

**BADENOCH : ITS HISTORY, CLANS,
AND PLACE NAMES.**

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A paper read to the Gaelic Society of Inverness on 5th March, 1890, by Dr Alexander Macbain, MA, LL.D, FSAScot, of Inverness.

TGSI¹ Vol 16 (1889-90), pp. 148-197.

[148] Badenoch is one of the most interior districts of Scotland ; it lies on the northern watershed of the mid Grampians, and the lofty ridge of the Monadhliha range forms its northern boundary, while its western border runs along the centre of the historic Drum-Alban. Even on its eastern side the mountains seem to have threatened to run a barrier across, for Craiggellachie thrusts its huge nose forward into a valley already narrowed by the massive form of the Ord Bain and the range of hills behind it. This land of mountains is intersected by the river Spey, which runs midway between the two parallel ranges of the Grampians and the Monadhliha, taking its rise, however, at the ridge of [149] Drum-Alban. Badenoch, as a habitable land, is the valley of the Spey and the glens that run off from it. The vast bulk of the district is simply mountain.

In shape, the district of Badenoch is rectangular, with east-north-easterly trend, its length averaging about thirty-two miles, and its breadth some seventeen miles. Its length along the line of the Spey is thirty-six miles, the river itself flowing some 35 miles of the first part of its course through Badenoch. The area of Badenoch is, according to the Ordnance Survey, 551 square miles, that is, close on three hundred and fifty-three thousand acres. The lowest level in the district is 700 feet ; Kingussie, the "capital," is 740 feet above sea-level, and Loch Spey is 1142 feet. The highest peak is 4149 feet high, a shoulder of the Braeriach ridge, which is itself outside Badenoch by about a mile, and Ben Macdui by two miles. Mountains and rivers, rugged rocks and narrow glens, with one large medial valley fringed with cultivation that is Badenoch. It is still well wooded, though nothing to what it once must have been. The lower ground at one time must have been completely covered by wood, which spread away into the vales and glens ; for we find on lofty plateaux and hill sides the marks of early cultivation, the ridges and the rigs or *feannagan*, showing that the lower ground was not very available for crops on account of the forest, which, moreover, was full of wild beasts, notably the wolf and the boar. Cultivation, therefore, ran mostly along the outer fringe of this huge wood, continually encroaching on it as generation succeeded generation.

The bogs yield abundant remains of the once magnificent forest that covered hillside and glen, and the charred logs prove that fire was the chief agent of destruction. The tradition of the country has it that the wicked Queen Mary set fire to the old Badenoch forest. She felt offended at her husband's pride in the great forest — he had asked once on his home return how his forests were before he asked about her. So she came north, took her station on the top of *Sron-na-Bàruinn* [OS has *Sròn na Ban-rìgh* {NN 87698 88131}] — the Queen's Ness — above Glenfeshie, and there gave orders to set the woods on fire. And her

¹ TGSI - Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

orders were obeyed. The Badenoch forest was set burning, [150] and the Queen, Nero-like, enjoyed the blaze from her point of vantage. But many glens and nooks escaped, and Rothiemurchus was left practically intact. The Sutherland shire version of the story is different and more mythic. The King of Lochlain was envious of the great woods of Scotland; the pine forests especially roused his jealous ire. So he sent his *muime* — it must have been a witch and a monster, whose name was *Dubh-Ghiubhais*, and she set the forests on fire in the north. She kept herself aloft among the clouds, and rained down fire on the woods, which burnt on with alarming rapidity. People tried to get at the witch, but she never showed herself, but kept herself enveloped in a cloud of smoke. When she had burned as far as Badenoch, a clever man of that district devised a plan for compassing her destruction. He gathered together cattle of all kinds and their young ; then he separated the lambs from the sheep, the calves from the cows, and the young generally from their dams ; then such a noise of bleating, lowing, neighing, and general Babel arose to the heaven that *Dubh-Ghiubhais* popped her head out of the cloud to see what was wrong. This was the moment for action. The Badenoch man was ready for it ; he had his gun loaded with the orthodox six-pence ; he fired, and down came the *Dubh-Ghiubhais*, a lifeless lump! So a part of the great Caledonian forest was saved among the Grampian hills.

Modern Badenoch comprises the parishes of Laggan, Kingussie and Insh, and Alvie ; but the old Lordship of Badenoch was too aristocratic to do without having a detached portion somewhere else. Consequently, we find that Kincardine parish, now part of Abernethy, was part of the Lordship of Badenoch even later than 1606, when Huntly excambed it with John [Grant] of Freuchie for lands in Glenlivet. Kincardine was always included in the sixty davachs [*daibhachean*] that made up the land of Badenoch. The Barony of Glencarnie in Duthil — from Aviemore to Garten and northward to Inverlaidnan — was seemingly attached to the Lordship of Badenoch for a time, and so were the davachs of Tullochgorum, Curr, and Clurie further down the Spey, excambed by Huntly in 1491 with John [Grant] of Freuchie. On the other hand, Rothiemurchus was never a part of Badenoch, though some have maintained that it was. The six davachs of Rothiemurchus belonged to the Bishops of Moray, and at times they feued the whole of Rothiemurchus to some powerful person, as to the Wolf of Badenoch in 1383, and to Alexander Keyr Mackintosh in 1464, in whose family it was held till 1539, when it passed into the hands of the Gordons, and from them to the Grants.

[151] Badenoch does not appear in early Scottish history; till the 13th-century, we never hear of it by name nor of anything that took place within its confines. True, Skene, in his "Celtic Scotland," definitely states that the battle of Monitcarno was fought here in 729. This battle took place between Angus, King of Fortrenn, and Nectan, the ex-king of the Picts, and in it the latter was defeated, and Angus shortly afterwards established himself on the Pictish throne. We are told that the scene of the battle was "*Monitcarno juxta stagnum Loogdae*" Monadh-carnach by the side of Loch Loogdæ. Adamnán also mentions Lochdæ, which Columba falls in with while going over Drum Alban. Skene says that Loch Insh — the lake of the island — is a secondary name, and that it must have originally been called Lochdæ, that the hills behind it enclose the valley of Glencarnie, and that Dunachton, by the side of Loch Insh, is named Nectan's fort after King Nectan. Unfortunately this view is wrong, and Badenoch must give up any claim to be the scene of the battle of Monadhcaro ; Lochdæ is now identified with [Loch] Lochy, and Glencarnie is in Duthil. But Dunachton is certainly

Nectan's fort ; whether the Nectan meant was the celebrated Pictish King may well be doubted. Curiously, local tradition holds strongly that a battle was fought by the side of Loch Insh, but the defeated leader was King Harold, whose grave is on the side of *Craig Righ Harailt* [OS has Creag Righ Tharailt {NH 79101 05175}].

From 729, we jump at once to 1229, exactly five hundred years, and about that date we find that Walter Cumyn [Comyn] is feudal proprietor of Badenoch, for he makes terms with the Bishop of Moray in regard to the church lands and to the "natives" or bondsmen in the district. It has been supposed that Walter Cumyn came into the possession of Badenoch by the forfeiture and death of Gillescop, a man who committed some atrocities in 1228 such as burning the (wooden) forts in the province of Moray, and setting fire to a large part of the town of Inverness. William Cumyn, Earl of Buchan, the justiciar [of the North], was intrusted with the protection of Moray, and in 1229 Gillescop and his two sons were slain. Thereafter we find Walter Cumyn in possession of Badenoch and Kincardine, and it is a fair inference that Gillespie was his predecessor in the lordship of Badenoch. The Cummings were a Norman family ; they came over with the Conqueror, and it is asserted that they were nearly related to him by marriage. In 1068, we hear of one of them being governor or earl of Northumberland, and the name is common in English charters of the 12th century, in the early part of which they appear in Scotland ; they were in great favour with the Normanising David, and with [152] William after him, filling offices of chancellors and justiciars under them. William Cumyn, about the year 1210, married Marjory, heiress of the Earldom of Buchan, and thus became the successor of the old Celtic *Mormaers* of that district under the title of Earl of Buchan. His son Walter obtained the lordship of Badenoch, as we saw, and, a year or two after, he became Earl of Menteith by marrying the heiress, the Countess of Menteith. He still kept the lands of Badenoch, for, in 1234, we find him, as Earl of Menteith, settling a quarrel with the Bishop of Moray over the Church lands of Kincardine. Walter was a potent factor in Scottish politics, and in the minority of Alexander III. acted patriotically as leader against the pro-English party. He died in 1257 without issue. John Comyn, his nephew, son of Richard, succeeded him in Badenoch ; he was head of the whole family of Comyn, and possessed much property, though simply entitled Lord of Badenoch. The Comyns at that time were at the height of their power ; they could muster at least two earls, the powerful Lord of Badenoch, and thirty belted knights. Comyn of Badenoch was a prince, though not in name, making treaties and kings. John Comyn, called the Red, died in 1274, and was succeeded by his son John Comyn, the Black, and in the troubles about the kingly succession, at the end of the century, he was known as John de Badenoch, senior, to distinguish him from his son John, the Red Comyn, the regent. Baliol's nephew, and claimant to the throne, whom Bruce killed under circumstances of treachery at Dumfries, in 1306. Then followed the fall and forfeiture of the Comyns, and the lordship of Badenoch was given, about 1313 – included in the Earldom of Moray – to Thomas Randolph, Bruce's right-hand friend.

The Cummings have left an ill name behind them in Badenoch for rapacity and cruelty. Their treachery has passed into a proverb –

*"Fhad bhitheas craobh 'sa choill
Bithidh foill 'sna Cuiminich."*

Which is equally smart in its English form

" While in the wood there is a tree
A Cumming will deceitful be."

It is in connection with displacing the old proprietors, the Shaws and Mackintoshes, that the ill repute of the Cummings was really gained. But the particular cases which tradition remembers are mythical in the extreme ; yet there is something in the traditions. There is a remembrance that these Cummings were the [153] first feudal lords of Badenoch ; until their time, the Gaelic *Tuath* that dwelt in Badenoch had lived under their old tribal customs, with their *toiseachs*, their *airés*, and their *saor* and *daor* occupiers of land. The newcomers, with their charters, their titles, and their new exactions over and above the old *Tuath* tributes and dues, must have been first objects of wonder, and then of disgust. The authority which the Cummings exerted over the native inhabitants must often have been in abeyance, and their rents more a matter of name than reality. However, by making it the interest of the chiefs to side with them, and by granting them charters, these initial difficulties were got over in a century or two. It was under this feudalising process that the system of clans, as now known, was developed.

Earl Randolph died in 1332, and his two sons were successively Earls of Moray, the second dying in 1346 without issue, when " Black Agnes," Countess of Dunbar, succeeded to the vast estates. The Earldom of Moray, exclusive of Badenoch and Lochaber, was renewed to her son in 1372.² Meanwhile, in 1371 Alexander Stewart, King Robert's son, was made Lord of Badenoch by his father, as also Earl of Buchan ; and in 1387 he became Earl of Ross through his marriage with the Countess Euphame. His power was therefore immense ; he was the king's lieutenant in the North (*locum tenens in borealibus partibus regni*) ; but such was the turbulence and ferocity of his character that he was called the "Wolf of Badenoch." He is still remembered in the traditions of the country — as "Alastair Mor Mac an Righ" — Alexander the Big, Son of the King — a title which is recorded also in Maurice Buchanan's writings (A.D. 1461, "Book of Pluscarden"), who says that the wild Scots (*Scotis silvestribus*) called him "Alitstar More Makin Re." Naturally enough he gets confused with his famous namesake of Macedon, also Alastair Mor, but the more accurate of tradition-mongers differentiate them easily, for they call [154] Alexander the Great "*Alastair Uabh'rach, Mac Righ Philip*" — " Alexander the Proud, son of King Philip." This epithet of *uabh'reach* or *uaibhreach* appears as applied to Alexander the Great in that beautiful mediæval Gaelic poem that begins —

" *Ceathrar do bhi air uaighan fhir*
Fear Alaxandair Uaibhrigh :
Ro chausat briathra con bhreicc
Os cionii na flatha a Fhinngheic."

Translated —

Four men were at a hero's grave

The tomb of Alexander the Proud ;

² Sir W. Fraser, in his "History of the Grants," says: "After the forfeiture of the Comyns, Badenoch formed a part of the earldom of Moray, conferred on Sir Thomas Randolph. In 1338, however, it was held by the Earl of Ross, and in 1372, while granting the Earldom of Moray to John Dunbar, King Robert II. specially excepted Lochaber and Badenoch." Sir W. Fraser's authority for saying that Badenoch was in the possession of the Earl of Ross must be the charter of 1338 granting Kinrara and Dalnavert to Melmoran of Glencharny ; but a careful reading of that document shows that the Earl of Ross was not superior of Badenoch, for he speaks of the services due by him to the "Lord superior of Badenoch." Besides, in 1467, when Huntly was Lord of Badenoch, we find the Earl of Ross still possessing lands there, viz., Invermarkie, which he gives to Cawdor as part of his daughter's dowry.

Words they spake without lies
Over the chief from beauteous Greek-land.³

The Wolf of Badenoch's dealings with his inferiors in his lordship are not known; but that he allowed lawlessness to abound may be inferred from the feuds that produced the Battle of Invernahavon (c.1386), and culminated in the remarkable conflict on the North Inch of Perth in 1396. We are not in much doubt as to his conduct morally and ecclesiastically. He had five natural-born sons Alexander, Earl of Mar, Andrew, Walter, James, and Duncan - a regular Wolf's brood for sanguinary embroilments. He had a chronic quarrel with Alexander Bur, Bishop of Moray, which culminated in the burning of Elgin Cathedral in 1390. But in nearly every case the Bishop, by the terrors of the Curse of Rome [Excommunication], gained his point. In 1380, the Wolf cited the Bishop to appear before him at the Standing Stones of the Rathe of Easter Kingussie (apud le *standand stanys* de le Rathe de Kyngucy estir) on the 10th October, to show his titles to the lands held in the Wolf's lordship of Badenoch, viz., the lands of Logachnacheny (Laggan) [{NN 61509 94308}] Ardinche (Balnespick. &c.) [NH 83758 03679], Kingucy [Kingussie {NH 75864 00657}], the lands of the Chapels of Rate [Chapel of Raitts = Lynchatt {NH 78546 02032}] and Nachtan [Dunachton {NH 82120 04737}], Kyncardyn [{NH 93837 15512}], and also Gartinengally [? Possibly near Gartenmore and Loch Garten?]. The Bishop protested, at a court held at Inverness, against the citation, and urged that the said lands were held of the King direct. But the Wolf held his court on the 10th October : the Bishop standing "*extra curiam*" – outside the court, i.e., the Standing Stones – renewed his protest, but to no purpose. But upon the next day before dinner, and in the great chamber behind the hall in the Castle of Ruthven, the Wolf annulled the proceedings of the previous day, and gave the rolls of Court to the Bishop's notary, who certified that he put them in [155] a large fire lighted in the said chamber, which consumed them. In 1381, the Wolf formally quits claims on the above-mentioned church lands, but in 1383 the Bishop granted him the wide domain of Rothiernurchus – "*Ratmorchus, viz., sex davatas terre quas habemus in Strathspe et le Badenach*" – six *davochs* of land it was. The later quarrels of the Wolf and the Bishop are notorious in Scotch History : the Wolf seized the Bishop's lands, and was excommunicated, in return for which he burnt, in 1390, the towns of Forres and Elgin, with the Church of St Giles, the maison dieu, the Cathedral, and 18 houses of the canons. For this he had to do penance in the Blackfriar's Church at Perth. He died in 1394, and is buried in Dunkeld, where a handsome tomb and effigy of him exist.

As the Wolf left no legitimate issue, some think the Lordship of Badenoch at once reverted to the Crown, for we hear no more of it till it was granted to Huntly in 1451. On this point Sir W. Fraser says : – "*The Lordship of Badenoch was bestowed by King Robert II. upon his son, the 'Wolf of Badenoch,' in 1371, and should have reverted to the Crown on the Lord of Badenoch's death in 1394. But there is no evidence in the Exchequer Roll, or elsewhere, of any such reversion, and Badenoch seems to have been retained in possession by the Wolf of Badenoch's eldest son, who became Earl of Mar Alexander, Earl of Mar, and his father, were therefore the successors of the Comyns as Lords of Badenoch.*"

³ See "*Dean of Lismore*," p. 84 ; Ranald Macdonald's Collection, p. 133, and Highland Monthly, II., p. 376. (The above is from a British Museum MS.)

The Lordship of Badenoch was finally granted to Alexander, Earl of Huntly, by James II., by charter dated 28th April, 1451, not in recompense for his services at the Battle of Brechin, as is generally stated, but upwards of a year before that event. The great family of Gordon and Huntly originally came from near the Borders. They obtained their name of Gordon from the lands of Gordon [{{NT 64730 43109}}], now a parish and village in the west of the Merse, S.W. Berwickshire. There, also, was the quondam hamlet of Huntly, a name now represented there only by the farm called Huntlywood [{{NT 61919 42982}}]. The parish gave the family name of Gordon, and the hamlet of Huntly gave the title of Earl or Marquess of Huntly. Sir Adam de Gordon was one of Bruce's supporters, and after the forfeiture of the Earl of Athole he got the lordship of Strathbogie, with all its appurtenances, in Aberdeenshire and Banff. The direct male Gordon line ended with Sir Adam's great-grandson and namesake, who fell at the battle of Homildon Hill in 1402, leaving a daughter Elizabeth, who married Alexander Seaton, second son of Sir W. Seaton of Winton. Her son Alexander assumed the name of [156] Gordon, and was created Earl of Huntly in 1449. His son George was Lord Chancellor, founded Gordon Castle, and erected the Priory of Kingussie (Shaw's Moray). The Gordons were so pre-eminent in Northern politics that their head was nicknamed "Cock of the North." In 1599, Huntly was created a Marquis, and in 1684 the title was advanced to that of Duke of Gordon. George, the fifth and last Duke of Gordon, died in 1836, when the property passed into the possession of the Duke of Richmond and Lennox, as heir of entail, in whose person the title of Duke of Gordon was again revived in 1876, the full title being now Duke of Richmond and Gordon.

Save the Church lands, all the property in Badenoch belonged to Huntly either as superior or actual proprietor. The Earl of Ross possessed lands in Badenoch under the lord superior in 1338, which he granted to Malmoran of Glencarnie : the lands were Dalnavert and Kinrara, and the grant is confirmed about 1440, while in 1467 we find the Earl of Ross again granting the adjoining lands of Invermarkie to the Thane of Cawdor, in whose name they appear till the seventeenth century, when Invereshie gets possession of them. The Laird of Grant, besides Delfour, which he had for three centuries, also held the Church lands of Laggan and Insh, that is, "*Logane, Ardinche, Ballynaspy,*" as it is stated in 1541, and he is in possession of them for part of the seventeenth century. Mackintosh of Mackintosh has in feu from Huntly in the sixteenth century the lands of Benchar, Clune, Kinraig, and Dunachton, with Rait, Kinrara, and Dalnavert. The only other proprietor or feuar besides these existing in the 16th century seems to have been James Mackintosh of Gask. The Macphersons, for instance, including Andrew in Cluny, who signed for Huntly the "Clan Farsons Band" of 1591, are all tenants merely. We are very fortunate in possessing the Huntly rental of Badenoch for the year 1603. Mackintosh appears as feuar for the lands above mentioned, and there are two wadsetters Gask and Strone, both Mackintoshes. The 17th century sees quite a revolution in landholding in Badenoch, for during its course Huntly has liberally granted feus, and the proprietors are accordingly very numerous. Besides Huntly, Mackintosh, and Grant of Grant, we find some twenty feus or estates possessed by Macphersons ; there was a Macpherson of Ardbrylach, Balchroan, Benchar, (in) Blarach, Breakachie, Clune, Cluny, Corranach, Crathie, Dalraddy, Delfour, Etteridge, Gasklyne, Gellovie, Invereshie, Invernahaven (Inverallochie), Invertromie, Nuid, Phones, and Pitchirn. There was a Mackintosh of Balnospick, Benchar, [157] Delfour, Gask, Kinrara, Lynwilg, Rait and Strone eight in all. Four other names appear once each besides these during the century Maclean, Gordon of Buckie, Macqueen, and Macdonald. The total valuation of Badenoch in

1644 was £11,527 Scots, in 1691 £6523, and in 1789 it was £7124, with only seven proprietors – Duke of Gordon, Mackintosh, Cluny, Invereshie, Belleville, Grant of Grant (Delfour), and Major Gordon (Invertromie). The "wee lairdies" of the previous two centuries were swallowed up in the estates of the first five of these big proprietors, who still hold large estates in Badenoch, the Duke of Gordon being represented by the Duke of Richmond since 1836. Only one or two other proprietors on any large scale have come in since – Baillie of Dochfour, Sir John Ramsden, and, we may add, Macpherson of Glentruim. The valuation roll for 1889-90 shows a rental of £36,165 11s 7d sterling.

CLAN CHATTAN.

In the above section we discussed the political history of Badenoch, under the title of the "Lordship of Badenoch," and in this section we intend to deal with the history of the native population of that district. Badenoch was the principal seat of the famous and powerful Clan Chattan. The territory held by this clan, however, was far from being confined to Badenoch ; for at the acme of their power in the 15th century, Clan Chattan stretched across mid Inverness-shire, almost from sea to sea from the Inverness Firth to near the end of Loch-eil, that is, from Petty right along through Strathnairn, Strathdearn, and Badenoch to Brae-Lochaber, with a large overflow through Rothiemurchus into Braemar, which was the seat of the Farquharsons, who are descendants of the Shaws or Mackintoshes of Rothiemurchus. The Clan Chattan were the inhabitants of this vast extent of territory, but the ownership or superiority of the land was not theirs or their chiefs', and the leading landlords they had to deal with were the two powerful Earls of Huntly and Moray. From them, as superiors, Mackintosh, chief of Clan Chattan, held stretches of land here and there over the area populated by the clan, and his tribesmen were tacksmen or feu-holders of the rest, as the case might be, under Moray or Huntly. It was rather an anomalous position for a great Highland chief, and one often difficult to maintain. Major (1521) describes the position, territorially and otherwise, of the Clans Chattan and Cameron in words which may be thus translated : – "These tribes are kinsmen, holding little in lordships, but following one head of their race (*caput progenei* – *ceann cinnidh*) [158] as chief, with their friends and dependents." The lordships were held, alas ! by foreigners to them in race and blood.

The Clan Chattan were the native Celtic inhabitants of Badenoch. There are traditional indications that they came from the west from Lochaber, where the MS. histories place the old Clan Chattan lands. The same authorities record that, for instance, the Macbeans came from Lochaber in the 14th century, " after slaying the Red Comyn's captain of Inverlochy," and put themselves under the protection of Mackintosh ; and this is supported by the tradition still preserved among the Rothiemurchus Macbeans, whose ancestor, Bean Cameron, had to fly Lochaber owing to a quarrel and slaughter arising from the exaction of the "*bò ursainn*," or probate duty of the time. It may be too bold to connect this eastern movement of Clan Chattan with the advancing tide of Scotie conquest in the 8th century, whereby the Pictish Kingdoms and the Pictish language were overthrown. That the Picts inhabited Badenoch is undoubted : the place names amply prove that, for we meet with such test prefixes as *Pet* (Pitowrie, Pictchirn, Pitmean) and *Aber* (Aberarder), and other difficulties of topography unexplainable by the Gaelic language. As in most of Scotland, we have doubtless to deal, first, with a pre-Celtic race or races, possibly leaving remnants of its

tongue in such a river name as Feshie, then the Pictish or Caledonian race of Celtic extraction, and, lastly, the Gaelic race who imposed their language and rule upon the previous peoples. The clan traditions are supported in the matter of a western origin for the Clan Chattan by the genealogies given in the 1467 MS., which deduces the chief line from Ferchar Fota, King of Dalriada, in the 7th century.

The name Cattan, like everything connected with the early history of this clan, is obscure, and has, in like manner, given rise to many absurd stories and theories. As a matter of course, the Classical geography of Europe has been ransacked, and there, in Germany, was a people called *Chatti*, which was taken as pronounced Catti ; but the *ch* stands for a sound like that in *loch*. The name now appears as Hesse for Hätti. It was never Katti, be it remembered. Yet the Catti are brought from Germany to Sutherlandshire, which in Gaelic is *Cataobh*, older *Cataib*, a name supposed thus to be derived from the Catti. *Cataobh* is merely the dative plural of *cat* (a cat), just as *Gallaobh* (Caithness) is the same case of *Gall* (a stranger, Norseman). The Cat men dwelt in Sutherlandshire ; why they were called the Cats is not known. Clan Chattan is often said to be originally from Sutherland, but [159] beyond the similarity of name, there is no shadow of evidence for the assertion. Others again, like Mr Elton, see in the name *Catan*, which means, undoubtedly, " little cat," relics of totemism ; this means neither more nor less than that the pre-Christian Clan Chattan worshipped the cat, from whom, as divine ancestor, they deemed themselves descended. We might similarly argue that the Mathesons — Mac Mhath-ghamhuin or Son of the Bear — were a "bear" tribe, a fact which shows how unstable is the foundation on which this theory is built. In fact, animal names for men were quite common in early times. The favourite theory — and one countenanced by the genealogies — connects the Clan Chattan, like so many other clans, with a church-derived name. The ancestor from whom they are represented as deriving their name is *Gillicattan Mor*, who lived in the 11th century. His name signifies *Servant of Catan*, that is, of St Catan ; for people were named after saints, not directly, but by means of the prefixes *Gille* and *Maol*. At least, that was the early and more reverent practice. That there was a St Catan is evidenced by such place names as Kilchattan (in Bute and Lung), with dedication of churches at Gigha and Colonsay. His date is given as 710AD, but really nothing is known of him. This is probably the best explanation of the name, though the possibility of the clan being named after some powerful chief called Catan must not be overlooked. The crest of the cat is late, and merely a piece of mild heraldic punning.

It is only about or after 1400 that we come on anything like firm historical ground in the genealogy and story of our chief Highland clans. This is true of the Grants and the Camerons, and especially true of the Clan Chattan. Everything before that is uncertainty and fable. The earliest mention of Clan Chattan — and it is not contemporary but fifty years later, is in connection with the fight at the North Inch of Perth in 1396, and here historians are all at sixes and sevens as to who the contending parties really were. The battle of Invernahavon (1386?) and the fight at Clachnaharry (1454) are mere traditions, and the battle in 1429 between Clan Chattan and Clan Chameron, in which the former nearly annihilated the latter, is recorded by a writer nearly a century later (1521). In fact, the first certain contemporary date is that of Mackintosh's charter in 1466 from the Lord of the Isles, where he is designated Duncan Mackintosh, " capitanus de Clan Chattan," and next year as " chief and captain" of Clan Chattan, in a bond with Lord Forbes. Henceforward, Clan Chattan is a common name in public history and private documents. [160] It comprised in the period of

its comparative unity (c. 1400-1600) some sixteen tribes or septs : these were the Mackintoshes, Macphersons, Davidsons, Cattanachs, Macbeans, Macphails, Shaws, Farquharsons, Macgillivrays, Macleans of Dochgarroch, Smiths, Macqueens, Gillanders, Clarks, &c. Of this confederation, Mackintosh was for, at least, two centuries "captain and chief," as all documents, public and private, testify. These two centuries (c.1400 to 1600) form the only period in which we see, under the light of history, the Highland clans in their full development.

The 17th century made sad havoc in the unity of Clan Chattan. Huntly, ever an enemy to Mackintosh, "banded" in 1591 the Macphersons to his own person, and, by freely granting charters to them, made them independent, and detached them from Mackintosh. Macpherson of Cluny claimed to be head of the Macphersons, and in 1673 styled himself "Duncan Mcpherson of Cluney for himself, and taking burden upon him for the heall name of Mcphersons and some others called old Clanchattan as cheeffe and principall man thereof," in a bond with Lord Macdonell of Morar. In support of this claim, the Macphersons appealed to the old genealogies, which represented Mackintosh as getting the Clan Chattan lands by marriage with the heiress in 1291, and which further showed that Cluny was the heir male descendant of the old Clan Chattan chiefs. The case in its solemn absurdity of appeal to genealogies reminds one of a like appeal placed before the Pope in the claims of King Edward upon the throne of Scotland. He claimed the Scottish crown as the direct successor of Brutus and Albanactus, who lived in Trojan times, every link of genealogy being given, while the Scots repelled this by declaring that they were descended from Gathelus husband of Scota, daughter of the Mosaic King of Egypt ; and here, too, all the genealogical links could have been given. Neither doubted the genuineness of each other's genealogies! So with the Mackintosh-Macpherson controversy about the chiefship of Clan Chattan. They each accept each other's genealogies without suspicion or demur. And yet the manufacture of these and like genealogies was an accomplished art with Gaelic *seanachies* whether Irish or Scottish. We even see it going on under our very eyes. The early chiefs of Lochiel are the *de Cambruns* of the 13th and 14th century records lists and other documents impressed into the Cameron genealogy, which is doubtless correctly given in the 1467 MS. Again, the Macpherson genealogy in the Douglas Baronage is in several cases drawn from [161] charters granted to wholly different families. Dormund Macpherson, 12th chief, gets a charter under the great seal from James IV.; but the charter turns out to be one granted to a Dormund McPherson in the Lordship of Menteith, not of Badenoch! John, 14th of Cluny, who "was with the Earl of Huntly at the battle of Glenlivet," as the veracious chronicler says, to add a touch of realism to his bald genealogical account, gets a charter of the lands of Tullich, &c., lands which lie in Strathnairn, and he turns out to be a scion of the well-known family of Macphersons of Brin! Similarly John, 15th of Cluny, is son of the foregoing John of Brin ; and Ewen, 16th of Cluny, who gets a charter in 1623 of the lands of Tullich, &c., is a cousin of Brin. Donald, 17th of Cluny, who gets a charter in 1643, turns out to be Donald Macpherson of Nuid. And all this time another and a correct genealogy of the Cluny family had been drawn up by Sir Æneas Macpherson towards the end of the 17th century, which must surely have been known to the writer.⁴ During all the period of 14th to

⁴ See Mr Fraser- Mackintosh's *Dunachton*, pp. 46-49, for a full *exposé* of this remarkable piece of manufacture.

16th chief here given, there was only one man in Cluny, and his name was Andrew Macpherson, son of Ewen.

The name Mackintosh signifies the son of the *toiseach* or chief, which is Latinised by Flaherty as "*capitaneus seu praecipuus dux*." The Book of Deer makes the relationship of *toiseach* to other dignitaries quite plain. There is first the King; under him are the *mormaers* or stewards of the great provinces of Scotland, such as Buchan, Marr, and Moray ; and next comes the *toiseach* or chief of the clan in a particular district. The two clans in the Book of Deer are those of Canan and Morgan, each with a *toiseach*. This word is represented oftenest in English in old documents by 'thane', which, indeed, represents it with fair accuracy. *Toiseach* is the true Gaelic word for "chief," but it is now obsolete, and there is now no true equivalent of the word "chief" in the language at all. And here it may be pointed out that the word chief itself was not at once adopted or adapted for this particular meaning of chief of a Highland clan. As we saw, the word at first employed was "captain," then "captain and chief," "captain, chief, and principal man," "chief and principal," &c., the idea finally settling down as fully represented by the word "chief" in the 16th century. Skene's attempt to argue that 'captain' denoted a leader temporarily adopted, leading the clan for another, or usurping the power of another, while chief denoted a hereditary office, is [162] condemned by his own evidence, and by the weight of facts. Besides, words do not suddenly spring into technical meanings, nor could chief acquire the definite meaning applicable to Highland chiefship, but by length of time and usage for this purpose. Hence arose the uncertainty of the early terms applied to the novel idea presented by Highland clans. The word clan itself appears first in literature in connection with Clan Chattan, or rather Clan Qwhewyl, at the North Inch of Perth, where Wyntown speaks of "Clannys twa." The Gaelic word clan had to be borrowed for want of a native English term ; why should we then wonder at the idea of *toiseach* being rendered first by captain, and latterly by chief?

The Mackintosh genealogies, dating from the 17th century, represent the family as descended from Macduff, thane of Fife, as they and Fordun call him. Shaw Macduff, the second son of Duncan, fifth Earl of Fife, who died in 1154, in an expedition against the people of Moray in 1160, distinguished himself, and received from the King lands in Petty, and the custody of Inverness Castle. Here he was locally known as Shaw Mac an Toiseich, "Shaw, the son of the Thane." He died in 1179, and was succeeded by (2) Shaw, whose son was (3) Ferchard, whose nephew was (4) Shaw, whose son was (5) Ferchard, whose son was (6) Angus, who in 1291 married Eva, heiress of Clan Chattan, and thus got the Clan's lands in Lochaber. So far the genealogy. It is a pretty story, but it sadly lacks one thing – verisimilitude. Macduff was not *toiseach* of Fife. In the Book of Deer he is called *comes*, the then Gaelic of which was *mormaer*, now *moirear*. Shaw Macduff would infallibly, as son of the Earl of Fife, have been called Mac Mhoireir. With those who support this Macduff genealogy, no argument need be held ; like the humorist of a past generation, one would, however, like to examine their bumps. The statement that the Mackintoshes were hereditary constables of Inverness Castle is totally baseless and false. At the dates indicated (12th century) we believe that the Mackintoshes had not penetrated so far north as Petty or Inverness, and that we should look to Badenoch as their place of origin, and their abode at this time. Unfortunately documents in regard to the early history of Badenoch are rare, but an entry or two in the *Registrum* of Moray Diocese may help us. In 1234, Walter Comyn, Earl of Monteith, comes to an agreement with the Bishop of Moray, in regard to Kincardine, and

Fercard, son of Seth, is a witness, and in the very next document, also one of Walter Comyn's, of the same date, appears a witness called Fercard "Senescalli de Badenoch," that is "steward of Badenoch." We are quite justified [163] in regarding him as the person mentioned in the previous document as Fercard, son of Seth. Now, one translation of *toiseach* is steward or seneschal — the person in power next the *mormaer* or earl. We may, therefore, conclude that this Ferchard was known in Gaelic as Ferchard Toiseach. Similarly in 1440 we meet with Malcolm Mackintosh, chief of the clan, as "ballivus de Badenoch," a title of equal import as that of seneschal. We should then say that the Mackintoshes derived their name from being *toiseachs* of Badenoch, the head of the old Celtic clan being now under the new non-Celtic *mormaer* or earl Walter Comyn. The ease with which the name Mackintosh might arise in any place where a clan and its *toiseach* existed explains how we meet with Mackintoshes, for instance, in Perthshire, who do not belong* to the Clan Chattan. Thus there were Mackintoshes of Glentilt, which was held as an old thanage, and whose history as such is well known. Similarly we may infer that the Mackintoshes of Monivaird were descendants of the old local Toiseachs or Thaners. The Mackintosh genealogists have of course annexed them to the Clan Chattan stock with the utmost ease and success. In 1456, John of the Isles granted to Somerled, his armour-bearer, a davoch of the lands of Glennevis, with *toiseachdorship* of most of his other lands there, and in 1552 this grant is renewed by Huntly to "dilecto nostro Donaldo MacAlister M'Toschd," that is, Donald, son of Alister, son of Somerled, the toiseach or bailif, named in 1456. This shows how easily the name could have arisen.

Skene, while unceremoniously brushing aside the Macduff genealogy, advances hypothetically a different account of the origin of the Mackintoshes. In 1382, the Lord of Badenoch is asked to restrain Farchard MacToschy and his adherents from disturbing the Bishop of Aberdeen and his tenants in the land of Brass or Birse, and to oblige him to prosecute his claim by form of law. Skene thinks that Farchard, whom he finds in the 1467 MS. as one of the "old" Mackintoshes, was descended from the old thanes of Brass, and that hence arose his name and his claim. Being a vassal of the Wolf's, he was a Badenoch man too. Rothiemurchus was a thanage, and the connection of the Mackintoshes with it was always close. Alexander Keir Mackintosh obtained the feudal rights to Rothiemurehus in 1464, and a few years later he styles himself "Thane of Rothiemurehus." Skene then suggests that Birso and Rothiemurehus might have anciently been in the hands of the same toiseach or thane, and that from him the Mackintoshes got their name. We have suggested that the name arose with Ferchard, son of Seth or Shaw, who was toiseach under Earl Walter Comyn in 1234, and his name appears in [164] the 1467 MS. genealogy as well as in the Mackintosh genealogies.

That a revolution took place in the affairs of Clan Chattan, with the overthrow or extrusion of the direct line of chiefs, in the half century that extends from about 1386 to 1436, is clear from two sources first, from the 1467 MS., and, second, from the Mackintosh history. The latter acknowledges that Ferquhard, 9th chief, was deposed from his position, which was given to his uncle Malcolm. The reason why he had to retire was, it is said, the clan's dissatisfaction with his way of managing affairs; but the matter is glossed over in the history in a most unsatisfactory manner. If this was the Ferchard mentioned in 1382 as giving trouble to the Bishop of Aberdeen, it is most unlikely that he was an incapable man; in fact, he must have been quite the opposite. He is doubtless the same person, for he is

given also in the 1467 MS. genealogy. But further confusion exists in the Mackintosh account. Malcolm, 10th Mackintosh, who dies in 1457, is grandson through William 7th (died 1368) of Angus who married Eva in 1291, the three generations thus lasting as chiefs from 1274 to 1457, some 183 years! Malcolm was the son of William's old age, and his brother, Lachlan 8th, was too old to take part in the North Inch fight in 1396, sixty years before his younger brother died! This beats the Fraser genealogy brought forward lately by a claimant to the Lovat estates. It is thus clear that there is something wrong in the Mackintosh genealogy here, corresponding doubtless to some revolution in the clan's history. And this is made clear when we consult the Edinburgh Gaelic MS. of 1467, which gives the genealogies of Highland clans down till about 1450. Here we actually have two genealogies given, which shows that the chiefship of the Mackintoshes or Clan Gillicattan was then either in dispute or a matter of division between two families. We print the two 1467 lists with the Mackintosh MS. genealogy between them, in parallel columns, supplying dates where possible :—

<i>1467 MS.</i>	<i>Mackintosh History.</i>	<i>1467 MS.</i>
William and Donald	(12) Ferchar (d. 1514)	Lochlan
William	(9) Ferchar (11) Duncan (d. 1496)	Suibne
Ferchar (1382)	(8) Lachlan & (10) Malcolm (d. 1457)	Shaw
William	(7) William (d. 1368)	Leod
Gillamichol	(6) Angus (d. 1345)	Scayth (1338)
Ferchar (1234)	(5) Ferchar (d. 1274)	Ferchar
Shaw	(4) Shaw (d. 1265)	Gilchrist
Gilchrist	William	Malcolm
Aigcol	(2) Shaw (d. 1210)	Donald Camgilla
Ewen	(1) Shaw (d. 1179)	Mureach
—	Macduff(d. 1154)	Suibne
—	Earl of Fife	Tead (Shaw)
Neill		Nachtain
[Gillicattan ?]		Gillicattan

[165] The similarity between the 1467 first list and that of the Mackintosh history is too striking to be accidental, and we may take it that they purport to give the same genealogy. There are only two discrepancies from about 1400 to 1200 between them. Ferchar 9th is given as son of Lachlan in the Mackintosh history, whereas the 1467 list makes him son of William, not grandson. The 6th Mackintosh in the one list is Gillamichael, and in the other he is called Angus. Perhaps he had borne both names, for Gillamichael means "servant of St Michael," and might possibly be an epithet. Mr Fraser-Mackintosh has drawn the writer's attention to a list of names published in Palgrave's "Documents and Records" of Scottish History (1837); this is a list of some ninety notables who, about 1297, made homage or submission to Edward I., and among them is Anegosius Marcarawer, or Angus Mac Ferchar,

whom Mr Fraser-Mackintosh claims as the 6th of Mackintosh. There are only two other Macs" in the list, and Maccarawer is, no doubt, a Highlander, and possibly a chief, and, perhaps, the chief of Mackintosh. In any case, in the middle of the 15th century, the direct line of Mackintoshes was represented by William and Donald, sons of William, whereas the chief de facto at the time was undoubtedly Malcolm Mackintosh. How he got this position is a question.

The second list in the 1467 MS. is a puzzle. Mr Skene called it the genealogy of the "old" Clan Chattan: *Why*, is not clear. Scayth, son of Ferchard, is mentioned in 1338 as the late Scayth who possessed a "manerium" at the "stychan" of Dalnavert. Mr Skene thinks that he was of the Shaws of Rothiemurchus, and that this is their genealogy; and this may be true, but what comes of his earlier theories in regard to the Macphersons as being the "old" family here represented? Theories held in 1837 were abandoned in 1880; but in this Mr Skene could hardly help himself, considering the amount of information that has since appeared in the volumes of such Societies as the "Spalding Club," bearing on the history of the Moravian clans, and especially on that of Clan Chattan.

The turmoil in the Clan Chattan, which changed the chiefship to another line, must be connected more especially with the events which took place when King James came North, in 1427, when part of the clan stood by the King and part by the Lord of the Isles. We find in a document preserved in the Kilravock papers, that King James grants a pardon to certain of the Clan Chattan, provided they really do attach themselves to the party of Angus and Malcolm Mackintosh; and this shews that Malcolm, [166] who was afterwards chief, stood by the king, and received his favours. Angus possibly was his brother, for a depredating rascal of the name of Donald Angusson, supported by Lachlan "Badenoch," son of Malcolm, evidently Lachlan's cousin, gives trouble to various people towards the end of the century. In any case, Malcolm Mackintosh emerged from the troubles that were rending the clan victorious, and his son Duncan was as powerful a chief as lived in the North in his day.

How much the Clan Battle at Perth, in 1396, had to do with the changes in the Clan Chattan leadership it is hard to say. It is accepted as certain that the Clan Chattan had a hand in the fight, for the later historians say so, and the contemporary writer Wyntown mentions the chiefs on both sides, and one of these bears the name of Scha Ferchar's son, which is an unmistakeably Mackintosh name. He says, in Laing's edition:—

" Tha thre score were clannys twa,
Clahynnhe Qwhewyl, and Clachinya;
Of thir twa Kynnys ware the men,
Thretty agane thretty then.
And thare thai had thair chifttanys twa,
Schir Ferqwharis sone wes ane of tha,
The tothir Cristy Johnesone."

The two clans here pitted against one another are the clans Quhele or Chewil, and Clan Ha or Hay, or, according to some, Kay. Boece has Clan Quhete, which Buchanan and Leslie improve into Clan Chattan.

As so much theorising has taken place upon this subject already, and so many positive assertions have been made, it may at present serve the interests of historic science if we can really decide what clan names the above cannot stand for. First, there is Clan Quhele or Chewil. This clan is mentioned in 1390 as Clan Qwhevil, who, with the Athole tribes, made a raid into Angus, and killed the Sheriff. They are mentioned again in an Act of Parliament in 1594 as among the broken clans, in the following sequence – Clandonochie, Clanchattane, Clanchewill, Clanchamron, &c. What clan they really were is yet a matter of dispute. The form *Chewill* points to a nominative, *Cumhal* or *Cubhal*, or *Keval*, but no such name can be recognised in the Clan Chattan district, or near it. Dughall or Dugald has been suggested, and the family of Camerons of Strone held as the clan referred to. But this, like so much in the discussion of this subject, forgets some very simple rules of Gaelic phonetics, which are not [167] forgotten in the spoken language, and in the English forms borrowed from it. *Feminine names ending in n never aspirate an initial d of the next word.* We have Clan Donnachie, Clan Donald, Clan Dugald, and so on, but never Clan Yonnachie or Youald, or such. Similarly, Clan Hay or Ha cannot stand for Clan Dai or Davidsons. Let these simple rules of Gaelic phonetics be understood once for all, and we have made much progress towards a solution of the difficulty. The word Qwhevil evidently commences with a C. Skene suggests it is for Caimgilla, "one-eyed one," the epithet of Donald, Murcach's son, in the 1467 pedigree. But the *m* of *cam* is never aspirated. Again, as to *Ha* or *Hay*. The *H* initial may stand for *th*, *sh*, or *fh*; and the only names that can be suggested are those of Shaw and Fhaidh. The Clan Cameron are called, in the 1467 MS. and other places, the "Clann Maelanfhaidh," the clan of the "servant of the Prophet," a name preserved in the Macgillony of Strone, which originally was Mac Gille-an-fhaidh, equivalent to Mael-an-fhaidh in meaning.

The name, however, that best suits the English form is that of Shaw or Seadh, that is, Seth. There is really a difficulty about Meal-an-fhaidh and his clan. The form ought to be either Clann-an-fhaidh, which Wyntown would give as Clahinanha or Clahan-anna, or it would be Clann Mhael-an-fhaidh, a form which could not be mistaken, were it handed down. The most popular theory at present is that the combatants were the Camerons and Mackintoshes, who were enemies for three centuries thereafter; the Mackintoshes were represented by the name of Clan Chewill, the chief being Shaw, son of Ferchar, of the Rothiemurchus branch, while the Camerons were the Clan Hay, with Gilchrist Mac Iain as chief. This is practically Skene's view, and it is the position taken up by Mr A. M. Shaw, the historian of the Mackintoshes, But the phonetics point to a struggle in which the Shaws were the chief combatants, the other side being Clan Kevil, and, on weighing all sides of the question, we are as much inclined to believe that it was the beginning of that struggle in the clan, which is represented by two lines of pedigree, and which latterly gave the chiefship even to a junior branch of one of the lines.

How does the claim of the Cluny Macphersons for the chiefship of Clan Chattan stand in relation to these historic facts? They do not appear at all in the historical documents, but tradition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had enough to tell of their share in the crisis. At the battle of Invernahaven, fought against the Camerons, the Macphersons of Cluny claimed the right under Mackintosh as chief, but he unfortunately gave this post of [168] honour to the Clan Dai or Davidsons of Invernahavon; and the Macphersons retired in high dudgeon. The battle was at first lost to Clan Chattan, but the Macphersons, despite anger, came to the rescue, and the Camerons were defeated. Then ensued a struggle, lasting

ten years, for superiority between the Macphersons (Clan Chattan) and the Davidsons, the scene of which, in 1396, was shifted to the North Inch of Perth. These, the Macpherson tradition says, were the two clans that fought the famous clan fight. The Macphersons claim to be descended from Gillicattan Mor, progenitor of the Clan Chattan, by direct male descent, and every link is given back to the eleventh century, thus (omitting "father of") Gillicattan, Diarmid, Gillicattan, Muirich, parson of Kingussie, whence they are called Claim Mhuirich, father of Gillicattan and Ewen Ban, the former of whom had a son, Dougal Dall, whose daughter Eva, " the heiress of Clan Chattan," married Angus Mackintosh in 1291, and thus made him " captain " of Clan Chattan ; Ewen Ban was the direct male representative, then Kenneth, Duncan, Donald Mor, Donald Og, Ewen ; then Andrew of Cluny in 1609, a real historic personage without a doubt. In this list, not a single name previous to that of Andrew can be proved to have existed from any documents outside the Macpherson genealogies, excepting only Andrew's father, Ewen, who is mentioned in the Clanranald Red Book as grandfather of the heroic Ewen, who joined Montrose with three hundred of Clans Mhuirich and Chattan. The direct Gillicattan genealogy is given in the 1467 MS., and, such as it is, it has no semblance to the Macpherson list. The fact is that the Macpherson list previous to Ewan, father of Andrew, is purely traditional and utterly unreliable. The honest historian of Moray, Lachlan Shaw, says " I cannot pretend to give the names of the representatives before the last century. I know that in 1660 Andrew was laird of Clunie, whose son, Ewan, was father of Duncan, who died in 1722 without male issue." By means of the Spalding Publications, the Synod of Moray "Records, and other documents, we can now supplement and add to Lachlan Shaw's information, though not much. Macpherson of Cluny is first mentioned in 1591 when Clan Farson gave their "band " or bond to Huntly. He is then called " Andrew Makfersone in Cluny," not of Cluny, be it observed, for he was merely tenant of Cluny at that time. This is amply proved by the Badenoch rental of 1603, where we have the entry — "Clovnye, three pleuches . . . Andro McFarlen (*read* Farsen) tenant to the haill." Perhaps Mr Fraser-Mackintosh's inference is right as to the national importance of Cluny [169] Macpherson then, when he says — " So little known does he seem to have been that Huntly's chamberlain, who made out the Badenoch rental in 1603, calls him Andro McFarlen." In 1609, Andrew had obtained a heritable right to Cluny, for then he is called Andrew Macpherson *of* Cluny in the bond of union amongst the Clan Chattan, " in which they are and is astricted to serve Mackintosh as their Captain and Chief." Huntly had for long been trying to detach the Clan from Mackintosh by "bands," as in 1591 and in 1543, and by raising the tenants to a position of independence under charter rights, which were liberally granted in the seventeenth century, and which proved fatal to the unity of Clan Chattan. But it was a wise policy, nationally considered, for in 1663-5, when Mackintosh tried to raise his Clan against Lochiel, some flatly refused asking *cui bono* ; others promised to go if Mackintosh would help them to a slice of their neighbour's land, and Macpherson of Cluny proposed three conditions on which he would go — (1) if the Chiefs of the Macphersons hold the next place in the Clan to Mackintosh ; (2) lands now possessed by Mackintoshes and once possessed by Macphersons to be restored to the latter ; and (3) the assistance now given was not of the nature of a service which Mackintosh had a right to demand, but simply a piece of goodwill. When Mackintosh was in 1688 proceeding to fight the "last Clan battle " at Mulray against Keppoch, we are told that the " Macphersons in Badenoch, after two citations, disobeyed most contemptuously." Duncan Macpherson, the Cluny of that time, had decided to claim chiefship for himself, and in 1672 he applied for

and obtained from the Lord Lyon's Office the matriculation of his arms as Laird of Cluny Macpherson, and only true representative of the ancient and honourable family of Clan Chattan. Mackintosh, on hearing of it, objected, and got the Lord Lyon to give Macpherson "a coat of arms as cadets of ' Clan Chattan.' " The Privy Council in the same year called him " Lord of Cluny and Chief of the Macphersons," but Mackintosh got them to correct even this to Cluny being responsible only for "those of his name of Macpherson descendit of his family," without prejudice always to the Laird of Mackintosh. In 1724 Mackintosh and Macpherson came to an agreement that Mackintosh, in virtue of marrying the heiress of Clan Chattan in 1291, was Chief of Clan Chattan, Macpherson renouncing all claim, but there was a big bribe held out to him he received the Loch Laggan estates from Mackintosh. In this way the egging on of Huntly, the reputation gained by the Macphersons in the Montrose wars and otherwise, and an absurd piece [170] of pedigree, all combined to deprive Mackintosh of his rightful honour of Chief, and also of a good slice of his estate! The renown gained by the Clan Macpherson in the Jacobite wars, compared to the supineness of the Mackintosh Chiefs, gained them public sympathy in their claims, and brought a clan, altogether unknown or ignored until the battle of Glenlivet in 1594, to the very front rank of Highland Clans in the eighteenth century. We see the rise of a clan and its chiefs actually take place in less than a century and a half, and that, too, by the pluck and bravery displayed by its chiefs and its members.

PLACE NAMES OF BADENOCH.

The Ordnance Survey maps, made to the scale of six inches to the mile, contain for Badenoch some fourteen hundred names ; but these do not form more than a tithe of the names actually in use or once used when the glens were filled with people, and the summer shealings received their annual visitants. Every knoll and rill had its name ; the bit of moor, the bog or *blàr*, the clump of wood (*badan*), the rock or crag, the tiny loch or river pool, not to speak of cultivated land parcelled into fields, each and all, however insignificant, had a name among those that dwelt near them. Nor were the minute features of the mountain ranges and faraway valleys much less known and named. The shealing system contributed much to this last fact. But now many of these names are lost, we may say most of them are lost, with the loss of the population, and with the abandonment of the old system of crofting and of summer migration to the hills. The names given to those minute features of the landscape were and are comparatively easy on the score of derivation, though sometimes difficult to explain historically. For instance, *Lub Mhàiri*, or Mary's Loop, is the name of a small meadow at Coilintuie {NH 81176 03671}, but who was the Mary from whom it got its name?

Of the fourteen hundred words on the Ordnance Maps, we may at once dismiss three fourths as self-explanatory. Anyone with a knowledge of Gaelic can explain them ; or anyone not so endowed but possessed of a Gaelic dictionary can by the use of it satisfactorily unravel the mystery of the names. Of the remaining fourth, most are easy enough as regards derivation, but some explanation of an historical character is desirable, though often impossible of being got. One of the most interesting names under this last category is that of Craig Rìgh Harailt [OS has Creag Rìgh Tharailt {NH 79101 05175}], or the Crag of King Harold, which stands among the hills behind Dunachton; yet there is

absolutely nothing known about this Scandinavian chief ; even tradition halts in the matter. There are only some six score names where any difficulty, however slight, of derivation can occur, and it is to these names that this paper will mostly devote itself. The oldest written or printed form of the name will be given, for often the difficulty of deriving a place-name yields when the oldest forms of it are found. We have fortunately some valuable documents, easily attainable, which throw light on some obscure names. Among these are the Huntly Rental for the Lordship of Badenoch for 1603,⁵ and Sir R. Gordon of Straloch's map of Braidalbane and Moray, which was published in Blaeu's Atlas in 1662, and which contains a full and intelligent representation of Badenoch. The Badenoch part of this map is reproduced [above] along with this paper for the sake of illustrating it. It was made about the year 1640.

District Names

First, we shall deal with the name of the district and the names of the principal divisions of it, and thereafter consider the nomenclature of the leading features of the country, whether river, loch, or mountain, following this with a glance at the names of farms and townships, and at the other points of the landscape that may seem to require explanation. The name of the district first claims our attention.

Badenoch. In 1229 or thereabouts the name appears as *Badenach* in the *Registrum of Moray Diocese*, and this is its usual form there; in 1289, *Badenagh*, *Badenoughe*, and, in King Edward's Journal, *Badnasshe* ; in 1366 we have *Baydenach*, which is the first indication of the length of the vowel in *Bad-*; a 14th century map gives *Baunagd* ; in 1467, *Badyenach* ; in 1539, *Baidyenoeh* ; in 1603 (*Huntly Rental*), *Badzenoche* ; and now in Gaelic it is *Baideanach*. The favourite derivation, first given by Lachlan Shaw, the historian of Moray (1775), refers it to *badan*, a bush or thicket ; and the Muses have sanctioned it in Calum Dubh's expressive line in his poem on the Loss of Gaick (1800) —

" 'S bidh mùirn ann an Dùthaich nam Badan."
(And joy shall be in the Land of Wood-clumps).

But there are two fatal objections to this derivation ; the *a* of *Badenoch* is long, and that of *badan* is short ; the *d* of *Badenoch* is vowel-flanked by "small" vowels, while that of *badan* is flanked by "broad" vowels and is hard, the one being pronounced approximately for English as *bah-janach*, and the other as *baddanach*. The root that suggests itself as contained in the word is that of *bàth* or *bàdh* (drown, submerge), which, with an adjectival termination [174] in *de*, would give *báide*, "submerged, marshy," and this might pass into *báidean* and *báideanach*, "marsh or lake land." That this meaning suits the long, central meadow land of *Badenoch*, which once could have been nothing else than a long morass, is evident. There are several places in Ireland containing the root *bádh* (drown), as Joyce points out. For instance, *Bauttagh*, west of *Loughrea* in *Galway*, a marshy place ; *Mullanbattog*, near *Monaghan*, hill summit of the morass ; the river *Bauteoge*, in *Queen's County*, flowing through swampy ground ; and *Currawatia*, in *Galway*, means the inundated *curragh* or morass. The neighbouring district of *Lochaber* is called by *Adamnan* *Stagnum Aporicum*, and the latter term is likely the Irish *abar* (a marsh), rather than the Pictish *aber* (a confluence)

⁵ Spalding Club Miscellany, vol. iv

; so that both districts may be looked upon as named from their marshes. The divisions of Badenoch are three – the parishes of Alvie, Kingussie and Insh, and Laggan.

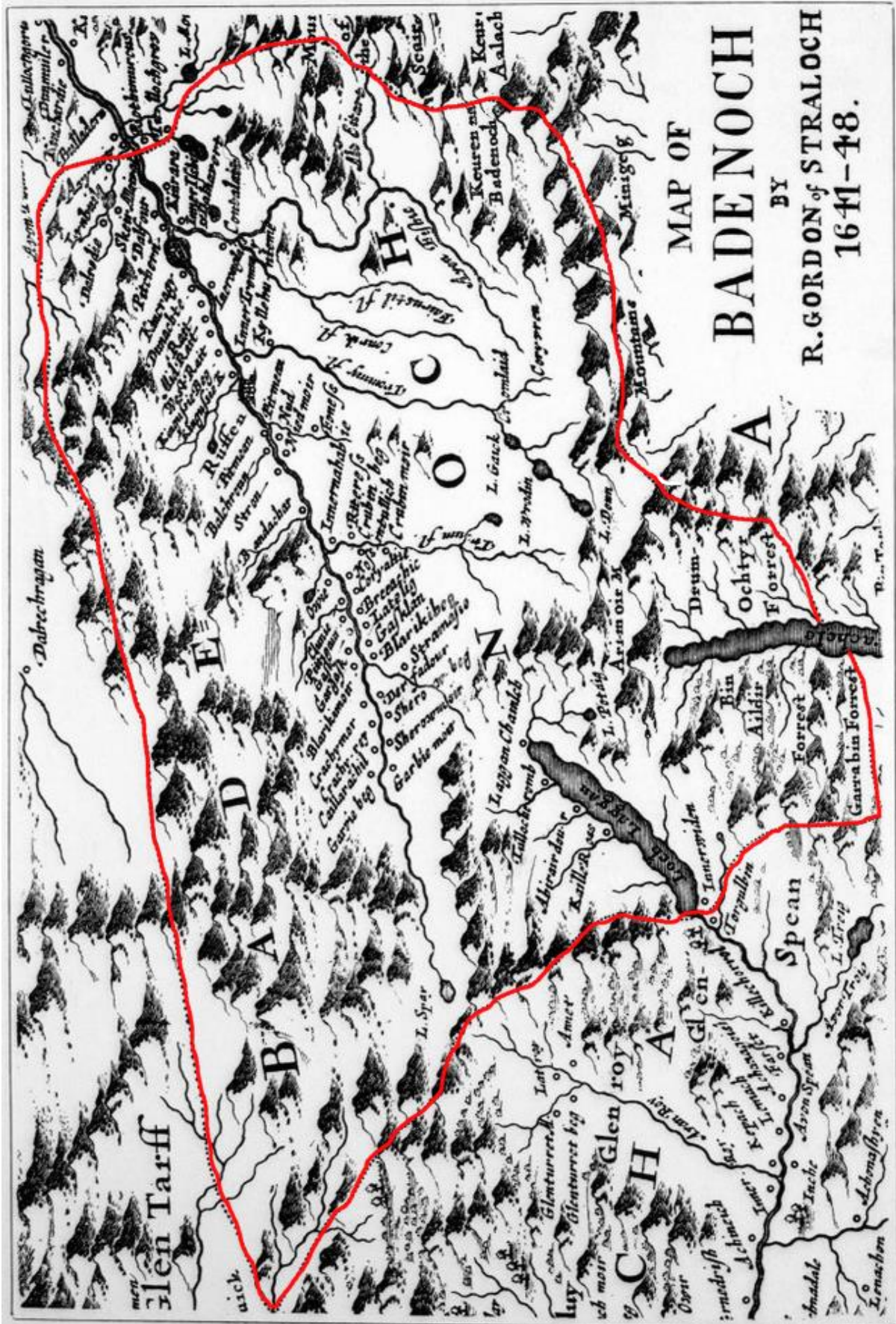


Figure 1: Badenoch, R. Gordon 1641-1648. © National Library of Scotland

Alvie [NH 86398 09326]. Shaw says it is a "parsonage dedicated to St Drostan." Otherwise we should have at once suggested the 6th-century Irish saint and bishop called Ailbe or later Ailbhe, whose name suits so admirably, that, even despite the Drostan connection, one would feel inclined to think that the parish is named after St Ailbhe. In the middle of the 14th century the parish is called Alveth or Alweth and Alway, and Alvecht about 1400, in 1603 Alvey and AluLoch Inshay, and in 1622 Alloway. The name, with the old spelling Alveth, appears in the parish of Alvah in Banffshire, and no doubt also in that of Alva, another parish in Stirlingshire. Shaw and others connect the name with *ail* (a rock), but do not explain the *v* or *bh* in the name. Some look at Loch Alvie as giving the name to the parish, and explain its name as connected with the flower *ealbhaidh* or St John's wort, a plant which it is asserted grows or grew around its bank. The learned minister of Alvie in Disruption times, Mr Macdonald, referred the name of the loch to *Eala-i* or Swan-isle Loch, but unfortunately there is no Gaelic word *i* for an island [Hy?], nor do the phonetics suit in regard to the *bh* or *v*. The old Fenian name of Almhu or Almhuinn, now Allen, in Ireland, the seat of Fionn and his Féinn, suggests itself, but the termination in *n* is wanting in Alvie, and this makes the comparison of doubtful value.

Insh [NH 83579 05334]. Mentioned as Inche in the Moray Registrum in 1226 and similarly in 1380 and in 1603. The name is derived from the knoll on which the church is built, and which is an island or *innis* when the river is in flood. Loch Insh takes its name from this or the other real island near it. The parish is a vicarage dedicated to "St Ewan," says Shaw; but, as the name of the [175] knoll on which the church stands is Tom Eunan, the Saint must have been Eònan or Adamnan, Columba's biographer, in the 7th century. The old bell is a curious and rare relic, and the legend attached to it is one of the prettiest told in the district. The bell stolen once upon a time, and taken to the south of the Grampians, but getting free, it returned of its own accord ringing out as it crossed the hills of Drumochter, "Tom Eònan! Tom Eònan."

Kingussie [NH 75862 00659]. — In Gaelic — *Cinn-ghiubhsaich* — "(at) the end of the fir-forest;" *cinn* being the locative of *ceann* (head) and *giubhsach* being a "fir-forest." The oldest forms of the name are Kynguscy (1103-11 ?), Kingussy (1208-15), Kingusy (1226), Kingucy (1380), Kingusy (1538), and Kyngusie (1603). It is a parsonage dedicate" to St Columba (Shaw). According to Shaw, there was a Priory at Kingussie, founded by the Earl of Huntly about 1490.

Laggan [NH 53740 89695]. — "A mensal church dedicated to St Kenneth" (Shaw). The name in full is Laggan-Choinnich, the *laggan* or "hollow of Kenneth." The present church is at Laggan Bridge, but the old church was at the nearest end of Loch Laggan, where the ruins are still to be seen. It is mentioned in 1239 as Logynkenny (R.E.M.), and Logykenny shortly before, as Logachnacheny and Logykeny in 1380, Logankenny in 1381 (all from R.E.M.), and Lagane in 1603 (H.R.) The Gaelic word "lagan" is the diminutive of "lag," a hollow.

Natural Features.

Rivers.

We now come to the leading natural features of the country, and deal first with the rivers and lochs of Badenoch. A loch and its river generally have the same name, and, as a rule, it is the river that gives name to the loch. A prominent characteristic of the river names

of Badenoch, and also of Pictland, is the termination *ie* or *y*. We meet in Badenoch with Feshie, Trommie, Markie, and Mashie, and not far away are Bennie, Druie, Geldie, Garry, Bogie, Gaudie, Lossie, Urie, and several more. The termination would appear to be that given by Ptolemy in several river names such as *Nov-ios*, *Tob-ios*, *Libn-ios*, &c., which is the adjectival termination *ios* ; but it has to be remarked that the modern pronunciation points to a termination in *idh*, Zeuss's primitive *adi* or *idi*; Tromie in Gaelic is to be spelt Tromaidh, and Feshie as Feisidh. We first deal with the so-called "rapidest river in Scotland."

The *Spey*. The Highlanders of old had a great idea of the size of the Spey, and also of the Dee and Tay. There is a Gaelic saying which runs thus : —

*Spé, Dé, agus Tatha,
Tri uisgeacgan 's mò fo'n athar.*

[176] This appears in an equally terse English form :

The three largest rivers that be
Are the Tay, the Spey, and the Dee.

In Norse literature the name appears as *Spæ* (13th century); we have the form *Spe* in the "Chronicles" (1165); *Spe* (1228, &c) ; *Spee* (Bruce's Charter to Randolph) and *Spey* (1451 and 1603). But the Spey is regarded as representing physically and etymologically Ptolemy's river *Tvesis* or *Tvæsis*. Dr Whitley Stokes says : — "Supposed to be Ptolemy's *Tvesis* ; but it points to an original Celtic *squêas*, cognate with Ir. *scéim* (vomo), W. *chwyd* (a vomit). For the connection of ideas, cf. Pliny's *Vomanus*, a river of Picenum. The river name *Spean* may be a diminutive of *Spe*." The changing of an original *sqv* to *sp*, instead of the true Gaelic form *sg* or *sc* indicates that the name is Pictish. The *Spean* is doubtless a diminutive arising from a form *spesona* or *spesana*.

The *Dulnan* [NJ 00408 23755]; in Gaelic *Tuilnean*, Blaeu's map *Tulnen*. It falls into Spey near Broomhill Station. The root is *tuil*, flood ; the idea being to denote its aptness to rapid floods.

The *Feshie* [NH 85147 04292]; Gaelic *Feisidh*. Its first appearance in charters is about 1230, and the name is printed *Ceffy*, evidently for *Fessy*. If it is Celtic, its earliest form was *Vestia*, from a root *ved*, which signifies "wet," and which is the origin of the English word wet and water. That Feshie is Celtic and Pictish may be regarded as probable when it is mentioned that in Breconshire there is a river *Gwesyn*, the root of the name being *gwes* (for *vest*), meaning "what moves" or "goes."

The *Tromie* [NH 78010 010089]; Gaelic *Trom(a)idh*. In 1603 it is called *Tromye*. The Gaelic name for dwarf elder is *troman*, which appears in Irish as *trom* or *tromm*, with genitive *truimm*. It gives its name to *Trim* in Meath, which in the 9th-century was called *Vadum Truimm*, or Ford of the Elder-tree. Several other Irish place-names come from it. In Badenoch and elsewhere in the Highlands, we often meet with rivers named after the woods on their banks. Notably is so the case with the alder tree, *Fearna*, which names numerous streams, and, indeed, is found in old Gaul, for Pliny mentions a river called *Vernodubrum*. Hence *Tromie* is the Elder-y River; while *Truim*, which is probably named after the glen, *Glen-truim* "Glen of the Elder," takes its name from the genitive of *tromm*. Compare the Irish *Cala-truim*, the hollow of the elder. *Glen-tromie* is the first part of the long gorge that latterly

becomes Gaick, and, in curious contrast to the ill fame of the latter in poetry, it appears thus in a well-known verse :—

[177] *Gleann Tromaidh nan siantan
Leam bu mhiann bhi 'nad fhasgath,
Far am faighinn a' bhroighleag,
An oighreag 's an dearcag,
Cnòthan donn air a' challtuinn,
'S iasg dearg air na h-easan.*

The *Guinag*, *Guynack*, *Guinach*, or *Gynach* (pronounced in Gaelic *Goi(bh)neag*) [OS now has *Gynack*], falls into the Spey at Kingussie [NH 75917 00146]. It is a short, stormy streamlet. All sorts of derivations have been offered ; the favourite is *guanag*, pretty, but, unfortunately, it does not suit the phonetics of *Goi-neag*. The name points to primitive forms like *gobni-* or *gomni-*, where the *o* may have been *a*, and the latter form, read as *gamni-*, would give us the root *gam*, which in old Gaelic means " winter." Hence the idea may be " wintry streamlet." But the Irish word *gaoth*, a shallow tidal stream, fordable at low water, should be remembered; this gives name to several places in Ireland, such as the famous Gweedore, and there is a river Gaothach in Tipperary. Old Irish has a word *góithlach*, signifying swamp, which seems allied, and we might consider *Guinag* as an older *Goith-neoc*, referring to the latter part of its course in entering the Spey, which is " tidal" and " swampy."

The *Calder* : in Gaelic *Cal(l)adar*. This river and lake name recurs about a dozen times in Pictland and the old Valentia province between the Walls, and there is a Calder river in Lancashire. Cawdor and its Thanes probably give us the earliest form of the word, applied to the Nairnshire district. This is in 1295 Kaledor; in 1310, Caldor ; and in 1468, Caudor. But the Gaelic forms persist in other places, as in *Aber-Callador* (1456) in Strathnairn. These forms point to an older *Cal-ent-or*, for *ent* and *ant* become in Gaelic *ed* or *ad*, earlier *et* or *at*. In the Irish Annals mention is made of a battle, fought, it is supposed, in the Carse of Falkirk, called the battle of Calitros, and certain lands near Falkirk were called in the 13th century *Kalentyr*, now *Callendar*. Not far away are several Calder waters. The root is evidently *cal* (sound, call), as in Latin *Calendae*, and English *Calendar*, borrowed, like the Gaelic equivalent word *Caladair*, from the Laton *Calendarium*.

The *Truim*. See (above) under the heading of *Tromie*.

The *Mashie*; *Masie* (1603), in Gaelic *Mathaisidh*, pronounced *Mathitidh* [NN 60119 93677]. Strathmashie is famous as the residence of Lachlan Macpherson, the bard, the contemporary and coadjutor of James Macpherson of Ossianic renown. The bard's opinions of the river [178] *Mashie* are still handed down ; these differed accorded[sic] to circumstances. Thus he praised the river :—

*Mathaisidh gheal, bhoidheach gheal,
Mathaisidh gheal, bhoidheach gheal,
Bu chaomh learn bhi laimh riut.*

But after it carried away his corn he said :—

*Mathaisidh dhubh, fhrògach dhubh,
Mathaisidh dhubh, fhrògach dhubh,*

Is mor rinn thu chall orm.

The derivation of the name is obscure. *Mathaisidh* could come from *mathas*, goodness, but the meaning is not satisfactory. We might think of *maise*, beauty, but it has 'the vowel short in modern Gaelic, though Welsh *maws*, pleasant, points to a long vowel or a possible contraction in the original.

The *Markie* [NN 58163 93563]; Gaelic *Marcaidh*. Streams and glens bearing the name Mark and Markie occur in Perthshire, Forfarshire, and Banffshire. The first tributary of the Feshie is Allt Mharkie, at the mouth of which was of old Invermarkie, an estate held by the Campbells of Cawdor in the 15th and 16th centuries. The root is doubtless *marc*, a horse.

The *Pattack* [NN 53598 89587]; in Gaelic *Patag*. This river, unlike those which we have hitherto dealt with, does not flow into the Spey, but into Loch Laggan, after making an extraordinary volte face about two miles from its mouth. First it flows directly north-wards, and then suddenly south-westwards for the last two miles of its course. Hence the local saying —

Patag dhubh, bhulgach
Dol an aghatdh uisge Alba

(Dark, bubbly Pattack, that goes against the streams of Alba).

We find Pattack first mentioned in an agreement between the Bishop of Moray and Walter Comyn about the year 1230, where the streams "Kyllene et Petenachy" are mentioned as bounding the church lands of Logykenny. The Kyllene is still remembered in Camus-Killeen, the bay of Killeen [OS has Camas Cillen {NN 53080 89550}], where the inn is [Lochlaggan Hotel]. The Kyllene must have been the present Allt Lairig, or as the map has it, Allt Buidhe [OS has Féith Bhuidhe which flows into Camus Cillein just west of Aberarder Lodge]; while Petenachy represents Pattack, which in Blaeu's map appears as Potaig. The initial *p* proves the name to be of non-Gaelic origin ultimately, but whether it is Pictish, pre-Celtic, or a Gaelicised foreign word we cannot say.

The *Alt Lowrag* lies between Lochan na h-Earba and Loch Laggan. It means the "loud-sounding (*labhar*) one." [The Allt Labhrach enters Loch Laggan at {NN 49792 87238}]

[179] The *Spean*; in Gaelic *Spithean*. See under Spey.

We have now exhausted the leading rivers, but before going further we may consider the names of one or two tributaries of these. Feshie, for instance, has three important tributaries, one of which, Allt Mharkie, we have already discussed. Passing over Allt Ruaidh as being an oblique form of Allt Ruadh, "red burn," we come to the curious river name

Farnsdale; in Gaelic *Fearnasdail*. The farms of Corarnstilmore [NN 83139 98227] and Corarnstilbeg [NN 83085 99044], that is, the Corrie of Fernsdale [OS has Coire Fhearnasdail], are mentioned in 1603 as Corearnstail Moir and Corearinstail Beige, and in 1691 the name is Corriarnisdail. Blaeu's map gives the river as Fairnstil. The first portion of the name is easy; it is *Fearna*, alder. But what of *sdail* or *asdail*? The word *astail* means a dwelling, but "Fern-dwelling" is satisfactory as a name neither for river or glen. The tributary of the Fernsdale is called —

Còmhraig [OS has Allt Chomhraig {NN 82722 9839}]; in Blaeu *Conrik*. Comhrag signifies a conflict ; but in Irish and early Gaelic it signified simply a meeting whether of road and rivers, or of men for conflict. There are several Irish place names Corick, situated near confluences. Doubtless this stream took its name from its confluence with Fernsdale.

On Feshie we meet further up with Allt Fhearnagan [NN 85101 97166], the stream of the alder trees ; then Allt Ghàbhlach, which the Ordnance map etymologises into Allt Garbhach [NN 84932 95347], the stream of the rugged place. This may be the true derivation ; it is a big rough gully or corrie with a mountain torrent tumbling through it.

Allt *Lorgaidh* [flows into the Feshie at {NN 84496 91801}] is named after the mountain pass or tract which it drains (*lorg*, *lorgadh*, track, tracing) and which also gives name to the prominent peak of *Càrn an Fhìdhleir Lorgaidh* [NN 85618 87472], the Fiddler's Cairn of Lorgie, to differentiate it from the Fiddler's Cairn which is just beyond the Inverness-shire border, and not far from the other one.

The *Eidart* [flows into the Feshie at {NN 90901 88335}], Blaeu's *Eitart*, with the neighbouring streamlet of *Eindart* [flows into the Feshie at {NN 90584 88467}], is a puzzling name. The Gaelic is *Eidird* and *Inndird* according to pronunciation.

Lochs.

We now come to the lochs of Badenoch. Loch Alvie [NH 86730 09568] is bound up with the name of Alvie Parish, discussed already. Loch Insh is the Lake of the Island, just as Loch-an-eilein, in Rothiemurchus, takes its name from the castle-island which it contains ; but *eilean* is the Norse word *eyland*, Eng. *island*, borrowed, whereas *innis* of Loch Insh is pure Gaelic. In Gaick, along the course of the Tromie, there are three lakes, about which the following rhyme is repeated [180]:—

*Tha gaoth mhòr air Loch-an-t-Seilich,
Tha gaoth eil' air Loch-an-Duin ;
Ruigidh mise Loch-a' Bhrodainn,
Mu'n teid cadal air mo shùil.*

The rhyme is supposed to have been the song of a hunter who escaped from demons by stratagem and the help of a good stallion on whose back he leapt. The first loch is called Loch-an-t-Seilich [NN 75835 86434], the lake of the willow, and the third of the series is, the loch of the Down or hill [OS gives Loch an Duin {NN 72277 79447}], the name of the steep crag on its west side. The intermediate lake is called Loch Vrodain [NN 74759 83228], Gaelic Bhrodainn, which Sir R. Gordon in Blaeu's map spells as Vrodin. The Ordnance map etymologises the word as usual, and the result is Loch Bhradainn, Salmon Loch; but unfortunately the *a* of *bradan* was never *o*, so that phonetically we must discard this derivation.⁶ There is a story told about this weird loch which fully explains the name mythically. A hunter had got into possession of a semi-supernatural litter of dogs. When they reached a certain age, all of them were taken away by one who claimed to be the true owner, who left with the hunter only a single pup, jet black in colour, and named Brodainn. Before leaving it with the hunter, the demon broke its leg. Brodainn was therefore lame.

⁶ The OS Six-inch 2nd edition of 1888-1915 gives *Loch Bhrodainn*.

There was a wonderful white fairy deer on Ben Alder, and the hunter decided he should make himself famous by the chase of it. So he and Brodainn went to Ben Alder, on Loch Ericht side ; the deer was roused, Brodainn pursued it, and was gaining ground on it when they were passing this loch in Gaick. In plunged the deer, and after it Brodainn dashed ; he caught it in mid-lake, and they both disappeared never more to be seen! Hence the name of the lake is Loch Vrodin ; the lake is there, the name is there, therefore the story is true! The word *brodan* means a small goad or prod, but how it can have given its name, if at all, to the lake is a mystery : "lake of the prod " suits the phonetics admirably. Loch-Laggan takes its name from the *lagan* or hollow which gave the parish its name, that is, from Laggan Chainnich or Lagan-Kenny, at the northern end of the loch. There are two isles in the lake connected with the old kingly race of Scotland. King Fergus, whoever he was, had his hunting lodge on one, called Eilean an Rìgh [NN 49868 87557], and the other was the dog-kennel of these Fenian hunters, and is called Eilean nan Con [NN 50208 87586]. The considerable lake or lakes running parallel to, and a mile to the south-east of Loch Laggan are called Lochan na h-Earba [NN 49419 84656] the lakes of the roe. Loch Crunachan, at the mouth of Glen-Shirra, has an [181] artificial island or *crannog* therein ; the word is rather Crunnachan than Crunachan by pronunciation. A Gordon estate map of 1773 calls it the " Loch of Sheiromore," and distinctly marks the crannog. Taylor and Skinner's Roads maps, published in 1776 by order of Parliament, give the name as L. Crenackan. The derivation, unless referable to *crannog*, is doubtful. Loch *Ericht* [NN 59857 67348], the largest lake in Badenoch, is known in Gaelic as *Loch Eireachd*. Blaeu calls it Eyrachle (read Eyrachte). The lake is doubtless named from the river Ericht, running from it into Loch Rannoch. Another river Ericht flows past Blairgowrie into the Isla, nor must we omit the Erichdie Water and Glen Erichdie in Blair Athole. The word *eireachd* signifies an assembly or meeting, but there is an abstract noun, *eireachdas*, signifying "handsomeness," and it is to this last form that we should be inclined to refer the word.

Hills, etc.

Let us now turn to the hills and hollows, and dales of Badenoch. Many of these place names are called after animals frequenting them. The name of the eagle for instance is exceedingly common in the form of *iolair*, as *Sròn an Iolair*, eagle's ness, &c. We shall begin at the north-east end of the district, and take the Monadh-lia or Grey Mountain range first. "Standing fast" as guard between Strathspey and Badenoch is the huge mass of

Craigellachie [NH 88407 11627], which gives its motto to the Clan of Grant "Stand fast: Craigellachie!" The name reads in Gaelic as *Eileachaidh*, which appears to be an adjective formed from the stem *eilech*, or older *ailech*, a rock, nominative *ail*. The idea is the stony or craggy hill a thoroughly descriptive adjective.

The *Moireach* ; Gaelic, *A' Mhorfhoich* [?], is an upland moor of undulating ground above Ballinluig. On the West Coast, this term signifies flat land liable to sea flooding. It is also the real Gaelic name of Lovat.

Carn Dubh 'Ic-an-Deòir [NH 77387 19567] is on the Strathdearn border, and is wrongly named on the map as "Cam Dubh aig an Doire." It means The Black Cairn of the Dewar's (Pilgrim) Son.⁷

An Sguabach [NH 83835 10686]. There is another Sguabach [NN 69437 85665] south of Loch Cuaich, a few miles from Dalwhinnie, and a Meall an Sguabaich west of Loch Ericht [NN 56631 82621]. It means the "sweeping" one, from *sguab*, a besom. The people of Insh the village and its vicinity used to speak of the north wind as *Gaoth na Sguabaich*, for it blew over that hill.

Cnoc Fraing [NH 80640 14385] not *Cnoc an Fhrangaich* as on the Ordnance map⁸ – a conspicuous dome-shaped hill above Dulnan river. There is a Cnoc Frangach a few miles south of Inverness, near Scaniport.

[182] *Fraoch frangach* means the cross-leaved heather, of which people made their scouring brushes. The brush was called in some parts *fraings'* in Gaelic.

Easga 'n Lochain [?], with its *caochan* [Caochan Easg' An Lochain joins the Caochan Dubh Cùil an Uchdach at {NH 80223 11923}] or streamlet, contains the interesting old word for "swamp" known as *easg*, *easga*, or *easgaidh*, with which we may compare the river name Esk.

A' Bhuidheanaich [NH 78179 08774] in the Ordnance maps etymologised into *Am Buidh 'aonach*,⁹ "the yellow hill or steep," occurs three times in Badenoch – here behind Kincaig and Dunachton, on the north side of Loch Laggan [above the Aberarder Forest {NN 47802 90731}], and on the confines of Badenoch a few miles south of Dalwhinnie [NN 65864 79304]. The idea of "yellowness" underlies the word as it is characteristic of the places meant. The root is *buidhe* (yellow) ; the rest is mere termination and has nothing to do with *aonach*, which, in Macpherson's "Ossian," is applied to a hill or slope.

Coire Bog, &c. – Here we may introduce a mnemonic rhyme detailing some features of the ground behind and beside Buidheanaich.

*Allt Duinne 'Choire Bhuig,
Tuilnean agus Feithlinn,
Coire Bog is Ruigh na h-Eag,
Steallag is Bad-Earbag.*

"The Burn of Dun-ness in Soft Corry, Dulnan and Broad Bogstream, the Reach of the Notch, the Spoutie and Hinds' Clump" that is the translation of the names.

An Suidhe [NH 81334 07074] means the "Seat;" it designates the solid, massive hill behind Kincaig.

Craig Rìgh Harailt [NH 79100 05172] means King Harold's Hill, on the side of which his grave is still pointed out. As already said, it is unknown who he was or when he lived.

⁷ On the OS Six-inch 2nd edition, 1888-1915, and the OS Landranger Sheet 35, it is marked as Càrn Dubh 'Ic an Deòir.

⁸ On the OS Six-inch 2nd edition, 1888-1915, it is shown as Cnoc Fraing.

⁹ On the OS Six-inch 2nd edition, 1888-1915, it is shown as A' Bhuidhenaich.

Coire Neachdradh [?]: *Glac an t-Sneachdaidh*, &c. This corrie is at the end of Dunachton burn after its final bend among the hills. *Sneachdradh* means snows, or much snow being an abstract noun formed from *sneachd*.

Ruigh an Ròig : the Reach of the Roig (?) is eastward of Craig Mhor [NH 79343 04559] by the side of the peat road. The map places it further along as Ruigh na Ruaige the Stretch of the Retreat.

Bad Each is [NH 74064 05395] above Glen Guinack [Gynack] : it is mis-read on the Ordnance map into Pait-an-Eich¹⁰ – a meaningless expression. It means Horses' Clump, and a famous local song begins –

Mollachd gn brath aig braigh Bad Each ;

“curses ever more on upper Bad-each, where the horses stuck and they could not extricate them.”

[183] Rhymes about the various place names are common, and here is an enumeration of the heights in the Monadh Liath between Kingussie and Craig Dhubh : –

*Creag-bheag Chinn-a'-ghinbhsaich,
 Creag-mhòir Bhail'-a'-chrothain,
 Beinne-Bhuidhe na Sròine,
 Creag-an-lòin aig na croitean,
 Sithean-mòr Dhail'-a'-Chaoruinn,
 Creag-an-abhaig a' Bhail'-shios,
 Creag-liath a' Bhail'-shuas,
 'S Creag-Dhubh Bhiallaid,
 Cadha-'n-fheidh Lochain-ubhaidh,
 Cadh' is mollaicht' tha ann,
 Cha'n fhàs fiar no fodar ann,
 Ach sochagan is dearcagan-allt,
 Gabhar air aodainn,
 Is laosboc air a cheann.*

Glen Balloch ; in Gaelic *Gleann Baloch*. This name is etymologised on the Ordnance map into *Gleann a' Bhealaich* – the Glen of the Pass ; but the word is *baloch* or *balloch*, which means either speckled or high-walled. To the left the Allt Mhadagain discharges into the Calder : this name is explained on the map as *Mada coin*, which may be right, but it certainly is not the pronunciation, which our *Madagain* reproduces. There are two corries in Gaick similarly named (Cory Mattakan, 1773). der.

Meall na h-Uinneig [NH 55267 85148] behind Gask-beg considerably, means the Mass or Hill of the Window. There are other places so named – *Uinneag Coire-an-Eich* (*Glenballoch*), *Uinneag Coir Ardair* [*Uinneag Coire Ardair* {NN 42533 88549}], *Uinneag Coir an Lochain*, *Uinneag na Creig Moire* [NN 44761 86298], *Uinneag Coire Chaoruinn* and *Uinneag*

¹⁰ On the OS Six-inch 2nd edition, 1888-1915, and the OS Landranger Map 35, it is shown corrected.

Mhìn Choire [NN 45136 89985], the latter ones being all near one another on the north side of Loch Laggan. The meaning of the name is an opening or pass, or a notch in the sky-line.

Iarlraig [NN 51322 95503] is the rising ground above Garva Bridge, and is mis-written for *Iolairig*, place of the eagles. There is here a rock where the eagle nests or nested. Compare Auld Cory na Helrick of 1773 with the Allt Coire na h-Iolair of the Ordnance map, both referring to a stream on Loch Ericht side. There is an Elrick opposite Killyhuntly. The name is common in North Scotland.

[184] *Coire Yairack* [NN 43411 98458]; *Allt Yairack*; in Gaelic *Earrag*, as if a feminine of *Errach* (spring). It is spelt *Yarig* on the 1773 estate map. Perhaps it is a corruption of *Gearrag*, the short one, applied to a stream.¹¹

Shesgnan [NN 43475 94796] is the name of a considerable extent of ground near the source of the Spey, and it means morass land, being from *seasqann*, fenny country, a word which gives several place names both in Scotland and Ireland. The most notable in Scotland is Shisken in Arran, a large, low-lying district, flat and now fertile.

South of Spey.

We now cross Spey, and work our way down the south side.

Dearc Beinne Bige [NN 46086 92623] the Dearc of the Little Hill. The pronunciation is *dire*; in the 1773 map it is spelt *Dirichk*. It is an oblique case of *dearc*, a hole, cave, cleft; it is found in early Irish as *derc* (a caCoire 'Bheanve), and several places in Ireland are called Derk and Dirk therefrom. It occurs at least three times in Laggan – as above; and in *Dirc Craig Chathalain* [NN 48881 94392] the 1773 *Dirichk* Craig Caulan, or cleft of the Noisy Rock, from *Callan*, noise; and in *Dearc-an-Fhearna* [NN 52305 93342].¹²

Coire 'Bhein [NN 50693 92800], the 1773 Cory Vein, is a puzzling name. It looks like the genitive case of *bian*, skin.

Coire Phitridh [NN 48756 80059], at the south corner of Lochan na h-Earba, [the Allt Coire Pitridh enters the southern end of the Loch at {NN 46356 81377}] is given in the map as *Corie na Peathraich*. The word is probably an abstract noun from *pit*, hollow.

Beinn Eibhinn [NN 44225 73445], the 1773 Bineven, the "pleasant hill," is a prominent peak of 3611 feet high [? 3379 feet – it is the western summit of Aonach Beag], on the borders of Badenoch and Lochaber, from which a good view of Skye can be got.

Ben Alder [NN 49630 71862], Blaeu's Bin Aildir, in modern Gaelic *Beinn Eallar* (Yallar). The word is obscure.

Beinn Udlaman [NN 57046 73973], the Uduman of the 1773 map, on the confines of Badenoch and Perthshire, east of Loch Ericht, seems to take its name from the ball and socket action, for *udalan* signifies a swivel or joint. Some suggest *udlaidh*, gloomy, retired.

¹¹ Leachdann Chorrach [NN 44101 98035] lies in the valley just to the east of the Alt Yairack- could *Chorrach* (angry) and *Yairack* be the same? The Corrieyairack Pass is known in Gaelic as Màm Choire Ghearraig.

¹² On the modern OS Landranger Map 35, this is given as *Dirc an Úillt Fhearna* and, on the ground, is a most impressive 'cleft.'

The *Boar, An Torc*, of Badenoch [NN 62092 76253] is to the left of the railway as one enters the district from the south. The " Sow of Athole" is quite close to the " Boar of Badenoch." [It lies 2.3km south, at {NN 62497 73993}]

We are now at the ridge of *Drumochter*, in Gaelic, *Drum-uachdar*, or ridge of the upper ground.

Coire Bhoite [the OS has *Coire Bhotie* at {NN 66107 79772}] or rather *Bhoitidh*, the *Vottie* of 1773, is two or three miles away, and finds a parallel in the name *Sron Bhoitidh* [c.NN 91508 87314?] at the top of Glenfishie [?], where the river bends on itself. The word *boitidh* means " pig," or rather the call made to a pig when its attention is desired.

[185] *Coire Sìùileagach* [NN 61174 92319], behind Craig Ruadh [NN 61671 92962] and Drumgask [NN 61391 93595], means the Corrie full of Eyes, so named from its springs doubtless. The term *sùileach* (full of eyes) is usually applied to streams and corries with whirlpools therein.

Creag Chrocan [NN 60705 93113], not *nan Cròcean* as on the map,¹³ is near the above corrie¹⁴, and is named from the deer's antlers which *cròc* means. Similary we often meet with *cabar* (an antler or caber) in place names.

The hill of *Bad na Deimheis* [?], the *Bad na Feish* of 1773, over-looks Dalwhinnie to the east. The name means the " Clump of the Shears," a curious designation. We now pass over into the forest and district of

Gaick [Gaick Lodge¹⁵ was originally at {NN 75899 84648} at the head of Glen Tromie] , in Gaelic *Gàig*, which is the dative or locative of *gàg*, a cleft or pass. It is considered the wildest portion of Badenoch, and the repute of the district is far from good. Supernaturally, it has an uncanny reputation. From the days of the ill-starred and ill-disposed Lord Walter Comyn, who, in crossing at Leum na Feinne – the Fenian Men's Leap¹⁶ – to carry out his dread

¹³ Now corrected on OS Maps.

¹⁴ Less than 100m separates the two, Coire Suileahach lying south-east of Creag Chrocan.

¹⁵ The old Lodge was destroyed by an avalanche in 1800 when a hunting party was killed.

¹⁶ According to the Ordnance Surney Name Book [OS1/17/54/211] this name applies to a hill feature situated between the burns *Allt na Feinne* and *Amhain Gharhghaig*, meaning - Fingals' Leap - once the property of Sir G. Macpherson-Grant, Baronet of Ballandalloch..

"Gaick had a bad reputation among the people of Badenoch and Atholl. There is a phrase: '*S mòr a b' fheàrr leam a bhith an Druim Uachdair na bhith ann an Gàdhaig nan creagan gruamach* - "I'd much rather be in Drumochter than in Gaick of the gloomy crags".

There was a local curse - *Dìol Bhaltair an Gàdhaig ort!* That means 'Walter's fate in Gaick to you'. It is connected to the terrible death that Walter Comyn, the Lord of Badenoch, suffered in the 13th Century. Walter's home was in Ruthven, near Kingussie. He was wanting there to be a proper road between Badenoch and Atholl and he was out looking at the route on the hills in 1258.

On the way out, Walter gave an order. When he returned, every woman between the age of fifteen and thirty who was working the land in Ruthven must be stark-naked!

On the high country east of Loch an Dùin [NN 72292 80054], there is a burn called *Allt a' Chaairnich* [NN 74267 82606]. There is famous place called *Leum nam Fiann*, where people would jump across the burn. Walter fell off his horse there. But his foot got caught in the stirrup. His horse must have been under a spell - or fear, and it made for Ruthven in a hurry. When it reached Ruthven, there was only Walter's leg left - still in the stirrup! When some people went to look for the rest of his body, they found it. Two eagles were ripping it apart. " © 2019 LearnGaelic

project of making the Ruthven women go to the harvest fields to work unclothed and naked, was torn to pieces by eagles,¹⁷ to that last Christmas of last century, when Captain John Macpherson of Ballachroan and four others were choked to death by an avalanche of snow as they slept in that far-away bothie, Gaick has an unbroken record of dread supernatural doings. Duncan Gow, in his poem on the Loss of Gaick in 1799, says : –

*Gàig dhubh nam feadan fiar,
Nach robh ach na striopaich riamh,
Na bana-bhuidsich 'gan toirt 'san lion,
Gach fear leis 'm bu mhiannach laighe leath'.*

Which means that Gaick, the dark, of wind-whistling crooked glens, has ever been a strumpet and a witch, enticing to their destruction those that loved her charms. How near this conception is to that mythological one of the beauteous maiden that entices the wayfarer into her castle, and turns into a savage Gragon [*sic.*] that devours him! The following verses showing the respective merits of various places have no love for Gaick : –

*Bha mi 'm Bran, an Cuilc 's an Gàig,
'N Eidird agus Leum-na-Làrach,
Am Feisidh mhòir bho 'bun gu 'bràighe
'S b'annsa leam 'bhi 'n Allt-a'-Bhàthaich.
[186] 'S mòr a b'fhearr leam 'bhi 'n Drum-Uachdar
Na 'bhi 'n Gàig nan creagan gruamach,
Far am faicinn ann na h-uailsean
'S iùbhaidh dhearg air bharr an gualain.*

The poet prefers Drumochter to Glen-Feshie and Gaick of the grim crags. The 'Loss of Gaick' is a local epoch from which to date : an old person always said that he or she was so many years old at Call Ghaig. So in other parts, the Olympiads or Archons or Temple-burnings which made the landmarks of chronology were such as the " Year of the White Peas," " the Hot Summer " (1826?), the year of the " Great Snow," and so forth.

A' *Chaoirnich* [NN 73793 81266], the *Caorunnach* of the Ordnance map, but the *Chournich* of 1773, stands beside Loch-an-Duin [NN 72290 79898] to the left. The latter form means the "cairny" or "rocky" hill; the other, the "rowan-ny" hill, which is the meaning doubtless. The steep ascent of it from the hither end of the lake is called on the map *Bruthach nan Spàidan*, a meaningless expression for *Bruthach nan Spardan*, the Hen-roost Brae.

Meall Aillig [NN 77751 83115], in the Gargaig Cory (1773), or Garbh-Ghaig [NN 77323 82102] (Rough Gaick as opposed to " Smooth " Gaick or Minigaig as in Blaeu's map), appears to contain *aill* (a cliff) as its root form. Some refer it to *ailleag*, the hiccup, which the stiffness of the climb might cause.

Coire Bhran [NN 79968 84834], the *Coryoren* of Bleau, takes its name from the river Bran [Allt Coire Bhran {NN 80294 86555}], a tributary of the Tromie, and this last word is a well-known river name, applied to turbulent streams, and signifies "raven."

Caochan a' Chaplich [NN 75432 92514], a streamlet which falls into Tromie a little below the confluence of the Bran, contains the word *caplach*, which seems to be a derivative of

¹⁷ Hence the expression – Diol Bhaltair an Gàig ort – Walter's fate in Gaick on you – to signify an ill wish or put a curse on anyone.

capull (a horse). There is a Caiplich in the Aird – a large plateau, the Monadh Caiplich in Loch Alsh, and a stream of the name in Abernethy.

Croyla [*Croidh-la* {NN 77608 95067}] is the prominent mountain on the left as one enters Glentromie – a massive, striking hill. It is sung of in the Ossianic poetry of John Clark, James Macpherson's fellow Badenoch man, contemporary, friend, and sincere imitator in poetry and literary honesty. Clark's (prose) poem is entitled the "Cave of Croyla," and in his notes he gives some topographical derivations. Tromie appears poetically as Trombia, and is explained as *Trom-bidh*, heavy water, while Badenoch itself is etymologised as *Bha-dianach*, secure valley. The Ordnance map renders Croyla as Cruaidhleac, a form which etymologises the word out of all ken of the local [187] pronunciation.¹⁸ Blaeu's map has Cromlaid, which is evidently meant for Croyla. The Gaelic pronunciation is *Croidh-la*, the *la* being pronounced as in English. It is possibly a form of *cruadh-lach* or *cruaidhlach* (rocky declivity), a locative from which might have been *cruaidhlaigh*.

Meall-an-Dulh-catha is at the sources of the Comhraig river. It should be spelt *Dubh-chadha*, the black pass, the word *cadha* being common for pass.

Ciste Mhairearaid or rather *Ciste Mhearad*, Margaret's kist or chest or coffin, is part of Coire Fhearnagan, above the farm of Achlean. Here snow may remain all the year round. It is said that Margaret, who was jilted by Mackintosh of Moy Hall, and who cursed his family to sterility, died here in her mad wanderings.

Meall Dubhag and not *Meall Dubh-achaidh* (Ordnance map) is the name of the hill to the south of Ciste Mairead, while equally *Creag Leathain(n)*, broad craig, is the name of the hill in front of Ciste Mairead, not *Creag na Leacainn*. Further north is

Creag Ghinbhsachan, the craig of the fir forest.

Creag Mhigeachaidh stands prominently behind Feshie Bridge and Laggan-lia. There is a Dal-mhigeachaidh or Dalmigavie in Strathdearn, a Migvie (Gaelic, Migibhidh) in Stratherrick, and the parish of Migvie and Tarland in Aberdeenshire. The root part is *mig* or *meig*, which means in modern Gaelic the bleating of a goat.

Creag Follais, not *Creag Phulach* (sic) as on the maps, means the conspicuous crag. Similarly wrong is

Creag Fhiaclach, not *Creag Pheacach* (!), on the borders of Rothiemurchus, which means the serrated or toothed crag, a most accurately descriptive epithet.

Clack Mhic Cailein, on the top of Creag Follais. The MacCailein meant is Argyle, supposed to be Montrose's opponent, though it must be remembered that Argyle had also much to do with Huntly at Glenlivet and otherwise.

Sgòr Gaoithe (wind skerry) [NN 90303 98952] is behind Creag Mhigeachaidh [NH 87013 02166].

We have now exhausted the natural features of the country so far as the explanation of their names is necessary, and we now turn to the farm and field names – the *bailes* and townships and other concomitants of civilisation. Commencing again at Craig Ellachie, we

¹⁸ OS Landranger - now *Croidh-la*.

meet first after crossing the *crioch* or boundary the farm of *Kinchyle*, *Cinn-Choille*, wood's-end. Then

Lynwilg [NH 88105 10653], the Lambulge of 1603, *Lynbuilg* (Blaeu), signifies the lane or land of the bag or bulge.

Ballinluig [NH 86471 10299], the town (we use this term for *baile*, which means " farm" or " township") of the hollow.

[188] *Kinrara* [NH 87556 08092], north and south, on each side of the Spey. This name appears about 1338 as *Kynroreach* ; 1440, as *Kynrorayth* ; and *Kynrara* (1603). The *kin* is easy ; it is " head" or "end" as usual. The *rara* or *rorath* is difficult. *Rorath*, like *ro-dhuine*, (great man), might mean the great or noble (*ro*) rath or dwelling place (the Latin *villa*).

Dalraddy [NH 85500 08764], *Dalreadye* (1603), and *Dalrodie* (Blaeu). The Gaelic is *Dail-radaidh*, the *radaidh dale*. The adjective *radaidh* is in the older form *rodaidh*, which is still known in Gaelic in the force of "dark, sallow." A sallow-complexioned man might be described as "*Duine rodaidh dorcha*." The root-word is *rod*, iron-scum or rusty-looking mud ; it is a shorter form of *ruadh* (red). In Ireland, it is pretty common, and is applied to ferruginous land. The adjective *rodaidh* (dark or ruddy) might describe the Dalraddy land. It is in connection with Dalraddy that the great Badenoch conundrum is given : —

Bha cailleach ann Dailradaidh
'S dh' ith i adag 's i marbh.

(There was a wife in Dalraddy who ate a haddock, being dead).

With Dalraddy estate are mentioned in 1691 the lands of *Keanintachair* (now or lately *Kingt`achair*, causeway-end), *Knockningalliach* (the knowe of the carlins), *Loyninriach*, *Balivuulin* (mill-town), and the pasturages *Feavorar* (the lord's moss-stream), *Riochnabegg* or *Biachnabegg*, and *Batabog* (now *Bata-bog*, above Ballinluig, the soft swampy place.) Another old name is *Gortincreif* (1603), the *gort* or field (farm) of trees. *Croftgowan* means the Smith's Croft.

Delfour [NH 84421 08576], *Dalphour* in 1603, and older forms are *Dallefour* (1569). The *del* or *dal* is for *dale*, but what is *four*? The Gaelic sound is *fur*. The word is very common in names in Pictland, such as *Dochfour*, *Pitfour*, *Balfour*, *Letterfour*, *Tillyfour*, *Tillipourie* and *Trinafour*. These forms point to a nominative *pur*, the *p* of which declares it of non-Gaelic origin. The term is clearly Pictish. The only Welsh word that can be compared is *pawr* (pasture), *pori* (to graze), the Breton *peur*. *Fur* has nothing to do with Gaelic *fuair*, for then *Dalfour* would in Gaelic be *Dail-fhuair*, that is *Dal-uar*.

Pitchurn [Balchurn {NH 83760 07549}], in 1603 *Pettechaerne*, in Gaelic *Bal-chaorrinn*, the town of the rowan. The Pictish *pet* or *pit* (town, farm), which is etymologically represented by the Gaelic *cuid*, has been changed in modern Gaelic to *baile*, the true native word.

[189] *Pitourie* [Ballourie {NH 83472 07098}], in 1495 *Pitwery*, in 1603 *Pettourye*, in 1620 *Pettevre*, &c.; now *Bail' odharaidh*. The adjective *odhar* means "dun," and *odharach*, with an old genitive *odharaigh*, or rather *odharach-mhullach*, is the plant devil's bit. The plant may have given the name to the farm.

Baldow [NH 83573 06509], means the black town.

Kincraig [NH 83274 05658], Kyncragye (1603), means the end of the crag or hill, which exactly describes it.

Leault [NH 82307 05783], Gaelic *Leth-allt* or half-burn, a name which also appears in Skye as *Lealt*, may have reference rather to the old force of *allt*, which was a glen or shore. The stream and partly one-sided glen are characteristic of the present Leault. [The stream that flows on the north side of the farm is called *An Leth-allt*.]

Dunachton [NH 82099 04733], Gaelic *Dùn-Neachdain(n)*, the hill-fort of Nechtan. Who he was, we do not know. The name appears first in history in connection with the Wolf of Badenoch. St Drostan's chapel, below Dunachton House, is the *cepella de Nachtan* of 1380. We have Dwnachtun in 1381, and Dunachtane in 1603. The barony of Dunachton of old belonged to a family called MacNiven, which ended in the 15th century in two heiresses, one of whom, Isobel, married William Mackintosh, cousin of the chief, and afterwards himself chief of the Clan Mackintosh. Isobel died shortly after marriage childless. Tradition says she was drowned in Loch Insh three weeks after her marriage by wicked kinsfolk. Mr Fraser-Mackintosh has written a most interesting monograph on Dunachton, entitled "Dunachton, Past and Present."

Achnabeachin ; Gaelic *Ach' nam Beathaichean*, the field of the beasts. Last century this land held eight tenants.

Keppochmuir ; Gaelic *An Sliabh Ceapanach* ; Ceapach means a tillage plot.

Coilintuie [NH 81149 03699], or *Meadowside*. The Gaelic is *Coill-an-t-Suidhe*, the Wood of the Suidh, or sitting or resting. Some hold the name is really *Cuil-an-t-Shuidh*, the Recess of the Suidh.

Croftcarnoch [NH 79931 03293]; Gaelic *Croit-charnach*, the Cairny Croft.

Belleville [Balavil {NH 79122 02650}] is, in its English form, of French origin, and means "beautiful town." The old name in documents and in maps was *Raitts*, and in the 1776 Roads' Map this name is placed exactly where Belleville would now be written. Gaelic people call it *Bail'-a'-Bhile*, "the town of the brae-top," an exact description of the situation. Mrs Grant of Laggan (in 1796) says that Bellavill "is the true Highland name of the place," not Belleville ; and it has been maintained by old people that the place was called *Bail'-a'-Bhile* before "Ossian" Macpherson ever bought it or lived there. Whether the name is adopted from Gaelic to suit a French [190] idea, or *vice versa*, is a matter of some doubt, though we are inclined to believe that James Macpherson was the first to call old Raitts by such a name. James Macpherson is the most famous — or rather the most notorious — of Badenoch's sons ; but though his "Ossian" is a forgery from a historical standpoint, and a purely original work from a literary point of view, yet it is to him that Celtic literature owes its two greatest benefits its being brought prominently before the European world, and, especially, the preservation of the old literature of the Gael as presented in traditional ballads and poems, and in the obscure Gaelic manuscripts which were fast disappearing through ignorance and carelessness.

Lachandhu [Lochan Dubh Mòr {NH 79838 02182}], the little loch below Belleville, gives the name to Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's novel.

Raitts {Upper Raitts {NH 77488 02264}] the English plural being used to denote that there were three Raitts — Easter, Middle, and Wester. In 1603 the place is called *Reatt*, and

Blaeu has *Rait*. The Gaelic is *Ràt*, and this, which is the usual form in Highland place names, is a strengthened form of the older *rath* or *ráith* of Old Irish, which meant a residence surrounded by an earthen rampart. It, in fact, meant the old farm house as it had to be built for protective purposes. For the form *ràt* (from *ràth-d*), compare *Bialaid*, further on, and the Irish names *Kealid* from *caol* and *Croaghat* from *cruach*, which Dr Joyce gives in his second volume of Irish Place Names to exemplify this termination in *d*.

Chapel-park [NH 78537 02035]; Gaelic *Pairc-an-t-Seipeil*. This is a modern name, derived from the chapel and kirk-yard that once were there, which was known as the chapel of Ma Luac, the Irish Saint. The older name was the *Tillie* or *Tillie-sow*, where an inn existed, whose "Guidwife" was called *Bean-an-Tillie*. Some explain *Tillie-sow* as the Gaelic motto that used, it is said, to be over the olden inn doors, viz., "Tadhailibh so" — "Visit here."

Lynchat [NH 78323 01732] is now *Bail'-a'-Chait*, Cat-town, instead of Cat's field (*loinn*).

An Uaimh Mhòir, the Great Cave, is a quarter of a mile away from the highway as we pass *Lynchat* [at {NH 77677 01927}]. It is an "Erd-house," the only one of this class of antiquarian remains that exists in Badenoch. It is in the form of a horse-shoe, which has one limb truncated, about 70 feet long, 8 feet broad, and 7 high. The walls gradually contract as they rise, and the roofing is formed by large slabs thrown over the approaching walls. Tradition says it was made in one night by a rather gigantic race: the women carried the excavated stuff in their aprons and threw it in the Spey, [191] while the men brought the stones, large and small, on their shoulders from the neighbouring hills. All was finished by morning, and the inhabitants knew not what had taken place. From this mythic ground we come down to the romantic period, when, according to the legend, MacNiven or Mac Gille-naoimh and his nine sons were compelled to take refuge here some say they made the cave, and long they eluded their Macpherson foes. There was a hut built over the mouth of the cave, and at last it was suspected that something was wrong with this hut. So one of the Macphersons donned beggar's raiment, called at the hut, pretended to be taken suddenly ill, and was, with much demur, allowed to stay all night. There was only one woman in the hut, and she was continually baking; and he could not understand how the bread disappeared in the apparent press into which she put it and which was really the entry into the cave. He at last suspected the truth, returned with a company of men next night, and slew the MacNivens. It is said that this man's descendants suffered from the ailment which he pretended to have on that fateful night.

Laggan [NH 76809 01543], the hollow, now in ruins. Here dwelt the famous Badenoch witch, *Bean-an-Lagain*.

Kerrow [NH 76534 01390]; in Gaelic, *An Ceatkramh*, the fourth part of the davoch doubtless the davoch of "Kingussie Beige" (1603), with its "four pleuches."

Kingussie. Already discussed under the heading of Kingussie parish.

Ardvroilach [NH 75547 01288]: Gaelic *Ard-bhroighleach*; in 1603, *Ardbrelache*. The form *broighleach* seems a genitive plural from the same root form as *broighleag*, the whortleberry. The word *broighlich* (brawling) scarcely suits with *ard*, a height.

Pitmain [NH 74532 00346]. The Gaelic is only a rendering of the English sounds: *Piodmé'an*. In 1603 it is *Petmeane*. The reason for their being no Gaelic form of this word is simply this. The great inn and stables of the Inverness road were here, and the name Pit-

meadhan, "middle town," was adopted into the English tongue. The Gaelic people, meantime, had been abolishing all the *pet* or *pit* names, and changing them to *Bals*, but this one was stereotyped in the other tongue, and the local Gael had to accept the English name or perpetuate an offending form. He chose to adopt the English pronunciation.

Balachroan ; Bellochroan (1603) [OS gives Ballachroan {NH 73278 00269}]; Gaelic *Baile-Chrothain*, the town of the sheepfold. Above it was *Coulinlinn*, the nook of the lint, where an old branch of Macphersons lived.

[192] *Aldlarie* [OS gives Aultlarie {NN 72995 99763}]; Gaelic *Allt-Làirigh*, the stream of the làrach or gorge.

Strone [NN 72233 99519] means "nose."

Newtonmore is the new town of the Moor — An Sliabh.

Clune and *Craggan of Clune* [NN 71328 99607]. The Gaelic *cluain* signifies meadow land, whether high or low, in dale or on hill.

Benchar [NN 70687 98774], *Bannachar* (1603), *Beandocher* (1614), and now *Beannachar*, Irish *beannchar* (horns, gables, peaks), Welsh *Banqor*. It is a very common place name. The root is *beann* or *beinn* (a hill).

Beallid [NN 70389 98737], in 1603 *Ballet*, in 1637 *Batlid*, now *Bialaid* [OS gives, so named from being at the mouth of Glen-banchor — *bial* (mouth), with a termination which is explained under Raitts. A "pendicle" of it, called *Corranach*, is often mentioned, which probably means the "knowey" place.

Cladh Bhrì'd [NN 70536 98898] and *Cladh Eadail*, Bridget's and Peter's (?) Kirkyards, are the one at Benchar and the other along from Beallid, the latter being generally called *Cladh-Bhiallaid* [NN 69124 97159].¹⁹ Chapels existed there also at one time.

Ovie, in 1603 *Owey* (and *Corealdye*, now *Coraldie*, corrie of streams or cliffs), *Blaeu's Owie*, now *Ubhaidh*, appears to be a derivative of *ubh*, egg : it is a genitive or locative of *ubhach*, spelt and pronounced of old as *ubhaigh*.²⁰ Mrs Grant describes Lochan Ovie as beauty in the lap of terror, thus suggesting the derivation usually given of the name, viz., *uamhaidh*, dreadful. Some lonesome lakes of dread near Ballintian are called *Na h-uath Lochan*, the dread lakes.

Cluny [NN 64546 94286], *Clovnye* (1603), now *Cluainidh*. The root is *cluain* (meadow), and the termination is doubtless that in *A' Chluanach*, a cultivated plateau behind Dunachton, and the dative singular of this abstract form would give the modern Cluny from the older *cluanaigh*.

Balgowan [NN 63600 94305], *Pettegovan* (1603), now *Bail'-a-Ghobhainn*, the town of the smith.

Gask-beg [NN 62057 94592], *Gask-more* [NN 62635 94289], *Gargask* [NN 61302 94549], *Drumgask* [NN 61386 93601] — all with *Gask*, and all near one another about Laggan Bridge.

¹⁹ On the OS Six-inch 2nd Series Map at [NN 69124 97159] *Cladh Phadraig* is clearly shown c.100m south of *Biallidbeg*.

²⁰ On the OS Six-inch 2nd Series Map at [NN 67489 95640] the two lochans are 'covered' by the one name — *Lochain Uvie*.

There is an older *Gasklone*, Mud-Gask, the *Gascoloyne* of 1603, Gasklyne (1644), and Gaskloan (1691). The form *Gask* appears in the Huntly rental of 1603. The name Gask is common ; there is Gask parish in Strathearn, Perthshire, and there is a Gask in Strathnairn, a Gask Hill in Fife, and Gask House near Turriff. The name Gaskan appears more than once, and in one instance applies to a rushy hollow (Gairloch). We have Fingask in four counties Aberdeen, Fife, Inverness (in the Aird, but the Gaelic is now [193] *Fionn-uisg*) and Perth. Colonel Robertson, in his "Topography of Scotland," refers Gask to *gasag*, diminutive of *gas*, branch ; but this hardly suits either phonetically or otherwise. The word *gasg* seems to have slipped out of use : it belongs only to Scotch Gaelic, and may be a Pictish word. The dictionaries render it by "tail," following Shaw, and mis-improving the matter by the additional synonym "appendage," which is not the meaning; for the idea is rather the posterior of an animal, such as that of the hind, which Duncan Ban refers to in this case as "white" — "gasganan geala," and which makes an excellent mark for the deer-stalker. The dictionaries give *gasgan*, a puppy ; *gasganach*, petulant ; and *gasgara* (*gasgana?*), posteriors ; all which Shaw first gives. There is also the living word *gasgay*, a stride, which no dictionary gives. These derivations throw very little light on the root word *gasg*, which seems to signify a nook, gusset, or hollow. The Laggan *gasgs* are now "rich meadows, bay shaped," as a native well describes them. It was at Gaskbeg that the gifted Mrs Grant of Laggan lived, and here she sang of the beauties of the Bronnach stream — the Gaelic Bronach, the "pebbly" (?) — which flows through the farm.

Blargie [NN 60062 94424], in 1603 *Blairovey*, in Blaeu *Blariki*, and in present Gaelic *Blàragaidh*. The termination *agaidh* appears also in Gallovie, which, in 1497, is *Galowye*, and now *Geal-agaidh*, the white *agaidh*. The word appears as a prefix in Aviemore and Avielochan, both being *agaidh* in Gaelic. The old spelling of these words with a *v*, as against the present pronunciation with *g*, is very extraordinary. The meaning and etymology of *agaidh* are doubtful. Shaw gives *aga* as the "bottom of any depth," and there is a Welsh word *ag*, a "cleft or opening." The word may be Pictish.

Coull [NN 58876 94048], in Gaelic *Cuil*, means the "nook, corner," which the place is.

Ballmishag [NN 58444 94041] means the town of the kid, *mìseag* or *minnseag*.

Crathie [NN 57986 93988],²¹ in 1603 *Crathe*, in Blaeu *Cracky*, now in Gaelic *Craichidh*. The name appears in the Aberdeenshire parish of Crathie. The form *Crathie* possibly points to an older Gaelic *Crathigh*.

Garvabeg [NN 52715 94917] and *Garvamore* [NN 52686 94387], the *Garvey Beige* and *Garvey Moir* of 1603. The word at present sounds as *Garbhath*, which is usually explained as *garbh-àth*, rough ford, a very suitable meaning and a possibly correct derivation.

Shirramore [NN 55169 93782] and *Shirrabeg* [NN 56887 93059], the *Waster Schyroche* and *Ester Schyroche* of 1603. *Sheiro-more*, in 1773, is in Gaelic *Siorrath Mòr*. [194] With these names we must connect the adjoining glen name, *Glenshirra* [NN 53703 92328] Gaelic *Glenn Sìoro*, a name which appears also in Argyleshire, near Inverary, as *Glenshira*, *Glenshyro* (1572), traversed by the Shira stream. The root word appears to be *sìr* or *sìor*, long. Some suggest *siaradh*, squinting, obliqueness.

²¹ This is the name of an area rather than a specific place.

Aberarder [NN 47907 87506], Blaeu's *Abirairdour*, Gaelic *Obair ardur*. There is an Aberarder (Aberardor in 1456, and Abirardour in 1602) in Strathnairn, and another in Deeside, and an Auchterarder in Strathearn. The *Aber* is the Pictish and Welsh prefix for "confluence," Gaelic *inver*. The *ardour* is etymologised in the Ordnance map as Ard-dhoire, high grove. The word may be from *ard dobhar*, high water, for the latter form generally appears in place names as *dour*.

Ardverikie [NN 50809 87554] has been explained correctly in the "Province of Moray," published in 1798, as "Ard Merigie, the height for rearing the standard." The Gaelic is *Ard Mheirgidh*, from *meirge*, a standard.²²

Gallowie. – See under Blargie.

Muccoul is from *Muc-cùil*, Pigs' nook.

Achduchil means the field of the black wood.

Dalchully [NN 59520 93605], Gaelic *Dail-chuilidh*. The word *cuilidh* signifies a press or hollow. It means the "dale of the hollow or recess."

Tynrich [NN 62265 93416] is for Tigh-an-Fhraoich, house of the heath.

Catlodge [NN 63313 92897], in 1603 *Cattelleitt*, and in 1776 *Catleak*, is in present Gaelic *Caitleag*, the Cat's Hollow. The form *cait* is unusual; we should, by analogy with *Muc-cùil* and other names where an animal's name comes first in a possessive way, expect *Catlaig* rather than *Caitleag*.

Brackachy [NN 63894 92840], *Brackachye* (1603), is usually explained as *Breacachaidh*, speckled field; but the latter part in *achaidh* is as likely to be a matter of affixes, viz., *ach-aigh*. We shall now cross the hills into Glentruim and up Loch Ericht side. There at Loch Ericht Lodge we have

Dail-an-Longairt, in 1773 *Rea Delenlongart*, and on the other side of the ridge is *Coire-an-Longairt* (Cory Longart 1773), while there is an *Eilean Longart* above Garvamore bridge and "Sheals of Badenlongart" in Gaick above the confluence of Bran, according to the 1773 map. *Longart* itself means a shealing, the older form being *longphort*, a harbour or encampment.

Dalwhinnie [NN 63859 84865], in Gaelic *Dail-chuinnidh*, is usually explained as *Dail-choinnimh*, Meeting's Dell; but the phonetics forbid the derivation. Professor Mackinnon has suggested the alternative of [195] the "narrow dail." Dalwhinnie was a famous station in the old coaching days, and the following verse shows how progress north-wards might be made: —

Brakbhaist am Baile-chloichridh
Lunch an Dail-na-ceardaich
Dinneir an Dail-chuinnidh

²² There is a tradition that, in ancient times, the Kings of Scotland often came upon hunting excursions, to the side of Lochlaggan, and that one, if not more, of the Kings Fergus was buried here. The place is still called *Ardveirge*, or the AirdDalch (height) of Fergus. About 3 years ago (1842) the Marquess of Abercorn commenced building a shooting-lodge there. A piece of ground was trenched for a garden, in the immediate vicinity of the grave and a silver coin of Henry II was found. [New Statistical Account (NSA) 1845.]

'S a' bhanais ann an Ràt.

Presmuckerach [Presmuchrach {NN 65898 88147}], not the Ordnance *Presmocachie*, is in 1603 *Presmukra*, that is *Preas-Mucraigh*, bush of piggery or pigs.

Datannach [Dalannach {NN 66689 88293}], which the Ordnance map etymologises into *Dail-gleannach* or Glen-dale, was in 1603 *Dallandache*, and is now *Dail-annach*. The old form points to the word *lann* or *land*, an enclosure or glade. The Irish *Annagh*, for *Eanach*, a marsh, will scarcely do, as the name appears in Loch Ennich in its proper Gaelic phonetics.

Crubinmore [NN 67479 90958], *Crubine* (1603), now *Crùbinn*. The names *Crubeen*, *Cruboge*, *Slievecroob*, &c., appear in Ireland, and are referred by Dr Joyce to *crub* (a paw, hoof), *cruibin* (a trotter, little hoof). The Gaelic *crubach* (lame), and *craban* (a crouching), are further forms of the root word, a locative case from the latter form being possibly our *Crubin*, referring to the two "much back-bent hills there."

Etteridge [NN 68612 92475], *Ettras* (1603), *Etrish* (1776), is in Gaelic *Eatrais*. The name of Phoinas cannot be disconnected with *Etteridge*, for the former in Gaelic is *Fothrais* or *Fotharais*, with the Pictish prefix *fother*, while *Etteridge* has the proposition *eadar* (between) as its first part. The terminal part *ais*, is common in place names, such as Dallas, Duffus, and Forres, the latter being practically our Phoness ; and this Lachlan Shaw explains as being *uis* (water). It seems to be first for an older *asti*, this for *osti*, and this again for Celtic *vostis*, a town or baile. The word *fois* (rest) is from this root.

Nessintullich, *Nesintuliche* (1603), now *Niosantulaich*, is probably for *Neasan-tulaich*, the place beside the hillock, *neasan*, the next place, which is an Irish word, from *neasa* (nearer).

Phoinas [NJ 19238 40573], *Foynes* (1603), has already been discussed. How the *n* comes to stand in the English for Gaelic *r* is very puzzling.

Invernahavon [NN 68969 95894], *Invernavine* (1603), means the confluence of the river, that is, of the Truim with Spey.

Riala [Raliabeag {NN 70301 96978}, *Ralia* {NN 70849 97767}], Gaelic *Rath-liath*, means the grey rath or dwelling place.

Nidde [Nuide {NN 73047 98753}, *Nuide Moss* {NN 71415 96093}], *Nuid* (1603), *Noid* (1699), now *Noid*. The derivation suggested for the name is *nuadh-id*, a topographic noun from the adjective *nuadh* or *nodha*, new ; of old, "*Noid of Ralia*."

[196] *Knappack* [NN 75528 99154], in Gaelic *A' Chnapaich*, the hilly or knobby land, It is a common place-name, especially in Ireland, appearing there as *Knappagh* and *Nappagh*.

Ruthven [NN 76238 99512], which is also the first form the name appears in in 1370, when the " Wolf" took possession of the lordship of Badenoch. It was here he had his castle. In 1380 the name is *Rothven* and *Ruthan*. The name is common all over Pictland, mostly in the form *Ruthven*, but also at various times and places spelt *Ruthfen*, *Ruwen*, *Ruven*, *Riv(v)en*, &c. The modern Gaelic is *Ruadhinn*, which simply means the " red place," from *ruadhan*, anything red. The *v* of the English form lacks historic explanation. *Brae-ruthven* gives the phonetically interesting Gaelic *Bré- ruadhinnach*.

Gordon Hall [NN 76797 99645] (so in 1773 also) is in Gaelic *Lag-an-Nòtair*, the Notary's Hollow, for it is a hollow. The name and its proximity to *Ruthven Castle* mutually explain

one another : Gordon Hall was doubtless the seat of the Gordon lords of Badenoch, when the castle of Ruthven was changed to barrack purposes. Here the rents used to be "lifted" for the Gordon estates.

Killiehuntly [NN 78714 00532], *Keillehuntlye* (1603), Blaeu's *Kyllehunteme*, in present Gaelic *Coille-Chuntainn*, the wood of Contin. Huntly is in Gaelic *Hundaidh*, and M'Firbis, in the 16th century, has Hundon ; hence arises the English form. The popular mind still connects it with the Huntlies. Contin is a parish in Ross-shire, and there was a Contuinn in Ireland, on the borders of Meath and Cavan, which is mentioned in connection with Fionn's youthful exploits. It has been explained as the meeting of the waters, *con-* (with) and *tuinn* (waves), but the matter is doubtful.

Inveruglas [NH 80971 00596], *Inneruglas* (1603), in Gaelic *Inbhir-ùlais*, the *inver* of *Ulas*, although no such stream exists now, receives its explanation from the old Retours, for in 1691 we have mention of Inveruglash and its mill-town on the water of Duglass, which means the stream passing the present Milton. Hence it means the *inver* of the Duglass or dark stream, *dubh* (black), and *glais* (stream).

Soillierie [NH 81496 01746], in Gaelic *Soileiridh*, means the " bright conspicuous place," on the rising beyond the Insh village.

Lynchlaggan [Lynachlaggan {NH 82269 02844}] stands for the Gaelic *Loinn-Chlaiginn*, the Glade of the Skull, possibly referring to the knoll above it rather than to an actual skull there found ; the name is applied in Ireland to such skull-like hills.

Am Beithe means the Birch.

Farletter [NH 82629 03315] is the old name for Balnacraig and Lynchlaggan, and it appears in 1603 as *Ferlatt* and *Falatrie* (1691). It took its [197] name from the hill above, now called *Craig-Farleitire*. The word *Farleitir* contains *leitir*, a slope or hillside, and possibly the preposition *for* (over), though we must remember the Fodderletter of Strathavon with its Pictish *Fotter*, or *Fetter*, or *Fother* (?).

Forr [Farr {NH 82791 03551}] is situated on a knolly ridge overlooking Loch Insh, and evidently contains the preposition *for* (over), as in *orra* for *forra*, on them. The last *r* or *ra* is more doubtful. Farr, in Strathdearn, is to be compared with it.

Dalnavert [NH 85801 06451],²³ in 1338 and 1440 *Dalnafert*, in 1603 *Dallavertt*, now in Gaelic *Dail-a'-bheirt*, which is for *Dail-an-bheart*, the dale of the grave or trench, from *feart*, a grave, which gives many place names in Ireland, such as Clonfert, Moyarty, &c.

Cromaran is possibly for *Crom-raon*, the crooked field.

Balnain is for *Beal an-àthain* the ford mouth.

Ballintian, the town of the fairy knoll, was called of old *Countelawe* (1603) and *Cuntelait* (1691), remembered still vaguely as the name of the stretch up the river from Ballintian, and caplained [*sic.*] as *Cunntadh-làid*, the counting (place) of the loads! Perhaps, like Contin, it is for *Con-tuil-aid*, the meeting of the waters, that is, of Feshie and Fernsdale, which takes place here.

²³ There are two places named Dalnavert very close to each other - [NH 85801 06451] and [NH 86032 06097],

Balanscristtan,²⁴ the town of the *sgrìodan* or running gravel.

Bulroy [NN 84596 99448], for *Bhuaill-ruaidh*, the red fold.

Tolvah [NN 84382 99520], the hole of drowning.

Achlean [NN 85191 97558], for *Achadh-leathainn*, is broad field. Beside it is Achlum, for *Achadh-lium*, the field of the leap.

Ruigh-aiteachain [NN 84717 92759] may possibly be a corruption for Ruigh Aitneachain, the Stretch of the Junipers.

Ruigh-fionntaig [?] the Reach of the Fair-stream.

In the Dulnan valley is *Caggan* [Craig Caggan {NH 81297 16714}], the Gaelic of which is *An Caiyinn*, and there is "a stony hill face" in Glen-Feshie of like name.

Editor's Notes.

All editorial additions to this paper are shown contained within square-brackets [...].

Numbers shown in the text, as for example, "[188]", indicate the page numbers of the original paper in the *Transactions* (TGS).

The editor has chosen to include a newer copy of the map of Badenoch, by Robert Gordon of Straloch, since that in the original paper in the *Transactions* is somewhat 'clipped.' This newer map also has the boundary-line of Badenoch highlighted in 'red' for clarity.

Map References. Have been obtained using the [Georeferenced Maps](#) of the National Library of Scotland, selecting the OS Six Inch 2nd edition. 1888-1915. References are printed in the form {NH 22222 33333} but, in full are, {NGR: NH 22222 33333}. In many cases the map reference quoted is that of the church in that 'area'. Where rivers are concerned, the reference given is usually that of the point of confluence with the mainstream (the 'parent' river). On hills, summit trig-points are used wherever possible.

Biographical Note.

Dr Alexander McBain was Rector of Inverness High School and a Gaelic scholar of some note. Having been born in Glenfeshie, Badenoch, in 1855, he was first educated in the local school and then taught there himself [as a pupil teacher] for a time. Aged nineteen, he then progressed to the King's College at Aberdeen University where he excelled becoming an outstanding student. In 1881, aged only 26 years, he was appointed to the rectorship of Raining's School in Inverness where he taught for thirteen years, transferring later to become rector of the Inverness High School. In 1901 Dr McBain's work in Celtic philosophy, history and literature was recognised with the award of the degree of LL.D. from his *alma mater*.

His principal works are articles that appeared in the *Transactions* of the Gaelic Society of Inverness including "The Book of Deer", "Ptolemy's Geography," "The Norse Element in Highland Place-names; Badenoch History and Place-names" (from which the following

²⁴ The OS lists the place-name *Balnasctiten* but it does not show it on the map.

article is extracted) and "Celtic Burial." The 'Transactions' of the Society also show him to have been a member of the Council of that body. In addition to the articles already mentioned, he edited Skene's *Highlanders of Scotland*, to which he added a valuable excursus embodying his own views regarding many of Skene's tenets. Along with the Rev. John Kennedy he brought out *Reliquiae Celticae*, a work of great value begun by that other pioneer Celtic scholar and native of Badenoch, the Rev. Alexander Cameron of Brodick. His crowning work, however, was his well-known *Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* first published in 1896. He died at Stirling in 1907 while arranging for the second edition of his dictionary to be published.

Dr McBain's knowledge of Gaelic was enhanced immensely by the fact that he was a native speaker and was considered to be bi-lingual. The work re-printed above has numerous references to the Ordnance Survey and evidence that might lead us to believe that he was not too impressed with the 'quality' of the Gaelic place-names that were used as labels for the various features that appeared on their maps. Mapmakers such as Pont and Bleau made less of an attempt at accuracy, recording instead the names as they thought they had heard them pronounced by the local inhabitants. Dr Bain added to his linguistic talents a large measure of local knowledge that had come from visiting many of the places he mentioned. The root or stem of a Gaelic place-name often became much easier to understand when the geography of the locality was known.

D.F.

Cushnie, An Dùbhlachd 2024.