THE EVOLUTION OF HIGHLAND RURAL SETTLEMENT

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ARGYLLSHIRE

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The vast bulk of original research on the Highlands deals with the circumstances of settlement about the time when the Improvers were at work, and later. There have been few studies of the period before 1700, while archæological work has been confined mainly to the study of the early Christian Church and to Dark Age and Medieval remains such as crannogs and duns, the distribution of which can not have represented the total settlement pattern of these periods. What may best be attempted then is to summarise briefly what is known of eighteenth-century Highland settlement, indicate the nature of the subsequent changes, and attempt to work backwards from the known datum of the eighteenth century.[1] It must be made clear now, however, that no *firm* evidence exists at the moment as to the form or the detailed evolution of Highland rural settlement before about 1700. This paper deals in the main with settlement form, and only incidentally with other equally important and related topics, such as the relationship between settlement form and distribution, and field system. One of the neglected aspects of settlement study, the relationship of house form to settlement, is touched on here.

The Military Survey of Scotland (known as Roy's Map) (O'Dell 1953:58-63) provides an unrivalled mid-eighteenth century source for Scottish settlement studies. Over the Highland area the ubiquitous, one might say the exclusive settlement form was the clachan,[2] a group of houses and related outbuildings showing usually no plan, originally an integral part of a run-rig joint-farm,[3] and housing solely the tenants and dependants of that joint-farm, dependants like tradesmen and cottars. The clachan was typified by a complete absence of commercial or educational facilities.

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It must be remembered that the total pattern of settlement contained two other elements also, though distributionally of minor significance. There were occasional isolated dwellings, sometimes tacksmen's or minor lairds' homes,[4] or sometimes the bothies of herdsmen sited outwith the bounds of the arable area of a run-rig farm. Secondly, in comparison with the modern settlement pattern the absence of small rural service centres, akin to the villages of England, was a noticeable feature. In the Highlands most of these centres have come into being since

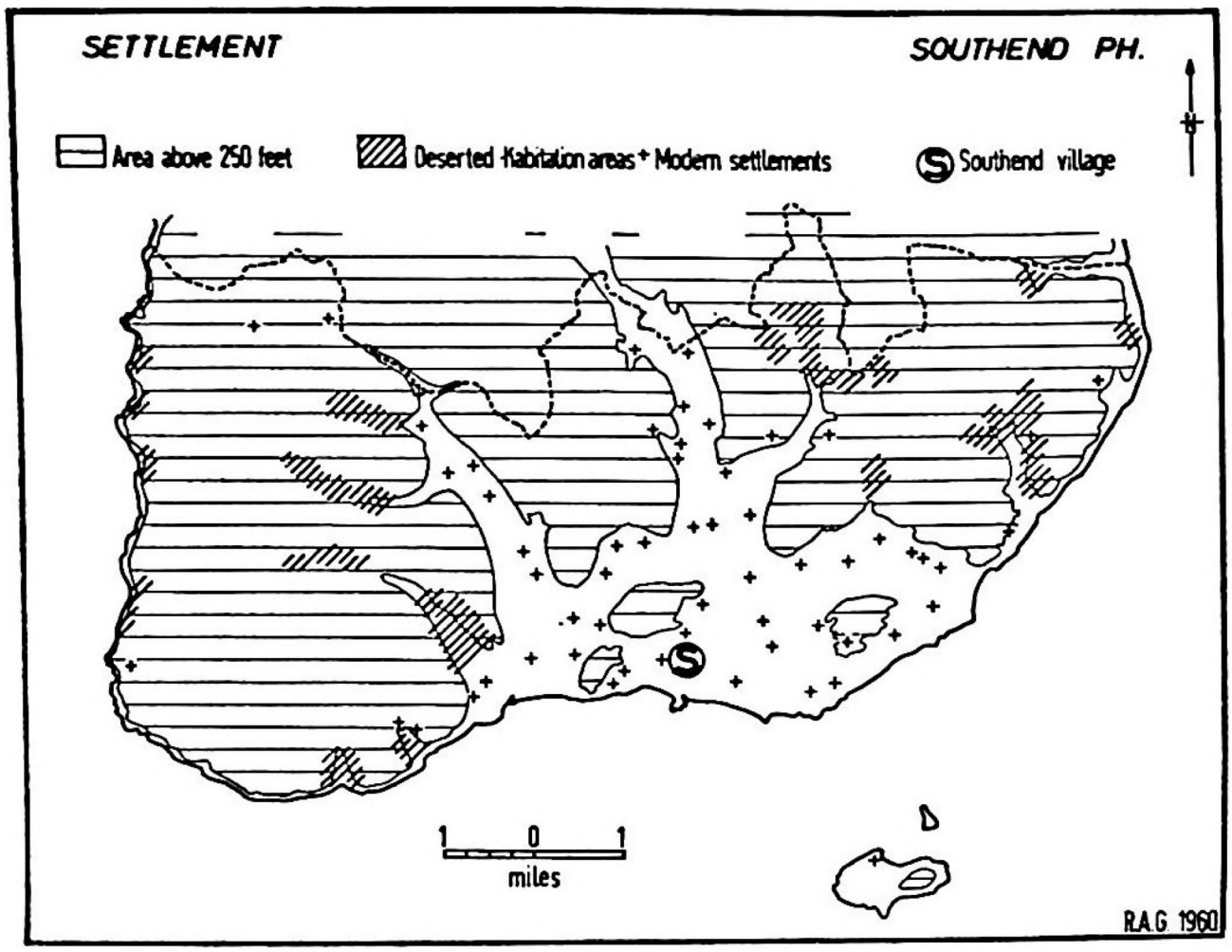

Fig. 1.

1750, with the exception of the larger Royal Burghs like Inveraray and Campbeltown.

By comparison with field and cartographic evidence it is possible to analyse what Roy's Map shows, and what subsequent changes have taken place (Fig. 1). In higher areas the clachans were cleared or were gradually deserted as the margin of profit for both laird and tenant declined due to rising living standards after 1750 in these marginal hill areas. In lower districts the clachans have been replaced, on the same sites, by modern farm steadings, the outbuildings of which not infrequently incorporate the remains of old joint-farm houses. In Southend the steadings take a Lowland form, the buildings

grouped round three or four sides of a central courtyard, a form introduced to the Duke of Argyll's estates in Kintyre soon after 1800 (Gailey 1960:104-105). Elsewhere, as farther north in Argyll, smaller sheep farm steadings are now normal, but in crofting areas one of two things usually happened. On what were the smaller joint-farms, of say from four to six joint-tenants, the clachan form of settlement has often remained. An example is Achnaha in west Ardnamurchan where a small tight cluster of dwellings remains amidst the arable crofts, not permanently lotted according to local tradition till about 1914. Ormsaigbeg, also in west Ardnamurchan, provides an example of what happened in many larger townships. A dispersal from the original clachan followed the permanent lotting of individual holdings after the disappearance of run-rig practices. Lotting appears to have been generally unknown in the Highlands before about 1800, and led usually in a large township to a widely spaced linear settlement pattern, each dwelling on its individual holding, a pattern which virtually mocks the traditional two-fold classification of nucleated and dispersed settlement.[5]

Fig. 2 represents a simplified altitudinal analysis of mid-eighteenth-century settlement, and also an analysis of the sites shown on Roy's Map subsequently abandoned or cleared. Distributional variations within Argyll depend on both physical and human factors. Kintyre stands apart from the remainder of the county, for both absolutely and relatively the greatest abandonment of settlement has been above 250 feet above sea level. Elsewhere, though the maximum relative abandonment remains at higher altitudes, the greatest absolute abandonment has always been within 100 feet of sea level. Topography has obvious effects on the siting of settlement. In both Ardnamurchan and Knapdale whether due to steeper slopes or to extremes of landform dissection the settlement possibilities are severely limited. On the other hand, in Kintyre especially but also in mid-Argyll the settlement potential is obviously greater, due to raised beaches at lower levels and to more gentle slopes higher up.

There are also clear regional variations in the percentages on a parish basis of the total settlement sites of 1750 later deserted. The basic pattern is one of least abandonment in the south of the area analysed, and maximum desertion in the north. This pattern is disturbed in the northeast where the low percentage abandonment is due to the initial sparse settlement

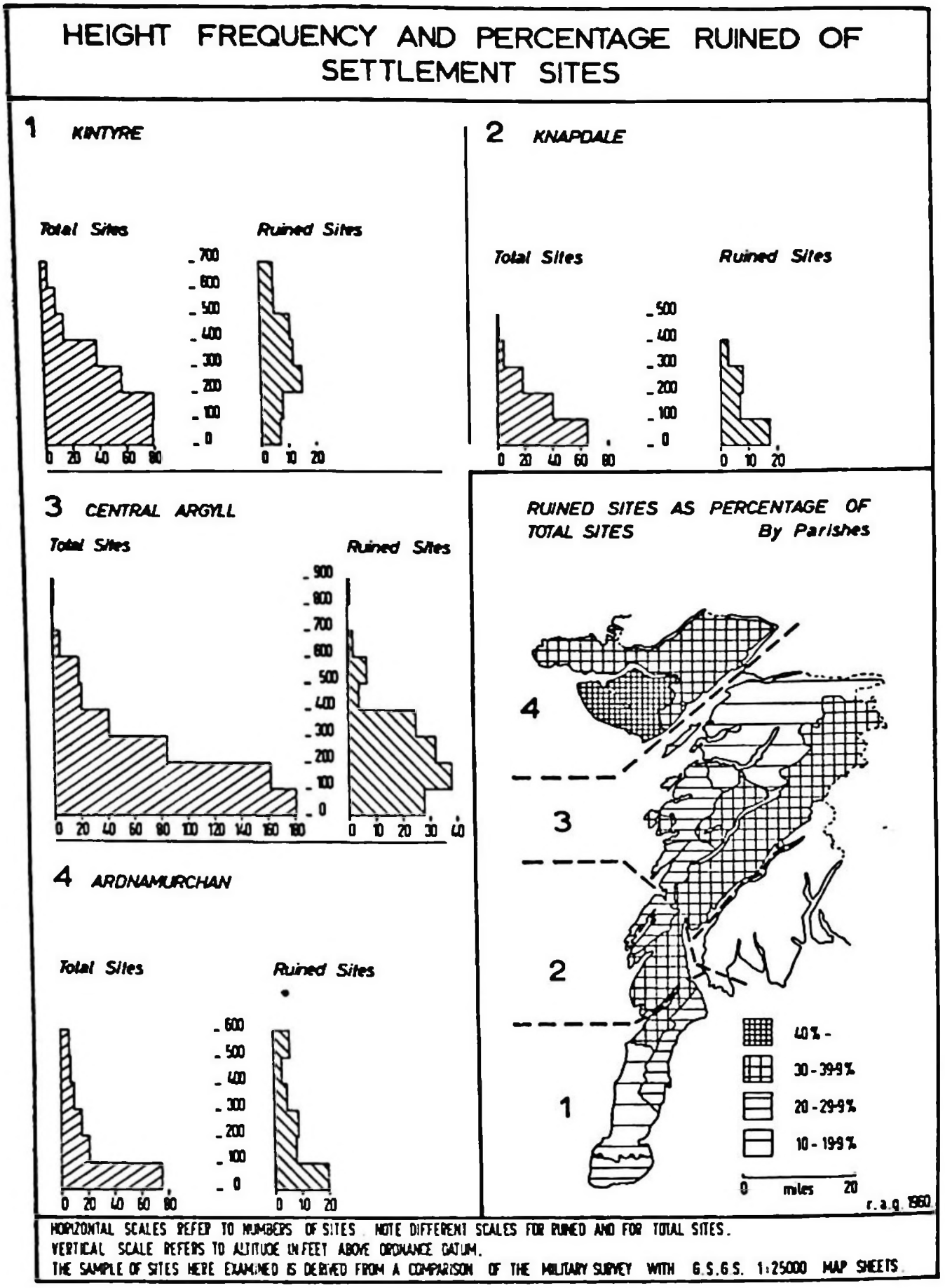

FIG. 2.

in the difficult terrain of Appin, and to an unusual continuity of settlement sites in the limestone-based island of Lismore. The basic pattern is interestingly paralleled by what is known of the course of agrarian change in the county. Innovations were normally initiated in the south and spread northward,

and it would seem that the earlier these changes occurred, the slighter was their effect on settlement. This is reasonable, for the earlier changes were being accepted by a relatively smaller total population in the south during the eighteenth century, while changes of a similar nature but differing in degree were thrust on a relatively larger population total which had outgrown local resources in the north during the early nineteenth century.

In the Highland area the representation of settlement on Roy's Map is diagrammatic. This is clear from a comparison of Roy with field evidence and with contemporary cartographic sources in estate papers. Each clachan is shown by a cluster of from four to six dots. The sole variation is where, in some cases, the clachan is shown as two or three groups of two, sometimes three dots each. However, detailed analysis of Roy's Map on a parish basis does suggest that some regional variation in clachan size was allowed for (Gailey 1961*a*:258). For Kintyre an average of three to four houses per clachan contrasts with six or more houses in each cluster in the north of Argyllshire. This distinction is noticeable from the evidence of ruined clachans on the ground. Indeed, variation in clachan size from district to district seems to have been the norm over the Highlands in general. At Monymusk in 1775 eight to ten houses per clachan was a size frequently encountered, though the average for the estate as a whole was about seven (Hamilton 1945:xiv). In the same year in Assynt an average settlement size of more than twelve families (and so presumably a similar number of houses) typified coastal run-rig farms, though inland the number was reduced to about seven (Adam 1958: xlvii). In 1696 in Aberdeenshire, a total of about six families per clachan was normal, though the social make-up of the clachan communities differed between Highland and Lowland areas of the county (Geddes and Forbes 1948:100-103). Sources like the Statistical Accounts at the end of the eighteenth century frequently provide information on clachan size; as in North Knapdale where the parish minister claimed that four tenants per farm, and so four or five houses per clachan was normal and he suggested that this number was related to the four-horse plough team, each tenant providing one horse for the common team in each settlement (Campbell 1793:540).

One of the striking features of ruined clachans in the field is that, particularly in the northwest Highlands, they consist of ten or a dozen or more houses in each cluster. While this

does not agree with clachan sizes just quoted, we must remember as has already been pointed out (Fairhurst 1960:72), that what we now see on the ground in the northwest are often the remains of these settlements after they had experienced a period of unprecedented growth to accommodate the rapidly increasing population of the late eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century. It is significant that in Kintyre, where agrarian changes were initiated as population growth was just getting under way, the ruined clachans we see to-day seldom exceed six houses in size, except in unique settlements like Mealdarroch near Tarbert Lochfyne which was essentially a fishing settlement and did not house a community living mainly by the land. The average clachan sizes for the Kintyre parishes, from Roy's Map are 3·3 in Southend, 3·7 in Campbeltown, 3·6 in Killean and Kilchenzie, 4·0 in Saddell and Skipness, and 4·4 in Kilcalmonell and Kilberry. These figures agree amazingly with the sizes of ruined clachans experienced in the field, and their gradual increase northward reflects the initiation of improvements in Southend and Campbeltown and their spread northward through the peninsula during the second half of the eighteenth century (Gailey 1960:106).

The English soldier, Burt, writing in 1754, was undoubtedly a biased observer, but his graphic account of Highland settlement provides as useful a pen-picture of the contemporary settlement form as any. "A Highland Town," he said, "is composed of a few Huts for Dwellings, with Barns and Stables, and both the latter are of more diminutive Size than the former, all irregularly placed, some one Way, some another, and, at any Distance, look like so many heaps of Dirt; these are built in Glens and Straths, which are the Corn Countries, near Rivers and Rivulets, and also on the sides of Lakes where there is some Arable Land for the support of the inhabitants" (Burt 54:II, 130). If to this we add his comment "Their Huts are mostly built on some rising Spot at the Foot of a Hill, secure from any Bournes or Springs that might descend upon them from the Mountains" (Burt 1754:II, 63), we have an adequate generalised description of eighteenth century Highland settlement distribution and form.

The normal mid-eighteenth-century clachans, and most modern clachans, both ruined and viable, are amorphous clusters of dwellings and offices. Bourblaige in west Ardnamurchan may be considered as typical if rather on the large side —a group of some sixteen dwellings not too closely packed

together set amidst the available cultivable area. A map of Ardnamurchan and Sunart drawn in 1806-7 by William Bald (Storrie 1961:112-17) represented the settlement very accurately, especially as regards the disposition of the houses within the group. What exists on the ground in a ruined state (Fig. 3) corresponds exactly with what Bald showed on his map. Ardnaw/Kilmory in South Knapdale retains still its clachan form but there are now only three occupied houses

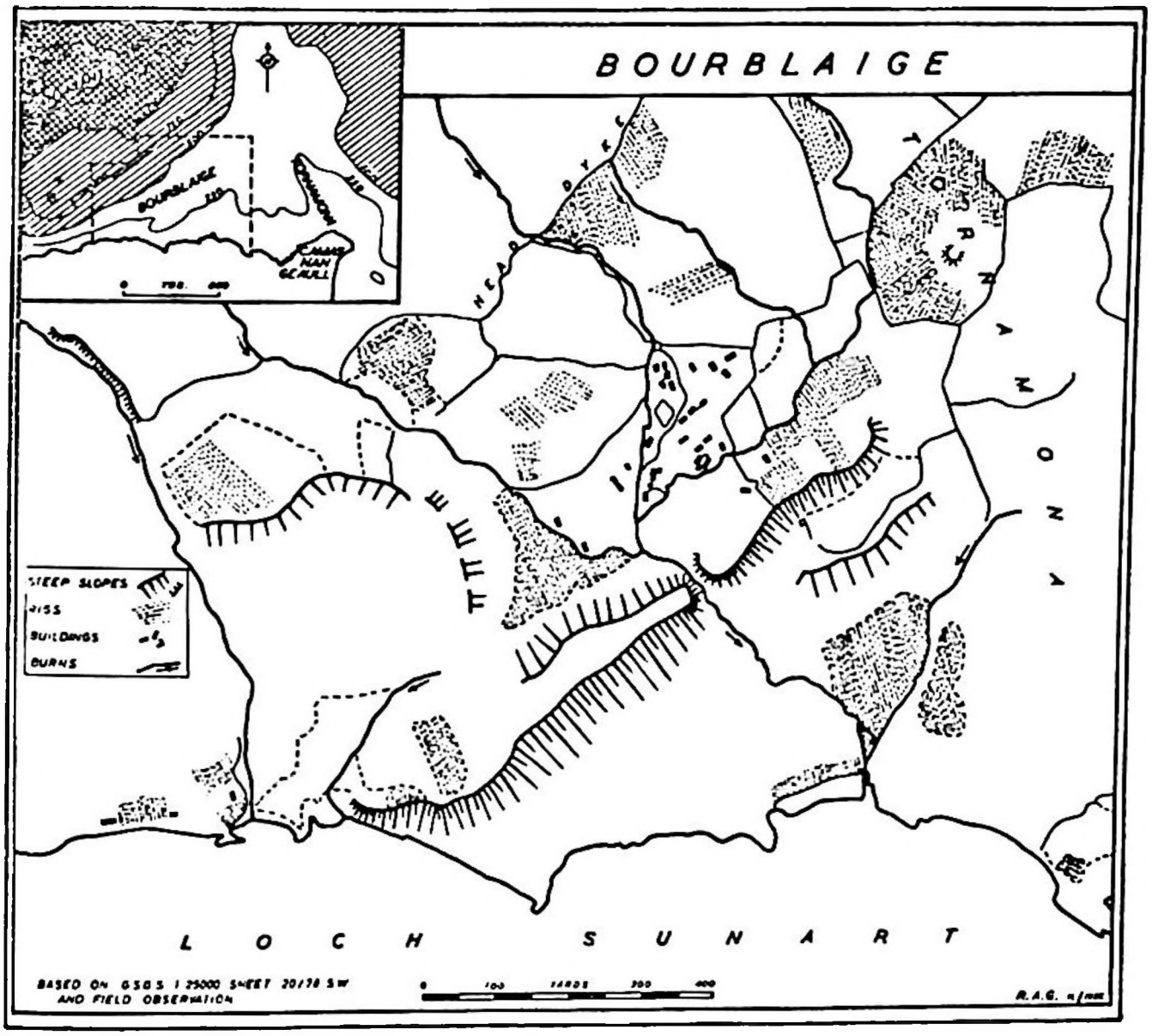

Fig. 3.

one of which is outside the original cluster. However, this settlement demonstrates to us that sometimes clachans are not quite what they seem. In this case a boundary stream dividing the clachan separates two adjacent joint-farms. That this division is not a recent artificial creation is proven by the fact that the boundary appears quite clearly dividing the single settlement between the two farms on an estate map drawn by Taylor and Skinner in 1776 (Inverneil Papers: Plans of Inverneil and Knap).[6] In this case we are dealing functionally with two settlements, but morphologically with a single clachan.

Sometimes topography took a hand and the houses of the clachan were each individually oriented according to slope, resulting in houses placed generally with their long axes in two directions at right angles to each other, or, as at Auchnangoul near Inveraray in a single direction (Pl. VII, fig. 1). Apart from this no semblance of orderliness obtains. The clachan was normally sited either roughly centrally within the disjoined patches of infield arable, as at Bourblaige, or like Auchnangoul the cluster of houses was sited at the boundary between arable and common pasture. In Auchnangoul there are now only two occupied houses, but elsewhere we occasionally discover a viable clachan. Such is Drumbuie in the parish of Lochalsh in Wester Ross, where there is also an associated fossilised remnant of run-rig openfield. Again in Drumbuie we can recognise topographic orientation of the houses in the amorphous cluster.

The sole apparently significant morphological variation from the amorphous settlement is what I have come to call the "Linear/Rectangular" clachan. Examples from Kintyre (Fig. 4) show what is implied by this term. The houses and outbuildings are built either in a straight line often joined to each other sometimes sharing common gables, or they are laid out in two or more lines approximately at right angles to each other. Roy's Map provides no indication of this variation from the normal amorphous clachan; but even had they existed in 1750 (and the sequel will show that this would have been unlikely) we should probably not expect to see them represented on the map due to the diagrammatic representation of settlement employed by Roy. Evidence from Kintyre, especially from the parish of Southend, suggests that these linear/rectangular sites were a reorganisation of older and pre-existing fully amorphous clachans on the same sites and that this re-organisation was an accompaniment, when it took place, to the earliest phases of agrarian improvement (Gailey 1960:104).

Analysis, mainly cartographic, of the distribution of the amorphous and of the linear/rectangular clachans in Argyll has been carried out.[7] A first impression is that the distribution of the linear/rectangular sites is random and meaningless. It is only when this distribution is viewed against the pattern of estate ownership that it becomes meaningful. In the south of the county especially, most of these sites are found on lands which belonged to proprietors like the Duke of Argyll, Campbell of Stonefield, or Campbell of Knockbuy—proprietors who

FIG. 1—Auchnangoul, Inveraray par., Argyll.

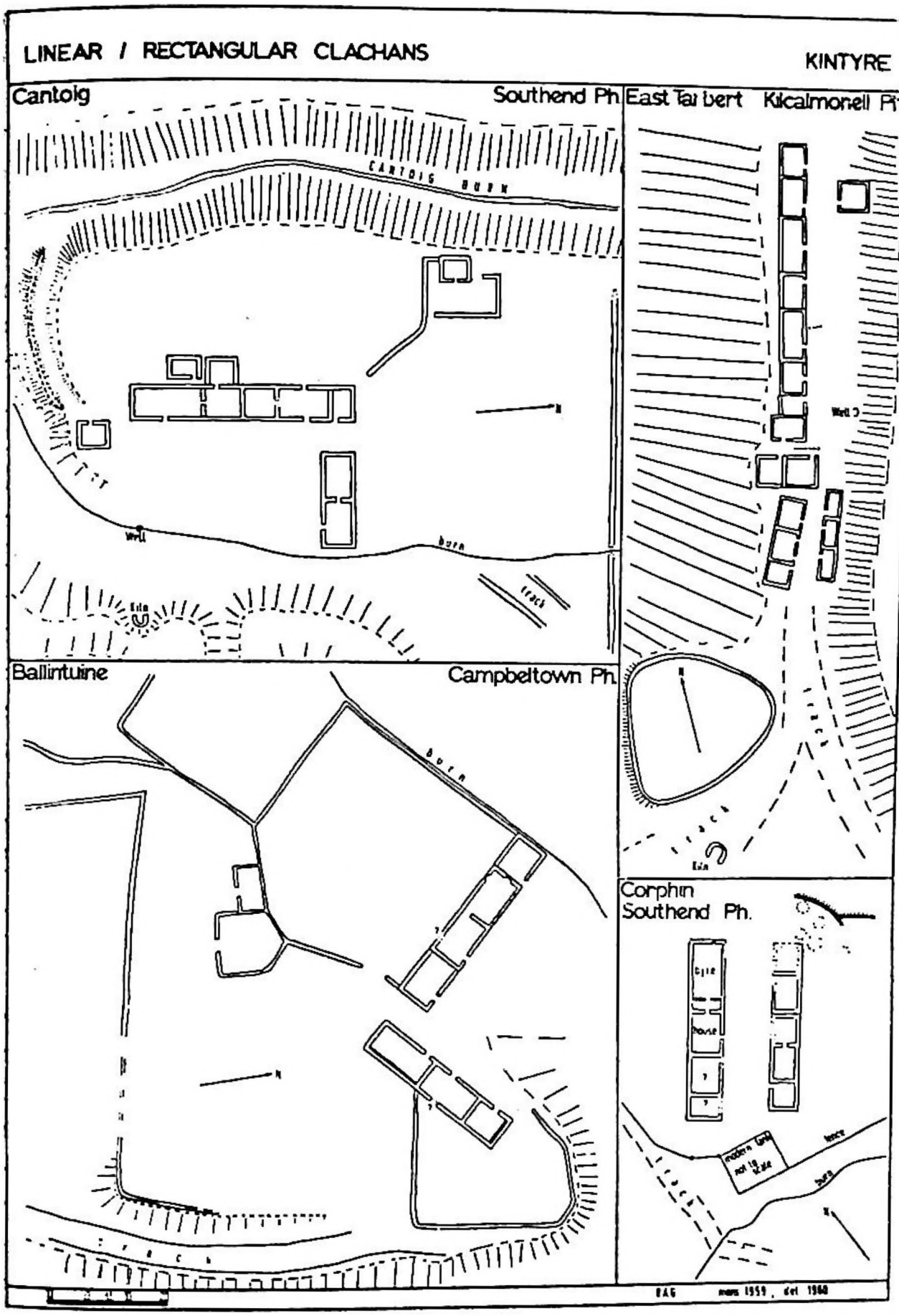

FIG. 4.

were prominent eighteenth-century improvers in Argyll. This correlation further strengthens the concomitance of the linear/rectangular clachans with the early phases of agrarian improvement which, in general, was only initiated in Argyll about or after the mid-eighteenth century.

A variant of the linear/rectangular clachan (though sometimes admittedly it should be classed a variant of the amorphous

clachan) takes the form of two or three groups of two or three houses each, distributed over the cultivable area of the joint-farm or around its margins. Usually each constituent group appears to have a linear or rectangular form. Roy in one or two instances suggests this form in Argyll in 1750, but the supreme example must be at Lix near Killin in western Perthshire, where I was privileged to assist in excavations under the direction of Dr. Fairhurst during 1959 and 1960. We know from cartographic sources contained in the Forfeited Estates Papers that at Lix this "fragmented' or "dispersed" linear/rectangular clachan was preceded by a normal amorphous settlement. Unfortunately, of this earlier clachan no trace has been found despite diligent search. Excavation in two of the small ruined house-clusters at East Lix has proved equally fruitless in the search for this earlier settlement, though the excavation itself was by no means barren of results. The present ruined house-clusters on East Lix are associated with rectangularly laid out field boundaries and trackways all apparently later than the Fortified Estates Papers map of 1755. Yet again at Lix we are faced with the conclusion that the linear/rectangular form was a concomitant of early agrarian reform.

This dispersed characteristic of some eighteenth-century clachans (but it must be remembered that the total number of sites involved is small) brings up a further point. Irish workers, in particular Dr. McCourt, have recognised a certain mobility in the evolution of Irish clachans in some areas (McCourt 1955: 376). This is a tendency for clachans to evolve and to develop fairly rapidly and for daughter clachans to hive off from the parent settlement, often within the bounds of the original township. The "dispersed" or "fragmented" Highland clachans look like a Highland counterpart to this Irish phenomenon—except that if the evidence from Lix is generally applicable the original settlement disappears altogether. Other cases, however, of the creation of new clachans and joint-farms in the eighteenth century within the bounds of pre-existing communities have recently come to light. Two examples I discovered from a study of estate rentals for Kilberry in Knapdale, between 1768 and 1780 (Gailey 1961*a*:119-121). Mr. MacSween has proved a similar occurrence in east Trotternish, one of the northerly peninsulas of Skye (MacSween 1959*a*:56). Occurrences like these have been rare and so we must conclude that increasing population was absorbed by swelling the ranks of the cottar and squatter population, producing the swollen clachans

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION WEST ARDNAMURCHAN

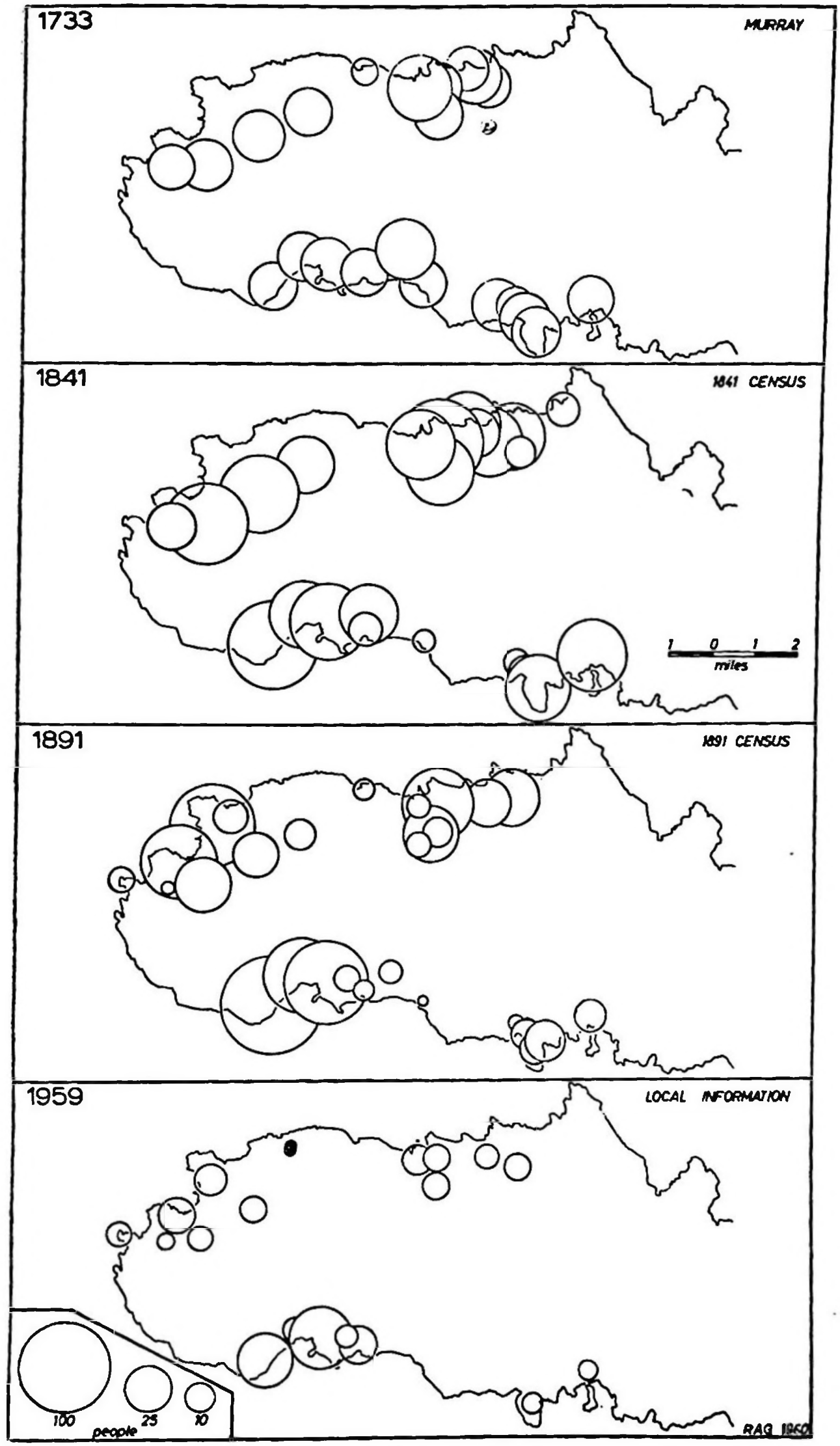

FIG. 5.

of the nineteenth century, while the numbers of legal tenants on the joint-farms remained fairly constant or gradually decreased. In Ireland it would appear that the tendency was for minute sub-division of the available land in many areas with the sporadic creation of new settlements. A different attitude by the proprietors in the two countries was basic to this difference in rural settlement.

The decline of the clachans is a well-known story—the tale of Highland depopulation. Population statistics when mapped, for instance, for west Ardnamurchan (Fig. 5) tell the story. The 1733 figures show population distribution under true run-rig conditions, with a fairly even size of settlement over the whole area. The following figures for 1841 and 1891 show what happened as some joint-farms and clachans were cleared to form sheep farms, while others had their land whittled away and their settlements swollen and reorganised into the modern crofting system. The final figures represent modern conditions when crofting settlement is no longer viable, and when many dwellings lie unoccupied for a variety of reasons (Gailey 1961*b*: 63). An increasing lack of balance in the distribution of population and so of settlement became the norm in the Highland area after 1800.

In exceptional cases where a more or less complete run of estate rentals is available, by totalling the number of tenancies over the estate for each year or at set intervals and producing a tenancy graph, an indication of the decline of clachans soon appears. This relies on the concomitance of the clachan and the run-rig joint-farm. The present example (Fig. 6) is for the Ross Estate in North Knapdale. The halving of the tenancies here between 1840 and 1860 is immediately evident. Allowing for the fact that there would be a time lag between the decline in the number of tenancies and in the number of occupied dwellings, a graph such as this can show the decline of settlement, and put a date to the critical period of change with fair accuracy. In the field this decline is apparent in the settlements themselves to a certain degree; and it appears also in a different form when one starts to map cultivation limits. In this, field study can be supplemented by the examination of aerial photographs. The drawback is that without independent dating evidence it is not possible to *date* the critical period in the decline of settlement. Where available, contemporary cartographic sources provide valuable comparative material. By comparing the cultivated area shown on Bald's map of

Ardnamurchan with the area mapped from field and aerial photographic evidence, it is clear that the maximum limits to which (outfield) cultivation had been pushed had been reached in west Ardnamurchan by 1806-7 at the latest. The area of retraction in cultivation limits, however, can only suggest the area within which there has been greatest decline of settlement, in the broadest sense, but can not provide of itself dating for this decline. The area involved is marginal hill land in most cases,

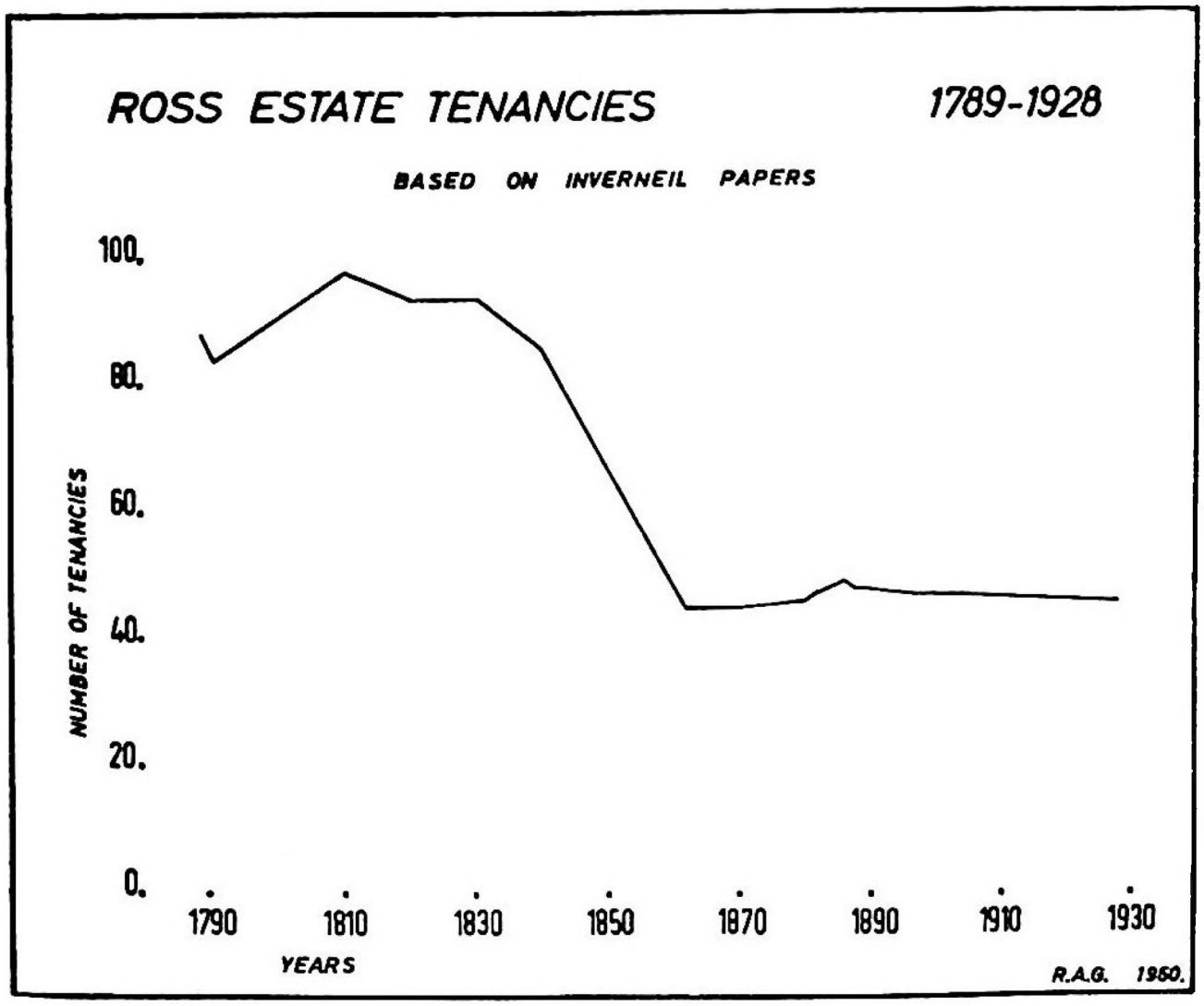

Fig. 6.

precisely the area in which, as we have already seen, we normally find the maximum relative numbers of ruined clachans. An ecological indicator of these areas is provided by bracken, which has spread rapidly over the better-drained once-cultivated areas now lying derelict.

It is worth recording here, perhaps, that the maximum limits to which cultivation had been pushed were attained by the beginning of the nineteenth century in west Ardnamurchan, before 1786 in North Knapdale, before about 1800 in Southend in Kintyre (Gailey 1961*a*; Chapters 7-9, 181), and before 1769 in Trotternish in north Skye (MacSween 1959:46). Remembering that population continued to increase into the nineteenth

century, we must, therefore, postulate an increasingly intensive use of a gradually diminishing, or at best static, total cultivable area in the Highlands during the early decades of the nineteenth century, and not a progressive intake of pasture land. The problem of the limits of cultivation is not a straight-forward relationship between man and the land, but one which demands recognition of the gradual changes wrought by agrarian improvement on an age-old infield-outfield pattern. Only thus can we resolve the apparent paradox of receding cultivation limits and rapidly increasing population pressure during the period between 1780 and 1830.

We must now turn our attention to the thorny problem of the dating of extant ruined clachans in the Highlands. Some clachans, indeed, as we have seen, are still inhabited. Terminal dates may be assigned to some sites where exceptional documentary or cartographic evidence exists. Such is the site (though there are now no ruins) at Inverneil on Loch Fyneside south of Lochgilphead. It appears on a map of about 1755 as a large inhabited clachan, and on a later one in 1776 by Taylor and Skinner as a ruinous cluster of houses (Gailey 1961*a*:106-114). In other cases oral evidence provides a date, especially where the clachan declined and was deserted after 1850. Evidence in the reports of Royal Commissions and other official bodies towards the end of the nineteenth century and also during the 1840's can place the desertion of many more sites. Similar dating evidence lies in sets of estate papers, or in the invaluable Statistical and New Statistical Accounts of the various parishes. For instance, for the Mull of Kintyre I was able to place the desertion of a group of clachans to the period before 1820 from evidence contained in the New Statistical Account for the Parish of Southend. Final dating from estate rentals put the year at 1818. Even where no specific evidence is to hand, a working knowledge of general Highland social and economic history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, of the often passionately recounted tale of the clearances and of schemes for resettlement provides some indication of when clachans were either deserted voluntarily or cleared compulsorily.

After the wealth of evidence for terminal dating we turn to discover almost complete barrenness of sources for dating the initial occupation of virtually all clachan sites. Equally there is little evidence to date the form which the clachans assume in their now ruined state. In the latter respect almost the

only evidence is derived from a study of house form and construction, rather than of settlement form.

One of the noticeable features of ruined Highland clachans is the fact that the houses were all obviously stone-built, whether with mortared or with dry-stone walls. Yet when we examine contemporary literature and other documentary sources, wherever Highland peasant houses are mentioned or described from before 1750 or 1760 almost invariably houses built of some material other than stone are involved. The various descriptions, often admittedly by biased non-Highland observers like Burt, Boswell or Pennant, all tend towards a single type of house. The building materials were wood, sod, wattles and clay; used in varying proportions in different parts of the Highlands. The house form was generally rectangular or oval with a hip-ended roof. This form, or something akin to it, is preserved in a few examples of Sinclair's *Skye* type of thatched house (Sinclair 1953:33-9) which are still to be seen.

Only two examples of this type of evidence need be given here.[8] Sir John Sinclair in 1814 summarised the late-eighteenth-century Statistical Accounts. Writing of the Highlands generally he said of the contemporary dwellings; "The miserable cottages, built of turf or sod, which are in some districts rapidly, and in others slowly disappearing, do not require any particular description. . . . Besides the low and uncomfortable walls of turf, the rounded form of the roof, with the fire-place in the middle, characterises a considerable number of the habitations of the lower classes in the Highlands and Islands" (Sinclair 1814:127). Burt in 1754 described peasant dwellings from the north Highlands. "The Walls were about four Feet high, lined with Sticks wattled like a Hurdle, built on the outside with Turf, and thinner Slices of the same material serve for Tiling. The Skeleton of the Huts was formed of small crooked Timber but the Beam of the Roof was large and out of all Proportion. This is to render the Weight of the whole more fit to resist the violent Flurries of Wind . . ." (Burt 1754:59). And it may be added that as late as 1883 Rev. Norman MacLeod remembered "The old house of Glendessary (in Morvern which) was constructed, like a few more, of wicker work; the outside being protected with turf, and the interior lined with wood" (MacLeod 1883:177).

Following the literary sources on into the nineteenth century, we discover a change to stone-built houses, and certainly by the time of the New Statistical Accounts we seldom

read of any but stone houses. Following Dr. Fairhurst, then, I would suggest that during the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, the majority of houses in clachans were constructed of material other than stone, but about the middle of the eighteenth century stone ousted the other materials in common use for various reasons (Fairhurst 1960:74; Gailey 1962, 1961*a*:299-316). This being so, one would expect to find certain unique features of the older houses lingering on as relict features in the first of the new stone houses. In fact this is the case. I would regard the narrowness of some ruined stone houses I have examined in Argyll as a relatively early feature. This suggestion is supported by the fact that at two sites overlooking Loch Stornoway in South Knapdale narrower stone houses are demonstrably overlain by wider stone houses.[9] Similarly the continued existence of cruck-supported roofs in houses with very substantial stone walls must be regarded as a relict feature.[10]

Indeed, writing in 1813 in his General View of the Agriculture of the County of Argyll, Smith had noted the anachronism of cruck-supported roofs in stone-walled houses. Writing of the roofing timbers, he had this to say: "The couple side consists sometimes of one piece, with a natural bend, sometimes of two pieces, fixed together at the eaves. The feet are built up in the walls, which is apt to shake them. If the walls were of stone and lime, the couple-soles might as well rest on top of them, over a flag, like those of slate or tile roofs. This mode, which is less troublesome and expensive, has been lately followed in several instances in Kintyre" (Smith 1813:16-17).

In view of this evidence from the study of house type we are led to the inevitable conclusion that the majority of the ruined clachans as we see them to-day can not conceivably in their present form extend back much before the end of the eighteenth century, or 1750 probably at the earliest. Thus, have earlier clachans composed of houses built of impermanent materials left no trace? So far as I am aware no ruined clachan (or inhabited one) exists with houses constructed of any material other than stone. In the one case where excavation has been tried, at Lix, only very inconclusive proof exists apart from documentary sources for a pre-stone house settlement.

Secondly, it must be asked, how old, in the Highlands, is the clachan form of settlement? Present knowledge provides no reason to extend the antiquity of the clachan form back before

about 1630.[11] All that remains is to indicate very briefly where the answers to this question may lie.

Documentary sources certainly indicate *continuity* of settlement for many known clachan *sites*, certainly back to the fourteenth century or thereby. Crown Rentals for Argyllshire in the fifteenth century enumerate holdings still recognisable, and sasines and other legal documents go back even farther. What none of these sources can do is to indicate the contemporary settlement *form*.

The authoritative work of Dr. McKerral and of Dr. Lamont on Scottish land denominations is by now well known. I profess no detailed knowledge of this tricky subject, but it would appear that the conclusions of others in this field hold important clues bearing on the present problem. It is the Celtic denominations which are here important, and of course, it was on these that the later Saxon and Norse systems were imposed to facilitate the gathering of tax. Unlike these later fiscal systems, the earlier Celtic units were basically social and agrarian in character. The principle Celtic unit was the *baile*. In 1950 McKerral said of the settlement of this unit, "The houses, unlike areas open to Northumbrian influences in the Lowlands, were not nucleated in villages, but scattered in groups over the land" (McKerral 1950:54). By this he surely implied clachan settlement. It is known that the various units and systems of units underwent significant changes from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries onwards, but it is possible, with care, to use later sources enumerating these units in relation to farms, sources like the 1751 Valuation of Argyll.[12] If I have read McKerral correctly he implies, when dealing with the southwest Highlands that the baile could have contained up to sixteen clachans. Accepting this, I wonder is it mere coincidence that in the 1751 Valuation we find six place-names with the element *Bal-* or *Bally-* included among a total of ninety-five farm entries in the modern parish of Southend. Unfortunately, this evidence looks less convincing when the distribution of these place-names is considered, for most of them occur on the west side of the parish, on the Mull of Kintyre.

The Norse imposed a tax of one ounce of silver on the Celtic baile in the areas which came under their domination. In the south the ounce was divided into twenty pennies, the area paying the tax of a penny becoming known as a pennyland. Again, I wonder is it coincidence that in west Ardnamurchan it is possible to discern topographic groupings of clachans which,

from the 1751 Valuation, total twenty pennylands and so possibly reflect the original Celtic baile. One of these groups includes Bourblaige (Fig. 3) and three other clachans, Tornamona, Skinid and Coryvoulin. The four are grouped about the foot of Ben Hiant, two on the east side of the mountain and two on the west side. The unifying feature between the four was the mountain itself, or rather the common pasture it supplied, and it is pertinent to recall that as far as we can tell early Highland society was organised on a pastoral basis and the existence of common grazings was of fundamental importance. Ben Hiant, incidentally, is still regarded as one of the finest hill grazings in the west Highlands, witnessed by the fact that the experimental farm of Boots' Pure Drug Company at Mingary incorporates the four old joint-farms grouped about the mountain. Examination of the ground and of aerial photographs shows no other settlement sites over the Ben Hiant area than the four known clachans—but it must be remembered that we have still to recognise a settlement site anywhere which had houses of clay, sod or wattles.

The evidence just cited appears to support about sixteen clachans per baile in south Argyll and only four in the north of the county. This disagreement need not concern us here. What is important is the seeming concomitance of clachan settlement and the Celtic baile.

Finally, to turn briefly and equally speculatively to archæology. Little is known from the archæologists' view-point of the detailed circumstances of settlement in the Highlands during the Dark Ages and the Medieval period (Clark 1956:121-142). The majority of the sites excavated have been duns, crannogs and allied contemporaneous structures. Occupation has been shown in some duns through the Dark Ages, and, in one case, even into the sixteenth century (Fairhurst 1939:219). Material remains discovered in excavations hint at a relatively prosperous, one might almost say "aristocratic" occupation. The construction of many of these settlements, and this is especially true of the galleried duns, demanded a high degree of skill and a larger labour force, I would suggest, than that for which there is immediate evidence from occupation material.

It would appear then that the distribution of the duns and contemporaneous structures which have so far been recognised, does not represent the total settlement pattern for the Dark Ages and Medieval period. The duns, for instance, are not all contemporaneous, and if Dr. Fairhurst's experience at Bunessan

in Mull recently is any indication, they were not all domestic settlements, fortified or unfortified (Fairhurst: unpublished excavation, personal communication).

If all this is acceptable, where did the bulk of the population live during these periods, some of whom must have been partly responsible for the building of the structures which have been examined hitherto? Something is needed to fill this gap in west Highland settlement evolution, and I would suggest that we should expect to find unenclosed clusters of dwellings, constructed of impermanent materials, contemporaneous with settlements already recognised as being of Dark Age and Medieval date.

This implies a dichotomy in society, as in settlement. On the one hand there was, for want of a better term, an "aristocracy" living in the duns, crannogs and similar settlements; while on the other hand, subservient to them, a numerically greater group of people lived in proto-clachans. This was a dichotomy which continued into the eighteenth century when it could still be recognised as such, with lairds, and to a lesser degree tacksmen frequently living in isolated dwellings and castles; while the greater part of the population lived in clachans as sub-tenants and joint-tenants.

The holding of land by the clachan-dwellers was at will until the eighteenth century, while many never had security of tenure till the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time clan raiding was endemic to the Highlands for at least two or three centuries before the final pacification of the Highlands in the mid-eighteenth century, and there were even more extensive devastations from time to time, like General Leslie's campaign through Kintyre in the seventeenth century. In circumstances like these we can easily appreciate that the stone architecture of the aristocracy, of the clan and lesser chiefs, would have had little influence on the humble dwellings of the clachans, whose occupants never knew when they would find their homes in ruins. There was little incentive until the eighteenth century at the earliest for the vast bulk of the Highland population to build for themselves homes which would last for any considerable length of time, houses which would leave material remains for us to study. Again we return to the fact that the ruined clachans which we see in the field are seldom dateable to a time earlier than the late eighteenth century at the earliest.[13]

[1] This is broadly the plan the author followed in his study of "Settlement Changes in the Southwest Highlands of Scotland: 1750-1960", Ph.D. thesis, Glasgow University, 1961, where the origins of eighteenth-century clachan settlement were discussed in a series of appendixes.

[2] Throughout this paper the term "clachan" is used to denote a group of dwellings and associated outbuildings grouped usually without any formal plan. This term has already been applied by Irish workers, particularly by students who have worked under Professor E. Evans at Belfast (e.g. Proudfoot 1959: 110). Similarly the term has already been incorporated into settlement terminology by workers dealing with Highland settlement (e.g. Fairhurst, MacSween, Gailey, et al.). At one time the term had a functional connotation implying the existence of a parish church within the settlement (e.g. Clachan in Kintyre), but this meaning has long been lost. The term is, and has been used in settlement studies primarily in a morphological manner, and only secondarily in a functional sense in that these settlements were at one time usually, but not always, an integral part of a run-rig or rundale joint-farm. The use of the term is infinitely preferable when dealing with a distinctive settlement form and type, where the use of terms like "village" and "hamlet" can only lead to ultimate confusion since they already possess distinctive meanings within the context of the study of lowland English settlement.

[3] It is outwith the scope of this paper to discuss the pattern of, or regional variations in run-rig in the Highlands. This has already been covered adequately for present purposes (Grant 1926; Gray 1937; Handley 1953).

[4] An example of this type of dwelling would be Pitcastle in Perthshire (Dunbar 1960:113-17), or the sheep farm at Kilian on Loch Fyne-side, the present house on which is known to date from about 1750. At Kilian, however, we know from Sheep Farm Accounts (Inverneil Papers: Kilian Accounts) between 1790 and 1793 that in all probability there were other smaller houses in existence to accommodate a gar-dener, a shepherd, a cow-man and various other servants, reproducing, possibly, a clachan community.

[5] The morphological variations of contemporary Highland, and especially Hebridean settlement patterns have been well demonstrated by Uhlig, who, in fact, has shown more than the two extremes mentioned as typical of the course of events within the crofting areas after about 1800 (Uhlig 1959:98-124).

[6] Taylor and Skinner are better known for their road maps of Scotland. Contained in the Inverneil Papers is a volume of farm plans, mostly dated 1776, covering Inverneil on Loch Fyneside, and the Ross and Knap estates on the west coast of Knapdale. These were surveyed following their acquisition between 1769 and 1775 on behalf of Major, later Sir Archibald Campbell of Inverneil, then with the East India Company in Calcutta. The Inverneil Papers are in the possession of Dr. John L. Campbell of Canna, and micro-film and photostat copies are held in the Library of Glasgow University.

[7] The actual maps and working of this analysis are not reproduced here, but have been set forth elsewhere (Gailey 1961*a*:176-8).

[8] All the examples discovered by the author relating to Argyllshire, together with others dealing with the Highlands at large, have been included in a paper on "The Peasant Houses of Southwest Highlands of Scotland: Distribution, Parallels and Evolution". (Gailey 1962; 1961*a*:299-316).

[9] Thirty-three ruined clachans were examined in Argyllshire, together with a cartographic analysis which covered settlements throughout the mainland part of the county, apart from Cowal. Narrow stone houses were noted at: Balmavicar (NR592095), Corphin (NR768147), and Soccach (NR745128) in the parish of Southend; Achadh na h-Airde (NR729613), Baillidh (NR750639), Breac Bharr (NR738621), and Munichile (NR743654) in the parish of South Knapdale. The two sites where wider stone houses overlie narrower ones are Breac Bharr and Achadh na h-Airde, both overlooking Loch Stornoway. (N.B. The letters and numbers in brackets are the National Grid references for these sites).

[10] The remains of bastard-crucks—Walton's crup-truss type (Walton 1957: 109, 121)—or the wall slots for these, were discovered at Baillidh (NR750639), and Munichile (NR743645) in South Knapdale parish; Tigh an t-Sluichd (NR750908) in the parish of North Knapdale; Auchindrain (NN031031), and Auchnangoul (NN058055) in the parish of Inveraray; Plocaig (NM453698) in the parish of Ardnamurchan. They are known to exist also at other sites, e.g. Old Crinan in North Knapdale.

[11] The earliest reference known to the author which points unequivocally to clachan settlement in the Highlands and Islands refers to Lewis in 1630, and is quoted by Dr. I. F. Grant in her recent *Highland Folkways*, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 44.

[12] A copy of this Valuation rests in the Historical Department of Register House, Edinburgh, and another copy with His Grace, the Duke of Argyll. A typescript copy, from which the author worked, is in the possession of Miss Marion Campbell, of Kilberry, to whom the author is indebted.

[13] The author thanks the University of Glasgow for liberal financial assistance to carry out much of the field and documentary research incorporated in this paper. The work was undertaken between 1957 and 1960 in the Department of Geography of Glasgow University.

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