

Origin of the Name Soutar

According to "The Surnames of Scotland" by George Black, New York, the name is from the occupation of shoemaker or cobbler (Middle English Soutere from Old Norse Sutare).

It has been claimed that the name came to the Perth and Angus areas when sons of Adam Johnston, Baron of Johnston in Annandale came to the area and assumed the name Soutar. An act of Parliament later allowed their descendants to resume their former name.

The following, from "The Acts of Parliament of Scotland" volume VII, page 467 gives some details:

Edinburgh 21st day of August 1663. (King Charles II:-) for changing the name of Soutar of late used by some of the name of Johnstoun.

The estates of Parliament having heard a supplication presented unto them be Mr David Johnstoun alias Souter Student in Divinity for himself and in the name and behalf of his remanant kinsmen of that name within the Sherreffdome of Pearth and Ffarfar Mentioning that the petitioners predecessor and his brother of the Surname of Johnstoun in the year 1460 (as they are informed) came from Annandale to Scone in Perthshire, upon some discontent, and ther attendit the owner of that place for a long time, and assumed to themselves the Surname of Souter that thereby they should not be noticed for the tyme;

One of the breither dyeing without issue, The other surviveing, for his good deportment, wes married to a Gentlewoman from which marriage procedit diverse honest men who are growin into considerable families whair of the petitioners are decendit And being desirous that they may be restored to their true and antient sirname of Johnstoun Therefor humbly craveing they may be empowered to alter their surname and that in all time coming they may be designed after the surname of Johnstoun As the supplication bears;

Which being taken into consideration The Kings Maiestie with the advice and consent of his estates of Parliament Doth heirby allow the supplicants to take the Surname of Johnstoun, and that they and their posterity be designed and called in all timecoming after the surname of Johnstoun Notwithstanding of their former designation be the name of Souter;

And declares that this change shall noways preindge them nor their airs and successors in any manner of way of the benefite of any writs or securitys wherin any of them are designed by the name of Souter.

This branch of the Soutars, now extinct, were burgesses and members of the Glovers Incorporation in Perth. There is a stone to the family in Greyfriars Graveyard, Perth.