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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for July 20th 2012

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Electric Scotland News

I've noticed Google serving up some Visit Scotland adverts this past week which is tied in with the Brave Disney movie. I still don't understand why Visit Scotland will not provide me with any tourism information as it really doesn't make any sense. However, as I've said before, the tourism industry world wide works the same way. As the tourism industry across the world works the same way I've tried to understand the downside for them not to provide information to other web sites and I still can't understand the logic. I mean say a tourism web site gets 150,000 visitors a month to their web site then that's all they are reaching. However if 100 other web sites provide some of the information then that might reach 1,150,000 people so why wouldn't you want to reach them?

I'm told Clan MacKenzie of Canada now have a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/clanmackenziecanada

A broch is an Iron Age drystone hollow-walled structure of a type found only in Scotland. Brochs include some of the most sophisticated examples of drystone architecture ever created, and belong to the classification "complex Atlantic Roundhouse" devised by Scottish archaeologists in the 1980s. Their origin is a matter of some controversy. The theory that they were defensive military structures is not accepted by many modern archaeologists (see the 'general references' below), while the alternative notion that they were farmhouses is dismissed by some others. Although most stand alone in the landscape, some examples exist of brochs surrounded by clusters of smaller dwellings. There is controversy about whether or not brochs were roofed.

While working on a book about Shetland I found a really excellent video on YouTube about "The Tower People of Shetland" which you can view at: <http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/3115-The-Tower-People-of-Shetland>

ABOUT THE STORIES

Some of the stories in here are just parts of a larger story so do check out the site for the full versions. You can always find the link in our "What's New" section in our site menu and at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm> and also <http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

We try not to point to a pdf file and instead send you to page where the pdf can be downloaded.

Electric Canadian

Camping in the Canadian Rockies

An Account of Camp Life in the Wilder parts of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, together with a description of the Region about Banff, Lake Louise and Glacier, and a Sketch of the early Explorations by Walter Dwight Wilcox (1896).

Now completed this book and you can read the concluding chapters at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/camping/index.htm>

The Prairie Provinces

A short history of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta by D. M. Duncan, M.A.

A new book we're starting and I also found an excellent wee video on YouTube which is an Educational film about the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the northwest territories of Keewatin, Mackenzie and Franklin in 1943.

You can view the film and read the book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/prairiendx.htm>

Life in Early Canada

This is a series of 7 short films created by the Film Board of Canada. You can view these at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/early_canada.htm

The Flag in the Wind

This issue was Compiled by Fraser Hudghton. In this issue he has a range of articles which make an interesting read although I am totally opposed to his views on being a member of the EU he is of course entitled to his own views.

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

Electric Scotland

The Bards of Bon Accord 1375 - 1860

By William Walker

Added:

Peter Buchan

John Burness

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

Northern Notes and Queries

Note: In the pdf version of the newsletter I am placing a graphic of the Contents page so you can see what is included in each issue.

June 1892

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This issue can be viewed at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/northern/index.htm>

Scenes and Legends of The North of Scotland
or the Traditional History of Cromarty by Hugh Miller (1869)

We've now completed this book and the final chapters can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/cromarty/index.htm>

The Life and Work of James Abernethy, C.E., F.R.S.E.
Past President of the Institution of Civil Engineers by his son John S. Abernethy (1867).

Have now also completed this book and the final chapters can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/abernethy/index.htm>

The Story of Edinburgh Castle
By Louis Weirter (1913)

We've now got up several chapters...

- Chapter I: Once Upon A Time
- Chapter II: Queen Margaret
- Chapter III. Dark Days
- Chapter IV. The Black Dinner
- Chapter V. The Blackest Day for Scotland
- Chapter VI. The Power of the Douglas
- Chapter VII. The Coronation of Charles the First
- Chapter VIII. Cromwell and the Ministers
- Chapter IX. Bonnie Prince Charlie
- Chapter X. The Story of the Regalia

The chapter on "The Blackest Day for Scotland" starts...

JAMES III was only seven years old when he succeeded his father in 1460, and no time was lost in arranging his coronation at Kelso Abbey, near to Roxburgh, whither his grief-stricken mother had hastened to make a chivalrous appeal to the troops besieging the castle. As usual there was a difficulty in arranging the regency. This nearly terminated in bloodshed, as the Queen's claim did not

receive the support of the Barons, who refused to submit to the sway of a woman. The matter, however, was eventually settled by appointing the Bishop of St. Andrews as joint guardian, and investing the Earl of Angus with supreme military power as Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, and the new reign commenced with great promise. But unfortunately the old Earl died not long after, which was a great loss to Scotland. The Queen-Mother, too, died suddenly, so that a great responsibility now rested on the Bishop, who continued to carry out the pacific policy for which he had constantly striven.

In due time James approached a marriageable age and an advantageous matrimonial alliance was formed with Margaret, daughter of the King of Denmark and Norway, who was known as "little Margaret, the maiden of Norway."

The alliance was further rendered acceptable to the nation in that the royal bridegroom "gatt with the King of Denmarkes dochter, in tocher guid, the landis of Orkney and Zetland," and in the month of July 1469, the future Queen landed at Leith in the presence of an immense crowd and amid general rejoicings of the people.

According to Abercromby, "the very sight of such a Queen could not but endear her to all ranks of people, who, to congratulate her happy arrival, and to create in her a good opinion of themselves and the country, entertained her and her princely train for many days with delicious and costly feasts."

But these festivities, at the Castle and elsewhere, gave place to events of a quite different character, and the young King did not foresee the troubles that awaited him. James evidently had no conception of his duties and responsibilities as monarch, sacrificing the interests of his kingdom to his tastes for the fine arts.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/edinburgh/castle05.htm>

The other chapters can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/edinburgh/castle.htm>

Songs by John Henderson

John sent us in another two songs one of which is "Gargunnock Blues":

Parody lyrics composed by John Henderson in June, 2012
to the music that Fred Meinken composed in 1921 for the song, 'Wabash Blues',
here played by Jim Bottorff.

Often quite nostalgic since the day that he'd departed from his Scottish home;
Carse beneath his feet where crops were hard to beat but he then had longed to roam;
His old farmhouse he could well see, where all his life had been as grand as could be,
Now ev'ry day Jock's so homesick it's misery.

Oh, Gargunnock Blues,
A dirge Jock can't diffuse,
His weary soul's awry,
And makes him want to die,
Sunset's light that gleams,
Haunts him in his dreams,
So he pulls on his shoes,
To lose those carseland blues.

On Jock's window-sill a candle light is shining bright,
Mem'ry brings the scent of new-mown hay to him each night,
He is longing for that glen no need to ask him when,
He'll be leaving footprints t'ward his homeland once again.
And hopes to see the moonshine on the mountains ev'ry eve,
Seems that such a picture's bound to make his old heart heave
And cajole his mind to reach his homeland far away,
But until that happens here's the best that Jock can say:

"Oh, Gargunnock Blues,
A dirge I can't diffuse,
My weary soul's awry,
It makes me want to die,
Sunset's light that gleams,
Haunts me in my dreams,
I'll pull on walking shoes,

To lose my carseland blues."

The other song is "Old Codger" which can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel447.htm>

Days at the Coast

A series of Sketches descriptive of the Frith of Clyde, its Watering Places, its Scenery and its Associations by Hugh MacDonald (1860).

This is a new book we're starting and here is the Preface...

The Sketches contained in the present volume are the fruit of a series of personal excursions, extending over several summers, to the several localities to which they refer. The writer's primary intention in commencing the series was to describe, to the best of his ability, the various towns and watering-places, with the islands, the lochs, and, in short, the principal features, natural and artificial, of the Frith of Clyde. But his design was not confined to mere description. The shores of the spacious estuary alluded to are rich, not only in material beauty, but in all the charms of historical and traditional association. These the writer has everywhere endeavoured to glean, either from old musty tomes and records of the past, or from the lips of that useful personage, the "oldest inhabitant" of the respective localities. By the diligence and assiduity with which he has conducted these investigations, the writer has been enabled to expiscate a considerable quantity of auld warld lore; and he feels confident that a perusal of his pages will not only prove instructive (with regard to such matters) to the stranger who pays a passing visit to the Frith, but to many who have long been familiar with its shores, but who may have neglected to make themselves acquainted with their numerous and most interesting associations. In laying the result of his labours before the public, the writer therefore hopes that he is, to some extent, supplying a desideratum, and that his volume may be regarded as a not altogether unnecessary addition to the topographical literature of the West of Scotland.

The writer may also mention that the Sketches contained in the present volume have been composed in the intervals of his professional labours as a member of the newspaper press, and that they appeared, from time to time, in the columns of two of the Glasgow journals with which he has had the honour of being connected. These facts are mentioned in excuse of any appearances of carelessness in style—often the result of hasty composition—or of inaccurate arrangement, which is frequently occasioned by an interrupted and fragmentary method of publication.

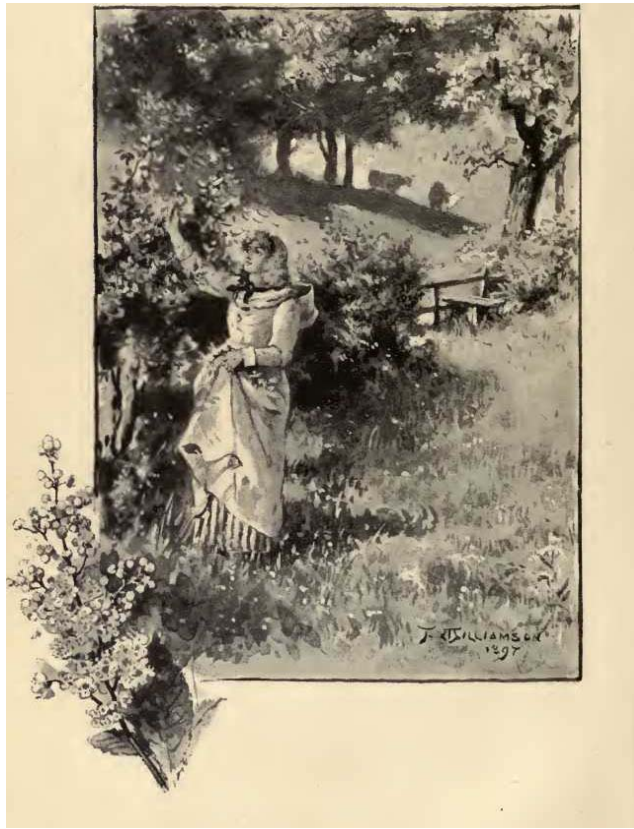
H. M'D.
92 John Street, Bridgeton,
Glasgow, October, 1857.

You can read this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/coast/index.htm>

Wild Flowers of Scotland

By J. H. Crawford (1897)

Another new book we're starting...



Here is a bit from the Introduction...

LESS has been said in a pleasant way about the wild flowers than about the wild animals of Scotland. Yet our four-footed creatures are few, and their tale easily told. Our wild birds, too, have been sadly thinned out, with the exception of sea forms; and these belong to other coasts as well. Birds have wings, and can cross water.

Whereas the many wild flowers are well-nigh untouched. Nor do they fly about from place to place, but remain pretty much where they have been all along. They are ours, in a sense in which other living things are not.

Moreover, they are out of fellowship with the wild flowers of other lands. There is no common border across which they mingle with kindred forms. Like ourselves, they have a semi-island character, and have grown into what they are by long ages spent within the Channel. They have been shaped and coloured here.

If the quest is not exciting, it is not therefore less interesting. Some of the ruder elements of sport are absent. We do not shoot them, nor do we hunt them with dogs.

You can read this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/wildflowers/index.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

By Frank Shaw

Ken Simpson continues to hit the "nail on the head" as a Robert Burns scholar and writer! As to Burns, Simpson excels in both areas as his article proves and it is one of a trilogy of conference articles on Highland Mary presented by Ken, Gerry Carruthers and Ross Roy. The three were guests of the Greenock Burns Club which is also known as "The Mother Club" in the global Burns community. The conference was held on 21st April 2012 at Greenock Lyle Kirk and was organized by President Margaret Dickson. She brought the three Burns scholars together to commemorate Highland Mary, a.k.a. Mary Campbell. These three added new insights to this almost mystical creature of love – Highland Mary.

You can find Gerry's article in Chapter 128 of Robert Burns Lives! and Ross's will appear later, perhaps as early as next week. Chances are good that I will write a fourth article on the conference itself to accompany this series of speeches. I have seen some very good pictures of the participants in Greenock and, if they wind their way to my office as promised, I think you will be pleased with them. In the meantime, here is Ken's article. (FRS: 7.18.12)

'Love and Poesy': Burns and Highland Mary By Ken Simpson.

You can read this at http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives144.htm

Other articles can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns.htm>

From Shetland to British Columbia, Alaska and the United States

Being a Journal of Travels, with narrative of return journey after three years exploration by Sinclair Thomson Duncan (1911).

It was while searching for a book about Shetland that I came across this book and enjoyed reading it so thought I'd share it with you. It is one long book with no chapters and can be read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/shetland/travel.htm>

Information on the name Wright

Thought I'd add a little information on the name Wright. In actual fact this was as a result of getting in an email asking me for such so I looked through the Surnames of Scotland and I scanned in the entry for the name and send it to him. I then thought that having done that I might as well stick it up on the site. There is actually a suggestion that people with the name MacIntyre took that name to Anglicize their name. You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/macintyre/wright.htm>

Hotch Potch and Kedgeree

By Sir Allan Arthur.

I came across this book which has many illustrations and amusing stories and so have made it available for you to download and have a read. Hope you enjoy it.

Here is the Preface for you to read here...

Many years ago I was present at a St. Andrew's Dinner in Bombay, at which Lord Rosebery was a guest. He was an unexpected guest, as the P. & O. mail steamer arrived 12 hours before it was due, which it never does nowadays. An express message was sent on board the mail to invite His Lordship to the dinner, and, though he arrived in Bombay only a couple of hours before the dinner hour, he duly attended the Banquet. Naturally his name was not on the Toast List, but his countrymen were not to be denied and insisted on his making a speech. He rose and told his audience that, while he had been long enough in India to write a book, he feared he had not been sufficiently long in the country to find material for a speech.

It is not to be presumed that, in making this humorous remark, this eminent Scotsman claimed that a short residence in India was the sole qualification for the writing of a book, or intended to suggest that an aspirant to literary effort, in the matter of a book, need be deprived of all hope of even moderate success by a very long residence in this country, although in the case of a Scot it might rub off much of the "polish" acquired by him at Aberdeen, Glasgow, Perth or some other place in the North. In the course of four decades, which have been decreed to be my lot in India, a vast amount of flotsam and jetsam has floated beneath the bridges of rivers like the Clyde and the Hooghly, upon whose banks, with a few intervals of absence from each, four-fifths of my life have been spent. Some of this floating stuff I have endeavoured to pick up as it glided by, with the result that much material, containing, as I think, a considerable amount of humour, has been gathered together and stored up, without ever a dream of its being at any time put into print.

I would have shrunk at any time in the past from the publicity and criticism attaching to the writer of a book, but everything has been altered by this awful war. As I am barred by the age limit, to my infinite regret, from joining the glorious throng of young Britishers, who are rolling up in their tens of thousands from all quarters of the Empire to be present at the certain and final overthrow of foul Germany, and to whom I take off my hat in profound admiration, and as a lame leg (to descend to the particular) prevents me from even becoming a Volunteer in the Calcutta Scottish or the Light Horse, it has occurred to me to do my little "bit" by arranging in book form and giving away for the benefit of those affected by the war a selection from my flotsam and jetsam, which I have been jealously guarding for my own hoarding.

When they see the delightful words "giving away," some of the Scots of Calcutta will be thinking that they are going to be given the fine chance of getting a book for nothing, but, unless they steal it, they won't get "Hotch Potch" and Mr. Macrae's Sketches for nothing. What they are going to get for nothing is what is in the book, but they have got to pay for the book itself. To some it may perhaps appear an old-fashioned publication, but others may find it as pleasing an investment as a National, Kinnison or Kanknarrah Jute Mill Ordinary at a price that is not fabulous, and no objection will be made to the rich men of the East ordering more copies than they want, which Her Excellency will be pleased to take charge of for despatch to the trenches.

If the book benefits the War Fund, for which it is published, to any material extent, I shall get my reward in having less of that feeling, which must come sooner or later to all old "dead beats," an expression applied in Australia to old fellows who are no good to any one, and so I offer my humble wares for what they will fetch to Her Excellency Lady Carmichael, who has been pleased to accept them, for the benefit of Her Excellency's Bengal Women's War Fund, which, as most people in India know, is a fund for the purpose of ameliorating the lot of our magnificent fighting men, British and Indian, who are serving their King and Country in Eastern Lands, more particularly in Mesopotamia and Persia.

I feel I have taken a great liberty in mentioning by name many of the actors in "Hotch Potch," and if any of my readers, on coming across his or her name or face or that of a friend in its pages, should take offence thereat, I would make them my most humble apologies, and would plead that stories, such as are collected in this volume, are much more entertaining if the real actors are named.

Robert Burns sang :—

"O wad some Pow'r the gif tie gie us
To see oorsels as ithers see us."

All who walk through the pages of "Hotch Potch"—even the "Bashfu' Bride" of my first Scottish story, who, though apparently highly approving of me, only suffered me to sit in her compartment for fear of "Some one waur" coming in at Motherwell—are seen by me only through glasses of the greatest good humour, and, if any to whom I have offered my apologies are still unappeased, I would still plead with them that there is no one more chaffed in the book than the author, and, if a laugh is occasionally raised against him and his co-actors and co-actresses, let us remember that we are being made the sport of the public in a noble cause.

You can get to this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/hotchpotch.htm>

And finally...

A Square Meal

NOSTALGIA alert! A new edition of Alan Brown's book Craigendoran Steamers has been published to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Waverley paddle steamer. In it, we read about speedy rival, the Jeanie Deans and its galley boy Alec, who found potato-peeling a tiresome chore. One day he completed the task quickly by simply cutting off all the sides of the potatoes.

The chief steward, glancing at the tub, abruptly stopped and asked: "Hey Alec, whit's all this, square potatoes?"

"Ah," replied the galley boy, "it's a wee bit rough the day, and that's tae stop them rolling off the plates."

And that's all for now and hope you all have a great weekend.

Alastair
