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'Shinty, Nationalism and Cultural Identity, 1835 - 1939: A Critical Analysis'

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis has been composed by myself, and that it embodies the results of my own research. Where appropriate, I have acknowledged the nature and extent of work carried out in collaboration with and/by others included in the thesis.

Signed: ....

Date: ....

ABSTRACT

The significance of sport is now emerging as an important dimension of the broader scholarship that examines the social, cultural and political aspects of Scottish society. A prominent facet of this emerging body of literature has examined the multiple ways in which sport contributes to and is constitutive of Scottish nationalism and culture. This thesis builds upon previous studies of sport to examine the connections between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity. The rationale that underpins the thesis asserts that in order to understand more fully expressions of nationalism, it is necessary to examine the social and cultural forces that have contributed to different ideas about the nation in specific historical circumstances. At the heart of the thesis it is argued that the sport-nationalism-identity axis in Scotland has sought to assert different forms of autonomy. The concept of autonomy, articulated through civil society, provides an original conceptual framework for the critical analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939. The development of shinty during this period coincided with the emergence of a number of cultural and political movements that were part of a relatively autonomous Highland civil society, and which became the repository of a particular strand of Celtic radicalism. A number of the leading proponents of Celtic radicalism were advocates of various aspects of Scottish nationalism that oscillated on the political landscape of Britain after 1886. Using a multi-methodological research approach, the thesis examines the extent to which the development of shinty intersected with key elements of Celtic radicalism and nationalism. It is concluded that shinty provided the terrain upon which particular cultural identities could be articulated, and was also a vehicle for particular expressions of nationalism that reinforced different aspects of the autonomy of the Highlands within Scotland. This original and unique synthesis provided in this thesis makes a small contribution to our understanding of sport in Scottish culture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my late father

William A. Reid (1930-1975).

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades or more a body of literature has emerged which has examined the cultural, political and social affairs of Scottish society (Beveridge and Turnbull, 1989; Harvie, 1994a; Lynch, 1992; McCrone, 1992; Morton, 1999; Nairn, 1981; Paterson, 1994). An important contribution to understanding social life in Scotland has been made by sociologists and historians who have focused on some of the many ways in which sport contributes to and is constitutive of Scottish culture and politics (Bradley, 1998a; Giulianotti, 1991; Jarvie, 1991; Jarvie and Reid, 1999; Jarvie and Walker, 1994; Moorhouse, 1986a; 1986b; 1987; Murray, 1984). This thesis contributes to, and is critical of, this body of knowledge. More specifically this thesis focuses on the connections between one sport, nationalism and cultural identity through a particular analysis of the game of shinty. It examines the extent to which the development of shinty was influenced by broader cultural, social and political movements during the period 1835 to 1939.

There are at least four key factors which distinguish this thesis from previous studies of shinty. First the analysis is grounded in theoretical assumptions which underpin a critical but eclectic theoretical approach to the study of sport in society. In the Scottish context this thesis takes its lead from the proposition that if we are to fully understand Scottish society, then the place of sport in Scottish culture has to be incorporated or at least not ignored (Jarvie and Walker, 1994: 8). Second the thesis examines shinty in relation to theories of nationalism and cultural identity as they have been specifically applied to the Scottish context. This strand of analysis considers the question posed by Telfer (1994: 123) who asked which image of the nation is represented through shinty. In this respect this analysis of shinty is a Celtic critique of nationalism and cultural identity in the Highlands of Scotland that has been largely

ignored in previous studies of the place of sport in Scottish social life. Third the analysis of shinty is contextualised within the specific social and political milieux of the Scottish Highlands between 1835 and 1939. Fourth a strand of this thesis involves a comparative socio-political analysis of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in two different contexts namely the Highlands of Scotland and Ireland. This builds upon examining the role of two sporting organisations, the Camanachd Association and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), in the period from their formation in the late nineteenth century through to the middle of the twentieth century. In an era of radical Celtic politics, particularly the period between 1870 and 1922, the comparative analysis of these two sporting organisations offers an insight into the respective relationship between sport, politics and nationalism in two different, but related Celtic cultural contexts. Together these four strands provide a unique theoretical framework and socio-political background upon which to consider shinty, the traditional 'sport of the Gael'.

The culture and politics of Celtic communities has become a matter of much academic and popular interest during the 1990s (Jarvie, 1999: 3). In spite of this widespread interest, it is necessary to first clarify how the term Celtic is used in this thesis. As Jarvie (1999: 3-4) points out there are for example linguistic, archaeological and political uses for the term. The conception of Celtic utilised in this thesis follows the open and inclusive approach adopted by Jarvie (1999: 4), acknowledging that Celtic culture can be defined in terms of language, the material culture of a particular people, as well as the activities and aspirations associated with certain political objectives. It is accepted that there a number of communities that assert their identity in connection with their image of Celtic community. This noted the thesis focuses predominantly upon the distinctive Celtic cultural community that was projected by the people of the Highlands of Scotland. This image of a Celtic cultural community can be defined by a combination

of cultural factors, that includes the Gaelic language, as well as the material culture such as poetry, literature and popular recreations of a particular people, the Gaels. As the thesis illustrates ideas about Celtic Scotland may have changed yet for Scottish Gaels these linguistic and cultural elements remain core elements in their sense of themselves as part of a distinct cultural community within Scotland and Britain. At the cusp of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries some Scottish Gaels, as well as more radical Scottish nationalist supporters, placed this linguistic and cultural vision at the core of their radical cultural and political aspirations. This Celtic vision underpins the critique of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland by analysing critically the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939.

It is important to clarify the reasons for the timescale examined in the thesis. There may be legitimate arguments for suggesting a narrower or wider time frame, but the period has not been selected at random or for the apparent convenience of approximately one hundred years. The historical period 1835 to 1939 has been selected for three important reasons which relate to the aims and underlying questions embedded within this study. These arose from specific issues suggested in previous histories of shinty and in a wider body of literature concerning Highland social development. The period 1835 to 1939 covers a substantive one in the development of the modern game of shinty. The development of shinty during the Victorian period was one aspect of a wider Celtic cultural movement that sought to preserve and promote a traditional distinctive cultural identity of the Highlands. During this period the development of shinty coincided with that of hurling in Ireland, where the development of Gaelic sport was connected to the ideas that underpinned land reform politics, home rule and nationalism. In the Highlands there were similar, but separate, expressions of Celtic radicalism in culture and politics. These did not translate into an identical project of political

nationalism but certain aspects of this Celtic radicalism did affect the development of shinty. It is argued that the imperial and unionist politics of certain key leading administrators within the Camanachd Association, shinty's governing body, was commensurate with the political nationalism of Scotland during this period. A distinctive Celtic identity was depicted through cultural activities such as sport, which along with other spheres of civil society provided an outlet for a cultural autonomy that was part of a larger imperial political state. By concluding this particular study of shinty in 1939 this thesis seeks to provide a more critical examination of the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity than has been evident in previous histories of shinty.

Since at least the 1980s a significant number of 'histories of shinty' have been produced. This literature records valuable evidence about the game in relation to its origins, its development, its structure and its organisation, and the histories of specific clubs such as Kingussie, Fort William, Kyles Athletic and Skye Camanachd (Hutchinson, 1989; Macdonald, 1992; MacLennan, 1993; 1994; 1998a; 1998b; Robertson, 1994; Thorburn, 1996; Whitson, 1983). Evidence suggests that shinty was once played in many parts of Scotland (MacLennan, 1993: 21; 1998b: 119), but the game began to disappear from certain areas by at least the latter part of the eighteenth century. By the middle of the nineteenth century shinty was largely confined to the Scottish Highlands, and to specific parts of urban Britain, although as MacLennan (1998b) has demonstrated, shinty was also played in the many emigrant contexts in which a Scottish diaspora settled.

The body of literature concerning shinty that has emerged since the 1980s builds on two classical historical accounts (Macdonald, 1919; MacDonald, 1932). These accounts claim that shinty's roots lie in the ancient Celtic culture of the Scots who

migrated to Scotland from Ireland in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. In Gaelic, the language of Celtic Scotland, the game is known as *camanachd*, with its antecedent folk origins being acknowledged as coming from the same Irish roots as the language (Hutchinson, 1989: 11). The antecedent folk origins of shinty are supported by Ó Maolfabhail (1973) in his history of hurling in Ireland. He contends that the Irish sport represents one of the two traditions of that activity and that the other "survives to the present day in Scotland under the name of ... Camanachd" (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: viii). The various histories of shinty available provide a useful historical record about the sport but there are limitations to such work. For instance previous studies of shinty do not accommodate a theoretical analysis of how shinty contributes to the cultural fabric of the Highlands, or to the ways in which this sport might represent a Highland image of Scottishness. More precisely, it is unclear which image of the nation shinty might represent - "Scottish, British, Highland or Celtic?" (Telfer, 1994: 123). In specific historical periods, particular social and political circumstances may have contributed to each of these images of the nation. In the context of this study it is argued that the game represented both Highland and Celtic representations. On the one hand a Highland image of the nation is used to refer to the idea of a distinctive cultural community within the British state. On the other hand Celtic is used to refer to the idea of a community linking the Highlands and Ireland which was promoted by certain individuals within the radical Celtic movement during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Shinty is recognised as a signifier of, and vehicle for, both images. It is argued that the Highland image predominated within the context of civil society, and importantly amongst the leaders of the Camanachd Association, the official administrative body for shinty.

Shinty did decline in some communities during the nineteenth century, but between 1835 and 1939 it was transformed from a popular folk pastime into an institutionalised sport. This metamorphosis was not revolutionary, nor was it a uniform and linear process since the patterns of transformation were different throughout Highland society. The transformation of shinty during this period, like other popular folk games (Holt, 1989: 3; Tranter, 1998: 3-12), depicts the complexities of decline and survival of traditional recreations, and the adoption of new practices, that are associated with what Williams (1977) termed dominant, residual and emergent cultures. Whitson (1983) has utilised this conceptual framework in an analysis of shinty in the Highlands since 1945, but these dimensions of cultural change are also helpful in examining the development of shinty between 1835 and 1939. This includes for instance: the disappearance of the sport in some communities; the decline of some traditional patterns of participation such as Sunday shinty; the continued significance of patronage to shinty but within new structures; the place of shinty as a core element of a distinctive Celtic culture; and the establishment of the formal structures and practices of institutionalised sport. Three questions are addressed in this thesis which arise from these developments: (i) How did the game of shinty develop between 1835 and 1939? (ii) What cultural, social and political circumstances contributed to the divergent patterns of change? and (iii) How was shinty affected by the historical epoch in which it moved? In answering these questions this thesis does not detract from existing knowledge about the history of shinty. It is the contention of this thesis that the research outlined in this study provides an original analysis and perhaps more importantly adds to our knowledge about one aspect of Scottish popular culture.

Previous studies of shinty have suggested that the sport contributes to definitions of the Highlands as a cultural community. By the middle of the nineteenth century

shinty was an integral element in the social and cultural activities of a growing Highland diaspora in urban Britain. During the 1870s certain elements within this loosely connected network of organisations and individuals in Highland society began to promote a more radical edge towards Highland issues. This Celtic radicalism manifested itself in a number of ways some of which were overtly political, while others fostered a distinctive Celtic cultural identity and autonomy through activities such as music, literature and sport. One of the more radical activists of this Celtic movement was John Murdoch (1818-1903) who recorded his recollections of shinty in the 1830s in his autobiographical notes (*The Autobiography of John Murdoch, Vol. I*). This unpublished record is one of a number of primary sources that demonstrate how shinty intersected with the radical Celtic movement of Highland society particularly during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The confluence of shinty and Celtic cultural and political movements such as the urban Highland societies, and the Highland Land Law Reform Association (HLLRA) has not been thoroughly examined in previous histories of the sport. This radical dimension of Highland social history therefore provides the impetus for a fourth question which the thesis examines namely: to what extent was the development of shinty and the Camanachd Association connected to the Celtic radical movement that shaped Highland society after the 1870s?

Between 1887 and 1934 a number of intermittent contests involving shinty and hurling teams took place on both sides of the Irish Sea (Hutchinson, 1989; MacLennan, 1998b; Bradley, 1998a). These links reinforced the antecedent folk origins of both codes which were part of the common cultural heritage of Celtic Scotland and Ireland. Like shinty the development of hurling within the GAA after 1884 was associated with cultivating a distinctive identity which drew on this Celtic past. The GAA's connections to the wider radical movements in Ireland brought a more overt political dimension to

the identity promoted by hurling. The anti-British flavour of the organisation appears to have influenced the Camanachd Association's decision to sever links with the Irish organisation between 1934 and 1972 (Hutchinson, 1989: 156-7). There is no evidence that the Camanachd Association had a collective view on the political issues which were the focus of Celtic radicalism in Scotland and Ireland, but this is an important difference between the national agencies responsible for the Celtic sports of Scotland and Ireland. This dimension of the social history of these Celtic sports raises two further issues: (i) Why did no similar organisation to the Gaelic Athletic Association in Ireland emerge in Scotland? and (ii) In what ways did the social and political background of the leading administrators and patrons of the Camanachd Association influence the national aspirations of shinty from 1893 until 1939?

The thesis builds upon a unique synthesis of material which draws from at least four bodies of knowledge. The study is partly rooted within: a sociological body of knowledge which discusses the concepts of nationalism and cultural identity; recent literature by Scottish writers who have sought to explain Scottish culture and society; a body of literature by sociologists and historians who have undertaken research into certain aspects of Scottish sport; and a body of Celtic literature which provides a basis for a critique of mainstream work on Scottish culture and Scottish sport. It is in fact this Celtic critique which is one of the original aspects of this thesis.

There are three key points which inform this study of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland. The first is developed from the body of literature on nationalism, which demonstrates that this complex ideology cannot be reduced to a single explanation (Anderson, 1991: 3; Hutchison and Smith, 1994: 3; Smith, 1991: 72). Second, the observation of both Kellas (1980: 129; 136) and Harvie (1994a: 19) that in pre-devolution Scotland, nationalism was a popular ideology expressed in relation to

sport rather than to politics. Finally there is McCrone's assertion that cultural identities such as region, religion, gender and ethnic origin contour the ways in which people define and experience the nation, and therefore inform alternative expressions of what it is to be Scottish (1992: 193).

The connection between identity and sport is not a new departure in the study of sport. This has been highlighted in studies of sport in other social, national and cultural contexts that have utilised theories from the perspective of critical sociology (Ball and Loy, 1975; Cantelon and Gruneau, 1982; Dunning, 1971; Gruneau, 1983; Hargreaves, 1982; Hargreaves, 1986). A feature of this work has been to examine the ways in which sport is used to express collective identities such as those based on class, gender or ethnicity. In the 1990s the ways in which nationalism is expressed through sporting contexts has emerged as a prominent issue in the sociological analysis of sport (Booth, 1998; Cronin, 1999; Duke and Crolley, 1996; Hargreaves, 2000; Jarvie, 1993; MacClancy, 1996; Nauright, 1997; Sugden and Bairner, 1993). This literature reveals at least three important points. First although a single word is used to describe expressions of allegiance towards the sporting representatives of nations, nationalism is not a single phenomenon (Cronin, 1999: 55). Second the nationalisms associated with sport may relate to different kinds of nations which can be divided into two broad categories: those which are states, and those nations which exist within states. These points have a particular resonance in Scotland, a nation within a state, where it has been suggested nationalism has been expressed in relation to cultural practices such as sport, rather than through politics in a quest for statehood (Kellas, 1980: 129). In the case of this thesis a third point is evident from previous studies of sport, nationalism and identity. Distinct cultural communities within both kinds of nations may express their collective identity, as well as their image of the nation, through sport.

One feature of some of the research into sport and nationalism has been that such studies have often focused on contemporary expressions of nationalism and cultural identity. There are limitations to this approach. Focusing on contemporary situations has tended to overlook the confluence of sport and ideas about nationhood and identity in specific historical contexts. It has been assumed that the nationalism expressed through sport has depicted the same meaning and image of the nation throughout the modern era. If we are to fully understand the myriad ways in which sport may be used to project nations and cultural communities, it is necessary to examine these relationships in historical, as well as in contemporary contexts, and in greater depth than has hitherto been the case. This thesis examines shinty from a social and historical perspective, in order to more fully understand the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity in a specific period. Using an eclectic theoretical framework of nationalism, cultural identity and autonomy, the thesis contributes a wider understanding of the place that shinty has occupied in Highland civil society and culture.

ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

In order to examine the questions raised concerning the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939 the thesis has been organised into six substantive chapters. The case study does not attempt to provide a comprehensive historical account of the sport during this period since this has been covered in previous histories of shinty (Macdonald, 1919; MacDonald, 1932; Hutchinson, 1989; MacLennan, 1998b). Instead the thesis examines the confluence of shinty with selected social, cultural and political developments which contoured the social history of the Highlands. The chapters are therefore organised around the key themes which provide the building blocks to facilitate the examination of shinty,

nationalism and cultural identity in the Highlands between 1835 and 1939. The social, cultural and political factors which contributed to the cultural identity embodied by shinty and to ideas of nationhood cannot be organised into neat time periods of specific decades. Each substantive chapter of the case study is framed by a broad time period, but the issues addressed therein were not confined to these decades. The social, cultural and political circumstances which contributed to definitions of cultural identity and Celtic radicalism between 1835 and 1939 were more fluid, their presence ebbing and flowing within the wider context of Highland, Scottish and British imperial social history.

Serious examinations of nationalism and cultural identity have emerged as prominent themes in the analysis of Scottish culture and society (Brown, McCrone and Paterson, 1996; Gallagher, 1991; Harvie, 1994; McCrone, 1992; McCrone, Kendrick and Straw, 1989; Nairn, 1981; Paterson, 1994; 1998). As recently as the 1980s such an approach would have been considered parochial, sentimental and irrelevant in the serious academic analysis of these themes. This poses a fundamental problem in developing an appropriate conceptual framework for this thesis. The problem, in part, was that Scotland was not the archetypal nation-state which certain scholars have argued is the necessary component of nationalism in the modern era (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992a). Gellner (1983: 44) stated that "Scottish nationalism indisputably exists", but acknowledged it contradicts his own theory of nationalism. The problem is compounded by the fact that during the period examined in this thesis shinty has been a constituent, and is constitutive of, Celtic cultural identity in the Gàidhealtachd, but not of the Scottish nation. This cultural identity did not translate into a widespread popular expression of nationalism that was associated with, or aspired to, a separate Scottish state. There was an element of Celtic radicalism that did have such aspirations, yet the

body of literature that examines Scottish society and politics has tended to marginalise this in accounts of both the Scottish nation and nationalism.

To address the problem concerning Scotland the eclectic theoretical framework that underpins this thesis is developed in chapters one and two. This theoretical framework has been developed from three ideas evident in current social and political theories on nationalism and cultural identity: (i) nations are not fixed entities; (ii) that nations are cultural formations to which political objectives and definitions of statehood may be attached; and (iii) nationalism is shaped by a number of cultural factors such as class, ethnic origin, religion, region and gender. In chapter one the focus is on selected theoretical explanations of sport, nationalism and cultural identity. The eclectic theoretical framework that is developed is built upon the core concepts that inform the thesis, namely nationalism, cultural identity, civil society and autonomy. The strength of this eclectic framework is that it draws on different theories to illuminate specific concepts that are relevant to the time period being examined. The chapter is divided into five sections that examine these concepts and their relationship to sport. The chapter probes six key questions: (i) what are some of the ways in which sport is connected to nationalism? (ii) what are nations and nationalisms? (iii) what are the processes that contribute to the making of nationalisms? (iv) how does sport contribute to the formation of cultural identity? (v) in what way are the structures of sport related to the institutional framework of nations? (vi) how are sporting nationalisms and cultural identities to be understood in relation to self-determination?

The discussion identifies the ways in which cultural, political and social processes shape social systems in particular historical contexts. This illustrates the ways in which the structure, meaning and image of the nation is subject to gradual transformation over time within the changing cultural, political and social framework of

society. Nationalism is shaped by these processes which redefine the nation, and the ideology changes to express an image of the nation which is consistent with the circumstances in a specific historical context. The processes that shape the nation cannot be divorced from the collective historical experience of the particular social system. One consequence of this is that expressions of nationalism incorporate symbols and events which are rooted in the history of the nation which may be real or mythical. This is a selective process which constructs the definition of the nation, and gives rise to what Anderson (1991) has referred to as the *imagined community*. It is argued that all nationalisms express aspirations or experiences of self-determination that represent some form of *autonomy*, that can be expressed through either political or cultural structures. The relationship between sport, nationalism and cultural identity is an example of the way in which civil society may provide a vehicle for such aspirations.

Chapter two develops this theoretical framework further through a critical analysis of autonomy, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland. The analysis examines the different ways in which scholars have explained nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland, and the role they ascribe to sport in defining the nation. Most analyses of Scottish society have either been ambivalent towards, or ignored, the contribution of sport to definitions of the nation (Jarvie and Reid, 1999b: 25; 1999c: 100). Where more detailed consideration has been given to the sport-nationalism-identity axis the analyses have tended to focus on football, ignoring Scotland's diverse sports culture. The limitations of these studies may overlook the multifarious social, cultural and political dimensions of Scottish society which mediate expressions of nationalism and cultural identity

One reason for examining nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland lies in the wider literature on nationalism. One theory argues that some cultural nationalisms

such as those associated with Catalonia and Scotland, seek cultural and social autonomy in a multinational state while they remain part of the political framework of the state (Smith, 1991: 138). Paterson (1994) argues that the circumstances of Scotland's place within the British imperial state until at least 1945 fulfilled the nation's objectives of autonomy. This is a plausible explanation as to why Scotland did not seek independence during the age of nationalism. It is also a flexible theoretical framework that can accommodate alternative expressions of nationhood through different cultural contexts. It is argued that organised sport is part of the network of institutions and cultural practices which comprise civil society in Scotland, which has had a central role in mediating ideas about nationalism, cultural identity and autonomy. Four questions underpin the analysis in chapter two. How have scholars explained Scotland's sense of nationhood in the community of nations? What explanations are offered for the connections between nationalism, cultural identity and Scottish sport? What are the limitations of these explanations for the investigation of shinty undertaken in this thesis? In what way does the autonomy of civil society, and the notion of unionist nationalism provide a theoretical framework for the study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity?

A number of studies of Scottish society have suggested that during the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century Scots displayed a dual national identity (Devine, 1999: 289-90; Mackintosh, 1974: 409; Morton, 1999: 6-7; Paterson, 1994: 50-1). This dual identity has been explained as one where Scots thought of themselves as British in relation to formal public matters like citizenship and politics, and Scottish in relation to culture and community. There is some evidence to support the dual identity theory, but there are at least two weaknesses in this explanation. First while the dual identity theory acknowledges the importance of Protestant religious

adherence in definitions of Scottish and Britishness, less attention is paid to the ways in which other personal and collective identities like gender, region or class, feed into these national discourses. Consequently people are considered to act and think as either Scottish or British depending on the social and political context or issue. This contrasts with current theory that highlights the importance of other social identities in understanding nationalism (Hall, 1993: 350; McCrone, 1992: 193). Explanations of dual identity may not claim this theory an exhaustive account of nationalism in Scotland, but more attention ought to be paid to the multifaceted identities that contribute to ideas about the nation.

A second weakness with the dual identity argument is that it can project the idea that a homogeneous Scottish culture has informed nationalism. Scotland was not a nation formed around a people of one ethnic origin with one culture but has always been a plural one (Lynch, 1992: 53-4). This cultural plurality is rooted in part in the period between the third and ninth centuries which is described as "an age of migrations" (Lynch, 1992: 12) which ensured there was "hybrid kingdom" of Scots by the twelfth century (Lynch, 1992: 53). By the nineteenth century the descendants of these cultural communities may have defined themselves in ways which support the dual identity thesis, but evidence suggests other collective identities were being articulated in Scotland at this time. In the context of this study of shinty the most pertinent of these was rooted in the Celtic culture, and the social circumstances of the Highlands. In short it is being argued here that Scotland's Highland cultural community is not adequately acknowledged in the dual identity theory.

Recent critical analyses have recognised that examinations of Scotland should consider the contemporary cultural diversity of the nation. This is also a valid assertion when considering Scottish society and sport in defined historical periods. Scholarship

concerning sport in Scotland that fails to address this cultural diversity ignores or marginalises the experiences of peripheral regions of the nation. It therefore provides a limited empirical analysis of the "alternative ways of being Scottish" (McCrone, 1992: 193). It is not necessary in this study to account for all the characteristics that shape nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland. The remaining chapters of the thesis provide a critique of previous explanations of the social significance of sport in Scotland. This is achieved through a critical analysis of the confluence of shinty with expressions of nationalism and cultural identity in one of Scotland's peripheral cultural regions during a defined historical period. The critique is built upon the synthesis of primary sources, supported by the work of a number of scholars who have defined the Highlands as a distinct cultural region (Chapman, 1978; Hunter, 1974a; 1974b; 1975; 1995; MacAulay, 1994; Meek, 1987a; 1987b; Withers, 1988). The particular themes of autonomy and civil society are incorporated into this analysis in order to provide a conceptual analysis of the ways in which shinty mediated ideas of nationalism and cultural identity in Highland society.

Chapter three examines the folk origins of shinty prior to 1835. The discussion traces the origins of shinty as an ancient Celtic sport and critically evaluates the notion that it was once the national game of Scotland. Evidence is drawn from a variety of sources including the oral tradition of Celtic Scotland and Ireland and the *Old Statistical Account of Scotland* (1793-99). The chapter examines six key questions: (i) In what ways did shinty represent an ancient imagined pan-Celtic nation? (ii) What were the patterns of participation up until 1835? (iii) Was shinty contoured by the broader social, cultural and political circumstances of Scotland prior to 1835? (iv) What particular features of Highland social history may have affected the continued presence of shinty in specific communities? (v) Is the claim that shinty is Scotland's true national game

legitimate? This chapter sets out the status of shinty in Highland society by 1835, by providing an overview of the game prior to this period.

The period on which the substantive part of the thesis focuses, 1835 until 1939, was one of social and political upheaval throughout Britain (Lynch, 1992: 375). This was especially true of the Highlands and Ireland (Cameron, 1996a; 1996b; Kee, 1972a; 1972b; 1972c) which formed the Celtic periphery on the north and west of the British imperial state. During this period the social and cultural similarities of parts of the Highlands and Ireland in relation to the British state became the focus for radical activity on this Celtic frontier. Three separate areas of activity – the promotion of Celtic cultural practices, the land reform movements and the emergence of home rule and nationalist politics – represented the similarities between the two Celtic communities. A common thread of previous analyses of these activities is that Irish and Highland affairs only loomed high on Westminster's political agenda when the communities began to organise and mobilise outwith the British political framework (Hunter, 1975: 190). There was apparently little formal official co-operation between the radical cultural and political movements of the Highlands and Ireland. However, evidence indicates that particular individuals did have connections with different organisations within their own nation, and in some cases on a pan-Celtic basis.

The three areas of activity identified above provide the social and political backdrop for chapters four, five and six, and the further critical analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939. In considering this social and political backdrop, the eclectic theoretical framework outlined in chapters one and two is incorporated into the substantive analysis of shinty. These chapters are organised to focus on one specific activity but this however should not be interpreted as suggesting monocausal links between shinty and the social and political issues addressed in each

chapter, during specific time periods. The connection between shinty and the Celtic cultural movement, shinty and land politics or shinty and ideas about nationalism were not discrete relationships. It is also acknowledged that these were not the only issues to affect Highland society between 1835 and 1939. They are however the issues most pertinent to the eclectic theoretical issues considered in this thesis.

Chapter four examines the development of shinty between 1835 and 1880 focusing in particular on the role of the game as a symbol and carrier of the distinctive cultural identity of Highlanders. During this period a characteristic of shinty was its gradual change from a popular recreation into an early form of a modern sport. This process of change was not uniform and linear throughout the Highlands. In some communities the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s marked a period of decline for shinty, while in others traditional patterns of play survived as new ones were emerging elsewhere. By 1880 a number of clubs had been formed but these were predominantly in urban centres of Britain where exiled Highlanders settled. In that year however the first formally constituted shinty club was formed in the Highlands. The formation of Strathglass Shinty Club marked the beginning of modern shinty in what is considered to be its nothern Highland heartland. The place of shinty as a component of Highland cultural identity is examined by locating the game within the broader context of four social developments that contoured Highland society. These are: the emergence of the Free Church as the dominant institutional religion in the Highlands; patterns of migration out of the Highlands; the influence of Highland landowners; and the expansion of the Celtic cultural movement in Britain. In considering these developments the critical analysis of shinty between 1835 and 1880 suggests that the game was established as a signifying practice of cultural identity that was developed within the context of an emergent Highland civil society. It is important to note that this civil society was a vehicle for a

distinctive cultural community within both the Scottish nation and British imperial state. In general terms civil society, and the cultural identity it was a repository for, did not pose a political challenge to the unitary British state.

Chapter five of the thesis examines the development of shinty in relation to issues surrounding land politics and the radical Highland land reform movement. Highland civil society provided the platform on which radical social and political activity was developed. In urban communities the Highland associations provided a social function and a structure for charitable support to less fortunate Highlanders in the city and those who remained at home (MacPhail, 1989: 9). By 1870 Highland civil society was establishing its own radical media in the form of newspapers and journals which focused on Highland issues and promoted aspects of Gaelic culture as signifiers of a distinctive cultural community. Within this Celtic cultural movement shinty was accepted as the sport of the Gaels whose interests Highland civil society pursued.

During the 1870s a number of these organisations, led by members of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, adopted a more overt political focus which targeted specific issues concerning the Highlands. This politicisation of Highland civil society reinforced the cultural identity, and relative autonomy of Highland society. The issue which fused rural Highlanders and their urban supporters in radical activity was land reform in the 1880s. The evidence suggests that some of the more radical supporters of land reform within the Celtic cultural movement, also contributed to the development of shinty in specific communities. In this respect there are some similarities with the revival of Gaelic sports within the GAA in Ireland, by some of those who participated in the separate cultural movements and the Irish Land League. Between 1883 and 1886 the Highland Land Law Reform Association (HLLRA) was a popular political force in the Highlands, and harnessed the support for the land agitation that culminated in the

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886). Chapter five examines the background to the land agitation which became the dominant issue in radical Highland politics during the 1880s, but which remained a distinctive feature of the Highlands' political agenda until 1920. The analysis probes the confluence of the development of shinty with the broader issues of land ownership and land law reform until 1886, and examines the extent to which this was an expression of political autonomy amongst Highlanders. The analysis also reflects on comparisons with similar developments in Ireland.

The final theme considered in the thesis is the relationship between shinty and nationalism. This forms the backdrop to chapter six, which examines the connections between shinty and hurling between 1887 and 1939, and provides a comparative analysis of the conjunction of these Celtic sports with expressions of nationalism in their respective national contexts. The GAA in Ireland was established in 1884, a decade before the Camanachd Association (1893), but both organisations were concerned with promoting the traditional sports of their respective Celtic communities. In contrast to the GAA however, the Camanachd Association did not appear to adopt an overt position on nationalism or home rule. But nationalist politics did influence relations between the two organisations. More specifically in 1934 the perceived anti-British ideology of the GAA contributed to the decision of the Camanachd Association to break the tentative official links that had been developing during the 1920s and early 1930s (Hutchinson, 1989: 185-7).

In considering the relationship between shinty and nationalism chapter six explores two specific issues. First it evaluates the respective contributions of the Camanachd Association and the GAA to forging nationalism and cultural identity through sport in two related, yet separate, Celtic communities. Second it considers why the Camanachd Association did not become the focus to harness popular support for

home rule or nationalism in Scotland. In exploring these issues the chapter probes four questions: What were the main characteristics in the development of shinty between 1886 and 1939? What evidence is there that Celtic sports were used to promote the image of a pan-Celtic nation which linked the Highlands and Ireland? Was there a confluence of these Celtic sports with nationalism in two different but related Celtic communities after 1886? Did shinty sustain its place as a symbol of cultural identity which could be mobilised as a vehicle of autonomy for the Highlands, or for Scotland? In exploring these questions it is concluded that shinty and the Camanachd Association, remained important symbols of Highland cultural identity.

It is argued that the political allegiances of shinty's leading administrators, like that of Highland civil society more broadly, reinforced the authority of the union and the British imperial state. In this respect their nationalism paralleled the Unionist nationalism which was exhibited by mainstream Scottish civil society during a similar period. The Camanachd Association's leaders exercised autonomy over their sport which they continued to promote as the sport of the Gael, rather than the sport of Scotland. In contrast to the GAA, the Camanachd Association did not align their sport with other organisations in Scotland which exhibited more overt political expressions of nationalism between 1886 and 1939. The aspirations of some of these organisations drew in part from the same Celtic radicalism that had contributed to the development of shinty prior to the formation of the Camanachd Association.

Two strands of the nationalist movement in Scotland between 1886 and 1939 have particular relevance to the questions investigated in this thesis. The moderate strand of nationalism sought greater autonomy over national (domestic) Scottish affairs through a home rule parliament in Edinburgh. The more radical strand sought the establishment of an independent Scottish state. The aspirations of both strands of

nationalism drew support from a number of individuals who had been active in the radical Celtic cultural movement that had supported land reform and promoted shinty. Home rule and independence Scottish nationalism had some parallels with Irish nationalism, and the evidence suggests the more radical strand drew inspiration from Ireland, with some support for the idea of a pan-Celtic community. In examining the development of shinty within this political context it is concluded that overtly the game's leading administrators maintained a separation of their autonomy over cultural affairs from formal politics and nationalism. The analysis reveals that the unionist nationalism of shinty's leading officials coincided in more subtle ways with the sport.

The formation of the Irish Free State in 1922 only partially resolved the nationalist objectives which had shaped Irish politics since the nineteenth century (Kee, 1972a: 3-4). The decision to partition Ireland defined relations between Britain and Ireland during the 1920s and 1930s, and exacerbated the construction of nationalisms around religious schisms that have been used in the limited discourse on sport and nationalism in Scotland. But too much weight can be placed on the Irish dimension to explain the nationalisms that are connected to sport in Scotland. The tensions between the new Irish state and Britain informed the decision of the Camanachd Association to break its links with the GAA in 1934. As a result shinty may have been dislocated from the cultural community and the sport with which it shared similar Gaelic roots, but the Highlands were not identical to Ireland. Shinty was the sport of the Highlands, a geographic territory and a cultural community defined in part by elements of Gaelic culture. For some within this cultural community this Gaelic culture was the basis for a radical brand of Celtic nationalism. For most, shinty was the sport through which a distinctive cultural identity could be expressed, but in political parlance their nationalism endorsed the union and the British state. Between 1835 and 1939 shinty

was a vehicle for alternative meanings and expressions of nationalism and cultural identity which reflected the changing social and political circumstances of the Highlands within a nation, and within a larger nation-state. These alternative images and identities illustrated the aspirations and experiences of autonomy articulated by various groups within the Highlands, in different social, political and historical circumstances.

NOTES ON METHOD

The research methodology used in this thesis was grounded in the principles of multi-methodological enquiry. This approach has been used primarily because it provided a range of techniques that would elicit the detailed evidence necessary for a social historical analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity, and these techniques corresponded most closely to the theoretical principles which informed my personal academic interests. Two principle methods were used in the research, archive research and interviews. The archival analysis examined a range of documentary sources, including Highland newspapers, magazines and journals, personal papers, government reports and shinty material. A series of interviews were conducted between 1995 and 1997 in order to gain a deeper understanding about the sport and its place in Highland communities. No one method has been privileged and the strength of this thesis has resulted from an over-arching synthesis of the data collected. I will return to the first point; however I wish first to clarify the connection between the personal and theoretical basis for the research methodology selected.

In a discussion of the process of research activity, Denzin (1970: 5) contends that the choice of topic and the selection of "one theory or method" are informed by the researcher's "personal preferences". Personal preference is an inaccurate explanation. The point being made is more accurately explained by Popkewitz (1984: 3) who states that research techniques emerge from the view of the world held by researchers working

within a particular research paradigm. A research paradigm provides a general perspective of the researcher as to what is important, legitimate and reasonable epistemological considerations and methods within a particular discipline. Kuhn (1970: 43) explained:

> Close historical investigation of a given speciality at a given time discloses a set of recurrent and quasi-standard illustrations of various theories in their conceptual, observational, and instrumental applications. These are the community's paradigms, revealed in its textbooks [and] lectures ... By studying them and by practicing with them, the members of the corresponding community learn their trade.

It is perhaps because learning the trade is "deeply embedded in the socialisation of adherents and practitioners" (Patton, 1978: 203) that these principles are usually unstated by researchers. Nonetheless the broad theoretical view which has informed my own work is best explained by a combination of critical historical and sociological research. It follows that the methods utilised in this thesis reflected these principles and enabled me to fulfil the objectives of the thesis.

The research approach includes a range of research tools such as interviews, content analysis, surveys and participant observation. These essentially qualitative techniques could elicit the kind of detailed information which was required and which would be incorporated into a narrative analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity. Given the historical focus of the thesis the evidence was also collected from extensive documentary and archival sources. This combination of methods was utilised to collect evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources. This included individuals involved in or with an interest in shinty; primary evidence contained in archive material such as newspapers, journals, autobiographical records, and official reports and minutes; and secondary sources such as the Shinty Yearbook, histories of shinty clubs, and other publications relevant to the thesis.

A source of data for the thesis was provided by a small number of individuals who were, or had been, active participants in the shinty community. It was decided to conduct a series of interviews with willing volunteers to support the formal documentary sources. In order to identify individuals who could provide the oral testimonies about the history of shinty a formal approach was made to the Camanachd Association in March 1995. At this time separate discussions with two former colleagues at the Scottish Sports Council proved to be the more fruitful avenue into the shinty world and making contact with potential interviewees. This approach provided me with access to individuals who were involved with the Camanachd Association, individual clubs and some who had in depth knowledge of the history of the sport but were no longer associated with any of the formal organisations of shinty. As the research progressed those interviewed suggested others whom I should speak to.

It is self-evident that, given the period under investigation (1835-1939), primary evidence relating to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would have to be drawn from relevant archival sources. In the course of the research it became apparent that first hand oral testimony relating to the 1920s and 1930s was difficult to obtain due to the small number of individuals involved with the game who had survived into 1990s. The interviews conducted did yield a wealth of useful information, but there are potential weaknesses with personal testimonies. For instance the passage of time may mean that information about a particular event is forgotten or distorted. Where information has been passed from one generation to the next it is possible that the actual events become distorted in some way. For example information which might be detrimental to particular groups or individuals may be ignored, or events can be dressed up to provide additional colour or excitement to occurrences that are otherwise not out-of-the

ordinary. In this thesis the combination of a variety of documentary sources, and oral testimonies, provided multiple sources of qualitative data collection.

As with all research the validity of the investigation undertaken and in the conclusions drawn has been addressed in planning and executing the study. In order to strengthen the validity of the research consideration was given to four key methodological issues involved in handling documentary sources. In terms of written texts and documents archive analysis was used to collect evidence from primary and secondary sources. These are authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Scott, 1990:19-35). The authenticity of documentary sources, that is whether it is what it purports to be, is an important consideration. In order to ensure the authenticity of evidence, original sources held in recognised archives such as the National Library of Scotland, the Mitchell Library (Glasgow) and Inverness Public Library were used. The credibility of documents, like that of oral testimonies, requires the researcher to be sensitive to the possible distortion and selective attenuation of the author (Scott, 1990: 22). For example in the context of official documents the author may not have had any discretion over the content, or alternative versions of the same event may have been excluded from the preferred account. In the case of personal papers self-justification or particular prejudices may lead to distortions of reality. To guard against the misrepresentation of social and historical reality it is necessary to consider the motives, perspective and sincerity of the author of all documentary sources. Credibility can be checked further by seeking out corroborating evidence from a variety of sources.

The issue of representativeness was of particular importance in this thesis. Attempts have been made to draw on a variety of evidence from a range of sources, that includes the published and unpublished sources; the oral tradition associated with the Gaelic language of Scotland's Gaelic culture, official and personal testimonies.

Representativeness in this thesis also required that material from Gaelic, as well as English, sources was acknowledged in the analysis. As a non-Gaelic speaker the major body of primary evidence has been drawn from English language sources, or from English translations of Gaelic material.[1] The collection of primary material used for the case study of shiny between 1835 and 1939 is however a substantive body of documentary sources that places the Highlands to the forefront of its Celtic culture. The final key methodological issue to consider in using documentary sources concerns the meaning arrived at from the evidence contained in individual sources, and from the collation of material. The danger is that critical analysis leads the researcher to attribute meaning to texts in order to fit his or her chosen categories of analysis. As Scott (1990: 31) explains assessing meaning from documentary analysis requires the researcher to balance their own "frames of reference" with those of the author of particular texts. In order to accomplish this every effort has been made to examine carefully the specific circumstances of the period 1835 until 1939, in order that in this particular case study, the assessment of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity is pertinent to the content and community being examined.

The principle sources of primary evidence were: *The Highlander* newspaper (1873-1882); the *Celtic Monthly* magazine (1890-1903); the long-running journal the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* (TGSI; 1872- present); the unpublished diaries of John Murdoch (1830-1903); and the reports and minutes of the Camanachd Association (1893-1945). Relevant secondary sources about shinty included the *Shinty Yearbook* (1971- present), pamphlets and booklets recording the history of individual clubs, and the published empirical histories of shinty and shinty clubs. The secondary

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[1] I am indebted to Dr H.D. MacLennan for his assistance in translating Gaelic material where it has not been possible to locate published English translations.

sources of information also covered a wide range of literature about the social and political history of Scotland and Ireland during the period 1835 until 1939.

The combination of techniques and sources utilised in this thesis represented a form of the multi-methodological approach to research (Denzin, 1970: 297). The most comprehensive multiple-methodology study would be one which used all the methods of qualitative research (methodological triangulation), and from a wide range of sources (data triangulation). Denzin (1970: 308) states that sociological investigations tend to put an emphasis on "one dominant method" which is then combined with one or more of the others. Yet there are a number of strengths to a multi-methodological approach. The use of different methods may ensure that the weaknesses of one method may be balanced by the strengths of another. In this thesis the combination of interviews and document analysis was necessary given the historical time period of the study. This approach provided a strategy to consider different versions of particular events or to make informed judgements about the accuracy of particular accounts.

Another advantage of the multi-methodological approach is that it is possible to examine the topic from a variety of perspectives. This was particularly important in this analysis because it ensured that as well as considering official evidence (such as that contained in official reports, minutes), unofficial versions and perspectives of potentially sensitive and controversial events could be included. These unofficial accounts are often ignored and therefore unheard in authoritative versions of history. Thompson (1988: 3-6) asserts that social history is concerned with the experiences of the underprivileged and defeated, as well as the versions of political elites, experts and those who have access to power or to formal academic skills. The official records of the Camanachd Association, published reports and the selective evidence included in newspapers and magazines represent an official, and often privileged, view of history.

By drawing on unofficial and unpublished accounts such as the Murdoch diaries, Blackie's papers and interviews, it is hoped that a more comprehensive critical analysis of shinty has been achieved.

The assertion that unofficial accounts are usually unheard in history has an added significance in this thesis. In outlining the rationale for the study and the theoretical framework established in chapters one and two, the marginal status of versions of Scottish nationalism and cultural identity other than those which dominated the mainstream of social research is addressed. A Celtic vision of sport, nationalism and cultural identity has been a subordinate or marginalised dimension of the critical analysis of sport considered in chapter two of this thesis. It was therefore important that this study utilised a methodology and drew on primary sources - official and unofficial - from the cultural region of Scotland whose story (in part) it sought to tell.

The multi-methodological approach used in this thesis provided a combination of primary and secondary evidence from a variety of sources. This evidence has been harnessed into an over-arching synthesis that provides a unique explanation of why, and in what ways, shinty contributed to cultural identity and nationalism between 1835 and 1939. It is acknowledged that incorporating other techniques would have provided a more multiple methodology. The methodology developed was considered to be the most effective and efficient within the limitations and demands of producing this doctoral thesis.

CHAPTER 1

NATIONALISM, CULTURAL IDENTITY AND SPORT

This chapter provides a critical, selective review of the literature that exists in relation to core theoretical concepts that inform the thesis. The objective of the chapter is to establish a theoretical framework that is appropriate for the analysis of shinty in Scotland between 1835 and 1939. In this thesis an eclectic theoretical framework is developed which is built upon four key concepts: nationalism, cultural identity, civil society and autonomy. In order to achieve this objective the chapter is organised into a number of sections. Section 1 is an overview of previous studies of sport, nationalism and cultural identity, and highlights various conceptual themes and issues that have underpinned this genre of research. Section 2 'Nationalism and nations: definitions' considers the terms nation, state and nation-state commonly associated with nationalism, and the key distinction between ethnic and civic nationalisms. Section 3 'The making of nationalisms' examines specific theories about the conditions and processes that have shaped nationalisms. Section 4 'Cultural identity and sport' reflects upon certain key components that contribute to collective identities and to the institutional structures of the nation in which they operate. Section 5 'Nationalism, autonomy and cultural identity' considers the ways in which these three concepts may inform self-determination in stateless nations. The summary draws together the key concepts of the thesis and summarises the eclectic framework utilised in the thesis.

SPORT, NATIONALISMS AND IDENTITIES

This section provides a critical overview of a selection of key themes that are evident in studies of sport, nationalisms and identities. There are many examples of the different ways in which sport, nationalisms and identities intersect. However most of these may be examined as either examples of nationalisms which represent an extension

of the state, or as nationalisms which represent nations and identities within states (Duke and Crolley, 1996). Within these two broad categories of sporting nationalisms there are many variations. No two sporting nationalisms are precisely identical. Therefore to understand any one expression it is necessary to do so through a framework that can accommodate this diversity. From this premise it is suggested that the historical and sociological analyses of sport, nationalisms and cultural identities must be examined in terms of specific time periods and contexts (Jarvie and Walker, 1994: 7).

There is an established literature which examines the significance of sport in society, and more recently this has paid increasing attention to the links between sport, nationalisms, and cultural identities. As Macintosh and Whitson (1993:1) explain sport is one of a number of cultural practices which have at least two important roles for nations: (i) they represent the nation to the rest of the world; and (ii) they mobilise national sentiments amongst the citizens within the nation. In short sports "are vehicles and embodiments of meaning, whose status and interpretation is continually open to negotiation and subject to conflict" (MacClancy, 1996: 7-8). The studies investigating sport, nationalisms and cultural identities have come from sports-oriented disciplines like sports history and the sociology of sport, but contributions from mainstream disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities (e.g. social history, sociology, anthropology and political science) are also mentioned. This latter body of research illustrates some social scientists' acceptance that there is some value in investigating areas of life like sport which have usually been regarded as "relaxing, wasteful or exhilarating pastimes" (Bradley, 1998a: 2).

The interest in sport amongst mainstream social sciences, arts and humanities is in contrast to the views of preceding generations of 'serious' academic theorists. For

instance Marxist theorist Ralph Miliband rejected sport as a distraction from the serious business of social and political consciousness (Miliband, 1977: 51-2). The problem with this assessment is that it ignores the place that sports practices have always had as an arena through which "various groups have actively reworked their relationships and have responded to changing social conditions as a whole" (Jarvie, 1991: i). The growing interest in sport within traditional academic communities is acknowledged in the intervention made by MacClancy (1996: 1). The studies in this collection, individually and collectively, are ground breaking analyses because of the particular range of sports, social groups, national contexts, and historical periods that are addressed. There are however two points to be made about this particular collection. First MacClancy feels it necessary to justify the book because he says "prejudices against the academic investigation of sport as an integral part of social and cultural life" (1996: 1) are still evident. That is not a criticism of MacClancy or the contributors to his book, but illustrates the fact that sport is still perceived to be an area of life set apart from the realities of serious affairs like politics (Gruneau, 1982: 19). Second, MacClancy fails to make explicit that scholars in both the sociology of sport and sports history areas have led the way in exploring the significance of sport in society since the late-1960s. Many of the leading figures contributing to this genre of literature came from a physical education background rather than the 'traditional' academic disciplines and although MacClancy lists examples of this research he fails to accord it the recognition it deserves in his introduction. This said the collection demonstrates that sports are used to satisfy "a plethora of functions" (MacClancy, 1996: 7) including definitions of moral and political boundaries, assisting in the construction of social identities and providing cultural sites on which many cultural identities, both personal and collective, can be articulated.

The connection between modern sports practices, expressions of nationalism and cultural identities has an established history. In the twentieth century sporting contests have provided tangible contexts through which a sense of belonging to a national community can be expressed. In this sport may provide a unique arena for at least three reasons. Sport is generally considered to be a non-political activity, although in reality it cannot be isolated from the political environment in which it exists. Sport is also thought to transcend social divisions such as class, gender, race or disability and therefore on certain national and international sporting occasions sport is viewed as a vehicle that can bind the people of the nation in spite of other differences. Finally, the inherent structure of international sporting competitions (both between nation-states, and nations-within-states) between representatives of *our* team, or player, against *theirs,* serves to reinforce the essential element of all nationalisms in that it defines what and who the nation is and is not.

Modern international sport was developed at the end of nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, during the period when the imperialism of certain European nation-states was at its zenith (Jarvie and Maguire, 1994: 254). The modern Olympic movement (1896) that was established in this period had an ideal objective of bringing together the peoples of the world through friendly and peaceful competition. It has been suggested however that Baron de Coubertin's motives may have been fuelled by a desire to promote French imperial superiority through a seemingly apolitical activity (Tomlinson, 1984: 85-88). There have been many occasions when international sport has been used to generate national pride and prestige, and the Olympic Games cannot be excluded from this. According to Triesman (1984: 17) "all sport is political and the Olympics most political of all". It is accepted that nationalism has pervaded most Olympic Games, but two examples may be highlighted in the literature on the

political history of the Olympic Games. The 1936 Berlin Olympics are considered by some to have been the first instance when overt political nationalism was deliberately attached to the games (Petrie, 1975: 213). On this occasion the host nation's ruling National Socialist German Workers (Nazi) Party used the Olympics to promote its ideology of German (Aryan) superiority (Hoberman, 1984: 162). A second example often cited of nationalism and the Olympics concerns the Cold War, the period of intense conflict between the United States of America and the Soviet Union (1947-1989)[2]. After 1952 Olympic success for the leading protagonists of the Cold War was interpreted by their respective governments as a measure of the superiority of their politico-economic system (Triesman, 1984: 21). This was exacerbated in 1980 when the conservative government in the USA led a boycott of the Moscow games, an act which was reciprocated four years later as the Communist bloc opted not to participate in the Los Angeles Olympics (Triesman, 1984: 21, 27; Cashmore, 2000: 203). The Cold War may have diminished, but the Olympic Games continues to provide the sporting terrain on which competing nationalisms are articulated.

In 1945 George Orwell suggested that "At the international level sport is frankly mimic warfare" that is tied up with the rise of nationalism (Orwell, The Tribune, 14, December 1945). Orwell described nationalism as "the lunatic modern habit of identifying oneself with large power units and seeing everything in competitive prestige." (The Tribune, 14 December 1945, cited Orwell and Angus (eds.), 1968: 43). The idea that international sport was 'war without weapons' is common in media

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[2] McLean (1996: 79) explains the conflict emerged in 1947 when "a general 'East-West' division of states" in Europe was established. This schism extended globally to include: the victory of the Communist Party in China (1949); the Korean War (1950); the Soviet occupation of Hungary (1956); the establishment of a socialist government in Cuba (1959); and the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). By the mid –1970s the original form of the Cold War had diminished, but a New Cold War was reawakened in the 1980s as the Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan, and exerted pressure over Poland, McLean (1996: 80-1). Both developments were denounced by the neo-liberal governments in Britain and America. By 1989 it is acknowledged that the disintegration of the Soviet Union brought an end to the Cold War.

commentaries on international sport. It has been suggested that this metaphoric warring nationalism has replaced a 'milder' expression of support for the representatives of a particular country that is a display of patriotism (Petrie, 1975: 207). International sport might be a metaphor for war, but this is not an adequate theoretical analysis of either sport or nationalism. There is something we might take from Orwell's remarks given the social and political context in which they were made. In a period when two world wars had been induced by nationalist sentiments, international sport may have in some way embodied and perhaps reinforced these sentiments. This 'war without weapons' analogy perhaps did explain an aspect of sporting nationalism of the 1940s. It is however an inadequate theory since it fails to address the multifaceted and multilayered nature of the nationalism and identity axis in different historical periods, and the forces that may impact upon the meanings and identities articulated through sport.

The idea that sports have a role as symbols of nations, and as rallying points through which identities can be accommodated has long been acknowledged by scholars both in the sociology of sport and the history of sport. Bairner (1999: 12) contends that the sports sociology community has tended to ignore the specific political "typologies of nationalism" used by political scientists. This is a criticism that might also be legitimately levelled at historical work. In some respects Bairner's assessment of sociological studies of sport and nationalism is fair, but it perhaps fails to convey the limitations of certain political theories of nationalism when it comes to understanding the many different nationalisms associated with cultural practices such as sport. In some political analyses it is argued that nationalisms are legitimate expressions when the nation and the state are congruent - that is to say the nation-state - or when the ideology is associated with political movements in search of independent nation-states (Breuilly, 1982: 1; Gellner, 1983: 1; Tivey, 1981: 4). There is evidence of such 'proper

nationalisms' linked to sport, but other nationalisms are also articulated through international sport (Clarke and Clarke, 1982: 66). It is the articulation of certain other nationalisms that some sports historians and sports sociologists have attempted to understand in sporting contexts. The point that needs to be clarified here is that since these other nationalisms often do not cohere with the objective structural criteria of nation-states, the theory of nationalism used by political scientists does not always provide an adequate theoretical framework to analyse nationalisms expressed through sporting practices.

Nationalism as the ideology of the nation-state is evident in many sports contexts, and there have been sociological and social-historical analyses of such cases. This connection between sport and nationalism can be explained as the way in which sports are seen to be an extension of the state in that they "come to reflect the structure of the political system" (Duke and Crolley, 1996: 6-7). This relationship between state nationalism and sport is often perceived by other countries as a negative one but this is not always the case. For example sport as an extension of state nationalism has been used in many African countries which, as Jarvie (1993: 70) points out, has been praised by liberal historians as a symbol of the integration of diverse social, cultural and ethnic groups. The use of sport as a vehicle for integration is common in developing countries, and was also one of the reasons for the political control of sport in many communist countries. In these circumstances national sport may provide a common focus for nation-building in countries with diverse religious, ethnic, linguistic and class divisions (Riordan, 1986: 288).

The sport-state nationalism alliance is not a unique feature of developing nations. Between 1970 and the mid-1980s the Canadian federal government increased its intervention in elite national sport (Macintosh, Bedeki and Franks, 1987). It has been

suggested that this process was in part to reinforce unity in Canada, and may have been a reaction to concerns about the rise of separatist nationalism in Quebec and the subsequent political threat to the unified Canadian federal state (Macintosh, et al, 1987: 74). Sport was also to provide a focus for consolidating a Canadian identity which would be "an effective antidote to economic and cultural domination by the United States" (Macintosh et al, 1987: 74). The idea that sport can be a vehicle for integration within nations providing a focus for state-nationalism is therefore also evident in advanced democratic capitalist states.

National sport may be a common focus for the diverse groups that comprise all nations, but it does not follow that the social divisions that exist in all societies will disappear because of sport (Jarvie, 1993: 69). This is exemplified by the case of South Africa in the post-apartheid era. The idea that sport has the potential to unite and integrate different ethnic and racial groups in a new nation-state has been an important element of South African policy since 1994 (Jarvie and Reid, 1999b: 242-3). This function for sport was set out in two policy documents of the post-apartheid rainbow nation. *The Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) (1994) identified sport as one of a number of activities central to the process of nation-building, reconciliation, unity and development. In addition to the RDP South Africa's Department of Sport and Recreation produced a Draft White Paper "Getting the nation to play" (1995: 2) which stated:

> Sport is central to the achievement of every single one of the aspirations, policies and principles that underpin the objective of the [ANC-led] Government of National Unity.

The success of South Africa's international team in the 1995 rugby World Cup was achieved with only one non-white player in the squad, yet the Springboks' achievement was celebrated as a symbol of reconciliation and nation-building. The

success of the soccer team in winning the 1996 African Nations Cup and qualifying for the 1998 World Cup finals was also considered to symbolise unity in the rainbow nation. These state commitments to unity and reconciliation appeared to represent a superficial nationalism, as accusations of continued racial divisions in many sports emerged during 1997. For instance in February 1997 Andre Markgraaf, national coach to the South African rugby union team, resigned when racist comments he made about the South African Rugby Football Union's (SARFU) vice-president Mluleki George reached the public domain (John Perlman, *The Guardian*, 19 February 1997: 23). Later that year one South African newspaper commented that rugby was only one example of a "sports community ... still wracked by charges of racism" (*Sunday Times*, 5 October 1997: 22). This substantiates the arguments of critical sports sociologists that cultural activities like sport cannot be divorced from the social and political condition of the time. Sporting nationalisms cannot transcend the social divisions that exist in all national communities, but it is often the case that civic allegiance to the national sporting cause can co-exist with social and political divisions.

The ways in which sport was an extension of the South African apartheid state have been addressed by sports sociologists and sports historians (Booth, 1998; Nauright, 1997). Attention has focused on rugby union, which was perceived to be the 'national' sport of the white Afrikaner community and therefore a symbol of the apartheid regime. In comparison only limited attention has been paid to other sports, but perhaps more problematic is the popular assumption that because of the national significance of rugby union for the Afrikaner-dominated state the sport had no appeal or significance amongst African and coloured communities. This was not an accurate picture of rugby and identity in the apartheid state. Both Nelson Mandela and Steve Tshwete, his Minister of Sport (1994-1999), were amongst leaders of the ANC who played sport during their

incarceration on Robben Island (Kevin Mitchell, *The Guardian*, 14 May 1995: 18). While Mandela preferred boxing, Tshwete set up a rugby club maintaining his interest in a sport that was popular in non-white communities in the Eastern Cape (Mike Cleary, *The Guardian*, 21 May 1995: 13). Sport therefore provided a vehicle for different meanings and different expressions of the nation, depending on which ethnic, racial, cultural or class groups were speaking through that sport, and their relationship to the social and political conditions of power. These different nationalisms may be expressed by different groups (e.g. class, gender or ethnic) through the same sport, or through different sports. Whichever identities were being expressed through sport, these were not simply extensions of the state, but may have contradicted, conflicted or co-existed with state-nationalism.

In their discussion Clarke and Clarke (1982) identified a number of examples of how sporting occasions are used to express the real or imagined collective experiences of different nations within one state, although these were not thoroughly examined at a substantial level in their work. Nonetheless their account illustrates the complexity of the relationship between sport, nationalisms and cultural identities, which others have examined more fully. This idea of sporting nations within states has been examined by Duke and Crolley (1996: 5-6; 9-81) in their analysis of a selection of different football nations which operate within the context of a political nation-state. Football has been a rich source of evidence for scholars interested in the social and historical significance of sport, particularly for investigating questions about collective identities like class, gender, religion and nationalism.

It may not be just football that offers stateless nations an outlet for national sentiment as other sports and cultural practices may also serve as a focus to celebrate "actual or latent" nations (Duke and Crolley, 1996:61). This was illustrated through

representations of the national and cultural divisions in Spain associated with the 1992

Olympic Games (Hargreaves, 1992; 2000; Hargreaves and Ferrando, 1997). The 1992

Olympics were held in Barcelona the capital of Catalonia, a region of Spain which has a

strong cultural identity that is distinct from the Castillian dominated Spanish state.

Although the Olympic Games provided a focus for Spanish nationalism and appeared as

such to other countries, it has been argued that the Catalans used this international

sports event to celebrate their national identity. The Catalanisation of the Games was

part of a power struggle between Catalan and Spanish national interests, which was

embodied in 'the war of the flags' (Hargreaves, 2000: 89-95). The significance of the

gestures of Catalan nationalism embodied in this war may have gone unnoticed except

to the most informed observer from outside Spain. The point is that global sports events

may be used to articulate what are often complex relationships between particular

national groups and the political states within whose boundaries they are considered to

exist. It is suggested that the Barcelona Olympics provided a forum in which the dual

identity of Catalans was articulated. At the same time the Games accommodated the

antagonisms between these communities (Hargreaves and Ferrando, 1997: 65).

The national-cultural divisions in Spain are also examined in recent studies of

Spanish football clubs, particularly in the Basque nation and in Catalonia. For example

Athletic de Bilbao is described as "a traditional part of Basque modernity, a customary

component of its twentieth-century nationalism"(MacClancy, 1996: 197), while Duke

and Crolley (1996: 26) suggest that FC Barcelona is "the symbol of Catalonia".

MacClancy and Duke and Crolley also incorporate an historical socio-political

dimension into their respective analyses. This is valuable since it demonstrates the

changing meanings of football in the cultural nations of Spain and in the Spanish state

and how these have been shaped by specific social and political conditions:

The historical and contemporary links between football and the socio-political fabric of Spain are complex .... The balance swings from football being used to promote an image of a single national identity (in the 1940s, during the early Franco years) to becoming a vehicle for nationalist/regionalist expression (particularly during the late Franco period and early phase of the transition to democracy) (Duke and Crolley, 1996: 24).

The case of Spanish regions like the Basque Country and Catalonia is not unique in expressing cultural nationalisms through sport. The studies in Jarvie's (1999) collection confirm that sport is a vital cultural practice through which many stateless Celtic nations celebrate their distinct and usually historic cultures. These Celtic nations are usually part of larger political-economic units (i.e. nation-states) which do not have a Celtic cultural core and usually it is the non-Celtic culture that is perceived to be dominant in the nation-state. The collection examines a variety of Celtic nations within states including Brittany, Wales, Ireland and Scotland. The case of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) in Scotland (Bradley, 1999a) is particularly interesting because it illustrates a number of dimensions to the sport - nationalism - identity relationship. The GAA was established in Scotland by Irish immigrants and it is argued that their national allegiances were to Ireland, the nation they left, rather than to their adopted home Scotland (Bradley, 1999a:166). This Irish nationalism expressed through sport appears also to have been shaped by the preferred religious allegiance to Catholicism, rather than to the Protestant Presbyterianism of Scotland and of Irish immigrants from Ulster. The case of the GAA in Scotland therefore illustrates how specific elements of cultural identity like religion are incorporated into the construction of nationalisms which are meaningful to those who express them in sporting contexts.

It is not only cultural stateless nations that express national identities within states; minority ethnic and racial groups within states may also use sport to articulate their identities and meanings of belonging to nation-states. Cricket has often been

identified as the site on which many struggles of national identity and autonomy are culturally represented if not politically resolved. This has been noticeable in nations that were once colonies in the British Empire such as Australia, Pakistan, and the islands which comprise the West Indies. The position of cricket as a cultural and political symbol of the relationship between Empire and the West Indies was examined by C.L.R. James (1994). James' account reflected on the relationship between sport, nationalism and colonial relations in a number of ways, one example of which was the reinforcement and reproduction of the "English public-school code" (James, 1994: 22) on the sports field. James (1994: 24) observed:

> The striking thing was that inside the classrooms the code had little success. ... But as soon as we stepped onto the cricket field, all was changed ... We learned to obey the umpire's decision without question ... We learned to play with the team ... We kept a stiff upper lip ... We did not denounce failures ... We were generous to opponents ... We lived in two worlds. Inside the classroom the heterogeneous jumble of Trinidad was battered and jostled and shaken down into some sort of order. On the playing field we did what ought to be done.

This was one dimension of the politics of cricket in the colonial West Indies but it is only part of the picture of the relationship between cricket and the colonial experience. Sport may have appeared to be a level playing field but through their sports Englishmen in the colonies used this moral code "as a mark of differentiation" which helped to sustain power and status in a colonial society (James, 1994: 40). For instance in Trinidad, where James was from, the structure and membership of first-class clubs mirrored the hierarchical boundaries and social strata of the island.[3]

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[3] Membership of the top club Queen's Park was predominantly white and wealthy; the second club Shamrock was "almost exclusively white" and Catholic Constabulary was the team of the police force, but "those with a secondary education did not become policemen", and although the team comprised all black players its captain was one of the all-white inspectorate; Stingo was an all black team of "plebeians"; Maple "the club of the brown-skinned middle class"; and Shannon "the club of the black lower-middle class" (James, 1994: 49-50).

The relationship between cricket, nationalism and cultural identity is illustrated through the social movement for the campaigns for a black player to captain the West Indies cricket team and the simultaneous rising tide of nationalist independence movements which emerged during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Returning to Trinidad in 1958 after 26 years abroad, James became the secretary of the West Indian Labour Party and editor of the *Nation*, a political paper that represented the People's National Movement. It was through the pages of the Nation that in 1960 he campaigned for the appointment of Frank Worrell as the first black man to captain the West Indian side, not on the basis of colour but on that of ability, experience and leadership qualities. The matter had become a final symbol of colonial rule, and one which James and others during the 1950s considered to be discrimination against black men by the West Indian Cricket Board and a matter of international scandal. As James (1994: 232) explained:

> An individual easily gets over the fact that he is disappointed in his desire to be captain. It is the constant, vigilant, bold and shameless manipulation of players to exclude black captains that has so demoralized West Indian teams and exasperated the people - a people, it is to be remembered, in the full tide of the transition from colonialism to independence.

More recent studies have demonstrated that although cricket retains its place in the popular discourses which seek to establish national and cultural identities in independent states such as India and Pakistan, the significance of this sport has diminished in the West Indies (Beckles, 1998b: 1-2; 5-6). There are also studies which illustrate that within the British state established communities whose familial origins were the former colonies often use cricket as the terrain on which specific cultural identities are secured. One suggestion for this is that cricket provides the cultural terrain on which the former colonial power can be beaten at its own game and although this is a persuasive argument it obscures the complex social, cultural and political realities of all

peoples living in contemporary nation-states. This point is made by Edward Said (1994) who argued that the contemporary societies of former imperial nations like Britain are dramatically different from what they were at their imperial zenith, the most notable difference being that the "large non-white immigrant populations [which constitute] an impressive roster of newly empowered voices asking for their narratives to be heard (Said, 1994: xxvii-xxviii). This is a powerful and legitimate argument. The discourses of national independence movements and of imperialism cannot contribute fully to an analysis of contemporary societies that are now much more multi-cultural in composition and experience. The *hybrid cultures* and *identities* that constitute the experiences of people in contemporary nation-states have replaced monolithic, rationalist and distinctively separate cultures and not just because of population migration from former colonies, although that is important. The global mass media plays an important role in the formation of hybrid cultures albeit it tends to favour particular realities and cultural forms (Said, 1994: 3-4). The emphasis now must be on overlapping territories, histories and identities within a world order that retains the nation or nation-state as its primary organisational form.

One example of the way that this notion of hybrid cultures might be manifested in a sporting context is offered by Werbner (1996) in her analysis of cricket within British Pakistani communities. Although she does not utilise Said's reasoning, Werbner reminds us of the too easily forgotten fact that neither British Asians nor British Pakistani cricket supporters are a homogeneous ethnic group. British Asian supporters for Pakistan's national cricket team tends to reveal an elaborate network of predominantly male identities *"none of which coincides with the nation-state"* (Werbner, 1996: 95) whether that is Britain or Pakistan. Werbner (1996: 95) agrees that cricket is used to portray "a popular cultural expression of modern Pakistani nationalism

... in the international arena" which is "symbolic of the nation-state as a 'Western' invention". She argues however that the diversity of the British Asian communities serves as a useful reminder that no nation-state, nation or ethnic/racial group can be represented as a homogeneous entity that articulates one nationalism through sport. On the contrary different groups within nations and states express nationalisms that embody the meaning of the nation or nations to which they may (or may not) have allegiance but which are necessarily shaped by other collective and personal identities like race, religion, gender, class and ethnicity.

It is neither possible, nor necessary, in the context of this thesis to examine all of the many ways in which sport, nationalisms and identities intersect. It is a recurring feature of much of the literature on sport and nationalism that women tend to be ignored as symbols of the national experience. This thesis does not examine these issues but there is a rich source of experiences to be examined in this area. The work which examines sport and nationalism from globalisation perspectives is not examined but it is recognised here (Houlihan, 1994; Maguire, 1994). The examples used in this section have been selected to illustrate three themes evident in research connecting sport, nationalism and cultural identity: (i) sport as an extension of state-nationalism; (ii) sport as arena through which identities of nations within states are expressed; and (iii) sport as a focus for nationalisms which draw on specific ethnic or race identities within states. The following sections of this chapter will examine selected theories associated with these themes.

NATIONALISMS AND NATIONS: DEFINITIONS

It is evident from the body of knowledge about nations, nationalisms and identities that these are complex and ambiguous concepts (Anderson, 1991: 3; Birch, 1993: 4-7; Hall, 1996: 1-2; Kellas, 1991: 2). Interest in these concepts has emanated from different disciplines, including sociology, history and political science. The purpose of this section is to map out the key terms associated with nationalism that are evident in the range of literature. It is neither possible nor necessary to examine all of these theories in this thesis. There is "an emerging consensus" (Kellas, 1991: 2) about the meaning of these ambiguous concepts, which provides a framework within which specific case studies can be examined. The analysis considers three issues: (i) the definition of nationalism that is utilised in the thesis; (ii) the connections between the terms nation, state and nation-state; and (iii) the distinctions between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism. Three general points should be made: first, nationalism is a powerful and persuasive global phenomenon that is not the preserve of any one political philosophy; and second there are many forms of nationalism and so it is appropriate to reflect on this concept in the plural. Third all nationalisms express aspirations of self-determination that result in some form of *autonomy*.

There is an extensive body of literature concerning nationalism that bears testimony to the argument that it is a topic which arouses much interest and debate. It is contributions from sociology, history and politics that have been examined here in order to synthesise the eclectic theoretical framework utilised in this thesis, but these are only three of the academic disciplines that contribute to nationalist discourses. The discussion here focuses upon notions of political nationalism and cultural nationalism, but it is acknowledged that in addition to these two categories there are many other definitions. For example, there has been some contemporary debate around the

conception of liberal nationalism that is derived from the fundamental principles of individual autonomy and freedom associated with liberalism (Patten, 1999: 1-17). An important aspect of the liberal nationalist argument appears to be the idea that the state ought to preserve and promote national cultures. One weakness with this argument may be that, at least in the context of this study, not all cultures within one state are preserved and promoted as national. Rather the culture of a particular cultural group appears to be promoted as 'national' while others are marginalised to be the culture of subordinate cultural identities. Since a prominent dimension of liberal nationalism is a concern with the role of the state in balancing the rights of different cultures, attention in this thesis has focused on a consideration of the principal components of state and other nationalisms.

One consequence of the vicissitude of academic contributions is that there is no universal definition of nationalism or of its origins (Anderson, 1996: 1). For instance a political perspective asserts that "nationalism is ... about politics", and is the ideology of nation-states (Breuilly, 1982: 1-2). From this definition nationalism is not usually attributed to societies that are not states. This is also the case presented by certain sociological assessments such as that of Ernest Gellner (1983: 4) who was unequivocal in his contention that "nationalism does not arise for stateless societies". This interpretation is rejected in this thesis for two connected reasons. First it restricts nationalisms to abstract political ideologies of nation-states and does not adequately explain the diversity of nationalisms that are evident in particular concrete forms throughout the world. Second this interpretation is not appropriate in this thesis since, as the previous section illustrated, nationalisms and cultural identities are articulated through sport which may contradict the political structure of nation-states. Since this

thesis investigates one specific example of this, it is necessary to consider other definitions that more appropriately explain the nationalisms of nations-within-states.

In contrast to perceptions of nationalisms as the political ideologies of nation-states, a sociological perspective might emphasise the cultural dimension of nationalisms, and describe it in terms of sentiment, aspiration and consciousness. The definition of nationalisms preferred in this thesis is drawn from the work of Anthony Smith (1991: vii) who suggests that nationalisms are ideologies that have cultural phenomena, which may be associated with politics. One of the important strengths of this definition is that nationalisms are understood to be meaningful expressions of collective identities that are perceived as national by those who articulate them. This idea of collective shared agency is a feature of nationalisms that is often overlooked in analyses that reflect on an abstract ideology. It recognises that at the core of all nationalisms there is a cultural dimension that gives any nationalism its content, and contributes to its social and political context (Smith: 1991: 147). The point being made is that from a sociological and historical perspective all nationalisms are a constellation of cultural and political elements that blend subjective and symbolic content with objective political aspirations and structures. In sociological definitions the political dimension is contained through recognised assumptions regarding self-determination.

In spite of the different theories one point offers a limited consensus on all nationalisms namely, that they are contingent upon a cultural formation called nations. This appears to be a straightforward explanation but close scrutiny of the literature reveals that there are different sorts of nations and indeed uses of the term. The question 'What is the nation?' elicits different responses that tend to reflect the sociological, historical or political orientations of those involved in the debate. For some scholars nations are natural units of human social organisation, but most of the more recent

contemporary literature rejects this assumption (Gellner, 1983: 6). There are a number of weaknesses with this assertion one of which is that it implies nations are abstract and fixed entities. From a sociological and social historical perspective an understanding of nations begins from the supposition that they do not fit into "a framework of permanence and universality" (Hobsbawm, 1992a: 6). The sociological understanding of the term used in this thesis emphasises that 'nation' is a conceptual category connected with social praxis (Hall, 1993a: 1). That is to say, the nation is concerned with human action and meaning. In this respect the term nation reflects a variety of practical uses that "structure perception ... inform thought and experience ... organise discourse and political action" (Brubaker, 1996: 10). It is worth adding here Hobsbawm's (1992a: 9) assertion that concepts are "socially, historically and locally rooted" and therefore must be understood in terms of these social realities. This relates to a second theme emerging in contemporary literature. That is, the idea that nations are constructed social and cultural entities. The ways in which nations are constructed is considered in the next section.

The connection between social praxis, structure, experience and political discourse and history is evident in much of the literature that considers what the nation is but, at least three terms stand out: *nation-state*, *state* and *nation*. The *nation-state* is defined as a sovereign political unit defined by territory in which one nation is dominant; the *state* is a legal and political concept represented by autonomous public institutions of coercion and extraction within recognised territorial boundaries and operates in relation to other states (Tivey, 1981: 1; Smith, 1996: 359). There is clearly a political dimension to the nation-state and the state, which is not evident in respect of the term *nation* which is understood to be the people within the state who share a common culture, ethnicity and historical continuity (McLean, 1996: 331). One problem

which arises in some of the literature is that that the term *nation* can be misused as a synonym for *state* or *nation-state* (Birch, 1993). For instance Gellner (1983: 55) has argued that nations are features of the modern era which began about the eighteenth century and which he refers to as the "age of nationalism". From a modernist perspective Gellner reflects on the specific political-economic formations that became the dominant model for the global organisation of sovereign politics after the 1700s. Although Gellner does acknowledge that nations and states are not the same, it can be misleading to speak of nations when it is the political formation of a specific historical epoch, the nation-state, that is being addressed.

Although nation-states have been the dominant organisation of sovereign politics for almost three hundred years the perfect congruence of the nation-state does not exist. As Kellas (1991: 3) explains most nation-states "share the features of nations"; there are also nations within states, and such states are correctly called multinational states." The distinction is resonant of the depiction of states and nations-within-states in the literature on sport, nationalism and cultural identity. It therefore helps to explain the nation as "a community of people" (Birch, 1993: 14), rather than as a sovereign political unit. This nation can be further clarified as "a group of people who feel themselves to be a community bound together by ties of history, culture, and common ancestry" (Kellas, 1993: 2). The cultural conceptualisation is endorsed by Smith (1996a: 359) who defines the nation as "a *named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and memories, a mass, public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members*". The significance of this emphasis on culture is that it identifies the central content of nationalisms, and the historic or pre-modern community as the cultural context, of nations-within-states. The important point being made is that it is the cultural formation and meaning of the nation that provides the social structure for

particular nationalisms. Indeed even from a modernist perspective Gellner (1983: 55) acknowledges that "nationalism uses the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively".

The final aspect of nations and nationalisms considered here concerns the distinction between *civic* and *ethnic* nationalisms (Smith, 1991: 9-14; Kellas, 1991: 51-71; Bairner, 1999: 12-13). This is a useful analytical categorisation but in practice the distinction is rarely clear cut. In order to understand the two broad categories of ethnic and civic nationalism it is first necessary to reflect on the idea of *community* that is included in sociological conceptions of the nation. There are two relevant points to be made. First *community* can refer to a specific geographical area with its particular social institutions; second *community* is to do with "a feeling of belonging, a sense of special identification with a particular grouping of people" (Lindsay, 1976, reprinted in Paterson, 1998: 100). Both are important in understanding nations and nationalisms, but it is the sense of belonging, a less tangible but apparently strong emotional sentiment, that is a vital component of shaping ethnic and civic nationalisms. All nationalisms appear, in part, to express a sense of belonging and loyalty to a particular national community and in doing so they implicitly articulate a recognition of collective difference from other groups. In this way all nationalisms contribute to defining the *Other*, or who does not belong to specific national communities. There is however a dual emotional response invoked by nationalisms that is represented in notions of *blood* and *belonging* (Ignatieff, 1993: 3). According to Anderson (1991: 7) it is the strong emotional pull of belonging to a national community that has made it possible for many millions of people not just to kill but to die willingly in its defence. This link between community, belonging and the spilling of blood has not been lost on those who write about the civic and ethnic forms of this popular ideology.

In considering the discourses associated with ethnic and civic nationalisms a key question to ask is "*Who* is the nation?" (Smith, 1991: 19). The answers to this question provide evidence of the essential conceptual distinction between the two forms, but they also raise important ideas about the status and even legitimacy of certain communities and their respective nationalisms. In the case of civic nationalisms *who* constitutes the nation is based on assumed acceptance of a system of political principles governing a specific territory and associated institutions, common values and patterns of social interaction (Keating, 1996: 5). These political principles are those represented as the objectives of the French and American Revolutions such as liberty, democracy, and equality and we might add to these the right to individual privacy and protection under the law. In this respect it is the idea of citizenship embodied in law, that binds the members of civic nations together, rather than perceived common ethnic roots (Ignatieff, 1993: 4; Smith, 1991: 11). It is argued that the cultural dimension of the nation "coincided with the political territory governed by the state" (McCrone, 1998: 8) but culture neither precludes nor provides the right to belong to the national community. Civic nationalisms are therefore regarded as incorporative ideologies which recognise the legal rights of individual citizens irrespective of cultural or ethnic differences such as gender, religion, ethnicity or political creed. This type of nationalism is widely held to be associated with nation-states like England, France, and the Netherlands that emerged in Western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but this model has been the goal of many nationalist movements since then (McCrone, 1998: 8).

Who constitutes the ethnic nation is encapsulated in the notion of blood, or more precisely blood ties. Membership of ethnic nations is usually restricted to those who fulfil certain conditions of ethnicity that are represented by a combination of ascriptive and inherited markers such as common ancestry, religion, language, colour, customs,

kinship or tribal attachment. Inherited markers like colour, blood and kinship are powerful but limited characteristics and it may be difficult to claim the ethnic purity of a nation on this basis alone. It is however those ascriptive markers such as religion, language and customs which bolster claims to the national status of ethnic nationalisms. These attributed signifiers of belonging to an ethnic community may be shared by different ethnic communities (for example the Islamic religion is used to ascribe status of belonging in many different ethnic nations), and therefore ascriptive markers usually have meaning in "specific historical and spatial settings" (Keating, 1996: 4).

There may be some debate as to whether all of these markers are invoked in the case of all ethnic nations and nationalisms. There are however many examples of nations (and nation-states) where a combination of ascriptive and inherited markers is used to delineate who belongs and who does not belong to the community. One example of a national community that drew on an ethnic conception of the nation is Germany where the right to belong to the German nation, or the *Volk* (the people), is defined according to language and ancestry. As with other cases of nation-building based on ethnicity this conception of the German nation during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries disrupted the boundaries of existing states with violent consequences. As the case of Germany during the 1930s, and the resurgence of ethnic nationalisms in certain communities during the 1990s have demonstrated, those who do not meet the ethnic characteristics of belonging are socially and politically excluded, and attempts may be made to cleanse the community of its alien ethnic inhabitants.

These fundamental distinctions between ethnic and civic nations are useful, but who belongs to the national community has been used to judge the legitimacy of ethnic and civic nationalisms in both academic and popular discourses. A problem which often arises in thinking about nationalisms is that they are considered to be either morally

good or bad but "in its broadest sense of attachment to a territorial and/or cultural community, [nationalism] is morally neutral" (Lindsay, 1976, reprinted in Paterson, 1998: 96). There is a tendency to represent 'our' nationalism as the sentiment of patriots and 'yours' as irrational nationalistic fervour (McCrone, 1998: 9) and sport may offer a number of examples of this. In addressing ethnic and civic forms the problem is compounded since it is not nationalisms per se that are judged in this way, but certain types of nationalisms are considered to be good or bad (Bairner, 1999: 13). More specifically ethnic nationalisms tend to be portrayed as demotic and evidence of the persistence of, or the return to, primitive, pre-modern social formations and irrational human action which is described by some theorists as representing the 'dark gods of nationalism' (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992a). In contrast Kellas (1991: 4) explains that civic nationalisms are given a "more noble status" although his own reference to *official* nations and nationalisms appears to reproduce implicitly the pejorative tag assigned to ethnic forms. Ethnic nations can be exclusionary and intolerant communities supported by negative ideologies, but civic nations and nationalisms are not always positive, inclusive and tolerant. Civic nations may also be intolerant and values may be unfairly applied (Keating, 1996: 7). For instance the experiences of black Americans and Britain's black and Asian citizens are illustrative examples of this history and yet such evidence is often hidden or ignored when civic nationalisms are considered. This noted, in contrast to ethnic nationalism the criteria of civic nationalism can be induced by minority groups to raise their status. The history and shared collective experiences of the Gàidhealtachd, the community considered in this study of shinty, is another example of a cultural group which suffered intolerance and exclusion within the British state and the Scottish nation. Civic nationalism may contribute to the marginalisation of

minority cultures and communities qua communities, on the assumption, shared by Marxists and liberals, not just of equality through uniformity, but that 'high cultures' and 'great nations' are necessarily of greater value than 'low' cultures and small nations or *ethnies* (Smith, 1986: 101).

The point that Smith makes here illustrates another concern of the status ascribed to ethnic and civic nationalisms. It appears that larger more powerful states are depicted as examples of civic nations which have 'good' nationalisms. As McCrone (1998: 8) notes power lies with this orthodoxy and civic nations are able to attribute status to emerging or aspiring national communities. This reinforces Said's (1994) contention that Western imperial powers have been able to define ideas about civilised societies and behaviours, which privilege their own ways of thinking at the expense of those cultures and cultural practices of their former colonies. Any challenge to that world order or to the model of civic nationalisms is defined in comparison to that model and its legitimacy may be called into question.

By the middle of the twentieth century there was a belief that nationalism was dead, its final hour represented in the struggles for independence waged by former imperial colonies (McCrone, 1998: 1). This has not been the case and a resurgence during the last quarter of the twentieth century has meant that nationalism is still alive (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 10-11; McCrone, 1988: 1). The terminology and meanings associated with civic and ethnic nations remain important elements for understanding contemporary nationalisms yet one final point ought to be made here concerning these definitions. There are still cases of communities which exist within nation-states or multinational states but which perceive themselves to be nations, for example Catalonia in Spain, Brittany in France and Scotland in the United Kingdom. There are also ethnic communities within larger nation-states that seek their own independent state (e.g. the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq) or separation from the state within

whose jurisdiction they have been placed (e.g. the Kosovo Albanians in Serbia). However what is perhaps forgotten is that the distinction between ethnic and civic nations provides useful analytic categories for the purposes of academic rigour. In reality most states are a blend of both civic and ethnic features, although it may be the case that concrete examples illustrate a variety of degrees to which the one form is favoured in presenting images of the nation to 'others'.

THE MAKING OF NATIONALISMS

A variety of theoretical positions have been used to examine the connections between nationalism and cultural identity. Within sports history and the sociology of sport functionalist theories, Marxist theories, figurational theory, cultural studies and post-modern theory have been most prominent. Nationalisms express the images, sentiments and loyalties of the communities that associate with the nation, the basis of such images and some of the ways in which nationalisms are formed. Two general principles predominate the sociological and historical explanations of nationalism: first that nations are constructed entities; and second that nationalisms form under a combination of *necessary* and *sufficient* conditions (Kellas 1991: 34). The problem for all theorists is that although there are key common elements which appear to be central to the development of nationalism, "the fabric or details of any one variety will always be unique" (Cronin, 1999: 27). In this section it is concluded that nations are never 'completed' entities and that nationalisms can only be understood as selective, timebound expressions of the nation, not as predicted inevitable consequences of internal and external conditions.

The debate about the origins of nations revolves around questions about the antiquity of these collective human societies. The main theories of such origins can be grouped into four theoretical categories: *primordialist, modernist, statist and political*

mythologist (Cronin, 1999: 26-27). Kellas, (1991: 31) refines these into two main schools of thought: *primordialist* and *contextualist*. The primordialist position asserts that nations are natural and universal human social formations that are firmly rooted in antiquity. This view represents the guiding canon of most nationalist political movements for whom the existence of their nation since time immemorial is not in question, and the only definition it requires is its self assertion (Nairn, 1997: 8; McCrone: 1998: 10). There appears to be little evidence to support the existence of nations in all pre-modern eras since "the differences between pre-modern and modern collective cultural identities are too great to be subsumed under a single concept of the nation" (Smith, 1991: 44).

The primordialist explanation of nations may portray the nation as a metaphor that has various factual references. A second potential weakness of the primordialist approach is that it can imply nations are static and unchanging social entities. The history of the twentieth century illustrates that the units that have claimed to be nations is not guaranteed in this way. As an expression of loyalty to specific nations, nationalism has also changed sometimes in subtle ways during the last hundred years and this too would seem to expose the weaknesses of primordialist accounts. In this regard Hobsbawm (1992a: 6) asserts that it is not possible to fit "historically novel, emerging, changing ... and far from universal entities into a framework of permanence and universality". In contrast to primordialist views of the origins of nations, contextualist accounts examine the ways that nations, and associated concepts like nationalism, developed within the social, political and economic conditions of a specific historical period.

One of the dominant strands of contextualist theories is the *modernist* position which asserts that nationalism and the nations they represent can only be understood as

features of the modern era which took root in western Europe from about the eighteenth century (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992a; Breuilly, 1996). Different strands within the modernist body of literature present alternative explanations of the key sufficient conditions required for nationalism to develop for example industrialisation, modernisation, imperialism or capitalism. Various strands of modernist theories of nationalism also offer explanations of the ways in which relationships between certain communities, such as nation-building, anti-colonialism and economic dependency, have contributed to the rise of nationalist movements in communities outside the core western European proto-nations like England and France.

The strength of such modernist accounts is that they illustrate the ways in which the boundaries of communities are not natural and the ways in which these can be redefined by the interconnection of social, political, economic and technological change. Anderson (1991) points to the development of new means of communication, such as printing as a commodity, in conjunction with mass literacy, as crucial in the process of establishing an awareness of the nation as a community of people with apparently shared interests, values and definitions of the nation. The weakness with some explanations of nationalism, such as Gellner's, is that they may overemphasise the influence of modernisation processes as the cause of nationalism, and economic conditions as a necessary condition of nationalism. This may overlook the range of subjective elements that contribute to nationalism, albeit these may have different levels of causation or importance in different national cases (Nairn, 1997: 7). For instance political and economic factors may be given primacy in modernist accounts of nationalism while social and cultural elements may be forgotten.

Not all contextualist accounts limit the origins of nations and nationalisms to the modern era. Nationalism and the modern usage of the term nation is a modern

phenomenon, "give or take the odd predecessor" Hobsbawm (1992: 3). This is an important qualification although Hobsbawm does not appear to explore this beyond an etymology of the terminology. The existence of nations prior to the eighteenth century is acknowledged by Anthony Smith (1991; 1996a; 1996b) whose historical sociological approach offers a more thorough examination of the possible connection between modern nations and pre-modern communities. Smith rejects primordialist explanations but he is also critical of most modernist theories because he says they fail to address "the persistence of ethnic ties and cultural sentiments in many parts of the world" (Smith, 1996a: 359). From this position nationalisms are perceived as "cultural phenomena" (Smith: 1991: 21) which are based on the historical and symbolic elements of the ethnic cores of nations. Central to this approach is the concept of the *ethnie* (Smith, 1991: 21). The *ethnie* is a specific ethnic community which in its ideal form claims to have six main attributes: (i) a collective name; (ii) a myth of common ancestry; (iii) shared historical memories; (iv) elements of common culture which make it distinctive; (v) an association with a homeland; and (vi) a sense of solidarity amongst significant sectors of the population (Smith, 1991: 21). These attributes are the subjective components of nations and embody the cultural and historical content of nationalism.

The acknowledged existence of an *ethnie* by its members was an essential element on which national communities could form. Smith (1991: 51) contends that from the late-medieval period there was a change in how ethnic communities began to think about themselves in relation to others. This transformation emerged first as an expressed "desire for autonomy based on cultural difference and distinctive laws and customs" (Smith, 1991: 51), as for example in the case of the Declaration of Arbroath (1320) by the Scots nobility. This recognition of the cultural distinctiveness of specific

communities is an essential component of all nationalisms although this need not be fixed by objective criteria.

An important point arising from this conception of nations is that the nation is the narrative of ethnic communities that develop their own histories, part of which is likely to be the incorporation of, or by, other *ethnies*. The narratives of these different ethnies may be selectively included or rejected to form new images of the communities that then provide the content of nations. It follows that this process can have no final destination or form; therefore we ought to reflect on the *formation of nations*. As Smith (1991: 43) reminds us

> though for convenience we delimit and define a specific concept of the nation, we are in fact dealing with a complex set of processes over time rather than with fixed 'essences'.

The idea of nations as processes of formation helps to illustrate that the nation has past, present and future forms. Nationalisms tell of what nations are held to be by their members at any particular moment, and they also tell of what they aspire to be in their futures but that narrative is never complete. In this way nationalisms appear to involve a constant redefinition of *who* the nation is, *what* the nation is and *why* the nation is. The nationalism of a particular nation is therefore not fixed for all time, but reciprocally confirms itself in the face of changing internal and external circumstances of a nation.[4]

The idea of the formation of nations is evident in many sociological explanations of the origins of nations, but is explained in different ways. The danger is that nations are interpreted to be false or fabricated communities, in the sense that they

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[4] The history of the British nation-state provides a useful illustration of this point particularly towards the end of the twentieth century. Internal pressures concerning the reorganisation of political powers for Scotland and Northern Ireland to specific national assemblies, and the vitality of the cultural identities of these communities contributed to the restructuring of Britain as a nation-state and the meaning of Britishness has changed (Craig and Reid, 1999). The coincidence of these internal pressures with the emergence of Europe as a supranational state has exacerbated the 'break-up of Britain'.

are thought to be invented. Anderson (1991: 6-7) asserts that the nation is an *imagined community*, which has limited territorial boundaries and a sovereign polity represented by the state. This community is imagined for two reasons. First because it is not possible to meet or even to know everyone, and so an individual or even specific groups, can only *think* that other members of the community share their passions, loyalties, interests and so on. Second the idea of the nation as *community* is imagined because the nation invokes a sense of solidarity and horizontal comradeship amongst its members. This perception of comradeship conceals the reality of inequality and exploitation which prevails between groups within the nation perhaps on the basis of class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or ability.

The processes of creating *imagined communities* must draw on sociological and cultural material. It is being suggested here that this can include specific ethnic communities but usually involves the selection of other cultural material that might include language, literature, religion, music, poetry, popular recreations and historical events in order to create some sort of narrative about the nation. Affinity to this symbolic representation of the imagined community is displayed through these cultural practices and forms. It is therefore the sentiments and feelings articulated in relation to this imagined community which can be described as nationalism (Birch, 1993). In the imagined community the style in which communities imagine themselves to be nations is just as important as the existence of certain objective criteria (Anderson, 1991: 6).

Essential to establishing the credentials of the imagined community and the style in which it is imagined are the ways in which history is mobilised in making nationalism. There is an element of fabrication to this process which Hobsbawm (1992b: 1) calls inventing traditions. These traditions may actually be invented or they may have emerged from previous practices. The important point is that these traditions

become essential components of the nation because they are seen to represent something "unchanging and invariant" in an environment of "constant change and innovation" (Hobsbawm, 1992b: 2). At the core of invented traditions are a number of practices, rituals and symbols, which instil a sense of historic shared community in the life of the 'present' community. For instance public ceremonies are created which mark certain key moments in the nation's history; a national iconography is commemorated in songs, literature and monuments; specific symbols such as flags and emblems are selected to symbolise the identity and sovereignty of the imagined community which command the respect of members, and it is hoped, other nations. It is through these invented traditions that it is possible to develop a sense of cohesion and collective experience.

The discussion here has identified certain key ideas from the literature which connect the origins of nations and the processes by which nationalisms are made. These are not fixed entities and abstract ideologies, but are dynamic processes that constantly change and adjust over time in order that imagined communities have relevance in the present while reinforcing the continuity of the past. In short the formation of nations can never be completed. The process necessarily draws on historical context, but it must look to find new ways of mapping its territory, both actual and imaginary. The next section considers some of the ways that modern sporting practices contribute to these processes.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND SPORT

In an analysis of sport, nationalism and cultural identity, Jarvie (1993:61) explains that his concern is with the ways that sport can assist in the search for identity. Adopting a similar position to Macintosh and Whitson (1993), Jarvie (1993) argues that nationality is only one of a number of identities that sport contributes to and which draws on shared cultural characteristics. In this section attention is focused on two related concepts arising out of this work: culture as the material content of nationalism and identity as the collective subjective feeling of nationalism objectified as culture. It is argued that as well as being a cultural practice, sport also provides certain institutional structures through which shared cultural identity can be expressed.

The concept of cultural identity has been the subject of much consideration in sociological research. A common starting point in the literature appears to be a consideration of culture, a much used but ambiguous and complex term (Williams, 1976; Palmer, 1981; Jenks, 1993). To explain this concept and its ambiguous meanings the work of Raymond Williams (1962; 1977) is often used. Williams (1962: 15) identified culture as one of five words that either came into common use or took on new meanings during the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century. Prior to the eighteenth century, culture was initially understood to refer to the cultivation of natural growth prior to the eighteenth century. The term subsequently came to be associated with: (i) "a general state or habit of the mind", which invoked a notion of human perfection; (ii) "the general state of intellectual development in society as a whole"; (iii) "the general body of the arts" such as certain forms of literature, music and art; (iv) "a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual" (Williams, 1962: 16). In sociology and cultural studies this last meaning has informed the assertion that as a way of life culture includes "the development of

literacy, holidays, sport [and] religious festivals", as well as intellectual and aesthetic activities (Storey 1993: 2). This is only a summary of what constitutes the content of culture which might also include language, ways of dressing, arts, crafts, religious practices, legal procedures, educational processes, customs, heroes and heroines, poetry, literature, folk tales, architecture, ways of acting and feeling (Smith, 1991: 71). The selection by groups of people of a certain mix of cultural content contributes to the social construction of nationalism which represents "the element of artefact, invention and social engineering" involved in the making of nations (Hobsbawm 1992a: 10).

The figurational approach to the sociology of sport however utilises a different interpretation of culture that incorporates the Eliasian notion of civilising processes as a central tenet. In this respect there is something in Elias' approach to culture that draws on those meanings of the term that emphasise certain activities as indicative that a community has achieved the state of a civilised society. Unlike earlier interpretations figurational sociology asserts that modern sports practices are symbols of a civilised society, and can therefore be usefully incorporated into the processes. It is also important to note that in figurational sociology culture and cultural identity cannot be understood without the people who practice it being aware of it. As a specific cultural activity, but more importantly as a carrier of deep culture and structure, sport is one of a number of structures on which specific ideas and meanings which are also part of distinctive ways of life can be constructed, developed and articulated (Maguire 1994: 408). This deeper role for sport in society, as a signifying practice and symbol of a particular way of life, provides what might be described as a tangible context through which ethereal ideas associated with nations, nationalisms and aspects of cultures may be given meaning.

At the core of analyses of sport and identities figurational sociology utilises Elias' concept of interdependence to explain the multiple bonds that individuals and groups form, and in doing so establish an infinite variety of social networks (Jarvie, 1988: 92). An important dimension to figurational sociology is that these interdependencies are formed in relation to emotional, political and economic spheres of activity, and at different levels. For instance the emotional bonds that may attach to national symbols such as flags or songs provide one level of interdependence and awareness of collective identity amongst individuals. At another level these bonds may form between larger units such as villages or towns, but never independently of the political and economic spheres of activity within the social formation (Jarvie, 1988: 92-3).

In relation to the critical study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity in this thesis, the definition of culture as the symbols and practices of a whole way of life is the most pertinent one. The idea that sport is one of a number of practices that are part of a distinctive culture is a useful basis from which to understand the connection between sport and cultural identity. In this context however, identity is not superficial or monolithic but "something deep-rooted" and concerned with "subjective feelings and valuations" (Jarvie, 1993: 61). Cultural identity knits together individuals, classes, genders, ethnies and nations, helping them to make sense of their common experiences.

The concept of identity resonates with both individual and collective meanings but from a sociological perspective it is the latter forms of identity which are most pertinent in this study. It is argued that as individuals we develop multiple identities which are based on a number of categories the most important of which are gender, space and territory, socio-economic, religion and ethnicity (Smith, 1991: 3-8). Following this principle, Smout (1994: 102-7) maps a more comprehensive framework

of multiple identities which combines a range of territorial identities which includes family, clan, locality, nation, state and supranational loyalty, and a range of social identities such as gender, class, occupation, colour, language, religion and sport. What is evident from the two explanations is that no single category of identity is sufficient to explain cultural identity. This point is reiterated by Hall (1996: 3) who prefers to speak of identification, rather than identity. More precisely Hall contends that that cultural identity concerns a process that has more than one category at its core. An understanding of sport and identity must therefore reflect on this impression of multiple identities which interweave individuals and groups into a dynamic framework of local, national and in the late-twentieth century, transnational contexts (Maguire, 1994: 402).

No single definition or explanation of these multiple identities is satisfactory but two important assertions arise from the analysis of collective forms of identity. First is the idea that collective identities are constructed on an assumption of sameness (Smith, 1991: 75). The idea of collective identity is based on shared cultural artefacts such as language, customs, common experiences, religion, and significant practices which mark the boundaries of similarity. Second, and by extension, collective identities which draw on shared and common meanings and practices, also define difference from other collective identities which are recognised by other sets of cultural characteristics and practices (Hall, 1996: 2). Stuart Hall has suggested that the cultural practices and symbols used to define 'sameness' may change in the process of constructing collective identity, but that the condition of defining difference remains (Hall, 1996: 2-3). A similar point is made by Maguire (1994: 402) who has stressed that definitions of 'sameness' and 'otherness' coexist through cultural identities that change "over the life of an individual [and] the *longue duree* of a nation".

In contrast to this idea of sameness Houlihan (1997: 116-7) warns that assumptions that sport is a metaphor for an "essentially indivisible" national culture are problematic. He points out that states (and nations) manage identity through sport, by seeking to override other claims on allegiance such as family, religion and ethnicity (Houlihan, 1997: 121). This reinforces the more comprehensive framework of multiple identities addressed by Smout (1994: 102-7). One problem with managing cultural homogeneity may lie therefore in the persistence of elements of cultural identities, such as traditional sports, that are peripheral to the core. Such cultural artefacts may provide the material for national or cultural self-perceptions that contradict both nation and state nationalisms.

The role of sport in helping to define distinctive cultural identities identified in much of the literature on sport is important because it gives concrete frameworks on which to build amorphous identities. Nations are centralised symbolic formations that incorporate cultures and national identities "which claim to subsume all differences into their imagined unity" (Hall, 1993b: 351). Socially constructed cultural identities then are selectively adopted to represent the common experiences and shared characteristics of a nation, an imagined community, which is contextualised for most people through cultural practices and institutions.

NATIONALISM, AUTONOMY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

A key argument in the literature which examines sport, nationalism and cultural identity appears to be that sport is an activity through which common experiences and otherwise subjective, intangible feelings can be expressed. In order to examine expressions of national or cultural identity from sociological and historical perspectives it is essential that two points are addressed. First there must be a satisfactory explanation of how the structures of sport, for example clubs and national governing

bodies, are related to other structures of nations and states. Second we must examine how sport, its organisations and associated expressions of collective identities are to be understood in relation to power. Some of this ground has been covered in analyses of sport and gender and sport, race and ethnicity, but this has not always been examined effectively in studies of sport, nationalism and other aspects of cultural identity. In order to conceptualise these points this section will consider two further concepts that are important elements of the theoretical framework utilised in this thesis, namely *civil society* and *autonomy*.

The idea of *civil society* is rooted in sociology, rather than the state which is considered to be a political concept (McCrone, 1998: 88). A number of theorists have used the idea of civil society, an institutional network which mediates the set of practices, values, and attitudes that constitute culture in order to understand the relationship between the nation and the state. Kumar (1993: 382-3) contends that "civil society is the sphere of culture in the broadest sense" which appears to be consistent with other interpretations of this concept. This is perhaps too broad a definition, or at least it is too similar to one of the meanings of culture considered in the previous section. A more helpful definition is that civil society is "the space or arena between the household and the state...which affords possibilities of concerted action and social self-organisation" (Bryant, 1993: 399). This proposition suggests that civil society is represented by the institutional terrain of culture, and specifically of areas of self-organisation not regulated by the state. Civil society must be understood in relation to the political apparatus of the state, like government, and forces of internal and external law and order. Closer examination of the development of the structures of civil society suggests that an important characteristic of this relationship is that civil society enjoys a relative degree of autonomy from the political administration of the state. More

precisely the success of civil society "must depend upon the ability to escape any particular cage" (Hall, 1995: 15). It is precisely because of their relative autonomy from the state that certain social and cultural institutions (e.g. established religion, education, welfare agencies, trade unions, the family, mass communications media, leisure activities) offer opportunities for self-regulation and self-definition by specific groups of people within a larger unitary political entity.

It is argued here that since at least the end of the nineteenth century sport has been part of self-regulated civil society. As such sport is a real day-to-day space within which both collective official (political) identities and distinctive contrasting but locally meaningful identities can be expressed. In presenting their distinctive cultural identities, groups of people who perceive themselves as the same look back to the range of historical experiences, symbols, customs, attitudes and so on in order to selectively reconstruct and redefine themselves for the historical period in which they move. An established civil society related to, yet separate from, the state represents the structural framework within which distinctive cultural groups could express the characteristics of their own cultural identity without disrupting the apparent unity of the political state. In addition to this it must be noted from a sociological perspective, that since nationalism is understood to be a subjective phenomenon and political ideology, the concept of civil society provides a pertinent institutional context even in nation-states. Nationalism is constructed as the non-partisan expression of a nation or state. Therefore the apparently autonomous institutions of civil society serve as the ideal arenas for state nationalism and cultural nationalism, because these are not considered to serve the interests of particular agents of the state apparatus. One of the strengths of the relationship between the state and civil society is that it is a reciprocal one. While civil society may legitimate

the state, it has the potential to "produce and sustain its own ideology, its own nationalism" (Morton, 1996: 262).

There is another reason why civil society is important for this thesis, which is connected to the specific historical and national context of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is more fully examined in chapter two; however it is relevant to note here that civil society was an important social and political world for the urban middle classes in Britain during the nineteenth century. During this period the urban bourgeoisie was empowered to govern their public world. This degree of autonomy over the institutions that comprised civil society meant that the bourgeoisie assumed an important place in local, and therefore in domestic, government (Morton, 1999: 191). Moreover, it was in self-regulating clubs, societies and associations that comprised civil society, rather than in the political agencies of the state, that social and cultural identities could be constructed, and where nationalism could be expressed. It was within the framework of an autonomous civil society that many alternatives to existing nationalist discourses could also be cultivated and promoted.

The final conceptual brick in the eclectic theoretical framework for this study is *autonomy*. Autonomy is concerned with the search and arrangements for the administration of power in cultural, national and state territories. In a recent consideration of the term nationalism, Smith (1996a: 359) explained that he took it to be:

> an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity of a human population, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'.

This follows his earlier assertion that nationalism is concerned with arrangements attaining and maintaining the *autonomy*, *unity* and *identity* of a nation, and is the goal of every nationalist (Smith, 1991: 74-7).

In explaining his conception of autonomy Smith reveals that it is concerned with self-determination. For exponents of the 'nationalism as the ideology of the nation-state' theory the objective of all nationalist movements is to establish control of its own independent state determined by its own legislature. The term autonomy is not used extensively in such literature, yet it seems that in political theories nationalism is precisely about the right to self-determination. This would appear to support two of the three assertions about autonomy and nationalism drawn from Smith's work. How then are we to understand autonomy in those cultural nations or regions of larger states that neither have nor seek political autonomy in their own state. The answer may be revealed, in part, by broadening the potential spheres of social and political life in which autonomy might be experienced and the extent to which these fulfilled aspirations of self-determination, power and authority. Clarification of this may be found in Smith's own assertion that certain cultural nations have in specific circumstances been satisfied with some form of devolved political power or with opportunities to assert cultural parity, rather than straightforward political independence (Smith, 1991: 74). It is being suggested here that there is more than one way one way in which to seek or establish autonomy. As Lindsay Paterson (1994: 5) has argued:

> Autonomy has taken many forms, and can operate in many different ways. A society can be almost wholly independent in one aspect of its existence (education, let us say) yet be almost wholly dependent in another (most usually in defence policy) ... that independence is perfectly consistent with freely chosen assimilation towards the norms of a larger neighbour.

The conception that there are forms of autonomy has a number of benefits in theorising sport, nationalism and cultural identity, but I wish to summarise three of those which are most pertinent to this study. First it is a flexible theoretical concept that is relevant to both nation-states and nations-within-states that assert collective identities through sporting practices. Second, there is a sense in which autonomy is neither an

abstract nor immutable aspiration but is part of the process of everyday experience which can, and does, change over time and in distinct social and cultural contexts. Third it illustrates that different spheres of social, cultural and political activity within specific societies can satisfy multiple aspirations and degrees of autonomy simultaneously. In providing the institutional structure for self-regulation and the development of specific identities, civil society provides the essential spaces in which different forms of autonomy can be practised.

SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the key concepts that form the theoretical framework for this thesis on shinty, nationalism and cultural identity. These are nationalism, cultural identity, civil society and autonomy. The framework has been developed through a consideration of certain sociological, historical and political theories associated with these concepts. It is concluded that nationalism is a cultural phenomenon that expresses the image of nations, but which changes over time. The processes that contribute to the formation of collective identities draw on a range of cultural material of specific groups that may become the defining characteristics of nations or which may remain those of specific cultures. The institutional features of sport are part of the meaningful objective structures of civil society which provides opportunities for social groups to realise different forms of autonomy (self-determination). It is one specific example of this premise that this thesis seeks to examine. These concepts are used in chapter 2 to examine the Scottish case of nationalism and cultural identity.

CHAPTER 2
SCOTTISH SPORT, NATIONALISM AND AUTONOMY

This chapter considers the different ways in which scholars have explained the relationship between sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland, and evaluates the adequacy of such explanations for the study of shinty. The discussion draws on two genres of literature: (i) studies which examine Scottish society from social, cultural and historical perspectives; and (ii) studies which investigate the social and cultural significance of sport in Scottish society. The chapter probes four key questions. How have scholars explained Scotland's sense of nationhood in the community of nations? What explanations are offered for the connections between nationalism, cultural identity and Scottish sport? What are the limitations of these explanations for the investigation of shinty undertaken in this thesis? In what way does the autonomy of civil society, and the notion of unionist nationalism provide a theoretical framework for the study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity?

The chapter is organised into five sections which examine selected themes arising from the literature. Section 1, 'Is Scotland a nation?' examines Scotland's status as a nation. Section 2, 'Scotland - an enigma? Autonomy and civil society', considers the extent to which Scotland is different from other national communities. Section 3, 'Sport in Scottish culture', examines the place of sport within studies of Scottish culture. Section 4 'The nearest thing to a National Assembly?'[5] is a critique of studies of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland that have tended to be dominated by football. Section 5 'Celtic sports, autonomy and unionist nationalism' examines selected studies of sport in Scotland, which reveal some of the alternative identities that

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[5] The title of this section is taken from Crampsey's (1978: 75) suggestion that "Hampden Park on international match-days remains the nearest thing to a National Assembly that the Scots have".

may be expressed through sport. This is combined with the work of Paterson (1994) and Morton (1999) to provide a conceptual framework that is used to explain the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939. The chapter closes with a summary of the preceding sections. It is concluded that most previous accounts of sport and nationalism provide inadequate conceptual frameworks for understanding shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939. The thesis seeks to redress this using the concepts of autonomy expressed through civil society. The organisation of shinty, and indeed most sport since at least the 1870s occurred as part of civil society, and as such became an important part of the cultural terrain on which particular forms of autonomy were executed. Yet sport has been an undervalued component in studies of the autonomy - civil society axis.

IS SCOTLAND A NATION?

Modernist accounts of nationalism often reject Scotland's place as a nation, because it does not fit the hypothesis that only nation-states can properly be called nations (Gellner, 1983: 47; Hobsbawm, 1992a: 34; 35). It is correct that Scotland relinquished a relative degree of political sovereignty in favour of a British state under the Act of Union in 1707 (Devine, 1999: 10-16; Harvie, 1994a: 34-5; Lynch, 1992: 315-23; Paterson, 1994: 27-31), but nations and nation-states are not the same thing. Nations are imagined cultural communities that do not require the political structures of nation-states (Brown et al, 1996: 25-30). This section examines Scotland's status as a nation by probing one question: *Is Scotland a nation*?

For many Scots it may seem unusual to question Scotland's status as a nation. The idea of a Scottish *nation* appears to be unproblematic to the historian Tom Devine (1999). From a political perspective Kellas (1991: 3) states that Scotland is one of four component nations within a *multinational state* (the United Kingdom of Great Britain

and Northern Ireland). This is reiterated by Lynch (1992: xviii) who notes that Scotland

is a nation within the British state. In making the case for Scotland as a nation Brown et

al (1996: 35-6) contend that the nation does not have an external or objective reality but

that it is "an idea [and] an aspiration". This reminder that nations can be *imagined*

communities (Anderson, 1991: 6-7) invokes four essential characteristics: the nation is

imagined as a community of people; the community is bound by a shared historic

territory; the community is viewed as deep and horizontal comradeship; and it implies

self-determination and autonomy for its members. To these four a fifth characteristic

can be added which is unclear in Anderson's definition; that is the community is usually

expressed through common myths and memories (Smith, 1996a: 359), that are often

reconstructed as *invented traditions* (Hobsbawm, 1992a: 1-14). Through these five

characteristics the nation manifests itself as a cultural formation that does not

necessarily require its own independent sovereign state (Smith, 1991: 74), but this

cultural formation merges with the "political and ideological constellations" in specific

social entities (Anderson, 1991: 4) to establish the national community. These

characteristics are employed to examine Scotland's case.

The first characteristic of the nation, that it is a community of people, can be

approached from a sociological perspective. 'Community', like 'nation' is a nebulous

concept (Simpson, 1974: 319), but there are definitions that connect these symbolic

constructions. Community has a subjective application as a sense of belonging and

identification with a particular group of people (Lindsay, 1976 reprinted in Paterson,

1998: 100). In this respect 'community' concerns a set of social relationships "based on

something which the participants have in common" such as a sense of identity

(Marshall, 1990: 97). A similar explanation is evident in the claim that "People assert

community, whether in the form of ethnicity or of locality when they recognise in it the

most adequate medium for the expression of their whole selves" (Cohen, 1985: 107).

There is therefore a close correspondence between the symbolic construction of 'nation'

and 'community' (McCrone, 1992: 32).

It is suggested that in Scotland a strong sense of shared identity is recognised by

most people (Bairner, 1994: 9; Mitchison, 1980a: 131; Smout, 1994: 102). This shared

identity is used to define what is "distinctively *ours*" and is defended from external

challenges (Paterson, 1994: 2). This sense of Scottish community is asserted in a

number of ways, some of the most visible of which are the national displays that engulf

certain contemporary sports events. Recent survey research provided more substantive

data of the contemporary sense of shared Scottish identity (Heath and Kellas, 1998:

110-27; Surridge, Paterson, Brown and McCrone, 1998: 38-60), but illustrated that

many Scots also still consider themselves to be British. One contemporary sociologist

asserts that the dual identity manifest during the twentieth century has been inherited

from the dual nationalisms of the nineteenth century. These dual nationalisms were said

to be British for formal, public matters, and Scottish for domestic and cultural (i.e.

national) affairs (Paterson, 1994: 65). This notion of dual nationalisms or identities, first

examined by Mackinstosh (1974: 408-12), is considered in section five of this chapter.

The provenance of a Scottish community is apparent in many accounts of

Scotland (Brown et al, 1996; Devine, 1999; Harvie, 1994a; McCrone, 1992; Smout,

1985). This introduces the second condition of nations as imagined cultural formations,

that is, the belief that the community is bound by ties of shared historic territory.

Historian Michael Lynch (1992: 21-131) describes the complex processes that shaped

the making of the medieval Kingdom of Scots, the root of the modern nation. It is not

necessary to examine these processes here but two points can be drawn from Lynch's

account. The first relates to the notion of homogeneity associated with ethnic nations

addressed in chapter one. By the twelfth century the different groups which had migrated to what is now Scotland constituted a "hybrid kingdom" that included Scots, Anglo-Normans, Northumbrians and Cumbrians (Lynch, 1992: 53; Harvie, 1994a: 8). The national community of Scots that was established by the twelfth century was therefore multi-cultural, rather than a community built on ethnic, or cultural, purity. There is an analogy with the modern nation, which is a community of ethnic and cultural diversity (McCrone, 1992: 193). Although the ideology of Scottish nationhood has celebrated certain aspects of the nation's diversity, as in most nations, there is a dominant image and identity of Scotland that marginalises the culture, historical and contemporary experiences of particular groups. This thesis examines the ways in which the development of shinty provided a vehicle for expressing the cultural identity of one such group, the people of the Gàidhealtachd, within the hybrid national community of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This cultural group had been marginalised by the dominant political and cultural forces in Scotland, and has largely been ignored in studies of sport, nationalism and identity in Scotland.

The second point taken from Lynch's account of the making of Scotland concerns the territorial delineation and defence of the nation. By the end of the twelfth century the mainland territory of modern-day Scotland was established both to the north and south of the line of the rivers Forth and Clyde. The Orkney and Shetland islands were added in 1470 (Lynch, 1992: 166) and the western Highlands and Hebrides were formally incorporated into Scotland in 1493 (Lynch, 1992: 166; Williams, 1997: xiii). The territorial delineation of mainland Scotland was defended in the Wars of Independence (1296-1328) against English expansion (Grant, 1984). These conflicts secured a geographic territory of Scotland, which contributed to the creation of a national community linking the nobility and the people. These conflicts with England

have been incorporated into the myth-making of Scotland's history which helps to reinforce the idea of Scotland as an imagined community which is horizontal and vertical in time and place.

This historical delineation of territory connects to the sociological conception of the nation as 'community'. McCrone (1992: 16-17) asserts that the fusion of specific land with the concept of nation is important because it defines Scotland as a *place*. This sense of the nation is helpful in two particular ways. First it helps to explain images of the nation in relation to its different landscapes for instance as urban, rural, mountainous or industrial. Second, the nation as place gives ephemeral values, mores, myths, traditions and cultural practices a more tangible, lasting framework in which the continuity of the imagined community can be established. A potential weakness in thinking of the nation as *place* however is that it becomes fixed in time, space and content, in ways that do not adequately describe the contemporary reality of Scotland. For instance we have already noted that the territory that is currently defined as Scotland includes geographic territory that was not included in the medieval kingdom. Territorial expansion or contraction is not the only way in which the nation changes; the *idea* of the nation also changes in relation to social, political and cultural circumstances.

A recent redefinition of Scotland as a political entity is represented by the establishment of a devolved parliament in 1999. This new representation of Scotland neither replicates the old Scots parliament ended in 1707, nor any of the political arrangements for Scotland that were in place for nearly three-hundred years. There is therefore a new idea of Scotland. This example helps clarify what Brown et al (1996: 36) explain as the *process* of Scotland. Geographic place is part of the transcendent idea of the process of Scotland running through history. It is experienced and explained by its people by capturing their history and reinterpreting it to fit the particular social,

cultural and political circumstances of their present. It must be concluded therefore that there is no *essential* Scotland, only *Scotlands*, which embrace different territorial rings (Smout, 1994: 102-4). These rings include some which are directly experienced such as the home and locality, while others like nation, state and global community lean on the construction of shared experiences (Smout, 1994: 102-4). They are connected to the idea of an historic community "moving ... down (or up) history" (Brown et al, 1996: 35).

There is one final aspect to be considered here in reinforcing the idea and aspirations of the nation and that is the process of inventing the past. Central to this process is the construction of shared myths and memories and the recognition of shared icons to construct the idea of an historical community. Some scholars have invoked the discourse of failure or inadequacy to explain this characteristic of the Scottish nation. In assessing Scottish culture and historiography Beveridge and Turnbull (1989: 7) utilised the constructs of inferiorisation (Fanon, 1969) to depict Scotland as a subordinate, colonised culture. The weakness here is that the national discourse of Scotland is being judged by concepts relevant to the present. The suggestion that looking to the past signified a sense of inferiority would have been anathema to most Victorian and Edwardian Scots, and this remained the case for the period examined in this thesis (Paterson, 1994: 60; Walker, 1994b: 97-8).

The historical images mobilised in Scotland's "mythical resuscitation of the past" (Nairn, 1981: 115) functioned to reinvent the distinctive identity of the nation within the Union (Devine, 1999: 287; Finlay, 1994: 129; Morton, 1994; 1999; Paterson, 1994: 59). There are a number of ways in which this reinvention of history has been part of Scotland's national discourse, as history was mobilised as an "appendage to the creation of a new cultural identity" (Finlay, 1994: 129). The successful campaign for

Scottish banks to retain the right to issue their own bank notes in the 1820s, and the emergence of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights (1853-1856) illustrate cultural issues which were pursued to maintain national integrity (Finlay, 1997: 17-8; Fry, 1991: 82; Harvie, 1994a: 20-1; Hutchison, 1986: 91; Morton, 1999: 135-54: Paterson, 1994: 62-3; Phillipson, 1969: 181-2). These were campaigns led largely by either upper or middle-class Scots, but in the mid-nineteenth century the participatory politics of the twentieth century were still in the future.

There were other aspects of history which were included in this reinvention of the past. The selective appropriation by Lowland Scots and British aristocracy of tartanry, Highlandism and the clan system came to represent the civilised cultural identity of certain Scots (Paterson, 1994: 59; McCrone, 1992: 180-4). Reinventing the past also embraced the erection of monuments to commemorate 'national icons' such as William Wallace, Robert Bruce, Robert Burns and Walter Scott which represented another expression of this reinvented Scottish identity (Harvie, 1994a: 21; Morton, 1999: 155-84). One scholar has called this Scotland's "strange sort of sub-national culture" which was not the authentic romantic culture necessary to inform a nationalist political movement (Nairn, 1981: 150-5). The same scholar in a later analysis argued however that the co-existence of invented traditions, national icons and a shared past with modernising ambition is the Janus face of nationalism that seeks to fulfil the social and political objectives of the present (Nairn, 1997: 71).

Closer examination of other European liberal nationalisms reveals that Scotland's reinvention of history and its cultural roots was not unlike the 'normal' nationalisms of other small European nations (Paterson, 1994: 59). Like all nationalisms it marginalised certain aspects of Scotland's past from the nation's story. There are a number of omissions from this national identity that have a particular resonance in the

context of this thesis. For example the misrepresentation of all out migration from the Highlands as a consequence of the clearances, attempts to extirpate the Gaelic language, and the absence of the contribution of radical Celtic politics to a distinctive Highland identity have all been marginalised from the national discourse (Hunter, 1975; 1995; Withers, 1988). The making of Scotland has also meant that the Catholic religious influences from pre-Reformation Scotland have tended to be underplayed in national and cultural discourses since the middle of the sixteenth century (O'Hagan, 2000: 26-27). These issues are incorporated where appropriate into the critical analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity in chapters three to six of this thesis.

The analysis so far has argued that on four conditions - recognition of an imagined community of people, that is viewed as deep and horizontal comradeship located in an defined territory, and the reinvention of its distinctive historical memory - Scotland is a nation. From this rejections of Scotland's nation status are less convincing, but the case cannot be closed at this juncture. Scrutiny of the remaining sociological characteristic of nations - that the nation implies self-determination and autonomy for its members is used to probe the question at the heart of the next section: *Is Scotland different from other nations?*

SCOTLAND - AN ENIGMA? AUTONOMY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The case of Scotland has been an enigma in studies of nationalism (Paterson, 1994: 46; Smout, 1994: 101). This comment is made because of the apparent paradox that depicts Scotland in the community of nations. Scotland has been described as a national community that expressed nationalism but did not demand its own independent state in the age of nationalism (Harvie, 1994a: 11; Smout, 1994: 101). In order to assess the extent to which Scotland has been an enigma, this section considers the pursuit of

autonomy, and the role of civil society in providing the institutional framework for the ideas and aspirations of the nation.

One feature of European history during the nineteenth century until at least 1922 was the emergence of nationalist movements in a number of small nations. It is assumed that the objective of these movements was to win their independence from larger states (Mitchison, 1980a; Nairn, 1981: 105; Harvie, 1994a: 10-11). Conventional wisdom asserts that Scotland was an oddity in this era because it remained part of the British state (Devine, 1999: 285; Nairn, 1981: 105-7; Harvie, 1994a: 10-11; Mitchison, 1980b: 131). This failure to seek independence has been cited as evidence of the absence of nationalism in a lost nation that had been assimilated as North Britain. This has been described as an "historical failure of nerve" (Ash: 1980: 10), or a deficient political history in the age of nationalism (Fry, 1991: 1-5).

One critique of these explanations contends that they adopt a narrow view of nationalism. Their premise is that only nationalisms which challenged the Union and demanded independent statehood could be properly defined as nationalism (Finlay, 1994: 127). It is reasonable to maintain that most nationalisms contain the belief that "all nations have the right to run their own affairs" (Philip, 1980: 1). It is inaccurate to conclude that statehood is the inevitable objective or settlement of this aspiration (Smith, 1991: 74; Paterson, 1994: 18). The 'normal nationalisms' to which nineteenth century Scotland are compared sought statehood when negotiated autonomy over their national (domestic) affairs failed (Paterson, 1994: 73-4). The emergence of citizen politics in the twentieth century, one consequence of liberalising ideologies of the preceding century, also contributed to formalising expressions of nationalism in political movements. It is also important to reiterate that nationalism is an expression of perceived cultural cohesion that may develop an overt political objective. In the case of

Scotland "the essence of the nation resided in popular culture" and the state did not intervene in these matters (Paterson, 1994: 18). On this level Scots were not prevented from running their national affairs, but there is further evidence to support the contention that Scottish autonomy and self-regulation was accomplished in other spheres of national life.

The common point of departure for understanding Scottish autonomy is the Treaty of Union of the Parliaments (1707).[6] The reasons for the Union are complex but the detail need not concern us here. In summary this was a unique bargain between two patrician classes, which created the conditions for economic, political and religious security within one state (Devine, 1999: 3-16; Lynch, 1992: 300-17; Paterson, 1994: 27-31). Under the Union Scotland relinquished a degree of political sovereignty to establish the British state (Brown et al, 1996: 38-9; Harvie, 1984a: 13-4; Paterson, 1994: 27). Participation in the territorial and economic expansion of the empire was an outlet for Scots to participate fully in the political aspirations of the state while simultaneously promoting their distinctive national identity through cultural practices.

Recent analyses of modern Scotland have reinterpreted the nation's aspirations for most of the three centuries since the Union. They contend that Scotland engaged in similar processes to other small nations to maintain its national autonomy within a larger state (Brown et al 1996; Paterson, 1994). If Scotland was different from other nations it is because it achieved this objective through negotiation; therefore it did not need to pursue a vigorous campaign for independence. The success of negotiated autonomy in Scotland may be measured in relation to the political realignment of the

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[6] It is not necessary here to examine in detail the background, content and consequences of the Act of Union as this has been considered in a variety of texts including: Daiches (1964); Thomson (1980); Harvie (1994); Pryde (1950); Lynch (1992); Nairn (1981); Thompson (1980).

state, the adaptation of the constitutional arrangements of the Union to new circumstances and demands, as well as the reassertion of Scotland's nationalism as a cultural identity (Finlay, 1997: 3). This may be the "successful nationalism" which dominated nineteenth century Scottish politics (Paterson, 1994: 74), but the assessment might also apply to the achievements of negotiated autonomy until at least 1945. The Scottish nationalist organisations of the twentieth century may not have secured independence, but this may be explained by the continued appeal of the Union for most Scots, rather than ideas of cultural cringe or absent nationalism. These assertions challenge the idea of Scotland as an enigma amongst nations, or that it has been a subordinate English colony.

The most cogent analysis of the autonomy of modern Scotland is provided by sociologist Lindsay Paterson (1994; 1997), but there is a body of literature that reaches similar conclusions (McCrone, 1992; Brown et al, 1996; Morton, 1994; 1999; Finlay, 1997a). Essentially the argument is that Scotland was able to exert a degree of autonomy over its own affairs since it entered the Union, but it is the period from 1835 until 1939 that is of most relevance here. The key to Scotland's quest for social, political and cultural autonomy during this period lies in Scottish civil society. The relative autonomy of civil society was significant for at least two reasons. First it was, and indeed remains, the institutional repository of the idea and aspirations of the nation. Second this institutional framework is the terrain on which autonomy has been experienced and executed. Let us examine each of these conditions.

The idea of civil society as the institutional repository of the nation has been acknowledged in many analyses of Scotland (Harvie, 1994a: Mitchison, 1980b: 132; Nairn, 1981: 132; Brown et al, 1996: 1-2). Central to this argument is the Act of Union which guaranteed the independence of Scotland's key national institutions - the Church,

the legal system, the education system and Scottish local government (Brown et al, 1996: 5; Lynch, 1992; Paterson, 1994: 31). During the nineteenth century civil society expanded and by the early 1900s it encompassed a wide range of organisations and practices. This included for example trade unions, the Scottish Office, industry, business commerce, the media and cultural institutions (Brown et al, 1996: 2). The national significance of this civil society in capturing the idea of Scotland goes beyond its separate organisational structure. Equally important is the fact that it draws on a specifically Scottish heritage of myths, prejudices and illusions (Burnett 1972; Nairn 1981: 132). This network of interacting social institutions within a specified territory contributes to definitions of the national community (Elias, 1974: xix; Lindsay, 1976 reprinted in Paterson, 1998: 100).

The second feature of the importance of civil society is its role in the governance of Scotland. The state was largely concerned with the affairs of high politics, which meant the empire and security of the realm. Domestic, that is national, politics were handled at a local level through the combined forces of the parish, the local legal structures and local government agencies (Paterson, 1994: 12-15; 31-40; Brown et al, 1996: 3-7). After 1840 increasing state interest in domestic affairs was extended under the radical political agenda of nineteenth century liberalism. State intervention in society was however restricted to measures that were deemed necessary to "regulate morality" and mitigate the negative effects of the free market (Brown et al, 1996: 12; Morton, 1999: 22-3; Paterson, 1994: 46-7).

The legislation introduced after 1840 encompassed the early development of what is now collectively termed social policy. This included the reformed poor law, the introduction of a basic public health system, the development of elementary education, the development of local police services, housing regulations, and as this thesis

examines, Highland development (Paterson, 1994: 47-59). Responsibility for providing this agenda was vested in the network of public and private institutions which comprised Scotland's distinctive civil society (Morton, 1999: 22; Brown et al, 1996: 12). This embodied, for instance, a separate Scottish education system which emerged out of Scotland's parish school tradition, the church, philanthropic organisations, Scotland's local government agencies, and a growing body of local and national supervisory boards (Paterson, 1994: 48-72). The decentralised nature of the Victorian state ensured that in Scotland, civil society handled the everyday governance of the Scotland, with little interference from the London-based state-parliament (Morton 1994; 1999; Paterson, 1994).

Before proceeding with this line of analysis, it is important to acknowledge that not all scholars of nationalism in Scotland accept this argument. Tom Nairn (1997: 77-80) provides the most cogent critique of the notion that the autonomy of Scotland is located in its distinctive society. Nairn (1997: 77-78) argues that although Scotland had assembled its national institutions by 1707:

> There was nothing truly self-standing, autonomous or magically apolitical about Edinburgh's Augustan Antiquity, or its philosophy. Its unusual situation and cultural opportunities were made possible by an imposed state-level arrangement ... the Union Treaty (Nairn, 1997: 78).

This same line of argument is used by Nairn to contend that a so-called autonomous civil society failed to develop a truly national identity. More precisely he concludes that in dispensing with its own state the assemblage of the notion of civil society by the Scottish Enlightenment *philosophes* provided an odd form of national liberation, which had enduring disadvantages in the subsequent formation of nationalism (Nairn, 1997: 80). This is an important critique of much of the contemporary scholarship on Scottish society and nationhood. While there is much weight from a theoretical perspective to Nairn's argument, one cannot deny that as others have suggested it has been through

civil society that people have often collectively expressed what it means to be Scottish. It is therefore through the repositories of national identity - the church, the legal system, the school and university system, the media, as well as in a variety of societies, clubs and associations - that people experience and articulate a sense of an autonomous national community.

The development of the welfare state after 1910 introduced a more centralised state role over social policy. Even in this context Scotland maintained its distinctiveness in the interpretation of legislation, and a degree of autonomy over the fashioning of legislation as it applied to Scotland (Paterson, 1994: 103-31). The consolidation of powers in the Scottish Office ensured that this agency became a central player in running Scotland's distinctive welfare bureaucracy after the First World War. This national autonomy in the twentieth century represented rule by experts, which Paterson (1994: 103) asserts characterised the welfare bureaucracy of the technocratic state. After the 1930s it was accepted that the welfare state should reflect Scotland's national status as well as the particular social and economic problems associated with industrial decline. The essential point is that in the era of citizen politics a distinctive Scottish welfare bureaucracy continued to exert autonomy over the nation's affairs as civil society had done in the preceding century.

The character of Scottish civil society has changed since the nineteenth century yet it continues to exhibit a distinctive character (McCrone, 1992; Harvie, 1994a; Paterson, 1994; Brown et al, 1996). This has ensured it continued to be a repository for the idea of Scotland, and the terrain on which nationalism as autonomy has been executed. Using this work to answer the question *Is Scotland different from other nations?*, the conclusion is 'no'. Nairn (1981: 170) contends Scottish civil society was "too developed and too distinct to be assimilated" but his assertion that it was not

required to make its own state is inaccurate. The strength of Scotland's civil society within the British state ensured that "Scotland was indeed normal" and was able to renegotiate desired levels of autonomy when necessary (Paterson 1994: 70). The assessment of civil society and autonomy set out here provides the conceptual framework for the analysis of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity undertaken in this thesis. In order to make the case for this approach the remaining sections of this chapter turn to explanations of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland.

SPORT IN SCOTTISH CULTURE

The purpose of this section is to consider the place of sport in Scottish culture, and to reflect on why it tends to be marginal to accounts of Scottish society. The peripheral treatment of sport is most clearly evident in accounts which deal with pre-nineteenth century Scottish history (Devine, 1999; Lynch, 1992; Smout, 1985, 1987). Historian Tom Devine (1999: 88) comments on the church's "ineffectual denunciations" of the immorality associated with certain popular culture activities like the celebration of New Year and Shrove Tuesday (Fastern's E'en) during the early eighteenth century. He does not mention that the activities included cock-fighting (Burnett and Jarvie, 2000), folk football (Magoun, 1931: 3, 10) or shinty in the Highlands at New Year (MacLennan, 1999: 87) which are all substantiated within parish entries in the Old Statistical Account of Scotland (1795). Smout (1985) ignores games and recreations in his study of Scotland between 1560 and 1830, but in a subsequent volume acknowledges the sixteenth and seventeenth century games of mass football (Smout, 1987: 152). This precursor of modern football is also mentioned by Lynch (1992: 360) to introduce the importance of football in late-nineteenth century urban society.

The history of sport in Scotland reveals that games and recreations were part of Scottish cultural life prior to the nineteenth century (Burnett, 1995; Burnett and Jarvie, 2000). It is not necessary to examine this sporting culture in depth but six points summarise its key characteristics. First, Scotland's sporting culture was not uniform but was shaped by geography, social class and culture. Second, the earliest known written reference to sport in Scotland was a decree issued by the parliament of James I in 1424 prohibiting participation in football (Magoun, 1931: 1; Burnett and Jarvie, 2000). Third, before the nineteenth century different social class groups appear to have participated in different activities. For example golf, quoiting (*kitin*), bowling, curling, horse-racing and *caitch* (an antecedent of real tennis) are identified as sports of upper class culture (Burnett, 1995: 7-11; Burnett and Jarvie, 2000; Tranter, 2000). There is a gap in documented evidence of the activities of the common people, but "rough culture" (Brown, 1996: 211) may have included football, cock-fighting, *caitch*, curling, golf, shinty and running and strength activities that are now part of Highland Games events. Fourth, the influence of Europe on the Scottish court before the seventeenth century brought a number of games directly to Scotland (Burnett, 1995: 7; Burnett and Jarvie, 2000; Lynch 1992: 257; Smout, 1985: 171-75). Fifth, Presbyterian disaffection with games-playing influenced the decline of sports during the seventeenth century, but sport did not disappear. The absence of the Presbyterian church in the Highlands until the eighteenth century, and the strength of the Episcopalian and Catholic traditions in certain areas also contoured geographic differences in the decline of sports (Burnett, 1995: 14-21; Burnett and Jarvie, 2000). It can be concluded therefore that games and recreations had a place in Scottish life before the nineteenth century but it was neither a uniform, nor regularly occurring experience (Smith, 2000; Tranter, 1989: 227).

Irregular patterns of play, decline and scant written records may explain, in part, the absence of sport from social histories of pre-industrial Scottish society. A second explanation for the omission of games and popular recreations may lie in the meaning of the term *culture*. Prior to the late-nineteenth century *culture* referred to "intellectual development", "the general body of the arts", and spiritual and moral concerns (Williams, 1962: 16). Where *culture* is mentioned in studies of pre-nineteenth century Scottish society the focus tends to be on practices that accord with these definitions, such as architecture, poetry, literature, education (Harvie, 1994a: 79-92; Lynch, 1992: 257-62; Smout, 1985: 171-84). There has been some consideration of the popular dimensions of some of these cultural practices. For example Donaldson (1986: 149) argues that in the late nineteenth century a substantial popular Scottish press addressed the problems and experiences of urbanisation and industrialisation that contrasted in significant ways with the notion of high culture. While studies of popular cultural practices are evident, it cannot be denied that when it comes to examining the institutions and practices that embody nationalism sport is frequently ignored. Three of the most influential contemporary sociological analyses of Scottish society make no mention of sport (Brown et al, 1996; McCrone, 1992; Paterson, 1994). Sport is also absent from a critical analysis of the distinctive cultural material, perceived to have the potential to counter inferiorist and distorted cultural expressions associated with post-Union political subordination (Beveridge and Turnbull, 1989). The exclusion of sport from serious analyses suggests many scholars hold some misconceptions about this activity. Perhaps sport is considered to be an irrelevant side-show to more serious activities, or it is perceived to be part of the distorted cultural expressions of Scottish culture and identity.

These interpretations of culture are legitimate, but they fail to capture the important place that sport has been given in defining local, national and other cultural identities since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This is particularly the case with the rough culture that was institutionalised as the popular culture of dance halls, music halls and football stadia into modern sporting forms (Brown, 1996: 210-15). This notion of sport as part of popular culture has informed its inclusion in some accounts of Scottish life since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. For instance Devine (1999: 356-62) notes that sports such as quoits, pigeon and whippet racing, cycling, swimming, cricket, bowling and rugby were part of popular culture from the mid-nineteenth century, while Smout (1997: 156-7) draws connections between betting around horse racing and pedestrianism. Lynch (1992: xiii-iv) gives football and rugby a more prominent place in the introduction to his history of Scotland, but in considering the construction of local and national identities only football is considered (Lynch, 1992: 360-1).

The collection by Burnett and Jarvie (2000) provides more detailed histories of selected activities from Scottish sports culture. Three points summarise the characteristics of sport as part of Scottish culture since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The case studies of athletics, hockey and cricket illustrate that developments in Scotland's independent schools influenced Scotland's sports culture (Thomson, 2000; Connelly and Weir, 2000; Burnett, 2000). This is also the case with football and rugby, but both codes have perhaps been more distinctively shaped by local, and in the case of football, by religious identities than other Scottish sports. The second characteristic of Scottish sport is that there are at least four sports that Scots consider to be indigenous and which are regarded abroad as Scotland's cultural property (Burnett and Jarvie, 2000). Curling, golf and bowling have developed wider international appeal although in

different degrees, while shinty became confined mainly to Highland communities. A fifth sporting event, Highland Games, has also developed an international dimension as part of the cultural material of Scotland's diaspora (Jarvie, 1991: 11; 1998: 391-3).

The social history of Scotland's cultural sporting property reveals the third characteristic of the nation's sports culture. These activities were established before the English cult of athleticism surfaced during the nineteenth century; some scholars have identified this ideology as the important aspect of the development of British sport surfaced during the nineteenth century (Holt 1989; Mangan, 1981). Scotland's indigenous sports culture also developed outside the English public school system that cultivated athleticism. This system and its associated middle-class Victorian ideology, have perhaps been over-stated in social histories of British sport at the expense of other patterns and cultures which influenced specific modern sports. This is perhaps the most important characteristic for a case study of shinty since the modern game was initiated by Highland civil society in urban Britain whose traditional sport was a symbol of their distinctive Celtic cultural identity.

The evidence surrounding Scotland's sports culture reveals its diversity in content, origin and patterns of development. It also illustrates the ways in which sports reflect and reinforce the social, cultural and geographic plurality of Scottish culture. Sport has been "part of the life of the people" since at least the Middle Ages (Burnett, 1995: 5). It is therefore an element of culture that has been shaped by "patterns of wealth, poverty, leisure and communication" and which has changed over time (Burnett, 1995: 5). The most distinctive cultural marker of all Scotland's sports is shinty, which is examined in the next chapter.

THE NEAREST THING TO A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY?

This section critiques some of the key explanations of the relationship between sport and nationalism in Scotland. The analysis is organised around one question 'What general arguments have been presented to explain the relationship between Scottish sport, nationalism and cultural identity?' Most serious analyses of the intersection between sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland have tended to be dominated by studies of football; therefore this literature is the focus of the analysis in this section. Two specific conclusions are drawn: (i) previous studies of football are based on inadequate conceptual frameworks of nationalism; (ii) previous analyses of football, nationalism and identity tend to provide limited understandings of the alternative ways of being Scottish that might be expressed through different sports.

The absence of an independent Scottish parliament has not stopped Scots proclaiming a separate identity through sport. Scotland's teams and individual performers "may have contributed to the existence of a separate Scottish identity" (Jarvie and Reid, 1999b: 22), just as the sporting representatives of other nations inform definitions of their communities. National teams wear the blue and white connecting to the Saltire flag; kilts and tartan form part of official off-field outfits of national teams. The Saltire, Lion Rampant or thistle is incorporated into the emblems of national sports organisations, or the clothing of those who compete as individuals in international sport. This is reinforced by the institutional fabric of sport which is organised on a Scottish basis, although in a number of sports it fits (sometimes uncomfortably) with a British structure (Harvie, 1994a: 19; Kellas, 1989: 9). Sport is important because it gives Scots an international platform to proclaim their loyalties and a single national identity (Bairner, 1994: 11).

Sport has tended to be treated as a peripheral theme by Scotland's leading scholars of nationalism and cultural identity. It is absent from discussions of nationalism and autonomy in the stateless nation (Brown et al, 1996; McCrone, 1992; Paterson, 1994). Elsewhere serious analysis of the place of sport in contributing to definitions of the nation, and as an outlet for nationalism is limited. Kellas (1980: 129, 136) suggests that nationalism in Scotland has been a popular expression, related mainly to working class cultural activities like football, rather than to politics. At least three weaknesses are contained in this assessment. Referring to nationalism as a popular expression does not explain what this means, and tends to neutralise the political context and content of sport and other cultural practices. Culture is a core component of all nationalisms (Nairn, 1981: 101) and as chapter one illustrated some nations have included sport in constructing their nation. One example pertinent to this thesis is the case of the GAA, which used selected sports to reconstruct Irish national identity (Cronin, 1999: 70-116; de Búrca, 1980; 1999). The assertion that Scottish nationalism is a popular expression also trivialises the function that sport may have in defining the national community, perhaps because sport has been perceived to be an apolitical activity.

The third critique of Kellas' (1980: 129, 136) comment lies in the implication that Scottish nationalism is a working-class phenomenon. Social class may contribute to particular expressions of nationalism in relation to particular sports, but nationalism is not the preserve of working class Scots. The journalist Arnold Kemp (1993: 214) illustrated that sport has provided arenas for expressing different expressions of Scottish nationalism. Kemp (1993: 214) described the rugby internationals he attended in his youth as "mostly bourgeois festivals", which contrasted to football matches at Hampden and Wembley, when "our national passions were more fiercely on display". An apparent reversal in the comparative fortunes of the international rugby and football

teams during the 1990s, as well as the emergence of anti-English sentiments at rugby internationals, illustrate the ways in which connections between sport and nationalism can change. It can be concluded that both codes continue to be "symbols of modern Scotland" (Kemp, 1993: 215). The point being made here is that these sports illustrate different expressions of nationalism which have been contoured by class, and by specific political and historical circumstances, but nationalism is not the preserve of a particular social class, nor of a particular sport.

Although Scotland has a rich sporting culture it is football that has received most attention in relation to questions about national and cultural identity. The relationship between football, nationalism and identity in Scotland has been acknowledged in some academic literature (Devine, 1999: 361-2; 605-6; Lynch, 1992: 360-1; Smout, 1997: 152-5; Harvie, 1994a: 19, 197; 1998: 119-20). These accounts depict football as the sporting repository of Scottish national identity. For instance Devine (1999: 361-2) describes football as the focus for Scottish national identity, while others refer to it as Scotland's national game (Lynch, 1992: 360; Bairner, 1994: 9). The benign comments are substantiated in popular literature and media representations of the national significance of football but popular discourses tend to give more elegant accounts. It is claimed that "Football is simply the most significant national activity in Scotland" (Cosgrove, 1986: 99) or that "Scottish football is all about what the soul of the country needs, its heart remembers and its mind cares to forget" (Archer, 1976: 104). One problem with a number of explanations of the connection between football and nationalism is that they exclude images of Scotland which are not predominantly white, male, and industrial working-class.

Those involved in football have also contributed benign views on the national importance of the sport. For example the journalist Bob Crampsey (1978: 1) and one

former national coach Andy Roxburgh (cited Rodger, 1988: 14) concur that the Scottish obsession with football might be a displaced political involvement. One commentator reflected there is something wrong with a nation that expresses its nationhood in relation to football (McIlvanney, 1988: 17), but the connection is common. In contrast to these prosaic analyses Nairn (1981: 116) dismissed football patriots as part of the tartanry that defined popular Scottish culture. This tartan monster was "a sub-culture that had no place in 'the elevated spheres' of "a great national culture" because it had not developed into a political nationalism (Nairn 1981: 116).

The 'sport as political substitute' theory has been a concern for some supporters of the Nationalist movement during the twentieth century (Harvie, 1994b: 46; Jarvie and Reid, 1999: 28). The idea was evident in the remark of one former Scottish National Party (SNP) MP that the Scottish electorate were "ninety minute patriots whose nationalist outpourings are expressed only at major sporting events" (Sillars, 1992: 1). This is a limited political conception of nationalism which assumes nationhood can only be expressed as statehood. There is also an implication that nationalism is the preserve of the party which seeks political independence, but this need not be the case. During the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century liberalism was "an expression of national values" (Fry, 1991: 2), that satisfied Scotland's national aspirations. The connection between politics, nationalism and football was perhaps overstated in the suggestion that Scotland's exit from the 1978 World Cup finals may have influenced the inconclusive result of the 1979 referendum on devolution (Gallagher, 1991: 106). Hampden Park and football may have been "the nearest thing to a national assembly" (Crampsey, 1978: 75) that Scots have had, but those who make such claims have failed to prove this is the reason why Scots have failed to support the Nationalist movement.

A prominent theme in studies of Scottish international football is the attention given to its role in defining Scotland's relationship with England. Football is used to display a national consciousness that is definitively 'not English', but which has become a more overt expression of anti-English nationalism since the 1970s. International matches against England were important events in the calendar of industrial Scotland when supporters displayed their distinctive identity through tartan, flags and an ideology of lost independence to be temporarily regained on the football field (Reid, unpublished, 1990: 120-5). Popular accounts of football tend not to include formal theories of nationalism. However, many of these accounts describe the national significance of football as a metaphor for Scotland as an inferior, subordinate under-developed colony within the Union. One example illustrates the tone of some popular analyses of Scotland's experience in this context:

> Scotland's relationship with England lies at the centre of our national schizophrenia, a tension between dependence and independence which inevitably spills over into football (Cosgrove, 1986: 102).

The neo-nationalist politics that emerged during the 1970s drew some vigour from the developing oil industry in north-east Scotland (Harvie, 1994a: 183-7), and this too found its way into the popular rhetoric of football patriots. In Archer's (1976: 105) view in deprived, neglected Scotland,

> the pangs of nationalism - the right to self-government - began to rear at Hampden. 'Not a country, eh? We'll ... show youse. Fitba, that's all we know or get ... It's oor oil. See the English. Nae worth a barrowload of shite.

These explanations may be relevant to the social and political context of the 1970s and 1980s, but they do not provide a suitable framework for understanding shinty between 1835 and 1939. Shinty was not popular in England, and even in Scotland it was largely enjoyed by Highland Scots, so shinty occasions could not be outlets for anti-Englishness. Indeed there is little evidence to support the view that nationalism before

the 1970s was anti-English. Moreover most Scots, Highlanders and others, were proud to assert their distinctive identity, but until at least 1945 most Scots were content with the constitutional arrangements of the Union.

The accounts of football and nationalism considered so far tend to reinforce the idea that Scotland is a unified imagined community. The image tends to conceal the ways in which sport, including football, reinforces the social divisions and cultural plurality within Scotland (Jarvie and Reid, 1999: 22-3). In observing that "football was politically important because it defined class, gender, religion, and nationality" Harvie (1998: 119-20) captured some sense of these divisions. This point, reiterated by Jarvie (1994: 164), has been examined more fully by Bairner (1994: 9) who concedes that although a recognisable Scottish national identity surrounds international football, the sport is also used to promote "the kind of divisions which militate against the development of a uniform sense of national identity". The sociologist David McCrone (1992: 193) has remarked that there are alternative ways of being Scottish. He highlights particular dichotomies - male/female, black/white and Protestant/Catholic adding that culture is a key carrier of expressions of an inclusive, rather than exclusive identity. There is however a limited body of research which examines the ways in which sport in general, but football in particular, reproduces or challenges these different ways of being Scottish.

The one exception to this pattern concerns the ways in which football projects nationalisms that are contoured by interconnected schismatic dichotomies. The schisms - Catholic/Protestant, Republican/Loyalist, and Irish Nationalist/British (Scottish) Unionist - appear to fortify the religious sectarianism that surrounds football in Scotland and which has been probed in a variety of studies (Bradley, 1995; 1998b; 1998c; Finn, 1994a; 1994b; Murray, 1984; 1988; Wilkie, 1986). Sectarianism has also shaped

Scottish football at the national level (Bairner, 1994: 17), but this has been submerged in most analyses of the relationship between the national game and nationalism. Even if these schisms are suspended for international occasions, this is only for a temporary period.

The construction of contested identities in Scottish society is a complex process that is not restricted to football (Bradley, 1995; 1998a; 1998b; 1999). Some literature does consider the wider socio-political context of this problem but a stronger critical commentary is required of the ways in which Scottish civil society reproduces the Protestant/British discourse. Contemporary studies of Scottish society have paid little attention to these issues, implying that in a more secular Scotland sectarianism is a marginal issue (Brown et al, 1996; McCrone, 1992; Bruce, 1999: 1). In August 1999 the interjection by composer James MacMillan (MacMillan, 2000) fuelled further discussion on this issue, which suggests that the notion of an inclusive civic Scottish nationalism remains a matter of debate. Football is perhaps the most obvious sporting arena where cultural, ethnic and religious identities intersect with contested ideas about nationality and nationhood, but other sports may also be contoured by these identities. Rugby union is one example where the perceived class associations of the game may reproduce religious divisions. The journalist Ian Bell (*Scotland on Sunday* Sport, 12 March 2000: 16) contends that rugby has little profile in Glasgow's Catholic comprehensive schools, which may be one explanation for why the national team has fielded few Catholic players in recent years. This is not an overt display of sectarianism, but it does reveal the complex ways in which religion intersects with ideas about the nation.

It is outwith the scope of this thesis to examine in detail how other ways of being Scottish are expressed through sport. Recent literature has noted that women have

been excluded from the iconography and the power structures of the nation, especially as this is embedded in culture and civil society (Christianson, 1996: 122; Crawford, Dunn, Kerrigan, McGuirk, Riach and MacLachlan, 1994: iii). There is a paucity of research on women's experiences of sport but the work of Tranter (1989; 1994) and Walker (1994a) reveals a strong tradition of women's participation. More detailed critical analysis is required of the ways in which women encounter the nation through sport if we are to get beyond suggestions that their interest in football results is to gauge the mood of male relatives, or that "most of these women are happy when the Scottish national team does well" (Bairner, 1994: 21). Similar limitations are evident with studies of the extent to which racism against Asian Scots is reproduced in football (Dimeo and Finn, 1998; Horne, 1995; Saeed, Blain and Forbes, 1999; Bairner, 1994: 21). As ideas of Scottishness are rethought at the end of the twentieth century the discourse must also address more vigorously the extent to which different ethnic groups use sport to articulate their multiple identities.

These caveats noted, it is the division between Highland and Lowland Scotland that is the most relevant for this study. Highland Scotland is the geographic region which embodied the most distinctive cultural community in Scotland's story. As some scholars have commented the people's game of this community is shinty, one of Scotland's indigenous sports. It is also acknowledged that the antecedent folk origins of shinty lie in the cultural legacy which Scotland has shared with Ireland, yet the ethno-religious schisms that shape the nationalisms of some parts of Scotland do not appear to manifest themselves through shinty's Irish connections. In preparation for the case study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939, the final section of this chapter examines selected studies that have investigated Celtic sporting images of the nation. It draws on some of the research addressed in section 2 to consider

the ways in which certain sports may embody dual identities that may be expressed as Unionist nationalism as well as Celtic identities that have the potential to be nationalisms.

CELTIC SPORTS, AUTONOMY AND UNIONIST NATIONALISM

A new generation of Scottish scholars has moved beyond football to investigate the social and cultural significance of sport in Scottish society. This section examines the ways in which this literature explains how Celtic sports are signifying practices of specific cultural communities within the nation. The discussion probes the nationalisms and cultural identities that have been articulated on this cultural terrain. It is suggested that between 1835 and 1939, sports provided the institutional framework within which specific groups in Scottish society were able to execute autonomy over their own affairs. The Celtic identities associated with these sports resonated with at least two forms of nationalism that were manifest in Scottish society during this period. On the one hand there is the representation through Gaelic sports of Irish national identity by the immigrant community in Scotland after 1897 (Bradley, 1998a; 1999a, 1999b). On the other the development of Highland Gatherings incorporated selected symbols of Gaelic Scotland, but reinforced the Unionist nationalism that dominated in Scotland. The question that arises from this section is in what ways did shinty, Scotland's indigenous Celtic sport, replicate these, or other, collective identities?

The strength of specific studies of modern Scotland is that they remind us that nationalism in Scotland has had both political content and context, even though it has not necessarily been expressed in terms of high politics (Brown, et al 1996; Finlay, 1997; Morton, 1999; Paterson, 1994; 1997). The cultural dimensions of autonomy have been acknowledged in certain studies but limited attention is given to popular cultural practices through which Scots have mediated their identities since the last quarter of the

nineteenth century (Brown et al, 1996; Paterson, 1994; 1997). In his study Morton (1999) demonstrates how civil society in Edinburgh was an important institutional network for cultural nationalism, and also for domestic governance. However there is a need to investigate other aspects of civil society in other parts of Scotland in order to better understand the multiple identities that may have been expressed through this network. The identities expressed may not aspire to statehood, but they are not devoid of political meaning that may be associated with the idea of autonomy.

Civil society is "the space ... between the household and the state ... which affords possibilities of concerted action and social self-organisation" (Bryant, 1993: 399). It is worth noting that in Britain the state was less directly involved in organised sport before 1960 than we have come to expect since. The social history of sport in Scotland illustrates that it developed as part of the distinctive Scottish civil society that was unfettered by Westminster politics. Sport was an institutional framework in which Scottishness could be cultivated, but it also provided mechanisms for the administration and exercise of political and cultural power within Scotland, and in a global setting. Sport was part of the wider institutional network of civil society through which national and cultural autonomy could be expressed. As citizen politics became more firmly established after the Third Reform Act (1884) and social policy was increasingly absorbed into the formal public institutions of government, organised sport consolidated its place as one of a number of cultural institutions through which autonomy was executed. The institutional context of sport, and the symbolic and real functions it fulfilled in constructing identities, have generally been absent from studies of sport, nationalism and cultural identity.

In section one it was noted that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the relationship between the state and civil society in Scotland contributed to the

development of dual nationalisms or identities (Mackinstosh, 1974: 408-12; Paterson, 994: 65). Both Morton (1994; 1996: 273; 1999: 195) and Paterson (1994: 60) suggest that this Unionist nationalism was built on the belief that unionism and nationalism were mutually dependent. Nationalism in Scotland was a pragmatic approach to sovereignty, which guaranteed Scottish identity, but through the Empire it had an outlet to export that identity as well as to participate fully in the administrative and commercial opportunities of that Empire (Harvie, 1994a: 56-72; Paterson, 1994: 60). The dual identities contained in the concept of Unionist nationalism are important, but to date there are few studies which incorporate this concept into explanations of the relationship between sport, nationalism and cultural identity.

There are a number of ways in which sport intersected with ideas of nationhood and cultural identity in Scotland, which illustrate the autonomy of sport, and the concrete ways in which alternative nationalisms have been expressed. Yet as the following examples illustrate it may be too straightforward to assert that Unionist nationalism was the only expression of dual identity in nineteenth and early twentieth century Scotland. The remainder of this section illustrates the ways in which 'Nationalism in sport paralleled the dualism of the Union" (Harvie, 1994a: 20) by examining two images of the cultural artefacts of a Celtic nation: Highland Gatherings and Games, and Gaelic sports.

In his analysis of Scottish culture Chapman (1978: 9-13) contends that since the eighteenth century the image of the nation Scotland displays to the world is a Highland one. In looking to the Highlands for the symbols and location of identity, Scots constructed an image of an autonomous Celtic nation. This 'Celtic' nation benefited from its participation in the Union, and obscured the realities of the Highland experience that included clearances, emigration, and famine, and marginalised the

Gaelic culture that embodied Scotland's Celtic past (Chapman, 1978: 13; Jarvie, 1991: 60). One of the most prominent sporting activities through which this constructed Celtic image of purple hills, romantic heroes, kilts and tartan was promoted is the Highland Gatherings and Games (Jarvie, 1989; 1991; 1992; 1994).

The development of Highland sporting practices during the nineteenth century contributed to an image of the Highlands as a sporting playground for Britain's social elite. In his analysis of these sporting practices between 1840 and 1920 Jarvie (1992: 167) argues that the Gatherings reproduced tartan symbolism, clan regalia and images of harmony between social classes which "contributed to a certain vision of Gaelic culture that was initially popularised during the reign of Queen Victoria". It is asserted that the close bond established by the monarch with the Highlands in general and the Braemar Royal Highland Gathering in particular, came to symbolise an unstated acceptance "of a particular definition of state, crown and nation" which represented a particular expression of Britishness (1994: 158-9). In this respect Britishness embodied certain social codes, events on the social calendar that included the grouse shooting season beginning on 12 August, the Argyllshire Gathering, the Oban Ball, the pheasant shooting season as well as Braemar Royal Highland Society Gathering in early September. This Anglo-British nationalism (Jarvie, 1992: 171; 1994: 164) drew on a sentimental and romantic image of Scotland's past, but it reinforced the hegemony of the Lowland Scottish and British social elite in the Highlands. There are some similarities with the symbolic expression of Unionist nationalism; Highland sporting practices are considered to reflect an image of Scottish cultural identity that reinforces the concept of cultural sub-nationalism (Nairn, 1981:162). Placing the symbolic role of the monarchy and British social elite at the heart of Anglo-Britishness perhaps overlooks the contribution that the urban middle-classes made to redefining identity,

that more outwardly embraced the union, empire and the changing role of civil society in mediating dual nationalisms.

The sporting nationalism that expressed a more radical dual identity in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Scotland is that of the immigrant Irish community. Much has been written about the ways in which Celtic Football Club (1887), established as a charitable organisation for poor relief specifically in Catholic parishes of Glasgow's east end (Murray, 1984: 17-18), has been a focus for subsequent generations' loyalty to an Irish, rather British national identity. The work of Bradley (1998a: 24; 1999a: 168) reveals that after about 1895 a desire for Irish cultural activities around the Glasgow area reflected the Gaelic revival already underway in Ireland. The formation of a Gaelic Class at the end of 1895 marked the first Gaelic League branch in the city. Along with the Catholic church, and the Irish National League, the main organisation promoting Irish home rule in Scotland, this was part of a fledgling network of social and cultural institutions serving the Irish diaspora (Devine, 2000: 494-5). Within two years this cultural activity embraced Gaelic sports as the first recorded GAA club in Scotland was established at a meeting in the Young Ireland Hall in Glasgow in 1897 (Bradley, 1998a: 24; 1999a: 168). The Red Hugh O'Neill Gaelic Athletic Club reflected the presence in the area of "respectable young men of Irish birth or parentage, and of good moral character". However it was perhaps the more politically active members of the Irish community who were behind the formation of this Glasgow branch of the GAA (Bradley, 1998a: 24; 1999a: 169).

Gaelic sports continued to develop in Scotland, although at times concerns were expressed that this would detract from the prominent position of Celtic Football Club (Bradley, 1998a: 26). By 1906 the Gaelic sports network around the Glasgow and Lanarkshire areas was sufficiently strong to sustain its first hurling championship, and a

football championship in Scotland. A vibrant Irish political and cultural scene continued to assert the distinctive experience and national aspirations of the Irish diaspora in Scotland until the 1920s, after which the impact of the war and the struggle against British rule in Ireland, diminished its profile (Bradley, 1999a: 169). There is some evidence to support the view that this Irish activity developed as a distinct and introverted ethnic enclave (Devine 2000: 495). Yet the Irish community did not develop its social, cultural or political activities entirely divorced from other groups in Scottish society. There were attempts to establish sporting links between the GAA in Scotland and in Ireland through hurling and shinty matches (Bradley, 1998a: 3; 12; 27). The politics of home rule and land reform united prominent Celtic radicals and some Scottish Liberals, although after 1886 the issue of home rule contributed to divisions in these movements within Scotland (Devine, 2000: 496). The working-class experience of the Irish Catholic community in Scotland also provided a vehicle for its participation in the Labour movement, particularly through trade unionism, that further ensured it was not wholly insulated from other groups in Scottish society divorced (Devine, 2000: 495). The important point to note however is that through their social and cultural activities, many of the Irish in Scotland retained an identity that was more closely aligned to Ireland, and did not conform to the Unionist nationalism asserted through much of Scotland's civil society.

In a recent collection Grant Jarvie (1999: 2) contends that there are a variety of ways in which certain peripheral communities in European states have used sport to assert elements of autonomy "that tend to be passionate about national and regional forms of culture". These Celtic cultures illustrate the ways in which the idea of being Celtic must be unpacked in terms of time, space and content. The case of Highland Gatherings and Gaelic sports illustrate how case studies of two specific sporting

practices have contributed to particular versions of Celtic identity in Scotland. Yet as this chapter has already indicated, more detailed critical analysis is required of the ways in which shinty, Scotland's indigenous sport, intersects with some of these explanations of nationalism and cultural identity. The question has been asked most cogently by Telfer (1994: 123), "which nation or which expression or image of the nation" did a game like shinty talk to - "Scottish, British, Highland or Celtic?" This is one of the questions that this study of shinty seeks to address.

SUMMARY

In preparing the groundwork for the case study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity, this chapter has examined a number of themes arising from the literature on sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland. The case for Scotland's status as a stateless nation within the British state has been examined. It is argued that national and cultural autonomy has been exercised through a distinctive civil society that mobilises history, traditions and cultural practices to define the nation in changing circumstances. The separate organisational structure of sport, and a distinctive Scottish sporting heritage, has been an important element of this civil society that contributes to definitions of the nation, but also embodies the social and cultural divisions and plurality which exists in Scottish society. There are however a number of weaknesses with previous studies of nationalism and cultural identity which do not lend themselves to a study of shinty. First many studies of sport, nationalism and cultural identity are based on football, which reflect a Glasgow centricity in their evidence and theoretical exposition of Scottishness. Second, the studies of Celtic sports illustrate in different ways that alternative nationalisms and identities have been shaped by the specific content, interests and historical period in which they were developed. Third, explanations of autonomy, civil society and Unionist nationalism are useful concepts for

examining nationalism in Scotland. More attention must be directed however to the capacity of civil society to be contoured by the particular interests and cultural characteristics of specific regions.

A number of scholars have opened up research on the alternative Scotlands that are expressed through sporting culture. In this context it has been suggested that shinty was heavily contoured by the social, cultural and political circumstances of the Highland communities where it has held its enduring appeal (Harvie, 1994b: 50). But in the wider context of Scottish civil society, a number of important questions have yet to be answered. For instance: What characteristics of Highland communities have shaped the development of this sport? In what ways has shinty paralleled the development of civil society? In what ways does shinty reflect the Unionist nationalism or Celtic radicalism of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? Why did shinty fail to mobilise political and cultural nationalism in the way that the GAA did in Ireland? It is these questions which inform the critical case study of shinty which is addressed in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3

THE FOLK ORIGINS OF SHINTY

This chapter examines the place of shinty in Scotland prior to 1835. More specifically the objective is to establish and trace the folk origins of this sport, and to evaluate critically the claim that shinty was Scotland's national game. In order to investigate these two themes, a number of questions lie at the heart of the analysis. In what ways did shinty represent an ancient pan-Celtic nation? What were the patterns of participation in shinty before 1835? Was shinty shaped by the broader social, cultural and political circumstances within Scotland prior to 1835? What particular characteristics of Highland social history may have affected the continued presence of shinty in specific communities? Is the claim that shinty is Scotland's true national game legitimate?

These problems are addressed within three substantive sections. Section one examines the case that can be made for shinty as the sport of a pan-Celtic community. Section two probes the presence of shinty in Scotland from the middle of the eleventh century until the late-seventeenth century. During this period the Gaelic hegemony that had been evident throughout much of the kingdom of Scots was marginalised from definitions of Scotland, and used to define the Highlands as a distinct cultural region of Scotland. Section 3 examines the history of shinty from about the seventeenth century until the early nineteenth century, and demonstrates that while the folk game began to disappear from many parts of the Lowlands, it remained a popular recreation in the Highlands. The summary pulls together the key strands of the analysis of shinty until 1835. It is concluded that although the game was once played throughout Scotland, shinty stood firmly as the national sport of the Gael.

The following analysis is not meant to be a comprehensive history of shinty, the Highlands or Scotland prior to 1835. Rather the primary intention is to demonstrate the fact that an initial phase in the development of shinty took place between about the sixth century and 1835. It is argued that during this period, the basis was established for recognising shinty as a cultural symbol of Celtic Scotland. A secondary concern is to illustrate the ways in which the Highlands were constructed as a distinct cultural region within Scotland. This cultural region can be defined by a combination of elements of culture and social practices, in conjunction with the unique circumstances of Highland social history.

SHINTY - THE SPORT OF A PAN-CELTIC NATION?

Tracing the folk origins of any sport is a complex process. It is not uncommon to hear claims that contemporary sports are derived from activities played in earlier epochs, which bear similar characteristics. In tracing the folk origins of shinty, this critical analysis argues that the game was socially and historically constructed. Its significance and the meanings attached to it can therefore only be understood in relation to the social and political context of the historical period in which it moved. In setting out this case the analysis probes one question: in what ways did shinty depict a pan-Celtic nation?

Shinty, along with golf, curling and bowls, is considered to be one of the sports that are indigenous to Scotland (Burnett and Jarvie, 2000), but the antecedent origins of the game come from a broader cultural context. One history of shinty described it as "a people's pastime ... bulked largely in the Gaelic life of old ... from the very earliest times" (Macdonald, 1919: 27-33). In a subsequent history of shinty Father Ninian MacDonald, reflected that shinty was "the national game of the Gael" (MacDonald, 1932: 16). These two accounts give an indication of the cultural roots of the sport. A

crude stick and ball activity similar to shinty is said to have been introduced to Scotland by the Scots from Ireland around the sixth century (Hutchinson, 1989: 1; MacLennan, 1995a: 2; 1998a: 1).[7] Shinty was one component of the culture of this tribe, the Scots, which also included Christianity and the Gaelic language. In Scottish Gaelic shinty was called *iomain*, or *camanachd* while in Irish Gaelic it was *camanácht* (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: viii).[8]

The Scots were a group of Irish Gaels from Dalriada, an area in what is now Antrim in north-east Ireland (Adamson, 1994: 5; Lynch, 1992: 17). By the beginning of the sixth century the Scots had established a colony "in the western districts" of the territory that is now Scotland (Skene, 1886: 2). This colony was part of the pan-Celtic kingdom of Dalriada that linked the peoples living on both sides of the Irish Sea. Dalriada included what is now Antrim in Northern Ireland, Argyll, Kintyre, Cowal and Lorne on the Scottish mainland, and the islands of Bute, Arran, Islay, Colonsay, Jura and Mull (Lynch, 1992: 17). There are few documentary sources that confirm how prolific camanachd was at this time. It is therefore the oral tradition of this pan-Celtic community that provides the richest source of references to the ancient game of camanachd. Some of this oral evidence, much of it in Gaelic, has been recorded in a variety of sources (Campbell, 1892; MacLagan, 1901; Macdonald, 1919; MacDonald, 1932; Ó Maolfabhail, 1973; Hutchinson, 1989; MacLennan, 1995a; 1995b; 1998b).[9] A

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[7] It is possible that there had been had been migrations between parts of the territories that are now the south-west of Scotland and the north-east of the island of Ireland prior to the sixth century. At its narrowest point thirteen miles of water that would have provided a means of communication, rather than a barrier separate these land areas. The first Christian Church in Scotland was established at Candida Casa, now Whithorn in Dumfries and Galloway, in 398 AD. Until the sixth century this was an important centre of Christianity for Britain and the north of Ireland (Adamson, 1994: 1-4).

[8] Ó Maolfabhail (1973: viii) notes there have been two traditions of hurling in Ireland "One of these survives to the present day in Scotland under the name of camánacht (known in English as shinty) ... Camanachd is the accepted spelling in modern Scottish Gaelic." Macdonald (1932: 15) remarks that "the national game of Camanachd [is] now more usually known as Shinty."

[9] As a non-Gaelic speaker I have relied upon English translations of the material which comprises this oral tradition. In addition to the collections cited I am indebted to Dr H D MacLennan for his assistance with identifiying and translating relevant material.

selection of this Celtic mythology is outlined here in order to illustrate the place of camanachd within the culture of the pan-Celtic Scots.

The earliest known documented references to camanachd are contained in one of two of the oldest surviving manuscripts in Irish literature (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 6; Hutchinson, 1989: 15). The *Book of Leinster* (*An Leabhar Laigneach*, AD 1180)[10] documents what appears to be one of the earliest surviving documentary sources in Gaelic. The myths documented in the manuscripts are fictional, yet they have remained part of Highland folklore during the twentieth century. There may have been some factual basis to these myths that have been preserved in the oral tradition, but we cannot be certain of this. This noted these myths are valuable sources since they are the means by which by pre-modern and modern cultures explain or understand some aspect of their reality or nature (Fiske, 1995: 88; Turner, 1993: 67-72).

The *Book of Leinster* records that a game of camanachd is said to have taken place in 1272 BC prior to the battle of Magh Tuired (now Moytura in County Mayo).[11] The legend states that the game was won by the Fir Bolg, the established rulers in Ireland, but that the invading Tuatha Dé Danann were victorious in battle (MacDonald, 1932: 30-1; Hutchinson, 1989: 15-16; Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 7-8). One of the kings of the Tuatha Dé Danann, Lugh, became an important figure in the folklore of camanachd. It is claimed Lugh introduced public sports to Ireland and he is linked with the Celtic harvest festival of *Lúnasa* at the beginning of August. Lúnasa was celebrated with great fairs, including the *Tailteann Fair* at which camanachd was a central feature. The Tailteann fairs are said to have been held in Ireland from at least 1800 BC until about

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[10] The oldest surviving manuscript of Irish literature appears to be *Leabhar na hUidhre* written c AD 1100 (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 6).

[11] MacDonald (1932: 30-31) remarks that he found two references to the game. The first in the Annals of Ireland is AM 3303 or approximately 1896 BC Te second reference is c.1750 BC. We should not become too concerned over the precise date. As MacDonald (1932: 30) remarks it was "a very remote date in [the] Celtic story".

AD 1180, their disappearance coinciding with the death of the last king of Ireland (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 7-8; Hutchinson, 1989: 15; MacLennan, 1999: 86). As chapter six of this thesis illustrates the resurrection of the Tailteann Games in 1924 had an important resonance for Ireland in the 1920s, and for celebrating the place of modern shinty and hurling in a renewed image of pan-Celtic community.

The second myth highlighted here is the Cú Chulainn saga (Macdonald, 1919: 27-8; MacDonald, 1932: 36-8; Hutchinson, 1989: 16-19; MacLennan, 1995: 17-24). It provides some insight into how the ancient game of camanachd may have been played. The narrative also depicts an image of a warrior culture in which camanachd was a preparation for war. The saga recounts tales of Cú Chulainn the most renowned and outstanding warrior hero of Irish and Scottish legend. The Ulster Cycle as these myths are collectively called are thought to depict the north of Ireland in the first centuries AD (Adamson, 1994: 3-4). These tales cannot be taken as 'historical' evidence yet they give some insight into one Celtic society during the Iron Age, albeit a mythologised version (Adamson, 1994: 3). The image of the Celtic warrior-hero wielding a caman is a recurrent theme of the Cú Chulainn saga. For example as a young boy Setanta (as he was called at that time) travelled from his home to Eamhain, the seat of the kings of Ulster where he had heard the king would spend part of the day watching the youths "playing games and camanachd" (Hutchinson, 1989: 17). When Cú Chulainn arrived at Eamhain, "thrice fifty youths ... were ... at their games" (MacLennan, 1995a: 22). This particular tale concludes with a further indication of how the caman and ball were used, with a description of "the hole-game (cluich-pholl)" (MacLennan, 1995a: 22). In the romantic Celtic myth of Cú Chulainn "thrice fifty youths" could not succeed in putting the ball past him into the hole. When one hundred and fifty youths kept goal however,

Cú Chulainn "put the thrice fifty balls unerringly into the hole" (MacLennan, 1995a: 24).

The final Celtic legend highlighted here connects camanachd with the instalment of a Christian abbey on the island of Iona in the sixth century. The Iona settlement was established by Saint Columba around AD 570 although it is thought he first arrived in Scotland in AD 563 (Lynch, 1992: 31; Adamson, 1994: 5). Columba was a kinsman of the Irish Gaelic dynasty the Uí Néill, and a branch of this tribe were the Dalriada Scots. It has been suggested that the events surrounding Columba's departure from Ireland included some disagreement during a game of shinty (MacDonald, 1932: 45-8; Hutchinson, 1989: 24; MacLennan, 1998a: 1). In summary following a dispute over Columba's inappropriate transcription of a book, he and his adversary agreed to go to Tara, the seat of the King of Ireland, to seek his judgement. The King judged in favour of Finnian, Columba's opponent, and Columba said the king would be punished for this. At this time a separate dispute broke out at Tara between the son of the King of Connaught, and the King of Ireland's son during a game of camanachd. The Prince of Connaught killed the other by striking him on the head with his caman, and then sought sanctuary with Columba. The High King of Ireland had him removed and put to death. Columba swore to avenge the sentence against him, and the death of the young prince "who was executed notwithstanding that he had placed himself under my protection" (MacDonald, 1932: 48). Columba was eventually forced into exile, sailing from "Loch Foyle beyond the Bann" until he "came to land in Dal Riada" (MacLennan, 1995a: 41).

This Celtic mythology is an important dimension of the folk origins of shinty for at least three reasons. First, as Adamson (1994: 3-4) attests, the characters move regularly between Ulster and Scotland. Even if these myths were part of a fictional oral tradition created sometime before the twelfth century, they suggest an awareness of a

pan-Celtic community. Second, many of these Celtic myths were part of an oral culture that persisted throughout the western Highlands at the end of the nineteenth century. Some were passed on to the folklorist John Francis Campbell, who remarked he often heard the same tale recounted with little deviation by older people who could not read (Hutchinson, 1989: 21). Third, the myths of primitive or ancient cultures provide a framework for understanding the past as its inhabitants understood it. My objective was to demonstrate how this form of narrative might have given the pan-Celtic people of Scotland and Ireland a sense of their shared identity.

Before the eleventh century Scotland was not a unified nation. In addition to the Dalriada Scots four other autonomous peoples occupied parts of the land that became Scotland. The Picts dominated Caledonia, which stretched approximately from Caithness in the north, south to the rivers Forth and Clyde, and until sixth century west into the area taken by the Scots. The Britons of Strathclyde occupied territory from Cumbria to Dumbarton, and the Anglo-Saxons controlled what is Northumberland and Lothian in the east. From the eighth century Norse raiders began to take control of the western isles, the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland and Caithness (Lynch, 1992: 1-25; 43-49; Jarvie, 1991: 16-17). The Picts, writes Skene (1886: 126), probably "formed the groundwork of the future kingdom of Celtic Scotland". Lynch (1992: 23) supports this view remarking that "the Celticisation" of Caledonia can be detected as early as the second century. By the middle of the ninth century the Picts had disappeared as a distinct group, the result of invasions by other the other groups, and of intermarriage especially with the Scots (Lynch, 1992: 12-23). The Celticisation of this region was consolidated with the arrival, and subsequent ascendancy of the Dalriada Scots. The geographical territory identified as the foundation of Celtic Scotland is important in this case study, since it closely resembles the region that came to be called the Highlands.

Between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries the fusion of the remaining four groupings took place. This unification process represented the second and most important stage in the "making of the kingdom" of Scots (Lynch, 1992: 21). The process was a complex one that included expansionism and intermarriage. The first King of Scots, Kenneth mac Alpin (843-58), was a Dalriadic king (Chapman, 1978: 10; Lynch, 1992: 41; Jarvie, 1991: 17), but the kingdom which he and his successors ruled was subject to tensions and power struggles. This noted there are at least two features of the emerging kingdom that illustrate the hegemony of the Dalriada Scots by the eleventh century. First the term Scotland, or its Latin form *Scotia*, was used to refer to some parts of what is modern Scotland (Skene, 1886: 1). Prior to the eleventh century *Scotia* "was exclusively appropriated to the island of Ireland" (Skene, 1886: 2). Second, until at least the middle of the eleventh century the Scots' culture and language was pre-eminent in the fledgling Scottish kingdom (Withers, 1988: 4; Kidd, 1994b: 1205). As MacAulay (1994: 113) explains:

> Long ago ... Scotland was ruled by a Gaelic leadership: Gaelic culture was the ascendant culture, the Gaelic language was the major language through which meaning in all prestigious domains (apart from the ritual dominance of Latin) was mediated. The very name 'Scotland' denoted Gaeldom.

Given the pre-eminence of Gaelic culture in Scotland until the eleventh century it is reasonable to suggest that camanachd, the sport of the Gael, spread to other parts of the developing kingdom. It is probable that the other cultural groups that were incorporated into the kingdom played similar stick and ball games. The evidence considered here suggests however that the ancient *camanachd* represented the antecedent origins of the folk games from which modern shinty has been developed. This is grounded in one recurring feature in shinty's history: the awareness that shinty is

the sport of the Gael that is embedded in the myths and legends of an ancient pan-Celtic culture.

The objective of this section has been to examine the ways in which shinty depicted an ancient pan-Celtic nation. It has been argued that the evidence found in certain Celtic myths reinforced the image and legacy of the warrior tribe that secured a foothold along the western seaboard of what became Scotland. Camanachd was built into these narratives which people used to define themselves and their past. As the kingdom of Scots began to take shape its initial strong Irish-Celtic emphasis was informed by the Dalriada Scots who had proved strongest in the processes of unification. It is therefore deduced that their sport might have spread, like other elements of their culture, to other parts of the kingdom. After the eleventh century, Gaeldom began to lose its pre-eminent position in the kingdom of Scotland. The reasons for this are examined in the next section within the context of the constructed division of Scotland into the Highlands and the Lowlands.

THE "IRISH GAYMNE" AND THE MARGINALISING OF GAELDOM

This section examines the place of shinty in Scotland between the eleventh and seventeenth centuries. The analysis considers the folk game of shinty during this period within the broader context of the anglicising process that began in Scotland from about AD 1058. One consequence of this process was that by the fourteenth century a cultural division had been constructed separating Scotland into two broad regions, the Highlands and the Lowlands. The defining characteristics of the former included the Gaelic language and culture that were legacies of the Dalriada Scots, while the clan system was the primary structure of social and political power. This separation of Scotland into two imagined communities is characterised by the marginalisation of certain elements of the Celtic past from definitions of Scotland. Two inter-related questions lie at the heart of

this analysis: how did the marginalisation of Gaeldom affect shinty and, can shinty be called the national sport of Scotland?

There is some difficulty in tracing shinty's folk origins prior to the eighteenth century. One shinty historian observes that there are many dark stretches in the narrative that are particularly pronounced during the Middle Ages (MacDonald, 1932: 60-61). There are at least three possible explanations for this limited written record of shinty during this period. First prior to the eighteenth century there is a lack of substantive documentary sources recording the social life of ordinary people in Scotland, particularly relating to life amongst the Highland clans. Second, the history of the Middle Ages was marked by war and destruction and it is possible that potentially valuable manuscripts could have been destroyed. Third, MacDonald (1932: 60) suggests that the chronicler was concerned with "the exceptional, the surprising and un-looked for", rather than amusements which were part of everyday life. With this background in mind, the presence of shinty in Scotland before the seventeenth century may be gleaned from a miscellany of sources. This includes: the survival of Celtic myths, oral evidence affirming contests between neighbouring parishes, districts and clans, manuscripts, statutory proclamations and rulings against sports, and the personal accounts of travellers (Macdonald, 1919: 27-38; MacDonald, 1932: 60; 69-78; Hutchinson, 1989: 23; MacLennan, 1995a: 45-50; 1998b),

In Ireland edicts passed by Edward III in 1363 and 1365 forbidding "useless games", referred in Latin to *cambucam* (Ò Maolfabhail, 1973: 14; Hutchinson, 1989: 24). This is similar to the term *cambuc* that is said to be one of the variations used for camanachd in different districts of Scotland (MacLagan, 1901: 26; MacLennan, 1995a: 46). A number of other variants of both the Gaelic term camanachd and the English term shinty can be identified in use in different districts in Scotland until the eighteenth

century (MacLagan, 1901: 25-26). This included for example cammock, camac, camog,

shinney, schinnie and shiny (MacLennan, 1995: MacLennan, 1995b: 2).

During the Middle Ages Scottish monarchs issued a number of proclamations

against activities which were not considered useful preparation for war. In 1457 James

II ordered that "the fute-bal and golfe be utterly cryed down" (MacDonald, 1932: 62).

This sentiment was reiterated in 1491 by James IV who proclaimed that his subjects be

dissuaded from playing "fute-ball, golf, or uther sic unprofitable sportes" (MacDonald,

1932: 62). These proclamations do not refer to either shinty or camanachd (or its

accepted variant terms); although we cannot infer its presence from these references, the

absence of an explicit allusion is not an indication that it was exempt from the objective

of the proclamations.[12] The regularity with which such Proclamations were made by

monarchs and local legislators suggests that these were not observed by all of those

people who engaged in the banned sports. This may have been the lower orders of

society who lived in small rural areas, since outside of the larger towns it would be

difficult for national legislators to know or to control the activities of ordinary people.

The earliest documented reference to either shinty or schynnie appeared in the

Kirk Session Records of Glasgow in 1589:

> With respectt to the Kirk-yeard, that ther be no be no playing at golf,
> carrict, shinnie in the High Kirk, or Kirjk-yard or Blackfriar Kirk yeard,
> either Sunday or week day

A more opaque reference to camanachd may have been made eight decades earlier. The

records of King James IV's Lord High Treasurer noted that the King had enjoyed the

"Irish gamyne" near Edinburgh on 17 March 1507 (Macdonald, 1919: 33; MacDonald,

1932: 62). We can only speculate that this comment was an allusion to camanachd, but

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[12] Some shinty historians claim that golf developed from a particular form of camanachd known as cluich-dhesog, the hole game, which required a minimum of two players each with camain the objective of which was to place a ball in a distant hole in the fewest strokes (Macdonald: 1919: 33; MacLennan 1995: 45).

support for this may be drawn from the broader context of the social, cultural and political division of Scotland at that time. The anglicisation of southern Scotland, and the concurrent marginalisation of Gaeldom to the north-west of Scotland were important facets in redefining Scottish identity and in the making of the Highlands as a distinct cultural region. It is not necessary to provide a detailed account of the decline in the prestige and influence of Gaelic by the end of the fourteenth century. Consideration of some of the more salient points lends support the argument being made here that the Irish game may have been an allusion to shinty.

The processes that contributed to the diminished prestige and influence of Gaeldom in Scotland commenced in the middle of the eleventh century. Power lay with Malcolm Ceann-Mor (Malcolm III, 1058-93), a descendent of the mac Alpin dynasty, whose reign was to be an important juncture in Scotland's history. The accession of Malcolm Ceann-Mor marked the end of a long period of crisis in the mac Alpin succession (Lynch, 1992: 42-50), but he was to be the last Gaelic-speaking king of Scotland (Chapman, 1978: 10-11; Jarvie, 1991: 18). His marriage to Margaret (later Saint Margaret) of the English royal house introduced an Anglo-Norman nobility in Scotland, and she also had a considerable influence over religion. One consequence of this marriage was that the successors of Malcolm and Margaret controlled the kingdom by a mix of Celtic custom and European feudalism (Chapman, 1978: 11; Lynch, 1992: 53). The *Old Statistical Account of Scotland* (Vol. 12: 127) notes that the union of Malcolm and Margaret was the catalyst for an anglicising process which led to the marginalisation of Gaeldom and later to its attempted destruction. Although not identical to the Anglo-Norman ascendancy in Ireland, the process of anglicisation in Scotland diminished the Gaelic hegemony in the southern part of Scotland where royal jurisdiction was strongest.

By the end of the fourteenth century the idea of the kingdom of Scots had changed but language remained a cultural determinant in the making of the nation. There were two dimensions to the process that changed the idea of the nation and Scottish identity. First there was a shift from an ethnic to a territorial definition of Scotland. Second the appropriation of anglicised terminology came to refer to the nation and the language spoken by its dominant ethnic group (MacAulay, 1994: 35; Withers, 1988: 4; Davidson, 2000: 67). Summarising this process Skene (1886: 17) explained:

> her [Scotland's] monarchs identified themselves more and more with their Teutonic subjects, with whom the Celtic tribes maintained an ineffectual struggle, and gradually retreated before their increasing power and colonisation, till they became confined to the mountains and western islands. The name of Scot passed over to the English - speaking people, and their language became known as Scotch; while the Celtic language, formerly known as Scotch, became stamped with the title of Irish.

This recognition of the Gaelic language as Irish is not inaccurate, but it illustrates the ways in which appropriated and anglicised terminology redefined who and what was Scotland. The association of the Gaelic language with a culture now defined as Irish within Scotland has some resonance with the reference made in 1507 to King James IV's enjoyment of the "Irish gaymne". The point being made here is that this broader perception of Gaelic culture as indicative of Irish, rather than the new image of Scottish, identity lends weight to speculation that the "Irish gamyne" in the sixteenth century referred to camanachd.

Anglicised Scots may not have wholly rejected Gaeldom from their definition of the nation. One historian has suggested that between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries "Scottish political identity was essentially Gaelic, dominated by the idea of the kingdom's continuous descent from an ancient Dalriadic line of kings" (Kidd, 1994b: 1205). This assessment appears to contradict the argument that has been made thus far that the privileged role of Gaeldom was marginalised from definitions of Scotland.

Closer examination reveals this must be understood in terms of resistance to the expansionist aspirations of the English Plantagenet dynasty (Kidd, 1994b: 1205; Davidson, 2000: 72). This may be illustrated with an extract from a poem written in Gaelic before the battle of Flodden (1513) which portrayed not simply a war between two kingdoms, but a clash of cultures:

> Meet it is to rise against Saxons...
> ere they have taken our country from us.
> Let us not yield up our native country...
> Fight roughly like the Irish Gael, we will have no english Pale...
> Drive the Saxons westward over the high sea,
> That Scotland may suffer no division. (cited Watson, 1937: 161).

A feature of the idea of Gaeldom that underpinned Scottish identity was that it incorporated "a Lowland critique of Gaelic life and manners" (Kidd, 1994b: 1206). The earliest documented evidence of this Lowland critique appeared in the work of the fourteenth century chronicler John of Fordun (c.1320 - 1384). In *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* Fordun wrote:

> The manners and customs of the Scots vary with diversity of their speech. For two languages are spoken amongst them the Scottish [Gaelic] and the Teutonic [English]; the latter of which is the language of those who occupy the seaboard and plains, while the race of Scottish speech inhabits the Highlands and outlying islands. The people of the coast are of domestic and civilised habits ... The Highlanders and people of the islands, on the other hand, are a savage and untamed race, rude and independent (cited Skene, 1871-72: 24).

This description is also said to be the first that made a distinction between the Highlands and Lowlands. The Highland Boundary Fault separates the Highlands from the Lowlands geologically and geographically (Withers, 1988: 1), but it is the 'Highland line' that is used most often, at least in popular thinking, to divide Scotland. The Highland line follows a path similar to the Highland Boundary Fault, but it is a symbolic division that was constructed between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries. Emerging at a particular historical juncture, the Highland line differentiated

two broad cultural, as well as geographic regions, the Highlands and the Lowlands (Withers, 1988: 1-6; Lynch, 1992: 59; MacAulay, 1994: 35-6; Devine, 1994: 1-11; Davidson, 2000: 63-72). In Lowland perceptions the Highland line divided their own civilised and ordered society, from that of an uncivilised and lawless Highland one. From the Highland perspective, Highlanders had no affinity with Lowlanders, and perceived only Gaelic speakers to be the true representatives of the Scottish 'race' (Davidson, 2000: 72-3).

In spite of the cultural division between the Highlands and Lowlands by the late fourteenth century, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that shinty, the sport of the Gael, disappeared from the Lowlands. The example has already been cited of the edict in Glasgow's Kirk Session records in 1589, but this specifically mentioned banning shinnie from churchyards, not from the wider social life of the community. Previous histories of shinty suggest that the game was played throughout Scotland from the island of St Kilda in the north-west, the Hebrides, in Ayrshire, Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Borders of south-east Scotland (Hutchinson, 1989: 37; MacLennan, 1993: 29; 1995a:2; 1998a: 4-8). For instance the Minutes of the Kirk-Session of North Berwick of 15 January 1671 reported that "some of the East and West Gate ... have played schinnie on Sabbath last in the afternoon". Two decades later Martin Martin (1703: 62) described a game on the island of St Kilda which he had seen during his travels through the Hebrides.

> They use for their diversion short clubs and balls of wood; the sand is a fair field for sport and exercise, in which they take great pleasure and are very nimble at it; they play for some eggs, fowls, hooks, or tobacco; and so eager are they for victory, that they strip themselves to the shirts to obtain it.

The description of the club in this account is reminiscent of that used in Irish hurling rather than in Scottish shinty where a long thin stick was preferred. This

distinction may not be important for as Hutchinson (1989: 36) asks, "what's in national boundaries when you're on the edge of the world?" What is interesting however is that Martin wrote about this activity as something peculiar to St Kilda, yet a similar game was probably played on Skye, the island he was from. One explanation for this may be that St Kilda was a remote and barren rock, two miles long by one mile wide, set 200 miles out from the Scottish mainland in the north-west Atlantic ocean. Martin's description of this game on St Kilda, rather than on the other islands he visited, was perhaps due to being surprised to find the activity being played in this isolated place.

In theory before the seventeenth century the Scottish Crown may have claimed jurisdiction throughout Scotland, but in practice this was not the case. With regard to royal edicts banning certain sports one shinty commentator asked why would "liege subjects in Benbecula and Kintyre ... rise as one man and make bonfires of their camain", when across the Highlands "people did not even bother to answer charges of mass murder" (Hutchinson, 1989: 38)? This question conceals an important characteristic in the making of the Highlands and Lowland perceptions that it was an uncivilised, lawless and violent society. That is, that the survival of an autonomous Gaelic power in the Highlands was embodied in the Gaelic/Norse Lordship of the Isles that survived until the end of the fifteenth century (Chapman, 1978: 11).

The ancient pan-Celtic kingdom of Dalriada had collapsed, but the connections between Scotland and Ireland were not completely severed prior to the seventeenth century. Between the fourteenth and the end of the sixteenth centuries mercenary soldiers from Scotland, many from the north-west Highlands and islands, settled in Ireland (Adamson, 1994: 9-10; Bardon, 1992: 49). The *Galláglach* (galloglasses in anglicised form) as these Scottish migrants were called had a cultural unity with the indigenous Gaelic Irish, and linked the Gaelic world from the Outer Hebrides to the far

south-west of Ireland. According to Bardon (1992: 57) in this Gaelic world "the real cultural frontiers were the Highland Line" and the anglicised region round Dublin known as the Pale. There is some evidence that shinty was known to these people. In Inishowen in County Donegal the fifteenth century gravestone of Manas mac Mhoireasdain of Iona is engraved with a broadsword, a ball and a long stick curved in the fashion of a caman (Hutchinson, 1989: 32; MacLennan, 1995a: 44). There is no explanation of who this man was or why he was in Ireland, but we can speculate that he was a Galláglach.

This era of Celtic unity was however coming to an end. The Lordship of the Isles had been forfeited in the fifteenth century, although there were failed attempts by Clan Donald to re-establish it in the sixteenth century using the MacDonnells in the Glens of Antrim for support (Chapman, 1978: 11; Bardon, 1992: 67-68). The Gaelic domination of Ireland collapsed with the English victory at the battle of Kinsale in 1602, and it severed the bond between Ireland and the west Highland core of Celtic Scotland. Between 1603 and 1685 the Plantation of Ulster (c.1603-1685) with Protestant Scottish families, replaced the dominant Gaelic Catholic society and had an enduring influence on the religious identity of that part of Ireland. This marked the break-up of the old community of interests which had existed between Ireland and the west Highlands.

By the seventeenth century the ancient game of camanachd appears to have taken different paths in Ireland and Scotland. In the south of Ireland a derivative of camanachd known as hurling became the dominant form, while in the north especially around remoter rural areas of Antrim, it was camanachd, the game with the longer driving stick and ground play that was more popular (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 25-26). With the status of Gaeldom in Scotland and Ireland significantly changed it might be

supposed that shinty would also begin its own retreat to the Highlands. In spite of the marginalisation of Gaelic culture from the Lowlands of Scotland, shinty was still played at this time in many parts of the nation. It is the subsequent history of this ground game, camanachd, that is the main focus of attention in the remainder of this thesis.

BETWIXT THE BRAES AND THE STRATH

This section examines the continued social significance of shinty in the Highlands until the early decades of the nineteenth century. There are more documented accounts of shinty activity in Highland communities during this period, yet this was a time of great social change in the Highlands. The defeat of the Jacobite army at Culloden in 1746, the dismantling of the clan system, migration and emigration, and the arrival of Presbyterianism all marked the lives of ordinary Highlanders. It is easy to assume that popular recreations suffered considerably during this social upheaval, yet there is evidence to substantiate the argument that such activities provided a thread of continuity in a changing environment. This section investigates the patterns of shinty play between 1700 and 1835 and illustrates how some of these broader social and political forces contoured the folk game.

Up until the nineteenth century shinty continued to be a game of considerable diversity rather than uniformity. A consistent feature of the folk game was that tradition rather than universal rules and standards provided structure and a sense of antiquity for the matches. A description of camanachd played at the Machair-Ionain in Kintyre illustrates some of the rituals and customs that were part of the folk games of shinty played in other parts of the Highlands.

... in olden times, early after breakfast on New Year's Day, people began to assemble from all the districts round about, many coming as far as five or six miles. Before mid-day there would often be perhaps a thousand people on the ground between players and onlookers. The players arranged themselves in teams according to age and other circumstances. Sides having been formed, the course was marked off, usually from a quarter of a mile long and upwards. At each end there was a goal, called the 'den', which was formed by placing two little heaps of stones, large enough to be seen at a distance, about nine or ten feet apart, and in such order that a line drawn between them would be right across the course ... The play was then fairly begun, the object on the one side being to carry the ball through the 'den' at the other side of the course, while the opposite side try to send it back into the den from which the start had been made (MacLagan, 1901: 29)

The definition of teams and the festivities surrounding the matches were part of a heritage which included customs for selecting sides, which side would have the honour of starting the game and for the nature of play. Writing in the 1840s the Reverend Donald Sage (1789-1869), minister of Resolis, recalled his school days in Dornoch between 1801-03:

When at school at Dornoch we had our holiday games. Of these the first was club and shinty (*cluich air phloc*). The method we observed was this - two points were marked out, the one the starting point, and the other the goal, or *haile*. Then two leaders were chosen by a sort of ballot, which consisted in casting a club up into the air, between the two ranks into which the players were divided. The leaders thus chosen stood out from the rest, and, from the number present alternatively called a boy to his standard. The shinty or shinny, a ball of wood, was then inserted into the ground, and the leaders with their clubs struck at it till they got it out again. The heat of the game, or battle as I might call it, then began. The one party laboured hard, and most keenly, to drive the ball to the opposite point or *haile*; which party soever did either, carried the day (Sage, 1899: 118).

There are descriptions of similar games being played in other parts of the Highlands during the eighteenth century, although it is perhaps not surprising that many of these references refer to the period after the Highlands had been 'tamed' following the defeat of the Jacobite army at Culloden (1746). A variety of evidence confirms that while shinty was played in certain Highland communities during the second half of the eighteenth century, in others the game began to disappear. For example Thomas

Pennant (1774) noted that in the Highlands and Islands when the chiefs were benefiting from higher rents, most of the traditional recreations of the people were no longer played but one of the few exceptions was shinty. Pennant's description of the games he saw were similar to the one which Donald Sage recalled playing as a schoolboy in the early 1800s.

In their accounts Samuel Johnson (1775) and James Boswell (1786) said little about popular recreations in the Highlands, but saw a nation that had been dejected and humiliated in the aftermath of Culloden. The *Old Statistical Account of Scotland* (*OSA*, 1791-99) provides an insight into the social and cultural life of Scotland at the end of the eighteenth century. Most of the entries in the *Old Statistical Account* were written by parish ministers, presenting a comprehensive insight into the lives of Scottish people across the range of urban, rural, Lowland and Highland communities. The various entries reveal considerable diversity between these communities. For example in Drainy (Moray) it was noted that the people seldom indulged "in any relaxation or diversion" (OSA, Vol. XVL: 467), but in Kilchoman on Islay the chief amusements of the people were "the dance and the song, with shinty and putting the stone" (OSA, Vol. XX: 395). Shinty was also reported in other parishes but in some cases it was to report the decline of what had previously been the popular recreation of the parish. For example the Reverend Stewart, minister of the Perthshire parish of Moulin reported:

> It is remarkable that gymnastic exercises, which constituted the chief pastimes of the Highlands forty or fifty years ago, have almost entirely disappeared. At every fair or meeting of the country people there were contests of racing, wrestling, putting the stone, etc.; and on holidays all the males of the district, young and old, met to play at football, but oftener at shinty. These games are now practised only by schoolboys, having given place to the more elegant but less manly amusement of dancing (OSA, Vol. III: 770).

The folk game that was played in many Highland communities was different from the modern game of shinty that was developed towards the end of the nineteenth

century in a number of ways. One characteristic that shinty shared with folk forms of games that also became modern team games was that the teams comprised large numbers of players. Some primary accounts refer to "an equal number of men ... on opposite sides" (Hutchinson, 1989: 54), yet the traditional methods of selecting teams for games in particular communities did not always make this possible. A game in Strathglass on 18th January 1826 involved

> upwards of 150 Chisholms and other natives of Strathglass had their usual match at Shinty. The match was betwixt the Braes and the Strath. The Braes men supported the character for superior activity and expertness, which they are said to possess, and though less numerous carried the day (Barron and Campbell, 1980: 5-6).

Using the topography of Highland landscape, as this example from Strathglass illustrates, was not an uncommon method of team selection for shinty games. In other communities shinty was played between large numbers of men from neighbouring parishes or villages as happened on the Hebridean island of Islay:

> I mustered to carry off the (palm) for the parish of Killasson and Kilmeny. There may have been as strong men in the (Rhinns) i.e. in Kilshanan and Portnahaven; but "Roekside" chose light, swift men, who were, no doubt good players; but they [were] not matches for the "Karris" men (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I).

In the 1820s the *Highland Home Journal* carried a report of a shinty game that that had been played on Mull's Calgary Sands (reproduced MacDonald, 1932: 79-80). On this occasion it was men from the island's Campbell and Maclean clans who opposed each other in a game that reinforced the traditions of the folk game. There were clearly no strict controls over the numbers on each side, nor on players joining or leaving the game. Many of the Macleans' best players were placed "in reserve", hidden "in the brushwood to the west of the Sands ... From time to time a fresh man would dash out upon the Sands and enter into the fray" until they were all involved in the game (cited MacDonald, 1932: 78-80). These games of shinty appeared to be enjoyed by

everyone within the community, regardless of age or social standing. The extent to which there was actually social mixing might be questioned. The game on Calgary Sands is illustrative of the ways in which the patronage of such games reinforced the prevailing social relations between the laird and his tenants. Further evidence to support this assertion is apparent in an account of shinty as it was played on the island of Coll, In his diary entry for 5 October 1773 James Boswell (1963: 263) wrote:

> About ten days at Christmas time, the people in Coll make merry. All the men in the island are divided into two parties. Each party is headed by a gentleman. The Laird perhaps heads one, and Captain Maclean another; or other two gentlemen of the family are leaders. There is a ball thrown down in the middle of a space above the house, or on a strand near it; and each party strives to beat it first to one end of the ground with clubs or crooked sticks. The club is called the shinny. It is used in the low-country of Scotland ... We corrupt it to shinty.

Changes in land tenure arrangements and agricultural practices were a significant contributory factor to the social upheavals encountered by large numbers of Highlanders in the half-century from about 1760 until the 1840s (Hunter, 1995: Devine, 1993: 32-83). One consequence of these processes was that large numbers of Highlanders were displaced from their traditional communities, either to less fertile land on the same estate or migration both to centres in urban Britain and overseas. The radical Highland land reform movement of the 1870s and 1880s, examined in chapter five of this thesis, was a much later response to this disruption. Critical, but varied, commentary on these changes, and the impact they had on traditional bonds between the Highland peasantry and the lairds was not wholly absent during the eighteenth century. For example Pennant (1774) considered the emigration of Highlanders as the opportunity for Highlanders to shake off the ties of their oppression. In contrast Samuel Johnson (1775) was more critical of landlords' unscrupulous practices of rack-renting and enforced emigration. Criticism of these policies is also evident in association with a poem written in 1799 about a winter shinty game in the Western Isles. The poem itself

describes how glen met glen "with ardour keen ... A cask of whisky strong the victor's prize" (cited MacLennan, 1995a: 64). The poet, Alexander Campbell, explained he was prompted to write this account to bring to the attention of others, "the manifold and great evils arising from the introduction of that system which has within these last forty years spread amongst the Grampians and the Western Isles" (cited MacLennan, 1995a: 64).

It is clear from many accounts that shinty was played during the winter months. More precisely in the era before regular organised sport was established, shinty was most commonly played to celebrate both New Year, and Old New Year (12/13 January) in Highland communities (MacLagan, 1901: 27-8; MacDonald, 1932: 65; Hutchinson, 1989: 41; MacLennan, 1999: 87-96). Donald Sage (1899: 118) recalled that shinty was "universal in the North" in the early 1800s when "Men of all ages among the working classes joined in it, especially on Old New Year's Day" (Sage, 1899: 118). Sage's grandfather, Eneas Sage, had also been a minister in Wester Ross (1726-1774). He too was familiar with Highlanders "assembling to play at club and shinty" near his home at "one of the Christmas holidays" (Sage, 1899: 12). This tradition is manifest in many primary sources and as the next chapter illustrates this continued late into the nineteenth century.

The final aspect of the social history of shinty that is considered in this chapter concerns the impact of the Presbyterian church in many parts of the Highlands during the eighteenth century. In the Highlands in the eighteenth century Sage (1899: 2) remarks that the Church of Scotland was "in its infancy, particularly in the north of Scotland", and it first had to "struggle with the adherents of Episcopacy". Upon taking up his duties in the parishes of Lochcarron, Applecross and Gairloch in 1726 the recently ordained Eneas Sage "found the people sunk in ignorance, with modes of

worship allied to Paganism" (Sage, 1899: 2). At the time of his death in 1774 the moral aspects of the people had changed, and his grandson Donald Sage remarked that the teachings of the Presbyterian church was an important factor in this transformation. In the context of this onslaught against the language and religion of Gaelic communities in the Highlands, it has been suggested that the popular customs came under attack, at least after 1750. For example, one historian commented that at one time shinty was played on Sundays either before or after worship but added:

> the wave of Puritan piety that rolled over the Highlands about 1750 put an end to Sunday shinty, and, indeed, did much to destroy not only shinty, but all manner of Highland sports, both outdoor and indoor (Alexander Macbain cited MacDonald, 1932: 65)

The influence of the Protestant religious organisations in the Highlands was not new. At least from the beginning of the eighteenth century civic authorities in Lowland Scotland contributed to British policies that would promote Protestantism in the Highlands. This mission was in part to replace the Catholic and Episcopal religious traditions that were believed to harbour support for Jacobitism and the restoration of the Catholic Stuart monarchy (Hunter, 1995: 94: Lynch, 1992: 363-7). The principal mechanism by which the Highlands were to be civilised was through basic instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. Since instruction was conducted mainly in English this was also part of the ongoing process to anglicise the Highlands. It was also intended that this would cultivate a belief that English was the language of civility, education and public life and therefore the path to knowledge and social improvement. Implicit in this approach was the message that Gaelic was suitable only as a spiritual language, for use in the private world of home and community, and religion, provided it was of the Protestant variety (Lynch, 1992: 338, 363, 364; MacAulay, 1994: 36-38; Withers, 1988: 121-36).

The objective of the Protestant clergy and like-minded agencies to extirpate the Catholic religion, and in some cases the Gaelic language, from the Highlands was not employed in a uniform way throughout the Highlands. In some communities ministers may have taken a less austere approach to Sunday shinty as one example from the parish of Laggan in Badenoch illustrates. It is said that the Reverend Duncan MacPherson, minister in the parish for ten years (1747-1757), joined the young men of the parish to play shinty before and after worship. They played on the flat ground known as the Eilean Dubh, which accommodated the church building (Barron, SYB, 1984: 33). It is worth noting here that more than two centuries later the Eilean is still used by Newtonmore Shinty Club, one of the modern game's most successful teams (Richmond, Appendix 6). Like MacPherson, Daniel Kerr, the headmaster of the Parish School in Urquhart in the 1790s and 1800s, also appears to have been unworried by shinty in his community. Although Kerr was personally concerned to eradicate the Gaelic language, he is reported to have allowed the boys in his charge to enjoy their sports, and remarked that games between those from the Braes and the Strath were particularly exciting (Hutchinson, 1989: 53).

A second point concerning religion must be made at this juncture. That is, even after the defeat of the Jacobite Stuart cause in 1746 the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches remained dominant in specific parts of the Highlands (Hunter, 1995: 94-95). The historian Jim Hunter (1995: 94) explains that Catholic predominance in the Highlands lay outside the Campbell territory of Argyll, crossing the region from the southern end of the Long Island (Harris) to Arisaig, Morar and Lochaber. Hunter (1995: 94-95) notes that after the 1790s the Episcopal Church retained significant numbers of Gaelic-speaking members in a narrow area along the eastern shore of Loch Linnhe from Appin to Ballachulish. It has been suggested that the Catholicism in some

parts of the Highlands may have had some bearing on the survival of shinty in certain communities, notably Lochaber and Strathglass. In Strathglass in particular there may have been a more or less unbroken tradition of shinty until the late nineteenth century. Writing towards the end of the nineteenth century one native of Strathglass, Colin Chisholm (1806-95) described the winter shinty activities that were associated with some of the traditional festivals that were part of the Catholic religious calendar. He explained that during the 1820s and 1830s:

> four matches used to be held each year - St Stephen's Day [26th December]; St John's Day [27th December]; New Year's Day [1st January]; and Epiphany [6th January] ... Directly after mass was over about noon, people and priest repaired to the broad fields of Balanahaun and Baile-na-Bruach without loss of time and without the least attention as to equal numbers on each side (*The Highlander*, 5 March 1880).

The religious adherence of Highlanders is one of a number of features that is often used to illustrate the case for the Highlands as a distinct cultural community within Scotland. While there is some value in this it is too simplistic to portray the Highlands as an homogeneous area. In fact the region is composed of three broad geographic areas: the eastern Highlands, the central Highlands, but it is also necessary to make a distinction between the mainland and the Western Isles (Lynch, 1992: 369). These areas differed in respect of a variety of inter-connected but distinct characteristics, which as has been demonstrated here includes religion. The diversity of Highland society is an important aspect that is addressed further in particular in chapters four and five of this study.

At this juncture it is helpful to summarise the key features of shinty that have been addressed in this section. First it has been shown that over the course of the eighteenth century shinty was played as a mass folk game according to local custom and practice. Second, shinty was played in local communities in order to celebrate festivals the most prominent of which was New Year. Third patronage from local landowners

was associated with these celebratory games, reinforcing the prevailing relationships between the two main social groups in Highland society. Fourth from at least the 1750s the arrival of the Presbyterian church in the Highlands may have contributed to the decline of certain shinty practices in a number of communities.

SHINTY - THE NATIONAL GAME OF THE GAEL

It has been argued in this chapter that the folk origins of shinty were embedded in the Celtic culture of the Scots from Ireland. The material considered in this chapter demonstrates however that by the nineteenth century the game was no longer widely played throughout Scotland. By 1835 shinty was recognised as a customary amusement in the Highlands, particularly in the winter (*The Penny Magazine*, 31 January 1835). This description of shinty in 1835 was consistent with a number of aspects of the accounts cited in the previous section.

A number of scholars have suggested that shinty is Scotland's national game (MacDonald, 1932: 15; Hutchinson, 1989: 24; MacLennan, 1993: 21; 1995a: 2; 1995b: 2), but careful consideration is required here before drawing any firm conclusions. These assertions intensify the composite nature of questions regarding sport and collective identity particularly in relation to nationalism. If by national game it is meant that shinty was something pertaining to the whole nation, then there is some evidence that can be used to illustrate that at one time shinty was played in many parts of Scotland (MacLennan, 1995b: 2). For something to be national it might also be thought of as unique or peculiar to a specific national community. On this point also a case can be made for shinty, although the game appears to have been derived from an ancient stick and ball game that was also played in Ireland.

A case can be made historically for the national credentials of shinty; it may be more accurate to consider that by the early 1800s the game was more specifically

located in the Highlands. It was from this Highland base, in some respects limited to areas such as Badenoch, Strathglass and Lochaber that shinty entered a long and varied pathway to becoming a modern sport. This noted, it is concluded here that with its antecedent origin in the cradle of the Dalriada Scots, shinty sits firmly as the sport of the Gael in the Highlands, the heartland of Celtic Scotland. Given the common ancestry of the modern games of shinty and hurling, it is ironic that in Ireland by the nineteenth century camanachd was referred to as the Scottish game (Ó Maolfabhail, 1973: 26; Hutchinson, 1989: 32). The next chapter builds upon the material presented here in order to argue that during the nineteenth century shinty became an important cultural symbol of a self-conscious Highland cultural community.

CHAPTER 4
SHINTY, CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CELTIC REVIVAL

This chapter examines the development of shinty from about 1835 until 1880, the period that marked a first stage in the gradual transformation of shinty from an uncodified folk game into a modern sporting practice. The development of sports during the nineteenth century did not occur in a social, cultural or political vacuum (Holt, 1989: 3-4). The objective here is to examine some of the broader forces that characterised the Highland society within which shinty began to change. The primary and secondary material examined confirms that a variety of social, cultural and political circumstances contoured shinty during the nineteenth century. The analysis in this chapter is focused principally upon those events that best illustrate two of the conceptual categories addressed in this thesis: (i) the coincidence of the development of shinty with other aspects of Highland civil society; and (ii) the consolidation of shinty's place as a symbol of Highland cultural identity.

In order to examine the impact of the broader social history on shinty the chapter is organised into four sections. Section 1 provides an overview of some of the continuities and changes in shinty between 1835 and 1880. Section 2 examines the influence of religion on shinty in Highland communities. Section 3 considers the significance of patronage to shinty between 1835 and 1880 and probes the extent to which it cemented Highlanders together into a distinctive cultural group. Section 4 examines the role of the Highland social organisations and development of shinty until 1880. Two questions lie at the heart of the analysis: how had shinty changed by 1880? and, in what ways was shinty a symbol of a distinctive cultural identity framed by Highland civil society?

FROM FOLK GAMES TO SHINTY CLUBS

The objective in this section is to examine some of the key features in shinty's story between 1835 and 1880. In chapter three it has been argued that by the early decades of the 1800s this stick and ball game was played mainly in the Highlands. MacLennan (1998b: 102) has argued that during the nineteenth century shinty underwent a period of decline, but its revival during the last quarter of the 1880s illustrates that the game survived in some communities despite the social upheavals experienced by many Highland communities. By 1880 shinty remained a relatively uncodified folk game, yet a number of shinty clubs had also been established. Drawing on a variety of primary material the analysis reveals some of the features of these patterns of continuity and change (Telfer, 1994: 113).

Primary documentary sources about shinty from 1835 until approximately 1850 are limited. There are however some references which help substantiate the place of shinty in Highland life. The most detailed account of shinty in 1835 appeared in a London publication that described shinty as a customary winter amusement in the Highlands of Scotland (*The Penny Magazine*, 31 January 1835). This report continued:

> The shinty is played with a small hard ball, which is generally made of wood, and each player is furnished with a curved stick somewhat resembling that which is used by golf players ... Large parties assemble during the Christmas holidays, one parish sometimes making a match against another. ... The writer witnessed a match, in which one of the players, having gained possession of the ball, contrived to run a mile with it in his hand, pursued by both his own and the adverse party until he reached the appointed limit, when his victory was admitted. Many of the Highland farmers join with eagerness in the sport, and the laird frequently encourages by his presence this amusement of his labourers and tenants.

In Argyllshire, one of the Highland counties at the frontier of both the actual and symbolic division between the Highlands and Lowlands, there was clearly some concern about the use of public roads for popular recreations. The Argyllshire Roads

Act (1843) stated that a penalty of forty shillings would be introduced for "Every person who shall fly any kite, or play at shinty, foot-ball, or other game to the annoyance of passengers". This is illustrative of the spatial constraints now being imposed on many traditional recreations within new work patterns and different levels of industrialisation, urbanisation and social control (Holt, 1989: 3; Telfer, 1994: 114).

Further evidence concerning shinty around the 1830s and 1840s can be gleaned from the volumes of the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (*NSA*, 1845). These accounts were once again produced with the help of parish ministers and they had now been asked to include information concerning the customs, games and amusements in common use in their parishes in their reports (Jarvie, 1998: 385). The *New Statistical Accounts* illustrate that the survival of shinty was not widespread throughout the Highlands. The minister for the parish of Inverness (NSA, Vol. XIV: 18-19) stated:

> There is nothing remarkable in the features or bodily strength or exercises of the inhabitants; and although the games of foot-ball, shintie, throwing the stone, hammer, and bowls, were formerly common among the lower orders no amusements of the sort are now practiced, except among boys and apprentices on Christmas and New-year's day - the sober realities and industrious habits of the present age having seemingly banished from the thoughts of the peasantry the pastimes of their forefathers.

A similar decline was apparent in the Lewis parish of Lochs where the games that included "the shinty" had disappeared (NSA, Vol. XIV: 108). In contrast in Stornoway, also on Lewis, the minister noted that the principal amusements were still "the club and shinty, quoits or discus, and the putting-stone" (NSA, Vol. XIV: 128). In the north-east the parishioners of Cullen in Banffshire were "in the occasional habit of amusing themselves with games of golf, shinty, football and target shooting" (NSA, Vol. XIII: 331). A similar picture was presented for the combined parishes of Moy and Dalrossie (Morayshire) where

The game chiefly played is the club and ball, which forms the winter amusement, and the collecting of the people for a trial of skill at this game is the only mode of celebrating the Christmas and new year holydays (NSA, Vol. XIV: 107).

These examples show that although the circumstances of shinty were not uniform the game had remained a popular recreation in many Highland communities. The notes of John Murdoch (1818-1903) also give an insight into the ways in which shinty was embedded in the social life of some communities on Islay during the 1830s, as it had been during the 1790s (*OSA*: Vol. VI: 369). Murdoch arrived on Islay with his family in 1827 and left in 1838 to take up employment on the mainland (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vols. I-II). In his notes he described the landscape near his home, and the activity often played upon it:

Along the head of the links ran the public road; above this stretched *Lagbuidhe*...the gathering place for district shinty matches, and from far, choice players came to prove their prowess in the grand game, famous and classic since Cuchulain outplayed all the chieftains of Ermania (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I).

Shinty is mentioned only a few times in Murdoch's autobiography but these references are a valuable primary source concerning the game. In addition to his account of the land that was used for games, Murdoch also described how the wood in front of his home was the source of "sticks with a natural crook [that could be] finished off into clubs for the game of shinty" (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I). Murdoch's account also reveals that in this particular community shinty may not have been restricted to the New Year festivities:

Coming home from school on Saturdays, we had quite a field day on Traigh an Luig at shinty playing. This was one of the best fields possible for the game, and the players were good. They were before the players in the upper end in being amenable to the good, fair rules; I came in for some bad blame for not keeping on my own side ... My great delight was to play at this game; and soon I became not only a good player, but came to be known as such (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I).

By the end of the century circumstances had changed and Murdoch reflected that shinty had gone as *"Traigh an Luig* is silent under the feet of cattle" (*Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I). This was not a universal situation throughout the Highlands. In contrast to the game's apparent demise in some communities after the 1840s, there was an almost unbroken record of shinty in the various communities around Badenoch, Lochaber and Strathglass. In Badenoch the Chiefs of the MacPherson clan, and the Duke of Gordon were influential in ensuring that shinty was kept alive around Kingussie, Newtonmore and Laggan through the provision of the annual "ball plays" (*cluidh-bhall*) (Barron, *SYB*, 1984: 33; Richmond, *SYB*, 1992-93: 18; Robertson, 1994: xi; Richmond, Appendix 7). The Reverend Donald Cameron, minister of the parish of Laggan (1832-46) even complained that the patrons provided too much whisky at the ball plays, with the result that quarrels broke out (Barron, *SYB*, 1984: 33). In his contribution to the *New Statistical Account*, prepared in 1841, the minister of Kilmorack in Ross and Cromarty described shinty as one of "the favourite amusements of the people" (NSA, Vol. XIV: 367). In the predominantly Catholic area of Strathglass, it is possible to trace an unbroken pattern of traditional shinty games around the principal winter festivals of Christmas, New Year and Epiphany from around the 1820s until the 1870s (*Inverness Courier*, 3 January 1850; *Inverness Courier* 14 January 1858; *Inverness Courier*, 14 January 1864). This primary evidence depicts shinty as a vibrant activity in the various communities where it had survived by the 1880s.

In 1873 a newspaper devoted to the interests and concerns of Highlanders came into circulation, edited by John Murdoch whose enthusiasm for shinty has already been established. From its inception *The Highlander* (1873-1882) carried reports on shinty games in a variety of communities, in the northern Highlands and parts of Argyllshire. The games that were reported in, for example, Nigg, Newtonmore, Kingussie, Garve,

Lochgilphead, Nairn, Laggan, Alness, Stratherrick, Invermoriston, Ardclach, Arisaig, Brae-Lochaber, Strathglass, Tain, Broadford, Glenforsa (Mull) and Croy, were not identical; nor were they necessarily played on an annual basis. An analysis of *The Highlander* confirms however that the Christmas and New Year shinty festivities were played according to the vicissitude of time-honoured local traditions and forms of local patronage. In Tain "The principal proceedings [were] a game between town and country" (*The Highlander*, 2 January 1875). In Garve "married men [met] single men ... in shinty array" an exciting contest ensued, which resulted in the single men being "masters of the field" and in the evening "a grand ball" was attended by "the *elite* of the village" (*The Highlander*, 23 January 1875: 7). A report from Barra also shows that shinty was part of the festivities according to the old "Celtic fashion", as the young men in the neighbourhood of Barra House were entertained by Dr MacGillivray's sons to a smart game at "shinty" in front of the dwelling house (*The Highlander*, 23 January, 1875). As demonstrated throughout this thesis the custom of patronage was to remain an important dimension of shinty, at both local and national levels even until 1939.

These traditional games survived in the rural Highlands after the 1880s, but by then the way the game was played began to change. The circumstances that contributed to this change were however influenced by what was happening to shinty in some urban communities. As early as 1834 there is evidence that shinty was being played in urban communities, but not all of them were located in the Highlands. Shinty caused some disruption in Paisley, a town located west of Glasgow in the heart of the industrial belt of Lowland Scotland. It was reported that:

The practice of playing at the game of shinty on the public streets has been very frequent of late, to the great danger and injury of the dress and person of passengers, as well as danger to the windows. The Magistrates have determined to put a stop to this, and during the early part of the week, about three dozen offenders were brought before them, and fined in various sums, from one shilling to half a crown (*Paisley Advertiser*, 15 November 1834).

The earliest known reference to some degree of formal shinty organisation in Scotland appeared in 1849, when the North of Spey Shinty Club in Aberdeen met on 1st January 1849 "for the purpose of contesting the long-established Celtic game" (*Inverness Courier*, 11 January 1849). It was the 1870s before references to shinty clubs suggested that an institutional structure for the game was emerging. Most of these clubs were established in towns and cities of Lowland Scotland such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock and in Dumbartonshire, but clubs were also formed in Inveraray in Argyllshire, and in London and Manchester. Apart perhaps from Inveraray, these were predominantly the communities to which Highlanders had migrated, and for different reasons. The shinty organisations they established illustrate their awareness of the role that sport could play in constructing their distinctive cultural identity within the social context of urban life, but they also reflected the time-honoured customs associated with shinty in the communities they had left.

It was from this urban base that the modernisation of shinty began to evolve during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By 1876 as well as playing internal games amongst their members, a number of these clubs began to play each other in inter-club matches, but still in accordance with the New Year tradition. *The Highlander* (30 December 1876) reported for example that "many clubs" were "springing up in different parts of the country", and explained that Glasgow Shinty Club:

gallantly defended their fortress at Alexandria [Dumbartonshire] on the 25th November against the celebrated "champions" of the Vale of Leven ... the result of the game was a draw - 2 goals each. Since then, the Glasgow Camanachd club have not been idle either in the field of practising or in fixing matches, and we understand arrangements have been made to play the following clubs: - Inverary Shinty Club, Manchester Camanachd Club, Edinburgh Camanachd Club, Ossian Shinty Club (Glasgow), and the return match with the Vale of Leven at Glasgow (*The Highlander*, 30 December 1876).

Although matches were played between clubs, the game was still far from being a rationalised modern activity with nationally agreed regulations. Teams of "thirty aside" (*The Highlander*, 6 January 1876) were reported and for internal club games teams were selected in a fashion that would have been familiar in many rural Highland communities. By 1880 approximately twenty-two shinty clubs had been formed in the urban communities that were home to Highland migrants (*Table 4.1*). The absence of regular press coverage makes it difficult to ascertain how many of these only formed around the festive season, or those that did not survive more than a few years. Many of these clubs were amongst the first members of the Shinty Association (1877), the first administrative organisation for shinty (Hutchinson, 1989: 108-12). The *Shinty Association* was an important institution for at least three reasons. First it indicated that new patterns of organisation and regulation for shinty were beginning to be established in urban communities. Second it established the first widely circulated set of rules for shinty (Hutchinson, 1989: 110). Finally, these developments were led by Highlanders within the context of a identifiably Highland institutional framework. Section four of this chapter examines more closely the function of this distinctive Highland civil society in urban Britain.

Aberdeen University (1861)	Bolton Caledonian (1877)
Edinburgh Camanachd (1870)	Furnace (1878)
Glasgow Camanachd (1875)	Glasgow Cowal (1877)
Glasgow Fingal (1877)	Glasgow Inveraray (1877)
Glasgow Ossian (1876) Glasgow Skye from 1879)	Glencoe (1879)
Glendaruel (1879)	Greenock (1877)
Inveraray (1877)	Lochgoilhead (1878)
London Highland Camanachd Club (1878)	Manchester (1877)
Manchester Camanachd (by 1876)	Manchester & Salford Camanachd (1876)
Renton (by 1878/9)	Springburn (1876)
Strachur (by 1880)	Tighnabruaich (1879)
Vale of Laroch (1879)	Vale of Leven (1854)

Table 4.1 Shinty clubs formed by 1880 (MacLennan, 1993: 335-38)

This infant club network in urban communities contrasted with the northern Highlands where shinty was still largely untouched by the characteristics of a modern sport. This changed in 1880 with the formation of Strathglass Shinty Club (*Comunn Camanachd Straghlais*), the first formally constituted shinty club in the northern Highlands. In the winter of 1876 shinty was once again played in Strathglass according to local custom:

> The Christmas is come and gone with its many varied amusements. In this strath all the old recreations in which our forefathers delighted on such occasions are still kept up with animation and vigour ... a number of the hardy young Highlanders, headed by piper Campbell, marched to the front of the hotel. Sides being taken, the whole company adjourned to a park generously granted for the occasion by Mr Robertson, Comar, to indulge in a game of camanachd. (*The Highlander*, 30 December 1876)

Three years later a native of Strathglass, Captain Archibald MacRa Chisholm, (1825-1897) returned to his native Strathglass following a career in the British army.

Captain Chisholm was described as a proud Highlander who loved "everything connected with his native land" including its Gaelic speech ... and its sports and pastimes" (*Celtic Monthly*, February 1893: 74). Having spent time in London, Chisholm had been a member of the Highland Society of London, and participated in its sporting activities. Early in 1880 the Highland press reported that at a meeting in the Cannich Hotel on 27 January "a regular association" for shinty, the *Comunn Camanachd Straghlais*, was formed with "Captain Chisholm of Glassburn ... elected Chief or president of the club" (*The Highlander*, 30 January 1880). Captain Chisholm was instrumental in this development and in subsequently devising the constitution of the club. The formation of Strathglass Shinty Club was a watershed for shinty in the north of Scotland. It set down in print the first formal rules of shinty in a northern Highland community. More importantly perhaps it set the pattern for the institutionalisation of shinty in other communities.

By 1880 shinty exhibited characteristics which combined continuity and change, but it must not be forgotten the game had also disappeared in some places. Despite adopting new ways of organising shinty, some traditions, such as local patronage, persisted as part of the formal structures of shinty for many years. It is therefore clear that the game had not developed in a uniform fashion, one consequence of which was that traditional practices and new patterns of play co-existed for a time. The remaining sections of this chapter investigate more fully some of the key features of Highland society that may have contributed to diversity in shinty between 1835 and 1880. In addressing this wider social context the analysis seeks to establish why these folk games and shinty clubs were signifiers of a distinctive civil society that mediated Highland cultural identity.

SHINTY AND CHEERLESS SUNDAYS

In chapter two religion was identified as one of a number of institutions that mediate different cultural identities in Scotland which are articulated through football. Previous accounts of shinty's history have acknowledged certain connections between religion and the development of the sport in the nineteenth century (Macdonald, 1919; Macdonald, 1932; Macdonald, 1992; Hutchinson, 1989; MacLennan, 1998b), but this theme is noticeably absent from other narratives (MacLennan, 1994; Thorburn, 1996). Where religion is addressed a principal view has been that the strictures of Presbyterianism, and in particular the strand associated with the Free Church of Scotland (1843), contributed to the demise of shinty during the nineteenth century. This section critically examines this assertion and concludes that the impact of religion on the development of shinty was not uniform throughout the Highlands.

In one of the first detailed narratives on shinty Father Ninian MacDonald, the abbot at St Benedict's Abbey in Fort Augustus, remarked that one of the repercussions of the Reformation was the "forbidding gloom" that was cast over the first day of the week (MacDonald, 1932: 63). This image of cheerless gloom was derived from the opposition amongst adherents of many forms of the Protestant religion towards participation in any activities that were considered unseemly for the Sabbath. A particular focus for attention was, as MacDonald points out, the various recreations that were often played on Sundays after attending church.

> Very soon Sunday became so associated in the popular mind with gloomy depression, that its consequences were reflected in the general life of the country for many a day. And even as late as the nineteenth century, one could not but remark how many who had given up all other observances, still clung to a cheerless Sunday (MacDonald, 1932: 64).

Up until the middle of the sixteenth century Catholicism was the dominant religion in Scotland, but it had superseded the early Celtic Christian church established

by St Columba and other missionaries in Scotland prior to Queen Margaret's anglicising influence (Lynch, 1992: 26-50). The early Christian church compromised over the matter of ancient Celtic festivals, reconstructing them and giving them a Christian significance (MacNeill, 1989a: 46). The incorporation of certain Celtic and non-Celtic festivals into Christianity bears some significance for the game of shinty for many of these holy days were occasions upon which shinty and other popular recreations were enjoyed after the necessary religious rituals had been attended to. From 1560 onwards the Protestant Reformers had sought to abolish Christmas and so many of these recreations subsequently attached themselves to New Year instead (MacLennan, 1999: 88). The Gregorian calendar began to be used more widely than the Julian calendar in the Highlands after 1752. One consequence of this was that shinty was celebrated in various parts of the Highlands and amongst its diaspora communities at Old New Year (*Oidheche Challuinn*), Christmas and New Year (New Style) (MacLagan, 1901: 35; MacLennan, 1999: 88).

Some examples of ministers' displeasure at shinty being played at Christmas and on Sundays during the eighteenth century have been highlighted in chapter three of this thesis. It is important to acknowledge however that the reformed Presbyterian religion did not make a significant impact in the Highlands, apart perhaps from Argyllshire, until the eighteenth century (Lynch, 1992: 364; Hunter, 1974: 98). Even then it was the late 1700s and early 1800s before the missionary zeal of evangelical ministers, many of them itinerant lay preachers, established the Protestant religion of the Presbyterian variety in the Highlands (Meek, 1987b: 1-2; Hunter, 1974a: 98-103; Withers, 1988: 337-42). The viewpoint that the strictures of Presbyterianism were detrimental to shinty was expressed by one radical Highlander, in his address to the Gaelic Society of

Glasgow in 1890. In his consideration of life in the Highlands John G. Mackay claimed that:

> In the olden days the pipe and song were frequently heard in every Highland clachan, and the youths of the country could enjoy themselves in a rational manner. Shinty, putting the stone, tossing the caber, and other manly exercises, were freely engaged in, the different districts and parishes vying with each other in friendly rivalry. But the Calvinistic doctrines of the Highland clergy preached all the manliness out of the people, and I don't think that even they will be bold enough to assert that they have preached anything better into them (Mackay, 1890 *TGSG*: 189).

There is some weight to suggestions that Presbyterianism affected traditional practices in the Highlands but we should not overstate, or demonise, its influence on shinty. There are a number of reasons why this is the case, three of which are considered in this section. First it obscures the religious diversity of the Highlands. Second it masks the traditional popularity of evangelical religion in many parts of the Highlands. Third the Free Church, the dominant institution of evangelical Presbyterianism in the Highlands after 1843, was significant in the development of a collective cultural and political identity for landless Highlanders (Hunter, 1974a: 112).

The growth of Protestantism in Scotland during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was part of a wider European rejection of papal jurisdiction (Lynch, 1992: 186). The events that marked the Reformation in Scotland (1560-67)[13] established a Presbyterian form of Protestantism as the dominant religion in Scotland (Lynch, 1992: 196-202). The rejection of Rome, the Latin mass, and papal jurisdiction was a decisive moment of Scottish history and the subsequent Protestant hegemony in Scotland assumed significance in defining nationhood (Lynch, 1992: 186; Devine, 1999: 367). This had repercussions for political and regnal power in Scotland until 1746. As

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[13] Lynch (1992: 196-202) explains that Scotland had two Reformation crises. The first occurred in 1560 with the revolt of the Lords of the Congregation, but the catalyst was a riot I n Perth in 1559 when the town's religious houses were sacked. The second in Reformation crisis came in 1567, when a coup deposed Queen Mary (Mary Queen of Scots).

Paterson (1994: 30) explains, since the Reformation Scottish Presbyterians argued for British union in order to safeguard their national integrity. The subsequent union was a political and ecclesiastical coalition, which was considered to reinforce Scottishness, rather than diminish its national identity (Paterson, 1994: 30). In considering questions of nationhood and autonomy in Scotland, it is worth noting that, particularly during the eighteenth century up until middle of the nineteenth century, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was in effect Scotland's parliament for domestic affairs (Paterson, 1994: 38; Devine, 1999: 367).

The acceptance of Presbyterianism marginalised Episcopal and Roman Catholic practices to specific areas of the Highlands (Hunter, 1976: 94; Lynch, 1992: 363-7). This religious diversity in the Highlands is also apparent with regard to some of the religious objections to shinty (MacLennan, 1998b: 125). This is reinforced by one interviewee who explained:

> The Lovat family were Roman Catholic and there were consequently a great proportion of Roman Catholics in the Kiltarlity [and] Beauly populations ... in Badenoch ... there was a movement of population from the south-west to the north-east from Lochaber and Roman Catholic and Presbyterian populations met in Laggan ... the narrow church never succeeded in dominating Badenoch as it did in other places, and certainly it didn't in Lochaber because it was still strongly Roman Catholic ... There was also a strong Scottish Episcopal population in Lochaber, Ballachulish and Appin (Richmond, Appendix 7).

The pockets of Catholic and Episcopal populations were small when considered against the dominant Presbyterian religion of Scotland, but they may have been important in relation to the development of shinty. When shinty clubs were formed in the northern Highlands in the 1880s many of them were in communities where the strict Presbyterian influence did not dominate. The point being made here is that in predominantly Roman Catholic areas and other communities like Badenoch the almost unbroken pattern of shinty play throughout the 1800s may be explained, at least in part,

by the fact that social life was unfettered by the strict doctrines of Presbyterianism. That is not to suggest that certain churches did more to develop shinty; rather that the doctrines of these churches did not discourage parishioners from participating in their traditional pursuits on Sunday, or in the case of the Catholic church, in connection with certain religious festivals. At this juncture it is sufficient to note that diversity of religion throughout the Highlands may have gone some way towards ensuring the survival of shinty in certain communities in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

As Mackay (1890) and others have suggested the impact of religion on shinty during the nineteenth century could be detrimental. A critical analysis of the development of shinty must also consider the place of evangelical religion in the lives of Highlanders. The formation of the Free Church of Scotland (1843) was, initially at least, an important symbol of radical protest against the domination of unscrupulous landlords, particularly in the west Highlands. The important point to be noted however is that the Free Church did not impose its evangelical teachings on a resisting and unwilling Highland population. Rather the Free Church crystallised support for an evangelical brand of Protestantism that had attracted Highlanders since the eighteenth century (Hunter, 1974a; 1995: 94-106; 154-5; Meek, 1987b; Withers, 1988: 338-39). The popular appeal of the Free Church in the communities where it predominated after 1843 cannot be ignored in a critical analysis of its influence on shinty.

The origins of the Free Church lay in part in the internecine disputes that had characterised the Protestant church in Scotland since the early eighteenth century. Although this radical church became an important institution particularly in the west Highlands, the matters that led to its creation were not specifically Highland affairs

(Hunter, 1995: 103).[14] The Disruption in 1843 was the culmination of a dispute between moderate and evangelical factions within the established Church of Scotland. The dispute concerned the issue of church patronage by landowners, which had been restored in 1712 under the Act of Patronage by the Westminster parliament. The government's refusal to accept the 1842 Claim of Right protesting against this interference in spiritual affairs, was received in some quarters as a denial of Scotland's national autonomy (Paterson, 1994: 56; Devine, 1999: 367; Withers, 1988: 338).

In the first three decades of the nineteenth century most Highland pulpits fell under the authority of the Presbyterian church, but a number of factors ensured that they had little support from landless Highlanders particularly in the north west Highlands (Hunter, 1995: 94). The Highland parishes were large and there was a shortage of churches. More critical perhaps was that many Highland parishes were in the charge of non-Gaelic speaking ministers. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that in general ministers failed to intervene over the land clearances and evictions of the early decades of the nineteenth century, and in the popular mind they had become identified with the interests of landlords (Hunter, 1995: 94-95; Withers, 1988: 338-9). This left Highlanders without spiritual guidance, material support or leadership during the period of mass social disruption and economic transformation that characterised the north-west Highlands and islands after the middle of the eighteenth century (Hunter, 1995: 94-95; Withers, 1988: 338-9). The mass walk-out from the church's General Assembly meeting on 18 May 1843 split the established Church of Scotland in two, and as well as

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[14] The Disruption of 1843 was not the first schism in Presbyterian religion in Scotland. The first secessions in 1733 when Ebenezer Erskine the minister of Stirling led four clergymen formed the Associate Presbytery. This was the first of a number of secessions that continued over the next century, that included the formation of the Relief Church (1761). Reunion was also evident during this period, as illustrated for example with the formation of the United Presbyterian Church (1821), which was the result of the union of the Relief Church and the 'New Lichts' from within the Church of Scotland (Lynch, 1992: 399-402).

being significant in church politics, it was also a momentous event in nineteenth century Scottish history (Lynch, 1992: 397).

At the Disruption, more than one third (453) of the Church of Scotland's 1,195 ministers joined the Free Church. They were joined by around forty percent of the total church membership, and by 408 teachers in parish and private schools signalling an end to Church of Scotland authority over parish schools (Lynch, 1992: 397). The Free Church attracted members from the industrial middle-classes, and working classes, but it made its most enduring impact in the Highlands. In the Synod of Ross almost seventy-six per cent of ministers joined the Free Church; in Lewis it was ninety per cent and it is estimated that out of the island's population of 20,000 only five hundred remained in the established church (Hunter, 1995: 103). This rejection of the established church was, indirectly, a rejection of the landlords' authority at least over the spiritual affairs of Highlanders (Hunter, 1995: 104; Withers, 1988: 342). The critique of proprietorial authority in the Highlands was a contributory factor in the popularity of the evangelical movement and it was in sharp contrast to the animosity felt towards the moderates amongst the Highland clergy (Hunter, 1974a: 109; Withers, 1988: 340-42).

The doctrine of evangelical Protestantism was not imposed on an unwilling population. In practice the Free Church was "a profoundly popular institution" amongst the small tenantry and crofting communities of the Highlands (Hunter, 1974: 112). The respect given to the evangelical ministry may have contributed to the demise of certain shinty practices in specific communities. The case of Roderick MacLeod, minister for the Duirnish parish on Skye, provides some insight here. The Reverend MacLeod, or *Maighstir Ruairidh* as he was affectionately known by his parishioners, attracted large crowds to his pre-Disruption evangelical meetings (Hunter, 1995: 109). He also attacked what he perceived to be the moral and spiritual weakness of the community

and shinty did not escape his missionary zeal. Writing in 1841 for the New Statistical

Account MacLeod stated:

> all public gatherings, whether for shinty playing, or throwing the
> putting-stone, for drinking and dancing, for marriages or funerals have
> been discontinued, and people live very much apart (NSA, Vol. XIV:
> 360).

The Reverend MacLeod's message that the Sabbath in particular was not to be

defiled by unseemly games and activities does not appear to have greatly upset his

parishioners. As a leading critic of the policies of eviction, emigration and sheep

farming, MacLeod was a man of integrity, as well as a charismatic figure (Hunter, 1976:

102-3; Macdonald, 1992: 4). When he joined the Free Church in 1843 his parishioners

followed him. Yet even the charismatic influence of *Maighstir Ruairidh* and other Free

Church ministers did not destroy all shinty activity on Skye in the longer term. This is

borne out by evidence from *The Highlander* (24 January 1874) which reported that:

> "The "Old" New-Year passed away very quietly in this place. There
> were several shinty matches in different parts of the parish, in which all
> the young men of the several districts joined with great *eclat*.

It is easy to claim that religion destroyed shinty in many Highland communities

but this should not obscure the fact that the game survived in other communities. Four

points need to be mentioned by way of summary of this section. First the impact of

religion on shinty during the nineteenth century was shaped by religious diversity across

the Highlands. This was as much to do with different brands of Protestantism as well as

the survival of Catholicism and the Episcopal traditions. Second the place of human

agency cannot be ignored in considering the relationship between shinty and religion.

This is crystallised in the appeal of evangelical religion to the Highland tenantry who

were not unwilling followers of this doctrine. Third, demonising evangelical

Presbyterianism masks the point that it was a vital component in developing a sense of a

radical protest against the authority of Highland landlords. This protest against

landlords' authority was an important development in Highland social history that re-emerged in the form the land agitation during the 1870s and 1880s. While the idea of radical protest did not impact directly on shinty, it nonetheless was an important feature of the broader social an cultural environment within which the game developed. Finally, the historian James Hunter (1976) points out that the Free Church was not just a religious institution, it also symbolised social, cultural and political identities in the Highlands, particularly in the north-west. Religion did have an impact upon the decline and survival of shinty during the nineteenth century, but other characteristics of Highland society were also influential. Two further factors, the continuity of paternal social relationships, and the growth of a distinctive Highland civil society, are considered in the remaining sections of this chapter.

SHINTY AND PATRONAGE - CEMENTING A UNION OF HIGHLANDERS?

This section examines the extent to which patronage contributed to the survival of shinty in the Highlands between 1835 and 1880. It is argued that the particular forms of patronage provided by some of the traditional Highland clan chiefs and the new land-owning class were a crucial dimension to the survival of traditional practices in the Highlands during this period. It is also suggested that by the end of the 1870s new forms of patronage had emerged amongst the diaspora Highland communities, which reflected the social structure and the environment of urban society. This second form of patronage provided the rudimentary characteristics of a modern sporting form and these are examined in the final section of this chapter. The analysis here probes the extent to which patronage of shinty contributed to unifying different social and cultural groups in specific rural Highland communities.

The forces of industrialisation had a significant impact upon the transformation of British sporting culture during the nineteenth century but the contribution of patrons

was also important (Tranter, 1989: 227-28). Tranter (1989: 229) identifies three ways in which sport was supported by patrons during the nineteenth century: (i) the provision of various prizes; (ii) the provision of finance, buildings, equipment, and access to natural facilities; and (iii) the motivation and administrative expertise that underpinned the transformation of popular recreations into modern sports forms. Shinty received all three types of patronage, although administrative expertise was just beginning towards the end of the period under consideration here. The formal awarding of trophies and medals for shinty competition also did not appear until the last quarter of the century. These forms of patronage are more closely associated with developments in urban shinty. Nonetheless by the end of the 1870s the paradox of Highland society was evident within the sphere of patronage for shinty. On the one hand in certain rural communities traditional forms of patronage survived and some of the upper social strata of Highland society continued to participate in traditional games. On the other hand new industry began to provide a new dimension to traditional customs.

The Highlands did not experience the same level of industrial and commercial expansion as other parts of Britain, and therefore traditional forms of patronage may have carried on longer than in other parts of Britain. The concept of patronage was understood in the nineteenth century (Jackson, 1998: 96), but the motivations for the specific support of shinty have not received a thorough analysis. Tranter (1989: 237-8) suggests a number of possible motives for certain socio-occupational groups becoming involved with sport and the acceptance of the arrangements by participants. Not all are relevant to this analysis, but at least five of them do provide a helpful framework for a critical analysis of why a certain social stratum maintained its support of the sport. The motivations considered here are that patronage facilitated access to land or water; it preserved ancient cultural and athletic traditions; it was perceived to be a mechanism for

establishing social relationships or breaking down barriers between sexes, generations and socio-occupational classes; and it was a traditional social obligation.

One of the most common forms of patronage relates to the first of the five motivational categories identified above, namely that local landowners controlled access to suitable land. This form of patronage was acknowledged in many reports of traditional shinty games throughout the nineteenth century. For example, a Kintyre Procurator Fiscal's report records that a fight had broken out during a shinty match played "upon the estate of Largie" (*Procurator Fiscal*, 13 January 1818, cited Telfer, 1994: 116). While in 1851 a game between Strathglass and Glenmoriston, was played on "the park at Kerrow, placed at their service by Dr Fraser" (*Inverness Courier*, 20 February 1851). There are a number of cases which illustrate that some of the leading landowners in the Highlands provided land for shinty games to be played, including at Strachur, Strathpeffer and in Netwonmore. In Argyllshire during the nineteenth century there are a variety of examples that illustrate the importance of patronage for shinty games during the nineteenth century (Jackson, 1998: 95-106; Telfer, 1994: 113-24), and this county provides one of the most enduring links between patrons and shinty. The Winterton ground of the current Inveraray shinty team is on land provided by the Duke of Argyll (Batchen, Appendix, 5; Jackson, 1998: 96) but this estate has a long association with the sport. Shinty was played on the castle lawn at Inveraray in 1867 (*Oban Times*, 28 December 1867) and once again a week later. On the second occasion it was reported that:

> The great annual challenge match between the opposite sides of Upper Lochfyne was played at Inveraray on Friday the 3rd, instant ... The much-talked-of meeting took place on the Castle lawn, which affords excellent and ample scope for the purpose, and where from time immemorial each Yule-tide has seen its well-fought battle in the favourite pastime of the district (*Oban Times*, 11 January 1868).

These examples are illustrative of the part played by landowners in ensuring a suitable space was available for shinty. Many sports may have depended on this form of patronage, but the changing patterns of land ownership and land use in the Highlands during the nineteenth century may have meant provision of land was even more crucial to the survival of shinty. The presence of this form patronage of shinty is acknowledge here, but a more thorough examination is provided as part of the next chapter, in relation to the radical critique of commercial landlordism in the Highlands that emerged during the 1870s and 1880s. The connection of some of the indigenous Highland aristocracy to shinty goes further than the provision of land, and is illustrative of some of the other motives Tranter outlines in relation to the patronage of sport. There can be little doubt that patronage through the provision of shinty matches preserved both ancient cultural and athletic traditions. This can also be understood in relation to two interconnected aspects of Highland society. First it reinforced the idea that a show of paternalism was perceived to be a traditional social obligation of the upper strata of Highland society. Second shinty games were a mechanism for establishing good social relationships between that class and their tenants.

The traditional social relationship between the upper and the lower strata of Highland society was based on bonds of kinship rather than on any economic dependency and are explained, in part, in relation to the clan system (Hunter, 1995: 7-10). Prior to 1746 the clan was the focus for all social, economic and cultural activity in the Highlands and at apex of this structure was the clan Chief. The bonds of kinship and mutual obligations were operated according to a specific hierarchical structure but this ensured the Chief's kinsmen had access to the clan's territorial possessions. The defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden (1746) marked the beginning of an onslaught on the social and political institutions of clanship, that included some of the chiefs being divested of

their lands but others were more gradually absorbed into southern society. A principal mechanism by which the clan chiefs effected their acceptance into southern society was by developing commercial landlord practices (Hunter, 1995: 11-13). The political power of the Highland clan chiefs was eroded by the policies of the British state and by the clan chiefs themselves as they sought to transform the social, economic and political environment of the area (Hunter 1995: 10-13).

The traditional bonds of kinship did not disappear entirely. At the end of the nineteenth century the residue of the clan structure remained in some communities. In these areas the clan Chief was viewed as "first among equals" and those who were of related names "felt they were members of that family" and therefore "did not feel inferior" (Richmond, Appendix 7). Reflecting upon the 1820s John Murdoch wrote favourably of the Islay laird and his family, particularly regarding their commitment to retaining their Highland identity. Murdoch observes that Walter Frederick Campbell "was animated by a good Highland feeling ... shown by the training he received for his son John Francis" (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. 1). Murdoch's insights into certain social relationships on Islay during the 1830s conveys a sense of the kinship felt between the three social levels although there was clearly a hierarchy to this power structure. This favourable assessment of the circumstances on Islay during the 1830s contrasts with Murdoch's later assessment that "farming is handicapped by the evil power of landlords ... that ... should be removed" (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. 1).

The traditional ties between different social groups in the Highlands appear to have been incorporated into the organisation of shinty. This was indicated in a number of references to shinty. For example, a second account of the shinty match at Inveraray Castle between Inveraray and Ardkinglas noted:

> The Cowal men were headed by George Callander of Ardkinglas, and his guest Mr Maitland; the Inveraray men by Lord Archibald Campbell and his brother Lord Walter; and 39 men on each side made a total of 82 ... Lords and labourers, Volunteers and their officers, farmers and burgesses, fisherman, shepherds, tradesmen, all armed with shinties, clustered about the old stone, and stripped to their work (*Glasgow Daily Herald*, 6 January 1868).

Five years later *The Highlander* (4 October 1873) remarked upon the former function of sport in bringing together those from different social backgrounds. Commenting upon the Highland games of the Northern Meeting (Highland games) the report claimed:

> The athletic sports are intended to represent the games and pastimes of the Highlanders some time ago, when the peasant, the gentleman farmer, and the chief and chieftain mixed together and contended with one another in all kinds of sports .... We can well remember ... examples of ... competitions in ball playing with the caman where peer and peasant, laird and tenant, playing together and contributed as much towards cementing a union of classes as they did in every other way (*The Highlander*, 4 October 1873).

This image of the upper strata of Highland society playing shinty with the lower orders is apparent in other Highland communities. Like the Campbells in Argyll the Lovats were depicted as keen shinty players in that games were played on the family estate around Beaufort Castle during the 1850s (Barron and Campbell, 1980: 6-7). Evidence from Badenoch further substantiates the ways in which shinty was an activity that appeared to be a unifying activity in the Highlands. In his history of Kingussie Camanachd club, Robertson (1994: xi) writes of a match in early 1836 when local people played shinty as "part of the traditional celebrations for the birthday of the Duke of Gordon". The players and spectators on this occasion were from the new villages of Newtonmore and Kingussie as well as some from the old town of Ruthven. This was the last time shinty was played for this particular purpose since the Duke died in May 1836, but shinty matches were still held in Badenoch. Prior to his death in 1848 it was usual for Lt. Col. Ronald Macdonald to send money home to provide a *cluidh-bhall* (ball

plays) for people in the parish of Glentruim in Laggan (Barron, *SYB* 1984: 33). It is said

that during his nine years in hiding after the defeat at Culloden in 1746, the chief of the

MacPherson clan joined in one Old New Year shinty game, and then returned safely to

his refuge (Barron, SYB, 1984: 33). In the nineteenth century the chief, Old Cluny (died

1885) regularly staged the *cluidh-bhall* on the meadow between the River Spey and

Cluny Castle at Old New Year, and his sons often participated (Barron, 1984: 33-34;

Richmond, *SYB*, 1992-93: 17; Richmond, Appendix 7). A report of the game in 1876

conveys a sense of the occasion, as well as the chief's recognition of the unique social

and cultural obligations associated with his position:

> Cluny, with his usual *duinealas* in preserving the customs of his
> ancestors, gives a ball-play in the grounds of Cluny Castle, when the
> bards, led by *Domhnuill a' Chnuic*, sing original compositions in
> honour of the occasion. He who gains the laurel is presented with a
> handsome prize by Cluny. On Christmas Day the shinty players in the
> Newtonmore district assembled on *Eilean Bheanachair* - from time
> immemorial the scene of such gatherings - and the game was kept up
> with much enthusiasm for some hours - Mr Gwyer, Biallid, providing
> refreshments. There was likewise a large and keenly contested shinty
> match on the Dell of Kingussie (*The Highlander*, 1 January 1876).

The annual *cluidh-bhall* continued beyond the 1880s despite the fact that

organised clubs were forming throughout the Highlands. Members of the MacPherson

family were patrons of other sports during the 1880s, although it is clear this reflected

the structures of organised sport. For instance in 1876 it was reported that the President

of the local curling club "Major MacPherson, younger of Cluny", was not able to attend

the outdoor bonspiel due to his involvement "with the 42nd in the field of martial strife

on the Gold Coast". The Secretary Capt. G. MacPherson, "was also absent". In their

absence the curling match was held "under the patronage of Cluny MacPherson and his

lady" (*The Highlander*, 21 February 1874). After the death of Old Cluny curling was

said to be replacing shinty as part of the traditional seasonal celebrations (Barron, *SYB*,

1984: 34), but the MacPherson family continued their association with shinty within the

institutional structure of the sport (Richmond, *SYB*, 1992-93: 18-19; Appendix 7). For instance three MacPhersons were amongst the founding Vice-Presidents of the Camanachd Association, and one of this group, C.J.B. MacPherson of Balavil, was a driving force in the formation of Kingussie Camanachd Club (Camanachd Association Minutes, 10 October 1893; Richmond, SYB, 1993: 18).

The examples considered here reveal there was still a perception that Highland society reflected the ideas of 'kinship' and equal standing between members of a family. On the other hand it was clear that the chief, and his family, were still held in high esteem as paternal figures in the community. This may have been a residual element of the clan structure that survived the destruction of other aspects of the traditional Highland society, as well as a reflection of the generally deferential tone of Victorian society. In other communities new landowners also appear to have adopted their role as patrons of local sports. The tone of many accounts tends to depict a positive relationship between the social classes. For example at Broadford in Skye it was reported that after the shinty match "amidst much cheering [the party] drank the health of the Dowager Lady Macdonald. A vote of thanks was also moved to the manager at Corry for his kindness in granting the field for the match" (*The Highlander*, 6 January 1877). In Barra shinty matches were also provided by the landowner:

> The young men here were kindly invited to a game of shinty on New-Year's Day by Messrs. Macgillivray. The teams assembled on the lawn in front of Barra House, where sides were drawn, and the games commenced. After much hard playing on both sides the contest was declared equal. The players were afterwards marshalled in front of the mansion, and treated to refreshments. The amusements were wound up with pipe-music. On separating the party gave three hearty cheers for Dr Macgillivray, his lady, and family (*The Highlander*, 29 January 1876).

The association between Highland landowners, clan chiefs and their tenants provided a symbolic continuity of traditional kinship between the landlords and their

tenants which provided comfort and stability in the context of agricultural improvement, land clearance and religious turmoil. This sporting patronage did not contribute to the breaking-down of social divisions within the Highlands, but simply reinforced the long-established existing social structure. Yet this patronage of shinty was not necessarily a positive one. In this regard it has been suggested that shinty was a source of entertainment for guests of the landowner who invited the "local boys" to play an exhibition match (MacLennan, Appendix 4). This is in contrast to the interpretation of another interviewee who believed that patronage of shinty was different from that given to hurling in Ireland by the Anglo-Irish aristocracy "where it was on a showing-off basis of the peasants playing their own game before the aristocracy" (Richmond, Appendix 7). There is some weight to both these interpretations.

The landlords' support for shinty may have been motivated by a desire to preserve the ancient cultural traditions of the Highlands yet in doing so they were acting as cultural gatekeepers of a romanticised social system (Jarvie, 1998: 384). Shinty was not just a popular recreation it was a symbol of a certain way of life and social structure that had disappeared. Even in the mid-nineteenth century a chief like Cluny McPherson the Gaelic-speaking laird and father of his clan was an unusual sight. The role of patrons in shinty was not simply to ensure the survival of a popular pastime but to preserve the integrity of the sport and its place in a distinctive Celtic cultural identity, albeit one that was defined by themselves. This idea is alluded to by MacLennan (1998b: 126). He contends that in "giving" their tenants a shinty game, and "honouring it with their presence" shinty provided the lairds with a sacred link to an imagined past that was fast disappearing. Patronage was a symbol of their social power which was being threatened and gradually replaced by other agencies. For instance during the nineteenth century ministers who adhered to the more radical evangelical strand of

Presbyterianism were prominent figures in many Highland communities. Later in the century an urban professional middle-class campaigned for the interests of Highlanders and in the 1880s succeeded in harnessing the support of the lower orders in Highland society. The agenda of this radical Celtic cultural movement focused principally on land law reform and those who directed it were seen by landowners as a threat to community stability and social harmony.

By the 1880s Highland society had experienced significant changes with the development of railways and industry beginning to open up the social and economic environment of the area. In some parts of the Highlands such changes began to influence the patronage of shinty. Where landowners are not clearly identified as patrons, hoteliers are sometimes mentioned as providing refreshments to be enjoyed after play. In Invermoriston in 1875 "Mr Burgess the factor, and Mr Macgregor, the well known proprietor of the Hotel, liberally supplied the players with refreshments during the day" (*The Highlander*, 2 January 1875). In January 1881, a match was given by Mr D.P. Macdonald of Keppoch and the Ben Nevis Distillery at Brae-Lochaber (*Inverness Advertiser*, 18 January 1881). In the south-west Highlands, the opening of the Millhouse-Kames Powderworks on the Kyles of Bute in 1839 provided employment for many men in the surrounding communities. The prospect of secure employment in this area perhaps contributed to the vibrant shinty culture in Kilfinan, Millhouse, Kames, Tighnabruaich, Glendaruel and Colintraive which preceded the formation of Kyles Athletic Football and Shinty Club 1896 (Thorburn, 1996: 18).

In considering the different motivations for patronage of nineteenth century sporting practices we are left with a less certain picture of its impact upon shinty. Many studies have shown that patronage was important to the survival of shinty, and it is clear that for much of the period considered in this chapter continuity rather than change was

the dominant characteristic. These arrangements signified a traditional acceptance of the social obligations that went with the privileges of rank and wealth, and reinforced the power and influence of those who acted as patrons (Tranter, 1989: 247; Telfer, 1994: 115). In this respect the original research outlined in this chapter confirms that patronage of shinty was not unusual, but it illustrates the complex influence of patronage upon sport in the nineteenth century, confirming that generalisations cannot be made in the case of specific sports. The particular ways in which patronage of shinty was provided were defined by the space it occupied in Highland life. The assertion that this functioned to cement Highlanders of different social classes in a unified community is less certain. Shinty was unique in the social and cultural space it occupied in Highland communities, and the traditions that endured for much of the century may in part explain why the game is an important symbol of cultural and community identity. The paternalism of landlords is relevant, but it is only one piece of the jigsaw that constituted the social and political context in which shinty was developing. It is therefore concluded that any investigation of patronage as a unifying force must locate this within the particular circumstances of a rapidly changing Highland society. It may be that social divisions are temporarily suspended, or concealed, by a shared enthusiasm for an apparently politically innocuous cultural activity.

HIGHLAND SOCIETIES, SHINTY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

From the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards a network of new organisations began to emerge in urban Britain. The Highland and Friendly Societies fulfilled a range of functions, some of which were consistent with similar self-regulating organisations in British society during this period. Although they were not primarily concerned with sporting affairs, some of these Highland organisations became central to the modernising of shinty during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In examining

these Highland societies this section probes three interconnected questions regarding their role in relation to shinty between 1835 and 1880. First what were the principal connections between the Highland societies and shinty? Second in what ways did the promotion of shinty through the Highland societies contribute to the reconstruction of a distinctive cultural identity for Highlanders in the city? Third how did these cultural developments relate to broader issues concerning the diaspora Highland community and civil society? It is argued here that this patronage of shinty was one dimension of a Celtic cultural revival, which was part of a broader Highland civil society.

One of the first Highland societies was the Glasgow Highland Society (1727). This organisation was followed by a number of others including the Highland Society of London (1778), the Gaelic Club of Gentlemen in Glasgow (1780), and the Highland Society of Scotland in Edinburgh (1784). From their inception some of these societies were concerned with improving the economic conditions of the Highlands and providing charitable support for less fortunate Highlanders. The objectives of the Glasgow Highland Society included clothing, educating and seeking trades for the sons of exiled Highlanders (MacLennan, 1998b: 167). The Highland Society of Scotland concerned itself with improving agriculture, fisheries, roads, bridges and also uniting the landlords, and it provided grants for draining, clearing and planting (Hutchinson, 1989: 67). These objectives should not be understated but it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the societies exerted a more co-ordinated effort in pursuing these as a part of a distinctive political identity for the Highlands. During the 1850s and 1860s there was a rapid proliferation in the number of Highland societies in urban Britain, particularly in Glasgow.

The social class of members of these organisations was not uniform. A number of these organisations were socially exclusive, and facilitated the integration of the

Highland social elite into polite society in these centres of economic, political and imperial influence (Jarvie, 1991: 57). Others served the interests of an emerging middle-class of professionals and businessmen but they too functioned as the self-regulating terrain on which this new social class achieved status within their own communities and the wider urban society. Regardless of the social and economic background of their members there was one common thread for most of the Highland societies. This is perhaps captured most succinctly in the words of the Glasgow Celtic Society, an organisation which stated one of its primary functions was concerned with "preserving and promoting the language, literature, music, poetry, antiquities and athletic games of the Highlanders" (MacLeod, *SYB*, 1979: 47-48).

The preservation of what Highlanders considered to be their distinctive cultural identity is an innocuous one. It is certainly debatable whether the symbols used retained the integrity of that culture, at least in the case of some organisations. After 1780 certain symbols and practices of Highland culture like tartan, bagpipes, kilts, the *sgian dhubh* and Highland games were incorporated into an invented image of a mythical and romantic image of Highland life and society, which became the dominant cultural image for Scotland. The process of romanticising Highland life has been variously called Highlandism (Devine, 1994: 86), and after 1840 Balmoralisation (Jarvie, 1991: 62). The terminology is perhaps less important than the image cultivated; at the core the principle was the same as specific elements of Highland culture became the fashionable accessories of polite society.

The southern elites of British society, both Scottish and English, were at the core of this process, but the indigenous social elite of Highland society also promoted this cultivated image of the Highlands. With respect to shinty the members of the Highland societies contributed their own version of an imagined Highland community. For

instance the continuation of giving the *cluidh bhall* at Old New Year recaptured an idyll set of the paternalistic social relations between the chief and his clan. In practice this relationship had been gradually eroded by the emergence of commercial landlordism, land clearance and the participation in the social life of polite London society, which affirmed the status of Highland chiefs as "landed and anglicized gentlemen" (Hunter, 1976: 13). The ways in which shinty was appropriated in this process have been addressed in some depth by three previous narratives on shinty's history (Macdonald, 1932: Hutchinson, 1989; MacLennan, 1998b). Of these three accounts MacLennan (1998b: 224) provides the more critical analysis asserting that the celebration of shinty amongst many of these was part of the Celtification of certain elements of Gaelic culture by anglicized urban Highlanders.

There is considerable weight to this assessment, but another image of Celtic cultural identity was manifest in the proliferation of organisations that emerged in urban communities from around the 1850s. The Celtification adopted by an anglicized Highland elite selected only certain aspects of Celtic culture; other Highlanders took a different approach. A late arrival to the network of Highland societies, the Gaelic Society of Glasgow (1887) captured the *zeitgeist* of the city during the nineteenth century. Its introductory statement asserted that:

> Glasgow is a recognized centre of culture and scholarship and contains more Gaelic-speaking people and educated Highlanders than perhaps any other town, or even county in the kingdom. From its commercial relation with the North and West of Scotland it has become essentially the 'Capital of the Highlands' (*TGSG*, 1891: 1-2).

In this context the cultural identity portrayed by some supporters of the Highland societies was arguably a more self-confident image of the Gaelic language, folklore and cultural practices that were at the heart of Celtic Scotland (1887). One contributor to the affairs of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow explained this image in the following way:

> We are living in the midst of a Celtic *renaissance*, when, after many years of misfortune and misrepresentation. The Highlander has risen superior to his difficulties, and reasserted his right to meet his southern rival on equal terms in every sphere of life. It is indeed the case that the Celt is quite able to occupy the highest position wherever a fair field is given to the best talent, whether it be in the learned professions, commerce, art or literature (Mackay, 1891: 247).

The status of Glasgow as the city of the Gael can be explained by the level of both permanent and temporary migration of Highlanders to the city. For instance it is estimated that in 1836, 22,509 native Highlanders lived in Glasgow and a number of its satellite industrial towns such as Greenock and Paisley (Devine, 1983: 137-39; Lynch, 1992: 373; MacLennan, 1998b: 167). In contrast to small tight-knit Highland communities the industrial town or city was a world of anonymous and apparently amorphous masses. The Highland societies provided communal spirit akin to that experienced in small communities. This is implicit in the contribution by one Glasgow-based Highlander to the press:

> Our countrymen are pretty numerous here, and for some months back have been enjoying those social reunions of which they have instituted such as large number within the last ten years. These social gatherings are, I believe, of much value, in as much as they afford natives of the various districts in the Highlands opportunities of meeting, conversing and enjoying the good fellowship of each other, which otherwise, in a large city like this, could not be obtained (*The Highlander*, 16 May 1873).

From this it is apparent that the Highland societies provided an environment in which the Highland diaspora could recreate the communal spirit and sense of belonging that was a component of smaller rural communities. It is not uncommon for émigré groups to organise their own self-regulating autonomous agencies, yet there were peculiar aspects to the Highland diaspora. In his assessment of these structures MacAulay (1994: 41-42) explains that the Highland societies had a dual function. The first is that they provided the terrain on which the leaders of each organisations could project their social status in the life of the city, precisely because these organisations

were part of the structures of the city. In keeping with Victorian practice it was the male members of these organisations who held the most prominent positions within the organisations, and who became leaders in both the social and political life of their communities.

The second dimension of the urban Highland associations is that they provided a focus for retaining the distinctive components of the Gaelic identity of Highlanders. As MacAulay (1994: 42-42) explains in the traditional Gaelic community three interconnected parameters defined identity: *dùthchas*, which referred to his native place; *dualchas*, referred to his people or kin; and *gnàthas*, which concerned the norms of personal behaviours against which the man was measured. It is the first two, *dùthchas* and *dualchas*, which were most clearly evident in the variety of Highland societies. The most striking characteristic of the urban Highland societies was that they were organised either on an area basis that reflected the districts of the Highlands and Islands from which the members originated, or they were defined by clan. In addition to providing a social network and a vehicle for social status, the Highland societies therefore incorporated a continuation with their members' home communities, or with kinship, into their structure.

The practice of organising Highland societies on the basis of the origins of their members reinforced the connection of the Gael in exile to their native place. In Glasgow by the 1870s the plethora of organisations connected to particular Highland areas included the Glasgow Cowal Society, the Badenoch Highland Society, the Glasgow Lochaber Society, the Glasgow Skye Association, the Lewis and Harris Association, the Sutherlandshire Association, the Tiree Association, the Mull and Iona Association, the Ross-shire Association, the Glasgow Islay Society, the Appin Society, the Coll Society and the Ardnamurchan, Morvern and Sunart Association. This sense of identity was

similarly reproduced in relation to some of the plethora of shinty clubs that had been formed in Glasgow by 1880. These included for example the Glasgow Cowal Shinty Club (1877), Glasgow Inverary (1877), and Glasgow Skye (1879). This pattern was continued in subsequent decades, with Glasgow Oban & Lorne (1913), Glasgow Kyles, (1920), Glasgow Islay (1922), Glasgow Mid-Argyll (1923) and Glasgow Inverness-shire (1924). In short the shinty clubs that were formed not only contributed to the development of the sport, but they were part of the cultural sphere and civic life of the city. The activities of the shinty clubs were not restricted to shinty. For example, the Ossian Club secured the use of the Temperance Hall in Glasgow's Robertson Street for six months, for the purpose of "teaching ... Highland dancing and gymnastics" to its members (*The Highlander*, 23 December 1876). The Highland press also carried reports on the concerts and dances organised by shinty clubs in a manner similar to the Highland associations to which they were linked. It was through this network of institutions that the Highland diaspora reproduced a meaningful and distinctive sense of identity.

The connections between the Highland societies and shinty clubs went beyond the similarity in names. It is suggested here that many of the shinty clubs were developed as part of the broader social and cultural activities that looked to celebrate and preserve "Gaelic tradition and culture" (MacPhail, 1989: 8). One clear example of this is evident in the following account in a press report early in 1876 which stated "Among the many schemes which the members of the Glasgow Highland Association have originated, the shinty Club is certainly not the least successful" (The Highlander, 1 January 1876). Some years later a letter appeared in the *Oban Times* supporting this connection between the formation of a shinty club in Glasgow. The author of the letter was J.G. Mackay of Portree in Skye. Mackay explained that at a meeting in the

Glasgow Highland Society's rooms on Hope Street in November 1875 he had suggested

"the Society should start a Shinty Club". His letter continued:

> At that time, as far as I know, there was no organized club in existence, with the exception of the Edinburgh and London clubs ... It was arranged in Glasgow that play should begin in the Queen's Park on New Year's Day, 1876, when sixty young men mustered with their camans. Under the management of Mrs Macpherson, the Skye Poetess, the creature comforts of the gathering were provided in the shape of home-made oatcakes, scones and cheese ... Ultimately so many joined that it was necessary to break up into district and other clubs. These included the Glasgow Cowal, Inverary [*sic.*] and other district clubs as well as the "Fardach Fhinn" or the Fingal Lodge of Good Templars (reprinted MacLennan, 1993: 50-52).

By the end of the 1870s there were at least six shinty clubs in the city including

Glasgow Camanachd, Glasgow Cowal (1877), Glasgow Fingal (1877), Glasgow

Inveraray (1877) and Springburn (1876). The Ossian club, also an offshoot of Glasgow

Camanachd, was renamed Glasgow Skye in 1879, since the big majority of members

belonged to or had a connection with the island. On 13 October 1877 representatives of

these Glasgow teams, along with Greenock (1877) Vale of Leven (1854), Renton (by

1879) and Edinburgh Camanachd, met at Whyte's Temperance Hotel in Glasgow and

agreed a set of rules and a constitution that was the basis for the Shinty Association, the

first collective administrative association for shinty. A year later the patronage that had

spawned many of the association's member clubs, led to the donation of the first shinty

trophy of the modern game, the Glasgow Celtic Society Challenge Cup.

It has been suggested that an important function of the Highland societies was

that they provided their members with considerable social and political standing in their

urban communities. This was not a unique feature of Highland societies since the

philanthropic and cultural societies of Victorian Britain, particularly Scotland were the

social and political world for the urban middle-classes. As Morton has argued (1994:

42; 1996: 262) it was in the self-regulating clubs, societies and associations which

comprised civil society, rather than in the political agencies of the state, that collective identities could be constructed and expressed. The individuals involved in these organisations not only established their national credentials, but also their political standing since local politics and civil society were almost inextricably linked. For Highlanders their societies, shinty clubs and their standing as middle-class business and military gentlemen fulfilled the same functions, while simultaneously reinforcing their distinctive cultural identity.

Previous studies have acknowledged the contribution the Highland societies made to the making of modern shinty. The original analysis in this thesis is that these Highland societies and their patronage of shinty in urban Britain have been conceptualised as core agencies of a distinctive, semi-autonomous Highland civil society. By the 1880s this Highland civil society fulfilled a number of functions, of which at least two have been identified as significant for this case study: (i) it was an institutional repository of an apparently benign cultural identity built upon the idea of Celtic revival; (ii) Highland civil society functioned to accommodate definitions of collective identity for Highlanders in the city, that reinforced certain concepts that were unique characteristics of identity for Highland Gaels.

SUMMARY

This chapter has examined three interconnected themes that marked the development of shinty and ideas about cultural identity within Highland society from 1835 until 1880. More specifically it has addressed the impact of varied patterns of the decline and survival of shinty; the importance of patronage in maintaining certain bonds of kinship and social obligation in the Highlands; and the contribution of the Highland societies to promoting shinty as a symbol of a distinctive cultural identity within the context of urban communities. These social and cultural practices arising from these

themes were embodied within the institutional framework of a distinctive Highland civil society. The politicisation of Highland civil society around certain issues, was the basis for a more formal radical political movement that fused the interests of rural and urban Highlanders during the 1880s. It is this issue of land politics and Highland land law reform that is addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5
SHINTY, LAND WARS AND CELTIC RADICALISM

The period from about 1875 until 1887 was an important one for shinty. During this decade a number of shinty clubs were constituted and there were signs that the formal competitive games between clubs were a popular new direction for the game. These developments emerged in an unsettled environment resulting from radical social and political activity in the Highlands and amongst the Highland diaspora throughout Britain. A number of elements contributed to this radical activity, but none more so than the issue of land reform. This chapter reflects upon the impact of certain interconnected consequences of the changing nature of landownership and land use during the nineteenth century. First the analysis probes the ways in which land clearance, famine and migration influenced the survival and decline of shinty prior to the 1870s. Second, the discussion investigates the place of land issues within the Celtic radicalism that characterised the politicisation of Highland civil society between about 1870 and 1886.

There was no straightforward link between shinty and politics, nor were the causes of the land agitation during the 1880s restricted to this period. The more opaque connection between shinty and land politics in the Highlands can be contrasted with similar but separate circumstances in Ireland, where hurling activities were often used as occasions to raise support for certain radical organisations in Ireland. During the 1870s and 1880s there was some cross-fertilisation of ideas between individuals in the Highlands and Ireland who were connected to the organisations that were concerned with on the one hand the development of Celtic sports, and on the other the politics of land reform.

The chapter is organised into four sections which examine selected themes relevant to the politics of land issues and shinty. Section 1 'Since they took our land'[15] examines the decline and survival of shinty in relation to land issues from the early decades of the nineteenth century until the 1870s. Section 2 'The Politicisation of Highland Society' investigates the radical political agenda that characterised the emerging political autonomy of Highland civil society between about 1870 and 1883. Section 3 'Shinty, land wars and Highland political autonomy' examines the connections between shinty, the radical politics of land reform and the achievements of the Highland Land Law Reform Association during the 1880s. Section 4 'Celtic sports and radical politics' draws together the key points arising from the analysis of shinty and land issues, in order provide some comparison between the Highland context and Ireland. More specifically the key questions at the heart of this chapter are: (i) Why did shinty disappear from many Highland communities during the nineteenth century? (ii) In what way was the development of shinty after 1870 influenced by the policies of land clearance, famine and depopulation? (iii) What were the main issues that exemplified the politicisation of Highland civil society? (iv) Did shinty players and administrators contribute to the radical Celtic politics of the 1870s and 1880s? (v) What parallels can be drawn between Celtic sports, radical politics and land reform in the Highlands and Ireland? This chapter now turns to answering the first two questions outlined above.

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[15] Taken from lines of the translation of a poem by Skye's Gaelic poetess bardess Màiri Mhor nan Oran. Translation is taken from Macdonald (1992: 3) also used by Telfer (1994: 114).

SINCE THEY TOOK OUR LAND

Chapter four has examined some of the ways in which certain aspects of Highland society and social development contoured the decline and survival of shinty between 1835 and 1870. It was suggested that the provision of suitable land was an important form of patronage for shinty in certain communities. This form of patronage also helped to reinforce the tone of deference towards certain social class groups in Victorian society, as well as the apparently traditional ties between landlords and their tenants. This section investigates further this aspect of patronage. The central issue here is to evaluate more critically the impact that the interconnected themes of land clearance, famine and depopulation had on shinty across the Highlands. To assess this, the analysis probes two key questions: why did shinty disappear from certain Highland communities during the nineteenth century? and, in what way was the development of shinty after 1870 influenced by the policies of land clearance, famine and depopulation? Given the social upheavals and dislocation that resulted from these events it is unsurprising that shinty was lost from many of the communities where it was played. The evidence considered here reveals that the disruption to social life that resulted from land clearance, famine and depopulation was not uniform throughout the Highlands, but this disruption was a contributory reason for the congregation of Highlanders in the urban communities in which modern shinty was developed during the 1870s.

In the first issue of *Celtic Monthly* (October 1892) one contributor asked why shinty, once played throughout Scotland until the 1840s, had disappeared from many Highland communities. Noting that other recreations had replaced "this characteristically Scottish game" the author remarked:

> In Sutherland and Caithness [shinty] is not kept up as it might be ...
> Why is this grand old national game allowed to die out in such places as
> Helmsdale, Brora, Golspie, Dornoch, Lairg, Bonar ... Tongue, Farr
> [and] Assynt?

The apparent decline of shinty in Sutherland was further commented upon two years

later when it was claimed:

> Shinty was a favourite game on the sands at Balnakeil, o'er shadowed
> by the fine baronial residence of the Lords of Reay, and on New-Year's
> Day the game is still played (*Celtic Monthly*, June 1894).

These sentiments appear to be supported by another contributor to the *Celtic Monthly*

who noted "Many of the ancient games and pastimes of the country are neglected or

abolished" (*Celtic Monthly*, December 1898). During the 1870s reports in the press of

shinty in these communities were sporadic, but the game was not entirely absent. Shinty

was played in Tain at Christmas and New Year during the mid-1870s (*The Highlander*,

26 December 1874; 2 January 1875; 9 January 1875). In Alness at "New Year (Old

Style)" shinty was played "in a field adjacent to the town, kindly granted for the

occasion by Mr McKenzie of Dalmore" (*The Highlander*, 22 January 1876). This

contrasts with reports from other communities in the north. In Dornoch a number of

young people "turned out on the Links, and had their usual game at bulls" as part of Old

New Year celebrations (*The Highlander*, 17 January 1874). Shinty was also absent from

the celebrations at Bonar Bridge two years later although "the inhabitants" turned out

"to witness the athletic games, which are becoming quite an annual institution in the

place" (*The Highlander*, 23 January 1876). The flat race, putting the ball, the high leap

and hammer throwing were held at Campbeltown and Dunoon in the south-west

Highlands at New Year 1876 (*The Highlander*, 8 January 1876). Further evidence of the

decline of shinty and other traditions in the northern Highlands was evident in Newmore

near Rosskean in Easter Ross, where "a football match ... commenced at 12 o'clock, and

was continued until 2." The local proprietor said he would continue games but on 1 January, rather than the customary 12 January (*The Highlander*, 15 January 1876).

On the island of Lismore a clear connection was made between the absence of shinty and commercial landlordism. It was claimed that, at Christmas "There were no old men in scores on the fields eagerly plying the shinty after the ball". The reason for this was explained:

> there are no people, and these innumerable ruins tell a sad tale of the present and the joy of the past. The fields still bearing the furrow of the plough, are covered with brackens and moss; the dykes which once marked the boundaries of the "crofts" are overgrown and hardly traced ... who had the heart to scatter hundreds of these mirthful family circles and replace them with sheep? ... They are all gone ... years ago ... forced to leave the soil and seek shelter under more hospitable landlords, while the place is taken up by a single individual with a plaid over his shoulder, a stick in his hand, and a pair of dogs at his heels (*The Highlander*, 9 January 1875).

This assessment of the impact of land clearances and the development of sheep farming on shinty was unusual, but perhaps the circumstances were not unique. One explanation for the disappearance of shinty from many parts of the Highlands lies in the patterns of population migration around, and out of, the Highlands. Population displacement was a characteristic of the land policies that had been applied to the Highlands in various ways since the second half of the eighteenth century. The consequences of these policies are often collectively referred to as the clearances but this categorisation is misleading and inaccurate for at least two reasons. First the Highlands cannot be treated as a homogeneous entity (Bumsted, 1982: 29-30; Lynch, 1992: 367). In a society shaped by the vagaries of local communities and interests, the social and economic causes and effects of land clearance and migration were very different. Second there were at least two main phases of clearance in the Highlands after 1746: the first between about the 1760s until the 1820s, the second occurring between about 1847 and 1856. One cannot make generalisations about the clearances since they

were shaped by the interests and objectives of those who were displaced, and those who may have displaced them (Lynch, 1992: 367-70). This caveat noted, land clearance was one of the repercussions of two interconnected features of Highland social history: the impact of improving landlords and the introduction of commercial landlordism to the Highlands; and the devastation caused by the famine in the Highlands between 1846 and 1850.

The decline of shinty in Sutherland and Caithness by 1840 is perhaps most closely connected to one example of the first of these causes of land clearance. More specifically shinty's decline in the north may be connected to a series of events during the first two decades of the nineteenth century that are known as the Sutherland Clearances. The evictions of tenants from their small farm holdings from the estate of the Duchess of Sutherland are a *cause célèbre* of the land clearances (Blackie, 1885: 57-66; Lynch, 1992: 369-70; Devine, 1993: 36-37). From 1807 until 1821 it is estimated that between 6,000 and 10,000 people were removed from the inland communities on the estate, and forced to settle in new crofting communities on the coast (Devine, 1993: 36-37. These evictions, an example of social engineering, were implemented in order to accommodate the introduction and expansion of commercial sheep farming on the estate (Lynch, 1992: 370; Devine, 1993: 33-36).

The introduction of commercial landlordism to the Highlands has been the subject of considerable debate which reveals the paradox of its impact. Commercial landlordism was concerned with modernising the Highlands but it inevitably destroyed traditional agricultural practices and tenurial systems, and cultural practices (Blackie, 1885: 34-81; Hunter, 1976: 6-7; Lynch, 1992: 367-70). An important feature of this was the introduction of pecuniary rent, rather than payment in services for the right to occupy the land (Blackie, 1885: 42; *Celtic Monthly*, January 1899: 62). This imposed a

commodity relationship between tenant, land and landowner that was alien, and consequently eroded the sense of *dùthchas* and *dualchas*, two of the three concepts by which Gaelic people defined their identity (Lynch, 1992: 368). The chief commodity under the new system was sheep farming and for a time in the north-west Highlands the people themselves who provided the labour to sustain the kelp industry. To maximise their profits from the wool markets many landlords established extensive tracts of land, and awarded the leases to tenants who could afford to pay the rents (Hunter, 1995: 15-33; Devine, 1993: 42-43). To make way for this new style of farming tenants and subtenants were removed to less fertile parts of the estate.

Until 1803 voluntary emigration to the New World for those who could afford it relieved pressure on the increasingly congested parts of some estates. Fearing emigration would leave the estates short of labour, landlords persuaded the government to introduce legislation, the Passenger Vessels Act (1803) that restricted emigration (Hunter 1995: 24-26). This in part exacerbated the problem of a rising population located in congested areas and is illustrative of one of the ways in which landlords' policies contributed to Highland overpopulation (Lynch, 1992: 368). This legislation was relaxed in 1827 when the industry had failed, but high rents and poor agriculture meant emigration was an unrealistic route for most crofters, although more benevolent landlords contributed to an assisted passage programme during this period. This accepted, the crofters and landless cotters who comprised the lowest orders of Highland society continued to be marginalised to the fringes of estates or lost good pasture lands in favour of the more profitable sheep or sporting estates. (Hunter, 195: 26-27).

The Sutherland Clearances occurred prior to the period considered in this chapter. It is important to point out however these clearances, and the changes effected by other commercial practices throughout the Highlands, remained in the popular

consciousness of Highlanders throughout the nineteenth century. The lasting legacy of events during the early nineteenth century, and before, informed the land agitation and calls for land law reform that emerged during the 1870s and 1880s.

John Murdoch did not experience the Sutherland evictions, but he was aware of the ways in which land policies affected shinty on Islay. As Murdoch explained:

> *Traigh an Luig* is silent now under the feet of cattle and the small farms from which the keen players of those days came in such troops are consolidated into large farms (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I).

The worst of the depopulation that left *Traigh an Luig* and other communities devoid of shinty players came after the famine of 1846-1850 (Hunter 1995: 50-72). Agricultural failure was not a new phenomenon in the Highlands, but the consequences of the potato crop failure in the middle of the nineteenth century were more potent than anything that had preceded it (Lynch, 1992: 371; Devine, 1993: 147). The historian Jim Hunter (1995: 50) contends that it was a "human tragedy on a scale unparalleled in modern Scottish history ... unprecedented in severity and duration". The facts of the matter are this. In 1845 the potato crop in southern Scotland, Islay and Argyll was affected by a fungus to which potatoes at that time had no natural resistance. Further north the mild and damp summer was not conducive to the fungus, but the spring of 1846 was mild followed by warm and dry weather in early summer and then in July wet weather. By mid-July the fungus had appeared in Skye and soon after the potato blight affected the potato crop throughout the Highlands (Hunter 1995: 53).

The protracted consequences of the famine were felt for over a decade and cannot be overstated (Hunter, 1995: 54-72; Devine, 1993: 146). In an historical epoch, but more importantly a society, used to scarcity, the failure of the principal source of subsistence signalled a period of starvation, disease and depopulation, and contributed to "enormous demographic losses" (Devine, 1993: 147). Some succumbed to the

diseases of famine but mortality was less acute in the Highlands than in Ireland, perhaps because some of the landed class, but more importantly the Highland diaspora, were able to provide more relief (Devine, 1993: 150-54). Nonetheless depopulation was a major feature of the decade from 1847 until 1857 (Hunter, 1995: ; Devine, 1993: 147). In some cases landlords and estate managers believed the land could simply not sustain the crofter population and that removing them was a better option. Better for whom is a topic of much debate, but the clearances of this period were a mixture of brutality and philanthropy. Legislation was used to enforce emigration to North America, Australia and other places. It is estimated that sixteen thousand people left communities across the north-west including Barra, South Uist, Lewis, Skye, and Knoydart, their passages paid either by public subscription or by their landlords (Devine, 1993: 147; Lynch, 1992: 373). The fallibility of the land was part of the problem but this was due in some measure to the proprietors' reorganisation of their estates for commercial purposes. One Church of Scotland minister, the Reverend Dr Norman MacLeod, argued that the poverty of the people during the famine was intensified by the commercial policies of selfish landlords looking for an excuse to get rid of the people through emigration (Blackie, 1885: 81-82).

The famine clearances left a significant mark on the landscape, population and social structure of many Highland communities but it is important not to generalise about these events as a Highland experience (Bumsted, 1982: 29-30; Hunter, 1976: 3; Lynch, 1992: 367-70). Migration was both permanent and seasonal (Devine, 1979: 344; Cameron, 1996: 2), with the latter being an essential component of the economic condition of crofters (Devine, 1994: 134). The different reasons for migration demonstrate both 'push' and 'pull' influences (Devine, 1983: 139), although one might argue that the 'pull' of improved social and economic conditions was exacerbated by

the impoverished conditions and limited prospects that in other places and circumstances were used to 'push' others. Nonetheless the disruption, dislocation and hardship caused by the clearances and famine were felt in many Highland communities and influenced the patterns of shinty play in those communities and its development further afield. For a people whose identity was embodied in *dùthchas* and *dualchas* separation from their homes for whatever reason was a dislocating experience (Lynch, 1992: 368; MacAulay, 1994: 41).

The history of Caberfeidh Shinty Club also reflects on links of shinty in the surrounding communities to different phases of land clearances. It is noted that "Shinty had been played in Knockfarrel - a small township one and a half miles south of Strathpeffer - since the time of the Highland Clearances." The community being families who had been evicted from Strathconon at that time and been given land by the Earl of Cromartie ('Caberfeidh Shinty Club', *Shinty Yearbook*, 1972-73: 18). Its players and supporters in the communities of Knockfarrel, Loch Ussie, the Height of Achterneed, Brae and Docharty, were descendants of Strathconon people "driven from their glen earlier in the century by the Balfour evictions, and allowed to settle in these districts" (MacLennan, SYB, 1986: 27). The Balfour evictions refers to the circumstances in 1850 when twenty-four families who had been evicted from the Balfour estate were accommodated on land held by the Earl of Cromartie. This was celebrated as an act of philanthropy, but it was a commercial arrangement (Richards and Clough, 1989: 223-6). The acceptance of the refugees went against the tide on the Cromartie estate since the famine had left the owner, John Hay-Mackenzie, with severe financial problems, and in May 1849 tenants in arrears were evicted in favour of consolidation into larger holdings. In September 1850, before the scheme was completed, Hay-Mackenzie died and the estate passed to his new son-in-law, the

Marquis of Stafford later the 3rd Duke of Sutherland (Richards and Clough, 1989: 219-227).

The acute reality of the impact of land clearance and famine on shinty in some Highland communities is brought home in the case of Skye (Macdonald 1992: 1-6). The famine left seventy-five per cent of the Skye population starving and fever-ridden, the same proportion estimated for the whole of the north-west Highlands. Unlike mainland communities such as those in Badenoch, Glenurquhart or Strathglass, Skye shinty did not benefit from stable communities with resident landlords. These circumstances of the crofting communities on Skye are examined by Hunter (1995: 19-22; 28-30; 36-38; 47-50; 53-56; 58-59; 61-65; 83-84) who describes how vast tracts of land were turned over to sheep farming, and thousands of the population migrated to Glasgow and overseas. By 1847 the leases for approximately six thousand of the island's sixteen thousand arable acres were held by thirty sheep farmers, as the remaining acreage was to support over 4,000 families (Hunter, 1995: 51). The potato, part of the staple diet on Skye since the 1680s, was the only crop that offered any reasonable yield for crofters on their infertile holdings and when it failed in 1846 the impact was devastating. One minister on the island wrote of a 'Winter of Starvation', another of crofters on the island's Kilmuir estate living on "seaweed and scanty supplies of shellfish", and in the parish of Strath on Christmas Day 1846 typhus had broken out in many households (Hunter, 1995: 54-6). By 1849 over 8,000 people on Skye received relief through the provisions of the Central Board of Management of the Fund for the Relief of the Destitute Inhabitants of the Highlands (1847). It is unsurprising that in many communities by 1852 there was "little reason to celebrate and less energy for shinty" (Macdonald, 1992: 3). One poet provided her own assessment of the impact of these events:

Since they took our land
We lost our shinty as well
And there are few men left who are skilful now.[16]

Two questions were posed in this section: why did shinty disappear from many Highland communities by the 1870s?, and what impact did land clearance and famine have on this decline? It has been argued that both these features of Highland social history marked the patterns of shinty's decline. It is important to acknowledge there was no monocausal reason, and it must be remembered that other factors including those discussed in chapter four were also contributory factors in shinty's disappearance and survival. The evidence concerning shinty in Highland communities reveals that the uneven pattern and severity of land clearance and famine contoured the fortunes of the game during the first half of the nineteenth century in some communities, while in other places there was a more consistent pattern of shinty play. Those who survived the clearances and famine did not easily forget the inhumanity and poverty these episodes exposed in their impoverished communities. It is therefore significant that these issues were at the forefront of the radical political agenda that defined the politicisation of Highland civil society during the 1870s. It is to this issue that the next section turns.

THE POLITICISATION OF HIGHLAND SOCIETIES

The network of Highland and Celtic societies in urban Britain had a profound influence on the development of shinty. During the 1870s the continued expansion of the Celtic cultural movement was supported by a popular press dedicated to the interests of Highlanders and the promotion of Highland culture. Within this context certain individuals called upon the Highland societies to use their position in British society to bring attention to the conditions of Highlanders in the rural crofting communities in the north and west Highlands. By the mid-1870s a political dimension was becoming

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[16] Reprinted Macdonald (1992: 3).

apparent in some of the activities of the urban Highland associations, and by the early 1880s much of this focused upon the issue of land law reform. This section investigates this development by probing the main characteristics that exemplified the relative political autonomy of Highland civil society between about 1870 and 1883.

The poem cited in the preceding section was written by was Màiri MacPherson (1821-98), a Gael from Skye. Màiri MacPherson, or *Màiri Mhòr nan Oran* (Great Mary of the Songs), was the daughter of a crofter from Skeabost in Skye. After her husband's death (1871) Màiri MacPherson took up nursing to support her family but she was gaoled in 1872 on a theft charge of which she was most likely innocent (Meek, 1976: 312; Cameron, 2000: 50-51). This experience brought her the support and friendship of Charles Fraser-Mackintosh later the M.P. for Inverness Burgh, and the land reformer John Murdoch who pointed to the unfairness of the trial being conducted in English rather than Gaelic. The predominance of English in formal public life in the Highlands, rather than the Highlanders' native Gaelic, was a matter that later aroused the collective political consciousness of urban Highlanders. For Màiri MacPherson imprisonment was the catalyst for her poetry and song compositions that expressed her personal outrage at the establishment and more specifically the Highland land issues.

At the age of fifty-two Màiri MacPherson moved to Glasgow (1872-82). Her participation on the céilidh circuit of the Highland societies brought her greater recognition, as did her appearance on Land League platforms throughout the Highlands during the 1880s (MacDonald, 1992: 2). Màiri MacPherson was also a staunch ally of shinty and described the New Year game of the Glasgow Shinty Club *Camanachd Ghlaschu* and also a match a year later, sixty-aside, between the Gaels of Glasgow and Greenock (MacLennan, 1993: 50-1; 1995a: 144-51). The case of Màiri MacPherson illustrates a third dimension to the migration of Highlanders. Migration was sometimes

voluntary, both permanent and temporary, and people left the Highlands in search of work, and for education. As John Murdoch explained:

> it was accepted as a matter of course that any lad of intelligence and proper ambition should look beyond the island for his sphere. And as years roll on, what was then thought by a few has become the [dominant] idea (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. I)

There were many prominent figures in Highland civil society in the second half of the nineteenth century whose experiences corroborate Murdoch's opinion. For example, William Murray, chieftain of the Edinburgh Camanachd Club, and a wine merchant from Stockbridge, was the son of a schoolmaster from Latheron in Caithness (*Celtic Monthly*, October 1892). Lieutenant Neil Mackay, proprietor of the Barley Mow public house in London's Fleet Street, Captain of the London Northern Counties Shinty Club and a founder of the London Inverness-shire Association was from the same Caithness parish and left there in 1866 aged eighteen "to seek his fortune in southern climes" (*Celtic Monthly*, April 1893).

The Highland societies were significant agencies of cultural identity and Victorian philanthropy. There was often a cross over in membership of these organisations but they operated as independent agencies. During the 1870s certain individuals began to countenance the idea of an integrated approach which could underpin greater politicisation of Highland civil society to pursue Highland interests. A key player in this process was the retired excise officer John Murdoch. Murdoch used his status in Highland civil society to raise awareness of three distinctly Highland issues: the establishment of a Chair in Celtic or Gaelic studies at Edinburgh University; the provision of Gaelic language teaching in Highland schools; and reform of land laws in both the Highlands and Ireland. It is outside the scope of this thesis to consider all three of these, but it is necessary to reflect upon the longer term impact of two of them.

The issue of Gaelic in Highland schools was arguably the one that was most significant for the broadest social spectrum of Highland society. In short the problem lay in the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872, under which there was no recognition of the distinctive culture and circumstances of Highland society. One of the most prominent campaigners on this matter was Professor John Stuart Blackie of Edinburgh University who summarised three principle objections to the provisions of the act. First, the absence of Gaelic was a consequence of the "ignorance and insolence" of Englishmen towards the Scots but also of Scottish Lowlanders (Blackie, 1885: 93). This comment is perhaps a veiled message about the failure to acknowledge Highland, and also Scottish, autonomy. Second he rejected the centralisation of education matters which ignored local peculiarities and in his view was "the besetting sin of all bureaucratic administration" (Blackie, 1885: 93). Third he objected to the narrow minded approach of school Inspectors towards what was "suitable intellectual product", which militated against Highlanders (Blackie, 1885: 94). Blackie (1885: 94) concluded:

> Highland education in its characteristic features had no meaning; their idea was not to make Highlanders better Highlanders, but to make them forget that they were Highlanders.

In campaigning for improvements to the Education Act, Highland civil society had an important ally in Charles Fraser-Mackintosh who was elected as the Independent Liberal Member of Parliament for Inverness Burgh in 1874 (Cameron, 2000: 35). Fraser-Mackintosh was a Gaelic speaker, the son of a tacksman and farmer although he was not from a crofting community. He practised law in Inverness and emerged in local politics as an election agent at the General Election of 1857, and thereafter as a town councillor (Cameron, 2000: 9). As an advocate of the Celtic cultural movement Fraser-Mackintosh was considered to have proven his genuine support of Highland issues. His election to parliament in 1874 was welcomed throughout the radical cultural movement,

and one report reflected that Fraser-Mackintosh was "the first and only really Highland Member which Parliament can boast" (*The Highlander*, 9 January 1875). Charles Fraser-Mackintosh pursued Highland interests in Parliament, where he called attention to:

> the working of the Education Act in the Highlands, especially directing attention to the difficulties arising from the want of proper provisions for the teaching of Gaelic (*The Highlander*, 26 February 1876).

With a champion of Highland interests in Westminster, the Highland press encouraged Highland civil society to adopt a similar line. This achieved moderate success in 1876 when an enquiry was set up to investigate the use of Gaelic in schools. The majority of Highland School Boards favoured a special grant for Gaelic teaching, but it was 1885 before this was achieved and Gaelic was made a specific subject (Devine, 1999: 401-02; Cameron, 2000: 69-70). This moderate success cannot be overstated, as it is illustrative of the growing politicisation of certain elements of the Highland societies around issues unique to the Highlands in the Scottish context. In an era when the franchise was not extended to all men, never mind to women, the Highland organisations therefore had considerable potential weight.

The education issue introduced a clear Highland dimension to politics in Victorian Britain, and in relation to a national institution whose autonomy has often been vigorously defended. At this juncture the Highland societies represented part of a civil society that could capitalise on the cultural consciousness of the urban Highland middle class to advance such issues. There is no evidence to suppose those who participated in shinty were unfamiliar with the discourse on education matters. Yet one question must be examined: did the players and administrators of the new shinty clubs contribute to the radical politics that emerged in the 1870s? In order to answer this

question it is helpful to turn to the issue of land reform, the third dimension of the politicisation of Highland civil society.

The leading radical of the decade John Murdoch was committed to promoting shinty and land reform through his newspaper and the various Highland societies. The first Secretary of Glasgow Shinty Club, and later Glasgow Skye, was a native of Skye, Mr John Macqueen. In June 1875 he addressed the Glasgow Skye Association on "The condition and prospects of Highlanders". In his presentation John Macqueen reflected "on the insecure footing on which land was held in the Highlands" and concluded with an appeal to all the Highland societies "to make common cause in regard to the question of depopulation" (*The Highlander*, 12 June 1875). There is no evidence that John Macqueen or John Murdoch actively promoted land reform through shinty, but they were manifestly aware of the problem. This was a separate yet related aspect of the cultural identity they celebrated through shinty.

Portraits of certain leading individuals in Highland civil society during the 1870s reinforce this assertion. They also confirm that the personal experiences of the Highland diaspora and that of their progenitors had been shaped by events earlier in the century. It is said that John MacKay, editor of *Celtic Monthly,* "could not write of Dunrobin Castle, the home of the Dukes and Duchesses of Sutherland and the spawning ground of the brutal clearances which preceded his own birth in Glasgow, except in words of unsupressed and uncharacteristic bitterness" (Hutchinson, 1989: 138). MacKay (1865-1909) was employed by a Glasgow flour merchant, but his standing in the city was established through his contributions to civil society. He was Secretary and later President of the Clan MacKay Society, President of Glasgow Gaelic Society, Vice-President of the Glasgow Sutherlandshire Association, but he was perhaps best known in his role as President of Glasgow Cowal Shinty Club (*The Celtic Monthly*, December

1896; Hutchinson, 1989: 134-36). John MacKay's grandfather had been evicted during the Strathnaver clearances in Sutherland in 1813, "the year of the burning" (Hunter, 1995: 27). This fact perhaps explains MacKay's bitterness to the ducal seat of Sutherland (*Celtic Monthly*, December 1896).

A second leading participant in the development of shinty during the 1870s and 1880s also had a personal connection to the Sutherland clearances, and to the depopulation in another Highland community. John G. Mackay was from Lochlash in Skye, where his father was a parish schoolmaster. Like his namesake, Mackay (1849-1924) was an active participant in a variety of Highland organisations in city, including, the Gaelic Society of Glasgow, the Glasgow Sutherlandshire Association, the Glasgow Highland Society and was a founder Glasgow Skye Shinty Club. The profile of John G. Mackay states:

> When we learn that his father was an eye-witness of the Sutherland "burnings," and incurred the displeasure of the notorious Patrick Sellar for trying to rouse the manliness of the people, we can easily understand how, in addition to receiving the ordinary branches of education from his father, the subject of our sketch imbibed in boyhood those principles which have made him such a persistent Land Leaguer. Another fact which may be held to have accentuated his antipathy to landlordism is, that his mother is a native of the desolated parish of Bracadale, Skye (*Celtic Monthly*, July 1893).

The point to be made from these examples is a simple, but important one. Some of the players and administrators who influenced the development of shinty were the progeny of Highlanders who had experienced the disruption and upheaval of land clearance in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Some of them had themselves encountered the later causes of land clearance and migration. Shinty was a symbol, and an expression of their cultural identity, but it was not used as a platform to resist land clearance or project other political objectives. Yet this Highland diaspora was acutely aware of the events that had influenced the fluctuating fortunes of their game

throughout the twentieth century. It was their immersion in the distinct yet connected agencies of Highland civil society that mediated the expressions of the cultural and subsequent relative political autonomy of the Highlands.

The Gaelic Society of Inverness (1871) was an important focus for the attention of supporters of the Celtic cultural revival in the north. The organisation's members included the liberal landowner Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, Archibald Chisholm and Celtic radicals like John Murdoch and Alexander MacKenzie, a supporter of Fraser-Mackintosh who published another radical paper the *Scottish Highlander* (1885-1898). Colin Chisholm (1806-1895) from Glencannich in Strathglass was another a member with a keen interest in shinty, and he too was aware of the impact of commercial land policies (*Celtic Monthly*, April 1896). In 1877 Colin Chisholm delivered a paper to the Gaelic Society of Inverness in which he was critical of the creation of "Large farms infested with game" and Glens "thoroughly cleared - the native population sent to the four quarters of the globe" (Chisholm 1877: 175). Concluding his critique Chisholm challenged his audience:

> Will you do all in your power to alter this state of things? Will you collectively and individually endeavour to leave the tenure of land in the Highlands in a better state than you found it? My own humble opinion is, that you ought to petition Parliament forthwith, praying that they may be pleased to interpose between misapplied capital and the cultivators of the land in the Highlands (Chisholm, 1877: 188).

In spite of the sincerity of this agenda there were at least two constraints on the potential power of Highland civil society. The first limitation lay in the failure of the Highland societies to present a unified voice to campaign on Highland issues, a matter that John Murdoch continually drew attention to through his newspaper (*The Highlander*, 20 December 1873; 5 February 1876). In November 1878 Murdoch's exhortations had some success, with the formation of the Federation of Celtic Societies (*The Highlander*, 30 November 1878; Cameron, 2000: 71). As with other aspects of

Highland civil society the connection between of the Federation of Celtic Societies and shinty was evident in terms of the participation of individuals in both spheres of Highland social life, rather than through formal organisational links. The organisation was a loose confederation of organisations but they did not speak with one voice. This is illustrated by some of the individuals who were connected with the federation. One of the Federation's leading proponents was John Stuart Blackie, a sympathetic Lowlander whose interest in the Highlands was developed while taking holidays in the Highlands during the 1850s (Blackie, 1885: vii). However his sympathy for the crofters against unscrupulous landlords was perhaps based in part on a limited romantic vision of the Highlands uncorrupted by modern civilisation (Hanham, 1968: 38-9). According to one interviewee Blackie left Oban "because he didn't want the railway" (McDougall, Appendix 8).

The Federation of Celtic Societies did have a common objective. It aspired to foster Gaelic culture, to oppose evictions and to take an interest in land laws, but radicals such as John Murdoch, Alexander Mackenzie and John G. Mackay wanted this to be part of a wider radical agenda. The Federation of Celtic Societies was short-lived, and it made little impact on land reform politics. Its demise began in 1882 when the Gaelic Society of Inverness withdrew because the Federation appeared to be adopting a Parnellite stance on land reform and the emerging Irish Home rule issue. As the final section of this chapter demonstrates the alignment of land law reform with Irish radicalism became a divisive issue in Highland politics.

The second constraint on the political development of Highland civil society was that it was essentially a southern-based middle-class institution. In the period before the Third Reform Act (1884) the lowest classes of Highland society had no outlet to express their own support for the transformation of land legislation. Highland crofters also

feared that if they opposed their landowners it would result in loss of tenure or increased rentals, and contributed to the difficulty in getting Highland tenants to speak out. Radical land reformers such as John Murdoch and Alexander Mackenzie toured Highland communities trying to encourage the crofters to develop "their own capabilities and stirring them up to work out their own elevation" (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. IV). Although unsuccessful during the 1870s, this was to change in the following decade when the radicalism of the Highland diaspora fused with the outbreak of land agitation in the Highlands. This development is the focus of the next section.

This section has illustrated the key elements that characterised the politicisation of Highland civil society during the 1870s. Although shinty was not a central platform for such developments it was part of the network of organisations that became the repository for consolidating an urban cultural identity, and a relatively autonomous political community. Some of the leading figures in shinty were acutely aware of the land issues that had affected their ancestors and indeed their own migration to the city. The achievements with regard to Gaelic education were symbols of this growing political consciousness. This more politicised environment was an important factor in the coalition of Celtic radicals and Highland crofters during the 1880s.

SHINTY, LAND WARS AND HIGHLAND POLITICAL AUTONOMY

The intensely local nature of many small Highland communities was a constraint to Highlanders mobilising their own campaign for land law reform. This was exacerbated by a deep-rooted fear of the repercussions of such actions, although it is inaccurate to suggest that by the 1880s all landowners were against some changes to distribution and tenure arrangements of their tenants. In the first two years of the 1880s the actions of small groups of crofters in the western Highlands provided the catalyst for

a new direction in Highland society. The subsequent formation of the Highland Land Law Reform Association (HLLRA, 1883) led to momentous events in nineteenth century Highland history. These included the election of representatives of a distinctive Highland political party to the Westminster Parliament (1885), and in 1886 the introduction of legislation that in part reinforced the relative autonomy of the Highlands as a distinctive political, as well as a cultural community. The objective of this section is to examine the coincidence of these developments with the further development of shinty in the Highlands. To investigate this issue the analysis probes the extent to which political activism and land agitation disrupted shinty in the Highlands between 1880 and 1887.

One of the most important shinty matches between northern Highland clubs took place on 12 February 1887 when teams representing Strathglass and Glenurquhart shinty clubs played in a "Great Game" at the Bught Park in Inverness (Hutchinson, 1989: 122-26). This was the first time these neighbouring glens had met at shinty, and it is claimed that more than 3,000 people witnessed Glenurquhart's 2-0 victory but that interest extended further across the Highlands and its diaspora communities (Barron and Campbell, 1980: 28). A return match was played in March 1888 when once again Glenurquhart was victorious (Hutchinson, 1989: 126-8), but for the purpose of this thesis the results are less important than the social and political environment in which the game was played. As Hutchinson (1989: 128) explains:

> Ordinary Highlanders, buoyant after their successful wringing of crofting legislation from a previously impervious government, had now proven themselves easily capable of and willing to transform their ancient, traditional outdoor game into an ordered, accessible modern entertainment without shaping it beyond recognition and while keeping its enormous strength.

The legislation to which Hutchinson refers was the Crofters' Act (1886) which marked the end of the first and most widespread phase of popular protest in the

Highlands against prevailing land laws. The Crofters' Act (1886) applied to parishes in all the Highland counties - Argyll, Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness and the northern isles - and affected almost every crofter in north-west Scotland (Hunter, 1976: 161). Weaknesses in the legislation ensured land agitation for further reform continued until at least the late-1920s, although this was less widespread and intense (Cameron, 1996; Hanham, 1968: 21). Given the geographical spread of the land agitation and the area covered by the Crofters' Act it seems reasonable to assume shinty would have been affected by the disruption, yet this does not appear to be the case. Before examining this circumstance it is necessary to outline some of the key events of the land agitation during the early 1880s.

During the 1870s opposition to the prevailing land laws was largely articulated through the social organisations outside the crofting communities of the Highlands, but there were signs that crofters were prepared to take action themselves. The Bernera Riot on Lewis in 1874 was early evidence of this, but it failed to ignite widespread resistance to prevailing land tenure arrangements throughout the Highlands (Hunter, 1974: 48; Macdonald, 1978: 172-3; MacPhail, 1989: 15-17). Outbreaks of crofter resistance on the Leckmelm estate in Wester Ross (1979-1880) and the Kilmuir estate on Skye were also settled although it cannot be said this was necessarily to the long-term benefit of the crofters (Hunter, 1995: 133; Orr, 1982: 60-61; Cameron, 2000: 65-66; 95-100). The Kilmuir resistance prevented the rent increases, and demonstrated that estate authorities and landowners were not omnipotent, if crofters had the courage to stand together. If further evidence of this was needed then the Irish Land Act in August 1881 confirmed that mass popular resistance could force legislation more favourable to tenants.

These pockets of resistance marked a new direction in Highland society, and raised hopes amongst Celtic radicals that dissatisfaction amongst Highlanders was about

to erupt. Certainly these circumstances had begun to cause "a great outcry among outside agitators" (Napier Commission 1884 Vol. III: 1837). This included the interest of the Federation of Celtic Societies, the Irish Land League in Glasgow, and individuals such as John Murdoch, Alexander Mackenzie, Angus Sutherland and Charles Cameron the Glasgow Liberal M.P. and President of the Federation of Celtic Societies. In parliament the Home Secretary rejected Fraser-Mackintosh's request for government intervention, stating the government had no right to interfere (Cameron, 2000: 96). Within the Highlands at least two factors constrained widespread support for reform of the land laws. First the isolation and relative insularity of crofting communities from each other, in part a consequence of poor communications. Second the absence of an institutional framework within the Highlands that could harness popular discontent also restricted a co-ordinated campaign. Through the radical Highland press, and by travelling throughout the Highlands, John Murdoch and Alexander Mackenzie tried to generate interest for change within the crofting communities. In particular they endeavoured to convince the crofters that if they raised their concerns with the landowners and estate management, public opinion amongst exiled Highlanders was in their favour (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. IV).

In April 1882 dissatisfaction with land arrangements in the Braes district of Skye proved to be the catalyst for more extensive protest and resistance, particularly across the north western Highlands and islands. Crofters in the Braes district of Lord Macdonald's estate used rent strikes to protest at the loss of grazing land to extend sheep farms on the estate. The sheriff officer and a detachment of Glasgow police attempted to deliver eviction notices to twelve crofters but they were met by over one hundred crofters outside Braes. The 'Battle of the Braes' received widespread press coverage and Highland land affairs became the subject of debate throughout Britain and

in parliament (Devine: 1994: 218-9; Hanham, 1968: 24-30; Hunter, 1976: 135-6; MacPhail, 1989: 36-52; Cameron, 2000: 108). Two Scottish Liberal MPs with connections to the radical Celtic cultural societies, Charles Fraser-Mackintosh of Inverness and Dr Charles Cameron who represented Glasgow, led the campaign to have the Highland land question addressed in Westminster. They were supported by the members of the Irish party while Irish Land League branch in Glasgow reiterated its support for the Highland crofters (Hunter, 1974b: 48-9).

The most significant consequence of the Braes incident was that it was the catalyst that ignited a widespread campaign of agitation across the Highlands as crofters recognised the power of their proactive collective resistance (Devine, 1994: 218). There were some parallels between grievances of the Highland crofters and their Irish counterparts such as the memory of the famine and clearances, lack of compensation for improvements and insecurity of tenure. The main problem in the Highlands concerned loss of common grazing lands and population congestion, whereas in Ireland rack-renting practices had been the major issue (Hanham, 1968; Hunter, 1974b, 1976: 131-64; Lynch, 1992: 375-7; Devine, 1994: 209-40; Cameron, 1996: 16-39). In January 1883 twenty-one Liberal Members of Parliament called for their government to set up a royal commission to examine the crofters' grievances. Growing support from Highland civil society and some Irish members forced the Liberal administration to take action and in February 1883 the government established a commission to examine the conditions of the crofters.

The commission, chaired by Lord Napier, was a modest victory for crofters but Celtic radicals feared that it would favour landlordism and focus only on Skye where

the agitation had started (Hunter, 1974b: 50). [17] In March 1883 a meeting was convened in London with the purpose of forming an organisation that would press for the interests of crofters, and for a land act similar to that of Ireland. The founding members of the Highland Land Law Reform Association (HLLRA) were mostly southern middle-class professional men who participated in the Highland associations in the city and had known sympathies for the crofters. Gavin Brown Clark, a London-based doctor from Glasgow, who was involved in a number of socialist and land reform groups, chaired the first meeting. The Caithness born Parnellite M.P. for County Carlow, D.H. MacFarlane, was elected president of the HLLRA. Its founding vice-presidents were drawn from the Celtic cultural revival movement and included, John Stuart Blackie, John MacKay a civil engineer from Hereford and member of the Gaelic Society of London, Alexander MacKenzie editor of the *Celtic Magazine* and founder member of the Gaelic Society of Inverness whose father had been evicted from a Gairloch croft, and Fraser-Mackintosh who also sat on the Napier Commission (*Oban Times*, 7 April 1883; Hunter, 1974b: 47). It seems that some shinty players were also involved in the HLLRA. Ewen Cattanach, a London businessman from Upper Cluny in Laggan, was "one of the original members and afterwards captain" of the London Highland Camanachd Club (1878). He later became President of the Gaelic Society of London (*Celtic Monthly*, March 1900: 101), an office which one of the HLLRA's founding vice-presidents, Dr Roderick MacDonald, had also held (*Oban Times*, 7 April 1883). The *Celtic Monthly* noted that Ewen Cattanach,

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[17] The Commissioners appointed included four landowners: Francis Baron Napier, Knight of the Noble Order of the Thistle, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch; Donald Cameron of Lochiel, M.P; and Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P. who was noted for his sympathy for the crofters. The two other commissioners were Gaelic scholars: Alexander Nicolson, Doctor of Laws, Advocate, Sheriff-Substitute of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright and Donald MacKinnon, Master of Arts, Professor of Celtic Languages, History Literature & Antiquities, University of Edinburgh.

will be best remembered in connection with the Crofter question. Together with his friend, Mr Malcolm Macleod, he organized the first meeting - held in Exeter Hall - concerning the welfare of the Highland Crofters, and as a result, a committee was formed, out of which sprang the Highland Crofters' Association ... the work thus commenced and carried on resulted in the passing of the Crofters' Act, which has proved so beneficial to the Crofter community (*Celtic Monthly*, March 1900).

In spite of its middle-class origins membership of the HLLRA was open to anyone who supported its objectives. Many of the leading Celtic radicals, including John Murdoch and Alexander MacKenzie, travelled throughout the Highlands encouraging crofters to nominate delegates who could present their case to the Napier Commission (*Oban Times*, 12, 19 May 1883). The summer herring fishing season at Fraserburgh provided temporary alternative employment for many crofters, and by its conclusion in August 1883, many crofters had resolved to establish their own local Land Law Reform Associations, a practice that was encouraged by the radical press (Hunter, 1974b: 51). The first Highland branch of the HLLRA was formed at Glendale in Skye on 5 December 1883, an island which was one of the main centres of the land wars. By the end of 1884 the HLLRA claimed to have 15,000 members in 160 branches throughout the Highlands. It is also estimated that on Skye, the hotbed of land agitation, every crofter and cottar was an enrolled member (*Oban Times*, 27 September, 7 October 1884; 14 June 1884; Hunter, 1974b: 52; Lynch, 1992: 376). The HLLRA branches embedded in Highland communities had a broader significance than simply providing a focus for the land agitation. These local branches were organised by local crofters which was a significant factor in establishing the HLLRA as a political organisation that had Highland interests at its core.

During 1883 the Napier Commissioners travelled throughout the Highlands and Islands collecting evidence from crofters, land agents, landowners and other interested parties (Napier Commission, 1884, Vols. I-IV). The Napier Commission report was

published in 1884 and recommended a number of changes to existing land laws. In spite of these recommendations the HLLRA regarded the commissioners' report inadequate for two reasons. First it rejected the formation of an independent Land Court with powers to determine fair rents and redistribute land. The second objection arose because the Napier Commission report did not recommend a redistribution of land that would have made provision for the landless cottar class of Highland crofting society (Hunter, 1974b: 52; Lynch, 1992: 376).

By its first annual meeting at Dingwall in September 1884 the HLLRA had fused the interests and activism of southern radicals and the crofters. This conference also established the direction of HLLRA as a political force announcing that in the next general election it would support only those candidates in northern constituencies who approved of its radical land reform agenda, and who were committed to support a parliamentary land reform bill. This commitment, in conjunction with the Third Reform Act that extended the franchise to crofters for the first time, ensured that in 1885 the political landscape of the Highlands changed significantly. In December 1885 five representatives of the HLLRA stood for election in Highland constituencies. The former Parnellite Irish M.P. D.H. MacFarlane stood in Argyll; Charles Fraser-Mackintosh resigned the burgh seat which he had held as an Independent Liberal since 1874 to stand in Inverness-shire; Roderick MacDonald, the President of the Gaelic Society of London stood in Ross-shire; Angus Sutherland, whose grandfather had been evicted from Kildonan in Sutherland stood in his native county; and G.B. Clark was nominated for Caithness. Four out of the five were elected (Sutherland was unsuccessful), but there is some debate over how significant the arrival of the Crofters' Party at Westminster was in the successful passing of the Liberal government's Crofters' Act in June 1886 (Cameron, 1996: 37). More important in the context of this particular thesis is the fact

that the HLLRA provided a vehicle for the mobilisation and expression of a relative

degree of political autonomy amongst the crofters and cottars of Highland society. The

fusion of their interests with the aspirations of middle-class Celtic radicals was further

evidence of the unique circumstances and identity of Highland society. This autonomy

was indeed a moment to celebrate the achievements and distinctive cultural identity of

the Highland community. What better way to do so than through their Highland sport,

and the 'Great Game' at Inverness in 1887?

Name of Club	Date	Source
Strathglass	1880	*The Highlander*, 13 February 1880; *Inverness Courier*, 19 February 1880
Bonawe (Oban)	1881	*The Highlander*, 27 April 1881
Oban Camanachd	1881	*The Highlander*, 27 April 1881
Ardgour	1882	*Inverness Courier*, 5 January 1882
Ben Nevis	1882	*Inverness Courier*, 5 January 1882
Glengarry	1882	*Northern Chronicle*, 23 January 1884
Lochcarron	1883	*Inverness Courier*, 17 December 1883
Union (Lochacarron)	1883	*Northern Chronicle*, 2 January 1884
Glenurquhart	1884	*Inverness Courier*, 17 January 1885
Fort Augustus	1885	*Inverness Courier*, 14 March 1885
Caberfeidh (Strathpeffer)	1886	*Shinty Year Book*, 1986
Invermoriston	1886	*Inverness Courier*, 16 February 1886
Dunollie	1886	*Shinty Year Book*, 1975-76

Table 5.1: Shinty clubs formed in north and north-west Highlands by 1893

Despite the land agitation, "life continued much as usual" in the Highlands

during the 1880s (Hanham, 1968: 23). This assessment appears to be relevant to the

development of shinty in some communities during this period. By 1886 a further

twelve shinty clubs had been established in the northern Highlands (see Table 5.1). The

apparent health of shinty should not be interpreted as evidence that land agitation did

not touch these communities, or that there was necessarily an inextricable correlation

between land agitation and the absence of shinty. In some communities people still

played shinty, but evidence suggests the varying tempo and severity of the land

agitation across the Highlands influenced the extent to which the game continued to be

played. Shinty does receive some attention in the press during the 1880s, but accounts are sporadic. The formation of some clubs such as Lochcarron (1883) and Glenurquhart (1884) in the period when Napier Commissioners were collecting their evidence throughout the Highlands suggests that shinty enjoyed relative health, with much of this interest still focused around the winter festivities. From this assessment it is reasonable to conclude that shinty was not wholly disrupted by the land agitation, although Highlanders were aware of the political environment in which they played their sport.

Strathpeffer in Ross and Cromarty is one example of a community where land politics did not greatly disrupt shinty activities. Local perceptions are that neither the clearances nor land politics were detrimental to shinty in Strathpeffer although one local acknowledged that where fences went up it would not be possible to play the 'old style' game (David MacMaster, Appendix 3). Giving evidence to the Napier Commission at Dingwall in October 1880 Donald MacDonald, representing crofters from Inchvannie, on the Heights of Strathpeffer, described the experiences of crofters in his community (Napier Commission, 1884, Vol. IV: 2618-2626). Donald MacDonald's evidence was not dissimilar to that given by crofters from other communities around the Highlands. He explained how a series of evictions, and resettlement within the community over the preceding eighty years had removed the crofters from the most arable land to make room for large farms. They received no compensation for improvements, their homes or for the lost common grazing land. Donald Macdonald's son, Colin, was born in January 1882 and he later recorded his memories of life in the communities around Strathpeffer. The old shinty traditions were clearly a familiar sight during his childhood:

> Very little notice was taken of Christmas Day and it was not until the eighties that the first of January began to be celebrated in our circle as New Year's Day, and even in those houses where the New fashion was adopted there was a celebration on Old New Year's Day too. But the event of New Year's Day itself was the game of shinty. There was no limit to the number which might form a team. Everyone was enlisted on one side or another, and it was not uncommon to see in the game men of seventy and boys of seven. One game I remember ... They met on the field of play about eleven o'clock, each carrying his trusty home-made caman. Of course, several drams had already been downed and many *slainte mhaths* and *Bliadhna-mhath ùrs* (Good healths and Good-New-Years) exchanged (MacDonald, 1993a: 24-25).

This account corroborates information from another Strathpeffer man Ken MacMaster (Appendix 3). He recalled how his father, John MacMaster, played in shinty games at the New Year holiday, with large numbers of men involved. After one hour the players rested for "suitable refreshments" and then continued (Ken MacMaster, Appendix 3).[18] His father John MacMaster was probably one of the players whom Colin MacDonald had watched during his childhood. He was certainly one of three Strathpeffer men recruited "from outwith their own territory" to play for the Knockfarrel team in the 1880s, after which it was decided to form a combined team (*Caberfeidh Shinty Club Centenary Match Programme*, 30 August 1986: 9).[19] The descriptions of life in the communities around Strathpeffer during the 1880s is an important source for understanding the extent to which the dominant political issue of the period influenced life in the local communities. It also reveals that while not

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[18] Ken MacMaster died in February 1996 at the age of 91, six months after the interview was conducted. 'Researcher error' at the time of the interview meant that the verbatim record of this valuable conversation was not successfully taped. Appendix 1 is therefore a summary of brief notes hastily written later that evening, in an attempt to expand on some key points noted during the course of the hour-long conversation. One of Mr MacMaster's sons, David, was also present and contributed to the conversation. A profile of Ken MacMaster ('Ken MacMaster, King of the Cabers') his contribution to shinty appears in *Shinty Yearbook*, No. 23, 1994/95: 18-19. An Obituary to Mr MacMaster by Hugh Dan MacLennan appears in *Shinty Yearbook*, No. 25, 1996-97: 64

[19] John MacMaster was the first Vice-Captain of Caberfeidh (*Caberfeidh Shinty Club Centenary Match Programme*, 30 August 1986: 30; 'Ken MacMaster, King of the Cabers,' *Shinty Yearbook* 1994/95: 18). Like other families in the community his descendants including his son Ken and grandson David MacMaster maintained these links with shinty in Strathpeffer through their contributions as players, coaches and administrators. Ken MacMaster was President of the Camanachd Association 1970-73, and his other administrative and honorary offices held by him included last President of the MacGillivray League, Chairman and Chieftain of the North Association, and Chieftain of Caberfeidh Shinty Club.

necessarily engaged in the land agitation the issue was integrated into the social life of the crofting communities in Cromartie. MacDonald (1993a: 33) asserts that the local newspaper, the *Ross-shire Journal*, was "execrated by all crofters for its Tory views on the land question" then adds it was "bought weekly because of the necessity of finding out the moves of the enemy." MacDonald then explains how information on the dominant political issue was circulated through the traditional *ceilidh*:

> At that period there was a strong move on the part of crofters throughout the Highlands to obtain statutory fair rents, security of tenure, and the right to compensation for permanent improvements effected on their holdings. Branches of the Land League had been formed in nearly every parish, and feelings between crofters and estate factors ran pretty high. I shall not discuss here the merits or otherwise of the case on either side, but no one who witnessed the *ceilidh* on an evening when the activities of the Land League were under discussion can ever forget the scene. Seated in his armchair by the side of the fire, with the eyes and ears of the whole *ceilidh* circle giving him rapt attention, the good man would read what one of the papers had to say about the matter in its leading article, or what others' views were as expressed in "Letters from Correspondents." A short paragraph would be read, then the spectacles would be removed and, changing to the Gaelic, the reader would make the point crystal-clear to his audience in their mother-tongue. When the point was thoroughly taken by all, the process would be repeated, again and again, until the end of the article was reached, and then everyone joined in general discussion. It was indeed an impressive scene (MacDonald, 1993: 34).

Closer examination reveals that most of the developments in shinty prior to 1887 occurred on the mainland. It was not until the late-1880s, after the widespread and concentrated agitation had ceased, that shinty activities were reported in some of the islands but even then reports are infrequent. That does not necessarily prove that there was no shinty activity during this period, but perhaps more accurately illustrates that when it came to the islands the press was more interested in the land agitation. The majority of mainland crofters were members of the HLLRA, but the organisations had even greater strength on the islands, and in particular on Skye (Hunter, 1974: 54). Shinty was played in South Uist in January 1886 (*Scottish Highlander*, 1 January 1886),

but on Skye it was Old New Year of 1887 before shinty was reported, and even here it was in Sleat, a community that had been relatively free of the land wars (Macdonald, 1992: 7). This noted "it is rather difficult to organise a shinty match if a crofter revolt is likely to erupt at any moment as a rival attraction, or half your pool of players is in gaol" (Macdonald, 1992: 7). Once again, the health of the shinty, and its development must be understood in the context of specific local circumstances of the land wars.

In November 1883 the *Northern Chronicle* reported that at a meeting seven days earlier it was agreed to form a shinty club in the village of Janetown (28 November 1883). The club, Lochcarron Camanachd, played its first match on 24 November 1883 thus providing a formal structure for shinty in a community where it had long been part of the culture (Sage, 1899; Barron, Campbell and MacLennan, *Lochcarron Camanachd*, 1983). One of the club's founding members, William Lockhart Bogle, had participated in the Glasgow Highland societies including Glasgow Camanachd Club, Glasgow Ossian and Glasgow Skye shinty clubs.[20] His connections with Skye took a different path during the 1880s when his artistic talents were used by one magazine to depict the agitation on the island during 1885 and 1886. A month after Lochcarron Camanachd was established Bogle advised that games were played on Saturdays, but because of opposition to the club it was agreed that there would be no drink at the games (*Inverness Courier*, 20 December 1883). It is an appropriate reminder that in addition to the wider political turmoil the church retained a powerful influence in communities when it came to matters of shinty and alcohol.

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[20] The son of a Glasgow merchant, William Lockhart Bogle spent most of his early life in that city, but part of his childhood was spent in Wester Ross. He was also one of the main contributors to the 'kilt versus knickerbockers' debate that dominated the press in 1877, which appeared to advocate that the veracity of the cultural identity of urban shinty clubs depended on which clothing they wore (*The Highlander*, 1877). In February 1880 Lockhart Bogle left Glasgow to pursue his art studies in Germany, and he was presumably back in Wester Ross temporarily in 1883 when he contributed to the formation of the Lochcarron club since he left for Glasgow and Germany in January 1884 (*Inverness Courier*, 22 January 1884).

The circumstances of Lochcarron's formation tell us little about land politics in the communities of Wester Ross. At the end of 1883 and early in 1884 Lochcarron played matches with other clubs, including local rivals Union of Strathcarron, (*Northern Chronicle*, 19 December 1883), suggesting there was sufficient interest to maintain traditional practices. Twice in 1884 (New Year's Day, and Old New Year's Day) the two teams from Wester Ross combined to play a Beauly team which included players from Strathglass (*Inverness Courier*, 15 January 1884; *Northern Chronicle*, 16 January 1884).[21] Two particular issues in Wester Ross, on the Leckmelm estate in 1880 (Orr, 1982: 60-61), and on the Lochcarron estate in August 1882 (Hanham, 1968: 52 fn6; Hunter, 1976: 141). These events had attracted the attention of the Celtic radicals, but active resistance had ceased by November 1883 when Lochcarron Camanachd was established. The communities around Lochacarron nonetheless engaged with the organised activities of the HLLRA and local grievances were expressed to the Napier Commission when it visited Ross-shire during August 1883 (Napier Commission, 1884, Vol. III: 1772-2022).

Land agitation continued to contour certain Highland communities after 1886 (Cameron, 1996). In some places, particularly on Lewis, reconstituted forms of the Highland Land League had a fluctuating place in Highland life at least until 1920. In the intervening years more official commissions investigated the circumstances of crofters, and further legislation was introduced to address some of the failings of the 1886 act. Close scrutiny of the land wars after 1886 reveals that this was a less prominent issue in Highland social and political life. More importantly for this thesis it less clearly coincided with the individuals and new administrative structures that were concerned

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[21] Links with Strathglass were probably developed through Captain Chisholm of Strathglass who had been factor in Applecross in Wester Ross around 1860 (Barron, Campbell and MacLennan, *Lochacarron Camanachd*, 1983: no page numbers; Hutchinson, 1989: 121).

with the further development of shinty.

The objective of this section was to consider the extent to which the land agitation of the early 1880s disrupted the development of shinty in the Highlands. Based on the evidence no conclusive picture is revealed, but once again it is clear that the voracity of the agitation throughout the Highlands may have had an impact on the pattern of progress in the formation of formal clubs. The attention paid in the Highland press to the land issue perhaps conceals the ongoing traditions of New Year games that were still played in some communities. Shinty practices were not wholly affected by land league activities during the early 1880s, yet in different ways the further formation of clubs, and the continuation of more traditional forms of shinty is illustrative of the separation of sport from formal politics. This noted the case for land reform and the parallel but moderate shinty developments continued to reinforce the cultural identity of the Highlands, within a vibrant and relatively autonomous political community.

CELTIC SPORTS AND RADICAL POLITICS

The issue of land law reform was not isolated to the Highlands during the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Lynch, 1992: 375). This was an important aspect of radical politics during this period throughout Britain and it drew support from a variety of individuals and agencies. This included for example the Liberal M.P. Joseph Chamberlain and Henry George, a leading advocate of land nationalisation, the Chartist movement, and the Land Nationalisation Society (Hunter, 1974b: 46; Cameron, 2000: 47; 206). These individuals and agencies took an interest in Highland crofting issues, but the most important links with other land reform campaigners were made between representatives of the Irish Land League and Celtic radicals in Scotland. This section considers certain aspects of land politics and Celtic radicalism in Ireland during the

nineteenth century. In pursuing this theme the analysis asks what links can be drawn between Celtic sports, radical politics and land reform in the Highlands and Ireland?

Like the Highlands, Ireland's largely rural peasant population suffered the insecurity of the absence of rights of tenure, agricultural failure and enforced emigration. The potato blight that caused famine in the Highlands in the middle of the century also affected Ireland's rural communities, and the ensuing famine (1845-48) left an indelible scar on the collective memory of the peasant community. Indeed it is said the social devastation of the Highland famine was surpassed only by the corresponding circumstances in Ireland. The census in 1841 measured the Irish population at just over eight million, but within six years it had been reduced by one quarter. It is estimated that around one million Irish peasants died while many more were forced to emigrate, circumstances that became part of the cultural mindset of the nation (Kee, 1972a: 173-74).

In the decades after the famine popular recreations like hurling experienced a dramatic decline from which they struggled to recover (de Búrca, 1980: 5; 1999: 101). The impact of this social disruption on popular recreations did not go unnoticed by some radical political and cultural figures. In 1870 the Home Rule M.P. A. M. Sullivan reflected that since the famine Ireland's ancient sports like hurling had disappeared (Sullivan, *New Ireland*, 1877, cited de Búrca, 1999: 101). While there is some truth in this assessment, as in the Highlands traditional sports did not disappear completely. Hurling was played in Munster from the 1850s, and by the 1860s it was evident in the counties of Cork, Limerick, Kerry, Tipperary, Donegal and Down and in the city of Dublin. It is also suggested that Michael Cusack, the founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), witnessed hurling in both north Clare and east Galway during his childhood in the 1850s (de Búrca 1980: 5-6). This hurling activity in certain places is

similar to the case of shinty that survived in those Highland communities least affected by famine and clearance. These Celtic sports therefore provide some parallels in terms of the varied geographic nature of their decline and subsequent game.

For Ireland, as for the Highlands, Celtic sports became a defining symbol of the distinctive identity of Ireland as a cultural community. The social and political circumstances of the two communities was however not identical. During the 1870s there was still no strong and distinctive civil society in Ireland that provided a repository for Irish identity in the way that the Highland societies mediated the state-nation-culture axis. In this context there was no institutional structure for specifically Irish, or Gaelic, sport that compared with the Highland associations. Rather it was English practices like athletics, cricket and football that dominated the sporting life of urban Ireland (de Búrca, 1980: 10-11). Sport in Ireland at the end of the 1870s therefore contrasted with the nationalist outlook of the broader political environment of Irish society (Kee, 1972b: 72; Hunter, 1975: 179). This was to change in 1884 when Michael Cusack, a schoolteacher with nationalist sympathies, led the formation of the GAA, that drew together his own political and cultural aspirations for Irish autonomy.

The GAA became a prominent vehicle for different expressions of Irish nationalism. More importantly in comparison with shinty and Celtic radicalism, the rhetoric and symbolism of the GAA were closely connected to the cultural and political nationalism. In particular it fused both the cultural and political nationalist spirit that had been harnessed around the land reform movement in Ireland between about 1879 and 1881. The function of Celtic sports within Ireland was endorsed by some of the leading figures connected to the various strands of Irish radicalism. Two individuals who became patrons of the GAA personified some aspects of the radical politics of the period: Charles Stewart Parnell, the parliamentarian and supporter of the Irish Land

League; and Michael Davitt founder of the Irish Land League (1879) (Mandle, 1987: 99). In addition to connecting Irish radicalism with Irish sport, these two men also illustrate some of the ways in which there was a loose confluence of Celtic radicalism linking the Highlands and Ireland.

Agrarian violence was common in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century. The Irish Land Act of 1879 had won some concessions for land reform, but overall the act was inadequate. A resurgence of protests against land tenure arrangements in 1879 led to the formation of a national organisation the Irish Land League. Under the leadership of Michael Davitt, the Land League co-ordinated a mass campaign of rent strikes and resistance to evictions (Kee, 1972b: 76-83). The Irish Land League fused the widespread popular resistance of tenant farmers into a mass popular political movement. The objective of this national organisation was simple - the radical reform of land laws and tenure arrangements in Ireland. The power of the Irish Land League forced the Liberal government into passing the Irish Land Act (1881). The Act granted three of the key objectives which had long been sought by land reformers in Ireland: fixity of tenure provided rent was paid; free sale by the tenant of his interest and compensation for improvements carried out during his tenure; and fair rents (Kee, 1972: 82-3).

Like many of his contemporaries in the Highland Celtic movement Davitt's childhood experiences of famine and land clearance had informed his political thinking. As early as 1856 John Murdoch had called for a joint Irish, Scottish and English campaign for land reform (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. V; Murdoch, 1986: 95-115). At this time Murdoch was based in Ireland and was acquainted with many of the emerging organisations concerned with Irish political and cultural identity (Murdoch, *Unpublished Autobiography*, Vol. V). In addition to campaigning for land

reform Murdoch also used his contributions to *The Nation* as a vehicle to promote the theme of Celtic unity which was also evident in his own newspaper. For example one editorial noted that "The Irish National Land League ... has been doing good works ventilating the land question and teaching the people to rely upon moral force and law" (*The Highlander*, 9 February 1881). While Murdoch and some of his contemporaries such as Alexander Mackenzie advocated Highland crofters adopt a similar line to the Irish, others within the Federation of Celtic Societies were less supportive of this approach. At a meeting of the federation in Glasgow in 1880 it was accepted that land reform was a matter of "National interest". John Stuart Blackie expressed the view that Highlanders should not follow the violent route taken by the Irish in order to secure their objectives (*The Highlander,* 5 January 1881). Scottish politicians and landowners, including Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, similarly condemned Irish land agitation in 1880 and 1881 (Cameron, 2000: 77-78).

It is interesting that the leader of the Irish Land League should feature as a patron of the sporting organisation, for there are some similarities with shinty. One of the leading proponents of shinty during the 1870s was John G. Mackay, the man who had proposed the formation of Glasgow Shinty Club, and who was later instrumental in early life of Glasgow Skye shinty, and in the creation of Skye Camanachd (*Celtic Monthly*, 1893; Macdonald, 1992: 12-23). Mackay was also recognised as "one of the pioneers of the land agitation in the Highlands", a role that brought him much acclaim, and a degree of notoriety during the 1880s (*The Celtic Monthly*, July 1893). One of the reasons for his notoriety was his sympathy with the Irish Land League and he was a frequent contributor to the organisation's Glasgow branches. As a consequence of this support, Mackay was sacked from the Glasgow drapery where he worked for making a speech at a meeting of the Irish Land League branch in 1881, although he was later

reinstated. These sentiments of support were reciprocated. A meeting of the Irish agency's Glasgow branch unanimously declaring its "strong sympathy with the suffering farmers and crofters of the Highlands of Scotland" (*The Highlander*, 7 May 1881).

It was not just in Glasgow that John G. Mackay was a land activist, for he pursued the case for land reform in his native Skye. Mackay was the "Gentleman representing a well-known Glasgow drapery house" who set out from Portree with the Sheriffs, Fiscals, and the detachment of police to issue eviction notices at Braes in April 1882 (Alexander Gow, *Dundee Advertiser*, cited MacKenzie, 1883: 427). Given his sympathy with the campaign for land reform it is likely that Mackay was there to witness at first hand the treatment of the crofters, rather than to support the forces of law. During the crofter wars on Skye in the 1880s Mackay was part of a Portree clique known for their radical anti-landlord, pro-Irish stance (1992: 12-13). In shinty John G. Mackay played a critical part, and it might be argued like other Highlanders who supported land reform, actually had a more direct role in the development of sport than many of their Irish land league counterparts. His pro-Irish sympathies were no doubt behind the invitation extended to Michael Davitt to stand as parliamentary candidate for the Highland Land League (*Oban Times*, 30 April, 7 May, 14 May 1887).

The support of land reformers for aspects of Irish radicalism did not go unnoticed by Highland landlords. Many of them perceived Murdoch, Mackay, Mackenzie and others to be leading a subversive conspiracy with the Irish Land League. They certainly encouraged Highlanders to follow their Irish counterparts and make a stand against the prevailing land laws, but they did not necessarily advocate violence. For instance Alexander Mackenzie explained he had toured Skye, the islands of Uist and the north west mainland encouraging crofters to report the truth of their

circumstances. Mackenzie suggested that if the enquiry did not lead to some resolution in the circumstances of Highland crofters, a social revolution would ensue, but added:

> I and others of my friends who were forcing on public meetings and a regular propaganda throughout the Highlands in connection with this question ... had to put our foot down ... to keep people from the south from coming here, and carrying on an agitation, independently of us, in the north, in every corner of the Highlands (cited Cameron, 2000: 124).

The support that Mackay, Murdoch and Mackenzie gave to Irish affairs was also extended to the campaign for Irish home rule. Unlike Davitt, and Cusack who appeared to advocate some form of pan-Celtic co-operation in politics and sport respectively (de Búrca, 1999: 108), Parnell was a more reluctant advocate of such links. In fact the leader of the Irish Home Rule Party dismissed any sense of Celtic solidarity because "Scotland has ceased to be a nation" (*Scots Magazine*, 1891, viii, 37n). The attempts to foster a sporting relationship between the two communities are examined in chapter six, but at this juncture it is important to acknowledge the impact of Irish aspirations on the HLLRA.

This issue was a source of considerable tension within the Scottish context, but this was exacerbated in 1886 when Gladstone's Liberal government introduced the first Irish Home Rule Bill (1886). The introduction of this bill coincided with consideration of the Crofters' Bill, but in an effort to settle the growing unrest in Ireland the Crofters' Act was given little parliamentary attention (Cameron, 1996: 37). This fact reinforced perceptions amongst more moderate Highland campaigners that Irish affairs were being given undue prominence in parliament, a matter that had caused considerable disquiet for some time. The failure of the Irish Home Rule Bill led to the fall of the Liberal government and in the subsequent discontent over the limitations of the Crofters' Act, the differences between Ireland and the Highlands came to the fore (Hunter, 1974b: 55-62). Initial concerns were raised in 1886 in respect of D.H. MacFarlane's Catholicism

and his Irish connections (*Oban Times*, 3, 24 July 1886), and as a result he lost his Argyllshire seat at the election to a Tory landlord. This is not insignificant given perceptions of the absence of any sectarian sentiments in the Highlands, yet it is illustrative of the ways in which such perceptions must be understood in terms of the specific social and political circumstances that prevailed in Ireland.

As a national body, and at branch level, the HLLRA declared its support for Irish home rule, (*Oban Times*, May-July 1886), but not all of its members supported this position. Amongst the most prominent anti-Irish members was the Inverness-shire M.P. Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, and his opposition marginalised him from the organisation (Hunter, 1974b: 58). Within a few years however the middle-class urban radicals who had been catalysts in this institutional expression of Highland political autonomy realigned with Gladstone's Liberal Party. In part they objected to the erosion of a fundamental ideal of the HLLRA, that it should be concerned only with matters that were directly concerned with the Highlands. Their brand of radical liberalism was also more attuned to the Liberal party after its split over the Irish home rule matter (Hunter, 1974b: 59). Although the HLLRA was part of the political landscape of the Highlands after 1886, the organisation's power in the Highlands was already in decline.

In assessing the connections between Celtic sports and the radical organisations in the Highlands and Ireland during the 1870s and 1880s, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the evidence considered here. First while there were some similarities in the missions of these radical movements they were not identical nor did they bring the same results. Second, the connections between Celtic radicalism, shinty and hurling were not formal, and in both cases tended to reflect the specific circumstances and tempo of the social and political environment in which these sports developed. By 1884 when Michael Cusack established the GAA, the nationalism had replaced land issues as

the dominant political issue in Ireland. Although an organisational structure for shinty was already in place and was firmly established as a repository of the cultural identity of Highlanders, it did not seek the form of national autonomy that was promoted by the GAA. Finally the distinctive cultural and political interests of Ireland and the Highlands at this stage were already emerging as crucial factors that reinforced the distance between these two Celtic communities.

SUMMARY

This chapter set out five questions to investigate the ways in which certain interconnected land issues influenced the development of shinty during the nineteenth century. In probing these questions, it has been argued that four key points may be concluded from the analysis of the evidence presented here. First that uneven patterns and severity of land clearance and famine shaped the fortunes of shinty during the first half of the nineteenth century. Second, in the context of urban communities, shinty was connected to the institutional network that developed as a distinctive and relatively autonomous Highland political community. Third, there was no formal link between shinty and politics, but it was a central cultural activity for many of those who were engaged in the politicised strands of Highland society. Fourth the connection between land reform in the Highlands and Ireland was not a formal one, but it was apparent in the sympathies of particular individuals who also recognised the shared cultural legacy of these two Celtic communities. In light of this evidence it would be inaccurate to conclude that shinty players and administrators used their sport to pursue the political agendas considered here. Rather it is suggested that shinty was a conduit of a collective cultural identity, but it was not the main vehicle to convey a political message.

CHAPTER 6

SHINTY, NATIONALISM AND HIGHLAND SOCIETY

The objective in this chapter is to examine certain aspects of the development of shinty in the context of wider social and political developments between 1886 and 1939. A number of issues shaped Highland society during this period, but focus here is concerned with the ways in which shinty was connected to two specific expressions of nationalism: on the one hand Unionist nationalism in Scotland and on the other nationalism in Ireland. Four questions underpin the analysis in this chapter: What were the main characteristics in the development of shinty after 1887? Was there a confluence of Celtic sports with nationalism in Scotland and Ireland after 1886? What influence did Irish nationalism and Unionist nationalism have on shinty? To what extent did shinty sustain its place as a symbol of cultural identity thereby consolidating its function as a vehicle of autonomy for the Highlands?

A NATIONAL MANDATE FOR SHINTY?

This section examines the further development of shinty between 1887 and 1939, the era in which shinty fortified its transformation from a folk game into a modern sporting practice. It is not intended to provide a detailed chronology of the game during this period. Rather a number of themes have been identified which are related to certain aspects of the wider social history of the Highlands. Two questions lie at the heart of this analysis: what were the main characteristics in the game's development after 1887?; and to what extent did the Camanachd Association fulfil its primary objective "to foster and develop a truly national game" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM, 9 April 1927)? In investigating these problems, three key features of the development of shinty are highlighted during this period: the creation of a national administrative body for governing shinty; the introduction of a range of

formal shinty competitions; and the continued variation in the survival and decline of shinty in spite of a national agency. These developments are located within the broader context of the social and political circumstances of the Highlands and Scotland. Attention is paid in particular to the impact of continued Highland depopulation; the prosperity of local industry; and the impact of war on Highland communities. This wider social history is woven into an overview of shinty until 1939.

The games between Strathglass and Glen Urquhart in February 1887 and March 1888 were important, but the attention they have been given in certain histories of shinty conceals the fact that enthusiasm for shinty was growing in many Highland communities (Hutchinson, 1989: 121-8; Macdonald, 1919: 51; MacLennan, 1995: 166-71). The games of the late 1880s and early 1890s depicted a variety of old and new practices. The traditional New Year games were still played in a number of places including South Uist (*Scottish Highlander*, 8 January 1886), Newtonmore (*Scottish Highlander*, 8 January 1886), and on Old New Year's Day at Sleat on Skye in 1887 (Macdonald, 1992: 7). The local custom for selecting sides was also much in evidence during the 1890s, as illustrated by the match between "old men and young boys" at Kilmun (*Celtic Monthly*, February 1893). In some areas New Year games continued to be played in the early decades of the twentieth century, while on the Kilberry estate in Argyllshire the custom of playing on Old New Year's Day was carried on until January 1938 (MacLennan, 1995a: 134).

The new practices were more formal affairs played between smaller numbers of players, often with a referee. While clubs also played shinty at New Year, inter-club games were arranged during the other winter months. For example on Wednesday 9 February 1887 "the Clubs of Brae Lochaber and Glengarry" met at shinty (*Inverness Courier*, 15 February 1887). Matches were also reported involving Fort Augustus and

Invermoriston (*Scottish Highlander*, 5 February 1886), Beauly and Kirkhill (*Scottish Highlander*, 30 December 1886), and Uig and Portree Athletic Club (Macdonald, 1992: 7). This evidence substantiates the point that the resurgence of shinty in the Highlands at the end of the 1880s was not wholly inspired by the Great Games. By the end of September 1893, the *Celtic Monthly* magazine had reported on the activities of at least thirty-two shinty clubs (Table 6.1). The range of clubs illustrates that at least three dimensions characterised club formation - local communities, Highland civil society in urban communities and works teams.

Club/team	Issue	Club/team	Issue
Aberdeen University	Oct 1892	Inveraray	Oct 1893
Alvie	Oct 1892	Invergordon	Aug 1893
Ardkinglas	Oct 1892	Inverness	Oct 1892
Ballachulish	Mar 1893	Kiltarlity	Oct 1892
Bonawe	Oct 1892	Kingussie	Oct 1892
Brae Lochaber	Oct 1892	Kinlochewe Rovers	May 1893
Caberfeidh	Oct 1892	Lochgoilhead	Oct 1892
Dalmally	Oct 1892	Locomotive (Inverness)	Jun 1893
Dunollie	Oct 1892	London & Northern Counties	Oct 1892
Edinburgh Camanachd	Oct 1892	London Scottish	Oct 1892
Edinburgh University	Oct 1892	Newtonmore	Oct 1892
Furnace	Oct 1892	Oban Camanachd	Dec 1892
Glasgow Cowal	Oct 1892	Spean Bridge	May 1893
Glencoe	Oct 1892	Strachur	Oct 1892
Glen Urquhart	Oct 1892	Strathglass	Oct 1892
Insh	Oct 1892	Vale of Larroch	Oct 1893

Table 6.1. Teams and clubs in Celtic Monthly October 1892-September 1893.

The absence of uniform rules or an administrative body for shinty became a matter of concern for these club games. During 1892 and 1893 reports appeared in the press suggesting that if some of the "influential Highland gentlemen" associated with Glen-Urquhart, Strathglass, Lovat (Kiltarlity), or the Badenoch clubs "would take the matter up ... a strong association would soon be formed for the control and encouragement of this good old game" (*Inverness Courier*, 19 February 1892). With this objective in mind a meeting was convened in Kingussie on 10 October 1893, the

consequence of which was that "a central Association ... to regulate the Game of

Shinty" was established (*Camanachd Association Minute*, 10 October 1893).

Clubs represented	Clubs indicating support in writing
Aberdeen University	Glasgow Cowal
Alvie	Inveraray
Brae-Lochaber	Ballachulish
Glen Urquhart	Edinburgh University
Grantown	Edinburgh Northern Counties
Insh	Edinburgh Camanachd
Invergarry	Fort William
Inverness	Spean Bridge
Kingussie	Furnace
Kinlochewe	Inverness
Laggan	Oban
London & Northern Counties	Strachur
Newtonmore	Strathglass
(Caberfeidh) Strathpeffer	

Table 6.2 Clubs present and indicating support for proposed shinty organisation (Camanachd Association Minute, 10 October 1893).

The representatives of the clubs present (Table 6.2) then elected the first Office

Bearers of the Camanachd Association, a practice which was to have considerable

bearing on the direction of shinty over the next four decades. These office bearers were

in the main patrons of the sport. It is also interesting to note that the association's first

office bearers were all connected to shinty clubs in the north: a Chief, Captain Chisholm

of Glassburn; a President, Lord Simon Fraser of Lovat; three Vice-Presidents, Cluny

Macpherson, C.J.B. Macpherson of Balavil and L.A. Macpherson of Corrimony; and a

composite post of Secretary/Treasurer, Mr John Campbell of Kingussie Shinty Club.

The remainder of this first meeting was taken up with agreeing draft rules prepared in

advance by the Kingussie club (*Camanachd Association Minute*, 10 October 1893). One

shinty historian described the formation of the Camanachd Association as the result of

"a national mandate" given by the clubs (Hutchinson, 1989: 146). There is some weight

to this assessment but as the discussion below illustrates shinty was still played outside the jurisdiction of the new organisation.

The Camanachd Association was a rudimentary national body that was initially responsible for establishing an agreed system of rules and a national cup competition. The Camanachd Association Challenge Cup (hereafter the Camanachd Cup) was introduced during the 1895-96 season. Nineteen teams entered the competition in its first season, won in April 1896 by Kingussie. The organisation of teams into four districts, reflected the combination of difficulty, time and costs still associated with travel around the Highlands (Table 6.3).

Northern District	Central District	Western District	Southern District
Caberfeidh	Newtonmore	Glengarry	London Camanachd
Beauly	Grantown	Spean Bridge	Glasgow Cowal
Lovat	Alvie	Brae-Lochaber	
Nairn	Laggan	Ballachulish	
Portree	Kingussie		
Rogart	Insh		
Inverness			

Table 6.3 Teams in first Camanchd Cup (Camanchd Association Minutes, 29 November 1895)

By the 1920s a number of communities were unable to enter teams in senior competition as a result of the impact of the war on Highland communities. The Camanachd Association introduced a junior competition, the Sir William Sutherland Cup (1922-23), named after the Liberal M.P. for Argyll who provided the trophy (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 18 October 1922). Outside these two national competitions, the North Association and South Association introduced competitions for clubs in these two main districts, while local shinty organisations introduced their own competitions (Table 6.4)

Competition	Introduced	Organising agency
Camanachd Cup	1895-96	Camanachd Association
Sutherland Cup	1922-23	Camanachd Association
MacTavish Cup	1897-98	North Association
Glasgow Celtic Society Cup	revived 1898-99	South Association
MacGillivray Senior League	1924-25	North Association
Strathdearn Cup	1910-11	North Association
MacTavish Juvenile Cup	1920-21	North Association
Fraser Cup	1900-01	South Association
Dunn Senior Cup	1931-32	South Association
Robertson Cup	1905-06	for Skye island teams
Harrow Cup	1920	Ross-shire Cam. Assoc.
Lochcarron Camanachd Challenge Cup	1934	teams from Skye, Wester Ross & Glenelg

Table 6.4. Selection of shinty competitions introduced between 1895 and 1939 (MacLennan, 1993: 348-62; Macdonald, 1992; Barron, Campbell and MacLennan, 1983).

In the 1897-98 season the Camanachd Association concluded that its competition was "truly representative" of shinty in Scotland (Hutchinson, 1989: 159). The number of teams participating in subsequent organised competitions of the association fluctuated, but the Camanachd Cup was contested annually until war suspended formal shinty competitions between 1914 and 1919. Formal shinty competitions resumed in 1919 until the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 once again interrupted formal shinty competition throughout the Highlands. Between 1896 and 1939 ten clubs won the Camanachd Cup with Kyles Athletic and Newtonmore emerging as the most prolific winners, both being successful on eight occasions (Table 6.5). By 1939 a number of clubs which had been established by the 1890s were still competing in shinty competitions, including Ballachulish, Beauly, Caberfeidh, Kingussie, Kyles Athletic, Newtonmore and Skye Camanachd.

Club	Year(s)
Kingussie	1896; 1900; 1902; 1903; 1914; 1921
Beauly	1897; 1913
Ballachulish	1899; 1901; 1911; 1912
Kyles Athletic	1904; 1905;1906;1920; 1922; 1927; 1928; 1935
Newtonmore	1907; 1908; 1909; 1910; 1929; 1931; 1932; 1936
Furnace	1923
Inveraray	1925; 1926; 1930
Oban Camanachd	1933; 1938
Caberfeidh	1934; 1939
Oban Celtic	1937

Table 6.5 Camanachd Cup winners 1896-1939.

The extent to which the Camanachd Association's national mandate successfully promoted shinty throughout the Highlands must be considered in relation to some of the features of Highland society during this period. The case of Skye provides some interesting evidence in this respect. Only one club based on the island of Skye affiliated to the national organisation between 1893 and 1939. The participation of only Skye Camanachd in the national association conceals the wider shinty activity that took place on the island up until 1939 (Macdonald, 1992: 15-107). In 1888 a club was formed in Bernisdale (*Oban Times*, 29 December 1888), and the game was also played in the communities of Uig and Breakish during the early 1890s (Macdonald, 1992: 8-18). The extent of shinty activity on the island is further demonstrated by the introduction of the Robertson Cup (1905-06), a competition for the island's teams (Macdonald, 1992: 45-53). The communities of Braes, Bernisdale, Edinbane, Portree, Dunvegan and Glendale are known to have played in the Robertson Cup since its inception, although not continuously (Macdonald, 1992: 101-7).

In Sleat, at the south of the island, an informal local league provided competition for a number of townships during the early 1920s (Macdonald, 1992: 101). Lack of employment opportunities in the area caused a significant number of young men to emigrate to Canada in 1923, and the league collapsed (Macdonald, 1992: 101). By the

1930s local competition had once again been established on the island. One possible explanation for this is that it was a consequence of migration back to the island during a period of economic recession on the mainland. This particular circumstance illustrates the uneasy constellation between the game's fortunes, and the wider social circumstances which affected Highland and Scottish society (Hutchinson, 1989: 168).

Shinty was also played on a local basis in other Highland communities outwith the context of the national competitions. In March 1920 the Ross-shire Camanachd Association was formed with seven teams (Strathpeffer, Contin, Garve, Kinlochewe, Strathcarron, Strathconon and Lochcarron) ready to contest the Harrow Cup (*Ross-shire Journal*, 5 March 1920). During the 1920s and 1930s these communities participated in a number of other Ross-shire competitions including the Conchra and Strathdearn Cups (Barron, Campbell and MacLennan, 1983: 4-19). Formal games were played according to rules agreed by the Camanachd Association, but beyond this the Ross-shire competitions were organised outwith the direct authority of the Camanachd Association. As in most parts of the Highlands, shinty was not dependent upon the mandate of the national body.

An interesting dimension of shinty's history has been the apparent paradox between the experience of shinty, the sport of the Gael, and the Gaelic language. The strength of the language has been marginalised to the extreme north-west Highlands (MacAulay, 1994: 44; Withers, 1988: 4; 38-40). In contrast shinty's strength has been in the central, eastern and south-western Highlands where use of the language had diminished considerably by the 1930s. Although teams from most of the islands did not participate in mainland competitions shinty was played on some islands - including Colonsay, Uist, Lewis and Iona - up until the 1920s (Hutchinson, 1989: 164-8; Fraser, SYB, 1971: 8; MacDonald, SYB, 1995: 47; Barden, *SYB*, 1996: 49). The demise of

shinty on the islands is explained in part by depopulation which resulted from limited employment opportunities, emigration, pursuit of education, the impact of war and an ageing population (Cameron, 1996b: 154; Devine, 1999: 446; Smout, 1987: 59). Another contributory factor was the arrival of football in those communities where the Gaelic language had been more resilient. On islands where there was a dearth of natural resources for *camain*, football may have been a cheaper, but exciting alternative. The growing popularity of football also illustrates the further erosion of Gaelic life experienced through more regular exposure to the world beyond the Highlands during the twentieth century. The experience of other social, cultural and economic experiences brought some prospects of social mobility. For the young it perhaps exposed rural Gaelic life as narrow and dull (Smout, 1987: 60). In communities beyond the mandate of the Camanachd Association, shinty succumbed to the radical alteration of patterns of life, work and leisure, which were experienced by Gaelic Scotland.

In the early decades of the twentieth century the number of shinty clubs surviving in towns and cities in the Scottish Lowlands continued to fluctuate. The search for employment remained an important reason for migration, but progression to University education was also a consideration that is demonstrated by the formation of new shinty clubs at Edinburgh University (1891) and Glasgow University (1901). These two university clubs joined Aberdeen University (1861) in national competitions, and they competed for the Littlejohn Vase, a competition introduced specifically for the University clubs.

In Glasgow during the 1920s and 1930s a number of clubs were formed but many quickly disappeared. This included Glasgow Islay (1922-23), Glasgow Inverness-shire (1924), Glasgow Mid-Argyll (1923 – present), Glasgow Oban and Lorne (1913) and Paisley (1908). The vagaries of human resources and the impact of war and

economic slump appear to have shaped the fortunes of many of these clubs. Shinty

clubs nonetheless remained a cultural marker of Highlanders in the city. More precisely

they reinforced key concepts of their identity: dùthchas (native place) and dualchas

(kinship) (MacAulay, 1994: 41).

The First World War (1914-18) had a devastating effect on Highland

communities, and in many of these shinty struggled to survive. Shinty players from

Skye were amongst the twenty-six Portree men killed in the Battle of Festubert in May

1915 (Macdonald, 1992: 71). Five of the Kingussie team that won the 1913-14

Camanachd Cup were killed in action, while Beauly lost twenty-five men (Robertson,

1994: 73). At least 112 men from Fort William were killed (MacLennan, 1994: 46), and

the war memorial in the parish of Kilfinan, which served Kyles Athletic, listed the

names of forty-nine men lost in action (Thorburn, 1996: 102). In small communities

these were significant numbers. It is therefore unsurprising that the Camanachd

Association noted shinty clubs had been "very seriously ... hit in players being killed in

the war" and compiled a Roll of Honour to be included in its handbook (*Camanachd*

Association Minutes, Council Meeting, 22 November 1919).

Portree (Skye Camanachd)	Kiltarlity	Beauly	Brae-Lochaber
Inverness	Caberfeidh	Kingussie	Spean Bridge
Newtonmore	Ballachulish	Glengarry	Oban
Fort William	Inveraray	Furnace	Kyles Athletic
Glasgow Oban & Lorn	Glasgow Skye		

Table 6.6 Clubs entered in Camanachd Cup 1919-20 (Camanachd Association Minute, 22 November 1919).

When formal competition resumed, eighteen teams entered the first post-war

Camanachd Cup (Table 6.6). The inter-war years continued to be a period of instability

for many clubs. In 1921-22 the inclusion of a team from Mull led the secretary to

conclude that the association was "widening its jurisdiction" (*Camanachd Association*

Minutes, 22 October 1921). In 1922-23 twenty-nine clubs entered the Camanachd Cup, but eight teams that had entered the previous season were missing. Within a few seasons the number had dropped to nineteen teams, and it was "regretted that Foyers, where the game had flourished for many years were not putting a team forward to contest the senior cup" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 16 October 1925). Two seasons later a new club from the Foyers area, Boleskine, joined the association, but this was not indicative of the health of the sport in the community. One Foyers local explained:

> in this area of Foyers and Stratherrick shinty came to mature when the British Aluminium Company was built here in 1896 ... Now when it was set up, shinty teams sprang up, and in that time we had two teams in Foyers, we had a team in Stratherrick and a team in Strathdearn - there was actually five teams. There used to be fairly bitter rivalry between Stratherrick and Foyers [but] some of the men were drifting away south in search of work, and in 1927-28 they held a meeting here and set up a committee and Foyers and Stratherrick amalgamated under one senior team under the name of Boleskine ... the name of the parish. In that year they reached the final of the Camanachd Cup. Unfortunately Kyles Athletic .... beat them (Batchen, Appendix 5).

The amalgamation of Foyers and Stratherrick was repeated in Badenoch where Newtonmore and Kingussie formed one team for two seasons in the mid-1920s (MacLennan, Appendix 4; Robertson, 1994: 90-3). The amalgamation of clubs in the 1920s was a "retrograde step" which was a barrier to fostering and developing the sport (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 27 October 1927). The merging and folding of clubs illustrates the importance of prosperous industry to employment in Highland communities. The aluminium works at Kinlochleven and Fort William brought important local employment opportunities to Lochaber (MacLennan, 1994: 26), and in Argyllshire, Furnace and Ballachulish shinty thrived because of the local slate quarries (McDougall and Skinner, Appendix 8). The success of Kyles Athletic during the 1920s provides an interesting contrast to the fortunes of other teams (Thorburn, 1996: 21). The closure of the Millhouse-Kames Powderworks in 1922 meant sixty jobs were lost, yet

this did not appear to damage shinty in the area, as this was one of the most successful

periods in the history of Kyles Athletic (Thorburn, 1996: 21).

Competition	Winner
Camanachd Association Challenge Cup	Caberfeidh
Sir William Sutherland Cup	Lochacarron
MacTavish Cup	Newtonmore
MacGillivray Senior League	Newtonmore
Strathdearn Cup	Lochcarron
MacTavish Juvenile Cup	Kingussie
Glasgow Celtic Society Cup	Kyles Athletic
Dunn Senior Cup	Oban Camanachd
Fraser Cup	Glasgow Mid-Argyll
Skeabost Horn	Glasgow Mid-Argyll
Munro Shield (1938)	Ballachulish

Table 6.7 List of shinty competition winners, 1938-9.

By 1939 shinty had consolidated its place in the Highlands, but it had been

affected by the wider social circumstances of the period. At the end of the 1938-39

season Caberfeidh won the Camanachd Cup for the second time, beating Kyles Athletic

in the final (Table 6.7). As the clouds of Fascism gathered in Europe in 1939, those of

shinty's players and administrators with memories of the 1914-18 war might have

realised that it could be sometime before formal shinty competition would be resumed.

From its inception in 1893 until the outbreak of war in 1939, the Camanachd

Association had strengthened its mandate over shinty. This was achieved by

establishing a common code of rules and two national competitions. A number of

district and local competitions reinforced the values and patronage of the sport. The

authority of the association did not extend throughout the Highlands, nor was it able to

develop the game throughout Scotland. In 1938 the Camanachd Association underwent

some minor reform regarding its management (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM

1938). This included restricting the number of Vice-Presidents to twenty, but those

honoured continued to be patrons of the game at local and national level. Many of those

who were honoured continued to come from those strands of civic, political and military life that appeared to reinforce unionist and imperial aspirations. The remaining sections of this chapter probe the ways in which shinty's administrators allowed their sport to engage with Celtic radicalism, home rule and nationalism between 1886 and 1939.

CELTIC CONNECTIONS AND SPORT

This section examines some of the connections that were made between shinty and hurling during the period 1887 until 1921. This sporting interaction is considered in relation to other activities that emerged from similar social and political organisations in the Highlands and Ireland at this time. There were a few occasions when shinty and hurling teams met but no long term or regular events were established. It is argued in this section that the attempts to establish these links had some resonance with the efforts of some Gaelic cultural nationalists in Scotland to promote links with similar organisations in Ireland. It is concluded that the lack of co-operation between these agencies also had limited results. The objective here is to examine the extent to which sport was part of the vision of a pan-Celtic community.

The idea that Celtic sports like shinty and hurling could be symbols of a pan-Celtic community was not created in the nineteenth century. As chapter three of this thesis has illustrated the ancient game from which both modern codes are derived was at one time part of a pan-Celtic community. The renewed vision of a pan-Celtic community and the place of sport within it has received comparatively little attention in previous histories of shinty and hurling. This idea was part of Michael Cusack's vision of cultural nationalism (de Búrca, 1999: 108) that appears to have been shared by at least one of the leading figures of the national movement in Ireland. Michael Davitt, founder of the Irish Land League and a patron of the GAA, welcomed Cusack's sporting initiative and together they discussed reviving the ancient Tailteann Games (de

Búrca, 1980: 43; Mandle, 1987: 6). The vision to connect Celtic communities was raised in one newspaper three years after the GAA was formed:

> The Gaelic Athletic Association has established a complete system for regulating Celtic pastimes in Ireland with affiliated branches in every parish where the Celtic element prevails. We hope to see our Celtic brethren in Scotland adopting a similar course and have matches arranged for Hurling contests between teams representing their respective counties in Irish countries ... We are the servants of the Celtic race, and we shall at all times do what we can to further the objects set forth on our title page, wherever a branch of our race has found a home (*Celtic Times*, 19 February 1887).

The recognition of the cultural bond between Ireland and Scotland perhaps reflected the editorial team of this newspaper. Alongside Michael Cusack was a Scotsman A. Morrison Miller, the founder the Irish Caledonian Society and secretary of the Caledonian Games Association of Ireland (de Búrca, 1980: 34; de Búrca, 1999: 108). The proposal attracted support from Scotland as one correspondent offered "to assist in organising international SHINTY versus HURLING matches" between the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland (*Celtic Times*, 18 June 1887). Proposals to play an "International match with Ireland" on Saturday 17 March 1888 were unsuccessful, and it was to be a further nine years before the aspirations were fulfilled (*Celtic Times*, 22 October 1887, 24 December 1887). By then Cusack's newspaper had failed and the internal administration of the GAA was in some disarray as the schisms in the wider national movement permeated the sporting organisation (Mandle, 1979: 102-3; Rouse, 1993: 343-4).

In the summer of 1897 the first formal matches between the two codes took place. On 5 June 1897 one match was played in London between London Highland Camanachd and Ireland United Hurling Club (*Celtic Monthly*, June 1897; Hutchinson, 1989: 156). A second was played that day between Glasgow Cowal Shinty Club and Dublin Celtic Hurling Club in Glasgow (*Celtic Monthly*, May 1897; June 1897). A third

match took place in Dublin on 17 July; this was the return game between Dublin Celtic and Glasgow Cowal. These three games resonated with the different identities that had infused the resurgence of shinty and hurling. The London game was facilitated by the London Highland Athletic Association, one of the societies that had contributed to the presence of shinty in that city. Members of the old and new Highland social elite were in attendance, including the Duke of Argyll, the MacKintosh of MacKintosh and the Count of Serra Largo (Hutchinson, 1989: 156). [22] Their presence typified the patronage that was being incorporated into the administrative structure of the Camanachd Association and many of the clubs which had been established.

In advance of the Glasgow match it was reported that this would be "the first [contest] between Irish hurlers and Scottish shinty men on Scottish soil" (*Sport*, 29 May 1897). This assessment was reiterated by another Irish newspaper which congratulated the Dublin Celtic team for having been "the first Irish team to embark in such a good undertaking" (*Freeman's Journal*, 19 July 1897). In contrast to the apparently benign cultural identity embodied in the London Highland Association's patrons, the games in Glasgow and Dublin were imbued with a more radical symbolism. The game was played at Celtic Park, the home of Celtic Football Club the champion of Irish immigrants in Glasgow (Bradley, 1998: 12). The Irish Land League founder Michael Davitt, one of the GAA's patrons, was also a patron of this football club and is reputed to have laid the first turf at the Celtic Park ground in 1892 (Murray, 1984: 70). The return game in Dublin was refereed by Michael Cusack, the founder of the GAA who

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[22] The Count de Serra Largo was Peter Alexander Cameron Mackenzie. He was born in Kingussie in 1856. In 1873 he left Scotland to work for the Singer Manufacturing Company of the USA. Peter MacKenzie travelled extensively in his work. In 1886 he married a Portuguese woman he had met in Brazil. He returned to Kingussie with his family in 1892 and two years later the King of Portugal made him a Viscount for services to Portuguese people in Brazil. In 1896 he was made the Count de Serra Largo for which he had to pay £580. He became Chieftain of Kingussie Shinty Club in 1897 (Robertson, 1994: 43-44) and later was invited to become an Honorary Vice-President of the Camanachd Association (*Camanachd Association Minute*, AGM 21 September 1899).

had espoused a place for sport in promoting Celtic unity (*Freeman's Journal*, 19 July 1897). These matches failed to establish regular pan-Celtic sporting contests and further shinty-hurling games were only played intermittently in Dublin until 1919 (de Búrca, 1999: 108).

A number of reasons might explain the failure to consolidate the pan-Celtic sports community which Cusack and Davitt had envisioned, three of which are suggested here. The first is essentially a pragmatic one. Steamer services between the west of Scotland and parts of Ireland would have provided transport, but journey times and financial considerations may have precluded regular travel. The second possible reason for the limited success of these sporting links is the absence of strong support for such developments at a national level. Cusack had been dismissed as Secretary of the GAA in July 1886 because of his poor administration (de Búrca, 1980: 32-3; 1999: 108; Mandle, 1977: 426). His ability to influence the GAA executive in the direction of closer links with shinty may have been diminished by his dismissal from office, even if this aspiration had been at the forefront of GAA concerns. If there had been a strong desire to cultivate such connections, stronger foundations could have been laid with the formation of GAA clubs within Scotland between 1897 and 1914 (Bradley, 1998: 24-39). Despite some games between Glasgow's Caledonian Shinty Club, and the Rapparees Hurling Club in 1901 this also failed to be a catalyst for regular interaction (Bradley, 1998: 27).

From a shinty perspective, the Camanachd Association does not appear to have had any direct involvement with the fledgling links between shinty and hurling teams during 1897. If initiatives were driven by any formal organisation it was probably Glasgow Cowal Shinty Club or the Glasgow based Shinty Association. It was certainly the Shinty Association that had approved arrangements being made for an international

match in 1887 (*Celtic Times*, 22 October 1887). The President of Glasgow Cowal, John Mackay, may have shared Cusack's sporting vision (MacLennan, 1998b: 141-51), but we can be less certain whether he shared the political aspirations of those who dominated the GAA between 1887 and 1893. There were other candidates who might have shared Cusack's ideal of a pan-Celtic nation which sporting links could help cultivate, including John Murdoch and John G. Mackay. Both had promoted shinty as part of the distinctive cultural identity of Highlanders, and both had displayed pro-Irish sympathies. But neither Murdoch nor Mackay were amongst the influential gentlemen at the inaugural meeting of the Camanachd Association, and neither of them are mentioned in connection with promoting pan-Celtic sports in the 1880s and 1890s (MacLennan, Appendix 4).

Outside the world of shinty, there was a cross-fertilisation of ideas involving Celtic radicals in Scotland and Ireland. In Ireland the land reform movement had merged with the two strands of Irish nationalism under the New Departure in 1879 (Kee, 1972b: 72; 1993: 160-64). By the 1890s the GAA and the Gaelic League, the Irish language organisation, were two of a number of social, cultural and political agencies which sought greater autonomy over Irish national affairs. In Scotland there were similar cultural and political organisations, but they did not have the same objectives, and there was much less co-operation between these groups than appears to have been the case in Ireland. Hunter (1975: 184-85) contends that Scotland's Gaelic cultural nationalists were prominent within the home rule and nationalist movements in Scotland at the end of the nineteenth century. Over approximately four decades from 1886 until 1928 successive national organisations such as the Scottish Home Rule Association (1886; 1918), the Scots National League (1920-28) and the National Party of Scotland (1928-33) drew varying levels of support from Gaelic nationalists (Hunter, 1975;

Finlay, 1994). It was the Scots National League (1920-28) that attracted the attention of a new generation of Gaelic cultural nationalists, many of whom looked to Ireland for their inspiration.

In spite of some cross-fertilisation of ideas, few formal links were established to promote pan-Celtic nationalism between 1887 and 1921. In the first decade of the twentieth century there were some attempts made to give some kind of organisational form to the idea of a pan-Celtic cultural community. This cultural movement underpinned the launch of a monthly pan-Celtic journal, *Celtia*, by the Dublin Celtic Association (1901) which aimed to inspire "militant Celticism" against "the dead and demoralising influence" of anglicisation (Hunter, 1975: 192). This was followed by a series of Pan-Celtic Congresses, the first of which was held in Dublin in August 1901 which attracted delegates from Ireland and Scotland, as well as Wales, the Isle of Man and Brittany. The Scottish representative was Ruaraidh Erskine of Mar, one of the new generation of nationalists who recognised the Gaelic connection in Irish and Scottish nationalism (Hunter, 1975: 185-87). As a cultural nationalist, Erskine recognised the importance of language and culture in defining nationality, and argued that Scotland must once again become a Gaelic-speaking nation in order to assert her independence (Hunter, 1975: 193). A similar view was expressed by an anonymous "GAELIC NATIONALIST" in one "Scottish Patriotic Magazine":

> In common with a great many Scotsmen of my acquaintance I was very pleased to see the advent of *The Thistle*, a paper devoted to the cause of Scottish Nationality ... I am sorry that there has been no reference to the necessity of reviving and extending the use of Gaelic, the national language of Scotland ... Scotland was most prosperous in her Gaelic days. She was then an independent nation with no parliament at Westminster to overrule her wishes ... The promotion of Gaelic is a national matter, and any movement to be genuinely national, and to have the most beneficial and permanent results, must make it one of the main planks in its programme ('Gaelic and Nationality', *The Thistle*, January 1909: 96).

The presence of this radical Gaelic element within the national movement in Scotland, at least until 1922, invites a specific question in relation to shinty: did Gaelic nationalists promote the sport as part of that cause? The straightforward answer is a negative one. Sport in general, but shinty in particular, was not part of the cultural terrain on which Scotland's nationalists, Gaelic or otherwise, developed their objectives. Nor were the sentiments expressed by Celtic nationalists in Scotland shared by shinty's administrative body. The Camanachd Association's honorary office bearers included for example Lord Lovat, C.J.B Macpherson of Balavil, Provost Skinner of Oban, and Colonel Campbell of Kingussie. This list is indicative of the blend of Highland aristocracy, landowners, military personnel and civic leaders associated with the sport and their political aspirations do not appear to have coincided with that of the Gaelic movement. Some may have been Gaelic speakers and they certainly emphasised the importance of the Highland credentials of their sport, but there is no evidence to suggest they thought this should be aligned with nationalism.

Between 1886 and 1921 the Celtic cultural heritage which linked the Highlands and Ireland was the basis for the vision of a pan-Celtic community. For some Celtic radicals sport was one symbol of this shared heritage, but these links were never fully explored. It has been suggested that the absence of committed individuals to drive forward these links was an important factor that constrained strong sporting links being cultivated. In the remaining sections of this chapter a third constraint on these developments is examined: the confluence of Celtic sports with ideas about national and cultural autonomy.

CELTIC SPORTS, HOME RULE AND NATIONAL AUTONOMY

The nature of the nineteenth century British nation may have been defined, at least in part, by its imperialist political and economic agenda. This did not destroy the distinctive identities of the component nations, or cultural communities like the Highlands, which comprised the United Kingdom state. Between 1887 and 1921 home rule for Scotland and Ireland oscillated on the landscape of British politics (Hunter, 1975: 178). This section provides a synthesis of material concerning shinty, hurling and nationalism to investigate two interconnected questions: (i) was there a confluence of shinty with nationalism in Scotland after 1887? and (ii) how did this compare to links between hurling and nationalism in Ireland during this period? A number of points are manifest from examining these issues. First, although some of Scotland's Celtic radicals participated in nationalist movements sport was not a vehicle used to invigorate a political consciousness. Second shinty's leaders exhibited a political nationalism that was in keeping with the Unionist nationalism displayed more generally by Scotland. Third shinty's administrators distanced their sport from overt and formal links with other more radical Celtic cultural and political organisations. It is concluded that this distance between shinty and formal nationalist movements was in marked contrast to circumstances in Ireland, where certain sports were more deliberately aligned with the nationalist cause.

The connection of the GAA to Irish nationalism since its formation in 1884 and 1921 has been well documented (de Búrca, 1980; Bairner, 1999; Cronin, 1999; Mandle, 1977; 1979; 1987; Rouse, 1993). The nature of this nationalism was towards ethnic, therefore exclusive, interpretations of the nation (Bairner, 1999: 13). Assessments of the Camanachd Association's national aspirations have been less thoroughly developed. In comparing the GAA's and Camanachd Association's commitments to political issues

MacLennan (1998b: 153) suggested that the leaders of shinty held insular and ultra-conservative views that did not consider "cultural or wider political aspirations". He concludes:

> Their attitude to issues such as Land Reform was, at best, ambivalent. Their nationalism was in real terms, a narrow, Highland and rarely Celtic one (MacLennan, 1998b: 153).

On the surface some weight may be attached to this assessment. The appraisal is however constrained by the absence of a more thorough consideration of the wider cultural and political aspirations that contoured home rule and nationalism in Scotland. Shinty's administrators may not have explicitly committed the association to a nationalist agenda, but it may be inaccurate to suggest their nationalism was narrow. The constellation of Celtic sports with ideas about nationalism and autonomy are woven into the analysis of shinty.

The national aspirations of the GAA's supporters were transparent from its inception in November 1884. In a letter to Michael Cusack Archbishop Croke, one of the organisation's patrons, captured the sentiments of the time:

> we are daily importing from England ... her accents, her vicious literature, her music, her dances, and her mannerisms, her games also and her pastimes, to the detriment of our own grand national sports (cited Mandle, 1979: 100 and Hunter, 1975: 191).

It is not necessary to examine in detail the links of the GAA to the quest for Irish autonomy but it is nonetheless necessary to highlight some salient points. First, support for the GAA brought together representatives of the main strands of Irish nationalism embodied in the New Departure (1879). This included for example: the constitutional home rule nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell; nationalists amongst the Catholic clergy like Archbishop Croke of Cashel; agrarian reformers such as Michael Davitt; and Fenian republicans such as J.K. Bracken and John Wyse Power (Mandle, 1979: 99). Second, the overt politicisation of the IRB-controlled GAA central council between

1887 and 1893 contributed to the temporary disintegration of the sporting organisation (de Búrca, 1980: 56-63; Mandle, 1979: 106-7; Rouse, 1993: 344-5). The Catholic clergy and home rule nationalists withdrew their support and encouraged clubs not to affiliate to the association. This campaign was exacerbated by the rupture in the broad nationalist movement caused by the "Parnell split" in 1891 as the GAA, under the influence of member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, supported Parnell (de Búrca, 1980: 59-62; Mandle, 1979: 105).

Third, the revival of the GAA from the mid-1890s resulted in its renewed support for the wider nationalist movement in Ireland, which was again gaining ground. This included, for example, support for the centenary celebrations in 1898 to commemorate the United Irishmen rebellion (1798); sympathy for the wider anti-imperialism inspired by the Boer War (Rouse, 1993: 348-9); and the participation of GAA members in the National and Irish Volunteers after Home the Rule crisis of 1912 (Cronin, 1999: 86). The GAA also extended its ban against members participating in foreign games, and against the police, security forces and other representatives of British authority in Ireland joining the GAA (Mandle, 1987: 158-61; Rouse, 1993: 347). The participation of some members in the 1916 Easter Rising is also illustrative of how the commitment of individuals intersected with the national struggle (de Búrca, 1980: 128-36; Rouse, 1993: 353-4; Cronin, 1999: 87).

Certain scholars have argued that official GAA support for the Irish national political movement, or at least specific elements of statist republicanism, should not be exaggerated (Cronin, 1999: 82; Rouse, 1993: 347). They suggest that it is inaccurate to portray the organisation as subservient to the nationalist struggle, and contend that sport was the main focus for the GAA after 1901. It is has also been argued that between 1884 and 1921 the objectives of the GAA corresponded to different shades of

nationalist opinion that reflected the social and political circumstances in Ireland (Cronin, 1999: 76-79). In the four decades before independence social and cultural organisations in Ireland that were not established by the Anglo-Irish or British authorities, were inevitably political. Their success depended upon their ability to provide a marker of a distinctive Irish identity which was separate from British cultural and political authority. The Celtic vision which framed hurling and the GAA before independence was therefore "part of a more general upsurge of political and cultural romantic nationalism" (Bairner, 1999: 13) that sought to express a desire for greater degrees of autonomy. In this context the GAA attracted support from statist, constitutionalist, militant and cultural nationalists. The GAA itself aligned with this diverse nationalist movement, and it must be noted at times struggled to maintain its autonomy within a radical social and political environment.

This notion of the GAA as an autonomous Irish organisation is reinforced by reflecting upon Cusack's own views regarding the administration of sport in Ireland. Although the GAA quickly became associated with so-called Irish games, initially it embraced a wide range of sports including athletics (Bairner, 1999: 14).[23] One of Cusack's objectives was to ensure that "nationalists ... control Irish athletics" which would be open "to every social class" (de Búrca, 1980: 23). While this can be interpreted as reinforcing an exclusive ethnic Irish identity, Cusack's intention may have been to establish an agency within civil society through which Irish autonomy could be exercised. Unlike other parts of the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century Ireland did not have the network of the intermediate institutions which would have comprised a self-regulating Irish civil society, and which in Scotland embodied

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[23] There is some debate as to whether Cusack intended the GAA to be a purely sporting organisation, or if the revival of Irish games was intended to be integral to goal of independence (Rouse, 1993: 335). Police records acknowledge Cusack did not intend the sporting organisation to be directly involved in politics (de Búrca, 1980: 54).

national autonomy (Paterson, 1994: 76-79).[24] Like most aspects of Irish political and

cultural life sport in urban communities like Dublin "had a distinct anglophile

atmosphere" (de Búrca, 1999: 102-3) and was often controlled by the Anglo-Irish and

British authorities (de Búrca, 1999: 101-3; Cronin, 1999: 78). The establishment of

cultural organisations such as the GAA was a challenge to cultural and political

authority in Ireland. In doing so the GAA became part of a self-regulating Irish civil

society, which was imbued with the discourse of nationalism all forms of which

opposed the prevailing governance of Ireland.

In contrast to the GAA, the Camanachd Association was less explicit about its

political and national loyalties. At its inaugural meeting the reason for the convention

was explained thus:

> The Clerk [Mr John Campbell, Honorary Secretary of Kingussie Club]
> had been requested by its members to call this conference in terms of
> letters which they had received from several influential gentlemen
> throughout the country desirous of having a central Association formed
> to regulate the Game of Shinty (Camanachd Association Minute, 10
> October 1893).

The analysis of the Camanachd Association's minutes reveals that the

organisation did not record any views which inferred shinty had been repressed as a

consequence of the Union with England. Nonetheless shinty's administrators often

asserted their awareness of the game's place as a signifying practice of the distinctive

Celtic cultural identity of the Highlands. This was particularly evident in the years

immediately following the First World War when efforts were focussed on reviving the

sport. The Association does not comment explicitly on the ongoing, but less extensive,

land agitation that continued in parts of the north-west Highlands until 1919 (Cameron,

1996; Hunter, 1974; 1975). Once again the analysis of the Association's records

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[24] Exceptions to this might have been in the north around Belfast, where there was the Protestant business class and working class posed less of a threat to the stability of the union than the largely Catholic rural population, and perhaps Dublin where the Anglo-Irish ascendancy was dominant (Paterson, 1994: 77).

conducted for this study reveals that between 1893 and 1939 there are no references to the objectives of the Scottish Home Rule Association established in 1886, nor to subsequent similar agencies. In short the Camanachd Association does not appear to have expressed collective support for a rearrangement of the constitutional settlement of Scotland or the Highlands within the Union. The absence of any explicit statements aligning shinty with the nationalist movement in Scotland raises at least two important questions. First, did shinty's administrative leaders promote the game as Scotland's national game throughout the country? Second, did shinty's administrators exhibit allegiances to any form of nationalism between 1893 and 1921?

The answer to the first question is 'no'. If the game's administrators held any vision of the community shinty represented it was a Highland one, but there is no evidence to suggest this should be part of the movement for increased national autonomy. The association noted that after five years of war there had been a good response to its call "to keep alive the old national Highland game" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, Council Meeting, 22 November 1919). Efforts were made "to foster the playing of shinty amongst the youth in schools in the Highlands" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM, 19 September 1919). On another occasion it was hoped the game would "again become popular amongst the youth of the Highlands and the West" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, Council Meeting, 22 November 1919). Subsequent meetings recorded some of the efforts made in this respect in Oban (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, Council Meeting, 31 January 1920), Badenoch, Lochaber and Inverness (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM, 10 September 1920). In the aftermath of a war in which the lives of many young men had been lost these were important initiatives. There is no evidence to suggest that any formal initiative was taken to extend participation outside the Highlands, even in those urban communities

where significant numbers of Highlanders were resident. One caveat must be stated. Any idea that governing bodies should take responsibility to develop participation in their sport is essentially a post-1960s phenomenon (Eady, 1993: 3). We therefore should not judge the Camanachd Association too harshly by our contemporary standards if it failed to revive the game throughout Scotland in an earlier period. During the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century the idea of a governing body developing sport was, as Bilsborough (1988: 13) suggests, largely concerned with promoting and encouraging the game controlling and regulating competitions, promoting the uniformity of rules, and enforcing the laws of the sport. While we might debate the extent to which the Camanachd Association achieved this on a national basis, it nonetheless appears in general to have followed such a remit.

There is some evidence that allows a more considered assessment of the second question concerning the national loyalties of the Camanachd Association's leaders. MacLennan (1998b: 17) concluded that the nationalism of shinty's leadership was a narrow one, but it is argued here that it was analogous to the wider unionist nationalism that represented Scottish opinion between 1886 and 1921. The election of Lord Simon Fraser of Lovat as second Chief (1898-1933) reveals a continued deference towards the Highland aristocracy within organised shinty (*Camanachd Association Minute*, AGM, 22 September 1898). Lord Lovat held this position until his death in 1933, during which time he exerted considerable influence over the sport in a number of ways. His participation in state politics impinged indirectly on the association's activities. As one interviewee explained:

> If you go back a hundred years Lord Lovat used to hold meetings of the Camanachd Association on the train station at Perth on his way back from the House of Commons because it suited him. He would draw people in there, so everything had to fit in to Lord Lovat's schedule [he] was 'God' then because he ran the thing and he ran the Highlands (MacLennan, Appendix 4).

A similar arrangement for the association's meetings was acknowledged by another interviewee who noted that Lord Lovat "had a considerable political presence in the House of Lords [and] travelled regularly up and down on the Highland Railway" (Richmond, Appendix 7). As an "avowed Conservative" Lord Lovat had hosted a meeting of landowners in 1885 designed to develop a coherent response to Liberal proposals to introduce land reforms in 1885-6 (Cameron, 1996: 28-9). In February 1908 land issues were again a concern of Lord Lovat who introduced a land bill in the House of Lords designed to create a new Land Commission with increased powers (Cameron, 1996: 135). Although supportive of some measure of land law reform, he held a conservative line on home rule.

At the cusp of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Boer War mobilised British patriotism throughout Scotland, and shinty's players and administrators were part of this. Further evidence of Lord Lovat's contribution to British imperial politics is apparent in his military commitments. During the second Boer War (1899-1902) he commanded a corps of soldiers, the Lovat Scouts, in South Africa. The contribution of their Chief to the war was noted by the executive of the Camanachd Association:

> The Camanachd Association respectfully offers their heartiest congratulations to The Right Honourable Lord Lovat .... on his patriotic action in raising a Corps of Scouts and Sharpshooters at a critical time in the history of the Empire ... They are delighted to know that the Corps has won honour and fame for itself in the great South African Campaign ... They are glad to know that many shinty players, members of the Association, have followed the noble example of their Chief (*Camanachd Association Minute*, AGM, 21 September 1900).

Two years later the secretary of the association reported that the 1901-2 season had been a successful one. He declared this success had been achieved "notwithstanding the fact that a large body of the best players of the game were absent patriotically fighting their country's cause in the late war in South Africa" (*Camanachd Association Minute*, AGM, 19 September 1902). At this meeting the association made a presentation to Lord

Lovat as a mark of the esteem in which he was held "as an exponent of the old Highland game of shinty" and for his "patriotic action ... for the defence of Queen and Country". In accepting the association's gift Lord Lovat remarked that even on the South African veldt his Corps of Lovat Scouts had "indulged in the Highland pastime" (*Camanachd Association Minute*, AGM, 19 September 1902).

There were however individuals who opposed this imperial cause. It has been mentioned that opposition was expressed by nationalists in Ireland, but in Scotland also key figures in the mongrel home rule and nationalist movement took a similar stance. Anti-imperialist views had been espoused by John Murdoch during the 1870s and 1880s (*The Highlander*, 19 February 1876; 23 March 1881). The Liberal Party, whose members were broadly committed to the principal of home rule all round, were divided over the second Boer War. Certain scholars have suggested that this division contributed to the party's defeat at the Khaki Election of 1900 (Devine, 1999: 302; Fry, 1991: 117). Pro-Boer views also had an impact on other Scottish home rulers in this election. The Land League M.P. for Caithness, Gavin Clark, was a co-founder of the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) and the organisation's Vice-President (Finlay, 1997: 45; Goring, 1992: 85). In 1900 he lost his seat having openly opposed the Boer War in an election speech because it was "immoral and unjust" (Cameron, 2000: 212; Goring, 1992: 85).

Amongst a new generation of Celtic radicals Ruaraidh Erskine regretted and condemned the part played by Scots "in the dishonourable task of attempting to crush the independence of another brave race" (*Fiery Cross*, October 1902: 3). His view that the destiny of Scotland, particularly "the Gael", was "not to go on fighting England's battles" (Erskine, *Guth na Bliadhna*, iii, 1906, cited Hunter, 1975: 196) was resonant of Murdoch's anti-imperialist stance two decades earlier. The pro-Boer sentiments

expressed by some advocates of Scottish home rule, and by more extreme nationalists, was also evident in the GAA and Irish nationalism (Mandle, 1979: 116). These views contrast sharply with the plaudits accorded to Lord Lovat and his corps of sharpshooters and shinty players by the Camanachd Association.

The SHRA drew its support from a variety of groups, including the Liberal Party, the Scottish Labour Party (1888), land reformers, socialists and radical Gaelic nationalists (Finlay, 1997: 45; Devine, 1999: 305; Fry, 1991: 105). It did not however adopt a unified anti-imperial stance. For example the former Crofters' Party M.P. Charles Fraser-Mackintosh believed that home rule all round would strengthen British and imperial unity, but he opposed home rule being awarded exclusively to Ireland (Cameron, 2000: 167). Many home rulers adopted a similar stance, and this broadly reflected wider Scottish opinion that was committed to the empire. This commitment was due in part to the fact that, unlike the Irish experience, Scots were able to participate fully in the imperial mission. For instance one organ of nationalism noted that "the Scots have at least doubly done their duty as builders of the British Empire" (*The Thistle*, Vol. I, August 1908). The point has been reinforced by a number of scholars who point out Scots used the empire to emphasise the cultural and moral distinctiveness of Scotland from England (Walker, 1995: 18). In this context Scots were prominent as missionaries, engineers, doctors, administrators, politicians and in the military throughout the empire (Finlay, 1997: 14-5; Paterson, 1994: 51; Walker, 1995: 18-23).

The evidence presented here suggests that Highlanders were able to assert their distinctive identity through their sport while engaged in the military service of the British imperial state. The willingness of Highlanders to serve in the British imperial forces is not an accurate measure of an individual's national aspirations. Yet it is

perhaps indicative of an implicit allegiance to the union and the empire that was always displayed more overtly by Highland communities in times of imperial crisis.

At the outbreak of war in 1914 one home rule publication called on its supporters to "allow our Scottish patriotism to be submerged, to a large extent at least, in that of the wider current of British patriotism" (*The Thistle*, Vol. VI, September 1914). The suspension of the movement until 1918 suggests most home rulers followed this line, but Ruaraidh Erskine disagreed with the call to arms, stating that the war was abominable, unjust, wasteful and reactionary (Hunter, 1975: 196). Such views appear to have been an anathema to shinty's players and administrators. The contribution of Highland regiments in the First World War (1914-18) reiterated the commitment of the Highlanders to the imperial cause, but this left a significant mark on shinty in Highland communities.

In assessing the confluence of shinty with nationalism one point captures the essence of the matter. It appears the Camanachd Association viewed sport to be an activity which should be unfettered by formal politics. This would have been in keeping with the dominant laissez-faire ideology that underpinned Victorian and Edwardian British society. This distancing of sport and politics was not quite complete since sport was used to underpin the political and cultural authority of the British imperial state. Organised shinty was part of a wider civil society over which Scots, in this case specifically Highland Scots, exercised autonomy over their domestic and cultural affairs. In contrast to the Irish context, it might be argued that there was no need for shinty to be mobilised in the national cause since it was already part of an established self-regulating, relatively autonomous, civil society. Shinty did however provide the cultural terrain on which a distinctive Highland identity could be celebrated. It is correct to say the Camanachd Association's leaders distanced themselves from radical

nationalist organisations, but it is inaccurate to conclude they held no nationalist image. It is suggested here that the Highland identity promoted by shinty's leaders may have reinforced what Paterson (1994: 79) calls the official and successful unionist nationalism of Scotland and the Highlands, rather than Ireland's more oppositional stance.

The objective of this section was to examine the confluence of Celtic sports with the national movements in Scotland and Ireland between 1886 and 1921. In probing this question the analysis has outlined some of the ways in which the histories of shinty and hurling intersected with different ideas about nationalism during this period. The specific context in which these Celtic sports developed reveals some parallel circumstances, but the extent to which these connected with sport in the respective communities was not identical. It is therefore concluded that in each case the sports were contoured by the specific social, cultural and political circumstances of their time. The next section examines a particular instance of how the autonomy of the Camanachd Association may have been constrained by the wider political relationship between Britain and Ireland during the 1930s.

SHINTY, UNIONIST NATIONALISM AND THE IRISH FREE STATE

In 1934 the Camanachd Association decided to distance itself from the formal discussions it had been engaged in with the GAA to organise an international shinty versus hurling match. This section examines this decision in the context of the wider political relationship that had existed between Britain and the Irish Free State since 1921. In explaining this decision, previous histories of shinty have pointed to the anti-British ideology that was said to underpin the GAA and the Irish National League in Glasgow, which acted as an intermediary in discussions. The analysis here does not disagree with this assessment, but it is suggested that the wider context of anti-Irish and

anti-Catholic sentiment in Britain cannot be entirely ignored. The question at the heart of the analysis asks what ideas about nationalism, religion and identity may have contoured the Camanachd Association's decision to pursue formal links with the GAA?

Section three of this chapter considered the attempts that were made to connect shinty and hurling in Scotland and Ireland between 1887 and 1921. It was suggested that one of the reasons more enduring links did not materialise was due to the absence of a strong commitment in this direction. The political upheavals in Ireland that derived from various assertions of Irish autonomy provided an uncertain environment for developing such links, while in Scotland the vagaries of the social and political circumstances of the Highlands also provided an unsettling locus for the development of shinty. During 1933 and the early months of 1934 there were some signs that an officially sanctioned shinty-hurling match might take place:

> As a result of the success which attended the conference recently held in Glasgow, there is now some prospect of international shinty matches being arranged between teams representing Scotland and Ireland ... The two national games ... have undoubtedly held a common origin, but they have drifted apart during the intervening years. The present movement ... may draw closer the bonds between the Celtic elements of the two countries and enlarge the outlook and sympathies of both, and that of itself is well worthwhile (*The Glasgow Highlander*, 28 October 1933).

At its meetings in October 1933, and February and April 1934 the Camanachd Association considered the proposals which had been discussed about a sports meeting with Irish hurlers. The leader of the shinty delegation at the Glasgow meeting was Donald Skinner, a former Provost of Oban who had considerable influence in the town (McDougall, Appendix 8). Ex-Provost Skinner had also been President of the Camanachd Association (1925-31) and in 1930 was invited to become one of the organisation's honorary vice-presidents (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 5 April 1930). Reporting back to shinty's administrators on the discussion with the Irish,

Skinner stated that he had emphasised shinty rules should not be compromised except "on a basis of equality" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 26 October 1933). It was agreed that discussions should continue with a view to playing "an International Match in Ireland at Easter" 1934; it was to be made clear to the Irish representatives "that on no account would the Camanachd Association play a match on a Sunday" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 26 October 1933). This was no doubt an important condition for shinty's administrators who maintained the Presbyterian respect for the Sabbath.

The matter was considered further by the Camanachd Association four months later when it was suggested that either 31 March or 2 April would be the most suitable date for the match. It was generally agreed the game should go ahead but only after the Camanachd Cup had been completed (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 5 February 1934). The Irish representative who attended this meeting offered to investigate the possibility that the "reasonable expenses" of both teams would be paid, and "any surplus" might be "equally divided between the respective Associations" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 5 February 1934). A revised proposal to play the match in Dublin on either the 21 or 28 April 1934 was discussed at the Camanachd Association's annual meeting on 7 April. Given the importance of the decision taken, the remarks from the association's records are worth citing in full.

> Mr William Paterson, Vice-President, informed the meeting that Mr John MacLennan, Strathconon, Vice-President, had made enquiries, and the information he had received was that the [Irish National] Association was Anti-British. Ex. Provost Skinner said he had the opinion from one in high authority who said "Have nothing to do with such a match." Major Colin MacRae of Feoirlinn also spoke and was of the opinion that the whole matter had a Political flavour, and advised the meeting to "keep Clear". After discussion Mr Paterson moved seconded by Ex. Provost Skinner, that the whole matter be dropped, and thus [*sic.*] motion became the finding of the meeting (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM, 7 April 1934).

With this decision the Camanachd Association severed further official contact (Hutchinson, 1989: 184; 187; MacLennan, 1993: 148). It has been suggested that shinty was the loser in a situation which left the game isolated from its Celtic cousin (Hutchinson, 1989: 186; Bradley, 1998: 59). Those who have commented on the decision have focused on the perceived anti-British flavour of the GAA (Bradley, 1998: 59; Hutchinson, 1989: 186; MacLennan, 1998b: 394-6). Some interesting questions arise from these analyses, two of which are explored here. First why did it take fifty years for shinty's administrators to realise the origins of the GAA in the independence struggle? Second, why did the Camanachd Association not question the direction given by "people in high authority ... to a small sporting body in the north of Scotland" (Hutchinson, 1989: 186)?

Neither question is easy to answer, but the first one can perhaps be dealt with more briefly. In the previous section it was argued that we should not exaggerate the political objectives in Cusack's sporting initiative. It is probable that shinty's administrators were aware of the GAA's connections to Irish nationalism, but the matter would not necessarily have been a major concern to the Camanachd Association prior to 1933. Between the formation of the Camanachd Association in 1893 and the events of 1933-34 there were few, if any, official links between the two organisations. What contact there was between shinty and hurling appears to have been organised, at least from the shinty perspective on a local, rather than a national basis (Skinner, Appendix 8).

Between 1919 and 1923 Ireland's history continued to be marked by violence. First the War of Independence (1919-21) and then civil war (1922-23) brought further bloodshed and internecine conflict to the island (Kee, 1972c: 56-7; de Búrca, 1980: 143). The 'Treaty Between Great Britain and Ireland' granted Ireland dominion status

"in the community of nations known as the British Empire" (Kee, 1972: 152) from which the six counties of the north-east were excluded. The end of civil war brought greater stability to Irish life, but the settlement remained an issue in Irish politics until the 1930s when the *Dàil* took action to resolve the matter itself. In 1933 it considered three Bills that would "gradually eliminate the Crown from the Constitution of the Irish Free State". The proposal was viewed as "unacceptable" to the British government (*Hansard*, Vol. 281, 14 November 1933). The issue of Irish nationalist politics and their anti-British dimension therefore remained a source of concern even after the secession from the British state.

Sport in Ireland was inevitably affected by the war of independence and the civil war, but the GAA continued to function in a limited way (de Búrca, 1980: 154-64; Cronin, 1999: 88-89; Mandle, 1987: 201-12; Bradley, 1998: 46-48). There were no pan-Celtic shinty-hurling events until some measure of stability had returned to Irish society. The revival of Gaelic sports clubs in Scotland after 1922 enabled some Celtic fraternity to flourish in Scotland in the 1922-23 season. For example Glasgow Skye shinty club played two matches against a select hurling team from Glasgow (Macdonald, 1992: 92; Bradley, 1998: 48). One of those who may have been instrumental in organising these events was John 'Kaid" MacLean, the son of Norman MacLean from Skye who had been a leading figure in the Land League activism and supporter of Irish home rule (Macdonald, 1992: 92). Yet even in the more stable political environment of Scotland, shinty-hurling links were not consolidated.

In 1924 the idea to revive the Tailteann Games which Michael Cusack and Michael Davitt had discussed forty years earlier was realised. The sixteen-day government sponsored event was a celebration of Irish cultural identity and national autonomy which drew 2,000 competitors from a variety of countries including New

Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Australia, and Britain (*Freeman's Journal*, 26 July 1924; de Búrca, 1980: 166-7). The opening event of the Tailteann Games at Croke Park Dublin on 2 August 1924 was "a clash between the Irish caman and the shinty stick of Scotland" (*Sunday Independent*, 3 August 1924). The occasion resonated with the symbolism of different aspects of Celtic radicalism. The referee was John "Kaid" MacLean, and it is said he made "a picturesque completion to an historic Gaelic reunion" in his Highland dress (*Freeman's Journal*, 4 August 1924). Another Scotsman present at the Tailteann Games was Compton Mackenzie, one of the national revivalists of the Scottish Renaissance literary tradition (Harvie, 1994b: 46; Mandle, 1989: 216). Like fellow nationalists however Mackenzie was "unhappy about sport's surrogate politics" (Harvie, 1994b: 46). The Camanachd Association refused to share the views of the Irish press that this was an "International Hurling-shinty match" (*Irish Times*, 2 August 1924). Two months later the secretary stated:

> he had no communication from any responsible person regarding any so called "International Match". If such a match took place it was not representative of the Association, who, as the parent body controlling Shinty, should have made arrangements for such a match" (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, 15 October 1924).

No shinty team attended the Tailteann Games in 1928, but a team did participate in 1932 (Hutchinson, 1989: 185-6). The view that the "so-called internationals" were "Glasgow and region with Ireland" (Skinner, Appendix 8, June 1997), is supported by a report in the Irish press. It was noted that the shinty team which attended the Tailteann Games in 1932 "was not so representative of Highland shinty strength" it having been drawn from "the Glasgow shinty men" (*Irish Times*, 30 June 1932). One conclusion that could be drawn from this is that if any agency did organise the shinty teams it was likely to have been the south district association, rather than the national body. This may

explain the Camanachd Association's lack of knowledge of such events, but also its lack of concern over the political connections of the GAA until 1933.

To investigate the second question Hutchinson (1989: 186) posed the wider social, cultural and political circumstances that underpinned relations between Britain and the Irish Free State after 1921 must be considered. Donald Skinner, the grandson of ex-Provost Skinner, offered this explanation for the decision taken at the annual meeting in April 1934:

> I think it was ... because of the Irish politics ... it appears he obviously questioned the motives of the Irish courting us, and felt that it was done for political purposes, rather than for ... interest in helping us further the sport ... I think there was pressure, in other words that he was just being used to curtail it. Because remember too that although he himself was not a member of the Free Church there would be strong pressure in a lot of areas not to associate with Catholics ... there would be a religious and a political connection there (Skinner, Appendix 8).

This assessment of the reasons why possible links with the GAA were curtailed is interesting. All of those interviewed for this study emphasised that shinty in particular and the Highlands in general, were not imbued with the religious sectarianism which has engulfed football in parts of Scotland. This noted, it must be acknowledged that the Presbyterian churches articulated the strong anti-Irish Catholic sentiments that were evident in Scotland during the 1920s and 1930s (Brown, 1991; Finlay, 1991; Bradley, 1996; Devine, 1999: 498-500). This included calls on the government to restrict Irish-Catholic immigration and to deport those already here in receipt of poor relief, issuing appeals to employers to hire "those of the Scottish race" and establishing a committee "to co-ordinate Scotland's anti-Catholic campaign" (Brown, 1991: 37). Requests were made in parliament to restrict further immigration and to deport Catholic Irish-Scots already in the country (*Hansard*, Vol. 252, 19 May 1931). The matter was investigated but no action was taken.

The majority of concerns were focused in west central Scotland, the area that had the largest concentration of immigrant Irish-Catholics and their descendants. It would be inaccurate to suggest that anti-Irish Catholic feelings were rife in Highland communities, but the wider ideology, and the views of the church cannot have gone unnoticed.[25] The point being made here is that proposals to establish regular shinty-hurling matches cannot be wholly divorced from this wider background. To paraphrase Purdie (1991: 66) while the Highlands and Ireland had much in common, the religious differences of Scottish Calvinism and Irish Catholicism may have been an obstacle to greater communication and co-operation. In the wider context of political relations between Britain and the Irish Free State this became a barrier for shinty and hurling.

In Scotland after the 1914-18 war home rule and nationalism reappeared on the political agenda. There was a revolutionary spirit in the country, which was heavily influenced at least until 1924 by Celtic radicalism (Finlay, 1994: 29-47; 1997: 76), and by socialism (Hunter, 1975: 198-203). The socialist leader John Maclean was influenced by aspects of the Irish struggle, and had a particular resonance with the philosophy of the Irish revolutionary socialist and nationalist leader James Connolly (1896-1916) (Devine, 1999: 495; Hunter, 1975: 197-8). Maclean was a key figure in the industrial action that became synonymous with the idea of Red Clydeside between 1919 and 1923 (Lynch, 1992: 427). His association with Ruaraidh Erskine contributed to a brand of Celtic communism (Hunter, 1975: 198), one objective of which was the establishment of an independent Scottish Republic.

Post-war nationalism in Scotland, like its pre-war manifestation, was a diverse creature. The revival of the Scottish Home Rule Association (1918) became closely

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[25] It is acknowledged that some parts of the Highlands and islands were of either the Catholic or Episcopal faith. The argument being made here does not overlook this, but the point being made is that within the context of the more dominant Presbyterian faith in Scotland the religious differences between the Highlands and Ireland may have been exacerbated.

associated with the Labour movement but this connection was a significant factor in the disintegration of the organisation during the 1920s (Finlay, 1994: 1-28; 1997: 71-76). The other influential strand on nationalism during the 1920s was once again Celtic radicalism (Hunter, 1975: Finlay, 1994: 29-70). The Celtic radical movement was a continuation of a loosely connected group of cultural and political activists. Initially its two main ties were Highland land issues and a "romantic passionate interest in all things Celtic" (Finlay, 1994: 30). An interest in Irish nationalism was another important dimension, and circumstances in Ireland after 1916 were "an important stimulus" for the creation in 1920 of the Scots National League (SNL) whose first President was Ruaraidh Erskine (Finlay, 1944: 31). The organisation failed to attract significant support for its vague policies which espoused an anti-British racism (both anti-English and anti-Anglo-Scottish), and called for the re-Celticising of Scotland in order for it to follow Ireland's lead and rid itself of its colonial status (Finlay, 1994: 29-70). The desire for independence was expressed in one newspaper the following way:

> Celtic culture, revived and extended in its application will prove the salvation of our country ... Our task, then, is to work for the development of Celtic culture in all its aspects, linguistic, economic and political. Endeavouring to work out those ideals, let us press onwards to the establishment of the Scottish Republic of the future" (MacNeacail, *Liberty*, January 1921).

The lack of clear, concrete policies and the emphasis on retrospective cultural ideals failed to inspire the flames of nationality. In 1928 the Scots National League merged with other national groups in Scottish politics to form the National Party of Scotland (NPS, 1928-33), and then the Scottish National Party (SNP; Finlay, 1994: 71-161). Over the course of these re-alignments nationalist fundamentalists who espoused pro-Irish Celtic radicalism, were marginalised and eliminated from the organisations. In May 1933 the leader of the NPS, John MacCormick, voiced his criticism of the Celtic radical wing:

> They seemed to me to look at Scotland through green spectacles ...
> despite a complete lack of a historical parallel to identify Irish struggle
> with their own (MacCormick, 1955: 67).

The influence of Celtic radicals on the SNL had been to propose Anglo-Scottish unionism perpetrated a harmful imagined division between Highland and Lowland cultures (Finlay, 1994: 47). There is little evidence to conclude shinty was perceived to be an activity that could promote the re-Celticisation of Scotland, and generate a national unity desirous of independence. This idea, and the shifts in nationalism generally, appeared to have little impact on shinty's administrators. They maintained their adherence to mainstream Scottish opinion which continued to declare its allegiance to the union and the empire. Over the final two decades considered in this thesis, the significance of Irish nationalism appeared to diminish in the mainstream of the Scottish movement. In contrast the Irish Free State's own actions to remove itself from dominion status influenced institutional and popular thinking in Scotland about its Celtic neighbour, and it would be naive to assume the Highlands and shinty were entirely immune from such sentiments.

There is no single reason that explains the Camanachd Association's apparent unquestioning acceptance of the advice to cease discussions with Irish hurling. Certainly the social, cultural and political circumstances of the period had a significant influence. The lack of coherence between Celtic radicalism and Celtic sport may also have been important. In a period when shinty was still a self-regulating, self-financing and autonomous organisation on one level the decision may appear odd. However the nature of that autonomy may have had much to do with the decision. The men who controlled the sport, and more precisely those who financed it, were part of the British establishment, key figures in local politics and Highland civic life. If the anonymous advisor was, as MacLennan (1998b: 394) suggests, Sir James Iain Macpherson (by 1934

Lord Strathcarron), then the association may have thought wisely on the advice. A Liberal M.P. for Ross & Cromarty since 1911, Macpherson was the Chief Secretary for Ireland who had introduced the Home Rule Bill in 1918. He was also chief of Newtonmore Shinty Club (Richmond, Appendix 7) and a patron of the Camanachd Association (*Camanachd Association Minutes*, AGM 3 April 1926). In short the association in particular, and shinty in general, could not afford to challenge the advice and position of Macpherson and its other patrons - even if there were any in the organisation concerned at what in retrospect has been interpreted as political interference.

SUMMARY

The objective of this chapter has been to examine the confluence of Celtic sports and nationalism between 1887 and 1939. A number of points can be concluded from the synthesis of material considered here. It is clear that over the course of this fifty-year period, the trajectory of shinty continued to be shaped by the specific circumstances of Highland society. It is also evident that wider social forces such as war, unemployment and variations in the fortunes of local industry were important characteristics in the fluctuating fortunes of the sport in the Highlands. In addressing the question of shinty's connection with the varied nature of nationalism there is no evidence to suggest that these ideas had an enduring connection to the sport. Nonetheless in a variety of ways the ideology of different forms of nationalism, including home rule, Irish republicanism, and unionist nationalism, touched upon the development of the sport. Shinty was conscious of its cultural links with hurling, but it is problematic to assume this should have led to formal and parallel developments. Such assumptions fail to acknowledge the specific circumstances in which each sport developed. It is concluded that shinty was an

important element of Highland civil society, that symbolised its distinctive, and autonomous cultural identity.

CONCLUSION
SHINTY, NATIONALISM AND CULTURAL IDENTITY, 1835-1939

Since the 1980s there has been a resurgence of interest in questions of nationhood and identity across a broad range of academic disciplines. This has generated a substantive body of literature from, amongst others, sociologists, historians and political scientists. This resurgence should not conceal a number of issues. Firstly, there is a need to recognise that nationalism is not a single phenomenon. There are a number of different conceptualisations of nationalism which are exemplified in the work of influential theorists such as Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Anthony Smith, Benedict Anderson and others. Nationalism must be examined in relation to the social, cultural and political conditions of the community being represented. Secondly, nations are not static or unchanging entities; therefore examinations of nationalism and cultural identity must be examined in the context of a specific historical epoch. Finally, one of the problems with rigid modernist and statist accounts of nationalism is that they frequently reject certain nationalisms because they do not fit the model of independent nation-states. This limited definition of nations often produces explanations of nationalisms as political ideologies of actual or aspired statehood, and rejects what Smith and others have identified as cultural nationalisms.

It has been argued in this study these points can be addressed by utilising theories of nationalism which acknowledge nations as changing cultural formations, that is categories of practice that are contoured by the social and political circumstances of specific historical epochs in named communities. Although changing, nations are population groups which are united by an enduring identity grounded in common myths of origin, shared historical memories, a common culture, conceptions of common rights and duties, and an attachment to a given territory. These communities may be aligned

with the political objectives of statehood, but this is not a necessary precondition of nations and nationalisms. From this position nationalism can be a cultural expression; it can nonetheless be used to project various political ideas concerning the unity, identity and autonomy of a named community. It has been argued in this thesis that this conception of the nation, and of nationalism, is an appropriate one for analysing in this case cultural identity and nationalism associated with the Highlands of Scotland.

The different conceptual explanations of nationalism are manifest in a synthesis of historical and sociological analyses of sport, nationalism and cultural identity. This is evidenced in the work of Bairner, Hargreaves, Houlihan, Duke and Crolley, and MacClancy. A particular characteristic of this body of work is that it acknowledges that sport can be used to project different sorts of nationalism, which are connected to various types of nations or social formations. The distinctions this thesis is concerned with are the expressions of nationalism and identity associated with a marginalised cultural community in one stateless nation. Stateless nations are represented by the enduring identity of national or cultural minorities within multinational states. The nationalism of stateless nations, or the identity of minority cultural groups, may project alternative images of the nation, but they do not necessarily seek statehood. The identities connected to sport in stateless nations are illustrative of one of many ways these communities may express different types of autonomy through different facets of culture and civil society. The notion of a stateless nation is the most appropriate one for investigating the confluence of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland.

It is important to recognise that nationalism is an expression of constructed, fluid and continually changing aspects of social and political practice in nations. Some commentators have argued that nationalism has not been a potent political force in Scotland. Nevertheless it has been a pervasive and persistent identity that is manifested

through a plethora of social, cultural and political terrains. It is informed by the unique collective experiences of who is speaking, the cultural content that is being used and the historical period in which they are speaking. The terrain on which nationalism and other cultural identities in Scotland has been constructed has not been uniform and static. An eclectic theoretical framework has therefore been developed to understand specific assertions of nationalism and identity in the Highlands and in Scotland. This eclectic theoretical framework is warranted provided it is reasoned and critical, because it illuminates the cultural and historical specificity of the ways in which sport can be a vehicle for different ideas about the nation.

I have suggested that the concepts of autonomy and civil society provide pertinent analytical tools to examine the conflux of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland between 1835 and 1939. These ideas of autonomy and civil society are evident in a number of contemporary sociological and historical analyses of nationalism in Scotland. The work of Lindsay Paterson and of Graeme Morton has incorporated these concepts to reveal that during this period nationalism in Scotland was a more vibrant, active and varied phenomenon than some other studies have exposed. A number of advantages may accrue from including autonomy and civil society as core components for understanding nationalism in Scotland. First autonomy is historically and culturally specific. Second it illustrates that although Scotland did not seek independent statehood, the nation sought to project, protect and extend its right to control its national affairs in various social, cultural and political spheres. Third autonomy does not result in mutually exclusive nationalisms, but captures the dual identities that proclaimed Scottish or British identity in particular circumstances. Autonomy can therefore accommodate the multiple identities that may be given a place by cultural communities within the nation. Fourth it provides some insight into the ways

in which cultural nationalism reflected the political aspirations of Scotland within the union.

The concept of autonomy is bolstered by the inclusion of civil society as the institutional terrain on which Scots exercised various forms of autonomy over their national affairs. Civil society encompasses the network of social, cultural and political institutions that have embodied the idea of Scotland as an enduring imagined community. Organised sport is included in this notion of civil society as the repository of the nation, rather than marginalising it as an unimportant, irrelevant or frivolous cultural practice. In Scotland an enduring identity has been projected in and through the institutions and practices which comprise a distinctive civil society.

It is important that scholarship which examines Scottish society recognises the plurality of Scotland's culture, including the variety of sports that filter ideas about the nation and the state. In this respect this thesis builds upon the work of a number of scholars such as Jarvie, Walker, and Bradley who have illustrated some of the myriad ways in which different sports mediate alternative conceptions of the nation and its nationalisms. As an element of civil society, sport is part of the terrain on which alternative identities and images of the nation may be expressed. In short autonomy and civil society can provide a more flexible conceptual approach to reveal the overt and more subtle ways in which the cultural plurality of Scotland's nationalism has been expressed in relation to sport. This study contributes to this body of literature that investigates the significance of sport in Scottish society by providing a critical analysis of shinty, one of the nation's indigenous sports.

Throughout this study I have illustrated that the development of shinty occurred within the broader social and political milieu of the Highlands where the game has been a signifier of that region's Celtic cultural heritage. The types of problems that have been

posed in this study would be compatible with a critical analysis of sport, society and culture. The question that lies at the heart of this thesis asks how the development of shinty was affected by different expressions of nationalism and cultural identity between 1835 and 1939? In addressing this problem the analysis also probes a number of secondary questions that might be asked in a case study of one of Scotland's distinctive cultural communities. What characteristics support the status of the Highlands as a marginalised cultural community? Which nation, or what image of the nation, has been projected through shinty? In what ways did the development of an institutionalised sport between 1835 and 1939 sustain elements of the folk game from which it is derived? How has shinty been affected by the broader social and political circumstances of the historical epoch in which it moved? Who were the influential people connected to Highland civil society, and to other radical social and cultural movements in Scotland, who guided shinty's development? Did shinty embrace those aspects of Scotland's cultural heritage that it shared with Ireland? What similarities and differences can be detected in the ways that Celtic sports of Scotland and Ireland engaged with the Celtic radicalism of these two related but separate imagined communities? To what extent did the Camanachd Association support the home rule and nationalist movements in Scotland? In what way did shinty in general, and the Camanachd Association in particular, provide a vehicle upon which Highlanders could exercise autonomy within a multinational imperial state? These questions are indicative of the potential of a critical analysis of sport that is grounded in an understanding of nationalisms and particular ways of being Scottish.

I have suggested that any discussion on sport, nationalism and cultural identity in the Highlands must attempt to locate these ideas within the unique milieu of Highland society, and its relationship to the nation and the state. Most of the work on

the Highlands acknowledges that although it is not a uniform and homogeneous community perhaps more than any other region of Scotland this area stands out as different. A complex mosaic of social, political and cultural factors help define the Highlands' status as a distinctive region within Scotland. At least two factors are essential to any examination of the social history of Highland society: (i) the significance of certain core elements of its Celtic past which have informed its self-awareness as a cultural community; (ii) the unique circumstances in which the certain social relationships have been used to sustain social and political power within Highland society. These factors have been incorporated into the critical analysis that forms the case study of shinty, nationalism and cultural identity. During the nineteenth century some minority cultural communities within larger European states during the nineteenth century used their distinctive cultural identity to mobilise national sentiments, and as a criterion of their right to statehood. This did not happen in the Highlands although people from the region projected a distinctive cultural identity. This thesis has illustrated that this may be explained by the fact that the Highlands were partly a distinct society within Scotland, and within the British state. This noted the thesis has revealed that tensions did exist in Highlanders' experience of this relationship, which have given rise at times to a radical Celtic image of the nation.

The case study of shinty has been organised around four different phases in the development of shinty in combination with four connected but separate themes which contoured Highland society. In chapter three, the first phase of the case study examines the place of shinty in Scottish society from around the sixth century until approximately 1835. The antecedent folk origins of the game in Scotland are located in this period. It is thought that shinty arrived in Argyllshire as part of the culture of the Dalriada Scots who established a pan-Celtic kingdom linking the western seaboard of Scotland with the

north-east of Ireland. Along with the Gaelic language, Celtic Christianity and a strong oral history, camanachd was one of a number of cultural components that was evident in the wider culture of a hybrid Scottish kingdom, and there is evidence that shinty was played in many parts of the country during this period. The construction of a cultural division between the Highlands and the Lowlands contributed to the marginalisation of Celtic culture from the Lowlands and from the north-east of Scotland by at least the fourteenth century.

After the sixteenth century a number of factors contributed to the erosion of certain elements of the Highlands as a separate community, including the destruction of the traditional clan structure, the proselytising mission of the Presbyterian church, and the introduction of more commercial land use. The idea that the Highlands was a distinct cultural community was maintained through certain elements of the Celtic past including dependence on the land, traditional social relationships, and the use of Gaelic for spiritual, local community and private activity, although English became the language of knowledge and education. In this context of marginalisation, social upheaval and transformation, shinty disappeared from many parts of Scotland. By 1835 shinty was still played among some Highland communities as part of traditional festivals in ways that reinforced the wider social relations that prevailed between landlord and tenants in the Highlands. Here shinty remained a symbol of the culture of an ancient Celtic past.

The second phase in the case study, addressed in chapter four, examined the development of shinty between about 1835 and 1880. During this period a gradual process transformed shinty from a popular recreation into a more organised sporting practice. This process was marked by three characteristics: (i) the continued decline of shinty in some communities; (ii) the survival of traditional forms of play; and (iii) the

emergence of new patterns of play. This transformation did not occur in a social vacuum. It would be inaccurate to claim a direct causal link between the development of shinty and factors like the hegemony of Presbyterianism, the patronage of landowners, various motivations for migration out of the Highlands, or the rise of Highland associations in the cities. It can certainly be argued however that these factors contributed to the changing social environment in which shinty was played.

It has been suggested that the expansion of Highland social and cultural organisations in urban Britain made a significant contribution to the emergence of new ways of playing shinty. A number of the shinty teams established in towns and cities reflected the links of the Highland associations to the Highland communities their members came from. These clubs were also part of a distinctive urban Highland civil society. This was an important social and support network for many Highlanders through which they maintained their distinctive identity that was built upon two interconnected parameters: *dùthchas* and *dualchas*. In 1880 the first formally constituted shinty club was formed in Strathglass. This was the catalyst for other clubs being formed in the northern Highlands, and also in Argyllshire, yet at this stage shinty cannot be wholly characterised as a modern sport. The folk game continued to be played in some communities and the emerging organisation of shinty incorporated certain features of traditional patronage associated with such occasions. The ways in which shinty signified the unique social milieu and culture of the Highlands provided a distinctive dimension to the development of the sport.

Chapter five addressed the third dimension of the development of shinty between 1835 and 1939 by examining its connections to land issues and land reform politics. During the 1870s the institutions that comprised the Celtic cultural movement provided the platform upon which Highland society developed a more radical political

dimension to its identity. The politicisation of the Highland associations focussed on issues that were unique to Highland society, but during the early 1880s it was the issue of land reform that fused the interests of urban and rural Highlanders. The formation of the Highland Land Law Reform Association mobilised Highland interests and confirmed one of the unique political dimensions of Highland society that was partially addressed by a series of land reform legislation that was passed by the British government between 1886 and 1920.

There was no monocausal link between the land issues which preceded the land agitation of the 1880s and shinty, nor were there formal connections linking the Highland Land Law Reform Association to shinty teams and clubs. Nonetheless it has been argued that the Celtic cultural organisations were common ground for supporters of shinty and land reform. The fusion of individuals around certain issues suggested a growing awareness of the political, as well as the cultural, identity of the Highlands. In this way it can be argued that the organisations which grew out of the Celtic radical movement were a fundamental component in the formation of an active Highland civil society. Highland civil society comprised a network of interconnected, yet independent, organisations which represented the relative autonomy of the Highlands and of Highlanders. Although shinty organisations appear to have been relatively unpolitical, many of those who supported the development of the sport participated as individuals in various aspects of the Celtic radical movement.

The final dimension of the development of shinty between 1835 and 1939 has been investigated in chapter six. Between 1886 and 1939 shinty continued to develop the structures and patterns of competition associated with other modern sporting practices. This was not a period of stability for the sport, which continued to be contoured by broader social and political circumstances of Highland society and the

imperial state. This was also a period in which attempts were made to form sporting links with hurling in Ireland the sport and the community with which the Highlands shared cultural roots. It has been suggested that failure to establish an enduring pan-Celtic sporting community has to be located within the broader social and political context of these two communities. Attention has been focused on the role of the respective administrative organisations of the two sports, the Camanachd Association and the Gaelic Athletic Association, and the ways in which they engaged with the wider nationalist movements in their respective communities. There was some cross-fertilisation of ideas between individuals who were connected to movements that sought increased autonomy for Ireland and Scotland, but there was no identical engagement of the sporting agencies with nationalism. The Gaelic Athletic Association was a potent symbol of Irish autonomy and it engaged overtly with those strands of nationalism that sought independence.

In contrast the Camanachd Association's links to nationalism were more opaque reinforcing in subtle ways the vagaries of unionist nationalism that were dominant in Scotland at least until 1939. The more radical strands of Scottish nationalism did not actively promote shinty or other sports vehicles for home rule or independence. Indeed after about 1924 those who advocated the most overt dimension of pan-Celticism within the Scots National League, the principal nationalist group between the wars, were marginalised and excluded from subsequent nationalist organisations.

The impact of political aspirations such as nationalism and autonomy on sport should not be overstated. A similar assessment has been made concerning the influence of Irish affairs on Highland, and indeed more broadly on Scottish, social life. At least three factors defined the differences between Scottish and Irish nationalism and may in part explain the divergent paths taken by shinty and hurling. First, before 1922, the

contrasting opportunities of Irishmen and Scotsmen, including those from the Highlands, to participate in the administration of the British state and empire. Second the relative degree of autonomy over its national affairs that Scotland held within the British state, and which was accommodated by Highland civil society. Third the significance of the religious differences between the two communities, which may have been intensified by the tense relationship between the Irish Free State and Britain after 1922. Set within this broader context it has been concluded that although the Camanachd Association did not project an overt nationalism, shinty did however mediate the multiple identities that were part of the lived experiences of Highland life.

The central focus of this analysis has been the popular Highland sport of shinty. Implicit in the analysis is the belief that while such a study is a worthy focus of critical historical and social study in its own right, it can provide insights into two further issues. The first problem concerns the multifarious types of nationalisms and identities that express alternative images of Scotland. These identities are socially constructed. Therefore one must examine the cultural content, social context and historical circumstances that mediate alternative ways of being Scottish, or images of the nation. The Highlands and in particular shinty, the sport of the Gael, provide one example of this diversity. The second problem concerns the different forms of autonomy that fulfil the changing aspirations of nationhood. The case of Scotland with its vigorous defence of its separate civil society is illustrative of the ways in which nationalist aspirations can be satisfied without the formation of an independent state. This may only be achieved through a process of negotiation with the dominant political power, and at the expense of the marginalisation of those components of its culture that may compromise the benefits that might accrue from this relative autonomy. In this respect this study has

provided one example of the ways in which sport in Scotland can be a vehicle for expressing autonomy which has a specific cultural identity at its core.

This study does not claim to provide a comprehensive historical analysis of shinty or a complete discussion of the relationship between shinty, nationalism and cultural identity. At a more modest level this thesis contributes to the analysis of sport, nationalism and cultural identity in Scotland in the following way: (i) it provides a conceptually informed critical analysis of shinty; (ii) it locates the analysis of shinty within the broader context of the social history of the Highlands; (iii) it utilises the concepts of autonomy and civil society to explain the axis connecting the aspirations of the nation and cultural identity in a specific historical period. The relative strength of this thesis is that it has attempted to address the constellation of all of these concerns. This original and unique synthesis provided in this thesis makes a small contribution to our understanding of sport in Scottish culture.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Appendix 3 Interview with Mr K MacMaster and Mr D. MacMaster, Caberfeidh Shinty Club at Strathpeffer (Ross & Cromartie) August 1995.

Appendix 4 Interview with Dr H. D. MacLennan, former shinty player and broadcaster, at North Kessock (Inverness), August 1995.

Appendix 5 Interview with Mr W. Batchen, former shinty player, referee and chairman of the Referees Development Committee of the Camanachd Association, at Foyers (Inverness-shire), August 1995.

Appendix 6 Interview with Mr J.W. Campbell, former shinty player and a past-President of the Camanachd Association, at Lyne of Gorthleck (Inverness-shire), August 1995.

Appendix 7 Interview with Mr J. Richmond, chairman of the Camanchd Association's Publicity Committee, Newtonmore (Inverness-shire), September 1995.

Appendix 8 Interview with Mr C. McDougall (*Oban Times*) and Mr D. Skinner, a former president of the Camanachd Association, Oban June 1997.

In addition to the above, the following individuals assisted with this research by participating in unrecorded conversations regarding the history of shinty:

Mr D. Cameron, Glasgow, President of the Camanachd Association 1995-2000; November 1996.

Mr J. Paterson, Dunoon, Convenor of Camanachd Referees Association and Kyles Athletic; November 1996.

Mr N. Cameron, Strachur (Argyll); November 1996.

Mr J. Crawford, Ardrishaig (Argyll); November 1996.

Mr E.R. Birkett, Inverness; November 1996).

Mr B. Denoon, Inverness; November 1996.

Mr G Slater, Oban (formerly of *Oban Times*); June 1997.

Rev D.R. MacLeod, Furnace (Argyll); July 1997.

Mr D Fraser, Inverlochy, Fort William; July 1997.

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The themes below were identified from the preliminary review of literature and used to structure the interviews conducted for the research. The framework was used to guide all the interviews, but other issues were addressed as they arose.

1   Shinty pre-1835 - themes to probe

What is known about the folk origins of shinty - myths/legends/heroic figures?

What connections are thought to link shinty with other sports?

Where and when was shinty played, and by whom?

What was the social significance of sport in communities?

What impact did population migration have on shinty?

To what extent did the different phases and forms of land clearances contour the survival and decline of shinty in various Highland communities?

2   Shinty post-1835

Key events which shaped the sport?

What are the key rivalries in shinty?

Key individuals involved - who were they and what was their involvement?

Pattern of club formation/demise; what links are there to with population migration out of the Highlands?

What divisions exist in game? Do these reflect divisions in other Scottish sport eg religion?

Are there class associations within the game? How do these relate to Highland society?

What was the role of landowners' in terms of patronage?

What was the social significance of sport in the community, and what changes have there been?

To what extent did religion contour the development of shinty in the Highlands?

What impact did the land wars and the Highland Land League have on shinty in the Highlands

3 Shinty and national identity

What is the interviewees perceptions regarding shinty as Scotland's national sport?

Which nation does shinty represent - is it a Gaelic nation, a pan-Celtic nation or Scottish nation?

Is there a strong belief in shinty as the national game in shinty communities?

Were there links between nationalist movements in Scotland and Ireland with shinty?

What is known about links between shinty and hurling in Ireland approximately 1870 and 1939?

What links were established between the GAA and the Camanachd Association?

APPENDIX 3

Interview with Ken MacMaster and David MacMaster (Caberfeidh Shinty Club), 29th August 1995, Strathpeffer.

Due to researcher error, the interview was not recorded. The notes below were taken during the interview, but do not represent a verbatim account.

Having outlined the background to the study IAR explained she was interested in KMacM's personal recollections and experiences of shinty.

KMacM asked DMacM to show IAR the photographs in the hallway. KMacM explained they were all taken at the 1934 Camanachd Cup Final when Caberfeidh first won the competition when they played Kyles Athletic are Inveraray. KMacM was captain of the Caberfeidh team at the time, which was also the season in which Caberfeidh became the first club ever to win all three trophies (the Camanachd Cup, the MacTavish Cup and the MacGillivray Senior League Cup) in one season.

IAR asked if KMacM when he started playing shinty.

KMacM recalled with humour that he began playing shinty "as soon as I was out of the cradle". He said he was born in 1904, and had a brother ten years older than him who was a good shinty player before World War I. KMacM said he always remembered shinty from when he was very young, and spoke of how young boys from crofts outside Strathpeffer would play informal games on the height above the town.

The MacMasters explained that Caberfeidh, the shinty club in Strathpeffer, was established in 1886, but from what they knew the game was played in the area long before then, in an unruly form. DMacM said that for the club's centenary in 1986 he had been involved in searching for early recordings of shinty in the area and the *Ross-shire Journal* seemed to be reporting on a club in Strathpeffer around the 1870s. He also said that in Castle Leod, the ancestral seat of the MacKenzie's who were Earls of Cromartie, there was a painting on the wall which showed shinty in the late 1700s.

IAR asked KMacM about the Celtic and Irish origins of shinty. KMacM was uncertain about this, or at least admitted he was unable to confirm this, or why the game had been described as the national game. In his experience the game was confined largely to the Highlands and recalled playing teams from Beauly, Strathglass and Muir of Ord. He spoke of travelling in a trap pulled by two horses, but said although there was much interest in shinty in the community not many supporters travelled to matches in the 1920s and 1930s. He also spoke of the strong rivalries between for example Kingussie and Newtonmore, and Caberfeidh and Beauly.

KMacM and DMacM confirmed that shinty was at one time played as part of the New Year celebrations in the community. KMacM said his father had spoken of being involved in large scale games at the turn of the century, when they played for an hour, then stopped for "suitable refreshments", and then played on for another hour or more. His father had told him such games were for anyone, if you went along you would get to play.

Neither **KMacM or DMacM** had any knowledge of issues such as the clearances or land agitation having much impact on shinty, but DMacM said he thought these issues may have influenced the demise of the game in some areas. With regard to links with Ireland, DMacM suggested Chisholm of Strathglass might have had connections through his Catholicism. KMacM was President of the Camanachd Association between 1970-73, when official links with the GAA were being resurrected. However he was unable to recall any of the detail as to why links had been cut during the 1930s.

IAR asked KMacM and DMacM about any influences of religion on shinty. Both were definite in their assertion that there were no religious affiliations of clubs, and that sectarianism was not part of the sport; they also said the game had no class bias. They explained that Caberfeidh's ground at Castle Leod was owned by the laird, the Earl of

Cromartie. They thought there was some historical connection to this and also mentioned that at one time people who had been cleared from land elsewhere, came to the area during the nineteenth century when the laird provided land for them.

IAR asked about divisions in the sport, at which both KMacM and DMacM laughed and said there was a north-south divide that prevailed and went back to the days of two separate associations.

KMacM spoke of the family tradition associated with a number of shinty clubs, and said the current Caberfeidh team had four sets of brothers. He said he had played in teams where this was quite common. He then spoke of how as a child he made a shinty ball by winding wool round cork very tightly "this was what the boys used". He then showed me a caman and hurley which he had carved himself; each was made from a single piece of ash. KMacM said there had not been any strength to the game in Caithness or Sutherland, and so far as he knew Caberfeidh was now the furthest north team, although there had once been a team in Garve.

After an hour the interview was concluded.

APPENDIX 4

Interview with Hugh Dan MacLennan, 31st August 1995, Inverness.

HDMacL: How up to date are you with Shinty Yearbooks or looked at what's in them?

IAR: Not very much. Jack gave me a copy of last year's (1994) Shinty Year Book.

HDMacL: Right, the blue one with the Kyles. Well Hugh Barron has written a very good article, a lengthy article, on the history of shinty in Laggan, which is a good appraisal of the way things were in the sort of pre-association days, and the New Year games in Laggan, right. So that's a good starting point, which if you mugged up on it, and went to speak to him at some other point, you know you could follow up a lot of things. But I would speak to him. The other guy who might be worth, on an anecdotal basis, speaking to, is a fellow Eric Ross Birkett, who was as a wee boy at the Inverary Final in 1934, and he's written poems. He stays at Kingsmills Road in Inverness. He would be worth speaking to just because of his age, he must be 80 plus himself, and he attends matches regularly, thumbs lifts, he's just an interesting guy. [**IAR** Well these are the kinds of people, who are important]. We're actually short of guys who are about eighty, ninety, funnily enough there's not that many about.

IAR: Is that something to do with the war?

HDMacL: Yes, Jack's [Richmond] not that far off it. We reckon he's seventy-five, give or take.

IAR: But then of course he's not from a shinty community originally is he?

HDMacL: No, no but he easily knows much more than anyone else. People like David MacMaster are exceptional in that they make a point of gathering information. You see we've always argued, and Jack's always argued, that there should be one person in each

club nominated as an archivist, which is what the GAA does in Ireland, which ensures that you can have a whole library of GAA books about finals or whatever. In shinty you're really scrabbling to do one book on the association, so it's just a different thing. But the best memory you're going to get is Willie Batchen, who's phenomenal. He'll tell you who scored a goal in 1952, and he'll be right, just from his refereeing and all that. He's got a phenomenal memory. [IAR Now what age is he about?] Willie must be in his mid-seventies as well. There are two good things about him. He's from a different area, he's not from Badenoch, you know being Foyers, that's Stratherrick which has quite a rich history. But he also because of his refereeing experience travelled very widely; and because he was secretary for such a long time he's got an intimate knowledge of the workings of various parts, so he's a very interesting guy. I mean he could talk of things like the influence of the Hydro scheme where he worked, which kept the people. If it hadn't been for the Hydro, I'm sure he'll tell you, if it hadn't been for the Hydro scheme, shinty would have died in Foyers, because there would've been no people there.

IAR: That's good, because those are the kinds of things I need because I'm not just doing the history of shinty. It's a social history, trying to bring in the political and cultural background of the Highlands in the late nineteenth, early twentieth century, things like that are going to be useful.

HDMacL: I would say his memory [Willie Batchen] is pretty flawless, I don't think he embroiders things. He's pretty straight. He's also got a very interesting history himself. He served as a waiter on the old steamers that went up Loch Ness, which is a fascinating thing because he saw some very important people and a real fancy side to life, at a time when the Highlands was just, you know like the back of beyond. Willie was there with the white napkins. He'll tell you all about it - try stopping him. Hugh

Barron's a long-term source. He's probably, I think got the best living knowledge of Highland history in practical terms, plus he's very well up on all the sources.

IAR: What about people for the Gaelic connection of the sport?

HDMacL: Well you see depending on what you're doing, I think it would be very difficult. A lot of my work is in the Gaelic side, completely. What I'm doing is trailing the cultural baggage they [the emigrants] took to say Canada, and Australia particularly. Now it's very difficult to do Highland history, any aspect of Highland history in that period, I think, without laying a lot of store in the Gaelic sources. A lot of what was left in English is so biased in one way or another that they're not that reliable, particularly the official ones which are just a whitewash most of them. So therefore a lot of the Gaelic poetry and oral tradition that's left, is really a better source or a more accurate source. I mean you really have to identify which bits of it you want. Any of the Gaelic scholars can do it I mean I could help you with a lot of it as well. A lot of it's available in translation, but you would need to know, I mean there's a lot, the 19th century is one of the most active periods in Gaelic poetry, for example. But if you spent your time wading through Gaelic poetry you could be at it forever and not find anything. There's a lot of it available in translation, and I could certainly guide you a lot on a lot of it as well.

IAR: I'm going to see John Willie Campbell this afternoon. Now Jack said he was a Gaelic speaker. He's from Skye?

HDMacL: It's not as simple - you see this is unfortunately an assumption Jack makes, because he's a non- Gaelic speaker and he's not tuned in with that aspect of it. Being a Gaelic speaker doesn't mean to say you know all about 19th century Gaelic poetry, it's not as simple as that. Now John will know about Mary MacPherson, the famous Land

League poetess. Now she's left a couple of very good poems which are accounts of matches in Glasgow in 1876 & 1877. I've used them in my next book that's coming out at the end of September I've collected a lot of literature and there's a lot of the stuff will be in that, and a lot of it will be in translation. A lot of the Canadian stuff for example, I've just found just now when I've been over the summer, and I'm going to have to start working it over anyway, you know like New Year traditions and whether it survived there or not. There's a lot in Australia which I know where it is and what it is and I've got some copies of it but I don't have the Gaelic stuff, I've got to go over and unwind it all. There's some of the stuff has appeared, but in Gaelic collections it tends to appear because it's a nineteenth century poem, not because it's a shinty poem, so you've really got to go round it that way. In a purely non-Gaelic, but specifically Highland sense, John Murdoch's stuff is very good and the *Celtic Monthly* and sources like that. Now the difficulty with them is none of them spoke Gaelic either, they used their stuff in translation; it tends to be okay, sometimes it's not perfect, you'd need to get translations checked, just to be sure they were right. But I don't think you can't not include the views, or the things that Mary MacPherson left for example. Ask John [Willie Campbell] about his father's recollections of her. John's father was probably ninety odd when he died ten-fifteen years ago. Mhairi Mhor [Mary MacPherson] was alive into the 1880s, 1890s, you know so that's a remarkable link in itself, John and his father and Mhairi Mhor. I think there's a story, I remember John telling me a story that his father saw Mhairi, she was a very big woman and I think he tried to hide up her skirt or something, there was some fancy story about when he was a wee boy. There are very few people that could provide that sort of link. Jim Hunter touches on some of it. The expert on Mary MacPherson is Professor Meek in Aberdeen, Donald Meek, in the Celtic Department. He's very good on anything to do with the Land League, crofting, that

period from 1850 to the First World War, he's a recognised expert that's one of his fields. All of a sudden Scottish history is fashionable.

IAR: Well, there's all sorts of things about Scotland that are becoming fashionable, somehow, and the Celtic tradition. That's something else you can maybe help guide me on - would you use the term Celtic, or would you use the term Gaelic to describe shinty as a sport - a Gaelic or a Celtic sport, or does it not really matter?

HDMacL: If you take it in a sort of family tree thing, Celtic comes first, because Celtic is wider, the whole Celtic world is a much wider sense. The Gaelic world is part of the Celtic world if you want to put it that way. You can't legitimately use the word "Highland" of shinty, really because it never was a specifically Highland sport, because it was always played in other parts of Scotland. For example, the evidence in this collection I've got here it was played , if you take it in its extremes, from St. Kilda to the Borders, and then in London. It's Highland in the sense people dreamed up its source to be Highland. The whole problem about Celtic and Gaelic is that so much of the Celtic Twilight stuff that was done in the 19th century was bogus. I mean that book of "The Club of True Highlanders", for example, claimed that Noah was the first shinty player. That's just absolute rubbish, but it was fashionable at the time to establish a lineage of everything. It was just the "in" thing to do and if you could continue it, it looked good, and it gave things credibility, that it didn't have, or didn't need, because there are far better sources which prove that it was played in Ireland, and Columba and all the rest of it. But that's genuine you know, nobody could argue with that, but it wasn't as attractive as saying Noah was the first one, that's daft.

IAR: Well it's that old thing about the Scots being descended from the children of Israel.

HDMacL: Yes it's all part of that same thing. But you see you could legitimately argue that shinty is international, in that if shinty by definition being a stick and ball game, stick and ball games are international and have a historical lineage going back to you know the Greeks. It's all very provable there's no doubt about it. But, you know as to when shinty was first played and where it was first played, you can't be specific about it, other than to say that its most obvious source is Ireland, in the 6th century. But it's just there's no proof, the Picts might have been playing with sticks and balls as well.

HDMacL: Do you know of the Littlejohn Album? [IAR No] See that thing there, that's part of it. But that was the coloured plates of it, it's held in the vaults of Aberdeen University. It's mentioned in "Shinty" [1993]. It's a trophy that's played for by the Scottish Universities, which was donated by that guy, Sir Alexander Littlejohn of Invercharron. A hugely valuable thing, I've a reduced photocopy, but the Inverness Gaelic Society library has a copy of it, you know like a black and white copy. This has actually got a history of shinty in it written by the Gaelic scholar Macbain at the end of the last century, which goes into, the sort of the Irish and the early, the very early sources and that's a very scholarly work.

IAR: So, that would be something that Hugh Barron could get for me?

HDMacL: Yes, yes. You see what you really need from Hugh is permission to use the Inverness Gaelic Society library for research purposes. He'll ask you what you're doing and so on and he'll maybe give you a cover note to give to the librarian or something which will then enable you to go up the stair. But this is his article [Barron's], which is quite lengthy as you see. You see his uncles took part in the matches in 1880 in Laggan, and he's got, you know, who they were and how Cluny attended and so on.

IAR: This is the one that watched a match and then got pleurisy or something?

HDMacL: Yes - the annual ball play. As to the year books, it's like any other source. It's worth ploughing through them. This year's one is coming out next month and that'll be no. 24. Very few people have got all of them but the likes of Jack has, and I have. You're quite welcome if you're up here to look through mine. I mean there's interesting articles in it like that one for example, on "Distant Shores", which Alistair Chisholm did. A piece on history basically beyond Scotland - London, Manchester, Bolton, the Boer War, York and Burma and so on. Now I, just the other day uncovered a couple of things about the war you know soldiers sending word back from the war for sticks to Inverness and stuff like that. You know it's just endless. Other books, do you know of Ninian MacDonald's history of shinty? [**IAR:** No.] In 1932 Father, although he was Reverend J. Ninian MacDonald, OSB is the Order of St. Bernard, was a monk in Fort Augustus Abbey. He produced this book called "Shinty - A Short History of the Ancient Highland Game", printed in Inverness in 1932. Now that likewise (to Alexander Macdonald *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*) draws on MacLagan, but also draws in a lot of other Highland and particularly Irish sources, it's very good on the links with Ireland, and, for example, the links with other games like the Greeks. He [Rev. MacDonald] was a classical scholar so he knew these sources intimately - see there's one or two pictures in it - and it's very thorough in that it does establish the Gaelic links too and it does translation of some Gaelic material. And if I remember rightly it's got quite a good selection of just chunks of things. Of descriptions of games, I mean it's invaluable - you can't really not use it. It's very rare, but I mean places like the National Library of Scotland or the Gaelic Society of Inverness will have it. I mean I picked that up in the most unlikely place, it's the sort of thing I wouldn't not pick up. So then scholarship went flat - I mean there was no shinty or hurley scholarship until Ó

Maolfabhail appeared. He did a very scholarly study, that's good, but that stops in 1970, you know, so it's limited in its shinty update - but if you're not doing the modern stuff it doesn't matter so much anyway. But that's a classic of its kind as well, you know, that's a good book. Now if your Japanese is good you can have this one, this is only for novelty value. The guy who did this is a Professor. At the moment he's got a book going through the printers in Inverness on Highland culture, and it's deemed to be like the final thing on Highland culture - he's big on the Picts. But in this previous book he did, he had a section on shinty would you believe. I don't know what your Japanese is like, but mine is not that good, but somewhere in the book my name appears. The book that's coming out is going to be in English anyway. I don't know what he's going to say; I can't see that he's going to come up with anything really earth-shattering - but you never know with these guys. After Ó Maolfabhail did his thing the first real sort of sociological or sort of real picture history book that emerged was this one by Peter English on Glen Urquhart which draws a lot on the *Inverness Courier* and that type of source from a hundred years ago. It's the first really of the shinty volumes that appeared. It was done by the Glen Urquhart club, so possibly "Thins" or somewhere like that, but I mean anyone at Glen Urquhart might be able to supply you with a copy. But it's very good in that it does the complete social history bit.

IAR: Now when was that published?

HDMacL: 1985, Aberdeen – Peter would have fixed it up through contacts in Aberdeen - he's a lecturer in Aberdeen University in Agricultural Science. But it's very good in that it does a lot of the folklore stuff and he writes a lot about the way they make the big game, pre-formation of the Camanachd Association, in the 1880s when they were trying to sort things out. He's got a lot of history of Chisholm of Glassburn, and how Glen Urquhart and Strathglass tried to set about sorting things out themselves, and this

"theoretical" greatest game that was ever played in 1887 which was played in Inverness, he's got a verbatim account of that. So that's a really good source.

IAR: Does Foyers still have a team?

HDMacL: Yes, Boleskine, but they play at a low level. But they're a good example of somebody struggling against difficult odds, with no people, so that's why Willie's stuff about the Hydro scheme and the economic factors is important. Now Martin MacDonald is very good on the economic factors in the Skye one, which is a special case because it's an island.

IAR: Is that the only island where they're still really playing? Or playing in the league?

HDMacL: Well, yes, you see, what's happened now is that, well no Bute , the island of Rothesay, is technically in the same league, because it's an island, slightly different case because it's further south and it's more accessible, but it is an island nonetheless. They've now started playing in the Western Isles, but what people have to remember there, and they very often forget, is it's not a case of starting shinty in the Western Isles, it's reviving something that died. Or to be absolutely accurate something the war stopped, because when the people from Lewis came back from the war they all started playing football because they'd been playing football away. I mean there were difficulties with lack of trees and so on, which was a specific thing, but they've revived it now and it's in North Uist as well. But the game was played in all the western isles, you know a hundred years ago, there's absolutely no doubt about that.

IAR: So it might be worthwhile trying to get in touch with people there?

HDMacL: Well, there's nobody who has direct recollection. The oldest I've found is, and I've got a friend trying to record him, he's not been well, but he can recall games on the strand in Barra at just about the turn of the century, but he's ninety odd you know.

He must have been a very young boy and he can remember things like cutting the horses' tails and boiling them and making the hair into balls which is actually quite an old thing, although you know that is particularly dated to a hundred years ago.

IAR: Would that be different from what Ken MacMaster spoke about - he spoke about winding wool?

HDMacL: Oh yes, aye. Ken's is a more modern recollection than that. I mean that recollection about boiling horses' hair, you can take that back to the Irish Gaels because that's what they did. That was the only thing other than say knots or joints of a bone or something like that which were used as balls as well. So after the Peter [English] sort of thing everyone got the idea that it was a good idea, so you know, sooner or later other clubs got round. Lochcarron were next, and they did that one, which is quite good in that Hugh Barron did it, and had a lot of the early stuff, and John Willie Campbell and myself did that one. Other ones came thereafter. Lovat did one which is quite good on the early days as well, but much more of a sort of recollection of players kind of thing. Inverness have done one, which is reasonably good in that Hugh Barron did it within the limits they allowed him to - so there's good early Inverness stuff in that one. Beauly have done rather an amateurish looking one, although the content is not that bad, by a school master Roddy McKinnon, and then there's the Fort William one. There's no doubt about Lochaber's strength as a shinty playing area, a hundred years ago. But when the war came, it's all detailed here, particularly the Second World War, it had a huge effect on Fort William in that they lost a lot of their men. If you go back even farther, this is just a general effects on Lochaber, "Bygone Lochaber" by Somerled MacMillan, 1971, I think it was Glasgow, it's good on people leaving you know just that far back in the early 1800s. But this is much more modern. Now one of the difficulties I had writing the book was just a lack of records from the club, so I had to

dig a bit deeper and wider and so you'll find there maybe isn't a huge amount of pre-first World War stuff. I think it kind of runs out in twenty pages, but there's still a reasonable amount. But then the later economic things are discussed after that, you know. But it does the whole one hundred years up to, well we published it in 1994, so it's obviously got the hundred years there.

IAR: Is the First World War one of the reasons for the lack of people left with first-hand recollections nowadays?

HDMacL: Aye, Aye. The two best examples, or the two most easily identifiable areas or clubs that were hit by the First World War are Skye - Martin MacDonald's stuff on Skye is very good on the First World War, also Beauly. Beauly lost a lot of men. In fact Beauly and Skye all had men at this Battle of Festubert in 1915, and they lost, well, Portree lost twenty men. Now that was a huge amount of people.

IAR: Now that was something that Ken MacMaster said, that Beauly was one of the clubs that lost a lot in the First World War.

HDMacL: Aye, they did. It's quite easy.

HDMacL: Skye are in a very peculiar, not peculiar a lucky situation, in that raising money is never a problem in Skye. I mean the Lochcarron thing was part sponsored; Fort William did it and got a financial package put together with council and stuff like that; the Camanachd [Association] did their own one; that cost 20 grand or something to produce but it was done in Japan. This is quite an interesting book or two books in that it gives you the history of 'shinny' the North American end of the operation. And I mean it's fascinating, and when you see it you don't even have to read the thing but see it and realise that wait a minute the thing was, I mean even the stories are similar to the Gaelic stories. You know the same themes and motives and stuff. It's a fabulously

detailed thing that whole section is about different types, different versions of shinty. It's a classic type of thorough analysis you know it's all about medicine. See there they used to bury the ball in the middle of the field by the medicine man - now that's exactly what happened in shinty. Now there's no way they were doing that as a result of having seen the Scots doing it; they were doing that long before the Scots came. In a way it's pointless saying 'which came first' shinty or ice hockey because at the end of the day neither of them were there first anyway.

IAR: But these kinds of rituals surrounding the game are obviously important, and those are the kind of things I'm interested in as well.

HDMacL: Aye. How are you on European languages? [IAR my French is weak]. Well this guy here has apparently done a huge volume on European stick sports, I just haven't contacted him yet. He's got a school link with John Finlayson in Kyle Primary, you know they go back and forth, John sent me this, but he's done an article in this year's (1995) Shinty Year Book about it. And it's all about you know how the Swedes played bandy and things - the problem is it's all written in French. John said that it was a fabulous book, but he couldn't make head nor tail of it either, and his French is worse than mine.

IAR: What is this book called, is it available here somewhere?

HDMacL: No, there's no title unfortunately, it's about stick sports in Europe. But pre-1880 it's very difficult to find any references to shinty at all. What I was surprised about was to find that it was all about cricket, would you believe, which in a way tells its own story. Because the vast majority of the early stuff, if you were to look at what sports feature, the first reference to shinty in the *Oban Times* is on the 19th of January 1867. Now the first paper was in 1866, but it's only a passing reference to New Year's match,

and then as you go on you certainly find annual references, but they're no more than that. It's just a paragraph here and a paragraph there and it's almost always just a reference to New Year's match. I mean there is no activity during the year at all, other than you get a lot of curling. You also get a lot of cricket appearing for example in 1867. A cricket club in Lochaber, it says there "established last season".

IAR: The fact that there's no references to shinty other than the New Year matches is that common do you think?

HDMacL: Yes, yes.

IAR: Now is that because it just wasn't played?

HDMacL: It just wasn't there. I mean, I'm pretty sure that to all intents and purposes it was purely a New Year festival sport, virtually to the extent of it not appearing at any point. I mean it doesn't seem to me to have been played in summer at all. I mean all the oral tradition, in the Gaelic tradition that survives is virtually 100% tied to the New Year. Now that suggests to me, [pause] I don't think it's being over simplistic to say that just because it's not there it didn't exist, because there's so much about New Year and there's nothing about anything else. It's only very much later that you find them arranging matches at other times, you know post-1870. All the records that appear in the *Courier* [Inverness] are New Year as well.

IAR: I suppose it's something to do with just the way people's lives were organised in those days. I mean the notion of work and leisure.

HDMacL: Yes. I don't think there's any way that it was so common that they didn't bother with it, because otherwise they wouldn't bother with it at New Year either. So if you rationalise that way it must have been that it wasn't there. I mean there's the usual tales of broken heads and all the rest of it.

IAR: I wonder if there's something, maybe not now but, something there about the old sort of traditions and myths of Celtic religion, the old calendar?

HDMacL: Well it was very firmly fixed to the celebration of the Old New Year, rather than the New. It was always almost guaranteed you would find your references in the *Oban Times* on the 18th and 19th of January, which would be the week after the 12th, almost without exception there in the early years.

IAR: And what about in Ireland then, with the hurling would it have been the same, although it's played more in summer isn't it?

HDMacL: It seems to be. Well there were two distinct codes. There was summer hurling. Ó Maolfabhail explains that very clearly. There were two separate versions, summer and winter. Now that never happened here, as far as we can find out, there was no clear code distinguishing summer hurling and winter hurling.

IAR: You use the term in the book - the Centenary book- of shinty as the *national* game. What do you mean by that?

HDMacL: Well I think, I'm going to have to give another paper on that in October, which is kind of getting in the way of everything else at the moment. I mean anybody can claim anything as a national game if you can justify it, I mean it depends on what you mean by national. But my criteria for something being a national game would have to be (pause) they would have to establish that it was played across the country. I don't mean now, and I don't mean in 1919 and I don't mean before that, but I mean over a long period of time it would have to have a territorial lineage and a historical lineage. Now I think you can advance a case for shinty where you can't for any other sport of it having been played across Scotland and beyond Scotland which is important. Because I think if it's played beyond a country it's by definition more than national. I mean I can

prove that it was played in Australia in the 1850s, and Canada and Ireland, so that's not a problem. And the territorial thing can prove it was played in St. Kilda, the whole Western Isles right up the west coast, Caithness, Thurso, it wasn't as far as I can find out played in Orkney or Shetland. Aberdeen in 1849 are the first organised club, so it must have been played a good bit before that, because the club didn't appear out of nowhere. And then if you take it down to the Borders you've got Thomas Chalmers 1920 in Galashiels and so on. Then round Robbie Burns country you know you've got the whole country, Glasgow, the central belt, Badenoch, obviously Lochaber, Oban, Argyll, Skye, Wester Ross, Nigg, up Easter Ross and so on.

IAR: So is that the kind of concept of the game as a national game which would be held by others in the shinty world?

HDMacL: I think so. On the simplest, if you had it on simplest of proof required being (a) was it played across the whole and (b) has it been played in the country for a long time. Now you can establish historically that it was played right back to the point the Scots arrived from Ireland, now that's the 6th century. Now I don't know of what other criteria, you can apply any criteria you want to prove or disprove. I mean people like Hugh Keevins say that its fanciful to call it [shinty] the national game; well it's fanciful - well okay.

IAR: Well you could also say that it's fanciful to call football the national game because it doesn't seem to have the same strong hold up here [i.e. the Highlands].

HDMacL: Aye. What sort of lineage does football have as a national sport? I mean I would argue that it doesn't have the same lineage as that. The way they coped with the problem in Canada of declaring what was the national sport, what they've done there is that officially ice hockey is the winter national sport. They've come to a brilliant

compromise and they've got lacrosse as the summer national sport - I mean this is absolutely official, and I can't remember what Hugh MacLennan the Canadian author called it, there's a phrase I wrote it down somewhere, he calls it a Canadian compromise. But you know the S.F.A. claim football, the Royal Curling Club will claim curling on a similar basis to shinty.

IAR: Yes. Well anything that's got some long connection with Scotland. [HDMacL: But nowhere else]. You could make similar claims for golf.

HDMacL: Yes - but golf's claim is slightly less authentic because of the evidence that the game was played in Holland and Belgium - or a similar game. Okay the game of golf was invented in Scotland, but if you take the point that the rules and so on were established as being the definitive point of starting the game of golf, it's not that far back.

IAR: So that comes into the same sort of context as shinty in a sense. There must be a sort of break between what was the folk game and what we now know and see as shinty.

HDMacL: Yes. The genuine point - well the 1880 Strathglass Rules, are the first written rules although you'll find that in the book "The Club of True Highlanders" they have a completely bogus set of rules which they just dreamt up as an exercise. Actually they're not, actually there's a grain of truth more than a grain of truth in them, but they're not the way shinty was played by everyone, by any manner of means. The difficulty you have is you had so many different sets of rules, and what Strathglass tried to do in 1880 was say look let's regularise them. So it took from 1880 to 1893 when the Association was formed to actually get down to it, and even then it was difficult for them to sustain from 1893 onwards that everybody would now play the twelve-aside, and you know the limited pitch whatever and so on. So there's no doubt about it the

formation of the association was the sort of pivotal point of organisation because before that there was nothing, it was purely the lairds organising their own - now wherever it happened to be it was organised in a different way. You know before that it was purely tribal, or territorial, that was village against village, goals were a mile wide or something. But there was no real shape or form to it, it was the stick and the ball and a lot of people. But in terms of vocabulary you can trace it back. The words in Gaelic can be pinned to a certain point in time, I mean there's even traditions of it if you go back to Glencoe the MacDonalds were playing shinty in the pre-amble up to the massacre, you know it just happened to be one of the pastimes they had. So I mean historical references are there. That was one of the reasons I did this next book I'm doing. There's a million places that shinty's mentioned here there and everywhere, there was none apart from Ninian MacDonald really, no sort of collection really where you would say to somebody well what are the sources, where do you find all these references to shinty - there wasn't one, so I just sat down and gathered them together. Obviously I was looking at them for this PhD, for my research. You know this starts with the Irish Tales and works forward from that in about 400 pages. Now that's not everything.

IAR: The Highland Gatherings over the years, have you come across references to shinty being played at those at all?

HDMacL: No. Well the only one I've got, well there are two specifically. Toronto Highland Games and New York had, but almost universally no. I'm trying to sort of establish it, but I'm fairly sure in that at a very early stage it was decided the formula for Highland Games never included shinty, which is one of the really daft things about them, in that you know the most Highland game of all. I mean tug-o-war was never their sport, that's completely bogus.

IAR: The fact as well I suppose that it's mainly that shinty is more played in the winter, whereas the games, the Highland Games, were developed as a summer thing and very much a social gathering.

HDMacL: Aye, but one of the whole ironies of the thing is that there is a great attempt to try and make shinty more of a summer game than it is a winter game, because of the difficulties of playing on the pitches. But I mean people say, you know they don't understand that a hundred years ago it wasn't a case of playing 14 league matches it was played maybe on the 12th January and never again until next year. I mean there was no "How do we get to Inveraray next Saturday?" that didn't happen because they didn't do it that way. They played in their own area and nowhere else. You know movement between villages and towns was quite rare for obvious reasons. But then you find very quickly that by 1898 teams like Beauly are going to play in Stamford Bridge in London as world champions, and they're also going to play in Dublin, you know a Scotland team going to play in Dublin and you think "How the hell did they manage that?" You know because it's bad enough doing it now but then.

IAR: Sure - and for many of those clubs, I mean the likes of Caberfeidh just chatting to Ken and David MacMaster the other day, talking about how long it used to take just to get to Inverness, never mind anywhere else.

HDMacL: Well you don't even need to go that far back to find that it was a hugely difficult thing. Even after the Second World War, you see it in the Caberfeidh Centenary match programme, there's an account in that one of a trip in 1946. And it tells you how they get on a ferry. You know actually it's an amazing experience how they left from Strathpeffer to get to Oban, and you see there's all this sort of arriving at, stopping for a refreshment, Conal Ferry they went on the bus, get on the bridge we reached Oban, shortly afterwards, high tea and lunch (IAR Yes - even in 1946). I mean

it tells you "arriving back at Strathpeffer 6am the next morning" - which would have been the Sunday.

IAR: The other thing I was asking Ken MacMaster about was if there was much of a travelling support, because there's a project that someone did at Dunfermline College in 1982, Norma Turnbull's study of sport in general around Oban. She did an interview with someone, I don't know who, but they spoke about how when they travelled to a shinty game or when the team, the shinty team was playing away just about the whole town used to travel.

HDMacL: Yes well that's certainly true at Cup Finals. That even survived into 1990 when Skye won the [Camanachd] Cup, the whole island travelled to Fort William. That's a particular example, but if the likes of Kingussie or Newtonmore are in the Camanchd Cup Final, you know four buses or whatever that's seventy people in each that's 300 people plus the rest in cars, you know. I mean it's a thieves paradise. But as for matches, you know the travelling in the early days I mean Ken talks about maybe six cars going you know with the team altogether, so I mean cars weren't that common.

IAR: Well he actually said that they used to travel in a cart pulled by two horses.

HDMacL: Aye, well they would get along get the boat, the steamer. The steamer was one of the main ways that they moved up and down the west coast. From Fort William certainly there was no way they would take carts or carriages or things from Kingussie through to Oban, it was just impossible it would have taken so long. The steamer was the only way to do it. Now Willie Batchen would probably tell you whether they took steamers down Loch Ness, but I would doubt that, because there just wasn't that much movement. And you know after the First World War there wasn't that much shinty anyway. It was really into the twenties, it was well into the twenties if you look at the

[Camanachd Association] Minutes the numbers of clubs competing was very, very small. There's always a "we welcome the new addition of" one or two, and you know the whole point of the Sutherland Cup, the junior cup in 1923 was to try and get young people back into the game. So it had taken them from 1918 to 1923 to get their act together and actually think of that. That was the whole point of getting that trophy and then you know from 1923 on to the 1930s that sort of then produced the good players that serviced the 1930s. That competition led to a lot of players coming into that, and then they established a structure and all of a sudden you had leagues and cups and all that. Then in the thirties you had probably shinty at one of its peaks again, unfortunately to be hit by the loss in 1939, just as it was really getting on its feet it was hammered and a lot of guys were lost in the Second World War. I mean relatively, although the First World War was a huge loss to specific areas, the Second World War was a desperate loss of people who were in their prime and playing. There's some records of play in various places abroad when they were away, you know in the big shinty book there's a picture of the prisoner of war camps, it was one of the ways they sort of passed time and stuff. But again when they came back it was exactly the same and the MacAulay Cup was set up to try and create interest in the game in the Argyll area. And it worked because the fifties were another good period, but again it took to the fifties. Then the sixties were probably a bad period for shinty really. There wasn't much happened in the sixties and it was only again in the seventies funnily in the Highlands again, it's probably an economic thing. The seventies were probably pretty good here and you eventually had the oil industry. A place like Lochcarron is probably a good case and point too in that their best years were when the oil industry, when they were building the yard at Kishorn, because everybody was at home, otherwise they were all playing for somebody else, you know. But Skye's the best example of that. There was a good

case not so long ago, 1980 somewhere, where 13 of the 24 players in the Sutherland Cup Final which was between Glasgow University and Skye, were actually from Skye. Now that was a remarkable thing that all the Skye students had focused, and here they were playing their own team. Now half these players never ever went back to Skye and that's a lot to lose. I mean you'll find one in every team in the country may be. They don't disappear from the game but they disappear from Skye. It's significant for Skye. They always lose - I'm not saying the cleverest people are always the best shinty players but they tend to be you know, I mean, university students have always been good shinty players.

IAR: Well I suppose it's also a thing that in order to 'get on' in a sense, there might have been that need to move away and to get a university education they had to go?

HDMacL: Yes, University was the only way out for the west coast. Definitely. You see other places weren't affected so badly because they were never in the desperate state that Skye were in. It's ironic now that Skye is probably better off than most places, but that was reflected in that they won the cup in 1990. Because they were able to keep their best players at home for once, guys like Willie Cowie and these guys had jobs in insurance or whatever in Skye, and they didn't have to go away. Skye should have won the cup years ago. They'll say that themselves but there is more than a grain of truth there. They were just robbed of all their best players. It's not really affected places like Badenoch I mean they've done a remarkable job of producing good teams. People assume that Kingussie have always been the best shinty team. They never won the Camanachd Cup from 1921 to 1961, you've got to ask yourself why and I think if you looked at it closely enough you'd probably find that in that period a lot of people were leaving the area.

IAR: Besides Newtonmore and Kingussie where are the big rivalries in the game then? Or where are the ones I should know about?

HDMacL: Oban's one example. There's two teams in Oban. Although if you look in my list at the back of the shinty book there's a list of other teams, you know all the teams. What happened in some areas was that teams would be formed for competitions and they would be called something, just a team. Now it might have been because of a barney the week before that one team split up and they reformed so certainly from the First World War there've been more teams in Oban than two, at various points you could have three or four but they've always sort of filtered back to the two main teams of which Oban Camanachd is currently the stronger but hasn't always been for a number of reasons. But there's an intense local rivalry in Oban. The Lochaber area has an intense local rivalry between Lochaber which is based in Spean Bridge, Fort William which used to be the town boundary, and Kilmally which was the rest of the immediate environment to Fort William, but not inside the Fort William boundary. Even when I was playing for them in 1974 when I left school, you still had to be staying in the Fort William town boundary to play for Fort William, which is a club decision I mean now they'll poach anyone, they'll take the best players. But that was part of the tradition if you were born on the wrong side of the town boundary you played for Kilmally, it was just accepted that that's where you went, and Spean was more in the sort of Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge area. But within Spean and Roy Bridge there were other teams as well. Roy Bridge had a team but you knew they would never been strong enough to last. But within Fort William there was a team created by a bunch of navvies in the 1930s who were working on the hydro scheme just for a short time they played a few competitions they were called Fort William Celtic. There was another team an interesting example of the economic thing was the formation of the Pulp and Paper Mill

team in 1967, I think it was, which was formed by people who were working in the pulp mill. Now at that time you had Fort William, you had the pulp mill, you had Kilmally and you had Lochaber which was probably the strongest selection at one time. But it was purely because all these workmen were working on the thing and of course when the pulp mill ran down the players disappeared. Well up here you've got Beauly and Lovat which are 3 miles apart and you know they barely speak. Newtonmore and Kingussie's probably the most intense of all. You've got a longer range thing between Newtonmore and Kyles which is just because of their historical pre-eminence meeting in finals, but it's not like a local rivalry. It's partly the north - south, but it's partly they are the best over the longest period of time. I mean they've won the Camanachd Cup more than all the other teams therefore they reckon they are the 'Old Firm'. If you were to ask who are the 'old firm'? It's Newtonmore - Kyles, not Newtonmore - Kingussie. Newtonmore - Kingussie is much more a parochial derby thing. I bet you Jack didn't tell you Newtonmore - Kingussie came together in 1929? He doesn't like talking about it. They did they came together. John Robertson's book on Kingussie explains it, it's best just to check it out there. They came together as a team called the Amalgamation, which was born to fail really and it did. Yes, I think it was probably, from memory, weaker on the Kingussie side and they thought well we better get together and try and produce a team and we'll go and beat them and they did. I don't think they ever won anything, they weren't that good, but they eventually fell out and they just split. If say at the weekend Newtonmore win the [Camanachd] cup they used to light bonfires in Newtonmore so that the people in Kingussie would see it you know. That kind of thing went on even into quite recent memory. They would obviously drive through the opposing village with the Cup if they could when they came back just to really irritate them, it got quite heated, quite intense you know. But now you've got inter-marriages

and so it's not the same as it was even 20 years ago, and I think it's just a much more pragmatic approach to these things, you know there used to be fights and everything else. But I mean it's not just shinty but it's the same in rugby in the Borders. You know it's not one of the things people cast up against shinty. I mean court cases are not a new thing in shinty either for all that we might think that they are.

IAR: What about the religious connections. Are there religious connections, religious divisions in the game?

HDMacL: Well, I wouldn't go at any point as far as to say there's a religious division. There's a religious division between Lovat and Beauly because of the two areas one is more Catholic than the other. The irony is that historically they've really botched it because Beauly had a Catholic abbey in it anyway. So I mean there's an assumption but it's not real it's more imaginary than real, and I have never ever come across a religious or sectarian problem to use the label.

IAR: But although there's no problem there may well be a religious association?

HDMacL: I'd be reluctant to go down that path at all in terms of shinty. I think any rivalry has been in territorial terms or purely on skill levels you know as to which team has the better pedigree in terms of its shinty players. If some of them happened to be from a Catholic area I think that would be a very, very secondary thing. I don't think it would ever come into the equation.

IAR: Now what about Kyles they got a set, a first set of shirts from Rangers?

HDMacL: From Rangers, yes.

IAR: Was there anything in that? I mean I know there were places where the shinty and football club were one in the same as it were.

HDMCL: Well yes. I mean a lot of people will, depending on who you ask I suppose, will tell you that the Kyles are all masons, but you know you can draw your own conclusions. That's probably as near, but it's not an issue, it's not an issue at all. The Kyles - Rangers connection was very much a sporting one. You had other football teams like Renton were shinty players as well. I mean Bob Crampsey admitted that in his history of the SFA that Renton were a dual purpose team at that time, but he didn't you know he just didn't think. I mean it wasn't from the SFA's point of view relevant but as a historical fact it should perhaps been given a bit more prominence, but they were just skirting with that at the time. The only time religion really reared its head as an issue and really the Camanachd have got it wrong is that they've never officially liked to entertain any play on a Sunday - and that's always been one of the bones of contention. It was one of the excuses used in the thirties for not playing against the Irish or continuing with the Irish links because the Irish wanted to play on Sunday for obvious reasons but that was their thing. Now historically it's very easy to prove that in fact once shinty was becoming organised, ministers in certain areas preferred to have people playing on a Sunday so that they could then either set up the church services first thing and then go to the shinty. That happened in Badenoch and there are also good records of the church influencing things in Nigg in Easter Ross. Now I mean that's religious in the sense that it's the church interfering or the church being part of the social fabric. It's not a religious problem in the sense of a sectarian divide.

IAR: No, it's something of a social control.

HDMacL: It's like social engineering. But the irony is that when the Camanachd Association were deciding that playing shinty on the Sabbath was a bad thing they were flying in the face of all this historical precedent that had been set a hundred years ago in that shinty was a Sunday game. So you try arguing it with them, they say "Oh no it was

never like that" and they'll actually deny the historical evidence that shinty was played on a Sunday. A lot of them are going to get a fright when this book comes out because there's accounts of Sunday matches, you know, and there's one in Badenoch, even up in Sutherland. Sage in *Memorabilia Domestica* says that, you know that a lot of the ministers tried to stop it being played on Sunday too, the Presbyterian evangelicals took a dislike to it. So you know that persisted right through to the 1970s when they were trying to resurrect the Irish game. Of course the Irish said we want to play you on Sunday and there was a lot of [pause] Willie Batchen will never ever play or entertain anything on a Sunday, he has a very sort of traditional view. Traditional in the wrong sense you know. With the best will in the world he's just been brought up to think that way and I mean there's nothing wrong with it except that they don't accept the historical fact that play on a Sunday was very much part of the tradition. So even now you see Skye will never play on a Sunday. I can tell you Skye have played on a Sunday in Ireland but they didn't go shouting about it at home, they quietly went to play, I mean that's the players themselves. But there was a great rush you see the night they won the Camanachd Cup. There was a great rush to get home before midnight in case they broke the Sunday. They didn't make it - they still celebrated but they kept it low key in case they offended the ministers, you know they all cleared off the streets before a certain time. Whereas in any other area the Sunday after the cup final is the parade through the village you know we're home with the cup sort of thing.

IAR: So, they wouldn't play, they would prefer not to play on a Sunday but they'll quite happily celebrate?

HDMacL: No. Skye as a club the official position will be that we won't take part in any shinty activities on a Sunday. A lot of clubs would do that - Newtonmore would probably be of that sort of traditional thing. But I mean they would certainly organise

their celebrations and all that, but they wouldn't do it publicly and attract a crowd. But the Camanachd Association's position is no play on the Sabbath officially but they will, and they have played the Irish on Sundays. They've now persuaded the Irish to play on Saturdays here, which is a bit of a nuisance for the Irish but you know to keep the series going they're prepared to do it, because it disrupts their whole weekly schedules, whereas Saturday is not a day for play in Ireland at all, Sunday is the day for games.

IAR: On the connections with things like Home Rule and the Land League are there people in shinty who would be able to help with that?

HDMacL: I mean historians like Hugh Barron will. But the problem you have there is there's just such a dearth of knowledge or understanding of what happened. I mean if Jim Hunter had never written the book about the Crofting Community, I mean okay Prebble on the Highland Clearances that was one, but hardly anyone reads that stuff and nobody but nobody was getting it taught in schools. So for the whole last two generations nobody has bothered with what happened under the Highland clearances. I mean it's an emotive issue understandably, but a lot of the arguments about that, I mean they're never about the Highland Land League they're about the Clearances and they're usually about Sutherland. Nobody really knows about all the Clearances. I mean Sutherland wasn't the only place that was cleared we all know that. There's a huge argument about what the Clearances were, the push or pull. You know people like Bumsted go one way. Eric Richards goes a similar direction but Marion McLean, who is now reorganising it in Canada goes the other way and has a whole new set of reasons which are an extension of Jim Hunter's. It's the did they jump or were they pushed? But Marion McLean can actually explain that a lot of the people who left Lochaber left for their own reasons. They were never cleared as such but you know it's the difference of using the word 'clearance' and 'emigration'. [IAR Yes there's emotive language there

isn't there?] You know who assisted them, and you find that a lot of them actually paid for their own trip to get out. Now it's a mute point whether they were cleared out in the sense that they were fired out, I mean what I'm trying to establish was how much of the cultural baggage they took with them. But that's the difficulty about saying that the Clearances were bad, you know, I mean some of them were inevitable. But you can go all the way to Marxist theory and prove this, that and the next thing about what happened in Europe. The answer to your original question is that the vast majority of people haven't a clue, and cannot distinguish between assisted passage, clearance and emigration. They just don't know the difference and they assume that all the clearances were the same as what happened under the Duke of Sutherland, and that they were all burned out of their houses. Now that's not true. It happens to be a very nice banner to wave in certain circumstances and a very useful one as a rallying call but as a historical fact it's very dubious. I'm not saying it didn't happen but I think you know the emphasis is pretty ropy sometimes and you have to be pretty careful. I mean I myself have reorganised my views on the Clearances quite a bit the more I've seen on Canada. I mean if you want a really good example of that new stuff it's Mhairi Ann McLean's book and it's called 'The People of Glengarry'. It starts with 1802 most of it, the people leaving, specifically leaving Glengarry and Lochaber and setting up Glengarry in Ontario, and it's a very, very good account. She challenges a lot of the assumptions that were made.

IAR: But is there anyone within the shinty world who I could speak to about it, not from a first hand knowledge, but about people like Murdoch and Blackie and their involvement with shinty and with the politics of the time?

HDMacL: I think the only person, or two people would be Jim Hunter, he knows Murdoch pretty well. On the general Highland Land League stuff he's very, very good

at that. Hugh Barron knows Murdoch very well but would probably know more of the shinty links. Ewan Cameron the guy in Scottish history in Edinburgh, has just recently been going through *The Highlander* and is probably shaping some sort of view on Murdoch and the Land League in the light of what he's done before because he hadn't really pursued the Murdoch connection that much, he'd just done it from various other angles. But you see John Murdoch's not that well known, really. I mean it's only since Hunter started publicising his stuff people have all of a sudden said 'Oh!' But you see he never got involved with the Camanachd Association at all; I mean there's no account in the minutes of the Camanachd Association of them ever having been approached to take a stand in what was going on. All the cross references appear in things like the '*Celtic Monthly*' and *The Highlander*. But there's not in the *Inverness Courier* either, I mean there's no sort of cross, like the Camanachd Association should be. Now I reckon that was because of the people involved in the organisation of the Camanachd Association. I think it's got to be that, that the people who took a grip of the thing then decided that their definition of what they wanted to do was purely a sporting thing. Now you can compare that with the way the GAA was set up and it was much more. Now I'm sure Murdoch wanted to do that and wanted to go the same way, but you see shinty didn't have the same coverage or numerical strength that the Irish had. I mean it's just a different ball game, that there aren't the people, and they couldn't influence, and the other thing of course was that the Camanachd Association was shinty and nothing else whereas the GAA was very much involved in other activities. Oh aye you had the whole country. There's reams written on the formation of the GAA, absolute stacks. It's almost embarrassing.

IAR: This is really one of the things I want to bring out, you know why it happened that way?

HDMacL: Now Murdoch must have realised that at some stage that he just couldn't do that, and you know he obviously got nowhere with any overtures he made. He had a very close link with the formation of the Celtic Football Club [IAR Murdoch?] Uh-Uh and the Irish because of Davitt. Well because of Davitt coming over Murdoch took him walk-about in various places in the Highlands in an attempt to stir things up a bit but it didn't work, it didn't work at all, he just never got it going. I mean he got no encouragement obviously from the shinty authorities. But the shinty authorities never ever saw themselves as part of mainstream politics, I mean it just didn't enter their sphere at all and that to me was one of the reasons they ended up where they ended up. They just don't see themselves as part of, or haven't. I mean they do now in that they've got national policies for this that and the next thing but they see themselves as very much part of mainstream Scottish sport. That's a relatively modern outlook which certainly didn't survive or didn't appear in the first years at all, it was always they had a very parochial attitude to everything.

IAR: I wonder too if there's something in the sort of Celtic Twilight kind of picture that was being painted, and the notion of shinty as the Celtic sport?

HDMacL: Yes. That picture was being painted not by the shinty authorities themselves but particularly from the London Gaels and the Highland Society. At the time were organising this tossing the caber nonsense and Highland dancing and things which weren't that Highland at all but were being projected as being the Highland image. They were very much the image that was being projected, and it'd probably be as simple as that, I don't know if it's anymore sophisticated. It was always projected as the Highland-ness, you know beyond the Highland line, not the Scottish emblem, national emblem and it just became marginalised to the Highlands and it suited them because it was 'free' at the time. You know Walter Scott has got his own part to play in all this.

When he brought King George in 1822, part of it came out of that, a big part of it came out of that, it was just that the Scottish image was changed to tartan and so on.

IAR: And the fact too that many of the sort of traditional leaders within the Highland communities and lairds and stuff were advantaged by empire and Britain you know that must have shaped things

HDMacL: Oh yes if you look at the membership of the first association and the chiefs and what not what you've got, you've got Lord Lovat, Colonel this Colonel that and you've got all that stuff. That undoubtedly was the reason that it went the way it did, and that persisted, I couldn't believe it right into the 1960s and 1970s when they had that huge argument about keeping 20 vice-presidents on the Association books some of whom you know were MPs and God-knows who, and Lt. Colonel this, that and the next thing. Never a blind connection with shinty. Jack's very big on the way the lairds treated and kept shinty alive. I think they killed it, you know because they kept it as their little pastime. You know their influence was always conservative and the preservation of the Highland culture, not on turning it into a national sport which if they'd taken these decisions a hundred years ago shinty would not at all be the same as it is now.

IAR: Now are the lairds and the landowners are they still involved in that way?

HDMacL: Hardly, hardly at all. Aye well I shouldn't say not at all. Land as you know is a difficult problem in the Highlands anyway but one of the things, one of the restrictions if you want or limiting factors has always been that the pitches have been owned by local lairds or landowners. Lord Burton, he still owns Kingussie's and he shafted them spectacularly two years ago, so they have an influence. That is their only influence. I mean they're not, they might locally nominally be the chieftain of the club

like Cromartie is in Strathpeffer technically, and they play on his pitch but they're desperate to get off it because they can't improve it and they can't get grants to put a stand on a pitch. The Sports Council won't give money to Lord this, that and the next thing. They won't do that it's got to be on public pitch and so therefore they have to get one. So that's all changed slowly. I mean there are still some people who play in farmer's fields and then the farmer says he wants to put sheep on them the next Saturday and that's it. But there are no sort of lairds and chiefs. They've got Patrons of Honour, which tend much more, they tend much more now to be people who did some good to the game and it's quite noticeable that a lot of them will soon be senior figures in sponsors' companies rather than lairds or lords or colonels or whatever. They'll be someone who was Marketing Director of Glenmorangie for example will be a Patron of Honour, whereas thirty years ago it might have been Lord Lovat or somebody who was the chief, he kind of disappeared. Then they had Russell Johnston and it became much more pragmatic about these things. They had Russell Johnston as chief because one of the things he was trying to do was get VAT off shinty sticks, standing up in Parliament once a session and saying we should really get the VAT off shinty sticks, and for that they made him chief. I mean it was the dawning of the commercial world in shinty that they could actually make use of these people. But if you go back a hundred years Lord Lovat used to hold meetings of the Camanachd Association on the train station in Perth on his way back from the House of Commons because it suited him. He would draw people in there so everything had to suit into Lord Lovat's schedule. But Lord Lovat was God then because he ran the thing and he ran the Highlands, but now he's got Mrs Gloag buying his castle you know - times change I'm afraid. You see if you turn it on its head these people are not so much use to shinty now as they were.

IAR: Were they ever much involved in actually playing, in the old days?

HDMacL: No, no. They would very much do what they would do. The games a hundred years ago and before would be set up by the laird as entertainment for his guests. So he would get the local boys to basically put on an exhibition match. He would find hospitality and the entertainment and the shinty match was part of this. It was like having his piper, he would have his shinty players. *The Penny Magazine* in 1835 has a good sort of picture of that.

After over 2 hours of discussion the interview had to be curtailed at this point in order to travel to conduct a further interview which had been arranged. I thanked HDMCL for his time, insight and advice and said I hoped that I might contact him again in the future to follow up on particular issues and any further ideas which arose as my research developed.

APPENDIX 5

Interview with Willie Batchen, 31st August 1995, at Foyers.

IAR: Willie, can you tell me something about the background to shinty in this area?

WB: Well, as you know, shinty has a very, very deep background many, many years and in this area of Foyers and Stratherrick shinty came to mature when the British Aluminium Company was built here in 1896. Next year incidentally is the centenary of British Aluminium. Now when it was set up, shinty teams sprang up, and in that time we had two teams in Foyers, we had a team in Stratherrick and a team in Strathdearn - there was actually five teams. So when aluminium came to this area it brought prosperity and shinty was one of the main sports that was played. It really *was* the main sport. During that time there used to be fairly bitter rivalry between Stratherrick and Foyers, and that carried on as the records show, that Foyers in the junior sense, and Stratherrick both were well known and their names appear on some of the trophies. Now the clearances of the Highlands meant that some of the younger men were drifting away in search of work to the south, and in 1927-28 they held a meeting here and set up a committee and Foyers and Stratherrick amalgamated under one senior team under the name of Boleskine. Boleskine is the name of the parish. In that year they reached the final of the Camanachd Cup. Unfortunately Kyles Athletic, one of the famous teams next in the way of honours to Newtonmore beat them. I can remember as a young boy waiting for the result to come through at the post office at Foyers and coming home with my head very much between my knees and the tears pouring down my cheeks. However they continued for a few years and although they appeared among the finalists they were never successful. In 1935 they went their own way again, Foyers one way Stratherrick the other and it went on like that until the war broke out. After the war they still kept their own identities - Foyers and Stratherrick - and until 1955 once again work

was scarce, players were drifting so they amalgamated again under the name of Boleskine. In the sixties they started building up a team which I think if it wasn't for the closure of the British Aluminium Company work in 1967, I think it would've been a team that would have gone far in the senior honours. They were a most successful team in junior ranks, they won all the junior competitions open to them, and they were the first junior team that were invited guests at to the Cowal Gathering that won the Cowal Sixes. Unfortunately as I stated the works closed in 1967 and with that the gradual drift away then. It wasn't a closure of a work it was virtually a closure of a community, with the result to keep shinty going one never knew who was going to drift back home here on a Saturday or not. They still carry on as junior team but as I talk to you just now there's only two of the twelve players live locally. It is indeed a real tragedy to me it is the clearance all over again.

IAR: How important is employment to the game?

WB: Without stable industry we're not going to achieve the heights again. There's no doubt tourism is playing a vital part here, but tourism might be alright for a few months in the year, but the seven, eight, nine months in the winter can be extremely hungry months. For shinty in this area and the community to survive and blossom once again, then we must get some stability, some industry into the place, so that young families can grow up again and enjoy being here. I personally attended the Foyers school when we had 100 pupils in it, a four-teacher school. Today there's approximately 18 pupils, a one-teacher school, and that is happening all too often throughout the Highlands. There's no question money is available, but where do they put the money, they don't put it in at the grass roots for families to be built up, and when I say grass roots that is where we're going to usher shinty from to take it back again. It's a very sad situation that we're in and although they do carry on it's on a very, very minor scale today.

IAR: What division do the Boleskine team play in now?

WB: They play just in the junior division, roundabout the third division. Some years ago shinty took a major part in what today we look upon as coaching from the Scottish Sports Council literature. But when one looks today as I look at it, and we mention a few of our top finest players outwith this area like the great Johnny Campbell of Newtonmore, the great Tommy Nicolson of Kyles and the present standing David Anderson of Kingussie, these boys were never coached by blackboards or coaches, their shinty club went hand in hand with the school bag to school. And they watched and listened and learned from the mature senior players of the day. I think whenever we spoke about it, these fellows never got their knowledge from a person who had a degree in sport. Shinty to me is quite unique - shinty is born in people and it's very difficult ever to put shinty into anybody else. There's been a few known cases but if you look at the traditions of families throughout the ages you'll see that shinty has been handed down, and beside being a noted Highland game, it brings together families. I wish to goodness today we could get some work to bring that happy atmosphere back again.

IAR: Willie, you mentioned your recollections of when Boleskine played in the Camanachd Cup final, when was that?

WB: 1928. They played at Westerlands Glasgow - where the final was played.

IAR: Right. Now can you give me an idea what shinty or shinty clubs meant to the community at that time and even earlier. Did everyone follow shinty? You spoke about your disappointment when they lost, what are your recollections of the community at that time?

WB: Oh there was no doubt that shinty at that time meant everything in the community. In fact at the cup final in Glasgow in 1928 a special train was run from Inverness to

Glasgow. The fare was 12s6d return, I can't work that out into present day money; admission to the match was 1/-. So when they left Foyers, Foyers to Inverness, Inverness - Glasgow, to the match and meal, they could have a jolly good day out for a £1.

IAR: And would many people have travelled to Glasgow?

WB: Well there was a special train went down that day. It left Inverness at eight o'clock in the morning and was in Glasgow about half-past twelve.

IAR: And how would people have travelled from Foyers and the surrounding district up to Inverness?

WB: Well the shopkeepers at that time they had sort of coaches and vans and they took them round. In fact it's fair to say that at that time it was nothing for them to cycle to Inverness to get there. You see one's got to recall that at that time we were a prosperous community. We had four shops in this area we had six post offices, we had petrol pumps, eventually we had seven petrol stations scattered in the area. Today we have one shop, one post office which the powers of government today would close if they got away with it, and we have no petrol station; the nearest petrol station to us is Fort Augustus fourteen miles away or in Inverness on the other side which is twenty. If people consider that is prosperity in the Highlands and the way forward, it's not prosperity it's the clearance all over again. And no way will shinty in an area such as this ever be built up again.

IAR: Can you tell me anything about shinty in this area or anywhere in Scotland before the 1920s. Is there anything you recall being passed down through your family about being involved in the game?

WB: Well I think it's fair to say that my father, and on my mother's side her brothers and all that, they were all shinty enthusiasts and there's been a lot of shinty teams have sprung up. But if one looks down through the records nowadays you'll see a terrible decline; there's names there on cups today which the clubs no longer exist. It's only by getting stability of employment, getting people back to the area, are you going to establish the same greatness as we knew. For instance today it's only too common if you look at our top teams, albeit the Kingussie, the Kyles, Fort William, Newtonmore you'll discover there are pockets of industry there, sufficient to keep twelve, twenty good players around the area.

IAR: You spoke about the British Aluminium Company here, are there any other specific events you could identify that had an impact on shinty in the late 19th and early 20th centuries?

WB: Well there's no question the British Aluminium Company here were a part of a community, they took part in everything. You even had a Foyers Games, you had tennis, you had badminton, and the British Aluminium Company sponsored, if you like or ran all these things. Today gone are all these things apart from shinty just holding on. The Hydro Board came in here, and the Hydro Board, typical, were only interested in making money for themselves. The friendliness, the hospitality, the goodwill of the British Aluminium Company was well and truly buried, because the Hydro Board had no interest whatsoever. In fact the labour we were looking for locally, they even imported their labour with quite a number coming from England.

IAR: So have you found in your experience then that people coming in say from the lowlands or from England, are there reasons they give that they don't want to be involved in shinty?

WB: I think today whether we look at sport, or whether we look at the general aspects of life, a lot of people that move in are only interested really in their own patch of ground; this is my area and I'm going to keep it, this is the extra yard which I should have. That's what they say, the friendliness that I knew is completely and absolutely gone.

IAR: It's just that I read somewhere that people have referred to shinty as a kind of barbaric sport. I'm just wondering if there's an attitude, or a perception of the sport being like that by outsiders that meant they'd resisted becoming involved in the game?

WB: You see I think I've also heard shinty described as "the savage amusement"; that's not right. I mentioned one or two shinty stars earlier, they were brought up in the true traditions of the game. Now today you see them with helmets on to protect from injury, you see doctors giving lessons on protection to the head. But doctors, Sports Council and so on who give these lectures never played the game and know little or nothing about the game. So therefore if they knew about it, and they were brought up in the true traditions then you wouldn't see clubs running about with helmets on because it's true to say the shinty caman, or club, was a weapon of offence, it was also the weapon of defence, and the word defence has sadly gone from senior shinty. Whenever they pat each other on the back and say how prosperous our game is today our overall standards have never been lower, and I'm talking about senior level. We're not attaining the standards of the game we should.

IAR: Another thing I've read about shinty is that its folk origins are connected with the ancient game of hurling in Ireland, and also that in Scotland the game had a folk tradition, played perhaps on particular festivals. Can you tell me anything about these roots - this is going back very much before 1870?

WB: Well my experience was, and I've refereed for over thirty years, and I had the honour and the privilege of playing in Croke Park in Dublin the shinty-hurling international. Now it goes I believe that shinty spread from Ireland via St Columba, into the western parts of Scotland and then spread on. Now when I was in Ireland I met many of the old hurling players, who said that even in Ireland the skills that used to be in Ireland with the hurley stick it's no longer there. And it's fair to say that some of these men, when we played in Ireland, and shinty teams today go across to Ireland on pan-Celtic Sunday and play on these dates. Also Ireland sort of admire they admire the skill of the way shinty players can play with the ball on the caman. There's no question the get together between Ireland and Scotland is tremendous; I'm not saying we're going to learn a great deal that will improve the standards but I will say the hospitality that's enjoyed between the two countries, Ireland and Scotland is completely without parallel.

IAR: Was it pan-Celtic Sunday you referred to there?

WB: Aye, they play sometimes on days like that and the Killarney Festival and there's different days like that. There's been several of the Scottish teams that go over for a long week-end, Skye, Glen Urquhart, Strathpeffer - several of them go over.

IAR: What about within Scotland itself. What sort of festivals was the game played on? Again I'm trying to get back to the days before organised shinty - can you tell me anything about how shinty was played and when it was played before the 1890s.

WB: Yes well at Stratherrick about the older time the older men told me, and this happened back in the twenties and that. They used to meet say on Christmas Day. Needless to say when they met I'm led to believe a barrel of beer was put down by the hotelier, and what people could afford it, the whiskey flask was always available, and

that was in a lot of areas. I do know that happened in this area on Christmas Day. It wouldn't matter then whether they had twelve, fourteen or twenty a side, this was looked upon - also New Year's Day - like a gathering of the clans if you wish. This was very much looked forward to, and I thing some of the games were a forerunner to the shinty when it was organised. I've got no doubt you know when the first meetings of the shinty association took place, and you'll have it in a rule book when Strathglass was set up, and then the meeting of the Camanachd Association I think was in 1896.

IAR: These games of shinty of fourteen or twenty aside presumably they'd be pretty unruly?

WB: Well I would say listening to the old men they may have been unruly, but then again with the spirit within and the spirit without, I don't think they'd mind too much about that – especially on Christmas or New Year.

IAR: I just wonder are there any myths or legends, heroic figures even about the game from that time?

WB: I think you could go back probably in some of the Association manuals, and even back to the time of the Shinty Yearbooks, and be able to pick up quite a number of items like that.

IAR: Are there any rituals, if that's the best word to use, in a shinty match today which you think have a connection to the old folk game?

WB: Oh I would say there is a ritual, I don't think they would sacrifice any person or animal then or today! But I think the ritual that existed on the festive day at Christmas or New Year after every major cup final today it still exists today – they get together. Nowadays of course they're very much sponsored.

IAR: Sponsorship today of course is very different from the past, but it sounds, from what you say, you spoke about hoteliers or publicans putting out barrels of beer, it sounds like there was a form of sponsorship?

WB: Well I think it's fair to say then one depended very much on the generosity of hoteliers or perhaps the landed gentry. There's no question of that, a lot depended on that. I'm not going to say this is the proper way to have things, I'm not saying the landlords then traditionally ruled the community, but we had a few respected landlords then, and we had quite a few unrespected ones as well. Probably that is fair today to say that. Without some of these people who gave a degree of thought to the game of shinty, a degree of thought to the running of the community, the children's parties and different things like that then without these people it's doubtful if it [shinty] would have survived even then.

IAR: That's interesting – I've heard that in Inveraray the Duke of Argyll gave some of his land for playing shinty. Has the role of the landlords or lairds in the sport been significant in this area?

WB: Yes, yes. The name of the park is the Winterton at Inveraray, the Duke of Argyll certainly gave them that and even at Strachur, just a few miles down the road, Sir Fitzroy Maclean who has Strachur park. Now again if you looked at Sir Fitzroy Maclean you would find the connections came up to this area. Lady Maclean was a sister of the late Lord Lovat of Beaufort Castle. So once again the Lovats they were great shinty enthusiasts and Lady Maclean also knew quite a bit about it. So that's what they say, you had landlords that had the game embedded in them.

IAR: Yes – when you say they had the game embedded in them, did they actually play?

WB: Lord Lovat was quite a good player, yes.

IAR: Which Lord Lovat?

WB: It was Lord Lovat that died there last year [1994] Lord Lovat who was in the Lovat Scouts, he was world famous for that. He died there last year, yes he actually played for Lovat shinty team.

IAR: Are there others of the Highland landed aristocracy who played the game, or have more of them been involved in giving land to be used, in patronage?

WB: I think it's fair to say yes in some way or another. For instance the local field that we have for some unknown reason we thought belonged to the community but it appears to have fallen into the hands of the Hydro Board. So the Hydro Board, typical of what they have done, they've done nothing for the field – they're just not interested in the community. So fortunately the likes of the Lord Lovats and the Fitzroy-Macleans we are indebted to them.

IAR: In terms of when the Association was formed were there some of these landowners involved in the formation of the Association?

WB: I think if you go back through the Chieftainship and the Presidents, you'll discover the name of the late Lord Lovat who died last year, and his father, you'll discover that they were very much figure-heads, beings Chiefs and Presidents of the Association.

IAR: Now another thing that I've heard about this game of shinty is a notion of shinty as the national game in Scotland. Is that a view which you think is widely held in the shinty community?

WB: I think it's the sport of the Gael. Now when I say it is the sport of the Gael, it was also a game in my opinion that was brought up in the true amateur form. It was the wisdom of some men many years ago took shinty into that; it was played by amateurs, enjoyed by amateurs, and run by amateurs. Today the present set up we're leaning

towards professionalism. When I say leaning towards professionalism we're all too dependent on one or two voluntary people that keeps clubs together. The [Scottish] Sports Council they're all men on quite substantial salaries and you've got to remember when a lot of this stuff goes out via the Sports Council via the executives of the Camanachd Association. It also comes out to one or two honest individuals who have a day's work to do and are trying to keep the club's head above water.

IAR: You mentioned there that shinty is the sport of the Gael. What is it you mean by that, and what does that mean for shinty?

WB: Well, I'm not a Gaelic speaker, my late wife was very much so and I sort of learnt it. But you're going off to meet John Willie Campbell you ask him that one, he'll tell you; he's a Skye man and a fluent Gaelic talker.

IAR: One of the other things that I'm interested in is the politics of national identity which surrounds the Gaelic Athletic Association in Ireland, and I'm just wondering, from your own personal view, why you think that sort of relationship never took hold in Scotland with shinty and the Camanachd Association?

WB: Well in Ireland there is not a question that hurling is the game in Ireland. There is absolutely no question whatsoever about that. So when you look at Ireland it's fair to say that Ireland ploughed money into beautiful stadiums and things like that, and that is because in simple terms obviously Ireland worships hurling. Now in Scotland today we are trying this year to form a national league, but that is very much on thin ice. First of all, I personally think they haven't got the top fields to cater for that, and even just now when it comes to the Camanachd Cup Final there are very few places to put them to. At present it goes in a rotation Inverness, Badenoch, Fort William, Oban, Glasgow. But to me there's only one place just now to hold your top final and that is the Bught Park in

Inverness because it can cater for everything. You can put 2,000 cars in it on a special occasion, you've got something available there, you've got hotels you've got everything. I think today if you're looking in higher terms than that, then you've also got to look at the sporting facility you've got to offer.

IAR: Do you think the fact then that some of the shinty grounds historically were under private ownerships, you know private lands of lairds, has that been a constraint on the facilities available for the sport?

WB: I wouldn't have thought that because if it wasn't for the private landlord many a team wouldn't have it. I think today we are pushing things forward too quickly. If they put the pressure on to have the grounds upgraded, and the only field we have in this area which is owned by the Hydro Board is an utter damned disgrace to put it mildly, and they'll do nothing about it. So if there's money available it should be handed over to a community. I do think the Camanachd Association should be doing more to push to get the facilities. There's no use entering into top competition now, call it National League whatever you like, and then look at the fields afterward. The facilities should be there in advance. Today it's not so difficult to get the facilities.

IAR: Can I go back to this notion of the political nationalism of the GAA. What connections do you know of, again going back to the turn of the last century, between individuals involved in the establishment of the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Home Rule movement in Ireland at that time?

WB: Oh I don't think it would matter in Ireland at all. It was and is the national game in Ireland and I would say on that it's absolutely 'full stop'. You see Croke Park in Dublin is probably the main centre but they're got beautiful facilities arranged all over. I think the Camanachd Association which we're looking at now with the size of their

executive, I think there's about seventeen of them here, is completely farcical to our game and shinty was never better than a number of years ago when we only had eight men running it. And men could run it practically with a Chief Executive. Just now you've too many bodies passing the parcel around, 'this is your job this is my job', whereas you've got to take it in to one centre and get the answer from that same centre.

IAR: Yes, I see, but what I'm really trying to get at here is the actual political nationalism and the harnessing of a very clear Irish national identity which said 'We are Irish, and we want to be independent'. Which, whether we like it or not, organisations like the Irish Republican Brotherhood tapped into in the GAA. There were individuals involved with the GAA, like Michael Davitt and Michael Cusack who may have had connections with those sorts of organisations. Now what I would like to find out about is if there were people involved in the Camanachd Association who were also involved in that kind of politics. I know there was a Scottish Home Rule movement in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century.

WB: I think in that respect Ireland have the obvious answer. I think it's fair to say that nationalism is going to take a strong hold in Scotland and I think it's also fair to say, and may I make a quick claim I am not a bitter politician, but I think it's blatantly unfair that we're up here in Scotland and are dictated to by the powers in London. I would whole-heartedly say that nationalism should play its part in a stronger manner than where it's been in the past, albeit to shinty or any other sports. We should be taking a leaf from the Gaelic Association of Ireland.

IAR: Are there reasons that you can think of in terms of what you've heard about the Camanachd Association back in 1893, 1900 as to why they didn't take a similar nationalist road as the GAA and people like Cusack, on that the Home Rule stance?

WB: I think it's quite fair to say that in the Highlands of Scotland stretching out to the west many years ago it's doubtful if you'd have ever got away with that in Scotland. You see there's need I recall that not so many years ago a landlord could sit in London, come up here to his estates in the Highlands and have a vote in London and another vote up here. So I think in these days some years ago you're very, very much about in fact it's quite a common saying if you didn't salute the landlord you wouldn't have a job on Monday! So I think fortunately in Ireland the game was stronger than some of these personalities were but it was never in the same capacity in Scotland.

IAR: Now another dimension of sport in Scotland is the connection to religion and sectarianism. Now I've been chatting to some people who assure me that this has not been a part of shinty, would that be your view as well Willie?

WB: Yes. I don't think that was ever a part that I ever knew. The way we looked on shinty was your shinty player. I don't think they're interested whether they were a Muslim, a Catholic or a Protestant. I don't think would make the slightest bit of difference. You went to the one local school, you came up to the one local shinty team and that's the way it was, and God forbid I trust that'll never change.

IAR: Are there other ways however that the church or religion has influenced or shaped the game; not in a negative way necessarily?

WB: Well I wouldn't say the church, although it's been known there was a number of ministers that have played the game of shinty and some of them quite well. In fact in Foyers here there was a minister to the name of Macvicar who played, and this is back in the twenties [1920s]. They were playing Fort Augustus and this man said the Fort Augustus player said to the Foyers player 'I believe there's a 'b' of a minister playing here today, I'll try and sort him out if I meet him on the park'. At the end of the game

they shook hands, the Fort Augustus player said 'Who am I shaking hands with?' 'Oh', he said, 'you're shaking hands with that 'b' of a minister!' So I don't think that made our game any different. Although you've to mind many years ago some in the, and I'm not going to mention the different Presbyterian religions, but some of them sort of frowned then the more narrow angle on ministers playing billiards, and shinty, playing badminton, some of them frowned on that. So I think it's fair to say that churches never, except the odd one, got deeply involved.

IAR: What about views in some churches about playing games, any kind of game, on a Sunday, has that had any kind of influence on shinty?

WB: Oh I think it was looked upon until a few years ago that shinty was never played on a Sunday. In fact when they play Ireland they play on a Sunday. But I can remember the first time we were going to play Ireland, and play on a Sunday, there was a terrific rumpus. At that time I happened to be secretary of the Association and I received a number of letters about it. My reply was quite fair: if a person is selected to play for Scotland and it's their belief they shouldn't play on a Sunday then it's entirely up to them. Ireland came across here and played on a Saturday so if we were returning to Ireland the Sunday is their national day, then it's entirely up to the individual.

IAR: Willie you spoke about some of the players and the tradition of the game being played down through families. Is there any history of women playing the game of shinty?

WB: I would say it is a male sport. I must say I can't see it ever coming about that women would play, I can't see it.

IAR: But if I go along to a shinty match this weekend as a spectator, I'm not going to be the only woman there am I?

WB: Oh no, no. There's plenty women there and may I say they make themselves heard in no uncertain terms.

IAR: Yes, I just wonder really when you think of a sport in a club being important to a community and you hear of the male 'tradition' you just wonder what role women had or what relationship women had to the game.

WB: Well the women had a tremendous role to play. You've got to mind there was the washing of the strips, you've got to mind there was the making of the tea after the game, there was the making of the tea at half-time. You see there was the little functions to run and women played a tremendous part in that. There's no doubt the women played their part very much.

IAR: Is that still a feature of the game?

WB: Oh yes, yes.

IAR: Now another thing I wanted to ask about the connections with Ireland. I understand that the international matches have taken place off and on over the years. Can you tell me anything about the background to that and why it's been off and on?

WB: Well I think it's fair to say that the hospitality for these games it tremendous, but they play in their compromise rules. The two games are still too far apart ever to marry them. But in Scotland they never get the opportunity of playing internationals and this is one of the only ways they can get to say 'Well I played for my country against Ireland'. But no the answer is the games are still too far apart. I couldn't see it ever being formed in a league basis. I can see it taking part in a year, two years time, but to take it over a league basis I couldn't see that.

IAR: It must be one of the few international sporting events where the players are actually using different implements, there's quite a difference between the hurley and the caman.

WB: Well that's right. There's a tremendous difference between the shinty caman and Irish hurling stick, a tremendous difference, and that's why they've drawn up compromise rules. You see in hurling they can stop a ball with their hand, they can't in shinty, so the compromise rule is they don't handle it. Ireland can kick the ball, they can't in shinty, so when they play Scotland they cannot kick the ball. So to take it over on a national sort of basis I can't see it.

IAR: You refereed international matches, that must've been quite a different scenario, or an unusual scenario to be involved in?

WB: I think it was but once you're refereeing for a few years around that you get hardened. You see I've seen me sitting here on a Saturday morning and at 10 o'clock the phone would ring, 'Go to Oban could I possibly do that'. It didn't matter to me, I just went it was just another game, so the same really applied to hurling. In fact they were very nice to me in Ireland; they thought I was very, very strict, in fact they wanted me to come back to Ireland and do hurling matches. But my reply was very simple, 'the Scots were bad enough to handle without taking the Irish on as well!'

IAR: It must've been quite a compliment to be invited, you may have been strict but obviously you were seen as being a fair referee.

WB: Yes that's right

IAR: Willie you've given me a lot of your time, so maybe just to finish off here you've spoken about the spirit of the game of shinty, how could you explain the spirit, what is shinty really about?

WB: Well I think you'd have to start at a very early age. Nowadays you don't see the shinty caman going to the school and this is why, today there is lots of other entertainment. But to get the true spirit you go back some years ago you'd see little boys hitting a shinty ball, or a tennis ball, against the gable end of a house. The spirit was there, and their spirit as they grew up was 'Well when will I be playing for the team?' Unfortunately today there's too many counter-attractions, and by saying counter-attractions it means you're dependent on too few people. No I'd just come back to say you've got to have pockets of industry here that keeps the local people together, and a nucleus of them would be brought up and the shinty club could go hand-in-hand with the schoolbag to school.

IAR: Thank you very much for your time Willie. All the information has been most interesting and I'm sure will be very helpful with my work.

APPENDIX 6

Interview with John W. Campbell, 31ˢᵗ August 1995, at Lyne of Gorthleck, Inverness-shire.

IAR: Can you tell me anything about traditions in shinty, for example family shinty-playing traditions?

JWC: There was none in my family at all. They probably played as youths in Skye but I was the first one in my family to get involved in shinty at all. I played in school as a youth, well a young boy of eleven. I moved from one school in Skye to another and the school I was at, which was Edinbane Primary School, had no tradition of shinty at all, it wasn't played. Though prior to the Second World War in 1939, that was the year I went to school, I remember shinty being played in the playground, just a vague memory of it being played by then. The schools in those days went to fourteen, they left school at fourteen, and you had to pass a bursary or whatever it was to get to the secondary school. So a lot of the boys just stayed on until they were fourteen and they were playing shinty, but then the war came and all that stopped, and off they went and probably all of them went to war. So when I moved to Bernisdale Primary School, Bernisdale has a real tradition of shinty, it's well known as a stronghold of the game in Skye and especially a certain family where the tradition is fantastic, the Murchisons they're called. Their fathers and grandfathers were fantastic players well-known players, and still are. So the tradition of shinty was carried on there by the school, so I started, albeit at the age of eleven, I started playing then - I hadn't played before that. There are people who learned to walk with a shinty stick in their hand, so I was a late starter, but I enjoyed the game and then I played in Portree High School when I got there, and then again when I got to Glasgow University, I played there. From there I came up to Inverness to teach here and I played for Inverness until I sustained a face knock, and I

was off school for five weeks. At that stage my son was born so I said 'right that's it'. I stopped playing but I continued in the administrative side, first I was the Secretary of Inverness Shinty Club. As far as my family is concerned, I'm the only one that was involved in shinty.

IAR: Now Hugh Dan [MacLennan] said that you might be able to help me out with Màiri Mhor nan Oran there was some connection with your father?

JWC: Yes, my father remembered this poetess, she stayed in Glen Bernisdale and he remembered seeing her and speaking to her. Now she has one or two poems where shinty is involved, Gaelic poetry.

IAR: What recollections do you have of what your father told you about her, or his knowledge of shinty being played in Skye?

JWC: Well no he didn't tell me very much about shinty at all. But the shinty in Skye I can remember as a boy there were four teams in Skye at that time. There was Bernisdale, there was Portree, there was Braes and there was Tarskavaig which is in the south end of the island, and they played each other for a cup which was called the Robertson Cup. Portree school sometimes came into that, but not as often. I couldn't give you much on that at all. He did mention some of the people that played but inevitably with Skye most of these people had to leave the island to get employment and therefore they didn't play for a local side. There was a Glasgow Skye club, there used to be a London club but that went by the boards in the early 1900s, there were some boys down there that came up and played in certain cups. But Glasgow Skye folded up when I was there that was in the late fifties. Glasgow Inverness had a team, they folded up then too, a Glasgow Highland recently started up but only lasted for two years. These are boys who come from here, go and work there; they find difficulty getting pitches for

a start in the likes of Glasgow. Glasgow Mid-Argyll are the one team that continues to play, as well as Glasgow University of course. They were fine for a while they had Allan Glen's rugby club but then they were thrown out of there, now I think they're playing in Govan across two football pitches or something like this.

IAR: Are there particular rivalries in the sport?

JWC: Oh yes. Kingussie - Newtonmore is one, and in Oban you've got Oban Celtic - Oban Camanachd, Fort William and Kilmallie in the Lochaber area. Oh yes there's rivalry.

IAR: What's behind some of those rivalries?

JWC: It's just pride, pride of winning and it's a funny thing, it's just not quite Rangers-Celtic, it isn't religious at all, it's just local rivalry, and the pride of winning the game or winning the cup, especially the Camanachd Cup.

IAR: Is there a great community involvement that you're aware of in shinty in these clubs.

JWC: There is a tremendous community involvement when you consider a club like Skye. Skye have to travel every second Saturday to the mainland and then many miles on the mainland to get to where they're playing, which is very costly. Now I think I'd be right in saying that Skye have to raise something like £10 to £15 thousand a year to meet their expenses. They get sponsorship, and they're well looked after that way but they also hold sales of work. Now communities like we are in here there's a club that plays, Boleskine who play in the field just below Willie Batchen's house. Now in places like this they have to have the whole community behind them to raise money because that's the only way they're going to exist. Consider that a stick costs £17-£18, and you can break four or five in a game, and a ball is £5 or £6 well I mean usually in the winter

when it's wet they use two or three balls. So that goes on each Saturday and the travelling as well, the hiring of mini buses or taking their own cars and giving them petrol and things like that, so it is a costly business, and they have to have the community behind them to keep going. That is how they exist. So therefore the pride of the community is built up and they in turn want to do well for that community.

IAR: One of the other things I'm interested in concerns the cultural identity associated with shinty, and I read an article by Donald MacAulay who explained that the migration of people from the Highlands to places like Glasgow, resulted in the Highland Associations. Would shinty have connections with those kinds of organisations, the likes of Glasgow Skye for example?

JWC: Oh yes, definitely. The Glasgow Skye Association I'm sure, I'm only theorising here, but I'm sure the Glasgow Skye Association would help the Glasgow Skye club into existence. Now you're talking about identity but there's also the identity of the Skye people, the Lewis people et cetera who went abroad who were sent out at the clearances, I'll give you an example of that. I've got a sister who stays in Australia and I went over to see her in 1991, and before that a cousin of mine who stays in New Zealand came over to stay with us and so we made a point of going to see him. So my story is that when we got to the southern end of the south island in New Zealand, I met a pocket of Campbells there were so many of them that I didn't know existed, all cousins, I could recognise who was connected to who.

IAR: These were people who were descendants of relatives of yours?

JWC: Yes. It went back to 1830 or 40 or something like that from Donald MacIver. Our family were MacIvers before they became Campbells, and this Donald MacIver was married twice, now the family from his first wife all went over there and lived

there. The second wife's family and my family in Skye remained there. It was very interesting to see that, and they were so interested in where they had come from and all this, and I'm in correspondence with one lady who's a teacher over there and is a Campbell and she wants to know and find out all about these things. So you've got that side too, they're so keen to come over here and see where their ancestors were.

IAR: And do they have any knowledge of shinty being played over there?

JWC: Well I think Hugh Dan's the man for that, because he's dealing with that. I didn't come across that when I was there. But then you see ice hockey developed from shinty, it was shinty played on ice by people leaving here and going over to Canada. In fact when I did a history of Strathglass Shinty Club, they were the first club to have their centenary they were formed in 1879, so I and Hugh Barron of the Inverness Gaelic Society did a small history of it. The Captain Chisholm of Strathglass mentioned that he had been over there and saw the game being played on ice. Now some time ago, this was still when I was in Inverness, I moved up here in '86 so it was prior to that, I remember on a Saturday watching television and here they were showing this game being played on ice in Russia and this was shinty on ice, and it's called bandy. But the ice countries like Sweden, play it; it's played every year it's a national game, and there's twelve aside, and they've got goals just like a shinty goal, a goalkeeper and they have it on the television. I was very interested to see this, I'd never seen nor heard of it, and there it was. Channel 4 were showing this. So that's another aspect of the shinty game coming through in other countries.

IAR: I've heard of bandy in Wales, as a form of hockey, and shinty too being connected to that game. In fact what I've become intrigued by is the sort of anglo-centric view describing these sports, and hurling in Ireland, as derivatives of the English hockey.

JWC: Yes that's right. That was on the go. But our game has come from Ireland definitely, and the Celts that came over in 568 AD or whatever to Dal Riada, then the game came over with that, I'm sure of that, and it has separated quite considerably. Have you seen the difference between the shinty stick and the hurley? I've got one here that was signed when I was dealing with the international. In '72 we started the internationals again and I was very much involved in that and we got slaughtered really until I think it was the third or the fourth game we managed a draw in Glasgow and the team that drew that all signed a hurley for me. Here's the silver-plated caman. From 1896 I think it was the winning captain of the Camanachd Cup got one of these presented to him by John McPherson & Sons of Inverness the makers. From that it evolved that the winning captain of nearly every major event gets one now and the President of the Camanachd Association gets one after his term of office is over.

IAR: Now Hugh Dan suggested you might be able to help me out with notions of Gaelic identity and Celtic identity which I've read about, and how shinty symbolises this. Is there anything you can think of in that respect, why is the sport described as the Celtic sport, or the sport of the Gael?

JWC: The roots of the game go back to the Gaelic-speaking areas. You would have come across in the history of the game that one glen would be playing another glen and they would have been led by the laird, the landowner, as it were. For instance Strathglass played Glen Urquhart in an historic match and I think Captain Chisholm of Strathglass was in charge of the Strathglass team, and I can't remember the name of the fellow who led the Glen Urquhart team, but that's well documented, that game. These games were also related to New Year's day, they had this clash of glens or straths; this is Stratherrick here, and Stratherrick might play Strathdearn or Strathnairn or these places. All these places around here were Gaelic speaking in those days, the Gaelic

went quite a way down south but now of course it's only in the islands and various places. Lochcarron players still speak Gaelic and so do the Skye players, they shout instructions to each other in Gaelic on the field of play, but certainly in this strath I'm probably the only one who can speak Gaelic in this area, but I'm an incomer, not a native of the area. My wife's grandmother could speak Gaelic I remember speaking to her, and there was another gentleman further down who died a few years ago I could hold a conversation with him in Gaelic, but there's nobody else around here that I know of that I could speak Gaelic with. But I think the origin you're talking about is that shinty was played in the areas that the Gaelic language was spoken and it still is pretty well the stronghold of shinty in Inverness-shire and Argyllshire. The islands, the outer islands did have shinty up until about probably 1900 and then it's lost. I'm glad to say it's coming back again, the Camanachd Association through their new coaching initiative are now stretching out to these islands to Islay, Lewis and Harris. Also the other thing is, the funny thing is, that the faîche are taking shinty aboard. You know what I mean by a faîche, it's a Gaelic festival. There are festivals now held all over the west coast, we have one here in the first week in August. I'm glad to say we were the first to start playing shinty at the faîche and I organised that, and now often nearly all the faîches have shinty as part of their week. At the faîche they've got tutors going round and they take in Gaelic, they take in playing a fiddle, the playing of the clarsach, and a piper too. The kids are given a concentrated course for the week and at the end of the week it's amazing how much they have learned at the end of that week. Here on a Wednesday afternoon we introduce them to shinty, the boys and the girls and it's great. I'm sorry I'm diversifying here.

IAR: No not at all, that's interesting. It sounds as if the faîches, compared with something like the Highland Games and the notion that what constitutes Highland

activity or Highland sport, is the faîche a more traditional Gaelic, or Celtic, form of culture?

JWC: Yes I would say that. They were started I think the big one was in Barra it started twenty years ago but now they've got an organisation running these faîches. The faîches are primarily I think the Gaelic side, and Gaelic songs being taught at these things, therefore old songs are being carried on and the kids are learning them and also old tunes, Gaelic airs on the fiddle and the pipes.

IAR: It's interesting then that in terms of the sport that they're using, it's the sport of shinty which seems to confirm the view of Gaelic speakers and the Gaelic people that that is their traditional sport.

JWC: Yes it is their traditional sport.

IAR: Well I think that's quite important in relation to what I've been trying to find out, you may feel you've been diversifying but it's very helpful to hear about that. Can you tell me anything in terms of what you know about the impact that land politics, post-1745 but particularly during the late-nineteenth century, might have had on shinty?

JWC: I'm afraid not. I've never seen anything on that.

IAR: I've read about how in the late-nineteenth century the Crofter Wars took place, and Lewis and Skye in particular are mentioned. I just wondered with your own connections to Skye if you knew of anything?

JWC: The only thing I can really think of is that with the clearances a lot of our tradition was sent away and you've Cape Breton island and the amount of Gaelic that's spoken out there is evidence of that. They just carried on their own tradition when they were sent off the land, they had to find their own way, and the Gaelic has continued over there and it's very strong in Cape Breton.

IAR: You mentioned that you were involved in the Association at a time when the internationals were being played with Ireland, and obviously there's connections there with the GAA. Can you tell me anything about the background or history to those connections in terms of the on-off relationship there seems to have been?

JWC: They went back to I think after the First World War. The Universities used to go across and play University College Dublin and places like that, Queen's I think in Belfast. They had sort of annual games against them, and then they had the internationals I can't remember the dates, but they had internationals and the Scottish version was winning in those days. But then since the GAA have got themselves on to a very firm footing, and they've all that money behind them the whole country now, all their sport is run by the GAA - not football and rugby, but their own Gaelic football and hurling. They are very strong and of course their methods they start with the young ones, and they come up through the counties, and then you've got the inter-county thing which gives you the All-Ireland hurling final in September. So they are very strong and have plenty of money, we are the poor relations in contrast to them. But they were very keen to get started in the '70s [1970s] and I was approached by someone and we started from there. We got going, they came over to Inverness but by the time we had got to know them, and a few of the rules were really against the stick work of the Scots, it was a disadvantage.

IAR: It's interesting that going way back in history there's this connection between the two games and now the differences in the way it is played, I'm just wondering if it's something to do with the type of land that people played on, or the time of year that the game was played?

JWC: I know that the Irish play in the summer and finish in October, we go through the winter and a number of games get put off because of the weather. A few have tried to

put it through the Camanachd Association AGM that we play February to October, but it's not succeeded. Trouble is as you mention the land, most of the fields not so much up here but in the south are owned by the landowners and they use these fields in the summer for something else, I'm not sure what. So they [the clubs] don't own the land so they can't get them. For instance Drumnadrochit last Saturday had the Highland Games, so we couldn't start the shinty - well we tried last year to start the shinty the last Saturday in August but we couldn't use that field because the Highland Games were on. These sort of things can hinder us whereas in Ireland they don't.

IAR: That's interesting because it brings in another dimension of the study I'm doing which is looking at things to do with the Highland Land Reform Association and the land politics of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the Home Rule movement. Looking at it in the context of the GAA there's very deliberate expressions of a clear Irish national identity tied up with the GAA. There are connections with the land movement and home rule movement in Ireland and the Highlands through an individual like John Murdoch. I'm interested if anyone can tell me about the extent to which people like Murdoch were, or were not involved, with shinty at that time.

JWC: I've never heard of him, so I couldn't comment about shinty.

IAR: I wonder why in Scotland didn't the nationalist movement and the land league movement get specifically tied up with sport as they did in Ireland when there were connections between the political figures.

JWC: I don't know. We used to have in the Camanachd Association the lords as for instance the Chief or the Vice-Chiefs. Lord Lovat was very much involved in the shinty, and very interested in it, and of course there's a team named after him, we have Lovat playing. He put up a cup in 1904 between Lovat and Beauly in their area. They play for

that Cup every New Year's day, sorry on the 2nd January, and one of the biggest crowds of the season go to that with their bottles and their drams and Happy New Year and all that, it's a great day and a great game. That was started by Lord Lovat, and I've told you about Captain Chisholm of Strathglass so the olden lairds were involved in the game, but recently it's not the same.

IAR: I suppose nowadays, from what I read in the papers, many of the landowners are foreigners and really don't live here and so perhaps that has an affect.

JWC: Yes that's true. For instance the estate over here that's Sir John Heywood who owns Wolverhampton Wanderers who owns that estate. They're up just now because of the grouse season but that apart you see he gives employment to several people in this area and it means that they stay here. He's got shepherds and gamekeepers and he's built houses for them over the last four or five years, but he hasn't come into the shinty yet so we'll have to work on him on that.

IAR: The parks and the pitches that are now used for shinty is there a long tradition to those?

JWC: Well in Inverness it's moved about Inverness but since about 1933 I think they've used the Bught Park, it's a first class pitch. The Boleskine I don't think that was a traditional one, British Aluminium gave that pitch to Boleskine. Now it's Hydro Board land but they've got a lease for it for twenty-five years and they're going to improve it and try add changing rooms and things like that, with funds through the Camanachd Association to improve pitches.

IAR: Can you get funds through the likes of the Scottish Sports Council?

JWC: Yes they do. They will give money for that as well and the districts in the Highland and Islands region. Now the Eilan that is traditionally the home of

Newtonmore and has been I think since they were formed and the Dell in Kingussie the same. Where Lovat play is where Lord Lovat gave them the land, so yes in certain areas it is traditional where they play. You're talking about a game that is only about one hundred years old in its current form. The Camanachd Association was formed in 1893, and next May [1996] is the first hundred years of the Camanachd Cup.

IAR: The likes of Stratherrick and Foyers and communities around here, Willie Batchen mentioned how at one time they all had their own team, and they've amalgamated, split up or disappeared. Are there other clubs that you know of that have had that experience - for instance Skye sounds as if it perhaps has a similar experience?

JWC: Yes, yes. They were sometimes Portree and sometimes Skye. They won cups as Portree and they have changed about. I left Skye in 1953 to go to University then in '58 they won the Sutherland Cup I think it was, and then after they had gone to the wall until a certain police inspector went over there and he got them going again. They've been going ever since, they got going in the schools. They've got an ideal situation there where they've got one secondary school and the primary schools play so they all go into secondary and they go from there. But again as I said with Skye so many leave and if they're going to tertiary education they have to go off the island. Kinlochshiel that's an interesting name it's an amalgamation of three teams, Kintail, Loch Duich I think it was and Shiel Bridge. The three teams have come together as Kinlochshiel. Lochcarron again they've been in and out a bit too, but they're very much back just now. Caberfeidh have always been playing although they were Strathconon at one stage, then moved to Caberfeidh. Inverness they had a Strath's Athletic side for a while. Lochaber were Brae Lochaber for a while, then Spean Bridge and then back to Lochaber. There used to be three teams in Oban, Oban Lorne but they've gone by the board and Oban Celtic and Oban Camanachd.

IAR: We spoke about the rivalries, are there other divisions in the sport maybe based on class, region, district?

JWC: You've got the north and the south associations and they were trying to get them amalgamated and this year we're starting the premier division which has four teams from the north and four form the south playing in that Premier division, and if it's successful we're going to hopefully get more involved in a National League.

IAR: I guess there's two more points that I'd like to ask you about. The first is you mentioned earlier Celtic and Rangers. Sadly some Scottish sport is very often noted for sectarianism. Would you see any religious schisms in shinty in any way?

JWC: No, no way I don't think so. It isn't big enough for that. In the districts you've got Catholics and Protestants playing together.

IAR: Are there areas where Protestant or Catholic communities are particularly strong?

JWC: No. There are too few playing. There are something like thirty-eight or forty teams playing in Scotland and when you multiply that out twelve aside, you've only got about eight-hundred people playing - it's far too small.

IAR: Not in the sense that it causes divisions in the sport, are there areas where you would say that have traditionally been a Catholic area or whatever?

JWC: Would Spean Bridge be one of these places? I think you could take a line right across Scotland from South Uist right across to Aberdeen and that line is mainly a Catholic line, but I'm not sure. It doesn't enter the sport at all, whether you're Catholic or Protestant. Mind you we have a few black people playing, there was one playing for Newtonmore for a spell, a very good player he was too.

IAR: I wonder too how recognition of the Sabbath comes in, is there any way religion comes in to shinty in that respect?

JWC: Yes. They take badly to any sport being played on the Sabbath. They have had occasions when they go to Ireland they play on Sunday, they have to play over there on Sunday because that's when they'll get the crowds. But over here no, I think they would lose too much by doing that, because they are very dependent on the community, and if you fall foul of the community then your shinty team is in trouble.

IAR: Would that belief be associated with a particular church?

JWC: Probably, yes. That's probably more a Protestant than a Catholic thing isn't it? Well Ireland it's mainly Catholic and they go to church in the morning and then they play their sport in the afternoon. I was over at the all-Ireland hurling there, at the centenary one, and they all went to mass in the morning and off to the sport in the afternoon. So I suppose, I'm talking out of turn here perhaps, because I'm not of the Catholic practice but from what I saw in Ireland that seemed to be the thing. I know that a lot of goodwill would be lost in a community if they were to play [shinty] on a Sunday.

IAR: So there's not necessarily strong links in terms of patronage with the churches, it would just be a social stigma to play on a Sunday?

JWC: Probably yes. I know I would be very much against it, sport being played on Sunday and I would probably be the first to leave if they were to start that, that's my own beliefs you see, Willie Batchen would be another, Ken MacMaster definitely. They are very religious people.

IAR: I know a lot of sport has gone that way, and I suppose there are pressures on shinty to follow?

JWC: Yes very much so. For instance just to give you an example of that boy Jonathon Edwards who won the triple jump, not so long ago he wouldn't jump on Sunday but he has come to square himself with the fact that he has to compete on a Sunday.

IAR: Yes and there are Scots who have refused to run on Sunday, Eric Liddell in particular. Can I ask you one more thing, I know you have something else on shortly? [JWC - yes, that's okay] I've seen shinty referred to as the national sport of Scotland and we've got this notion of it as a Gaelic sport, or the sport of the Gael. As someone who's a Gaelic speaker would you hold to shinty as the national sport in Scotland?

JWC: I would like to think that it is the national sport of Scotland in that it's only played in Scotland, and therefore that makes it the national sport. Unfortunately we can't play against another nation at our own game, the Irish is the nearest so that's the way we have to go. They have the same problem, except that they can go and play in America. So from that point of view it is the national sport of Scotland. Trouble is we don't play it in all of Scotland. I know that it was played in the Borders before rugby got in there shinty was the game down there, but then rugby came in there and then off goes shinty and we've lost it down there. But we're trying to get into get into the other counties, Perth there's a team in Perth called Tayforth, and Aberdeen University.

IAR: It's the notion of shinty as the sport of the Gael that I'm trying to understand. What is the sense of the nation that a Gael identifies with. Is it is Celtic nation, a pan-Celtic nation with Ireland?

JWC: I don't think it's a pan-Celtic one. Well the pan-Celtic you've got Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Ireland. But Scotland's shinty, Ireland's hurling, I don't think the game's played in the other three. I think as a Scot or a Celtic Scot or a Gaelic Scot, Scotland is my nation, and I'm proud to be a Scotsman and part of Scotland. And

shinty is my sport, it's my national sport I identify myself with that. I think you're right shinty is our national sport, but it is too small a sport as yet to be claimed as the national sport, because not every part plays the game.

IAR: Well thank you very much for your time and sharing your thoughts with me, there are many interesting which have come out.

APPENDIX 7

Interview with Jack Richmond, 2nd September 1995, at Newtonmore.

The interview began with IAR explaining the background to the research, and asking

Jack Richmond what he could tell me about the origins of the modern game of shinty.

He began by telling me about 'The Society of True Highlanders' and its contribution to

recording the traditions of games of shinty, the ways they formalised the programme of

events for games meetings as well as setting out the rules of shinty "in a very clear and

surprisingly modern language".

IAR: Where would I go specifically to find out about the connection between The

Society of True Highlanders and shinty?

JR: Well Hugh Dan [MacLennan] has photocopied quite a lot of that stuff and I've got

the shinty part of that. As I say the surprising thing is that the language is very

straightforward and if it was written today you wouldn't see any difference from

contemporary wording.

IAR: What sort of image of shinty, and what sort of image of the Highlands were these

people trying to form do you think?

JR: Well they were exiles, and an exiled Scot is noted, even notorious, for being more

Scottish than the Scots they've left at home. They tend to be almost cartoon Scots. But

at the same time, in the period in the 19thC I think it's very much related to, I think

you've got to consider all this in relation to imperial Britain in that period. As far as

shinty is concerned, and your subject nationalism and cultural identity as I've already

said to you I think you should look at it as Gaelic related identity. Now the Highlands

was changing in population pressures after the Forty-Five rebellion and particularly

after the beginning of the imperial expansion after the Seven Years War. The Highlands

was a great recruiting ground first of all for the army, and that had an effect in wider terms, and the Highland regiments playing shinty in Canada, and the possible origin of ice-hockey. But the term 'seeking fortune' was very much part of that picture, and there was a great enabling patronage, in Badenoch, for instance from the Duke of Gordon who was the overall landlord. His land stretched from the North Sea through Badenoch to Loch Linnhe to the Atlantic. The representatives of these ducal houses had this ability to promise the sons of tenants they would gain land if they were recruited. The famous Duchess of Gordon recruiting is part of that, for the Seven Years War and then for the American War of Independence and then for the Napoleonic Wars. Many of these men became commissions as well and then came back on half pay after the wars were finished, and they would take small farms, small tacksmen's estates near Badenoch and these were leaders of the community in many ways. As well Badenoch had Cluny MacPherson as the Chief of the clan whose seat was very much the focus of social life in this part of the Highlands. The extraordinary thing, the difference between shinty and soccer and rugby was to a degree socially related, in that soccer undoubtedly was always seen as, not to beat about the bush, a class related sport. It was a recreation of the lowest orders if you like, whereas rugby was related to fee-paying schools, rather than local authority schooling. In the Highlands it was a different situation, in that [pause] remarkably the residue of the clan structure if you will remained. In Badenoch, Cluny MacPherson was still seen as first among equals, if you like. Those who were of the MacPherson name, and the related names like Cattenach, saw Cluny as a cousin, they felt they were just members of that family, they didn't feel inferior. I've an interesting article by Magnus Linklater in *The Times* yesterday and it sums this up. It was about aristocracy, and the Scottish attitude to aristocracy, related to the sale of Beaufort Castle. This is very interesting in shinty terms because Lord Lovat was one of

the original pillar leaders of the formal development of the Camanachd Association. His [Linklater's] conclusion is that in Scotland and in Scottish terms there is a different attitude to aristocracy than there is in England. That is there is not the same forelock tugging that there is in so many parts of England. In fact, in middle Scotland where there is a Labour dominated electorate that in fact is radically sort of opposed to the aristocracy. But in the Highlands it's more relaxed, and it's not deferential. Those people who are the general population see themselves as natural aristocrats. I think that has always been so, that it is, to a degree, classless, and I think that is something to be proud of. Lord Lovat used to be the game's links with the Highland aristocracy who were proud to be connected.

IAR: That's interesting.

JR: Interestingly after the formation of the Camanachd Association in 1893 first of all Captain Chisholm of Glassburn was the first Chief. There was Honorary Office and there was the functional office of President. Lord Lovat inherited after four years the honorary office. The Camanachd Association [annual meeting] was timed to be at the time of the Northern Meeting in Inverness. This was when all the aristocracy, all the lairds met together for the Northern Meeting which was the Highland Games meeting. The Northern Meeting park's still in Inverness - and the Northern Meeting Ball which was even more important, because, you know, in spite of it being an apparently male dominated society the women in the case often had an influence behind the scenes, seeing that people were there. The original Northern Meeting Ball in fact was largely started by the famous Duchess of Gordon. But as well as that, Lord Lovat of that time, that's the Lord Lovat who has just died, his father, and he had a considerable political presence in the House of Lords as well. He travelled regularly up and down on the Highland railway, and the customary thing to effective communication in terms of the

Camanachd Association would be that individuals would get on at succeeding stations, on the overnight train. The overnight train arrived in Perth just when light was breaking and they would get on and they'd have their discussion and then they'd get off at another station, or they would stay the whole way to Inverness and then get the train back. But that was the sort of leadership influence there was. It was very different from the situation when you're comparing the stick game, the Celtic stick game in Scotland with the Celtic game in Ireland where the "aristocracy" in Ireland was the Anglo-Irish ascendancy. They looked on the relationship between the people, the men who played hurling in its two different forms, in Ireland were looked upon much as inferior tenants as peasants so to speak. There was patronage similar to the patronage that was given to the big games here, but it was on a showing off basis of these peasants playing their own game before the aristocracy who themselves had no part in it.

IAR: Right, I see.

JR: Whereas the Chiefs and the chiefs' sons and the higher order of the strata of the clan and the social system in the Highlands, they all played the game and they prided themselves in doing it. These 'ball plays' as they were called were great social occasions and apart from the actual playing of the game, there was a structure to it in the way the teams were selected. There was a very formal Gaelic progress. It's in The Club of the True Highlanders. It was a very formal thing, you know like these playground games that you would probably know from any school in Scotland, it was similar to that you know this sort of formal structure in how you select, the way the two leaders would select their teams. But as well as that, at the end of the match there were toasts and the whole district would gather for these occasions. Now in some districts the braes of the glen would play against the strath of the glen. This was the sort of natural sides. In Newtonmore for instance in the school, the west end would play against the

east end. And then it was extended to a parish against a parish and in Newtonmore, in wider terms in Badenoch terms, Badenoch played against Brae Lochaber.

IAR: How does this translate into the modern game?

JR: Now the fascinating thing is that particularly with the development of easier travel, and the coming of the railway here in 1863 made a tremendous difference. The development of the steamships' service in the west coast, Macbraynes, the frequent efficient service that made a big difference. But there was never the counterpart, unfortunately, that has taken place in Ireland with the formation of the Gaelic Athletic Association, where the structure there now starts at a club level but then progresses to county level. The thirty-two counties in Ireland embraced the game and there is a very strong allegiance to these counties. Now this has taken place and the Grampian cup final mentioned Inverness-shire played against Argyll-shire, but there has never been a great deal of conviction about this in terms of loyalty. The loyalty here is for the club, whereas in Ireland the stronger loyalty is really the county. I mean tomorrow Clare is playing Offaly and in choosing the extreme loyalty of tens of thousands of people on that occasion. We are introducing this new competition eight inter-district matches which will culminate in a play-off in May. This is all related to what you're saying about cultural identity. In shinty terms what the position is now is that, if you take Newtonmore for example, most early analysis said that the survival of shinty suffered a very grave reduction in its playing force in the period after the Forty-Five rebellion, and the growth of the narrow religious authority was for a period after that was a particular influence. A minister who had a narrow doctrine would have an extremely harmful influence on the strength of the game.

IAR: In what way?

JR: The narrow church saw any recreation almost as being against the best Christian ideals. There's lots of instances of elders who were keen shinty players, famous shinty players, who because of the ministers' influence would abruptly stop playing. Now the game survived in Badenoch because particularly of the Cluny ball-plays, and the Duke of Gordon was a great patron and they had ball-plays to celebrate his birthday and so on. But the ball-plays generally depended on Cluny principally and a number of other lesser figures in the clan, and proprietors. When the game was formalised in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it to an extent was fuelled by local rivalries, between Newtonmore and Kingussie, and that was an intense rivalry. Newtonmore had grown up. The community was one of the planned communities, it was hued by MacPherson of Balavil whereas Kingussie had started off earlier as a planned community by the Duke of Gordon, it was about of quarter of a century ahead of Newtonmore. Newtonmore was always, I think, psychologically conscious that they were in the shadow of Kingussie in terms of development. Its like athletics at the present time, sport generally at the present time, you look at these sports occasions and you see an increasing number of coloured faces, there's a similar situation there - they've got an incentive to better themselves through sport or prove themselves through sport, and I think the same held good with the rivalries between these communities. And it was bitter, I know when we came here talking to many people who were involved in the game back. The people I've talked to could go back a hundred years, and there was an unthinking [pause]. I mean it was what you're involved in, in terms of the sociology of sport. I mean you see it demonstrated in yobbism if you like of the football culture. And it was like that here to a degree, unthinking almost you know it's proof of identity. That is the psychology of any recreational activity, any human activity in general terms, that the individual is setting out to prove himself. In aggregate the community was setting out to prove itself and this

was the way they eventually demonstrated that they had a collective resolve to do well, in this skilled sport and the dedication to it. Once Newtonmore had proved themselves they contested two Camanachd cup finals without winning, and then they won the Camanachd cup final and then they won it another three running occasions which was tremendous thing to achieve on the population base that's in this community.

IAR: How important is population size in this context?

JR: I think one of the things you could look at is the population profiles, and particularly the leeching of the population from an area like this. In the last half of the nineteenth century 500,000 people left Scotland you know through emigration. But in the next fifty years a million people left Scotland and they went in different directions. The Highlands was more affected by that, and the Borders than middle Scotland.

IAR: Jack, can I ask you whether that notion of the collective identity, and how important it's been for the town?

JR: It's not a town, that's another interesting thing. Kingussie was a town but Newtonmore was a village. That was another incentive if you like to prove that they were better, than that jumped-up town.

IAR: Right. But in terms of more the notion of shinty as the sport of the Gael, or the sport of the Gaelic Scotland, the sport of the Highlands there appears to have been a clear attempt to use the sport to establish the Gaelic identity of Scotland.

JR: There was. For instance *The Highlander* the periodical that was a vehicle of help to sustain the game in its early formalised form.

IAR: This is John Murdoch's paper?

JR: Yes. Through the columns recording games but also the news about the game and so on. Now the equivalent of that in modern terms is the *West Highland Free Press*. The

parallel of that in Irish terms is the 'Irish Post' on the British mainland which serves the Irish emigrant population in Britain, and records all the Gaelic sports that are taking place. Not only those that take place in London and so on, and in Glasgow, but the games back in Ireland and you know that sustains interest. There's no doubt the Gaelic nation in terms of camanachd was one in one period which bridged the North Channel. They saw themselves for a certain number of centuries as a common race. Although the first distinct movement had taken place in the sixth and seventh centuries from Antrim to Argyll, what's now Argyllshire. They continued to speak the same language and there was an interconnection in sea terms which was relatively much easier in fact than someone going from Argyllshire to Edinburgh, it was easier for them to go in fact to Northern Ireland and this is the link. The most interesting proof of that is the famous grave slab in Donegal which is fifteenth century and the caman and the ball that's on that grave slab you could just mirror the present caman and ball there. They're indistinguishable, and that's fascinating. It's the identity matter which I feel looking at this community has been of great importance as a life force for the community. This community has been able to make a mark out of all proportion to its base if you like. If you compare Newtonmore's record in shinty against a comparable village in the central Scotland belt, there are some examples of junior football where they aspire to success on that level. But in objective terms the achievement of Newtonmore is out of sight of anything like that in identity terms and fame throughout not just the area of the Highlands, but through the emigrant population in the cities. There was this interconnection, there was a passing back and forward, and the teams that grew up in Glasgow and in Edinburgh were actually peopled by those individuals that had gone to seek work in the cities, and there was this passing back and forward.

IAR: It's interesting because Newtonmore and presumably Kingussie, like many other communities in the Highlands must have had its fair share of migration of people to the likes of Glasgow, Edinburgh, yet there are some areas in the Highlands where shinty seems to have suffered significantly from that, yet Newtonmore and Kingussie still have very strong teams.

JR: I think in jargon terms you've got a critical mass where success breeds success, and if you've gained success you don't want to relinquish it. Kingussie were of major importance in the earliest period of the establishment of the Camanachd Association and then they were overtaken by Newtonmore, and then Kingussie gained no honours for over forty years and then reasserted themselves if you like to the great credit of those individuals who led that. They made a very determined effort to renew themselves and they did it.

IAR: But is it something more than just the success of the team because, for example, speaking to Willie Batchen he talks of how the closure of the British Aluminium factory in the Foyers area had such a significant impact on people having to move away from there. Is there more industry or work here?

JR: Well that community had Boleskine, the team there, and in fact there was three teams. It reflects the importance of employment to the success, or to the health of any sport in any place. Fort William is another case in point where there was an incoming population and it's related to Foyers because it's the same company that was there, and Kinlochleven also, and Willie [Batchen] recalls the British Aluminium Company had a boat that went between these places. But the reverse happened when Fort William, with the building of the tunnel and all the works that were associated with it, they needed hundreds of men, and a large proportion of these were Irish. There was a remaining, a surviving Roman Catholic population in Lochaber, a very strong core. But to that has

been added this incoming Irish descended population and the two have coalesced to an extent and you get a lot of names of shinty players now who are obviously from that stock. In terms of what we're trying to do with the international series, in a way we're turning the clock back to the period 1500 years ago when the core game came to Scotland, and then divided and there was two forms of the game in Ireland, the winter game and the summer game with somewhat different sticks. What has become the paramount game in Ireland now is the summer game, which was played with broader caman which is the hurley now. Going back a hundred years ago was the reversal, if you like. To find an international dimension and then the relation of the GAA to extreme nationalism in Ireland was obvious. The interesting connection with that here in Newtonmore is the fact that James Iain MacPherson who was one of the principle office holders in the early years, the most successful years of the Newtonmore club, became the First Secretary for Ireland. Then there was the period of the establishment of the Irish Free State, and the effect that had. Although a Scottish team took part in the first two Tailteann Games, there was political influence brought to bear on the Camanachd Association not to continue that series until it was in fact renewed in 1972 just when the troubles were starting again. Newtonmore had a signal place in breaking the barrier that was erected of international teams going to play in Ireland. They went in 1972 to play in Dublin. But in the wider world the imperial situation was another, and the relationship of shinty to the territorial volunteer army and to the territorial army which it contained, and the two world wars was of single importance because the same identity that was seen in community terms in shinty was projected into identity in territorial terms. In Badenoch it was the 4th and 5th Battalions of the Cameron Highlanders and the Lovat Scouts. Of course the Lovat Scouts were formed by Lord Lovat who was the important leading individual in the Camanachd Association. Many of the men who served in the

Lovat Scouts and in the Camerons who went to the Boer War were the cream of the shinty players. So it was in the first World War that many of the cream of shinty players were killed in the First World War. And again James Iain McPherson was the minister, the Under-Secretary-of State for War, who was most influential in terms of ministerial responsibility for the armed forces. You can't believe the circumstance in history that that had on his awareness, his closeness to the tragedy of the First World War in terms of men involved and shinty. And it was so also in the Second World War and that remained. The shinty players who were captured at Saint Valery were from this community, these are the men who have become leaders in committee terms and so on, and who were players in fact after the war. But there was a succeeding period when there was a reserve service in the Territorial Army, and the same people who were in that were the shinty players, and its both economic and wider than economic in terms of that sort of social structure. That has disappeared now although a lot of Badenoch men have gone to serve in what became the Queen's Own Highlanders and now the Highlanders.

IAR: Can I go back to pick up on the theme of religion, because I know from speaking to people this week that the religious sectarianism which affects football in Scotland, doesn't seem to be a feature of shinty.

JR: Oban Celtic and Oban Camanachd are tinged with that, and Beauly Shinty Club. The Lovat family were Roman Catholic and there were consequently a greater proportion of Roman Catholics in the Kiltarlity and Beauly populations, and there is a tinge of it but it's not really strong. There was also a strong Episcopalian, Scottish Episcopal population, in Lochaber, Ballachulish and Appin. There was that stricture [Free Church] that there was in Ross-shire but it depended on the parish, it always

depended on the minister, but I think the balancing forces were much greater here than they perhaps were elsewhere.

IAR: Are there other ways in which the church had some kind of influence on the development of shinty, for instance where, when and how the game was played?

JR: Well the strangest example in Laggan is the "Minister Mhor", the famous eighteenth century minister in what's now Laggan Bridge. The recorded philosophy was that he encouraged the young men to come to play shinty on Sunday as long as they attended church service. A lot of people involved in shinty in recent years have been Free Church people. John Willie Campbell for instance is Free Church, he was brought up on Skye and Skye is another example of the bad influence of narrow doctrine on recreation, fiddle playing, the playing of the pipes and shinty. But at the present time our endeavour to establish the current international series was in fact obstructed by individuals of Free Church persuasion who were particularly concerned about going to play on a Sunday in Ireland. We have not played on a Sunday in Scotland, we've agreed that we do as the Romans do and if one looks at tomorrow's occasion in Dublin at Croke Park that's the very dramatic comparison between the two cultures. The antipathy to recreation on a Sunday of course is a very erratic situation in the Highlands now. At one time to play golf here, or bowling would have been unthinkable but it's now not thought of at all. But a game would not be played on a Sunday because of the remaining elderly population. The community at large and the committee of Newtonmore Camanachd Club would see it as discourteous that's putting it in the least way.

IAR: What about other areas where there's been the patronage of the Lairds. You've mentioned Lord Lovat, and Captain Chisholm of Strathglass, Cluny MacPherson in the Newtonmore area. What other examples are there?

JR: In lesser terms what took place was the Ball Plays. The Cluny Ball Play was at Cluny Castle, but the Ball Plays here were sponsored by MacPherson of Balavil who was the landlord of Newtonmore, and he again was of crucial importance in forming the Camanachd Association. Then the Tenants of Bannacher Farm which is the ground that the Eilan the pitch, is on. The tenant of Bailit, which is the adjoining tacksman's house to Bannacher, and then the two hotels were patrons at either end of the village; what was the Newtonmore Hotel and is now Mains Hotel and the Inn at the other end which is now the Balavil Hotel, and that's where shinty is focused now. But it was first of all focused in the old hotel at the west end. There was what was called a "Sixpenny Day" and that was the equivalent of what was charged in all sport occasions whether it was cricket or rugby or football, the forms of football that were played in the Borders and Orkney & Shetland. Instead of depending on the patronage of key individuals everybody clubbed together as admissions came to be charged for going to matches. So these 'Sixpenny Days' everyone who wanted to attend put in sixpence to buy the whisky and the beer, and they had coffee and they had bread and cheese and buns and oatcakes and so on, and that was how it worked.

IAR: And is that still a feature of the game today in some way?

JR: Well in effect it is because it's like taxes in a way. If you look at sponsorship in sport that's just what patronage was. The theory being that in athletics you see the massive amounts of sponsorship money that goes into that, paid admission is not sufficient. Again, the school playground was a great generating influence, the school-masters in Newtonmore through John McDonald who was the school master when Newtonmore Camanachd Club was formed more than a hundred years ago. His son who was referred to as 'Johnny the Master' was one of the great innovators in terms of the development of play, along with the man who became Sir Stuart MacPherson who was

James Iain MacPherson's brother. James Iain MacPherson became Lord Strathcarron. The remarkable thing was that their grandfather was a crofter here. This demonstrates the classlessness of the game as it was played in a community like Newtonmore. But the school-masters were very influential in their nurturing of the game from that age level. But most players began to play in Newtonmore long before they went to school, from about three years onwards, and then the congregations that took place to practice at school. John Miller followed John MacDonald. He was an Ayrshire man like I am and his cousin in South Ayrshire coached Hurlford school to be schoolboy football champions of Scotland. Now John Miller had the same genes, and although it was not his native sport, he saw it [shinty] as important to the community and he nurtured it. He was a great influence, as was Donald Finlayson who was the succeeding schoolmaster in the present era, and who all the great players will acknowledge was their mentor in terms of their development in the game. They would play in the playground through the day, but when they went home from school they played and played and played. They played against the gable end and the aim would be not to hit the gable end but to hit an individual stone. That's how the skill of the game developed and then they practised at the top of the golf course. They all practised together - seniors, youths down to schoolboys so in fact there was unconscious coaching going on, although it wasn't formal coaching as you think of the word but it was a 'rubbing-off' of skills and outlook from one generation to another which was very important.

IAR: To what extent does the role of the physical education teacher, and the department's curriculum play a part?

JR This is extremely important and I think it's a deficiency of the system that is the reflection of our nationhood and our identity in successive terms from community upwards. For instance the education system in the Highland region I think has never

paid attention, well it didn't but it is increasingly having to pay attention to the Gaelic elements that underpin the community. It is my contention that there should be 'most favoured nation sports' if you like and the politically correct belief for a long time was that all sports should be available to the young athlete and they've got to select from them. Now the parallel is made here that one of the major insults almost that occurred here in recent times was the erection of rugby goal posts at Kingussie High School. Now I feel, and individuals in Kingussie, that that was an enormity and it was caused by the appointment of an assistant PE master who was a rugby enthusiast. It's my contention that in the appointment there should have been consideration about the background of the applicant, and if that person had gone to a Borders community and sought to introduce an alien sport you'd look at that situation. To my knowledge shinty has not been on the curriculum of Kingussie High School, it has not been a curriculum sport. The philosophy of that is 'oh well you play shinty anyway, so why should we have to include that as our curriculum sport'. I think that needs examination.

IAR: I suppose there's always the notion that there is a common curriculum of subjects in Scottish schools and that too has an influence.

JR: The 'Future of Shinty' committee deliberations which I chaired maintained that we ensured shinty was a choice subject on the PE curriculum of Dunfermline College or where the male course was based. Also that it was ensured through the regional councils that pitches were available in schools in the Highlands, the playing area of the game, and that there was a demonstrated nurturing of the game in these schools. Now that the Schools Camanachd Association has remained as an entity, and is influential, and they have resisted the intrusion, if you like, of non-teaching individuals in the conduct of playing shinty at school level.

IAR: Can I go back to late nineteenth century Jack, and the role of people in The Society of True Highlanders' and the image of the Highlands which they perhaps sought to portray. Do you think that was in any way damaging to the game of shinty?

JR: It was self-conscious to a degree and originally they played in Highland dress. Each side wore a kilt and that continued. There was one team in Glasgow played in a kilt, and then I think it became evident it was too self conscious, I mean it cured itself in that they would get made fun of. Strangely enough there's been this recent match which Coll McDougall of the *[Oban] Times* helped to organise, the clan Cameron had their ten yearly gathering at Lochaber a fortnight ago. There was a shinty match between the Frasers and the Camerons - we've done this for the international Gathering of the Clans. Coll McDougall has talked to the Duke of Argyll proposing next year to have a clan shinty competition which is interesting. But that is very much the nature of what the Society of True Highlanders was about. If you look at a lot of Victorian, late - Victorian and Edwardian photographs of Highland dress, even the uniforms of the Territorial Army tended to be grotesque, and it was so in the Highland Games too. If you look at the extreme of the Highland Games in the North American circuit, you would just cringe from so much of it. And that to a degree was the Society of True Highlanders, just one stage on the way to what these North American games have become, and who's to say that they're wrong. You just would like to see them moderate it.

IAR: What other issues contributed to the development of shinty?

JR: The tourist industry was an important element in the development of shinty. Because the steady increase in numbers of tourists coming to Newtonmore, and the loyalty that was developed with these regular visitors, they saw Newtonmore as a second home, they came year after year, they rented houses and they stayed in the hotels. Most of all they underpinned the economy of the community and gave

employment to the tradesmen and shopkeepers and so on, many of these people were the players. In longer distance terms, in national terms and in London and metropolitan terms, the Highlands undoubtedly that was the playing area of shinty. Just to illustrate, Andrew Carnegie came in 1888 for the first time, and he came in successive years until 1898, 10 years to Cluny Castle. He wanted to buy Cluny Castle but he couldn't because Cluny was still there, although later he might have been able to, then he went and bought Skibo. But that was just an example of the wealthy people who came in. It was a stratagem if you like. Local people would write to them and say we're going to honour you and make you a vice-president. But the expectation, the consequent expectation was that they would give a donation to the club funds. It worked with Sir John Cargill, he was a vice-president in Newtonmore club, he was the originator of the Burmah Oil Company, an extremely wealthy man. These were the influences. The Highlands and extended playing areas of the game, I think was looked on as a special place, and the people within it as special people, and they were respected. In army terms the calibre of the recruits that were gained from the area were seen as the foremost.

IAR: I'm interested in the connection of the political notion of identity and shinty, and with hurling in Ireland. The politics of those who were involved in establishing the Camanachd Association appears to have been quite different from the politics of those who were involved with he Gaelic Association in Ireland.

JR: Very much. Again I've said about the difference in the aristocracy in Ireland. But there was a strong political tradition, which was very similar to the mass of the GAA involved population, of radical liberalism in a community like this. But very effectively that was balanced, it was headed off, by this pervasive influence of individuals like Lord Lovat, who was not a radical liberal but who was a unionist of the Unionists. The difference was, although the Irish comparison was complicated, that these individuals

were often still able to display effective patronage in gaining jobs. For instance Sir Stuart MacPherson here became a judge of the Supreme Court of India. They strode the world in terms of job progress. Individuals from shinty, like D.A. MacGillivray who gave the MacGillivray Cup, started the Bank of Egypt, and he introduced cotton to the Sudan. That's the sort of influence there was. Although in the crofting community there was an unrest, which came to a head, particularly in Skye, it was headed off partly by the use of troops and police. But although there was an equivalent in agricultural terms in the Highlands of the famine in Ireland in 1845, it was assuaged better in terms of assistance to those people who were affected by it. The economic downturns that happened at different times with the sheep economy, and often the Napoleonic wars with the agricultural related legislation. But the balancing factor when Britain was expanding as an imperial power was the employment opportunities that were offered elsewhere. In Newtonmore as a community it was common practice to move either to the city to gain winter employment or to go overseas either permanently or temporarily. Many men went to Canada and came back again, and to Australia and came back again. That assuaged that radical pressure, although they were very political animals and remarkably unrestrained in terms of debate.

IAR: I suppose too there's a sense in which the politicians from the Highland area, who may have been involved with the Camanachd Association, for them the union and the Empire was a positive institution?

JR: Well take Sir James Iain MacPherson as an interesting example who sat as a Member of Parliament for Ross and Cromarty. He was a Liberal and home rule was one of the platform elements of the Liberal Party at that time, who had a landslide victory at the beginning of the century. When it came to the bit he was member of Lloyd George's coalition government during the First World War and he was later Secretary for Ireland.

His assessment in post war terms was very different from what it was in the early years of his incumbency as a Member of Parliament. He identified that for Britain to relinquish Ireland had grave consequences. Now that looks as if he turned his coat, but I think he was so much affected by his closeness of the stark tragedy of the First World War and the implications of the fact that his own family were spread around the world, such as in India, India encapsulates all the problems of an imperial power. But it demonstrates the reality of how effective the imperial purpose was in Britain, that they could look at the strategic implications of what may seem different matters from what really is the outcome. Even Sir George Cargill in Burma and oil the strategic importance that these things had. And the consequences of the Second World War and how to an extent the imperial standing of Britain in world terms was demolished effectively by use of the nation's resources in the Second World War, and the successive granting of independence to what had been imperial countries. I suppose you've got to examine what happened following the Second World War with the landslide victory of the Labour government first of all, and their establishment of the Scottish Sports Council. Now in a way if you're examining the broad picture, for the first time there was a body which was appointed which could crystallise the aspirations of the ruling bodies of sport. Whether it's done it effectively is another matter, but it did do that, and for the first time there was a reference point and that was to be desired. That was a Labour initiative but then the Team Sport Scotland [1991] came during the Conservative government. Now in a way they were a prisoner of the Scottish Sports Council, but they had to make the most effective use of it. That as you know was an outcome of the famous teachers' dispute, which had consequences on shinty as it had on other sports and the dedication of many teachers. Oban's a case and point, where the survival of the

game at the end of the day didn't depend on the clubs, it depended on a few teachers who passed the game on in schools.

IAR: Can I ask you then Jack about the notion of shinty as the national sport of Scotland. Where do you think that sort of view comes from?

JR: Well I think that's almost a misnomer. It's the unique sport of Scotland, in respect of not being played as the core game anywhere else. Now that makes it seem very lonely, but I think it has a right to make a claim for the importance of its uniqueness, in the overall identity of Scotland, but most particularly related to the Gaelic speaking, or Gaelic connected population. Although in recent generations a large number of shinty players won't be Gaelic speaking, that has now narrowed down to Skye.

IAR: I see. I suppose there's a bit of a contradiction in terms of shinty as the sport of the Gael, that it's strength in the twentieth century has not been in areas which are predominately Gaelic speaking, in the sense that the language has been pushed to the western Highlands and shinty's strength is in the eastern Highlands?

JR: Yes. Well that again had other reasons. One was a practical reason in that there was a lack of natural tree cover in the outer islands and that makes for difficulty in having good camain. In a critical period when also the wider influence of the movement of fishermen who went out to the east coast fishing and so inevitably they brought football back, they were in contact with the developing football in parts of England and parts of Scotland. But most essentially to buy a ball, or to have a ball made by a local shoemaker, one ball was easier than to provide the number of camain that were required to sustain a game.

IAR: I think one final point I'd like to ask at the moment Jack, is about this notion of shinty being the sport of the Gael, or a traditional Celtic sport. Are there aspects of the

game which you could pinpoint and say that symbolises the Celtic nature or the Gaelic nature of the shinty?

JR: There's a whole list of the traditional aspects of the sport. But in terms of identifiable characteristics I think you need to look at the same time to the comparison with the Gaelic sports which were played in Ireland. If you're making a comparison, it's got to be partly socially related, there's no doubt about that. It's the play in a way that is and was shinty at its best. Originally there was no referee in shinty, there was a self discipline, or code of self pride that established the boundary lines of behaviour. I'm sure that there's lots of instances when that code was not adhered to, but by and large that was the element of the game. That is similar to the universal perception of the image of the Highlander as an independent, proud individual whose ability in war terms was brave and indomitable, but also was skilful in the use of weapons and so on, and his ability not to flinch in conflict. As you know all sport, all competitive team sport, is like a replacement for war but you end up not having any blood on the ground, but you have the equivalent of victory in war. You don't necessarily have to have defeated opponents, but you have opponents who have done their best and maybe on the day haven't succeeded but they feel proud they've made a good contest of it. The two opponents meet afterwards in social amity - that was the characteristic of the best occasions in shinty. And it still is, and we've tried to foster this in our social occasions. In the All Ireland [hurling] final the two counties will each have separate functions in the evening, in football the same applies. But what happens in Ireland the following day they meet together at lunchtime. Now it's quite different in shinty - the two meet in social comradeship afterwards and respect for each other. That's what it's about.

IAR: Well thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with me it has been most interesting and helpful.

APPENDIX 8

Interview with Coll McDougall and Donald Skinner, June 1997, Oban.

At the beginning of the interview only Coll McDougall was present. When IAR explained the focus of the thesis, CMcD picked up the theme of the land wars of the 1880s.

CMcD: It's a pity that Sorley McLean has gone because I would have said that if there was one place for that it would be Skye. If you look at the *Badenoch Record* around the time of the land league period, the peasants were not revolting. The traditional New Year match was always sponsored by the laird. There are some wonderful reports in the *Oban Times* about Ne'er Day matches in Mull and the two big landowners had their teams and whoever won provided the dram and the cheese and the oatcakes. But they always seemed to dance a reel. As you know the matches went on for hours and they changed round after every hail, but it's astonishing that almost all the reports say 'and when the matches finished they danced a reel' before being led by the pipers or piper to wherever.

IAR: There's references to those kinds of occasions in *The Highlander*, and Mull is one of the places mentioned. How late in terms of the twentieth century are those games mentioned?

CMcD: In the 1930s they were still being played in Mull

IAR: Would that be the traditional folk game?

CMcD: Yes. You've got to remember there weren't as many games played, there was no league structure. The Camanachd Association as you know didn't come in until 1893 and there were two codes. There was the south code and the north code and there were quite substantial differences between them. The coming together came from challenges

from Glasgow Cowal who were the south champions and Kingussie or Newtonmore who were accepted as the sort of north equivalent, also at Glen Urquhart, Strathglass and other teams. But I don't notice through stuff that I've read a great correlation between the sport and politics, whereas of course the GAA was very much a political organisation.

IAR: Have you any thoughts as to why that has been the case in Scotland, or was the case?

CMcD: I would have thought that it's because it was a game played in rural areas, this sounds patronising, by people who were not the go-getters of the area. They had gone, they'd gone to Canada. I was born in this town, Donald [Skinner] will tell you this, the number of people we were at school with who are still here, they're scattered all over the world. It's a better situation now, there's a better infrastructure, there are jobs at the professional level, there are jobs in science in the research laboratory, which does provide a career structure for people, there are jobs in farming too. There weren't those opportunities. Those who were left behind at the turn of the century were doing menial tasks on the land. The clan system had almost disintegrated in that almost all the clan chiefs had been educated at Cambridge, they might still be. I mean young Lovat whom I got to know reasonably well, his father, grand-father, great grand-father, were all Harrow educated. He's at Edinburgh doing a degree in commerce because he reckons if the old man had done that he might have got work.

IAR: Obviously the people who would be playing shinty of those who were left behind were the tenants, ordinary people. I'm wondering too about the patronage of the game by the lairds and landlords, people who perhaps were educated in the south, whether that too might have had an impact on why the game did not become associated with the politics of the time?

CMcD: Definitely. Jack [Richmond] no doubt told you about the MacPhersons of Balavil. Well it comes down to J.P.S. MacPherson and Sir Tommy in the current generation. You'll notice that the first chieftains of the Camanachd Association were the Lord Lovat of the day, the chiefs of the Macpherson and so on. Now they would be much for the agrarian structure of the era, but the tenants would know that they were being reasonably well looked after, they're not going to revolt, or agitate. But by and large it appears that they enjoyed themselves. You've got to remember that there weren't many games played because they worked a six and a half-day week and communication was difficult. You've got the 1930s Cup Finals. Newtonmore would come down to Fort William and travel by steamer and vice versa. Donald will probably tell you about how we got across the Falls of Lorne before the bridge was there. But I would say I haven't noticed any big usage, there's no 'Rangers and Celtic' religious-political picture in shinty as far as I can see. We know that teams are Roman Catholic like Roy Bridge in Lochaber because it would be predominantly Roman Catholic in the community. It is probably still true today. My mother's family all came from Ballachulish for generations. Now that was a great quarry and crofting village. When did it become red? Dr Lachlan Grant was the guy responsible for the road through Glencoe. I've heard her talk about certain people who were shinty players who were very much bitten with Marxism and all that sort of thing but I wouldn't have said the team had political connotations. On the other hand there's no trace in Ballachulish vicinity of the instance of the lairds, like there is in Newtonmore and Kingussie, it isn't here. Donald's [Skinner] grandfather who was one of the great figures in shinty for more than half a century, was the chemist, he was the provost, he bred dogs. I think I wrote a piece about him which said he was a benevolent despot. If you played well for [Oban] Camanachd and you hadn't got a council house old Skinner would see to it. You

could take that as political influence in the game. But mind he would have been a Tory I would have thought. No, Argyll was a Liberal constituency then, the Tory didn't come into influence until before the Second Word War.

IAR: I suppose that's an important thing about many parts of Scotland, particularly the Highlands, it was for a very long time the Liberals that were prominent. Of course they were for home rule but didn't deliver in the early 20th century. What seemed to be the radical party was the Crofters Party in the 1880s. I'm wondering if in Ireland they had perhaps the slight advantage that they could harness the majority of people around their religion as well, whereas in Scotland we hadn't. Is there a perception of a cultural divide between Highlands and Lowlands? Therefore if you were going to have a sense of nationalism in the way that Ireland had it wasn't going to work here because of that division.

CMcD: That might well be the case. I can remember as a schoolboy in the fifties when there was this national covenant led by Dr John McCormick. You know they got significance for having a Scottish parliament yet the whole thing fizzled out. It seems to be a desire to go 90% of the way but when it's the last step you draw back. But I think one of the failures of the SNP currently is if they had national heroes like Ally McCoist or Paul McStay or Hastings, people who become national sporting heroes, Jackie Stewart, the vote I would have thought would have increased quite substantially. That hasn't happened. I can't think of one prominent shinty player who would admit he was a Scottish nationalist.

IAR: I wonder if you go back a hundred years if some of the people who were involved in establishing the Camanachd Association, what were their politics? The perception I get is that they were part of unionist politics, or rather would have supported the union.

CMcD: Oh yes. They would either be left wing Tories or Liberals.

IAR: You mentioned earlier religion in terms of sectarianism that shinty does not have that division. Are these other ways in which the history of religion in the Highlands has impacted on the game?

CMcD: Well of course the Free Church was agin anything you enjoyed. I think Hugh Dan [MacLennan] will tell you from his research that he discovered that in the days when the Roman church was dominant that the males didn't go to church unless they got their game of shinty before hand, they left the camain at the door. Nobody would mind if you played shinty here on a Sunday but they actually object in Newtonmore. It's quite strange. I suppose the only thing you notice is that when we go to Ireland the internationals are always on a Sunday whereas here as a matter of not upsetting the north you play on a Saturday.

IAR: As part of the background to what I'm doing I wondered if there's any evidence, or old tales that the clans were involved in playing matches between each other.

CMcD: Shinty was said to be the antidote to clan warfare, that's one of Jack's great things. I think Roger Hutchinson's book talks about that. It's like the Cu Chulainn stuff. I suppose it's possible.

IAR: I wondered how common that sort of myth is?

CMcD: Well there's the tale about the MacDonalds before the massacre at Glencoe. My mother's family could trace all the way back to the MacDonalds and that was one of the tales they told how the Campbell was issuing a warning. There was also the reference that he was whistling a pipe tune, which if you knew your piping was the one used by the Campbells when going in to battle.

IAR: Certainly that's more anecdotal. What about the folk origins of the game?

Donald Skinner joined us at this moment, and CMcD explained we were discussing the folk history of the game

IAR: Would you consider shinty to be a Highland sport or a Gaelic sport or a Celtic sport?

DS: Well I think obviously if you're going to say Gaelic then most of the areas where it was played were Gaelic-speaking. In terms of the early days, before they even organised shinty, they'd all be Gaelic speaking. So it's very much a Gaelic sport. In more recent years there's probably very few native Gaelic speakers now, perhaps in Skye. When I started playing shinty myself in Glasgow, that was in '58 and I played for Glasgow Skye and at that time probably half the team was Gaelic-speaking. In my first game I remember being shouted at in Gaelic but as I wasn't a Gaelic speaker it didn't have any effect. But there's not many fluent native speakers now.

CMcD: I suppose my mother was a native Gaelic speaker but she didn't really speak to me in Gaelic. Bits 'n' pieces but not all the time.

DS: Of course in those days they were positively looked down on, they were ridiculed if they spoke Gaelic. That was the education system that strangled Gaelic.

CMcD: Without a doubt. Because you had the choice of doing French or Gaelic at Oban High. Despite having a Gaelic-speaking rector the preponderance did French.

IAR: I wonder as well what kind of impact that might have had on other aspects of Gaelic culture, like shinty. If the sport is seen as being indigenous to Gaelic Scotland, if you start to undermine the language what are you telling people about their culture?

DS: Well I think obviously they would have very early on have regarded it as the sport of the Highlands, rather than a Gaelic one. Both sets of my grandparents were Gaelic speaking. But because Gaelic was very much downtrodden they'd choose when they'd speak Gaelic. For example in my mother's case she had a good grasp of Gaelic because

she was the eldest in the family and my grandfather was away at the war and my granny would use Gaelic so the younger ones wouldn't understand what she was talking about. So it was used selectively. But then on the other side, my father's side, my grandfather was embroiled in Gaelic. Then fell out with Gaelic, and he used to blame the late Hugh McPhee [head of BBC Gaelic] because he made out anytime he spoke to Hugh McPhee in Gaelic, Hugh McPhee would answer in English.

CMcD: We were trying to establish a political connotation for shinty and I would have said if you look at the teams that the one I would've thought might have been affected by the land league and all that would've been Skye.

DS: Yes Skye.

CMcD: Because Mary Robinson [at this time then President of Ireland] was talking both privately and publicly at the week-end how Michael Davitt had come across from Ireland and had addressed the crofters in the open air and what a tremendous reception he'd got.

DS: What makes it difficult is that in the last 30-odd years the strong-hold of Gaelic was very much the western isles and yet in the western isles all the Gaelic activists were not interested in shinty. Yes the sporting culture of the Gael became very diverse. I would've said the absence on the western isles of shinty might've been the Free Kirk.

IAR: I could understand that on a Sunday but other days of the week?

DS: Why I'm saying this is that I was lately involved with the shinty administration in Glasgow. From an early age I was quite amazed how little encouragement the sport got from the Gaelic-speaking community especially from Lewis and Harris. Even if you were promoting a Camanachd Cup Final in Glasgow and you were trying desperately to publicise it to get the largest possible attendance you got no support from the Lewis

Gaelic speakers. Again because shinty hadn't been played on the island for a long time. I think part of that was because of not being able to get equipment and the lack of timber on the island. But also because a lot of the Lewis men went to sea.

CMcD: Yes it's what I said earlier on. Donald and I are fortunate now to be able to live in the town where we were brought up, a lot of folk couldn't.

IAR: This is something I have not really had an opportunity to pick up with many people, the significance of the shinty clubs in Glasgow historically in relation to the Glasgow Skye Association or the Glasgow Lewis Association and so on. What was their place for shinty as part of the social network of Highlanders in the city?

DS: The only thing is if you take Skye which is the only one which had a shinty background, it wasn't the whole of Skye which had a shinty background so it was only pockets of the island which were shinty. You would have people saying 'Oh they're from Skeabost, to they're shinty people'. It was only parts of the island that were shinty.

IAR: Is it north, south or east of the island.

DS: Well it just depended. There was no real pattern. But probably if you went back another generation probably there would be more shinty-playing in the islands. Again going back to the land league of crofting things in the likes of the Argyll-shire area literally as far back as I've even any knowledge of via the old times of back to the 1880s but there was shinty played at Bonawe. That was because of the quarry because a large number considered this the centre of employment. The same in Ballachulish where there was the slate quarry.

CMcD: What about Easdale, have we ever come across a reference to Easdale, because of quarrying again?

DS: No but I would imagine there should be.

CMcD: Furnace the famous team which won the Camanachd Cup without losing a goal, they were in a quarry area.

DS: Tighnabruaich, I would think there was various things, there was the gunpowder factory, the sailing where a lot of them worked on yachts in summer time as well as farming rather than crofting. Inveraray, probably a very large percentage were employed by Argyll estates. So it's difficult to identify a connection with the land league in these area.

IAR: I suppose also, we were saying earlier, it's only in the 20th century that the sport developed as we know it with leagues. Back in the 1880s if you did play it was maybe a Sunday which was the only free day from work, and maybe the traditional festivals like New Year.

DS: Yes that's true. In the old records if you go back to say the mid-1800s games were very much the festivals. It was probably just played among themselves, playing with anything resembling a ball. At a later stage on festival days on a more organised footing, some form of competition.

IAR: Are you familiar with how recently those traditional games continued to be played?

DS: You're going way back. I don't think anyone would have knowledge of those games, way back before 1880 before your organised shinty. When I was a youngster there used to be a New Year's Day game, they maybe just started that before the Second World War but that's fairly recent. Glasgow Skye would come to Oban but that was probably just started in the mid-thirties.

IAR: Another aspect of the folk origins I've come across in the literature is the connection with Ireland. Is that something that's acknowledged by people in the sport?

DS: Well the connections with Ireland very much go back to the common origin. But there was very little contact since organised shinty began with Ireland. Your only contact was in the early twenties, you had so called internationals which were more just sort of Glasgow and region with Ireland. Obviously they had communication via the Clyde by sea. But there's records of games being played at that time.

IAR: A couple of weeks ago I managed to get access to the [Camanachd] Association's minutes at the National Library in Edinburgh and I've not got as far as the 1920s yet, but I've heard there's probably not much on that. I suppose where I'm going here is why they stopped, why didn't they continue after the 1920s?

DS: Why they stopped? Aye well I've got to admit it was my grandfather that stopped it.

IAR: Why?

DS: It's in the minutes I believe. He must've been President at the time and what was it? It was in Hugh Dan's book. Coll will know.

IAR: Well I know Hugh Dan hints at something.

DS: Well was it not [pause] well it was a case of because of the Irish politics that apparently [pauses]. This grandfather of mine was quite a strong individual and it appears he obviously questioned the motives of the Irish courting us, and felt it was done for political purposes, rather than helping us further the sport.

IAR: Did you ever hear him say anything that might have indicated there was pressure from politicians to curtail any link because of politics?

DS: I seem to remember this being brought with him. I think there was pressure, in other words he was just being used to curtail it. Because remember too that although he

himself was not a member of the Free Church there would be strong pressure in a lot of areas not to associate with Catholics.

IAR: So it was the religion and the politics?

DS: Yes there would be a religious and political dimension.

CMcD rejoins discussion

DS: Irene's asking about how the connection with Ireland, the internationals of the twenties petered out, and I had to admit that it was my grandfather that scuppered it, that he would have been under pressure to stop it.

CMcD: Yes.

IAR: One of the sub-questions I'm looking at in the study is looking at Ireland with the land league politics, the home rule movement there at the turn of the century and the cultural dimension to that in how they harnessed the GAA. We had land league politics in the Highlands, there was a home rule movement and we had the Celtic revival and there were connections through individuals such as John Murdoch and Michael Davitt. It might be argued there was an opportunity there to link the two things and sport might have been one of the ways but it didn't happen. So my question is why didn't it happen, what was going on?

CMcD: You realise John Stuart Blackie lived here, but he left Oban because he didn't want the railway. When the old railway station was there the clock only had three faces. Blackie took such umbrage the railway authority responded by not putting a face on the side that he would see it when he came in from his house.

IAR: Well you've got people like that wanting to save what they saw as Highland culture but what intrigued me is that perhaps their perception of what was Highland culture **CMcD:** [interrupts] It wasn't shinty.

DS: It's just coming back to me my grandfather and the Irish thing. What apparently he said at a Camanachd meeting was, whether or not this is fact or not or whether he just said it, was that he had been given information from police sources that in actual fact we should not be associating with the GAA. Now this is something which continued even after the reintroduction of the shinty internationals. On the very first trip to Ireland they were in a hostelry in Ireland and they seemed to get involved as was their want with a groups of [Irish] and ['X'] went to the toilet and suddenly realised he was being followed and this chap said to him 'Can I see you for a second'. He introduced himself as a Special Branch officer with the Irish police, to say the people they were associating with, drinking with, were known IRA and he suggested they cut contact. This is in the 1970s.

IAR: It's only very recently that GAA lifted its ban about the British forces.

DS: Yes this caused a bit of friction at the Camanachd Association level many years ago when one member of the executive who was a retired police officer, was very anti the Irish connection and it was because he was insisting on the GAA deleting that clause in the constitution. My impression again was that a lot of development in hurling and the change from ground hurling was very much a political thing to have a different identity. I think some of my earliest contact with the Irish was the ones that were great admirers of the ground game as distinct from the aerial game acknowledge that the game had been changed simply to establish separate identity from the original game which they reckoned was much closer to camanachd.

IAR: In terms of when they changed the game, when would they be talking about?

DS: This would probably be in the 'twenties.

CMcD: Yes Hugh Dan's pals came up with a picture of hurls before the First World War and they are very similar to camain.

IAR: Another book that I've read, '2000 years of hurling in Ireland' by Ó Maolfabhail mentions something like that. He says the term hurling does not appear in Ireland until around the 17th century.

DS: Yes it's actually from discussions with him that I've got a lot of this.

IAR: I've also read that in the 19th century that in more rural parts of the north of Ireland you could still find pockets of a game much more akin to shinty than to hurling, which is interesting given the very close proximity of the north-east of Ireland to Kintyre.

DS: Yes that's true.

IAR: Is there anything about the rituals of the game that would reflect it's Highland roots?

DS: Well, not so much rituals but the great sacrifices in order to play. I remember speaking to a late uncle of my mother's who had I think been staying in Bonawe at the time. They would think nothing of walking to Oban to play shinty that's a good 15 miles they would walk. Now ask someone now to walk to the end of the street and they won't do it. But there was no other way at the time. That would be about maybe the 1890s I suppose, 1890s, 1900. You would find too that in the Highlands shinty was the premier sport, the summer football league in Oban was meant to keep the shinty players fit. Literally the different teams playing in that were made up of shinty players. I think the Swifts was Oban Camanachd under a different name; the Celtic one was United, there was Burnside. There were others, so I supported Swift because that was Oban Camanachd.

IAR: You spoke earlier about the Highland associations in the city. Was there a definite connection between the associations and shinty clubs at one time?

DS: With the strong ones, if you regard the Glasgow ones as the Lewis and Harris, Skye and at one time the Sutherland Association, but Skye it was a small part of the Skye Association that was involved in the shinty, it wasn't the whole association so they wouldn't have given such fantastic support. But the interesting thing was years later, I think in 1976 for example when we staged a shinty-hurling international in Glasgow and I was responsible for it I was fired up and I thought I'm going to pull out the stops here, I'm going to involve the Irish. I involved the Irish in the sense that our organising committee took on board two people, one who was a manager of the Allied Irish Banks in Glasgow and the other was a priest in Perth. And I had great hopes of this, I got contacts with the press, I got fantastic publicity and yet although it turned out it was a great game and we had a reasonable turn out but there wasn't the Irish people there I'd expected. Well what I hadn't realised it turned out that the majority of the Irish in Glasgow are Donegal which is not a hurling county. So here we were with big efforts getting the word around but your Donegal Irish didn't turn out. There's not much hurling at Donegal, it's Gaelic football. But looking at it overall to promote Gaelic culture, to try and get co-operation in Glasgow with the Lewis, Harris and Skye associations it's a major achievement. The nature of the Gael is very parochial, their own wee corner.

CMcD: That's what I was explaining to you about political connotations. The Badenoch clubs were well supported by their landed gentry, it was a fairly quiet reasonably comfortable living so there would be nothing to disturb the shinty. The crofting areas like Skye were much more disrupted.

DS: Yes as you say like the Argyll-shire area a lot of the people were very much under the control of the landowners. I suppose if it was a reasonable landowner they wouldn't step out of line because then their job was at stake.

IAR: I suppose parts of Argyll-shire where they were more settled, more stable, where they had a different style of agriculture.

DS: Yes. That's where you get a bit uptight when people come to you - not yourself - and they think every landowner was an ogre and that is not the case at all. If you go across to Canada, to different parts of Canada, you see a different perspective. So many people who were settled it was for their own good.

IAR: Yes, there were different reasons for emigration.

CMcD: The real trouble comes when you've got the old landed gentry running out of money and having to sell their estates to the products of the industrial revolution, the grand children of the industrial revolution who have none of the breeding. Basically money talks and if I can earn more from that part of the hill then turf them out. Whereas the Earl of Selkirk for example would be old landed gentry. It still happens today, you've got the Dutch some of which are very good, you've got the Sheikh owning a great chunk of Ross-shire letting everything go to ruin.

IAR: Is that having a great impact on shinty today?

CMcD: That has certainly been a problem in many places not least in Glasgow but for different reasons. This question of fields if they're very much at the mercy of the landowner, it's very much on his terms.

DS: Where they play, at Inveraray it was the Winterton, Strachur in front of the big house. In the likes of this area, in Oban, the earliest going back to the 1880s the pitch would have been decimated by the introduction of the railway, it would have cut into it.

That was John Stuart McCaig, because he owned all of it at the time. I suppose in those days the standard of the pitch would not be good.

IAR: Well I think I've covered all of the issues I had noted down to ask you about. Is there anything else you think might be helpful?

DS and CMcD: No, nothing else at the moment.

IAR: Well thank you both very much for your time. It's been most interesting and the information I'm sure will be very helpful for my work.

APPENDIX 9

List of clubs and teams known to have formed between 1835 and 1939.

Name of club/team	Source of earliest recorded formation
Aberdeen North of Spey	*Inverness Courier* 11 November 1849
Aberdeen University	*Inverness Courier* 24 December 1889
Achnacarry	*Inverness Courier*, 22 January 1907
Achnasheen	*Northern Chronicle*, 26 November 1930
Airdrie	*Celtic Monthly*, August 1895
Alvie	*Inverness Courier*, 17 February 1891
Ardgay	*Inverness Courier*, 23 November 1894
Ardgour	*Inverness Courier*, 5 January 1882
Ardkinglas	*Celtic Monthly*, October 1892
Ardvaasar	*Inverness Courier*, 27 November 1934
Argyll Battery Pack (Oban)	*Inverness Courier*, 17 October 1924
Avoch	*Northern Chronicle*, 1 April 1896
Balfour Beatty's Club, Fort William	*Inverness Courier*, 18 December 1925
Ballachulish	*Celtic Monthly*, March 1893
Ballifeary	*Inverness Courier*, 6 March 1928
Beauly	*Scottish Highlander*, 30 December 1886
Ben Nevis	*Inverness Courier*, 5 January 1882
Ben Slioch Rovers	Hutchinson (1989: 140)
Bernisdale (Skye)	*Oban Times*, 29 December 1888
Boleskine	*Inverness Courier*, 29 November 1927
Bolton Caledonian	*The Highlander*, 5 January 1878
Bonawe	*The Highlander*, 27 April 1881
Brae Lochaber	*Inverness Courier*, 26 January 1887
Braes	*Inverness Courier*, 5 March 1927
Breakish	*Inverness Courier*, 9 February 1894
Broadford	*Northern Chronicle*, 12 April 1922
Bute	*SYB*, 1978;
Caberfeidh	*SYB* (1973: 18) states 1886; *Inverness Courier*, 6 February 1891
Cameron Highlanders Depot	*Inverness Courier*, 18 March 1887
Cameron Highlanders, 1st Battalion, Fort George	*Inverness Courier*, 23 October 1903
Carr Bridge	*Inverness Courier*, 30 January 1912
Colintraive	*Inverness Courier*, 19 December 1922
Colintraive & Glendaruel	*Inverness Courier*, 6 December 1932
Conon	*Inverness Courier*, 25 January 1887
Contin	*Northern Chronicle*, 13 December 1899
Cumbrae	*Inverness Courier*, 13 February 1912
Dalmally	*Celtic Monthly*, October 1892
Dingwall	*Inverness Courier*, 18 January 1887

Name of club/team	Source of earliest recorded formation
Dochgarroch	*Inverness Courier*, 7 March 1930
Dunollie	*Celtic Monthly*, October 1892 (SYB, 1976 suggests formed by 1886)
Duror	*Inverness Courier*, 6 December 1921
Edinbane	*Inverness Courier*, 5 March 1907
Edinburgh Camanachd	*The Highlander*, 10 January 1874
Edinburgh Northern Counties	*Inverness Courier*, 1 December 1896
Edinburgh University	formed 1891
Elgin	*Inverness Courier*, 17 October 1899
Evanton	By1906, *(SYB 1988)*
Fairburn	*Inverness Courier*, 23 November 1920
Falkirk	*Inverness Courier*, 7 March 1899
Feochan United (Oban)	Inverness Courier, 24 October 1933
Fodderty	*Inverness Courier*, 18 April 1899
Forres	*Inverness Courier*, 5 December 1905
Fort Augustus	*Northern Chronicle*, 23 January 1884
Fort William	*Inverness Courier*, 21 February 1893
Fort William Celtic	*Inverness Courier*, 10 December 1933
Foyers	*Inverness Courier*, 11 March 1898
Furnace	*The Highlander*, 5 January 1878
Garve	*Inverness Courier*, 4 February 1890
Glasgow Caledonian	*Inverness Courier*, 20 October 1890
Glasgow Camanachd	*The Highlander*, 27 November 1875
Glasgow Cowal	*The Highlander*, 10 March 1877
Glasgow Fingal	*The Highlander*, 28 April 1877
Glasgow Inveraray	*The Highlander*, 10 March 1877
Glasgow Inverness-shire	*Inverness Courier*, 12 February 1924
Glasgow Islay	*Northern Chronicle*, 14 November 1923
Glasgow Kyles	*Inverness Courier*, 14 December 1920
Glasgow Mid Argyll	In 1923 *(SYB, 1986)*
Glasgow Oban & Lorne	*Northern Chronicle*, 19 November 1913
Glasgow Ossian	*The Highlander*, 23 December 1876
Glasgow Skye (formerly Ossian)	*The Highlander*, 23 December 1879
Glasgow University	In 1901 *(SYB 1971)*
Gleann Mór (Fort Augustus)	*Northern Chronicle*, 30 October 1907
Glendaruel	*The Highlander*, November 1879
Glengarry	*Northern Chronicle*, 23 January 1884
Glenmoriston	*Inverness Courier*, 4 March 1930
Glenorchy	In 1896 *(SYB, 1980)*
Glenshiel	*Northern Chronicle*, 28 November 1923
Glenurquhart	*Inverness Courier*, 17 January 1885
Govan	*Inverness Courier*, 3 December 1901
Grantown	*Inverness Courier*, 9 October 1894
Greenock	*The Highlander*, 20 January 1877

Name of club/team	Source of earliest recorded formation
Insh	*Inverness Courier*, 27 January 1893
Inveraray	*The Highlander*, 24 February 1877
Invereshie	*Northern Chronicle*, 6 March 1907
Invergordon	*Celtic Monthly*, August 1893
Inverlochy	*Inverness Courier*, 21 October 1938
Invermoriston	*Inverness Courier*, 16 February 1886
Inverness Celtic	*Inverness Courier*, 9 December 1938
Inverness (Town & County)	*Inverness Courier*, 29 March 1887
Inverness Highland Railway Workshop	*Inverness Courier*, 12 April 1887
Inverness Wanderers	*Northern Chronicle*, 23 March 1887
Kames	*Inverness Courier*, 10 December 1924
Kilmallie	*Inverness Courier*, 6 December 1932
Kilmorak	*Inverness Courier*, 12 December 1933
Kilmory	By 1914 *(SYB, 1985)*
Kincardine	*Northern Chronicle*, 19 February 1896
Kincraig	*Inverness Courier*, 17 February 1920
Kingarth	*Inverness Courier*, 13 February 1912
Kingussie	*Northern Chronicle*, 1 February 1888
Kinlochewe Rovers	*Inverness Courier*, 4 February 1890
Kintail	*Northern Chronicle*, 28 November 1923
Kirkhill	*Inverness Courier*, 25 February 1887
Kirn	*The Highlander*, 26 March 1880
Kyles Athletic	In 1896 *(SYB, 1978)*
Laggan	*Inverness Courier*, 18 March 1892
Lairg	*Inverness Courier*, 15 March 1898
Lochalsh	*Northern Chronicle*, 26 April 1922
Lochcarron	*Inverness Courier*, 17 December 1883
Lochcarron Union	*Northern Chronicle*, 2 January 1884
Lochgilphead	*Inverness Courier*, 18 December 1925
Lochgoilhead	*The Highlander*, 20 April 1878
Lochloy	*Inverness Courier*, 6 October 1896
Lochside Rovers (Oban)	By 1923 *(SYB, 1976)*
London Caledonian	*Inverness Courier*, 9 October 1894
London Camanachd	By 1894 (Hutchinson, 1989)
London Clans Shinty Club	By 1900 *(Hutchinson, 1989)*
London Highland Camanachd Club	*The Highlander*, 5 January 1878
London Inverness-shire Assoc. Camanachd Club (later London Northern Counties)	*Inverness Courier*, 1 January 1886
London Ross-shire Assoc. Camanachd Club	By 1884 *(Hutchinson, 1989)*
London Scots Shinty Club	*Northern Chronicle*, 6 January 1892
Lovat (initially as Kiltarlity)	*Inverness Courier*, 18 January 1887

Name of club/team	Source of earliest recorded formation
Manchester	*The Highlander*, 7 April 1877
Manchester Camanachd	*The Highlander*, 22 April 1876
Manchester & Salford	*The Highlander*, 23 December 1876
Mid Ross (amalgamation of Caberfeidh & Strathconon)	*Inverness Courier*, 24 November 1925
Millhouse	By 1921 (*SYB*, 1985)
Minard	*Inverness Courier*, 13 November 1923
Moy	*Inverness Courier*, 9 October 1903
Muir of Ord	*Inverness Courier*, 18 March 1898
Mull	*Inverness Courier*, 25 October 1921
Nairn	*The Highlander*, 26 January 1881
Nether Lochaber	*Inverness Courier*, 6 December 1932
Nethy Bridge	*Inverness Courier*, 18 April 1905
Newtonmore	*Northern Chronicle*, 1 February 1888
North Ballachulish	*Inverness Courier*, 4 November 1927
Oban Camanachd	*The Highlander*, 27 April 1881
Oban Celtic	By 1928 (*SYB*, 1976)
Paisley	*Highland News*, 22 May 1909
Perth	*Inverness Courier*, 23 September 1898
Portree (later Skye)	*Inverness Courier*, 8 March 1892
Redcastle	*Inverness Courier*, 15 February 1887
Renton	*By 1879 The Highlander*, 27 October 1880
Rogart	*Inverness Courier*, 9 April 1895
Ross County	*Ross-shire Journal*, 26 November 1920
Rothesay	*Inverness Courier*, 13 February 1912
Seaforth Highlanders	*Inverness Courier* 10 January 1911
Sleat	*Inverness Courier*, 29 November 1932
Spean Bridge	*Inverness Courier*, 13 April 1894
Springburn	*The Highlander*, 29 April 1876
Stornoway	*Highland News*, 6 December 1893
Strachur	*The Highlander*, 16 April 1880
Strath (Skye)	*Inverness Courier*, 6 December 1921
Strathcarron	*Ross-shire Journal*, 5 March 1920
Strathdearn	*Inverness Courier*, 4 January 1898
Stratherrick	*Inverness Courier*, 3 February 1890
Strathglass	*The Highlander*, 13 January 1880
Strathnairn	*Inverness Courier*, 14 December 1923
Sutherland (Lairg & Rogart)	*Inverness Courier*, 13 November 1900
Tain	*Northern Chronicle*, 19 February 1896
Taynuilt	*Inverness Courier*, 13 December 1935
Tighnabruaich	*The Highlander*, 11 January 1879
Tobermory	*The Highlander*, 10 February 1877
Uig	*Northern Chronicle*, 15 February 1888

Name of club/team	Source of earliest recorded formation
Vale of Laroch	*The Highlander*, 12 September 1879
Vale of Leven (since 1854)	*The Highlander*, 19 February 1876
Vale of Oich (by 1881)	*Inverness Courier*, 5 November 1946
Wester Ross	*Ross-shire Journal*, 6 March 1908
Wimbledon & District Scots Assoc. Shinty team	By 1910 (Hutchinson, 1989)

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1984:	Dunfermline College of Physical Education, Edinburgh
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1990:	Queen's University @ Kingston, Ontario, Canada Master of Arts in the Sociology of Sport.

EMPLOYMENT

1984-86:	Teacher of Physical Education, Strathclyde Regional Council, Scotland.
1988-89:	Sports Administrator, Perth & Kinross District Council
1989-90:	Assistant Recreation Development Officer, Perth & Kinross District Council.
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1992-97:	Lecturer in Sociology of Sport & Leisure, De Montfort University Bedford (formerly Bedford College of Higher Education) England.
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