

**THE GAMES &
DIVERSIONS
OF ARGYLESHIRE**

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The games & diversions of Argyleshire by Robert C. Maclagan

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ROBERT C. MACLAGAN

**THE GAMES &
DIVERSIONS
OF ARGYLESHIRE**

The Folk-Lore Society

FOR COLLECTING AND PRINTING

RELICS OF POPULAR ANTIQUITIES, &c.

ESTABLISHED IN

THE YEAR MDCCLXXVIII.



After an Irish.

Low
ATLON

PUBLICATIONS

OF

THE FOLK-LORE SOCIETY.

XLVII.

[1900]

THE
GAMES & DIVERSIONS
OF
ARGYLESHIRE

COMPILED BY
ROBERT CRAIG MACLAGAN, M.D

"Albaton bhoadarrach!"

LONDON
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DAVID NUTT, 57-59 LONG ACRE
1901



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PREFACE

WHEN the Folk-Lore Society suggested the collecting of county folk-lore, the writer sent a circular (August 1893) to all clergymen, school-teachers, and some others in Argyle and its attached islands, asking if they would assist. Headings for the various subjects and hints on the best methods of collecting and noting information were given.

One of the first answers, on the specimen collecting-sheet sent out, was:—

“In two volumes, by . . . viz., . . . and . . . published by William Paterson, Edinburgh (now Paterson & Company, Paternoster Row, London). Dr. MacLagan will find all that could be collected of any interest in the ‘Superstitions and Folk-Lore of the West Highlands,’ September 1st, 1893.”

Though unsigned, and without locality of origin, this was not encouraging, but all hope of finding something worth recording was not abandoned. That much was yet to be done has been proved by the work of Gregorson Campbell of Tiree, and Malcolm MacPhail of Kilmartin. This is a further endeavour in the same direction, and it is hoped, while it is, so far as known, the only collection of nothing but Scottish games, that it may, even if imperfect, form a groundwork for a complete exposition, probably by other observers.

This is the age of co-operation, and of my fellow-workers I wish to acknowledge specially the assistance of:—

Miss Elizabeth M. Kerr, till recently of the F. C. Manse, Port Charlotte, Islay, a colleague without whose enthusiastic assistance this collection would never have appeared.

Also Miss Jessie Macleod, Auchoish, Ardrishaig.

The Rev. Neil Campbell of Kilchrennan.

Mr. Peter MacDonald, New Selma House, Ledaig.

Mr. Colin MacDonald, Public School, Lochbuy; and

Mr. Ian Macdougall, now Secretary to the Clan MacDougall Society.

The airs to which the rhymes are sung were noted in Sol-fa by Mr. Donald Macfadyen, Port Charlotte, Islay, and translated into the older notation by Miss Effic MacLagan, Edinburgh.

No hard and fast line has been drawn, but the contents are simply pastimes found in use in Argyleshire at the present day. There has been no attempt to connote games played elsewhere in Britain. The student who desires to do this has the necessary material in Mrs. Gomme's "Traditional (British) Games" (2 vols. London, 1894-98, forming the first section of her "Dictionary of British Folk-Lore"), a monumental work, to which this may be considered an appendix.

The Gaelic critic will no doubt find weak places, but if, e.g., he attacks the frequent use of the word *cailleach* for a "den," we admit the word should be *callaich*, but if the children will call it "the old wife," we accept their joke as partakers in their fun.

R. C. M.

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1. Straicean for Iomairt an Geat.
2. 8 Pinneachan an Geat.
3. Stamard.
4. Camain. Shinty sticks, the lower one a single-handed Kintyre club.
5. Wooden shinty ball.
6. Ball-spiel.

7. Straicean for "Ball Spiel" and "An Toll."
8. Sene for Cat and Dog.
9. Two Cuts; the right-hand one has the sides numbered.
10. Somad.
11. Pinnac a Gluata.