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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for October 26th 2012

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#### Electric Scotland News

Well I confess this was a light week for me and so didn't achieve very much. I think I needed a wee break so got stuck into some serious reading of a new Science Fiction series I acquired. I did however make a start at a new book on a Significant Scot, one James MacGregor, which is intended for the Electric Canadian site as it provides some great information about the living and social conditions at an early period in Nova Scotia's history.

I have also worked more on researching the First Nations people in Canada and will be publishing some of my research this coming week which will include information on the Cree and the Sioux. I have also started a new book on the History of Kilsyth which is more of my work trying to tell the history of places in Scotland.

On the longer term I am going to embark on some serious research on the Septs of the Clans. As you may know many clans have quite large Sept lists. My understanding is that only the chief of the clan can change this list and if the clan does not have a chief then the list stays as it was. What I want to find out is how a Sept list came into being. Is there an official document that states who the Septs are? Is there any information on why these Septs are Septs? What I'd like to see from ALL Clan societies is a list of their Septs but against each one show either "Information available" or "No Information available". The reason I am interested in this is that talking to a few clan chiefs I am told that they mostly just accepted the list when they inherited the Chieftdom and so they don't really know why a particular name is listed as a Sept.

I did get a communication about Clan MacGregor...

Where MacGregor's are concerned, during the period of proscription many of the clan temporarily adopted the name of whatever clan was willing to give them shelter in order to avoid persecution. MacGregor's went one further when many adopted a name which reflected the trade plied by the individual so among septs of Clan Gregor you will find names like :-

Arrowsmith - Maker of arrow-heads  
Black(smith) - Self explanatory  
Bowmaker - Self explanatory

Fletcher - Maker of arrows  
Peat/Peter etc - Supplier of fuel  
Skinner - Possibly the butcher  
Stalker - Gamekeeper  
Stringer - Assisting the bowmaker  
Walker - Self explanatory

Of course how that translates into how they became officially recognised as Septs rather than "other names of the clan" I'm still not sure.

I note confusion over having a clan gathering in Scotland during 2014. The latest information suggests this will now not take place. The reason is that Stirling Council say there is simply no room to host the event at Bannockburn as the site is surrounded by housing estates.

## Electric Canadian

### Canadian Monthly Magazine

Published by the Vanderhoof-Gunn Publishing Company

I've now added Volume 40 and this is the last volume I could find.

This can be found at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/magazine/index.htm>

### Young Canada's Nursery Rhymes

By J C Byers

I thought this might be an interesting read for parents and the younger family members. You can read it at:

[http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/nursery\\_rhymes.htm](http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/nursery_rhymes.htm)

### Memoir of the Rev James MacGregor D.D.

Missionary of the General Associate Synod of Scotland to Pictou, Nova Scotia with Notices of the Colonization of the Lower Provinces of British America, and of the Social and Religious condition of the Early Settlers by his Grandson The Rev. George Patterson (1859). This is a new book we're starting on.

This is an interesting read of a Significant Scot in Canada but it also provides an insight into living and social conditions at the time.

You can read this book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/macgregor/index.htm>

## The Flag in the Wind

This weeks edition was Compiled by Margaret Hamilton.

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

## Electric Scotland

### Northern Notes and Queries

This week we have a new editor for this publication.

This issue includes...

Portraits of the Marquis of Argyll, his son the 9th Earl, and the 1st, and, and 3rd Dukes

The Saxon Lineage of the Macfarlanes—

The Pedigree of Walter Macfarlane of that Ilk, Antiquary and Genealogist

Old Scots Bank-Notes

Expenses of a Student at St. Salvador's College, St. Andrews, 1684 : A Letter

King-Edward Writs

A Jacobite (?) Petition

Pike-head from Corbet Tower

The nearly twelve years' occupation of—James Macveigh?

William III. and the Synod of Argyll, 1691  
Marriage—Special Licence  
Funerals of Unbaptised Children, Kiltarn, Ross-shire  
The Deil's Dander '—A Vitrifaction in Berwickshire  
Dancing, Golf, and Curling in 1774  
Abstract of Protocol Book of the Burgh of Stirling (continued)  
The Commissariat Register of Shetland (continued)  
The Loing Collection of Charters, etc., in the Library of the University of Edinburgh

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

### **Reminiscences of the Royal Burgh of Haddington**

And Old East Lothian Agriculturists by John Martine (1883).

We added the following chapters this week...

William Brodie of Upper Keith and Amisfield Mains  
Adam Bogue or Woodhall and Linplum  
John Hepburn of Bearford  
Robert Tweedie of West Hopes  
Farm Stewards in East Lothian

and this now completes this book.

You can read the rest of these chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/haddington/index.htm>

### **Sketches of Virginia**

Historical and Biographical by The Rev. William Henry Foote D.D. (1856)

We're now up to Chapter XXV of this book. In chapter XXIV we learn about a Scots-Irish gentleman, Rev. Daniel Blain...

For those fond only of the exciting, and the thrilling, and the imposing, Rev. Daniel Blain presented in his life and character little that is pleasing. To those who can delight in the calm sunshine of heaven, beaming with endless splendor, he has much to offer for meditation and love. Like a spring day, with its clouds and light showers, and much sweet sunshine; beautiful in its rising, enlivening in its noon, and lovely in its early close; one of those days that make spring so dear, and is so necessary a preparation for seed time, and the after harvest; that medium between winter and summer, the want of which makes tropical climes wearisome and enervating; a day in which there is no thunder or lightning, or chilling frost, in which no blood freezing event takes place, no great and notable circumstance, but a succession of events, some pleasing, all necessary to make up the web of human life, he exhibited acts and graces breathing of heaven, and finally perfected in heaven. President Baxter loved him as his amiable professor and co-laborer; his brethren called him "the amiable Mr. Blain," and Mr. Blain, "that amiable man." He was born in South Carolina, Abbeville District, in 1713, of the Scotch Irish race. His father was among the pioneers upon the head waters of the Savannah, on the South Carolina side, and formed a part of that emigration, whose descendants have made Abbeville District famous in political history.

Of a mild and gentle disposition, equally removed from self-complacency or presumption, and from cowardice or fear, guileless, generous, unpretending and cheerful, young Blain passed his early life on the frontiers in the American Revolution. Like Andrew Jackson, and a multitude of Scotch-Irish boys in North and South Carolina, who in maturer years rose to eminence and worth, he was familiar with the privations and distresses and battles and massacres of the famous campaigns of the southern war. In the plunderings and excesses and wanton cruelties of the marauding parties, the Presbyterian settlements, from their known and stern adherence to the principles of American Independence, had the greatest share. The large Bible, with David's Psalms in metre, was sure evidence that rebels of the worst sort lived in that house. Singing old Rouse, rebellion and being plundered, were synonymous terms; and hardships and privations were familiar consequences. You can read the rest of this chapter at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/virginia/chapter24.htm>

You can read the other chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/virginia/index.htm>

### **Reminiscences of the Lews**

By Sixty One (1871)

This week we've added the following chapters...

Chapter XVI - Lews Climate and Midges  
Chapter XVII - Stornoway

Chapter XVIII - Superstitions  
Chapter XIX - M'Auley's Stories  
Chapter XX - My First Wild Boar  
Chapter XXI - The Late Duke of St. Simon

Here is how the chapter on Stornoway starts...

AFTER all I have said of the Lews I must not forget its capital, Stornoway the magnificent, the London of the Hebrides; the city of merchants, the grand emporium in those northern climes of cod and ling, herrings and haddock. It beats the world, and Dublin Bay to boot, for the haddies, and everything for the herrings except Yarmouth and the Dutch coast. How cheery and pleasant it looks of a bright morning, with its white houses in a sort of amphitheatre round the bay, and up the rising ground above, flashing in the sun as you sail in; the castle standing well to the left, a good feature in the landscape, till they spoil it by tacking on a wretched conservatory, Crystal Palace fashion, to it. Who the mischief ever saw a conservatory hanging on to a baronial castle, like a Chinese pagoda?

When first I knew this great capital it was a nasty place, redolent of anything but the sweets of Araby, badly lighted, wretchedly paved and roaded, with such mud and such holes ! But now it is very much improved. There is a nice pavement in many of the chief streets. It is lighted to a certain extent with gas. It is made now a Scotch burgh, and there is, I think, a corporation. The inhabitants and the proprietor fell out about the foreshores and the quays. Who was right or who was wrong I never could make out, but they settled it, I presume, to their mutual satisfaction; and the town certainly progresses, and is assuming every year a neater and cleaner appearance. I believe the inhabitants are very much indebted to that very excellent and systematically improving lady, Mrs. Percival, who is there, as she ever has been wherever her lot has been cast, as active as she is judicious and benevolent in all she does. There is a Freemasons' Hall, -a good room, in which many is the reel I have seen danced, and awful the quantity of toddy imbibed. Underneath the said hall is, or was, a billiard-table, at which the Stornowegians played their matches. So curious a specimen of what a table can be I never saw. It was not large; for, had it been, no human arm, with the strongest cue, could ever have pocketed a ball. Even as it was, but for a certain natural attraction in the pockets, large as they were, taking up a considerable portion of this table, this feat never could have been performed. The surface was not slate, but a sort of wooden ridge and furrow, with deep holes, covered over with very rough baize. The balls were very large, corresponding to the pockets. The only plan of making a hazard was to hit your ball very hard into one of these holes, out of which, if it had force and way enough, it made a sort of ricochet, and hopped over in the line of a pocket, which, if it only landed near enough, was sure to engulf it; for never had even Scylla and Charybdis such powers of suction as these pockets. It was rather a service of danger looking on at one of these matches; for the room not being very much larger than the table, if one of these cannon-balls in its bound cleared the pocket,. and took you in the pit of the stomach, which it sometimes did, it would have knocked you over, but for the wall, that brought you up standing. Dick Burnaby was a tremendous hand at this table, and, had the play been high, he might have ruined Stornoway; for he was a good player anywhere, but at this table invincible. Fortunately, "the tables" were the highest stake ever thought of, and I don't think Dick's play ever cost him much.

You can read the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/lews/chapter17.htm>

You can read this book and the opening chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/lews/index.htm>

### **Robert Burns Lives!**

Edited by Frank Shaw

I have heard about Robert Fergusson since I began studying Burns back in the early 1990s and one day while in Edinburgh, Susan and I walked into McNaughtan's Bookshop on Haddington Place and met the proprietor, Elizabeth Strong, a lady who knows her books. I would buy a lot of books from her over the subsequent years, but I have always treasured my first purchase from her on the subject of Fergusson. We found a beautiful leather 1812 two-volume set entitled *The Poetical Works of Fergusson with his Life*. I remember hand-carrying it on the airplane from Manchester to Atlanta to make sure it was not damaged in any way on the trip home.

Today I welcome Rhona Brown back to *Robert Burns Lives!* as one who already has several articles on this web site. Her new book, *Robert Fergusson and the Scottish Periodical Press*, is the first monograph on Fergusson since 1984 when Fred Freeman published his book, *Robert Fergusson and the Scots Humanist Compromise*. Basically, a monograph is a book written by one person on a single subject. Dr. Rhona Brown has excelled in this arena writing with her new publication on Fergusson.

In an email I asked this of Dr. Brown: "While doing your research and writing your book, what stands out as something unexpected to you...something you ran across that you did not expect to find or something that perked you up because you did find a bit of news about Fergusson you were unaware of, or for that matter, something on the Fergusson/Burns connection?"

Rhona answered, "I did find some unexpected things during my research, but this is always the nature of research! One of the things that interested me most was the ways in which Fergusson's poetry aligned with news stories, particularly of public celebrations in Edinburgh. As 'The Daft Days', 'The King's Birth-Day in Edinburgh' and 'Leith Races' are published, the Weekly Magazine prints details of riots and misbehaviour among Edinburgh residents on these holidays. I think my book's strategy of reading the poems through the lens of the magazines in which they were first printed shows just how contemporary Fergusson was. He's often seen as being nostalgic

for pre-Union Scotland and for days gone by, but his magazine context shows us that he was responding to day-to-day events and news stories with real immediacy. Although, very sadly, Burns and Fergusson never met, it's clear that Fergusson is in the literati's minds when Burns arrives in Edinburgh in 1787. In the contemporary periodical press and poetry publications, there are lots of tributes to Burns which recognise his genius and vitality, but also very much see him as Fergusson's Scots vernacular successor."

I'm excited about Rhona's new book and hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

You can read this article, Robert Fergusson and the Scottish Periodical Press by Rhona Brown at:  
[http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns\\_lives157.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives157.htm)

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

### **Songs of John Henderson**

John sent us in another song, A Guid Deal O' Reelin', in the Dorric language. which you can view at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel455.htm>

### **A Significant Scot - William Sharp**

Scottish poet, literary biographer, and romantic story-teller. You can read about him at:  
[http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sharp\\_william.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sharp_william.htm)

### **Kilsyth, A Parish History**

This is a new book we're starting which of course is another place in Scotland. You can view this book at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/kilsyth>

### **Laura McGhee**

A Scots Lass now resident in Nashville and you can learn more about her and watch one of her music videos at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/3361-Laura-Mcghee>

### **5 Days Around Scotland**

Sandy Campbell was taking a friend around Scotland and so he's sending us in 5 pdf files containing pictures and notes of their travels. We now have the first 2 files in for you to read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/travel/tours/5days.htm>

### **The Little White Bird by James Barrie**

We've decided to serialize this book as part of the reason is that his famous Peter Pan first appeared in it which led to the play. You can read this at [http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/barrie\\_james.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/barrie_james.htm)

### **Banffshire Maritime & Heritage Association Books**

Got an email in saying...

Alastair I have finally managed to get some of our books on Amazon and downloadable for the KINDLE. These may be of interest to Scots living outside Scotland who don't have the same access to our books which are generally only on sale locally. All proceeds to the Banffshire Maritime & Heritage Association.

Along the Coast - Pennan to St. Fergus  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009VRPW10>

Along the Coast - Burghead to Portknockie  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009V3FTX0>

Along the Coast - Cullen to Pennan  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009V3FUZC>

Along the Coast - St. Fergus to The Bridge of Don (This one is new and is currently only available on the kindle)  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009V5AIWK>

### **And finally...**

Och Nae Whisky

As a postman in a previous life, a friend of mine was delivering the mail on a horrible morning just before Christmas. It was blowing a gale with rain, sleet and snow.

He knocked on the door of a house which was opened by a dear old woman. She said: "Oh, look at you, son." (He was soaked to the skin.)

"What a state you are in. Would you like an orange?"

He replied: "That's very kind of you to offer, but no thanks."

She then said: "Would you like a hauf?"

Postie's eyes lit up. "That would be great."

She replied: "Just wait till I get a knife."

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

Alastair

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