

THE NAME AND FAMILY
OF
McVICKER OR McVICKAR

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THE NAME OF McVICKER OR McVICKAR

The name of McVICKER or McVICKAR, originally MacVicar, meaning "son of vicar," is a name anciently found on the shores of Loch Fyne, in Scotland. It was first used as a sept name, its bearers belonging to the Clan MacNaughton. In ancient British and early American records the name is found in the various forms of MacVicar, MacVicer, McVicar, McVicer, MacVickars, MacVickar, McVickar, MacVicker, McVickers, McVicker, and others. Of these, the two spellings first mentioned are those most frequently used in America in modern times.

The Clan MacNaughton, of which the MacVickers were a sept, possessed land in Argyll shire, Scotland, in the thirteenth century, their possessions extending over the upper part of Lochawe, Glenara, Glenshira, and Loch Fyne. Among the earliest records of this clan are those of the Gillichrist MacNachdan, that is, Gilchrist MacNaughton, who was granted the Castle of Fraoch Eilean, in Lochawe, in the year 1287; and those of Maurice MacNaughtane, of Lochawe, between 1390 and 1406.

Dongall MacVicker, who was living at Bardger, in the parish of Lochwinnoch, Scotland, before 1672, married Margaret Caldwell or Caldwell, of Glasgow, but the names of their progeny are not in evidence.

A branch of the family early settled at Edinburgh, Scotland, was represented in 1754 by John MacVicar, who was married in that year to Grizel, daughter of Lawrence Sinclair, of Caithness. Other records of the family in Edinburgh include those of Katherine MacVicer, who was married in 1761 to George Springs: those of Ann MacVicar, who married Alexander MacNaughton in 1762; those of Niell MacVicar, son of another Niell, who married Marjorie, daughter of David Grierson, in 1765; those of Alexander MacVicar, who married in 1779 to Katherine, daughter of George Miller; those of Christian MacVicar who married John MacDougall in 1783; those of Captain Charles MacVicar, who was married in 1797 to Martha, daughter of William Cambell; and those of John MacVicar, who married Agnes, daughter of John Miller, of Ayrshire, in 1798. These records are however, only fragmentary.

Although the records of the family in the British Isles are not complete, the clan seems to have occupied an honorable, though undistinguished, position. The bearers of the name in Great Britain belonged chiefly to the yeomen and merchant classes. Their descendents in America are numerous, many of the clan having come to this country in the eighteenth century.

Probably the first of the family in America was Archibald McVickar or McVicker, whose parents had removed from Scotland to Ireland in the early eighteenth century. Archibald came to America in 1769, if not before, and settled in the New York City. It is probable that his father's name was also Archibald and that he had two brothers, John and James, both of whom lived and died in Ireland. Of those brothers, however, James is said to have been the father of four children, John, Nathan or Nathaniel, Jane, and Nancy, of whom the two sons also immigrated to America in the eighteenth century and will be mentioned again later. The immigrant Archibald died in New York in 1779, leaving a widow named Elizabeth, but no issue.

John McVickar or McVicker, nephew of the immigrant Archibald, possibly came over about 1777 and was certainly established in New York City as early as 1780. He was an importer and ship-owner and held, among other distinctions, those of being director of the Bank of New York; founder and Vice-President of the St. Patrick's Society; director of several insurance companies and of the Western and Northern Coal Company; vestryman of the Trinity Church; and founder of St. Michael's, St James, and St. Paul's churches, all in New York.

The immigrant John married Ann Moore, of Newtown, L.I., in 1781 and had issue by her of James, Archibald, John, Mary Eliza, Hannah, Augusta, Henry, Edward, Nathan and Benjamin Moore.

Of the last-mentioned brothers, James was twice married, his first wife being Eweretta Constable, by whom he was the father of William Constable, Anna, John Augustus, and Mary Stewart McVickar. By a second wife, he left only one child, a daughter names Catherine, who died unmarried.

Archibald, son of the immigrant John, married Catherine Augusta Livingston and was the father by her of Brockholst, John, Catherine, Archibald, and Susan.

John, son of the immigrant John, resided at Bloomingdale, N.Y., and was the father by his Elizabeth Bard, of John, Anna, Samuel Bard, Henry, Mary, Frances, Pendleton, Sarah Bard, Susan, and William Augustus.

Edward, son of the immigrant John, married Frances Matilda Constable, by whom he was the father of Frances, Emily Constable, Branton, Anne, Henry, Augustus, Matilda Constable, and Eweretta.

Benjamin Moore McVickar, the youngest son of the immigrant John, married Isaphene Lawrence. Their children were John Lawrence, Cornelia Augusta, Anna, Isaphere, and Maria Elizabeth.

Nathan or Nathaniel, the younger brother of the immigrant John, came to America about the year 1798 and made his home in New York. By his wife Catherine Bucknor, he had issue of four sons, William Henry, John, Nathan, and William Bucknor, all but the first of whom died unmarried.

William Henry McVickar, son of Nathan, married a Miss Phelps, by whom he was the father of at least three children, Henry, Catherine, and Edith.

William McVickar or McVicker, who settled before 1800 at Conesus, N.Y., left issue by his wife, Betsy Roberts, of Julia, Charles, Jane, John, Walter, Elizabeth, Edwin, Edward, Martha, George and Sarah.

John McVickar or McVicker, a native of Scotland, came in the early nineteenth century to Nova Scotia and later settled for a time at Whelling W.Va., whence he finally removed to Frederick County, on the Shenandoah Valley. He married Catherine Thatcher and was the father by her of Catherine, Charles William, Marion Jenkins, Turner Ashby, Henry W. and Minnie.

The McVickars and McVickers in America have been shown themselves to be, the whole, a highly religious race, intellectually able, resourceful, and possessed of the strength of their convictions.

Members of the family who served with the Colonial forces during the American Revolution, some of whom may have been original immigrants from the British Isles, including Duncan McVicker, Peter McVicker, and Archibald McVickers of Pennsylvania.

John, Alexander, Archibald, James, Nathan or Nathaniel, Henry, Samuel, Benjamin, George, William and Edward are some of the Christian names more frequently used by the family for its male progeny.

Of the members of the family who have been prominent in America I comparatively recent times, the following are considered representative:

John McVickar (1787-1868), of New York, educator and author.

John Augustus McVickar (1812-1892), of New York, physician.

John George McVickar (nineteenth century), of New York, Michigan, and New Jersey, educator and founder of the Montgomery Academy.

James Hubert McVicker (1822-1896), of New York, Louisiana, Missouri, and Illinois, journalist, actor, and theatre manager.

William Augustus McVickar (1827-1877), of New York, clergyman and author.

William Neilson McVickar (1843-1910), of New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island, clergyman and bishop.

Henry Goelet McVickar (latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), of New York, poet and author.

Harry Whitney McVickar (B. 1860), of New York, author and illustrator.

James Rufus McVicker (B. 1876), of Iowa, writer.

The coat of arms of the Scottish family of MacVicar, from which the McVickars and McVickers of America trace their descent, is described in heraldic terms as follows (Burke, Encyclopedia of Heraldry, 1844);

Arms.—“Argent, a millrind sable, charged with four estoiles of the field. ”

Crest.—“An Eagle rising, proper.”

Motto.—“Dominus providebit.”

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