

# INNIS SEA-MHRACH



The KIST • 50

# T H E K I S T

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## CONTENTS

<u>The Early History of the Clan Mackellar</u> Pt 2 .....	1
Mr Duncan Beaton	
<u>Fact and Fiction. Legends of Loch Awe</u> .....	7
Lady McGrigor, FSAScot.	
<u>Cup-and-Ring Carvings and the Brocken Spectre</u> .....	11
Mr Ian Purvis	
<u>Pre-1855 Gravestones in Barbreck Burial Ground</u> .....	14
Mrs A.C. Pitt	
<u>A Different Experience of Emigration</u> .....	15
John Black	
<u>Close Encounters of the Bird Kind</u> .....	19
Mr Edmond S. Clark, MA, FSAScot.	
<u>Found in Tarbert Garden</u> .....	21
<u>Summer Expeditions 1994</u> .....	22
<u>Home Front, Tarbert 1939-1945</u> .....	23
Miss Margaret Campbell McDougall	
<u>Book Reviews</u> .....	25

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# THE EARLY HISTORY of the CLAN MACKELLAR

## Part 2

### Duncan Beaton

In 1652 Duncan Mackellar of Maam and Malcolm Mackellar of Kilblaan were deputies For the Marquis of Argyile during the Commonwealth. Malcolm, the sasine witness of 1643, sat on the assises at the Sheriff Court at Inveraray from 1664 to 1671. He was followed by Dougal Mackellar of Kilblaan from 1672 until 1693, accompanied by his brother Alexander and son Allan in 1677.

Mackellars in Stuckscarden witnessed sasines in 1635, 1644 and 1661. The family was always designated "in" Stuckscarden, never "of" Stuckscarden; there is no doubt that the property was always held by tack from the heritor of Glen-shira, who by that time was the Earl of Argyile. Archibald Mackellar in Stuckscarden appeared on the assises at Inveraray between 1664 and 1691. The farm was apparently divided, as in the 1760 Argyll rentals a 19-year tack was granted to Ellar Mackellar, then in Dalrioch, and his brother Gilfillan Mackellar, in Kennachreggan, of the three merklands of Stuckscarden. This was probably the same Ellar Mackellar who with his wife Mary McNuier had a son Donald born at Stuckscarden in 1685, although an Ellar Mackellar and his McNuier wife (wife's name and place of birth indecipherable) had two daughters listed in the parish registers in the 1650's.

In the summer of 1679 the county of Argyll was raided by an army of Islesmen principally made up of MacDonalds and Macleans and led by Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat who had succeeded as the 3rd Baronet the previous year. (Neil Munro in John Splendid calls this episode "Donald Gorm's Troubles" although the last MacDonald chief to bear this appellation was the 3rd Baronet's grandfather). A great many Argyll people suffered as a result of this incursion; their privations are listed in The Manuscript of the Duke of Argyll, by Sir William Fraser. In the sixth report of the Argyll MSS (as Sir William's document is known) item no. 198 is "Account of the goods plundered by the McDonalds and Mc-Clanes party in May and June 1679 from Ellar McEllar and Duncan McEllar his son, and John McEllar inhabitants and tenants in Stukskardan in Glenshire. Amounting to 2,245L 6s 8d".

The other Mackellars in Glenshira also suffered at this time; item no. 193 is "Account of the goods unjustly robbed and taken away from Dugald McEllar of Kilblaan and his tenants by the party of McDonald and McClane who illegally and violently made invasion of the shire of Argyll in May and June 1679. The losses amount in all to 2933L 13s 4d. The special actors in the robbery were the McEans of Glencoe, McDonalds of Keppoch and the McClanes of the family of Ard-gour". It was no wonder that from this and other subsequent raids a special enmity existed between the clans of South Argyll and those of Lochaber and the Isles.

Although this raid of 1679 had tragic consequences it has been overshadowed in Scottish history by the more famous "Atholl Raid" of 1685. Once again there was a national, even international, root to the events that shook Argyll.

When Charles II died in 1685 he was succeeded by his Roman Catholic brother James Duke of York as James VII of Scotland and II of Great Britain. The succession was opposed by his Protestant nephew James Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch, a bastard son of Charles II, who was supported by Archibald Campbell Earl of Argyle, always an opponent of the Stuart monarchy. The Monmouth Rebellion ended with defeats at Sedgemoor in England and a series of minor skirmishes in Scotland. Both leaders were captured and beheaded. The Marquis of Atholl, head of the Murray clan as well as the Stewarts in Perthshire, was commissioned to raise an army and make a foray into the Campbell-held lands in Argyll. Instead of a punitive campaign it was used to settle even older scores. The Stewarts, Camerons, MacDonalds and Macleans came in three great columns and swept the glens of Argyll, looting, burning and killing as they went. Sixteen principals of the rebellion, all Argyllshire lairds, were hanged at the Gallows Farland at Inveraray, and others were detained in the town's Tolbooth.

Even minor participants were listed; those who had followed their lairds into the fray were recorded as the "Commons of Argyll". (The list was published under that title by Duncan C. MacTavish in 1935). Among them were "at Ard-tare in Glassary" Duncan and Dougal Mackellar, and at Braevallich John Mackellar; in Kilmartin Parish John Mackellar at Achrome, in Dalavich Parish John Mackellar in Kilmacha and Donald Mackellar in "Eraden" (Eredine), and in Glenaray Parish Gilbert Mackellar in Auchindrain.

By far the greatest numbers of Mackellars involved in the rebellion lived across Loch Fyne in Cowal. This is probably due more to the enthusiasm of the Campbell lairds there than any true indication of the distribution of families bearing the Mackellar name. By this time they were well-established Campbell clanspeople, faithful to the chief of the name. Their presence in Cowal was explained in a letter from the 10th Duke of Argyll to the novelist Neil Munro:".... the Mackellars of Maam who were cadets of those of Cruachan in Lorne and connected with those of Glaslet near Kinlochgoil (Lochgoilhead) who for generations were our 'officiers' of Gara-Cowal alias Upper Cowal". There are many sasines which mention this family from 1554 to 1601. [These are listed by Mr Beaton; but for reasons of space only place-names are given here. Ed.] They refer to Dowlater (Duiletter), Drumsyniemore, Curroure (Carrow), Garweachre and Glascaill (Glaslet).

In the 1685 List of Rebels the following Mackellars appeared in Lochgoilhead Parish: Duncan and Patrick in Glaslet; Duncan and Donald in Corrive; Archibald in Drumsyniebeg; Duncan in Corrivalichen; Archibald in Cuilivuick; Donald in Carrick; Neill in Aldrinoman; John and Archibald in Stuck; and Patrick in Lochgoilhead. It cannot be established what the fate of some of these people was, but from later lists it can be seen that there were many who escaped unmolested, or with a fine. There can be no doubt that life was tough for them during the period of the Atholl Raid, but three years later the tables were turned and the Campbells and their adherents were all-powerful. The only Mackellar to suffer severe punishment for his part in the rebellion was Angus, who was sentenced to be transported to New England in 1685. He does not even appear in MacTavish's lists.

During the time of these upheavals Mackellars "in Maam" appear on record on the assises from 1664 to 1675 and from 1697 to 1709. In the last quarter of the 17th century the number of Mackellar families on record in their traditional areas of Glassary, Lochaweside, Glenshira and Cowal was on the increase. In 1672 a writ was served in Glassary by a Duncan Mackellar at the instance of Charles Maitland of Halftoun against Archibald McLauchlane of that ilk and others, including Kenneth Mackellar, John Roy Mackellar and Patrick Mackellar, tenants in the lands of Fincharne Nedder (Nether) and Kilneuair, and Neill Mackellar, feuar

of Letternamalt (sic), for the non-payment of teinds.

The Commissariat Records of Argyll list the wills and testaments of the deceased Mackellars of that period: that of Patrick Mackellar in Fincharn was dated 26th November 1674, of Catherine Mackellar, spouse of Malcolm McIver in Auchihoish in the parish of Glassary, 15th December 1674; also in Glassary that of Margaret Campbell, spouse of Duncan Mackellar in Fincharn. In Cowal were recorded Mary Mc-Grigour, spouse of Duncan Mackellar in Cormonichan on Loch Goil on 12th June 1675, Archibald Mackellar in Pollechrouran on 30th August 1675, and Christian Mackellar, spouse of Neill McGhoune (Macgowan, or Smith) in Cullimuik on Loch Goil on 1st September 1675. On 5th July the Commissary agents recorded the testament of Donald Mackellar in Kilbryde, in Glendaruel in the parish of Kilmodan, and on 8th August that of John Mackellar at Rascappy in the parish of Kilmartin.

As part of the campaign for keeping the peace in the highlands prior to the "Glorious Revolution" (as the replacement of King James with his Protestant daughter Queen Mary and her husband King William was called) various bonds were required from the lairds and tenants. These involved a bail scheme, where the principal required a cautioner to pledge a sum for his good behaviour. Among those in Mid-Argyll were listed, in the Privy Council minutes, John Mackellar in Letternamoult as principal, with John Campbell of Barmolloch as cautioner, penalty 1,000 merks; John Campbell of Barmolloch as principal with John Mackellar of Letternamoult as cautioner, penalty 1,000 merks. Both were dated the 9th of June 1683. Two generations earlier there had been a bond of kinship between these families, this John Mackellar being the grandson of John Dow McIllichallum Bane Mackellar who purchased Letternamoult and the son of Neil who appeared on record in 1672. A similar reciprocal arrangement seems to have existed between near neighbours John Campbell of Auchteherly, near Kilmichael-Glassary village, and Malcolm Mackellar of Dail (Dail) near present-day Cairnbaan; both bonds, for 500 merks each, were dated 16th August 1683. Exactly who this Malcolm was is not certain, but he may have been the younger brother of Neil Mackellar of Letternamoult. They appeared on record together with their father when he purchased the property in the 1630's. As early as 16th June 1671 Malcolm had signed an obligation for 300 merks from John McTavish in Barwillan, who had sasine

of the 40 shilling-lands of Dail as security, granted on 2nd June 1674. Malcolm of Dail married Isobel, daughter of Archibald MacAllister of Barnakill in Knapdale and a sister of John Dow MacAllister of Barnakill. They had a son John who succeeded to Dail. Malcolm died in July 1686.

With the arrival of King William in 1688 came also the young Archibald Campbell, 10th Earl of Argyll (the modern form of the county name now being generally adopted). The new king was never popular in large northern tracts of Scotland, but in Argyll and the lowlands he had many supporters, and they were to prosper. However, William was a warmonger, as was common among European potentates at that time, and his new kingdom inherited his enemies. This had benefits for future historical researchers, in that his armies had to be paid and furnished with fresh recruits. In 1691 a Hearth Tax was arranged, whereby collectors were sent out to count the residents or Householders of the United Kingdom, recording their status, number of hearths, etc. Then in 1692 the Earl of Argyll's servitors compiled the list known as "The List of the Fencible Men between Sixteen and Sixty in various Parishes in Argyll as given up on 26th May 1692" (also published by Duncan C. MacTavish in 1935).

The distribution of Mackellar families shows that they still at that time kept to their more traditional areas. In the Hearth Tax Rolls Duncan and Dougall Mackellar were still in Ardarie (the "rebels" of 1685) and Malcom (sic) in "Dounads Lands", i.e. the lands belonging to MacLachlan of Dunadd in Glassary. In Glenaray Parish were listed Archibald, Donald and John Mackellar, all in Stuckscarden, Dougall in Auchenbreck (also known as the Commonmuir of Inveraray), Patrick in Carnus, Alexander in Sallachry and another Archibald in Tullich, all in Glen Aray itself, and Donald in the town of Inveraray. There were no Mackellars listed in Maam (three single-hearthed cottages) or Kilblaan (seven single-hearthed cottages), nor in Kilmartin nor in any part of Kintyre. By far the greatest number were to be found in the Parish of Lochgoilhead, with other families in the Strachur area. At Glashyne (Glaschoine), near the village of Cairndow at the head of Loch Fyne, was Donald Mackellar; in the village of Lochgoilhead was Patrick Mackellar, probably the same as was there in 1685. Others were: John in Craig, Donald in Dounans, John and Archibald in Corremonechan, Donald in Cullemuick, Gilmartin (Martin) in Ardnaherir, Donald

at Ardgartan, another Donald at Strongartan, and Duncan who was living near the mansion-house of Ballemeanich, which had five hearths. All these Mackellar families were living in single-hearth cottages. In Strachur Parish there was a John Mackellar at Baliebeg, a Donald at Balemor and a Duncan at Arinagown on the shores of Loch Fyne opposite Inveraray.

The other list from the 17th century, the Fencible List of 1692, did not include the Lochgoilhead area or the parishes of Glenarary and Inveraray, and Strachur and Stralachlan; however there were some parishes in Cowal listed; in Kilfinan there was a John Mackellar, and in the neighbouring parish of Kilmodan (Glendaruel) there were Donald and John in Kilbrydmor, Archibald in Stronardron and Duncan in Strondavan.

One of the more densely populated parishes in Cowal is that of Dunoon and Kilmun. At that time it was still fairly rural; Mackellars recorded there were John in Dergachie (Dearg-achadh, the "red field", an old Campbell barony), Malcum (sic) in Bearnish on Loch Eck and Donald in Blairmore on Loch Long.

In the traditional parish of Glassary there were the expected numbers of bearers of the Mackellar name. In Ardarie there were still Duncan and Dougall, in Bravallich there were now three Johns - John "Dow" (black-haired, or dark), John "Roy" (red-haired, or ruddy-faced) and John the cottar. At Over "Ffincharin" there was Hew; Malcolm was still at Dunadd, and at "Auchigdrom" there was a John. As this last was presumably Auchachrome, a now-deserted township above Slockavullin and near Raschoille in Kilmartin, it is difficult to see why it should appear in the Glassary list; the 1685 list showed it as "Achrome" in Kilmartin Parish, and a John Mackellar living there.

On Lochaweside in the parish of Kilchrenan there were still significant numbers of Mackellars; at Cuillcherrelune there was Angus Mackellar who, apart from the transported rebel of 1685, was the first bearer of this given name found on record. It was to become a popular name among the Lochaweside families. At Keames there was Patrick, at Durran there was Ellar and at Eriden Donald and Duncan. At Ballegowin there were Archibald and another Ellar, and at Kellag there was another John.

For the first time Mackellars were recorded in the



Kintyre area, with Patrick in Brackley, between present-day Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig, and John in Craiglassan and Dail; both these were in Knapdale Parish, the nearest Kintyre parish to Glassary. John Mackellar of Dail was the son of the Malcolm previously mentioned and died in March 1699, leaving a son Alexander, and a daughter who was married to Patrick Fisher in Inveraray.

At the close of the 17th century another lawless member of the family appeared on record. He was Dugald Ban Mackellar, a "broken man", who in 1697 took refuge with the MacDonalds of Glencoe who themselves had been subjected to rough justice five years before. The glen was far from being the impregnable fortress it was claimed to be, and Dugald, who had robbed a man of 800 pounds Scots before cutting his victim's throat, was captured, tried and hanged.

With the 18th century came change. The distribution of the Mackellar name, like that of many others, expanded tremendously. As the old Highland way of life changed, only a few names, like McNuier mentioned above, disappeared from the record.

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### FACT AND FICTION

#### The Legends of Innis Sea-ramhach and Fraoch Eilean

Mary McGrigor

The descent of Finn mac Cumhal is found in the Book of Leinster, and his death in 283 A.D. is recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters. Finn is a legendary figure who supposedly came from Ireland to Scotland to do great deeds of valour with a band of heroic warriors, afterwards called the Feinne. Stories of their exploits, recited, traditionally, by his son Ossian, were handed down from mouth to mouth; two of these tales concern islands which lie in Loch Awe: Innis Sea-ramhach and Fraoch Eilean.

Innis Sea-ramhach lies just off the east shore of the loch near the pier of Portinsherrick. It can be reached by a causeway when the water is low. The Gaelic name means "island of the six-oared galley"; there may be some connection with the ferry which from the mid-16th century until

1909 plied back and forth across the loch.

This island has been a burial ground from unrecorded time, and the ruined chapel upon it is of pre-Reformation date. It is thought to have been connected with the nearby castle of Innis Chonnell, as was Innishail, another burial island on Loch Awe, with the castle on Fraoch Eilean. The burial ground and the chapel are surrounded by an enclosing wall. The building has long been roofless but the walls largely remain; constructed of local rubble and schist and bonded with lime mortar, they are in some places over six feet high. The north wall contains the doorway and a single window; there are windows in the east and west walls, and below the latter a beautiful little basin is carved into the sill. Sadly, the inscriptions on many of the old grave slabs have disappeared. The table tomb of William McAllum, who died in 1732, is the first with a specific date. Local families buried here include MacArthurs, MacLachlans and MacIntyres, and also Turners who were millers at Ardchonnell. The large slab against the west wall is that of John Scott and his wife Alatheia, of nearby Eredine House.

Wild flowers grow even on the shore. Primroses, violets, windflowers and kingcups are everywhere, and in May the wild hyacinths stretch across the burial ground like a carpet of blue. The island nowadays is a place of deep tranquillity; but according to legend it was once the scene of great tragedy .....

Daura was betrothed to Armar; but Erreth, whose brother Armar had killed, sought revenge. He therefore lured Daura to Innis Sea-ramhach, pretending her lover was there badly wounded by a stag. Then, leaving her alone, he headed back to the shore.

Arindal her brother, who was hunting in the woods, emerged from the trees with a royal stag slung over his shoulder and his five hounds at his heels. Quickly he overcame Erreth, forced him to admit what he had done, and tied him with thongs of deer-hide to a tree.

Meanwhile Armar, discovering Daura gone, had set off with her father to where he guessed she might be. As they neared Innis Sea-ramhach they saw a man heading towards it in a canoe. It was of course Arindal going to the rescue of Daura, but Armar, mistaking him for Erreth, killed him with an arrow from his bow. Then from across the water

came Daura's pitiful cries. Armar plunged into the loch; although a strong swimmer he took cramp in the icy water. Daura watching helplessly saw him drown, and overcome with horror, herself collapsed and died.

Two weeks later a hunter found a snow-covered corpse tied to an oak tree. The flesh had been eaten by foxes, and the eyes taken out by a raven, which flew croaking away.

Fraoch Eilean, which should mean "Heather Isle" may take its name from the legend to be related below. The island is a natural place of defence; the ruined castle upon it may first have been built by Ewan of Lorn to protect the northeast end of the great inland waterway of Loch Awe. It is first recorded in 1267 when it was granted by Alexander III to Gillechrist Macnachdan (sic). The terms included the maintenance of the castle at the King's expense, and the provision of specific hospitality by Gillechrist, including a clean bed of straw!

During the Scottish Wars of Independence the MacNaughtons supported the MacDougalls, to whom they were related by marriage, against King Robert the Bruce. According to tradition John Bacach, son of Alexander Lord of Lorn, watched the defeat of his army by Bruce's forces in the Pass of Brander from a galley moored near Fraoch Eilean. The King, following his victory, granted the island to the Campbells of Loch Awe, but the MacNaughtons seem to have remained as vassals until they moved away to Loch Fyne.

The 13th century hall-house, built by the MacDougalls, consisted of two storeys and a garret. The stone was quarried locally, some of it apparently on the island. The ground floor has two separate entrances, suggesting it was divided. A doorway in the east wall led into a lobby from where a mural stair descended to the dungeon, still recognisable today. A stair also ran upwards to the great hall on the first floor, which was lit by windows, with stone seats below, in the north and south walls. It seems to have been heated by a central fire from which the smoke escaped through a roof louvre, there being no sign of a chimney. A doorway in the north wall opened on to a stair which led to the garret above and also probably to a parapet walk from which a good watch could be kept. Later a curtain wall was constructed with a tower in the southwest corner and an entrance on the south side.

These buildings seem to have become partly ruinous, perhaps when the MacNaughtons left; but during the first half of the 17th century a small house of three storeys with a single room in each was built in the northeast corner of the hall-house. Towards the end of the century this was extended to include the southeast corner of the original foundation while the rest became an inner courtyard. The Campbells of Inverawe, a cadet branch of the House of Argyll, who were granted the island at an unspecified date, probably made these alterations. Possibly the house was then tenanted, for, according to local tradition, the people who lived there in 1745 planned to entertain Prince Charles Edward should he come to Argyll.

Redcurrant bushes and other 'garden' shrubs growing on the island today have probably sprung from the seeds of plants of the garden of that time. In 1765 Fraoch Eilean was sold to Robert Campbell of Monzie, whose wife was a Campbell of Inverawe, and it then passed to the Campbells of Dunstaffnage. The castle, uninhabited, became ruinous; but in 1960 the island was bought by Mr Ian M. Campbell WS, a descendant of the Campbells of Inverawe, who has carried out major work of restoration. [Kists 22 and 26 contain accounts of this restoration contributed by Mr Campbell. Ed.]

The legend of Fraoch Eilean seems inspired by that of the Greek Hesperides. The hero, Fraoch, loved a beautiful girl who lived somewhere near Loch Awe; but her mother Maeve, also enamoured of him, became obsessed with jealousy, and, feigning illness, she besought him to bring to her fruit from a certain tree on Fraoch Eilean, claiming that it would save her from death.

Fraoch reached the island and found the tree; below it lay a sleeping dragon, guardian of the precious fruit. Miraculously he managed to pick it without rousing the beast, but just as he reached the shore the creature suddenly awoke. Seizing him in its terrible jaws it dragged him into the loch. The water, thrashed to foam as they struggled, turned crimson as Fraoch killed the dragon with his sword; but fatally caught in its coils he sank to his death in the depths.

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## CUP-AND-RING CARVINGS and the BROCKEN SPECTRE

Ian Purvis



Drawing made from a photograph taken by the writer from Dun Skeig. Note the fishing boat on the loch at the 'feet' of the Spectre.

About four years ago I saw a Brocken Spectre from the top of Dun Skeig in Kintyre (map reference NR757571), a height of 143m. Until then I had thought it appeared only on the high hills, my own previous experiences being on Ben Lomond and Ben Nevis. Since then I have seen it three more times on Dun Skeig. (The Brocken Spectre is so called after the Brocken Peak in the Harz Mountains in Germany from where it was first reported, and which in German folklore is the scene of witches' revels in May). Requirements are a hill with a bank of low cloud or mist below it, and a low sun. The observer on the hill top sees his huge shadow cast on to the mist or cloud and surrounded by rings of colour. A very bright example would show all the colours of the spectrum. The head of the shadow is always in the

middle of the circle, with the body and legs projecting down to the outer ring, or below it.

As a result of seeing this phenomenon at the modest height of 143m I now know that, provided the three ingredients of mist or cloud, sun and a hill high enough to be above the mist are present, the Brocken Spectre can be seen practically anywhere in the world. In Scotland the most likely time to see it is during a period of high atmospheric pressure, particularly in the autumn; September is probably the best month. I have found that if mist is lying in the village of Clachan (about 1km from the foot of Dun Skeig) in the early morning, the top of Dun Skeig will almost certainly be clear above it, or at least clear from time to time, allowing the Spectre to appear.

A diversionary note: it may interest readers to know that the eminent physicist Charles Wilson studied the Spectre on Ben Nevis and subsequently invented the "Wilson Cloud Chamber". This led to the splitting of the atom and the development of the atomic bomb. The Spectre can therefore be said to have played a part in two momentous events, the abrupt ending of the Second World War, and the harnessing of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

In the distant past the Brocken Spectre may perhaps have played another role. Last year it occurred to me that it bears a distinct resemblance to a cup-and-ring carving. No other natural phenomenon produces an image surrounded by rings of colour; it appears only rarely during the year and retains an aura of mystery and magic even for us today. For the people who made the rock carvings some 3,000 to 4,000 years ago it may have had great significance.

At Achnabreck we can see one of the largest areas of carved rock in Britain. Below, where the Crinan Canal and the main road now run, there was once a shallow loch, and no doubt this was a place where mist lay when conditions were right 4,000 years ago. The area of carved rock itself might not provide a view of a Brocken Spectre, but it would almost certainly be visible at times from the little hill about 300m to the west, or from the triangulation point 162 some 800m to the north. My theory is that the rock carvers felt the Spectre to be a very important phenomenon, and therefore attempted to produce its image on rock outcrops. If the colours were very clear they carved seven rings, and if less bright a correspondingly lesser number. The cup in

the middle of the circle represents the head of the shadow, and the radial groove, or grooves, if present, running from the cup, represents the body. At Achnabreck the radial grooves almost all run in a southerly direction between east and west. This tallies with the fact that a Brocken Spectre can only be formed on mist opposite the sun, like the shadow of the gnomon on a sundial. It is of course not necessary that the original of a symbol should be visible from the site of its representation.

The Autumn seems to be the best time for producing the right conditions of temperature change and high pressure. Here this usually means an east wind, and provided it is not too strong mist may hang around for two or three hours after sunrise. On Dun Skeig the mist lies more thickly on the west side above West Loch Tarbert, and that is where I have always seen the Spectre. Once, although the mist was quite thin, the Spectre was fairly clear and I was able to take the photograph from which the drawing at the head of this article was made. I wonder if those on the fishing boat were aware of the Spectre?

If two people were to stand side by side I imagine both shadows would be surrounded by one set of rings; but if one were to stand above or below another on a ridge there would be two separate Spectres, possibly with the outer rings overlapping. This could explain some carvings at Achnabreck and other places. Other motifs such as lozenges, rosettes, 'bananas' and pecked lines may represent other phenomena; plain cupmarks are thought to be the earliest form, their most obvious originals being the sun and full moon.

I have no proof of this theory. But for people living in the Lochgilphead area who find themselves wrapped in mist during a period of high pressure, a trip to the hill above Achnabreck might be very rewarding.

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## PRE-1855 GRAVESTONES in BARBRECK BURIAL GROUND

A. C. Pitt

The graveyard is very small and not distinctly divided into rows. A number of stones lie face downwards and could not be read. The map reference is NM824058. A complete list of visible inscribed gravestones is held by Mrs Pitt.

Recumbent slab to left of gate, '1 row' in:

To the memory of CATHRINE CAMPBELL relict of the late JOHN MCDONALD who died 6 = Octr = 1838 aged 72, by their affectionate daughter CATHRINE MCDONALD 1841

'Row 3' in, almost opposite gate:

Erected by DUNCAN & JOHN MACCALLUM Memory of their Father JOHN MACCALLUM late tenant in BARBRECKMORE who died on the 13th Day of Octr aged 56 years

Next to preceding: (and erected 1893)

[Sacred to the memory of COLIN MCCALLUM late farmer DUINE CRAIGNISH who died 16th November 188? aged 70 years] and his son ALEXANDER who died 7th February 1852 aged 15 months.

'Row 5' in, to the right:

G R S MCD Here lys the Remains of The two ANNS infant children of GEORGE & SUSANNA RITCHIE Tacksman of SCARABA 1814

Next to preceding:

Intered here DON MCEWIN son to JOHN MCEWIN and JANET RITCHIE died 1th [sic] March 1820 aged 21 years.

Table stone near south corner:

Under this stone are deposited the remains of ELEONORA CAMPBELL late spouse of DUNCAN MCDUGALL BARBRECK died 25th Nov. 1833

Note: most of the remaining tombstones are dated between 1855 and 1934. The last burial was one of the Shaws about ten years ago.

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## A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE of EMIGRATION

[This diary-letter was kindly made available to Kist by Miss Lorna MacEchern. It was written by her uncle, Jock Black, to his mother, then a widow and farming at Tiretigan. (Her husband, who died in 1892, is buried in the graveyard opposite Killean Farm). Jock Black appears in the photograph of the Kilberry Pipers reproduced in Kist 44, p.22; he was considered by Archibald Campbell of Kilberry, author of The Kilberry Book of Ceol Mor as "probably the best march player of the lot".]

December 17. 02. Wednesday night. Left Glasgow for Liverpool, had a jolly send-off. I was glad to leave Glasgow to get on my journey. When you start away you don't like to be waiting halfway. Reached Liverpool at 5.15 on Thursday morning, had to stay in the waiting room till 9 o'clock. Got on board the tender at 10 and steamed out to the Suevic. We are not leaving till tomorrow as the weather is rough outside. The Suevic is a fine ship, just like a floating town. There are about 500 passengers on board, a great lot of women and children.

Friday 19th. Left Liverpool today. My berth mates are a very nice lot I think. One is an Aberdonian going to Cape Town, one going to Australia and one a Cape Colonial; he was with Lord Methuen when he was captured, he was wounded and captured also. We are just beginning to settle down for the voyage after getting our luggage put right.

Saturday 20th. A dull day, ship rolling a bit, a good many passengers sick. I have not felt the least bit sick yet. We are off the coast of France now, will be in the Bay of Biscay tomorrow. The weather is very cold.

Sunday 21st. In the Bay of Biscay. The sea is very calm and not like the Bay of Biscay you read about. We had a service this morning by an English minister; a lady played the hymns on the piano. Sunday on board ship is different from at home. You see a thing or two, some playing cards, some singing songs, others at games. We passed a steamer today, the first since we left the Mersey. The passengers are very agreeable and the waiters are very nice and attentive. There is a girl from Inverness in the next berth. She has a terrible tongue, she keeps us in fits of laughter half the night and then in the morning. Today her and a

little English girl brought us tea and cake. The English girl's mother had a brother who travelled with Dr. Livingstone in Central Africa.

Monday 22nd. A lovely morning off the coast of Spain. The weather is now something like our summer, you know the difference every day. We are having a splendid voyage so far, sea as calm as glass. Passed a full-rigged ship today, becalmed. I had afternoon tea with some ladies; they mostly all carry tea, teapots and cake with them and make afternoon tea. We are going to have a good time at Xmas, I understand, Balls, Concerts and Sports. We get very good food on board. Some people grumble, people who were not acquaint with as good at home.

Tuesday 23rd. Another good day, getting milder every day. Suevic off Straits of Gibraltar. Last night I had a tune at the pipes; almost as soon as I started a boy in kilts came along and started dancing the highland fling. After that I got to know nearly all the Scotchmen on board. I have seen nothing of interest today, nothing but sea all round.

Wednesday 24th. A fair day, good breeze blowing. Ship making about 310 miles every day. We will not have any port of call till we reach Cape Town. The ship is decorated with holly and mistletoe for Xmas. We are getting a lecture on the siege of Mafeking by an old Gentleman who was there at the time.

Thursday 25th. We had a big dinner and a concert at night. I played the pipes. We also had a service at 11 o'clock, they sang the Xmas hymns.

Friday 26th, Boxing Day. Sports on board today and dancing at night.

Saturday 27th. Today we are having a cricket match and a concert at night on deck. Us Scotch fellows on board are going to celebrate New Year's Day; our chairman is a Dr. Mann from the North of Scotland, a fine fellow. He has a brother a minister somewhere. I met another fellow from Inverness, MacBean; he knew the MacEcherns well. Saw lots of flying fish today.

Sunday 28th. A very hot day. Getting near the Line now. We had two sermons today, one Church of England and one Presbyterian.

Monday 29th. A lot of us fellows slept on deck last night; we took up our beds and slept on the hatches. We had a good

game of cricket today and a concert at night.

Tuesday 30th. Crossed the Line today, a very cool day, I thought the heat would have been greater in the tropics. It is very hot sleeping in the cabins. I slept on deck last night also. We have concerts every night now.

Wednesday 31st. Had a quiet day today. At night us Scotchmen had a little gathering of our own, some Scotch songs and toasts. I played the pipes. Passed the Punic on the home journey.

Thursday January 1st 1903. Had a quiet day today. In afternoon had Sports. Won 2nd prize for putting the stone (a sandbag). Mind you there are some big strong fellows on board. I would have got 1st but my last throw struck the awning above and stopped the force of the throw.

Tuesday 2nd. A good day, much cooler now. More Sports today. I got another prize. We are having a fancy dress ball tomorrow night. I lent my kilt and sporran to an Australian girl who took a fancy to wear it at the ball. I wish you had heard her play the piano and sing, you might listen to her all night. She was not very good-looking so you need not be alarmed.

Saturday 3rd. Nothing special going on today, just a cricket match and the fancy dress ball at night. The ladies turned out in all sorts of dresses. We expect to arrive in Table Bay on Thursday morning. I don't mind how soon as I am tired doing nothing. When I come home it won't be by the W. Star Line as they don't call anywhere during the whole journey, you see nothing but water the whole time.

Sunday 4th. A very cool day. Had two services, morning and evening, a very quiet day. We signalled the Mail Steamer going home; it looked nice to see them signalling at night.

Monday 5th. I did not expect to have such cool weather going to S. Africa. We are having a record trip. I am in good form. Have not missed a meal since I came on board. Few of the passengers can say the same. We had more Sports today. I have made a good many acquaintances since I came on board. People on board ship are a queer mixture. Never let any of the girls come out here alone unless with some trustworthy person, especially such silly girls as Sarah and Susy. Sarah will turn up her long nose when she sees this but it is the truth.

Tuesday 6th. Another cool day. Some of the people are

getting into their home garments again. Things are getting flat on board. Cape passengers are preparing for going ashore. We had a distribution of prizes today. All Sports are finished till the Suevic leaves C. Town. We expect to arrive on Thursday afternoon.

Wednesday 7th. A breezy day, ship rolling a bit. Passed two steamers. I have no doubt you are a bit anxious about me, but you need not be. Travelling is nothing when a person has his head screwed on the right way. I have kept myself very reserved during the voyage yet had a good time. Some of the ladies thought I was a married man.

Thursday 8th. Sighted land about 12 o'clock, arrived in Table Bay at 5 p.m. We are going to stay on board all night. I am very glad as we would be very late before we got our luggage ashore and through the Customs. Nearly all the Scotch fellows are going ashore here. It is a magnificent sight going into Table Bay. Table mountain is grand, a thick coat of mist on top. Just like a tablecloth.

Friday 9th. Left the Suevic this morning by tender. Great excitement. We got a great send-off from the Australians, everybody singing Auld Lang Syne, cheering and waving handkerchiefs. Staying in C. Town tonight. It is hotter here than at any part of the voyage.

Saturday 10th. Going to leave by train for Salisbury tonight at 8 o'clock.

Sunday 11th. My fellow-travellers are three Boers and a fellow who came out in the Suevic. This is the worst part of the journey crossing the Karoo desert. Passed some of the Boer prisoners going home, and they came from Ceylon. The trains stopped to water at the same place. They were glad to get back to South Africa. We also had a talk with some of the soldiers coming down to Cape Town. They were travelling in open trucks like cattle or sheep. There are a lot of the Irish Fusiliers going up to Dee Arr [De Aar] in this train; they are good company.

Monday 12th. Today you will be celebrating the Old New Year. I just picture the remnants of the pipe band marching to the field of battle and all the brave and fair marching after them. This is a devil of a place for want of water. As soon as the train stops at a station we all make a rush to get our water-bottles filled. It is a luxury to get your face washed. Passed General Wauchope's grave today. I don't understand why they buried him in such a terrible

wilderness, far better had they buried him at Modder River. Passed Graspan, Methuen's first fight, then Belmont and Modder River. Saw the graveyard of the soldiers who died there. The whole line up is studded with blockhouses and graves beside every one. Reached Kimberly this afternoon and changed trains for Bulowayo. Reached Dryburg at 10 o'clock tonight. Tuesday 13th. At Mafeking this morning. This is the nicest place I have seen since I left C. Town, the country is nice and green.

Wednesday 14th. At Bulowayo 8 o'clock tonight, changed trains for Salisbury.

Thursday 15th. At Shangani River left train and crossed stream by footbridge, then joined another train that was waiting for us on the other side. Reached Gwelo 12 o'clock, arrived in Salisbury at 1 o'clock on Friday morning, Lachie and Dunkie at station.

This finishes my diary. Friday January 16th 1903.

[signed] John Black

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### CLOSE ENCOUNTERS of the BIRD KIND

Edmond S. Clark

After a most enjoyable week spent in Harris and Lewis in late May 1993 we decided to visit Barra and the Uists in May 1994. A car is essential unless one is young and fit enough to cycle; we joined forces with daughter and son-in-law to share expenses, driving and knowledge; they are reliable on birds and wild flowers; we think we are reliable on archaeology; and we all had our reference books!

At Oban we embarked for Castlebay on a perfect early summer afternoon, so calm we could easily spot such birds as guillemots, cormorants and Manx shearwaters resting on the sea. My wife came round to the port side to say we had just been passed by a school of dolphin. (In fairness to Calmac they were going in the opposite direction). I think they were dolphin, not porpoise, but being part Irish I can only tell them apart when I see them together.

At Castlebay, coming off the pier, one is faced by a signpost which directs one to Eoligarry in both directions. Barra, one might say, has a ring road, and we travelled it

with delight. Near Ben Scurrival, which we climbed to visit the dun on its top, we heard the rasping calls of several corncrakes, but failed to spot one, though the croft owner said there were three nesting pairs on her croft. Our experience on Harris was different - at Northton Bay a hist-  
rionic bird strutted up and down in a hayfield before an admiring group at the roadside, craking merrily, and even stood on a stone so that we could get a better view.

The old graveyard at Eoligaray (where Compton Mackenzie is buried) was one mass of primroses - it was impossible to avoid treading on them. Similarly the machair on Vatersay, between its two wide sandy bays, was thick with primroses, violets, daisies and other small flowers. On that machair is the memorial to the emigrant ship Annie Jane which sank just outside the Bagh Siar with enormous loss of life. The bodies of the drowned were washed ashore over many days, and the biblical text inscribed on the monument is from Rev. XX 13: "and the sea gave up the dead".

We visited Kisimul Castle, by boat of course. This ancient stronghold of the MacNeills of Barra has been restored and made habitable in part, by its present owner. In the firebasket that crowns the highest part of the walls a pair of crows were bringing up a noisy family, making it a sort of crow's nest I suppose.

On Barra, and on our journey northwards, we visited standing stones, chambered cairns (many with the name 'Barpa' as in 'Barpa Langass'), duns and a wheelhouse; crossed causeways ancient (winding and partly under water, to a dun) and modern (between islands); we called in at the excellent museum and library at Lioncleit Community School on Benbecula; we shopped at the only NAAFI which is open to the general public which supplies the islanders as well as Service personnel on the airfield and rocket range. We joined an evening Otter Walk, which lasted over two hours and was most enjoyable, but not an otter was to be seen. The guide, to whom this had never happened before, was so embarrassed he gave us our money back. We did not really mind the absence of otters - the scenery was magnificent! We spent a large part of two days on the nature reserves of Druidibeg and Balranald. We picnicked on beautiful beaches. On our travels we notched up over 60 species of wild flowers in bloom, and over 60 species of birds, among them red-throated divers

at Loch Skipport, large flocks of sanderlings wheeling in the strong wind at Ardvule Point, black-throated divers on a small loch, ravens by the roadside, twite on the moors, greylag geese, whooper swans and many species of duck on the reserves and elsewhere.

On our last morning before embarking at Lochmaddy for Skye we drove towards the tip of North Uist in search of the souterrain at NF862753. We walked across fields to the shore; we knew the entrance was just above high water mark but were unsure whether to turn right or left, so split forces, two going one way and two the other. I spotted a clump of white campion and beside it one small bright red flower - a scarlet pimpernel. Bending down to examine it I realised that just a few feet away was a well-built stone entrance about 0.5m square, partly blocked by driftwood. I removed the driftwood, lay down on my stomach and inched my way in for 1.5m or so, and then froze. There was a small hole in the roof which let in the light and I found myself almost beak to beak with a nesting fulmar. I don't know which of us was the more surprised. Knowing the fulmar's reputation for spraying intruders with a foul-smelling and remarkably persistent liquid, and not wishing to have to jettison my clothes, souse myself in a cold sea and be driven back, or worse, walk back, wrapped in a picnic rug, I eased myself out as speedily as possible, and after the rest of the party had had a quick look from (probably) a safe distance I replaced the driftwood. The fulmar's mate arrived and disappeared through the hole in the roof, apparently their mode of access. Neither bird seemed disturbed by us. Should you wish to visit this remarkably civilised and restrained pair next year, you have the map reference.

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#### FOUND in TARBERT GARDEN

Some pieces of leather found clinging to a bush some two feet above the ground have been identified by Mrs Clare Thomas as part of the leather upper of a boot or shoe of late 19th or early 20th century date. It would be an example of the first machine-made footwear to come into the area for cheap working use. This replaced, very rapidly, traditionally hand-made boots and shoes. In 1853 Cricke's

machine was patented which fastened the upper to the sole by brass rivets; some of these are still attached to one of the portions found. The upper elements would have been machine-stitched together with double lapped grain-to-flesh stitching channels. In 1857 Singer treddle sewing machines were strengthened for working leather.

Such boots and shoes were likely to have been made in central Scotland and imported to Tarbert, but could have been made locally by a shoe repairer or cobbler, if he had been trained in the method and could get the rivets. The front would have been laced and the sole probably hob-nailed. These riveted machine-made boots and shoes were most common from the 1880's up to World War I, and were an example of the change-over from the self-sufficient methods of supplying people's needs to the money economy of the new industrial society.

But how did fragments of a 100-year-old shoe come to be roosting, quite obviously, in a small bush outside the Editor's dining-room window? Did a seagull, foraging in a tip, mistake them for a tasty elderly kipper and, disillusioned, drop them in disgust? They had not been there long before being noticed.

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### SUMMER EXPEDITIONS 1994

The usual notes on the Society's previous summer outings were omitted from Kist 49 due to shortage of space. As members unable to be with us like to hear of them, a brief account is included here.

#### 23rd April. Lunga

On a beautiful spring day we visited Caisteal nan Con Duibh (Fort of the Dogs, scene of the legendary fight between For and Bran), a galleried dun, and the denuded burial cairn close by, then walked out on the modern causeway to the partly vitrified fort on Eilean an Duin.

#### 14th May. Taynish Nature Reserve

On a walk led by Mr John Halliday of Scottish Natural Heritage we saw and heard a variety of birds, saw traces of badgers and otters, admired many spring flowers and trees, but were too early for the butterflies. The account of the management of the Reserve was most interesting.



11th June. Gigha

A walk from one end to the other, with shuttle car transport at intervals to save time. We saw duns, rock-carved Christian symbols, the Ogham stone (and its possible top, incorporated in a roadside wall), and visited the ruined 13th century church and graveyard, also, briefly, Achamore Gardens.

16th July. Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel

This visit needs no description, the site being well-presented by Historic Scotland. But there was also a morning visit by invitation, much enjoyed by all who made it, to Dunollie House and Castle. We were entertained by Dr and Mrs Hadfield to morning coffee with delicious home baking, then to a tour of the treasures of the House, and finally to an inspection of Dunollie Castle on its commanding height.

17th August. Clachan Church and the Ballochroy Stones

Mr Ian MacDonald conducted the visit to Clachan Church and graveyard with a huge fund of history and anecdote. At Ballochroy we were too early to see the sun set over Jura, but inspected the standing stones and were shown the likely position of a former back-marker and also the place where it may now be lying. We walked over and saw the large cairn at Corriechrevie, never, at least officially, excavated.

10th September. Furnace

A conducted visit to the substantial remains of the Old Iron Works, built in 1755 and abandoned in 1812, and a clear account of the processes carried out and the trade involved. Also a tour of the extensive Loch Fyne Powder Works which operated from 1841 to 1883 (ending explosively).

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HOME FRONT, TARBERT, 1939-45

Margaret Campbell McDougall

On Sunday 3rd September 1939 we listened in silence to Neville Chamberlain's brief broadcast stating that Britain and France were now at war with Germany. That same day a boat arrived at the Pier laden with evacuees complete with suitcases, gas masks and labels, seeking a safer life in the country. Anyone with spare accommodation had to take in evacuees, in some cases whole families. Tarbert at that

time was much smaller than it is now.

In both World Wars Tarbert provided a free canteen for Service personnel. In 1914-18 it was housed at the "Rest" [the wedge-shaped building on the right after one turns on to the Campbeltown Road from the Harbour. Ed.] and in 1939-45 at "Kerryview". A group of ladies ran both, and provided soup, tea, sandwiches, home baking and dumpling for all members of the Forces passing through to and from Islay, Campbeltown and Skipness. These free meals were greatly appreciated. This was reputed to be the only free Canteen in the U.K. at the time.

Due to the blackout and other restrictions everything might have been more or less at a standstill; but not in Tarbert. The Committee of the Gaelic Choir registered under the War Charities Act to enable them to hold functions to raise cash for H.M. Services. They held ceilidhs, whist drives, dances, even fancy dress dances. This enabled them to despatch postal orders twice a year, at Tarbert Fair and at Christmas, to all serving personnel from the Tarbert area. In addition £50 was sent to the Glasgow War Relief Fund, £100 to the Merchant and Navymen's Hostel, £35 and £25 to the Red Cross and Prisoner of War Fund and £35 to the RNLI.

[This at a time when £1 a week was considered a reasonable wage. Ed.]

A Committee of the Tarbert Fishermen was also formed; they achieved the handsome sum of £3,000. They too sent postal orders periodically to all local men and women serving with the Forces, and in addition the sum of £260 was given to the Canteen.

Then came the Clydebank blitz with all its devastation and the loss of 1,200 lives in two nights. Greenock, Gourock and Dumbarton were the next targets, and even Tarbert had an air raid with fortunately no casualties, but it left a good-sized crater at Achnacarnan. Campbeltown was not so fortunate, for they had an attack with several casualties.

During these sad years when news of war casualties was received by next of kin a gloom was cast over the whole village, grieving as a family.

At long last "Victory" was proclaimed. The Tarbert Gaelic Choir on the 9th of May 1945 held a "Victory Sports" and open-air dance. There was a collection from the Thanksgiving Service. On 21st June 1945 there was a fancy dress parade headed by the Kilmartin Pipe Band; sports were held,

and a presentation of £10 each made to ex-prisoners of war. On 6th June a Welcome Home gift of £3 each to 179 men and women in H.M. Forces was made, and also £3 each to 12 next-of-kin.

On 15th March 1946 the Fishermen's Welcome Fund held a Concert and Dance in the Drill Hall, their first function since 1900; the remaining sum of £1,500 was allocated as follows: £20 each to next-of-kin of those who made the supreme sacrifice, and £20 each to the following who were decorated by the King: Leading Seaman Dugald McFarlane, P.O. Alex Sinclair, Sergt. William York; and £7 each to the 179 local men and Women.

Twenty-four names were added to the War Memorial: two from the Navy, seven from the Merchant Navy, twelve from the Army and three from the Air Force.

#### Editorial note

As part of Tarbert's commemoration of V E Day the "Free Canteen" went into operation again (for one day only!) supplying tea, coffee and home baking, and also a corned beef hash lunch.

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#### BOOK REVIEWS

CELTIC WARFARE 1595 -1763 James Michael Hill  
John Donald Publishers Ltd. £13.95 (paperback)

According to the comment on the back cover of this book "it will interest all concerned with the study of military history or the history of Ireland, Scotland, England and North America". This is something of an overstatement, for while it is well-written and readable, it is undoubtedly for those interested in the history of warfare. For others who find analyses of campaigns and descriptions of battles unappetising it has less to offer. One weakness is that military events are viewed in isolation, with rather half-hearted attempts to set them in a social, economic and political context.

Taken as military history pure and simple, the book rewards reading. Its central thesis is that Gaelic warfare displayed remarkable continuity during the 17th and 18th

centuries, characterised by defensive strategy and offensive tactics, the latter having as their hallmark the Highland charge. The thesis is developed out of a study of the Irish Wars of the late 16th century, the Civil War in Scotland in the 1640's and the three Jacobite Rebellions of 1689, 1715 and 1745. By analysing the strategy of the campaigns and the tactics employed in particular battles, the author paints a clear picture of Gaelic warfare, what it meant to the participants and why it produced frequent success in battle but invariable defeat in war. The best chapters are those on the '45; the most intriguing are the last two, which argue that Gaelic warfare did not end at Culloden, but was in all its essential elements exported to North America. There the distinctive brand of war waged by the Highland regiments was crucial to the winning of Canada for the British. Perhaps more surprisingly, the strategy and tactics of the Confederates in the American Civil War derived directly from the strong Celtic heritage of the Southern states.

Although military history can be monotonous, this book is not dull. The prose reads well, keeps to the point and is enlivened by intelligent use of quotation. The arguments are clear, logical and supported by numerous references and an extensive bibliography. It is scholarly yet does have a romantic tinge and a strong whiff of hero-worship for the likes of MacColla and Dundee. One might complain that there is no discussion of the origin of the Highland charge, and that battles such as Fyvie, Alford and Dunkeld are ignored; the book is let down by bad quality maps, poorly used, and the use of chapter notes leads to irritating page-turning. Nevertheless the book on the whole is well-produced, and a worthy member of the John Donald collection.

I. D. M.

GEORGE MOORE and FRIENDS: Letters from a Manx Merchant  
1750 to 1760. Frances Wilkins.  
Wyre Forest Press. £9.95 (paperback)

This book is based on the George Moore letter-book - a volume into which nearly 1,650 letters written by George Moore to some 320 addressees were copied, not a complete record by any means, but covering a wide range of his business correspondence with merchants in Europe, Eastern America (Boston) and the West Indies; with his bankers, his

shipmasters, his suppliers, his agents, his customers, his debtors; and also letters to his family. Frances Wilkins has made a selection of these letters and supplied a background of fascinating information. There are chapters on the wine trade, the rum trade, the tea trade, the tobacco trade; on negotiations with bankers; on his ships and their cargoes. All this was legal business. There are, however, no fewer than five chapters on Smuggling, a more doubtful activity. George Moore, perfectly legally, imported customable goods into the Isle of Man, whence he exported them, at his customers' risk, to the West Coast of Scotland, from Fort William to Kirkcudbright; he had agents at various places from Tarbert (John Cowan) to Stranraer. Collection of monies in this trade being awkward, he generally spent two months of each year travelling southwest Scotland and the southern Highlands himself collecting them and getting to know his customers. Some of these can be traced without difficulty, such as the Laird of Largie, some through birth, marriage and death records, some from tombstones, for example James Orr at Inverkip and Archibald McAlister, Merchant in Tarbert, who died in 1752 at the age of 32 and is buried in Tarbert graveyard, as is his wife Anna McDougall (who Moore hoped would pay off what her late husband owed him).

There are "Tailpieces" and "Inserts" isolated from the main text on various subjects, such as the 1755 earthquake in Lisbon, the Old Ship Bank in Glasgow, Ship Worms and methods of protecting ships from them, and episodes concerning his "Friends". As a panoramic survey of the activities of a successful and hard-working merchant in our part of the world in the 18th century it could scarcely be bettered. All the material is properly sourced. Many of the illustrations are from contemporary sources - maps, plans, and engravings; an account of the West Indies is taken from A New Geographical Grammar of 1779 - a little later than the period concerned, but the information would be appropriate.

A chapter towards the end of the book, of a more domestic character, contains letters concerning the improvement and planting of his newly-purchased estate on the Isle of Man. There are orders for trees, a detailed order for seeds, and a complaint of the non-arrival of "two stone eagles and two pomegranates, with their pedestals".

All in all, a book full of information it would be difficult and time-consuming for the ordinary reader to find. The

book is very well-produced, and there is a commendable lack of misprints, a rare virtue in these days.

Readers wishing a more general and shorter account are recommended to the same author's Strathclyde's Smuggling Story, also published by the Wyre Forest Press, at £6.95.

A. O. M. C.

THE MAKING of the CROFTING COMMUNITY.

John Donald Publishers Ltd. £12.95

James Hunter

(paperback)

This edition in paperback of the classic book by James Hunter, first published almost twenty years ago, is most welcome. The hardback edition, reprinted twice, is now out of print. The critical acclaim that greeted it in 1976 has not faded with the passage of time. It remains the most authoritative and best-documented history of 200 years of the crofting way of life in the Highlands and Islands, and it is pointless for this reviewer to praise it further; but a description may not be out of place.

After a five-page Introduction (which should be read) there are twelve chapters covering 214 pages, then 62 pages of detailed references, 20 pages of bibliography and a good index of over 7 pages. The main text is immensely readable. There is not a statement that is not documented, but the documentation does not encumber the text - once one grows used to the reference numbers enclosed in brackets within the text line. One can read straight on, and the interest and liveliness of the subject-matter compels one to do so: the end of the old order at the close of the 18th century, the beginnings of crofting, the eviction of whole communities to make room for sheep, emigration (at first discouraged for fear there would not be enough labour for the kelp industry), the famine years 1845 - 1850, the sporadic efforts made officially and unofficially to deal with the crofters' problems, the Highland Land Wars of 1881 - 1896, the Napier Commission and eventual land settlement, and modern conditions to 1975. There is much direct quotation, from crofters, from landowners, from agents, from the reports of official bodies. The problems that faced the landowners, whether of their own making or not, and the methods they took to solve them are explained. The problems that faced the crofters are described in all their often fearful detail. The presentation is fair. If a reader

wishes a reliable history without emotionalism (as distinct from emotion) this is it.

A. O. M. C.

DISCOVERING ARGYLL, MULL and IONA. Willie Orr  
John Donald Publishers Ltd. £8.95

The earlier printing of this book was reviewed, favourably, in Kist 40 (Autumn 1990) and the present reviewer sees no need to revise the opinion of the then reviewer that it is an "excellent and satisfying book" and "impossible to lay aside once one has started it". He had however several minor complaints; corrections he suggested have mostly been made, except in the case of the Clock Lodge in Lochgilphead; persons enquiring locally for the Clock Tower will find themselves smartly re-routed to a furniture saleroom in Pier Square, Ardrishaig, about two miles away; and the location of the graffiti depicting late mediaeval galleys at Kilchatan is not accurate. The maps serve only as an aid to finding places on an O.S. map.

However these are small blemishes on a text that is well-written, interesting and informative, and can be heartily recommended to visitors to the area - and to the local inhabitants.

A. O. M. C.

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