

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



3 1761 04330 2231

ETIC DIALECTS



RLINGSHIRE

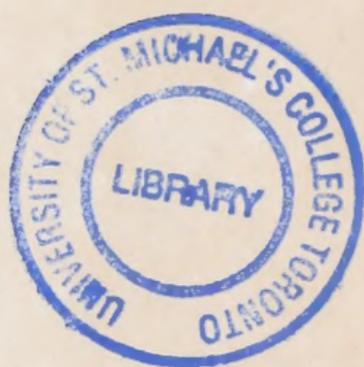
PLACE-NAMES.



MACDONALD.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation





# CELTIC DIALECTS:

GAELIC, BRYTHONIC, PICTISH,

AND

SOME STIRLINGSHIRE PLACE-NAMES.

*Paper read before the Gaelic Society of Stirling,  
March 31st, 1903,*

BY

T. D. MACDONALD.



STIRLING:

ENEAS MACKAY, 43 MURRAY PLACE.

1903.



CELTIC DIALECTS:  
GAELIC, BRYTHONIC, PICTISH,  
AND  
SOME STIRLINGSHIRE PLACE-NAMES.



On Tuesday evening, March 31st, 1903, in the Y.M.C.A. Rooms, Stirling, under the auspices of the Stirling Gaelic Society, Mr T. D. MacDonald delivered a lecture on the Celtic Dialects. The chair was occupied by the Rev. Colin Mackenzie, president of the Society.

The Chairman having briefly introduced the lecturer, Mr MacDonald said—

This is not an attempt to show the various differences of provincial dialects that have always existed, and which still exist, within the Gaelic area; such, for instance, as the *ia* of the Northern and the *ei* and *eu* of the Southern Highlands. The aim is to show in some degree the various influences that contributed to the dialectic differences between the two main groups of the Celtic tongue, and why a Pictish, or would-be third group, need not be counted upon. Who were the Picts, and what was their language? are questions that have been the subject of more controversy than any of the many disputable and complex questions arising out of the early history

of Scotland. To-day it is all but unanimously agreed that the Picts were the people found in possession of this country on the arrival of the Romans during the first century of the Christian era. It is also equally admitted that they were a Celtic people, speaking a Celtic language. Opinion is, however, divided as to which of the known dialects of Celtic was spoken by them, while there are still a few who contend that they spoke a language distinctively their own, and not to be included in either of the two general terms—Gaelic and Brythonic—which terms are made to include all the living Celtic dialects; that their dialect, or language, is lost, but that, nevertheless, it was Celtic. Among the latter is Dr Alex. MacBain, Inverness, who is indeed the only recognised authority holding these views to-day. More extreme still are a few who maintain that the Picts were not a Celtic race at all. But the idea once held by those latter, that the Picts were Goths or Teutons, is now entirely departed from, and there is now no authority worth quoting who argues in favour of the non-Celtic extraction of the Picts, with the single exception of Professor Rhys, of Cambridge. Professor Rhys holds that the Picts were a non-Aryan race, but in this view he stands alone, and alone he will be left, his admitted weight as an authority notwithstanding. He has deciphered one of the so-called Pictish or Ogam inscriptions in support of his views. Thus—

Ttocuhotts: ahebhhttmnnn: hcevvevv:  
nehhtonn,

truly a conglomeration of letters, non-representative of any language that ever was in this or any other world. The last word may resemble Gaelic, but as MacBain truly says, "It is neither Welsh nor any other language under the moon," a dictum endorsed by Andrew Lang, when he says "It is not only non-Aryan, but non-human."

These inscriptions, says MacBean, are the oldest monuments of the Gaelic literature, and were cut on the stones marking the graves of men of the Gaelic race; and certainly the examples deciphered by himself show unmistakable Gaelic roots \*

But MacBean still contends that Pictish was not Gaelic. They are found in Ireland, S. Wales, Pictland, and Shetland. MacBean calls them an Irish invention, and suggests that they were introduced to Pictland through Cornwall and Wales, a circumstance that would itself be suggestive of the close affinities between the different dialects of the Celts, whether Gaelic or Brythonic, but MacBean will still insist that Pictish was not Gaelic.

In a paper read recently before the Archæological Society of Stirling, on the Place-Names of Stirlingshire, the worn-out theory of a lost Pictish language is again given undue weight to. The writer of the paper referred to, Rev. J. B. Johnstone, Falkirk, who, in his larger work on "The Place-Names of Scotland," published in 1892, made himself the pioneer in the treatment of a subject at once instructive and fascinating, and he also placed all future workers in the same field under a deep debt of gratitude towards him. One need not be held to agree with all his conclusions when saying this much. Mr Johnstone does not himself claim finality for his conclusions. Indeed, he invites criticism and information which may lead to the elucidation of problems, many of which he has touched very tenderly. When one considers that Mr Johnstone does not know Gaelic, except from the dictionary, the amount of labour even his recent work on the "Place-Names of Stirlingshire" must have entailed, calls for our unstinted admiration. It is evidently a labour of love, kindly and unprejudiced in its treatment. In the same spirit

---

\* (See MacBain's Introduction to his Gaelic Dictionary, p. xvi.)

I would take exception to a few of his derivations of the place-names of Stirlingshire. He invites, as I said, criticism and diversity of opinion, in recognition, I suppose, of the saying "that two heads are better than one," and if my alternative meanings for a few of the place-names do not seem final, our united conclusions may enable a third party to see the solution we fail to find.

### Only Two Main Dialects.

Before, however, entering into details of the place-names, I will endeavour to give some reason why I at once repudiate the idea that any of the solutions are to be found in a so-called Pictish language. Indeed, the rev. author himself falls into the inevitable chaos resulting from such a theory. For instance, he says in referring to the so-called Pictish language that "their almost obliterated tongue had certainly some Brythonic, especially Cornish affinities, but on the whole it must have been nearer to Gaelic," and with this I entirely agree; but further on he says, "Pictish is certainly one of the P. Group, and not one of the K. or G. Group of Celtic languages." If Pictish were one of the P. Group it stands to reason that it could not be nearer to Gaelic, as he had already informed us, for Gaelic belongs to what he calls the K. or G. Group, but what is more commonly called the C. or G. and Q Group, as will be explained later on. The difficulty of the situation arises entirely from refusing to recognise the fact that Pictish contained the elements of both the Gaelic and the Brythonic, a situation which I believe to have arisen through the fusion into Pictavia of people speaking all the Celtic dialects then spoken in Britain, and that these people were the strong and unyielding Britons, driven before them by the Romans in the course of their all-conquering march northwards. Pursuing the theory that the Picts spoke a language dis-

tinot from the Scots and the Britons, is like pursuing a phantom; give it up, recognise the fact, as I believe it, that there were only two main dialects of the Celtic tongue spoken in this country, the Gaelic and the Brythonic, and that all our Celtic place-names can be traced to one or other of these two, and a great deal of mysticism and consequent conjecture will be avoidable.

### **Latin and Saxon Influences on the Celtic Tongue.**

During the Roman occupation of South Britain, while Latin was the official and written language, Celtic was still the spoken language of the natives, and we have ample evidence that Roman-Britain contained a large native element in its population, and also that this native element was not an unfelt force in the land. "The Britons," says Tacitus, "willingly supply our army with recruits, pay their taxes without a murmur, and perform all the service of Government with alacrity, provided they have no reason to complain of oppression. When injured their resentment is quick, sudden, and impatient; they are conquered, not spirit broken; they may be reduced to obedience, not to slavery." This is still characteristic of the Celts, they are easily led, sometimes too easily, but will not be driven. There is thus evidence of a large native Celtic population under the Romans in what afterwards became England. When the Romans left, the bulk of the Saxons did not come as was their wont, both before and after this event, burning and slaying all before them, they came to an extent at the invitation of the Roman-Britons, to aid them in the defence of their country from the inroads of their erstwhile kindred, the Picts and Scots of North Britain, who, not having endured the unnerving influence of a foreign yoke, as their kin in the South had done under the

Romans, were of a wilder, hardier, and more unsettled disposition. In the meantime, the manners, customs, and even the language of the Romano-Celts must have undergone considerable changes. On the advent of the Saxons, in the guise thus described, mixing and inter-marrying with the natives would immediately become prevalent, and although, when the Saxons began to make themselves the masters instead of the allies of the Romano-Britons, the more independent, and perhaps the more civilised and cultured of the latter, sought a safer asylum among the glens and mountains of Wales, it is reasonable to assume that a goodly number found their way northwards as well, thus bringing new influences to bear on the manners, customs, and even the language of the Picts. But even then it is safe to assume, and it need not be mere assumption, that a very large proportion of the Romano-Britons remained on the soil, and inter-married with the Saxons. The Saxons who invaded England were admittedly the most primitive of their race, and their language was not adequate to give expression to the ideas and the requirements of a more advanced and a more cultured people, such as the Romano-Britons undoubtedly were. It is computed that not one-half of the language of the Saxon Chronicle, limited as it is, survives in the English of to-day, and it would certainly surprise the average Englishman were he to realise the proportion of British words that go to make up the so-called Anglo-Saxon tongue. Filibustering expeditions, such as brought the Saxons to our shores, would not be accompanied by wives and daughters in proportionate numbers, and it is only reasonable to assume that the deficiency would be largely if not entirely made up by their taking as wives the daughters of the Romano-Celts, and the influence of the language of these Celtic mothers on that of their children would be lasting and unmistakable. This fact is not sufficiently recognised by Mr John-

stone, when he describes some words as being either early English—i.e., Old Saxon—or Celtic. The two languages had nothing in common, and when words with Celtic roots or resemblances are found in old Saxon, the inference need scarcely be a matter of conjecture. "The German," remarks one writer, "could never dine or sup, he could only eat. He learned to dine and sup as he learned comfort, law, and order from the Celt. The German had no meats, he had only flesh; he knew nothing of beef, or mutton, or pork."

### Norman-French.

These latter terms, however, were got, I suspect, from the Norman-French, who during many years supplanted the Saxons as the ruling race. Their language was the language of the Court, and of the nobility, and in the different circumstances under which they gained their footing it may safely be asserted that during the period of the Norman ascendancy the Saxon race and the Saxon language would be relegated to a position below that to which the race and the language of the Romano-Britons had previously been relegated by the Saxons. The Saxons, when they first came to this country, could and doubtless did learn a great deal from the Romano-Britons, but the Normans had nothing to learn from the Saxons. Ultimately the Saxon element, or the so-called Saxon element, regained their supremacy, yet to this day the bluest blood in England claims to be Norman. Even Tennyson, the great English poet of the nineteenth century, could imagine nothing approaching the nobleness of being good except the right to boast of Norman blood. The mere Saxon is not in the running, although his royal dynasty was established long before the famous son of the Norman leather merchant and his retainers set foot in the

country. Thus, by accidents, incidental to the changing scenes of changing years, a name gains eminence, and a name is lost. The Celt is lost in England. Racially he is supposed to be lost, but he has his monuments, unfailing and undying. "It is significant that all over England the Gaelic language explains topographically nomenclature more extensively than the Cymric. Nearly all the enduring objects of nature, mountains, hills, lakes, and rivers, are significant only in some Celtic dialect."\* Proof positive that the native element remained after the advent of the Roman, the Saxon, and the Norman. In Scotland, did such as argue the non-Celtic descent of the Picts have their way, the Celt would be lost here also. Happily, such a gospel is no longer preached, Professor Rhys excepted.

**"Goidelic," "Gwyddyl,"**  
**and "Gwyddyl Ffichtic"—Modern**  
**"Gaidheal," Anglicised "Gael."**

There was never at any time a Celtic tribe in Scotland who designated themselves anything other than Gaels, in one or other of the slightly differentiating forms of the general name, although each one of the three—Scots, Picts, and Britons—distinguished the other two, when referring to them, by a qualifying adjective. The tribal or provincial names applied to them by classical writers do not mean a different race. Rhys excepted, all authorities now agree that all three belonged to the same parent stock, the Celtic. It is true that Dr MacBean, Inverness, maintains that the Picts spoke a language distinctively their own, which he admits to have been a Celtic language. As all Celtic dia-

---

\* (Green's "History of England.")

lects must have sprung from the same parent stock, and as we are speaking of a time when they were all in the primitive stages of their development, and when the differences that now exist were not at all so acute, it seems like splitting straws to insist that they spoke a different language when the term dialect would better express the idea.

“Alas, that it was not in the land of the Picts,  
Of the bloody and fierce Fingallians,  
That thou did'st fall,”

says Ossian. This makes the Picts and the Fingallians kin, and no one will assert that the Fingallians are not Gaelic heroes, legendary or otherwise. Camden writes of the British and Pictish tongues as alike. Buchanan says he was conversant with the Pictish of Galloway, and that it was Gaelic. Hexham, the English historian, calls the Galloway Scots who fought at the Battle of the Standard, A.D. 1138, Picts, and in no part of Scotland is the topographical and other available evidence so strong in support of their Gaelic extraction, that is, when the unmistakably Danish element is eliminated. Enmenius, in a panegyric on the Emperor Constantine, uses the phrase “Caledonians and other Picts,” thus showing that the terms Picts was a general one, and embraced various tribes. The Scots were distinct for very good reasons, they were newcomers at a time when the Romans were already in the country. After all, there is no difference between Celtic and Gaelic. The former is a word of Greek origin, and the latter a word of Latin origin, both meaning the same thing. There is no one branch of the race that lays any distinctive claim to the term Celtic, although the term Gaelic has been narrowed down so as to apply only to one out of the two great groups into which the race is popularly divided, the

G. and Q. Group and the P. Group. These groups are again divided into three dialects each, making six in all, viz. :—

C. or G. and Q. Group—Scottish Gaelic.

Irish do.

Manx do.

P. Group—Welsh.

Cornish.

Armoric.

Between the three dialects of the C. or G. and Q. Group there is scarcely any difference as written languages, but a different alphabet, a different orthography, a difference in pronunciation, and the apparent specialisation of function, makes it necessary for spoken sentences to be compared word for word before the Albannach, the Eirinnach, and the Mannanach can understand one another. The relative positions of the dialects belonging to the P. Group are very much the same, perhaps not quite so near. Take, then, the Scottish Gaelic as representative of the G. Group, although the Irish may be the purer; and the Welsh as representative of the P. Group, and compare the general affinities of the two groups. I give a list of Gaelic and Welsh words in parallel columns, with the English equivalents after each. The double English column is decided upon because there are instances where the Gaelic and the Welsh words have slightly different meanings to-day, although still near enough to show that the roots are identical. There are other columns where the only difference is in the initial letter. Give the Gaelic initial to the corresponding word in Welsh, or vice-versa, and the words are at once seen to be identical, keeping, of course, in mind the differences in the Gaelic and Welsh alphabets, particularly the sounds represented by the double ff's, dd's, and ll's in Welsh, and the bh and mh and adh, agh, &c., in Gaelic.

## IDENTICAL ROOTS.

<i>Gaelic.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Welsh.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Aber or Inver	Confluence of waters	Aber	Confluence of waters
A crith	Shaking, trembling	Acreth	Trembling
A chaol	The narrow, the strait or kyle	Achul	Narrow, lean
Caol	Narrow, lean		
A Cheangail	The tie	Achwlwn	Tie
Ceangal	Tie		
A tionail	Collecting	Adgynull	Collect again
Tionail	Collect, gather		
Aidmheil	Creed, religion	Addaladwy	Adorable, divine
Ar	Battle	Aer	Slaughter, battle
Abhuinn or Amhainn	River	Afon	River
Eag	A nick, notch, or hack	Ag	An opening, a cleft
Lach	A wild duck	Alarch	A swan
Allt	A deep burn, a cliff	Allt	A cliff
Ainm	Name	Enwan	Name
Ainmhidh	Animal	Anifel	Animal
Ar	Ploughed land	Ar	Ploughed land
Ardan	Arrogance, pride	Ardant	Clamorous, noisy
Airgiod	Silver	Arian	Silver
Araichdeil	Important	Aruchel	High, lofty
Bata	A boat	Bad	A boat
Bat'-fhear	A boatman	Badwr	A boatman
→ (properly Fear-bat')			
Bris, or brisd	Break, fracture	Breg	Rupture, fissure
Cam	Crooked	Cam	Crooked
Canntair-eachd	Humming, chanting	Cann	To sing
Can	Say, sing, express		
Cearbach	Clumsy	Carbwl	Clumsy
Carn	A heap of stones	Carn	A heap
Carnach	Full of carns or Cairns, stony	Carnedd	A heap of stones
Cairdeil	Friendly, kind, connected	Cariadol	Loving, endearing
Dealbh	Picture, image, form	Delw	Picture, image
Deas	Ready, in order	Des	Order, rule

## IDENTICAL ROOTS (Continued).

<i>Gaelic.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Welsh.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Gun-bhlas	Without taste	Diflas	Tasteless
Di-bhlas	Wanting taste		
Dun	Hill, fort, or heap	Din	Hill, fort, or heap
Diot	A meal	Diod	A drink
Deoch	A drink		
Direach	Straight	Diwyr	Straight
(An) de	Yesterday	Doe	Yesterday
Dul	A loop	Doli	A loop
Draighionn	Thorns	Dreiniog	Prickles
Draighion- nach	Thorny	Dreinach	Thorny
Drisan	Brambles	Drysn	Brambles
Dubh (pron. Doo)	Black	Du	Black
Dubb-linne	Black pool	Dulyn	Black water
Domhan (pron. Doyn)	Deep	Dwfn	Deep
Dorn	Fist	Dwrn	Fist
Doigh	Method, man- ner, way, means, order	Dwy	Rule, order
Da	Two	Dwy	Two
Deuchainn	Distress, misery	Dychan	Groan
<i>Quire</i> → Duin'	Man	Dyn	Man
Eadar-fhuinn (pron. Ederin)	Between us, unknown to others	Eddrin	Whispering
Ead	Jealousy	Eiddig	Jealousy
Earran	Edge, border, division or portion	Eirionyn	Border
Iasg	Fish	Eog	Salmon
Erbach	Trustworthy	Erbarch	Respect, deference
Caise	Cheese	Caws	Cheese
Falbh	Going away	Ffoad	Running away
Fosgladh	A opening	Fospan	A breach, a gap
Fearg	Anger	Ffrwg	Violence
Fuighleach	Refuse (n)	Ffwlach	Refuse (n)
Gabhal	Taking	Gafael	Hold, grasp
Gap	An aperture, a cleft	Gag	An aperture, a cleft
Gaing	A wedge	Gaing	A wedge
Galar	A disease	Galar	Mourning, grief
Gairm	A cry, a pro- clamation	Garm	A shout, an out-cry
Garbh	Rough	Garw	Rough, a tor- rent
Glainh	A sword	Glaif	A sword
Glan	Clean	Glan	Clean
Glas	Red, blue, verdancy	Glas	Blue, verdancy
Glassan	A greyling	Glassan	A greyling
Gaorr	To gore	Gorddi	To impel

IDENTICAL ROOTS (*Continued*).

<i>Gaelic.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Welsh.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Gorach	Foolish, mad	Gorwyllt	Frantic, mad
Grad	Quick, hasty	Graid	Ardency, vehemence
Greinachal	Sun-shiny, sunny	Gwreichionol	Sparkling
Og-nighean	Young girl	Hogen	Girl, damsel
Cuillein	Holly	Celyn	Hollywood
Carbad	Chariot	Cerbud	Chariot
Gin	Generate	Cenedhlu	Generate
Ceard	Craft	Cerdd	Craft
Cu	A dog	Ci	A dog
Clagh	A burying place	Claddfa	A burying place
Goirid	Short	Coraidd	Dwarfish
Cu or Go	Approxima- tion	Cu	Approxima- tion
Cul	A corner	Cul	Narrowness
Caol	A strait, narrow	Cul	A strait
Gaol	Love	Cuole	Love
Con	Dogs	Cwn	Dogs
Cuachtach	Stumpy	Cwta	Short
Iorguill	A quarrel	Iadedd	Rage, grievi- ousness
Islead	Degree of lowness	Isaad	Rendering low
Iseal	Low, humble	Isel	Low, base, humble
Liath	Pale blue, grey	Llai	Raven grey
Lann	A sword, a blade	Llain	A blade
Leughadh	Reading	Lleain	To read
Leathad	Width, breadth	Lled	Width, breadth
Lomanachd	Nakedness	Llyman	A naked man
Madadh	Wild dog, or Wolf	Maden	A She Fox
Madadh- ruadh	Male Fox		
Math	Good	Mad	Good
Marbh	Dead	Marw	Dead
Mellis	Sweet	Melys	Sweet
Muir	Sea	Mor	Sea
Og	Young	Og	Youth
Beith	Birch	Bedw	Birch
Mac	Son	Mab or Map	Son

## IDENTICAL ROOTS WITH MERE INITIAL DIFFERENCES.

Teagaisg	Instruction	Addysg	Instruction
Balach	A fellow	Elach	A fellow
Giomach	Lobster	Ceinach	Lobster
Caoimhneas	Kindness	Hyneas	Kindness
Deir	Say, affirm	Ger	An utterance, a cry
Teas	Heat	Gres	What is warm
Griosach	Fire embers		

**IDENTICAL ROOTS WITH MERE INITIAL  
DIFFERENCES (*Continued*).**

<i>Gaelic.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Welsh.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Sgread	A scream	Gryd	A scream
Uir	New, fresh	Gwyr	Pure, fresh
Seilg-cu	Hunting dog	Helgi	Hunting dog
Maigheach	A Hare	Ceinnach	A hare
Briatharach	Of fluent utterance	Ffraethaid	Of fluent utterance
Briathardar	A speaker	Ffraethder	A speaker
Coimhead	Look	Gwedd	Look
Seall	Look	Syllu	Look
Ciall	Reason	Dwl	Reason
Ciall	Understand- ing	Dyall	Understand- ing
Banail	Maidenly, modest	Cynwyl	Modest
Balt	Welt	Gwalt	Welt
Feachailleach	Cautiously	Gwagelu	Cautiously
Fiar or feur	Hay, grass	Gwair	Hay
Fann	Weak, faint	Gwan	Feeble, faint
Fasgadh	Shelter	Gwasgod	Shelter
Fiarachd	Making hay	Gweiriad	Making hay
Fear	Man, husband	Gwr	Man, husband
Paisg	Squeeze, press	Gwasgu	Squeeze, press
Fearail	Manly	Gwrol	Manly
Gamag	A stride, a step	Llamag	Stride, step

These Gaelic and Welsh words of evident identical roots could be multiplied threefold. It is not contended that all of them are pure Celtic, far from it. A large percentage are admittedly from Latin roots, but this percentage was adopted by the Celtic at so early a period, and without any Saxon influences, that their affinities in their Celtic garbs are equally applicable in illustrating the affinities of the Celtic dialects.

### The Foreign Elements.

We know that the Roman auxiliary troops in Britain included Gauls, Germans, Belgians, Batavians, and Spaniards, and it is possible to conceive of many words belonging to all of these becoming common among the Romano-Britons, while a hybrid Latin vocabulary would doubtless be general. Subsequently, when the Pagan Saxons began to domineer over the Romano-

Britons, the bravest and the most cultivated of these latter, seeing the hopelessness of maintaining their status in their own country, sought asylums elsewhere. The great majority doubtless found their way to the more convenient fastnesses of Wales, while others got hemmed in in Cornwall, but a considerable number must have come northwards, bringing with them the useful arts, the manners, and the customs learned from the Romans. Such arrivals would enrich the civilisation and the language of the Picts, and the Pagan Saxons would be all the poorer in losing them. Thus separated, and anything like continued intercourse between the Celtic peoples of Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall, becoming impossible, the differences in their respective dialects would gradually become more acute, and the Latin and other foreign influences would undoubtedly be greater among the Celts of Wales and Cornwall than among their kindred in Pictavia. We know that such was the condition of matters among the Saxons when they were overcome by the Normans. Not only did the nobles of the Saxon race seek asylums in Scotland, but a large sprinkling of the Saxon commonalty sought and found homes in the Scoto-Pictish kingdom. Simeon of Durham gives us ample evidence of this when he tells us that "when Malcolm harassed the English borders in support of the Saxon claims, so many Saxon refugees accepted the protection of the Scottish King that to this day the kingdom was stocked with English men and maidservants, so that there is not a farmhouse or even a cottage where they are not to be found." Similar conditions must have existed among the Picts, first, at the time of the Roman Conquest, and again at the time of the Saxon Conquest of South Britain. Is it any wonder, then, that the language of the Picts should contain non-Gaelic elements, that it should

differ from that of the kindred Celts of Ireland, when the latter, in the guise of Scots, made their appearance on the shores of Old Argyle and founded their kingdom of Dalriada?

### **Arrival of Scots in Ireland and Picts in Britain.**

The general idea is that the Scots arrived in Ireland from the Continent in the fifth or sixth centuries before Christ, and assuming this to have been also the era when the Celtic race on the Continent of Europe began to feel itself being pushed to sea by the succeeding waves of other races that were following in its wake westwards, and it may be reasonably assumed that the Picts, under whatever name they were then known, found their way into South Britain much about the same time, gradually spreading themselves to the extreme north, and to the islands of Ultima Thule beyond. It would be about a thousand years after this when the Celts of ancient Caledonia and the Celts of ancient Scotia (latterly Erin, or Ireland) found themselves again in contact with one another. There is no evidence that there was at any time much intercourse between these kindred races during these thousand years. It is not conceivable that the language, customs, and manners of these people could be exactly the same as they were when they parted, say a thousand years before, on the shores of ancient Gaul. MacBean admits that their public life and manners had many resemblances, but he says, "They were not the same?"

### **The Iberians.**

When the Picts arrived in Britain, whenever that may have been, it is generally supposed that they found an aboriginal race before

them, the supposed Iberians. There would doubtless be intermarrying, although more in the way of taking than giving. It would be the stranger taking and marrying the native's daughter, not the stranger's daughter marrying the native's son. In any case not to the same extent. Thus would the Iberian language influence the Pictish language through the Iberian mothers of the Pictish children. Hence the supposed stratum of the pre-Celtic element in the Gaelic of to-day.

If, then, there is still a perceptible element in the Gaelic of a pre-Celtic language with which it came in contact more than two thousand years ago, is it not inconceivable that there can be nothing more than a few hypothetical words existing of a language that must have been in full vigour less than a thousand years ago, if we grant that such a language existed at all.

### **Welsh Designation of the Picts.**

In the Welsh Records the Picts are called Gwyddyl Ffichtic. MacBean says that the word Gwyddyl means nothing, but had the Welsh Records called them Ffichtic without the Gwyddyl doubtless MacBain would have made a very strong point of the omission. Besides, there is every reason to suppose that the Welsh learnt the term Ffichtic from Roman sources, or in any case through sources influenced by the Romans. It was not a native term. The Scots, when they arrived on the coast of Argyleshire, called themselves Gael; subsequently the mixture of Scots and Norse in the Western Isles came to be known as Gall-Gaels, while the wild Scots of Galloway, first known as the Dubh-Ghaels, came latterly to be known under the same name—Gall-Gaels; hence the term Galloway. It was close upon 500 years after the founding of the kingdom of Dalriada before the terms

## Scot and Scotland

became native appellations. When Kenneth Mac-Alpin, King of the Scots (the Gaels of Argyleshire), fell heir to the Pictish throne, the seat of government was removed from Dalriada to Pictavia, and the palladium of the Scots, their Stone of Destiny, was removed from Dunstaffnage, Argyle, to Scone. Kenneth also removed the venerated relics of Saint Columba from Iona to a church which he built for the purpose at Dunkeld, and thus attested his zeal for the faith that was now professed by Scot and Pict. Indeed, most subsequent references make mention of Kenneth as King of the Picts, although he was in reality the King of the Scots, who ascended the Pictish throne in right of succession through his mother. The Picts are still mentioned as a separate and a living nationality, although ruled over by Kenneth the Scot. They are so mentioned by Nenius, the English historian, who wrote shortly after the union of the Picts and the Scots, and a few years after the death of Kenneth; also by Asser, the biographer of Alfred the Great of England, who wrote nearly half-a-century after the union. In like manner they are mentioned by the Saxon Chronicle, and by Ethelward and Ingulphus in the tenth and eleventh centuries—surely sufficient evidence that the Picts were never either conquered or exterminated by the Scots. Common interests, common traditions, a common language (with, doubtless, dialectic differences), soon blended the two peoples into one, so that only a century later—a century subsequent to these mentions of the Picts by the English historians—their name disappeared, just as did that of

## The Caledonians

before them; but as in the case of the Caledonians, it was only the disappearance of a name, the people

remained. In the Charters of Malcolm and William the Lion mention is made of the different peoples of the Kingdom, but the term Pict is not among them. They mention Franks (Norman-French), English (of the south-eastern counties—the Lothians), Scots, Galwegians, and Welsh (the Britons of Strathelyde). It is also on record that during the reign of Malcolm none of the clergy could understand the Saxon tongue, their language was Gaelic. It is admitted that the Picts had adopted Christianity before their union with the Scots.

It is inconceivable, had they spoken a language other than Gaelic, it could have so mysteriously disappeared. Consider the habits of the times. Their simple patriarchal manners and tribal government did not lead to much intercourse with strangers, or with the various districts among themselves. Their habits led to no wants which could not be supplied within themselves. They had fish from the rivers and the sea, and on the coast; they had game from the woods and hills; and they had their cattle in the valleys. How could their language possibly disappear so suddenly and so silently? Take the case of the Gaelic for centuries past. Successive Governments of Scotland and Great Britain endeavoured to weaken the Gaelic sentiment of the country by promulgating laws against the Gaelic language and the Highland dress. The Lords of Council, in 1616, ordained "That all the children of the Highland Chiefs who were over nine years of age were to be sent to schools in the Lowlands, to learn to read, write, and spell English, and that any of their children who had not been so instructed should be excluded from their inheritance." My Lords expressed the desire that by such measures the Gaelic language should "be abolished and removed." The same antagonistic spirit towards the native language and the native sentiment has been alive

ever since. An English education is compulsory, and it is also a necessity ; nothing but English is thought fashionable (although, thanks to the Celtic revival, a knowledge of Gaelic is now considered an accomplishment), but the Gaelic has not died ; certainly it is less exclusively spoken, but to all appearance it will outlive the present century. Yet we are told that the Picts spoke a language distinctive from the Gaelic, and that under the primitive conditions then existing Gaelic supplanted their language in a comparatively short space of time.

### **Gaelic was itself attacked**

little more than a couple of centuries after the union of the Picts and the Scots, English having become the language of the Court, and Gaelic was henceforth unable to influence the absorption of Pictish. Small Gaelic Colonies that went to Canada over a century ago are still exclusively Gaelic-speaking. Public and compulsory education is in English, all their commercial transactions outside their own districts must be in English. But their everyday language is still Gaelic, their divine worship is conducted in Gaelic, and they have a weekly newspaper exclusively conducted in Gaelic. Pretty well the same conditions exist in Australia.

### **The Hebrides, Gaul, England, and the Lothians.**

At one time nothing but Norse could have been spoken in the Hebrides for upwards of four hundred years, and although it was subsequently ousted by the Gaelic, Norse place-names still flourish by about three Norse to one Gaelic in Lewis, to about two Norse to three Gaelic in farther South Islay.

The Celtic place-names of ancient Gaul still re-

main in abundance, although the spoken language must have been superseded for upwards of two thousand years. Celtic place-names remain scattered all over England and the Lothians, although the spoken Celtic language must have been superseded for more than fifteen hundred years. Little more than a thousand years have elapsed since Pictish, did it ever exist, must have been in the full vigour of its vitality, yet only a few hypothetical place-names can be pointed to as probable remnants of its existence.

### **The Languages of the Church in Pictavia.**

#### **Saints Ternan, Columba, and Palladius.**

MacBean tries to make much of his contention that the Scots forced their language on the Picts because theirs was the language of the Court and the Church, but it could not be the language of the Church in Pictavia, as the Picts had adopted Christianity long before their union with the Scots.

Saint Ternan, a Culdee and a Pict, bred in Culross, was ordained by St Palladius in A.D. 455.\* He was the assistant and companion of the latter during his life-time, and his successor afterwards. He became known as "The Archbishop of the Picts." This was four hundred years before the union of the two peoples, and if they had a Pictish clergy then they must have been numerous in King Kenneth's time, too numerous for that shrewd monarch to replace them wholesale by Scots. It is possible that as vacancies occurred Scottish aspirants to the office would be

---

[\*Ant. of the shires of Aberdeen and Banff, Spalding Club Pub., vol. ii. p. 52; King's Kalendar, 1588.]

favoured, but that would be a slow process, which would take centuries before it could influence the language of the Picts, were there any such language to be influenced. While it is recorded that St Columba required an interpreter on two occasions among the Picts, a fact already commented upon, it is nowhere recorded that the Scoto-Irishman, St Palladius, at any time required an interpreter in the course of his labours among them. Frequent references is made in Charters of the 11th and 12th centuries to the religious houses, the abbots and the monks of Pictavia, but never a hint as to their having at any time been a Pictish language. The Druidical remains in the Parish of Deer, Aberdeenshire, were known among the natives in days of old as "the houses of the Picts," and there is reason to believe that there was a continuity of succession accompanied by a change in religion between the occupants of these temples and the first Christian community in the ancient and venerable Monastery of Deer.

### **Bede.**

Bede, A.D. 731, makes mention of four nations, Britons, Picts, Scots, and English, and later he adds a fifth, Latin, "each in its own peculiar dialect cultivating the sublime study of the divine truth." The same could be said of the Christian Church in the Highlands and in Ireland to-day, but it would be wrong to call the Gaelic of Alba and the Gaelic of Erin two different languages, yet an Irishman would require an interpreter in the Highlands to-day just as St Columba required one among the Picts, A.D. 565. Professor Meyer says, and Dr MacBain agrees with him, "That no Gael ever set foot on British soil except in a boat that sailed from Ireland." This may be quite true if the term Gael is to be limited to the Scots of the Dalriadic Kingdom, but it is not true if, as

I believe, the term also applies to the Picts and the Britons.

### **Adamnan.**

There is an evasion of awkward but pertinent argument in the manner in which Dr MacBain glosses over Adamnan's silence regarding the existence of a Pictish language. "Adamnan," he says, "did not require to mention it, writing for people who knew that Pictish was different from Irish." Just so, but if Adamnan had mentioned it, MacBean would have pointed to the fact as proof positive of its existence. To argue also from his (Adamnan's) silence is going too far. Only two words of what are supposed to be Pictish are recorded anywhere, one of these, Peanfahel, is mentioned by Bede; the other, Cartit, is mentioned by Cormac of Cashel. But even MacBain admits that Pean may be a corruption of the Welsh Penn, Gaelic Cenn (Anglicised Kin), meaning head, and that fahel may be allied to Gaelic fal, Welsh gwawl, meaning a rampart. Cartit, Cormac writes of as meaning a pin or a brooch, and Stoke compares it with the old Welsh garthon. "The P in Mons Grapius," MacBean says, "argues a non-Gaelic root, and in favour of its Picto-Britonic character." But why not Britonic without the Picto, and is not Mons Grapius after all but a classical Latinised term? I do not believe it was ever made use of by a Pict. As I have already maintained, Pictavia became of necessity the asylum for speakers of every Celtic dialect spoken in Britain, native and corrupt.

### **The So-called Pictish Prefixes.**

MacBean admits many names to be common to Pictish and Irish. All the most enduring features of nature, the high mountains and the rivers of Pictavia, are more akin to Gaelic than to

Brythonic. There are many Celtic place-names still in the Orkneys, names of crofts and small townships, and they are Gaelic, not Brythonic; and in the days when Celts were there, the Scots were not heard of; those Celts were Picts, and such traces as they have left behind them are Gaelic. The prefixes "Mel," as in Mel Fea, a hill 1061 feet high, and Mull Head; "Mon," as in Monguhauny, and Monivey; "Tor," as Tormistore, and Torness; the unmistakable tautology in "Row Head," a point of the Island of Hoy, and "Ruecoe;" then there are "Lochs," "Bals," "Straths," "Tres," "Coils," and a "Craig" or two as prefixes, all descriptive in the Gaelic of the places they name, yet no Gaels arrived there in a boat that set sail from Ireland. All the Celts who were there were Picts. There is still a "Pict's Well" in Orkney, and a "Pict's Ness" in Shetland, memorials of their predominance of old.

It is also significant that in nearly all the few place-names for which a Pictish element is claimed, their stems are pure Gaelic, and only the prefix or suffix is said to be Pictish. Such, for instance, as:—

<b>Auchterarder.</b>	<b>Pitcaple.</b>
<b>Auchterderran.</b>	<b>Pitfour.</b>
<b>Auchtergaven.</b>	<b>Pitmilly.</b>
<b>Auchterless.</b>	<b>Pettendreich.</b>
<b>Pettecoulter.</b>	<b>Fettercairn.</b>
<b>Pettecur.</b>	<b>Fetternear.</b>
<b>Pitcairn.</b>	<b>&amp;c., &amp;c.</b>

Would it not be more reasonable to suppose that if a foreign element were to be wedded to the native in a place-name, such foreign element would form the prefix or suffix tacked on to the native stem. But here we are asked to believe that the so-called foreign element forms the stem, and that the native Pictish is represented by the prefix only.

The fugitives from the various tribes who

doubtless found refuge in Pictavia at the time of the Roman Conquest would have a fellow-feeling with the northern natives born of the fact that they were pursued by a common enemy, and they would thus more readily blend than would be possible for Pict and Scot when they were being amalgamated. The latter would have tribal jealousy, the memory of centuries of bitter hostility to overcome, and only their kindred dialects, their common religion, new in its fervour; their common manners and customs could have rendered it at all possible for them to have become blended into one people in what could not have been more than two, or at most three generations. A nation does not lose its identity or its name without a struggle and a lengthy lapse of time, yet there is no evidence of there having been a life and death struggle between Pict and Scot, and certainly no lengthy lapse of time went by before they appear in history as one people with a common language, and having every other primitive trait in common.

Besides, it is common knowledge that a language will change in the mouths of its speakers, and there is no accounting for the eccentricities of localisms in pronunciation, and if the P was foreign to the Gaelic at one time, as it undoubtedly was, it is not so to-day. It is even replacing the B in many instances. Take the very modern word potato, spelled in Gaelic buntata, from the Gaelic bun, root, and tata, the Scottish tattie, it is commonly pronounced puntata; and as an extreme instance of localism we find the Skyeman doing away with an initial consonant entirely, and saying am unata. What with Latin, Saxon, and French, and the many other foreign elements that accompanied the Latin; and perhaps the admitted stratum of Iberian influences, distorting and corrupting a primitive, and therefore a not very elastic language, is it any wonder that there are a few words that

baffle the derivative ingenuity of the etymologist? Such place-names in England as Baildon, Bailingdon, Baldoch, Bandon, Bankyfelin, London, Bardon, Findon, Finderne, Finghall, Dunross, Canewdon, Caunock, Dunchidoch, Duncow, Dunsby, Dunsden, Dunyatt, and the innumerable place-names with the prefixes Cal, Cam, Car; the river-names Esk, Avon, Dee, etc., show how prevalent must have been the Gaelic as distinguished from the purely Brythonic dialect, and yet we have no account of a boat-load of Gaels having at any time arrived in England in a boat that set sail from Ireland. Place-names with more of the Gaelic than of the Brythonic element are common even in Wales. These names are so spread over that country that they cannot be attributed to the Colony of Gaels who are said to have made their home in North Wales at the time of the early Scottish raids into South Briton after the departure of the Romans. They are in many instances the lingering traces of a one time common and identical language.

### **Stirlingshire Place-Names.**

We will now take the following Stirlingshire place-names which show derivations other than those given by Mr Johnstone. They do not include all the names from Mr Johnstone's collection to which alternative meanings could be given, but they are sufficiently numerous to show how very difficult it is to arrive at a definite conclusion with regard to words that have been to a great extent murdered by Latin and Saxon scribes of old; by the clumsy efforts of the Saxon tongue to pronounce Celtic names; and in more recent times by the clumsier efforts of the Ordinance Survey scribes to give spellings to Gaelic words in which there is very often not the semblance of a Gaelic root left.

In the following all quotations from Mr Johnstone's book, "The Place-Names of Stirlingshire," are given in indented paragraphs.

Allan R. 1187 Strathalun. Either G. ailean "a green plain," or aluinn, "exceeding fair, beautiful."—Johnstone.

Mr Johnstone's second shot, "aluinn," will not do. It is an adjective only, and it is not possible for an adjective alone to become a place-name. It would require to be beautiful something, such as Lochaline, "the beautiful loch," and Polmaiseach (Polmaise), "the beautiful pool." There are many possible derivation of Allan. For instance—

Allan, a contraction of Al, rock, and amhainn, river, meaning "the river rock."

Allan, a corruption of Al, rock, and Linne, a pool, meaning "the pool rock"

Allan, a corruption of Al, rock, and lian, a meadow, meaning "the meadow rock."

Allan, a contraction of ath, a "ford," and lan, "the tide," meaning "the tidal ford."

Allan, a corruption of Eillan, an "island."

Arnotdale and Arnothill (Falkirk). Said to be fr. "earth nut," 1551 ernut, the pig-nut, formerly dug up here. Cf. 1429 "Arnut," Fifeshire.—Johnstone.

Ar, while by itself may mean ploughed land, battle, and various meanings, is often but a corruption of Ard, "height of;" and dale as a suffix, is very often a corruption of various Gaelic suffixes with similar sounds, so Arnotdale, may after all be Ard'naiteil, meaning the "juniper heights" or "braes." Ar is also sometimes a corruption of Arruinn, a portion.

Callander (Falkirk). 1164 Calentare, 1296 Calentyr, c. 1350 Callanter. Falkirk, Polmont, and Muiravon parishes were once called Calatria (e.g., in Æthelred of Rievaulx, c. 1145), in the

Irish Annals, Calathros, said to be Ir. calath ros, "hard wood;" and this name is often thought the same as Callander. Early forms do not encourage this; they look like G. coill an tir, "wood on the land." This sounds awkward; so perh. cailleanach tir, "region, land full of seeds or husks of grain," G. caillean.—Johnstone.

Callander may be just another Torwood, with the Gaelic article retained. Torwood, as Mr Johnstone points out, was originally Coill-an-tor, in A.D. 1140 it was written Keltor, the article "an" having then been dropped. The "Kel," or "Coill" was subsequently translated "wood" but the "tor" was left in the original Gaelic, making it read Torwood, with exactly the same meaning as Coill-an-tor, Callander, Eng. "wood of the hill."

Croftamie (Balfron). Doubtful. Can it be "croft of the foolish woman," G. amaid? Croft is an English rather than a Gaelic word.—Johnstone.

G. "Amadan," not "amaid," means "a fool," the feminine equivalent is "oinseach." By "amaid," Mr Johnstone probably has in his mind the work "aimaideach," meaning "foolish," but it is no more applicable to a woman than it is to a man. While it is quite true that croft as applied to a small holding of land is an English word, although it is now made purely Highland by Act of Parliament, "Croit," pron. almost alike, is purely Gaelic, meaning a hump or an eminence, hence Croftamie may or may not be Croit-an-taimhaich, "the resting hump;" or it may have been Croit'n-tuim, which would mean "the hump with the tufts" or "bushes" or of "anthills;" tuime or tamie would be a diminutive of "tuim," the plural of "tom."

Croftalpie (Fintry). Either fr. old G. ailp "a lump, a protuberance," or ailp "white," or the name Alpin.—Johnstone.

Croftalpie, on the same principle may be Croit-albin. I know a place called Ardalbin in Glenelg, and it would mean exactly the same, i.e., "white eminence."

Craigforth (Stirling). 1215 Craighorth, 1327 Cragorth, "Hill by the Forth;" the f. in 1215 lost by aspiration.—Johnstone.

The chief objection to this derivation is that the Craig must have had a distinctive name before the term forth was known, just as the Abbey Craig had before there was an abbey there. Stirling rock, Abbey Craig, and Craigforth must have had their distinctive names, and it is possible that the "el" in Striveline has its root in the Gaelic ail, rock, a fact that would upset all previous derivations of the name. I will attempt none in the meantime.

Aucheneck (Killearn). G. achadh an ec, "field with the water;" of lochs Eck and Oich. The old Keltic root ec or oc is no longer in use.—Johnstone.

The root is still in use. We have it in modern "uisge," water. As likely, and a more simple derivation would be "Achadh-an-each," abbreviated and pronounced "Ach'an-each," the horse's field. Compare with the next in Mr Johnstone's list, viz. :—

Auchengean (Falkirk). 1458—ingavenis, c. 1620 Achingein; Modern pron. Auchengayn. G. achadh na gamhainn, "field of the yearling cattle;" cf. Auchtergaven; the is in form 1458 is the common Eng. plural.—Johnstone.

Auchentroig (Buchlyvie). 1393—introig, "Field of the children" G. trogh; or "of the dwarf," G. troich.—Johnstone.

I confess I do not know the word "trogh" as applied to children. Say "Achantreabhaiche," or "Achadhantreabhaiche," pron. Achantro-ich, "ploughman's field."

Balgrochan (Lennoxton and Torrance). 1428 Bargrochan (G. barr, a height), 1458 Ballingrochane, 1486 Balgrochquenis. Doubtful; possibly, "Village of the fork" or "wide throat," G. glochan, or "of the sweetheart," graidhean.—Johnstone.

"Ballachruachan" immediately suggests itself here, and I have the impression confirmed by the fact that this represents the local pronunciation. Gaelic "Bal," and "cruachan," the hip, also a conical-shaped hill, hence "the township, hamlet, or farm of the conical-shaped hill." "Cruachan" has also a meaning similar to "guallan," "shoulder," in application to physiographical features.

Ballat (Balfron). Prob. c. 1350 Buchlat (cf. Baldernock), 1494 Ballatis, "Village," or "house;" perhaps "of the youth" or "champion," G. lath.—Johnstone.

I am unfortunate in having no personal acquaintance with the places here named, but in many cases an acquaintance with them to-day might only tend to mislead, as their appearance, shape, and even the situation or first site of not a few of them may be quite different to what they were when they got their names, ages ago. Ballat, both to the eye and to the ear, although I am not sure of the local pronunciation, strikes me forcibly as Balfhad (fh is of course silent), which would mean the long farm, steading, or township (Bal answers them all). Compare with the Scots "Lang Toon" (Kirkcaldy).

Branzert (Killearn). 1545 Branzet, Old map, Branert. Prob. G. breanach aird, "stinking,

nasty height," fr. brean or breun, "a stink," breanan, "a dunghill." The z is the old Sc. y; and G. -ach often gets clipped down into -y or -ie.—Johnstone.

"Breunach" means a turbulent, indelicate, or immodest female. I presume Mr Johnstone refers to the word "breunachd," indelicacy, rottenness, putridness, but I fail to see how it applies to "Branzert." "Braigh-'n-airde," would be more appropriate. G. Braigh, "brae;" an airde, "of the heights," an Eng. rendering would be "The aird heights" or "braes."

A word on this "Ard" or "Aird" so frequent in place-names. It has been interpreted variously as heights, top, etc. "Ard" as an adjective means high, but as a noun it means a height over which the horizon is seen, and will not apply to a height with a higher background. It has its equivalent in the Scots "airt," a component part of the heavens, a point of the compass; G. "Aird-an-iar," the west; "Aird-an-ear," the east; "Aird-a-deas," the south; "Aird-a-tuath," the north. The "ard" in "Cruachanard" is an adjective, but the "ard" in "Ard-a-Chruachan" is a noun.

Bonny-Water, so puzzling to Mr Johnstone, would be equally puzzling to the writer were it not for the accidental discovery by him of the name in another form. About two years ago, in the course of a stroll through the Old Churchyard of Lasswade, Midlothian, I saw the tombstone of an erstwhile resident of Bonnyrigg, in the same district, with the inscription of a date about the first decade of the 17th century. Bonnyrigg was then written Bannockrigg. May not our bonny in Bonnywater have been written the same way, although allowing that it may have been softened into bonny much earlier. Assuming such to have been the case, we have thus Bonnywater and Ban-

nockburn with one and the same meaning. But what is it?

Bannock, 1215 Banoc, and Bannockburn, sic 1314, but 1494 Bannockysborne. Keltic ban oc, "white, shining stream." Oc is the same root as in Eck and Oich; and Bannockburn is a tautology parallel to Ockbrook, Derby.—Johnstone.

The root "oc," meaning "water," is not defunct; we still have it in the word "Uisge," water; and it is questionable whether our modern "uisge" is not as near the original sound of the word as is the "oo" of our severely classical scholars. Although one should not be too dogmatic in such matters, the meaning for Bannockburn given by Mr Johnstone in his earlier work, "The Place-Names of Scotland," is preferable to the above. It is G. "Ban," white, or glistening; and G. Cnoc. Anglicised Knock, and contracted "rock," a hillock or knoll. Thus Bannock would mean, the "white," "light-coloured," or "glistening hillock," and the burn running by it would be the Bannockburn. Eng. et. lit. Whitehill, quite a common place-name. This would give us a Blackhill, a Greenhill, and a Whitehill in what is almost the same neighbourhood. In the immediate vicinity there was the Bannock water (Bonny water), and in almost the same district there is Fintry, "Fionntrath," the white, or "glistening strath," giving the same idea, as does also Glenfinnich, in the county, the white, or "glistening glen," showing this characteristic of the district to have been pretty general.\* Another

---

[\* Since writing the above I have got the "white" characteristic of the district further confirmed by being informed that the present Laurel Hill, Stirling, in the near neighbourhood, is called

derivation given is that the "Bannock" in this name means the G. bonnoch, Sc. bannock, an oat-meal cake, and in support of this it is stated that there has been a meal mill on the banks of the Bannock since time immemorial. But other streams with meal mills on their banks generally take their name from the mill itself, and not from its product. They are all of them "Alt-amhuilans," or "Millburns."

Balfron a. 1300 Bafrone (? 1503 Buthrane; cf. above). Prob. G bail-a-bhron "village of mourning."—Johnstone.

This name does not illustrate the "Celtic gloom," as Mr Johnstone would have it do. I believe the "frone" to be a corruption of the Gaelic bhraon, the gen. of braon, a "drizzling rain," or "rain and blast." The Gaelic bh is often replaced in Anglicised forms by f. The meaning would be "Rainy town," "Hamlet," or "Farm," the Gaelic "Bal" applies to them all. We have the same word in Lochbraon, Anglicised Lochbroom, meaning "the rainy loch," a very appropriate term. The name would be very applicable to a township in an exposed position on a hillside.

Canny Rinns (Kilsyth), said to be "canny" or "gently-flowing stream." Rinn may be the English run; or, perh. W. rhen, a brook, though this is unlikely.—Johnstone.

"Canny Rinns" seems to be but a slight corrup-

---

"Whitehill" in all old charters and documents. The original term may have been "Ban-Chnuic" instead of "Ban-chnoc," which would mean whitehills, not "whitehill." The Anglicised form of both would be the same. The plural form would make the name applicable to the district at large, embracing the Bannockburn and Bonny Water.]

tion of Ceann-a-Raon, the "head" or "end of the mossy plain," or it may be a dale, or merely a field. "Ceann-a-raon" is pron. "Ken-a-rinn." The s is the Eng. plural, and an interloper. Compare with "Penrhyn" and "Penryn" in Wales and England.

Cringate Law (Fintry). G. cruinn geat "round gote," and O.E. hlæw, "a mound, a hill."—Johnstone.

I agree with Mr Johnstone as to "Crin" being the G. "Cruinn," Eng. "round." But "gate" I believe to be the G. geat, pron. exactly like gate, and meaning just the same as "Law" in O. Eng., "a mound," or "small ridge." Hence Cringate Law is a tautology.

Dalhilloch (Fintry). Perh. "hilly field," fr. G. mheallach fr. meall a knob, a boss, a hill.—Johnstone.

I suspect it to be nothing more or less than "Dalsheillach," pron. "Dalhellach," and meaning "willowfield." Mr Johnstone says that Salachoc is E. Eng. for willow. Seileach is Gaelic for willow to-day. There is also the G. Sileach, or Silteach, meaning rainy, and it and Seilach form the root or stem of numerous place-names in the Highlands.

Dalnair (Drymen), 1494 -are. Prob. "field of disgrace" or "shame," G. naire.—Johnstone.

There is nothing more characteristic of the Anglicised forms of Gaelic place-names than the almost invariable dropping of the Gaelic article "a" or "an," and where it is not dropped entirely, it is just as invariably corrupted into er or ter. Keeping this in view, it seems to me that "Dalnair" is but a slight contraction of the Gaelic Dal'nathair, the "field of the serpent," and I think it a more probable meaning.

Dechrode (Fintry). Perh. G. deagh rod, "good, excellent road" or "path."—Johnstone.

I confess I feel that there is something unsatisfactory with "deagh rod" as a derivation for "Dechrode," and I will venture to assume that the article has been dropped here also, and that the original Gaelic was "An t-each-rathad." (The D and T, it is commonly known, are interchangeable in the Gaelic). This would make it mean "the horse road," and it would also make it not only the good, but the best "road," distinguishing it from some other road, perhaps shorter as a footpath, but not suitable as a pony track, on account of rocks or swamps, or other causes. It is said that there are very few good roads in the district.

Dunmyat, Dumyat, Demyat (Bridge of Allan). "Hill of the tribe Miati," (sic in Adamnan), outliers of the Damnonii; cf. Devon. Miati is prob. fr. W. meiddio to dare; so Rhys.—Johnstone.

The derivation here given is a commonly known one, and is generally taken for granted. The name, Miati, however, is a mere classical one, at anyrate in this form. It is supposed to mean men of the plains, from the G. "Magh," plain. But I think we may take it for granted that the hill got its name from the natives, who did not call themselves Miati. How would "Druim-fhad," pronounced Drim-att, suit. I think it more likely than the other. This would mean "the long ridge."

Duntreath (Kilsyth). 1497 -treth, "Hill" or "fort of the chief," G. triath.—Johnstone.

I would suggest Dun'srath, pron. Duntrah, the "dun" or "fort in the Strath." Duntreath Castle is actually in the strath of the Blane valley, and

the site is believed to have been occupied by a stronghold since time immemorial.

Fintry. 1238 Fyntrie; cf. c 1203 Fintrith, a. 1300 Fyntre, old forms of Fintray, Kintore. Prob. "White" or "fine (G. fionn) land," trith or tre prob. being old forms of G. tir land, W. tre, tref, village, house.—Johnstone.

"Tir," or "land," is not, to my mind, suitable to apply to a small circumscribed spot. It would be well enough if a county or province were meant, or an island, or the possessions of any particularly mentioned individual. Would not Fionn'srath (the s is silent, pron. "Finn-trah"), the "white" or "light-coloured Strath," be nearer the mark? Hence the common characteristics throughout the districts of Bannockburn, Bannock Water, Fintry, and Glenfinnich, all in the county.

Fouldubs (Falkirk). Dub, found in Sc from 1500 onwards, means a stagnant, muddy pool. Origin unknown.—Johnstone.

This plainly seems "A pholl-dubh," with the article, "a," dropped, and the "s" an interloper. Eng. Blackpool.

Dundaff (Fintry). Sic 1237, 1480 Dundafmure; and perhaps Chron. Iona ann. 692 Duin Deauae. If this last then prob. same as R. Dee, in Ptolemy c 120, Deoua, in G. Deabhadh, which means lit, "draining," and also implies "hastiness." Some connect it with L. diva "a goddess," and see a reference to river-worship, which certainly existed among the early Kelts. Dundaff can hardly be fr. G. dubh black.—Johnstone.

"Dundamb," pron. Dundaff, appears simple and appropriate, i.e., "the ox" or "the stag hill."

Faughlin Burn (Kilsyth). Doubtful: ? G. faiche linne, "plain of the pool."—Johnstone.

“Faich-lion,” “Faughlin” becomes an easy corruption, meaning “the lint field.”

Gartincaber (Buchanan). Sic 1508, but 1497 Gartcaber, “Field of the deer,” G. an cabair, and so the same as Garngaber, Lenzie.—Johnstone.

I am afraid the deer were not confined to fields in those days. (A gart is an enclosed field). Cabair does not necessarily mean deer, and even in their connection it is confined to their antlers. Cabair is applied to the trunks of small trees or the large limbs of trees, such as are still used as couples in thatched houses, hence Gartanbabair may have been a place where such were easily found. “Cabars” were also in common use in forming palings or enclosures around a field. “Gart-an-Cabair” might have had a cabar enclosure round it, hence the name.

Iconkil (hill, Balfron). Puzzling and prob. a corrupt form. It can hardly be the same as Icolmkill, “island of Columcille,” or Columba, i.e., Iona.—Johnstone.

I am equally puzzled with this name, unless Io is a contraction and a corruption of the Ach, and the name were really Ach-an-coille, “Woodfield.”

Gairdoch (Carron). G. gearr dabhoch, “short, ploughed field.” Cf. Dochfour, Inverness.—Johnstone.

Ceardoch (C hard) meaning “smithy,” seems to me as simple and as probable a meaning for this name.

Gartcows (Falkirk). In 18th century Kirkhoose, of which the present name may be a corruption. If not, then an analogy of Cowden, 1604 Coulden, prob. “Park at the back” (G. cul) of Arnothill.—Johnstone.

This is just as likely to be “Gartgiubhas,”

pron. Gartgeose, i.e., "park with the firs." Compare with Mr Johnstone's next. Gartfairn (Buchanan). Prob. 1458 -ferin "Park with the alders," G. fearn.

Gartwhinnie (Plean). "Enclosure with the thicket," G. -a-mhuine, or -a-choinnimh, "of the meeting" or "assembly" (G. conneamh). But M'Bain thinks Dalwhinnie is G. dail chuinnidh, which possibly means "narrow field."—Johnstone.

It may also be "Gartuaine," "the green field."

Inchyra Grange (Polmont). Perh. fr. Inchyra, Perthshire, 1324 Inchesyreth, G. innis iar or siar, "western meadow;" iar the West. Cf. Abbotsgrange.—Johnstone.

This may be "Innis reidh" the clear (ed), or smooth meadow. "Innis-reidh" may be pron. "Inchray."

Mye (Balfron). Sic. 1510. Doubtful.—Johnstone.

Is this not a corruption of the better-known Moy, of which there are two in Inverness-shire, and which is derived from the Gaelic Magh, "a plain."

Parkfoot and Parkhead (Falkirk). Here in Pont's Map c. 1620 is "The Parck."—Johnstone.

The reference in Pont's Map to this place illustrates what is going on from day to day. The idiom is unmistakably Gaelic, "Parck" is an admirable and exact phonetic rendering of the Gaelic for "Park." "Am Pairce," The Park; "Ceann a Phairce," Parkend; "Bailameanach," Middleton, are all township names quite common in the Highlands, and in the writer's first recollection they were known in no other than their Gaelic forms. To-day their English equivalents are in use. Letters are addressed to Middleton

instead of Balameanach ; to Broadford instead of Athleathan ; to Redburn instead of Altruadh ; to Barnhill instead of Cnoc-an-toul. But it would be inaccurate for a writer to state a few hundred years hence that all these townships or farm names were English, as such a bare statement does not recognise the fact that these English names are literal translations from the original Gaelic, and that they still give the Gael's idea in an English garb. May not this fact explain why mostly all the farm names in East Stirlingshire are English?

Kildean (Stirling). Prob. G. *cuil dion*, "nook of refuge."—Johnstone.

Just as likely to be "*cul'n-dun*," back of the hill, or fort. Kildean is so situated ; or it may be "*cul dion*," "side" or "nook of the shelter," not refuge ; i.e., "the side sheltered from the weather."

Ochils. Geographer of Ravenna, *Cindocellun* i.e., *cind ochil*, fr. G. *ceann* "head, height." c 850 Bk, *Lecan*, *Sliab Nochel*, G. *sliabh*, a hill ; 1461 *Oychellis*. In France near the modern Besancon, and in two places in the W. of Spain were hill-ranges called by the Romans, *Ocellum*, evidently the same Keltic root, cognate with old Ir. *achil*, W. *uchel* "high." Cf. *Achilty*, *Strathpeffer*, *Auchelchanzie*, *Crieff*, and *Glen Ogle*.—Johnstone.

There is the same root in the G. *usal*, gentle, high-born ; *uachdaran*, "overman" (modern for proprietor or landlord) ; and *uachdar*, "over," "the top of ;" and *iochdar*, "under," "the bottom of ;" *iochdaran*, an "underling ;" and hence the *Auchter*, one of the so-called sign-manuals of Pictish. There is also G. *Uchd*, "the lap," "the ascent," or "face of a hill." Hence *Ochils* may be a corruption and a contraction of *Uchdshilteach*, the rainy up-lands, or heights, appropriately de-

scriptive of the range of the Ochils. The Saxons' or the Romans' attempt to give the plural of Uchshilteach or Uchdshilleach would almost certainly be "Ochils." This, however, is a mere conjecture. In this connection one is reminded of another of the so-called sign-manuals of Pictish, viz. :—the prefix Auchter, already briefly referred to, which contains the same root as the Ochils. Auchtertyre, Lochalsh, is known to the natives as Uchd-a-fhrith-reidh, "the face, or ascent of the cleared or level forest." Here we have "uchd," "ascent," and the article "a" corrupted into Auchter. In many cases, however, the "Auchter" is a corruption of Uachdar, meaning "the upper," or "the tops of," equivalent to the "uppers" and the "uplands" so frequent in place-names in England. Auchter may be either the G. Uachdar, "up" or "upper," or the G. Iochdar, "low," "lower," or "nether," all common English prefixes. It is perfectly plain that there is no reason to suppose that Auchter belongs to a lost language. There is no non-Gaelic element attached to it.

There is still another of the so-called sign-manuals of Pictish mentioned by Mr Johnstone which I have not commented upon. This is the "Fetter," as in Fettercairn, Fetternear, etc. Fetter, according to pro-Pictish writers, means, like pette, "a bit of land." This is surely a most unsatisfactory meaning. If Pictish has not left a line of prose or poetry behind it, it must therefore be difficult to say what isolated words may mean, admitting that they are Pictish. How has it been discovered that "Fetter" means "a bit of land?" It is an invariable characteristic of place-names that they are descriptive in one form or another of the places. "A bit of land" is nondescriptive in any sense. There is the old Gaelic word Feithir or Fothir, and, as Mr Johnstone acknowledges,

Fettercairn is written in the Pictish Chronicle, a document of the 10th century, as "Fotherkern." I would suggest Feithir and not Fothir, as the modern form, and the meaning I believe to be from the two Gaelic words feith, "a swamp," and tir, "land," the latter aspirated in the gen. to thir. Thus Feith-thir (the t's are silent), contracted into Feithir, which answers the pronunciation just as well, and which means "swamp-land." This would be descriptive, and most likely descriptive of the low country on the east coast in the time of the Picts. It would answer to the "Fens" in England. Fettercairn would thus mean, "the swamp-land of the cairn." This I take to be a more probable as well as a most appropriate meaning, and it has no lost language, Pictish, or other, about it.

Pendreich (Bridge of Allan). 1288 Pentendreich, 1503 Pettyn-. Pictish G. Pitte-na-droich, "farm, croft of the dwarf." Cf. the surname Pittendrigh; and Bantaskin.—Johnstone.

Yet another of the so-called sign-manuals of Pictish, the pit or pette, of which this Pen is but a corruption. It is an admitted fact that the B. and C. of the Gaelic are invariably replaced by the P. in the Brythonic or Brittonic. This being so, instead of labouring to build the hypothesis of a lost Pictish language on what is, I believe, but an eccentricity of provincialism in dialect, we try to find an analogy for this pette or pit in the more purely Gaelic districts, it will be, I think, a shorter and surer way to a solution of the difficult question.

We have the Gaelic "cuit," a portion, which may in the Brythonic element with which the Pictish Gaelic is saturated, be pette or pit. The Brythonic P. certainly replaces the Gaelic C. in numerous instances. It also replaces the Gaelic

B., and we have in Gaelic Biod, a pointed top of either a very small knoll or a very high hill; hence, whereas we have Pettecoulter in Pictavia, we have Biod a Choltraiche in Dalriada; Pitcairn in Pictavia, and Biod-a-Charn in Dalriada; Pitcaple in Pitavia, and Biod-a-Chabeil in Dalriada, and so, for every Pette or Pit in the east, you will find a corresponding Biod in the west. Pendraich, therefore, which was originally Pette-dreich, may be the Gaelic "Biod-an-fhraoich, "the heather hill," or "knoll."

Powfoulis (S. of the Pow Burn, Airth). Sic 1483. Looks like a curious tautology. Pow is the Sc. softening of G. poll, "a stream, a muddy burn, a pool;" and Foulis or Fowlis, which occurs as a place-name in Easter Ross and near Crieff, looks like G. phuill (the aspirated genitive of poll) with the common Eng. plural. However, Fowlis is also said to be G. fodh n 'lios, "beneath the fort" or "enclosure." —Johnstone.

"Poll fodh 'n lios," may be the proper derivation of this name, which would make it mean, "the pool below the garden." Pollfaileis also suggests itself, which would mean "the image pool," or "shadow pool," suggesting water with a strong reflection, mirror-like.

Snabhead (Bannockburn). Dan. sneb, a beak, Sc. neb. Cf. Snab Hill, Kells.—Johnstone.

Would not the Gaelic "Snathad," be a solution of the entire name, and thus the tautology would be avoided. This would mean "the needle," not an unknown name for natural objects in country places. It would also answer to the same description as Snabhead. We have the needle rock in Skye, another in Lewis, and even if there be nothing with such a resemblance at Snabhead to-day,

we do not know what may have been there answering to the name hundreds of years ago.

Tomraver (Kilsyth). c 1620 -rawyr. Prob. G. tom rath' ard, "hillock with the high fort;" cf. Rawyards, Airdrie.—Johnstone.

Tomraver may be Tomramhar (mh. equivalent to w.), which would mean the thick, fallow, or rich heap, or knoll; or it may mean Tomrabhadair, pron. like the former, and meaning "the beacon knoll," "a lookout;" or it may mean "Tom'n radhadair," which would mean "the Speakers Hill," "Hill of Assembly," or of "proclamation."

Tomtain (Kilsyth). G. tom tain, "knoll of the cattle" or "flocks."—Johnstone.

This may mean exactly the same as the foregoing, but instead of "beacon," the word used is tain, G. teine, "fire." Thus Tom-an teine, "the fire hill," in other words "the beacon hill." There is a Tomatin in Inverness-shire.

Torrance of Campsie. L. torrens, "a torrent, a burn." Cf. Water of Torrance, Drumblade.—Johnstone.

Torran, is G. for a small knoll, "tor" round hill or knoll, with the diminutive "an." The plural applied to a collection of small knolls is "na torran," Eng. "Torrans." I know one in Glenelg, Inverness-shire; and another in Skye, near Broadford, both Anglicised "Torrans." Is it not more likely to have the same meaning in Stirlingshire, although spelt differently? The name is pretty common all over the Highlands.

Tygetshaugh (Dunipace). Local pron. Tigget-shugh. Formerly a roadside inn. Said doubtfully to be corruption of G. tigh-an-deoich, "house of the drink."—Johnstone.

The "nearest shot by a Gael" at this name would be "Tigh-a-ghead-thuigh," pron. hugh,

“the house on the thick ridge;” but “thick ridge” does not seem quite satisfactory, and perhaps Tigh-a-ghead-dubh, “the house on the black ridge,” would be better, although not so near the Anglicised phonetic rendering. If the “hugh” does mean “deoich,” as Mr Johnstone suggests, the corruption has gone far indeed. “Gead,” as has been already explained, is pron. gate, and means a bed in a garden, or a small ridge of land.

The foregoing are a few alternative meanings to Mr Johnstone’s. I have confined myself to such names as I believed to be Gaelic; but I have not exhausted this class. Modern English names there need be no question about; early Saxon names are insignificant in number; Roman names do not count at all; Norse names in the county are few and doubtful, and I hold that there is not such a thing as a Pictish name. Pictish was Gaelic, strongly influenced by the Brythonic, in the manner and for the reasons I have given. These circumstances certainly led to the formation of a distinct dialect, but not a language. It was still near enough to the Gaelic of the Gael of Dalriada to be understood by him, after the manner and to the extent that the native Aberdonian would be understood by the North of England man to-day. Easier, indeed, than the Irishman can be understood by the Highlander when speaking in their native tongues, albeit they be the same language.

# The Gaelic Society of Stirling.

(Comunn Gaidhlig Shruìdhla.)



## **President.**

Rev. COLIN MACKENZIE, St. Ninians.

## **Vice-Presidents.**

Prof. MAGNUS MACLEAN, Glasgow.

Rev. DUNCAN CAMERON, Bridge of Allan.

Major A. L. MACKENZIE, of Ord.

STEWART A. ROBERTSON, Stirling.

Dr. W. A. MACKINTOSH, Stirling.

## **Hon. General Secretary.**

JNO. CRAWFORD, 7 Bruce Street, Stirling.

## **Hon. Gaelic Secretary and Convener.**

T. D. MACDONALD, 13 Forth Place, Stirling.

## **Hon. Treasurer.**

J. A. GORDON, Barnton Street, Stirling.

## **Hon. Librarian.**

ENEAS MACKAY.

## **Piper.**

Pipe-Major AITKEN, The Castle, Stirling.

## **Members of Committee.**

J. J. MUNRO, Stirling.

J. M. MACLUCKIE, Stirling.

RONALD WALKER, Stirling.

M. DINGWALL, Stirling.

Bailie MACEWEN, Stirling.

J. S. MACKAY, Stirling.

J. FRASER, Stirling.

A. NORRIS, Stirling.

ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Stirling.

## **District Representatives.**

DOUNE—J. MACLACHLAN.

FALKIRK—DONALD MACPHERSON.

# The Gaelic Society of Stirling.

(Comunn Gaidhlig Shruidhla.)



## *Objects, Constitution, and Rules.*

### **TITLE.**

I.—The title of the Society shall be “THE GAELIC SOCIETY OF STIRLING.”

### **OBJECTS.**

II.—The Objects of the Society shall be the preservation and cultivation of the Gaelic Language, and of the Music, Poetry, Folklore, Literature, and History of Scotland, and the cognizance of all matters of special interest to the Celtic race.

### **CONSTITUTION.**

III.—The Society shall be non-political and non-sectarian, and shall consist of Honorary Members, elected in accordance with Rule VII. ; Ordinary Members, paying a subscription of not less than five shillings per annum for gentlemen, and two shillings and sixpence for ladies ; and Associate Members, paying a subscription of two shillings and sixpence. All subscriptions shall be payable in advance. A single payment of Five Guineas shall constitute a Life-Member.

### **QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.**

IV.—A desire to cultivate or promote any of the Objects of the Society shall qualify for Membership.





PB 1014 .T55 1903

SMC

T. D. M. (Thomas Donald  
Macdonald), 1864-

Celtic dialects: Gaelic,  
Brythonic, Pictish, and  
AHN-8507 (awih)



