

The Derivation in England of the Family Names of MONK and MONKS, (and their phonetic variations).

Based on research by Peter MONCK.¹

Overview

The names evolved from William LE MOIGNE, from St Lo in Normandy who came to England with William the Conquerer. In French the name means "the Monk". King William gave Le Moigne the manor of Owers in Devon, where he settled. In England the name evolved to MOIGNE, MOINE, MOYNE and MOYGNE (with and without the prefix 'le'). The Latin version of the Norman name, as used in medieval times in the church, was MONACHUS, from which DE MONACHO, MONIAC, MONKYS and the many phonetic variations of MONK and MONKS derived (for example: MONKE(S); MONCK(S); MUNKE(S); MUNCKE (S); MOUNK(S); MOUNKE(S)).

A clear evolutionary trail for these early developments of the name is obtained from records associated with property owned by the families over several centuries, as illustrated below. More recently, from the late 18th century, parish records show variations within the one family group (for example children and grandchildren of William MONKS and Ann née FLOOK, who married at Holy Trinity, Stapleton, Gloucestershire, in 1765, were christened variously as MONKS, MONK, and MOUNKS.)

Ralph, a son or grandson of William Le Moigne, was held in sufficient esteem by Henry 1st to be created a Grand Sergeant (a member of the inner court) and Larderer-in-Chief to the Kings of England. For this service he was granted 50 hides of land in five manors: Shipton Moigne in Gloucestershire (21 hides); Maddington in Wiltshire (4 hides); Great Easton in Essex (10 hides); Owermoigne in Dorset (10 hides); and Lambourne in Berkshire (5 hides).

Branches of the family are recorded as moving to these areas and to Huntingdonshire (Cambridgeshire). While direct links have not yet been established, early records of the names also emerged in Hertfordshire from the late 1100s; Oxfordshire from 1166; Norfolk from 1282; Hampshire from 1287; Lancashire from 1350; and in Northamptonshire.

Not all bearers of the name are directly related to the original aristocratic family. Looser marital procedures and practices, unnamed orphans left at (or supported by) the manor, identification of workers with their employers, geographical means of identification, adoptions, and many other processes in the olden days would have led to the adoption of the name by unrelated people.

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Devonshire from 1066; LE MOIGNE, LE MOINES, MOIGNES, MONKS & MONK

The LE MOIGNE family came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066. Soon after Henry I gave them the Manor of Owers in Devonshire, where the last male heir died ca 1428.²

Later, in the time of Edward I, the name LE MOINES, contemporaneously recorded also as MONKS, appeared at Potheridge, near Torrington and continued there for 16 generations. This branch may have returned to Devonshire from the Gloucestershire branch, although the arms were entirely different. Sir John MOIGNES was rector of nearby Merton in 1372.

The brother of the last MONK of Potheridge³, Sir Thomas MONK, was the famous General MONK who brought about the Restoration and became Duke of Albemarle. He was Lord Mayor of London at the time of the great Fire and the Great Plague. Potheridge was in a ruinous state by 1770, but in 1822 the stables were still standing.⁴

It is recorded that branches of this family moved to Great Easton in Essex about 1160; to Weston in Huntingdonshire (now Cambridgeshire) about 1250; to Maddington in Wiltshire; and to Sibton-Moyne in Gloucestershire.⁵

Huntingdonshire (Cambridgeshire) from early 1100s; LE MOIGNE, LE MOINE, LE MOYGNE, LE MOYNE, MOYNE, MONACHUS, the MONK

In the early 1100s Hervey LE MOINE (also recorded as the MONK or MONACHUS) held land at Upwood and Bradenech and was given lands at Ravelly, Gidding, Sawtrey⁶, and Luddington. In 1245 Sir William LE MOYNE was Sheriff of Cambridge and Huntingdon. In 1276 he gave his son the manors at Ravelly, Rowey (in Piddley), Sawtrey, Giddington and Luddington. The name MOYNE disappeared from these lands in 1407.

In 1203 the manor of Little Paxton or MOYNES Manor was granted to LE MOYNE, and the name was still associated with it in 1303.

Essex from 1160; LE MOIGNE, DE MOINE, MOYNE, and MONK

This branch owned Moynes Park⁷ near Steeple Bumpstead in Essex. In the time of Edward II they also had estates at Ashen, Redeswell. In 1334 a branch [DE MOINE?] owned Wreningham.⁸

Wiltshire from 1413; LE MOIGNE

LE MOIGNE owned Maddington in Wiltshire. Their last male heir attended the Coronation of Henry V.⁹

² *The Battle Abbey Roll*. (The Roll of those who fought with William of Normandy, William I of England, in 1066); Hutchins, *Dorset*.

³ Also spelt Potteridge.

⁴ *The History of Devonshire, 1822*.

⁵ Hutchins, *Dorset*.

⁶ Also referred to as Sawtrey-Moigne.

⁷ Also known as Moynes Manor.

⁸ *Victoria County History of the County of Essex*

⁹ Hoare, *Wiltshire*.

Gloucestershire

There is no further information about the branch that was reported to have moved from Devonshire to Shipton Moyne in Gloucestershire. [The large numbers of MONKS-variant names in parts of Gloucestershire in modern times suggest that the family may have maintained a presence there throughout.]

Hertfordshire from late 1100s; MONACHUS, MONK, MONKE, LE MONCK, MONCK, MUNK

In the latter part of the 12th Century the manor of Little Amwell was given to Waltham Abbey by Gilbert MONK (also recorded as MONACHUS). In 1334 Thomas MONCK was a juror on inquisition at Linley, near Luton. In 1344 Richard LE MONCK was juror on inquisition at Hitchen re manor of Pirton. In 1393 William MUNK was juror at an inquisition at Hitchen in relation to a manor at Offley. In 1598 the Queen rented the Manor of Sawbridgeworth to Thomas MONKE. Elijah MONK was vicar of Great Wymondley from 1411 to 1420.

Oxfordshire from 1166; MONACHUS, LE MOINE, MONK.

The manors of Clifton Hampden, Burcot and South Stoke were held by MONACHUS (1166) and LE MOINE (1201-1350s). John MONK was vicar of Adderbury 1395 - 1397 and 1398 - 1414. He was also chaplain at Canterbury.

Norfolk from 1282; LE MOINE

In 1282 LE MOINE held Moines Manor in Norfolk. By 1334 the LE MOINE heiress of this land was wife of DE SUTTON of Wivenhoe in nearby Essex, where a branch of the DE MOINES owned Wreningham.

Hampshire from 1287; LE MOYNE & MONK

Henry II granted Litchfield Manor to Ralph LE MOYNE, Lord of Great Easton in County Essex and son of Robert. The name was associated with this land until after 1375. In 1287 Sopley Manor was acquired by Henry LE MOYNE and remained in the family until 1551 when it was sold. John LE MOYNE was governor of Portsmouth 1483, and Nicholas MONK was Prior of Winchester 1404 - 1426.

Lancashire from 1350; LE MOINE, DE MONKYS, DE MONIAIC, MONK, DEL MONKS

From about 1350 the name MONK, also recorded as DE MONKYS and LE MOINE, appeared at Blackburn in Lancashire, while DE MONIAIC appeared in nearby Accrington.¹⁰

In 1394 Henry DEL MONKS and Margaret his wife were granted land in the village of Barton. They may have built Monks Hall [in?] Eccles.

Northamptonshire; LE MOIGNE, MONK

The name LE MOIGNE, also recorded as MONK, appeared in Northamptonshire where they owned Castle Barnwell, near Oundle.

¹⁰ Baines, *Lancashire*.