

1467 MS: The Camerons (2)

I began my previous article by pointing out that the Cameron genealogy in the 1467 MS lies at the bottom of column c and the top of column d, i.e. 1rc50–56 and 1rd0–7. I went on to show that the portion from 1rc50 to 1rd1 consists of the pedigrees of two of the four principal elements that made up the confederation, i.e. the Cameron leadership and the MacGillonies: “*genelach cloinni mhaeil anfaigh .i. eoghan mac domnaill dhuib mhic Ailin Maelanfhaid mac foil mhic gillapadraig mhic gilla mhartain mhic pfoil mhic mhailanfaid mhic gill[anf]oid a quo clann ghille (ghilla?) c[h]amsronich 7 clann m o bfuilid genelaigh binme i tighib ut . . .*” = “The genealogy of the Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh i.e. Eoghan son of Domhnall Dubh son of Allan. Maol Anfaigh son of Paul son of Gille Pádraig son of Gille Mhártainn son of Paul son of Maol Anfaigh son of Gille Anfaigh from whom are the Clan Cameron and the Clann M[haoil Anfaigh], from whom are generations rich in houses, as . . .”

It falls to us this time to consider the two ‘houses’ which the author cites as examples. These begin at 1rd2, of course, but because of the configuration of the manuscript, it will be appropriate to take a short step backward to the top of column d. As always I will start by reviewing the historiography of the text, rearranging the nineteenth-century versions to make them correspond to the lines of the original.

(1) Skene, *Collectanea* (1839):

0 mc Neill
1 *Clann Gillacolum .i.*
2
3
4 Gillamartan
5 ic Gillapoil
6 mc Gart . . . ic Eogan ic Panilac
7 moir ic Ereloch.

0 son of Niell
1 THE CLAN MALCOLM,
2
3
4 Martin
5 son of Paul
6 son of Gart . . . son of Ewen son of Panilac
7 the great son of Ereloch.¹

(2) Skene, *Collectanea* (1847):

0 pro McNeill lege Mc Gillroid a quo clann Gillcamsroin agus Clann Maelanfaig
1 o fuiled. Clann i.
2 Clann Maelanfaig sroin ic Gilla
3 anfaigh ic Gillamardun og ic Gilla
4 ic Gillamartan moir ic Gilla camsroin.

5 Eogan ic Gillapoil mc Eacada
6 mc Gartnaid ic Digail ic Paulilac
7 mc Art ic Angus moir ic Erc ic Telt.

0 Son of Gillroid, from whom descended the Clan Cameron and Clan Millonoy
1 The Clan or
2 children of Millonoy of Stron, son of Gill
3 ony, son of Martan og, son of
4 son of Martan mor, son of Gilla Cameron.
5 Ewen son of Paul, son of Eacada,
6 son of Gartnaid, son of Digail, son of Paulilac,
7 son of Arthur, son of Angus mor, son of Erc son Telt.²

(3) Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, with Skene's footnotes:

0 mic Gillroid a quo Gillacamsroin agus clann Maelanfaigh
1 * . . .
2
3 mic Gillamartain og mic Gillaganiorgan (?)
4 mic Gillamartan moir mic Gill
5 eogain mic mic Gillapaill mic Eacada
6 mic Gartnaid mic Digail mic Pouilacin
7 mic Airt mic Aengusa moir mic Erc mic Telt

* There is a sentence here so defaced as to be hardly legible. The words 'Clann . . . Maelanfaig agus rac an sreoin ic Gillanfaigh' may be made out, and imply that the MacGillonies of Strone were his descendants.

0 son of Gilleroth,** from whom descended the Clan Cameron
1
2
3 son of Gillamartan og son of Gillaniorgan
4 son of Gillamartan mor son of Gille
5 ewen son of Gillapaul son of Eacada
6 son of Gartnaid son of Digail son of Pouilacin
7 son of Art son of Angus mor son of Erc son of Telt.

** This is the Gilleroth mentioned by Fordun in 1222 as a follower of Gillespic Macohecan in his insurrection, along with whom he witnesses a charter as Gilleroth son of Gillemartan.³

(4) Máire and Ronald Black, www.1467manuscript.co.uk (2009), with our footnotes (unclear or illegible text shown in the website in red, here in italic):

0 *mhic gillanfoid* a quo clann gillacamsronic 7 clann m
1 . . . clann bininci* .i. *genilach*
2 *cloinni* maelanfaig ethrac ann so eoin mac gilla
3 anfad mhic gilla martain oig mhic *gilgain* mhic** *martain*

4 clann *** gillacam mhic gillamartainn morsin mhic *gilcha*
 5 sroin eogain mhic gilla failh mhic eacain[?]
 6 mhic gartnaid mhic conigail mhic foailaoin
 7 mhic airt mhic aengus mhoir mhic eirc mhic *telt*

* There seems to be an ‘x’ here, possibly a caret for the top margin where there is illegible matter.

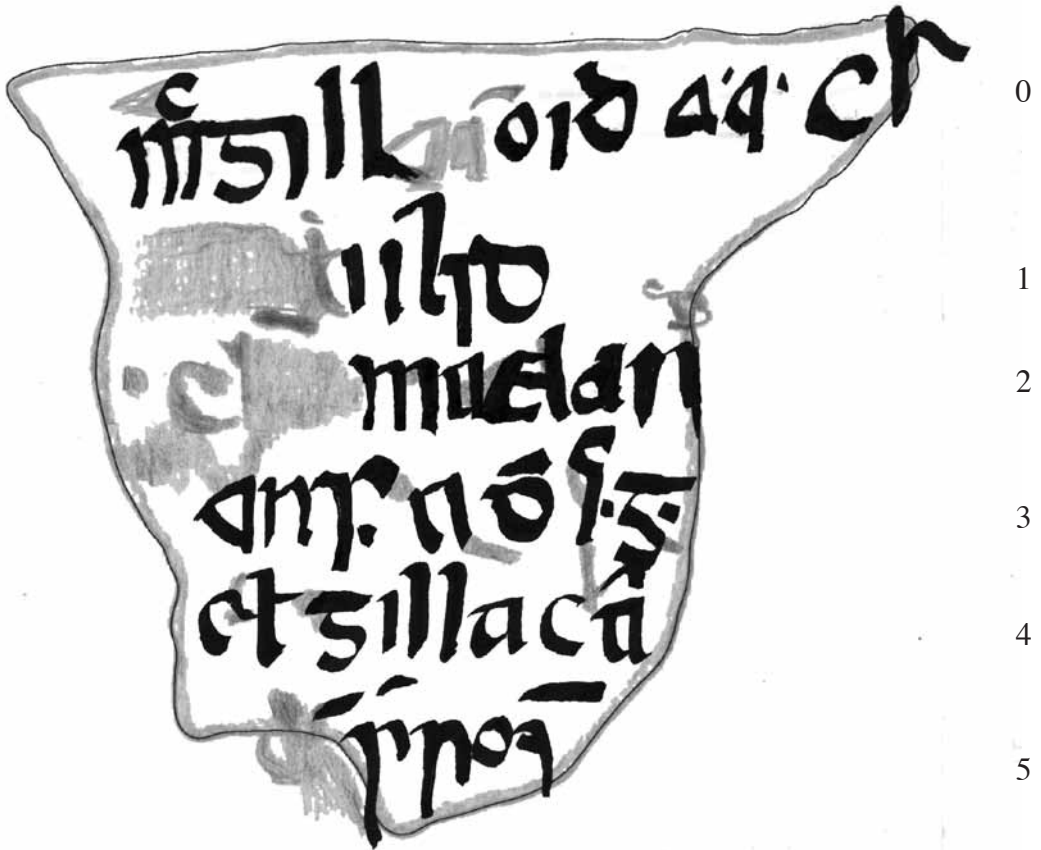
** It is uncertain whether the superscript character is the ‘c’ of ‘mhic’ or an ‘a’, or even ‘cl[ann]’.

*** There is a vertical line here separating this from the rest. It may be a sort of heading.

0 son of Gille Anfaigh from whom are the Clan Cameron and the Clan *Maol Anfaigh*[?]
 1 the Clan [*Banquo*] i.e. the genealogy
 2 of the Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh of Erracht here: John son of Gille
 3 Anfaigh son of young Gille Mártainn son of Gilgan (Cuilcean?) son of ...?... (or ‘i.e.
 the Clann ...?...’)
 4 Clan Cam son of that elder Gille Mártainn son of Gille Cha[mshroin].
 5 eron Eoghan son of Gille Phóil son of Hector(?)
 6 son of Gartnaid son of Connal(?) son of Faolán
 7 son of Art son of big (great) Angus son of Earc(?) son of Telt(?)

It will be noticed that Skene originally thought that a new pedigree began at line 1, that of the Malcolms (of Poltalloch, presumably). He was quick to retreat from that position, but left us instead a legacy of strange names, not least the one in line 6 that has evolved from *Panilac* to *Pauilac*, *Pouilacin* and *Faolán*. There is something slightly ideological about the interpretation of names. Those scholars of the past who saw the Picts as a mysterious people with an unknowable language were perfectly happy to find texts sprinkled with unique names. Those of us who understand the Gael of Scotland to be descended from the Gael of Ireland, and the Picts of the northern two-thirds of Scotland to be first cousins of the Britons of the southern third, who were in turn first cousins of the Welsh (all speaking basically the same language), do not like surprises. We expect to find established Gaelic names, including a few that the Gael got from the Picts. The best collection of medieval Gaelic names is O’Brien’s *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*. It cites the manuscript texts from which the names have come and indexes each occurrence separately, thus providing a splendid statistical basis upon which to assess the likelihood that a form in the 1467 MS may be identified with a particular form in the *Corpus*. For example, with respect to the last name in the genealogy, which looks like *Telt*, *Tenit*, *Celt* or *Cenit*, the *Corpus* offers one example of *Cennait* or *Cingit*, one of *Téiti*, one of *Tene* and one of *Tenni*, of which *Cennait/Cingit* and *Téiti* can be dismissed because they are women’s names; on the other hand it offers three occurrences of *Celtchair* and fifty-eight, no less, of *Cináed*. If we then turn to *Irish Names* by Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Fidelma Maguire (a useful guide by a leading medievalist and his wife), they confirm that *Cináed* was statistically the most frequently used of these names, at least in the sense that they do not mention any of the others; they also point out that *Cináed* was borne by the first king of Scotland and ‘may well be Pictish in origin’. This is a good illustration of the ideology, sources and deductive processes employed in the present exercise.

Lines 1rd0–7 include a curious feature. The scribe, Dubhghall Albannach mac mhic Cathail, has enclosed the left-hand portion of 1rd0–5 in a box shaped coincidentally like a map of Spain, thus:




The purpose of the box has already been identified at line 4 of our website, where it is however described merely as ‘a vertical line’. Further inspection has shown that it is more than that. At the top right (Catalonia, as it were) it explains the ‘diagonal beneath the *c* of *clann*’ referred to in ‘The Camerons (1)’. The diagonal passes through the big gap in line 1 also shown in that article, leaving the impression that the words “genelaigh binme i tighib ut” = “generations rich in houses, as” are in fact an afterthought, Dubhghall Albannach’s personal contribution to the text, written after the line was drawn. (Medieval scribes were trained to avoid ‘ragged right’.) Even without them, the original of lines 1–2 would, I think, have been perfectly logical: “o bfuilid clann maelanfaig . . .” = “from whom are the Clann Maol Anfaigh . . .”

Presenting the text as above brings a particular benefit. In these articles I have generally been showing one line at a time, but occasionally the reading of a line may be affected by what happens to lie above or below it. There is a good case of this between lines 1 and 2 (at Valladolid in the map of Spain, so to speak), where a horizontal stroke looms out of the fog. This might be thought to be part of a double superstroke for *ann* of *clann* (line 2), but I am pretty sure that it is in fact the cross-stroke of *f* in *bfuilid* (line 1). Lines 0 and 4 demonstrate (at Barcelona and Seville!) that Dubhghall Albannach does not use superstrokes for *clann*, but merely a suspension-mark. More importantly perhaps, the ‘map’ helps us understand why in 1847 Skene read ‘gillroid’ and interpreted it as ‘gilleroth’. The *l* of *bfuilid* lies directly underneath the *a* of *gilla*, making the latter look like the *ar*-compendium,




for which see lines 4 and 6 below. There is another instance of ‘vertical collision’ at line 5 (see my notes on that line).

Now for my line-by-line examination of 1rd2–7. In each case I will provide a sketch of what lies to the right of the box, then transcribe and assess it along with what lies within the box. Italics are used for obscure passages and the expansion of the less obvious contractions.

2 

“**clann maelan/faig etrac ann so eoin mac gilla**” The beginning of the line is not quite lost in obscurity. It is possible to make out *cl*, which can only be for *clann*, just as two lines above and two lines below. It appears to be preceded by a large dot. There is a curious mark above the *n* of *maelanfaig*; I do not know what it is, but it may be worth pointing out that there is a ‘helping’ vowel at this point in the pronunciation of the name: MULL ANAHÉ. It looks as if Dubhghall Albannach first wrote *faag*, then ‘corrected’ this to *faig* by filling in the second *a*.

The following word is the crux. It may be described as consisting of one or two dots, the *et* compendium, the letters *rac* and another dot. In *Celtic Scotland* Skene read *agus rac* (see his footnote). In our website Máire and I read *ethrac*. Study of the photographs in the website shows that in black and white it looks like *irac*, while in colour it looks like *etrac* with a separate mark of lenition above *et*, giving *ethrac*. In the new spectrally imaged photographs it is clearly *etrac* with no mark above *et*, though it would be possible, I suppose, to see what looks like a serif as a mark of lenition. The ‘safe’ transcription is therefore *etrac*; but in any case Dubhghall Albannach is highly neglectful about showing marks of lenition. They generally have to be assumed.

The ‘*et*-compendium’ is derived from Latin *et* ‘and’. In Gaelic palaeography it serves two functions: *agus* ‘and’ and the letters *et* or similar, e.g. *eat*, *eit*, *ed*, *ead*, *eid*. Analysis of the 1467 MS genealogies shows that it appears forty-six times in the meaning *agus* and three times as the letters *et*:  *bethadh* (1rb24, Macbeth king of Scots);  *bethad* (1rc27, Green Abbot);  *bethad* (1re8, MacLerans).⁴ As *rac* can be found defined in MacAlpine’s dictionary (first published 1832) as ‘in Ireland, a king’, I think Skene took *agus rac an sreoin ic Gillanfaigh* to mean, literally, ‘and a king in MacGillony’s Strone’, Strone being the *caput* of the MacGillonies. I can find no good evidence that there was ever a word *rac* in such a meaning in Ireland or Scotland, however, and in any case my understanding of the entire passage differs from Skene’s.⁵ Having re-examined the matter thoroughly, I stand by the interpretation of the phrase as ‘the Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh of Erracht’.

Erracht is an interesting name. It means an assembly, a court of justice, therefore a gathering-place: in Irish *oireacht*, earlier *airecht*, Scottish Gaelic *eireachd*.⁶ The Welsh traveller Pennant wrote in 1772 of Cnoc an Eireachd at Duntulm in Skye that ‘such eminences are frequent near the houses of all the great men, for on these, by the assistance of their friends, they determined all differences between their people: the place was held sacred. . .’⁷ Pennant spelt it ‘Eirick’; our spelling *etrac*, i.e. *ethrac*, is entirely explicable in terms of Scottish Gaelic phonology. *Th* is silent, so one wonders why Dubhghall did not simply write *erac* with an *e*: he must have thought *th* was historically correct, as in *ceithre* ‘four’, *eithre* ‘a fin’, *leithre* ‘a thong’, etc.

Similarly, the ending *-ac* clearly results from the well-known process in Scottish Gaelic whereby *-acht* takes on the same ACHK sound as in *mac*, and comes to be spelt, rather illogically, *-achd*, as in *Gaidhealtachd*. In the same way, the Skyeman Angus Beaton wrote *tacann* for *tachtann* ‘suffocates’ in 1611–14; our example is a good deal earlier, perhaps the earliest on record.⁸

Erracht in Lochaber is at the foot of Glen Loy, five miles north of Fort William, about halfway between the foot of Loch Eil and the foot of Loch Arkaig. In the fifteenth century the seat of the Cameron family was still on an islet called Eilean na Craoibhe at the foot of Loch Eil. The captains of Clan Cameron then moved to Torcastle *c.* 1527 and to Achnacarry *c.* 1650.⁹ Torcastle is on the west bank of the Lochy, three miles south of Erracht; Achnacarry is further north, near the foot of Loch Arkaig.

Glen Loy was the ancestral home of the MacGillonies of Strone.¹⁰ Strone is just outside the glen, less than a mile south of Erracht, and I think this is what Alexander Mackenzie meant when he remarked that the residence of the Erracht family was ‘within a short distance of the castle of the chief, situated on an elevated plateau at the entrance to Glenlui, and seen from the Caledonian Canal between Gairloch and Banavie’.¹¹ Whether there is any evidence of a castle at Strone I do not know. Or perhaps Mackenzie was referring to Torcastle.

Historians of the Clan Cameron have made it abundantly clear that the progenitor of the Camerons of Erracht was Ewen, elder son of Ewen of Lochiel (*c.* 1530–80) by his wife Marjory Macintosh, and that the family were therefore known as *Sliochd Eoghain ’ic Eoghain*.¹² This then was during the time when, as I have shown, the captains of Clan Cameron had moved to Torcastle, a demonstration of their increasing power and confidence. By ‘the Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh of Erracht’ the author of the 1467 MS is clearly referring to an earlier family, one sprung from the MacGillonies of Strone, whose pedigree is presumably the one already given, ‘Maol Anfaigh son of Paul son of Gille Pádraig son of Gille Mhártainn son of Paul son of Maol Anfaigh son of Gille Anfaigh from whom are the Clan Cameron and the Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh’.

As I have said, Skene read *agus rac an sreoin ic Gillanfaigh* and appears to have interpreted the last four words as ‘in MacGillony’s Strone’. A superscript vowel is supposed to indicate *r* followed by that vowel – which would give *sroecoin*, not *sreoin*. The only way I can make sense of it is to assume that the *o* was missed out accidentally and placed above the line as an afterthought. What follows is clearly *eoin*, the name John, although it looks as if the scribe wrote *in* too soon, erased it as best he could, and wrote it again further to the right (this sort of thing happens again in lines 3 and 7). The *mac/mhic/ic* compendium that follows was rendered *ic* by Skene in the belief that it should be in the genitive case; I make it nominative *mac*, as is demanded by my own understanding of the syntax. Finally, the *g* of *gilla* looks as if it began life as *e* but was promptly corrected.

Translation: “The Clann Mhaoil Anfaigh of Erracht here: John son of Gille”

3 

“anfadh mhic gilla / martain oig mhic gelgan i. an condainnec” The part of this line that is in the ‘box’ is entirely straightforward. Outside the box, the fourth letter looks at first sight like *d*, but on further examination could well be *t*. Skene read *d*

in 1847 and *t* in 1880; Máire and I read *t* in 2009. It does not matter, as *g. mardain* would merely be an eccentric spelling of *g. martain* anyhow. The *i* of *oig* is in the same position as Dubhghall's first attempt at writing the *i* of *eoin* in line 2; see also line 7.

The name that follows *mhic* is of great interest. It looks like *gelgan*, though it has to be said that the initial *g* resembles a subscript *t* with a suspension stroke, which might give *tonelgan* or the like, were it not for the fact that there is no such name. *Gelgan* (which we could modernise a little as *Gealgán*) is a satisfactory reading, for several reasons. The *Corpus* offers *Célicán*, *Céilechán*, *Gillugán*, *Gillacán*, *Gillicán*, *Giallucán*, *Gillucán*, *Gillgán*, all seemingly variants of the same name. Intriguingly, they include an individual known as *Gillacán Sacsanach*, though that is by the by.¹³ The relative popularity of the name is backed up by its inclusion in Ó Corráin and Maguire's little book as *Gillucán* or *Gillagán* ('little lad'). They say: "This name occurs occasionally in the early period. From it derives the modern surname Mac Giollagáin (Mac Gilligan, Magilligan, Gillan)."¹⁴

We can replicate this for Scotland. George F. Black discusses the surname of the celebrated Covenanting minister of Fodderty, the Rev. John McKillican (d. 1689). "This name, not now common," he says, "is confined mainly to Ross and Moray." His early examples are all from Inverness or Ardersier, and he also throws in a late one from Aberdeenshire. He cites a vast array of spellings: Mackillican, Mackilligan, Mackilligin, Mackillicane, Macgilligan, McKelegan, McKelecan, McGilligaaie, McGilligain, McGillican, McKillican, McCulican, McCulicam, McCulikam, McCuligan, McCuligin, McCulikan, McCuliken, McGulican, McKelican, McKilican, McKilikin, McKillicane, McKulikan, Makulikin, McGiligan, McClagine, McKillican, McKilligin, McCulligane, McKillichane, McKilligane, MacKilligin. He clearly goes wrong, however, in deriving it from *Mac Gill' Fhaolagain* 'son of the servant of (S.) Faolagan'.¹⁵

In fact, if I am not mistaken, we find the name at the very heart of the violent story of how the Cameron confederation was put together. Various sources tell how, around the time our manuscript is being written, Allan son of Domhnall Dubh of Lochiel – *Ailean nan Creach* – pays what appears to be a social visit to the leader of a minor tribe, Domhnall Mór 'MacMhuilcein' (MacWilkane, McQuilken), who lives in a *taigh-dige* or moated house by the side of Loch Oich, and whose name almost certainly represents *MacGiollagáin*, MacKillican. Allan and Domhnall Mór enjoy an excellent meal together, after which Allan gets ready to leave, putting on his plaid and broadsword as is usual, and Domhnall Mór sees him to the door. Suddenly Allan draws back and asks Domhnall Mór from behind, *Dé 'n uair a tha e?* "What time is it?"

It is of course before the era of clocks. Domhnall Mór puts up his right hand to shade his eyes as he tells the time from the sun, upon which Allan severs his head with a single blow of his sword. So the storyteller says of Domhnall Mór, *Mun robh am facal air bàrr a theangaidh, bha a cheann air bàrr a bhròige*. "Before the word was on the tip of his tongue, his head was on the tip of his shoe."

Allan now goes to see MacMartin of Letterfinlay by Loch Lochy. "If you do not take my name and follow my banner, *nì mi cleas MhicMhuilcein ort* – I'll do to you what I did to MacMhuilcein."

Interestingly, we are told, when the Caledonian Canal was being repaired and Loch Oich deepened in 1846, workmen found the remains of a wooden house at the spot where tradition had it that Domhnall Mór lived. “There were large beams of black oak laid horizontally. In one end of each of these was a deep mortice in which an upright beam was fitted by a tenon.”¹⁶

The Lochaber MacQuilkens should not be confused with the Argyllshire tribe of that name, apparently in Gaelic *MacCuilcein*, Irish *Mac Uilcín*, who are to be found historically in Knapdale, Kintyre and Islay.¹⁷ By 1613 at least, the MacKillicans or MacGilligans who were so plentiful in Ardersier were followers of Macintosh of Borlum, and the Macintoshes’ early connection with Lochaber is well documented. It is possible that Allan’s aggression towards Domhnall Mór should be seen in the light of the centuries-long feud between the Camerons as vassals and the Macintoshes as feudal overlords. However, what follows *gelgan* in our manuscript points in a slightly different direction. First we have *i*, which could give us *gelgain*, the correct genitive case of *gelgan*, but as it is followed by a dot it seems more likely to represent the common contraction *id* (*id est*, ‘i.e.’). We then have superscript *a*, followed by *n*, then backward *c* (the contraction for *con*), then a grapheme consisting either of *d* with two suspension-strokes or *g* with one suspension-stroke; finally there are some obscure marks resembling *es*. As in line 2, I believe the superscript vowel is just that and does not represent *ra*, especially as it is not placed above a letter at all. Again it is an afterthought, a very likely and common occurrence when unstressed, as in *an*, ‘*n* the’. The grapheme is difficult: *g* with a suspension-stroke could give us something like *congnamh* ‘help’ or *congantach* ‘helpful’, and it is possible to see what follows as *t*, in which case we could perhaps read *an congant[ach]* ‘the auxiliary’. But the letter in the grapheme looks more like *d* than *g*, and this offers a more satisfying reading in any case: *an condainnec*, in which the penultimate letter is what it looks like, *e*, and the last letter is what it could easily be, the upper two-thirds of *c*.

A *Condainneach* will be a native of Contin or a person fostered there. Contin is a huge parish in central Ross-shire, neighbouring Fodderty which has already been mentioned. In modern Gaelic it is *Cunndainn*. It is explained by Watson as representing some such word as *condationn-* ‘confluence’ (of the Conon and Blackwater). The name also occurs in Badenoch (*Coille Chunndainn* ‘Killiehuntly’), Brae Lochaber (*Both Chunndainn*, Bohuntin) and Ireland (*Contuinn* on the borders of Meath and Cavan), but I think it highly likely that the Ross-shire parish is the place being referred to.¹⁸ It should be remembered that in the period of our manuscript the earldom of Ross was firmly in the grasp of the regional magnate to whom the Camerons and Macintoshes both gave allegiance, the Lord of the Isles, and that the MacKenzies of Kintail had yet to begin their eastward march across the county.

Translation: “Anfaigh son of the younger Gille Mártainn son of Gealgán i.e. the man from Contin”

4 

“*clann gilla cam / mhic gillamartainn moirsi mhic gilcha*” Taken together, those parts of lines 4 and 5 which lie within the ‘box’ give us *clann gilla camshroin* – ‘the kindred of Gille Camshroin’ or simply ‘the Clan Cameron’. It appears to be a heading, and it is the *raison d’être* of the box.

What follows outside the box is pretty clear, at least until we reach the end of the line. The sense runs on from line 3. Admittedly the *ar*-compendium in *gillamartainn* is not as well formed as in line 6, and there is a dreadful muddle at the end of *moir*, but the reading is not in doubt: *óg* and *mór* are the words invariably used for ‘younger’ and ‘elder’, and we have already met *gillamartainn og* in line 3. As far as it can be made out at all, the *r* of *moir* appears to be a capital letter of the type we have already met in the MacLeran and MacLean pedigrees.¹⁹ The enclitic *-si* is for ‘this’ (following a palatal consonant, as here), cf. Old Irish *ind lipuir si*, Scottish Gaelic *an leabhair sa*, ‘of this book’. We met a similar usage in the MacEwen pedigree, ‘son of Duncan of this son of Baron Donnsléibhe’.²⁰ But why the scribe chooses to say ‘this’ elder Gille Mártainn I am not sure. Perhaps it is to distinguish him clearly from Gille Mártainn son of Paul in the first MacGillony pedigree, quoted at the beginning of this article.

The line ends *mhic gilcha*. The reading is clear enough, and it is quite common for *a* to be written subscript in this way, especially where the scribe has run out of space, as here. What he intends us to do, it seems, is to read on to that part of line 5 which lies within the ‘box’ – *shroin*. The *s* there is preceded by a superscript mark which the scribe must have intended as a tilde. The result: *mhic gilchamshroin*. In other words, *shroin* at the bottom of the box serves to complete not only the rubric *clann gilla camshroin* but also the pedigree itself. This is in line with the monkish sense of humour that is so frequently displayed in the margins of medieval manuscripts.

Translation (including line 5 of the ‘box’): “**The Clan Cameron. / son of this elder Gille Mártainn son of Gille Camshroin.**”

5

“**shroin / eogain mac gilla páill mhic eacadha**” We may ignore *shroin* as it has been dealt with above. A new pedigree appears to begin at *eogain*. It looks like the vocative or genitive case, which would surprise anyone but a native speaker of modern Scottish Gaelic, in which the inflected form *Eoghain* regularly displaces the nominative. A roughly comparable case occurs at 1vbc31 in the MacDougall pedigree, which begins *aillein mac eoin*. It appears from this that some ‘modern’ trends began very early indeed.

The reading *gilla* is not in doubt. The reason why the first *l* is short and surmounted by a cross-stroke is that it is directly below the *ar*-compendium in line 4. The purpose of the cross-stroke is to break the continuous vertical line that appears to run from the top of *ar* to the bottom of *l*. There are faint traces of a lengthmark over the *a* of *páill*; whether the first letter of the name is *p* or *f* is very doubtful, but it scarcely matters in any case. The *mhic*-compendium that follows is a mess, but that *mhic* is the correct reading was not doubted by Skene, and is not doubted by me. Finally, thanks to spectral imaging, I am pleased for once to prefer Skene’s reading (*Eacada*) over that of the website (*eacain*), except that there is clearly a mark of lenition over the *d*. *Eachadha* or *Eochadha* is genitive of *Eochaidh*, which fills three pages of the index to the *Corpus*, and is described by Ó Corráin and Maguire as (together with *Eochu*) ‘the second most popular name in early Irish society’, the most popular being the one spelt *Áed* or *Aodh*.²¹

Translation (excluding line 5 of the ‘box’): “Eoghan son of Gille Páill son of Eochaidh”

6 

“mhic gartnaidh mhic dighail (conighail? conghail?) mhic foailacha” Each of these three names requires separate consideration. The first is the only occurrence of the Pictish name *Gartnait* in our manuscript, albeit with very clear lenition of the final consonant. This lenition seems to occur in all of its late reflexes – Pitgartney in the Black Isle, Gairnieston in Aberdeenshire, Pittengardner in Kincardineshire, and the personal name Gratney, borne by at least one of the medieval earls of Mar.²² Glen Artney, Strath Gartney and the surname McCartney, to all of which a different origin is attributed, deserve to be reconsidered in this context.

The second name is uncertain. The first grapheme could either be *d* or another occurrence of the compendium *con* which we met in line 3. It has to be said that it appears to have the downward-pointing initial stroke characteristic of the latter. If it is *d* the reading will be *dighail*, assuming that the second letter is a misshapen *i* and that the third is a lenited *g* (despite the fact that the mark of lenition is above the *i*). This is *Dícuill*, which enjoys seventeen citations in the *Corpus*, while Ó Corráin and Maguire point out that although relatively common in the early period it falls into disuse in the later middle ages. Dícuill the Geographer, an Irish scholar at the Carolingian court in the early ninth century, wrote works on astronomy, geography and metrics. The pet-forms *Díchú* and *Mo-Díchú* are suggestive of the decomposition which seems to be evident in *dighail*. Alternatively, if the first grapheme is *con* the reading will be *conighail* (taking the second letter as *i*) or *conghail* (taking the second letter as *g*, which allows the mark of lenition to be in its proper place). Indeed, writing the name *conghail* is quite a good way to show the presence of the ‘helping vowel’ following *n*. In either case the name is *Conghal*, which enjoys forty-three citations in the *Corpus* (as *Congal*) and is described by Ó Corráin and Maguire as ‘one of the more common early Irish names’.²³ Taking all these facts together, *Conghal* appears to be a more likely solution than *Dícuill*.

The third name is the one variously transcribed by Skene as *Panilac*, *Paulilac* and *Pouilacin*, and by Máire and myself as *foilaoín*. What I now see, thanks mainly to spectral imaging, is *foailacha*, with the minor qualification that the mark of lenition is placed above the last letter. It could therefore still be read as a suspension-stroke, giving *faoilacan*, were it not for the fact that, judging by my usual sources, no such name has ever existed. We are therefore thrown back on *foailacha*, which I take to be genitive of *Fáelchad*. There are ten citations of *Fáelchad* in the *Corpus*, and in all cases its genitive is *Fáelchada*.²⁴

Translation: “son of Gartnait son of Conghal son of Fáelchad”

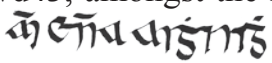
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

“mhic airt mhic aenguis móir mhic eifdh (ene? enna?) mhic cenit (cenlt? tenit? tentl?)” Once again each of these names deserves separate consideration, for different reasons. The problem with the first, *airt*, genitive of the common name *Art*, is the minim between *t* and the *mhic* compendium. I think it can easily be explained,

however: Dubhghall begins *mhic* too soon, changes his mind and begins it again further to the right, just as happened with *eoin* in line 2 and *oig* in line 3.

There are no serious palaeographic problems with *aenguis móir*. Once again we notice a superscript mark falling too far to the right (it should be over *e*, not *g*); the *-us/-uis* compendium, which resembles a lowered '3', is standard; there appears to be a faint lengthmark over *i* (it should be over *o*). The main issue is why Angus is described as *mór*: was he a big man, a great man, or merely the elder of two Anguses, the younger of whom died without succeeding to the chiefship? Probably all these possibilities should be reflected in our translation.

The third name was transcribed confidently as *Erc* by Skene but doubtfully as *eirc* in the website. As my sketch shows, the two most viable readings are *eifdh* or *ene*. The former makes use of all the letters and marks except the blur above *e*, but is meaningless. The latter assumes that the last letter is a misshapen vowel (*e* or possibly *a*) and ignores the dot, but leads us towards a possible solution, especially if the blur is allowed to conceal a suspension-mark: *enne*, *enna*, the name currently borne in Ireland by the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny.

Under the spellings *Énnae*, *Énna* and *Éanna*, the name Enda enjoys fifty-five citations in the *Corpus*, and is described by Ó Corráin and Maguire as 'a popular secular name borne by a number of ancient heroes'.²⁵ It appears for certain just once in the 1467 MS, at 1vd43, amongst the mythological heroes in the depths of the MacDonald pedigree:  *mhic enna aighnigh* 'son of Éanna Aighneach'.

There remains however the possibility that *eifdh*, if we may call it that, represents a falsification of *erc*. I have repeatedly drawn attention in these articles to the presence in our manuscript of 'interference', 'interpolation', 'mutilation', 'alteration' or 'erasure'.²⁶ The reason why *erc* would be a sensitive and important reading is that an *Erc* is present in the Macintosh pedigree: 1rc22 . In fact, if we shorten the second minim in  and remove some of the mess on the right,  is exactly what we get. There are eight certain occurrences of *Erc* in the 1467 MS, all in genitive contexts, written  six times and  twice. Spelt *Ercc*, *Erc* or *Earc*, genitive *Eirce*, *Erca*, there are forty-five citations of the name in the *Corpus*, and it is described by Ó Corráin and Maguire as 'a fairly common name in early pedigrees'.²⁷ Fergus mac Erc was of course the reputed founder of the Dalriadic colony in Scotland c. AD 500.

We may now move on to the last name in the pedigree. Here the oddities are simple and obvious. We have an initial letter which could equally be *c* or *t*, followed by *e*, followed by *l* with suspension-stroke, followed by *t* with a stain underneath it. The suspension-stroke cannot be explained in the same way as the cross-stroke in line 5 as there is nothing above it. From 1847 onwards Skene made it *Telt*, and in our website Máire and I were willing to agree with him, albeit with a question-mark. There is no such name as *Telt*. It is certainly possible to construct a theory around these letters, however, and this I have done, as follows. My first choice would be *cenit*, reading the third letter as *i* and assuming that the suspension-stroke is intended to be above the *e*. This would give us the Pictish name Kenneth, borrowed into Irish as *Cináed*, which enjoys fifty-eight citations in the *Corpus*. Worrying for this interpretation are the facts that the genitive of *Cináed* is *Cináeda* and that in the one certain occurrence of the name in our manuscript it takes the form *cinaetha*,

not *cenit* (1ra6, David king of Scots). My second choice would be *celtchair*, on the grounds that *-chair* is intended by the suspension-stroke, or lost in the stain underneath (the suspension-stroke *could* be explained as a serif). *Celtchair* has only three citations in the *Corpus*, however, and is not listed by Ó Corráin and Maguire. My third choice would be *tenit*, again reading the third letter as *i* and assuming that the suspension-stroke is intended to be above the *e*. This is a rather desperate attempt to find something beginning with *t* – the *Corpus* cites one example of a name *Tene* (‘Fire’) whose genitive case is *Tened*.²⁸

As none of these ideas are wholly satisfactory, it is worth pursuing the ‘falsification’ route. If we seek the identity of Erc’s father wherever he occurs in the 1467 MS, the answer is as follows: *Eochaidh Muinreamhar* 1ra22, 1rb23, 1rb53 (David king of Scots, Lulach king of Scots, MacNaughtons); *Conlaith* 1rc23 (Macintoshes); *Domhnall Donn* 1rc39 (Green Abbot); *Loarn* 1rd37 (Clann Ainnrias); *Aengus* 1rd48 (MacKays of Ugadale); *Carthann* 1vd20 (MacDonalds). Of these six names, only one, *Conlaith*, could be conceived as lurking within *celt*. This is a discovery to set bells ringing – a clear connection with the Macintoshes which the fabricator does not wish us to know about.

The precise form of the name at 1rc23 (in the genitive case, of course) is *o[n]at̃*. Our form of the name is entirely different. It is best seen as *c* (disguised as *t*) + *o* (disguised as *e*) + suspension-stroke for *n + l + t*. Unless a second suspension-stroke has been erased, there appears to have been no attempt to represent *ai*, but all the most important letters are there. I suspect the fabricator would have been delighted by my initial conclusion that the name was *cenit*, Kenneth: it was probably what he intended.

In the spellings *Conlae*, *Conláed*, *Conlaodh* and *Conlao*, the name *Conlaith* enjoys twenty-five citations in the *Corpus*, and is listed by Ó Corráin and Maguire but described as ‘rare’.²⁹

Interpretation: “**son of Art son of big/great/elder Angus son of Erc son of Conlaith.**”

Conclusion

Over these two articles I have presented four Cameron genealogies. Judging by the first, they date from about 1450. The first is of the captains of Clan Cameron and contains only three steps, Eoghan son of Domhnall Dubh son of Allan. The second contains seven steps ending with Gille Anfaigh, who is stated by the scribe to be the common ancestor of the Camerons and MacGillonies. I therefore take it to be the pedigree of the main MacGillony line, the MacGillonies of Strone. It may be calculated that Gille Anfaigh lived *c.* 1270. The scribe then says that from the MacGillonies spring ‘generations rich in houses’, and he gives the pedigrees of two of them. The first is stated to be the pedigree of the MacGillonies of Erracht, which is less than a mile up Glen Loy from Strone. It contains six steps, of which the fourth (*c.* 1360) is Gealgán from Contin in the earldom of Ross, which suggests a possible Macintosh connection, and the sixth (*c.* 1300) is Gille Camshroin. By means of the rubric *clann gilla camshroin*, the scribe is at pains to stress that this man is the ultimate ancestor of the Clan Cameron. Thus he claims the Erracht family

for the Camerons. The pedigree of the second house contains ten steps, the last two of which are Erc and his father Conlaith, from which we may calculate that Conlaith lived *c.* 1180. Erc and his father Conlaith also appear towards the end of the Macintosh pedigree, which contains two further steps, *mhic ferchair fhota mhic fearadhaigh* ‘son of Fearchar Fada son of Fearadhach’. As I pointed out in my article on the MacLeans, Ferchar Fota son of Feradach (son of Fergus, son of Colmán, son of Báetán, son of Eochaid) was a king of Dalriada who died, according to the Annals of Ulster, in 697;³⁰ we should not, therefore, rely on the historical accuracy of these pedigrees, at least in their earlier stages. In any case the names Erc and Conlaith in our pedigree have been doctored in order to make them read something like *enne mhic cenit* (‘Enda son of Kenneth’), clearly an attempt to disconnect the Camerons from the Macintoshes; it may be worth pointing out here that Kenneth mac Alpin, king of Scots, united the Picts and Scots *c.* 843 and died in 858.

Historians of the Camerons are unanimous in telling us that the clan is a confederation of four main elements, i.e. the Cameron leadership, the MacGillonies of Strone, the MacMartins of Letterfinlay and the MacSorleys of Glen Nevis (who are in fact MacDonalDs). Our manuscript dates from the very period in which the confederation was put together, but although it presents four separate pedigrees, these correspond only in part to the traditional scenario. First we have (briefly) the Cameron leadership and (apparently) the MacGillonies of Strone. Then we have the MacGillonies of Erracht, whose relatively brief pedigree includes two Martins, a Gille Camshroin and some traces of Macintosh influence. This allows us to deduce that not only the Cameron leadership but also the MacMartins of Letterfinlay are offshoots of the MacGillonies of Erracht. Finally we have a much longer pedigree which contains the Pictish name Gartnait and connects with the Macintosh line. The family which it traces is not identified (it is certainly not the MacSorleys), but the first two names, Eoghan and Gille Páill, stand out as having something in common with our first two pedigrees – the Clan Cameron leadership begins with Eoghan and the MacGillonies of Strone include two Pauls. It may well be, then, that although the author of the text has told us that this house is sprung from the MacGillonies, the connection is actually quite recent. Whoever they are, they are the oldest family in Lochaber, they represent the Macintosh interest, by *c.* 1400 they are becoming integrated with the Camerons and MacGillonies, and before much more time elapses they disappear. They are, I suspect, the old Macintoshes of Torcastle, who are reputed to have held that ancient seat of Banquo’s at the time when they had control of the disputed lands of Glenloy and Locharkaig. If so, they were finally evicted *c.* 1527 when, as I have said, Cameron of Lochiel took the place for himself.³¹

Ronald Black

- 1 The Iona Club, *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis* (Edinburgh, 1839), pp. 52, 53.
- 2 The Iona Club, *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis* (Edinburgh, 1839), p. 357.
- 3 William F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 1876–80), vol. 3, pp. 479–80.
- 4 Ronald Black, ‘The MacLerans’, *N&Q*, Ser. 3, No. 18 (Jan. 2012), pp. 3–17: 13.
- 5 The word got as far as Dwelly’s dictionary, where it is defined as ‘King, prince’ and

- marked obsolete. I suspect that it is *ràc* ‘drake’ used satirically, much as in English we might say ‘the big cheese’. It does not appear in Irish dictionaries.
- 6 William J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926), p. 491; Somerled MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber* (Glasgow, 1971), p. 258; Lachlan MacKinnon, *Place Names of Lochaber* (Fort William, 1973), p. 20.
 - 7 Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides 1772*, ed. by Andrew Simmons (Edinburgh, 1998), p. 305.
 - 8 Derick S. Thomson, ed., *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (2nd edn, Glasgow, 1994), p. 196.
 - 9 MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber*, pp. 115, 120; John Stewart of Ardvorlich, *The Camerons: A History of Clan Cameron* (Glasgow, 1974), pp. 319, 321, 324.
 - 10 MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber*, p. 259.
 - 11 Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Camerons* (Inverness, 1884), p. 318.
 - 12 Mackenzie, *History of the Camerons*, p. 318; MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber*, p. 129; Stewart, *The Camerons*, pp. 30, 36, 201.
 - 13 M. A. O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1976), pp. 538, 661.
 - 14 Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Fidelma Maguire, *Irish Names* (2nd edn, Dublin, 1990), p. 112.
 - 15 George F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland: Their Origin, Meaning, and History* (New York, 1946), p. 529.
 - 16 MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber*, p. 15, cf. Rev. Dr Archibald Clerk, *Notes of Every Thing* (Kilmallie, 1987), p. 21.
 - 17 Black, *Surnames of Scotland*, p. 560.
 - 18 W. J. Watson, *Place-Names of Ross and Cromarty* (Inverness, 1904), pp. 147–48.
 - 19 ‘The MacLerans’, pp. 11, 12, 14; ‘1467 MS: The MacLeans’, *N&Q*, Ser. 3, No. 22 (May 2013), pp. 3–19: 12, 17.
 - 20 ‘1467 MS: The MacEwens of Otter’, *N&Q* Ser. 3, No. 24 (Jan. 2014), pp. 15–22: 20.
 - 21 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 613–16; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, pp. 13, 87.
 - 22 Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, ‘The Scotticisation of Gaelic: A Reassessment of the Language and Orthography of the Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer’, in *Studies on the Book of Deer*, ed. by Katherine Forsyth (Dublin, 2008), pp. 179–274: 228, n. 22.
 - 23 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 561, 587–88; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, pp. 57, 74.
 - 24 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 113, 238, 239, 240, 245, 624.
 - 25 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 611–13; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, p. 86.
 - 26 ‘The MacLerans’, pp. 10, 11, 12, 14; ‘1467 MS: The Campbells’, *N&Q* Ser. 3, No. 19 (May 2012), pp. 3–10: 7; ‘1467 MS: The Lamonts’, *N&Q* Ser. 3, No. 21 (Jan. 2013), pp. 3–19: 18; ‘The MacLeans’, pp. 17, 18; ‘The MacEwens of Otter’, p. 21.
 - 27 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 620–21; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, p. 88.
 - 28 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 249, 541, 545–47, 741; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, p. 52.
 - 29 O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, pp. 562–63; Ó Corráin and Maguire, *Irish Names*, p. 58.
 - 30 ‘The MacLeans’, p. 16.
 - 31 MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber*, p. 263; Stewart, *The Camerons*, p. 23 and note 11.