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GENEALOGY
HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORY
HUMOR
JOHN'S PAGE
KIDS
LIFESTYLE
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
RELIGION
ROBERT BURNS
SCOTS IRISH
SCOTS REGIMENTS
SERVICES

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHATS NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for November 1st, 2013

CONTENTS

Electric Scotland News
Electric Canadian
The Barren Ground of Northern Canada (New Book)
Philip Gray
Life in the Port of Vancouver 1999
The Flag in the Wind
Electric Scotland
The Scottish Historical Review
Songs Of Scotland, Prior To Burns
Enigma Machine
Leaves from the Journal
Merchant's Guide to Stirling & District
Lord Charles Neaves
Scotland, Picturesque: Historical: Descriptive
David Herschell Edwards - Modern Poets
Robert Louis Stevenson
Songs by John Henderson
Henry Dundas, Scots Guards, a Memoir
Christine McKelvie's Column
Scottish independence: Country would leave EU
Video update on Electric Scotland
Stories by Abigail Leskey
Hybrid of Scots Shinty and Irish Hurling created
Beth's Newfangled Family Tree
Parish Papers
and finally



Electric Scotland News

I was looking at the Scottish Review web site this week and note that they have changed to a weekly edition. I also noted that they are now doing a pdf file for each month and that they keep the last few months on the site as a free download. As they do cover an interesting range of topics you might look at downloading these as they do make an interesting read. You can get to them at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/AnthologyArchive.shtml>

I was just finishing last night as it hit midnight and thought I'd have a look at the top dozen pages visitors were looking at before I packed in for the night and here is the list...

Robert Burns - The Works of Robert Burns
Cherokee Rose: On Rivers of Golden Tears
Nether Lochaber
Robert Stirling
Balcarres
Parish Life in the North of Scotland
Stewartsville Cemetery
Children's Stories - Stories with Animals
Children's Stories - Bear...like honey, but not bees

Children's Stories - Blowing Bubbles
Children's Stories - Three Hungry Rats
William Wallace

An interesting wee selection of pages folk were looking at at midnight EST. It also reinforces the fact that our children's stories are very popular.

Another book review for you...

SEARCH FOR TEMPLAR GOLD

By Alex Wilson

[Kindle Edition] \$9.99.

503 Pages

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00G9FG2Z2>

The book is a novel set in Leith, near Edinburgh, Scotland and is of the Dan Brown genre but much more fascinating.

The greatest corporation the medieval world ever knew, was that of the Knights Templar. Spectacularly wealthy, far beyond that of individual Kings and Emperors they amassed over the few centuries of their existence, not only the wealth of nations, but the ire of many of the crowned heads of Europe, deeply in debt to this organization which paid no taxes and was beyond the reach of even, the Church. The Templar's could have lasted for many centuries more, but for the evil intent of King Phillip the Fair of France, who plotted with the Pope, their downfall.

Sensing the end of their 'empire' the Templar's sought out a safe refuge for their many treasures, not all of them in the form of gold. Scotland, on the periphery of Europe and helped by the fact that their King, Robert the Bruce had been excommunicated by the Catholic Church after murdering his cousin in a church.

Leith at this time, was the pre-eminent Templar port in northern Europe. It was here that the contents of the Paris Treasury was relocated to a safe haven, far from prying eyes.

The vast treasure lay undisturbed for century after century expertly secreted away, out of sight, out of mind. Eventually, the Templar's realized that the treasure would be recovered but not until circumstances or technology, allowed for such an event.

The book begins with an unusual climatic condition which resulted in the catastrophic destruction of an ancient house, falling masonry revealing an underground pit wherein lay an artifact, key to the rediscovery of the treasure.

The young boy who makes the discovery is no ordinary kid. He lives in Leith in no ordinary family. His father is 'works for the government' and arriving home, helps his son uncover the meaning of the symbols decorating the artifact.

By seeking 'professional' help in this matter they set off a chain reaction of latent interest in this revelation that has been waiting in the wings for centuries, for just this moment.

The exploits of the family take them to London and Cyprus, the action moves to Beirut and back again to Cyprus. With the boy's father taking on a greater role in the story, the scene moves to Geneva where a further revelation sees the book move to France before heading to Edinburgh.

There are a further set of circumstances which see's the United States being drawn into the narrative. However, the action doesn't move to the United States, the United States comes to the action in the form of the world's largest battleship, the Nimitz class carrier, USS. Abraham Lincoln.

The arrival of this great battleship in Leith totally transforms the fortunes of the exploration and it is only with the able assistance of the U.S. Navy that the whole enterprise succeeds.

There is indeed treasure to find. Gold to the value of ¼ Trillion \$'s that is \$250.000.000.000.00. Hidden in Leith.

Treasure in other forms too, the 'rescued' balance of the Dead Sea Scrolls which the Templar's had 'removed' from the remains of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem and perhaps, the most important relic of all, the Holy of Holies.

Could it be that they discover hidden for all these years just outside Edinburgh the --- Ark of the Covenant?. The book reveals all!

My first two chapters concentrates on telling the story of the family all of whom, are integral to the progress of the story. My historical research, which was conducted prior to writing the book, is drip fed into the story, throughout.

I trust it is as exciting a read as it was to write. Packed full of local interest certainly, I hope it's parochial nature will transcend the potential readership and reveal for them the often ignored great history we have on our doorstep.

I'm sure that the great Scottish diaspora will also find it interesting, if not the world as a whole?.

As the author relates it... The book is a fictional account of the adventures of a young Leith boy and his family who discovers an ancient artifact and in the desire to understand the significance of the item embarks on an adventure all around Europe. It was the best way I could articulate all the amazing stuff I discovered about Leith's history that doesn't appear in history books. Time will tell if this was the best way to bring such a great story to the public.

I know Alex quite well as we've corresponded on a number of occasions. He wrote a most interesting article on the ancient Flag of Leith which can be read at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/leith_flag.htm

He then produced "A Potted History of the Flag of the Port of Leith" which you can also read at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/leith_flag2.htm

Alex is an ex-pat Scot who having arrived back in Edinburgh from Southern California, he happened to land a job at the famous Vaults. It was this that triggered an interest into this most historical of buildings and spawned the origins of the book. Research in local history books and many visits to the local library's failed to extract the information now available in this book. Omission of this most important component of Leith's history is the fault of lack of interconnectivity, nothing else. No-one sought to join all the dots until now. The Author is semi-retired and working on a Timeline History of Leith which will be published in early 2014.

I'd hoped that we'd have managed to upgrade our Electric Scotland Community by last weekend but I'm afraid Steve still hasn't managed it. I guess he's feeling a bit guilty about this as he's now not answering his phone so just getting the answering machine. Hope he might manage it this weekend but time will tell.

Electric Canadian

The Barren Ground of Northern Canada

By Warburton Pike (1917) and this is a new book we're starting with a chapter per day added to the site.

As the author says in his Preface...

The success of my expedition is to be attributed entirely to the assistance which was given me by the Hudson's Bay Company, and I take this opportunity of thanking them for all the hospitality that was shown to me throughout my journey; I was never refused a single request that I made, and, although a total stranger, was treated with the greatest kindness by everybody, from the Commissioner at Winnipeg to the engaged servant in the Far North. My thanks are especially due to Lord Anson, one of the directors in London, to Messrs. Wrigley and William Clark at Winnipeg, Mr. Roderick MacFarlane, lately of Stuart's Lake, British Columbia, a well-known northern explorer who put me in the way of making a fair start, Dr. Mackay of Athabasca, Mr. Camsell of Mackenzie River, Mr. Ewen Macdonald of Peace River, and most of all to Mr. Mackinlay of Fort Resolution on the Great Slave Lake, who was my companion during a long summer journey in the Barren Ground.

You can read this book as we get in up at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/nwt/barren/index.htm>

Philip Gray

A gifted & brave WW2 pilot, author and friends to many around the world.

You can read about him at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/philip_gray.htm

Life in the Port of Vancouver 1999

A video documentary of the Port which you can view at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/bc/port_vancouver.htm

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Clare Adamson.

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

Electric Scotland

The Scottish Historical Review

We are on Volume 13 and have now added the October 1915 issue. You can get to this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/volume13.htm>

There is an interesting article on "The Theory of the Scots Burgh".

Also another article, "An Aberdeen Professor of the Eighteenth Century"

The subject of this Memoir, Professor John Leslie, did not aim at personal distinction, and left no writings to perpetuate his memory. He was contented to remain a teacher in the best sense of the word to make it his mission to instil into others his own love and reverence for learning. His letters show that he numbered among his friends such men as Robertson the historian, 'Jupiter' Carlyle, Colin Maclaurin the mathematician and Robert Foulis of the Glasgow University Printing Press. Letters written to Leslie by these and other men afford interesting glimpses of Social Life, not only at King's College, Aberdeen, but in the wider circle of friends among whom he moved.

You can read the previous issues at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/>

Songs Of Scotland, Prior To Burns

This book is by Robert Chambers who is famous for collecting old Scottish Songs.

Added another three songs...

Sae Merry As We Twa Ha'e Been!

Johnie's Gray Breeks

Shame Fa' The Gear

You can get to this book at the foot of the page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/chambers_robert.htm

Enigma Machine

This is where we are publishing this set of puzzles created by Doug Ross which can now be found in Doctor's Surgeries, Old Folks Homes, etc.

Added Enigma Machine 38 puzzle which you can get to at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma038.htm>

The other puzzles we've already published can be found at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/index.htm>

I might add that if you follow the Enigma Machine thread in our Community you can work with others on figuring out each puzzle.

You can get to these messages at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forumdisplay.php/17-Thistle-amp-Whistle>

Hugh posts each new puzzle in there and then by the end of the week will provide the answers and then add the next one. He also gives the odd hint to help you solve the puzzle.

Leaves from the Journal

From our life in the Highlands from 1848 to 1861 (1868)

We're now on her second book and this week added chapters on...

A Second Christening 1 Nov 1868

Widow Grant 22 Aug 1869

Visit to Invertrossachs 1 Sept 1869

Sheep Clipping 13 June 1870

Betrothal of Princess Louise to the Marquis of Lome 3 Oct 1870

Communion Sunday at Crathie 13 Nov 1871
The "Spate" 11 June 1872

Widow Grant 22 Aug 1869

On Sunday, August 22, 1869, I went to see old Mrs. Grant, whom I was grieved to see sitting in her chair supported by pillows, and her poor feet raised upon cushions, very much altered in her face, and, I fear, dying of dropsy.

On August 26 I again saw her, and gave her a shawl and a pair of socks, and found the poor old soul in bed, looking very weak and very ill, but bowing her head and thanking me in her usual way. I took her hand and held it.

On the 27th she died.

On the 28th I stopped at her cottage and went in with Louise and Leopold. We found all so clean and tidy, but all so silent. Mrs. Gordon, her daughter, was there, having arrived just in time to spend the last evening and night with her; and then she lifted the sheet, and there the poor old woman, whom we had known and seen from the first here these twenty-one years, lay on a bier in her shroud, but with her usual cap on, peaceful and little altered, her dark skin taking away from, the usual terrible pallor of death. She had on the socks I gave her the day before yesterday. She was in her eighty-ninth year.

You can read these at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/leaves/>

Merchant's Guide to Stirling & District
You can find this book towards the foot of our History of Stirlingshire page.

This week I added the chapters on...

Murray Place (continued)
The Old Bridge

You can get to this book which we'll be adding to over the next few weeks at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/stirlingshire>

Lord Charles Neaves
Added three more of his poems...

The Sons of the Manse (Hope Ranald enjoys this one!)
Song Sung At The Symposium of 1840
Song at the Symposium on Maga, 1841

You can view these at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/neaves_charles.htm

Scotland, Picturesque: Historical: Descriptive
This is a book we're serialising from the author of Historical Tales of the Wars of Scotland And of the Border Raids, Forays and Conflicts by John Parker Lawson (1839)

You need to scroll down the page to get to this book where we've now added...

Edinburgh: The Old City (continued)

You can get to this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/wars/>

David Herschell Edwards
His 16 volumes of modern Scottish Poets is probably the most massive collection of poetry by anyone in the world and it's all about Scots poets which makes it all the more amazing. Each volume portrays around 100 poets and each poet has their own wee biography, a critical assessment and a few examples of their poetry.

Added volume 9 this week.

You can get to this at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/edwards_david.htm

Robert Louis Stevenson
A weekly serialisation of this intimate two volume biography of Robert Louis Stevenson by his cousin Graham Balfour.

Added this week...

Chapter VI. Life at Five and Twenty 1873 - 76

You can read this chapter towards the foot of the page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/rlstevenson.htm>

Songs by John Henderson
John sent in a new song, Old Steam Trains which you can read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel519.htm>

Henry Dundas, Scots Guards, a Memoir
This record of the life of a dearly-loved son I dedicate to his Mother. Only those who have known them can realise to the full the wonderful relationship that was theirs. He knew well the extent of his debt to her; and the intensity of his love for her is the measure of her loss.

Almost completed this book with only the final chapter to go.

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

Christine McKelvie's Column
Added her column for 29th October 2013 which you can read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/mckelvie/131029.htm>

Scottish independence: Country would leave EU
SCOTLAND would automatically leave the European Union if it split from the United Kingdom, Foreign Secretary William Hague said today.

You can read this article and an interesting comment by Dr James Wilkie at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/131029.htm>

Video update on Electric Scotland
Thought I'd do a wee video of what I've been working on recently on Electric Scotland. You can view this at:
<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/4192-Update-on-Electric-Scotland-as-at-October-2013>

Stories by Abigail Leskey
A new young Scots American writer (15) who is launching her first book on the site called Sir William's Man for Aye.

When William Wallace takes up the sword against the Southron invaders, Kenneth has no hesitation about joining him, despite his uncle's belief that it will end in being hanged. After all, he has grown up alongside Wallace, who is his laird's son. Kenneth climbs out the window, and confidently heads off into more than he ever could have expected. Not all is as it appears. He will need all the courage and loyalty he has to contend with treachery and fate.

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/leskey>

I might add that if you enjoy her book you might add a comment to the book page to encourage her.

Hybrid of Scots Shinty and Irish Hurling created
A new chapter is being written in sporting history with the launch of a new hybrid game of Scottish Shinty and Irish Hurling, called Iomain. See the foot of the page for this article at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/sport/shinty1.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree
Got in section 1 of the November issue which you can read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

Parish Papers
By Norman MacLeod, D.D.

I've actually had this book on my hard disk for some time and only now got around to adding it to the site under our Religious section. It is of course by a very famous Devine who was chaplain to Queen Victoria.

You can learn more about him at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/macleod/index.htm>

You can read his Parish Papers book at: http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/parish_papers.htm

And finally...

Weak Excuse

A 91 year-old regular in Ayr's Brig Bar, visited the doctor to tell him his right leg sometimes went a bit weak and he had difficulty walking.

The doctor examined him and said it appeared to be old age and the leg was getting tired - to which Davie replied that his left leg was the same age and did not cause him bother.

Success On A Plate

A former Glaswegian noticed while following the fortunes of the Texas A&M University American Football team from his wife's hometown of College Station, Texas, that they have a young 6ft 5in, 22st Offensive Guard whose standing in the community would be assured if he decided to settle in Scotland.

His name is Kirk Elder.

Frank suggests that his physical presence would be an even bigger asset there, particularly at church collection times.

This newsletter is going out early due to it being Halloween as last year I got some 63 wee ones calling for their Trick a Treat so looks like I'll be busy tonight.

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

Alastair