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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for April 13th 2012

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Electric Scotland News

Electric Scotland's Family Tree Service

http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/family_tree.htm

We did hit a problem with our service so had to install it again but looks like it is all working now. I've created an account for myself and been able to import a gedcom file ok and add a picture. I dare say there will be questions and we'll do our best to find answers. If you have questions perhaps try and use our forum in the [Electric Scotland Community](#) and that way as we answer them that will build some useful information for others.

Comment System

We have been in touch with their support team again and this time we seem to getting answers although not yet a solution. This means I'm a bit more hopeful that we may get a solution and so provide this service.

Electric Scotland Community

We got an email in from the software company saying they have now integrated the forumrunner app into their software. We have enabled it in our community but so far not impressed. Mind you this is an alpha trial so it should get better as we give our feedback.

Also do keep an eye on the Facebook integration as we've now got our secure certificate for the community which will now let us integrate more tightly with Facebook. I'm actually hoping we might get this up by tomorrow and if we do I'll announce that on our What's New page.

ABOUT THE STORIES

Some of the stories in here are just parts of a larger story so do check out the site for the full versions. You can always find the link in our "What's New" section in our site menu and at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm> and also <http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

We try not to point to a pdf file and instead send you to page where the pdf can be downloaded.

Electric Canadian

The Stories of the Counties of Ontario

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/stories/index.htm>

By Emily P Weaver (1913) Have now added the Western Counties of:

WENTWORTH, BRANT, HALDIMAND, WATERLOO, WELLINGTON, NORFOLK, ELGIN, OXFORD, MIDDLESEX, KENT, ESSEX, LAMBTON, PERTH, HURON, BRUCE and GREY.



AMHERSTBURG IN 1800

The account of Perth starts...

"Rickety, shingleless, old and grey,
Scathed by the storms of many a day,
In a wayside spot where the wild weeds grow,
Stands the old cabin of long ago."

Thomas Sparks, M.D.

THIS county was not set apart as a separate municipality till 1847, but to make intelligible the first chapter in its history it is necessary to go back a quarter of a century—to the year 1824—when the Canada Land Company was organised in London. It received its charter in 1826. One of its most eager promoters (already mentioned more than

once) was the Scottish novelist John Galt, and he was amongst those who came out to this country to look after the interests and carry out the plans of the Company. It began its operations by buying up "vast tracts of the Clergy Reserves and Crown lands," to sell at an advanced price in small lots. It was at first intended that, under certain conditions as to settlement and improvements, it should be permitted to buy at a low price all that remained ungranted of the Crown Reserves (about 1,300,000 acres), and half of the Clergy Reserves. It had not, however, been many years in business when another able Scot, Bishop Strachan, succeeded in persuading the Government that the Clergy Reserves should be controlled by the Church. The Canada Company was accordingly forced to accept, in exchange for the Clergy Reserves, what was known as the Huron Tract, of which the present county of Perth is an important part. This vast estate comprised about one million acres, and stretched almost from the head of Lake Ontario to the site of Goderich on Lake Huron. It has proved to be a rich and fertile country, but was then unknown. Only where the agents of the Company had entered from the east, near where the city of Stratford now stands, they had found a great swamp, which stretched away towards the north, through Elma and Ellice townships, and it seemed vain to hope that these dismal marshes could "ever be made available for agriculture."

You can read the rest of this account at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/stories/chapter40.htm>

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue has been compiled by Jim Lynch. One of the articles is about our aircraft carriers which starts...

Many of you will have been viewing with awe the massive structures of the new aircraft carriers, and marvelling at the precise engineering challenges being overcome. No doubt about it, the work is proceeding well and is being done to a very high standard, with appropriate pride in the work force, who are to be congratulated.



Just defence cuts, nothing to see here, move along...

You can read this issue at <http://www.scotsindependent.org>

Scottish Poets in America

With Biographical and Critical Notices by John D. Ross (1889)

Now added...

William MacDonald Wood

Though gay as mirth, as curious though sedate;
As elegance polite, as power elate;
Profound as reason, and as justice clear;
Soft as compassion, yet as truth severe.

The Brooklyn Daily Times has enjoyed a prosperous career since it was established in 1848. Its present editor, Mr. William Macdonald Wood, is a native of Edinburgh. He was born in 1847. His father, James Wood, followed the occupation of a printer, and seems to

have been possessed of a deeply religious nature, as we learn that, while not an ordained minister, he frequently officiated as a preacher of the gospel in Kirkcaldy. His mother, Susanna Macdonald, was descended from an ancient Highland family. She was a woman of strong intellectual faculties, and our author is said to have inherited many of her distinguished qualities. Mr. Wood, after receiving what in those days was considered an excellent education, began the battle of life on his own account by becoming an apprentice to a publishing firm in his native city. Life, however, in Edinburgh seemed too slow for his ideas. At the age of twenty-one he emigrated to this country, and after travelling somewhat extensively through the South settled in New Orleans. Here he readily obtained employment, and shortly afterward began contributing a series of articles on various subjects to the Edinburgh Review which attracted considerable attention and brought his name prominently before the literary celebrities of the time then domiciled in the Scottish metropolis. He does not seem to have taken kindly to Southern life, however, although one of his friends writes that "the balmy, delicious climate and summer pomp of the South still lingers pleasantly in his memory." In a few years he came North and took up his residence in Brooklyn. Obtaining a minor position on the Times, his abilities as a journalist were soon recognized, and he was rapidly advanced until at length he was offered and accepted the post of managing editor. Mr. Wood composed verses from his boyhood, and many of his early musings evince considerable talent and skill.

You can read this entry at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/america/chapter23.htm>

The other entries can be found at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/america/index.htm>

Calendar Of Documents Relating to Scotland

By Joseph Bain

Our thanks to John Henderson for compiling this for us. This week we've added...

Volume 4
1501 to 1508

This week I notice several extracts to do with supplying fashion articles...

1501. [*Extracts.*]
Nov. 10. 1677. Warrant for delivery to the yeoman of the Wardrobe, for the Ladye Margaret, a gown of tawny cloth of gold of tisshue containing $9\frac{1}{2}$ yards furred with ermyn bakkes, and furred within with ermyn wombes; *item*, a gown af purpull velvet with taberd sleeves containing 10 yards, furred with ermyn bakkes, and within with ermyn wombes; *item*, a kirtill of tawny saten containing $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards, with sufficient lining; *item*, a kirtill of russet satten with lining, containing $5\frac{1}{2}$ yards; *item*, an ell black velvet for a hood 'of the French facioun'; *item*, 'a elle' right crymsyn velvet for a other hood of same fashion; *item*, $\frac{1}{2}$ ell black sarsinet for a tippet; *item*, $\frac{1}{2}$ ell white sarsenet for 'a other tipet'; *item*, 3 elles canvas to line the edges of 4 gowns for her; *item*, three quarters crymsyn satten for a pair of kirtill sleeves; *item*, 2 yards black sarsenet to line 2 pair sleeves of white cloth of gold of damask for her and her sister Lady Mary. Richemount. [*Exchequer, Q. R. Miscellanea (Wardrobe), No. 7 $\frac{3}{36}$.*]

You can get to this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/records/bain/index.htm>

Northern Notes and Queries

Edited by Rev. R. W. Cornelious Hallen (1886)

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We now have up the "September Edition 1889", which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/northern/index.htm>

Songs of Robert Burns

We added

Historical Notes: The Jolly Beggars

VI. THE JOLLY BEGGARS.—A CANTATA.

(Nos. 246–253.) *Poems ascribed to Robert Burns, 1801, 1; Cromek's Scottish Songs, 1810, ii. 233.* This remarkable composition was written about the end of 1785. Nowhere is the genius of Burns more displayed than in this description of the lowest stratum of human life, and the portraiture of the individuals composing the society of the most depraved Bohemians. One true function of art is to provoke sympathy with all animated nature, and Burns was the first poet of his century who cast aside the artificial *Damons* and *Celias* of song and the affectations of the rhymer; he stepped out into the field of nature, saw it with a clear open eye, gauged it with a sound mind, and depicted it with the feeling that he was a part of the great scheme. No poet before him—except Cowper—sang of the weeds, the flowers, and the lower animals as subjects of affectionate regard. Burns's *Deil* was a human spirit who spoke 'broad Scots,' with whom he could converse in familiar terms, and from whom he parted on the best of terms, hoping he 'will tak a thocht and mend.'

Historical Notes: Patriotic and Political

You can get to this book to read more at <http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/songs/index.htm>

The Bards of Bon Accord 1375 - 1860

By William Walker

Added the chapters on "George Halket"

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/bonaccord/index.htm>

Biggar and the House of Fleming

An Account of the Biggar District, Archaeological, Historical and Biographical by William Hunter (1862)

We have now added the balance of the chapters of this book which continues the story of the Fleming family

The chapters can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/biggar/index.htm>

The History of Blairgowrie

Town, Parish and District being an account of the Origin and Progress of the Burgh from the Earliest Period with a description of the Antiquities, Topography, Civil History, Ecclesiastical and Parochial Records, Institutions, Public Works, Manufactures, Legends, Sports, Statistics, and Biographical Sketches of Eminent Persons, etc. by John A. R. MacDonald (1899)

We have added this week...

Chapter VIII.

Castles and Mansions—Legends, Ballads. &c.

Chapter IX.

Institutions, Societies, &c.—Banks—Barty Mortification—Blairgowrie and District Photographic Association—Choral Society—Constitutional Club—Dramatic Society—Dundee, Blairgowrie and District Association Edinburgh Blairgowrie Club—Evening Classes—Free Masonry—Horticultural Society — Literary Societies — Mechanics' institute — Post Office—Press—Shepherds—Volunteer Rifle Brigade,

Chapter X.

Manufactures—Lornty Mill—Bronklinn—Oakbank—The Meikle Mill—Ericht Linen Works—Green bank Engineering Works —Millwright Works—Brewing—Ancient Trade—Recollections of the Past—A Merchant's Rhyme—The Whisky Roadie and its Associations—Duncan Watchie—Posty Reid —The Toon's Officers—The Guard House—The Bell o' Blair-Lily Harris—Matthew Harris—Tammy Mann—Daft Hary— John Couper -Quoit Clu)—Candy Betty—Smith Lamont —Voluntary Constables—Abram Low and the Welltown Brownies—Isaac Low, the Ingenious Blacksmith,

Chapter XI.

Sports, Pastimes, &c.—Angling—The Ericht as a Salmon River— Fishways on the Ericht—Pish Ladders for Loch Benachally —Ardle —Blackwater—Ericht — Lornty—Lunan—Tay—Isla Drimmie Burn—Fyall Burn—Lochs Benachally, Butterstone, Clunie, Marlee, Loch o' the Lowes, Stormont" llae, Fengus, White, &c.—Bowling—Cricket — Curling—Cycling—Pair o' Blair—The Fair o' Blair 50 Years ago —Football—Go) C— Gymnastics,

Chapter VIII starts...

Ardblair Castle,

AN old building, about a mile west from Blairgowrie. Up to 1895 (when structural alterations were made to modernise it. It still retained its courtyard form, with a good entrance gateway surmounted by a coat of arms, monogram, and date-panel marked 1B68. In the monogram the letter "B" is distinctly visible, referring to the family of "Blair," who long were in possession.

The dwelling-house was on the right, with cellars and servants' accommodation on the left. The former was a simple oblong, with vaulted cellars on the ground floor, and a room on each of the upper floors. The staircase is contained in a wing, which juts out to the west as well as to the south, so as to command two sides of the main block with shot-holes. The old entrance door of the house is in the re-entering angle of the wing, and is of a very remarkable design: the ornament and sculptured band surrounding the recess for owner's crest, bearing a similarity to 17th century monuments.

The estate was in the possession of Thomas Blair, son of Blair of Balthayock, from the reign of David II., and was of great extent. The site of the Castle was then defended by a loch, long since diminished by drainage, so that it is now at some distance from the building. The Blairs of Ardblair were mixed up with all the local feuds, and had occasionally to pay the penalty. The entrance to the Castle is through a beautiful avenue of trees, at once the glory and pride of Ardblair, said to have been planted after the Battle of Culloden in token of the loyalty to Prince Charlie of the Oliphants of Cask, to whom the estate had passed, and to whose descendants it now belongs.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/blairgowrie/chapter08.htm>

The other chapters can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/blairgowrie/index.htm>

A Golfing Idyll

or the Skipper's Round with the Deil on the Links at St. Andrews.



Since I penned the first prefatory lines to this trifling work, I regret to inform my readers nonresident in St Andrews, that my interesting old friend the Skipper is no more. He died at the ripe age of 75. Peace to his memory! Some time before his death, I had what proved to be a final interview with him, when he rehearsed his queer weird story, adding some curious reminiscences of his early days in connection with the Links of St Andrews and his favourite pastime. As they may be interesting to some of my older golfing friends, I have interpolated them into the rugged doggerel of the text from the notes I took at the time. He also at the same time pathetically deplored the unreasoning and obstinate incredulity of friends who persisted in disbelieving his story, and suggested, with a view to convincing and converting them, that I should have some of the more striking incidents in the story illustrated. I have done so, but alas ! his old eyes will never look upon them and acknowledge the credit due to Mr Bannerman, the clever draughtsman.

At the close of our interview, he also alluded to his precious breeks with which, in his opinion, rest the onus probandi of his adventure. It was his intention, he told me, to have them framed and glazed, with the fateful mark prominently displayed—the date, incident, etc., carefully printed—to be made over at his death to the local Museum, and safe custody of Mr Couttes. It was not every man, he proudly asserted, who could receive and survive a skelp o' the Deil's tail!

V. F.
Torrington Mansions,
London

You can read this book at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/sport/golfing_idyll.htm

Neil Munro

Journalist, Editor and Author. I have put up a small biography of this person. He was the author of the Para Handy books and of course the famous TV series. I've also included a nice wee book he wrote, "The Lost Pibroch and Other Sheiling Stories", which makes a good read. You can read this at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/munro_neil2.htm

Brother Scots

By Donald Carswell

The biographical Studies that make up this book are ostensibly separate essays, each complete in itself. But they were not separately

conceived. My idea in writing them was to give not only some account of a number of intrinsically interesting men but also a cultural picture of Scotland in the late years of the nineteenth century. The picture is neither complete nor, even in regard to the aspect of Scottish life with which it deals, very explicit, but it contains matter which I believe will be found interesting, especially by English readers.

The Scottish character is familiar enough and it adapts itself readily enough to English ways and institutions. Yet it is never quite assimilated. There remains always something unresolved, something alien, even hostile to the English genius. The Englishman feels it, but is at a loss to say what it is. The Scotsman cannot help him to define it, for he himself has never thought the matter out. He merely repeats a few patriotic clichés, and like most patriots he has not even an elementary knowledge of the history of his own country.

You can read this book as we get it up at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/brother_scots.htm

The History of Brechin

By David D Black, Town Clerk (1867)



CHURCH STREET, HAVING MECHANICS' HALL IN THE DISTANCE

When this book was originally written in 1838, the Author was immersed in business, and could not bestow time on verifying all the statements in it by reference to authorities. He has now more leisure, and has employed it in examining every authority he could find bearing on the statements made. He cannot hope to be free from error; but he trusts this enlarged edition will be found to contain fewer mistakes than the previous publication. He meant to have quoted his authorities, and the manuscript was prepared with that view, but as it was found to be troublesome in the printing, and of little moment to the general reader, the references are only given in particular cases. The list of Bishops, however, in the Appendix, is supported by references to the authorities, warranting the insertion of their names in that compilation. The original publication was no source of emolument to the Author—the reverse; but it brought him the acquaintance of noblemen and of gentlemen, with whom he has had much pleasant intercourse. He has now and formerly been greatly indebted to many parties for hints and information; and while he feels it impossible to select particular individuals, he finds it would be tedious to give a list of the whole, and he therefore confines himself to tendering general thanks to his numerous friends, and to living authors from whom he has freely borrowed when he found anything in their works to answer his purpose, as some of them had borrowed from him previously.

The first volume of the records of the Town Council commences with Lam Deo, and the Author of this book desires to finish his labours in the same spirit, for he cannot be too thankful that after having completed his seventieth year he is enabled to finish this work.

Clerk Street, Brechin,
3rd July 1867.

You can read this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/brechin/index.htm>

John Stuart Blackie

Professor John Stuart Blackie features as a subject in Brother Scots. You can get to this at the foot of the page at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/blackie/index.htm>

Songs from John Henderson

We've added another three songs, "In An April Evening", "The Last Steam Train In Stoon Station" and "Wartime Blackouts". You can read these at the foot of the page at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

And finally...

One more!: bet you didn't know this! In the heyday of sailing ships, all war ships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannon balls. It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon. However, how to prevent them from rolling about the deck? The best storage method devised was a square-based pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem....how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding or rolling from under the others. The solution was a metal plate called a 'Monkey' with 16 round indentations. However, if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make 'Brass Monkeys.' Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled.. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannonballs would come right off the monkey; Thus, it was quite literally, 'Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey.' (All this time, you thought that was an improper expression, didn't you?)

And that's all for now and hope you all have a great Easter weekend.

Alastair
