

Michael SCOTT - Fife Scotland
University bosom friend - Alexander de LECELLES

Michael SCOTT

B 13 century Balwearie Kirkcaldy Fife Scotland

D 13 century Fife Scotland

M unknown

Unknown

B unknown

D unknown

Children:

1. unknown

Michael SCOT was educated at a Benedictine School at Kirkcaldy and afterwards studied for a few years at Oxford University (then renowned as the second University of Europe) had come to Paris University, which was (famous as the first University in Europe) to prosecute his studies in Alchemy and astronomy &c.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS married Margaret GILLIES)

He lodged together with Alexander de LECELLES prosecuted the same studied together and became inseparable and congenial friends and “fratues-jurats” [sic] or sworn brothers according to a custom of that chivalrous age. Sir Walter Scot [1771-1832] of Abbotsford [Roxburgh County Eastern Scotland] the learned author and poet ancient [sic] of the Scot family call them “bosom friends”.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

On completing their studies at the University they bade an affectionate adieu to each other, and left Paris. Michael preceding to Spain the favorite residence of magicians to study magic which was taught at Toledo.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

Alexander de LECELLAS arrival at Kinghorn with the King and Queen after their marriage renewed his old friendship with Michael Scot (whose Castle of Balwearie is in the adjoining parish) and had been induced by him to remain in Scotland instead of returning to Flanders with his wife and family, offering him a house and land and the position of personal chaplain if he had so, and as it would be for the mutual pleasure of both, Alexander accepted the offer.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

The house and land that Michael ceded to him was a short distance from Balwearie Castle and consisted of a stone house similar to the country houses of this period, one storey high, a barn, byre (cow house) pigsty, and a shed for wood and peat. This house possessed two rooms, ‘a but and a beam’ the largest room being about 20 feet long and 14 ft, wide, the other being smaller. The land consisted of three acres, sufficient to pasture a cow. For this he was to pay 18 Kamed Hens (counted like the Houden breed of the present day) in perpetuity.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

For centuries this small property was known as Priestleys i.e. Priest Meadows and is alluded to in the old ballad of “Ye ladye of Balwearie” which appears to have been written about the time of the Deformation. Others call at Priest-lies as according to tradition, Alexander de LECELLES was looked upon as a magician (like his bosom [sic] friend Michael Scot) and in consequence the Abbot of Dunfermline (in whose diocese this land was included) would not

permit the priest to be buried in the Benediction Cemetery at Kirkcaldy, as he was buried in his own land, and this may be the reason for the uncertainty of the burial place of Michael Scot also. This land is still known as Prestleys.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

Comment - Information about Priestley Estate and the Balwerie Castle are recorded at the end of this document along with a 1757 map.

Between the years 1288 - 1290 Sir Michael Scot of Balwearie with his chaplain (Alexander de LECELLES) and Sir David Wamys all from Fifeshire, were sent on an Embassy to Norway, to bring over the heir to the Scottish throne "Margaret of Norway" but she sickened and died at Orkney to the great grief of the Scottish nation.

(Reference RAHMS Edinburgh Scotland document originally written by John LESSELS chart 08-09)

A Scott family prominent much earlier than Buccleuch were Scotts of Balwearie (Fife) Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie was among the prominent Scottish knights sent to bring home the Maid of Norway (Margaret) in 1290 and his seal bearing. The family remained prominent enough until the middle of the 15th century when Michael of Balwearie was among a group of hostages sent to England in exchange for James.

(Reference National Library of New Zealand publication on shelf Scotland's Historic Heraldry by Bruce A McAndrew chapter The Borders page 389 The Boydell Press Woodbridge 2006)

Scottish family Histories - Scott of Balweary – Family of Scott of Balweary, Jawcraig Aberdeenshire etc. [N.d.] (MSS.) Qz/p-1

(Referenced National Library of NZ Wellington Scottish Family Histories compiled by Joan P S Ferguson published 1986 page 208)

The Ragman Rolls record a Richard le Scot of Murthockston had two sons one was Michael Scot who later was progenitor of the Scotts of Balwearie in Fife Scotland. The younger son, Sir Michael Scott, was possessed of a considerable estate in Fifeshire in the reign of William the Lion. From the chartulary of Dunfermline, it is ascertained that he married Margaret, daughter of Duncan Syras of Syras, and obtained with her the lands of Ceres. He had a son, Duncan, who succeeded him and who had two sons, the younger of whom was named Gilbert. The elder son, Sir Michael Scott, was knighted by Alexander II., and was one of the assizes upon a perambulation of the marches between the monastery of Dunfermline and the lands of Dundaff in 1231. By his wife, Margaret, daughter and sole heiress of Sir Richard Balwearie of Balwearie, he got that estate in the parish of Abbotshall. He had a son, Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie and Scotsraig, the famous wizard, of whom a memoir is given below. In the Ragman Roll is the name of Michael Scott, one of the Scottish barons who swore fealty to Edward I. of England in 1296, said to have been this learned personage. He had two sons: Sir Henry, and Duncan Scott, proprietor of lands in Forfarshire, and progenitor of the Scotts in the North.

(Reference website www.electricscotland.com/history and www.bbc.co.uk and Wikipedia.org and www.scotlandhistory.net and various other website)

SCOTT family of Balwerie Fife Scotland

Michael SCOTT sometimes spelt SCOT was a mathematician and scholar. He was born in Scotland about 1175 possibly at Balwearie in Fife (as Sir Walter Scott believed) and studied first at the cathedral school of Durham and then at Oxford and Paris then later Toledo devoting himself to philosophy, mathematics and astrology. It appears that he had also studied theology and became an ordained priest. Michael Scott was known in Scottish folklore as a Wizard.

Michael SCOTT was knighted by Alexander II and married Margaret Balwearie of Kirkcaldy, Fife. His son Michael Scot (wizard) was born in the latter part of the 12th Century and grew up in a tower at Balwearie. The tower stood long before James III, in 1463, granted William Scott a license to build the fortress that was to become the Castle of Balwearie.

(Reference website www.scotlandmag.com)

Comments - Many historians and researchers seem confused between Michael Scott the wizard and Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie Fife Scotland. Michael SCOT left manuscripts which were published in 15th century but I have not read any of these publications.

Sir Walter Scott mentions that Michael SCOTT and Alexander de LECELLES were bosom friends but which Michael, or are they one of the same. Perhaps we are all getting confused between Michael the father and/or Michael the son and/or Michael a relative. Sir Walter Scott and other researchers when trying to identify Michael Scot with the Sir Michael Scot of Balwearie believe the two were related.

Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie castle on the south side of Kirkcaldy in Fife Scotland was sent to Norway by the King in 1290. Was he the friend of Alexander de Lecelles or father or relative of Alexander's friend?

Michael Scott (Sir) arrived in Scotland after the death of Alexander III (1286) and was sent to Norway to bring back the young Queen Margaret also known as the Maid of Norway. This is when he became known as Sir Michael Scott. This Michael Scott died in 1292 and was buried at Holme Coltrame in Cumberland but some say his was buried at Melrose.

Comment - The date of Michael Scot's death (believed by some as 1232 and others 1292) remains uncertain. Some state that he was buried at Melrose Abbey others at Holme Coltrame in Cumberland. Still others say he met his death in Italy from a falling masonry from a church ceiling that struck his head and he died afterwards.

A Scott family prominent much earlier than Buccleuch were Scotts of Balwearie (Fife). Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie was among the prominent Scottish knights sent to bring home the Maid of Norway (Margaret) in 1290 and his seal bearing. The family remained prominent enough until the middle of the 15th century when Michael of Balwearie was among a group of hostages sent to England in exchange for James.

(Reference National Library of New Zealand publication on shelf *Scotland's Historic Heraldry* by Bruce A McAndrew chapter *The Borders* page 389 *The Boydell Press Woodbridge 2006*)

Prestley Estate - Balwearie Castle - Raith Estate - Fife Scotland

Comment - The Lessels families throughout the centuries have been connected to the Prestley Estate, Balwearie Castle and Raith Estate in Fife Scotland.

The lands of the middle of the fifteenth century belonged to the abbey of Dunfermline and are supposed after the dissolution of monasteries to have been granted to the bailies and corporation of the town of Kirkcaldy and by them transferred to the family of the Scotts of Balwearie from whom they passed into the possession of the Ramsays of this place and were purchased by the ancestor of the present proprietor (Fergusson).

(Reference National Library of New Zealand Wellington publication on shelf *Topographical Dictionary of Scotland* by Samuel Lewis first published in 1846 volume 1 -1 B there is also a volume 2)

The greater portion of the lands formerly in Kirkcaldy was in the year 1650 separated from that parish and together with the lands of Easter and Wester Touch formerly in the Parish of

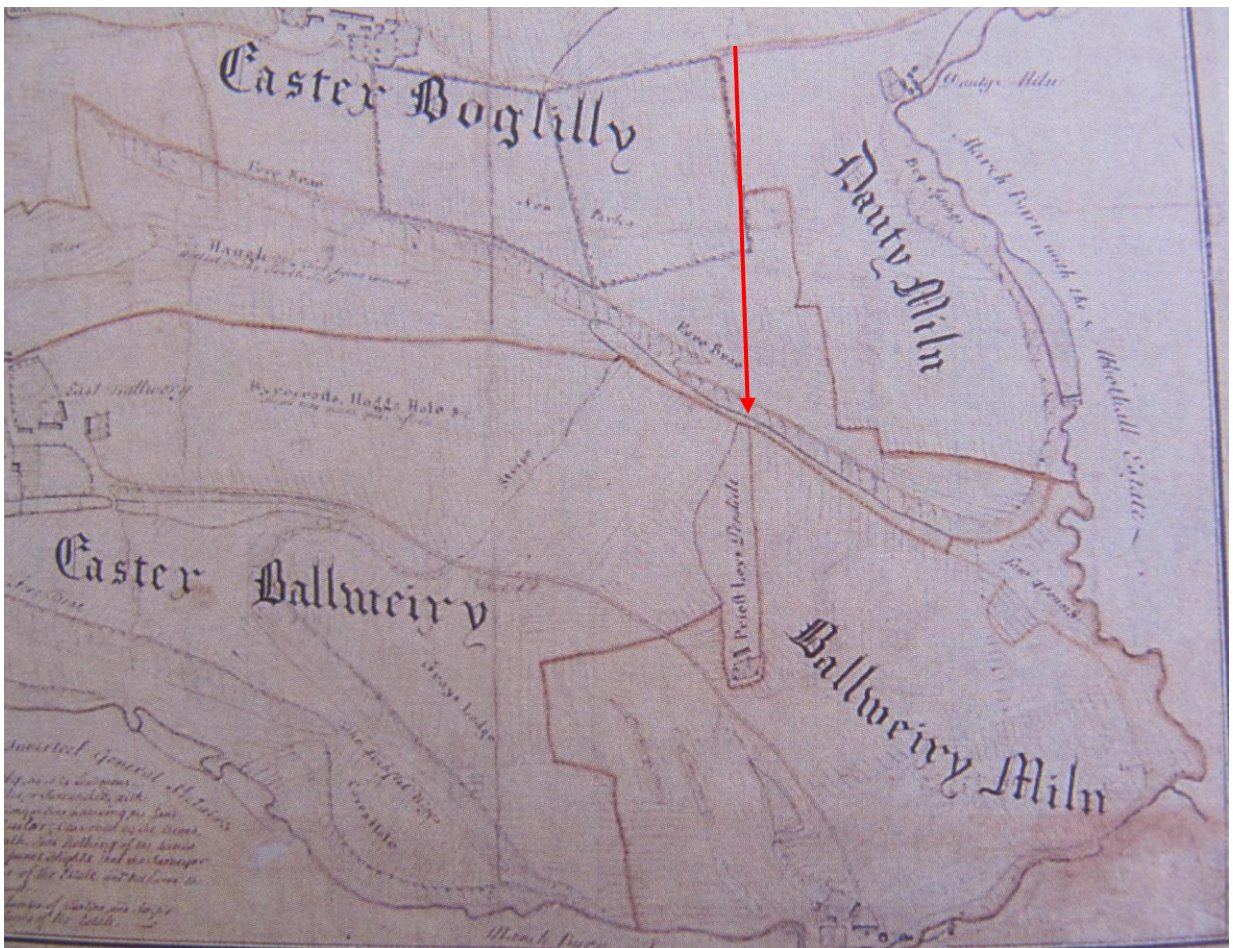
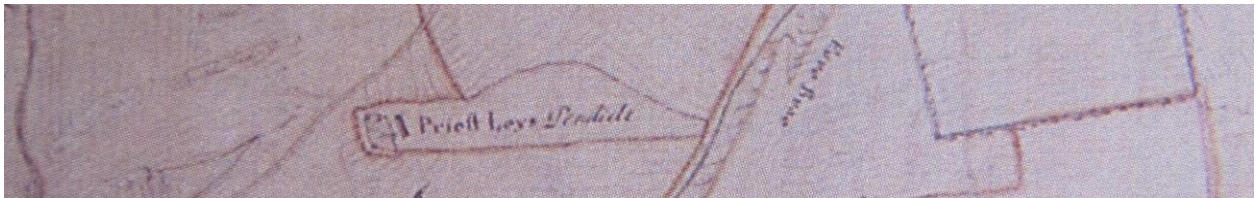
Kinghorn and those of Wester Bogie in the parish of Dysart erected in to a separate and distinct parish under the appellation of Abbotshall

(Reference National Library of New Zealand Wellington publication on shelf Topographical Dictionary of Scotland by Samuel Lewis first published in 1846 volume 1 -1 B there is also a volume 2)

Comment – By researching the Balwearie land occupiers such as the Scott's – Ramsay's – and Fergusson's families we will learn more about our Lessels ancestors. When time permits I will attempt this additional line of research.

I located a June 1757 surveyed map of Raith Estate showing the property of Robert Ferguson Esq. To the left of Ballweiry Miln it records the Priest-leys Terbane [sic]. The map also records Raith, Ballbarton, Ballwiera [sic Balwearie] and Garden as presently set out and possessed by Tenants.

(Reference National Archives of Scotland the map is located in the images link and I have a copy of the survey map)



1757 Map Raith Estate Kirkcaldy Fife Scotland

