

The Lamonts of Tiree

by
Gene Donald Lamont

The male line of the Lamonts of Tiree had its roots in Cowal, or perhaps Glassary, within the ancient territory of Clan Lamont on the mainland of Argyll. The Lamonts had been the most powerful clan on the Cowal Peninsula at a time when many other clans, who are better known today, were just beginning to emerge from obscurity. The chiefs of Clan Lamont were descended from a scion of the O'Neills, the royal house of Ulster and the former High Kings of Ireland. This O'Neill prince was named Aedh, but was more commonly referred to by his nickname of 'Anradhan'. He lived in the eleventh century, and married the heiress of the royal house of Cowal and Knapdale. Historians have conjectured that he probably came to Argyll at the head of a force of Ulster Scots in order to help his kinsmen extinguish the last spark of Pictish resistance to their rule. His wife is believed to have been a descendant of Fergus, who, with his brother Loarn, had first established the Dalriadic Scots in Ulster at the beginning of the sixth century AD. The descendants of Anradhan became the overlords of Cowal and Knapdale, and eventually became the founders of such clans, as the Lamonts, MacLachlans, MacNeills, MacEwens of Otter, MacSweeneys, Macleays, Livingstones and the Scrymgeours of Glassary (Appendix I).

The name Lamont is derived from Lagman, which is Norse in origin. The name was given to the first chief of the clan by his mother, who, tradition has held, was the daughter of the great Gallo-Norse chieftain, Somerled. The Gaelic form of the name is Lamon, or Laomuinn, while the Scots' version is Laumon. During the Middle Ages, roughly between 1400 and 1600, the name appeared most often as Lawmound. After that period Lamont came into favor, especially in Cowal and Kerry, although Lamond was sometimes used outside the clan territory. Several cadets of the clan adopted patronymics, such as the MacSorley Lamonts of Monydrain, the MacGorrie Lamonts of Knockdow, and the MacPhadrick Lamonts of Couston, but to the world at large they were all Lamonts. The common members of the clan had little use for a surname in the old days, however, and were probably known by a simple patronymic, a nickname, by their livelihood, or by the location in which they lived. Such names would have been more distinctive, when so many individuals had the same Christian name. It is more than likely that the first of the Lamonts of Mull and Tiree to use the Lamont surname were those who first came to the Hebrides from the old clan territory. Among the Maclean clansmen the Lamont surname would have distinguished them from their neighbors.

The Lamonts reached the zenith of their power during the thirteenth century, when their holdings are believed to have included much of Cowal, Nether Cowal, Kerry, and a small section of Glassary (Appendix II). The first decline in their fortunes began with their opposition to Bruce during the Scottish War of Independence, although one branch of the clan evidently did support him. Like many clans with Norse connections, including the powerful MacDougalls, the Lamonts championed Baliol in this dynastic struggle. After Bruce gained the Scottish throne, he rewarded his followers with the forfeited land of his opponents. The MacDougalls lost their holdings in the Western Isles, including Tiree, Coll and Mull, to a younger branch of Clan Donald, while the title of much of the Lamont land in northern Cowal was given to the Campbells. The fatal feud with this rival clan can be traced to this period of

time, when the Lamonts forcibly resisted all attempts by the Campbells to take possession of the forfeited property. There is evidence to suggest that it took half a century or more for the Campbells to gain the disputed lands, and that in the end it was acquired through marriage and not through force of arms.

The next two hundred years and more were marked by several outbreaks of open warfare with the Campbells, as each clan sought to gain advantage over the other. During the periods of peace, however, it was not unusual for the two neighbors to be on the same side of a political issue and marriage between the gentry of the two clans was commonplace. During this time, while the Lamonts gave as good as they got in the fighting, the Campbells continued to grow in wealth and influence. Eventually this adversary became the major power in Argyll, and then the entire Highland region, and the long contest between the Lamonts and the Campbells became an unequal one. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the Lamonts were overshadowed by the mighty neighbor.

During the period of the Civil Wars of the 1640s the Marquis of Montrose ably led the Stuart forces in Scotland, while the Campbell chief with his clan were the main prop of Parliament in the north. After some double-dealing, which did not enhance his reputation, Sir James, the Lamont chief, led his clan into the Stuart camp. In a reckless gamble to regain what the Lamonts had lost long ago in Cowal, Sir James joined Sir Alasdair MacDonald, Montrose's second in command, in an invasion of Campbell territory. Sir Alasdair MacDonald, who was better known as 'Colkitto', led a force of wild Irish from his home territory in Antrim, whose reputation for savagery was well deserved. Both the MacDonalds and Lamonts had endured much at the hands of the Campbells in the past, and made the most of this opportunity for vengeance. There is no doubt that excesses were committed by the invaders while bringing fire and sword to their ancient foe. They spared few Campbells that had the misfortune to fall into their path, and the treatment the enemy suffered laid the groundwork for the fearful reprisal that came later.

If the Lamonts had had the wisdom to choose the winning side in these Civil Wars they might have been able to avoid the disastrous consequences of their bloody foray against the Campbells. This was not to be, however, and they were to pay dearly for their rashness. After Montrose was defeated and the Stuart cause collapsed the Campbells turned their full attention upon their old opponent. Invading the Lamont territory to seek revenge, the Campbells easily succeeded in bottling up the badly outnumbered Lamonts in their two castles of Toward and Ascog. Finding that they could not readily dislodge the defenders, the Campbells offered the Lamonts a written pledge of safe conduct if they would surrender their strongholds. Realizing that continued resistance would not likely gain them better terms, the Lamonts accepted the offer and capitulated. Once they had laid down their arms and peacefully marched out of their fortresses, however, the Campbells treacherously repudiated their pledge of safety for the garrisons and took all prisoner.

After a short period of imprisonment the Lamont defenders of Toward and Ascog were transported to Dunoon in their own war galleys. There in Dunoon thirty-six gentlemen of the clan were hanged, and many more than another hundred murdered by various means, including burial while yet alive. In the aftermath of the massacre most of the remainder of the clan were harried from their homes, and compelled to seek safety across Scotland and Northern Ireland. Sir James Lamont escaped with his life, but was kept prisoner by the Campbells for a number of years. Although he lived to regain a portion of his estate and to see the Marquis of Argyll hanged for his misdeeds, neither he nor his clan ever recovered from the grim events of 1646.

Sir James and his predecessors once had the power of Clan Lamont behind them and could call upon as many as 300 or more fighting men in their own cause. After 1646 no Lamont chief was ever able to take the field to exercise such independent might. While the chief of the clan did take the field with about 100 tenants and servants during the rebellion of 1685, it was in answer to the call of the government and not on his own initiative.

The historian of Clan Lamont, Hector McKechnie, stated that some Lamonts sought refuge among the Macleans of Mull after the massacre of 1646, and this undoubtedly was the case, although details are lacking. This, of course, would not be surprising, since both the Macleans and the Lamonts had supported Montrose and the Stuart cause, and both were long time enemies of the Campbells. McKechnie did muddy the waters by suggesting that the Lamonts may have come to Tiree at the time of the Scottish Reformation, or about 1560. He based this on an admittedly vague reference in the Argyll Papers implying that the Lamont laird of Auchinbreck in Glassary had helped relocate some of his clansmen on Tiree at that time at the instigation of the Earl of Argyll. This now does not appear credible, because new evidence shows only a handful of Lamonts living on the island in 1715, and this number would not be consistent with a group supposedly in residence since 1560.

If we reject McKechnie's vague reference to the Lamonts' coming to Tiree at the time of the Reformation, we are left with the premise that the Lamonts of Tiree are descended from those who migrated to the island from its neighbor, Mull. Migration to Tiree from either the mainland or other Hebridean islands was not unusual. During its long history it was common for outsiders to come to dwell on Tiree. They came or were brought to the island for a variety of reasons, many to provide skills the islanders lacked. The MacEacherns of Tiree are known to be descendants of a blacksmith, who was induced to come to the island by a Campbell tacksman in the eighteenth century. The Munns are the descendants of a Campbell estate official, and there must have been many other examples now lost in time. The Macleans of Cornaigbeg in this writer's ancestry originally came from Ardgour, my MacDonald ancestors of Caolas had their roots in Mull, while my MacFadyen forebears of Salum sprang from an incomer from Coll.

If the Lamonts of Tiree are the descendants of some of the refugees of 1646, who came to Mull shortly after that date, which is the belief of this writer, it is still unclear when some of these people or their descendants came to Tiree from Mull. This and what brought them to Tiree can only be a matter of conjecture. One historian described the search of Highland history similar to watching a scene on a dark and misty night. Every once and a while the fog lifts enough to get a sense of the action, but just then the mist rolls in again, obscuring what is occurring, and the end result is that one sees only bits and pieces of what happened.

The first time that the fog of time lifted on the Lamont presence in the Hebrides was in 1673. At that time a legal action was taken against Maclean of Duart, the Maclean chief, by the Campbell Duke of Argyll, and the names of Duart's tenants on Mull appeared on a court document. Listed was a Duncan McEan vic William, a tenant of the farm of Cuilhelis in Torosay. Again in 1675 in a similar action by the Duke of Argyll, a Duncan Lamont was shown as a tenant of Collicheles in Torosay. Chuilhelis and Collicheles appear to have been the same location with different spellings common to that era, and Duncan MacEan vic William and Duncan Lamont were very likely the same person. The 1675 list also showed a Donald oig McEan vic William living in Barniscrieve in Torosay, and one would have to conclude that Donald and Duncan were brothers and Lamonts. The fact that Donald Oig, meaning 'Donald the Younger' was named in this document suggests that there was or had been an older Lamont with the name of Donald in the family. We cannot conclude, of course, that Duncan and Donald Oig were the only Lamonts living on Mull in 1673-1675. It is very likely that there were several others, although the little evidence we have suggests that the number of Lamonts coming to Mull after the massacre of 1646 was limited to a mere handful.

It is interesting to note that most of the tenants of the Duart estate were not using surnames in 1673 and 1675. Patronymics were used by all but for a few of the Maclean gentry, who carried the Maclean surname. Some of these men also carried a patronymic as part of their cognomen, which is interesting from a genealogical standpoint. This was also true in 1716, when a list of men was kept of those capable of bearing arms at the time of the collapse of the Jacobite rebellion of the prior year. Fortunately for us, the Lamonts were an exception to this practice, and it would appear that most, if not all, had adopted the surname of Lamont by 1716. After the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 had been suppressed, the government moved to disarm not only those participating in the insurrection, but all males

capable of bearing weapons, such a guns, pistols, swords, and dirks. The Macleans had been able to raise a sizeable force for the Stuart cause, most, surprisingly, from the lands they formerly owned that were in the hands of the Campbells. Mull contributed many men, as did Tiree, with the latter raising a total of 95 men out of 434 capable of bearing arms. The Lamont males capable of bearing arms, who resided on Mull, Gometra, Iona or Tiree in 1716 are shown in the chart below. Their total number was twenty-one, but since there were only four Lamonts living on Tiree in 1716, it would appear that they were just beginning to migrate to the island at that time. This assumes, as was noted earlier, that all had dropped patronymics in favor of the Lamont surname, but it must be admitted that this may not have been the case.

ADULT LAMONT MALES OF MULL, GOMETRA, IONA OR TIREE, 1716

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Neil bane Lamont	Killiechronan, Aros, Mull	
Hugh Lamont	Arine, Morinish, Mull	
Alexander Lamont	Ardskipnoch, Gometra	
Donald Lamont	Eolasaray, Torloisk, Mull	Rebel
Murdoch Lamont	Carsaig, Brolas, Mull	Rebel, gave up gun
Malcolm Lamont	Aird of Kinloch, Mull	Rebel, gave up gun and sword
Murdoch Lamont	Ballichtrich, Gometra	
James Lamont	Ballichtrich, Gometra	
Archibald Lamont	Ballichtrich, Gometra	
Alexander Lamont	Ballichtrich, Gometra	
John Lamont	Icolmkill, Iona	
Duncan Lamont	Ardchivaig, Ross, Mull	Rebel, gave up gun, sword, and dirk
John McEan oig Lamont	Scalaste, Learmullich, Mull	
Duncan Lamont	Archnacreig, Torosay, Mull	Sick
ffinlay Lamont	Archncrieg, Torosay, Mull	Had no arms, not in militia
Donald Lamont	Ardchoirk, Torosay, Mull	Had no arms of his own
John Lamont	Ardchoirk, Torosay, Mull	
Donald Lamont	Cornaigmore, Tiree	Rebel, gave up sword
Rorie Lamont	Cornaigmore, Tiree	Rebel, gave up sword
Murdoch Lamont	Scarinish, Tiree	Had no arms
Malcolm Lamont	Scarinish, Tiree	Son of Murdoch above, had no arms

Source: Maclean-Bristol, Nicholas, *Inhabitants of the Inner Isles, Morven, and Ardnamurchan, 1716*.

If the Lamonts had just begun to migrate to Tiree around the turn of the eighteenth century, that would put to rest the theory that the Lamonts of Tiree first came to island at the time of the Reformation. If all the assumptions, outlined above, are reasonably correct, we do have an approximate fix on the time they first settled on the island.

The rent rolls of the Argyll Estate, 1737, 1743, and 1747, during the early years of the estate reorganization, when many joint-tenants began to first rent directly from the Duke of Argyll, give more information on the Lamonts of Tiree, and this is shown in the chart below. It should be noted, however, that there may well have been Lamonts on Tiree, other than the eight who were named, who were not direct tenants of the Argyll Estate and who rented from some of the tacksmen still in control of some farms.

JOINT -TENANTS OF ARGYLL ESTATE, 1737-1747

Joint Tenant	Location	Year
Neil Lamont	Baugh	1737
Hugh Lamont	Baugh	1737
Neil Lamont	Baugh	1743
John Lamont	Balevullin	1743
Donald Lamont, son	Balevullin	1743
Angus Lamont	Caolas	1743
Donald Lamont	Caolas	1743
Neil Lamont	Baugh	1747
Donald Lamont	Balevullin	1747
Angus Lamont	Caolas	1747
Malcolm Lamont	Caolas	1747
John Lamont	Vaull	1747

Sources: Correspondence with Dr. Margaret Mackay citing notes taken from the rent rolls in the Argyll Papers by Eric R. Cregeen of the School of Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh.
Correspondence with Murdo MacDonald, Archivist of Argyll and Bute, citing rent rolls of Argyll Estate.

Although the preceding information is of interest to those pursuing the history of the Lamonts of Tiree, it leaves more questions unanswered than answered. Approximately another quarter of a century passed before the parish records and the Census of 1779 give us definitive information regarding the family structure of the Lamonts of the island. This census information on the Lamont households of 1779 is shown in the chart below:

THE LAMONTS OF TIREE, 1779

<u>Name</u>	<u>Township</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Township</u>
Hugh Lamont	40 Grianal (T)	Hector Lamont	50 Ballamhulin
Katharine Brown	40 “	Christian Brown(W)	40 “
James Lamont	17 “	Anne Lamont	15 “
Donald Lamont	14 “	Katharine Lamont	13 “
Archibald Lamont	8 “	Flory Lamont	11 “
Neil Graeme(H)	50 Hough (T)	Donald Lamont	25 “
Mary Lamont	44 “	Marion Mackinnon	40 “
John Lamont	30 “	Katharine Lamont	16 “
Marian Maclean(W)	25 “	Mary Lamont	14 “
Angus Lamont	2 “	Marion Lamont	30 “

<u>Name</u>		<u>Township</u>	<u>Name</u>		<u>Township</u>
Neil Brown(H)	50	Ballamhulin	Donald Lamont	50	Ceannabhagh
Flory Lamont	48	“	Marion Maclean(W)	34	“
Christian Lamont	50	“	Alexander Lamont	18	“
Donald Maclean(H)	40	“	Margaret Lamont	15	Scarinish
Katharine Lamont	40	“			
			Mary Lamont	24	Ballanuacth (T)
Neil Lamont	30	Ceannabhagh	Katharine Lamont	36	Ballanuacth (C)
Janet Maclean(W)	24	“			
Mary Lamont	4	“	Donald Maclean(H)	50	Killipol (T)
Katharine Lamont	1½	“	Mary Lamont	40	
John Lamont	25	“			
			John Maclean(H)	46	Baugh (T)
John Lamont	36	Ruaig (T)	Ann Lamont	40	“
Flory Lamont	20	“	Hugh Lamont	60	“
Mary Lamont	18	“	Mary Maclean(W)	50	“
Charles Lamont	30	“	Alexander Lamont	16	“
Mary MacDonald(W)	30	“	Mary Lamont	20	“
Donald Lamont	3	“	Hugh Lamont	4	“
Hugh Lamont	36	“	Peter Lamont	45	“
Mary Maclean(W)	36	“	Effie Lamont	42	“
Hector Lamont	3	“	John Lamont	16	“
Marion Lamont	5	“	Flory Lamont	26	“
Flory Lamont	1½	“	John Maclean(H)	52	“
			Mary Lamont	45	“
Marion Lamont	38	Haynish (C)	Katharine Lamont	6	Baugh(C)
Donald McEorie(H)	40		Marion Lamont	60	
Katharine Lamont	16	“	Hugh Lamont	6	
Flory Lamont	6	“	Mary Lamont	4	
Effie Lamont	4	“			

(T) = Tenant, (C) = Cottar, (H) = Husband, (W) = Wife

Source: Cregeen, Eric R., ed., *Inhabitants of Argyll Estate, 1779*.

The Census of 1779, which shows eleven Lamont males over twenty-one years of age, gives us definite information on the number of Lamont households on Tiree in that year. It should be noted, however, that this census may not be complete, because some males were off island soldiering in this war year. From a genealogical standpoint it is invaluable, since it lists married women by their maiden name, which is a most unusual occurrence. Since this census shows both tenants and cottars, it also provides a look at the social standing of the individual Lamont households.

The parish registers of Tiree, 1775-1855, fill the gap between the Census of 1779 and that of 1841¹. A record of the Lamont households in 1841 is shown on the following pages.

¹ The Family History Library of the LDS Church has microfilmed these registers, and they also have been entered in their International Genealogical Index (IGI). The microfilmed records, FHL Film 102,390, are more complete, however, since they also show where the bride and groom lived at the time of their marriage. The residence of the parents is also shown in the baptismal records. Both are a help in making family connections.

THE LAMONTS OF TIREE, 1841

Name		Township	Name		Township
Katharine Lamont	20	Ruaig	John Lamont(C)	20	Baugh
Ann Lamont	2wks	“	Margaret Lamont	15	“
John Lamont	5	“	Mary Lamont	15	“
Archibald Lamont(C)	65	“	Nancy Lamont	5	“
			Niel Lamont	5	“
Donald Lamont(C)	75	“			
Christy Lamont	65	“	Mary Lamont(C)	30	“
Mary Lamont	30	“	Mary Lamont	15	“
Flora Lamont	20	“	Ronald Lamont	5	“
Hugh Lamont(L)	20	Salum	Nancy Lamont	45	“
			Mary Lamont	15	“
Donald Lamont	35	“	Catharine Lamont	60	“
Mary Lamont	35	“			
Hugh Lamont	14	“	Roderick Lamont(L)	18	“
John Lamont	12	“			
Flora Lamont	3	“	Mary Lamont	20	Mannal
Flory Lamont(FS)	14	Kirkapol	Hugh Lamont(Q)	25	“
Duncan Lamont(M)	65	“	Ann Lamont(Cr)	60	Balemartin
John Lamont(C)	60	“	Angus Lamont(C)	80	“
Peggy Lamont	50	“	Mary Lamont	60	“
Catharine Lamont	?	“			
Charles Lamont	20	“	Donald Lamont	13	Balinoe
Niel Lamont	18	“	Catharine Lamont	50	“
Mary Lamont	15	“			
Hector Lamont	13	“	Christina Lamont(Cr)	75	L. Balephuill
Donald Lamont	12	“	Catherine Lamont	35	“
John Lamont	10	“	Niel Lamont	30	“
Mary Lamont	8	“			
Ann Lamont	6	“	Mary Lamont(C)	50	U. Balephuill
			Hugh Lamont	30	“
Roderick Lamont	65	“	Mary Lamont	25	“
Catharine Lamont	30	“			
Isabella Lamont	15	“	Marion Lamont	13	“
Niel Lamont	9	“			
John Lamont(L)	20	Scaranish			
Effie Lamont(Cr)	10	“			

Name		Township	Name		Township
Archibald Lamont	35	G'donnell	Donald Lamont (Cr)	50	Balleuvullin
Peggy Lamont	25	"	Mary Lamont	50	"
Archibald Lamont	2	"	Niel Lamont	14	"
Peggy Lamont	3 mo.	"	Marion Lamont	12	"
Catharine Lamont(Cr)	80	"	Isabella Lamont	10	"
			John Lamont	6	"
Ann Lamont	40	"	Alex Lamont(C)	35	"
			Mary Lamont	30	"
Hugh Lamont(Cr)	35	Kilkenneth	Margaret Lamont	13	"
Mary Lamont	30	"	Colin Lamont	10	"
Dougald Lamont	10	"	Roderick Lamont	8	"
John Lamont	8	"	John Lamont	5	"
Ellen(?) Lamont	5	"	Malcolm Lamont	3	"
			Donald Lamont	9 mo.	"
Duncan Lamont(C)	50	Balevullin			
Effy Lamont	40	"	Donald Lamont(Cr)	55	Kilmaluaig
Marion Lamont	10	"	Ann Lamont	50	"
Niel Lamont	8	"	Flory Lamont	15	"
Donald Lamont	6	"	Hugh Lamont	12	"
Allan Lamont	4	"	Catherine Lamont	10	"
			Effy Lamont	5	"
Angus(?) Lamont(Cr)	50	"	John Lamont	15	"
Mary Lamont	50	"			
Alex Lamont	12	"	Alexander Lamont(Cr)	12	"
Marion Lamont	10	"	Allan Lamont	5	"
Catherine Lamont	5	"	Hector Lamont	3	"
Flora Lamont(HLW)	30	"	Marion Lamont(FS)	20	"
Catherine Lamont	8	"	John Lamont	11	"
John Lamont	1	"			
			Janet Lamont(Cr)	20	Cornaigmore
John Lamont(C)	50	"	Niel Lamont	13	"
Christy Lamont	50	"	Alexander Lamont	11	"
Ann Lamont	15	"	Catherine Lamont	8	"
			Dougall Lamont	6	"
Flora Lamont(C)	35	"			
Hector Lamont	15	"	Catherine Lamont(Mt)	35	"
Margaret Lamont	15	"	Niel Lamont	16	"
Catherine Lamont	13	"	Alexander Lamont	15	"
Alex Lamont	12	"	Malcolm Lamont	11	"
Mary Lamont	9	"	Flora Lamont	9	"
Ann Lamont	5	"	Mary Lamont	?	"
Marion Lamont	2	"	Archibald Lamont	3	"
Flora Lamont	9 mo.	"	Angus Lamont	1	"

Name		Township	Name		Township
Niel Lamont(Cr)	30	Ballevullin	Donald Lamont	12	Cornaigbeg
			Mary Lamont	10	“
Catharine Lamont(FS)	20	Kenavay	Hugh Lamont	8	“
			Giles Lamont	6	“
Peter Lamont(C)*	41	Cornaigbeg	Una Lamont	3	“
Ann Lamont	40	“	Ann Lamont	10 mo.	
Archibald Lamont*	16	“			
John Lamont*	15	“			

(C) = Crofter, (Cr) = Cottar, (FS) = Unknown, possibly female servant, (HLW) = Unknown, (L) = Laborer, (M) = Mason, (Mt) = Merchant, (Q) = Quarrier

- Peter Lamont and his two eldest sons, Archibald and John, are shown in the 1841 Census of Coll in the township of Travaig (modern spelling Treabhaig) as agricultural laborers, as were Tíree peat cutters in the Ross of Mull. There was no indication of what activity they were engaged in on Coll. Treabhaig is on the eastern end of Coll toward the north side.

Please note that in the 1841 census ages up to 15 were recorded correctly, but ages above 15 were rounded down to the nearest 5 year multiple. For example, ages 15-19 were recorded as 15, ages 20-24 were recorded as 20, ages 25-29 as 25, etc. Note also that wives were recorded by their husbands' surnames, and not their maiden names as in the 1779 Census.

Source: Census of Tíree, 1841. FHL Film 1,042,721.

MALCOLM OF THE TOWER

The progenitor of our particular Lamont line was named ‘Malcolm of the Tower’ in the old Gaelic *sloinneadh*, which was handed down in our family. This, as many readers will recognize, is the time-honored means of recounting a genealogy in the Highlands. Omitting the references to the ‘tower’ and the ‘Bard of Tiree’, which is beyond my Gaelic, it would have been written as Domnall mac Pharaic ‘ic Iain ‘ic Pharaic, ‘ic Neil (Bard of Tiree) ‘ic Chaluim (of the Tower). The English version is Donald, son of Peter, son of John, son of Peter, son of Neil, Bard of Tiree, son of Malcolm of the Tower.

The questions arise, of course, as to Malcolm’s origin, the significance of his appellation, and the time of his arrival on Tiree, assuming he was the first of his line to come to the island. It cannot be emphasized enough that there are no definite answers to any of these questions, and any of this can only be a matter of conjecture. In the earlier section of this work it was said that the Lamonts of Tiree probably migrated to the island from the neighboring island of Mull, and that the Lamonts of Mull were descended from Cowal refugees, who came to the Hebrides shortly after the Dunoon massacre of 1646. While this would appear to be the most likely theory, there are other possibilities. One is that the Lamonts of Tiree are descended from a Lamont, who came to the island in the train of some Campbell official. When Campbell of Ardkinglas was granted the tack of Tiree and the two ends of Coll after Maclean of Duart lost his lands in 1692, he sent a score of sub-tacksmen to take control from the former Maclean tacksmen. These no doubt brought others they could rely upon to help ‘colonize’ the new Campbell acquisition. The few Lamonts remaining in the old clan territory were again at peace with their Campbell neighbors at this time, and it would not be entirely strange to find them cooperating in a joint venture. There are several reasons to believe that this supposition is unlikely, however. One is that several of the Lamonts of Tiree answered the call to arms by the Macleans in 1715, and were part of the Jacobite Rebellion of that year. That would not have been the action of those who owed their place on the island to the Campbells. Another reason to view this theory with suspect is that the son of Malcolm of the Tower became bard to Hector Maclean, XIth chieftain of Coll. In this capacity he wrote at least one poem praising both Maclean of Brolas and Maclean of Torloisk, who had strong Jacobite connections. It is doubtful that the son of a Campbell colonist would have become bard to a Maclean chieftain and write glowingly of Jacobite rebels.

If we accept that Malcolm of the Tower was probably a descendant of a Cowal refugee, who came to Mull shortly after 1646, could he have been the son of either Duncan McEan ‘ic William, aka Duncan Lamont, or Donald oig McEan ‘ic William? Both of these Lamonts lived in Torosay in 1673-1675, as was discussed in the earlier section, and both could have been Cowal born and brought to Mull by their father Ean McWilliam.² They could also, of course, been born on Mull to this same father. Since it has been estimated that Malcolm was probably born sometime about 1658-1666, an affirmative answer can be made to the question posed above. It should be recognized, however, that there must have been other Lamonts present on Mull at this same time, and they, too, could have been the father of Malcolm of the Tower, so no conclusion can be reached on this matter.

Dr. Margaret Mackay of the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh found an ancient map of Tiree, which referred to the Maclean fortress of Isleburgh on Loch an Eilean as ‘Maclean’s Tower’. She suggested that this ‘Tower’ might have some connection with the ‘Tower’ in Malcolm’s appellation. There is evidence that the Macleans of Duart, the chiefs of Clan Maclean, made their winter residence at Isleburgh each season during the

² An examination of the genealogies of the chiefs of Clan Lamont and the several cadet families, which are shown in Hector McKechnie’s history of Clan Lamont, do not reveal any connection with an Ean McWilliam (John, son of William). Since William was not a common Highland name, it is interesting to note, however, that a William of unknown origin is listed as one of those murdered by the Campbells in 1646. He was important enough to have his name inscribed on the Dunoon Memorial.

middle of the 17th century, bringing as many as a hundred retainers from Mull with them. Included were bards, musicians, falconers, soldiers, servants of all kinds, and no doubt others. If Malcolm of the Tower was in service to Maclean of Duart, he could have been part of the permanent garrison of Isleburgh, or in the retinue traveling with the Maclean chief. Again, this is only a matter of conjecture, but it is the only explanation that has been offered on this subject up to now.

At one time in view of the possible connection that Malcolm of the Tower might have had with Maclean stronghold of Isleburgh on Tiree it was thought he might have been part of the garrison, and then stayed on the island after the Campbell takeover. The list of Lamont males on Mull and Tiree in 1716, which is shown on page 4, does not support this theory that Malcolm of the Tower was in residence on Tiree at that time. It is true that one of the four Lamonts residing on Tiree at this time was named Malcolm, but he does not appear old enough to have been Malcolm of the Tower. There was another Malcolm Lamont living on the Aird of Kinloch on Mull in 1716, however, who could conceivably have been Malcolm of the Tower, but there is no proof that they were the same individual. It should be repeated that most of the male inhabitants of Mull and Tiree did not use surnames in 1716, but were listed under patronymics. The Lamonts appear to have been an exception to this practice, since twenty-one were listed under that surname, but this does not exclude other Lamonts still using a patronymic. There was, for example, a Malcolm McNeil of Torloisk, and he, too, could have been Malcolm of the Tower, who had a father named Neil.

If we assume that all the Lamonts of Mull and Tiree were using a surname by 1715, and this is admittedly a big assumption, we must conclude the first Lamont of our line did not come to the island until after that date. We do know, however, that Malcolm's son, Neil, the Bard of Tiree, was one of the joint-tenants of Baugh in 1737. We can, therefore, speculate that the first Lamont of our line probably came to Tiree sometime between 1716 and 1737. It is possible that new information will emerge in the future that will force us to re-examine this theory, but this is the best that can be done with the facts at hand at present.

APPENDIX II

