

The Agnewsletter



Volume III, Number 4 • Fall 1990

Agnew Family History

Origins of the Agnews of Lochnaw; the Agnew tartan; are we a family or clan?

by Sir Crispin Agnew

Sir Crispin Agnew was the featured speaker at the dinner following the biennial Agnew meeting held recently in Santa Rosa, California.. Attendees were treated to a talk on Agnew family history from the Chief of the Agnew family. This is the essence of his talk.

Origins of the Agnews

The Agnews at Lochnaw start with Andrew Agnew, who was granted Lochnaw Castle and surrounding lands by William Douglas of Leswalt in 1426. Andrew Agnew was granted the office of Hereditary Sheriff of Wigton in 1451.

Nothing is known of the origins of Andrew, who appeared at Lochnaw in 1426. There are no contemporary records of any other Agnews in Scotland at that time and the name does not seem to appear as a Scottish name



Sir Crispin Agnew

before that time. So where did he come from?

Sir Andrew Agnew, 8th Baronet, in his book *The Hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway*, published in 1864 & 2nd Edition in 1890, put forward a theory that the Agnews were descended from the French or Norman family of Agneau or Aigneau, or Aignell, who came from near St Lô, outside Caen in

See Agnew History, Page 2

Also in this Issue

Agnew Poet Laureate	4
Meeting Minutes	5
Treasurer's Report	5
Agnew Gathering	6
Agnews and Othernews	8
Civil War Style-Setter	9
Editor's Corner	10
The Last Word	10
Special Membership Offer	11

Agnew History

Continued from Page 1

Normandy. He traced the Norman family to Norfolk in England after the Norman conquest of 1066, where they were given a substantial grant of land. He goes on to suggest that a younger son of that family then went to Ireland in the twelfth century with William the Strong Bow to subdue the Irish, being a member of the de Courcy party. He then considers that the family moved north to Larne, where there is an Agnews Hill and became Lords of Larne. Founding on a statement in the works of George Mackenzie, Lord Advocate for Scotland in 1680, that the Agnews came to Scotland from Larne in 1362, he traces the family to Lochnaw at that time.

There is no evidence to support this theory. The only hint of an early Agnew in Scotland was one Aignell, who witnessed a charter in the mid twelfth century in southern Scotland. The charter was granted by the de Soulis, who came from the same area of Normandy as the Aigneaus and so it is

possible that Aignell might have been a follower of the neighbouring more powerful family.

The difficulty is that the Professor of Celtic Studies at Dublin University, who has done a study of the name Agnew, says that Agnew does not derive linguistically

Agnew name has celtic, not Norman, origins

from Aigneau or Aignell, but is associated with the celtic names which begin with "A" found in Galloway, such as A'Hannay, Adair and Agnew. He traces the name from O'Gnimh, which was one of the branches of the great Ulster tribe from which Somerled Lord of the Isles

descends and from him, the Macdonalds, MacDougalls and MacRuaries descend.

The heraldic evidence rather supports his view. The principal symbol in all the Macdonald arms is the double headed eagle. The Agnew crest is an eagle. The arms of the Norman Aigneaus was usually a holy lamb or three holy lambs on a blue background. The Agnew arms of a chevron between two cinquefoils bear no relationship to those lambs.

It is well known to students of heraldry and Norman history, that Norman families which moved to England and Scotland continued to use their own coat of arms. There are many examples, where the Norman arms appear later in Scotland and one can immediately say that they are of the same family. Why do the Agnews not follow that rule, if the Agnews of Lochnaw are indeed of Norman descent?

Another possibility relates to the arms of a family

See More History, next page

More History

Continued from prior page

of Aigneau in Burgundy, who bore a gold chevron between three cinquefoils on a blue shield. In about 1426 the Douglases, who were Lords of Galloway, had a French Dukedom in the area. Is it possible that an Aigneau who lived in that French dukedom came over with his Scottish master in 1426 and was given lands at Lochnaw?

All that can be said is that the origin of the Agnews is shrouded in mystery. As a family there are strong connections between Galloway and Ulster, but which family came first will probably remain a continuing source of argument. The lineage is further confused, because, even if the Agnews did first come from Ulster to Galloway, it is clear that there was quite an immigration back to Ulster during the plantations by James VI in 1620s.

The Tartan

While the Romans reported that the savages north of Hadrian's Wall wore a chequered cloth and some people claim that as the ori-

gin of tartan, tartan did not really develop until after 1782.

Prior to 1745 there are numerous portraits of the gentry dressed in tartan but it would seem that there were no family tartans because the same families were depicted in different tartan

Agnew tartan was designed in the mid 1970s

cloths. Probably the clansmen and women would wear chequered cloth and it may well be that different districts had particular colour biases depending on available dyes.

Family tartans as we know them now, probably developed after 1782, when the 1745 ban on the wearing

of tartan and highland dress was lifted.

With the visit of George IV to Scotland in 1822, there was a great revival in tartan. Chiefs, who were to attend the functions in Edinburgh suddenly had to "find" their family tartan. They selected patterns, which seemed to be associated with their names, perhaps from the earlier portraits or they wrote to Wilsons of Bannockburn, the weavers, and ordered a particular pattern from their pattern book, which thereafter became the clan tartan.

During Victoria's reign more clans and family adopted particular tartans. A number of families have adopted tartan in this century.

The Agnew tartan was designed and adopted in the mid 1970s. The ground pattern of blue and green comes from the Douglas tartan, because the Douglases were the Lords of Galloway and originally gave the Agnews their land. The black and

See Family, page 4

Family

Continued from page 3

white lines in the Douglas tartan were removed and replaced with a red line, which is taken from the livery colour of the Agnews, which is red. The livery colour for a family derives from the principal colour in the coat of arms — not the background metal, which in the Agnew's case is silver or white.

The Agnew tartan has been approved by the Lord Lyon and is now recorded in the Court Books of the Lyon Court.

Family or Clan?

The Agnews are a family rather than a clan. In Scottish law there is no difference between a clan and a family. You can have a chief of either. In 1680, George MacKenzie, the Lord Advocate wrote of "Heads of Clans and Chiefs of Families," showing that the terms are interchangeable.

The difference is that a family probably all descends from the progenitor, who first came to Scotland and founded the family. With each generation having numerous children, soon there

would be a large family of the same name, although it becomes increasingly difficult to trace the connection.

In contrast a clan consists of the family of the chief and numerous clansmen, who adopted his name in the 17th and 18th centuries, when the gaelic speakers began to adopt surnames. Gaelic speakers to this day will refer to someone by their patronimic, e.g., "John, MacWilliam, MacIain, MacHamish" or "John son of William, son of Iain, etc." With the coming of English speaking administration there was a need to have a surname. The Gaelic speaker would describe himself as "John Macdonald's man" or "John of the clan Macdonald" and that would be transcribed as "John Macdonald." therefore, all "clansmen" are not necessarily related to the chief, whereas in a family, all persons bearing the name probably are related to the chief.



Agnew Poet Laureate?

The 1990 Christmas Catalog from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is marketing a collection of greeting cards and mugs featuring a whimsical illustration by E. H. Shepard, the illustrator for A. A. Milne's *Pooh* books. However, the featured illustration is not of Winnie the Pooh. E. H. Shepard also illustrated a book of poems by Georgette Agnew, published in 1927 in London, called *Let's Pretend*. The drawing is from that book, and illustrates the following Georgette Agnew poem:

Keeping Cheerful

If it's snowing, or it's hailing,
Or late Winter checks the
Spring—
If the northern wind is wailing,
Still this heart of mine will
sing.



Does anyone know of Georgette Agnew, or perhaps own a copy of her book? Please write to the *Agnewsletter* and share what you know.

Agnew Association Biennial Meeting

Minutes —September 1, 1990—El Rancho Motel, Santa Rosa, CA

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., and Convener Art Agnew introduced co-convener Ken Agnew; secretary-treasurer Lois Schieck; archivist Pat Alexander; and Marie Agnew-Marcelli, historian.

Jack Agnew moved, seconded by Albert Agnew, that existing officers be elected for the next two years. A white ballot was cast to elect the officers, and Art Agnew as Convener, for the next two years.

Discussion centered on recent improvements in the *Agnewsletter* and all agreed that it was a very professional newsletter. The Convener asked that contributions of news items be sent to Carol Smith, *Agnewsletter* editor, for use in the *Agnewsletter*. A round of applause was given for Carol's excellent work on the *Agnewsletter*.

Jack Agnew suggested that the tartan, badges, etc., be made available for those desiring them. Another suggestion was to insert an application for membership in the *Agnewsletter* for members to use in signing

up new members. It was also suggested that Agnew T-shirts bearing the crest be made. The possibility of an exchange program for Agnew children was presented. Dr. David Agnew told about the Scotland Hospital for Sick Children which is hoping to raise 12 million pounds. He suggested a piece of equipment or a room in the Agnew name. It was felt we are too small a group to take on such a large project.

Lois Schieck reported a balance of \$2,975.33 in the

treasury. (See box below.)

Ray Agnew of Australia spoke of his homeland. He stated he probably speaks the same language as we, but his is closer to the English!

The Convener asked everyone to introduce himself. Sir Crispin introduced himself as "the father of the tribe."

Col. John Agnew, the first convener, sent his regards through Lois Schieck.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m., and a delicious dinner was enjoyed by all.

Treasurer's Report

On hand as of January 1, 1989:	\$2,587.75
Receipts 1/1/89 - 9/1/90:	5,109.85*
Total receipts:	7,697.60

* Receipts include dues and hotel deposits for Caledonian Club Games

Disbursements 1/1/89 - 9/1/90:	
Printing and postage, <i>Agnewsletter</i>	\$2,051.49
Deposit for hotel (Caledonian Club Games)	1,900.00
Ad and tent deposit for Games	250.00
Other postage, office supplies, bank charges	520.78
Total disbursements:	\$4,722.27

Balance on hand, September 1, 1990: \$2,975.33

The Gathering and Games

Agnew Tent had lots of visitors

The long-awaited and anxiously-anticipated Agnew family gathering has come and gone. All who participated agreed that the event was a great success.

Pictured at right is the tent with a few visitors. Pictured below are some of the members who enjoyed the recent event.



Pictured at left:
Thelma Agnew
Unknown
Pat Alexander
Art Agnew
Tom Cartwright



Pictured at right:
Ken Jameson (hat)
Thelma Agnew
Jack Agnew
Beth Agnew
Mildred Weisner
Lois Schieck

Photos courtesy of Charles F. Agnew

Sir Crispin Agnew Guest of Honor

Sir Crispin Agnew was a guest of honor at the Caledonian Club's 125th Scottish Gathering and Games and guest of honor at

the Agnew Association biennial family gathering.

Sir Crispin spent a very busy few days dividing his time between the two

events. The announcement below was published in the Caledonian Club's program.



The reception for Sir Crispin on August 31 was attended by about 45 members from throughout the United States and Canada. The Games were held on

September 1 and 2, and the Agnew tent was a popular gathering place. The events included the parade of clans and families, the Association meeting and dinner.

Although the Association sponsored trip to the Redwoods did not take place, several interested members took the tour on their own.

Agnews and Othernews

New Members

During the past two years, since the last biennial meeting, the Agnew Association of America has added *fifty* new members to its roster. And, since the last issue of the *Agnewsletter* was published, ten new members have joined our ranks. Our membership now totals 140. We are pleased that our organization continues to grow steadily.

One way current members can help increase the size of our organization is by giving gift memberships. And, with the holiday season upon us, the Agnew Association is offering, for a limited time, gift memberships at a reduced rate. See page 11 for details.

We welcome the ten new members who are:

- Charlene Craig
P.O. Box 875
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
- Lisa Marie Purvis
P.O. Box 5683
Bellingham, WA 98227

- Malcolm J. Agnew
195 River Rd.
Schuylerville, NY 12871
- Mary Lee Agnew
P.O. Box 5683
Bellingham, WA 98227
- Beatrice Agnew Irwin
1624 Leisure World
Mesa, AZ 85206
- Irene Agnew Samways
36567 Valley Blvd. #1599
Pomona, CA 91768
- Natalie Slaughter Becker
3704 Fox Hollow
Fort Worth, TX 76109
- Robert F. Agnew
1522 Court
Ventura, CA 93003
- William R. Agnew
P.O. Box 163636
Sacramento, CA 95816
- Samuel Ferrell Agnew
1305 Kennedy Dr.
Tupelo, MS 38801

Address Changes

Please note the following changes to member addresses:

- Mrs. Nancy Galler
9601 Leesburg Pike
Vienna, VA 22182
- Stanley A. Agnew
3123 Rita Ct.
Napa, CA 94558
- Christopher French
23 Eden Terr. Grdn. Apt.
20156 Stanton
Castro Valley, CA 94546
- Linda C. Miller
30 Chiswick Rd.
Brookline, MA 02146-1132
- Mr. David Agnew
1187 Coast Village Rd
#1-197
Santa Barbara CA 93108-2737
- Mrs. Bruce Thompson
5 Date Drive
Chatham, NJ 07928

Dr. Agnew, Civil War Era Style Setter

The recent, highly acclaimed public television broadcast of *The Civil War* provided us with a perspective on that war few of us knew. In addition to offering a new understanding of the war, the saga was liberally sprinkled with obscure facts and marvelous anecdotes about the lives and feelings of the people who were forever changed by the

tragedy of the Civil War. One fact that was *not* recounted by Shelby Foote, or any of the other commentators, was recently uncovered by one of our members who asks to remain anonymous. The following definition was found on page 4 of the *Civil War Dictionary*, by Mark Boatner, published by David MacKay and Co., New York, 1988.

AGNEW. Name of attire worn by SANITARY COMMISSION nurses in the Peninsular campaign. This consisted of a man's army shirt, the original one having been borrowed from a Dr. Agnew, with the collar open, sleeves rolled up, and shirttails out, worn over a full skirt less the hoops.

Coming Next Issue:

✓ *Abram Agnew, 19th century California rancher*

✓ *Chart information from The Book of Agnews—James Agnew of Pennsylvania*

✓ *Family history of John Agnew, Blair County, Pennsylvania*



Just in time for Christmas giving, the Agnew Association of America is pleased to offer One Year Association Gift Memberships for \$10.00.

Offer expires January 15, 1991.
See Page 11 for details.

Editor's Corner

I recently asked members to submit articles and other written material for the *Agnewsletter* on a floppy computer disk if possible, so that I wouldn't have to re-type everything.

Since I made that request, I have discovered another marvel of computer technology which makes that request unnecessary. I have gained access to an optical character reader which scans a typewritten page and translates the scanned image into a computer file I can use in the *Agnewsletter*. It reads clear, crisp, typewritten text quickly and accurately but it can't read handwriting or words with strike-throughs.

So, when you submit material to the *Agnewsletter*, please send it neatly typed, no smudges, strike-throughs, or handwritten edits. This hunt and peck typist/editor will be extremely grateful. Thank you.



The Last Word

Convener Art Agnew

How wonderful it was to meet and visit with so many Agnews at the recently concluded Caledonian Games in California. Agnews came from Australia, Scotland, Canada, and from throughout the United States. The Agnew Tent was graced with visits from many of our members.

During the games, a number of folks stopped by the tent and asked if Spiro (you know who) was a member; of course, you know the answer to that question! Some stopped and said, "...gee, I'm an Agnew and I never heard of the Association." We responded with, "Well, now that you know about us, why not join?" And about five of them did!

The Games were quite eventful and will long be remembered by all who participated. Especially by some Agnew cousins who met for the first time at the event. A small but proud contingent of Agnews marched in the parade of the Clans and Families, and it was a great honor to see Sir Crispin on the reviewing stand. All who attended



agreed it was a very enjoyable weekend. We look forward to our next get together.

We have some time before we begin planning the next Agnew event, so may I suggest that you help me in building our Association by increasing the membership?

Do as I do—every time I come across the name Agnew, I write (if I can find an address), tell them about our Association, and ask them to join. You'd be surprised; it actually works. We've acquired some new members this way!

Another suggestion is through giving gift memberships. Christmas is just around the corner. What a great (and easy) gift idea. See our special limited time gift membership offer on the next page. If we work at finding new members, our group will grow and that is what will keep our organization viable.

The Agnew Association of America



is pleased to welcome

as a member.

Your one year membership is a gift from

Your membership entitles you to all the privileges of the Association.
Agnew Association of America • P.O. Box 691 • Petaluma, CA 94953

Gift Memberships

Make it an Agnew Xmas all year long!

The perfect Christmas gift for that special family member may *not* be a tie or a bottle of cologne. A gift membership in the Agnew Association of America is a thoughtful, year-long remembrance.

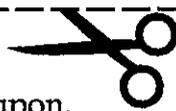
And, you can give the gift of *family heritage* for only \$10.00—one-third off the regular membership rate. Offer good until January 15, 1991.

Just detach the gift certificate above, fill it in, and mail it or wrap it in a gift box. What could be easier?

Then complete the coupon below and mail it, along with your check for \$10.00, for each gift membership, to the

address on the coupon.

You'll be glad you did!



Special Gift Membership Offer
Please enroll the following as a member of the Agnew Association of America:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Attach a separate sheet to list additional gift memberships.

Please mail a gift certificate and a copy of the Agnewsletter to my gift memberships. I already used the gift certificate.

Please mail a copy of the Agnewsletter only to my gift memberships.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ membership(s)
(Make checks payable to Agnew Association of America)

My name is _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: Agnew Association of America • P.O. Box 691 • Petaluma • CA • 94953

(Offer expires January 15, 1991)

Agnew Association Membership

The Agnew Association of America was established in the United States in April 1984 at the request of Sir Crispin Agnew, Bt. of Lochnaw, Chief of the Family Agnew. The purpose of the Association is to bring together all of the name Agnew or those descended from the name Agnew to promote interest in lineage and exchange of information. An Association newsletter is published quarterly to disseminate items of Agnew interest and assist contacts with other members tracing their Agnew line. The newsletter is available to members only, and back issues are available at \$3.00 each to members and prospective members. Member queries are answered without charge. In order to support the Association, the Board of Directors established annual dues of \$15.00, and \$6.00 for students.

Dues are payable by July 1 of each year. Life membership in the parent Association in Scotland is \$30 in the United States and Canada.

Membership application for both the American and Scottish associations and annual dues should be sent to:

*Mrs. Lois Schieck
Apt. 105, 4615 North Park Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815*

Please make checks payable to the Agnew Association of America. For membership in the Agnew Association of Scotland, send a separate check for \$30 payable to the Agnew Association.

Agnew Association Officers

Arthur W. Agnew—Convener
Kenneth H. Agnew—Co-Convener
Lois Schieck—Secretary/Treasurer
Pat Alexander—Archivist
Dr. G. Marie Agnew-Marcelli—
Historian
Magalen Bryant—Director
Jean Schneider—Membership
Carol Agnew Smith—Editor



Honorary Members

Colonel John Park Agnew—
Convener Emeritus
Sir Crispin and Lady Susan Agnew
Lady Swanzie Agnew

The Agnewletter

Agnew Association of America
P.O. Box 691
Petaluma, California 94953



Dr. Marie Agnew-Marcelli
61 Maple Ave.
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706