

An Incident in Maclean–Campbell Conflict

A Search for Documentary Support for the Incident in Legend where Dougall of Inverawe (circa. 1518-1582) has his Castle of Fraoch Eilean Attacked and his Wife and Children 'Hung at the Gate.'

Chapter 3

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Douglas Wimberley, in his *Memorials of the Family of the Campbells of Kilmartin* published in 1894, is unusual for that period in that he normally gives sources for his documented facts. However in one instance of legend, no source is given and none has been found as yet. The purpose here is to examine ancillary sources for evidence that might support or deny that legend. The quotation is contained in the following paragraph, which is preceded by a statement that the family of the MacConnochie Campbells of Inverawe 'lived long in the castle of Fraoch Eilean, previously the stronghold of the Macnaughtons, and afterwards at ... Inverawe.':

'The Dougall of Inveraw who lived about 1575 is said to have lived at Ardchonnell Castle, and to have made peace in his old age with MacDougall of Dunollie, to whom he gave his daughter in marriage as his second wife. She, hearing the sons of her husband by his first wife arranging to drown her, escapes over the hills to Lochawe. MacDougall looses his bloodhounds in pursuit, during which her cloak, with the brooch of Lorn in it, is left behind. Dougall, her father, is said to have fought with the Macdonalds and the Islemen, and to have had his castle burnt during his absence by Allan Maclean of Torloisk, who hanged his wife and children at the gate¹.'

The essential sentence here is the last. No proof has yet been found of the Dunollie marriage nor of Dougall having 'fought with the Macdonalds,' however his brother John – Ian 'dubh' MacConnochie' was a leader of the Islemen when in Ireland². Dougall's 'castle' was clearly Fraoch Eilean³, Innis Chonnell belonging to the Argyll family and Ardchonnell being a house built later by the Maclachlan 'Keepers' of Innis Chonnell. Inverawe was never a castle, the only local strength being 'the dunan Inveraw,' a mound or dun.

Dougall's life is fairly well documented for the period. Fraoch Eilean had passed from the MacNachtans in 1361 when MacNachtan's widow, Christina of Craignish, granted it to an intermediary through which it passed to Sir Colin 'iongantach' of Lochawe (1336-

¹ Captain Douglas Wimberley, *Memorials of the Family of Campbell of Kilmartin and some Notes on the Family of the Campbells of Inverawe*, printed privately at the offices of the *Northern Chronicle*, Inverness, (1894), p. 5.

² Nicholas Maclean-Bristol, *Murder Under Trust, the Crimes and Death of Sir Lachlan Mor Maclean of Duart 1558-1598*, Tuckwell, (1999) pp.13, 67 &155. Also Diarmid Campbell, unpublished paper, John 'dubh' MacConnochie, Tutor of Inverawe, address to Inveraray Hist. Soc.

³ Argyll Transcripts by Duke Neil, Argyll Charters, Notarial Instrument, at Castle Campbell between 4th Earl of Argyll and Archibald C. of Inverawe.

1414)⁴. Some years later it appears in the hands of the MacConnochie Campbells of Inverawe who almost certainly descend from Colin's brother Duncan, the eponym of the MacDonnachaidh, called MacConnochie, Campbells⁵. Inverawe was not granted to the family until after the Lordship of Lorn was granted to the Earl of Argyll in 1470⁶.

Dougall was the son of Archibald of Inverawe whose father Dougall had died shortly before Flodden, in 1513. This earlier Dougall MacConnochie first appears on record in 1485, having a father Archibald MacConnochie who must have been first of Inverawe⁷. The Dougall of this legend first appears on record on the 6th of September 1539 when, as lawful son of Archibald Campbell of Inverawe, he is given Sasine as 'louit cousing' by Allan Campbell of Ballimenach, a younger son of Archibald MacConnochie of Lerags⁸. This act upset the earl who summoned Archibald of Inverawe to Castle Campbell where, on the 8th of March 1540 the earl agreed to 'remit all rancour' against Archibald for accepting Allan's Disposition of Ballimenach and Achouran on Lismore, with the office of the Martyrship of Lismore and Appin. Inverawe had characteristically ignored the earl's right to agree to the transfer of ownership. Mention is made of Inverawe's lands of Achlian, Duchoille and Innestrynich which last he agreed to lease to the earl who wanted to build a house there. In all later charters and sasines, Fraoch Eilean castle is associated with Achlian and Duchollie which had likely long been the supporting lands for the castle on its small island in Lochawe. Although Fraoch Eilean is later mentioned specifically in Inverawe charters and sasines, this mention of these lands is the earliest confirmation that they pertained to the family⁹.

In 1544 young Dougall came into possession of his lands of Achouran and the office of Seargendry of the isle of Lismore, suggesting that he was now 'of age'¹⁰. But in January 1548-49 Dougall, son of Inverawe was 'wrongfully ejected' from his lands of Achouranbeg in Lismore and from the office of Sergeandry¹¹. In 1561 Archibald of Inverawe resigned his lands in favour of his son Dougall¹². Finally on the 14th of May 1562 Dougall's case came to court in an Action against Ewin Gar alias Ewin McGillemytchel for wrongfully ejection of Dougall from his lands of Achouranbeg and

⁴ Alastair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell*, vol. 1, pp. 102-104.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 100; & Scot. Hist. Soc. *Highland Papers*, vol.2, p. 91. Duncan appears as a witness to one of the Glassary Writs on p.141, also Note 3, where in Note 2 the undated charter is suggested as being of 1355. I am grateful to Andrew MacEwen for pointing out that the content makes clear that this is the last in the series of the writs and therefore the date should rather be after 1361 and before 26 July 1364 when John died.

⁶ Alastair Campbell of Airds, *A History of Clan Campbell*, vol. 1, pp. 138-140; & Stephen Boardman, *The Campbells 1250-1513*, pp.184-190.

⁷ Inverawe charter and sasine (destroyed in Dunstaffnage fire 1940 but recorded 1912) 22nd Nov. 1485, 2nd Earl of Argyll to Dougall of Inverawe, son of Archibald, officer of Over Lochow, followed by Sasine of 1486, see Richards, NY State Hist. Assoc. vol. 10, *The Black Watch at Ticonderoga & Major Duncan Campbell of Inverawe*; & Kilmartin-Arduaine corr (private papers, C. of Kilmartin); Achouran writs, Airds Charter Chest, Archibald signs as McCoul McConachie of Inverawe a bailie 12 Sept. 1515.

⁸ Achouran writs in Airds Charter Chest, 6 Sept. 1539.

⁹ *Ibid.* Notarial Instrument at Castle Campbell, Earl of Argyll and Archibald of Inverawe, 8 March 1539-40.

¹⁰ Barcaldine & Paton, *Clan Campbell*, vol. 5. p. 387.

¹¹ Acts & Deceets, Act Reg. 14 May 1562.

¹² Writ dated 3 Nov. 1561 noted from Inverawe papers destroyed at Dunstaffnage in 1940.

from his office of Sergeandry of Lismore¹³. Then in 1566 Argyll granted a charter to Dougall as lawful son of Archibald of Inverawe, in liferent, and to Allan Campbell his son and apparent heir, of Achouranbeg and Ballimenach¹⁴. This is the only mention of Dougall's son Allan, who died before his father, supporting the legend that Dougall's wife and children were 'hung' at Fraoch Eilean. Dougall's wife also died before him since he was shortly marrying again.

But first old Archibald of Inverawe was in trouble with the earl again. He had drowned a number of the MacArthurs in a fight on Lochawe. They had long been 'doers' for the earls and had finally been promoted by a grant of lands, including Innestrynich which Archibald of Inverawe had allowed the earl to lease and use, and so must have considered to be his. At Inveraray on the 2nd of December 1567, Dougall was at Inveraray where he was obliged to submit to four Campbell arbiters with Archibald the 5th Earl of Argyll as oversman and to resign all the lands on the side of Lochawe pertaining to clan Arthur¹⁵.

Dougall's father's character is epitomized by his signature on a letter to Glenorchy dated the 5th of March 1569. He signs himself 'Yours own very assured to power¹⁶.' But he and his son Dougall's ordered Resignation of the Wardship over the MacArthur lands followed, and they were granted to the surviving heir of the MacArthurs by charter dated on the 18th of January 1569-70¹⁷. By the 10th of November 1575 old Archibald of Inverawe had died and Dougall appears as 'of Inverawe¹⁸.' Since Dougall would be dead by July 1583¹⁹, any attack by Maclean on Fraoch Eilean must have taken place between 1575 and 1583.

In March 1577 Argyll sent Macdonnell of Dunivaig and Lochnell's brother of Cabrachan, married to Dougall's sister Margaret, widow of Bishop Carswell, with 200 men by land, and John 'dubh' MacConnochie, Dougall's half brother by sea, to attack Maclean's crannog house of Lochgorm on Islay²⁰. On the 16th of February 1578-9 Lachlan Maclean of Duart entered a complaint against 'Makondoquhy' of Inverawe (although likely John 'dubh' again) and his accomplices who, to the number of 60 persons or more, raided the isle of Luing and slew two of Lachlan's servants and fortified the place of Luing²¹.

These events alone would give reason for a Maclean attack Dougall's castle of Fraoch Eilean. But there was as yet no Maclean of Torloisk at that time²². However another

¹³ Acts & Deceets, vol. 24, f. 54 14 May 1562.

¹⁴ Achouran writs in Airds Charter Chest, Charter by Archibald Earl of Argyll 1566 (day and month illegible).

¹⁵ Scot. Hist. Soc., *Highland Papers*, vol. 4 p. 54; & Monzie Inventory OPS p. 877.

¹⁶ Scot. Hist. Soc. Jane E. Dawson, *Clan Campbell Letters*, p.145 (1997).

¹⁷ NLS (Adv. Lib.), MS 31.2.3: p. 43.

¹⁸ Coll. De Reb. Alb. Pp. 8 & 9; & Barcaldine & Paton, *Clan Campbell*, vol.4, p. 30.

¹⁹ Inveraray Abstracts, 17 July 1583, John 'dubh' half brother of Dougall of Inverawe is on record as 'Tutor of Inverawe' indicating that he is steward of the lands for his nephew Archibald, Dougall's infant son.

²⁰ Wormald, *Bonds of Manrent*, p. 112; & Argyll Transcripts.

²¹ Reg. Privy Council, vol. 3, p. 94.

²² J. P. MacLean, *History of the Clan MacLean*, p. 312. While Torloisk had been held by 'Ailein nan Sop' Maclean and later his son Hector Allanson, the latter forfeited the lands and they were granted to Lachlan 'oig' who was second son of Sir Lachlan 'mor' of Duart and first of the Macleans of Torloisk.

Maclean, Hector ‘mor’ of Duart’s brother known as ‘Alein nan Sop’ or Alan of the straw due to his birth in a barn, had lived at Torloisk. He was a known incendiary. He was also known as Alan of Gigha, but was dead by 1551²³, and so perhaps it was his natural son Hector Allanson, known as ‘Eachan MacAilein nan sop’ who was the raider. He would have been a man of about 46 when he was beheaded on Coll in 1578²⁴, further limiting the period of attack on Fraoch Eilean to between 1575 and ’78, suggesting 1576-77.

Dougall of Inverawe’s sister Margaret had been second wife of John Carswell Bishop of Argyll & the Isles, the builder of Carnassarie Castle near Kilmartin. By his earlier wife, a Hamilton, the Bishop had a son and a daughter Christian. The now childless Dougall may well have visited his sister Margaret at Carnassarie and there met her step-daughter Christian, clearly still much younger than him. They married as his second wife and she gave birth to a son whom they called Archibald. By the 17th of July 1583 Dougall was dead and his brother John ‘dubh’ was named as a bailie by a Lachlan Maclean of Duart. John was now ‘Tutor of Inverawe’ and as such called back from leading the Islemen fighting the English in Ireland on Dougall’s death. Then on the 28th of December 1583 James Campbell of Ardkinglas was granted the [ward &] marriage of Archibald Campbell, son and apparent heir of ... Dougall Campbell of Inverawe. This suggests that John and Margaret’s mother Margaret had been a daughter of the Ardkinglas family. Finally, the RCAHMS Lorn Inventory mentions abandonment of the 13th century hall house of Fraoch Eilean. “Some time towards the end of the Middle Ages the castle appears to have gone out of use, remaining unoccupied long enough for the hall-house to become derelict. About the beginning of the 17th century, however, the place was reoccupied...” If the legend has truth, as the parallel facts suggest, perhaps the dereliction was a result of a fire accompanied by the hanging of Alan, heir to Inverawe, his mother and any siblings.

²³ Nicolas Maclean-Bristol, *Murder Under Trust*, for Ailein nan Sop see pp.21, 25, 38, 43 & 64.

²⁴ *Ibid.* For Hector Allanson, see pp. 43, 47, 57-60, 67, 69, 71 & 272.