

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

IT WOULD not have been possible to assemble the information that is included in this volume without the unstinting help of many people.

First, I am grateful to my wife Frances Ida McKee for her patience in bearing the brunt of our four minor boys' activities during the four years the book has engaged me, and for her unflinching encouragement and suggestions. Both of us hope the future generations of McKees, including those descending from our sons Michael, David, Roderick, and Duncan, will be proud of their antecedents and kinsmen back through the centuries. Often, we get only a candlelight glimpse of them for a brief instant, but nothing dishonourable or stealthy ever attains them. Whereas they never seem to attain quite to the summit, yet their accomplishments in war and peace are sound and often distinguished. Many have adorned the professions of the clergy, law, medicine, education, and engineering, with considerable distinction. On every frontier and in every war I have found members of our clan, and they have died on nearly every battlefield of note.

Several families are entitled to arms based on arms borne by their ancestors, obtained by application and a showing presented to the Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland, or to Garter, or Norroy and Ulster Kings of Arms, who can confer differenced arms, if thoroughly satisfied with the evidence. Scot arms more probably emerge from the area from whence their prototype sprang, but there is persuasive evidence that MacAodhs displayed arms in Ulster, also, in early centuries.

The member of our immediate tribe who has given me the greatest help and stimulation is H. Malcolm McKee, M.C., of Bangor, Northern Ireland; he has not only supplied very important fundamental clues and invaluable information, but by encouragement and critical comment has guided me time and again away from pitfalls born of my excessive credulity toward early historians.

Others who have painstakingly helped with facts and information, and to whom I owe my gratitude, are named below with brief comment to identify their contribution.

Elizabeth McKee, the wife of Robert McKee, Toddstown House, Carricknaveagh, Saintfield, County Down, Northern Ireland, supplied facts concerning Big David of the Temple and his descendants, as well as a transcription of the matter inscribed on the McKee Monument at Boardmills. Further, she went to considerable trouble to photograph and send me pictures of the grave of Big David at Loughenny, the McKee Hall at Boardmills, the McKee Monument at Boardmills, and other pictures of great interest.

Through the efforts and interest of Charles T. McKee of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and his daughter Nancy McKee FitzGerald, all of the information concerning their ancestor Captain Robert McKee was received. He was a Revolutionary War veteran who had immigrated to Westmoreland County earlier from Ireland. I surmise that he came from the vicinity of Omagh in Tyrone, not far from Dungannon, the latter the ancient seat of the mighty O'Neills, because he named his farm in Westmoreland County "Omaghi". His descendants say he was one of five brothers, but in view of the 1734 arrival of the Virginia pioneers, and the circumstance that one of them was named Robert too, it is evident that the veteran here under consideration probably came a little later, and was of another branch of the same family.

John Ritchie McKee of San Francisco supplied many otherwise obscure details concerning the descendants of David McKee, progenitor of McKeesport McKees. The reader will see that much remains to be done on the several branches of that sept, but I am confident that other researchers will fill in the details from their own family records. My sincere thanks to my good friend and distant cousin John Ritchie McKee.

Clara Adkisson of Hamilton, Illinois, herself descended from one of the Boyne veterans through William McKee and Cassander Frakes, kindly pointed the way to much source material, and in addition wrote out several historical bits and anecdotes concerning her sept, which is also mine.

Clara Byrnes of Rushville, Illinois, responded immediately to my advertisement in that area for information concerning William McKee and Cassander Frakes, and their descendants. Over a period of many months we exchanged letters, mine catechising patient Clara, who never once failed me, and hers responding accurately and comprehensively. We are descended from the same ancestors, her more immediate antecedents having been Joel Tullis and Cassie McKee, the latter a daughter of William McKee and Cassander Frakes. She suggested that I should also write to Cyrus L. DeWitt, the venerable husband of Bertha McKee, and who was born in 1857.

As it happened, Mr. DeWitt had also answered my advertisement with priceless information that he supplied from an astonishing memory, except for dates that he obtained from the Bible of William McKee, Jr., his wife's father, which had been passed down to him. As a measure of this fine Christian's magnanimity I can best present the simple act of giving me Uncle Billy's beautiful Bible. Mr. DeWitt joined a long line of distinguished ancestors in February, 1956.

Herman Oscar McKee, my first cousin whom I have not seen since 1920, but with whom I now correspond regularly, supplied a great fund of information and dates that relate to his and my recent ancestors. Later, he very kindly gave me our grandmother's and our grandfather's respective Family Bibles. I can never repay him for what he has done.

From my cousin Emma Ora McKee (Smith) of Mineral Wells, Texas, I received information, anecdotes, and photographs relating to her grandfather Captain Joel McKee, who settled in Palo Pinto County before the Civil War, fought in the Confederate Army as a captain of a company of raiders, and survived to survey much of that section of Texas. Captain Joel and my grandfather Henry were brothers. Emma Ora has promised to visit us in California, and to this my entire family is looking forward.

Eva Sowards of Cashion, Oklahoma, through her granddaughter Marguerite Stone, gave me a wealth of information concerning the lines descending and ascending through Henry Lafayette McKee, his father James McKee, and Thomas McKee and Hannah Frakes. Thank you Eva and Marguerite.

Most of the information I received concerning Major David McKee of Kahoka, Missouri, whose majority was gained in the Union Army, came from the indefatigable Della McKee (Pollock), who joined our ancestors in April 1955. She patiently answered dozens of probing questions, without complaint, from her little home in Nickerson, Kansas, and invariably terminated her kindly letters with a brief account of the state of her beloved roses. Her sister Cora Belle McKee (Arnold) has graciously added her own recollections to those of her younger sister Della ; to both I owe my grateful thanks and blessings.

The original portrait of Captain William McKee, who was killed at the battle of Prairie Grove December 7, 1862, while leading his company in the Union forces, was presented to

me by my cousin Arthur Frank Anderson of Hopewell, Kansas. Both it and the memory of the donor will be preserved in my family with gratitude.

For advice and the reading of some manuscript I wish to thank John W. Beck, Seven Kings, Essex, England, who is intensely interested in Ulster history.

Ethel Brown of Stockton, California, and Letha Davis Glaze of Kansas City, Missouri, gave me the names and dates that pertain to their lines, both of which descend from Thomas McKee and Hannah Frakes. Sadie West of Kansas City, Kansas, also supplied a great deal of what I know about Captain William McKee, mentioned above. Other particulars came from his grandson Albert J. McKee of Kahoka, Missouri.

Hazel Ritchey West of Western Springs, Illinois, descended from William McKee and Cassie Frakes, sent me a photostat of the very early McKee Family Tree of my line, which contains internal evidence of having been drawn a decade or so before the Civil War. Moreover, this fine kinswoman supplied many facts, names, and dates of great importance to the work as a whole. In the fall of 1957 she and her husband visited us in our Puente, California home.

Herman Ansel Whitson of Urbana, Illinois, worked with me through the mails, over a period of many months, drawing upon his own experience gained in researching his agnatic line to give me advice and guidance. I am under great obligation to him for his patient help and advice. He too descends from William and Cassander.

To Henrietta Cameron Parsons, in the Soldiers' Widows Home at Wilmington, Illinois, I owe thanks for writing out for me many anecdotes about her grandfather, Major David McKee, who incidentally had twenty-three children, four of them adopted, and so many grandchildren that I have not counted them. The reader may trace them on the Family Tree that portrays Major David's line.

Mrs. H. E. Stitt of Cleveland, Ohio, sent me a copy of her father's volume *David McKee of Anahilt*, which paves the way from the four McKee veterans of the Boyne toward all future research into lines descending from these pioneers. I take this opportunity to thank this kind clanswoman for her thoughtful gift. I had the good fortune to buy another copy of the volume from Goodspeed's in Boston, so that at least two copies may thus descend through my own sons.

The other people whose names follow have supplied information about various McKee septs which, but for their ready willingness to impart it, could not possibly have been discovered.

Charles W. McKee of Detroit sent very interesting and useful material concerning some of the descendants of that distinguished stalwart of our tribe Colonel Alexander McKee. He also supplied the originals of 18th and 19th century letters and documents executed by members of the Innes and Gordon families that suggest a possible geographical source in the northern reaches of Scotland.

Facts and dates about this same sept, both ascending and descending, were also sent by Eleanor P. Reed of Haverford, Pennsylvania, and my good guiding lights in research, Marge S. Kieffer of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and Ethel S. Davenport, of the State Library, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Rose Thompson McKee of Leavenworth, Kansas, sent facts and dates that enabled me to trace her sept, which includes Robert Eugene McKee of El Paso and the late Henry Stewart McKee of Los Angeles, back into Ireland. She was most helpful.

Fred E. McKee of Glendale, California, supplied me with the clues, from family papers in his possession, out of which grew the research into the ancestors and descendants of Hugh O'Neill, the third Earl of Tyrone, from whom one or two lines of McKees may descend. Although it was not feasible to make an exact determination from the evidence presently available, such a descent falls well within the bounds of possibility. Factors that bear on this enigma are explained in the chapter *The O'Neills of Ulster*.

Both my readers and I are under very considerable obligation to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Jesse Hays Baird, A.B., B.D., D.D., LL.D., Moderator of the 160th Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, who was for more than twenty years president of San Francisco Theological Seminary, for his very excellent explanation of the origins of Protestantism, in the section titled **McKEES HAVE BEEN PRESBYTERIANS**.

The monograph is founded on historical fact, and some of the unfortunate acts on both sides in the earlier centuries, when dissension split the Roman Catholic Church asunder, shock our tempered views of today.

The McKees with whom I have corresponded are uniformly Protestant, but there are many Roman Catholic McKee families here and abroad. McKees of both faiths should keep ever in mind that they are units of a great sept, equally precious in the eyes of their Creator.

Jesse Hays Baird, descended from Martha McKee and Thomas Beard (Baird), was a week-end guest in my Puente home in the fall of 1957.

In Scotland, I acknowledge the gracious assistance of Eileen L. McKee of Glasgow, Frances McKee of Edinburgh, and Mary Elizabeth McKee of Glasgow, all of whom sent me data that helped direct my efforts into productive channels.

I am under obligation to Iain Moncreiffe of Easter Moncreiffe, Unicorn Pursuivant, for the illuminating and expert comment he was good enough to supply, reproduced in the *Mackays of Scotland* chapter.

In Canada, Douglas Thurston Kee, Q.C., of Chatham, Ontario, supplied an outline of his own sept's descent, which is included herein with credit to him and the painstaking and exhaustive research he did over a period of several years to compile it. Based upon the facts he was able to unearth, the Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland granted arms to him based on the ancient arms of the Galloway Mackays from whom Lyon deduced his descent. Later in the present volume explanation is made that the name "Kee" is an abridgement of MacKee, or McKee, that took place in the late 16th or early 17th century, under the menace of English law in Ireland. The same cropping process was doubtless applied to the name "Key", and Francis Scott Key was without very much question descended from the same great tribe of MacAodh that, I feel confident, generated the Mackays and McKees.

In Ireland, I am indebted to my friend Allen Figgis of the old (1758) publishing house of Hodges, Figgis & Co., Dublin, who rooted out of nooks and crannies of the Republic of Ireland neglected copies of ancient topographical poems, and early annals of localities now long forgotten.

I am deeply obliged also to Mr. Basil O'Connell, K.M., one of the foremost authorities on Irish genealogy. This very busy expert has greatly helped and encouraged my work by reading and commenting on the typescript.

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the Burton Historical Collection Department of the Detroit Public Library, the Department of Public Records and Archives of Toronto, the Surrogate Court at Sandwich, and the Public Archives of Canada at Ottawa.

Sir Aeneas Alexander Mackay, Bt., 13th Baron Reay of Reay, County Caithness, in Scotland, Chief of the Clan Mackay, has been gracious and cooperative.

Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, K.C.V.O., Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland, has kindly afforded me considerable time and his own invaluable and authoritative deductions concerning the McKee sept, included in the chapter *The Mackays of Scotland*.

To both of these eminent Scotsmen I owe and give my thanks.

The very fine portraits of Lord Reay were made by the renowned Fayer of London ; to him and to his lordship I am indebted for permission to reproduce them.

As explained in the chapter concerning Colonel Alexander McKee, his portrait, which was painted in 1757, and various memorabilia, belong to the author.

Other portraits reproduced were lent by descendants of the various lines. The several Family Trees were constructed by the author, except that of the Ards Family of McKee, which H. Malcolm McKee of Bangor procured for me from Frank McKee, LL.B., of Belfast, and Bangor Town Solicitor.

My diligent, agreeable, and very competent secretary Alice Gooden, herself descended from the Revolutionary War veteran Jonathan Stevens, has rendered my tribe and me an invaluable service by typing the manuscript of this volume, detecting and correcting many of my errors, and often serving as my more dependable of two separate memories. Thank you, Alice.

RAYMOND WALTER MCKEE,
Puente, California.