



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
FAMILYTREE
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 January 20th, 2017

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 I have focused on Scottish Education and also made a start at creating a page on the Scottish Justice system.

On education we used to be the best in the world and now we're just average and is why I've been looking for histories of education in Scotland. I thus hope we can learn something that will help us restore our reputation.

On Justice I needed to explore our system and history and then point to how our current system is performing. This being the case I've found some good videos about our current system and then produced some articles pointing out problem areas.

You may remember the Named Persons scheme where the idea was that a "Named Person" would be available to every child in Scotland. The Scottish Supreme Court passed this bill but it was appealed to the highest court in the land in England who chucked it out as it was against human rights legislation. I fail to understand how our Supreme court didn't see that as being an issue. Surely a major embarrassment to our top judges.

Launch of exhibits on Scottish chapbooks and Lucy Maud Montgomery

I'm excited to announce the launch of two new exhibits in the McLaughlin Library at the University of Guelph next week. The exhibits were curated by students enrolled in the University Collaborative Experiential Exhibition (UCEE) program under the supervision of Dr. Christina Smylitopoulos in partnership with Library staff.

Hosted by Rebecca Graham, CIO & Chief Librarian and Sally Hickson, Director of SOFAM, the launches will take place in the Library Academic Commons on Weds, Jan 25 from 3:30-5:00. A reception and tours of the exhibits led by the curators will follow.

Below are summaries of both exhibits:

"Text & Textile: the Legacy of Lucy Maud Montgomery" takes a look at the intersection of textiles and written narratives in the L. M. Montgomery Collection in Archival & Special Collections. This is a rare opportunity to see the original manuscript of Rilla of Ingleside, first editions of novels by LMM, and the textiles she created during her lifetime.

"Prints & Pages: Fables & Narratives in Art and Chapbooks" examines the powerful role of a variety of cheaply produced images through the mediums of 19th century Scottish chapbooks and prints created by 19th and 20th century artists, including, Marc Chagall, Francisco Goya and Pablo Picasso. The materials in this exhibit were drawn from the University of Guelph Library's Scottish Studies Collection in Archival & Special Collections and the School of Fine Art and Music's Bachinski/Chu Print Study Collection in Zavitz Hall.

Council tax

Following the recent about-turn by the Scottish government, we now have the local authorities in the firing line as 'tax raisers' with a

directive to apply additional rises to bands E-H as well as a rise across the board for all council tax bands. Those unlucky enough to live in bands E-H will have to stump up the additional largesse on the basis that this is 'progressive taxation' whatever that may mean.

This crass disregard for local democracy by taking tax-raising decisions for local services away from local authorities is based on the premise that the occupiers of these homes must be wealthier than the average Scottish Nationalist supporter and therefore well able to pay.

Some uncomfortable truths remain:

- a) The occupiers of these homes can only realise their perceived paper wealth through the sale of their property.
- b) Those occupiers with a mortgage are already waiting for monthly payments to increase as inflation creeps up and interest rates rise. Even if this happens slowly, it will still represent an additional outgoing, reducing disposable income for expenditure on local goods and services.
- c) Home owners have already been taxed on the income required to buy and service their property.
- d) A large number of occupiers are on fixed incomes.

The property-based council tax is outdated and is a sledgehammer approach to penalise those who save and put their money into the country's assets rather than expend it on consumables.

If residents are to be denied local accountability for the setting of the council tax would it not be better to scrap local taxation altogether? Instead increase central taxation, for which the government now has the necessary powers, to take into account the amount collected by councils and then redistribute it to local authorities on a headcount basis. At a stroke you would have removed substantial administration costs across 32 local authorities. Scotland has a population roughly the same as Yorkshire, so it couldn't be that difficult to put such an equitable scheme in place.

Stuart Robertson

Brexit at-a-glance: What we learned from Theresa May

With her Brexit speech, Theresa May has for the first time revealed some key details about her approach to negotiations with the EU.

Here's what we know now: See <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-38641207>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our ScotNews feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in newspapers such as the Guardian, Scotsman, Courier, etc. you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish.

Conifers show strength of Scotland's forestry industry

Scotland's conifer forests are the biggest in the UK, with more than a million hectares of conifer woodland across the country.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/business/companies/farming/conifers-show-strength-of-scotland-s-forestry-industry-1-4337659>

SNP leadership has reduced independence to a hollow threat

By Alex Bell

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/alex-bell/346734/snp-leadership-reduced-independence-hollow-threat/>

Ireland and the UK joined the EEC together

Should they leave the EU together too?

Read more at:

<http://brexitcentral.com/ireland-uk-joined-eec-together-leave-eu-together/>

Government urged to abandon EU fisheries policy that's cost Brit fishermen £80 BILLION
BRITAIN'S blighted fishing industry has lost more than £80 billion from EU boats trawling UK waters, a damning new report finds.

Read more at:

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2602379/government-urged-to-abandon-eu-fisheries-policy-thats-cost-brit-fishermen-80-billion/>

John Muir Way awarded Scotland's Great Trail status

The John Muir Way has been awarded Scotland's Great Trail status three years after the coast-to-coast route was established.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-38610685>

Tayside dig unearths internationally important relics

Archaeologists found 650 items and features including a Stone Age longhouse that could be up to 6,000 years old after builders stumbled across the hoard in Carnoustie.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/angus-mearns/349023/exclusive-tayside-dig-unearths-internationally-important-relics/>

Trump says Brexit to be a great thing

Wants quick trade deal with UK

Read more at:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-usa-trump-britain-idUKKBN14Z0XU>

Scotland-inspired poem created for Donald Trump inauguration

An American poet society has released a poem inspired by Scotland to mark Donald Trump's inauguration this Friday.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scotland-inspired-poem-created-for-donald-trump-inauguration-1-4340260>

Haunting Scottish documentary wins acclaim in Serbia

A haunting and evocative photo documentary examining the legacy left by the Highland Clearances is attracting international attention.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/haunting-scottish-documentary-wins-acclaim-in-serbia-1-4339744>

US links to exiled 17th Century Scots soldiers revealed

Dr Anwen Caffell of Durham University with remains from the mass grave of Scottish soldiers.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/us-links-to-exiled-17th-century-scots-soldiers-revealed-1-4341210>

Lord Advocate wants significant reform of Scots justice system

Committee convener Margaret Mitchell said the probe had unearthed some serious concerns

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-38639858>

Anyone for Tennis?

Political debates sometimes seem a bit like tennis.

Read more at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.ca/2017/01/anyone-for-tennis.html>

Theresa May's Brexit speech in full

Full text of Theresa May's Brexit speech at Lancaster House on 17th Jan 2017 (emphasis added):

Read more at:

<http://brexitcentral.com/theresa-mays-speech-lancaster-house/>

The myth of Scotland as a beacon of humane enlightenment
By Kenneth Roy

Read more at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/KennethRoy140a.html>

Scots economy lags behind UK in latest economic data

Scotland's Economic growth is continuing to fall behind the UK with the jobs picture also looking more bleak north of the border, official figures today show.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scots-economy-lags-behind-uk-in-latest-economic-data-1-4341883>

Combating food poverty

£350,000 to make fresh and healthy food available

Read more at:

<http://news.gov.scot/news/combating-food-poverty>

Early years workforce expansion

£1.5 million for more nursery teachers and graduates in deprived areas.

Read more at:

<http://news.gov.scot/news/early-years-workforce-expansion>

SNP accused of skewing Budget figures to make exaggerate cuts

The Scottish Government has been accused of manipulating the figures in its budget to exaggerate the impact of Westminster cuts by senior economists.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/snp-accused-of-skewing-budget-figures-to-make-exaggerate-cuts-1-4342594>

Liam Fox launches Brexit trade crusade

Confirming informal talks already under way with 12 countries across the world

Read more at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/18/liam-fox-launches-brexit-trade-crusade-confirming-informal-talks/>

SNP's Joanna Cherry on Scottish trade with EU and UK

The SNP's Joanna Cherry looks at future Scottish trade deals with the EU and UK, and the Scottish government's bid to remain in the single market.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-38678641>

Remembering the exiled Polish soldiers of Cupar

A campaign has been launched to remember the exiled Polish soldiers who were stationed in Cupar, Fife, during the Second World War and the many who settled in the area afterwar

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/fife/350490/remembering-exiled-polish-soldiers-cupar/>

Sturgeon's bluff is called

By Brian Monteith

Read more at:

http://www.thinkscotland.org/todays-thinking/articles.html?read_full=13005

A Step Nearer?

Is Scotland stepping closer to a second independence referendum?

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-38663834>

Lost kingdom linked to Galloway

Archaeological research at a site in Galloway has suggested it may have been at the heart of a lost kingdom from the Dark Ages

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-38679324>

Devolved administrations hold difficult Brexit talks

Speaking after a gathering of ministers from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, Mike Russell said it had been a difficult morning.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-38670128>

Brexit speech cuts Davos in two

Interesting commentary

View at:

<http://uk.reuters.com/video/2017/01/17/brexit-speech-cuts-davos-in-two?videoid=370932243>

Electric Canadian

Chronicles of Canada

Added Volume 14: The War with the United States

I might add that I've found text copies of these volumes so have added a link to them on the page.

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/chronicles>

The Trail of Love

An Appreciation of Canadian Pioneers and Pioneer Life by W. D. Flatt (1916)

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/trailoflove1.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Scottish Innovation Party

Added page for Justice which you can get to at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/sip/index.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

A Collaborative Tribute from Four Editors by Patrick Scott, Bill Dawson, Mike Duguid, and Gerard Carruthers for the 250th edition of Robert Burns Lives!

This week, Robert Burns Lives! attains its 250th number. Its founder, Frank Shaw, whom we are proud to call a friend, has been editing it for much longer than any other current editor of a Burns-related periodical, and under his benign direction it has come to occupy a unique position among the several different periodicals and websites devoted to Robert Burns and the Burnsian community. Over the past fifteen years, the 250 articles have covered a remarkable variety of aspects of Burns. They have been contributed by an equally remarkable range of writers from Alex Salmond (no. 40, 2009), Ross Roy (repeatedly, from no. 6, 2003) and Eddie Reader (no. 37, also 2009), through virtually every prominent Burns scholar of the past forty years, to essays from Burns's Ukrainian translators, and even a few non-Burnsians like David Shi, president of Furman University. They have been linked by Frank's own enthusiasm and curiosity, building a community of interest in the broader significance of Robert Burns and what he means in the 21st century. These things don't just happen by themselves, and it seems worth saying thank you.

Frank (as we all know him) started Robert Burns Lives! in print as a column in The Family Tree in September 2002, and it soon became available also on the web as part of Alastair McIntyre's site Electric Scotland. Publication on the Electric Scotland site, with its own front or index page, gave Robert Burns Lives! more of its own identity as well as wider distribution. It reached article 50 in April 2009, article 100 in November 2010 (Frank himself writing on the centenary of the Atlanta Burns Cottage), article 150 in August

2012 (a tribute by Bill Dawson), and article 200 in July 2014. To celebrate that 200th number, Alastair McIntyre wrote an excellent retrospective, giving the history of Robert Burns Lives! with extracts both from the articles themselves and from Frank's characteristic and generous introductions.

In many ways, Robert Burns Lives! is an exemplary story of how its editor has successfully transitioned through, and his publication has benefitted from, wider changes in how we all communicate. It began in print, and moved to digital publication, shedding its early dependence on subscriptions and mail distribution, and gaining flexibility in article length and publication schedule and frequent colour illustration. In digital-only form, Robert Burns Lives! is free and accessible immediately on publication day to readers worldwide. But Frank's willingness to adapt to technological change is only part of RBL's success. From the beginning Frank has sought out contributors personally. When he met someone at a conference, or heard a good speaker, or read an interesting book and could track down its author, he has asked them to contribute. As Ross Roy used to do, he has encouraged young scholars to share accounts of their research, and so begin the healthy process of engaging with a wider public. And he has written himself, when books or news items or things he saw in his travels with Susan caught his attention. Almost everything he has published is notably more readable than what commonly appears in academic journals, and it is made even more readable by his introductory comments on the contributors and their topics. Some of the items on Robert Burns Lives! have been chiefly of immediate interest, but a remarkable number of the 250 are clearly of lasting value.

For this 250th number, instead of repeating the story told in Alastair's excellent article three years ago, four of us who are editors of other Burns-related publications asked Frank if we could mark the occasion by trying to pin down how Robert Burns Lives! has changed editorial attitudes and broadened horizons for all periodicals serving the Burns community. The publications we edit are the annual Burns Chronicle, edited by Bill Dawson for the Robert Burns World Federation, the longest-running Burns periodical in the world, which also carries each year the biggest concentration of research-based articles on Burns; its bimonthly counterpart, and the newest of Burns periodicals, the RBWF Newsletter, edited by Mike Duguid, which gives timely illustrated reports of Burnsian activities; and the two leading academic journals in Scottish literature, both now appearing twice a year, Scottish Literary Review, edited by Gerry Carruthers of the University of Glasgow, and Studies in Scottish Literature, jointly edited by Patrick Scott and Tony Jarrells of the University of South Carolina. All four of the journals now have, in different ways as noted below, a digital existence as well as one in print or hardcopy, a development for which Robert Burns Lives! and Electric Scotland showed the way.

On the academic end, of course, there are many other journals that occasionally carry the odd Burns article, and with Web publication, and now social media, there are several other interesting Burns sites that also give Burns news (such as the RBANA Newsletter) or even quite substantial articles; the Glasgow Centre for Robert Burns Studies, for instance, hosts a site Editing Burns for the 21st Century, with news and discoveries from the team working on the new Oxford Edition of Robert Burns. The ASLS's online e-zine, The Bottle Imp, has Burns articles and reviews from time to time. Newsletters and websites maintained by individual clubs provide an increasing variety of substantive content as well as news; examples are the articles on the Irvine and Calgary Burns Club sites. But the four journals discussed here represent a full spectrum from heavily-documented research articles on specific poems or aspects of Burns's life to the briefer reports about Burns discoveries, events and people. This is the spectrum of interest that through Robert Burns Lives! Frank Shaw has extended and made into a worldwide community of readers. All four of us have ourselves contributed articles to Robert Burns Lives!, and the brief reflections and tributes below attempt to say what Frank's success with it has meant to us and to Burns studies.

In addition to Robert Burns Lives!, the Electric Scotland site has extensive Burns content, from early editions and biographical sources to presentations on Burns localities and recent talks (indexed at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/index.html>)

Read what the four editors had to say at: http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives250.htm

A History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland
By Marjorie Cruikshank

You can read this book at: http://www.electricscotland.com/education/teacher_training.pdf

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree
Got in the February 2017 section 2 issue which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/archives/BNFTFeb2017B.PDF>

History of Early Scottish Education
By John Edgar (1893)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/education/historyearlyscotedu01.pdf>

The Early History of New Zealand

Being a series of lectures delivered before the Otago Institute by Dr. T. M. Hocken (1914)

This can be read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nz/earlyhistoryofnewzealand.pdf>

The Work of Scottish Rhetorician George Jardine

A Foreshadowing of Modern Theories and Practices of Collaborative Learning: The Work of Scottish Rhetorician George Jardine by Lynee Lewis Gaillet

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/education/collaborativelearning.pdf>

Agriculture in New Zealand

Second Edition by the Hon. Robert McNab, Minister for Agriculture (1908) (pdf)

Also provides a Sketch Map of New Zealand Showing Provincial Districts and Chief Towns

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nz/agricultureinnewzealand.pdf>

The Story

This is a story in two parts.. first the claims and then second a discussion on them.

Claims of Ireland

The literature of the Highlands, although not extensive, is varied, and has excited not a little interest in the world of letters. The existing remains are of various ages, carrying us back, in the estimation of some writers, to the second century, while contributions are making to it still, and are likely to be made for several generations.

It has often been said that the literature of the Celts of Ireland was much more extensive than that of the Celts of Scotland - that the former were in fact a more literary people - that the ecclesiastics, and medical men, and historians (senachies) of Scotland had less culture than those of the sister island, and that they must be held thus to have been a stage behind them in civilisation and progress. Judging by the remains which exist, there seems to be considerable ground for such a conclusion.

Scotland can produce nothing like the MS. collections in possession of Trinity College Dublin, or the Royal Irish Academy. There are numerous fragments of considerable value in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, and in the hands of private parties throughout Scotland, but there is nothing to compare with the Book of Lecan, Leabhar na h-uidre, and the other remains of the ancient literary culture of Ireland, which exist among the collections now brought together in Dublin; nor with such remains of what is called Irish scholarship as are to be found in Milan, Brussels, and other places on the continent of Europe.

At the same time there is room for questioning how far the claims of Ireland to the whole of that literature are good. Irish scholars are not backward in pressing the claims of their own country to everything of any interest that may be called Celtic. If we acquiesce in this claim, Scotland will be left without a shred of aught which she can call her own in the way of Celtic literature; and there is a class of Scottish scholars who, somewhat more generous than discriminating, have been disposed to acquiesce but too readily in those claims.

We have our doubts as to Ireland having furnished Scotland with its Gaelic population, and we have still stronger doubts as to Ireland having been the source of all the Celtic literature which she claims. A certain class of writers are at once prepared to allow that the Bobbio MSS. and those other continental Gaelic Mss. of which Zeuss has made such admirable use in his *Grammatica Celtica*, are all Irish, and they are taken as illustrative alike of the zeal and culture of the early Irish Church. And yet there is no evidence of such being the case.

The language certainly is not Irish, nor are the names of such of the writers as are usually associated with the writings. Columbanus, the founder of the Bobbio Institution, may have been an Irishman, but he may have been a Scotchman. He may have gone from Durrow, but he may have gone from Iona. The latter was no less famous than the former, and had a staff of men quite as remarkable. We have authentic information regarding its ancient history. It sent out Aidan to Northumberland, and numerous successors after him, and there is much presumptive evidence that many of the early missionaries took their departure from Scotland, and carried with them their Scottish literature to the Continent of Europe. And the language of the writers is no evidence to the contrary.

In so far as the Gaelic was written at this early period, the dialect used was common to Ireland and Scotland. To say that a work is Irish because written in what is called the Irish dialect is absurd. There was no such thing as an Irish dialect. The written language of the whole Gaelic race was long the same throughout, and it would have been impossible for any man to have said to which of the

sections into which that race was divided any piece of writing belonged. This has long been evident to men who have made a study of the question, but recent relics of Scottish Gaelic which have come to light, and have been published, put the matter beyond any doubt.

Mr. Whitley Stokes, than whom there is no better authority, has said of a passage in the "Book of Deer" that the language of it is identical with that of the MSS. which forms the basis of the learned grammar of Zeuss: and there can be not doubt that the "Book of Deer" is of Scottish authorship. It is difficult to convince Irish scholars of this, but it is no less true on that account. Indeed, what is called the Irish dialect has been employed for literary purposes in Scotland down to a recent period, the first book in the vernacular of the Scottish Highlands having been printed so lately as the middle of the last century. And it is important to observe that this literary dialect, said to be Irish, is nearly as far apart from the ordinary Gaelic vernacular of Ireland as it is from that of Scotland.

But besides this possibility of having writings that are really Scottish counted as Irish from their being written in the same dialect, the Gaelic literature of Scotland has suffered from other causes. Among these were the changes in the ecclesiastical condition of the country which took place from time to time. First of all there was the change which took place under the government of Malcolm III. (Ceanmor) and his sons, which led to the downfall of the ancient Scottish Church, and the supplanting of it by the Roman Hierarchy. Any literature existing in the 12th century would have been of the older church, and would have little interest for the institution which took its place. That there was such a literature is obvious from the "Book of Deer", and that it existed among all the institutions of a like kind in Scotland is a fair and reasonable inference from the existence and character of that book. Why this is the only fragment of such a literature remaining is a question of much interest, which may perhaps be solved by the fact that the clergy of the later church could have felt little interest in preserving the memorials of a period which they must have been glad to have seen passed away. Then the Scottish reformation and the rise of the Protestant Church, however favourable to literature, would not have been favourable to the preservation of such literature. The old receptacles of such writings were broken up, and their contents probably destroyed or dispersed, as associated with what was now felt to be a superstitious worship. There is reason to believe that the Kilbride collection of MSS. now in the Advocates' Library, and obtained from the family of Maclachlan of Kilbride, was to some extent a portion of the old library of Iona, one of the last Abbots of which was a Ferquhard M'Lachlan.

I agree with some of the interpretations in the article "Claims of Ireland" and disagree with others.

Anyone who speaks Scottish Gaelic and has some knowledge of Irish Gaelic will recognize the similarity of the languages. The dialects of Donegal are quite comprehensible to the people of Islay and Colonsay for instance. A Lewis person would have a great deal of difficulty understanding a person from Kerry. Still after a few months of acquaintance they will be able to communicate in Gaelic.

The folklore and mythology of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland is shared. Until the early 20th century the most popular stories in Gaelic were about Fionn MacCumhail. In Ireland 100 different story motifs about Fionn have been collected and from Scotland 400 motifs about Fionn have been collected. The repertoire of Scots and Irish Gaelic storytellers is startlingly similar: stories of Fionn, Gráinne, Cuchallain, Deirdre, the Speckled Bull, the Battle of the Birds etc. Belief in the supernatural much the same: the Banshee, Banbha (Banff), the ways of making prophecies and of cursing and blessing.

The "Book of Kells" was most likely written in Iona. The "Chronicles of Iona" are embedded in the "Annals of Ulster". The "Book of Durrow" was likely written in the Kingdom of Northumbria. Today no one doubts that the "Book of Deer" was written by Scottish Gaels in the monastery of Deer. (Deer at that time was Gaelic-speaking.) Bergin's "Irish Bardic Poetry" contains poems by Scottish poets to Irish patrons and poems by Irish poets to Scottish patrons. "Duanairé Finn", a 17th century manuscript collection of Fionn stories (published by the Irish Texts Society), was commissioned by a MacDonald of the Isles. Rather than say the manuscripts which survive as "belonging to Scotland or Ireland", it would be more accurate to say that they were written by Gaels wherever they were living. Irish scholars make copious use of Scottish sources and their titles would be more accurate if the word "Gaelic" were used instead of "Celtic" or "Irish".

The literary dialect of Gaelic, used by poets and historians, was taught in formal schools mostly in Ireland and was in use until the early 18th century. The last poet to use the literary dialect was a Scottish Highlander called Dòmhnall MacMhuirich who died about 1740. He was descended from a poetic dynasty who made a living from poetry and history for more than 20 generations. Scholars cannot discern the origin of a poet who used this dialect which was common to all of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland.

Most historians agree that a considerable migration took place in the 5th-6th centuries AD; however, there have been migrations between Ireland and Scotland (and the other bits of Britain) for millenia. The society of Gaelic Ireland and Scotland, whose basic unit was the clan (Gaelic: fine) is similar as is the Gaelic terminology to describe it. The laws were shared, although differentiated by contact with feudal law, introduced by French and English-speaking peoples.

S.E.Gunn
M.A. (honours) Scottish History and Celtic Studies, Glasgow University

And that's it for this week and as the weekend is almost here hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair