

[Page 40 - Allan the Ridge MacDonald, Gaelic Poet: An Introduction to the Mabou Bards](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 38](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1985/1/1

'S i'n tir a dh'fhag thu tir gun chairdeas, Tir gun bhaigh ri tuath. Ach gur tursach iad 'ga fagail Is anradh thar a' chuain. Daoine bochda, siol nan croitear Bha gun stoc gun bhuar. 'S mearg a chain iad tir an aigh 'San do dh'fhas iad nan daoin' uaisl'. E) The land you left was an unfriendly land A land without compassion for tenants. But they were sad leaving it And suffering while crossing the ocean. Poor men, seed of crofters Who had no stock or herds. Shame that they would demean the blessed land Where they became gentry. F) Nis bho'n thainig thu thar saile Chun an aite ghrinn, Cha bhi failinn ort ri d' latha 'S gach ni 'fas dhuinn fhin. Gheobh thu mil air bharr nan lusan Siucar agus ti. 'S fhearr dhuit siud na'n tir a dh'fhag thu Aig a' ghraisg 'san fhrith. G) 'S tu rinn glic 's nach deach 'am mearachd, 'S cha robh do bharail faoin, 'Tighinn do dhuthaieh nam fear glana Coibhneil, tairis, caomh. Far am faigh thu or a mhaireas. Coir air fearann saor, Gach ni bu mhath leat 'bhi mu d' bhaile, Earras is erodh laoigh. F) Now since you came across the sea. To this pretty place. You will have no lack all your days Since everything flourishes for us. You will have honey from tops of flowers Sugar and tea. Better that for you than the land you left. Among the rabble in the deer-forest. G) You did wisely and made no mistake. And your decision was not foolish. Coming to the land of fine men Kind, compassionate and gentle. Where you will find lasting gold. Free right to land. Everything you would wish around your farm Possessions and cattle. John the Hunter's condemnation of the new land is quite strong. He contrasts it with the freedom of--he was an outdoor person, and he loved the mountains. Strangely enough, he loved the deer whom he stalked and killed. But he was the professional. And he saw no ambivalence there, you know, between hunting this beautiful animal--his descriptions of the deer and the mountains are among the finest that I've read in nature poetry. There's a lot of that in Scotland, fine nature poetry. But when John the Hunter in the new land reminisces and talks about the deer and the mountains of Scotland, and the freedom and the healthy open-air life that he led there, we get this feeling that this was so much better. And then he talks about going around in a kilt and bonnet and hose. And Al? Ian, his cousin, answers, that happened very rarely; you know, that you went around in rags most of the time, except on a special occasion. Now I think that's the truth. Except that the Hunter was a little bit more privileged than your average emigrant. He is reputed to have arrived here with quite a considerable amount of money. He had very good muskets, very good guns-- there might be one in Mabou, but we haven't. For some it's a tennis match or a round of golf; for others, the enjoyment of : community theatre or membership in a local choir. Recreation offers each of us opportunities to explore our personal potentials. Try a new leisure activity ... there's bound to be one which suits you to a "T". v'f Department of " Culture, Recreation and Fitness J)a4's IflarW MEAT FISH GROCERIES OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 9-9 TO SERVE YOU BETTER ST. PETERS ?H. 535-3363 Midway Motors Ltd.



Middle River R. R. No. 3, Baddeck Victoria Co., N. S. BOE IBO 295-2290 Local Dealer for CHRYSLER Products Dodge Aries 2-Door Coupe We made our name in hardware. dSstle building centre Your Friendly Pittsburgh Paint Dealer Prefinish Paneling * Margaree & Lockwood Windows Shingles * Cement Blocks * Patio Stones * Well Crocks Brick & Wood Stoves * Lumber * Plywood * Mouldings LEVI LEBLANC LTD. MARGAREE, NOVA SCOTIA OFFICE: 235-2022