

MANX SURNAMES*

It is usual to assign English surnames to one of four origins: toponyms with which the original bearer was associated; patronyms; occupations; and physical and mental characteristics and other nicknames. The personal names recorded over the past 1500 years for the Isle of Man fall into the same classes but with some qualifications and in different proportions.

The chief qualification that requires to be stated concerns the origins of the persons bearing the names and the circumstances of their introduction to the Island. From the beginning of the fifteenth century when the Stanleys, later earls of Derby, became lords of Man, and no doubt also under the rule of their immediate predecessors, the Island was administered and garrisoned by dependents of the lord, drawn from his own household and estates. The names and possible local origins of these officials, and of later immigrants to 1830, were discussed by the late Professor Michael Dolley in *Nomina VII* (1983) 47-64. Suffice it to say here that a selection of the early official names of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries illustrates well the English preference for toponymic origins (native surnames never being of this type), e.g. Ashton, Bradley, Davenport, Dutton, Fazakerley, Heywood, Holt, Halliwell, Latham, Litherland, Radcliffe, Shirburne; while occupational names are few, e.g. Chaloner, Fletcher, Cooke; and patronymics even scarcer, in a small sample biased by the presence of two Welshmen, Bithell and Jones.

Yet, though recorded in Man and in some cases taking root and surviving to the present day, these, like the later English, Scots, and Irish surnames that abound in the last four centuries, are not Manx names, in that their origins are to be sought outside the Island, both geographically and linguistically. At the other end of the millennium-and-a-half covered by the record we find other immigrants, the Irish settlers who erected the ogam-inscribed stones, and later the Norse settlers who did the same but with runes. Both in their different ways and different languages were concerned to commemorate the dead, and the inscriptions identify them in terms of their family relationships, personal names being numerous but not numerous enough to be unique. Both the languages concerned and the patronymic principle form the foundation of the Manx system of surnaming. Gaelic appears to have ousted the Brythonic speech which we should expect from its geographical position to have been the original Celtic language of the Island, and while Gaelic personal names and types of patronymic set the pattern, Norse also contributed a number of personal names to the stock and these were treated exactly like the others. This process of assimilation was at work already during the Norse period when runic inscriptions were being erected; Gaelic male names occur among the Norse ones, and in some cases the Gaelic order, in which 'son' precedes the father's name, is preferred to the Norse one in which it follows.

It was this Gaelic type, whether the personal names involved are Gaelic or Norse, that appears to have persisted throughout the rest of the Middle Ages and which we find in possession of the field when records become fairly abundant at the end of the fifteenth century with the first surviving manorial rolls, the record of the lord's rent due from all those occupants of land whose direct feudal superior he was. This patronymic system provides identification and genealogy but not necessarily surnames, i.e. family names continuing unchanged through the generations, but the change to true surnames seems to have taken place in Man by at least the second half of the fourteenth century, for the Appyn manor grant of 1376 mentions two men, father and son, and names both as mac Askill (a Norse personal name). Indirect evidence to the same effect is provided by the

large range of personal names from which surnames were formed, in contrast to the quite restricted range of personal names employed as forenames by even the early fifteenth century (see below). The contrast with the position in Wales is very marked in this respect.

The normal link in Man as in Scotland in these patronymic surnames is mac (there are relatively few women's names in the records), but there is a little evidence in Man for o 'grandson, descendant', which has survived so much better in Ireland. Again in agreement with Scots and Ulster usage, the name after mac is usually lenited in Manx, and is of course in the genitive case (so far as the orthography allows this to be distinguished). The fifteenth-century records still keep o and mac in full, but subsequently o disappears and mac is reduced to [æk], and the [k] is attached in writing as c, k, or q to the following name. It is these shortened forms that have come down to the present day as distinctively Manx though the fuller forms often exist in Scotland and Ireland.

A relatively small number of these patronymics are based on Norse personal names: Casement (Asmund, already in the monastic Limites, c.1280), Castell (Askell, in the Appyn grant), three or four originally pagan Thor-names, Corkill (Þórkell), Corlett (Þórljótt), Cormode (Þórmóð), and perhaps Carroon (Þórfinn); Cottier (Ottar), Cowley (Olaf, met with in runic inscriptions), Crennell (Rögnvald, Raghall, a common name among the Norse kings of Man), Cure (Ivar), Clement (Lagmann), MacLoughlin, Christian (anglicized from Kristinn), Quiggin (víking), Vondy (bóndi). The last two or three may be regarded as occupational names or nicknames.

A second non-Gaelic element is the result of adopting Anglo-Norman names or words. Examples are Crebbin (Robin), Creer (friar), Crigart (Richard), Cubbon (Gibbon), Kinry (Henry), Qualtrough (Walter + -ach), Quilliam (William), Cotch (Wat, a form of Walter), and probably Garrett (Gerald).

A third source of innovation is the adoption of Biblical personal names: Corkish (Marcus), Clucas (Lucas), Kewin (Eoin, John) and, I think, Quine (Mian, Matthew), Quayle and Fayle (Pál, Paul), all incidentally from medieval Latin or Gaelic, not modern forms of the names. Sometimes multiple forms occur, of differing dates: Thomas gives Kewish (with lenited -m-), but also, with unlenited -m- and different stress, Comish (in the north of the Island) and Camaish (in the south). Further examples are Christory or Crystal (Christopher), Cojeen like MacFadyean from a diminutive of Patrick, Corteen (Martin), Costain (Augustine), Cringle, Criggyl (Nicholas), Killip (Philip), Gawe (Adam), Kissack (Isaac), Shimmin, McHym (Sim(e)on). A solitary classical borrowing occurs in Callister (Alexander).

These simple combinations of mac and a scriptural name are far from exhausting the list of religious names; in another group the patronym is itself a compound of gille 'servant, devotee' and a saint's name. Such names, preceded by mac, are common in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but are generally shortened later. Examples are MacGilcolumb (Columba), Leece (Iosa, Jesus), Lewin (John), Looney (mac Gille Dhomhnaigh), Lowey (mac Gille Dhubhthaigh, more fully preserved in the place-name Ballakillowey), MacGilcobragh (Cuthbert), MacGilcowle (Comghall), MacGilandras (Andrew), MacGilpeder (Peter), Mylecharaine (mac Ghille Chiaráin), Mylechreest (Christ), Mylevreeshey (Brigit), Mylevoirrey (Mary).

Finally we reach the bedrock of Gaelic personal names: Cain(e) (Cathán), Cannell (Domhnall), Callin (Ailín), Cashen (Caisín), Caugherty (Dochartach), Condra (Conaire), Connor (Conchubhar), Cooil (Dubhghall), Cowell (Cathmhaol), Craine (Ciarán), Crellin (Niallán), Cretney (Breatnach), Crowe (Conchradha), Curphey, earlier Curghy (Murchadh), Far(a)gher, Karragher (Fearchar),

Kaighin (Eachann), Kay, Kee (Aodh), Keig (Tadhg), Keggin (Aodhagán, found in a runic inscription), Kelly (Ceallach), Kermode (Diarmaid), Kerruish (Fearghus), Kinley (Fionnlagh), Kinnish (Aonghus), Kneale (Niall), Quinney (Coinneach), Quirk (Corc, Torc).

Surnames drawn from the occupation of the parent are few in Manx: Brew may represent breitheamh 'judge' or brughaidh 'hospitaller', more probably the former, Gawne (gobha 'smith'), Nidraugh (figheadóir 'weaver'), Teare (saor 'wright'). There is also a group connected with churchmen: Joughin 'deacon', Taggyrt 'priest', Freer 'prior', Creer 'friar', and the obsolete Deyne, Jaine 'dean'. It may be that nicknames cannot be altogether excluded here. The expected Clery 'clerk' which would belong to this group is found as Mac Cleare in 1532 and in the farm name Ballaclery but otherwise seems to have been ousted early by the translation Clarke.

Such translations occur more frequently in the earlier records and some of them have continued in use: Bredynson for Cregeen, Bridson for Mylevreeshey, Donaldson for Cannell, Finlowson for Kinley, Gibsonson for Cubbon, Harrison for Kinry, Johnson for Kewin, Lucason for Clucas, Markson for Quark or Corkish, Martinson for Corteen, Morrison for Mylewoirrey, Murghsone for Curghy, Ne(a)lson for Kneale, Nicholson for Cringle, Reynoldson for Crennell, Robinson for Crebbin, Watterson for Qualtrough, Williamson for Quilliam, and by way of translation of the meaning (sometimes mistaken) rather than the form, Wright for Teare (see above), and probably Oates for Quirk (from a supposed connection with corkey 'oats'). It may be that it is this urge to translate the early names that accounts for the rarity of Manx occupational surnames though the English ones are fairly numerous: Maddrell, Mason, Mercer, Miller, Piper, Potter, Sadler, Skinner, Smith, Souter, Swyneherd, Taylor, Wainwright, Walker, Webster.

Although patronymic surnames have been fixed for some six centuries now it is interesting to note that in late spoken Manx the patronymic principle in its original form had survived or reasserted itself, so giving rise to such well-known examples as Ned Beg Hom Ruy, whose 'proper' name was Edward Faragher, or Neddy Diggy (Edward Kinley). Ned was known as 'Ned Beg' (little Ned) because his father had the same forename, and his grandfather was Tom Ruy (red-haired Thomas). In these cases there is no use of mac but the second name is sometimes lenited as a genitive.

It is clear from the surnames that a very large range of Gaelic forenames once existed, certainly so before surnames were fixed, but with the adoption of surnames any pressure for distinctive forenames disappears, and to judge from the statistics collected from the records by J. J. Kneen (The personal names of the Isle of Man, London, 1937) that is exactly what happened. In 1417 the twenty-four Keys and one of the Deemsters numbered among them five Johns and five Williams, four Gilberts and four Patricks, two Donalds, and one each of Mark, Duncan, Hugh, and Andrew. A century later in the manorial roll John is again the most common name at 27 per cent, with William at 13, and Donald at 9, so that among them these three names account for half the male tenants. In a much shorter list of monastic tenants a century on, John still heads the field at 35 per cent, Thomas (8 per cent in the manorial roll) stands at 22, and William maintains its popularity at 12.

These figures are not very satisfactory, based as they are on samples of very different size, but one sign of the creeping anglicisation or europeanisation of forenames is the fact that the Gaelic names Donald and Finlo, 9 per cent and 6 per cent respectively in the roll, are down to under 4 per cent each among the monastic tenants, less than 10 instances each out of a sample of at least 250. Women were no more tenacious of tradition than their menfolk. Relatively few of them figure in the manorial roll, 148 in all, and of the distinctively Gaelic names Calyhony (cailleach Dhomhnaigh)

scores 10 per cent, the fourth most popular after Christian, Janet, and Marion; Calyvorri reaches 2 per cent, More, Calybrid, Calycrist reach 1 per cent, while Morgell and Calypatric are mentioned only once.

Surnames once fixed preserve the tradition in a fossilized form; it is the choice of forenames that indicates the direction in which public taste is moving, and even as early as the sixteenth century it seems in Man to be turning its back on its Gaelic inheritance.

CASTLETOWN, ISLE OF MAN

NOTE

- * This is a revised version of the paper given on 23 March 1985, at the XVIIth Annual Conference of the Council for Name-Studies held at Christ's College, Cambridge.

THE OSSIANIC NAMES - A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF CELTIC PERSONAL NAMES IN SCANDINAVIA*

I. Literary backgrounds

What has appropriately been termed the pre-Romantic period in English literature is characterized by a vigorous revival of imagination, a recognition of the claims of emotion, and a sense of mystery in life. Budding Romanticism with its spiritual alienation from the tedium of present-day reality would naturally turn to the national past for contentment and feel itself particularly in sympathy with the Middle Ages.

It is this imaginative return to the romance of Britain's past and the endeavour to bring back its wild picturesqueness, mystery and pathos into that age of rational lucidity and dry precision which delighted to term itself the 'Augustan Age' that has remained the essential feature of pre-Romantic evocation.

The passionate idealization of the Middle Ages had already tentatively materialized in the interest taken in Old Norse literature by poets like Hickes, Temple and Gray and in the renewed interest in old English balladry which was to culminate in Percy's 'Reliques'. A kindred leaning towards the past is visible in Thomas Chatterton's 'Rowley Poems' and in the neo-Gothic affectations of Horace Walpole.

With a keen sense of the need of the hour the Scottish schoolmaster James Macpherson threw into the midst of seething Romanticism certain Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland (1760), which he averred to be 'translated from the Gaelic or Erse language', but which were actually adapted or invented after earlier Irish or Scottish Gaelic literature (Thomson, 1951).

The success of this collection prompted him to roam the Highlands for further material which supplied him with Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem (1762) and Temora (1763), afterwards collected into one single volume under the title The Poems of Ossian (1765).

Macpherson's Ossianic sagas were drawn from a large treasure house of legendary lore centred around the exploits of the hero warrior Fionn and his comrades the Fianna Éireann. The legends were current mostly in oral form among the Irish and Scottish Gaelic-speaking populations, and Macpherson claimed his translation to have been based on the bardic poetry of Ossian, the son of Fingal.

The tales of love, chivalry, internecine conflict and heroic simplicity are set in the wild nebulous country of the north, on the wind-swept heaths among rocks, torrents and sinister mossy castles. Macpherson's Ossian is in matter and spirit wildly romantic when it passes in review the heroic imagery of the forgotten past. Steeped as it is in emotion, melancholy and love of the supernatural it could not but captivate readers in revolt from their own time and bored with the polished academic diction of drawing-room poetry.

The tremendous success of Macpherson's achievement can be succinctly ascribed to the one fact that it fell in with, in fact apotheosized, all the new currents that were already then closing in on Augustan literature from every side.

Though the consensus of authoritative opinion has decided that Macpherson's Ossian is essentially a literary forgery¹ and no genuine rendering of ancient Celtic originals (and he never made any serious attempts to vindicate himself against that charge), no single work in British literature has exercised so wide-reaching an influence abroad as have the