

The

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# Editorial

In this edition we have several articles that will hopefully pique your interest and occupy some of your time during the increasing dark hours.

First up is the story of the creation of a new hybrid plant at Kirnan and the lost garden it was originally found in. Lime kilns can be found all over Argyll and are used to produce quick lime used as an agricultural improver as well as in lime mortar for buildings, and Dave and Pat Batty give us some insights into several structures they have recorded.

Apart from waving them away from my bedside lamp, I certainly do not give moths the attention they perhaps deserve, and David Jardine reports on some rarer specimens that might become more common in our area with climate change attracting more southern species north.

‘Knocking stones’ or stone basins are a reasonably common archaeological feature. However, they occur in various places such as settlements and churches and some appear to be associated with rock art. As such they may have had several functions and some of these are discussed in two articles.

We also have the third part of the story of the Dunoon and Dunaverty massacres and their causes. – *Roddy Regan*

## Cover note

The cover shows the unusual rock art design found at Glasvaar on a rock that also contains a rock cut basin.

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*Please email any articles you wish to be considered for publication in the Kist to Roddy Regan at [roddyregan123161@gmail.com](mailto:roddyregan123161@gmail.com).*

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# Mr Macauley's Gentian

## H R Macauley

As you drive or walk up Kilmichael Glen you will notice on your left a sign to Kirnan, and at certain times of the year you may notice within the trees the colourful blooms of rhododendron. These are the most obvious remains of the once well-known garden of Reginald Heber Macaulay. Kirnan House and estate now occupy an area that once contained the settlements of Kirnan More and Kirnan Beag. The remains of Kirnan More can still be traced, while Kirnan Beag is now occupied by the present house built sometime before 1865. In 1890 the house and buildings were extended and renovated to form a shooting lodge by the Malcolms of Poltalloch.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the property was leased to the Eton and Cambridge-educated botanist Reginald Heber Macaulay. In his working life Macaulay became a merchant with Wallace & Co of Bombay and chairman of the Bombay Burma Trading Corporation.

In retirement Macaulay lived partly in Argyll at Kirnan, where he cultivated his famous rock garden. With a team of six full time gardeners he created a garden full of rhododendrons and rare plants which was considered the second finest in the west of Scotland, second only to Poolewe. Macaulay also continued to make regular visits to India, Burma and Siam (now Thailand) where he continued to collect plants. Macaulay wrote about his work in the Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society in 1934.<sup>1</sup> In this he tells us the garden was first started in 1915 and continued to be added to until 1932. Macaulay tells us that the extent of the rock garden was '250 yards by 35 yards'. This he created by removing soil overburden and exposing natural outcrops of mainly 'micaceous schist' and from some

escarpments he reckoned these had been created by older quarrying by locals.

The photographs accompanying the article show the rocky landscape he created for his garden which then had few mature trees surrounding it, although his article tells us he planted *Pinus Nobilis* along with smaller forms of conifers, Junipers and Cotoneasters. The photos also show paths and steps laid out amongst the rock garden.

He goes on to list some of his main plantings within his rock garden including; *Desfontainea spinosa*, *Tricuspidaria lanceolata*, *Eucryphia Billardieri*, *Embothrium coccineum*, *Itea ilicifolia*, *Osmanthus Delavayi*, *Olearia semidentata*, *Telopea truncate*, *Daphne Blagayana*, *Daphne Cneorum*, *Daphne rupertris grandiflora*, *Rhodothamnus Chamaecistus*, *Jeffersonia dubia*, *Lithospermum Gastonii* and *Phyllodoce aletica*.

However, he appears to have concentrated on certain favourites such as Asian Gentians and *Cyanathus* varieties.



Apart from the gardens themselves one of Macaulays other notable horticultural feats was to breed the *Gentiana Macaulayi*, a hybrid of *Gentiana farreri* and *Gentiana sino-ornata* which he named after himself.

**Figure 1:** *Cyanathus micro phyllus*



Macaulay died in December 1937 and his garden appears to have fallen into disrepair. The estate is now owned by Ross and Diana Appleyard who have been busy uncovering many of the original garden features that had become lost in undergrowth over the years.

**Figure 2:** *Gentiana Macauleyi*

Notes

1 Macaulay R H 1934. The Rock Garden at Kirnan, Argyllshire, *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, Vol. LIX 14-17.

# Clamp Lime Kilns in Mid Argyll

## Dave & Pat Batty

We are used to seeing typical lime kilns throughout Mid Argyll. They are usually quite big structures, square or rectangular in shape with a circular opening at the top and a flue at the bottom. However, there are other ways of producing lime, and in Mid Argyll there are several examples of clamp lime kilns. These are much simpler structures consisting of three walls forming a U-shape with an open end. They are usually built into the side of a hill or slope, as with the normal type, for ease of loading the limestone and fuel from the top. The burnt lime is then extracted from the open front. This type of lime kiln is unlikely to achieve a uniform burn especially at the sides and presumably any unburnt or partially burnt limestone was put back into the kiln for the next burn. The clamp method was the quickest way to build a limekiln and perhaps was more used for on-farm improvements over a short period.

## Upper Rudale

Just north of Kilbride Farm near the deserted settlement of Upper Rudale is one example of a clamp lime kiln at NR85569664. It is not named as a lime kiln on the 6" first edition OS map but there is a rectangle symbol at its position. It is built into a low ridge and internally measures c.5m long by 2.2m wide and c.1.85m high at the end wall. Externally it is c.3.85m wide and 7m long as there is a paved flat platform on the ground beyond the end wall. On the inside of the walls is burnt red rock showing its former use. The open end faces down the glen into the prevailing wind which must have helped with the burning process. Along the low ridge, c.15m to

the north, is a small 'quarry' where limestone has been dug out for burning. To the south of the kiln are several improved agricultural fields where the lime was probably used. Interestingly Begg (2002) suggests that there could have been a limekiln at Upper Rudale, but gives no details.

### **Meall in Culcruick**

The other kiln is near Meall Cottage at NR818956 on the Poltalloch Estate and looks a much more substantial structure. A major difference is that it is lined internally with bricks but the top edges and wall ends are stone. It is built into the landform and has a large limestone quarry behind it and another to the side. Internally it measures c.6m long by c.2.85m wide and at least 2m deep at the open end. The floor has filled up with tree debris and other vegetation over the years. The stone walls at the end are large; 2.5m wide on the west and 2.1m on the east. It would have been used for the agricultural improvements on Poltalloch Estate and was associated with the nearby farm at Barsloisnoch. RCHAMAS (1992), in relation to Barsloisnoch, refers to a limekiln in 1801 at 'Meall in Culcruick' (NR818956) where an old quarry is now visible behind Meall Cottage. No details are given of the limekiln. A limekiln is named on the 6<sup>th</sup> first edition OS map surveyed in 1865 and there is a U-shaped symbol for a clamp limekiln. However there is neither a name nor a symbol on the second edition map surveyed in 1898. It is possible that the original clamp limekiln was lined later with brick (from the nearby brick works at Slockavullin) by Poltalloch Estate for another purpose. However the large double limekiln at Port nan Gallan on Danna is also brick lined at the top. Kahane (1991) reviewed lime making in Mid Argyll and provided details of kilns she had seen up to that time. She mentions proposals for lime burning for improvements on Duntroon Estate but it is surprising that she makes no reference to a lime

kiln near Meall Cottage. All the lime kilns she listed are of the enclosed and square/rectangular type.

## **Upper Largie**

The 1<sup>st</sup> OS map marks a lime kiln the north end of a treed ridge beyond Upper Largie. On investigation the probable remains of a clamp lime kiln were found. It was in a very ruined state with a large ash tree in one corner and had been used as a depository for clearance stones and farm rubbish. However it did look like a 3-sided clamp kiln with an open end. It is set into the bank at the end of the ridge with the southern long side stone faced and also stone faced at the front, but the long north side is a wall. It is c. 2.5m wide at the open end and the internal sides are c. 6m long. It was difficult to determine the internal depth due to the amount of debris but is not very deep. The top of the end wall was flush with the flat ground beyond and at one point there appears to be a small ramp up to the end wall. It is at NR83670030, the same site as on the OS map. Nearby within the treed area there was a large quantity of clearance stones. Kahane (1991) visited this site and noted the furnace was a very low kiln and must have been quite shallow but does not suggest it was a clamp type lime kiln. At that time she was able to discern the complete draw-hole recess. She did not mention that the kiln was partially filled with clearance stones.

There could have been other clamp limekilns elsewhere in the Mid Argyll area, as at Kilbride and Upper Largie, but the stone walls could easily have been robbed to use in field dykes or fallen into total disrepair leaving little trace. Bishop and Thomas (2013) review how limekilns, both clamp and draw kilns, are depicted on the first edition OS maps in Central Scotland.

They found a wide range of symbols used for both types of kiln. The symbols at Upper Rudale and near Meall Cottage are consistent with their findings. However, when examining the OS sheets it can be difficult to decipher these symbols, even at high magnification, and then it is not easy to determine that they represent a clamp limekiln.

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# Some new moths in Kilmartin

## David Jardine

There is rarely a day when Climate Change does not receive coverage in the national media, but it receives less coverage in the local press. In recent years changes in the weather have been apparent in Mid-Argyll; increased rainfall and increased temperatures during summer (and winter).

Insects are amongst the more mobile and responsive taxa to a changing environment and therefore it is not surprising that with these changes in the conditions in Mid-Argyll that new species are now returning on a regular basis. Most of these are species with a more southerly distribution. This note describes three moths which have turned up in recent years.

The evening of 4 November 2015 was a warm mizzly evening with a southerly breeze. I had left the light on in our porch and in the late evening a noticed a micro-moth on the window. On capture this small golden-coloured moth turned out to be a Rusty-dot Pearl (*Udea ferrugalis*), a



continental immigrant which is regularly caught on the southern coast of England.

This was the first record in Mid-Argyll, but Rusty-dot Pearl has been recorded at one location in Cowal and at two in North Argyll;

**Figure 3: Rusty-dot Pearl, Kilmartin, 4 November 2015**

there are also records from Mull, Islay and Gigha. The food plants of the larvae are Hemp Agrimony, Woundworts, Burdocks and Mint, but the likelihood of eggs being laid were slim at this time of year.

The evening of 13 July 2018 was warm in Kilmartin and I decided to put on the moth-trap in my garden. The following morning there was a reasonable catch of just over 100 moths of 35 species. As I took a noctuid out I thought it was not a regular species; on checking the moth guide it turned out to be a Bordered Straw (*Heliothis peltigera*), a migrant species which is regularly found in England and has occurred as far north as Shetland. Elsewhere in Scotland it has occurred in around 40 ten-km<sup>2</sup> south of a line between Montrose and Ayrshire. The individual in Kilmartin was the second in Argyll, the other having occurred in Barcaldine, North Argyll. The known food plants of this species are garden marigolds, Scentless Mayweed, Common Restharrow, Sticky Groundsel and Ploughman's-spikenard.



**Figure 4: Bordered Straw, Kilmartin, 20 July 2018**

During late July 2019 there was a prolonged warm spell and there were reports of large numbers of Painted Lady butterflies (*Vanessa cardui*) across Britain. On opening my moth-trap on the morning of 21 July 2019, I found around 180 moths of 60 species. Amongst them was a male Four-

spotted Footman (*Lithosia quadra*), a species which I had only previously seen in an area of the Picos Mountains in Northern Spain which was surrounded by Oakwoods. The larvae of this species feed on Dog lichen (*Peltigera* spp.) and other lichens and algae growing on the trunks and branches of oaks and other trees and rocks. This was only the fifth individual to be found in Scotland; three were along the Solway coast and the other in Easter Ross. This species is both an immigrant and resident in the British Isles, with breeding populations on the Scilly Isles, in Cornwall, Devon, south-west Wales and southern Ireland. With increasing temperatures and plenty of lichen-rich oakwoods in mid-Argyll, this striking moth is a potential colonist.



**Figure 5: Four-spotted Footman, male, Kilmartin, 20 July 2019**

# Knocking Stones in Mid Argyll

**Dave & Pat Batty**

In the process of locating and exploring a number of deserted settlements in Mid Argyll, we have come upon several unusual rock basins at three sites and seen some in other situations. On showing photographs to Roddy Regan, he identified them as knocking stones. Knocking stones or 'knockin' stanes' are mortars and were used with a rounded stone or wooden mell throughout the Highlands to knock the husks off grain, usually barley. Kahane (2001), in an article about corn drying kilns, mentions knocking stones and states they were 'a small circular basin ground out of a large boulder, or occasionally out of a nearby rock surface' and were 'used to catch the ears of corn as they are knocked off the head of a sheaf.' They went out of general use in the early 1700s but remained in use until the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Highlands and Islands.

The term knocking stone is also used as a generic one relating to any stone cut basin, either free standing or in natural rock outcrops, used for bait mortars for fishing, religious connections, good luck artefacts, etc. There are a number of different types of stone cut basins found in Mid Argyll and elsewhere in Argyll.

The three deserted settlement sites were Achayerran (north of Kilbride Farm), Ardnoe (east of Castle Dounie) and Barnashalag (northwest of the ruined Barnashalag Farm). At all three sites the knocking stones were situated at the corner of a ruined building, flat and the right way up. They were all uncovered and full of water. The two stones at Ardnoe and Barnashalag were round and very similar in shape and size with bevelled sides but the one at Achayerran was rectangular with a flat surface. In all

three stones the central hole was almost circular, with smooth sides and a flat or rounded bottom.

The Ardnoe (NR77499349) stone is roughly square but with a curve for about a quarter of its edge. It is located on the north east corner of a building not far away from a substantial house and is partially buried in the vegetation. The stone is massive, being 1.30m x 1.08m. The hole is almost round, 28cm x 24cm and 13cm deep with a rounded bottom. The stone is 35cm thick at its thickest point but along the curved edge the side is vertical in part and bevelled to the edge for the rest of the curve. The other sides were more or less straight and looked as if they were broken edges of a bigger stone. The stone is a separate piece of rock and has been placed there in a horizontal position. It is composed of Crinan grits. There were no other similar stones in the vicinity of the settlement. Above the deserted settlement is a ridge whose topography is hidden by dense, tall conifers. Moving such a large stone would have been easier downhill and we wonder whether there was a small quarry on the ridge. Intriguingly the stone has the look of a partially hewn millstone that broke during production.

The Barnashalag stone resembles the one at Ardnoe. It is also a massive slab of Crinan grits and is situated (NR72988684) some 4m from the north east corner of a building. It is on the nearest flat ground to the building and is partially buried in the vegetation and was being overgrown with grass. The stone shape is roughly semi-circular with part of the edge curved with the stone angling down to it. One side has a vertical edge. The stone is 1.75m x 1.02m and is 45cm at its thickest (tapering to 25cm on the curved edge). The hole is almost circular, 24cm x 24cm, and 18cm deep with a slightly rounded base. The top of the stone was not as flat as the one at Ardnoe. The stone appeared to be a separate slab as the

bottom edge could be found for most of its length. There were no other large similar stones/slabs or any other large stones in the vicinity.

The Achayerran stone (NR854977) was rectangular in shape, c.60cm x c.40cm and at least 25cm thick, and was partially buried in the turf. The central hole was c.25cm in diameter and was c.16cm deep. It was slightly sloped at the top on one side. The rock appeared to be a piece of Crinan grits not unlike blocks in the wall of the adjacent building. Begg (2002) from a visit to Achayerran noted an old quern outside one of the buildings. This is likely to be the same stone.

The making of the holes would have involved considerable work especially to have the smooth sides and bottom. Having done that it is not clear why in two of the stones extra work was carried out to make the bevelled edges nor why large stones should be required. They would not have been easy to move. However at Achayerran a smaller, relatively portable, stone was used, so why were similar large blocks like the corner stones of buildings not utilised at the other sites?

Being outside they were obviously not being used for their original purpose (but two are so big they would not have been easily moved and would have occupied lot of space inside a building) and were perhaps there as water bowls for hens.

The Barnashalag and Ardnoe stones are located on the northeast corner of a building and at the left hand side of the door as you look at the building. At Achayerran the stone is at the southwest corner of a building. It cannot be coincidence that two large stones just happened to be at the same place in relation to the buildings and had a similar look. It is likely that they were deliberately moved to their present horizontal position.

Kahane (2001) has a drawing of a knocking stone at Old Achnaba and stated that there was one by Kilmartin churchyard. The one at Kilmartin churchyard is still extant and is located on the outside of the wall between two seats on the edge of the village green. It is very similar to the one at Achayerran and is a rectangular block of Crinan grits. It is 1.04m x 0.55m and 0.25m thick. The hole is circular, 25cm x 25cm, and is c.23cm deep with smooth sides and a rounded bottom. It is similar to the one from Achayerran. Kahane (2001) did not know from which deserted settlement it originated.

Achnaba deserted settlement (NR 893871) which was assumed to be Kahane's Old Achnaba was visited on 8 November 2018 to search for the knocking stone. The settlement is large but is becoming overgrown in places and despite extensive searching no sign of the knocking stone was found.

Regan (2005) recorded the stone at Ardnoe as a stone basin, 18cm diameter and 12cm deep, cut into a natural boulder. He considered it a mortar or 'cartogan'. Regan and Webb (2007) list several rock cut basins and imply they are in natural outcrops with many lying close to settlement sites. They might have their origin for agricultural usage as knocking stones. They recorded a basin at Knockalva (NR9174296975) of 25cm diameter and 28cm deep



**Figure 6: Stone at Knockalva**



**Figure 7: Stone at Dippen** settlements.

with sides sloping towards a slightly rounded base. Another basin was at Dippen (NR8798089960) of 30cm diameter and 17cm deep, again with sides sloping to a rounded base. These rock cut basins seem different to the free lying stones described here found next to buildings in deserted

Other knocking stones found elsewhere in Scotland have a similar sized hole, c.20-25 wide and c.15 cm deep, but appear to be more like the ones at Achayerran and Kilmartin (Omond, 1911). The only one like the Ardnoe and Barnashalag examples is near Saughtree (NR56199961) in the Scottish Borders lying on a hillside near a sheiling settlement. It measures 125cm x 65cm and 30cm thick with a 25cm diameter hole. It is a large rounded rock. It is marked on the first edition OS map as a Knocking Stone.

The stones were all found outside buildings. Whilst the one at Achayerran is portable (and also the ones at Kilmartin and Old Achnaba) the ones at Ardnoe and Barnashalag are large boulders and once positioned would not have been moved. The basins would have filled with rain and collected debris and thus would either have been covered over or been cleaned out and dried before each use.

Whilst on a visit to Kilmichael of Inverlussa churchyard on 25 February 2019 what was assumed to be a knocking stone with a 'lid' was noticed by the side of the church door. The stone itself was rectangular in shape with rounded corners and dimensions of 50cm x 30cm. The basin was full of

debris and stones but when cleaned out was 25cm in diameter and 15-17cm deep with a slightly rounded bottom. The stone had a small depression (a tiny cupmark?) that seemed manmade towards one corner. The stone was portable. The lid was round and flat sided but broken into two pieces with a small piece missing. It was c.35cm in diameter and has a small hole in the centre.



**Figure 8: Kilmichael stone basin with 'lid' on (above) and removed (below)**



We informed Roddy Regan of Kilmartin Museum who considered the lid to be the top part of a rotary quern and who suggested the lower stone was possibly a bullaun stone, as they are called in Ireland. These stones are found on sites with some religious associations and may have been used for washing hands or feet before entering the church. There are the ruins of an old chapel and burial ground not far from the church at NR777862 and a well, Tobar an-t-Sagairt, nearby at NR777861. So it is possible that this bullaun stone was transferred from there to the church at some point. However, photographs of Irish bullaun stones on the internet show a wide range of sizes and shapes, some of which are like the ones mentioned here. It seems that the terms 'knocking stane' in Scotland and 'bullaun stone' in Ireland are generic names for almost any stone with a rock cut basin of some kind.

We wish to thank Roddy Regan for his help, information and for furthering our understanding of these enigmatic stone artefacts, as well interesting us in deserted settlements.

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# Further Thoughts on Stone Basins in Argyll

**Roddy Regan**

This issue of the Kist includes Dave and Pat Batty's article on 'knocking stones' in Mid Argyll, which tells us that one of the main functions of these features was undoubtedly their use as mortars for processing cereals and producing pot barley. This is perhaps underlined by many of these stone basins being associated with settlements and located near buildings. To their list of stones associated with settlements we can perhaps add those at Kirnan More (NR 8680 9560), Leac na Ban (NR 78685 92066, Regan and Webb 2006) and Eyvary (NR 78359 93493, James 2003).



**Figure 9: Basin at Leac na Baan**



**Figure 10: Basin at Eyvary**

The earliest reference I have managed to uncover as to their use as cereal mortars comes from a publication of 1847 which gives a description of a “*Clach-an-Eòrna’ or barley stone, a large rude mortar about the height of an ordinary seat, and very like a small ancient font used for shelling barley by bruising it with a heavy wooden pestle. In former days, one stood by every door, and they are still occasionally seen at the entrance of ‘black houses’ and small farms’* (Sobieski and Stuart 1847).

This use is potentially an ancient one given that a similar stone mortar was recently found inside a broch structure at Clachtoll in Assynt, which was all the more remarkable for the fact that the mortar was full of carbonised cereal grains, these left in situ after the broch had been severely burnt.



**Figure 11: Stone Basin with burnt grain from the broch at Clachtoll**

However, as the Battys' article also alluded to, stone basins occur in many forms and likely had different functions.

One such recorded use was for grinding bait for fishing (MacKenzie 1900, Morris 1968). Morris tells us that he was told by fishermen-crofters on Tiree that they had used the basins, *Croichtican* or *Crotagan* in Gaelic, for grinding 'cockles, limpets, mussels, pieces of crab and the like' which was thrown into the adjacent sea to attract fish.

However, as MacKenzie and Morris, along with others, have previously noted, any stone with a hollow has the potential to attract other uses. MacKenzie notes that some stones were used as boundary markers while others have associations with healing. Other stories tell of the stones being used as 'wishing stones' such as the stones on Islay at Kilchiaran and Kilchoman, the former still being used in 1968 where an individual would

turn a pestle three revolutions in the stone sun-wise before leaving behind a coin (Morris 1969, no. 48 and no. 50; Caldwell 2008, 13).

Dr Clare Ellis, in her publication of a chapel site of Baliscate on Mull, has recently discussed the use of stone basins that appear to have some kind of religious association. In Ireland these are called bullaun stones and as in Scotland may have been used to hold water for baptism, or for the washing of hands and feet before entering a church. These stones may also have been used in ritualised liturgical cursing where a stone was turned within the bowl of the bullaun in an anticlockwise direction this practice formerly sanctioned by the Church (Ellis 2017). Other stone basins in Argyll associated with religious sites have previously been recorded at Killeyan and Finlaggan on Islay, Killiemor on Mull, Kildalven, Inchmarnock, St Blane's on Bute, St Ciaran's cave and St Columba's cave. Locally, we can perhaps add the basin recorded at Kilmartin and the one at Kilmichael Inverlussa which was reported in Dave and Pat Batty's article.

The religious use of these stones also echo some of the folk traditions associated with other rock-cut basins in Argyll, such as the summoning up of favourable winds as with the basins at Scallasaig and Kilchattan on Colonsay, the latter called 'Cuidh Chattain' was apparently used for summoning the requisite wind direction by clearing out a basin on the side from which the wind was to blow.

Morris also cites another belief concerning a stone basin at Clachan, Seil, which each spring was filled with milk to placate the fairies, so that cows produced milk in the summer (Morris 1969, 62 no.77).

Of course we also have the famous rock-cut basin at Dunadd, which some suggest was used in kingship ceremonies. The Dunadd basin lies adjacent

to some cup-marks, and other basins such as those at Glasvaar, Dippin, Croitachaimbie and Fincharn also appear to be associated with rock-art.



**Figure 12: Basin at Dunadd**



**Figure 13: Basin at Glasvaar**



**Figure 14: Basin at Croitachimbie**



**Figure 15: Basin at Fincharn**

As such we perhaps have to be careful when ascribing names or functions to specific stones, although it is possible they had more than one function or indeed were used in less functional ways. A good example of this would

be the rock-cut basin we recently recorded near Dunyvaig castle on Islay (Maričević 2019).



**Figure 16: Basin at Dunyvaig**

Given its proximity to nearby buildings and to the sea, the basin could have been a mortar used for grinding grain or perhaps bait production, however, given the presence of a possible cup-mark on the same rock the stone may also have had a less apparent association.

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# The Seeds of the Red Roots of Dunoon,

## Part III

### Roddy Regan

In Part II Alistair MacColla had left the camp of Montrose and was again ensconced in Argyll's heartland, where he had been joined by the Lamonts and the MacDougalls, amongst others.

A foretaste of the approaching storm can be seen in March 1646 when '*Duncan Campbell of Ellangreg*' '*... with certain of his complices ...*' are reported of having come to the '*...lands of Cowston and Stroan, and there murdered early in the morning of men and children to the number of forty persons...*'. Basically the Campbell troops were accused of executing men they considered to be of fighting age, mirroring what had happened to the Campbells in the previous year. While some of the 22 named were Lamonts, many were not, but were obviously considered to be their allies.

40

Charles I surrendered to the Scots near Newark on May 5, 1646 and ordered his supporters to lay down their arms and cease hostilities. Montrose disbanded his army but MacColla continued to stay in Kintyre presumably awaiting reinforcements from Ireland.

In order to prevent further incursions from Ireland the Government had ordered the Marquis of Argyll to proceed to Ireland. While on his way to Ireland and passing near Stirling it was reported by Bishop Guthry that the Marquis '*...encountered there his few country people, who had out-lived Inverlochy and Kilsyth, in a very sad posture: Whereof the occasion was this. They having, at Macdonald's settling in Argyle, retired to corners, and*

*lurked until hunger forced them to come out; Arkinglass drew them together, they being about 1200,...'.<sup>41</sup>*

Argyll then reportedly sent these desperate troops to prey upon the Royalists lands in the Lennox and it may be these men who formed the basis of the revenging army led by James Campbell of Ardinglas that entered Cowal and proceeded to move on the Lamont strongholds of castles of Toward and Ascog.<sup>42</sup>

Argyll himself proceeded to Ireland seeking forces to attack the MacDonalds, the basis of his force being his own regiment of foot which was assigned to him.

By mid-April 1646, a Campbell force under Ardinglas had approached the Lamont stronghold of Toward and put it under siege for two weeks, after which on the 1<sup>st</sup> June the Campbells brought forward cannon and had started to bombard the castle.



**Figure 17: Remains of Castle Toward**

The account of what happened next is based on Sir James Lamont's *'True Relation'* and from the charges laid against the Marquess of Argyll in his trial for treason in 1661. <sup>43</sup>

*'Arkinglasse being the Marquesse of Argyle his neare kinsman and having the sole command in his absence of all his kindred and followers heareing tell of the absence of the said Generall Major with the Army came with all the whole power of the Campbells with Shippes boats and great cannons and beleaguered the said Sr James by sea and land within his owne principall house, and haveing mounted their said cannons did continue shooting and battering for two days together, (haveing layne a fortnight about the same before that) And upon the third day they sent a gentleman to the said Sr James offering honourable capitulation'.* <sup>44</sup>

In his *'True Relation'* Sir James Lamont states that he had received a command from Montrose to lay down his arms on order of the King just three days before Ardinglass had laid siege to Toward. Given that, and realising that he could not withstand a long siege and with no hope of relief, Sir James, was forced to capitulate, signing terms of quarter and liberty for himself and his followers on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1646.

A copy of these *'Articles of Capitulation'* survive and state that *'...Sir James Lamont shall overgive his house at Toward...'* and *'...have libertie to goe himself his brethren souldiers wives and children towards Sir Alexander Mack Donald...'*. They also had to leave behind their weapons and Sir James had to hand over the keys to castle by 8 o'clock in the morning, thereafter they were to be given safe conduct and transported to rejoin MacColla who was on Bute. Local lore has it that James Lamonts sister, Isobel, stripped to her shift by the covenanter soldiers, managed to hide her brother's copy of *'Articles of Capitulation'* in the coils of her hair. <sup>45</sup>

Ascog castle was also besieged by the Campbells although their assault initially appears to have been fiercely resisted by the Lamonts. The Campbells then took Sir James Lamont '*...to the said house and castle of Escog, and by that means and for fear of the said Sir James's life, the keepers of the said castle being the said Sir James's friends and vassals, they did surrender the said house,...*' <sup>46</sup>



### Ascog Castle

The Campbells did '*...fetter and bind the hands of near two hundred persons of the said Sir James his friends and followers, who were comprehended within the said capitulation; detaining them prisoners with a guard, their hands being bound behind their backs like thieves,...*' and '*...kept them in severall chambers within the said garisons for the space of eight dayes as if they had beene Galley slaves...*'

The Campbells then proceeded to '*...plunder the said houses of their whole furniture and goods therein; and did rob and take away from the persons within the same, their whole money and cloaths, did drive their whole*

*cattle...* (some 3,000 cattle with a value of £50,000 were reputedly driven off).<sup>47</sup>

Some people attempted to stop the plundering and rescue their goods but the Campbells '*... barbarously murdered and massacred a number of innocent women, as namely, Marie Gilaspie, Marione Mackleish, a young maid, Caleoch Breedmachfoyne, Margaret Crawford, and certain others; and inhumanly left their bodies, as a prey to ravenous beasts and fowls.*'<sup>48</sup>

The Campbells '*...burned broke downe and demolished those garrisons...*' and '*...they spared not any of the name of Lamont that were past seven yeares of age; yea so far went they on in their barbarous cruelties, that they plucked sucklings from their mothers breasts and dashed out their brains against the walls*'

Ten days after the capitulation the Campbells '*...carried the said Sr James his freinds and vassalls to a place called DUNNOONE...*'

At this point Sir James and his closest kin were sent as captives to the '*...marquis's house of Innerarey...*' and placed in the custody of George Campbell of Kinnochtree, the Sheriff Depute.

As for the rest of the Lamont adherents '*...the whole people, who were in the said houses of Escog and Towart...*' were taken to the '*village of Denoone*' and '*...there in the Churchyard...*' the Campbells did '*...most cruelly, traitorously, and perfidiously cause hang upon one tree near the number of thirty-six persons, most of them being special gentlemen of the name of Lamond, and vassals to the said Sir James... and before they were half hanged they cutt them downe*'

The Campbell's then '*...unchristianly murdered with durks and cut down with swords and pistols the persons following...*' the document then goes on to name 30 people, one of them being John Jamieson Provost of Rothesay '*...who being shot thrice through the body, finding some life in him, did thrust severall durks and skanes (knives) in him, and at last did cut his throat with a long durk... And to manifest their further cruelty, they did cast some of the aforesaid persons into holes made for them, who were spurning and wrestling, whilst they were suffocated with earth;...*'.

The account given in the 1661 trial of the Marquis of Argyll also tells us that;

*'...the Lord from heaven did declare his wrath and displeasure against the aforesaid inhuman cruelty, by striking the tree whereon they were hanged, in the said month of June, being a lively fresh growing ash-tree, at the Kirk-yard of Denoone, amongst many other fresh trees with leaves, the Lord struck the said tree immediately thereafter ; so that the whole leaves fell from it, and the tree withered, never bearing leaf thereafter, remaining so for the space of two years: which being cut down, there sprang out of the very heart of the root thereof a spring like unto blood popling up, running in several streams, all over the root, and that for several years thereafter: until the said murderers or their favourers, perceiving that it was remarked by persons of all ranks (resorting there to see the miracle) they did cause hock out the root, covering the whole with earth, which was full of the said matter like blood. Of the which cruel murders, the said persons, and especially the said marquis of Argyle, or one or other of them, were authors, actors, aiders, abettors, assisters, contrivers, countenancers and promoters, many of the said persons defendants being officers under the command of the said marquis of Argyle'.*

It is not known exactly how many Lamonts were killed that day, but along with the 36 gentry over 200 men and women may have perished and this may well be an underestimate.

At Inveraray Castle Sir James was then forced by the Marquis of Argyll to sign over his lands and was then held captive at Carnassrie and Dunstaffnage Castle where '*...Sr James himselfe and his brethren they were kept seven years prisoners in great want and misery for Sr James had neither shirt nor cloaths for four yeares together but the same hee had upon him when hee was taken The which in the said space did all rott of him So that there did not keepe so much together as cover his nakednesse And at last there was given him one shirt and one suite of very coarse gray cloth...*' .<sup>49</sup>

Any other leading Lamont's or their followers who survived the massacre sought any safe haven they could find, some fleeing to the north of Ireland to escape the Campbell wrath.

The Campbells now had to deal with any remaining Royalists on their doorstep. Despite being given his own old regiment from Ulster, Argyll was initially disappointed when his requests for additional forces strong enough to retake Argyll were denied by General Munro. Under the command of Campbell of Skipness, the regiment attacked Islay but were repulsed by Clanranald who had occupied the island and the regiment had returned to Ireland by 31<sup>st</sup> May.<sup>50</sup>

The MacDougall heartlands appeared to be next in the line of fire for Campbell and Covenanter retaliation.

In 1646 a force, under the Campbell officers of Ardkinglass, Inverawe and Dunstaffnage, landed on Kerrera where 13 MacDougall adherents were '*cruelly murdered with swords and durks*' and six prisoners taken, the latter

after being sent to Inveraray where the Campbells '*hanged them to death*'.<sup>51</sup>

Alistair MacColla continued to control Kintyre from where he could strike out into Campbell heartlands. By the spring of 1646 he had been joined by the Marquis of Antrim and possibly up to 1,000 more Irish troops. Antrim had been instructed by the King to lay down his arms on at least three occasions, the last on 29th July 1646. Despite the king's instructions, Antrim remained in Scotland '*... for the purpose to renew the kings service there, and to make himselfe capable to renewe the warres of Scotland, when commanded by his Majestie.*' and planning to raise an army of 30,000 men with which he hoped first to reduce Scotland, and then to march into England and free the King. However, unable to raise the support he wanted in Scotland, Antrim had returned to Ireland by October 1646.

While MacColla had the free run of Kintyre, without artillery he was unable to take control of the various Campbell strongholds despite assaults on Skipness, Kilberry and Craignish castles, although Castle Sween appears to have been burnt, possibly in the spring of 1647.<sup>52</sup>

Alistairs brother, Gilleasbuig MacColla, appears to have been killed during a siege of Skipness Castle in August, 1646. Kilberry castle held out after a two-week siege, which was lifted after the garrison apparently persuaded the besiegers they had sufficient supplies to hold out by offering them a cask of ale. Another story tells of how, at Craignish castle, the Tutor of Craignish annoyed MacColla by repeatedly challenging him to single combat, while leaping over the wide ditch surrounding the castle, in order to attack Alistair's men. The siege lasted three weeks, and proved costly in men (he is said to have lost 300) leading MacColla to say: '*This is a sharp*

*castle of wheelks, the wind itself is the only thing that will keep up a constant fight with it. We will leave it.'* <sup>53</sup>

Another story of Campbell resistance to MacColla tells how at Ederline, Zachary MacCallum of Poltalloch, renowned for his strength, had already slain seven MacDonalds before taking on MacColla in single combat. However, MacCallum was killed by MacColla but only after he had been was struck down from behind by a man armed with a scythe.

By early 1647 the Campbell's and Covenanters had eventually turned to deal with the threat still posed by MacColla. On 29th January 1647 Argyll's regiment was re-constituted from other regiments in Scotland (together with Campbell of Ardinglass's Highland Regiment) becoming part of the Scots New Model Army, most being of *'the Arguile party, officers and souldiers...the new Model is fourteen hundred Horse and five thousand Foot'*. By March, under the command of General David, this force was sent to suppress the remnants of MacColla's forces in the Highlands.

#### Notes

40. Cobbett 1810 Cobbett's complete collection of state trials and proceedings for high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors from the earliest period to the present time, Vol V, 1309-1511.
41. Guthry, H 1747 The Memoirs of Henry Guthry late Bishop of Dunkeld, 213.
42. Willcock, J 1903 the Great Marquess, the Life and times of Archibald 8<sup>th</sup> Earl, 1<sup>st</sup> (and only) Marquess of Argyll, 188-189.
43. 'The true relation of Sr James Lamont of that ilk His actings and sufferings In His Late Majesties service since the yeare 1643' in Lamont, N 1914 An Inventory of Lamont Papers, 429-434.
44. Lamont Papers, 432.
45. Lamont Papers, 420-421.
46. Lamont Papers, 220-233.
47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Lamont Papers, 429-434.

50. Furgol, E M 2003 A Regimental History of the Covenanting Armies 1639–1651, 416.

52. Argyll Inventory, vol. 7, 259.

53. Matheson, A 1958 'Traditions of Alasdair MacColla', Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow, vol. 5, 1958, 47.

# NHASMA Summer Holiday: Islay 2019

## Poem by Rebecca Pine

The roads all led to Kennacraig  
to catch the ferry boat  
for all had got the NHASMA bug  
(and some the antidote)  
and some had got their sailor's legs  
before they were afloat.

We'd said goodbye to Ashens  
Au revoir Barfad and Broch  
The cars were full of people  
and the boots were choc-a-bloch,  
but we dined aboard 'Finlaggan'  
as we ferried down the loch.

We spread our fingers on the map  
for Sunday sea and sand –  
Kilchoman and Saligo Bay  
By way of Sunderland!  
Then round the flats to Loch Indaal  
And back along the Strand.

The Portnahaven harbour  
was a rather windy perch,  
with a lighthouse built by Stevenson  
and a Parliamentary Church

but not a coffee to be had  
despite our lengthy search.

We did some strange manoeuvres  
Round the craft shops of the Rinns  
that finished where we started  
and the road back home begins! –  
but some were more successful later  
navigating gins.

It was early-o on Tuesday  
with the destination Oa  
where some went round about the cliffs  
but *we* chose just to go  
directly to the monument  
(because *we're* getting slow!)

It was later-o for Wednesday  
destination Colonsay  
but the misty rain descended  
and stayed with us all the day  
but we sandwiched, dined and coffee'd  
every inch along the way.

The Thurs-'D' day was birdies day  
a little local ride  
to Gruinart, and for a start  
to occupy a hide –  
where all the birds were twittering

(about those folk inside!).

It's in our blood. It's part of why  
Societies exist.

It's in our title. It's the part  
that stands for 'Nat' and 'Hist'.  
and if you wonder what we saw  
Val and Morag have a list.

The Antiquarian bit of course  
is scattered o'er the scene,  
and reigning over all this year  
Finlaggan must be queen  
with a virtual reality  
of how it might have been.

Throughout the week we've filled our cars  
with Nhasmites and the Boss  
has led us over Islay  
north to south and criss to cross  
but when it came to barbecues  
our Matt was turned to Gloss!

So thanks to all who've made our week  
A pleasure all the way;  
For all the planning, booking, thinking  
Day by day by day.  
Now Islay joins our happy list.....  
And next year it's the Spey!

## Birds spotted on Islay: June 2019

Arctic Tern	Great Spotted Woodpecker
Barn Owl	Great Tit
Blackbird	Grey Wagtail
Black Guillemot	Guillemot
Blue Tit	Gull – Black-headed
Buzzard	Gull – Common
Chaffinch	Gull - Great Black-backed
Chough	Gull – Herring
Coal Tit	Gull – Lesser Black-backed
Collared Dove	Hen Harrier
Common Sandpiper	Heron
Cormorant	Hoodie Crow
Corncrake	House Martin
Cuckoo	House Sparrow
Curlew	Jackdaw
Dipper	Kestrel
Duck - Eider	Lapwing
Duck – Mallard	Linnet
Duck - Shoveler	Meadow Pipit
Duck – Tufted	Moorhen
Duncock	Osprey
Eagle – Golden	Oystercatcher
Eagle – White-tailed	Peregrine
Fulmar	Pheasant
Gannet	Pied Wagtail
Goldfinch	Raven
Goose - Barnacle	Red Breasted Merganser
Goose – Canada	Red Throated Diver
Goose – Greylag	Redpoll
Great Northern Diver	Redshank
Greenfinch	Reed Bunting

Ringed Plover  
Robin  
Rock Dove  
Rock Pipit  
Rook  
Sanderling  
Sand Martin  
Sedge Warbler  
Shag  
Shelduck  
Siskin  
Skylark  
Snipe  
Song Thrush  
Spotted Flycatcher  
Starling  
Stonechat  
Swallow  
Swan – Mute  
Swan - Whooper  
Teal  
Twite  
Wheatear  
Whinchat  
Whitethroat  
Willow Warbler  
Wren  
Woodpigeon

**TOTAL 90**

# Kilmartin Museum Events

## Autumn/Winter 2019-20



Further details can be found on Kilmartin Museum's website [www.kilmartin.org](http://www.kilmartin.org), or phone 01546 510278. More events are being planned for the next few months, please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for all the latest information.

### **Guided Glen Walks**

Each Wednesday until October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm  
Walks are FREE, meet at Kilmartin Museum shop on the day.

### **Arichonan Deserted Settlement Guided Tour**

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October - a mini bus will leave Kilmartin Museum at 11.30am returning for 3pm. Join us for a guided tour of Arichonan to learn about the history of the settlement and the local area. Bring a packed lunch and suitable clothing and footwear. The walk has a steady ascent and descent on return. Free event but **booking is essential** (phone 01546 510278), sorry no dogs except assistance dogs.

### **Highland Archaeology Fortnight: Bronze Age Style Pottery Workshops**

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October @ Kilmartin Museum, 30 minute sessions at 1.30, 2.15 and 3pm. Discover more about Bronze Age pottery and create your own pot to take home. Free event but **booking is essential**, please phone 01546 510278 or email [education@kilmartin.org](mailto:education@kilmartin.org).

### **'Spooktacular' Family Halloween event**

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October, 6.30-8.30pm @ Heart of Argyll Wildlife Centre, Barrandaimh. Free event but **booking is essential**, please phone 01546 510278 or email [education@kilmartin.org](mailto:education@kilmartin.org).

### **Sleepy Creatures Family Halloween event for ages 6 and under**

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October, 12.30-2.30pm @ Taynish Nature Reserve. Free drop in event, no booking required.

### **Winter Talks**

Talks are held monthly on Thursdays 7.30-8.30pm during November – March at Glassary, Kilmartin & Ford Parish Church (formerly Living Stones). Tea & coffee will be served from 7pm.

14<sup>th</sup> November: Dr Tertia Barnett, Scotland's Rock Art Project

Talks will be held on the following dates - 12<sup>th</sup> December, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 13<sup>th</sup> February, and 19<sup>th</sup> March. Further details will be published on the Kilmartin Museum website and Facebook page once they are finalised.

# **NHASMA: your local wildlife and history society**

## **Autumn/Winter 2019-20 Programme**

**All meetings will be held at Lochgilphead Community Centre at 7pm.**

### **Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October**

**Annual General Meeting** followed by **Wildlife in Shetland** talk by David Wood, Ornithologist.

### **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

**History of the Forestry Commission** by David Jardine, former Regional Manager, Forestry and Land Scotland.

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

**Lichens of Argyll** by Andy Acton, consultant Ecologist and Lichenologist.

### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January**

**Argyll Castle Excavations: recent work at Tarbert** by Roddy Regan, Archaeologist.

### **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February**

**Tag and Track – Living with Seagulls** by Hayley Douglas, Ranger at Muirshiel Country Park

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

**Kilmory Castle** by Murdo MacDonald, former Argyll & Bute Council Archivist



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