



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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Clan Bell has been a driving force in the history that makes Scotland so fascinating. Starting as knights in Northern France, the Bells fought in the Norman conquest, in the Crusades, and more. Bells have been Knights Templar, master masons for beautiful castles in Scotland, and fought for Scottish independence.

Fighting to survive on the Scottish Border as reivers, Bells were known as one of the Devil's Dozen, the 13 strongest and most active of the riding clans. Bells thrived under hardship, so much that Scots needed the proverb: "*numerous as the Bells of Middlebie.*" A Bell carried Kinmont Willie of the Armstrong clan over his shoulders during the battle to free him during the raid of Carlisle Castle. The Bells from Scotland and from England were lined up across from each other at the Battle of Solway Moss, and refused to fight their cousins. England and Scotland gave a war, but Bells turned it into a family reunion.

Bells have been inventors and thought leaders in many professions, invented the telephone, mechanical reaper, pioneered steamships, and advanced knowledge in medicine, forensic science, and the law. Bell entrepreneurs created companies that advanced aviation with helicopters and the first supersonic jet, and of course the "Scottish" food of Taco Bell. A Bell was founding co-publisher of Encyclopedia Britannica. A Bell founded Bell's Whisky – which is a best-selling scotch in Scotland, the UK and South Africa. A Bell was the author of "The Principles of the Laws of Scotland" that taught law to generations of lawyers.

When England and Scotland united into the United Kingdom, a first priority was to send the most unruly of the unruly Bell clan to Northern Ireland in order to help pacify the Scottish border. Many Bells migrated to Northern Ireland, the United States, Australia, Canada and other nations. The story of Bells is still being written by our families bound together by friendship, fellowship, and a rich and proud history.<sup>1</sup>

Bells who could join Clan Bell may feel they were cheated by historical errors that claimed Bell was a sept of another name. The information below corrects some errors, to help Bells deprived in this way.

### The MacMillan Claim of a Bell Sept Is Not Valid

Although MacMillans are fine Scots and it is appealing that they want to consider Bells part of their extended family, the facts prove the sept claim is false and it dilutes the honor that is due to the Bells.

The term "sept" has two definitions:

1. *First are the men of the clan who were related by blood and formed separate divisions,*
2. *Second were individuals and groups who looked for and received protection of the clan.*<sup>2</sup>

The mid-18th century name change of MacMillans (of the MacIlvoyle names) to Bell fails to create a Bell sept of Clan MacMillan under both definitions of a sept:

A related group of MacMillans changing their names to Bell created a Bell-named sept of Clan Bell, even if they all later showed loyalty to MacMillan as individuals while keeping the Bell name. The Lord Lyon Court policy is that "*where a particular sept has traditionally been associated with a particular clan it would not be appropriate for that name to be treated by another clan chief as one of its septs.*"<sup>3</sup>

The name change to Bell around the time of Culloden was likely to give these ex-MacMillans protection using the Bell surname. These ex-MacMillans were therefore a Bell-named sept of Clan Bell.

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<sup>1</sup> Bell history is too amazing to fully footnote here. To learn more, join Clan Bell at <http://www.ClanBell.org>

<sup>2</sup> House of Gordon, "Family & Septs", *House of Gordon*, <http://www.houseofgordon.com/>

<sup>3</sup> The Court of the Lord Lyon, "Who is a member of a clan?", *The Court of the Lord Lyon*, (Archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180627072357/http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html>)



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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The ex-MacMillans who changed their names to Bell did so after a dispute with Clan MacMillan, and there is no valid Bell sept of Clan MacMillan. The small percentage of Bells who can trace their genealogy to the names of McIlvoyle were even considered a distinct group from MacMillan before the name change.

Ex-MacMillans named Bell were not called Bell before the name change and then totally changed their names to Bell. Therefore, it was never correct for Bell to be a considered sept of MacMillan.

Some of the failed Clan MacMillan arguments for a Bell sept include:

- Cormac, Bishop of Dunkeld, is not related to Bell clergy present at Dunkeld over 130 years later. Cormac had no last name (typical in Scotland at his time), but Bells did (common in France but not Scotland at their time), and Bells were likely in Scotland to reduce Celtic Church influence.
- The name of Gilbert le fitz Bel in 1304 was not equivalent to “McBell” (recorded in 1666 and 1795). A Donald le fitz Can appears in English records for Donald McCan/Cahan in the 1300s, but there is plenty of evidence for McCan/McCann and a conspicuous lack of McBell and Mhaoil evidence, so Gilbert le fitz Bel as “Gilbert McBell” or “Gilbert Mhaoil” is unlikely.
  - Descendants of Gilbert le fitz Bel living around Annandale do not match MacMillan DNA results, so there is physical evidence against him being related to MacMillans.
- Robert Bell of Berwickshire in 1427 and an unnamed MacMillan in England with similar coats of arms is a coincidence since a chevron with 3 stars is a very popular design used by at least 37 unique surnames. It is very unlikely that Robert Bell and the unnamed MacMillan were related.
- The power of MacMillan chiefs was reduced after Culloden (around the time of the name change to Bell) so that the chiefs could not command allegiance to Clan MacMillan in some areas.
  - It is ironic that the historic setting with the most diminished power for MacMillan chiefs is used as the basis for claiming Bell as a sept of MacMillan.
- Phonetic changes to arbitrarily get to “Bell” do not create a valid sept claim. The old MacMillan names were closer to “Gullible” and could have been changed to other English names, instead.
- The total change of names in the parish register to Bell is not explained by arbitrary phonetics, showing a great need to change to Bell for protection. Even protection “by the Bell surname” would make the ex-MacMillans a sept of Bell, by definition and by Lord Lyon Court policy.
- A small number of people named “McBell” and a Bell gravestone with an ancient MacMillan name respects family heritage but does not create an argument for a Bell sept of MacMillan.

Additional refutation of the MacMillan claim of a Bell sept includes:

- A name change to Bell means the group is assumed to be part of Clan Bell, and not MacMillan, per Lord Lyon Court policy. This prevents a group taking over another name.
- Tartan books are not reliable on sept matters, often reflecting one person’s opinion of name groups in a clan’s area. Tartan books have a commercial bias to lump many names into clans with a tartan to avoid stocking additional tartans and to not have any name that does not have a tartan.
- A rough estimate of relative populations has people named Bell (but not related to MacMillans) outnumbering the former MacMillan-Bells by about ten to one (91% versus 9%).

The MacMillan arguments all fail badly when given a critical examination that looks for the underlying facts needed to support them.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### MacMillan Historians Had Doubts About Arguments to Claim Bell as Their Sept

In his book *“The MacMillans and Their Septs”*, Rev. Somerled MacMillan notes his inability to explain why MacMillans changed their name to Bell:

*“Only in certain parts of Argyll do we find this branch of the clan termed “Na Belaich” who, for some strange reason, have adopted the name ‘Bell’ in English. Those Bells are actually descendants of the MacMillans in Glen Aray and Glen Shira.”*<sup>4</sup>

This is not the sort of statement a historian makes when they have a strong argument, or can give a plausible reason for something. In his book on MacMillan septs, Somerled MacMillan only noted the name change to Bell without explanation and did not make other arguments for a Bell sept claim.

Several factors created pressure for later MacMillan historians to explain the Bell sept and name change:

- The tartan books list Bell as a sept of MacMillan and this creates expectations for a story.
- People with the Bell surname who traced their Bell genealogy to MacMillan ancestors in Inveraray and Glenaray wanted a story for the name change.
- A desire to show more past accomplishments for the clan by claiming additional sept names, and the accomplishments of the Bells are significant.<sup>5 6</sup>

Even the most intelligent and sincere people are in a difficult position when obligated to defend a weak debate position with few feasible theories. Although the discussion below criticizes the various bad MacMillan arguments, we should have both respect and sympathy for the difficult situation of those who tried to defend a weak debate position out of loyalty to their extended families.

### The Scope of the Name Change to Bell was Total

The Clan MacMillan website notes the truly remarkable scope of the name change:

*“The Old Parish Registers indicate a remarkable fading of this hitherto flourishing clan in the 1700s; which after two entries in the 1760s, disappears altogether. Even the most ruthless clearances of the next century failed to achieve so complete a wiping out of an ancient tribe. The records also reveal, however, an equally extraordinary blooming of Bells at exactly the same time; a name hitherto unknown in this Parish Register.”*<sup>7</sup>

The fact that the name change to Bell that was total in scope, indicates that these ex-MacMillans needed protection by using the Bell surname. A choice by a church clerk or a popular fashion to change to English names is inadequate to explain how the ancient MacMillan names of McIlvoile and McIlvoyle disappeared completely. *“Even the most ruthless clearances of the next century failed to achieve so complete a wiping out of an ancient tribe.”*<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Somerled MacMillan, *The MacMillans and Their Septs*, (Glasgow: K. and R. Davidson, 1952), 111.

<sup>5</sup> James Elton Bell, *One Hundred & Twenty Five Bell Families Contribute to History*, (Tucson, AZ: Bell Book Bank, Ltd., 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Clan Bell North America, “Bells Invented the Modern World”, *CBNA Home Page*, <http://www.clanbell.org/images/BellsInvented.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*



## **Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims**

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A more thorough analysis of these points follows, with some necessary repetition. The analysis of most arguments also includes attachments for even more detail and sources to allow interested readers to independently evaluate the conclusions.<sup>9</sup>

### **Cormac, Bishop of Dunkeld, Is Not Related to Bell Clergy in Dunkeld Over 130 Years Later**

MacMillans claimed that Cormac, bishop of Dunkeld from 1116 to 1132 AD, is somehow related to the Bell surnamed clergy who appear in Dunkeld over 130 years later. Cormac had no last name, as was common in Scotland in 1132 AD. However, the Bell clergy had their surname in 1263 AD, which was not common in Scotland until much later. The Bell surname was common in France as early as 960 AD.

Scottish kings after 1124 AD worked to remove Celtic Church influence and were therefore likely to bring clergy to Dunkeld from France or England in order to reduce the Celtic Church influence. The desire of Scottish kings and church leaders to remove Celtic Church influence makes it more likely that the Bell clergy in Dunkeld after 1263 AD were from outside of Scotland and NOT related to Cormac.

See Attachment 1 for sources and information on the Cormac claim.

### **Gilbert le fitz Bel of Dumfries Was Not a MacMillan or McBell**

MacMillans claimed that the name Gilbert le fitz Bel, which appears in Dumfries in 1304, is a Norman-French equivalent of Gilbert MacBell/Mhaoil. Substituting the Gaelic patronymic prefix “Mac” for French patronymic prefix of “le fitz” is the first step in this speculation. An example of this substitution is Donald McCan listed as Donald le fitz Can, but the many records of McCanns, in contrast to the lack of evidence and a huge time gap for any MacBell or Mhaoil makes this name substitution credible for Donald McCan but not credible for Gilbert le fitz Bel.

Donald le fitz Can appears in English records for Donald McCan/Cahan in the 1300s, and there are many instances of McCan. In contrast, there is no instance of McBell in records until 1666, or 1795 tax records in Richmond Co., North Carolina.<sup>10</sup> This large time gap from 1304 to 1666/1795 for the McBell / Mhaoil names makes it very unlikely that Gilbert le fitz Bel was a MacBell or in any way related to MacMillans.

This claim also fails on the historic and DNA data because “*The Bells of Annandale are said to be descended from Gilbert le fiz Bel, who was deprived of his lands by Edward I*”<sup>11</sup> as a result of Gilbert le fitz Bel fighting against Edward I along with William Wallace.<sup>12</sup> The lack of MacMillan DNA results around Annandale is further evidence against this MacMillan claim.

See Attachment 2 for sources and information on the Gilbert le fitz Bel claim.

### **The Coat of Arms for Robert Bell of Berwickshire in 1427 Versus English MacMillan Arms**

MacMillans claimed that the similar coats of arms for Robert Bell of Berwickshire in 1427, and for an unnamed MacMillan in England, is in some way evidence that the ancestors of at least some of Bells could also have been MacMillans.

<sup>9</sup> It is appealing that MacMillans want Bells in their extended family, but the facts do not support their sept claim.

<sup>10</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>11</sup> Bain, Joseph. *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office London*, (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. II, 397.

<sup>12</sup> James Elton Bell and Frances Jean Bell, *Sir Robert Bell and His Early Virginia Colony Descendants*, (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2007), 21.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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Both of these coats of arms have a chevron and three stars. The third son of any family could choose three stars as cadency marks to indicate that he is a third son, and use three of the cadency symbol for a third son for emphasis. The star, or mullet, is also interpreted in heraldry as the rowlet of a spur, so any person who likes riding horses might choose this design. The chevron and three star coat of arms design is one of the most popular in heraldry. In fact, there are at least 37 unique surnames with coats of arms that have a chevron and three stars or mullets in the design, so there is no reason to believe the owners of these coats of arms are related.

See Attachment 3 for sources and information on the coat of arms common ancestry claim.

### **Lyon Court Position: Every Person with the Chief's Surname is Deemed a Member of the Clan**

Some MacMillan families in Glen Aray and Glen Shira changed their name to Bell in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (mostly after Culloden). This name change does not make Bell a sept of MacMillan, but rather creates the assumption that these people with the Bell surname and Bell lineage to MacMillans are members of Clan Bell -- unless they gave specific allegiance to Clan MacMillan or another clan.

This is consistent with the Lord Lyon Court position on clan membership and septs, and this policy statement shows that there is no legal basis for the MacMillan claim of Bell as their sept.:

*“Every person who has the same surname as the chief is deemed to be a member of the clan. Equally a person who offers allegiance to the chief is recognised as a member of the clan unless the chief decides that he will not accept that person's allegiance.*

*There is no official list of recognised septs. This is a matter for each chief to determine. But where a particular sept has traditionally been associated with a particular clan it would not be appropriate for that name to be treated by another clan chief as one of its septs.”<sup>13</sup>*

Without this Lyon Court policy, any group could change their names and assume effective ownership of an existing name, as the MacMillan sept claim of Bell does.

See Attachment 4 for sources and information on the Lyon Court policy on clan sept claims.

### **MacMillan Chief Was Likely Not Owed Allegiance by Bell / Ex-MacMillans After Culloden**

The evidence of a name change from parish registers has only one entry for a Bell baptism (in 1743) before the battle Culloden (which was in 1746). The next Bell names in the parish register were in 1757 and later. The historic context after Culloden would still explain the name change to Bell as proof that the ex-MacMillans are a Bell-named sept of Bell.

The 1743 name change to Bell was the first example of a name change to Bell, and the only example before Culloden. All the remaining name changes to Bell were after Culloden. The 1743 name change to Bell was likely a model for others to follow after Culloden (if an arbitrary name change is assumed.)

The historic situation after Culloden reduced the ability of MacMillan clan chiefs to command allegiance to their clan. The casualties from the battle of Culloden devastated Clan MacMillan leadership who were positioned at the front line on the right flank of the Jacobite forces. There was strong and continued pressure from government-supporting lairds and ministers attacking the old ways. A MacMillan clan chief

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<sup>13</sup> The Court of the Lord Lyon, “Who is a member of a clan?”, *The Court of the Lord Lyon*, <http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html>  
(Archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180627072357/http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html>)



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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lost his lands due to poverty, yet retained his position as chief. Retribution from the Redcoats on Highland clans, whether they participated in Culloden or not, strongly motivated MacMillan clan members to either reject or hide their association with Clan MacMillan by changing names for self-preservation.

The MacMillans changing their names to Bell did not show allegiance to the MacMillan chief with the name change, and it is not realistic to assume people did not know that a church clerk recorded their names as Bell. The Bell name change formed a new division of Clan Bell from at least two MacMillan families, who looked for and received protection from current threats by using the Bell surname. The new division formed and the name change from MacMillan to Bell for protection meets both definitions of a sept – as a sept of Bell, even though these Bell-named people are related by blood to the MacMillan name of McIlvoyle (which disappeared parish rolls after the name change to Bell).

It is ironic that the historic setting with the most diminished power for MacMillan chiefs is used as the basis for claiming Bell as a sept of MacMillan.

See Attachment 5 for sources and information on the parish registers for Bell name changes

See Attachment 6 for sources and information on the impact of Culloden on MacMillan chiefs

### Phonetic Arguments for an Arbitrary MacMillan Mass Name Change to Bell

MacMillan phonetic arguments on the many possible transformations needed to get from Mhaoil to Bell may sound incredible to a modern English speaker. However, these arguments are actually correct linguistically in Gaelic. However, in most other languages, this kind of transformation can quickly lead to nonsense.

This flexibility in the Gaelic language may contribute to the incorrect view that any existing name that could be phonetically transformed to be like a MacMillan name was available to use without any strings.

The Gaelic MacMillan names of *Gilibile* or *Gillemhaoil*, and even *McIlvoil* sound closer to the English word “Gullible” than they sound to Bell. Other English names like Abel, Lovell, or Merrill also sound similar to the MacMillan names and those other English names could have been chosen instead of Bell.

If the MacMillan name change to Bell was the result of an arbitrary choice, so there is nothing to stop them from changing back except for the inconvenience of changing names. In fact, changing their names back to McBell or MacMillan would honor their Gaelic heritage. However, the Bell sept claim would be undermined, since there was no basis for arbitrarily using the identity of the existing Border Clan Bell clan over some other English surname.

The Lyon Court’s policy that a person with the name of the chief is assumed to be a member of the clan still applies, making the MacMillan Bell sept claim phonetic arguments contrary to Lyon Court policy. The definitions of a sept can also be applied to show that the Bells who can trace their genealogy to MacMillans are part of a Bell-named sept of Clan Bell, and not a sept of MacMillan.

The phonetic arguments fail to explain to why there was a total change of the ancient McIlvoile names to the Bell surname.

The Bells from MacMillan areas, who were related to MacMillan (actually McIlvoyle) by blood, created a confirmation bias that called for some kind of explanation, and this was a good and noble motive for MacMillan trying the phonetic arguments. That does not make the phonetic arguments a valid justification for the MacMillan sept claim.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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See Attachment 7 for sources and information on the Phonetic Arguments.

### Tartan Books Are Not Reliable on Septs

Tartan books are not an authoritative source on septs. In fact, the septs listed in tartan books are nothing more than one person's opinion, usually during the Victorian era,<sup>14</sup> and biased toward Highland clans. Tartan books are also biased against Lowland Scots (like the Border Bells) and clans without a tartan.

The tartan books reflect the commercial bias of Victorian era tartan sellers, who wanted everyone to have a tartan, but did not want the extra expense of stocking additional tartans. Their commercial interests were best served by combining many sept names into clans with existing tartans.

Lowland Scots with names that did not have tartans could be encouraged to buy a tartan using the tartan book listing their family name as a sept of a Highland clan, regardless of historical facts. Any statement in a tartan book that a specific clan or name did not actually have a tartan was not good for business.

The tartan books applied some person's opinion of which name groups were in a particular clan's territory. This opinion of tartan book authors might not consider or know the actual allegiance of the name group within a clan's territory, the relative power of a clan chief to command allegiance to his clan within the clan's territory, or the changing historical situation.

See Attachment 8 for sources and information on authority for sept determinations

### Relative Population Estimate of the Border Bells Versus the MacMillan Bells

It is difficult to make an estimate of the number of people currently named Bell who are from the Border Bells versus the Bells who could trace their origin to MacMillan areas in a way that is internally consistent, or to calculate an estimate from comprehensive data taken at a similar time that is relevant to the question. Therefore, some arbitrary judgment is required and the results will be subject to challenge on assumptions and gaps in data.

The estimate results of 9% MacMillan-Bells versus 91% Border Bells is subject to the problems associated with any estimate, but roughly shows how misleading it is for MacMillan to claim Bell as a sept. Even if the MacMillan-Bell percentage was higher, the sept claim still has misleading aspects on the relative size of these two groups.

A rough estimate of the Border Bell versus MacMillan Bells population percentage was made from the UK 1891 census results by county. The percentage of Border Bells versus MacMillan Bells was then crudely estimated by UK county from UK census heat maps for the family names from Public Profiler.<sup>15</sup>

It would be fair to criticize this exercise in estimation as one seeking answers for a question that does not have strong evidence to back it up. This is a reason to be charitable to the MacMillan historians who were seeking to answer other difficult questions that call for some kind of answer.

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<sup>14</sup>Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw Bt., "Clans, Families and Septs", *Clans, Families and Septs*, [http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/clans\\_families\\_septs.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/clans_families_septs.htm)

*"It should also be said that the various Sept lists, which are published in the various Clans and Tartan books, have no official authority. They merely represent some person's, (usually in the Victorian eras) views of which name groups were in a particular clan's territory."*

<sup>15</sup> See <http://named.publicprofiler.org> and enter a surname to create a map of where surnames are unusually prevalent in the UK, compared with the local general population



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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In this estimate, the people named Bell (who are NOT related to MacMillan) are roughly 10 times larger than the relevant (blood-related to MacMillan) part of the clan that claimed the Bell name as their sept. The issue that the MacMillan Bell sept claim misrepresents the relative size of groups is relevant to the sept question, since the sept claim creates unavoidable confusion for people named Bell.

See Attachment 9 for sources and information on the rough estimation of Bells vs MacMillans

### McBell and Other MacMillan Sept Names

Some MacMillans have changed their name from Bell to McBell, or added ancient MacMillan names to family gravestones to preserve their Gaelic heritage. These historic instances do not in any way argue for a Bell sept of MacMillan.

The McBell name change shows that MacMillans can choose to change their names to recognize their MacMillan origins. This is not to advocate that the Bells with MacMillan genealogy change their names, but rather that Clan MacMillan should drop their claim to a Bell sept, but keep the McBell sept.

Adding an ancient MacMillan name to a Bell gravestone is a way to recognize MacMillan heritage and blood relationship without a name change. An example of adding an ancient MacMillan name to a Bell family gravestone is the gravestone erected in 1897 in Inveraray for Angus Bell.

See Attachment 10 for sources and information on the McBell name and the Angus Bell gravestone.

### Conclusions

Clan MacMillan does not need a Bell sept in order to preserve their heritage, since the McBell sept is available as a substitute and the McBell sept is an effective way to discuss the Bell name connection.

MacMillan historians needed some kind of explanation to address the Bells with MacMillan ancestors who “*for some strange reason, have adopted the name ‘Bell’*”<sup>16</sup> as a result to the MacMillan claim of Bell as a sept. Somerled MacMillan wisely limited his discussion of the Bell sept to a puzzled comment on the reason for the name change to Bell. None of the later MacMillan arguments for a Bell sept stand up to critical examination. The Bell sept claim by Clan MacMillan should now be dismissed as wrong based on better information.

In contrast, Clan Bell has a clear basis to claim the ex-MacMillan Bells as a Bell-named sept of Clan Bell, even though these Bells are related by blood to MacMillans (McIlvoyles).

It is correct for Clan MacMillan to note:

- 1) Bell is not a sept of MacMillan
- 2) It was never correct to consider Bell a sept of MacMillan
- 3) A group of MacMillans sought and received protection using the Bell surname, and
- 4) Only those Bells with lineage to the Highlands before 1743 are related to McIlvoyle.
- 5) Calling Bell a “related name” to MacMillan is misleading since the McIlvoyle name changed to Bell as a rejection of MacMillan ties after a clan dispute, and the McIlvoyle name was considered separate from the MacMillan name long before the name change to Bell.

The Chief of Clan MacMillan is held in high regard by Clan Bell, and some Bells have been leaders in Clan MacMillan organizations. Invalid arguments made in the past by MacMillans for the Bell sept

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<sup>16</sup> Somerled MacMillan, “*The MacMillans and Their Septs*”, 111.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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should not be taken to reflect poorly on MacMillans. However, all of the arguments for the MacMillan claim of a Bell sept were bad arguments and should be abandoned going forward.

Note that stating that there is no valid MacMillan Bell sept, and never was a valid MacMillan Bell sept, is different from saying that no Bells were ever (related to) MacMillans.<sup>17</sup> It is clear that a small percentage of all people named Bell could trace their Bell lineage to ancient MacMillan names in the Highlands. It is also clear that individuals can choose allegiance to any clan, making septs and related names irrelevant compared to their individual choice.

The significant accomplishments of Bells listed in “Bells Invented the Modern World” were all done by Bells who are not from the MacMillan names. Therefore, it is misleading for Clan MacMillan to claim any of these Bells as part of their debunked claim of Bell as a sept of MacMillan.

See Attachment 11 for sources and information on the paternal genealogy of accomplished Bells who are all from the Border Bells, and NOT from MacMillan.

The loss from this effective identity theft and stolen accomplishments from generations of Bells is compounded by the badly failed arguments given by Clan MacMillan to justify their Bell sept claim. If someone is going to steal the identity and honor due to a clan of border reivers, they should at least extend the professional courtesy of having some good excuses. Many countries have laws against identity theft and stolen valor for falsely claiming the honor due to others. The enforcement of sept issues is not a systematic or transparent process, but patient Bells can pursue it with detailed evidence and careful analysis presented in the proper forums.

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<sup>17</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>  
*"An appreciation of Reverend Somerled MacMillan's family history is important because his own brief references to it have been erroneously used by some to suggest that Somerled was always a Bell and never really a MacMillan; and indeed that no Bells were ever MacMillans! A proper understanding of the use of (or more to the point, the non-use of) surnames in the Gaidhealtachd soon dispenses such a myth."*

This odd quote from the Clan MacMillan website seems to not understand the Bell arguments against the MacMillan Bell sept claim, and to misapply them as an absolute statement that Bells with MacMillan ancestry do not exist, but this cannot be verified due to the lack of a reference or a direct quote.

See Attachment 1 on the refutation of the arguments on Cormac and the Bell clergy over 130 years later in Dunkeld for a better understanding of the use of surnames in many nations, and not just in the Scottish-Gaelic speaking culture of the Scottish Highlands and Islands (i.e., the *Gaidhealtachd*).



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### **Attachment 1**

#### **Cormac Bishop of Dunkeld Is Not Related to Bell Clergy in Dunkeld Over 130 Years Later**

A page on the MacMillan website, titled “Highland Bells”, discusses Cormac of Dunkeld:

*“In Scottish records the name Bell can be traced back to the 13th century in the diocese of Dunkeld, where Cormac, the father of Gilchrist Maolan / Gillemaol, had been bishop between 1116 and 1132. A Master David Bell was a canon there in 1263, and Thomas de Perth, dictus Bell, was an "Official" of the diocese in the same year. William Bell, Dean of Dunkeld in 1329 was actually elected Bishop of St Andrews (the Primate of the Church of Scotland) in 1332, though his appointment was never ratified by the Pope due to English pressure at the papal curia. Another Thomas dictus Bell was a canon of Dunkeld in 1340. In the circumstances it seems probable that these religious "Bells" were MacMillans.”<sup>18</sup>*

There are some key facts that combine to refute the discussion above as proof of any MacMillan – Bell connection in Dunkeld:

- Cormac, bishop of Dunkeld had no last name, which is typical for Scotland between 1116 and 1132 AD. By 1400, most English and some Scottish people used surnames, but many Scottish and Welsh people did not adopt surnames until the 17th century, or later.<sup>19</sup>
- The Bell clergymen noted above had their surname, and there is no evidence of a Bell at the Dunkeld diocese until Master David Bell was a canon there in 1263. Roman Catholic clergy from France born into the aristocracy or important landowners were likely to have surnames as early as the Merovingian period (8<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>20</sup>
- The first Bell surname at Dunkeld was over 130 years after Cormac was bishop of Dunkeld. Therefore, claiming that Cormac was related to the origin of Master David Bell, and Thomas de Perth, dictus Bell is not supported. When the current clergy at a specific diocese today and a bishop who was at the same diocese 131 years before are considered, their being at the same location is likely just a coincidence and not proof of any shared ancestor.
- Pressure from Scottish kings to remove influence of the Celtic Church in this period makes it more reasonable to assume that some clergy were from outside of Scotland, including these Bell clergy in Dunkeld, likely brought to Scotland to help remove the Celtic influence of Cormac and earlier bishops.

Cormac of Dunkeld had no surname in 1132 AD, and the Bell clergy at Dunkeld 130 years later had surnames. The Bell clergy in 1263 AD, and 1329 through 1340 AD would have been unusual in Scotland for having a surname. This makes it more reasonable that these Bell clergy were born and named outside

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<sup>18</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, *Highland Bells - Na Belaich*, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>19</sup> Cynthia Blevins Doll, "Harmonizing Filial and Parental Rights in Names: Progress, Pitfalls, and Constitutional Problems", (Howard Law Journal. 35, 1992): 227.

<sup>20</sup> France-pub.com, “Evolution of Family Names in France”, *News and Information from France*, <https://www.france-pub.com/forum/2014/12/23/evolution-family-names-france/>

*“It was during the Merovingian period that Catholicism spread among the population and the attribution of a name referring to a saint of the Church appeared. At first, family names were almost reserved to the early aristocracy or important landowners. The aristocrats added to their forenames a filiation name which became hereditary. These early surnames were often the name of the land they own or the name of their lordships. Under the Carolingian, the heredity of nobility spread along the heredity of the surnames.”*



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



of Scotland. The lack of a surname by Cormac, and the use of a surname by these Bell clergy, makes the assertion that Cormac was an ancestor to these Bell clergy even more unlikely, given the 131-year gap between the times that they were present at Dunkeld.

The assignment of clergy from France to the Dunkeld diocese in the century after Cormac was bishop of Dunkeld is also likely for reasons related to the difference in tonsure practices between the Celtic church and the Roman church. The son of Cormac, named Gilchrist Maolan / Gillemaol or Gilchrist “son of the Tonsured One”, and it is from this name that the MacMillan surname developed.

From Somerled MacMillan:

*“Now let us consider how the name MacMillan is said to have developed. ... He states that “the name is supposed to be derived from the Celtic tonsure, known as St. John’s, which differed from the Roman in that it consisted in shaving all the hair in front of a line drawn over the top of the head from ear to ear ; whereas the Roman tonsure, associated with the name of St. Peter, was formed by the top of the head being clean shaven, and a circle or crown of hair being left to grow around it. During the seventh and eighth century the shape of the tonsure formed the subject of most violent controversy in both sections of the Church : the Romans condemning the Celtic method, and attributing it to Simon Magnus ; while the Celts claimed that it was the earliest custom of the Church, and they brought it with them from the East directly, and not by way of Rome. Bede tells us of Abbot Ceolfrid’s letter to Nectan, King of the Picts, in which this form of tonsure was discussed at considerable length. It was probably during this controversy that the name of Macmillan came first into notice. The son of some prominent ecclesiastic was called the son of the man with the bald or tonsured head.””<sup>21</sup>*

This controversy in practices for tonsure and other matters made it more likely that the Roman Church would insist on sending clergy to Dunkeld from outside of Scotland, in order to assure that Roman practices were followed instead of those from the Celtic Church. If the clergy in a church service had different tonsure this difference would be especially noticeable.

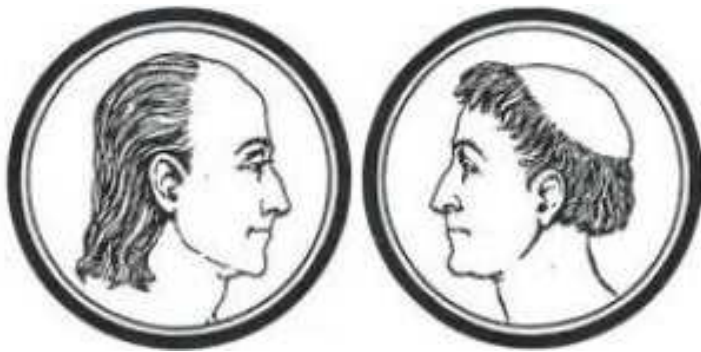


Figure 1 – Celtic Tonsure versus Roman Tonsure

The desire for conformity with Roman Church practices makes it likely that the Bell clergy at Dunkeld from 1263 AD to 1340 AD were from outside of Scotland, and are therefore not related to Cormac.

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<sup>21</sup> Somerled MacMillan, “*The MacMillans and Their Septs*”, 16-17.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



Somerled MacMillan notes that “*it was the decided policy of David I. to remove the Celtic Church*”.<sup>22</sup> Papal confirmation of the Scottish church was granted by Pope Celestine III in 1192 AD during the reign of William the Lion, grandson of David I. The best explanation is that Master David Bell and Thomas de Perth, dictus Bell were both clergyman brought to Scotland from France or England around 1263 AD as the Scottish church was increasingly influenced by the Roman church. William Bell, Dean of Dunkeld in 1329 was also best explained as a clergyman brought to Scotland from France or England. This William Bell was in Dunkeld almost 200 years after the time of Cormac.

The assumption that Cormac must be related to later Bell clergy in Dunkeld attempts to force the facts to fit a pre-determined conclusion. It also ignores relevant information, like the history of surnames in Scotland, England and France, and the long term actions of Scottish kings and the Roman Church leaders seeking to reduce the influence of the Celtic Church.

To summarize, the mere existence of some people with the Bell name in Dunkeld 131 years and 197 years after Cormac was bishop of Dunkeld does not support the assumption that they were somehow related. Also, the absence of surname for Cormac and the presence of surname for the Bell clergy supports the assumption that the Bell clergy were brought to Scotland to reduce the influence of the Celtic Church that Cormac promoted and are therefore not related to Cormac.

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<sup>22</sup> Somerled MacMillan “*The MacMillans and Their Septs*”, 19.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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### **Attachment 2**

#### **Gilbert le fitz Bel Was Not a MacMillan or a McBell**

MacMillans claim that the name Gilbert le fitz Bel, which appears in Dumfries in 1304, is a Norman-French equivalent of Gilbert MacBell/Mhaoil. Substituting the Gaelic patronymic<sup>23</sup> prefix “Mac” for French patronomic prefix “le fitz” is the first step in this speculation. An example of this substitution is Donald McCan listed as Donald le fitz Can, but the many McCanns, lack of McBells and a huge time gap for any MacBell makes this substitution credible for McCann but not credible for Gilbert le fitz Bel.

The argument that the name Gilbert le fitz Bel is equivalent to Gilbert MacBell / Mhaoil projects the Mhaoil name change to Bell from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century back to 1304. This argument requires evidence of McBell or Mhaoil names around Dumfries after 1300. McBell deaths are recorded in Edinburgh in 1666, and Inverness in 1691, far from Dumfries and there are no Mhaoil birth, marriage or death records.<sup>24</sup> The lack of McBell or Mhaoil records before 1666 argues strongly against the speculation the Gilbert le fitz Bel was a McBell in 1304.

Donald le fitz Can appears in English records as Donald McCan/Cahan in the 1300s, and there are many instances of McCan even in recent times. The 2010 US census had 42,143 named McCann, 674 named McCan, and 417 named McCahan. The 2010 US census, had results for MacBell and McBell equivalent to zero (i.e., “Less than 122” on [www.HowMany.OfMe.com](http://www.HowMany.OfMe.com)).<sup>25</sup> The UK census for 1998 and 1881 has people named McCann in Western Scotland and much of the UK. The UK census for 1998 and 1881 has no result for MacBell, McBell, and Mhaoil surnames.<sup>26</sup> The large number of McCanns and a lack of MacBell and Mhaoil names make it very unlikely there was any “Gilbert MacBell” in 1300s Dumfries.

There are no instances of McBell or Mhaoil in the National Records of Scotland the available records (from the 1513 to 1665.) The earliest record cited by MacMillans for a McBell was in 1795 tax records in Richmond Co., North Carolina.<sup>27</sup> This large time gap from 1304 to 1666/1795 for the McBell / Mhaoil names makes it very unlikely that Gilbert le fitz Bel in 1304 was a MacBell or that he was in any way related to MacMillans.

The speculation of Gilbert le fitz Bel as a possible MacMillan Bell fails based on historic and DNA data: “*The Bells of Annandale are said to be descended from Gilbert le fiz Bel, who was deprived of his lands by Edward I*”<sup>28</sup> Gilbert le fitz Bel was deprived of his lands as a result of Bells fighting against Edward I along with William Wallace in the wars for Scottish independence.<sup>29</sup>

The lack of MacMillan DNA results around Annandale is physical evidence against this claim that Gilbert le fitz Bel was in any way related to MacMillans. Analysis of DNA data in Bell DNA project and the MacMillan DNA project shows differences and helps to pinpoint genetic homelands of various people.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>23</sup> “Patronymic” means denoting or relating to a name derived from the name of a father or male ancestor.

<sup>24</sup> National Records of Scotland, “ScotlandsPeople”, <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> (records 1513 to 2018)

<sup>25</sup> Auron Technologies, LLC, “How Many of Me”, <http://www.howmanyofme.com/search/>

<sup>26</sup> PublicProfiler GBnames, “Great Britain Family Names”, <http://gbnames.publicprofiler.org/Surnames.aspx>

<sup>27</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Bain, *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office London*, (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. II, 397.

<sup>29</sup> James Elton Bell, *Sir Robert Bell and His Early Virginia Colony Descendants*, (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2007), 21.

<sup>30</sup> Tyrone Bowes, Ph.D., *Pinpointing David Bell's Scottish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland*, 18 July 2018.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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### Attachment 3

#### The Coat of Arms for Robert Bell of Berwickshire in 1427 Versus English MacMillan Arms

On the MacMillan website, the page titled “Highland Bells” discusses coats of arms:

*“The arms - on a seal - of Robert Bell in Berwickshire in 1427, which pre-date all other known Bell coats of arms in Scotland, show mullets/stars where later there were bells, and make it the same design as the un-attributed MacMillan arms recorded in England (Burke, 1884, page 645) and the base for the MacMillan arms recorded in Scotland by Alexander Nisbet in 1722. The latter - i.e. with three plates put on the chevron of the basic design - are later associated with the MacMillans of Brockloch in Galloway (see in right sidebar). The existence of MacMillan-Bells in this area in the Middle Ages would make sense since by the 14th century there was a significant branch of the Clann an Mhaoil in Galloway & Dumfries - followers in the next century of the Earls of Douglas - from which evolved important septs that also became clans in their own right, such as the Millikens (of Blackmyre) and the Cannans (of Killochy). The Earls of Douglas were also the overlords of the Bells of Kirkconnell, the leading family amongst the 15th century "Border Bells", who in the next century were to be recognised by the crown as a clan in their own right.”<sup>31</sup>*

The claim on the MacMillan web site that the 1427 arms of Robert Bell of Berwickshire are “*the same design as the un-attributed MacMillan arms recorded in England*” is misleading. The arms of Robert Bell of Berwickshire are described as “A chevron between three stars. Legend (Goth. Caps.): s' ROBERT[I] BEL.”<sup>32</sup> The MacMillan arms in England is described as “Argent a chevron between three mullets Sable”.<sup>33</sup> The arms of Robert Bell of Berwickshire are different because no color is specified and there is a legend scroll with the name ROBERT BEL, unlike the MacMillan arms which have argent and sable colors and no legend.

There are more reasonable explanations for two people using similar designs for their coats of arms, than to assume they have a common ancestry. Mullets, or stars, are used as a mark of cadency on the coat of arms for the third son, so the third son of any family could create arms with three starts or mullets on it.<sup>34</sup> The mullet is also used in heraldry to represent the rowel of a spur, so a coat of arms with three mullets could be created by anyone who likes horses.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>32</sup> William Rae MacDonald, “*Scottish Armorial Seals*”, (Edinburgh: William Green and Sons, 1904), 17.

“146. BELL, Robert, juror at Reston, Berwickshire. A chevron between three stars. Legend (Goth. Caps.): s' ROBERT[I] BEL. Diam 15/16 in. Durham Ch. 8 May 1427, Laing, ii 87, Raines' North Durham App. p. 110.”

<sup>33</sup> Bernard Burke, *General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales*, (London: Harrison & Sons, 1864), 645.

<sup>34</sup> MacDonald, William Rae, “*Scottish Armorial Seals*”, xxxiii.

“MARKS OF CADENCY - Differences, or Marks of Cadency, are the distinctions used to indicate the various branches or Cadets of one family. The eldest son during the lifetime of his father bears a Label; the second, a Crescent; the third, a Mullet; the fourth, a Martlet; the fifth, an Annulet; the sixth, a Fleur-de-lis; the seventh, a Rose; the eighth, a Cross Moline; the ninth, a Double quatrefoil.”

<sup>35</sup> James Parker, “A Glossary of Terms Used in Heraldry”, <https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglossm.htm>  
“Mullet. (fr. molette): this bearing is generally taken to represent the rowel of a spur, and in modern French heraldry is called molette d'éperon. In old French blazon it is sometimes termed rouwell, q.v. It might, however, when not pierced be taken to represent a star, and, as will be seen by the examples, it appears originally to have been interchangeable with the estoile. It usually has five points, and this number is always to be understood when no other is mentioned.”



# Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



Methods for “differencing” arms include adding Marks of Cadency, which are used in England and the Scottish Border, and adding Brodures, which are used in Scotland.

## BORDURES

## CADENCY MARKS

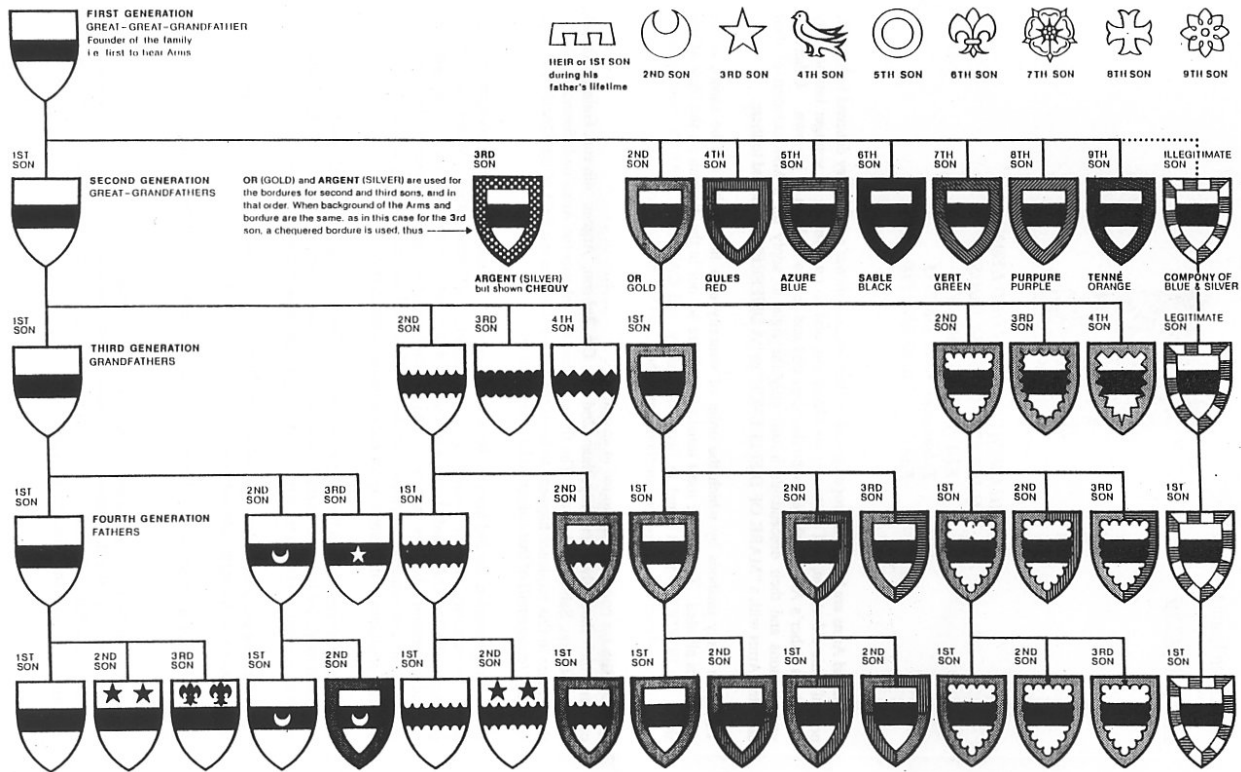


Figure 2 – Bordures and Cadency Marks

The design of the arms for Robert Bell of Berwickshire is similar to many other coats of arms, since a chevron with three items is one of the simplest possible designs for an undivided shield.

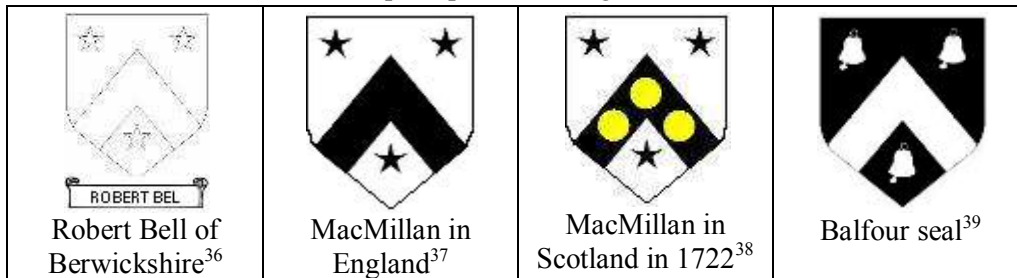


Figure 3 – Arms on the Clan MacMillan Website Claimed to Indicate a MacMillan-Bell Connection

<sup>36</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>  
The image on the Clan MacMillan page does not include the legend of Robert [I] Bel, which is added here.

<sup>37</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>38</sup> ibid

<sup>39</sup> ibid



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



<b>Unique Surname</b>	<b>URL for Coat of Arms Image</b>
Andrews	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/a">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/a</a>
Andrus	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/a">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/a</a>
Bell	<a href="http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html">http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html</a>
Brewster	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/b">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/b</a>
Broughton	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/b">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/b</a>
Bruche	<a href="https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol3/pp328-331">https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol3/pp328-331</a>
Capen	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/c">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/c</a>
Checkly	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/c">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/c</a>
Cousmaker	<a href="http://www.middlesex-heraldry.org.uk/publications/monographs/chenies/cheniesBKM-armorial.htm">http://www.middlesex-heraldry.org.uk/publications/monographs/chenies/cheniesBKM-armorial.htm</a>
Crackenthorpe	<a href="https://www.british-history.ac.uk/magna-britannia/vol4/lxix-xcviii">https://www.british-history.ac.uk/magna-britannia/vol4/lxix-xcviii</a>
Cretinger	<a href="https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html">https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html</a>
Danvers	<a href="https://www.fromoldbooks.org/Heraldry-Kent/pages/pp0118/1093x904.html">https://www.fromoldbooks.org/Heraldry-Kent/pages/pp0118/1093x904.html</a>
Davie	<a href="https://wiki2.org/en/Devon_heraldry">https://wiki2.org/en/Devon_heraldry</a>
Davis	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d</a>
Davy	<a href="https://wiki2.org/en/Devon_heraldry">https://wiki2.org/en/Devon_heraldry</a>
Day	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d</a>
Dorr	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/d</a>
Everett	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/e">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/e</a>
Gresham	<a href="https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Thomas_Gresham">https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Thomas_Gresham</a>
Hewell	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/h">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/h</a>
Hopkinson	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/h">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/h</a>
Karlsdotter	<a href="http://legacy.antirheralds.org/IL/2006/0606/jun06il.html">http://legacy.antirheralds.org/IL/2006/0606/jun06il.html</a>
Kerr	<a href="http://the-red-thread.net/genealogy/kerr.html">http://the-red-thread.net/genealogy/kerr.html</a>
Lane	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/l">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/l</a>
Latting	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/l">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/l</a>
MacMillan	<a href="http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html">http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html</a>
Mordaunt	<a href="https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglosse.htm">https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglosse.htm</a>
Moulson	<a href="http://cheshire-heraldry.org.uk/vale_royal/VRE17.html">http://cheshire-heraldry.org.uk/vale_royal/VRE17.html</a>

Table 1 – Unique Surnames of Arms with the Chevron & Three Stars/Mulletts Design



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



Unique Surname	URL for Coat of Arms Image
Orrock	<a href="https://www.scotclans.com/scottish-clans/clan-orrock/orrock-coat-of-arms/">https://www.scotclans.com/scottish-clans/clan-orrock/orrock-coat-of-arms/</a>
Rhys	<a href="https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html">https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html</a>
Sackett	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s</a>
Sherwood	<a href="http://www.sherwoodfam.plus.com/heraldry.htm">http://www.sherwoodfam.plus.com/heraldry.htm</a>
Stockton	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s</a>
Storer	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/s</a>
Sturmy	<a href="https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html">https://www.blason.es/heraldry/argent.html</a>
Willis	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/w">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/w</a>
Wilson	<a href="https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/w">https://www.americanheraldry.org/heraldry-in-the-usa/roll-of-early-american-arms/w</a>

Table 1 (continued) – Unique Surnames of Arms with the Chevron & Three Stars/Mulletts Design

There at least 37 unique surnames with coats of arms with a chevron and three stars/mullets (see Table 1), including the designs of the design of the Robert Bell of Berwickshire arms and the English MacMillan arms in Figure 3. Counting only the unique surnames with a coat of arms with the design avoids inflating the total with duplicates of the same family (although the Davie, Davis and Davy arms may be related.)

The owners of the arms in Figure 3 and Table 1 are clearly not related. However, the MacMillan argument is that two people with similar arms of a popular design are “*pieces of evidence relating to the name Bell in these areas suggest that the ancestors of at least some of them could also have been MacMillans*”.<sup>40</sup> The 37 unique surnames with this similar design show that the assumed Bell-MacMillan connection due to these similar coats of arms is merely speculation with no evidence.

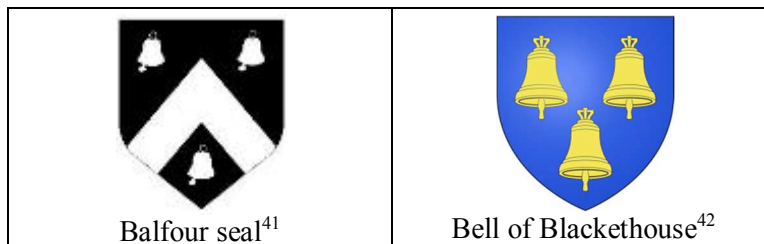


Figure 4 – Compare a Balfour Seal Cited by the Clan MacMillan Website to Bell of Blackethouse Arms

The later Bell arms with three bells are similar to the Balfour seal (see Figure 4), but Balfour is not likely to be related to MacMillan English arms or to Bell arms. The point of showing the Balfour arms in the context other arms on the MacMillan Bell sept web page is not clear, but various coats of arms with a chevron and three identical objects are also reviewed in Table 2.

<sup>40</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*

<sup>42</sup> ScotClans, “Bell Armorial Bearings”, *Scottish Clans*, <https://www.scotclans.com/scottish-clans/clan-bell/bell-coat-of-arms/>

The Bell of Blackethouse arms are added for comparison, and were not part of the MacMillan web page.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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Another measure of the popularity of the coat of arms design with a chevron and three stars or mullets is that designs with a chevron and three of some other identical objects are not as popular. Research for this study found the following number of coats of arms with a chevron and three of various objects:

<b>Coat of Arms Design - Chevron with:</b>	<b>Unique Surnames</b>
3 mullets or stars • 37 unique surnames	Andrews, Andrus, Bell, Brewster, Broughton, Bruche, Capen, Checkly, Cousmaker, Crackenthorpe, Creetingger, Danvers, Davie, Davis, Davy, Day, Dorr, Everett, Gresham, Hewell, Hopkinson, Karlsdotter, Kerr, Lane, Latting, MacMillan, Mordaunt, Moulson, Orrock, Rhys, Sackett, Sherwood, Stockton, Storer, Sturmy, Willis, Wilson
3 birds • 20 unique surnames	Bagot, Blewett, Croker, Culme, Henshaugh, Hodgson, Kapenhurst, Menyfie, Moore, Pote, Ravenscroft, Sanford, Southcott, Stevenson, Warburton, Walthall, Ward, Woodley, Wrenbury, Yeo
3 lions or large wild animals • 16 unique surnames	Aglionby, Balmerino, Barwis, Buerton, Cochrane, Copleston, Hayes, Heely, Lea, Litley, Monck, Rowcliffe, Spencer, Quicke, Willesford, White
3 round objects • 15 unique surnames	Anuats, Ball, Baskerville, Clifton, Clotworthy, Clutton, Durie, Fursdon, Incledon, Northleigh, Prenton, Smith, Wadham, Waltham, Webber, Wheelock
3 grains or produce • 13 unique surnames	Bennett, Calmady, Chamber, Cotton, Darby, Delves, Hatton, Hill, Masterson, Pyne, Riddell, Rowe, Searle
3 lozenges or rectangles • 9 unique surnames	Ashton, Hyde, Kelly, Massy, Norton, Shaw, Staveley, Sutherland, Tawley
3 fish or shells • 9 unique surnames	Blenerhasset, Brougham, Browne, Gay, Kendall, Milbourne, Pollard, Shapleigh, Waye
3 horses or domesticated animals • 9 unique surnames	Berryman, Blackenden, Buckley, Duncalfe, Hocknell, Marwood, Norbury, Slader, Strode
3 crosses • 6 unique surnames	Barclay, Birchills, Crossing, Dampport, Fitzpatrick, Kennedy
3 arrows, swords or weapons • 5 unique surnames	Floyer, Forster, Hurell, Sutton, Whiddon
3 of any other kinds of object • 15 unique surnames	Balfour, Carruthers, Cheteham, Christian, Fetherstonhaugh, Ponsonby, Potter, Shrigley, Slowley, Toft, Velly, von dem Drachen, Wethers, Wiseman, Yard

Table 2 – Unique Surnames of Arms with Chevron & Three Identical Objects

The fact that the Robert Bell arms were in Scotland in 1427 and the unattributed MacMillan arms were in England means that there were separate King of Arms officials located in different nations for these two arms. This made it more difficult for the King of Arms officials in the two nations to detect that other arms had been issued that were very similar.

The assumption that Robert Bell of Berwickshire arms and the MacMillan English arms must be related by blood because their coats of arms are similar is unlikely due to the great popularity of the design with a chevron and three stars. The fact that this design could be used by the third son of any family or any person who likes riding horses makes the assumed Bell MacMillan relationship very unlikely.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### **Attachment 4**

#### **Lyon Court Position: Every Person with the Chief's Surname is Deemed a Member of the Clan**

The Lord Lyon Court policy on clan membership and septs is stated on their web site:

*“Every person who has the same surname as the chief is deemed to be a member of the clan. Equally a person who offers allegiance to the chief is recognised as a member of the clan unless the chief decides that he will not accept that person's allegiance.*

*There is no official list of recognised septs. This is a matter for each chief to determine. But where a particular sept has traditionally been associated with a particular clan it would not be appropriate for that name to be treated by another clan chief as one of its septs.”<sup>43</sup>*

The Lyon Court notes that people with the last name of a clan chief are deemed to be members of that clan. Clan MacMillan illogically reverses the policy stated by the Lyon Court with the Bell sept claim.

Clan Bell is its own particular clan, and should not be treated as a sept by MacMillan or any other clan. The name Bell is noted in history by the Scottish parliament as a clan in Scotland in the Act of 1587.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, Clan Bell should not be claimed as a sept by another clan.

This name change creates the logical presumption that these people of MacMillan ancestry are part of Clan Bell, since they adopted of the name Bell and abandoned their earlier MacMillan name. A name change by a small group does not give MacMillan any legal right to ownership of the name Bell, which is the implicit result of MacMillan claiming Bell as a sept of their clan.

A practical application of the Lord Lyon Court position combined with the name change to Bell is that Clan MacMillan never had a correct basis to claim Bell as a sept of MacMillan.

There are some Bells whose paternal line traces back to a McIlvoile name. However, it is erroneous for Clan MacMillan to claim Bell as a sept. The sept claim is the exact opposite of the Lyon Court policy that is intended to prevent a clan abusively taking a name through a sept claim.

Many individuals with the Bell name were misled to think they are MacMillans by the erroneous MacMillan Bell sept claim, instead of Clan MacMillan correctly noting that only some Bells with a specific known genealogy are likely from the McIlvoile group that rejected Clan MacMillan after a clan dispute.

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<sup>43</sup> The Court of the Lord Lyon, “Who is a member of a clan?”, <http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html> (Archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180627072357/http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html>)

<sup>44</sup> electricScotland.com, “James VI: Translation 1587, 8 July, Edinburgh, Parliament Parliamentary Register 29 July 1587”, [http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/parliamentary\\_register.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/parliamentary_register.htm)

The July 1587 statute passed by the Scottish parliament notes the Bells as a clan on “*The roll of the clans that have captains, chiefs and chieftains whom on they depend, often times against the will of their landlords, as well on the borders as highlands, and of some special persons of branches of the said clans*”.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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### Attachment 5

#### History of Old Parish Register Entries for Name Changes from MacMillan to Bell

The MacMillan website gives one example of the name change to Bell before Culloden. This one example is an entry for the baptism in 1743 of a daughter Mary to Archibald and Christian Bell:

*“The MacMillan sept of Bell seems to have been most numerous in the parish of Inverary. Local traditions attribute their presence there to the settlement of a MacGilveil/MacGilbile from Lochaber at the head of Loch Fyne, at a place called Badokennan. His descendants colonised the nearby Glens Shira and Aray, and the records of Inverary parish are rich in references to the Clann 'ic 'illemhaoil under a variety of spellings. The tenants of Drimfern in Glen Aray appear in the Register of Inventories in 1690 as McIlveill, while their neighbours at Tullich can be found in the Hearth Tax records of 1694 as McIlvoyle. Both families are recorded in the Old Parish Registers (from their start in the 1680s) as McIlvoils, along with many others so named; and many MacMillans too; a distinction being traditionally kept in the area between the MacGhillemhaoils from Lochaber, and the MacMhaolains from Knapdale and Kintyre. The Old Parish Registers indicate a remarkable fading of this hitherto flourishing clan in the 1700s; which after two entries in the 1760s, disappears altogether. Even the most ruthless clearances of the next century failed to achieve so complete a wiping out of an ancient tribe. The records also reveal, however, an equally extraordinary blooming of Bells at exactly the same time; a name hitherto unknown in this Parish Register. The explanation is not far to find. The first of these Bell entries is the baptism in 1743 of a daughter Mary to Archibald and Christian Bell - a couple whose marriage can be found fourteen years before under the name of McIlvoile. Other Bell families of the 1760s also appear in these registers in the 1750s bearing the ancient Gaelic form of MacMillan.”<sup>45</sup>*

The parish register entry for the 1729 marriage of the first couple to later change their name to Bell is shown in Figure 5, below. Note that some gaps in public records that prevent saying with absolute certainty that this McIlvoile couple was also the first Bell couple in Inveraray or Glenarary.

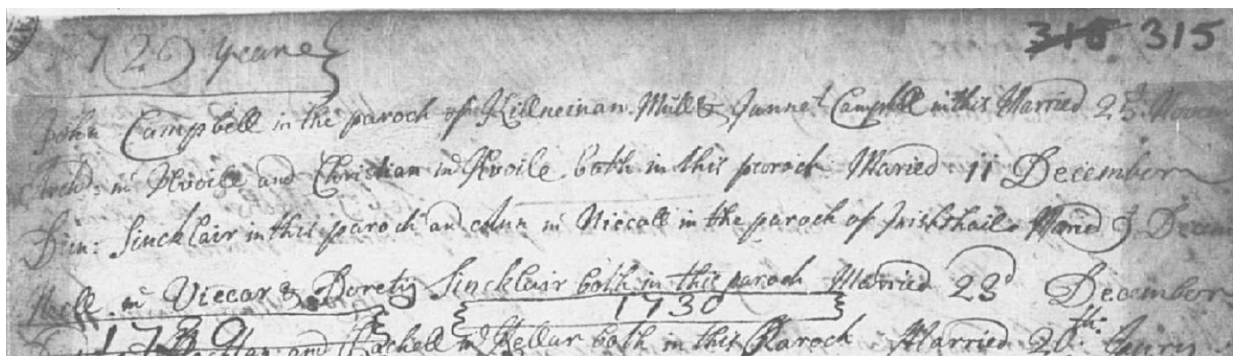


Figure 5 – Marriage Entry for Archibald and Christian MCILVOILE on 11 December 1729<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>46</sup> National Records of Scotland, “ScotlandsPeople”, *Scotlands People - Connecting Generations*, <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> Record Header for the image is: 11/12/1729 MCILVOILE, ARCHIBALD (Old Parish Registers Marriages 513/ 20 320 Inveraray and Glenarary) Page 320 of 34311/1



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



The same Archibald and Christian McIlvoile couple that was listed in a 11 December 1729 marriage entry, was apparently also recorded in 19 November 1743 in a baptism entry for their daughter Mary, but in 1743 listing has their family name as Bell.

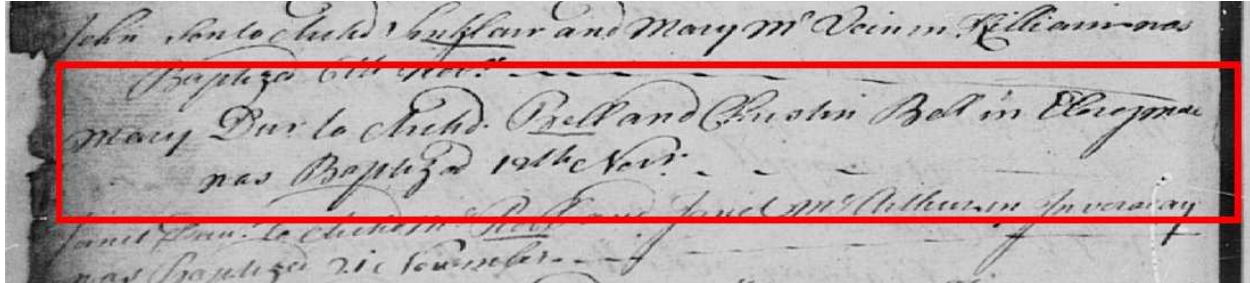


Figure 6 – Baptism entry for Mary Bell, Daughter of Archibald and Christian Bell on 19 Nov 1743<sup>47</sup>

The baptism entry for Mary, daughter of Archibald BELL and Christian BELL is show in Figure 6, below. The actual parish register entry reads:

“Mary Da[ughte]r to Arch[ibal]d Bell and Christian Bell in [Elrigbeag] was Baptized 19th Nov. [1743]”

Elrigbeag is the current name for the location listed for this Bell family at the time they baptized their daughter Mary in 1743. The location of Elrigbeag is about 5 miles Northeast of Inveraray, in Glen Shyra, and where the bridge crosses the river.

The 1729 marriage entry in the Inverary and Gelaray parish registers for the marriage of Archibald and Christian McIlvoile shows that Archibald Bell was not likely born a Bell, but by 1743 they had changed their name.



Figure 7 – View of Elrigbeag from the Pont Map, Pont Maps of Scotland, ca. 1583-1614<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> National Records of Scotland, “ScotlandsPeople”, <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>  
Record Header for the image is: 12/11/1743 BELL, MARY (Old Parish Registers Births 513/ 20 303 Inveraray and Glenaray) Page 303 of 343

<sup>48</sup> National Library of Scotland, “[Mid-Argyll; from Dunoon to Inverary and Loch Awe] - Pont 14”, *Maps by Timothy Pont*, <https://maps.nls.uk/pont/view/?id=pont14#zoom=5&lat=2393&lon=5009&layers=BT>



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



Figure 8 – View of Elrigbeag from a 1907 Ordnance Survey of Scotland Map<sup>49</sup>



Figure 9 – Enlarged View of Elrigbeag from a 1907 Ordnance Survey of Scotland Map<sup>50</sup>

The reasons for only one couple changing surname are difficult to determine, leaving only speculation to create theories with critical review of how consistent each theory is with information known about the couple, the area and times they lived in to evaluate the merits of various theories.

One theory is that Archibald and Christian McIlvoile changed their name to Bell in 1743 because they agreed with the Jacobite politics of their Campbell landlords before Culloden and wished to identify with the Bell part in name of Campbell instead of McIlvoile / Millan. This theory means they changed their allegiance away from MacMillan, but that they also did not want change it to Campbell, so this theory is very weak.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> National Library of Scotland, "Sheet 37 – Inveraray, Publication date: 1907", *Ordnance Survey One-inch to the mile maps of Scotland, 1903-1912*, <https://maps.nls.uk/view/74488726>

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

<sup>51</sup> Note that the reference to the Knapdale area, both in the discussion of the Parish Register, and that the chiefs of the clan in Knapdale were obliged to follow the Jacobite politics of their landlords. This supports the assumption of opposition to Jacobite politics as a reason for the name change to Bell in 1743, before Culloden. The clan dispute evidence would instead indicate opposition by this couple to the Jacobite politics of MacMillan and Campbell.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



Another theory for the name change by Archibald and Christian Bell in 1743 is to consider the situation in the Highlands in the years before Culloden, since other information about the couple is not available.

*“Even the later chiefs of the clan in Knapdale were obliged to follow the politics of their landlords, the Campbells - which in the Jacobite rebellions of the eighteenth century put them at odds with some of their own kin in Lochaber and Glen Urquhart who were staunch supporters of the Stuarts. Indeed, Clann 'ic 'illemhaoil Abrach formed a company of Lochiel's regiment in "The '45" and fought as such at the battle of Culloden.”<sup>52</sup>*

Archibald and Christian might have changed their surname to Bell to reflect a choice by the couple to avoid choosing sides at a time when the Jacobites and Hanoverians were increasingly polarized. Another possibility that cannot be ruled out is that the church clerk made an error. If they lived on Campbell land the clerk might have heard only the last part of the Campbell name and assumed it was the family name. Entering a name that was new for the area should have raised questions

Note that after the single Bell entry in the Parish Register in 1743, there were no other Bell entries in the parish registers until 1757. (The last McIlvoile entries in the Parish Register were in the 1760s.)<sup>53</sup>

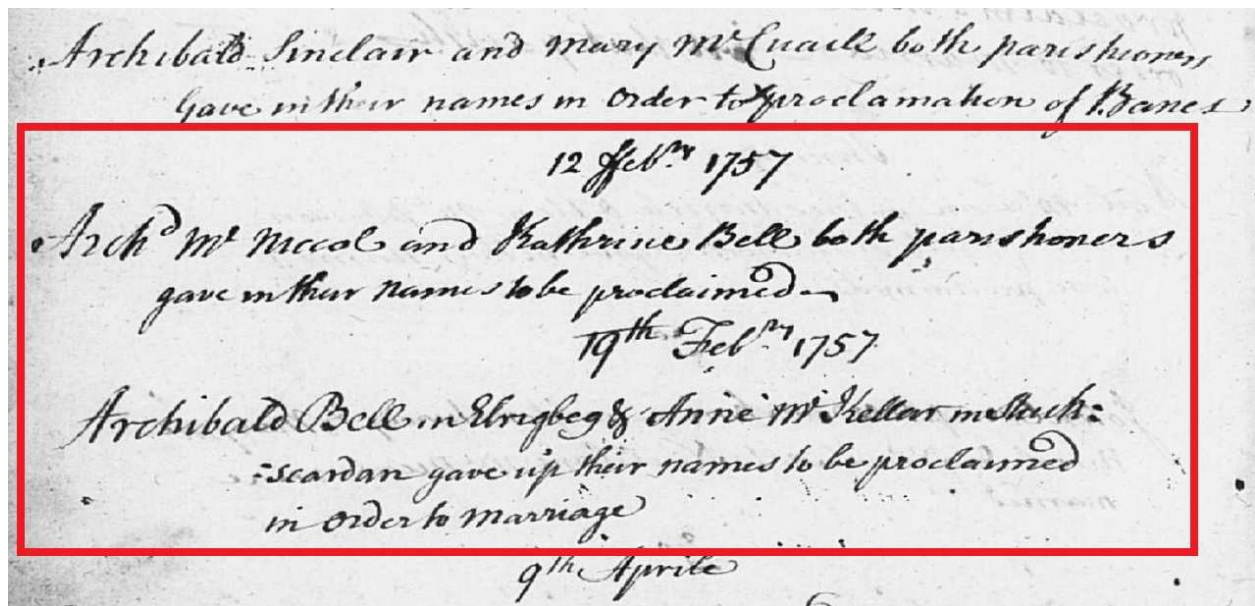


Figure 10 – Marriage entries for Two Wedding with Bells in February 1757<sup>54</sup>

The isolated instance of a name change to Bell in 1743 may explain why the name Bell was chosen instead of other English surnames for the mass name change after Culloden. However, this theory does not explain why the name change to Bell was so absolute. Only the need for protection by adopting a non-Gaelic surname like Bell, or protection from an actual Bell clan leader, explains the complete elimination of the McIlvoyle names from the parish registers.

<sup>52</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Clan MacMillan's history. A brief overview”, *Historical resources specific to the clan*, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/history.html>

<sup>53</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>54</sup> National Records of Scotland, “ScotlandsPeople”, <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

Record Header for the image is: 19/02/1757 BELL, ARCHIBALD (Old Parish Registers Marriages 513/ 20 211 Inveraray and Glenaray) Page 211 of 343



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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### **Attachment 6**

#### **MacMillan Chief Likely Not Owed Allegiance by Bell / Former MacMillans After Culloden**

Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw Bt. of the Lord Lyon Court discusses how the changing power of clan chiefs had significant impact on the scope of clan membership and who owed the chief allegiance:

*“Historically, the concept of “clan territory” also gives rise to difficulty, particularly as certain names or Septs claim allegiance to a particular chief, because they come from his territory. The extent of the territory of any particular chief varied from time to time depending on the waxing and waning of his power. Thus a particular name living on the boundaries of a clan's territory would find that while the chiefs power was on the up they would owe him allegiance but - if his power declined retrospectively at some arbitrary' date which the compiler of the list has selected.”<sup>55</sup>*

During the battle of Culloden, Clan MacMillan likely had casualties that reduced its military power:

*“Even the later chiefs of the clan in Knapdale were obliged to follow the politics of their landlords, the Campbells - which in the Jacobite rebellions of the eighteenth century put them at odds with some of their own kin in Lochaber and Glen Urquhart who were staunch supporters of the Stuarts. Indeed, Clann 'ic 'illemhaoil Abrach formed a company of Lochiel's regiment in “The '45” and fought as such at the battle of Culloden.”<sup>56</sup>*

The time when some MacMillan names were changed to Bell was just before and mostly after Culloden. The power of MacMillan clan chiefs was reduced at this time, and the old ways were under attack.

*“The sudden nature of the name-change indicates an arbitrary decision by the Minister or Session Clerk to do away with the old Gaelic name in the church records (this being in the period following the battle of Culloden, when many of the old ways of the Gaidhealtachd were under attack from government-supporting lairds and ministers).”<sup>57</sup>*

With the power of Clan MacMillan was at its lowest ebb after Culloden, the name change to Bell was either a sign that the people who changed names to Bell either did not owe allegiance to the chief of MacMillan, or they needed to hide association with the MacMillan clan chief for their own protection. The timing and the sudden and complete name change indicate that MacMillan had no authority over the name of Bell. Loss of clan military power, combined with pressure from the lairds, and persuasion from church leaders all worked against the influence of MacMillan chiefs and the old ways.

The history of the battle of Culloden shows that the impact on the MacMillan clan chief and leadership was especially severe. The MacMillan leaders were on the first line of the right flank,<sup>58</sup> and this meant that the clan chiefs, their sons, their leadership were positioned where the highest casualties occurred.

*“With the companies in line, captained by cadets of the chieftain's family, or by chiefs of smaller septs, were two lieutenants and two ensigns, and they, too, were chief's sons or the sons of sons. The first ranks of each company consisted of men who may have held land or had no land at all,*

<sup>55</sup> Sir Crispin Agnew of Lochnaw Bt., “Clans, Families and Septs”, *Clans, Families and Septs*, [http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/clans\\_families\\_septs.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/clans_families_septs.htm)

<sup>56</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Clan MacMillan's history.A brief overview”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/history.html>

<sup>57</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>58</sup> Clan Cameron, “The Battle of Culloden”, [http://www.clan-cameron.org/battles/1746\\_b.html](http://www.clan-cameron.org/battles/1746_b.html)



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



*but who were, in the geology of their society, placed among the strata of gentlemen...Behind them stood those with lesser claims to gentility, and behind again yet another rank, so that in some clans the ranks were six deep. In the rear of all stood the wild and bearded humblyes...But these common men, disposed themselves by families, brothers and sons about the father, for it was in the tradition of their hills that the oldest and most respected should stand closest to the enemy, and that inspiration and courage should pass through father, brother, son, tenant and servant.”<sup>59</sup>*

The casualties were severe, and Clan Cameron history specifically mentions the MacMillan casualties:

*“Within the regiment there were also contingents from the numerous tribes of Clan Cameron, under their respective chiefs and leaders, most notably Cameron of Strone at the head of the Macgillonies and a contingent of MacMillans from Loch Arkaig under their own officers. Many varied "Camerons" would fight for Lochiel that Wednesday afternoon, most of their names died along with them on the battlefield.”<sup>60</sup>*

The results of Culloden meant that there was no safe haven in Scotland for MacMillans and other Highlanders:

*“They could see their shattered army in full retreat all around them. These men of Lochaber would reluctantly retreat to their native land, places that were once safe haven from the outside world. As was their fate at Culloden, they would soon find that nowhere in Scotland was there a safe haven for true Highlanders.”<sup>61</sup>*

The economic impact on MacMillan families after Culloden was severe, and likely made many of them less loyal to their clan chief:

*“Highlanders cannot readily forget the brutal treatment their forebears received at the hands of the Redcoats after Culloden when their homes were destroyed, their livestock taken, and the innocent made to suffer as well as those who actually took part in the rising.”<sup>62</sup>*

The economic situation of MacMillan chiefs also suffered significant decline after Culloden:<sup>63</sup>

*“John MacMillan, chief of the Lochaber branch, was forced to give up the farm at Murlagan about the year 1748, mainly because of his pecuniary circumstances. He was succeeded by a relation named Alexander, but still retained the position as chief of his clan.”<sup>64</sup>*

This history of the name change shows that no person named Bell would owe allegiance to MacMillan, regardless of their origin, even without the clan dispute as reason to leave MacMillan. The MacMillan mass name change took place when the MacMillan clan chief lacked authority claim allegiance. A

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<sup>59</sup> Clan Cameron, “The Battle of Culloden”, [http://www.clan-cameron.org/battles/1746\\_b.html](http://www.clan-cameron.org/battles/1746_b.html)

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> Somerled MacMillan “*The MacMillans and Their Septs*”, 84

<sup>63</sup> Scottish History, “The Highland Clearances, and their causes, effects, and results”, *Scottish History – Summary index*, <http://www.scottish-history.com/clearances2.shtml>

*“In the Government zeal to root out once and for all time the Highland clans power, they not only took powers away from the Clan Chiefs but also hereditary sherriff-doms [...] Not only were the clan chiefs now without powers, they no longer commanded the respect they once did, or so they imagined, and were without pride or purpose. [...] The lands of the fallen chiefs were eventually turned over to factors.”*

<sup>64</sup> Somerled MacMillan “*The MacMillans and Their Septs*”, 87



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



personal choice for MacMillan is possible, but this not required or historically justified for those who adopted the Bell name or for their descendants.

The choice to change from MacMillan names to Bell as a method of self preservation has significant implications for the kind of sept that MacMillan Bells are.

*"There are two types of septs: First are the men of the clan who were related by blood and formed separate divisions, Second were individuals and groups who looked for and received protection of the clan."*<sup>65</sup>

MacMillans who changed their name to Bell did not form a separate division of MacMillan, but instead renamed themselves as a Bell division, with a new set of members. The MacMillan Bells came from at least two families into a new division, and were therefore not an existing MacMillan division.

*"The tenants of Drimfern in Glen Aray appear in the Register of Inventories in 1690 as McIlveill, while their neighbours at Tullich can be found in the Hearth Tax records of 1694 as McIlvoyle. Both families are recorded in the Old Parish Registers (from their start in the 1680s) as McIlvoils, along with many others so named; and many MacMillans too; a distinction being traditionally kept in the area between the MacGillemhaoils from Lochaber, and the MacMhaolains from Knapdale and Kintyre. The Old Parish Registers indicate a remarkable fading of this hitherto flourishing clan in the 1700s; which after two entries in the 1760s, disappears altogether. Even the most ruthless clearances of the next century failed to achieve so complete a wiping out of an ancient tribe. The records also reveal, however, an equally extraordinary blooming of Bells at exactly the same time; a name hitherto unknown in this Parish Register."*<sup>66</sup>

In The Kist<sup>67</sup> 45, Mr. Duncan Beaton writes an article on "*The Notable Descendants of John Munro*"<sup>68</sup>:

*"The Bells mysteriously appear about 1764 in the Parish Registers of the combined parishes of Inveraray and Glenaray, but this was only because they had previously been recorded as McIlvoile or McIlvoyle. This name is from the Gaelic MacGillemhaoil - 'son of the bald man's gille', usually thought to refer to the servant of a tonsured monk. The name Macmillan has the same root, and indeed the Bells in Glenaray were descendants of Macmillans from Loch Arkaig in Lochaber who had sought protection from the House of Argyll after a clan dispute. The Munros were mainly based on the farms of Tullich in Glenaray and Stuckagoy in Glenshira, and the bells tenanted Sallachray in Glenaray as well as sharing Tullich with the Munros. It was only natural therefore that the two families should intermarry frequently"*<sup>69</sup>

The key information for the Bell MacMillan sept issue from the quote above is:

*"the Bells in Glenaray were descendants of Macmillans from Loch Arkaig in Lochaber who had sought protection from the House of Argyll after a clan dispute."*

<sup>65</sup> House of Gordon, "Family & Septs", *House of Gordon*, <http://www.houseofgordon.com/>

<sup>66</sup> Clan MacMillan, "Highland Bells - Na Belaich", <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>67</sup> The Kist is "The Magazine of the Natural History & Antiquarian Society of Mid-Argyll". The Kist is an edited journal that has been published twice per year by the society every year since 1971. Past issues of The Kist are available at <http://kist.scot/publications.html>

<sup>68</sup> Beaton, Duncan, *The Notable Descendants of John Munro*, The Kist 45 (1993). p 1-7.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1. - Retrieved from [http://kist.scot/The%20Kist%2045%20\(1993\).pdf](http://kist.scot/The%20Kist%2045%20(1993).pdf)



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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The Bells in Glenarary left the MacMillan House of Argyll after a clan dispute. The clan dispute was related to a change in identity from leaving the Clan MacMillan and seeking protection from the Bell surname. This clan dispute was likely the motivation for changing McIlvoile names to Bell, which has long been a mystery to historians.

These former MacMillans, changed their surname from McIlvoile or McILvoyle to Bell. This is not the action of people who owed allegiance to a MacMillan chief. Therefore, these former MacMillans were not loyal to the MacMillan chiefs and it is not correct and was never correct for Clan MacMillan to claim these former MacMillans as a sept of MacMillan.

These MacMillans changed their surname from MacMillan to Bell for self-preservation at a time when they did not receive effective protection from the MacMillan clan for Redcoat retribution and other immediate threats, and the Bell surname may have provided some protection. Seeking and receiving protection by adopting the Bell surname meets the definition for the second type of clan.

An explanation assuming that English names were simply more popular does not explain how this fashion in surnames led to the complete elimination of an ancient name. The phonetic transformations assumed by MacMillans would not give a uniform result of change to the Bell name. This leaves explanations where the name was changed for the protection of the Bell surname, which meets the definition of the second type of a sept – as a sept of Bell. There was also the formation of a new group or division as a result of the Bell name change, which meets the definition of the first type of a sept – as a sept of Bell.

The logical conclusion is that these ex-MacMillans are therefore a sept of Bell with the name of Bell, even though they are related to McIlvoyle (which was separate from MacMillan) by blood. Although this may be surprising and unpopular with MacMillans, it is the best explanation of the facts for the name change to Bell.

The practical result of MacMillan dropping their Bell sept claim would be to reduce confusion for Bells, since the MacMillan sept claim is not consistent with the available evidence. The people named Bell are members of Clan Bell, including the Bell-named sept of Bell that is also related by blood to McIlvoyle.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



### **Attachment 7**

#### **Authority for Sept Determinations**

The Lord Lyon is the sole King of Arms in Scotland. He is Head of the Heraldic Executive and the Judge of the Court of the Lord Lyon which has jurisdiction over all heraldic business in Scotland. The Lord Lyon is charged with responsibility for all State Ceremonial in Scotland. In this duty he is assisted by Her Majesty's Officers of Arms.

The Court of the Lord Lyon does not undertake genealogical research for members of the public.

Under the topic of “Who is a member of a clan?”, the Lord Lyon Court website states:

*Every person who has the same surname as the chief is deemed to be a member of the clan. Equally a person who offers allegiance to the chief is recognised as a member of the clan unless the chief decides that he will not accept that person's allegiance.*

*There is no official list of recognised septs. This is a matter for each chief to determine. But where a particular sept has traditionally been associated with a particular clan it would not be appropriate for that name to be treated by another clan chief as one of its septs.<sup>70</sup>*

The Lord Lyon Court will make no determinations on septs or sept matters, but will defer to the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs.

The Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs is the definitive and authoritative body for information on the Scottish Clan System. The Standing Council is a private organization, with clan chiefs or representatives as members.

Even though the Standing Council of Scottish Chief is a private organization that is directed by the interests of its members, the delegation of authority from government implies some responsibility to consider greater equities and concerns outside of the particular interests of their members in the areas delegated. This is similar to the practice where various industry organizations are allowed by government to self-regulate because the industry organizations have exceptional expertise and a strong interest.

The Lord Lyon Court also defers tartan matters to the Scottish Register of Tartans. The main function of the Scottish Register of Tartans is the registration of new tartan designs, and determining the policy surrounding that function.<sup>71</sup>

Although tartan books have less authority on septs, books like “Tartan For Me!” with nine editions do have some opinions to be considered. Writing under the heading of “THE TERM “SEPT””, this reference states:

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<sup>70</sup> The Court of the Lord Lyon, “Who is a member of a clan?”, <http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html> (Archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180627072357/http://www.lyon-court.com/lordlyon/240.html>)

<sup>71</sup> National Records of Scotland, “About Us”, *About Us - The Scottish Register of Tartans*, <https://www.tartanregister.gov.uk/aboutUs>

“The Register is administered by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) with advice from the Court of the Lord Lyon and representatives of the Scottish tartan industry”



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
President, Clan Bell North America



*"Sept" is a term borrowed from Irish culture in the nineteenth century to explain the use of a variety of surnames by members of a single clan. In Ireland, "sept" is roughly synonymous with the Scottish "clan" and refers to an intra-related family. Where Scots would refer to "MacGregor and his clan" an Irish historian might say "O'Neill and his sept." The Irish historically have princes and think in terms of land rather than names. Thus, the name "O'Brien" might be a sept of several different princes. In Scotland, only in the case of larger clans with distinct and sometimes widely separated sub-families is the term "sept" appropriate. The various branches of Clan Donald, for example, all using the name "MacDonald of ..." or "MacDonell of ..." may properly be viewed as septs. The many other names of Clan Donald are just that--names of Clan Donald.*

*The variety of surnames within a Scottish clan do not represent separate and definable sub-clans but instead reflect the vagaries of transition of the Gaels into the English naming system as well as marriages, migrations and occupations. The main family itself may have developed a variety of surnames. In the Glen Urquhart parish record, one man is variously identified as "John Miller" (referring to his occupation), "John Ban" (referring to his hair colour) and "John Ban Miller". In Gaelic he was called Iain Mac Aillein, "John, Son of Allen"). When his name was "made official", he could have been named "John Miller", "John Bain", or "John MacAllen." Actually, he was "John Grant."*

*The preferred modern usage is to avoid the use of the term "sept" and to simply describe these names as what they are -- surnames of the family and of allied or dependent families. It is preferable to speak of "The names and families of Clan X" rather than to call a name "a sept of Clan X".<sup>72</sup>*

A key difference between the social organization of families in Ireland versus Scotland is that *"The Irish historically have princes and think in terms of land rather than names."* Applying the Irish concept to the situation of Bells in the Highlands might be used to justify claiming any family name in the area of a clan as a sept of that clan.

Using a Scottish understanding would give a different result. *"The variety of surnames within a Scottish clan do not represent separate and definable sub-clans but instead reflect the vagaries of transition of the Gaels into the English naming system as well as marriages, migrations and occupations."* This concept might try to make sense of the name Bell in the Highlands as a transition from Gaelic names to English names. However, the total scope of the name change to Bell in Parish Registers and the bitter clan dispute involving the people who changed their name to Bell indicates a rejection of MacMillan chiefs. This was an intentional rejection of the MacMillan identity rather than a mere transition of the name to another language.

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<sup>72</sup> Philip D. Smith Jr., *Tartan For Me!: Suggested Tartans for Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Irish, and North American Surnames with Lists of Clan, Family and District Tartans*, (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1998), 9.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### **Attachment 8**

#### **Phonetic Arguments for an Assumed Arbitrary MacMillan Mass Name Change to Bell**

The first part of the Bell sept discussion on the MacMillan web page merely claims that the Bell name was arbitrarily selected to Anglicize their Gaelic name:

*“Though the Na Belaich are probably the oldest and largest of the septs of Clan MacMillan, the surname Bell is fairly common in Scotland, and only those bearing it whose ancestors came from the Highlands - and particularly Argyll and other areas associated with the MacMillans - can certainly be linked to the clan. The proof of that link comes from the name itself, which stands for the main element of the Gaelic names from which MacMillan is derived; i.e. mhaoil (the aspirated genitive of maol, meaning shaven or tonsured) which is pronounced in English like “vaoil”, as is the Gaelic bhaoil. So, Mill/Mell is seen to be the equivalent of Bill/Bell. While this may seem incredible to English speakers, it is proven to be the case by the appearance of the MacMillan's namefather on the 1560 Leny family tree both as Maolan and as Gilibile (a phonetic version of Gillemhaoil), and by the record of MacMillan's Rock in Knapdale on the first edition OS Map as Rudha Mhic Ghille-bheill (it appears on the current edition as Rubha Mhic Ghille-mhaoil).”<sup>73</sup>*

The discussion of Gaelic is technically correct on the equivalence of “M” and “B” for the relevant words.<sup>74</sup> The equivalence is due to pronunciation differences in various areas of the Highlands. It is ironic that the argument that may seem rather “*incredible to English speakers*” is the strongest one on the facts of the Gaelic language, even though it is irrelevant to the actual MacMillan Bell sept question.

It is not correct to consider the Gaelic discussion as any kind of “proof” of a link to the Bell surname before the mass name change. The phonetic similarity of parts of the Gaelic names mhaoil, bhaoil, gilibile, gillemhaoil and McIlvoil to the English word “Bell” is only a possible explanation of why the Bell surname was selected instead of others for the mass name change by these MacMillans.

Prior evidence of the old MacMillan names that later changed to Bell is also not relevant. It is an anachronistic fallacy to claim that old MacMillan names that later changed to Bell were in some meaningful way an “early form of Bell”.

The English word “Gullible” was also available and closer to the sound of the MacMillan names, but gullible has negative associations. It is entirely reasonable for MacMillans to choose a name that avoids these negative associations. That does not give MacMillans any ownership of the Bell surname. The Bell surname was “fairly common in Scotland” long before some MacMillans chose to adopt the name because it was used by the far more numerous members of Clan Bell.

Proof of ancient MacMillan names as early instances of the Bell surname would require actual use of the Bell surname by MacMillans long before the mass name change. The historical record has only one instance of Bell used by a single former MacMillan family only 3 years before Culloden.

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<sup>73</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Septs and related names”, *Clan MacMillan septs and related names*, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/genealogy/septs.html>

<sup>74</sup> Dr. Jamie MacDonald, Private discussions with Joseph L. Bell on 14 July 2018.

Jamie MacDonald holds a Ph.D. in Scottish Studies from the University of Edinburgh and a DipHE in Gaelic and Related Studies from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in the Isle of Skye. Jamie has taught Gaelic language and song in the U.S. and Scotland, and was Professor of Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University in Canada.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### Attachment 9

#### Relative Population Estimate of the Border Bells Versus the MacMillan Bells

Far more people today with the Bell surname have their origin from the Scottish border and England, and not from MacMillan origins. Scots had a proverb “numerous as the Bells of Middlebie” to deal with the many Bells around the Scottish border. The Border Bell presence in England was also significant. In comparison, the “[Macmillan] Bells are far less numerous and unrelated to the Border Reiver Bells.”<sup>75</sup>

As noted on the Clan MacMillan website: “the surname Bell is fairly common in Scotland, and only those bearing it whose ancestors came from the Highlands - and particularly Argyll and other areas associated with the MacMillans - can certainly be linked to the [MacMillan] clan.”<sup>76</sup>

A rough estimate of the Border Bell versus MacMillan Bells population percentage can be made from the UK 1891 census results by county.<sup>77</sup> Assuming that all Bell families in Highland counties were once MacMillans, while border counties are estimated percentages of Border Bells, allows a calculation of rough estimates. These estimates do not include Bells in Australia, Canada, Northern Ireland, and the United States. Heat maps in Figure 11 and Figure 12 of surname populations in the UK from Public Profiler<sup>78</sup> helped estimate the percentage of Border Bells versus MacMillan Bells by county from the 1891 UK census. Although this estimate method has arbitrary aspects to it, it does break the problem into smaller parts, and uses the best available data.

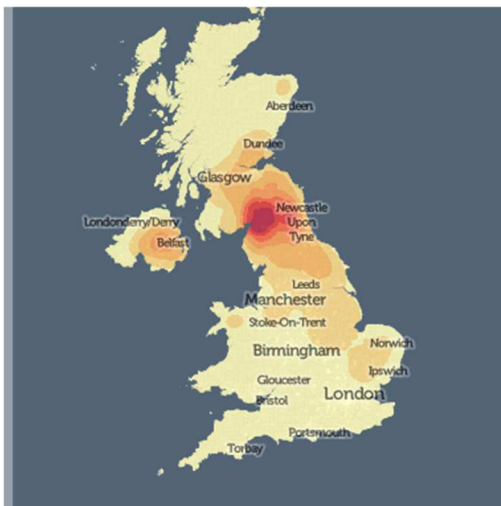


Figure 11 – Map for Bell Name Frequency<sup>79</sup>

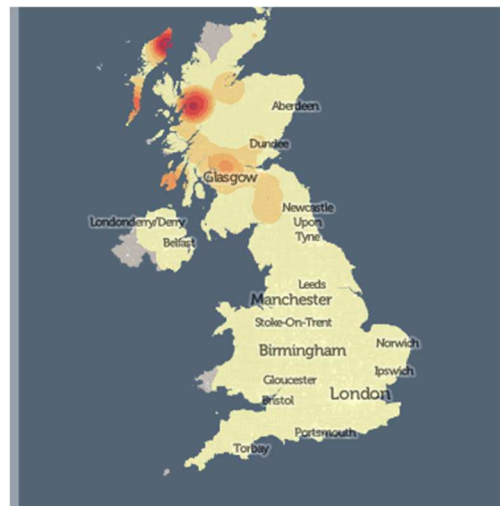


Figure 12 – Map for MacMillan Name Frequency<sup>80</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Tyrone Bowes, Ph.D., *Pinpointing David Bell's Scottish Paternal Ancestral Genetic Homeland*, 18 July 2018.

<sup>76</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Septs and related names.”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/genealogy/septs.html>

<sup>77</sup> James Elton Bell and Frances Jean Bell, “*Bell Roots: Our Early History, 825-1800*”, (Oro Valley, AZ: Bell Book Bank Ltd., 2014), 11.

<sup>78</sup> PublicProfiler, “named by PublicProfiler”, *named - Map your surname across the UK*, <http://named.publicprofiler.org>

The Named project was created by Oliver O'Brien (UCL Dept of Geography) with the KDE map generation code from ASU School of Computing, and uses data from the edited Electoral Roll for the United Kingdom.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid*

<sup>80</sup> *ibid*



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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The frequency of people with the Bell surname can be seen in Figure 11 as a heat map of people in the UK named Bell. The map for Bell name frequency in Figure 11 shows a strong red in the border of Scotland and into Carlisle in England and in Northern Ireland. The lightly shaded area for people named MacMillan in Figure 12 includes Roxburgh, Selkirk and the eastern edge of Dumfries (Langholm). The slight increase for MacMillans in this Middle March border area may be a result of the Highland clearances.

The estimate allocating the 1891 UK census results by county results in the overall estimate with about 9% MacMillan Bells and 91% Border Bells in the UK. The Northern Ireland and Australia are likely an even higher percentage of Border Bells. The US percentage is difficult to estimate, but the area of pre-Revolutionary War migration is a similar proportion for the later Highland groups versus the earlier Scots-Irish migration.

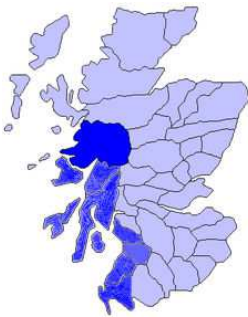


Figure 13 – Map of Pre-Clearance MacMillan Areas

In contrast, the areas with MacMillan Bells show only the lightest color for frequency of the Bell name. MacMillan Bells would be expected in the areas of Argyll, Ayrshire, Galloway, Glen Aray, Glen Shira and Lochaber, which are shaded in Figure 13. The only areas of significant overlap before the Highland clearances are in Ayrshire in areas with the lightest shading for Bell population, and possibly the eastern area of Galloway that is close to Dumfries.

Somerled MacMillan notes the beginnings of the MacMillans who later changed their name to Bell:

*“Only in certain parts of Argyll do we find this branch of the clan termed “Na Belaich” who, for some strange reason, have adopted the name ‘Bell’ in English. Those Bells are actually descendants of the MacMillans in Glen Aray and Glen Shira. Their progenitor was one of the six clansmen who accompanied Malcolm Mor’s son when he fled to Lochaber about 1365.”<sup>81</sup>*

The limited areas occupied in Scotland by the branch of MacMillan who changed their name to Bell, and the smaller area of Highland Scots migration to the United States,<sup>82</sup> further supports the estimate of MacMillan Bells as a small percentage of people named Bell.

The estimate of 9% MacMillan-Bells versus 91% Border Bells is subject to the problems associated with any estimate, but roughly shows how misleading to it is for MacMillan to claim Bell as a sept. This rough estimate of the relative populations has people named Bell (but not related to MacMillans) outnumbering the former MacMillan-Bells by about ten to one (91% versus 9%).

<sup>81</sup> Somerled MacMillan *“The MacMillans and Their Septs”*, 111

<sup>82</sup> Clan MacMillan, *“Clan MacMillan International – Map of Scottish Highland and Scots-Irish lands and immigration routes”*, [http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/history/immigration\\_map.html](http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/history/immigration_map.html)



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### Attachment 10

#### McBell and Other MacMillan Sept Names

The discussion of the “Bell sept” on the MacMillan website mentions the McBell surname:

*“The name McBell is on record amongst Scottish emigrants to America in the late 18th century, though in Scotland it seems to have evolved into MacGill, which was recognised in Kintyre as a MacMillan sept.”<sup>83</sup>*

The Highland Bells - Na Belaich (MacMillan) web page has similar mention of McBell:

*“The gill of the name M'gill is another version of the same, and at least one example can be found of the equivalent form McBell (Malcolm, Daniel and Alexander McBell appear on a tax list for 1795 in Richmond Co., North Carolina).”<sup>84</sup>*

The McBell surname found in 1795 is evidence that some Bells who changed their name to Bell later had allegiance to MacMillan, and were able to change their name back to something closer to MacMillan.



Figure 14 –Bell Gravestone at Inverary

According to the 2010 US census, there were less than 122 people (which is equivalent to a zero result for this data source) in the United States with the McBell surname, and 1,638 people who use McBell as a first name.<sup>85</sup>

There is an example of a Bell family with MacMillan ancestry who used an ancient MacMillan name on the Angus Bell gravestone at Inverary:

*“The most concrete evidence of these Bells' connection with Clan MacMillan is to be found in the burial ground at Inverary. Among the many Bell gravestones there is one - pictured at left - commemorating Angus and his wife Ann Munro, farmers at Tullich. At the top of this handsome monument, erected in 1897 when Angus died in the 96th year of his age, the family have engraved their ancient clan name **MAC ILLEMHAO**”<sup>86</sup>*

Those Bells who can trace their genealogy to a MacMillan ancestor in the Highlands can choose to be members of Clan MacMillan, without any need for a Bell sept. Changing their surname to McBell, or adding their ancient MacMillan name to family gravestones are also options, and a fitting tribute to their Gaelic roots.

The McBell sept of MacMillan clearly belongs to Clan MacMillan, and the McBell sept avoids the infringement of the identity of Clan Bell that is unavoidable when MacMillan claimed a Bell sept.

<sup>83</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Septs and related names.”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/genealogy/septs.html>

<sup>84</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>

<sup>85</sup> Auron Technologies, LLC, “How Many of Me”, <http://www.howmanyofme.com/search/>

<sup>86</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Highland Bells - Na Belaich”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/members/septs/bell.html>



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### Attachment 11

#### Bells with Significant Accomplishments Are Not from MacMillan Names

The Bells listed in the Clan Bell handout titled “Bells Invented the Modern World” all trace their paternal lineage to Bells who are not from the Highlands and did not have MacMillan names. Yet Clan MacMillan claims important Bells from the Border Bells, like Alexander Graham Bell, as if they were MacMillans.

## Clan MacMillan International Centre.



Figure 15 – Alexander Graham Bell Used in a Display at the Clan MacMillan International Centre<sup>87</sup>

Although Clan MacMillan claims to respect that the Border Bells have a separate identity from MacMillan,<sup>88</sup> they frequently take control of the Border Bell identity in order to claim accomplishments that do not belong to any MacMillan.

A detailed review of the list of Border Bells who “invented the modern world” (and some planned additions to the list) shows it contains only Border Bells, English and German Bells with no MacMillan links on their direct paternal lineage. Review of the many Bells listed in the book *One Hundred & Twenty Five Bell Families Contribute to History*<sup>89</sup> is a long term work in progress.

<sup>87</sup> Clan MacMillan International, “Clan MacMillan International Centre”, *Clan MacMillan International Centre*, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/about/centre.html>

<sup>88</sup> Clan MacMillan, “Septs and related names.”, <http://www.clanmacmillan.org/pages/genealogy/septs.html>  
“The traditions of the Bells of Kirkconnell, the leading Border family of the name in the 15th century speak of an ancestor that came from France with the Earl of Douglas in the previous century, and descendants of the Bells of Blackethouse (their 16th century chiefs), maintain a separate identity which is respected by Clan MacMillan.”

<sup>89</sup> James Elton Bell, *One Hundred & Twenty Five Bell Families Contribute to History*, (Tucson, AZ: Bell Book Bank, Ltd., 2016).



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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<b>Name &amp; Years</b>	<b>Significant Accomplishment</b>	<b>Early Paternal Lineage</b>
Alexander Graham Bell 1847 – 1922	Invented the telephone and hydrofoil boat	Patrick Bell, born 4 September 1624 at West Lothian, Scotland
Dr. Joseph Bell 1837 – 1911	Model for Sherlock Holmes, famous surgeon and forensic pathologist	Rev Benjamin Bell, 1680–1762, born 1680 at Dumfries, Dumfries-shire, Scotland
Sir Charles Bell 1774 – 1842	Surgeon, anatomist, and neurologist who discovered Bell's nerve, Bell's palsy, Bell's spasm, and Bell's phenomenon	Rev William Bell 1704–1779 born 3 July, 1704 at Gladsmuir, East Lothian, Scotland
Rev. Patrick Bell 1800 – 1869	Invented a mechanical reaping machine	Robert Mason Bell, 1746–1822, born 09 Feb 1746 at Lanark, Scotland
Henry Bell 1767 - 1830	Pioneered development of the steamship, and introduced the first successful passenger steamboat service in Europe	Patrick Bell, 1726–1793, born 2 Oct 1726 at Strathmill, Torphichen, West Lothian, Scotland
Andrew Bell 1726-1809	Co-founder and later the sole proprietor of the Encyclopedia Britannica.	Alexander Baillie Bell, 1726–1789, born about 1726 in Scotland, died 3 March 1789 at St Leonards, Fife, Scotland
Arthur Bell 1825 - 1900	Creator of Bell's Whisky, a best-selling scotch in Scotland and the UK	James Bell, 1682–1740, born March 1682 at Annandale, Perth, Scotland
Larry Bell 1894 - 1956	Founder of Bell Aviation Company, an innovator in aviation jets and helicopters	Edmund Bell, 1562–1607, born 7 April 1562 at Beaupre Hall, Outwell, Norfolk, England
Glen William Bell, Jr. 1923 - 2010	Created and franchised Taco Bell restaurants	Ernst Friederich Ludwig Bell, 1828–1886, born 11 November 1828 at Mecklenburg, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany

Table 3 – The Non-Highland Origin of Significant Bells Listed in “Bells Invented the Modern World”

A male Bell ancestor traced back to 1743 or earlier shows that the person is NOT a MacMillan. The evidence shows that there was no MacMillan / McIlvoyle family that used the Bell name before a single Bell entry in the Parish Register in 1743. This information makes a line of male Bell ancestors not located in Inverary or the Highlands evidence that a specific Bell is not descended from the McIlvoyle name or from the MacMillans.

The Bells with MacMillan ancestors are considered part of Clan Bell. This analysis of whether any Bell listed on “Bells Invented the Modern World” is to establish whether it is proper for Clan MacMillan to claim the accomplishments of any of these specific people. It is not appropriate for Clan MacMillan to claim any of them because none of them trace their direct patrilineal ancestry to a former MacMillan.

The number of Bells with MacMillan ancestry is very small compared to the number of Border Bells, English and European Bells, so with a random allocation of talent it is to be expected that there would only be one or less Bells with MacMillan ancestry on this honored list.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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<b>Name &amp; Years</b>	<b>Significant Accomplishment</b>	<b>Early Paternal Lineage</b>
Jocelyn Bell Burnell 1943 - Living	Astrophysicist who was first to observe and precisely analyze radio pulsars	Northern Ireland. Roger Bell, born about 1568 at Aylesbury, Bucks, England
George Joseph Bell 1770 - 1843	Legal scholar and author of "Principles of the Law of Scotland"	Rev William Bell, 1704–1779, born 3 July, 1704 at Gladsmuir, East Lothian, Scotland
John Stewart Bell 1928 - 1990	A Northern Irish physicist, and the originator of Bell's theorem, an important theorem in quantum physics regarding hidden variable theories.	Northern Ireland, TBD
Gertrude Bell 1868 - 1926	Writer, traveler, British diplomat and spy, founder of Baghdad Archaeology Museum. Instrumental in negotiating the borders of Iraq.	Thomas Bell, 1784–1845, born 5 Mar 1784 at Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland, England. Died 20 April 1845
Louis Bell 1864 - 1923	Inventor and pioneer in electricity. Designed and installed the first three phase generators in industrial plants in US. Professor of Physics Purdue University	Matthew Bell, born about 1650 at Kirconnel, Scotland
Robert Bell 1945 - Living	Aerospace engineer elected to the International Space Exploration Hall of Fame	Y-DNA results match the profile for Border Bell and not for MacMillan
Ruth Bell Graham 1920 - 2007	Wife of evangelist Billy Graham, author	Joseph Bell Jr, 1778–1855, born 25 May 1778 at Augusta County, Virginia, USA. <sup>90</sup>

Table 4 – The Non-Highland Origin of “More Bells Invented the Modern World” Candidates

<sup>90</sup> This is a common ancestor with Joseph L. Bell, the author of this paper, whose Y-DNA results match an ancestor of William “Redcloak” Bell – the last chief of Clan Bell and a Border Bell.



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

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### **AFTERWORD**

An unfortunate side effect of this effort is that it could create a false impression that being associated with MacMillan is not desirable. It is a matter of correcting the historical record that has been distorted by confirmation bias and errors in tartan books.

It was necessary to deal with the many bad arguments created by a MacMillan historian who tried to justify the MacMillan sept claim of Bell beyond what actual evidence can support. In contrast, Somerled MacMillan just left the Bell sept claim as a group of MacMillans who changed their name to Bell for some unknown reason.

The MacMillan assumption that the name change to Bell was “arbitrary” is the most prejudiced assumption possible on the topic of their sept claim. Calling the name change “arbitrary” implicitly assumes without evidence that there was no particular reason for the name change to Bell. This is mere prejudice against the possibility of there being specific reasons for the MacIlvoyles to choose the surname of Bell. Calling the name change “arbitrary” ignores two critical points of evidence that the name change was not arbitrary:

- 1) the name change from MacIlvoyle in the Parish Registers was a total change to Bell which indicates that the change had a purpose that was compelling, and
- 2) the bitter dispute involving the MacIlvoyles who changed their names to Bell could be a reason to change allegiance to another specific clan.

Here is an arbitrary assumption that cannot be ruled out even though no specific evidence has been found to date: The MacIlvoyles changed their allegiance to a specific Bell clan leader and are therefore a sept of Bell who specifically abandoned allegiance to Clan MacMillan. Although it is arbitrary to assume that there was a Bell clan leader, it makes more sense of the total name change to Bell than the MacMillan assumption that it was just an arbitrary choice of a surname.

One meaning of Sept is a surname specifically recognized by a clan chief for meritorious service to the clan, and who the clan owes a perpetual debt of protection for that service. A member of a sept has rights that members of the clan do not have. For example, members of a sept can wear the clan tartan but members of the clan do not have a right to the tartan of a sept.

With honored recognition and protection by a specific clan, even septs who are actually a clan in their own right might consider it a positive result to be considered a sept. Unfortunately, clans who claim septs too often treat the sept as a fully-owned part of that clan without any mention of the one-way obligations of the clan to the sept. Sept lists are too often used by one clan as just a way to take members away from other clans resulting in an attack on the sept instead of protection. Tartan sellers too often insist that Bells who want a Bell of the Borders tartan **MUST** wear the MacMillan tartan just because they are listed as a sept.

Even in the Highlands, the name Bell did not fit a definition of sept before about 1743 since there is no evidence any of them that used the name Bell. After the comprehensive change of the MacIlvoyle names to Bell, their surname actually indicated rebellion from MacMillan chiefs as the result of a bitter clan dispute.

If the choice of Bell was just an arbitrary way to avoid trouble with redcoats and stay in the Highlands in peace, then it was a very bad choice since Bells were declared an unruly clan and were among the first



## Clan Bell and the MacMillan Sept Claims

By Joseph L. Bell  
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clans to be forced to migrate to the Ulster Plantation. Being troublesome to the MacMillan chiefs might make the Highland Bells kindred spirits to the Bells, who were troublesome at times on the border.

The sept game for taking members from other clans includes lists of “related names”, so whether the Highland Bells are a related name to MacMillan also needs to be addressed. The name Bell was not used before the name change by those who became Bells in the Highlands. After the name change, these Bells were from descended from MacIlvoyle but not owing allegiance to MacMillan. It is important to note that even before the name change, the MacIlvoyle and MacMillan names were treated as separate names in the Parish Registers.

The bitter dispute that caused the name change to Bell faded from memory after generations, and combined with the tartan book errors, and Bells living close to MacMillans and inter-marriage led to the assumption that Bell was somehow a sept. That is a very weak basis to even claim Bell as a related name, since these relatives specifically changed their surname to break from MacMillan. The some of the Bells from the Highlands may technically be related to MacMillans through intermarriage but their use of the Bell surname proves something else on the clan allegiance for the genealogy of their father’s lineage.

Clan MacMillan has reduced the scope of their Bell sept claim in the recent past by noting that the Border Bells are a separate people and a clan in their own right. Further review of the evidence should result in additional clarification and change to drop the Bell sept claim and greatly restrict any claim as a related name. Review of the genealogy of specific Bells with important accomplishments also shows that these individual Bells are exclusively from the Border Bells and not related to Bells from the Highlands. Therefore, Clan MacMillan should not claim any of these accomplished Border Bells as if they were in any way related to MacMillan.

These further reductions in the Clan MacMillan claims of what is Bell heritage would be a welcome outcome for Bells. However, it will also be a difficult and necessary outcome for Clan MacMillan because the “Na Belaich” or Highland Bells are currently claimed as the largest sept of MacMillan and they display Alexander Graham Bell and others on their website and in their visitor center.