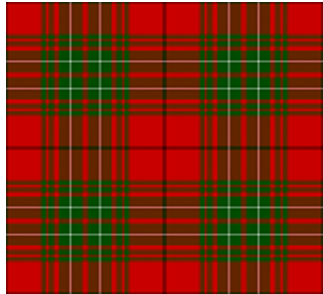


Comyn Connection - or not?



The Cumming clan crest is on a brooch my father had on a kilt. He explained it was the family clan. In his "Reminiscences" book, Alexander Penny suggests the family had been on the Hallmoss, Rathen estate 500 years. That arguably takes us back to the mid-1300s to early 1400s.

At the time of writing, the 100th anniversary of the First World War was being commemorated and this line from an American poet, Maya Angelou, was being quoted - "Courage is the most important of all virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently".

Certainly the North East of Scotland (where the Pennys farmed) is Comyn, Cumyn or Cumming territory and, in typical main clan and dependent family associations there is an argument that the Pennys could have been linked in with the Comyns; but if that is the case it could be further back than the 1400s.

Clan Cumming, also known as Clan Comyn, played a major role in the history of 13th century Scotland and in the Wars of Scottish Independence. They were instrumental in defeating the English at the Battle of Roslin in 1303. The Clan Comyn were once the most powerful family in Scotland until they were defeated in the civil war by their rival to the Scottish throne, Robert the Bruce.

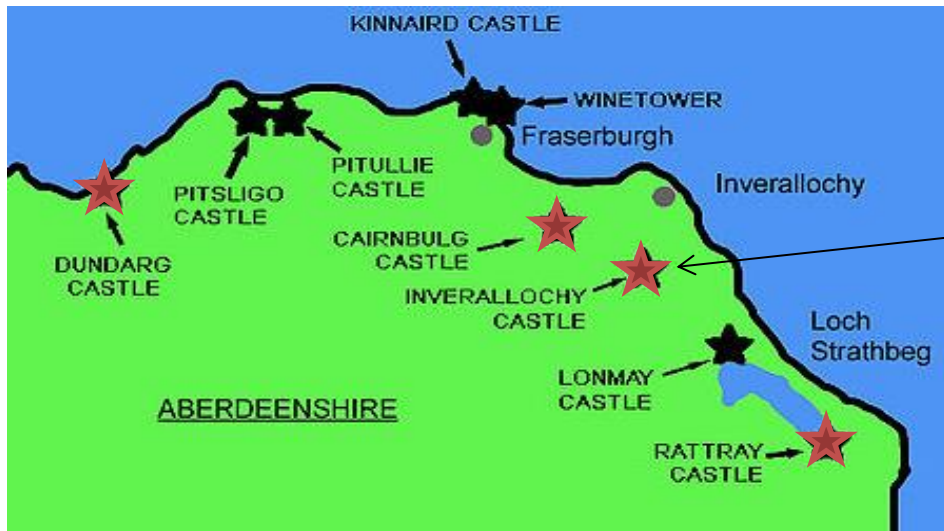
According to Sir Bernard Burke, John, Count de Comyn, and Baron of Tonsberg, in Normandy, was the son of Baldwin, a distinguished Soldier of the Cross and grandson of Charles, Duke d'Ingeheim who was fifth son of the Emperor Charlemagne. John had two sons one of whom (Harlowen de Burg) married Arlotta - the mother of William the Conqueror. Together they had two sons Odo (Bishop of Bayeux - created Earl of Kent in 1068) and Robert (Count de Moreton - created Earl of Cornwall in 1068). Both these sons were with their half-brother, William, at the Battle of Hastings.

The Comyn name later appears as Earl of Buchan with Alexander in 1237 who was the Great Justiciar in 1258 and High Constable from 1275 until his death in 1289. He was a rival of Robert the Bruce.

An illustrious list, indeed. But what could their connection be with the Pennys? Both Comyns and Pennys are of Norman origin, they may both have come to Britain at the time of the Norman Conquest

Conversely some sources suggest that the surname Penney (Penny) dates from the Anglo-Saxon culture of Britain first found in Northampton, then London before the 12th century, then Scotland and Ireland.

Maybe the Pennys were a family associated with Clan Comyn but seemingly no more than that - there is no evidence of direct descent. An added complication is the discovery of my Penny line and Auchterarder.



The nine castles of the "Knuckle" - the promontory between the Moray Firth and the North Sea. It appears that four were built by the Comyn family - Cairnbulg, Dundarg, Inverallochy and Rattray. ★



Inverallochy castle a half mile south of Cairnbulg castle near Fraserburgh.