

# Firm Skelbo bid by US General

A retired American general, from Memphis, Tennessee, is bidding to become the Baron of Skelbo by restoring the sixteen-century mansion house on the shores of Loch Fleet.

Mr Michael Alexander, author, Colditz Castle prisoner-of-war and the member of the S J Alexander Trust, owners of Skelbo, said from his London home yesterday: "The deal with the American is in fact pretty firm and is at the moment being negotiated by solicitors.

"He came up to see Skelbo Castle and the mansion house ruins three weeks ago in pretty foul weather and he liked what he saw. Although it was pouring with rain and looking absolutely horrible, it did not diminish his interest."

Dornoch Heritage Society, on the other hand, have organised a petition registering their concern about the latest planning application for remedial work on the manor house of Skelbo. They hope that the trustees will give serious consideration to the offers of help from such bodies as the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust. They would prefer to see the ruins of the old castle and the mansion house coming under the guardianship of the Government, to make it a major tourist attraction.