

THE PROBABLE SERIAL GEOMORPHIC EVENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE CAPTURE AND DIVERSION OF THE ORIGINAL COURSE OF THE RIVER EVELIX.

- The Ice Age : cuts the valley of the ultimate River Evelix in a near straight line from Loch Laro to the sea.
- Immediate Post-Glaciation : the melt-water channel of the receding ice flows into a gradually rising sea, at Achinchanter, following the line of the ice-cut valley in a generally south-east direction.
- Late Post-Glaciation : The continental ice-caps melt, raising sea-level throughout the world, and the land, relieved of the weight of ice, gradually rises, but at a faster rate than the rising of the sea level. Raised beaches are formed at new sea-levels, including the Achinchanter area – thus blocking off the old mouth of the River Evelix, and forming a retention lake between Dornoch and Pitgrudie. The level of this Dornoch Lake rises, seeking overspill, which it effects by two channels:-
- (1) : First at the Milltown of Evelix – Evelix Bridge (A9) gap.
 - (2) : Much later on, by the Valley of the Dornoch Burn.
- The former, being by far the greater, drains the greater part of the Dornoch Lake, and forms the modern, captured, south-westerly course of the Evelix, between Cyderhall (Sidera) Farm and Evelix House, and onwards to the Meikle Ferry.
- The latter, losing thus much of its possible catchment area, shrivels to a mere burn, running to the sea through the town of Dornoch, having drained the rest of the once Dornoch Loch, and is often dry in prolonged drought.

The aerial photograph, exhibited, shows the dried river valley of the primaeval Evelix running right across the middle of the photograph, from west to east. The north slopes, consisting of the Embo Street Forestry Nursery slopes, and sloping fields of Pitgrudie Farm, are outstandingly apparent in the oblique nature of the camera view, from the north bank of the old river bed. The less obvious southerly slopes of the old river valley – following the contours of the post-glacial eskers and kames, in the immediate hinterland of Dornoch, are most acutely apparent in the rising hill of the Poles Road (B9168), at Balloan corner, and the gravel hillocks behind the old Dornoch Railway station, now the Industrial Estate, form the south slopes of the old river.

Further, there is evidence at Rearquhar School Corner (O.S. Grid Ref : NH: 79/89: 746 920) of the dried river bed of the old course of the River Evelix turning northwards, above the trace of the subsequent “Monk’s Canal” cut, apparently to join the existing Birichin Burn, at Fleuchary, and thence by Proncy, behind “Cherry-tree Cottage” and below Proncycroy and the Pitgrudie cemetery to Achinchanter, and so into the sea, in an almost straight course – before these land-movements obstructed a natural escape parallel to its neighbours on each flank, of the Dornoch Firth, the River Carnaig and the Valley of the Fleet.

It remains to be stated that the above is reasoned conjecture, based upon the study of the large-scale maps kindly donated by the Forestry Commission, photographs on the ground and in the air, by very considerable field study over the years of the area concerned, and by consultation and discussion, and is thus still theoretical.