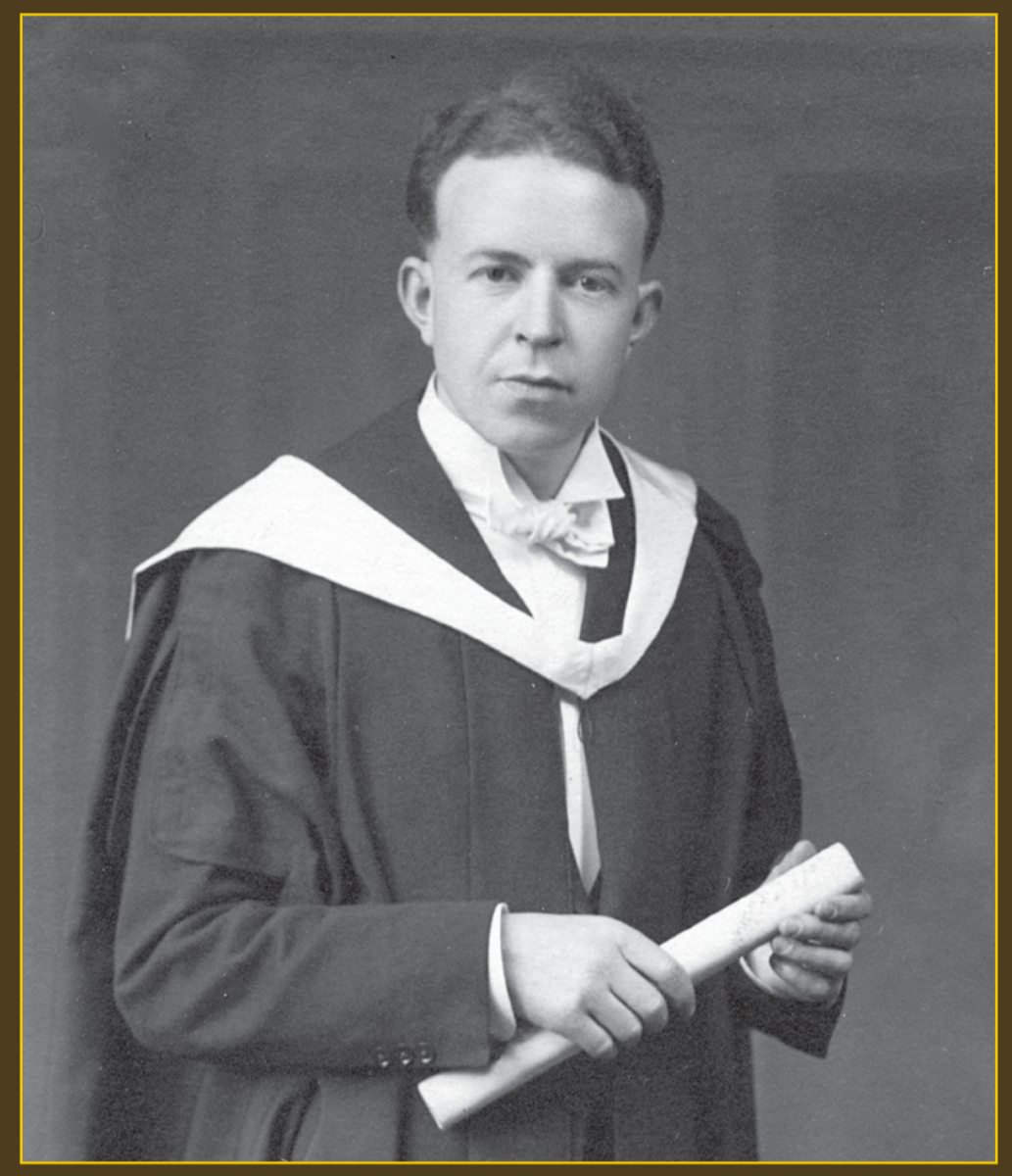


***Give my regards to everyone
I know in Edinburgh. Tell old
Watson that I hope to see him
at Christmas.***

[Maclean writing to his brother Sorley MacLean, 1945]



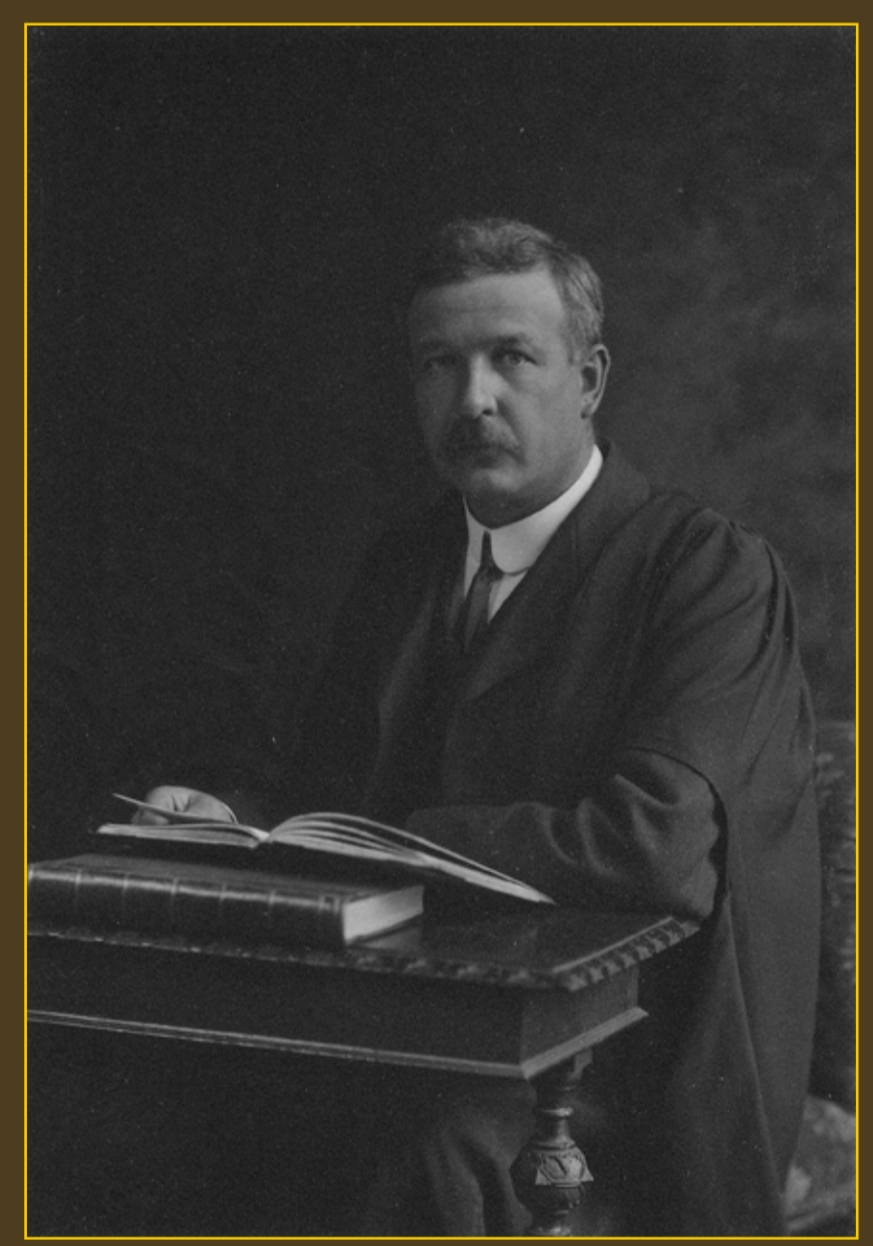
Edinburgh / Dùn Èideann •



Graduation portrait of Calum Maclean, 1939.
• Courtesy of the MacLean family.

FROM EDINBURGH TO DUBLIN (1935–1939)

In 1935 Maclean entered the University of Edinburgh. By then, a little over half a century had elapsed since the establishment of Scotland's first Chair of Celtic Languages, Literature, History and Antiquities in 1882. The first incumbent of the Chair was Professor Donald Mackinnon (1839–1914) who, on his death, was followed by Professor William John Watson (1865–1948), a distinguished scholar and doyen of onomastic studies.



Professor William J. Watson, 1930s.
• Courtesy of the School of Scottish Studies Archives.

Maclean studied Classics as his secondary subject as well as Moral Philosophy but his main focus of interest was Celtic in which he was successful in gaining a first under the tutelage of Watson and his son (and successor to the Chair) James Carmichael Watson (1910–1942), a grandson of Alexander Carmichael (1832–1912), the eminent Gaelic scholar and editor of the first two volumes of *Carmina Gadelica*.



Professor James Carmichael Watson,
c. 1940.
• Courtesy of the Centre for Research Collections, University of Edinburgh.

Whilst an undergraduate, Maclean became political active and took the opportunity to vent his feelings about his own Scottish nationalism. He even had the temerity to publically reproach Sir Thomas Holland (1868–1947), elected Principal of the University in 1929, who, in Maclean's opinion, personified all that was wrong with Scotland at that time.

Such was his potential promise as a scholar that Maclean was successful in winning the McCaig and Macpherson scholarships which enabled him to enrol at University College Dublin where he undertook further post-graduate study in Early Irish under Professor Osborn Bergin (1872–1950) and also in Medieval and Modern Welsh under Professor John Lloyd-Jones (1885–1965).

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Maclean's studies came to a temporary halt and so he had to cast around for some other livelihood.