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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 1st, 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

We are back to testing with Ezoic and so for a couple of days the site will slow down a bit while they transfer and test out the serving up of our pages. So that's just a heads up on that.

The speed increase in our bandwidth has made our Electric Scotland Community a real pleasure to use as it's been very responsive and useable as a result. I've also noted an increase in our web traffic which I can only put down to the speed increase as at this time of year we'd expect to get a decline in traffic due to summer holidays.

Mind that with this bandwidth speed increase that doesn't mean that in all instances you will see a difference as it will then be down to your own personal bandwidth from you own Telco that will now be the limiting factor and not on our end.

We've just signed a contract today to lift this to 100 Gbyte download and 20 Gbyte upload and am told this might go into place over night. We are currently running on 7 Gbyte upload right now. Mind while you are downloading content from us we need to upload it to you so upload speed is the key for us.

So once the new bandwidth becomes a reality we will be moving on several fronts and here are a couple of things we plan to work on...

First will be our community as the speed increase has clearly shown that this has fixed a couple of issues such as the saving of high scores in our Arcade and just the general speed of loading pages. Like it used to take almost a minute to see the new posts but now it comes up in just a few seconds. Here we plan to do a little makeover of the service and upgrade it from v4 to v5 of the software.

Then it's onto new projects and one we've had in mind is to have our own Radio Show. We've had the software for some time to do this and we also have the contacts with artists and production companies so as we'll be able to stream this we're ready to go with this project when they switch us on.

And don't forget that one of the reasons for going with Ezoic is so that people with smart phones and tablets should get a much better experience when connecting to our site and so all that will help a great deal. They tell me that some 30% of web traffic is now through mobile devices and growing fast.

Electric Canadian

Duck Lake

Stories from the Canadian Backwoods By E. Ryerson Young.

Got one complete story up now and started on the next one.

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

Hugh Scobie

Added this newspaperman, publisher and justice of the peace to our Makers of Canada section.

You can get to this at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/annual/scobie_hugh.htm

James MacGregor

I added a pdf of a book of his songs and hymns to the foot of his page. The Preface is in English but the rest is in Gaelic.

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

Canada Day service at Shorncliffe military cemetery

I was told of this service which takes place just outside Folkestone in England each year and there is a YouTube video of it which you can view at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/folkestone.htm>

Overview of Religion in Canada taken from a US Report

Amazing how you can sometimes get a better report on aspects of Canada from non Canadian resources and in this case the Dept of State in the US.

You can read this report at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/canada_overview.htm

Gaasenbeek

An Immigrant's Story: Memoirs of a Dutch Canadian which we've added to our Makers of Canada section.

An interesting story starting with an account of his growing up in Holland during the WWII. He's kindly provided us with a copy of his book in pdf format for you to read and you can get to this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/gaasenbeek.htm>

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Margaret Hamilton but no Synopsis this week.

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

Electric Scotland

Thomas Dick Lauder

Hope you are enjoying his book, Lochandhu. Started on the final Volume 3 and you can find these at the foot of the page at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/lauder_thomas1.htm where we've added chapters VII & VIII this week.

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.

Now started on Volume 3 and have added Pages 98 to 156.

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

The Northern Highlands in the Nineteenth Century

Some years ago I published the 2 volumes in this set. Well I have now found a third volume is now available and so have started to work on this.

Added the issue for 1854...

The year 1854 saw the first stage of the Crimean War, carried on by the armies of Britain and France against Russia in support of Turkey. Great efforts were made to avoid war, but there was strong indignation in France and England against the aggression and the autocratic attitude of the Czar, and their Governments were forced into action. To an autograph letter written by the French Emperor on 29th January, the Czar sent a haughty reply, with an allusion to the retreat from Moscow. A deputation from the Society of Friends, which visited St Petersburg, was courteously received, but was informed by the Czar that he could not permit the Turks to violate the stipulations of treaties made for the protection of his coreligionists. On 8th February the Russian Ambassador left London, and on the 27th the British Government sent an ultimatum, to which no reply was delivered, and war was formally declared. The allied fleet had been sent to the Black Sea, and in due course the allied forces were transported to the Crimea. The battle of Alma was fought on

20th September, and was followed by the opening of the siege of Sebastopol, and the battles of Balaclava and Inkermann.

The great event in the North of Scotland was the beginning of the railway line from Inverness to Nairn. The first turf was cut by the Countess of Seafield on 21st September.

You can read this issue (No. 13) at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/highlands/3no13.htm>

Henry Dryerre
Compositor, Poet, Journalist and Musician.

Now added another three Worthies...

John C. Spindler
Baillie Isles
James Band

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

Poets and Poetry of Scotland from the earliest to the present time
Comprising characteristic selections from the works of more noteworthy Scottish poets with biographical and critical notices. By James Grant Wilson (1876)

Now on Volume 2 with...

Pages 281 - 377 added this week.

You can read these at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/poets/>

Samuel Smiles
Newspaper Editor, Author and Social reformer has been added to our Significant Scots page.

This is another biography we're adding. I've added this week...

Chapter XIX - Character, Illness, A Long Rest
Chapter XX - Thrift, The Scotch Naturalist, George Moore, etc.

You can read this book at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/smiles_samuel.htm

Book of the Old Edinburgh Club
We have acquired copies of 12 volumes of this club's publications and we're going to add one a week.

Now added volume 10 which includes...

The Burgh Muir of Edinburgh, from the Records by William Moir Bryce, LL.D.

You can read these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/edinburgh/edinburghclub>

Enigma Machine
Now have up puzzle 72.

You can get to this one at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma072.htm>

A Highlander Looks Back
By Angus MacPherson.

Added the final chapters and so this now completes this book.

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

The Great Floods of August 1829
In the Province of Moray and Adjoining Districts by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder.

This week added...

Chapter VII. The Rivers Diview and Findhorn - Relugas - And to the Craig of Coulternose
Chapter VIII. The Left Bank of the River Findhirn, below Coulternose

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

Weird Tales - Scottish
Added another story...

The Witch of Laggan
Allan MacTavish's Fishing

And this now completes this book and these can be read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/strange.htm>

Legends of the Braes o' Mar
some time ago we published this book on the site. Only this week we learned that the author had taken most of this information from another book without permission or indeed without any reference to it. So in fairness we have now sourced the original book and have made it available from this page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/braemar/index.htm>

The Picts
This is a page I created to bring you books and research on the Picts. I also added books of Place Names in Scotland.

You can get to this page at <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/picts/>

Miss L. E. Farquharson of Invercauld
An article from the Celtic Annual of 1916 which you can read at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/farquharson.htm>

The Records of Invercauld
Added this book to our page on Clan Farquharson. A newspaper cutting from the "Aberdeen Daily Journal", 27th Jan. 1902, containing an article entitled "The Clan Farquharson" by a clansman, has been pasted in the front of the volume.

You can get to this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/dtog/farquha.html>

Highland Dyes
Found an article detailing how the Highland Dyes were made. I have to say that finding this type of information is very hard to find so a bit of a coup to come across this.

It can be read at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/highland_dyes.htm

Celtic Annual
Found three issues of this publication which are in both English and Gaelic. You can read these at:
http://www.electricscotland.com/gaelic/celtic_annual.htm

The History of the "Old Scots" Church of Freehold
From the Scotch immigration of 1685 till the removal of the Church. A new book we're starting.

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

Robert Dick of Thurso
Geologist and Botanist by Samuel Smiles LL.D. (1879). Another new book we're starting.

PREFACE

The preparation of this book has occupied me at intervals during several years. It would have been published before the Life of a Scotch Naturalist, but for want of the requisite materials.

I have to thank my reviewers, one and all, for their favourable notices of that work. It has, however, been objected that I should have culled my last example of Self-Help from a career not already concluded, and exposed the Scotch Naturalist, after his long unmerited

neglect, to the harder trial of intrusive patronage, to which my premature biography was likely to expose him.

Whatever truth there may be in this objection, it certainly does not apply in the present case. Robert Dick died twelve years ago, without any recognition of his services to the cause of science, and without any of that Royal Help which, as in the case of Edward, is likely to render the later years of his life more free from care and anxiety.

The first account that I heard of Robert Dick was from the lips of the late Sir Roderick Murchison. He delivered a speech at Leeds on the occasion of the meeting of the British Association, which was held there in September 1858.

“In pursuing my researches in the Highlands,” said the Baronet, “and going beyond Sutherland into Caithness, it was my gratification a second time to meet with a remarkable man in the town of Thurso, named Robert Dick, a baker by trade. I am proud to call him my distinguished friend. When I went to see him, he spread out before me a map of Caithness and pointed out its imperfections. Mr. Dick had travelled over the whole county in his leisure hours, and was thoroughly acquainted with its features. He delineated to me, by means of some flour which he spread out on his baking board, not only its geographical features, but certain geological phenomena which he desired to impress upon my attention. Here is a man who is earning his daily bread by his hard work; who is obliged to read and study by night; and yet who is able to instruct the Director-General of the Geographical Society.

“But this is not half of what I have to tell you of Robert Dick. When I became better acquainted with this distinguished man, and was admitted into his sanctum—which few were permitted to enter—I found there busts of Byron, of Sir Walter Scott, and other great poets. I also found there books, carefully and beautifully bound, which this man had been able to purchase out of the savings of his single bakery. I also found that Robert Dick was a profound botanist. I found, to my humiliation, that this baker knew infinitely more of botanical science—ay, ten times more—than I did; and that there were only some twenty or thirty British plants that he had not collected. Some he had obtained as presents, some he had purchased, but the greater portion had been accumulated by his own industry in his native county of Caithness. These specimens were all arranged in most beautiful order, with their respective names and habitats; and he is so excellent a botanist that he might well have been a professed ornament of Section D [Zoology and Botany]. I have mentioned these facts,” concluded the Baronet, “in order that the audience may deduce a practical application.”

This notice of Robert Dick, by a man of so much eminence as Sir Roderick Murchison, interested me greatly. His perseverance in the cause of Science, while pursuing the occupations of his daily labour—his humility, his modesty, and his love of nature—were things well worthy of being commemorated. But I was at that time unable to follow up my inquiries. I could merely mention him in *Self-Help*, which was published in the following year, as an instance of cheerful, honest working, and of energetic effort to make the most of small means and ordinary opportunities.

Many years passed. Robert Dick died in 1866* Was it possible that he had left any memoranda on which a memoir of his life and labours could be written? On inquiry I found that many of his letters were still in existence. I believe that I have been successful in obtaining the greater part of them, or, at all events, those which are the most interesting. In fact, by means of these letters the story of Dick's life has in a great measure been told by himself.

One of his principal correspondents was the late Hugh Miller, author of *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, *The Old Red Sandstone*, and other geological works. His son, Mr. Hugh Miller, of the Geological Survey, has kindly sent me Dick's letters to his father; though Hugh Miller's letters to Dick have not yet reached me. They are supposed to be in Australia.

Mr. Charles W. Peach, A.L.S., one of Dick's best friends, has sent me all Dick's letters to him, together with much other valuable information as to his life and character. But perhaps the best of Dick's letters—those containing his references to his private life—were those written to his sister, principally for her amusement; and these have been kindly placed in my hands by Dick's brother-in-law, Mr. Falconer of Haddington.

I am also indebted to Dr. Meiklejohn, to Dr. Robert Brown, F.L.S., for many letters; and to the Rev. William Miller, A.M., Thurso, for the letters sent by Dick to his uncle, the late Mr. John Miller, F.G.S.

Among those who have also favoured me with valuable information as to Dick's life, I have to mention Mr. Brims, Procurator-Fiscal, Thurso; Mr. G. M. Sutherland and Mr. Fielding, Wick; Professor Shearer, Airedale College, Bradford; and Dr. George Shearer, Liverpool.

With respect to the Illustrations, they have, for the most part, been the result of several journeys which I have made round the coast of Caithness, and also into the inland districts frequented by Robert Dick, while making his numerous journeys in search of fossils, boulder clay, ferns, plants, and grasses.

The illustrations have been much improved by being drawn on the wood by such accomplished artists as Leitch, Skelton, and Boot, and engraved by Cooper, Whympster, and Paterson.

Mr. Sheriff Russell of Wick and Mr. Charles Peach of Edinburgh have also given me their assistance in the preparation of the

illustrations.

The engraving of Mr. Peach has been executed by Charles Roberts, after a photograph by Mr. Dallas, Edinburgh.

London, November 1878.

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

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in Section A of the August 2014 issue which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

Adventures of a Highland Soldier

On Active Service at Home and Abroad by Charles R Martin (Late sergeant 92nd Gordon Highlanders)

I found this book on the Internet archive and I really enjoyed reading it. It hadn't been well scanned so I unpicked it and corrected each page then re-assembled it., You can read this at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/highland_soldier.htm

Glesga Toon In The 1950s

A new song from John Henderson which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel546.htm>

He also sent in Call of the Bens which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel547.htm>

A Guide to Stirling in 1911

Most of the material in the book appears to me to have been supplied by Bailie James Ronald before his death c. 1905.

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

Pictures of Glasgow 1911

Found this wee book with some excellent black and white pictures. I added a link to this pdf book to our Rambles Round Glasgow page at

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

I might add that I also edited this page to point to all our other material about Glasgow which we have on the web site.

And Finally...

A JUDGE BREAKING THE LAWS.

A late Lord Justice-Clerk, when out in pursuit of game one day, was passing through a turnip field, when he was rudely hailed by the farmer to "come oot o' that!" His lordship, not liking to be addressed in this disrespectful manner, asked the angry man if he knew to whom he was speaking? "No, I dinna," was the answer. "Well, I'm the Lord Justice-Clerk." "I dinna care wha's clerk ye are; but ye'se come oot among my neeps."

ADVICE GRATIS

The famous Dr John Brown, the commentator, experienced a full share of the world's vicissitudes. At Dunse, on one occasion, when his funds were low, he entered a shop to invest in the luxury of a halfpenny worth of cheese! The shopman declared his inability to accommodate him with so small a portion, "Then what's the least you can sell?" inquired the doctor. "A pennyworth," replied the dealer, and instantly set about weighing that quantity, which he speedily placed on the counter in anticipation of payment. "Now," said the doctor, taking up the knife, "I will instruct you how to sell a halfpenny worth of cheese in future;" upon which he cut the modicum in two, and appropriating the half, paid down his copper, and departed.

THE VIRTUES OF GLENLIVET

Gie me the real Glenleevit-such as Awmrose aye has in the house-and I weel believe that I could mak drinkable toddy out o' sea-water. The human mind never tires o' Glenleevit, ony mair than o' cauler air. If a body could just find out the exac proportion o' quantity that ought to be drank every day, and keep to that, I verily trow that he micht leeve for ever, without dying at a', and that doctors and kirkyards would go out of fashion. - Noctes Ambros.

A LONG STAY

The following complacent remark upon Bannockburn was made to a splenetic Englishman, who had said to a Scottish clergyman that no man of taste could think of remaining any time in such a country as Scotland. "Tastes differ. I'll tak ye to a place no' far frae Stirling

whaur thretty thousand o' yer countrymen hae been for five hunder years, and they've nae thoch! o' leavin' yet."

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair