



CLAN CHEYNE

ARMS

Azure, a bend between six crosses pattée fitchée Argent (quartered with Marshall of Esslemont)

CREST MOTTO

A cross pattée fitchée Argent

Patientia vincit (Patience conquers)

A name of great antiquity, believed to be of Norman or French origin, from Quesney near Coutances. The name means 'oak plantation'. According to Black, some early clerks confused the word for 'oak' with that meaning 'dog', and erroneously styled the name 'Canis'. Richardus de Chenai witness a gift to the Hospital of St Peter of York around 11585. The earliest record of the name in Scotland appears to be William de Chesne who witnessed a charter by William the Lion around 1200. Sir Reginald le Chein was Great Chamberlain of Scotland from 1267 to 1269; he held the lands of Inverugie as well as immense estates in Caithness. Another Sir Reginald signed the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320. Anderson narrates that Sir Reginald le Chein, who died in 1350, was survived by two daughters in the following manner: Cheyne was renowned throughout the lands as a mighty hunter and longed for a male heir to his vast estates. When his wife was safely delivered of a daughter, in a rage, he ordered the child to be killed. A subsequent daughter was condemned in the same way. The years passed and no male heir was born and he began to lament his childless family. At length, on some great festival, he noticed two young ladies far outshining the rest in beauty and accomplishment. He expressed to his wife his admiration of these girls and the cruel fate which had persuaded him to order the death of his daughters who, if they had been allowed to live, would have been about the age of these beauties. His wife confessed her justifiable disobedience and introduced the young ladies to him as his own daughters. Sir Reginald was overjoyed and acknowledged them as his heirs to the lands of Esslemont, which had become the principal seat of the family by marriage with the heiress of Marshall of Esslemont. There were several cadet lines holding lands at Straloch, Dundarg and Pitfitchie. The lands of Esslemont eventually passed into the hands of the Gordons in the early eighteenth century, a branch of which noble family still resides there to this day. Sir William Cheyne, who died in 1932, was a distinguished surgeon and bacteriologist who was a pioneer of antiseptic surgical methods in Britain.

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