



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILY TREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

GAZETTEER
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 December 4th, 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

Scottish Studies Foundation

The Centre for Scottish Studies is pleased to announce its next and final installment of the 2015 Scottish Studies Roundtable series, Politics and Preaching in Glasgow, 1651, presented by Alexander Campbell, a SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellow at Queen's University and a visiting fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh.

Details:

Tuesday December 15, 2015

Time: 3:30pm

Location: MacKinnon Room 132,

University of Guelph

More info here:

<http://www.scottishstudies.com/520-roundtable-151215.htm>

Back issues of our newsletter which you might want to have a look at. See:

<http://www.scottishstudies.com/archival-newsletters.htm>

We are also on twitter at @ssfcanada

Scottish Studies Genealogy Research Repository website launched today

Dr. James Fraser at the Guelph Centre for Scottish Studies is excited to announce the launch of a major new fundraising initiative. The Repository will be an important research tool for anyone interested in the history of the Scottish Canadian community, be they academic historians, genealogists, research students, population scientists, journalists, heritage workers, writers, or any Canadian proud of their Scottish ancestry and heritage. Details here: http://uofg.convio.net/site/TR?fr_id=1955&pg=entry

Clan Passports

These are a great way to get the Kids involved at Highland Games and for information visit:

<http://www.ross-ter.com/Tales/ClanPassport/ClanPassport.html>

And now for some Scottish news from the Scottish Press this week...

SNP condemns Commons Syria air strikes vote

The SNP has condemned a House of Commons vote to allow the UK to launch air strikes against Islamic State targets in Syria.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-34990012>

Scotcoin Scottish digital currency trialled in Glasgow pub

The Arlington on Woodlands Road is the first business in Scotland to accept brand new digital currency Scotcoin as payment.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/personal-finance/scotcoin-scottish-digital-currency-trialled-in-glasgow-pub-1-3964575>

A history of tartan: from Falkirk to Mod

Writer Jude Stewart follows the story of Scottish tartan - from the Falkirk Sett to Idi Amin

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/people-places/a-history-of-tartan-from-falkirk-to-mod-1-3964516>

Nicola Sturgeon's 2015 Christmas card

Children's character Katie Morag is featured on First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's 2015 Christmas card.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-34986209>

Scottish Review

The December 2015 issue is now available.

Read more at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/index.html>

Scots climber attacked by grizzly bear in Canada

Greg Boswell was climbing in the Rocky Mountains in the ski resort of Banff, on Alberta's Mount Wilson, when a grizzly bear attacked him.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/scots-climber-attacked-by-grizzly-bear-in-canada-1-3963272>

HMRC to contact Scottish taxpayers over new income tax

The letters are intended to confirm the accuracy of HMRC's records for the 2.6 million taxpayers who live in Scotland and who will pay the new rate.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-34965388>

Andy Murray wins the Davis Cup for Great Britain

Great Britain have won the Davis Cup for the first time since 1936

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/sport/tennis/34957711>

A butcher has claimed Scotland's traditional haggis recipe is wrong

Joe Callaghan says the national dish was invented by Viking invaders who made it from venison, not sheep.

Read more at:

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/weird-news/butcher-claims-scotlands-traditional-haggis-6915118>

Coming Oot: The fabulous history of gay Scotland

A remarkable transformation in just a generation. A queer tale indeed.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-34910016>

and

James Clerk Maxwell

The BBC did a write up on him which you can read at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/zyp34j6> and we also have a page about him at:

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

TV/Internet/Home Phone

I saw an article on one of the Canadian sites where they were discussing the costs of these services. Essentially they said that Canadians should be far more aggressive in checking to see if they can get a better price on their packages and also check with other service providers.

Well I checked today with my own service provider, in my case Cogeco, and through talking to them I was able to reduce my monthly fee by \$17.00 a month. However people have saved over \$100 when they phoned around.

So this is just to tell you about this and perhaps you might want to check this out for yourself in whatever country you live in.

Retiring

As I will be 65 on January 31, 2016 I will shortly become an old age pensioner. I suppose I thought I'd just start to receive my pensions automatically but found I needed to apply for them all which meant filling out various application forms. So I had to do this with the UK, Canada and again with the private pension I get through Zurich in the UK. They usually ask you to confirm who you worked for and where you lived throughout your life. So if you are within range of retiring you may want to start gathering this information together.

Electric Canadian

Grand Priory of Canada December 2015 newsletter

Got up the December 2015 newsletter which is around 80 pages. Covers activities within the order in Canada and Internationally as well as covering World News, Canadian stories and lots of other topics.

You can download this and get past copies at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/religion/kt.htm>

Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte

Including Genealogies of Old Families and Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens.

You can download this at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/pioneerlifeonbay00torouoft.pdf>

Pioneer Days in British Columbia

Reminiscences, by Violet E. Sillitoe

You can download this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/pioneerbc.htm>

Electric Scotland

Snippets from the Glasgow Herald

This is a new section we've created thanks to John Henderson who has gained access to their archives from 1800 to 1990.

We've added three more categories for...

Hygiene

Nature

Weather

and others will be added as we work through the archives.

Some of the articles are a wee bit hard to read but we've done our best to improve the scans to the best of our ability.

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

Also added Destitution in the West Highlands which you can get to at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/snippets/employment/18550101.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

Dr. Clark McGinn is nearing the end of his series on the few men who gathered in the auld Burns cottage to celebrate Robert Burns a

few years after his untimely death. This small meeting became the first Burns Supper, and I doubt any of the men ever dreamed what they had birthed. Now thousands of Burns Suppers are held around the world each year on or around January 25th. I have attended both large and small suppers and have delivered Immortal Memories from the east coast to the west coast and many places in the South. I say this humbly but with pride as I do it to honor the Bard. I have read more about Burns and spoken about him more than any person in my life.

However, before one begins to boast of his or her (yes, her!) Immortal Memories, let me mention that Clark has flown around the world over eight times delivering 145 Immortal Memories in 30 cities in 15 countries. My dear old Dad, who passed away in 1953 when I was 14, would have said, "Put that in your pipe and smoke it!" Clark would never boast of his accomplishments but I will for him. He is one of the finest Burns speakers I have ever heard. I have always wanted him to speak at my own Burns Club in Atlanta and hopefully 2016 has a great chance of being the year my dream comes true. Cross your fingers with me and maybe, just maybe, this will be the year he comes our way. In the meantime, build yourself a fire if you can, get a glass of good wine or whatever your choice of drink is, settle down and enjoy this chapter on NINE MEN: THE BANKER AND THE PROFESSOR. (FRS: 12.3.15)

Read Nine Men: The Banker and the Professor by Dr Clark McGinn at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives228.htm

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in Section 1 of the December issue which provides some interesting info on the Armstrongs.

You can get to this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/archives/BNFTDec2015A.PDF>

Older issues can be found in her archives at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/archives/index.htm>

Life of the Rev. George Donnell

First Pastor of the Church in Lebanon with a Sketch of the Scots-Irish Race by President T. C. Anderson (1858). Added a link to this book at the foot of our page on the Scots-Irish at:

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

The Winter Queen

Being the Unhappy History of Elizabeth Stuart, Electress Palatine, Queen of Bohemia by Marie Hay (1910). Added a link to this book at the foot of our Stuart page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/stuart.htm>

I might add that the copy I first put up was missing page 1 and Ranald emailed me about it. I then was able to find another copy which has page 1 so replaced it with this new one.

Tales from Scottish Ballads

A great wee collection of tales for you to read. This is a text file which I've linked to at the foot of our Children's Rhymes. Games, Songs and Stories page at:

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

I posted up the first story from this book in our community which can be read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/4990-Tales-from-Scottish-Ballads>

A Scotch Playhouse

Being the Historical Records of the Old Theatre Royal, Marischal Street, Aberdeen by J. Keith Angus (1878) Added a link to this book on our Story of the Scots Stage page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/hiStory/stage/index.htm>

The Life, Public Services, Addresses and Letters of Elias Boudinot, LL.D

President of the Continental Congress edited by J.J. Boudinot in Two Volumes (1896)

I have found that Americans seem to know very little of their own history and I thought this publication might be a good read for them as they make up some 40% of our visitors. As Scots played a major part in the fight for American Independence they also feature in this publication and so hopefully all of you will enjoy the read.

PREFACE

Lapse of time and the stirring events of our Civil War have thrown somewhat into shade our patriot fathers, with the exception of the one colossal figure looming above the later troubled sea of strife and war, the light of whose patriotism has pierced all misty shadows

of the past, and whose name is a watchword for all that is grand and noble. The spell of that great name we invoke to bid "come again, ye children of men," and marshal before us his faithful followers and co-workers.

Elias Boudinot was one of these, the friend of Washington, an ardent patriot and philanthropist, resolute and earnest, of strong intellectual fibre; he gave the greater part of a long life to the service of his country.

Be it ever remembered that these men were treading a new and untried path, leading and legislating for a new order of things. To all of them, as time yields us more and more of their records, do we owe our homage.

The purpose of this volume is to place before the reader the services, speeches, and letters of Elias Boudinot, in such chronological sequence that they shall for themselves tell the history of his life.

It is to be regretted that often in the early period of our national existence our fathers failed to realize what a precious heritage for us would be the letters to and from these great men. Though many were preserved, many have been destroyed or lost, some given away, and others stolen; the latter was the case with some of the most valuable of those of Elias Boudinot, such having found their way into the dealers' hands, and their marketable value is slowly bringing them to light.

Mr. Boudinot himself says: "A great many interesting anecdotes that happened during the American Revolutionary War are likely to be lost to posterity by the negligence of the Parties concerned in not recording them, so that in future time they may be resorted to as throwing light on the eventful crisis of this important Era. I shall therefore, without any attention to order, but merely as they arise in my memory, set down those that I have had any acquaintance with, attending principally to the Truth of the Fact."

When it is remembered that these accounts of Mr. Boudinot were written chiefly from personal observation, or participation in the events recorded, and, even when he was not himself an actor in the scene, he reflects the feelings and views of those who were, an added zest is given to the narrative. Corroboration of the main facts, with later accounts culled from various sources, and the absolute integrity of the writer, give a verisimilitude to the whole, even though it apparently differs in some details from accepted versions.

There is also evidence that these Reminiscences were written while Mr. Boudinot was still in the vigor of manhood, and not at all in declining years, when age and illness might have impaired his memory. Many of his official letters as President of the Continental Congress are in the Department of State at Washington, where with courtesy those in charge welcome the student of history with intelligent helpfulness.

Jane J. Boudinot.

You can download the two volumes at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/boudinot.htm>

THE STORY

Social Life among the Easter Ross Fishermen
From an old copy of the Highland Magazine

IF the reader will glance at any good map of the north shore of the Moray Firth, among the places named he will find Hilton, Balintore, and Shandwick. These are villages composed exclusively of fishing families, who are entirely dependent on the sea for their living. To the antiquarian, the first and last named villages will, at least, be known by reputation. Tradition has it that they mark the burial place of two of the sons of the Kings of Denmark, who were wrecked on this coast. In the case of the Hilton stone, perhaps I ought to mention that it was removed by the late R. B. AL. Macleod of Cadboll to his residence—Invergordon Castle—a good many years ago, and that the little house—the "chapel," as it was locally known—is razed to the ground. The stone, however, is in a perfect state of preservation, and appears to be well taken care of; but I think it only right to put the fact of its being removed from its original site on record, as in recent references to it by archaeological writers, it is assumed to be still at Hilton. Although these villages are about a mile apart from one another, yet, in most respects, they may be regarded as one. There are, however, some things upon which they do not think alike.

The fishermen of the three villages as a class are sober, honest, and God-fearing, but exceedingly poor. Poverty has always been, to a greater or less degree, present with them; in fact, it is part of their very existence. Of course, it fluctuates in degree, according to the success which attends the herring fishing. It is upon the herring that they depend for the sinews of war to pay for their boats and fishing gear, and the many other items of extraordinary expenditure connected with the economy of the household. With the exception of the few weeks that the herring fishing takes them away from home, they are for the rest of the year engaged in line fishing. In this industry they have to contend with a great disadvantage in not having a harbour. In discussing the condition of these people with the late Mr Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod of Cadboll, who had the interests of fishermen peculiarly at heart, he admitted that the villages were established in situations which were quite unfavourable to their existence. They were, he said, exposed to every wind that blew;

they were too far from the fishing banks; and they had no harbour accommodation. The first assertion cannot for a moment be gainsaid, but, in the case of the second and third objection, they are scarcely tenable. The chief cause of the impoverished condition of these poor people is the want of good harbours. It is quite true that a harbour of a very unsubstantial character had been built at Hilton about sixty years ago, but it was in such a position that it succumbed to the first great storm. The best of its stones were afterwards carried away, and used in the building of farm offices. I am glad to see that, after repeated endeavours and many years of patient waiting, there is now the near prospect of getting a substantial harbour built at Balintore, the central village.

The villagers at present are compelled to fish in smaller boats than the requirements of the case demand, and it naturally follows that when there is a fresh breeze on, or the least appearance of a squall, they never venture out of port. It must indeed be tantalizing to these less fortunate fishermen to see their brethren-in-trade from the south side of the Moray Firth "beating" backwards and forwards in their tidy crafts, while they are obliged to stay at home in abject misery. When they do venture out the boats have in the first place to be launched from a point considerably above high water mark. This, as can easily be understood, is attended with much extra labour, and by far the heaviest share of it falls to the wives and daughters of the fishermen. The reader will please imagine that he or she is standing on the spot where the boats are beached. Although the hour is still early, perhaps two, three, or four o'clock in the morning, yet all the villagers are astir. The men can be seen in small groups anxiously discussing the weather. While they are thus engaged, all at once a stentorian shout of "a' mhuir" (the sea) is raised, and in an instant every man rushes to the line rack, where the creel containing the baited line is in a state of readiness. He hoists it on his shoulder, and runs as for dear life to the beach. The women take up the shout as well as the men; it is of equal significance to them. They in the first place make a dart for the "keilkeiach"—a piece of cord about three yards long, which is hung up in a convenient place near the door, and at such an altitude that no little one can reach it. Armed with this they rush after the men to the beach. The first process is to kilt their petticoats above the knee, and then they assist the men to launch the boats. Every boat's crew strives as to which of them hoists the first sail. In the launching process, as soon as the boat touches the water, the men stand back, but the hardy women still rush it forward till such time as the craft is afloat. The next process is to transfer the men into the boat, and this is done by the women, who carry them on their backs. Next the masts, sails, lines, &c, have to be put into the boats by the women. When it is borne in mind that this ordeal has to be gone through summer and winter—all the year round—every person must admit that the women's lot is not by any means an enviable one. But the drenching in the morning is not what they have most to complain of. They have to provide bait for the lines for the following day's fishing, and at certain seasons of the year they have to collect it in Nigg Bay, a distance of about six miles. In the afternoon the boats return to port. The men are landed dry-shod, the gear is transferred to land, the creels containing the lines, and the day's catch, be it muckle or little, are taken ashore, and the boat has to be pulled above high water mark. Often have I witnessed the women completely drenched, and more than once carried off their feet, and running narrow risks of being drowned. Yet they are never heard to complain, and are never known to shirk this disagreeable work. One thing that accounts for this is the fact that they have been accustomed to it from < childhood, and they submit to it as an inevitable fate, from which there is no escape. The boats being berthed beyond the reach of the highest tide, the work of dividing the day's catch is next proceeded with. The whole is collected into one heap on the beach, and is divided by the men into as many shares as the number of the crew, and afterwards lots are cast upon the shares. There are various ways of disposing of the fish. At times a curer settles down in their midst, and buys the haddock and cod, but the whiting and other species are for home consumption, and for sale among the "tuath," or country people. Tain, about eight miles distant, is regularly visited, and the burdens—varying from half a cwt. to one cwt. and a half—are carried by these hardy females with apparent ease.

Of course there are occasional lulls caused by storms. Then is the time for the men to repair their nets and lines, and see to it that the fishing craft is in a sea-worthy condition. The good-wives betake themselves to looking after the internal arrangements of the household, which, during a spell of good weather, receive only scant attention. Their food is of the plainest possible description. Their chief articles of diet are potatoes and fish. They are also heavy drinkers of tea, using it several times a day. They seldom eat flesh—perhaps on the occasion of a marriage or upon New-Year's Day. All the men smoke tobacco, and are thorough believers in the virtue of a dram, although it cannot be said that they drink to excess. All the fishermen of Hilton, and the greater part of Balintore, are adherents of the Free Church, while the Shandwickers are very staunch Seceders, or, as now called, United Presbyterians. So loyal are the Seceders to their own church, that on the return of those of their number who go to the West Coast fishing, on their first appearance in their own church, they drop a coin into the collection, which makes up, in lump, for the Sabbaths upon which they have been absent. When at home, they never visit a sister church, but are most regular in their attendance at the various diets of worship in their own. Indeed, no class of the community can vie with them in that respect. The Sabbath day is scrupulously observed; no work of any kind is done, and in the case of some of them, they do not even cook their meals on that day, and it is regarded as an unlucky thing to wash dishes on the Sabbath. All the water has to be carried home on the Saturday, the men shave, and there is a general stoppage of work of all kind on the Saturday night. On Sabbath morning a good many of them resort as early as seven o'clock to the meeting-house, where two hours are spent in prayer. They next go to church, and the greater proportion of them sit out two sermons, but every man and woman makes it a point of honour to attend the Gaelic service in the church. A custom is prevalent in the Free Church of Fearn which I never observed in any other part of the Highlands. It is, however, confined to the fishing population of the congregation. A worthy couple walk gravely up to the church door. The female, as a rule, approaches the elder that stands at the plate and presents him with a penny piece. He knows his duty. He, without a moment's hesitation, gives two half-pennies in exchange. Both the man and wife then pass into the church, each dropping a half-penny into the plate with the air of persons who have done their duty. Nearly all the men and women above forty years are, as regards English, illiterate, but they can read the Gaelic New Testament.

As regards politics, and the other social and general questions which agitate the country in other quarters, these villagers entirely ignore them. Not a single fisherman invests a copper in a newspaper of any shade of politics whatever. The merchant, the shoemaker, and the village baker supply them with the current news. The wives and daughters who regularly hawk fish over the country have always something new to tell; but a story of the scandalous kind, particularly if it refers to some well-known individual, is of more interest to them than if Lord Salisbury granted Home Rule to Ireland on the lines propounded by Mr Gladstone. In stormy weather the men are in the habit of collecting in groups at particular places, and it is there that the current gossip of the day is set forth. In the course of their discussions, they never make an assertion on their own account; they always like to give their authority, although sometimes it is of a very shady description. It is their custom to talk in such a loud tone of voice that a stranger, hearing them for the first time, would naturally imagine they were in the midst of a fierce quarrel; and yet they very rarely, indeed, do seriously quarrel.

Besides the herring and the line fishing, there are other particular things in which they are engaged in the course of the year. A great event is the "ware day," which usually comes round on the 1st of April. Sea-ware is the manure which they use for growing their potatoes. For some days prior to the recognised day, the men congregate at their regular meeting places, and watch one another with the utmost care. They talk of everything or anything but that which holds the first place in their minds. By the time that there is full ebb, very much the same piece of etiquette is observed as when going to the fishing. One of the older men, who is recognised as a leader, shouts at the pitch of his voice, in Gaelic, "To the ware," and in a moment every capable man and woman are seen rushing, hook in hand and creel on back, in the direction of the rocks. As a rule, every householder confines himself to the rocks opposite his own house, and any violation of this unwritten law is regarded with the greatest disfavour. The ware time lasts, as a rule, for three days, and sometimes more. Their next business is to get it carted to the rigs, which they hire from the surrounding farmers. Potato land is a scarce commodity, and were it not that some farmers regularly let them ground, they would be in very bad case. As a rule, they pay very long prices for this land—£4. or £5 an acre, according to quality—but it is necessary to charge a big price, as a good deal of the rents is never paid.

All the fishermen marry at an early age. The general rule is that a man selects a wife from among his own kith and kin, although some wives have been imported from the fishing villages of Sutherlandshire and other coast villages. A good fishing season always produces a correspondingly large number of marriages. Friday is the universal marriage day among the fisher people. The ceremony is of the simplest possible description, but must be in proper form. Prior to the marriage there is a "raiteach," or covenant night, the following Friday the "ceangal," or contract, and on the third Friday thereafter the marriage. On the night prior to the marriage the ancient rite of feet washing is tenaciously adhered to. A very curious custom is observed in this connection. A lad and a lass, with pail in hand, are despatched to a spring for water for this particular work. One of the conditions is that they must not speak to one another on any pretence whatever, neither are they to speak to any person by the way, and if they are accosted they must not respond. A violation of this law would be the foreboding of an unhappy life between the parties about to be married. For this reason only the most trustworthy of friends can be safely sent for the mystic water. All marriages take place in the manse, about two miles distant. The bride, leaning on the arm of her father or a near friend, is followed by a procession of bridesmaids and young men. They walk in couples. At a short interval the bridegroom's party follows. I had the curiosity to ask why precedence was given to the bride in being the first to leave home for the purpose of being married. I was told by an old woman—"He follows her to-day, but she is to follow him afterwards." A few years ago I remember seeing two couples from one of the villages named entering the Free Church of Fearn, the first Sunday after their marriage, to be "kirked"—a ceremony to which considerable importance is attached in Easter Ross. Both couples sat out the two* sermons, Gaelic and English, which occupied over four hours. No sooner was the "Amen" of the benediction said than a rush was made for the door by the respective couples and their trains. The route regularly traversed was not chosen by either party on this occasion—a circuitous pathway traversed by the local "gentry" was preferred, although it doubled the length of walk. Both parties marched at a very swift pace, and it became apparent that the one set endeavoured to out-walk the other. Being curious to know what it all meant, I asked an old matron, and she replied by saying, "Nach yeil fios agad gur e d chiad chupal a ruigeas am bade a gheibh d bheannachd?" "Don't you know that it is the first couple that reaches the village which will get the blessing?" I am not sure whether the couple which reached the village first got any particular blessing, but this I am satisfied of, that they both strove very hard for it. This leads me to say that, although they are, as a class, a very sober and religiously-inclined set of people, they are, on the other hand, very superstitious. Pointing the first finger of the hand to a sailing vessel is considered uncanny; and to even mention the word "bradan" or "salmon," while proceeding to fish for any other kind of fish, is a sure sign of a poor return. I shall not readily forget the reprimand I got from a grave fisherman for innocently, as far as I was concerned, asking a question regarding a salmon net which we happened to be sailing by at the time.

The older men have no clear notion of past facts and dates. If you ask any of them what is his age, he will answer that he was so many years "when the church came out"—the Disruption. And their great epoch of all is marked by the ravages which the cholera made in those villages in the year 1836, when nearly half the population fell victims to that most terrible scourge. The mortality was so great that coffins could not be provided for the dead, and, in many cases, bodies had to be rudely wrapped in a piece of sail, and buried in the sand-banks in the neighbourhood of the villages. An old carter who lived in one of the villages had a busy time of it then conveying the corpses to their last resting place. Asked how he managed to escape, he said that he never allowed himself to cool from the effects of drink. "In fact," he said, "my stomach was tinned with it, so that the cholera would not dare on me." Be that as it may, he did escape it, and lived for many years afterwards, and often told his experiences of the cholera year. When a death occurs in any of the villages, work of all kind is suspended till after the burial. Every man who accompanies the funeral is supplied with a

dram. The coffin is placed on a bier, and carried on the shoulder by turns of about five minutes.

A good many of the younger men are members of the Royal Naval Reserve, and attend the annual training at Inverness. Besides being in receipt of about 20s a week during the four weeks that they are at Inverness, they also receive a bounty quarterly of something like 12s. Another source of revenue is the rearing of pigs. Every family keeps one pig, and, in a good many cases, two, and they are regularly sold at the pig market, held monthly at the Hill of Fearn, which is unique in the north of Scotland as being the only exclusively pig market held there.

These Easter Ross fishers are different from those living on the West Coast and in Sutherlandshire. There they have all, or nearly all, a small plot of ground, upon which they can raise some food for their families. In the case of the Easter Ross fishermen, they have not a square yard that they can call their own.

A great many of the rising generation are betaking themselves to other trades and professions, and many of the sons of fishermen are at the present moment occupying positions of trust in all parts of the world. Few, or comparatively few, of the young are taking to the sea as a profession. I will venture to predict that, within fifty years, Hilton and Shandwickfwill become places of the past. In the case of Balintore, it will endure for a longer period, as it is to have a harbour, which will encourage the younger people to follow their fathers' calling. The inhabitants of these three villages are at the present moment the most poverty-stricken and the most destitute class of fishermen in the Highlands. Yet, in the face of all that, their voice is never heard ; they are law-abiding, they live honestly, and they do not obtrude themselves upon their neighbours.

ALEX. M. ROSS.

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

Alastair