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Kilmartin Glen



The KIST 53

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ALAN JOHN DUNCAN CAMPBELL OF GLENFEOCHAN

Vice-President and Treasurer of our Society

By the death on 13th October 1996 at the age of 70 of Alan, 23rd representer of the Glenfeochan family, our Society has lost a most valued and supportive member; and we are only one of many organisations in the same condition.

Alan was a man of many talents - seaman, woodworker, silversmith - in addition to his career in veterinary medicine which took him to Greece and Malawi as well as the Glasgow Veterinary College. Those of us who have been associated with the Auchindrain Museum knew him for an indefatigable worker, as a Trustee, a collector of farm tools (from a complete smiddy onwards) and as the highly successful organiser of the Museum Shop with the constant help of his wife Sona.

Many others came to appreciate his work in launching the Heritage Tent at the Argyllshire Gathering. Most recently he devoted much time, skill and patience to the publication of When the Years Were Young, a collection of pieces by our late member Mary L.S. Sandeman (some of which had appeared in earlier numbers of Kist).

We must be thankful for a life so full of service and of well-employed abilities, thankful too that he was spared a long illness. Our deep sympathy is with Sona.

M.C.



...ooo0ooo...

THE KILMAHONAIG JOURNAL

A Family Holiday in Argyll, 1871

Michael Murray

In October 1990 a couple walked up the drive to the yard at Kilmahumaig bearing in one hand a bottle of champagne (which makes anyone welcome in my house) and under one arm a red leather-bound volume with the gilded lettering "The Kilmahonaig Journal". John Jeff and his wife Fay explained that his great, great grandfather, a Dr Charles Blatherwick, with his young family, had spent three months in the summer of 1871 in this house and recorded the events of that time in a diary. As a boy, John had read this diary through and through and it had remained an object of great interest all his life. He had determined to come and see the place where his forebears had enjoyed a holiday so much. The diary is illustrated with delightful sketches in pen and ink and colour wash, mostly by the Doctor's wife, with one of particular relevance in that on setting foot in the kitchen, John's first words were "My goodness, there's the floor!" Not the usual kind of words new acquaintances might utter, but prompted by a sketch in the diary showing, coloured black and red as they are to this day, the floor tiles, with "Mrs McCallum, our washerwoman" at work at the tub.

The reproduction of the diary in modern typeface, denuded of most of its illustrations and of their colour, detracts from the "feel" of the original; but much remains. What follows is a slightly abridged version.

June 8 On this day we made a false start for Kilmahumaig.

The Lady Utility at the head of her army got safely on board the "Dandie" but alas! the Editor of this Journal with all the impedimenta was left behind on Helensburgh Quay - Luckily the steamer made an unusually noisy demonstration on starting or we would have to chronicle some unparliamentary language here.

June 9 The Editor arrives in charge of the baggage.
Rejoicings.

June 13 Arrivals: Miss Blatherwick, from Row (sic) Dumbar-tonshire. Though slightly tired from the fatigue of a sea passage Miss B was looking moderately well. Her pale



Mr. Macallan
our Wash Woman

face was admirably set off by a becoming wild duck hat with violet ribbons, and a pilot jacket and violet dress with three flounces and pannier completed her becoming costume. She ate much bread and butter.

June 14 We regret that Miss B's face is much swollen - it seems as if the bread and butter had gone the wrong way.

June 15 Miss B's gum was lanced, but no bread and butter appeared so the Dr gives hopes of a speedy recovery.

June 18 The day, unusually calm and placid, ended in the most fearful excitement. An explicit statement is necessary: At 9.26 pm three sharp and mysterious taps were heard at the kitchen window and on looking out the Cook, Anne Mackenzie, espied Miss Jeanie Clark, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Dancing Peter* in an attitude of suppressed excitement. Her dishevelled hair was blowing wild in the breeze, her black eyes starting from their sockets, her right index finger pressed on her closed lips to enforce silence, while her left arm was extended towards the adjoining meadow. The window was opened; then she breathlessly whispered "Tell Him to bring his gun, for the ROE is here!" Speedily the Editor was armed, and followed by 1.Lady Utility, 2.Miss B, 3.Miss Ida, 4.Miss Jeanie Clark, 5.Miss Wilson, all noiselessly tip-toed out to reconnoitre.

At 9.30 The Roe was seen a quarter of a mile off (everyone spoke in a whisper): At 9.31 Everyone hides while the Editor essays to stalk the animal: At 9.33 The Roe bobs up & the Editor bobs down: At 9.34 The Roe bobs down, & the Editor bobs up; At 9.35 The tactics are repeated, but the Editor is nearing the doomed deer. At 9.36 The Roe and the Editor bob up together, but the gun is too near. The deer starts and falls dead as the report reaches the onlookers; At 9.37 Miss Wilson takes the hind legs, & the Editor the forelegs and carry the deer home; At 9.40 Dancing Peter paunches him (The Roe not the Editor).

June 19 All the hills are baaing. Mr MacIntyre from Dounie, Mr McKechnie & Mr P Clark are shearing Phemie with brawny arms folding up the wool. Dancing Peter gets from 2/6d to 3/- a fleece and thereby pays his rent. The wool is packed in a huge bag some 10ft high. This bag is attached

*Dancing Peter: Peter Clark Tenant of Kilmahumaig. Peter was convicted at Inveraray Court of dancing on a Sunday.



Kilnahunai



Peter Clark's Farm

(mouth upwards) to beams and into it gets the Packer, stamping down the weighed out portions as they are thrown in, until the bag is full.

Q. How many animalcula is the Packer attacked by?

June 20 Not with vulgar nets and not with poaching clip hooks - but with 5 or 6 bright bare hooks on a line, and the fish (like mortals) attracted by the splendid bait grab at it and are caught - we caught 60 herring.

June 22 Arrivals: Capt Boyd and Adam Morrison Esq with Miss Morrison. Miss Morrison pays a very short visit owing to the impracticable behaviour of her Papa. The gentlemen are en-route for Barnagad.

See Saw. This highly fashionable and exhilarating pastime was established today. The apparatus will be found in excellent order behind Dancing Peter's cottage - just within view of the back window so that Mrs Clark can see that due decorum is kept, the bounds of propriety not exceeded.

NB Gentlemen & Ladies are required to take opposite sides.

June 23 See Saw has already a Competitor. Toboggan races are established. The toboggan is an instrument of the most primitive construction. Two planks from a cask securely bound with iron. When you sit in the concavity you find two foot rests. Place it on the top of the hill, hold tight, get a gentle shove, and you reach the bottom (unless you capsize) like lightning.

June 24 "Fish, Flesh, Fowl". In the evening the Editor accompanied by Lady Utility fished for trout, when the peacefulness of the occupation was broken by a low whistle; it proved to come from Dancing Peter who kept beckoning from the road. The Editor dropped his rod and on reaching Peter was shown another Roe grazing behind some bushes - just now, a large white owl appeared on the scene and kept flapping overhead but although the gun was brought down both owl and deer escaped, and Phemie carried back the gun disconsolately. Neither fish, flesh nor fowl was caught on this day.

June 25 Sunday. To church across the Ferry. We were rowed over by the stalwart and handsome boatbuilder; but never a word spake he. Two miles walk brought us to St Columba church at Poltalloch. A small and select congregation. Home with a good appetite to dinner. Capt Boyd and Adam Morrison Esquire dined at Kilmahonaig. The chef's sumptuous carte showed Venison Soup; curried rabbit; Roast

mutton; apple pie; custard pudding; cheese.

Lovely orchises were picked today.

Departure: Miss Morrison for Bath Street, Glasgow.

June 26 A picnic on the top of a very steep hill, very hot, party consisted of Miss Blatherwick, Miss Lily, Miss Ida & Dancing Perter's fascinating daughter, protected by Mr Hugh and Mr Duncan Clark: Hugh lit a fire, a catastrophe happened to the eggs - they were smashed. The party took the quickest route coming home by rolling down the hill. Alarming Intelligence: The cook, Anne Mackenzie, and the parlour maid, Margaret Somerville, deposed that a GHOST was seen by them at the back door of Kilmahonaig at 10.30 pm. A huge black object heaving up a hideous back against the waning light. They shrieked and fled. NB. The Artist is to be on the look out tomorrow evening to sketch the villain.

July 2 Sunday. To Poltalloch Church across the Ferry, two miles there and two miles back. Rowed over by the Ferryman's daughter aged twelve years. Though it was the Sabbath the Editor was wicked enough to gather mushrooms in Poltalloch Park and Fan, the long-eared spaniel, was wicked enough to catch and kill a hen partridge on her nest. Miss Dyne is expected at Kilmahonaig tomorrow.

July 3 Miss Dyne did not arrive by boat and Miss B is disconsolate. The Rev Mapleton and Mrs M accompanied by their daughter called at Kilmahonaig.

July 4 A letter from Miss Dyne advising us of her journey hither next week.

July 7 The Editor in the character of Piscator fished the River Add. Hugh drove him & accompanied him when fishing, but unluckily the river was swollen and dirty and no fish were caught.

Somebodies were thinking they had been MARRIED 20 years today - it is time this was put a stop to!

July 9 To Poltalloch Church - By ferry and the Road walk. A handsome and mysterious Widow appeared. She was dressed (apparently) in a kilt of black serge. At all events it was a tight fitting skirt heavily folded like a veritable kilt and clinging close to her body - A pannier of the bumpiest description relieved this scantiness - Her waist was about 3 inches in circumference and she was resplendent in diamonds and black enamel.

[See over]



The Mysterious Widow

July 10 Departure: The Editor for Glasgow: Miss Clark came to tea and dolls were dressed for the Oban Bazaar.

July 11 Arrival: Miss Margaret Dyne from Highgate London. This young lady - the elegant and accomplished daughter of the Rev Dr Dyne head master of the Cholmondeley grammar School - was attired in a dark blue serge dress and jacket elegantly trimmed with military braid - no pannier - A mushroom hat with blue quilling and blue ribbon round her neck.

More sheep shearing.

Arrival: The Editor from Glasgow bringing strawberries and pears. He was met at the boat by the Kilmahunaig Party.

July 13 Very wet. Work indoors. Miss Dyne made the first sketches for the grand picture of the ruined mill.

July 14 A Red Letter Day! Death of a Cock Salmon!

A suspicious day. Big clouds bursting with rain threatening us. Notwithstanding this, Piscator started for a day's fishing in the Add. The river was in fair ply, the fish were up. With that love of solitude for which he is remarkable, he went unattended, and driving up the river about 5 miles commenced operations at a likely looking pool with a long deep run at the end of it. It was a quiet out of the way place and looked decidedly "fishy". The first essay was made with a salmon cast. Halfway down the run a suspicious movement in the water caused Piscator to lie back and begin again. This time there was no mistaking the presence of a fine fish though he came so shyly as not to touch the fly - a pause and another hark back with another fly. The fish still rose shyly - the same tactics

were used again and again rose our modest friend, and yet again a fifth time without being being touched. Then came the sulks. Fly after fly of the most tempting form and colour allured him not. Patience is a virtue which every true Piscator possesses, so the Editor at this juncture refused to give up the fight, and lighting a philosophical pipe, sat him down on the bank to cogitate. The result of this cogitation was the substitution of a Sea Trout fly of ordinary appearance for the larger one, and operations recommenced at the same spot. At the very end of the run, indeed at the very last cast, there was a sharp shock in the water, a jerk, a joyous whirr of the reel, & the salmon was well in hand. The first rush was straight up the run, then down again, then across to the sand bank then a jump, & a somersault, then a dive behind the big stone, and finally a stern pause. This little game was enacted for about ten minutes when the fish began to shew symptoms of fatigue, and Piscator considered how to land him. On the opposite bank it would be easy enough, but the steep sheer side on which he fished made the use of the gaff very difficult for the holder of the rod. Just now, however the blows of an axe denoted the presence of an intruder and after shouting like mad the Editor had the satisfaction of seeing a red head over the stone wall close by his side. Red Head grasped the situation at once & bounded over the dyke, took the gaff & descended the steep bank - Then Piscator giving Salmo the 'but', swirled him down the eddy close under Red Head's feet. Red Head was equal to the contingencies for he put the clip in him very cleverly as he went by and laid a clean run 9lb salmon at Piscator's feet with great rejoicing. Rain came down in torrents - Editor arrived at Kilmahumaig like a drowned rat. Boots and pockets full of water - dead tired - but with the 9lb trophy.

In the evening, partly by way of conquering the wet & cold and partly from pure effervescence of joyousness, Dancing commenced - Miss Dyne, Miss Blatherwick, The Misses Lily & Ida, with Miss Wilson performed several Scotch Reels in a most graceful manner - The Highland Fling, the Rale Irish Jig were severally gone through with immense vigour & as the excitement increased, screeches, clapping of hands, and jumps into space finished the performance.

To be continued.

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KILMARTIN GLEN

A Multi-Use Landscape

Robert Gordon

Kilmartin Glen is an impressive landscape. Although covering a small area in Mid Argyll, it has a concentration of natural and historic features unequalled in mainland Britain. Its topography with its wide range of natural and managed habitats gives it great scenic beauty, while its rich history is witnessed by the well-preserved remains of human activity spanning over 5000 years - from the neolithic chambered tomb of Nether Largie South and the stone circles of Temple Wood to the many settings of standing stones, the Bronze Age burial cairns and the rock sheets covered with 'cup-and-ring' carvings, to Iron Age duns, the Dark Age fortress of Dunadd (the first 'capital' of the Scots), early Christian sculptured stones, mediaeval carved stones, to the 16th century castle of Carnasserie, the 18th and 19th century Improvements, and so to modern farming and forestry. The Glen itself forms the core of a more extensive landscape stretching southwards to the Crinan Canal and beyond to Knapdale.

The geology and landform are largely the result of the last ice age and the changes that followed its retreat. The steep-sided valleys were gouged out by the ice flowing south-westward, while the valley floor was more affected by the water and sediment from the receding ice, which left the kame terraces and fertile farmland leading to the estuarine area of the River Add and the Moine Mhor, a National Nature Reserve of international importance. This varied landscape with its flora and fauna, combined with the rich built heritage spanning every stage in land use from the early neolithic period to the present day, makes Kilmartin Glen one of the most important heritage areas in mainland Britain.

The countryside is farmed and afforested; the natural and historic features attract numbers of visitors from all over the world. While farming and forestry are important to the local economy, tourism now plays an increasing role. This makes for multiple land use with resultant pressures and conflicts. Several public bodies have an active interest in the area through their responsibilities for the natural and historic heritage, for land management, for planning, tourism and recreation. Their policies all have a major impact

on the landscape. A major conservation opportunity existed for interested and involved parties to harmonise various user needs and relieve localised pressures in Kilmartin Glen for both present and future generations, while at the same time encouraging both visitors and local community to understand, appreciate and enjoy its beauty and richness.

To meet this challenge six public bodies - Argyll & Islands Enterprise, Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Tourist Board and, at first, Argyll & Bute District Council with Strathclyde Regional Council, now since reorganisation Argyll and Bute Council - joined together to form the Kilmartin Glen Project to co-ordinate the work of these organisations and "to work with local communities to enhance public awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the Kilmartin Glen and surrounding through a co-ordinated approach to countryside and visitor management". The Project has worked closely with British Waterways (Crinan Canal), Forest Enterprise, Kilmartin Area Tourist Association, local landowners and community groups on individual projects.

Throughout the centuries the land has been managed to provide a source of income, employment, food, building material and fuel, as well as being home to the residents of the area. The landscape has developed along with the changing demands of society. Of this past development evidence remains; most noticeably, the groups of funerary and ceremonial monuments that form the prehistoric 'ritual' landscape, and the planned landscape of Poltalloch, along with the agricultural improvements of the period, still form the basis of what we see today. The traditional land uses of agriculture and forestry have recently seen rapid change. New technologies and practices have created features that we would not have envisaged a few years ago.

Not only have the practices of the basic industries changed, the society we live in is now highly mobile. We have more leisure time than ever before. This creates an additional demand to use the land for leisure and recreation. This demand does not come just from local residents seeking access to the countryside; the unique heritage of Kilmartin Glen attracts specialist visitors from all over the world. It is this influx of tourists and day visitors during the summer season that puts strains on the minor roads and parking facilities at certain areas within the Glen. Without

management they will, over time, destroy what they come to visit and enjoy. Indiscriminate parking on roadsides is already causing damage to the verges and dykes, not to mention problems for other road-users, while parking in farm gateways increases the conflict between visitors and land-owners. The peak season for visits coincides with the time when farmers are at their busiest conserving winter feed for their livestock.

Although we knew that a substantial number of visitors came to the Kilmartin Glen, there was little information on how many, where they came from, why they came, or which sites they visited. A survey of visitors was undertaken in 1995 and 1996 at all the major sites in the Glen, and at other locations in Argyll. This gave a comparison of numbers and provided the information required to construct a strategy for visitor management. This includes the concentration of the use of motor transport on the main route A816 through the Glen by means of the provision of parking with orientation and interpretation boards at key points close to this route, the encouragement of pedestrian and cycle access on minor routes and to the main sites of interest, as well to the wider countryside, by a network of paths and trails.

The first of the traffic management measures, threshold lay-bys / car parks at Achnashelloch and Carnassarie (winners of an environmental regeneration award), are now in place. Stone, which is so much part of the built landscape of Kilmartin, has been retained as the main feature of the design; drystone dykes, already part of the existing boundaries of the sites, have been repaired and extended to create some of the seating and picnic facilities. That at Carnassarie acts as car park for the Castle and for access to the Forest Enterprise cycle trails, while both Carnassarie and Achnashelloch provide broad information on the natural and historic landscape of Kilmartin, on where parking is available, and where to find the sites that have parking and public access rights or agreements. This latter point is very important as many of the sites are on private land and are not accessible to the public without the land-owners' consent. Some land-owners have been willing to enter into management agreements to allow public access to monuments on their land and to manage areas around the sites to improve the aspect and conservation of the sites and to

give access at all times. Further negotiations are taking place to extend the number of monuments that will be accessible through management agreements.

Within the Glen, parking is being provided at specific sites; there is already parking and a new access to the cup-and-ring marks at Achnabreck; Scottish Natural Heritage have provided a car park and a raised pathway on to the moss at Moine Mhor; and improvements to the access road and the formalisation of parking is planned for Dunadd in 1997.

Some complex issues still need to be addressed. Negotiations are taking place in an attempt to relieve the pressures of parking and access at the core area of Temple Wood, Nether Largie and the Linear Cemetery, and options are being looked at for parking and environmental improvements at the villages of Kilmartin and Kilmichael. These areas are seen as being of the highest priority; this view has been endorsed by the Kilmartin Glen Forum who represent local community and business organisations.

Traffic management cannot work without an integrated system of signs and interpretation. This starts with roadside directional signs which are under the control of the highways authority; then through the orientation maps and general interpretation boards at the key car parks and laybys, to the specific signage at individual sites. In a sensitive area like Kilmartin Glen it is difficult to strike a balance between the function - which means signs have to be noticed - and the need to keep them as unobtrusive as possible, while keeping in mind issues of public safety, the demand from the public for more information, and the fact that many visitors are unfamiliar with the area. The monolith shape of Kilmartin Glen signage is now being used at the key orientation and information points, and is designed to create a sense of identity for the area and to form an easily recognisable indicator of the availability of information. The panels set in these 'monoliths' are easily dismountable to allow the signs to be updated or to be customised for specific periods or events. (The 'monoliths' are made of wood, not stone, lest the unwary should confuse them with the genuine article, many of which can be seen in the Glen).

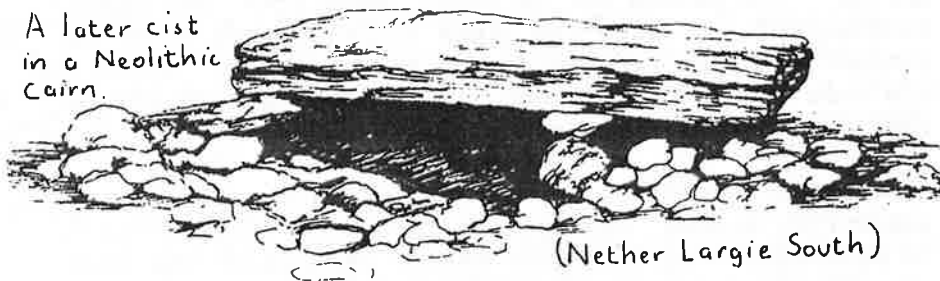
The combination of key parking and distribution points, pedestrian access, signage and interpretation should help to distribute visitors more evenly throughout the Glen,

reduce the volume of traffic on some minor routes and relieve the pressures at certain sites.

The Project has provided the opportunity for members of the partnership to co-ordinate the interpretation at sites within the Glen. In the past each individual organisation tended to interpret its sites in isolation, relating them only to other similar sites in the area. Little attempt was made to show how they relate in time or location, or how they fit within the overall landscape. The landscape of the Glen provides a unique opportunity to link the protection and management of the cultural heritage represented by the monuments with that of the natural environment, set in the context of a modern working countryside. New interpretation will attempt to show the development of the features of the landscape, and the inter-relationship between land use throughout the centuries, the environment, and the Glen as we see it today. The interpretation boards throughout the Glen are supplemented by a leaflet describing the main sites in Kilmartin; this is available at Tourist Information Centres and through local businesses.

While we must provide for the visitors who come to see the historic sites and natural heritage, it is important to make it clear that Kilmartin is not a museum of the past, but a working environment. The traditional land users are as much a part of the countryside as they were when they first cultivated the soil here over 5000 years ago. It is an ever-changing landscape, the product of this generation as well as past generations of farmers, foresters, businessmen and communities who have lived and worked in the area. Let us ensure that as we use Kilmartin Glen for our income or our leisure we do not diminish the use, understanding and enjoyment of this unique resource for our own and future generations.

A later cist
in a Neolithic
Cairn.



(Nether Largie South)

...oooOooo...

ACROSS THE LECKAN MUIR

Duncan Beaton

One day during the summer of 1995 my good friend Eddie MacCallum and I set out to walk across the Leckan Muir, which lies between Lochfyneside and Lochaweside. This part of the country was never densely populated, but it is now completely uninhabited, given over to sheep farming, forestry and the sport of trout fishing on the many small lochs; although hillwalking is increasingly popular the main interest seems to lie in the higher mountains; large tracts of land where there are no challenging climbs are often considered of less importance and left relatively undisturbed.

At one time the Leckan Muir was a busy place, a piece of moorland crossed by roads between the main centres of population in Mid Argyll. These roads were well used by the drovers who bought their cattle at the local markets at Kilmichael Glassary and Killenuair and took them across the country to the main annual markets at Crieff and Falkirk. Sometimes the cattle had been brought from the Argyll Islands where the breeders were mostly small farmers or crofters, and the drovers sold them on to English buyers; they were then taken south to be fattened on sweet grass for the English market, which was appreciative of the fine flavour of "Scotch Beef".

So, on a dull but mild morning the car was parked near Auchindrain, six miles from Inveraray. The old township is now a farming museum; Eddie was brought up there, son of the last family to live in the settlement. The right-of-way footpath to Loch Awe starts across the main road, and within half a mile crosses the Leckan Water and enters the ancient lordship, now the parish, of Glassary. The bridge is called the Miller's Bridge; on the Glenaray side may still be traced the lade of the Braleckan meal mill. The millers of the late 18th century and early 19th century came from a family named Turner, and part of one of the millstones has been used as their tombstone in Killevin Graveyard at Crarae. The other stone is built into the dyke at Braleckan. Braleckan was the property of a family named Clerk from 1514 to 1754, over a total of eight traceable generations. They were closely associated with the Campbells of Argyll, but no-one has been able to find out how they acquired their

foothold in the county in the year following the catastrophic battle of Flodden.

On the Glassary side of the burn the first farm is Brenchoille, once the home of a family of MacVicars. Near here, or perhaps on the Braleckan side of the bridge, the last wolf in Mid Argyll was killed. [The story is told in the first Statistical Account of 1793. Several versions exist - one is told in Kist 2, likely to be the most accurate. The common element is that the beast was killed by an old woman who died herself in the encounter. Ed.].

After leaving Brenchoille on our left we followed the track as it climbed steadily to the site of the Craigerrine copper mines, on the course of Allt Aoil (the burn of lime). Now filled in and surrounded by conifer plantations, these mines were first worked by Cornish mining experts who extracted the copper ore in the 1830s. At a later date nickel ore was found in the waste heaps and the mine was re-opened to allow the extraction of this more valuable mineral. (See Notes at end of this article).

After rising for a few more miles the track descends to the River Add, where there is an old stone bridge at the site of the twin settlements of Craignuair and Carron. The Add is a good salmon river, and tradition has it that King Robert the Bruce fished here while he was a guest of Sir Neil Campbell of Lochow - they were at the time both fugitives from the searching allies of the English King Edward I. Craignuair (Creag-an-Uair) means "Rock of the Yew Trees" but there are no yews there nowadays. In the 18th century John Campbell of Craignuair or Craignure was a Writer (lawyer) in Inveraray. By the time of the 1841 census one of the tenants at Craignuair was named MacGilp and was the keeper of a change-house, licensed to sell alcoholic refreshment and victuals to passing travellers on the road. This was a common custom; one of Eddie's ancestors at Auchindrain offered a similar service on the main thoroughfare between Inveraray and Campbeltown.

When I first visited Craignuair, in 1974, the house still had a roof of corrugated iron, and the walls inside were lined with vertical larch planking. This gave a good indication of the construction of a typical 19th century Highland farmhouse. It was used by the sons of the farmer at Brenchoille as a bothy at lambing time. Now the roof is off and lying in a crumpled heap, and internal deterioration

has been accelerated.

In contrast, Carron farmhouse across the Add had a slate roof, and this is still largely intact. Neither house has been lived in for several generations, however, and because of their isolation they are not likely to be lived in again. Both styles of house are represented among the examples to be seen in the museum of farming life at Auchindrain. In its heyday Carron would have been a busy place, as here stood the first cattle stance on the road from the Kilmichael Glassary trysts to the large markets at Falkirk or Crieff. Recognising the importance of the site, the property including Carron was much sought after by persons in the droving trade. Carron was included in the estate of the MacIvers or Campbells of Kirnan, in the Vale of Glassary, which was sold when they fell into financial difficulties in the 1730s. The buyer was Captain Duncan Campbell, son of the Reverend Alexander Campbell, one-time minister at Inveraray. A few years after the purchase Captain Campbell had borrowed a sum of money from his brother-in-law Archibald Campbell, the Duke's bailie in Kintyre, and by discharging the bond for this loan the property passed to Lt. Colonel Patrick Mackellar in the 1770s. (See Notes). Colonel Mackellar was a famed military engineer, spending much of his time overseas; acting on his behalf in Mid Argyll was his brother Neil Mackellar of Stroneskar. Neil Mackellar had tacks of other lands from Archibald Campbell of Knockbuy, an enlightened landlord whose Minard estates took in part of Carron known as Upper Carron. In 1773 Upper Carron was set in tack to a John Mackellar, a drover who may have been another brother of Neil Mackellar of Stroneskar. (See Notes)

After leaving Carron the track to Loch Awe rises to a bealach, from where to the south the gentle Cowal hills are visible. A few hundred yards further and the hills of Lorn are on the northern horizon. Forestry gives way to sheep, and the track has been improved for all-terrain vehicles; a patchwork of hill lochs, some full of native brown trout and others stocked with rainbow trout, comes into view. This is the natural habitat of the peewit, or green plover; many circled over our heads with the cries that give them their name, to lead us away from their nest sites.

As we walked down among the lochs we met many fishermen who had come up from Lochaweside. Eventually the loch came into view, the first place of habitation recognisable on its

shore being Inverliever. This place, long associated with an old branch of Clan Campbell, is often confused with Inverliver on Lochetiveside. (The latter is a farm on the former Breadalbane estates, now part of the Glenkinglas property owned by the Fleming merchant banking family). The Campbells of Inverliever descended from Iain Anfhamn, (Weak John), the brother of Donnachadh an Aigh (Duncan the Fortunate) the first Lord Cambel (sic). Legend has it that John "Annan" was actually the elder brother, but gave way to Duncan as being the more able leader of the clan. He was granted Barbreck and other lands, which his son Duncan divided up between his two sons; Angus received Barbreck, and his progeny became known as Clan Innes na Tra (MacAongais an Traighe - [the sons] of Angus by the Shore); and Alexander was the ancestor of the Inverliever family, the head of whom became known as MacAlasdair mhic Dhonnachadh.

As the track reaches Lochaweside it passes an enclosure which is the churchyard of Killenuair, the ancient parish church of the Lordship of Glassary. In spring it is easily visible from the track, the burying ground a mass of daffodils, but on this July day the bracken and the foliage of the old beech trees had hidden it from view. The walls of the church still stand; it was a building of considerable size. The 10th Duke of Argyll wrote; "St Columba's church of Glasrid or Glasred (Glassary) was the original mother church of this Lordship, and though roofless now, bears marks of a high antiquity, especially at the eastern end ... The name means Church of the Yews, none of which trees now, however, survive. There can be little doubt that it is one of the Patron Saint's personal foundations. The church at a later date sank in importance as Kilmichael in Glassary gradually rose in prominence, due perhaps to some early shifting of the population, or perhaps to the gradual destruction of Fioncharn Castle close to Killinuair on the shores of Lochaw" (See Notes) Fincharn, which was not on our route that day, was the seat of the early Lords of Glassary and is now a ruin.

The church shows signs of its pre-Reformation antiquity (but not of any structure belonging to the 6th century), including the remains of a piscina on the south wall by the site of the altar. There are flagstones in the floor nearby, covering the graves of once-important people in the district who are now forgotten. Their names appear in the records of Argyll, but whose remains are under each slab is

not known. It was at this altar on a Sunday long ago that Sir Dugal Campbell of Craignish quarrelled with his brother-in-law MacMartin of Upper Glassary, with tragic consequences for both families. Sir Dugal had been visiting his chief MacCailein Mor, the knight of Lochow, at his residence of Innischonnel on Loch Awe, and had called at the church to celebrate Mass. The quarrel continued as they passed out of the door, but they separated and went their own ways. MacMartin went back to collect his men and followed Sir Dugal over the track to Craignish. At a place now called Ath mhic Mhairtein, about halfway between the village of Ford and Kentra in Craignish the ambush took place as the Campbells crossed a small stream. In the conflict MacMartin was killed, leaving a widow and infant son. Sir Dugal, the uncle, was full of remorse and took the child and his mother home to Craignish where the boy was eventually fostered by the family of a trusted tenant named Macrath.

All went well until the child was six years old. One day he was out walking with his foster-father near Barvrack-an where they lived, and stopped to rest by a small freshwater loch which empties into Loch Craignish. Macrath noticed that the boy was playing with the handle of the small knife or dirk he was carrying, and asked him what use he would make of it when he was a man. "I will use it to stab the man who killed my father" the boy replied. "Perhaps you would, but I shall prevent you so doing" said the foster-father. He immediately killed the boy and threw his body in the loch. The upshot of all this was that the Macraths had to flee from the wrath of the Campbells of Craignish, and there are no bearers of that name indigenous to the district today. The loch is still known as Loch mhic Mhairtein. (See Notes).

This church also had its ghost, probably pre-dating even the time of the Campbell-MacMartin quarrel. The impression of its huge hand can be seen at the left of the door where it made an ineffectual grab at the fleeing person of a tailor who had been rash enough to take on a wager involving sewing a pair of trousers in the church during the midnight hours. [The story is told in Kist 48, along with a description of the church. For a full version see Highways and Byways in the West Highlands by Seton Gordon, pp330-1. Ed.].

After leaving the historic church the track passes through a plantation of spruce to reach the B840 road about one

mile from Ford. On a warm, and by now sunny July day the roadside refreshment offered by the Ford Hotel was very welcome!

Notes

- 1) On 8th October 1952 a geologist's letter to Mr D.B. Bogle, of Messrs Lindsay Howe & Co. of 32 Charlotte Square Edinburgh, concluded that there was little likelihood of finding a further sizeable body of ore at the site of this mine. (Glasgow University Archives, DC80/912).
- 2) Gr. of Sasines, RS 10/11/125-7, Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh.
- 3) Knockbuy Rentals, the unpublished accounts of Archibald Campbell, 2nd of Knockbuy, courtesy of his descendant, Miss Marion Campbell of Kilberry.
- 4) "The Manuscript History of (the Campbells of) Craignish" by Alexander Campbell, Advocate. Edited by Herbert Campbell. "Miscellany of the Scottish History Society" vol.4, p220.
- 5) "Highland Papers" edited by J.R.N. MacPhail vol.II p199.
- 6) "Miscellany of the Scottish History Society" pp212-4.

...oooOooo...

THE UNSEEN NEIGHBOURS

Marion Campbell

They cannot all have eaten fernseed or borrowed the Cloak of Darkness. If one could reckon the total number of deer, badgers, foxes, wildcats - not to mention two sorts of hare, stoats, rabbits, hedgehogs and smaller fry - Homo Sapiens would be well and truly outnumbered in this neck of the woods; but still he (and she) crash around asserting that there is "very little wild life left". It is just as well that we don't depend for breakfast on what we can catch.

I know a headland where the sea frets into narrow clefts thick with mussels, or crashes into rainbow spray under an onshore gale. On a warm summer afternoon, as one sits among the marram grass, there may come into view a dark dot on the burnished sea, at the edge of vision. It closes the shore as the apex of a sharp wake, faster than any duck, taking shape as a flat-topped Something a trifle raised above the

surface. The wake is spreading into the kelp when the swimmer hoists himself easily to the top of the reef, and settles down to a long combing and licking of his dark pelt.

He is not a "Sea Otter" in the Californian sense, but a smaller cousin, once persecuted to the point of extinction in most of Britain. He is perfectly at home in salt or fresh water; you may find his broad pugmarks, and maybe curse them, by hill lochs and salmon pools. Here at the sea margin he has played in long slide-paths down the white sand slopes, as in winter he makes toboggan-runs over thin snow; a cluster of footmarks of different sizes defines the queuing area at the top, and little scoops down the edges of the slide mark where hands have struck out for speed.

There is a restaurant near this run; but first, a problem: that swimmer, first sighted a mile or so offshore - where had he been? The nearest land on that bearing is ten miles away, across a Sound covering some of the deepest waters on this coast and swept by fierce currents. Our swimmer brought nothing ashore, and unlike his American cousins he does not float along cracking shells on his chest; if he went out there to hunt, he must have eaten whatever he got while swimming in the tideway.

The restaurant, however, is all around his grooming-rock. On another summer day you may catch sight of a strange upright object - a dead stem of kelp? - waving among the outer rocks, and hear a peevish voice, like that of a spoilt child, whining and chattering nearby. It is only silenced when the spike vanishes to be replaced by a brown body with a crab in its mouth. Presented to the smaller creature, this briefly stills the complaints. Not for long; "I wanna" starts again, and back goes the long-suffering parent for a second helping, and a third. At last the brat is led away, swimming with head and forepaw on the mother's shoulder, so that the two heads show as one.

Or you meet them elsewhere. One stormy night, on a road close to the shore, my headlights picked out a bundling shape preceding me on the crown of the road. I slowed and dipped to let him escape, which he was in no haste to do, finding the illumination helpful. Close by is another well-known grooming-rock, used also by shags and gulls when they find it unoccupied.

In the summer of 1939, that miraculous summer when the sun always shone, we sat on a Jura cliff overlooking a sandy

bay and watched four otters swimming below us, coiling around each other underwater like the elements of a Celtic knot, over and under, dark against the white sand beneath the ice-green sea. Twisting out and turning in, up for a quick breath and down in a stream of bubbles, they were not fishing or fighting or competing in any way that we could distinguish, but taking pleasure, as were we, high above them, in a time and place and season very near perfection. At last the knot dissolved and its four strands dashed into rougher water where the kelp hid them. We too went off towards darker things; but the images of that patterned underwater ballet remained with us through half a century.

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THE MILITARY ROAD THROUGH GLENARAY
AND THE STRANGE APPARITION OF A SOLDIER

Mary McGrigor

The Gaelic word "aoradh" means "worship"; Lord Archibald Campbell in his Records of Argyll tells us that Glenaray, "Gleann Aoraidh", was a pilgrims' way to the Holy Isle of Inishail on Loch Awe. There used to be a cross beside a rock (now impossible to identify), called Crois-an-t-Sleuchdadh, Cross of the Kneeling, where the pilgrims, on first catching sight of the island, fell on their knees and prayed. The rough track which they followed has now long disappeared, but it probably followed the river much as does the road today.

The military road between Dumbarton and Tyndrum, part of the system laid down after the '45 for the express purpose of controlling the Highlands, reached Inveraray in 1749, and the next stretch, through Glenaray, was approved by the military authorities in 1757. From Inveraray it ran initially up the east bank of the river to the Old Post House of Dalbuhie, built to accommodate travellers when the river was too high to ford. Thence it continued to Kennachreggan, where it crossed the Aray, either by a ford or a bridge. Just below on the west bank stood the schoolhouse, built by the S.P.C.K. in 1793 and now a ruin. From there the road continued on the west side of the river to the head of the glen. It was built under the direction of Major Caulfield;

in addition to local labour 220 soldiers were still employed as late as 1761. These military roads were sixteen feet wide, on a foundation of heavy stones, and surfaced with gravel. The greater part of the work in Glenaray was completed in the 1760s.

The task of the men labouring on it, particularly in the winter months of heavy rainfall, was cruel and exhausting. Many men must have detested this cold and remote land. It seems their earthly feelings haunt the glen still - over the years the ghosts of soldiers are reported to have been seen by people in Glenaray; and Mr Archie Cameron, who was a roadman at the Three Bridges in the early part of the century, frequently saw, on the bridge opposite to his house (known locally as the "Military Bridge") a light which vanished upon investigation. These however are not the only military apparitions seen in the area.

The article in Kist 50 "Cup-and- Ring Carvings and the Brocken Spectre" by Ian Purvis brings to mind a strange story of the vision of a soldier in Glenaray. Some time ago Mr Murdo MacDonald, Archivist for Argyll and Bute, received a letter from a Mr Norman Innis-Will, then living in New Zealand. He told how in 1966, while working for Tilhil Economic Forestry, he had gone with an older colleague to inspect some land at the head of Glenaray which the late Brigadier Fellowes planned to put up for sale. They climbed from the road to a spot close to the Neil Munro Monument on the northwest side of the glen. The Brigadier and the senior man from Tilhil remained in conversation while Mr Innis-Will "advanced alone to a rough rock outcrop, looking west up the side of a considerable mountain along which our forest fence would have run. It was, I think, Nov. 6th, 1966, the weather fair ... The mountain face in full view ... and I was at once aware that on the bare face of the hill was imprinted the head and shoulders, on a giant scale, of a Hussar wearing a tall shako. It was unmoving, of a youngish man without beard or moustache; the visage appeared in expression sad and stern. I understood that I was seeing something supernatural ... I took careful observation, following every line. At the very top was a small badge in front. The chain chin strap was in view. There was one epaulet on the right shoulder".

He watched for about twenty minutes, the time being between 3.30 and 4pm, until, as he followed the others down the

hill, the figure suddenly disappeared. Later, looking at a map, he found he had been standing on Creag nan Sassunach (Hill of the Englishman); the vision must have appeared on the north face of Mullach nam Maol, which rises to 1668 feet.

The fact that the shako became military headgear only from the 1790s precludes the obvious surmise of the image being that of a road-builder; and according to local tradition Creag nan Sassunach was so called because an Englishman fell to his death there at some time unknown.

Is it possible then that a young man, sensitive to atmosphere, saw an image from the past? Or was it just a strange trick of the light? Or a mixture of the two?

...oooOooo...

A TRAINING EXCAVATION IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

A.O.M. CLARK

On two weekends in 1980 your Membership and Publications Secretary and the Editor, at that time resident in Hawick, took part in the excavation of an 18th century farmhouse at Smailcleugh in the Kale Valley. It was organised by John Forsyth of the Border Local History Association and supervised by the late Ian Smith, then of the Department of Archaeology in the University of Durham. The workforce consisted of members of the Hawick Archaeological Society.

Preliminary work on early maps and documents had been carried out by Mr Forsyth. Several maps of the 18th century showed the farmstead, but the first OS map of the area (1863) showed no building. At a short meeting on the first morning of the exercise we were able to examine these maps and documents, and were briefed on the methods to be used in excavating the site. The aim was to discover and record as much information as possible about a small 18th century Border farmstead; but a further aim was "to give local people some experience of practical excavation techniques".

The site lay about a quarter of a mile from the road; the only hazard in reaching it was an electric fence in full working order; jackets and jerseys draped over it enabled everyone to negotiate it unshocked. Visible on the ground were the remains of a rectangular building apparently consisting of a house measuring internally about 20 feet by

12 feet, adjoining a possible byre of 10 feet by 12; the back wall was cut into a bank. Behind the house were field systems divided by turf banks and later stone walls; ridge and furrow cultivation was well-marked. In front of the house was what was probably a midden.

The part of the building selected for excavation had already been divided for us into four quadrants, covered by a grid made of string attached to numbered pegs and held down by nails. Any point on the excavation could thus be identified by two numbers, on the same principle as grid references on a map. To photograph the site from above Mr Forsyth had erected a 30 foot "ladder in the sky", its legs lodged in holes in the ground and the whole thing held upright by four guy ropes. The workforce regarded this with deep suspicion, which in the end proved unfounded. Plans to photograph by radio-controlled camera mounted on a kite had to be abandoned because there was, most unusually, no wind. Photographs were taken by this method on another day and proved most successful.

Two diagonally opposite quadrants of the area selected for excavation were to be tackled first, those expected to yield most information. The party was divided into two groups and tasks assigned according to strength and inclination. Mr Smith saw to it that all operations on the site were carried out according to proper practice. First the turf was stripped off, carried away and tidily piled, grass to grass, well away from the site area. Soil was then cleared from the stones and taken by bucket and barrow to a dump some distance away, and the stones cleaned by trowel and brush. Next the stones tumbled from the walls were removed to yet another dump, and the original shape of the structure appeared, also a paved area in front of it. From that point careful cleaning of walls and different levels of floors was carried out, with trowel and brush. Deep excavation to the foundation layer was then undertaken at points on exterior and interior of the walls, and each level of floor examined. At each stage photographs were taken and detailed drawings made.

That is a very brief summary of the procedure; it took a long time and required hard work and concentration; but there were two tea-breaks and a lunch-break on each day, and time was made to go and look at other people's discoveries. Five minutes' warning was given before each break

during which time the working areas had to be tidied "removing the loose" and tools taken off to the side - spades, picks and shovels laid neatly side by side, small brushes and trowels set down together and covered with upturned buckets arranged in a row; discarded anoraks, jerseys and shirts had to be taken back to the picnic spot. This was in order to leave the site uncluttered for the photographer, or visitors, or of course the supervisor who might want to study it before letting the workforce loose on it again.

Finds were collected in trays at each level, their find-spots noted by the numbered grid, and marked on the ground with labels. They consisted mainly of domestic pottery and glass and an assortment of nails and small ironmongery, but there was also a pony's shoe, a spade, knives and spoons, a slate pencil, fragments of leather, a broken whistle, a part (probable) of a spur, and a George III penny of 1806 in very good condition. Parts of a large stone quern were found in a trench outside the rear wall.

At the end of the first weekend's work the basic shape of the building was clear, and the original appearance of the lower parts of the outside walls restored; the inside walls were also clear, but of course showed only a bare stone surface. The quantity of mortar found might indicate that the walls were lined with it. An entrance had been identified, and a hearth was just emerging. Part at least of the "byre" seemed to have been a workshop, and the "midden" turned out to have been a well-cultivated kitchen garden; the soil was almost completely stone-free, as if it had been riddled, and had a beautiful tilth, the envy of all the gardeners present.

On the second weekend similar methods were employed, opening up more of the house. Newly uncovered floor-levels were recorded, and the front wall uncovered for more of its length. Selective excavations were carried out at various points to answer specific questions.

Unfortunately we were not able to participate in the follow-up excavation of 1981, as we had by that time left Roxburghshire. However this account of the methods used to investigate a small 18th century site may interest readers of Kist. A similar exercise could be carried out on a deserted settlement in Mid Argyll - the house plans are almost identical. The Society has indeed done some elementary investigation of 18th and 19th century houses at Mealdarroch, Tarbert and Ballimeanach on the Stonefield Estate, but in

nothing like the same detail.

We do not recommend the "ladder in the sky"!

...oooOooo...

The following set of verses is reprinted by permission of Argyll Colony Plus, the magazine of the North Carolina Scottish Heritage Society, edited by our good friend Col. Vic Clark, whose ancestors came from Jura. Two notes may be necessary: "Podunk" is an imaginary, typical dull country town in the USA; and the Scottish Country Dance step "pas de basque" is universally pronounced "paddy-bah".

THE FEUDS OF THE CLANS

The Clan is up - the blood is hot,
The fiery cross's gone around -
Before this trouble's settled, there'll
Be blood upon the ground!

'Tis not in bonny Highland glens,
Nor on the Border green,
'Tis not on Scotia's shores at all
This Scottish feud is seen.

A Caledonian Clan is formed;
The word is spread about;
The East Podunk St. Andy's bunch
Has had a falling out!

Our pipe band has but thirteen pipes,
For twenty-three have quit -
(But only twenty-two are mad -
The other had to flit).

The pipes are proud. The drums are mad.
And "Damn the first who speaks!"
The pipers claim the drummers are
All wimps who wear the breeks.

The Podunk Scottish Dancing Class
Has gone and split in "twa" -
"The teacher of that other bunch
Critiqued my pas de basque!"

And Clan MacFuddy of the States -
It has a rival now,

For Clan MacFuddy of Podunk
Was formed after the row.

At least our Highland dancers did
Not split in half - you see
There are three Highland teachers, so
They went and split in three.

There'll be two "Nichts" for Rabbie Burns,
('Twould drive you round the bend);
At least the double sets of Games
Are not the same weekend!

I know the feud will soon be o'er
For tempers here have sunk;
And we've been hearing things about
That bunch in WEST Podunk!

...oooOooo...

SUMMER EXPEDITIONS 1996

April 13th. Ardcastle Wood

From the Forestry Commission car park a walk of 1½ miles or so to the Kilbride Burial Ground, a walled enclosure containing many grave markers, and headstones of the 18th and 19th centuries, possibly the site of an early chapel. Each grave had a single daffodil placed on it, by whom we did not know. Drifts of daffodils were in flower nearby. Some of the party went on to see the old jetty and a deserted settlement.

May 11th. Kilmory Knap

On a pleasant sunny day, a walk up the steep grassy hillside to Dun a Bhuilg, a stone-walled fort protected by rock faces and steep slopes, overlooking Kilmory Bay. Walls are some 3m thick, some facing stones in situ on both inner and outer faces, otherwise spread tumble. View was magnificent. Then down to the early 13th century chapel of Kilmory Knap, set among the buildings of the old township of Kilmory, now being rehabilitated. Inside the restored chapel is a magnificent collection of early Christian and mediaeval carved stones, including the MacMillan Cross, our Society's logo, once set outside the chapel and not quite at home inside. Some of the party then walked out to the two cairns at Ardnaw.

June 14th. Portavadie

Ferry across Loch Fyne from Tarbert, then the 'Wee Bus' from Portavadie over the ridge to Millhouse to the remains of the once very extensive Gun Powder Works which flourished from the middle of last century until soon after the 1914-18 war. Though vegetation was thick and prickly we managed to reach several of the well spaced out processing buildings and understand something of the organisation, and risks, of manufacture. The works bell, hanging from the upright tails of two fish near the manager's house, and the dumpy little powder tester in a grassy field, were much admired. After a picnic lunch one party went round the north of Ascog Loch past the ruins of the large Lamont castle, attacked and abandoned in the late 1640s, the other took the route SW towards Low Stillaig, visiting the outline of a very early chapel, several standing stones and a bronze age cairn, both parties ending up at the ferry terminal.

July 17th. Kilmartin Glen

Meeting at Dunchraigaig on a beautiful sunny evening we inspected the cairn, its two visible cists and the old excavation trench. Then, escorted by Mr Robert Gordon of the Kilmartin Glen Project we walked by the new access path to the standing stones at Ballimeanoch, the two cairns and the henge, viewing the new identification boards and the improved appearance of the stones since the accumulation around their bases was removed. A visit to the new information lay-by and picnic area at Achnashelloch ended the tour. Some of us went on to visit other monuments.

August 17th. Dunardry Forest Walk

Starting from the F.C. car park south of and above the top reach of the Canal we walked uphill, admiring the magnificent views over the Moine Mhor. Near the slate quarry and the remains of workers' houses the path climbs to an even more magnificent viewpoint. Then the track descends by the west side of the steep burn draining the Dail Loch, and so through conifers back to the car park. Lots of botanical interest all the way, and even some chanterelles beside the return path through the wood.

September 21st. Craignish

We went first to the Old Parish Church of Kilmarie (the med-

iaeval parish church of Craignish) which dates from the early 13th century, has been repaired and to a small extent altered. It is roofless, but the West end has been covered with a transparent roof to protect the assemblage of ancient carved stones, for whose care our Society is responsible. The surrounding graveyard also contains interesting stones. We then enjoyed a long walk by field and hill at first, then above the shore to Craignish Point with its wide views from Crinan round to Scarba and northward. Impressive volcanic dykes on the way, and two small archaeological features - a cist (excavated) and a suggestive agglomeration of large stones.

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