

Seanchas Ìle

MACLAGAN MANUSCRIPTS

LEGENDS: Ulaidh

From John Campbell, Jura (anonymous)

6227

Talking about ulaidhs (treasure trove), a native of the island of Jura says that it is a current belief that there are very valuable treasures concealed in the mountains of the island, if only people could hit upon them. He told the following story which he used to hear often in his young days:

One time a ship was caught in a fog in the Atlantic, and the first land they struck was the West Coast of Jura. It was night, but the diamonds that were shining in the paps made the land visible to them. They knew the value of the Diamonds, and with the view of finding them when daylight would come, they put balls of chalk in their big guns, and fired them at the places where they thought the diamonds were, with the view of marking the spots. But when they went ashore the next day, they could not find one of the diamonds.

From Mr John Watson, Lollarmains Bay, Jura

6227/8

A farmer who was at one time in Ardmeuish, in Jura, found an ulaidh on his farm. It was tied up in a calf's skin. When the laird of Jura heard that he had got it, he sent for him, and offered him a hundred pounds for it, but the man would not part with it. This made the laird angry, and he put the farmer out of the farm. But the farmer did not care much for that, for he soon got another farm with the ulaidh, and was a rich man afterwards.

From Mr John Watson, Lollarmains Bay, Jura

6228

A native of the island of Jura, who had gone to America dreamed when there that there was a rich ulaidh hid on the farm in Keills in Jura, of which his brothers were tenants at the time. The dream was so clean to him, and made such an impression on his mind that he resolved to come home for it, and home he came. But when he told his brothers what had brought him, they pretended to laugh at him, and would not allow him to dig for it, and he was forced to return to America with out it. But as soon as he was gone, they went to work, and true enough they found the ulaidh, just as their brother had told them of how he had seen it in his dream, and they built a fine house for themselves with the money.

From Mr John Watson, Lollarmains Bay, Jura

6229

The following incident shows what is a pretty common belief regarding the existence of ulaidhs.

Two men were working on a road that was being made in the parish of Kilchomain in Islay, when a lady who was passing, and who knew the men, stood to speak to them. She remarked playfully that they might make their fortune there, if they should come across an ulaidh. Where upon, taking her remark quite seriously, one of the men replied: "Oh no, there is no ulaidh to be got here," and pointing to a pole that was stuck in the ground a little way down from where they were working, he continued, "it is a step or two from where you see that pole that the ulaidh is hid." The lady then, assuming a more serious tone, asked if there was an ulaidh there, and both the men said "Oh yes, that is what they are saying."

From Crawford, Carnaàn, Islay (anonymous)

6229

The reciter says that people are often afraid to search for an ulaidh although they might know of its being there, and he has heard it said that no body except one who has actually killed a man, can find an ulaidh.