Traditional genealogies place the origin of this clan among the ancient Britons of Strathclyde, but the first Campbell in written records is Gillespie, in 1263. Early grants of land to him and his relations were almost all in east-central Scotland, although the family’s first connection with Argyll appears to have come about some generations before, with the marriage of a Campbell to the dynastic heiress of the O’Duines, who brought with her the Lordship of Loch Awe. Through this connection the clan took its early name of Clan O’Duine, a name which was later supplanted by the style Clan Diarmid, from a fancied connection with a great hero from early Celtic mythology, Diarmid the Boar. The original seat of the clan was either Innischonnel Castle on Lock Awe, which was in Campbell hands by the early fourteenth century, or Caisteal na Nigheann Ruaidhe on Loch Avich. The Campbell handholding spread, with Craingnich, Avaslotnisk, Melfort and Strachur, together with other lands of Cowal, being early additions, and the family’s power soon spread throughout Argyll.

At first the Campbells were under the domination of the Macdougal Lords of Lorne who killed the Campbell chief Sir Cailen Mor Campbell, in 1296. (All subsequent Campbell chiefs have taken as their Gaelic patronymic, ‘MacCailein Mor’). However, this situation was reversed in the time of his son, Sir Neil, a staunch ally and companion of Robert the Bruce, by whom he was rewarded with extensive grants of land forfeited by the Lords of Lorne and other enemies in Argyll. It was this that gave initial impetus to the rise to power of the Campbells in the west Highlands. The king also gave his sister in marriage to Sir Neil, who appears to have disposed of his existing wife for this better offer, a common practice at a time when noble marriages were primarily a means of forging alliances. This royal marriage resulted in a son, John, who was created Earl of Atholl. John was killed at the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333, and with no heir to succeed, the title and lands passed out of Campbell hands. However, this close royal connection may have helped to ensure the emergence of the Loch Awe branch as the chiefly line of the Campbells. The Macarthur Campbells of Strachur may well have been senior by primo geniture, but their chance of pre-eminence failed when a projected marriage with the MacRuari heiress to Garmoran was prevented by her family. The lands later fell into the hands of the expanding Clan Donald, but not before a charter had been made out to her intended husband, Arthur Campbell, a younger son of Strachur. This gave rise to the celebrated incident in 1427 when James I executed both John Macarthur, a descendent of the disappointed bridegroom, and the then Macruari chief in order to settle the quarrel over the right to Garmoran.

Throughout the fifteenth century the Campbells gave steady support to the Crown in an area where royal influence was under severe pressure, first from the rival Crown of Norway and then from the descendents of Somerled, former Lord of the Isles, with the eventual emergence of the Crown’s most powerful rival in the Macdonald Lordship of the Isles. The Lordship of the Isles was broken by the Crown by the end of the fifteenth century, leaving the Campbells the main power in the area. Thereafter they continued to act as the chief instrument of central authority in the
region. This long struggle for supremacy, and with it, the headship of the Gael, may be said to be the real cause for
the ancient enmity between the Campbells and the Macdonals.

In 1445, Sir Duncan Campbell of Loch Awe became Lord Campbell. In 1457 his grandson and heir, Colin, was
created Earl of Argyll. He married one of the three daughters of the Stewart Lord of Lorne, and through a financial
deal with his wife’s uncle, he brought the Lordship of Lorne to the Campbells, with not only much land and the
stronghold of Dunstaffnage, but the important dynastic significance of a title which represented the senior line of the
descendants of Somerled; from then on the Campbell chiefs quartered the galley of the Isles in their Arms. His
uncle, another Colin, also married another of the Stewart daughters and founded a line which was to rival that of
Loch Awe in terms of power and importance – the Campbells of Glenorchy, later Earls of Breadalbane. The Earls of
Breadalbane were to build themselves the palatial Taymouth Castle, at the east end of Loch Tay, which still stands
to this day. It was said at one time that Breadalbane could ride for a hundred miles across his family’s possessions
which stretched from Perthshire to the Atlantic.

The Campbell family held other earldoms, in the north and south of the country, As Earls of Loudoun they held
land in Ayrshire and spawned a host of lairdships there; and they gained the thanedom of Cawdor from the Calder’s
as a result of the marriage of an infant Calder heiress to one of Argyll’s sons, founding the great house of the earls of
Cawdor.

However, internal rivalry for the chieftship led to a feud which threatened to split the clan. Campbell of Cawdor, a
guardian of the young seventh Earl of Argyll, was murdered in 1592 during a conspiracy by some of the other
guardians, which threatened the child’s life and that of his brother. None of the principal conspirators was brought
to justice, but the young earl survived a suspected poisoning attempt to become an able soldier and unite the clan.

Campbell support for central government brought rewards. In 1807 Archibald, seventh Earl of Argyll, was
granted former Macdonald lands in Kintyre, while in 1615 Campbell of Cawdor was allowed to purchase Islay and
most of Jura which had previously belonged to the Macleans of Duart.

The civil war and the invasion of the Irish Macdonalds into Argyllin support of the great Montrose brought
wholesale death and destruction, and at Inverlochy in 1645 the clan suffered the biggest single defeat in its history.
Archibald, the eight Earl, attempted to maintain a precarious balance between his espousal of the Covenant and his
support for Charles II’s attempts to win his father’s throne. But it was a balance too fine to be maintained, and the
earls was executed for treason after the Restoration. His son, the ninth Earl, was staunch in his loyalty to the
Protestant religion and he, like his father, was executed, this time as a result of his support for the rebellion of
Monmouth against the king.

The Revolution of 1688 once more restored the family fortunes, and in 1703 William of Orange created the tenth
Earl, Duke of Argyll and Marquess of Lorne and Kintyre, with a string of lesser titles. The second Duke was one of
the first officers of the British army to be promoted to the rank of field marshall; his military skills were said to be
equal to, if not greater than, those of his renowned contemporary, Marlborough, and he became commander-in-chief
of the British army. He was succeeded by his brother, the most influential man in Scotland and a proponent of the
Treaty of Union in 1707.

The success of the Campbells owed much to a remarkable succession of chiefs, although they could not have
achieved what they did without the support of their people. Throughout their history the chiefs managed to combine
their role of Highland clan chiefs with a strong presence at court, which insured them a leading part in the affairs of
Scotland, Great Britain and the Empire. In the days when allegiances were expressed by bonds of man rent, the
chiefs of a dozen clans swore allegiance to Argyll, whose superiority as lord extended to the Outer Hebrides, and his
clanmen possessed great swathes of Scotland both within and without the bounds of the Highlands. They were
difficult neighbors and their success, and the ways in which they achieved it, brought them many enemies, but no-
one could gainsay those achievements. Shortly before 1745 the strength of Clan Campbell was upped to a total of
some five thousand men.

The rise of Empire opened up many other opportunities to serve the Crown, and no less than sixteen regiments of
the British army were at one time or another raised by members of the clan. The Argyll and Sutherland
Highlanders, descended from Lochnell’s 98th (later 91st) Highlanders still wear the Duke’s boar’s head as their cap
badge and charge to the Campbell battle-cry, ‘Cruachan’. The intense pride of the Campbells in their ancestry was
illustrated when Queen Victoria’s daughter, Princess Louise, became engaged to the Marquess of Lorne, the ninth
Duke’s heir, in a marriage which was sensational in its day. The news was apparently told to an old lady in
Inverary, who is said to have replied, ‘Achweel, Her Majesty’s be prood wumman the day, wat wi’ her dochter
getting’ mairrit on the son of MacCailein Mor’.

Campbells have spread out across the globe and have prospered. Geographic features throughout the world are
called after the family, and although there are now fewer Campbells still owning lands in the Highlands, the family
still prospers there. No less than four Campbell peerages have been created since the end of the Second World War.
to add to the fifteen Campbell families who have already been distinguished in this way. Much of the ancestral lands are still in family hands, including the Castles of Inverary, Dunstaffnage and Cawdor. MacCailein Mor is often to be seen at great state ceremonials in his capacity as hereditary Great Master of the Royal Household. The Clan Campbell is now organized as a world-wide association with a permanent base at Inverary Castle which is still the family home of the twelfth Duke of Argyll and twenty-sixth chief.

Taken from “Scottish Clan & Family Encyclopedia”, by Collins, HarperCollins Publishers 1994

Clan CAMPBELL Septs -

ARThUR, KISSACK,-OCK - MAC DERMTON, MAC KILGIR
BALLANTYNE -INE, KNAP(P) - MAC DERMOT, MAC KIPPEN(S)
BANNATYNE -INE, LORNE - MAC DERMYUT (E) - MAC KISSACK
BANNER, LOUDEN,-IN - MAC DIRMIT, MAC KISSOCK
BARNES, LOUNTAIN - MAC DONACHIE,-Y, MAC KONKEY,-IE
BARN, LOWDEN,-ON,-IN - MAC DORMAN (D) - MAC LAWS
BL YTHMAN, MAC AILLION - MAC DURMET - MAC LEHOSE
BOURNE, MAC AR - MAC DURMIT (T) - MAC LIVER
BURNETT (Western), MAC ART(T)ER - MAC ELLER,-AR - MAC NEVEN(S)
BURNS, MACartaIR - MAC ELLERY, MAC NICOL(S)
BYRNES, MAC ARTHUR - MAC ELVIE, -Y - MAC NICOL(L)(S)
CAD(D)ELL, MAC ASKIN(E) - MAC ELWEE - MAC NIVEN(S)
CADDER, MAC ASTON - MAC ELYA - MAC NOCAIRD
CALDER, MAC CALLIN - MAC ELYEA - MAC ONACHIE,-Y
CAMBEL, MAC CALLION - MAC EVER - MAC ORAN
CAMBL, MAC CAMMEL - MAC GARROW - MAC PHIEDRAN,-ON
CAMEL, MAC CARRY,-IE - MAC GIBBON - MAC PHIEDRAN,-ON
CAMP, MAC CARTER - MAC GIBBONY,-IE - MAC PHUN(N)
CAMPBEL, MAC CASHIN - MAC GILKER - MAC PRIOR
CATTELL, MAC CASKEN - MAC GIVEN (S) - MAC QUAKER
CAUDILL, MAC CASKIN - MAC GLASARICH,-K - MAC QUARN
CAUDLE, MAC CAWELL - MAC GLEAVE - MAC QUIRN(S)
CONNOLYIE,-Y, MAC CHARLATIE,-Y - MAC GUBBIN(S) - MAC QUIRN(S)
CONNOSIE,-Y, MAC COLLAN - MAC GURE - MAC QUIRN(S)
DENNOON, MAC COL(E)N - MAC ILVAY - MAC TAMBIE, -Y
DERM (A) ID, MAC COLM - MAC ILWEE - MAC TAUSE
DUNAN, MAC COLMBE - MAC ISSAC(S) - MAC TAVISH
DUNMIRE, MAC COMISKIE,-Y - MAC IVAR (S) - MAC URE
DUNMORE, MAC COMPSIE,-Y - MAC IVER (S) - MAC VICAR
DUNNOON, MAC COMSIE,-Y - MAC IVOR(S) - MAC VICKER,-AR(S)
FISHER, MAC CONACHIE,-Y - MAC KELLAR (S) - MAC WARAN (S)
GIBBON, MAC CONCHIE - MAC KELLER(S) - MAC WARN (S)
GRANCE, MAC CONNECHY,-IE - MAC KELLOR(S) - MAC WARRAN,-EN
HARRIES, MAC CONNOCHIE,-Y - MAC KELVIE,-Y - MAC WIRN (S)
HARRIS, MAC CORAN - MAC KER(R)Y,-IE - MAC WORN (S)
HASTINGS (West), MAC CORN - MAC KERLICH - MAGELBY,-IE
HAWES, MAC CRELAR(S) - MAC KERLIE - MOORE
HAWS, MAC CRELLAS, -I S - MAC KES(S)EN - MUIR
HAWSON, MAC CROM - MAC KES(S)ON - NEVIN
ISAAC(S), MAC CULLAR (S) - MAC KESIE,-Y - NEVINSON
IVerson, MAC DAIRD - MAC KESIND - NEVISON
KAMBELL, MAC DERM(A) ID - MAC KESSACK,-ICK - NIVEN(S)
KIMBALL,-ELL, MAC DERMIERD - MAC KESSIE,-Y - NIVISON
KIMBLE, MAC DERMIT(T) - MAC KESSOCK - O'DUIN

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