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1904

*Sanford King*

(544) *Intro*

ORIGIN AND HISTORY  
OF THE  
NAME  
OF  
ALEXANDER  
WITH  
BIOGRAPHIES OF ALL THE MOST NOTED  
PERSONS OF THAT NAME.

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF  
SURNAMES AND FORENAMES.

TOGETHER WITH  
OVER FIVE HUNDRED CHRISTIAN NAMES OF MEN AND WOMEN  
AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

**The Crescent Family Record.**

*"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."*

CHICAGO, ILL.:  
AMERICAN PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION.  
1904.

and is ready to be further developed, even to the highest degree of importance and intricacy, in proportion as the social principle itself becomes more extended and more complicated in its constitution.

Add new members to the family; collect several families together and form them into one tribe; place a number of tribes holding friendly relations with one another in a less limited tract of land; then will the spot occupied by each tribe, every village or cluster of inhabitants belonging to the same tribe, every hill and thicket and brook—in a word, the land and the gathering of men upon it assume proper names, just as the tribes had already done before, and the families and the individuals that constituted them.

From this outline of the first elements of social life, let us remove, in thought, for a moment, and place ourselves in the heart of civilized existence. The names of lands and dwellings have changed into the designations of powerful states and magnificent cities; names which will be familiar for centuries after the grass has grown over and hidden even the ruins of their palaces and their fortresses and obliterated the very traces of their existence, and after political or naturally induced revolutions have depopulated, divided and totally dismembered the provinces of mighty empires. Here the names of men distinguish the individual members of a great social body, magistrates, princes, chiefs of the great civil and political whole; and among these names, all of them less or more important at present, there are some which hereafter shall be handed down to history as a rich inheritance, an object of envy to the ambitious, and a pattern of conduct to the wise.

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY

OF

THE NAME OF

ALEXANDER.

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*HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL.*

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THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF ALEXANDER.

The name Alexander is of Grecian origin and signifies a "Helper of Mep." The name was first used as a surname, but upon the introduction of the christian name it was adopted by many who appreciated the advantage of the advance in nomenclature. There is no doubt that it had been used for some time as a christian name in Scotland before the period of which history speaks, when we are informed that Alexander MacDonald, second son of Donald, King of the Isles, had two sons who adopted the christian name of their father as a surname for themselves and their descendants. Numerous clans of Alexanders descended from the ancient clan of the MacDonald, including both a nobility and a commonalty. The chiefs of these clans at first resided in the South of Scotland and were Earls of Sterling and Dovan.

In the period following the rebellion, by the defeat and outlawry of certain of the Irish chiefs under the reign of James I of England, who was also James VI of Scotland, vast estates were divided into small tracts and given to the Scotch Protestants on the condition that they should settle permanently in Ireland. King James had a dual object in view in this act, one to replace the Catholics by Protestants, and the

other to secure for himself loyal subjects in the place of rebels. A settlement of Scotch Presbyterians in the midst of the Celtic Catholics meant a perpetual and increasing garrison of friends of the home government in the midst of a hostile population, and which proved the wisdom of James I, when under the reign of William III, of Orange, they saved Ireland for the British Crown.

The distance from Scotland to Ireland at some points is less than twenty miles, and thousands of Scots, all men of enterprise, energy and above the average in intelligence, went over and took possession of the confiscated lands, and among those who availed themselves of this opportunity were many of the Alexanders, who settled in Counties Antrim, Armagh and Down. These families included both the commonalty and nobility, many of whom long enjoyed and do still enjoy hereditary nobility and honorable positions both in church and state.

In after years, under Catholic governments, the descendants of the Scots in Ireland were bitterly persecuted, and early in the last century large numbers of them, including many of the yeomanry bearing the name of Alexander, and probably of the same clan, emigrated to America during the different periods of her colonial history, sometimes in single families, and sometimes in groups of families, and settled at various points along the Eastern coast from Nova Scotia on the North to the Carolinas on the South, but the settlements were principally in Pennsylvania. From these first settlements they became so widely dispersed that families of the same name are now found in almost every part of the United States. These families of Alexanders have been nearly all strict Presbyterians in religion, Scotch in nationality, and strongly characterized by the well known peculiarities of that intelligent, hardy, industrious, and liberty-loving people. The evidence is strongly in favor of the conclusion that they were originally of the same Scottish clan, yet owing to their long separation, partly in the old countries before emigration, and partly in the new, where they arrived at different times and places, it is difficult to determine anything definite concerning the degrees of consanguinity—this has been found to be the case in tracing several of the earlier Alexander families who came to America from the same parts of the British Isles, and no certain knowledge of relation-

ship has been found to exist between them. They all came to this country, hoping that by a change of residence, to find an unrestrained field for the exercise of their industry and skill, and for the enjoyment of their religious opinions. They brought with them the hatred of oppression and the love of freedom in its fullest measure, as was afterwards manifested in our struggle for independence.

William Alexandre is mentioned in Writs of Parliament. The name of Nicholas Alexandre appears in the famous Hundred Rolls.

With five Alexanders in the New Testament, it did not need the celebrity of the great commander Alexander nor that of more fabulous heroes to make this name common. In Scotland the name of Alexander obtained great favor both in palace and cottage. The softer form was always used, as Alisaundre.

#### COATS-OF-ARMS.

##### ALEXANDERS OF ENGLAND.

ARMS: Per pale ar. and sa. a chev. and in base a crescent, counterchanged, a canton az. charged with a harp or.

CREST: On a wreath, a cubit arm erect holding a sword ppr. point and hilt or.

##### ALEXANDERS OF SCOTLAND.

ARMS: Per pale, arg. and sa., a chevron, in a base crescent, and in chief a fleur-de-lys all counterchanged, with a bordure, gu. and or.

CREST: An elephant passant, ppr.

MOTTO: Perseverantia vincit, which means, Perseverance conquers.

##### ALEXANDERS IN IRELAND.

ARMS: Per pale ar. and sa., a chevron, and in base a crest counterchanged; an o canton az., a harp or stringed ar.; in the sinister chief point, a mullet of the last.

CREST: A dexter arm embowed, holding a dagger, all ppr., charged on the wrist with a mullet or.

MOTTO: Per mare, per terras., which means, "By Sea and Land."



## THE FIRST OR THE NAME OF ALEXANDER.

Very few names have been so long and extensively used both as a christian and surname. For more than two thousand years it has been found among all the nations that have received the literature and civilization of Greece and Rome. It is not known when it began to be used as a first or christian name in Scotland, but the genealogy of the British Peerage, printed in 1840 by the Edmund Lodge of London, informs us that Alexander McDonald, second son of Donald, King of the Isles, had two sons who adopted the christian name of their father as a surname for themselves and their descendants. Thus a numerous clan of Alexanders descended from the ancient clan of the McDonalds, including both a nobility and a commonalty. Their residence was first in the South of Scotland about Edinburgh and Glasgow. Their chiefs were the Earls of Stirling and Dovan. In the civil and religious revolutions and persecutions of that country many of this clan were scattered from Scotland into England, and especially into the North of Ireland, where, besides the commonalty, some families have long enjoyed and do still enjoy hereditary nobility and honorable positions both in church and state.

The yeomanry of this name and probably of the same clan came gradually to America in considerable numbers during the whole period of her colonial history; sometimes in single families, and sometimes in groups of families. One of the first settlers in New England was James Alexander; he was in the employ of Theodore Atkinson; and died in 1644.

In 1688 several of the name of Alexander landed at Manhattan Island, where the city of New York now stands. The descendants of these families went into Pennsylvania and into North Carolina.

As early as the year 1665 some settlers of the name of Alexander began to purchase land in the most southern county of the eastern shore of Maryland. They flourished there for about one hundred years, after which they began to migrate.

About 1675 William Alexander, senior and junior, were largely engaged in buying and selling land in Somerset county, Md.

In 1714 two thousand acres of land in Munster and Mecklenburg was bought by several families of the name of Alexander.

## THE ALEXANDERS IN AMERICA.

A thorough perusal of the following life sketches of noted Alexanders, eminent in all walks of life, will reveal the fact that the Alexanders have been actively and intimately associated with the ecclesiastical, civil, industrial and commercial affairs of America; and to become conversant with their history will naturally create in our children a source of pride in the name of Alexanders heretofore unappreciated.

As builders and merchants they have built cities and illumined the marts of trade; in the field of science and medicine they have obtained great prominence; in the arena of statesmanship they have produced men of thought and men of action; while at the bar and in the administration of justice they have shown erudition and wisdom. As clergymen, educators and lecturers they have occupied high places; as musicians, composers and artists they have contributed profusely to social life; and as authors and poets they are worthy to be crowned with a laurel wreath of fame. Also as heroes of colonial, revolutionary and later wars they have rendered patriotic service, each one of whom has added luster to the name of Alexander.

ALEXANDER, AARON I., clergyman, was born in May, 1861, in Cecil County, Md. He was educated in the public schools, the State Normal, and at Wilmington Institute. He is pastor of the First Baptist church of Benkelman, Neb.; and president of the Ministers Conference of Southwestern Nebraska. He is also secretary of the Baptist Association; and chairman of the Missionary Committee. He married Kate M. McNeely, and they have a family of two sons and three daughters. His father was also a minister of the gospel.

ALEXANDER, ABRAHAM, statesman, was born in 1718 in North Carolina. He represented Mecklenburg County in the colonial legislature prior to 1775. He was chairman of the meeting which unanimously adopted The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. He died April 23, 1786, near Charlotte, N. C.

ALEXANDER, ADAM R., congressman, was born in Washington county, Va. He was elected a representative in congress from Madison county, Tenn., from 1823 to 1827.