

*...and so began the decade of unremitting dedicated labour which transformed the state of folklore studies in Scotland.*

[Hamish Henderson's memoir of Maclean, 1985]

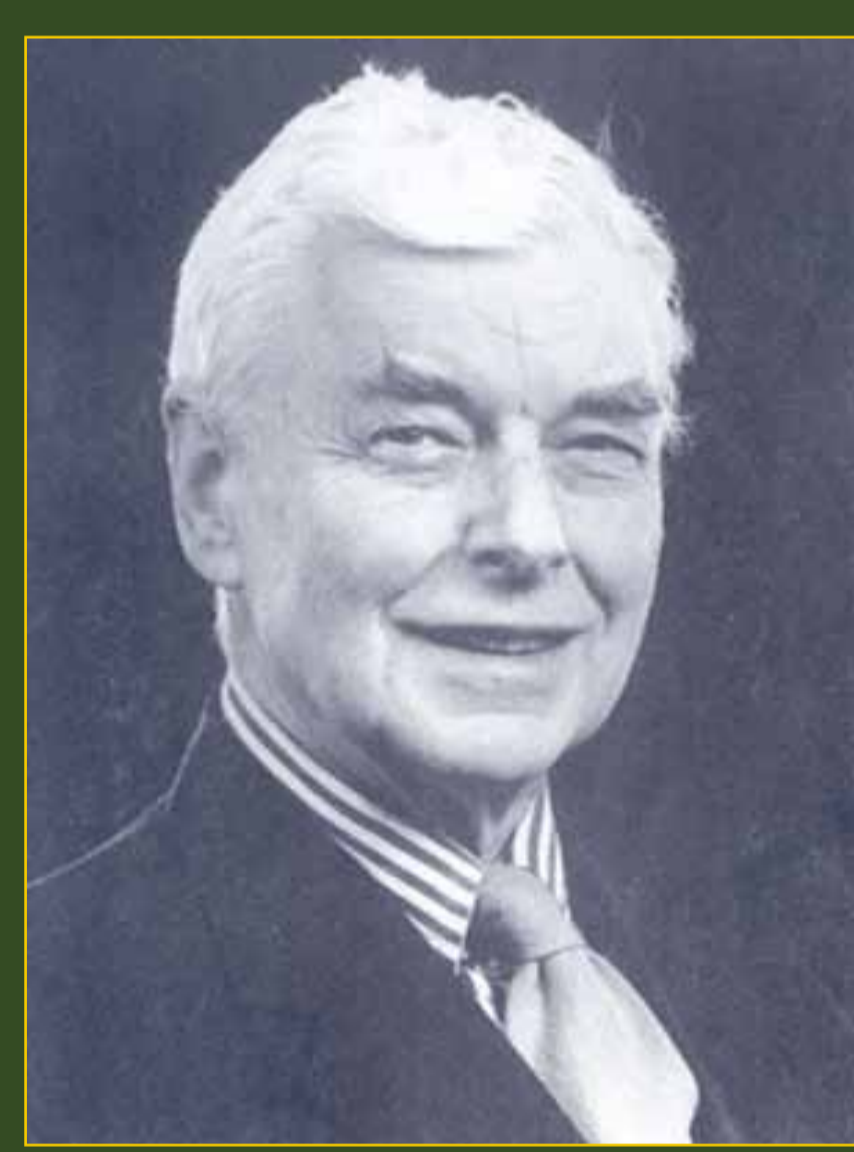


The School of Scottish Studies, George Square, University of Edinburgh.  
\* Courtesy of the School of Scottish Studies Archives.

## THE SCHOOL OF SCOTTISH STUDIES (1951-1960)

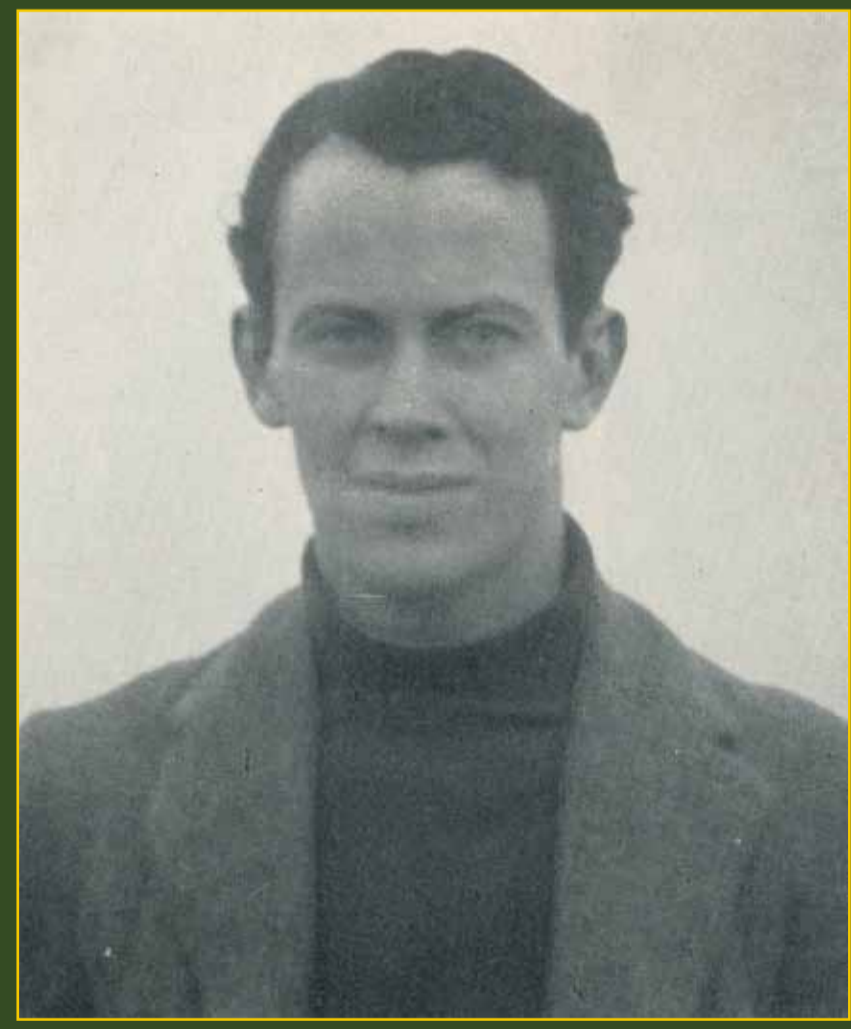
With the foundation of the School of Scottish Studies in 1951 at the University of Edinburgh, the collecting of Scotland's intangible cultural heritage was put on a firmer footing.

Maclean, initially sent on a three-year loan from the Irish Folklore Commission to the School, which subsequently became permanent, was appointed the first Research Fellow and Collector.



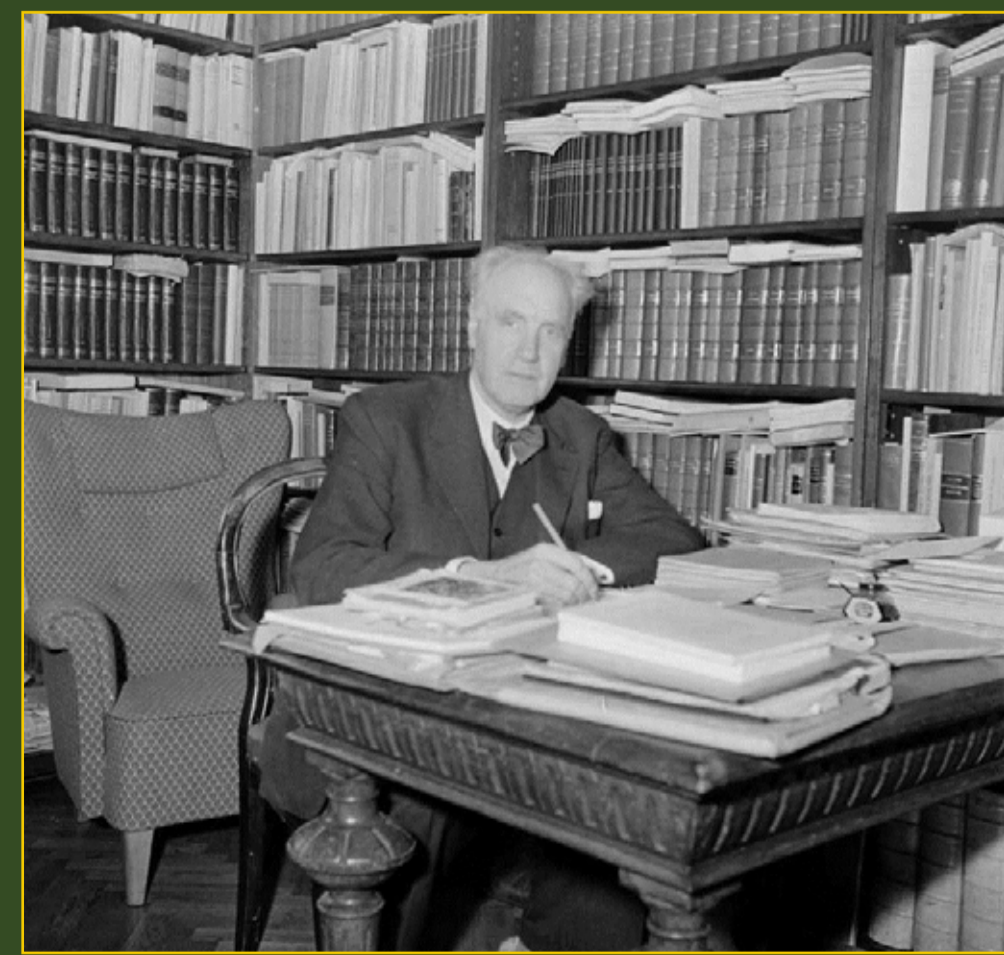
Professor Angus McIntosh.  
\* Courtesy of the School of Scottish Studies Archives.

One of the main catalysts for the School's foundation was Angus McIntosh (1914-2005), appointed in 1948 as the first Forbes Professor of English Language and General Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh. A great deal of encouragement, not to mention wise counsel, was received from the likes of John Lorne Campbell and, of course, from Maclean himself. Furth of Scotland, support came from several other quarters but most notably from James Hamilton Delargy as Director of the Irish Folklore Commission and also Dag Strömbäck (1900-1978), Director of the Swedish Folklore Archives at Uppsala University.



John Lorne Campbell, mid-1930s.  
\* Courtesy of Canna House Archive, National Trust of Scotland.

Along with later colleagues such as Hamish Henderson (1919-2002) and John MacInnes (1930-), Maclean began to make a systematic attempt at the scientific preservation of this material before the last Gaelic storytellers and folksingers who had escaped the net of the 1872 Education Act had passed away. Maclean's fieldwork training gained in Ireland and Uppsala, his in-depth knowledge of oral tradition as well as a broad academic knowledge, including his 'inherited' gifts, gave him a distinct advantage when it came to collecting. Moreover, Maclean possessed a remarkable facility to put people at ease and by his friendly and unassuming manner managed to gain their confidence and thus to open many doors that otherwise would have remained closed.



Dag Strömbäck, 1955.  
\* Courtesy of Uppsala University.