1467 MS: The MacEacherns

The MacEacherns are prominent in the early history of Kintyre, and the name MacEachern (or MacEachran) is very common in the Campbeltown district to this day.[1] Their pedigree is on the recto of the 1467 MS (National Library of Scotland Adv. MS 72.1.1, f. 1), occupying the bottom of the fourth column (lines d54–56) and the top of the fifth (e1–5), between the pedigrees of the MacDuffies (d49–53) and the MacLerans (e5–10). Due to the rubbing and staining that has affected the top of the fifth, it is palaeographically the most challenging pedigree in the 1467 MS, with the possible exception of that of the earls of Lennox (e11–18). For reasons known only to himself, W. F. Skene omitted it completely in 1880 from his celebrated Appendix VIII to *Celtic Scotland*, despite having made valiant efforts to unravel its secrets in 1839 and 1847.[2]

I will begin by citing the pedigree exactly as given in the three editions known to me: Skene's two, followed by the one published on-line by my wife Máire and myself in 2009. For ease of comparison, the texts are all presented here according to the eight-line structure in which they appear in the manuscript.

(1) *Collectanea* 1839, with Skene's footnotes:

d54	*Genelach clann Ectigearna.*—Gillaam . . . . ic Cailin ic Icair
d55	mc Gillacrist ic Icreit ic Marceartaig ic Cormaic ic Disiab
d56	mc Fearchar ic Finlaeic ic Nicail ic Nicail ic Muirecac.
e1–5	* . . . .**

d54	THE GENEALOGY OF THE MACEACHERNS.—Gille . . . . son of Colin son of Vicar
d55	son of Gilchrist son of Vicar son of Murdoch son of Cormac son of Shaw
d56	son of Ferchar son of Finlay son of Nicol son of Nicol son of Murdoch.
e1–5	. . . .**

*   Where this mark * occurs on the margin of the Gaelic, it indicates the commencement of a column in the original MS.

**   Here it has been found necessary to omit an entire column of MS., of which only a few detached words can at present be read.[3]

(2) *Collectanea* 1847, with Skene's footnote (and RB's comments in italic):

Skene first tells us with respect to line d54 that for 'Gallaam . . . .' (*he means 'Gillaam'*) *we should read 'Gillaamardrias', and that for 'Nicail ic Nicail'* (*d56*) *we should read 'Nicail ic Maine'. Then under the heading 'Column 5th omitted in the First Part, but now deciphered', he attempts a reading and translation of column e, beginning*:

e1	Mc renabarta in gamor
e2	McEodgar ic Gillandres ic Eatgar
e3	mc Ath. Clann on igerne Betain ic Ubusan
e4	ic Conor ic . . . . ic . . . . ic Becir .i.

e5   Mougaillain* [*Skene ignores the rest of this line*]

*   Mougaillan, the Editor takes to be derived from the old Gaelic word Moidgeallad, a vow. This clan, it is to be presumed, are the MacVicars of Argyllshire.

e1   Son of . . . . called . . . .
e2   son of Eadgar, son of Andrew, son of Eadgar,
e3   son of Ath. Clan . . . . . Beaton, son of Ubusan,
e4   son of Conor, son of . . . . son of . . . son of
e5   the Vicar or Votary [*Skene ignores the rest of this line*] [4]

(3) www.1467manuscript.co.uk:

d54   genelach cloinni echthigerna gilla ainndrias mac cailin mhic I*mair*
d55   mhic gilla crist mhic mhicraith mhic muirchertaigh mhic cormaic mhic oisiab
d56   mhic ferchair mhic finnlaeith mhic nicail mhic maine mhic --?-- *mhic ethach*
e1   mhic gilla*crist* mhic osiab mhic sainngandr*ias*
e2   mhic e*c*tig[*erna*] mhic mhic gillanndria*s moir* mhic [*or* mac] eittig*erna*
e3   mhic ath c*l*oinni [*or* c*l*ann] echtigerne bet[h]ain mhic ab[a]ran
e4   mhic conaill mhic ca*irbr*i mhic ea*tach* [*or* ea*ictigerna*] mhic beth*air moir*
e5   mhic du*b*gaill mhic f*ergus*a   genel(a)c(h) cl(oinn)e earrrainn

d54   The genealogy of the MacEacherns: Gille Ainndrias son of Colin son of Ivor(?)
d55   son of Gille Críost son of Mac Raith son of Muircheartach son of Cormac son of Oisiab
d56   son of Fearchar son of Finlay son of Neacal son of Maine son of --?-- son of Eochaidh(?).
e1   son of Gille Críost son of Oisiab son of old Gille Ainndrias (?)
e2   son of Eichthighearna son of the son of big/great Gille Ainndrias son of Eichthighearna
e3   son of Aodh [or Eochaidh] of Clann Eichthighearna Beathán son of Ab(a)ran
e4   son of Conall son of Cairbre son of Eochaidh [or Eichthighearna] son of big/great(?) Beathán
e5   son of Dugald son of (?)Fergus. The genealogy of the (?)MacLerans:

At this point we should take into account the text as cited in translation by the Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair in 1908. He says: "The pedigree of the Clan Eachern, as given in the Skene MS. is as follows:—Andrew, son of Colin, son of Macrath, son of Gilchrist, son of Macrath, son of Marceartach, son of Cormac, son of Seth, son of Ferchar, son of Finlay, son of Nicol, son of Maine, son of Murdoch, son of ——, who was called In Gamor, son of Eatgar, son of Andrew, son of Eatgar, son of Ath. The name of the man who was known as In Gamor is illegible. In Gamor may stand for an gaineoir, the archer, but what it really does stand for it is impossible to say. Marceartach or Marc-ceartach and Ectigerne or Eacharn mean the same thing – horse-manager or horse-lord – and are thus in reality the same name.

"Marceartach or Eachthighearna, which is now Eacharn, must have been born about 1180. He lived in Kintyre and possessed lands both in Kintyre and Nether-Craignish. He married apparently a daughter of Macrath, son of Maol Suthain, and had Macrath and probably other children.[5] Macrath married Bridget, daughter of Dugald Macbain, thane of Lochavich, and had by her, Gilchrist, Dugald and Ranald.

Gilchrist succeeded his father in Kintyre. Dugald obtained the lands of Nether-Craignish, and others. Ranald lived in Craignish and appears as a witness in 1270.

"Andrew, son of Colin, son of Macrath, son of Gilchrist, was chief of the Maceacherns when the Skene MS. was written, or about the year 1385. Colin, a descendant of Andrew, held the lands of Kilellan in 1493 and was chief of the Clan Eachern."[6]

By the 'Skene MS.' Sinclair means our manuscript. At first sight his version of the text appears to differ from Skene's, and of course it is possible that a version unknown to me had been published between 1847 and 1908, or that Sinclair had access to somebody's notes. He may even have taken advantage of a visit to Edinburgh to look at the manuscript for himself (he was a native of Nova Scotia, and his parish was in Prince Edward Island). But a close look at his text suggests that it contains nothing that is not derived from Skene's work. It is a short step from Skene's 'Gillaamardrias' to Sinclair's 'Andrew', which is correct. Sinclair's 'Macrath' for Skene's 'Icair' and 'Icreit' is another simple deduction (wrong the first time, right the second time), backed up by Sinclair's apparent familiarity with Gilchrist son of Macrath from another source. Sinclair's 'Marceartach' is obviously Skene's 'Marceartaig' brought back to the nominative case, as is usual in translation. As a rendering of 'Disiab', Sinclair's 'Seth' is as good as Skene's 'Shaw', and suitably biblical. The rest is pure Skene.

Sinclair's attempt to explain 'In Gamor' is pointless, and his argument that Marceartach is Marc-ceartach is Ectigerne is silly, but the rest of his remarks deserve our attention, because the MacEacherns' connection with Craignish is also attested by a better scholar, the Kintyre historian Andrew McKerrall, writing in 1940. McKerrall's account of the MacEacherns is of great interest and usefulness, combining traditional sources with the evidence of such documents as the *Registrum Secreti Sigilii*, and I give it at length, without apology. "The family is said to have been founded in the middle of the 12th century by the Tossach Bain mac Eachran of Nether Craignish, who at that time was foster father to the young chief of Craignish. In order to increase the power and prestige of his foster son MacEachran obtained by stratagem a marriage for him with the daughter of Macdonald of Islay, one of the most powerful of the island chiefs. At a later date and one day while old Tossach was supervising the building of his new castle he overheard the young lady complain about the smallness of the estate to maintain two families (res augustae domi), and, taking umbrage at this and leaving his castle unfinished, he gathered together his followers, packed up his belongings and set out to Ireland, we are told, to found a new colony.[7] He swore that he would rest and take up residence at the place where the withies, that is, the wicker ropes that bound the panniers on his horses, first gave way, thus following an old 'freit' [*omen*]! The withies, we are told, broke at Killelan, in southern Kintyre, and there his followers, drawing their weapons, dispossessed the owners and took possession of Killelan by the sword. This was a not uncommon method of carving out a patrimony in the Highlands in the old days.

"The family, which became the most influential and numerous in southern Kintyre, held Killelan till the middle of the nineteenth century first under the Lords of the Isles, secondly under the Kings of Scotland, and finally under the Campbells of Argyle. They also held the old and important office of hereditary Mairs or Mairs of

Fee of Southern Kintyre. This was a relic of the old Celtic office of Mair or Maor, the holders of which were at the head of a Baile or township. On the introduction of the Feudal system and the establishment of the sheriffdoms the Mair became a kind of Sheriff officer whose duties were to serve summons, effect arrests and assist in the collection of the crown revenues. They were provided with a red wand as a symbol of their office and with a horn by which they had to make their presence known when they went on duty. The office was a very remunerative one, for a large share of the fines of the court and of the estates of forfeited persons went to the Mairs, and thus we find that it was sought after by some of the noble families of Scotland. Needless to say it was also often a very unpopular office, and the records show frequent instances of Mairs having been assaulted and even killed, in the course of their duty. Up to the 18th century Kintyre had two Mairs of Fee, the corresponding office for Northern Kintyre being held by the Mackays of Ugadale.

"On the fall of the Lords of the Isles in 1493 the MacEachrans of Killelan became King's vassals. By a crown charter of King James the Fourth dated April 1499 Colin Makauchan (MacEachran) of Killelan was confirmed in the office of Mair of Fee of Southern Kintyre and given a grant of the 2 merkland of Killeban (sic); the 2 merkland of Pennygown; the 2 merkland of Gartloskan; the 2 merkland of Ellarig and Arynaskansach (Elrig and Ardnascavoch) – 8 merklands in all to be held of the King and his successors, MacEachran to perform the services used and wont. Presumably before the forfeiture they had been holding the same lands of the Lords of the Isles. Again in 1507 MacEachran got a further crown grant in liferent of a 12 merkland including the lands of Dounglas, Sron, Glenadull-wochtrach, Tredonyll, Gartnalarg, Querrafour, Largnacraig, Auchinglas, Glenramskillmore with their pertinents and a mandate of the office of Chamberlainship of Southern Kintyre.

"Another of the family – Gillespie – was also a freeholder possessing at this date an 8 merkland comprising the lands of Owegill, Achequhork, Kilbrid, Kynachan, Achenaslesaige and Ochtorag by letters granted under the signet. Still another, John MacEachran, is shown in the Kintyre Crown rental of 1505 as having a tack of the 12 merkland of Kinloch – a very large holding. Some of the family were at this date churchmen and one of these – Andrew – who was rector of Ellenoan and Kilquhoan in Ardnamurchan, erected the Campbeltown Cross in memory of his father Ivar who was also a Rector. Mr Andrew died before 1515 and the date of erection of the Campbeltown Cross is approximately 1500 A.D. Still another MacEachran, or it may have been one of those already mentioned, is shown in the 1505 rental as having mortified one merk of land for the support of the church of Kilkerran. The rental of the next year, 1506, has the note that Stockadill, a 2 merkland, was assigned 'to the Rector Makachern for 2 merks rent'.

"The family continued to hold the lands of Killelan and also the office of Mair of Fee up to the Dunaverty affair in 1647. In that year the then owner of Killelan – Angus MacEachran – joined up with Colkitto and with the two Macdonalds of Sanda was executed there . . . The MacEachrans of Killelan in the main line apparently came to an end before 1751, as in the rental of that year Killelan and Pennygown are shown as belonging to Alexander McMillan of Dunmore, but a side branch represented by Capt. Colin MacEachran, R.N., of Oatfield lasted out till the death of the latter in 1845."[8]

The main points to note are the double connection of the MacEacherns with Craignish and Kintyre, their alleged descent from the *tòiseach bàn* of Nether Craignish, who lived *c*. 1150, their status as mairs of fee for South Kintyre (their counterparts in North Kintyre being the MacKays of Ugadale), and the continuing use of the names Ivor and Andrew in the fifteenth century. McKerrall's description of the office of mair of fee – also called 'crowner', Gaelic *crùnair* – is of great interest. With regard to *tòiseach*, William Gillies has conveniently defined the word for us as '(i) the head of a tribal unit, and (ii) an official in pre-Norman Gaelic society, inferior in status to the *mormaer*, later identified with the *thane*, and, according to Professor Jackson, holding an office which perhaps reflected conditions in Pictish society'.[9] This fits with the mairship of fee, and reminds us of Sir John Skene's definition of the mysterious term 'toschadorech' in 1609 as 'vulgo ane mair of fee'.[10]

Knowledge of the MacEacherns' landholdings is useful too as they delineate the 'clan territory' for us. Of the twenty-three place-names cited by McKerrall from charters and rentals, all but one (Auchinglas) can be identified, and of these twenty-two, all but one (Stockadill) lie in the fertile southernmost part of Kintyre between Kinloch (Campbeltown) and the Mull. Killellan itself is three miles south of Campbeltown. Stockadill is in Glen Barr, West Kintyre.[11]

McKerrall also mentions the Campbeltown Cross. Probably taken from Kilkivan churchyard, it stands at the Old Quay Head in the town, and, *pace* McKerrall, dates from 1350–92. The inscription reads: *Hec est crvx domini Yuari M[ac] Heachyrna qvo[n]dam rectoris de Kylkecan et domini Andree nati eivs rectoris de Kilcoman qvi hanc crvce[m] fieri faciebat.* ("This is the cross of sir Yvarus MacEachern, sometime parson of Kilkecan, and sir Andrew his son, parson of Kilchoman, who caused this cross to be made.") 'Kilkecan' must be a stone-cutter's error for Kilkevan (Kilkivan). The Andrew MacEachern who was rector of Ellenenan or *Eilean Fhìonain* (not 'Ellenoan') and Kilquhoan in Ardnamurchan was a later figure. None of these people were chiefs of the MacEacherns, but a cross in Kilkerran Cemetery, Campbeltown, the former churchyard, commemorates a Colin who may well have been the son and successor of the Gille Ainndrias with whom our pedigree begins. Its inscription reads: *Hec est crvx Caleni M[a]c Heachyrna et Katirine vxoris eivs.* ("This is the cross of Calenus MacEachern and Katerina his wife.") Following the forfeiture of the lordship of the Isles, Colin was confirmed by a royal charter of 1499 as maer of South Kintyre and possessor of Killellan and other lands. A second charter of 1507 described him as chamberlain of South Kintyre and granted him lands of which he already held the lease. He had six sons, Malcolm, Andrew, John, Donald, Eachann and Niall. Malcolm having predeceased him, he was succeeded by Andrew.[12] It is curious to find a Colin (*Cailín*) and a Malcolm (*Maol Colaim*) in the same family, as both are secular derivatives of the sacred name Colm Cille, and the use of the one usually precludes the use of the other. Malcolm was used by the *Clann Dubhghaill* of Craignish, Colin by all other Campbell families.

An example of the traditions underlying McKerrall's account is provided by the Rev. Edward Bradley (1827–89), author of *Glencreggan*, who wrote under the pen-name 'Cuthbert Bede'. He tells in a newspaper article how 'at least eight hundred years ago' MacEachern, a single man, was laird of Craignish. His niece lived with him, but took up with a Campbell and married him. MacEachern insisted that they

live with him at Craignish, but soon found himself 'looked upon as one too many'. So, placing the lairdship of Craignish in Campbell's hands, he set off for the south, and we have the tale of the withies, here called 'woodies' and 'bark-bands'. They broke at Killellan, and there he stayed, married, and had a family, 'and that was the rise of the MacEacherns, of Killellan'. The second half of Bradley's account is taken up with a story of how the daughter of one of his descendants just missed being married to MacDonald (of the Isles, presumably). He arrived at the door one day, 'a stall, strong-limbed man, who had a gold ring on his finger and a gold chain on his neck, but who wore neither bonnet nor shoes', and she refused to give him any of the bannocks she was baking, so he snatched one for himself, but her father went after him and took it back. Some time later he returns as the distinguished commander of a company of Irish soldiers; they fail to recognise him, but provide all the hospitality that he and his men require. The daughter falls in love with him this time, but he rejects her for her meanness, telling MacEachern: "She saved her bannock, but she has lost Macdonald."[13]

In the way of the local press, Bradley's piece provoked a response from an irate but nameless correspondent who dismissed the story as 'humbug' on the grounds that no MacEachern would refuse hospitality to a hungry traveller. The officer was not MacDonald but one of Leslie's soldiers, he said, thus placing the story in the seventeenth century; what the man really wanted was neither the bannock nor the daughter but MacEachern's land, and this he succeeded in getting. But more to the point, the letter-writer confirmed the basic premises of Bradley's Craignish story, pointing out only that the young couple whom MacEachern left in possession, 'a son of Argyll and his wife', were his foster-children. This is much as described by McKerrall.[14]

I move now to my usual line-by-line discussion of Dubhghall Albanach's 1467 text using pen-and-ink sketches, based on spectrally-imaged colour photographs which are superior to those in the website. As always, square brackets indicate illegible, indistinct or uncertain text, italics indicate expanded contractions (the less obvious ones, at least).

d54 ᵍᵉᵗ cᴴᵉᶜᵗᶦᵍᵗᵘᵢᵍᶦˡˡᵃ ᵃᵐᵈᵃʳ.ᶠᶜᵃᶦˡᶦ ᶠ.ᶴᵍ

genelach cloinni echthigerna gilla ainndrias mac cailin mhic imair = "The genealogy of the MacEacherns: Gille Ainndrias son of Colin son of Ivor"

There are no serious doubts about the reading of this line. The end of *echthigerna* is a little messy and *imair* is a little squashed, but that is all. *Ainndrias* is taken care of by the rule that a suprascript vowel indicates *r* followed by that vowel.

The MacEachern eponym *Eichthighearna* means 'Horse Lord', not to be confused with that other horse-name *Eachann*, usually translated 'Hector'. In the second century AD Ptolemy spoke of a tribe called the *Epidii*, 'Horse People', whose territory extended northwards from *Epidion Akron*, 'Horse Point', the Mull of Kintyre.[15] Ivor is a Norse name; this is the only occurrence of a Norse name in our pedigree, but it remained popular amongst later MacEacherns, as we have seen. It was also used by the MacKays of Ugadale, not to mention the MacIvers of Asknish in Craignish.

If we use the start-date of 1385 suggested by Sinclair for this pedigree, which appears to be correct, and apply the usual measure of thirty years per generation, we may say that Gille Ainndrias lived *c.* 1385, Colin *c.* 1355 and Ivor *c.* 1325.

d55

mhic gilla cr*ist* mhic mhicraith mhic m*uircer*taigh mhic cormaic mhic oisiab = "son of Gille Críost son of Mac Raith son of Muircheartach son of Cormac son of Joseph"

The only name which is difficult to read is the third, but as its main elements correspond to the main elements of *Muircheartaigh* as written by Dubhghall Albanach elsewhere, there need be no doubt about the reading. For *Oisiab* 'Joseph' see my article on the MacKays of Ugadale. Gille Críost appears to have lived *c.* 1295, Mac Raith *c.* 1265, Muircheartach *c.* 1235, Cormac *c.* 1205 and Joseph *c.* 1175. Mac Raith means 'Son of Prosperity'; in Ross-shire it developed into the surname of the MacRaes (*Mac Mhic Raith*, modern Gaelic *MacRath*). The presence of the name in this pedigree leads us to wonder if Macratius, abbot of Saddell *c.* 1393, was a MacEachern. The monks elected Macratius and submitted their decision, according to their usual custom, to the abbot of Mellifont (their mother house in Ireland) for confirmation. What they did not know was that the Pope had reserved provision to the abbey to himself, and Macratius was excommunicated. The matter was sorted out by a bull of Clement VII dated 12 July 1393 which confirmed his election.[16] However, the name was relatively common in the medieval Highlands.

d56

mhic f*erch*air mhic finnlaeith mhic nicail mhic maine mhic m*uire*th*aigh* = "son of Farquhar son of Finlay son of Nicol son of Maine son of Muireadhach"

This line is not particularly difficult to read, but contains some careless calligraphy. The *er*-compendium above the *f* of the first name is odd. The last name is messy and includes a *t* which should be a *d*, perhaps because Dubhghall (or rather the writer of his exemplar) had the old pronunciation of *dh* like 'th' in English 'the' or 'this'. Nicol is of course Nicholas, a name which we would not expect to find before the eleventh century, when the 'biography' of St Nicholas, bishop of Myra in Lycia (better known now as Santa Claus) became popular in Western Europe.[17] Maine, pronounced 'manya', was a common name in early Ireland: it has forty-three citations in the *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, and is summarised by Ó Corráin and Maguire as 'an extremely popular early name borne by many legendary warriors and founders of dynasties'.[18]

Farquhar will have lived *c.* 1145, Finlay *c.* 1115, Nicol *c.* 1085, Maine *c.* 1055 and Muireadhach *c.* 1025. It will be recalled that, according to Andrew McKerrall, the MacEachern family 'is said to have been founded in the middle of the 12th century by the Tossach Bain mac Eachran of Nether Craignish'. If accurate, this points to Farquhar. McKerrall seems to have thought that Tossach was a baptismal name,

but it is merely his title. If he was really 'mac Eachran', he was a descendant of Eichthighearna, and in terms of the pedigree as we have it, this certainly applies to Farquhar.

e1

mhic gillac[*rist* in tris] ab ar saingan[n]dria[*s*] = "son of Gille Críost [the third] abbot of St Andrews"

We are now at the top of the fifth column of the page. There is a deep dark stain here which even spectral imaging fails to penetrate. Fortunately the script on either side of it is fairly easy to read and interpret. On the left is *mhic gillac* followed by a long descender and what may be a minim. This could only be *r*, giving *gillac*[*rist*] as at line d55. On the right is *abarsaingan*, followed by an uncertain letter topped by *d*, then a pair of letters which could either be *ia* or *ri*. The uncertain letter could be interpreted as *n*, *d* or nothing at all. A superscript consonant can mean that consonant followed by *r*. This gives us *abarsaingan*[*n*]*dria*, and whether or not a final *s* is lost in the gloom that follows is immaterial: either way, the meaning is literally 'abbot upon St Andrew'.

We may now return to the stain, and here I hope the reader will permit me to explain the deductive processes involved. It is impossible to say what immediately follows *gillac*[*rist*], and of course it is likely to be a space. We can then detect a minim, followed by what may be *t* or *d*, then a descender, then two uncertain marks before we come to *ab*. My first thought is that the minim may be the *mhic*-compendium. My second thought is that if this is the case, the syntax of *ab ar sainganndria*[*s*] is very odd and I cannot imagine what the uncertain letters could be. My third thought is that the syntax of the legible parts seems to demand *mhic gillacrist do bhí ina ab ar sainganndria*[*s*] 'son of Gille Críost who was abbot of St Andrews'. My fourth thought is that the uncertain letters give this no support whatever. My fifth thought is that the uncertain letters certainly support a reading *mhic gillacrist in tris* (or *in tres*) *ab ar sainganndria*[*s*]. It seems likely that at least one superstroke has been lost, but even this is not necessarily the case – there is space for *in* or *an* to have been written in full, and *is* or *es* could have taken the form of the *us*-compendium, ligatured to the *a* of *ab*.

Gille Críost will have lived *c*. AD 995. The monastery of St Andrews, then known as Kilrymont or Cennrígmonaid (modern Gaelic *Cill Rìbhinn*), is usually considered to be an eighth-century foundation. Túathalán, abbot of Cennrígmonaidh, who may or may not have been its first or founding abbot, died in 747, but this does not necessarily invalidate our reading.[19] Curiously, the only other named individual on record as abbot of St Andrews in the period before it was erected into a bishopric (*c*. 1028) is Constantine, king of Scotland, who abdicated *c*. 943 after a forty-year reign and is said in late versions of a king-list to have retired to St Andrews, where he became abbot of the Céli Dé for the last five years of his life. He died in 952, which would make Gille Críost a near-contemporary.[20]

e2

mhic e[c]htig[erna] mhic mhic gillanndria*s* [moir] mhic [eichtigerna] = "son of Eichthighearna son of Gille Ainndrias [senior] son of Eichthighearna"

With regard to the first name, enough is clear for us to be sure that Eichthighearna is meant. The second letter looks more like *o* than *c*, but the mark of lenition above it (= *h*) is clear, and so is the following sequence *tig*. On the basis of *echthigerna* in line d54 we would then expect an *er*-compendium on *g*, followed by *na*. Traces of a faint *er*-compendium, shown above, appear in one of the spectrally-imaged photographs but not the others. The last two letters look more like *di* than *na*, but Dubhghall's calligraphy is very suspect at times, as if he were working in the dark. With regard to the second name, the mark above the *d* looks like an *er*-compendium, but there is little difficulty as seeing it as an *i*. A superscript vowel means *r* followed by that vowel, so it gives us *ri*. The final *s* of *gillanndrias* is a surprise: it is written exactly like a modern printed *s*, thus showing the influence of other writing systems on Dubhghall's Gaelic script. What follows is most peculiar. It could be described as a short minim followed by *r*, surmounted by a macron. Given that Gille Ainndrias is the elder of two persons of that name in the pedigree, it is probably best interpreted as *mór* 'big' in the sense of 'senior', elsewhere shown as *m* surmounted by a macron: let us write it *moir*, as Dubhghall would probably have done had he written it in full.

The last name in the line makes no sense as it stands, and can best be explained as a combination of muddle and interference. Spelt out, it looks like *c*, *l*, *t* (dotted), *t* or *g*, surmounted by *d*, then *i* and *g* with a huge infrascript *g*-loop. These can be rationalised as partly-altered forms of *e*, *i*, *c* (dotted), *t* or *g*, surmounted by the *er*-compendium, then *i* converted to *g*, and finally *g*; there may be something after this last *g*, representing *na*, but it is impossible to say. This would give us *eicht-er-ig-na*, in other words *eicht-ig-er-na* written in the wrong order. This may be fanciful, but I remain convinced that we are expected to read *eichtigerna*.

If historical, the younger Eichthighearna will have lived *c*. 965, his grandfather Gille Ainndrias senior *c*. 905, and the elder Eichthighearna *c*. 875.

e3

mhic ath [et] c*lann* eichtig[er]ne bethain mhic [a]n baran = "son of ?Aodh [and] the MacEacherns of Bethan son of the baron"

The structure of this line is uncertain. That is to say, there seem to be only two occurrences of the *mhic*-compendium, and there is a space between *ath* and *eichtig*[*er*]*ne* which appears to be partly filled, as shown, by the letters *cl*. The best way to explain these facts is that *cl* is for *clann*, and that a new genealogy begins at this point – but it is still a MacEachern genealogy, as it is pretty clear that the name following *clann* is *eichtigerne*.

First however we must deal with *ath*. The *t* could easily be a *d*. The name appears twice in the MacKay of Ugadale pedigree, both times in the genitive as here, as *aidh*

and *áidh*. Since we must not make too much of a missing *i*, it is reasonable to conclude that the correct reading is *mhic a*[*i*]*dh* 'son of Aodh'. An alternative solution 'son of Eochaidh' was put forward in the website, probably because something resembling a faint *et*-compendium appears to follow *adh*. This would give *mhic adhet*, *mhic adhedh* or the like, still not quite *mhic ethach* 'son of Eochaidh'. It could more easily be argued that the *et*-compendium is exactly that – Latin *et*, Gaelic *agus* 'and', linking the two pedigrees. Eochaidh may be dismissed; Aodh, if historical, will have lived *c.* 845.

My sketch tentatively shows a minim following *cl*, suggesting genitive *cloinni*, but this is by no means certain. The *t* of *eichtig*[*er*]*ne* is hard to see, the mark of lenition is above *i* rather than *c*, and it is difficult to be sure whether or not there are superscript marks above *g* and *n*. The final *e* is a little detached, and there may be a faint *c* above it, which makes one wonder if it is a weird form of the *mhic*-compendium. In fact, even if it is, this would not materially affect the translation given above, which would become '[and] the kindred of Eichthighearna son of Bethan son of the baron'.

The middle letter of the name following *eichtig*[*er*]*ne* is not entirely certain. It could be *c*, *t* or possibly *d*, and the dot above it is faint. If *c* it would give *becain*, in which case there should be no dot. I have opted for *bethain*, partly because this can be argued to fit well with the last name in e4, partly because McKerrall has pointed to the MacEacherns' origins in Craignish. We appear to have begun a second MacEachern pedigree, and logic suggests that it describes a family of MacEacherns who remained there. The name Baothan, earlier spelt Báetán, has strong associations with Craignish. Barrichibean, a place of no small importance to the *Clann Dubhghaill*, is *Barrfhaiche Baothain*, 'Baothan's Hilltop Greensward' (or 'Parade-Ground'). Nearby in Kilmartin is *Learga Baothain* 'Baothan's Plain'.[21] To the south, off the Knapdale coast, is Eilean Mór Mhic Uí Chormaic 'The Big Island of the Son of Cormac's Grandson', which Watson guessed might be dedicated to one of two saints, Báetán maccu Cormaic, abbot of Clonmacnois, or Abbán Maccu Cormaic of Magh Arnaide.[22] It will be noticed by a glance at line e4 that our Bethan is the son of Cormac's grandson; unfortunately for this line of speculation, however, recent scholarship prefers Abbán to Báetán, and evidence for the *maccu Cormaic* or *mac uí Chormaic* dedication goes back as far as the late thirteenth century, thus predating our Bethan by over 100 years.[23]

The island has an unusual recent history. The farmer at nearby Keills, Walter Paterson Neill, died in 1978 after instructing his executors to realise his estate and donate the proceeds to the Scottish National Party. The estate included the 'MacCormaig Islands', and according to Neill's wishes the successful bidder handed over Eilean Mor MacCormick, as it was now known, to the SNP. The then leader, William Wolfe (1924–2010), adopted the project with enthusiasm, and had the island conveyed to a charitable trust whose object is to maintain it for the benefit of the public. A visitors' centre was opened there in 2009.[24]

Since Bethan must have lived *c.* 1400, a tentative suggestion may be made about his identity. In the 1380s a cleric called Bean MacGillandris served as chaplain and secretary to Donald, lord of the Isles. When Donald petitioned on his behalf for the deanery of Lismore he called him his 'faithful servant'. Also thanks to Donald's

patronage he held the rectory of Kilmonivaig in Lochaber, but by July 1405 he was bishop of Argyll. Despite being asked to step down from the rectory, he held on to it, pleading poverty, and the result was a triangular dispute between him, the papacy and the lord of the Isles, in which the Pope pointed out on his behalf that a tenth of his mensal resources were being unlawfully held by powerful noblemen of the district. The case dragged on for at least another six years, but the outcome appears to be unknown. Like the other early secretaries to the Lordship, Bean was from Argyll or Sodor, which rules out the possibility that he was a MacGillandris from the earldom of Ross.[25] In any case MacGillandris is more likely to be a patronymic than a surname, so if Bean is our Beathan, we have the name of his father the baron.

The line ends *mhic nbaran* for *mhic an bharain*. The first *a* is below the line for no other reason than that Dubhghall forgot to write it until after he had written *r*. As elsewhere, he prefers vernacular *baran* to classical *barún*. I do not know what barony, if any, he is referring to. He seems fond of using the term *baran* at the expense of others, and may be employing it loosely, e.g. of the MacEacherns' mairship of fee, or of their seat at the council table of the lord of the Isles.

e4

mhic conailll mhic [cormaic] mhic ea[chthigerna] mhic beithir [moir] = "son of Conall son of ?Cormac son of ?Eichthighearna son of ?Bethan ?senior"

At a quick glance the first three letters of this line look like *msd*. Since this makes no sense, one has to look more closely. It appears that the very thick third minim is in fact the right-hand stroke of *m*, and that what follows is not *d* at all but the *con*-compendium which resembles it. After that *ai* is clear enough, but then there is more confusion. On closer inspection, what looks like *uh* with some superscript gibberish seems in fact to be *lll* followed by the *mhic*-compendium. This gives us *conailll mhic*, though obviously the third *l* is surplus to requirements.

The next name is equally hard to read. It looks a little like *c* or *e* followed by *mui* with superscript *t* or *d*. Once again close inspection resolves the problem. The five minims forming *mui* can be re-read as *rm*; not for the first time in Dubhghall's script, the *r* lacks its descender; there is something between *c* and *r*; the superscript letter is neither *t* nor *d* but *c*. This gives us *cormaic*, written just as Dubhghall always writes it, but carelessly.

After that, things get even worse. The third name in the line appears to have four letters, all misshapen: probably *e*, then *a*, then *e* or *c*, then *l* and a suspension-stroke. This makes no sense, but the *l* resembles an *h* in line d46 of the MacKay pedigree, giving us *each~*. The question is, what is *each~*? Skene failed to read the name. In our website Máire and I suggested *eatach or eaictigerna*, in that order. *Eathach* and *Ethach* are Dubhghall's spellings of the genitive case of Eochaidh. There is a third possibility, Eachainn, which Dubhghall cites twice, once as (1ra12) and once as (1vbc28). I think the third letter is more likely to be *c* than *t*, which rules out *eathach*. The choice therefore comes down to *eachainn* or *eachthigerna*. It is not an easy choice. We have had four spellings of Eichthighearna, and not one of them has begun *ea*. However, it is a perfectly possible variant, and Dubhghall has

told us (as far as we can make out) that this is a pedigree of the Clann Eichthighearna. If so, there must be an Eichthighearna in it.

The fourth name in the line is perfectly clear: *beithir*. Unfortunately there is no such name, but it exists as a vocabulary word. In Ireland it means 'bear' (the animal), and thus 'champion' or 'hero', and in this sense, as Macbain pointed out long ago, it is probably borrowed from English. In Scotland, however, the meanings are different, and probably underlain by a genuine Celtic word *betrix*. A *beithir* is a great coiled snake-like dragon-like creature that emerges from the sea, well remembered in Argyllshire tradition and seemingly commemorated in mountain-names like *Beinn a' Bheithir* in Appin and *Beinn nam Bearrach* (*na Beithreach*?) in Morvern. Curiously, a *beithir-beumnach* or 'striking dragon' is a thunderbolt.[26] My best guess is that *bethan* was altered to *beithir*, here or in Dubhghall's exemplar, as some sort of joke. (Indeed there is space between *th* and *i*, with the merest hint that *i* may once have been *a*.) I am encouraged in this belief by the presence of something after *beithir* consisting of at least two minims and a superscript mark of some kind; I do not see how it can be a *mhic*-compendium, but I think it could be *moir*.

Conall will have lived *c*. 1340, Cormac *c*. 1310, Eichthighearna *c*. 1280 and Bethan senior *c*. 1250.

e5

m[*hic*] du[b]gaill a*n* f*er* leg[inn] r[uadh] e. t. [ge]nel(a)[ch] cl[oinn]e earrain = "son of Dugald the ?red-haired ?professor. e.t. The genealogy of the MacLerans:"

There is no mark of suspension above the large initial *m*, but that need not bother us. It will be for *mhic*. The name that follows it is clear enough. There is a space between *u* and *g* of *dugaill* which may well have contained *b*. What follows is indistinct. We have *a* with something above it, *f* with something above it, then some marks which could be *l*, *e* and *g*, then what looks like *r* of the rounded type frequently used after letters such as *o*; it is topped by a superstroke. Then there is what may be a large open *e*, a dot, and finally a letter which may perhaps be *t* or *e*, also I think with a dot. After that we come to some words which I have interpreted elsewhere as *genelach cloinne earrain*, the heading of the MacLeran genealogy.[27] This is sufficient, in my view, to support the tentative reading *an fer leginn ruadh* 'the red-haired professor'. The term *fer léginn* is used twice elsewhere by Dubhghall Albanach, in the Mackintosh and MacKay of Ugadale pedigrees, while *r* with a suspension-stroke generally signifies *ruadh* – we met an example in the MacLean pedigree.[28] As for the very doubtful *e. t.*, the spacing suggests that it may be an abbreviation for *Eichthighearna*, but it could be for *et cetera*, or indeed for *et* (*agus*, 'and'), as at e3.

Dugald will have lived *c*. 1220. This puts him precisely into the period in which we find the last certain Scottish record of the application of the title *fer léginn* – to Laurence, who was archdeacon of St Andrews from 1209 to *c*. 1240.[29] Given the associations of the MacEacherns with St Andrews, perhaps Dugald also belonged to that monastery.

Conclusion

We have dealt here with the first two of a series of three pedigrees, the second and third of which are each joined to the preceding one by *et* instead of beginning on a fresh line. This is unusual for our manuscript. The first is clearly that of the MacEacherns of Killellan, the second is that of 'the MacEacherns of Bethan son of the Baron', and the third is that of the MacLerans. The MacEacherns of Killellan were crowners (or previously, under the lordship of the Isles, *tòisich*) of South Kintyre. It is obvious that the 'MacEacherns of Bethan son of the Baron' also belonged to the professional class; indeed, 'baron' may well stand in this case for *tòiseach*. There are indications that their connections were with Craignish and Knapdale. The tenure of crownerships in these districts should therefore be explored, bearing in mind that outwith Kintyre the kindred-name MacEachern may have given way to another, such as MacNeil.

Addendum: the 'Cristinus MacKay' cross-shaft

Once again I have to thank Mr Angus Martin, Campbeltown, who is an unfailing source of information on all matters relating to Kintyre. He kindly cast an eye over a draft of the above and supplied copies of old newspaper articles. These include items relating to the 'Cristinus MacKay' cross-shaft which was mentioned in my 'MacKays of Ugadale' piece.[30] About 1924 the broken fragments of the shaft, along with 'a rude rough stone, adorned with an incised Roman Cross on one side and a similar Wheel Cross on the other', believed to belong to the eighth century AD, were found in a rubbish heap by a Mr Farmer, superintendent of Kilkerran Cemetery. He brought them to the safety of the mortuary, and in 1934 the churchyard committee granted permission to the Kintyre Antiquarian Society to have them restored. An appeal was made for subscriptions, the necessary £40 was raised, the work was carried out by HM Department of Works in Edinburgh, and the stones were placed in a prominent position at the entrance to the cemetery.[31]

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Notes

1 See for example Andrew McKerral, *Kintyre in the Seventeenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1948), pp. 10–11, 163–64; Angus Martin, *Kintyre Families* (Campbeltown, 2010), pp. 35–36.
2 William F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 1876–80), vol. 3, pp. 458–90.
3 The Iona Club, *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis* (Edinburgh, 1839), pp. 56–57, 62.
4 The Iona Club, *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis* (Edinburgh, 1847), pp. 358–59, 361.
5 Macrath son of Maol Suthain is a figure in the MacLean pedigree, see Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan Maclean, 1300–1570* (E. Linton, 1995), p. 161, and Ronald Black, '1467 MS: The MacLeans', *WHN&Q*, ser. 3, no. 22 (May 2013), pp. 3–19: 11.
6 A. Maclean Sinclair, 'The Clan Eachern or Maceachran', *Celtic Monthly*, vol. 16 (1908), p. 228.
7 *Res augustae domi* should read *res angusta domi* 'limited wealth at home', 'straitened circumstances at home', a quote from Juvenal's Satire III.
8 Andrew McKerrall, 'The MacEachrans of Killellan', *The Campbeltown Courier* [*TCC*], 2 Nov. 1940. 'Oatfield' is a translation of Achequhork (*Achadh a' Choirc*), mentioned earlier.
9 William Gillies, 'Some Thoughts on the *Toschederach*', *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, vol. 17 (1996), pp. 128–42: 134.
10 W. D. H. Sellar, 'O'Donnell Lecture 1985, Celtic Law and Scots Law: Survival and Integration', *Scottish Studies*, vol. 29 (1989), pp. 1–27: 9.

11   The four works consulted on this point are all by Angus Martin: *The Place-Names of the Parish of Campbeltown* (2009), *The Place-Names of the Parish of Southend* (2009) and *The Place-Names of the Parish of Killean and Kilchenzie* (2014), all published by the Kintyre Antiquarian and Natural History Society, Campbeltown, and *Kintyre Places and Place-Names* (Kilkerran, 2013). 'Arynaskansach' is now Arinascavach, 'Querrafour' is now Kerrafour, and 'Owegill' is now Uigle or Wigle.

12   K. A. Steer and J. W. M. Bannerman, *Late Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the West Highlands* (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 157–60. On the respect given to Ivor's cross around the turn of the 20th century see 'The Campbeltown Cross and its Inscription', *The Celtic Monthly*, vol. 13 (1905), p. 90. Curiously, the treatment afforded to Colin's cross around the same time was very different. The 'body' in charge of Kilkerran Cemetery rejected the Kintyre Antiquarian Society's proposal to have it restored, and in 1936 it was still 'a series of separated and deteriorating blocks' (Sheriff John Macmaster Campbell, 'Perpetuating Memory of a Chieftain of Kintyre', *TCC*, 28 March 1936). On Ivor's cross see further 'Sparks and Flashes', *TCC*, 3 Feb. 1934; Andrew McKerrall, 'The Campbeltown Cross', *TCC*, 5 Jan. 1946; 'The Cross: Site Suggested at Old Quay Head', *TCC*, 23 Feb. 1946; 'Sparks and Flashes', *TCC*, 29 Jan. 1949; Lilli Gjerlow, 'The Cross', *TCC*, 28 Dec. 1950.

13   Cuthbert Bede, 'Round the Peat Fire at Glenbrecky', *The Argyllshire Herald*, 29 Aug. 1874.

14   A Craignish Friend, 'The M'Eachrans', *The Argyllshire Herald*, 19 Sept. 1874.

15   Martin, *Kintyre Places and Place-Names*, pp. 120–21.

16   A. L. Brown, 'The Cistercian Abbey of Saddell, Kintyre', *The Innes Review*, vol. 20 (1969), pp. 130–37: 130–31.

17   Donald Attwater, *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints* (2nd edn, Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 243.

18   M. A. O'Brien, ed., *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1976), pp. 696–97; Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Fidelma Maguire, *Irish Names* (2nd edn, Dublin, 1990), p. 132; cf. Ronald Black, 'The MacLerans', *WHN&Q*, ser. 3, no. 18 (Jan. 2012), pp. 3–17: 12.

19   James E. Fraser, *From Caledonia to Pictland: Scotland to 795* (Edinburgh, 2009), p. 361.

20   Alex Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789–1070* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 128, 175.

21   Ronald Black, *The Campbells of the Ark: Men of Argyll in 1745* (2 vols, Edinburgh, 2017), vol. 2, p. 187.

22   William J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926), pp. 282–83.

23   Douglas Mac Lean, 'Knapdale Dedications to a Leinster Saint: Sculpture, Hagiography and Oral Tradition', *Scottish Studies*, vol. 27 (1983), pp. 49–65: 50, 54; *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments*, vol. 7, *Mid Argyll & Cowal: Medieval & Later Monuments* (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1992), p. 74.

24   William Wolfe and Nicoll Cameron, *Eilean Mór MacCormick: The Story of Eilean Mor MacCormick* (Stirling, 2013), pp. 27, 41–42, 123–34.

25   Sarah Thomas, 'Bishops, Priests, Monks and their Patrons: The Lords of the Isles and the Church', in *The Lordship of the Isles*, ed. by Richard D. Oram (Leiden, 2014), pp. 123–45: 128–29, 143.

26   Alexander Macbain, *An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* (Inverness, 1896), p. 29; Ronald Black, ed., *The Gaelic Otherworld: John Gregorson Campbell's Superstitions of the Highlands & Islands of Scotland and Witchcraft & Second Sight in the Highlands & Islands* (Edinburgh, 2005), pp. 121, 129, 294, 378, 486.

27   Black, 'The MacLerans', pp. 10–11.

28   Black, '1467 MS: The MacLeans', p. 13.

29   Steer and Bannerman, *Monumental Sculpture*, p. 123.

30   Ronald Black, '1467 MS: The MacKays of Ugadale', *WHN&Q*, ser. 4, no. 4 (July 2017), pp. 3–15: 10.

31   'Kintyre Antiquarian Society. Ancient Kilkerran Crosses. Appeal for Subscriptions', *TCC*, 22 Sept. 1934; Sheriff John Macmaster Campbell, 'Celtic Art: Its Relation to the Kilkerran Crosses, II', *TCC*, 27 April 1935; 'Kintyre Antiquarian Society. Annual Meeting. Report of Executive Council', *TCC*, 20 July 1935; 'Kilkerran Crosses Handed Over at Campbeltown Ceremony', *TCC*, 21 March 1936; Sheriff John Macmaster Campbell, 'Perpetuating Memory of a Chieftain of Kintyre', *TCC*, 28 March 1936.