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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 7th, 2015

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

This week we've been having major discussions with Simon Fraser University about hosting our web servers. As you may remember the plan is for me to preserve all the content on the site for future generations and SFU has agreed to inherit my sites and keep them available.

We are also reviewing electricscotland.org where we have our vbulletin community. There is actually a lot of content on that site but it's not being used that much so we're trying to decide what we might do with it. Several hundred use it each week to view our newsletter but other than that perhaps a half dozen actually post on a regular basis which is why we're trying to consider what we might do with it. Should you have any ideas please feel free to share them with me.

Ancient hillfort to be excavated in Lochaber

Archaeologists are preparing for the first ever excavation of an ancient hillfort in Lochaber. Dun Deardail was constructed on a prominent knoll on Sgorr Chalum, a hill overlooking the River Nevis in Glen Nevis. AOC Archaeology, which will lead volunteers in the dig, has described the site as "enigmatic". Little is known about the origins of the fort, who built it or when it was constructed. The first phase in a three-year project will examine the defences.

Read more about this at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-33751731>

Electric Canadian

Pan Am Games 2015

Stunning closing ceremony where Canada placed a close second after the USA with 217 medals. See

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoKNzyNeQ8o>

for a video of the event.

Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer for the last Fifty Years

Continuing to add more chapters to this book.

We are now up to Chapter XLII.

In this last chapter it starts...

My first step in public life was in 1848. I had leased from the heirs of the late Major Hartney (who had been barrack-master of York during its siege and capture by the American forces under Generals Pike and Dearborn in 1813) his house on Wellington street, opposite the rear of Bishop Strachan's palace. I thus became a resident ratepayer of the ward of St. George, and in that capacity contested the representation of the ward as councilman, in opposition to the late Ezekiel F. Whittemore, whose American antecedents

rendered him unpopular just then. As neither Mr. Whittemore nor myself resorted to illegitimate means of influencing votes, we speedily became fast friends--a friendship which lasted until his death. I was defeated after a close contest. Before the end of the year, however, Mr. Whittemore resigned his seat in the council and offered me his support, so that I was elected councilman in his stead, and held the seat as councilman, and afterwards as alderman, continuously until 1854, when I removed to Carlton, on the Davenport Road, five miles north-west of the city. The electors have since told me that I taught them how to vote without bribery, and certainly I never purchased a vote. My chief outlay arose from a custom--not bad, as I think--originated by the late Alderman Wakefield, of providing a hearty English dinner at the expense of the successful candidates, at the Shades Hotel, in which the candidates and voters on both sides were wont to participate. Need I add, that the company was jovial, and the toasts effusively loyal.

I thought purchasing such an excellent dinner was a good way to get votes and a lot less expensive than the billions spent by political parties in the USA!

You can read this at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/thompson/index.htm>

Enigma Machine

The whole collection can be found at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma>. We're currently working on puzzle 112

National Film Board of Canada

I came across them this week and found an excellent archive of old films and have taken the time to embed a few into our pages...

Joseph Howe, Tribune of Nova Scotia at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/howe/index.htm>

Lord Elgin: Voice of the People at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/lordelginndx.htm>

Alexander MacKenzie at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/makers/mackenzie11.htm>

Great Grand Mothers, This short film is an ode to the women who settled the Prairies at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/articles/ggmother.htm>

The Promised Land

This feature-length fiction, originally produced as a television miniseries and based on the novel *Nuages sur les brûlés* by Hervé Biron, explores the colonization of northern Quebec during the Depression-era 1930s. These historical dramas relive the toil, hardship and unexpected rewards of the pioneer. Folk singer Félix Leclerc appears in each episode. Part I: Encounters with the inhospitable wilderness while clearing a townsite. Part II: Struggles for leadership; log cabins are built and the women arrive. Part III: The dangers of frontier life: forest fire, accident, anxiety about bankruptcy, lack of tools, hard labour. Part IV: Big steps forward: the curé brings in teachers and is in turn presented with a new, though rough-hewn, church.

You can watch this film at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/index.htm>

I intend to do more research on their offering and see what else I can discover.

Electric Scotland

Stories in the Scottish Dialect

This is a collection of stories we're adding over time from the pen of Alexander (Black) Harley. We've added a section for these at the foot of his page. I can only say that this collection is outstanding and in my view a "must read".

We have now completed this book by adding the final 3 chapters which you can read at:

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

Lucy Bethia Colquhoun

Added Chapter XII. Wanted: A Hero to this book which you can read at:

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

I might add that the author mentions in this chapter about her publishing a book "Mr Smith" and have added a link to the book on the page. She also adds a comment about the book "The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopedea" and while she didn't think that much about the poems she clearly was highly impressed with the other content. As it happens we have a copy of that book available at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/scottishgallow.pdf>

John Lorne Campbell

Added a short bio of him and his wife to our Famous Scots section. They were Gaelic scholars and folklorists.

John Lorne Campbell of Canna was a Scottish patriot of unique stamp, a scholar of exceptional quality, and a generous friend to many both at home and beyond the shores of Scotland. You can read an account of him and his wife at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/campbell_johnlorne.htm

Wonder Tales from Scottish Myth and Legend

Added 2 videos on this topic one of which is a two part one to the page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/myths/index.htm>

Hylton Newsletter

Added newsletters 15 & 16 which now completes this story of their holiday to Scotland and the UK. You can view these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/indianapolis/index.htm>

Charles Randolph

Added this Shipbuilder and Philanthropist to our Famous Scots section. Our thanks to John Henderson for sending this to us.

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

Catherine Sinclair

Added this author to our Women in History section.

Her father was the originator of the "Statistical Account of Scotland" and her own book "Holiday House" broke the mould for the telling of children's stories and was popular for over a century and have provided a link to this book on the page.

You can read about her at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/women/wh61.htm>

Gary Gianotti

This is the researcher who is looking into the history of the Great Seals of the USA and is finding a whole lot of Scottish connections. He's added three more articles on his findings, "The US Great Seal is Bonnie Prince Charlie's Seal" which I've posted up as one page graphic and also another two articles "George Washington Inaugural Buttons-Heraldic Eagles-Misconception & Fallacy" and also "Design Origins of George Washington Inaugural Buttons Cipher Surface" which I've provided as links to the pdf articles. You can get to these at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/greatseal.htm>

I might add that this research reveals for the first time the major influence Scots had in the building of America and also could well have a major affect on the price of these buttons by increasing their value 10 fold.

Out of Gary's research many Scottish families have benefited by his research showing connections that were previously unknown.

Did the Flemings come from Flanders?

An article by F. Lawrence Fleming which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/fleming.html>

Scottish Studies at Simon Fraser University

Found a copy of their Fall 2014 newsletter which I've added to the foot of the page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/canada/sfu.htm>

Clan Leslie International

Got up their July 2015 newsletter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslieinti/index.htm>

Clan Munro Australia

Got in their August 2015 newsletter which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/munro/index.htm>

THE STORY

I thought I'd provide this story for you as having come through the Independence referendum I feel it serves to show how many Scots are living in England today... getting on for 1 million of the current generation. There are certainly many more Scots in England that are now considered to be English. Some of course have forgotten their Scottish roots but many have not. DNA studies of late also confirm this. I myself lived and worked in England for a number of years based in Coventry.

In some respects the SNP should really try to sit for English seats as they did many years ago when in the period 1790-1820 a staggering 130 Scots were MPs representing seats in England and Wales. Indeed there is a group of people in Northern England that want to join the Scots if Scotland went Independent. And of course the Scots used to rule Northumberland at one point in our history.

And so this story is designed to show how Scots can end up in England and hope you find it of interest.

Scotland/England migration

My great-grandmother Margaret Gordon and her sons were somewhat famous, or more properly infamous in Glasgow at the turn of the 19th century. Margaret sold second-hand clothes at Barrowland and was famous for knocking out a man with one punch.

My granddad Philip Brannan, (born in 1887) was the eldest of her three surviving sons, and he was a tall, red-haired, immensely powerful man. As a youth he was the leader of a razor gang, but later joined the army, where he put his fighting skills to better use by becoming a boxer, turning semi-professional. He married a local woman Susan Otterson, and they had four children when the First World War broke out.

He went off to fight in France and, being badly wounded, was sent back to Britain and ended up convalescing in Stockport, Cheshire, where he became friendly with a 16-year-old girl, Ethel Taylor. So friendly did he become that after he'd returned to France she had a stillborn child.

Susan in Scotland found out about this, and the combination of this, losing two of her children within weeks of each other and possible postnatal depression led her to commit suicide by jumping into the River Clyde one night in 1916. She must have been truly desperate as she was a Roman Catholic and suicide was considered a mortal sin.

Philip continued to see Ethel whenever he could, and managed to get her pregnant again in 1918. When his father found out, he sent Philip to England, insisting that he marry her, which he did on Christmas Day 1918. His children from his first marriage remained in Scotland and were brought up by Margaret and other relations.

Ethel and Philip had two children in England, and then the whole family moved back to Scotland. Philip was homesick, but there were also practical problems in that he found it difficult to get a job in England as being a Scot he was considered foreign, and bosses preferred to employ their own ie Englishmen.

My mother (Flora) was born in Scotland, but Ethel could not settle there, mainly because all the Scots side of the family hated her as they held her partly responsible for Susan's death, and because the Scots side were all RC and Ethel was an Anglican (she later converted to RC). After a huge argument Ethel came back to England with her two sons, leaving my mother to be brought up by her grandmother in Scotland. Philip followed his wife a few days later, and my mother was finally brought to England when she was 8, in 1930.

The depression was in full swing, and my grandfather found it impossible to get any regular work. There were no equal opportunity laws then, and he suffered a great deal of prejudice, something which isn't really documented as it relates to England and Scotland at this period.

With a growing family to feed, he then spent some time working as a strongman in a small circus. His partner was a black man whose name I know only as Black Bob. They all lived in a big house in Stockport, and my mum told me great tales about life with the circus people. Once the circus disbanded, Philip, in spite of his great strength and willingness to work, still couldn't get anything and took up bare knuckle fighting, at which he did quite well, the money being good if very erratic. The family never saved anything, so if he won £5 they'd live like kings for a week, and would virtually starve after that until he won some more.

They lived all over Manchester, and moved house some twenty-five times in ten years, probably because they couldn't pay the rent. It was a very meagre existence, but they were trapped in a way, because although Philip could have worked with his mother in Glasgow (she was doing very well in the clothing trade), Ethel would not move to Scotland and he wouldn't leave her, even though their relationship was not a happy one. My mother was hated and physically abused by her mother, and the family feud caused by the death of Philip's first wife split the Scottish and English sides of the family completely, with my mother and her dad in a bad position, being Scots stuck in England!

The repercussions are still ongoing. The Scots and English sides of the family still hate each other, although most of them don't know why any more. My mother grew to distrust the English and have a general dislike for England, although she never went back to live in Scotland after having met my father (an Englishman) and married him in Manchester. He was the son of emigrant Welsh people.

When my mother found out she was pregnant, she wanted to have me in Scotland, but I foiled her (unfortunately) by being born early. I was then brought up in England as a fervent Scot, complete with all the Highland heritage and Jacobite loyalties, songs, stories etc

handed down through the generations. The Scots considered me one of them, as they felt it was not my fault I was born in England. Which has left me with a very strange sense of being a Scot, although legally I have no right to say it. I feel at home in Scotland, as I never did in England, am learning Gaelic, and although I live in Wales at the moment, would like to return to Scotland to live one day. At least I can say with complete truth that I'm a Celt!

It's strange how chance meetings of ancestors can affect the lives of all those following, for sometimes hundreds of years!

Our thanks to Julie Roberts for sending this in to us

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair