THE RING NET : RING NET HERRING FISHING ON THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND ; A DOCUMENTARY EXHIBITION BY WILL MACLEAN

Patricia Allerston

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MLitt at the University of St Andrews

1991

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THE RING NET

Ring Net Herring Fishing on the West Coast of Scotland

A Documentary Exhibition by WILL MACLEAN

Third Eye Centre, 350 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow 25 Jan - 4 Mar 1978

THE RING NET BY WILL MACLEAN

PATRICIA ALLERSTON

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE

DEGREE OF M.LITT IN GALLERY STUDIES AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

MAY 1990
ABSTRACT.

This dissertation focuses on The Ring Net, a documentary exhibition by the artist Will Maclean. The Ring Net is a collection of drawings, photographs and printed plans numbering more than three hundred and forty items, which was originally shown at the Third Eye Centre, Glasgow in 1978. It subsequently toured to various venues, mostly in Scotland, and was later bought by The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh where it is presently held.

The project is based on a particular method of sea fishing which used to be practised on the West Coast of Scotland. The subject of fishing is a consistent feature in the work of Maclean, although this particular undertaking is somewhat unusual as the artist has chosen a documentary approach. The initial period of research for the project was enabled by an Edinburgh-based charitable organisation, the Scottish International Education Trust. The artist continued to work on the project for some time afterwards, and the eventual exhibition was not shown until four and a half years later.

The aim of this dissertation is to look at The Ring Net in its context. The period of its making is explored in some depth, as is the showing of the project at the Third Eye Centre and the various venues included in its tour. Though the methods and media used in The Ring Net are discussed, they do not constitute the main objective of the work. More space has been devoted to the documentary aspect of the project and the effect this had on the finished result. Unpublished sources such as a series of letters from the artist to a collaborator in Kintyre have been used to some extent.
DECLARATIONS.

i) I, Patricia Allerston, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 30,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date 22/5/90 Signature of candidate

ii) I was admitted as a candidate for the degree of M.Litt. in October 1989 the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between June 1989 and May 1990.

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iii) I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of M.Litt. in the University of St. Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date Signature of supervisor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

A great many people have helped me in my researches for this dissertation. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Will Maclean. Not only did he consent to being interviewed, he also went to great lengths looking out information and kindly lent material to aid me in my studies. In the final stages, he checked through chapters three, four and five for inaccuracies, making valuable suggestions without altering the substance. This must have been particularly difficult for him as much of those chapters was based on letters he wrote many years ago, and had not read since. I would also like to thank Angus Martin. His willingness to contribute information and the promptness with which he replied to various queries was greatly appreciated. His lending of the Argyll letters proved of seminal importance to this work. During my stay in Kintyre he arranged several interviews with people connected to fishing and made every effort to ensure that I got to know Campbeltown and the surrounding area. I am also in debt to him and his family, Judy, Sarah and Amelia for their hospitality and for making me so welcome in their home.

My thanks go to the following people who were willing to be interviewed, Sylvia Stevenson, Alan Woods. Margaret Mackay, Valerie Gillies, Richard Demarco, Douglas Hall, and in Kintyre, Archie Paterson, Lachie Paterson and Denis Meenham.

I also received great help from the staffs of various galleries. In this respect I would especially like to mention Richard Calvocoressi and the curators at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art who showed great trust in giving me unlimited access to The Ring Net. Fiona Pearson, Keeper of the Prints and Drawings Collection, patiently helped with the
many boxes containing the project, and generously shared her office with me for the whole of the summer of 1989. I am indebted to Patrick Elliott for taking the photographs and for his advice. Claus Runkel and the staff at Runkel-Hue-Williams Ltd. in London, sent a great deal of information including catalogues. I am also grateful to Catharine Niven at Inverness Museum and Gallery, David Scruton at Dundee, Roddy Murray at an Lanntair and Anne Barlow at the Scottish Arts Council. The staff at the Crawford Arts Centre were very encouraging in the early stages of my research and particularly Diana Sykes, who not only suggested that I look at The Ring when I expressed an interest in the work of Will Maclean, but also gave me the benefit of her experience within the SAC.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of St. Andrews, my supervisor Dr. Tom Normand and Professor Martin Kemp. Dawn Waddell deserves a special mention and her help has been very much appreciated.
ABBREVIATIONS.

Main text and illustrations:

Arg. Argyll letters - correspondence between Will Maclean and Angus Martin.
CR Claus Runkel.
GMA Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.
RN The Ring Net.
RSA Royal Scottish Academy.
SAC Scottish Arts Council.
SIET Scottish International Education Trust.
SSA Society of Scottish Artists.
WN Will Maclean.

Appendix Three - The Ring Net list of works:

CN Campbeltown.
Half-mounted Mounted on board with a paper cover for easier storage.
I/S Image size.
IF/S Inner frame size.
P/S Paper size.
RNC The Ring Net catalogue.
RNF The Ring-Net Fishermen. Angus Martin's book. (note fig. refers to book illustrations.)
TT Tarbert.

The names included in the lists of photographs were the original lenders.
LAMENT FOR THE HERRING

for Will Maclean

Since you have gone,
the sea has no great fire
in its mouth.

In the memory of gannets
your twisting, flashing knives
are rust in darkened crevices.

Whale and porpoise follow you
on the ebb-tide of extinction,
their song going out like echoes.

ANGUS MARTIN. (Unpublished)
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.

As its title suggests, *The Ring Net - Ring Net Herring Fishing on the West Coast of Scotland, A Documentary Exhibition* by Will Maclean is a documentary project based on a particular method of sea fishing. *The Ring Net* is a collection of drawings, photographs and printed plans, comprising more than three hundred and forty items. The ensemble was first exhibited at The Third Eye Centre, Glasgow in 1978, and was subsequently shown in Edinburgh, Leeds, Campbeltown, Tarbert and Inverness. The project was purchased by The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (GMA) in 1979 and a selection of works from it shown by that institution at its new Belford Road premises in 1986.

*The Ring Net* focuses on the practice of ring-net fishing. This was a technique which developed in the 1830s on the West Coast of Scotland and which became the dominant form of herring fishing in that area. It was an active method of catching fish, evolving from the more passive drift-net technique. Rather than setting nets and waiting for the herring to swim into them as in drift-netting, the ring-netters went looking for the fish. When found, they set the net around the shoal, hence the name. Locating the fish was far from easy. At first, fishermen depended on natural signs such as the feeding habits of gannets (fig 1), and became highly skilled in their detection. Over the years the method developed from a shore-based operation using crudely adapted drift-nets, into a highly sophisticated deep-water method exploiting the latest developments in engineering and electronic equipment. Maclean's *The Ring Net* covers the whole of this period and also records the changes in equipment and methods used to catch the fish.
Maclean was born in 1941 in Inverness. He studied at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, from 1961-65 and then took a post-graduate course at Hospitalfield School of Art, Arbroath, in the summer of 1965. By 1973 when he began The Ring Net project, Maclean's work had already been widely exhibited. He had shown at the New 57 and Richard Demarco Galleries in Edinburgh, had exhibited at various venues in Fife and had submitted regularly to exhibitions held by the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA), the Society of Scottish Artists (SSA) and the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour (RSW) in Edinburgh. Maclean was given the opportunity to undertake The Ring Net by a grant from the Scottish International Education Trust (SIET), a charitable organisation set up in 1971 on the initiative of the actor Sean Connery. When he made the proposal for the project Maclean was working as an art teacher at Bell Baxter School in Cupar, Fife. The SIET grant allowed him a six month period free from teaching, enabling him to conduct on-site research on the West Coast. He continued on the project after his return to Bell Baxter. The Ring Net was not exhibited until January 1978.

The resultant project is a major work and has been described as: "perhaps the most important piece of art on a large scale that's been done for many a year". Although it was undertaken by an artist and exhibited in a gallery, it is not a typical artistic undertaking. The documentary approach adopted by Maclean had an enormous effect on the visual aspect of the project. Moreover, The Ring Net is a serious venture: it presents the history of ring-netting in an objective fashion, showing little trace of nostalgic or romantic concerns. Though sea and coastal themes have a long tradition in Scottish art, The Ring Net has no real precursors in the visual arts. There have, however, been literary predecessors. As Tom McGrath pointed out in the 1978 Ring Net exhibition catalogue, the
novelist Neil M. Gunn is the obvious example. Though The Ring Net is the first large visual project of its type based on the Loch Fyne area, it is not the first attempt at incorporating the region's fishing industry into an artistic context. Naomi Mitchison's The Alban Goes Out and George Campbell Hay's Wind on Loch Fyne reveal similar concerns.

This dissertation looks at The Ring Net in its context. Although formal aspects of the project and the methods and media employed in its making are discussed, they are not the central theme. Instead, it explores how The Ring Net fits into Maclean's career and looks also at the period of its making which covered several years. The showing of the project and its eventual acquisition by the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art are discussed in the fourth chapter. Since the project is quite unusual from an artistic point of view, it has been felt necessary to go beyond formal techniques in order to gain an adequate understanding of its meaning. For example, the extended period of its making had a considerable influence on the final work, so this aspect has been covered at some length. Such an approach is justifiable given that the artist's criteria were often affected by non-artistic considerations.

Sources.

Although The Ring Net took up a considerable amount of Maclean's time and effort in the mid 1970s, surprisingly little was (or has been) written about it. The catalogue of the original exhibition is very slight, and though it gives some details on the method of ring-net fishing, it sheds little light on the project itself. The Ring Net works themselves contain a wealth of information, and considerable insight was gained by studying them systematically at the GMA. For example, the inclusion of oral texts written on to the works indicated some of the techniques involved in their
creation, while the sheer number of items revealed the amount of time devoted to the project. Letters in the GMA archives concerning the acquisition of The Ring Net gave important contemporary evidence for this aspect of the exhibition's subsequent life.4

Given the paucity of written information on The Ring Net, considerable emphasis has been placed on interviews. Will Maclean has been extremely helpful, answering many questions and also providing relevant information as and when it was requested (such as the sketches drawn by ring-net fishermen to explain aspects of the technique). Angus Martin, who greatly assisted Maclean in the making of the project, was also most helpful, agreeing to interviews and answering countless specific queries. Sylvia Stevenson proved an invaluable aid, giving additional information on the period of the exhibition and on general aspects of Maclean's career. Her rich collection of works by the artist enabled further insight into the artistic background behind The Ring Net. Alan Woods and Valerie Gillies at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art furnished valuable information on Maclean's artistic background, while Douglas Hall and Margaret Mackay provided additional information on the acquisition and eventual showing of The Ring Net at the GMA. Richard Demarco gave his own inimitable version of the proceedings.

However, the most vital source material was that provided by Angus Martin of Campbeltown. This comprised a box containing letters sent from Maclean to Martin and also several carbon copy replies covering the whole period of their collaboration. Starting with the artist's first communication of 23 February 1974 requesting information on ring-netting, these letters span the period of research, eventually covering the Third Eye showing and tour, and continue up to the publishing of Martin's book The Ring Net.
Fishermen in 1981. They also include other items such as exhibition invitations and a photocopied letter of recommendation from the SIET. Numbering more than one hundred and seventy items, they have proved of inestimable value. Not only do they constitute important contemporary source material, allowing an accurate picture of the proceedings, they also provide information on aspects of the project subsequently forgotten by those involved. Thanks to these letters the background to the project has become much more accessible, and a more reasoned analysis of the project and its place within the career of the artist has been allowed.
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER ONE.


2. For example, see the artist and the sea - Inspiration from the Scottish coast (sic) a SAC Travelling Gallery Exhibition. selected by Duncan Macmillan in 1980.

3. For example, compare to the treatment of the area and themes in the works of James Kay and William MacTaggart in the same 1980 SAC catalogue.

4. The Alban Goes Out. Edinburgh, 1939. Mitchison's poem dedicated to the Carradale ring-net fishing fleet was named after a local boat. She read it to the local fishermen at various stages in its making to get their reactions and check on technical details. The illustrations by Gertrude Hermes include woodcuts of diving gannets and boats fishing at night. Wind on Loch Fyne. Edinburgh, 1948. Campbell Hay's book of poems based on the area includes several about the fishermen and their work such as "To a Loch Fyne Fisherman". Angus Martin has described Campbell Hay's fascination with ring-netting in his introduction to a new publication of the poet's Seaker Reaper. He mentions that Campbell Hay frequently went out on a Tarbert skiff Liberator and that Seaker Reaper was conceived during a particular night's fishing. His father, John MacDougall Hay had similar interests as can be seen by two newspaper articles: "A Night with the Herring Fisheries". Campbeltown Courier 2 October 1901 and "With Loch Fyne Men" Glasgow Evening News 19 September 1903.

5. The GMA correspondence comprises letters from the artist and carbon copies of letters sent to the artist. They are all dated and are numbered according to date, with the exception of 33/13a which appears to have been misdated.

6. Arg.147.

7. They continue afterwards but are much less in number.

8. Arg.78.

9. The letters are not organised chronologically and are very rarely dated. For convenience, I have numbered them according to their order in the box and refer to them as 'Arg'. I have quoted quite extensively from the letters. My punctuation follows that given in the letters.
In his statement for the Scottish Arts Council's artist file written on 12 January 1973, Will Maclean gave no indication that he was intending to embark on a major documentary investigation of ring-net fishing that same year. On the contrary, he stated:

"My work is figurative and is based upon experiences from my life, or from reaction to things experienced. At present I am moving towards starker more symbolic images."¹

Maclean's work of this time bears out this description. For example, Last Banquet (fig 2) painted in 1972, is a surreal, disquieting interior containing a stag's skull set against a podium, with another painting of an empty chair as a backdrop. Its restraint and tight composition, coupled with the strange atmosphere owe more than a passing debt to De Chirico. It could not be more different from The Ring Net.

However, the use of fishing and the sea as a source of subject matter was a feature of Maclean's work at the time. The Four Figurative Painters exhibition held at the Richard Demarco Gallery at the end of 1970 (the show which brought the artist to notice), demonstrates how fertile a source it proved. More than half of the twenty-eight pieces shown had some connection with the sea. An early interview of January 1969 indicates that this interest began to manifest itself in Maclean's work during 1968.² The same talk also reveals the artist's particular attraction to ring-netting. The interviewer informs us:

"In one (painting), the boats are seen working together as in ring netting. Set against each other at completely different angles.... each boat, as it dips up and down is suggested by one or a few prominent shapes - perhaps by a funnel, or the yellow square of the hold... the use of very bright patches of colour set against the deep green of the sea adds to the dramatic effect."³
Many of the specific topics eventually covered by the project were also of interest to the artist before he began his exhaustive research. In the same interview of 1969 he records his preoccupation with the weather, the sea, the type of water, the effects of wind action on the water, and even the fishermen’s dependence on gannets and other signs used to find the fish.

Although Maclean’s work had not focused on these themes before 1968, they had nevertheless been intrinsic to his artistic development. He explained in 1969: "I’ve been involved with fishing boats all my life. But it wasn’t until this last year that I’ve been able to translate my ideas visually about fishing boats." The development of ideas is an essential aspect of Maclean’s work. The gestatory period of a particular piece can take many months with a great deal of effort involved in the formation of the central idea. An overview of Maclean’s career reveals that certain ideas are constantly returned to and reworked, using different media if necessary, suggesting that the gestatory period of the idea transcends individual works. It constitutes a lifelong commitment. For example, the Four Figurative Painters exhibition of 1970 contained a work called Lost Heritage, 1970. At the 1990 exhibition at the Runkel-Hue-Williams Gallery in London a piece called Emigrant’s Voyage, 1987 was displayed. This concentration on the history of the Highland Clearances with its accompanying exile of countless Highlanders is one such core concern. It can be charted throughout Maclean’s career, and appears in such works as Memorial for a Clearance Village, 1975, West Highland Memorabilia, 1977, Pouch for an Exile, 1980, and perhaps in I Didn’t Go Willingly - I went Sad ly of 1973.
In this context The Ring Net can be seen to comprise a natural progression in Maclean's work. The 1969 interview shows that he had attempted drawings of the ring-netting technique two years prior to actually working on the boats after art college. It also demonstrates that he saw his paintings of 1968 as developments on these early drawings. The period concurrent with the making of The Ring Net produced many other works connected to the theme, such as Nightmare for a Herring, 1974 (reworked 1987), Song for the Solan, 1977 and Metamorphic Bird, 1977. Moreover, the 1990 Runkel-Hue-Williams exhibition revealed that Maclean still derives inspiration from the subject. A particular work, Fisherman Listening for Herring, 1989, refers to one of the 'appearances' which alerted the fishermen to a shoal (fig 3).

Although the project came into being when 'conceptual art' was a dominant artistic trend (and Maclean acknowledges a debt to Paul Neagu), its conception was not overtly influenced by current developments in the avant-garde. Given the emphatically documentary aspect of the project, it is perhaps not so surprising to learn that Maclean was more interested in the scientific voyages of Captain Cook and the works produced by his illustrators. Indeed, Richard Demarco recently defined The Ring Net as "a work of scientific investigation." 10

Though the meticulously factual basis of The Ring Net was new, the emphasis on producing works from real life was not such a radical departure. It was, and is, the mainstay of Maclean's work. He has said of the subject:

"Any art any artist creates can only be a reflection of his experience. My experience has been my involvement in life in the Highlands and involvement with the sea. I am now experimenting with modern art techniques to express my ideas." 11
Maclean, like Cook's illustrators, is an empiricist. He is uninterested in art for its own sake, or as Edward Gage put it: "Maclean is someone who is not content merely to intellectualise about language or convey aesthetic pleasure." The artistic methods are a means of expressing ideas, not an end in themselves. By 1969, he looked upon his time at Aberdeen as a period of training, a coming to grips with particular media and developing a facility in their use. In a sense he looked upon other artists, for example Alan Davie and William Scott in the same light. He explained:

"I went to art school at 20, not having drawn really since I was 14. Art School was a struggle to catch up and come to terms with the materials. It wasn't til Hospitalfield that I felt I could do with paint what I wanted to do. From then on I've been building up my own way of looking." 

As Maclean laid out in his statement for the SAC's artist register in January 1973, this way of looking was based on real experiences. One of the few other Scottish artists following a similar path at this time was John Bellany.

The subjects Maclean chooses to depict come both from personal experience and from the experiences of the Highlanders in general. His father, John Maclean, was a Master Mariner, Harbour Master at Inverness, and owner of a fishing boat worked by others. The artist spent every summer with his mother's fishing relatives in Skye, where his family moved after the death of his father in 1962. Given this background, it is hardly surprising that sea themes and fishing, especially ring-net fishing, feature prominently in Maclean's work. Moreover, in addition to the time he spent in the Merchant Navy, and his childhood experiences on his uncle's boat, he also spent a season working as a cook on fishing boats before embarking on his travelling scholarship in 1966. He explained his bias in 1969:

"I'm attracted to them (fishermen) because basically I'm one of them - by
hereditary (sic) on both sides. This background not only made Maclean uniquely fitted to tackle The Ring Net, it is also responsible for the initial selection of ring-netting as suitable subject matter.

Will Maclean's personal experience of fishing enables him to present an insider's view. Since he also feels a personal involvement with the history of the Highlanders, he explores this subject with a certain authority. While it might seem strange to an outsider quite how fresh and raw are the memories of incidents which happened so long ago, one has only to read Sorley Maclean's "Hallaig" to realise that Will Maclean is not so unusual in this regard, that memories are long in the Highlands, and grievances not forgotten. This context is of paramount importance to the work of Maclean, and should not be underestimated. As put by the artist himself in 1978: "I realise that if anybody wants to understand what fully drives me then there's a lot of background that one would need to know about."

The growth of the fishing industry in the Highlands had a reciprocal relationship to the clearances from the land. For many communities it was the only alternative to emigration. But it was not an easy process of transition. The development of the necessary skills and an understanding of the elements took time. This is the context of ring-net fishing. A highly effective means of catching fish, ring-net fishing was heavily dependent on the instincts of the fishermen and represented an important stage in this transition. The Ring Net records the development of the method from its early beginnings. For example, its treatment of innovations in locating the fish can be seen in Appearances 2: Means of Detecting Herring - Aids, Night and Day (fig 4). Though it was not originally intended to be anything other than an objective record of that
particular type of fishing, the finished result perfectly complements this historical perspective. It therefore also complements the artist's other works based on the history of the Highlands.

Maclean's works of this genre frequently take the form of memorials or elegies to a passing way of life. Often melancholic, occasionally unashamedly nostalgic, these works reveal the sense of responsibility felt by the artist towards this task. He wrote on the subject to Angus Martin:

"To have been permitted to know the sweetness and joy of a highland village, then to see its death throes and watch the carrion pick at its bones is the stuff of great novels but a constant source of pain."19

Of Martin's efforts in the ring-net research he commented: "You understand your role as a cypher and approach it with awe and humility and sensitivity tempered with practical experience."20 In many ways this can be seen as Maclean's aim in dealing with his history -- part witness, part oracle. During the making of The Ring Net, the practice of ring-net fishing itself became obsolete, though the artist had been unaware of the likelihood of this happening when he began his research. Thus Maclean came to witness, at firsthand, yet another passing feature of Highland life. It can be seen then that The Ring Net project fits, somewhat unexpectedly, into this commemorating category.
1. Scottish Arts Council's Artist Register, Will Maclean file.
2. "... Will's work has lately centred around the theme of sea fishing." "Future Plans etc.", A Talk with William McLean (sic) dated January 1969 last page. This talk was found in the SAC file, it was conducted by Philip Wright, the current Director of the SAC.
3. Ibid last page. The "funnel" referred to may be the wheelhouse.
5. See Arg.102 and Arg.14.
6. A Talk with William McLean p.3.
7. Will Maclean Sculptures and Box Constructions 1974-1987 catalogue gives the date of Metamorphic Bird as 1978, however the SAC's Travelling Gallery leaflet accompanying its 1978 exhibition which included the work gives 1977. The piece referred to a relative's boat based on the natural design of a herring gull (see figs 38,62a,81). A Solan Goose is a gannet see (fig 49).
8. Neagu was also linked to the Richard Demarco Gallery at the same time as the artist.
9. Interview 18/4/90. William Daniell was one such illustrator. Maclean was recently involved in producing a print based on one of Daniell's aquatints of the Scottish Coast for a joint venture organised by Peacock Printmakers and Aberdeen Art Gallery.
10. Interview 1/5/90.
12. The Eye in the Wind p.74.
14. Ibid. p.3.
15. "Art for art's sake never seems to work for me, just making art without further causes to make it - that's one reason why I see John Bellany as the finest Scottish artist of his generation." "Will Maclean interviewed by Alan Woods", Alba Summer 1988 p.39.
"I belong to a... coastal culture and I've been brought up at sea and by the sea and amongst people who are involved in the sea and I have a strong feeling of... place there." Arena, BBC2 programme featuring Will Maclean originally scheduled to be shown January 1978.
18. Ibid.
19. Arg.135.
20. Arg.110.
CHAPTER THREE: THE MAKING OF THE RING NET I.

The Scottish International Education Trust (SIET) grant was awarded to enable Will Maclean to make "a visual record of aspects of Scottish Ring Net fishing." Anyone coming to the project without prior knowledge of its form might be somewhat surprised at the finished work. Not only does it differ from Maclean's previous work, it more resembles a technical manual based on painstaking research, than an artist's undertaking. Indeed in 1978 Edward Gage described the project as: "...a piece of research which might seem to have come straight from the Campbeltown Museum rather than the Third Eye Centre in Glasgow..." In comparison with Stanley Spencer's Clydeside panels 'commissioned' to record wartime activity in Glasgow's shipyards, the artist is conspicuous by his absence.

Like Spencer, Maclean became obsessed by his subject. The Ring Net represents an undertaking of massive proportions, consisting of photographs, drawings, plans, diagrams and models, numbering more than three hundred and forty items. The scope of the project belies the original brief. Rather than tackling particular aspects of ring-netting, the artist concerned himself with everything, from the equipment used by the fishermen to the food they ate. He even considered their cures for salt water boils. He wrote of the subject to Angus Martin:

"Nothing must escape us -- from the makers names of the stove and cooking pot, to the Brand of tobacco that the men used in their pipes -- were they clay or Briar pipes -- did they all Have the little metal lids that my grandfather had even as an old man..."

The project presents the entire history of ring-netting, from its stormy beginnings in the early nineteenth century to its recent demise. It
demonstrates the development of the fishing method over time, along with related changes in equipment used, and records ways of detecting the fish since rendered obsolete by technological advances. In addition to the fishermen and their activities at sea, he also concerned himself with other people involved in the industry; from the curers, gutters and packers on the dock, to the netmakers at the local factory (figs 4,6). The project also highlights the variety of wild life encountered by the fishermen, and their importance to the practice of ring-netting (figs 7,8).

The overwhelming sense of scale is accentuated by the artist’s concern with minutiae. In larger illustrations such as **Method: Fleeting with Double Anchors**, Maclean homes in on tiny features, in this case depth markings on the sweeplines (fig 9,9a). In the **Forecastle** sheet he highlights a typical week’s stores, whereas in **Net Construction C19**, the intricacies involved in making nets (figs 74,10). Occasionally the details merit their own sheets. **Buoys, The Flambeau and Net Needles** are all executed with the same degree of care as the larger ‘method’ illustrations (figs 11,12,13). Maclean’s attention to detail is very evident in the letters to Angus Martin. The particular way that the hammock was attached to the mast in the aforementioned **Forecastle** sheet, for example, was the subject of several frenzied communications (see figs 74-79).

**The Ring Net** becomes more manageable if approached in sections. This was how the artist dealt with the material during its making, and this was how he intended it to be shown. The project’s present situation, stored according to size or state rather than by subject, rather complicates matters. The Third Eye Centre’s list of works, amended by Margaret
Mackay, gives a better idea of the different groupings, at least as far as the photographs are concerned. The works were organised into groups such as boats (subdivided into sailing skiffs, motor boats and later ring-netters), working illustrations, 'appearances' (natural signs of herring) and methods. Installation shots taken at the Third Eye exhibition give some idea of how these different groupings appeared in practice (fig 14, 59, 88, 89).

**Media and Methods:**

The subjects depicted are not the only aspect of *The Ring Net* expressing variety. The methods and materials chosen to present those subjects comprise a surprisingly catholic selection. Photographs, both copied from older originals and taken by the artist himself, form the bulk of the project (figs 15, 16). Though they command the largest proportion, this is not a measure of their precedence. Both the prints and the graphic sheets required greater personal effort on the part of the artist.

Prints feature prominently in the project. General arrangement plans of various ring-net boats were presented in this medium. The artist borrowed these plans from boatyards in the early stages of the research, traced them and, then returned them. They were photo-printed onto cream paper using an architect's photocopier before the exhibition. The basic plans reproduced in these prints have also been used to different effect in other illustrations. Photocopies of a deck plan greatly reduced in size, recur as collage motifs in such works as *Method: Single Boat Ringing* and *Method: Towing* (figs 17, 18). In other sheets, actual-size prints contain additional details executed by hand. The workings of the *Herring Chute*, for example, are described on the copied *General Arrangement Plan, Macduff Engineering Co.* (figs 19, 20). In *Ring Net Fishing Boat c1947* (fig 21) a
complete print is hand-coloured to articulate the structure of the boat.
The project also contains several photocopies of old documents and
illustrations relevant to the history of ring-netting, such as an obituary
of Robert Robertson, a pioneer of new methods in the practice, and various
public notices (figs 22, 23, 24).

The group of works made specifically for the exhibition present the
greatest variety of media and display considerable inventiveness in their
application. The artist experimented with materials as diverse as
spraypaint and fish scales. These illustrations vary enormously in size,
and form, and are somewhat less homogenous than the groups of photographs
and plans. Whereas the latter were printed en masse prior to the
exhibition, the various drawings were created in a piecemeal fashion over
a long period of time, which helps to explain their differences. The
compositions of these works fall into three main categories: from single
monumental motifs with occasional highlighted details; to series of images
arranged in regular frames or representing different views of the same
subject; to frenzied sketches filling sheets with no obvious order. Certain
elements contrive to give the sheets coherence, creating a unified
feel despite the differences. The use of letraset has this effect, as
does the general design of the works.

The various types of illustrations perform different functions. By their
nature and by the ad hoc manner in which they were gathered from fishing
communities, the older photographs do not always provide the specific
information sought by the artist. Gaps left are filled by Maclean's own
photographs and by the drawings and plans. However, the older photographs
do play a vital role in creating a historical perspective, helping to
impart a general impression of technological development (for example, see
Perhaps their most important contribution lies in presenting the human aspect of ringing, in showing the fishermen in their milieu (figs 30,31). In this respect, because each photograph does represent a contemporaneous image and has its own raison d'être, the artist's objectivity is reinforced and the documentary aspect of the project enhanced.14

Maclean's own photographs form a different category. They tend to be much more specific, elucidating methods and equipment, and show parts of the boats not covered by the earlier photographs, for example the engine room and the forecastle (figs 32,37). The night shots also impart a sense of the atmosphere of fishing in the dark (fig 33). The drawings on the other hand are much better suited to making comparisons and charting developments. In this regard they hold the project together, making sense of it and altering its focus from a passive record to a sophisticated interpretation. Often the different media complement each other. A photograph might show a fisherman performing a particular action, while a related drawing explains that action or describes the equipment used. The night shots of brailling, for example, marry nicely with the drawings Boarding Herring: the Tail Brailler and Boarding Herring 2: Simpson's Tail Brailler 1932 (figs 34,35,36). Plans showing the basic layout of boats mesh well with an illustration such as Forecstales which gives an idea of how it was to actually live, eat and sleep in that space (figs 20,74).15

The methods and media used in the project are interesting from a strictly formal angle. As stated by Tom McGrath at the time of the Third Eye exhibition:

"It is tempting to try and place Will Maclean's work on this exhibition within the context of international developments in the visual arts in
recent years, and there is no doubt that as an artist he is well-aware of the extensive use of documentary materials in contemporary art."  

The deployment of gathered information, often with little obvious interference by the artist, is noteworthy in this respect. In fact it is the dominant feature of the exhibition, reflected in the plans borrowed from the boatyards, the copied photographs, and the fishermen's sketches reproduced in the drawings (fig 39). This heavy emphasis on duplicated information both distances the artist from the viewer and forces the subject matter to the fore.  

It also fits into the tradition of utilising found objects, in that each item brings an association, a small trace of its former existence, to the new context. Maclean's principal objective in producing this project was not the pursuit of artistic effects, however. Though it is tempting to compare the project with international artistic developments, McGrath rightly qualified his statement by adding:

"...he makes the exhibition as a descendant of the people it presents and his main concern has been to make something accessible to all."  

Maclean's objective was not that of producing an 'art exhibition', in fact the antithesis more often seems the case. Instead, the aim was to produce a documentary exhibition. This rather unusual emphasis can be seen as having a significant effect on the methods employed and on the eventual form of the project. The distancing of the artist was not a mere ploy for artistic effect. It can, and should, be seen in this context of the artist's pursual of objectivity. A formal approach, therefore, is not necessarily the best means of understanding The Ring Net.

The communication of information was the main aim of the project. The accuracy of the material assumed great importance as a result, and both Maclean and Angus Martin went to great pains to double and triple-check
The artist's trepidation at the prospect of experienced fishermen finding fault with the finished works encouraged a vigourously self-critical approach. Before considering an illustration completed, Maclean had to feel certain that its contents were an accurate reflection of the subject at hand. This aspect of the project explains the volume of communications over the hammock-lashing in the Forecasts sheet (figs 74-79), and the artist's despair at misrepresenting a winch.

The material not only had to be accurate, since it was being presented by means of an exhibition it also had to be readily assimilable. Clarity was therefore vital. The artist adopted a diagrammatic format for a large number of the drawings which helped to fulfil this criterion. Several sheets were created using few colours and generic elements such as letraset and adhesive plastic, for example Engines I and Nets 1840 (figs 40,41). The simplicity of these works often negates the effort involved in their making, however. For example, both Development of Deck and Winches (figs 69-71,82-84) were created mainly from oral descriptions. Maclean found these sheets exacting. His nervousness at using pen for such careful work necessitated all initial marks to be made in pencil. This timidity is evident in Loch Fyne Skiff: Elevation, Plan and Side View (fig 43,43a) which reveals a nervous hand up close. The acutely graphic aspect can be seen as expressly contravening Maclean's normal artistic impulses, a situation which was tolerated because of its perceived importance to the project.

Clarity is not always achieved by reduction and simplification however. Additional means were sought to convey information. The inclusion of oral material became very important to the artist in this respect. He wrote of the subject to Angus Martin:
"I never cease to be amazed at the amount of information that a Drawing can contain when it is combined with some writing." 27

The texts were incorporated in a variety of ways, forming solid blocks in Appearances 3: Means of Detecting Herring - Natural Signs Day and Shotting Procedure (figs 53, 44), for example, and actively involved in Method: Single Boat Ringing (fig 45). While ostensibly explaining the subject, the inclusion of the fishermen's words had the added advantage of verisimilitude, of coming 'straight from the horse's mouth', and thus validating the illustrations and reinforcing the objectivity of the artist.

The subtle use of sepia tones throughout the project further enhances this clarity. By printing the older photographs in sepia, an impression of age was created which rendered the historical dimension immediately visual, as can be seen in Drying Poles at Kames (fig 46). Sepia-coloured ink has been used to similar effect in the drawings, particularly in those of the earlier boats and fishing methods such as Loch Fyne Skiff: Sail, Oar, Ballast and Hauling to the Shallows (figs 25, 47). 28 The choice of cream paper and brown ink for the general arrangement plans maintains this effect, establishing a coherence further accentuated by the sepia-coloured catalogue (fig 90).

The stark, clean lines of the boatyard plans might articulate the structure of the boats, but they rarely clarify the reality of actually fishing on them. In this regard they tell us more about the exigencies of technical illustration than the practice of ring-net fishing. In several pieces, however, Maclean has employed certain media to impart a feeling of the process and atmosphere, which facilitates an understanding of this reality. The sheet that works best in this respect is Boarding Herring:
Basket Methods  (fig 48,48a)  The smudging of pen details with water and
the addition of wash, both complements and elucidates the incorporated
text describing how wet the fishermen became when boarding herring.
Method: Hauling Procedure, Sailing Skiffs and Barking the Net show similar
cconcerns (figs 58,80).

The communication of information was of great importance to the artist in
the execution of the project, and it assumed a variety of forms, including
precise anatomical descriptions of the wildlife connected with the
practice as can be seen in Gannets II and Car-fish (figs 49,7). Certain
aspects of The Ring Net do not fit in with this criterion, however, which
tends to suggest that, while paramount, it was not the sole objective of
the artist. Several works display an interest in the expressive
possibilities of the media beyond the needs of clarifying information.
For Example, in one of the pieces using collage Method: Hauling - Keeping
Out of the Net (fig 50), the luscious quality of the applied marbled paper
contrasts with the expositive purpose of the work.29 Regarding Buoys
(fig 11), moreover, one could be forgiven for assuming that the artist was
attracted as much by the fantastic shapes of the objects as by their
relevance to The Ring Net.30

The Ring Net was initiated as a documentary undertaking, but an exhibition
was always the intended result. Though accuracy of information and
clarity were of utmost importance, so were the visual exigencies imposed
by an exhibition. The particular aspects of the project which transcend
the requirements of clarifying information complement this display
objective. The contiguity of informative and visual criteria necessitated
a fine balancing act by the artist. He explained:
"It is hard to make a drawing carry the total information and remain a visual structure."31

Maclean is not a technical illustrator, and though certain images borrow from the field of graphic illustration (and he has deliberately played down the painterly aspect) his contribution is inescapable: "Maclean the artist is never absent."32 Certain elements of the project leave the viewer, at least a viewer aware of Maclean's other work, in no doubt as to its creator. *Herring Chute* (fig 19), rendered with a mixture of pen, ink and gouache, contains very characteristic Maclean features: seemingly frenzied sketches of fish shapes in pen smudged with water, familiar colours, the isolating of a singular feature against its background. Both *Appearances 1: Means of Detecting Herring...Day* and *Appearances 3...Night* (figs 52,53) compare quite naturally with the rest of Maclean's oeuvre, independent of the project. Both separate different 'appearances' into individual details, yet relate these to a central boat shape in a similar vein to the compartmentalisation of symbols within Maclean's box constructions. An idea of this in practice can be gained from a sketch for a construction included in one of the letters (fig 54).34 The 'herring (sight)' and 'herring (sound)' details of *Appearances 1* (fig 55) which depict jumping fish set against a seascape also recall both the artist's fish totem engravings and the fish symbols contained in his boxes.35

The artist's concern to represent the processes involved in ring-netting is another recurring feature. The carved bone elements of the artist's whale boxes (which render the animals more immediate and evoke scrimshaw work and commercial whalebone products) have parallels in the carved half-models in that these recall the skill and craftwork of the early days of boatbuilding before the introduction of professionally drawn plans.36
While the documental motive formed the original purpose of the project and subsequently governed the form of its undertaking, the artist's input cannot be ignored. The subject itself was originally chosen because of the artist's particular affinity with west coast fishermen, and this personal involvement comes over in the project. It is perhaps not as evident as in his other works, but its presence is discernable nonetheless, especially in the sheets based on Skye fishermen's reminiscences.³⁷ Cordelia Oliver summed up the situation thus:

"True the Ring Net is first of all a documentary exhibition, but it is about a subject into which Will Maclean was born; which has been his creative springboard all along..."³⁸

When considering The Ring Net it is imperative to regard it as a documentary exhibition, with equal stress on both terms. Objective criteria were vital in achieving the former, but the latter had as much of an effect on the result. Though the information depicted is factual, the manner in which it is depicted was greatly influenced by its eventual siting on the walls of an exhibition space. It is useful to regard The Ring Net in terms of a balance effected between these two aims. This makes sense of the anomalies evident when viewing the project as either solely an artistic undertaking or a documentary one. For the most part the balance is achieved by the artist, although occasionally it tips in favour of one or the other. Skiffs (fig 57), a basic general arrangement plan, for example, is somewhat more factual than visual, while Method: Hauling Procedure, Sailing Skiffs, Duowns, and The Flambeau are all very visual (figs 58,11,12).

CHANGES SINCE 1978:
Since the project was acquired by the Gallery of Modern Art it has undergone several changes. These, while understandable given the nature of the organisation and its curatorial objectives, tend to make it more difficult to envisage the original exhibition. In some respects they alter the focus of the project, disrupting the fine balance between visual and documentary concerns. Though most of the general arrangement plans have been kept in their original state, all the drawings have been stripped of their backings, so their original effect is hard to gauge.

The majority of the photographs, though removed from the hardboard to which they were attached in groups, have maintained their individual pulpboard backings. They are not exhibited in this state, however.

Works shown since the acquisition have been displayed in the GMA's own mounts and frames. In comparison with the original hardboard mounts and perspex covers secured by screws, the more traditional acid free mounts and wooden frames convey a radically different impression. An idea of the difference can be gained by comparing the works shown at the GMA during its Scottish Art Since 1900 exhibition of 1989 with the same ones at the original Third Eye exhibition of 1978 (figs 59, 60). The works appear sleeker and generally more like classic works of art than technical expositions. Though the choice of original mounts was greatly influenced by the artist's lack of means and would have been considerably different had more funds been available, the basic mounts of the 1978 exhibition did rather complement the subject matter. They also suited the artist's wish to direct the exhibition primarily at those involved with fishing instead of the usual gallery-attending public.

The mounting of the photographs has significantly altered their effect. Initially displayed in groups of about ten, the present individual mounts
and pairs of images place greater emphasis on each image, as can be seen by comparing the photographs at Campbeltown in 1978 to those lent to Stornaway in 1987 (figs 91, 93). The original photographs mounted by the GMA have been separated from their pulpboard backings, a lot of which were ripped by their earlier removal from hardboard. As many of these photographs were damaged in transit, most of the mounted works are actually copies of the originals, for example Fisherman Drying Net (fig 61).\textsuperscript{43} These newer copies fail to reproduce the sepia tint so carefully sought in the original project, and also vary in size from their masters.

Perhaps the greatest change within the project, however, has been the addition of new lithographs specially printed for the 1986 GMA showing. Though also produced from the original boat plan tracings, these prints contrast enormously with the sepia photo-prints. Printed on white paper using brilliantly coloured inks (usually a shade of blue) the boat plan details stand out in white. Not only is their effect completely different from the understated originals, but their details are not so clear. In this respect it is interesting to compare Ring Net Zulu A.M.V. Acacia with its 1986 counterpart (figs 62a\&b). Whereas the newer lithograph printed with French-navy coloured ink on a white background is very attractive, a great deal of the annotations and details such as a shelf with strapped in clock and sea biscuits, are blurred or indistinct. (figs 63a\&b) The all-important balance of clarity and visual effect is lost.\textsuperscript{44}

Since the project was acquired by the GMA it has greatly increased in size. This curious phenomenon is partly explained by the copied photographs in addition to the new prints. The illustrations made for Martin's book were also given to the gallery after the publisher had
finished with them. While these were added to the GMA's collection, the half-models were not as the artist wished to keep them. They were subsequently reunited with the rest of the project at Stornaway in 1987 (fig 93).
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER THREE.


3. The panels were painted for the War Artist's Advisory Committee (from 1940 on), though Spencer refused to sign a formal agreement. Spencer became fascinated by the atmosphere within the yards and the shapes of the ships' parts and the resultant panels reveal these interests. Spencer stated that he was "moved" by what he saw in the shipyards and experienced joy "in attempting to express the feeling I have about it all." Quoted in Joseph Darracott's introduction to the Art Council's exhibition Spencer in the Shipyard of 1981. (unpaginated)

4. The Picture Post describes Spencer noting down "Don't forget the finished shipping". "A War Artist on the Clyde" 2 October 1943 pp7-11.

5. Arg.88. See also Arg.57, 50, 72, 28.

6. Arg.48.

7. The plans and drawings are not differentiated. The list is not always consistent, the photographs do not always appear under their appropriate headings and cannot be changed as the numbers are the basis of the GMA's cataloguing of The Ring Net (see appendix three).

8. These number more than two hundred and fifty and range in size from Ardrishaig Skiffs 11.4 x 20.5cm to The Fleet Leaving Whitby 29.5 x 39cm, though the majority measure about 20 x 20cm. The photographs are either sepia or black and white according to date with 1910 as the division.

9. These prints tend to be quite large. Sail Plan Auxiliary Ring Net Vessel, a smaller work is 37.4 x 57.6cm, Auxiliary Ring Net Boat (McBride type) is 44.1 x 71.7cm and Lines Plan Monadhliath is very large 60 x 141cm.

10. See appendix three for media.

11. Examples of these types: Loch Fyne Skiff: Sail, Oar, Ballast (fig 25), Boarding: Nets (fig 26), Forecastles: Loch Fyne Skiff, Sail and Oar (fig 74), Hazards: Tides, Tears, Meshing etc. (fig 27).

12. For example the drawn inner frames.

13. That is to say each photograph was taken for its own reason and very rarely for technical purposes. Maclean and Martin did actively seek particular photographs as can be seen by the encampment shots mentioned in the Campbeltown Courier 28 November 1974 (see appendix two).

14. They were also important sources for the drawings.

15. Whereas a more luscious medium requiring active involvement by the artist might have produced a subjective approach, Maclean is conspicuous by his absence in this regard. Compare to Alan Watson's whaling series, Hunting The Big Fish.

16. This impression is reinforced by the artist's photographs of forecastles (see fig 37). A similar all-round picture is given of the Acacia by way of photographs, a drawing and a plan (figs 38, 62)

17. Quoted in The Ring Net catalogue. Tom McGrath was the Director of the Third Eye Centre at the time of the exhibition. Douglas Hall has mentioned that he saw the project very much in the field of conceptual art (interview 18/4/90).

18. Both of which are reinforced by the attributed sources on all pieces of text, plans and photos.

19. Ring Net catalogue. Douglas Hall also stated that its Scottish/socio
-economic/cultural links made it easier to effect its acquisition. He said: "It killed two birds with one stone" and was "more accessible than most (conceptual art projects)." Interview 18/4/90.

20. He wrote to Martin: "Came home to find you(r) letter and the 'winkie' drawings -- they are really great -- just the sort of detail that our work should be about -- soon, who will be able to draw a winkie light, who (will) have ever have asked about winkie lights -- also I can work them into a 'Art Work' finish... Arg.88.

21. As stated by Edward Gage: "This show does have aesthetic qualities but they are subservient to the documented facts." Review of The Ring Net in The Scotsman 27 March 1976 p4.

22. Especially Angus Martin, a point stressed by the artist in two interviews, 6/9/89, 18/4/90.

23. See Arg.37 and Arg.126.

24. The adhesive plastic simulates netting. See detail of Net: 1840-1880 (fig 42).

25. Interview 29/11/89, Arg.175. It is somewhat ironic that this very use of pencil reduced the clarity of the boat plans. Interviews 6/9/89 and 18/4/90.

26. It is interesting to note that this strain found an outlet in the creation of sculptural objects. See conclusion.

27. Arg.53.

28. In the latter the details are hand-written in sepia-coloured ink.

29. As do the delicate hues of Winches (fig 51) and Ring Net Boat c1947 (fig 21).

30. As Stanley Spencer proved to be in the shipyards, though Maclean had little interest in such considerations at the time see Arg.80. The more 'abstract' pieces were selected by Margaret Mackay for one of the groupings in the 1986 GMA hang.

31. Arg.29.

32. Cordelia Oliver Guardian Review 20 February 1978. It is interesting in this regard to compare the set of images produced for Angus Martin's book, The Ring Net Fishermen, with those of the original project. Though both parties had hoped to use The Ring Net works, a situation made impossible by the format of the book, the illustrations made by Maclean for the venture are radically different in every respect to the complex Ring Net sheets. They are mere diagrams.


34. For Dundee's Northern Totem, 1975 see Arg.77.

35. The Experimental Sole Rope Hauler (fig 56) also reveals the familiar graphic style.

36. For an example of such a whale box see Northern Totem, above. NB: real netting was used as a stencil in depicting The Simpson's Tail Brailler of 1932 (fig 36).

37. Particularly those connected with Maclean's immediate family such as the Acacia sheets.


39. During the period of Acquisition the artist was requested to remove the works from their hard board mounts for reasons of storage. See GMA.15 11 April 1979. The GMA was at this time based at The Botanical Gardens and had very little storage space.

40. The majority of the works mounted tend to be the more visual and attractive pieces which perhaps reflects the bent of the host institution.

41. The artist is very pleased with the GMA's presentation. Interview 18/4/90.
42. Although the mounts were rough and ready, the works were not. The artist took every care to keep them in perfect condition until the exhibition finally came about. Unfortunately the mounts allowed dust and heat access to the works which has hastened their deterioration.

43. Note: these themselves were copies of originals.

44. The artist has acknowledged this in interview (6/9/89, 18/4/90) As the original plans have deteriorated quite considerably, their initial effect has somewhat diminished.

45. These comprise very small, simplified diagrams which are not so carefully rendered as the rest (refer Arg.175). Some echo subjects tackled in The Ring Net, while others such as the two Lug-sheet diagrams were made specifically for the book.

46. GMA.16 15 April 1979.

The Ring Net was made over a period encompassing several years. This extended period of development had a considerable effect on the eventual exhibition, and it is only by looking at the project against this background that a real understanding of it can be achieved. The Argyll letters have proved to be a vital source in this respect, allowing access to the artist's activities and thoughts throughout most of the period in question. Since work commitments prevented frequent visits, and telephoning proved too expensive, the letters comprised the main form of communication between Will Maclean in Gateside and Angus Martin in Campbeltown. As a result they contain a wealth of information. The sheer volume of letters alone gives insight into the close working relationship enjoyed by the two men, belying the distance between them.

The letters allow a rare glimpse into the working process of the artist. Though it is possible to piece together a rough idea of the project's development from conversations with the artist and Angus Martin, the letters enable a detailed view of the evolution of The Ring Net throughout the actual period of its making. Since this period saw various shifts of emphases, the opportunity of viewing the finished project against the background of these changes is invaluable.

The Ring Net: Stages in its development.

The initial idea to apply for a Scottish International Education Trust grant came from Richard Demarco who had recently been appointed director of the trust. It was suggested as a means of obtaining time free from teaching to allow Will Maclean to concentrate solely on his painting. Richard Demarco described the situation in this way: "When Will Maclean
came to me in the seventies...I knew that as a teacher he was at the end of his tether at all the time he had to spend in concentrating upon school teaching, it was taking away from his main work..." Though Demarco suggested the SIET, it was Ann Tautie, the Trust's secretary, who ensured the success of the application and in a sense, dictated the documentary form of the undertaking. She stressed that for the proposal to be accepted it had to appear more like an educational programme, with the emphasis more on the collection of information than on drawing and painting. Maclean summed up the situation thus:

"So in a way it was...more through my need to...make that kind of presentation to get the award. But once I had got my mind round to the notion of doing that, it seemed to me to be a good thing to do."2

The idea of doing a work based on ring-net fishing was not an overtly self-conscious decision prompted by its imminent demise or by environmentalist concerns, but a natural choice given that it was the form of fishing practised by his relatives in Skye.3 When the exhibition was being shown Maclean stated:

"I wasn't after a political or sentimental thing. I wanted to catch the interaction between the fisherman and the gannet, the phosphorous, the porpoise. .... When I first started work on the documentary I knew that time was short. But even then, in 1973, I didn't know how fast the ring nets were fading."4

The proposed project appears to have complimented the newly inaugurated Trust's aims and was duly accepted. The present Director, John F. McClellan has said with hindsight: "...so far as I can gather, its strength was seen in the combination of its importance to the fishing industry and its worth as art."5 Since Maclean was unable to arrange six months leave from Bell Baxter's School until late 1973, however, the period of real research was subsequently delayed.
A photocopied letter of commendation from the SIET dated 2nd October 1973 gives some indication of the activities of the artist in this initial stage of the project. It introduces Will Maclean, mentions the SIET grant, and states that it was awarded to enable him to record information relative to ring-net fishing. The artist describes his actions of the first five months in one of his earliest letters to Angus Martin:

"...and I have been collecting mainly visual material and tape recordings so far and mainly in the Skye area."

The letter also mentions visits to boatyards to borrow plans, an activity which occurred for the most part in this early period. Maclean also spent time out at sea with ring-netting boats in these first few months, taking photographs and sketching (see figs 64-66). This proved vital as the practice virtually ceased thereafter. The first stage therefore saw Maclean working on his own, gathering material and making occasional visits to boat builders in the hope of obtaining plans and related information. The Skye area proved to be relatively barren ground, however, producing very little by way of information and a lot of dead-ends. It was at this juncture that the artist began to search elsewhere and came across Angus Martin.

The involvement of Angus Martin was to have a major effect on the project. Maclean, nearing the end of his sabbatical and somewhat desperate, turned to Campbeltown for ring-netting information. Lacking contacts in the area he had been advised to get in touch with Angus Martin, at this time a practising fisherman with journalistic experience and an interest in local history. Perhaps owing to the pressure of time or simply because of their common interests, the two parties struck up an immediate working relationship. By the end of March 1974 Maclean considered the project as much Martin's as his own. He wrote on the subject:
"I don't feel like thanking you for all your help with the Ring Net stuff we collected because I feel that its yours as much as mine now."  

Even at this early stage a prospective book was in the offing, ostensibly the upshot of a somewhat flippant remark made on Maclean’s first visit to Campbeltown. That Angus Martin was giving it serious consideration is evidenced by his first letter to the Campbeltown Courier of 21st March 1974 (see appendix 1). 

The period after March 1974 saw the development of a working pattern between the two men. With Will Maclean obliged to return to his teaching work in Cupar, Angus Martin took over the responsibility of taping the Kintyre fishermen. Martin took particular interest in this side of the research as can be seen by his letter to the Campbeltown Courier of 28th November 1974 in which he stated: "My own special interest is verbal documentation..." (see appendix 2). Though Will Maclean had used this method in the earlier part of his research and expressed interest in recording the words of Skye fishermen as far back as 1962, Martin honed his taping technique to a fine art. The realisation that so little had been recorded about ring-netting acted as a spur to capture the memories of those fishermen still about, and in this sense the project took on a life of its own, independent of the exhibition. The recordings made and later lodged in The School of Scottish Studies, formed the basis of Angus Martin’s book The Ring Net Fishermen, published in 1981. Transcripts of these tapes were sent to Will Maclean and subsequently used for various parts of The Ring Net. 

An efficient division of labour developed between the two men. Angus Martin on the ground in Kintyre, where the ring-net first developed, recorded the surviving fishermen and gathered old photographs and other
related material. Will Maclean, somewhat isolated in Fife, printed the bundles of photographs dispatched by Martin, followed up east coast leads, and in vacations, focussed on Skye and the Minch, areas known to him from his youth (fig 67). Since both were working on uncharted ground and using relatively unfamiliar techniques, the development of this working pattern took some time. However, both the reference file devised by Angus Martin, and the smooth process by which photographs were borrowed, copied and carefully returned to their owners, suggest that once developed, it was very effective.

Over time, the book, which had always been considered distinct from the project, became the main focus of Angus Martin's research, while Will Maclean concentrated on the exhibition.

In this way the division of labour not only applied to processes, but also reflected the ultimate aims of the two men.

The Ring Net: Features in its Development.

A straightforward chronological approach to the making of The Ring Net is perhaps not the most satisfactory means of approaching this period. Though undoubtedly an interesting study in its own right it is of relevance here principally as background material for the finished project. Although some of the letters are dated and it is possible to give approximate dates to others, not enough are dated to construct an exact chronology. The letters' principle strength lies in the light they shed on particular aspects of the project, aspects either forgotten or which appear different in hindsight. By way of example, a consistent feature of the period of preparation which comes through very strongly in the letters, yet is easily missed if looking solely at the finished project or the exhibition reviews, is that the artist, once back in Fife in 1974, could only work part-time on The Ring Net. School, family and
other artistic commitments constantly took precedence. Though the project became an obsession and commanded an incredible amount of time and energy, it was not worked on consistently from 1973-1978 and was often set aside for several months. The Argyll letters are full of such comments as:

"I'm ready, nearly for another session at them (drawings), having nearly cleared the backlog of commitments that have been cluttering up my mind."18

I. Process:
The letters provide insight into the working methods used in the project and their development over time. One of the earliest communications introduces a central process by which Will Maclean gained information for particular drawings. Stating that he was currently copying a drawing of an early canoe-stern boat, he asked Angus Martin if he could find a photograph of the first craft of this type.19 Will Maclean’s letters throughout the whole period are full of such queries. Some, indeed, comprise long lists of questions, and little else.20 Information was sought for current drawings and future ones, and the sheets might be set aside until the relevant details had been found. The artist discovered that the process was more efficient if his questions were accompanied by a small sketch, as in the example of the ‘stirrup’ used for loading herring (fig 68). This innovation developed quite considerably with certain images recurring repeatedly until enough information was gathered. An idea of how the images were gradually built up can be gleaned from the Development of Deck and Herring Chute sheets (figs 69-73). This development eventually produced sketches by Angus Martin and the fishermen in return. The artist explained: "I don’t really have enough information that can be turned into a graphic form and your drawings can do it."21 However, the process was not as smooth as this might indicate; reiteration was often necessary and certain illustrations required many of
these sketch communications. The *Forecasts* sheet is a particular case in point (figs 74-79).

Valuable information can also be gleaned about the creation of the images by the artist. An impression of the sheer effort involved emanates from the letters. Maclean confided to Martin:

"I have been struggling with a drawing of whales/porpoises, I just cannot get what I want and I have destroyed 3/4 efforts so far. It is hard to make a drawing carry the total information and remain a visual structure."

Whereas some images such as *Buoys* (fig 11) came easily, others fought all the way. *Barking the Net* and *Winches* (figs 80, 84) seem to have been particularly awkward, while it took two years for Maclean to gather enough information to tackle the Acacia drawing. The high standards of accuracy imposed by both the artist and Martin appear to be responsible for this aspect of the project, in the case of *Winches* the artist hoped to achieve "...a definitive statement", an ambitious aim given the paucity of existing information. The artist again used fishermen's sketches to build up the image (figs 82-84). It would also appear that Martin acted as a check on certain illustrations advising Maclean to hold back on particular drawings until he had been able to get hold of more information. He justified himself thus: "... perhaps (then) truly representative drawings can be made."

Rare insight is given into the artist's tackling of this graphic side of the project. Maclean's concern to convey total information which in turn prompted his experiments with the inclusion of written text is well represented. His quest for validity which necessitated all important images to be made rather than borrowed can also be perceived. In addition, the letters convey more usually ephemeral factors such as the
artist's initial lack of confidence in tackling the images, and how this was dispelled as more information came in. They also reveal how consistently the artist thought about the project, even while he was not working on it.

II. Sources

The artist tapped a wide variety of sources in making The Ring Net. By far the largest and most important resource comprised the tape recordings and information gathered from the fishermen, a factor acknowledged by Angus Martin:

"The raw material's there. .... As you'll know, without our informants the book and the exhibition wouldn't be worth much. Imagine having to depend on the Fishery Board accounts for the story of ring-netting. Ye Gods!"

Maclean and Martin sought precise technical information and accurate descriptions from these oral sources, and they were very careful in their choice of interviewees. Their success in this respect can be perceived in assessing reactions to both the resultant project and book. They were both interested in more than bald facts, however, and relished finding a good 'yarner' who could impart the atmosphere alongside the details.

As well as individuals, organisations were courted for information. Specific firms such as Marconi and Stewarts of Musselburgh provided particular trades information of relevance to the project. The detailed material this produced can be seen in the copied list of ring nets bought from Stewarts (fig 85). The boatyards were most important in this respect as repositories of information about vessels, most of which no longer existed. Though a great deal of information came from this source, its acquisition was not always straightforward. Maclean describes the wariness of Miller, the boatbuilder, and the need to tread very carefully
in approaching him, and also the reluctance of the Fairley boatyard towards any advances. More traditional research institutions were utilised by both parties such as the Mitchell Library in Glasgow and the Scottish Records Office and Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh. Persistence was required even with these. Strathclyde University, for example, the holder of an important photographic collection appropriate to ring-netting, resisted enquiries for an exasperating period of time.

From a methodological standpoint, a most exciting aspect of Maclean and Martin's approach lay in their imaginative, and often unorthodox, use of source materials. Technical manuals and histories were used, but their conclusions not taken for granted. Letter 'Arg.39', for example, sees Maclean asking Martin to check a reference found in Robert Simper's Scottish Sail: a Forgotten Era against their own sources. As much respect was accorded to the fishermen who knew their field as well, if not better, than the so-called experts. Maclean made a personal tribute to the knowledge and attitude of Hugh Macfarlane in this regard. This attitude is all the more admirable given that the project was researched during the 1970's before oral history had been validated as a historical source. The letters also reveal the use of other unpublished source materials such as diaries and logbooks of fishermen, and the drafts of Angus Martin's book, along with actual artefacts such as net needles, buoys and a feeling wire.

Experience proved of immense importance to the project; it could quite validly be argued that the whole undertaking hinged upon it. Both Maclean and Martin's knowledge of the basics of fishing not only enabled reasoned evaluation of particular sources, it also facilitated access to others and formed a secure basis from which to build up information where no sources
existed. When information in technical books contradicted local experience, both men were able to perceive the anomaly. If no information was readily available and the fishermen had to be approached, they knew, more or less, what they were looking for, thus saving time and effort, and preventing misrepresentation of the facts. Without this experience the project would have been a very meagre thing as it is doubtful whether either the boatyards or the fishermen would have been so accommodating towards unknowledgeable folk.\textsuperscript{34} That both men were aware of the importance of their own experience comes over strongly in the letters. In discussing Anson, author of Fishing Boats and Fisherfolk on the East Coast of Scotland, Maclean stated:

"... he is not of the fishing people I think he is English. He could never really know, he has never had his hands burned with a cork rope or a jelly sting in the eye."\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{III. Collaborators:}

Although the physical creation of The Ring Net required tremendous individual effort, the majority of which occurred in Gateside, well away from the west coast and even the sea, it was also the result of much collaboration. The contribution of Angus Martin was paramount. The artist was always the first to acknowledge Martin's importance and he was annoyed that the Third Eye Centre omitted mentioning the collaboration in their initial publicity for the exhibition.\textsuperscript{36} Maclean referred to the project as a joint enterprise from the time of his first meeting with Angus Martin in Campbeltown.\textsuperscript{37} The two men shared information, sources and even money, though the latter was not frequently available. Both passionately believed in the importance of recording the practice of ring-netting for posterity. Both were serious in their purpose and in their methods of carrying out the research. And, both were drawn in by family
ties. The history of the ring-net was in a sense their history, and this
gave an added spur to their activities. Maclean wrote to Martin:

"I am sending on the details of my Great Grandfathers Boat.... I would
be very pleased to have them back sometime - you know how much they
mean to me." 38

Though initiated through work, the relationship that developed between the
two men was more personal than professional. In addition to ring-net
information, the letters also contain family details, local news and
personal thoughts. They were vehicles for more than technical
information, transmitting encouragement when either was jaded or depressed
by the scale of the undertaking; advice when either was unsure; or
suggestions for future actions. Relations were not always smooth.
Occasionally disagreements would arise over particular issues, and Maclean
experienced guilt at the constant demands made on Martin, and his own
inability to share the Kintyre side of the work. 39 The odd break in
contact would also occur when either party stopped working on the
research. On the whole, however, the collaboration between the two men
was extremely effective. In addition to maximising information, the
collaboration seems to have carried The Ring Net well beyond its original
brief. Moreover, the personal bond element within that collaboration,
seems to have helped both the artist and the author to see this expanded
project through.

Other collaborators were not involved to anywhere near the same extent as
Martin, but they were important to the finished exhibition. J. Blyth of
Falkland falls into this category. Though originally the artist undertook
to copy the borrowed photographs himself, he was not satisfied by the
quality achieved; "...I want a better print than I can get by printing
myself." 40 After much searching he came up with Blyth, "...a first class
photographer, who is very keen to make the prints. He lives near at hand and I can monitor the prints -- I feel a huge burden has been lifted from my shoulders..."41 The existing photographs reveal the importance of this collaboration. Often the photographer was able to improve on the quality of badly damaged originals. Blyth had the added advantage of being cheap, refusing to take much remuneration for reproducing the prints, although the reverse side of this was that he did not work to order, which added extra stress to the period before the exhibition. The taped fishermen and lenders of photographs were also seen very much as collaborators, and both the artist and Martin were keen that their contributions be acknowledged."42

IV. Ephemerae:
Perhaps the letters' most important contribution lies in their illumination of the artist's thoughts about the project contemporaneous to its making. Given the time involved, it is hardly surprising that his views changed as the project developed, nor that he experienced a huge sense of relief, and to a certain degree disbelief, when the exhibition was finally on the walls. The letters chart these developments as well as the periods of despondency when the strain became too much. The strongest impression gained, however, is that the artist came to believe more and more in the project as time passed. When it became obvious that the ring-net was on the way out, the importance of the project as a record, and in a sense homage, to the many fishermen involved over the years increased. The letters are full of laments over lost, or more unforgivably, mishandled material."43 The artist and Martin's awareness that their's was the first, and most probably last, contemporary research to be undertaken was acute."44 In this respect the gathering and preserving of material assumed a curatorial propensity far exceeding the needs of the exhibition.
The artist maintained a consistently serious attitude towards the exhibition. He explained to Angus Martin that:

"It must be professional a knockout. no hanging nets and old skin buoys and so on but Defined, clean, considered, accurate. however long it takes."45

The incredible detail included in the exhibition can be seen as an extension of this attitude. The artist was concerned to give a total picture and constantly worked towards this end.46 For example, a sketch from Angus Martin in Campbeltown, for example, explained how often the five gallon flask of water on a 1904/5 skiff was refilled (fig 87).

Despite this meticulous and careful approach, the artist never lost his enthusiasm for newly discovered photographs, or for the tapes of fishermen's experiences.47 Nor did he lose his sense of humour regarding the ever-increasing scale of the undertaking, occasionally referring to the "Ring Saga" and "the great Ring Net Road Show."48

As well as documenting such general attitudes, the letters highlight the day to day worries and concerns of the artist which were as much a part of the project's making. Money, or to be more exact the lack of it, was a constant theme. Photographic costs were frequently mentioned and as the exhibition approached, the cost of printing the plans and framing became a heavy burden. Occasionally the lack of funds would hold back the work. The 'nets' series, for example, was delayed as the desired photocopies of netmakers' plans cost two pounds apiece.49 This monetary pressure in turn put more stress on selling other artworks at exhibition, and encouraged the artist to accept commissions, something he was loath to do.50 It also necessitated approaching grant-making bodies which tended to absorb a great deal of time and energy.51 In hindsight, Maclean regretted the
unproductive first five months of the project and the money expended
therein. He said of this to Martin:

"I wish I had the money that I used up early in the project - I didn't
waste it, but there were so many deadends up north."52

Another constant concern was an eventual home for the project. Maclean
and Martin considered the whole gamut of possible venues, from the Museum
of Antiquities to the School of Scottish Studies, though the Fisheries
Museum at Anstruther and the Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh, were
never contenders.53 Given their seriousness of purpose and the perceived
importance of the collected material it is not surprising that they should
give serious consideration to this subject. Both felt very strongly that
the project should have a permanent home in Argyll, or at least be shown
there once a year. The artist acknowledged: "It should be Argyll because
its all about Argyll."54 Despite the attention of several critics to this
topic, notably Cordelia Oliver of the Guardian55, the only serious offer
came from Douglas Hall of the Gallery of Modern Art. While Maclean was
honoured to be included in the national collection, and relieved that the
project was finally "safe", this solution initially appeared somewhat
surprising. He has subsequently explained: "I didn't see it by that time
as...fine art."56

Conclusion:
Approaching The Ring Net housed at the Gallery of Modern Art more than a
decade after its completion can be a daunting prospect. Its sheer size
and the variety of items overwhelm at first contact. The 1978 exhibition
catalogue sheds little light on the subject. Though The Ring Net
Fishermen by Angus Martin makes sense of the technical and historical
aspects of the project, the lack of documentation on the work itself makes
the viewer consistently aware of missing out, of not getting the full picture. In this respect the Argyll letters are invaluable. They help to make sense of the enterprise, they explain its scale and reveal the artist's preoccupations and techniques and how these developed over time. Such information is not only vital from an art historical standpoint and for future showings of the project. Given the importance of the subject to the artist it is only fitting that its context be explained.
1. Interview 1/5/90, also discussed in interviews with artist 6/9/89 and 18/4/90.

2. Interview 18/4/90. Richard Demarco has given a somewhat different account of the events: "He (Maclean) had involved himself deeply in a self-appointed task which was to document the death of the ring-net fishing in the Minch. And, this would result, I knew, in a work of art that didn't look like a work of art... So I sold the idea to the SIET... and I knew that if I presented it as an avant-garde art work, it wouldn't work and it would work if... the Trust could see that it was a necessary investigation into part of Scotland's history." Interview 1/5/90.


5. Letter from Director 26/2/90. The Trust's two primary purposes are defined as:

1. To promote individual Scottish talent among young people which will be seen to be supported in Scotland and will retain its roots and interests for the benefit of Scotland.

2. To support projects which seem to the Trustees especially valuable in contributing to the cultural, economic or social development of the Scottish environment.

Scottish International Education Trust pamphlet.

6. Arg.78.


8. An activity stressed by Angus Martin in his first letter to the Campbeltown Courier advertising the project 21 March 1974 (see appendix one).

9. Refer to Arg.147 dated 23 February 1974, also Arg.43, 64 and 8. Corroborated by letter from Angus Martin to P. Allerston 6/11/89.

10. Arg.64 March 1974.

11. Interview 18/4. The subject is also mentioned in one of Maclean's earliest letters to Martin (Arg.43) February/March 1974. In it the artist wrote: "I am so pleased that you are interested in the project maybe we can make a book between us!"

12. "I am becoming intensely interested in continuing the research work into the history of ring-netting, begun by Will Maclean and carried on, in Kintyre, by myself." Campbeltown Courier 28 November 1974 p2 (see appendix two).


14. Arg.146 mentions a tape made of a subsequently deceased relative, Alex Reid in 1962. In interview (18/4/90) the artist has stated that these early tapes were very general, reflecting an early "romantic" interest in the fishing boats and a lasting interest in social and oral history.

15. Such as Miller's Boatyard at St. Monans and Stewart's Net-making Company at Musselburgh. Maclean worked on the sheets for the exhibition throughout this period.

16. The file in the possession of Maclean is an alphabetically-organised encyclopedia of ring-netting information. The photograph exchange process is evident throughout the period of communication.

17. This distinct stress is evident in Martin's first letter to the Campbeltown Courier of 21 March 1974. (see appendix one)

18. Arg.101. Refer also to Arg.46,104,60,70,71,84. The artist wrote in Arg.79: "If the painting goes well a week will finish the work, if
not, I don’t know how long it will take but I feel exhausted and must get it over and done with and (get) back to our project.

20. For example, Arg.149.
21. Arg.57 26 January 1975. The methods drawings completed last depended almost entirely on these sketches. Arg.37 and Arg.125 ("...thank God for your diagrams without them all would be lost").
22. Arg.29.
23. Arg.37. The idea behind the design for this boat seems to have particularly caught Maclean’s attention. He produced several Ring Net works based on the subject and a box construction. He explained the concept in a letter to Martin (Arg.87) accompanied by thumbnail sketches (fig 81).
25. Arg.164
26. Refer particularly to Arg.28 and Arg.53.
27. Arg.40 gives the example of a half-model subsequently crafted by the artist.
28. Arg.53, and Arg.76 in which the artist wrote: "There is some stuff there – I feel much more confident now to begin the drawings."
29. Arg.45,35,37,123.
31. Arg.100 30 April 1974, see also Arg.111.
32. Arg.27 "I confess an ever increasing respect for Hugh Macfarlane - his knowledge and his poetry - my sheets are full of his direct commentary...
33. The artist considered the latter purely as aids to research refusing to include such objects in the exhibition, refer Arg184 (see note 45)
34. In interview (6/9/89) the artist explained that the boatyards were helpful because he knew quite a lot before going to them and he knew what to ask for. When introducing himself to Angus Martin and to the Kintyre public by way of Martin, stress was laid on the artist’s links with the Reid fishing family of Kyleakin refer Arg.147 and Martin’s letter to the Campbeltown Courier 21 March 1974 (appendix one).
35. Arg.30. Refer also to Arg.146 describing the position of crew positions when hauling: "It always appeared to me that the real experience was needed on the yarn..." (see fig 86)
36. Arg.119. Refer also to Arg.160 in which Maclean states: "It will soon be clear to any observer that the exhibition is built on your researches of the Campbeltown area." Also discussed in interview 18/4/90.
37. Refer Arg.64 and Arg.57.
38. Arg.80. Refer also to Arg.1 Martin to Maclean 19 November 1975 in which the former writes: "Much of the material is related to the Martin family, you’ll have noted. The explanation is simply: it was an effective way of throwing myself into the difficult early stage... the added interest of family lore..."
39. The artist has stated that Martin’s commitment to the material was more intensive than his own and that The Ring Net benefited enormously from Martin’s researches. Interview 18/4/90.
40. Arg.102.
41. Arg.16.
42. The artist also consulted individual fishing experts, an enthusiast in Perth, Alistair Parker, and an historian at Strathclyde University.
43. Maclean described scouring the dump on one occasion for precious records just discarded. Interview 18/4/90.
44. Refer to "A last look at the world of the ring netters." In the West
45. Arg.84.
46. As he wrote in Arg.48: "You talk about detail - and we both have it, this is what separates us from the boys."
47. Arg.43 and Arg.88.
48. Arg.89 and Arg.47.
49. Arg.38.
50. Arg.50.
51. A Gulbenkian application was a particular source of worry and aggravation, refer Arg.55,75,78,82,83,84. A diplomatic path also had to be followed in dealings concerning both the SAC and SIET refer Arg.35.
52. Arg.87.
53. Interview 18/4/90. The Department of the Environment Curator also showed interest refer Arg.104.
54. Arg.118 January 1978. Refer to Arg.119 for the once a year suggestion.
56. Interview 18/4/90, refer also to Arg.131 and Arg.86.
CHAPTER FIVE: THE SHOWING OF THE RING NET.

The Approach:

An exhibition had always been the intention of the artist. The sabbatical enabled by the SIET was undertaken with a view to producing a visual record of ring-netting. As the project grew and became more complex, this basic aim never altered, although the type of exhibition envisaged did develop considerably. A standard letter produced to thank lenders of photographs dated 28 May 1974 reveals that the artist considered the exhibition imminent at this early stage: "We have now collected a considerable amount of material on Ring Netting and hope to have an exhibition in Glasgow early next year." As more material appeared, however, and the artist and Angus Martin's understanding subsequently increased, so did their appreciation of the subject and desire to find out more. Rather than bringing the exhibition closer, the research pushed it further away, a factor evidenced by Angus Martin in his letter to The Campbeltown Courier of 28 November 1974:

"The originally suggested date of the exhibition has been put back; but that change of plan has probably been for the better because the exhibition, when it is staged will be more complete." (see appendix 2)

The Argyll letters indicate other postponements and also reveal this desire to exhibit only when the topic had been thoroughly researched and all aspects tackled. The long period of preparation not only resulted in more information being uncovered, it also gave the artist more time to ponder on the exhibition and the form it should take. In response to what would appear to be pressure from Martin for a definitive date, Maclean made his opinion very clear. He urged:

"... I think that I know when the material for our exhibition is at the right stage to push - I don't really mind within reason how long it is,
with each new stage as the Big picture becomes clear - then the show will be better... I don't mean by that that I want it to trail on." 4

The artist also developed particular ideas about locations for the exhibition. He strongly felt that its opening should be on the West Coast. 5 When questioned by Bridget Brown, exhibitions officer at the Third Eye Centre, as to where he wished the show to travel:

"... I said that I didn't really care so long as it went to Campbeltown and Tarbert. Once the show is all ready and all glossy there are plenty of... venues ready to gobble it up. It has to go where it has a meaning." 6

In this regard Maclean's intentions were fulfilled. The Third Eye hosted the opening exhibition in Glasgow and ensured that it toured to Kintyre. Maclean has mentioned how important Tom McGrath was to The Ring Net. His consistent enthusiasm proved a source of encouragement to the artist, while his offer of the Third Eye as a venue showed his faith in the exhibition. It was fitting that his Directorship saw the fulfilment of this promise. 7

Despite the offer of this venue the artist continued to work at his own pace. At the outset the space appeared too large, encouraging the production of more sheets. 8 When arrangements became more definite, however, Maclean was merely offered the smaller gallery, causing the artist to completely reconsider the Third Eye Centre as a possible venue. He explained the situation to Martin thus: "To secure the big space I have to go again and plead my case before the Arts Committee in Glasgow." He continued that should he not get satisfaction, though it would be with some regret, he would take the project to Edinburgh or to Glasgow University. 9 Once the larger space had been procured and a date decided, this seems to have acted as a necessary spur to bring the whole project together. Deciding a definite date also meant that Maclean could approach
the SIET and SAC for final grants to help with exhibition costs, which
added extra momentum to the proceedings. The artist had been wary of
approaching these organisations hitherto for fear that pressure be applied
to show the project before he felt it was ready.\(^{10}\)

The summer months of 1977 leading into the autumn saw the artist finishing
off drawings and preparing the various parts of The Ring Net for
exhibition. The catalogue became an unwarranted burden in this hectic
period as Angus Martin reneged on an earlier agreement to produce the
essay, well after the Third Eye's deadline.\(^{11}\) Maclean was forced to write
the introduction himself, depending heavily on Martin's drafts for The
Ring Net Fishermen, though at considerable personal effort. The period
immediately prior to the exhibition in January became increasingly chaotic
with the artist attempting to print and frame works as well as tie up the
inevitable loose ends. The period preceding any exhibition tends to be
somewhat fraught. However, given the scale of The Ring net, the number of
years that went into its making, and its importance to the artist, it is
hardly surprising that the activity assumed feverish proportions in this
case.\(^{12}\)

Alongside the pressure on time came the fears.\(^{13}\) The artist wished for
Angus Martin to have a final look at the works before they went on the
walls. Not only did he hope that Martin would point out mistakes, he also
seems to have needed Martin's reassurance about the final project. He
wrote:

"... I would like to know that you are happy with the material -- many
of the sheets have your name on them i.e. 'from the material recorded by
Angus Martin' there will of course be errors of mine."\(^{14}\)

Despite the inevitable nerves, Maclean felt positive about the exhibition
at this stage. Willing it success, he stated: "I am hopeful that it will
be a good exhibition after all the work and co-operation we have enjoyed... we seem to have been living with it for so long now."15

The Exhibition and Tour:

"... the exhibition is not the mirage that has floated before us for the last four years... it is a reality at last."16

The exhibition opened to the public on the 25th January 1978. The final project filled two rooms and the corridor at the Third Eye Centre, with the artist having to fight to secure the use of the latter.17 A good idea of the layout is gained from the installation shots taken by George Oliver. The works can just be glimpsed in the corridor (figs 88,89). The sheer number of works had surprised the artist when he began to prepare them for the show. The cost of printing the photographs and framing all the pieces proved a heavy burden as a result, and the money provided by the SIET and SAC barely covered expenses. Maclean has recently said of the exhibition:

"The Third Eye showing, the first showing, was very difficult because I had no idea of how much material I had. ...there wasn’t much cash around and...the presentation of it was...crude and basic. But it was all I could do to get that kind of information, to get all the information in it that I wanted to get in it."18

Maclean had originally hoped to include some tape recordings, filmed material and slides, but in the event the extra costs and time involved rendered this impracticable.19

The Ring Net proved a success. Positive reactions came from both artistic quarters and from sea-faring communities, indicating that the balance sought between visual effect and the conveyance of information had been achieved.20 The Press and Journal, for example, chose to review the exhibition under its ‘Sea and Oil’ section. The West Highland Free Press
seems to have perceived a political use for the project, as an incentive to mobilise the fishermen against the fishing authorities. Though The Glasgow Herald appears to have devoted little space to the exhibition, it was given national coverage in The Guardian, meriting two separate reviews which focused on both the fishing and aesthetic aspects of the undertaking.

After Glasgow, the exhibition toured to Edinburgh, Leeds, Campbeltown, Tarbert and Inverness. The artist had little influence over the tour as the Third Eye was responsible for leasing it out. In Edinburgh it was sensitively reviewed by Edward Gage of The Scotsman. Gage made the valid point that its siting in the Demarco Gallery was appropriate given the director’s involvement at the outset of the project. The Leeds exhibition of April 1978 appears to have occurred on rather an ad hoc basis, with the artist much more interested in the subsequent Campbeltown and Tarbert shows. When it reached Argyll, The Ring Net was displayed for a week at Tarbert during its seafood festival. It then moved to Campbeltown Public Library for three weeks. The costs involved in taking the project to these venues were shared between the Tourism, Leisure and Recreation Department of Argyll, Mid Argyll and Islay Tourist Organisation, and Bute District Council. The librarian at Campbeltown, Norman S. Newton reported that it proved particularly successful at this site, attracting 4,337 people during the run. The showing of the project on its home ground did appear to catch the attention of the local population. The Campbeltown Courier’s initial advertisement for the exhibition (fig 91) provoked sufficient response to warrant two additional articles on the history of ring-netting written by Angus Martin.
In December 1978 the show travelled to Inverness, Will Maclean's home town. The project appears almost tailor-made for such a venue. The historical, cultural and economic aspects of *The Ring Net* complimented the other scheduled events in the museum's busy calendar, and Cordelia Oliver was invited to speak on the more aesthetic aspects of the artist's work. The press coverage at this venue, as one might expect, emphasised the local connections - that Maclean was an Invernessian, and that the Avoch fleet from the Black Isle had been one of the sources consulted during research for the exhibition. An unfortunate consequence of this showing, however, was that the project became quite badly damaged in transit. The works that returned to the Third Eye at the end of December 1978 had considerably deteriorated compared to their condition at the beginning of that year.

At this stage it appears that plans were made to tour the project further. Hull and Redcar had already been proposed. However, the latter part of 1978 had also witnessed moves by the Gallery of Modern Art towards acquiring the project from Maclean. This appears to have thwarted further touring, as the institution was unwilling to conclude the purchase until "all that is over". On hearing from Bridget Brown that she was unsure about further touring commitments, Douglas Hall asked Will to remind her that "the sooner we can have the drawings etc., the sooner we can pay you."

**Subsequent Showings:**

Since the acquisition of the project by the GMA it has been shown three times. Parts of it were displayed at the Pittenweem Festival of 1983, in Fife's new travelling gallery, at the request of Janet Shelley. The list of borrowed works tends to indicate that the drawings were
predominant in this showing, rather than the photographs. The GMA was unable to exhibit the project itself until it moved from the Botanical Gardens into its new premises at Belford Road. It was shown at this venue in 1986, largely the result of efforts by Margaret Mackay who had sorted through the project at the time of acquisition. Mackay was responsible for the hang, though she had the artist's approval. She selected enough material to fill two rooms and a corridor, arranging it into readily comprehensible themes, a situation curiously reminiscent of the original Third Eye hang. She encouraged the artist to make new prints from the boatyard tracings as the original photocopies had deteriorated so badly, and also borrowed the artist's negatives to copy particular photographs which had similarly deteriorated or been damaged in transit.

This showing at the new home of the project received unanimous critical acclaim, suggesting that adequate time had passed since 1978 for it to reach a new audience. Clare Henry seems to have been particularly enamoured with the show, relinquishing precious 'Mayfest' copy to give it adequate coverage in both the Glasgow Herald and Arts Review. Though her comments revealed an occasional lack of knowledge about both the project and the career of Will Maclean, her enthusiasm was very positive. The latest showing, at Stornaway in July 1987 (figs 92,93), owed less to such interest generated by this 1986 showing, than to contacts with the artist over the As an Fhearann/From the Land exhibition hosted by both an Lanntair and the Third Eye, also in 1986. The Ring Net's relevance to the Isle of Lewis and surrounding area encouraged Roddy Murray, the gallery's Director, to approach the GMA. Local reaction at this venue seems to have been particularly good, with the project most appreciated by those with experience of herring fishing.
On the whole, the exhibiting of the project has generally fulfilled the artist’s aims of going where it had meaning. The Third Eye showing gave access to those in Ayrshire and other areas connected with the Clyde Fishery, in addition to Tarbert and Campbeltown, while the Inverness and Pittenweem exhibitions made The Ring Net available to East coast fishing communities. Though it has not been made available as often as the artist originally wished, a situation influenced by the project’s present location, it has reached a wide-ranging audience over the years. Maclean has admitted that he is quite satisfied with the present situation.36

The Acquisition:

Since the purchase of the project by the GMA has had quite an effect on its showing since 1979, mention should be made of this event. Fortunately, letters stored in the acquisitions files at the GMA give detailed insight into the process of acquisition. It appears that the original intention was not to buy the whole project but merely five of the drawings. Douglas Hall, Keeper at that time, put forward this proposal after seeing the exhibition at the Demarco Gallery.256 The artist was placed in rather a quandary at this request. He rued splitting up the project, yet could not afford to turn down this offer, given that it was the first serious one concerning The Ring Net.37

Five works were subsequently chosen with the artist’s help, though Douglas Hall changed his mind about the particular works selected between April and June of 1978, ostensibly to ensure: "..that we have something representative of the visual impact of the series and which is capable of standing alone when exhibited."38 By November 1978 the artist appeared to be very concerned about the long-term future of the project after the tour had been completed. He confessed to the GMA:
"I wish I know of a home for the show, I don't want it back at Gateside but who? where?" 39

The gallery appears to have recognised Maclean's plea, as indicated by a letter stamped 21 November 1979, but which must have been sent in March as it refers to the Compass Gallery exhibition of that month. This letter states the intention of proposing the whole project to the committee on 6 April for a figure of four hundred pounds, double the amount offered for the original five sheets, and seeks the artist's opinion. 40

Maclean's relief at the proposal was evident. He replied:

"I am delighted to hear of your consideration of the whole 'Ring Net' sequence being put forward... I must confess that I was troubled by the fact that the drawings were to be split up, I would very much like them to be kept together." 41

Once accepted by both parties and various other queries ironed out, the artist was requested to deliver the works, minus their mounts, to the GMA in September 1979. Payment was not made until 11 January 1980, presumably after the project had been thoroughly checked by Margaret Mackay, which meant that the whole process had taken nineteen months to be completed. Douglas Hall's original wish for five representative works that could stand up to exhibition adequately describes the project's future at the GMA. Since the nature of the institution precludes frequent showings of The Ring Net in its entirety, occasional displays of a few pieces either as part of the permanent collection display, or in exhibitions such as Scottish Art Since 1900 (1989) will most probably be the norm.

Conclusion:
The opening exhibition of The Ring Net and subsequent tour represented the culmination of a long period of research and preparation. That it was well received at each venue validated this effort that had taken so long to reach fruition. In this respect Maclean was particularly pleased with
the reaction from the fishing communities, that the details were never faulted.\textsuperscript{42} Concerns about the future of the project were allayed in this period, although the new home was not exactly as the artist had envisaged. In hindsight Maclean is quite satisfied with the GMA as a home for the project. He does not feel that it would have been made much more available elsewhere, and it has the added bonus of being properly looked after owing to the GMA's excellent conservation facilities. Rather than see the project split up he more or less gave it to the GMA. The price offered barely reflected the cost of materials, a fact obviously recognised by those involved. At one stage in the negotiations Douglas Hall admitted:

"I do realise that the figure of £400 is a concessionary one, and I am not trying to wring the maximum out of you..."\textsuperscript{43}

During the most intensive negotiations, the artist was busy preparing for exhibitions in both Glasgow and London, and had in a sense, moved on from The Ring Net. Though concerned that a record was made of the project, and keen for it to be kept together and safe, he was by this stage more than a little saturated with the material and had other things to think about. It is not so surprising, therefore, that the project went for such a small sum.

While working on the project the artist came to regard it as an important historical document, an opinion reinforced by the critics when it was originally shown. Since the GMA's assumption of responsibility, emphasis does seem to have been placed on The Ring Net as an archive, a resource to be consulted rather than frequently displayed.\textsuperscript{44} It is somewhat ironic however, that while the artist intended it to be a historical archive, it has in effect become an artistic archive, providing background material for the career of Will Maclean the artist. Cordelia Oliver stressed in 1978 that:
"The artist has, so to speak, stepped aside to let the light fall unobstructed on his subject..."45

The present home of the project ensures that such may never again be the case.
1. Arg.97.
2. p2 Maclean has described this aspect of the project in interview. He explained: "The more I started to do it, the more I realised that every area that I wanted to cover there was more and more... to do, more and more to cover as well." He continued that his own experience of ring-netting combined with going out on the boats in the early stages of the project meant that he already had a good idea of how the contemporary system worked. However, talking to the men drew him into the historical aspects of ring-netting which put him "firmly into the research bracket". Interview 18/4/90.
3. Arg.97,77,103.
4. Arg.84.
5. Arg.112.
6. Arg.18.
7. Interview 6/9/89. The artist gave the drawing that appears on the cover of The Ring Net catalogue to McGrath (fig 90). Maclean's exhibition was the last of McGrath's Directorship at the Third Eye.
8. Conversation with the artist in Glasgow 23/1/90.
9. Arg.112.
10. Arg.84.
11. Martin had returned to fishing, drastically curtailing his free time. Arg.116.
12. After receiving a new list of photograph lenders replacing a mislaid original, the artist thanked Martin, writing: "I was near to despair there is so much to do I am in a terrible turmoil just now." Arg.140. See also Arg.119, and Arg.124.
13. See Arg.25: "I am beginning to be very nervous about the show. It is getting big build treatment from the Third Eye."
14. Arg.118 refer also Arg.124.
15. Arg.118.
16. Arg.119.
17. Bridget Brown, Exhibitions Officer at the Third Eye, wanted to reduce the number of works on show, Maclean considered this impossible. Interview with Will Maclean 18/4/90.
18. Interview 18/4/90.
19. See Arg.124. The works in the exhibition were mounted on boards and covered with perspex. The photographs, organised into themes and mounted about ten to a board, comprised about thirty boards, though not all the photographs were included. See Arg.119,120,124,135.
20. The artist mentioned in interview (18/4/90) that staff at the Third Eye were very pleased at the number of 'non-art' visitors that came through the doors. He quoted an overheard comment: "That's almost like a picture, you could almost put that on your wall."
22. 20 February 1978 p16. Maclean wrote to Martin that it was well received by the SAC Arg.130.
24. What's On December 1978 (publicity pamphlet for the museum). Other events included a lecture on the future of the Highlands, photographs by an Orcadian, films from the School of Scottish Studies and a natural history exhibition.
25. Interviews 6/9/89 and 18/4/90. The hanging of the works by inexperienced curators in several of the venues contributed to the
general tattiness of the works. The frames did not help in this respect.

27. GMA.17, 23 April 1979.
28. GMA.18, 4 June 1979

29. Though some pieces were shown at the GMA's Scottish Art Since 1900 exhibition of 1989, they only numbered three sheets (despite what is printed in the catalogue) see fig 60.

30. Interview 6/9/89. Shelley taught weaving at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee.

31. Rooms 21, 22 and 13. The photographs were grouped into methods, people, historical, boats and harbours, and the rest into historical, methods, kinds of boats, large "abstract" illustrations (mostly methods), and wildlife.

32. Interview with Margaret Mackay 10/4/90 and with the artist 18/4/90. The glue used on the photographic boards had affected the prints, and many of the photographs were badly scratched, evidence of which is still visible on pieces in the GMA collection.

33. 6 May 1986 p5 and 9 May 1986 p259 respectively.


35. Interview 18/4/90.

36. GMA.1, 3 April 1978. One of the Trustees, Alan Roger, a keen collector appears to have been involved at this stage. Interview WM 6/9/89 and Margaret Mackay 10/4/90.

37. See especially GMA.2, 6 April 1978 in which the artist wrote: "I had not thought to split up the work." Though the Anstruther Fisheries Museum had made an offer, it was not entertained.

38. GMA.6, 5 June 1978. Douglas Hall has mentioned that it was difficult to separate individual works from the whole. Conversation 18/4/90.


40. GMA.33/13a, Richard Calvocoressi to Will Maclean.

41. GMA.14, 18 March 1979. The consensus among those involved is that Douglas Hall had forgotten quite how large the project was. Interviews the artist 18/4/90 and Margaret Mackay 10/4/90.


43. GMA.18 4 June 1979.

44. Given the fugitive nature of the media there appears to be little alternative.

Richard Calvocoressi wrote of Alfred Wallis in an essay on Marine Painting 1900-1945: "Wallis said that he painted from memory 'what we may never see again', and as such he remains something of a glorious anachronism in 20th century marine painting..."1 Wallis' main source of subject matter was fishing boats and pre-steam ships. Though he was taken up and declared a true 'primitive' by Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood in 1928, he painted from his own experiences. Starting as a cabin boy on ships working the Newfoundland fishing routes at the tender age of nine, he later turned to inshore fishing and eventually worked as a marine scrap merchant in St. Ives. His working life therefore covered most aspects of the contemporary fishing industry, with the last venture allowing him to witness at firsthand the passing sail age.

Though Wallis's methods were somewhat different to those of Maclean and may reflect the presence of the many other artists in St. Ives, the concerns evidenced in his works parallel to a certain extent those of The Ring Net. Works like This is Sain Fishery That Use to be (fig 94), which refers to the seine-net method used for catching pilchards, both shows his familiarity with the technique and a desire to record it. The quote referred to above was written by Wallis in 1935. The whole passage reads thus:

"what i do mosely is what use to Bee out of my own memory what we may never see again as thing are altered all To gether Ther is nothin what Ever do not look like what it was sence i can remember"2

The Ring Net was originally intended to comprise a contemporary record of that particular type of fishing. However, as Maclean has stated, the more he talked to the older fishermen, the more he became drawn into the
historical aspect of the practice. Any attempt to reconstruct obsolete methods and equipment required heavy reliance on these oral sources, and occasional sketches when descriptions proved insufficient. As the practice itself became obsolete during the period of research, the impetus to produce a thorough record became more pressing. Though The Ring Net was produced by a classically trained artist, and the individual drawings are highly finished and reflect the factual bent of the undertaking, it is not so far removed from Alfred Wallis' 'primitive' works. Wallis is not the sole "glorious anachronism" in 20th Century marine painting. Of The Ring Net, Maclean himself has stated: "It will be seen historically as a kind of eccentric thing."

Will Maclean chose to depict ring-net fishing because it was a subject he knew, having spent time as a cook on a fishing boat after Hospitalfield School of Art. This direct experience of working on a fishing boat acted as a spur. Hitherto he had been unable to visualise his ideas on the subject. As he explained in 1969: "I suppose it wasn't until I worked on them that I came to know what they are, and what makes them boats." It is often stated in reviews of his work, that this experience, this insider knowledge, made his task easier. In a superficial sense it did. Will Maclean, the artist, could produce accurate images of ring-net boats because Will Maclean, the fisherman, had worked and slept on them. What is not often remarked upon, however, is that this fact of being an insider also made it more difficult for Maclean to tackle the subject.

Maclean's selection of familiar material as subject matter brought obligations as well as advantages. In the interview of 1969 he is recorded as saying that while at art school, though he was inspired by the
sea and excited by aspects of fishing, he could not depict his feelings.

He continued:

"For a long time I shied clear of boats and the sea because of my interest in it and yet my inability to tackle the problem. ... when I did, it looked so terrible that I was disgusted with myself."

He found it difficult to produce such works because he was not merely influenced by artistic decisions, he also wished to do justice to the subject, and thus to the people involved. More often than not he describes his work as "an attempt to express" rather than a definitive statement. To label Maclean a painter of the sea, and to place him in the tradition of Scottish marine painters negates this vital aspect of his work, this fatal attraction to a task of which he seldom feels the equal.

Certain aspects of The Ring Net are more readily understood if seen in this context. The attention to detail and preoccupation with accuracy are better explained by this sense of obligation to the fishermen involved. The trepidation at the project going out to the fishing communities and subsequent pride at its unanimous acceptance. The adamantine approach to the form of the exhibition: "no hanging nets", no "old skin buoys", but "Defined, clean, considered, accurate". The sheer scale of The Ring Net could only be explained by this compulsion to do justice to the subject. Maclean qualified his statement thus: "It will be seen historically as a kind of eccentric thing, but...I know that most of the information is right."

The artist's insistence that his work is only successful if rooted in personal experience or the experiences of others such as those of the Highlanders, is emphatic and has proved a consistent feature of his career. He tackles his themes based in reality in such a way as to give them international significance. Through Maclean the personal becomes the
Though very much a personal decision, this aspect of his work parallels the changes wrought within art circles of the 1960's. Caroline Tisdall, Art Critic for The Guardian, gave her view of the situation:

"There are once more among us artists, and non artists, who have moved out into the world. They believe that their role does not end, or perhaps even begin, within such a restricted framework. They have tried to break out of the narrow specialization that art has become and find a wider function than the production of simply aesthetic goods for the pleasure of the enlightened. The artist's materials now extend way beyond those of tradition. You could say that part of the new social function of art is the recognition of life itself, and the way we live it...""

David Baxendall, Director of the National Galleries of Scotland in 1966, revealed that the artistic situation in Scotland was in dire need of such a change in direction at that particular time, that a great deal of current Scottish painting tended to be inbred, complacent, and produced with little regard to outside trends. More ambitious young artists were obliged to leave Scotland to survive, either to rid themselves of the taint of parochialism by gaining access to international art, or simply to live, as the art market in Scotland offered little hope of subsistence. In this regard the situation was somewhat reminiscent of late 19th Century Scotland. Just as the 1880's saw the rise of the Glasgow Boys, feisty in their rejection of the provincialism of The Royal Scottish Academy and Glasgow Art Club alike, the late sixties produced a new breed of Scottish homeboy, artists who were not content to accept this status quo: artists who were determined to stay in Scotland without compromising their art.

In 1969 Will Maclean was very much of this ilk. He is recorded as saying at the time: "I'd like to think that art was an international statement, like drama - non local. On the other hand, I've no desire to go to London for London's sake.""
This rejection of the parochialism of Scottish art should not be seen as a rejection of all things Scottish within contemporary art. On the contrary, as witnessed by the work of John Bellany, this period saw a reaffirmation of one's own background as acceptable subject matter for this new breed of artist going out into the real world. Alastair Mackintosh saw two problems facing Scottish artists in the 1960's: firstly, isolation, likely to result in the sort of provincial narrowness which he saw the RSA as embodying; secondly, renunciation of all ties and going to New York or London, the only flaw, the likelihood that the loss of one's roots might lead to a facile art. He concluded:

"The problem then is to have a sufficient grasp of the central and important movements in contemporary art, and at the same time a confidence in one's own roots and traditions."12

For this to be possible in Scotland, artists had to have access to contemporary developments, and needed exhibition spaces themselves. This period saw the establishing of several new venues in response to this need, often by the very artists requiring them. The lonely path chosen by the New 57 Gallery in 1957, was later followed by The Richard Demarco Gallery in 1966, and still later by The Fruitmarket Gallery, The 369, The Third Eye in Glasgow, The Landmark Sculpture Park at Carrbridge, and the various printmakers' workshops in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow. The period also saw the Scottish Arts Council with more available funds and a suitably stepped up exhibition programme, while more established private dealers such as The Scottish Gallery began to reassess the contemporary market as a possible source of revenue.13 The late 1960's and early 1970's was therefore a time of self-conscious assessment and adjustment of the Scottish Art situation.
Will Maclean's career coincides with these developments. Not only did his aims align with those of the vanguard demanding change (artists such as John Bellany and Alexander Moffat), but he began to exhibit at a time when it became more possible for an artist just out of art school to exhibit. The Ring Net not only reflects these changes, it is inextricably bound to them. Initiated by Richard Demarco at the height of his influence in the Scottish Arts' scene; funded by an organisation committed to this new vision of Scottish culture; exhibited and toured by The Third Eye, itself indebted to The Scottish Arts Council; and bought by the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, to be shown in its new, improved premises in 1986. Without the developments of the late 1960's it is doubtful whether The Ring Net would ever have been feasible.

Though Maclean's avowal of experience and familiar subject matter as the basis of his art fits into this context, it was not necessarily caused by it. As so often with core issues in Maclean's art, influences without the visual arts can be seen as playing a more substantial role. In this respect Maclean is emphatic about his debt to Sorley Maclean. As he explained to Alan Woods in 1988:

"Yes, poetry has always been important to me, and Sorley's poetry in particular. He succeeds in literature where I fail in visual terms. He makes his work from a deeply rooted Highland background with an international form, breadth and relevance."  

The example set by Sorley Maclean can be seen as the goal aimed at by the artist. The subjects tackled by Will Maclean overlap many of the poet's. Indeed, the latter's poetry has been the inspiration for more than one construction. Sabbath of the Dead, 1978 and Inner Sound, 1984 both focus on particular images from 'Hallaig'.

In 1984, Maclean was involved in illustrating a film about Sorley Maclean made by Tim Neat, Hallaig: The Poetry and Landscape of Sorley Maclean.
What is interesting about this film is not so much the collaborative aspect, but that so many of the issues raised apply just as much to Will Maclean as to his namesake the poet. Great stress, for example, is placed on the importance of the Highland landscape. It is described as "a landscape of fantastic fact and fantastic symbol" with a history as worthy as that of Greece, bearing the imprint of the physical and spiritual struggle of a people, a people who were the poet's own forebears. In the same film, Seamus Heaney describes Sorley Maclean as: "deeply, authentically and proudly a local poet, a poet of place, but he is also a major poet... and his work... comes through with tremendous passion and with a sense of revelation." Similar words occur repeatedly in reviews of the work of Will Maclean.

Though the artist's concerns are more indebted to Sorley Maclean than to contemporary Scottish art, the parallels are not coincidental. While Maclean was taking his example from a poet of the Literary Renaissance generation in Skye, John Bellany and Alexander Moffat were doing likewise, but in Edinburgh. Whereas Will Maclean chose the appropriate example of a Highlander, these lowland artists focussed on Hugh MacDiarmid, still very much on the Edinburgh scene at this time. As Alexander Moffat explained in his essay for John Bellany's retrospective exhibition at the GMA in 1986:

"It seemed that MacDiarmid and the poets directly inspired by him, their ideas, their horizons, were far in advance of anything in Scottish Painting. Something had happened in poetry which hadn't in painting; poetry seemed to matter, while painting merely aimed at the bourgeois living-room with pretty still lifes and landscapes. John and I were intent on forging a figurative style which would not only be a synthesis of the old and the new, but would contain subject matter particular to modern Scotland."

In the same catalogue, Alan Bold, close friend to both Moffat and Bellany and author of a recent biography on MacDiarmid, stressed: "MacDiarmid was
living proof that a Scotsman could operate at an international level."
Bold also stated that Bellany later painted on the walls of his London
studio a quotation from MacDiarmid's poem A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle
of 1926:

And Let the lesson be -- to be yersel's
Ye needna fash gin it's to be ocht else.
To be yersel's -- and to mak'that worth bein'
Nae harder job to mortals has been gi'en.20

As well as summarising the attitudes of Bellany and Moffat at this time,
this particular quotation could also stand as the leitmotiv of Maclean's
art.

Will Maclean and The Ring Net:
The Ring Net is of obvious importance to an assessment of the career of
Will Maclean. Not only did it take up more than four years of his life,
at a time which began to see his reputation spread outside Scotland, but
it reflects many of the core concerns of his work. Its focus on the
'appearances' (the instinctive means used to catch the herring) mirrors
Maclean's fascination with the primaeval aspects of fishing evidenced in
other works.21 The processes used in its making, such as the repeated use
of sketches and photographs as bases for the graphic works, and the
constant reworking of particular themes comprise other familiar features.
Maclean's handling of real materials is of particular interest here.
Though he refused to include actual artefacts in the exhibition, such
items were used as sources for the works, in a similar way to his more
recent pieces including moulds instead of actual objects. The artist's
willingness to take on new media and methods to express a particular idea,
regardless of whether he feels confident in their use, can also be traced
in The Ring Net. Maclean can hardly be accused of taking the easy route
through his career, having trained in drawing and painting, acquired fame
through constructions which eventually evolved into free-standing sculptures, and recently returning to the picture plane. As he explained to Alan Woods in 1988:

"Sculpture is a new avenue of development, but it doesn't block off the old avenues; whether a work is a sculpture or not depends on whether sculpture is the best solution to the problem. But you can never predict these things; at the moment I'm working on more two-dimensional pieces."\(^{22}\)

As well as reflecting central concerns of Maclean's art, The Ring Net also affected his work. In 1978 he considered it to have had an important influence on his own development as an artist. He explained to Raymond Gardner of The Guardian:

"... it was interesting from the technical point of view that I was forced to make visual conclusions in a new discipline. But I've also collected a store of visual images which will be used eventually in my own work in a more subjective form."\(^{23}\)

Maclean had begun to use that store of images during the period of working on the project. Ray Fish Shrine, 1976, like Rainy Day Skate, 1978, has obvious correlations with the photograph Fishermen and Skate, Kintyre from the project (figs 95-97). Maclean had shown interest in the subject before, for example in Fishermen with Skate, 1970, though the treatment was considerably different. It is surely no coincidence that the appearance of the distinctive mouth and tail of the skate should occur after the discovery of the photograph. Twelve years on, the artist still acknowledges the "reservoir of imagery" produced by the project. Moreover, the repetitive nature of much of The Ring Net work ensured that such images as Loch Fyne skiffs would be etched on his memory, and could afterwards be drawn automatically.\(^{24}\)

For Maclean the historical importance of the project is paramount: it recorded the practice of ring-netting before all memory of it was lost.
Throughout the period of working on The Ring Net, Maclean exhibited other works and his current reputation has been based on the box constructions which he began making in the mid-1970's. The factual aspect of the project proved to be one-off. In 1979, for example, Cyril Gerber stressed: "His current work, however, is not documentary, nor even literal." 24

Though it is necessary to qualify the degree of artistic influence of The Ring Net on Will Maclean, it was important to his work. In a sense it kept him sane, freeing him from teaching when at his lowest ebb and allowing him time to reaffirm his artistic commitment. In his introduction to the Inscape catalogue, Paul Overy praised the system in Scotland that produced so many artist-schoolteachers, rightly surmising that the nation's restricted number of art schools was responsible for this situation. He stated that he was impressed "...by the number of artists in Scotland who manage to produce a body of work while teaching full-time in schools." 24 The Argyll letters reveal quite taxing this balance proved in practice, and indicate the resulting detrimental effects on both Maclean's work and health. As well as giving him six months free, The Ring Net helped the artist to make sense of teaching on his return. He began to work on pieces of the project during his school day as he was later to do with bits destined for his box constructions. Moreover, The Ring Net and its ensuing contact with Angus Martin, kept him in touch with his beloved Highlands, during this trying period of his career. It kept him going between school vacations which enabled visits to Skye. 27 It also restored his faith in human nature, previously shaken by the petty squabblings of career-minded colleagues and the suspicion built into the secondary education system. That people were willing to lend photographs, and boatbuilders, plans, on trust alone, contrasted greatly with a system
that rigidly enforced counting pencils after each class. The change was refreshing, and very necessary.  

In one respect, The Ring Net was vital to Maclean's artistic development. The Ring Net produced the boxes. To be more exact, the rigour of the graphic work involved in The Ring Net produced the boxes. As a form of relaxation during the period of working on the project, Maclean began to carve and make things. This may have been inspired by making the half-models, as the Argyll letters record the enjoyment derived from this particular task.  

Jack Knox wrote in his introduction to A Choice Selection in 1975:

"But when it comes down to it, art is a very personal thing - it is one man's idea of what life is all about, and everything he makes is his metaphor of the process of living. Behind the surface appearance of what he does lies his whole attitude to life, and he will develop his own artistic language when his ideas and feelings and the means he devises of expressing them are perfectly integrated."

It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that The Ring Net helped Will Maclean in achieving such a stage of integration.
ENDNOTES: CHAPTER SIX.


2. "Letter to Ede" 6 April 1935 quoted in St. Ives 1939-64 Twenty-five Years of Painting, Sculpture and Pottery, Tate Gallery 1985 p156.

3. Interview 18/4/90. It is somewhat ironic that Richard Calvocoressi wrote on behalf of the GMA offering to buy The Ring Net. See ch5 note 40.

4. A Talk with William McLean (sic) pl.

5. Ibid. p2.


7. Arg.04 - a statement which might almost have served as a personal mantra.


10. BBC Arts Review Programme 20 October 1966 quoted in the Richard Demarco tenth anniversary catalogue above p9. Baxendall stated: "Modern Scottish painting has many virtues but a good deal of it suffers from the effects of in-breeding. We all know the sort of painting that has been called "Edinburgh School" in which pleasant colour is combined with skill in handling of paint broadly but tastefully, decoratively rather than expressively. Any painter who follows this style in Scotland is fairly sure of support from the picture-buying public; it is the accepted and established thing. As a result many painters have produced variations on the styles of the leading painters here in Scotland and a very cosy time is had by all. It is just a little parochial and it doesn't have all that much to do with the main current of contemporary painting."


13. It has been difficult acquiring information on the New 57 Gallery as the archives held at The Fruit Market Gallery are awaiting transfer to the National Library and were not made accessible. However, various exhibition catalogues held at The Central Library provide some information, for example, Twenty by 57: 20 Young Scottish Artists presented by the New 57 Gallery, 1969, A Second 20 by 57, 1970 and particularly 15 Years of The '57 Gallery, 1972. These, like the newsletters of the Richard Demarco Gallery demonstrate how self conscious these new galleries were in their promotion of Scottish Art. In the preface to the 1969 20 x 57 catalogue is written: "The idea of presenting an exhibition of young Scottish painters is in many ways, new, and should enhance the reputation of Scottish Art in general, during such an important International Festival." The New 57 also showed the work of artists of international importance such as John Heartfield and Max Beckmann. See also the copies of the Richard Demarco News Sheet, Umbrella and Parasol held at the National Library, the SAC catalogues for A Choice Selection, 1975, Inscape, 1976, and Painters in Parallel, 1978 in which the SAC's policy of promoting Scottish art is evident (all of which feature the work of McLean) and Peacock Printmakers Recent Work, 1986.

14. McLean exhibited at most of the venues mentioned.

16. The artist stressed this in interview 29/11/90.

17. 'Inner Sound' features a window yielding onto a distant nuclear submarine which refers to "The window is nailed and boarded through which I saw the west" the first stanza of 'Hallaig', whereas the first work refers to the sixth stanza:

If it does not, I will go down to Hallaig, 

to the Sabbath of the dead, 

where the people are frequenting, 

every single generation gone.


18. Heaney also quoted a Polish poet thus: "A poet can be great only when he is truly himself and faithful to the horizon of circumstance that encircles him" which echoes the sentiment in note 20.


21. Ring-netting was a hunting method of catching fish. Maclean laid heavy stress on this aspect of the project in his introduction to The Ring Net catalogue in 1978. The artist has frequently included the imagery of fishermen as hunters in his box constructions.


24. Interview 18/4/90.


27. See especially Arg.150.

28. Interview 29/11/89. It is somewhat ironic that schools still haunt Maclean. The current emphasis on primary sources has produced countless requests from teachers requesting information about his work.


DEAR SIR

Sir,

Last week-end Campbeltown was visited by Mr. William Maclean, a native of Skye, who has been awarded a major scholarship by the Scottish International Education Trust to enable him to record information relative to ring-net fishing. The response from local persons connected with fishing was most encouraging and he was able to collect a lot of old photographs of considerable value to his research, as well as several interesting relics.

In the past several months he has visited most of the Scottish boatyards which built ring-net fishing boats. Eventually, he hopes, an exhibition of photographs and plans of early skiffs and the more recent cruiser stern vessels will be organised. On account of the limited time he was able to spend here, it was not possible for him to visit all the persons he intended to.

However, as there is a considerable possibility of Mr Maclean and myself collaborating to produce a book on the history of ring-netting (as a project distinct from the one he is at present engaged in) I will be giving him whatever assistance I can in the Kintyre area. Photographs of the early ring-netting skiffs of Lochfyneside, Tarbert, Carradale and Campbeltown and, especially, of the early cruiser stern vessels would be welcome, as well as any plans of vessels, pictures of models, etc. Such material can be left at my address, or collected by me after I've been told about it. I would emphasise that Mr Maclean wishes simply to borrow material. He has been photo-copying facilities at his disposal, and after copies have been made of suitable material it will be promptly returned to the owner in its original condition.

I feel confident that Mr Maclean's researches will be supported by the fishing communities of Kintyre. So very little has been done to document the history of ring-netting in Kintyre and in Lochfyneside, where the method originated that I am sure Mr Maclean, who is related to the Reid fishing family of Kyleakin, will get the further response that he is hopeful of.

His address, for anyone who would like to contact him, is: The Schoolhouse, Gereside, Strathmiglo, Fife.

Yours etc.,

ANGUS MARTIN, Junr.
24 Crosshill Avenue, Campbeltown.
DEAR SIR

Sir.—After a necessary lay-off which has lasted for about five months, I am becoming intensely interested in continuing the research work into the history of ring-netting, begun by Will Maclean and carried on, in Kintyre, by myself.

Preparations for the exhibition of visual material—photographs, reproductions of builders’ models, plans of boats, engines, nets and sails, and his own drawings—are advancing. The originally suggested date of the exhibition has been put back, but that change of plan has probably been for the better because the exhibition, when it is staged, will be the more complete.

My own special interest is verbal documentation, and to that end I have been making taped recordings of the remaining representatives of that great breed of ring-net fishermen who began their working lives when sail and oar were the means of propulsion; men who fished the herring grounds of the Minch and West Coast of Ireland, getting the nets up entirely by hand.

These recordings, of which there are now, in total, about 40 hours of, acquired in Campbeltown, Carradale and Tarbert, have a special value which cannot yet be appreciated. What is important is that a spoken record exists of that period which now seems so curiously remote. And yet, there are at least ten men in Kintyre who toiled under just these aforementioned conditions.

The point is, I hope to begin a second round of recording. The essential history is beginning to emerge in clear outlines (sharpened, of course, by contemporaneous written evidence, in the form of newspaper reports, fishery officers’ reports, etc.) but there is an abundance of material yet to be gleaned from the memories of retired fishermen, not least of all the ‘yarns’ which so characterised life during that period. I’m hopeful of getting again, the wonderful co-operation which rendered my furling beginning in this kind of research so smooth.

A surprisingly large amount of photographic material has come to light in Campbeltown, though very little, as yet, in Carradale and Tarbert. I would appeal, again, to people of or connected with Kintyre fishing families to look out photographs of skiffs, cruiser stern vessels, groups of fishermen, individual fishermen—in short, anything to do with the herring fishing industry in Kintyre.

Any material handed over to me will be passed on to Will Maclean who will photocopy it and return it intact to its owner.

There is a fascinating period, of which no photographic evidence, as yet, has been discovered. I refer to the encampment fishery, which ceased to be practised at the end of the last century. In that fishery, Campbeltown fishermen (especially) sailed during the summer months to the coast between Carradale and Skipness and stationed themselves there, each family camping out at its traditional spot.

They would remain there fishing and putting their catches on board the herring steamers (being unengined there was no question of taking their catches to a port for auction), and perhaps return home at weekends, but certainly during ‘the week of the moon’ when herring were difficult to net.

I have heard mention of a photograph of fishermen campers at Grogport, which was at one time on display in a local garage, but its present whereabouts is seemingly unknown.

I’ll be about Tarbert and Carradale in the near future (I have a collection of photographs to return to a Carradale fisherman) and hope to hear about material in these places.

Thanking warmly all those who have associated and who have assisted so far in the work, on behalf of Will Maclean and myself.—Yours,

ANGUS MARTIN, Jnr.
24 Crosshill Avenue.
APPENDIX THREE: THE RING NET LIST OF WORKS.

This list is based on the Third Eye Centre’s list of works given to the GMA. The titles have been checked against the actual works. Where the original titles contradict with those on the Third Eye Centre’s list changes have been made in favour of the former. Sizes and media have also been added. The sizes are in centimetres. Any gaps denote works not given to the GMA, or ones which do not agree with the list. This represents a work in progress. (For abbreviations see beginning.)

PHOTOGRAPHS.

LOCH FYNE SKIFFS:
1. VARNISHING THE FAME. 12.5 x 25.1 A. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.
2. SKIFFS AT CAMPBELTOWN. 20 x 25.1 MRS C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.
3. SKIFFS AND HERRING STEAMERS, CAMPBELTOWN. 20.2 x 25.2.
4. FISHING FLEET IN TARBERT HARBOUR. 29.5 x 37.5 D. FERGUSON, TARBERT.
5. SKIFF JUNE ROSE AT KYLEAKIN. 20.2 x 25.2.
6. SKIFF JUNE ROSE AT KYLEAKIN. 20.2 x 25.2.
7. SKIFF LOADING NET. 14.2 x 23.8.
8. CARRADALE SKIFF MAGGIE MACDOUGALL UNDERWAY. 25.2 x 25.2 M. A. MACDOUGALL, CARRADALE.
9. SKIFFS AND HERRING STEAMERS, CAMPBELTOWN. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 x 25 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19 x 24.1 PAPER-MOUNTED COPY MOUNTED WITH 59. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.68 fig.13. W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

CANOE STERNED RINGERS:
10. MAGGIE MACDONALD - FIRST SKYE CANOE-STERNE RINGER. 13.7 x 25.1 A. MACLEOD, PORTREE.
11. ONYX. 17.9 x 25.1.
12. MONSOON. 20.1 x 25.2 ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITY.
13. FALCON: FIRST CANOE-STERNE FISHING BOAT. 28.7 x 35.1 MOUNTED ILLUSTRATED RNF p.212 fig.42. MISS G. WILSON, STAITHES.
14. MARSALI. 16.1 x 24.5 A. MACLEOD, PORTREE.
15. CAMPBELTOWN CANOE-STERNE UNDER SAIL. 19.5 x 25.2.
16. MARY STORGEON. 20 x 25.1 MOUNTED. W. WEATHERHEAD, COCKENZIE.
17. MAIREARED. (TWO COPIES) 15.3 x 24.5 UNMOUNTED COPY, 15 x 24.1 PAPER-MOUNTED COPY, MOUNTED WITH 19.
18. CRIMSON ARROW LAUNCHING. 15.5 x 25.2.
19. CRIMSON ARROW LAUNCHING. 25 x 20.1.

GROUPS OF CANOE AND CRUISER STERNED RINGERS:
20. SUMMER ROSE AT SEA. (TWO COPIES) 16 x 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 15.3 x 24 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 39.
21. PRIMROSE IN INVERNESS. 20 x 25.
22. MISTY ISLE AT SEA. 19.2 x 25 MOUNTED WITH 29.
23. RISHINN BHAN. 20.1 x 20.
24. RINGERS WITH DERRICK RIGGED. 20.1 x 15.3.
25A. SEAFARER OF CAMPBELTOWN SETTING OFF NORTH AFTER ANNUAL OVERHAUL. 25.7 x 36.6. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.237 fig.58.
26. MANX BEAUTY LAUNCHING. 15.6 x 24.4 HALF-MOUNTED. MOUNTED WITH 79. LENT BY ANSTRUTHER FISHERIES MUSEUM.
27. PILOT ME IN SWELL. (TWO COPIES) 19.9 x 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.2 x 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 40.
28. OAKLEA IN HARBOUR. 20.2 x 25.1.
29. HOPE AT ST. MONANCE. 15.8 x 25.2 MOUNTED WITH 25.
30. **SUMMER ROSE.** 19.9 X 25.1
31. **MISTY ISLE.** 20.2 X 25.1

**ALIFED AND LATER BOATS:**
32. **RIBHINN DONN II.** 16.7 X 22.6 NOBLE, GIRVAN.
33. **WESTERLEA.** 17.1 X 22.3 NOBLE, GIRVAN.
34. **HEATHER SPRIG AT UIG.** 19.8 X 25
35. **VIGILANT FITTING OUT.** 20.1 X 25.1
36. **ALIFED VII BEING WORKED ON IN HARBOUR.** 23.9 X 37.4

**W. WEATHERHEAD, DUNBAR.**
37. **FAIR MORN FROM ABOVE.** 24 X 20.1 J. MACKENZIE, BUCKIE.
38. **KLONDYKER AT UIG, 1973.** 19.2 X 25.2
39. **VILLAGE MAID. (TWO COPIES)** 20.1 X 25.2 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.9 X 24
   HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 21. J. MURRAY, GIRVAN.
40. **MONADHLAITH. (TWO COPIES)** 20.1 X 25.2 UNMOUNTED COPY,
   19 X 24 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 27.
41. **NEW DAWN.** 20.1 X 25.2 P. MCCABE, MAIDENS.

**GROUPS OF BOATS:**
42. **POST-WAR RINGERS, CAMPBELTOWN LOCH.** 20 X 25.1
   A. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.
43. **SKIFFS AND RINGERS, CAMPBELTOWN.** 20.1 X 25.3
44. **CARRADALE RING-NETTERS, ISLE OF MAN.** 20.3 X 25.2
   C. GALBRAITH, CARRADALE.
45. **KITTIWAKE AND OTHER RINGERS IN HARBOUR.** 20.2 X 25.2
46. **RING-NETTERS AT CARRADALE c1936.** 20.2 X 25.2
   MRS C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.
47. **THE SCOTTISH FLEET AT WHITBY.** 20 X 25.2 DORAN BROTHERS, WHITBY.
48. **THE SCOTTISH FLEET AT WHITBY.** (TWO COPIES) 20 X 25 UNMOUNTED COPY,
   18.9 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 49. DORAN BROTHERS.
49. **THE SCOTTISH FLEET AT WHITBY.** (TWO COPIES) 20 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY,
   19 X 24 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 48. DORAN BROTHERS.
50. **AYRSHIRE RINGERS IN HARBOUR.** 20.2 X 25.1 P. MCCABE, MAIDENS.
51. **MALLAIG HARBOUR.** 20 X 25.3 ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.
52. **THE ENTERPRISE BEING BUILT.** 12.5 X 25.1 MR. FORBES, SANDHAVEN.
53. **GLAD TIDINGS WITH CUT DOWN RUDDER.** 20 X 25.1 W. BLAIR, CAMPBELTOWN
54. **SCAFFIE BLOSSOM (NOT FITTED OUT FOR RINGING). (TWO COPIES)** 20 X 25.2
   UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.1 X 24.2 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. G. JACK, AVOCH.
55. **NIL DESPERANDUM ON TRIALS.** 20.8 X 35 MOUNTED J. MILLER, ST. MONANCE.
   ILLUSTRATED RNF p.216 fig.43.
56. **SILVER GREY ON WARTIME PATROL (TWO COPIES)** 20.4 X 36.1 ORIGINAL
   UNMOUNTED COPY, 29.4 X 40 UNMOUNTED NEW PRINT A. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN
57. **BELLA ANCHORED IN THE KYLE OF LOCHALSH.** 14.6 X 25.2
   D. GILLIES, KYLE OF LOCHALSH.
58. **DUSKIE MAID FITTED FOR SHARK FISHING, CARRADALE.** 20 X 25.1
59. **THE ZULU RINGER ACACIA. (TWO COPIES)** 20 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY,
   19.1 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 9. MRS. SOAPER, SKYE.
60. **ZULU KATIE MACDONALD CONVERTED FOR RING-NETTING.** 15.5 X 25.1
   MR. MACDONALD, STEIN, SKYE.
61. **ZULU RINGER AT KYLE OF LOCHALSH.** 20.1 X 25.1
   D. GILLIES, KYLE OF LOCHALSH.
62. **STAR AND ACACIA AT KYLEAKIN.** 20 X 25.1 MOUNTED. N. GRANT, KYLEAKIN.
   ILLUSTRATED RNF p.217 fig.44.

**GROUPS:**
63. **CANOE-STERNED RINGER MARSALI UNDER SAIL. (TWO COPIES)** 21.6 X 13.3
   UNMOUNTED COPY, 21.4 X 13 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 64.
   A. MACLEOD, PORTREE.
64. **CANOE-STERNED RINGER UNDER WAY. (TWO COPIES)** 25.2 X 17.3 UNMOUNTED
COPY, 24 X 16.7

65. KINTYRE FISHERMEN.

66. FISHERMEN AT THE ISLE OF MAN.

67. FAMILY GROUP, KYLEAKIN. 20 X 22.9

68. CARRADALE BOATS BEING CLEANED. 20.1 X 25.2

69. GROUP OF FISHERMEN ABOARD NOBLES 15.4 X 23.8

70. FAME BEACHED AT DALINTOBER. 17.2 X 25.3

71. GROUP OF DALINTOBER FISHERMEN, CAMPBELTOWN. 19.6 X 24.9

71A. CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMEN IN WORKING GEAR. 25 X 19.6

72. CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMEN, STRANRAER. 25.1 X 19.7

73. ELIZMOR ON TRIALS. 17.9 X 23.5

74. TUDOR ROSE. 18.8 X 24.8

75. STORMDRIFT. 19.6 X 25.2

76. NULLI SECUNDUS IN CAMPBELTOWN HARBOUR. 18.8 X 25.1

77. MARY MCLEAN AT MILLER'S YARD. 27 X 37.1 MOUNTED

78. JESSIE LAUNCHING. 25.2 X 20

79. FERTILITY LAUNCHING. 19.9 X 25.2 MOUNTED WITH 26.

80. FORTITUDE LAUNCHING. 20 X 25.2

81. CONSTANT FRIEND AND KATHRYN WITH DRIFT NETS. 20.1 X 25.1

82. INTEGRITY. 20 X 25.1 MOUNTED.

83. KINTYRE FISHERMEN MENDING. 25 X 20

84. HAULING THE NET FOR RD. 23 X 19.3

85. MENDING NETS, CARRADALE. 20 X 25.2

86. MENDING NETS ON THE FORTITUDE. 20 X 25.1

87. MENDING NETS ON THE FORTITUDE. 20.1 X 25.1

88. MENDING NETS ON THE FORTITUDE. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 X 25.2 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19 X 24.2 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 166

89. MENDING NETS ASHORE, CARRADALE. 19.8 X 24.8

90. DRYING NETS ABOARD MARGARET HAMILTON, CAMPBELTOWN. 19.9 X 24.8

91. TARBERT FISHERMEN SETTING UP A RING NET. 25.1 X 20

92. SETTING UP A RING NET. 19 X 25.2

93. RING-NETTERS OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973; FORTITUDE, MISTY ISLE AND RIBHINN BHAN. 15.6 X 22.3

94. RING-NETTER OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 20.2 X 25.3


96. THE FLEET LEAVING WHITBY. 25.5 X 39 HALF-MOUNTED COPY

97. BOATS AT WATERFOOT, CARRADALE. 27.6 X 37.3

98. OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 15.9 X 22.5


100. RING-NETTERS OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 20.1 X 25.1

101. OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 16.6 X 23.8
102. RIBHINN PHAN OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 20 X 25.2
103. NIGHT FISHING OFF THE SKYE COAST, NOVEMBER 1973. 20 X 25.2

HAULING:

104. CAMPBELTOWN PAIR HAULING. 18.1 X 23.8
105. JOHAN WITH MESHED HERRING. 18.5 25.2 MOUNTED WITH 106.
106. VERBENA BRAILLING. 19.9 X 25
107. RIBHINN PHAN BRAILLING. 20 X 25.1 ILLUSTRATED RNF p.232 fig.53.
108. AYRSHIRE CREWS HAULING. 20 X 25.1 J. GEMMELL, AYR.
109. AYRSHIRE CREWS HAULING. J. GEMMELL, AYR. ILLUSTRATED RNF P.226 fig.50.

HALVING AND BRAILLING:

110. CABER FEIGH HAULING. 30.1 X 37.4 A. FINLAYSON, AUCHTERTYE.
111. MOREA BOARDING WITH VERBENA ALONGSIDE. 25.4 X 20.4
112. MARIGOLD HAULING. (TWO COPIES) 25.2 X 17.6 UNMOUNTED COPY, 24 X 16.8 MOUNTED WITH 114.
113. HERRING MESHING ABOARD STORM DRIFT, LOCH FYNE. 25.2 X 19.
114. HERRING MESHING, LOCH FYNE. (TWO COPIES) 25.2 X 20 UNMOUNTED COPY, 24 X 19 MOUNTED WITH 112.

HAULING AND BRAILLING:

115. BRAILLING: MISTY ISLE AND RIBHINN PHAN. 19 X 24.1 MOUNTED WITH 114.
117. BRAILLING: MISTY ISLE AND RIBHINN PHAN. 20 X 25.1 MOUNTED WITH 125.
118. BRAILLING: MISTY ISLE AND RIBHINN PHAN. 19.2 X 24.1 MOUNTED WITH 122.
119. HAULING THE CORK ROPE. 20 X 25.1
120. RIBHINN PHAN. 20 X 25.2
121. HAULING THE CORK ROPE: MISTY ISLE. 19.1 X 24.1 MOUNTED WITH 135.
122. HAULING THE CORK ROPE, MISTY ISLE. 20.1 X 25.1 MOUNTED WITH 118.
123. HAULING THE SOLE ROPE, MISTY ISLE. 20.1 X 25.
124. HAULING THE SOLE ROPE, MISTY ISLE. 20 X 25.1

BOARDING HERRING:

125. BOARDING HERRING, MISTY ISLE. 19 X 24 MOUNTED WITH 117
126. FENDING OFF NEIGHBOUR BOAT. 20 X 25
127. BOARDING, RIBHINN PHAN. 20.2 X 25
128. BOARDING, RIBHINN PHAN. 25.2 X 20
129. AYRSHIRE CREWS BASKETING HERRING. 24.9 X 19.5 J. GEMMELL, AYR.
130. HAULING THE AFTER CORK ROPE. 25.1 X 20
131. BOARDING HERRING -- FENDING POLE IN USE. 20.1 X 25.2
132. BOARDING HERRING WITH TWO BRAILERS. 19.5 X 25.1
133. CREW JUMPING BETWEEN BOATS. 17.2 X 23.4
134. CREWS FENDING OFF NEIGHOUR BOAT. 20 X 25.2
135. CREWS JUMPING BETWEEN BOATS: MISTY ISLE AND FORTITUDE. 19.1 X 24.1 MOUNTED WITH 121.

DISCHARGING HERRING:

136. DISCHARGING HERRING, CAMPBELTOWN. 18.1 X 22.5 J. GEMMELL, AYR.
137. FILLING BASKETS. 19.7 X 25.1
138. RAISING THE DERRICK, ULLAFOOL. 20 X 25.1 MOUNTED.
139. MISTY ISLE DISCHARGING HERRING AT UIG. 19 X 25.1 ILLUSTRATION RNF p.235 fig.56.
140. MISTY ISLE DISCHARGING HERRING AT UIG. 20 X 25.1
141. AVOCH CREW FILLING BOXES. (TWO COPIES) 30 X 37.5 UNMOUNTED COPY, 29.2 X 36.2 MOUNTED WITH 142.
142. MR. A. MACRAE WASHING SCALES AT UIG. 25.3 X 20
143. MISTY ISLE DISCHARGING HERRING AT UIG. 19.1 X 25.1
144. SCOOPING AND PICKING HERRING. 19.9 X 25.2 J. GEMMELL, AYR.
145. SCOOPING HERRING. 19.8 X 25.1 MOUNTED. J. GEMMELL, AYR.

ILLUSTRATED RNF p.234 fig.55.

FORECASTLES:

146. FORECASTLE: FORTITUDE. (TWO COPIES) 20 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 148, 149, 150.
147. FORECASTLE: MISTY ISLE. 20.1 X 25
148. ENGINE ROOM: MISTY ISLE. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 X 25.2 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.1 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 146, 149, 150.
149. TABLE: MISTY ISLE. (TWO COPIES) 20 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.1 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 146, 148, 150.
150. PLAYING DRAUGHTS: MISTY ISLE. (TWO COPIES) 19.9 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.1 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 146, 148, 149.

151. CRIBBAGE: FORTITUDE. 20 X 25.1
152. MAKING A CLOOTIE DUMPLING: MISTY ISLE. 20 X 25.1
153. MAKING A CLOOTIE DUMPLING: MISTY ISLE. 20 X 25.2
154. TEA: MISTY ISLE. 19.9 X 25.2
155. MAKING A CLOOTIE DUMPLING: MISTY ISLE. 20 X 25.2

VARIous:

156. BOAT WITH WORKING LIGHTS. 15.5 X 23.3
157. BOARDING HERRING: MISTY ISLE. 16.2 X 23.5
158. WHEELHOUSE: FORTITUDE. 16.4 X 23.7
159. BOATS FISHING. 15.4 X 24.4
160. BOARDING HERRING. 16.6 X 21.8
161. WASHING OFF SCALES. 17.6 X 23.8
162. BOARDING HERRING. 20.1 X 25.1
163. HERRING BAG. 18.5 X 25
164. BOXING HERRING. 16.9 X 19.5
165. CAPSTAN WINCH: ALIPED IX. 16.6 X 24
166. MISTY ISLE ON PASSAGE. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 18.9 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 88.
167. DISCHARGING HERRING: MISTY ISLE. 20 X 25.1
168. FORTITUDE FISHING. 16.9 X 24.1 MOUNTED.

FISHERMEN:

169. GROUP OF SKYE FISHERMEN AT TARBERT, LOCH FYNE. 14.1 X 23.7 MISS REID, KYLEAKIN.
170. SILVER GREY ON WARTIME PATROL, PART-CREWED BY CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMEN. 17 X 24.9 A. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.
171. CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMEN MENDING AT CARRADALE. 14.1 X 24.6 MRS. C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.
172. CARRADALE FISHERMEN IN SUMMER ATTIRE. 24.4 X 19.3 C. GALBRAITH, CARRADALE.
173. SKYE FISHERMEN: FORTITUDE. 18.1 X 23
174. MR. J. MANSON OF MALLAIG. (TWO COPIES) 20.3 X 25.3 UNMOUNTED COPY, 18.9 X 24 HALF-MOUNTED COPY.
175. MYSTICAL ROSE AT BROWN HEAD. 18.4 X 24.9 P. MCKINLAY, CAMPBELTOWN.
176. MR. W. REID OYSTER FISHING. 25.1 X 19.1
177. DALINTOBER FISHERMEN MENDING. 25.1 X 20.1 A. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.
178. MR. ROBERT ROBERTSON, CAMPBELTOWN. 25.1 X 20.1 MRS. LAIRD, CAMPBELTOWN.
179. FAME OF DALINTOBER LEAVING MOORINGS. 20 X 25.2 ILLUSTRATED RNF p.207 fig.39. MRS. C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.
180. THE LATE MR. E. MACRAE MENDING NETS. 25.1 X 20
181. FISHERMEN AND SKATE, KINTYRE. (TWO COPIES) 24.9 X 18.9 UNMOUNTED COPY, 29.2 X 19 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. MRS. A. MUNRO, CAMPBELTOWN. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.187 fig.35.

181A. FISHERMAN WITH FISH. 19 X 24. HALF-MOUNTED.

GROUPS:

182. CAMPBELTOWN REGATTA 1904 -- CREW OF WINNING SKIFF CLEMINA. 20.2 X 17.8 W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

183. CAMPBELTOWN LIFEBOAT CREW. 15.7 X 25.1 J. MAREHAM, CAMPBELTOWN.

184. KINTYRE FISHERMEN AT THE LONDON EXHIBITION OF 1883. 20 X 25.2 FROM CAMPBELTOWN COURIER, MRS. C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.

185. CARRADALE FISHERMEN. (TWO COPIES) 25 X 37.6 UNMOUNTED COPY, 25.6 X 37.8 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.46 fig.9 (WITHOUT FOREGROUND) D. MACINTOSH, CARRADALE.

186. NETMAKERS, CAMPBELTOWN. 23.9 X 37.6 MOUNTED J. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.

187. DALLINTOBER FISHERMEN ON THE QUAY AT DALLINTOBER c1910. 20.6 X 16.7 ILLUSTRATED RNF p.43 fig.7. W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

188. HERRING CURING, CAMPBELTOWN. (TWO COPIES) 13.8 X 24.9 UNMOUNTED COPY, 12.8 X 24 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

189. CREW OF SWEET HOME. 20.1 X 25.1. MOUNTED WITH 192. W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

190.

191. FISHERMEN IN SKIFF, CARRADALE. 13.5 X 23.5 J. RITCHIE, CARRADALE.

192. GROUP OF CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMEN. 20.1 X 24.9 MOUNTED WITH 189. W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.

WORK PHOTOGRAPHS:

193. MRS. MACTAGGART, FISHSELLER, CAMPBELTOWN. (TWO COPIES) 25.9 X 34.4 UNMOUNTED COPY, 27 X 34.8 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. W. ANDERSON. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.185 fig.34 AND RNC PHOTOGRAPH SECTION TOP LEFT.

194. CARRADALE FISHERMEN WITH TEA BOWLS. 19 X 25 MRS. C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.

195. JOHN MORRISON, SKYE FISHERMAN. 29.7 X 33.6 MRS. N. MCPHERSON, KYLE OF LOCHALSH.

196. SPlicing HALYARDS ON A SKIFF. 23.8 X 17.8 P. MACCAEIE, MAIDENS.

197. SKYE FISHERMAN. 19.6 X 25.2 MRS. N. MCPHERSON, KYLE OF LOCHALSH.

198. FISHERMAN DRYING NET. (TWO COPIES) 37.4 X 28 UNMOUNTED COPY, 38.7 X 28 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. D. MCINTOSH, CARRADALE. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.127 fig.23.

199. SKIFF BUILDING, PORT RIGH. (TWO COPIES) 29.4 X 37.5 UNMOUNTED COPY, 25.8 X 37 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. M.N. MCDUGALL. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.78 fig.15.

SKIFFS UNDER SAIL:

200. TARBERT SKIFFS LEAVING MOORINGS. (TWO COPIES) 20 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 19.1 X 24.2 HALF-MOUNTED COPY.

201. CAMPBELTOWN SKIFF UNDER SAIL AND OAR. 20 X 20.3

202. THE SKIFF FIONA UNDER SAIL. 20 X 25.2 MOUNTED WITH 207 J. MARTIN, CAMPBELTOWN.

203. SKIFFS AT MOORINGS. 20.2 X 25.2 ILLUSTRATED RNF p.79 fig.16.

204. CLEMINA UNDER SAIL, CAMPBELTOWN. 20 X 25.2

205. ARDRISHAIG SKIFF, SAIL AND OAR. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 18.9 X 24.2 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 206.

206. THE SKIFF ELSIE UNDER SAIL AT CAMPBELTOWN. (TWO COPIES) 20.1 X 25.1 UNMOUNTED COPY, 18.9 X 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY -- MOUNTED WITH 205.

207. SKIFF CN414. 23.4 X 20.1 MOUNTED WITH 202

208. SKIFF ARGYLE BECALMED. 20.1 X 25.3

209. SKIFF WITH SHORTENED SAIL. 23.4 X 20

WORK PHOTOGRAPHS:

210. BARKING A SAIL, TARBERT. 20 X 25 MOUNTED J. WEIR, TARBERT.
211. FISHERMEN BARKING NET. 25.2 x 20.2 MRS. M. MACARTHUR, LOCHGILPHEAD.
212. GUTTING AND PACKING HERRING. 20 x 25 W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.
213. GUTTING AND PACKING HERRING. 17.7 x 25.2 MOUNTED (WHOLE MOUNT 55.9 X 40.7) W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.
214. SETTING UP A RING NET. 20.2 x 25.2
215. CARRYING BALLAST ON BOARD A SHIP. 20.1 x 25.2 A. FERGUSON, TARBERT.
216. PICKING HERRING, DALINTOBER. 37.2 x 28 MRS. C. MACCALLUM, CAMPBELTOWN.
217. TWO TARBERT FISHERMEN. 37.5 x 25.5 MOUNTED. D. FERGUSON, TARBERT.
218. MARY MCELLENN ALONGSIDE THE HERRING STEAMER. 17.3 x 23.9 MRS. A. MUNRO, CAMPBELTOWN.
219. LOADING THE HERRING STEAMER. 17.4 x 24.8
220. CAMPBELTOWN SKIFF ROThESAY CASTLE 20.1 x 25.3 ILLUSTRATED RNF p.206 fig. 38.
221. SKIFF MAY AT MOORINGS. 15.5 x 23.9
222. OSPREY CREW AT WORK ON THE MAINSAIL. 18.1 x 25.1
223. GOODWILL AND AGNES IN CAMPBELTOWN. 20 x 25.1 MOUNTED W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.
ILLUSTRATED RNF p. 58 fig.10 AND RNC PHOTOGRAPH SECTION BOTTOM LEFT.
224. MUNRO BOATBUILDERS YARD, ARDRISHAIG. 22.7 x 20.1 DR. A. CAMPBELL, PAISLEY.
225. ARDRISHAIG SKIFFS 11.4 x 20.5 DR. A. CAMPBELL, PAISLEY.
226. CAMPBELTOWN SKIFFS. 20.1 x 25.3
227. ARDRISHAIG SKIFF Mooring UP. 17.4 x 25.2
VARIOUS PRINTS:
228. PICNIC TRIP, CAMPBELTOWN. 14.1 x 23.5 J. SHORT.
229. WATCHING THE REGATTA. (TWO COPIES) 19 x 24.8 UNMOUNTED COPY, 18.9 x 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED COPY.
230. SHACK EUPHEMIA BEEACHED AT CARRADALE. 29.9 x 37.5 MOUNTED MRS. E. MORRISON, CAMPBELTOWN.
231. CAMPBELTOWN QUAY. 16.7 x 25.3 D. FERGUSON, TARBERT.
232. FISHERMEN AND SMALL SKIFF. 20.1 x 25.2 MRS. D. FERGUSON.
233. NETS DRYING ON POLES. 20.1 x 25
234. SKIFF'S CREW RAISING THE JIB. 25 x 19.2
235. CAMPBELTOWN FISHERMAN ROWING SKIFF. 25.2 x 20
236. SKIFFS PASSING DAVAAR ISLAND. 20 x 20.5
237. SKIFF MAGGIE AT HER MOORINGS. 20.1 X 17.4
238. PRESENTATION ADDRESS, CAMPBELTOWN. (TWO COPIES) 30.2 X 37.5 UNMOUNTED COPY, 30.2 X 40.4 HALF-MOUNTED COPY. W. ANDERSON.
239. STERN SHEETS OF A SKIFF. 15.6 x 25.1
240. HERRING FLEET LEAVING FOR THE GROUNDS. 18.2 x 25.3
241. LAUNCHING OF THE REGENT BIRD AT FORT BANNTAYNE. 19.6 x 25.4
242. GROUP AND RING NET. 15.8 x 25.1
243. SKIFF SARA. 18.3 x 25.3 W. ANDERSON, CAMPBELTOWN.
244. LIFE BOAT LAUNCH. 19.7 x 25.1 J. WAREHAM, CAMPBELTOWN.
245. HERRING SWIMMING. 19.1 x 24.1 HALF-MOUNTED.
251. THREE HERRING. MEDIA: PEN AND INK AND COLOURED WASH ON THIN CARD. ILLUSTRATED RNC.

252. TWO HERRING. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, INK WASH AND FISH SCALES.

254. BARKING THE NET. P/S 41.6 X 57.7. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK INK, WATERCOLOUR, SPRAY PAINT AND LETRASET ON PAPER.

255. SKIFFS. P/S 38.6 X 56.1. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET ON CREAM PAPER.

256. BOARDING HERRING: THE TAIL BRAILLER. P/S 58.6 X 46.8. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, RED PENCIL AND WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER. ILLUSTRATED RNC p. 230 fig. 51.

257. BOARDING HERRING 2: SIMPSON'S TAIL BRAILLER 1932. P/S 49.9 X 46.7. MOUNTED. MEDIA: LETRASET, PEN AND SEPIA AND RED INK, SPRAY PAINT ON PAPER.

258. DEVELOPMENT OF FISH HOLD. P/S 41.8 X 37, IF/S 41.3 X 37, I/S 30.3 X 35. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK, LETRASET AND COLOURED ACRYLIC PENS ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.

259. GAR-FISH. P/S 35 X 48.7, IF/S 34.3 X 48. MOUNTED. MEDIA: WATERCOLOUR, PEN AND INK, AND FISH OIL ON WHATMAN PAPER.

260. NET NEEDLES. ORIGINAL P/S 43.1 X 43.1, ADDED F/S 54.5 X 55.9. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR AND TRACES OF GOUACHE ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.

261. LOCHE FYNE SKIFF: FULLY DECKED SAILING SKIFF c1905. P/S 32.9 X 48.5, F/S 31.4 X 47.3, I/S 28.7 X 44.5. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BROWN INK AND GOUACHE ON CARD, GLAZED.

262. EXPERIMENTAL SOLE ROPE HAULERS. P/S 32.5 X 40.3, IF/S 31.8 X 39.7, I/S 25.3 X 38.5. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK AND LETRASET ON WHATMAN PAPER.

263. BOARDING: NETS. P/S 45.2 X 37.6, I/S 42.9 X 36.7. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK, COLLAGE, LETRASET AND WATERCOLOUR ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.


266. LOCHE FYNE SKIFF. P/S 43.9 X 51.6 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, GUM AND GOUACHE ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.

267. WINCHES. P/S 48.9 X 50.1. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND SEPIA INK, LETRASET AND WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER.

268. LOCHE FYNE SKIFF: DEVELOPMENT OF DECK. P/S 56.1 X 44.4. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PENCIL, ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET ON WHITE PAPER.

269. GANNET FISHING. P/S 46.6 X 61.6, I/S 32.5 X 59 (WITHOUT TITLE). MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, SPRAY PAINT, WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER. ILLUSTRATION RNC.

270. GANNET II. P/S 15.7 X 37.6, ADDED F/S 26.1 X 47.2. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK AND RED INK, LETRASET AND WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER.

271. HERRING COOKING. P/S 17.2 X 32.9, IF/S 16.3 X 32.2, I/S 9.8 X 27.7 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PENCIL ON WOVE PAPER.

272. ACACIA 1926: DESIGNED BY J. REID FROM A HERRING GULL. P/S 44.6 X 56, I/S 17.7 X 51. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLLAGE, LETRASET, PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK ON CARTRIDGE PAPER.

273. HERRING IN THE STOMACH OF A COALFISH, PORTREE SOUND. P/S 24.7 X 42.9, I/S 20.2 X 39. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PENCIL DRAWING ON CARTRIDGE PAPER.

274. WINCHES DISCHARGING. P/S 32 X 32.9. UNMOUNTED.
MEDIA: PEN AND INK, ACRYLIC PEN, WATERCOLOUR, WASH AND LETRASET ON PAPER.

275. BUOYS: CANVAS AND LEATHER. P/S 31.4 X 56.8. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK, LETRASET AND SPRAY PAINT ON PAPER.

276. OARS, BALLAST ETC. P/S 32.5 X 40.3, IF/S 31.8 X 39.7, I/S 25.3 X 38.5 MOUNTED. MEDIA: RED AND BLACK INK AND LETRASET ON WHATMAN PAPER.

277. THE FLAMBEAU. P/S 45.3 X 27.1, IF/S 43.1 X 25, I/S 40.8 X 22.9 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN, INK AND COLOURED WASH ON PAPER.

278. MAP OF THE MINCH FISHING GROUNDS 1946-67. MEDIA: MAP ANNOTATED WITH LETRASET AND ACRYLIC PEN.

279. WINKIES. MEDIA: PEN DRAWING.

280. FORECASTLES: LOCH FYNE SKIFF, SAIL AND OAR. P/S 47.2 X 57.6 IF/S 44.7 X 55.5 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND SEPIA INK ON PAPER.

281. APPEARANCES 1: MEANS OF DETECTING HERRING -- NATURAL SIGNS, DAY. P/S 58.5 X 41.7, IF/S 56.4 X 40.4. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER.

282. APPEARANCES 2: MEANS OF DETECTING HERRING -- AIDS, NIGHT AND DAY. P/S 47.1 X 58.1, IF/S 46.4 X 57.5. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK AND SEPIA INK, LETRASET AND WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER.

283. APPEARANCES 3: MEANS OF DETECTING HERRING -- SOUND AND SIGHT, NATURAL SIGNS. P/S 58.1 X 48.7. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, SPRAY PAINT, WATERCOLOUR, LETRASET.

284. BOARDING HERRING: BASKET METHODS. P/S 57.7 X 49.2, IF/S 56.8 X 48.5 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR AND COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC) ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.

285. SHUTTING PROCEDURE. ORIGINAL P/S 50.6 X 61.5, ADDED F/S 56 X 77. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLLAGE (PAPER AND ADHESIVE PLASTIC), LETRASET, PEN AND BLACK INK, PENCIL ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.

286. NETS:
A. NETS ASSEMBLY, NINETEENTH CENTURY. P/S 41.1 X 59.2. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC) ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.


C. NETS USED IN KILBRANNON SOUND AND LOCH FYNE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. P/S 27.3 X 53.4. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS ON WHITE PAPER.

D. NETS: 1840. P/S 40.9 X 59.8. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BROWN AND GREEN INK AND LETRASET ON WHITE CARD.

E. NETS: WINGS 1840 TO 1880. P/S 56.1 X 28.5. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK, COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC) ON CREAM CARD.

287. NETS: CONSTRUCTION DETAILS C19. P/S 43.7 X 60.3. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND SEPIA INK AND LETRASET ON WHITE CARD.

288. RING NET. P/S 44.5 X 60.2, I/S 29.2 X 59.8 (WITHOUT TITLE). MOUNTED. MEDIA: LETRASET, PEN AND GREEN INK. ILLUSTRATED RNF p.222 fig.47 AND RNC.

289. METHOD: SINGLE BOAT RINGING. P/S 50.4 X 60.2. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, COLLAGE AND LETRASET ON PAPER.

289B. METHOD: SINGLE BOAT, NET DRAWN TO SHORE c1840. P/S 57.2 X 49.8. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET AND SPRAY PAINT ON WHITE PAPER.

290. METHOD: HAULING -- KEEPING OUT OF THE NET. P/S 50.3 X 60.9. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, COLLAGE, PENCIL, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER.

291. METHOD: SHORE FISHING; DOUBLE ANCHOR -- ROCKS AND TIDE I.
292. METHOD: TOWING. P/S 63.2 X 51.9. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLLAGE (PAPER
AND ADHESIVE PLASTIC), PENCIL AND PEN AND INK ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.
293. METHOD: SHORE FISHING; DOUBLE ANCHOR -- HERRING NEAR ROCKS.
P/S 63.3 X 51.7, I/S 61.6 X 49.4. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK,
ACRYLIC PEN, LETRASET, COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC), WATERCOLOUR,
SPRAY PAINT ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.
294. METHOD: HAULING TO THE SHALLOWS. P/S 51.5 X 62.9, I/S 48.4 X 59.9
MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND SEPIA INK, LETRASET AND SPRAY INK ON GLAZED
KENT PAPER.
295. METHOD: DOUBLE ANCHOR AND SWEELINES. P/S 60.8 X 49.8. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: COLLAGE, PEN AND BLACK INK, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR ON GLAZED
KENT PAPER.
296. METHOD: WIND AND TIDE. P/S 57.6 X 46.4. MOUNTED. MEDIA:
PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, PENCIL ON PAPER.
297. METHOD: RINGING DEEP WATER -- PRESENT DAY. P/S 62.3 X 50.9.
UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: ACRYLIC PEN, PEN AND INK AND LETRASET ON PAPER.
ILLUSTRATION RNF p.156 fig.32 AND RNC.
298. METHOD: HAULING PROCEDURE, SAILING SKIFFS. P/S 59.4 X 42.6.
MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK AND RED INK, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR ON
GLAZED KENT PAPER.
299. METHOD: FLEETING WITH DOUBLE ANCHORS. P/S 52.6 X 46.1, I/S 43.5 X
41.2 (WITHOUT TITLE). MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS,
LETRASET ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.
300. HAZARDS: TIDES, TEARS, MESHING ETC. P/S 50.2 X 60.7, I/S 48.3 X 60
MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INK'S, LETRASET ON PAPER.
301. DISCHARGING HERRING. P/S 50 X 61.1. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND RED
AND BLACK INK, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR ON GLAZED KENT PAPER.
302. HAULING: NET, SWEELINES AND ANCHOR WORK (SINGLE ANCHOR) 1900.
P/S 52 X 63.1. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: ACRYLIC PEN, PENCIL, LETRASET,
PEN AND RED INK.
303. HERRING CHUTE. P/S 53 X 69, I/S 48.5 X 66.8. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: PEN AND RED AND BLACK INK, GOUACHE, LETRASET, ACRYLIC PEN
OVER PHOTO PLAN PRINT, ON PHOTO PLAN PRINT PAPER.
304. LOCH Fyne SKIFF: SAIL, OAR, BALLAST. P/S 61.4 X 49.7, I/S 52.5 X
45.9. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, PENCIL AND
SPRAY PAINT ON PAPER. ILLUSTRATED RNC.
305. WHALES, SHARKS, DOGFISH ETC. P/S 52 X 63.5. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: LETRASET, PEN AND BLACK INK, SPRAY PAINT ON PAPER.
306. LOCH Fyne SKIFF: ELEVATION, PLAN AND SIDE VIEW. P/S 41.8 X 57.4,
I/S 37.7 X 57.4. MOUNTED. MEDIA: SEPIA INK ON CARTRIDGE PAPER.
ILLUSTRATED RNF p.86 fig.18.
307. RING NET FISHING BOAT c1947. P/S 49.5 X 68.2. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: PEN AND COLOURED INKS, LETRASET, WATERCOLOUR, WASH, SPRAY
PAINT ON WOODED PAPER ILLUSTRATED RNC.
308. CANOE STERN RINGER c1930. P/S 44.4 X 71.7. MOUNTED.
MEDIA: COLOURED WASH, LETRASET, PEN AND BLACK INK ON PAPER
ILLUSTRATED RNF p.220 fig.46.
309. HULL FORMS. P/S 47.2 X 61.3. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK
INK, LETRASET, ACRYLIC PEN ON PAPER.
310. RINGER LINES, WYLEY, CAMPBELTOWN. P/S 47.5 X 61.4, I/S 43.3 X 60.8.
UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLACK AND BROWN INK, LETRASET ON SMOOTH
CREAM CARD.
310A. FISH. P/S 25.1 X 31.6. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK ON THIN CARD.
311. LINES DRAWING: LILY OAK. P/S 43.8 X 61.4, I/S 43.2 X 60.8.
UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND BLUE AND BLACK INK, LETRASET ON CREAM
312. SAIL PLAN: 48FT RING NET BOAT. P/S 34.6 X 69.6, I/S 32 X 65.5. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD. J. MILLER, ST. MONANCE.

313. SAIL PLAN: AUXILIARY RING NET VESSEL. P/S 37.4 X 57.6, I/S 34.1 X 52. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. MACDUFF ENGINEERING CO.


315. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, WEATHERHEAD AND BLACKIE. P/S 70.7 X 64.3, I/S 63 X 56.5. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD.

316. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, MCBRIDE TYPE. P/S 44.1 X 71.7. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. MACDUFF ENGINEERING COMPANY.

317. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, MCBRIDE TYPE. P/S 53.1 X 71.6, I/S 48.4 X 66.8. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. MACDUFF ENGINEERING COMPANY.

318. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, ARKLOW. P/S 47.5 X 68. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. J. TYRELL, ARKLOW.

319. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, FRASERBURGH. P/S 50.7 X 71.5. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. J. NOBLE, FRASERBURGH.

320. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, RINGER, BUCKIE. P/S 60.1 X 56.2. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT. J. MACKENZIE, BUCKIE.

321. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, RINGER, BUCKIE. P/S 60.5 X 68.5. MOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT, PEN AND RED INK, PINK PENCIL, LETRASET. J. MILLER, ST. MONANCE.

322. SPECIFICATIONS 1948. P/S 60.5 X 53.2 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD. MCDUFF ENGINEERING CO.

323. SPECIFICATIONS 1965, ST. MONANCE. J. MILLER, ST. MONANCE.

324. LINES PLAN: MONADHLIATH, BUCKIE. P/S 60.6 X 141, I/S 57 X 136.2. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT. J. MACKENZIE, BUCKIE.

325. RING NET ZULU A.M.V. ACACIA. P/S 51.3 X 60, I/S 48.2 X 60. ORIGINAL MOUNT. MEDIA: PHOTO PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD, MOUNTED ON PULPBOARD AND CHIPBOARD. FROM THE DRAWING BY J. REID, KYLEAKIN.

326. COSTING SHEET. P/S 52.1 X 53.2 MOUNTED. MEDIA: PRINT ON THIN CREAM TEXTURED CARD. MCDUFF ENGINEERING CO.

327. DRAWINGS BY DAVID STEWART 1852: DRIFT NET AND TRAWL NET FISHING FOR HERRING. A. EARLIEST ILLUSTRATION OF RING-NETTING -- SINGLE SKIFF. P/S 29.1 X 50.4. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY. ILLUSTRATION RNF p.139 fig.25. SCOTTISH RECORD OFFICE.

B. A TRAWLER'S INTERFERENCE WITH DRIFT-NETS. P/S 25.1 X 53.1 UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY. ILLUSTRATION RNF p.8 fig.2. SCOTTISH RECORD OFFICE.
333. COPIES OF LETTERS:
A. REPORT OF ARREST FOR SUSPECTED TRAWLING. P/S 34.8 X 21.3.
   UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY ON PULPBOARD.
B. REPORT OF TRAWLING ARREST. P/S 34.4 X 21. UNMOUNTED.
   MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY ON PULPBOARD.
C. PETITION CONCERNING CONSTABLES’ UNIFORMS. P/S 43.5 X 20.6.
   UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY ON PULPBOARD.
334. OBITUARY: MR. ROBERT ROBERTSON. P/S 49.2 X 21.1 UNMOUNTED.
   MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY.
335. HERRING CLOSE TIME NOTICE. P/S 49.1 X 31.4. UNMOUNTED.
   MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY.
336. AUCTION OF FORFEITED BOATS NOTICE. P/S 32.3 X 20.1. UNMOUNTED.
   MEDIA: PHOTOCOPY ON PULPBOARD.

PRINTS MADE FOR 1986 EXHIBITION.
342. AUXILIARY FISHING BOAT, LOCH FYNE SKIFF 1925. P/S 47.6 X 78.1,
    CP/S 39.8 X 60.3, IF/S 36.8 X 58.6. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED
    LITHOGRAPH ON GLAZED WHITE KENT PAPER. J. MILLER, ST. MONANCE.
343. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, FRASERBURGH. P/S 60.3 X 87.3, CP/S 51.6 X
    71.6, IF/S 50.4 X 70.5. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED LITHOGRAPH ON
    GLAZED WHITE KENT PAPER. J. NOBLE, FRASERBURGH.
344. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, MCBRIDE TYPE. P/S 59.2 X 87.1, CP/S 45.8 X
    72.5, IF/S 43.8 X 70.6. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED LITHOGRAPH ON
    GLAZED WHITE KENT PAPER. MACDUFF ENGINEERING COMPANY.
345. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, MACDUFF ENGINEERING CO. P/S 64 X 90,
    CP/S 54 X 72.1, IF/S 52.7 X 70.8. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED
    LITHOGRAPH ON GLAZED WHITE KENT PAPER. MACDUFF ENGINEERING COMPANY.
346. RING NET ZULU A.M.V. ACACIA. P/S 63.2 X 87, CP/S 52.6 X 60.3,
    IF/S 50.6 X 58.8. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED LITHOGRAPH ON GLAZED
    WHITE KENT PAPER. FROM THE DRAWING BY J. REID, KYLEAKIN.
347. GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN, FAIRLIE. P/S 88.5 X 64, CP/S 62 X 60.4,
    IF/S 60.7 X 59.4. MOUNTED. MEDIA: COLOURED LITHOGRAPH ON GLAZED
    WHITE KENT PAPER. MR AND MRS. MACMILLAN, FAIRLIE.

ADDITIONAL DRAWINGS MADE FOR THE RING NET FISHERMEN:
348. LUG-SHEETS. P/S 18.9 X 12.1, I/S 16.4 X 10.8. UNMOUNTED.
    MEDIA: PEN AND INK, WATERCOLOUR AND LETRASET ON WHITE PAPER.
    ILLUSTRATED RNF p88 fig.19A.
349. LUG-SHEETS. P/S 18.9 X 12.1, I/S 16.4 X 10.8. UNMOUNTED.
    MEDIA: PEN AND INK, WATERCOLOUR AND LETRASET ON WHITE PAPER.
    ILLUSTRATED RNF p88 fig.19B.
350. BOATING A NET. P/S 31.5 X 22.4, IF/S 29 X 22.4, I/S 26.5 X 10.5.
    UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, WATERCOLOUR, LETRASET ON WHITE CARD.
    ILLUSTRATED RNF p149 fig.29.
351. EXPERIMENTAL RING NET, TARBERT 1905. P/S 20.65 X 38.8,
    I/S 12.1 X 38.2. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK AND LETRASET ON
    WHITE CARD. ILLUSTRATED RNF p159 fig.33.
352. SHOOTING AND HAULING A NET TO ANCHORED SKIFFS. P/S 23.8 X 32.2
    I/S 21.2 X 29.7. UNMOUNTED. MEDIA: PEN AND INK, WATERCOLOUR AND
    LETRASET ON CARD. ILLUSTRATED RNF p144 fig.26.
353. SHIFTING TO LEEWARD. P/S 24 X 32.1, IF/S 21.3 X 29.5. UNMOUNTED.
    MEDIA: PEN AND INK, LETRASET AND COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC) ON CARD.
    ILLUSTRATED RNF p146 fig.27.
354. FLEETING A NET. P/S 24.4 X 32.6, I/S 21.3 X 30. UNMOUNTED.
    MEDIA: PEN AND INK, LETRASET AND COLLAGE (ADHESIVE PLASTIC) ON CARD.
    ILLUSTRATED RNF p148 fig.28.
355. **Map of the coast north and south of Campbeltown showing fishermen’s place-names.**
   P/S 36.1 x 30.5, I/F/S 34 x 27.8, I/S 30.3 x 22.5.
   Unmounted. Media: Pen, ink and Letraset.
   Illustrated RNF p250 fig. 62.

356. **Map of the coast north and south of Carradale showing fishermen’s place-names.**
   P/S 35 x 29.7, I/F/S 32 x 29, I/S 29.5 x 15.
   Unmounted. Media: Pen, ink and Letraset.
   Illustrated RNF p248 fig. 61.

357. **Map of the Tarbert west shore showing fishermen’s place-names.**
   P/S 36.3 x 30.7, I/F/S 33.8 x 28.1, I/S 30.5 x 17.5. Unmounted.
   Media: Pen, ink and Letraset. Illustrated p245 fig. 60.

**Tracings in rolls:**

358. **Kelvin Control Gear 1933.**
   P/S 39.9 x 37.9, I/S 32.2 x 36.3.
   Media: Pencil and Letraset on thick tracing paper.

359. **Loch Fyne Skiff TT177.**
   P/S 44 x 51.3.
   Media: Pencil on thick tracing paper.

360. **Line plan: Loch Fyne Skiff, auxiliary fishing boat.**
   P/S 40.6 x 67.8
   I/S 28.6 x 58.6. Media: Pencil on thick tracing paper.

361. **Kelvin: Installation Sheet 1933.**
   P/S 67 x 43.5, I/S 64.4 x 40.9.
   Media: Pencil, pen and black ink, Letraset on tracing paper.

362. **Kelvin Steering Gear 1930.**
   P/S 33.4 x 36.1, I/S 29.9 x 32.5.
   Media: Letraset, pencil, pen and black ink on tracing paper.

363. **Kelvin Control column 1933.**
   P/S 62.3 x 49.2, I/S 59.2 x 46.1.
   Media: Pen and ink, Letraset and pencil on tracing paper.
BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Unpublished Sources.

Interviews.
Three formal interviews were held with the artist on 6/9/89, 29/11/89 and 18/4/90 (taped). There were also various informal conversations.

A weekend was spent in Campbeltown interviewing Angus Martin, 19/10/89 to 23/10/89 which also included interviews with three fishermen: Archie Paterson and Lachie Paterson of Carradale and Denis Meenham of Campbeltown.


Also: A Talk with William McLean (sic), January 1969 conducted by Philip Wright current Director of the SAC and an Arena Programme on Will Maclean which took the form of an interview. It was made for BBC2 and scheduled to be shown in January 1978.

Letters.

GMA acquisitions files: letters concerning the purchase of The Ring Net. Catalogues, articles and reviews.

Other unpublished sources.

GMA list of works annotated by the artist in the acquisitions file, conservation reports, register of works and a list of works for the 1983 Pittenweem exhibition.

SAC Artists' Register, file on Will Maclean, which also included many photographs of early paintings.

Poems by Angus Martin inspired by ring-net fishing and the Campbeltown area such as 'Lament for the Herring for Will Maclean', 'A Picture Postcard of Campbeltown Harbour for Tricia Allerston' and 'Old Men's Words'.


Published Sources.


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(Forward to P.F. Anson’s The Sea Fisheries of Scotland are they doomed?)


        Highlands and Islands. Glasgow, no date.


(technical books after catalogues.)

Catalogues, Reviews, and Articles:

PICTURE POST, "A War Artist on the Clyde." v21 2 October 1943 p7-11.


May 1969, Edinburgh.


RICHARD DEMARCO GALLERY, News Sheet No.11. August 1970 (feature on the new Landmark Sculpture Park at Carrbridge).


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Will Maclean. (Introduction by Duncan Macmillan)


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Edinburgh.

Technical sources and regional background.

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London, 1930.


BRITISH MUSEUM Guide for the Identification and Reporting of Stranded
Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises on British Coasts.


HODGSON, W.C. The Natural History of the Herring of the Southern North

JOHNSON, Ronnie and Tarbert Lochfyne - The Story of the Fishermen.

MARCH, E.J. Sailing Drifters. The Story of the Herring Luggers of

MARTIN, Angus "Passive Ring Net." Fishing News (Uses illustrations from
"Fishermen of Kintyre." in Odyssey - Voices from Scotland's
Past by Billy Kay. (Uses Ring Net illustrations)
Edinburgh, 1980. Also BBC Scotland Radio Programme.
"The Mull of Kintyre Fishery." The Kintyre Magazine No.16

industry during WWII.)


SMITH, Peter The Lammas Drive and the Winter Herrin' - A History of the

THE RING NET BY WILL MACLEAN

PATRICIA ALLERSTON

ILLUSTRATIONS.
1. Gannet Fishing (RN 269)
2. Last Banquet, 1972 (Photo: SAC)
3. Fisherman Listening for Herring, 1989
5. Avoch crew filling boxes (RN 141)
6. Netmakers, Campbeltown (RN 186)
7. Gar-fish (ără 259)
8. Herring Swimming (RN 250a)
9. Method: Fleeting With Double Anchors (RN 299)

9a. Detail of above: Fathoms marked with Leather Tags (RN 299)
The bottom of the upper bag was first placed in the top of the lower bag.
12. The flambeau (RN 277)
13. Net needles (RN 260)
14. Installation shot of Third Eye Centre Exhibition showing early Loch Fyne sailing skiffs (Photo: George Oliver)
15. The Scottish fleet at Whitby (RN 49)
16. Ring-netter off the Skye Coast, November 1973 (RN 95)
17. Method: Single Boat Ringing (RN 289)

17a. Detail of above (collage) (RN 289)
METHOD: fig. 1, end of tow crew positions.

fig. 2, position of boats when boarding herring.

fig. 3.

18. Method: Towing (RN 292)
19. Herring Chute (HN 303)

20. General Arrangement Plan, McIvoff Engineering Co. (HN 318)
21. Ring Net Fishing Boat c1947 (RN 307)
Campbeltown Loses A Great Fisherman
Tributes To The Late Mr. Robert Robertson
He Pioneered Many Methods Of Herring Fishing
23. Mr Robert Robertson, Campbelltown (RN 178)
V. R.
HERRING CLOSE TIME.
NOTICE TO FISHERMEN.

By Act 23d and 24th Victoria, cap. 92, the Herring Fisheries Scotland Act 1860.

All Fishing for Herrings or Herring Fry, is prohibited on the West Coasts of Scotland, between the Points of Ardnamurchan on the North, and the Mull of Galloway on the South, at any time between the 1st day of January and the 31st day of May inclusive, in any year:

As also,

Between Cape Wrath, on the North, and the said Point of Ardnamurchan on the South, at any time between the 1st day of January and the 20th day of May inclusive.

By the 24th and 25th Vict., cap. 72, every person who during Close-Time shall sell or dispose of, or shall have in his possession any Herring or Herring Fry known by such Person to have been taken on the said West Coast of Scotland, or on any part thereof during such Close-Time, shall be liable to the Penalties cap.

Penalties for Offenders—Forfeiture of Boat, Box, Basket, Creel, or other article in which the Herring or Herring Fry may be found, with Fine of not under £3, and not exceeding £20, for every such offence.

By Order,

R. F. PRIMROSE,
Secretary.

24. Herring Close Time. Notice (RA 335)
25. Loch Fyne Skiff: Sail, Oar, Ballast (RN 304)
26. Boarding: Nets (RN 263)
27. Hazards: Tides, Tears, Meshing Etc. (PA 300)
28. 'Snack Euphemia' Beached at Carradale (AN 231)
29. 'Mary McLean' at Miller's Yard (HN 77)
30. Ayrshire Crews Hauling (AN 108)
31. Barking a Sail, Tarbert (HN 210)
32. Engine Room: Misty Isle (RN 148)
33. Boats Fishing (RN 159)
34. Brailling: Misty Isle and Ribhinn Bhan (PW 117)
35. Boarding Herring: The Tail Brailler (AN 256)
36. Boarding Herring 2: Simpson's Tail Trailer 1732 (p. 257)
37. Tea: Misty Isle (RN 154)
38. The Zulu Ringer Acacia (HN 59)
39. Winkie sketch by Will Maclean (Arg 109)
41. Nets: 1840 (RN 2860)
Nets

Wings 1840 to 1880

The patient rows of the nets were lashed up in a pattern through panels opposite in length. The inside rope from the beam was attached to the swivel hinges; the purpose of the beam was to raise the net. The term 'long' from the side of the net which is begun is hung on the back and the side rope. It was also to guide the net of the net hanging on the beam when raising or lowering. A file in the

42. Nets: Wings 1840-1880 (detail) (RN 286E)
43. Loch Fyne Skiff: Elevation, Plan and Side view (RN 306)

43a. Detail of above
44a. Detail of above

We would never do it unless we were forced to. It was a difficult job, the net was always trying to get just to the trailer or the brack site as you were trying to make the circle. The head of the molly was coming round into the net (above the staff). They were throwing away the whose back of the net. They were not seeing the net; they would never do it unless they were forced to. We'd try, maybe if there was somebody near you and they were hearing the herring bumping the same as you, before you would get round, they'd be shot. — Hugh MacFarlane, Torbert.

We shot off the backside of it was suitable for shooting. If you didn't want to go through the herring, you shot down, put round them a save disturbing them. It was very awkward to shoot. It wasn't nice. The net never went out the clean way shooting it. You had to throw the net out, you went away from it, of course the net was kind of reversed. You were apt to choose the herring, coming, in get the beat into position. John Wel was quoted by Amy Murl.

If seen them do it. We didn't do it very much in case we made a mess of it. They used to have tillers that went down, round it, and by seen, them putting the tiller in the proper way is shot because it was apt to get round the molly head then. The crowded storm, brack nose slightly better, but it was very awkward, you had to throw the not from you. You get nearly dragged over the side with it especially if there was a breeze of wind. — J.T. M'Currie, The Marisons.
45. Method: Single Boat Rimming (detail) (RN 289)
46. Drying Poles at Kames (RN 235)
47. Method: Hauling to the Shallows (RN 294)
48. Boarding Herring: Basket Methods (RN 284)

48a. Detail of above: Basket and Pole

BASKET & POLE

The fish in the basket means that a man smiled of lying on his stomach on his stomach, all packed in ice and stood there with another pole at a rope an a pole with the middle rope (on the nose/nose drum)

David Maclean, Campbellton, 15 SE
Gannet II (RN 270)
METHOD - Keeping out of the net

50. Method: Hauling - Keeping out of the Net (AN 290)
51. Winches Discharging (RN 274)
52. Appearances I: Means of Detecting Herring - Natural Signs - Day (RN 281)
53. Appearances 3: Means of Detecting Herring - Sound & Sight, Natural Signs - Night (RN 283)
54. Sketch for 'Northern Totem', 1975 (Arg 77)
THE FISHERMEN COULD OFTEN TELL THE KIND OF FISH BY THE SOUND OF THE JUMP ONE "PLOUT" WAS ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY A "RING"

55. Appearances I (detail): Herring (sound) (RN 281)
EXPERIMENTAL SOLEROPE HAULERS

A fleet of sole-rope haulers designed by John Marshall in the late 1930s
and built in the 1940s were "Sole and Monkeys" about 1942.

56. Experimental Sole Rope Haulers (RN 262)
57. Skiffs (RN 255)
58. Method: Hauling procedure, sailing skiffs (RN 298)
59. Installation shot at Third Eye Centre Exhibition, showing various fish drawings, eg. 'Three Herring', RN 251

60. Installation shot at GMA 'Scottish Art Since 1900' exhibition, 1989, showing same works
61. Fishermen drying Net (RN 198)
62a. Ring Net Zulu A.M.V. Acacia (original) (RN 330)

62b. Ring Net Zulu A.M.V. Acacia (1986 print) (RN 346)
63a. Detail of RN 330: Shelf, clock and sea biscuits

63b. Detail of RN 346: Shelf, clock and sea biscuits
64. Ring-Netter off the Skye Coast, November 1973 (RN 100)
65. Off the Skye Coast, November 1973 (AN 98)
66. Herring in the Stomach of a Coalfish, Portree Sound (PN 273)
67. Map of the Minch Fishing Grounds 1946-67 (RN 278)
Did you ever hear of the man using a "stirrup" for loading herring? A loop 'n eye hung out the side so that a man shackled to the gunwale could scoop the bucket of herring.

This was told to me by a present man.

63. Stirrup for loading Herring - Sketch. By W.M. (Arg. 50)
The 7 Stages of Skiffs

Could you put an average date on these stages for me, and also an average length?

I cannot really make the drawings to scale without this.

Development of Deck, Sketch II. By W.M. (Arg 151)

70. Development of Deck, Sketch II. By W.M. (Arg 151)
71. Loch Fyne Skiff. Development of Deck (RN 268)
72. Herring Chute. Sketch I. By W.M. (Arg. 128)

73. Herring Chute. Sketch II. By W.M. (Arg 117)

Did you fill the jumpings? did you need doors out?
Was it wood or metal?
Section or complete?

any information would be very valuable.

Bot. 

Will.
74. Forecastles: Loch Fyne Skiff, Sail and Oar (RN 280)
75. Forecastle sketch by W.M. (Arg. 52)
76. Plan of the non-engined Skiff, by Angus Martin (coll.W.M.)
77. Forecastle Sketch by Angus Martin (coll. W.K.)
78. Forward section of Skiff, annotated by A. Martin (coll. W.W.)

79. Forecasts: Detail of Forward Section (RN 280)
80. Barking the Net (RN 254)
the boat is being built, constructed. It is a custom-built steam vessel. Ugly, but the thought was taken from a waterplane or a sea gull, quite a neat iron and very handy now. with curvatures and every part relating after hell a comedy.

81. Sketch of the Acacia showing Gull. By W.M. (Arg. 87)
82. Fisherman's sketch of a winch (collection W.M.)

83. Sketch of the Reid/upright McBain winch. By W.M. (Arg. 38)
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85. Artist's list of Ring nets made by Stewart's of Musselburgh (collection W.M.)
Daily in the latter boat.

Sketch of Crew handling positions by Hill MacIver (Arg. 116)
87. Sketch of 1904-05 Skiff under oars, drawn by Angus Martin after description given by John McWhirter of Campbeltown
88. Third Eye Centre, installation shot, 1978 (coll. W.M.)

89. Third Eye Centre, installation shot, 1978 (coll. W.M.)
90. Front cover of The Ring Net catalogue, Third Eye Centre, 1978
(Illustration given to Tom McGrath)
These are just some of the many photographs on display in the ring net fishing exhibition at Campbeltown Public Library.
Invitation to Opening
Cuireadh chun Phosgladh
Friday 10 July, 8pm
Di haoine 10 Iuchair, 8pm
93. Installation shot at An Lanntair, 1987 showing Glenys Kinnock visiting the exhibition
94. Alfred Wallis, *This is Sain Fishery That Use to Be* (Oil on board)
95. Ray-Fish Shrine, 1976. (Wood and bone). SAC photo
97. Fishermen and Skate, Kintyre (HN 181)