

*Bu Dual Dha Sin* (That was His Birthright):

Gaelic Scholar Alexander Maclean Sinclair (1840-1924)

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***Bu Dual Dha Sin (That Was His Birthright):  
Gaelic Scholar Alexander Maclean Sinclair (1840-1924)***

**Abstract**

This dissertation is an examination of the life and work of nineteenth-century Gaelic scholar, Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Maclean Sinclair was a prominent member of the substantial Scottish Gaelic community that flourished in eastern Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was an acknowledged Gaelic scholar in his time, and published extensively on Gaelic poetry and Highland history. He was a Presbyterian Church minister with Gaelic-speaking congregations in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and, towards the end of his life, he became a lecturer of Gaelic language and literature and Celtic civilization at St. Francis Xavier and Dalhousie Universities.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part looks at the Gaelic influences in Maclean Sinclair's upbringing and education, and includes a chapter on his maternal grandfather, John Maclean, a well-known Gaelic poet who emigrated from Scotland to Nova Scotia in 1819. Being raised in his grandfather's household contributed to Maclean Sinclair's profound identification with his Maclean heritage, and provided a considerable impetus to his later activities in Gaelic publishing.

The second part of the dissertation is divided into two chapters devoted to an exploration of Maclean Sinclair's work. The first chapter discusses the

development of the field of Celtic Studies in Europe and North America and Maclean Sinclair's appointment as Celtic lecturer in 1907, and includes a look at contemporary trends and concerns reflected in some of his work. The second chapter looks at Maclean Sinclair's significance in the world of Gaelic publishing. Maclean Sinclair's writings and his correspondence with significant individuals among the Gaelic literati of Scotland demonstrate that he was consciously attempting to shape the development of Gaelic literature by contributing a substantial corpus of material to the canon of published works in Scottish Gaelic.

**For my Mother and Father**

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**List of Abbreviations**  
(Used in Notes and Appendices)

AMS	Alexander Maclean Sinclair
CMA	<i>The Celtic Magazine</i> [Inverness]
CMO	<i>The Celtic Monthly</i> [Glasgow]
CS	<i>The Canada Scotsman</i> [Montreal and Toronto]
CR	<i>The Celtic Review</i> [Edinburgh]
CT	<i>The Casket</i> [Antigonish, NS]
DMS	Donald Maclean Sinclair
DUASC	Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections
EC	<i>The Eastern Chronicle</i> [New Glasgow, NS]
HI	<i>The Highlander</i> [Inverness]
MG	Manuscript Group
MT	<i>Mac-Talla</i> [Sydney, NS]
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NSARM	Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, formerly Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS)
OT	<i>The Oban Times</i>
PW	<i>The Presbyterian Witness</i> [Halifax, NS]
RG	Record Group
SA	<i>The Scottish-American Journal</i> [New York]
SFH	“Some Family History” by DMS
SC	<i>The Scottish Canadian</i> [Toronto]
STFXUA	Saint Francis Xavier University Archives
STFXUSC	Saint Francis Xavier University Special Collections
TGSI	<i>Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness</i>

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In the process of writing this dissertation many people have contributed to its completion with their time, assistance, expertise, encouragement, advice and support. Chief among them was Barbara Hillers who so willingly printed off numerous drafts sent by e-mail. I am sure at times the process of advising long distance must have been wearisome, and so I am doubly appreciative of her considerable efforts at making sure I received her feedback by telephone. I owe Dr. Hillers my most sincere and deepest gratitude for helping me see this process to its completion, and for her detailed and extremely helpful comments.

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I would also like to thank Patrick Ford for his kindness, encouragement, and instruction during my years at Harvard, and many thanks go to Margo

Granfors for making my student life at Harvard easier by knowing all the ins and outs of the bureaucracy of the university, and for her assistance in making sure I had all the proper forms mailed to me from Harvard for the degree, and for getting me set up with last-minute computer facilities.

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letters” project which led to this dissertation. I must express my sincere appreciation to both Professor Dunn and Sister MacDonell for their roles in leading me to the Maclean Sinclair archival material.

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Throughout the research and writing phases of the dissertation I was very fortunate to be able to use the facilities of St. Francis Xavier University as my base of operations. I unfortunately had to turn down a Term-time Dissertation Research Fellowship from the Harvard Graduate Society in 2001. However, my reason for this was to accept an opportunity to return to Canada in a temporary

position as an assistant professor in the newly established Ben Alder Chair in Celtic Studies at St. Francis Xavier University. I am extremely appreciative of the opportunity to gain valuable teaching experience that it provided, as well as the opportunity it afforded me in being that much closer to important resources concerning my dissertation research.

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I would also like to thank the Angus L. Macdonald Library at St. Francis Xavier University for the use of their facilities. In particular the Father Charles Brewer Celtic Collection (Special Collections) was essential to my work, and my gratitude goes to former Special Collections curator Maureen Williams, Jane Gormen, who was also helpful in providing me with access to Special Collections at earlier stages of the dissertation, and current Special Collections librarian, Susan Cameron, who was very helpful in the months prior to completion. Thank you as well to Kathleen MacKenzie of the St. Francis Xavier University Archives for her assistance with materials there, and Angela Hagar of the Interlibrary Loans Department for her work in getting me access to certain microfilm newspaper reels.

I must also acknowledge Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, in particular archives specialist Kathryn Harvey, for help in accessing certain materials relating to Maclean Sinclair there, and for permission to include in my appendices a complete transcription of a letter in their archives from Donald MacKinnon.

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I would be remiss indeed if I did not acknowledge the supportive role of my family; I owe my love and thanks to them all. My parents, Nancy and David Linkletter, have always encouraged me to follow my aspirations, and I thank them for their patience in seeing me through to the finish with this one. I am very proud to call Heather Linkletter and Shelley MacNevin my sisters; they have been supportive of me in every way and I thank them sincerely for this (as well as apologize for that bratty phase I went through from about age three to twenty-three). I am sorry to say that my two grandmothers passed away during

my graduate-student career at Harvard, Elma Linkletter at the end of my first year and Thelma Matthews at the beginning of my last year, and I regret that I cannot enjoy their presence at this particular milestone in my life. I must also acknowledge that it was largely due to the influence of my grandfather, Harold Linkletter, the family historian and genealogist, that I followed the path I took in academia, and I thank him for his stories and lessons about “the old days” which will be with me always.

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To all the above I express my heartfelt and sincerest appreciation. You have all helped me to some degree, and so share at least some small part in the realization of this dissertation. For this I thank you.

## *Preface*

In a small community in northeastern, mainland Nova Scotia is the cemetery containing the earthly remains of a man who did an extraordinary amount for the preservation of Scottish Gaelic literature. A stroll through the graveyard reveals a number of monuments bearing Highland names, several with inscriptions in Gaelic. Although the best known of these is the grave of the poet, the “Bard,” John Maclean, we would know little about him but for the labours of his grandson Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Clustered near the shared tombstone of John Maclean and his wife Isabella Black are the graves of their children, including their daughter Christy and her only son, John Maclean’s scholarly grandson, Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Alexander Maclean Sinclair’s son,

Donald Maclean Sinclair, also buried in the vicinity, with understandable bias wrote:

Perhaps no place of its kind in North America better represents the culture and the spirit of the ancient Gaelic race than does this little-noticed, but intensely interesting burial-place. [. . .] As things are today, Glenbard may well become a neglected spot about which will cluster some memories vaguely transmitted by the people of the district. Yet it is there that the most representative Gaelic Bard of the New World lies buried, and near him is the grave of the greatest Gaelic scholar born on Canadian soil, the grandson of the poet, and the father of the subject of this sketch.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: Glen Bard Cemetery<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 32.

<sup>2</sup> Photo taken April 2006.

The community in which the cemetery is situated is called Glen Bard,<sup>3</sup> from Gaelic “Gleann a’ Bhàird” ‘Valley of the Poet,’ an appellation almost certainly in honour of John Maclean. The community is today adjacent to the Trans-Canada highway which runs parallel to the road going through Glen Bard. Though the small cemetery is visible from the highway, one might pass it by in the proverbial blink of an eye if one did not know where to look. The grass of the burial ground is kept trimmed but the small Presbyterian church that used to be at the west end of the grounds, has recently been demolished after being in disuse for some years. The torn-down church, the small cemetery, and bypassed community at the fringe of a province that is itself at the northeastern fringe of North America, may very well stand as a metaphor for the Gaelic language in that continent with its dwindling number of speakers, which is in many ways bypassed by mainstream, popular culture. Recognition of the cultural significance of the cemetery is represented by the placement of two memorial plaques on the grounds: one is on a stone cairn built in 1961 as a memorial to John Maclean; the other marks the establishment of the grounds as a Nova Scotia Provincial Heritage Property in 1988.

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<sup>3</sup> Though Alexander Maclean Sinclair (AMS) customarily wrote “Glenbard” as one word in English, it is now generally spelt as two, i.e. “Glen Bard.”

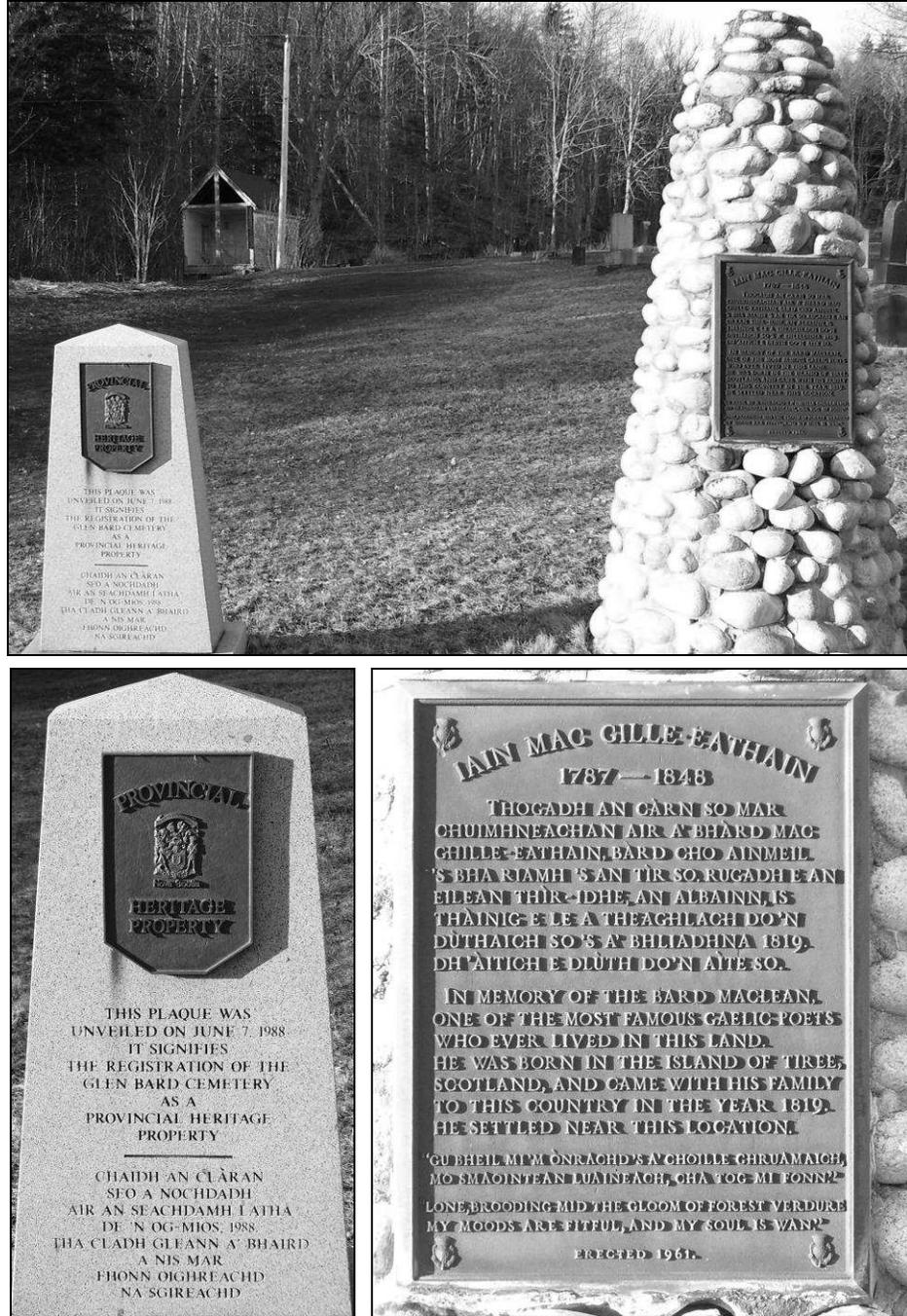


Figure 2: Glen Bard Memorial Plaques<sup>4</sup>

The community of Glen Bard is located in Antigonish County, and the town of Antigonish lies thirteen kilometres east of Glen Bard. It is today the

<sup>4</sup> Photo taken April 2006.

official seat and largest municipal centre of the county, as well as the home of St. Francis Xavier University, founded in 1853. Northeastern Nova Scotia – including the island of Cape Breton – and much of the neighbouring province of Prince Edward Island were in large part established as predominantly Scottish Highland communities between the 1770s and 1830s. After this period, immigration from Scotland levelled out until about 1880 when there began a decline in the population of the region due to outmigration to the United States – especially to the Boston area – and Western Canada.

It was in this largely Gaelic-speaking community that Alexander Maclean Sinclair was raised with a strong sympathy for his native language and culture. As a member of a minority language group in an immigrant community striving to conform to the ideals of advancement and success of a predominantly English-speaking society, Maclean Sinclair's passion for and devotion to Gaelic language, literature, and history is somewhat of an anomaly. No one in North America, and few in Scotland during this period, can boast of a comparable Gaelic publishing record. The nineteenth century was an important period in Gaelic publishing, which saw an unprecedented amount of newspapers, magazines, and books being produced. According to Derick Thomson, at least 986 Gaelic books were published in Scotland in the nineteenth century, compared to 70 in the preceding century.<sup>5</sup> Ironically it was also this period which saw a great

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<sup>5</sup> Derick S. Thomson, ed. *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (1983; rpt. Glasgow: Gairm Publications, 1994), s.v. "publishing, Gaelic."

decline in the numbers of Gaelic speakers. The socio-economic pressures of the Industrial Revolution, the great upheavals in the Highlands, and the disruption in traditional Gaelic society in the eighteenth century, along with emigration and the devaluation of the Gaelic language, resulted in a great deal of apathy by many Gaels towards their own culture. Much of the Gaelic literature of the time bemoaned the Gaelic community's seeming lack of interest in their own native tongue. How then did a New World Gael like Alexander Maclean Sinclair come to devote much of his life to the preservation and promulgation of Gaelic culture? To answer this question, we shall investigate Alexander Maclean Sinclair's family background and upbringing. Maclean Sinclair grew up in a largely Gaelic-speaking community and was reared by a family in which Gaelic tradition was very strong. Maclean Sinclair stated that he felt strongly attached to Scotland due to his upbringing, and in particular received a firm foundation in Gaelic literature and history from his family:

I am a Nova Scotian by birth, but a Highlander by blood, in feeling, and in training. I have been brought up to look upon myself rather as an exile from Scotland, than as a native of the new world. Highland poetry, Highland legends, and Highland history, I have known from my youth.<sup>6</sup>

Unquestionably the most significant influence regarding his lifelong devotion to Gaelic was in the figure of his grandfather John Maclean, whose presence looms large in the background of Maclean Sinclair. Because of the

---

<sup>6</sup> AMS, "How I spent the Summer of 1869" [Part I], *Canada Scotsman* (n.d.). See Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/545/664, NSARM.

significance of such a figure, it is impossible to consider the life of Maclean Sinclair without first addressing his grandfather, who provided him with an important inheritance of Gaelic literature. This legacy was the catalyst by which Maclean Sinclair came to a more intimate knowledge of Gaelic culture, especially poetry, and provided the focus for his lifelong endeavours in Gaelic publishing. By looking at the life of John Maclean, based on the narrative supplied by his grandson, we can come to a greater appreciation of how and why Maclean Sinclair chose the path that he did.

In Gaelic, the notions of “heritage,” “legacy,” “birthright,” “custom,” and “wont,” can be expressed by the word *dual*. There is an expression in Gaelic, “*bu dual dha sin,*” which ideally suits Maclean Sinclair and the implication of the cultural imperative behind his activities in the production of Gaelic letters:

*Bu dual d[h]a sin.* – That was his birthright. This is one of the most familiar and characteristic sayings in the Highlands, where the belief in blood and hereditary tendencies and claims is very strong. It is difficult to translate it literally. It might be paraphrased, “That is what you might expect of his father and mother’s son.”<sup>7</sup>

The saying, *bu dual dha sin*, informs precisely Maclean Sinclair's whole outlook on his life and work. He most definitely felt a compulsion towards Gaelic publishing from the combined influences of his Gaelic upbringing in Glen Bard and his grandfather's legacy as a poet. Maclean Sinclair also believed in the

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<sup>7</sup> Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs* (1881; rpt. Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1996), 78.

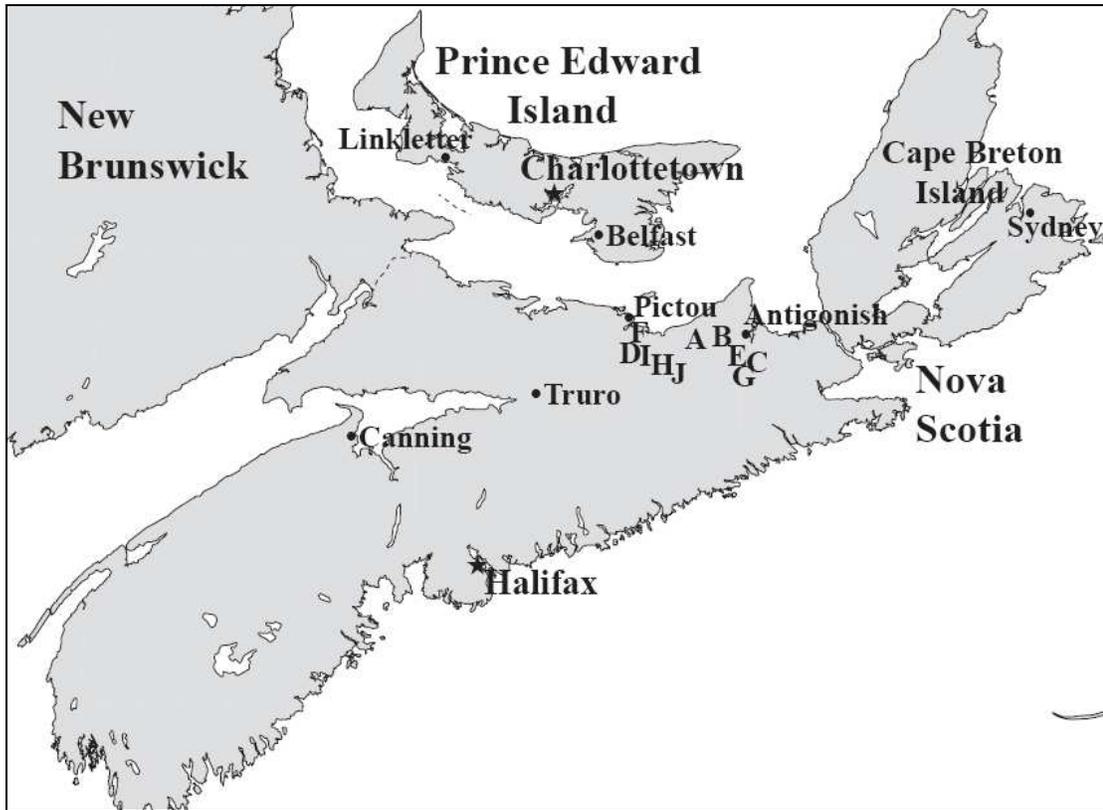
notion of being a Highlander “by blood,” and said as much on a number of occasions, as seen above (“I am a Highlander by blood, feeling and training”).

This dissertation is divided into two parts, essentially looking at the life and letters of Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Part I is a biography emphasizing the major Gaelic influences in his upbringing and education, beginning with his grandfather, John Maclean. Part II examines Maclean Sinclair’s role in the nascent field of Celtic Studies, including a look at contemporary influences, and discusses his prolific career in Gaelic publishing as a reflection of his deliberate and active role in attempting not only to contribute to, but to shape, the development of Scottish Gaelic literature. The appendices in this dissertation are representative of the sources which were the basis of much of my research, including unpublished archival material in addition to Maclean Sinclair’s many publications; they are offered here for ease of referral in reading this dissertation, and as aids for further research.

All translations and figures, including maps and photographs, in this dissertation are my own unless otherwise noted.



Figure 3: Map of Scotland



**Figure 4: Map of the Canadian Maritimes**

- |                    |                 |              |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| A - Barney's River | F - New Glasgow |              |
| B - Glen Bard      | G - St. Mary's  |              |
| C - Goshen         | H - St. Paul's  | } East River |
| D - Hopewell       | I - Springville |              |
| E - Lochaber       | J - Sunny Brae  |              |

## PART I

### BIOGRAPHY



**Figure 5: Alexander Maclean Sinclair\***

*Bu dual dhut a thaobh do mhàthar,  
A bhi measail air a' Ghàidhlig  
Air a h-eachdraidh 's air a bàrdachd,  
'S lean thu gu dian buaidh do nàduir.†*

It was your birthright from your mother's side  
To be respectful of Gaelic,  
Its history, and its poetry,  
And you fervently followed the influence of your nature.

---

\* AMS at the age of 46, according to the accompanying signature, "A. McLean Sinclair, June 1886." Photo courtesy of Barney's River Station School Museum.

† From an adaptation made by AMS of an unpublished poem composed in his honour, "Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sinclair," ("A Salute to Maclean Sinclair") by "Cailein Macafi," 13 July 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/423, NSARM. Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this dissertation are my own.

# Chapter I

## *The Bard Maclean*

*Stad is éisd ri guth bho'n uaigh*  
- Stop and listen to a voice from the grave

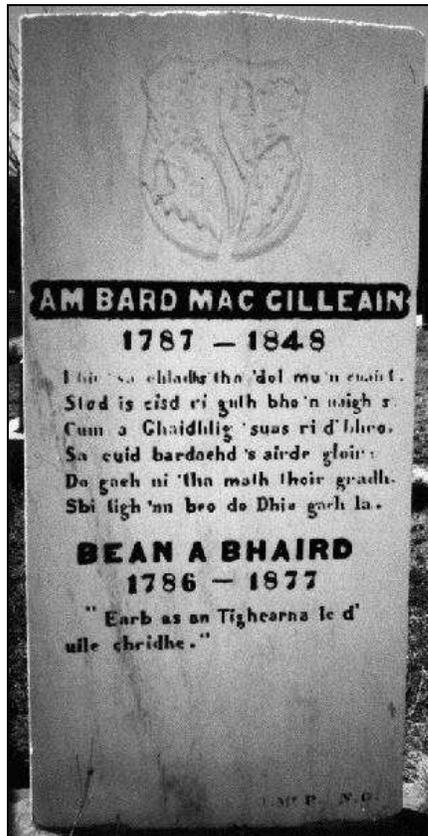


Figure 6: Tombstone of John Maclean and Isabella Black<sup>1</sup>

John Maclean is one of the best-known Gaelic poets to have emigrated from Scotland. His contribution to the corpus of Gaelic poetry is significant, if only for his composition of “Òran do dh’America” (“A Song to America”), better known as “A’ Choille Ghruamach” (“The Gloomy Forest”), which has become the *locus*

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<sup>1</sup> Photo courtesy of Kenneth Nilsen, taken April 1988. My thanks to Dr. Nilsen for permission to use this photograph.

*classicus* in discussions of the Highland Diaspora and first impressions of Highland settlers upon reaching the wilderness of the New World.

Because of John Maclean's significance in Gaelic literature, he has received a considerable amount of attention in anthologies, especially concerning New World Gaelic poetry and nineteenth-century Gaelic poetry. However, everything that has been written about John Maclean's life essentially relies on the work of Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Alexander Maclean Sinclair grew up in his grandfather's house. John Maclean died when his grandson was only eight years old, but even after his death, Maclean Sinclair had access to a wealth of information and stories about his grandfather. John Maclean's wife Isabella Black outlived her husband by almost thirty years, and Maclean Sinclair was able to draw not only on his own memories of John Maclean, but also on those of his immediate and extended family and neighbours. In 1869 Maclean Sinclair visited his grandfather's native island of Tiree, where he also met with relatives and former neighbours of John Maclean. In constructing the narrative of his grandfather's life, there are mainly two streams of evidence on which Maclean Sinclair relied. Sources based on anecdotes relating to Maclean gathered from informants, in addition to the information John Maclean himself provides in his own poetry, come together to give Maclean Sinclair his adult-formed vision of his grandfather's life. The limited historical evidence available to Maclean Sinclair forms the bones of the narrative; however, it is the anecdotal and poetic evidence which forms the flesh of the tale. The overall impression of John

Maclean provided by Maclean Sinclair is of someone who was proud, stubborn, pious, and quick-witted, and who was rooted in Gaelic tradition, whose poetic impulses were so strong that he would rather compose songs than do physical labour.

### Previous Scholarship Concerning John Maclean

The more comprehensive works concerning John Maclean's life are in the biographical sketches in Maclean Sinclair's own editions of Gaelic poetry, specifically *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain* (Spiritual Hymns by John Maclean) in 1880,<sup>2</sup> *Clàrsach na Coille* (The Harp of the Forest) in 1881<sup>3</sup> (a second edition of this was published in 1928 by Hector MacDougall under the title *The Maclean Songster: Clàrsach na Coille*<sup>4</sup>), and *Filidh na Coille* (The Poet of the Forest) in 1901.<sup>5</sup> Information on John Maclean can also be found in Maclean Sinclair's history of the Maclean Clan, *The Clan Gilleain* (1899), in which he delineates John Maclean's ancestry as well as his descendants and provides a brief account of the family's

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<sup>2</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1880), ix-xi.

<sup>3</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *Clàrsach na Coille* (Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair and R. McGregor & Co., 1881), xiii-xxvi.

<sup>4</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Maclean Songster: Clàrsach na Coille*, revised and edited by Hector MacDougall (Glasgow: Alex. MacLaren & Sons, 1928), xiv-xxi.

<sup>5</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille: Dàin agus Òrain leis a' Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain agus le Feadhainn Eile* (Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company, 1901), 8-16.

move to the New World.<sup>6</sup> Donald Maclean Sinclair's unpublished family history, "Some Family History,"<sup>7</sup> and his memoir of John Maclean in *The Dalhousie Review* (1948) entitled "John Maclean: A Centenary" are of note, though they are in essence largely a reiteration of material from his father's books.<sup>8</sup>

The earliest published account of John Maclean is in Norman Macdonald's edition of *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaelach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry* printed in Halifax in 1863.<sup>9</sup> This book was virtually a pirated version of the first edition of John MacKenzie's well-known work published in Edinburgh in 1841.

Macdonald does not credit MacKenzie at all, and states in his title page: "A new edition enlarged and improved by Norman Macdonald, Esq. Halifax, N.S." The main difference in Macdonald's edition was the addition of the John Maclean material consisting of "A' Choille Ghruamach" and a biographical sketch written by Maclean Sinclair, who was a former pupil of Macdonald's. Though

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<sup>6</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Clan Gillean* (Charlottetown: Haszard and Moore, 1899), 337-41.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Maclean Sinclair, "Some Family History," (unpublished typescript, 1979), 3-6. Available at NSARM (CS90/S616) and the Special Collections Library of St. Francis Xavier University. Donald Maclean Sinclair (DMS) was AMS's son.

<sup>8</sup> Donald Maclean Sinclair, "John Maclean: A Centenary," *The Dalhousie Review* 28.3 (Oct. 1948): 258-65.

<sup>9</sup> Norman Macdonald, ed. *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaelach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry* (1841 ed. John MacKenzie; rpt. Halifax: James Bowes & Sons, 1863), 322-30. About 1,000 copies were printed, see Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica* (1915; rpt. Shannon: Irish Univ. Press, 1972), 248-49. Concerning the popularity of this book in PEI and NS, see Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Cape Breton and Eastern Nova Scotia* (1953; rpt. Wreck Cove, NS: Breton Books, 1991), 49-50.

Macdonald nowhere credits Maclean Sinclair with this material, we know it was contributed by Maclean Sinclair. P. J. Nicholson, president of St. Francis Xavier University (1944-54), and a former pupil of Maclean Sinclair's, commented on Norman Macdonald's edition of *Sàr-Obair* in a letter to Maclean Sinclair's son Donald Maclean (D. M.) Sinclair in 1951: "I remember your father telling me that he himself had contributed the only original thing in Norman's edition, namely the biographical sketch of his own grandfather, and, if I recall accurately, the text of a' Choille Ghruamach."<sup>10</sup>

In the 1930s Maclean Sinclair's home (at that time in the possession of his son George) in Hopewell, Nova Scotia, was visited by well-known Nova Scotian travel writer Clara Dennis.<sup>11</sup> Dennis also visited the Barney's River and Glen Bard area and published her account of this visit in *More About Nova Scotia*, where she describes her meeting with a grandson of John Maclean who tells her about Maclean, shows her Glen Bard Cemetery, and relates a short anecdote concerning Maclean's poetry.<sup>12</sup> Charles Dunn's 1953 *Highland Settler* also relies on Maclean Sinclair's work for his treatment of John Maclean, and indeed Dunn

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<sup>10</sup> P. J. Nicholson to D. M. Sinclair, 13 Feb. 1951. P. J. Nicholson Papers, RG5/11/14913, STFXUA. See also DMS, "Some Family History," 46.

<sup>11</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 33.

<sup>12</sup> Clara Dennis, *More About Nova Scotia: My Own, My Native Land* (1937; rpt. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1944), 211-18. Unfortunately Dennis's description is of a romanticized nature and even has her informant speaking in Lowland Scots, e.g. (on p. 212) "'The Bard? Have ye no heerd of the Gaelic Bard of Novy Scotia?' he exclaimed; lapsing in his astonishment into the dialect of the Scot. "'Tis thinkin' I've been that everyone kent o' the Gaelic Bard, John McLean.'"

visited Maclean Sinclair's homestead in Hopewell, Nova Scotia, in order to see Maclean Sinclair's still intact library in preparation for his book. As falling within the scope of his work, Dunn was most interested in Maclean as an immigrant to Nova Scotia, and states that "John Maclean was probably the most versatile and renowned of the Highland poets to come out to the New World."<sup>13</sup> Dunn explains that John Maclean was lured to the New World with the promise of unclaimed land, and that he had left a life of comfort in Tìree with an assured house and income as bard to the Laird of Coll.<sup>14</sup>

A work which places John Maclean in context along with his fellow Tìree poets is *Tìree Bards and their Bàrdachd* (1978), by Eric Cregeen and Donald W. Mackenzie. Part of Cregeen and Mackenzie's objective in their monograph is to demonstrate the transformation of the bards of Tìree into popular poets in the nineteenth century; something which they explain was most represented in the figure of John Maclean: "It is in John Maclean, or Iain mac Ailein as he is commonly known, that the transition is most clearly seen from chief's bard to popular poet."<sup>15</sup> In support of this they describe Maclean's early compositions as being of traditional bardic fare, such as addresses to the Laird of Coll and his family and other Maclean chiefs, "extolling the ancient virtues of '*cruadal*'

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<sup>13</sup> Dunn, *Highland Settler*, 60.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>15</sup> Eric Cregeen & Donald W. Mackenzie, *Tìree Bards and their Bàrdachd: The Poets in a Hebridean Community* (Isle of Coll: Society of West Highland & Island Historical Research, 1978), 7.

(hardihood), 'gaisge' (heroism) and 'fiadhlaidheachd' (liberality)."<sup>16</sup> Cregeen and Mackenzie then go on to explain that Maclean also composed popular local poetry while still in Scotland, but that this increased when he emigrated to the New World.<sup>17</sup>

Very little has been published in more recent times concerning John Maclean, only a few biographical entries in reference works and a couple of short articles in non-academic periodicals. For instance, Donald Meek's entry in Derick Thomson's *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (1983), in which Meek says that "Maclean held the honorific position of Bard to the Laird of Coll," and that "[h]is verse is mainly traditional eulogy [. . .], although MacLean also composed some township verse and hymns."<sup>18</sup> Meek also states that Maclean brought two important manuscripts of Gaelic verse with him when he emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1819, and that he is best known for his poem "A' Choille Ghruamach" ("The Gloomy Forest").<sup>19</sup> A more extensive biographical/encyclopaedic entry on John Maclean is that by Maureen Lonergan Williams in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Williams' entry from 1988 provides the most complete biography of John Maclean up to that time since Maclean Sinclair's own work was published

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<sup>16</sup> Cregeen & Mackenzie, *Tiree Bards*, 8.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Derick S. Thomson, ed. *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, (1983; rpt. Glasgow: Gairm Publications, 1994), s.v. "MacLean, John."

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

about a hundred years previously. She remarks on John Maclean's background in Scotland, his role as a poet, emigration to Nova Scotia, life in the New World, and "A' Choille Ghruamach."<sup>20</sup> In 1977 Williams wrote an MA thesis for the University of Glasgow's Celtic Department under Derick Thomson, entitled "The Canadian Songs of John MacLean, Am Bàrd Mac Gilleathain." Williams, whose thesis was essentially a *verbatim et literatim* edition, with translation and notes, of John Maclean's Nova Scotian compositions based on his manuscripts, included a brief look at the background of John Maclean, relying mostly on material provided by Maclean Sinclair in *Clàrsach na Coille* and *Filidh na Coille*.<sup>21</sup> In 1991/92, A. A. (Tony) MacKenzie published a brief article on John Maclean in *The Clansman* magazine (now called *Celtic Heritage*).<sup>22</sup>

The latest and most comprehensive treatment to date of John Maclean is a two-part article by Robert Dunbar from 2002/03 in *Am Bràighe* (The

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<sup>20</sup> Maureen Lonergan Williams, "MacGhillEathain, Iain (John MacLean)," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography 1836-1850*, vol. VII, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), s.v. "MacGhillEathain, Iain (John MacLean)." (See also online <<http://www.biographi.ca>>).

<sup>21</sup> See Maureen Lonergan, "The Canadian Songs of John MacLean, Am Bàrd Mac Gilleathain" (1977), MA thesis, U. Glasgow (a copy is also in STFXUSC). See also Maureen Lonergan's MA thesis for St. Francis Xavier University, "The Scholar Poet and Local Bard: A Comparison and Study of Six Composers of Scottish Gaelic Poetry in Nova Scotia" (1974), and an unpublished report for the Heritage Unit of Nova Scotia's Department of Culture, Recreation and Fitness in 1985: Maureen Williams, "A Study on the Cultural Significance of John Maclean (the Bard Maclean)," STFXUSC.

<sup>22</sup> A. A. MacKenzie, "Am Bàrd Mac'Illeain am Baile-Chnoic," *The Clansman* 5.6 [Halifax, NS] (Dec. 1991/Jan. 1992): 7. The late Tony MacKenzie was a history professor at St. Francis Xavier University.

Brae/Upland), a Gaelic cultural magazine published in Cape Breton.<sup>23</sup> Dunbar deals with Maclean's family background, his role as tradition-bearer, attempts at the shoemaking trade, his collecting and publishing work, emigration to the New World, for which Dunbar notes a number of contributing factors, and finishing with Maclean's life and work in Nova Scotia.<sup>24</sup>

Other material concerning John Maclean can be found in anthologies of Gaelic poetry, which, though only touching on his life if at all, stand as significant sources incorporating his compositions. These include Archibald Sinclair's famous 1879 work *An t-Òranaiche* (The Songster),<sup>25</sup> William J. Watson's well-known anthology from 1918, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig* (Gaelic Poetry),<sup>26</sup> and Rev. Hector Cameron's *Tiree Bards* from 1932.<sup>27</sup> More recent anthologies include

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<sup>23</sup> Rob Dunbar, "John MacLean: Bàrd Thighearna Chola, am Bàrd MacGill-eain, Part One" *Am Bràighe* 10.2 (Fall 2002): 12-13, 15 and "Part Two" *Am Bràighe* 10.3 (Winter 2003): 12-13. Dunbar is currently (Spring 2006) completing his doctoral thesis on John Maclean and his poetry for the Celtic Department at Edinburgh University.

<sup>24</sup> Dunbar, "John MacLean: Part One" *Am Bràighe* 10.2 (Fall 2002): 13 and "Part Two" *Am Bràighe* 10.3 (Winter 2003): 12-13.

<sup>25</sup> Archibald Sinclair, *An t-Òranaiche* (Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair, 1879), 313-17.

<sup>26</sup> William J. Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry 1550-1900* (1918; rpt. Glasgow: An Comunn Gàidhealach, 1932), 14-18.

<sup>27</sup> Rev. Hector Cameron, *The Tiree Bards: Being the Original Compositions of Natives of Tiree at Home and Abroad* (Stirling: The Tiree Association, 1932), 38-113.

Margaret MacDonell's *The Emigrant Experience* (1982)<sup>28</sup> and Donald E. Meek's *Caran an t-Saoghail* (The Wiles of the World) (2003).<sup>29</sup>

### John Maclean in Scotland

John Maclean was born 8 January 1787 on the Island of Tìree, a part of Argyllshire, on the west coast of Scotland. Born in the latter part of the eighteenth century, John Maclean was part of a culture in transition. Gaelic society was still reeling as a result of the major disruption caused by the disastrous 1745 uprising. The Highlands were under the social and economic pressures of assimilation and modernization from the south, resulting in the mass migration of peoples out of the region to the Lowlands and the New World. John Maclean's compositions reflect this transition. In Scotland his pieces included traditional praise poetry as well as the local songs of the *bàrd baile*, or "village poet." In the New World, without his patron nearby, John Maclean's poetry took on even more of the local subject matter of village verse. Though John Maclean's bardic title was *Bàrd Thighearna Chola* (the Laird of Coll's Bard), the use of such titles by Maclean's lifetime was becoming anachronistic: "It may be that the title, 'Bàrd Thighearna Chola' - 'the laird of Coll's bard' - was largely honorific, but it is interesting as being the latest example of the use of a

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<sup>28</sup> Margaret MacDonell, *The Emigrant Experience: Songs of Highland Settlers in North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 68-79 & 211-13.

<sup>29</sup> Donald E. Meek, ed. *Caran an t-Saoghail: The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2003), xxxi, 64-70, 405-08 & 479.

traditional style of this kind in the Highlands.”<sup>30</sup> Locals also knew John Maclean by his patronymic Iain mac Ailein (John, son of Allan). Maclean Sinclair explains in his tribute to his grandfather in *Clàrsach na Coille*, that on a trip to Scotland in 1869 he met with people on Tiree who still remembered John Maclean, and who were able to recite his ancestry: “*Iain mac Ailein mhic Iain mhic Theàrlaich mhic Lachainn mhic Dhòmhnuille òig mhic Iain mhic Eobhain Lachainn Fhinn*”<sup>31</sup> (“John son of Allan son of John son of Charles son of Lachlan son of Young Donald son of Ewen son of Fair Lachlan”). John Maclean was a *seanchaidh* (tradition-bearer) as well as a poet and could ultimately trace his paternal lineage to Gaelic aristocracy through the Treisinnis (Treshnish) branch of the Ardgour MacLeans to the sixth chief of the MacLeans, Eachan Ruadh nan Cath (“Red Hector of the Battles”), killed in 1411 at the Battle of Harlaw.<sup>32</sup>

Though John Maclean had gone to school for several years where he learned to read and write in both English and Gaelic, the real training for his poetic life was around the hearths of his neighbours in Tiree. Ronald Black succinctly remarks on the importance of the *ceilidh* in his introduction to his anthology of eighteenth-century Gaelic poetry, *An Lasair*: “Given the virtual collapse of chiefly patronage after 1715, the power-house of eighteenth-century

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<sup>30</sup> Cregeen & Mackenzie, *Tiree Bards*, 8.

<sup>31</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xiii.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

Gaelic culture became the *ceilidh*. In twentieth-century terms, the *ceilidh* was school and university [. . .].”<sup>33</sup> This certainly applies to John Maclean as a child of the late eighteenth century. According to Maclean Sinclair, from the time John Maclean was a youth, Maclean enjoyed the *ceilidh* and was especially fond of listening to the conversations and stories of old men: “In his boyhood, John MacLean, was very fond of the society of old men, and listened with the greatest attention to their conversations.”<sup>34</sup> Maclean also had ample opportunity to learn from the tradition-bearers in his home community:

There were several poets and song-makers. Archibald MacPhail, Archibald MacLean, and Donald MacDonald composed poems of much merit. There were many persons who could repeat old stories. It was a common thing for the people of a neighbourhood to meet and enjoy themselves in song-singing and storytelling.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to the importance of the positive social environment for Gaelic traditions provided by the community, John Maclean’s family contributed to his strong predilection for Gaelic poetry. Maclean inherited his poetic gifts from both sides of his family. He could count the Tìree poet Archibald Maclean, “Gilleasbuig Làidir” (“Archibald the Strong”), among his paternal relations (Archibald’s father and John Maclean’s grandfather were brothers<sup>36</sup>), and among

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<sup>33</sup> Ronald Black, *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), xii.

<sup>34</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xiv.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

his mother's kin was his great-grandfather, poet Neil Lamont.<sup>37</sup> Maclean's poetic gifts surfaced at an early age. On a trip to Tiree in 1869, Maclean Sinclair collected an anecdote about John Maclean from an old childhood friend of his grandfather's, who related that on the way home from school one day, Maclean said to one his classmates:

<i>Nach faic thu strothan nan spàg</i>	Look at the club-footed scholar
<i>Tigh'nn 'ga mo chàineadh le shoc;</i>	Reviling me with his beak;
<i>Crùbach, speireach, crotach, crom,</i>	Crippled, slender-limbed, hump-backed, crooked,
<i>'S gur-a h-ann 'na chom tha 'n t- olc.</i> <sup>38</sup>	The wickedness is in his chest.

Maclean then turned to another classmate and directed this invective:

<i>Eobhainn mur fan thu sàmhach</i>	Ewen if you don't keep quiet
<i>Bheir mi fàsgadh air do chorp;</i>	I'll give your body a wringing;
<i>Cuiridh mi fàinne mu d' bhial,</i>	I'll put a ring around your mouth,
<i>'S cha leig mi riasgladh le d' shoc.</i> <sup>39</sup>	And I won't let any mocking come from your beak.

Obviously Maclean's quick wit and way with words made enough of an impact on his listeners so that his satirical verses were remembered by them in old age. This quick-wittedness and facility with composing extemporaneous verse is a characteristic personality trait that repeatedly turns up in the orally-based accounts of Maclean's life at various stages.

At the age of sixteen, John Maclean went off to be a shoemaker's apprentice under Neil Sinclair in Goirtean Dòmhnail on the western end of

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<sup>37</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 233.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

Tiree. According to Maclean Sinclair, the craft of making shoes did not appeal much to his grandfather, and he would often daydream, composing songs and poems instead of concentrating on shoemaking. On Maclean Sinclair's visit to Tiree in 1869 he interviewed Hugh MacFadyen who apprenticed as a shoemaker with John Maclean under Neil Sinclair. He recorded MacFadyen's recollection of Maclean:

John MacLean and I learned the shoemaking together, with Neil Sinclair. We were three years learning; we slept together all that time. John used to compose verses frequently. He was not at all a good shoemaker. He was a poor eater, a great walker, and a splendid reader; he was very much given to reading.<sup>40</sup>

After his three years as a shoemaker's apprentice, Maclean went to Glasgow as a journeyman, but was there only one year before he returned to Tiree. About a year later, at the age of twenty-one, he returned to Glasgow and married Isabella Black on 19 July 1808 [unfortunately there is no indication as to how the two met initially]. Black was originally from the island of Lismore, near Oban; her father was Duncan Black, an elder in the Church of Scotland.<sup>41</sup> Maclean and his new wife returned to Tiree to his forty-acre croft at Caolas, where in 1809 they had their first child Christy – Alexander Maclean Sinclair's mother.

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<sup>40</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xv.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, xv & 1.

In the summer of 1810, John Maclean was conscripted into the militia. His father offered to “procure a substitute,”<sup>42</sup> as it was then possible to do, but Maclean would hear nothing of it, and joined the Argyllshire Regiment. He was only in the regiment for six months when “he got tired of his new profession” and decided to get someone to take his place for £40.<sup>43</sup> Maclean was at first unable to get permission to leave the regiment as he states in one of his songs. He says that he went to see the magistrate about it, who replied:

[...] <i>“Cha ghabh mi bàidh riut</i>	... “I will not give you mercy
<i>Chan fhàigh thu fàbhar o m’ làimh;</i>	You will not get a favour from me;
<i>Chan eil còir agam no càirdeas</i>	I have no obligation or friendship
<i>Dol ’nad phàirt ’s cha téid mi ann.”</i> <sup>44</sup>	Taking your part and I will not go there.”

Maclean eventually persuaded the Laird of Coll to write a letter on his behalf to the colonel of the regiment, Lord John Campbell. Coll gave him his letter and Maclean was so appreciative he composed a song for him, “Òran do dh’Alasdair Mac Gilleain, Tighearna Chola,” in which Maclean states that after going to see the Laird of Coll about disaffecting from the militia, Coll “put a letter in [his] bag to the Colonel on [his] behalf” (“*Chuir e litir ann am phòca / Dh’ionnsaidh Chòirneil os mo chionn*”).<sup>45</sup> However, C. R. Morison of the Isle of Mull stated in a letter to

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<sup>42</sup> There is a slight discrepancy in sources here. Though AMS, in both *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), xv & 1 and *Filidh na Coille*, 9, says that it was Maclean’s father who offered to pay for a replacement, DMS says it was the Laird of Coll (see “John Maclean: A Centenary,” *Dalhousie Review* 28.3 (Oct. 1948): 259 and “Some Family History,” 4).

<sup>43</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xv.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

Maclean Sinclair in 1897 that, according to oral tradition, the Laird of Coll was not at first so willing to help Maclean get out of the militia. Morison, a major informant of Maclean Sinclair, supplied him with a brief anecdote of how John Maclean freed himself from the army with his incisive wit:

Have you heard the reply your grandfather gave McLean of Coll when he refused to interfere to get him free from the army? “*Nam bu Chaimbeulach mi 'n diugh bho dhà cheann Chola gheibhinn fear a ghabhadh mo leisgeul.*” [“If I were a Campbell I would find a man to take my place from either end of Coll.”] When McLean heard this he called him back.<sup>46</sup>

A similar tradition was cited by Hector MacDougall in his 1928 edition of *Clàrsach na Coille*.<sup>47</sup> In any event, according to Maclean Sinclair, who cited his grandfather’s army discharge papers, John Maclean was released from the Argyllshire regiment on 17 January 1811.<sup>48</sup>

After his stint in the army, John Maclean returned to Tiree, eventually making an attempt as a small-scale merchant.<sup>49</sup> According to Maclean Sinclair, his grandfather was no more successful in his trade as merchant than he was as shoemaker. It was during this period Maclean’s wife Isabella gave birth to their second and third child, Charles (1813) and Archibald (1815). John Maclean’s next

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<sup>46</sup> C. R. Morison to AMS, 1 Sept. 1897, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/398b, NSARM.

<sup>47</sup> See his footnote in *Clàrsach* (1928), 2. DMS also relates a similar version in his article on John Maclean in the *Dalhousie Review* (see DMS, “John Maclean,” 259), undoubtedly based on Hector MacDougall.

<sup>48</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xv.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

endeavour was to publish a collection of poetry in 1818 entitled *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* (New Gaelic Songs), which included twenty-two of Maclean's own poems and thirty-four others he had collected.<sup>50</sup> Maclean explains in a song that he went to Edinburgh to try and gain the support he needed for his book from the Highland Society of Edinburgh, but was unsuccessful in finding much support:<sup>51</sup>

<p><i>'S nach robh fear-dàimh no caraid ann A ghabh mo phàirt, no shealladh orm, Cha tug iad mòran geallaidh dhomh, 'S ann thuirt iad, "rinneadh mearachd oirnn Gar mealladh anns an t-seòl sin."</i><sup>52</sup></p>	<p>And there was no relation or friend there To take my part, or look at me, They did not give me much of a promise. They said, "it would be a mistake for us To be enticed in that direction."</p>
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When he did not get the aid he had hoped, Maclean thought to turn to his patron the Laird of Coll while he was in Edinburgh. According to Maclean Sinclair, "when he left the house he expected that the Laird of Coll would meet him in Edinburgh; when he arrived, he was in England" ("*Nuair a dh'fhàg e 'n taigh bha dùil aige gun tachradh Tighearna Chola air an Dùn Éideann; nuair a ràinig e, 's ann a bha e an Sasainn*"):<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> A supposed "Second Edition" of this was published in Antigonish, NS in 1856 (see Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, 260); however, the 1856 work was an edition of eleven of John Maclean's New World poems (see AMS, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*, vol. II (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1900), 27).

<sup>51</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 20. See also DMS, "John Maclean," 259.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<p><i>Gur h-ann an sin a dh'ionndraich mi</i>  <i>Am fear ruadh dhan dual bhi</i>  <i>ceannsgalach</i>  <i>'S a sheasadh 'n àm na teanntachd mi</i>  <i>Am measg nan uaislean Gallda sin</i>  <i>Bha 'g imeachd air na cabhsairean</i>  <i>Ged bha mi tric a shealltainn orr',</i>  <i>Chan fhaicinn ann an Còirneal.<sup>54</sup></i></p>	<p>It was then that I longed for  The red-haired man with the authority of  birthright  Who would stand for me in my time of trouble  Among those Lowland nobles  Walking on the pathways.  Though I often watched them  I would not see the Colonel.<sup>55</sup></p>
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Despite the lack of support from the Highland Society of Edinburgh or his patron, John Maclean was eventually able to make a deal with a printer in Edinburgh, Robert Menzies, to publish his book for him. A run of 400 copies were made.<sup>56</sup>

In 1819 John Maclean decided that he would emigrate to Nova Scotia. The economy of the Hebrides, which had been buoyed up by the increased prices paid for agricultural products and kelp, did not fare so well after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. The downturn in the economy and Maclean's lack of success as a shoemaker and merchant probably contributed to his decision to emigrate. Maclean Sinclair was of the opinion that the main reason his grandfather left Scotland was in the hopes of obtaining his own "estate" in the New World where he could live almost as well-off as a laird in the Old Country:

He had formed a very high opinion of the new world: he expected to become in it, in a short time, if not as rich, yet as independent as the Laird

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<sup>54</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 21-22.

<sup>55</sup> i.e. Alexander MacLean, Laird of Coll. Coll was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Breadalbane Fencible Regiment, see AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 6.

<sup>56</sup> Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, 260.

of Coll. In his vivid imagination he saw himself in America, not handling the last, but cultivating a farm which he could call his own; his children not going off to the fishing, but living around him in good circumstances.<sup>57</sup>

Maclean himself conveys this notion, in “A’ Choille Ghruamach”: “It was then my opinion before I left that I would become noble when I came here [Nova Scotia]” (“*Bu bheachd dhomh ‘n uair sin mun d’ rinn mi gluasad / Gum fàsainn uasal nuair thiginn ann*”).<sup>58</sup>

Maclean’s “high opinion of the New World” was probably in large part due to the propaganda of emigration agents who often gave emigrants a false impression, not only of the wealth and fortune they would accrue there, but also of the good weather and ideal environment. The theme of being misled by emigration agents is not uncommon in immigrant Gaelic poetry. Certainly John Maclean felt he was misled, and says as much in “A’ Choille Ghruamach” where he particularly describes agents trying to entice emigrants to the New World with false promises and misleading reports:

*‘Si seo an dùthaich ‘sa bheil an cruadal  
Gun fhios don t-sluagh a tha tigh’nn a-nall,  
Gur h-olc a fhuaras oirnn luchd a’ bhuaireidh  
A rinn le ‘n tuairisgeul ar toirt ann.  
[. . .]  
Bidh cliù an àite ‘ga chur am meud;  
[. . .]  
Ri cur am fiachaibh gu bheil ‘san tìr seo  
Gach nì as prìseile tha fon ghréin.”<sup>59</sup>*

This is the land in which there is hardship  
Unknown to the people coming over here;  
Evil has been done to us by the deceivers  
Who with their description brought us here.  
...  
The fame of the place is exaggerated;  
...  
They try to make out that in this land

<sup>57</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xvi.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>59</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 99-100.

Is every thing most precious under the sun.

Maclean also bemoaned his deception in the song, “*O, gur mise th’ air mo mhealladh*” (“Oh, I have been deceived”), thinking that in the New World he would be wearing boots and spurs and picking gold from the trees:

<i>’S ann shaoil leamsa leis a’ ghòraich</i>	I thought like the fool
<i>Nuair a dh’fhalbh mi leis a’ Chòirneal,</i>	When I left with the Colonel <sup>61</sup>
<i>A bhi ann am spuir ’s am bhòtuinn</i>	That I would be wearing spurs and boots,
<i>Trusadh òir air bhàrr gach meangain.</i> <sup>60</sup>	Gathering gold from the top of every branch.

Hector MacDougall, who revised Maclean Sinclair’s 1881 edition of *Clàrsach na Coille* in 1928, included an afterword in which he provides an interesting angle on John Maclean’s decision to emigrate. MacDougall cites anecdotal accounts from oral tradition that point to tensions between John Maclean and the Laird of Coll. This tradition says that Maclean had a disagreement with the Laird of Coll that sparked a decision to give up his position as *Bàrd Thighearna Chola*.<sup>62</sup> Supposedly the Laird of Coll was not pleased with some particular poems Maclean had composed in praise of the chief of the

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>61</sup> i.e. the emigration agent, Colonel Simon Fraser, see AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 111.

<sup>62</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 283.

MacDonells of Glengarry, whom Maclean describes in one poem as “king of all the Gaels” (“*rìgh nan Gàidheal uile*”),<sup>63</sup> and says:

<i>Chan eil coimeas do Ghleann Garaidh,</i>	There is no comparison to Glengarry
<i>'S da chuid Ghàidheal</i>	And his Highlanders
<i>Bhon a chaochail Fionn Mac Cumhail,</i>	Since the death of Fionn MacCumhail
<i>'S a laoiach àghmhor.</i> <sup>64</sup>	And his joyful heroes.

MacDougall explained that there were at least two anecdotes as to how and why Maclean composed a *deoch-slàinte*, or “toast,” to Glengarry. The first account, which MacDougall got from Glengarry oral tradition, has Maclean sharing a drink with the Glengarry chief on the way to Glenfinnan, the site where Bonnie Prince Charlie first raised his standard in 1745:

*Bha e air aithris am measg sheann daoine Ghleanna Garadh fhéin gun robh Mac Mhic Alasdair [Glengarry] agus a chuid dhaoine air an rathad gu Gleann Fhionghain gu foillseachadh na carragh-chuimhne air Prionnsa Teàrlach a chuir MacDhomhnuill Ghlinn Aladail suas far an do chuireadh ri crann Bratach nan Stiubhartach anns a' bhliadhna 1745. [. . .] Co-dhiù bha e air a ràdh gun robh am bàrd anns an dùthaich sin aig a' cheart am seo, agus [. . .] thachair e fhéin is cuideachd Mhic 'ic Alasdair air a chéile. Bha Gleanna Garadh eòlach air a' Bhàrd agus stad e far an do thachair iad. Chuir e fàilte chridheil air Iain agus b'e an ath nì làmh a thoirt air an “tòiseach;” chaidh an t-searrag mun cuairt agus air don Bhàrd an t-slige a ghabhail 'na dhòrn à laimh Mhic 'ic Alasdair, thug e seachad an deoch-slàinte seo às a sheasamh an làrach nam bonn.*<sup>65</sup>

It has been reported among the old people of Glengarry themselves that Alasdair Ranaldson MacDonell [chief of the MacDonells of Glengarry] and his people were on their way to Glenfinnan to the unveiling of the monument to Prince Charlie that MacDonald of Glenaladale put up where the flag of the Stewarts was planted in the year 1745. . . . At any rate it has been said that the Bard was in that country at just this time, and he . . . and

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<sup>63</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 89.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>65</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 283-84.

Glengarry's company happened upon one another. Glengarry was familiar with the Bard and he stopped where they met. He gave John a warm welcome and they then turned to the matter of drinking; the flask went round and as the Bard accepted the drinking-shell from the hand of Glengarry, he came out with this toast on the spot.

The second account, this one from Coll and Tiree tradition, concerns the reasons behind the possible tension between Maclean and the Laird of Coll. In this anecdote the Laird of Coll is at a special banquet attended by a number of the Highland nobility when John Maclean delivers his toast to Glengarry. Maclean, a part of Coll's entourage, was affronted when his patron left him behind outside. The last to enter, Glengarry recognized Maclean and brought him inside with him to the table and shared a drink with him, at which point Maclean recited his *deoch-slàinte* to Glengarry in appreciation:

*Bha cuirm air a gleidheadh ann an ionad sònraichte – cha robh e air a ràdh càite, agus dh'fhaodadh e bhi gur i a' cheart dìnneir a bhiodh aca aig foillseachadh a' charragh fhéin a bhiodh ann – is bha mórán uaislean cruinn. Bha cinn-fheadhna ann às gach ceàrn, bha Gleanna Garadh ann is bha Tighearna Chola ann. Bha co-dhiù cuid de na gillean aig na cinn-fheadhna leò mar bu dual, agus bha Iain MacGhilleathain, mar bhàrd, an cuideachd Mhic Iain Abraich [the Laird of Coll]. Air do na h-uaislean dol a-steach don t-seòmar anns an robh an dìnneir air a suidheachadh, chaidh Tighearna Chola e fhéin a-steach ach dh'fhàg e am Bàrd a-muigh. Theagamh nach robh an seo ach nì a dh'fhaodadh a bhi freagarrach gu leòr, ach air do Ghleanna Garadh a bhi na bu deireannaiche gun dol a-steach, mhothaich e gun do dh'fhàgadh Iain a-muigh. Is e an sin a rinn e a làmh a chur an achlais a' Bhàird agus a thoirt a-steach leis, mar gum biodh fear a bhiodh co-ionnan ris fhéin an inbhe. B'ann mun bhòrd an sin air dhaibh suidhe sìos a thug Gleanna Garadh do dh'Iain an t-slige is a liubhair esan an "Deoch-Slàinte." Ghabh Tighearna Chola gu fìor dhona an t-àrd-mholadh a rinn am Bàrd air "Alasdair Gleannach" seach e fhéin, oir 'se Alasdair a bu cheud ainm dhaibh le chéile, is mar a bha an sgeul air a h-innseadh, thionndaidh e ri Iain, is beagan àrdain ri fhaicinn 'na ghnùis, agus arsa esan, – "Iain, Iain, ciod a rinn thu orm a-nis; Carson nach dèanadh tu rann mar siud dhòmhsa?"*

*“Cha laigheadh e ort,” arsa Iain, oir bha àrdan-san mar an ceudna air dùsgadh a thaobh mar a dh’fhàg a cheann-cinnidh fhéin a-mach e, is Mac Mhic Alasdair ‘ga thoirt a-stigh.<sup>66</sup>*

There was a banquet being held in a special place – it was not said where, maybe it was the same dinner that they would have had for the unveiling of the monument – and there were many nobles assembled. There were clan chieftains there from every corner, Glengarry was there and the Laird of Coll was there. There were at least some of the chieftains’ servants with them there, as was the custom, and John Maclean, as bard, in the Laird of Coll’s company. When the nobles went into the room where the dinner was to be held, the Laird of Coll went in himself but he left the Bard outside. Maybe this was only something that might be proper enough, but as Glengarry was one of the last ones to enter, he noticed that John was left outside. It was then that he put his hand under the Bard’s arm and took him inside with him, as if he were a man of the same rank as himself. It was there around the table where they were seated that Glengarry gave John the drinking-shell and he delivered his “Toast.” The Laird of Coll took the high praise that the Bard gave “Alexander of the Glen” instead of himself very badly, for Alexander was both their first name, and as the story has been told, he turned to John, with a little bit of pride visible in his expression, and said, “John, John what have you done to me now; why wouldn’t you make a verse like that for me?”

“It wouldn’t suit you,” said John, for his own pride had been aroused because of how his own chieftain left him outside, while Glengarry took him inside.

MacDougall also points out that there is a hint at the discord in his relationship with the Laird of Coll in one of Maclean’s songs:

*Ged bu mhath bhi measg nan uaislean,  
‘Se bhi fada bhuath’ is fheàrr dhut;  
An luchd muinntir tha ‘nan seirbhis,  
Chan àird an ainm na na tràillean.  
‘S sleamhainn an leac aig an dorsaibh  
Dh’fheumadh tu coiseachd gu fàilidh;  
Nan tuiteadh tu uair gun fhios dhut,  
Rachadh bristeadh air a’ chàirdeas.<sup>67</sup>*

Though it was good to be among the nobility,  
You’re better off far away from them;  
The servants in their service,  
Their name is no higher than that of slaves.  
Their doorstep is slippery;  
You would have to walk carefully;  
If you fell once by mistake,  
The friendship would be broken.

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<sup>66</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 284.

MacDougall explained that, according to his father and Tìree oral tradition, this passage referred directly to the *deoch-slàinte* John Maclean composed for Glengarry: “My father said that what was meant by the ‘slipperiness’ in that verse was this ‘toast’” (“*Bha m’athair ag ràdh gur i an ‘deoch-slàinte’ seo an ‘sleamhnachadh’ a bha e a’ ciallachadh anns an rann sin*”).<sup>68</sup>

According to MacDougall’s oral sources, Maclean’s patron had not been happy with the slight Maclean dealt him in composing encomia to another chieftain. If indeed a falling out had occurred between Maclean and his patron, as suggested in the anecdotal sources, it could have played a role in Maclean’s decision to emigrate. One must admit, however, that these sources could have arisen after the fact as a way of explaining Maclean’s departure. Whatever John Maclean’s real reasons were for emigrating, the orally-based tradition cited by MacDougall provides an interesting insight into what may have been a contributing factor to Maclean’s decision, and fleshes out a significant period in Maclean’s life for which we have little detail. This tradition also provides insight into the perceived figure of Maclean: the characteristic stubbornness, pride, and aspirations for nobility. This image corresponds with much of what Maclean Sinclair has to tell us about his grandfather, “he was not a man who could be easily coaxed or advised; he was very stiff in his own opinions. When he had

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<sup>67</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 107.

<sup>68</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 283.

once resolved to do a thing, it was almost useless to try and persuade him not to do it.”<sup>69</sup> Granted Maclean Sinclair himself necessarily relies to a certain extent on family and other informants in forming his own image of his grandfather, he was after all not even eight years old when John Maclean died, and Maclean Sinclair was almost certainly aware of the tradition surrounding his grandfather’s emigration, having visited Tiree in 1869.

When the time came for John Maclean and his family to leave Scotland, Maclean Sinclair says that the Laird of Coll was away at the time and that the laird’s daughter wrote to her father about it. Coll replied trying to convince Maclean not to go; however, his letter came too late, John Maclean and his family had already departed.<sup>70</sup> Maclean Sinclair recounts that John Maclean’s friends adamantly opposed his emigration, but he was obstinate. Just as he had made up his mind to join the militia against the advice of his father when he was twenty-three, at the age of thirty-two he resolved to move with his family to the New World, against the advice of his friends. John Maclean, his wife Isabella, and their three children, Christy (nine), Charles (six), and Archibald (four), set

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<sup>69</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xvi-xvii.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi. There is a slight discrepancy between AMS and DMS. DMS says that John Maclean left “*despite* the persuasions of the Laird of Coll.” See DMS, “John Maclean,” 259. However, according to AMS, John Maclean and his family had already gone by the time Coll had written to him to persuade him otherwise.

sail on the ship *Economy* from Tobermory, Mull, on a Thursday<sup>71</sup> in early August 1819. They arrived in Pictou, Nova Scotia around the beginning of October. In a transcription of the agreement between John Maclean and his emigration agent, dated Tobermory, 29 July 1819 – provided by Maclean Sinclair in *Clàrsach na Coille* – it is evident that John Maclean, at least partly, financed his passage on the *Economy* with his poetry. He gave over his recently published books of poetry in security of what he owed the emigration agent, who also agreed to pay Maclean’s outstanding bill to Robert Menzies, the printer in Edinburgh, as part of the deal:

It is agreed between John MacLean Bard to MacLean of Coll, and S. Fraser of Pictou as follows: John Maclean will with his wife and three children be accompanied with a passage to North America, which amounts to Twenty-seven pounds, Six shillings, and in addition S. Fraser will endorse the said John MacLean’s bill for Thirty-three pounds, Six shillings due to Mr. Robert Menzies, Printer, Edinburgh; for all which the said John MacLean will pay over to the said S. Fraser three hundred and eighty Gaelic song books in security of the balance.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See “A’ Choille Ghruamach,” in AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 103, one line of which says, “Air moch Diar-daoin a’ dol seach an Caolas.” (“Early Thursday morning going past Caolas.”) See MacDougall’s discussion of this in the afterword, *Clàrsach* (1928), 287.

<sup>72</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xvii. This is at odds with the statement in *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, 260, which states that, “Almost the entire impression of 400 copies was left with the printer, who supplied the Poet with a small sum of money to pay his passage to Canada, whither he went with his wife and family in 1819.” This is somewhat surprising as Donald Maclean almost certainly relied on AMS for this as the two corresponded periodically exchanging books and Gaelic publishing information for Donald MacLean’s *Typographia*. Donald Maclean would have also had access to *Clàrsach na Coille*, in which is printed a copy of the agreement between S. Fraser and John Maclean.

## John Maclean in Nova Scotia

By the time John Maclean and his family arrived in the small port town of Pictou in 1819, the colony had been settled for nearly half a century, largely by fellow Scots. In essence the Highland influx to Nova Scotia, or “New Scotland,” began with the landing of the ship *Hector* in Pictou in 1773. Nova Scotia was not named after the Scots who subsequently settled there in such great numbers. It was named New Scotland in a Royal Charter granted to Scottish peer William Alexander in 1621 by King James VI of Scotland (who had also become King James I of England in 1603).<sup>73</sup> The Latin for New Scotland, given in the Charter, was eventually adopted as the name for the territory. At that time Nova Scotia was a region roughly equivalent to the modern Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island (PEI). The area was contested by the French (who had settled there as early as 1604, calling it Acadia) and the British until 1763, when the British conclusively defeated the French for control in North America. Nova Scotia, as defined by its current boundaries, dates from 1769 when PEI (the Island of St. John until 1799) became a separate colony, and 1784 when New Brunswick was also created as a separate colony, and 1820 when Cape Breton Island (previously Île Royale), which had also been created as a separate colony in 1784, was re-annexed to Nova Scotia. In 1867 Nova Scotia joined in confederation with three other British North American colonies to

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<sup>73</sup> D. Campbell & R. A. MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974), 35.

become the original four provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec) of the new Dominion of Canada (PEI, the third province from “the Maritimes,” later joined Canada in 1873).

Though the initial shipload of immigrant Scots to Pictou included two hundred, the settlement in the first year dwindled to about eighty. In 1776 about fifteen Highland families from neighbouring PEI moved to Pictou with the promise of free land. Highland settlement in PEI had begun slightly earlier.<sup>74</sup> The situation in PEI was not unlike that of Scotland; settlers were essentially tenants who had to pay rent to a proprietor/landlord who owned the particular lot of land on which they settled. Though the rent was very little in PEI, the promise of free land in Nova Scotia, in addition to a plague of mice that devoured their stores of food in Georgetown, PEI, was enough to make a few families decide to move to the nascent colony at Pictou. By 1783 there were about three hundred people living in Pictou. The colony steadily grew with additions from disbanded regiments after the American Revolution, a number of which included Lowlanders and Roman Catholic Highlanders.

In September of 1791 a large group of destitute Catholics from the Western Isles arrived in the largely Presbyterian settlement of Pictou. There is

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<sup>74</sup> For a discussion on the Gaelic community of PEI see Michael Linkletter, “The Island *Gàidhealtachd*: The Scottish Gaelic Community of Prince Edward Island,” *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 17 (1997): 223-43. For a discussion on Scottish Gaelic in North America see Kenneth E. Nilsen, “Celtic Languages in North America: §2. Scottish Gaelic” in *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* I, ed. John T. Koch (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2006): 379-81 and Calum I. N. MacLeod, “The Gaelic Tradition in North America,” *Irisleabhar Ceilteach* 1.3 (1953): 70-71 & 94-98.

some indication of a certain amount of tension between the two religious groups, though generally speaking relations between the Catholic and Protestant Scots of Nova Scotia were not hostile.<sup>75</sup> Rev. James MacGregor, who arrived in Pictou in 1786, became its first Presbyterian minister and only clergyman. He was disturbed by a range of beliefs, superstitions, and behaviours of the Roman Catholic newcomers, fearing this might influence his flock of Protestant Highlanders who had been “weaned” from such false notions:

Much of their [i.e. the Catholics’] time was spent in naughty diversions, jestings which were not convenient or decent, in telling extravagant stories of miracles done by priests, and absurd tales about ghosts, witches, fairies, etc. The minds of the Protestant Highlanders, being partly tinctured with these superstitions before the arrival of the Roman Catholics, were less prepared to resist their influence than the minds of more reasoning and sceptical Christians. They had been pretty much weaned from the remains which the first settlers brought from Scotland, but we have not got wholly over these bad lessons.<sup>76</sup>

Eventually, however, the Catholics in Pictou were visited by Father Angus MacEachern of PEI (later Bishop), who encouraged them to move east to Antigonish County (then part of what was called Sydney County) where they could settle with fellow Catholics.<sup>77</sup> More and more Highlanders came into the area, and by 1805 most of the best lands in Pictou County were taken. New arrivals moved on to New Brunswick or PEI or east to Antigonish County and

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<sup>75</sup> See Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots*, 221-28.

<sup>76</sup> George Patterson, *Memoir of Rev. James MacGregor, D.D.* (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1859), 257-58.

<sup>77</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 210.

Cape Breton, but Pictou remained a major point of entry throughout the period of immigration.<sup>78</sup> There came to be a marked difference in the settlement pattern between the two counties of Pictou and Antigonish, which was influenced by the religious affiliation of earlier immigrants. The former was typically Scottish Presbyterian, while the latter attracted many Scottish Roman Catholics.<sup>79</sup> Though Roman Catholics came to form the major religious denomination in Antigonish County, there were also significant numbers of Anglicans, Baptists, and Presbyterians. The town of Antigonish, originally called Dorchester Village, had a mixed population (both Catholic and Protestant) of Scottish, English, and Irish; however, with the exception of a few French-Acadian settlements in such places as Pomquet and Havre Bouché, the hinterland of the county was settled mainly by Highlanders.

Between 1810 and 1815, immigration to the region dropped off somewhat. Between 1815 and 1822, about 1,674 Scots arrived in Pictou County, with many of these eventually moving elsewhere. The influx into Pictou slowed down by 1823 and essentially ceased by 1827.<sup>80</sup> The estimated population of Nova Scotia in 1827 was 153, 848 and the largest single religious denomination was the Church

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<sup>78</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 40-43.

<sup>79</sup> See Chapter 2 "Settlement," in Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*; specifically the sections on Pictou and Antigonish counties.

<sup>80</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 46.

of Scotland, indicating the Scots were a major segment of the colony's population.<sup>81</sup>

The settlement of the northeastern Nova Scotia mainland initially took place along the fertile lands closest to water, along the river valleys and intervales, and coastline. As more colonists arrived and these lands were taken, settlers were forced to develop the less desirable tracts of land in the interior. Communications services were eventually established in the region, and by 1815 there was mail and passenger coach service to Truro and Halifax, southwest of Pictou. The road east to Antigonish was not established until 1851. Up until this time people had to travel in the area by going along the coast or on trails through the woods.<sup>82</sup>

By the 1820s, Pictou was well established with churches, schools, and agricultural societies. Antigonish to the east was only slightly behind in similar development, while further east Cape Breton was still in the pioneering phase. A contemporary description provides a window onto the conditions of the roads in the area between Pictou and Antigonish in 1817:

To French and Barney's River, 7 miles pretty good then becomes intricate. From Barney's River, 2 miles a road strikes off right to Antigonish – a mere path thro' the wood most difficult to keep, at 2 miles a pretty settlement called Bayley's Brook. 8 families of Highlanders speaking not one word of English – then ascent the Antigonish mountain-road pretty well cut out but no more . . . a settler's horse being much accustomed to

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<sup>81</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 51.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

pick his steps may get thro' . . . rock and fallen trees but impossible to drag a carriage after him. . . .<sup>83</sup>

It was in this isolated area that John Maclean and his family would settle after arriving in Pictou in 1819, and which would inspire his poem about the “Gloomy Forest.”

### **Baile-Chnoic**

John and Isabella Maclean and their three children spent a week in Pictou before they went by boat eastwards along the coast to the tiny settlement of Merigomish. From there they went upriver to Middle Barney’s River, a hilly, heavily forested area, and stayed in the small house of the family of Joseph MacDonald. After another week or two, they moved on once again to stay with the family of William Gordon, an immigrant from Sutherlandshire. Maclean purchased a lot of woodland which was a substantial distance from William Gordon’s property and began to clear it.<sup>84</sup> They spent their first winter in Nova Scotia at William Gordon’s, paying their board by attending to Gordon’s cows. In the spring of 1820 Maclean continued clearing his land; he also planted

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<sup>83</sup> “Notebook on certain roads in Nova Scotia,” 1817, General Register Office, Edinburgh, quoted in Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 144.

<sup>84</sup> AMS later says Maclean’s nearest neighbour in Baile-Chnoic was Kenneth Cameron, originally of Lochbroom, Scotland, who lived more than three kilometers away. AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xix.

potatoes and built a small log-house, calling his small settlement *Baile-Chnoic*, or “Hill-Farm.”<sup>85</sup>

John Maclean’s wife, Isabella, was an important factor in the family’s survival in the difficult times of their first years in Nova Scotia. In addition to giving birth to three more children in Nova Scotia – John in 1820, Allan in 1822, and Elizabeth in 1826 – she was instrumental as a worker on the farm.

According to Maclean Sinclair, John Maclean was not used to the hard labour required of pioneer life:

In Scotland he knew nothing of hard work or poverty, but now he had to work hard. He had to cut down the tall trees, to cut them up into junks about twelve feet long, to make piles of these logs and burn them; and to plant potatoes in his new ground with the hoe.<sup>86</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s portrait of John Maclean’s wife, however, is of a redoubtable figure, much better suited to pioneer life than her husband: “If she could not handle the lyre, she could handle the hoe, the sickle and the rake.”<sup>87</sup>

Unfortunately we have little more information concerning Isabella than Maclean Sinclair’s short description of her that he included in the memoir to his grandfather in *Clàrsach na Coille*:

She was an active, healthy, and industrious woman. No woman could be better qualified to make a home for herself in the woods than she was. [. . .] She was kind and hospitable. Her house was ever open to the stranger.

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<sup>85</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xvii-xviii.

<sup>86</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xviii.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, xxv.

It would indeed be difficult to find a house which had freely lodged more travellers. She was devotedly attached to her husband. She was a good and pious woman.<sup>88</sup>

Isabella died at the age of ninety-one on 5 June 1877 and was interred next to her husband. They share a tombstone, with her inscription just below her husband's. She is simply acknowledged as "*Bean a' Bhàird, 1786-1877*" ("The Wife of the Bard"), along with a short phrase in Gaelic: "*Earb as an Tighearna le d'uile chridhe*" ("Trust in the Lord with all your heart"). (See Figure 6: Tombstone of John Maclean and Isabella Black).

It is an understatement to say that John Maclean and his family must have been considerably shocked at the extreme temperatures and the amount of snowfall they would have experienced during their first winter in Nova Scotia. They were used to the temperate climate of the Island of Tìree, influenced by the moderating effects of the Gulf Stream. The visible impact of arriving in a land completely covered by trees would have also been considerable. Back in Tìree, a relatively flat and low-lying land, trees were scarce. These new images stimulated John Maclean's poetic nature, and after a short time in Barney's River he composed "*A' Choille Ghruamach*" ("The Gloomy Forest"), despite his ironic statement in the song that his poetic talents have left him: "Every talent I had in

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<sup>88</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xxv.

my head has gone; I am unable to put together a song here" (*"Gun thréig gach tàlant a bha 'nam cheann; / Cha dèan mi òran a chur air dòigh ann"*).<sup>89</sup>

It is clear in *"A' Choille Ghruamach,"* that the first few years in Barney's River were hard for John Maclean, and he was very disappointed with "this place against nature" (*"[...] an t-àite seo 'n aighidh nàduir"*).<sup>90</sup> The extremes of the seasons greatly affected him, especially the deep snow and severe cold of winter:

<i>Bidh sneachd a' dlùthadh ri cùl nan geug,</i>	The snow gathers dense on the branches;
<i>'S gu domhain dùmhail dol thar na glùine</i>	It's deep and thick going over the knee;
<i>[...]</i>	...
<i>Mur bi mi èdlach airson mo chòmhdach</i>	If I'm not careful about covering up,
<i>Gum faigh mi reòta mo shròn 's mo bheul;</i>	I'll find my nose and mouth frozen
<i>Le gaoth à tuath a bhios nimheil fuaraidh</i>	From the cold, malicious north wind;
<i>Gum bi mo chluasan an cunnart geur.</i> <sup>91</sup>	My ears will be in severe danger.

Nor did Maclean find any respite with the onset of summer. Not only was the heat too much, it brought out the wild animals and insects: "the heat of the sun leaves me weak" (*"[...] teas na gréine 'gam fhàgail fann"*), "the beaked, poisonous, taloned fly wounds me repeatedly with the tip of its weapon" (*"[...] a' chuileag ìneach gu socach, puinnseanta / 'Gam lot gu lìonmhor le rinn a lainn"*), and "every loathsome beast ... raises its head" (*"Gach beathach gràineil a thogas ceann"*).<sup>92</sup>

When John Maclean sent his new composition in a letter back to Coll and Tìree, the people were dismayed at his harsh portrayal of the New World. His

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<sup>89</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 98.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 100-101.

friends wrote back to him and offered to send money to bring him back. The Laird of Coll also wrote to Maclean and offered him a piece of land on which to settle rent-free if he would return.<sup>93</sup> John Maclean eventually changed his mind about his new home however, especially once he became more comfortable with his surroundings and his children got older and were able to help with the farm,<sup>94</sup> and he came to compose songs which convey a growing contentedness with his home in the New World.

That he was becoming reconciled to his life in the New World is apparent in Maclean's "Seann Albainn agus Albainn Ùr" ("Old Scotland and New Scotland"), which Maclean Sinclair says was composed after his grandfather had "come to be somewhat satisfied with the country."<sup>95</sup> This is a song in the form of a *còmhradh* (conversation) between John Maclean (the "Poet" in the song) and emigration agent Simon Fraser (the "Colonel" in the song), who was involved with securing Maclean's passage to Nova Scotia. The dialogue here is really an argument Maclean is having with himself which ends with Maclean coming to terms with his situation. Superficially the "Colonel" represents the persuasive machinations of the emigration agent who convinced the "Poet" to emigrate;

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<sup>93</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xix.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, xx.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

however, the “Colonel” essentially embodies the voice of reason in the song, by which Maclean weighs the good aspects of his new life with the bad:

<i>Gu dé dh'iarradh tu ach fhaotainn,</i>	What more could you want but
<i>Fearann saor is còir bhon rìgh air,</i>	Cheap land and title to it from the king,
<i>Bhios an déidh do bhàis mar</i>	Which will be, after your death, like an
<i>oighreachd</i>	inheritance
<i>Aig do chloinn ma bhios iad crìonnta.</i> <sup>96</sup>	For your children if they are prudent.

Maclean, in the role of the “Bard,” expresses his disillusionment with his new home in similar sentiments to those in “A’ Choille Ghruamach”; however, in this song, Maclean seems resigned to his fate in the New World. Though he is still disappointed, his expectations have been moderately lowered. Where before he had hoped to have the life of a noble, he now reveals a desire to be somewhere in the middle: “the man wants contentment between being noble and lowly” (“*Tha an duine ag iarraidh àilgheis / Eadar e bhi àrd is iosal*”). By the conclusion of the song, the voice of the Colonel has won out and the Bard resigns himself to life in the New World:<sup>97</sup>

[...]	...
<i>Olc air mhath 's mar bhios mo chàradh</i>	Whether my situation in this place
<i>'San àite seo, 's éiginn strìochdadh.</i>	Is bad or good, I must accept it.
<i>Soraidh bhuam gu tìr nan Gàidheal</i>	Farewell to the land of the Gaels
<i>Nach leig mi gu bràth air dìochuimn'.</i> <sup>98</sup>	That I will never feign forget.

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<sup>96</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 108.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

Within a few years of composing “A’ Choille Ghruamach” and “Seann Albainn agus Albainn Ùr,” Maclean shows a complete turn around in his view of Nova Scotia, and seems fully adjusted to life there. He is not just content, he is light-hearted and jovial in a song he composed in 1826 to commemorate a “Highland Ball” (“Am Bàl Gaidhealach”), where “only those who would speak Gaelic could attend the ball” (“*Chan fhaodadh duine a bhi aig a’ bhàl ach feadhainn a labhradh Gàidhlig*”).<sup>99</sup> In the oppressive atmosphere of the “Gloomy Forest,” Maclean repeatedly complained of not being able to concentrate on his poetry, “I cannot put together a song, when I start I get depressed ... I cannot get my mind in order” (“*Cha dèan mi òran a chur air dòigh / Nuair nì mi tòiseachadh bidh mi trom / [...] / Chan fhaigh mi m’ inntinn leam an òrdugh*”).<sup>100</sup> By the time of “Am Bàl Gaidhealach,” however, Maclean’s melancholy has lifted. The Gaelic word *trom* in the song “A’ Choille Ghruamach,” meaning “heavy, serious, depressed, sad, melancholic,” is used conversely by Maclean in “Am Bàl Gaidhealach.” In this song he exhorts his audience to be *gun trom* (without sadness): “be light-hearted and sing a cheerful, merry tune without being serious” (“*Bithibh aotram ’s togaibh fonn, / Cridheil, sùnndach gun bhi trom*”).<sup>101</sup> With the happiness of the occasion and a potential audience at hand, Maclean is at last able to bring order to his

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<sup>99</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 134.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

mind. His poetic skills “wake up” when he hears the news about the Highland ball, and that his presence has been requested:

<p><i>Gur h-e 'n sgeul a fhuair mi an dràs, 'S a dhùisg m' inntinn suas gu dàn, Bhi 'gam iarraidh dh'ionnsaidh bhàil, Th' aig na Gàidheil tùs an Earraich.</i><sup>102</sup></p>	<p>I got news just now And my mind woke up to song They want me at the ball That the Gaels are having at the start of Spring.</p>
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### **Glen Bard**

Even after the considerable effort he expended in clearing his *Baile-Chnoic* farm in the hills of Barney's River, and despite the cheerfulness of “Am Bàl Gàidhealach,” John Maclean was not completely happy there. A decade after he had set out from Scotland to come to the New World, at the age of forty-two, he decided to move once again. He found a new piece of land in neighbouring Antigonish County to his liking, just ten kilometres east of *Baile-Chnoic*, which would eventually come to be known as Glen Bard. There is a stark contrast between the geographies of *Baile-Chnoic* and Glen Bard. While the former is difficult to farm, with its rugged hills and steep inclines, the latter offers the smoother, more fertile terrain of a valley, much more suitable to cultivation than the hills of Barney's River. Maclean and his eldest son Charles began clearing land at the new location in Antigonish County in 1829. In 1830 they built a log-house in the clearing, and in the winter depths of January 1831, the whole family

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<sup>102</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 134.

set out on the trail to Glen Bard.<sup>103</sup> Once the family was established in Glen Bard, John Maclean did not work on the farm very much, as the children were old enough to take over its responsibilities: “The poet never worked much after moving to Glenbard. His children were now able to work.”<sup>104</sup>

### A Flyting with Dùghall Breac

Rivalry between poets is nothing new in Gaelic tradition, and it is not surprising that it should occur between John Maclean and other poets in Nova Scotia who challenged the customary authority that his honorary title of *Bàrd Thighearna Chola* had given him in Scotland. There is some evidence for a certain amount of rivalry between John Maclean and Dugald MacEachern, who was a third cousin of John Maclean’s and, according to Maclean Sinclair, “possessed some poetic talent.”<sup>105</sup> Dùghall Breac, or “Speckled/Spotty Dugald,” so-called supposedly due to pock marks on his face left from a childhood illness, was also born in Tìree (1789), and had come to Antigonish County around 1820 where he found employment as a school teacher.<sup>106</sup> MacEachern lived near Arisaig, on what is called the Gulf Shore (located to the north of the town of Antigonish), a

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<sup>103</sup> In *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), xx, AMS says only that, “In the spring of 1830, the poet left Baile-Chnoic.” However, in *Filidh na Coille*, 13, he explains the move to Glen Bard in more detail with more precise dates.

<sup>104</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xx.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>106</sup> C. I. M. MacLeòid, *Bàrdachd á Albainn Nuaidh* (Glaschu: Gairm, 1970), 19.

substantial distance from Glen Bard, and, according to Maclean Sinclair, John Maclean periodically made trips to the area to visit his cousin. Evidently there was some point of contention between the two, which recorded local tradition says may have been caused by MacEachern plagiarising one of Maclean's compositions.

In 1823 a number of men drowned in a boating accident off the coast of Arisaig, and a song was composed about the incident. The rivalry between the two is elucidated by a conflicting tradition that says either Maclean or MacEachern composed the song. Father Ronald MacGillivray explained the origins concerning the composition of this song in a letter to Maclean Sinclair in 1892. MacGillivray, known as "Sagart Arisaig" ("the Arisaig Priest"), lived in Arisaig near the coast of the Gulf Shore, and was a great friend and correspondent of Maclean Sinclair.<sup>107</sup> In a lengthy letter to Maclean Sinclair, dated 27 March 1892, MacGillivray included seventeen verses of the song about the boating incident off Arisaig, and the story behind its composition:<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> MacGillivray was also a collector of Gaelic songs and folklore as well as local history, and published a great deal of what he collected in the *Antigonish Casket*. His various articles in the *Casket* on the history of the area have been assembled and edited by historian Raymond A. MacLean into two volumes called *History of Antigonish*.

<sup>108</sup> A version of the song, "Bàthadh nam Fear" ("The Drowning of the Men"), was published in *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia* edited by Helen Creighton and Calum MacLeod (1964; rpt. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979), 136-41. MacLeod, the Gaelic editor of the book, stated that "according to Antigonish County local tradition, this song was composed by Alexander MacDonald, the Keppoch Bard [. . .]. Notes on 'The Drowning of the Men' appear in a small MS of the Keppoch Bard's unpublished poems [. . .]." MacLeod later refuted this statement in *Bàrdachd á Albainn Nuaidh* when he stated that Dugald MacEachern was the author of the song, though he did not explain

The song is generally supposed to have been composed by Dougal MacEacharn of Arisaig. A man told me today: “the bard McLean was round at the time, he was on a visit to Arisaig and the old people said that the most of the song was composed by McLean.” [. . .] Friends spoke to Dougal MacEacharn to make a song for the lost. It is said he went to Barney’s River and came back with the song.<sup>109</sup>

MacGillivray went on to explain that, according to local tradition, John Maclean was irritated by MacEachern’s plagiarism, and in a “temporary miff” was supposed to have said: “‘S iomadh dràm a fhuair Dùghall airson an òrain nach d’rinn e.”<sup>110</sup> (“Many’s the dram Dugald got for the song he did not make.”)

MacEachern and Maclean’s competitive relationship is neatly encapsulated in a poetic flyting between them related by Maclean Sinclair in *Clàrsach na Coille*, and illustrates the quick-wittedness for which John Maclean is particularly remembered in anecdotal accounts. Maclean Sinclair explained that this dialogue occurred on one of the last visits his grandfather ever made to MacEachern’s house. He says that “MacEachern, who saw him coming, stood at

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where he got this information: “*fhuair mi a mach a chionn ghoirid gur e Dùghall Mac Eacharna fhéin a chuir ri chéile a’ bhàrdachd ghrinn so.*” (“I found out a short time ago, that it was Dugald MacEachern himself that put together this fine poem.”) Calum Iain M. MacLeòid, *Bàrdachd á Albainn Nuaidh* (1970), 19. MacLeod donated his papers to the Celtic Dept of his *alma mater*, Glasgow University, where they were misplaced. These were recently rediscovered, and include a manuscript written by Father MacGillivray in which a number of Dughall Breac’s compositions appear, “*Bàthadh nam Fear*” among them. This also appears to be the Keppoch Bard’s manuscript he referred to in *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*.

<sup>109</sup> Father Ronald McGillivray to AMS, 27 Mar. 1892, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/256, NSARM.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

the door refusing to let him in until he should give his ‘*duan*’ [poem].”<sup>111</sup> John

Maclean was ready with his riposte and quickly answered with:

<i>'S mise fhuair an rathad càrn,</i>	I have taken the crooked road
<i>A' tigh'nn a shealltainn Dhùghaill Bhric,</i>	To come to see Spotty Dugald.
<i>B'fheàrr dhomh gu mòr na tigh'nn ann,</i>	I would much prefer, instead of coming
<i>Bhi le m' chlann aig taobh mo lic.</i>	here, To be with my children at home.
<i>Cha tig mi tuilledh a-nall</i>	I'll never come here again
<i>'Ga d' shealltainn, ainneamh, no tric;</i>	To see you, often or not;
<i>Ma gheibh mi dhachaidh an dràs,</i>	If I go home right now,
<i>Tha mi 'n dùil gum fàs mi glic.</i> <sup>112</sup>	I expect I'll be the wiser.

Dugald, whose arm was in a sling with an injury, supplied this retort when it

was time for Maclean to leave:

<i>Tha thu nis a' falbh a Bhàird,</i>	Well, you're off now Bard,
<i>'S cuimhnich gun d' thàinig thu gun fhios,</i>	Remember that you came without warning;
<i>Ma thig thu 'n rathad seo gu bràth,</i>	If you ever come by this road again,
<i>Biodh d' fhàilte le modh is meas.</i>	Let your welcome be civil and respectful.
<i>Thuirtear thu rium le barrachd tàir,</i>	You told me with much contempt
<i>Gun robh m'aodann làn den bhric :</i>	That my face was full of spots.
<i>Tha e mathte agad an dràs</i>	You are forgiven now
<i>Bhon a tha mo làmh-sa brist'.</i> <sup>113</sup>	Since my hand is broken.

## Religion

John Maclean's hardships in the first few years in Barney's River had an effect on his spiritual outlook on life, according to Maclean Sinclair, and he took to composing religious songs:

It seems, however, that his hard lot at Barney's River and his lonely condition had, in a spiritual point of view, a very beneficial effect upon

<sup>111</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 190.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 191.

him; they were the means of directing his attention more fully to the Saviour and to the promised land. It was after he had been four or five years at *Baile-Chnoic* that he began to compose spiritual songs.<sup>114</sup>

Religion was taken very seriously by John Maclean: “He always maintained the worship of God in his family and was a strict observer of the Sabbath.”<sup>115</sup>

Maclean was a member of the Church of Scotland which had a Presbyterian form of church government. From the Greek word for elder, *πρεσβυτερος*, the presbyters, or elders, in the Presbyterian Church, preside in a system of local, regional, and national church courts. The founder of Presbyterianism in Scotland, John Knox, had studied under Protestant Reformer John Calvin in Switzerland in the mid-sixteenth century. Knox brought the Calvinist doctrine back to Scotland where the Scottish Parliament formally established it in 1560 in the national Church of Scotland. A schism in the church, known as the Disruption, occurred in 1843, when about one-third of the congregation of the Church of Scotland broke away to form the Free Church of Scotland. The Free Church movement was essentially evangelical, and is described succinctly by historian Laurie Stanley-Blackwell in her work on Presbyterianism in Cape Breton as “embrac[ing] a distinctive form of hardline Calvinism, characterized by pious fervour, rigid doctrinal faith and ecclesiastical authoritarianism.”<sup>116</sup> The

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<sup>114</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1880), x.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Laurie Stanley, *The Well-Watered Garden: The Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860* (Sydney, NS: University College of Cape Breton Press, 1983), 1.

Disruption quickly spread from Scotland to the protestant Scottish communities in North America, and in Nova Scotia the Free Church of Scotland came to have more followers than the Church of Scotland.<sup>117</sup>

The evangelical zeitgeist is reflected in devotional texts popular in the nineteenth century such as Thomas Boston's *Fourfold State*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Alleine's *Alarm to the Unconverted*, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*.<sup>118</sup> Translations of these books into Gaelic were undertaken by the church in the eighteenth century and enjoyed immense popularity:

Under the influence of the General Assembly, of the missionary agencies, and also of Scotland's Secession churches, Gaelic translations were made of seventeenth-century English Puritan divines, such as most familiarly John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and these went through many editions. In many households Gaelic versions of "Pilgrim's Progress" enjoyed a status second only to the Bible. Another well known and multi-published evangelical work was Richard Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted" which developed the theme of the "call" or warning to the unrepentant sinner on the dangers of lost eternity, exhorting them to allow the conversion of their soul.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> William Klempa, "Scottish Presbyterianism Transplanted to the Wilderness," in *The Contribution of Presbyterianism to the Maritime Provinces of Canada*, ed. Charles H. H. Scobie & G. A. Rawlyk, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1997), 15.

<sup>118</sup> For a discussion on this, see recent article by Matthew P. Brown, "The Thick Style: Steady Sellers, Textual Aesthetics, and Early Modern Devotional Reading," *PMLA* 121.1 (Jan. 2006): 67-86.

<sup>119</sup> Hugh Cheape, "The Gaelic Book: The Printed Book in Scottish Gaelic," Edinburgh: International League of Antiquarian Booksellers, <<http://www.ilab-lila.com/english/gaelicbook.htm>> For the availability of these texts in Gaelic see Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, and for their availability in Nova Scotia see Donald Maclean Sinclair, "Gaelic in Nova Scotia," *Dalhousie Review* 30.3 (Oct. 1950): 253, "Gaelic Newspapers and Prose Writings in Nova Scotia," *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 26 (1944): 106, and Laurie Stanley, *The Well-Watered Garden*, 103.

According to Maclean Sinclair, these books were favourites of his grandfather, and they are thus representative of John Maclean's interest in the evangelical movement. Maclean joined the Free Church once the movement spread to Nova Scotia.<sup>120</sup> John Maclean's religious enthusiasm is further indicated by his religious compositions, which Maclean Sinclair later assembled into his first published Gaelic book,<sup>121</sup> *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain* ("Spiritual Hymns by John Maclean").<sup>122</sup> A common theme in Maclean's hymns is that of religious conversion, or *cùram* (also meaning care, responsibility, anxiety), as a process of awakening, in which Maclean urges the unconverted and non-religious (*mì-chùramach*), to rise and wake from their slumber before it is too late:

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<sup>120</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, x.

<sup>121</sup> His very first published book, *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, was written under the pseudonym A. Malachi, and published in Truro, NS in 1880 (dated by the author at the end of the text 1 December 1879). We know this was written by AMS because his son DMS lists it as one of his father's works in his memoir of him in *Clàrsach na Coille* (1928), xxiv, and AMS himself tells us in *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*, 34.

<sup>122</sup> A previous edition of Maclean's hymns was published in Glasgow in 1835 by Maurice Ogle. AMS sought to redress the numerous errors in it by providing his own edition: "A small edition of his Hymns was published in 1835. It was circulated almost wholly in this country. It was full of mistakes." AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, x. See also *Clàrsach* (1881), xxii, and Donald Maclean, *Typographia*, 261.

<i>'S bochd an cadal 'san t-suain</i>	Poor is the sleep and slumber
<i>Th' air mòran den t-sluagh</i>	That is on many people,
[...]	...
<i>Dùisg a pheacaich gun dàil,</i>	Awaken sinner without delay
<i>Teich gu h-ealamh</i>	Flee quickly to the ark,
<i>Faic an stoirm tha gu làr gu brùchdadh.</i> <sup>123</sup>	See the rushing storm that is at hand.

This theme is repeated in a number of hymns: “Awaken unconverted youth! If you die without knowing [Christ], you will go to everlasting torment” (“*Dùisg òganaich mhì-chùramach, / 'S ma gheibh thu bàs gun eòlas air, / Theid thu do dhoruinn bhuaibh*”).<sup>124</sup> Similarly, in another hymn, Maclean appeals to the “pitiful, unconverted sinner [to] awaken from [his] sleep” (“*A Pheacaich thruaigh, mhì-chùramaich, / Bi dùsgadh à do shuain*”).<sup>125</sup>

John Maclean continued to compose hymns as he got older, and his compositions dealt more specifically with the theme of death and salvation, such as “*Uamhas a’ Bhàis*” (“The Horror of Death”) and “*Dèan Deas Airson a’ Bhàis*” (“Make Ready for Death”).<sup>126</sup> One of the last hymns he composed before his own demise,<sup>127</sup> “*Smaointeanan Mun Bhàs*” (“Thoughts on Death”), suggests that death had become more of a concern with Maclean as he aged:

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<sup>123</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, 56 & 58.

<sup>124</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, 61.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 119 & 122.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<i>Gur muladach a tha mi;</i>	Sad am I;
<i>Mun bhàs tha mi smaointean.</i>	Thinking about death.
<i>Gach latha tha na mìltean</i>	Every day thousands
<i>Don chill leis ag aomadh.</i>	Go down to the churchyard because of it.
<i>Ma bheir e mise sìos leis</i>	If it takes me down with it,
<i>Do phrìosan na daorsa</i>	To the confining prison,
<i>Gum b'fheàrr nach deachaidh m' àrach</i>	It would be better if I had not been reared
<i>Gu àiteach an t-saoghail.<sup>128</sup></i>	To inhabit the world.

## Death

John Maclean passed away at the age of sixty-one in 1848. In January of that year, Maclean took ill for a period of three weeks, but recuperated well enough to resume going on his *ceilidhs* to neighbours' homes. However, on Wednesday 26 January,<sup>129</sup> perhaps weakened by his lengthy illness and his exertions in the frigid January air, John Maclean passed away at a neighbour's home. Maclean Sinclair says Maclean died instantly of "apoplexy" (stroke).<sup>130</sup> There is also a contemporary account which says that Maclean choked to death. In a letter dated 1 February 1848, Donald Cameron of Big Clearing, Nova Scotia (near Glen Bard), told his uncle Duncan Cameron in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin,

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 124-25.

<sup>129</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xx. There is some minor discrepancy among the dates. AMS says it was 26 Jan. both in *Clàrsach* (1881), xx and *Filidh*, 13; DMS also says it was 26 Jan., both in "John Maclean," 3 and in "Some Family History," 42. *History of Antigonish*, vol. I, p. 78 says it was 25 Jan., but in vol. II, p. 73, an excerpt from a letter that mentions Maclean's death, dated 1 Feb., says it was "last Wednesday," which would make it 26 Jan. Rob Dunbar, in his article on John Maclean in *Am Bràighe*, says "Donald MacLean Sinclair reports that he died on January 26, 1848; Alexander MacLean Sinclair puts the date at January 30."

<sup>130</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xx-xxi.

that the “Bard MacLean choked to death last Wednesday at Ranald MacLean’s.”<sup>131</sup>

Maclean’s body was taken home to Glen Bard four miles away and interred in the cemetery at Glen Bard the following Friday.<sup>132</sup> His headstone beckons to passersby with an entreaty in Gaelic. Like his wife’s epitaph just below his own, there is no mention of his name; he is described simply as “Am Bàrd Mac-Gilleain” (see Figure 6: Tombstone of John Maclean and Isabella Black):

*Am Bàrd Mac-Gilleain,  
1787-1848*

*Fhir 'sa chladh s' tha 'dol mun cuairt  
Stad is éisd ri guth bhon uaigh s'  
Cùm a' Ghàidhlig suas ri d' bheò,  
'S a cuid bàrdachd 's àirde glòir;  
Do gach nì tha math thoir gràdh,  
'S bi tigh'nn beò do Dhia gach là.*

The Bard MacLean  
1787-1848

You in this cemetery who goes around  
Stop and listen to a voice from this grave!  
Keep up the Gaelic for as long as you live,  
And its poetry of the highest praise;<sup>133</sup>  
To each thing that is good, give love,  
And come alive to God every day.

### The Manuscripts

When John Maclean came to the New World, he brought with him two significant manuscripts of poetry, which are today housed in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia (now Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management). One manuscript contains 94 pages of Maclean’s own poetry and 547 pages of poetry

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<sup>131</sup> Raymond A. MacLean, ed. *History of Antigonish*, vol. II (Antigonish, NS: The Casket Printing & Publishing Company, 1976), 73.

<sup>132</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xxi.

<sup>133</sup> My thanks to Kenneth Nilsen for his help with this line.

that he collected. The other important manuscript that Maclean brought with him from Scotland was a collection of 128 pages of poetry made by Dr. Hector Maclean (1704-1783) of Grulin, Mull, probably as early as 1738. According to Colm Ó Baoill, who has worked extensively on it, “[t]his manuscript was put together in Mull between 1738 and 1768, and we have no reason not to accept what it tells us as authentic” (“*Chaidh an làmh-sgrìobhainn sin a chur ri chèile am Muile eadar 1738 agus 1768, agus chan eil adhbhar sam bith againn gun a ghabhail, mar fhìrinn, leis na tha i ag innse dhuinn*”).<sup>134</sup> John Maclean also wrote down some of his own poetry on the unused pages of this manuscript. Some of the poetry found in these manuscripts cannot be found in any other source. For instance, Ó Baoill mentions in *Duanaire Colach* that there is a version of “Caismeachd Ailean nan Sop” in Dr. Hector Maclean’s manuscript not found elsewhere: “The only account of this piece of poetry is in the manuscript of Dr. Hector Maclean” (“*Is ann an làmh-sgrìobhainn an Dr. Eachainn MhicGilleathain, [. . .] a tha an aon innse air a phìos bàrdachd seo [. . .]*”).<sup>135</sup>

Samuel Johnson and James Boswell comment on Dr. Hector Maclean’s manuscript in the diaries of their famous visit to the Highlands and Island in

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<sup>134</sup> Colm Ó Baoill, *Duanaire Colach 1537-1757* (Obar-Dheathain: An Clò Gaidhealach, 1997), 47. See also Ó Baoill’s *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Department of Celtic, 2001), and *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), xxx. See also Derick Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry* (1974; rpt. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), 145.

<sup>135</sup> Ó Baoill, *Duanaire*, 47.

1773. They visited the home of the doctor when they were on the island of Mull. The doctor was not at home when they arrived, but his daughter, referred to by Maclean Sinclair as Mary,<sup>136</sup> entertained them with readings from the manuscript. She read excerpts of poems to them by the well-known poet Iain mac Ailein (John MacLean) of Mull, great-grandson of the sixth chief of the Macleans of Ardgour, and one of the *aos-dàna* listed in Ranald MacDonald's Eigg Collection of 1776; Iain Mac Ailein died sometime between 1738 and 1745.<sup>137</sup> Johnson's account, though somewhat coloured by his own cultural biases, is informative nonetheless as a contemporary reference to Dr. Hector Maclean's manuscript:

There has lately been in the Islands one of these illiterate poets, who hearing the Bible read at church, is said to have turned the sacred history into verse. I heard part of a dialogue, composed by him [Iain Mac Ailein], translated by a young lady in *Mull*, and thought it had more meaning than I expected from a man totally uneducated [. . .].<sup>138</sup>

Boswell's account is decidedly more sympathetic, and much more instructive concerning the contents of the manuscript:

Miss M'Lean produced some Erse poems by John M'Lean [Iain Mac Ailein], who was a famous bard in Mull, and had died only a few years ago. He could neither read nor write. She read and translated two of

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<sup>136</sup> Her name may have been Christina. See *Notes and Queries of the Society of West Highland and Island Historical Research* X: 18.2 & XII: 26, cited in Ó Baoill, *Maclean Manuscripts*, 37.

<sup>137</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Aos-dàna."

<sup>138</sup> R. W. Chapman, ed. *Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), 105-06.

them; one a kind elegy on Sir John M'Lean's being obliged to fly his country in 1715; another, a dialogue between two Roman Catholick young ladies, sisters, whether it was better to be a nun or to marry. I could not perceive much poetical imagery in the translation. Yet all of our company who understood Erse, seemed charmed with the original. There may, perhaps, be some choice of expression, and some excellence of arrangement, that cannot be shewn in translation.<sup>139</sup>

The dialogue between the "two Roman Catholick young ladies" was published by Maclean Sinclair from this manuscript in *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* with the following note: "The foregoing poem was translated to Dr. Johnson by Mary Maclean in her father's house."<sup>140</sup> As Iain mac Ailein composed many poems to Sir John Maclean, it is not clear which poem was precisely the "kind of elegy on Sir John M'Lean's" flight of 1715, mentioned by Boswell.

In the first volume of his *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*, Maclean Sinclair explains how his grandfather happened to obtain Dr. Hector Maclean's manuscript. The doctor's daughter, "Mary Maclean," was an only child and she inherited the manuscript when her father died around 1785. According to Maclean Sinclair, Mary did not "love wisely"; she had fallen in love with a "disreputable" man named Duncan Mackenzie whom she did not marry until after her father's death, in order not to displease him. Mary and Duncan lived in

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<sup>139</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, 372. See also AMS, "Dr. Maclean's Manuscript" in *The Gaelic Bards From 1411 to 1715* (Charlottetown, PEI: Haszard & Moore, 1890), 208-11, and preface to *Na Bàird Leathanach: The MacLean Bards*, vol. I, 5-6.

<sup>140</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* vol. I (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1898), 89. This poem was recently (2001) included by Ronald Black in *An Lasair*, 94-101 & 402-05.

Tobermory, Mull in “poor circumstances” until her husband’s death in 1800. Mary was then supported by Alexander MacLean, the Laird of Coll, John Maclean’s patron. Familiar with John Maclean’s reputation as a poet, she gave her father’s manuscript to him in the hopes that he might some day publish it. Mary died in 1826.<sup>141</sup> John Maclean brought this manuscript to Nova Scotia with him in 1819, and though he never published it himself, he left it, in addition to his own manuscript, as a legacy to his children and grandchildren. Upon John Maclean’s death, the manuscripts passed into the hands of Maclean’s eldest son Charles, who in turn handed them over to his nephew – John Maclean’s grandson – Alexander Maclean Sinclair.

Since John Maclean died when Maclean Sinclair was very young, and Maclean Sinclair admitted that he had “only a dim recollection”<sup>142</sup> of his grandfather, he necessarily had to rely on others concerning Maclean. After Maclean’s death, his memory was reinforced by other family members from the time Maclean Sinclair was a youth growing up in his grandfather’s household. Maclean Sinclair would have been constantly reminded of the poetic talents of his grandfather on occasions such as *ceilidhs*, or other gatherings where Gaelic

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<sup>141</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, 5-6. See Alexander Mackenzie’s description of the Maclean Manuscripts on his visit with Maclean Sinclair in 1879, published in “The Editor in Canada Part II,” *Celtic Magazine* 5.50 (Dec. 1879): 73. See also AMS’s letter to the editor in the *Celtic Magazine* (“Correspondence: The Cup Song,” *Celtic Magazine* 12.138 (Apr. 1887): 284-86) in which he discusses Dr. Hector Maclean’s manuscript, the doctor’s daughter and Dr. Johnson’s comments.

<sup>142</sup> AMS’s diaries as quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 42.

singing and storytelling took place. The presence in the house of the two manuscripts that his grandfather brought from Scotland would have also served as a tangible reminder of his grandfather, and their importance could not have been lost on the young Alexander Maclean Sinclair.

## Chapter II

### *Family and Childhood*

*Tha mo smuain a ruith 'san àm  
Air na làithibh gasd' a bh'ann,  
Nuair a bha mi òg 'sa ghleann,  
'S an robh 'n sluagh bu taitneach leam,  
Is taigh beag mo mhàthar;<sup>1</sup>*

– A. Maclean Sinclair

My thought is running in the time  
Of the splendid days  
When I was young in the valley  
Where the people kind to me  
And my mother's little house were.

Despite Alexander Maclean Sinclair's significance to Gaelic Studies, very little has been published about him of any extent, either during his lifetime or since. The main secondary source concerning Alexander Maclean Sinclair's life is the unpublished family account written in 1979 by his son Donald Maclean (D. M.) Sinclair, entitled "Some Family History." "Some Family History" is especially significant in that it contains excerpts from Maclean Sinclair's diaries (since lost): "Much of the material recorded here has been gleaned from scrap books, Clan histories, and a diary kept intermittently by my father, Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair, from 1855 to 1910."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AMS, "Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar," *Filidh na Coille*, 168.

<sup>2</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 26 (unpublished typescript, 1979), i. According to the copy at NSARM (CS90/S616), which was donated by the family, a number of copies

Significant sources in Maclean Sinclair's own words include a piece he contributed to the Antigonish *Casket* in 1898 about his former teacher Norman Macdonald, in which Maclean Sinclair incorporates information about his own educational influences.<sup>3</sup> Maclean Sinclair also published a seven-part series of articles concerning his 1869 visit to Scotland in the *Canada Scotsman*,<sup>4</sup> and a five-part series of articles on his life and educational background in the *Eastern Chronicle*.<sup>5</sup> Maclean Sinclair provided a brief summary of his biography, including a list of his published works, in *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*.<sup>6</sup>

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were made of SFH, mostly for family members; STFXUSC also has a copy. See also DMS's article in the *Eastern Chronicle* [New Glasgow, NS] ("Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair, LL.D., F.G.S.C., a Brief Sketch of His Life and Works" (22 Feb. 1940: 3 & 7)), much of which he incorporated into SFH. The same article was also published in two parts in the *Casket* [Antigonish, NS] (29 Feb. 1940: 10 and 7 Mar. 1940: 10-11).

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4. See also Raymond A. MacLean, ed. *History of Antigonish*, vol. II, 73-74.

<sup>4</sup> The extant issues of the *Canada Scotsman* [Montreal and Toronto] are incomplete and only two survive with AMS's articles and are available on microfilm; i.e. "How I Spent the Summer of 1869 Part III" *Canada Scotsman* (23 Apr. 1870): 3 and "Part IV" (19 Nov. 1870): 2. The complete series of seven articles are available, however, in AMS's scrapbooks in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/545/664-71, NSARM.

<sup>5</sup> See in the *Eastern Chronicle*: "Beaver Meadow School" (26 Dec. 1916): 7, "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's" (2 Jan. 1917): 1, "Fifty Years Ago" (9 Jan. 1917): 5, "A Trip to Scotland" (12 Jan. 1917): 2, and "A Troublesome Fly" (16 Jan. 1917): 4. These articles are also available in AMS's scrapbooks in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/545/671-73, NSARM.

<sup>6</sup> AMS, *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen* (Charlottetown, PEI: The Examiner Publishing Company, 1901), 33-34.

Contemporary sources concerning Maclean Sinclair include an interesting description of Maclean Sinclair at his home in Springville, Nova Scotia by Alexander Mackenzie. Mackenzie was editor of *The Celtic Magazine*<sup>7</sup> and visited Maclean Sinclair in 1879 as part of a larger Canadian tour. Mackenzie published a description of this tour in his magazine under the title “The Editor in Canada,” and was particularly impressed by Maclean Sinclair’s library:

[. . .] I envied him his magnificent and valuable library ten times more. It is almost impossible to conceive that such a rare collection of valuable books could be met with in such an out-of-the-way place. I believe his collection of Celtic works is the best private one on the American Continent, and a very few indeed surpass it even at home. [. . .] Many people, possessing good libraries, know very little of their contents, but Mr. Sinclair knows every word, and is a thorough master of every idea in his splendid collection.<sup>8</sup>

A short biographical sketch of Maclean Sinclair appeared in 1898 in *The Canadian Men and Women of the Times*,<sup>9</sup> and a brief recognition of his scholarship, including a photograph, appeared in *The Scottish Canadian* and *The Celtic Monthly* in 1907.<sup>10</sup> There is also a short outline of his life, including a photograph, in *Pictonians at Home and Abroad* (1914), by Rev. J. P. MacPhie.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A monthly periodical from Inverness, Scotland which lasted from 1875-1888; it was then absorbed by the weekly *Scottish Highlander* which continued until 1898.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander Mackenzie, “The Editor in Canada,” *Celtic Magazine* 5.50 (Dec. 1879): 72-73.

<sup>9</sup> Henry James Morgan, ed. *The Canadian Men and Women of the Times* (1898), 942-43.

<sup>10</sup> See “Gaelic Scholarship Recognised,” *Celtic Monthly* 15.10 (July 1907): 180-82.

<sup>11</sup> J. P. MacPhie, *Pictonians at Home and Abroad: Sketches of Professional Men and Women of Pictou County - Its History and Institutions* (Boston: Pinkham Press, 1914), see Chapter 3 “Pictonians in the Pulpit.”

### Previous Scholarship Concerning Alexander Maclean Sinclair

Much of what has been published subsequently concerning Maclean Sinclair's life has either been written by his son D. M. Sinclair<sup>12</sup> or relies on information provided by D. M. Sinclair. Monsignor P. J. Nicholson, President of St. Francis Xavier University (Antigonish, Nova Scotia) from 1944-54, and a former student of Maclean Sinclair's, wrote an article on him for *Irisleabhar Ceilteach*<sup>13</sup> in 1954, for which he relied partly on information supplied, or confirmed, by D. M. Sinclair.<sup>14</sup>

Charles Dunn in *Highland Settler* makes note of Maclean Sinclair and his important contribution to Gaelic publishing.<sup>15</sup> As previously mentioned, Dunn visited Maclean Sinclair's home office, including the library, at the family homestead in Hopewell, Nova Scotia, in preparation for his book. A biographical sketch of Maclean Sinclair was included in *Maritime Presbyterian*

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<sup>12</sup> This includes a memoir of his father he contributed to the 1928 edition of Maclean Sinclair's best-known book of Gaelic poetry, *Clàrsach na Coille* (see *Clàrsach* (1928), xxii-xxiv), and brief sketches in newspapers, see "Rev. Alexander MacLean Sinclair, LL.D., F.G.S.C., A Brief Sketch of His Life and Works," *Eastern Chronicle* (22 Feb. 1940): 3 & 7; *Casket* (29 Feb. 1940): 10; and *Casket* (7 Mar. 1940): 10-11.

<sup>13</sup> P. J. Nicholson, "The Reverend Doctor Alexander Maclean Sinclair," *Irisleabhar Ceilteach* 2.3 (Lá Bealtaine 1954): 63-65.

<sup>14</sup> See letters from P. J. Nicholson, St.FX to D. M. Sinclair, Halifax, NS, 28 July 1952 and 11 Jan. 1954, RG5/11/14916 and RG5/11/14917, STFXUA.

<sup>15</sup> Dunn, *Highland Settler*, 80-83.

*Ministers* by E. Arthur Betts, published in 1983.<sup>16</sup> James Cameron of the St. Francis Xavier University History Department recently wrote two articles concerning the history of Celtic at the university, in which he also mentions Maclean Sinclair who lectured at St. Francis Xavier University as well as Dalhousie University (Halifax, Nova Scotia), from 1907-14.<sup>17</sup> Anthony MacKenzie discussed Maclean Sinclair's family history in his unpublished paper "Sinclairs of Goshen and Glenbard, Nova Scotia" in 2000,<sup>18</sup> and published an article in *Celtic Heritage* magazine that same year under the title "Protector of Gaelic Culture: The Sinclairs of Goshen and Glenbard," in which he discussed Alexander Maclean Sinclair and son Donald and their contribution to Gaelic culture.<sup>19</sup> Kenneth Nilsen's paper from the proceedings of the first *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* (Scottish Gaelic Studies) conference, in Aberdeen (2000), includes

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<sup>16</sup> E. Arthur Betts, *Maritime Presbyterian Ministers: Biographical Sketches of over 400 Ministers of the various Presbyterian Churches in the Lower Provinces of British North America ordained by 1875, together with Notes on the Divisions of Presbyterianism* (Halifax: Maritime Conference Archives of the United Church of Canada, 1983), 118-19.

<sup>17</sup> James D. Cameron, "A Living Culture: Celtic Studies and the History of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia," *Celtic Heritage* 10.2 (Apr./May 1996): 20-21 & 46; and "The University Contribution to Canadian Multiculturalism: A Case Study of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia," *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 8 (2005): 116-28. My thanks to Dr. Cameron for providing me with both of these articles. See also James D. Cameron, *For the People: A History of St. Francis Xavier University* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 142 & 166.

<sup>18</sup> Anthony MacKenzie, "Sinclairs of Goshen and Glenbard, Nova Scotia" (unpublished typescript, 2000). The late Tony MacKenzie was a history professor at St. Francis Xavier University.

<sup>19</sup> A. A. MacKenzie, "Protector of Gaelic Culture: The Sinclairs of Goshen and Glenbard," *Celtic Heritage* 14.1 [Halifax, NS] (Mar./Apr. 2000): 13 & 37.

background on Maclean Sinclair;<sup>20</sup> Maclean Sinclair is also briefly discussed in Michael Kennedy's 2002 report *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural, and Social Impact Study*.<sup>21</sup> In 2004, Robert Dunbar discussed both John Maclean and Maclean Sinclair in an unpublished paper entitled "'Òran do Dhòmhnall MacArtair': The Song Maclean Sinclair Forgot" at the *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 3* conference at the University of Edinburgh. Also in 2004, Robert Dunbar presented a half-hour radio program on the publications of Alexander Maclean Sinclair for BBC Radio nan Gàidheal, as part of the series *Na Duanairean* (The Poetry Collections).<sup>22</sup> Entries on Maclean Sinclair can be found in Derick Thomson's *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (1983),<sup>23</sup> and the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (2004), contributed by Kenneth Nilsen.<sup>24</sup> Also recently,

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<sup>20</sup> Kenneth Nilsen, "Some Notes on pre-Mac-Talla Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia (with references to early Gaelic publishing in Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario)" in *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2000*, ed. C. Ó Baoill and N. R. McGuire (Obar Dheathain: An Clò Gàidhealach, 2002), 127-40.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Kennedy, *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural, and Social Impact Study* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 2002), 76. See also Michael Kennedy, "Is Leis an Tighearna an Talamh agus an Làn (the Earth and All that it Contains Belongs to God): The Scottish Gaelic Settlement History of Prince Edward Island" (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Robert Dunbar, "Alexander Maclean Sinclair," *Na Duanairean* (radio broadcast) BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (10 July 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Sinclair, Alexander Maclean."

<sup>24</sup> See Kenneth E. Nilsen, "Sinclair, Alexander MacLean," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography 1921-1930*, vol. XV, s.v. "Sinclair, Alexander MacLean." This volume of the *Dictionary* is not yet available in print; it is available online, however (see online <<http://www.biographi.ca>>). See also Kenneth E. Nilsen, "A Brief History of the Department of Celtic Studies, Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia,"

Michael Newton, in his *e-Keltoi* article, “‘Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them’: Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912,” described some of Maclean Sinclair’s interests in the preservation of Gaelic language and literature, particularly as represented in Maclean Sinclair’s contributions to the *Scottish-American Journal* of New York.<sup>25</sup> Newton also briefly touched upon Maclean Sinclair’s significance as a Gaelic scholar in his foreword to the “Highland Settlers: Scottish Highland Immigrants in North America” volume of *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies*.<sup>26</sup>

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*Journal of Celtic Language Learning* 2 (1996): 78-80, and “Report, Department of Celtic Studies, St. Francis Xavier University,” (unpublished document); my thanks to Dr. Nilsen for providing a copy of this report.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Newton, “‘Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them’: Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912,” *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>. See also Newton’s *We’re Indians Sure Enough: The Legacy of the Scottish Highlanders in the United States* (n.p.: Saorsa Media, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> Michael Newton, “Foreword: Highland Settlers: Scottish Highland Immigrants in North America,” *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies* 27 (2003): 1-5. In the same volume, I contributed an article on AMS and his papers in the Nova Scotia Public Archives, much of which is incorporated in this dissertation (see Michael Linkletter, “The Alexander Maclean Sinclair Papers in NSARM,” *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies* (2003): 15-18.). See also my paper presented at the University of Glasgow in 2001, “The Gaelic Collection of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia” in *Litreachas & Eachdraidh: Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2, Glaschu 2002; Literature & History: Papers from the Second Conference of Scottish Gaelic Studies, Glasgow 2002*, ed. Michel Byrne, Thomas Owen Clancy & Sheila Kidd (Glasgow: Department of Celtic, U. Glasgow, 2006), 148-60.

### “Maclean” and “Sinclair”

The story of how Alexander Maclean Sinclair, or “Alasdair Mac-Gilleain Sinclair”<sup>27</sup> as he referred to himself when writing in Gaelic, acquired his names provides insight into not only his early life, but also how he came to the study of his life’s passion, Gaelic literature. Though his surname was Sinclair, he always added the name of Maclean<sup>28</sup> in his publications and correspondence. His inclusion of this name was a choice with a certain amount of significance. Besides the necessity of distinguishing himself from other Alexander Sinclairs, the addition of “Maclean” demonstrates how much Maclean Sinclair identified with his maternal parentage. Maclean Sinclair’s grandfather, John Maclean, played an influential role in his life, even though he died when Alexander was

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<sup>27</sup> According to AMS, there are two forms of Sinclair in Gaelic, i.e. “Singlear” and “Mac na Ceardaich.” He says the latter was used by Sinclairs from Argyllshire in the west of Scotland (see AMS, *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*, 13). Though AMS’s grandfather (John Maclean) came from Argyllshire, AMS’s father (John Sinclair) came from the north, and AMS never used the Argyll version of Sinclair in Gaelic himself. However, there are secondary references to him in Gaelic that employ this usage; for instance see Hector MacDougall’s Preface to the 1928 edition of *Clàrsach na Coille* (p. viii), where he refers to him as “Mgr. MacGhilleathain Mac na Ceardach,” and Calum Iain M. MacLeòid’s *Bàrdachd á Albainn Nuaidh* (p. 11), where he refers to AMS as “Dr. Alasdair Mac Gille-Eathain Mac na Ceardadh.” See also Ragnall MacilleDhuibh’s (Ronald Black) recent paper “‘Moladh Beinn Dóbhraín’ agus Cùis Bhraid Albainn” published in *Litreachas & Eachdraidh Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* 2, where he refers to AMS in Gaelic as “Alastair MacillEathain Mac Na Ceàrdaich” (p. 111). AMS invariably wrote his surname “Sinclair” in Gaelic as well as English.

<sup>28</sup> AMS inconsistently spelled “Maclean” in a number ways, such as “Maclean” or “MacLean,” and often abbreviated it (a common practice at the time) to “McLean” or even “McL,” with the result that scholars today differ in spelling when writing about, or citing, AMS; one commonly sees “MacLean” or “Maclean.” I have decided to use the latter as it seems to be the most prevalent in AMS’s writings, and for the simple matter of economy of typing.

only seven years old. John Maclean had imparted a love of Gaelic poetry and learning to his children, and Maclean Sinclair's mother Christy in turn passed on this love to her son. Maclean Sinclair's grandmother Isabella, who lived to be ninety-one, and his uncle Charles Maclean, John Maclean's eldest son, were also significant influences. Though Maclean Sinclair did write a small book on the Sinclairs, *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen* (44 pages),<sup>29</sup> Maclean Sinclair's particular identification with his Maclean side is indicated in his numerous publications on the clan,<sup>30</sup> including three volumes of Maclean poetry in Gaelic, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* (volume one (277 pages) in 1898 and volume two (180 pages) in 1900) and *Filidh na Coille* (197 pages, 1901), which Maclean Sinclair stated was "in reality the third volume of the Maclean Bards,"<sup>31</sup> and his notable history of the Maclean Clan, *The Clan Gillean* in 1899 (542 pages). This emphasis on his Maclean ancestry is not surprising as Maclean Sinclair himself stated, "I have been acquainted with the history of the Macleans from my childhood. My mother, who died a year ago, was the oldest daughter of John

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<sup>29</sup> See also AMS's article on "The Argyleshire Sinclairs," *Celtic Monthly* 18.11 (Nov. 1910): 208-09.

<sup>30</sup> See especially his "history" of the Maclean Clan put into poetic form in Gaelic ("Clann-Ghilleain," *TGSI* 15 (1887-88): 58-62) and his series of articles on the Macleans in the *Celtic Magazine* from Apr. to Sept. in 1888 and the *Celtic Monthly* 1903-06 (see Appendix B: Periodical Contributions). See also in *Mac-Talla* "Teaghlach Chola" ["The Coll Family" 2 parts] (7 Oct. 1893): 2 and (14 Oct. 1893): 2-3, and "Leathanaich Chola" ["The Coll Macleans" 2 parts] (21 Oct. 1893): 7 and (4 Nov. 1893): 7.

<sup>31</sup> AMS, "A Collection of Gaelic Poems," *TGSI* 26 (1904-07): 260.

Maclean, the Poet, am Bard MacGilleain. She taught me to hate the Campbells, to love the Macleans, and to respect every other clan.”<sup>32</sup>

According to D. M. Sinclair, Alexander was so-called in honour of Alexander MacLean, Laird of Coll, Chieftain of the Macleans of Ardgour, who was John Maclean’s patron in Scotland.<sup>33</sup> D. M. Sinclair also stated that, “in young manhood he [Maclean Sinclair] added the middle name of Maclean,”<sup>34</sup> and at another point D. M. mentions an inscription from one of Maclean Sinclair’s texts which reads “A. M. Sinclair [...] 1855,”<sup>35</sup> indicating that he had begun to use the name Maclean by the time he was at least fifteen. The earliest extant publication by Maclean Sinclair is from 1862, in which Maclean Sinclair used an abbreviated form of the Gaelic version of Maclean (MacGilleain): “A. McG. Sinclair.”<sup>36</sup>

It was not uncommon, either in Scotland or among the Scottish settlers in the New World, for a son to be given his mother’s maiden name as a second or middle name. As D. M. Sinclair points out, this practice helped to distinguish between people who had the same first and last name: “The Scottish settlers as a

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<sup>32</sup> AMS to (possibly) Dr. William Mackay, 9 Oct. 1888, Emigration from Scotland: Emigrants’ Correspondence, Acc. 8922, NLS.

<sup>33</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), xxii.

<sup>34</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 9.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> See “Uilleam Glas” *Casket* (20 Feb. 1862): 4.

rule gave only one name to their children and subsequent confusion sometimes resulted."<sup>37</sup> However, the fact that Maclean Sinclair always included the name Maclean in his publications and correspondence, either fully written out or in abbreviated forms, points to his using it as a double surname rather than as a middle name. Indeed there were a number of Maclean Sinclair's contemporaries with the name Alexander Sinclair, and it is certainly helpful to the researcher that he, as a rule, always included the name Maclean in his writing.<sup>38</sup> This conscious choice of the adoption of Maclean into his name is representative of his strong identification with his mother's family, and is explained by the fact that he grew up in his grandfather's house due to the separation between his parents.

Maclean Sinclair was well aware that there was a certain amount of prestige attached to the name; his grandfather was renowned for his poetry in the Gaelic communities of Nova Scotia as well as Scotland.

Maclean Sinclair had been raised in John Maclean's household because his mother Christy returned there after separating from her husband, John Sinclair, shortly after Maclean Sinclair was conceived. The family history by D. M.

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<sup>37</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 9.

<sup>38</sup> Confusion can result, note for instance: the NLS wrongly lists AMS in their online database as the translator (into Gaelic) of R. M. McCheyne's sermons: *Guth mo Ghràidh (agus Searmoinean Eile)* [The Voice of my Love (and Other Sermons)] (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for the Church of Scotland et al., [1916? "Cogadh Mòr na h-Eòrpa"]). "Rev. A. Sinclair, M.A.," translator of the work, was actually Rev. Allan Sinclair. See Mary Ferguson & Ann Matheson, eds., *Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue* (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, 1984), s.v. "#1463. McCheyne, Robert Murray" and "#2559. Sinclair, Allan, tr."

Sinclair contains the only information available concerning Maclean Sinclair's father. It is also the only source of information regarding Maclean Sinclair's parents' separation.

### **John Sinclair**

John Sinclair was born 20 May 1797 in Breckrow, Sutherlandshire, in the north of Scotland. His family was originally from Caithness, but his grandfather, who was himself a grandson of Alexander Sinclair, the Ninth Earl of Caithness, the traditional chief of the Sinclair clan,<sup>39</sup> settled in Breckrow, Sutherlandshire. They became victims of the Highland Clearances when in 1807 he and his family were removed from Breckrow "to make room for sheep, dogs and shepherds."<sup>40</sup> They settled on a croft on the Strathy River, but had to move in 1820 when they were once again driven from their home. This time they returned to Caithness where they found long-term refuge. John Sinclair emigrated in 1831 and came to Pictou, Nova Scotia via Dundee, Scotland on the ship *Industry*.<sup>41</sup>

After arriving in Nova Scotia, John Sinclair settled near his uncle, who had emigrated from Scotland a number of years earlier. The lands where he settled were the back lands of Goshen, about twenty-six kilometres from where John Maclean's family lived in Glen Bard. Settlers generally regarded the rear lands,

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<sup>39</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 3.

or back lands, as inferior to land located nearer rivers or shorelines, and as more and more settlers arrived, the coveted front lands were completely taken. There was little choice for later settlers who had to take the back lands or move on. Once John Sinclair settled in Goshen, he became known as “Iain Ùr” (New John). Nicknaming was a common Gaelic tradition which aided in differentiating people with similar names in a given area. The attribution of ùr (new) was commonly given to the most recent settler who had the same name as another resident in the same district. For instance, John McDonald, a neighbour of John Maclean, was known as “an Domhnallach Ur” (the New McDonald) to distinguish him from the other John Macdonald of the area, “an Taillear Abrach” (the Lochaber Tailor).<sup>42</sup>

In 1833 John Sinclair married Mary Inglis of Lochaber, a community not far from Goshen. He was thirty-six and she was eighteen. They were married four years when in 1837 Mary died, leaving her husband alone to care for their three children: Janet four, John two, and George three months. Two years later John Sinclair married Christy Maclean, daughter of John Maclean.

### **Christy Maclean**

As with John Sinclair, the main source of information for Christy Maclean is in D. M. Sinclair’s “Some Family History.” There is also a small amount of

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<sup>42</sup> AMS, “Passing Away,” *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

information concerning her in Maclean Sinclair's memoir of John Maclean in *Clàrsach na Coille*. Christy Maclean was born on 25 December 1809 in Caolas on the island of Tiree, off Scotland's west coast. She was the first of John Maclean and Isabella Black's six children. Christy was ten years old when the family came to Nova Scotia where they lived in Barney's River for twelve years before finally settling a few kilometres east in the community that would eventually be called Glen Bard.

D. M. Sinclair explains in the family history that Christy had "several suitors" as a young woman before she finally married John Sinclair. One of these suitors was a certain Patrick Black of Marshy Hope, Nova Scotia – located between Barney's River and Glen Bard.<sup>43</sup> Black composed a love-song for Christy which Maclean Sinclair collected and later preserved in his anthology entitled *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry* (Part III), where he also described Black as "a fair scholar and a good singer":<sup>44</sup>

*Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
Mo dhùrachd don ainnire.*

Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
Ho ro, hi ri, riu u o,  
My greeting to the maiden.

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<sup>43</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 44.

<sup>44</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry* Part III (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1890), 341.

*Gur bòidhche leam a dh'fhàs thu*      You are more beautiful to me  
*Na'n lili ann san fhàsach,*      Than a lily in the wild.  
*Do ghruaidh mar ròs 'sa ghàrradh,*      Your cheeks are like a rose in the garden,  
*'S do bhràighe mar eala ghil.*      Your breasts are white as a swan.

*Gur suidhichte, ge beò thu,*      Though you are sprightly, you are composed,  
*Gur seadhail, blasd', do chòmhradh,*      Your conversation is courteous and eloquent,  
*Gur h-uasal air gach dòigh thu,*      You are noble in every way,  
*Gur h-oirdeirc do cheanaltachd.*      Your kindness is renowned.

*Gun tug mi urrad ghràidh dhut,*      I gave you as much love  
*'S thug Ionatan do Dhàibhidh,*      As Jonathan gave David  
*'S a-réir an iomraidh 'dh'fhàgadh,*      When he swore to him  
*Gun d' ghràdhaich e mar anam e.<sup>45</sup>*      That he loved him like his soul.

Though most of the poem is standard love-song imagery, with allusions to the subject's "cheeks like roses," "swan-white breasts," and "courteousness and nobility," the last stanza comes from a biblical passage. Black chose to compare his love for Christy to the love of Jonathan for David and the wording of the poem recalls the text of the Gaelic Bible (1 Samuel 20:17): "*Agus thug Ionatan air Dàibhidh mionnachadh a-ris, a chionn gun do ghràdhaich e e: oir ghràdhaich e e mar a ghràdhaich e a anam fhèin.*"<sup>46</sup> ("And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul."<sup>47</sup>) Besides being an interesting window into Christy's early years, Black's song serves to illustrate the vitality of the Gaelic community of which she was a member, and which was thriving in her part of Nova Scotia in the mid-nineteenth century.

<sup>45</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, 340-41.

<sup>46</sup> *Am Bioball Gàidhlig* (Dun Eideann: Comann-Bhioball Duthchail na h-Alba, 1992), 1 Samuel 20:17, 359.

<sup>47</sup> 1 Sam. 20:17, Authorized Version (King James).

Besides Patrick Black, D. M. Sinclair explains that, “John Cameron also wanted to marry her. But her father and Donald MacKenzie persuaded her to marry John Sinclair.”<sup>48</sup> In stating that she needed to be “persuaded” to marry John Sinclair, D. M. Sinclair seems to suggest that Christy went into the relationship somewhat reluctantly. Unfortunately there is no further information as to how John Sinclair and Christy met, nor is it explained exactly who Donald MacKenzie was that he should have such influence on Christy and who was in such obvious collusion with her father.<sup>49</sup> When she married, Christy was twenty-nine years of age, and John Sinclair was twelve years her senior. Christy did not remain with John Sinclair for long. She evidently left him within a few months of their wedding in April of 1839. D. M. Sinclair simply states in the family history that, “it was not a very happy marriage. They went to Goshen to live, but after a short time she returned to Glenbard.”<sup>50</sup> D. M. Sinclair does not specify the exact date of Christy’s return, but her child, Alexander Maclean Sinclair, was born in her father’s house in Glen Bard on 1 March (or 29 February, see below), 1840. John Sinclair sent word home to Scotland about his predicament of, once again, being left alone to care for his three children, and his

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<sup>48</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 44.

<sup>49</sup> The 1838 census for Antigonish County, where Glen Bard is located, records that there were five Donald MacKenzies; in Pictou County the census for the closest township to the west of Glen Bard records no Donald MacKenzie, but the next township after that lists 17. No Donald MacKenzie is listed for the township where John Sinclair lived.

<sup>50</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 44.

sister, also named Christy, came to Nova Scotia to keep house for him and look after the children.<sup>51</sup>

Because of the inherent negative social implications caused by marital strife in such a small community in such a time period, it is not surprising that little has been preserved which might explain just why Maclean Sinclair's parents separated. Indeed, D. M. Sinclair attempts to suggest in the family history that their relationship was cordial: "they had no unkind feelings toward one another, and never a word of quarrel or disagreement."<sup>52</sup> Having seen each other only once after they separated, at their son's baptism in August 1840, it would have been difficult for Christy and John Sinclair to "quarrel or disagree." In the family history D. M. Sinclair provides an excerpt from Maclean Sinclair's diary in which the topic of his mother and father's relationship is mentioned briefly. Maclean Sinclair, who used to visit his father at least once or twice a year from the time he was twelve, later stated in his diary that,

In all that time my father never mentioned my mother's name to me but once. One day he said, "How is your mother?" I answered, "She is well." Then he said, "She was very good with the needle." That is all that ever passed between us about her. My mother was still more reticent. She never mentioned my father's name to me at all. When he died I told her of his death, but she made no remark of any kind.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 44.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 44.

That Maclean Sinclair should remark that his father only mentioned his mother once, and that she was “still more reticent” concerning his father, is a testimony of their continued alienation. In particular Christy’s lack of response of “of any kind” when Maclean Sinclair told her of his father’s death in 1875 suggests a studied indifference, which is not so surprising when recalling that she had to be “persuaded” to marry John Sinclair in the first place. In another place in the family history, D. M. Sinclair characterizes Christy as “touchy and ready to resent an insult.”<sup>54</sup>

### **Birth and Baptism**

There is a slight discrepancy in the sources concerning the date of Maclean Sinclair’s birth. According to D. M. Sinclair’s memorial in the 1928 edition of *Clàrsach na Coille*, and the family history, the date of Maclean Sinclair’s birth was 1 March 1840. However, his baptismal record from St. James’ Presbyterian Church, Dorchester (today St. James’ United Church, Antigonish) states that he was born on 28 February 1840.<sup>55</sup> It is possible that this incongruity can be explained by the fact that 1840 was a leap year, and that perhaps Maclean

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<sup>54</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 7.

<sup>55</sup> Church records for St. James United Church, Antigonish (then Dorchester Presbyterian), Nova Scotia. Civil records of birth did not exist at this time. The Presbyterian denomination in Canada was founded by the Church of Scotland, which is organized along the lines of the presbyterian style of church governance (i.e. governance by elders in a system of local (the Session and Presbytery), regional (Synod), and national (the General Assembly) church courts) established formally in Scotland in 1560.

Sinclair was born on 29 February. The predicament of only being able to celebrate birthdays during leap years would necessitate the adoption of a standard, annual birth date. It is conceivable that the minister chose to record his birth as the last day of February, usually the 28<sup>th</sup>, and his family chose to assign his birth date as the first of March. Maclean Sinclair was not baptized until 4 August 1840 – five months after his birth. He was christened “Alexander Sinclair” by Reverend Thomas Trotter of St. James’ Presbyterian Church in the town of Dorchester (now Antigonish). Maclean Sinclair’s parents never saw one another again after their son’s baptism (“Although they lived but sixteen miles apart they never met after the baptism of their son Alexander.”), and John Sinclair did not see his son again for another twelve years.<sup>56</sup>

In 1852, Maclean Sinclair’s family decided it was time for him to meet his father. D. M. Sinclair reports in the family history that it was left to Maclean Sinclair’s aunt, Eliza Maclean, to go with him to Lochaber where they would attend church and meet his father and siblings.<sup>57</sup> Thereafter Maclean Sinclair visited his father and siblings in Goshen “at least once a year and sometimes more frequently.”<sup>58</sup> John Sinclair died in 1875 and is buried in the Goshen cemetery. He lies next to his first wife Mary, who died in 1837. The inscription

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<sup>56</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 44.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

on the headstone, erected by their children, reads: "SINCLAIR, John d Jun 27, 1875 76 yrs / his wife Mary d Dec 29, 1837 22 yrs / our parents." There is no mention of Christy, whose own grave (1887) in Glen Bard cemetery denotes her as "Christy McLean / Wife of John Sinclair."

### **Charles Maclean**

In effect, with his father being essentially out of the picture, the most important male figure in Maclean Sinclair's life was, at first, his grandfather, John Maclean. After John's death in 1848, Maclean Sinclair's uncle, Charles Maclean, John's eldest son, assumed the head of the household in Glen Bard, and he became almost like a father to the young Alexander. Maclean Sinclair testified to the close relationship between himself and his uncle in *Clàrsach na Coille* – the book of Gaelic poetry he published in 1881 which included compositions by his grandfather and others, including his uncle Charles – where he called Charles "the best friend I ever knew": "When this work went to press I cherished the hope that the best friend I ever knew would derive some pleasure from reading it. It was not however half through the press when death laid its cold hand upon him."<sup>59</sup> The fact that Maclean Sinclair later named his first child Charles after his uncle, and his second child John after his grandfather, also attests to the primary significance his uncle played in his life. When Maclean Sinclair left home in 1856

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<sup>59</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 337.

to pursue his education, Charles helped support him during the various stages of school and college.<sup>60</sup> Maclean Sinclair continued an ongoing correspondence with his uncle and it is clear in some of the letters that Charles helped him with funds during this time; later on Maclean Sinclair did the same for his uncle during times of economic difficulty on the farm.

Charles Maclean was the second-born child of John and Isabella Maclean and came to Nova Scotia in 1819 with his parents and Christy, his older sister by four years, and their younger brother Archibald. John Maclean and his wife Isabella had three more children in Nova Scotia – John, Allan, and Elizabeth. All six of the children, except Charles and Elizabeth, eventually married. Charles had been of considerable support to the family in their early homesteading endeavours, especially when they moved to Glen Bard from Barney's River in 1829 when Charles was seventeen. He gradually assumed more responsibility for the farm and had been largely responsible for it, even before his father's death, for according to Maclean Sinclair, John Maclean "never worked much after moving to Glenbard. His children were now able to work."<sup>61</sup>

Charles was not only his father's successor on the farm; he also inherited some of John Maclean's poetic inclinations. In an excerpt from his diaries in the family history, Maclean Sinclair relates that shortly after John Maclean's death,

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<sup>60</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 252.

<sup>61</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xx.

Charles became enamoured with a woman named Mary Maclean of nearby Keppoch and wrote two love-songs for her. These were the songs by Charles that Maclean Sinclair included in *Clàrsach na Coille*. Clearly Mary Maclean had quite an effect on Charles, as Maclean Sinclair reports that his uncle neglected his work and had generally been “in a very unhappy frame of mind” for a few years and “their courtship, for some reason or other, came to nothing.”<sup>62</sup> Charles composed his love-songs in traditional eight-line strophes, and used the time-honoured theme in which the only cure for lovesickness was the returned affection of the subject of the poem. While the poems are steeped in the conventional imagery of Gaelic love poetry, there is no mistaking their serious and unhappy content:

*Gur h-e mis' tha fo éislean  
'S neo-éibhinn mo shùnn,  
A' smaointinn mu d' dheidhinn-sa  
'Euchdag ghlan, ùr.  
Le do bhòidhcheid 's le d' bhrìodal  
Mo chrìdh' bhuam shlad thu,  
Anns gach àite bidh d'iomhaigh  
'Nam inntinn, a ruin.<sup>63</sup>*

I am afflicted  
And my mood is sombre  
Thinking about you,  
O fair, innocent mercy.  
With your beauty and your soft words  
You stole my heart;  
O my love, your image pervades  
My thoughts.

In another passage from the same song, Charles is pleading for Mary's love by declaring how ill he will become without it:

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<sup>62</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 46.

<sup>63</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 338.

<i>'S beag an t-ioghnadh dhomh 'n tràth seo</i>	I'm not surprised right now
<i>'Bhi stràchdte fo sprochd;</i>	To be struck with melancholy;
<i>Tha mo smaointeanan cianail,</i>	My thoughts are pensive
<i>'S gur piantach mo lot.</i>	And my hurt is tormenting me.
<i>Mur-a till thus an gràdh rium</i>	If you don't return my love,
<i>'Thé 's àlainne dreach</i>	O lass of the loveliest shape,
<i>Bidh mi tuilleadh fo phràmh</i>	I'll be more than dejected
<i>'S mi gun slàinte, gun neart.<sup>64</sup></i>	I'll be without health or strength.

Charles' other love-song to Mary continues the sentiments of lovesickness. In strong lyrical terms Charles' profound love for Mary, and his anguish, is palpable:

<i>Thoir an t-soraidh seo bhuan</i>	Take these compliments from me
<i>'S dèan a h-aiseag gu luath gu m' ghràdh;</i>	And ferry them swiftly to my love
<i>Thoir i null thar a' chaoil,</i>	Take them across the narrows
<i>Agus innis do m'ghaol mar thà.</i>	And tell my love already
<i>Gu bheil aiceid am chré</i>	That there's pain in my heart
<i>'S nach dèan lighich' dhomh feum no stà;</i>	And a doctor won't do me any good;
<i>Mura faigh mi i féin</i>	If I don't get her
<i>Tha mi 'n cunnart dol eug gun dàil.</i>	I'm in danger of dying without her contact.
 [...]	 ...
<i>Gur h-e mise tha fo bhròn,</i>	Oh, I'm sad,
<i>'S tric a' snigheadh mo dheòir gu làr</i>	My tears drop often to the floor
<i>Le 'bhi 'smaointinn mun òigh,</i>	With thinking about the maiden,
<i>Finne mhaiseach a' chòmhradh thlàith. –</i>	The graceful maiden of sweet discourse.
<i>Mura faigh mi còir bhuan</i>	If I don't get the lasting commitment of
<i>Ort an ceanglaichean cruaidh, le d' ghràdh</i>	Firm bonds on you, with your love,
<i>'S e 'bhi 'cumha mo cheòl</i>	While I am lamenting
<i>'S bidh mi tuilleadh ri m' bheò fo phràmh.<sup>65</sup></i>	I'll be more than sad for as long as I live.

<sup>64</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 338.

<sup>65</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 339-341.

Mary Maclean never did marry Charles. It is clear that Maclean Sinclair did not approve of the relationship, and he notes with evident satisfaction how his uncle was finally “cured” of his love and unhappiness:

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1852 our house caught fire. It was a large and comfortable frame house. It was the house in which I was born. It caught fire in the roof. There were only a few things saved out of it. My uncle Charles, for two or three years before the fire was in a very unhappy frame of mind. He had fallen in love with Mary Maclean, a daughter of Lachlan MacLean, Keppoch. [. . .] He was in Antigonish when the fire broke out. When he came home and saw that the house was gone, he came to his senses and went to work. He got thoroughly cured of his love sickness and folly.<sup>66</sup>

Luckily among the few items they were able to save from the fire were the two manuscripts that John Maclean had brought with him from Scotland in 1819.

These had passed into Charles’ possession along with the farm. Charles in turn passed them on to Maclean Sinclair.

### **“My Mother’s Little House”**

Maclean Sinclair’s mother and grandmother provided a nurturing environment for his upbringing, both physically and intellectually. They made sure that he was well fed with the basic fare that was available to them: “We had porridge for breakfast. Potatoes, meat, herring, curds, tea, oatbread, flour, gruel, bread, butter were staple articles of food.”<sup>67</sup> However, in addition to the important domestic role they played, his mother and grandmother were also

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<sup>66</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 46. For a picture of the house that Charles rebuilt, see Figure 7: “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar” (“My Mother’s Little House”).

<sup>67</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 10.

significant influences in raising Maclean Sinclair in a Gaelic language milieu and imparting to him their own stores of Gaelic oral tradition. Though there is little information concerning his grandmother Isabella, the fact that she lived to be ninety-one years of age (d.1877) meant that Maclean Sinclair had through her, a direct, living link to the Highlands as far back as the late eighteenth century as she was born in 1786: “from her and from his mother he heard many of the stirring tales and songs of Scotland, and stored up much of the history of the Highland clans and poets.”<sup>68</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s mother in particular played a key role in providing an intellectually stimulating environment for him at home. According to D. M. Sinclair in “Some Family History,” Christy was very well read and could read both in English and in Gaelic: “She was well acquainted with Gaelic poetry and had pieces of a great many poems by heart.”<sup>69</sup> When it came to the written word, the dominance of her upbringing in the oral tradition is further affirmed by her practice of “always read[ing] aloud even when alone.”<sup>70</sup> Maclean Sinclair later contended that his main instruction in history came from his mother: “My real teacher in history was my mother, who was well-read in history and used to converse with me about historical matters.”<sup>71</sup> Christy certainly made an

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<sup>68</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 9.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>71</sup> AMS, “Passing Away,” *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

impression on Alexander Mackenzie, editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, when he visited Maclean Sinclair's home in Springville, Nova Scotia in 1879. In his recount of his visit to the house he referred to Maclean Sinclair's mother as, "a veritable walking Celtic encyclopædia."<sup>72</sup> Later, when Maclean Sinclair went to Pictou to further his education, his mother "kept house for him,"<sup>73</sup> and she seems to have lived with him for much of the time until he married in 1882. There is little doubt that she was the primary and lasting influence on Maclean Sinclair, since she lived with her son into his adult life, and continued to provide a link to his childhood. Maclean Sinclair attributes his interest in Gaelic literature to her influence: "I may state that my mother was a daughter of John Maclean, the Poet, and that through her influence – and indeed the influence of all my surroundings – I have been led from my youth upwards to take an interest in Gaelic literature."<sup>74</sup>

Maclean Sinclair's upbringing in his grandfather's household in Glen Bard left with him a profound sense of place in a traditional Gaelic-speaking community, steeped in Gaelic lore and literature. Each of the members of John Maclean's household – the poet himself, his wife Isabella, Maclean Sinclair's mother Christy, and his uncle Charles – left an enduring influence on his life so

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<sup>72</sup> Alexander Mackenzie, "The Editor in Canada," *Celtic Magazine* 5.50 (Dec. 1879): 72.

<sup>73</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* vol. I (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1898), 7.

that he would always look back to his years at Glen Bard as the foundation of his passion for Gaelic literature and culture. Maclean Sinclair later wrote a poem called “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar” in which he fondly described his mother’s wee house and the Highland lore and religion of his mother:

[. . .]

*Chluinnt’ a chainnt a ’s momha brìgh,  
‘Chainnt a labhair gaisgich Fhìnn  
Is na diadhairean ’bha ’n I,  
‘Tigh’nn gu glan o bhilibh binn’,  
An taigh beag mo mhàthar.*

...

Speech of the greatest substance would be heard,  
Speech speaking of the heroes of Fionn  
And the clergymen that were in Iona,  
Coming neatly from musical lips,  
In my mother’s little house.

*Gheibhteadh eachdraidh shoilleir, réidh,  
Mu na gaisgich reachdmhor, ghleusd’  
‘S mu gach nì air an robh sgeul  
Ann an Albainn nam fear treun,  
An taigh beag mo mhàthar.*

Clear, smooth history would be found,  
About the stout, ready heroes  
And about everything about which there is a tale  
In Scotland of the strong men,  
In my mother’s little house.

*Chìteadh speuclairean air sròin,  
Sùilean gorma, caoimhneil, beò,  
Leabhar Dhé aig mnaoi na ’dòrn,  
‘S i toirt às d’ a h-anam lòn,  
An taigh beag mo mhàthar.*

Spectacles would be seen on [her] nose  
Blue eyes, kind, alive,  
The woman’s book of God in her fist,  
While getting from it food for her soul.  
In my mother’s little house.

*Chluinnteadh ùrnaigh ’ga ’cur suas  
Moch is anmoch - ’s chan b’ ann fuar -  
Ris an Tì a ghabh dhinn truas  
‘S a chuir Mac a ghràidh a nuas,  
An taigh beag mo mhàthar.<sup>75</sup>*

A prayer would be heard offered up  
Early and late - and it wouldn’t be insincere -  
To the One who took pity on us  
And who sent down his beloved son,  
In my mother’s little house.<sup>76</sup>

[. . .]

...

<sup>75</sup> AMS, “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar,” *Filidh na Coille*, 169.

<sup>76</sup> My thanks to Effie Rankin for her help with this particular verse.



**Figure 7: “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar” (“My Mother’s Little House”)<sup>77</sup>**

Maclean Sinclair’s identification with his maternal side is also evident in one of the emendations Maclean Sinclair made to a poem, “Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sinclair” (“A Salute to Maclean Sinclair”), that was composed in his honour in later years by a follower of his work, who forwarded it to Maclean Sinclair in a letter. The poet made specific reference to Maclean Sinclair’s work in Gaelic literature and his strong support of the language and culture. Significantly Maclean Sinclair himself altered one of the verses in which the poet had referred to Maclean Sinclair’s love of Gaelic culture coming from his parents:

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<sup>77</sup> The house built by Charles Maclean in Glen Bard after the original homestead burned down in 1852 when AMS was twelve (see footnote #66 above). Photo taken April 2006. For a case study of this house see the paper by Elizabeth Beaton, “The MacLean House at Glenbard, Antigonish County” submitted to the Heritage Division, Nova Scotia Department of Culture, Recreation and Fitness, 12 Nov. 1984; available at the Antigonish Heritage Museum. My thanks to Jocelyn Gillis of the museum for a copy of this paper.

Original version:

*Bha siud dual dhut o na pàrantan  
'S na daoine fiachail on a thànaig  
'S cha d' rinn thu idir an àicheadh  
Lean thu gu dian buaidh do nàduir.*<sup>78</sup>

That was your birthright from the parents  
And the worthy people from whom [they] came  
And you did not deny them  
You eagerly followed the influence of your  
nature.

Maclean Sinclair's version:

*Bu dual dhut a thaobh do mhàthar,  
A bhi measail air a' Ghàidhlig  
Air a h-eachdraidh 's air a bàrdachd,  
'S lean thu gu dian buaidh do nàduir.*<sup>79</sup>

It was your birthright from your mother's side  
To be respectful of Gaelic,  
Its history, and its poetry,  
And you eagerly followed the influence of your  
nature.

That Maclean Sinclair changed the passage in the way he did, to say it was the *dual* ("heritage, birthright, character, etc.") he got from his mother's side alone, and not both parents, that contributed to his respect for the language, literature, and history of the Gael, clearly shows how strongly he identified his mother's family and how he viewed their impact on his life.

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<sup>78</sup> From an unpublished poem (as far as I can determine) composed in honour of AMS, "Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sinclair," by "Cailein Macafi," in a letter he sent to AMS, 13 July 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/422, NSARM.

<sup>79</sup> From an adaptation made by AMS of the poem "Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sinclair," by "Cailein Macafi," Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/422, NSARM.

## Chapter III

### *Education and Vocation*

Knowledge will never jump into our heads;  
we must go after it and seek it diligently.<sup>1</sup>

– A. Maclean Sinclair

In 1848, the year that his grandfather passed away, Alexander Maclean Sinclair began his formal education in a tiny one-room schoolhouse in Beaver Meadow, about five kilometres from Glen Bard. His education afforded little opportunity for instruction in his native Gaelic. It was ironic that his schoolteachers, educated native Gaelic speakers, such as John Boyd and Norman Macdonald, were responsible for Maclean Sinclair's education in English. Maclean Sinclair had to rely on the environment provided him at home and in the community for his instruction in Gaelic, something he attested to himself in describing the significance of his mother and neighbourhood tradition-bearers who imparted their stores of tales, songs, poetry and oral history.

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<sup>1</sup> AMS, "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's," *Eastern Chronicle* [New Glasgow, NS] (2 Jan. 1917): 1.

Though the Gaels formed a large part of the immigrant community of Nova Scotia, they had little opportunity for education in their native tongue. By the mid-nineteenth century the settlement patterns in Nova Scotia had evolved into distinct communities based often along the lines of ethnicity, religion, and even clan affiliation. On the mainland of Nova Scotia, the northeastern counties were settled by Gaelic speakers from the Highlands and Islands, both Presbyterian and Roman Catholic. Though the eastern part of Antigonish County had pockets of French Acadian settlements, and the town of Antigonish had a mixture of United Empire Loyalists, English, Scots, and Irish, much of the rest of the county, including the area surrounding Glen Bard, was largely Gaelic speaking. Despite the demographic preponderance of the Gaels, due to a combination of a lack of provincial support and a necessity for advancement in the English-dominated economy, education was conducted primarily through the medium of English.

The education system of Nova Scotia had been gradually moving towards greater standardization for the whole province since the early part of the nineteenth century, and in 1841 the colonial legislature passed the Education Act to this end. Superficially the act appears to be a progressive one as it included a clause that made allowance for some of the more widely spoken languages in the province. It permitted the use of Gaelic in schools; Gaelic, along with French and German, was put on an equal footing with English, in order to encourage

education and allow schools to have access to public funds.<sup>2</sup> This legislation was in recognition of the fact that there was a need for schooling among linguistic groups in parts of the province where English was not widely spoken, such as the Germans in the southeast, the French Acadians in pockets throughout the province, and the Gaels, primarily in the northeast. As Michael Kennedy argues in his recent work *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural, and Social Impact Study*, though the 1841 act was ostensibly a positive move, the policy was not backed by any provisions allowing practical application, and subsequent amendments were added which effectively cancelled the language clause.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, in practice, Gaelic communities had to rely on an English system of education. The pioneer Gaelic communities in nineteenth-century Nova Scotia were not immune to the rapidly changing economic imperatives of the time which placed an emphasis on progress and the accumulation of wealth in a society dominated by English institutions. To many families this meant educating their children in English. Campbell and MacLean contend in *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots* that parents did not necessarily want their children to learn Gaelic in the schools:

Under the act of 1841 [. . .] it was permissible to use Gaelic as the language of instruction if a district so desired. French, Gaelic and German were given the status of English; but, except in a few isolated cases, the Scottish

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<sup>2</sup> *Laws and Statutes of Nova Scotia*, 1841, Ch. 43, Sec. 14. NSARM.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Kennedy, *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural, and Social Impact Study*, (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 2002), 47.

Nova Scotians made no concerted effort to take advantage of this legislation.<sup>4</sup>

A local emphasis on gaining an English-language education, due to the perception that it was necessary in order to succeed in almost any area outside the community, led to the ironic situation of “Gaelic-speaking teachers [who] were paid by Gaelic-speaking parents to teach Gaelic-speaking students through the medium of English about subjects deemed important in English-speaking society.”<sup>5</sup> Any provision for a formal education in Gaelic supported by the government faded with the introduction of the 1864 Free Schools Act when the 1841 language clause was dropped altogether.

### **Local Schooling**

It is hardly surprising then that when Alexander Maclean Sinclair started school in Beaver Meadow he had to conduct his studies entirely through English, and “was not allowed to speak Gaelic in school, even during recess.”<sup>6</sup> That Maclean Sinclair would not have been permitted to speak Gaelic was not an uncommon factor in the region at the time. Similar situations existed in schools in other Gaelic-speaking regions of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, not to mention Scotland. In some schools students were discouraged from speaking

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<sup>4</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 141.

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy, *Gaelic*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 10.

Gaelic through corporal punishment and humiliation. John Shaw, in his 1987 report on Gaelic in PEI, interviewed an informant, then 103 years of age, who recalled that speaking Gaelic “was actively discouraged with switches from the woods or a strap.”<sup>7</sup> Students were sometimes forced to wear a sign declaring the prohibition of Gaelic on a shingle board hung around their necks if they were caught speaking it: “Perhaps they’d have the shingle themselves, you know, and they’d be watching for Gaelic and then it would be put on them. . . . No Gaelic allowed, and the children would tell on each other if the other fellow was talking Gaelic.”<sup>8</sup> The inherent shame of wearing such a sign encouraged students to report any violation of the “No Gaelic” rule in order to get rid of the “shingle” more quickly. The circumstances in the Beaver Meadow School, though perhaps not so draconian – nothing like the abuse reported in PEI is indicated in the Maclean Sinclair family history at any rate – meant that Gaelic-speaking students, like the young Alexander, did not receive a formal education in their native language.

The Beaver Meadow School<sup>9</sup> was typical of early pioneer schools in the province, made of hewn logs that were essentially thrown together, sometimes in

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<sup>7</sup> John Shaw, “Gaelic in Prince Edward Island: A Cultural Remnant,” 7. [Final Report, sponsored by the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island and the Celtic Studies Committee, Summer 1987.] See also <<http://www.upei.ca/islandstudies/reports.htm>>

<sup>8</sup> Shaw, “Gaelic in PEI,” 7.

<sup>9</sup> “The first schoolhouse in the Beaver Meadow was where the present schoolhouse stands. It was a log house and was accidently burnt.” Raymond A. MacLean, ed.

as quick as one or two days. Amenities and learning aids were few, and space was cramped:

Equipment for the schools was lacking and some of the buildings appeared to be designed to prevent the use of learning aids. The average size of a majority of the one-room schools ranged through 16'x14', 16'x16', 20'x16' and 25'x25'. Such buildings allowed little room for other than the vitally necessary stove, desks and seats. It was not uncommon for such a school to be built in two days, or sometimes one. Maps and dictionaries were infrequently used, and it was not until the 1850's that much attention was paid to the development of libraries in the common schools.<sup>10</sup>

Maclean Sinclair later described what it was like to walk to school every day, and had the help of a bigger schoolmate as a windbreak for part of the way in the colder weather:

The people along the road from Glenbard to the Beaver Meadow were all in very comfortable circumstances, but they never considered it necessary for the boys that were going to school to have such clumsy things as overcoats on them. I had sometimes an excellent substitute for an overcoat in Uilleam Eoghainn Mhoir, or as he was called in English, Billy Big Hughey. He was tall and strong and like his father and mother, very kind. By following him closely when going against the wind, I could get along in a comfortable manner. I was about a mile farther away from the school than any of the other scholars. Fortunately, I was protected by the woods for nearly half the way.<sup>11</sup>

Kenneth Nilsen collected a similar anecdote from Donald Cameron a native Gaelic speaker who was raised in Beaver Meadow and who had spoken with Maclean Sinclair on occasion. Cameron recalled Maclean Sinclair telling him in

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*History of Antigonish*, vol. I (Antigonish, NS: The Casket Printing & Publishing Company, 1976), 79.

<sup>10</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 140.

<sup>11</sup> AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7.

Gaelic, “that on wintry days in his boyhood he would walk home from school behind his friend William MacDonald, whose large frame – ‘he had shoulders as wide as a gate’ – would shelter him from blowing snow.”<sup>12</sup> At any rate, Maclean Sinclair stated he stayed at home during the winter months but this did not inhibit his learning: “as I studied at home all winter I learned probably as much as I would if I had gone to school regularly.”<sup>13</sup> The subjects he learned at school included reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, physics, astronomy, geography, and British history.<sup>14</sup>

In 1853, after five terms at the Beaver Meadow School, each of about eight months, for unknown reasons Maclean Sinclair went to school in Lochaber and in 1854 he attended school in Upper South River. Both communities were within nine kilometres of Maclean Sinclair’s father’s home in Goshen. As it would have been too far to travel to school everyday from Glen Bard to Lochaber or Upper South River (about twenty-six kilometres apart<sup>15</sup>), Maclean Sinclair either resided with his father in Goshen, his closest relative in the area, or boarded with a willing family. Maclean Sinclair was thirteen years old at this juncture and he

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<sup>12</sup> Kenneth E. Nilsen, “Sinclair, Alexander MacLean,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography 1921-1930*, vol. XV, s.v. “Sinclair, Alexander MacLean.” This volume of the *Dictionary* is not yet available in print; it is available online, however (see online <<http://www.biographi.ca>>).

<sup>13</sup> AMS, “Passing Away,” *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 44.

had only met his father the year before when his aunt took him to church in Lochaber for their first meeting.<sup>16</sup> Maclean Sinclair at least visited his father during this time, as D. M. Sinclair states that the year after Maclean Sinclair and his father were re-acquainted, Maclean Sinclair “used to go see his father at least once a year, and sometimes more frequently.”<sup>17</sup> At any rate, again for unknown reasons, in 1855 Maclean Sinclair returned to school in Beaver Meadow for his final year of country school education;<sup>18</sup> “I had then all the education that the Beaver Meadow School could give me.”<sup>19</sup>

### **John Boyd**

The teachers of the early country schoolhouses were chosen from among the educated people who lived in the area. This was also the case at the school in Beaver Meadow. One of the teachers at the Beaver Meadow School was John Boyd, as indicated in the inscription left in Maclean Sinclair’s astronomy textbook, “A. M. Sinclair. John Boyd, Teacher, Beaver Meadow School, Poet’s Valley, Sydney Co. [now Antigonish], British North America 1855.”<sup>20</sup> The inscription is somewhat misleading as John Boyd probably did not teach

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<sup>16</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 44.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>19</sup> AMS, “The Beaver Meadow School,” *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7.

<sup>20</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 26.

Maclean Sinclair. 1855 was Maclean Sinclair's last year at the Beaver Meadow School, and he indicates elsewhere that James Nichols was his last teacher there.<sup>21</sup> John Boyd's dates at the Beaver Meadow School are uncertain, though according to the inscription in the book it seems probable that he taught there sometime in 1855.<sup>22</sup> At any rate, John Boyd certainly interacted with Maclean Sinclair; Maclean Sinclair would later contribute much material to Boyd's Antigonish newspaper, the *Casket*. Boyd was the builder of the first printing press in the county and was the founder of the *Casket*.<sup>23</sup> The first words to be printed in the county were in Gaelic and reportedly came from John Boyd's printing press in December 1849, i.e. the pamphlet "An Teagas Chrìosda" ("Christ's Teachings").<sup>24</sup> John Boyd began a monthly paper in January 1851 entitled *An Cuairtear Òg Gaelach* (The Young Gaelic Tourist), which continued for a year. Boyd then started the *Casket* in 1852.<sup>25</sup> As the *Cuairtear*'s successor, the

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<sup>21</sup> AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7. See also "Some Family History," 10. The *History of Antigonish* states that John Boyd followed James Nichols as teacher at Beaver Meadow (see vol. I, 79).

<sup>22</sup> The *History of Antigonish* states that John Boyd followed James Nichols as teacher at Beaver Meadow (see Raymond A. MacLean, *History of Antigonish* vol. I, 79).

<sup>23</sup> MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish*, vol. I, 63. It says here that John Boyd, *Casket* founder, taught school in nearby Bailey's Brook in 1848. It is probable that this is the same John Boyd who later taught at the Beaver Meadow School.

<sup>24</sup> MacLean, ed., *History of Antigonish*, vol. I, 63.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. See also Kenneth E. Nilsen, "Some Notes on Pre-Mac-Talla Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia (with references to early Gaelic publishing in Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario)" in *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 2000*, ed. Colm Ó Baoill and Nancy R. McGuire (Obar Dheathain: An Clò Gàidhealach, 2002), 133-35, and Dunn, *Highland Settler*, 78-79.

*Casket* was at first printed partly in Gaelic and partly in English, but the Gaelic content eventually decreased to little more than an occasional article. The *Casket* was one of the papers that Maclean Sinclair's family received regularly<sup>26</sup> and it was the first periodical to which he contributed. He would later state in a letter that, "the first time my name appeared in print was in the *Casket*, John Boyd was publishing puzzling questions in the *Casket*, and I happened to answer one of them."<sup>27</sup>

### Norman Macdonald

Maclean Sinclair's first teacher at Beaver Meadow, and the one of whom he was most fond, was Norman Macdonald: "His first teacher, whom he later spoke of as his best teacher, was Norman MacDonald, a Roman Catholic and a native of Moidart, Scotland, and a good scholar in both English and Gaelic."<sup>28</sup> As Norman Macdonald had more education than had many of his neighbours, he

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<sup>26</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 11.

<sup>27</sup> AMS to Dr. Hugh P. MacPherson, 6 Feb. 1918. Hugh P. MacPherson Papers, RG5/9/11,078, STFXUA. A number of the earlier *Caskets* have been lost. As I have been unable to trace AMS's reference it is probable that it is from one of the missing issues. The earliest submission by AMS in a surviving *Casket* is a ten-stanza poem "Uilleam Glas," which appeared 20 Feb. 1862 (10.32: 4), "his first poem" according to D. M. Sinclair ("Some Family History," 72). A somewhat different version of it appears in AMS's own *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), 314-45, and *Filidh na Coille* (Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company, 1901), 146-49. In both texts AMS says the song was published in the *Casket* in Apr. 1862 (of which there are no copies extant); this appears to be an error, however, as the song to which he was referring definitely appears in the 20 Feb. 1862 issue.

<sup>28</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 10.

was employed as teacher in the district for a number of years. He later became well-known among the Gaels of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island for his edition of *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaedhlach: The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry*, which was virtually a duplicate of the first edition of John MacKenzie's well-known work of the same title published in Edinburgh in 1841. The main difference in Macdonald's edition was the addition of material by John Maclean, the Poet, accompanied by a biographical sketch written by Maclean Sinclair when he was twenty-three.<sup>29</sup>

After he left Glen Bard to pursue his education, Maclean Sinclair kept in touch with his former mentor through correspondence, and would visit him whenever he returned home: "It was a pleasure to call to see those who were grown up men when I was a boy – Tormaid an Maighstir-sgoile [Norman the Schoolmaster] among the number."<sup>30</sup> They were very good friends, as indicated by the very personal nature of their correspondence. At one point Macdonald wrote to Maclean Sinclair to apologize for not acknowledging Maclean Sinclair's 1894 work entitled *Peoples and Languages of the World*, and to inform Maclean Sinclair of his wife's trying illness:

Rev Dear Sir,

You certainly must think your old master a very dull & uncourteous correspondant. I never acknowledged your great work on the Languages and the reason why is this: At the time there came to hand

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<sup>29</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 46.

<sup>30</sup> AMS, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

my wife (who was until then getting on fairly well) took a terrible turn. Her maledy suddenly assumed the worst phase of insanity. She lost all control of herself and became unbearable. She remained in this state until within the last 3 or 4 weeks when as suddenly reason again resumed its sway. Ah! Mr. Sinclair, I have had many an infliction of the rod, but this last one was the severest of all. We naturally mourn the death of a beloved one, but when such a death is surrounded with such evidences as warrants in calling it a good death or the death of the first are full resigned & consoled; but to see one whom we most love and has been our constant and faithful companion through life suddenly deprived of every vestige of reason the sight is sad and hard to bear. [. . .]

Very Sincerely,  
Nor. Macdonald<sup>31</sup>

Their warm friendship ended when Norman Macdonald passed away on 7 May 1898, precisely fifty years since they had first met as schoolmaster and pupil at the Beaver Meadow School. Within two days of Macdonald's death, his son asked Maclean Sinclair in a letter to write an obituary for his father in the *Casket*, as he considered Maclean Sinclair to be the most appropriate person for the task: "I think you would be the proper person as you knew him so well."<sup>32</sup> Maclean Sinclair fulfilled the request and the obituary appeared in the *Casket* on 19 May 1898. It is a pleasant tribute to his old schoolmaster – more of a memoir than an obituary – and it stands as a principal first-hand source concerning Maclean Sinclair's early education. He describes his visit with Macdonald shortly before he passed away, and it is clear that he regarded him fondly:

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<sup>31</sup> Norman Macdonald to AMS, September [year illegible, 1894?], Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/276, NSARM.

<sup>32</sup> Hugh Norman McDonald to AMS, 9 May 1898, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/330, NSARM.

It is with genuine sorrow that I have just learned, by a letter from his son, that Norman Macdonald, of Addington Forks, is no more. I was in Glenbard on Saturday, April 31<sup>st</sup> [*sic*], and went to see him. He felt unwell, but was sitting up. As I saw that he was suffering I remained with him only about half an hour. I had no idea, however, that his end was so near. I always liked him, and was always glad to meet him. It was a great pleasure to spend a few hours with him.<sup>33</sup>

### **Gaelic Education**

His fondness for his old schoolmaster notwithstanding, it is clear that Maclean Sinclair did not regard him as a significant Gaelic influence, even though Macdonald “knew Gaelic thoroughly and wrote it with great facility.”<sup>34</sup> Concerning Macdonald’s abilities in Gaelic poetry, Maclean Sinclair said, “He had some poetic gifts, but did not cultivate them. He composed, I think, only one song.”<sup>35</sup> It must be remembered that Maclean Sinclair wrote his memoir of Norman Macdonald in 1898 after already having published nine books of Gaelic poetry, where he had established a certain reputation as a self-taught Gaelic scholar. It seems in writing about Norman Macdonald as his former schoolteacher, he felt the need to account for his Gaelic education, which he did not get from Macdonald. Thus much of the memoir is occupied with a discussion of Maclean Sinclair’s Gaelic influences, in particular the oral nature of his Gaelic education in contrast to the English-based education he received from

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<sup>33</sup> AMS, “Passing Away,” *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

Macdonald. He goes into detail about some of the important oral sources for his Gaelic education:

My other teachers were two near neighbors, John Macdonald an Taillear Abrach [the Lochaber Tailor] and John McDonald an Domhnallach Ur [the New McDonald]. The former came from Lochaber, and the latter from Glencoe. The one could not read at all; the other certainly was not a reader of historical books. But both had a number of stories about ghosts, strong Highlanders and clan feuds; they had also bits of old Gaelic songs by heart. I listened to them many a night and became pretty well acquainted with all their lore.<sup>36</sup>

This passage is a telling statement of Maclean Sinclair's attitude towards his Gaelic roots. He distinctly stresses that these tradition-bearers could barely read. In counting the two John MacDonalds among his teachers, he is not just acknowledging the dichotomy that existed between the two worlds in which he was brought up – a primarily literary-based, English-language world on the one hand and the largely oral world of Gaelic tradition on the other – he is also recognizing the fact that the contribution the two men made to his intellectual development was equally as important as his formal, English-language schooling.

The cultivation of Maclean Sinclair's Gaelic literacy was another matter.

Though it is not clear in which language, English or Gaelic, he first learned to

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<sup>36</sup> AMS, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4. See also MacLean, *Antigonish*, vol. II, 73-74. In an excerpt from his diaries in "Some Family History" (see p. 47) Maclean Sinclair says "John MacDonald, An Tailleir Abrach, used to go from house to house tailoring." He also mentions another tradition-bearer: "John Campbell was a shoemaker. He used to come to our house every fall and stay several days making shoes and boots. He had many ghost stories." See also AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7.

read, Maclean Sinclair does point out that he learned to read Gaelic through the Lord's Prayer: "I was taught the Lord's Prayer in Gaelic. It was by means of it I learned to read Gaelic."<sup>37</sup> In developing his literacy in Gaelic, he also had access to the numerous periodicals and books belonging to his family. He alludes to this in his memoir of Norman Macdonald with the mention of what he considered to be his primary text in history: "My real text-book in history was not Chamber's *British Empire*, but Norman Macleod's *Cuairtear nan Gleann* [The Traveller of the Glens], a most valuable and attractive work."<sup>38</sup> His high opinion of such works as *Cuairtear nan Gleann* is also clear in the preface to part three of his 1890 *Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry*: "If we want to learn Gaelic correctly we must study the works of the Gaelic bards, J. F. Campbell's *Sgeulachdan Gaidhealach* [Highland Tales], and Norman McLeod's *Cuairtear nan Gleann*."<sup>39</sup>

Norman MacLeod is today considered to be "one of the leading figures in the history of Gaelic prose,"<sup>40</sup> and was an important influence on the developing literacy of educated Gaels: "The standards that he set influenced Gaelic writers for a century."<sup>41</sup> The periodical *Cuairtear nan Gleann* (1840-43), and indeed other writings by Norman MacLeod, were popular publications. It had been

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 46.

<sup>38</sup> AMS, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

<sup>39</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, v.

<sup>40</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Caraid nan Gaidheal."

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

MacLeod's intention, at least in part, to develop a more formal register for secular Gaelic prose, based on past oral and written tradition. Besides providing material of his own composition, he also wanted to make available to Gaels in their own language "'every kind of useful information' which had hitherto been 'locked up in English books'." <sup>42</sup> To this end he included translations on topics such as history, geography, current events, science, and religion. It was publications like *Cuairtear nan Gleann* that would later aid Maclean Sinclair in the challenge of transferring the material of a primarily oral-based tradition into a written one.

After about eight years of education in country schoolhouses, Alexander Maclean Sinclair had exhausted the educational opportunities provided by the public school system: "I attended school about 37 months and had received all the education I could get at country schools."<sup>43</sup> There is no indication that Maclean Sinclair ever considered remaining on the family farm and becoming a farmer himself. It is clear from his own testimony and from family records that he was always drawn to education, but the options for young men without the means to pursue a higher education and to make a living from it were few. Two career paths were open to them; they could become teachers or members of the

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<sup>42</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Caraid nan Gaidheal."

<sup>43</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 46.

clergy. Maclean Sinclair explored both paths before eventually becoming a minister.

After his common school education, Maclean Sinclair left home and became a teacher in the same system: "I left Glenbard to teach school when I was fifteen and a half years of age, and have since then paid only occasional visits to my old home."<sup>44</sup> After obtaining a teaching licence from Dr. MacDonald, the chairman of the schoolboard, Maclean Sinclair was engaged by the community of Lochaber to teach in the schoolhouse where he himself had been a student only two years before.<sup>45</sup> He relates in his diary that his uncle accompanied him to Lochaber, that he boarded from house to house, and that he received a government supplemented salary:

On Saturday, Sept. 8, 1855 I left home for Lochaber to teach school there. My uncle Charles went with me. We stayed at Alexander MacMillan's. I boarded from house to house. I had some government allowance in addition to my salary. I got in all [£?] 30 or \$120. and my board. I gave up teaching at Lochaber Sept. 10, 1856, one year to the day.<sup>46</sup>

### **Further Education**

After teaching for only one year, however, Maclean Sinclair decided to continue with his own education. The salary he obtained at Lochaber – though

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<sup>44</sup> AMS, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

<sup>45</sup> AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7. See also "Some Family History," 47.

<sup>46</sup> From AMS's diaries as cited by DMS in "Some Family History," 47.

he related that he did not “get the whole” of it and “was often in need of money”<sup>47</sup> – enabled him to attend school in the town of Pictou, sixty-one kilometres from Glen Bard. Maclean Sinclair would not have considered attending the much closer, newly founded St. Francis Xavier’s College, a Catholic institution with the primary purpose of training young men to become priests. Instead he attended Pictou Academy, founded by Scottish Presbyterians in 1816 to provide training for the native clerical and professional class.<sup>48</sup> Ostensibly a non-denominational institution, it was in practice attended mostly by Protestants and was essentially the only choice for young Presbyterians in northeastern Nova Scotia who wanted to further their education beyond that provided by the country schoolhouses. By Maclean Sinclair’s time the small academy had developed a reputation as a solid grammar school. Maclean Sinclair spent two years there, paying his way by being a teacher’s assistant at the Academy, teaching “five hours a day.”<sup>49</sup> He also taught in a schoolhouse at Cross Roads in the St. Mary’s district in the intervening summer of 1857,<sup>50</sup> but continued to study diligently on his own:

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<sup>47</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 48.

<sup>48</sup> B. Anne Wood, “Schooling/Credentials for Professional Advancement: A Case Study of Pictou Presbyterians,” in *The Contribution of Presbyterianism to the Maritime Provinces of Canada*, ed. Charles H. H. Scobie & G. A. Rawlyk, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s Univ. Press, 1997), 57.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 48.

<sup>50</sup> AMS, “The Pictou Academy and St. Mary’s,” *Eastern Chronicle* (2 Jan. 1917): 1. See also “Some Family History,” 11.

I studied or read useful books nearly all the time when I was not engaged in teaching. A young person who thinks that he is a genius and that he can learn anything and everything without close application is laboring under a sad delusion. Knowledge will never jump into our heads, we must go after it and seek it diligently.<sup>51</sup>

His teaching duties did not prevent Maclean Sinclair from completing his own course work, which included Latin, Greek, geometry, practical mathematics, English composition, and navigation.<sup>52</sup> Maclean Sinclair seems to have been a gifted student and evidently progressed quickly through his studies at Pictou Academy: "I was not kept in a class but allowed to go on as fast as I could."<sup>53</sup> A certificate he received from the academy attests to his aptitude, describing his progress as "highly satisfactory"; he "was regular in his attendance, assiduous in his studies, and maintained throughout the conduct and character of a good student."<sup>54</sup> Especial mention was made of his grasp of mathematics. Maclean Sinclair was also particularly fond of geometry: "Geometry was really the most enjoyable thing to me that I ever studied."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> AMS, "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's," *Eastern Chronicle* (2 Jan. 1917): 1.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. See also "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>54</sup> AMS quotes this certificate verbatim in "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's," *Eastern Chronicle* (2 Jan. 1917): 1. See also "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>55</sup> AMS, "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's," *Eastern Chronicle* (2 Jan. 1917): 1.

In “Some Family History” D. M. Sinclair writes that “at the age of sixteen Mr. Sinclair determined to study for the Christian ministry [. . .].”<sup>56</sup> In reality Maclean Sinclair’s career choice appears to have been much less clear-cut, as evidenced by his attendance of both a teacher training facility and Presbyterian seminaries. After Pictou Academy, Maclean Sinclair taught from June 1858 to November 1859 again at a schoolhouse in St. Mary’s.<sup>57</sup> During his time in St. Mary’s Maclean Sinclair attended a wedding where he was asked to dance by the bride. He was not fond of dancing and declared that he knew many things, but that dancing was not one of them:

The bride came to me and wanted me to dance with her. I stood up with her, but allowed herself and the others to do the dancing. I know some things fairly well, but there are thousands of things about which I know nothing at all, and dancing is one of these things. I never danced.<sup>58</sup>

After his time teaching in the St. Mary’s district, Maclean Sinclair studied for a year at the Free Church College in Halifax in 1859, but subsequently he attended the Provincial Normal School—a teacher-training facility—in Truro in 1861, where he graduated as a grammar school teacher.<sup>59</sup> Not only did he do much teaching throughout his studies, his first accreditation was as a teacher. Though he eventually decided upon a career in the church, he returned to

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<sup>56</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 11.

<sup>57</sup> AMS, “The Pictou Academy and St. Mary’s,” *Eastern Chronicle* (2 Jan. 1917): 1. See also “Some Family History,” 11.

<sup>58</sup> AMS, “The Pictou Academy and St. Mary’s.”

<sup>59</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 11.

teaching upon his retirement from the ministry when he took up Celtic lectureships at Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier universities.

During the summer of 1862, when he was twenty-two, Maclean Sinclair taught once again, this time at a school in Canning, located in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley near the Bay of Fundy. While he was in Canning he delivered a lecture on the topic of education.<sup>60</sup> This was Maclean Sinclair's first major public-speaking engagement and set the stage for his later career in the pulpit as minister and at the podium as lecturer. A complimentary response to his lecture appeared in the *Presbyterian Witness*: "The treatment of the subject, the style of the writing, the full-heartedness with which he entered into the subject, as well as his excellent delivery, took us all by surprise."<sup>61</sup> In 1863 Maclean Sinclair was back at school once more, this time at the seminary of the Theological Hall of the Presbyterian Church, or the "Presbyterian College" (later called Pine Hill) in Halifax, where he studied theology, church history, Biblical literature, and Jewish antiquities.<sup>62</sup> At the same time, Maclean Sinclair attended Dalhousie College in Halifax where he studied chemistry, political economy, natural philosophy,

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<sup>60</sup> This lecture is still extant in Maclean Sinclair's house in Hopewell, Nova Scotia, now the property of his grandson John Sinclair. It is entitled "The Importance of Education" and consists of fifty pages of handwritten text. According to the marginalia it was delivered at Canning, NS on 21 April 1862 and New Caledonia, NS on 9 June 1863.

<sup>61</sup> "Letter to the Editor from A.B.C.," *Presbyterian Witness* (21 April 1863). Quoted in DMS, "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>62</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 49.

moral philosophy, and metaphysics.<sup>63</sup> Before Maclean Sinclair continued on his ultimate path to becoming a licensed Presbyterian clergyman, he attempted a career in education once more. D. M. Sinclair indicates that in 1864 Maclean Sinclair intended to open an “English, Classical, and Mathematical School” in Halifax. Maclean Sinclair got as far as preparing a course prospectus, but “nothing came of it.”<sup>64</sup>

### **Vocation**

In 1865 Maclean Sinclair preached his first sermon on the shores of Chocolate Lake in Halifax, but it was not until 1866 that he became fully licensed as a preacher and ordained as a minister in the Free Church of Nova Scotia. That Maclean Sinclair ultimately chose a profession in the church is hardly surprising considering his upbringing. His grandfather John Maclean was a staunch member of the Free Church and instilled a reverence for God in his home. Home worship, with the fundamentally important Bible (in this case a Gaelic Bible), was expected in any devout Presbyterian’s home, and John Maclean was no exception. Maclean Sinclair attested to the fact that his grandfather “always maintained the worship of God in his family and was a strict observer of the Sabbath.”<sup>65</sup> After his grandfather died when he was almost eight, Maclean

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<sup>63</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 12 & 49.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>65</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spoiradail*, x.

Sinclair's mother, who "read her Gaelic Bible regularly,"<sup>66</sup> and his uncle Charles, who became an elder in the church,<sup>67</sup> continued to uphold the pre-eminent position of the church in the home. According to Maclean Sinclair, his family "used to attend church at Barney's River, nine miles away."<sup>68</sup> This was the Free Church just a few kilometres from the original Maclean homestead at *Baile-Chnoic* in Barney's River.

#### **D. B. Blair**

The minister of the church was the Reverend Duncan Black Blair. Maclean Sinclair stated that "[t]hrough the influence of my mother's reading and Dr. Blair's preaching, it was impossible for me to be anything else but a thorough Calvinist."<sup>69</sup> Blair became Maclean Sinclair's friend and mentor. For Maclean Sinclair, Blair was a role model, combining the ministry with his Gaelic scholar, and represented the ultimate path his own life would take. Blair was thus a significant influence in Maclean Sinclair's life, not only as a representative of the church, but also as an educated Gael who was actively involved in the literature of his native language.

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<sup>66</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 6. See also AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7.

<sup>67</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 252.

<sup>68</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 47.

<sup>69</sup> AMS, "The Beaver Meadow School," *Eastern Chronicle* (26 Dec. 1916): 7.

A native of Strathchur, Cowal (b. 1815), and educated at the University of Edinburgh, Blair immigrated to Nova Scotia in 1846 and eventually became minister in Barney's River and Blue Mountain. In 1847 he went for a year to Ontario, where he visited Niagara Falls.<sup>70</sup> The falls made an immediate impression on the minister-poet, and though he composed a number of pieces, his poem on seeing Niagara Falls, "Eas Niagara," is his best known. First published by Maclean Sinclair in *Clàrsach na Coille*,<sup>71</sup> it has since been included in other significant compilations of Gaelic poetry. W. J. Watson included it in his well-known *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*,<sup>72</sup> and most recently Donald Meek included it in his anthology of nineteenth-century poetry, *Caran an t-Saoghail*.<sup>73</sup> Blair returned to Nova Scotia from Ontario in 1848, and in 1850 he went back to Scotland and married a woman from Mull with whom he finally settled in Nova Scotia in 1851.

Maclean Sinclair related in *Clàrsach na Coille* that Blair, in addition to writing several poems, translated the Psalms of David into Gaelic metre, and had

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<sup>70</sup> Blair visited various spots in British North America and published Gaelic accounts of these trips in the *Canada Scotsman*. See "Turusan air feadh Nuadh-Albainn agus Eilean Prionnsa Eideard anns a' Bhliadhna 1846" (25 Dec. 1869): 7; "Turus air feadh Eilean Cheap Breatuinn, anns a' Bhliadhna 1847" (15 Jan. 1870): 7; "Turus do Chanada Uachdarach anns a' Bhliadhna 1847" (29 Jan. 1870): 7. See also "Cead Deireannach do thir [page torn] Beann 's a' bhliadhna 18[torn]" (newspaper & date unknown) and "Turus do dh-America Tuath anns a' Bhliadhna 1846, II" (newspaper uncertain, *Canada Scotsman?*) (Ceud Mios an Fhoghair, 21, 1869). These are all available in Maclean Sinclair's scrapbooks in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/544/541-43, NSARM.

<sup>71</sup> See AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 323-31.

<sup>72</sup> Watson, *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, 9-14.

<sup>73</sup> Meek, *Caran*, 88-99, 410 & 473.

a Gaelic grammar “ready for press.”<sup>74</sup> When Blair died in 1893, Maclean Sinclair inherited and preserved them throughout his life;<sup>75</sup> Blair’s manuscripts are today housed along with Maclean Sinclair’s papers in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia building. Aside from the Gaelic translations of the Psalms and the “Rudiments of Gaelic Grammar,” Blair’s manuscripts include personal and religious poems in Gaelic by Blair, historical sketches, notes in Gaelic on grammar with an English translation, a Greek-Gaelic glossary, transcriptions of Gaelic poetry (e.g. Duncan Bàn, William Ross, and Alexander MacDonald), and a Gaelic translation of “Homer Canto III.”<sup>76</sup>

### Ordination

Maclean Sinclair’s relationship with D. B. Blair continued even after Maclean Sinclair left Glen Bard to further his education. When it was time for him to get his license as a minister, Maclean Sinclair returned to his home district in order to be examined. Prospective ministers were licensed and ordained by

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<sup>74</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1928), 242.

<sup>75</sup> “When Dr. Blair was dying he ordered his son to give me all his Gaelic manuscripts.” Quoted in D. M. Sinclair, “Rev. Duncan Black Blair, D. D. (1815-1893): Pioneer Preacher in Pictou County, Gaelic Scholar and Poet,” *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 39 (1977): 165. See also DMS, “Some Family History,” 53.

<sup>76</sup> See specifically in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG15/G/23/5-8, and MG15/G/24/9-12 & 16, NSARM. For a description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM, see the Appendix D. See also AMS, “Dr. Blair’s Version of the Psalms,” *Scottish Canadian* 10.4 (Apr. 1905), 118 and DMS, “Rev. Duncan Black Blair,” *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 39 (1977): 155-68.

established ministers in the church court of the Presbytery. Part of this process involved a lengthy oral examination, which, in Maclean Sinclair's case, involved presenting a homily in Gaelic and being tested on theology, church history, Hebrew, and Greek.<sup>77</sup> One of Maclean Sinclair's examiners was D. B. Blair, and, as Moderator of the Presbytery, it was Blair who ultimately licensed Maclean Sinclair to preach in the Free Church of Nova Scotia on 2 May 1866.

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<sup>77</sup> AMS, "Fifty Years Ago," *Eastern Chronicle* (9 Jan. 1917): 5. See also "Some Family History," 13 & 52.

## Chapter IV

### *Adult Years*

Well, I would like to be great, some boy will say, I would like to be something; I would like to be spoken of as a useful man years after I was dead! I am glad to hear that. It is a noble aspiration.<sup>1</sup>

— A. Maclean Sinclair

After his ordination on 25 July 1866 Maclean Sinclair's first engagement as a minister in two churches, Springville and Sunny Brae, in the East River area of Pictou County, when he was twenty-six years of age.<sup>2</sup> After the creation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875, which united most of the various Presbyterian denominations, a third church in the area came under Maclean Sinclair's charge, i.e. St. Paul's, located between Springville and Sunny Brae.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Boys Learn Latin" [unsigned manuscript in AMS's hand], Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/303, NSARM.

<sup>2</sup> AMS, "Fifty Years Ago," *Eastern Chronicle* (9 Jan. 1917): 5. See also "Some Family History," 13 & 52.

<sup>3</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 17. See Figure 4: Map of the Canadian Maritimes.

Maclean Sinclair's choice of vocation allowed him to use his native tongue in a way no other profession available to him could. Had he become a teacher as he had entertained, he would not have had the opportunity to use Gaelic in a professional setting. As a minister, he had a formal venue in which to employ his native language: "Services were conducted regularly in Gaelic and English at Springville and Sunny Brae, and after 1875 at St. Paul's [...] [and after moving to Prince Edward Island in 1888] St. John's Presbyterian Church, Belfast."<sup>4</sup> His life as a Gaelic-speaking minister also put him into contact with the active tradition-bearers in his community from whom he could collect Gaelic songs and tales, local history, and genealogical information.

Maclean Sinclair lived in East River for twenty-two years, longer than in any other locale, previously or subsequently, and it was here that he began his long career in Gaelic publishing with two editions of Gaelic verse and a Gaelic column for a local newspaper. Maclean Sinclair also made a significant trip to Scotland during this time, and he entered into family life by marrying Mary Ann Campbell and producing five children. He and his family left Nova Scotia in 1888 and moved to Belfast, Prince Edward Island, where he resided eighteen years before finally returning to Nova Scotia to take up a lectureship in Celtic Studies in 1907.

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<sup>4</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 17 & 19.

A particular event occurred in 1874 which acted as the catalyst for the seeds of Maclean Sinclair's solid Gaelic upbringing to blossom into his lifelong passion of collecting the lore that informants, especially old people, willingly shared. He was paid a visit on 26 April of that year by Finlay Grant,<sup>5</sup> an elder in his congregation in East River. Grant had been storm-stayed at Maclean Sinclair's manse and Maclean Sinclair took the opportunity to interview him:

I got a notebook, questioned him on the early history of the East River and took down all the facts good and bad, serious and comical, that he gave. He started with Angus MacPherson in the Marsh and gave me an account of all the old settlers down to Duncan Cruikshank's and Black David MacIntosh's and up through Cummings Mountain to Ben Heela. He is thus my first professor in local history. Indeed prior to April 27, 1874 I took no interest in the local history of the East River or any other locality. I was too busy studying history and other things that I required to know.<sup>6</sup>

This event can be regarded as a turning point in Maclean Sinclair's life, and indeed he must have regarded it so himself considering his note of the occasion. His education had prepared him for his role in life as an educator and as a minister, and his personal interests attracted him to the study of many topics, mathematics, science, philology, as well as history and language; however, his anecdote signifies that his worldly interests eventually encompassed the local. His antiquarian interests in Scotland, especially regarding its history, language, and literature in books and manuscripts, extended to the oral history and literature of the Gaels. Maclean Sinclair was

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<sup>5</sup> DMS "Some Family History," 17.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 17.

“well aware that the relative scarcity of manuscripts in Scottish Gaeldom – in comparison to the wealth of textual remains in Ireland – made oral tradition all the more crucial in compiling the assets of Scottish history.”<sup>7</sup> The information he collected from informants, both through correspondence and personal interviews, would become an important component of his role in Gaelic publishing to come. Maclean Sinclair had already made a foray into collecting folk tradition a few years prior to his meeting with Finlay Grant. His interest in collecting Gaelic songs had already begun in 1869 during a trip to Scotland, which put him in touch with tradition-bearers in the birthplace of his mother and grandfather, the island of Tiree.

### **A Trip to Scotland**

In 1869, when he was 29, Maclean Sinclair took a four-month leave-of absence from his church to embark upon a voyage to Europe. His main goal was to visit Scotland and see his grandfather’s home island of Tiree. However, he also journeyed to various points of call in the United States, Ireland, England, and France as part of his voyage to Scotland. With the influence of his mother and grandfather, Scotland of course loomed large in the mind of Maclean

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Newton, “Foreword: Highland Settlers: Scottish Highland Immigrants in North America,” *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies* 27 (2003): 4. See also Michael Newton, “‘Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them’: Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912,” *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>, section 5.3, and AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems,” *Scottish-American Journal* (27 Feb. 1889).

Sinclair, and his desire to visit there is not surprising. Given his upbringing, Maclean Sinclair's desire to visit Scotland was hardly surprising. His interest was further piqued when his friend A. R. Garvie, a former classmate, visited Scotland in 1866, and wrote "very descriptive letters of what he had seen."<sup>8</sup> The trip was a significant event in Maclean Sinclair's life, for not only did he meet his relatives in Tìree, but he also made valuable contacts in the world of Gaelic publishing and Celtic Studies with whom he would continue to correspond for much of the rest of his life. He also collected material from a number of tradition-bearers, much of which would find its way into his later publications.

Maclean Sinclair apparently kept a journal during his travels; however, the only information available as to its contents are quotations from D. M. Sinclair in "Some Family History," which he gleaned from his father's travel journal; however, he only directly quotes his father a few times, and generally summarises the journal, e.g. "In his diary he refers to the greenness of Ireland, the beauty of the Clyde, and the ruggedness of the Highlands."<sup>9</sup> Fortunately, we do have a more extensive and detailed account from the *Canada Scotsman* in which Maclean Sinclair published his travels.<sup>10</sup> These accounts provide a

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<sup>8</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 51.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>10</sup> The seven-part account of his trip, as published in the *Canada Scotsman* in 1870-71, is available in Maclean Sinclair's scrapbooks in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/545/664-71, NSARM. There is also a manuscript version of one of these accounts in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, "From New Glasgow to Old Glasgow by New York," MG1/2660/211, NSARM. Although "For the *Witness*" (i.e. the Halifax-based

glimpse into Maclean Sinclair's character, as well as his impressions on seeing the country of his forbears for the first time. Maclean Sinclair begins his account by indicating that he first had to journey to New York in order to catch his ship across the Atlantic. After travelling to Halifax from Springville, he sailed to Portland, Maine; from there he went to Boston by train and then to New York by steamship. He goes into great detail about Boston and, especially, New York City. He was particularly impressed by the condition of American cemeteries, which he finds a sharp contrast to those in Nova Scotia:

From the battery which is at the extremity of the peninsula of New York City, we cross over by the South Ferry to Brooklyn, and taking the horse-cars visit Greenwood Cemetery. This is a lovely burying place. Its grounds which comprise an area of 410 acres are laid out with great taste. It is a more delightful place than Mount Auburn. It commands an excellent view of New York and the places surrounding it. The Americans deserve much praise for the attention they pay their burying grounds. It is a sad sight that often meets one's eyes when travelling through Nova Scotia. You see burying grounds without even a fence around them, tombstones heaved out of the ground by the frost or knocked down by cattle, and graves without a tree, or shrub, or a flower near them. We should honour the abode of the dead. Though the body of the Christian is in the grave, it is "still in union with Christ," and shall be raised up at the resurrection. With very little trouble all the burying-places in America might be fenced and adorned with trees and flowers. It is an easy matter to transplant the gloomy solemn spruce.<sup>11</sup>

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*Presbyterian Witness*) is written at the top of the page, I have not been able to find it there. See also AMS, "Two Weeks and a Half in Tیره: a Reminiscence of Forty Years Ago," [newspaper uncertain, *Oban Times?*] (3 July 1909), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks) MG9/545/617, NSARM; "A Trip to Scotland," *Eastern Chronicle* (12 Jan. 1917): 2; and DMS, "Some Family History," 15-16.

<sup>11</sup> AMS [Athanasius], "From New Glasgow to Old Glasgow by New York," MG1/2660/211, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, NSARM. See also AMS, "How I spent the Summer of 1869, Part I" *Canada Scotsman* (n.d.), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/545/664, NSARM.

Maclean Sinclair might have had his grandfather's resting place in Glen Bard in mind when he compared New York's cemeteries to Nova Scotia's. He was very aware of his grandfather's legacy and made sure that his gravesite in Glen Bard was not ignored. In 1887 he took part in a celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Maclean, at which there was food and the singing of his grandfather's songs.<sup>12</sup>

From New York, on 3 July 1869, Maclean Sinclair took the ship *India* to Europe. He related in his account that the time on board was mostly passed in eating, and does not provide a very complimentary picture of his fellow passengers. Besides a penchant for satire, Maclean Sinclair betrays a certain frugality in his own preferences, "while some men eat to live, others live to eat," and bemoans the lack of intelligent conversation beyond the matters of food: "Gastronomy was the only science with which they seemed to be at all acquainted."<sup>13</sup> After ten days, the *India* arrived at Loch Foyle in Ireland on 15 May, where the passengers bound for Londonderry disembarked. Though on this part of the trip he only saw a glimpse of Ireland, he enjoyed what he saw: "What a beautiful island Erin is! Often had I heard it called the Emerald isle, but I never thought that it was so surpassingly green and lovely as it is."<sup>14</sup> D. M.

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<sup>12</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 58.

<sup>13</sup> AMS, "From New Glasgow to Old Glasgow by New York."

<sup>14</sup> AMS, "How I spent the Summer of 1869, Part I."

Sinclair explained that his father later visited Ireland as part of his voyage, but only states that he described “Sackville Street, Dublin, as the finest street he had ever seen.”<sup>15</sup> Maclean Sinclair also visited France where he saw the “many sights of Paris,” but his Presbyterian sensibilities were shocked by the lack of piety on Sundays: “There is no Sabbath in France. All walking and amusing themselves.”<sup>16</sup> Regrettably, that is all we have of his impressions there. In England Maclean Sinclair visited London, but again we have little record of his activities, D. M. Sinclair only states that his father visited the Crystal Palace, “where he heard a choir of 8,000 voices.”<sup>17</sup>

Maclean Sinclair arrived in Glasgow on board the *India* on 16 May, and his genuine eagerness on finally seeing the “land of his forefathers” is clear:

Leaving Loch Foyle we sailed past the Giants’ Causeway of which we had an excellent view and made for the Firth of Clyde. We anchored off Greenock all night and, leaving at daybreak on the following morning, arrived at Glasgow about 8 o’clock. Having taken breakfast, we bade the *India* goodbye, and stepped ashore on the Bonnie land. I was now in the land of my forefathers, and the country which more than any other part of this earth I wanted to see.<sup>18</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s anticipation is hardly surprising. Even though he was born and raised in North America, he identified with Scotland: “I am a Nova Scotian by birth, but a Highlander by blood, in feeling, and in training. I have been

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<sup>15</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 16.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted by DMS in “Some Family History,” 16.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> AMS, “From New Glasgow to Old Glasgow by New York.”

brought up to look upon myself rather as an exile from Scotland, than as a native of the new world.”<sup>19</sup> The life he lived everyday, in a church that was founded in Scotland, surrounded by people directly from Scotland, and speaking a language from Scotland, all combined to reinforce this identity.

While his primary allegiance was clearly to the *Gàidhealtachd*, to the Gaelic-speaking culture of the Highlands, it is clear that he also subscribed to a wider Scottish patriotism. In his description of his trip, Maclean Sinclair chose to invoke the images of Scotland’s romantic past of brave kings and heroes, its famous authors, and religious luminaries: “I was now in Scotland the land of Wallace, Bruce, of Brown & Scott, of Knox & Chalmers [...]”<sup>20</sup> His pride in the land of his parents’ birth is also evident when he says Scotland is “the greatest of all small countries, except Judea & Greece.”<sup>21</sup> Maclean Sinclair also would later translate some of the poetry of Robert Burns, such as his famous “Annie Laurie” and the patriotic song “Scots Wha Hae.”<sup>22</sup>

Maclean Sinclair visited a number of places in Scotland including sites of religious and historical significance such as Iona, Bannockburn, Killiecrankie, Glencoe, and Culloden, as well as the main cities and towns such as Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, and Oban. Apparently he also visited Thurso,

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<sup>19</sup> AMS, “How I spent the Summer of 1869.”

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS, under *MT (Mac-Talla)*.

Caithness, which was his father's family's home district. Perhaps most significantly, he visited the islands of Coll, Mull, Rum, Eigg, Islay, and Tiree. Maclean Sinclair went off the beaten track of contemporary cultural tourists and revealed his real interests in visiting his grandfather's home village of Caolas on Tiree:

[. . .] I walked up to Caolis, at the northern extremity of the island. I was now in that part of Scotland which I had all along been more anxious to see than any other bit of Caledonia's soil. Here at Caolis, my grandfather, the late John McLean, "am Bard Mac Gilleadhain," passed the first half of his life, and here my mother was born.<sup>23</sup>

While in Tiree, Maclean Sinclair collected oral tradition from the locals. His later account of this trip provides an interesting glimpse into his folklore collecting activities, and where his specific antiquarian interests lay, i.e. songs, traditions, and genealogies. He provides the ages of his informants almost as an indication of the archaicness, and perhaps authenticity, of the material he was collecting:

I landed in Tiree on Friday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. I spent the first week visiting here and there, and taking down songs, traditions, and genealogies. Rory Macdonald and Neil Macfadyen had a good deal of information to impart about old things. The former was 82 years of age, and the latter 80. I got a number of songs from Anna Bheag a' Chùbair, a good woman whom I met years afterwards at Priceville, Ontario.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> AMS, "How I Spent the Summer of 1869" [Part IV], *Canada Scotsman* (19 Nov. 1870): 2. See also Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/545/667, NSARM.

<sup>24</sup> Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair, "Two Weeks and a Half in Tiree: a Reminiscence of Forty Years Ago," [newspaper uncertain, *Oban Times?*] (3 July 1909), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/545/617, NSARM.

Maclean Sinclair later used the material he collected in Scotland to inform his books and articles on Gaelic song and Highland genealogy.

Also while in Tiree, Maclean Sinclair says he preached for the inhabitants “on three successive Sabbaths.” He made particular note of the incongruity of a man born in the “wilderness” of North America preaching to the Tiree islanders in their own language:

I spent over two weeks among the people of Tyree, and preached for them on three successive Sabbaths. To some of them it was quite a curiosity to hear a man born in the woods of America preach to them neither in Indian nor in English, but in their own native language. Why, I would consider it a disgrace to me if, in this age of progress, I could not speak at least as many languages as my father and mother speak.<sup>25</sup>

It is clear from his accounts that Maclean Sinclair was distressed at the poor economic circumstances he witnessed in the Highlands and Islands. He was of the opinion that the lives of Highlanders would be improved by immigrating to the New World. Though Maclean Sinclair had great enthusiasm for Scotland on his arrival, any romantic notions he may have had of the Highlands were dispelled by the poor living conditions that he witnessed in his two months there. This confirmed in his mind the ultimate wisdom of his grandfather’s decision to move to the New World, and he felt compelled to preach the benefits of emigration to those he found living in poor circumstances.

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<sup>25</sup> AMS, “How I Spent the Summer of 1869” (Part VI), *Canada Scotsman* (n.d.). See Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/545/669, NSARM.

Maclean Sinclair encountered a servant man whom he tried to convince to emigrate:

Whilst waiting at Port Appin I walked to a farm and conversed with a servant man I found mowing hay. I ascertained that he received only £8:10:0 for a half-year's work. I advised him to come to America and settle down upon a piece of land of his own, the same advice I gave to everyone else who gave me a willing or an unwilling ear.<sup>26</sup>

Maclean Sinclair echoed this sentiment in *Clàrsach na Coille*, published a little over a decade after his Scottish tour. He comments that it was unfortunate that his grandfather sent his negative depiction of the New World home to Tiree in the song "A' Choille Ghruamach," as "it was no doubt the means of keeping many persons from emigrating."<sup>27</sup> Maclean Sinclair continues in this vein by asserting the wisdom of his grandfather's move, and refers to the trip to Scotland to substantiate this opinion:

He was in comfortable enough circumstances in his latter days; and his children and grandchildren are in every way better off than they would be in Scotland. The writer of this memoir was born and brought up in Nova Scotia, but travelled in the Highlands of Scotland in the summer of 1869, spending three weeks in Tiree. He knows that the children of those who emigrated from Scotland are a great deal better off than the children of those who remained in that country of landlords and rents. It is a pity that all the crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland could not be at once brought over to Manitoba.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 1-6.

<sup>27</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), xix-xx.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Though many Highlanders may have left their homeland unwillingly, Maclean Sinclair saw this as an ultimate good that came of the evil of the landlords who dispossessed their tenants in the Highland Clearances. Ending with a Biblical allusion, Maclean Sinclair essentially says that it was God's will that Highlanders were evicted, since their circumstances were improved in the end:

It is no doubt a hardship to be banished from one's native land, still when on the one hand I consider the unfitness of parts of Scotland for cultivation and on the other hand look at the freedom and comfort enjoyed by the banished who came to this country I see God intended their banishment for their good. What Joseph said to his servants, these exiles might now say to those who were once their landlords "as for you ye thought evil against us, but God meant it unto good."<sup>29</sup>

Beyond the personal significance that the visit to Scotland had for Maclean Sinclair, it proved an essential asset to his later work in Gaelic publishing. In addition to his folklore, genealogical, and historical field work, he made a number of contacts on his trip, including some notable Gaels with whom he later corresponded.<sup>30</sup> His trip to Scotland provided a powerful incentive to venture down the path of Gaelic publishing. After his return to East River and his duties in the church, Maclean Sinclair seems to have embarked in earnest on his career as a Gaelic publisher. His first great project was the publication of the manuscripts his grandfather brought to Nova Scotia in 1819, and which represented for Maclean Sinclair a personal link with Gaelic Scotland. His first

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<sup>29</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 16.

<sup>30</sup> Many of the letters he received from these contacts are among the 628 letters in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM. See Part II, Chapter II.

two collections included *Dàin Spioradail* in 1880, which were hymns by John Maclean and others, and *Clàrsach na Coille* in 1881, which included John Maclean's secular songs as well as songs collected by Dr. Hector Maclean, John Maclean and Maclean Sinclair himself. Maclean Sinclair also published his first English-language book in 1880, *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, under the pseudonym "A. Malachi."<sup>31</sup>

### **Marriage and Family Life**

A year after publishing *Clàrsach na Coille*, Maclean Sinclair got married. That he did not marry until he was forty-two years of age was something his son, D. M. Sinclair, attributes to Maclean Sinclair's mother Christy: "Mr. Sinclair's mother exerted a great influence on him from childhood to manhood. It is significant that he did not marry till he was 42 years of age."<sup>32</sup> When Maclean Sinclair left Glen Bard in 1856 to attend Pictou Academy at the age of sixteen, he tells us in his diary that his mother came with him and looked after him: "my mother went with me to Pictou and kept house for me [. . .]."<sup>33</sup> This she continued to do for Maclean Sinclair until he married in 1882,<sup>34</sup> something

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<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of this book see Part II, Chapter I.

<sup>32</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 50.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 48.

<sup>34</sup> See SFH, 18, where DMS says, "Previous to his marriage his mother kept house for him."

observed by Alexander Mackenzie, editor of the *Celtic Magazine* when he visited Maclean Sinclair's manse in Springville, East River, Nova Scotia, in 1879. In his report on his trip to Canada, which he published in the magazine, Mackenzie recorded his impressions of Maclean Sinclair; he considered that Maclean Sinclair needed a wife, and noted that his mother kept house for him:

The Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair is really most happy and comfortable in his surroundings, and all he seems to want to make him completely happy as this world can, is to have at the head of his household gods, a better half, congenial to his cultivated tastes; though at present his mother, a fine old lady, the daughter of the Bard of Coll, and a veritable walking encyclopædia, keeps house for him, and presides at his hospitable table.<sup>35</sup>

Christy Maclean's influence on her son was challenged in 1861 when Maclean Sinclair (then twenty-one) developed a romance with a Miss Alice Lalage Hayes while attending the Provincial Normal School in Truro, Nova Scotia. Hayes was a music and art teacher at the Normal School. According to D. M. Sinclair, after a relationship of five years, Hayes and Maclean Sinclair went their separate ways; this was around the time that Maclean Sinclair was ordained as a minister in the Free Church. Apparently Christy was not very fond of Hayes, and Christy had been a contributing factor in their break-up. D. M. Sinclair, relying on his father's diaries, states that, "[i]n breaking up their friendship [Maclean Sinclair's and Hayes'] Miss Hayes assured Mrs. Sinclair that her one desire was to 'make her happy.'"<sup>36</sup> D. M. Sinclair also explained that

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<sup>35</sup> Alexander Mackenzie, "The Editor in Canada," *Celtic Magazine* 5.50 (Dec. 1879): 72.

<sup>36</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 50.

Maclean Sinclair's old school friend, A. R. Garvie, was helpful in consoling Maclean Sinclair over the break-up. Garvie implied in a letter that Maclean Sinclair had been in love with Alice Hayes; but Garvie was not convinced that it was true love, and insisted Maclean Sinclair's passion for her had only been out of pity and chivalry: "bide your time and the woman ordained for you will drift into your experience soon and may your lot be a happy one with her. I believe your chivalry and pity made you think you loved her. I do not think pity and chivalry are all the elements of love. She was not suited to you."<sup>37</sup>

The woman ordained for Maclean Sinclair drifted into his experience in the likeness of one of his parishioners. At the age of forty-two, while Maclean Sinclair was minister in East River, he got married to a member of his congregation, twenty-one-year-old Mary Ann Campbell. Mary Ann's father, John MacRae Campbell, had been an elder in Maclean Sinclair's church; he passed away in 1881, one year before Mary Ann married Maclean Sinclair. Maclean Sinclair would later state, somewhat jokingly, that he was "half afraid" to tell his mother that he would be marrying a Campbell: "She [Christy Maclean] taught me to hate the Campbells, to love the Macleans, and to respect every other clan. My wife is a Campbell, and I was half afraid to tell my mother I was going to marry one of the clan."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted in "Some Family History," 50.

<sup>38</sup> AMS to (possibly) Dr. William Mackay, 9 Oct. 1888, Emigration from Scotland: Emigrants' Correspondence, Acc. 8922, NLS.

Apparently Mary Ann was not a Gaelic speaker. According to D. M. Sinclair, D. B. Blair, who officiated at the wedding, delivered the service in Gaelic and offered to say it again in English for Mary Ann's sake: "When asked if she wished it repeated in English the bride politely declined."<sup>39</sup> D. B. Blair also composed an "Òran Pòsaidh" ("Wedding Song"), for the event, which took place 1 August 1882. Maclean Sinclair published it in 1904, in the fourth book of his Gaelic Bards series, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875*. Categorized by Maclean Sinclair as a *luinneag* (song/ditty), it is an entertaining, cheerful composition in which Blair puts Maclean Sinclair in the first person as the singer of the song, praising his new bride. The first verse is interesting in that Blair makes allusion to Maclean Sinclair's relationship to his mother, and that, as she had been looking after him from birth, he is now essentially leaving her for "Màiri," a "noble young woman" ("òg-bhean uasal"). Evidently, the fact that Christy Maclean had been keeping house for her son up to this point was not lost on Blair:

*Séist:*  
*Chaidh an comann, an comann,*  
*Chaidh an comann air chùl;*  
*Chaidh an comann o chéile,*  
*Cha dèan feum ach fear ùr.*

*Chorus:*  
 The fellowship, the fellowship,  
 The fellowship has departed;  
 The fellowship has separated,  
 Only a new one will make do.

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<sup>39</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 18.

*Soraidh slàn le mo mhàthair,  
A thug gràdh dhomh o thùs;  
'S òg a rinn i mis' àrach  
'Na mo phàisd air a glùn.  
Tha mi 'nis 'ga fàgail  
Airson Màiri mo rùin;  
Òg-bhean uasal nam blàth-shùl,  
'Rinn mo thàladh le mùirn;*

Farewell to my mother,  
That loved me from the beginning;  
That raised me from youth  
As a child on her knee.  
I leave her now  
For Mary my love;  
The noble young woman of the kind eyes,  
Who lured me with tenderness;

*Maighdeann uasal ro àlainn,  
Thug mi gràdh dhi as ùr;  
'S i mo roghainn gu bràth i,  
Cuiream càch air mo chùl.  
Bidh i leam anns gach àite,  
Oir 's i làn mo dha shùl.  
Cha sgar nì ach am bàs sinn,  
Siud an tràth seo mo dhùil.*

The noble maiden so lovely,  
I loved her anew;  
She is my choice forever,  
Let me leave the rest behind.  
She is with me everywhere,  
For she fills my vision.  
Nothing will separate us but death,  
That is now my hope.

*Mar is ait leinn, am Blàrach  
Thig gu'r tàthadh ri 'chéil',  
Do réir riaghailt an àite,  
Agus àithne na cléir'.  
Nuair a gheibh mi air làimh i  
Nì mi gàirdeachas réidh;  
Cha bhi duine 'san àite  
'Bhios cho sàsaicht' rium fhéin.*

How joyful we are that  
Blair comes to bind us together,  
According to the law of the land,  
And the sanction of the church.  
When I take her hand  
I will openly rejoice;  
There will be no one around  
As happy as me.

*'S i bean chomainn mo ghràidh i  
Fad mo làithean fon ghréin,  
Air mo thurus troimh'n fhàsach  
Dh'ionnsaigh Pàrras mo Dhé.  
'S e mo ghuidhe le làn-toil,  
I bhith sàbhailt' gach ré,  
Ann an comann an Àrd-rìgh  
A thug gràdh dhuinn nach tréig.<sup>40</sup>*

She is the woman of my love  
For the rest of my days beneath the sun,  
On my journey through the wilderness  
Towards the paradise of my God.  
It is my prayer and full wish,  
That she be forever safe  
In the fellowship of the Lord  
Who gave us unending love.

According to D. M. Sinclair, Maclean Sinclair wrote two love-songs for Mary Ann. The first one he composed while they were still courting. Though it

<sup>40</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875* (Sydney, NS: Mac-Talla Publishing Co. Ltd., 1904), 107-08.

is sentimental and employs conventional imagery, his love-song to Mary Ann shows Maclean Sinclair in a new, gentle mood, and serves as a testimony of his affection for his bride-to-be:

Come to my bosom, Mary Ann,  
 Come and be ever mine.  
 Of thee I think by day, by night,  
 My heart is wholly thine.  
 Whilst in my veins the red blood flows,  
 Whilst I can think and plan,  
 Whilst feelings can enflame my soul,  
 I'll love my Mary Ann.

She's lovely as the lily pure  
 That hails the morning ray,  
 And guileless as the happy lamb  
 That sports about the brae.  
 With joy I'm thrilled and wholly filled  
 As all her charms I scan,  
 Each lovely trait that I can crave  
 I find in Mary Ann.

O hasten, hasten happy day  
 That joins us hand and heart  
 That gives me all I ask below  
 Till death shall bid us part.  
 Beneath the sun there cannot be  
 A lighter-hearted man  
 Than I when I enfold as mine,  
 My charming Mary Ann.

Written by a lonely bachelor on a stormy day.<sup>41</sup>

The second love-song for Mary Ann by Maclean Sinclair, which he composed two months after their wedding, was in Gaelic.<sup>42</sup> Maclean Sinclair did

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<sup>41</sup> The original manuscript page of this song is in the possession of DMS's son John Sinclair, who now owns the family home in Hopewell, NS. My thanks to him for providing me with a transcription and partial facsimile copy. See also DMS "Some Family History," 51.

not publish the song, but a version of it is extant in his notebook now located in the Special Collections library of St. Francis Xavier University. Maclean Sinclair included it under the heading “*Criomagan a fhuair mi an siud 's an seo*” (“pieces that I got here and there”). The poem is signed “By myself” and dated 26 September 1882; it consists of only one verse. Maclean Sinclair paints a homey picture of his wife, his “*bean fheumail*” (“useful woman”), at the hearth, building the fire for him. He describes her “blowing” the fire, presumably with the billows, and stirring up the embers “*le eireachdas*” (“with a flourish”). He admires her strength of character by continuing on with her task, and not giving in to distress or complaint. He finishes with a conventional topos of praise – no one can find fault with her. There is a certain Presbyterian quality to the Gaelic passage in its understated emotion and emphasis on duty and aversion to complaint:

<p><i>'S ann agams' tha 'bhean fheumail</i>  <i>'Ga séideadh an teine dhomh;</i>  <i>Ged bhiodh i ann an éiginn,</i>  <i>Cha ghéill i 's cha ghearainn i</i>  <i>Gu'n toir i air na h-éibhlean</i>  <i>Gu'n leum iad le eireachdas;</i>  <i>Am fear a gheibheadh beum dhi</i>  <i>Bu bhéist air bheag eilean e.</i><sup>43</sup></p>	<p>Mine is the worthy woman          Stoking the fire for me;          If something troubles her          She will not give up or complain          Until she stirs the embers          Until they jump with a flourish;          The man who would find fault with her          Would be an uncultivated brute.</p>
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<sup>42</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 56. DMS provides only the first line, “*S ann agam a tha bhean fheumail*” (“Mine is the Worthy Woman”).

<sup>43</sup> For *eilean* read *oilean* (see Dwelly, s.v. “eilean”). Alexander Maclean Sinclair Notebook (PB1633S54), STFXUSC. My thanks to Effie Rankin for her help in translating and deciphering Maclean Sinclair’s handwriting in this verse.

This short but pleasant verse is a contrast to Maclean Sinclair's English piece to Mary Ann, in which he used conventional, sentimental and romantic imagery to convey his love for her. The image that Maclean Sinclair employs in his Gaelic composition is comparably understated; but even though he never explicitly says it, his fondness for Mary Ann is unmistakable. The simple but caring act of tending to the fire in such a prosaic setting more strongly evokes a genuine sentiment of love. As Gaelic was Maclean Sinclair's native language, it is perhaps not surprising that his Gaelic composition to Mary Ann comes across as being decidedly more genuine in feeling than his English one. With its use of conventional imagery and metre, "She's lovely as the lily pure / That hails the morning ray, / And guileless as the happy lamb / That sports about the brae." Maclean Sinclair was certainly conversant with customary love imagery in Gaelic tradition, as his numerous publications of Gaelic poetry imply, yet he chose not to resort to the standard imagery of the genre in that language. Instead he chose to represent his love for Mary Ann in an understated manner, and, in so doing, emphasized the sincerity of his affection for her.

Mary Ann's equal affection for her husband is apparent in a letter she wrote to him, when he was away from their home in Springville, exactly three years after their wedding day. She was about five-months pregnant with their first child, Charles, at this juncture. In the letter, dated 1 August 1885, she remarks that since Maclean Sinclair had to be away on their anniversary, she had hoped to receive a letter from him. Her fondness and devotion to her husband is

clear; as a minister and a scholar he does not have the hands of a labourer and she cautions him to wear gloves lest his hands become “brown as nuts.” She expresses her fondness for his smile, of which she can remind herself by looking at his “fascinating” photograph.<sup>44</sup> She betrays a sense of playfulness when she warns her husband that his smiles are dangerous, and that “it would never do for a clerical husband to have young girls sighing over him.” It is also evident from the letter that Maclean Sinclair’s mother is living with them, as Mary Ann asserts that they are “getting along very well.” Mary Ann mentions that the doctor came to examine Christy’s toe and teased her for “coming down so soon.” Apparently Christy returned to Glen Bard once her son got married and came to Springville presumably to help Mary Ann in her pregnancy. It is uncertain whether Christy continued to live with her son’s family, or later returned to Glen Bard.

Another interesting allusion in the letter is to Maclean Sinclair’s folklore collecting activities. Evidently the reason for his absence was a mission to collect Gaelic songs and stories, as Mary Ann writes: “You will get a number of songs & stories from those people I hope [ . . .].” For at least part of this trip he went to Merigomish, Nova Scotia (located in Pictou County on the Northumberland Strait), for the doctor mentioned to Mary Ann that he saw her husband on his

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<sup>44</sup> See Figure 5: Alexander Maclean Sinclair, at start of Part I, which was signed June 1886. Though not the one to which Mary Ann refers, it is an example of what AMS looked like in the time period of her letter.

way to Merigomish. Maclean Sinclair may also have been visiting Glen Bard as Mary Ann signs off by wishing “love to all the family.” Mary Ann also refers to Maclean Sinclair’s need to “correct and re-write” the songs and stories that he is collecting, something for which he later becomes notorious. At this point in the letter she states that it was unfortunate Maclean Sinclair should forget to take writing paper with him. Perhaps this was to emphasize the point that she had not received a letter from him, even though he had to be writing down the songs and stories of his informants on something. In an undoubtedly euphemistic reference to her developing pregnancy, she mentions that she is making a dress and that Maclean Sinclair would understand the “necessity for doing so.” She concludes with an amusing anecdote about trimming a cow’s “eye-whiskers.” The letter is worth presenting in its entirety as it provides a charming insight into both Maclean Sinclair and his wife’s personalities, and the affectionate nature of their relationship:

My dear husband

I am sitting in the study thinking of you. So I will write you something. I felt sure of getting a letter today, but when I went to the post-office I came back disappointed. You did not promise to write. Still I felt that when I could not see you I should get a letter on the anniversary of our wedding day. I would like to know where you are and what you are doing. I hope you are enjoying yourself. Do wear gloves or your pretty hands will be as brown as nuts. You will get a number of songs and stories from those people I hope but if you will have to correct & re-write them they will be more trouble than good perhaps. It is a pity you forgot to take writing paper with you. Ma & myself are getting along very well. Her toe is troubling her. Dr. Murray called to see us yesterday.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Maclean Sinclair later related a personal anecdote about the Dr. Murray mentioned by Mary Ann in her letter. Apparently Maclean Sinclair felt something moving in his ear

He examined her toe & is going to send her stuff to cure it. He was up at Kennedy's; Bessy has a young son. The doctor teased Ma about coming down so soon. He told me he saw you on your way to Merigomish, so that is the last I heard of you. If you were at Assembly or Synod I would know what you were doing by the papers. I miss you very much but I have your parting smile to live on & the same expression in your picture. I just love this picture; there is something fascinating in it. Did you ever think that your smiles are dangerous? If not you had better take the matter into serious consideration. It would never do for a clerical husband to have young girls sighing over him. I feel very well. We get up at 5.30 o'clock & go to bed at 9. Do not think that we are idle. Of course there is not much cooking to do but I am making a dress for myself. You understand the necessity for doing so. I hope your study will please you when you get home. Some of the papers are so mixed up that I can make nothing of them. We were up to see Mrs McGillivray last Thursday. She is ill. Rev. Jms D. & family were through. If I had known he was there I would have staid at home. He went back on Saturday. Sarah came home on Friday. Raspberries are ripe. People are getting through with the hay. James Holmes was done last Thursday & I think Donald finished yesterday. One of his cows is still breaking into the grain. Duncan Chisholm was passing one day & saw a cow jumping up & down with John holding on to her horns and his father bending over her with a pair of scissors. He noticed that he had his spectacles on. He asked him what he was doing. "I am cutting the cow's eye-wiskers" said he "so that she will not jump the fence." It is very hot today, nearly as bad as the day we were married. We had no rain since you left. -With love to all the family.

Your loving wife Mary Ann<sup>46</sup>

It was during his time in East River that Maclean Sinclair became the editor of a Gaelic column in a local weekly newspaper, the *Pictou News*. The

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during the night. When he put his finger into it "to remove the cause of the disturbance," he ended up poking the fly in further, "and soon found out that it was a busy buzzing fly." He then visited Dr. Murray who flushed the fly out with a syringe and some water. "I was strongly attached to Dr. Murray. He was a man of ability and knowledge, and had a kind and friendly heart. He did good work in his day." See AMS, "A Troublesome Fly," *Eastern Chronicle* (16 Jan. 1917): 4.

<sup>46</sup> Mary Ann Sinclair to AMS, 1 Aug. 1885. My thanks to John Sinclair, grandson of AMS, for providing me with a transcript of this letter.

column, called “Cùil na Gàidhlig” (“The Gaelic Corner”), ran for just over five years, from December 1883 to at least January 1888 (the month of the latest extant issue of the *Pictou News* containing “Cùil na Gàidhlig”).<sup>47</sup> “Cùil na Gàidhlig” included in its columns a variety of material, most of it contributions, such as poetry, articles on history, proverbs, and letters. D. B. Blair also contributed to the column, as did other Gaels who sent their submissions in letters to Maclean Sinclair, who edited the column without remuneration: “The Gaelic readers in Pictou, Antigonishe, Cape Breton, and P. E. Island, who are patrons of the *News*, owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Sinclair, who has without any recompense regularly furnished them with interesting reading in their mother tongue.”<sup>48</sup>

Although he did not publish any other monographs during his years living in the East River area, Maclean Sinclair was involved in his collecting activities, as witnessed in Mary Ann’s letter, in addition to editing his Gaelic column in the *Pictou News*, and submitting articles to various periodicals in Canada, the United States, and Scotland [see Appendix B]. While in East River, Maclean Sinclair’s wife gave birth to two children, Charles Maclean Sinclair (1885), named after Maclean Sinclair’s uncle in Glen Bard, and John Maclean Sinclair (1888), named after his grandfather John Maclean. Also during this

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<sup>47</sup> See Part II, Chapter II, footnote #56 to #61. See also Appendix C: Items in “Cùil na Gàidhlig,” *Pictou News*.

<sup>48</sup> *Pictou News*, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/234, NSARM. D. B. Blair’s “Eachdraidh nan Gàidheal” (“History of the Highlanders”) began 30 Oct. 1885 and appeared in “Cùil na Gàidhlig” until 10 Dec. 1886.

period Maclean Sinclair's mother passed away at the age of seventy-seven (1887).

D. M. Sinclair indicates in the family history that D. B. Blair conducted her funeral service, which was all in Gaelic.<sup>49</sup> She was buried in Glen Bard Cemetery, not far from her mother and father's resting place. Her monument reads:

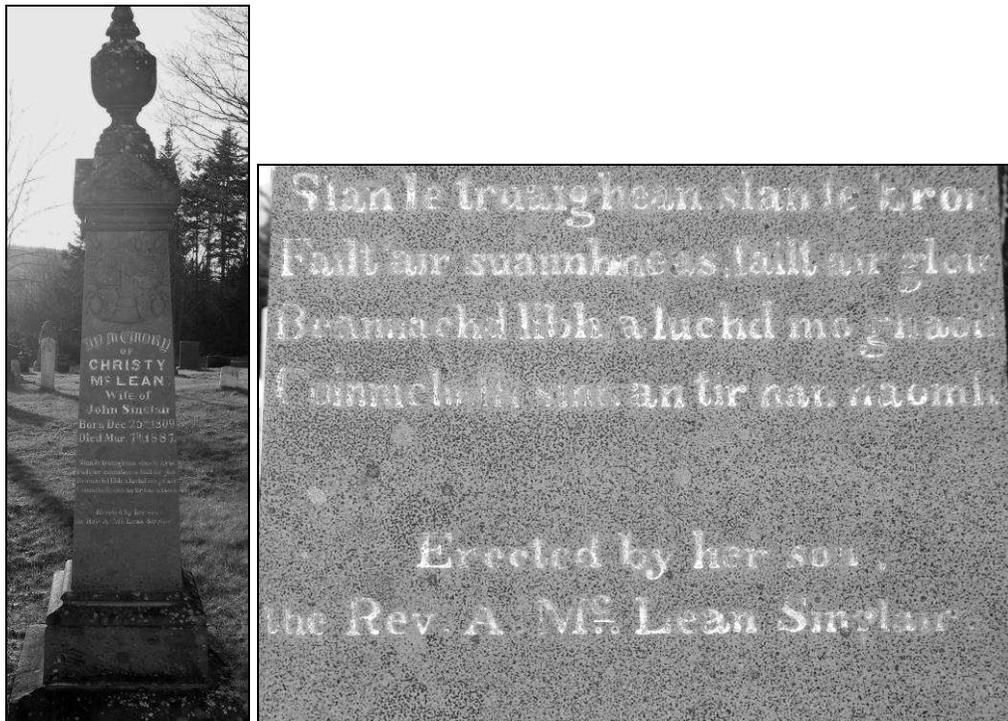


Figure 8: Tombstone of Christy Maclean<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 7.

<sup>50</sup> Photo taken April 2006.

In Memory of Christy M<sup>c</sup> Lean  
 Wife of John Sinclair  
 Born Dec 25<sup>th</sup>, 1809  
 Died Mar 7<sup>th</sup>, 1887.

*Slàn le truaighean slàn le bròn*  
*Fàilt' air suaimhneas, fàilt' air glòir*  
*Beannachd libh a luchd mo ghaoil*  
*Coinnichidh sinn an tìr nan naomh*

Erected by her son,  
 the Rev. A. M<sup>c</sup> Lean Sinclair

Farewell to miseries, farewell to sorrow  
 Welcome to peace, welcome to glory  
 Goodbye my beloved family  
 We will meet in the land of the saints

In 1888, Maclean Sinclair accepted an offer from the representatives of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Belfast, Prince Edward Island to become minister there. The Belfast area, located on the southeast part of PEI, was established as a Gaelic-speaking colony in 1803. Known as the Selkirk Settlement, the colony took shape largely through the efforts of Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk. Selkirk purchased the land in PEI, recruited settlers from the Scottish Highlands, and organized matters upon their arrival. The first wave of pioneers came chiefly from the Isle of Skye in three ships. The Selkirk settlers founded the Belfast area where they flourished, and by 1828 it had become a colony of almost 3,000 people.

It was to this largely Presbyterian, Gaelic-speaking community that Maclean Sinclair moved in May 1888. His wife and children did not join him until June. Mary Ann had given birth to their second child, John, in April, and as it was a difficult delivery, she had to remain in Springville to recuperate for another two months before seeing her husband and their new home, where they lived for another eighteen years. They had three more children while living in

Belfast: Christy (1891), George (1895), and Donald (1899).<sup>51</sup> Maclean Sinclair was adamant that his children be Gaelic speakers, and, considering his own activities in support of Gaelic language and culture, it is not surprising that he saw it incumbent upon himself to perpetuate the language. In the afterword of his 1902 book *Dàin agus Òrain le Alasdair Mac-Fhionghain*, he stated that he only spoke Gaelic with his children: "I like the language my mother taught me and I should like to see it kept in existence. I have never yet spoken a word of English to one of my children. They can speak as much English as they like to others; but when they talk to me they have to talk in Gaelic."<sup>52</sup> D. M. Sinclair later wrote that his father did not follow this rule so strictly in his later years:

This rule he did not adhere to rigidly during the last few years of his life, although when his son John would pay a visit from Providence, R. I. or when I came home from Dalhousie University, he would check carefully on our knowledge of Gaelic. "Dr. MacMechan," an old friend at Dalhousie, "can teach you English, but I want you to keep the Gaelic."<sup>53</sup>

Maclean Sinclair's oldest son, Charles, went to Providence, Rhode Island and trained as a mechanical engineer and eventually moved west to Washington, Oregon, and California, and moved to British Columbia to join the Royal Canadian Engineers during the First World War; he died in 1965 in California. John trained as a carpenter in Montague, PEI and moved to Providence, Rhode

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<sup>51</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 59.

<sup>52</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 47.

<sup>53</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 23.

Island in 1905; John married a girl from Nova Scotia and they had two children together; John died in Providence in 1977. Christy “the only member of the family who did not have the name, Maclean,”<sup>54</sup> remained in Nova Scotia, became a schoolteacher, married and had five children. Maclean Sinclair’s two youngest children, George and Donald (D. M.), were the main ones to keep up the family interest in Gaelic literature and history. George lived in Maclean Sinclair’s retirement house in Hopewell and maintained the library (“[. . .] he knew that library with the intimacy of one deeply devoted to the world so fully represented in its volumes.”<sup>55</sup>). George also compiled an index of the newspaper clippings in his father’s scrapbooks, and left much of the collection to the Public Archives of Nova Scotia on his death.<sup>56</sup> George married, but had no children; he died in 1952 and shares the tombstone of his mother and father in Glen Bard Cemetery.<sup>57</sup> Donald followed in his father’s footsteps and became a minister, similarly educated at Pictou Academy, Pine Hill, and Dalhousie. Donald also attended Edinburgh University from 1926 to 1928, where he did graduate work in Divinity while also studying Celtic under William J. Watson. Donald wrote a number of articles concerning his father’s work and Gaelic in Nova Scotia,<sup>58</sup> and donated

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<sup>54</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 31.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>56</sup> See Appendix D: Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM.

<sup>57</sup> See Figure 10: Tombstone of Alexander Maclean Sinclair.

<sup>58</sup> See Bibliography under Sinclair, Donald Maclean.

materials to the Nova Scotia Archives between 1966 and 1987. Donald married and had six children; he passed away in 1988 and is buried in Glen Bard.<sup>59</sup>

Maclean Sinclair's years on Prince Edward Island were to be his most productive. He published prolifically, a staggering seventeen books during his eighteen years in Belfast. Thirteen of these were volumes of Gaelic poetry; the other four books included three on clan history and one on the *Peoples and Languages of the World* (1894).<sup>60</sup> In 1888 and 1890 he published a three-part collection of Gaelic songs named after his home community of Glen Bard called *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a'-Bhaird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, published in Charlottetown, PEI. Beginning in 1890 Maclean Sinclair also embarked on a four-volume series of the works of *The Gaelic Bards*, and in 1895 he released a small book on the songs of Iain Lom MacDonald. From 1898-1900 Maclean Sinclair was especially engaged in material relating to the Maclean clan, including two volumes of Gaelic verse by Maclean poets and, what he considered to be his *magnum opus*, a history of the Macleans called *The Clan Gillean*. In 1901 he published *MacTalla nan Tùr* (The Echo of the Towers), which he intended to fill gaps in the *Gaelic Bards* series, and *Filidh na Coille* (The Poet of the Forest), which included a number of his own compositions. In 1902 Maclean Sinclair published his penultimate book, *Dàin agus Òrain, le Alasdair Mac-*

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<sup>59</sup> See Figure 1: Glen Bard Cemetery.

<sup>60</sup> See Appendix A: Published Books by AMS.

*Fhionghain* (Poetry and Songs by Alexander Mackinnon), in which Maclean Sinclair explains, as part of an afterword on “Publishing Gaelic Books,” some of his frustrations with Gaelic publishing, pointing out that his efforts were largely undertaken at his own expense. Maclean Sinclair’s last anthology of Gaelic verse was published in 1904, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875*. Maclean Sinclair retired two years later and returned to Nova Scotia in 1907.

### **The Gaelic Society of Canada**

Maclean Sinclair was a corresponding member of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, an important scholarly Gaelic association in Scotland, and contributed a number of articles to its *Transactions*. Maclean Sinclair was a member of a number of Scottish societies in North America, including the Gaelic Society of Montreal and the Gaelic Society of New York, and an honorary member of the North British Society of Halifax.<sup>61</sup> In 1907 he was made an honorary fellow of the Gaelic Society of Canada. The Gaelic Society of Canada, part of whose remit was to bestow honorary fellowships on individuals who attained distinction in the field of Gaelic scholarship, had been formed around the turn of the century under the statutes of the province of Ontario. The society was set up to promote and support intellectual achievement in Gaelic Studies:

It has long been felt by Celts, who have studied and become scholars in the language and literature of their people, that there was little or no

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<sup>61</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 21. See also *Clàrsach* (1928), xxiii.

recognition of such work by the Universities, outside of Germany, while the scholarship in the Celtic field attained to by many students, was of highest quality. To some extent, as an offset to this discrimination against Celtic, and as a proof that Gaelic scholarship is held in high esteem by the Gaelic people, the Fellowship was instituted. It is at once an encouragement to persevere, and a recognition of attainments, by the Gaelic people, and as such has a special value to the recipient. It is obvious that great care must be observed in conferring this honour, otherwise the object of its foundation would not be attained. Therefore, it is carefully safeguarded. The qualifications of nominees are presented in writing – in Gaelic – the Council takes advice and without its recommendation the Society cannot act.<sup>62</sup>

Interestingly, Maclean Sinclair was the only one of the recipients to be born and raised in (what would become in 1867) Canada. Besides Maclean Sinclair “of Prince Edward Island, originally from Nova Scotia,” the other three recipients were all born in Scotland and included William Mackenzie of Edinburgh, originally from Western Ross-shire, editor of *An Gaidheal*, a significant periodical founded in Toronto in July 1871 and later transferred to Scotland; Mackenzie was also instrumental in stirring up interest in the formation of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in 1871. Another recipient was Henry Whyte of Glasgow, originally of Argyll; he was better known by his penname “Fionn” under which he contributed prolifically poetry, translations, tales, work on piping tradition, etc. to newspapers and other periodicals. The final recipient was Alexander Fraser of Toronto, originally from Inverness, who conducted a Gaelic Department in the Saturday edition of the *Toronto Mail*, gave lectures on Gaelic at the University of Toronto’s Knox College, was an advocate

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<sup>62</sup> “Gaelic Scholarship Recognized,” *Celtic Monthly* 15.10 (July 1907): 181.

for a Celtic lectureship at the same university, and was the Provincial Archivist for Ontario.

Considering that this was an award given by New-World Gaels in recognition of their fellow Gaels, this award must have been particularly significant to Maclean Sinclair, since he often lamented the lack of interest that his fellow Gaels took in their own literature and history. Maclean Sinclair's tombstone carries the initials F.G.S.C. after his name, as well as the LL.D. abbreviation of his honorary doctor of laws from Dalhousie University from 1914. The initials F.G.S.C. were intended by the fellowship as an element of distinction and to encourage others: "The Society requires and expects (as an incentive to others), that on all appropriate occasions the Fellows will add to their names the initial letters of the title: F.G.S.C., – Fellow of the Gaelic Society of Canada."<sup>63</sup>

### **Retirement and Lectureship**

Maclean Sinclair had been offered a position as a Celtic lecturer at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish and Dalhousie University in Halifax in 1907, which was almost certainly a contributing factor to his return to Nova Scotia. Back in Nova Scotia, Maclean Sinclair settled for good in the community

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<sup>63</sup> "Gaelic Scholarship Recognized," *Celtic Monthly* 15.10 (July 1907): 181.

of Hopewell, Pictou County, not far from his first clerical charge on the East River and his wife's family, his former parishioners.

The choice of Hopewell was a convenient one for its proximity, not only to family and friends in the area, but also because it was located near the railway midway between Antigonish and Halifax. According to D. M. Sinclair, the family rented a house for three years until they built a new home for themselves in 1910 with the help of their second-oldest son John, who had trained to become a carpenter when the family lived in PEI.<sup>64</sup> Maclean Sinclair wrote, "Tuesday, July 12, 1910. We had dinner in the new house. Present were my wife and myself, Donald, George, and John Fraser, the carpenter who worked with John in building the house. Christy was not there. She took dinner at A. B. Dean's."<sup>65</sup> Maclean Sinclair had his own office in the house, which included his impressive library, remarked upon by a number of Gaelic scholars such as Alexander Mackenzie, editor of the *Celtic Magazine* (Inverness), who had visited Maclean Sinclair in his manse in Springville in 1879. In later years, after Maclean Sinclair passed away, his library was visited by Celtic scholars John Lorne Campbell and Charles Dunn. Maclean Sinclair's library was kept largely intact by his family until they donated the most important materials, the manuscripts and

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<sup>64</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 21.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 62.

correspondence, to the Public Archives of Nova Scotia;<sup>66</sup> many of the rare Gaelic books went to St. Francis Xavier University.<sup>67</sup>



**Figure 9: The House in Hopewell<sup>68</sup>**

Maclean Sinclair selected a site for his house within convenient walking distance of the railway. This allowed Maclean Sinclair to travel to St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie without much difficulty. Another significant feature of Hopewell, which undoubtedly contributed to its appeal in Maclean Sinclair's eyes, was its reputation as a strong Presbyterian community with a history of producing academics and clergymen: "The village of Hopewell, Pictou County, largely Presbyterian, was the original home of more than three hundred

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<sup>66</sup> See Appendix D: Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM.

<sup>67</sup> For a description of STFXUSC, see Maureen Williams, "Rare Books, Journals and Tracts: An Introduction to the Special Collection of Celtic Materials Held at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, NS," *Celtic Heritage* [Halifax, NS] 9.1 (Dec. 1994/Jan. 1995): 20 & 27. My thanks to James D. Cameron for providing me with a copy of this article.

<sup>68</sup> AMS's retirement home in Hopewell, Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Built in 1909/1910 by his son John with the help of John (Jack) Fraser of Eureka, NS (see "Some Family History," 21 & 62). Photo taken June 2003.

ministers as well as numerous educators and businessmen, many of whom became nationally known.”<sup>69</sup>

D. M. Sinclair explained in the family history that his father remained active in the church after retirement, and often substituted for ministers in local Presbyterian churches. He also was a member and sometime chairman of the local Board of District School Commissioners. Though he did not publish anymore books of his own after 1904, he did edit an English-language history of the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia, *The Story of the Kirk in Nova Scotia*, by Alexander Maclean, which appeared in 1911.<sup>70</sup> He also continued to contribute articles to local newspapers such as the *Antigonish Casket* and the *New Glasgow Eastern Chronicle*, as well as Scottish periodicals such as the *Celtic Review* and the *Celtic Monthly*.

Maclean Sinclair began lecturing in “Keltic Language and Literature” at St. Francis Xavier University in the autumn term of 1907, and at Dalhousie University in the spring term of 1908.<sup>71</sup> Maclean Sinclair continued lecturing at the two universities in alternating terms until about 1912, by which time he was seventy-two. In 1914 Dalhousie University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

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<sup>69</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 122.

<sup>70</sup> See Appendix A: Published Books by AMS.

<sup>71</sup> See Part II, Chapter I.

## The Honorary Degree

In January 1914, then President of Dalhousie University, A. Stanley MacKenzie, sent out letters to two individuals in search of references regarding Maclean Sinclair's nomination for an honorary degree. One was to John MacNaughton, professor of classics at McGill University in Montreal. MacNaughton was a native of Perthshire who had been educated at Aberdeen, Cambridge, and Edinburgh. MacKenzie sought an objective view of Maclean Sinclair's status among Gaelic scholars. MacKenzie wrote to MacNaughton on the suggestion of members of the university senate: "I know that he enjoys a relatively high position in this part of the world as a student of Gaelic, but no one here can speak accurately enough about his absolute standing among his fellow Gaelic students. It was suggested by some members of our Senate that you could give us a very good estimate of his standing [. . .]." <sup>72</sup>

MacKenzie had little luck in gaining any perspective on the matter from MacNaughton who replied that he had not "for many years done anything in the way of Celtic Studies or kept up any knowledge of the work that is being done in that department."<sup>73</sup> MacNaughton continued his letter by explaining that he could not form an opinion on Maclean Sinclair's work, and that he knew of no one in Canada who was interested in such matters: "And what is more I know

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<sup>72</sup> A. Stanley MacKenzie to John MacNaughton, 26 Jan. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

<sup>73</sup> John MacNaughton to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 28 Jan. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

nobody at all in Canada now who is interested in such studies and would be likely to be capable of any solid opinion in the matter."<sup>74</sup>

President MacKenzie sent another letter requesting a reference concerning Maclean Sinclair to Professor Donald MacKinnon, first holder of the Celtic Chair at Edinburgh University which was established in 1882. MacKenzie's letter to MacKinnon was very similar to that which he sent MacNaughton, though it is clear in MacKinnon's letter that MacKenzie knew he was writing to a "real" Gaelic scholar:

I should feel very much indebted if you could tell me something about the standing of the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair as a Celtic student. [. . .] The reason I wish to know is that the question has been raised here of granting him an honorary degree from this university. We know that he enjoys a very high reputation in this part of the world, but there are so few here qualified to form a judgment that it is difficult to know his proper standing among real Gaelic scholars.<sup>75</sup>

MacKenzie got the reply he needed from MacKinnon. From MacKinnon's role in Celtic Studies in Scotland and as long-time correspondent of Maclean Sinclair, he was ideally situated to be able to give an opinion on Maclean Sinclair's work. MacKinnon replied with a summary of Maclean Sinclair's accomplishments in regards to Gaelic scholarship and a clear recommendation for the bestowal of the

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<sup>74</sup> John MacNaughton to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 28 Jan. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

<sup>75</sup> A. Stanley MacKenzie to Donald MacKinnon, 26 Jan. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

honorary degree on Maclean Sinclair. MacKinnon also makes it clear that his opinion is representative of the academic Gaelic community of Scotland:

Dear Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to reply to your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> ult. inviting my opinion of the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair's attainments as a Gaelic Scholar.

I have not had the good fortune to meet Mr. Sinclair, but he has been a valued correspondent of mine for many years on Celtic matters, and I believe I have read all his principal writings on these subjects.

[. . .] From what I have said you will gather that I am of the clear conviction that Mr. Maclean Sinclair is well worthy of the highest honour which your Senators may be prepared to offer for eminence in the field of Gaelic Scholarship, and in this judgment I believe I voice the views of the few in Scotland who are entitled to express an opinion upon the subject.

I am yours faithfully,

Don. MacKinnon<sup>76</sup>

## Death

There is little information concerning Maclean Sinclair in the years following his honorary degree. Maclean Sinclair celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination in 1916, and in late 1916/early 1917, he published a series of retrospective articles and reminiscences, concerning his education and his trip to Scotland, in the New Glasgow *Eastern Chronicle*.<sup>77</sup> Maclean Sinclair

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<sup>76</sup> Donald MacKinnon to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 9 Feb. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC. Many of MacKinnon's other points from his letter are incorporated into the discussion on AMS's scholarship in Part II. For a complete transcription of the letter, see Appendix G: Donald MacKinnon's Letter of Reference.

<sup>77</sup> These are the latest periodical contributions by AMS that I have found. See in the *Eastern Chronicle*, "Beaver Meadow School" (26 Dec. 1916): 7, "The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's" (2 Jan. 1917): 1, "Fifty Years Ago" (9 Jan. 1917): 5, "A Trip to Scotland" (12 Jan. 1917): 2, and "A Troublesome Fly" (16 Jan. 1917): 4.

lived for another seven years and passed away in Hopewell on 14 February 1924, at the age of eighty-four.<sup>78</sup> His obituary in the *Casket* reported that he had been failing in health two years prior to his death: “During his residence in Hopewell, Dr. Sinclair identified himself with the life of the community and the Church, and was highly honored by his fellow citizens, his stately and venerable figure being a familiar sight in the village, until failing health two years ago kept him mostly in the retirement of his home.”<sup>79</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was highly respected in the Gaelic-speaking world, but nowhere more so than his home Gaelic community, the Canadian Maritime *Gàidhealtachd*: “His name was a household word throughout the Scottish communities of Eastern Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, both on account of his distinction as a Gaelic scholar and preacher, and his ardent interest in and attachment to Scottish literature and traditions.”<sup>80</sup> No fewer than two Gaelic poems were composed in his honour by local poets: one is an unpublished poem from 1889, “Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sincleir” (“A Salute to Maclean Sinclair”), by a “Cailean Macafi,” perhaps of Prince Edward Island;<sup>81</sup> the other poem,

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<sup>78</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 21.

<sup>79</sup> “Eminent Gaelic Scholar Dies” *Casket* (21 Feb. 1924): 6. See also “Hopewell,” *Eastern Chronicle* (22 Feb. 1924): 8, and “Eminent as a Gaelic Scholar,” *Morning Chronicle* (Halifax) (16 Feb. 1924): 3.

<sup>80</sup> “Eminent Gaelic Scholar Dies” *Casket* (21 Feb. 1924): 6.

<sup>81</sup> “Fàilte air Macgille-aeoin Sincleir” by “Cailein Macafi” 13 July 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/423, NSARM. MacPhee was almost certainly from Prince Edward Island judging from the envelope (MG1/2660/424) he sent AMS the poem in,

“Duanag Do’n Mhinisteir A. McL. Sinclair” (“A Short Poem to the Minister A. McL. Sinclair”), was published in 1892 in the Antigonish *Casket* by Maclean Sinclair’s long-time friend and informant, Alexander MacDonald, “Alasdair an Ridge,” of South River, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia.<sup>82</sup>

Maclean Sinclair said in a poem in 1897 that when he died he wanted to be buried in the cemetery close to his childhood home in Glen Bard:

<i>Nuair a thig am bàs, mar ’s dù.</i>	When death comes, as is proper.
<i>Is a dhùineas e mo shùil,</i>	And it closes my eyes,
<i>B’ e mo mhiann mo chur ’san ùir</i>	It would be my desire to be put in the earth
<i>’S an àit-amhlacaidh tha dlùth</i>	In the burying-place that is close
<i>Air taigh beag mo mhàthar.</i> <sup>83</sup>	To my mother’s little house.

Maclean Sinclair’s wish was granted upon his death in 1924, when he was interred in Glen Bard Cemetery between his mother, Christy Maclean, and his grandparents, John Maclean and Isabella Black,<sup>84</sup> not far from his “mother’s little house.”<sup>85</sup> The epitaph on his monument is a verse in Gaelic from the Bible which, according to D. M. Sinclair, also served as the basis for Maclean Sinclair’s

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which addressed simply to Eldon, Belfast. Had MacPhee come from elsewhere he would have almost certainly included the designation PEI. This poem has not been published to my knowledge.

<sup>82</sup> Alasdair an Ridge, “Duanag Do’n Mhinisteir A. McL. Sinclair,” *Casket* (25 Feb. 1892): 3. See also the manuscript version “Do an Mhinisteir Shinclair” in STFXUSC and online, i.e. Alexander MacDonald, Ridge, *A Collection of Gaelic Poetry* [manuscript] PB 1633 C612, STFXUSC, online: <<http://libmain.stfx.ca/etext/RidgMS1/Ridhome.html>>

<sup>83</sup> AMS, “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar,” *Filidh na Coille*, 170.

<sup>84</sup> See Figure 1: Glen Bard Cemetery.

<sup>85</sup> The house is still standing, though in disrepair. See Figure 7: “Taigh Beag Mo Mhàthar” (“My Mother’s Little House”).

funeral oration:<sup>86</sup> “Oir an déigh a ghinealach féin a riarachadh a réir toil Dhé, chaidil e.” (“For after he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell on sleep.”<sup>87</sup>) Maclean Sinclair was survived by his wife Mary Ann, who died eleven years later,<sup>88</sup> and his five children. His house in Hopewell remains in the hands of the family and Maclean Sinclair’s study is largely as he left it, and even though much has gone to the Public Archives of the province and to Special Collections at St. Francis Xavier University, much of Maclean Sinclair’s library and papers remain in the house.<sup>89</sup>



**Figure 10: Tombstone of Alexander Maclean Sinclair<sup>90</sup>**

<sup>86</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 21-22. No record of the funeral oration is extant.

<sup>87</sup> Acts 13:36, Authorized Version (King James).

<sup>88</sup> See her obituary in the *Eastern Chronicle* (17 Jan. 1935).

<sup>89</sup> My sincere appreciation to John Sinclair, son of DMS, for inviting me to the house and allowing me to see Maclean Sinclair’s study.

<sup>90</sup> Photo taken June 2001.

## PART II

### A MAN OF LETTERS

*Fàilte air MacIlleain Sinclair,  
Fear comhchruinneachadh a' ghlinne.  
Aon a tha buidheach dhìot mise,  
'S chan eil mi 'm ònrachd tha fiosam.*

*Fhuair mi do leabhar luach Gàidhlig,  
'S cho luath 's a dh'fhosgail mi 'm làimh e  
Dhùisg e mo thàlantàn bàrdachd  
'Bha greis mar theine air a smàladh*

*Chan iarr thu moladh o m' bheulsa;  
Chan eil idir agad feum air.  
Tha t' ainm 's do chliù 's do bheusan  
Feadh na rìoghachd farsaing féin-sgaoilt'.  
—Cailein Mac a' Phì\**

A Salute to Maclean Sinclair,  
The collector of the glen.  
I'm one who is thankful to you,  
And I'm not alone I know.

I got your worthy Gaelic book,  
And as quickly as I opened it in my hand  
It awakened my poetic talents,  
That were for a while like a smothered fire.

You haven't asked for praise from me;  
You don't at all need it.  
Your name, your fame, and your morals  
Throughout the broad kingdom precede you.  
—Colin MacPhee

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\* "Cailein Macafi" to AMS, 13 July 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/422, NSARM.

## Chapter I

### *Role in Celtic Studies*

The day has gone when any Keltic scholar, worthy of the name, would waste time trying to allow that Gaelic is closely allied to Hebrew, or that it is the parent speech of Latin and Greek. Gaelic, English, Latin, Greek, Russian, Persian, and Sanskrit are sister tongues, and constitute the Indo-Keltic family of languages.<sup>1</sup>

– A. Maclean Sinclair

Though Alexander Maclean Sinclair was a well-read man, interested in a great deal of subjects from theology and philosophy to physics and engineering – in this he was a typical nineteenth-century man of letters – it is his contribution to Gaelic literature and history for which he is remembered in academia. Maclean Sinclair was a major figure in the world of Gaelic publishing in the late nineteenth century. Between 1880 and 1904 he published twenty books, fifteen of which were volumes of Gaelic poetry, edited a Gaelic column in a local newspaper, and contributed to a variety of Celtic and Scottish journals, newspapers, and magazines in Scotland, Canada, and the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems,” *Scottish-American Journal* (27 Feb. 1889). My thanks to Michael Newton for providing me with a copy of this article.

Through periodical subscriptions and an active correspondence life, Maclean Sinclair was very familiar with the academic rhetoric of Celtic Studies, which offered a new comparative matrix for the study of all branches of the Celtic family of languages. He stated in a letter to the *Celtic Magazine* (Inverness) in 1887: "I have read with deep interest the articles on 'The Present State of Celtic Studies,' 'The Present State of Celtic Ethnology,' and 'Loan-Words in Gaelic.' Of course I have read the clan history with pleasure."<sup>2</sup> Even though Irish, Welsh, and Gaelic all were operating within the same political entity, Britain, in the nineteenth century, their historical affiliation had largely not been recognized and they had not been studied in conjunction. The nascent field of Celtic Studies thus offered a new and exciting intellectual vantage point.

As an inhabitant of the far eastern edge of the New World, in a region barely out of its colonial stage, it is perhaps somewhat surprising that Maclean Sinclair should be so influenced by intellectual trends and movements in the Old World. Though he went to college to study for the ministry, and was a native speaker of Gaelic and literate in the language, in the area of Celtic Studies he was almost completely self-taught. Nevertheless, throughout his long and productive career, he wrote informed contributions to current major and minor debates in the field, and published well-received editions and historical studies. As a lecturer of Celtic Studies in his retirement at St. Francis Xavier University

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<sup>2</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, "Correspondence: The Cup Song," *Celtic Magazine* 12.138 (Apr. 1887): 284.

and Dalhousie University, he was part of the growing interest in, and acceptance of, the field as an academic discipline in North America.

That Gaelic and Celtic studies were considered part and parcel of the same academic discipline is bound up in the comparative philological origins of Celtic Studies as a field. Maclean Sinclair was well aware of the philological arguments for the Celtic languages being part of the Indo-European family, as his 1894 treatise *The Peoples and Languages of the World*, and his manuscript "History of the Continental Kelts," suggest.<sup>3</sup> The latter is a 204-page manuscript which is largely a compilation of Maclean Sinclair's lecture notes from Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier Universities, and is divided into such topics as the "Classification of Languages," and "the Civilization of the Ancient Kelts."

The work of a few key linguists in the mid-nineteenth century played a significant role in the recognition of Celtic Studies as a legitimate academic pursuit, and contributed to the eventual introduction of courses, programs, and chairs of Celtic at a variety of universities in Europe and eventually North America. The establishment of Celtic programs in Scotland and Nova Scotia, as well as the other Celtic countries, was inextricably linked to the same cultural and nationalistic *zeitgeist* of the nineteenth century which underpinned the development of the field of comparative philology. As a man so centred in Scottish scholarship, and so well connected internationally, it is hardly surprising

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<sup>3</sup> See also AMS's articles "A Highlander Philologically Dissected" in *TGSI* 15 (1987-88): 55-58 and "The Letter P in Gaelic," *Casket* (22 Dec. 1892): 2.

that Alexander Maclean Sinclair should represent this phenomenon in his home country by taking up the torch for Gaelic and Celtic Studies at local universities.

As we have seen, after his retirement in 1907, Maclean Sinclair was employed at St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie University as “Lecturer on Keltic Language and Literature.” We shall also see in this chapter that Maclean Sinclair’s program at St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie University, as revealed in contemporary course calendars and his own lecture notes, was similar in structure to programs offered in Scotland, further implying his familiarity with the intellectual framework of Celtic Studies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

### **The Development of Celtic Studies**

Interest in Celtic Studies has its roots in the late seventeenth century in the work of Edward Lhuyd. In his *Archaeologia Britannica*, published in 1707, Lhuyd, an Oxford don and native Welsh speaker, was one of the first scholars to recognize the linguistic affinities between the Celtic languages. Indeed Lhuyd adopted the term “Celtic” – resurrected from the writings of Classical authors – to refer to a group of related languages whose connection had not since antiquity been recognized. In Classical times the connection between the Celtic-speaking groups in Britain and mainland Europe was largely recognized, even though the term for the “Celts” (Greek *Κελτοί* or Latin *Celtae*) was reserved for those on the continent. While native Irish and Scottish Gaelic scholars were aware of the

connection between these two branches of the Celtic-language family, Gaels and speakers of Welsh were not aware of the affinity between their languages, nor did they recognize their connection to the Celtic languages that during antiquity covered the best part of Europe. By the eighteenth century, the connections between the Celtic languages were beginning to be studied, and the term “Celtic,” as used to denote speakers of Irish, Manx, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Breton, and Cornish, and their cultures, is a modern one which post-dates the “discovery” of the academic field. The relationship between the Celtic languages and other European languages would not be drawn definitively until the mid-nineteenth century, however.

Meanwhile, the publication of James Macpherson’s *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language* (1760), *Fingal* (1762), *Temora* (1763), and the *Poems of Ossian* (1765) which was a compilation of the three previous publications in two volumes with an introduction by Dr. Hugh Blair, was significant in raising the profile, particularly of the Scottish Highlands, but also of the Celtic countries in general. Scottish Gaelic and its cousins by this time were widely regarded to be Celtic thanks to the work of Lhuyd and others. Translated from English into most of the major European languages, Macpherson’s *Ossian* enjoyed immense popularity in Europe and sparked a surge in interest in “things Celtic.” Macpherson deliberately misled the public in his Ossianic publications. He made the extraordinary claim that his works were translations of poetry

originating in the third century by Ossian, the legendary poet/hero of Gaelic mythology.

Though Macpherson's work came to be discredited as a forgery even in his own lifetime, and there was a certain amount of resultant fallout, especially a feeling of contempt towards Gaelic,<sup>4</sup> the reverberations of this popular publication were felt well into the nineteenth century with the European phenomenon of Ossianism, as well as the late-nineteenth-century Celtic Twilight literary movement. It has been argued by Christoph Alfred Dröge, for instance, that the reaction to Macpherson's *Ossian* in France contributed to "the literary rebirth of Brittany" ("*die literarische Wiedergeburt der Bretagne*").<sup>5</sup> It has since been determined that, while Macpherson did compose his "translations" himself, he did rely, at least in part, on a knowledge of genuine Gaelic ballads:

Macpherson was neither as honest as he claimed nor as inventive as his opponents implied. In *Fingal*, his most elaborate work, we can identify at

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<sup>4</sup> See Derick S. Thomson, "Bogus Gaelic Literature c.1750-c.1820," *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow*, 5 (1954), 173-88 and "'Ossian', Macpherson and the Gaelic World of the Eighteenth Century," *Aberdeen University Review* 40 (1963), 7-20.

<sup>5</sup> Christoph Alfred Dröge, "Napoleons Homer – Betrachtungen zur Ossianrezeption in Frankreich" *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 49-50 (1997): 118-29 ("Napoleon's Homer – Considerations on the Response to MacPherson's *Ossian* in France"). Dröge considers two aspects of Ossianism, "the Ossianism of Napoleon and the significance of French Ossianism to the literary rebirth of Brittany" ("*den Ossianismus Napoleons und die Bedeutung des französischen Ossianismus für die literarische Wiedergeburt der Bretagne.*"): 123. He also argues for "the rather limited responsibility of the response to *Ossian* for the phenomenon of 'romanticism'" ("*der recht begrenzten Zurechenbarkeit der Ossianrezeption zum Phänomen „Romantik“ [ . . . ]*"): 126.

least twelve passages, some of them fairly lengthy, in which he used genuine Gaelic ballad sources, sometimes specific versions.<sup>6</sup>

Like many Gaels, Maclean Sinclair was a great admirer of the work of Macpherson. Donald Meek noted in reference to the Gaels of Scotland, though it certainly applies to Maclean Sinclair, that “[f]or some Gaels, indeed, it was a matter of ‘faith and zeal’ to stand by *Ossian*, particularly after the Gaelic versions had been published in 1807. [. . .] It is very clear that ministers of the Presbyterian Church were much to the fore in championing the authenticity of *Ossian* [. . .].”<sup>7</sup> Maclean Sinclair’s opinion was that, “MacPherson’s *Ossian* [was] thoroughly Keltic in its ideas, sentiments and spirit. It is such a work as no man but a Highlander could have written. It is true that it has its defects; but it is also true that its defects are very insignificant in comparison with its merits.”<sup>8</sup> Maclean Sinclair felt that Macpherson’s work was a contribution to the cause of the promotion of the Gaelic language, and as such Maclean Sinclair was sympathetic. Macpherson had, after all, left money in his will for a Gaelic version to be produced, and the financial support for the production of Gaelic books was an

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<sup>6</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. “Macpherson, James.” For a discussion on this, see especially Derick Thomson, *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson’s ‘Ossian’* (Edinburgh: Published for the University of Aberdeen by Oliver and Boyd, 1952).

<sup>7</sup> Donald E. Meek, “The Sublime Gael: The Impact of Macpherson’s *Ossian* on Literary Creativity and Cultural Perception in Gaelic Scotland” in *The Reception of Ossian in Europe*, ed. Howard Gaskill (London: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), 40 & 52.

<sup>8</sup> AMS, “James MacPherson,” *Oban Times* (24 Aug. 1901), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/167, NSARM. See also AMS “James MacPherson,” *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901): 2, and *Presbyterian Witness* (12 Oct. 1901): 321.

important matter to Maclean Sinclair. Maclean Sinclair even thought that Macpherson did not compose his Ossianic poetry, but genuinely translated it from Gaelic originals: "That MacPherson composed the poems in English first, and then put them into Gaelic seems to me an untenable theory."<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately Maclean Sinclair's cultural sympathies obscured his impartiality in regard to the origins and merits of the Gaelic version of Macpherson's *Ossian*. It is clear that Maclean Sinclair believed Macpherson's claim that he had translated his poems from the Gaelic. In response to his sceptics' demands to produce the "originals," in 1807 a Gaelic version was published, which is, however, merely a translation into Gaelic of Macpherson's English compositions. Maclean Sinclair writes: "The grandest poetry in Gaelic is Ossian's. Macpherson's translation does not at all approach the original in vigor and sublimity."<sup>10</sup> However, basing his opinions on the Gaelic translation of Macpherson's *Ossian*, Maclean Sinclair thought that the Gaelic "originals" must be from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, showing that his acquaintance with Gaelic verse at least saved him from accepting *Ossian* as a third-century composition:

It seems to me that MacPherson's *Ossian* in Gaelic was written between 1500 and 1611 by some learned men who knew Gaelic, Latin and Greek, who were good poets, who were acquainted with the traditions about Fionn and the Fiantan, who paid attention to dates and genuine history.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> AMS, as quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 27.

<sup>10</sup> AMS, "The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems" *Scottish-American* (27 Feb. 1889).

<sup>11</sup> AMS, as quoted by DMS in "Some Family History," 27.

Macpherson's works engendered strong feelings of nationalism among many Scots as well as Irish, each claiming their own country to be the source of Macpherson's "translations." Maclean Sinclair thought that the Irish claim was absurd, though he was aware of the Irish origins of the Fiana, and his nationalist sympathies, due to his cultural ties to Scotland, are clear:

Some Irish writers held that Macpherson's poems were of Irish origin and that Macpherson deserved a good shillalaying for stealing them and affirming that they were of Scottish origin. It is quite true that Fionn or Fingal was an Irishman; it does not follow, however, that Macpherson's poems about him were composed by an Irishman. It would be just as reasonable to affirm that Milton's "Samson Agonistes" was originally composed by a Jew. Macpherson's Ossianic poems were undoubtedly composed in Scotland. They smell of the Heather all through.<sup>12</sup>

Maclean Sinclair did recognize the common Gaelic heritage between the two, however, and said in a humorous quip that "Irishmen are merely Highlanders who happened to be born in Ireland."<sup>13</sup>

While the work of Edward Lhuyd and James Macpherson did much to popularize the concept of "Celtic" in Western culture, it was not until the work of linguists in the nineteenth century that Celtic came to be regarded as a viable topic of scholarly inquiry. The study of the Celtic languages developed

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<sup>12</sup> AMS, "James MacPherson," *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901): 2, and *Presbyterian Witness* (12 Oct. 1901): 321.

<sup>13</sup> AMS, "Letter from the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair," *Casket* (1 Nov. 1900): 4.

essentially as an outgrowth of comparative philology, or historical linguistics.<sup>14</sup> This discipline, involved in examining the origin and definition of the Indo-European languages, was itself a fairly new field sparked by the growth of Sanskrit studies and the resultant realization of the shared linguistic heritage of many languages from India to Europe. Sir William Jones, a British judge in India, was one of the first people to draw the connections between these languages in a well-known address to the Asiatick Society of Calcutta in 1786, where he also posited that the Celtic languages were part of this family:

The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a strong affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source. [ . . . ] There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit*; and the old *Persian* might be added to the same family.<sup>15</sup>

Jones' supposition that Celtic might also be descended from a common source notwithstanding, the Indo-European origins of the Celtic languages was not readily accepted. The source of the Celtic languages was a topic of debate in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. For instance a popular contemporary theory, evident even into the early twentieth century, said that the

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<sup>14</sup> For a recent discussion on the history of the field of Celtic Studies see Dan Wiley, "Celtic studies, early history of the field" in *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* I, ed. John T. Koch (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2006): 384-87.

<sup>15</sup> William Jones, "Third Anniversary Discourse, 1786," *Asiatick Researches* 1 (1788): 415-31.

Celts ultimately came from Phoenicia.<sup>16</sup> Matthew Arnold, writing in 1867, neatly encapsulated the contemporary zeal for the search for origins and the growing awareness of the importance of the Celts in reconstructing a picture of the “original” people of Europe: “What the French call the *science des origines*, the science of origins, – a science which is at the bottom of all real knowledge of the actual world, and which is every day growing in interest and importance, – is very incomplete without a thorough critical account of the Celts, and their genius, language, and literature.”<sup>17</sup>

James Cowles Prichard, who has been called the father of ethnology and anthropology in Britain, and whose 1831 book on *The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations* Maclean Sinclair possessed,<sup>18</sup> was one of the first scholars to argue for the inclusion of the Celtic languages in the Indo-European family, though to Prichard, because of affinities he saw with the Semitic languages, the Celtic languages were a kind of “intermediate link” between Indo-European and Semitic.<sup>19</sup> Adolphe Pictet’s 1837 book *De l’affinité des langues celtiques avec le*

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<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, “Chapter 12: Who were the ‘Celts’ properly so-called?” in L. A. Waddell, *The Phoenician Origin of Britons, Scots & Anglo-Saxons* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1924).

<sup>17</sup> Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature and on Translating Homer* (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1883), 12-13.

<sup>18</sup> See AMS’s notebook in STFXUSC (PB1633S54). AMS also cites Prichard’s book in the back of his own *Peoples and Languages of the World*, 251.

<sup>19</sup> James Cowles Prichard, *The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations Proved by a Comparison of their Dialects with the Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and Teutonic Languages: Forming a Supplement*

*sanscrit* (On the Affinity of the Celtic Languages with Sanskrit), was another notable work from this period which tried to establish the Celtic languages as Indo-European, but whose “wide ranging phonological and morphological equations were hit and miss, to say the least, with the misses far outnumbering the hits.”<sup>20</sup> One of the major stumbling blocks in this period concerning classification of the Celtic languages as Indo-European had to do with the feature of initial consonant mutation, which was unique to Celtic. Franz Bopp was able to put this question to rest in his 1839 monograph, *Über die celtischen Sprachen* (About the Celtic Languages). Bopp pointed out that the characteristic Celtic feature of initial consonant mutation derived from nasal and vocalic auslaut in old case-endings of words. If a case-ending in a word was nasal, a following consonant was nasalized, if a word ended in a vowel, a following consonant was lenited.<sup>21</sup> Though each of Prichard’s, Pictet’s, and Bopp’s work had considerable problems, it must be remembered that the science of comparative linguistics was still in its infancy and their scholarship, despite faults, was significant in establishing the Celtic languages as Indo-European: “[...] the work of Prichard, Pictet and Bopp put an end to serious doubts about the Indo-European pedigree

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*to Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, ed. R. G. Latham (1831; rpt. London: Sherwood, Gilbert & Piper, 1857), 349.

<sup>20</sup> Kim McCone & Katharine Simms, eds. *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies* (Maynooth: Dept. of Old Irish, St. Patrick’s College, 1996), 10.

<sup>21</sup> Franz Bopp, *Die celtischen Sprachen* (Berlin: Dümmler, 1839), 206-16.

of the Celtic languages.”<sup>22</sup> The most significant publication to establish Celtic firmly as a legitimate academic pursuit came in 1853 with Johann Kaspar Zeuss’s study written in Latin, *Grammatica Celtica*. Much of what followed in the new field of Celtic was based on Zeuss’s work, for which he has come to be regarded as one of the most important founding fathers of Celtic Studies.<sup>23</sup>

### Anglo-Israelism

In addition to Maclean Sinclair’s book on *Peoples and Languages*, he wrote one other book in English that was, seemingly, not related specifically to Scotland, and which demonstrates his awareness in the events of his times.

*Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, Maclean Sinclair’s first book (he dated the text 1 December 1879), was a series of didactic essays that Maclean Sinclair published under the pseudonym A. Malachi.<sup>24</sup> Anglo-Israelism, sometimes known as British Israelism, has to do with the notion held by some Christians, usually of British descent, that they are the direct descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. This is a theory that had its origins in the 1700s, but which did not become an

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<sup>22</sup> McCone & Simms, eds. *Progress*, 11.

<sup>23</sup> For a recent reproduction of early linguistics texts important to the historiography of Celtic Studies, see Daniel R. Davis, *Celtic Linguistics 1700-1850* 1-8 (London: Routledge, 2000) and *Development of Celtic Linguistics 1850-1900* 1-6 (London: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>24</sup> AMS tells us that he published *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly* in *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*, 34. These letters, signed “A. M.” after each one, may have originally been published in a local newspaper and later compiled to form the small book.

organized movement until the latter half of the nineteenth century, largely as a result of the efforts of Edward Hine and Edward Bird. Their arguments were based on scriptural interpretation and a mangled rationalization of history.

Maclean Sinclair took Anglo-Israelism to task by highlighting the ridiculousness of their theories and the spuriousness of their reasoning. He divided the small book (forty-one pages) into twelve sections, or letters, in which he describes Edward Hines'<sup>25</sup> particular branch of Anglo-Israelism whose followers are called "Hinites" and delineates the nineteen points of their creed in his first letter: 1. The Hinites are the descendants of ten tribes of Israel. 2. In 720 BC the tribe of Dan left Israel in ships, landed in the north of Ireland and were called the Tuatha De Danann, they spoke Hebrew, and the northern Irish Protestants are their lineal descendants. 3. The tribe of Simeon came with Dan, went to the west of Scotland, gradually removed to Wales, and the Welsh are descended from them. 4. That the Saxons are the descendants of Isaac, or "Isaac's sons." 5. The tribe of Benjamin went to Normandy and then England with Norman the Conqueror in 1066, thus people of Anglo-Norman descent are true Israelites of the tribe of Benjamin. 6. "The Yankees are of the tribe of Manasseh." 7. The Celts of Ireland are "accursed Canaanites" and should be used as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." 8. In 580 BC Jeremiah and Baruch went to Tara in Ireland with a princess of the house of David named

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<sup>25</sup> See Edward Hine, *Forty-Seven Indications of the Anglo-Saxons with the Lost Tribe of Israel* (London, 1871).

Tephi. Eochaid, King of Ireland, married Tephi and adopted Judaism, Queen Victoria is their descendant, and thus “the line of David rules over Israel.” 9. Jeremiah brought the stone on which Jacob slept and this is the stone on which the monarchs of Britain are crowned. 10. Seven-eighths of the Bible are misunderstood by Christians. 11. The Bible is addressed to three classes of men, the Israelites, the Jews, and the Gentiles. 12. It is a waste of money to send missionaries to the Jews, “the wicked descendants of Judah and Levi.” 13. The Jews will return to their own land and build a temple and re-instate the laws of Moses. 14. Anglo-Israelites will also return to the Holy Land, two from every family. 15. In their return they will be under one commander-in-chief, with a company for every city and a captain for every company. 16. They “believe in the glory of the great pyramid, the glory of saving millions a year, the glory of long life, and twenty-four other glories of England.” 17. They believe that their “identity with Israel will be nationally established before the present Tory government of Britain shall go out of power, so some time before the end of 1881.” 18. The aboriginal inhabitants of wherever the Anglo-Israelites settle should, and will, die out. 19. They believe “with all Christian humility, that ten Englishmen, or true Israelites, can whip any day one hundred Gentiles, be they Highlanders, Irish Celts, or Cossacks.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> AMS [A. Malachi], *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly* (Truro, NS: Robert McConnell, Printer, 1880), 1-3.

In Maclean Sinclair's other letters he discusses the problems with the reasoning of the Anglo-Israelites; what he calls in his characteristically ironical manner, their "New Rules of Hermeneutics": "The way they came to know what he [Jeremiah] meant was by the application of a new law in hermeneutics. The law is this: 'When two things do not seem to agree in the prophecies, split the difference and you will arrive at the truth.'" <sup>27</sup> Maclean Sinclair continues in the rest of his letters by refuting the various arguments of the Hinites, especially in regards to the racial origins of the Anglo-Israelites and their rationalization of the origins of the Gaels as Canaanites, to which Maclean Sinclair took particular exception, as well as the origins of the Welsh, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Normans. He also discusses some of Hine's other fallacies under "Miscellaneous Matters," pointing out that, "Some Ignoramus has told Hine that the English language is derived from Hebrew and the Sanskrit."<sup>28</sup> Maclean Sinclair realizes his contention with the Hinites was like arguing with madmen, and, once again, points this out in typical satire: "But I must stop. To be refuting Hine's vagaries seems like proving that the moon is not made of green cheese. If any man thinks he is an Israelite let him think so. Nebuchadnezzar believed he was an ox."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> AMS, *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, 9.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

At first glance, Maclean Sinclair's book on the "Anglo-Israel Folly" stands out from among his other publications of Gaelic poetry and Highland history. Upon closer examination, however, one can see that much of Maclean Sinclair's argument against Hinism had to do largely with the Celts, and Hine's erroneous assertions of their origins. Maclean Sinclair's goal in publishing this treatise was to dismiss the claims of Edward Hine, claims that Maclean Sinclair found insulting to the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland, and which Maclean Sinclair felt the need to redress. Another factor in his production of the book may have been that Anglo-Israelism had found its way to Nova Scotia. It is surely no coincidence that in 1880, the same year that *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly* was published in Truro, Nova Scotia, a periodical was launched, also in Truro, under the title of the *Anglo-Israel Ensign*.<sup>30</sup> Maclean Sinclair was probably reacting to the rise in the movement in his region and wanted to warn his fellow Highlanders in his typically didactic way. It may also be that this publication was an opportunity to expound on the proud origins of the Highlanders as Celts, which he does in very nationalistic strains:

Highlanders attention! Let me speak a few words to those of you who have an itching after Hinism. [. . .] Don't you know you are Celts? You are neither Israelites, Canaanites, nor Saxons. Why do you wish to be Israelites? Are you ashamed of your race? If so it is because you are ignorant of its history. The Celts were the first race that entered Europe from western Asia. [. . .] As missionaries, travellers, writers, and statesmen we find men of Celtic blood occupy the highest positions. You

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<sup>30</sup> See the *Anglo-Israel Ensign* (Truro: J. Ross) [1880-188?], in NSARM, call no. AK B12 M68Q.

know that all the Macs and O's are Celts, whether born in the Lowlands of Scotland, the island of Cape Breton, or Timbuctoo. [. . .] Perhaps you have heard of Sir John A. Macdonald, the Premier of the Dominion, and skilful manager of the conservative party! He is a pure Celt. His able rival Alexander Mackenzie, the leader of the opposition, is also a Celt. Know too that Lord Lorne, young Mac Cailean Mor, the Governor General of this great Dominion, is a Celt.

As then you have no reason to be ashamed of your race, give up your nonsense. Blow no longer about your Israelitish origin. Stand by your true colors.

"Triumphant be the thistle still unfurled,  
Dear symbol wild! on freedom's hills it grows,  
Where Fingal stemmed the tyrants of the world,  
And Roman eagles found unconquered foes."

As Donald Turk was one day standing at the door before a big spruce stick his neighbor came along and said to him. "What are [you] going to make of that stick?" "I am going to make a pig trough of it," he answered, "and I am going to make it all out of my head." That is just the way in which Hine made his theory. I question, however, it is as useful as Donald's trough would be.<sup>31</sup>

Ultimately Maclean Sinclair's *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly* fits in rather well with his other publications. It is essentially an essay on race and language, and the origins of the Celts, especially Gaels, clothed in the literary raiment of a religious cautionary essay. Maclean Sinclair's subsequent monographs were all on topics, covering Gaelic poetry, Highland history, and race and language. Wherever possible in his articles and prefaces to his books, he took the opportunity to instruct his fellow Gaels on the merits of their own history and the significance of their place in the world, and how they should take more of an active interest in their own language and culture.

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<sup>31</sup> AMS, *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, 21-22.

### Philological Interests

Maclean Sinclair “manifested an early interest in the study of languages. There [were] many books on philology in his library.”<sup>32</sup> He was well aware of the development of the field of comparative philology, as books in his library indicate. His spelling of “Keltic” reflects a practice that was not uncommon at the time, and is presumably an indication of how he thought people should properly pronounce the word. He definitely knew the more common spelling of “Celtic,” and used it in *Clàrsach na Coille* in 1881. Though Celtic appears only as a loan-word in the Celtic languages, Maclean Sinclair, as a literate Gaelic speaker, was aware that the *c* in Gaelic orthography is always pronounced like a *k* in English orthography, and it is apparent from his lecture notes that Maclean Sinclair was also aware of the use of the word “Celtic” among the Greeks of Massalia, who used *Κελτοι* to refer to their Gaulish neighbours: “The Greeks of Massilia applied the collective name *Keltoi*, or Kelts, to the tribes that lived north of them, and the name *Keltike*, or Kelt-land, to the country occupied by these tribes.”<sup>33</sup> It is conceivable that Maclean Sinclair adopted the usage from Prichard, whose work on linguistics he possessed, although he disagreed with Prichard’s notion that Celtic occupies an intermediate position between Indo-European and Semitic. Maclean Sinclair was conscious of the fact that Prichard’s

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<sup>32</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 28.

<sup>33</sup> AMS, “History of the Continental Kelts” (unpublished manuscript), 13; pagination is inconsistent, if present at all, STFXUSC.

ideas on this had been superseded by the works of linguists such as Bopp and Zeuss, and he acknowledges both, as well as Prichard, at the end of his book *Peoples and Languages of the World* in a section entitled “The Practical Value of the Science of Language,”<sup>34</sup> and elsewhere says of Zeuss: “The greatest of all works on Gaelic grammar is Zeuss’ *Grammatica Keltica*. It is a large work of 1,115 pages, and is in Latin.”<sup>35</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s use of the term “Indo-Keltic,” which he employed in his book, is also interesting to note.<sup>36</sup> This term also shows up in his later manuscript lecture notes which he, in part, adapted from his book. The term “Indoeuropean,” in reference to the family of languages descended from William Jones’ posited “common source,” was first proposed in 1813 by Thomas Young, an English physician and Egyptologist.<sup>37</sup> Though it eventually came to be the practice of most German-speaking philologists to use the term *indogermanisch* in reference to the same group, the earliest published reference to such a term was apparently Danish-French geographer Conrad Malte-Brun, who first used the

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<sup>34</sup> A. Maclean Sinclair, *The Peoples and Languages of the World* (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1894), 251.

<sup>35</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems” *Scottish-American* (27 Feb. 1889).

<sup>36</sup> AMS also uses the term Indo-Keltic in his brief article “A Highlander Philologically Dissected” in *TGSI* 15 (1887-88): 55-58.

<sup>37</sup> F. R. Shapiro, “On the Origin of the Term ‘Indo-Germanic,’” *Historiographia Linguistica* 8 (1981): 165.

term *indo-germanique*, as early as 1810.<sup>38</sup> While Franz Bopp employed the term *indoeuropäisch*, it was his student August Friedrich Pott who popularized the term *indogermanisch*. The coining of the word was an attempt to describe the range of related languages found within the particular geographical extents of Western Europe and India, and, particularly after Pott defined his use of *indogermanisch* to denote the easternmost and westernmost branches of the Indo-European continuum, a debate resulted over whether it should more properly be called “Indo-Celtic” or even “Tocharo-Celtic.” Pott himself even suggested the term *indokeltisch* in 1840.<sup>39</sup> Maclean Sinclair’s use of the term “Indo-Keltic,” shows that he was certainly aware of the debate on nomenclature. His choice of “Indo-Keltic,” like his spelling of “Keltic,” is an indication of his self-confidence in taking an intellectual position in academic debate. Obviously the term Indo-Keltic, arguably more correct since Celtic was, in fact, the westernmost branch of the Indo-European family of languages, also had a special appeal to Maclean Sinclair since it included a reference to his own language group and demonstrated its importance to the field of philology. This is particularly evident in a public lecture given by Maclean Sinclair on the topic. According to a newspaper account which covered the lecture:

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<sup>38</sup> Shapiro, “On the Origin of the Term ‘Indo-Germanic,’” 166.

<sup>39</sup> A. F. Pott, “Indogermanischer Sprachstamm,” *Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, ed. Ersch & Gruber, 18.2 (1840).

Quite a number attended the lecture in St. James' hall last evening by Rev. Mr. McLean Sinclair. [...] The subject was on the original unity of the Indo Keltic languages. [...] The union of these has been called by some the Indo Japhetic, by others the Indo European, but the lecturer preferred the name Indo Keltic as it unites the Keltic spoken in the most western part of Europe with the Indo language in the east.<sup>40</sup>

### **Ethnological Interests**

Maclean Sinclair's interests in the various races and their classifications are evident in a number of his writings which demonstrate how he was influenced by the intellectual discourse of his era. The preoccupation with race in the nineteenth century can be seen in essentialist definitions of ethnic groups based, for instance, on skin colour and hair type – the common view was that the human race could be ultimately divided into three racial groups, Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid;<sup>41</sup> or as Maclean Sinclair put it "*na Cocàsaich, na Mongolaich, agus na Sudànaich.*"<sup>42</sup> ("the Causasians, the Mongolians, and the Sudanese.") In accordance with this, the study of craniometry and physiognomy were popular nineteenth-century anthropological and ethnological pseudo-sciences, the former involving the categorization of race through the examination of cranial size and profile, and the latter involving the study of facial characteristics and body type. The related study of phrenology, the

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<sup>40</sup> "The Indo-Keltic Languages," newspaper clipping (n.p., n.d.), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/542/217, NSARM.

<sup>41</sup> William A. Haviland, *Anthropology* 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Fort Worth: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1989), 255.

<sup>42</sup> AMS, "Sloigh an t-Saoghail" ["Peoples of the World"], *Mac-Talla* (14 Mar. 1902): 196.

determination of character and personality traits based on skull shape, also contributed to the view that races had defining group-personality traits, including differences in moral character and intelligence.<sup>43</sup> George Combe of Scotland was the leading popularizer of phrenology in Britain. His book, the *Constitution of Man*, was largely “responsible for the seepage of phrenology into every chink and cranny of public opinion.”<sup>44</sup>

Alexander Maclean Sinclair’s familiarity with contemporary intellectual discourse concerning racial typology is apparent in his *Peoples and Languages of the Worlds*; a book which was surely influenced by his own reading of contemporary archaeologist A. H. Sayce’s book *The Principles of Comparative Philology* (1874), which has as much to do with ethnography as it does with linguistics. Maclean Sinclair “states that on June 15, 1887, while on board the train between Winnipeg and Ottawa, he finished *The Principles of Comparative Philology* – A. H. Sayce.”<sup>45</sup> In his own book on the ethnographic and linguistic division of man, Maclean Sinclair states that, “[a]mong the physical characteristics to be considered are the color of the skin, the nature of the hair,

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<sup>43</sup> See, for instance Johann Gaspar Spurzheim, *Phrenology in Connexion with the Study of Physiognomy* 3<sup>rd</sup> American ed. (Boston: Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1836). Spurzheim, along with his colleague Franz Joseph Gall, were the originators of phrenology around the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

<sup>44</sup> Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 135. See also George Combe, *Essay on the Constitution of Man, and Its Relations to External Objects* (1827; 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Edinburgh: Maclachlan, Stewart & Co., 1847).

<sup>45</sup> DMS, “Some Family History,” 28.

the presence of beard, the shape of the skull, the form of the face, and the average stature.”<sup>46</sup> Maclean Sinclair devoted a paragraph to the definition of craniometry, though he does not call it this. The organization of the book is in keeping with the contemporary views of the division of humanity. He divided the human family into three “primary varieties” and described the skin colour, facial shape, and hair type of each:

The Whites have a fair, dark-white, or brownish-white skin, soft, straight or wavy hair, a full beard, a thin prominent nose, and vertical jaws. The Yellows have a yellowish or brownish skin, straight coarse black hair, little or no beard, and prominent cheekbones. The Blacks have a black or brownish skin, woolly or frizzly hair, little or no beard, full lips, and prognathous jaws.<sup>47</sup>

Maclean Sinclair further divided humans into “secondary varieties,” which he used as the primary divisions in the organization of his book: “the Aryo-Hamitic, the Basko-American, the Indo-Australian, and the Negro-Papuan.” His description of “The Negroes Proper,” under the African Blacks of his Negro-Papuan Division,<sup>48</sup> is representative of his reliance on secondary sources which

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<sup>46</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 13.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 16. See also his Gaelic articles in *Mac-Talla*, for example, “Sloigh an t-Saoghail” (14 Mar. 1902): 196, “Na Sudanaich” (28 Mar. 1902): 204, and “Nigearan nan Eileanan” (25 Apr. 1902): 221 (“Peoples of the World,” “The Sudanese,” and “The Negroes of the Islands”).

<sup>48</sup> See also AMS’s Gaelic article on the “Negroes of the Islands” (“Nigearan nan Eileanan,” *Mac-Talla* (25 Apr. 1902): 221), in which he discusses three main groups “[. . .] na Papùach ’s na Melanìsich, na h-Astràlaich, is na h-Eilìnich Dhubha. Tha na Papùach ’s na Melanìsich gle choltach ri chéile; cha ’n fheil annta ach da mheur as an aon chraoibh.” (“the Papuans and the Melanesians, the Australians, and the Black Islanders. The Papuans and the Melanesians are very alike; they are only two branches of the same tree.”)

must surely have been in his library. Again, the contemporary preoccupation with racial distinction is evident in his description of skull shape, hair type, the ability to grow a beard, skin colour, and even skin smell:

They have woolly hair, narrow skulls, full black eyes, a short flat nose, with dilated nostrils, projecting jaws, and thick, out-turned lips. As a general rule they have very little hair on the face. Some of them, however, may be seen with a beard whiskers, and moustache. Their skulls are extremely thick, whilst their arms are unusually long. There is a strong, unpleasant odor of their skin.<sup>49</sup>

### **On the Origins of Man**

Maclean Sinclair's emphasis on the original unity of the human race ("The various peoples of the world had a common origin"), stemmed from his belief in the Bible as the ultimate authority in all matters, including the ultimate origins of man: "But the original unity of mankind is placed beyond all doubt by the general teachings and positive declarations of the Bible."<sup>50</sup> Nowhere is this more evident than in his discussion on the origin of language. He first delineates contemporary theories concerning the topic, for which his disdain is obvious:

Various theories have been propounded to account for the origin of language. According to one the first sounds used were merely imitations of certain sounds in nature; according to another they were involuntary interjections; whilst according to a third they were the natural ringings of a mental instinct. The first of these theories has been termed the bow-wow theory, the second the pooh-pooh theory, and the third the ding-dong theory. They are all utterly unsatisfactory.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 154.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 171-72.

Maclean Sinclair then goes on to expound on a more satisfactory explanation on the origin of language, i.e. from the Bible:

The Bible represents Adam and Eve as conversing with one another from the moment in which they first met. It does not make known to us, however, how they came into possession of their language. God, having given them the power of speaking, may have guided them in forming their words in some such mysterious manner as that by which He afterwards guided the prophets and apostles to use the very words and expressions which He destined them to use; or, He may have created them with a language. That the language in which Adam and Eve conversed in the Garden of Eden was not made by them, but given them in some way or other by their Creator, may be regarded as fact.<sup>52</sup>

As a confirmed creationist, Maclean Sinclair was not impressed with Darwin's ideas in *On the Origin of Species* and the *Descent of Man*, published in 1859 and 1871 respectively. Maclean Sinclair said about Darwin elsewhere, in reference to the Highlanders who settled in Nova Scotia, "they knew far more about their ancestors than Darwin did about his."<sup>53</sup> He was equally mocking in another statement: "Infidels rejoice in tracing themselves back to nasty monkeys that lived before the days of the first man who was created in the image of God, and they deserve credit for tracing themselves back to their forefathers."<sup>54</sup>

Darwin's theories were not accepted very readily by the church, and subsequent scholars relying on Darwin's ideas as a foundation for their own, sometimes

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<sup>52</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 172.

<sup>53</sup> AMS, "Passing Away," *Casket* (19 May 1898): 4.

<sup>54</sup> AMS, "Know Thyself," *Eastern Chronicle* (3 Aug. 1909): 3.

found themselves without venues to publish their ideas. Apparently Sayce's *Principles of Comparative Philology* was considered "safe" by some of the more religious publishing houses, but for Maclean Sinclair, Sayce was not conservative enough. This is indicated in a letter Maclean Sinclair received from a contact in the Education Office of the government of Nova Scotia, to whom Maclean Sinclair had sent his recently published *Peoples and Languages of the World*. The writer very subtly indicates that Maclean Sinclair's work may be too conservative since scholars such as Sayce are considered "safe" by some religious publishing houses, and implies that Maclean Sinclair is even more conservative than they are:

Rev. and Dear Sir:

I have to thank you for your latest, interesting and handsome publication: *Peoples and Languages of the World*. I have had very much pleasure in bringing it to the attention of the Book Committee of the Legislative Library who immediately ordered it. I hope this is but the beginning of your work which also to a very great extent bears upon some of our theological theories, and is therefore very compatible with your profession. [. . .] I see that your interpretation of the ethnology and geography of Genesis and the other Books alluded to (of the Old Testament) is not altogether coincident with those of Sayce, Budge, Winchell and others who are considered to be pretty safe by some of our religious publishing houses. Conservatism is undoubtedly the safest course in all partially speculative work. I hope your little handbook may have a wide circulation and turn the attention of many to employ their leisure hours in a manner which may be profitable to themselves and the world.

Yours very truly,  
A. H. MacKay<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> A. H. MacKay to AMS, 27 Oct. 1894, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/153, NSARM.

Maclean Sinclair even composed a satirical story in Gaelic entitled “Stuth na Beatha: no té dhen na sgeulachdan ùra” (“The Stuff of Life: or one of the new tales”), mocking the ideas of evolution by placing them in a “creation of the world” tale along the lines of the Old Testament:

*Nuair a bha 'n saoghal òg bha stuth na beatha 'na laighe gu socrach sàmhach air grunn a' chuain. Bha e air a dhèanamh a suas de pholl buidhe, de chrìomagan mìne de chlaich-theine, agus de bhrìgh beatha. Bhiodh an doinionn 'ga ghluasad gu garbh, 'ga bhrisdeadh às a chèile, agus 'ga shuaineadh a' suas na bhùill bheaga, chruinne. Bhiodh na crìtheannan-talmhainn, cuideachd, a' toirt chrathaidhean doirbhe air, agus mar seo a' cuideachadh na doinionn gu brìgh na beatha a chur air ghluasad ann. Leis gach crathadh a bha na bùill bheaga a bha dlùth don chladach a faotuin, agus le bhith a sìor sgailceadh a chèile, bha brìgh na beatha, air a neartachadh cho mòr annta is gun d' fhàs iad 'nan iasgan crìona.<sup>56</sup>*

When the world was young, Bioplasm was resting silently, peacefully at the bottom of the ocean. It consisted of yellow mud, small bits of flint, and the germ of life. The storms moved it violently, breaking it asunder and rolling it into small balls. The earthquakes also gave it some hard shakings and thus helped the storms to move the germ of life in it. With all the tossings that the little balls that were near the shore received, and by their continual striking against each other, the germ of life was so developed in them that they became minute fishes.<sup>57</sup>

The story continues with a description of how the fish were tossed ashore by a storm and eventually developed into insects and land animals. Maclean Sinclair has toads consciously choosing their evolutionary path. They “were exceedingly

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<sup>56</sup> AMS, “Stuth na Beatha,” *Mac-Talla* (23 May 1902): 233. Also published elsewhere (newspaper & date unknown), and translated by “M. L.” (only the initials are given) into English as “Bioplasm: Or, One of the New Tales (From the Gaelic of A. M. S. in *MacTalla*),” for another newspaper (unknown). These are in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/159-60, NSARM.

<sup>57</sup> From a newspaper (title unknown) article entitled “Bioplasm: Or, One of the New Tales (From the Gaelic of A. M. S. in *MacTalla*),” and translated by “M. L.” Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/159-60, NSARM.

smart and cute. They practised all possible schemes to produce a new breed and grow big.”<sup>58</sup> (“*anabarrach tapaidh agus teoma. Chleachd iad gach innleachd a bha ’nan comas gu sliochd ùr a dhèanamh agus gu fàs mór.*”<sup>59</sup>) The toads became apes who also took evolution into their own hands by chopping off their tails and applying ointments to remove fur. The law of natural selection is in essence acting the part of God: “The law of natural choice had compassion on them and helped them. The young apes then began to come to the world just as the parents saw fit. Nobody on the face of the earth knows how the law of natural choice affected that; but it did it.”<sup>60</sup> (“*Ghabh lagh an taghaidh nàdarra truas riutha agus chuidich e iad. Thòisich na h-apannan òga an sin air tighinn a-staigh don t-saoghal dìreach mar a chitheadh am pàrantan iomchuidh. Chan eil fios an diugh aig duine ’tha air uachdar an t-saoghail ciamar a rinn lagh an taghaidh an nì sin; ach rinn e e.*”<sup>61</sup>) The ultimate stage in evolution of Maclean Sinclair’s creation tale of evolutionary man was in the development of language, which arose from the ape’s ability to mimic sounds:

*Bha mòran de dh’abhacas anns na h-apannan neo-earballach, agus biodh iad glé thrice a’ magadh air na h-eòin ’s air na beathaichean ceithir-chasach.  
Dh’ionnsaich iad mar sin gog bho’n choileach, hù-hù bho’n chaillich oidhche, mù*

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<sup>58</sup> “Bioplasm: Or, One of the New Tales (From the Gaelic of A. M. S. in *MacTalla.*),” and translated by “M. L.” Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/159-60, NSARM.

<sup>59</sup> AMS, “Stuth na Beatha,” *Mac-Talla* (23 May 1902): 233.

<sup>60</sup> “Bioplasm: Or, One of the New Tales (From the Gaelic of A. M. S. in *MacTalla.*),” and translated by “M. L.” Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/159-60, NSARM.

<sup>61</sup> AMS, “Stuth na Beatha,” 233.

*bho'n mhàrt, bó bho'n tarbh, mè bho'n chaora, dur bho'n fheoraig, agus rì-rò bho'n chat. Thòisich iad fhéin air dèanamh fhacal ùra, agus ann an ùine glé ghoirid, bhruineadh iad siùbhlach gu leòir. Bha iad a-nis 'nan daoine, agus làn ullamh gu tòiseachadh air an t-saoghal a thoirt a chum an t-suidheachadh thaitnich anns a bheil e an diugh.*

The tailless apes were great mimics, and they were frequently imitating the birds and the four-footed animals. In this way they learned goc from the rooster, hoo-hoo from the owl, moo from the cow, bo from the bull, ma-a from the sheep, dur-r-r from the squirrel, and purr-purr from the cat. They themselves began to make new words, and in a short enough time they could speak glibly enough. They were now men and fully prepared to begin to bring the world to the desirable condition in which it is today.<sup>62</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was of the opinion that even without the Bible as a source for the origins of mankind, history and ethnology would ultimately trace man's origins to Western Asia, and that it was there that mankind spread from the seed of Noah after the flood waters receded. He shared the contemporary view of the hierarchical division of mankind. To Maclean Sinclair, "the purest and most ennobling religion" among the early civilizations in the east was that of Judea.<sup>63</sup> He argued that the further man strayed from the West Asian heartland, the more he declined:

We also meet the highest type of human race in Western Asia. The farther people wandered away from that region the more degraded they became. We would never think of comparing the Negroes to the South, the Chinese to the East, the Lapps to the North, or even the Basques to the West, with

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<sup>62</sup> "Bioplasm: Or, One of the New Tales (From the Gaelic of A. M. S. in *MacTalla.*)," and translated by "M. L." Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/159-60, NSARM.

<sup>63</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 12.

the Jews, Persians, and Armenians in physical beauty and intellectual vigor.<sup>64</sup>

Maclean Sinclair claimed that “[t]he purest Kelts of the present day are the Irish, the Scottish Highlanders, the inhabitants of the Isle of Man, the Gallowegians, the Kymry or the Welsh, the people of Cornwall, and the Bretons of France.”<sup>65</sup> His inclusion of the Cornish as one of the pure stock of “Kelts” seemingly supports the argument that he viewed culture as secondary to, and derivative of, a biological distinction, or race. Further to this, Maclean Sinclair stated, “[i]n using language as a means of classifying peoples it must be borne in mind that the identity of speech does not prove identity of origin. The inhabitants of Cornwall speak English, but they are not Anglo-Saxon.”<sup>66</sup> However, in the very next paragraph he contradicts himself with the view that language was a good indicator of stock: “[. . .] the evidence of language is of the very highest ethnological value. As a general rule the language of a people is a fairly certain indication of the stock from which they have sprung.”<sup>67</sup> Essentially what Maclean Sinclair was declaring was that the Cornish were Celts even though they no longer spoke a Celtic language, and that all Gaels were Celtic because they spoke a Celtic language, forgetting the strong Scandinavian element

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<sup>64</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 12-13.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

to the Western Isles for instance. Maclean Sinclair's bias reveals his position as a speaker of a minority language. By asserting that a people who had already lost their language were still Celtic, and, therefore, not English (Anglo-Saxon), he was stating that, though his own people might be declining in the number of native speakers, they were also still Celtic, and, therefore, different from the dominant culture. This notion implies a certain belief on Maclean Sinclair's part that there is a "racial essence" to culture that is inherited biologically.

Maclean Sinclair considered tradition, culture, and a connection to the past, as of utmost importance to his people; this was a prime motivating factor behind his publication and preservation of Gaelic literature and history, which, he often pointed out, was at his own expense. He certainly believed in a connection between race and culture: "Although I am a Canadian by birth, I am a Highlander by blood, and feel under obligation to do all I can for the sake of the Highlanders and their literature."<sup>68</sup> It is clear in *Peoples and Languages of the World* that Maclean Sinclair sought a global perspective for his own people with whose history, language, and literature, he was so pre-occupied, and this undoubtedly informed his decision to produce the book: "If a person is to have a clear and correct view of the ethnology and history of his own nation, it is

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<sup>68</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 47.

necessary for him to have some acquaintance with the ethnology and history of other nations.”<sup>69</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s book *Peoples and Languages of the World* does not seem to have been all that well received in his own day. It was too small a book to cover such a broad scope, 254 pages, 155 x 115 mm in size. It was overtly constrained by his own religious orthodoxy, and he did not have access to the sources needed to cover such a huge topic appropriately. An illustrative example of the perception of Maclean Sinclair’s “little book” by his contemporaries is from long-time correspondent, Donald MacKinnon, first holder of the Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University. Maclean Sinclair had apparently sent MacKinnon a copy of the book in hopes that MacKinnon would write a review of it for the *Scotsman* newspaper of Edinburgh. MacKinnon politely declines by claiming that it was not within his particular area of specialty, at the same time implying that neither was it Maclean Sinclair’s:

I have to thank you cordially for your gift of *The Peoples and Languages of the World* which I received [. . .] a few days ago. I much wish that the *Scotsman* would ask me to notice the book, but being written in English & dealing with a subject only in a very small degree Celtic, it is not at all likely that such notice will be written by an outsider.<sup>70</sup>

MacKinnon does not seem impressed with Maclean Sinclair’s book, though he says this very subtly by complimenting Maclean Sinclair’s work ethic, and

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<sup>69</sup> AMS, *Peoples*, 13.

<sup>70</sup> Don MacKinnon to AMS, 14 Oct. 1894, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/26, NSARM.

urging Maclean Sinclair to return to producing Gaelic books, which MacKinnon found so helpful in his own lexical work:

I shall have an early opportunity of bringing the book under the notice of my students. The subject is so very wide & has been treated [. . .] from so many different aspects in so many languages of recent years that the surprising thing is that you with all your congregational work & without libraries other than your own could manage to compass it all so successfully. You must be a hard & systematic worker. I hope you will turn to Gaelic soon again & that we shall have another vol. soon from your hand. I have been myself for many years collecting material to supplement our grammatical & lexical treatises. Whether I shall ever be able to print I am doubtful. For the lexical part, especially of my inquiries, I have found your volumes a very great value. With kind regard & wishing to hear from you as often as convenient for you.

I am yours faithfully

Don: Mackinnon<sup>71</sup>

### **Imperialism**

Maclean Sinclair believed in the cultural, and indeed racial, distinctiveness of the ethnic group to which he belonged, but did not see the place of the Gaels, or the Celts at large, as conflicting with the interests of the British Empire. One might say that Maclean Sinclair was an “imperial nationalist”; he saw no contradiction in terms of the promotion of his native culture within the larger state. He proudly saw himself as a Canadian Gael who was a subject in the British Empire.

Insight into Maclean Sinclair’s support for the British Empire comes from a letter from his eldest son Charles. Charles had moved to Provincetown,

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<sup>71</sup> Don MacKinnon to AMS, 14 Oct. 1894, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/26, NSARM.

Massachusetts, for work as an electrical engineer. Apparently he had been on the job for less than a month when he received a letter from his father reprimanding him for working on Sundays. Charles responded angrily with words that would have surely caught his father's attention. He defends himself for having to work on Sundays, and lashes back at Maclean Sinclair for saying that the United States was "full of greed and infidelity." Charles certainly saw a contradiction in his father's support for the British Empire, even if Maclean Sinclair did not, and pointed out "the greed of the old country landlords" and especially "the greed of the British Empire," and formally signs off as "CM Sinclair":

Dear Father,

I received your letter this morning. I have read and considered it carefully. I may say that you are greatly mistaken. I do not purpose to work on the Sabbath day. But it is necessary that the people should have light on Sunday night. As well as any other night (at least they seem to think so). So I have to sit in an engine room and watch an engine run from 8 P.M. till midnight.

You say that this country is full of greed and infidelity. How about the greed of your old country landlords? How about the greed of the British Empire? If they had the whole world they would wish for more. [...] That have within the last few years slaughtered thousands of innocent savages which know no God.<sup>72</sup> By this they have added another miserable piece of ground to their grand empire. Oh! No they are not living for the world.

I am trying to live up to the Bible. I know that I am far from being good. I therefore ask that you think of me occasionally and pray for me.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> A reference perhaps to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.

<sup>73</sup> Charles Maclean Sinclair to AMS, 12 July 1904. My thanks to John Sinclair, grandson of AMS (and son of DMS), for providing me with a transcript of this letter.

Maclean Sinclair's imperialist viewpoint is particularly evident in two Gaelic songs he composed, inspired by the Second Boer War. One of these was to the tune of the patriotic Scots song "Scots Wha Hae Wi' Wallace Bled";<sup>74</sup> Maclean Sinclair called it a "Brosnachadh Catha" ("Incitement to Battle"), and translated it into English as "A Canadian Battle Song." Apparently this song "attracted much attention and the English translation of it appeared in many papers."<sup>75</sup> The other song was his "Òran an t-Sluaigh air an robh Crùgar ri Eucoir" ("The Song of the People Wronged by Kruger"), or as Maclean Sinclair translated "The Song of the Outlanders." Maclean Sinclair was closely monitoring the events of the Boer War, and was incensed with the treatment of British "outlanders" (Afrikaans *uitlanders*, literally "foreigners") in South Africa. The outlanders were immigrants to the Transvaal Republic of South Africa, who had come in search of gold. Many of the outlanders were immigrants from

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<sup>74</sup> AMS also translated this song as "Brosnachadh Catha a Bhruisich" whose manuscript version can be found inserted between pages 2 and 3 in the copies of *Mac-Talla* (1 Oct. 1892) in STFXUSC and whose edited version is in *Filidh na Coille*, 183-84. DMS says in "Gaelic Newspapers and Prose Writings in Nova Scotia," *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 26 (1945): 107, that AMS published a translation of "Scots Wha Hae" in the first issue of *Mac-Talla*. However, the version in *Mac-Talla* is not the same as the manuscript insert just mentioned. *Mac-Talla* states that they got their version from the *Casket* where it was contributed anonymously. They also state that they are aware that AMS translated this song into Gaelic, and that they would like to obtain a copy: "Fhuair sinn an dan so anns a Chasket. Cha'n eil fhios again co thug gu Gaelic e, ach se ar barail gun d'thug e ionnsaidh mhath air. Thug an t-Urr. A. MacIllean Sinclair an dan so gu Gaelic ach cha d'fhuair sinn greim an fhathast. Bhitheamaid an comain neach sam bith a chuireadh g'ar n'ionnsaidh e." *Mac-Talla* (28 May 1892): 4. Another version (possibly by AMS) appeared in "Cùil na Gàidhlig," *Pictou News* (7 Dec. 1883): 1.

<sup>75</sup> DMS, "Gaelic Newspapers and Prose Writings in Nova Scotia," *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 26 (1945): 110.

neighbouring Cape Colony, which had become a British colony in 1806. The influx of outlanders grew in substantial enough numbers to alarm the Transvaalian Afrikaners, or Boers, who denied the outlanders voting rights and taxed the gold industry heavily. The outlanders and British mine owners pressured the British government for action. Britain amassed its troops, including many Highland regiments, along the Transvaal/Cape Colony border with an ultimatum to Kruger, President of Transvaal, demanding full equality for British subjects residing in Transvaal. Kruger issued his own ultimatum that the British withdraw their troops or Transvaal, allied with the neighbouring Boer Orange Free State, would go to war against them. The result was the Second Boer War, which lasted from 1899 to 1902. The British had been at war with Transvaal in the First Boer War just eighteen years previously, 1880-1881.

The treatment of the outlanders in Transvaal upset people all over the British Empire, and volunteers came forth from every part of the Empire, including Canada. Both his "Canadian Battle Song" and "Song of the Outlanders" are indicative of Maclean Sinclair's strong feelings about the plight of the outlanders and how he viewed his own place in the British Empire. In the first song, he incites Britain to go to war and specifically includes people from England, Ireland, and Scotland, i.e. represented by the rose, shamrock, and thistle, as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India as "Britons all by name." Both versions (by Maclean Sinclair):

Dùisg a Bhreatainn, á do shuain  
 Glac do chloidheamh glas gu cruaidh  
 Tilg air falbh á d' làimh an truail,  
 'S gluais le d' shluagh don spàirn.  
 Biodh do chàbhlach làidir, briagh',  
 Deas á là 's a dh'oidhch' gu d' dhìon  
 Bho luchd-farmaid feargach, fiadht',  
 Le'm bu mhiann do bhàs.

[...]  
 Biodh do ròs ri crann 'sa ghaoith,  
 Biodh do sheamrag ghrinn ri 'thaobh,  
 'S biodh do chluaran leo fo aoigh  
 'Falbh thoirt saors' is àigh.

Thig bho Chanada nan craobh,  
 Bho Astràlia nan raon,  
 'S bho New Zealand nan glean caoin'  
 Fir nach chaon bho d' shàil.  
 Innis dhaibh 's na h-Innsibh aosd'  
 Gu bheil feum agad air daoine',  
 'S thig gu grad ceud mìle laoch  
 'Theid ri d' thaobh an sàs.

'S Breatannaich gach sluagh fo d' reachd  
 Ann an ainm is an am beachd;  
 Seasaidh sinn gu dileas, ceart  
 Le do bhrataich àird.  
 Earb 's an Ti 'tha 'riaghladh shuas,  
 Cùm a lagh roimh d' shùil gu buan,  
 Anns a cheartas òirdheirc gluais,  
 'S buail gu cruaidh 'sa bhlàr.<sup>76</sup>  
 [...]

Waken, Britain, rise and stand,  
 Grasp thy sword in thy strong hand,  
 Throw the scabbard on the strand;  
 Waken in thy might.  
 Be as in the days of old,  
 Be the lion strong and bold,  
 Beard the tyrant in his hold;  
 Brook no further slight.

[...]  
 Let thy rose and shamrock green,  
 Let thy thistle fierce and keen,  
 Side by side with joy be seen  
 Waving in thy sight.

From Canada's domains,  
 From Australia's broad campaigns,  
 From New Zealand's hills and plains,  
 Bring thy sons; they'll fight.  
 Half a million men and more  
 Stand on India's sunny shore,  
 Keen to cross the billows o'er  
 In thy cause to smite.

We are Britons all by name,  
 Britons, too, in heart and aim,  
 And we'll stand with British flame  
 By thy colours bright.  
 Trust in Him that reigns on high,  
 Keep His law before thine eye;  
 Let thy shells and bullets fly;  
 Strike and strike aright.<sup>77</sup>

[...]

Maclean Sinclair composed the Gaelic version first, dating it "Jan. 18, 1900"; the

English version followed about a month later "Feb 12, 1900." He intended his

English version to be sung and so, due to the requirements of adapting the

<sup>76</sup> A. Mac-Gilleain Sinclair, *Filidh na Coille* (Charlottetown: Examiner Publishing Co., 1901), 177-79. Also published in *Mac-Talla* (16 Feb. 1900): 256.

<sup>77</sup> AMS, *Filidh*, 179-81.

language to the rhythm of the tune, he did not make it a literal translation. A

more literal translation would be:

*Dùisg a Bhreatainn, á do shuain  
Glac do chlaidheamh glas gu cruaidh  
Tilg air falbh á d' làimh an truaill,  
'S gluais le d' shluagh don spàirn.  
Biodh do chàbhlach làidir, briagh',  
Deas á là 's a dh'oidhch' gu d' dhìon  
Bho luchd-farmaid feargach, fiadht',  
Le'm bu mhian do bhàs.*

[...]

*Biodh do ròs ri crann 'sa ghaoith,  
Biodh do sheamrag ghrinn ri 'thaobh,  
'S biodh do chluaran leo fo aoigh  
'Falbh thoirt saors' is àigh.*

*Thig bho Chanada nan craobh,  
Bho Astràlia nan raon,  
'S bho New Zealand nan glean caoin'  
Fir nach chaon bho d' shàil.  
Innis dhaibh 's na h-Innsibh aosd'  
Gu bheil feum agad air daoine,  
'S thig gu grad ceud mìle laoch  
'Theid ri d' thaobh an sàs.*

*'S Breatannaich gach sluagh fo d' reachd  
Ann an ainm is an am beachd;  
Seasaidh sinn gu dìleas, ceart  
Le do bhrataich àird.  
Earb 's an Ti 'tha 'riaghladh shuas,  
Cùm a lagh roimh d' shùil gu buan,  
Anns a' cheartas òirdheirc gluais,  
'S buail gu cruaidh 'sa bhlàr.<sup>78</sup>*

[...]

Waken Britain from your slumber,  
Grasp your grey sword firmly  
Throw away the sheath from your hand,  
Advance with your army to the struggle.  
Let your beautiful, strong fleet  
Be ready day and night to protect you  
From the surly, angry, envious people,  
Who would desire your death.

...

Let your rose be hoisted in the wind,  
Let your fine shamrock be beside it,  
And let your thistle with them reside,  
Going off to bring freedom and prosperity.

From Canada of the trees,  
From Australia of the fields,  
And from New Zealand of the pleasant valleys  
Will come men who will not shirk from your  
guard.  
Tell them and the ancient Indians  
That you need men,  
And a hundred thousand heroes will come  
swiftly  
To go fight by your side.

Each group is British under your law  
In name and in feeling;  
We will stand properly, faithfully,  
With your flag high.  
Trust in the One who governs above,  
Keep his law before your eye always,  
In glorious justice proceed,  
And strike hard in the battle.

...

<sup>78</sup> AMS, *Filidh*, 177-79.

It is obvious that Maclean Sinclair was following the news closely and came out with his second song on the topic of the Boer War a month later. This time he composed the English version first, "March 13, 1900"; the Gaelic version was not composed until a year later, "March 28, 1901." The song directly addresses Paul Kruger, the President of Transvaal, on behalf of the outlanders: "Paul Kruger, do not boast and talk [...]"; in the Gaelic version: "*A Chrùgair thruaigh, na bi le pròis*" ("Miserable Kruger, do not be with pride"). Maclean Sinclair's use of the first person plural in "The Song of the Outlanders" shows his identification with the British outlanders: "We came, we worked, we pressed along, / We helped make you rich and strong," in Gaelic: "*Na d' dhùthaich shaothraich sinn gu dian, / Is rinn sinn uachd'ran saidhbhir dhìot,*" ("In your country we laboured hard / And we made a wealthy ruler out of you"). Interestingly Maclean Sinclair calls the approaching British forces "Anglo-Kelts" in the English version and "*Breatannaich*" ("Britons") in the Gaelic version:

<p>Our gallant friends are drawing near A few days more will bring them here; Go give to them your jeers and pelts But bear in mind they're Anglo-Kelts.<sup>79</sup></p>	<p><i>Bidh luchd ar gaoil an seo gun dàil, Na gaisgich chalma 'chleachd a bhàigh. Rach 's coinnich iad is tairg dhaibh tàir; Ach cuimhnich 's Breatannaich na sàir.<sup>80</sup></i></p>	<p>The people of our love will be here without delay, The brave heroes accustomed to hospitality. Go and meet them and offer them contempt; But remember the heroes are Britons.</p>
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<sup>79</sup> AMS, *Filidh*, 181.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

Maclean Sinclair's use of "Anglo-Kelts" is another allusion to his view of the British as a multi-ethnic entity where, furthermore, English and Celtic appear as equals. Maclean Sinclair was well aware that Highland regiments were playing a large part in the war efforts in South Africa and wanted to make sure his English-speaking audience would be reminded of the fact. Maclean Sinclair was also aware of the background of Celtic Britain before the coming of the various Germanic tribes, especially the Angles and the Saxons, and considered the Celts to be part of the essential racial make-up of the British. Bearing this in mind, he unquestionably felt it was more appropriate to use Anglo-Celtic instead of Anglo-Saxon; it certainly was as equally inclusive as the term British, which he used in the Gaelic version:

Are the peoples of the British Isles an Anglo-Saxon race? Yes, if we go for our ethnographical knowledge to the perorations of some of the great speeches delivered in Ottawa and other parts of the Dominion [of Canada]. Of course, there are several public speakers in this magnificent country of ours who would never think of calling the peoples of the British Isles an Anglo-Saxon race. Catch the grand old man of Victoria County [Cape Breton] using such an utterly preposterous term as that! He has too much clearness of head, too much honesty of heart, and too much respect for his ancestors to cast himself at the feet of the Anglo-Saxon race and whine out in pitiful tones, "please let me call myself by your name, so that I may hide the shame of being a Highlander by blood, and speaking the language in which my mother sang me to sleep when I was a child.

When we look at historic facts, and give each fact its due weight, we find that the peoples of the British Isles and their descendants throughout the world are an Anglo-Keltic race, nothing more, nothing less. If they were merely Anglo-Saxons, or Kymro-Gaidels, they would not occupy today the leading position which they hold. They are a

mixture, or blend, of the fiery-hearted Kelts and the cool-headed Germans; therefore they are what they are in energy, perseverance and influence.<sup>81</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was in essence suggesting that it was the mixture of the Celtic and the Germanic peoples that made the British of his day great. It was much easier to look at the Gael in the British Empire as having a supportive role; the importance of the Highland regiments for instance as the enactors of British foreign policy rather than as pawns in the strategic removal of the fighting force of the rebellious Highlands, especially after 1745. By the inclusion of the descendants of the British Isles "throughout the world," Maclean Sinclair was of course signifying himself and his fellow New World Gaels, and preferred to see them as partners in the Empire. His strong identity with his culture or "nation" was not a rebellious assertion of independence by the Gaels in Canada or Scotland for an independent nation state. Rather, his intense awareness of his own culture contributed to his rationalization of the positive, and inclusive, role of the "Celts" in the history of Britain. It was eminently more satisfying to think of the genetic make up of the British Isles as a mixture of Celtic and Germanic, and sharing in the glory of the Empire, than to consider himself a member of a subjugated and conquered people whose culture was in decline. According to Maclean Sinclair it was the contribution of both "races" that made Britain great, and neither one on its own would have come to such great heights: "If they were

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<sup>81</sup> AMS, "History of the Continental Kelts" (unpublished manuscript), 21-22; pagination is inconsistent, if present at all, STFXUSC.

merely Anglo-Saxons, or Kymro-Gaidels, they would not occupy today the leading position which they hold.”<sup>82</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was undoubtedly influenced here by Matthew Arnold’s famous lecture and essay on Celtic literature, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867). Maclean Sinclair referred to Arnold’s work in 1889: “Anyone who reads [...] Matthew Arnold’s *On the Study of Keltic Literature* must see that the Keltic genius is naturally poetic [...].”<sup>83</sup> Matthew Arnold’s essay provides insight into nineteenth-century views of specific racial traits concerning the Celts, recalling Maclean Sinclair’s description of “Anglo-Kelts” as “a mixture, or blend, of the fiery-hearted Kelts and the cool-headed Germans.”<sup>84</sup> Though he never used the term “Anglo-Kelt,” or “Anglo-Celt” for that matter, Arnold declared that a combined racial heritage attributed certain qualities to the English character:

The Germanic genius has steadiness as its main basis, with commonness and humdrum for its defect, fidelity to nature for its excellence. The Celtic genius, sentiment as its main basis, with love of beauty, charm, and spirituality for its excellence, ineffectualness and self-will for its defect. The Norman genius, talent for affairs as its main basis, with strenuousness and clear rapidity for its excellence, hardness and insolence for its defect.<sup>85</sup>

Arnold applied his racist notions to literature and argued that English poetry got its passion and melancholy from Celtic heritage, drawing a comparison

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<sup>82</sup> AMS, “History of the Continental Kelts.”

<sup>83</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems” *Scottish-American* (27 Feb. 1889).

<sup>84</sup> AMS, “History of the Continental Kelts.”

<sup>85</sup> Arnold, *On the Study*, 87.

between Llywarch Hen and Byron.<sup>86</sup> Almost certainly influenced by Macpherson's Ossian, Arnold was at least partly responsible for the "Celtic Twilight" literary movement of the 1890s, with his view of the misty and melancholic essence of Celtic literature, to which he also ascribed an inherent "natural magic":

Now of this delicate magic, Celtic romance is so pre-eminent a mistress, that it seems impossible to believe the power did not come into romance from the Celts. Magic is just the word for it, – the magic of nature; not merely the beauty of nature, – that the Greeks and Latins had; not merely an honest smack of the soil, a faithful realism, – that the Germans had; but the intimate life of Nature, her weird power and her fairy charm.<sup>87</sup>

### **The Establishment of Academic Celtic Studies Programs**

The establishment of Celtic Studies chairs and programs in universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century reflects two streams of orientation. In the Celtic-speaking areas, it was inextricably linked to issues of cultural and ethnic identity politics; elsewhere it was largely motivated by comparative philology. Though Celtic chairs in the Celtic countries were often established through the support of cultural and special interest groups, that is not to say there was not also a philological component to their programs; Celtic Studies, after all, was an outgrowth of the field of linguistics. The Jesus Celtic Chair at Oxford University, the first of its kind in Britain or Ireland, was

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<sup>86</sup> Arnold, *On the Study*, 118-19.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

established in 1877, with the support of academics, such as Matthew Arnold who was one of its main supporters. The first Celtic chair in Scotland was founded five years later at the University of Edinburgh in 1882. A Celtic chair in Scotland had been a *desideratum* expressed in Gaelic journals and magazines long before 1882.<sup>88</sup> The chair had the backing of Gaelic communities in Scotland and abroad, and indeed it was completely funded by public subscription. Once it was established, it was a source of immense pride for Gaels, not just in Scotland but also around the world: “For the success of the Celtic Chair movement was deeply felt in the Highlands. Whatever Edinburgh may have thought, it was their Chair. Toasts were drunk to it at the gatherings of the Highland Societies, and Gaelic bards sang the praises of Blackie and the Chair.”<sup>89</sup>

Professor John Stuart Blackie was a key figure championing the establishment of the Edinburgh Chair of Celtic. Though Professor of Greek at Edinburgh, he had a love of the Highlands and wrote an introductory book in 1876 on *The Language and Literature of the Scottish Highlands*. Well known for his role in the campaign, he was popular among Gaels at home and abroad. His activities in support of the Celtic Chair were followed in newspapers in Highland communities in Scotland and North America.<sup>90</sup> A number of

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<sup>88</sup> William Gillies, *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), 7-8.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>90</sup> When he died in 1895, an account of his life and his role in founding the Celtic Chair was even published in the Cape Breton Gaelic newspaper *Mac-Talla*. “Professor

candidates had been suggested for the position, including folklore collector John Francis Campbell of Islay, but Campbell emphatically declined: "I would not sit in that chair for £100,000 a year, ... to be pelted with hard epithets by all the Gaelic scholars in the kingdom. When asked for my opinion, I will vote for the man best fitted to sit on spikes and be pelted with jawbreakers!"<sup>91</sup> The first holder of the new Chair of Celtic was Donald MacKinnon. Described by William Gillies as an "all-rounder,"<sup>92</sup> MacKinnon was the ideal candidate for the position because of his strengths in modern Scottish Gaelic language and literature, one of the remits in the establishment of the Celtic Chair, and soon "set about defining the new discipline, balancing Celtic and Gaelic philological and literary interests, and creating or helping to create the necessary apparatus of textbooks and aids to study where these were lacking."<sup>93</sup>

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Blackie," *Mac-Talla* (30 Mar. 1895): 6. See also "Òran do Bhlakie [*sic*]," *Mac-Talla* (3 Mar. 1899): 8; and "An t-Olla [*sic*] Blackie Nach Maireann," *Mac-Talla* (29 Apr. 1904): 169-70. The *Scottish-American Journal* published pieces by Blackie seeking funds from the emigrant Scottish community. Blackie himself stated that the bulk of financial support for the Celtic Chair came from the United Kingdom, but also Canada and New Zealand, and complained in the *Scottish-American Journal* that Scots in the United States were not as forthcoming (see Michael Newton, "'Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them': Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912," *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>. In particular see section 5.6 The Celtic Chair Campaign and Other Fundraising.)

<sup>91</sup> "Celtic Scholarship celebrates its centenary," *Scotsman* (26 Mar. 1983): 4. Thanks to Paul MacDonald for this reference. See also Gillies, *Gaelic and Scotland*, 3.

<sup>92</sup> Gillies, *Gaelic and Scotland*, 14.

<sup>93</sup> "Celtic Scholarship celebrates its centenary," *Scotsman* (26 Mar. 1983): 4.

In Scotland, Glasgow University followed Edinburgh with their chair in 1903, first held by German Celticist Kuno Meyer. Maclean Sinclair had also been suggested for the position in the *Oban Times* to which Maclean Sinclair subscribed and often contributed. It is a significant indication of the high regard with which he was held in Scotland: "Everyone must welcome, and greatly prize, what springs from the pen of the Rev. A. McLean Sinclair, Nova Scotia, an accomplished Celtic scholar. None better than he, many people think, could fill the new Celtic Chair to be established in the Glasgow University."<sup>94</sup> Lectures in Celtic had been given at Glasgow earlier, from 1900 to 1903, by Magnus Maclean.<sup>95</sup> Though Maclean's background was in electrical engineering, he was a self-trained Celtic scholar. Maclean published his lectures from 1900 to 1902 in a volume called *The Literature of the Celts*,<sup>96</sup> and his lectures specifically on Gaelic literature from 1902 to 1903 he published in a subsequent volume entitled *The Literature of the Highlands*.<sup>97</sup> Aberdeen University's Celtic program did not get underway until 1916, although there had been a move to introduce a program there as early as the 1840s.<sup>98</sup> In the case of Ireland, it was not until the

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<sup>94</sup> *Oban Times* (n.d.), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/544/549, NSARM.

<sup>95</sup> See Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Maclean, Dr Magnus."

<sup>96</sup> Magnus Maclean, *The Literature of the Celts* (London: Blackie & Son, 1902).

<sup>97</sup> Magnus Maclean, *The Literature of the Highlands* (London: Blackie & Son, 1903).

<sup>98</sup> Thompson, *Companion*, s.v. "universities and colleges, Gaelic studies in."

foundation of the National University of Ireland system in 1908 that Celtic Studies courses began to be offered consistently there.<sup>99</sup> In 1940, Ireland did something no other Celtic country could do. In that year, the Irish government, by act of parliament, established the School of Celtic Studies at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.<sup>100</sup>

### **Celtic Studies in North America**

The first stirrings of Celtic Studies in the United States began at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D. C., and Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The role of special-interest groups in the United States, especially the rise in Irish Gaelic societies in the northeast in the 1870s, was significant in the establishment of Celtic programs.<sup>101</sup> For instance, the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America was instrumental in the establishment of the Gaelic (Irish) Studies Foundation at the Catholic University of America in 1896, with Irish-language classes following in 1898.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Brian Ó Cuív, "Celtic Studies – An Appraisal," in *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples: Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies* ed. Cyril J. Byrne, Margaret Harry & Pádraig Ó Siadhail (Halifax: D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University, 1992), 5.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>101</sup> Kenneth E. Nilsen, "Report, Department of Celtic Studies, St. Francis Xavier University" (unpublished document, 2004), 2.

<sup>102</sup> Roland Blenner-Hassett, "A Brief History of Celtic Studies in North America," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 67.4.2 (Sept. 1954): 13.

Fred Norris Robinson, “father of Celtic Studies in the United States,”<sup>103</sup> began offering Celtic courses at Harvard University in 1896, after he returned from Germany where he studied with the famous Swiss scholar of Old Irish, Rudolf Thurneysen.<sup>104</sup> Irish special-interest groups were less of a factor in the beginnings of Celtic at Harvard University, though Robinson stated that President Eliot of Harvard, who was so supportive of the study of Celtic, thought that Celtic at Harvard could be a bolster “to those groups in the American population who came from Celtic countries and had behind them the native languages and traditions.”<sup>105</sup> Robinson’s work in Celtic at Harvard marked the beginning of “serious and sustained interest in Celtic studies”<sup>106</sup> in American academia – though it was preceded by a popular non-academic surge of interest – and after he retired in 1939, a chair of Celtic was created with Vernum Hull as its first holder. In 1940, the Department of Celtic Languages and Literatures became a distinct entity at Harvard University and is still the only such department in the United States. However, the University of California, Berkeley has long had a Celtic Studies program, establishing “the first degree-granting program in Celtic languages and literatures in North America” in 1911-

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<sup>103</sup> Charles W. Dunn, “The Present State of Celtic Studies in North America,” *Studia Celtica* 4 (1969): 117.

<sup>104</sup> Blenner-Hassett, “A Brief History”: 8.

<sup>105</sup> F. N. Robinson, “Celtic at Harvard,” *The Canadian-American Gael* 2 (May 1948): 17.

<sup>106</sup> Blenner-Hassett, “A Brief History”: 8.

12, and where Celtic Studies courses have been offered “more or less” continuously since 1909.<sup>107</sup>

### **Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia**

One of the first institutions of higher learning in North America to teach a Celtic language was St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, in 1890-91.<sup>108</sup> The Antigonish newspaper, the *Casket*, announced in April 1891: “Something new in the College this year was a class in Gaelic. Some twenty students learned to read and write Gaelic under the instruction of Mr. D. M. MacAdam.”<sup>109</sup> MacAdam, a native Gaelic speaker born in East Bay, Cape Breton in 1867, came to St. Francis Xavier University as a student in 1885. In the summer of 1891 MacAdam attended Harvard University’s Summer School, followed by two years at the Grand Seminary of Montreal. He then returned to Antigonish to become an ordained priest in 1893 where he taught Gaelic (as well as science) at the university once again, from 1893 to 1900.<sup>110</sup> St. Francis Xavier University was founded as a seminary in 1853 to train local young men as priests in the church. Unlike universities in the United States, which served

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<sup>107</sup> See “Celtic Studies at Berkeley” at UC Berkeley’s Celtic Program website: [http://ls.berkeley.edu/dept/celtic/celtic\\_study\\_berkeley.html](http://ls.berkeley.edu/dept/celtic/celtic_study_berkeley.html)

<sup>108</sup> The first may be the University of Notre Dame, which offered instruction in Irish in the early 1870s. My thanks to Ken Nilsen for pointing this out.

<sup>109</sup> See *Casket* (25 Apr. 1891): 4.

<sup>110</sup> Nilsen, “Report,” 2.

constituencies of multi-cultural backgrounds, such as the Catholic University of America and Boston College which both drew Catholics of a variety of national backgrounds, St. Francis Xavier University served a population almost completely made up of Roman Catholic Highlanders, with a small representation of Catholics from French Acadian and Irish backgrounds.

Many of the students taking Gaelic at St. Francis Xavier University were native Gaels who wanted to improve their literacy in their mother tongue. The “twenty students [who] learned to read and write Gaelic” in D. M. MacAdam’s class in 1890-91, were presumably native speakers who had little opportunity to develop Gaelic literacy skills in the English-language dominated education system. As part of their training in the church, the first objective in the foundation of the university, this would have also allowed for a greater ability to serve their Gaelic-speaking parishioners once they became priests. This is not unlike the situation in Scotland, pertaining to Protestant clergy, where many of the students who took Gaelic at Edinburgh were native speakers. Indeed one of the considerations in the founding of the chair there was “the expectation that its holder would strengthen and improve Gaelic preaching and ministry, for the benefit of Gaelic-speaking congregations.”<sup>111</sup> Not even Scotland could boast, however, of an institution where Catholic Gaels could go and study to become priests, though the commitment to the language at St. Francis Xavier University,

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<sup>111</sup> Gillies, *Gaelic and Scotland*, 12.

and indeed Celtic Studies as an academic discipline, did not happen formally until 1958.

Kenneth Nilsen has suggested that a cooperation between Irish and Scottish Gaelic societies in Boston in the late 1880s and early 1890s, of which some Nova Scotian Gaels were aware because of close ties between the two regions, contributed to the spirit of interest which led to the introduction of Gaelic at St. Francis Xavier University.<sup>112</sup> A similar influencing factor for the continuing, if somewhat intermittent, presence of Gaelic at the university, may also have been that St. Francis Xavier University had close ties with the Catholic University of America in Washington as many of its professors were trained there, including three presidents,<sup>113</sup> and they would almost certainly have been aware of the activities of the Catholic University's Irish program. Though there were interruptions in Celtic course offerings at St. Francis Xavier University around the war years, just as there were at other universities such as Harvard,<sup>114</sup> Gaelic education has been a persistent feature at St. Francis Xavier University since D. M. MacAdam offered the first class in 1890-91.

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<sup>112</sup> Nilsen, "Report," 2.

<sup>113</sup> James D. Cameron, *For the People: A History of St. Francis Xavier University* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 152. See also James Cameron, "A Living Culture: Celtic studies and history of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia," *Celtic Heritage* (Apr./May 1996): 20-21 & 42.

<sup>114</sup> Robinson, "Celtic at Harvard": 17.

After MacAdam's final year of teaching Gaelic in 1900, there was a two-year hiatus until Father Ronald H. MacDougall of Southwest Margaree, Cape Breton taught it from 1902-03 and Father Ronald Beaton of Broad Cove, Cape Breton from 1903-08.<sup>115</sup> In 1907 Maclean Sinclair was hired by both St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie University to teach, not only Gaelic language and literature, but also Celtic civilization, including a comparative philological component. This was the first time a Celtic Studies course – as an academic subject comparable to offerings at other universities with Celtic such as Harvard and Edinburgh entailing the historical and comparative linguistic origins of the Celtic peoples – had been offered at either St. Francis Xavier or Dalhousie.

Cultural identity was more of a contributing factor in the original institutionalization of Gaelic and Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia than was the philological impetus behind the introduction of Celtic, for instance, at Harvard University. This is not surprising given the historical factors behind St. Francis Xavier University's establishment and its Highland constituency. A continuing lectureship in Celtic was as much a *desideratum* for Canadian Gaels as it was for Scottish Gaels, and indeed the foundation of the Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University in 1882 undoubtedly provided added impetus behind the foundation of a Gaelic and Celtic lectureship in Nova Scotia. As previously noted, Professor John Stewart Blackie's efforts in raising funds for the Celtic Chair in Edinburgh

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<sup>115</sup> Nilsen, "Report," 4.

had reverberations across the Atlantic. There is evidence that a fund had been established in 1882 with the intention of founding a similar chair in a Canadian university, but which came to nought.<sup>116</sup> The considerations for establishing such a position seem to be out of a nationalistic sense that the Gaels *should* be represented with a chair at the university level, if for no other reason than the value of their literary and linguistic heritage, beyond the practical value of training the clergy to minister to Gaelic-speaking parishioners. The role of comparative philology was not insignificant in an argument for Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia, it did after all, lend weight to the field as a legitimate intellectual pursuit in the eyes of some academics. Maclean Sinclair himself stressed the importance of Gaelic to philological studies on more than one occasion and pointed out that it was “the language which some of the best scholars in Germany are now studying with the greatest diligence.”<sup>117</sup> Though perhaps not so influential as the cultural factor, the high profile paid to the Celtic languages by European philologists, of which the Nova Scotian literati were aware, and which formed such an important part of the intellectual climate of the day, was certainly a factor in its acceptance, at least at the intellectual level, at universities in Nova Scotia. Maclean Sinclair was certainly of this opinion; he felt that one of

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<sup>116</sup> Apparently AMS was one of the trustees of the fund. See Michael Newton, “‘Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them’: Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912,” *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>. In particular see section 5.6 The Celtic Chair Campaign and other Fundraising.

<sup>117</sup> AMS, “A Lesson in Gaelic,” *Casket* (15 Apr. 1897): 4.

the arguments for “the preservation of old Gaelic poems” was for philological purposes: “[...] for the purposes of comparative philology, it is necessary to have words in their oldest written form. [...] My object is not to explain philological rules, but to show the need of preserving all the Gaelic words in existence.”<sup>118</sup>

The mandate of Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia was not to stimulate a renaissance in language or stem the loss of native speakers, though this was always a hope, but to provide literacy, largely to native Gaels, and instill an appreciation for the merits of their own literature and history. The combination of ethnic community and philological/intellectual trends that forms the backdrop of the introduction of Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia is represented in particular in an 1899 letter to Maclean Sinclair from D. C. Fraser, a member of parliament for Nova Scotia and later lieutenant governor. Fraser encloses a contribution to Maclean Sinclair’s “Gaelic fund,” perhaps towards his publishing endeavours for which Maclean Sinclair often bemoaned a lack of support. Fraser’s rhetoric is interesting as he explicitly calls Maclean Sinclair a “loyal and loving son of the great Keltic literature,” betraying a certain sense of shared ethnic fellowship as well as recalling Maclean Sinclair’s own spelling of “Keltic”:

My Dear Mr. Sinclair

I enclose you five dollars for your Gaelic fund. As a loyal and loving son of the great Keltic literature I wish in a small way to show my high appreciation of your devotion for many years, to the task of helping your countrymen to more ardent study of the grand old language.

Yours Sincerely,

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<sup>118</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems” *Scottish-American* (27 Feb. 1889).

D. C. Fraser<sup>119</sup>

### **A Gaelic Scheme for Pine Hill College**

Like the chair at Edinburgh University, the funding of a dedicated lectureship for Gaelic and Celtic Studies through public subscription would become particularly significant in 1907 when Alexander Maclean Sinclair was hired to teach at Dalhousie University and St. Francis Xavier University. A reference to a Gaelic program turns up in Maclean Sinclair's personal papers as early as 1904 (though Maclean Sinclair had earlier (1882) backed (unsuccessful) efforts to found a Canadian Celtic Chair when Scots in Canada had hoped to bank on community support in the euphoric wake of the establishment of the Edinburgh Celtic Chair in 1882<sup>120</sup>). Though it is somewhat unclear, a letter to Maclean Sinclair from Dr. M. Chisholm of Halifax<sup>121</sup> referred to a Gaelic program at the Halifax Presbyterian College, popularly known as Pine Hill College,

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<sup>119</sup> D. C. Fraser to AMS, 7 Aug. 1899, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/206, NSARM.

<sup>120</sup> Michael Newton, "'Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them': Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912," *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>. In particular see section 5.6 The Celtic Chair Campaign and other Fundraising.

<sup>121</sup> Possibly Dr. Murdock Chisholm a surgical teacher at Dalhousie. See P. B. Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University: Volume One, 1818-1925: Lord Dalhousie's College* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 168.

Maclean Sinclair's *alma mater*.<sup>122</sup> This is indicated by the mention of Dr. Falconer who was principal of the college from 1904 until 1907, when he became president of the University of Toronto. Chisholm makes a tantalizing reference to a letter that Maclean Sinclair had written Falconer concerning "things to be done," in which he apparently discussed a Gaelic program; or more likely a competition for prizes which the college seemed to offer: "Dr. Falconer sent me your letter some time ago with a scheme of 'things to be done.' They suit me well. As you say the idea is not to help students through college but to make them proficient in Gaelic."<sup>123</sup>

Maclean Sinclair may have been suggesting that the focus of a Gaelic program should be on helping to improve students' proficiency in the language presumably so they could read (the implication being that students were to some extent native speakers and without literacy in Gaelic). Chisholm also requests Maclean Sinclair's input concerning texts: "I would like you to have named the Gaelic dictionary you prefer. I have McAlpine. What there is of it is good but it is woefully wanting when you want to hunt up the difficult words in Beinn

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<sup>122</sup> See Part I, Chapter III. Pine Hill went through many incarnations, known by different names and locations in its history: from Pictou, NS to Princetown (Malpeque), PEI, to Truro, NS and finally to Halifax; it has been known as the Theological Hall, the Free Church College, the Presbyterian College, Pine Hill College, Pine Hill Divinity Hall, and now forms part of the Atlantic School of Theology.

<sup>123</sup> M. Chisholm to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, 27 June 1904, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/227, NSARM.

Dorain.”<sup>124</sup> It is interesting to note that Chisholm also made reference to the reluctance of some native speakers to teach their language to their children, and implied that the onus was on the mother for supplying their children with an acquaintance with their mother tongue: “It is like stemming the flood and disheartening. My own children do not know Gaelic. My wife is English and I have no time to teach them. Other mothers know the language but are too ignorantly proud to teach it.”<sup>125</sup> Chisholm also made a passing reference at the end of the letter which implies a certain desire for the establishment of a Celtic chair at Dalhousie University, where Chisholm was possibly a surgical teacher<sup>126</sup>: “Were I rich, a chair of Celtic Literature in Dalhousie would not be long wanting, but – well – how?”<sup>127</sup>

Another letter to Maclean Sinclair in 1907, from a certain S. D. McPhee,<sup>128</sup> apparently a fellow clergyman of Maclean Sinclair in Prince Edward Island, clearly indicates a desire to establish a Gaelic professorship at Pine Hill College, with Alexander Maclean Sinclair as its first incumbent; funding for the

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<sup>124</sup> M. Chisholm to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, 27 June 1904, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/227, NSARM.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> See footnote #121 above.

<sup>127</sup> M. Chisholm to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, 27 June 1904, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/227, NSARM.

<sup>128</sup> Listed as a graduate (no year given) of the Presbyterian College, Halifax in J. W. Falconer & W. G. Watson, *A Brief History of Pine Hill Divinity Hall and the Theological Department at Mount Allison University* (Halifax: Pine Hill Divinity Hall, 1946), 43.

lectureship was to be sought through public subscription. After Maclean Sinclair retired from the ministry in 1906, and just before he decided to move back to Nova Scotia in 1907 from PEI, he received an inquiry from a colleague who urged him to take up a chair in Gaelic at Pine Hill College in Halifax:

I suppose you have seen my letter to the *Witness*<sup>129</sup> re. a Gaelic professorship at Pine Hill and your appointment to the Chair. I have used your name without your consent but you will forgive me. I have also written to Principal Falconer and Lieut. Governor Fraser of Nova Scotia on the matter & received very encouraging replies from each. The Governor is quite enthusiastic on the matter. I will call some time and show you his letter. The College Board will be asked (at the April meeting) to approve of the inauguration of a Gaelic Lectureship for 5 years. Steps will then be taken to raise the necessary funds. I will do anything in my power to make it a success. I do not think there would be any difficulty in raising the money in our Highland congregations. I feel confident Belfast would contribute \$2 or 3 hundred. Kindly let me know what you think of the scheme. I am writing to some of the leading men in Cape Breton on the matter.<sup>130</sup>

There does not appear to be any reference to a Gaelic program in the minutes of the Board of Management of Pine Hill in 1906-07. There is also no indication of Gaelic in the course calendars; however, there is an entry in the minutes of the Pine Hill Senate which indicates that there was at least an “interest” in Gaelic at Pine Hill by an M. A. McKinnon, who donated prizes, perhaps relating to a Gaelic competition: “A vote of thanks was unanimously recorded to Rev. M. A. McKinnon for his interest in the Gaelic language in

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<sup>129</sup> See S. D. MacPhee, “Prince Edward Island,” *Presbyterian Witness* (15 Dec. 1906): 394.

<sup>130</sup> S. D. McPhee to AMS, 10 Jan. 1907, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/207, NSARM.

connection with the College, and for the prizes awarded by him this session – \$20.00 to J. A. McLellan; \$10.00 to C. J. McInnis – and for offering the prizes for the next year also.”<sup>131</sup> J. A. McLellan later wrote to the *Presbyterian Witness* of Halifax, and mentioned the Gaelic competition and McKinnon’s donation: “Rev. M. A. McKinnon, Halifax, is on the right track. Last Spring he offered two prizes, \$20. and \$10. to be won by an examination in Gaelic. There were six competitors, and as many, or more, will be ready to try each year for some years to come.”<sup>132</sup>

This prize seems to have been associated with Gaelic at Pine Hill for a few years, perhaps two students a year. There is a reference to such in two letters sent to Maclean Sinclair in 1905. One is from J. A. McLellan, mentioned in the Senate minutes above, and the other is from D. J. Nicholson. Both thank Maclean Sinclair for a prize, which seems to have been in the form of a book, donated by Maclean Sinclair. Interestingly both letters were written in Gaelic. Nicholson and McLellan are both students<sup>133</sup> at the Presbyterian College of Halifax, which was popularly called Pine Hill College; McLellan refers to it in Gaelic as “*Oil-thigh Cnoc-a-Ghiuthais*” (Pine Hill University) and Nicholson “*Oil-thigh Eaglais na*

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<sup>131</sup> Minutes of the Senate of the Presbyterian College, Halifax (Pine Hill College), April 1907, Maritime Conference Archives of the United Church of Canada. 1907 is the only year in which Gaelic is mentioned in the Senate minutes between 1903 and 1908. My thanks to archivist Judith Colwell for checking on this reference for me.

<sup>132</sup> J. A. McLellan, “Gaelic and its Prospects,” *Presbyterian Witness* (1 June 1907): 170.

<sup>133</sup> See Falconer & Watson, *A Brief History of Pine Hill*, 43-44.

*Clèire*” (The Presbyterian University). Nicholson thanks Maclean Sinclair for sending him a book, and mentions a “*duais*” (prize):

*Thainig an leabhar a chur sibh thugam gu laimh agus tha mi toilichte fhantainn. Tha mi gle thaingean dhuibh air a shon. Do-bhrigh agus gu bheil mi gle dhruipeal aig an àm so cha d’rinn mi ach sealladh cabhagach a thoirt thairis air, ach chunnaic mi gu bheil mor-fhoghlum air a chruinneachadh ann, agus tha dochas againn ’nuair a bhithas cothrom air a thoirt dhomh, buannachd a dheanamh dheth.*

*Tha sinn toilichte mar an ceudna gu bheil neach againn a tha comasach air ceistean a chur oirnn air son ar rannsachadh, agus gu bheil neach ann a tha deonach air duais a thoirt seachad mar sin a treorachadh ar n’aire gu tuilleadh suim a bhi againn do na chànan anns a bheil mor-thlachd againn. [...]*<sup>134</sup>

I have the book you sent me at hand and I am happy to get it. I am very thankful to you for it. Because I am very busy at this time, I have only given it a quick look through, but I saw that there was much great-learning gathered there, and we hope when I get the chance, to profit from it.

We are happy likewise that we have someone who is able to question us to examine us, and that there is someone who is willing to give a prize like that to guide our notice so that we have more regard for the language in which there is so much great pleasure. . . .

McLellan also thanks Maclean Sinclair for his “*soar-thiodhlac*” (donation) of *Peoples and Languages of the World*. If this was indeed a prize for Gaelic it is somewhat ironic that Maclean Sinclair should donate an English-language book, especially since Maclean Sinclair had produced so many in Gaelic: “*S’ann le mor thoil intinn a tha mi a toirt taing dhuibh air son bhur saor-thiodhlac “Sloigh agus Canainean an t’Shaoghail” a shinn ceann-suidhe an Oill-thigh dhomh an diugh. [. . .]*<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> D. J. McNeacail to AMS, 30 Mar. 1905, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/103, NSARM.

<sup>135</sup> J. A. McLellan to AMS, 31 Mar. 1905, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/103, NSARM.

("It is with great pleasure that I thank you for your donation Peoples and Languages of the World that the president of the University gave to me today.")

S. D. MacPhee's letter to the *Presbyterian Witness*, about which he informed Maclean Sinclair, was essentially an argument for "the inauguration of a Celtic professorship in connection with Pine Hill College." MacPhee's desire for the chair stemmed from what he saw as a need for properly trained Gaelic-speaking Presbyterian ministers. Regarding Prince Edward Island alone, he said that "[o]ut of 34 congregations under the jurisdiction of this Presbytery 14 are vacant. The majority of these require Gaelic speaking ministers, and Gaelic preachers are rapidly passing away, and will soon become an unknown quantity." He also said that Gaelic was needed "in a large majority of congregations in Cape Breton and in a number of parishes in other parts of Nova Scotia." MacPhee then proposes that a "remedy" for this would be the establishment of a "Gaelic chair" to train ministers to preach in Gaelic. He suggests that Maclean Sinclair is the man to fill the position and, interestingly, states that Maclean Sinclair was rumoured to have been offered a position in a Scottish university. This is most likely in response to the *Oban Times* (to which Maclean Sinclair and other New World Gaels subscribed) piece which had suggested Maclean Sinclair for the new Celtic Studies chair at the University of Glasgow.<sup>136</sup>

Let me return to the consideration of the "remedy." To inaugurate a "Gaelic chair" in our college, two things are essential – the man qualified

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<sup>136</sup> See footnote #94 above.

to fill it, and the funds to endow it. The man available is in the person of Rev. A. McLean Sinclair, who is acknowledged by competent critics to be without a peer, in the sphere of Celtic literature. It is rumoured that he is to be called to a Gaelic professorship in one of the Scottish colleges. Why let him cross the water when so sorely needed here?<sup>137</sup>

MacPhee's letter to the *Witness* sparked an almost year-long debate in its columns about whether or not there should be a Gaelic chair established at Pine Hill. The Gaelic scheme for Pine Hill College never took hold,<sup>138</sup> but among the discourse in the *Witness* engendered by MacPhee's suggestion was the mention of the establishment of a Celtic society in Halifax, of people of both Scottish and Irish descent, both Protestant and Catholic, whose main goal was to establish a Celtic program at Dalhousie University: "the Celtic Society [. . .] will establish a lectureship and eventually a professorship in Dalhousie [. . .]."<sup>139</sup> It was rationalized that students would go on from Dalhousie to Pine Hill to be trained in the ministry, and that they could get a Celtic education, including Gaelic, from a program at Dalhousie: "Many of said students will pass from Dalhousie to Pine Hill to prepare them for the ministry of our Church. [. . .] Pine Hill Gaelic students should take advantage of those lectures and acquire further knowledge of the language in which they will be called upon some day to preach."<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> See S. D. MacPhee, "Prince Edward Island," *Presbyterian Witness* (15 Dec. 1906): 394.

<sup>138</sup> Apparently Gaelic was later taught at Pine Hill starting in 1914 for a year or more by J. S. Mackinnon of Sydney. See E. Arthur Betts, *Pine Hill Divinity Hall 1820-1970: A History* (Halifax: Pine Hill Divinity Hall, 1970), 30.

<sup>139</sup> W. Ross, "The Gaelic Language," *Presbyterian Witness* (22 June 1907): 194.

<sup>140</sup> W. Ross, "For the Presbyterian Witness," *Presbyterian Witness* (13 Oct. 1907): 322.

As early as 1818, Dalhousie University's founders – Church of Scotland ministers and supporters – planned Dalhousie as a non-sectarian institution, based on Edinburgh University as a model. The college was named after its greatest supporter, Scottish peer George Ramsay, Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, later Governor General of Canada, and Ninth Earl of Dalhousie in Scotland. After a number of years of uncertainty, during which the continued existence of the college was threatened, Dalhousie opened decidedly in 1856.<sup>141</sup> Though there was a certain amount of disagreement between Pine Hill College and Dalhousie during the latter's foundation years, both were essentially Presbyterian in their origins, despite Dalhousie being non-sectarian in its founding philosophy, and they sometimes shared professors.<sup>142</sup>

### **Lectureship at Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier Universities**

The *Presbyterian Witness* is the main source of information regarding the establishment of the Celtic program at Dalhousie University and the appointment to it of Maclean Sinclair. The formation of the Celtic Society of Halifax and support for a Celtic program at Dalhousie was largely due to the efforts of Senator W. Ross of Cape Breton. Ross announced Maclean Sinclair's appointment in the *Presbyterian Witness*; interestingly Ross's use of the word

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<sup>141</sup> P. B. Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University*, 80-81.

<sup>142</sup> Falconer & Watson, *A Brief History of Pine Hill*, 14 & 16. See also E. Arthur Betts, *Pine Hill Divinity Hall*, 30.

“Keltic” is redolent of Maclean Sinclair’s influence. Ross also indicates that the program is for native Gaelic speakers:

The Keltic Society of which the writer has the honor of being President and the Reverend M. A. McKinnon [who had donated the Gaelic prize at Pine Hill], Secretary, is now well established and the number of its members is increasing. The Reverend A. McLean Sinclair has been engaged to give a course of lectures on the origin, history and literature of the Gaelic language before the students of Dalhousie who already understand the language.<sup>143</sup>

Ross goes on to call for financial support for the lectureship from the readers of the *Witness*. He particularly appeals to readers in the traditional Gaelic-speaking districts of the Maritimes: “We therefore appeal for the support of our friends from P. E. Island, Antigonish, Pictou, Guysboro, and the whole Island of Cape Breton for liberal contributions of five dollars and upwards, which will be thankfully received and faithfully applied.”<sup>144</sup> Subsequent issues of the *Witness* contain further mention of the Dalhousie Celtic program, including mention of donations received.

Maclean Sinclair’s services as Celtic lecturer were first secured by Dalhousie earlier in 1907, though he did not begin teaching until January 1908, and St. Francis Xavier University hired him to teach in the autumn of 1907. An article in the Antigonish *Casket* in 1907, asking for support to hire Maclean Sinclair as a Celtic lecturer, stated:

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<sup>143</sup> W. Ross, “For the Presbyterian Witness,” *Presbyterian Witness* (13 Oct. 1907): 322.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

Arrangements are on foot to secure the services of that well-known Gaelic scholar, the Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair to conduct a class in Gaelic and Celtic literature at the College. [. . .] Mr. MacLean Sinclair is engaged as Celtic lecturer and instructor in Gaelic at Dalhousie for the year, and it is proposed that he should give a third of the term to work in our College, the friends of Gaelic and of the College undertaking to pay his salary.<sup>145</sup>

The *Casket* article continued by explaining that the funds were already raised for Maclean Sinclair's salary at Dalhousie, and that public subscription was desired to secure his services at St. Francis Xavier:

We understand that Senator Ross, an enthusiast in the cause of Gaelic, has succeeded in raising among the Highlanders of Victoria County, \$300 toward paying Mr. Maclean Sinclair's salary at Dalhousie. We need less than that amount and are quite confident that we shall have no difficulty in getting it through the subscription that is herewith opened in the columns of the *Casket*.<sup>146</sup>

The *Casket* subsequently published donors' names and amounts of contributions, the most common amounts being \$5 and \$10. Apparently donations were not as forthcoming as had been expected, or at least they slowed down by 1910, as Maclean Sinclair indicated in a somewhat cynical letter to the president of St. Francis Xavier University, Rev. Dr. Hugh MacPherson: "I received the other day your [money] order for \$200.00. The money is as good for me now as it would have been a month ago. I suspect it is a little difficult to get the money needed, even from men who are professedly strong friends of the Gaelic language."<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> "The Study of Gaelic," *Casket* (26 Sept. 1907): 4.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair to Rev. Dr. Hugh MacPherson, 17 Feb. 1910, President MacPherson Papers, RG5/9/11,076, STFXUA.

Announcement of Maclean Sinclair's program at Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier was carried in the *Celtic Monthly*, a periodical published in Glasgow, Scotland, and to which Maclean Sinclair contributed and subscribed. The *Monthly* stated that:

Gaelic is evidently on the up grade, not only in Scotland but also the Colonies, and Celtic lectureships are to be founded in various centres. At a meeting of the executive of the Celtic Society, held in Halifax, letters were read from Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair, of Hopewell [. . .], outlining the lectures which he proposes delivering on the Celtic language and literature at St. Francis Xavier's College and Dalhousie College. [. . .] Dalhousie, it may be mentioned, is the principal University in Nova Scotia. It is non-denominational. St. Francis Xavier's College and University belongs to the Roman Catholic Church in Nova Scotia. The Celtic Society has its headquarters in Halifax, and includes Scotsmen, Irishmen, Protestants and Catholics.<sup>148</sup>

That Maclean Sinclair should be employed by Dalhousie to lecture there is not at all surprising given the strong Presbyterian element to its foundation. What is surprising, however, is that Catholic St. Francis Xavier University should decide to engage Maclean Sinclair's services. Religious differences among the Gaels in the New World do not give the impression of being as divisive as they were in the Old. They certainly had their differences, but the interdependence necessitated by the rigours of pioneer life forced a certain amount of cooperation and tolerance among neighbours of different church affiliations. Tensions between Catholics and Protestants among the Nova Scotia Scots rarely erupted in

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<sup>148</sup> "Gaelic in the Colonies," *Celtic Monthly* 16.2 (Nov. 1907): 36. See also "Gaelic in Nova Scotia: Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair's Lectures," *Celtic Monthly* 16.5 (Feb. 1908): 100 (this is an announcement of AMS's inaugural lecture at Dalhousie).

violent conflict; however, there was certainly a degree of mutual suspicion between the two groups. As Campbell and MacLean suggest in *Beyond the Atlantic Roar: A Study of the Nova Scotia Scots*, it would be surprising if attitudes of hostility and suspicion among Catholics and Protestants, so typical in Scotland, were not transported to Nova Scotia with the settlers.<sup>149</sup>

In light of this, Maclean Sinclair's appointment at St. Francis Xavier University is somewhat of an anomaly: "Rev. Sinclair was a retired Presbyterian minister, and, to that time, the only Protestant cleric ever to teach at the Catholic college."<sup>150</sup> The shared Gaelic cultural bonds between Maclean Sinclair and his colleague's at St. Francis Xavier seem to have outweighed their sectarian differences. Maclean Sinclair had also developed a significant international reputation as a Gaelic scholar by this point with his numerous Gaelic publications, and his name carried a certain amount of currency among Gaels, especially from the area of his home community. The area near which Maclean Sinclair was raised was largely, if not predominantly Catholic, and indeed many of his classmates in the local schoolhouse were Catholic. His schoolteacher Norman Macdonald was also Catholic. The family was known to have good relations with Catholics as Maclean Sinclair's grandfather, John Maclean, was a great friend of Catholic priest Father Colin Grant, for whom Maclean composed

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<sup>149</sup> Campbell & MacLean, *Beyond*, 221-22.

<sup>150</sup> Cameron, *For the People*, 142.

three songs. Maclean Sinclair himself corresponded with Catholic priests, such as Father Ronald MacGillivray, “Sagart Arisaig,” who was an important informant on Antigonish local history and Gaelic songs, and another significant informant on Gaelic matters, Rev. Dr. Alexander MacDonald (who had a PhD and DD from the Urban College of Rome, and was a prefect of studies and professor of Latin, English, and philosophy at St. Francis Xavier College (now University), and later bishop of Victoria, British Columbia) (see Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds). At any rate, though the study of Gaelic obviously had its sympathisers at St. Francis Xavier, the university never had a policy for the teaching of Gaelic as part of its founding philosophy, “Highland culture and traditions were not a priority; social advancement and integration were,” and the establishment of Maclean Sinclair’s Celtic lectureship was largely in response to community demands for cultural representation in the curriculum. Acadians from the local French-speaking population had always had at least a small representation among students and staff at St. Francis Xavier University, and the language had been taught there since its beginnings in 1853;<sup>151</sup> there was undoubtedly some feeling of need among the community of Highland descendants to redress this imbalance. The community pressure behind the establishment of Gaelic and Celtic courses at the university had been a factor virtually since the first Gaelic classes were taught

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<sup>151</sup> Cameron, *For the People*, 165.

there. In 1894 for instance, it was seen as a coup over the strong classical element to the curriculum: "The more loyal sons of the heather are just as jubilant over the fact that they have succeeded despite the strong classic atmosphere of St. F. X. in getting a class in their own beloved Gaelic started and that as a consequence they are able to inhale pure Celtic air three times a week."<sup>152</sup> This type of sentiment was characteristic even after Maclean Sinclair's time, whose lectureship was by no means a secure chair of Celtic, and particularly surfaced in 1919 with the establishment of a chair of French:

The announcement of a chair of French propelled into action those Gaels loyal to their own cultural heritage. The Antigonish Highland Society, which had been formed in 1861 to preserve and promote Scottish culture, was provoked by the alleged "lifting of the Gaul above the Gael" at the college; it urged the college to establish a chair of Gaelic along with the chair of French. The society underscored the importance of the "Highland element" in founding and developing St.F.X.; and it did not want this element to play "second fiddle" to any other nationality.<sup>153</sup>

Though Gaelic would continue to be taught at the university, it would not get secure status as a course of instruction until 1958. In that year Celtic Studies became a separate department within the university, and two endowed chairs followed in 1983 and 2001, the Sister Saint Veronica Chair in Gaelic Studies and the Ben Alder Chair in Celtic Studies, respectively.

Returning to 1907, additional impetus for establishing Gaelic at St. Francis Xavier University came from the visit to Nova Scotia in that year by Father

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<sup>152</sup> "Xaveriana," *Casket* (29 Nov. 1894): 1.

<sup>153</sup> Cameron, *For the People*, 165-66.

Archibald Campbell, a Gaelic-speaking Jesuit priest from Scotland on a mission to the Catholic districts of Cape Breton. The *Casket* published reports of his activities, and apparently he was very well received. His visit provided a kind of external validation to many Gaelic communities suffering from the enduring emphasis on social advance in an English-language dominated society, and his activities stimulated somewhat of a resurgence in interest and support for the Gaelic language, particularly among Catholic Gaels. The article calling for public support to fund Maclean Sinclair at St. Francis Xavier University began: "Father Campbell's coming and his work among us have awakened new interest in the old Gaelic tongue. Arrangements are on foot to secure the services of that well-known Gaelic scholar, the Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair, to conduct a class in Gaelic and Celtic literature in the College."<sup>154</sup>

If Fred Norris Robinson is the father of Celtic Studies in the United States,<sup>155</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair can arguably be considered the equivalent in Canada. The appointment of Maclean Sinclair at St. Francis Xavier and Dalhousie was a landmark event for Celtic Studies in Canada; this was the first time a dedicated lecturer was hired specifically to teach both Gaelic language and literature, and with a remit that included comparative Celtic Studies. The Gaelic classes that were previously held at St. Francis Xavier were generally

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<sup>154</sup> "The Study of Gaelic," *Casket* (26 Sept. 1907): 4.

<sup>155</sup> Dunn, "The Present," 117.

offered by lecturers who taught other subjects such as science, or math, and, as native Gaelic speakers, provided a course secondary to their other teaching duties. Indeed, even with regards to North America as a whole, the Gaelic/Celtic lectureship established for Maclean Sinclair was one of the earliest dedicated academic positions; only the Catholic University of America appears to have had a specifically designated position before that, with the start of their program in 1898.

After his retirement from the church and return to Nova Scotia from PEI, Alexander Maclean Sinclair lectured at St. Francis Xavier and Dalhousie Universities from 1907 to 1912. Maclean Sinclair began lecturing at St. Francis Xavier University in the autumn of 1907 and taught subsequently every fall until 1911. Course calendars from 1908/09 to 1911/12 include Maclean Sinclair under the academic staff. In the St. Francis Xavier University calendar he is listed under the Faculty of Arts in the 1908/09, but a course description does not appear until the following year in 1909/10: "Keltic Literature (including Gaelic language). This course begins in September, and continues until 22<sup>nd</sup> of December. It includes regular class-work in the Gaelic language, and lectures on the history, customs, and literature of the Keltic race..."<sup>156</sup> The *Casket* described Maclean Sinclair's appointment:

Rev. A. McLean Sinclair is also a specialist and enthusiast in his chosen department. A man of superior mental endowments, a student and a Kelt

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<sup>156</sup> *The Calendar of the University of St. Francis Xavier's College (1909-10)*, 18. STFXUA.

from toe to tonsure, his lifetime study of the traditions and characteristics of the Kelts admirably qualify him for the post of lecturer in Keltic Literature and teacher of the Gaelic language. He lectures for two hours and teaches for four hours a week.<sup>157</sup>

Beginning in January of 1908, Maclean Sinclair taught similar courses at Dalhousie University. According to D. M. Sinclair, there was an inaugural Celtic lecture at Dalhousie on 14 January on the topic of the "Origin of the Kelts."<sup>158</sup> In a letter to his daughter Christy in 1908, Maclean Sinclair described his teaching schedule at Dalhousie, where he apparently had two levels of class: "The following are my hours in College, from 2 to 3 with the junior class, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. I have no classes on Tuesday or Saturday."<sup>159</sup> The Dalhousie University course calendar describes Maclean Sinclair's Celtic program as having two levels, a junior and senior:

This course begins after the Christmas holidays and continues throughout the remainder of the session. There are two divisions - a Junior Class in Gaelic and a Senior Class in Gaelic. A lecture on the History and Literature of the Kelts is given once a week. It is open to members of both divisions of the class and to anyone interested in the subject.<sup>160</sup>

D. M. Sinclair states that Maclean Sinclair taught at both Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier Universities until 1914;<sup>161</sup> however the course calendars for both

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<sup>157</sup> "The University of St. Francis Xavier," *Casket* (24 Oct. 1907): 5.

<sup>158</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 62.

<sup>159</sup> AMS to Christy Sinclair, 27 Jan. 1908. My thanks to John Sinclair for providing me with a transcript of this letter.

<sup>160</sup> *Calendar of Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1908-09*, 61-62. DUASC.

<sup>161</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 21.

universities list Maclean Sinclair among their faculties only until the 1911/12 academic year. It is plausible that Maclean Sinclair was contracted for only five years, at least the evidence relating to the Gaelic scheme proposed for Pine Hill College indicates as much for that institution: "The [Pine Hill] College Board will be asked [...] to approve of the inauguration of a Gaelic Lectureship for 5 years."<sup>162</sup> At any rate Maclean Sinclair was getting older; he turned seventy-two in 1912.

Unfortunately there is no official record of class enrolment for Maclean Sinclair's years at either St. Francis Xavier or Dalhousie. However, the *Presbyterian Witness* stated that there were thirty Gaelic-speaking students going to Dalhousie in Dec. 1907,<sup>163</sup> and after Maclean Sinclair started at Dalhousie in January, the *Witness* announced that there were "a larger number of students studying the language than [. . .] anticipated."<sup>164</sup> Maclean Sinclair did record students' names from at least his first year of teaching at St. Francis Xavier University. There were twelve students in the 1907 class.<sup>165</sup> In a letter from 1910, Maclean Sinclair stated that he had eight students at each of Dalhousie and St.

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<sup>162</sup> S. D. MacPhee to Alexander Maclean Sinclair, 10 Jan. 1907, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/207, NSARM.

<sup>163</sup> W. Ross, "The Keltic Society...", *Presbyterian Witness* (7 Dec. 1907): 386.

<sup>164</sup> Murdoch MacKinnon, "The Gaelic Lectureship," *Presbyterian Witness* (28 Mar. 1908): 98. For an announcement of the program in 1909 see "Gaelic at Dalhousie," *Presbyterian Witness* (16 Jan. 1909): 20 and "Gaelic in Dalhousie and St. Francis Xavier," *Presbyterian Witness* (27 Feb. 1909): 68.

<sup>165</sup> DMS to Dr. MacKinnon, 28 Feb. 1975, RG5/9/25,689, STFXUA.

Francis Xavier, and that they all sixteen intend to study for the clergy, “but eighteen clergymen, if they leave politics and compulsory temperance alone, should have a good deal of influence in behalf of Gaelic.”<sup>166</sup> Some of Maclean Sinclair’s students did go on to be big supporters of the language. One student was P. J. Nicholson, a future president of St. Francis Xavier and a big supporter of Gaelic at the university. A member of Maclean Sinclair’s 1907 class was Angus L. Macdonald who became minister of national defence for Canada during the Second World War and was twice Premier of Nova Scotia. He had even been about to become the first chair holder of a new Celtic Department at the university in his retirement, when he died suddenly in 1954.<sup>167</sup>

The *Casket*, to which Maclean Sinclair subscribed, published a description of the Celtic program at Edinburgh University in 1891. Maclean Sinclair was surely aware of the curriculum at Edinburgh, the article from the *Casket* appears as a clipping in his scrapbooks, and perhaps more significantly, Maclean Sinclair was a correspondent of the holder of the Celtic Chair at Edinburgh, Donald MacKinnon. MacKinnon’s “Celtic Languages and Literature” program at Edinburgh was strongly linguistically oriented with a comparative Celtic element as well as a specific Scottish Gaelic component. The program was divided between classes and lectures:

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<sup>166</sup> AMS to Hugh P. MacPherson, 17 Feb. 1910, Pres. Hugh P. MacPherson Papers, RG5/9/11,076, STFXUA.

<sup>167</sup> Cameron, *For the People*, 322.

The class meets on five days in the week at 4 p.m. For session 1890-91 the work of the class will be arranged as follows: 1. Monday and Wednesday, Lectures on the Celtic Languages, Literature and History. 2. Tuesday and Thursday, Reading and Exposition of Gaelic Poets and Prose authors. 3. Friday, Reading of Old Gaelic and manuscripts. The course of Lectures for 1890-91, which may be attended separately, will consist of two parts: (1) Celtic Philology, (2) Lectures on the Literature of the Scottish Highlands.<sup>168</sup>

When the time came for Maclean Sinclair to prepare his own Celtic curriculum for St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie University in 1907, he had obviously been contemplating what his own approach to such a program would be for many years. Maclean Sinclair had a definite plan of attack when it came to the type of program he had in mind, which was a combination of instruction in Gaelic language and literature, and lectures on the origins of the Celts, including a philological component. He had been contemplating such a design at least as early as 1879. In a notebook belonging to Maclean Sinclair he has an outline entitled "Sketches of the Celtic Races." The outline is headed by the phrase "Dec. 11, 1879, In Contemplation," presumably pertaining to a Celtic program or perhaps a book:

I Origin & Migration of the Celts to Western Europe, France, Spain, Britain & Ireland.  
 II Ancient Gaul, History of France  
 III Wales, its History, Literature  
 IV Scotland – *Celtic Scotland* by Skene<sup>169</sup>  
 Condensed, Celtic Literature, Poetry

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<sup>168</sup> "Celtic in Edinburgh University," *Casket* (2 Apr. 1891): 1.

<sup>169</sup> See William Forbes Skene, *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban* 1-5 (Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1876-80).

V Ireland – Its People, political history as in D’Arcy McGee

VI The Celts abroad – In Canada, the States, and Australia

VII The Value of the Celt to the World

- (1) First to rule Europe – pioneers
- (2) The existing Celtic element
- (3) The characteristics of the Celts
- (4) The value of the Celtic language, useful in studying the geography of Europe & comparative philology
- (5) What poetry owes to the Celts
- (6) Eminent Celts<sup>170</sup>

The make-up of the outline indicates a broad scope of the history of the Celts from mainland Europe to the British Isles to the New World, including a look at literature and language. Maclean Sinclair is remarkably prescient in his design. This type of comprehensive, survey approach to the study of Celtic civilization has become popular in introductory course offerings in recent years at many universities where there are Celtic Departments, and is not unlike the Celtic Civilization course now offered at St. Francis Xavier University, introduced in 2001, which similarly includes a component on the immigration of the Celtic peoples to the New World as part of its remit.

Maclean Sinclair’s mention of Thomas D’Arcy McGee is interesting to note. McGee was born in Co. Louth, Ireland, in 1825. He traveled to the United States in 1842 where he worked for a Catholic newspaper in Boston called the *Boston Pilot*. He returned to Ireland in 1845 and became involved in the Young Ireland independence movement, and took part in the 1848 rebellion. He fled back to the US where he continued to support Irish independence and

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<sup>170</sup> AMS Notebook (PB1633S54), STFXUSC.

established a newspaper called the *Nation*, which he later changed to the *American Celt*. By the 1850s his political viewpoint was changing and he moved to Montreal where he eventually became an advocate of British supremacy, and was instrumental as one of the founding Fathers of Confederation which united four colonies of British North America to form the Dominion of Canada in 1867. He also became very outspoken against Irish independence. He was shot dead in Ottawa in 1868. Though it was never proven, it was suspected that this was the result of an assassination conspiracy by Fenian supporters in Canada.

McGee is interesting in terms of Maclean Sinclair who preferred a British imperialistic outlook himself. McGee represented an Irish cultural nationalist who changed his radical views of independence for Ireland towards a rationalization of the supremacy of the British Empire. McGee wrote a two-volume work called *A Popular History of Ireland* (1863), which was used in Irish colleges and was considered an important text on the topic of Irish history for many years: "His best historical work was his last, *A Popular History of Ireland* (1863). Its title was significant: although McGee did some primary research, he depended on the work of other scholars and popularized their discoveries. The work was well received, and he was elected to the Royal Irish Academy."<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Robin B. Burns, "McGee, Thomas D'Arcy," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography 1861-1870*, vol. IX, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), s.v. "McGee, Thomas D'Arcy." (See also online <<http://www.biographi.ca> >.)

McGee wrote his history far from archives and libraries in Ireland and would have had to rely on the rather limited sources available in Canada. To Maclean Sinclair, McGee's work would have struck a chord especially with his own work on clan history for which, similar to McGee, Maclean Sinclair had limited sources in Canada. Also, McGee must have represented to Maclean Sinclair the prime example of a fellow Canadian Celt whose beliefs he found so complementary to his own. In light of McGee's earlier nationalist rhetoric in regards to Irish Gaels ("One in name and one in fame, / The Sea divided Gael."<sup>172</sup>), and his later support for Canadian confederation within the British Empire, it is not surprising that Maclean Sinclair should be a supporter of his work (as represented in his outline "Sketches of the Celtic Races").

Maclean Sinclair later used these ideas to construct his Celtic program at St. Francis Xavier University and Dalhousie University. He indicated his proposed course of study in a letter to the *Casket* in 1907, in which he also describes how labour intensive such a course will be, and stipulates that it should not interfere with studies that are "necessary":

Those who have no clear conception of what it should be, may think there is but very little to be done. From my point of view, the work of a Keltic lecturer would be a very difficult work. [...] Gaelic studies should be limited so as not to interfere with studies that are absolutely necessary. [...] the work of the Keltic lecturer and instructor in Gaelic should, in my judgement, be as follows:

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<sup>172</sup> Thomas D'Arcy McGee, "Salutation to the Celts," *The Poems of Thomas D'Arcy McGee* (New York, 1886), 135.

1° Two written lectures a week should be delivered, or about twenty lectures in all. The lectures of the fifth year should be on the History of the ancient Kelts. This would include introductory matters, speculations in Keltic ethnology, the Kelts of Italy, the Kelts of Spain, the Kelts of Germany and the Danube, the Galatians or Kelts of Asia Minor, and the Kelts of Gaul, including their customs, religion, struggle with the Normans, &c.<sup>173</sup> In the second year the Kelts of England, or the Britains who lived in the country now known as England, the Kelts of Wales and the Kelts of Ireland could be dealt with.

The historical lectures for the third and last year should be:

2nd° Instruction in reading and spelling Gaelic – instruction in Gaelic Grammar – reading and translating the poems of Duncan Bàn, Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, and the prose composition in the *Cuairtear*, and other works. Those who could read all the books in Scottish Gaelic they desired to read, could devote at least a part of the third year to the study of Irish Grammar and the reading of Irish poetry and prose. Keltic philology would also come up in the third year.

The work of the lecturer as an instructor would be an easy matter, but as a writer of lectures on the History of the Kelts would be an extremely difficult matter. I know the history of the Kelts fairly well, possibly as well as any one else, but I would not undertake to give more than two written historical lectures a week, each lecture to take between 30 and 40 minutes in reading it.

The history of the Highlanders would include the people, sketches of the clans, sketches of the Highland Regiments, &c.<sup>174</sup>

There are certainly elements of similarity with the 1891 program at Edinburgh, such as a distinct separation between Celtic “lectures” and Gaelic “instruction” and the Celtic philology component. Also interesting is the inclusion of Irish grammar and literature showing Maclean Sinclair had a knowledge of Irish

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<sup>173</sup> See his Gaelic article on the Galatians, “Na Galataich,” *Mac-Talla* (25 Apr. 1896): 2. AMS provides an amusing anecdote at the end of the article stating that it originally appeared in his *Pictou News* Gaelic column, “Cùil na Gàidhlig.” His copies of the paper had been stacked in a corner of his house for many years, and AMS says mice got to the stack and attacked the Galatians. I have not found this article among the extant issues of *Pictou News* (see Appendix C: Items in “Cùil na Gàidhlig,” *Pictou News*).

<sup>174</sup> AMS, “The Study of Gaelic,” *Casket* (26 Sept. 1907): 4.

Gaelic. The *Celtic Monthly* of Glasgow also mentioned that he was “at home in Irish as well as in the Highland Keltic lore, and is thoroughly master of the grammar as well as the literature of the language. Still more he is a student of the whole wide science of human language.”<sup>175</sup> There is no indication that he covered Old Irish, or “Old Gaelic,” as part of his program the way Donald MacKinnon did at Edinburgh, though one could hardly discuss Celtic philology without including Old Irish – or indeed Welsh for that matter. Maclean Sinclair was certainly familiar with the work of Whitley Stokes, “the ablest Keltic scholar living, is paving the way for the publication of a dictionary of the Irish language, by editing and publishing old Irish MSS.,”<sup>176</sup> and Ernst Windisch, “[...] if one has any interest in the laws of Keltic philology, he had better purchase the *Compendium of Irish Grammar*, by Ernst Windisch, Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Leipsic.,”<sup>177</sup> not to mention Johann Kaspar Zeuss, whose *Grammatica Celtica* Maclean Sinclair considered to be “the greatest of all works on Gaelic grammar.”<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> “Gaelic in Nova Scotia: Rev. A. MacLean Sinclair’s Lectures,” *Celtic Monthly* 16.5 (Feb. 1908): 100.

<sup>176</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems” *Scottish-American* (27 Feb. 1889).

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. Ernst Windisch’s 1879 *Kurzgefasste irische Grammatik* was translated in 1882 by Rev. James P. M’Swiney.

<sup>178</sup> AMS, “Gaelic Books” *Scottish-American Journal* (10 July 1884). My thanks to Michael Newton for supplying me with a copy of this article.

Maclean Sinclair stated he could read modern Irish and recommends Irish grammars and dictionaries to readers in the *Scottish-American*, such as John O'Donovan's *Grammar of the Irish Language* (1845), which compares medieval with modern modes of written and spoken Irish, and Edward O'Reilly's *Irish-English Dictionary* (1817) with O'Donovan's *Supplement* [1864]. Maclean Sinclair goes on to say that "'The Lay of Oisín on the Land of the Young' [...] is a beautiful poem, and can be very easily read by a Scottish Gael."<sup>179</sup> Maclean Sinclair says that he could understand Welsh well enough to be able to compare it with Gaelic: "[b]y getting Spurrell's *Welsh Grammar*, Spurrell's *Welsh Dictionary*,<sup>180</sup> and a New Testament in Welsh, one can learn enough of the Welsh language to enable one to compare it with the Gaelic. Prof. Rhys' *Lectures on Welsh Philology* [1877] are very valuable and sensible [Sir John Rhys, first professor of Welsh at Oxford]."<sup>181</sup>

Like the program at Edinburgh University, Maclean Sinclair provided a specific Gaelic element and it is clear that he assumed the class would be made up of Gaelic speakers with varying levels of literacy; he conspicuously leaves out Scotland in his delineation of the "Kelts" from other regions, perhaps with the

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<sup>179</sup> AMS, "Gaelic Books."

<sup>180</sup> See William Spurrell, *A Grammar of the Welsh Language* (Carmarthen: William Spurrell, 1853) and *A Dictionary of the Welsh Language, with English Synonymes and Explanations/Geiriadur Cymraeg a Saesoneg* (Carmarthen: William Spurrell, 1848) and *An English-Welsh Pronouncing Dictionary/Geiriadur Cynaniaeithol Saesoneg a Chymraeg* (Carmarthen: William Spurrell, 1850).

<sup>181</sup> AMS, "Gaelic Books."

understanding that such inclusion would be assumed. However, he does mention at the end of his proposal that a history of the Highlanders would be included; he does not say a history of Scotland, but of the Highlanders specifically, i.e. the Gaels whose history has often been misunderstood or glossed over in histories of Scotland written by historians without a knowledge of Gaelic. This was a sensitive point for Maclean Sinclair; he was fully of the opinion that one must have a knowledge of the language, and especially of the poetry, in order to properly understand the history of Gaelic Scotland: "The true history of the Highlanders is to be found in their poems, and nowhere else. The world at large may not care very much how our forefathers looked at things and how they lived; but surely men with Highland blood in their veins should take some interest in these things."<sup>182</sup> In his 1879 outline of "Sketches of the Celtic Races," Maclean Sinclair refers to William Forbes Skene's work *Celtic Scotland* (in three volumes from 1876-80),<sup>183</sup> but elsewhere states:

We can learn the external history of the Highlands from Skene's works, but if we wish to learn the inner history of the Highlanders, the real history of the people, we must study the works of the Gaelic bards. We find the history of a people in their poetry far more than in their chronicles. [...] the old poems [...] are exceedingly useful from a historic point of view. They throw light upon the thoughts, feelings, aims, habits and actions of the old Highlanders.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> AMS, "The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems."

<sup>183</sup> See also W. F. Skene, *The Highlanders of Scotland, Their Origin, History, and Antiquities; With a Sketch of Their Manners and Customs, and an Account of the Clans into which They Were Divided, and of the State of Society which Existed Among Them* (London: J. Murray, 1837).

<sup>184</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, v.

Maclean Sinclair's inclusion of eighteenth-century poets in his curriculum is notable in this regard. He mentions the poetry of Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, probably the most famous poet of the eighteenth century, and who printed the first secular Gaelic book, and Duncan Bàn MacIntyre, especially famous for his "Moladh Beinn Dòbhrain," who was himself largely influenced by Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair. Concerning Gaelic prose, Maclean Sinclair was a great fan of Dr. Norman MacLeod: "*Caraid nan Gaidheal* [The Friend of the Gaels, 1867] by Dr. McLeod is the best work in prose in the language. It contains selections from the old *Teachdaire Gaidhealach* [Highland Messenger, 1829-31] and the *Cuairtear [nan Gleann, The Traveller of the Glens, 1840-43]*. It is an admirable work."<sup>185</sup> Norman MacLeod is today considered to be "one of the leading figures in the history of Gaelic prose,"<sup>186</sup> and Maclean Sinclair's inclusion of MacLeod's *Cuairtear nan Gleann* into his curriculum is no surprise. Maclean Sinclair found it an essential resource for his own understanding of Scottish history: "My real text-book in history was not Chamber's British Empire, but Norman Macleod's *Cuairtear nan Gleann*, a most valuable and attractive work."<sup>187</sup> His high opinion of *Cuairtear nan Gleann* is indicated elsewhere, where he also recommends appropriate literature for learning Gaelic "correctly": "If we want to learn Gaelic

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<sup>185</sup> AMS, "Gaelic Books."

<sup>186</sup> Thomson, *Companion to Gaelic Scotland*, s.v. "Caraid nan Gaidheal."

<sup>187</sup> AMS, "Passing Away."

correctly we must study the works of the Gaelic bards, J. F. Campbell's *Sgeulachdan Gaidhealach* [*Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, 1860-61], and Norman McLeod's *Cuairtear nan Gleann*."<sup>188</sup>

Maclean Sinclair felt the need to justify the incorporation of a Celtic program at university. While he granted that such studies should not interfere with ones that were absolutely "necessary" as he stated in his letter to the *Casket*, he proposed the question in his lectures, "Why, it may be asked, should we who live in this busy age spend time in making ourselves acquainted with the history, language and literature of the Kelts?" and proceeded to answer, essentially by saying that there was "more to life than making money." Maclean Sinclair's background as preacher is evident here, even though these were his lecture notes from his Celtic class; his language is didactic and recalls his position on the evolutionary debate:

If the only object in life be to make money, to get the name of being rich, to live in grand houses, and to enjoy all the comforts and pleasures which wealth can procure for us, there can be no reason for our taking an interest in our forefathers, or even in our neighbours, especially if they are poor. It will be a matter of perfect indifference to us whether we are descended from a dirty anthropoid ape, or from a man created with an immortal soul and in God's own image. It will not be necessary for us to study the history either of our forefathers or of any other people. But if one of our great aims should be to cultivate our minds by the acquisition of knowledge, we can obtain a vast amount of useful information by a careful study of the history of the Kelts, including the old continentals and the old insulars, from the time of Herodotus to the present day. Then, if we feel under any obligations to the Highlanders and Irishmen who came to this country in poverty and distress, cut down trees, and made

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<sup>188</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, v.

comfortable homes for themselves and their children, we should surely take an interest in their history and genealogy, and also in the men and women from whom they sprang. It is certainly not to the credit of an intelligent and educated man to be acquainted with the history of the Greeks and Romans, even with the amazing doings of their gods and goddesses, and to be utterly ignorant of the history of the people to whom his father or mother, or both, belonged.<sup>189</sup>

As a lifelong student of many interests, especially comparative philology, ethnology, and history, Maclean Sinclair was acquainted with the intellectual developments of his day and the developments in the emerging field of Celtic Studies as an academic subject. Though it was one of his passions, Maclean Sinclair never had formal instruction in the field of comparative linguistics and it would necessarily remain little more than an intellectual diversion for him, even though he dabbled in it himself with his 1894 publication of *Peoples and Languages of the World*. Maclean Sinclair's real impact was in the Scottish Gaelic branch of Celtic Studies. With his retirement in 1907 from the ministry, he was once again able to return to his early love of teaching. It was fitting that he was able to do this in the field in which he had made a lifelong study, and to which he had made such a significant contribution. His precedent as lecturer of Celtic would have an enduring influence on the establishment of Celtic Studies in Nova Scotia in later years, especially at St. Francis Xavier University, but it would be for his substantial contribution to the corpus of Gaelic literature for which he would become particularly known internationally.

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<sup>189</sup> AMS, "History of the Continental Kelts."

## Chapter II

### *Role in Gaelic Publishing*

*Bhiodh e maslach mearachdan a chur an clò.*<sup>1</sup>

It would be a disgrace to put mistakes into print.

— A. Maclean Sinclair

With the publication of his first two books of Gaelic poetry in Scotland in 1880 and 1881, Alexander Maclean Sinclair began to build a name for himself in the world of Gaelic letters. This was only just the beginning, however, of what became a prolific output, amounting to twenty separate monographs, mostly anthologies of Gaelic verse and Highland history, published between 1880 and 1904,<sup>2</sup> in addition to well over 500 items published in at least eighteen periodicals between 1860 and 1917.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AMS, “Riaghailtean Bardachd” [“Rules of Poetry”], *Pictou News* (13 Mar. 1885): 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A: Published Books by AMS.

<sup>3</sup> I have found 559 individual items published, edited, and/or composed by AMS in twelve different periodicals (this number includes items submitted to more than one periodical). These are listed in Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS and

The manuscripts Maclean Sinclair inherited from his grandfather, via his uncle Charles Maclean, in particular, acted as a kind of imperative, pushing Maclean Sinclair to publish their contents in order to preserve them for posterity at the very least, but also to make them available to a wider Gaelic-speaking audience: “[. . .] I feel that it would be utterly unbecoming on my part not to publish at least the manuscripts brought to this country by my grandfather. Influenced by these reasons I have resolved to publish all the poems that I have.”<sup>4</sup>

Maclean Sinclair had an extensive network of informants in both Scotland and Canada with whom he communicated via correspondence or in person, and on whom he relied, in addition to his grandfather’s manuscripts, for much of the material in his publications: “During the last twenty-one years, whenever I met a person who had old Gaelic poems by heart, poems not in any book, I have been in the habit of getting him to recite them, and writing them down. I have in this way collected quite a number of valuable poems.”<sup>5</sup> Maclean Sinclair discussed his collecting activities in an article in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of*

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Appendix C: Items in “Cùil na Gàidhlig,” *Pictou News*. There are many more periodical items by AMS beyond those listed, such as in Scottish newspapers the *Oban Times* and *Inverness Highlander*, and Canadian papers such as the *Cape Breton Island Reporter*, the *PEI Magazine*, and the *Charlottetown Patriot*. The items listed in the appendices from the *Casket*, *Mac-Talla*, and the *Pictou News* are as complete as possible, based on all extant issues of those newspapers.

<sup>4</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, iv.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

*Inverness*, in which he acknowledges his informants. It is worth providing in its entirety here as an indication of his sources and the massive amount of material he gathered. Most of his local informants came from around the area in which he was raised (Antigonish County), but he also mentions a significant informant in Caledonia, PEI, near where he had been a minister for many years (Belfast). He also indicates some of the song collecting he had done in Tiree on his visit there in 1869 and other informants from Scotland from whom he received material via correspondence:

It is right that I should acknowledge my obligations to those who kindly assisted me, either by reciting poems to me, and thus enabling me to take them down, or by sending me poems which they themselves knew, or had obtained from others.

I took down from Ann Maclean, in Bailphuill, Tiree, 145 lines composed by her father, Donald Maclean (Domhnall Cubair); from John Macgillivray, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 426 lines by his father, John Macgillivray, piper to Macdonald of Glenaladale; and from John Macdonald (an Tailleir Abrach), 140 lines of Keppoch poetry, and also "Eachdraidh Dhòmhnail Bhàin a Bhòchdain." John Chisholm (Seoc Ruadh) wrote down for me and sent me 515 lines that he had by heart. I took down from John Macdonald – Iain Mac Aonghais, mhic Alasdair, mhic Raonaill – about 200 lines. He came from Glencoe, and settled at Glenbard in 1834. He was born in 1801, and died July 22, 1895, aged 94 years. I took down from Elizabeth Mackintosh about 510 lines. She was born at Taigh-an-Fhraoich, in Aberarder, and was married to Donald Mackenzie at Tom-an-t-Sabhail. She came to Nova Scotia with her husband in 1822. She lived at the East River of Pictou. I took down from Alexander Macdonald (Alasdair an Ridge) 730 lines. He wrote down and sent me 1120 lines. I thus got from him in all 1850 lines: all of which, and many more, he had by heart. He was born in 1823, and died February 27, 1904. He lived at Upper South River, Antigonish County. He belonged to the Bohuntin branch of the Keppoch family. I took down from Mary Mackinnon – a sister of the publisher of *Mactalla*, the Gaelic newspaper – 310 lines; and from Jane Macleod, in Caledonia, Prince Edward Island, 668 lines.

The Rev. Ranald Macgillivray, Arisaig, Antigonish County, collected 210 lines of Dugald Maceachern's poems for me. Of the poems of the Maclean Bards, I received 262 lines of old poems from Coundullie Morison, Aintuim, Mull; and about 1700 lines of modern poetry, by different authors, from Neil MacLaine, 2 Rutland Crescent, Glasgow.<sup>6</sup>

In the twentieth century Alexander Maclean Sinclair would become particularly known for his reputation for altering his texts, yet in this he was following the common practice of his contemporaries of "improving" texts for publication. It must be remembered that as a preserver of Gaelic poetry and history, he was following in the footsteps of a long line of tradition-bearers. For Maclean Sinclair, living in a period which saw a decline in the number of Gaelic speakers and the associated loss of much of their oral and literary tradition, the responsibility as a bearer of his family's legacy entailed transmitting what he could of this tradition into print. In conveying this tradition into the relative permanence and stability of print medium, Maclean Sinclair was conscious of making sure that what he published was "correct," not only for the sake of posterity, but the more immediate goal of presenting his culture's literature in an accurate form to his readers. As a Gael involved in the production of letters, his aim was to contribute to the defining literary canon of his culture, and ensure that it was authoritative as well as aesthetic, according to his own notions of

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<sup>6</sup> AMS, "A Collection of Gaelic Poems," *TGSI* 26 (1904-07): 260-61. Much of the material sent to AMS by C. Morison and N. MacLaine can be found in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds. There is also a small amount of material there from R. MacGillivray (Sagart Arisaig). Unfortunately, none of the material from AMS's other informants mentioned above is in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM (see Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds and Appendix F: Gaelic Songs in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds Correspondence).

correctness. This chapter will incorporate letters from Maclean Sinclair's correspondents as a means of shedding light on his involvement in the field of Gaelic publishing. This will lead into an examination of Maclean Sinclair's published works, especially his significant collections of Gaelic poetry, and a discussion of his editorial practices.

Maclean Sinclair was one of the most prolific individuals engaged in the effort of transforming the largely oral- and manuscript-based Gaelic literary tradition into a printed one in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In many ways his ethnic, linguistic, and professional profile is typical of nineteenth-century Gaelic scholars. Like so many of his Scottish contemporaries, Maclean Sinclair was a native Gaelic speaker whose immediate family hailed from the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*; he was university educated but was an amateur autodidact as far as Celtic Studies was concerned, and he made his living as a minister. What makes him stand out is the fact that he was born several thousands of miles west of Scotland and never set foot there until he was twenty-nine years of age. This is particularly evident in an announcement in the *Celtic Magazine* of Inverness in December 1880, concerning Maclean Sinclair's book *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881): "Such a publication – a Collection of Gaelic Songs from the backwoods of Canada – will be a new thing in Scotland." In Nova Scotia, Maclean Sinclair was often discussed in his own time as being without equal in Gaelic scholarship in North America:

The best Gaelic scholar and the most fruitful Gaelic pen in Canada is not in Nova Scotia, but is at Belfast, P. E. Island. The late Dr. Blair of Barney's River, Pictou, was probably the equal of Mr. Sinclair as far as Theological Gaelic is concerned; but in regard to Celtic poetry and history we do not know that Mr. Sinclair has a peer in America.<sup>7</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was an ambitious scholar, self-taught as he was in the field of Celtic Studies, and was keen on making a name for himself, not only in Nova Scotia, but in Scotland, and indeed the world, as well:

A man may be well-known in his own county, or even in Nova Scotia without being known in Scotland, England, or the United States. I would rather be known by name in the old country, than have all the people in Pictou County speak highly of me. Pictou county is but a small part of the world, the old country is a much larger part. To have a name in Nova Scotia is better than to have a name in Pictou County; to have a name in Scotland is better than to have a name in Nova Scotia; but to have a name in the world is better than to have a name in Scotland. [. . .] Greatness is something; it is of value. It will last.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, due to his many publications, Maclean Sinclair came to be highly regarded by Gaels in Scotland and North America, and engaged in correspondence with a number of significant members of the Gaelic community of the nineteenth century. He also corresponded with individuals from around the world. For instance, the letters in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in the Nova Scotia Archives (see Appendix E) indicate that he received letters from nine countries (including Australia, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, South Africa, and Trinidad), eight Canadian provinces, and fifteen of

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<sup>7</sup> "Gaelic," *Casket* (13 Mar. 1902): 2. [Originally published in the *Presbyterian Witness*.]

<sup>8</sup> "Boys Learn Latin" [unsigned manuscript in AMS's hand], Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/303, NSARM.

the United States. His repute among his contemporaries is illustrated by the words of one correspondent who wrote: "trusting you will excuse the liberty taken I may say I heard your name since I was a boy of ten years running cold in Tobermory, Mull, land of heroes bold and brave."<sup>9</sup> Maclean Sinclair was certainly well-known in Scotland for his Gaelic scholarship, as an anonymous contributor to the Antigonish *Casket* noted concerning Donald Mackinnon of the University of Edinburgh: "Let me add that I have seen a recent letter from Prof. McKinnon in which he speaks of the *Casket's* old friend, Rev. A. McLean Sinclair, as 'a most competent authority to guide or advise in matters Gaelic.'"<sup>10</sup> Maclean Sinclair's reputation went beyond the field of Scottish Gaelic studies; according to one family anecdote, the eminent Irish-language scholar Douglas Hyde, founder (in 1893) of Conradh na Gaeilge [The Gaelic League], and first president of Ireland (1938-45), apparently referred Sir Joseph Chisholm, later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (1931), to Maclean Sinclair as an authority on Gaelic matters: "He [Chisholm] wrote to Dr. Douglas Hyde, an eminent authority on such, and later President of Éire. Dr. Hyde replied that he need go no further afield than his own Province as he could get all the information he wanted from Dr. Maclean Sinclair who was then living in Halifax."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> J. MacDougall to AMS, Sept. 1897, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/230, NSARM.

<sup>10</sup> "Celtic in Edinburgh University," *Casket* (2 Apr. 1891): 1.

<sup>11</sup> DMS, "Some Family History," 29. Douglas Hyde lived in Canada from 1891 to 1892 as an interim professor of modern languages at the University of New Brunswick.

## Correspondents in Scotland

Maclean Sinclair's extensive network of correspondents in Scotland shows how well he was in touch with current affairs in Gaelic Studies. In his letters of inquiry concerning poetry and history, which he often sent to individuals of import in the field of Gaelic studies, including academics and poets, Maclean Sinclair thought nothing of commenting on their work and making suggestions for improvement. His correspondents inevitably replied politely, thanking him for his "suggestions." Many letters from his colleagues also suggest that he move to Scotland permanently.

Among Maclean Sinclair's correspondents<sup>12</sup> in Scotland were Professor John Stewart Blackie,<sup>13</sup> instrumental in establishing the Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University in 1882; Professor Donald MacKinnon, first holder of the Celtic Chair at Edinburgh University; and Dr. Magnus Maclean, first lecturer in Celtic at the University of Glasgow; Maclean published his lectures in two books, *The Literature of the Celts* (1902) and *The Literature of the Highlands* (1904).<sup>14</sup> In Magnus Maclean's first letter to Maclean Sinclair, a response to Maclean Sinclair's inquiries, he proclaims his familiarity with Maclean Sinclair's work and proposes that Maclean Sinclair return to Scotland:

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds.

<sup>13</sup> Blackie sent AMS a copy of the English-language poem, "Weep for an Hour." J. S. Blackie to AMS, 12 Apr. 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/199, NSARM.

<sup>14</sup> See Magnus Maclean, *The Literature of the Celts* (London: Blackie & Son, Ltd., 1902) and *The Literature of the Highlands* (London: Blackie & Son, Ltd., 1904).

I have been very pleased to receive your letter of Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>. I have been familiar with your name for a long time. We had a meeting of the Clan Maclean on Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> [. . .] the chairman made honourable mention of yourself, as one who has made a mark in the historical department as well as in the poetic department. [. . .] I am writing a paper for the association on "Maclean Bards." I am mostly altogether dependant on your own books, *Clarsach* etc. [. . .] Do you intend to visit Scotland anytime soon? Would you not like to come back permanently? There is need and I believe room for you here!<sup>15</sup>

Another well-known correspondent was Alexander Carmichael. In 1898, Carmichael sent Maclean Sinclair a letter in response to Maclean Sinclair's inquiries concerning the MacLeans of North Uist. Carmichael remarks on Maclean Sinclair's renown among Gaels, "Your name is well known to me as it is to all Highlanders on this and on that side of the Atlantic."<sup>16</sup> Carmichael could not, however, help Maclean Sinclair in his genealogical endeavours: "I would be very pleased to help you if I could, very pleased indeed. But I fear I cannot for which I am sorry. I heard much of the Macleans of North Uist but genealogy not being much in my line I did not take down much of what I heard."<sup>17</sup> Carmichael also describes his own work on a collection of archaic Gaelic charms, spells, and

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<sup>15</sup> Magnus Maclean to AMS, 28 Nov. 1892, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/314, NSARM.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Carmichael to AMS, 6 Dec. 1898, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/54, NSARM.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

lore, i.e. his well-known *Carmina Gadelica*, published in six volumes between 1900 and 1971:<sup>18</sup>

[. . .] I have been collecting old lore for upwards of forty years now. I am just now bringing out [. . .] a section of this old lore. [. . .] My daughter [. . .] is my assistant in my work. She is a highly capable all round scholar including Celtic [. . .].

Carmichael also refers to the decorative “Celtic” lettering which was to appear in the forthcoming work, published just two years after his letter to Maclean Sinclair:

My wife copied ornamental Celtic initial letters from ancient Celtic mss in the Advocate library. Those many beautiful Celtic letters I intend to be used for the initial letters of all the Gaelic poems. They [. . .] will enhance the appearance of the work though I much grudge the time and trouble they have caused.<sup>19</sup>

Carmichael, like Magnus Maclean, also invited Maclean Sinclair to come to Scotland: “Would you not, I must request, come some time to Scotland in order to carry on your labour of love? [...] Should you come to Scotland we will be very glad to see you and to aid if we can.”<sup>20</sup>

Other correspondents of Maclean Sinclair included Donald Maclean, known for his book *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica* published in 1915, still an essential reference work for Gaelic scholars. Donald Maclean and Alexander Maclean

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<sup>18</sup> Carmichael published the first two volumes; the subsequent four volumes were published after his death by J. C. Watson and A. Matheson; volume six is an index. See Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica* vol. 1-6 (Edinburgh: 1900-71).

<sup>19</sup> Alexander Carmichael to AMS, 6 Dec. 1898, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/54, NSARM.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Sinclair exchanged a number of letters concerning Gaelic poetry and publications. Maclean wrote to Maclean Sinclair in 1900 indicating he was working on a bibliography of Gaelic works in print; this would later become Maclean's *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*. Maclean indicates that he received some of his information from Maclean Sinclair via Donald MacKinnon:

Dear Mr. MacLean-Sinclair,

[. . .]

I have here before me material for a new Bibliography of Gaelic printed books, among other things your own reports of American Gaelic Books to Professor Mackinnon some years ago. The Professor has placed at my disposal all the material collected by himself and I expect to finish the work next summer.<sup>21</sup>

Maclean dedicated *Typographia* to Donald MacKinnon, whom Maclean acknowledges as having placed at his disposal "very valuable bibliographic material which he [i.e. MacKinnon] had collected for many years before he became the first occupant of the Celtic Chair in Edinburgh. It is not possible for me to acknowledge my full indebtedness to this collection."<sup>22</sup> Except for the entries on Maclean Sinclair's own publications, Donald Maclean makes no mention of Maclean Sinclair in *Typographia*. Maclean does acknowledge, however, that he obtained much of his information from "Colonial Booksellers and private collectors": "I have searched the leading Libraries of Great Britain, and I have been in communication with Colonial and Continental Librarians and

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<sup>21</sup> Donald MacLean to AMS, 4 Dec. 1900, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/6, NSARM.

<sup>22</sup> Donald Maclean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, viii.

Booksellers. I have approached private collectors as far as I could go, and I have for many years scanned and noted the pages of booksellers' and auctioneers' catalogues."<sup>23</sup>

Other correspondents of Maclean Sinclair among the literati of Gaelic Scotland include Rev. John Gregorson Campbell, known especially for his books *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* published in 1900 and *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* published in 1902; Mary Mackellar, author of *Poems and Songs, Gaelic and English* published in 1880, and frequent contributor of articles to periodicals such as the *Celtic Monthly* and the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*; Colin Chisholm, also a significant contributor to the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*; and Counnduillie Rankin Morison, an authority on Mull traditions and one of Maclean Sinclair's most prolific corresponding informants with over twenty letters including eighteen Gaelic songs.<sup>24</sup>

Another important figure in Gaelic Studies with whom Maclean Sinclair corresponded was printer and publisher Archibald Sinclair of Glasgow, known especially for his *An t-Òranaiche*, originally published in five parts between 1876 and 1879. Alexander Maclean Sinclair's second book of Gaelic poetry, *Clàrsach na Coille*, was published in Glasgow by Archibald Sinclair in 1881 (his first book

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<sup>23</sup> Maclean, *Typographia*, ix.

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds and Appendix F: Gaelic Songs in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds Correspondence.

*Dàin Spioradail*, published in 1880 by MacLachlan and Stewart, was a collection of hymns by his grandfather John Maclean). In 1877 Archibald Sinclair wrote a letter in response to Alexander Maclean Sinclair thanking him for his high praise of his work. He also mentions that he would like to get a copy of Maclean Sinclair's grandfather's song "A' Choille Ghruamach": "Your grandfather's 'Coille Ghruamach' which I had when you were in Scotland has gone missing and the copy I now have I am not sure if it is correct and would thank you much to furnish me with a copy which you consider right, as I would not like to see such a fine song appear in the *Oranaiche* unless it was correct."<sup>25</sup>

Another of Maclean Sinclair's well-known correspondents was Neil MacLeod, one of the most popular Gaelic poets of the late nineteenth century. Most of his songs are considered by modern Gaelic critics to be "rather facile and superficial"<sup>26</sup> – according to Sorley MacLean, MacLeod's poetry "is sentimental, pretty-pretty, weak and thin, only sometimes attaining splendour in its occasional realist moods [...]"<sup>27</sup> – MacLeod was nevertheless, "a competent craftsman with a strong musical quality."<sup>28</sup> MacLeod, who came from a family of poets, moved from Glendale, Skye to Edinburgh at 22 years of age, where he

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<sup>25</sup> Archibald Sinclair to AMS, 3 May 1877, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/90, NSARM.

<sup>26</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Niall MacLeòid."

<sup>27</sup> Somhairle MacGill-eain, *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley Maclean* ed. William Gillies (1985; rpt. Stornoway: Acair Ltd, 1997), 46.

<sup>28</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Niall MacLeòid."

took up the tea trade.<sup>29</sup> In one of MacLeod's letters to Maclean Sinclair, it is apparent that Maclean Sinclair had written to MacLeod first for information regarding Gaelic poets, including MacLeod himself. MacLeod replied:

Now regarding myself, I herewith enclose you some newspaper cuttings containing a paper on my father, read by D. Macdiarmid, before the Gaelic Society of Glasgow, a few years ago, from which you will be able to glean as much as is necessary of my pedigree. I was born in Glendale, Skye, in the year 1843. All the teaching I got was in the Parish school of my native glen. I may say that my "schools and schoolmasters" were, and are, the book of Nature, and my fellow beings. I came to Edinburgh, over 30 years ago, but still "my heart is in the Highlands." I am married, and have 3 of a family, one son and two daughters. My wife's maiden name is Stewart, daughter of John Stewart, late teacher Snizort, Portree, Skye.<sup>30</sup>

In an earlier letter it is clear that Maclean Sinclair must have written to MacLeod to compliment him on his collection of poetry, *Clàrsach an Doire* (The Harp of the Grove), which MacLeod published in 1883.<sup>31</sup> MacLeod was complimentary in return:

Dear Sir,

I received your letter this morning, and I am very pleased indeed to make your acquaintance. I am quite aware of the valuable services you have rendered the language & literature of the Gael. My sincere wish is that you may be long spared to continue your good work in that direction. [. . .]

I am very glad to know you are pleased with my humble efforts in the poetic field. I appreciate the compliment very much coming from such a quarter.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Thomson, *Companion*, s.v. "Niall MacLeòid."

<sup>30</sup> Neil Macleod to AMS, 2 Feb. 1897, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/252, NSARM.

<sup>31</sup> Neil MacLeod, *Clàrsach an Doire* (Duneideann: Maclachlainn agus an Stiùbhartach, 1883).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

It is also clear that Maclean Sinclair disapproved of some of MacLeod's choices of words, particularly in the song "Bàs Leinibh na Bantraich" ("The Death of the Widow's Child"):

With regard to your objection to a line or two in my verses on Bas leanabh na bantraich, - especially my using the rose and the lamb as meaning the self & same thing. Our language is very rich in endearing pet names for children, such as - *mo luaidh, mo laogh, mo luran, mo chagaran, mo mhùirnin*, etc, and from my point of view I would think it most natural for the bereaved mother to use more than one of these endearing terms in lamenting the loss of her only child.

Allow me once more to express my pleasure at making your acquaintance, and at the same time believe me to be faithfully yours  
Neil Macleod<sup>33</sup>

We get some insight into what issues Maclean Sinclair had with the song from a small piece in Maclean Sinclair's own Gaelic column, "Cùil na Gàidhlig" in the *Pictou News* thirteen years earlier in 1884, in an announcement concerning Neil MacLeod's new book of songs *Clàrsach an Doire* (1883). As MacLeod had indicated in his letter, Maclean Sinclair had a problem with the metaphors of the rose and the lamb representing the same thing:

*Chuir Niall Macleoid, bard a tha chomhnuidh ann an Duneideann, a mach a chuid oran bho cheann a ghoirid. [. . .] Tha coimeasan gle fhreagarrach air an toirt a-stigh 's na h-orain. Cha do thachair ruinn ach aon choimeas leis nach eil sinn toilichte. Anns an dan "Bas leanabh na Bantraich" gheibhear na rannan a leanas:—*

*Cha robh nam ghàradh ach aon ros,  
A bha mi 'dion 'sa cumail beo,  
Spion thusa leat e gun dheoin;  
Mo leanaban gaoil!*

[. . .]

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<sup>33</sup> Neil Macleod to AMS, 2 Jan. 1897, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/262, NSARM.

*Gu 'shuidheachadh 'na fhion-lios fhein,  
Far nach tig thus' a dheanamh beud,  
'Na uan gun ghaoid am measg an treud,  
Mo leanaban gaoil!*

*Gabhaidh ros suidheachadh ann am fion-lios mar ros; ach ciamar a ghabhas e suidheachadh ann mar uan? Cha'n urrainn ni a bhi 'na ros agus 'na uan.<sup>34</sup>*

Neil MacLeod, a poet living in Edinburgh, recently published his songs. . . There are some very agreeable metaphors given in the songs. We only happened upon one metaphor with which we are not pleased. In the song "The Death of the Widow's Child" one finds the verses that follow:

I only had one rose in my garden  
That I was sheltering and keeping alive;  
You plucked it away without my consent,  
My baby of love!

...

Located in its own vineyard,  
Where you won't come doing harm,  
a lamb without defect among the herd,  
My baby of love!

A rose can be located in a vineyard as a rose, but how can it be located there as a lamb? A thing cannot be a rose and a lamb.

### Correspondents in Canada

In the New World too, Maclean Sinclair's correspondents included notable figures among the Gaelic intelligentsia. But generally speaking, Maclean Sinclair's local correspondents tend to have a markedly different social profile to his educated and established Scottish contacts. Through his role as a minister in the church, his Gaelic books and a Gaelic column in a local newspaper, Maclean Sinclair became known as a leader in the Gaelic community of the Canadian Maritimes. Maclean Sinclair thus received letters from priests, ministers,

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<sup>34</sup> AMS, "Leabhar-Oran Neill Mhicleoid" ["The Song-Book of Neil MacLeod"], *Pictou News* (8 Feb. 1884): 1.

teachers, and politicians, in addition to letters from farmers, fishermen, and miners. They typically wrote to Maclean Sinclair concerning genealogical information, Gaelic matters, and poetry they themselves collected or even composed. Sometimes this was material that they asked Maclean Sinclair to correct and resend to a particular newspaper on their behalf, such as Maclean Sinclair's own Gaelic column, "Cùil na Gàidhlig," in the *Pictou News*, the *Antigonish Casket*, or the all-Gaelic newspaper *Mac-Talla*.

One of the better-known correspondents of Maclean Sinclair from among the Gaels of Nova Scotia includes Jonathan G. MacKinnon, a native of Cape Breton and the editor of the newspaper *Mac-Talla*. MacKinnon was a long-time friend of Maclean Sinclair; he also published three of Maclean Sinclair's books of Gaelic poetry. Among notoriously short-lived Gaelic periodicals, both in Scotland as well as Canada, *Mac-Talla* stood out, running from 28 May 1892 to 24 June 1904. Unlike other Gaelic periodicals, it was entirely in Gaelic, including even the advertisements.<sup>35</sup> *Mac-Talla* printed many poems sent in from readers, but one of the difficulties in researching the Gaelic poetry is that the contributors, more often than not, give only their initials, a penname, or no name at all. Maclean Sinclair apparently wrote to MacKinnon to request the personal names of some of the regular contributors to *Mac-Talla*. MacKinnon responded with a

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<sup>35</sup> See Charles Dunn's discussion of Jonathan MacKinnon and *Mac-Talla* in *Highland Settler*, 84-88. See also DMS, "Gaelic Newspapers and Prose Writings in Nova Scotia," *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* 26 (1945): 105-13.

very interesting letter that sheds light on a number of these pseudonyms whose identity might otherwise remain unknown:

Dear Sir!

I was away on a short vacation just after receiving your letter of August 31<sup>st</sup>, and although I have been back for some time I have not yet complied with your request for the names of those who wrote the letters. You will kindly excuse me for this neglect, as the request you made had partly passed out of my mind.

“Peigidh Phabach’s” real name is Dan MacPherson, a young man who is foreman in my office. He has been writing letters [in] that name for some time. “Calum Dubh” is John M. Charles in the Dept. of Marine, Ottawa. He is a Cape Breton man I think! “Calum Beag” is a son of Murdoch McDonald’s of North Sydney who is a brother of Rev. D. McDonald’s of Strathloine. “Calum Beag” does not really write those letters, at least I don’t think he does. “Gille Beag” is a Dan McNeil, Giant’s Lake, Antigonish County. “Cabar-Feidh” is Ian MacKenzie, of London, England. The author of “tuathanaich math is dona” is D. D. McFarlane of S.W. Margaree. [. . .]

Yours Truly,  
J. G. MacKinnon<sup>36</sup>

Other examples of correspondents from among the Gaels of Nova Scotia include the Rev. Dr. Alexander MacDonald, a highly educated priest with a PhD and DD from the Urban College of Rome and a professor of Latin, English and philosophy at St. Francis Xavier University; in one letter, for instance, MacDonald answers some questions Maclean Sinclair had concerning some particularly difficult Gaelic words.<sup>37</sup> Another correspondent was Father Ronald MacGillivray, the “Sagart Arisaig” (“the Arisaig priest”), who sent Maclean

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<sup>36</sup> Jonathan MacKinnon to AMS, 5 Oct. 1903, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/17, NSARM.

<sup>37</sup> See Alex. MacDonald to AMS, 5 June 1902, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/88a, NSARM.

Sinclair a number of anecdotes, poems, and poem fragments.<sup>38</sup> Yet another correspondent was Alexander McDonald, the “Keppoch Bard,” whom Maclean Sinclair called “the last of the old bards,”<sup>39</sup> and, writing in 1904, of whom Maclean Sinclair also said “he is the best Gaelic poet in America today” (“*is e bard Gàidhlig a 's fearr a tha 'n diugh an America*”<sup>40</sup>). In one letter, McDonald included a composition called “Address to a May Flower” which has never been published.<sup>41</sup> Maclean Sinclair also received a number of letters from less well-known local poets from both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, often intended for publication in local newspapers.

### Contribution to Periodicals

Some of the local newspapers to which Maclean Sinclair submitted material, for instance Gaelic songs, genealogical articles and clan histories,

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<sup>38</sup> See Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds. See Part I, Chapter I for an example of one of Father MacGillivray’s letters (in particular see footnotes #108 & #109). For additional information concerning MacGillivray, see Kenneth Nilsen’s “Some Pre-*Mac-Talla* Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia” in *Ranssachadh na Gàidhlig 2000*, 130 & 133-34. See also MacGillivray’s *History of Antigonish*, ed. Raymond MacLean.

<sup>39</sup> AMS, “The Death of the Keppoch Bard,” *Casket* (24 Mar. 1904): 4.

<sup>40</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875* (Sydney, C.B.: *Mac-Talla* Publishing Co. Ltd., 1904), 115.

<sup>41</sup> See Bàrd na Ceapaich (Alexander McDonald) to AMS, 30 Dec. 1896, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/284, NSARM. Trueman and Laurinda Matheson, of Siol Cultural Enterprises, St. Andrew’s, Nova Scotia, are working on producing a book of McDonald’s compositions and will be including a copy of this poem.

matters concerning the Gaelic language and philology, and religious items, have already been noted, such as the Antigonish *Casket*<sup>42</sup> – Maclean Sinclair contributed at least fifty items to the *Casket* between 1860 and 1916 – and the all-Gaelic newspaper *Mac-Talla* (Sydney, Cape Breton), to which Maclean Sinclair submitted almost eighty items over the entire run of the paper between 1892 and 1904.<sup>43</sup> Other periodicals to which Maclean Sinclair contributed in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island included the New Glasgow *Eastern Chronicle*, the *Presbyterian Witness* (Halifax), the *Enterprise* (New Glasgow and Pictou), the *Island Reporter*<sup>44</sup> (Baddeck and Sydney, Cape Breton), the Charlottetown *Patriot*, and the *PEI Magazine*. Maclean Sinclair also published material in Scottish-interest newspapers in the United States and Canada, including the *Scottish-American Journal* (New York),<sup>45</sup> the *Scottish Canadian* (Toronto), and the *Canada Scotsman* (Montreal and Toronto).

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<sup>42</sup> For a discussion on the *Casket* see Part I, Chapter III, in particular footnote #27.

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS.

<sup>44</sup> AMS used much of the Gaelic poetry he published in the *Island Reporter* (and the *Pictou News*) for his books, especially *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a'-Bhàird* (1888-1890) (see below concerning this). AMS also re-published much of what appeared in the *Pictou News* in *Mac-Talla*.

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion on this newspaper see Michael Newton, "'Becoming Cold-hearted like the Gentiles Around Them': Scottish Gaelic in the United States 1872-1912," *e-Keltoi: [Electronic] Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies* 2, <<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/>>. In particular see section 2. The Role of Gaelic Periodicals.

Maclean Sinclair also contributed to newspapers in Scotland; in particular the *Oban Times* and the *Inverness Highlander*<sup>46</sup> were significant as venues in which Maclean Sinclair could engage in discourse (particularly evident in letters to the editor) with individuals with similar genealogical and poetical interests in Scotland on a level he could not find, for the most part, in North American newspapers. Maclean Sinclair subscribed to most of these papers and cut out many articles, including some of the pieces he contributed, and glued them into scrapbooks.<sup>47</sup> He often submitted items of the same or similar nature to more than one periodical.<sup>48</sup>

Other Scottish serials to which Maclean Sinclair subscribed and contributed included the short-lived *Celtic Magazine*, published in Inverness from 1876-88 (Maclean Sinclair contributed six items) and the *Celtic Monthly*, published in Glasgow from 1892-1917 (Maclean Sinclair contributed nineteen items), and the academic periodical the *Celtic Review*, published in Edinburgh

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<sup>46</sup> Colm Ó Baoill cites two of Maclean Sinclair's contributions to the *Highlander*, 6 Sept. 1873: 3 and 9 May 1874: 2. See Colm Ó Baoill, *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia*, 36.

<sup>47</sup> The scrapbooks are now housed in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. See Appendix D: Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM. DMS compiled a list of the contents of the scrapbooks (kept along with the scrapbooks). Some of this list can also be found in "Some Family History," 68-70. See MG9 "Scrapbooks" Volumes 538-45, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, NSARM.

<sup>48</sup> See, for instance, his piece on James Macpherson which he submitted to at least three newspapers: the *Oban Times* (24 Aug. 1901), the *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901 & 3 Oct. 1901), and the *Presbyterian Witness* (12 Oct. 1901). He also published similar articles on clan histories and Gaelic poetry in a number of periodicals (see Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS).

from 1904-16 (Maclean Sinclair contributed twelve items).<sup>49</sup> However, one of the most significant periodicals to which Maclean Sinclair contributed was *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*. He published five items in *Transactions* between 1887 and 1905 as a corresponding member.<sup>50</sup> The still-functioning Gaelic Society of Inverness was founded in 1871 as a learned society at whose meetings papers were read on topics ranging from the historical and antiquarian to linguistics and literature. One of the most important functions of the society was the publication of its *Transactions*, beginning in 1872. Maclean Sinclair's articles in the *Transactions* covered topics ranging from philology, genealogy, and Gaelic poetry. He contributed three significant articles on the latter including unpublished Gaelic songs with notes ("Old Gaelic Songs" and "A Collection of Gaelic Poems")<sup>51</sup> and a discussion on "The Gaelic Bards and the Collectors of Their Productions," which Maclean Sinclair subdivided into sections on the Heroic Ballads, the Gaelic Bards from 1400 to 1525, 1525 to 1645, 1645 to 1725, 1725 to 1830, and 1830 to 1900, (largely listings of bards from these periods), and Collectors and Collections.<sup>52</sup> Maclean Sinclair also similarly

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<sup>49</sup> For a list of AMS's articles in these three periodicals, see *CMA*, *CMO*, and *CR* in Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS.

<sup>50</sup> AMS is first listed as a member of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in *TGSI* 13 (1886-87): 363.

<sup>51</sup> See *TGSI* in Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS.

<sup>52</sup> AMS, "The Gaelic Bards and the Collectors of Their Productions," *TGSI* 24 (1899-1901): 259-77.

published in *Mac-Talla* and the *Casket* a chronologically based series of articles on the Gaelic Bards.<sup>53</sup>

**“Cùil na Gàidhlig,” *Pictou News***

Maclean Sinclair’s largest contribution to Gaelic publishing in newspapers was while he was living in the East River district (ministering to congregations in Springville, St. Paul’s, and Sunny Brae) of Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Maclean Sinclair became the editor of a Gaelic column in a local weekly newspaper, the *Pictou News*. The column, called “Cùil na Gàidhlig” (“The Gaelic Corner”), was announced in English in the issue of 30 November 1883:

An entirely New Feature and one which is found in no paper in Canada, so far as we know, will be our GAELIC COLUMN. It is a matter of surprise to us, that, in a country where Gaelic is still so extensively spoken and read, no paper has yet made an attempt to suit the taste of Highland people. We are happy to announce that one of the most distinguished Celtic scholars of the day has kindly undertaken the management of this department.<sup>54</sup>

The Gaelic column began in the next issue on 7 December 1883 and included a similar announcement in Gaelic to the English one the week before, and six months later Maclean Sinclair stated in the *Scottish-American Journal*, without any mention of his own role in the column, that, “[t]he only newspaper in America

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<sup>53</sup> See Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS, specifically *Mac-Talla* (6 parts) 2 Feb. 1895 to 9 Mar. 1895, and the *Casket* (6 parts) 10 Mar. 1898 to 4 Jan. 1900.

<sup>54</sup> “An entirely New Feature,” *Pictou News* (30 Nov. 1883): 1. See also Kenneth Nilsen, “Some Notes on pre-*Mac-Talla* Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia” in *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* 2000, 137-38.

which devotes special attention to Gaelic is the *Pictou News*. It has a Gaelic column every week. It is published in Pictou, Nova Scotia.”<sup>55</sup> Maclean Sinclair’s Gaelic column ran at least until 26 January 1888, which is the latest extant issue of the *Pictou News* containing “Cùil na Gàidhlig.”<sup>56</sup> One reason for its termination may in fact have been Maclean Sinclair’s move to a new pastoral charge in PEI in May of 1888. The *Pictou News*, begun in August 1882, was discontinued in 1890, and Maclean Sinclair’s Gaelic column thus ran for nearly the lifetime of the paper.<sup>57</sup> During this time “Cùil na Gàidhlig” included at least 367 items in 178 issues of the *Pictou News*.<sup>58</sup> “Cùil na Gàidhlig” included in its

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<sup>55</sup> AMS, “Gaelic Books,” *Scottish-American Journal* (10 July 1888). Kenneth Nilsen points out that there was in fact another newspaper with Gaelic in it being published concurrently in Antigonish, called the *Aurora*; see “Some Notes on pre-Mac-Talla Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia,” 138.

<sup>56</sup> It seems that “Cùil na Gàidhlig” may have run longer as AMS received a letter dated 23 July 1889 submitting a poem for the column (see Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/65, NSARM and Appendix E: Correspondence in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds).

<sup>57</sup> The *Union List of Canadian Newspapers Held by Canadian Libraries* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1977), 218, says the *News* merged with a Stellarton trades journal to form the *Journal & Pictou News*. However, according to *Nova Scotia Newspapers: A Directory & Union List 1752-1988*, comp. Lynn Murphy (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1990), 327 and Gertrude E. N. Tratt in her *Survey & Listing of Nova Scotia Newspapers, 1752-1957: With Particular Reference to the Period Before 1867* (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1979), 93, the *Pictou News* ran 1882-1890 when “the *Standard* bought out the *News* plant after it had lost its own by fire. The *News* was discontinued.” NSARM holdings indicate that they have *Pictou News* issues from 1882-1890 available on microfilm (mostly complete, but some issues missing towards the end), and the originals from 1882 to 1891. After a search, however, the 1891 originals, as listed in the archival holdings, did not turn up and was determined to be an error.

<sup>58</sup> See Appendix C: Items in “Cùil na Gàidhlig,” *Pictou News*. Some issues of the *Pictou News* are missing from archival holdings (see previous footnote), therefore the number of issues in which “Cùil na Gàidhlig” appeared is undoubtedly greater than 178.

column a variety of material such as songs, anecdotes, articles on Highland history, advice, proverbs, letters, and poetry from Maclean Sinclair's grandfather's manuscripts. Maclean Sinclair's friend and colleague D. B. Blair contributed much to the column, including a series "About the Old Highlanders" ("Mu na Sean Gaidhil") and "The History of the Highlanders" ("Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal"):

The "Cùil na Gàidhlig," dear to so many Highland hearts, will be continued, and a very interesting feature will be the regular publication of a "History of the Highlanders," by the Rev. D. B. Blair, one of the most distinguished Gaelic Scholars of the day, who has very materially aided the Rev. Mr. Sinclair in furnishing matter for the Gaelic column. The Gaelic readers in Pictou, Antigonishe, Cape Breton, and P. E. Island, who are patrons of the *News*, owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Sinclair, who has without any recompense regularly furnished them with interesting reading in their mother tongue.<sup>59</sup>

Maclean Sinclair sometimes received submissions for "Cùil na Gàidhlig" from informants via correspondence, which Maclean Sinclair would in turn edit for inclusion in the column.<sup>60</sup> In one letter a contributor clearly requests that Maclean Sinclair correct his poem for him:

I herewith enclose a piece of Gaelic poetry for the publication in the "*Pictou News*." I could get it printed in the *Sydney Island Reporter*, but since I have ascertained that the editor of that paper does not know much

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<sup>59</sup> *Pictou News*, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (Scrapbooks), MG9/542/234, NSARM. D. B. Blair's "Eachdraidh nan Gàidheal" ("History of the Highlanders") began 30 Oct. 1885 and appeared in "Cùil na Gàidhlig" until 10 Dec. 1886 (see Appendix C: Items in "Cùil na Gàidhlig," *Pictou News*).

<sup>60</sup> See, for instance, letters in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/30, 30b, & 65, NSARM. See also Appendix E.

about the Gaelic language, I decided to send it to you, [. . .] revise it if necessary, and render the versification smoother.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to material for the *Pictou News* that Maclean Sinclair received via correspondence, he also actively collected songs and tales for his column from local informants. Maclean Sinclair's wife Mary Ann alludes to his collecting and editorial activities for "Cùil na Gàidhlig" in a letter to him while he was in Merigomish, Nova Scotia. It seems Maclean Sinclair devoted a lot of time to "correcting" the material, something which Mary Ann also remarks upon: "You will get a number of songs and stories from those people I hope but if you will have to correct & re-write them they will be more trouble than good perhaps."<sup>62</sup>

### **Maclean Sinclair as Publisher<sup>63</sup>**

Between the years 1880 and 1911, Maclean Sinclair published a total of twenty-one books. In addition to fifteen volumes of Gaelic verse, Maclean Sinclair published six books in English. The latter includes *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly* (Truro, NS, 1880), essentially a series of essays warning about the theories of Anglo-Israelism, and *Peoples and Languages of the World*

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<sup>61</sup> Peter McLellan to AMS, 23 July 1889, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/65, NSARM. Unfortunately the poem is not extant in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds and the last date for which any extant issues of the *Pictou News* with "Cùil na Gàidhlig" is 26 Jan. 1888.

<sup>62</sup> Mary Ann Sinclair to AMS, 1 Aug. 1885. Private Collection; courtesy of John Sinclair, grandson of AMS.

<sup>63</sup> See Appendix A: Published Books by AMS.

(Charlottetown, PEI, 1894), which, as we have seen, was Maclean Sinclair's foray into ethnology and philology.<sup>64</sup> Maclean Sinclair also wrote three books in English on Highland history and genealogy. These include Maclean Sinclair's sizeable history of the Macleans, *The Clan Gillean* (1899), which complements his works on the *Maclean Bards*,<sup>65</sup> and two short works: *The Mackenzies of Applecross* (1901), essentially a pamphlet (eleven-pages) tracing the genealogy of the Mackenzies of Kintail in Scotland to Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, and a forty-five-page history of the *Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen* (1901), which looks at Maclean Sinclair's father's branch of the Sinclairs, tracing them from their homeland in northern Scotland to the Goshen area of Nova Scotia. The latter incorporates some biographical material on Maclean Sinclair himself, including a list of his published works.<sup>66</sup> All of Maclean Sinclair's clan histories were published in Charlottetown. The sixth English-language book with which Maclean Sinclair is connected is a 102-page history of the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia that includes a brief look at the church in PEI and Newfoundland. This book, entitled *The Story of the Kirk in Nova Scotia* (published in Pictou in

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<sup>64</sup> See Part II, Chapter I.

<sup>65</sup> Discussed below under the section on Maclean Poetry and *The Clan Gillean*.

<sup>66</sup> See AMS, *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*, 32-34.

1911), was written by a Rev. Alexander Maclean, and was supposedly edited by Alexander Maclean Sinclair.<sup>67</sup>

### *Dàin Spioradail and Clàrsach na Coille*

Because of the profound influence of his maternal Maclean upbringing, it is not surprising that Maclean Sinclair's first anthologies of Gaelic verse should be on the poetry of his grandfather, John Maclean: "I have prepared this work [*Clàrsach na Coille*] for the press, partly owing to a feeling of regard for the memory of John M'Lean, [. . .]."<sup>68</sup> Maclean Sinclair published John Maclean's religious and secular works in two separate volumes, which were released almost simultaneously. In 1880, the same year that Maclean Sinclair published *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*, he also published a book in Scotland of his grandfather's hymns, whose complete title is *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain Maille ri Beagan de Laoidhean Mhic Griogair Nach Robh Gus a So Air an Clo-Bhualadh* (Spiritual Songs by John Maclean Along With a Few Hymns by MacGregor That Have Not Until Now Been Published). This was Maclean Sinclair's first published collection of Gaelic poetry, and he sought to produce a version of his grandfather's hymns without the errors of an earlier edition, published by John

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<sup>67</sup> Alexander Maclean, D. D., *The Story of the Kirk in Nova Scotia*, (Pictou: *Pictou Advocate*, 1911). AMS's name is not on the book; however, DMS tells us AMS was editor of this book in "Some Family History," 67. Also, the cover page states that "Copies of this work will be sent to any address, at 50 cents per copy, by George M. Sinclair, Hopewell, Nova Scotia." George was AMS's son.

<sup>68</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), vi.

Maclean himself in 1835, that “was full of mistakes.”<sup>69</sup> It is a book of 215 pages which includes forty-seven hymns by John Maclean, nine by Rev. James MacGregor,<sup>70</sup> one by D. B. Blair,<sup>71</sup> and one by John MacGillivray.<sup>72</sup> In his preface of the book, a memoir of John Maclean, Maclean Sinclair explains that his next book of poetry will shortly follow *Dàin Spioradail*: “John Maclean’s songs and secular poems are in the printer’s hands, and will be issued in a few weeks under the title of ‘Clarsach na Coille.’”<sup>73</sup>

There is indication in Maclean Sinclair’s correspondence that he had submitted a manuscript for a book of poetry based on his grandfather’s manuscripts (the John Maclean and Dr. Hector Maclean manuscripts) to potential publishers in Scotland as early as 1875. In a letter from Gaelic printer Archibald Sinclair, it is clear that Maclean Sinclair sought his consideration for publishing his book. Sinclair, who did eventually publish Maclean Sinclair’s *Clàrsach na*

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<sup>69</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, x.

<sup>70</sup> MacGregor was the first Presbyterian minister in Pictou (see Part I, Chapter I, particularly footnote #76). Maclean Sinclair inherited MacGregor’s manuscripts (see page 146 of *Dàin Spioradail*); these are now in NSARM (see Appendix D: Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM).

<sup>71</sup> See Part I, Chapters III and IV. Maclean Sinclair also inherited D. B. Blair’s papers (see Appendix D: Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM).

<sup>72</sup> John “the Piper” MacGillivray was born in Moydart, Scotland, and was piper to Macdonald of Glenaladale. He emigrated to Antigonish, Nova Scotia, late in life, and was a schoolteacher there. See AMS, *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), 316.

<sup>73</sup> AMS, *Dàin Spioradail*, xi.

*Coille* in 1881, remarks on the probable size of the printed book, and the cost of publishing it:

Rev. dear Sir,

I have been laid up for sometime hence my delay in answering your letter. So far as I can see at present your M.S. will make a book of 400 pages or so – of the size of Rob Donn’s Poems if you could sell 4 or 500 copies in Canada I would purpose printing an edition of say 750 and would let you have 4 or 500 copies at 2/- per copy and retain here the 250 or 350 copies as the case may be, and by the sale of them recoup myself for the loss I make by giving the 4 or 500 copies at 2/-. The said amount would not pay me for printing the work but I would run the risk of selling the remainder of the copies. I would require the half of the price viz. £20. before commencing the publication and the other £20. when completed. The price I would sell the work to the public would be 3/- or 3/6 per copy. [. . .]<sup>74</sup>

Archibald Sinclair also mentions the difficulties in Gaelic publishing, foreshadowing what would become a common complaint of Maclean Sinclair in almost all of his later publications:

[. . .] It is up hill work to get Gaelic books sold. Although several Tyree men have been at me for copies of your grandfather’s books I find that when they know that a book of that kind has been printed they lose their enthusiasm and come to the conclusion that they can get the loan of a copy from some acquaintance. [. . .]<sup>75</sup>

Another piece of correspondence also shows that Maclean Sinclair was consulting individuals in Scotland for their opinions on his manuscript, and was soliciting their aid in getting it produced. In particular, Donald MacKinnon of

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<sup>74</sup> Archibald Sinclair to AMS, 29 Mar. 1875, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/578, NSARM.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Edinburgh University acted as a kind of agent for Maclean Sinclair, showing the manuscript to potential publishers and advising Maclean Sinclair on the matter. MacKinnon indicates that he spoke with Gaelic publishers MacLachlan and Stewart on Maclean Sinclair's behalf: "I have had some interviews & correspondence with some people regarding the publication of your ms. Especially with McLachlan & Stewart who, with the exception of Sinclair, Glasgow, is the only Gaelic publisher of consequence we have."<sup>76</sup> MacKinnon goes on to explain to Maclean Sinclair the difficulties in publishing Gaelic books, echoing Archibald Sinclair's earlier comments to Maclean Sinclair:

Publishers are not ready to take up a Gaelic ms. It must be admitted that our countrymen however loudly & warmly they speak about their affection for their tongue will not buy the books printed in it; and a publisher naturally looks at the matter clearly from that point of view. Still Mr. McLachlan [. . .] is inclined to look more liberally at the matter & I think he would be prepared to publish your ms. If [. . .] you would take 250 copies at cost price to be sold in Canada.<sup>77</sup>

Though *Dàin Spioradail* (1880) has a publication date of a year earlier than *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), it seems that Maclean Sinclair had *Clàrsach* ready for publication sooner, or at least his prefaces in each of the books indicate as much. The preface (memoir) in *Dàin* is dated 22 July 1880 and the preface in *Clàrsach* is dated 6 January 1880. Also the letters from Archibald Sinclair and Donald MacKinnon suggest that Maclean Sinclair was mainly interested in getting

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<sup>76</sup> Donald MacKinnon to AMS, 12 Aug. 1878, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/261, NSARM.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

material from his grandfather's manuscripts, much of which ended up in *Clàrsach na Coille*, into print at an early date.

An announcement concerning the impending release of *Clàrsach na Coille* appeared in the December 1880 issue of the *Celtic Magazine*, and included a mention of *Dàin Spioradail*, which was going to be “published on an early date by MacLachlan and Stewart of Edinburgh.”<sup>78</sup> The announcement remarked upon the uniqueness of such a collection coming from the “backwoods of Canada.” Interestingly the announcement also makes note that Maclean Sinclair was already known to the Gaels of Scotland:

A New Collection of Gaelic Songs, under the name of “Clarsach na Coille,” is about to be issued to the public. Such a publication – a Collection of Gaelic Songs from the backwoods of Canada – will be a new thing in Scotland. The compiler the Rev. A. Maclean-Sinclair, already known to Gaelic students, even on this side of the Atlantic, is well qualified for the compiling and editing of such a work, for he has a most intimate acquaintance with the whole range of Gaelic poetry, and is a first-class Gaelic scholar, having closely studied the language and poetry of the Highlands since he could read.<sup>79</sup>

*Clàrsach na Coille* contains 371 pages and includes a memoir in honour of John Maclean and most of his secular poetry (twenty-five songs he composed in Scotland, “*a rinn e ann an Albainn*,” and nineteen that he composed in “this country [Nova Scotia], “*a rinn e 's an duthaich so*”). Maclean Sinclair included the

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<sup>78</sup> “A New Collection of Gaelic Songs, . . .” *Celtic Magazine* 6.62 (Dec. 1880): 65.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

same epigraph by John Maclean on the title page of *Clàrsach* that Maclean had used for his own *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* in 1818:

<p><i>'Chlann nan Gàidheal, bithibh cuimhneach</i>  <i>Air 'ur cainnt a chur an cleachdadh;</i>  <i>Cha 'n iarr i iasad air cànan</i>  <i>'S bheir i-fhéin do chàch am pailteas.</i>  <i>Gur mairg a leigeadh air diochuimhne</i>  <i>A' chainnt rìoghail, bhrioghail, bhlasda;</i>  <i>'S mòr an onair anns gach àm</i>  <i>Do dh'aon a labhras i le ceartas.</i>  <i>AM BARD MAC-GILLEAIN.<sup>80</sup></i></p>	<p>Children of the Gaels, remember          To practise your tongue;          It does not borrow from languages          And it gives to others plenty.          It is deplorable to forget          The eloquent, vital, regal language;          Great honour, in every instance, goes          To the one who speaks it with care.          The Bard Maclean<sup>81</sup></p>
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Maclean Sinclair also included ten songs collected by Dr. Hector Maclean (taken from his manuscript in Maclean Sinclair's possession), such as by Eachann Bacach, Iain MacAilein of Mull, and Mairearad Nigheann Lachainn, eighteen songs collected by John Maclean, including ones by Iain Lom, seventeen love songs, and fourteen songs collected by Maclean Sinclair himself, such as songs by his uncle Charles Maclean, D. B. Blair, John MacGillivray the Piper, and others he

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<sup>80</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach na Coille* (1881), iii. See also title page to Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* (Edinburgh: Robert Menzies, 1818). AMS also used this again in his *Filidh na Coille* (1901).

<sup>81</sup> A rather more poetic translation of this appeared in the *Presbyterian Witness* (7 Dec. 1901): 388, as part of an article announcing the publication of AMS's *Filidh na Coille*:

Gaelic children, this remember:  
 Keep your language well in practice;  
 For it borrows nought from others  
 And it lends in richest measure.  
 Woe it were to be forgetful  
 Of a tongue so sweet, so royal.  
 Great the honor and the glory  
 Should you speak that tongue correctly!

collected on his visit to Scotland in 1869.<sup>82</sup> For each poet and for many of the songs, Maclean Sinclair also included short biographical and historical notes. Most of the material had never previously been published.

*Clàrsach na Coille* was generally well received, and indeed it became almost certainly his most famous publication. A second edition of it was revised and published in 1928 in Glasgow by Hector MacDougall of Coll.<sup>83</sup> MacDougall stated in his preface: “The old *Clàrsach* was one of the first Gaelic books I heard being read and with which I was acquainted when I was a boy. . .” (“*Bha an t-seann ‘Chlàrsach’ air aon de na ceud leabhraichean Gàidhlig a chuala mi air a leughadh is air an d’fhuair mi eolas an uair a bha mi ‘nam bhalach, [. . .].*”<sup>84</sup>) MacDougall did not alter the poems in his revised edition of *Clàrsach*. He noted that Maclean Sinclair changed the texts, but had the right to do so as grandson of John Maclean, the author of much of the book: “Without a doubt the first editor had the reins, as grandson of the author, that editors are not frequently permitted.” (“*Gun teagamh bha srian aig a’ cheud fhear-deasachaidh, mar ogha an ùghdair, nach eil air a ceadachadh do luchd deasachaidh am bitheantas.*”<sup>85</sup>) Essentially the difference in the

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<sup>82</sup> AMS says he “took down a few songs from his [Donald Maclean, brother of John Maclean] daughter Anna in Tyree in 1863.” Surely this is a typographical error as it is known that AMS’s only visit to Scotland was in 1869. This error was not corrected in the 1928 edition of *Clàrsach*.

<sup>83</sup> AMS, *The Maclean Songster: Clàrsach na Coille*, revised and edited by Hector MacDougall (Glasgow: Alex. MacLaren & Sons, 1928).

<sup>84</sup> Eachann MacDhughail, “Preface,” *Clàrsach na Coille* (1928), viii.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, viii-ix.

editions amounted to removing some songs and adding others. He removed entirely the section containing the poems from Dr. Hector Maclean's manuscript, added versions of two different songs (that were in the 1881 edition) by John Maclean for comparative purposes, one from Maclean's own *Orain Nuadh Gaedhlach* of 1818, and another from Glengarry oral tradition. MacDougall also added a song collected by John Maclean that did not appear in the 1881 edition and added two more songs by Charles Maclean, John's son, and leaves out four songs collected by John Maclean and one love song.

According to an advertisement at the back of his 1881 *Clàrsach na Coille* (The Harp of the Forest), Maclean Sinclair had planned on bringing out another collection of Gaelic poetry called *Clàrsach nan Eileinean* (The Harp of the Islands): "This is a new Collection of Gaelic Poetry. The MS. consists of 480 pages of foolscap, each page as a general rule containing thirty-two lines of poetry."<sup>86</sup> The ad continued by describing the proposed contents – i.e. poetry from John Maclean's manuscript collection, Dr. Hector Maclean's manuscript collection, "poems taken down by the Editor from oral recitation, and poems from "old printed collections," such as from the out-of-print collections of Ranald Macdonald, Gillies, A. and D. Stewart, and Turner – and finished by stating that the work was ready for the press, and that "[s]hould there be sufficient

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<sup>86</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 347.

encouragement given, it will be published.”<sup>87</sup> Maclean Sinclair had stated in his preface to *Clàrsach* the desirability of a modern anthology containing poetry from inaccessible, out-of-print editions:

Many Gaelic songs of great excellence have been published to which readers in general have at present no access. They lie buried in such old works as Ronald M’Donald’s Collection, Gillies’ Collection, A. and D. Stewart’s Collection, Turner’s Collection, Donald M’Leod’s Collection, and M’Farlane’s Collection. It is to be hoped that some of our Gaelic Societies will take an interest in them, and have them re-published. They are too good to be left in their present inaccessible state. In the meantime let us be thankful for the Dean of Lismore’s book, Campbell’s “Leabhar na Féinne,” Mackenzie’s “Sàr-obair nam Bàrd,” Macpherson’s “Duanaire,” and Archibald Sinclair’s “Oranaiche.”<sup>88</sup>

Maclean Sinclair had been testing the waters, as it were, concerning the publication of a book of an anthology of Gaelic poetry, the year before his first Gaelic book came out, in a short piece in the *Celtic Magazine* from Inverness, “Buried Gaelic Poems,” dated 22 January 1879.<sup>89</sup> Maclean Sinclair discussed how difficult it was to access the Gaelic poetry in certain rare old collections (“The old collections of Gaelic poems are very scarce.”<sup>90</sup>), such as Ranald MacDonald’s, Stewart’s, and Turner’s collections, among others, and proposed the question, “Why should good poems lie buried in books which cannot be obtained?”<sup>91</sup> He

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<sup>87</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), 347.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>89</sup> AMS, “Buried Gaelic Songs,” *Celtic Magazine* 4.41 (1878-79): 195-96.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 196. See discussion below under the section on *The Gaelic Bards* and *Mactalla nan Tùr*.

then proceeded to list the poets and numbers of poems in these collections, "The six collections I have examined contain 283 poems which are not in the works which can be now purchased."<sup>92</sup> Essentially Maclean Sinclair was setting up an argument for his later publications which incorporated much of the material from the old editions he mentioned. Though he did not explicitly state it in his article, it is clear that Maclean Sinclair was announcing a future project:

But could a collection containing those poems in the old collections which do not appear in the new collections, be sold? I should think so. Would not every person who reads *Sar-obair nam Bard* like to have it? For my own part I would gladly take ten copies of the work. It could be sold, I suppose, for about ten shillings a copy.<sup>93</sup>

Apparently, sufficient encouragement was not found for such a publication as Maclean Sinclair never did publish a book under the title of *Clàrsach nan Eileinean*. He would go on to publish much of the material outlined in the advertisement for it, but not in Scotland. Maclean Sinclair published his subsequent books in Canada, almost certainly to keep the costs of printing down, and it seems his intended *Clàrsach nan Eileinean* would be adapted into newspaper submissions and later into a three-part anthology called *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird*.

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<sup>92</sup> AMS, "Buried Gaelic Songs."

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

### *The Glenbard Collection*

There was a hiatus of about seven years between the publication of *Clàrsach na Coille* and Maclean Sinclair's next book. He got married in 1882 and much of his literary efforts went into the job of collecting and editing material for the Gaelic column, "Cùil na Gàidhlig," in the *Pictou News* beginning in 1883. Maclean Sinclair's "Cùil na Gàidhlig" work was significant in that he was able to use much of what he published there in his subsequent book publications. Right around the time that his Gaelic Column was coming to an end, Maclean Sinclair came out with his next anthology of Gaelic verse in 1888. This was also when he left his pastoral charge in the East River district of Pictou County, Nova Scotia, to take up a new one in the Belfast district of eastern Prince Edward Island, and it was here that his next collection, entitled *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry*, named after Maclean Sinclair's boyhood home of Glen Bard, was published in three parts in Charlottetown in 1888 and 1890. The first two books were published by Herbert Hazard and the third by Hazard and Moore.<sup>94</sup>

Though the *Glenbard Collection* was published in PEI, Maclean Sinclair had arranged for its distribution in Scotland through James Thin of Edinburgh, and in Montreal with William Drysdale and Company, as indicated on the flyleaf of

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<sup>94</sup> The Hazard family had somewhat of a tradition of Gaelic book publishing on PEI (though, according to Maclean Sinclair, they did not speak Gaelic), starting with James D. Hazard's publication of *Ainmeanna Cliuteach* [sic] *Chriosd* (Christ's Famous Titles) in 1832, see Kenneth E. Nilsen, "Some Notes on Pre-Mac-Talla Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia," 127.

Part Three of the *Collection*. The entire series comprises 406 pages (129 pages in Part One, 133 pages in Part Two, and 144 in Part Three), which are numbered consecutively in each part – pagination is slightly confused in Part Two: it runs from page 129 to 220 and then starts at page 1 again and goes to page 40 (Part Three starts with page 261). Confusingly the preface and table of contents do not appear until Part Three.<sup>95</sup> Maclean Sinclair also published an abridged edition of the *Glenbard Collection*: “The abridgment includes all the poems that have not been inserted in other works. It thus contains all of the original work that is now really needed.”<sup>96</sup>

The whole organization of the collection is somewhat haphazard, which is not surprising considering Maclean Sinclair was using the already typeset

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<sup>95</sup> At the end of the copy of Part Three of the *Glenbard Collection* in STFXUSC is bound a copy of a 92-page work entitled *Co-chruinneachadh Phicto* [The Pictou Collection]. Pages 1-4 and 55-56 are missing and there is no title page, publisher, place, or date provided. It is in a different typeface than the *Glenbard Collection*, and is reminiscent of *Mac-Talla's* printing. Much of the material is that printed elsewhere by AMS, but I have never come across any reference to such a collection called *Co-chruinneachadh Phicto*, which, interestingly, is not spelled the way AMS uses the word elsewhere, i.e. *comhchruinneachadh*, though the word “Keltic” does appear in the text, the way AMS spelled it (though it must be granted that he was not unique in using it, see Part II, Chapter I). One wonders what its connection is to AMS and why it was bound along with his book. Also bound at the end of Part Three of the copy of the *Glenbard Collection* in STFXUSC, after *Co-chruinneachadh Phicto*, is a short, two-page poem (fourteen verses plus chorus) called *Faoghid nam Fiadh ann an Eilean Leodhuis: Hunting the Deer in Lewis*. This was originally published as a pamphlet by S. M. MacKenzie in New Glasgow in 1888, according to the title page. The author is not given, though someone has written across the title page that it was composed by D. B. Blair. This is not unlikely, as D. B. Blair previously published with the same printer (see Nilsen, “Some Notes on Pre-Mac-Talla Gaelic Publishing in Nova Scotia,” 135). See *Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue*, s.v. “#955. *Faoghid nam Fiadh*” (no author is provided).

<sup>96</sup> AMS, *Filidh*, 197.

versions of songs published in newspapers in order to save on costs of new typesetting:

Of this work only two hundred copies have been printed. The poems were first published in newspapers and then struck off in their present form. The type-setters could not read Gaelic, and the editor never saw some of the proofsheets. The work is upon the whole printed as correctly as could be expected. Had it not appeared in newspapers, it would cost twice as much per copy as it does now. The fact is it would not be published at all.<sup>97</sup>

Maclean Sinclair provided a *corrigenda* section at the end of each part of *Glenbard* in order to save on having to correct the previous errors in typesetting the poems for newspapers.

Maclean Sinclair was driven by the need to publish the poetry in his grandfather's manuscripts and in the *Glenbard Collection* it is clear he intended it as a significant contribution to the published corpus of Gaelic literature. His motivation for publishing the work was to preserve the old poetry in the manuscripts in his possession:

It may be said that this book would sell much better if I had omitted some of the old poems and inserted modern and popular songs. I have no doubt that it would. But my aim has not been either to make a collection

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<sup>97</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird* Part II, back page. AMS further explains in the preface in Part Three exactly which pages from the collection had appeared in which newspapers: pp. 1-128 appeared in the *Island Reporter* of Baddeck and pp. 129-220 and 261-322 appeared in the same paper after it had been transferred to Sydney; the forty pages in between appeared in the *Pictou News*, see *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird* Part III, vi. See also *Dàin agus Òrain*, 42 where AMS says, "The greater part of the *Glenbard Collection*, the *Gaelic Bards from 1775 to 1825*, *John Lom's Poems*, and *Mactalla nan Tùr* was first published in newspapers and then struck off from the newspaper type in book form. The cost of publishing these books was thus far less than it would otherwise have been." AMS was ever complaining about the expense of publishing books. See section below on Frustrations with Gaelic Book Publishing.

that would sell readily or a collection of popular songs. This collection with all its defects will serve my chief purpose. It will help to give, to such as may take an interest in them, the old poems in the manuscripts in my possession. The manuscripts may perish, but probably some copies of this work will be preserved.<sup>98</sup>

Ironically, considering Maclean Sinclair's concern for the long-term preservation of the poetry, he used inexpensive newsprint for his books to keep costs down; this means that surviving copies of the work are delicate and brittle, and now prone to crumbling.

In addition to his preface, which begins with a brief account of his grandfather, the *Glenbard Collection* is comprised of poems from Iain Lom, Mairi Nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, Alasdair Bhoth-Fhiunntainn, Domhnall Donn, Iain Mac Ailein, John Maclean (Maclean Sinclair's grandfather), James MacGregor, John "Piper" MacGillivray, Allen "Ridge" MacDonald, and many others (over sixty-three poets), coming from both Scotland and Canada, and covering almost every period. Throughout the series he included his usual short essays and notes on historical and biographical information on the poets and their poems. For his sources for the *Glenbard Collection*, Maclean Sinclair was relying on his grandfather's manuscripts, material from his own collecting activities, and the old editions of poetry in his possession such as the collections by Ranald MacDonald, Gillies, the Stewarts, and Turner; in essence, the material he said he wanted to publish in Scotland as *Clàrsach nan Eileinean*, but which never got off

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<sup>98</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, iv-v.

the ground there. Much of the material had also already appeared in *Clàrsach na Coille*, and Maclean Sinclair would continue to use much of the same material in his future publications, though organized in a much more accessible and logical manner.

### *The Gaelic Bards and Mactalla nan Tùr*

Maclean Sinclair obviously felt the need to bring order to the chaos of the *Glenbard Collection*, and a chronological arrangement of the plethora of material which he had at his disposal was a practical choice; so, in 1890, Maclean Sinclair embarked upon a series of books called the *Gaelic Bards*, which were arranged into specific periods. The series was published in four volumes covering time periods from the fifteenth to the late nineteenth century. The first two volumes were published in Charlottetown, PEI by Haszard and Moore in 1890 and 1892 and covered the periods 1411 to 1715—or as Maclean Sinclair described it, “from the Battle of Harlaw to the Battle of Sheriffmuir”<sup>99</sup>—and 1715 to 1765, “from the Battle of Sheriffmuir to the beginning of the Ossianic Controversy.”<sup>100</sup> The last two volumes were published by the *Mac-Talla* Publishing Company in Sydney, Cape Breton in 1896 and 1904, and covered the periods 1765 to 1825 and 1825 to 1875, respectively. Maclean Sinclair considered his book *Mactalla nan Tùr* (Echo

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<sup>99</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, iii.

<sup>100</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765* (Charlottetown, PEI: Haszard & Moore, 1892), iii.

of the Towers) to be a supplement to the *Gaelic Bards* series, which “fills up the gap in the *Gaelic Bards* between 1765 and 1775, and gives a number of additional poems for the period between 1400 to 1875.”<sup>101</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s chronological arrangement may seem an obvious as well as a convenient principle of organization. This should not obscure the fact that it was innovative and ground breaking; before this, anthologies of Gaelic verse were invariably eclectic, single-volume works, without any organizing principle, be it chronological, thematic, or otherwise. One of the earliest anthologies of Scottish Gaelic poetry to be published was the 1776 “Eigg Collection” of Ranald MacDonald of Eigg, which was largely based on verse collected by his father, Alexander MacDonald (Alasdair MacMhaighstir Alasdair). MacDonald’s Eigg Collection set an important precedent for subsequent publications: “The contents of the Eigg Collection set the tone for a flow of similar publications at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the volumes by John Gillies of Perth, Alexander and Donald Stewart and Patrick Turner being the most notable and popular at the time.”<sup>102</sup> These were works often mentioned by Maclean Sinclair who used their contents for some of his own publications. In the early nineteenth century, John

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<sup>101</sup> AMS, “A Collection of Gaelic Poems,” *TGSI* 26 (1904-07): 260. See also AMS, *Mactallan nan Tùr* (Sydney, NS: *Mac-Talla* Publishing Co., Ltd., 1901), iii.

<sup>102</sup> Hugh Cheape, “The Gaelic Book: The Printed Book in Scottish Gaelic,” Edinburgh: International League of Antiquarian Booksellers, <<http://www.ilab-lila.com/english/gaelicbook.htm>>

Mackenzie's *Sàr Obair nam Bàrd Gàidhealach* (The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry) was a very popular book among Gaels in Scotland as well as Canada. It had gone through as many as seven editions between 1841 and 1904, including one that was published in Nova Scotia in 1863 by Norman Macdonald, Maclean Sinclair's schoolteacher.<sup>103</sup> Subsequent anthologies included D. C. MacPherson's 1868 *An Duanaire* (The Songbook), mainly containing material from the Lochaber area, and in 1879 Archibald Sinclair produced the first collection of Gaelic popular songs in print, his popular *An t-Òranaiche* (The Songster); it was Archibald Sinclair who published Maclean Sinclair's *Clàrsach na Coille* two years later.

Maclean Sinclair's *Gaelic Bards* series was innovative not only in terms of its chronological arrangement, but also in its scope. It was the first multi-volume collection of Gaelic verse and was an ambitious undertaking; it is also representative of Maclean Sinclair's ambition in trying to establish the published canon of Scottish Gaelic literature.<sup>104</sup> The total number of pages in the series,

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<sup>103</sup> See Part I, Chapter I, specifically footnote #9. See also Part I, Chapter II for more background on Norman Macdonald.

<sup>104</sup> Only in recent years have authoritative editions of anthologies of Gaelic verse been published according to specific time periods. See Colm Ó Baoill's *Gàir nan Clàrsach: The Harp's Cry: An Anthology of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Gaelic Poetry* (1994), Derick Thomson's *Gaelic Poetry in the Eighteenth Century* (1993), Ronald Black's *An Lasair [The Flame]: Anthology of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (2001), Donald Meek's *Caran an t-Saoghail: The Wiles of the World: Anthology of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish Gaelic Verse*, and Ronald Black's *An Tuil [The Flood]: Anthology of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (1999).

including *Mactalla nan Tùr*, amounts to 975 pages, with poems by 233 named poets, and with “such biographical sketches as it was possible to give.”<sup>105</sup>

By providing significant dates on which to anchor the time periods of his *Gaelic Bards* series, particularly the first two volumes, shows that Maclean Sinclair’s was thinking along the lines of historical, cultural, and literary criteria. Maclean Sinclair also published a series of articles in *Mac-Talla* in 1895 and the *Casket* from 1898-1900,<sup>106</sup> as well as an article in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* in 1900,<sup>107</sup> which categorized Gaelic poets into similar time periods to his *Gaelic Bards* series, and he provides some rationalization for looking at the Gaelic poets differently after 1830: “It is evident [. . .] that a new school of Gaelic poets had come into existence; the ‘*orain aotrom*,’ or light songs, had come to the front, the ‘*orain mhòra*’ were no longer popular.”<sup>108</sup>

Maclean Sinclair’s contemporaries had high praises for his *Gaelic Bards*. Edinburgh University Celtic Professor and long-time correspondent of Maclean Sinclair, Donald MacKinnon, was of the opinion that the *Gaelic Bards* were Maclean Sinclair’s most important work. MacKinnon expressed this in a letter of

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<sup>105</sup> AMS, “A Collection of Gaelic Poems,” *TGSI* 26 (1904-07): 260.

<sup>106</sup> See section under Periodicals above. See Appendix B: Periodical Contributions by AMS, specifically *Mac-Talla* (6 parts) 2 Feb. 1895 to 9 Mar. 1895, and the *Casket* (6 parts) 10 Mar. 1898 to 4 Jan. 1900.

<sup>107</sup> AMS, “The Gaelic Bards and the Collectors of Their Productions,” *TGSI* 24 (1899-1901): 259-77.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

reference he had written in response to a request from the President of Dalhousie University in 1914:

I have not had the good fortune to meet Mr. Sinclair, but he has been a valued correspondent of mine for many years on Celtic matters, and I believe I have read all his principal writings on these subjects. [. . .] Mr. Sinclair has published in three volumes selections from the works of the most famous Gaelic poets from the 15<sup>th</sup> century downwards, with biographical & critical notes, & explanations of the rarer & more obscure words that occur. In this publication Mr. Sinclair shows such knowledge of the Language & Literature of Scottish Gaelic as few, if indeed any, living man possess. [. . .] [H]is most valuable publication, as I regard it, is the volumes on the Gaelic poets.<sup>109</sup>

In a letter to Maclean Sinclair, Oxford scholar W. A. Craigie was also complimentary. Craigie sent Maclean Sinclair a copy of the *Scottish Review* in which Craigie had published an article on “Gaelic Historical Songs,” and had used some of Maclean Sinclair’s work:

Rev. Sir,

Along with this I take the liberty of sending you a copy of the *Scottish Review* for October last, which contains an article of mine on the songs of the Clan Bards. I had not a copy to spare until just lately otherwise I should have sent you one before, in case you might not have the chance of coming across the *Review* otherwise. The article I left unsigned for one or two reasons which I need not specify. [. . .]

I had planned out the article & had collected nearly all the materials (from MacDonald, Turner, etc.) before coming across your collections: needless to say, I am very glad I did so, & I hope the notice of them may make them more known. The *Revue Celtique* for last October had a pretty long notice of my article & fortunately quoted the titles of both the collections.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Donald MacKinnon to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 9 Feb. 1914, Presidents’ Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

<sup>110</sup> W. A. Craigie to AMS, 18 Feb. 1892, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/186, NSARM.

The Craigie's "anonymous" article in *Scottish Review* stresses the value of Maclean Sinclair's *Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715* and his *Glenbard Collection*:

A valuable addition to these texts has however been made within the past year or two by the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair, who has printed from the MS. of Dr. MacLean of Mull, written about 1768. Besides containing a number of poems not in the previous printed works, this MS. gives in general better texts, and the editor has made his work still more valuable by adding numerous biographical and historical notes. What is yet required is a complete corpus of collated texts with such historic notes as are necessary for the full understanding of them.<sup>111</sup>

This last sentiment Craigie echoed in his letter to Maclean Sinclair: "With the growing interest in Celtic Studies that there is at present a real corpus of the Clan Bards ought to be within the reach of possibility some time."<sup>112</sup>

Maclean Sinclair clearly intended his *Gaelic Bards* for native Gaelic speakers in Canada. The very first lines of the preface in the first volume state: "This work is especially intended for Gaelic-speaking Canadians. [. . .] They are Canadians by birth and are thoroughly loyal to their own country; but they are Kelts by blood, and are not ashamed of the poetic, warm-hearted, and war-like

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<sup>111</sup> [W. A. Craigie], "Gaelic Historical Songs," *Scottish Review* 18.36 (Oct. 1891): 305. This article is anonymous; for its attribution to Craigie see the letter quoted above to AMS dated 18 Feb. 1892 in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/186, NSARM. See the notice in *Revue Celtique* of Craigie's "l'article anonyme de la *Scottish Review*," where AMS's *Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715* and *Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry* ("en trois parties") are also mentioned; see "Post-Scriptum II" in the Chronique section of *Revue Celtique* 12 (1891): 488-89.

<sup>112</sup> W. A. Craigie to AMS, 18 Feb. 1892, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/186, NSARM.

people from who they have sprung.”<sup>113</sup> Maclean Sinclair began his first volume with an extensive introduction amounting to almost thirty pages devoted to “Gaelic Reading and Spelling,” in which he attempts to teach native Gaelic speakers who can read English but not Gaelic, how to read their native tongue: “I feel very confident that any person of ordinary intelligence who can read English and speak Gaelic can, if he will only try, learn to read Gaelic in a very few hours.”<sup>114</sup> Maclean Sinclair continues by complaining about the Gaelic spelling system, such as the “Rule of Lethann ri Lethann and Caol ri Caol” about which he raises several objections. Mainly that it is an artificial system that does not accurately represent the spoken language, that was “founded simply upon the lively fancy of Irish scribes of a comparatively late period,”<sup>115</sup> and that was “introduced into Scotland, and rigorously applied to the Scottish Gaelic.”<sup>116</sup> Maclean Sinclair then proceeds to argue for a more phonetic spelling system in Gaelic (and English), stating that the present system hinders native Gaelic

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<sup>113</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, iii.

<sup>114</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715* (Charlottetown, PEI: Haszard & Moore, 1890), iv. AMS expressed similar sentiments elsewhere, and wrote instructive articles on how to read Gaelic in the *Pictou News* (“How to Read Gaelic” (29 Feb. 1884): 1), *Mac-Talla* (“Leasan air Leughadh Gadhlig” (23 Sept. 1893): 5 and “First Lesson in Reading Gaelic” (7 Oct. 1893): 3), and the *Casket* (“A Lesson in Gaelic” (15 Apr. 1897): 4.) See also “The Gaelic Letters and Their Sounds” in *Filidh na Coille* (1901), 4-7.

<sup>115</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, xxi.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, xx.

speakers who were taught to read English but not their native language. He clearly expresses his commitment to the language:

It is especially desirable that the Gaelic language should be spelt phonetically. There are at the present day thousands of persons in the world who can speak Gaelic and read English, but who cannot read Gaelic. This is surely a state of things that should not be allowed to continue. If Gaelic were only spelt phonetically any one who understands it, and who can read English, could learn to read it in a few hours. [. . .] We are told over and over that Gaelic is a dying language. [. . .] There can be no doubt that among the things helping to kill it, at least in this country, is the inability of those who speak it to read it. By spelling it in a natural and proper manner this source of injury to it would be removed and its life prolonged.<sup>117</sup>

Maclean Sinclair put his thoughts on spelling into practice, at least for his first volume of the *Gaelic Bards*, and “departed to some extent from the common orthography.”<sup>118</sup> Maclean Sinclair followed twelve rules which guided his spelling, and discussed each of them in the back of the book, in a section entitled “The Mode of Spelling Followed in this Work.” Some of these rules demonstrate that Maclean Sinclair was striving to make the spelling easier for native Gaelic speakers learning to read, as he argued in his introduction, and internal consistency included spelling “spell the same word in the same way,” “change sg everywhere to sc,” “throw away all useless apostrophes,” and after every rule Maclean Sinclair points out how he deviated from the rule on occasion.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, xxiv.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 211-13. See also AMS’s “Speculations on Orthography” in *Na Baird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* vol. I, 271-73

Donald MacKinnon had this to say concerning Maclean Sinclair's ideas on orthography:

[ . . . ] Scottish Gaelic writers, in the matters of orthography & some grammatical forms, do not practice the uniformity prevalent in English literature. Mr. Maclean Sinclair has written forcibly in favour of spelling reform in Gaelic, & in some of his Gaelic volumes has given effect to his views. I may say that while I agree that some change in these matters is desirable, I do not agree with the views of Mr. Sinclair in all cases. But I whole heartedly endorse the ability & clearness with which he expresses them.<sup>120</sup>

In any event, most of Maclean Sinclair's experiments in orthography were not major deviations from common Gaelic spelling – his biggest was the broad to broad, slender to slender rule. If he had strayed too far from common orthography, he would have alienated Gaels educated in the traditional spelling system. His discourse on orthography shows that Maclean Sinclair was actively and purposefully involved in shaping Gaelic literature.

As with his *Glenbard Collection*, Maclean Sinclair published his *Gaelic Bards* series using pre-set newstype to cut down costs. Maclean Sinclair had a deal with Jonathan MacKinnon and his *Mac-Talla* Publishing Company to use the already typeset editions of songs submitted by Maclean Sinclair to the newspaper *Mac-Talla* for at least his last book, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875*. This is evident in a letter to Maclean Sinclair from Jonathan MacKinnon in 1902:

Dear Sir:-

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<sup>120</sup> Donald MacKinnon to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 9 Feb. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

We did not publish in yesterday's issue of Mac-Talla any of the poetry you sent us, for the following reason: We had in view to make a proposition for the printing of the "Gaelic Bards"<sup>121</sup> for you in book form without it costing you anything. Our plan would be to set the poetry for the paper, and to print it in book form afterwards while the type was still standing. It would take a long time, but it would be better than to leave the work unpublished. The proofs could be sent to you for correction, so that there would not need to be many errors in the book. If this will suit please let me know at once, and send copy so that we can begin without delay, and state how many copies should be printed. [. . .]

Yours very truly,  
J. G. MacKinnon<sup>122</sup>

MacKinnon was engaged in a similar deal with a John MacRury of the Isle of Skye for a production of a book of Fenian lays called *Bàrdachd na Féinne*:

P.S. We have agreed with John MacRury, of Skye, to print in the same manner a small book of Ossianic poetry, which has long been out of print. Should you consent to have the Gaelic Bards printed, we would have your poetry in the one issue and Mr MacRury's in another turn about. But I think it very likely that Mr MacRury would not be able to keep us in copy for every second issue, as he has a lot of work on hand, and is not, I fear, enjoying the very best of health. In that case your poetry would of course get the benefit. I thought-it-well to let you know of this arrangement with Mr MacRury.

J.G. M K.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> i.e. *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875* (Sydney, NS: Mac-Talla Publishing Co., Ltd., 1904).

<sup>122</sup> J. G. MacKinnon to AMS, 10 Jan. 1902, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/104, NSARM.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. Donald John MacLeod, in his *Twentieth Century Publications in Scottish Gaelic* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1980), 171, lists Maclean Sinclair as being the editor of *Bàrdachd na Féinne*, but I have not found any reference among Maclean Sinclair's works, or otherwise, to support this. Donald Maclean's *Typographia* does not mention the book at all, nor does Mary Ferguson and Ann Matheson's *Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue*; Charles Dunn's "Checklist of Scottish Gaelic Writings in North America," *Irisleabhar Ceilteach* 1.1 [Toronto] (Deir Fómhair - An Damhar, 1952): 23, only says that "*Bardachd na Feine*" was "Reprinted from *Mac-Talla*." See also *Bàrdachd na*

The poor quality of the physical make-up of Maclean Sinclair's collections was something that was remarked upon unfavourably by Maclean Sinclair's contemporaries. Donald MacKinnon regretted the physical quality of the work as being unrepresentative of its true value:

It is but right to add that Mr. Sinclair's Gaelic volumes [. . .] are, in outward appearance, a very imperfect indication of the ability & learning shown by the author & editor. The limited sale of Gaelic books no doubt necessitates rigid economy in the production of them – in paper & binding, in printing & proof-reading.<sup>124</sup>

Similarly W. A. Craigie stated, concerning the *Glenbard Collection* and *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*: "it is to be regretted that these works could not be published in a better form."<sup>125</sup>

### **Maclean Poetry and *The Clan Gillean***

Maclean Sinclair's next project was also a major multi-volume undertaking. In 1898 Maclean Sinclair published his first volume of Maclean poetry, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*.<sup>126</sup> It is obvious that Maclean Sinclair had planned more than one volume of the *Maclean Bards* from the outset,

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*Féinne*, coll. & ed. by Hugh & John M'Callum (1816), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Trueman Matheson (Antigonish, NS: Sìol Cultural Enterprises, 2005).

<sup>124</sup> Donald MacKinnon to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 9 Feb. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.

<sup>125</sup> [W. A. Craigie], "Gaelic Historical Songs," *Scottish Review* 18.36 (Oct. 1891): 305.

<sup>126</sup> Though the publisher was Haszard and Moore of Charlottetown, PEI, AMS says in his "Corrections and Notes" in the back that "this work was printed in Antigonish, Nova Scotia." *Na Bàird Leathanach* vol. I, 276.

as a subheading indicates that it is *Vol. I: The Old Maclean Bards* (277 pages). The second volume (180 pages) appeared in 1900, and in between, in 1899, Maclean Sinclair published his major history of the Macleans called the *Clan Gillean* (542 pages). In 1901, Maclean Sinclair published *Filidh na Coille* (197 pages), which he stated was “in reality the third volume of the Maclean Bards.”<sup>127</sup> Maclean Sinclair considered those four books, the history and the three volumes of Maclean poetry, to be, in essence, a unit.

Considering his intense identification with his maternal heritage, it is no surprise that Maclean Sinclair should embark upon a series of books relating to the Macleans.<sup>128</sup> He explicitly identifies himself as a Maclean in the preface to his first volume of Maclean poetry, *Na Bàird Leathanach*: “I may state that my mother was a daughter of John Maclean, the Poet, and that through her influence – and indeed the influence of all my surroundings – I have been led from my youth upwards to take an interest in Gaelic literature.”<sup>129</sup> Maclean Sinclair stresses his personal connection with the poetry: “So far as the history and poetry of the Macleans are concerned, I could scarcely help having at least an elementary

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<sup>127</sup> AMS, “A Collection of Gaelic Poems,” *TGSI* 26 (1904-07): 260.

<sup>128</sup> AMS wrote a number of articles relating to the Macleans as well, see Part I, Chapter II, footnote #30.

<sup>129</sup> Alexander Maclean Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards* vol. I (Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore, 1898), 7. In a letter to a colleague in Scotland, Maclean Sinclair humourously described his mother’s influence in regards to the Maclean clan: “She taught me to hate the Campbells, to love the Macleans, and to respect every other clan.” See letter from AMS to (possibly) Dr. William Mackay, 9 Oct. 1888, Emigration from Scotland: Emigrants’ Correspondence, Acc. 8922, NLS.

acquaintance with them. I rejoice, then, to see poems with which I have been familiar from my boyhood now collected and published."<sup>130</sup> Indeed, the very first poem in *Na Bàird Leathanach* was Maclean Sinclair's own poem on the Macleans, "Clann-Ghilleain," which he had earlier submitted to the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*.<sup>131</sup>

Maclean Sinclair intended his *Maclean Bards* volumes to be comprehensive anthologies of all of the Maclean poets from 1525 to 1900. He explained at the end of his *Clan Gillean* that the first volume of the *Maclean Bards* "contains the extant productions of all the Maclean poets who flourished between 1525 and 1775."<sup>132</sup> According to the preface of volume one of the *Maclean Bards*, most of the work was based on the manuscript collections of his grandfather John Maclean and Dr. Hector Maclean; the preface also provides a brief biographical sketch of the two. Among the poetry by the "Old Maclean Bards" in volume one is the work of Hector Maclean of Coll, known as "an Cleireach Beag," and Hector Maclean of Mull, or "Eachann Bacach." Most of the songs in the collection are by Iain Mac Ailein of Mull whom Johnson and Boswell met on their tour to the Hebrides in 1773.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> AMS, *Na Bàird Leathanach* vol. I, 7-8.

<sup>131</sup> See AMS, *Na Bàird Leathanach* vol. I, 13-17. See also AMS, "Clann-Ghilleain," *TGSI* 15 (1887-88): 58-62.

<sup>132</sup> AMS, *Clan Gillean* (Charlottetown, PEI: Haszard & Moore, 1899), 530.

<sup>133</sup> See end of Part I, Chapter I.

Maclean Sinclair's *Clan Gillean* of 1899, published in between the two volumes of *Na Bàird Leathanach*, has nineteen chapters including an introduction on the origins of the Clan Maclean, the first chiefs, and the various branches. Much of the text is taken up with providing genealogical information, but a narrative is provided and much of the barebones of family genealogies are fleshed out with the inclusion of anecdotes, and historical information gleaned by Maclean Sinclair from a variety of sources whom he credits in his preface, such as C. R. Morison of Mull, James Maclean of Greenock, Magnus Maclean of Glasgow.<sup>134</sup>

Volume two of the *Maclean Bards* (1900) “contains poems by all the Maclean poets and song-writers who have written in Gaelic during the last one hundred and twenty-five years [1775-1900].”<sup>135</sup> Some of the poets in this collection include Archibald Maclean (Gilleasbuig Làidir), Alexander Maclean (an Cùbair Colach), John Maclean (am Baile-Mhartainn), Lachlan Maclean (Lachainn na Gàidhlig), and others. Much of the material used by Maclean Sinclair for this volume and *Filidh na Coille* (1901) was also by his grandfather John Maclean. Maclean Sinclair explained in an ad at the end of the latter book that “[t]he greater part of the poems composed by John Maclean in Scotland will

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<sup>134</sup> A number of their letters to AMS are in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds. Maclean Sinclair corresponded with many Macleans, and the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM contain 151 letters from Macleans (of all spellings). See Appendix E: Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds.

<sup>135</sup> AMS, *Clan Gillean*, 530.

be found in the *Maclean Bards*, vol. II. The present work contains the remainder of the poems composed by him in Scotland and all the poems composed by him in America. It is thus to a large extent a continuation of the *Maclean Bards*.<sup>136</sup> *Filidh na Coille* was essentially a Canadian *Clàrsach na Coille*; as he had done in *Clàrsach* in 1881, Maclean Sinclair repeated the epigraph used by John Maclean in his own anthology of 1818 (see above). *Filidh* contained many of the same poems by John Maclean that appeared in *Clàrsach* (as well as a similar “Memoir of John Maclean”). Work by other poets in the collection includes some verses by John Maclean’s sons Allan and Charles, three elegies in honour of Maclean on his death, and a number of songs by Maclean Sinclair, including a few translations.

### **The Iain Lom and Alasdair MacFhionghain Editions**

Maclean Sinclair published two volumes of poetry by individual Gaelic poets: *Òrain le Iain Lom Mac-Dhòmhnaill: Poems by John Lom Macdonald* (1895) and *Dàin agus Òrain le Alasdair Mac-Fhionghain* (Songs and Poems by Alexander Mackinnon, 1902).

Maclean Sinclair’s edition is 134 pages and includes forty-one of Iain Lom’s songs and a brief biographical sketch, which is shorter than the sketch he provided in the *Glenbard Collection*, and notes and corrections on the texts located at the back of the book. This book was published by the *Casket* in Antigonish,

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<sup>136</sup> AMS, *Filidh*, 197.

Nova Scotia,<sup>137</sup> and as with many of Maclean Sinclair's publications, his songs of Iain Lom appeared in newsprint first and these were later used in the printing of the book: "The poems that appear in this work were published in the *Casket*, Antigonish, and struck off from the type of that newspaper in book form."<sup>138</sup>

Iain Lom (John MacDonald), known as the Keppoch Bard, is recognized today as a major seventeenth-century Gaelic poet. In the nineteenth century he was in the process of being discovered and canonized, and Maclean Sinclair recognized his significance by releasing a volume dedicated to his works. Contemporary interest in Iain Lom was expressed by Professor Donald MacKinnon of the University of Edinburgh in a letter to Maclean Sinclair. MacKinnon explains that he was trying to get copies of Maclean Sinclair's "improved and fuller text" for his Gaelic book club: "I have asked Norman Macleod, Bookseller in Edinburgh here to write you for copies of your *Iain Lom*. A small Gaelic club which usually meets in my house during the winter months is reading this winter the works of this poet, & we would like to have your improved & fuller text."<sup>139</sup> Maclean Sinclair's publication of Iain Lom's poems was something he had been contemplating as early as 1890 when he included

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<sup>137</sup> This was the only book by AMS to be published by the *Casket*; as previously noted (see footnote #126 above), AMS did print at least one volume of *Na Bàird Leathanach* in Antigonish, though published in Charlottetown by Haszard & Moore.

<sup>138</sup> AMS, *Òrain le Iain Lom Mac-Dhòmhnaill: Poems by John Lom Macdonald*, (Antigonish, NS: The *Casket* Office, 1895), iv.

<sup>139</sup> Donald MacKinnon to AMS, 16 Dec. 1901, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/132, NSARM.

Iain Lom's poetry in the first part of the *Glenbard Collection*. Maclean Sinclair had started that collection off with background on Iain Lom and had included nineteen of his poems. Maclean Sinclair stated there that "It is to be regretted that Iain Lom's poems have never been published in a collected form. That such should be the case is not at all to the credit of his countrymen."<sup>140</sup> Iain Lom's work had certainly appeared in compilations such as those by R. MacDonald of Eigg's Collection, Gillies' Collection, A. and D. Stewart's Collection, Turner's Collection, and D. C. Macpherson's *An Duanaire*, but before Maclean Sinclair's edition, a single work devoted to Iain Lom had never been published. Maclean Sinclair was also motivated by the manuscripts in his possession which contained some of Iain Lom's work.

Maclean Sinclair's other book devoted entirely to the work of a single poet, *Dàin agus Òrain le Alasdair Mac-Fhionghain* (Songs and Poems by Alexander Mackinnon, 1902), concerned a poet who is not as well known as Iain Lom. This is a small forty-eight-page work that includes nine songs by the poet Alexander Mackinnon. Mackinnon was a poet from South Morar, Scotland, born in 1770, and who was best known for his poem "An Dubh-Ghleannach," which appeared in Mackenzie's *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gàidhealach* in 1841. Maclean Sinclair explained that his source for most of Mackinnon's poems is his grandfather's manuscript: "About the year 1816 John Maclean, Am Bard Mac-Gilleain, copied

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<sup>140</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part I, 5.

from Alexander Mackinnon's manuscript all the poems printed in this work except two. [. . .] He [John Maclean] published the most of these poems in his collection in 1818."<sup>141</sup> Maclean Sinclair goes on to explain that he is relying on his grandfather's manuscript not his book: "In giving the poems copied by John Maclean I have followed his MS., – not his printed collection, which contains some typographical errors."<sup>142</sup>

### **Frustrations with Gaelic Publishing**

Increasingly we get a sense from Maclean Sinclair of his frustration with Gaelic publishing. His many publications brought him considerable renown in Nova Scotia and Scotland, but did not do much for his personal finances. It is clear he lost money, something which he frequently comments upon in his publications. In *Dàin agus Òrain*, he makes pains to point out that his efforts in publishing were largely undertaken at his own expense. It is clear that he was becoming somewhat exasperated at the expense, and delineates the profit and loss he incurred on all of his publications up to that point. He says that he made a profit of \$28.14 on his *Maclean Bards* volumes and the book on Iain Lom's songs, but lost \$242 on *Clàrsach na Coille*, the *Glenbard Collection*, the *Gaelic Bards* series, and *Filidh na Coille*. He also pointed out that he spent much time on

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<sup>141</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 3.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

working on his publications: “I have also spent time and labour on Gaelic poetry, things which are of far more importance than money.”<sup>143</sup>

In providing this information, Maclean Sinclair essentially sought to demonstrate to his readers his selfless devotion to the preservation of Gaelic poetry, something he explicitly states in the last paragraph of *Dàin agus Òrain*: “I trust that I have done something in the interest of Gaelic poetry. If I have done nothing else, I have at least preserved and made known a large number of poems which were likely to perish.”<sup>144</sup> He also hoped that his readers might feel compelled to pay for the books they had ordered; apparently he received orders and subscriptions for some of his publications, but sometimes had trouble getting people to pay: “There were a few persons, however, who considered it an act of worldly wisdom not to pay for the books they got.”<sup>145</sup>

This is reminiscent of the warnings given Maclean Sinclair by Archibald Sinclair of Glasgow in 1875 and Donald MacKinnon of Edinburgh in 1878, when Maclean Sinclair was seeking to get his first anthology of Gaelic poetry published in Scotland. Archibald Sinclair had complained:

It is up hill work to get Gaelic books sold. [. . .] I find that when they [Gael] know that a book of that kind has been printed they lose their

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>144</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 48.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 41.

enthusiasm and come to the conclusion that they can get the loan of a copy from some acquaintance.<sup>146</sup>

And Donald MacKinnon was equally critical: "It must be admitted that our countrymen however loudly & warmly they speak about their affection for their tongue will not buy the books printed in it [. . .]."<sup>147</sup>

The fact that it was not uncommon for one copy of a particular Gaelic work to serve a whole community perhaps contributed to low book sales. If one person owned a Gaelic book or newspaper, he might read out of it for the benefit of others in the community who might not be able to read or lend it to those who did not own their own copy. This meant that fewer copies of a particular work were purchased than might be otherwise. Charles Dunn commented on this in reference to the Gaelic newspaper *Mac-Talla*:

Perhaps only one copy went to a Gaelic settlement, but that is not to say only one person read the paper there; young and old would gather around the local Gaelic scholars who could read the latest news and stories and songs from its pages. The copy would pass from household to household, and parents would teach their children to spell out the words of their mother tongue from its pages.<sup>148</sup>

Collecting subscription fees was also a difficulty faced by Jonathan MacKinnon, editor of *Mac-Talla*. Apparently people would request a subscription to *Mac-Talla*, but sometimes not pay, even after receiving the paper,

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<sup>146</sup> Archibald Sinclair to AMS, 29 Mar. 1875, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/578, NSARM.

<sup>147</sup> Donald MacKinnon to AMS, 12 Aug. 1878, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/261, NSARM.

<sup>148</sup> Dunn, *Highland Settler*, 87.

or they might not renew their subscription in a timely manner. MacKinnon dealt with the problem by publishing the names of subscribers who had fully paid under a column called “Iadsan a phàigh” (“Those who paid”). This was a subtle way of encouraging those who were in arrears to pay up; however, in many issues he also blatantly asked his readers to pay. That this tactic was resented by some clients, at least, is clear from a satire on *Mac-Talla* composed by the local poet Alexander “the Ridge” MacDonald.<sup>149</sup> In the first verse of his satire, “Òran Càinidh do Mhac-Talla” (“A Song of Revile to *Mac-Talla*”), MacDonald alludes to MacKinnon’s constant struggle with subscription fees:

<i>Galar bàis dhut a Mhic-Talla</i>	The disease of death to you <i>Mac-Talla</i>
<i>Canaidh càch nach bi thu maireann</i>	People say that you will not survive
<i>Oir tha’n deasaiche cuir gràin oirnn</i>	For the publisher disgusts us
<i>Ag éigheach pàidheadh a Mhic-Talla.</i> <sup>150</sup>	Crying for the payment of <i>Mac-Talla</i> .

In 1904 MacKinnon printed the last issue of *Mac-Talla*, 24 June. He is clearly disappointed and frustrated in his farewell comments:

*Airson Mac-Talla a chur a-mach uair ’s an dà sheachdain cha b’fhuilear air a chuid bu lugha dà mhìle fear-gabhail a bhith aige. Dh’fhaodadh sin a bhith aige ged nach biodh ann de luchd-leughaidh Gàidhlig ach na th’air eilein Cheap Breatuinn; ach nuair nach faighear an àireamh sin air fad is leud an t-saoghail,*

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<sup>149</sup> MacKinnon had raised MacDonald’s ire for a variety of reasons: see Michael Linkletter, “The Alexander Maclean Sinclair Papers in NSARM,” *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies* (2003): 15-18.

<sup>150</sup> Alexander MacDonald, *Ridge, A Collection of Gaelic Poetry* [manuscript] PB 1633 C612, STFXUSC. MacDonald wrote two satires of *Mac-Talla*. The satire above is inserted in the MS between pages 136 and 137. It is not in the MS’s table of contents, though his other satire, “Aoir MhicTalla,” is. See also PB 1633 C62, STFXUSC. One of these manuscripts (PB 1633 C612) is now available online: <<http://libmain.stfx.ca/etext/RidgMS1/Ridhome.html>> where both satires are available.

*chan urrainnear tighinn gu co-dhùnadh sam bith eile ach nach eil pàipeir Gàidhlig a dhìth air na Gàidheil, gu bheil iad riarraichte le bhith comharraichte mar an aon chinneach Crìosdail a th'air thalamh nach cosd ri pàipeir a chumail suas 'nan cainnt fhéin. [. . .] nam faigheamaid dearbhadh gu robh àireamh a dh'fhoghnadh de na Gàidheil iarrtach a chumail suas, bheireamaid ionnsaidh eile air. Ach gun dearbhadh no dòchas, chan urrainn dhuinn nì eile dhèanamh aig an àm seo ach, le mór dhuilichinn, a leigeil bàs.<sup>151</sup>*

In order to bring out *Mac-Talla* once every two weeks, it would require not less than two thousand subscribers. The paper could easily have that, even if there were no other Gaelic readers except those in Cape Breton; but when this number cannot be found throughout the length and breadth of the world, we can reach no other conclusion than that the Gaels do not want a Gaelic paper, and that they are content to be classed as the only Christian race in the world who will not pay to keep a paper in their own language. . . . if we could find proof that an adequate number of Gaels were desirous of keeping it up, we should make another attempt. But with neither proof nor hope, we can do nothing else at this time except, with great regret, allow it to die.<sup>152</sup>

Maclean Sinclair similarly laments: “Alas, alas, that the grandest language for songs and stories now under the sun, should be neglected by its own children as it is. Who cares for ‘Ho ro mo nigh’n donn bhoidheach’ or any other Gaelic song today? The dollar is the thing.”<sup>153</sup> Maclean Sinclair then displays his considerable talent for satire in the song “Òran an Latha an Diugh” (A Song of Today”), which he composed to the tune of the well-known “Horo mo Nighean Donn Bhòidheach,” showing his contempt for the “love of the dollar” of contemporary society:

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<sup>151</sup> Jonathan MacKinnon, ed. *Mac-Talla* (21 Sept. 1904): 193.

<sup>152</sup> Translated by Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler*, 86.

<sup>153</sup> AMS, “James MacPherson,” *Oban Times* (24 Aug. 1901), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/167, NSARM. See also AMS, “James MacPherson,” *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901): 2, and *Presbyterian Witness* (12 Oct. 1901): 321.

Horo, mo dholar gaolach,  
 Hori, mo dholar gaolach,  
 Mo dholar laghach, gaolach,  
 Cò thaobhainn ach thu?

Horo my dollar dear,  
 Horo my dollar dear,  
 My dear, fine dollar,  
 Who would I choose but you?

A dholair 'se mo shòlas,  
 Bhith breith ort ann am chrògan;  
 Gur cumadail 's gach dòigh thu,  
 'S gur bòidheach do ghnùis.

Oh dollar, it's my solace,  
 To carry you in my dish;  
 You're well formed in every way  
 And your face is beautiful.

Thug mi le m' chridhe gaol dhut  
 Nach dealaich rium ri m' shaoghal;  
 'S nam b' urrainn mi gu'n slaodainn  
 Ri m' thaobh thu don ùir.

I gave you love with my heart  
 That I won't ever part from;  
 And if I were able I'd haul you  
 Along with me to the grave.

Biodh amadain gun stòldachd  
 A' ruith an déidh nan òighean;  
 Ach cumaidh mis' an còmhnuidh  
 Do ghlòir-sa roimh m' shùil.

Let fools without restraint  
 Run after the maidens;  
 But I will always keep  
 Your glory before my eye.

Biodh daoine' air bheagan léirsinn  
 Ri duanagan ag éisdeachd,  
 Ach 's mise nach toir spéis dhaibh  
 'S leat fhéin mi gu m' chùil.<sup>154</sup>

Let people with little intellect  
 Listen to little ditties  
 But I won't give them any regard  
 I am yours completely.

Maclean Sinclair expresses his frustrations with the state of affairs in Gaelic publishing again in the afterword to *Dàin agus Òrain*. Like MacKinnon, he also sensed a lack of interest in Gaelic material, which contributed to poor sales. His comments reveal a certain sense of imperative; he plainly felt that his fellow Gaels should pay more attention to their own literature:

<sup>154</sup> AMS, "James MacPherson," *Oban Times* (24 Aug. 1901), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/167, NSARM. This song also appeared in the *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901): 2; *Mac-Talla* (18 Oct. 1901): 120 and (22 Jan. 1904): 119; AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875* (Sydney, NS: Mac-Talla Publishing Co. Ltd., 1904); and *Island Prose and Poetry: An Anthology*, ed. Allan Graham (Charlottetown: the Prince Edward Island 1973 Centennial Commission, 1972), 34.

[. . .] many of those who should, owing to the blood that flows in their veins, take an interest in it and study it, deem it prudent to keep at a distance from it, as if it were something worthless [. . .]. If the Macleans in general took the interest in their bards which they should take in them there would be no difficulty in realizing the \$44.00 from the sale of the *Maclean Bards and Filidh na Coille*.<sup>155</sup>

His comments elsewhere also reveal the irritation, which he frequently took opportunity to express, at the lack of financial support he felt he should be getting from many of his fellow Gaels for his publishing efforts:

It is a great pity that some of the rich Scotsmen of Montreal, Dawson City, Glencoe, Skibo, and other parts of the world would not imitate the example of Sir John MacGregor and the Marquis of Bute, and give at least one thousand dollars for the purpose of publishing and preserving the old songs of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.<sup>156</sup>

Despite his frustrations with the economic aspects of Gaelic publishing, Maclean Sinclair stated that he was not sorry for the money he spent; he claimed that he felt “under obligation” to do all he could “for the sake of Highlanders and their literature.”<sup>157</sup> He also explained that he had another book of Gaelic verse ready for the press: “I have prepared for publication the Gaelic Bards from

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<sup>155</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 44-45.

<sup>156</sup> AMS, “James MacPherson,” *Oban Times* (24 Aug. 1901), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds (scrapbooks), MG9/542/167, NSARM. The version of this article in the *Casket*, see “James MacPherson,” *Casket* (26 Sept. 1901): 2, appears with slightly different wording, for instance he lowers the amount to \$500 from \$1,000. There is an error in the *Casket* version that must be missing lines. AMS supplies the missing lines in a following issue of the *Casket* (3 Oct. 1901): 5. The *Presbyterian Witness* version also reads \$1,000, but does not include the song; instead an editorial note at the end states, “Then Mr. Sinclair touches the Gaelic lyre in satiric strains on the love of the dollar. If he would but translate the verses they might reach some hard hearts.” (12 Oct. 1901): 321.

<sup>157</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 47.

1825 to the present day,"<sup>158</sup> but adds, not very hopefully, "[. . .] it is not likely that this work shall ever appear."<sup>159</sup> In fact, the final volume of the *Gaelic Bards* (1825-1875) was published in 1904 by Jonathan MacKinnon. However, it proved to be Maclean Sinclair's last book of Gaelic verse.

### **Maclean Sinclair as Editor**

From his many publications, both books and periodicals, Maclean Sinclair gained a considerable reputation among Gaels in Scotland and North America in his own lifetime; however, he has become particularly known today for his heavy editorial hand, and his anthologies of Gaelic verse have become largely superseded. Because of Maclean Sinclair's attitude towards his original texts, the reliability and authority of his own editions have been called into question. Through an examination of his writings we will consider Maclean Sinclair's attitude towards his sources and the motivation behind his alterations, particularly in regards to his moral sensibilities.

In his first anthology of secular verse, *Clàrsach na Coille*, Maclean Sinclair offers a concise description of the difficulties facing a prospective editor:

To prepare a collection of Gaelic poetry for the press is by no means an easy work. The first difficulty is the fact that, with very few exceptions, our Gaelic poets and song-makers were uneducated persons, and consequently frequently violated the rules of grammar and composition,

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<sup>158</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 47.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

and even the rules of prosody. The second difficulty is that in handing down songs from one person to another, words, lines and even verses become lost.

Maclean Sinclair reveals here a disturbing attitude towards his sources. He had a particular concern for grammatical, philological, and metrical correctness and an implicit faith in his own ability to ascertain what is correct, even though he admitted that he often failed to grasp the meaning of words – an obvious temptation to emend such difficulties and substitute more familiar ones: “The third difficulty is that in the case of old poems one frequently meets with words which he does not understand, and which he cannot find in any dictionary.”<sup>160</sup>

That Maclean Sinclair’s emendations sometimes went beyond a concern for grammatical and metrical correctness has been pointed out by a number of scholars. In particular, Annie Mackenzie alluded to this in her 1964 edition of Iain Lom’s work, which was the first such text after Maclean Sinclair’s own *Òrain le Iain Lom* of 1895:

In 1895 the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair of Pictou, Nova Scotia, published an edition of the bard’s works, which is also out of print. While this is an extremely useful book it is not always reliable, as the Editor did not hesitate on occasion to omit certain portions of the text, rewrite others and insert stanzas of his own composition.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), vi-vii.

<sup>161</sup> Annie M. MacKenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim: Songs of John MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press Ltd., 1964), v.

Maclean Sinclair himself pointed out some of his emendations in his book of songs by Iain Lom, though he did not make his sources clear in most of his editions. He provided his reasoning behind his alterations in the preface:

I have ma[d]e several changes in some of the poems in this work. My aim in making these changes was to remove obscurities, to correct inaccuracies in historic matters, and to bring lines to be of the proper length. That these changes are improvements, I do not pretend to say. Such of them as are of any real importance are pointed out in the notes.<sup>162</sup>

Maclean Sinclair's notes to his Iain Lom book offers insight into Maclean Sinclair's criteria for omitting or adding parts in his editions of poetry. He explained that he left out a verse in the poem "Là Allt-Eireann" ("The Day (i.e. battle) of Auldearn") because of a combination of what he perceived as historical inaccuracies and problems with rhyme:

The last verse has been omitted. It is as follows: —

<i>Chuir sibh pairt diu air theicheadh</i>	[You sent some of them fleeing
<i>Gus'n do ranig sibh Muiri,</i>	Until you reached Muiri (Moray),
<i>'S chuir sibh lasraichean teine 'sa Mhoraich</i>	And you set flames of fire to
	Moraich (the land of Lovat).]

So far as I can tell Montrose did not set fire to Moraich Mhic-Shimi, at the time of the battle of Auldearn. There may, however, have been a Moraich, or Mor-fhaiche, between Nairn and Garmouth. But whether there was or not, John Lom had too good an ear for music to suppose that Muiri rhymed with *theicheadh*.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> AMS, *Òrain le Iain Lom Mac-Dhòmhnail: Poems by John Lom Macdonald*, (Antigonish, NS: The Casket Office, 1895), iv.

<sup>163</sup> AMS, *Òrain le Iain Lom*, 116. For the authoritative edition of this poem see Annie Mackenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, 26.

In another poem from the same collection, “Òran do Mhac-Dhòmhnail Shléite” (“A Song to MacDonald of Slate”), Maclean Sinclair rejected certain lines on the grounds of logic:

I have rejected the following lines from the twelfth verse: –

*A chraobh fhio agus gun ghaiseadh* [The fig tree without blemish  
*'Chuireadh fion d'i am pailteas.* That would yield wine in abundance.]

If the fig-tree belongs to the arms of the Macdonalds of Sleat, and it yields wine in abundance, these lines should have been retained.<sup>164</sup>

Colm Ó Baoill has also pointed out Maclean Sinclair's apparent disregard for the authority of his original texts and the fact that he frequently went beyond the regularization of spelling. In Colm Ó Baoill's editions of Maclean poetry, Ó Baoill relied in part on the Hector Maclean and John Maclean manuscripts brought to Nova Scotia by John Maclean in 1819, the contents of which were subsequently published by Maclean Sinclair. Ó Baoill published an invaluable descriptive catalogue of the manuscripts and their contents, *Maclean Manuscripts in Nova Scotia* (2001), as well as the two books relating to the Maclean poets, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets* (1979) and *Duanaire Colach: 1537-1757* (1997).<sup>165</sup> From his close examination of the Maclean manuscripts and Maclean Sinclair's published collections, Ó Baoill is very familiar with Maclean Sinclair's emendations, and in his introduction to *Bàrdachd*

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<sup>164</sup> AMS, *Òrain le Iain Lom*, 121. For the authoritative edition of this poem see Annie Mackenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, 146.

<sup>165</sup> See also Ó Baoill, “*Caismeachd Ailean nan Sop: The Literatim Text*,” *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 17 (1996): 295-97; and “*Caismeachd Ailean nan Sop: Towards a Definitive Text*,” *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 18 (1998): 89-110.

*Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, Ó Baoill specifically addressed the issue of Maclean

Sinclair's editorial penchant, pointing out his unreliability regarding sources:

These collections [*Na Bàird Leathanach*, *Clàrsach na Coille*, and *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715 and 1715 to 1765*] by Maclean Sinclair often give readings which cannot be found in other extant versions of the poems. The editor seldom identifies his sources, [. . .] in many cases he has silently altered the text beyond simply regularising the spelling. [. . .] Because of this attitude to sources, I have assumed in the case of all the poems dealt with here that the versions in Maclean Sinclair's collections are derivative, and that significant divergences there from the older sources are due to changes made by him without authority.<sup>166</sup>

One of the major motivations behind Maclean Sinclair's editorial practice lies with his moral sensitivities. This is clear in his preface to *Clàrsach na Coille*:

I have tried to make this Collection a work which may be read and sung by all persons, and in any company. I would rather burn all the songs in my possession than publish one which would have a tendency to do harm, or contain indelicate expressions.<sup>167</sup>

Maclean Sinclair's willingness to expurgate offensive material is hardly surprising considering that he was a minister and lived in a society and time which saw an increasingly censorious moral sensibility. Colm Ó Baoill alluded to this in his 1979 work on the Maclean poets, and cited a letter Maclean Sinclair wrote to COUNDUILLIE Rankin Morison, one of his most prolific correspondents:

In a letter to COUNDUILLIE Morison, dated Jan. 26th, 1898, Maclean Sinclair says, referring to the forthcoming *BL* [*Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*, vol. I]: "I have made a few trifling changes in the songs you sent me, partly to remove mistakes in composition, and partly to avoid

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<sup>166</sup> Colm Ó Baoill, ed. *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979), xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>167</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), vi-vii.

repetitions in ideas or words. I have also thrown in a verse or two. I have not, however, changed the meaning of the songs. I have weakened the statement about Calum in Mrs MacAskill's lines 'Chuir mi suas mo ghùn bainnse' [BL, p. 258]. I did not want to make it quite so clear as she made it that she cared nothing for Calum.<sup>168</sup>

The piece to which Maclean Sinclair is referring here is a short poem of only five lines, but serves to illustrate Maclean Sinclair's editorial practice. Maclean Sinclair included the piece in the first volume of *Na Bàird Leathanach*, and though he does cite C. R. Morison as his source for the preceding and following poems, Maclean Sinclair does not explicitly state that Morison was his ultimate source of the piece:

<i>Chuir mi suas mo ghùn bainnse,</i>	I put on my wedding dress
<i>'Dhol a shealltainn mo sheann leannain,</i>	To go see my old lover,
<i>Hug o rin o 's mi air m' aineol.</i>	<i>Hug o rin o</i> I am a stranger.
<i>'S truagh nach robh te eile 'm sheombar,</i>	It's a pity another woman isn't in my room.
<i>Is mi-fhin 's Mac-Leoid am Manain.</i> <sup>169</sup>	And MacLeod and I in the Isle of Man.

Fortunately, C. R. Morison's letter to Maclean Sinclair with the poem has been preserved in the Maclean Sinclair correspondence, enabling us to compare the original with Maclean Sinclair's edition. In his letter, Morison explains the story associated with the poem. According to the tradition, the poem was composed by a certain Mary Maclean (Màiri nighean Eòghainn), daughter of Hugh Maclean, Fourteenth Laird of Coll. Although she married Rev. Malcolm

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<sup>168</sup> Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>169</sup> AMS, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. I, 258.

MacAskill, minister of Eigg, Muck, Rum, and Canna in 1767, she maintained a previous attachment to a MacLeod:

Although she married MacAskill it was said that MacLeod [. . .] was her favourite. There is another song of which I have only two verses in which she says

<i>Chuir mi suas mo ghunn bainnse</i>	[I put on my wedding dress
<i>Dhol a shealltainn mo sheann leannainn</i>	To go see my old lover,
<i>Hug oirrin o 's mi air m'aineil</i>	<i>Hug o rin o</i> I am a stranger.

<i>'S truagh nach robh Callum (her husband)</i>	It's a pity Malcolm weren't dead
<i>fo na bordaibh</i>	("under the planks")
<i>'S mise 's Macleoid a bhi Manain (Isle of Man)<sup>170</sup></i>	And Macleod and I in the Isle of Man.]

Maclean Sinclair obviously felt that Mrs. MacAskill's wish that her husband were dead ("*'S truagh nach robh Callum fo na bordaibh*") so she could be with her lover, was too outrageous a sentiment, so that he had to "weaken" it, as he put it in the above-mentioned letter to Morison: "I have weakened the statement about Calum in Mrs MacAskill's lines 'Chuir mi suas mo ghùn bainnse.' I did not want to make it quite so clear as she made it that she cared nothing for Calum."<sup>171</sup>

Another indication of Maclean Sinclair's moral sensitivity is in a letter Maclean Sinclair wrote to Rev. Dr. Hugh P. MacPherson, Rector of St. Francis Xavier University from 1906 to 1936. Maclean Sinclair explains that he is sending along a book of Gaelic poetry for the university library, but not before first

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<sup>170</sup> Interpolation in parentheses are Morison's. C. R. Morison to AMS (not signed or dated), Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/232, NSARM.

<sup>171</sup> Quoted in Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, xxxiii.

removing offensive material. Ironically, he finishes his letter by encouraging MacPherson to carefully preserve the book:

*Aiseirigh na Seann Chànain Albannaich* was taken to America by my grandfather, John Maclean the Poet. It is an extremely rare work now. It was the Poet that bound it in its present form. [. . .] The leaves that I cut out between pages 152 and [1]61 were abominably filthy. The book, as I send it to you, deserves to be carefully preserved.<sup>172</sup>

Unfortunately, it does not seem as though it was preserved, at least not in the university library. Although Special Collections at St. Francis Xavier University does have three different copies of *Aiseirigh na Seann Chànain Albannaich* by Alasdair MacMhaighstir Alasdair (Alexander Macdonald), none of them appear to be the text that Maclean Sinclair included with his letter. Rev. Donald MacLean, in his book *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, explains that many copies of the first edition of 1751 were burned in Edinburgh and a number of the subsequent editions were expurgated of offensive material.<sup>173</sup> There were three editions in print before Maclean Sinclair's grandfather left Scotland in 1819: the first in 1751, the second edition in 1764 (which was expurgated), and the third in 1802 (which was a reprint of the first edition). The text that Maclean Sinclair got from his grandfather was likely, therefore, either the first or third edition; Maclean Sinclair certainly found his edition offensive at any rate. The material he removed himself included the poems "Moladh air Deagh Bhod" ("In Praise of a

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<sup>172</sup> AMS to Hugh P. MacPherson, 30 Jan. 1915 or 1918, President MacPherson Papers, RG5/9/11,077, STFXUA.

<sup>173</sup> MacLean, *Typographia*, 189-92.

Good Penis”) and “Tinneas na h-Urchaid” (“The Venereal Disease”).<sup>174</sup> Maclean Sinclair thought highly of MacMhaighstir Alasdair’s work, but obviously took exception to his more “racy” productions:

There was something very coarse about Mac Mhaighstir Alasdir’s moral nature. He could use the foulest language. His *Di-moladh na Moraig* and *Marbhrann na h-Aigeannach* are of an utterly disgraceful character. It was wrong to compose such pieces, but it was outrageous to publish them, especially for a man who had been teaching school for years, and who at the time of publication must have been about fifty years of age. It is right, however, to mention that the statement has been made, and probably on good authority, that he came to regret his improper course in publishing such unbecoming poems.<sup>175</sup>

The factor of Maclean Sinclair’s moral sensibilities’ influence on his editorial practices was also discussed by Rob Dunbar in a talk at the *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 3* (Scottish Gaelic Studies) conference at Edinburgh University in 2004, in which Dunbar considered Maclean Sinclair’s omission from publication of a particular song by John Maclean, “Òran do Dhòmhnall MacArtair.” Hector MacDougall pointed out in his 1928 edition of *Clàrsach na Coille* that this was one song from John Maclean’s 1818 *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* that Maclean Sinclair did not include in *Clàrsach na Coille* of 1881: “*Bha aon òran anns an t-seann leabhar [le Iain MacIlleathain] nach do chuir an ceud fhear-deasachaidh*

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<sup>174</sup> Alastair Mac-Dhonnail, *Ais-eiridh na Sean Chánoin Albannaich; no An Nuadh Oranaiche Gaidhealach* (Duneidiunn: 1751), 158-60.

<sup>175</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765*, 129. Interestingly “*Di-moladh na Moraig*” was not among the pages AMS said that he removed in his letter; “*Marbhrann na h-Aigeannach*” was, however. See Mac-Dhonnail, *Ais-eiridh na Sean Chánoin Albannaich*, 26 & 153.

*anns a' 'Chlàrsaich,' [. . .].*<sup>176</sup> (“There was one song in the old book [by John Maclean] that the first editor did not include in the ‘*Clàrsach,' . . .*’.”) MacDougall does not include the song in his edition either, though he does provide the chorus and three of the fourteen verses in his preface. Dunbar argued that Maclean Sinclair’s omission of this song, which “[. . .] concerns a young Gael who travels to Glasgow, loses all his money to, and apparently contracts venereal disease from, a Lowland prostitute,”<sup>177</sup> was a reflection of Maclean Sinclair’s moralistic sensitivities as minister:

A minister, Maclean Sinclair would certainly have considered the subject matter to be inappropriate for any collection. Without question, Maclean Sinclair knew the song existed: it was in both John MacLean’s manuscript and in the collection which John MacLean himself published in 1818, *Òrain Nuadh Ghaidhealach*, a copy of which Maclean Sinclair would almost certainly have had.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Hector MacDougall, “Preface,” *Clàrsach na Coille* (1928), ix.

<sup>177</sup> Robert Dunbar, “‘Òran do Dhòmhnail MacArtair’: The Song Maclean Sinclair Forgot,” *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 3* [Scottish Gaelic Studies Conference], University of Edinburgh, 21-23 July 2004 (quoted from the abstract of Dunbar’s talk published in the conference program), 16.

<sup>178</sup> Dunbar, “‘Òran do Dhòmhnail MacArtair,’” *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig 3*, conference program, 16. AMS definitely had at least two copies of his grandfather’s book. Many of the books from AMS’s personal library went to STFXUSC via his son DMS; two of the three copies of John Maclean’s book now owned by STFXUSC came to the library in this way. One of which was John Maclean’s own copy (which contains the original handwritten account of the agreement between Maclean and his publisher Robert Menzies), the other copy is signed by AMS with an inscription stating: “This book belonged to Big Evan Maclean in Pictou Island. I got it from his wife – A. Maclean Sinclair.” See Iain Mac Illeain, *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach* (Edinburgh: Robert Menzies, 1818). PB 1648 M31 O7, STFXUSC.

Despite his penchant for emendation, Maclean Sinclair recognized the need for a *literatim* text, though for him the value of such a text was strictly philological, and even offered up the Dr. Hector Maclean manuscript to whomever promised to publish such an edition. He stated in the preface to his *Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*: “Several of the poems in this work are from Dr. Maclean’s MS. I feel convinced that it would be useful especially for philological purposes, to publish that MS. *verbatim et literatim*. I shall be glad to hand it over to any person or persons who will agree to do so.”<sup>179</sup> He was perhaps influenced here by Donald MacKinnon’s advice a few years earlier when Maclean Sinclair had been in communication with MacKinnon regarding publishing: “The ms. is of general literary interest. It would be better to print it exactly as the Dr. left it so as to show the spelling & ideas current in that district at the time.”<sup>180</sup> In response to Maclean Sinclair’s proposal, W. A. Craigie, in his article on “Gaelic Historical Songs” in which he praised Maclean Sinclair’s work, especially for the biographical and historical notes, expressed the hope that someone might take Maclean Sinclair up on his offer: “It is to be regretted that these works could not be published in a better form, and it is to be hoped that the editor’s offer to hand

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<sup>179</sup> AMS, *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*, iv.

<sup>180</sup> Donald MacKinnon to AMS, 12 Aug. 1878, Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG1/2660/261, NSARM.

over Dr. MacLean's MS. to any one willing to publish it *litteratim* will not be neglected."<sup>181</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was not concerned with publishing authoritative editions in the modern sense, and many of his physical changes to the texts might be explained by the need he felt to produce texts in a quick, inexpensive, and accessible way, intelligible to his contemporary Gaels. Colm Ó Baoill stated in his 1979 work on the Maclean poets that John Lorne Campbell suggested this might also be a reason for Maclean Sinclair's emendations: "This may have been done, as Dr Campbell suggests to me, in the interests of getting readily intelligible Gaelic poems into print speedily."<sup>182</sup> That Maclean Sinclair chose to publish the majority of his editions on newsprint using preset newstype also indicates his need to make Gaelic poetry available in an inexpensive and quick way. He often commented on the difficulties of printing Gaelic books with publishers who did not speak the language. He remarked in his first volume of *The Maclean Bards* that the typographical errors did not bother him so much if it meant the speedy publication of the book:

As this work was printed in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, it took the proofs three days to come to me [in Belfast, PEI] and three days to go back. The printers are not book-publishers and had not as large a quantity of spare type as would be needed to print the book in three or four months if they would send me proofs twice. There are thus more typographical errors than one would wish to see. At the same time I would rather have all

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<sup>181</sup> [W. A. Craigie], "Gaelic Historical Songs," *The Scottish Review* 18.36 (Oct. 1891): 305.

<sup>182</sup> Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, xxxii-xxxiii.

these errors than have the work dragging its way through the press during five or six months.<sup>183</sup>

Maclean Sinclair was clearly of the opinion that Gaels should take an interest in their literary heritage and should have ready access to it: “old Gaelic poems in manuscript ought to be published, and thus rendered accessible to Gaelic readers, [ . . .].”<sup>184</sup> He felt similarly about old editions of Gaelic verse: “Many Gaelic songs of great excellence have been published to which readers in general have at present no access.”<sup>185</sup> The fact that he included instructive lessons on reading Gaelic in some of his editions (and newspaper) articles clearly shows that he was concerned that uneducated Gaels could, and should, learn to read his material as well: “Surely, then, those who understand Gaelic should take the trouble of learning to read and write it, and of making themselves acquainted, by studying Gaelic works, with the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of the heroic people from whom they have sprung.”<sup>186</sup>

In an article on “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems” in the *Scottish-American Journal* of 1889, he proposed that old Gaelic poems should be preserved and made available to the Gaelic-speaking public, “especially scholars” for three main reasons:

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<sup>183</sup> AMS, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, vol. I, 276.

<sup>184</sup> AMS, “The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems.”

<sup>185</sup> AMS, *Clàrsach* (1881), vi-vii.

<sup>186</sup> AMS, “History of the Continental Kelts.”

1. For their poetic merits:

The Kelts were always a poetic people. They cultivated the art of poetry with great care. They produced lyric gems of the highest order. [. . .] all the valuable poems in the Gaelic language have not been printed. There are hundreds of poems of great beauty that have not been printed.

2. For linguistic reasons:

There are thousands of MSS. in Irish Gaelic, whilst in Scottish Gaelic there are only a very few. But the very fact there are only a few, makes it all the more necessary to have these published. They are needed for the sake of the words they contain. [. . .] Besides, for the purposes of comparative philology, it is necessary to have words in their oldest written form.

3. For the sake of their historical content:

[. . .] The true history of the Highlanders is to be found in their poems, and nowhere else.<sup>187</sup>

Because of what he regarded as the relative purity of Gaelic in the older poetry, Maclean Sinclair thought that by publishing them, he would be contributing to the amelioration of the spoken Gaelic of his day: "If we want to learn Gaelic correctly we must study the works of the Gaelic bards [. . .]."<sup>188</sup> It is not surprising in light of this attitude that he should want to make sure that what he was putting into print was as "correct" as possible from his own viewpoint.

As we have seen, the importance of the manuscripts his grandfather brought with him from Scotland to Nova Scotia in 1819 was impressed on Maclean Sinclair at an early age, and he regarded himself as the guardian of these manuscripts in his adult life. The imperative he felt from his upbringing, reinforced by the constant presence of the manuscripts and the antiquity of their contents [the Dr. Hector Maclean manuscript dates from the eighteenth century

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<sup>187</sup> AMS, "The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems."

<sup>188</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, v.

and some of its contents date from the sixteenth], drove Maclean Sinclair to the publication of his many books: "I wrote out all the poems that I have published at least once, and in a good many instances twice. I can now read every word in the manuscripts that I possess quite easily, but it took me some time to learn to do that."<sup>189</sup> Maclean Sinclair commented on the paucity of Gaelic printed literature as another motivation behind publishing, and most definitely saw his own work as a significant augment to published Gaelic literature: "I know that if I do not publish the poems in my possession no one else will. I know also that unless I publish them, they are likely to perish; Gaelic literature is not of so extensive a character that this should be allowed to happen."<sup>190</sup>

Within the past forty years scholars have returned to the manuscripts that Maclean Sinclair did indeed preserve (via his children with their donation of the manuscripts to the Nova Scotia archives). Copies, microfilm and photostat, are also available at the major universities with Celtic Studies departments in Scotland and North America. Authoritative modern editions have at least in part superseded Maclean Sinclair's editions, but both Annie Mackenzie and Colm Ó Baoill have acknowledged their debt to Maclean Sinclair, while pointing out the unreliability of his editions. Mackenzie called Maclean Sinclair's book

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<sup>189</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 47-48.

<sup>190</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, iv.

“extremely useful”<sup>191</sup> and Ó Baoill wrote, “I must nevertheless acknowledge my great debt to Maclean Sinclair’s work, which made my own very much easier.”<sup>192</sup> In both cases Maclean Sinclair was the first to produce such a text. He recognized the significance of Iain Lom and saw the need for a dedicated volume of his works. He also saw the importance of producing a collection of Maclean verse, and was the first to produce a chronologically based series of the works of the Gaelic bards.

Maclean Sinclair was among the vanguard of Gaelic scholars working in Gaelic publishing in the nineteenth century, and in his editorial stance he was like many of his contemporaries. Alexander Carmichael, a correspondent of Maclean Sinclair, was also known for altering his texts. John Lorne Campbell, in an article on Alexander Carmichael’s *Carmina Gadelica* in *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, attempted to put Carmichael’s work into the context of his time: “In ‘mending’ his texts, Carmichael was only following a practice which was normal in his time, followed by editors like D. C. MacPherson in preparing his *Duanaire* and A. MacLean Sinclair in his books of selections of the works of the Gaelic bards, in their struggles to provide the Scottish Gaelic language with a printed literature.”<sup>193</sup> Campbell cites Rev. Donald Lamont’s memorial tribute to

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<sup>191</sup> MacKenzie, *Òrain Iain Luim*, v.

<sup>192</sup> Ó Baoill, *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>193</sup> John Lorne Campbell, “Notes on Hamish Robertson’s ‘Studies in Carmichael’s *Carmina Gadelica*,’” *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 13.1 (1978): 2.

Professor Donald MacKinnon in defence of Carmichael; it is equally applicable to Maclean Sinclair:

The old race of Highland gentlemen, lay and clerical, who kept alive the torch of Gaelic learning deserve better treatment than they sometimes receive from their successors. Their work, no doubt, had the defects of their age, and the application of scientific methods to Gaelic study has resulted in their being superseded as authorities. But at the same time, from the point of view of literary culture and learning in the best sense, these men were far superior to the critics who poke fun or malice at them.<sup>194</sup>

Maclean Sinclair did emend printed texts extensively, for a number of reasons, among them religious piety, moral sensibilities, and linguistic perfectionism. Maclean Sinclair stated in one of his last anthologies of Gaelic verse, "I trust that I have done something in the interest of Gaelic poetry. If I have done nothing else, I have at least preserved and made known a large number of poems which were likely to perish."<sup>195</sup> He was of the opinion that by publishing his editions he was saving the contents of the manuscripts in his possession for posterity: "The manuscripts may perish, but probably some copies of this work will be preserved."<sup>196</sup>

This is completely indicative of his point of view that he had preserved the essence of the manuscripts in his editions of poetry. It is ironic that he should choose to print his editions on low quality paper contributing to a relatively

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<sup>194</sup> Campbell, "Notes": 13.

<sup>195</sup> AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 48.

<sup>196</sup> AMS, *Comhchruinneachadh* Part III, iv-v.

shorter lifespan than the manuscripts, which are still extant and preserved in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. In his self-assessment of his work, he was essentially correct in stating that he had brought to light a large number of poems which might not otherwise have been known, and this is undoubtedly his greatest contribution along with his still valuable biographical and historical notes. He was also correct, though not in the way he meant it, in his assessment that he had preserved the material as well. Maclean Sinclair was of course talking about his publications here; however, because of his disregard for the authority of his original sources, he has called into doubt much of what he has published, and subsequent scholarship has had to return to the originals where possible. For much of his work this means the manuscripts, which he did indeed preserve for posterity, so that later scholars, made aware of their contents via Maclean Sinclair's work, could utilize them for their own authoritative editions.

## APPENDICES

I trust that I have done something in the interest of Gaelic poetry. If I have done nothing else, I have at least preserved and made known a large number of poems which were likely to perish. Leaving others to do more work and better work than I have done, I now feel very much like saying, FAREWELL TO GAELIC POETRY!\*

– A. Maclean Sinclair

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\* AMS, *Dàin agus Òrain*, 48.

**Appendix A**  
**Published Books by Alexander Maclean Sinclair**

- [1880] *Dàin Spioradail le Iain Mac-Gilleain*. Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart.
- [1880] A. Malachi [pseudonym], *Letters on the Anglo-Israel Folly*. Truro, NS: Robert McConnell, Printer.
- [1881] *Clàrsach na Coille*. Glasgow: Archibald Sinclair and R. McGregor & Co.
- [1888] *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry, Part I*. Charlottetown, PEI: G. Herbert Haszard, Publisher.
- [1890] *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry, Part II*. Charlottetown: G. Herbert Haszard, Publisher.
- [1890] *Comhchruinneachadh Ghlinn-a-Bhàird: The Glenbard Collection of Gaelic Poetry, Part III*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1890] *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1892] *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1894] *Peoples and Languages of the World*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1895] *Òrain le Iain Lom Mac-Dhòmhnail*. Antigonish, NS: The Casket Office.
- [1896] *The Gaelic Bards from 1765 to 1825*. Sydney, NS: Mac-Talla Publishing Co., Ltd.
- [1898] *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*, vol. I. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1899] *The Clan Gillean*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1900] *Na Bàird Leathanach: The Maclean Bards*, vol. II. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1901] *Filidh na Coille: Dàin agus Òrain leis a' Bhàrd Mac-Gilleain agus le Feadhainn Eile*. Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company.
- [1901] *Mactalla Nan Tur*. Sydney: Mac-Talla Publishing Co., Ltd.
- [1901] *The Mackenzies of Applecross*. Charlottetown: John K. Mackenzie, Publisher.

- [1901] *The Sinclairs of Roslin, Caithness, and Goshen*. Charlottetown: The Examiner Publishing Company.
- [1902] *Dàin agus Òrain le Alasdair Mac-Fhionghain*. Charlottetown: Haszard & Moore.
- [1904] *The Gaelic Bards from 1825 to 1875*. Sydney: Mac-Talla Publishing Co., Ltd.
- [1911] Alexander Maclean, D. D. *The Story of the Kirk in Nova Scotia*. Ed. Alexander Maclean Sinclair. Pictou: *The Pictou Advocate*.\*
- [1928] *The Maclean Songster: Clàrsach na Coille*. Ed. Hector MacDougall. Glasgow: Alex. MacLaren & Sons.

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\* According to DMS, AMS was the editor of this book; see "Some Family History," 67. See Part II, Chapter II, footnote #67.

## Appendix B Periodical Contributions by Alexander Maclean Sinclair

This list includes the first lines of songs (with titles in parentheses), submitted and/or composed by AMS, as well as titles of articles and letters by AMS. All items are clearly contributed by AMS, unless otherwise indicated below. This is not a comprehensive list of all of his periodical contributions. However, his contributions to the *Casket* and *Mac-Talla* are as comprehensive as possible based on extant issues of these papers. The *Casket* and *Mac-Talla* are two Nova Scotia newspapers with a history of Gaelic publishing, and are the two main Nova Scotian venues to which AMS contributed Gaelic material, other than his own “Cùil na Gàidhlig” column in the *Pictou News* (see Appendix C). Periodicals to which he contributed and which are not included in this appendix include the *Island Reporter* (Baddeck and Sydney, NS), the Charlottetown *Patriot*, the *PEI Magazine*, and the *Enterprise* (New Glasgow, NS).

The list of AMS’s contributions to the Scottish journals, *Celtic Magazine*, *Celtic Monthly*, *Celtic Review*, and *TGSI*, is comprehensive. AMS also contributed to Scottish newspapers, such as the *Oban Times* and the *Inverness Highlander*, for which only a few of his articles are listed below.

The items below are ordered chronologically by periodical. Periodicals themselves are ordered alphabetically according to the abbreviated form of their title: *CMA* = *Celtic Magazine* (Inverness), *CMO* = *Celtic Monthly* (Glasgow), *CR* = *Celtic Review* (Edinburgh), *CS* = *Canada Scotsman* (Montreal and Toronto), *CT* = *Casket* (Antigonish, NS), *EC* = *Eastern Chronicle* (New Glasgow, NS), *HI* = *Highlander* (Inverness), *MT* = *Mac-Talla* (Sydney, NS), *OT* = *Oban Times*, *PW* = *Presbyterian Witness* (Halifax, NS), *SA* = *Scottish-American Journal* (New York), *SC* = *Scottish Canadian* (Toronto), *TGSI* = *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*.

AMS often contributed the same article to more than one periodical; therefore some of the items below are repeated. The items below have been transcribed *Verbatim et Literatim*; please note that the lack of appropriate accents (length marks) in many of the Gaelic items is also *literatim*.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Buried Gaelic Songs	<i>CMA</i> 4.41 (1878-79): 195-96
Correspondence: The Cup Song	<i>CMA</i> 12.138 (1887): 284-86
The Origin of the Clan Maclean	<i>CMA</i> 13.150 (1888): 250-52

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
The Origin of the Clan Maclean	CMA 13.151 (1888): 297-302
The Origin of the Clan Maclean	CMA 13.154 (1888): 439-43
The Origin of the Clan Maclean	CMA 13.155 (1888): 498-509
Highland Ancestry of Dr. David Livingstone, African Traveller	CMO 2.6 (1894): 121-22
Was Dr. Smith a Truthful Man?	CMO 10.1 (1902): 19-20
The Macleans of Crossapol	CMO 11.4 (1903): 78-79
The Macleans of Crossapol	CMO 11.5 (1903): 95-96
The Macleans of Crossapol	CMO 11.12 (1903): 237-38
The Macleans of Boreray	CMO 13.8 (1905): 144-45
The Macleans of Boreray	CMO 13.9 (1905): 174-75
The Origin of the Macleans	CMO 14.5 (1906): 87-88
The MacQuarries of Ulva	CMO 14.9 (1906): 171-72
The MacGillivrays of Mull	CMO 14.20 (1906): 196-98
Witnesses to a Galloway Charter	CMO 15.2 (1906): 28-29
The Clan Eachern or MacEachran	CMO 16.12 (1908): 227-28
The Macleods of Lewis	CMO 17.3 (1908): 57-59
The Macgregors of Fortingall	CMO 17.6 (1909): 114
The Ancestors of Dr. Livingstone	CMO 17.9 (1909): 168-69
Argyleshire Sinclairs	CMO 18.11 (1910): 208-09
The Gunns	CMO 20.8 (1912): 156-57
The Camerons of Erracht	CMO 21.2 (1913): 26-27
The Urcharts or Urquharts	CMO 21.9 (1913): 162-63
The Rev. Dr. Blair's MSS	CR 2 (1905-06): 153-60

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
The Combatants on the North Inch of Perth	CR 3 (1906-07): 1-9
The MacNeils of Barra	CR 3 (1906-07): 216-23
The Clan Fingon	CR 4 (1907-08): 31-41
The Clan Cameron	CR 5 (1908-09): 70-79
MacGregor Genealogies	CR 5 (1908-09): 309-19
The MacNeills of Argyllshire	CR 6 (1909-10): 55-64
Who Was Mairearad Nigh'n Lachainn?	CR 7 (1911): 193-203
The Clan Chattan	CR 8 (1912): 1-7
Argyllshire Clans	CR 8 (1912): 334-40
The MacDonalds of Keppoch	CR 9 (1913-14): 48-56
The MacKays of Strathnaver	CR 10 (1914-15): 193-97
How I Spent the Summer of 1869 – Parts I-VII	CS (1870-71): exact dates and page numbers unavailable except for parts III & IV (23 Apr 1870: 3 and 19 Nov 1870: 2, respectively). See Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/545/664-71, NSARM.
Tha mo chridhe-sa ciuirte (Marbh-Rann do dh' Alastair Mac-Eachern, a chaochail ann a' Pictou 'san t-Samhradh, 1859), AMS	CT 8.46 (15 Nov 1860): 4
[1st line illegible] (Uilleam Glas)	CT 10.32 (20 Feb 1862): 4
Translation of Annie Laurie	CT 32.29 (25 Oct 1883): 2
Ged bha 'n rathad slochdach, reot' (Mile Beannachd aig na Suinn), AMS	CT 41.1 (21 Jan 1892): 1
The Chisholms of Strathglass	CT 41.37 (29 Sept 1892): 1

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
The Chisholms of Strathglass	CT 41.38 (6 Oct 1892): 1
The Mackintoshes	CT 41.48 (15 Dec 1892): 1
The Mackintoshes	CT 41.49 (22 Dec 1892): 1
The Letter P in Gaelic	CT 41.49 (22 Dec 1892): 2
The Shaws	CT 41.50 (29 Dec 1892): 1
Branches of the Camerons of Lochiel	CT 42.28 (20 July 1893): 1
The MacGillonies, Camerons of Glennevis, MacMartins	CT 42.29 (27 July 1893): 1
[1 <sup>st</sup> line illegible] (Cumha do Phadraig Caimbeul)	CT 42.33 (24 Aug 1893): 4
Laments Composed at the Gulf	CT 42.52 (28 Dec 1893): 1
Chiefs of the Macleans	CT 43.1 (4 Jan 1894): 1
The MacNeils of Barra	CT 43.30 (9 Aug 1894): 3
The Macintyres of Glennoe	CT 44.7 (28 Feb 1895): 3
The New Gaelic Dictionary and Other Books	CT 45.11 (12 Apr 1896): 2
A Lesson in Gaelic	CT 46.13 (15 Apr 1897): 4
The Old Gaelic Bards	CT 47.10 (10 Mar 1898): 4
Passing Away	CT 47.20 (19 May 1898): 4
The Gaelic Poetry of Scotland	CT 48.47 (23 Nov 1899): 4,7
The Heroic Ballads	CT 48.48 (30 Nov 1899): 4,7
The Gaelic Bards of Scotland from 1400 to 1725 (From 1400 to 1525)	CT 48.49 (7 Dec 1899): 4

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Deoch slaint 'nan daoine furanach (Oran do Chomunn Gaidhealach Antigonish), AMS	CT 48.50 (14 Dec 1899): 2
The Gaelic Bards of Scotland from 1400 to 1725 (From 1645 to 1725)	CT 48.52 (21 Dec 1899): 2
The Gaelic Bards of Scotland from 1725 to 1830	CT 49.1 (4 Jan 1900): 4,7
Beir mo shoraidh leis an ti (Laoidh), Sile na Ceapaich	CT 49.6 (15 Feb 1900): 6
The Clan Iver	CT 49.30 (12 July 1900): 3
Letter from the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair	CT 49.45 (1 Nov 1900): 4
Was Dr. Smith a Truthful Man?	CT 50.30 (25 July 1901): 7
A dholair 'se mo shòlas (Oran an Latha 'n Diugh)	CT 50.39 (26 Sept 1901): 2
James MacPherson	CT 50.39 (26 Sept 1901): 2
Letter relating to article on James MacPherson	CT 50.40 (3 Oct 1901): 5
History of the Highland Clans	CT 50.49 (5 Dec 1901): 1
Stuth na Beatha: Sgeulach	CT 51.25 (26 June 1902): 8
'Chuachag nan craobh, nach cruaidh leat mo chaidh (Cuachag nan Craobh)	CT 51.40 (9 Oct 1902): 2
Surnames	CT 51.43 (15 Oct 1903): 2
Death of the Keppoch Bard	CT 52.12 (24 Mar 1904): 4
Tha m' athair bochd an nochd san uaigh (Rannan), R.D. Domhnallach	CT 52.13 (31 Mar 1904): 2

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Thus' a ghlacas lothan fiadhaich (Laoidh), Clement Alexandria	CT 53.4 (26 Jan 1905): 2
Old Almanacs	CT 53.16 (20 Apr 1905): 2
The Macdonalds of Islay and the Glens	CT 54.6 (8 Feb 1906): 2
The MacGillivrays of Mull	CT 54.33 (16 Aug 1906): 7
MacLeod's Gaelic Dictionary	CT 56.37 (10 Sept 1908): 4
The Late Chief of the McNeils of Barra	CT 58.25 (23 June 1910): 3
The MacEacherns	CT 59.47 (23 Nov 1911): 6
To What Clan Did Lord Clyde Belong?	CT 61.5 (30 Jan 1913): 7
Clan Genealogies	CT 64.15 (13 Apr 1916): 6
'S iomadh olc a tha 'san t-saoghal (Gearan an Tuathanaich), AMS	CT 72.32 (7 Aug 1924): 8
David McLean of the West Branch	EC 53.9 (1 Mar 1894): 2
Patersons, Shaws and MacLeans	EC 59.17 (26 Feb 1904): 2
Barney's River	EC 59.18 (1 Mar 1904): 3
Marshy Hope	EC 59.22 (15 Mar 1904): 5
Know Thyself	EC 64.62 (3 Aug 1909): 3
Beaver Meadow School	EC 73.102 (26 Dec 1916): 7
The Pictou Academy and St. Mary's	EC 73.104 (2 Jan 1917): 1
Fifty Years Ago	EC 74.2 (9 Jan 1917): 5
A Trip to Scotland	EC 74.3 (12 Jan 1917): 2
A Troublesome Fly	EC 74.4 (16 Jan 1917): 4

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
(Eachdraidh Thuath Dè Danann), Iain mac Ailein	<i>HI</i> (6 Sept 1873): 3
(Moladh na Pioba), Iain mac Ailein	<i>HI</i> (9 May 1874): 2
Litir Eile a Eillean a Phriunsa	<i>MT</i> 1.7 (9 July 1892): 4
Tha bruachan Mhacsniel aluinn (Anna Bhoideach) [trans. of Robert Burns's "Annie Laurie"], AMS	A manuscript insert on front page of <i>MT</i> 1.14 (27 Aug 1892) in STFXUSC
Albnaich 'chog fo Wallas suairc' (Brosnachadh Catha a Bhrusaich) <sup>1</sup> [trans. of Robert Burns's Scots Wha Hae], AMS	A manuscript insert between p. 2 & 3 of <i>MT</i> 1.19 (1 Oct 1892) in STFXUSC
Dhirich e 'm mach guall' a bhealach (Biodh an Deoch so 'n Laimh mo Ruin) <sup>2</sup>	<i>MT</i> 2.6 (5 Aug 1893): 8
Na Sean Sgeulachdan	<i>MT</i> 2.11 (9 Sept 1893): 5
Leasan air Leughadh Gadhlig	<i>MT</i> 2.13 (23 Sept 1893): 5
Teaghlach Chola	<i>MT</i> 2.14 (7 Oct 1893): 2
First Lesson in Reading Gaelic	<i>MT</i> 2.14 (7 Oct 1893): 3
Teaghlach Chola	<i>MT</i> 2.15 (14 Oct 1893): 2-3
Leathanich Chola	<i>MT</i> 2.16 (21 Oct 1893): 7
Leathanich Chola	<i>MT</i> 2.18 (4 Nov 1893): 7
Clann-Neill Bharra	<i>MT</i> 2.45 (2 June 1894): 2

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<sup>1</sup> See Part II, Chapter I, footnote #74.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous contribution, but almost certainly contributed by AMS. See Ó Baoill, *Duanaire Colach*, 105; N.B. reference to song should read p. 8 rather than p. 3 of *Mac-Talla*.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Dh' fhalbh mi a mo dhuthaich (Ho mo Mhairi Laghach), Alastair Domhnallach, 'sa Cheapich an Antigonish <sup>3</sup>	MT 3.6 (11 Aug 1894): 8
Gur moch rinn mi dusgadh (Oran)	MT 3.9 (1 Sept 1894): 8
'Righ! Nach eireadh i tuath (Iorram do dh' Iain Garbh, triath Chola) <sup>4</sup>	MT 3.11 (15 Sept 1894): 8
Clann-Neill Bharra	MT 3.20 (17 Nov 1894): 6-7
Oidhche dhomh 's mi 'n druim a chlachain (Oran Gaoil)	MT 3.23 (8 Dec 1894): 8
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho linn Oisein gu ruig a Bhliadhna 1400	MT 3.31 (2 Feb 1895): 3
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho'n bhliadhna 1400 gu ruig a bhliadhna 1525	MT 3.32 (9 Feb 1895): 6
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho 1525 gu 1645	MT 3.33 (16 Feb 1895): 6
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho 1645 gu 1725	MT 3.34 (23 Feb 1895): 6
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho 1725 gu 1815	MT 3.35 (2 Mar 1895): 6
Na Baird Ghaidhealach bho 1725 gu 1815	MT 3.36 (9 Mar 1895): 6
Gur mise bheir gràdh gu bràth do 'n chailin (Oran Gaoil), Mr. Seumas Mac-Griogair <sup>5</sup>	MT 4.4 (3 Aug 1895): 8

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<sup>3</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS; personal correspondence indicates AMS submitted poems on behalf of Alexander McDonald, "the Keppoch Bard," of Springhill, NS.

<sup>4</sup> Anonymous contribution, but almost certainly contributed by AMS. See Ó Baoill, *Duanaire Colach*, 68.

<sup>5</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS as he inherited some of the Rev. James MacGregor's material .

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Na Galataich	MT 4.42 (25 Apr 1896): 2
Gaidheil Ghlinnegaradh an Ontario	MT 4.43 (2 May 1896): 2-3
Clann Mhuirich	MT 4.44 (9 May 1896): 2-3
Nuair dh' eirich gealach gheal nan trath (Aisling Mari)	MT 4.45 (16 May 1896): 8
Bithibh aotrom 's togaibh fonn (Am Bal Gaidhealach), am Bard Mac-Gilleain	MT 5.15 (17 Oct 1896): 112
Na Baird Ghaidhealach	MT 5.18 (7 Nov 1896): 134-35
Gur-a mis' tha fo airtneal (Duanag), Saighdear Muileach*	MT 6.8 (20 Aug 1897): 64
Is tric mi gach la a cuimhneach' do ghraidh (Oran Gaoil)*	MT 6.9 (27 Aug 1897): 72
Strathchomhainn	MT 6.11 (10 Sept 1897): 81
Tha mo chridh' an diugh brònach (Oran Broin)*	MT 6.11 (10 Sept 1897): 87
So an gille beag aig da (An Gille Beag aig Da)*	MT 6.30 (21 Jan 1898): 240
Fhuaradh litir ghrinn an dé leam (An Gaidheal Uasal)*	MT 6.40 (1 Apr 1898): 320
Briogais an Fhir-Dheasachaidh*	MT 7.30 (17 Feb 1899): 234
Litir gu Iain Beag*	MT 7.31 (24 Feb 1899): 241-42

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\* Contributed by "Gleann-a-Bhàird." This is almost certainly a penname of AMS as much of what is contributed under this pseudonym appears elsewhere under AMS's name. For instance, "Coileach Uisdein" is a poem by AMS (see *Filidh na Coille*, 155-58). It is also not surprising that AMS should use this as a penname considering it was the placename of his birth.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Litir eile gu Iain Beag*	MT 7.34 (24 Mar 1899): 265
Coileach Uisdein*	MT 7.38 (21 Apr 1899): 297
Deoch slaint nan daoine furanach (Oran do Chomunn Gaidhealach Antigonish), AMS	MT 8.23 (15 Dec 1899): 184
Duisg, a Bhreatainn, a do shuain (Brosnachadh Catha), AMS	MT 8.32 (16 Feb 1900): 256
Clann Raonaill	MT 9.1 (6 July 1900): 6
Clann Domhnall	MT 9.2 (13 July 1900): 15
Domhnallaich 'na Ceapaich	MT 9.3 (20 July 1900): 24
Clann Alasdair	MT 9.4 (27 July 1900): 32
Triathan Ghlinne-Comhann	MT 9.5 (3 Aug 1900): 38-39
Eachdraidh Sgeulachdail nan Caimbalach	MT 9.6 (10 Aug 1900): 45,48
Eachdraidh Fhirinneach nan Caimbalach	MT 9.8 (24 Aug 1900): 64
Criomag de Shean Eachdraidh	MT 9.13 (28 Sept 1900): 100
Clann Ruari	MT 9.27-28 (11 Jan 1901): 210
Tha mo chiabhan air glasadh (Rainn do Mhac-Griogair), Mr. Seumas Mac-Griogair, D.D. <sup>6</sup>	MT 9.30 (25 Jan 1901): 232

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\* Contributed by "Gleann-a-Bhàird."

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS as he inherited some of the Rev. James MacGregor's material .

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Air dhòmsa bhith 'm aonar (Oran Molaidh), Alasdair Domhnallach 'sa Cheapaich <sup>7</sup>	MT 9.42 (19 Apr 1901): 328
A dholair, 's e mo shòlas (Oran an Latha 'n Diugh), AMS	MT 10.16 (18 Oct 1901): 120
'S trom mo mhulad mu 'n sgeul (Iain Ghlinne-Cuaich)*	MT 10.24 (14 Feb 1902): 184
Sloigh an t-Saoghail	MT 10.26 (14 Mar 1902): 196
Na Sudanaich	MT 10.27 (28 Mar 1902): 204
'S tric mi 'tionndadh am leabaidh (Cumha), Iain Mac-Gillebhrath, am piobaire*	MT 10.27 (28 Mar 1902): 208
Nigearan nan Eileanan	MT 10.29 (25 Apr 1902): 221
Stuth na Beatha	MT 10.31 (23 May 1902): 233
Moch Di-luain an am dhuinn gluasad (Tuireadh), Iain Ruadh Mac-Gillebrath*	MT 10.32 (6 June 1902): 247
'S e dhuisg cho grad a m' shuain mi (Oran Gaoil)*	MT 10.33 (20 June 1902): 256
A chuachag nan craobh, nach cruaidh leat mo chaidh (Cuachag nan Craobh)*	MT 11.2 (25 July 1902): 15
Tha 'n coinean beag maoth sin (An Cu Beag)*	MT 11.10 (14 Nov 1902): 80

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<sup>7</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS; personal correspondence indicates AMS submitted poems on behalf of Alexander McDonald, "the Keppoch Bard," of Springhill, NS.

\* Contributed by "Gleann-a-Bhàird."

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
Gur a mis' tha 'n diugh bronach (Marbhrann), Dòmhnall Munro an Rònaidh*	<i>MT</i> 11.17 (20 Feb 1903): 136
'N diugh gur airtnealach m' éirigh (Oran), Alasdair Domhnallach, Bard na Ceapaich <sup>8</sup>	<i>MT</i> 11.18 (6 Mar 1903): 144
[Title & 1 <sup>st</sup> line same] (Tha Taighean Beag Agam), Seumas Munro	<i>MT</i> 11.24 (29 May 1903): 192
Clann Duilligh	<i>MT</i> 12.2 (24 July 1903): 12-13
Togaid na Gaidheil an ceann (Aiseirigh na Gaidhealtachd), D.B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.9 (30 Oct 1903): 71
Dh' fhalbh na Forsairean 's na féidh (Ruaig nan Tighearnan), D. B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.9 (30 Oct 1903): 71-2
Olc air mhath le bodaich bhaoth (Triall nan Croitearan), D. B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.9 (30 Oct 1903): 72
Ach a nis bho 'n chaidh tu eug (Tuireadh nighean air son a leannain ann an tir Phictou), D. B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.9 (30 Oct 1903): 72
Nuair a théid mi dh' fhuireach (Mairi Lurach), D. B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.9 (30 Oct 1903): 72
Thig an àird' leam gu Bràigh' (Bràigh' Abhainn Bhàrnaidh), D. B. Blair <sup>†</sup>	<i>MT</i> 12.10 (13 Nov 1903): 79

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\* Contributed by "Gleann-a-Bhàird."

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS; personal correspondence indicates AMS submitted poems on behalf of Alexander McDonald, "the Keppoch Bard," of Springhill, NS.

<sup>†</sup> Anonymous contribution, most likely from AMS as he inherited D. B. Blair's material upon his death in 1893.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
A shaoghail, 's cruaidh leam bhuin do ghruaim (Cumha d'a mhnaoi, Mairi Nic-Gilleain a dh' eug sa bhliadhna 1800), Alasdair Domhnallach*	<i>MT</i> 12.11 (27 Nov 1903): 88
'Nuair chaidh mi thun a chladaich leat (Tha mi Trom 's Duilich Leam)	<i>MT</i> 12.15 (22 Jan 1904): 119
B'e sud an là mi-shealbhach (A Pholaidh Ghrinn)	<i>MT</i> 12.15 (22 Jan 1904): 119
A dholair, 's e mo sholas (Oran an Latha 'n Diugh)	<i>MT</i> 12.15 (22 Jan 1904): 119
Thug mi gràdh dhuit thar gach nionaig (Cairistiona Chaimbeul)	<i>MT</i> 12.15 (22 Jan 1904): 120
A Chomuinn Ghaidhealaich mo ghaoil (Oran Brosnachaidh do 'n Chomunn Ghaidhealach an Southland, New Zealand), Alasdair A. Mac Rath*	<i>MT</i> 12.15 (22 Jan 1904): 120
Baisteadh Cloinne*	<i>MT</i> 12.22 (29 Apr 1904): 170
Dh' fhag sinn cladach Alb' nar déidh (Oran), Aonghus Mac-an-Toisich*	<i>MT</i> 12.24 (27 May 1904): 192
James MacPherson	<i>OT</i> (24 Aug 1901): n.p. See Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds, MG9/542/167, NSARM.
James MacPherson	<i>PW</i> 54.41 (12 Oct 1901): 321
Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund	<i>PW</i> 55.45 (8 Nov 1902): 353
Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund	<i>PW</i> 55.52 (27 Dec 1902): 410
Gaelic Books	<i>SA</i> (10 July 1884): n.p.#

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\* Contributed by "Gleann-a-Bhàird."

<u>Title</u>	<u>Published in</u>
The Preservation of Old Gaelic Poems	SA (27 Feb 1889): n.p.#
Dr. Blair's Version of the Psalms	SC 10.4 (Apr 1905): 118
A Highlander Philologically Dissected	TGSI 14 (1887-88): 55-63
The MacIntyres of Glennoe	TGSI 18 (1891-92): 289-95
Old Gaelic Songs	TGSI 20 (1894-96): 9-28
The Gaelic Bards and the Collectors of their Productions	TGSI 24 (1899-1901): 259-77
A Collection of Gaelic Poems	TGSI 26 (1904-07): 235-62

**Appendix C**  
**Items in “Cùil na Gàidhlig” (The Gaelic Corner), edited by AMS, in the *Pictou News***  
 (30 Nov 1883 – 26 Jan 1888)\*

N.B. Though this was a Gaelic column (with the odd item in English), it was published in an English-language newspaper and many typographical errors occurred in the typesetting process; AMS often complained about this in his publications. The items below have been transcribed *Verbatim et Literatim*; please note that the lack of appropriate accents (length marks) in many of the Gaelic items is also *literatim*, and is probably representative of the fact that accents would not have been available in the printing press of this English-language newspaper.

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
An Entirely New Feature [Announcement of Cuil na Gaidhlig]	2.11 (30 Nov 1883): 1
Cuil na Gaidhlig	2.12 (7 Dec 1883): 1
'Threin, a chog fo Uallas suas (Brosnachadh- cathan Bhrusaich aig Blar Allt-a-Bhonnaich)	2.12 (7 Dec 1883): 1
Iain agus Sine	2.12 (7 Dec 1883): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.13 (14 Dec 1883): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.14 ( 21 Dec 1883): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.16 (4 Jan 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.17 (11 Jan 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.21 (8 Feb 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.22 (15 Feb 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.23 (22 Feb 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.37 (30 May 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.38 (6 June 1884): 1
Mu na Seann Ghaidhil, D. B. Blair	2.41 (27 June 1884): 1

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\* This is as complete a list as possible based on the surviving issues of the *Pictou News* available in archival holdings at NSARM (see Part II, Chapter II, footnote #57).

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
'Stric thu bhais, cur an ceill dhuinn (Marbhbrann Eoghainn), Robert McKay (Rob Donn)	2.13 (14 Dec 1883): 1
Death! How oft we're reminded (Marbhrann Eoghainn - English Translation), Robert McKay (Rob Donn)	2.14 (21 Dec 1883): 1
[Gaelic Proverbs]	2.14 (21 Dec 1883): 1
[Gaelic Proverbs]	2.15 (28 Dec 1883): 1
[Gaelic Proverbs]	2.18 (18 Jan 1884): 1
[Gaelic Proverbs]	2.36 (23 May 1884): 1
[Gaelic Proverbs]	2.40 (20 June 1884): 1
Cum a' suas gu brath a Ghaidhlig, litir bho 'n Urramach Mr Raonull Mac Gillebhrath, Ohio, Antigonish	2.15 (28 Dec 1883): 1
Altachadh Dhail-na-Capaig	2.15 (28 Dec 1883): 1
Comhairlean Aithgearr	2.16 (4 Jan 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	2.16 (4 Jan 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	2.34 (9 May 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	2.39 (13 June 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	2.47 (8 Aug 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.1 (19 Sept 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.11 (28 Nov 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.12 (5 Dec 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.15 (26 Dec 1884): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.16 (2 Jan 1885): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.30 (10 Apr 1885): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.31 (17 Apr 1885): 1
Sean-Fhocail	3.41 (26 June 1885): 1
Sean-Fhocail	4.4 (9 Oct 1885): 1
Sean-Fhocail	4.24 (26 Feb 1886): 4
Sean-Fhocail	4.25 (5 Mar 1886): 4
Sean-Fhocail	4.50 (27 Aug 1886): 4
Sean-Fhocail	4.50 (27 Aug 1886): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Piob dhubh an tombac, ' piob dhona gun tlachd (A Phiob-thombaca), Donald McDuff, Esq. of Tomnagrew, Dunkeld	2.17 (11 Jan 1884): 1
Fhuair mi naidheachd bho thuath (Tuireadh), D.B. Blair	2.18 (18 Jan 1884): 1
Diadhachd Chrìosd, Cuairtear nan Gleann	2.18 (18 Jan 1884): 1
Slan gu'n till fear 'chinn-duibh (Seaforth's Welcome), (Fàilt' Uilleim Dhuibh), Piobaire Mhic-Coinnich	2.18 (18 Jan 1884): 1
'S e Domhnull Mac Dhomhnuill is ainm dhomh (Domhnull Mac Dhomhnuill)	2.19 (25 Jan 1884): 1
Cailleach-nan-Cno agus Taillear-nan-Clar	2.19 (25 Jan 1884): 1
Leabhar-Oran Neill Mhicleoid	2.21 (8 Feb 1884): 1
Seann Sgeul Gaelach	2.23 (22 Feb 1884): 1
Seann Sgeul Gaelach	2.25 (7 Mar 1884): 1
Seann Sgeul Gaelach	2.26 (14 Mar 1884): 1
Mo Pheigi 's caileag shunndach ("The Wakuin' o' the Fauld")	2.24 (29 Feb 1884): 1
How to Read Gaelic	2.24 (29 Feb 1884): 1
Fhuair mi sgeul a tha leam binn (Am Bal Gaidhealach), Bhard Mac-Gilleain	2.25 (7 Mar 1884): 1
Cìod an Seorsa Dachaidh tha Agad?	2.26 (14 Mar 1884): 1
An t-Urramach Aonghus Mac-Gillemhòire	2.27 (21 Mar 1884): 1
Am Piobaire Gaidhealach agus na Madaidh-Alluidh	2.28 (28 Mar 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
A Chraobh Bhainne	2.28 (28 Mar 1884): 1
Ochanadam mur tha mi 'n Diugh	2.28 (28 Mar 1884): 1
An am dhuinn dealachadh Di-mairt (Duanag an t-Seoladair)	2.28 (28 Mar 1884): 1
Eachdraidh mu Mhurcha Gearr	2.29 (4 Apr 1884): 1
Maothran Thighearna Chola	2.29 (4 Apr 1884): 1
Creach Eadar Fhineacha Gaidhealach	2.30 (11 Apr 1884): 1
Tha 'm Muillionn-dubh air bhogadan (Am Muillionn-Dubh)	2.30 (11 Apr 1884): 1
An Faillear Bradach	2.31 (18 Apr 1884): 1
Horo Iain taobh rium fhin (Comhairle do na Gillean Oga), A. MacCuarraig	2.31 (18 Apr 1884): 1
Domhnull 's an t-Airgiod	2.32 (25 Apr 1884): 1
Bha 'n [...] a ghnath (Moladh nan Gaidheal)	2.32 (25 Apr 1884): 1
Gilleasbuig Aotrom	2.33 (2 May 1884): 1
Gilleasbuig Aotrom	2.34 (9 May 1884): 1
Gilleasbuig Aotrom	3.42 (3 July 1885): 1
Sgeulabeag Gaidhleach, Mu Bhinnean Ghoraidh	2.34 (9 May 1884): 1
A Mhairi, ruith 's thoir dhachaidh 'n crodh gun dail (The Sands of Dee)	2.35 (16 May 1884): 1
Aiseirigh na Gaidhlig	2.35 (16 May 1884): 1
Aiseirigh na Gaidhlig	2.36 (23 May 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
An t-Amadan agus 'Uaireadair	2.36 (23 May 1884): 1
Iain Lom agus Muirichean	2.36 (23 May 1884): 1
A Mhairi thaitneach gur mor mo thlachd dhiot (Mairi Aoidheil), Maighstir Ailein Mac-Gilleain, [a priest from Judique, Cape Breton]	2.37 (30 May 1884): 1
'N deicheamh miosa de 'n bhliadhna (Marbh-rann do 'n Easbuig Fhriseal), Iain Boid	2.39 (13 June 1884): 1
[Advice]	2.40 (20 June 1884): 1
An Cu agus Fhaileas Fein	2.40 (20 June 1884): 1
Ceud-Thus nan Gaidheal	2.42 (4 July 1884): 1
Ceud-Thus nan Gaidheal	2.43 (11 July 1884): 1
Ceud-Thus nan Gaidheal	2.44 (18 July 1884): 1
Fhuair mi litir 'buas bho Dhomhnull (An Litir Ghaidhlig), M.H.G., Margaree	2.44 (18 July 1884): 1
Am Mortair Mac-Thomais	2.44 (18 July 1884): 1
Am Mortair Mac-Thomais	2.45 (25 July 1884): 1
Deanamaid ealaidh do 'n ghlanraich (Rannan Do Bhata), Alastair Mac Mhaighstir Alastair	2.45 (25 July 1884): 1
Mu Dhroch Cuideachd a Sheachnadh	2.45 (25 July 1884): 1
Ann Balbhan agus am Muilleir Cam	2.46 (1 Aug 1884): 1
Ann Balbhan agus am Muilleir Cam	2.47 (8 Aug 1884): 1
Bidh Iain mac Sheumais (Luinneag), D. B. Blair	2.47 (8 Aug 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Donnachadh Ban 's an Gillean Mi-Mhodhal	2.47 (8 Aug 1884): 1
Fhad 's 'thogus cnoic a suas an cinn (Cum a suas a Ghaidhlig), N. Brodie	2.48 (15 Aug 1884): 1
Domhnull na Gealaiche	2.48 (15 Aug 1884): 1
Am Fear Leisg 's an Teas	2.48 (15 Aug 1884): 1
'S i mo chomhairle bho m' chridh' (Do na Seann Fhleasgaichean)	2.49 (22 Aug 1884): 1
Meirleach Ghlinn-Amain	2.49 (22 Aug 1884): 1
Meirleach Ghlinn-Amain	2.50 (29 Aug 1884): 1
Bha mi 'n raoir a' measg nan uaislean (Banais Aonghais Og), Alastair Domhnullach 's a Cheapaich	2.50 (29 Aug 1884): 1
Cuil Bheag nan Glic-Bhriathair	2.50 (29 Aug 1884): 1
Cuil Bheag nan Glic-Bhriathair	2.51 (5 Sept 1884): 1
Names of Animals in Gaelic	2.51 (5 Sept 1884): 1
Names of Animals in Gaelic	2.52 (12 Sept 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	2.51 (5 Sept 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	2.52 (12 Sept 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.1 (19 Sept 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.2 (26 Sept 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.4 (10 Oct 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.6 (24 Oct 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.7 (31 Oct 1884): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.17 (9 Jan 1885): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.18 (16 Jan 1885): 1
Fogradh nan Gaidheal	3.37 (29 May 1885): 1
Se fogl 'nan nal-alba, lus ainmeal nam buadh (Am Foghannan- Suaicheantas na h-Alba), Eoghann Mac-Colla	3.1 (19 Sept 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Gnath-Fhocail	3.1 (19 Sept 1884):1
Gnath-Fhocail	3.5 (17 Oct 1884): 1
Gnath-Fhocail	3.19 (23 Jan 1885): 1
Gnath-Fhocail	3.35 (15 May 1885): 1
Gnath-Fhocail	5.12 (3 Dec 1886): 4
Briathran Gliocais	3.2 (26 Sept 1884): 1
Briathran Gliocais	3.15 (26 Dec 1884): 1
Briathran Gliocais	3.26 (13 Mar 1885): 4
Briathran Gliocais	4.2 (25 Sept 1885): 1
Briathran Gliocais	4.3 (2 Oct 1885): 1
Briathran Gliocais	4.44 (16 July 1886): 4
Briathran Gliocais	4.45 (23 July 1886): 4
Briathran Gliocais	4.46 (30 July 1886): 4
Briathran Gliocais	4.48 (13 Aug 1886): 4
Briathran Gliocais	5.19 (21 Jan 1887): 4
Briathran Gliocais	5.23 (18 Feb 1887): 4
Iain Mac Mhurachaidh	3.3 (3 Oct 1884): 1
Rob Donn 's a Choimhearsnach	3.3 (3 Oct 1884): 1
Teagasgan Gliocais	3.3 (3 Oct 1884): 1
Gaoth 'n Iar air Rugh' na Feisde (Guidhe Namhaid Do Chlann Domhnuill)	3.3 (3 Oct 1884): 1
'S puinnsean e da rireadh (Duanag an Aghaidh an oll), Eoghan Siosal	3.5 (17 Oct 1884): 1
'S miann le breac a bhi 'n sru cas (Thogainn Fonn air Lorg an Fheidh)	3.5 (17 Oct 1884): 1
Nemo me impune lacessit [various translations into Gaelic of this Latin motto of Scotland, i.e. "No one wounds me with impunity"]	3.5 (17 Oct 1884): 1
Run fearan, gaol fearan (Lullaby)	3.7 (31 Oct 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Ged bha barail uil' aig each (The Marks of a Good Cow)	3.7 (31 Oct 1884): 1
Dh'iadh ceo nan stuchd mu aodann Chuilinn (Tuireadh Mhicruimein)	3.7 (31 Oct 1884): 1
Seann Sgeulachd	3.8 (7 Nov 1884): 1
Seann Sgeulachd	3.9 (14 Nov 1884): 1
Ho ro air Breabadair Gormshuil (Breabadair Gormshuil)	3.8 (7 Nov 1884): 1
O hi ri-ri ni sinn tilleadh (Tillidh na Gaidheil), Fear Ghnasto, Caerphilly Castle near Cardiff	3.8 (7 Nov 1884): 1
Sgeul Eachuinn Duibh agus mar Fhuair e an Coirce	3.9 (14 Nov 1884): 1
Sgeul Eachuinn Duibh agus mar Fhuair e an Coirce	3.10 (21 Nov 1884): 1
Thainig fear-an-tighe dhachaidh (Hame Cam' Oor Guidman)	3.10 (21 Nov 1884): 1
Para Ruadh Mac-Griogair	3.11 (28 Nov 1884): 1
Para Ruadh Mac-Griogair	3.13 (12 Dec 1884): 1
Mile Mallachd do 'n ol (Oran Phara Ruaidh MhicGriogair)	3.11 (28 Nov 1884): 1
'Nuair rachadh tu shealg (The Highland Hunt Long Ago - Cumha nam Bann - Parf Forest Lament)	3.11 (28 Nov 1884): 1
Mar Chaidh a' Chiad Sionnach do Mhuile	3.12 (5 Dec 1884): 1
Comhradh Eadar Murachadh Ban agus Coinneach Ciobair	3.14 (19 Dec 1884): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Badges, or Suaicheantas, of the Highland Clans with the Gaelic and English Names	3.15 (26 Dec 1884): 1
Muileann 'na stad a dhith grain (Bantraichean Oga)	3.15 (26 Dec 1884): 1
An Leanabh Ieach 's na Brogan	3.16 (2 Jan 1885): 1
'S trath dhomh dusgadh o m' chadal (Oran do Shir Eobhan Camshron Lhochiall a bha Comharaichte an Cogadh Chrombhail)	3.17 (9 Jan 1885): 1
An raoir a bhruadair mi 'm chadal (Oran do'n Doctair Chamaran), Iain Camaran, an Taileir Mac Alasdair	3.18 (16 Jan 1885): 1
Litir bho 'n Taillear Abrach	3.19 (23 Jan 1885): 1
Chunnaic mise bruadar (Oran, a rinneadh air Padruig Sellar), Domhnull Baillidh	3.20 (30 Jan 1885): 1
Oighreachd Mhic Shimidh	3.20 (30 Jan 1885): 1
Oighreachd Mhic Shimidh	3.21 (6 Feb 1885): 1
Na cnoichd 's na glinn bu bhoidche leann (Am Braighe), M.H. Gillis, Margaree, C.B.	3.22 (13 Feb 1885): 1
[1st line illegible, last two quatrains by A.M.S.] (Oran do ghillean oga a dh' fhag Tiridhe airson Mhanitoba 'sa bhliadhna 1877), Iain Mac-Ghilleain	3.22 (13 Feb 1885): 1
Bha Iain 'na chadal gun smuairean air aigne (Meirleach nam Marag)	3.23 (20 Feb 1885): 1
Clarsach na Coille	3.23 (20 Feb 1885): 1
Calum liath nan suilan gaibhree (Rann), Rob Donn	3.23 (20 Feb 1885): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Facal no Dha da' r Luchd Leughaidh	3.24 (27 Feb 1885): 1
Comhairlean Matha	3.25 (6 Mar 1885): 1
Mar Fhuair Coinneach Odhar an Fhiosachd	3.25 (6 Mar 1885): 1
Riaghailtean Bardachd	3.26 (13 Mar 1885): 4
Mu Litireachadh	3.26 (13 Mar 1885): 4
Gaelic Spelling	3.26 (13 Mar 1885): 4
Litir bho 'n Ghreusaiche Chaimbeul	3.27 (20 Mar 1885): 1
Litir bho 'n Ghreusaiche Chaimbeul	3.28 (27 Mar 1885): 1
Litir bho 'n Ghreusaiche Chaimbeul	3.29 (3 Apr 1885): 1
Bard Loch-nan-Eala	3.28 (27 Mar 1885): 1
[Advice]	3.29 (3 Apr 1885): 1
Litir a chum Sgeulaiche Phictou, bho Iain Muideartach	3.30 (10 Apr 1885): 1
Thug mi sgriob Di-luain 's maighdean uasal mar rium (Geata Kherro)	3.31 (17 Apr 1885): 1
Litir bho Aonghas a Chubair	3.31 (17 Apr 1885): 1
Comhrag ri Clamhan, bho Dail-Uaine	3.32 (24 Apr 1885): 1
Comhrag ri Clamhan, bho Dail-Uaine	3.33 (1 May 1885): 4
'S mise chainnt a dh' fhas lapach (Gearan Na Gaidhlighe), Micheil Domhnullach, Grand Lake, C.B.	3.33 (1 May 1885): 4
A bheil e ann a chrom a cheann (Burn's [sic] Honest Poverty), Tormaid [translation of Robert Burns's "A Man's a Man for A' That"]	3.33 (1 May 1885): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Guth bho 'n Chamus Fharsuinn, Calum Ban	3.33 (1 May 1885): 4
Guth bho 'n Chamus Fharsuinn, Calum Ban	3.34 (8 May 1885): 1
Na Seann Phiobairean – Clann Mhic Cruimein, Clann Mhic Aratair, Clann Mhic Aoidh	3.34 (8 May 1885): 1
Coinneach Odhar	3.36 (22 May 1885): 1
A thir do 'n d' thug mi mo chol (Oran Molaidh do Chape Breatuinn)	3.36 (22 May 1885): 1
A thir do 'n d' thug mi mo chol (Oran Molaidh do Chape Breatuinn)	3.37 (29 May 1885): 1
Ud ud, ud ud, ud udain (Col. Murchison's Song), Col. Donald Murchison, a satirical song on Capt. Ross of Fearne	3.37 (29 May 1885): 1
Niall Gobha	3.38 (5 June 1885): 1
Deoch-Slainte 'n Oighre	3.38 (5 June 1885): 1
Mo shimealair gur laghach thu (An Simealair 's an Stobh), Ailean Mac-Gillean	3.38 (5 June 1885): 1
A Bhreatuinn, na fag, na fag do leanabh (Glaodh a Ghordanaich)	3.39 (12 June 1885): 1
Faic an spailp am morair ard (For A' That) [translation of Robert Burns's "A Man's a Man for A' That"]	3.39 (12 June 1885): 1
An Tuathanach agus a' Fear-Lagha	3.39 (12 June 1885): 1
Tuadh ri Gheurachadh	3.39 (12 June 1885): 1
Tuadh ri Gheurachadh	3.41 (26 June 1885): 1
An Gobhainn Sanntach	3.40 (19 June 1885): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
An Gobhainn Sanntach	3.41 (26 June 1885): 1
Sliochd an tri Fichead Buraidh	3.42 (3 July 1885): 1
Ciontach ach air Mhisg	3.43 (10 July 1885): 1
Ciontach ach air Mhisg	3.44 (17 July 1885): 1
Achairi Mor Pholltaloch	3.44 (17 July 1885): 1
Achairi Mor Pholltaloch	3.45 (24 July 1885): 1
Throd Mo Bhean, 's gun Throd I Rium [1st line and title]	3.45 (24 July 1885): 1
Tha cheardach bheag fo sgail na craoibh (An Gobhainn) [translation of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith"]	3.46 (31 July 1885): 1
Eachdraidh Fhirinneach Mu Pharuig Mac an t-Sagairt Ceatharnach - Coille Gaidhealach, a Bha Ainmeil 'na Linn Fein	3.46 (31 July 1885): 1
Eachdraidh Fhirinneach Mu Pharuig...	3.47 (7 Aug 1885): 1
Eachdraidh Fhirinneach Mu Pharuig...	3.48 (14 Aug 1885): 1
Somhairle Mor Domhnullach	3.48 (14 Aug 1885): 1
Somhairle Mor Domhnullach	3.49 (21 Aug 1885): 1
Sgeul air Bliadhna Thearlaich	3.49 (21 Aug 1885): 1
Sgeul air Bliadhna Thearlaich	3.50 (28 Aug 1885): 1
Bho n' bha Moran dhe m' chairdean (Turus Dhomhnuill do Ghlaschu)	3.51 (4 Sept 1885): 1
Iain Mor	3.52 (11 Sept 1885): 1
Ailean nan Sop	3.52 (11 Sept 1885): 1
Lochial Agus na [...] Naich	4.2 (25 Sept 1885): 1

<u>Title of Item</u>		<u>Issue</u>
Togaid na Gaidhil an ceann (Aiseirigh na Gaidhealtachd), D. B. B.		4.3 (2 Oct 1885): 1
Guth A' Margaree, Pat-Mor		4.4 (9 Oct 1885): 1
Uamh an Oir		4.4 (9 Oct 1885): 1
Is puinnsean e da rirleadh, 'bheir diobhail air corp 's air anam (Aoir do 'n Ol)		4.5 (16 Oct 1885): 1
Iongantas nan Tri Saoghail!		4.5 (16 Oct 1885): 1
An Tuathanach agus am Madadh		4.5 (16 Oct 1885): 1
Highland Ancestry of Mr. Gladstone		4.6 (23 Oct 1885): 1
Olc air mhath le bodaich bhaoth (Friall nan Croitearan), D. B. B.		4.7 (30 Oct 1885): 1
Announcement of History of the Highlanders, D. B. Blair	See scrapbooks in Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds	MG9/542/234, NSARM
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal, D. B. Blair	I	4.7 (30 Oct 1885): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	II	4.8 (6 Nov 1885): 2
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	III & IV	4.9 (13 Nov 1885): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	V	4.12 (4 Dec 1885): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VI	4.14 (18 Dec 1885): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VI	4.15 (25 Dec 1885): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VII	4.16 (1 Jan 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VII & VIII	4.17 (8 Jan 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VIII & IX	4.18 (15 Jan 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	IX & X	4.19 (22 Jan 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XI	4.20 (29 Jan 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XI & XII	4.21 (5 Feb 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XII & XIII	4.22 (12 Feb 1886): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XII	4.23 (19 Feb 1886): 1
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XIV	4.28 (26 Mar 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XIV, XV, & XVI	4.29 (2 Apr 1886): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>		<u>Issue</u>
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XVI & XVII	4.30 (9 Apr 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XVII & XVIII	4.31 (16 Apr 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	III & IV	4.34 (7 May 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	IV	4.36 (21 May 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	V	4.37 (28 May 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VI	4.38 (4 June 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VII	4.52 (10 Sept 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	VIII & IX	5.1 (17 Sept 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	X & XI	5.2 (24 Sept 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XIV & XV	5.3 (1 Oct 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XVI & XVII	5.4 (8 Oct 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XVIII & XIX	5.5 (15 Oct 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XIX & XX	5.7 (29 Oct 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XXI	5.8 (5 Nov 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XXII	5.9 (12 Nov 1886): 4
Eachdraidh nan Gaidheal	XII & XIII	5.13 (10 Dec 1886): 4
'S tim dhomh dusgadh a suain (Oran Molaidh, do dh' Alastair Mac-Dhomhnuill, Tighearna Ghlinne-Gairidh)		4.13 (11 Dec 1885): 1
'S tim dhomh dusgadh a suain		4.14 (18 Dec 1885): 1
Chum Fear-deasachaidh Cuil na Gaidhlig anns an Sgeulaiche, R. D., Antigonish		4.15 (25 Dec 1885): 4
An cuala sibh a nis an sgeul (Ruaig nan Tighearnan)		4.15 (25 Dec 1885): 4
Mile marbhaisg air a chnatan (Oran a' Chnatain), Iain Domhnullach		4.16 (1 Jan 1886): 4
O na tha mi fo smuairean (Oran), Calum Gilleas		4.23 (19 Feb 1886): 1
'S ann air oidhche challuinn / 'Thachair mi air Calum (Mar a sguir Tsarlach dhe'n Deoch-laidir)		4.24 (26 Feb 1886): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Gur mise tha dheth bronach (Oran), Gilleaspuig Caimbeul	4.25 (5 Mar 1886): 4
An diugh gur airtnealach meiridh (Oran do Mhaighstir Raonull Mac Gillebhra), Alastair Domhnullach	4.26 (12 Mar 1886): 1
An diugh gur airtnealach meiridh	4.27 (19 Mar 1886): 4
Am pos thu, 'nigh 'n og an Rìgh (Oran Ur air Seann Fhonn)	4.27 (19 Mar 1886): 4
Soraidh bhuamsa thun a bhaird (Oran do dh' Alastair Domhnullach), Maighstir Raonull Mac Gillebhra, sagart ann an Arisaig	4.28 (26 Mar 1886): 4
Uistean Mor Mac-'Ille-Phadruig agus na Sithichean	4.36 (21 May 1886): 4
Mu'n Chruinne	4.37 (28 May 1886): 4
Comhradh eadar Seumas Ban agus Domhnull Gobha	4.38 (4 June 1886): 4
Comhradh eadar Seumas Ban agus Domhnull Gobha	4.39 (11 June 1886): 4
Sop as Gach Seid - Sgioba-Bainnse Dalta	4.40 (18 June 1886): 4
Sop as Gach Seid - Sgioba-Bainnse Dalta	4.41 (25 June 1886): 4
Mu Theachd a Stigh an t-Samhruidh	4.41 (25 June 1886): 4
Mu Theachd a Stigh an t-Samhruidh	4.42 (2 July 1886): 4
Bha 'ghrian 's i air luidhe fo smal a's fo ghruaim (Eilean Thiridh) (Iul an Eileanaich)	4.42 (2 July 1886): 4
Amanna Fuilteach a Shean ann an Gaidhealtachd	4.43 (9 July 1886): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Ma h-Alba	4.43 (9 July 1886): 4
Lochial agus na Sasunnaich	4.43 (9 July 1886): 4
Lochial agus na Sasunnaich	4.44 (16 July 1886): 4
Rob Ruadh	4.44 (16 July 1886): 4
Rob Ruadh	4.45 (23 July 1886): 4
Na Saighdearan Gaidhealach	4.46 (30 July 1886): 4
Sgiathanach-Gnath-Fhocail	4.46 (30 July 1886): 4
Eachdruidh Sgeir na Ban Tighearna	4.47 (6 Aug 1886): 4
Should Gaelic Speech be e'er forgot (The Language of Paradise) [in English]	4.48 (13 Aug 1886): 4
Sgeulachdan Pearsach	4.49 (20 Aug 1886): 4
Rob Muillear 's na Mairbh	4.50 (27 Aug 1886): 4
Bha mi'n de leis an Each-iaruinn (Rann Do'n Rathad Iarunn, anns am Bheil An T-Inneal Tarruinn air a choimeas ri each), Iain Camshron	4.51 (3 Sept 1886): 4
'Nuair thig samhradh na neoinein (An tim a bh' ann bho Shean), Calum	5.10 (19 Nov 1886): 4
'N sgeul a thainig thar tuinn (Oran do dh'Aonghus Mac-Eachearn), Alasdair mac-Gilleain an Cape Breatunn	5.10 (19 Nov 1886): 4
'S an cuala sibhse mar a thachair (Oran don "Chogadh Ruiseanach"), Alastair Macille Mhaoil	5.11 (26 Nov 1886): 4
An t-Oganach agus am Bas	5.12 (3 Dec 1886): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Gur mise tha gu bronach / La nollaig 's mi na m'onar (Oran), Gilleaspuig Caimbeul	5.12 (3 Dec 1886): 4
Posadh a' Cheaird	5.15 (24 Dec 1886): 4
Gaelic Proverbs (with English Translation)	5.15 (24 Dec 1886): 4
An Oighreachd a 's luachmhoire	5.16 (31 Dec 1886): 4
Trom tiamhaidh mo chridhe aig imeachdtroibh' nghleann (Oran), an lighiche Iain Mac-Lachain	5.16 (31 Dec 1886): 4
Caomh fhailt ort a latha - a latha mo ruin (Latha Nollaig), an Urramach D. Macgilleadhain	5.16 (31 Dec 1886): 4
Tha nigheanag og a tighinn do'n bhuile so (A Bhliadhna Ur), J. Campbell	5.16 (31 Dec 1886): 4
Barail Iosal Oirnn Fein, Tomas A. Kempis	5.17 (7 Jan 1887): 4
Seann Laoidh - translated from Latin of St. Bernard by Rev. Bishop John Chisholm - Foghnaidh smaointean air d' ainm, Ios'	5.17 (7 Jan 1887): 4
"Ghradhaich Ios Mi" - Gaelic translation of Mr. Sankey's Hymn, "Jesus Loved Me" - Aoibhneas mo chridhe gu bhal m Athair air neamh, D. M.	5.17 (7 Jan 1887): 4
Turus nan Saighdear don Eilean Sgitheanach	5.18 (14 Jan 1887): 4
Aig toiseach na bliadhn' ura (Ho Fheara, Treigibh 'n Drama), Srath-Urchudainn	5.19 (21 Jan 1887): 4
Oidhche 'n Oicheir Dhuibh	5.22 (11 Feb 1887): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Tha mise so, Abrach o Lochaidh (Na Gaidheil aig Alma)	5.22 (11 Feb 1887): 4
Fad as o shiantan dorch' an t-saoil (An Canaan Neamhaidh)	5.23 (18 Feb 1887): 4
Ceathrar bha air uaigh an fhir (Marbh-rann Alastair Uaibhrich) a glossary (Gaelic-English) and information on Alexander the Great follows	5.29 (1 Apr 1887): 4
'Nuair a theid thu 'thigh an oil (Comhairle Chormaic d' a Mhac)	5.29 (1 Apr 1887): 4
Bhuam-s' tha' n raitinn (Oran), Anndra Mac an Easpuig	5.30 (8 Apr 1887): 4
Tha ioghnadh air an Dreallainn (Tuireadh a Mhinisteir Easbuigeach), Rev. John Beaton	5.31 (15 Apr 1887): 4
Bheir fios bhuam ' dh' ionnsaidh Thearlaich (Cleirsinneachd Fhir nan Drimnean), Iain Mac Ailein	5.33 (29 Apr 1887): 4
Tha mi 'g innse do gach duine (Turragan Fhir nan Drimnean), Iain Mac Ailein	5.33 (29 Apr 1887): 4
Bha tri leumannan Mhic-Leug (Rann), Iain Mac Ailein	5.33 (29 Apr 1887): 4
Gabhaidh sgeula de m' shagairt (Gearan air Fear-teagaisg)	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4
'S beag m' fhaoilt an diugh 'tighinn (An Salachadh-Fuinn), Iain Mac Ailein	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4
Thoir an t-soraidh so bhuamsa (Do dh' Anndra Mac an Easbuig), Iain Mac Ailein	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Tha gach cnocan orm na chuith (Rann), Iain Mac Ailein	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4
Is coir dhuinn failte 'chur air an leann (Rann), Iain Mac Ailein	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4
Nach innis sibh dhomhsa ' chairdean (Rann), Iain Mac Ailein	5.34 (6 May 1887): 4
Failte do bhur n-iomraic Luain (Iomraic Fear Threisinnis)	5.35 (13 May 1887): 4
Failte air tigh mor nan seachd uinneag (Beannachadh tighe), Iain Mac Ailein	5.35 (13 May 1887): 4
Eachdraidh Thuatha De Danann [explanation in English with a following narrative in Gaelic], Iain Mac Ailein	5.35 (13 May 1887): 4
Fogradh Thuatha De Danann [Poem, 1st line & title]	5.36 (20 May 1887): 4
Cath Alphuirt	5.36 (20 May 1887): 4
Cath Alphuirt	5.37 (27 May 1887): 4
'Ghilleasbuig mo bheannachd ri m' bheo (Moladh do dh' Fhearna-Ceapaich 's do'n Phiob), Iain Mac Ailein	5.37 (27 May 1887): 4
'Ghilleasbuig ni 'm molan ri m' bheo / Fear aithris do ghniomh' (Diomoladh na Pioba), Lachainn Mac Mhic Chola, an adhaidh Iain Mac Ailein	5.37 (27 May 1887): 4
Gaoth an ear o'n ailbhinn chiuin (Guidhe airson Gaoithe)	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4
I see the Right (translated into Gaelic)	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4
In all thy Humours	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
'Na d' uile ghiulan co dhiu 's doirbh no subhach [translated by Rev. John Mc Innis, a minister in North Uist]	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4
Gur subhach comunn nan cairdean (Comunn nan Cairdean), Mr. Domhnull Mac Leoid, a minister in North Uist	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4
Soraidh no dha le durachd bhuan / Gu cuirtear deas a cheoil (Oran do dh' Uilleam Mac-Leoid)	5.38 (3 June 1887): 4
'S tionn dhomh dusgadh a m' chadal (Oran do Shir Eoghan Lochial)	5.39 (10 June 1887): 4
Gur h-e latha Raon-Ruairidh (Oran air Raon-Ruairidh)	5.39 (10 June 1887): 4
Tha mi fo leanndubh 's fo bhron (Sliabh an t-Siorraim)	5.42 (1 July 1887): 4
'S tearc an diugh mo chuis ghairne (Oran do dh' Uilleam a Mhorluim), te de chloinn Mhic-Gillesheathanaich a bha na banaltrum aige	5.43 (8 July 1887): 4
Aonghais oig mhic Sheumais (Oran do dh' Aonghas Bhaile Fhionnlaidh), Iain Dubh Mac Iain Mhic Ailein	5.44 (15 July 1887): 4
An deicheamh la de thui a Mhairt (Oran do Mhac-Shimi), Iain Dubh Mac Iain Mhic Ailein	5.44 (15 July 1887): 4
History of the Frasers (no title, in English)	5.45 (22 July 1887): 4
Ud ud, ud ud, ud udain (Oran Magaidh air Fear Fearna)	5.45 (22 July 1887): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Tha mo chridh' air fas trom (Cumha d'a Mhnaoi), Fear Ghrinneard, duin' uasal de Chlann-Choinnich	5.45 (22 July 1887): 4
Tha mi fada gun dusgadh (Cumha do Mhorair Tairbeirt)	5.46 (29 July 1887): 4
'S trom 's cha 'n aotrom an t-aiseag (Oran do dhuine uasal araid)	5.46 (29 July 1887): 4
'Fhir ud' shiubhlas an rod (Oran do Mhac-Fhionghain an t-Sratha)	5.46 (29 July 1887): 4
Ceannard fine thu 's glan r'a shireadh (Oran do Mhac Neill Bharra)	5.47 (5 Aug 1887): 4
Fhuair mi naidheachd thar fasaich (Oran do Mhac Neill Bharra), Eoghan Mac-Gilleain ann am Barra	5.47 (5 Aug 1887): 4
'Dheadh Mhic Coinnich a Brathainn (Oran do Shir Iain Mac-Gilleain)	5.47 (5 Aug 1887): 4
Gura cianail bochd ni adhart (Oran do Lachainn Mac-Gilleain), a phiuthar	5.48 (12 Aug 1887): 4
Tha mi lionte gu leor (Oran do dh' Eochainn Mac-Gilleain, Fear Eilean nam Mac), Iain Mac-Aoidh	5.48 (12 Aug 1887): 4
Tha mi 'm Muile 's-an am (Oran do dh' Ailean Mac-Gilleain, Tighearna nan Drimnean), duine bochd de Chlann-Domhnaill	5.49 (19 Aug 1887): 4
Gur-a beag a shaoil mi (Oran do dhuine uasal araid)	5.49 (19 Aug 1887): 4
Is oganach deas suairc thu (Oran do dh' Iain Dubh na h-Uamha)	5.49 (19 Aug 1887): 4

<u>Title of Item</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Nam b' fhear facail no dain mi (Cumha do Mhartainn Mac Gillemhartainn), Niall Mac-an-Aba ann an Trotairuis	5.51 (2 Sept 1887): 4
Comhradh eadar Eochan agus Domhnull	6.18 (13 Jan 1888): 4
Fear dubh dana, fear ban bleideil (Dath an fhuilt)	6.20 (26 Jan 1888): 4
Am foinne mu 'n iadh a' ghlac (Foinneachan)	6.20 (26 Jan 1888): 4
Cha tugainn m' fhalt a mach Dihaoine (Giseag)	6.20 (26 Jan 1888): 4
Beannaich an tigh 's na tha ann (Beannachadh Tighe)	6.20 (26 Jan 1888): 4
Oidhche Shamhna Alastair Mac Clullaich	6.20 (26 Jan 1888): 4

**Appendix D**  
**Short Description of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds in NSARM\***

**NSARM Address:** Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, 6016 University Ave., Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 1W4, Canada, e-mail: nsarm@gov.ns.ca

A more detailed description of the collection is available at their webpage: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/gaelic/>

**Manuscript Group 1 (MG1) - "Personal and Family Papers"**

Consult finding aid for MG1 which has a description of the correspondence.

**MG1/Volume 2660/"A"** - John Maclean's receipt book which he kept as a shoemaker while still on Tyree; he later used it to write down some of his poetry (mostly hymns) (see microfilm reel #15,012).

**MG1/2660/#1-628** (Finding aid says 1-625 but describes 628 items.) - Mostly correspondence received by Alexander Maclean Sinclair.

**MG9 - "Scrapbooks"**

**MG9/Volumes 538-45** - Scrapbooks compiled by Alexander Maclean Sinclair and Donald Maclean Sinclair. See the included indices by George Maclean Sinclair, i.e. "Index of Miscellaneous Press Clippings, Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair, LL.D., Vols I-V [MG9/538-42]" and "Scrap Books. 'Sweet's Architectural Catalogues' Vols A-C [MG9/543-45]."

**MG15 Series G - "Ethnic Groups"** (each "volume" is actually a box)

Consult finding aid for MG15 Series G. Though somewhat confusing due to the numbering, it provides an index of the poetry from John Maclean's MS as well as a description of books and newspapers donated to NSARM by the family. See also the contents description for microfilms.

**MG15/G/Vol. 22, #1** (Previously vol. 2, #1) - John Maclean's manuscript (see microfilm reel #15,113).

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\* Formerly called the Alexander Maclean Sinclair Collection. See Michael Linkletter, "The Gaelic Collection of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia" in *Litreachas & Eachdraidh: Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* 2, 148-60; and "The Alexander Maclean Sinclair Papers in NSARM," *Scotia: Interdisciplinary Journal of Scottish Studies*, 27 (2003): 6-21 (available online: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/gaelic/linkletter.asp>).

**MG15/G/22/2** (Previously vol. 2, #2) – Hector Maclean’s manuscript (see microfilm reel #15,112, also included on reel #15,113).

**MG15/G/22/3** – Hymns by John Maclean (see microfilm reel #15,113).

**MG15/G/22/4** – New Gaelic Poems by John Maclean, i.e. his 1818 book *Orain Nuadh Ghaedhlach*. (As a publication this does not now form part of the manuscript groups and has been relocated to the library of NSARM, see PB G127 #2.)

**MG15/G/22/5** – Hymns by Rev. James MacGregor (see microfilm reel # 15,113).

**MG15/G/23/5** – Psalms translated into Gaelic by Rev. Duncan Black Blair.

**MG15/G/23/6** – Hymns, by D. B. Blair.

**MG15/G/23/7** – Rudiments of Gaelic Grammar by D. B. Blair.

**MG15/G/23/8** – Misc. Religious and personal poems by D. B. Blair.

**MG15/G/24/9** – More religious and personal poems by D. B. Blair; more Gaelic grammar written in Gaelic with English translation; a Greek-Gaelic glossary.

**MG15/G/24/10** – More religious and personal poems by D. B. Blair.

**MG15/G/24/11** – Historical Sketches by D. B. Blair such as a history of the Church and a history of the Highlands; Address at Barney’s River 1891; and poem “Immanuel.”

**MG15/G/24/12** – Transcriptions (done by D. B. Blair) of poems by Duncan Bàn, William Ross, and Alexander MacDonald; a translation by D. B. Blair of Homer Canto III; some personal poetry by D. B. Blair.

**MG15/G/24/13** – Confession of Faith by Rev. James MacGregor; also some Psalms translated by James MacGregor.

**MG15/G/24/14** – Hymns by J. MacGregor.

**MG15/G/24/15** – Psalms translated by J. MacGregor.

**MG15/G/24/16** – Religious poems by D. B. Blair; biographical info on Rev. Dr. MacKintosh MacKay and Rev. Duncan Blair, by D. B. Blair; page in Greek.

**Appendix E**  
**Correspondents in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds**  
**MG1, Vol. 2660, NSARM**

Though they are listed on the NSARM finding aid, the contents of some of the items listed below are missing from the collection. Some of AMS's own letters also form part of this collection. Names are transcribed *verbatim et literatim*. A similar list has recently been made available online at the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management Gaelic Resources website: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/gaelic/>

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
A.C. McClurg & Co.	Chicago, IL	No	470
A.M.N.	Unknown	No	399
Amcan, D.	Unknown	No	494
Bard na Caepach (McDonald, Alex)	Springhill, NS	Yes	284
Beaton, Alexander	River Little Judique, NS	No	321
Beaton, Alexander	Unknown	No	457
Black, Donald	Greenock, Sc.	No	375
Black, Geo. F.	New York, NY	No	297
Black, Isabella	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	267
Black, Isabella	Lismore, Sc.	No	376
Black, Lachlan	Preston, Eng.	No	253
Blackie, John Stuart	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	199
Blair, John K.	Truro, NS	No	4
Blair, J. K.	Truro, NS	No	322

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Brodie, Neil	Halifax, NS	No	282
Bruce, H. H.	Barney's River Sta., NS	No	279
Buchanan, M.	Castlebay, Barra, Sc.	No	280
Buchanan, Murdoch A.	Castlebay, Barra, Sc.	No	349
Buchannon, Michael	Glasgow, Sc.	No	71
Burke, A. E.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	82
Busby, Sarah	Boston, MA	No	120
Buxton, Susanna L.	Belfast, PEI	No	300
C. Lyons and Co.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	527
Cameron, Angus	St. Mary's, NS	No	94
Cameron, Charlotte	Minnesota	No	107
Cameron, Charlotte	Minnesota	No	596
Cameron, Donald	Rushford, MN	No	18
Cameron, Donald	Unknown	No	365b
Cameron, Dr. John	Murray Harbour North, PEI	No	223
Cameron, Mary	Bushford	No	365a
Campbell, A.	Broadcove, NS	No	29c
Campbell, Alex	Broadcove, NS	Yes	29b
Campbell, Alex	Merigomish, NS	No	409c

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Campbell, Christine	Unknown	No	95
Campbell, E. P.	East River, NS	No	225
Campbell, John A.	Iron Rock, PEI	No	323
Campbell, John G.	Manse of Tiree, Sc.	No	163
Campbell, John G.	Manse of Tiree, Sc.	No	377
Campbell, John L.*	Isle of Canna, Sc.	No	623
Campbell, John L.*	Isle of Canna, Sc.	No	624
Campbell, M.	Broadcove, NS	No	29a
Campbell, M.	Wood Islands, PEI	No	170
Campbell, Peter	Montreal, QB	No	197
Campbell, Professor	Montreal, QB	No	358a
Campbell, William	Seaforth	No	176
Canadian Archives	Ottawa, ON	No	243
Carbonell, E. T.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	237
Carmichael, Alexander	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	54
Chisholm, Colin	Inverness, Sc.	No	241

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\* John Lorne Campbell wrote to the archivist in NSARM concerning the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds. The archivist in turn inserted Campbell's letters into the collection.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Chisholm, Colin	Inverness, Sc.	Yes	248
Chisholm, Dr. M.	Halifax, NS	No	227
Clarkin Bros.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	534
Colton, R. L.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	505
Craigie, W. A.	Oxford, Eng.	Yes	186
Cumming	Unknown	Yes	418
Dauphile, Jas.	Providence, RI	No	364
Dewart, Rev. E. H.	Toronto, ON	No	87
Dix, J.	Sydney, NS	No	221
Dunlop, Allan	Halifax, NS	No	620
Dunlop, Allan	Halifax, NS	No	621
Dunlop, Allan	Halifax, NS	No	622
Evans, Rebecca	Acton Settlement	No	400
Falconer, Dr. J.	Garfield	No	522
Fergusson, H. H.	Halifax, NS	No	479
Forbes, I. Macbeth	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	86
Fowler, William P.	Boston, MA	No	368e
Fraser, Alexander	Toronto, ON	No	13
Fraser, D. C.	Halifax, NS	No	140

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Fraser, D. C.	Halifax, NS	No	178
Fraser, D. C.	New Glasgow, NS	No	136
Fraser, D. C.	New Glasgow, NS	No	173
Fraser, D. C.	New Glasgow, NS	Yes	181
Fraser, D. C.	Ottawa, ON	No	206
Fraser, Donald	Springville, NS	No	226
Fraser, Wm.	Barrie, ON	Yes	96
Fraser, Wm.	Barrie, ON	No	99
Fullerton, Thomas	Unknown	No	411c
Gaelic Society of Inverness	Inverness, Sc.	No	572
Gilbert, J.	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	53a
Gillies, Joseph A.	Sydney, NS	No	324
Gillis, Malcolm H.	Margaree, NS	No	61
Gordon, G. Lawson	River John	No	145
Gowans & Gray	Glasgow, Sc.	No	583
Gowans & Gray	Glasgow, Sc.	No	589
Grant, Francis J.	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	309
Grant, Roderick	Antigonish, NS	No	347d
Gray, Don	Stellarton, NS	No	63

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Gunn, Donald	East River, St. Mary's, NS	No	15
Gunn, Samuel	East Earltown	No	325
Hamilton-Dundas (McLean of Coll)	Unknown	No	378a
Hamilton-Dundas (McLean of Coll)	Unknown	No	378b
Hamilton-Dundas (McLean of Coll)	Unknown	No	378c
Hamilton-Dundas (McLean of Coll)	Unknown	No	378d
Hardy, Mrs. M. McLean	Berkeley, CA	No	44b
Hardy, Mrs. M. McLean	Berkeley, CA	No	124
Hardy, Mrs. M. McLean	Berkeley, CA	No	450
Haszard & Moore	Charlottetown, PEI	No	521
Haszard & Moore	Charlottetown, PEI	No	523
Haszard & Moore	Charlottetown, PEI	No	584
Haszard & Moore	Charlottetown, PEI	No	586
Henderson, S.	Unknown	No	507
Henniker, Lily Grant	Wyther Grange	No	112
Henniker, T. G.	Unknown	No	350
Holmes, Annie	Charlottetown, PEI	No	269
Horton, Edward	Charlottetown, PEI	No	601
Horton, Edward	Charlottetown, PEI	No	602

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Horton, Edward	Charlottetown, PEI	No	603
J.R. MacIlreille & Co.	Antigonish, NS	No	497
James Paton & Co.	Unknown	No	529
James, T. C.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	411b
Johnson, J. A.	Halifax, NS	No	600
Johnston, Gary B.	Unknown	No	414
Kegan Paul, Trench, Trüber & Co. Ltd.	London, Eng.	No	85
Krers, Isabella*	New York, NY	No	499
Krers, Isabella*	New York, NY	No	500
Kriss, Isabelle S.*	New York, NY	No	31
Lafontaine, G.	Ste. Anne, IL	No	270
Lawrence, Robert Murdoch	Unknown	No	44
Logan, John	Unknown	No	359
Macafi, Cailein	Unknown	Yes	422
MacColl, Evan	Kingston, ON	No	147
MacColl, Evan	Kingston, ON	No	147a
MacColl, Evan	Toronto, ON	No	147b

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\* Perhaps the same person. This could be a scribal error in the NSARM descriptive index.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacDonald, A. G.	Truro, NS	No	234
MacDonald, Alex	Antigonish, NS	No	23
MacDonald, Alex	Antigonish, NS	No	88
MacDonald, Alex	Antigonish, NS	Yes	88a
MacDonald, Alex	Antigonish, NS	No	326
MacDonald, Dr. Alex	Mabou Harbour, NS	No	89
Macdonald, D. D.	Bailey's Brook, NS	No	298
MacDonald, D. T.	Calumet, MI	No	111
MacDonald, D. T.	Los Angeles, CA	No	118
MacDonald, Edward	North Sydney, NS	No	141
MacDonald, James	Iron Ore, NS	No	174
MacDonald, James	Pictou, NS	No	272
MacDonald, John	Caolas, Tiree, Sc.	No	264
MacDonald, John	Inverness-shire, Sc.	No	205
MacDonald, John A.	Kerrowgare, Sc.	No	328
MacDonald, John A.	Tracadie, PEI	No	190
MacDonald, John A.	Unknown	No	271
MacDonald, John	Grand River	No	179
MacDonald, Joseph	Sydney, NS	No	161

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacDonald, Judge H. C.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	189
MacDonald, Nor.	Addington, NS	No	276
MacDonald, Norman	Addington Forks, NS	No	351
MacDonald, R.	South Uist, Lochboisdale, Sc.	No	57
MacDonald, Roderick	Caolas, Tiree, Sc.	No	265
MacDonell, A. MacLean	Toronto, ON	No	115
MacDougall, A.	Fortingall, Sc.	No	184
MacDougall, John	Hamilton, ON	No	230
MacEchen, A. J. G.	Sydney, NS	No	331
MacGilleán, Alaister	Unknown	No	44a
MacGillivray, A.	Dunmaglass, NS	No	332
Macgillivray, D.	Inverness, Sc.	No	235
MacGillivray, Georgie Gordon	Springville, NS	No	445
MacGregor, S.	Appin, Sc.	No	214
MacInnes, A.	New Glasgow, NS	No	334
MacIntosh, Dr. James W.	Philadelphia, PA	No	229
MacKay, A. H.	Halifax, NS	No	81
MacKay, A. H.	Halifax, NS	No	153
MacKay, I.	New Glasgow, NS	No	16

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacKay, J.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	231
MacKay, John	Cambridge, MA	No	481
MacKay, John	Wiesbaden, Ger.	No	169
MacKay, John	Wiesbaden, Ger.	No	187
MacKay, William	Graigmonie, Inverness, Sc.	No	183
MacKenzie, H. H.	Balelone, Lochmaddy, Sc.	No	55
MacKenzie, H. H.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	53
MacKenzie, H. H.	Lochmaddy, Sc.	No	380a
MacKenzie, H. H.	Lochmaddy, Sc.	No	380b
MacKenzie, H. R.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	460
MacKenzie, John	Durham, NS	No	289
MacKenzie, John	Germany	No	200
MacKenzie, Kenneth G.	New York, NY	No	498
Mackenzie, William?*	Glasgow, Sc.	No	250
MacKenzie, W. R.	Antigonish, NS	No	119b
MacKinnon, D. A.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	220
Mackinnon, Don	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	26

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\* "William Mackenzie" is written at the end, but by a different hand and in pencil (body of letter was in ink). Originally contributed by M. MacLean (see below).

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacKinnon, Don	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	47
Mackinnon, Don	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	132
MacKinnon, Don	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	133
MacKinnon, Don	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	134
Mackinnon, Donald	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	261
MacKinnon, Donald	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	381a
MacKinnon, Donald	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	381b
MacKinnon, Donald	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	381c
MacKinnon, J. G.	Sydney, NS	Yes	17
MacKinnon, J. G.	Sydney, NS	No	104
MacKinnon, J. G.	Sydney, NS	Yes	209
MacKinnon, J. G.	Sydney, NS	No	506
MacKinnon, Rev. Murdoch	Ottawa, ON	No	228
MacKintosh, A.	Inverness, Sc.	No	150
MacKintosh, A. M.	Geddes, Sc.	No	383a
MacKintosh, A. M.	Geddes, Sc.	No	383b
MacKintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	567
MacKintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	568
MacKintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	569

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacKintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	570a
Maclachlan, D.	Unknown	No	242
MacLachlan, Jessie	Antigonish, NS	No	290
MacLachlan, Leslie N.	Unknown	No	2
Maclaine of Lochbuie	Unknown	No	286
Maclaine, Archibald	Glasgow, Sc.	No	315
MacLaine, Neil	Glasgow, Sc.	No	121
MacLaine, Neil? <sup>1</sup>	Glasgow, Sc.	Yes	239
MacLaine, Neil? <sup>2</sup>	Glasgow, Sc.	Yes	249
MacLaine, Neil? <sup>3</sup>	Glasgow, Sc.	Yes	254
MacLaine, Neil? <sup>4</sup>	Glasgow, Sc.	Yes	257

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<sup>1</sup> In AMS's writing I think. A large number of songs by James Maclean, Coll. Pages numbered 3-50, some missing. Songs are also numbered, but not in a strict consecutive order. Handwriting is by one hand and is different from those in #249 (Neil MacLaine?). In #320, MacLaine asked AMS to return James Maclean's songs to him as they were MacLaine's only copy; therefore it seems probable that #239 was originally sent by Neil MacLaine, but recopied by AMS.

<sup>2</sup> File says Gaelic songs of John MacLean, Tìree Bard. The writing is by at least two different hands (Neil MacLaine for sure and maybe AMS), maybe a third hand.

<sup>3</sup> File says Gaelic songs by Neil MacLaine. Maybe two or three different hands, in pen and pencil.

<sup>4</sup> No contributor given, though the hand is almost definitely Neil MacLaine's, based on his other letters.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacLaine, Neil <sup>5</sup>	Glasgow, Sc.	No	320
MacLaine, Neil	Glasgow, Sc.	No	394a
MacLaine, Neil	Glasgow, Sc.	No	394b
MacLaine, N.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	401
MacLaine, Neil*	Glasgow, Sc.	Yes	430
MacLaughlin, Rev. Thomas	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	185
MacLaughlin, Rev. Thomas	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	185a
MacLaughlin, Rev. Thomas	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	185b
MacLean	Gravenhage	No	50
MacLean, A.	Harvey Settlement, NB	No	266
Maclean, A.	Hopewell, NS	No	410
Maclean, A.	Hopewell, NS	No	411a
MacLean, A. H.	West Hampstead, Eng.	No	44c
Maclean, Alan Walter	Surrey, Eng.	No	319
MacLean, Alex	Glenbard, NS	No	119

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<sup>5</sup> I think that this letter may be connected with the Gaelic songs in folders #239 (songs by James Maclean, Coll, contributor uncertain), #249 (songs by John MacLean, Tìree Bard [not AMS's grandfather], contributed probably by Neil MacLaine), and #254 (songs by Neil MacLaine, contributor uncertain).

\* Most likely a continuation of #257.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Maclean, Allan MacIntosh	Banffshire, Aberlour, Sc.	No	20
MacLean, Archibald	Berlin, Ger.	No	296
Maclean, Archibald	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	308
MacLean, Archibald	Gerbienzen Castle, West Prussia	No	158
Maclean, Archibald	London, Eng.	No	308
MacLean, C.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	155
MacLean, C. J.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	549
MacLean, C. J.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	550
MacLean, Charles	Glenbard, NS	No	116
MacLean, Charles	Glenbard, NS	No	126b
MacLean, Charles J.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	556
MacLean, D. D.	Burrin	No	403
Maclean, Donald	Dunvegan, Skye, Sc.	Yes	6
Maclean, Dr. A.	Eureka	No	336
MacLean, Dr. W. C.	Southampton, Eng.	No	58
MacLean, Dr. W. C.	Southampton, Eng.	No	164
Maclean, Dugald	Scotland	No	216
MacLean, Elizabeth J.	Bridgetown, NS	No	105
MacLean, Elizabeth J.	Bridgetown, NS	No	110

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Maclean, Fanny	Unknown	No	312
MacLean, Fitzroy B.	Skiveburyness, Sc.	No	156
Maclean, General Charles S.	Isle of Wight, Eng.	Yes	311
Maclean, General Charles S.	Isle of Wight, Eng.	Yes	313
MacLean, George Nelson	Chicago, IL	No	34b
MacLean, Hector	Bridgetown, NS	No	137
MacLean, Hector	Bridgetown, NS	No	219
MacLean, Hector	Bridgetown, NS	No	222
MacLean, Hector	Dickinson, NC	No	212
MacLean, Hugh	Dickinson, NC	No	212
Maclean, I.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	24
MacLean, J.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	245
MacLean, J.	Isle of Wight, Eng.	No	386
MacLean, J. A.	Forfar, Sc.	No	387a
MacLean, J. A.	Forfar, Sc.	No	387b
MacLean, J. A.	Pomfret, CT	No	66a
MacLean, J. M.	Earls Court, London, Eng.	No	46
MacLean, J. M.	Earls Court, London, Eng.	No	52
MacLean, J. P.	Cleveland, OH	No	369a

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacLean, J. P.	Franklin, OH	No	369b
Maclean, J. P.	Ohio, U.S.A.	No	244
Maclean, J. R.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	25
Maclean, James	Chesterfield, Eng.	No	388
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	No	74
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	No	74b
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	No	75
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	Yes	75a
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	No	75c
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	Yes	75b
Maclean, James	Greenock, Sc.	Yes	77
MacLean, Jas. F.	Hopewell, NS	No	196
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	28
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	32
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	33
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	34
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	35
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	35b
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	36

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	37
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	38
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	40
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	389
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	546
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	547
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	548
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	554
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	558
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	585
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	587
MacLean, John	Glasgow, Sc.	No	588
MacLean, John	Unknown	No	520
MacLean, John J. P.	Nowra, N.S.W., Aus.	No	49
Maclean, L.	Greenhill, Kenilworth, S. Afr.	No	295
Maclean, M.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	250
Maclean, Magnus	Glasgow, Sc.	No	21
Maclean, Magnus	Glasgow, Sc.	No	314
Maclean, Magnus	Glasgow, Sc.	No	390b

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Maclean, Marion	Argyleshire, Sc.	No	215
MacLean, Mrs. Hector	Bridgetown, NS	No	338
MacLean, Murdoch	Ottawa, ON	No	1
MacLean, R.	Chicago, IL	No	48
Maclean, R. J.	Wilmington, DE	No	157
Maclean, R. J.	Wilmington, DE	No	503
MacLean, Rev. Donald	Dunvegan, Skye, Sc.	No	138
Maclean, Rev. J. B.	Upper Stewiacke, NS	No	316
Maclean, Rev. Roderick	Quebec	No	204
Maclean, Rev. Roderick	Valleyfield, PEI	No	166
MacLean, Robert	Lynn, MA	No	372
MacLean, Sir Flemming Donald	Inverness-shire, Sc.	No	60
MacLean, W.	Aberdeenshire, Sc.	No	45
Maclean, W.	Toronto, ON	No	508
Maclean, W. J.	Pictou, NS	No	208
MacLean, W. V.	Toronto, ON	No	102
MacLellan, J. A.	Oill-thigh Cnoc-a-Ghiuthais, Halifax, NS	Yes	193
MacLellan, James A.	Stellarton, NS	No	175
Macleod, J. D.	Valleyfield, PEI	No	509

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacLeod, Malcolm	Pennsylvania	No	495
MacLeod, Mrs. E. L.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	93
MacLeod, Neil	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	252
Macleod, Neil	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	262
Macleod, Neil	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	396
Macleod, Norman	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	358b
MacLeod, Norman	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	472
MacLeod, Norman	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	502
Macleod, Norman	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	504
MacLeod, Rev. D. B.	Orwell, PEI	No	135
MacLochlan, D.	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	294
MacMillan, Angus	Churchville, NS	No	192
MacNeil, Neil	Cornwall, Eng.	No	27
MacNeil, Stephen	Beaver Cove, NS	No	485
Macneill, J. D. G.	MacKinnon's Harbour, NS	No	484
MacNish, Neil*	Unknown	No	42
MacNish, Neil*	Unknown	No	42a

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\* See also under McNish.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
MacPhearsoin, Uilleam	Gleann Uilleam	Yes	64
MacQuarrie, Chris	Glasgow, Sc.	No	247
MacRae, Rev. Donald	St. John, NB	No	146
MacRae, Roderick	Chicago, IL	No	167
MacRuintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	565
MacRuintosh, Duncan	Inverness, Sc.	No	566
Mann, Dan	Ontario	No	510
Martin, Alex	Valleyfield, PEI	Yes	159
Martin, J. M.	Montague Bridge, PEI	No	355
Marzan, Henry	Ottawa, ON	No	3
McClain, F.	Pittsburgh, PA	No	101
McCulany, Norman	Albert Bridge, Mira, NS	No	482
McCurdy, E. A.	Unknown	No	407a
McCurdy, E. A.	Unknown	No	407b
McDonald, A.	Glenbard, NS	No	327
McDonald(Tulloch), Alex	Brook Village, NS	Yes	213
McDonald, Alexander	Spring Hill Mines, NS	No	9
McDonald, Angus	Glen Bard, NS	No	91
McDonald, Angus A.	Leadville, CO	No	480

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McDonald, Angus A.	Leadville, CO	No	490
McDonald, D.	East River, NS	No	225
McDonald, Dan C.	Antigonish, NS	No	203
McDonald, Donald	Unknown	No	347a
McDonald, Dr. D. D.	Alexandria, ON	Yes	427
McDonald, Dr. D. D.	Alexandria, ON	Yes	428
McDonald, Hugh Norman	Addington Forks, NS	No	330
McDonald, Isabella	Tiree, Sc.	No	379
McDonald, J. S.	Springhill, NS	No	493
McDonald, Lauchlan	Earlton	No	329
McDonald, R. D.	Springhill, NS	Yes	10b
McDonnell, Allen	Toronto, ON	No	360a
McDonnell, Allen	Toronto, ON	No	360b
McDowell, Allen	Vancouver, BC	No	488
McEachern, Annie	Pictou, NS	No	123
McFarlane, D.	Truro, NS	No	109
McGillivray, A.	Dumraglass, NS	No	292
McGillivray, A. A.	Dunmaglass, NS	Yes	201
McGillivray, Andrew	Antigonish, NS	No	501

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McGillivray, And.	Lismore, NS	No	333
McGillivray, D. H.	Antigonish, NS	No	236
McGillivray, Rev. R. (Sagart Arisaig)	Arisaig, NS	Yes	256
McGillivray, Ronald	Arisaig, NS	No	30
McGillivray, Ronald	Arisaig, NS	Yes	30b
McInnes, Angus	Springville, NS	No	195
McInnes, D. S.	Judique, NS	No	486
McIntyre, A.	Albany, NY	No	191
McIntyre, Murdoch	West Bay, NS	Yes	283
McIsaac, Duncan	Scotland	No	258
McKellar, Mary	Belfast, Ire.	Yes	188
McKenzie, Bella	Churchville, NS	No	335
McKenzie, Capt. R. K.	Flat River, PEI	No	84
McKenzie, D. R.	Kenzieville, NS	No	301
McKenzie, M. A.	Middle River, NS	No	172
McKenzie, W. R.	New Glasgow, NS	No	238
McKinnon, Colin H.	Creignish, NS	No	492
McKinnon, D. L.	Montague, PEI	No	12
McKinnon, Hector	Barre, NS	No	130

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McKinnon, Hector	Isle of Barra, Sc.	No	382b
McKinnon, Hector	Isle of Barra, Sc.	No	382c
McLean, A.	Bradford, ON	No	366a
McLean, A.	Bradford, ON	No	366b
McLean, A.	Bradford, ON	No	366c
McLean, A. A.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	525
McLean, Alex	Glen Bard, NS	No	274
McLean, Alexander	Ardour, NB	No	310
McLean, Angus	Charlottetown, PEI	No	352a
McLean, Angus	Charlottetown, PEI	No	352b
McLean, Angus	Charlottetown, PEI	No	352c
McLean, C.	Tomatin, Inverness-shire, Sc.	No	384
McLean, C. M.	Scotland	No	354
McLean, Charles	Glenbard, NS	No	337
McLean, Christy	Unknown	No	347b
McLean, D. H.	Shoal Lake, Manitoba	No	260
McLean, Douglas	Unknown	No	402
McLean, Elizabeth	Glenbard, NS	No	97
McLean, Hector	Torquay, Sc.	No	385

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McLean, Hugh	North Carolina	No	367
McLean, J. A.	Calgary, N.W.T.	No	59
McLean, J. B.	Duddingtoun, Torquay	No	117
McLean, J. R.	Washington	No	370
McLean, John	Montague, PEI	No	305
McLean, John A.	Boston, MA	No	368c
McLean, John A.	Boston, MA	No	368d
McLean, John A.	Boston, MA	No	368dd
McLean, John A.	Cambridge, MA	No	368a
McLean, M.	Edinburgh, Sc.	Yes	393
McLean, Malcolm	Lochmaddy, Sc.	No	391
McLean, Malcolm	London, Eng.	No	392
McLean, Mary	Franklin, MA	No	106
McLean, Mary	Franklin, MA	No	122
McLean, Mary	Franklin, MA	No	339
McLean, Mary	Franklin, MA	No	371
McLean, Mary	Wichita, KS	No	277
McLean, Neil	Unknown	No	5
McLean, R. D. Douglas	Unknown	No	278

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McLean, Rebecca	Ham Town Cardigan, PEI	No	268
McLean, W.	Aberdeenshire, Sc.	No	395
McLean, Walter R.	Coffeen, IL	No	373a
McLean, Walter R.	Coffeen, IL	No	373b
McLellan, Peter	Orangedale, NS	No	65
McLellan, V. A.	Mabou Bridge, NS	No	511
McLennan, Dan	Port Hood, NS	No	43
McLeod, Hugh	Sydney, NS	No	14
McLeod, Mal. N.	Englishtown, NS	No	98
McLeod, Norman	Inverness, Sc.	No	218
McMillan, Angus	Unknown	No	405
McMillan, Donald	Priceville, ON	Yes	275
McMillan, Donald	Priceville, ON	No	404
McMillan, James Allan	Wood Islands, PEI	Yes	198
McMillan, James Allan	Wood Islands, PEI	Yes	432
McMillan, Mrs. William	Bridgeville, NS	No	443
McMillan, W.	Bridgeville, NS	No	177
McNeacail, D. J.	Halifax, NS	Yes	103
McNeil, John	Glace Bay, NS	No	459

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
McNeil, Michael	Castlebay, Barra, Sc.	No	273
Mcneil, Michael	Castlebay, Barra, Sc.	Yes	307
McNeil, Michael	Castlebay, Barra, Sc.	No	397
McNeil, Michael	Glasgow, Sc.	No	71
McNeil, Michael	Lornway, MN	No	210
McNeil, Stephen	Beaver Cove, NS	No	341
McNeill, Stephen	Beaver Cove, NS	No	491
McNeish, William	Cornwall, Eng.	No	353
McNish, Dr.*	Cornwall, Eng.	No	288
McNish, Neil*	Cornwall, Eng.	No	72
McNish, Neil*	Cornwall, Eng.	No	92
McPhee, John	Bridgeville, NS	No	100
McPhee, S. D.	Belfast, PEI	No	409d
M'Millan, Donald	Lake Ainslie, NS	No	340
Morison, A. M.	Inverness, Sc.	No	571
Morison, Counndullie R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	398a
Morison, Counndullie R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	398c

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\* See also under MacNish.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Morison, Counndullie R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	398d
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	125
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	125a
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	398
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	398b
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	398e
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	398f
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	398g
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	398h
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	420
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	420a
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	420b
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	429
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	No	451
Morison, C. R.	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	452
Morison, C. R.?*	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	160
Morison, C. R.?*	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	131

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\* No contributor is given, though the handwriting is almost certainly that of C. R. Morison.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Morison, C. R.? <sup>*</sup>	Isle of Mull, Sc.	Yes	232
Morrison, Angus	Inverness, Sc.	No	573
M'Phee, S. D.	Belfast, PEI	No	207
Murley & Garnhum	Unknown	No	524
Nichols, John H.	Tewksbury, MA	No	66
Nicholson, James	Eldon, PEI	No	382a
Nicholson, Rev. J. W. A.	Inverness, NS	No	168
Nicholson, Rev. J. W. A.	Inverness, NS	No	180
Nickerson, Albert	Pinnette, PEI	No	526
Nic Lachlainn, Seonaid	Parkhill, ON	No	361
Oxenham, Isaac	Charlottetown, PEI	No	171
Patterson, George	Dalhousie, NB	No	342
Patterson, George	New Glasgow, NS	No	139
Patterson, George	New Glasgow, NS	No	342
Pollock, Dr. Allan	Halifax, NS	No	79
Pont, P. Maclaine	The Hague, Neth.	No	306
Press, Miss J. S.	New York, NY	No	318

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\* No contributor is given, though the handwriting is almost certainly that of C. R. Morison.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Rattee, E. J.	Malpeque, PEI	No	11
Reid, Sir Hugh Gilzean	Kilburn	No	594
Reid, Sir Hugh Gilzean	Kilburn	No	595
Rogers, Rev. Anderson	New Glasgow, NS	No	413a
Ross, Annie	Prince Edward Island Hosp.	No	7
Ross, Daniel M.	Big Pond, NS	No	487
Ross, James	Halifax, NS	No	343
Ross, William	Unknown	No	489
Ryan, E. F.	Georgetown, PEI	No	464
Schulte, J.	London, ON	No	41
Sedgwick, Thomas	Tatamagouche, NS	No	413b
Senator Ferguson	Charlottetown, PEI	No	149
Shaw, A. M.	England	No	182
Sinclair & Campbell	Glasgow, Sc.	No	148
Sinclair and Patterson, Barristers	New Glasgow, NS	No	246
Sinclair, A.	Glasgow, Sc.	No	90
Sinclair, A. McLean*	Belfast, PEI	No	177

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\* These are indeed by AMS, some of whose letters form part of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds MG1/2660.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Sinclair, A. MacLean*	Belfast, PEI	No	211
Sinclair, A. MacLean*	Belfast, PEI	No	344
Sinclair, A. McLean*	Chatham, NB	No	263
Sinclair, A. MacLean*	Hopewell, NS	No	411
Sinclair, A. McLean*	Lancaster, QB	Yes	263
Sinclair, A. MacLean*	Springville, NS	No	126
Sinclair, A. McLean*	Springville, NS	No	625
Sinclair, A. MacLean*	Unknown	No	303
Sinclair, A. Maclean*	Unknown	Yes	423
Sinclair, Archibald	Glasgow, Sc.	No	578
Sinclair, Archibald	Glasgow, Sc.	No	579
Sinclair, Archibald	Glasgow, Sc.	No	580
Sinclair, Archibald	Glasgow, Sc.	No	581
Sinclair, Cecilia	Chacachase, Trinidad	No	293
Sinclair, D. L.	Toronto, ON	No	114
Sinclair, Donald	Toronto, ON	No	362
Sinclair, Dr. James	Sheffield, Eng.	Yes	76

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\* These are indeed by AMS, some of whose letters form part of the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds MG1/2660.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
Sinclair, George	North Lochabar, NS	No	151
Sinclair, George W.	Goshen, NS	No	291
Sinclair, J. H.	Ottawa, ON	No	363a
Sinclair, J. H.	Ottawa, ON	No	363b
Sinclair, James A.	Aberdeen, Sc.	No	162
Sinclair, James A.	Country Harbour, NS	No	346
Sinclair, John	Brookline, MA	No	8
Sinclair, John H.	S.S. Pontiac	No	255
Sinclair, Libbie E.	North End Lochaber, NS	No	291a
Sinclair, P.	Summerfield, PEI	Yes	259
Sinclair Patterson	New Glasgow, NS	No	345
Stewart, Alexander	Nether Lochaber, NS	No	285
Stewart, Donald	Dunbar, Sc.	No	458
Stewart, Hugh	Glen Alpine, NS	No	113
Stewart, Rev. Donald?*	Executive Chambers of Canada	No	165
Sutherland, D.	Garbarus, NS	No	152
Sutherland, Rev. John	Caledonia, PEI	No	202

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\* No contributor is given, but "Rev. Donald Stewart" is written on back of letter in a different hand.

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
T.C. Allen & Co.	Halifax, NS	No	471
The Guardian Pub., Co.	Charlottetown, PEI	No	537
The Oban Times	Edinburgh, Sc.	No	530
The Presbyterian Record	Montreal, QB	No	532
The Presbyterian Witness & Co.	Pictou, NS	No	531
The Princeton Theological Review	Philadelphia, PA	No	535
Thompson, R. B.	Unknown	No	348
Unknown	Churchville, NS	No	108
Unknown	Ledaic	No	22
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	98a
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	302
Unknown	Unknown	No	412b
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	419
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	421
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	425
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	426
Unknown	Unknown	Yes	431
Unknown	Unknown	No	453
Unknown	Unknown	No	614

<u>Correspondent</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Gaelic Content</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>
W. Drysdale & Co.	Montreal, QB	No	496
West, Bertha	Eldon, PEI	No	406
West, T. F.	Cape Traverse, PEI	No	224
Wilkinson, Anna Reed	Providence, RI	No	374

**Appendix F**  
**Gaelic Songs in the Maclean, Sinclair Family Fonds Correspondence in NSARM**  
**MG1 Vol. 2660 (ordered by reference number)**

*Transcribed verbatim et literatim.*

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
1. Tha Mac (“forgot name”) is sproc air [1 verse]	John Maclean, “the Bard”	6	Donald Maclean, Skye, Sc. (4 Dec 1900)
2. Tha m’athair bochd a nochd san uaidh (Elegy for Alexander McDonald, Bàrd na Ceapaich) [5 verses]	Roderick D. McDonald	10b	R. D. McDonald, Springhill, NS (12 Mar 1904)
3. Tha m-inntinn ga mo bhrosnuchadh (Marbhrann do fhear Thalasgair) [7 verses]	Raoghall mac Iain (no Raoghall Domhnullach)	29b	Alex Campbell, Broadcove, NS (16 Apr 1889)
4. Leibid air a phairti uir (To James A. Fraser, Esq., M.P.P.) [14 verses]	Michael McDonald	30b	Ronald McGillivray (Sagart), Arisaig, NS (14 Mar 1886)
5. Si nighean Chaptain Lachainn (Mac fir a chnoic a Muile to Cpt. Lachlan Maclean of Greispools daughter) [6 verses]	[Not provided]	75b	James McLean, Greenock, Sc. (25 May 1897)
6. Cum do chairdeas gu h uasal [1 verse]	Rory McLain Mhoir	75b	James McLean (25 May 1897)
7. Ach ma ghabh u Iain mhic Fhearlaich (Ho, hi, ri ri eile Chalain) [5 verses]	Iain Mac Fhearlaich	75b	James McLean (25 May 1897)
8. Turas mo chriche thug mi chola [9 verses]	Lady McLean	75b	James McLean (25 May 1897)
9. Bear leam fein gun ro u Cheit [2 verses]	[Not provided]	77	James McLean (19 Jan 1900)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
10. Ni sinn marbhrann air Tomas (Elegy on Tomas Fhriseil) [3 verses]	Seumas MacGriogair (Rev. James MacGregor)	96	Wm Fraser, Barrie, ON (28 Dec 1889)
11. Oh tha 'n Cheann Dearg an diugh fo ghruaim (Marbhrann do Dhomhnall MacAmhlaidh, Eildeir, an cotional Bhaddec, a bhasaich air 5mh la de cheud mhios an Fhoghair 1886) - page from a book [22 verses]	Le aon a bha min eolach air (signed "M.N.ML~")	98a	[Not provided] (24 Oct 1902)
12. 'Nuair a bha mi annsa chuir [10 verses]	Eoghan Mac Gilleain (no Eoghan saor)	131	C. R. Morison, Mull, Sc. (no date)
13. Dhealbh is chruthaich thu Dhia sinn, ann ad choltas 's ad iomhaigh air [word missing] [55 verses]	John Martin, PEI	159	Alex Martin, Valleyfield, PEI (18 Jan 1904)
14. Tha 'n dluth tha 'n dluth (Cloinn Duilli sa phiob) [1 verse]	[Not provided]	160	C. R. Morison (no date)
15. Cait a bheil anns a chruiteach [1 verse]	[Not provided]	160	C. R. Morison (no date)
16. 'Thogail nam bó, 'n aird ris a' bhealach sibh [1 verse]	[Not provided]	186	W. A. Craigie, Oxford (18 Feb 1892)
17. Deoch Slainte d'on chonnspunn ud (do D. D. Domhnulach ann an Alt. a' Bhaille, Shiorrachd Phictou, N.S.) [6 verses]	A. A. McGillivray	201	A. A. McGillivray, Antigonish, NS (24 Dec 1900)
18. Cha bhidh air ceann sa smuireach [1 verse]	John McLean, Langamull, Mull (Iain MacEoghainn)	232	C. R. Morison (no date)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
19. Sa Thighearn oig Cholla [4 verses]	Mairi Nigh'n Eòghain	232	C. R. Morison (no date)
20. Chuir mi suas mo ghunn bannise [2 verses]	Mairi Nigh'n Eòghain	232	C. R. Morison (no date)
21. 'S mearg a mhol a mhor-thir mhosach (Diomladh na Mòrthir) [3 verses]	An t-Aireach Muilean	232	C. R. Morison (no date)
22. Anns a' mhaduinn 's mi 'g eiridh (Cumha a' Bhàird) [5, 8-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine?, Glasgow (no date)
23. An cuala sibh mu'n chléireachd 'th' anns a' bhaile (Coll Boy) [8, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
24. Gur h-ann air Di-ciadain 'nuair chaidh mi gu m'dhiota (Oran air Niall MacArtair) [7, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
25. 'S an àm 'bhi 'cur mu sgaoil dhaibh (Sgiobaireachd na Carpaich) [3, 8-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
26. Bho'n a thachair do dhuine uasal (Oran do dh-Eachann Caimbeal) [7, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
27. Bho'n a tha mi 'n diugh car dìomhain (Turas a' bhàird a dh-iarraidh mna) [25, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
28. Bho'n thubhairt càch gu'n dianainn òran [6, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
29. 'S a' mhaduinn an àm dùsgaigh dhomh (Marbhrann air bancharaid do'n bhàrd) [5, 8-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
30. Ná'm bu bhàrd mi 'bhidheadh math air dànachd pharlamaid chall (Oran eile do MhacPhàrlain air dha 'n taghadh) [6, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
31. 'Nuair 'bha mise òg gu'm b'e mo dhòigh [8, 8-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
32. Bho'n a tha mis' fodh mhulad air m'uilinn gun sùnn (Oran mu furmailt a bh'aig Comunn Cloinn Illeathain ann am Bath Hotel) [7, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
33. O'n a fhuair mise ainm bhi m'bhàrd (Oran do chruinneachadh Comuinn Chloinn Illeathan Ann an Glaschu) [6, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
34. Gur a mise a tha fodh mhulad (An Gàidheal a measg nan Gall) [7, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
35. Latha dhomh 's mi 'dol do'n Chaolas (Oran Gaoil a reinn am bàrd 'nuair a bha e 'na bhalach òg) [8, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
36. (Oran Iasgaich) [no text]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
37. Bho'n thubhairt cuid an smeòrach rium (Oran do Niall MacNeill, co-shuiridhche) [5, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
38. Oidhche dhomh 's mi 'miosg luchd Beurla (Oran mu Chomunn Céilidh nan Gaidheal ann an Glaschu) [13, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
39. Dh-fhalbh an linn 's an robh na bàird ann (Aithris air car àbhcaid a reinn am bàrd air sgiobair bàta iasgaich [...]) [14, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
40. Gur mise tha gu brònach a bhi 'teannadh ri òran 's an àm (Oran an reinn am bàrd air dha athair fhaicinn fodh 'n mhisge) [5, 4-line verses]	James Maclean, Coll	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
41. Gur bòidheach leam na h-ainneirean (Moladh nan Ainneir) [13, 4-line verses]	Lachainn MacIlleathain (Lachainn Neill)	239	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
42. Bhi ga'm chuir a Cinntsaile [1 verse]	[Not provided]	248	Colin Chisholm, Inverness, Scotland (12 Mar 1888)
43. Cha'n eil Reisamaid fon chrún [1 verse]	[Not provided]	248	Colin Chisholm (12 Mar 1888)
44. Thog thu ormsa mar thuaileas (Ann' Eudmhor Nigh'n Ailein) [1 verse]	Iain mor Mac- Dhughail	248	Colin Chisholm (6 Mar 1891)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
45. Ach Aonghais oig gun deaninn oran (Oran Gaoil do dh' Aonghas Mac-Ille-Mhaoil) [8 verses]	Mairghreud Ghriogarach	248	Colin Chisholm (6 Mar 1891)
46. Se'm breacan lurach fasant e (Oran mu Bhreachan Mhairi Uisdean) [15, 4-line verses]	John MacLean, Balemartine Bard	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
47. A Chalum big a chalumain a Chalum 's tu fo churam (Oran do Chalum big) [24, 4-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
48. Eachdraidh Chalum don Bhard (Laoidh Chalum) [8, 8-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
49. O, seinneam cliu na teachdairean (Cliu teachdairean (na commissioners)) [4 ½, 4-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
50. An sgrìob thug mi do chireib ol [8, 8-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
51. 'An am dhuin an buachail fhasadh (Oran a "Ghluinanich") [4, 8-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
52. Dh'éug an dè mo ghearran fhein (Marbhrann a Ghluinanich no "Cumha Eich") [3, 8-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
53. An cuala sibh sgeul fireannach mu chabhluch Lite d'thainig iad (An Ti) [7, 4-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
54. Do Fhear ionaid Cuirt na Siorramachd (Oran Neill 's ic Dhonnachaidh Bhain) [8, 8-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
55. A cualadh sibh mun oganach (Creideamh dubh Bhaile-mhartain) [16, 4-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
56. Oh gu bh-eolach mise oir a ghiulan (Oran Gaoil) [3, 4-line verses]	John MacLean	249	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
57. Oidhche dhomhsa s mi aig ball (Do mhaighdinn oig mor nic Ionmhuinn air dha a faicinn aig ball nam Muilleach) [11, 4-line verses]	Neil MacLaine, (Niall MacIlleathain)	254	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
58. Fhir a rinn oran a ceilidh Iain Chailein [4, 4-line verses]	Neil MacLaine or Iain Chailein	254	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
59. 'S ioma Curidh tha 'n Albainn [8, 8-line verses]	Neil MacLaine	254	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
60. Is latha dhòmhsa 'falbh mu'n cuairt (Oran a rinneadh leis a bhàrd air dha ministear a choinneachadh a thubhairt ris gu'n robh a Ghaidhlig air bàsachadh) [4, 8-line verses]	Lachlun Maclean, Coll (Lachainn Mac-Gilleain)	254	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
61. Fhir a shiubhlas thar an t-saile (Oran Marachd) [1, 4-line verse]	Lachlun Maclean or James Maclean	254	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
62. Tha mis' an so ann am Priosan (Laoidh mar gum biodh an t'anam a' gearain anns a phurgatair) [1 verse]	J. McGillivray, piper	256	Sagart Arisaig (27 Mar 1892)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
63. 'San a chiad mhios de'n gheamhradh (Bathadh nam Fear) [17 verses]	Dougald McEacharn (Dughall Breac) or John Maclean ("The Bard")	256	Sagart Arisaig (27 Mar 1892)
64. S'lionnmhor gruagach a bha tursach (Oran do na "Lovat's Scouts") [4 verses, see #90 below]	Neil MacLaine?	257 [#430 may be the rest of this]	Neil MacLaine? (no date)
65. Soraidh uam gu Comhal (Soraidh do Chomunn Chomhail) [1 verse]	John Sinclair	259	P. Sinclair, Summerfield, PEI (7 June 1895)
66. Slan le beanntan an fhraoich [2 verses]	John Sinclair	259	P. Sinclair (7 June 1895)
67. Dughail Mac Ghilleathain an tusal [11 verses]	Donald McMillan	275	Donald McMillan, Priceville, ON (13 Feb 1903)
68. Ha mi bliadhna san fo ravan [9 verses]	Donald McMillan	275	Donald McMillan (13 Feb 1903)
69. Na bitheadh agam gaelic [8 verses]	Murdoch McIntyre?	283	Murdoch McIntyre, West Bay, CB, NS (1 Mar 1886)
70. Dheirich mi much maddin shamhruidhe (Address to a May flower) [55 lines]	Alexander McDonald (Keppoch Bard)	284	Alexander McDonald Springhill, NS (30 Dec 1896)
71. Ciad soraidh thar an t-saile [3, 8-line verses]	Donald McDonald, Tiree	307	Michael Mcneil, Barra (1 Nov 1896)
72. Fad air faireadh 's mor a naire (Di-moladh na mor-thir) [7, 2-line verses]	[Not provided]	393	M.(Magnus?) McLean or Neil MacLaine (no date)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
73. Cha stochd 's cha storas a tha mi'n toir air [4, 4-line verses]	[Not provided]	398	C. R. Morison (5 July 1894)
74. Dh'fhag thu mi'n de dhol thar d'eolais [4, 4-line verses]	Christina McLean, Brolas	398	C. R. Morison (5 July 1894)
75. Hao o hu gur mis' tha fo mhighean [chorus & verse]	Neil McLean, Coll?	398g	C. R. Morison (17 Oct 1898)
76. A Mhaighstir Alasdair nam buadh [24, 4-line verses]	McLeod, PEI	418	Cumming (1875)
77. B e so bleadhna na dhunach [16, 4-line verses]	Tearlach Mac-Gilleain	419	[Not provided] (no date)
78. Ailis donn gur mor mo ghradh dhuit (Cha neil feum anns a mhulad) [9, 2-line verses]	Fear-a-Lagain?	420	C. R. Morison (no date)
79. Gur a muladach a tha mi [10, 2-line verses]	Alicia McLean, Torloisk	420	C. R. Morison (no date)
80. Mo cheist na fiurainn uasal [7, 4-line verses]	Margaret McLean, Mull (Peigi nigh'nn Eoghainn Chiobair)	420a	C. R. Morison (no date)
81. Nan tigeadh t-usa Thearlaich [40 lines]	Iain Mac-Eòghain	420a	C. R. Morison (no date)
82. An cluinn thu mi ni' Donill 'ic Thamhais [1, 4-line verse]	Lachlan McLean	420b	C. R. Morison (11 May 1899)
83. Nighean fir a chnoic ag raitinn [2, 4-line verses]	Lachlan McLean	420b	C. R. Morison (11 May 1899)
84. Failte air Macgille-aeoin Sinclair [10, 4-line verses]	Cailein Macafi	422	Cailein Macafi (13 July 1889)

<u>First line (&amp; title if included)</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Ref. #</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
85. Ged fhuair iad thu fo chis [3, 4-line verses, fragments]	[Not provided]	425	[Not provided] (no date)
86. 'S cianail an diugh Geurlach (Fagail Gearloch) [12 lines]	Colin Fraser (Cailean Saor)	426	[Not provided] (no date)
87. Am Baile-Mhulinn Chlann Donuill	Dr. D. D. McDonald	427-8	Dr. D. D. McDonald, Alexandria, ON (9 Mar 1906)
88. Lion am botul lion a dha dhiu (Nighean Donn nan Gobhar) [8, 4-line verses]	Fear-a-Lagain (Archibald Maclean)	429	C. R. Morison (no date)
89. 'Nuair chaidh thu gam dhiteadh (O's mis' th'air mo lagadh) [4, 4-line verses]	Fear-a-Lagain	429	C. R. Morison (no date)
90. Na bi curam ort na mhi chin (Oran do na "Lovat's Scouts"?) [last 5 verses of 9, first 4 missing, perhaps follows from #64 above]	Neil MacLaine	430 [#257 may be the first part of this]	Neil MacLaine (no date)

## Appendix G Donald MacKinnon's Letter of Reference

The following is a transcription of a letter that Donald MacKinnon, first holder of the Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University, wrote to President A. Stanley MacKenzie of Dalhousie University in response to MacKenzie's request. Maclean Sinclair had been nominated for an honorary degree, and MacKenzie wrote to MacKinnon seeking a reference concerning Maclean Sinclair's Gaelic scholarship. Maclean Sinclair was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in the spring of 1914.

The letter is housed in the Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections (DUASC).

**Donald MacKinnon to A. Stanley MacKenzie, 9 Feb. 1914, Presidents' Office Collection, Honorary Degrees, 1914-28, MS 1-3, Box 326, Folder 7, DUASC.**

Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> 1914

Dear Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to reply to your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> ult. inviting my opinion of the Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair's attainments as a Gaelic Scholar.

I have not had the good fortune to meet Mr. Sinclair, but he has been a valued correspondent of mine for many years on Celtic matters, and I believe I have read all his principal writings on these subjects.

Mr. Maclean Sinclair's Celtic publications are mainly confined to Scottish Gaelic, with the history & especially the genealogy of Highland chiefs & leading families.

Within this field he has been for many years a most indefatigable & capable student. He has, e.g. collected & printed a considerable amount of Gaelic verse composed in Canada by emigrants from this country & their descendants. He has also recovered from the descendants of emigrants Gaelic poems composed but not published in Scotland. In this latter class is included a valuable manuscript collection of Gaelic poetry made in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and given by its possessor to Mr. John Maclean., a well known Gaelic poet (Mr. Sinclair's maternal grandfather) who brought it to Canada early in the last century; as also some poems by John MacDonald, a distinguished Gaelic poet of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which were lost or forgotten in Scotland, but recovered by Mr. Sinclair in Canada, & printed in a full edition of the Bard's poems.

In addition to these publications Mr. Sinclair has published in three volumes selections from the works of the most famous Gaelic poets from the 15<sup>th</sup> century downwards, with biographical & critical notes, & explanations of the rarer & more obscure words that occur. In this

publication Mr. Sinclair shows such knowledge of the Language & Literature of Scottish Gaelic as few, if indeed any, living man possess.

Mr. Sinclair has written in the *Celtic Review* & other periodicals genealogies of Highland Chiefs & families showing extensive research, especially in the case of a writer of limited opportunities for consulting original Documents of value in this department.

It is but right to add that Mr. Sinclair's Gaelic volumes, & especially his most valuable publication, as I regard it, the volumes on the Gaelic poets, are, in outward appearance a very imperfect indication of the ability & learning shown by the author & editor. The limited sale of Gaelic books no doubt necessitates rigid economy in the production of them – in paper & binding, in printing & proof-reading.

Some members of your Senate may be aware that Scottish Gaelic writers, in the matters of orthography & some grammatical forms, do not practice the uniformity prevalent in English literature. Mr. Maclean Sinclair has written forcibly in favour of spelling reform in Gaelic, & in some of his Gaelic volumes has given effect to his views. I may say that while I agree that some change in these matters is desirable, I do not agree with the views of Mr. Sinclair in all cases. But I whole heartedly endorse the ability & clearness with which he expresses them.

From what I have said you will gather that I am of the clear conviction that Mr. Maclean Sinclair is well worthy of the highest honour which your Senators may be prepared to offer for eminence in the field of Gaelic Scholarship, and in this judgment I believe I voice the views of the few in Scotland who are entitled to express an opinion upon the subject.

I am yours faithfully,

Don. MacKinnon

A. Stanley MacKenzie, Esq.

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