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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for February 21st, 2014

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

Save the Date for the Scottish Special Interest Group's Symposium
Ontario Genealogical Society

The OGS Scottish Special Interest Group has set a date for a one day symposium on Scottish Genealogy Research. The Symposium is scheduled for Friday, Aug. 22, 2014, at the Spring Hill Suites by Marriott in Vaughan, ON.

Confirmed speakers include James Thomson, Linda Reid, Ruth Blair, and Christine Woodcock. They will speak on a different aspect of Scottish Genealogy Research. A variety of vendors who specialize in Genealogy, Scottish Clans, and Scotland will also be available.

You can book your room now. A block of rooms has been booked at the Marriott for those wishing to stay the night before, or the night of the Symposium. A group rate of \$130 includes a double room and breakfast. The hotel has a pool, and is in close proximity to both the Vaughan Mills Shopping Centre and Wonderland so families may wish to travel together for the weekend.

For more information visit the Scottish SIG website: <http://www.ogs.on.ca/scottishsig/symposium.php>

I might add that rooms at the event are in Niagara so might also make a good holiday to see the falls as well as attend this event.

The Kelpies will be exhibited from March 21st through April 22nd in the lead up to the internationally acclaimed week of Scottish celebrations in New York City.

The Kelpies at Bryant Park are scale models of the two 100ft steel horses heads which are the largest equine sculptures in the world. Attracting world wide recognition, the Kelpies are the center piece of the £43 million Helix land transformational project between Falkirk and Grangemouth in central Scotland.

The Kelpies' arrival in Bryant Park is a partnership between the Helix Project, The City of New York Parks and Recreation, Bryant Park Corporation, and the American-Scottish Foundation.

New York Tartan Day Parade 2014
Saturday April 5, 2014

The Countdown is on ... Now is the time to register to march in the Parade or mark your calendar to join us in New York for the 16th Annual Tartan Day Parade

If you are a Clan, Pipe Band, Organization or Scottie Dog and would like to register to march please go to the NYCTartanWeek

website to register.

The Post Parade Party is this year taking place at Desmonds - tickets are now on sale

<http://www.americanscottishfoundation.com/tartanDay/index.html>

Electric Canadian

Experiences of a Backwoods Preacher

Facts and Incidents culled from thirty years of Ministerial life by Rev. Joseph H. Hilts, Second Edition (1892).

Chapter V is about Camp meetings and here is how this chapter starts...

IF there is any place on earth that is more like heaven than a good live camp-meeting, I should like to hear from it. I would be pleased to know where it is, and on what grounds the claim is made. To commune with nature, is, to a devout mind, a precious privilege. To commune with good people is a blessed means of grace. And to commune with God is a greater blessing than either or both of these. To hold converse with nature, tends to expand the intellect and quicken the sensibilities. To hold friendly intercourse with the good elevates, refines, and stimulates the social and moral elements of our being. And to commune with God purities and exalts our whole nature, and inspires us to a holier life and loftier aims and a fuller consecration to the service of God.

In the original idea of the camp-meeting we are at the same time, and in the same place, brought in converse with nature, in religious fellowship with the good and in sweet communion with God. I know of no place where the ethical, esthetical, social and spiritual wants of humanity are more fully provided for than at the camp-meeting. There some of the most soul-inspiring scenes that earth can furnish may be witnessed. When a strong religious influence is felt by the assembled worshippers as, with cheerful voices they ring out the melody of their gladdened hearts, where is the soul so dead as not to feel an impulse drawing heavenward? The trees that surround this leafy temple seem to catch the spirit of song, and send back to the ears of the happy worshippers in pleasing echoes the very words they are giving utterance to. The leaves upon the forest trees as they are swept by the ascending currents of air that are heated by the "light-stand" fires, seem to vie with the human singers as they rustle to the praise of Him who gave to them their numbers and their beauty. Even the shadows cast by the trees and limbs that intercept the lights of the camp-fires seem to enter into the spirit of the occasion, and point upward to a realm where darkness is unheard of and shadows are unknown.

My first experience with camp-meetings was many years ago. When thirteen years old, I was permitted to go with my parents to one at a place called Beech-woods, in 1832. At that camp-meeting there were one or two of the Ryersons, James Richardson, one of the Evans, and other preachers both Canadian and American.

There was a camp of Indians on the ground too. They would sometimes sing. That was a source of enjoyment to the younger portion of the audience. The prayer-meetings were in a square enclosure made by placing long poles on the top of posts set at the four angles, so that the poles would be some three feet from the ground. At one corner there was left an opening for entrance and exit.

My parents had a share in a tent, and we remained on the encampment from the beginning to the end of the meetings.

For the first two or three days the novelty of my surroundings tended to banish serious thoughts from my mind. But as the meetings progressed, a number of the young people were converted. My attention was at last arrested by two young girls, I think they were sisters. I saw them go into the place, and kneel, weeping, at the altar for prayer. It was not long till they were both blessed. Then they began to sing "Come, ye sinners, poor and needy." The congregation joined in, and the woods rang with the voices of a hundred or more as they rolled on the old invitation "Come." The singing was after the manner of happy children whose hearts were full of joy and their souls full of melody, rather than like the cold, majestic performances of some of the stately choristers of our times.

I was standing up against the poles and listening to the singing, when my mother came to me, saying, "My son, you are old enough to sin, so you are old enough to be converted; don't you want to come and be saved?" I bent down and crept in under the pole, and went to the penitent form. My mother knelt beside me. And it seemed to me that I had never heard such praying as she did then and there for me. My father came and knelt by me, too, and joined his prayers to mothers. Up till then I had thought that I was not a very bad boy, but now it seemed to me that every mean and sinful thing that I had ever said or done was called up before me just to torture my wounded spirit. I tried to pray for myself, but the words seemed to stop in my throat and choke me. Despair was fast seizing upon me, when one of the preachers came and said to me, "Can't you say, 'Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do.'" I commenced to say it. Before the words were spoken, my soul was full of light and my heart was filled with joy unspeakable. Then I was converted. And now, after all the intervening years I look back to that day and that spot with the same feelings that prompted some one to write,

"There is a place to me more dear
Than native vale or mountain—
A place for which affection's tear

Springs grateful from its fountain;
'Tis not where kindred souls abound,
Tho' that were almost Heaven,
But where I first my Saviour found
And felt my sins forgiven."

Now up to Chapter VIII which you can read all the chapters at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/backwoods/index.htm>

By Trench and Trail in Song and Story

By Angus MacKay (Oscar Dhu) (1918). We've now completed this book which you can read at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/music/mackay/index.htm>

Also added a wee collection of articles...

The Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River

Their Recorded History from the Earliest Times, their Legends, their Romances, their Fortifications and their Contests. (pdf)

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/souvenirthousan00hadd.pdf>

Pacific Coast Tours

An interesting guide to tours you can take in the Canadian Rockies along with maps (pdf)

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/bc/pacificcoasttour00cana.pdf>

Donald Morrison, The Canadian Outlaw

A Tale of the Scottish Pioneers

"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."

PREFACE

Upwards of three years have passed since Donald Morrison, the Canadian outlaw, was imprisoned in St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary for the slaying of "Jack" Warren, at Megantic, in 1888. That it was justifiable homicide, no unprejudiced person, conversant with the evidence adduced at the trial, will deny. And the almost universal sympathy expressed for the accused before and after said trial, will attest to the truth of our statement.

It was, therefore, not strange that a general feeling of disgust and indignation was experienced when it became known that the outlawed Scotchman had been sentenced to 18 years of penal servitude! And why? Simply because he had a sufficient regard for the "first law of Nature" to defend his life against the unscrupulous alien who had sworn to shoot him on sight!

In proportion, however, as Morrison's troubles accumulated, popular sympathy also increased, until it became mooted that a monster petition be presented to the proper authorities for a commutation of the severe sentence imposed. But months passed, and good resolutions never matured. Fearful, therefore, lest Time, the healer of all wounds, should allay the sympathy so strongly entertained for Morrison — whom we deem a worthy object for judicial clemency — we offer this little volume to the public in the earnest hope that it may assist the laudable efforts of those who are endeavoring to secure the release of one of earth's wronged. In a former "Life of Morrison," a work as absurd as it is untruthful, an attempt was made to stigmatize the religious principles of the Highlanders. Had the authors of the book in question taken the pains to visit the cottages of the lowly, instead of the — perhaps more congenial — liquor resorce of a frontier town, they would have discovered beneath the homespun a religion as sincere as it is unostentatious, and as grand as it is simple; and we would have found it unnecessary to vindicate a temperate, God-fearing community. The wrongs which drove Donald Morrison to the verge of despair, the fruitless attempts to arrest him on suspicion of having turned his lost home; the worthless character of the late Warren; his tragic death; and subsequently, Morrison's marvellous success in eluding the motley army of pursuers; and, finally, the outlaw's betrayal and cowardly capture, are all introduced as central figures in the following tale. We sincerely disclaim any hostile motives in dealing with the persons accused of conniving at Donald's ruin. We can only express our regret that they should have allowed themselves to be drawn into transactions which ended so disastrously for all concerned; and earnestly hope that the lesson taught will not soon be forgotten.

The orthography of the Gaelic words in the present work may be defective from a literary standpoint, as I have followed the style of the late Josh Billings, rather than the correct one. Complaints had been made previous to Morrison's capture regarding the assistance afforded him during his wanderings in the Compton wilds. The complaints emanated from thwarted speculators, who, while thirsting for the coveted "reward," still lacked the courage to brave the Scottish youth in his native haunts. From the same source also emanated the story of Morrison's ferocious and bloodthirsty instincts! a calumny as false and malicious as it was unmerited. The rabid faultfinders

could little realise the nature of the hospitality so characteristic of the Highlanders---a hospitality that could turn no one whose needs were urgent from the door. Much less could their mercenary natures understand how the poor Scottish farmer could resist the power of the reward so temptingly displayed. "Come, Scotty, reveal Donald's whereabouts, and receive 3,000 mighty dollars!" God forbid! Aye, all honor to the people whom no threats could intimidate, or bribes corrupt! We commend this humble effort to the stream of public opinion, and while craving indulgence for our own imperfections, we bespeak the sympathy of all lovers of justice and humanity for the bereft maiden weeping in her loneliness, and for the ill-fated Donald Morrison, who is buried with the cherished hopes of years in the rayless gloom of St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary.

The Author

You can download this book at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/donald_morrison.htm

Added a couple of videos to our Quebec page

You can view these at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/index.htm>

Montreal

It's history to which is added Biographical Sketches of Prominent Citizens by Rev. J. Douglas Borthwick (1875) (pdf)

You can download this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/montreal.pdf>

History of the County of Brant, Ontario (1883)

This is a 700 page book which you can download at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/brant.htm>

Citizen Lauder

Being an account of the day when Harry Lauder, guest and speaker before the Rotary Club of Toronto, sold nearly three-quarters of a million dollars worth of Bonds for Canada's victory Loan. (pdf)

I was delighted to find this book and hope you'll enjoy it. You can download this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/citizenlauderbei00rowe.pdf>

Diefenbaker

Prime Minister of Canada.

I got in an email from TimeSpan where they are doing a project on him. In the article it said...

Diefenbaker made a return visit to Kildonan in the summer of 1968, this time in a personal capacity to unveil a plaque dedicated to his ancestors at Kildonan Church, and also to unveil a memorial cairn in Rogart to the parents of the first Canadian Prime Minister, John A MacDonald, who like Diefenbaker was descended from a Kildonan family.

The two families had lived only miles apart in Kildonan, and in a later interview, Diefenbaker said: "So if it hadn't been for the Highland Clearances, the first and thirteenth Prime Ministers of Canada might not have been."

You can read the full article at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/diefenbaker.htm>

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Clare Adamson and in it she has a large article on "Tale of two countries". And as usual some interesting articles in the Synopsis.

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

Electric Scotland

Alexander Murdoch (1841-1891)

A Scottish Engineer, Poet, Author, Journalist

Added a third book called "Scotch Readings: Humorous and Amusing" and we're breaking this down into individual chapters for you to read. We've added two more chapters, "The Courtship of Jonathan Quiggs" and "Willie Weedrap's Domestic Astronomy" which you can find at the foot of the page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/murdoch/index.htm>

Alex Salmond and co are acting like spoilt children

This article is from Martin Kettle writing in the Guardian Newspaper this week...

The inadequacy of the SNP's engagement with serious issues like currency and Europe suggests they suspect the game is up.

Maybe it's the effect of spending an evening earlier this week at the Almeida theatre in London at its searing new dramatisation of George Orwell's 1984. But it seems to me that even Orwell has little to teach the Scottish National party leader Alex Salmond about the art of Newspeak.

In Orwell's dystopian novel, you may remember, Newspeak is designed "not to extend but to diminish the range of thought." In its purest, and most egregious form, Newspeak therefore boldly expresses logical impossibilities like "War is peace", "Freedom is slavery" or even "2+2=5."

To be fair, Salmond's response this week to the assaults that have rained down on some of his key independence policies – a currency union with the UK and seamless membership of the EU prominent among them – stopped short of outright Orwellian outrages.

Scotland's first minister, after all, is Wee Eck, not Big Brother. And he talks Natspeak not Newspeak.

But that speech of his in Aberdeen on Monday, along with too many of the SNP's other responses to the challenges levelled against their independence plans this month, was a really shoddy job. Having insisted that he believes in positive not negative campaigning, Salmond promptly excoriated attempts "to dictate from on high" by people who do not understand Scotland. Natspeak and Newspeak – political language giving "an appearance of solidity to pure wind", as Orwell called it – have rarely been closer.

Salmond's supporters were delighted, as they always are. But it felt like a reputation destroying performance. For if anyone is guilty of the bluff, bluster and bullying with which Salmond loudly charged his much better argued critics, it is Salmond himself. What's more, I'd be pretty confident that the voters will ultimately see it that way too.

These feel like pivotal days in the argument over Scotland's future. The phoney war of the last two years has disappeared, while the hard pounding of serious political weaponry has abruptly taken its place. Next Monday both the UK and the Scottish cabinets will be taking their messages to Aberdeen. With all the polls suggesting that pocketbook questions will be at the heart of the vote on 18 September, Salmond and the yes campaign have been challenged on three of the biggest of those questions – the currency, Europe and pensions – and thus far they have had little besides huffing and puffing to respond with. It will be interesting to see whether the SNP heads to Aberdeen next week to sneer or to engage.

This is said almost as much in sorrow as in anger, because Salmond has been a formidable figure in modern Scotland and the arguments he has played such a part in unleashing over the years are unquestionably powerful ones. But in each of the three cases – George Osborne's ruling out of a currency union, José Manuel Barroso's warnings that Scotland's place in the EU is not automatic and, most recently, Gordon Brown's return to the fray to caution about the future of Scottish pensions – the SNP response has been the same. First, the problem raised by the critic is airily dismissed and denied; second, an untested solution is confidently asserted; finally, the nationalist attack machine clatters the man not the ball. Doubtless it will be the same when Alistair Darling speaks about UK social solidarity in a speech on Thursday.

Thus, in Natspeak, the huge issue of the currency was dismissed by the SNP simply as a diktat from the Westminster elite, while Osborne was sneered at as a patronising Englishman who knows nothing about Scotland. Ed Balls, who weighed in to support Osborne, was promptly told by Salmond he was reading from the chancellor's script.

Four days later, Barroso's massively important warnings about Scotland and Europe were scorned as undemocratic. And this week Brown's no less serious case about pensions was met by Nicola Sturgeon's insult that the former PM was the last person anyone in Scotland would take lessons from.

I'm no uncritical admirer of Osborne, Balls, Barroso or Brown. Nor am I a kneejerk critic of Salmond or Sturgeon. But I know a serious argument when I hear one, and Osborne and the others have been making serious arguments in the past few days. It is simply mischievous to pretend that they are not dealing with major issues which, if mishandled, could be seriously destructive to ordinary lives, communities and standards of living. Yet, faced with genuine intellectual and political challenges on big subjects, Salmond and his colleagues act like children who scream as loudly as possible in order to avoid listening to a message they do not want to hear.

It is often said, by admirer and critic alike, that Salmond is a man who plays a long game. If that is the case, then what is the long game that has such a reflexive and prominent place for such low-level sneering? To read some commentators, you may think that Salmond has simply tapped in to the Scottish public's view. Maybe that feeling of being talked down to and told off, even bullied, is the

feeling that most Scots share this week. Salmond has captured their mood before. So he may do it again.

But a rather more persuasive explanation for the inadequacy of the SNP's engagement with serious issues this week is that it may suspect the game is up. The party has read the steadiness in the polls and realised it is not going to win a referendum that Salmond neither wanted nor expected until his shock landslide in 2011 forced him to hold it.

In that case, the long game may simply be an SNP core vote strategy, designed not to persuade but to maximise the anti-English, anti-British, anti-Tory, anti-neoliberal vote that the nationalists have successfully corralled in the past – and await another day.

This article had 2394 comments and they can be read at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/19/alex-salmond-acting-spoilt-children>

Tait's Edinburgh Magazine

Have continued to work on these magazines from c1840. Here are some of the articles I've culled from the pages this week. I might add that some of the scans are not too clear so I ended up providing them as pdf files.

River Dee

Got a very good article on this river and also found both a book about the river and also a 25 minute video of it.

You can find this at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/river_dee.htm

Remedies for Highland Famine

There are three classes of people in the Highlands, whose peculiar circumstances must be embraced in any remedial scheme intended to be applied to that distressed portion of the country. The first is the pauper class, consisting of the aged and infirm, widows with families of young children, and persons disabled by disease or by some bodily or mental defect. The second is the cottar class, or day-labourers, who have been permitted to squat upon the large farms, and for the privilege of growing a crop of potatoes, have become to a certain extent affixed to these farms, to which they must give their labour in the first instance, and fill up the remainder of their time with employment wherever they can find it. The third class are the crofters, who hold a few acres of land, either directly from the proprietor or as sub-tenants of the tacksmen, and who are also dependent upon day-labour for part of their subsistence. The whole of these classes have been vitally injured in their circumstances by the loss of the potato as an article of food. The whole of them are more or less exposed to famine; the whole of them are involved in suffering as painful and distressing as afflict any portion of her Majesty's subjects; and to exclude them from a share of the legislative efforts so freely extended to the co-suffering classes of Ireland, would be a narrow and discreditable policy, utterly alien to every good quality of free and representative government.

You can read the rest of this article at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/highland_famine.htm

Obituries

Sir Robert D. Horn Elphinstone, Bart at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/elphinstone3.htm>

Lieut-Colonel Sir Robert Mowbray, K.H. at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/mowbray2.html>

Professor Tennant, of St. Andrews at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/stoz/tennant2.html>

Scottish Song

Investigating the genius of Scottish Song.

You can download this in pdf format at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/scottish_song.htm

Widow Rice and William Lindsay

Two cases on the Poor Law in Scotland. For researchers this is an excellent article which quotes many past cases and so I have both ocr'd this in and also made the article available as a pdf file.

You can get to this at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/widow_rice.htm

And this concludes the articles from Tait's Edinburgh Magazine for this week.

The Songstresses of Scotland

Added the biography of Jean Glover (1758 - 1801)

This one can be read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/music/songstresses/>

Enigma Machine

Put up puzzle 51 at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma051.htm>

The Campells of Argyll
By Hilda Skae.

We've now added the penultimate chapter which you can get to at:
http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/atoc/campbell_book.htm

Robert Burns Lives!
Edited by Frank Shaw

Review of the Burns Chronicle

A dear old friend of mine has come back into my life! This friend has been missing for more years than I care to remember and, I must confess, I have greatly missed this particular companion. I liked the replacements that took his place and, while these new friends were more colorful and were published on a quarterly basis, they could never replace that special relationship I had developed with my old friend. Lord knows, "they" tried hard to replace him with something better and one would think it would be an easy task, but to me, something was always missing. When I heard he was soon to reappear in my life again, I rejoiced and have welcomed him back with great joy and gratitude with the hope "they" never send him away again. I am not saying it was a mistake, it could have simply been trial by error, but the phrase that comes to mind is "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

You can read the rest of this article at: http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives194.htm

We've continued to add chapters to...

Scottish Historical Review at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/volume16.htm>
The Clyde from the Source to the Sea at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/clyde/index.htm>
The History of Burke and Hare at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/burkehare/>

And Finally...

Great Place New York.

A Scots tourist taking the train from New Jersey to Penn station hears the conductor announce: "For those of you who are interested, Penn Station is next."

then he went on ... "For those who aren't, it still is."

Happily Unhappy

PROOF that there is none so miserable as a Scot, comes the just-published book *Wha's Like Us?*, subtitled *On the Unrealities of being Scottish* by Andrew Burnside.

Andrew tries to sum up what it means to be Scottish these days and his musings in the book include:

We won't change. We're satisfied being dissatisfied with ourselves.

Lack of initiative - a critical survival strategy for the Scot at home. It equips him to endure familiar failings, helps him avoid the criticism of getting above himself, and avoids the risk of major failure had he aspired.

The Scot imagines he's a world beater; occasionally he gets glimpses of how far he falls short of that; so he returns to the comfort blanket of myth.

Golf - quintessential game of the Scot. In it, you struggle against yourself forever and never quite win.

And that's it for this week and I hope you all have a good weekend.

Alastair