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NORTH 7

20p

Ath-bheothachadh Bhatarsaidh

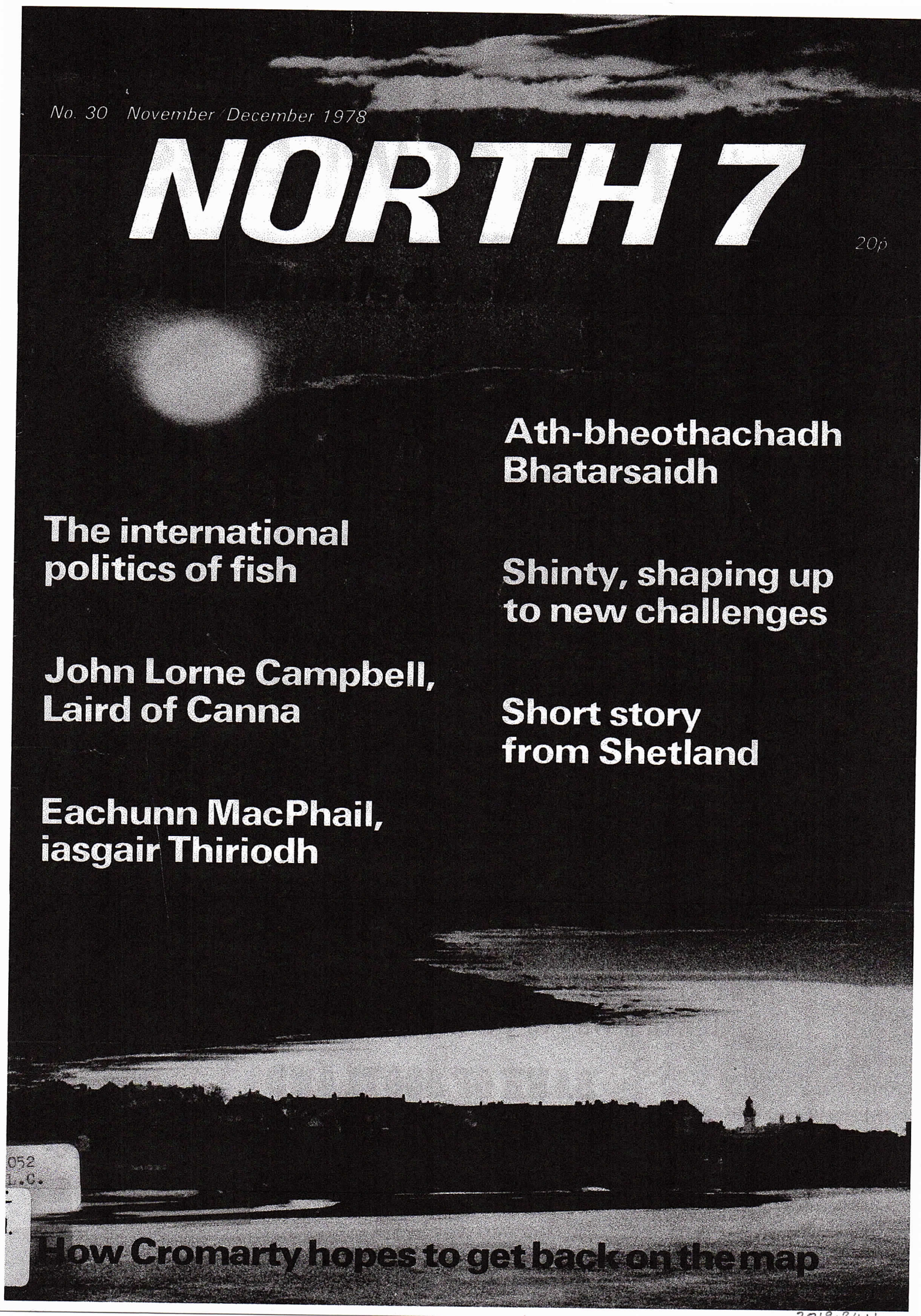
The international politics of fish

Shinty, shaping up to new challenges

John Lorne Campbell, Laird of Canna

Short story from Shetland

Eachunn MacPhail, iasgair Thiriodh



How Cromarty hopes to get back on the map

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L.C.

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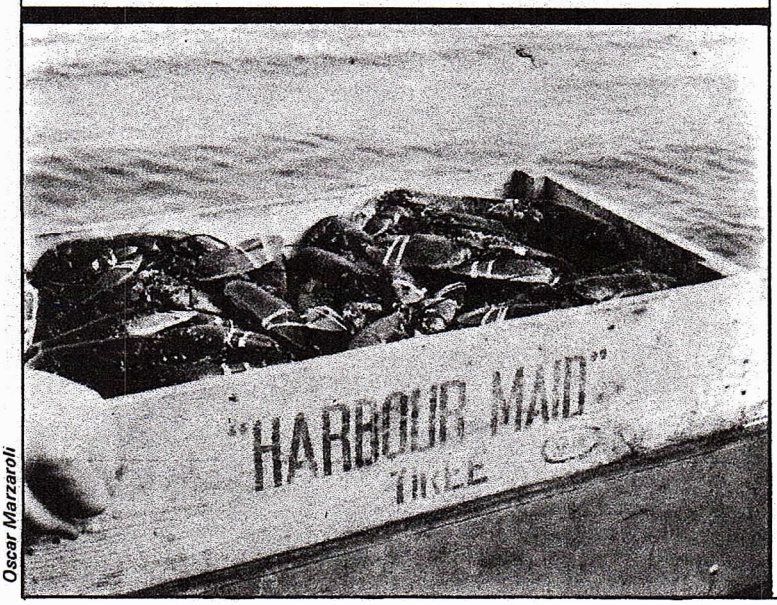
land drained, fences and stone walls kept in good repair, and a famous fold of pedigree Highland cattle established, all with a minimum of aid from public funds. In 1963 Campbell wrote in a letter to me, 'Today is the 25th anniversary of our taking over Canna. I know very well there were people who didn't expect us to last over 6 years! It was touch and go at times, but we had luck in various ways that balanced the disasters. The first 12 years were the hardest!'

During the Campbells' ownership Canna has become the Mecca for those who are interested in Hebridean archaeology, Gaelic oral literature, island farming, ornithology, botany, and entomology, a subject to which Campbell himself, aided by a light trap, has made some intersting contributions in his booklet *Macrolepidoptera Cannae* (1970). Throughout this time, the Campbells' policy has been to encourage persons and societies who wanted to study such subjects, especially Hebridean wildlife, to visit the island, often camping, in order to do so in peace and quiet amongst undisturbed surroundings, while at the same time resisting the pressures of mass tourism, which could destroy the fragile atmosphere of Canna and its ecology.

Meanwhile, literary labours have continued. In 1963 with the collaboration of Professor Derick Thomson, Campbell published *Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands*, based on Lhuyd's notes, discovered in Dublin, of his trip to Scotland in 1699-70 (Lhuyd's diaries had been lost). Of greater popular interest was *Strange Things*, an account of the Society of Psychical Research's enquiry into Highland Second Sight in the 1890s, and the misuse by the Society's agent, Ada Goodrich Freer, of Fr Allan McDonald's folklore collections in various lectures and articles under her own name. This book was written in collaboration with the well-known student of odd happenings, Dr Trevor H. Hall. Another MS copied by Lhuyd, *A Collection of Highland Rites and Customes*, was edited by Campbell for the Folklore Society in 1975.

But his most substantial labour, now nearing completion, has been the great collection of waulking songs from South Uist and Barra which he is editing with Francis Collinson the well-known musicologist, partly from his own recordings and partly from earlier MS collections such as Fr Allan's. The last real waulkings were held in the Hebrides in the 1950s, but Campbell's recordings go back to 1937, and he knew some of the last exponents, to whom he has dedicated his work. The first volume appeared in 1969, the second in 1977, and the third is now in the press. ●



Oscar Marzaroli

'Ma dh'fhagas mi Tiriodh tuilleadh fagaidh mi gu buileach e — theid mi a New Zealand neo a dh'aiteigin mar sin.' Faithnichidh tu anns an spot nach ann gun stri a dh'fhagadh Eachunn MacPhail eilean arach; cha b'ann air son sin a thill e ann an deidh ceithir bliadhna deug 'na sheoladair air feadh an t-saoghail.

Ach faithnichidh tu cuideachd nach eil an smuain gur docha gum feum e fhagail latha-eigin fada bho chul inntinn aig am sam bith. Chan eil beatha an iasgair ach mi-chinnteach mas as fhearr e, agus chan eil beatha an Tirisdich a tha ri iasgach ach mi-chinnteach buileach.

Se duine mor 'na bhodhaig a th'ann an Eachunn, duine tha saor le bheachdan agus deas air a theanga. Tha fhios aige de tha dhith air is tha e uaireannan mi-fhoighidneach leis cho slaodach 's a tha cuisean a' tighinn gu buil. Tha sin ri thuigsinn oir tha Eachunn air an iasgach a chaidh bas an Tiriodh an 1914 a thoirt beo a rithist — an ire mhath leis fhein!

Nuair a thill e dhachaidh bho mhuir an 1969 bha ealas mara aige ach cha robh eolas iasgaich, agus cha robh duine an Tiriodh a bheireadh dha e. Ach cha do chuir sin bacadh air. Cheannaich e seann eithir an Uibhist is thug e bheo-shlaint aiste aig na giomaich is e ag ionnsachadh a chiuirde aig an aon am. Nuair a bhiodh e am Malaig neo 'san. Oban bhiodh e a' togail gach eolas a b'urrainn dha bho na h-iasgairean eile.

An ceann tri bliadhna bha e air bata na bu mhotha cheannach le cobhair bho Bhord na Gaidhealtachd, agus an diugh tha e a' ruagadh nan cuantan cho fada amuigh ri Hiort le te nas motha buileach, an "Alice Robert" anns am bheil leth-cheud troigh.

'Chan eil na giomaich fiadhaich pailt mu Thiriodh is Colla, grunnd bog a th'ann le cus gainmhich,' canaidh e. 'Mar sin bidh sinn gle thric amuigh mu chladaichean Bharraidh is na Hearadh, is a' dol amach cho fada ri Hiort. Tha grunnd math, creagach an sin.'

Ach chan eil e soirbh bata cho mor ris an "Alice Robert" obrachadh amach a Tiriodh oir chan eil acairseid shabhailte ann do dh'eithir moran os cionn sia deug thar fhichead troigh. Ged a tha an seann chidhe an Sgairinnis ag coimhead seasmhach gu leoir bidh na suallaichean a' bristeadh thairis air nuair a tha an stoirm bho dheas. Se eilean air leth lom a tha an Tiriodh, is gle thric feadh a' gheamhraidh feumaidh Eachunn am bata fhagail an Tobar-mhoire neo an Cearara, rud a tha gle dhuilich.

'Bidh daoine tric ag radhtainn rium: 'Ach nach fhaod thu obrachadh amach as an Oban mar a bhios iasgairean a' chost an ear a' deanamh?" Rud a bhios iad a' diochuimhneachadh is e gum faod muinntir Cheann-phadruig ceangal suas aig cidhe an Obain, leum astigh do char, is draibheadh dhachaidh aig deireadh na seachdain.'

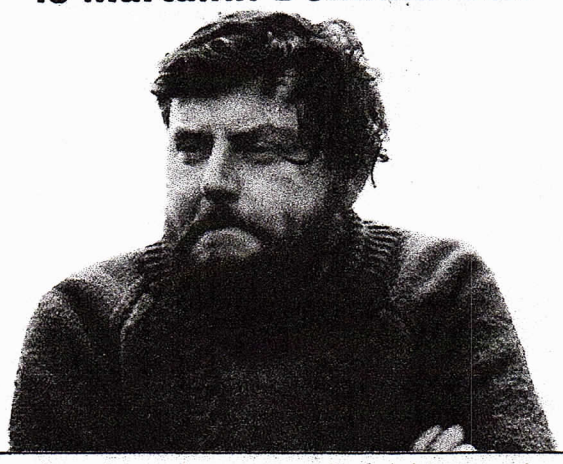
An drasda bidh Eachunn ag cur nan giomach air tir aig a' phort as fhaisge, a reir caite am bheil e ag iasgach. Mar sin tha iad air a dhol air tir an Leodhus, an Uibhist, an Ile, agus shios mu Chluaidh; ach mar as trice bidh e deanamh air an Oban. Ach tha e am beachd fiachainn ri'n toirt air tir aig an tigh, an Tiriodh. Tha e air lorg fhaighinn air marsanta a Sunderland a tha deonach pleine chur a Thiriodh 'gan togail ma gheibh e luchd mile punnd de ghiomaich comhla.

An doigh tha Eachunn an diugh ag caoidh nach do ghabh e an cothrom bho chionn tri bliadhna bata ur a cheannach son a dhol dha'n iasg gheal. B'e an t-aobhar bu mhotha chuir stad air gum feumadh e Tiriodh fhagail a chionn 's gum biodh am bata ro mhor son a cumail ann.

'Ach a bharrachd air sin bho chionn tri bliadhna bha luchd an eisg ghil ann an nadur de staing agus bha iasgairean a' ghiomaich a' deanamh gle mhath. Bha prisean a' ghiomaich ag eiridh a reir luach a' not agus cha robh pris an eisg ghil. Bha moran stri aig an fheadhainn a

Eachunn MacPhail, iasgair Thiriodh

le Martainn Domhnallach



Oscar Marzaroli

bhas sas 'san iasgach son cumail a' dol is mar sin chuir mise romham leantuinn ris an t-seors iasgaich air an robh mi eolach.'

'Ach re nam bliadhnaichean tha cuisean ag atharrachadh is a nise is ann aig luchd a' ghiomaich a tha an dragh agus tha na h-iasgairean eile a' deanamh gle mhath. Shaoileam aig an am gur e an rud ceart a rinn mi ach le suil air ais a nise tha e follaiseach nach e. Rud bu choir dhomh a bhith air a dheanamh se mo dhachaidh a ghluasad a Thobar-mhoire agus am bata ur seo obrachadh amach a sin — neo a Mhalaig neo dha'n Oban — ach de am math dhomh a bhith air tilleadh dhachaidh idir nam feumainn sin a dheanamh?'

Mar sin tha Eachunn MacPhail, an seoladair a thill, an Tiriodh fhathast a dh'aindeoin gach duilgheadas — agus tha dhachaidh ann. Se ban-Thirisdeach a thill dhachaidh a theagasg Gaidhlig an sgoil Chornaig-mhoir a tha posda aige, Florag NicDhomhnaill mar a bh'innte; agus tha dithis theaghlach og aca, Calum agus Niall, agus iad a' sreap ri tri bliadhna agus ris a' bhliadhna.

Bha Eachunn air ceithir bliadhna deug a chur seachad ag cuartachadh an t-saoghail mus do bhuail e air nach robh an sin ach faoineas is beo-shlaint ri dheanamh aig an tigh, doirbh 's gum faodadh i bhith. Tha e fhathast ag cur ioghnadh air cho deonach 's a tha an oigridh an t-eilean fhagail.

'Ach chan urrainn dhomhsa sin a dheanamh. Chan ann do na h-iasgairean a tha Cal-Mac a' ruith na h-aiseagan aca idir! Ma cheanglas mise suas anns an Oban air oidhche h-Aoine, tha mi dol air bord na h-aiseig 'sa mhadainn is a' faighinn dhachaidh feasgar Di-sathurna. Chan fhaigh mi air ais a rithist dha'n Oban gu Di-mairt is tha Di-ciadain agam mus ruig mi an grunnd iasgaich. Ma chuireas mi na cleibh Di-ciadain chan urrainn dhomh an togail gu'n ath latha is tha sin ag ciallachadh nach eil mo cheud latha cosnaidh dhe'n t-seachdain agam gu Di-ardaoin.'

'Tha sin ag ciallachadh gum feum mi cumail orm ag iasgach aig deireadh na seachdain, is ma chailleas mi latha neo dha le droch aimsir 'sa gheamhradh cha bhidh giomaich gu leoir agam aig deireadh an darna seachdain is fhiach an cur air tir. Mar sin uaireannan bidh an treas seachdain agam aig an iasgach is nuair a ruigeas mi Tiriodh air an aiseig Di-sathurna chan fhaigh mi air tir le droch aimsir is cha bhidh air ach tilleadh dha'n Oban. Uaireannan tha mi cho fada air falbh air chuairt is ged a bhithinn aig muir a rithist!'

Chan eil a 'na ioghnadh mar sin gum biodh Eachunn a' stri son acairseid dhoigheil fhaighinn an Tiriodh. Chaidh sgrudadh is ath-sgrudadh a dheanamh air cairidh a thogail 'sa Chaolas ach cha do thachair cail fhathast. An toiseach bha an t-Arm dol a dheanamh na h-obrach ach tharruing iad as. A nise se Bord na Gaidhealtachd an aon dochas a th'aig Eachunn.

'Tha e fiadhaich neonach leamsa gum faod iad £250,000 a thoirt do dh'iasgair son bata a cheannach is nach fhaod iad suim moran nas lugha chosg air cidhe far an laigh i gu sabhailte. Bho chionn tri bliadhna bha am Bord deonach £114,000 a thoirt dhomh son bata ur anns am biodh leth-cheud is ceithir troigh a rachadh gu'n iasg gheal, — an t-airgiod sin a thoirt dhomh son bata nach b'urrainn dhomh a chumail an Tiriodh! Tha e fiadhaich neonach.'

Tha am Bord ag aideachadh gum bheil cion acairseid ag cur bacadh air Tiriodh a thaobh an iasgaich is tha iad a nise rannsachadh dhoighean air cidhe thogail ann. Nan tachradh sin, tha Eachunn a' smaoineachadh, cha bhiodh dragh sam bith nach tigeadh an t-iasgach beo a rithist. Fiu's le cuisean mar a tha iad lean a bhrathair-ceile cleas Eachuinn agus cheannaich e bata; eadar an da bhata tha sianar Thirisdich nise ag cosnadh an lon aig na giomaich.

'Se Barraidh an t-eilean as coltaiche ruinn,' thuirt Eachunn. 'Tha iadsan air deagh adhartas a dheanamh leis an iasgach agus tha an aon eolas againne air seoladaireachd 's a bh'acasan nuair a thoisich iad. Tha gu leoir dhaoine againn a' seoladh a bhiodh deonach tilleadh agus tha gu leoir de dhaoine oga a' fagail na sgoile a dh'obraicheadh air bord bata iasgaich.'

'Se rud neonach a th'ann mar a bhios daoine fagail Thiriodh son a dhol a dh'obair air tir-mor. Nuair a dh'fhagas iad an sgoil se a cheud rud tha fa-near dhaibh an aiseag a ghabhail is cosnadh fhaighinn nach paigh dhaibh ach £20 'san t-seachdain — £1,000 'sa bhliadhna. Dh'fhaodadh iad fuireach aig an tigh, tighinn air bord bata iasgaich agus £2,000 'sa bhliadhna chosnadh anns an spot.'

Ach tha an t-eilean dha'n do thill Eachunn eadar-dhealaichte bho'n eilean a dh'fhag e. Fiu's an aite cho iomallach ri Tiriodh tha cuisean ag atharrachadh beag is beag agus tha Eachunn gu math amharusach mu chuid dhe na h-atharrachaidhean. Chan eil e a' faicinn gum bheil e a' deanamh feum sam bith do na Tirisdich gum bheil coigrich air toiseachadh air tighean a cheannach, mar as trice son an cumail falamh son leth-cheud seachdain 'sa bhliadhna.

Agus uaireannan cuideachd bidh e a' fas an-fhoiseil. Bidh a cho-eileanaich ag cur chais air corr uair leis cho socair 's a bhios iad ag gabhail chuisean, rud a tha nadurrach gu leoir, is docha, ann an duine a chuir car neo dha dhe'n t-saoghal mus robh e fichead bliadhna dh'aois. Agus rud a tha nadurrach cuideachd ann am fear a thill 's a chuir a thaic 'na ghairdean fhein son a bheo-shlaint a lorg.

'Tha cus dhe'n fhasan ann a bhith a' bruidheann air na rudan a dh'fhaodadh "iadsan" a dheanamh dhuinn — deanadh "iadsan" sud, deanadh "iadsan" seo — an aite a bhith ag carachadh far ar toin 's 'ga dheanamh sinn fhein!' canaidh e.

Cha b'ann le suidhe air a thoin a thug Eachunn MacPhail iasgach Thiriodh beo a rithist. Is docha gun toir an ath char a chuireas e dheth a New Zealand e. Ach is neonach leam gun tachair sin. Se an eiginn a bheireadh air Eachunn gluasad a rithist. Tha a dhilseachd 's a fhreumhaichean fuaighte ri Tiriodh. ●