The Coulthart Con - An Ancestral Swindle Exposed!

Original article from Clan Bulletin 34 in March 2025. Author: Philip McDouall

Here is a story that would rival the best of April Fools jokes, and should also act as a lesson to all amateur genealogists.

Right at the end of last year I was getting quite excited by what I thought was a unique archival discovery that would take the earliest Freugh record back another 106 years from 1445 to 1339, together with a second entry dated 1362. I commenced writing a paper on it – see pages 2 to 13 below – based on a book published on two of the most reputable genealogical websites.

While the antiquity of some of the information appeared to be quite 'remarkable' dating back to Roman times, most of it comes across as 'impressive'. In particular, what really grabbed my attention were two references to the marriages of female McDoualls of Freugh to members of the Ross clan, who in turn were related by marriage to the Coultharts. The dates and names given certainly seemed plausible enough, supported in part by the marriage of Sarah McDouall to Alexander Ross in 1756. For about 65 years after the book's publication in 1855, it was apparently accepted by society at large. Until that is, an inquisitive journalist decided to take a second look, a man who was an avowed skeptic of some of the most highly regarded, but perhaps less scrupulous, genealogists of the times. He stated unequivocally that the Coulthart genealogy was an elaborate hoax, and tore it to pieces in a scathing 19-page article – read the summary in the appendix on pages 15 and 16. I chanced across the paper, dismissing the whole scheme as a means of elevating this family's reputation in society, apparently not all that uncommon in Victorian times.

I should have heeded these quotes from our own **Family Tree** document, 'Claims and counter-claims by rival clans and branches often generated speculation and confusion about noble and royal ancestry, even in such respectable publications as the Peerages', and from our **Lost in Antiquity** paper, 'Much of the past is the stuff of myths and legends, some of which are all but impossible to substantiate.'

Unfortunately, it means that no credence can be attached to the Freugh marriages with members of the Ross clan, even though they appear genuine. For the genealogy to have been sufficiently convincing at the time of publication, and for the 65 years following, some of the content must surely be at least partially true, but without other evidence to corroborate it, we just do not know. It does seem incredible the lengths and expense to which some people went, to claim such noble and ancient ancestry.

And not to be outdone by the Coultharts, James/Jacobus McDouall *(Canada)* proposes an addition to our family tree as follows:



Julius Magnus McDoullius A.D. 22 – 122 signalling his displeasure at the Coulthart Con

McDouall records reveal our earliest known ancestor
JULIUS MAGNUS MCDOULLIUS, A.D. 22 – 122
The ancient Latin text reads as follows:
'JULIUS MAGNUS MCDOULLIUS, QUI ANNO LXXXV LEGIONI ROMANAE IN SCOTIA PRAEERAT, ET VETERES CELTAS VICIT.'
Inscribed beneath
'VINCERE VEL MORI'

Translation: *Julius Magnus McDoullius who in A.D. 85 commanded a Roman legion in Scotland, and conquered the ancient Celts. Victory or Death.*
The thumbs down sign in Roman amphitheatres signalled to the victorious gladiator to finish off his vanquished opponent…or in this instance the Coulthart Con!

The Records and Transcriptions follow.

WARNING – these records were exposed as a complete hoax some 65 years after publication.

The Earliest Contemporary Records of the McDoualls of Freugh

Revealed in a booklet entitled:

A genealogical and heraldic account of the Coulthards of Coulthart and Collyn, chiefs of the name: from their first settlement in Scotland, in the reign of Conarus, to the year of our Lord 1854, to which are added, the pedigrees of seven other.

1. Held in the NLS (National Library of Scotland) archives (with the family tree folded):
https://digital.nls.uk/histories-of-scottish-families/archive/95255327#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=6&xywh=-476%2C-285%2C5611%2C5136

2. Held in the LDS (Latter Day Saints) Books archive: (with the family tree unfolded)
[sign-in required]
https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/records/?navigation=&perpage=&sort=_score&search=Freugh&refine%5BAccessLevel%5D%5B%5D=Full+Permission&refine%5BAccessLevel%5D%5B%5D=Public&refine%5BAccessLevel%5D%5B%5D=Limited+Permission&fulltext=1&bookmarks=0&page=2#title

OR

https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/253938/?offset=&return=1#page=1&viewer=picture&o=info&n=0&q=

Our Earliest Contemporary Records

The previous earliest known contemporary record of the McDoualls of Freugh was:

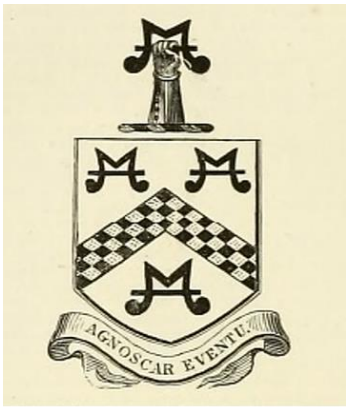
Gilbert MCDOWALL of Freugh, d.1496, m.1445 Katherine MACGILIGH

From this booklet two earlier dates are revealed for marriages of daughters of the Laird of Freugh to members of the Ross clan:

James with the Laird of Freugh's daughter on 6th July 1339

And **James the ROSS de Renfrew married Isabel, dau. of Macdouall of Freugh on 26th October 1362**

(see images and transcriptions in the following pages below)



Ross of Renfrew

The Coultharts of Coulthart

The genealogy of the Coultharts is remarkable indeed. Through family manuscripts and records, the original author was able to trace their ancestry back to Coulthartus, a Roman Lieutenant, who fought under Julius Agricola at the foot of the Grampian Mountains ca. AD 80 – 84 (see the summary "About the Coultharts" and "Julius Agricola" at the end).



Coultharts of Coulthart

The mention of King Conarus of Caledonia (Scotland) who reigned from AD 149 – 163 appears confusing because Coulthartus supposedly died in the '12th year of his reign', i.e. in AD 161, a practically unimaginable life span at that time. In the family tree, Coulthartus I to VI are mentioned, and it was Coulthartus I who apparently became the Caledonian Chief by marrying Marsa, daughter of Kadalayne, Chief of the Novantae (from Galloway), and whose children would have been Romano-Britons through intermarriage with the local Celts. His sons appear to have fought against the Romans because Julius, the eldest son, 'assisted in the erection of several strong castles near the wall of Adrian' (Hadrian's Wall), which was built ca. AD 120, and Ackaline, the younger son, 'fought heroically against the Romans near Adrian's wall' under King Ethodius, who succeeded Conarus in AD 163. Therefore one might assume that Coulthartus I was likely a son or grandson of the aforementioned Roman Lieutenant.

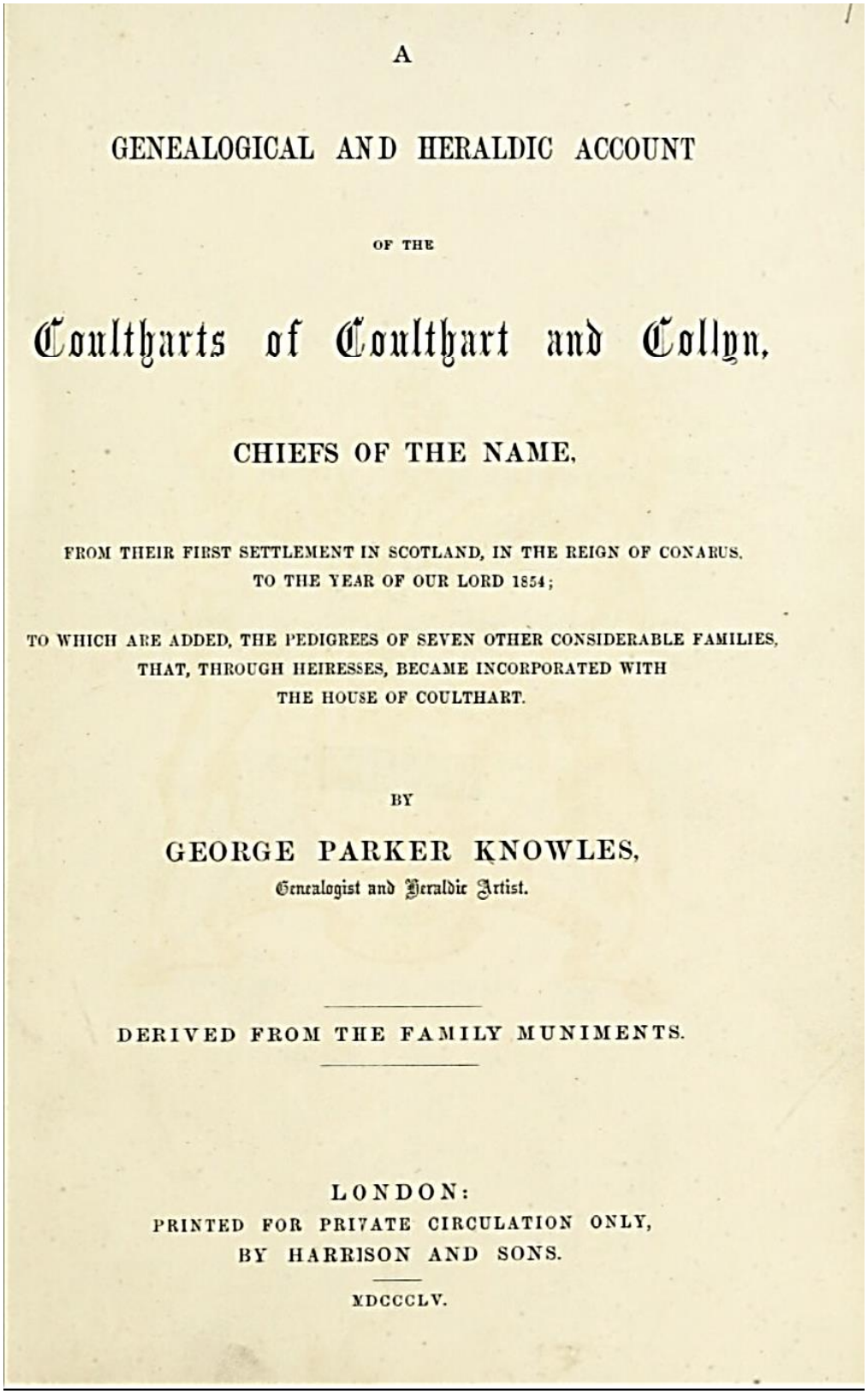
The earliest recorded date in their family tree is AD 1061, however ancient manuscripts were of course without dates as we know them today, the current numbering system only coming into wider use from the 9th century on.

Reference: The Scottish Monarchy - https://randomscottishhistory.com/2018/05/22/what-happened-to-the-scottish-monarchy/

Title page

Published 1855

A note states that only 75 copies were printed for private distribution only.



A

GENEALOGICAL AND HERALDIC ACCOUNT

OF THE

Coulthards of Coulthart and Collyn,

CHIEFS OF THE NAME,

FROM THEIR FIRST SETTLEMENT IN SCOTLAND, IN THE REIGN OF CONARUS,
TO THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1854;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED, THE PEDIGREES OF SEVEN OTHER CONSIDERABLE FAMILIES,
THAT, THROUGH HEIRESSES, BECAME INCORPORATED WITH
THE HOUSE OF COULTHART.

BY

GEORGE PARKER KNOWLES,
Genealogist and Heraldic Artist.

DERIVED FROM THE FAMILY MUNIMENTS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY,
BY HARRISON AND SONS.

MDCCCLV.

PREFACE.

In submitting the following Memorials of the Coulthart family to the indulgent reader, the Author is desirous of guarding against assuming to himself more than his own humble share of the merit of the compilation. All the most difficult and laborious part of the work (such as the transcribing and translating of the old deeds, wills, charters, pedigrees, marriage settlements, genealogical notices, &c.) had been accomplished by the late Alexander Cheyne, Esq., of Ashton-under-Lyne, Barrister-at-law, prior to his death, on the 26th August, 1853; and, judging of that gentleman's learning and research by the memoranda which he left behind him, it is deeply to be regretted that he did not live to bring the undertaking to a conclusion. Divine Providence, however, ordered it otherwise, and hence it was that the arranging, compiling, and illustrating of these Pedigrees became entrusted to the Author, which he has at last completed, and in the following form now respectfully submits to the COULTHARTS *of Coulthart and Collyn.*

MANCHESTER, AUGUST 1854.

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FEW families can justly claim so ancient and honourable a descent as the COULTHARTS *of Coulthart and Collyn*, and fewer still can establish their lineage by such unerring documentary evidence. Deriving an uninterrupted male succession from the era of JULIUS AGRICOLA, the genealogy is clearly traceable by means of monkish chronicles, historical achievements, marriage alliances, royal charters, baronial leases, sepulchral inscriptions, sasine precepts, judicial decreets, and fragmentary pedigrees, to the present lineal representative, who has furnished me with such an extensive collection of ancestral muniments, partly arranged by domestic annalists and antiquaries, that I am enabled to compile from the family archives the following brief record of the COULTHARTS *of Coulthart and Collyn*, chiefs of the name; and also to annex thereto heraldic and genealogical accounts of the ROSSES *of Renfrew*, the MACKNYGHTES *of Macknyghte*, the GLENDONYNS *of Glendonyn*, the CARMICHAELS *of Carspherne*, the FORBESES *of Pitscottie*, the MACKENZIES *of Craighall*, and the GORDONS *of Sorbie*, who have all, through heiresses, become incorporated with the House of Coulthart, as successive generations meandered down the stream of time.

It has been thought sufficient in the southern half of Britain to trace a genealogy up to one of those Norman knights who "came in with the Conqueror," and are named on the Roll of Battle Abbey: but the extraordinary antiquity of the Coultharts mounts for more than thirty generations higher than that, up to "Coulthartus, a Roman lieutenant, who fought under Julius Agricola, at the foot of the Grampian mountains;" and who, "versed in all the wisdom and learning of the Romans, appears to have lived at Leucaphibia, as a Caledonian chieftain, and to have died there, beloved and lamented, in the 12th year of the reign of King Conarus." The genealogy is carried on by the names of Julius, Ackaline, Doraldus, Moraldus, Thorwaldus, and a great variety of others, but Coulthartus occurs again in it at intervals. Coulthartus II. in the fifth generation from the first, "surpassed most men of his time in the manly exercises of running, riding, shooting arrows, throwing the dart, and wielding the battle-axe;" and his son and successor Diorthaca was "the first of the family that embraced the Christian religion." In the 14th generation we come to Coulthartus III. whose mother was a daughter of Lothus king of the Picts; in the 19th to Coulthartus IV. who was chiefly remarkable for his benefactions to the abbey of Candida Casa, or Whithorn, built in his time; in the 26th to Coulthartus V. who was equally liberal in erecting and repairing churches in Galloway; and in the 32d to Coulthartus VI. who having stood aloof from the usurper Macbeth, joyfully assisted in the restoration of Malcolm Kianmore. Immediately after his death, his two sons Alfred and Theodore went on a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre of St. Peter at Rome; and the former, on his return, "had a confirmation charter from King Malcolm of the barony of Coulthart, on condition that three horses should always be furnished to the sovereigns of Scotland when required in time of war: *for which reason three colts, courant, have ever since been borne by the family of Coulthart as an armorial ensign.*"

[Complete Transcription Follows]
Page 16 (part)

Gilbert the Ross de Renfrew was *s.* by his eldest surviving son,

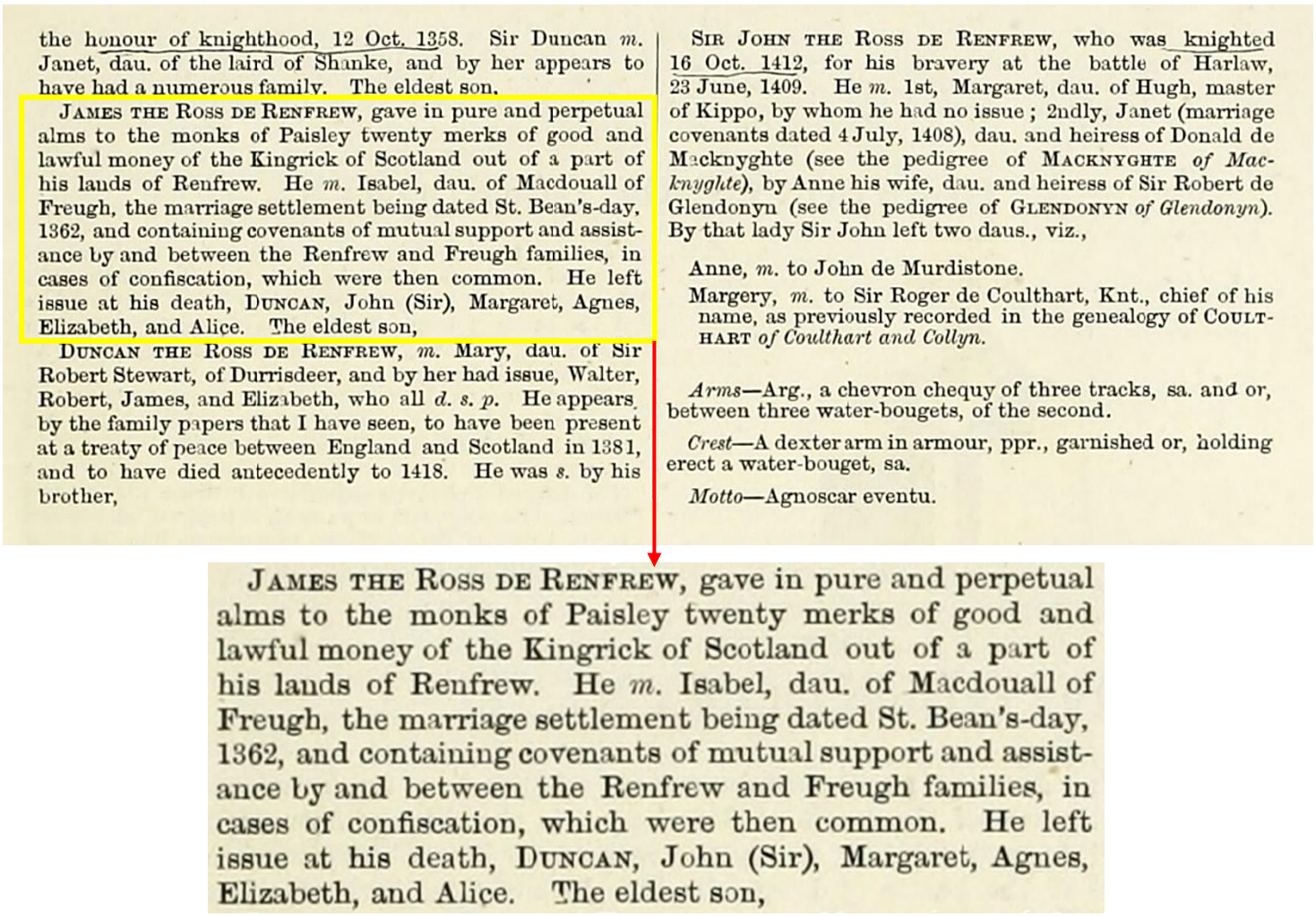
ALEXANDER THE ROSS DE RENFREW, whose bodily health and dexterity procured for him much celebrity, and the special favour of King ALEXANDER III. He *m.* Christian, dau. of the laird of Ballow, and by her had issue,

DUNCAN (Sir), his heir.
Murdoch, who acquired lands in Mearns, and was infeft therein, 15 May, 1331. He *m.* Janet, dau. of the laird of Menzies, and by her had,

Robert, who witnesses the marriage contract of his cousin James with the laird of Freugh's daughter, 6 July, 1339.
Walter, who fell at the capture of Berwick Castle, under the Earls of March and Douglas, A.D. 1347.
Janet, wife of Murray of Tullibardine, who mortified a portion of his lands to the Abbey of Culross, 10 Dec. 1362, and was infeft the year afterwards in lands called Blackmark, within [illegible].

Alexander the Ross de Renfrew lived to the age of 96 years, and died beloved and respected for his many acts of piety and charity. His eldest son and successor,

Page 17 (part)



the honour of knighthood, 12 Oct. 1358. Sir Duncan *m.* Janet, dau. of the laird of Shanke, and by her appears to have had a numerous family. The eldest son,

JAMES THE ROSS DE RENFREW, gave in pure and perpetual alms to the monks of Paisley twenty merks of good and lawful money of the Kingrick of Scotland out of a part of his lands of Renfrew. He *m.* Isabel, dau. of Macdouall of Freugh, the marriage settlement being dated St. Bean's-day, 1362, and containing covenants of mutual support and assistance by and between the Renfrew and Freugh families, in cases of confiscation, which were then common. He left issue at his death, DUNCAN, John (Sir), Margaret, Agnes, Elizabeth, and Alice. The eldest son,

DUNCAN THE ROSS DE RENFREW, *m.* Mary, dau. of Sir Robert Stewart, of Durrisdeer, and by her had issue, Walter, Robert, James, and Elizabeth, who all *d. s. p.* He appears by the family papers that I have seen, to have been present at a treaty of peace between England and Scotland in 1381, and to have died antecedently to 1418. He was *s.* by his brother,

SIR JOHN THE ROSS DE RENFREW, who was knighted 16 Oct. 1412, for his bravery at the battle of Harlaw, 23 June, 1409. He *m.* 1st, Margaret, dau. of Hugh, master of Kippo, by whom he had no issue; 2ndly, Janet (marriage covenants dated 4 July, 1408), dau. and heiress of Donald de Macknyghte (see the pedigree of MACKNYGHTE *of Macknyghte*), by Anne his wife, dau. and heiress of Sir Robert de Glendonyn (see the pedigree of GLENDONYN *of Glendonyn*). By that lady Sir John left two daus., viz.,

Anne, *m.* to John de Murdistone.

Margery, *m.* to Sir Roger de Coulthart, Knt., chief of his name, as previously recorded in the genealogy of COULTHART *of Coulthart and Collyn.*

Arms—Arg., a chevron chequy of three tracks, sa. and or, between three water-bougets, of the second.

Crest—A dexter arm in armour, ppr., garnished or, holding erect a water-bouget, sa.

Motto—Agnoscar eventu.

JAMES THE ROSS DE RENFREW, gave in pure and perpetual alms to the monks of Paisley twenty merks of good and lawful money of the Kingrick of Scotland out of a part of his lands of Renfrew. He *m.* Isabel, dau. of Macdouall of Freugh, the marriage settlement being dated St. Bean's-day, 1362, and containing covenants of mutual support and assistance by and between the Renfrew and Freugh families, in cases of confiscation, which were then common. He left issue at his death, DUNCAN, John (Sir), Margaret, Agnes, Elizabeth, and Alice. The eldest son,

Transcription: Page 16

ROSS OF RENFREW.

The distinguished name of Ross is associated with nearly all the notable events of Scottish history; but as the families so designated are numerous, the tracing of the descent of the Rosses of Renfrew his been a work of some difficulty.

Indeed, the following pedigree of the family has been almost entirely compiled from private MSS, the national records, from their general statements, affording very little assistance. The earliest progenitor I can trace is Alysandre the Ross de Renfrew, living *temp.* David I., reputed to have been an exceedingly learned and well-bred man, and designated in an old family charter, sans date, "Sheriff-principal and constable-primus of the county of Renfrew." He married Isabel, dau. of Stephen de Morton, which Stephen renewed and augmented a donation of his ancestors to the monks of Aberbruthic, the deed being subsequently confirmed by William the Lion.

He had issue by this marriage, Serle, his heir, of whom presently. David, described in various family papers as "of Aberford" a six-merk land of old extent in the shire of Ayr. By a mortification-deed dated Christmas 1172, he bestowed on the monks of Paisley one-tenth part of all his heritable property, for the salvation of his soul and the souls of his near relations. He had several children by his wife Alice, dau. of Walter de Newbiggin, Lord of Dunsyre, which Walter had another dau., Margaret, married to William, Lord Somerville, who was one of the nobles appointed to exercise in a tournament at Roxburgh Castle, on the occasion of the marriage of King Alexander II.

Alysandre the Ross de Renfrew d. before 1161, and was succeeded by his son, Serle the Ross de Renfrew, whose name and designation occur in a mortification-grant to the abbots of Kelso, A.D. 1161. By Margaret his wife, dau. of Richard de Arbuthnot, in the shire of Kincardine, he left at his death two sons, Alexander and Radulphus, both of whom ultimately succeeded to the family possessions. The eldest, Alexander the Ross de Renfrew, was a donator to the Abbey of Scoon, as is set forth in the second volume of the chartulary book thereof; and took part with Gilchrist in quelling the disturbances raised by the Thane of Galloway during the period, that King William the Lion was forcibly detained in Normandy. He married Maud Cunningham, whose father, Stephen Cunningham, was one of the fifteen hostages given to King Henry II of England at the liberation of King William of Scotland. By her he left issue at his death an only son, Harvey the Ross de Renfrew, who stands one of the witnesses to a charter granted by Allan, Lord of Galloway, of the lands of Blackrock, to Hugh Craufurd, ancestor of the Earls of Loudoun. He was never married, and lived very devoutly, bestowing towards the close of his life, large portions of his estate on pious objects, not forgetting the Abbey of Aberbrothie, where, by the side of General Gilchrist, in St. Katherine's chapel, his remains were deposited.

His successor was his uncle, Radulphus the Ross de Renfrew, who acquired the lands of Drumboyne, as dower with his wife Helen, sister of Serle Dundas, of that ilk, and was amongst the noblemen and gentlemen who attended the King of Scotland to the English court, to congratulate King Richard on his safe return from Palestine. Radulphus was through life an exceedingly energetic man; and for his valuable services in the suppression of organized robbery, and the maintenance of military efficiency amongst his vassals and dependents, King William granted him a charter, dated 22 March 1209, of the lands of Airdmillan, in the shire of Ayr, which were then vested in the crown. He had at least two sons, namely, Francis, his successor. Walter, present at the confirmation of the Kirk of Melville to the Monastery of Dunfermline, A.D. 1251, which circumstance is incidentally recorded in the chartulary of the monastery, and in Fordun's Scotichronicon.

Ralulphus was succeeded by his eldest son, Francis the Ross de Renfrew, who married Agnes Maynors, whose father, Anchettle de Maynors, witnesses a deed made by Wilhelmus de Vetere Poute to the Abbacy of Holyrood, of the lands of Carschede, in the co. of Linlithgow, "pro salute Domini mei Regis Wilhemi et Reginae Emergardie." Francis the Ross de Renfrew hid the lands of Airdmillan confirmed to him by Alexander II at a convention held in Edinburgh, 16 Nov. 1215. He witnesses two deeds, which I have seen, that belonged to the Abbots of Paisley, and his name frequently occurs in the public records of the earlier portion of the 13th century. He had issue, a son and successor, Francis the Ross de Renfrew, who distinguished himself so highly, 8 July, 1245, in negotiating a treaty of peace between England and Scotland, that Alexander II rewarded him with a grant of lands in Annandale, called Boddesbeck, which grant was subsequently confirmed, 17 Aug. 1250, by King Alexander III. By his wife Anobel, dau. of Dovendalus, Thane of Calder, he had Gilbert, Hugh, Walter, and Harvey, the eldest of whom, it is believed, succeeded him at his death. His name was, Gilbert the Ross de Renfrew, who, with other Scottish noblemen and gentlemen, formed the suite of Alexander III at the ratification of the treaty of peace at Wark, between the Kings of England and Scotland, A.D. 1253. He married 1st, Helen, dau. of the Earl of March, and sister to Agnes, wife of Sir William Keith, Marischal of Scotland, by whom he had no issue; 2ndly, Margery, dau. of Hugh de Wemyss, by whom he had, Alexander, his successor. Robert, William, Mary, who were present at their brother Alexander's marriage, 4 June, 1278. Gilbert the Ross de Renfrew was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Alexander the Ross de Renfrew, whose bodily health and dexterity procured for him much celebrity, and the special favour of King Alexander III. He married Christian, dau. of the laird of Ballow, and by her had issue, Duncan (Sir), his heir. Murdoch, who acquired lands in Mearns, and was infeft therein, 15 May, 1331. He married Janet, dau. of the Laird of Menzies, and by her had, Robert, who witnesses the marriage contract of his cousin James with the Laird of Freugh's daughter, 6 July, 1339.

Walter, who fell at the capture of Berwick Castle, under the Earls of March and Douglas, A.D. 1347. Janet, wife of Murray of Tullibardine, who mortified a portion of his lands to the Abbey of Culross, 10 Dec. 1302, and was infeft the year afterwards in lands called Blackmark, within *[illegible].* Alexander the Ross de Renfrew lived to the age of 96 years, and died beloved and respected for his many acts of piety and charity. His eldest son and successor, Sir Duncan the Ross de Renfrew, attached himself to the fortunes of King David Bruce, who, in consideration of his fidelity and eminent military services, conferred on him

Transcription Page 17 (top)

the honour of knighthood, 12 Oct 1358. Sir Duncan married Janet, dau. of the Laird of Shanke, and by her appears to have had a numerous family. The eldest son, James the Ross de Renfrew, gave in pure and perpetual alms to the monks of Paisley twenty merks of good and lawful money of the Kingrick of Scotland out of a part of his lands of Renfrew. He married Isabel, dau. of Macdouall of Freugh, the marriage settlement being dated St. Bean's-day*, 1362, and containing covenants of mutual support and assistance by and between the Renfrew and Freugh families, in cases of confiscation, which were then common. He left issue at his death, Duncan, John (Sir), Margaret, Agnes, Elizabeth, and Alice. The eldest son, Duncan the Ross de Renfrew, married Mary, dau. of Sir Robert Stewart, of Durrisdeer, and by her had issue, Walter, Robert, James, and Elizibeth, who all d.s.p. (descessit sine parole – died without issue). He appears by the family papers that I have seen, to have been present at a treaty of peace between England and Scotland in 1381, and to have died antecedently to 1418. He was succeeded by his brother, Sir John the Ross de Renfrew, who was knighted 16th Oct 1412, for his bravery at the Battle of Harlaw, 23 June, 1409. He married 1st, Margaret, dau. of Hugh, master of Kippo, by whom he had no issue; 2ndly, Janet (marriage covenants dated 4 July, 1408), dau. and heiress of Donald de Macknyghte (see the pedigree of Macknyghte of Macknyghte), by Anne his wife, dau. and heiress of Sir Robert de Glendonyn (see the pedigree of Glendonyn of Glendonyn).

By that lady Sir John left two daughters, viz., Anne, married to John de Murdistone. Margery, married to Sir Roger de Coulthart, Knt., chief of his name, as previously recorded in the genealogy of Coulthart of Coulthart and C'ollyn.

Arms — Arg., a chevron chequy of three tracks, sa. and or, between three water-bougets, of the second.

Crest — A dexter arm in armour, ppr., garnished or, holding erect a water-bouget, sa.

Motto — Agnoscar eventu.

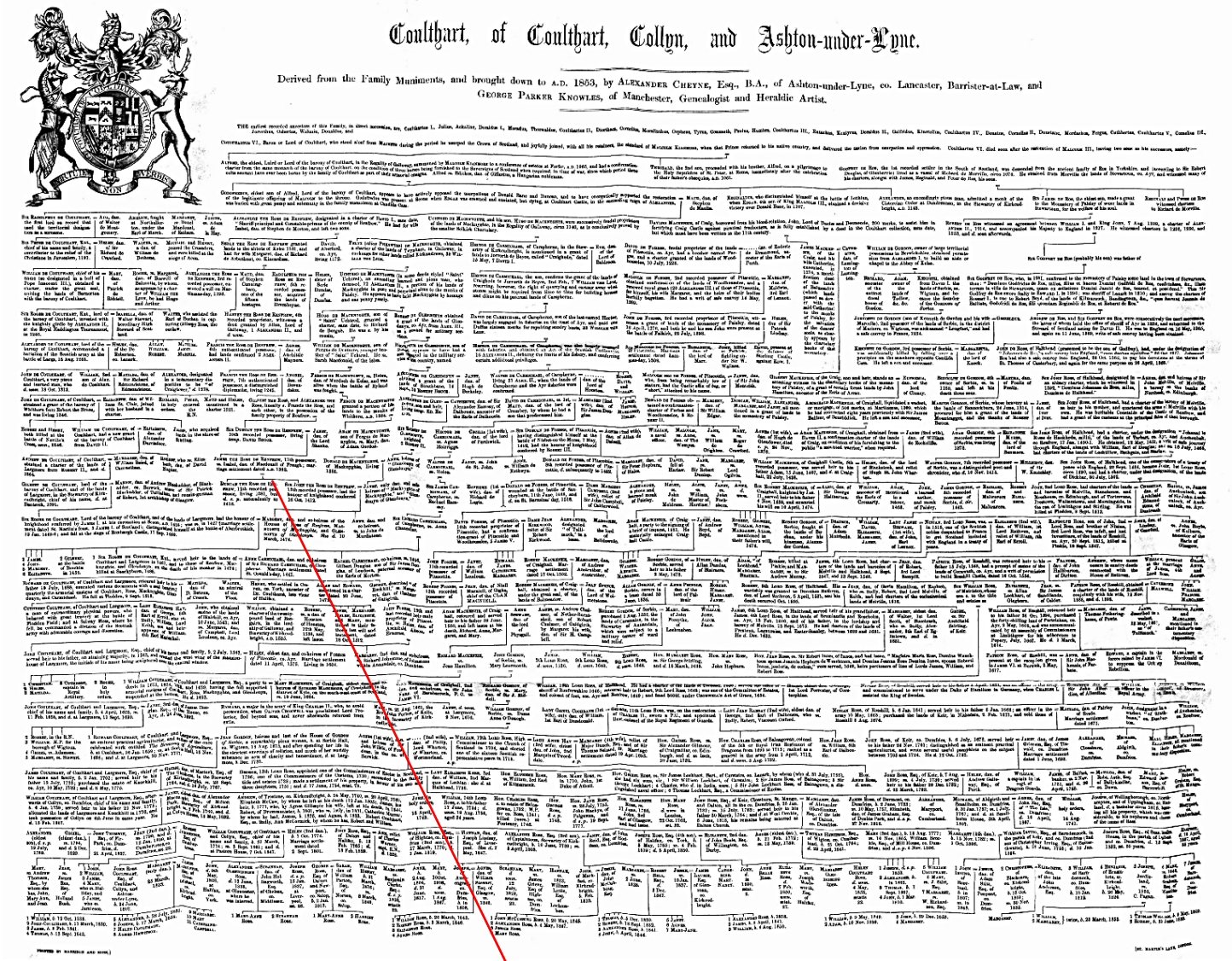
***Note: St. Bean's Day** *(Author: This is factually correct)*

Saint Bean of Mortlach (Murlach) is a revered figure in the Catholic Church, recognized for his significant contributions to the spread of Christianity in medieval Scotland. He is also known by various names such as Bean of Aberdeen, Bean of Lough Derg, and Bean of Murlach among others. The name "Beanus" and "Beóán" are also associated with him. Born in Scotland during an era of religious fervor, little is known about Bean's early life. However, what is certain is that he was chosen by Pope Benedict VIII to be the Bishop of Mortlach, located in the region of Banff, Scotland. This appointment bestowed upon him great responsibility and signaled his spiritual prowess. Greatly inspired by his faith and motivated by his calling as a bishop, Saint Bean dedicated himself to the mission of spreading the Gospel throughout Scotland, particularly in Aberdeen. He was known for his eloquent preaching and tireless efforts to convert non-believers. Many were drawn to the faith through his compelling sermons and the example he set in his own virtuous life. Saint Bean's evangelistic endeavors contributed to the establishment and growth of the Christian community in Aberdeen. His unwavering commitment to his faith laid the foundation for the city's rich religious heritage, and his influence extended far beyond his lifetime. While the representation of Saint Bean of Mortlach is not clearly defined, his legacy lives on through the impact he had on the communities he served. His feast days are celebrated on December 16th in Ireland, and October 26th, as Saint Bean of Murlach and Aberdeen in Scotland. Saint Bean's exact date of death is uncertain, but it is

believed to have occurred around the year 1012. His sanctity and exemplary life prompted his recognition as a Saint by the Catholic Church, although his canonization took place before the formal establishment of the canonization process known as Pre-Congregation. Though he may not have any specific patronage attributed to him, Saint Bean of Mortlach remains an inspiration for all those who strive to live a devout and faithful life, particularly in the face of adversity. His unwavering dedication to spreading the Christian message, along with his role as Bishop of Mortlach, solidifies his place as a significant figure in the history of Scottish Catholicism.

[The Coulthart Family Tree follows]

Family Tree of Coulthart of Coulthart, Collyn, and Ashton-Under-Lyne



Coulthart, of Coulthart, Collyn, and Ashton-under-Lyne.

Derived from the Family Muniments, and brought down to A.D. 1853, by Alexander Cheyne, Esq., B.A., of Ashton-under-Lyne, co. Lancaster, Barrister-at-Law, and George Parker Knowles, of Manchester, Genealogist and Heraldic Artist.

JAMES, who acquired lands in the shire of Stirling.

SIR DUNCAN THE ROSS DE RENFREW, 10th recorded possessor, living *temp.* DAVID BRUCE.

JANET, dau. of the Lord Shanke.

ADAM DE MACKNYGHTE, son of Fergus de Macnyghte, *m.* Mary, dau. of Adam Gordon.

ELIZABETH, dau. of Alexander Durrisdeer.

ROBERT, who *m.* Elizabeth, dau. of David Napier.

JAMES THE ROSS DE RENFREW, 11th possessor, *m.* Isabel, dau. of Macdouall of Freugh; marriage settlement dated A.D. 1362.

DONALD DE MACKNYGHTE, of Macknyghte, living 1386.

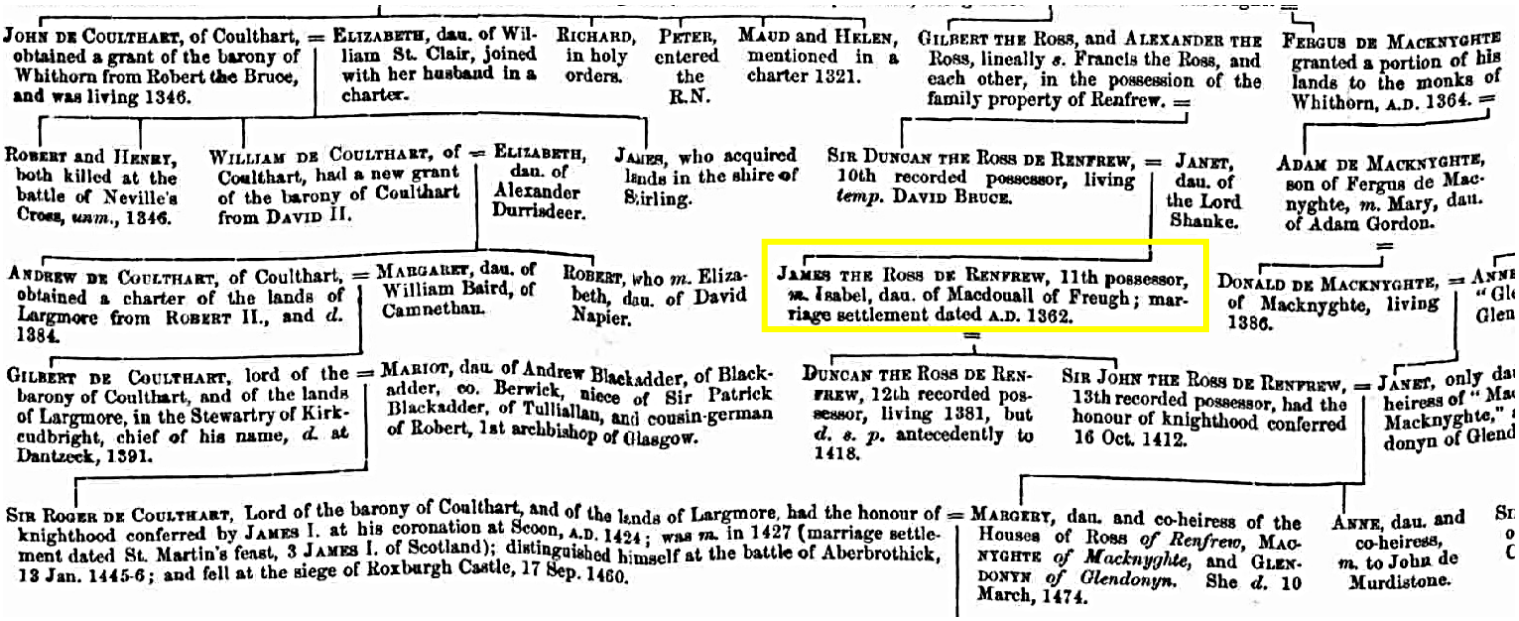
ANNE, "Glen Glend

, dau. of Andrew Blackadder, of Blackco. Berwick, niece of Sir Patrick dder, of Tulliallan, and cousin-german ert, 1st archbishop of Glasgow.

DUNCAN THE ROSS DE RENFREW, 12th recorded possessor, living 1381, but *d. s. p.* antecedently to 1418.

SIR JOHN THE ROSS DE RENFREW, 13th recorded possessor, had the honour of knighthood conferred 16 Oct. 1412.

JANET, only dau. heiress of "Mach Macknyghte," a donyn of Glendo



Julius Agricola *(Author: This is factually correct)*



Statue of Agricola erected in Bath in 1894

Julius Agricola, or Gnaeus Julius Agricola, lived from 13 June AD40 to 23 August AD93. He was the Roman Governor of Britain responsible for securing the Roman grip on what is now England and Wales, and for conquering much of Scotland. He is among the best known of Romans, as a result of his biography, De vita et moribus Iulii Agricolae, written by his son-in-law, Tacitus, in AD98.

Agricola was born in Gallia Narbonensis, part of southern France, into a high-ranking Roman family. Both of his grandfathers had been Imperial Governors. His father, Julius Graecinus, became a member of the Roman Senate in the year Julius was born. Agricola himself was educated in Massilia (now Marseille).

In AD58 Agricola began his military career as a tribune with Legion II Augusta in Britain. As a member of the staff of the Roman General Paulinus, he very probably took part in the suppression of Queen Boudica's uprising in AD61. Back in Rome, Agricola married Domitia Decidiana in AD62.

In AD69 Agricola was given command of Legion XX Valeria Victrix in Britain: a legion whose previous commander had used the recent unrest as a pretext to rebel against the rather ineffectual governor, Marcus Vettius Bolanus. Agricola steadied the ship and consolidated Roman rule in the province. In AD71 a new governor, Quintus Petillius Cerialis, allowed Agricola to take a much more aggressive role against the Brigantes.

Agricola was then appointed Governor of Britain in AD78, arriving back in the province in the middle of the year. He immediately launched a campaign against the Ordovices of North Wales. In AD79 he re-established clear Roman authority in northern England, then in AD80 began the campaign he envisaged would complete the Roman conquest of Britain, by marching into Scotland.

By AD82 the Romans under Agricola controlled everything up to the line between the Rivers Forth and Clyde. AD83 saw the Romans press further north, now in the face of serious opposition from the native Caledonians. In one incident, Legion IX Hispana was attacked at night and only saved from disaster through the intervention of a large force of Roman cavalry.

In AD84 the Romans pressed still further into northern Scotland, trying to draw the main forces of the Caledonian leader Calgacus into open battle. The Caledonians, however, were intent on maintaining their hit-and-run

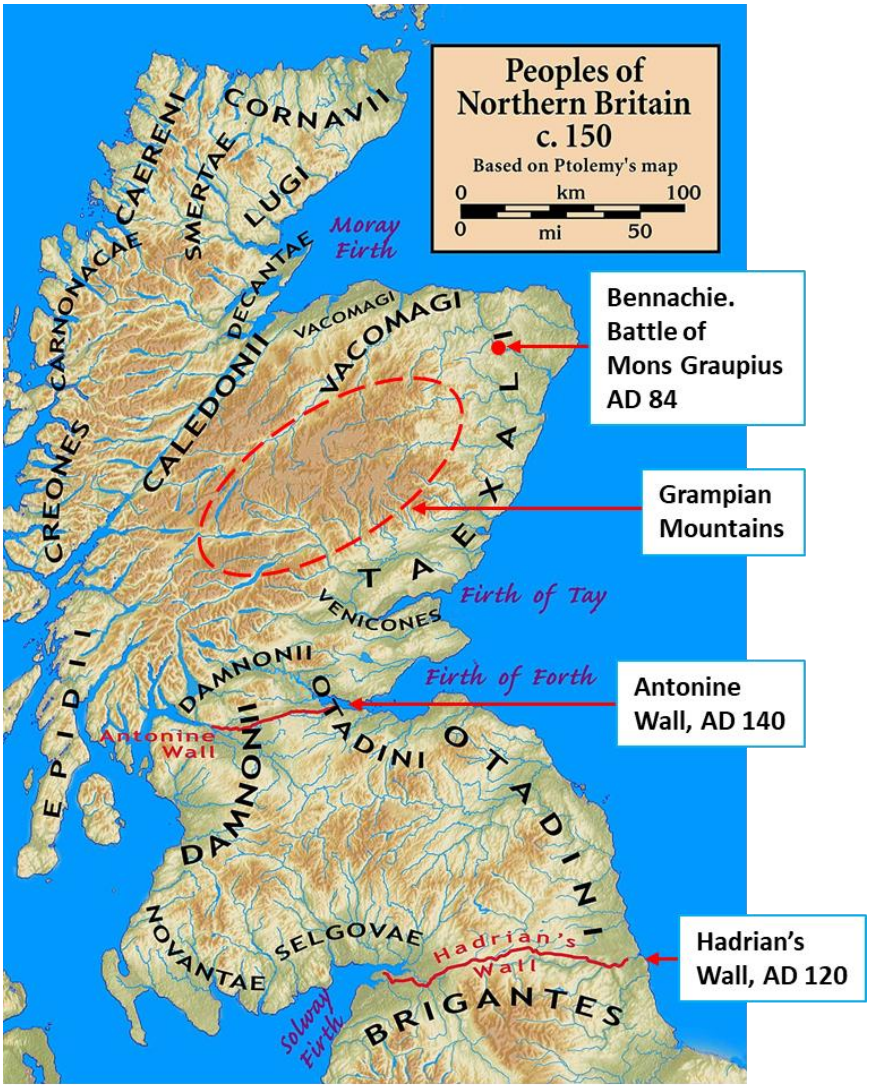
tactics. But when Agricola's troops captured many of the storehouses holding the Caledonians' recently gathered harvest, Calgacus had to choose between fighting, or letting his people starve in the forthcoming winter. The final showdown occurred at the Battle of Mons Graupius, believed to have taken place in the autumn of AD84.

The location of the battle is the subject of wide debate today, with candidates including Bennachie in Aberdeenshire and the Gask Ridge west of Perth; though locations as far afield as Moray, Fife and Sutherland have also been suggested. On the whole, however, Bennachie seems the clear favourite. While Tacitus was a little vague about geography, he is more definite about the conduct of the battle itself. According to him the Caledonians mustered some 30,000 men to face the 20,000 Roman legionnaires and auxiliaries under Agricola.

The battle started with an exchange of missiles before the 8,000 Romans auxiliaries in the Roman front line attacked uphill, closing with the Caledonians to neutralise the latter's longer swords. The 3,000 Roman cavalry then outflanked the Caledonians, causing them to break and flee. The main body of the Roman army at Mons Graupius, the 9,000 men of the legions, were held in reserve and took no active part in the battle. By Tacitus's account, the battle cost the lives of 10,000 Caledonians and just 360 Romans. The remaining 20,000 Caledonians, including Calgacus, simply melted away into the hills.

It is probably fair to say that the Battle of Mons Graupius very nearly completed the Roman conquest of Britain and Agricola certainly had the Roman fleet sail around the north and west coast of Scotland in an act of ownership after the battle. But he himself was recalled to Rome in AD85, before he could build on his victory at Mons Graupius and bring Scotland fully under Roman rule. Subsequent Roman Governors never had both the will nor the troops to complete the job, instead preferring to hold defensive positions along the Gask Ridge, the Antonine Wall, or Hadrian's Wall, and leaving what was left to the "painted people" beyond.

On his return to Rome, Agricola was awarded triumphal decorations and a statue; but he never again held a civil or military post. He died in AD93 on his family estates in Gallia Narbonensis, aged fifty-three, after eight years of retirement.



Caledonia

Appendix

Bonny House of Coulthart by Oswald Barron 1868-1939

Published before 1923.

Original Article

https://ia801907.us.archive.org/7/items/bonnyhouseofcoul00barr/bonnyhouseofcoul00barr.pdf

The article is a complete rebuttal of the original Coultharts of Coulthart genealogy, and dismisses it as an elaborate hoax. There do not appear to be any reviews online, even though many copies from a reprint in 2015 are still available, under the title: **Bonny House of Coulthart; An Old Story Retold by Oswald Barron**

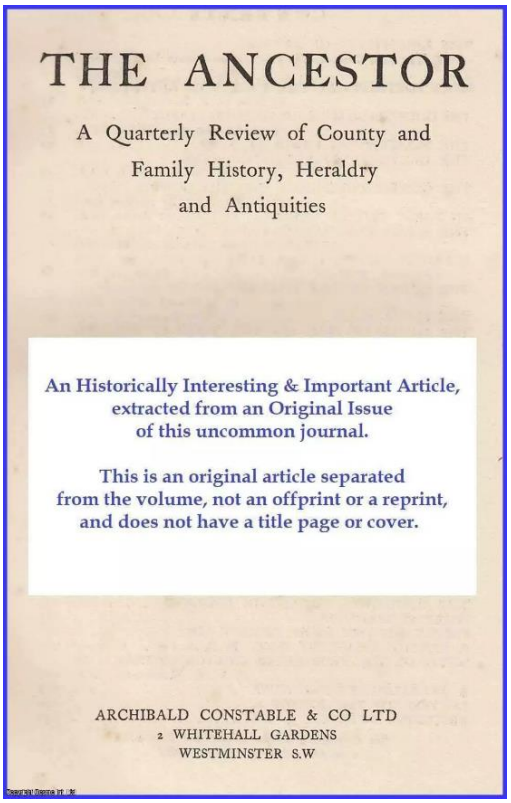
Oswald Barron was a journalist, who did much to discredit the work of some 'reputable' but perhaps less scrupulous genealogists, as revealed in the extracts below.

He founded and edited a profusely-illustrated quarterly scholarly periodical on genealogical subjects, called **The Ancestor** (1902–1905), which attempted to debunk many popular myths of the Victorian era and to replace them with properly referenced facts, concentrating especially on the medieval period. The Ancestor discontinued publication after its twelfth volume.

From this venture, he moved to the Victoria County History, where he contributed on matters on heraldry and genealogy. He also contributed a major article on heraldry to the 1911 edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, which according to John Campbell-Kease in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography remains "one of the best and most erudite introductions to the subject".

His interest in medieval rather than contemporary heraldry, and his opinion (based on medieval practice) that assumption of arms was not prohibited by the Law of Arms, pitted him against the more prolific and popular heraldic author, A. C. Fox-Davies.

[Ref: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oswald_Barron]



THE ANCESTOR

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Extracts

Clearly, Barron set himself against those genealogists whom he believed were contriving exaggerated claims of heraldry and ancestry for their clients, and who were doubtless being well paid for their schemes. There is certainly an element of truth to his claims, but how widespread this practice was is difficult to ascertain.

In his paper he writes scornfully about the Coultharts genealogy for 19 pages altogether:

> With such a market for their wares, the heralds and pedigree makers fell joyfully to work. For the new gentleman were found arms and crests, which hinted at near kinship to the most illustrious bearer of his name, or of a name in anyway resembling it, whilst for the new lord were traced out and emblazoned in gold and many colours those marvellous pedigree rolls which are our wonder today when we see them brought out of their leather cases and pulled out along the hall floor or the hall table.

And he continues:

> Beside the landed gentry, and amongst
> them, a new class had arisen. Bankers, ironmasters and
> manufacturers had prospered in the fat years which followed
> Waterloo, and these were not slow to demand a wedding garment
> of pedigree woven with legend. Above others this
> class was the natural prey of the pedigree maker, and amongst
> this class Mr. John Ross Coulthart stands for a tall obelisk
> of warning example.

And of the author of the Coultharts genealogy, George Parker Knowles, he adds sarcastically:

> It is possible that a higher antiquity might have been
> claimed for this illustrious house had the chief of his name and
> family, as Mr. Knowles invariably styles his patron, fallen into
> the hands of a less scrupulous genealogist. But Mr. Knowles,
> pushing aside untrustworthy documents and evidence which
> might perchance have taken the line of Coulthart back to the
> earlier stone age, insists upon 'confining' his 'details to the
> evidence of documents obviously authentic.'

Conclusion

Clearly Barron had a bone to pick with 'unscrupulous' genealogists for which he gained quite a reputation. However, he does not appear, at least in this instance, to have reviewed the original documents himself that Knowles claims to have consulted, therefore some of his rebuttals could amount to conjecture. He does write that others perused the documents and were dismissive of them as largely fictional fakes. Barron was a journalist writing news for a living, and could have developed some of his arguments to make them more 'newsworthy'.

Relatively minor details like the mentions of the two marriages of the Ross clan to Freugh females, don't even arise in Barron's rebuttal, which isn't surprising because his critique was directed primarily at the Coultharts. Knowles could have dreamt up such details with precise dates, because the McDowalls, although known in Scottish circles, were not of particular significance in the realm of great aristocratic families. Knowles may have even been aware that no early Freugh records existed anymore that could be used to dispute the facts one way or the other.

One point does give rise to some doubt regarding Coulthartus I, who according to Knowles, fought for Julius Agricola sometime from AD 80-84 and died in the 12th year of the reign of King Conarus in AD 161, which would mean that he was about 100 years old, an unimaginable life span some 2,000 years ago. Either way, the supposed Coulthart ancestry has been all but ridiculed by the majority of experts in the field.

One is left wondering why such prominent archives as the LDS (Latter Day Saints) Family Search and NLS (National Library of Scotland) do not give readers a warning that the content is either unverifiable or potentially misleading, or, alternatively, to simply not include doubtful content in their archives. Furthermore, Barron's article exposing this fraud is posted on a more obscure website, whereas if it was collocated with the original, the reader could obtain both sides of the story and decide for themselves.

We live and learn…