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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for November 2nd 2012

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Electric Scotland News

I mentioned last week that I was going to do more research into the Septs question and I did get several emails in about this. As a result I have reworked my page on the Septs to reflect the new information I have received which you can see at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/septs.htm> but here is my account...

I find that many lists that are provided by individual clans and clan societies are questionable.

Where a name is listed as a Sept rarely is there any information as to why that name is listed as a Sept. Often the Clan Chief does not know this information either having simply accepted the list when inheriting the chiefdom. Where there might be a connection due to the people of the name living in clan lands, in most situations like this, there are many people of that same name that never lived on these clan lands. This means that listing a surname as a Sept of a clan can be very misleading.

I personally feel that the Clan or Clan Society has the responsibility to make clear why a name has been listed as a Sept of their Clan. Where they are unable to do so then they should list the name as "no historical information" so that we know there is no information as to why that name was listed as a Sept. To my knowledge not one Clan or Clan Society has done that or made any effort to be transparent about their Sept list and instead just provide a list of names.

I would also make clear that just because your name is listed as a Sept under a Clan name doesn't mean that you are related by blood to that clan. And as mentioned above your ancestors may not have had any association with the clan as they never lived on the clan lands or had anything to do with them.

I thus think the time has come when we must hold all clans to account to provide a meaningful Sept list. Instead of simply listing the names they must list them in such a way that they tell people why that name is a Sept and where they don't have the information they should make it clear that no information is available. They can thus list Septs in such a way...

Name - Reason why this name is a Sept.

or

Name - Inherited list but no evidence of why the name is a Sept.

or

Name - No historical information available.

Let us also remember that last week I provided names associated with MacGregor. In that list it was clear due to circumstances that MacGregors often had to change their name but looking at the list you could see a lot of names that were already in use. That means there is simply no way you can claim all people of that name were Septs of the clan.

And let us not forget that the more names you can mention as a Sept of your clan then hopefully the more paying members you are going to get. And thus this is probably going to mean that most clans will not provide clarity on their Sept lists. We should thus hold these clans and clan societies to account to become more transparent on their Sept lists.

Our Site Stats...

It's been a long time since I bothered to look at my site stats and was amazed to find that our Children's Stories page was the most visited page on the site. You can see this page at http://www.electricscotland.com/kids/childrens_stories.htm

The second most visited page was the Robert Burns page "To a Mouse" which you can see at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/mouse.html>

I might add that I wondered why our site index page was not listed and I then found out that due to an error on the page the tracking code had been greyed out and so have now fixed that and I note that page is rapidly going up in the rankings and is now in 5th position.

Translation

I received an irate phone call from a Scottish Professor from Germany complaining about how he couldn't read our pages due to the pathetic translation of our pages into German. A few years ago I added a script so that when someone came from a non English speaking country then an option would come up offering to try and translate the page. However it seems he wasn't given that option and so the page was automatically being translated. As a result of this phone call I decided to remove the script and he told me that had fixed his problem. I am just hoping that not too many other people had the same problem.

Electric Canadian

Memoir of the Rev James MacGregor D.D.

Missionary of the General Associate Synod of Scotland to Pictou, Nova Scotia with Notices of the Colonization of the Lower Provinces of British America, and of the Social and Religious condition of the Early Settlers by his Grandson The Rev. George Patterson (1859). This is a new book we're starting on.

We have continued to add a chapter per day from this book and now up to chapter XII. In Chapter IX we learn...

Having advanced thus far, it may be proper to pause in our narrative, to give a general view of his early ministrations, more especially as our subsequent chapters will introduce us into his Missionary labours abroad. The sketch we shall give, however, is not intended to describe merely the years over which we have passed, but will be descriptive of the whole nine years in which he was alone, and also to some extent of his pastoral labours during his whole life.

When he arrived, he was deeply discouraged at the gloomy appearance of the country and the low state of the people. A letter of one of his friends represents him as having written of "the dismal appearance of the place, and that if he could have conveniently got away from it he would have come." Still he set about his labours with energy, though oftentimes with very depressed spirits.

From the first his sermons were sound and evangelical, and delivered in an agreeable manner. But neither in vigour of thought nor fervour of appeal, did they reach the superlative excellence of those of his after years. But the improvement was very rapid. One circumstance which perhaps more than any other especially tended to arouse the ardour of his nature, was his view of the condition of the settlers. "His spirit was stirred within him when he beheld" the ignorance and spiritual desolation around him, and all his energies, intellectual, and spiritual, as well as physical, were awakened on their behalf. To the preparation of his discourses, he devoted as much time and labour as his circumstances would permit. When at home he was diligent in study, and in his little garret he spent hours over his books, it might be when others were asleep. But he was much of his time from home, and even when at home he had often little time allowed him for study. He was not long here till he was greatly interrupted when at home by calls from persons wishing to converse with him. There were times when not a day would elapse without such calls, sometimes to the number of half a dozen. Many

of these would be anxious about the salvation of their souls—some would come to have their perplexities solved either in regard to matters of religious experience or Christian doctrine, while some perhaps came from curiosity, or to enjoy his company. He however never repelled any, and spent much time in conversing with them, although their business was not of such a nature as to justify such encroachments upon his time. So little consideration had the people that some would come to converse with him on the Sabbath morning. Under these circumstances it was little of regular study that he could do.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/macgregor/chapter09.htm>

You can read this book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/macgregor/index.htm>

The Aboriginies of Canada

This is a chapter from the book "The Dawn of Canadian History: A Chronicle of Aboriginal Canada" by Stephen Leacock.

You can read this chapter at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/dawn.htm>

Sioux Nation

Many native Indian tribes and nations shared their land between Canada and the United States so we can also turn to the USA for information on the history of them as well as Canadian resources.

This week I've been researching the Sioux Nation and have found a number of antiquarian books about them and here is the list...

The Taming of the Sioux
By Frank Fiske

A Sioux Story of the War
Chief Big Eagle's Story of the Sioux Outbreak of 1862.

Ethnographic Collections
From the Assiniboine and Yanktonai Sioux in the Field Museum of Natural History by James W. VanStone

A Comprehensive History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians
By Doane Robinson

Myths and Legends of the Sioux
By Mrs. Marie L. McLaughlin (Text file)

The Heritage of the Sioux
by B.M. Bower (Text file)

You can get to these books at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/sioux/index.htm>

I might just add that next week I hope to bring you information on the Cree.

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks edition was Compiled by Jennifer Dunn in which she is pondering over the bad press that hit the SNP over the past week.

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

Electric Scotland

Northern Notes and Queries

This week we have a new editor for this publication.

This issue includes...

No. 42—OCTOBER 1896.

Portrait of the Marquis of Argyll, his son the 9th Earl, and the lit, and, and 3rd DuVes {continued}

Who was the last Scottish Saint?

Robertsons of Strowan and Sir William Robertson, alios Colyear, Bari.

New Year's Day
Two Founders of St. John's Parish Church, Perth
The Tombstones of King James I. of Scotland and his Queen
Algerine Pirates and Scots Captives
The Roman Camp at Ardoch
Recent discovery of Celtic Crosses in St. Andrews
The Menteith-Graham Coat of Armour
Old Scots Bank-Notes [continued]
Jaunt between Edinburgh and the West Country in 1781
Inventory of the Early Writs of the Burgh of Linlithgow,
The Commissaiiot Register of Shetland [continued]

QUERIES

Lollards of Kyle—Murdoch Nisbet
Seal of a Bi*hop of Argyle
Forbes
Dunbar
Brace of Langlee
Steuart
M'Kain of Elgin
Rebels of 1715

REPLY

M'Kain of Elgin

This issue can be viewed at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/northern/index.htm>

Sketches of Virginia

Historical and Biographical by The Rev. William Henry Foote D.D. (1856)

We're now up to Chapter XXV of this book. In Chapter XXIX. - Rev. Conrad Speece D.D. - His Youth and Ministry to 1820 you can see how tough it was to get an education is these days...

The author of the beautiful hymn—"Blest Jesus, when thy cross I view—that mystery to the angelic host"—Conrad Speece, was for many years pastor of the Stone Church, Augusta County, the third in succession. Of German origin, though entirely English in his education, he often playfully, in his later years, called himself "the old Dutchman." In some manuscript notes, he says: "My father's name was Conrad Speece, the son of Conrad Speece, who emigrated to this 'country from Germany. My mother's maiden name was Ann Catherine Turney. I was born in New London, Virginia, November 7th, 1776. My parents were poor, but honest and industrious people." His birth occurred about a year previous to that of John H. Rice, D. D., and in the spie county, Bedford. Both were blessed with pious mothers; both struggled hard with poverty for an education. They were associated as tutors in college, and maintained for each other a warm friendship through life.

"My parents," he says, "sent me several years, in my childhood, to a common school, where I learned reading, writing and arithmetic. They also instructed me early in religion. In 1787, we removed to a farm five miles from New London, where I was employed, several years, in the labors of agriculture. As I delighted much in reading, I gradually acquired some knowledge of the historical parts of the Bible, and some ideas on the leading doctrines of religion."

Samuel Brown, afterwards pastor of New Providence, was one of his early teachers. Having formed a high estimate of the boy's capacity, he wrote to his father, urging him to send his son Conrad to the grammar school, near New London. This request, declined by the father, on account of his narrow circumstances, made an impression of lasting influence on the boy. Some months afterwards, Mr. Edward Graham, the teacher of the grammar school, moved probably by the representations of Mr. Brown, offered to give me tuition for four years, on condition of my assisting him in teaching, as soon as I should become capable, and until the end of that period. My grandmother Speece, in New London, offered to furnish my boarding on moderate terms. On this plan, I entered the school in November, 1792.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/virginia/chapter29.htm>

You can read the other chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/virginia/index.htm>

Reminiscences of the Lews

By Sixty One (1871)

This week we've completed this book by adding the final chapter - Conclusion

You can read the chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/lews/index.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

I have heard about Robert Fergusson since I began studying Burns back in the early 1990s and one day while in Edinburgh, Susan and I walked into McNaughtan's Bookshop on Haddington Place and met the proprietor, Elizabeth Strong, a lady who knows her books. I would buy a lot of books from her over the subsequent years, but I have always treasured my first purchase from her on the subject of Fergusson. We found a beautiful leather 1812 two-volume set entitled *The Poetical Works of Fergusson with his Life*. I remember hand-carrying it on the airplane from Manchester to Atlanta to make sure it was not damaged in any way on the trip home.

Today I welcome Rhona Brown back to *Robert Burns Lives!* as one who already has several articles on this web site. Her new book, *Robert Fergusson and the Scottish Periodical Press*, is the first monograph on Fergusson since 1984 when Fred Freeman published his book, *Robert Fergusson and the Scots Humanist Compromise*. Basically, a monograph is a book written by one person on a single subject. Dr. Rhona Brown has excelled in this arena writing with her new publication on Fergusson.

In an email I asked this of Dr. Brown: "While doing your research and writing your book, what stands out as something unexpected to you...something you ran across that you did not expect to find or something that perked you up because you did find a bit of news about Fergusson you were unaware of, or for that matter, something on the Fergusson/Burns connection?"

Rhona answered, "I did find some unexpected things during my research, but this is always the nature of research! One of the things that interested me most was the ways in which Fergusson's poetry aligned with news stories, particularly of public celebrations in Edinburgh. As 'The Daft Days', 'The King's Birth-Day in Edinburgh' and 'Leith Races' are published, the Weekly Magazine prints details of riots and misbehaviour among Edinburgh residents on these holidays. I think my book's strategy of reading the poems through the lens of the magazines in which they were first printed shows just how contemporary Fergusson was. He's often seen as being nostalgic for pre-Union Scotland and for days gone by, but his magazine context shows us that he was responding to day-to-day events and news stories with real immediacy. Although, very sadly, Burns and Fergusson never met, it's clear that Fergusson is in the literati's minds when Burns arrives in Edinburgh in 1787. In the contemporary periodical press and poetry publications, there are lots of tributes to Burns which recognise his genius and vitality, but also very much see him as Fergusson's Scots vernacular successor."

I'm excited about Rhona's new book and hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

You can read this article, Robert Fergusson and the Scottish Periodical Press by Rhona Brown at:
http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives157.htm

Other articles in this series can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns.htm>

Songs of John Henderson

A new song - "Rabbie"

Lyrics composed by John Henderson on the 27th of October, 2012,
to George Beech and Alfred Solman's music for the song, '[You Can't Live Without A Girl](#)'.

Who's not heard of Rabbie Burns,
His short life of twists and turns,
Filled with toil and abject poverty,
Lost loves, drink, and mental misery?
But from such ills arose a muse
O'er which friends would oft enthuse,
But that bigots to their shame
Did so cruelly ordain
As an upstart's false claims to fame.

This Rab tilled unyielding earth,
But of rhymes he had no dearth;
His mind brimmed with rustic tales of yore,
Female trysts that eased each daily chore;

So from such like and others stored,
His pen flowed as visions soared;
Sympathetic he'd rehearse
All injustice through lots verse,
Satirising each cause of stress.

Last Rab read songs most ev'ry day,
And hummed them in his own way;
When their words he didn't rate o'er much,
He changed them with deft poetic touch;
Yes these lyrics came from his heart,
And wise thoughts oft did impart
That have lasted to this day
For immortal memory
In the minds of humanity.

You can read his other songs at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

I might add that John does research on appropriate music to go with his songs so on most of his pages you'll see a link to the music file.

A Significant Scot - William Sharp

Scottish poet, literary biographer, and romantic story-teller.

We've now started on adding volume two of his memoir...

You can read about him at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sharp_william.htm

Kilsyth, A Parish History

This is a new book we're starting which of course is another place in Scotland.

We're now up to Chapter VIII which included topics such as...

The Covenanters' Graves—The Battle of Kilsyth—Scottish Army in England—Montrose—Famine—Pestilence—The Story of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray—Montrose's Victories —A Hot Day—Strength of the Armies—The Decoy—The Snare — Charge of Covenanting Dragoons — Onset of M'Leans and M'Donalds—General Engagement—Fearful Carnage—A Romance of the Battle—Gordon's Gravestone.

You can view this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/kilsyth>

5 Days Around Scotland

Sandy Campbell was taking a friend around Scotland and so he's sending us in 5 pdf files containing pictures and notes of their travels. We now have the files 3 and 4 for you to read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/travel/tours/5days.htm>

The Little White Bird by James Barrie

We've decided to serialize this book as part of the reason is that his famous Peter Pan first appeared in it which led to the play.

We've now added the first 5 chapters...

Chapter I - David and I set forth upon a Journey

Chapter II - The Little Nursery Governess

Chapter III - Her Marriage, her Clothes, her Appetite and an Inventory of her Furniture

Chapter IV - A Night-Piece

Chapter V - The Fight for Timothy

You can read this at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/barrie_james.htm

Strathmore Past and Present

By The Rev. J. G. M'Pherson (1885)

This is a new book we've started on and here is the Preface...

These Articles were originally written, at the request of the Proprietor, to appear in the columns of the Perthshire Advertiser. They were meant for the general readers of a newspaper. Accordingly, my object was to make the sketches interesting, in some way, to all: accurate enough for the ecclesiastical and historical student, yet readable and instructive for those who have less liking for antiquarian lore.

Some friends, whose opinions have always a considerable influence with me, have at last persuaded me—though after no little reluctance—to acknowledge the authorship, and collect them in the more permanent shape in which they now appear. And, though I have carefully revised the Articles, they are reprinted, to a great extent, in the same order, and with the same style and aim, as in their first appearance in the Advertiser.

The first Article is the History of the Abbey of Cupar, and its influence on the religion, education, and agriculture of the district; then follow sketches of the sixteen parishes in the “ Howe of Strathmore; ” and the volume concludes with the History of the Priory of Rostinoth, in Forfar. It has been impossible to get for the volume a title which would give an exact idea of its object, and the ground gone over. It is more than a series of dry statistical accounts, though each parish has been made a separate study. Special attention has been given to the Ecclesiastical Antiquities : I have ransacked the Registers of the Abbeys and Priors—especially of Cupar, Arbroath, Dunkeld, St. Andrews, and Lindores—and have examined for myself the original, contracted, Latin charters, to ensure accuracy. The history of the several Churches has been traced from their foundation, with occasional characteristic extracts from the Parochial records. The Topographical Sketches are from personal observation; descriptions of the landscape from several points being given. The most interesting fauna and flora to be found, the characteristic climate, and the physical features of each parish, are specially described. The Secular History deals with facts and carefully-sifted traditions; the several Castles being the centres of the narratives. The Antiquities of the district are full of interest, not only to those living in the Strath, but to all Scotland. The development of the manners and customs, the vicissitudes of agriculture and trade, and the prominent social features, are described and freely commented upon. Illustrious persons born in, or connected with, the district have not been forgotten. Occasional anecdotes and poetic illustrations have been introduced to lighten the reading.

I have, I think, acknowledged, throughout the work, the valuable authorities to which I am indebted. Besides the Registers already mentioned, I would especially notice Chalmers' Caledonia, Lord Lindsay's Lives of the Lindsays, Jervise's Land of the Lindsays and Memorials of Angus, the two well-known Statistical Accounts of the Parishes, Skene's Celtic Scotland, Wilson's Pre-historic Scotland, the Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Edward's Angus, Ochterlony's Shyre of Forfar, Myln's Bishops of Dunkeld, Robertson's Agriculture, Scott's Fasti, Billing's Ecclesiastical and Baronial Antiquities, Grose's Antiquities of Scotland, Stewart's Sculptured Stones, Browne's History of the Highlands, Cunningham's Church History, Allan's Abbots of Cupar, Duncan's Ecclesiastical Law, Forbes' Saints, Keith's Scotch Bishops, Laing's Catalogue of Seals, Hooker's Perthshire Illustrated, Gardiner's Flora of Forfarshire, Douglas' Peerage, and the Spalding and Bannatyne Club Miscellanies.

A pleasant part now remains. I sincerely thank the ministers and session-clerks who have, with considerable trouble, assisted me. And I specially thank the Rev. George B. Lunan, B.D., Minister of Newtyle, for having carefully revised the proof-sheets, so as to make the volume as accurate as possible.

To me, this has been a work of special pleasure. The Publishers now offer it at a very reasonable price; and my object will be consummated if it affords interest, instruction, and a fresh thirst for research to those who peruse its pages.

J. G. M'PHERSON.

Ruthven Manse, March, 1885.

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

The Old Scottish Ploughman

A story of the old Scottish Ploughman and his working and living conditions.

This is an interesting account of the personal and working conditions which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/agriculture/ploughman.htm>

And finally...

Who Believes What?

A small midwestern USA town entrepreneur built a bar next door to a church, This enraged the congregation so much that they prayed it would never open. The night before the grand opening it was struck by lightning and burned to the ground so the bar owner sued the church - who denied all responsibility.

In court, the judge commented:

"So we have a bar owner who believes in the power of prayer, and an entire church congregation that doesn't."

Quick Thinking

A police officer while out on patrol with a colleague came across a teenager climbing on the roof of the local primary school late one evening.

Full marks for trying, they reckoned, when they asked him what he was doing and he replied: "Ah've loast ma budgie."

And that's it for now and hope you all have a great weekend and enjoy watching the Presidential election which I see is being described as the "greatest political show on earth!"

Alastair
