



The Sons of Andrew

a History of the Anderson Name

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The use of surnames started in France around the year 1100 AD. The Norman invaders brought the practice to Scotland nearly 100 years later, however the use of surnames was not common for some 50 years or more after this time, or about 1155 AD. Prior to this, Malcolm Ceanmor (1057- 1093), spouse to Queen Margaret of Scotland, directed his subjects to adopt surnames after their territorial possessions. Such was the origin of the first earls of Scotland, such as Leslie, Gordon, Shaw, and Abircrumby, among others.

Written references to actual surnames are first found during the time of David I, who reigned from 1124-1153 AD. One such reference to a surname is found for the famous Robertus de Brus (Robert the Bruce).

With this abbreviated history of surnames one can appreciate the name *Anderson* would not be a Scandinavian name as the Danes invaded Britain between 997-1014 AD, some 150 years prior to the use of surnames! Likewise, William the Conqueror, dates to 1066 AD in Britain, also before the use of surnames. One would find it difficult to actually trace a genealogy to a time when surnames were not used. We do however recognize that some Scandinavians may also bear the Anderson name.

Anderson means Son of Andrew. It was typically used to denote "servant of Andrew", the patron saint of Scotland. The Gaelic form of the name is *Gillanders*. Andersons are a diverse group, with no specific place from which the name is derived. It is probable the Anderson name cropped up all over the country over a period of time, with one group of Andersons not necessarily related to another group.

The Anderson name is sometimes affiliated with Clan Ross, which creates a lot of confusion among many Andersons. The first five earls of Clan Ross bore the name of Aindrea, and not Ross. They too were the "Servants of Andrew". As the title passed to descendants of the female line, the name of "Ross" was assumed by the male representatives of the earls as it referred to their territorial origin. The "Ross" name, as such, is territorial, being derived from the District of Ross. In actuality, the Rosses first referred to themselves as do the Andersons - "Andrew's servants". It is possible that some of the descendants of the Highland Andersons may rightfully share heritage with what is today the Ross Clan.

Some other Highland "Gillanders" (servants of Andrew) may be associated with Clan Donald, also through the female line, as the Lord of the Isles (Clan Donald) assumed the title of Earl of Ross. In fact it was Donald MacGillandrish who accompanied Moira McDonald of Clan Donald when she became the wife to a McIntosh chief in the 1400's. Their descendants became known as MacAndrew (son of the servant of Andrew). This is the origin of the affiliation with Clan Chattan.

According to the Lord Lyon, there was an "Anderson of that Ilk", in the 1500's. This specific Anderson is unknown to us today, however this fact verifies the Andersons are a clan in their own right despite having some shared ancestry with other clan groups. The Anderson name shows up in many forms: *Andrews, Andirsoone, Andersonne, Andersoun, Andersoune, Andison, Andreson, Andherson, MacAndrews, Endirsonne*, and many other spellings.