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H. M. Chadwick

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## CHAPTER I

## THE KINGDOM OF THE PICTS

## THE CHRONICLES

Lists of the Pictish kings are preserved in seven of the early Chronicles, viz. A, B, C, D, F, I, K. Details of these texts have been given in the Introductory Note above. From a study of these details it will be seen at once that these lists form two distinct groups or families, one consisting of A, B, C, and the other of D, F, I, K.

The chief differences between the two families are as follows:

A, B, C begin thus: (i) 'Cruithne (Cruidne), son of Cing, father of the Picts who dwell in this island, reigned 100 years. He had seven sons. These are their names.' Then follow their names—which are in reality the names of provinces (see p. 81)—together with the length of their reigns. This list is continued in similar style by a few other names, which will require notice below. Then comes (ii) a new list of most peculiar character. Every king is called Brude; and the individual names are formed in pairs (see below, p. 3). These in turn are followed by a third list (iii) of more normal type, beginning 'Gilgidi reigned 150 years, Tharain 100,' etc. Later each king's name is accompanied by that of his father. This list continues down to the end of the Pictish kingdom, in 843.

D, F, I, K have nothing corresponding to the first two lists (i, ii), except the initial sentence. They begin as follows: 'Cruithne,<sup>1</sup> son of Cing, a kindly judge, received the monarchy in the kingdom of the Picts, and reigned 50 years. Gede reigned 50 years. Tharan reigned 100 years', etc. The third list then continues down to the end of the kingdom.

But even in the third list itself the discrepancies between the two groups of texts are serious. Of the first thirteen names contained in A, B, C only seven are found in D, F, I, K, while at the end of the list the latter add three names which do not appear in the former, and which seem to bring the end of the kingdom down to 849 or 850. In the intervening period too there are some important differences. But the most striking fact is that throughout this list the names—both the kings' names and those of their fathers—show throughout a

<sup>1</sup> No attempt is made here to reproduce the exact forms of the names, which are usually very corrupt in this group of texts.

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difference of language between the two groups of texts. In A, B, C nearly all the names show Welsh forms, although two of the three (B, C) are Irish MSS., whereas in D, F, I, K, which have no Irish connections, most, if not all, of the names are in Gaelic form.

Scribal corruptions abound in the latter group; but they cannot by themselves account for these differences. A, B, C are clearly derived from a common archetype; and there is no reason to doubt that D, F, I, K are likewise of common origin. But I do not think that scribal corruptions and corrections in the two archetypes can be responsible for all the discrepancies. At least in the earliest part of the list account is to be taken of discrepant oral traditions, from which the archetypes were derived.

We may now return to the first list, which, apart from the opening, occurs only in A, B, C. The names are Gaelic, probably without exception. Cruithne, i.e. 'Pict', is the national eponym. Cing, the name of his father, means here, 'champion'. The names of his seven sons appear to be those of provinces, as noted above; and some of them can be located without difficulty, in spite of textual corruption and confusion in the forms.<sup>1</sup> These are Fib (Fibaid), i.e. Fife; Fortrenn, corresponding to southern Perthshire; Circinn (Cirig), Angus and the Mearns;<sup>2</sup> and Fotla (Floclaid, Foltlaid), the northern districts of Perthshire. The remaining three names, Cait, Ce and Fidach, presumably belong to the region north of the Mounth. Cait<sup>3</sup> is usually connected with Caithness (Norse *Katanes*), though it may have included a wider area. The other two names, Ce and Fidach, have not been definitely located. According to Watson<sup>4</sup> one of them—which of the two is uncertain—extended from the Dee to the Spey, the other from the Spey to Easter Ross and the Dornoch Firth. If this is correct the whole of the west coast region is left out of the scheme.

The eponyms of the provinces are followed immediately by six other names: Gede Olgudach (Geide Ollgothach), 80 (years); Aenbecan, 100; Olfnachta (Finechta), 60; Guidid gaed brechach (gaeth Breatnach), 50; Gest Gurcich (Gurid), 40; Wurgest (Urges), 30. It is to be noted that the first and third of these names are

<sup>1</sup> Some of the forms (*Fib*, and perhaps *Fotla*) seem to be in the Nom. case, others (*Fibaid*, *Fortrenn*, *Circinn*, *Cirig*, *Floclaid*) in the Gen. or Dat. The last form is presumably corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> 'Mearns' was derived from *Mag* ('Plain') *Girginn* by Skene. But the early form of the name (*Moerne*, etc.) shows that this cannot be correct; cf. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926), p. 110f.

<sup>3</sup> *Cait* (so B; *Got*, A; *Gatt*, C) is probably a Nom.pl.; a tribal name.

<sup>4</sup> *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, p. 114.

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identical with (Ailill) Ollfinachta and Geide Ollgothach, two brothers who appear in Irish legendary records among the earliest high-kings of Ireland. The father and predecessor of these two latter is called Ollamh Fotla in the Irish records. The fathers of the two mentioned in our list are not given, though they are presumably regarded as sons of the eponymoi; Aenbecan, who comes between them, is said (in B) to be a son of Cait.

The significance of this Irish connection may be appreciated by reference to certain Irish texts,<sup>1</sup> in which it is stated that 'Seven kings of the Cruithni of Alba (i.e. the Picts of Scotland or Britain) ruled Ireland in Tara'. Then follow Ollam, Ailill Ollfinachta, Geide Ollgothach, and four other names. Their relationships are not stated here; but in other texts three are said to be sons, and the other three grandsons, of Ollam. They belong to the 'descendants of Ir' in the mythological genealogy.

The second list (cf. p. 1) is introduced in A by the following sentence (in Latin): 'Brude Bont—from whom thirty Brude reigned over Ireland and Scotland (*Albania*) for 150 years—(himself) reigned 48 years.' In B and C this statement is given, partly or wholly, in Irish, and is somewhat expanded. 'Brude Pont—thirty kings of them; and Bruide was the name of every single man of them. And they ruled Ireland and Scotland for 150 years, as it is found in the books of the Cruithnig' (i.e. Picts).<sup>2</sup> Then all three texts proceed as follows, with slight variants in the form of the names: 'Brude Pant. Brude Urpant. Brude Leo. Brude Uleo. Brude Gant. Brude Urgant. Brude Gnith. Brude Urganth', etc.<sup>3</sup> The total number of names, including Brude Bont, is twenty-nine. But it is perhaps worth noting that the last two names of the first list—Gest Gurcich, Wurgest (Urges, B)—seem to show an approximation to the type of the second list. The significance of this is not quite clear.

For the curious pairs of names Pant—Urpant, etc., a striking parallel<sup>4</sup> is to be found in the genealogy of Cunedda, from whom

<sup>1</sup> Book of Lecan (see Skene, *P. & S.* p. 320 f.); MS. Bodl. Rawlinson, B. 506 (see M. E. Dobbs, *Zeitschrift f. celt. Philol.* xiv, 66 ff.).

<sup>2</sup> This is a 'conflate' translation, chiefly from C. All these passages, including the one from A, are in a crabbed style, and not strictly grammatical.

<sup>3</sup> The full lists will be found in *P. & S.* pp. 5, 26, 324 f., 397 f.

<sup>4</sup> Noticed by Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, 1, 208, note. He also adduces Cornish parallels from the Bodmin Manumissions; but I cannot find them in the editions of the Manumissions which I have consulted—those of Kemble, Stokes and M. Förster—and I fear they are due to some mistake.

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several Welsh dynasties claimed descent. The genealogy is as follows: Cunedda map Aeternus map Paternus map Tacitus map Cein map Guorcein map Doli map Guordoli map Dumn map Gurdumn (for Guordumn), etc. Cunedda and his sons are said<sup>1</sup> to have come from the north—from a region called Manaw Gododdin, which seems to have been situated between the Tyne and the Forth. Their old home therefore was not far from the Picts of Fife. Another analogy may be found in Ireland—in the genealogy of the Dal Fiatach or Ulaid, in the east of Co. Down. This is as follows: CuRoi mac Dairi mac Dedad mac Sin mac Rosin mac Trir mac Ret(h)riri, etc. There is a good deal of variation between the different texts;<sup>2</sup> but this does not affect the two pairs of forms which concern us here. The prefix *ro* is an intensive particle, used before nouns and adjectives with the sense of ‘great’, ‘very’.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be connected with the prefixes in the Pictish names or in the genealogy of Cunedda. But the two latter may be identical and represent earlier forms of the Welsh prefix *gor-*.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, one of the names in the genealogy is current as an adjective to-day. The corresponding Irish prefix is *for-*, which is used in much the same sense as *ro-*.<sup>5</sup> Its earliest form is *ver-*, which may be seen in such names as Vertigernus and Vercingetorix, literally ‘great king’ (or ‘high-king’) and ‘great hero king’ respectively. In origin it is identical with English ‘over’.

It would seem then that in these pairs of names the second is—sometimes at least—an intensive form of the first. More than this cannot be said with confidence; for hardly any of the Pictish names occur elsewhere as words in actual use, whether as nouns or adjectives, which would seem to be appropriate in a list of kings.<sup>6</sup> Nor is it easy to see how such pairs of names came into existence. It may be observed that in all three lists the name with prefix follows the simple name. But this agreement is of course illusory. The Welsh and Irish lists are ascending genealogies, in which the son’s name precedes that of his father, i.e. the compound name belongs to the earlier generation.

<sup>1</sup> *Historia Brittonum*, cap. 62, and the last two sections of the Genealogies which follow in MS. Harl. 3859. The statement in the former passage that the expedition took place 146 years before the reign of Maelgwn cannot be correct. Meirion, a grandson of Cunedda, took part in it; and two great-grandsons, Cynlas and Maelgwn, were reigning c. 540, when they were attacked by Gildas. Maelgwn died c. 548. The expedition therefore can hardly have taken place before 450.

<sup>2</sup> See Dobbs, *Zeitschrift f. celt. Philol.* XIII, 330.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. *romór*, ‘very great’.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. *gorddwfn*, ‘very deep’ (*Gurdumn*); *gorsedd*, ‘high-seat’.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *forárd*, ‘very high’.

<sup>6</sup> Thus, for example, *Pant* and *Gart* might be Welsh *pant*, ‘hollow, valley’, and *garth*, ‘hill’, respectively. But how did they come to be used as names of kings?

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But the Pictish list is not recorded as a genealogy; and its form suggests priority for the simple names.

Similar pairs of place-names are not unknown,<sup>1</sup> at least among the Picts of Ireland. But I do not know of any evidence which would go to show that they were of common occurrence.

The form taken by the prefix in the Pictish list (*Ur-* and perhaps *Wur-*) seems to indicate that this list—the second list noted on p. 3 above—comes from a milieu in which the current language was Welsh rather than Gaelic. But it is to be remembered that the names themselves are still unexplained. Possibly this ‘Welsh’ language differed a good deal, especially in vocabulary, from what is commonly known as Welsh.

The third list, which is by far the longest, is found in all the seven texts which are concerned with the Picts. In A the first name, Gilgidi, follows the *Ur-*names abruptly, while in D, F, I, K the corresponding name, Gede, immediately follows Cruithne (cf. p. 1). But the Irish texts (B, C) introduce a passage which states that they (the kings of the second list) ‘reigned 150 years, as we have said’. Then they proceed in Irish: ‘And Alba was without king all the time until the days of Gud, the first king who acquired all Alba by consent or by force. Others state that it was Cathluan, son of Catmand, who acquired rule by force in Cruithentuath (Pictland) and in Ireland for 60 years, and after him Gud acquired it for 50 years.’ In this account Gud seems to take the place of Gilgidi or Gede.

We are nowhere informed as to the relationship between the kings of the third list and those of the second. If the latter were believed to have preceded the former, the statement just quoted would seem to contradict the statement which introduces the thirty kings called Brude, quoted on p. 3. If this latter statement is rejected, it is possible of course that the two lists originally belonged to different parts of the country.

The third list contains the names of over sixty kings, together with the number of years which each of them reigned and, except in the early part of the list, the names of their fathers. About half of the kings belong to the historical period—say from the middle of the sixth century—and most of these are mentioned in the Irish Annals

<sup>1</sup> Skene (*Celtic Scotland*, I, 208, note 72) cites two pairs in Ireland and one in Scotland, all from early records. The most interesting pair are Tola and Fortola, two neighbouring localities, which are said (A.U. 573) to be in *regionibus Cruithne*. The reference is to Leix, where the ruling family claimed to be of Pictish ancestry. Cf. also Dobar and Urdobar ‘in the north of Alba’—*Lebor Bretnach*, cap. 322.

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or other historical records. As noted above, there are discrepancies between the various texts. In the length of reigns these are considerable and frequent, as is commonly the case with figures, but on the whole hardly as great as might have been expected.

The earlier half of the list (before *c.* 550) contains about the same number of names; but only one or two of these are known from other sources. The length of the reign is given in every case; but some of them are improbably long, and a few quite incredible. Altogether they make up a total of about 1000 years for thirty reigns, as against 300 years for about the same number of later kings. If the same average be allowed for the first half of the list as for the second, *i.e.* about 10 years per reign, the beginning of the list will be brought back to about the middle of the third century.

The first part of the list gradually changes in character. Among the first thirteen kings there is mention of only one father and one brother. Among the following eight names there are two references to fathers, while five of the other kings bear what seem to be surnames. After this the omission of the father's name is quite rare.

Again, only two of the first thirteen names (Tarain and perhaps Cinioid) recur later in the list. The fourteenth name (Ru) occurs also in the second list—the only point of contact between the two lists. The remaining ten names seem to be unknown elsewhere, unless they are hopelessly corrupt.

All this seems to me to be fairly good evidence for the genuineness and antiquity of the list. The principle of succession through females is said to have prevailed among the kings of the Picts—a subject which will require discussion later—and consequently the introduction of the names of fathers may reasonably be regarded as an innovation. And, whatever allowance be made for textual corruption, the large proportion of unknown names, especially those with initial D-, would seem to suggest that many of them had gone out of use, and were preserved by tradition as relics from a far past.

It will be convenient now to give the list of the first twenty-one kings. Names which are known elsewhere are entered in their usual form, and the textual forms recorded in the notes. But unfamiliar or unrecognizable names are given in what appear to be the best of the textual forms—usually one from A, B, C, and one from D, F, I, K—and the forms of the other texts recorded in the notes. It will be seen that a number of the early names are wanting in D, F, I, K. The figures denote the number of years a king is said to have reigned:

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1. Gilgidi (A) 150, see above; Gede (D, F, I, K) 150.<sup>1</sup>
2. Tarain<sup>2</sup> 100. This name occurs again below (No. 47), and is known elsewhere as a Pictish name (Adamnan, *Vita Columbani*, II, 23).
3. Morleo (A, B, C) 15;<sup>3</sup> not in the other texts.
4. Deocillimon (B, C) 40; Duchil (D, F, I) 40.<sup>4</sup>
5. Cinioid mac Artcois (B)<sup>5</sup> 7; not in D, F, I, K.
6. Derordegele (D)<sup>6</sup> 20; not in A, B, C.
7. Deoord (A) 50, Derothet (D) 60.<sup>7</sup>
8. Bliesblituth (A)<sup>8</sup> 5; not in D, F, I, K.
9. Dectotr'ic frater Diu (A) 40; Tethothrecht (I) 60;<sup>9</sup> not in D, F.
10. Usconbutts (A, B), Combust (D) 20;<sup>10</sup> not in K.
11. Crautreic (B), Karanethrecht (F)<sup>11</sup> 40; not in K.
12. Deordiuois (B, C)<sup>12</sup> 20; not in D, F, I, K.
13. Uist (B, C)<sup>13</sup> 50; not in D, F, I, K.
14. Ru (A, B, C) 100; not in D, F, I, K.
15. Gartnait I<sup>14</sup> Bolg (D)<sup>15</sup> 9.
16. Breth filius Buthut (A)<sup>16</sup> 7; not in D, F, I, K.
17. Vipoig namet (A), Vipoguenech (I)<sup>17</sup> 30.
18. Fiacha Albus (F)<sup>18</sup> or Fiachna le Blank (K) 30; not in A, B, C.
19. Canutulachama (A) 4; Canatulmet (F) 6.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 150 (I, K); 50 (D, F). Perhaps Gud 50 (B, C) should be entered here.

<sup>2</sup> Tarain (B), Tharain (A), Taram (C), Tharan (D, I), Thoran (F), Taren (K).

<sup>3</sup> a xii (C).

<sup>4</sup> Deocilunon (A), Dugil (K).

<sup>5</sup> Cimoiod filius Arcois (A), Cimoiod mac Airtcois (C). Cinioid is perhaps an earlier form of Cinioi (No. 54), *q.v.*

<sup>6</sup> Duordeghall (F), Duordegel (I); Dinortechest (K, before No. 4) possibly shows some confusion with No. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Deort 50 (B, C), Deokleth 60 (F). Apparently omitted in I, K.

<sup>8</sup> Blied'lith (B), Bliedlith (C).

<sup>9</sup> Deototreic frater Tui (B, C). For K cf. note 6 above.

<sup>10</sup> Usconbest (C), Cumbust (F), Conbust (I); 30 (A).

<sup>11</sup> Carvorst (A), Crutbolc 7 (C), Fevanacherthe (D), Karanochrecht (I).

<sup>12</sup> Deo ardivois (A).

<sup>13</sup> Vist (A).

<sup>14</sup> I have inserted these figures (I, II, III, etc.) after names which occur more than once in the list, in order to facilitate reference.

<sup>15</sup> Gartnait Loc, a que Garnart iiii regnavere (A), Gartnait Bolc 4, Gartnait Ini 9 (B), Gartnait 49, 50 (C), Gernarg Bolg (D), Garnathbolus (F), Gercnath (I), Gamaldebald (K).

<sup>16</sup> B. mac Buthud 4 (B), B. mac Buithed 7 (C).

<sup>17</sup> Uipo ignaviet (B), Uipo ignavit (C), Poponeuet (D), Wmpopwall (F), Verpempnet (K).

<sup>18</sup> Fiacua Albus (D), Fyahor Albus (I).

<sup>19</sup> Canutulahina 3 (B), Canatulacma 3 (C), Tonaculmel 6 (D), Canatumel 6 (I), Calnatuhel 6 (K).

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This name is probably to be connected with Cathanalachan, son of Cathluan, mentioned in one of the legends relating to the origin of the Picts (*P. & S.* p. 328).

20. Douernach Uetalec (I) 1;<sup>1</sup> not in A, B, C.

21. Uuradech Uetla (B), Feradach Finlegh (I)<sup>2</sup> 2.

Uuradech and Feradach are variant forms of the same name. This person may well be the Feradach, king of the Picts, who figures in the story of Corc, son of Lugaid, a Munster prince—which will be noticed below. His reign would seem to have been not long after A.D. 400.

22. Gartnait II Diuperr (B), Garnard Dives (F)<sup>3</sup> 60.

23. Talorc I mac Achiuir (B) 75; Talarg filius Keother (F) 25.<sup>4</sup>

With this entry the character of the list begins to change, as was noted above. From now the name of the king's father is nearly always recorded; and the names themselves, at least those of the kings, are familiar from later times. Obscure names and surnames soon disappear. And a few of the entries in A, B, C contain remarks which, if we may credit them, enable us to date the reigns more or less precisely. These remarks are perhaps additions to the original text; but they may be regarded as first steps towards the formation of a true chronicle.

24. 'Drust, son of Erp<sup>5</sup> (Irb, F, K; Yrb, I) reigned (lived, D, F) a hundred years, and fought a hundred battles' (the last words in Irish in B, C) A. A, B, C add: 'In the nineteenth year of his reign the holy bishop Patrick arrived in (*peruenit ad*) the island of Ireland.'

If the writer had in mind 432 as the date of St Patrick's mission, his date for the accession of Drust must be 413. The figure for the length of the reign need not be taken seriously.

This is the first of nine kings called Drust. It is worth noting that the subsequent kings of this name are always called Drest in A, and nearly always in B, C. The other texts seem always to have Drust, except where the name has been misread. It will be seen shortly that somewhat similar variants occur in the name Brude.

<sup>1</sup> Donornauch Nerales (D), Donarmahl-netalec (F), Denornach Leedales (K).

<sup>2</sup> Wradach Uecla (A), Uradach Uetla (C), Ferdach Fyngal (D), Feredak Filius (F), Stradach Fingel (K).

<sup>3</sup> Gartnaich Diuberr (A), Gartnait Duiper (C), Canath Dives 40 (D), Gaiach Dives (I), Garnard le Riche (K).

<sup>4</sup> From this entry onwards details as to the readings of the various texts are given by Anderson, *op. cit.* i, cxix ff. It will be sufficient therefore here to note the more important variants.

<sup>5</sup> Compare the name of the hero Drust mac Seirb in the Irish saga, *Tochmarc Éimre*. See R. Thurneysen, *Die Irische Helden- und Königsage* (Halle a. Saale, 1921), p. 392, and note 2.





