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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 14th 2012

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Electric Scotland News

I ordered up some cheese from Scotland to give out as Christmas presents and WOW I got charged a 245% tariff charge for bringing them into Canada. Sure won't be doing that again!

Guess we're all getting into Christmas mode these days through buying presents and getting them all wrapped up. We do have a Christmas page at <http://www.electricscotland.com/index98.htm>

This weekend we are scheduled to update our Electric Scotland Community software so might be offline for a wee while. Once the update is complete and we know all is working as it should we'll be doing an image copy of our server and sending that to Simon Fraser University. They are going to make a "virtual" server for us and the plan is to make them primary for our domain. Of course that will also take a wee bit of time to test everything is working as it should. We'll still retain our own server but we'll simply be a mirror. This is all part of my work to make sure the sites are all available for future generations.

I continue to watch the fight for independence in Scotland and have to confess I am amazed at the SNP's decision to stick with the EU. I'd like you to read a report on how the EU cost Scotland over a hundred thousand jobs at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/3706-Scotland-and-the-EU-Common-Fisheries-Policy>

and you tell me how being a member of the EU would in any way help Scotland.

This week I've added more articles from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society for which more below.

And a wee plug for a friend who has now written four books about "The Monkey King's Daughter". Here is what he has to say...

Hello, I'm Todd DeBonis, author of The Monkey King's Daughter novels for middle readers.

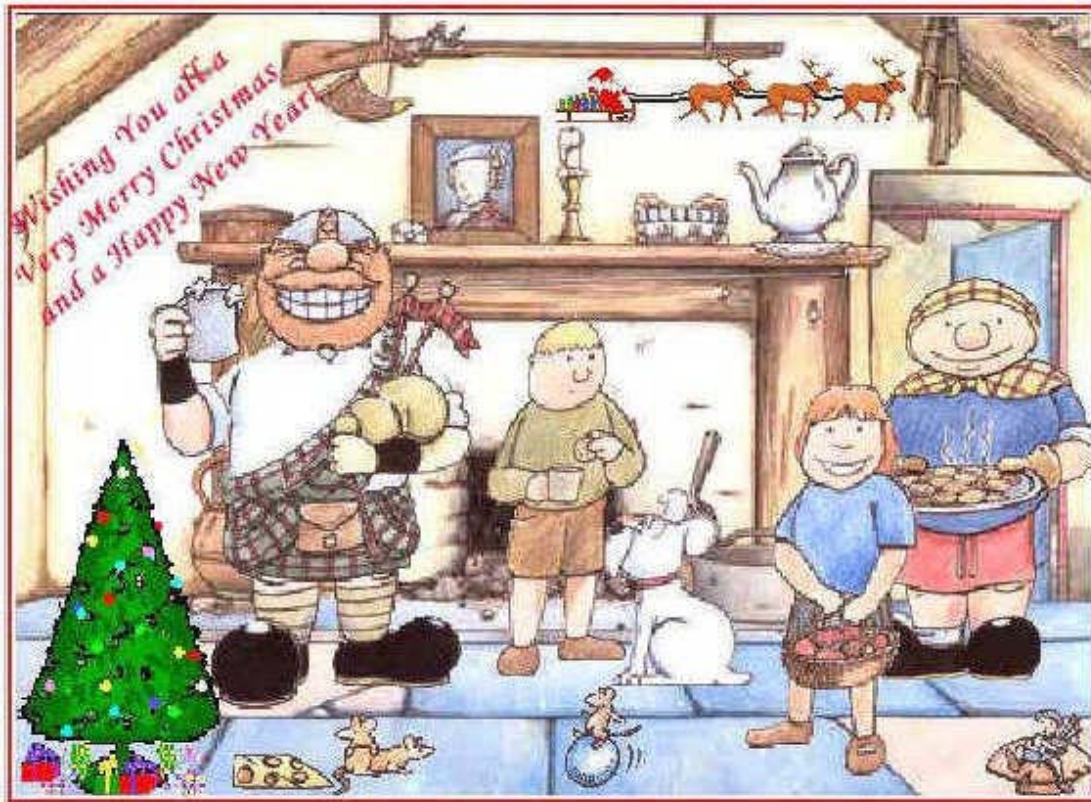
The Monkey King's Daughter series offers the warm coming-of-age story of a contemporary teenage girl tightly wrapped in high adventure and fantastic mythological Chinese settings.

Steeped with the philosophical universal tenants of Compassion, Humility, Loyalty, Balance and Honor, The Monkey King's Daughter delivers solid family core-values and a new female hero for a multicultural world.

I wrote the first book for my eldest daughter and I've continued them for not only my own children but because I've learned that they can help make a difference for other children even if in a very small way through the various charities and foundations that use the novels to help raise money for their causes (China Care Foundation, China Adoption with Love.) This, to me has been my greatest reward. These organizations receive 50% of the cover price for every book sold on their behalf. In fact, I welcome the opportunity to associate the novels with any charity or foundation that helps better the lives of children, anywhere in the world.

You can read more about the books at <http://www.themonkeykingsdaughter.com/>

Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



Electric Canadian

Roughing it in the Bush

or Forrest Life in Canada by Susanna Moodie (1871). A new book we're starting.

Added the following chapters this week...

Burning the Fallow
Our Logging-Bee
A Trip to Stony Lake
The Ould dhragoon
Disappointed Hopes
The Little Stumpy Man

You can read these chapters at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/roughing/index.htm>

Iroquois Nation

I have managed to dig up a lot of information on the Iroquois. There were five Indian nations that made up the Iroquois and so have found quite a few pdf files and text files that provide good information on them.

According to the best evidence that can be obtained, the formation of the Iroquois confederacy dates from about the middle of the fifteenth century. There is reason to believe that prior to that time the five tribes, who are dignified with the title of nations, had held the region south of Lake Ontario, extending from the Hudson to the Genesee river, for many generations, and probably for many centuries. Tradition makes their earlier seat to have been north of the St. Lawrence river, which is probable enough. It also represents the Mohawks as the original tribe, of which the others are offshoots; and this tradition is confirmed by the evidence of language. That the Iroquois tribes were originally one people, and that their separation into five communities, speaking distinct dialects, dates many centuries back, are both conclusions as certain as any facts in physical science. Three hundred and fifty years ago they were isolated tribes, at war occasionally with one another, and almost constantly with the fierce Algonquins who surrounded them. Not unfrequently, also, they had to withstand and to avenge the incursions of warriors belonging to more distant tribes of various stocks, Hurons, Cherokees and Dakotas. Yet they were not peculiarly a warlike people. They were a race of housebuilders, farmers, and fishermen. They had large and strongly palisaded towns, well-cultivated fields, and substantial houses, sometimes a hundred feet long, in which many kindred families dwelt together.

You can study what I've collected at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/iroquois/index.htm>

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks edition was Compiled by Jennifer Dunn. In this issue she is supporting Scotland's wish to remain in the EU which I am personally totally opposed to.

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

Electric Scotland

Northern Notes and Queries

This weeks issue is for April 1898 and can be found at the foot of the page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/northern/index.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

No article this week but Frank will be giving a talk at the Robert Burns Conference in Glasgow in January and for those that can make the venue you can find out more at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burnsathomeabroad.pdf>

A Significant Scot - William Sharp

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

We've now added...

Chapter 9 Provence
Chapter 10 Lismore

You can read these at the foot of the page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sharp_william.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 final two chapters...

Chapter XXV - The Cricket Match

Chapter XXVI - The Dedication

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

House of Green Shutters

Journalist, Teacher, Novelist, Short Story Writer, Critic

We've now added more chapters to the "House of Green Shutters" and now up to chapter XXII.

You can read these at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/brown_george_d.htm

A Hundred Years in the Highlands

By Osgood Hanbury MacKenzie of Inverewe (1921)

We are now up to chapter XVII which is about The Famous Gairloch Pipers and here is how it starts...

In 1609 an ancestor of mine, who was also one of the most famous of the Gairloch lairds, John Roy Mackenzie, paid a visit to the laird of Reay in Sutherland. I believe the laird of Reay (Lord Reay) was his stepfather. On John Roy's return from his visit to Tongue House, Mackay accompanied him as far as the Meikle Ferry, on the Kyle of Sutherland. On their arrival at the ferry it seems there was another gentleman crossing, accompanied by a groom, who attempted to prevent anyone entering the boat but his master and his party. Mackay had his piper with him, a young, handsome lad of only seventeen summers. A scuffle ensued between the piper and the groom, the former drew his dirk, and with one blow cut the groom's hand off at the wrist.

The laird of Reay at once said to his piper: "Rory, I cannot keep you with me any longer; you must at once fly the country and save your life." John Roy said: "Will you come with me to Gairloch, Rory?" And the piper was only too glad to accept the offer.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/hundred/chapter17.htm>

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

For Puir Auld Scotland's Sake

A Book of Prose Essays on Scottish Literary and Rural Subjects by Hugh Haliburton (1887)

We have added the following chapters this week...

Holidays

A Holiday in Arcadia

The Queen's Holiday

And this now completes this book.

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

Songs from John Henderson

John sent us another two songs which you can read at the foot of the page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Sir David Brewster

We continue to add chapters from his memoir and now have up...

Chapter I - The Birthplace

Chapter II - The Child

Chapter III - The Companions

Chapter IV - The Student
Chapter V - Settling in Life
Chapter VI - Notes of Life from 1810 to 1814
Chapter VII - Notes of Life from 1814 to 1824

You can read these chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/brewster.htm>

Old Scottish Customs

By E. J. Guthrie (1885)

A new book we're starting and here is the Preface...

IN placing before the reading public this small book on a great subject, it may be desirable to give a few words of explanation regarding its compilation. Some fifteen or sixteen years ago, in connection with other literary work regarding parochial and local matters throughout Scotland, the writer had occasion to consult somewhat fully, many of the works on such subjects,—namely, works regarding topographical history and description. In these volumes, mostly either large, rare, or expensive and difficult of access by the general public, numerous references, it was observed, were made to old customs of all sorts, now either quite obsolete or rapidly becoming so.

Getting increasingly interested in these frequent references, jottings were taken in many instances. Since then the accumulation has been added to from time to time, and from many sources,—by personal contact with the people and otherwise,—and now there being a goodly number, it has been suggested that they would form an interesting little volume, which might not be altogether unacceptable to those fellow-countrymen who are interested in the manners and customs of our fathers. In the circumstances described, the result of the protracted but pleasing process of research, sadly imperfect as it may be, is laid before the public in all humbleness of spirit, and as such it is hoped that criticism may be withheld. As the customs themselves only are given, and, not being burdened with remark or comment, the style of the collection must necessarily be fragmentary and brief; perhaps however, this latter feature, in these days of the making of many books, may not be altogether a disadvantage.

With regard to the works already referred to, as the source from which the writer is indebted for most of the various customs described in these pages. Almost all authoritative and standard authors likely to be of assistance have been consulted. Among many others the following may be specified :—Skene's *The Highlanders of Scotland*, 2 vols.; Chalmers's *Caledonia*, 3 vols., 4to.; Martin's *Description of the Western Islands*; Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*, 3 vols.; Johnson and Boswell's *Tour in Scotland*; Roger's *Scotland Social and Domestic*, and other writings; Sir Walter Scott's various writings; Chambers' *Picture of Scotland*, and other writings; Forsyth's *Beauties of Scotland*, 5 vols.; Miss Gordon Cumming's *In the Hebrides*, etc., etc. But chief of all, is the magnificent collection edited by Sir John Sinclair entitled the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, in 21 volumes, and written by the respective parish ministers. The value and interest attaching to these latter volumes is far beyond all ordinary estimate, and yet the work is not at all easy of access, and is seldom seen by the general reader.

London, May, 1885.

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

Evelyn Glennie

A Percussionist we're added to our Significant Scots.

There is more to celebrity than basking in the warm sunshine of applause, as I discovered in talking with the internationally famous percussionist, Evelyn Glennie.

A countless number of column inches have been written about Evelyn. The Aberdeenshire-born percussionist enjoys fame far beyond the boundaries of her birthplace. Critics and musicologists scour their thesauruses for verbal accolades after every remarkable performance.

The New York Times called her "the percussion worlds Segovia or Rampal", and went on to state in characteristically scholarly terms: "her musicianship is extraordinary. One has to pause in sheer wonder at what she has accomplished. She is quite simply a phenomenon of a performer."

You can read the rest of this article and even watch a YouTube video of her giving a master class at:
http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/glennie_evelyn.htm

Exchequer Rolls of Scotland

An article from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society.

Within this article, which is a great read, there is a section on...

How Kings and People Fared.

The Kings of Scotland had never any great command of money, but they did not lack the means of maintaining royal pomp of State, when it suited them, and from having generously hospitable homes. They had manors, lands, and forests of their own in all parts of the country; and so, by moving about with their Court attendants, they could enjoy many changes of domicile, and consume the rent in kind, wheat, barley, oats, marts, mutton, poultry, pigs, herrings, salmon, etc., where they were payable, along with money rents, and use the other services of tenants. As they began to be more stationary in their habits, and took to staying, except in the hunting season, chiefly in Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, Perth, and Falkland, the rents in kind of distant possessions were commuted for money, but the old distinction between money and produce was still retained down to a very late period. The household accounts show that our kings and their courtiers lived generously, and even luxuriously. They had, as far back as the records go, French, Spanish, Rhenish, and even Greek wines. They were fond of spices of all kinds. Pepper is often the quit rent of blench holdings. Honey and sugar they had in abundance. They consumed great quantities of home-brewn ale, and had beer imported from Germany and the Netherlands. I have not noticed in the first sixteen volumes a single mention of whisky or "aqua vitae." But that is not at all strange, as, until last century, whisky was not generally used as a drink at all. It was, however, used as medicine more than a thousand years ago. According to the ancient poems of Wales, there were distillers in Galloway in the days of the Romans and King Arthur, and the monks afterwards continued to distil what they called "strong waters." Ale was made both from barley and from , oats—the former being much preferred, but the latter being not despised. A middle class of ale was brewed from mixing barley malt and oat malt together. Honey and wax were apparently plentiful. Wax was in great request for church, palace, and castle lights. Honey was used for a hundred purposes of cooking and brewing, besides being eaten from the comb or from the jar into which it had been melted, along with bread and meat. Grapes and raisins, like spices, were imported. The home orchards produced apples, pears, and plums.

The Scotch kings of the later era had good gardens at Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Falkland, Perth, Stirling, etc. We may conclude that their predecessors had gardens also, which, if not so good, were still more numerous, because they roved more, about to eat the produce of their possessions where it was grown. The accounts of cooks or clerks of the kitchen, in the time of the five Jameses, record a huge consumption of salad herbs and of endives, leeks, and onions. Kale of all kinds was largely grown and used all the year round America had still to be discovered, and it was not till a century after the discovery of America that Sir Walter Raleigh introduced that prince of vegetables, the potato. What were the substitutes that did duty for the potato in the olden times? Parsnips and cabbages chiefly, which were both pitted at the beginning of winter, and so kept good till new ones grew. I have not come across any mention of turnips. The parsnip was not a garden but a field crop. Its Gaelic name is "curran, and it has affixed its name to many Highland places, like "Tom-a-cluirrain," "Lub-a-churrain," and so forth. Of course the clerks in the kitchen took no notice in their accounts of the smaller fruits and vegetables which were mere gairshings, and grew in all the king's gardens. Some of the queens had gardens and gardeners of their own, and we get a hint of flower gardening here and there without anything more. It is different with medicinal plants. A monk near Stirling was paid handsomely for medicinal herbs from his garden, which were given to the horses of the king. Roses were apparently favourite flowers, for red roses are among the quit rents of very ancient charters, along with such other curious reddendoes as falcons, hounds, broad arrows, small arrows, scarlet cloaks, etc. The broad arrows were shot from a catapult sort of machine, and the small arrows by archers.

You can read more of this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/rolls.htm>

The Baillies of Dunain

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

These transactions are useful in telling us stories of other families in Scotland.

This family, which terminated in 1869 upon the death of William Baillie, ran an honoured course in the neighbourhood of the burgh of Inverness, for upwards of four hundred years.

With one exception, connected with the winning and leading of peats in the mont of Caiploch by the people of Inverness, against the remonstrances of the Baillies, every good feeling prevailed betwixt the Baillies and the town of Inverness.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/atoc/baillie3.html>

Folk-Lore of Luck

An article from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society.

One has only to read any of the works on the folk-lore of any foreign country, or reside anywhere out of the Highlands for a year or two, to understand that Highlanders are certainly not a bit more superstitious than people elsewhere, and that what superstitious beliefs they have, are on inquiry found to have arisen from some reasonable cause generally unknown to the sneering outsider. In adopting means to secure luck, it is believed that their customs are less stupid than those of so-called educated people who indulge in games of chance, and who, if they have perfected no 'system' by which to regulate their luck, then by means of charms, which may easily be bought for filthy lucre, they expect to propitiate the unknown and dreaded powers so that they may be favoured—at the expense of

somebody else, of course. It is well known that in games of pure chance the proportion of the amount won altogether by one side of say two numerically equal sides of players is almost certain to fee very nearly an equality in the long run, but before that long run comes it ought not to be forgotten that the last of the means of the apparently losing side may have gone, and then no way remains by which the losers may recoup themselves and the equality be restored; and ruin then comes, as it inevitably does to all gamblers, and hence the ardent desire to get in some way or other the balance of probability on their side at the beginning—in short, to load the dice. But Highlanders, in common with the vast majority of believers in luck, never think of it as coming within any mathematical or other law.

You can read the rest of this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/luck.htm>

Notes on the Family of De Moravia or Moray

Family history has been a feature in the Transactions of the Gaelic Society, and it is proposed to-night to give the Jesuit of some gleanings in the genealogy of a race whose name looms largely in the early northern records. The pedigree of the Morays has had a strange fascination for antiquaries; and although cultured scholars have made a special study of it, yet comparatively little is known of the origin of this wide-spread and potent house.

You can read this article half way down on our page about Moray at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/moray.htm>

Notes on the Urquharts of Cromarty

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

The published pedigree of the Urquharts is unique in Scottish genealogy, because Sir Thomas Urquhart traced his lineage back to Adam, so that no family can ever hope to surpass it in point of antiquity or splendour of descent. There are many who regard the work as a clever satire; they say that a man of Sir Thomas's culture could surely never credit the nonsense he had written. But this is by no means clear; experience proves that in genealogical matters some men possess a faith that is astonishing. In our own unbelieving age we have an instance of this in a recent work upon a Highland clan, where the pedigree is carried back several centuries before the Christian era, local events being brought under notice with a precision that is appalling.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/stoz/urquhar3.html>

Professor Charles Thomson Rees Wilson

Career and Genealogy of Professor Charles Thomson Rees Wilson (1868-1959) of Glencorse, Midlothian, the, as yet, only Scottish Nobel Prize winner when this was written. We have added this person to our Significant Scots page.

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

And finally...

Touche-eeeh!

A group of annoying business-types sat down in a Glasgow lounge-bar, and when asked if they wanted a drink, one of them shouted: "We'll have four G&Ts - that's gin and tonics to you."

Being from the west end, the waitress merely replied:

"Would you like ice and lemon with them - that's frozen water and citrus fruit to you."-----

Morning Ablutions

My wife banged on the bathroom door the other morning asking why I was in there so long.

"I told her that the balder I get, the longer it takes me to wash my face."

And that's it for now and hope you all have a grand weekend.

Alastair