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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for January 11th 2013

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Electric Scotland News

I'm continuing my work of extracting some articles from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. While I've made each volume available on the site I figure many won't have the time to read these so by posting up some of the more interesting articles I hope you will have the time to read them.

For Canadians or those interested in Canada I'm working on bringing you the 23 volume set on Canadian history and have included the introduction to this below in the Electric Canadian section.

Most of us will be gearing up for Robert Burns Suppers this month and remember that we do have an awesome collection of material in our own Robert Burns collection at <http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/index.html>. I would also note that if any of you will be reciting the odd poem or two at these Suppers we do have an excellent selection of audio files where you can practice your accent at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/culture/features/scots/index.htm>. These were recorded by Peter Wright who at the time was the Chairman of the Scots Independent newspaper and also his wife Marilyne. .

Electric Canadian

Canada in Flanders

By Sir Max Aitken MP (1916)

We've now completed this book but working on the excellent appendix which should be complete by next week. Appendix II is all about Canadians mentioned in Despatches and makes a great read.

You can read the concluding chapters and the Appendix at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/flanders/index.htm>

Report on a visit to the Sioux and Ponka Indians

On the Missouri River made by Wm Welsh July, 1872

I added this book to our page on the Sioux but in particular I added the extract on the Ponka tribe mainly due to our friend Donna Flood being part of that nation.

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

The Red Record of the Sioux

Life of Sitting Bull and History of the Indian War of 1890-91.

PREFACE

There is in all the checkered history of America no chapter of more general interest than that which tells of the Aborigines and our dealings with them. It narrates a story often shameful, often noble, sometimes pusillanimous, sometimes heroic, now causing us to blush with shame for fallen human nature, now kindling us with enthusiastic admiration for humanity that seems almost divine; but always full of power to thrill the heart, of romance to captivate the fancy, and of rich food to nourish earnest thought. To the man of war and to the man of peace, to the statesman and to the Christian teacher, to the scientist, and to the romanticist, it makes with equal directness its irresistible appeal.

It is the object of the present volume to relate the story of the Sioux, more properly the Dakota Indians, and our relations with them. Of all the aboriginal people, they were the greatest, the bravest in war, the wisest in peace, the most powerful in body, the most advanced in mind. As possessors of the famed Red Pipe Stone Quarry, the Indian Mecca, where Gitche Manito the Mighty, revealed himself to man, they have cherished and developed more than any others the myths and legends of the Indian race. The foremost leaders of aboriginal civilization, they have longest resisted the inflowing tide of alien civilization brought hither by the Puritan and the Cavalier. And to-day, he who would study the red race in its noblest remnant and in its best estate, must do so among the scattered lodges of the Sioux.

The name of Sitting Bull must be as famous as that of Tecumseh, of Red Cloud, as that of Black Hawk or Massasoit. The Sioux massacres of 1862, make Wyoming seem commonplace, and the last rally of Custer at the Little Big Horn fight has no parallel in all the annals of our Indian wars. Nor is the long drama drawn to an unworthy close by the weird Ghost Dances, the death of Sitting Bull and the mad slaughtering at Wounded Knee. It is the present purpose to record this history before the blood of the last grim chapter shall have grown dry. The tale is told chiefly in the words of those who could truly say, magna pars quorum fuimus. The views of both friends and foes of the Indian are given a fair hearing, nothing extenuated, nothing set down in malice. In years to come, when some metempsychosis shall have translated passion into philosophy, a more discerning judgment may record in other terms these same events. For this day and this generation we can only tell the story as it comes to us in the echoes of war, in the prayer for relief, in the cry of despair.

I have provided the pdf of this book which you can download at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/sioux/sittingbull.htm>

Potato Growing in Canada

By the Canadian Department of Agriculture

The potato is one of the important crops in the Canadian agricultural economy. In addition to being the premier vegetable it ranks fifth among the field crops from the standpoint of gross farm value. The potato has a wide adaptation and succeeds well in most areas of Canada. It is grown on more farms and in more gardens than any other single agricultural plant, reaching its greatest importance in the Maritime Provinces where it provides a large part of the total agricultural revenue.

You can read this account at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/potato.htm>

Oats in Canada

By the Canadian Department of Agriculture

THE purpose of this bulletin is two-fold. In the first place it summarizes certain phases of the results of experimental work with oats carried on by the Experimental Farms Service. In the second place, it gives a brief history of the oat crop and discusses varieties,

diseases and other subjects of vital interest to the grower.

You can read this at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/oats.htm>

Canada and its Provinces

In 22 volumes and Index

It is now my intention to bring you each week one of these volumes to read. This publication is a massive story of the history of Canada and its Provinces. It is thus a rich store of knowledge that you can scan, dip into or read in detail. I will be starting on this next week but here is the Editors introduction for you to read here which will set the scene...

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

SELDOM in the history of a nation has there been such rapid economic development as Canada has enjoyed during the last two decades. Within that time the Dominion has felt the throb of a new industrial life from ocean to ocean. Railroads have opened up to the settler vast stretches of fertile soil. Immigration has proceeded vigorously, and the country has received a large influx of population from both Europe and the United States. Wide tracts of prairie land, which twenty years ago were uninhabited and which appalled the traveller by their unbroken solitude, are now dotted with the buildings of the settler. Cities and towns have sprung up, as in a night, equipped with the conveniences of modern civilization. The increase in the production of gold and silver has been no less phenomenal—the fame of the Yukon and of the Cobalt region has gone all over the world. From Sydney on the Atlantic to Prince Rupert on the Pacific the signs of rapid advancement are everywhere visible. Vacant lands are being settled, mineral resources exploited, great rivers bridged and mountains scaled or tunnelled. The shifting of population from the older and historic settlements to the new sections and from rural districts to urban centres is also a feature of the present situation. While European nations have been devoting much of their energy to navies and armies, Canada has been concentrating all her forces on the conquest of nature for the use of man

But, in the enthusiasm of commercial and industrial activity, of increasing wealth and population, it is not to be forgotten that the national character is not moulded exclusively by economic causes. Flung over an enormous geographic range, the Canadian communities are not yet bound together by continuity of settlement. There remain differences of environment, of local interest, of language and race. Under such conditions the danger of sectionalism, in spite of material success, is greatly to be feared, unless this destructive tendency is met by the positive and constructive idea of the Nation.

To the end that a broad national spirit should prevail in all parts of the Dominion, it is desirable that a sound knowledge of Canada as a whole, of its history, traditions and standards of life, should be diffused among its citizens, and especially among the immigrants who are peopling the new lands. Commercial and industrial ambition, so strong a motive in every new country, will naturally lead men to inform themselves concerning its business advantages, but mere wealth-making is not the chief essential of citizenship. Good citizenship grows out of a patriotic interest in the institutions of one's country and a sympathy with the people who dwell there. Such interest and sympathy are possible in large measure only to those who are familiar with their country's past. Now, Canada's past, though brief compared with that of the Motherland or other European countries, is full of interest, instruction, and even romance. The story of the early centuries is fascinating and dramatic. It has its conspicuous examples of high endeavour and brave accomplishment—such as the heart of youth always delights in—in defence, in business enterprise, in education, in religion and in statecraft. Without exaggerating its favourable features or minimizing or ignoring those that are less attractive, the record of the stages through which Canada's various provinces have passed, from the state of nature in which they were found by the first European explorers and settlers to the present condition of civilization, may be so presented as to awaken not only the interest but the patriotic pride of every intelligent citizen. With this story every Canadian should be acquainted, both for his own enlightenment and for the good of the state.

The work which is here presented to the public has been planned and undertaken on a comprehensive scale, both in the sense that it covers the entire history of Canada and its provinces, and in the sense that those who write represent all parts of the Dominion and their more or less diverse points of view. The range of facts is so wide and the topics so various and complex that no one author could possibly compass them. The work, therefore, has been apportioned among many writers, each of whom has some special sympathy and aptitude for the topic with which he deals. In adopting this co-operative plan the Editors have followed not merely the logic of their theme, but the practice of modern historians in other and older countries.

The co-operative method, while involving the Editors in some difficulties, has obvious advantages to the reader. Although two or more writers may deal with the same event or personality, they do so from different angles, and what sometimes appears to be duplication serves to clarify a complex situation by presenting it from more than one point of view. A financial measure, for instance, having as a direct object the raising of revenue, is dealt with in that aspect by the writer on public finance. But the same measure in its course through parliament may have proved the occasion of a political crisis; in that phase it is treated by one of the writers dealing with political history. The measure may also have affected domestic trade or foreign trade relations, raising questions for the consideration of a third writer whose subject is economic history. From each of the three standpoints new light is given, and a comprehensive view of the whole matter is thus afforded.

The plan of the work embraces twelve main divisions or sections as follows :

- I. New France, 1534-1760
- II. British Dominion, 1760-1840
- III. United Canada, 1840-1867
- IV. The Dominion: Political Evolution
- V. The Dominion : Industrial Expansion
- VI. The Dominion : Missions, Arts and Letters
- VII. The Atlantic Provinces
- VIII. The Province of Quebec
- IX. The Province of Ontario
- X. The Prairie Provinces
- XI. The Pacific Provinces
- XII. Documentary Notes
- General Index

It will be observed that these titles indicate two distinct classes of history—one general or national, and the other local or provincial. A recital here of all the considerations which led the Editors to adopt this system would be of little service to the reader. It is enough to say that the Editors arrived at its method after much study and experiment, and that in their judgment it appears to be the only way in which a complete historical survey can be made of the Canadian people and their institutions. Broadly, the first six sections cover New France, the two Canadas, United Canada, and the Dominion. The topics treated in the five provincial sections may be generalized as (1) Pioneer Settlement, (2) Provincial Political History since Confederation, (3) Provincial and Municipal Government, (4) Education, and (5) Resources. In general it may be said that all matters of Canadian history not covered by one of these heads are to be looked for in the first six sections, although there are necessarily deviations from this rule. The pre-Confederation history of the Atlantic Provinces, for instance, has little connection with that of the Canadas, and it is therefore given in the provincial section. The same is true of British Columbia.

Although the normal historical order is followed as closely as possible, the work is arranged on topical rather than on chronological lines. This makes it possible and convenient to institute comparisons, if desired, between one province and another in the same matter. Thus it will be seen that the work may serve the reader in a variety of ways: (1) as a general history of Canada, (2) as a special history of any one of the provinces, (3) as a comparative history of similar institutions in the different provinces, or (4) as an independent study of any leading historical topic relating to Canada. For specific events or facts the General Index will supply a full and ready guide. The Documentary Notes in the final volume will traverse the text of the narratives and cite authorities.

The average citizen cannot be expected to know the story of his country in every detail, but he should know its outstanding events, personalities and tendencies, while those who are creating and guiding public opinion should have at their command at all times the fullest possible information for use as each new occasion may demand. With knowledge, the prejudice and narrowness of sectionalism give way to an enlightened patriotism which vibrates to the sentiment of nationality and holds high above all else the welfare of the whole commonwealth. For these and other reasons the preparation of a comprehensive history of Canada at the present time may be regarded as a contribution to the development of the Dominion.

And so we'll embark on this series next week and I hope you'll take the time to scan through it. I intend to add one volume each week until complete.

The Flag in the Wind

This week's edition was compiled by Jennifer Dunn in which her main article is about Trident with an interesting article on the craft of knitting.

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

Electric Scotland

The Scottish Historical Review

We have now completed Volume 1 with the final 2 chapters and the Index.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/>

Songs from John Henderson

A new song this week...

'Wul Girse'
(Wild Grass)

Lyrics composed by John Henderson on the 25th Of December, 2012,
to Freeman's 1917 music for the song, 'My Little Rambling Rose'.

John's words in N.E. Doric are based on Rev. Henry Francis Lyte's poem, 'To A Blade Of Grass', written in biblical English c. 1830.
The Rev. Lyte, born in Ednam, Kelso, Scotland in 1795, is best known as the author of the words for the hymn, 'Abide With Me'.

Glossary:

sids=seeds; wur=were; sawn=sown; fun=found; biel=shelter; faar=where; airth=soil;
mochie=damp; wairm=warm; reets=roots; delt=dug; grupt=gripped; weel=well;
kep=keep; sheets=shoots; fae=from; hairm=harm; sin=sun; reyn=rain; tirn'd=turned;
cam=came; ilk=each; kibbler=stronger; tee=also; staun=stand; stark=bravely; abeen=above;
treids=treads; birs'd=pressed; fan=when; leukin=looking; hoomble=humble; plank=place;
ithers=others; wag=wave; maun=must; aft=often; weesh=wish; wurna=were not; rank=wild;
jist=just; hag=brushwood; kennelt=colourful; nae=not; twig=catch; ee=eye; waffs=odours;
raikin'=roving; moch=moth; wull=will; rist=rest; oan=on; brichter=brighter; ow'r=over;
sizzons=seasons; dee=die; aye=forever; bide=stay; rin=run; sich=such; lang=long; gien=given;
pairtricks=partridges; thur=their; spraikt=speckled; kin=family; fesh=bring; coorin'=cowering;
wames=bellies; meese=mice; fyle=while; happin'=covering; livrocks=skylarks; hames=homes;
hungert=hungry; kye=cows; saft=soft; nicht=night; lammies=young lambs; dicht=wipe; dyow=dew;
clair=clear; sicht=sight; howp=hope; wauk=walk; by=past; airn=earn; seen=soon; guid=good;
freen=friend; spyack; fur=because; shawn=shown; vailyit=valued; wul=wild; girse=grass.

Brief Introductory Music

Yer sids wur sawn an' fun a biel
Faar airth wis mochie wairm;
Yer reets delt doon an' syne grupt weel
Tae kep yer sheets fae hairm.
Wi' sin an' reyn ye tirn'd tae green
Cam ilk day kibbler tee
Tae staun-up stark tae winds abeen
An' treids birs'd doon oan ye.

Fan leukin roon yer hoomble plank,
Tho' ithers at ye wag,
Ye maun aft weesh ye wurna rank
Jist like a bit o' hag.
Kennelt ye're nae tae twig the ee;
Nae waffs tae lure a raikin' bee;
Nae e'en a moch or butterflye
Wull tak a rist oan ye.

Fyle brichter floo-ers o' the sin
Ow'r sizzons droop an' dee,
Ye aye bide green as time dis rin,
Sich lang life God's gien ye.
The pairtricks wi' thur spraikt bird kin
Fesh ye thur coorin' wames,
Tae them an' meese ye're welcomin'
Fyle happin' livrocks' hames.

Ye feed'st the hungert kye by day,
Ye're thur saft bed at nicht;
The lammies in thur mornin' play
Dicht dyow tae clair yer sicht.
I howp, fyle ithers wauk oan by,
Tae airn ye seen as ma guid freen;
Fur fae the spyack ye've shawn aye
I've vailyit wul girse green.

'To A Blade Of Grass'
by
Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)
Composer of the words for, 'Abide With Me'.

Poor little twinkler in the sun,
That liftest here thy modest head,
For every breeze to blow upon,
And every passing foot to tread;

The loneliest waste, the humblest bower,
Content in homely green to dress,
And wear away thy little hour
In meek unheeded usefulness;

No hues of thine attract the eye,
No sweets allure the roving bee,
Nor deigns the dainty butterfly
To rest his wing on lowly thee.

All undistinguished and forgot.
Among the myriads of thy kind,
The moral of thy tranquil lot
Thou wastest on the idle wind.

Be mine, while others pass thee by,
To win and wear thee in my strain;
And from thy gentle teaching try
A lesson for my heart to gain.

While brighter children of the sun
With altering seasons droop and die,
I see thee green and gladsome run
Through all the changes of the sky.

Where vegetative life begins,
Thy little flag is first unfurled,
And marks the empire Nature wins
From desolation round the world.

Yes; Nature claims thee for her own;
Her thousand children house with thee:
An insect world, to eye unknown
Peoples thy coverts blithe and free.

The partridge, 'midst her speckled brood,
Leans upon thee her cowering breast;
Thou giv'st the field-mouse home and food;
Thou curtain'st round the skylark's nest.

Thou feed'st the honest steer by day,
Thou strew'st at night his open bed;
The young lamb, in his morning play
Strikes down the dewdrop from thy head.

Oh, ever pleasing, ever plain,
Creation's goodly household vest !
By thee is fringed the ruined fane,
By thee the poor man's grave is drest.

The pilgrim of the sandy waste,
The roamer of the long, long sea,

The sick-room's or the dungeon's guest --
'Tis his, 'tis his, to value thee.

Green soother of the burning eye,
Thou speak'st of sweet and simple things--
Of freedom, health, and purity,
And all that buxom Nature brings.

Be mine to dwell with her, with thee;
At eventide the fields to roam;
My God among His works to see,
And call my wandering spirit home:

And, while I view the Hand that tends
Ten thousand worlds, so kind to thee,
To feel that He, who so descends,
Will not o'erlook a worm like me.

You can read more of John's songs mostly in the Doric language at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Sir David Brewster

We continue to add chapters and this week have added...

Chapter XIV - Notes of Life in 1852-3

Chapter XV - Notes of Life in 1854-55

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

Old Scottish Customs

By E. J. Guthrie (1885)

Have now completed this book and you can read the concluding chapters at:

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

Some Reminiscences and the Bagpipe

By Alexander Duncan Fraser

Now adding chapters most days and now have up...

Chapter I — Introductory

Chapter II — Introductory

Chapter III — Introductory

Chapter IV — A Well-Abused Instrument

Chapter V — The Critics and the Bagpipe

Chapter VI — A Royal Instrument

Chapter VII — The Why and the Wherefore

Chapter VIII — Wanted: A Book on the Bagpipe

In the chapter "A Well-Abused Instrument" we read...

NO musical instrument has been subjected to so much hostile criticism as the Great Highland Bagpipe.

No musical instrument has been so often made the butt of the heavy after-dinner wits!

Men, in whom the sense of humour seems entirely wanting, waken up on the first mention of the word Bagpipe, feeling that their reproach is about to be taken from them—now they will show that they too are possessed of a nice wit—and nine out of ten such answer the simple question "Do you like the Bagpipe?" with, "Oh, yes! I like the Bagpipe at a distance." The long pause after Bagpipe punctuates the wit, and prepares for the laughter that always follows.

Is this sort of thing not becoming a little stale?

You can the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/bagpipe/chapter04.htm>

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

Harry Lauder

We have added more of his songs for you to listen to at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/henderson/lauder>

Songs Of Scotland, Prior To Burns

This book is by Robert Chambers who is famous for collecting old Scottish Songs. His publishing house produced numerous very important works many of which he authored himself. On the page for this book is a biography of him along with another song book he published.

We are adding individual songs in pdf format so you can print them out. As each song provides the sheet music, words and notes about the song it should be of great help to anyone wanting to play these. To date we have up...

The Flowers of the Forrest
Lament of the Border Widow
Gilderoy
General Leslie's March to Longmarston Moor
Never Love Thee More
You're Welcome Whiggs
The Battle of and Braes of Killicrankie
Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation!
The Wee, Wee German Lairdie
The Piper O' Dundee
Carle, An The King Come!

You can get to this book at the foot of the page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/chambers_robert.htm

Scenes and Stories of the North of Scotland

By John Sinclair (1890)

A new book we're starting.

This book has been written with a three-fold aim : to awaken interest, to stimulate, and to amuse. Here is how Chapter 1 starts which will give you a flavour of what you can expect...

It may not perhaps be wise to begin my book by rubbing the fur of some readers the wrong way, but justice to my subject and to my own intense convictions leave me no choice.

Do you know Loch Duich? Hundreds answer, Yes. Then I am sure you will bid others listen while I tell my story. On the other hand, thousands upon thousands answer, No. Then you have not yet seen a Scottish sea-loch, which, for interest and attractiveness, has few rivals; some would even say, no equal. Allow me a word or two with the hundreds. They very promptly answered, Yes; but I am doubtful of some of them. Will you kindly step into the witness box, one of you, please? Thank you. Now, sir, you say you know Loch Duich? Yes. Have you sailed up its waters? No, I have not. Have you walked around its shores? No, not exactly. Have you ever spent a night within hearing of its ripple? I cannot say I have. Have you ever seen the Five Sisters of Kintail? No; who or what are they? So ho! you, sir, have turned questioner now; please don't ask me in the meantime; I shall introduce you to the ladies by-and-bye. Before you leave the box, will you allow me to guess the history and amount of your knowledge of Loch Duich? You were going north or coming south by one of Mr Macbrayne's excellent fleet of steamers. She came up Loch Alsh, and swung round for perhaps twenty minutes off a small pier called Totaig. There you were almost in Loch Duich, but not quite. It is as if you leant your shoulder against the right-hand door-post, and then told me you knew the house. The claim is absurd; and as you have confessed never to have seen the inmates—who are never away from home—you may go down. So the process of cross-examination might go on with one and another and another; and in the end not more than five out of each hundred would be found, in any worthy sense, to know Loch Duich.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scenes/chapter01.htm>

The book index page is at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scenes/>

Social Life in the Highlands in Olden Times

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

It is unfortunate that so little has been written about the Highlands by natives of the country, who being acquainted with the state of

society and manners, would be able to give an intelligent and unbiassed account of the social condition of the country in the past, and not left us dependent upon what has been written by strangers, many of whom were prejudiced, and who, even though they would have been incline to treat us fairly, could hardly have done so from their want of knowledge of the language, customs, and institutions of the people. That there were many Highlanders even at a remote period who could have done so, there is not any doubt, for, though there were no schools of learning in the country previous to the Reformation, many of the Highland youth of good families got a fair education in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and some went abroad, even to France and Italy. Martin, who wrote an account of his tour to the 'Western Isles about the end of the seventeenth century, says that he was not only the first native, but the first who travelled in these islands, to write a description of them. He makes a complaint which might very well be repeated at the present day, "That the modern itch after knowledge of foreign places is so prevalent, that the generality of mankind bestow little thought or time upon the place of their own nativity." and adds, "It is become customary in those of quality to travel young, into foreign countries, while they are absolute strangers at home."

You can read this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/social_highlands.htm

The Robertsons of Inshes

An article from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

The Robertsons of Inshes were honourably connected with the burgh and parish of Inverness for over four hundred years. Through the kindness of the last proprietor, Mr Arthur John Robertson, known as " The Laird" so well in and about Inverness, I was favoured many years ago with the perusal and liberty of fairing some notes from the singularly well kept papers of the family. In their papers the family took great pride, and had them looked over by several antiquarians, such as the late Mr Alexander Mackenzie of Woodside, Mr George Anderson, and others. Mr Arthur Robertson, grandfather of the late laird, was a frequent correspondent of the well-known collector, a century ago, General Hutton, some of whose papers connected with Inverness and the North are in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/inshes.htm>

The 18th Century Scottish Origins of Washington, DC

Early Scots in Georgetown and Washington City: Implications for Our Society By John King Bellasai.

Introduction

When I first came to Washington from Texas in 1965, it was to attend Georgetown University as an undergraduate student. Georgetown University was founded in 1789—the same year the US Constitution was ratified—and is located on the heights adjacent to what was then the Maryland side of the Potomac River—at a fording point right above where Key Bridge now stands. So Georgetown University's history has always been entwined with that of Georgetown itself and the early years of the American Republic.

I studied history and government (political science) at Georgetown University and for a number of years lived in Georgetown. Always interested in my Scottish roots (my maternal grandfather had emigrated to the USA from Stirlingshire in 1910), I soon became keenly aware of the Scottish origins of Georgetown and of the remnants of its Scottish foundations in the form of the many great mansion houses still standing in Georgetown which had been built by Scottish merchants in the years just before and just after the American Revolution.

Oddly, the Scottish origins of Georgetown, and of Washington, DC generally, are little known in the ranks of our Society—this in contrast to the fact that the Scottish origins of Alexandria, located right across the Potomac River, are well known to all of us. This article has been written in part to redress this imbalance and to acquaint our general membership with some very interesting facts concerning the Scottish origins of Georgetown and of Washington City.

You can read this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/scots_origins.htm

Fauns and Fairies

An article from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Since the day on which the Rev. Robert Kirk, minister at Aberfoil, "went to his own herd," in 1692, our knowledge of fairies has made no appreciable advance. When men ceased to prosecute witches and burn them, the traditions of the past were by mutual consent forgotten, and the prevalent type of Christianity put curious prying into the unknown under a ban. So it happened that during the latter half of the seventeenth, and the whole of the eighteenth century Scotland, forgot its folk-lore. Old stories with a spice of Paganism were deemed unsuited for grave and sober Presbyterian households. Even the cherished traditions of the Roman Catholic church were regarded as something more than harmless superstition, and treated accordingly. In odd corners the older folk-lore stories remained. Men could tell tales of battle where other heroes than the Great Twin Brothers led the van, and record, with minute amplification of circumstance, scenes of midnight carouse and revel, at which immortals appeared and claimed the service and homage of those whose spirits were congenial to the forgotten cult. Gradually the beliefs or superstitions of Christianity displaced the ancestral spirits from their sylvan homes, and substituted a kind of personal devil, clad in bull hide and smelling evilly of brimstone, thus transforming

beautiful legends and stories of folk-lore of untold value into grotesque representations of a Christianity little understood and rarely practised.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/fauns.htm>

Strathspey Raid to Elgin in 1820

An article from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

Elgin and the rich agricultural plains of Moray afforded abundant spoil to Highland caterans and rieviers in the days when

“Sweeping faulds and tooming of the glen
Had still been held the deeds of honest men.”

On the 3rd of July, 1402, Alexander Macdonald, third son of the Lord of the Isles, with a band of his many followers, plundered the Cathedral, as well as many of the private houses, and returned home rich with the spoils of the burgh. Nearly three hundred years later, in 1691, the Clan Grant organised a cattle-lifting expedition, and made a descent into the valley of Dallas and the neighbouring districts of Pluscarden and Duffus. Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, on hearing of the raid, gathered a few of his retainers and overtook the Strathspey men as they were driving the criach on the heights above Knockando. Sir Robert demanded by what authority they acted in plundering and robbing the tenantry under cloud of night. “By order of the Laird of Grant,” replied the leader. “I cannot believe that,” said Sir Robert, “unless you show me his writing.” “Here it is, then,” again answered the leader of the expedition, handing a letter to the Baronet, who immediately turned his horse, rode off to Edinburgh, produced the letter, and obtained decree against the Laird of Grant for the whole amount of his losses.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/moray/nairn08.htm>

Selections from the family papers of the MacKays of Bighouse

Taken from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness

Consisting Mainly of Letters Addressed to John Campbell of Barcaldine, some time one of the Government Factors on the Forfeited Estates after the '45.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/mackay4.htm>

And finally...

Positively Negative

With the crucial Georgia v Scotland game now only a day away, the mood of Tartan Army supporters was probably best summed up by the T-shirt worn by a fan at the Ukraine game which bore the slogan:

"I can handle the despair - it's the optimism I can't stand."

Here's Tae Ewe

A GAEL attending the National Mod in Fort William was telling fellow contestants that he and other Western Isles crofters had their own website, Heatherislemeat, selling mutton over the internet.

The difficulty, he added, was getting the website some publicity.

"Could you not put it on EweTube?" asked a listener.

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

Alastair