Stone at Cladh Bhile

The KIST 14

THE KIST

The Magazine of
The Natural History & Antiquarian Society
of Mid-Argyll
President: Miss Campbell of Kilberry, FSA. FSAScot.
NUMBER FOURTEEN: Autumn 1977
Editor: F.S.Mackenna, MA. FSA. FSAScot.

CONTENTS

JOINT HON. SECRETARIES

Air Vice-Marshal Gordon Young, CBE, Middle Hill,
Ardrishaig.
Mrs A.M.Kahane, MA. FSAScot. (Membership and Kist)
Kilchoan Lodge, Poltalloch, by Lochgilphead

Price: 40p. (by post 50p.) Free to Members

OLD CRINAN

George Campbell
(A Conversation recorded by the Editor in November 1976)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

I have often wondered what that big chimney down at Crinan Harbour is for. Can you tell me anything about it?

Well yes, I can. I saw one of the family of the man who built that; 1954 I was talking to him; he was a McPhail, a Scotch name, and he was dead Scotch. It was a Vinegar Distillery and the manager was from England, an Englishman called Phillips, and in the end his daughter Eunice married the owner's son, McPhail; but the Englishman was never owner of the distillery. It was his grandson I was talking to. He said the distillery was built 130 years ago; that was in 1954, that would make it, now, about 1824, when it was built, I would say. Of course the man's dates just might be a rough date, but he was pretty accurate in all his things; and it was a Vinegar distillery, not any wood alcohol or anything like that, unless it was used for that in latter years, which I doubt, for when all's said and done this country didn't go in much for wood alcohol; America did, but not Britain. We shipped a lot of wood alcohol over during the last war from the States and it was used in this country, and it set an awful lot of our boys who were fond of a bucket off their head and put them plain absolutely crackers, killed them. They made their own whiskey without any fancy distilling about it, the kettle and a copper pipe, that's really all they wanted.

But it was vinegar at Crinan?

Vinegar at Crinan. There's a girl I was speaking to .....well she's not a girl now, she'll be roughly about 73, coming on anyway, and she told me she was born there and I remember old Grandfather, old Seanair McPhail, I remember him there, also his neighbour, old Hugh McAlpine, when I was a boy of 10 or thereabouts. She said that it was vinegar, definitely vinegar that was made at that distillery. They extracted acetic acid out of the oak and the birch, and I know that was done for various other purposes such as for preserving bacon and herring, kippering herring, different kinds of fish; they used the smoke warm going into the fish and the fish drank it in when they were warm, drank that smoke in. And that's

what they took of the old distillery at Crinan, was acetic acid....vinegar; just pure vinegar. So they must have distilled it there as well. What process they put it through I have no idea. I know it was not on its feet at the turn of the century; it was in a half state of ruin; not as bad as it is today but it was pretty well off, part of the roofs and that was off.

But why Crinan? Was it because of the shipping facilities?

I would say so, I would say so, for the type of craft that was running around then was craft that would be drawing loaded about 8'6" - 9'6"draft.

And how many did they employ?

Oh now, that's a question. I dont know the number; there must have been quite a number of boys at it. A lot of boats carting stuff in, in to the old pier, and then taking away the produce as they took in the timber; they were carting timber in. They burnt all the timber, or whatever they did with it, from around this area; there wasn't a scrap of oak or a birch; anything you see now is inside this century.

And after they had used all the timber did they import more or did they give up?

Oh no, they imported timber, they imported timber,they were taking timber from the Baltic into it.

That was what your people were at, but they went into Grangemouth didn't they?

Aye, but they were taking in also into Crinan and they took out of Crinan, but not the same boat that they had when they went into Grangemouth. But they took their boat, the John Bull, into these parts. She was the first boat that ever came into the Crinan Canal with a flag up, noting that she was from a foreign country.

A quarantine flag?

No, just a flag, an ensign ....your ensign's up if you're from a foreign country, the ensign's up at the mast head, so the John Bull was the first that ever came into this canal with her ensign flying.

And that was your folks who owned that boat?

Aye, that was them; it would be my grandfather.

Was that one of the boats you were telling me had been made out of an old battleship?

Not that one, no, that was before that; the John Bull, she was built and bought in Nova Scotia; they took her over from there and ran her on this coast. Either they took her over or some of them belonging to her bought her there and sent her over, I couldn't tell you just which, but that's where she came from.

When you were a boy and saw the ruins of the vinegar factory, were there a lot of buildings?

Oh there were two thatched cottages in occupation; there was Seanair McPhail, the Grandfather McPhail in the one nearest this way and next door to him was Hugh McAlpine and his sister Jean that was housekeeping to him. There was other old half-shaped buildings with walls up, no roofs but the walls up, coming this way on to the slate building. There was one woman I remember, Mary Ann McPhail was the name; now I dont think she was any relation of the McPhail that built the distillery but she was there and she owned that wee cottage at the corner.

How did they come to leave the chimney up?

Well they left all the buildings up as it was and gradually somebody wanted a bit of wood I expect and they helped themselves.

But they couldn't help themselves to the chimney!

They couldn't help themselves much to the chimney. The chimney's a beautiful chimney, well built, and has stood for that time, and it looks absolutely perfect. The walls of the distillery were a good deal higher when I remember it first than it is now but I never remember it with a complete roof over it - parts but never a complete roof.

Did you ever hear of any other vinegar distilleries in this neighbourhood?

No, I never heard anything, though I see by a book I read they say that there's mention of a methyl alcohol distillery in Carsaig and one in Crinan, but that's not right about the one in Crinan because it was definitely vinegar. Oh maybe perhaps they put it to the purpose of that after the vinegar stopped, they might have; they might have gone into wood alcohol after the vinegar stopped.

Did your folks have anything to do with this vinegar business?

They had nothing to do bar the cartage of timber back and forward. That's the only thing they did in connection with it was the freightage of wood. And they might probably have taken some in from the Baltic because they were the boys that traded anywhere.

Now what about these other boats that were built out of the battleship?

There was the Catherine McColl, she was carrying stuff through the canal, that was one of them.

Was that before the vinegar factory?

No. The vinegar factory might have been working when she was built, I think it would be, and she might even have carried stuff in because she got into difficulties with the Board of Trade, 1896 or thereabouts, it might have been even 1892, but it was somewhere around that; she was working by 1896 anyway and in good going order, braw order, after coming out of all the difficulties. Well the difficulties were so severe that the old man that had her ..... I think he was a McColl and I think he was a Duncan McColl ....it went to the poor old chap's head and he died, as far as I know, in the asylum and I think it was up at Lochgilphead. The Board of Trade was so severe on him and he backchatted them and got them angry, one tossing against the other, and of course they just went from one thing to another and a hammer here and a hammer there and put a big bill upon the man in no time; so it knocked him crazy.

That's one boat; old Ebony was another; strange to say that boat finished up in our own hands. She was built off the remains of the same old battleship at Bowling by Scott the boatbuilder. I was speaking to one of the younger Scotts in the canal there, a number of years ago now, must be about fifteen to twenty years ago, and he knew about what I was talking about right enough.

How many other boats were built from the battleship?

Laburnum, the Ebony, and the Catherine McColl, that's three; there's another one too.

What rig had they?

Oh now, the Laburnum carried well, for the type of boat, she carried in the vicinity of 100 to 110 tons I think;

she was a big ketch. The Ebony was a ketch too and she carried 110. They weren't too deep loaded at that, they had a good freeboard at that.

Would they go outside Ardnamurchan?

Well, the Catherine McColl would go out in the summer time, but they preferred mostly sheltered waters for they had a big heavy boom on them. She was smack-rigged..... they're calling them sloops today.

Did they all work in and out of Crinan at times?

They all passed through the Canal, every one of them. The Ebony was as big a boat as went through the Canal, and she had a false rudder, made to my father's own dimensions; of course he served his time as a carpenter. I've seen the same article lying in Crinan where he'd left it on his last passage through. A false rudder, and they shipped it on her for the Canal and when they went through at the Ardrishaig end they took it off and left it ashore; coming back through the Canal going north again they put on their false rudder, and come to Crinan they unshipped it and threw it ashore and it lay in where the old coal ree used to be --- there's a diesel oil tank now ---inside of that wall.

When they got out at Ardrishaig where would they make for --- Greenock, I suppose?

A lot of them did their trade in Greenock but at that time they could trade to Ayr, Troon, but a lot of it was Greenock, right enough there was an awful trade to Greenock and to Glasgow.

So they were really doing what the puffers used to in a way?

Exactly the same trade; the puffers followed after them. The puffers cut them out. And the diesel boats have cut out the puffers. And its just gone from one thing to another; first the old sailing boats cut out and then the puffers cut out; the diesel boat has come.

...oOo...

Editorial Note. Readers may be interested to know that the Mediaeval Pot described in KIST 10 has been acquired by the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland.

THE HISTORY OF MAN IN NORTH KNAPDALE (2nd part)

Leslie Rymer

The Norse plundering expeditions began about 750 AD and permanent settlements were ultimately formed. At the height of their power the Norsemen controlled all the Scottish islands from Shetland to Islay, and the mainland areas of Caithness and Sutherland; also within their sphere of influence, if not under total occupation, were parts of the mainland of Ross and Argyll. That Knapdale came under this influence is shown by place names such as Danna (Dane island), Carsaig (marshy place), Scotnish (look-out cape), Ulva (wolf island), and others. Even Knapdale is derived from the Norse 'knapp-r' and 'dal-r' (hill and dale).

A treaty between Magnus Barelegs of Norway and Malcolm of Scotland dated 1098 gave to Magnus "all the islands that lie to the west of Scotland". In order to lay claim to the relatively fertile Kintyre peninsula it is said that Magnus had his boat drawn across the narrow isthmus between East and West Tarbert. As a result of this stratagem Knapdale became a frontier post. The political importance of this location may have been responsible for the building of Castle Sween. This is a remarkable 12th century castle, the oldest in Scotland, which controlled the entrance to Loch Sween. It is surprising to find a late-Norman keep of such considerable size within this now remote region of Britain. Measured over the walls it is 84 feet long by 70 feet broad (the Tower of London, which is the second largest on record, measures 118 feet by 107 feet).

Clearly a very large garrison must have been present. Some food may have been imported but much would have been produced locally, and large numbers of livestock must have been kept. A considerable settlement would have built up around the castle.

In the early 14th century King Robert Bruce beseiged Alexander, brother of the Lord of the Isles, "very strictly at Castle Swin, till he was obliged to surrender the castle" and Bruce was probably responsible for building the round tower. In 1310 Edward II, in order that "John the son of Swien, Argyle....might render [himself] more hateful to John of Monteth, his enemy....granted to [him] the whole land of Knapdale which belonged to his ancestors, provided [he] could recover it out of [his] enemies' hands". The

land had been granted to Monteth by Robert Bruce, and Monteth in his turn granted lands round Castle Sween, Danna and Ulva to Archibald Campbell of Lochawe. By 1479 Hector M'Torquell M'Neill was constable of "Castle Sweyne" and possessed the greater part of Knapdale much of which remained in McNeill hands until the mid-eighteenth century. In 1478 Castle Sween was garrisoned against the Crown by the rebellious John, Lord of the Isles, who entertained Earl Douglas there in 1483, receiving from him gifts of clothes, wine, silk, English cloth, and silver in exchange for a gift of mantles. From about 1480-1647 Castle Sween had been retained by the family of Argyll. It was then beseiged and burnt by Sir Alexander Macdonald (Colkitto), who "ravaged the whole district of Knapdale with fire and sword" on his retreat from the Kintyre peninsula.

During this period of its early history North Knapdale must have supported a large, if unstable, population. It was not a completely isolated community, and trade, both legal and illicit, must have been taking place. Contact with other regions and assimilation of new ideas and techniques were slow, and for a large part of the population not possible; except, that is, for the occasional raiding party, as when in 1443 a group of "accursed invaders" from Knapdale ravaged lands in Arran so badly that for 1445, 1446 and 1447 the taxes and other dues payable to the Royal Treasury were only a fraction of the amount payable in peace. Such raiding parties could cause considerable havoc and led for example, to deforestation by burning, but they were unlikely to lead to agricultural innovation and the deliberate or controlled alteration of the landscape.

AGRICULTURE BEFORE THE 18th CENTURY.

Little is known about the agricultural economy of this period, but the parish would seem to have been fairly prosperous. This is suggested by the fact that the church of St Charmaig (Keills) belonged to the monks of Kilwinning in Ayrshire until 1621, and that grants were made to Saddell Abbey from the rents of the lands lying round Loch Sween. In 1629 the teinds of the area that is now North Knapdale were valued at 262 bolls with £18 Stg. of money.

It is commonly assumed that the agricultural state of the Highlands in 1750 gives a good picture of its state throughout early historical times. An explicit statement is made by Marwick in 1939:-

"But down to approximately the middle of the eighteenth century, farming methods and conditions had continued practically unchanged from time immemorial.... the crops grown, implements and methods of tillage employed and the types of animals reared were probably exactly the same in 1750 as they had been six hundred years before."

Undoubtedly this is an over-generalisation, reflecting our lack of knowledge of early Scottish agriculture, but it cannot be denied that the situation as we know it from the 18th century is primitive, and that rapid change took place after the 1745 rebellion had opened up the Highlands and brought them under the control of market forces operating in other parts of Britain.

The chief heritor of North Knapdale in 1750 was Campbell of Auchenbreck, one of the only two Jacobites among the Campbell lairds of Argyll (he had long been in correspondence with the Pretender, and in November 1745 was arrested for high treason). One result of the rebellion was the abolition of heritable jurisdictions, and this seems to have had a considerable effect on the economy of the parish. According to the minister (Old Statistical Account), "...The effect of this reformation was astonishing....Within these 30 years the face and condition of this country has undergone the happiest change, as appears by a variety of useful improvements." An indirect result of the 1745 was the appearance of new proprietors who were widely travelled, knowledgeable, and keen to improve their estates. Its effects must not be over-emphasised, but they were certainly considerable. Despite the rather unsettled political history of the parish before the rebellion: "...estates were seldom sold ..luxury had not reached us, proprietors lived at home, and subsisted chiefly on the gross produce of their own lands. But now the case is otherwise... gentlemen resort frequently to the metropolis and no reproach is attached to the loss of an estate as the case is so common".

The most important single effect in North Knapdale was the arrival of new landlords, and between 1765 and 1793 the rent of the parish doubled. When they took over their estates they began to keep records. The most detailed relate to the Ross estate because Sir Archibald Campbell spent much time abroad and his younger brother Duncan, acting as factor, had to keep him informed. These estate papers play an important role in formulating any ecological history of the parish.

...oOo...

MULTUM IN PARVO

Excursion to Keills, May 29th, 1976

Dilys M. Hooton

****

We had made a special expedition to Keills one bright morning in late May, but were frustrated at finding the Chapel still closed. As we sat in the warm sun on the bank below the graveyard to tackle the lunch sandwiches a pair of Oystercatchers and a pair of Redshanks were noisy on the shore below us; the hills across Loch Sween were crystal clear against the blue sky. We thought it very unkind of the Department of the Environment to fill the Chapel windows with opaque plastic. Since they have locked the building up for so many years with all the carved stones inside there is nothing else to see but the splendid cross on the hillside above. The carving on the cross is much clearer now that the stone has been treated to prevent the growth of lichens.

"What a gorgeous day in this lovely place! Our drive is not wasted, we'll watch the birds instead ... there is not a soul to disturb them. Even this turf is worth coming here to sit on. It is just jewelled over with tiny flowers!"

So we sat looking at it...daisies, chickweed and a minute yellow trefoil, in a thick pattern of gold and white in the fine grass.

"Which trefoil is it? .....you need the seed head for identification and it may be too early to find one! Here is a tiny tiny Veronica with blue flowers and here a little Cranesbill with pinky lavender flowers". (Veronica serpyllifolia and Geranium molle). Here are three plants in a crack in the rock.....Lamb's Lettuce (Valerianella locusta, but only one inch high, palest blue flowers; but what is this cornfield weed doing here? I know it best growing a foot high in chalky Chiltern wheat fields!"

Now the hunt was on, the birds and distant scene forgotten while we sat against the sunny rock and looked and looked at that little patch of turf. It had been eaten close by sheep, nothing was more than 1½ inches high. In that yard or two we collected quite a variety of species, and several of them were most unexpected. Some were annuals, unlikely finds in close turf; some would normally

grow larger than we found them here but being kept short by grazing they were charmingly dwarfed. Mouse-ear Chickweed (Cerastium vulgatum) and Thyme-leaved Sandwort (Arenaria serpyllifolia) were all starry white flowers with hardly any leaves to be seen; Parsley Piert (Aphanes microcarpa), a trailing plant with frilly fan-shaped leaves and insignificant flowers; Field Madder (Sherardia arvensis), another prostrate plant with leaves in whorls of four and small pale lilac flowers.... both are common on arable land. The little yellow trefoil, creeping everywhere, proved to be the Lesser Yellow Trefoil (Trifolium dubium), and there was some Eggs and Bacon too (Lotus corniculatus). There was another little Trefoil, with hairy leaves and tiny heads of pale pinky flowers, which might be the calcicole annual Trifolium striatum. Little mats of Thyme leaves trailed over the rocks, and the distinctive leaves of Mouse-ear Hawkweed (Hieracium pilosella) and Lady's Bedstraw (Galium verum) showed in the grass; all to flower later. Many of these plants would not grow in acid soil. The explanation of their presence here could only be that we were sitting against a limestone outcrop.

A few yards away, where the cart track up to the Chapel leaves the road, the rocks to the south showed typical limestone weathering. Here the rock is fissured, with ferns and primrose leaves and stunted sloe growing in the cracks. On the rock the patches of Stonecrop (Sedum anglicum) had red leaves and flowers shining white in the sun against the grey stone. Here too we found the annual Rue-leaved Saxifrage (Saxifraga tridactylites), with tiniest white flowers and almost crimson stalks and foliage, again growing no more than 1-1½ inches in height. This is the only place I have found this species so far.

Great patches of Yellow Flag (Iris pseudocorus) grow along the curving shoreline below the Chapel, so freshly green that day seen against the blue water, with buds appearing and soon to open. It is worth noting the site of the spring in the ditch beside the road. It grows splendid Watercress (Nasturtium officinale) and there is Lesser Water Crowfoot (Ranunculus hederaceus) and Brooklime (Veronica beccabunga) here too. All three are plants of constant running water. There are big stones in the mud and I imagine that before the road was made the spring was walled round, perhaps like St Columba's Well at Kilbryd

across Loch Sween .... now alas rather disturbed by road widening.

There are other fascinating habitats by the roadside at Keills; acid bog and rough pastures full of orchids, but the flowers were not yet out and anyway the afternoon was far advanced before we left our limestone turf and its tiny flowers. With the sun lower in the sky behind us as we drove back the colours glowed over broader scenes. Near the Danna turn there were clumps of Early Purple Orchid (Orchis mascula) shining out in the rough grass. The myriad primroses had grown their leaves tall, hiding the last of the flowers, but everywhere were more Wild Hyacinths (Endymion nonscriptus) than I ever remember seeing. They were thickly blue among the trees and bushes, and spread across many of the open places; a vintage year, 1976, for these bluebells. By the corner of the road north of Dùn Mhuirich spikes of Twayblade (Listera ovata) were already standing up to 18 inches high among the Meadowsweet leaves and rushes. Nearer to Tayvallich grow many Juniper bushes, indicating another limestone area. Here can be found the little Cat's-foot (Antennaria dioica) creeping among the heather and showing almost as white as Edelweiss. This pretty plant is less common than it was a few years ago...I hope not because it has been picked too much. It seeds very readily and should spread again if the other vegetation was shortened. Cat's-foot is very common on the north coast of Ireland but the only other site I know in North Knapdale is far up the Lussa Glen.

All our views along this road were dominated by the budding oak trees, in many shades of glowing orange-green. Before the advent of the Forestry Commission the natural woods of the whole area were mainly oak; I just remember them, and there is nothing more beautiful in spring and autumn.

There were still two more special pleasures before reaching the Barnluasgan turn. First was the field of Globe Flowers (Trollius europaeus) just north of the two big Monkey-puzzle trees on Loch Scotnish; and we were interested to see one of these trees quite covered with young cones. The second lovely sight was that of the great clumps of Golden Male Fern (Dryopteris borreri) on the steep rocky slopes of Druim an Dùin. The backs of the uncurling fronds are covered thickly with bright

brown scales, giving the plants a bronze-yellow look. It is a magnificent fern, preferring such a site, which indeed shows off its form to best advantage. It retains a more yellow colour of green all summer than the true Male Fern.

I have not visited Keills so early in the year before, but if we could have seen the carved stones we had hoped to look at that day, would we have noticed the turf on which we picnicked, I wonder?

POSTSCRIPT.

I returned to Keills in July to collect seed heads of the Trefoils for identification. The bracken had grown tall on the hillside, the grass was longer and there were almost no flowers to be seen; just an occasional daisy and the yellow Bedstraw. I could find no trace of the annual Lamb's Lettuce, and of the annual Triflorum striatum (?) only one small seedling. As it had been flowering in the late spring I think the seed may germinate in the autumn and the seedlings grow through the mild winter and early spring. I must look again next year.

.....oOo.....

TRAVELLING IN 1740

(Simon, Lord Lovat writing from Edinburgh)

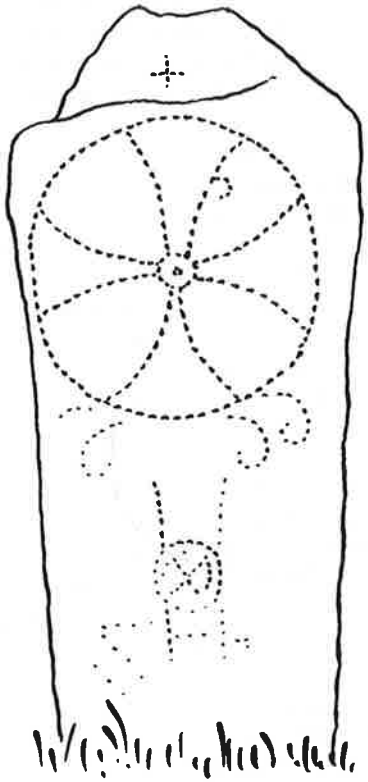
"I took a journey from my own house to come up here the 30th July with both my daughters, but if I was as much of an observer of freits as I used to be I would not have taken journey. For two days before I came away one of my coach mares, as she was stepping into the park, dropd down dead, as if she had been shot with a cannon ball. The next day, when I went to bid farewell, one of the hind wheels of my chariot broke in pieces, that kept me two days to get new wheels. I came off on Wednesday, the 30th of July, from my own house; dined at your sister's, and did not halt at Inverness, but came all night to Corribrough with Evan Baillie and Duncan Fraser, and my chariot did very well. I brought my wheelwright with me the length of Aviemore in case of accidents, and there I parted with him, because he declared my chariot would go safe

enough to London; but I was not eight miles from the place when, on the plain road, the axletree of the hind wheels broke in two, so that my girls were forced to go on bare horses behind footmen, and I was obliged to ride myself, tho' I was very tender, and the day very cold. I came with that equipage to Ruthven late at night and my chariot was pulled there by force of men, where I got an English wheelwright and a smith, who wrought two days mending my chariot; and after paying very dear for their work, and for my quarters two nights, I was not gone four miles from Ruthven when it broke again, so that I was in a miserable condition till I came to Dalnakeardach, where my honest landlord, Charles McGlassian, told me that the Duke of Athole had two as good workmen at Blaire as were in the kingdom, and that I would get my chariot as well mended as at London; accordingly I went there, and stayed a night, and got my chariot very well mended by a good wright and a good smith. I thought then I was pretty secure till I came to this place. I was stormstayed two days at Castle Drummond by the most tempestuous weather of wind and rain that I ever remember to see. The Dutches of Perth and Lady Mary Drummond were excessively kind and civil to my daughters and to me, and sent their chamberlaine to conduct me to Dunblane, who happened to be very useful to us that day, for I was not three miles gone from Castle Drummond when the axletre of my fore wheels broke in two, in the midst of the Hill betwixt Drummond and the bridge of Erdoch, and we were forced to sit in the Hill with a Boisterous day till Chamberlain Drummond was so kind as to go down to the Strath and bring wrights, and carts, and smiths, to our assistance, who dragged us to the plain, where we were forced to stay five or six hours till there was a new axletre made, so that it was dark night before we came to Dunblaine, which is but eight miles from Castle Drummond, and we were all much fatigued. The next day we came to Lithgow, and the day after that we arrived here, so that we were twelve days on our journey by our misfortunes, which was seven days more than ordinary; and I bless God we were all in pretty good health....."

....oOo....

Note on THE COVER by the Editor

The drawing on the cover of this issue represents the most important of the sculptured stones at Cladh Bhile on Loch Caolisport (cladh = burying ground: bile = grove of trees). It is 4'6" high and is formed of the local mica-schist. Both faces are carved, the reverse being now the less elaborate, its most obvious feature being an equal-armed Maltese cross formed of intersecting arcs with a small circle in the centre. This has always been thought to be the sole decoration on this face, but during a close examination of photographic slides of the many stones at Cladh Bhile I discovered very obvious traces of other carving. Starting from the top, there is a small plain cross of simple form, centred above the main cross; on the upper right arm of the large cross are traces of a half-spiral, which at once establishes this part of the decoration as an oblique reference to the Chi Rho monogram. Parallels for this can be seen on the two Raasay crosses illustrated in P.S.A.S. 1932-33, pp.63 & 64. Below the large cross are very distinct traces of a 'tuning-fork' symbol, terminating at the upper ends on each side in two large outward-facing scrolls. Midway down the 'tuning-fork' is a small circle defined by a double line and containing a saltire cross. Below this and to either side are faint traces of other decorations, too much weathered to afford any certain basis for identification. Although not as elaborate as the front face of the slab, this reverse side



Outline drawing of reverse.

seems to have had much more decoration than hitherto suspected.

The carving on the front, shown on our cover, gives an impression of a highly stylised phytomorphic design; most probably it is a six-armed version of the Chi Rho monogram again. Enough of the scrollwork survives to enable one to reconstruct the decoration very fully. The lower design is rather more traditional, being basically a Maltese cross without an enclosing circle; in the spaces between the arms are double scrolls. Here again there is an apparent Chi Rho sign.

The whole monument is majestic by any standards and all the more so in view of the sophistication of its carving compared with that on the remainder of the stones at this ancient site, most of which bear multiple crosses but show no signs of ever having had lettering on them

...oOo...

SCOTTISH HERALDIC BOOKPLATES: A Footnote.

Sir Ilay Campbell, Bart.

Since writing on this subject for KIST 12 I have found out that James Riddell was far from the "obscure Scottish laird" I so disparagingly called him! Descended from the Riddells of that Ilk, he was the only son of James Riddell who made a fortune as a merchant in Poland in the late 16th century, returning home to settle in Edinburgh in 1602.

Soon after his father's death James acquired the lands of Kinglass near Linlithgow. An intimate friend of General Monck, he was Commissionary General to the Forces of Parliament in Scotland during the campaigns of the 1640s, and became closely associated with Oliver Cromwell, who lodged in his house in Leith.

With John, Earl of Crawford, he introduced woollen manufactures to Scotland, his friendship with Cromwell enabling him to secure the release of key tradesmen from the Army. In 1639 he married Elizabeth, daughter of George Foulis of Ravelston, Master of the Scottish Mint. This is the date which appears on his bookplate, but I still feel certain that the plate cannot be contemporary, and that it is most unlikely that it was made before the 1660s. James Riddell died in 1674.

WHEN THE YEARS WERE YOUNG

Mary Sandeman

The Big Wash

The day before a big wash the wooden cover was taken off the second sink in our scullery and the whites put in to steep in a mixture of soft soap and soda melted together in a pail of boiling water diluted with cold water. The big copper was uncovered and wiped out. To me it seemed a real monster. It stood at the back of the scullery encased in whitewashed stonework. It had its own cold tap above to fill it and a tap below to empty it and, underneath, its own fire with a fascinating little metal door.

On the day itself I would be up early to see this delectable fire lit and the copper filled. The black range in the kitchen was going at more than its usual strength to ensure plenty of hot water for the sinks.

Out and in I ran to report on the weather; we had no faith in wireless forecasts, if indeed there were any. Yes, it seemed to be making a good day. All round the bay plumes of smoke began to rise, tracing, not the houses but the burns that ran near them - others thought it would be a good day. Big round black pots like witches' cauldrons would be being half filled from the burns and hung over the fires from iron rods hammered into a convenient wall or bank, or set on the stone fireplaces in which the peats burned, and then filled up with a dipper, perhaps a syrup tin with a handle put on by MacAlister or even one especially made by him. The washing was done in wooden or tin tubs set on a large stone or on a stool, using a washing board as we did too. The rinsing was done in the burn, except for the woollens, which are better done in warm water. The rinsing, held firmly, was pulled up and down the stream, the current carrying away the suds until it "ran clear", as in the best laundry instructions. It was much better than a mere tap, which few had anyway. Every now and then a quick twist of the wrist brought the rinse out on to a conveniently placed smooth stone with a good whack to help remove the suds. It was wrung by hand (no man except a sailor was said to be able to do this, and if you were not a good wringer they said you would have to marry a sailor) and spread on the heather or on a bush, or hung on a line to dry. It was a great reassurance to see Jean's fire

going, for her family was weather wise; so we were right to be washing today and could have our breakfast in happy anticipation.

By this time Bella would have arrived, wrung out the steep and put it in the copper to boil. She too would have her breakfast set out on a round table by the kitchen fire. I always wished that I could have mine there too but no doubt they were glad to be shot of me for a few minutes.

The scullery was soon full of steam through which figures moved and conversation flowed and laughter rippled while the wash snaked through the wringer clamped between the sinks. Then off we trooped to the mangle, which was too big to go in the scullery. Definitely a machine this. I could just reach the handle on the big wheel on tip toe when it was at the top of its circle, meshed into the iron cogs inside their openwork metal shields which turned the wooden rollers On top there was a black screw wheel that adjusted the rollers according to the thickness of the wash to be put through or how much water one wished to remove. There were moveable wooden shelves both in front and behind the rollers. One person fed the wash into the rollers and turned the handle, and the other caught it as it came through; but with the help of the shelves it could be done by one person. Then out to the lines and the merry dance of the sheets. If the wind was strong they were doubled and hung with the fold down so that they would not crack and flype the hems. They billowed out big bosomed, and running in and out between them I could be at sea in a full rigged ship. When still damp they were taken down and pulled diagonally, first from corner to corner, then gathered equally into each hand, the pull coming straighter until it went right down the middle. You must pull at exactly the same time or one of you will be pulled over. Folded most exactly they were put through the mangle, being carefully smoothed as they went - careful of your fingers when doing this; hung up still folded to finish and, when quite dry, mangled once again; they needed no ironing. The starched tablecloths and napkins were first dried then starched and then treated in the same way but had their first mangling when much damper; they only needed their outer folds glazed by 'throwing', that is sliding a very hot heavy iron quickly from hand to hand

over the linen. Once the flat iron was lifted from the fire to the board, being heavy enough to need no pressure, it was far less tiring to iron a tablecloth than it is with an electric iron but much hotter work. There were lighter irons for shirts and frills and so on, and standing on a chair I was allowed to do the handkerchiefs. Mother always did the ironing herself and washed the fine woollens.

Starching was great fun. Starch came in pale blue bits about the size of macaroni but solid. These were beaten to a thick cream with a little water and a wooden spoon. This was my job and kept me happy for quite a time, for of course I was really creaming butter and sugar for the most wonderful, wonderful cake. Just as well I was happy for there must not be the vestige of a lump left. Then someone would pour on boiling water while I stirred and a transformation took place before my very eyes, the faintly bluish-white cream turned darker and darker blue and then lighter and lighter until it was almost clear, when it was ready to be thinned with cold water to the required strength.

We didn't use bleach, but if anything was discoloured it was washed, rinsed and then put through clean suds and spread very wet on the grass for the sun to bleach. Often it was left out overnight, for the early sun after the dew was said to be the better bleacher, and frost the best of all .... but it must thaw out before being lifted or it may crack right through if folded. The bleach smelt beautifully fresh but while it was on the grass woe betide you if your footprint was found on it. You didn't exactly step on it ever, but it did look as if there was room to walk between the pillow-cases .... and there seldom was, balance you never so carefully.

I wonder if children still find wash-day fun? Even the grown-ups seemed to get some fun out of the hard work, and hard work it was, but they even had time to buy from my shop, set up on an old ironing board in a corner of the kitchen; or to rig a line at a suitable height for my private wash of doll's clothes. I suppose it was the exercise of skills at every turn that lightened what is usually considered drudgery. I still have a feeling of guilt if I have to damp anything for ironing although we did have a sprinkler for just that purpose, or we used a bowl of water, dipping the tips of our fingers in it and flicking

the water off with the back of the hand towards the cloth; but for all that Bella would have said that I should have paid attention and brought things in just ready for the iron.

Blanket wash was even more fun. Two large wooden tubs were put out in the yard and scrubbed and then filled with pails of hot water with just the right amount of black soft soap melted in boiling water and a dash of ammonia. In went the blankets and off came our shoes and stockings and into the tubs we went to tramp the blankets, slow and steady as, I imagine, one tramps grapes, with the warm water squidging between our toes - the first paddle of the year. Careful! Soapy blankets are slippery! I sat down more than once to add to the grown-ups' troubles.

The blankets were then folded end to end, one woman held the ends while the other put a smooth stick like a long spirtle through the loop of the fold and turned it, passing one end from her right to her left hand over and over while her partner turned the ends against her till there was a tight fat sausage between them from which the water poured. The tubs were filled up again with warm water and we tramped and wrung and did it all at least once more. After the last wringing they were shaken, not as you would a rug, much less a duster, but two people with a firm grip of a corner in each hand, hands up in front of the face and then down and out with a strong beat, up and down, up and down, while rainbows danced above and below. They were then spread on the grass for a few minutes to let the water take the shortest way out and in doing so to bring up the pile, turned on the other side and hung on the line to swish gently back and forth in the spring sun and wind. You want a stiff but gentle breeze, enough to keep them moving but not so strong as to make them flap. This way you will have soft fleecy blankets that will last your time and more.

Loud are the lamentations when my washing machine takes the strunts but I am glad that at least I know how to do a big wash without a machine, except of course that we did have my friend the mangle. Alas I have no mangle, nor have I dear Bella who made so light of all her labours.

....oOo....

LOCH FYNE RING-NETTING: Some Early Episodes & Folk Tales

Angus Martin

The Origins of Ring-netting

The Scottish ring-net, or trawl-net as it was improperly called, originated from irregular use of drift-nets in the 1830's. The year cannot be established with certainty, but the most convincing evidence indicates either 1833 or 1835. Ninian Ballantyne, who began fish-curing in Tarbert in 1826, claimed to have purchased the first catch of herring taken in the new way. He remembered that in December 1833 two men had stretched drift-nets across the mouth of a Loch Fyne bay and enclosed 6,700 barrels of herring, a massive catch even by modern standards. He paid out £400 or £500 for his share of the catch, the rest of which went to farmers and other fish-curers in the neighbourhood. The herring were, he said, 'superior to any taken by drift-nets that season', and he sold them cured at 'five shillings a barrel above the price of the regular drift-net herrings which any other curer had in Glasgow'. Whom the fishermen were is nowhere recorded, but the catch - in excess of 435 tons, if Ballantyne's figure is correct - would have made them suddenly rich men, at a time when £10 would have purchased a 20ft rowing boat and £35 or £40 a sturdy sailing boat.

The date 1835 is given in a report which appeared in the Edinburgh Review. According to that account, Loch Fyne was visited by such vast shoals of herring that drift-netting, the usual method of fishing, was abandoned, and nets 'of all sizes and descriptions' were stretched across the bays, enclosing the fish until the tide receded and left them dry. As to why drift-netting was abandoned, oral tradition is specific. John Weir of Tarbert recalled his grandfather's account of how, about that year, the herring were 'lazy', that is, not swimming into the nets and meshing. So certain imaginative Tarbert fishermen attached pieces of drift-nets together and by surrounding the fish in shallow water turned disadvantage to their benefit.

Within a few years nets were being designed specifically for trawling. Such a net was described in 1840 by Alexander Sutherland, fishery officer at Inveraray, as being 160 yards in length, with a foot-rope weighted with 'lead sinks' and a back-rope buoyed with pieces of cork along its length. The trawl-net had first attracted his attent-

ion in December, 1836, when he reported that six 'trals' were being worked at Otter Spit. Three hundred barrels of herring had been taken, and he inspected the nets and found none under the legal size.

CREAG JOHNNY McQUILKAN

A rock was named after one of the mid-nineteenth century shore fishermen. Creag Johnny McQuilkan is a flat rock exposed in Camus na Ban-tighearna (the Lady's Bight) when the tide ebbs. The small nets used to be hauled to it, and the story goes that one evening Johnny and his crew shot the net and were just beginning to haul it when Johnny saw that it was full of herring from end to end. He immediately began to jump with excitement, crying Tha mi beairteach gu bràth! (I am wealthy forever!), and jumped so much that he flattened the rock. One version of the story concludes on an unhappy note - the net burst with the weight of the fish; but the other two versions, preferred by the writer, allow Johnny his wealth.

'THE TARBERT MAN MUST HAVE HIS DRAM'

The operation of working from the shore was evidently an uncomfortable one. Laurence Lamb's report in 1851 (he was Assistant Inspector of Fisheries, Board of the British White Herring Fishery) of accounts received from three Tarbert fishermen whom he engaged in conversation, indicates as much: 'They stated that the fishermen engaged (in trawling), having to wade into the sea, are almost constantly wet to the neck, and in this state they come on shore and go direct to the dram shop where they will remain until it is time to go to sea again. This conduct they will continue for days and in this manner nearly the whole of their earnings are squandered.' A fisherman from Dalintober, near Campbeltown, who had himself been at trawling, gave a similar account in his evidence to the Royal Commission in 1864. 'The trawlers', said John Martin, 'are in a great way subject to getting very wet and draggled with dragging the herring and nets, whereas the drift-net fisherman can put on a coat of oil-cloth and keep himself almost dry.' He added cautiously: 'No doubt they very frequently take a glass of spirits or whatever they choose when they come in.'

Serious drunkenness among the trawl-fishermen was evidently prevalent about that time, though the tendency would

hardly have been of recent origin. John Stewart of the Princess Royal fishery cutter had reported drunken squabbling in September 1846; 'I am sorry to say that the fishermen at Ardrishaig and Tarbert have frequent quarrels among themselves. These arise from the large sums of money which they realise and spend mostly on spirits. I am often called upon to settle these disputes, and our interference has always been a means of restoring order.'

Years earlier, before trawling had begun on Loch Fyne, Lord Teignmouth, who visited Tarbert in 1827 and 1829, reported 'no less than twenty public houses' in the village. The superintendent of a Tarbert distillery had informed him that the fishermen carried whisky to sea with them, 'observing emphatically "Sir, the Tarbert man must have his dram, let the world sink or swim."'.

Unlike the drift-net fishermen, whose wages were relatively meagre but more regular, the trawl fishermen with their 'sudden gains' could afford to 'get on a spree and remain so for a week', as Sergeant John Kennedy of the Fishery Police, a detached but understandably critical observer, commented in 1862. He described the trawlers as 'a wild set of men'. A Tarbert merchant and banker, Archibald McCalman, expressed a similar opinion: 'The trawlers are a younger and more disorderly set of men, while the drift-net fishers, being older, are steadier.' He admitted that the trawlers were 'given to drink', and offered the ingenious explanation that 'the intermarrying here produces a good deal of this disorder'. The chief constable of police for Argyll, James Fraser, declared that the Inveraray men, as drinkers, were 'as bad as any fishermen in the loch', but added that 'they do not commit as ferocious assaults as the Tarbert men'.

Until recent years an ash tree stood on the northern shore of Camus na Ban-tighearna, and was named Mrs Black's Tree, because, according to local tradition, when the fishermen were working along the shore between Tarbert and Skipness, the vigorous Mrs Black would walk across the hills to the bay in her long billowing skirts, with skins of illicit whisky concealed beneath them. The fishermen put the bows of their skiffs to the edge of a flat rock on the shore beneath the tree, and Mrs Black would go down to them and 'peddle the whisky over the bow'.

THE TARBERT RAID.

The new anti-trawling Act of Parliament of 1860, despite its impressive appearance on paper, proved little more effectual than its predecessor of 1851, principally because it lacked provision for the seizure of boats and catches. The necessity remained of catching the trawl-fishermen actually working their nets, and the fishermen simply reverted to their former tactics of abandoning or concealing nets when alarmed.

That defect in the law was clearly demonstrated when, in a raid on Tarbert harbour in the early hours of the morning of Sunday 23 September, 1860, 13 trawl-skiffs with nets on board were seized by the crew of H.M.S. Jackal and removed to Greenock. This action was 'absolutely illegal', as the secretary of the Fishery Board, B.F.Primrose, would later complain, and the Board was spared embarrassment only by the discovery that all the skiffs were improperly named and numbered.

The discovery of the seizures caused a stir of anger among the fishermen of Tarbert. They were, reported fishery officer Robert Bannatyne, 'going about in a half-raised state excited by drink, vowing vengeance on the crew of the Jackal and on all drift-net fishers'. Some of them, he was informed, had 'gone off in their boats and maliciously cut buoys off the drift trains'.

His opinion, with its ominous conclusion, was that 'whatever view may be taken of trawling, the authority of the Law must be maintained and these men taught the lesson of obedience to constitutional authority, which I fear may be a bitter one, but I trust it will prove ultimately a salutary one to them and their children'.

The fishermen had a spokesman for their grievance in D. Sinclair, a local Justice of the Peace and factor of the Stonefield Estate. He remonstrated that the 'wholesale seizure' was 'rather an extreme measure', and suggested that 'a step of less ruinous consequence to about 50 families now thrown destitute would have been sufficient to convince them that the Fishery Board is now determined to suppress trawling'.

The determination of the Tarbert fishermen to persist at trawling was, however, not long upset. Almost a month after the raid, with the restoration of the 13 skiffs pending, the fishery officer at Ardrishaig, George Thomson,

reported that all the fishermen who had lost nets and boats had again got trawls. 'I used my best endeavours,' he wrote, 'to convince the trawling classes that the law was now against them and would be enforced with the utmost rigour, of which they seem to be quite aware - yet, withal they seem determined to venture to the last'.

The boats were restored to their owners on 23 October, having been exactly a month locked away in a Greenock boat-yard, secured by chain and padlock, and guarded throughout the nights by a watchman. They had been held for the maximum period of time allowed by law, and the owners were compelled to travel to Greenock to collect them, 'being entitled to no leniency because of their illegal trade'.

The commander of the Jackal, Lieutenant Edward F. Lodder, was displeased at the return of the skiffs. This was implied in a letter to Primrose from the Board's general inspector of fisheries, John Millar. On 30 October he tersely confided: 'Lieut. Lodder feels that the Board has not signified approval of his conduct in obtaining the 13 skiffs and seizing the 13 nets - nor acquainted him that the boats have been returned'. The letter ended with the caution, 'Please put this in the fire on perusal'. Lodder had less reason for annoyance than he may at first have supposed. He and his crew were subsequently paid £52, a half of the valuation of the seized nets, according to the provision in the Act of 1860 for rewards to captors. The nets were burned after valuation.

RIOT AT TARBERT

The Tarbert community was, at the time of the raid, already locked in a state of tension. Earlier in the month a crowd of villagers - six of whom would later be convicted of mobbing and rioting - tussled with three policemen and two fishery officers who had seized a net on the harbourside. Charges had still not been made.

The net had been discovered on 5 September by fishery officer William Gillis, who met a support force - which included the chief constable of Argyll, James Fraser - and led them to the shore. One of the constables set off to find a cart to carry the net away, and while he was gone men and women of the village began to assemble. The estimated crowd of 100 men and 30 women was in a 'very excited state, shouting and declaring that they would not

allow the net to be carried off'.

'We used our utmost endeavours to get them to go home' wrote Gillis and George Thomson in a joint statement, 'but to no avail, for the women backed up by the men made a rush down the hill and carried the seizure off to a boat'. Fraser's coat was torn in the fray and, perhaps fearing further damage to his uniform or to the body that was inside it, he gave the order to 'retire from the scene'.

The 'ring leaders' were taken to Campbeltown on board the Jackal on 23 November and waited in the jail there until their trial at the sheriff court on 16 December. Four women - Catherine and Mary Law, Mary Hyndman and Flora McBean - were each jailed for 30 days, and the men - James McLean and James Law - for 40 days.

SGADAN GRÉINE

On a warm summer's day the fishermen might split open several dozen herring, sprinkle them freely with salt or pepper, and spread them out on a board, perhaps with a canopy of netting raised on a brush and the boat-hook to keep gulls off, but usually with the netting simply laid over the fish. It is said that pepper acted as an additional repellent to gulls and also to flies, but some fishermen evidently acquired a taste for the strong flavour which the pepper imparted to the fish. These fish were termed by the Tarbert fishermen sgadan gréine (sunned herring) and were so delicious that batches were often prepared on a Friday for taking home next morning. On especially warm days, and if allowed to lie out for long enough, the fish would turn brown like kippers. The expression 'sgadan gréine' still survives as a name given to a rock, though the savoury fish are no longer eaten. On the shore near Laggan Head, four miles south along the coast from Tarbert, a flat rock presents its face to the sea, and approaching the shore by boat on a certain course on a summer's day, the elongated marble forms of the 'sgadan gréine' can be seen in rows, 'pure white, a dozen or more, split on that rock'.

.....

Angus Martin wishes to express his gratitude to Mr Hugh Macfarlane and Mr John Weir, Tarbert, for their patient and unstinting release of knowledge and guidance to him during the past 3 years. Their
(cont'd on page 27)

THE LAST FOX HUNT OF ALLAN MACINTYRE

Ian MacDonald

Nowadays foxes in Kintyre are numerous and during the lambing season cause many losses to sheep farmers by carrying off and killing lambs. I once found a den after losing lambs; scattered round it were the remains of three lambs, five hen pheasants, a hen, a cormorant, a rat, a mole and a stoat, together with feathers of various small birds. Six large cubs and a vixen were subsequently killed. During the period June 1970 - June 1976 no fewer than 357 adult foxes and 125 cubs were killed by members of Kintyre Foxhunting Society, which pays a bounty for the 'brushes' produced as evidence of a kill.

During last century however foxes were completely exterminated in the peninsula of Kintyre by Allan MacIntyre (1745-1840) the celebrated Foxhunter of Kintyre. With his horse, long gun and a pack of hounds he finally killed the last fox at Largiebaan, near the Mull of Kintyre, and in recognition of his efforts the Duke of Argyll awarded him an annual pension of £25.

Allan and his spouse Mary MacIntyre lived at Garvalt near the head of Barr Glen about 1788, subsequently moving down to Upper Barr about 1791 and then to Killagruir where they lived next door to my great-grandfather John MacDonald, who farmed at Margmonagach together with his brother Neil who emigrated to Canada in 1831. The MacIntyres had six children, Dugald, Margaret, Mary, Peter, John and Alexander, born between 1788 and 1801. The birth entry for Peter is shown in the old Parochial Register for Killean and Kilkenzie as follows:- "Peter - lawful son to Allan MacIntyre, Foxhunter of Kintyre, baptised 9th April 1796"; whilst Alexander, born at Killagruir, is shown with both parents' names followed by the title FOXHUNTER and the date of baptism, 29th August 1801.

There are several stories of the hunts. On one occasion a hound named Gasgeach chased a fox for some thirty miles. A shepherd found them both lying exhausted in a field near the old castle at Skipness, only able to manage one pace forward at a time. The shepherd despatched the fox and carried the hound home.

The story of the hunting of the last fox told to me when I was a boy was as follows. The fox had its den on

Largiebaan near the Mull of Kintyre. It was found in the Largieside by hounds and was chased south by Allan on horseback together with the hounds. It duly headed for Largiebaan with the two leading hounds hard on its heels. When Allan got to the cliffs he found the dogs searching at the top, and looking over saw with dismay his two leading hounds lying dead on the rocks below. There was no trace of the fox. On examining the area above where the dogs lay he discovered a small rowan tree growing out from the cliff and noticed teeth marks on one branch. The wily fox had apparently been in the habit, on reaching the cliff top in emergency, of jumping down and gripping the branch in its teeth to enable it to swing itself into a small cave hidden below. In this instance the hounds had been travelling so fast that they were unable to stop and plunged down to the rocks on the shore.

With his knife Allan cut the branch almost through and returned home saddened at the loss of his two valuable hounds.

Some time later the fox was reported again, this time at the head of Barr Glen. So Allan set off and soon sighted it, and on hounds picking up the scent it again headed in the direction of the Mull. The final chase was fast and furious, and when Allan arrived at the den he looked over and saw the fox lying dead on the rocks below with the broken-off branch in its mouth.

Such was the fate of the last fox of that era, but as Allan afterwards said

" 'S e gearradh a' meanglan ud an gnothach 's miosa 'rinn mi riamh o'n chàill e dhomh m'obair!"
(It was the worst thing I ever did cutting that branch, for it lost me my job!)

....oOo....

(cont'd from page 25)
tape-recorded information will be preserved at the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh. He would like to hear from or of anyone in Argyll prepared to recount traditional material. His address is 24 Crosshill Avenue, Campbeltown.

BOOK REVIEW

ARGYLL. The Enduring Heartland by Marion Campbell.

The Foreword to Miss Campbell's new book, by His Grace the Duke of Argyll, is indicative of a work of quite exceptional value to anyone even vaguely interested in the background of this County. But be warned: the 'quick-thumb-through' proves utterly impossible, for one instantly finds oneself captivated by the author's uncanny knack of turning the past and its peoples into actual acquaintances. Scenes from prehistory shimmer into being, unfolding rain-swept, or loud with birdsong, to merge smoothly into yet some further age in Argyll's evolution. Most paragraphs could be described as poetry in their own right; while bilingual verses by Miss Campbell and others ring and hide among the pages, interspersed with fine Frances Walker drawings.

Out of the gnarled coast-rocks, and from the high tops of Glencoe (of where one reads for once the real, bald truths in a way which might for all that have been penned by as skilled and unbiassed a MacDonald); or from the bitter soil and white-flecked sea-fingers; from the inward thoughts of plain folk and gentry alike, both past and present, this book is spun. It is not a 'Guide to Argyll' in the usual sense at all; it is far more - the local vernacular and humour occurs delightfully throughout, to lend the perfect atmosphere.

Those who have enjoyed excerpts from 'Old Kilberry's' Diaries in past numbers of KIST will know something of the mettle of the author's ancestry. My feeling is that were the old gentleman visibly about Kilberry's hall today, he would be more than thrilled by his grand-daughter's work, for she has given her country a most precious part of herself, and Argyll has never been so complete.

J.S.Andrews, F.S.A.Scot.

ARGYLL. The Enduring Heartland. Marion Campbell. Turnstone Books, 37 Upper Addison Gardens, London. W.14

Ordinary edition: £4.95 Limited signed edition: £12.50