

Macdougall Campbells of Craignish.

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"The policy of the Argyll family," says Mr Skene, "led them to employ every means for the acquisition of property, and the extension of the clan. One of the arts which they used for the latter purpose was to compel those clans which had become dependant upon them to adopt the name of Campbell; and this, when successful, was generally followed at an after period, by the assertion that that clan was descended from the house of Argyll. In general, the clans thus adopted into the race of Campbell, are sufficiently marked out by their being promoted only to the honour of their being an illegitimate branch; but the tradition of the country invariably distinguishes between the real Campbells, and those who were compelled to adopt their name." Of the policy in question, the Campbells of Craignish are said to have afforded a remarkable instance. According to the Argyll system, as here described, they are represented as the descendants of Dugall, an illegitimate son of a Campbell, who lived in the twelfth century. But the common belief amongst the people is, that their ancient name was MacEachern, and that they were of the same race with the Macdonalds; nor are there wanting circumstances which seem to give countenance to this tradition. Their arms are charged with the galley of the Isles, from the mast of which depends a shield exhibiting some of the distinctive bearings of the Campbells; and, what is even more to the purpose, the manuscript of 1450 contains a genealogy of the MacEacherns, in which they are derived from a certain Nicol MacMurdoch, who lived in the twelfth century. Besides, when the MacGillevrays and Maclans of Morvern and Ardgour were broken up and dispersed, many of their septs, although not resident on the property of the Craignish family, acknowledged its head as their chief. But as the MacGillevrays and the Maclans were two branches of the same clan, which had separated as early as the twelfth century; and as the MacEacherns appear to have been of the same race, Murdoch, the first of the clan, being contemporary with Murdoch the father of Gillebride, the ancestor of the Siol Gillevrays; it may be concluded that the Siol Eachern and the Maclans were of the same clan; and this is further confirmed by the circumstance, that there was an old family of MacEacherns which occupied Kingerloch, bordering on Ardgour, the ancient property of the Maclans. That branch of the Siol Eachern which settled at Craignish, were called Clan Dugall Craignish, and obtained, it is said, the property known by this name from the brother of Campbell of Lochow, in the reign of David II.[169] The lands of Colin Campbell of Lochow having been forfeited in that reign, his brother, Gillespie Campbell, appears to have obtained a grant of them from the[168] crown; and it is not improbable that the clan Dugall Craignish acquired from the latter their right to the property of Craignish. After the restoration of the Lochow family, by the removal of the forfeiture, that of Craignish were obliged to hold their lands, not of the crown, but of the house of Argyll. Nevertheless, they continued for some time a considerable family, maintaining a sort of independence, until at length, yielding to the influence of that policy which has already been described, they merged, like most of the neighbouring clans, in that powerful race by whom they were surrounded.[170]