capacity of scutifer (shield-bearer, esquire at arms), the good will of the Lady Margaret Stewart, the duchess of Turenne and countess of Douglas, while she enjoyed Galloway as her dower. In 1426 he acquired from William Douglas of Leswalt the heritable office of the castle of Lochnaw,” &c. This Andrew Agnew got several charters from James I., particularly two, dated 31st January 1431, confirming to him and his heirs the office of heritable constable of Lochnaw, with the whole lands and barony of Lochnaw, &c. He afterwards got the office of heritable sheriffship of Wigeon conferred on him and his heirs, by a charter, under the great seal from James II., dated 25th May 1451.*

**In a fascinating *genforum* post by Jimmie Robbins dated July, 2006; I found this interesting story connecting Agnew and Douglas...**

*It is a small world. I had known that my Ancestor, Andrew Agnew, the 1st Hereditary Sheriff of Galloway had died on May 1st, 1455 but did not know the circumstances. There had been problems between the Agnews and the Douglasses I understand. It is a long story. The Agnews had held the office of the constable of the Kings Castle of Lochnaw for a while and held the lands around the Castle. They were run off by some of the Douglas bunch. I will get the specifics later.*

*Andrew Agnew had gotten the Office of Hereditie Sheriffs of Galloway. They got Lochnaw Castle back and other lands. Andrew Agnew (He had been the son of the constable) had been close to Margaret Stewart, Lady of Galloway, Daughter of Robert III and wife of Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl of Douglas. When Archibald Douglas, 4th Earl of Douglas died everything went to Margaret and not to the sons. She was the Duchess of Touraine and Andrew Agnew was her Squire. He had been around for quite some time. At about the same time that Archibald died, James I, her brother was released from his long captivity and all the rights and privileges connected with the Lordship of Galloway were confirmed by the king in their fullest sense to his "Beloved Sister" and she ruled for nearly twenty years at Threave, a veritable queen.*

*Prominent among members of her household by a rather strange coincidence was Andrew Agnew, son of the Constable driven from Lochnaw years earlier. To make the story shorter, Andrew Agnew got Lochnaw back along with more power than any sheriff had had and it was to be his and his descendants forever. They kept that until it was no longer an office. It lasted from the 1400s until the very late 1700s. The family still hold some Baronets. The family held and lived in the Castle until 1997. It is still in very good condition, but is owned by a man from Hong Kong now.*

*I have moved away from the subject of Andrew's Death on May 1st, 1455. That was the day of the Battle at Arkenholme Scotland. On this day, Andrew Agnew led his men into a battle with Sir James Douglas, 9th Earl of Douglas and his brother, Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray.*

*Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray died that day and My Ancestor, Andrew Agnew, 1st Sheriff died as well.*

**A further connection between Agnew and Douglas concerns the name and lands of Kevans or Kevands or, as it is known to those of us in Clan Douglas, Cavens. The Kevans DNA project (hosted by worldfamilies.net) states:**

*The name Kevans or Kavands is also found as a place name in Wigtownshire from at least the 15th century.*

*The first lands obtained in the parish of Sorby by the Agnews of Lochnaw were the farms which had been given for the support of the church at Cruggleton, and called the church lands; viz., Baltier, Cults, and Kevands. The grant was subsequent to the Reformation, and by charter in January 1581 by King James VI. Kevands is stated to have been bestowed in 1421 by Archibald, Earl of Douglas, to a John de Cavens, [PH M'Kerlie, History of the lands & their owners in Galloway p. 350]*

*A later addendum by M'Kerlie, however, argues that Balter, Cults, and Kevands could not have been accepted by William Douglas of Leswalt as an equivalent for Lochnaw when he gave up the castle, etc. [because] "they had [already] been appropriated or set apart for the support of the Church of Cruggleton". [Furthermore] search has recently been made in vain for any charter under the Great Seal in confirmation of such a grant to William Douglas. There were two charters granted by Margaret, Countess of Douglas, and confirmed by King James I., but they did not refer to any portion of the Cruggleton property. [M'Kerlie, p. 338]*

Sir Andrew Agnew, however, in *The Agnews of Lochnaw: a history of the hereditary sheriffs of Galloway*, p. 242, says that "the Sheriff simultaneously increased his Galloway estates and acquired the lands of Cults, including Baltier and Kevands". The deed conveying these lands to the Sheriff from his son-in-law, James Kennedy, was signed at Lochnaw "in presence of Quentin Agnew, lawful son of the said Sir Andrew Agnew;" and among the charters which then came into his possession, as evidents, is a curious one by the Earl of Douglas to John de Cavens, dated 1421 showing the origin of the word Kevands, which, though much altered by modern orthography, is always pronounced Cavens.

Sources:

*Agnew Clan: Agnew Clan History*. Article @ **Scots Connection**. [http://www.scotsconnection.com/clan\\_crests/agnew.htm](http://www.scotsconnection.com/clan_crests/agnew.htm)

*The Kevans of Galloway*. Article on the **World Families** server. <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/kevan/mtdna>

Robbins, Jimmie. *Re: Agnews and William the Conqueror and Charlemagne*. In a genforum post @ <http://genforum.genealogy.com/agnew/messages/1138.html>

*The Scottish Nation: Lochnaw* @ <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/lochnaw.htm>

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs. <http://www.clanchiefs.org/p/members.html>

Wikipedia: Clan Agnew. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clan\\_Agnew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clan_Agnew)

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