

Mary McGregor

Daughter-in-law of Prince Brannart McGregor of Klantyre

AC 1014

Originally by Kit Navarro Updated by Michael Berry

"Why have the Immortals allowed me to suffer so?"

Appearance

Mary McGregor is as nondescript as nondescript can get. She is of average height, plain short brown hair, dull dark eyes (It is hard to tell if they are black or brown or even gray.), and pale ashen skin with freckles—or blemishes. Even her features are not particularly "McGregor" or particularly Kaelic or particularly of any easily identifiable Glantrian ethnicity.

Mary's kindly and self-effacing manner does not help her image at all. Once in the Tower of Crownguard, she was even mistaken for a maidservant. And yet, it is this same unassuming and humble demeanor that the soldiers of Fort Sablestone came to respect her for. When dressed in military attire and armor, Mary looks like an ordinary soldier. She does not dress up, even for official or social functions not that there have been many such activities in the frontiers of western Glantri.

Background

Mary McGregor was born in AC 968 into the warm, loving family of Sir William and Fiona McGregor in Glenmoorloch. Sir William was a scion of the ruling family of Klantyre, but had given up political ambitions to become a Kaelic warrior-poet and a father to his children: the battlemage Burnaby, the wise yet troubled Bruce, Mary, and the youngest Angan. Fiona had died at childbirth and Mary was tasked to care for the baby Angan, so Mary's guilt and grief were immeasurable when little Angan died of a fever at the age of 4.

Mary's life was never the same again, despite the constant routine of housekeeping and sword practice with her brothers. She had hoped for a change in her life, if only to forget the loss of her poor baby brother and a change did come, but not the way she expected it. One night in AC 988, mysterious villains came to Glenmoorloch to exterminate the McGregor clan living there. Bruce was the first to be struck down, but Sir William and Burnaby bravely protected their house and home to allow Mary and her injured brother to escape the magical onslaught. Mary sought shelter amongst her kin in the city, those who were not yet killed by the assassins, but none would risk taking her in. It was then that Mary thought to escape to Crownguard, where they would be safe amongst the McGregors who ruled Klantyre.

Thus, the orphaned Mary arrived at the gloomy Tower of Crownguard and helped nurse her brother Bruce back to health. In the shadow of the family tragedy, Mary was drawn to another wretched soul, her cousin Lord Quentin McGregor. They found solace in each other, and Mary's compassion grew into what she believed was love. In the next year, they were married. The birth of their first child Angus in AC

990 was a source of inestimable joy for both Quentin and Mary. While Quentin was a proud father of a magically prodigious son, Mary was only too happy to care for her baby boy as if caring for her son [Angus](#) would atone for the loss of her brother Angan.

In AC 992, Mary gave birth to a daughter Fiona, who unfortunately died after a few months. Mary was bereft, but she had her Angus to help recover from Fiona's death. In AC 994, Mary had a third child, Amabel. At six months, Amabel mysteriously died. And although Mary heard the evil whispering all around, she could not believe that her sweet Angus was anything more than her angelic hope and succor in her suffering. But in AC 995, after the birth of her son Wallace and Quentin's discovery of Angus' necromantic experiments with his baby siblings, Mary could no longer deny the horror of her fiendish child, nor the madness that had beset her husband. Mary was a helpless observer of the magical confrontation that ensued between her husband and her child, and later between Quentin and Prince Brannart McGregor. With that, Mary withdrew from all contact with the McGregors, save her son and her gentle brother Bruce.

Four years later in AC 999, Prince Brannart assigned Quentin to be the new Castellan of Fort Sablestone and Mary eagerly went with him. She also insisted upon taking Angus, hoping to free her son from the evil that pervaded Crownguard. Within the first weeks at Sablestone, Mary found a semblance of order and peace. Quentin seemed no longer haunted by the ghosts of McGregors long dead and even Angus seemed more meek and obedient if a bit slow and quiet than the child usually was. But this bliss was promptly ended, when Quentin's madness returned, in the form of disturbing nightmares of his evil father, and when Mary discovered that the sweet little cherub she had brought along from Crownguard was nothing but a zombie double that bore Angus' visage. In horror, Mary too nearly went mad, but she realized that if Fort Sablestone was not run properly, the Council of Princes would pass the responsibility to some other Prince, and she and Quentin would be forced back to Klantyre. With a brave face, Mary took charge of the duties of the Castellan. Her long-forgotten skills with the sword came to good use again, and she actually earned the respect and loyalty of the officers at Fort Sablestone. From the outpost, Mary also tried to know the fate of her son Angus and sent Quentin back to Crownguard found that even though Brannart forbid Angus leaving Crownguard for Sablestone, her brother Bruce was we;; and had again become the tutor of Angus in Crownguard, hopefully to lead the little one onto the path of right and good.

The enfeoffment of Sablestone in AC 1004 meant the end of Quentin's duty at the fort, and Prince Brannart ordered the couple to return to Crownguard. Quentin was too weak to resist his father's summons, but Mary never returned. The soldiers loyal to her helped her escape the nightmare of Crownguard. From the small towns of the Sablestone area, Mary worked to find rescuers for her husband and son, but few were willing to take up the task and none who helped ever returned alive. In 1005 war broke out between Glantri and Alphatia, and Mary found herself with the defenders of Glantri and Sablestone. Sometimes, she joined the local militia, while at other times, she worked covertly with the Followers of the Claymore of which her brother Bruce was a leader of. In AC 1007, following the major defeat of the Followers in Sablestone and the subsequent imprisonment of Bruce in Crownguard, Mary escaped discovery and capture but became severely sick with worry and fear, and fell into a catatonic shock for the better part of the year. When she emerged, Mary seemed to have newfound resolve to find rescuers for her Quentin, Angus, and now Bruce. And yet Mary began to suffer from bouts of mental instability. On several occasions, Mary would disappear for weeks at a time, and strangely reappear naked but unharmed in some alley in Estin or confused and in a strange woman's clothing in a brothel in Kern. At all those times, she would have no memory of where she had been, what she had been doing, or how she had gotten there.

Since the end of the Great War, three mysterious figures have emerged from the Sablestone area, recruiting brave heroes to travel to Klantyre and risk life and limb at the Tower of Crownguard. One is a Kaelic warrior-poet named Fiona McIntyre, recognizable by her bagpipe and claymore. Lady Fiona is searching for her brother who was once a member of the Followers of the Claymore. The second is a certain Lady Margaret Purple from Fenswick. This wealthy aristocrat (rumored to own several bank accounts in Glenmoorloch) offers one million ducats to those who can rescue her son and husband from their Kaelic kidnapers. A third lady is Lady Miriam Haaskinz, allegedly a cousin of Prince Harald Haaskinz of Sablestone, who wishes to hire spies and thieves for some secret reconnaissance mission against Prince Brannart McGregor. Rumors of Lady Miriam have reached the ears of the Prince of Sablestone, Harald Haaskinz, who has denied any involvement in this plot and even the existence of such a person in his family!

Personality & Quirks

Mary is a practical and responsible woman, when it comes to day-to-day tasks of caring for a household and child or a garrison of roughneck soldiers. Mary is also a sweet, gentle, if naïve soul, and she has remained so throughout her unspeakable ordeals with the McGregors.

But those years of horror and suffering have finally caused her to snap. She has developed multiple personalities, each with a distinct character and manner, but all with the same goal of freeing her loved ones from Crownguard. At least, three personae have emerged so far: the righteous and adventurous Fiona, the imperious yet petty Lady Margaret, and the seductive and manipulative Lady Miriam. Mary does not know of her split personalities and their activities, and each persona remains unaware as well. (So far, no one else has been able to figure out that each persona is actually the same person.)

Web of Intrigue

Mary's sole purpose in life at present is to find rescuers for her husband Quentin, her brother Bruce, and her son Angus. Unfortunately for her, her allies of the past have all but gone. The soldiers of Fort Sablestone were once loyal to her, but after the Great War and the recent Ethengarian invasion, those men-at-arms have mostly moved on to other posts or other worlds. Mary also had some contacts with the Followers of the Claymore, but with their recent loss of power in AC 1007, the Followers can do little to even attempt a rescue of Sir Bruce from Crownguard. Mary even had an affair with the past Mayor of Estin, Trillo d'Ascioti, thinking he would be able to help her; when she realized that Trillo was not as influential as she thought and that Trillo's interest in her was confined to the bedroom, she ended the affair.

It is strange that with all of Mary's powerlessness, her three other personae have been more successful than she has been. As Fiona McIntyre, she has been able to get word from Klantyre that Angus is definitely still alive, but nothing has been heard of Bruce and Quentin since AC 1011. With the recent popularity of Princess Dolores Hillsbury and the Fen people, the enigmatic Lady Margaret Purple has become a most wanted guest among the nobles of western Glantri.

And finally, as the enchanting Miriam Haaskinz, she has been able to send spies to the Tower of Crownguard itself, and returned with reports that Bruce was imprisoned in AC 1007 (either at the Tower of Sighs or in Crownguard itself), and that Quentin may or may not have been killed by either Prince

Brannart. Prince Harald Haaskinz of Sablestone has heard of this impostor who is posing as his relative but has not actually made a definite move to find out who she is.

Combat & Skills

Statistics:

12th-level fighter; Str 12, Int 11, Wis 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Cha 9; AL - Neutral

Languages: Kaelic, Thyatian Common

Weapon Proficiencies: Bastard Sword (skilled), Short Sword (skilled), Dagger (basic), Wrestling (skilled)

Skills: Cooking (11), Glantrian Etiquette (11), Music - Bagpipes (9), Military Tactics (11), Horse Riding (16), Domestic Administration (11)

Back in Glenmoorloch, Sir William made sure all his children learned two skills: how to use the sword and how to play the bagpipes.

Mary began swordfight alongside her brother Burnaby and Bruce, and has always been naturally adept at it. However, it was not until she was alongside the soldiers of Fort Sablestone, with their routine drills and frequent clashes in the Glantrian frontier, that her skills truly developed. Over the years, Mary's fighting technique evolved from traditional Kaelic to a more hodge-podge style, owing to the mix of soldiers stationed at Sablestone. Even after the disbanding of the fort—or rather, because of it—Mary has had many opportunities to wield her sword, if only to defend herself and survive in the Sablestone wilderness.

Although Mary is not aware of it, she has recently been applying her ability with the bagpipe as the warrior-poet Fiona McIntyre. Actually, she is not that good—but the Glantrians of Sablestone have no point of comparison.

As Margaret Purple, Mary pretends to be an arcaner. She accomplishes this successfully with a ring of spell storing (Phantasmal Force x2, Mirror Image x2, Fly x2) Quentin once made for her, and with a lot of pompous gestures. She is quite convincing at this bluff, and manages to convince herself (Then again, she is quite delusional to begin with.)

In her Miriam Haaskinz persona, Mary uses no special skills, save her seduction and natural allure—something the real Mary hardly ever uses.

"What a pathetic story of a sorry woman! One would think that after all this time, she would have already accomplished her life's mission already. That is, if she really loves these people she claims to care about!"

(Lady Margaret Purple, when asked if she had heard of the similar plight of Mary McGregor)