

**NOTES ON THE SURNAMES OF
FRANCUS, FARNCEIS, FRENCH,
ETC. IN SCOTLAND, WITH AN
ACCOUNT OF THE FRENCHES OF
THORNYDYKES**

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Notes on the surnames of Francus, Farnceis, French, etc. in Scotland, with an account of the Frenches of Thornydykes by A. D. Weld French

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FRENCHES OF THORNYDYKES

BY

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PREFACE.

THE authorities consulted in this work were the abbey records, the principal antiquarian authorities, and published and unpublished public records.

In regard to the early use of these surnames in France and Scotland, some remarks seem appropriate in this place. From the Latin word "Francus," with the addition of the suffixes, we have the following compound words,— "Franc-ensis," "Franc-iscus," and "Franci-gena."

The change of Francensis to the modern Les Français is not only interesting as regards the changes of a word in the language of France, but also of some value as bearing on the commencement and continued use of these surnames.

The suffix *ensis* in Franc-ensis implies nationality in Latin; and we observe, according to M. Brachet, that by reducing the *ns* to *s* we have Francēsis, then Francis in the seventh century, Francēis in the tenth century, at its end *éi* becomes *ói*, and we have

François, by the end of the twelfth century *ói* becomes *oe*; and we have Françoés, then François and Les Français.

We have also from Francus the French surnames of Le Franc and Le Franceis;* and at later periods, owing to the changes in the orthography of the language, Le François and finally Le Français came into existence.

The surname of Le Franc is more frequently found in France, but it does not often occur in the records of Great Britain. Its nearest approach, of which there are numerous records, are *Fran̄c* or *Le Fran̄c*. This mark of abbreviation indicates a contraction for Francus or Le Franceis.

Surnames came into existence in France toward the end of the tenth century. In the following century are found the names of Gualterius Francus and Hugo Franco. About the middle of the twelfth century the records of the Cotentin show the names of Rannulfus Francus and Ricardo Franco.

* This name passed through many orthographical changes in Great Britain before the anglicization period. In Scotland the Coldingham charters, of which abstracts are hereafter given, show sufficient illustrations, of which the following may be mentioned; namely, Franceis, Fraunceis, Franceys, Fraunceys, etc. Some illustrations of the early anglicized surname of French in Scotland are found in the latter part of the fifteenth and earlier portion of the sixteenth century in the records relating to the family of Johannes France, Burgess of Linlithgow, where it appears in the year 1487 under the form of France, in the year 1535 as Frans, Franss, and Franche, while under the date of 1538-39 this surname is found first in this family under the form of Frensch.

M. Pinckmeier and M. Bain translate *Franciscus* as French. Their opinions have the confirmation of M. Du Cange, who gives the following illustrations, "*Franciscus habitus, Cuspis Franciscus, Miles Franciscus, Franciscus mos, and Francisca lingua.*"

From *Franciscus* we have *Francisco*, which we find synonymous with *Le Franceis* in the Coldingham charters. In one of the charters of Robert de Brus, circa 1218, we find William *Franceis*; and at the same period, in another of his charters, apparently the same individual has his surname latinized into *Willielmus Franciscus*.

As regards *Francigena* and *Francis* being synonymous, we have the record of the parson of Coldebec, in Cumberland, who is mentioned in 1231-33 as John *Francigena*, and again in this same period as John *Le Franceis*. M. Stapleton evidently took this view, as his French translation of *Walterus Francigena*, who is mentioned in the Norman Roll of 1203, was *Walter Le Franceis*; while Roger French is given by the Rev. Eyton as the English translation of *Rogerus Francigena*, who is mentioned in England in the early part of the thirteenth century.

There remains now the pleasant duty of thanking those who have aided in this work, without whose co-operation and help it could not have been completed. My obligations are due to Dr. Thomas Dickson, Curator of the Historical Department H. M. General Register House at Edinburgh, who,

on learning of my wish, kindly placed at my disposal for examination his valuable unpublished records; and I must specially acknowledge the interest he showed in the work during its progress. To my friend, Rev. Walter MacLeod, the antiquary, I must express my gratitude for his interest, perseverance, care, and the most satisfactory results of his examinations of the archives and manuscripts of Scotland. With the Norman charters, of which translations are given, my special thanks are due M. François Dolbet, the Registrar of the Archives of La Manche, at Saint-Lo, France, who, on being informed of my desire to have the abbey manuscript records of La Manche examined, kindly offered to make a search among these ancient archives. With great antiquarian zeal he completed the examination of these records from their foundations down to the time that King John of England by his feudal delinquency lost the Duchy of Normandy. Some additional charters are given by him, showing the continuance of this surname in the Cotentin after its confiscation by King Philippe of France.

The remaining Norman charters presented were obtained from the published records. In conclusion I must acknowledge the thanks due Mr. George H. Ellis of this city for the typography of the work.

A. D. WELD FRENCH.

PART FIRST.

NOTES

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