Mesolithic food-gatherers in Spanish cave paintings

the KIST 47

THE KIST

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NOTE on the COVER

Marion Campbell

Although no Scottish Mesolithic art is known, some survives in Spain. When published these two examples were dated to between 12,000 and 8,000 BC; many new studies into cave-art are now being made around the world, more detailed reproductions may be available and earlier datings may have been assigned, but I have not had access to such studies, nor have I seen the originals. They differ from the Palaeolithic paintings of Altamira etc. in depicting humans engaged in day-to-day activities.

Upper left:- A woman has climbed a tree to smoke out a nest of wild bees. Smoke gushes from the hole into which she has plunged one arm; in the other hand she grasps a basket or leather pail for the honey she hopes to collect. Her hair is piled high; she wears a short skirt and has perhaps coated her body in mud as a protection against the furious bees flying around her.
(At Alpera; after J.G.D.Clark, Prehistoric Europe, the Economic Basis, Methuen 1952).

Lower right:- Hunters counter-charged by a family of wild pigs, including an adult boar (emerging from cover, right). The dotted spiral may represent a waterhole, with a startled ?duck taking flight, and a patch of trampled mud appears between the water and the main action. Three young men run literally flat-out, in the convention used for speed in later paintings down to 19th century sporting prints of horse-racing. All the men have topknots of hair with feathers or tassels, and wear long (?fur) trousers with ornamental fringes, if not Nicky-Tams, below the knee, and loose anklets, probably of beads. Each carries a bow almost as long as himself, and a fistful of arrows (but no quiver). The furthest away is in the act of shooting; his companions have other ideas. The artist has drawn them with a touch of satire - bonny hunters, dolled up regardless for a day's sport and getting more than they bargained for.
(At Cueva Remigia; after Piggott, Ancient Europe, Edinburgh University Press 1965).
For the Scottish Mesolithic, see Kist 46, and pp.2-7 below.

THE FAINT FOOTPRINTS: Pt.2

Marion Campbell

In Part 1 (Kist 46) I tried to summarise the conditions in which our forebears recolonised Scotland in postglacial times some 10,000 years ago.

Since their traces were first recognised, last century, they have often been stigmatised as primitive drop-outs who had fallen far below the Palaeolithic artists of France and Spain. Our cover shows that some talent survived in Spain; no cave-art has yet been found in Britain, but then we have few limestone caves, at least in Scotland, and painted rock-shelters may have weathered away. Or perhaps the Mesolithic hunters chose more portable art-forms, woodcarving or tattooing, or turned their artistic impulses to music, dancing or storytelling by the campfire. Scornful moderns have compiled lists of Mesolithic deficiencies with glee, failing to consider the huge range of skills needed to exploit the available natural resources and evolve the necessary tool-kits. A balance-sheet might look like this:-

Lacking	Available
Pottery	Baskets, leather bags, birchbark
Woollen cloth	Fur, leather, plaited plant-fibres
Domestic cattle/sheep/goats	Deer /aurochs/horse/pig/wildfowl
Polished-stone tools	Specialised compound tools
Metals	Stone, antler, bone, wood, shell
Wheat, oats, barley, rye	Native seeds and nuts
Potatoes (until c.1700 AD)	Native plants from root to fruit
Milk, butter, cheese	High protein meat/fish diet

The first four items above left are those used as criteria for the 'Neolithic Revolution'. It is notable that the Neolithic farmers gradually decreased their reliance on grain-crops evolved from Near Eastern wild species and reverted to pastoralism and hunting. Beware of picturing a Great Westward March like the settlement of the American Mid West, streams of settlers driving flocks and herds; more likely is the arrival of families with two goats and a small tame cow - both evolved from Eastern wild stocks, the cow to be mated with an aurochs bull twice her size. In any case the farmers only appeared some five thousand years after the

hunters, who thus had plenty of time to develop their ways of life.

They survived by adapting to every change of climate, sea-level or animal dominance; coasts flooded, tundra was replaced by forest, reindeer vanished, red deer increased, arctic plants and arctic shells gave place to lusher vegetation and oysters. The hunters started from a high degree of tool-making skill and improved on it, adding newfound materials (Rhum bloodstone, Arran pitchstone) to familiar flint, chalcedony, chert and quartz. Antler was split, sawn or drilled to make anything from mattocks to sleeves for mounting stone tools into wooden hafts. Bone tools, though widely used, are less easily dateable because the shape usually dictates the use; bird-bones are ideal as needles, deer cannon-bones are pre-toughened cold chisels. They continue in such uses through the ages; patterns of stone-working are more distinctive.

The Mesolithic people continued to use large hammer-stones, flint knives, even core-axes (Fig.2:A) with an ancestry far back in the Palaeolithic, but they specialised in delicate little components for mounting in wood or antler hafts, replaceable if damaged like the teeth of a 20th century haymower. In a way such tiny tools were necessary because good flint was scarce; in Argyll it is almost non-existent except for thin veins at Carsaig in Mull, and sea-rolled lumps along Kintyre beaches which originate in Antrim or undersea beds. Such lumps are apt to be flawed by wave action, so that they shatter when worked. The small tools were shaped on the block and detached by an expert tap on a prepared striking-platform; when the core block became too small to work, it too might be given an edge-trim and made into a tool. Working was by gentle blows or pressure on a bone or wooden chisel. A similar technique was used for quartz, a less reliable material from which an adequate cutting edge can be got by throwing a pebble against a rock and gathering up the bits. Genuinely worked quartz is hard to recognise; any working shows best when wet, is likely when a chipped edge does not resemble a natural break and almost certain if there is more than one row of chipping. Quartz pieces often outnumber flints on site, but I have only ever felt sure of about three quartz tools. Fig.1:1,f shows a quartz 'scraper', in fact (I suspect) a semi-circular knife for tailoring skins or splitting fish; its main

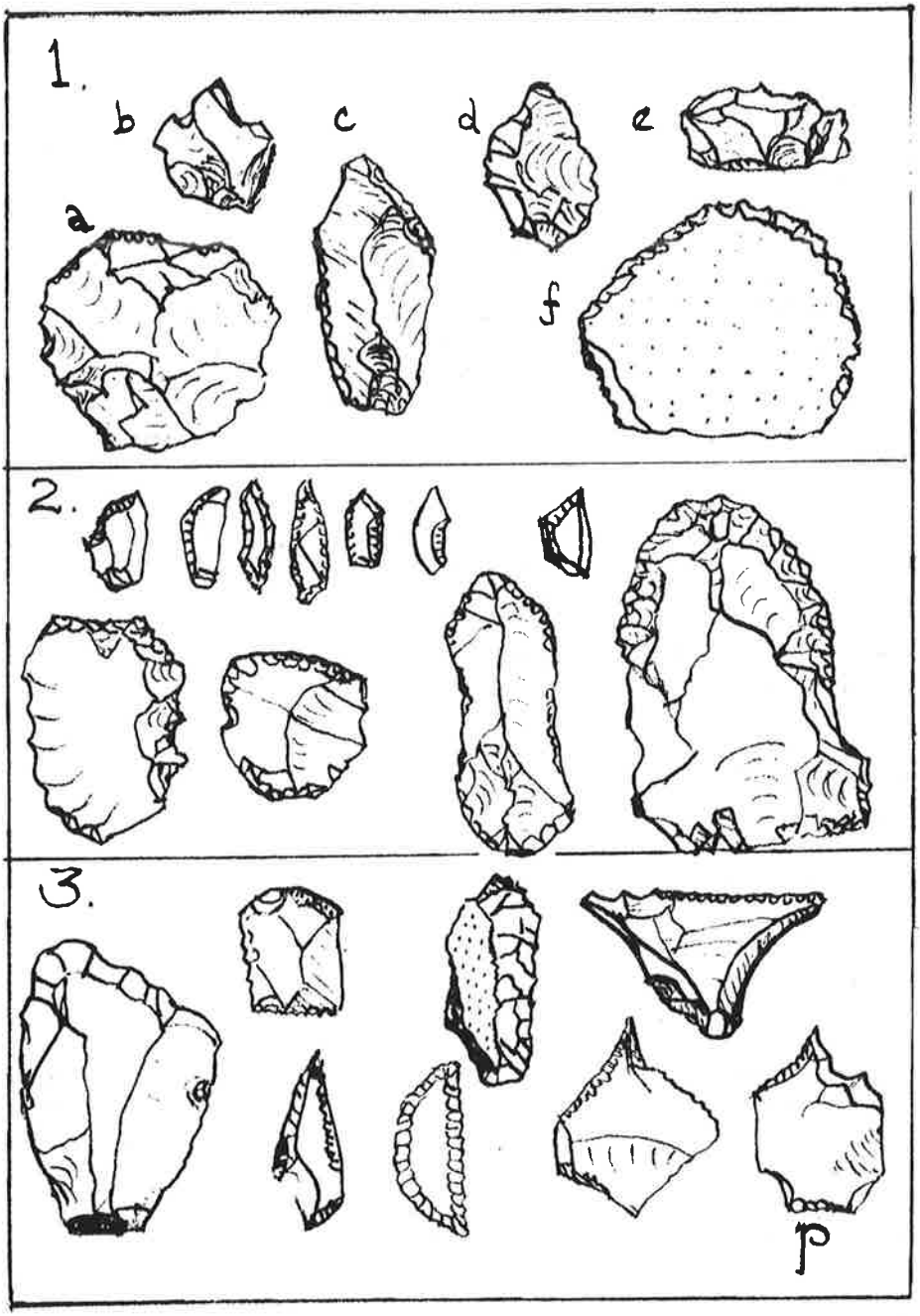

Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 (opposite page)

1) Tools from Albyn Distillery site, Campbeltown: found re-deposited in stormbeach. a, b, c, flint; d, e, f, quartz (f is a split pebble). After MacCallien and Lacaille, PSAS LXXV.
2) Flints from Lussa River site, Jura: found ca. 10m above present sea-level. After Mercer, PSAS 103.
3) Flints and (p) pitchstone from tidal rivermouth, Lealt, Jura. After Mercer, PSAS 100.

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surface is the unworked outside of the stone.

Fig.1:2 shows an array of large and small tools; the sharpest edge of the miniature ones ('microliths') is the unworked side; the dressed edges are intended to take the resin or fishglue in a grooved haft. When all sides are worked, as in Fig. 1: 2 and 3, this may be to give a coarser cut, or may result from re-sharpening. In Fig. 1: 3 the triangle at top right is a transverse arrowhead, with below it two drill-bits or borers.

Antlers, either broken from stags' skulls after the kill, or collected from the ground at the annual casting (quickly, before the animals chewed them for their minerals) were used in many ways. They could be cut into lengths by 'nibbling' a groove around the beam and snapping through the cellular core, when flattish plates could be levered off to make fish spears as shown in Fig.2:C (overleaf); or a tine could be removed and a hole drilled through the core to form a mattock-head (Fig.2:D). One such was found in the skeleton of a whale, stranded at a time of high sea-levels far up the Forth valley above Stirling. Stone saws were needed to make the fish spears from antler or bone. An antler fish-spear in Oronsay may have come from Jura; in this century Colonsay fishermen still crossed to stay in the big Jura caves (to which they claimed family rights) for summer fishing. In the earliest times they may have wintered there and gone over to Colonsay for seal-hunts and saithe.

One must not say "They must have had ... ". Few wooden utensils and only the rare worn scallop scoop hint at other tools. On some campsites quantities of hazelnuts are found, and stakeholes marking either a windbreak or a fish-smoking rack; heated baking-stones, eggs baked in shells, joints wrapped in leaves and clay and buried in firepits, leave

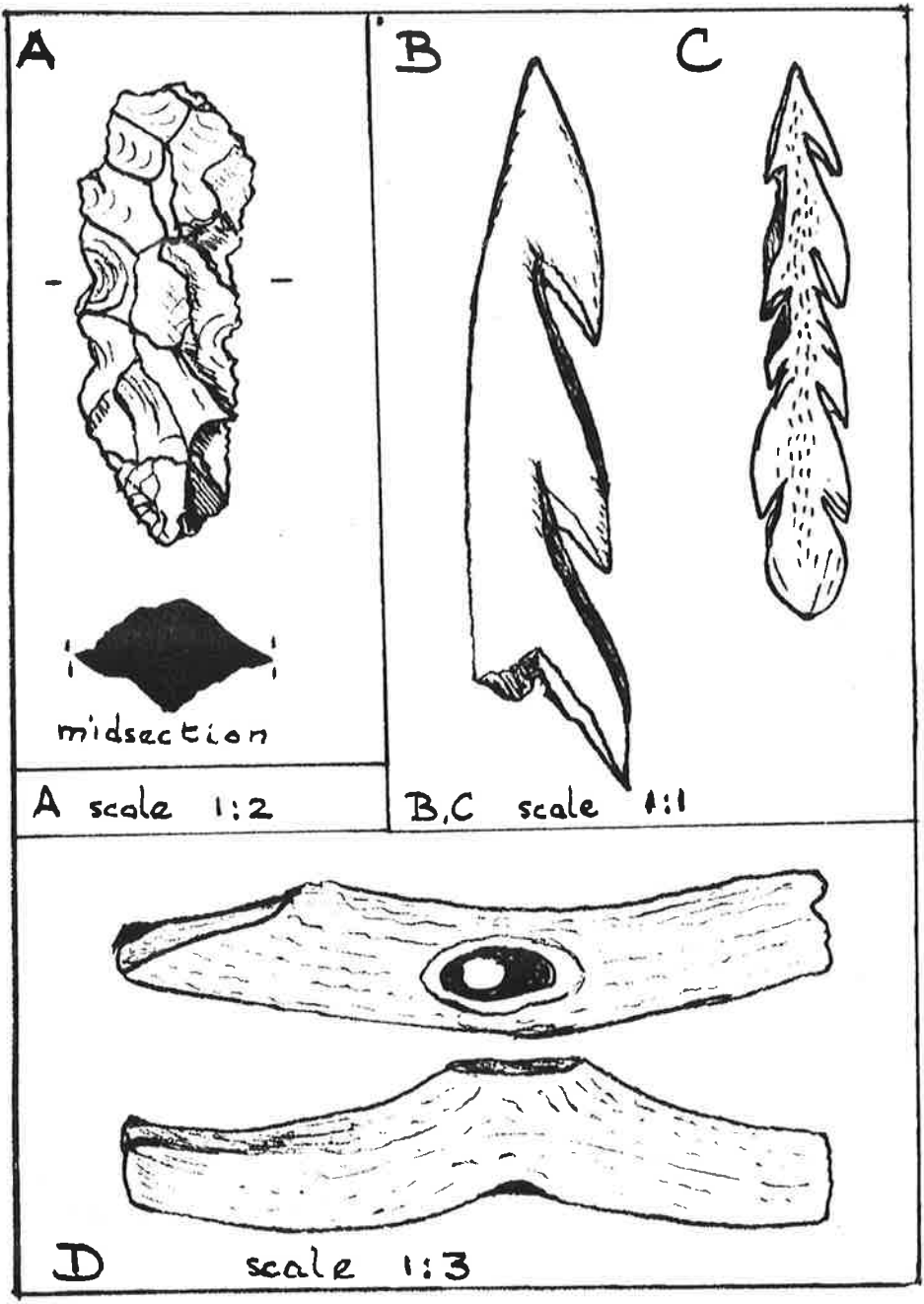

Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 (opposite page)

A) Flint core-axe from under peat, Fair Isle; half-size. After Cumming, PSAS LXXX.

B) Bone harpoon-head, Druimvargie Cave, Oban; full-size. After Joseph Anderson, PSAS XXIX.

C) Antler harpoon-head (inner face shown), MacArthur's Cave, Oban; full-size. After J. G. D. Clark, PSAS LXXXIX.

D) Antler mattock-head, found with whale skeleton, Meikle-wood, Stirling; one-third size. After Clark as above.

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scant trace. It cannot have been easy to store food; pits, cairns or slung bundles were none of them bear-proof. A better plan was to share everything and so build up a credit balance with a neighbour who hunted while you fished, or would exchange oysters for your gull-eggs and herbs. Salt must have been a problem ("must have" is right for once); dwellers by the shore could cook things in seawater, others would have to eat seaweed or sea-purslane, lovage or the like, carried inland fresh or dried. Honey in the comb was a rare and perilous treat; one made do with chewing nectar-rich flowers.

The Good Life involved a deal of hard work and hard-learned skill, but it could be done and it could be enjoyed; when the spark flew from the flint struck on iron pyrites, or the first smoke rose from the fire-drill, and the dog pushed his way under the fire-maker's elbow, and the fish was set on sticks to grill, and the tent grew warm and lit the dusk, then the day's hunting was told over in infinite detail, and the panic when the bears came down the burnside; and after the meal and before sleep, there were the next day's movements to plan - little enough needed if today's hunt had been good. There might possibly be another camp-fire in sight, and a man might be outraged to find another fishing 'his' pool - such things are not unknown in more 'advanced' societies - but the chances of Perpetual Prim-itive Warfare would be severely limited, both because we were all either hungry and therefore hunting, or full-fed and therefore sleepy; and without Tribe or Chief or City to defend there was not much that could not be resolved before the moon changed. However large the total population (and one estimate is for 7500 in all Scotland) you could at least

walk away to another glen and leave the bores and the quarrelsome ones to get on with each other; and you would hear how it all worked out when you met next year at the salmon-run.

...oooOoooo...

A TOUR of SOME OLD SETTLEMENTS and RUINED BUILDINGS in the PARISHES of KILMARTIN and GLASSARY Part 3

Allan Begg

We will go to Dippen, or Duppen, first; it lies about a mile from Blarbuie on the forest road to Loch Glashan. I walked out here one fine Sunday afternoon when I learned that the forest there had been clear-felled. I met a man there, also out for a walk, and together we made a search to try and find any trace of the farmhouse, but without any success. We came to the conclusion that it may have been demolished and the stones used when the new forest road was built. However the fine old sheepfank is still there, and outside the wall what appears to be an old stone clipping-stool - two slabs on pedestals and a round stone seat.

From here we go on to Craigans which is about a mile from the Add ponds. A gravestone in Glassary churchyard records the death of Catherine MacCalman wife of Archibald MacKellar, Craigens, in 1861, and on the Records the death of Martha MacDonald aged 3 years at Craigens in 1867. On the opposite side of the River Add from Craigans was the old farm of Monunernich, or Menarnich, once owned by Archibald Campbell of Knockbuie. A gravestone in Glassary is for"Robert Mitchell, Tacksman, Menarnich, Died 1839. Erected by his son Peter Mitchell, Tenant of Craigens". An old account book of Knockbuie's dating from 1728 and now in the archivist's department at Lochgilphead shows that there was North Monunernich and South Monunernich. Duncan Henderson, now retired from the Forestry Commission, told me that he had found ruins high up in the forest which may be those of North Monunernich; Donald MacVean of Lochgilphead, who has gone on some of my expeditions, and I searched the forest between the road and the River Add. It was not an easy task, but we found what appear to be the foundations of possibly

South Monunernich; its stones may have been taken to help build the new forest road. We go from here along to Tunns, which again was owned by Campbell of Knockbuie in the 18th century. The house is demolished but part of the steading still stands. The only death here that I have a record of is of George Wilson Trotter aged 3 days, in 1861. I recall an old man living in retirement in Kilmichael who had been in Tunns. From Tunns we go along the Add to Auchlea where lies the ruined farmstead, and again a fine sheepfank. I really liked this one. A gravestone in Glassary records the death of Duncan MacVicar (79), Farmer, Auchlea, in 1891, and the Births , Marriages and Deaths Register records Ann Tait (78) died Auchlea in 1857.

In June 1992 my brother-in-law and I took the car to Knockalva, on the opposite side of the Add from Auchlea, and walked out to Carron and on to Creag-an-Iubhair. This is without doubt one of the most isolated spots that I have visited, but it is beautiful. The old drove road from Auchindrain to Kilneuair passes along and over a fine single-span bridge. To visit Carron has been my secret longing for years, and I can assure you I was not disappointed. I found a record of Donald Kerr, born at Carron in 1788, died at Uilean in 1855. In the 18th century Carron also was owned by Campbell of Knockbuie. Between Carron and Garvachy lies Feorlin, which I visited this year; it is quite a long walk out to the ruined farmstead. There is a gravestone in Glassary for Donald MacArthur (77) Tacksman, Feorlin, died 1883. There are also gravestones in Glassary, Kilmory and Lochgilphead Parish Church for tenants of Brenfeorlin from 1773 to 1855; I cannot say whether or not this is the same place.

From Feorlin we go back to Minard and to Lochgair. On the hill near Loch Glashan and in the forest is the ruin of Knock, an old place this one. In Lochgair old graveyard is the gravestone of Rachael Ballantyne, aged 18, Knock, died 1788, of smallpox. In the Ardcastle Wood in the forest are two ruined houses; in talking to two natives of Lochgair area I was told that this was probably called Eilar or Eilear. There are deaths on record of Donald MacKellar (33) in 1868 and Sarah MacKellar (83) in 1882 at Sheep-point which is nearby. I walked the whole of the Forest Walk in Ardcastle and saw remains of other dwellings. There is a splendid view from Ardcastle Point along Loch Fyne. We go on to Kames near Lochgair where there are a number of ruined

dwellings. I have a list of names of people of Kames who died there from 1855 to 1882.

From here we go up to Carrick, near Port Ann, a place in the forest, but I found it quite easily. A stone in Glassary records the death of John MacFarlane aged 6 who died here in 1816, and one in Kilmory that of Archibald MacEwan aged 75 who died in 1838; there is another for Donald MacTavish, tenant, died 1851 aged 69, and wife Mary Dewar died in 1846 aged 70. In Lochgair old burial ground is a stone for Malcolm Clark (40), tenant of Carrick, died 1796. Among others who died at Carrick is Mary Currie aged 86, who died in 1885, and who was born at Lag near Kilmichael.

We can go from here to West Otter Ferry, where the old jetty still survives along with some ruined houses. There is a stone in Kilmory for John Carmichael (10), West Otter Ferry, died 1791, and Janet Carmichael, died 1855.

From here we go up the hill and on to the old road from Kilmory, past the ruin of the Cossack Inn, where a tenant was John Crawford. At an enquiry at Tarbert on 17 April 1894 into crofting Peter Whyte of Silvercraigs gave evidence on evictions from the Cossack Inn, Achnaba, Achnalephen, Drimgarbh, Drimfuar and Lagnahullidh, around 1860. We cross the old Cossack Bridge and go on to Achnaba village; the tenants said to have been evicted included Crawfords, Fergusons, MacCalls, MacEwans and Kerrs. The only relevant gravestone I found was in Kilmory, for Archibald Ferguson aged 10, died at Achnaba in 1833. Along the old road are the ruins of Achnalephen, where those said to have been evicted were Campbells and MacFarlanes; a stone in Kilmory is for John MacIver (22), son of Donald MacIver, tenant of Achnalephen, who died in 1792, and another for Duncan Campbell, tenant of Achnalephen, died 1842 aged 34. About half a mile from Ballibeg is a road leading into the hill, and at the back of the ridge known as Drimfuar is the ruined settlement of Drimfuar. The deaths are on record of Hugh Dewar in 1856, Nancy MacFarlane (87) in 1859 and Malcolm Brodie (85) in 1859. Further along is another ruined croft, probably Drimgarbh; there is an old quern on the hillside here. Coming down we go along to where a road leads into the forest; in here are the ruins of two houses known as, and marked on the map as, Acres. Along the burn which flows down here are the ruins of Tomdhu, but I did not find them.

Coming down to the main road now we go on to Lingerton,

whose ruins are on the hillside where the forest is now felled. A tree planted in the middle of the house, when felled,dropped on the wall and broke it down. In Kilmory are stones for Malcolm MacChruter (71), tenant, died 1780, and a son of Dugald MacKechnie, Lingerton, who died in 1828 aged 28; the same stone records Duncan MacKechnie, tenant, died 1877 aged 69.

Lastly we go up to Dunmore, which appears to have been the kennels for Kilmory Estate. I went here after the forest was cut, and it was not easy. The place is all in ruins. A gravestone in Kilmory records Edward MacTavish (28), son of Dugald MacTavish, tenant of Dunmore, died 1858, John MacTavish (25), died 1859, and father Dugald in 1866.

So end my wanderings through the parishes of Kilmartin and Glassary. Where to next, I wonder? There is still a lot of wear in my hill boots.

...oooOooo...

ROWANS - and ARCHAEOLOGY ?

Edmond S. Clark

Rowans have long been thought to possess magical powers. Even today there are folk in the Highlands and Islands who would be reluctant to cut one down. Several years ago a friend arranged for a garage to be built on land adjoining his garden. Accordingly one morning three local workmen came to clear the site and lay a concrete foundation. A little later, going out to see how the work was progressing, he found all three standing round a young rowan growing in the middle of the proposed site. Promptly he fetched an axe and a saw and quickly demolished the cause of the hold-up. Work then proceeded apace. It was of course pure coincidence that some time afterwards he was knocked down - on a zebra crossing - sustaining injuries from which he took several months to recover.

But - rowans and archaeology? While working on the deserted settlement of Beldarroch [see Kist 45] I was clearing the corn-drying kiln; a ring of six or seven rowan saplings grew on the banked earth round it, and as they were not in the way I left them untouched.

Later that summer members of the Association of Certific-

ated Field Archaeologists had agreed to survey the whole site, which was by now engulfed in bracken. In preparation for this volunteers cleared the walls of the houses with hand tools, and a friend with a petrol-driven strimmer set out to cut pathways and the D-shaped enclosure. The latter was so overgrown with bracken that it was impossible to make out even the line of the wall. I decided a 'road' would have to be cut to avoid damage to the strimmer, but even that was difficult until I realised there was a line of young trees, mainly rowan and birch, roughly where I expected the wall to run. Working from one to the next I managed to clear the whole line of the wall. Thinking longingly of lunch, I turned my back on the work, and noticed for the first time a line of rowans marching across the hillside below. "Surely not" I thought,"but I'd better just have a look". The rowans grew exactly on what proved to be an old field wall running for at least 100m across the slope below the site. It was in fact marked on an old map, but, preoccupied with the houses, we had not noticed it before.

All these saplings were of course some 150 years or more younger than the walls beside which and on which they were growing. Seeds falling between the stones would have found shelter, and also protection from the sheep which once grazed those hillsides. Whatever the explanation, a grouping or line of young rowans could always be worth investigating.

The volunteer team was congratulated by an Inspector from Historic Scotland on the work they had done on what is now a scheduled site. She did however enquire why we had left all those rowan and birch saplings growing round and inside the house walls. Our reasons were environmental and not superstitious; but with her encouragement my wife and I went up one Sunday afternoon and cut down or uprooted all the young trees threatening the houses.

On the Monday our washing machine overflowed and flooded the whole kitchen to a depth of two to three inches; we had not previously noticed that the floor sloped towards the dining-room. It must have been a judgement on us for breaking the Sabbath. It couldn't have been the rowans - could it?

...oooOooo...

THE OLD SHOPS of TARBERT

Duncan MacDougall

[Mr MacDougall has supplied to Kist a list of 58 shops which traded in Tarbert from the latter part of the 19th century up to the Second World War, mostly at the same time. This article is a shortened version of his information. His full list is deposited with the Archivist for Argyll and Bute. It may not be generally known that Tarbert is divided, by the burn that runs into the corner of the harbour, between Kintyre on the southern side and South Knapdale (part of Mid Argyll) on the northern side. Mr MacDougall begins by listing the shops on the Kintyre side, from the East Pier.]

The wee shop at the Pier: Mrs Crawford sold sweets and postcards.

The East Pier Post Office: Mrs Duncan Johnson had the post office, and a tea-room.

Kate MacFarlane's: across the road from the Quay; a tea-room and shop selling ice-cream and sweets and boxes of chocolates; popular with yachtsmen.

Neil Black's: one of the main shops for all the fishermen's supplies. It was called Nellie Bhan's. [a Gaelic joke. Ed.] He also had the coal-ree, and two puffers 'Boar' and 'Bloodhound', two carts for delivering coal round the village, and two horses, Punch and Bochdan. Punch was one of the last horses to pull the Campbeltown Coach.

Willie Shaw: tailor. He employed one other tailor, and a girl in the shop; he made blue suits to measure, costing about £7, women's costumes, and other clothing, mainly men's.

Mrs Campbell: (Christina's); sweet shop, sold some grocery.

MacPhersons': owned by Peter MacPherson and his son John from about 1880 till about 1935. Supplied nets, ropes, coal, oil, groceries and all sorts of ship's chandlery.

Duncan Crawford's: butcher's shop with slaughter-house behind. He killed most of his mutton and the odd bullock, though he got sides of beef from Glasgow. He bought thirty to forty sheep at one time, kept them in a field out the West Road, and killed them as required.

Smith the baker: Willie Smith (Tapp) had his shop and bake-house next to Crawford's; the bakers were Old Tapp and his two sons Willie and Jimmie, two other bakers and an apprentice, and there were two girls in the shop. It sold all

sorts of bread, rolls, soft biscuits and teabread. They got in a ton of flour at a time; it came with the cargo boat from Glasgow. Willie Smith came from Stevenston in Ayrshire. He had just started in Tarbert when somebody went into the shop to buy hot pies. Willie said "Will ye tak' a sugar-tap till Willie makes the hot pies?" This earned him the nickname 'Tapp'. [a sugar-tap is a bun with sugar on the top. Ed.]

Duncan Johnson: boot and shoe shop and repairs.

Mrs Clinkscale: tea-room and sweetie shop.

Johnsons': paper shop; sold newspapers, magazines, books and confectionery.

The Italians': sold ice-cream, fish and chips, hot peas and vinegar, soft drinks, boxes of chocolates and sweets of all kinds.

Mrs MacFarlane: draper.

Flora Murray: sold confectionery, ice-cream and soft drinks; tea-room in back shop.

MacIntyres': bakers; a family business, father and three sons all bakers, employing one other baker and an apprentice. The daughters and another girl served in the shop. There was a big sale for bread. Forty fishing boats in Tarbert, which took forty dozen plain loaves each week, households requiring bread, rolls, biscuits, cakes etc., produced a flourishing trade of which MacIntyres' had a large share. The MacIntyre family all emigrated to Australia about 1925.

John MacEwen: sold jewellery and repaired clocks and watches, etc.

Robert Mitchell: grocer and general merchant; also had stables and a yard. He had about twelve horses, and carriages, brakes, horse-drawn lorries and the hearse. He ran the Islay passengers between the East and West Piers. He also supplied wedding carriages. He carried on till about 1910, the start of the motor cars. D. Blair then took over the shop.

MacLarty's: the shop where the Corner House is now; mostly a seed and grain merchant's; sold all kinds of feeding for horses, cattle, pigs, hens etc. He had a horse-drawn spring cart for delivering goods. When he died his nephew took over and ran a grocer's shop till about 1925. They owned the tenement 'Braeside', with stores below and the stable and other buildings at the back.

MacEwans': Alick MacEwan and his wife sold all kinds of drapery in a shop in front of the picture house. [One en-

tered the old picture house by going through a close between two shops. Ed.]

Flora Black: had a sweetie shop next the picture house, a good site!

Willie MacIntyre: baker;employed another man and a boy in the bakehouse. His wife and a girl served in the shop. He went to Australia.

John MacFarlane (Skate): a fish shop next the Tarbert Hotel. He was a herring-buyer on one of the 'screws'. His family ran the shop for a number of years; a fish shop never paid in Tarbert - it was easy to get herring, stanelock, peuchkie or an odd flounder for nothing from the skiffs at the Quay, and some fishermen took herring home for their neighbours.

MacMillan: shoemaker. The old shoemaker and his son Dunkie sold boots and shoes in the shop. The workshop was next door, where they made shoes, and also high boots for the fishermen, reaching about two inches above the knee, all leather; and water-tight hill-boots with turned-up toes for the farmers, some plain and some with toecaps; they were called 'fraochans'.

Ned MacCallien's: shoe shop; sold boots and shoes and did repairs.

Smith: grocer; the same Smith as the baker. The shop was quite big; they had a horse-drawn van going to Whitehouse, Skipness, Ardpatrick and Kilberry with groceries and bakery.

Aggie Smith; a small butcher's shop beside the grocer's.

Gear the chemist: 'The Medical Hall'. The doctor had his consulting room in the back shop.

Archie MacDougall: baker. The shop had two windows, bakery in one and confectionery in the other. The bakehouse was over at the end of the lane; there were three bakers - Archie, one other man and a boy - and two girls in the shop.

Robert MacFarlane (Bob the Gardener): he had a market garden out the West Road, where the Council houses are now. He sold fruit and vegetables in the shop, buying in what he could not grow. He also sold newspapers and postcards.

The shop now the 'Kintyre Electrics' had several occupants.

Adam the barber.

John Munro: sold cheap suits, boots and shoes, and material.

MacNair : butcher.

Peter Smith.

Three small shops next - Mrs MacFarlane's, selling paraf-

fin oil and other goods, Mrs Leitch selling groceries and sweets, and Peggie Smith selling groceries, the latter two in 'Kerryview'.

Hector MacMillan: saddler; made all kinds of harness for horse and cart, farm ploughing harness, harness for two or three abreast carriages,for brakes and for traps; he made collars, saddles, brechans, halters, blinkers. When the motor cars started,that spoiled the demand for harness; he then sold other leather goods - suitcases, boots and shoes, bags etc.

Roddie MacLellan: painter; sold wallpaper, paint,varnish and so on.

Black the Tailor: made men's suits and women's costumes and sold drapery.

Crawford's: fish and chip shop.

Reids' Furniture Shop: they also had a shop and store in the Back Street, and a big furniture business in Old Kilpatrick.

Dougald Campbell's shops: a general store, a butcher's shop and the shop at Kilberry. He had a horse-drawn van to take supplies to his customers between Tarbert and Kilberry, and brought back to Tarbert eggs, potatoes, rabbits, hares and the odd braxy sheep. He was auctioneer at the Cattle Market, and at farm and house sales.

Across the burn and into South Knapdale:

Miss Lamont's Emporium: all sorts of drapery.

'The Rest' (a small triangular building still to be seen on the right at the beginning of the Campbeltown Road): three shops here; a baker at the end of the 19th century; Katie Smith's small draper's shop selling knitting wool, socks,thread, buttons etc.; and Huie Rankin, boot and shoe repairer.

Mary Dickie: grocer. ('Mary Dickie's Corner').

Shaw the Tailors: brothers Dan Shaw and Archie Shaw had a drapery business in the front shop, with a girl assistant. The back premises were the workshop, making blue serge suits to measure which cost about £6 or £7; they also made odd trousers and jackets. They employed one other tailor.

Kirsty MacDougall: sold high class confectionery.

Mrs Smith: sold dishes and chinaware.

John MacLeod (Jonnie Gloud): ironmonger and gunsmith; sold everything to do with shooting - guns, including the old

muzzle-loader and double-barrelled guns, gunpowder, hale (hail, small shot, pellets), ramrods, flasks for carrying powder and hale, and cartridges. He also kept powder for blasting; he had a small stone building with a concrete roof up the hill for keeping explosives.

Miss MacDougall's: a small sweetie shop; but she was also the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths till about 1925. (Before her time, away back about 1850 the Registrar was the schoolmaster at the old school beside the high church. His name was Walter Jenkins, Wattie Jinkins).

Mrs MacDougall (Nellie Doo): a sweetie shop. She emigrated to Australia about 1925.

Mrs MacFarlane's: a grocer's shop, in 'Finlaggan' a building owned by the family. Before them, it was Dr Craig's house; he stabled his pony and kept his trap at the back of the building, through the wide close.

Mrs Henderson ('the Wee Hoch Wife'): came from Greenock about 1925 and took over a small shop; it was mainly a sweetie shop, but she made potted heid and potted hough (hence her nickname) and sold it in bowls. She also made toffee; she had a tray on the end of the counter with the toffee and a toffee-hammer to break off the amount the customer wanted.

Mrs Barker; her shop in 'Cornwall' sold glass and delf dishes; she had a big mangle in the shop; a customer could bring a basketful of linen sheets, tablecloths and the like and put them through the mangle.

Mrs Smith: sold groceries, sweets etc.

Maggie Murray: in 'Otterburn' now demolished. She had a good grocery trade and sold a great amount of cigarettes (Woodbines) to the young fishermen.

Mrs John Campbell: had a shop in the bottom flat of 'Sunnycraig' from about 1900 selling groceries and vegetables. She was the wife of Jeck the Coalman, who had a kippering house and a coalree on the shore side of the road. Sailing smacks unloaded the coal at Jeck's Quay.

Three shops were used as offices: the Harbour Board Office at the Quay, the Fishery Office at the Quay, and Dickie's Garage Office in the Bank of Scotland Building.

...oooOooo...

THE DURRAN ROAD

Mary McGrigor

"They shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
Before they planted the trees."

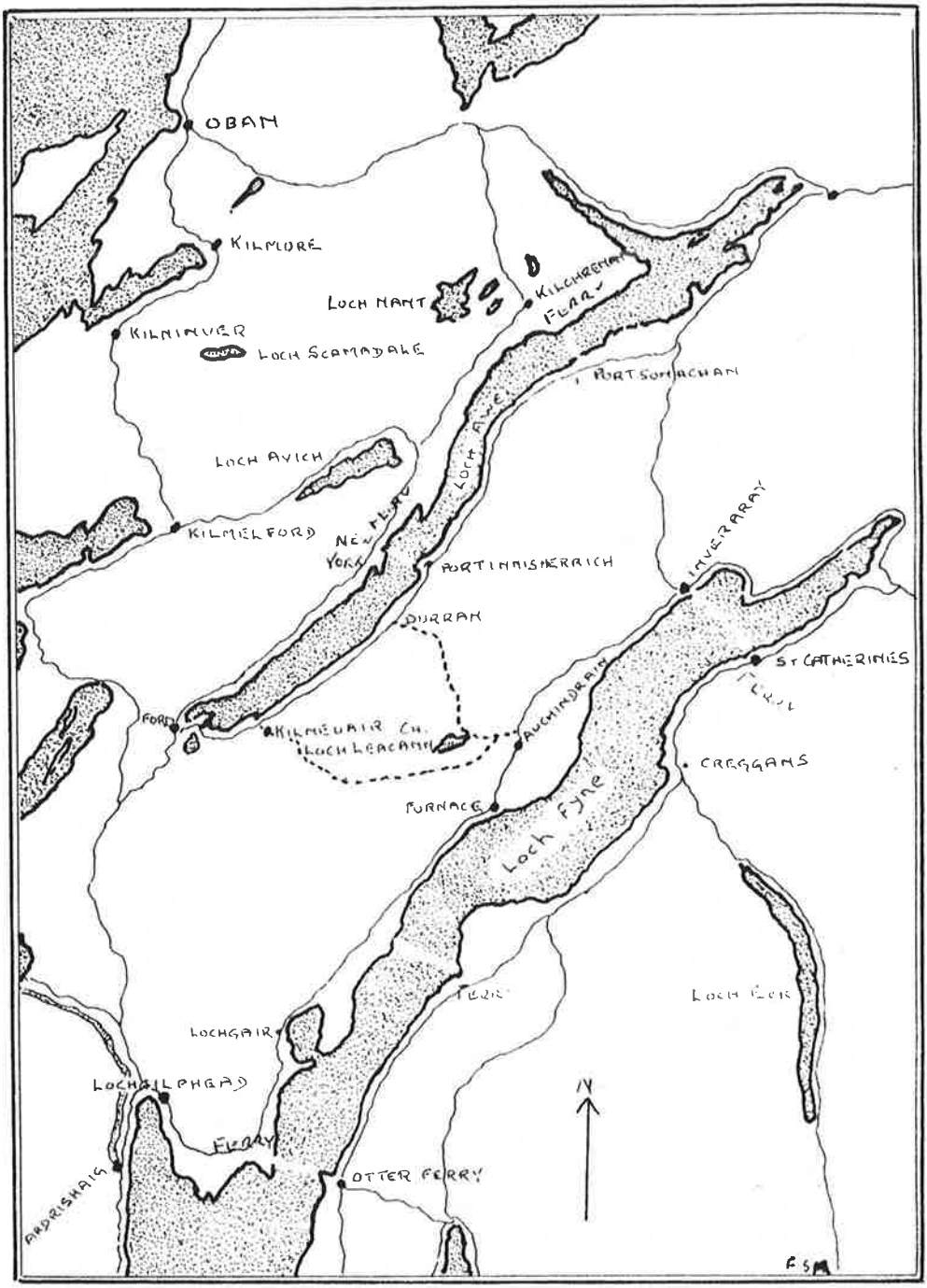
Rudyard Kipling

The old roads across the Leacann Muir, between Loch Awe and Loch Fyne, are now marked merely as footpaths; but a glance at the map shows their past importance, for they once linked the system of ferries on a main route to the NW of Scotland. Prior to the opening of the Crinan Canal in 1801 the coastal passage for shipping was beset with peril. Not only was it threatened by the natural dangers of rock, wind and tide, but at least until the 18th century piracy was rife amongst the Isles.

The Durran Road, marked by a sign "Footpath to Loch Fyne" branches off from the B840 on S Lochaweside just below the hamlet of Durran. It then cuts through the Eredine Forest for a short way until it joins a forestry road. The two routes combine up the E side of the Abhainn Bhealaich (the Braevallich Burn), the march between Lorn and Mid Argyll. Then, when the forestry road turns to the NE, the Durran Road continues to the SW across the now forested hill. Reaching the watershed it turns SE to cross the Allt nan Sac (Burn of the Load). It then threads its way among several small hill lochs before it descends to the larger Loch Leacann. After a steep drop beside the Leacann Water it converges with the other hill road, also marked as a footpath, which leaves Loch Awe below the ruined church of Kilneuair.

The last wolf in Argyll is said to have been killed near to the junction of the tracks in about 1720. The story runs that it sprang upon a woman who was spinning as she walked along the track. She managed to kill it with her spindle, but died herself in the attack. [The story is told in vivid detail by Marion Campbell in Kist 2. Ed.]

Sadly , she might have been saved had only her cries been heard, for she was within half a mile of Auchindrain. This


OBAN
KILMORE
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KILNINVER
LOCH SCAMADALE
PORTSONACHAN
LOCH AVICH
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NEW FERRY
PORTINNISHERRICH
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LOCH LEACANN
AUCHINDRAIN
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LOCH FYNE
LOCHGAIR
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small village, where the roads across the hill reach Loch-fyneside, was one of the last farming communities in Argyll. Now, thanks to the inspiration of Miss Campbell of Kilberry, it is a fascinating museum of the old farming life. Travellers of the past would probably have been welcomed with a dram; today a cup of tea or coffee awaits visitors.

During the Civil War the Durran Road was an important route. In December 1644, when the Royalist forces under Montrose invaded Argyll, his lieutenant Alasdair MacColla is believed to have led the Irish Contingent of the army this way when jointly they attacked Inveraray.

In the following century, however, the road had more peaceful uses. Firstly, as the cattle trade increased, droves of beasts from the Isles and the western areas, after being ferried or swum across Loch Awe, followed it on their way to the markets. Next, in the 1750's, a new industry began as the trees which had stood for centuries were felled to make charcoal for fuel. In 1754 Archibald, 3rd Duke of Argyll, leased his woods on the Leacann Muir to the Argyll Furnace Company, and in the following year an iron foundry was established at the place still called Furnace, on the W shore of Loch Fyne. The wood was burned on the circular platforms which can still be traced on the hillsides. Once ready the charcoal was carried in panniers by ponies walking head to tail on roads to the foundry.

Embankments built to prevent landslides apparently date from this time; but despite these the road remained unsafe for anything larger than farm carts. In 1812, when the Durran Estate was advertised for sale, it was described as "unfit for carriages", perhaps an indication that an accident had recently occurred. The following story, told by the late Alasdair Carmichael, and published in the Ford village History, comes with permission of his widow Sheena, a member of NHASMA.

On the 2nd September 1939, in the clear light of noon, Mr Carmichael and a companion, both working for the Forestry Commission, walked up the track from Durran ahead of some other men, carrying young trees for hill planting. The talk was entirely of music, both being keen fiddlers.

Rounding a bend in the track they were confronted by a lady walking down the path towards them. She seemed very young, and very beautiful, with long golden ringlets falling from below her poke bonnet on to the shoulders of her

travelling cloak, which covered all but her tiny feet. Astonished, the two men recovered in time to wish her a polite "Good Day". She answered nothing, but looked at both their faces in turn before continuing on her way round the bend in the track. Then, even as the fiddlers gazed after her, their companions, laughing and talking, came into sight the same way. They had met and seen nothing and no-one, of that they were totally certain. A search of the muddy track showed the footprints of all who were there, but not a trace could be found of the print of a lady's shoe. An elderly man who was present then told the story of an eloping couple whose coach had crashed at that bend, and the young lady thrown out and killed.

Plans were made in the early 19th century to take a road on a new line from Inveraray to Loch Awe under the direction of the Crown Commissioners, but these were finally abandoned when, in the 1870's, the Malcolms of Poltalloch built what is now the B840 to link their lands on S Lochaweside which then stretched as far as Portsonachan. The old road, however, was still used by local people. Men seeking seasonal work on the herring boats walked that way to Loch Fyne, and women carrying farm produce for sale returned with their creels filled with seaweed with which to fertilise the ground; but its use gradually declined, and now it is mostly hill-walkers who follow the old way across the Muir.

My most grateful thanks are due to Mrs Sheena Carmichael, Mrs Ile Crawford, Mr Murdo MacDonald, Archivist for Argyll and Bute, and to Dr F.S. Mackenna who edited the manuscript and contributed the map, for their great help with this article.

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BELDARROCH

The editor regrets that, partly due to lack of space and partly due to the recent arrival of further information, the promised 'historical' account of Beldarroch is held over until the next issue of Kist, due out in September 1994.

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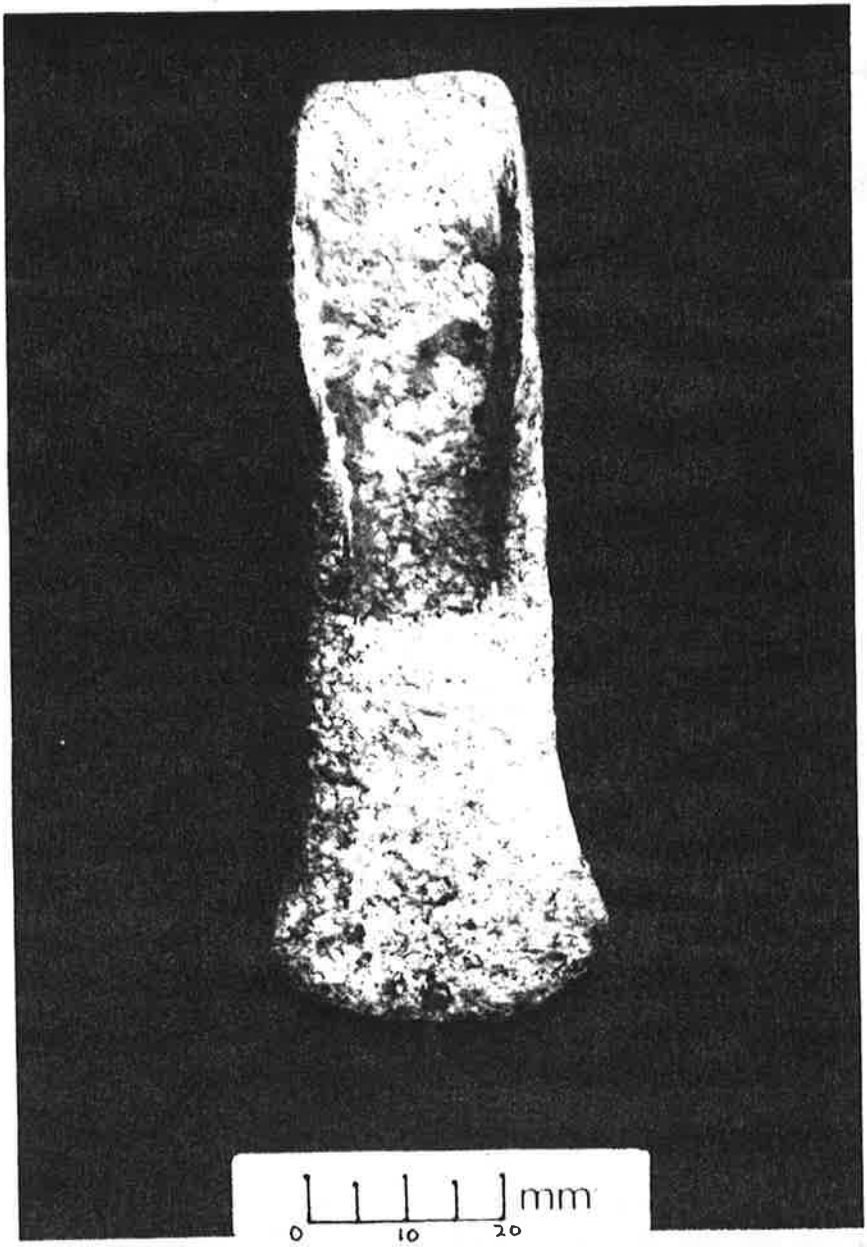


The Stonefield Bronze Age Axe
Photograph by courtesy of the National Museums of Scotland

THE STONEFIELD BRONZE AGE AXE

Fiona Campbell Byatt

This axe is part of the collection held by the National Museums of Scotland; the story behind it proved to be interesting. Not all the details have fallen into place, and it is possible this note will bring some more facts to light.

The story begins in the Middle Bronze Age (1600-1500 BC) when probably the axe was made, but it was not until the end of last century that it was re-discovered. In 1892 a storm in the early part of the year blew down trees in the vicinity of Stonefield House near Tarbert. An unknown person found this beautiful object stuck in the roots of a fallen tree, and took it to a local antiquarian, Hugh McLean, who lived at Breaklarach in Tarbert. On March 16th 1892 Mr McLean wrote to his friend Andrew Muirhead, FSAScot.

> "By the most singular of co-incidences I was about to write to you when your letter of yesterday arrived. By it I see that the Bronze Axe has received a place in the list of donations to the National Museum and I therefore feel pleased to have brought it under your notice".

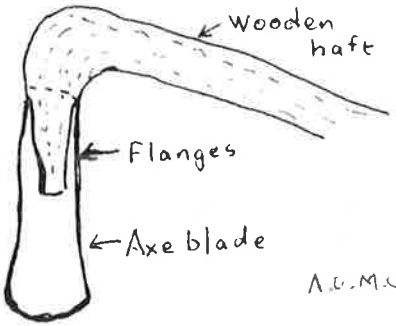
In the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland of March 13th 1893 a note is attached to this letter as follows:

> "The axe here referred to is of the flanged type and was found in the earth attached to the upturned root of a tree which had been blown down in the gales of the previous winter. The site of the discovery is close to Stonefield House, a well-sheltered locality and one which has yielded several objects of archaeological interest".

Dr Trevor Cowie, who dates the axe to 1600-1500 BC, was kind enough to show it to me and have it photographed. It is surprisingly small, only 4 inches long [length 100mm, cutting edge 36mm, butt 22mm]. It would have had limited agricultural use but could have been used for wood-carving. Dr Cowie suggests that it might have been a votive object, and so have been placed in the area where it was found, not lost there.

It is not possible to say where it was made. There are deposits of copper close to hand at Inverneill, but the tin would have had to come from elsewhere, perhaps Cornwall. The possibility of the axe being made far away on the Con-

tinent and reaching Argyll some years, perhaps as many as 200 years, later, by trade, exchange or gift, is a very real one.



Such an axe was affixed to a haft made of a right-angled piece of wood split at the short end; the split sides were inserted into the recesses in the axe-blade, and gripped by the flanges. The joint could then be bound with cord for additional strength.
(See diagram)

I am grateful for the help given by Dr Cowie, Dr Alison Sheridan, Miss Campbell of Kilberry and the staff of the National Museums of Scotland.

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THE REPAIRING of BRENCHOILLE BRIDGE

Jim Riley

This is a lovely bridge believed to have been constructed in the last quarter of the 18th century as per Historic Scotland's report. Very few alterations have been carried out since it was built. At one time hard cement smear pointing has been done; this is bad practice; any masonry built with lime mortar should be repaired using lime mortar. Hard cement smear pointing cracks and lets water in and behind the pointing, and during frost can cause a jacking-out of stones. It has therefore been removed from areas on the abutments. The building stones that were missing have been replaced in the upstream cutwater on the centre pier, and also in the abutments. These were the areas that required immediate attention. As the work proceeded building in of missing stones took place. The core of the wall was grouted: as the grout runs into the wall it finds any voids, and consolidates the masonry. This work is unseen but very necessary in making a sound job. A water-resistant lime-based mortar was used on the work carried out in this Phase 1.

Other areas on this bridge should receive attention in

1994: harmful vegetation should be cut back, and removed from the masonry when dead; missing and loose stones should be replaced,and the masonry then re-pointed.

The conservation volunteers were keen and worked very hard, thus ensuring Phase 1 was completed on time. I enjoyed taking part in repairing this fine bridge over the Leacann Water -long may it be preserved!

[Mr Riley supervised the work carried out on the Brenchoille Bridge. The bridge can be seen about a mile south of Auchindrain on a small side road off the A83.
Map reference NN 023019. Ed.]

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RARE BIRDS in ARGYLL

Colin Fergusson

One of the success stories in recent years has been the re-introduction to our country of the osprey (Pandion haliaetus). Since the first pair first set up their eyrie on Loch Garten in 1954, with the active support of landowners, wardens and volunteers it has continually been able to raise successfully many young. Each successfully reared young bird is another on the look-out for a place to set up home as it reaches maturity; so their territory has expanded well over Scotland in the past few years. Many of our members have been aware of a nesting pair which has taken up residence in Argyll. It has been quietly watched and guarded, and though there were a few early disappointments, it was very pleasing to see this year a young Argyll-bred osprey flying strongly with its parents in the area. It is now known that three pairs did breed in Argyll in 1993. Two were fortunate and reared one chick each; the other, perhaps more immature, may have better luck next season.

The call of the corncrake (Crex crex) was once a regular sound in our district; but the last birds which I can recall hearing locally were at the old River Add bridge at Bridgend and at Lagluinge, Tarbert. Hay was made in these fields, and not too early in the season, which helped the parent birds to lay their eggs and hatch their young in safety; cover for the nest and young birds was essential.

Before the sound of the horse-drawn grass mower was heard the young were strong enough to follow their parents to a safe place. In Scotland the territory of the corncrake is now the Western Isles. A reserve has been set up in Coll covering four square miles. A set-aside type of crofting has been agreed by the crofters and the Reserve Management Committee for the benefit of the corncrake. The population of birds there is not large; but the scheme of reverting to later cutting of grass for hay or silage should help to increase their numbers, as will another agreed scheme of cutting a swathe down the middle of the field first and working outwards from it. In this way corncrakes, if present, will be able to escape to denser vegetation at the field edges before the arrival of tractor and mower. It is hoped that these measures will lead to increased numbers of corncrakes being raised again in our countryside.

Several of our hill lochans sometimes have a pair of red-throated divers (Gavia stellata), which in spring have their nest beside the water, usually with two fairly large green-coloured eggs. Divers, both the red- and the black-throated (Gavia arctica), are unable because of their build to move very freely on land, so must have their nests very close to the edge of the water. Unfortunately, when heavy rain falls the level of the loch rises and nest and eggs are flooded. If it is a short-term flood hatching can resume when the level of the water drops to normal; however, if the rain continues for a lengthy period, as we know it can with a vengeance at this time of the year, nest and eggs are destroyed. Thus a breeding season is ruined for another beautiful and diminishing species. For some years trials have been taking place on several lochs, large and small, by floating man-made rafts on them. These are made of a framework of wood and turf held together with wire-netting. They are just big enough to comfortably accommodate a sitting bird. This has been quite a successful venture; the rafts, always floating even on rising water,are less susceptible to flooding. In the North of Scotland the rarer black-throated diver has used these rafts at forty sites. From early studies it would appear that the birds preferred the raft to the natural site at the edge of the loch. Out on the water there is less disturbance and fewer predators; from seven pairs ten young were reared during 1992. Nearer our own area a pair successfully reared two young

this year on a Rannoch Moor lochan where some of these rafts are now in position.

Another breeding success in Argyll in 1993 was that of the capercaillie (Tetrao urogallus) which reared two young. It is a fierce defender of its territory; but it must be many years since it was seen in Argyll, let alone since it bred here; in the whole of Scotland it was non-existent for many years. It was only by imports from Scandinavian countries into Perthshire in the late 1830's that it was able to re-establish a foothold in this country. Let us hope we see and hear more of the capercaillie!

This short update on ornithological matters has ranged over several parts of Scotland. As species extend their territory through breeding success in other areas as well as Argyll, so we are delighted to see their offspring set up new nesting sites in our neck of the woods. There are no barriers to prevent them flying into our area - and none to keep them in. The pleasure of seeing a rare species on a country walk is a delightful bonus, and may become more frequent.

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DICKIES' BOATYARD, TARBERT

In response to Mr MacDougall's article in Kist 46, Mr John Pinkerton, presently based aboard "Morna" at Split in Croatia, wrote to Kist. His letter, slightly abridged, is as follows.

Perhaps readers would like some further information which I have discovered over the last few years, mostly on the sailing yachts, with one or two motor yachts but only one fishing boat.

The oldest yacht I have come across is Oread, built in 1898, about 28½ft long, rigged as a cutter; then there was Runa, a 36ft yawl, and Witch, a 30ft cutter, both built in 1899; another yacht built in that year was Hirta, a 33ft sloop, but I believe she was launched under the name Rhomac. Mr MacDougall mentions as pre-1923 Morna - two yachts of this name, one built in 1913, a 38½ft yawl, and the second in 1920, a 48½ft ketch built for Mr Sillars of Shandon (this is now my own yacht), Veronique, a 31½ft yawl built in

1923, Lady Anne, a 35½ft ketch built in 1922, Lady Sophie, which may have been the 1911-built Lady Jean motor yacht designed by J A MacCallum; Mayflower I have not found; Quest III was built in 1914 as a 49ft ketch, most unusual in her time for having bermuda sails and twin auxiliary engines; she sank off Sicily in the early 1970's; Rosemary was built in 1922, a 33ft cutter. I have a record of only one fishing boat, Faeme, built in 1901, 35ft long, and converted to a yacht in about 1947.

The yard built several yachts to designs by other names, such as Harrison Butler (Cruinneag I in 1931 and Ard Chuan in 1930), Fred Shepherd (Crystal II in 1927), William Fife (Gitana in 1935), Albert Strange (Hawk Moth in 1908, Redwing in 1911 and Sheila II in 1911), A Mylne (Rhomac in 1899 and Skerryvore in 1932). My lists are not exhaustive, and I am continually updating.

Moonshine, 58½ft ketch, built in 1927, was sailed to the Caribbean and abandoned, only to be discovered in Antigua and restored in 1987 by Ian and Cath Ferguson, and still sails those waters. Gitana is sailing the Great Lakes, based in Canada. Mouse, now called Faith and owned by an American, Mr Kelley, is based in Puerto Rico; she is the third of the group including Quest III and my Morna which were designed by Peter Dickie and are most distinctive in style, showing his training with William Fife of Fairlie and the influence of Albert Strange. Morna is largely original and unmodified in spite of several Atlantic crossings and 20 years of chartering.

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OBITUARY. AIR VICE-MARSHALL GORDON YOUNG CBE

After a distinguished career in the RAF during the 1939-1945 war Gordon Young was posted in 1949 to the British Embassy in Moscow as assistant air attaché, remaining there till 1952 when he returned to his earlier sphere as expert in maritime reconnaissance. From 1960 to 1963 he was deputy chief of the C.in C. mission to the Soviet forces in Germany based at Potsdam during the tense situation of the early 1960's. It was at this stage he was appointed CBE. Until

his retirement in 1971 he combined maritime reconnaissance command with diplomatic and intelligence work as air attaché at the British Embassy in Bonn.

In 1971 he came to live at Middle Hill, Ardrishaig; for ten years he was vice-chairman of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Association for the Highlands, and for eight of those years he was honorary secretary of our Society, his enthusiasm and efficiency, not to mention his hospitality at Middle Hill, being boundless. When in 1982 he departed for Canada the Society felt the loss keenly.

He was an expert ornithologist, and contributed several articles on the subject to Kist, the last from Kingston Ontario pointing out that although at first glance many birds there may appear familiar to visitors from Mid Argyll "initial appearances are deceptive"; but of the 333 species in the local list 60 were found in Mid Argyll; with glee he reported that "two rarities eagerly sought but very rarely seen are the Lesser Blackbacked Gull and the Blackheaded Gull".

The Society is honoured to have had so distinguished and knowledgeable a Secretary, and mourns his death.

SUMMER EXPEDITIONS 1993

17th April. Ardfern. Led by Mrs Kahane.
On a clear sunny day the views seaward and landward from Soroba Hill were magnificent. Just below the summit we saw in a sheltered spot the remains of a near-circular structure probably a shieling, but just possibly an Iron Age hut. We then went downhill to the Clach an t'Sagairt chambered cairn, three massive stones and a capstone, a large upright slab and a huge boulder, projecting above the remains of a circular cairn about 13m wide.

15th May. Portinnisherrich. Led by Lady McGrigor.
A rainy morning changed to pale sunshine as the large party assembled. Two small boats made several journeys to take us to Innis Sea-Ramhach to visit the 15th century chapel in its surrounding graveyard sheltered by an encircling wall and tall trees, and then to Innischonnell Castle, its 13th century walls still standing to a great height, and 15th and 17th centuries' work adding to its impressive appearance.

Lady McGrigor's tales of its history and legend greatly enhanced our enjoyment of the visit. The issue of a colour-coded plan helped us to sort out the building periods.

12th June. Lismore. Led by Mrs Kahane.

Again the weather was kind. We had a minibus to transport us between widely separated sites. We visited Achadun, the 13th century castle of the bishops of Argyll, crowning its hill above a safe anchorage below; its former strength and magnificence are obvious, but by the 17th century it was ruinous. We visited (for the second time) what remains of the 13th century cathedral whose choir, much altered, is now the parish church; and then Castle Coeffin perched on its promontory commanding a wide view over Loch Linnhe and the Sound of Mull; its earliest walls are probably 13th century, and there are later additions; it was probably abandoned in the 16th century.

17th July. Taynish Nature Reserve. Led by Mr Halliday.

Torrential rain deterred all but six members, who were rewarded by its gradual cessation, and as we went along by a fascinating account of the reserve; among other things we saw badgers' tracks, woodpeckers' nest sites and - the highlight of the day - two otters fishing, and catching, in the loch, then coming ashore to play among the rocks, all as we were eating our lunch.

18th August. Crinan Canal. Led by Mr Howie.

On a dampish evening we walked along the canal bank from Ardrishaig to the Water Waster (see Kist 45) which by a simple automatic process controls the water level in the Canal; we inspected the device in its house and were then given an impressive demonstration of it in operation. Mr Howie also told us much about the working of the Canal.

11th September. Achnagoul. Led by Mrs Kahane.

A sunny afternoon. We saw first the remains of the chambered cairn in Barmore Wood, little visible on the ground, but the plan traceable, 20m long and the chamber 5m long; then visited the huge cairn at Achnagoul, 34m long and the chamber over 10m long, still very impressive despite heavy robbing and poor excavation last century. The second cairn, now in forestry, we were unable to locate! A visit to Brenchoille bridge (see p.24) ended the expedition.

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