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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 21st 2012

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Electric Scotland News

I've never been that interested in genealogy however over the years I've had genealogy research done on myself by a couple of people. The first was way back and was to illustrate how a genealogist goes about their work and they used me to illustrate that. Then John Henderson had a go and found that I have a number of illegitimizes in my line. At the time he thought I might actually be a Boyd although there was a possibility of me being a MacMillan. .

On 19th December 2012 John sent in this note...

Alastair,

Re the probable father of your grandfather, the illegitimate Alexander Boyd (later called McIntyre) born to **Elizabeth Boyd** in 1878 in Largs, I have found the only relevant **Alexander McMillan** candidate for the father.

Assuming fish trade between Largs and Killean/Kenchenzie, Argyll, and knowing from the attached Censuses that both Alexander McMillan Snr. and **son Alexander McMillan Jnr.** were fishermen, and from your notes that **Elizabeth Boyd's** father Crawford Boyd was a prominent fisherman in Largs, young **Alexander** probably had a liaison with **Elizabeth** whilst across the water!

Thus, your paternal line blood may well be that of McMillan of Argyll !

What's that saying... a Captain has a lass in every port?

Fascinating stuff this genealogy! <grin>

While working on the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness I have published an account of their first Annual Supper in which I read a plea to help preserve any texts on the Gaelic language. This made me feel a little guilty as usually I ignore Gaelic texts firstly because I can't read it but secondly I figured very few of our visitors could read it either. This being the case I have now decided to do something about it so now under our Scots Language section I have now created a section for Gaelic and also for the Doric language. As I come across texts in these languages I'll now add them to the site.

The Doric language section can be found at <http://www.electricscotland.com/culture/features/scots/doric.htm>

The Gaelic language section can be found at <http://www.electricscotland.com/gaelic/index.htm>

As I have been working on extracting articles from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness I've decided to make the complete volumes available on the site. While they obviously contain English texts there are in fact a lot of articles in Gaelic and so you'll now be able to read these as well. I have obtained volumes 1 to 26 and am now currently working on adding all of them to the site. When you click on a volume you'll be taken to a web page where I've made available the contents page with a link to download the volume in pdf format. I hope to complete all 26 volumes by the weekend.

This week we managed to get our Electric Scotland Community updated to the latest release. Now all that is left to do is to upgrade all our add-ons which should be done by the weekend. I know Steve had intended to do the add-ons on Wednesday but he had to get a pain killer or something for his pulled shoulder so he was kind of out of it as a result.

Ranald reminded me that I should produce my one page Calendar for 2013 so have now created one which you can download in pdf format for easy printing at <http://www.electricscotland.org/attachment.php?attachmentid=1415&d=1355439666>. I actually attached it to a message in our Electric Scotland Community but the link does seem to work ok.

Electric Canadian

Roughing it in the Bush

or Forrest Life in Canada by Susanna Moodie (1871).

I have now completed this book with the following chapters....

The Fire
The Outbreak
The Whirlwind
The Walk to Dummer
A Change in our Prospects
Adieu to the Woods

You can read these chapters at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/roughing/index.htm>

Canada in Flanders

By Sir Max Aitken MP (1916)

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

PREFACE

By the Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The author of this book is an intimate personal friend, and possibly for that reason I take too favourable a view of his work; but I think

he has already rendered a great service, and not to Canada alone.

As Canadian Record Officer, he published a glowing account of the part played in the Battle of Ypres by the Canadian contingent. This account was circulated widely, and it contributed largely to make the deeds of the Canadian soldiers a household word, not only throughout the Dominion, but in the United Kingdom as well.

The present work seems to me a model of lucid, picturesque, and sympathetic narrative, and it will have, I feel sure, a lasting value.

We have a right to feel very proud of the part which is being played in the terrible tragedy of this war by the great Dominions of the British Crown. We had no power to compel any one of them to contribute a single penny, or to send a single man, but they have given of their best, not to help us, though I think they would have done that also, but to defend the Empire which is theirs as much as ours.

Led by a General who a few years ago was in arms against us and who is the Prime Minister of South Africa, the Union Government have wrested from Germany a territory larger than the whole German Empire; and a South African contingent is now in England ready to play their part on the battlefields of Flanders.

The Australians and New Zealanders have shown in the Dardanelles that in courage, resourcefulness, and tenacity better troops have never existed in the world. Whatever the final result of that operation may be, the blood which has been shed there has not been shed in vain. Not to Australians and New Zealanders alone, but to men of every race throughout the British Empire, the Peninsula of Gallipoli will for ever be sacred ground because of the brave men who lie buried there.

“In glory will they sleep, and endless sanctity.”

What Canada has done, and is doing, shines out in every page of this book. Higher praise could not be given than was contained in the despatch of the Commander-in-Chief after the Battle of Ypres: “ In spite of the danger to which they were exposed, the Canadians held their ground with a magnificent display of tenacity and courage, and it is not too much to say that the bearing and conduct of these splendid troops averted a disaster which might have been attended with most serious consequences.”

Our enemies said, and probably they believed, that the outbreak of war would be the signal for the breaking-up of the British Empire. They have been mistaken. After this war the relations between the great Dominions and the Mother Country can never be the same again. The pressure of our enemies is welding us together, and the British Empire is becoming in reality, as well as in name, a united nation.

A. Bonar Law.

Colonial Office,
December 6th, 1915.

You can read this book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/flanders/index.htm>

Robert McLean Calder

A Berwickshire Bard who made his home in Chatham.

I was sent in a couple of books in pdf format about this Bard as having settled in Chatham myself they thought I might be interested and so decided to share them on the site.

You can get to these at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/calder.htm>

Scottish Studies Foundation - A History

Just noticed that there has been a history produced about the Scottish Studies Foundation which I thought you might be interested in reading and is available at <http://www.scottishstudies.com/950-historyscotlandarticle.htm>

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks edition was Compiled by Gary Knox and a quite chatty one it is too.

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

Electric Scotland

Northern Notes and Queries gives way to "The Scottish Historical Review".

We have now exhausted these volumes and we're now proceeding to provide the publication that superseded it "The Scottish Historical Review".

These are available as pdf files on the Internet Archive but as usual no information is provided giving you details of the contents of these volumes. For this reason we're going to add a volume each week and also provide you with the contents of each volume. Also, as these publications are large downloads, we're splitting each volume into a number of smaller downloads.

First we had "Northern Notes and Queries" which was superseded by the "Scottish Antiquary" and this has now been superseded by the "Scottish Historical Review".

You can read the first volume at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

In actual fact we did get in an article last week but as I completed the newsletter earlier that usual it came just as I put it to bed.

Scotland and the 19th-Century World edited by Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie and Alastair Renfrew

This book review has been fun to write! The book was edited by Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie and Alastair Renfrew, three men who know their subjects and who acquired twelve noted scholars to write a most interesting and thought provoking book. It is entitled **Scotland and the 19th-Century World**. All are as talented as they come, and it is literature at its best!

Before going any further, let me give you a quote from the back cover of the book:

"The nineteenth century is often read as a time of retreat and diffusion in Scottish literature under the overwhelming influence of British identity. **Scotland and the 19-Century World** presents Scottish literature as altogether more dynamic, with narratives of Scottish identity working beyond the merely imperial. This collection of essays by leading international scholars highlights Scottish literary intersections with North America, Asia, Africa and Europe. James Macpherson, Francis Jeffrey, Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson and John Davidson feature alongside other major literary and cultural figures in this groundbreaking volume."

You can read the rest of this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives161.htm

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

A Significant Scot - William Sharp

Scottish poet, literary biographer, and romantic story-teller.

We've now added...

Chapter 11 Winter in Athens

Chapter 12 The Winged Destiny

You can read these at the foot of the page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sharp_william.htm

House of Green Shutters

Journalist, Teacher, Novelist, Short Story Writer, Critic

We've now added more chapters to the "House of Green Shutters" and now up to chapter XXIV.

You can read these at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/men/brown_george_d.htm

A Hundred Years in the Highlands

By Osgood Hanbury MacKenzie of Inverewe (1921)

Have now completed this book by adding the final chapters.

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

Songs from John Henderson

Jean's Mistak

Lyrics composed by John Henderson on the 7th of December, 2012,
to part of Frank McKee's 1914 music for the '[Cecile Waltz](#)'.

Oot fae Jean's windae slicht-snaw hud happ'd maist growthe
"Snaw-Queen, she mutter'd, fin anither howf ;
Bide upoan the Bens' taps, bit lea the carse-lans leen,
Fur, there ye'll garr fowks tribble lang afore ye're a' deen."

Syne oot cam the snaw-ploos tae clair the wye fur caurs
An' jist ahint them sauters jyned the wars ;
Jean heark'nin hard flakes squallach in sair fricht,
As, robsorbies sheeled and flang them intae dreefths left an' richt.

Airly neist mornin' wee Jean leuk'd oot aince mair
Seein' the sin she chyse'd tae tak the air ;
An' losh hoo she mervill'd, nae snaw lay roon about,
"Guid, Snaw-Queen, she thocht, ye hard me, o' yon there is nae doot.

Bit Jake-Freest affrontit wis nae weel plees'd wi' Jean
"Glaikit wee airthlin', I'll seen chynge yer teen !
Ye'll fin I jeel'd a' saut the larries thraw'd
Whilk I micht hiv nae been mintin' gif oan me ye hud caa'd."

Glossary:

happ'd=covered; howf=place; bide=stay; leen=alone; garr=bring; sauters=salters;
squallach=squeal; robsorbies=scything shovel; sheeled=shovelled; mintin'=intending

You can read more of John's songs mostly in the Doric language at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Sir David Brewster

We continue to add chapters and this week have added...

Chapter VIII - Miss Edgeworth - Junius

Chapter IX - Notes of Life from 1824 to 1830

You can read these chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/brewster.htm>

Old Scottish Customs

By E. J. Guthrie (1885)

I'm now up to Chapter VII with this book. Essentially these are numerous wee snippets that have been culled from a whole variety of sources. For example here is the snippet on Marriage customs in Chapter V...

IN the parish of Logierait, Perthshire, and its neighbourhood, a variety of superstitious customs formerly prevailed amongst the vulgar. Lucky and unlucky days were by many annually observed. That day of the week upon which the 14th of May happened to follow was esteemed unlucky throughout the remainder of the year. None got married or began any serious business upon it. None chose to marry in January or May; or to have their banns proclaimed in the end of one quarter of the year and to marry in the beginning of the next. Some things were to be done before the full moon, others after. In fevers the patient was expected to be worse on Sundays than on the other days of the week; did he, however, prove to be better on that day a relapse was dreaded.

Immediately before the celebration of the marriage ceremony, every knot about the bride and bridegroom's dress, garters, shoe-strings, petticoat-strings, etc., were carefully loosed. After leaving the church the whole company walked round it keeping the church walls carefully on their right hand. The bridegroom, however, first retired one way with some young men to tie the knots that were

loosed about him; while the bride in the same manner withdrew to put her array in order.

You can read the various chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/customs/index.htm>

Slum Life in Edinburgh

Or Scenes in its Darkest Places by T. B. M. (1891)

This is a new book we're starting.

PREFACE

These sketches were first printed in the Weekly Scotsman, and strongly excited the attention of the Public. So many suggestions to publish them in book form were made to me, that I now do so in the hope that their publication may be of some little use to those who are striving to solve the great problem of the age.

Edinburgh, 1891.

This does not make happy reading but as it is part of our history we do need to be aware what went on.

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

Clan Leslie International

We got in a pdf of their December 2012 newsletter which you can view at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslieint>

Robert Buchanan [1835-1875] of Falkirk

Poet, Songwriter, Storyteller

Got in an email...

Alastair,

This is a discovery close to the hearts of people like you and me with close family associations with Falkirk and Grangemouth. I have from his 1901 published book provided the attached .jpps and a single .pdf of the 'tidied-up' whole book. He wrote in a lovely mixture of Doric, Lallans and English Fascinating!

JH

And so have now made this available and you can read this at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/falkirk/falkirk/buchanan_robert.htm

Charles Murray

An article from The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld., Australia) Saturday 2 December 1933.

You can read this at http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/charles_murray.htm

How the MacLeod's lost Assynt

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

The wild district of Assynt, in the west of Sutherlandshire, was possessed by a branch of the great family of Macleod from the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Torquil Macleod of the Lews acquired it by marrying the heiress of Macnicol of Assynt, till the latter half of the seventeenth century, when Neil Macleod was deprived of it by the Mackenzies of Seaforth. The commonly received story of the loss of the estate is that Neil, who, in 1649, seized the Marquis of Montrose after his defeat in Ross-shire, and sold him to the Covenanters for £20,000 Scots and 400 bolls of sour meal, was, after the Restoration, so persecuted by the Government and the Mackenzies that in some way or other he lost the estate, and the Mackenzies succeeded to it. The precise manner in which he was deprived of it has, however, not been condescended on by the writers on the subject, and the following "Information" may therefore be of interest to the members of this Society, and of use to the future Highland historian. The document was written in 1738 for the use of the Laird of Macleod, who interested himself in the dispossessed family. It came into the possession of the famous Simon Lord Lovat, with whose papers it passed into the hands of the Rev. Donald Fraser of Killeaman. It now belongs to Mr Fraser's great grandson, the Rev. Hector Fraser of Halkirk, who has kindly placed it at my disposal.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/macleod6.html>

The MacGillivrays of Dunmaglass

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

Of old the Clan Chattan were reckoned under two classes, the first, nine in number, sprung of the Chiefs own house, and the second, those who had incorporated or attached themselves though of other names than that of Mackintosh, being sixteen in number. Amongst the latter class the Macgillivrays stood the first and oldest, for according to the Croy M.S. history, compiled by the Rev. Andrew Macphail, who, it is understood, died minister of Boleskine, 1608, it is said that about the year 1268 "Gillivray, the progenitor of the Clan vie Gillivray, took protection and dependence for himself and posterity of this Farquhard Mackintosh" (5th of Mackintosh, who was killed in 1274, aged 36). Sir Eneas Mackintosh in his manuscript, privately printed in 1892 by the present 28th of Mackintosh, gives the date as 1271.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/macgill3.html>

Our Fires and Fire-Sides

From the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

January 30, 1874.—On this date Mr. John Murdoch read a paper on

OUR FIRES AND FIRE-SIDES.

The subject which I have chosen is a practical one, and I hope you will consider it seasonable. Even to those in whom the organs of ideality, wonder, and wit are largely developed, this evening devoted to the grosser matters of our Fires and Fire-sides will not, I hope, be a great sacrifice.

I have chosen this subject at the present time, thinking that the exorbitant price of fuel might induce people to give an amount of attention to the economics of our fires and fire-places which they might decline to do when coals were only at a reasonable price.

No doubt there could be a good deal of poetry and sentiment entwined around the subject. Numbers of beautiful pictures could be conjured up about our ingle-sides, our blazing logs, and our family circles, with their endearing associations and memories; but in one brief hour I can hardly dispose of the mass of matter which I have to lay before you; and in justice to myself, and in mercy to you, I shall not give more time to the subject.

"And," some one asks, "if we are not to have poetry and sentiment around our hearths, what are we to have?"

You shall have a treatise on our Fires, our Fire-places, and our Fuel.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/fires.htm>

Annual Supper

Report from the Gaelic Society

The Annual Supper was held on the 26th December, in the Royal Hotel. We give the report which appeared in the Inverness Advertiser;—

And an excellent report it is as well which you can read at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/annual_supper.htm

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Edited by Beth Gay

Beth is now near to getting her publication back but still struggling with the new software. She sent in an update on her trials and tribulations which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/archives/Bestcando1.pdf>

She also did a word document file with some other information which you can get at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/archives/Bestwecando2.doc>

Mackay's Regiment

An Account taken from the Transactions of the Gaelic Society

A narrative of the principal services of the Regiment, from its formation in 1626, to the battle of Nordlingen, in 1634; and of its subsequent incorporation with the Corps now known as The Royal Scots or First Regiment of Foot of the British Army.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/mackay.htm>

The Celtic Province of Moray

By James Barron

The history of the Celtic Province of Moray takes us back to a remote period, on which the light is dim and fitful. All that any one can do is to endeavour to ascertain the probable nature of movements, the details of which are obscure and to most modern readers possessing but feeble interest. The facts in the following paper are mainly derived from Mr. Skene's "Celtic Scotland," and Mr. Anderson's "Orkneyinga Saga," but they are of course applied to special purposes, and made the basis of inferences for which these authorities are not responsible. I may say that our retrospect includes the period from the seventh century to the twelfth, but before entering on the narrative a few preliminary observations are necessary.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/moray.htm>

Telfer Family Calico Blockcutters From 1795 To 1850

An article sent in by John Henderson which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/henderson/telfer.htm>

Clan Leslie Society of Australia and New Zealand

Got in a copy of their Jan, Feb, Mar 2013 newsletter which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie>

And finally in the Spirit of Christmas...

Fruity Xmas

"I told my kids," said the loudmouth in the bar, "that when I was their age, all I got at Christmas was an orange and an apple.

"But all my son said was, Wow! a mobile phone and a computer - not bad!"-

Fizz, Bang, Wallop

The approaching festive season reminds us of the chap opening a bottle of fizzy wine on Christmas morning who accidentally hit himself in the eye with the cork and let out a loud yelp. His wife rushed through from the kitchen, and seeing the bottle, asked: "Champagne?"

"No," he whimpered. "It really was very sore."

Little Wonders

A piano instructor recently asked her pupils what Christmas carols they wished to learn over the next few weeks. One of her young charges wanted to learn one she spotted in her piano book - 'Three Wee Kings'. It's presumably the Scottish version of a more traditional favourite?

Wisdom

An updated version of the traditional Christmas gifts borne by the three wise men: gold, banking sense and mirth.

Fitting Tribute

Yesterday's funeral of much-missed trade union official Bill Speirs, heard many tributes from politicians. But it was Bill's sister, Seonaid, who made everyone smile by telling them that Bill was intellectually gifted from an early age. "I remember," she said, "when Bill got a bicycle for Christmas. He was only three, yet he measured the bicycle, measured the width of the chimney, then announced that Santa couldn't have brought it."

Not My 'Princess'!

Santa time makes me think of the Nativity, and the story of the Dundee woman who on Christmas Eve took her swollen-bellied teenage daughter to the doctor, who immediately diagnosed pregnancy.

The mother protested of course, claiming vehemently that her innocent princess had never so much as kissed a man, to which the golden child nodded confirmation. Just then, the doctor moved to the window and stared out, searchingly, into the sky.

"Is there anything wrong?" asked the mother, the concern evident in her voice.

"No, not really" replied the doctor. "I'm just checking. You know the last time this happened, a bright star appeared in the East."

And that's it for now and hope you all have a Very Merry Christmas.

Alastair