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W. F. H. NICOLAISEN

B. NOTES ON COLLECTION AND RESEARCH

An Oil Painting of a Highland Shinty Match

Some years ago Professor J. H. Delargy, Honorary Director of the Irish Folklore Commission, drew our attention to a reproduction of an old painting of a Highland shinty match. This had been published in 1932 by the late Father Ninian Macdonald, O.S.B., of Fort Augustus Abbey, by way of frontispiece to his little book on the history of shinty (Macdonald 1932).

Through the kindness of Mr. Basil Skinner, of the Scottish

A Highland Shinty Match, *circa* 1840. After the original oil painting in the possession of Dr. Joan MacKinnon (*Block by courtesy of the Arts Council of Great Britain*). See pp. 103-4.

National Portrait Gallery, who ascertained that the painting had been presented by Sir Alec Martin, of Christie's, to the then Prime Minister, the late Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, we were soon able to locate the original, for Mrs. Ishbel Peterkin, of Lossiemouth, informed us that the painting remained in the family after her father's death, and now belongs to her sister, Dr. Joan MacKinnon, of Leeds. Dr. MacKinnon at once agreed to lend the painting to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery for its 1962 exhibition, *Sport in Scotland*, and subsequently gave permission for its reproduction here (Plate XII).

The painting (which measures 29 by 37½ inches) is unsigned, and the identity of the artist has not yet been conclusively established, though D. Cunliffe, and A. Smith, of Mauchline, have been suggested. The period of the painting is, on stylistic grounds, put at about 1840. Despite the tendency towards romantic exaggeration characteristic of that period, the painting is of considerable interest as perhaps the earliest-known visual representation of the game of shinty in Scotland. This interest would be enhanced if it could be related to a particular place and event. It is not impossible, of course, that the landscape setting is an ideal one, for some of the more notable games of Highland shinty took place at this period in quite other surroundings. Such, for instance, was the match arranged on 23 June, 1841, by the "Society of True Highlanders" in Copenhagen Fields, an extent of rich meadow land lying on the outskirts of Islington, for which, however, "half the glens of Lochaber had been ransacked for shinty clubs before the gathering".

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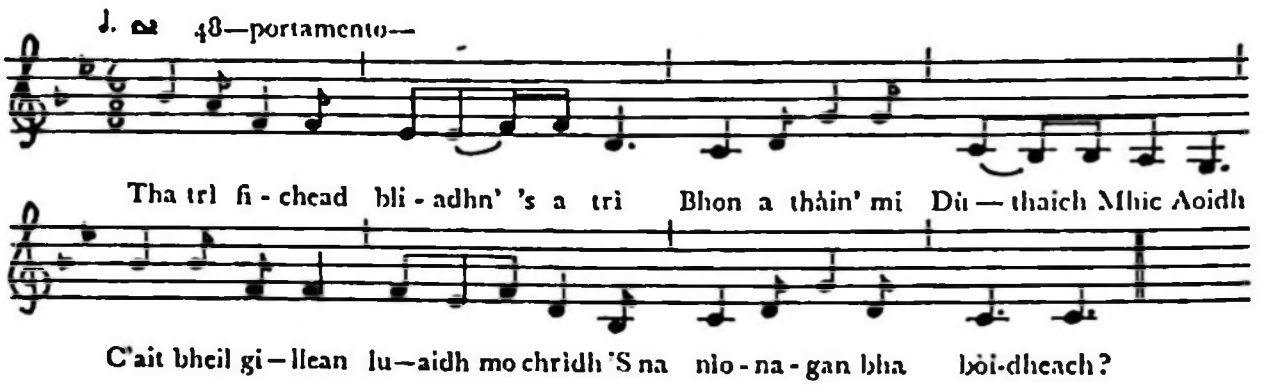
B. R. S. MEGAW

A Gaelic Song of the Sutherland Clearances



Tha trì fichead bliadhn' 's a trì
Bhon a thàin'[1] mi Dùthaich Mhic Aoidh
Càit bheil gillean luaidh mo chrìdh
'S na nionagan bha bòidheach

Mo mhullachd air a' chaora mhór
Càit bheil clann nan daoine còir
Dhealaich sinn nuair bha sinn òg
'S mas robh Dùthaich 'c Aoidh 'na fàsach

Ach nis, a Shellar, fhuair thu bàs
'S ma fhuair thu ceartas fhuair thu blàths
An teine leis 'n a loisg thu càch
Gum faigh thu fhéin gu leòr dheth

It is sixty-three years
Since I came to MacKay's country
Where are the lads I loved
And the pretty girls?

My curse on the big sheep—
Where are the children of the kindly folk?
We parted when we were young
Before MacKay's country had become a wilderness

But now, Sellar, you are dead
And if justice has been done you are warm!
The fire with which you burnt others
May you yourself have enough of it.

These three verses belong to a song composed in the north of Sutherland, probably in the early eighties of last century. The author, according to Mr. Ian Grimble in *The Trial of Patrick Sellar* (London 1962), Appendix pp. 158-60, is said to have been Ewen Robertson (1842-95), a native of Tongue. Mr. Grimble publishes eleven verses: a main text of eight quatrains from a Durness source, and illustrative variants from Dornie and Invernaver tradition. The version published above differs slightly from all of these, and may be considered to represent still another variant. It is printed here, however, mainly for the sake of the melody. In his note on the song Mr. Grimble points out that none of Ewen Robertson's poems had up to then been published, "and this, his most famous poem to-day survives in variant versions, sung to at least two airs that appear to belong exclusively to it" (*ibid*).

The words and air printed above were recorded in April 1958 from Mr. Andrew Stewart, Durness, a native of Melness.

Since verse 3 loses almost all its force in English—and the

idiomatic use of *fhuair* in any case resists translation—my colleague, Mr. Hamish Henderson, produced this trim stanza in his own Scots:

> Sellar, daith has ye in his grip;
> Ye needna think he'll let ye slip.
> Justice ye've earned, and, by the Book,
> A warm assize ye winna jouk.
> The fires ye lit tae gut Strathnaver
> Ye'll feel them noo—and roast forever.

I am indebted to my colleague, Miss Gillian Johnstone, for transcribing the melody.

NOTE

[1] *Thàin mi*, "I came", of verse 1 is simply a slip on the singer's part for *dh'fhàg mi*, "I left" (which is also Grimble's form) as is seen by *Dùthaich*.

JOHN MACINNES

The Buckie Wife

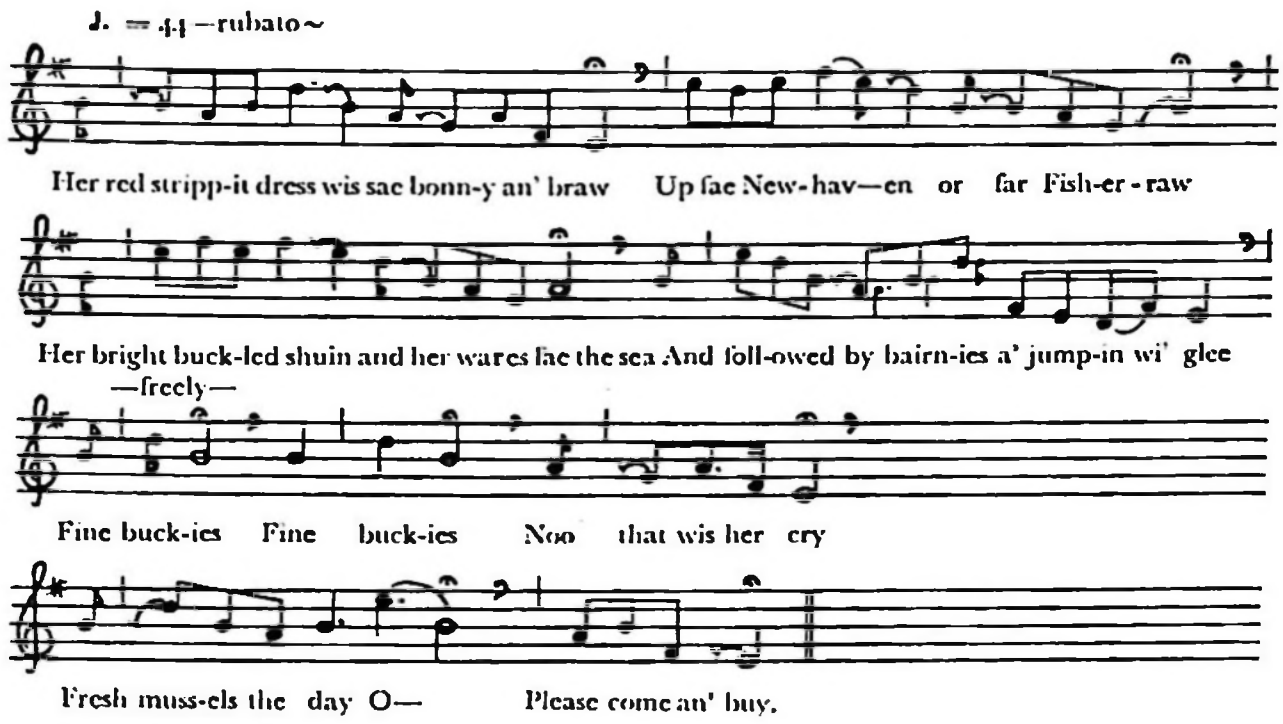
The present folk-song revival has already thrown up some excellent folk poets. In Glasgow there is Matt McGinn, a native of the Gallowgate, whose songs have all the smeddum and sardonic verve of a great proletarian city. Edinburgh has (among others) Bob Bertram, who has written over fifty songs in the last five months. Some of these are mere ephemeral squibs about current affairs such as the Profumo imbroglio, but others look as if they might prove more durable.

These song-writers are nearly all products of the folk-song clubs which have sprung up all over Britain in the last two years. The clubs often invite famous traditional singers like Jeannie Robertson to sing to their predominantly youthful audiences, and the results are nearly always beneficial; the introduction to the world of traditional song thus afforded stimulates the more gifted of the club members not only to sing but also to create in the "auld style". In one or two cases, the results have been extraordinary.

Before he began visiting the evening sessions in the Waverley Bar, St. Mary's Street, Bob Bertram had never had any knowledge of, or interest in, Scottish folk-music. Although born in Melbourne, Australia, he has lived nearly all his life in Edinburgh. He went to Niddrie Marischal school, left it at 14, and after six months in a biscuit factory and two years in the army he got a job with Scott's, the wholesale ironmongers in the Grassmarket. At present he is working in

the costing department. He is a bachelor, thirty-five years of age.

For most of his songs Bob takes over and adapts already existing tunes in the time-honoured fashion, but he has also composed some striking original tunes of his own. The air of "The Buckie Wife" is somewhat reminiscent of a gangrel family of Irish ballad tunes, but it has its own very marked identity. Bob says that the song "is about life in Edinburgh, when the Newhaven fisherwives used to come around selling buckies and mussels, and actually it echoes a lot of the thoughts . . . and the scenes I witnessed when I was a boy". It was given its first public performance during my seminar on "Scots Folk-Song Today" in the School of Scottish Studies on 27th November 1963.



When I was a laddie in Auld Reekie toon,
I looked for the buckie wife comin' aroon—
Wi' a creel on her back, and a strap tae her broo;
In each hand a tin pitcher o' mussels quite fu'.

(Chorus)

Fine buckies
Fine buckies
Noo that wis her cry.
Fresh mussels the day O
Please come an' buy.

Her red-strippit dress was sae bonny an' braw,
Up frae Newhaven, or far Fisherraw.
Her bright buckled shuin, and her wares fae the sea,
And followed by bairnies a' jumpin' wi 'glee.

A' shoutin' for buckies, as roon her were seen;
Each wi' a poke and a wee tiny peen.
If we wanted mussels, wi' spoons there we ate,
And supped them a' up fae oot o' a plate.

And late at night, when the pubs a' shut doon,
It's there she'd be seen at the tap o' the toon;
Wi' drunks a' aroon, when the hunger did gnaw—
Fair gled o' her wares fae far Fisherraw.

Bit alas and alack, noo, this sight is quite rare.
Yon frienly fish-wife we'll see there nae mair;
Wi' the passin' o' time nae mair tae be seen—
The buckies, the mussels, the wee tiny peen.

HAMISH HENDERSON

Gual Gaidhealach: Peat Charcoal

The purpose of this note is twofold; to describe a technological process for which considerable antiquity may be postulated, and to publish a first hand account, in Gaelic, of the preparation of peat charcoal for iron-smelting in North Uist indicating the importance of oral tradition, not only as a source of literary and social history, but of economic history also.

The necessity for a concentrated fuel for metal working has been known for some 5,000 years. Charcoal has been the answer to this need for most of that period and indeed without "chars" it is difficult to envisage the progress of metallurgy at all. Charcoal is almost the perfect fuel with high temperature, minimal ash and no smoke. In addition, by chance, it happens to convert iron to a metal superior to copper or bronze in a functional sense. Wrought iron objects in the presence of heated charcoal acquire a surface coating of steel by the diffusion of carbon and thereafter, of course, will take a sharp edge. Indeed R. J. Forbes would argue that the Iron Age does not properly begin until this cementation process, the carbonisation of wrought iron, occurs (*circa* mid-2nd Millenium on present evidence). Furthermore, pottery kilns also required a fuel concentrate. Wood charcoal became a vital product and deforestation proceeded apace until by early medieval times attempts were made in parts of Europe to ban its production—the possibilities of coal becoming by then apparent. Although, to quote Forbes on the medieval period, "metallurgy remains

in essence a charcoal process" (Forbes 1956:62) the disappearance of the forests in the immediate post medieval centuries killed large scale charcoal production.

Non-forested or deforested areas, however remote from coal were, and in the former case had always been, at a severe disadvantage in an age of iron technology. In the Outer Hebrides (treeless within the historic period) this problem was clearly severe and peat provided a first class substitute for wood as a raw material—perhaps even an improvement. We have, for instance, an account of peat reduction for charcoal in the nineteenth century by Alexander Ross who observed this process indoors in Jura where a small stone lined pit some 2 feet in diameter and with a perforated stone covering was filled with pre-heated peats (Ross 1885-6:409).

Relatively large-scale production of peat charcoal continued in North Uist into the first decade of this century. It is a technique which I would argue on the grounds of necessity, effectiveness, and simplicity to be of very early origin, as old as the specialist smith in the area, an argument which will remain hypothetical, of course, until archæological evidence is forthcoming. I print now the transcription of an interview which I recorded between my colleague D. A. MacDonald and Mr. Donald MacLean of Carinish, North Uist, in October 1962 (R.L. 1900).

D.A.M.: Seadh, 's bha sibh ag ràdha, ma tha, gu'm biodh sibh a' deanamh gual—rud ris an canadh 'ad gual Gàidhealach —'s gu 'm biodh sibh ag obair leis as a' cheàrdaich.
D.M.: Bha; bhiomaid 'ga dhèanamh. Bhiodh an gual gann co dhiùbh. A' dol dha'n mhointich 's a' toir linn spaid 's a' fosgladh toll ann am mòinteach—nam biodh mòinteach mhath, gun a bhi ro fhliuch ann—'fosgladh toll as am biodh aon ochd traighean a dh'fhaid, agus aon trí traighean a liad 's doimhneachd a rithist aon-ò, deagh thrì traighean a dhoimhneachd. Bhith 'g a lìonadh, an uairsen, sen le mòine—mòine mhath a bhiodh slàn.
D.A.M.: 'N e mòine dhubh, na mòine chiob, na . . .?
D.M.: Mòine dhubh. Sheadh, mòine dhubh. O, té sam bith ach i bhi rudeigin . . . gun i bhi ro phrann. Agus 'n uair a bh' e làn go bhial, bha sibh an uair sen a' cur teine as gach ceann dheth, 's teine as a' mheadhoin.
D.A.M.: A robh sibh a' fàgail àite airson gaoth a thighinn threimhe na sian?

D.M.: Cha robh, cha robh, ach a' leigeil leis gabhail an uairsen. Bhiodh e gabhail suas gobhail: 's ligeil leis an uairsen go'n biodh e gu math dearg, gos nach biodh . . . Bhiodh direach a' ghabhail air stad as. 'N uair a bha sibh a' smaointeachadh an uairsen a bha teas air a dhol thromh 'n fhàd uileag, 's e uileag 'na ghual, bha thu 'n uairsen a' tòiseachadh air gearradh sgrathan: tòiseachadh air cur na sgrathan as an dala ceann 's a' cur t'éil' as deaghaidh na té sen 's i' breith air . . . 'greimeachadh air a' sgrath eile, go ruigeadh sibh an ceann eile.

D.A.M.: 'S bhiodh e dùinte buileach an uairsen?

D.M.: Toir dheth na h-èidhear, 's ma bha ceò a' tighinn as an uairsen badan beaga do cheò a' tighinn threimhe bha sibh an uairsen a' faighinn, leis a' spaid, mòine bhog 's 'ga bualadh air na tuill a bh'ann a shen, 's bha e 'n uairsen a' toir dheth na h-èidhear, 's cha robh sian a' tighinn . . . ri fhaicinn idir: 's thu 'ga fhàgail ann a shen go cionn, ò, latha na dà latha. 'Ga thoir as an uairsen 's ga thoir dha'n cheàrdaich ann am pocannan.

D.A.M.: 'S ciamar a gheibheadh sibh an uairsen e . . .?

D.M.: Bhiodh e aotrom. Aotrom. Shaoileadh sibh nach robh móran feum ann idir.

D.A.M.: Agus bhiodh e prann, am bitheadh?

D.M.: Bhithead. Bhiodh feadhainn dhe na fòidean dìreach nan dà leth. Feadhainn bu lugha na sen, bhiodh e uiread ri . . . ò, ged bhiodh e, abraibh . . . bhiodh e uiread ri bocsa mhaidseachan na mar sen.

D.A.M.: Agus an ann dubh a bhiodh e?

D.M. Chan ann. Glas a bhiodh e: glas: liath-ghlas mar sen.

D.A.M.: Agus dé na ghabhadh sloc mar seo? Dé na chuireadh sibh ann a' mhònaidh?

D.M.: O, do mhònaidh? O dh'fheumadh sibh aon dà luchd cartach.

D.A.M.: Dà luchd cartach. 'S dé *size* a thuirt sibh a rithist a bhiodh as a' chlaise bha seo. . . .

D.M.: O, bhiodh aona n-ochd traighean a dh'fhaid innte, 's aon trí a liad, 's doimhneachd mhath, sios aon trí traighean.

D.A.M.: Seadh gu dearbha. 'S dheanadh seo obair sam bith as a' cheàrdaich?

D.M.: Dheanadh e . . . uamhasach math as a' cheàrdaich . . . Cha robh e salach idir. Cha robh . . . *chars* as a dheaghaidh idir, mar a chanas sìbh as a' Bheurla . . . Dheanadh e tathadh cho math ri gual sam bith.

D.A.M.: *Well, well!* 'S a robh e cho teth ris a' ghual?
D.M.: O, *well*, 's dòcha nach robh e cho teth ach, *well*, cha robh e fad air deireadh.
D.A.M.: Agus a robh e buan an uairsen? A maireadh e? . . .
D.M.: O, mhaireadh. Cha mhaireadh e cho fad ris a' ghual ghallda, ach dheanadh e obair mhath. Dheanadh sibh obair mhath leis—math fhéin.
D.A.M.: Agus chunnaig sibh péin seo 'ga dhèanamh tric gu leòr?
D.M.: Chunnaig. Bha mi 'ga dhèanamh cuide ri m'athair uair is uair.
D.A.M.: 'S cuin a rinn sibh seo ma dheireadh, bheil dad a bheachd agaibh?
D.M.: O, bhitheadh, tha mi creidsinn, ann a . . . ach, a' 1909, na 1910.
D.A.M.: Díreach. 'S bhiodh a' cheàrdach gu math trang an uairsen?
D.M.: O, bha i trang an uair ad; bha.

Translation

D.A.M.: Well, you were saying then that you used to make charcoal—a thing called Gaelic coal—and that you used to work with it in the smithy.
D.M.: Yes; we used to make it. Coal was scarce anyway. We would go to the peat moor taking spades and open a hole in the moor—if there was a suitable place that was not too wet—opening a hole that would be some 8 feet long and some 3 feet broad and depth again some . . . oh a good 3 feet of depth. Filling that, then with peats—good peats that were whole.
D.A.M.: Was it black peat, or fibrous peat, or . . .?
D.M.: Black peat. Yes, black peat. Oh any kind provided that it was somewhat . . . that it was not too crumbling. And when it was full to the top you then lit a fire at each end of it and a fire in the middle.
D.A.M.: Did you leave a place for a draught to pass through it or anything?
D.M.: No, no. You just allowed it to burn then. It would catch alight right up to the mouth: you let it be then till it was pretty red, so that there was not . . . the flames would just have died down in it. When you thought then that the heat had gone completely through the peat and that it was one

mass of glowing embers you then began to cut turfs: beginning to put the turfs at one end and putting another after that one catching . . . gripping the other turf until you reached the other end.
D.A.M.: And it would be completely closed then?
D.M.: Shutting the air off from it, and if there was smoke coming out of it then—little patches of smoke coming through it—you then got soft peat with the spade and plastered it on these holes and it shut the air off from it then, and there was nothing coming . . . to be seen at all. And you left it there for, oh, a day or two days. You took it out then and took it to the smithy in bags.
D.A.M.: And in what condition would you find it then?
D.M.: It would be light. Light. You could imagine that there was not much use in it at all.
D.A.M.: And it would be brittle would it?
D.M.: Yes. Some of the peats would be just broken in half. Smaller pieces than these would be as big as . . . or perhaps it might be, say . . . it would be the size of a box of matches or thereabouts.
D.A.M.: And it would be black would it?
D.M.: No it was grey; grey; blue grey somewhat.
D.A.M.: And how much would a pit like this take? How much peat would you put in it?
D.M.: Oh, of peat? Oh you would need some two cartloads.
D.A.M.: Two cart loads. And what size did you say this trench would be again?
D.M.: Oh it would be some 8 feet long and some 3 feet broad and a good depth some 3 feet down.
D.A.M.: Yes, indeed. And this would do any kind of work in the smithy?
D.M.: It would do . . . exceedingly well in the smithy . . . it wasn't dirty at all. There were no "chars" after it at all, as you would say in English. It would do welding/joining as well as any coal.
D.A.M.: Well, well! And was it as hot as coal?
D.M.: Oh. Well perhaps it was not as hot but, well, it wasn't far behind.
D.A.M.: And it was long-lasting then? Would it last?
D.M.: Oh, yes. It would not last as long as (foreign) coal but it would do good work. You could do good work with it—excellent.
D.A.M.: And you yourself saw this being done often enough?

D.M.: Yes. I used to make it with my father time and again.
D.A.M.: And when did you do this last, have you any idea?
D.M.: Oh, it would be I believe in . . . ach, in 1909 or 1910.
D.A.M.: Very good. And the smithy would be pretty busy at that time?
D.M.: Oh, it was busy then; yes.

I think this graphic description requires no amplification. I am indebted to Mr. Donald Maclean, Carinish, for his expert commentary and courtesy and, of course, to my colleague D. A. MacDonald for the pertinence of his questions.

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IAIN A. CRAWFORD

C. OTHER NOTES

The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme

During the last forty years there has been a remarkable decline in the Hebridean fishing industry. Around the islands the waters still teem with valuable and varied fish, and naturally much fishing continues to take place, but the islanders themselves now have little to do with it. For example, probably fewer than 200 Lewismen are engaged in fishing other than for themselves at any time in the year, half of them only for a brief summer season, and even for local consumption their island depends for some of the year on the efforts of mainland crews. The contrast with forty years ago is complete, for then every mobile man and woman took part in the fishery, afloat or on shore.

In the old days of sail it was easy for men to combine the two occupations of crofting and fishing. However, when, in the early years of this century, power replaced sail, and the steam drifter took over from the sailboat, the whole nature of the fishing industry changed. The fishermen of the Western Isles were unable to adjust themselves to the new situation by acquiring modern boats—partly because of lack of sufficient capital, partly because of lack of suitable anchorages and

harbours, and partly because the combination of crofting and fishing had created a seasonal tradition which was incompatible with the use of expensive boats which needed to be kept continually at sea if they were to be made to pay—and in the lean years of the inter-war period they had no option but to carry on as best they could in their old traditional role. Even in this humble role they were at a serious geographical disadvantage, for changes in the means and methods of fishing had been accompanied by equally sharp changes in the size and nature of markets, both at home and abroad. Deprived of the continental markets which had formerly bought large quantities of cured herring, the Hebridean ports were now forced to rely mainly upon the smaller and more selective home market, in relation to which they were badly located. The resultant decline of the Hebridean fishing industry between the two World Wars meant that, when new opportunities did eventually arise in the form of grants and loans schemes introduced in 1945 by the Fisheries Division of the Scottish Home Department and subsequently by the White Fish Authority and the Herring Industry Board, the bulk of the men living in the Isles—lacking experience in handling modern boats and equipment as well as confidence in fishing as an occupation—were unable to take advantage of them. By 1959 there were only 25 boats of 40 feet or more in length based upon Hebridean ports (Fleck Committee, 1961:para. 177) and only six full-time crews in Lewis and five in Harris (*Glasgow Herald*:2.6.1959).

The decline of the local fishing industry has undoubtedly contributed towards the high level of unemployment and depopulation in the Hebrides, especially the Outer Hebrides, in recent decades. As the Taylor Commission remarked: "A good part of the difficulties under which the crofting districts labour has been caused not only by the decline of production on the croft but also, and even more, by the failure of the auxiliary occupations which used to be followed. In some parts of the Western sea-board and in many of the Isles, it is the failure of the fishing industry which creates the difficulty" (Taylor Commission, 1954:para. 233). Furthermore, the lack of a modern local fleet fishing on a full-time basis has meant that the Minch is only fished at all intensively when the East Coast fleet is operating in the area, with the result that landings at Minch ports tend to be both seasonal and irregular in occurrence. But any investment in harbour improvements

and processing facilities at Minch ports will clearly fail to yield a full return on the capital invested in them so long as they remain largely unused during the summer months. Just as surely as the Minch fishing is essential to keep the capital invested in East Coast boats employed in winter, so the development of a local fleet is necessary to keep the capital invested in processing plant in the area employed in summer.

It has long been realised, of course, that there is both ample scope and need for a local fleet in the Minch. Lord Leverhulme was well aware of this when, shortly after the First World War, he formulated his ambitious plans for the development of a full-time fishing fleet based on Stornoway. More than thirty years later, the Taylor Commission again drew attention to the need for a full-time fishing fleet off the North-West coast of Scotland. As it commented in its Report: "Gone are the days when the crew of the fishing boat could haul their craft up on the beach and leave it there in safety. The modern scine-netter is much too heavy to be beached in that way and far too costly to be exposed to risk in unsafe anchorages. . . . The capital outlay required for their purchase is such that it is not economic to operate them except on a full-time basis. It is still possible for smaller boats to be employed in fishing for lobster or crab, but the general trend of development is against the man who combines fishing with the work of the croft. We do not think it possible to reverse this trend; it should be accepted and an attempt made to establish a full-time fishing industry in Western waters" (Taylor Commission, 1954:para. 233). It is only within the last four years, however, that such an attempt has finally been made.

The first vital step came in January, 1959, when the Macaulay (Rhodesia) Trust[1] announced the introduction of a scheme designed "to increase the number of modern boats with efficient crews operating from or based on Lewis". All persons applying for assistance under this scheme were required to give an undertaking that they would prosecute fishing on a full-time basis, and if this condition was broken within a period of ten years the Trustees reserved the right to recover any monies provided by them. Furthermore, no person would be assisted unless, in the opinion of the Trustees, he was likely to make "an energetic and successful fisherman", and applicants for assistance were accordingly required either to show that they were adequately trained in modern fishing methods or else to undergo a period of training by working on an

approved vessel for anything up to two years. Subject to these conditions being satisfied, the Trust declared that it would provide the initial capital needed to obtain a new boat under the grants and loans schemes operated by the Herring Industry Board and the White Fish Authority. In the case of groups acting together as a crew this would amount to up to 5 per cent of the cost of a new boat (with an upper limit of £3,000)—which, subject to the approval of the appropriate fishing authority, would enable them to acquire a boat worth about £20,000 at the end of their period of training—or up to 5 per cent (with an upper limit of £1,000) in the case of individuals.

Announcing the introduction of the scheme, the Trust's Local Advisory Committee stated: "It is obvious that East Coast fishermen are earning good money from the Minch. . . . The prospects, given a modern boat and all-out fishing throughout the year, are very different from what they were before the war. We do not agree that the Lewisman has lost his taste for the sea and fishing, or that he is in any way less enterprising than the East Coaster. We have come to the conclusion that there are two difficulties—the young Lewisman lacks the capital to buy a modern boat and the experience to use it. We are trying by this scheme to solve these two problems together. If there are any young men prepared to acquire the experience, the Macaulay Trust is prepared to assist them with capital. . . . The scheme covers only the Island of Lewis, but if it succeeds, it may open the way for a general revival of fishing in the Western Isles by showing that there are young men in the area who will take an opportunity when it is offered to them" (*Stornoway Gazette*:27.1.1959).

The Macaulay Trust scheme was a pioneering venture, but it had two important consequences. Firstly, it was directly responsible for assisting three young men in Kirkibost, Bernera, to acquire one of the best-equipped lobster boats in Scotland. Apart from one other boat, this was the first fishing vessel of 40 feet or more in length to be built for a Lewis crew since the end of the last war. Secondly, the scheme acted indirectly as a useful prototype for the Government scheme which was to augment and largely replace it a year later.

The possible introduction of a Government-sponsored scheme was intimated in the White Paper of June, 1959, which stressed that "the development in the Minch area of a modern local fleet fishing on a full-time basis is needed to strengthen the economy of the Outer Hebrides" and went on to declare

that "the Highlands Panel are of the opinion that a most important step in reviving a local fleet in the Minch is to educate young fishermen there in modern fishing techniques, and the Secretary of State, with the White Fish Authority and the Herring Industry Board, is considering how best this suggestion can be put into practice" (Review of Highland Policy, 1959:para. 23). The result of these deliberations became apparent in January, 1960, when the Government officially instituted the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme. Under this scheme, free training was offered to men who were prepared to make fishing their career, together with financial assistance to those who satisfactorily completed their training and who wished to acquire boats of their own. For men with no previous fishing experience, practical training as an extra hand was to be given for a period of up to six months on a commercial fishing vessel operating in the Minch area and selected as suitable for the purpose. For men who completed their initial period of training or who had other suitable experience and who proposed to form their own crew locally and to acquire a boat, the scheme offered a further period of at least six months' training under an experienced skipper and second hand on board the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' own training ship, the "Islesman". The implementation of this scheme, which applied solely to able bodied men of 18 or over whose permanent homes were in the Outer Hebrides, was to be supervised by the Chief Inspector of Sea Fisheries, Mr. Charles Sim, and organised by the Scheme's Training officer, Mr. J. W. Dunningham, from his base in Stornoway.

The provision of financial assistance for the purchase of boats was only made possible by the generosity of the Macaulay (Rhodesia) Trust and the Highland Fund Limited who agreed to grant suitably trained applicants the capital required to meet the normal 15 per cent deposit on a new boat. The remainder of the cost was to be met by grants from the White Fish Authority or the Herring Industry Board and loans from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Except under special circumstances, this assistance was not designed to cover the acquisition of second-hand vessels, for the likelihood of higher maintenance expenses being added to the repayment burden was considered too heavy a commitment for men embarking upon a fishing career. In addition to their preliminary period of training on the official training vessel, an

extra training skipper was also to be available to sail with crews during the working-up period following the acquisition and delivery of their own boats.

The implementation of the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme was not without its difficulties. Firstly, in June, 1961, the funds of the Macaulay (Rhodesia) Trust were suddenly depleted by an unforeseen tax liability, causing its Trustees temporarily to suspend their scheme of assistance for Lewismen acquiring their own boats. Three crews had been or were then being assisted to purchase boats under the Government scheme, and the extension of this assistance to other Lewis crews was only made possible by the Highland Fund Limited agreeing to advance to fishermen the sum they would otherwise have expected to receive from the Macaulay Trust. Under the terms of the agreement between these two bodies it was arranged that the Macaulay Trust would repay these sums to the Highland Fund Limited over a long period, thereby avoiding any immediate drain upon its depleted financial resources. Secondly, when the Highlands and Islands Advisory Panel made their initial recommendations to the Government, the rate of interest on long-term loans for new fishing boats was 5¼ per cent. By the time the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme came into operation, this figure had risen to 5⅝ per cent. Then, thrice within the first three months of the scheme, interest rates advanced again. When the credit squeeze was eventually introduced the rate of interest on new boats was further increased to 7¼ per cent. Though the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme was exempted from the general restrictions then imposed upon the provision of Government assistance for new boats, these high rates of interest came at a most unfortunate time, for on a large boat a rise of 2 per cent could add up to £240 to the annual burden its owners had to meet, and even on a smaller boat the difference might well be sufficient to turn a possible success into failure. There has since been a reduction in interest rates, but those fishermen who bought their boats during the credit squeeze must of course continue to repay their loans at the higher rates prevailing at the time of purchase.

Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme has successfully reached its declared target of a dozen new boats. By the end of 1962 nine boats, ranging from 46 feet to 66 feet in length, had already been

acquired and were actually fishing, while the remaining three were in course of construction with their crews completing their periods of training. Of the nine boats then in service (all but one of which were new) five were manned by crews from Lewis, two by crews from Barra, and one each by crews from Scalpay and Eriskay. In addition, the three boats on order were all for Lewis crews, thus bringing that island's ultimate figure to eight. A point of particular significance is that most of these boats are equipped for dual-purpose fishing. For example, the four boats owned by fishermen in Barra, Scalpay and Eriskay are each fitted out for ring-net fishing during the normal herring season and for nephrops trawling at other times; of the first four boats built for Lewis crews under the scheme, two are fitted out for great line fishing and nephrops trawling, one for seine-net fishing and one for white fish trawling (the latter being equipped for stern trawling instead of the normal side trawling). As the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland remarked: "The introduction in this way of dual-purpose fishing to the fishermen in the Outer Isles should enable fishing to be prosecuted on a full-time basis in the Islands throughout the year" (Fisheries of Scotland, Report for 1961:p. 15).

The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme will come to an end when the twelfth boat has been delivered and its crew has completed its course of training. Altogether, about 60 men will then have been provided with employment under the Scheme—which in the Hebrides is a considerable number—and with the exception of one crew who underwent training on a commercial vessel and had also had previous experience, all will have received a course of training on the official training ship.[2] However, for several reasons, this achievement will have a significance quite apart from its practical contribution to the employment situation in the area. Firstly, it will have clearly illustrated the benefits that are to be gained by close co-operation among the various organisations whose activities affect the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme has been a combined effort in which many bodies, official and unofficial, have worked together towards a common end, and its success would have been impossible but for that co-operation. Secondly, it has shown that—given access to both capital and training—the people of the Outer Hebrides are as willing and able as those of any other area to take advantage of the

opportunities which are offered to them. Indeed, the pattern of the Fisheries Training Scheme, which combined the offer of capital in the form of grants and loans with the provision of technical instruction, was exactly the same as that which has proved so effective in promoting the recent expansion of pasture improvement schemes in the Outer Hebrides. Finally, of all the lessons to be learned from the scheme, perhaps the most important is the value of flexibility. A rigid scheme would probably have broken down long ago but, under the guidance of Mr. J. W. Dunningham, the Fishery Officer in charge, every crew has been given individual treatment and the training tailored to suit their precise requirements.

It would seem that the long decline of the Hebridean fishing industry has at last been halted and that the embryo of a new fleet has now been created on sound modern lines. Mr. Donald Gunn, skipper of one of the new Lewis boats acquired under the scheme, has been reported as saying: "Before our boat was purchased we had difficulty in gathering a crew, but now that we've got it quite a few want to join us" (*Stornoway Gazette*:30.10.1962). These words, more than any statistics, testify to the success of the Outer Hebrides Fisheries Training Scheme. Indeed, it is perhaps a pity that the scheme has to come to an end so soon for, as the Crofters' Commission recently remarked: "The scheme has demonstrated that there are quite a number of young lads in the area, especially in Barra, who are eager to take up fishing, and it is questionable whether the fleet of twelve boats which has been established is sufficiently large to provide openings for them all" (The Crofters' Commission, Annual Report for 1962: para. 98). Nevertheless, a foundation has at least been laid upon which it should be possible to build in future years. Most important of all, the scheme has helped to remove some of the apathy and defeatism which has for so long characterised the Islanders' attitude to the fishing industry, and in the long run this achievement may prove to be of greater value than any of its more immediate results.

NOTES

[1] The Macaulay (Rhodesia) Trust was set up under the will of the late Murdo Macaulay of Ness, who left Lewis with hardly a word of English and no money but who later acquired a considerable fortune in Rhodesia and, when he died, bequeathed the bulk of it for the good of his native island.

[2] The men now owning and/or making up the crews of the boats acquired under the scheme came almost exclusively from the following occupations:—

(*a*) Merchant navy and whaling fleet.

(*b*) Harris tweed weavers.

(*c*) Deckhands aboard East Coast fishing boats.

It would be difficult to give any accurate figures for the proportion of men who came from each of the above sources as many of them formerly combined two and sometimes three of these occupations.

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JOHN L. BLAKE

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D. BOOK REVIEWS

The traditional tunes of the Child ballads with their texts, according to the extant records of Great Britain and America. By Bertrand Harris Bronson. Princeton, New Jersey. Princeton University Press. Vol. II. £10.

The second volume of Professor Bronson's work covers the tunes to nos. 54-113 of Child's collection, and includes a preface in which the author deals further with certain matters raised in the introductory essay to Vol. I. The latter was not reviewed in this journal, and it will be necessary to refer to it several times.

In his chosen field, Bronson has undertaken something that is comparable in intention to that of any literary editor who seeks to add illumination to the past by the increased light provided by the latest knowledge and method. Inevitably, this process of critical re-appraisement means the exposing of errors of judgment by earlier scholars, due to their lack of access to material only subsequently available; but this fact