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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 16th, 2014

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

Thanks to the work of John Henderson, who is a retired Scots school teacher now living in Cyprus, we are now likely the largest site for Scottish Poetry. Over the years quite a few of our visitors have also sent in their own poems for us to post on the site as well.

John has also profiled poets with their genealogy and biography along with a collection of their poems. we're continuing to add more poetry collections and you'll see a new book of them below.

Got a new advertiser this week called The Celtic Croft. As they say on their site... The Celtic Croft has one of the largest selections of kilts, tartans, accessories, Clan Crests, Coat of Arms, Celtic jewelry, kilted skirts and decor to compliment your Scottish, Irish, and Welsh heritage. Family owned and operated in the USA.

See their site at <http://www.kilts-n-stuff.com/>

Scots MP's keep Westminster seats after referendum

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/scots-mp-s-keep-westminster-seats-after-referendum-1-3412798>

Worth a read and also the comments by Dr James Wikie below the article.

Electric Canadian

Muskoka Memories, Sketches from Real Life

By Ann Hathaway (1904)

We're now up to chapter XIV with this book which you can read at:

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

Nova Scotia Historical Society, Reports and Collections

I added Volume XVII 1913 which includes...

Notes of historical Tablets placed at various historical places in Nova Scotia. This includes the first Printing Press in Canada.

Papers, Memoir of the Life of the Honourable William Blowers Bliss, with portraits, by Hon. Sir Charles J. Townshend.

Notes on Thomas Williams of Annapolis Royal, with portraits, by James D. Ritchie.

A Short Note on the Yarmouth "Runic Stone," by Moses H. Nickerson with Illustrations.

Remarks on the Fletcher and Related Stones of Yarmouth, N. S., by Harry Piers.

The Fenwick Family in Nova Scotia, by Colonel G. C. Fenwick, Indian Army (retired.)

The Militia of Nova Scotia, 1749-1867, with portraits, by Major Joseph Plimson Edwards.

Early Reminiscences of Halifax, by Peter Lynch, Q. C.

"A Sketch of Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, a Member of the House of Assembly in the Thirties and Forties," with portraits, by George Mullane.

Notes on Several Governors and Their Influence, by Joseph Howe.

Statement Relative to the Introduction and History of Responsible Government in Nova Scotia, by Rev. E. M. Saunders, D. D.

Centennial Number of "Acadian Recorder," with portraits.

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

The Flag in the Wind

This week's issue was compiled by Clare Adamson where she talks about Project Fear or Project Feart? and there is a Synopsis this week.

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

Electric Scotland

Alexander Murdoch (1841-1891)

A Scottish Engineer, Poet, Author, Journalist

Added a third book called "Scotch Readings: Humorous and Amusing" and we're breaking this down into individual chapters for you to read. We've added two more chapters, "Jean Tamson's Love Hopes and Fears" and "The Amateur Phrenologist" which you can find at the foot of the page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/murdoch/index.htm>

I hope you have got around to reading these stories as while using Scots words they provide a mental picture that is quite unique.

Thomas Dick Lauder

Hope you are enjoying this book, "Lochandhu". Started on Volume 2 and you can find these at the foot of the page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/lauder_thomas1.htm

As this book was published in 1825 it is a great example of what interested Scots way back some 190 years ago.

Enigma Machine

Added puzzle 62 which you can get to at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma062.htm>

The Book of Scottish Anecdote

Humorous, Social, Legendary and Historical edited by Alexander Hislop, eighth edition.

Added pages 402 to 451. You can read these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/anecdote>

Alan Cunningham

This distinguished poet entered the world under those lowly circumstances, and was educated under those disadvantages, which have so signally characterized the history of the best of our Scottish bards.

We've added the final chapters to the Life of Alan Cunningham.

You can read these at the foot of his page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/cunningham_allan.htm where we have also added "Songs: Chiefly in the Rural Language of Scotland" which is another of his books.

Life Sketches from Scottish History of Brief Biographies of the Scottish Presbyterian Worthies

We have now completed this book.

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

The Northern Highlands in the Nineteenth Century

Some years ago I published the 2 volumes in this set. Well I have now found a third volume is now available and so have started to work on this.

In Scotland 1843 is memorable as the year of the Disruption, which has had so much effect on the ecclesiastical and religious life of the country, especially of the Highlands. In other respects also the year was marked by excitement and agitation. On 21st January, Mr Drummond, private secretary to Sir Robert Peel, was shot by a man named Macnaughten, who mistook him for Peel. The disorders in Ireland assumed unusual violence. There was a vehement revival of the agitation for the repeal of the Union and a sudden rise of the repeal rent from £500 to £3000 a-week. Daniel O'Connell, the popular Irish leader, and in the eyes of Britain "the great beggar-man," addressed monster meetings, and was ultimately prosecuted on a charge of high treason. He was convicted of sedition, but the judgment broke down on appeal to the House of Lords.

Distress increased in the United Kingdom owing to a series of deficient harvests and the operation of the Corn Laws. In the House of Commons Lord Howick moved for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the prevailing distress. The discussion turned on the Corn Laws, and Sir Jas. Graham and Mr Gladstone admitted the soundness of the principles of free trade, but pleaded for the continuance of protection to agriculture on the ground of the interests which had grown up under it. The motion for inquiry was defeated by a majority of 115 (306 to 191). Mr Villiers made himself conspicuous by advocating the entire repeal of the Corn Laws.

The Tractarian movement in England had been going on for some time. In 1843 Dr Pusey was suspended for two years from preaching before the University of Oxford, on account of his views on the Eucharist.

You can read this issue at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/highlands/3no2.htm>

Henry Dryerre
Compositor, Poet, Journalist and Musician.

Now added the following stories...

Old Doctor Lunan
Bailie Steven, Blairgowrie
Old John, Blairgowrie
Mrs Baxter-Mitchell
Robert Robertson

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

The Working Life of Christina McKelvie MSP
Got in her column for 11th May 2014.

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/mckelvie/140511.htm>

The Millers of Haddington, Dunbar and Dunfermline
A Record of Scottish Bookselling by W. J. Couper. A new book we're starting.

IT is curious that amid the multitude of books written on the history of British literature, little attention should have been given to the agencies by means of which the printed book reached the hands of those for whom it was prepared. Booksellers and bookselling have been almost entirely neglected. "No great trade," says Mr. Augustine Birrell, "has an obscurer history than the book trade. It seems to lie choked in mountains of dust which it would be suicidal to disturb. Men have lived from time to time of literary skill—Dr. Johnson was one of them—who had knowledge, extensive and peculiar, of the traditions and practices of 'the trade,' as it is proudly styled by its votaries; but nobody has ever thought it worth while to make record of his knowledge, which accordingly perished with him, and is now irrecoverably lost." Books like those of Charles Knight, Curwen, and Mr. Frank A. Mumby have done something to remove the reproach. Monographs on isolated periods and workers have appeared, and there is much promise in the patient researches of the learned societies devoted to the history of book production. But on the whole the field is practically unworked.

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

Songs by John Henderson
John sent in a new song, Banknock Schule in The 1940s.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel536.htm>

Also another one, Johnny and Jessie, which you can read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel535.htm>

Wrights of Glasgow
We already had a wee book up about them and have now added another two one of which I scanned in myself.

You can get to these at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/wrights.htm>

Roddy Gow OBE

Added a profile of Roddy Gow, Chairman and Founder of the Asia Scotland Institute.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/asia/gow.htm>

Radical Scotland for Independence

A report on the Inverness meeting which you can read at

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/4408-Subject-Radical-Scotland-for-Independence>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in the June issue section 1 which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

Dictionary of National Biography

I created a page with links to download all 63 volumes. A great reference resource.

I was reading a book about the early years of the Scots Guards. In it I was reading that the author noted two of the people associated with the Scots Guards deserved to be far better known and he mentioned that the work "Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen" has nothing on either of them. He did note that there were bios on them in the Dictionary of National Biography.

It is for this reason that I decided to create this page so you can easily find information on a person that might not be available elsewhere.

You can get to this page with links to all 63 volumes at

http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/national_biography.htm

And Finally...

More from the Book of Scottish Anecdote...

JOCK AND TAM GORDON

These were natural sons of Sir Adam Gordon, who was killed at the battle of Homildon Hill, in 1401, by Elizabeth Crookshank, daughter of the laird of Aswanley. They were great heroes in their time, and tradition still speaks of them. Many of the families of the name of Gordon are descended from them; whilst the name of the noble family of Gordon are Gordons only by the female side, the legitimate daughter of Sir Adam Gordon having been married to a baron of the name of Seaton, who assumed the name of Gordon. Tam Gordon was at last killed by a monk, and his monument is in the Kirk of Ruthven, in Banffshire.

LOCAL CUSTOMS AT GALSTON

It is usual for even the women to attend funerals in the village, drest in black or red cloaks. Another singular custom prevails here:-

When a young man wishes to pay his addresses to his sweetheart, instead of going to her father's, and professing his passion, he goes to a public-house; and, having let the landlady into the secret of his attachment, the object of his wishes is immediately sent for, who never almost refuses to come. She is entertained with ale and whisky, or brandy; and the marriage is concluded on.

The second day after the marriage, a creeling, as it is called, takes place. The young wedded pair, with their friends, assemble in a convenient spot. A small creel or basket is prepared for the occasion, into which they put some stones: the young men carry it alternately, and allow themselves to be caught by the maidens, who have a kiss when they succeed. After a great deal of innocent mirth and pleasantry, the creel falls at length to the young husband's share, who is obliged to carry it generally for a long time, none of the young women having compassion upon him. At last, his fair mate, kindly relieves him from his burden; and her compliance, in this particular, is considered as a proof of her satisfaction with the choice she has made. The creel goes round again; more merriment succeeds, and all the company dine together, and talk oyer the feats of the field.

A HINT WELL APPLIED

"If I'm no hame frae that pairty at ten o'clock the nicht," said a husband to his wife, "dinna sit up for me." That I winna John," said she, significantly, "but I'll come for ye." John reached home before the parlour clock had chimed ten.

CHIEF O' SCOTIA'S FOOD

The common people live on oatmeal porridge twice a-day. It is the most wholesome and palatable of all their food, being purely vegetable; notwithstanding the reflection in 'Johnson's Dictionary', that "oats are eaten by horses in England, and in Scotland by men." Such food makes men strong like horses, and purges the brain of pedantry. It produces hardy Highlanders, who by their strength and dress are so formidable to their enemies, that they call them "Les diables des Montagnes."

THE MAIDEN FEAST

It was, till very lately; the custom to give what was called a Maiden Feast, upon the finishing of the harvest; and to prepare for which, the last handful of corn reaped in the field was called the Maiden. This was generally contrived to fall into the hands of one of the finest girls in the field; was dressed up in ribands, and brought in triumph, With the music of fiddles or bagpipes. A good dinner was given to the whole band, and the evening spent in joviality and dancing, while the fortunate lass who took the Maiden was the Queen of the feast: after which, this handful of corn was dressed out, generally in the form of a cross, and hung up, with the date of the year, in some conspicuous part of the house. This custom is now entirely done away; and in its room, to each shearer is given sixpence and a loaf of bread. However, some farmers, when all their corns are brought in, give their servants a dinner, and a jovial evening, by way of Harvest Home.

THE "BLACK-WATCH" IN AMERICA

In 1756, when the 42d Regiment was sent out to America, and landed at New York, they were caressed by all sorts of men, particularly the Indians. On their march to Albany, the Indians flocked from all quarters to see the strangers, whom they believed to be of the same extraction with themselves; and, therefore, they received them as brothers.

And that's it for this week and I hope you all have a good weekend.

Alastair