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NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
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SONGS
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SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHAT'S NEW

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for April 25th, 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

Many thanks for the all the emails and messages on my health issues... much appreciated!

I'm trying to get Scotia Bank to sponsor the Electric Canadian web site as they seem to be keen to get their staff involved so if it works I should get lots of content.

I was away in Toronto for the Easter break and found out that Nola's church has been closed due to the land lord putting up the rent. As a result she had her Easter service in her own home which was rather unique. They are finding it difficult to find new premises.

The whole family gather afterward at Cinq Foods premises where her son-in-law Alex put on a great spread for lunch.

I thought I'd provide some information on the The Better Together Campaign and so added a page for them at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/together.htm>

It's mostly links to resources.

Electric Canadian

Nova Scotia Historical Society, Reports and Collections

I have found a number of volumes from this Society and have added the first four to get you started. I'll be adding more as I find them.

I added Volume X 1896/98 which includes, The Slave in Canada.

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

Bert Lloyd's Boyhood.

A Story from Nova Scotia by J. MacDonald Oxley, LL.D. (1892).

Getting near the end of this book. We are now up to Chapter XXVII which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/boyhood/index.htm>

Nova Scotia: The Province that has been Passed By

By Beckles Willson (1911).

Also getting near the end of this book where we are now up to chapter XV and you can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/passed/index.htm>

I might mention that chapter XV about Louisbourg also contains a video.

Prince Edward Island

I am working on a History of Prince Edward Island (PEI) and took the opportunity to add a few videos to the pages which you can get to at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/pei/index.htm>

History of the Bank of Nova Scotia 1832-1900

I added this book to our Banking section and you can get to this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/bankns.htm>.

History of Nova Scotia

This is an overview with links to major works on the Province. You can get to this at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/history_links.htm

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Fraser Hudghton where his article is about "What Women Want". It is of course to address the fact that women in Scotland are less interested in a "YES" vote.

There is no Synopsis this week.

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, "Sandy M'Tartan's Voyage to Govan" and "Robin Rigg and the Minister" which you can find at the foot of the page at:

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

Here's a wee snippet from the second story...

Robin Rigg was a West of Scotland ploughman chiel, who was in farm service in Upper Clydesdale. Robin was an honest, plain-going, unsophisticated man, and, although neither a scholar nor a theologian, he was none the less a consistent doer of his daily duty in an humble but serviceable way. In point of fact, Robin, honest man, never meddled with, nor even consented to listen to, discussed theology, nor church creed and government, excepting, perhaps, on a Saturday night, when the "clachan yill" was in his head. For Robin was a real typical Scotchman, and took to the discussion of theology when "fou" as naturally as a retriever dog takes to the water. But even then Robin Eigg was often badly at sea on this subject, and was in the habit of roundly declaring that "kirk theology was for a' the worl' jist like a bit o' teuch girsle—wersh in the mouth, an' unco ill to chowe."

Thomas Dick Lauder

This is an author that wrote many historical books and we are going to be bringing you a selection of his books over the next few months.. We are starting on his 3 volume book "Lochandou".

Hope you are enjoying this book. Added another two chapters to this book which you can find at the foot of the page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/lauder_thomas1.htm

Enigma Machine

Added puzzle 59 which you can get to at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma059.htm>

Scottish Historical Review

Added the January 1922 issue. It includes a couple of interesting articles, "Documents relating to Coal Mining in the Saltcoats District in the First Quarter of the Eighteenth Century" and "Glasgow in the Pre-Reformation Period".

You can read this issue at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/volume19.htm>

The Book of Scottish Anecdote

Humorous, Social, Legendary and Historical edited by Alexander Hislop, eighth edition.

I note there are quite a few wee articles on Robert Burns and I was thinking it would be a useful project to save all these and add them to a special page about him.

Added pages 252 to 301. You can read these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/anecdote>

Alan Cunningham

This distinguished poet entered the world under those lowly circumstances, and was educated under those disadvantages, which have so signally characterized the history of the best of our Scottish bards.

We've added chapter XII to the Life of Alan Cunningham.

You can read it at the foot of his page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/cunningham_allan.htm

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's Trip to Scotland

By Thomas Dick Lauder (1843).

Have now completed this book and the concluding chapters can be read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/leaves/index.htm#trip>

With the Scottish Regiments at the Front

Now concluded this book where the chapters are on...

Chapter I - The Guards and The Greys

Chapter II - The Royal Scots

Chapter III - The Royal Scots Fusiliers

Chapter IV - The King's Own Scottish Borderers

Chapter V - The Black Watch

Chapter VI - The Gordon Highlanders

Chapter VII - The Seaforth Highlanders

Chapter VIII - The Cameron Highlanders

Chapter IX - The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

Chapter X - The Highland Light Infantry and the Cameronians

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

And as we have concluded these books we're starting three more...

Memories of his Time

By Henry Cockburn

PREFACE

"It occurred to me, several years ago, as a pity, that no private account should be preserved of the distinguished men or important events that had marked the progress of Scotland, or at least of Edinburgh, during my day. I had never made a single note with a view to such a record. But about 1821 I began to recollect and to inquire."

Such is the brief account which Lord Cockburn, writing in the year 1840, gives of the origin of his Memorials.

What is now presented to the public by his Executors was accordingly written between 1821 and the close of the year 1830. Some alterations and additions however, though only to a small extent, were made at times subsequent to 1830.

It may further be explained, that the characters of some eminent men—as for example Henry Erskine and the first Lord Melville, and the details of some remarkable events—such as the establishment of the Edinburgh Review and its great public effects, have been omitted in this publication, because they are contained, with no very material variation, in Lord Cockburn's Life of Lord Jeffrey.

Edinburgh, May 1856.

Here is a bit from the first chapter...

I was born on the 26th of October 1779. This event took place, I suspect, in one of the many flats of the lofty range of dwelling-houses which then formed the east side of the Parliament Close. If not there, it must have been at Cockpen; a small estate, about eight miles south of Edinburgh, then belonging to my father, but sold soon after this to the Earl of Dalhousie. My terror at the apparition of a peacock in one of the Cockpen walks, while I was still in petticoats, is the most distant recollection that I have.

My father was then Sheriff of the county of Midlothian; he was afterwards also Judge Admiral, and finally a Baron of Exchequer. My mother was Janet Bannie, one of the two daughters of Captain Bannie of Melville. Her sister was married to Henry Dundas the first Viscount Melville; and besides this near alliance by marriage, our family and that of the once powerful house of Arniston were connected by blood, and on habits of very friendly intimacy.

My father was a man of strong sense, and with no aversion to a joke, whether theoretical or practical. He was one of the many good fathers, who, from mere want of consideration and method, kept his children at a distance. My mother was the best woman I have ever known. If I were to survive her for a thousand years, I should still have a deep and grateful recollection of her kindness, her piety, her devotion to her family, and her earnest, gentle, and Christian anxiety for their happiness in this life and in the life to come.

After leaving Cockpen we removed to Hope Park. My father purchased the eastmost house on the south side of the Meadows; and there the next twenty-two or twenty-three years of my life were passed. We had about eight acres of ground, partly in lease and partly our own; and nearly the whole country to the south of us, though all private property, was almost quite open. There were very few fences south of the meadows. The lands of Grange, Canaan, Blackford, Braid, Mortonhall, and many other now enclosed, properties, were all, except in immediate connection with the mansion houses, unenclosed; and we roamed at pleasure till we reached the Pentlands, or the deserts of Peeblesshire. A delightful region for wild and active boys. A part of the monastery of the nuns of Sienna (from which the neighbouring village, now part of Edinburgh, is called Sciennes or Sheens) stood in a field behind our house, which field my father always had in lease from Sir Andrew Lauder of Grange; and a fragment of the monastery still remains. A large portion, including the great window, of the Chapel of St. Roque, on the northern base of Blackford Hill, then survived. There was a pond close beside it where I learned to skate—the most delightful of all exercises, and one which I have practised with unflinching ardour ever since.

I have actually completed this book as it was just 7 chapters although each chapter is of considerable length.

I have also provided links to articles and other books he has written.

You can find all this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/cockburn/index.htm>

The Forester

Being Plain and Practical Directions for the Planting, Rearing, and General Management of Forest Trees by James Brown, Forester, Arniston (1847).

PREFACE

Having, for the period of fifteen years, had my attention almost entirely devoted to the rearing up and cutting down of forest trees, I have during that time seen much to convince me that arboriculture is not in that advanced state among us which its real importance demands.

The present improved condition of agriculture is the natural result of the great attention paid to that science by the landed proprietors and farmers of Great Britain during the past twenty years; while, upon the other hand, the proper management of plantations has been almost entirely neglected, and this mainly because landed proprietors have not had their attention and interest directed towards the subject.

Many of our home woods are rapidly dying out, as if by consumption; yet the cause does not appear to be known among those who have the management of them: and, seeing this state of things, it appears to me very evident, that until noblemen and gentlemen shall become as truly practical foresters, as they now are practical farmers, we cannot reasonably expect to see our home plantations exhibit the extent and healthy development which it is most desirable should characterise them. I am anxious that the spirit of improvement should be aroused among our landed proprietors, relative to arboriculture: and at the same time I am of opinion that it is necessary, in order to the gaining of this end, that all proprietors should be made acquainted with practical forestry, and that upon the most improved principles. It is with the hope of promoting such knowledge that I am induced to publish the present work: and I have been further encouraged in compiling it by the fact that many extensive landed proprietors in Scotland have invited me to visit their plantations, and report upon them for their future guidance; and by my having constantly found the gentlemen who have thus honoured me with their patronage as a forester, most anxious to be made acquainted with the practical details of arboriculture. I am therefore led to hope that this little treatise may be both acceptable and of service to them.

JAMES BRONX.

Arniston, November 1847.

This was another shorter book which we've also completed and you can read this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/agriculture/forest/index.htm>

And as we have completed this book also that means we've started on another...

Robert Stewart was looking for some of these people and asked me if I had anything up about them on my site. I may have had but off hand I didn't know who they were and so this book will fix this problem.

Life Sketches from Scottish History of Brief Biographies of the Scottish Presbyterian Worthies

This little volume is presented without any claim to originality. It is, indeed, nothing more than a book of quotations from those glorious old records, the History of the Scottish Church. These stories are selected without reference to chronological order, and are intended to stimulate the young to greater self-denial, and more ardent love for the church of their fathers, by placing before them a few noble examples, of whom the world was not worthy.

The number of these stories might have been indefinitely increased, but enough have been given to excite the reader to learn more of the history of that church which so nobly battled for Christ's crown and kingdom, amidst fire and sword.

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

As I've been working through some issues of the Edinburgh Review I've found some good book reviews and so have added them to the site and where possible link to the actual books.

Earls of Cromarty

Added a review of the 2 volume book about them and a link to download both volumes.

I've added this to our The Mackenzies of Cromartie page at the foot of the page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/families/mackenzies_cromartie.htm

Scotch Novels

This is an interesting review of Scotch Novels in the mid Nineteenth century and I've found pdf copies of the books. I have extracted the Edinburgh review of these books and should any of these be of interest just click on the link on the page to download them.

THE practical character of our busy modern life has done some injustice to the Scottish nation. Not altogether without reason, people have come to regard us in those practical aspects which are least engaging. The typical Scotchman is the keen and pushing man of business who looks closely to the main chance, seldom misses a profitable occasion. and takes religious care that in his dealings with his neighbour he shall never fail in his duty to himself. 'Whatever sterling qualities he may possess. there is supposed to be the minimum of poetry in his composition. The Scots have now more than their share of wealth and honours all over the British possessions and the virtues by which they command success have made them less liked than respected. Their peculiarities of speech and manner lend themselves easily to ridicule. Their constitutional reserve and caution tend to repel easy intimacy; and superficial observers have been shown to appreciate the desirable qualities that lie hidden under a commonplace or chilling exterior. We need hardly wonder. then. that they have seemed to offer unpromising material to the hurried authors of ephemeral novels. These ladies and gentlemen write for their readers; they dash down the vague impressions that glance from the surface of unreflecting minds; their indolence saves them from attempting the discriminating analysis which could only result in lamentable failure. and they dwell either on the trivial or the coarsely emotional life that recommends itself most to the vulgar fancy. It neither suits their genius, nor is it in their capacity, to remember that it is the stillest water that runs the deepest.

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

Dalrymple

I found a review of three books about the Dalrymples in the Edinburgh Review and so have made this available

Arnold thinks, the virtue of an aristocracy lies in openness to ideas, never was a body less worthy of the name than the nobility of Scotland. Happily, influences were now at work which opened a career to 'new men.' It is our purpose, with the aid of the books which are at the head of this article, to give some account of the foremost of these-the two Dalrymples, father and son-founders of a family which, through several generations, produced men eminent in literature, law, arms, and diplomacy.

I've added these to our Dalrymple page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/dalrymp2.html>

RAF Montrose

Britain's first operational military airfield was set up in Montrose by the Royal Flying Corps in 1913.

I had no idea that this was the first airfield so thanks to Wendy in Dundee for sending me this information which you can read at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/raf_montrose.htm

The Art of Deer-Stalking
By William Scrope.

I found an article about this book in the Edinburgh Review and have also provided a link to download the book.

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

And Finally...

Here are a few wee stories from "The Book of Scottish Anecdote"...

FINE SPINNING

Robert Burns, in reply to the question if the critical literati of Edinburgh had, on the occasion of his visit to that city aided him at all with their opinions, said: "The best of these gentlemen are like the wife's daughter in the west - they spin the thread of their criticism so fine, that it is neither fit for warp nor waft."

BURNS AS AN EXCISEMAN

The poet and a brother exciseman one day suddenly entered a widow woman's shop in Dunscore, and made an extensive seizure of smuggled tobacco. "Jenny," said the poet, "I expected this would be the upshot; here, Lewar, take note of the number of rolls as I count them. Now, Jock; did ye ever hear an auld wife numbering her threads before check reels were invented? "Thou's ane, and thou's no ane, and thou's ane a' out-listen." As he handed out the rolls, he went on with his humorous enumeration, but dropping every other roll into Jenny's lap. Lewars took the note with as much gravity as he could muster, and saw the merciful conduct of his companion as "if he saw it not."

HIGHLAND BEAUTY

The men in the Highlands have more regard to the comeliness of their posterity than in those countries where a large fortune serves to soften the hardest features, and even to make the crooked straight; and indeed their definition of a fine woman seems chiefly to be directed to that purpose; for after speaking of her face they say, She's a fine, healthy, straight, strong, strapping lassie." - Burt.

BELTANE

On the 1st of May the herdsmen of every village hold their Beltein, a rum sacrifice. They cut a square trench on the ground, leaving a turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal, and milk; and bring, besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whisky; for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on the ground, by way of libation: on that every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them. Each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and flinging it over his shoulders, says, "This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this to thee preserve my sheep," and so on. After that they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals: "This I give to thee, O Fox! spare thou my lambs; this to thee, O hooded Crow! this to thee, O Engle!" When the ceremony is over, they dine on the caudle; and after the feast is finished, what is left is hid by two persons deputed for that purpose; but on the next Sunday they reassemble, and finish the reliques of the first entertainment. - Pennant.

CHAMPED POTATOES

Mashed potatoes in milk and butter one of the very best of dishes. I defy the most skilful French cook that ever lived to make a dish of a more delicious nature; and no confectioner's shop in the kingdom has anything to compare with them: They are truly glorious - Mactaggart

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

Alastair