

ARGYLSHIRE

A Contribution to Argyllshire History, Being a Monograph Sketch of the SWEYNES OF SKIPNESS and the MACTAVISHES OF DUN-ARDRIGH, KNAPDALE, AND ELSEWHERE, their Ancestors, and descendants

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Edited and Footnoted by Patricia Adams©
March 1, 2001

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Chapter II

The Sweynes of Kyntyrr

In the scanty records we possess respecting the Kingdom of the Dalriads in south Argyll, we rarely meet with any names beyond those of the successive kings or leading chiefs and then generally, in connection with some victory or defeat. During the period however, between the removal of the Capital from Dun-Add and the Thirteenth century, the names of a few such are met with, each of whom in the absence of anything like organized local government, was monarch over his own people. Among these names are those of Somerled, lord of the Isles,¹ who married Ragnhildis daughter of Olave, King of Man, in 1140 AD and the numerous branches of his descendants; of the Lamonts who were lords of Cowall, and of the Sweynes of Skipness and Swayne castles, lords of Knapdale and Northern Kyntyrr.^{2 3 4 5} "The Family of Syfyn or Swenye possessed the upper half of Kyntyrr and all Knapdale, embracing the parishes of Kilcalmonel, Skipness, South and North Knapdale, extending on the south, from Rudh-na-haorainn, later Reairnaherine, the castle of the Largie Family, on the west to Cour on the east, and on the north, from Crinan on the west to Lochgilp on the east."⁶ As to the origin of this family, there is some dispute. The name with its variant spelling is current in Scandinavia and is borne today by the Asiatic explorer Sven Hedin. Hence, some alledge that the Kyntyrr family came probably from the North, and was connected with one of the great leaders who bore that name. But the name was also current among the Dalriads and their successors, long previous to the advent of the Scandinavians. Thus in the "*Annals of Ulster*" as early as 565 AD we meet with it and thenceforward repeatedly. In 622 AD we read that "Connall, the son of Suibne"⁷ with many others of the tribe of Gabhrain fell in the hour of victory at the battle of Cindelegen, supposed to be the present Ard-teligean near Loch Killisport or Kolisport formerly Chuilisport.⁸ Unfortunately, the Annalist has not said who this Suibne may have been, but Connall's death would not have been mentioned had not his father been a man of high position in the army. In the *Four Masters* we read that Suibne, King of all Ireland, reigned from 611 to 623 AD. Again in "*Iona*"^{9 10} p. 225, we read of the death of "Suibne the son of Cuirtre, Abbot of Iona", while on p. 229, of the same book, we read of a visit to Ireland in 766 AD by "Suibne, Abbot of Iona" a dignitary whose death took place in 772 AD.¹² These extracts are sufficient to show, that the name of Syfyn or Suibne, was in

use among the Kyntyr Dalriads, long before the Northmen visited the Western Islands. Buchanan, in "*Enq. Into Scot. Surnames*", says; "that the Sweynes of Sweyne Castle, were a branch of the great Irish Clan¹³ of Sween or MacSween¹⁴ which ranked among the most important families of that period¹⁵." Whatever may have been the Irish origin, we are indebted for the earliest Scottish mention of this family to tradition, a source of information at times vague and indefinite yet ever suggestive and if not always verbally accurate, yet generally so as to the persons or person of whom it may speak. A tradition concerning this family, and one everywhere current in Western Argyll and generally believed, has been already given in the opening sentences of the previous chapter, and we know of no reason for doubting its trustworthiness.

Kyntyr was thus for centuries the home of one of the potentially most progressive Western sections of the human family,- the Dalriad Scots. The influence of Christianity together with the undoubted presence of Christian priests and teachers among them, must have led to many differences between the Dalriad conceptions of life and social matters generally, and those of the Northern pirates, so that the relations between these two peoples could never have been friendly. Naturally, the east coast of Kyntyr would be a favourite rallying locality for the sea-tossed galleys from the north, whether they sought the Isle of Man or were purposing an invasion of Ireland for on the shores of Skipness (ship-point), the turbulent waves of the Atlantic never broke. Ships could lie there in safety, its sandy beach making that point a favourite place for the repairing of battered vessels or the resting of wearied men. Hence the name of Skipness given to the locality and then, to put an end to such invasions, the building by the Sweynes, the "lordys of the lands" of Skipness or Skipinche Castle.

Of life in Kyntyr at this period, we have no knowledge, yet though outside of the general current of Scottish National life, it must have possessed a life of its own, that would be developing on lines similar to those on which other Communities have advanced. A century however elapses before we meet with the name of Sweyne again, and this time, we are on documentary and therefore historic ground. One feature however is so remarkable that it must be mentioned. Southern Kyntyr from which the Northmen had driven the Dalriads or these latter had migrated for more attractive lands, came in process of time, to be the home of the Macdonalds, descendants of Somerled. Almost every member of that great family was ever at variance either with the Sovereign himself, or with other Princes and Chiefs. Brother even fought against brother leading on one occasion to the death of Angus, Somerled's younger son, along with his own sons at Dunaverty, when he invaded the territory of his elder brother Reginald. Yet the Sweynes of Skipinche are never on record as at variance either with the monarch or with their neighbours. Sweyne's estates were more extensive than those of Somerled, and more easily assailed, but either because their owners were so occupied with the administration of their semi-regal territory and were content with what they had, or whether they were too powerful to encourage invasion by another, the singular fact remains that never once in all their history, do we read of their being in conflict with any of their neighbours, nor do they appear as co-operating with any who might be so involved.

Considering also the antiquity of the family, and the extent of their possessions, with the important position of these, they do not seem to have taken any special part in the public affairs, neither when at Skipness nor later when at Sweyne. They were even not members of the Parliament held at Scone for the coronation of Balliol, though relations of his, through the Comyns, and supporters at the cost of life and lands against Bruce. Altogether their notable absence from the public life of the Nation is one of those matters of which we would like some explanation, but such we are unable to give.

Alexander the Second had succeeded to the Scottish throne in 1214, and though then, only some seventeen years of age, soon showed himself to be possessed of remarkable vigour. Descendant of one of those barons who at Rynnymede had compelled King John to sign Magna Charta, he had no hesitation in joining Louis of France in making war upon the English Monarch. For so doing he was

promptly excommunicated by Pope Honorius the Fourth, to whom John had become reconciled. Scotland was thus laid under an Interdict, remaining in that condition till 1222 AD when this was removed at Tweedmouth, by the Papal Legate. His dispute with England being thus out of the way, Alexander who in 1221 AD had married Joanna, sister of Henry 3rd of England, turned his attention to Argyll-shire, which he at once invaded, being determined to put an end to the power and influence of the descendants of Somerled and of their relations to Scandinavia.

On his first attempt to reach western Argyll, his ships were driven back by a fierce storm, but in the following year he entered it by land, making an invasion from the north. According to Fordun, this expedition was successful. "The men of Argyll were frightened. Some gave hostages and a great deal of money and were taken back in peace, while others who had offended against the King's will, forsook their estates and possessions and fled." All who had supported him, as Wynton puts it, should in future hold their lands by charter¹⁶ of the King.

But the ethchetys (the forfeited estates) off the lave (rest)

To the lordys of that land he gave: A wise measure, leaving no room for jealousies or quarrels between old and new proprietors.¹⁷

Our next mention of the Sweynes is in the "*Annals of the House of Craignish*" (Reg. House Edin.) - a family connected with the Siol Eachern, or the Clan Dugall. In these Annals the following passage occurs; "Dugald Campbell MacCuil Craignish (who succeeded to the headship of his family on the death of his father in 1220 AD) married a daughter of MacSween of Skipinche, whose predecessors built the large house of Castle Sweyne in the division of Argyll called Knapdale, and were proprietors of an extensive estate in that division and in Keilsislate (in S. Knapdale) part of which MacSween held possession of."

Dugall of whom I have nothing memorable save that he married the Daughter of Dugal MacSwine of Skipnish whose predecessors were proprietors of Knapdail and Kelislate, and built that large house Castle Swine¹⁸. He himself was in possession of a great part of the Estate.

Here we have much interesting information. First, we hear of a marriage in 1220 AD between a certain MacSween, a man known as the son of Sween who own age added to that of his father would probably send us back to about 1140 or 1150 AD. We then hear of the home in Kyntyr of this "son of Sweyne", this being Skipinche Castle, but how much earlier it may have been so, we are unable to say. We cannot suppose that the Sweynes having large landed estates in that immediate neighbourhood, were so friendly to the Scandinavian pirates as to have allowed them to erect such a building as Skipinche or themselves to have built this castle for their convenience enabling them to have a safe resort in place of trouble on eastern Kyntyr. Nor is it all probable, that the Scandinavians built it, for the construction of that Castle was the work not of days but of years, judging even from its present remains. Much more likely is it to have been build by the Sweynes, as a protection to the district against any landing of the pirates, its presence warning such of the danger of attempting landing in that locality.¹⁹

Such then is our first historic introduction to the Sweyne family, enabling us to realize something of the greatness of its lords. On the lives or exploits of these we know nothing, while the successive removals of the Capital of the Dalriads from Dalruida to Kolisport, then to Dun-Add, and then again to Scone in Perthshire, must have left the government of Southern Argyll, entirely in the hands of the local chiefs and proprietors, especially in the hands of one who was called the Thane^{20 21} of Argyll.²² Under such conditions, the Sweyne chiefs must have practically been kinglets, whose will be law throughout an extensive district. The shape of Kyntyr and the blood-unity of the Dalriads would save its inhabitants from much of that inter-raiding which occasioned many a conflict between Clans in the North, but its

remoteness from an organized central authority, while favouring the growth of a spirit of independence that might easily run into lawlessness, left it largely exposed to the plundering invasions of the Northern rovers. Probably, the danger of such attacks and the sufferings they occasioned, led to what the Annalist records in his next sentence; MacSween "whose predecessors built the large house of Castle Sweyne in the division of Argyll called Knapdale." This Castle then had been built long previous to 1220, so that not to this "MacSween" but to some unnamed predecessors - near or far off - belongs the credit of its erection. Sweyne Castle as may therefore suppose, to have been built about the tenth or eleventh century, and certainly had not been built by any of the Scandinavians, who were not in the habit of building stone castles of such a character as either Skipness or Sweyne. Rather it was to put an end to the merciless invasions of those pirates that it had been built. Its presence in a commanding position at the mouth of Loch Sweyne just where this opens out into the Sound of Jura, would warn off any roving bands that might have purposed landing, and hence it became subsequently known as "the key of Knapdale and Glassarie."

One other statement by the Craignish Annalist and his contribution to the history of the Sweyne family comes to an end. This unhappily is sadly suggestive of a change in the fortunes of the Sweynes. Having just shewn how extensive were their estates in that division of Argyll, which the Sween' ancestors possessed, he adds, "part of which MacSween held possession of." "Part of which". So there had been previous, even to 1220 A.D., a diminution of the landed property of this great family. The family was already on the decline. MacSween was not so extensive a proprietor as some of his predecessors had been. He is of old and honourable descent²³ and is still wealthy enough to retain his position among the landed men of Argyll, and so his daughter is married to the head of the Craignish Campbells, "one of the most ancient families in Argyllshire and is well known not to have been of Campbell origin." *Hist of Clan Iver*, p. 52.

As the eldest son of this Dugald Campbell Craignish died in 1270, leaving two sons, we may probably assign the marriage to the year 1220-5. The lady, a daughter of "MacSween of Skipinche", that is, of one known as "the son of Sweyne or Syfyn" was therefore a sister of the Dufgall²⁴, son of Syfyn, of whom we shall soon read. To have had a daughter married in 1225, this Syfyn or Sweyne, must have been born in the later decades of the previous century,- the century in which another daughter of that same House, was married to Colin MacDuine of Lochow, less than fifty years separating the two events.

In addition to the daughter thus married, "MacSweyn" had at least one son, always described as "Dufgall son of Syfyn,"²⁵ of whom we learn something from the Chartulary of the Abbey of Passalet or Paisley. This Abbey had been founded in 1163 by Walter, son of Alan, the first of the Stewarts of Scotland, who placed it in the hands of certain Cluniac monks of the Reformed Benedictine Order, whom he brought from Shropshire for the purpose. Its varied buildings had not been completed when the Interdict of Pope Honorius already mentioned, arrested all work, but this having been removed in 1222 A.D., benefactions poured in apace. Among the donors was the family of de Sweyne, and some interesting items respecting one at least of its members, are recorded in its Chartulary. The Abbey itself has long since passed into a ruin, but the document or an early copy is in the Advocates library, Edinburgh, and is a storehouse of valuable information. In 1832, this was published by the Maitland Club of Glasgow, and it is to this copy that we are indebted for our present knowledge. The first of these entries is dated 1247 and refers to a gift made by "Dufgall, son of Syfyn" from which we may infer "MacSwine of Skipinch" had by that date passed away, and been succeeded in the headship of the House by his son Dufgall.

In this Chartulary, there is a copy of the Sanction given in April 1247 A.D. by Pope Innocent the Fourth, dated from Lyons, where he was then residing, and addressed to the Rector of the Church of St. Columanel in Kyntyr, Diocese of Lismore, authorising him to accept of a certain donation which had been made to that church by "Dufgall son of Syfyn." The Pope's language is very explicit,- "Dufgall a

layman, patron of the church of St. Columanel in Kyntyr, of his own free kindness and for the benefit of his soul, has given to the said church, a piece of ground commonly called "penny land", which lies near the Church itself." The date of the gift is not mentioned, but plainly it must have been made previously to the year 1247. In this Sanction, Innocent warns those who might at any time propose to interfere with or to disturb the church in its enjoyment of this gift, that the wrath of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, would be poured out upon them, should they attempt to do so. The warning does not seem to have been of much service to the church. Long since, the land passed out of the hands of the Church and into those of some noble of the Reformation, so that for aught we know the teinds of the gift of Dufgall the son of Syfyn, may contribute to make up the income of the present incumbent of the Parish Church of Kilcolumanel!

Another of these entries dated Passalet, Palm Sunday, 1261 A.D. by which time Dufgall the son of Syfyn was probably seventy years of age or more, says that: "Dufgall son of Syfyn of his own free will and with the consent of his heir John, made a donation to the monks of the Abbey of Passalet, of the patronage of the church of St. Columanel (now Kilcalmonell) located "in mea terra de Kentyr" beside the village of Clachan, that is, the village of or with the stone church. The gift was for the salvation not only of Dufgall himself but also for that of his two wives, who had borne the names of Julia and Jean or Joanna,- would that we knew to what family either of these ladies belonged, information that for our purpose had been of great value,- as well as for the salvation of his ancestors,- "ancestors", carrying us back for a number generations, and "successors", his expected descendants. Not only however did he make to the Paisley monks the gift of this patronage with absolute right to all rights connected therewith, but he added the "chapel of St. Columbe which is "juxta castrum meum de Schnepehniche," so that as yet, his estates included the northern part of Kyntyr. "chapel" of St. Columbe, whose architecture resembles English buildings of the 13th century- the date of its appearance in the records, restored and still in use, was probably frequented by those living in or near the Castle of Skipness, Dufgall's gift being subject however, to the life interest of Clemens or Clement, its then rector. In connection with the gift of this property, Dufgall bequeathed his own body to the Monastery and asked for it a church-internment.

This document which was witnessed by Walter Stewart, Seneschall, Earl of Menteith (the first Menteith of that name) and others of equal rank was followed by a somewhat peculiar entry. After this gift had been made, Dufgall seems to have parted with the land of Skipinche, together with the patronage of St. Columanel and its "penny land", as well as the chapel of St. Columbe, to Walter, Earl of Menteith²⁶ and so, the latter confirms the gift previously made by Dufgall to the monks, and endorses it most fully. He does so as for the welfare of his own soul, the soul of his wife and those of his ancestors (the Stewarts) buried at Paisley, and thus, the Skipinche property passed forever out of the hands of the Sweynes. This Deed of Confirmation is witnessed by Dufgall himself thus furnishing conclusive evidence, that the property now belonged absolutely to Menteith.

The Passalet Chartulary was, of course, not called on to give any record of the reason for the transfer of this immense property, but in the Rotuli Scotorum, p. 90, quoted in the Red Book of Mentieth, vol 1, pg. 63, we are told, "that the lands were to be held of the said Dufgall, son of Syfyn, with the privilege of a free barony, with sock, sack, tholl, thane and infangtheiff and for the service to the King of two parts of a soldier in His Majesty's armies, and with all other services and duties to be exacted forth of said lands," and to which, he had affixed his seal.

This transfer was said in the Rotuli to have been made at St. Hilary's Feast, 1267, and with the consent of his own son, John and apparently of an unnamed brother.

What the circumstances may have been which led to this immense transfer of property we are unable to say. The equivalent which Dufgall was to receive for the surrender of his Kyntyr estates seems altogether inadequate to explain the transaction. There must have been some special considerations leading to this surrender, but these we have no means of ascertaining.

Another entry, which however is undated, tells of the presentation by Laumannue (Lamont) to God, to St. James, to St. Mirren, and to the monks living in Passalet Monastery, of the patronage of the Church of Kilfinnan, for the salvation of the King, most illustrious Lord Alexander, This denotes probably King Alexander the Third, Alexander the Second having been killed in 1246 A.D. by the fall of his horse at Kinghorn. Among the witnesses to this document, we find Walter, the son of Alan, Seneschall and Justiviar, Dufgall, son of Syfyn, and many others. The name of Dufgall, son of Syfyn, appearing for the last time in the records of the monastery. There is indeed an entry in the Chartulary, of a Visitation made in 1269 A.D. of the Monastery by Laurentius, Bishop of Argyll, who reports that he had examined the Deeds of the gifts of Angus²⁷, son of Dovenald, of Dufgall, son of Syfyn, of Duncan, son of Farquhar, of Lamont, son of Malcolm, and nephew of Duncan, and also of the church of Queraria or Kilkerran, and of St. Finnan in Kathreme Congall that all the buildings were in good condition, but that as the needs of the Monastery were very great because of the hospitality and other good works of its inmates, these were allowed whenever any of those churches became vacant, to apply the income to their own uses, provided the services in the different churches were carefully maintained, and the fourth part of the income reserved for the Bishop's tithes. This Deed was dated at Ayr, on the day after the Feast of St. Luke, 1269, before which date, Dufgall, the son of Syfyn, had probably passed away, as his name appears no more.

From these several documents then combined with tradition, we learn that about the year 1050 A.D. a certain Sween was Lord of Skipinche Castle in Kyntyr and of Sweyne Castle in Knapdale; that he held large possessions both in Knapdale and Kyntyr, that about 1105 A.D., a daughter of his had married Colin MacDwine of Lochow and that in 1225 A.D. a later Daughter of the House had married Dugald Campbell of Craignish, that the father-in-law of Craignish had at least one son, named Dufgall, who again had a son and heir- John, and that this Dufgall donated to the parish church of Kilcolumanel a portion of land adjoining it to Paisley Abbey, the tithes of the same church, and of one of the Chapels on his estates in Kyntyr, by granting the patronage of such to the Monastery that Dufgall had been twice married, the names of his wives being Julia and Jean or Joanna; that he had his own personal seal though unfortunately, no impression of this has come down to us, and that the property of the family once extended from the present Moss of Poltalloch down to nearly the middle of Kyntyr, a truly princely domain, and one that would enable its owner to stand high among the "lordys" of the land.

The information thus given covers about two hundred years of national history and might perchance have been much enlarged, if certain sources of information had been accessible to us. Such sources are, Family Papers²⁸, often buried in the Family Chest, and Ecclesiastical Charters, that once belonged to some church, or Abbey. As a rule, these latter were always written out with great care, fully witnessed, and then most diligently preserved, especially when they contained grants or gifts of lands in acknowledgement of services rendered or to be rendered, either by or to the Church. Many even of these latter have been lost through the overthrow of Monasteries, so that our National life is the poorer, through the absence of the information that such documents would have given us.

¹ Somerled and his family owned the southern half of Kyntyr along with Craignish, Lorn and other districts on the west coast of Scotland including many of the western islands, while MacSween of Skipness owned the northern part of Kyntyr and all Knapdale. Somerled's estates may have been more extensive superficially, but they were all connected, while Sweynes were compact as in a mill ring, and all on the on the mainland.

² Maclauchlan, "Hist. Scot.", p. 326; "In 1034 the Annalists note the death of Sweyne of Argyll. He is called Sweyne, son of Kenneth King of the Gall Gaedhil. This was probably a native regulus."

³ SCBA, pg 5 – LCS reproduces the manuscript of a book titled *Ramifications of the Clan Sween*, commissioned by Princess Maire MacSweeney, daughter of Eion O'Maille and wife of Rory MacSweeney, 10th Lord of Fanad, and was written circa 1532 A.D. and is preserved in the Royal Irish Academy's collection (No. 24 P 25) along with her prayer book.

This account of the history of the Clan Sween states: "Now a son of Anradhan was Aodh Aluinn mac Andraham, and a son of Aodh Aluinn was Donnsluibhe, and Donnsluibhe's son was Suibhne, from whom Clan Suibhne derive their name. Suibhne was the most noble and distinguished son of Donnsluibhe. It was he who built Castle Sween in Scotland. A son of that Suibhne was Maolmhuire au Sparain...etc."

The above Anradhan was the second son of Domnhall of Armagh, King of Ailleach in Ulster, and of the House of Neil. Anradhan is stated to have left Ailleach to his brother, and, to quote the above narrative once more, "...they rested not till they reached the beautiful bright country of Scotland, more than half of which they brought by violence under their sway... They made peace and a marriage alliance with the King of Scotland then in this way, namely, *the daughter of the King was given in marriage of Anradhan*, and she bore him children; and descended from these two are the whole of Clann Suibhne from that time to now."

The pedigree of the Macneils of Barra state that they (Macneil) descend from Anradhan's first son, and the Clan MacSween from his second son, and this descent is supported by the present Macneil of Barra.

⁴ SCBA, pg 6 – Sir Ian Moncreiffe of that Ilk, Bt., writes (*Burke's Peerage, Baronetage & Knightage*, 103rd ed., p. 1853)

Anrothan, who is said to have married a daughter of the King of Scots (probably the local King of Argyll) and to have received wide lands after campaigning there.

According to Medieval Irish and Scottish MS genealogies he was ancestor of Maclachlan of Strathlachlan ... the Lamonts of that Ilk (of whom the Lyons of Glamis, Earls of Strathmore are possibly cadets); the MacSorleys of Monydrain; the MacEwans of Otter; the Clan Neil in Scotland (the Macneils of Barra and the McNeills of Gigha and Colonsay); the MacSwins of Castle Swin (the ancient key to Knapdale) and the MacSweeneys in Dongeal (who were great leaders of "galloglasses" or mercenary battle-axe men); etc.

If the above lady was the daughter of Kenneth III, King of Scots, this would unite the Sween pedigree to that of Neil by marriage. However, the House of Sween (or MacSween) would of necessity be by direct descent from the name-giver. Therefore I submit that the MacNeils of Barra were the issue of this marriage and the other clans mentioned were descended from (her brother) Sween.

As will be noted, Edmund Curtiss, late Professor of History at the University of Dublin, acknowledges the descent of the Clan Sween directly from the Sween of 1034. In addition, Reverend F. Winston Leyland S.S.C., supports this conclusion unreservedly, adding that this original Sween could hardly be any other than a son of Kenneth III.

As the Macneils of Barra almost immediately proceeded to the Isle of Barra, it would seem doubtful that her inheritance would have included Cowal and Knapdale. These lands seems to have descended in the direct line.

⁵ As a territorial term, Gall Gháidhil settled down to mean Galloway, the Hebrides as a whole being known as Innse Gall, 'Isles of the Foreigners.' In 1034 Suibne, son of Cinaeth, king of the Gall Gháidhil, died.* Rollant mac Uchtraigh, king of the Gall Gháidhil, died in 1199, and his successor, Ailín mac Uchtraigh, in 1234. In these cases, as Skene has pointed out, the term is territorial and denotes Galloway. It may be worth mention as a curiosity that kings of the Gall Gháidhil are made contemporary with Fionn mac Cumhaill in the rather late compilation called *Acallam na Senórach*, 'the Colloquy of the Ancient Men.' **

*In the thirteenth century Dubhghall mac Suibhne (Dufgallus filius Syfyn) was Lord of Kintyre; Reg. Pasl., pp. 120-22. The name is preserved in Caisteal Suibhne, Castle Sween, on Loch Sween in Knapdale. Cf. Orig. Paroch., ii. pt. 1. p. 40.

**Samaisc, Artúr, and Inber, sons of the king of Gall Gháidhil, were drowned by the Smirdris of Loch Lurgan (*Acall.*, l. 4560); Bressal, son of Eirge, king of the Gall Gháidhil, slew Mac Lughdhach, Fionn's grandson (l. 7951) - Stokes' edition.

⁶ Mitchell, p. 175

⁷ In the Erse language the letters f and b are interchangeable In pronunciation, while bh is sounded like v. Suibne is thus pronounced simply as Suifyn or Sweyne.

⁸ <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100005A/>

Annals of the Four Masters transcribed on the Internet:

M558.1

After Diarmaid, the son of Fearghus Cerrbheoil, had been twenty years in sovereignty over Ireland, he was slain by Aedh Dubh, son of Suibhne, King of Dal Araidhe, at Rath Beag, in Magh Line. His head was brought to Cluain MiNois, and interred there, and his body was interred at Connor.

M592.3

Aedh Dubh, son of Suibhne, King of Ulidia, was slain by Fiachna, son of Baedan. It was by this Aedh Dubh Diarmaid Mac Cearbhaill had been slain.

M600.4

After Aedh Slaine, son of Diarmaid, and Colman Rimidh, son of Baedan, son of Muircheartach, son of Muireadhach, son of Eoghan, son of Niall, had been six years in the sovereignty of Ireland, Colman Rimidh was slain by Lochan Dilmana, and Aedh Slaine was slain by Conall Guithbhinn, son of Suibhne, son of Colman Mor, or Beg, son of Diarmaid, son of Cearthall, at Loch Semhedidhe. Aedh Gustan, the foster brother of Conall, and Baethghal Bile, wounded him. Of their deaths was said:

- 1.1] What is reign, what is law,
- 2] what is power over chieftains?
- 3] Behold, Colman Rimidh the King!
- 4] Lochan Dilmana slew him !
- 5] It was not a wise counsel
- 6] for the youths of Tuath Tuirbhe!
- 7] Conall slew Aedh Slaine,
- 8] Aedh Slaine slew Suibhne.

M611.1

The first year of Suibhne Meann, son of Fiachna, son of Fearadhach, in sovereignty over Ireland.

M623.2

After Suibhne Meann had been thirteen years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he was slain at Traigh Brena, by Congal Claen.

The Chronological Apparatus of the Annals of Ulster AD 431-1131' by D. Mc Carthy. Peritia, 8, (Cork 1994) 46-79.

Abstract. This paper demonstrates that the chronological framework of the Annals of Ulster is a combination of two different systems: one based on January AD dating (nativity era), the other based on March AD dating (incarnation era). This discovery explains the discrepancies in the dates, and vindicates Ussher's analysis of the dating criteria against Bartholomew Mac Carthy's later critique. The introduction of March AD dating is pinpointed to the eleventh century, and is related to contemporary political and ecclesiastical developments. The original chronological apparatus is restored and some of the literary sources are also identified. The date and place of compilation for the original are identified as Iona, c. AD 740.

⁹ HD, pg. 10. The *Iona Chronicle*, is a vehicle of transmission to Ireland of Anglo-Saxon and British entries, and was removed from Scotland to Ireland. Many, if not all, of the Scottish entries did originate from the *Iona Chronicle*.

¹⁰ HD, p. 1 "The work of Eoin MacNeill¹⁰ and T. F. O'Rahilly¹⁰ has demonstrated that early Irish annual entries go back to a common source. O'Rahilly concludes that this document dates to c. 740, while MacNeil¹⁰, followed by O'Reilly suggests Bangor near Belfast Lough in East Ulster as the place of compilation. That the *Ulster Chronicle*, as O'Reilly has called it, contains entries which derive from Scotland, probably *Iona*, was recognized by both MacNeill and O'Rahilly, while O'Rahilly's dating of the *Ulster Chronicle* was partly determined on the evidence of these entries. More recently Dr. Isabel Henderson¹⁰ has suggested new grounds for believing that a Scottish annalistic record was compiled in Iona about the middle of the eighth century. For convenience of reference it may be cited henceforth as the *Iona Chronicle*."

¹¹ PHH, pg 24: It is evident that a great deal of work continued to be done in the *Scriptorium* in Iona. Portions of annals written there formed the basis of later Irish annals such as the Annals of Tigernach.

¹² SS, pg. 756: SUIBHNE. A name of uncertain meaning. *Su* mand 'good,' but the meaning of the second part of the name is not clear. The opposite of *Suibhne* is *Duibhne*, where the first syllable has the meaning 'ill, bad.' Suibhne, Cuirtre's son, sixth abbot of Iona, died in 657 (*Tighehernach*), and another Suibhne, sixteenth abbot, died in 772 (AU). The death of Suibhne mac Cinaeda, ri Gallgaidhel (Suibhne, son of Kenneth, king of the Gall-Gaidil) is recorded in AU, under 1034. Suffne or Swene,

son of Ewen (Sunicus or Suffinis Eugenii), lord of Oitty, granted certain of his lands to Duncan, son of Alexander, in 1431 (OPS., p. 54). From *Suibhne* comes Ir. *Sweeney*. (See info at end of this publication also.)

¹³ PHH, pg. 59: In Erin, as in Alba, the word *clann*, meaning "children" had acquired the wider meaning of "kindred". But by the twelfth century, the nuclei were forming in the Highlands of a wider type of organisation that was to develop gradually into what we now recognize as the Highlands clans.

¹⁴ PHH, pg. 14: In spite of what must have been a considerable infusion of foreign blood by the conqueror and settler, the number of clans that in their older genealogies claimed Norse descent is not large. They include the MacLeods, the MacAskills, the MacAulays, the MacSweens and the Nicholsons.

¹⁵ <http://www.macewan.net/castle.html> - The Macewens are descended from Aedh Anradham who married an heiress of Cowal and Knapdale in the 11th century. Four generations later Suibhne, in the early 12th century, held Castle Sween. His son Uufgal is known to have given a charter to the Monks of Paisley for two chapels, one in Knapdale and one at Skipness. He also sold the lands of Knapdale and Skipness to the Earl of Monteith. His son John sided with Edward I and Edward II in the Scottish Wars of Independence, perhaps partly because he hoped to recover possession of the lands of Knapdale if the English conquered Scotland. He spent much time in Ireland during these years of war, which probably explains the tradition that the Macewens came from Ireland. It was his grand son Ewen who gave his name to the clan in the 14th century. They settled on Loch Fyneside on land between the territories of the Lamonts and the Maclachlans with which clans they intermarried. About 1450 the Campbells ousted them from this area but, while the Macewens no longer held these lands, they scattered throughout Scotland and prospered. I am grateful to Mr Archibald McIntyre late of Lindsaig, Kilfinan, who has given me this information on the origins of the Macewen for use in this section.

¹⁶ charter\ Source, Internet site of Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com>: a document granting certain specified rights, powers, privileges, or functions from the sovereign power of a state to an individual, corporation, city, or other unit of local organization. (Sovereign: One that exercises supreme, permanent authority, especially in a nation or other governmental unit, as king, queen, ruler or monarch.)

¹⁷ Among the followers of Alexander was a Duncan MacDuine who appears as owning land at Lochow. Dugald, the son of this Duncan, was the first of his family to bear the name of Campbell.

Over the doorway of Carnasserie Castle near Kilmartin, there is a stone bearing the arms of Archibald, 5th Earl of Argyll (1558), impaled with those of his wife. Below is the following "God with the O'Duin or son of Duin," referencing to the original Clan through connections with which the Campbells became possessed of property in Western Argyll.

¹⁸ GS, pg 495 – SWIN: sea-loch in west of Knapdale, Argyleshire. It opens opposite southern part of Jura; strikes north-northeastward in such divergent line as to leave only a narrow peninsula between it and Jura Sound; measures 10 miles in length, and from 2 ½ miles to 5 furlongs in width; has intricately-cut shores and wooded sloping hilly screens; and adjoins, at two miles from its mouth, the ruined strong ancient fortalice of Castle Swin .

¹⁹ One would like to know who were the Architects and draughtsmen that planned this and the many similar castles in remote localities and superintended their construction. Probably they would be Churchmen, as this was the beginning of the great Cathedral building era.

Skipness Castle is, today, one of the most imposing and best preserved of the old castles of Kynnty. It was evidently built at a date when the Norman and the Gothic styles were both studied by architects for in the main entrance, which faces the sea, is a pointed gateway. Several feet within this are the grooves of the portcullis while an inner gateway leading into the courtyard, has the round Norman arch. On the northeast corner is the high keep, a massive square building which could never have been reduced by any such weapons as were in use at that period, though its garrison might be starved into surrender. A smaller tower is at the southeast corner and is known as the Tur an t' saigart or the priest's tower. On the western side, there are the remains of another small tower, so that the castle was well prepared for all defensive purposes, while none could have been owners of such a building but men who were indeed "lordys of that land" and possessors of an estate almost regal.

The following is a description of Skipness as it appeared in the early decades of last Century. "The Castle of Skipness is several stories high and has numerous rooms. The ramparts round the top of the walls show skilful architecture, projecting over the walls. A passage for taking an airing or walk runs between the rampart and the roof on which are loop holes. The roof is sloped and slated like other houses. The rooms, though much dilapidated retain some marks of the splendour which was stamped on them in byegone days. The walls are five or six feet thick, with passages inside them; the windows are narrow outside, but tapering and wide inside! ("*History of Kintyre*" by Peter McIntosh, 1801)

"In the outlying districts of Scotland" says Burton, *"Hist. Of Scot."* 1.8.398, "those which were hardly under the Crown till a late period, there were some puzzling castles such as Sweyne Castle. They are not Gothic in massiveness and have not the finish and decorations of the Normans, yet they are probably as old as Hermitage," well known castle in Liddesdale, built by Walter Comyn in 1244 AD.

²⁰ PHH, pg 17: (Talking about Pett Meic Garnair) *Toisech*, meaning leader, appears in both Irish and Scottish records as the head of a kindred, although the *Toisech* as an administrative official appears only in the Scottish records such as the Book of Deer. He may have possessed the duties, tenure and privileges of the Scottish Thane with whom he was identified in later records, and it is more than coincidence that the Scottish Thanages are almost all within the former Pictland.

²¹ PHH, pg. 40: "Thane" is an English title, of course, and first appears in Angle-Saxon records of the seventh century; they were royal officers in charge of subdivisions of the shires of Northumbria, and from here seem to have been adopted by the kings of Scots. The system was grafted onto a pre-existing administration, that of the *toiseach* of whom we have record in the Book of Deer. The *toiseach* was both the lord or a kindred and a military leader. In the twelfth century, the Scottish thane was a royal officer in charge of royal demesne lands and responsible for the collection of the *cain* (taxes) and other dues. He was also responsible for the organisation of the common army service which assessed in the earldoms of land divisions such as the *davoch* and *ploughgate*.

²² The "*Red Book of Monteith*", vol 1, p. 40, says that during 1124 and 1153 AD, the Earl of Monteith had been appointed to have "jurisdiction in Kyntyre and Cowall"; up to that period then Knapdale belonged to the Sweynes. Acts 1.372.

²³ See area at end of book – this is too long for footnote area.

²⁴ In the thirteenth century Dubhghall mac Suibhne (Dufgallus filius Syfyn) was Lord of Kintyre; *Reg. Pasl.*, pp. 120-22. The name is preserved in *Caisteal Suibhne*, Castle Sween, on Loch Sween in Knapdale. Cf. *Orig..Paroch.*, ii. pt, 1. p. 40.

²⁵ SCBA, pg 10 – At Castle Sween, Dufgall's brother Maolmhuire au Sparain married Beanmidhe, the daughter of Turloch O'Connor, King of Connaught (Ireland). Their son Murragh was captured in Ireland, and he died in the Earl of Ulster's prison, this being the Clan's first mention in the *Irish Annals of the Four Masters*: "In the Age of Christ 1267. Murragh MacSweeney was taken prisoner in Umallia by Donnell, son of Manus O'Conor, who delivered him up to the Earl in whose prison he died." Burke's *General Armory* lists his arms as follows: "MacSweeney (co. Donegal), Moragh MacSweeney, Chieftain 1267. Reg. Ulster's Office. *Argent a lion in chief and a boar in base both passant gules.*" Edmund Curtis, late Professor of History at the University of Dublin in his *A History of Ireland*, describes this event: "...but Tyrconnell's hero died of his wounds, and his country was only saved by the arrival in 1258 of Donel Og O'Donnel from Scotland, where he had been fostered and married Catriona MacSweeney, a descendent of the Suibhne of 1034.

²⁶ SCBA, pg 9 – James Balfour Paul in *Scots Peerage Notes*: (VI, 130, "The Ancient Earls of Mentieth") – "It was about 1260, when the Countess Isabella and her husband were forced to renounce the earldom, that the Kings and barons of Scotland decerned the lands and title to belong to the wife of William Stewart, and he was invested therein. (*Red Book of Mentieth, I, 4*). He was certainly earl before 17 April 1261, when he was witness to a grand to the Abbey of Paisley. (*Reg Passelet, 121*) In the following year (*sic*) Dugall MacSwein granted to the Earl the lands of Skipnish, Kedeslatt or Killislate, and others being that part of Kintyre called South Knapdale and the Parish of Kilcalmonell." Archibald Brown mentions "Dufgall who granted to Walter Stewart of Menchet his lands of Skyphinch in free barony to the king for two thirds of one soldier and other service." (*Reg. Pass.*, 120-121)

²⁷ KSC, pg. 5. In 1249, Angus mor, son of Donald, bestowed the church of Kilkerran in Kintyre on the Abbey of Paisley. (pg. 5)

²⁸ Papers in the Library at Inverary Castle?