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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 23rd, 2013

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### Electric Scotland News

Reader delighted as Scots notes worth more than 'British' counterpart. This was one of the headlines in the Newsnet Scotland online newspaper...

Scottish banknotes have resulted in a pleasant surprise for one reader of Newsnet Scotland who found they were worth more than their Bank of England counterparts.

The reader, Derek Logan, who lives and works in Dubai, explained to Newsnet Scotland how his eldest son received thirty pounds as a birthday present - one Bank of England £20 note and one Clydesdale Bank £10 note.

"We went to a local Foreign Exchange outlet, there are many here." He told Newsnet Scotland.

"The gentlemen behind the counter looked at the notes, looked again and moved off to his supervisor. The supervisor came over to me, asked 'Is this Scottish?'. I replied yes.

"He spoke to the teller who then sat back down at his computer and typed away. We then received the Dirhams in exchange for both notes and receipt. The value of AED was 5.51 to the Pound. The value of Scotland Pound was 5.70"

The reader kindly supplied Newsnet Scotland with a receipt of the exchange, clearly showing the Scottish pound with the higher value.

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George Johnston built Scotland's first motor-car in 1895. He went on to form the Mo-Car Syndicate Ltd with Sir William Arrol, which became Arrol-Johnston.

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The Davidson family has its roots in the tiny village of Aberlemno near the small market town of Brechin in northeast Scotland. Alexander (Sandy) Davidson was the wright at Netherton Smiddy (blacksmith's shop), where he lived in the two-bedroom smiddy cottage with his wife, Margaret, their six children and two workers. It was from this picturesque cottage, nestled in the beautiful rolling Scottish countryside that Sandy and Margaret travelled to their new life in Wisconsin, USA. There, one of their sons, William C, met and married another Scot, Margaret McFarlane, from Stirlingshire. Three of their children, Arthur, Walter and William, along with Englishman Bill Harley, became the founders of the Harley-Davidson Motor Company™.

For more on this story see <http://www.thedavidsonlegacy.com/the-davidsons/>

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John Henderson is on holiday so a few of our regular items have not been updated this week but should be next week when he returns from his holiday.

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Many congratulations to the Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band for winning this years World Pipe Band Championship. You can watch there winning performance at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/4110-2013-British-Championship-goes-to-Field-Marshal-Montgomery>

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A coincidence that leaves me worried about our lives  
An Article that should make us think by Alex Wood

I came across this story in the Scottish Review and thought I'd share it with you here...

Perhaps I shouldn't read too much into the coincidence but I've had almost exactly the same experience twice in the last fortnight and I'm concerned.

The first occasion was at Waverley Station entering from Market Street. As ever the place was awash with travellers in a hurry. A young woman with a baby in a buggy stopped at the head of the stairs and sighed audibly. It's more than 20 years since my kids were in a buggy but I knew what she was feeling: 'How do I do this without becoming totally knackered?'

I turned to her and offered to help carry the buggy. We got it down to the platform level and she thanked me. The thanks were profuse, seriously profuse. I waved my hand: 'No problem. Take care'. And I moved on.

I didn't rethink the matter until yesterday. Again, it was in a station, this time Linlithgow station. I was in the queue, a busy queue, at the ticket office when a young woman, again with a buggy, leaned over and informed the ticket clerk that the lift to the platform would not open. 'Afraid it's not working,' he replied. Again, the woman's doleful look said it all.

I left the queue and offered to help get the buggy and baby to the platform. I took the front of the buggy, she took the back and 30 seconds later she and the buggy were on the platform. The coincidence, however, wasn't that I'd twice helped a woman hoist a buggy either down or up station steps. It was the profuse nature of the thanks I received.

The task on both occasions was simple, not physically challenging and consequently on both occasions the gratitude seemed to me, initially at least, out of all proportion to the routine favour granted.

One explanation is simply that I bumped into two women prone to hyperbole and exaggeration but I do not think so. What hit me after the second experience was that on neither occasion, despite the many other passengers in the vicinity, did another soul make even a move to help. The response of these women was less about gratitude for the brief assistance I had rendered but rather an acknowledgement that such behaviour was not the norm. It did not accord with their routine experience.

I'll return to that theme shortly but after, on the latter occasion, I had completed my supportive behaviour, I returned to the ticket queue when I experienced my one moment of frustration. Despite the fact I had left the queue to help someone in need, my queuing associates stood their ground to a person. Not one of them suggested I re-enter my original place in the queue. They all saw me leave the queue and why I did so. Several turned and saw me return but their eyes quickly refocused on the ticket clerk, on their journey and on their own concerns. A few minutes at the end of the queue gave me time to pause and consider what had happened.

I started to reflect on that experience and on the experience of a fortnight earlier. It was not merely that I was alone in offering assistance – and I am certain that the profuse thanks were a reflection of that. It was that for so many of my fellow passengers, engrossed in their mobiles or iPads or conversations with friends, focused on their own particular journey or simply not considering that it was the job of 'someone else' to help, the plight of a fellow traveller was not even visible.

I am not an advocate of a return to some mid 20th-century culture of male etiquette, where men automatically give up seats on public transport to women. I would have done exactly the same on both occasions had the buggy-wheeler been male.

There are, however, basic courtesies which oil the wheels of social connectedness. Offering help to someone patently in need of it is the most basic of such courtesies. Courtesy generally is a social lubricant. As a teacher I told young people that terms such as 'Please' and 'Excuse me' gave a signal to others that we respected them and that we were not putting ourselves and our interests ahead of them and theirs. Consequently it made them relate more warmly and connect more readily to us.

In our atomised, goal-focused culture, we are in danger of losing sight of the fact that it is our very inter-connectedness which makes us human. The small courtesies and kindly behaviours of daily behaviour among individuals are the essential underpinning of cooperative relationships in society at large.

That may be naïve. Perhaps Thatcher was right, not ethically right but predictively accurate: '...there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families'. If that is the case we should not be surprised at some of the cruel and callous behaviour which has recently been uncovered in hospitals and care settings. It is simply the extreme end of a spectrum of the relentless individualism which left countless passengers blind to the dilemmas of two women with buggies facing stairs they could not tackle alone.

Alex Wood is a retired headteacher

The article came from the Scottish Review <http://www.scottishreview.net>

## Electric Canadian

Wild Life in Canada

By Captain Angus Buchanan, M.C. (1920).

I've now completed this book which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/wildlife/index.htm>

The Men of the Last Frontier

By Grey Owl (1932)

The publisher feels that a short foreword is necessary in offering this book to the public.

It should be explained that the author is a halfbreed Indian, whose name has recently become known throughout the English-speaking world. His father was a Scot, his mother an Apache Indian of New Mexico, and he was born somewhere near the Rio Grande forty odd years ago. Grey Owl is the translation of his Red Indian name, given to him when he became a blood brother of the Ojibways, and his proper legal style. He trekked, in his early twenties, into Canada and followed the life of a bush Indian, trapping, fire-ranging and guiding. During the Great War, he enlisted in the 13th Montreal Battalion, became a sniper and saw service in France. On his return he took up his old life as a trapper, but presently found his chief interest in the preservation of the beaver, which was on the verge of extinction, and his efforts in that direction have been recognized by the Canadian Government. He tried his hand at writing an article on Canadian Wild Life, and his letters to his publisher, from time to time, were so original, so full of the local colour of his surroundings, that, in 1929, the suggestion was made that he should write this book. Difficulties have been many, both for author and publisher. The book was written in many camps, often the author was a hundred miles from the nearest post office and frequently weather conditions made any journey impossible. His MS., by no means always easy to follow, was further complicated by the fact that it had been typewritten by a French-Canadian who knew little English.

Among the pile of letters and MS. which, in the course of time, accumulated at the publishers, were several rough but extraordinarily vivid sketches drawn by the author in pencil on pages torn from an exercise book; one of these is reproduced here and others appear as the end papers of this book.

At Grey Owl's own request, and because the publisher felt very strongly that much of the value of his work lies in its individuality, the editing of his MS. has been reduced to a minimum and alterations have only been made to clear possible ambiguities or where a phrase would have read too strangely. This will explain to any reader who may find the author's language anywhere unnatural that the fault does not lie with Grey Owl.

I'll be adding chapters from this book most days until complete. You can read it at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/articles/greyowl.htm>

## The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Jim Lynch. I note his comment about Scotland not being automatically gifted membership of the Commonwealth or for that matter the EU or NATO. Frankly I think that is all going a bit far as I'm perfectly sure that if we applied we'd more than likely gain membership. That's not to say that Scotland would be well served by joining all these organisations but none will turn us down if we apply. But apply we must otherwise it makes a mockery of these organisations.

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

## Electric Scotland

The Scottish Historical Review

We are on Volume 10 and as John is on holiday no issues this week. You can get to this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/volume10.htm>

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

Songs Of Scotland, Prior To Burns

This book is by Robert Chambers who is famous for collecting old Scottish Songs.

No entries this week with John being on holiday.

You can get to this book at the foot of the page at:

[http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/chambers\\_robert.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/chambers_robert.htm)

The Scottish Naturalist

I added Volume 3 1875/1876 this week.

The first article in this issue is about Zoology and discusses the intelligence of animals. Some great wee stories to read within it and I suspect that those of you that have pets will enjoy them.

You can get to this volume at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/nature/naturalist.htm>

Thomas Dykes

(1850, Dundonald, Ayrshire - 1916, London, England) Journalist and Author

John is on holiday so no entries this week.

You can read these at [http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/dykes\\_thomas.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/dykes_thomas.htm)

Enigma Machine

This is where we are publishing this set of puzzles created by Doug Ross which can now be found in Doctor's Surgeries, Old Folks Homes, etc.

Added Enigma Machine 28 puzzle which you can get to at:

[Enigma Machine](#)

The other puzzles we've already published can be found at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/index.htm>

Songs from John Henderson

John has sent us in three songs prior to heading off on his holidays which you can read at the foot of the page at

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Beauties of Dr. John Moore

Selected from the moral, philosophical, and miscellaneous works of that esteemed author, to which are added, a new biographical and critical account of the doctor and his writings, and notes, historical, classical, and explanatory.

Again no entries this week due to John being on holiday. The book is available at:

[http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/moore\\_john.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/moore_john.htm)

The Scottish Fairy Book  
By Elizabeth W. Grierson (1918)

This week we've added more stories...

The Laird o' Co'  
Poussie Baudrons  
The Milk-white Doo  
The Draiglin' Hogney  
The Brownie o' Ferne-Den  
The Witch of Fife  
Assipattle and the Mester Stoorworm

You can get to these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/fairy/fairybook.htm>

Braemar Highlands  
Their Tales, Traditions and History by Elizabeth Taylor (1869)

We're now completed Part the Third which is all about the Farquharsons and have made a start at Part the Fourth.

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

The Tower of Craigietocher  
We've now received parts 2 and 3 of the account of building this tower which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/craigietocher.htm>

The tale relates all the ups and downs of building a tower from scratch and the costs involved and the weather delays to name but a few of the challenges.

Communicating your message

I created a document about how to communicate your message in an online world which is intended to be a start towards a discussion on this topic. This is as a result of me joining the Communications Team of COSCA which is intended to help COSCA reach out to more people in the Scots Diaspora and Clan Societies.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/4108-Communicating-your-message>

John Crofton

A significant Scot and Chair of tuberculosis at Edinburgh University. You can read about him at: [http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/crofton\\_john.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/crofton_john.htm)

David Kennedy

He is a famous Scottish singer from a musical family and we've added a biography of him and in it you'll learn tales of their trip from Scotland taking in Australia, New Zealand, America, Canada, South Africa, India and including an interview with Brigham Young. This was also the time of the Indian Mutiny and the war with the Zulu nation.

David Kennedy was born in the city of Perth, on the fifteenth of April in the year 1825. His father and grand-father were also natives of Perth, but his great-great-grand-father, John Kennedy, belonged to a family or small clan of Kennedys in Foss, in the north of Perthshire, and was, in fact, gillie to the Laird of Foss, whom he accompanied to the fatal field of Culloden. The Laird was killed but his gillie escaped. The story goes that when he got home the lady called him "coward" for having come back without his master, and he felt her reproach so keenly that he never forgot it.

Others of the family were driven from their homes after the failure of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-46, and some found their way to Canada, and later to Australia, where their descendants, thriving colonists, claimed kinship with "The Kennedys" when singing round the world. One family in particular, settled near Ottawa (the seat of the Canadian Government), had so increased and multiplied on the face of the earth that when, as on every occasion of our professional visits to the city, we assembled in the farm house of the patriarch of the family, no fewer than forty Kennedys were present in the one room.

This account covers two books and is a most enjoyable read which you can get to at: [http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/kennedy\\_david.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/kennedy_david.htm)

I might add that I also found a fax copy of Kennedy's Handbook of Scottish Songs. It was actually in very bad shape so I unpacked it and edited every page to try and make it more readable and then recompiled it into a pdf file. You can find the link to it at the foot of his page.

And finally...

#### Archaic Ignorance

A couple of English tourists looked at the old-fashioned "Apothecary" sign over the chemist's shop in Inveraray, Argyllshire, and one turned to the other and said:

"I don't know any Gaelic. I wonder what it means?"

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#### Served Him Right?

A sales rep for a Scottish steel company during the Falklands War was stopped for speeding on the M74 en route from Glasgow to Yorkshire. He told the police that he had an urgent component for the Royal Naval Dockyard at Devonport, in the South of England, and that is why he was speeding. He opened his boot to show the officers a part he had picked up from a customer, thinking they would let him go on his way with no ticket. Instead, they escorted him to the county border where he was met by another patrol car who then escorted him to Warwickshire, where again he was met by another car, which continued all the way to Devonport.

He then phoned his wife to try to explain why he was further away from home than he had been seven hours earlier.

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

Alastair