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For further information regarding the New York Tartan Day Parade Events Calendar visit www.nyctartanweek.org

2016 International Clan Rattray Gathering

The clan are trying to setup a Gathering in Scotland for 2016 and you can learn more about this and get the registration form at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/ntor/rattray.html>

West Dumbartonshire Council

I read an interesting article about how this council want to promote their area for tourism so I decided to do a YouTube video to explain one method they might use.

The background article can be read at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-31610720>

The video can be viewed at

<http://youtu.be/H2643QZLxcQ>

I might just say that this concept can also be used by any other area of the world.

Just a reminder

I've always said to beware of unsubscribing from email lists. The reason is that some of these spam emails you get in will sell on your email address as a "good one" as they then know your email address is one you use and so they get more money for selling it on.

Now if you are looking to subscribe to a mailing list in my opinion you must see a copy of the last mailing to see if it is something you want to subscribe to and if it is then by all means go ahead and join. However, a lot of emails you get don't offer this option and instead have just added you themselves so all you can really do is unsubscribe (and that's only if they give you the option) and that way you can be certain you'll just get lots of new spam in your inbox.

In my case this weekly email newsletter is sent out to our list and we always say if you want to unsubscribe then just reply to the email and let me know. Should I get an email in from you asking to unsubscribe then I do it manually so it's not an automatic thing. When you send in the email to me you should find you won't get the newsletter the following week so that way you'll know you've been taken of the list.

In the unlikely event you still receive it then email me again as I'm only human and might have missed your email but you should never need to email me again after that. I don't actually acknowledge your unsubscribe email as I just do it but from now on I will acknowledge it so you know you've been unsubscribed. Mind you it would be nice to know why you are unsubscribing but of course you don't need to tell me that.

Electric Canadian

Added a wee book on Selection of Lamb Cuts. Seems most Canadians don't eat lamb so thought this might help those that don't know the various cuts of meat and it also includes a few recipes as well. You can read this booklet at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/selectlambcuts.pdf>

I personally enjoy lamb and actually prefer it to beef.

Bar to Bar to Bench: a Memoir The Honourable Gregory T. Evans, C.M., Ont., Q.C., LL.B.

I will say I have been unable to contact anyone to get permission to publish this memoir so I admit to taking a chance on publishing it. Of course this might be dangerous as this is a Judge after all!!! I do think it is worthwhile to provide this as it's comparatively rare to read about the life of a Judge.

You can read this pdf version of the book at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/Judge.pdf>

Electric Scotland

George Douglas, Eighth Duke of Argyll K.G., K.T. (1823 - 1900)

Autobiography and Memoirs edited by the Dowager Duchess of Argyll with Portraits and Illustrations in two volumes.

We're now up to Chapter XVI and an interesting comment on the people of Glasgow...

After our return to Rosneath, in January, 1851, I was called to Glasgow to fulfil an engagement to open in that city a new Athenaeum for public reading and study. The largest hall in Glasgow was full to overflowing, and I had an enthusiastic audience. As this was the first of many occasions on which, during forty years, I have been called on to address great meetings in Glasgow on all subjects—social, religious, and political—I wish here to bear my testimony to the great superiority of the people of Glasgow over all others whom I have ever addressed, in respect to that liveliness, quickness, and high intelligence on which every speaker must depend for all the pleasure and all the satisfaction he can possibly derive from his exertions. Next to them, and very near them, I should place the people of Paisley.

You can read this book as I get it up at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/argyll/argyllindx.htm>

Enigma Machine

Added puzzle 99 which you can get to at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/enigma099.htm>

Memoir of the Rev. Wm. C. Burns, M.A.

We're now up to Chapter IX of this book and in the next chapter he'll be heading to Canada.

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

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

Patrick Scott writes: "This previously-unpublished talk about Tam o' Shanter was one that Ross Roy gave a number of times, always as far as I recall in a two part-program along with a power-point talk we had developed about the early editions of the poem in the Roy Collection. Ross wrote the talk shortly after he had purchased one of the rare proof sheets or offprints of the poem that Burns presented to friends and patrons. Towards the end of the talk Ross describes the proof sheet, and the annotation on it made by its recipient, the Scottish judge Alexander Fraser Tytler. The version of the talk given here is from a typescript marked for reading at the Atlanta Burns Club in December 2003, but Ross also spoke on the same topic for a special Burns session at the Eighteenth-Century Scottish Studies Society meeting in Charleston, SC, April 2003, and again more informally at the Charles Bascombe Shaw Scottish Heritage Symposium at St. Andrew's College, Laurinburg, North Carolina, in March 2005. He never revised the talk for publication, perhaps because he had written about the poem more extensively in 1979 for his edition of the Alloway Manuscript in his Scottish Poetry Reprint Series. Much of the talk was deliberately introductory, covering background material about the poem that, in Ross Roy's words, 'was already known and available to the searcher.' The final section, however, contains his first discussion of Tytler's annotation, and it seems worth rescuing, as the issues it raises have since been discussed more fully by other scholars."

You can read this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives212.htm

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got up Section 1 of the March 2015 edition which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/>

Poetry by John Henderson

John has sent in a number of poems which we've added to the foot of his page at:

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

Old Silver

Fairy Nell

Maggie's Passion

Think Again Sparrow

The Devil

Into the West

This is a 6 part video presentation telling Tales from the American West in the 19th century, told from the perspective of two families, one of white settlers and one of Native Americans.

I thought you might enjoy this and can be viewed at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/into.htm>

The Highlanders

I came across this video about the fighting between the Campbells and the MacDougalls and Robert the Bruce. I've added this to the foot of the Campbell page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/atoc/campbel-a.html>

Monarch of the Glen

Added a page for this seven season BBC series. I had got an email in which talked about this series and so thought I should add it

the site. I'm told folk enjoyed it for the Scottish scenery and the accents.

You can get to this page where I've added links to where you can watch the series at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/culture/monarch.htm>

A Study of the Diet of the Labouring Classes of Edinburgh

Found this report and have added it to the foot of our Health in Scotland page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/health_scotland.htm

Tales of the Highlands

A book by Thomas Dick Lauder. Added this to the foot of his Significant Scots page at:

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

Thomas Atkinson

Found a book he produced called The Chameleon which I've added to his page in the Scottish Nation at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/atkinson.htm>

Three Nights in Perthshire

With a description of the festival "Scotch Hairst Kirn" (1821). Added this book to the foot of our Perth page at:

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

Three Speeches of The Right Honorable, Sir Francis Bacon Knight

Then his Majesties Sollicitor Generall, after Lord Verulam, Viscount Saint Alban including Post-Nati, Naturalization of the Scotch in England, Union of the Laws of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland (1641) Added this towards the foot of our Scots in England

page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/england/>

I will say this is a bit challenging to read but it covers an interesting discussion on whether people born in Scotland can be naturalized in England. Seeing as this was written in 1641 you'll find the letter s is written as an f.

Indomitable John Scott

Citizen of Long Island 1632-1704 By Lilian T. Mowrer.

Added this interesting account to our Clan Scott page. Soldier, explorer, pioneer, something of a scientist and poet.

PREFACE

To those versed in England's colonial and domestic history during the second half of the seventeenth century John Scott, a minor figure in that colorful time, is remembered as a notorious but picturesque and piquant rascal. Loved by many in America, despised by a few in England, Scott's evil repute has rested largely on depositions which Samuel Pepys obtained but never used to blacken John, a leading and most damaging witness in the parliamentary investigation of that admiralty secretary. Wilbur Cortez Abbott, among others, in his writings of twenty-five to forty years ago on Scott, basing his work largely on the Pepysian papers, is chiefly responsible for giving this seventeenth century character such a disreputable name among students of history.

Now after a careful examination of these same documents Lilian Mowrer has found that the depositions against Scott were made by malevolently inventive witnesses whose evidence would have had little chance of acceptance even in the notorious English Restoration courts. Becoming deeply interested in John Scott she followed him back and forth across Long Island Sound, the Atlantic Ocean, the English Channel, the North Sea, and into the Caribbean. With the help of hundreds of papers and documents she has reconstructed his life from birth in 1632 to his death in 1704.

This gifted, artful man with his widespread interests and far-flung activities—Long Island landowner, West Indies buccaneer, Dutch Colonel, Royal Geographer, English officer and agent in the Low Countries, French gun caster, a coachman's murderer, and Speaker of the Assembly at Montserrat in the Leeward Islands—Mrs. Mowrer has vividly brought back to life in a style the envy of most stolid historians. At the same time she has made excellent use of the historian's tools: records, papers, and documents in New England, New York, and Long Island communities, in England's British Museum, Public Record Office, and Bodleian Library, in France's record repositories, and in Holland's archives. She has made John Scott a respectable, loyal subject of Charles II. She has shown him to be a man of many and varied abilities. She has disclosed a rough, at times crude, but charming personality in a man whose character was as straightforward and honest as that of most men of his day. She has followed his career with all the fascinating details at her disposal. All this Lilian Mowrer has done with imagination and insight and has soundly based her work on the finest materials the most meticulous historian could desire. This is a brilliant historical biography. I believe that it will rehabilitate John Scott in the eyes of students of English and American history and will instruct and delight the reader seeking knowledge and adventure.

Harold Hulme

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/stoz/scott.html>

THE STORY

This week I'm going to tell the story of the Scots that emigrated to England. I'm giving you the first chapter from the book...

The history of the Scottish people is largely a history of Scotsmen who have emigrated from the land of their birth. The Fates decreed, apparently, that it was to be the dark lot of Caledonia to educate her sons and then send them to far places. All through the centuries this has been so, nor will we see it changed, for the practical genius of the Scot, and the more pleasing aspects of his nature, do not expand freely in Scotland. In order that he may grow, the Scot must be transplanted while young. Rooted in his native soil he remains hard, gnarled, and knotty, like a Scotch fir leaning stubbornly against the winds of a rocky headland.

During the past ten years, 391,903 Scots left their native land. Of the 391,903 emigrants, 328,000 sailed from these islands. What became of the remaining 60,000? There is only one answer—they trekked across the border and settled down in England. No other country in the world received such copious transfusions of vigorous blood at so little cost.

Yet Scotland, somehow, survives this perennial blood-letting. Indeed, in spite of her appalling losses of population, she has grown, slowly, like the oak, and, like the oak, hardening her texture in the tedious process. At the time of Parliamentary Union there were 1,093,000 people in Scotland; it has taken more than two centuries to achieve an increase in population of 3,749,980. When we compare these population figures with those of England, for the same period, we begin to understand what has been called The Tragedy of Scotland. Only a hardy breed could survive the conditions that these figures connote.

The earliest Scots did not leave their country. On the contrary, they clung tenaciously to their barren acres and their primitive huts, fighting savagely against a succession of covetous invaders. They defended their dismal hinterland against the disciplined Roman legions, and with a degree of success that puzzled and irritated the military masters of Europe. Agricola, with all his skill as a military strategist, had a hard time battling his way north to the Firth of Forth, and in that air he ran into the red-headed Caledonians. It was no use pitting Romans against these wild men from the Highlands, so, just as a precautionary measure, Agricola built his line of forts from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde. The Caledonians remained in their mountains till Agricola went back to Rome, then they pushed the forts over.

Rome, however, was too proud to overlook this sort of thing, and the Emperor Hadrian went north to take a look at things. He must have seen a good deal of the Caledonians, for he backed up and built his sod wall between the Tyne and the Solway. This soft barricade only aroused the curiosity of the Picts and the Scots of the Lowlands, and after inspecting it carefully they swarmed over it, invaded South Britain, did some killing, and headed home with booty. Another good Roman reputation was tarnished.

Lollius Urbicus was the next great Roman general to be sent against the tribesmen of North Britain. He followed Agricola's road to the Firth of Forth, and built another huge wall across the waspish waist of the country, naming it in honour of his emperor Antoninus. It was a fine achievement in military architecture, but it did not keep the redheaded raiders in their own territory, and Lollius had to admit that he was beaten. The Caledonians opposed his massed troops with guerilla tactics, and in this type of warfare, with cold steel to the fore, the men from the Highlands were, as they have always been since, unbeatable.

Something had to be done about them, however. The prestige of Roman arms was at stake. Ignoring his generals, the Emperor Severus took the problem in hand himself. With an immense army at his command, he marched into North Britain, and kept on marching till he was within sight of Lossiemouth. He had killed a number of Caledonians, but when he came to make a tally of his own army on the shores of the Moray Firth, he discovered that he had 50,000 fewer soldiers than when he started on his march. That settled Severus. He made a dignified but smartly executed retreat to the border, built a stone wall between the Tyne and the Solway, and sent his regrets to Rome. That was the last attempt made to keep the Picts and Scots out of England. Rome, with trouble piling up nearer home, was quite content to leave the tribes of North Britain [This term is still used to signify Scotland, and the English are blamed for perpetuating its use. As a matter of fact, the diminutive letters "N.B." are printed on the notepaper of most of the county families and successful tradespeople of Scotland to-day.] to their own devices.

In their turn, the Norsemen and the Danes had their fling at Caledonia. Sometimes they met with success ; often they were repulsed; always they were stubbornly resisted. They, too, left traces of their successive invasions, for many of them remained in the country to which they came to ravish, raising fair-haired, horse-faced, high-shouldered children. The blood of those vigorous pagans from across the seas flows strongly in the Orkneys to-day, and further south. Phlegmatic blood, but strong in courage and with the old love of questing in it. The pagan pirates came to North Britain to weaken and conquer it; they left it stronger, and unconquered, but facing the worst enemy it had yet encountered—England. The fibre of the northern tribesmen was to be tested and toughened by nearly five centuries of savage warfare with their southern neighbours.

The lot of the common people of Scotland at this period was one of perennial poverty, but the stately ruins which dot the countryside

are mute evidence of the certainty that civilizing influences were at work. The records of the benign and enlightened ecclesiastical outposts that were established were swept away by the raging fires of war and religious bigotry; but there is not the slightest doubt that, nurtured by these centres of culture and learning, the long-repressed genius of the country flowered briefly in the twelfth century. [King David I of Scotland (1124-1153) made ecclesiastical history by his whole-souled support of the Church. He almost beggared the country by building such famous monasteries as Melrose, Dundrennan, Holyrood, Dryburgh, and Newbattle.]

We catch glimpses of this vague but interesting era in the ruins of beautiful monasteries, in convincing historical evidence that agriculture was on a diversified and progressive basis in the lowlands, and in the fact that scholars of wide renown came out of the country. Michael Scot emerged from the mists to impress England and Europe with his learning :

A wizard of such dreaded fame, That when, in Salamanca's cave, Him listed his magic wand to wave, The bells would ring in Notre Dame.

It appears, also, that Michael studied medicine on the Continent, for he returned to Scotland with a reputation for the successful treatment of leprosy, gout, and dropsy, and he compounded a pill called "Pilulae Magistri Michaelis Scoti", which, like some of these modern pills that are wrapped in pretty boxes, was both popular and potent. Michael assured Scottish sufferers that it was "guaranteed to relieve headache, purge the humours wonderfully, produce joyfulness, brighten the intellect, improve the vision, sharpen hearing, preserve youth, and retard baldness". Had he lived to-day, this healer would undoubtedly have thought of many other diseases that would have yielded to his powerful concoction.

This mysterious character was born in 1175, and was probably the first Scot who studied at Oxford University. His passion for mathematics, astrology, and the occult sciences took him to Paris and Rome, and his genius so impressed Europe that he was invited to join the glittering galaxy of savants that was a feature of the Court of Frederick II. While basking in the sunshine of that monarch's patronage, Michael translated Aristotle and wrote several books that dealt with astrology, alchemy, and his dark occult theories. He foretold Frederick's death in 1250, and having guessed well in that instance, set the date of his own departure from this sphere, adding the interesting detail that he would be killed by a stone weighing less than two ounces. From that day onwards he wore an iron helmet. Fate, however, caught him with his hat off. He was in church one day, and at the Elevation of the Host removed his helmet. Crack ! A small stone fell from the lofty roof of the church, killing him instantly but vindicating his reputation as a prophet of doom. Another faded vignette salvaged from that remote era shows that the Scots had already begun to take a kindly interest in the education of the English. It is surely a curious historical fact that Lady Devorguila, daughter of Alan, the last of the old Kings of Galloway, was the benefactress of Balliol College, Oxford. Following the death of her husband, John de Balliol, in 1269, this devout lady built a house in Horsemonger's Lane, in St. Mary Magdalene's Parish, on the site of the existing college, and in 1282 gave her scholars statutes under her seal.

Two years later she purchased a tenement known as Mary's Hall, which was "to be used as a perpetual settlement for the principal and scholars of the House of Balliol". This domicile was called New Balliol Hall. The revenues of the college in those days would not buy cigarettes for the brilliant lotus-eaters who stroll through their studies at Balliol to-day. They produced only one shilling and sixpence per week for each scholar. Lady Devorguila, however, made up the deficiencies by substantial gifts, and when she died the college was supported by her son, King Balliol of Scotland. The son's generosity, in fact, was so boundless that he ended up by handing Scotland over to the English, and we will catch a revealing glimpse of the conditions that produced the modern Scot as we pause a moment to see how Balliol was driven to the miserable extremity of bartering his country for his freedom.

When that incorrigible meddler, Edward I of England, bullied the Scottish barons into accepting John Balliol as their king on the 17th of November, 1292, the bloodiest chapter in Scotland's history opened. Balliol was a weakling. He tried to stand out against Edward, and by way of counteracting the latter's pressure, established the Franco-Scottish Alliance. The fight for Scottish independence was in earnest, and it proved to be the most gruelling test to which the tenacity of the race has ever been subjected. Edward led an army against the prosperous town of Berwick-on-Tweed, and to show the Scots that he was not a man to be treated lightly when coveted new territory, he razed the town and put its inhabitants—men, women, and children—to the sword. That slaughter completed, he led his army north to Perth, and there celebrated his victories. It did look as if he had crushed the Scots completely, and a day or two later Balliol, stripped to his underwear, handed the Bishop of Durham the white wand of abject surrender.

Edward, however, made the same mistake that so many other would-be conquerors of Scotland made—he underestimated the unconquerable spirit of the common people. Balliol had surrendered the independence of their country; they had not. So, just when Edward's English satraps thought they had the country tamed, Sir William Wallace drew his sword in the town of Lanark, and he did not lay it aside until he met England's soldiers "beard to beard", and had swept the hated invaders back into their own country. The first great hero of the common people of Scotland was betrayed by the landed class, who should have been the last to desert him, and by their connivance he was hanged, castrated, and beheaded in London; but he had shown England what made the heart of Scotland beat strong and true—the courage of the common people. It was this courage of which Robert Bruce became the symbol after Wallace's dismembered body had been scattered throughout Scotland; it was this courage which sustained the new King in his wanderings following his shabby coronation; and it was this courage which, at Bannockburn, on the 24th of June, 1314, inflicted upon English arms the greatest defeat they have ever sustained in fair fighting.

England had learned, as Rome had learned, that she was dealing with a race that would not accept defeat. Well might Christopher Marlowe put these words into the mouth of Edward II:

And as for you, Lord Mortimer of Chirke,
Whose great achievements in our forrain warre,
Deserve no common place, nor meane reward:
Be you the generall of the levied troopes,
That now are readie to assaile the Scots.

The levied troops did not succeed, however. Scotland's independence had been fought for and won at terrible cost, and although the struggle against "the auld enemie" was to last for centuries, the country had been united by common sacrifice, its real strength had been revealed, and in the white heat of the endless war against a more powerful country the people were tempered to the hardness which was to make their descendants the wonder of the modern world.

Their determination to be free was immovable. A curious proof of this almost fanatical resistance to England's attempted domination may be seen in the letter which the Barons of Scotland addressed to the Pope in April of 1320:

We know [they wrote in Latin], and from the chronicles and books of the ancients gather, that among other illustrious nations, ours, to wit the nation of the Scots, has been distinguished by many honours; which passing from the greater Scythia through the Mediterranean Sea and the Pillars of Hercules and sojourning in Spain among the most savage tribes through a long course of time, could nowhere be subjugated by any people however barbarous; and coming thence one thousand two hundred years after the outgoing of the people of Israel, they, had many victories and infinite toil, acquired for themselves the Possessions in the West which they now hold after expelling the Britons and completely destroying the Picts, and although very often assailed by the Norwegians, the Danes, and the English, always kept them free from all servitude, as the histories of the ancients testify.

The sins committed by the Edwards against Scotland are solemnly enumerated to the Most Holy Father at Rome; Robert Bruce is praised for delivering the country from the oppressors; but this ringing declaration, which carries a warning to the Scottish King, follows:

But if he were to desist from what he has begun, wishing to subject us or our kingdom to the Kings of England or the English, we would immediately endeavour to expel him as our enemy and the subverter of his own rights and ours, and make another our king who should be able to defend us. For, as long as a hundred remain alive, we will never in any degree be subject to the dominion of the English. since not for Glory, Riches or Honours we fight, but for Liberty alone, which no good man loses but with his life.

Such was the spirit that sustained Scotland during the early part of the fourteenth century. In those dark days it could be kindled only in the hearts of a valiant and intelligent breed, and we are not surprised, therefore, to find the country giving promise of its future genius by producing, here and there, men who became eminent in the intellectual world. Even in those far-off days, these scholarly men found their way into England. One of the first of them was John de Duns, sometimes called Scotus. He was born at the end of the thirteenth century, and was the first of the long line of grim and learned Scots who have held Professorships at Oxford University. John was almost too good to be true, if we are to swallow the following tribute to his genius, penned by a contemporary Cardinal:

Among all the scholastic doctors, I must regard John Duns Scotus as a splendid sun, obscuring all the stars of heaven by the piercing acuteness of his genius; by the subtlety and the depth of the most wide, the most hidden, the most wonderful learning, this most subtle doctor surpasses all others, and in my opinion, yields to no writer of any age. His productions, the admiration and despair even of the most learned among the learned, being of such extreme acuteness, that they exercise, excite, and sharpen even the brightest talents to a more sublime knowledge of divine objects, it is no wonder that the most profound writers join in one voice, "that this Scot, beyond all controversy, surpasses not only the contemporary theologians, but even the greatest of ancient or modern times, in the sublimity of his genius and the immensity of his learning!"

It is perhaps advisable to add that the testimonial was not written by a Scot. It may seem to be a trifle lacking in scholarly reserve, and the cynic might point out that John left very little evidence of his sublime genius. Nevertheless, this most subtle doctor was an authentic character, for he was appointed Professor of Divinity at Oxford University in the year 1301. Only a hazy picture of him comes across the intervening centuries, but it is one, if we may judge by his writings, of a monkish, pragmatic pedant who specialized in turgid denunciations of unbelievers.

Three centuries were to pass before Scottish scholars were heard of again, for the weary struggle with England reduced the country to a state of poverty and ignorance. The clashes became more serious as the years rolled on. Hatred of England had been bred into the blood and bones of the Scots; from the end of the thirteenth century they hated their southern neighbours with a hatred that lay cold in their very vitals. Back in 1388, just before the bloody battle of Otterburn, the Earl of Douglas said to his French ally, De Vienne: "My friend, you shall see that our army shall not be idle, and as for our Scottish people, they will endure pillage, and they will endure famine, and every other extremity of war, but they will not endure English masters."

In view of the almost magical manner in which Scotsmen rise to positions of authority in England to-day, the last observation of the Douglas was prophetic.

War had become the normal condition in Scottish life. Armies moved back and forth across the border, leaving chaos and death behind them. Raiders rode at night through the debatable lands. There was no peace or security for anybody, and under these disturbed conditions of existence trade languished, agriculture became a lost art, and the people sank deeper and deeper into the mires of poverty and ignorance.

AENEAS SYLVIUS, afterwards Pius II, paid the country a visit in 1413, and he had this to say about it when he got back to Rome:

It is an island joined to England, stretching two hundred miles to the north, and about fifty broad, a cold country, fertile of few sorts of grain, and generally void of trees, but there is a sulphureous stone dug up which is used for firing. The towns are unwallled, the houses commonly built without lime, and in villages roofed with turf, while a cow's hide supplies the place of a door. The commonalty are poor and uneducated, have abundance of flesh and fish, but eat bread as a dainty. The men are small in stature, but bold; the women fair and comely, and prone to the pleasures of love, kisses being esteemed of less consequence than pressing the hand is in Italy. Nothing gives the Scots more pleasure than to hear the English dispraised.

Much blood was to be spilled on both sides of the border before the ancient enmity was softened; but even so, it is possible to discern, in the turbulent reigns of the Stuart kings, a gradual but inevitable converging of the destinies of the two countries. Perhaps the feeling grows upon the student of history because the Stuarts, with all their faults, indicated that they had a larger conception of statesmanship than the great majority of the rowdy Scottish barons who surrounded them.

So, as we enter the sixteenth century, we see the dawn of peace glimmering dimly on the border. The darkness lifted when James IV of Scotland married Margaret Tudor in 1503. That talented man died at Flodden, and his son, James V, died at Solway Moss; but the very violence of the fighting which these tragic events connoted seemed to presage the end of it all, and the light still glimmered over the Pentland Hills.

Mary, the infant daughter of James V, succeeded to the throne, and the curtain rose slowly on the most poignant tragedy of Scottish history. Both countries drifted further into the angry waters of religious intolerance:

And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick.

Inflamed by the harsh eloquence of John Knox, Scotland rallied to the Reformation. In England the fanatics burned bishops at the stake, and Queen Elizabeth became head of the Anglican Church.

The drama of the century rushed to its climax. Mary came back from France, married the degenerate Darnley, fought her protracted duel with the implacable Knox, and at the end of the pathetic struggle abdicated the throne in favour of her infant son James. For Mary Stuart nothing remained but the insults of the Scottish rabble, the long years in English prisons, and the axe at Fotheringay. For her son James a great destiny loomed up, for on the night of 24th March, 1603, Sir Robert Carey, riding a jaded horse, arrived at Holyrood Palace with the news that Queen Elizabeth was dead, and two days later another messenger brought the Scottish King word that the Privy Council of England had chosen him to succeed the Maiden Queen.

The other chapters include...

- Chapter II - We Give England a King
- Chapter III - We Give England a Prime Minister
- Chapter IV - A Festival of Race Hatred
- Chapter V - Scottish Support for English Art
- Chapter VI - Guardians of John Bull's Health
- Chapter VII - The Real Builders of England
- Chapter VIII - New Power for England
- Chapter IX - The Scot in English Business
- Chapter X - Eight Scottish Prime Ministers
- Chapter XI - The Scot in English Agriculture
- Chapter XII - "Scots Wha Hae For England Bled!"

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

And that's it for this week and next week sees the start of Spring! Can't come fast enough!

Alastair