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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for February 24th, 2017

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

Got an email in which said...

Had email correspondence with F. Lawrence Fleming then Fleming genealogy author and scholar.

As of the last year more than enough Fleming DNA matches proved with 100% accuracy that Anselm Le Fleming and Agnes of Dunbar are the parents of Richard la Scott the progenitor of the Scott's Buccleuch family line.

Gail the head of Clan Scott DNA will not disclose these fact to the Scott's Clan members who are Fleming matches.

... and so I thought I'd copy you into this email so that the information is out there for researchers.

Brexit

There is so much talk of Bexit these days that I've decided to create a Brexit page under our Scotland's Future section. You can see this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/brexitndx.htm>

Update on me

Just getting over a cold which I've had for the past couple of weeks and I think I'll have finally got rid of it over the weekend.

I've been reading more these days on a wider range of web sites. I'm interested in understanding more about Brexit, Trump and also what is happening in EU countries. So I've added Brexit Central, Think Scotland and Reuters to my regular reading and also signed up for the Conrad Black blog. It's now taking me around 2-3 hours each morning going through all the news sources. I have at the same time reduced some of the reading I used to do for the Knights Templar newsletter.

I'm also doing more reading of books rather than ebooks on my Kindle. I do have quite a large library so now re-reading a lot of them and enjoying becoming re-acquainted with old favourites.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our ScotNews feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in newspapers such as the Guardian, Scotsman, Courier, etc. you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish.

Scientists explore Edinburgh's mystery cave network

New light is being shed on a mysterious network of tunnels and caves carved out of rock underneath Edinburgh.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-38991458>

3,000-year-old spearhead found in Angus

A 3,000 year old bronze spearhead embellished with gold has been discovered in the North East of Scotland with archaeologists declaring the weapon as the find of a lifetime.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/3-000-year-old-spearhead-found-in-angus-find-of-a-lifetime-1-4367614>

Queen's private Balmoral golf course opened to the public

Normally only open to the royal family, staff and their guests, visiting golfers will now be allowed a round on the nine-hole course for £200 for four players.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/people-places/queen-s-private-balmoral-golf-course-opened-to-the-public-1-4370792>

The Bridge

By Magie Craig in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/MaggieCraig170a.html>

Volunteers needed to work and live on tiny Scottish island

Bird-loving volunteers are being hunted for a chance of a lifetime opportunity to work and live on a tiny Scottish island,

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/volunteers-needed-to-work-and-live-on-tiny-scottish-island-1-4371446>

Shetland ponies taken on boat adventure to meet relatives

This is the moment one of Britain's leading horse trainers took her ponies to meet their relatives on the Shetland Islands - on a tiny boat.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/odd/shetland-ponies-taken-on-boat-adventure-to-meet-relatives-1-4371655>

Mary Queen of Scots last letter goes on display

Writing to Henri III, king of France and the brother of her first husband, she said: "I am to be executed like a criminal at eight in the morning

Read more at:

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/mary-queen-scots-last-letter-9780007>

Trump and the Enemy of the People

By Conrad Black. I thought I'd add this article giving a different view of Trump and the media.

Read more at:

<http://www.conradblack.com/1270/trump-and-the-enemy-of-the-people>

European Union it can expect hostility after Brexit

Steve Bannon, the White House chief strategist, is understood to have informed Germany's ambassador to Washington that the new US administration hopes to conduct future relations with Europe on a bilateral basis.

Read more at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/21/senior-donald-trump-aide-warns-european-union-can-expect-hostility/>

Why Jaffa Cakes excite philosophers

It's a delicious structure consisting of a small sponge with a chocolate cap covering a veneer of orange jelly.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-38985820>

Brussels warns French economy out of kilter, chides Germany, Italy

The European Commission warned France two months before elections that its economy was out of balance and in need of reforms as it also chided Germany and Italy.

Read more at:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-eu-economy-imbalance-idUKKBN1611DV>

Transatlantic flights from just £69 from Edinburgh

Low-cost airline Norwegian today announced flights from Edinburgh to airports near Boston, New York and in Connecticut.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/transport/transatlantic-flights-from-just-69-from-edinburgh-announced-1-4374586>

With right approach, UK can boost Commonwealth trade

Loosening ties with Brussels will provide an opportunity to reinvigorate relationships with the 52-nation, 2.4 billion-citizen Commonwealth, with its ties of history, culture and language.

Read more at:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-commonwealth-idUKKBN1621UJ?il=0>

Electric Canadian

Chronicles of Canada

Added Volume 19: Pathfinders of the Great Plains: A Chronicle of La Vérendrye and his sons

I might add that I've found text copies of these volumes so have added a link to them on the page. I also found a page where you can get audio copies so have placed a link to these as well.

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

D. C. Beard

Author of many books on bush craft for the Boy Scouts of America. I thought I'd bring you a few of them as having found them I enjoyed them and so hope you do as well.

Added another book, "Boat Building and Boating" in which you get shown how to build a really basic boat from just a log which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/beard/>

Sportsman's Paradise

Or, The Lake Lands of Canada by B. A. Watson, A.M., M.D. (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/lakelands.pdf>

Electric Scotland

The Forfar Directory and Year Book

A most interesting publication with lots of wee stories and articles. I have now added more editions 1889 and 1890 which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/forfar/direct/>

Scottish Pictures

Drawn with Pen and Pencil By Samuel G. Green, D.D.

You can view this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/pictures/picsscot.htm>

Irish Pictures

Drawn with Pen and Pencil

You can view this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/ireland/irishpictures.pdf>

I might just clarify that these Picture books also include many articles.

Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle

Together with a few of later years and some of Thomas Carlyle edited by David G. Ritchie, M.A. (1889)

You can view this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/EarlyLettersofJaneCarlyle.pdf>

Flora Scotica

A description of Scottish Plants in a 2 volume publication from 1777 and another from 1821.

The general division of Scotland into Highlands and Lowlands is in itself sufficiently indicative of the nature of the country, and of its aptness to the purposes of Natural History. The Lowlands, adjoining the English frontier, present an extensive and level range of the most fertile corn-fields, interspersed with moist woods, and occasional tracts of barren heath. In a surface thus diversified, and also containing a correspondent variety of soil, the botanist will meet with the greater number of the plants peculiar to the southern districts of Great Britain; while the mountains and rocks of the Highlands furnish a considerable number of others, for which search has in vain been made in any other part of the United Kingdom.

Such a country, though happily now forming an undivided portion of the empire, is of itself so naturally separate, and was so long regarded politically so, that there can scarcely be raised a question as to how far it deserves the distinction of having a volume dedicated expressly to the elucidation of its vegetable productions. In England, as well as upon the continent, the advantage of partial Floras has been generally recognised: they supply the natives of peculiar districts with the means of examining and ascertaining the plants of their vicinity at a comparatively small expense; they furnish an important contribution to vegetable geography; and they record a multitude of facts which would otherwise escape observation as well as contain in many instances more laboured and more minute descriptions than can be admitted into works of more extensive range.

Sibbald, as early as the year 1684, published his *Scotia Illustrata, sive Prodrromus Histories Naturalis Scotice*, in two small folio volumes, the second of which was devoted exclusively to plants. This work was shortly afterwards attacked with severe invectives, which he met with a *Vindicice contra Prodrromomastiges*. Whether it was owing to the rebuff which poor Sibbald experienced; or to the unsettled state of the country, little qualified to encourage scientific pursuits; or to any other cause; no further attempt appears to have been made to illustrate the vegetables of Scotland, till the appearance of the *Flora Scolica* of Lightfoot, in the latter half of the last century; a publication soon followed by two lists of plants lately discovered in Scotland by Mr. Dickson; the one communicated to the Linnean Society, the other printed in his own 2d fasciculus of *Cryptogamous Vegetables*. At a subsequent period, the late indefatigable George Don made many, and in certain instances very unexpected, additions to the Scotch Flora, the greater part of which he published through the medium of Smith's *Flora Britannica*, or Sowerby's *English Botany*; but some of them are to be found in his own fasciculi of *Dried Plants*. In times more immediately our own, Mr. Hopkirk of Glasgow, the founder of our Botanic Garden, has made a more important contribution to the Natural History of Scotland, by the publication of his *Flora Glottiana*; but still, with the exception of Lightfoot's work, none has yet appeared professing to be a complete Flora of the country north of the Tweed. It will be observed that, in making this remark, I speak only of a Flora exclusively devoted to Scotland; it would be an invidious, and it would also be a needless, task, to provoke a discussion of the merits or demerits of those among my cotemporaries whose publications embrace the plants contained in the whole extent of the British Isles. With these I enter into no competition; nor have I a single observation to offer that may deteriorate from the merits of Lightfoot. His work contains a great mass of curious and valuable matter, selected with judgement when it is a compilation, and admirable where it is original. But it has long been out of print; and it maybe added, without any diminution of his fame, that during the last fifty years Botanical science has made such advances that a new and a different work is now required.

To supply, therefore, this desideratum is the object of the present publication. The want of a similar work was felt by myself severely during the last course of my Lectures, and I have reason to believe that it has been equally complained of in the other Universities of Scotland. Of my own qualifications for the task it would by no means become me to speak: I, most assuredly, cannot lay claim to the advantages arising from a long residence in the country; but, on the other hand, I am not altogether a stranger to it. Two successive tours, undertaken for the purpose of the cultivation of this branch of Natural History, the one in company with Mr. Borrer, the other with Mr. Turner, and both of them extending over by far the greatest part of the country, have rendered me, in some measure, acquainted with its vegetable productions. For a much more extensive and intimate acquaintance with them, I am proud to acknowledge myself indebted to the communications of my friends, who are residents in various parts of the kingdom: the information they have supplied me with is invariably accompanied with their names; but in a peculiar manner I feel myself bound to acknowledge the exertions made by my friend R. H. Greville, Esq. who devoted a very large portion of his time to the study of the minuter Fungi, with a success to which that portion of the work will bear ample testimony. Still much remains to be done in that extensive tribe, as well as among the Confervae, nor could the Botanists of Scotland render a more acceptable service to their Flora than by searching for new individuals of these families: and I can assure them that their labours will be rewarded by numerous interesting discoveries.

You can view these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/nature/florascotica.htm>

Ancient Criminal Trials in Scotland

Found 3 books giving us information on Ancient Criminal trials in Scotland. As these are old trials a lot of the information is in the Scotch language. I added these to the foot of our Law page at:

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

Principal Families of the name of Kennedy

Historical and Genealogical Account of the Principal Families of the name of Kennedy from an Original MS With Notes and Illustrations, &c. by Robert Pitcairn (1830)

I would note that I only found out about this book from reading the above Criminal Trials by the same author. You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/htol/kennedy.html>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

While visiting Glasgow several years ago to speak at the annual Burns conference put on by the University's Centre for Robert Burns Studies, Susan and I were invited by Kirsteen McCue to her lovely home on a snowy Sunday afternoon to enjoy some of the famous chicken she is known to put on her dinner table. What a special treat! This is the same Kirsteen who sings, writes, composes, teaches and who is a top speaker on the Burns circuit. She is also devoted wife to David (top-rated organist in Scotland) and loving mother of two very beautiful and lively children, Dora and Gregor. Kirsteen's mother, Pat, lives nearby and is always a welcomed addition at mealtime. And, of course, I can't leave out their loving dog, Winnie, who captivates the whole family. It was interesting to watch the two of them, mother and daughter, interact while setting the table and serving the main Sunday meal. Kirsteen is the first woman ever invited to attend a meeting at the Bachelor's Club in Tarbolton (Ayshire) and to give the Immortal Memory, a treat only a few men have enjoyed over the years.

I hope you, our readers, enjoy yourselves reading and studying this piece of work by one who is a Burns scholar and a tremendous friend. Thanks, Kirsteen, for sharing another interesting article with us. (FRS: 2.22.17)

Read this article, "Bringing The Jolly Beggars to Life!" By Dr Kirsteen McCue at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives252.htm

The Story

JOTTINGS FROM THE RECORDS OF A FARMING SOCIETY IN THE COUNTY OF FORFAR, 1803-1814, UNDER THE PERPETUAL PRESIDENCY OF ITS ORIGINATOR THE CELEBRATED GEORGE DEMPSTER OF DUNNICHEN. By THE REV. CHARLES ROGERS, D.D., LL.D., F.S.A. Scot

Nearly eighty years ago, namely on the 4th July 1803, was held, under the auspices of Mr. George Dempster of Dunnichen, the initiatory meeting of "The Lunan and Vinney Water Farmer Society." Invitations had been issued to twenty-six persons, but such was Mr. Dempster's popularity, that thirty-four attended, of whom eleven were landowners. Among those who met was the Rev. James Rogers, author of the Agricultural Survey of the County, father of the present writer. On Mr. Dempster's proposal, he was chosen secretary, and the records were afterwards kept by him. It is from the Minutes which he prepared, under Mr. Dempster's approval, that these present jottings are drawn.

In the minute which records Mr. Dempster's appointment as "Perpetual Preses," that gentleman is described as possessing "the same ardour of patriotism, as when he filled a public station." [Mr. Dempster was in early friendship with David Hume, John Home, author of "Douglas," Principal William Robertson, and Dr. Adam Ferguson. He latterly associated at London with Dr. Samuel Johnson and other literary notables. He represented in Parliament the Fife and Forfar burghs from 1762 till 1790, and latterly devoted himself to agricultural pursuits. His sterling independence as a politician procured him the designation of "Honest George;" he is as such celebrated by Burns, who deemed him worthy of a title. He was an ardent and successful promoter of the Scottish Fisheries. His long career of ardent patriotism and active usefulness was terminated by death on the 13th February 1818, when he had reached his eighty-fourth year.] In opening the Society's business, he expatiated on the importance of maintaining superior breeds of cattle and horses, on the duty of extirpating weeds, on the necessity of a stern resistance to smuggling, and on the desirableness of upholding the constitution. With his cordial approval, it was arranged that the Society should assemble at least once a year, that its proceedings should be accompanied by a modest feast at 1s. 6d., afterwards 2s. 6d. a head, and that on each occasion liquor of native manufacture should be used exclusively. The only practical business of the first meeting consisted in adopting the recommendation of a committee, that no member should hire a servant without obtaining a recommendation of him from his former employer.

At the second meeting, held in July 1804, Mr Dempster invited attention to the rotation of crops; suggesting various methods, and maintaining that by a proper alternation of green and grain crops, fallowing might be dispensed with. To each member he handed a slip of rules, which he termed golden; they consisted of injunctions to keep the land rich and clean and dry, to use efficient manure, and to avoid two grain crops in succession. Poultry and hogs, he maintained, should be largely reared. The Secretary read an essay on the rearing of horses and cattle. Prior to the reign of James I., he said Alexander, Earl of Mar, imported horses from Hungary; while James I. was himself a promoter of farm stock, by introducing on his lands at Falkland a superior species of milch cows. In

reference to grazing, he remarked that one of the members had recently sold farm cattle of three years old at £18 each, while another member had reaped from about an acre a quantity of red clover which produced 154 lbs. of seed. At the meetings held in August 1805, and in July 1806, Mr Dempster recommended the cultivation of Swedish turnips, and suggested that the tops of the carrot should be used in feeding milch cows. His former proposal as to the disuse of fallow ground was disapproved, it being strongly held that the land required rest at least every tenth year. It was agreed, on his recommendation, that wheat should be more extensively cultivated, and that it should be sown late in August or early in September. At the close of the meeting an indigent person, formerly a farmer, and then said to be in his 106th year, was awarded a little money.

The fifth meeting, held in August 1807, was attended with an exhibition of live stock. Various subjects were discussed. Gypsum as a manure, recommended by the Board of Agriculture, was, on the motion of the Rev. James Headrick, [This reverend gentleman was then assistant in the parish; he was ordained to the cure 11th August 1807. He had recommended himself to Mr. Dempster by his agricultural papers in the Farmer's Magazine. His best known work, "View of the Mineralogy, &c. of the Isle of Arran, entitles him to special notice. He died on the 31st March 1841, in his eighty-third year.] disapproved. Flax-raising was commended by several members, and by others styled unprofitable. The question as to whether carcasses of meat might be transmitted to distances packed in ice, was mooted and generally affirmed.

In his address to the meeting in July 1808, Mr. Dempster recommended the cultivation of vetches, to be sown in drills. The Chinese method of economising manure was explained and urged by Mr. Headrick; while the importance of draining marshes, described as "magazines of mischief," was duly maintained. At the meeting in 1809, the President remarked that he had lately been making trial of kale, with a view to its more extensive use. He regarded the sowing of spring wheat as worthy of consideration, and exhibited a sample of naked barley, resembling wheat, imported from Egypt, and commended by Sir John Sinclair. By individual members different agricultural topics were submitted for discussion. Mr. Guthrie of Craigie, an important landowner, held that the Swedish was much inferior to the yellow turnip, especially as the latter might be reared on a greater variety of soils. Mr Scott of Reswallie recommended a more general cultivation of barley, and suggested the erection in the district of woollen mills. He condemned the disuse of "the Scottish" or woollen bonnet, and hoped that at next meeting all the members would discard hats and appear bonneted. To this proposal Mr. Dempster expressed an objection. The hat, he held, was not cumbersome, as the bonnet was; it protected the face, and did not retain moisture. As to woollen manufactories, these had been established in East Lothian and elsewhere, and had failed. Manufactories of sailcloth and coarse linen, long common to the district, were, he maintained, worthy of encouragement, and no others. It was suggested that a donation should be presented to Mr. Meikle, inventor of the threshing-machine, who was represented as aged and indigent.

The Society's roll in September 1810 was seventy-four; it increased to eighty. At the anniversary then held, Mr. Dempster remarked, that sixty years ago, the district was covered with furze and broom, while bogs were to be found at every turn; now the fields were clean and well drained, roads were abundant, and wheat was largely cultivated. The establishment of local farming societies he believed was most beneficial, as they brought pleasantly together landlord and tenant, and enabled them to be mutually helpful. Respecting the destruction of weeds, a member remarked that in Strathmore, a riding committee inspected farms every summer, and, as authorised in the leases, imposed fines on those who permitted weeds to grow unchecked. Of spring wheat Mr. Guthrie expressed his disapproval; the grain was inferior, and the straw discoloured and feeble.

There was a competition among exhibitors of live stock in 1811, Mr. Dempster presenting several gold and silver medals to be used as premiums. In his presidential address, he recommended wheat-sowing in drill rather than in broadcast; suggested the use of single-horse carts, and remarked that cattle might be trained for use in the thrashing mill. These proposals were generally approved, especially the drill-sowing of wheat. But naked barley was unfavourably reported upon—a third only of the seed being found to germinate, while the grain could not be thrashed without difficulty. Some members discussed the respective merits of "Angus" and "Potato" oats, but the subject was left open.

In July 1812, the Society held its tenth anniversary. At this meeting wheat-sowing in drill was warmly commended, a member remarking that the produce of wheat sown in this manner was one-third more than under the broadcast system. At the following meeting Mr. Dempster, who had formerly congratulated the members on the general disappearance of field weeds, recommended drainage as "the most necessary of agricultural operations." He pleaded on behalf of crows, that they destroyed grub, and ought to be encouraged, a view strongly supported by Mr. Guthrie, but objected to by Mr Headrick. Fiorin grass had at a former meeting been brought under discussion; the subject was revived, and among those who took part in the discussion was Mr. John Pinkerton, the antiquary, who, being Mr. Dempster's guest, was present as an honorary member. Mr. Pinkerton remarked that Camden had referred to a field of form grass which was so fertile as to be cut four times a year.

At the Society's twelfth anniversary, held in July 1814, Mr. Dempster complimented the clergy as early promoters of agriculture. "Around the monasteries," he said, "the best soil was a garden and the worst a grave." It was remarked by a member that while the Roman Catholic clergy largely cultivated and made use of wheaten-flour, it had since the Reformation been generally disused. This sentiment was confirmed by Mr. Headrick, who stated that his father, who was a farmer in Ayrshire, had endeavoured to introduce wheaten-flour, but without success. A return to the use of oxen in tillage was suggested; the blight in barley, some held, might be prevented by pickling the seed; and the yellow turnip was unanimously ruled to be preferable to the Swedish.

The Society did not re-assemble. Having attained his eightieth year, Mr. Dempster was probably unable longer to discharge the presidential duties, and as his election was for life it may have been deemed ungracious to choose a substitute. It is even probable that Mr. Dempster believed that the object he had in view by the Society's establishment had been attained, and that little if anything remained worthy of special discussion. Perhaps these familiar notes of agricultural proceedings and speculations seventy or eighty years ago, may not be deemed, even in point of antiquarian interest, unworthy of our Society's notice.

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

Alastair