



Ann Thomas

Artists impression
CARBERT CASTLE
C1500

The
RIST63

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NOTE ON THE COVER

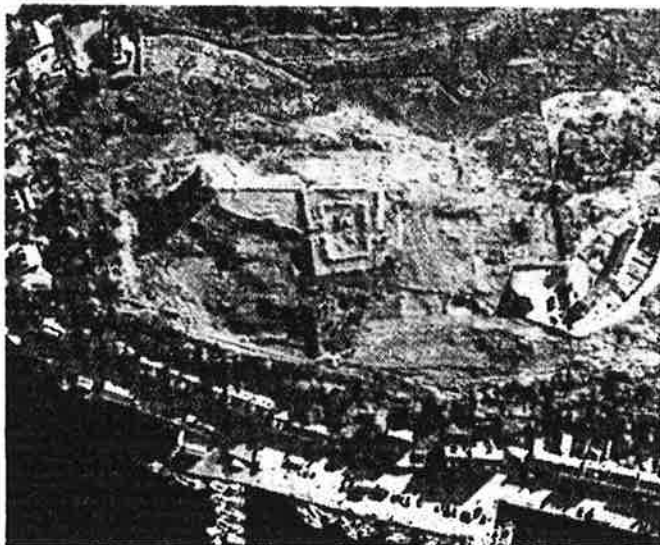
It may be thought that artist and editor were indulging in a wild flight of fancy when they decided (after much consulting of relevant books) on this imaginary reconstruction.

However, several points should be kept in mind. The view-point is from Toll a' Choilich, a bay on the opposite side of East Loch Tarbert from the Castle, and from sea-level. This produces considerable foreshortening - a modern photograph in the possession of the artist shows the same effect. The Castle site itself slopes steeply downwards from the tower house to the drum towers and the postern gate, and from the inner bailey to the north-western curtain wall (see the aerial photograph and plan overleaf), thus producing further foreshortening; in fact the lengths of curtain wall between drum towers and tower house and between tower house and inner bailey disappear entirely. This would be the view seen from a boat coming into the inner East Loch. The original height of the curtain wall, with its towers (not now visible above ground), is not known, but a reasonable guess can be made by going round the south side of the tower house and looking up. The original height of the 13th century castle (the inner bailey) is not known either, but comparison with others of the same period may suggest some 15m. to 18m.

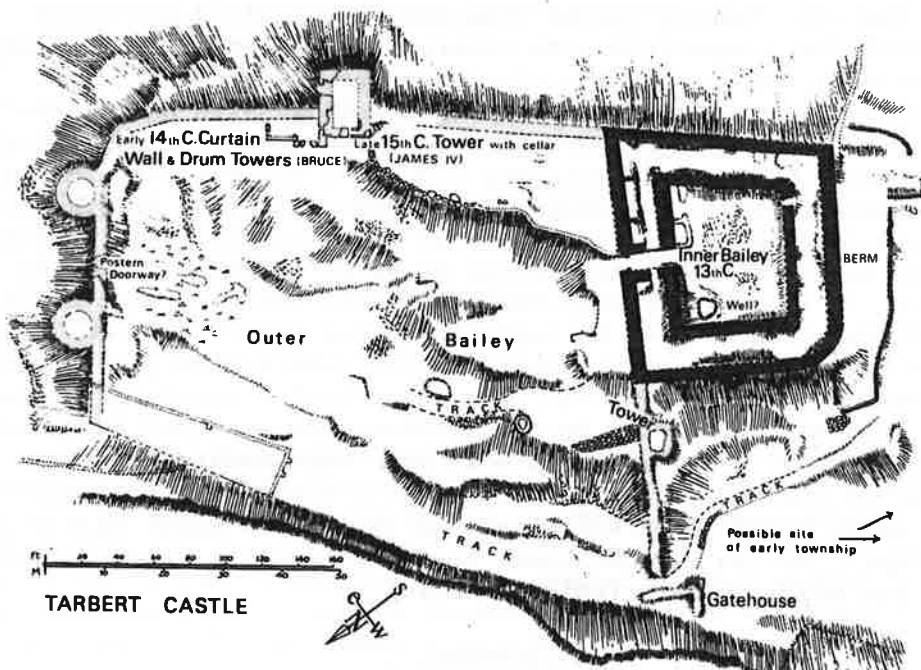
When in 1494 James IV, an enthusiastic castle and palace builder who had major work carried out at Holyrood, Edinburgh, Falkland, Linlithgow, Rothesay and above all Stirling, as well as smaller projects elsewhere, decided to build a modern tower house for the strategically-placed Castle of Tarbert, he would wish the rest of the structures to be of an acceptable standard; it is most unlikely that the inner bailey, curtain wall and drum towers would be neglected. The tower house was given the conventional garret roof, and the drum towers probably the fashionable conical roofs. The inner bailey may not have been so high as represented in the drawing, nor have had such elaborate corner towers; but it must have been refurbished to provide accommodation, and storage for supplies and equipment.

James required an effective and impressive Royal Castle of Tarbert, not an elegant tower house (even with inbuilt defence) in the middle of a dilapidated ruin.

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Aerial photograph of Tarbert Castle looking south-east



TARBERT CASTLE

A.O.M. Clark

A fort of some kind stood at Tarbert in the early 8th century, important enough to have its destruction in 712 A.D. and again in 731 recorded in the ancient Annals of Ulster. The oldest structure visible today is the inner bailey, consisting of four ranges of buildings (7m wide internally) round an open courtyard. This plan is similar to that of other early stone castles and dates to the 13th century. It may have been built by a dependant of the MacDonalds of Islay, but more probably by Alexander II or Alexander III during wars with the Norsemen. In 1292 it was certainly a Royal Castle, being among those granted to John Balliol by Edward I of England. In 1325 Robert I (Bruce) had it enlarged and strengthened; a curtain wall was built out from the inner bailey, with two drum towers overlooking Loch Fyne, a gatehouse, and at least one other tower, enclosing almost a hectare. The surviving building accounts record, among other structures, a hall, a chapel, houses, workshops, a brewhouse and, outside the wall, a mill and mill-lade. Bruce visited his castle while work was in progress, and for the last time in 1329, the year of his death.

In 1494 James IV, requiring a strong base for his operations in the Western Isles, repaired the Castle and built the tower-house halfway along the south-eastern curtain wall; he brought in artillery, victualled and garrisoned the Castle, and summoned Parliament to meet at Tarbert. In 1498 he revisited Tarbert, and in 1499 made Archibald Earl of Argyll (Chief of Clan Campbell) Keeper of the Castle. Frequent clashes between Campbells and MacDonalds resulted in changing control - the MacDonalds entrusted it for many years to Alan nan Sop, whose piratical raids spread terror far and wide. By 1652 it was held by Commonwealth troops, apart from one autumn day when the bored garrison had "gone out a'nutting". The men of Tarbert swarmed in and removed stores of gunpowder, cheese and biscuit. The episode was amicably settled.

1685 saw 1800 men and horses gather at the Castle in support of the Earl of Argyll's ill-fated rebellion against James VII and II after which he lost his head and the Campbell lands. By 1689 the Campbell fortunes were restored, and the tenancy of Tarbert Castle given under charter to the MacAlisters, who

were "to provide a boat of six oars in time of peace and war and preserve the Castle of Tarbert wind and water tight in all times coming". The MacAlister fortunes declined, the Castle fell into disrepair. In 1791 the Statistical Account calls it "a fine old ruin", and in the mid 19th century the centre of the tower house collapsed.

NOTE: This is a much simplified version of an extremely complicated history, intended to supply a very general background view - it is mainly the text supplied by the writer for the information panel set up at the Castle by Forest Enterprise.

A translation, made by Marion Campbell of Kilberry, of the 1325 building accounts appears in Kist 34.

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HOW THE TARBERT LANDS PASSED FROM THE MACALISTERS TO THE CAMPBELLS

Duncan Beaton

The MacAlisters of Tarbert were a cadet family of the MacAlisters of Loup, the main branch of the MacAlisters. That the Campbell Earls of Argyll should have entrusted this vital royal castle into the hands of this branch of Clan Donald is a good illustration of how skewed our modern view of the relations between these two families can often be unless seen in the light of historical fact.

Among the papers of Herbert Campbell's deposited at the Scottish Record Office in Edinburgh is a bundle of transcripts of writs pertaining to Mid Argyll families. Included are those involving the original Campbells of Auchindarroch, which form the basis of this article.

On the 8th May 1580 Charles MacAllister was granted the two merklands of "Balleneile" etc. in the Lordship of Knapdale and the Sherifffdom of Tarbert, in feuferme. In this charter, which had a royal confirmation at Holyrood on the 5th September 1580 Charles was described as "Constable of Tarbert". Early in the 17th century there were an Archibald MacAllister and a Godfrey MacAllister who followed one another as Constables of the Castle and featured in local history; Godfrey had effectively acted as chieftain while his father was still alive, into the mid 1630s.

On the 13th and 14th February 1654 at Inveraray Castle Ronald MacAllester, now Captain of Tarbert, grandson and nearest lawful heir male of the late Archibald MacAllester, was granted sasine of his lands. This charter reveals the then extent of the Tarbert lands; the properties listed are: the 4 merklands of Achnadarrach (Auchindarroch), 4 merklands of Braklie (Brackley), 2 merklands of Kildusklane (Kilduskland), 2 merklands of Auchtychowane (Attichuan), 2 merklands of Craiglaslie and Gortanorne (Craiglass and Gortinorne), 2 merklands of Dal-tinable (Daltenab), the ten-shilling land of Ardrishaig, the half merkland of Drumnadroman, 4 merklands of Ashens, 2 merklands of Garrowellen, Barmore, Park and Ashnasey, 2 merklands of Breanfeorline (Brenfield), and 1 merkland of Tarbert, with custody of the castle, all in the parish of Knapdale. Also included was the 5 merklands of Auchaleik in Kerriff (Kerry - an old name for the parish of Kilfinan) across Loch Fyne in Cowal. If Ronald's line failed to produce an heir the Tarbert properties were to pass to his nearest lawful male heir descended from John Dow MacAllester his "foregrandsyre's father" (great-great-grandfather). This "John Dow" was evidently the father or grandfather of the Charles MacAlister who had Tarbert in 1580.

Ronald married Jean, third daughter of James Campbell of Ardkinglass, and granted her a liferent charter of some of his lands: the 4 merklands of Brackley, the 2 merklands of Kilduskland, the 1 merkland of Ardrishaig, the 2 merklands of Erines and the 2 merklands of Ashens, all in Knapdale, on the 26th July 1659. At this time Jean was styled his future wife; sasine was dated 3rd August of the same year, by which time Jean was "now wife of Ronald MacAllister of Tarbert".

On the 25th June 1681 another charter was granted at Inveraray Castle to Archibald, lawful son of the deceased Ronald MacAllister of Tarbert, "whom failing in lawful heirs to his brothers german James and Gorrie (Godfrey), whom failing, the nearest heirs of John Dow MacAllister Atavus (i.e. great-great-grandfather's great-grandfather) of Archibald". This sasine had one extra generation added in the descent from John, when compared with the 1654 sasine. The lands listed were as the 1654 sasine, with the exception of the property in Cowal, and Kilduskland now included a mill; the reddendo: "service of ward and relief, with marriage when it shall happen, a six-oared ship in war and peace at the service of Argyll and his family when required, and keepership of the Castle".

On the 13th November 1697 Archibald, with the consent of his mother Jean Campbell and his brothers, disposed in feuferme perpetually the lands of Bracklie, Kilduskland and Ardrishaig in Knapdale to Patrick Campbell, now of Kilduskland, in liferent and to his son Duncan Campbell in fee for 8,000 merks. The contract was signed at Slockavullin near Kilmartin and additional provision was made for the liferent of Patrick's wife Isobel MacAllister, a daughter of the laird of Loup. On the same day Archibald MacAllister of Tarbert also disposed the 4 merklands of Auchindarroch to Captain Archibald Campbell of Auchindarroch, elder brother of "Black Pat" Campbell of Kilduskland.

Prior to this event Ronald MacAllister, who held Breanfeorline, had disposed his property to Gorrie, brother of Archibald of Tarbert, whom failing, to Archibald himself. Ronald and his wife Katherine MacTavish had no male heirs and he was keen that the property was left to one of his own name and clan. This event took place on the 30th August 1697, and Ronald reserved a liferent for his wife and himself. Ronald was deceased by the 10th October 1701, when Gorrie had sasine of Breanfeorline. He was married to Margaret McLauchlan (or MacLachlan).

It is evident from the sasines that Archibald MacAlister of Tarbert had not inherited a metaphorical "goldmine" from his ancestors in 1681. In December 1668 his father Ronald MacAlister had had the then whole estate (named as Auchinleck - for Achalliek; Bracklie; Auchindarroch; Craigleith - for Craiglass; Gortindorne, Daltenab, Kilduskland, Ardrishaig, Aitrechowane - for Attichuan; Drufeorling - for Breanfeorline; and Ashen, all in Knapdale, and Tarbert in Kilcalmonell Parish) appraised for an outstanding debt of 4,706 merks to Sir Patrick Houston of Houston. The charter of apprising by the Earl of Argyll was signed at Edinburgh on the 18th November 1668. On the 13th May 1666 Ronald had borrowed the sum of 2,000 merks from Colin Campbell, son of George Campbell of Kinnochtrie, secured against his lands of Tarbert, Barmore, Ashens and Achalliek. This sum was repaid on the 8th September 1674: the sasine was registered on 3rd October that year.

Gorrie MacAlister of Breanfeorline was dead by the 4th June 1708 and his brother Archibald continued to dispose of the patrimony to relieve the family's debts. On that date at Auchindarroch he sold Breanfeorline and Attichuan to Patrick Campbell of Kilduskland and his son Duncan. He also agreed to redeem an existing wadset of Attichuan to a Colin Campbell for

the sum of 2,000 merks as well as pay the yearly liferent due to Margaret MacLachlan, Gorrie's widow, and Katherine MacTavish the widow of Ronald MacAlister; this despite the fact that Katherine was already remarried to Duncan Campbell of Culigaltro, yet another member of the Auchinbreck family.

Another recent fatality had been Captain Archibald Campbell of Auchindarroch and on the 10th July 1708 the lands of Auchindarroch, Brackley, Kilduskland, Ardrissaig, Brenfeorline and Attichuan were resigned to Archibald MacAlister to be regranted by him to Patrick Campbell in liferent and his son Duncan in fee, with remainder to Ronald and James, second and third lawful sons of Patrick. A further disposition, of the 4 merklands of Daill and Craiglass, was made by Archibald MacAlister to Patrick Campbell of Kilduskland and signed on the 16th December 1714 at Auchindarroch. This was the superiority of the lands only; Daill and Craiglass were held from the Captains of Tarbert by a branch of the Mackellar clan.

Duncan Campbell 2nd of Kilduskland succeeded his father "Black Pat" on the 20th November 1738. By this time interest had been shown in the American Colonies, and Duncan was instrumental in setting up the "Argyle Colony". Before leading the colonists to North Carolina he disposed of his holdings in the parish of Knapdale. At Brackly on the 27th March 1739 he sold the 19 merklands of Auchindarroch, Bracklie, Kilduskland, Ardrissaig, Brenfeorline, Attichuan, Daill, and Craiglass for 3,100 pounds sterling to Archibald Campbell of Barnacarry, a cadet of Lochnell, who had sasine of the same dated 29th March of that year. Archibald Campbell was succeeded by his son John Campbell of Auchindarroch, who was retoured as his heir at Inveraray on the 25th February 1752. On the 13th March 1753 at Tayvallich in Knapdale Duncan Campbell, formerly of Kilduskland and now returned from America, granted a precept of Clare Constat to John Campbell of Auchindarroch of the lands of Daill and Craiglass, held by the Mackellars from the feudal superior. Sasine was granted the following day. In the following year the lands passed from the Campbells, formerly of Barnacarry, to Archibald Campbell, son of John Campbell of Askomill.

About the same time Archibald MacAlister, Captain of Tarbert, was feeling the financial pressures mounting. By 1748 the MacAlisters had built a large house at Barmore, which in 1748 had 33 windows. By 1751 Barmore had been acquired by another Campbell, Archibald, the Chamberlain and Sheriff-

depute of Argyll. His own family was a cadet of Lochnell, and lived at Auchnacloich on Loch Etive. On purchasing his new estate he named it Stonefield, the English translation of Auchnacloich. Archibald MacAlister was deceased by the 16th December 1737, but "Lady Tarbert" was assessed for 24 windows at Barmore in 1762. Barmore House was destroyed by fire about 1790 and the Campbells of Stonefield had the present Stonefield Castle designed by Playfair and built between 1836 and 1840. The building is now a fine hotel.

The MacAlisters were powerless in arresting their decline, a situation not helped by their inability to make a decent living from their Knapdale lands. A family of MacAlisters claiming descent from the Captains of Tarbert stayed on in the vicinity of their former lands. On the 20th February 1814 Hector MacAlister, then a crofter or tenant farmer at Ashens in Glenralloch, married Janet MacFarlane at Clachan. Their sons included Donald, who was born on 1st February 1825. He moved to Glasgow, where he worked for William MacKenzie the publisher at Howard Street in the city. He joined the Free Church of Scotland and married, on the 9th January 1852 at Hope Street Gaelic Free Church, Euphemia Kennedy from Bowmore, Islay. The publishing business took Donald and his family to the town of Perth, where on the 17th May 1854 their second son Donald was born. Sir Donald MacAlister (he was knighted as a KCB in 1908) was graduate of St John's College Cambridge, and became Principal of Glasgow University on the 21st February 1907. He was created a Baronet on the New Year's Day Honours List, 1924, and in 1930 became Chancellor of the University in succession to the late Lord Rosebery. He was one of the trustees of the sacred isle of Iona which had been made over to the Iona Trust by the 8th Duke of Argyll in September 1899 to be held by them in inalienable connexion with the Church of Scotland; during his time as trustee the rebuilding of the ancient abbey of Iona took place. Sir Donald died on the 15th January 1934 and was buried at Cambridge.

[Some notes on the sources for this article were supplied by the author and copies can be obtained from the Editor]

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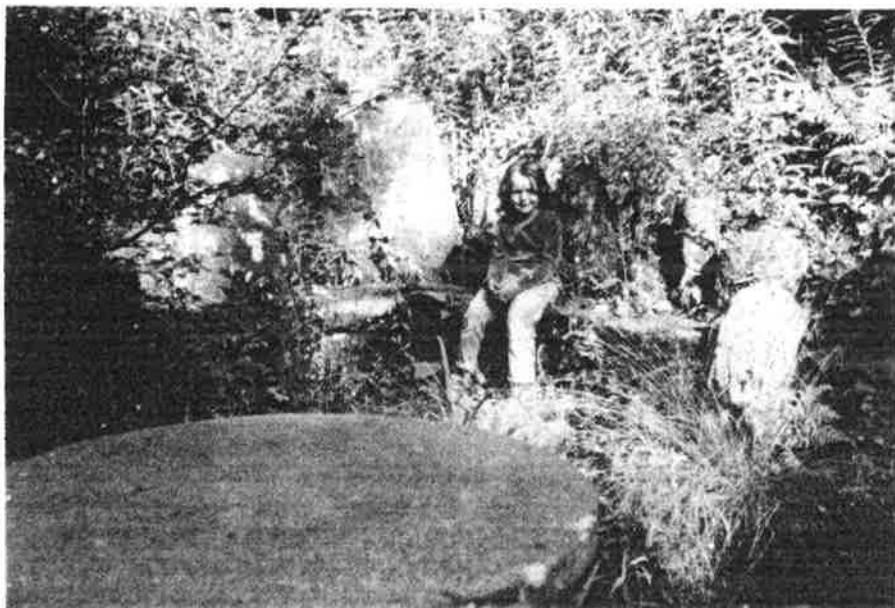
FIND THE LADY

Michael C. Davis

Anne Kahane's excellent article in Kist 62 describes and illustrates "The Lady's Seat" near Kilmartin, and the two similar structures in the vicinity which are occasionally also known by this name. But why, when and for whom were they built? They have an obvious role which requires no further exploration: they were outdoor seats, at least one of which was named in honour of the Lady of the estate whose bottom (as well as those of her guests) they were presumably intended to accommodate while the extensive view was enjoyed during rambles from the "big house". "The Lady's Seat" is a description used elsewhere for genteel resting spots in the vicinity of a mansion. But which lady and which big house were they built to serve? Does their execution, lacking in apparent finesse, merely suggest crude workmanship, or does it embody more sophisticated design values?

The identity of the mansion is easily guessed, as is the timeframe. The seats form a group near the site of Kilmartin (or Largie) House. This neat Georgian residence was the seat of the Campbells of Kilmartin who built it in the mid to late 18th century. It passed into the ownership of the Malcolms of Poltalloch who used it as a residence in conjunction with Duntrune Castle until they moved to Poltalloch House on its completion in the 1850s. (Indeed one of the seats bears an inscription, or graffito, of a date from the 1850s). Thereafter it became the Factor's residence. After the building of Rì Cruin near Slockavullin (which provided a purpose-built Factor's residence), it briefly became the home of the retired Factor prior to its demolition, later in the 1870s.

The timeframe can be narrowed further through intelligent conjecture. Since the design of the seats is "romantic" in their consciously rough-hewn appeal, they are unlikely to be older than the early 19th century. Since Kilmartin House was intended to be abandoned as a Malcolm family residence from the mid 1840s when the new Mansion of Poltalloch (or Calton Mor) was settled upon, they are unlikely to be later than this date. At this point one must also consider the very similar, but slightly more extensive, "garden furniture" in the grounds of Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead; these are virtually identical to the Kilmartin pieces, though they are clearly intended for



The author's daughter Flora at Kilmory

picnic or tea parties rather than for enjoying extensive views. Nevertheless it is almost inescapable that the two sets are related in design and period. Those at Kilmory were probably executed for that puzzling personality Sir John Powlet Orde of Kilmory, who took an intense interest in laying out the policy land at Kilmory on becoming laird in 1827 or 1828, a year or so before the Malcolms added Kilmartin to their holdings. Orde began work to remodel and enlarge Kilmory almost at once, and the gardens must have gradually evolved in the decades following his acquisition.

Sir John Orde's second wife was a keen gardener (see the late Mervyn Kessel's article in Kist 35 which quotes an 1855 article on the gardens at Kilmory), and the Ordes and the Malcolms were great friends, as a surviving Malcolm diary from the later 1830s (in the care of Argyll & Bute Council Archives) indicates, often spending numbers of days on long visits to one another's houses in Mid Argyll. During the 1830s the Malcolms remodelled the landscaped setting of Kilmartin House to some extent, creating an oblique picturesque approach to the mansion and relocating the former stables (or home farm?) which had stood too near to an important vista towards Carnasserie Castle. There was seemingly an interest also in

gardening on a smaller scale, if an entry of 1837 in Isabella Malcolm's diary while at Kilmartin House is anything to go by: "out gardening all the morn", she noted.

Adding to the circumstantial evidence in favour of the 1830s as the probable date is a further link between the Ordes and the Malcolms: both shared the use of an architect-builder called Joseph Gordon Davis whom Sir John Orde imported from London to realise his schemes for Kilmory Castle. He worked for the Malcolms, designing Kilmartin Church for them in 1834-1835 and carrying out substantial works at Duntrune Castle in 1833-1835. As late as 1842 he was working on the building of what is now the Grey Gull Hotel in Ardrishaig for Neil Malcolm. Possibly it was also he who extended Kilmartin House, providing a service court to the rear.

The Malcolms' own family arrangements bear out the possibility of a building date for the seats in or around the 1830s. Neil Malcolm junior lived at Kilmartin while his father lived at Duntrune. The son did not succeed as laird until 1837, on the death of his father. His first wife, Harriet Mary (3rd daughter of Sir Samuel Clarke Jervoise), he had married in July 1831. She had died in May 1837. The new laird, now a widower, continued to use Kilmartin House, and his guests seem to have flitted between Kilmartin House, Duntrune Castle and Eredine, a fishing lodge on Loch Awe. He remarried in 1843, and it was his new wife who seems to have been the prime mover for building the new palatial mansion of Poltalloch at Calton Mor, overlooking the Moine Mor.

Almost certainly, then, the Lady's Seat and (by implication) its companion pieces in the hills west of Kilmartin, and those in the gardens at Kilmory, were placed there during the 1830s, after the Malcolms and Sir John Orde had taken up residence at Kilmartin and Kilmory respectively, and probably prior to the death of the first Mrs Malcolm in 1837, and certainly prior to the move to the new mansion. The Lady in question was probably therefore Harriet Mary Malcolm.

These simple constructions of apparently unhewn slabs of rock are much in tune with a romantic appreciation of the landscape in which they were set. The concentration of prehistoric monuments in Kilmartin Glen seems likely to have influenced the design, at a period when such objects were attracting aesthetic and antiquarian regard; in fact the least rough-hewn of the Kilmartin group - that at Barr a' Chuirn - is very closely associated with the remains of a cairn. In the policies at

Kilmory a standing stone, either relocated or actually completely ersatz, was employed as a feature, as was the use of similar seemingly unquarried rock to form retaining walls in association with Sir John's new road layout through the grounds. In the walled garden at Kilmory, where Sir John and both his wives are buried, there was a similar concentration of rockworks, originally as a foil for alpenes; these were all more or less natural and were enthusiastically enrolled to play a part in what was really an important and highly advanced garden. The only un-natural element appears to be where a natural outcrop is enhanced by seamlessly fitting in rough slabs to form an idyllic enclave of seats.

Who then designed these features? The list is reasonably long: the Malcolms and their staff; Sir John Orde and his two successive wives; Archibald Brown, the Kilmory Head Gardener; Joseph Gordon Davis, the architect-builder. We suspect that they all had a hand in it; and their work was constructed well enough to last a century and a half and a decade or so more.

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THE FOUNTAIN ON THE FRONT GREEN, LOCHGILPHEAD

Murdo MacDonald

Visitors to Lochgilphead and local people occasionally ask for information about this fountain. It commemorates Dr Alexander Rodger Fraser, ship surgeon, who died on 4th September 1894 in the Gulf of Suez on board S.S. Manora. He was the son of the Rev. William Fraser, Minister of the Free Church congregation in Lochgilphead. Dr Fraser was a graduate of the University of Glasgow.

The fountain was erected in September 1897 (report in the Campbeltown Courier 11 Sep. 1897). It was originally about 10 feet in height, of red freestone on a concrete base. The designer may have been Dr Fraser's brother and Executor, William Fraser, an architect latterly working in Dunoon. The inscription gives the date of Dr Fraser's death as 1895, a year out. The fountain was dismantled (in the 1940s?) and the dressed stones were stored in the Burgh Yard. Shortly before its dissolution in 1975 Lochgilphead Town Council employed the late Dugald MacLachlan, a skilled and highly respected stonemason, to rebuild the memorial as it now stands. This act is marked by a small plaque affixed to the monument.

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[This excerpt from the diary of Margaret MacEchern, staying at her brother's manse at Clabhach on Coll, was sent to the Editor by Miss Lorna MacEchern, the diarist's niece, who has kindly given permission to print it in Kist.

The Rev. Dugald MacEchern, Parish minister of Coll, was 32 at the time, Margaret was 21, her brothers Victor and Hector were 14 and 12 respectively. (Victor became a minister, Hector was killed in the First World War). In 1899 Dugald MacEchern was unmarried; his housekeeper was Miss Robertson.]

Monday 30th October

We are suffering this week from re-action after last week's gaieties. Fancy two sprees in one week! I refer, of course, to the two funerals. That window upstairs is very good for viewing processions. We have been wishing for all sorts of things lately - fireworks, marionette-dolls, paints, cakes, dripping, clothes, etc. etc. So when today's post brought two huge parcels from Mother containing almost everything we wanted, we darted into a mad dance, regardless of step and each others' toes. We think Mama must be sort of uncanny, to say the least of it. In fact we have come to the decision that she has "Occult Powers" as she seems to have the knack of sending the right thing at the right moment without any previous hint from anyone.

Gathered bracken for tomorrow's bonfire and carried it home on our backs after the fashion of fishwives or peat carriers.

Tuesday 31st October

This is Hallowe'en. Tonight we battled storm and wind and rain, and invaded the farm of Ballyhaugh about 7 o'clock. Hector and Victor were dressed in their nigger rigout [It must be remembered that the "Nigger Minstrels" were a very popular form of entertainment at the time, and the heavy black make-up a theatrical convention; the singing was genuinely appreciated and enjoyed. Ed.] and proceeded at once to the business of the evening, namely to scandalize the McFadyen family with their minstrel antics and vocal powers. Miss Robertson and I were much disgusted when we were prohibited from "dressing up" and "guising" with the boys, all our preparations having been made. Dugald explained to me that the people here (not our Ballyhaugh friends, who can enjoy a laugh, but holy Free Church

deacons and their families and other native lights who would clutch at the news with cocked ears and fiendish gratification as exemplifying what these "Black Moderates" are) would not understand such a departure from dignity, and would put it down to lightheadedness and works of the Devil. So I went down along with Miss Robertson and the boys and acted the sedate matron! After the scandalizing process was over, we were invited "in to the fire" to warm ourselves and burn the proverbial nuts. This proved very entertaining, although it didn't come up to the entertainment and amusement afforded by Mr. McFadyen, our host, quite unconsciously, when he every now and then stuck his hands into the hottest part of the fire to arrange nuts to his better satisfaction. He didn't seem to feel the heat a bit. Lucky man! especially if he is bound for down below - which he by no means appears to be, by the way. Presently we were all provided with spoons, and sitting at a round table with a large basin of a concoction which I afterwards found out was called Foorach and composed of cream, sugar and meal, a favourite Hallowe'en dish in which were mysteriously hidden emblems of various fates, such as a ring for marriage, sixpence for wealth, etc. etc. We all dived into said basin and supped till we found something or felt sick. The latter was the fate of most of us, but still we persevered desperate in our dauntless determination to get the ring or - ay! even the button! We were all lucky at this game, especially in regard to the button! After some refreshment we all adjourned to Ben Meanach where we lit our bonfire and let off fireworks and rockets.

Wednesday 1st November

No post has come today. The Fingal has not been able to come with the storm. But I was prepared for this as Dugald has to go "out" tomorrow, and it will be a case for the oldest inhabitant's memory. The Hebrides did not come last night, so there is no bread on the island. Crikey. We held another Hallowe'en tonight for Dugald's benefit, as he was in all by himself last night. So we had rings, thimbles etc. again tonight in a dish of potatoes. Tonight Dugald, Victor and Hector evidently thought they were having a battle. They were going through the latest victories of the British over the Boers. They had fireworks for cannons and had the dining-room floor mapped out as South Africa. Poor Curam [presumably the dog! or cat! Ed.] was nearly frightened out his wits.

Thursday 2nd November

Dugald, Victor and Hector started off before six this morning while it was still pitch dark, for Arinagour. It was frightfully stormy, and the Fingal was not expected to call at all, but at last it came and Dugald got off. Victor and Hector drove round with the post and arrived home about two o'clock - minus their hats which had blown into a loch. Another parcel from Mother full of acceptable items. Among the lot, we discovered a bag of cakes which we immediately proceeded to devour along with a cup of tea made for the occasion, having no bread yet. We hold Hallowe'en nightly now. We had "champed tatties" tonight again.

Friday 3rd November

No bread yet. And no word of the Hebrides. John Kennedy brought us a loaf as a favour, seeing we were old customers of his, to keep us from actual starvation. Miss Robertson baked some suspicious-looking "esculenta" which she called oatcakes today, so with that and a half-slice of the loaf which we get now and again as a tit-bit, we are getting on fine. Mr. McFadyen and Johnnie passed early this morning in their Sunday taggery from which we gathered they were going "out". They were followed presently by their retinue in the form of three carts containing pigs, cheese, cloth, etc., respectively, and accompanied by Tual, Sandy, Charlie Kennedy and Kennedy with the laugh - what you might call a "personally conducted tour"! Tonight we were alarmed by a great rumbling noise rising above the raging storm without. It turned out to be the same personally conducted tour, trundling home, no word of the boat, Hebrides, having come to land. Post brought another rare parcel from Mother with "sausengers", marriage cake, custard etc.

Saturday 4th November

This morning, poor Mr. McFadyen and his caravan made another pilgrimage to the village to look for the over-due steamer. They waited all day in the wind and rain - for every day seems to get worse than the last, this week - in the hope of each minute seeing the red funnel rounding the point, or at last getting word from some port or other as to her whereabouts. Poor things, there they wait all day surrounded by their pigs, cheese, cloth and also some unmanageable sheep, till evening when word came that the Hebrides was passing owing to the

storm. So the poor drenched, dripping creatures have once more passed home with their retinue. The bread is still on board the Hebrides and must be moulding by now. Today I made a plum pudding. Perhaps we shall have it for supper to save the loaf. No-one came to the class as it is so stormy. We were going to have the marionette show and had the stage up and everything, thinking it was going to clear up.

Hector and Victor also made plum-puddings today. We had Victor's for tea - minus currants. He had the pleasure of eating most of it himself; it had only been on one hour. Oh! what a fraud are all our expectations! Shakespere.

Lorry-me-dunt! [Can any reader elucidate this expression? Ed] Wur Victor is a poet! He made a "pome" tonight on Yuletide, and he is showing further symptoms by threatening to sit up late tonight to commune with the Muse. I think it must be the after-effects of his plum-pudding.
[The "pome" is quoted, but adds nothing to the diary. Ed.]

Sunday 5th November

It is very stormy today, and even if Dugald had been at home I doubt if any one would have come to service. We spent a good part of the day down at the sea, which was in great form today. Hector and Victor performed various experiments in Cooking, the results of which were presented to us at tea under the guise of French names; one dish was composed of onions, potatoes, apricots, carrots, currants and Yorkshire Relish - or as Miss Robertson is pleased to call it, "Yorkshire Relic". Altogether, we have had a jolly day, and, to quote the same lady, "it has been more like a market day than a Sunday in this house". To crown it all, we have a large bleaching out in McFadyens' park. We have had lightning every night of late.

Monday 6th November

Victor, Hector and I went to the village today, visited six houses and got home at 8.30, having had "grub" at most of the places. I did the needful in the way of gushing over the infantile members of the houses, admiring the gardens, and testing the quality of the curtains when I got the families' back turned! Post brought another parcel from Mother today, and a letter saying that the Provost and Mr. Raddie want me to play at the Provost's Concert in the beginning of December. I have to let them know by return if I will do it, and when I can be home, as they must fix the date of the concert at once.

Bother the Charity Concert, as I live! I wish it far enough, and also Mr. Raddle. Besides I haven't a decent dress.

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It seems Margaret was reluctant to leave the hardships of Coll for home in Inverness!

In 1997 a group of N.H.A.S.M.A. members spent a most enjoyable few days on Coll, staying at the Hebridean Centre at Ballyhaugh. We saw the site of the old church at Clabhach; the manse is lived in still. We also visited the present-day church on the hill above Arinagour, the "new" church for the building of which the Rev.Dugald MacEchern raised the money by a Grand Two Day Bazaar in Inverness. For a full account of the visit see Kist 54.

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WILLIAM DOUGLAS, WRITER

Brian D Osborne

William Douglas was the first employer of the Inveraray-born novelist Neil Munro. As Munro wrote in one of his columns, he was "insinuated, without any regard for my own desires, into a country lawyer's office, wherefrom I withdrew myself as soon as I arrived at years of discretion and revolt".

Who was William Douglas and what sort of country lawyer's office was it that Munro found himself in?

Douglas was born in Kilmorack parish, Inverness-shire, in 1824 and was trained as a solicitor, or writer, in Edinburgh. He moved to Inveraray in 1848 as conveyancing clerk to Alexander McArthur. He was later assumed as a partner by William Wilson, a burgh lawyer who acted as agent for many Argyllshire families. Douglas was admitted as a Burgess of Inveraray in November 1856. He was appointed Clerk to the Commissioners of Supply for the County in 1864 and Clerk to the Lieutenancy of Argyll in 1873. On the death of the wonderfully named Scipio Alexander Mactaggart, W.S., in 1886, Douglas became Sheriff Clerk and Justice of the Peace Clerk of Argyll, a position which he held until his death, aged 79, in April 1903. On Douglas's death the head-court of the Sheriffdom was moved

from Inveraray to Dunoon - a policy which Munro noted in his column in the Oban Times that Douglas had fought against for years.

So it was hardly just a run of the mill country lawyer's office that young Neil Munro entered as a junior clerk in 1876 but the office of a significant figure close to the heart of official Argyll. Munro jokingly described himself at the age of 16 as "the most courageous of young conveyancers, drafting and 'enlarging' Leases, Trust Dispositions and Settlements", but to his dismay he found that he could "earn in an afternoon for my employer far more than the £5 per annum I was getting as salary."

However there were occasional bonuses. In 1878 the appointment of the sitting MP for Argyllshire, the Marquis of Lorne, as Governor-General of Canada, caused a parliamentary bye-election. The Liberal candidate was Lorne's younger brother, Lord Colin Campbell, the 5th son of the 8th Duke of Argyll, who set up campaign headquarters at the Argyll Arms Hotel. William Douglas was Lord Colin's agent and Munro had been kept busy "lodging thousands of pounds in the local Bank to anticipate expenses". The Tory candidate, John Wingfield Malcolm of Poltalloch, had his headquarters at the George Hotel. Munro earned £5 for overtime worked at the election - a very rich reward for the fun he had had: "the hours I spent besieging the George Hotel ... and the cat-calls at the Tory meeting". The Liberal candidate won comfortably.

In the 1881 Census Munro was described as Law Clerk(Apprentice). However there is no record in the Argyll Sheriff Court Register of deeds of Munro's indenture as an apprentice, There is a contemporary record of an indenture for an apprentice to William Douglas - that of Alex R MacDonald on 25th February 1879, a document indeed witnessed by Neil Munro, clerk. MacDonald, the son of the local doctor, would have been about 20 when his apprenticeship began. It may well be that as Munro left Inveraray in June 1881, more or less on his 18th birthday, his formal apprenticeship might have been planned to start then and this prompted the decision to leave rather than commit himself to a five-year term as an apprentice.

Munro's diary records the death of "my first employer" on 6th April 1903 and in June 1903 it notes his attendance at the sale of Douglas's furniture in Inveraray where he bought lots to the value of £65. The next month he records that he had become a tenant of Douglas's house - The Brass Man's Hand in

East High Street, Inveraray - at a rental of £30 per annum. This became the holiday home for the Munro family, who had in the previous year moved to a new home in Gourrock.

Douglas was described in the Glasgow Herald's obituary notice as a generous contributor to philanthropic schemes, a Liberal in politics and a member of the United Free church, and a bachelor. The Parish minister and the U.F. Church minister jointly conducted his funeral service in the Parish Church. He is buried in Kilmalieu cemetery. Douglas left an estate valued at £15,575.9.7 - a very substantial sum in 1903. His estate included the steam yacht Lucille, valued at £500, and a block of 500 shares in the North British & Mercantile Insurance Company worth £14,725.

Douglas's will provided for small bequests to local people and professional contacts (such as his managing clerk William Disselduff and his yacht skipper Charles MacArthur) and annuities for his two sisters Helen and Christina, but the residuary legatee was his brother Hugh, a farmer in Dalcross, Inverness.

Daniel Dyce is the bachelor lawyer who lives in The Brass Man's Hand in Munro's novel The Daft Days, and to some extent one might imagine him to be modelled on Douglas. There are however differences [as there would have to be! Ed.]. Daniel Dyce lives with his two sisters Alison and Bell, and Bud [his niece] when she arrives from America, and Kate MacNeill, the Colonsay-born maid. The 1881 Census shows that William Douglas was cared for by a cook, Jessie Campbell, and a housemaid, Mary Ann Reidberger; a somewhat less lively household perhaps than that painted by Munro!

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SOME SITES OF ANCIENT FOUNDATION ON LOCH AWE

Mary McGrigor

Two places of antiquity which lie within the forestry on the north shore of Loch Awe are now so smothered in bracken that they are difficult to find. Mr Cameron, who was born in Ford and now lives at Inverinan, was kind enough to take us to them one wet October day.

The first, the ruined chapel of Kilmun, is reached from the forestry road which branches off the main road above the house called Kilmun. A water tank, a short way above the locked

forestry gate, provides a convenient marker on the right side of the track; from there you must scramble up a steep and muddy bank and then push your way through sitka spruce for some two hundred yards in a direction roughly diagonal to the road. The just visible ruins lie on some gently sloping ground with a few larches on the right and beeches on the left. The best time to go is in winter or early spring when the bracken lies deadened by frost. The R.C.A.H.M.S. Inventory of Argyll vol.2 p.155 states "This site is occupied by an enclosure of irregular plan, measuring about 30m. by 25m. over all." This was the churchyard within which stood a chapel of late 13th to early 14th century date. Unfortunately many of the stones of both wall and building have been used for other purposes such as building dykes. An old road which can be traced just above the site must have been the way along which coffins were borne but grave stones cannot be identified with accuracy today.

Because of depredation, Kilmun and its churchyard are now mere phantoms of the past. Significant however is their dedication to the enigmatical Saint Munn, or, as he may be more correctly named, Saint Mund. St Munn was really Finten, son of Tailchan of Munnu. Adomnan in his life of St Columba tells how the saint foresaw the arrival of Finten at Iona. Baithene had succeeded Columba as Abbot of Iona when Finten duly arrived. He begged to be allowed to become a monk and wept bitterly when Baithene refused his request. Nonetheless he was mollified when the Abbot explained to him that Columba, believing him to be of high intelligence, had left instructions that he should become an abbot. Finten thus obediently returned to Ireland to found a monastery on the coast of Lagin.

So much for the identity of St Munn, reputedly the patron saint of the early Campbells of Loch Awe. Columba died in 597. Baithene succeeded him, so St Munn must have gone to Iona in the early 600s. Bearing this in mind, the question arises as to whether he actually founded a cell on the site of the 13th/14th century chapel above Loch Awe, or was it merely dedicated to his name?

Again on the word of Adomnan we know that there was a monastery founded by or dedicated to Diún "beside the lake of the river Aub"(Awe) in St Columba's own time. He describes Diún's brother, Cailtan, prior of the monastery, being summoned by the saint to Iona. The location of this monastery has never been discovered. Lord Archibald Campbell believed it to have been on Inistrynich (an island prior to 1875, when it was connected

by a causeway to the south-east shore of Loch Awe). However nothing has ever been discovered there, and even if a chapel had been destroyed there during the Reformation some vestige of foundations surely would remain.

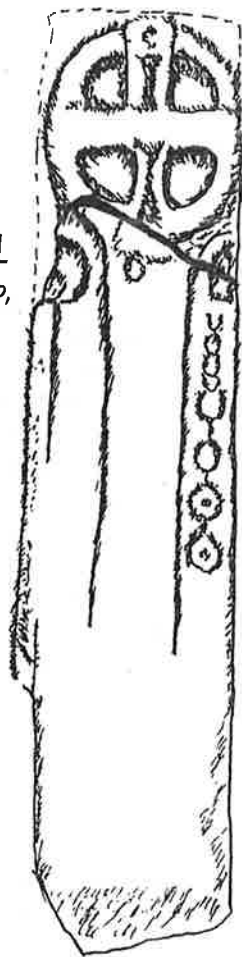
Alternatively, if Adomnan's translator confused the word "beside" for "on" Loch Awe, the "monastery" may have been the chapel on the island of Inishail. The cross-decorated slab within the ruin is believed to be of 8th/9th century date.

A third possibility is that the monastery stood on Rubha na Fidhle on the north shore of Loch Awe some six miles south-west of Kilmun. The Inventory states that this is a site which "may be of monastic origin...where the remains of several buildings have been recorded, together with a rock carving and two carved stones of early Christian date". The "carved stones", both Early Christian crosses, have now been removed for safe-keeping to Dalavich Church, where they are excellently displayed.

[One of these, illustrated here was entire until the disastrous gale of 1968 which flattened the surrounding forestry plantation; as a result the head of the cross was broken off, and mysteriously disappeared shortly afterwards. If any reader knows its present whereabouts will he/she please contact the Editor? It is a small but important part of the early history of Mid Argyll].

The church at Kilmaha, thus ascribed to the Early Christian period, was however apparently dedicated to St Mochoe of Nen-drum, or alternatively to St Kentigern whose nickname in Gaelic was Mochoe. This must preclude St Munn as the founder

Rough sketch of Kilmaha cross; after a drawing in Argyll Inv. 2 (Lorn) p.150, made from a photograph taken before the cross head disappeared.



of Kilmaha, but nonetheless the facts of the proximity of his own chapel and his adoption by the early Campbells as their patron saint may indicate his association with the monastery "beside the loch of the river Aub" of which Adomnan wrote. The possibility that he actually lived for some time in Argyll is strengthened by the number of places connected with his name. There is "Old Kilmun" below Craig na Moraig near the eastern end of Loch Avich; this appears to be a row of ruined cottages, now lying deep in the forest, which may have been a farming township; we could not find any sign of a church. Also "Suidhe Mund", on the hill just east of Dalavich, means "Munn's seat". Other places in Argyll connected with St Munn include the foundations of an early Christian chapel, called Kilmun, near Creag a' Chaibeil (crag of the burying place) on the west side of Glenaray. In North Argyll, in Loch Leven, the old parish church (now ruined) on Eilean Munde is reputedly dedicated to St Munn - although there is thought to have been more than one of the same name. Here there is no connection with Clan Campbell, the island being originally a burying ground of the MacDonalDs. On the Holy Loch, most famously, the church of Kilmun contains the family vault of the Campbell earls and until recently the dukes of Argyll. Celestine, son of Sir Duncan Campbell, reputedly was buried there c.1440, when snow made it impossible to carry his body back to Loch Awe. However the theory that the Campbells took the name with them to Cowal cannot be substantiated, for, as Alasdair Campbell points out, Kilmun is mentioned there almost 180 years earlier, in 1262.

Mr Cameron also took us to the mysterious circular enclosure of Larach na h-Iobairte. This stands in the forest to the north-east of the road from Kilchrenan to Loch Avich; to reach it take the first forestry track above the road junction (when heading for Loch Avich) and walk a short way to a small quarry on the right; from there it is again a steep scramble up a bank and then through trees until an open enclosure is reached. Here as at Kilmun many stones have been removed, but the outline is still visible of the foundations of a circular enclosure backed up with turf. Some large boulders rise through the bracken including two which seem to have flanked the entrance on the north-west side. The obvious explanation for the enclosure's existence is that it was used for holding cattle being driven to and fro along the nearby old road. However, the translation of the Gaelic "Larach na h-Iobairte" is "Place of the Sacrifice" and this raises speculation as to whether, in

addition to practical use, it may have been a scene of pagan ritual before, or even after, the first Christians settled on Loch Awe?

This is just one of the several intriguing questions which surround these long-ruined sites of the great inland waterway, so much travelled and so much crossed by so many ferries, in the days when water was the highway, long before, (and even after) the building of passable roads.

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[A good discussion of the name Kilmun and of Finten/Finntan/St Mun/Munn/Mund/Munde appears in Angus McLean's Chronicles of Cowal, Argyll (pp.15-68) published in 2001 and reviewed briefly in this issue of Kist. Ed.]

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The proposal to build a shellfish storage and packing unit at the Battery, Tarbert, reminded residents of a feature they had almost forgotten. Part of a stone-built ammunition store is all that remains apart from the name, but old photographs show two ex-naval guns pointing out to sea.

The following extract is taken from an exhibit in the Easdale Island Folk Museum, and is printed here by kind permission of Jean Adams, the Curator.

" 1ST ARGYLL AND BUTE ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY (VOLUNTEERS)

Honorary Colonel: J.D.S.Duke of Argyll, K.T.,K.C.M.G.,V.D.

Headquarters: Tarbert, Loch Fyne

The 1st Administrative Brigade Argyll Artillery Volunteers was formed with headquarters at Oban, on October 10, 1861, and to it were attached, then or on the date of their subsequent formation, the following corps of Argyll Artillery Volunteers of one battery each, except when otherwise stated:-

1st, Easdale, formed March 7, 1860, as two batteries.

2nd, Tarbert, formed April 12, 1860; disbanded 1862.

3rd, Oban, formed March 8, 1860.

4th, West Tarbert, formed April 12, 1860. Headquarters moved 1864, to Dunmore, and, 1866, to Ronachan. Disbanded 1874.

5th, Ardgour, formed January 16, 1861, as one subdivision.

Disbanded in 1865.

6th, Campbeltown, formed February 11, 1861. Increased to two batteries, 1870.

7th, Port Ellen, Islay, formed July 3, 1861.

8th, South Hall, formed September 10, 1861. Headquarters changed to Castle Toward, 1878.

9th, Tobermory, Mull, formed May 15, 1862.

10th, Lochgilphead, formed May 15, 1862.

11th, Tarbert, formed February 13, 1866.

12th, Inveraray, formed April 2, 1867; recruited from men of the Furnace Quarries.

In 1863 the 1st Bute A.V., headquarters Rothesay, raised on March 20, 1862, and in 1867 the 2nd Bute A.V., headquarters Millport, Cumbrae, raised on October 5, 1867, each one battery strong, were added to the brigade.

The original uniforms varied greatly. Colonel F. Campbell (commanding 1884-1908) writes: "The corps had their separate uniforms, which were tunics or Garibaldi shirts; caps with red, yellow or white bands; belts brown, black or white. The officers' dress was even more varied. They joined simply to encourage the movement, and wore much what they chose, utilising any old uniform that they might have worn some time or other, whether cavalry, infantry or other. Swords of all patterns, perhaps presentations to their forefathers before and after Waterloo."

The 3rd Corps had in 1860 blue uniforms with scarlet facings, white pouch-belts, black waist-belts, and busbies; while the 4th Corps wore a jumper and trousers of blue flannel and a broad Kilmarnock bonnet, such as are usually worn by Tarbert fishermen, of whom it was mainly composed.

In 1864 brigade headquarters were moved to Lochgilphead, and in 1870 to Rothesay.

In May 1880 the brigade was consolidated as the 1st Argyll and Bute Artillery Volunteers, with twelve and a half batteries, distributed as follows:-

Nos. 1 and 2, Easdale (late 1st Argyll).

No. 3, Oban (late 3rd Argyll).

Nos. 4 and 5, Campbeltown (late 6th Argyll).

No. 6, Port Ellen, Islay (late 7th Argyll).

No. 7, Castle Toward (late 8th Argyll).

No. 8, Rothesay (late 1st Bute).

No. 9, Millport (late 2nd Bute).

No. 10, Lochgilphead (late 10th Argyll).

No. 11, Tarbert (late 11th Argyll).

No. 12, Inveraray (late 12th Argyll).

Half-battery, Tobermory, Mull (late 9th Argyll).

In 1887 the 12th Battery at Inveraray was disbanded, a new 12th being formed in its place at Rothesay, and in the following year the headquarters of the 8th Battery were removed from Castle Toward to Dunoon.

During the South African War, 211 men of the 1st Argyll and Bute volunteered their services, but only 8 were taken for active service.

The corps was one of the most scattered in the kingdom, for besides the headquarter detachments, No. 6 Company had detachments at Bowmore, Bridgend and Ardbeg, and No. 12 one at Kingarth - thus its men were spread over fifteen localities in every portion of the largest and least accessible county in Scotland. Owing to the varying natures of the occupations of the men, three-fourths of whom were Gaelic-speaking, no fewer than three camps had to be formed for training at different times of the year, and the corps had to keep up fifteen carbine ranges. Still, many prizes have been gained by the corps, both in gun practices and repository exercises, at the Scottish National Artillery Association camps, and the King's Cup was won at Buddon in 1903 by the Easdale companies. The pipe band consisted of over thirty pipers.

The headquarters of the corps were transferred in March 1906 to Tarbert, Loch Fyne. The lieutenant-colonels (commandant since 1866) of the corps have been -

J. Campbell, C.B., Major-General; Major, October 10, 1861;
Lieut.-Colonel, July 23, 1863.

J.D.S. Marquis of Lorne, K.T., G.C.M.G., July 13, 1866.

Frederick Campbell, late Lieutenant R.A., C.B., V.D. (hon.col.)
March 21, 1884.

John W. Stewart, V.D. (hon.col.), August 1, 1903.

Colin G.P. Campbell, late 2nd Lieutenant Scots Guards,
February 17, 1906."

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE NORTH HERRING FISHING. Angus Martin. House of Lochar,
Isle of Colonsay, 2001. £13.99. ISBN 1 899 863 80 X

Angus has an in-depth knowledge of ring net fishing. His earlier book The Ring Net Fishermen gives a detailed description of the development of this method of fishing. His latest is a continuation of the story as seen by the fishermen who used it. Not only does the book give a view as seen from the deck of the fishing boat, it is written in the idiom of each contributor. This forms an intimacy between reader and storyteller - an atmosphere in which readers may almost feel that they have become members of the crew.

As a teenager in the 1940s I remember the stir created in the village of Tarbert as word was passed round that "The boats are going to the North. The Jacksons are ready to go tomorrow and the Toms will be away by the end of the week". It was well recognised that "the fishing" in the North could be lucrative, but was not without its difficulties, discomforts and dangers. Despite these hardships there was a need to follow the herring shoals in order to earn their living. Through the words of the fishermen themselves, Angus Martin's book illustrates all these aspects, along with a humour which is uniquely their own. Appendices 1 and 2, Biographical Notes on Main Contributors, and The Little Places, are an interesting record of the fishermen who participated in this important part of Scottish fishing heritage and the names they attributed to the places they fished. Other indexes confirm the thoroughness with which the book has been researched and invite the reader to follow an interest further. The thoughtful addition of a glossary should ensure that the reader from out-with the fishing communities does not miss out on any of the detail of the stories. Other authors have written enjoyable books based on anecdotes and superstitions of West Coast fishing; but by producing this book Angus has not only provided us with an entertaining read; he has also recorded an important piece of West Coast social history.

Ian Y. Macintyre

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ARGYLL, THE ENDURING HEARTLAND. Marion Campbell. House of
Lochar (in collaboration with Kilmartin House Trust) 2001.
£9.99. ISBN 1 899 863 82 6

This is the 3rd edition, brought out in response to demand, with an excellent Foreword by Neal Ascherson incorporating a brief biography. There is really no describing of this book. It can be read again and again and still produce that mental shiver of delight. Marion Campbell passionately loved and deeply understood Argyll to which she and her ancestors belonged. Here the reader will find the landscape, the light, the weather, the people, the history of over 5,000 years; poems in Gaelic and English, her own and some of George Campbell Hay's - the "soul" of Argyll, perhaps; and at the end the passionate insistence that Argyll is alive, not a beautiful empty wilderness to be preserved behind glass for the delectation of the casual tourist. It is of the past, the present and the future.

A.O.M.C.

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CHRONICLES OF COWAL, ARGYLL. Angus McLean. The Pentland Press
2001. £11.50 ISBN 1 85821 874 8

Angus McLean was born in Kilmartin, educated at Dunoon Grammar School and Glasgow University, qualified as a solicitor in 1935 and, apart from war service, spent all his working life in Dunoon, where he became fascinated by local history and carried out extensive research. This book, of some 450 pages, is full of good things: a general introduction on Cowal, then a dictionary of Scots terms used in deeds (very useful as many of his references are quoted verbatim); then a study of Kilmun on the Holy Loch - name, history and surrounding district; then the whole area surrounding the Holy Loch with particular attention to the history of places and their names; then the drove roads and ancient ferries of Cowal, including those across Loch Fyne; then the three or four hundred year feud between the Lamonts and the Campbells; and finally, smuggling and distilling in Cowal. References are meticulously detailed or quoted in full and frequently criticised. The book is well bound and printed, and a pleasure to handle and read.

A.O.M.C.

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COLONSAY - ONE OF THE HEBRIDES. Murdoch McNeill, 1910. Reprinted 2001, House of Lochar, Isle of Colonsay. 216 pp. £12.99

This book is essentially about the flora, as the author worked at Kew Gardens before returning to his native Colonsay; but it is divided into 5 sections, with chapters entitled general description, climate, geological formation, and woods, lochs and pastures. The general section describes the rocky shores, bare rugged hills, and fertile interior as Geikie had noted in 1879; mentions buildings, natural features and natural history with short lists of birds, fishes, shellfish and seaweeds. The climate was warm, winters mean 42F, with cooler summers, mean 55F. "As an agreeable change from the warmer and more enervating regions in the south, the cool bracing climate of the islands is yearly becoming more appreciated by an increasing number of tourists". (It would seem that this trend has continued!). The geological formations are described in the next section. The final parts, on woods, lochs and pastures discuss first natural and planted woodlands, the main native woods in the north-east as today; the plantations begun in 1722 around the mansion house had to be protected by 5-foot high stone dykes and replanted several times. Rhododendrons (now the subject of a programme of removal) were introduced about 1850. Seedlings were planted by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra to commemorate their visit in 1902. The 2 main lochs are described, their depth and length; they are now well-vegetated, but there is still much open water and Loch Fada is a good bird-watching area. Pasture was mainly below 250 feet, sedges, rushes and heather more frequent between 250 and 350, and heather moorland and grassland above 350; there is a discussion of the influence of sheep on the botanical composition, a list of common plants eaten by different animals, and plant indicators of soil conditions. The floral section lists 580 species and 70 varieties recorded by 1910; Gaelic names for 200 species are included, and uses of plants, the information largely gleaned from older inhabitants. The lists include both flowering plants (Phanerogams) and flowerless plants (Cryptogams) - essentially ferns and stoneworts - which is fairly unusual for early texts. The abundance of each species is given and the locations of the more restricted species. The book provides an excellent basis for present day comparisons.

Lynne Farrell

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SUMMER EXPEDITIONS 2001

April 21st. Kilmartin

Because of the Foot and Mouth outbreak the planned walk could not take place, but as it was a very wet day the assembled members did not regret the loss, especially as Anne Kahane gave us a most interesting talk in Kilmartin Church on its history and building, with plenty of time to study and discuss.

May 16th. Taynish Mill

This evening walk along the new path to the mill proved most pleasant. We inspected the construction of the old bridge running at an angle under the path, made our way down a zigzag slope to a meadow full of bluebells, stitchwort, primroses and pink campion, also daffodils and narcissi, the latter two planted, but the others "just appeared" after clearance. We were able to examine the structure of the mill with its incorporated drying kiln and envisage how the whole complex worked.

June 27th. Dunderave Castle

This visit was cancelled by the owners at very short notice without explanation. Some members made up for the disappointment by attending the Woodland Fair at Minard Castle on the following Saturday, a most enjoyable and successful day. Our Society had an excellent exhibit in one of the marquees.

July 14th. The Garvellachs (Garbh Eileach)

The weather was kind. Two trips left from Crinan Harbour and each party made its own study of Eileach an Naoimh: the chapel, the beehive huts, the well and corn-drying kiln, the old garden: a walk round the cliff top, with marvellous views; the botany was interesting - thyme broomrape was found; the ornithologists were delighted to find an eagle's plucking-post with gannet feathers (so probably it was a sea-eagle) and on the way home to be shown a new colony of terns on a small islet.

August 22nd. Lagg, in Kilmichael Glen

The visit to this deserted settlement was by courtesy of the Poulsen family, who have restored one of the buildings to habitability and have had a physical survey done of the whole site. The remains of several buildings have been recorded, and four corn-drying kilns. Lush vegetation hid many structures but one substantial gable stands to full height, and provided an interesting puzzle to work out its original form and fireplace.

September 15th. Easdale Island.

Only five intrepid members braved the weather, but were rewarded by a clearance, leisurely visits to both excellent museums, a good walk round the island and a gathering of ripe brambles!

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Mr John Halliday

Mrs A.O.M.Clark

Hon. Secretary:

(membership & publications)

Mrs Marina Cowham

10 Dunadd View

Kilmichael Glassary

Lochgilphead PA31 8QA

Tel. 01546 606 526

Hon. Secretary:

Office vacant.

Correspondence may be sent

to: Mr David Batty

Kirnan Farm

Kilmichael Glassary

Lochgilphead, Argyll

Hon. Treasurer:

Miss Margaret McVicar

Finbracken

22 Dunmor Avenue, Kilmory

Lochgilphead, Argyll

Committee:

Dr Douglas Barker, Mr David Batty, Mr Edmond Clark, Dr Krishna Goel, Dr Deborah Long, Mrs Marjorie Small.

Copies of The Kist can be obtained from the Membership and Publications Secretary, price £1, postage and packing extra.

Editor of The Kist:

Mrs Adeline O.M.Clark

Northlea

Tarbert PA29 6TT

Tel. 01880 820 793

Although Kist does not specialise in family history, it has been pointed out to the Editor that there may be cases where we have information that would be useful to readers in search of their forebears. Requests should be sent to the Editor of Kist, should give as much detail as possible, and should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

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