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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 2nd, 2023

Electric Scotland News

Introducing Reimagine: Scan & Improve Photos from MyHeritage. See how it works at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zawU9ml_1Ec

The Society publications team is pleased to announce that a new e-book is now available to view online:

The Traprain Law Environs Project: Fieldwork and Excavations 2000–2004

<http://books.socantscot.org/digital-books/catalog/book/14>

by Colin Haselgrove

Abstract: This volume presents the results of fieldwork on the East Lothian coastal plain in south-east Scotland investigating the nature later prehistoric settlement around the hillfort of Traprain Law. Following geomagnetic surveys at thirty sites, six enclosures were excavated, three extensively. All six had complex occupation histories, involving multiple acts of enclosure, as well as phases of open settlement and use for other purposes such as burial. Their combined chronological span extends from the fourth millennium BC to the dawn of the Early Historic period.

The four curvilinear enclosures were apparently constructed in the later second or early first millennium BC. The short-lived hillslope enclosure at Standingstone occupied the site of an earlier Bronze Age burial ground and open settlement. At Whittingehame, a later scoop within a ravine-edge enclosure was still a focus of agricultural activity as late as the sixth century AD. The two rectilinear enclosures were foundations of the later Iron Age, although a scooped settlement within the site at Knowes was inhabited well into the Roman Iron Age.

Thanks to these excavations and the wider studies of the cropmark record and material culture from East Lothian presented here, we can now begin to reconstruct settlement dynamic in the Traprain Law area and relate this to the sequence of activity on the hilltop between the second millennium BC and the mid-first millennium AD.

Was updating my site map this week and noted a broken link to the book

Summer at the Lake of Monteith

By P. Dun, Station Master, Port of Monteith (1866)

Seems to have been deleted so found a new second edition copy and this is now available at:

<https://electricScotland.com/books/summeratlakeofmo00dunrich.pdf>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. I might also add that in a number of newspapers 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 which I do myself from time to time. Here is what caught my eye this week...

Scotland faces £1bn spending gap next year, warns finance secretary
The deputy first minister warned MSPs of the looming budget gap as the medium term financial strategy was published.

Read more at:

<https://news.stv.tv/politics/scotland-faces-1bn-spending-gap-next-year-warns-deputy-first-minister-shona-robinson>

Huge Labour gains in election poll, Record's school violence campaign and a summer of independence

Daily Record Political Editor Paul Hutcheon is joined on the Planet Holyrood podcast by Daily Record Deputy Political Editor Chris McCall and Scottish Express Editor Ben Borland to discuss the latest Ipsos poll showing huge Labour gains in ahead of next general election, the Scottish Government classroom violence summit happening after Daily Record's Our Kids, Our Future campaign and the SNP Independence Convention next month. And, finally, it is all gone quiet on the SNP police probe front.

View this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMd3LYSbnME>

A fresh start: time to make devolution really work

Spring 2023 could mark the start of a new journey for the Scottish people and its democratically elected organisations the Scottish Parliament and Scottish local authorities.

Read more at:

<https://sceptical.scot/2023/05/a-fresh-start-time-to-make-devolution-really-work/>

Apocalyptic Canada wildfire video captures driver's near miss

Dashcam footage has captured the moment a car drove through a wildfire, with flames and smoke on both sides of a highway, in Hammonds Plains, Nova Scotia, Canada.

View this at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-65745448>

Dramatic video shows firefighters running in Alberta

The Canadian province of Alberta saw 91 active wildfires on Saturday. The smokes from the fires has spread to multiple provinces and US states, including Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Utah, Washington and Colorado, triggering air quality alerts in some places.

View this at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-65678001>

Every Canadian cigarette will soon carry a health warning

Canada will soon print warning labels directly on cigarettes in a world-first, the country's health agency announced.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-65755793>

War crimes evidence erased by social media platforms
Evidence of potential human rights abuses may be lost after being deleted by tech companies, the BBC has found.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-65755517>

New York's Tax Reckoning

The Empire State pushes out the high-earning taxpayers on whom its public sector relies.

Read more at:

<https://www.city-journal.org/article/new-yorks-tax-reckoning>

Electric Canadian

John Macgregor V.C.

Scottish Canadian fought in both WWI & WWII

Read more about him at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/macgregor-john.htm>

The British Army and Sport in Canada

Case Studies of the Garrisons at Halifax, Montreal and Kingston to 1871 by Robert Douglas Day (1981) (pdf)

You can read these case studies at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/sportincanada.pdf>

Ontario Agricultural College

Bulletins 99 to 112

You can read these bulletins at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/bulletinsfromont99112onta.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 28th day of May 2023 - Keeping on track

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can view this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26353-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-28th-day-of-may-2023-keeping-on-track>

Programs of The London and Middlesex Historical Society Parts 1-3

The First Bishop of Huron, the Settlement of London (pdf)

You can read these at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/transactions1-3.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Making Scotch Respectable: Buchanan and Walker (pdf)

You can read this chapter at:

<https://electricscotland.com/food/MakingScotchRespectableBuchana.pdf>

MacFarren

Added this name to our Scottish Families page.

Learn more about this name at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/m/MacFarren.html>

Arms of the Scottish Family & Clan Chiefs Map

You can view this map on the right column of our clans page at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/index.html>

Account of the great meeting of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland at Berwick-Upon-Tweed in 1841

You can read this account at:

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/berwickupontweed.pdf>

An Inquiry into the duties of the landholders of Scotland

To the peasantry, and the manner in which these duties have been performed by William Grierson, of Garioch

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/landholders.pdf>

On Hill Shelter

By Mr. D. Bain, Edinburgh (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/hillshelter.pdf>

Securing a Crop of Carrots

By Mr. James Brown

Read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/carrots.pdf>

The Quarterly Journal of Agriculture

Statistical observations on the Health of the labouring population of the District of Kelso, in two decennial periods, from 1777 to 1787, and from 1829 to 1839 by Charles Wilson, M.D., Corresponding Member of the Medical Society of London, &c., Surgeon to the Kelso Dispensary. (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/medical/kelso.pdf>

The King of Saxony's Journey Through England and Scotland in the Year 1844

By Dr. Carl Gustav Carus translated by Br. S. C. Davison, B.A., Da. Ph., &c. (1846) (pdf)

I enjoyed reading this account and you can get to this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/books/pdf/kingsaxonyjour00carugoog.pdf>

A Journey through Scotland

In Familiar Letters from a Gentleman Here to his Friend Abroad bring the third volume, which completes Great Britain by the author of The Journey thro' England. (John Mackay) (1723) (pdf)

From the date of this book you'd be right to recognise that the letter S is written as an F but as I've said before it doesn't take long to get used to it and you can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/books/pdf/journeythroughscotland.pdf>

An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith During his captivity with the Indians, in the years 1755 to 1759 with an Appendix of Illustrative Notes by Wm. M. Darlington, of Pittsburgh (1870) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/america/col-james-smith.pdf>

Christian Belief and Practice

Lessons for the Guidance of Clergy and Teachers by R.D. Richardson, M.A., B.Litt. (1940) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/Christian%20Belief%20and%20Practice.pdf>

Primitive Folk-Moots

Or, Open-Air Assemblies in Britain by George Laurence Gomme, F.S.A. (1880) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/Primitivefolk-moots.pdf>

Life of Thomas Graham. Lord Lynedoch

By Alex. M. Delavoye, Captain 56th Foot (late 90th L.I.) (1880) (pdf)

You can read about him at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/nation/lifeofthomasgrah00delauoft.pdf>

Story

From the Journal of American Folklore

Thrift and Abstinence, "Scotch" Stories:—Three stories on misers and stinginess, entitled "New England Tales," which appeared in the Journal for April-June, 1949 (PP- 190-191) reminded me of a galaxy of similar stories attached to a family in my own midwestern home town. Some of these tales probably were ascribed to them in the same way that a particular sort of bon mot of a generation just past was always accredited to Dorothy Parker, or one of a somewhat different character, in a still earlier generation, to Chauncey Depew; in other cases the family in question probably unconsciously duplicated feats of thrift which had long since become traditional; in still others, however, the family were doubtless in actuality the originators of "Scotch" devices well worthy of standing beside time-honored predecessors. I have no way of determining which of the following stories belong to each of the respective categories; I can only testify that all of the triumphs of thrift here recorded were actually, and apparently in all sincerity, told in my presence as achievements of this particular family.

The central figure was always the husband and father, Mr. Mac (he was not a Mac, actually, but his surname was as Scottish as if he had been), a prosperous farmer; the other members were merely subsidiaries or, perhaps rather, victims.

The most conventional of the tales concerns the father's order that his sons, on the infrequent occasions when they were waring new shoes, should take especially long steps. The mother, it was sometimes eluded, finally obtained a withdrawal of this injunction by pointing out that it involved a serious danger of splitting their trousers.

A very similar story immediately comes to mind, included in Margaret Wilson's novel of a Scottish family in Iowa in the 1860's, *The Able McLaughlins*. Andy McFee, even in his prosperous old age, persisted in removing his shoes when they were not currently needed for walking purposes "till an able grand-daughter-in-law urged him not to misuse shoestrings with such extravagance."

Another similar story, which, however, lacks the element of feminine intervention, has the father say, prior to departing on a journey: 'An', wife, see that wee Wullie tak's off his glasses when he's no lookin' at onything!"

My mother, to whom I recently applied for a check on my recollections, supplied a story which was new to me, probably because lacking in the dramatic qualities of those which I did remember. It was merely that Mr. Mac, discovering that to start his car in the conventional fashion required an undue amount of "gas," used to require his wife and hired man to start it by pushing.

One of the most popular of the stories was of how the man of the house, going the rounds of the stores in search of cracked eggs, stale bread, and wilted vegetables, finally approached the butcher shop. He glanced up at the swinging sign above the door—which represented a side of bacon checked a moment for a second glance, and entered, his brow furrowed with thought. He poked, priced, and depreciated the meats on display, but it was evident that his true interest lay elsewhere. "That side of bacon over the door," he finally remarked, "how often do you change it?" The butcher, a gamesome character, immediately saw where the wind lay. "Why, about every year, I guess—and now that you mention it, I believe the year is just about up." "Well, in that case, how about taking it down and letting me have it?—it wouldn't be worth anything to you after hanging up there all that time in the rain and sun and dust and flies." "Oh I could hardly do that!" demurred the butcher. "It ought to be worth something to somebody. . . ." After protracted bargaining, a sufficiently depreciated price was finally agreed upon, the "side of bacon" taken down, wrapped and delivered, and payment made. The thrifty farmer returned it next day, more in sorrow than in anger. It was, of course, an ingeniously painted slab of wood.

I heard this story so early in my childhood that it was with a "shock of recognition" amounting almost to outrage that I encountered a similar situation in one of the juvenile publications I favored—probably the *American Boy*. In this case, however, the transaction involved a ham—of sawdust-stuffed canvas—which a smart-aleck clerk sold to an aged farmer—not as a bargain but rather as a particularly fine piece of merchandise, hung thus to acquire flavor. The moral, I believe, was that clerks should not play practical jokes on customers. It is unlikely that the *American Boy* story could have been based upon this piece of local folklore and the contrary could not, in this case, have been true. Were both derived from a common origin or was the published story merely a case of art unconsciously imitating nature? I know only that I felt that the published story was itself "damaged goods."

My favorite deals with the father settling his monthly bill at the general store. "Right!" the storekeeper exclaimed. "Thank you very much! And now, if you'll wait just a minute, I'll put up a sack of candy for the children"—as was the genial custom in those days at a settlement of accounts. Mr. Mac put up a restraining hand. "If it's all the same to you," he said, "I think I'll just have the worth of it in assorted nails!"

Mr. Mac here appears as a distant relative of the man who, on Christmas Eve, went out into the backyard, fired off a pistol, and rushed in to the house to inform his children that Santa Claus had just committed suicide.

The final tale deals with a period when Mr. Mac, long since retired from the farm and mellowed by years and prosperity, yielded to his wife's urgings and built a fine large house. The ruling passion, however, temporarily stifled, then returned in full force. The house completed and ready for occupancy, Mr. Mac drew the line at buying appropriate new furniture; instead he personally moved the old furniture into the new house—under

cover of night, with his wife's assistance, by handcart! That he did not do so in full daylight—as he had formerly bargained for wooden sides of bacon and requested the substitution of nails for candy—may, however, be taken as suggesting a weakening of his moral fibre.

These five stories, as a whole, lack, it might be noted, the shocking and nauseating quality characteristic of the "Aberdeen" type of stories—typified by the widow who, on receipt of her late husband's ashes, enquired angrily: "And whaur's the dreepin'?", and the other widow who, on being informed that her drowned husband's body had been found, "full of eels," ordered: "Tak* him back an' set him again!"

They, further, lack the most extreme examples of thrift, meanness which becomes sheer viciousness—though some might assert that the substitution of nails for candy amounts to a contradiction of this statement. I am thinking, however, of such a story as the one about the father who used to pay his children to go without supper—and then charge them the same amount for breakfast!—a version of which appears in the "New England Tales" which inspired this note. Mr. Mac's children, it will be noted, did have shoes—even though the father was ultra-concerned with their care; the family table was supplied with eggs, bread, and vegetables which were approximately equal in nourishing qualities to those appearing on the tables of less careful marketers; and the father intended that his family should have bacon for breakfast—even if of a curiously second-hand character. The family, furthermore, did possess a house, furniture, and a car, and could hardly be classed among the "ill clothed, ill housed, and ill fed."

The stories were always told, as I recall, not in denunciation or with any opprobrious intention, but delightedly and with considerable concern for dramatic effect, as "good stories"—indeed, with a sort of wry admiration for the principal character. They were, significantly, always told by men. My mother—herself no mean teller of tales on a variety of subjects—knew the stories and was willing to run through them to refresh my memory, but employed for the purpose a dry flat style, presenting the episodes as mere pieces of information, and evidently took no pleasure in the narration.

The characteristic narrators had themselves undergone droughts, blizzards, grasshoppers, blights of one kind and another, and had survived successive crop failures only by the most gruelling labors and the most rigid economies—of which their women however, had borne the brunt. Some of them—like Mr. Mac himself—had eventually become prosperous, but they carried over from their early struggles an uneasy feeling that the lack of regard for the pennies which characterized their present existence—the luxuries which, through the insistence of their wives and children, their families now enjoyed—were somehow immoral and likely to bring about a day of reckoning in some sinister future. They therefore took a vicarious pleasure and satisfaction in Mr. Mac's single-handed resistance to those forces of worldliness and extravagance to which they themselves had succumbed. They must have experienced a shock when the new house went up—but, when the hand-cart story got about, they probably drew unconscious sighs of relief. The old virtues were not dead yet—nor would they be while Mr. Mac lived. Because of even one righteous man, it might be that Sodom would yet be saved.

Kenneth Wiggins Porter
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Manufacture of Scotch Whiskey

It is a remarkable fact, says major-general Stewart, in an article on the prevention of smuggling in the Highlands, inserted in the Quarterly Journal of Agriculture, that a spirit of the best quality and flavour has been distilled by men with their apparatus at the side of a burn, and, perhaps, changing weekly from fear of a discovery, malting on the open heath far up the hills, and hurrying on the whole process to avoid detection; yet, with all these disadvantages, they received the highest price in the market for the spirit thus manufactured. The quantity might, perhaps, be less than what could be produced by a more regular process of distillation; but then the liquor was so much superior in flavour and quality, as to compensate for the deficient quantity. Several of these men have been employed, by way of experiment, in a licensed distillery on the estate of Garth, with directions to proceed in their own way, only to be regulated by the laws under the control of an officer; yet, with

the advantage of the best utensils, the purest water, and the best fuel, they produced a spirit quite inferior in quality and flavour to what they made under the shelter of a rock, or in a den, and it sustained neither the same price nor character in the market.

END.

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair