

THE SCOTS CANADIAN

Issue XXVIII

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Fall 2008

Fundraising reaches new heights at CN Tower

On Thursday April 3rd, Toronto's iconic landmark, the CN Tower, was the venue for this year's Tartan Day and the Scottish Society's 16th Annual "Scot of the Year Award" presentation.

The event was sponsored by HBOS (Halifax Bank of Scotland) Canada and was hosted by the Scottish Government in conjunction with Scottish Development International as part of a program of Scotland Week events across North America recognizing Tartan Day.

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of Michael Corish and Isobel Bell of SDI in organizing a night to remember and for garnering support from the corporate community in Canada, about \$50,000 was raised in a few hours to support the Scottish Studies Foundation -- the single most successful fundraising event we have ever held!

Set against the magnificent backdrop of the Toronto skyline, highlights of the night included entertainment by *Caledon - Scotland's Tenors* and Canadian folk group *Scotlandia*.

Special guests from Scotland included Robert Winter, the Rt. Hon. The Lord Provost of Glasgow and Scottish Government Minister Linda Fabiani, MSP, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture who presented the Scottish Studies Society's 16th annual 'Scot of the Year' in



*Andrew Darling,
Chief Executive HBOS Canada
which sponsored the event*

Canada award to this year's recipient -- Donald Stewart, President and CEO of Sun Life Financial Inc.

Donald was born on the Island of Arran in 1946, his Arran roots going back many generations. He left home to attend secondary school on the Isle of Bute and then attended Glasgow University, graduating in 1968 with first class honours in Natural Philosophy.

He joined Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada in London and transferred to Montreal in 1972, shortly after qualifying as a UK actuary.

Donald has spent four decades in financial services, including almost 35 years with Sun Life. Since becoming CEO in 1998 he has focused the Company on international expansion.

He led the successful demutualization of Sun Life in March 2000, and has since grown the company through acquisitions in Canada, the United States and Hong Kong. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce named him "International CEO of the Year" in November 2007.

But despite Donald's Canadian base and international focus, he and his wife Qianqian visit Scotland regularly, maintaining close links with family members in Dumfries, Edinburgh and Lewis.

Linda Fabiani is no stranger to Canada and actually has more family in Ontario than



Linda Fabiani, MSP presents the "Scot of the Year Award 2008" to Donald Stewart, President and CEO of Sun Life Financial Inc.

in Scotland. This connection with Canada is a great asset and came across in her speech and reinforced how the historical links between the two countries should continue to strengthen as Scotland evolves in the future.

It was truly gratifying to receive such wonderful endorsement from SDI and HBOS Canada as this will allow us to further strengthen the Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph. It helps the Centre solidify its position as the leader in Scottish Studies in North America providing opportunities for young Canadians to explore their Scottish heritage at the university level, at the same time raising awareness of Scotland in Canada and encouraging travel to Scotland.



Michael Corish and Isobel Bell of Scottish Development International with Robert Winter, the Lord Provost of Glasgow

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From the President

Dear fellow members:

I do hope you have had a pleasant summer and are suitably refreshed and ready for the fall and winter seasons ahead.

Once again I would like to thank you for your wonderful support. This year has been the most successful single year we have had in terms of fundraising and I would like to thank each and every one of you for the contribution you have made to our cause. Clearly, the business of preserving the Scots-Canadian heritage at the academic level has struck a chord all across the country.

Since the last newsletter, the big event was the Tartan Day Celebration at the CN Tower and we are deeply indebted to Michael Corish of Scottish Development International for his support in designating the Scottish Studies Foundation as SDI's chosen charity for the event. Donations received during the evening initially totaled \$42,385 but this quickly rose to almost \$50,000 before the week was out! The major sponsor was HBOS Canada and a very big thank you goes to Andrew Darling of HBOS for his endorsement.

Since my retirement from my day job at CTV in April of 2007, I have been spending a lot of time in Scotland and this year I was there from mid-May to early August. As a result, I was unable to attend this year's Annual Meeting on June 7 but despite this (or perhaps because of it), I was re-elected president and will do my best to fulfill my duties to the best of my ability even if it has to be from cyberspace on occasion. Thanks to our very capable and diligent vice-president Maggie McEwan we are in very good hands.

Maggie did a magnificent job in organizing our August 31 Tall Ship Cruise –

a wonderful event which was packed to capacity.

While in Scotland, I spent most of my time in the Highlands, in particular in the area of Argyll and Lochaber, taking advantage of magnificent scenery, ideal for the hillwalking and photography expeditions that I enjoy.

Interestingly enough, I never failed to find some kind of contact with Canada or Canadians as I moved around the area. Sometimes it would be by meeting young Canadian hikers on the West Highland Way or tourists in Oban or Fort William.

All too often it would be by reading memorial plaques in churchyards in the most obscure places -- sad reminders of the many Scots who enlisted in Canadian regiments and who were killed in the first and second world wars. And, of course, by the ever-present reminders of the Highland Clearances -- vast areas of land where complete communities were forced off the land to make way for more profitable sheep.

Scotland's loss was, of course, Canada's gain and, ironically, in some ways the tables have been turned.

Canadian expertise in goldmining is in action at a re-opened mine near Tyndrum and Alcan signs can be seen all around Fort William and Kinlochleven. One of the best views of Ben Nevis is from the town of Corpach just outside Fort William and as I photographed that view from a train on the West Highland Line I was quite surprised to see that I had taken a shot with a Canadian flag flying in the foreground.

Another event with a Canadian connection came to light as recently as last August when a memorial cairn was unveiled at Kinlochlaggan to commemorate the posthumous awarding of the George Cross medal to Canadian Corporal James Hendry of Kirkland Lake, Ontario for his heroic actions during World War II. James was just 29 and in 1941 was serving with the Royal Canadian Engineers which were sent to dig a tunnel to increase the water supply to the British Aluminium (now Alcan) works at Kinlochleven -- a crucial facility for the war effort. His warning saved countless lives by allowing fellow soldiers and villagers to run to safety when a powder house fire broke out. Sadly, he was killed in the resulting explosion.

Also, one of my favourite short walks is around Glencoe Lochan near the house built for Donald Alexander Smith, a saddler's son who, born in Forres in 1870, emigrated to Canada at age 18 and rose to become Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, High



Linda Fabiani, MSP, reveals a card showing the amount raised at the CN Tower event. David Hunter is rendered speechless! Subsequent donations increased this amount to almost \$50,000.

Commissioner for Canada and later Lord Strathcona (famous for hammering in the "last spike" on the CPR). In 1895 he commissioned the building of Glencoe House, created the Lochan and surrounding woodland for his Canadian wife Isabella (whose grandmother was an aboriginal Canadian) in an attempt to make her feel more at home while in Scotland.

Returning to Foundation business again, in April we had a very informative visit from James Hunter (no relation) who is the Director of the Centre for History at Scotland's UHI Millennium Institute, the prospective University of the Highlands and Islands. He is the author of several books on Scottish history and has recently published *Scottish Exodus*, a moving story of Scots separated from their roots by hundreds of years and thousands of miles. UHI would be interested in hearing from any organizations or individuals interested in supporting what will be the first university in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and the Foundation is exploring ways that it might be able to help.

Also in April we had a very well attended Spring Colloquium at the University of Toronto's Knox College followed by the extremely successful International Scottish Studies June Conference: *Scottish Associational Culture in the Diaspora* which was held at the University of Toronto's Emmanuel College both of these events being organized by Dr. Graeme Morton and the Scottish Studies team at the University of Guelph.

All of this has been made possible thanks to your support and I want you to know that it is truly appreciated. Best wishes to you all.

Sincerely,

David Hunter

Duntulm Castle

An ancient MacDonald stronghold

by Neil Matheson

On a high rocky promontory that juts out into the Minch at the north end of Score Bay in Skye rises the mouldering ruins of Duntulm Castle, the once resplendent home of the MacDonalds of the Isles.

Looking down from the battered walls surmounting an imposing cliff-face one can see far below the sea breaking over the flat rocks that still bear the keelmarks of the MacDonald galleys, while westward, across the Minch, the stately profile of the Outer Hebrides breaks the skyline.

On a summer evening long ago, according to a story still told round island peat fires, a nursemaid with a sleeping child in her arms stood on the castle ramparts and watched the sun set behind the hills of Harris.

Perhaps startled in its sleep, the child suddenly jerked itself free from the nursemaid's grasp and, toppling over the battlements, was dashed to death on the rocks below.

This may be only a fireside tale, but there is a strong tradition that the incident had something to do with the decision of the MacDonalds to abandon Duntulm after it had been the home of the family for 200 years. This event took place round about 1730.

The last memorable festivity to grace the castle walls is said to have taken place on the eve of the departure of Sir Donald MacDonald at the head of 800 of his clansmen to join the Earl of Mar in the 1715 Jacobite rebellion.

Of the six chiefs who are known to have reigned at Duntulm none had a more colourful career than Donald Gorm Mor, who was chief from 1575 to 1611.

His treatment of Margaret MacLeod, with whom he had contracted a "handfasting" marriage, is still spoken about in Skye. Such marriages could be dissolved by either party at the end of a year and a day.

Margaret appears to have lost favour with her husband, ostensibly because of a disfigurement following an injury to one of her eyes, but more probably because of a liaison which Donald had formed with a daughter of MacKenzie of Kintail.

Whatever the reason Margaret was driven from Duntulm at the end of the probationary period, her discomfiture being crowned by the added indignity of having to return to her old home at Dunvegan mounted on a one-

eyed horse led by a one-eyed groom and followed by a one-eyed dog.

The great Rory Mor of Dunvegan, Margaret's brother, was not a man to submit tamely to an affront of this kind, and for two years the "War of the one-eyed Woman," as it was called, raged with intense bitterness between the MacLeods and the MacDonalds.

At the end of two years' fighting reconciliation took place, and a great gathering of both clans was held in Dunvegan Castle. This ended the last episode in Skye clan warfare.

Donald Gorm married the daughter of MacKenzie of Kintail, but the marriage was not a happy one, for the Lady of Brahan, as she was called in Skye, was a woman of very extravagant tastes, and not even the resources of Duntulm could stand up to the strain of having to provide for her ladyship's table "one ox-tongue, a mutchkin of marrow and the same of honey" each day.

"Whose cattle are these?" she asked her husband one day as a vast drove of cattle were being driven past the castle walls. "These, my dear," answered Donald Gorm, "are your provisions for a year, one ox-tongue for each day."

A really gruesome tale is that relating to the death of Uisdean MacGhillespic Chleirich -- a near kinsman of the chief, whose record of villainy earned for him the title of "Archfiend of Clan Donald." His crowning act of perfidy was to plot against the life of Donald Gorm Mor himself; and but for a stupid mistake on his own part he might have succeeded.

Uisdean had just completed the building of an imposing new house for himself, and to celebrate the occasion he had arranged for a housewarming to which the chief and other prominent members of the clan were to be invited.

But the "house-warming" was only a pretext for the liquidation of Donald Gorm Mor; and an assassin, Martin by name, had actually been hired to carry out the foul deed.

But Uisdean inadvertently crossed two letters -- one intended for the Chief and the other for Martin. Donald Mor, on opening the missive addressed to him, found that it contained detailed instructions to Martin as to how the assassination was to be carried out.



Duntulm Castle stands ruined on the north coast of the Isle of Skye in Scotland near the hamlet of Duntulm.

The castle was abandoned in the early 1730s. According to local legend, the castle was abandoned after the infant son of the chieftain who dwelt there at the time, in the charge of a nursemaid, fell from a window and was dashed on the rocks below. As a punishment, the nursemaid was set adrift on the North Atlantic in a small boat.

And so Uisdean, who had hoped to enter Duntulm as Chief of Clan Donald, entered it bound hand and foot like a common criminal.

"Your arrangements for my entertainment on the occasion of the housewarming were very carefully planned," Donald Gorm Mor told him, "and by way of reciprocating your concern for the welfare of your chief it will be my pleasure to have you as my guest at Duntulm for the rest of your days."

Uisdean was led away to the castle dungeon. There, when his eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, he noticed that a meal had been left on a small table, and that a pewter tankard rested on the floor beside it.

He ate greedily, and then picked up the tankard to quench a thirst that had been aggravated by the huge chunk of salt meat he had eaten. But to his horror he found that the tankard was empty.

Then he heard the sound of masons sealing up the entrance to his cell.

Many years afterwards when the dungeon was reopened, workers found the skeleton of a powerfully built man still clutching the pewter jug, out of which pieces had actually been torn in the agony of a maddening thirst.

But culture was not neglected in Duntulm. Like the homes of most Highland chiefs it could boast a long line of hereditary bards, harpers and pipers; and a reminder of the part played by music in the life of the people can be seen in the "Harper's Window" which still adorns one of the crumbling castle walls. ■

Jean Kay and the MacGregors

by Ian C. Lees

James Kay, a native of Strathendrick and the owner of a fortune of two thousand pounds, bought the lands of Edinbellie, about two miles from Balfroun. He married, and his only daughter was Jean Kay, born in 1732. James Kay died twelve years later, leaving his daughter heiress to the property. Naturally, as time passed she became the centre of considerable interest in the valley, and had many suitors. Among them was John Wright, the son of a neighbouring "bonnet laird," whom she married in 1749. The death of this young man a year later left Jean once more alone with her mother.

Reports of her fortune had reached the ears of Robert Og, one of Rob Roy's sons, and he resolved to get her into his power. Within six weeks of John Wright's death he set out to visit her. He arrived at Balfroun, called at an inn, and sent a messenger to Jean Kay, asking whether he might call at Edinbellie. She replied that she did not know him, and although she never refused a visit from a neighbour, she would not receive him. MacGregor was angry, and declared that if fair wooing would not do, he would carry her off.

Jean was passionately fond of rambling among the woods round her home. Her friends, knowing the determined character of the MacGregors, warned her to be on her guard, and even suggested that she would be safer in Glasgow.

A few days after his rebuff Robert Og, with his two brothers and a number of his retainers, left Balquhiddier to capture the heiress. At dusk the same day, when Jean's uncle and aunt were strolling through the wood not far from the house, they were startled by a sound ahead of them.

"Sh-sh! What's that?" they both whispered. They halted, and listened. The dead silence of the wood was broken only by the scurrying rabbits and the low rustle of fallen leaves. Then, a short distance to the north, a dry twig crackled.

"Someone's coming," whispered Jean's uncle excitedly.

Then for a time all was silent. Here and there, however, after a little time the sudden scurry of a rabbit and the occasional muffled crunch of a fallen branch told that something was approaching. Both of the strollers, who had retreated behind a thicket, gasped, for, without further warning than the subdued noises they had heard, a man stole stealthily from the shadow of a tree.



The broad valley of Strathendrick near Gartness – a few miles from the scene of the story

"A MacGregor!" whispered the two watchers in their agitation. With swift steps the Highlander approached the house. He had no claymore, but in his belt there was a rough horn-handled dirk, round which the fingers of his right hand kept nervously moving. He seemed to know his way, and made straight for the door.

Jean answered the knocking, and spoke to the visitor. He had come, he said, to ask for quarters, whereupon Jean told him that she quartered nobody, but that he would find shelter at the inn at Balfroun. When the man replied that he did not know his way there, Jean sent one of her servants with him. Thus rid of her visitor, she was then joined by her relatives, who told her they had seen the man arrive and had noted his nervous movements. They feared he was a spy of the MacGregors.

"I think you attach too much importance to the appearance of that wandering Gael in this part of the valley," said Jean.

"I wish I could bring myself to think it meant nothing," replied her uncle. "It is true that there has been no word of the MacGregors of late, and that they have left us alone for a year or two, but we must take care, especially you. I cannot forget Robert Og's message to you the other night."

This warning had just been given when the servant who had guided the stranger to the inn came breathlessly into the kitchen, where the others had been joined by Jean's mother and cousin. He told them that while he was at the inn he had heard that some people were to follow him, and that the Highlander's visit had simply been a ruse to discover whether Jean was at home.

Had the MacGregors come to fulfil their threat by winning Jean by force? That was the question which flashed through their minds. How real were their fears was to be proved at once.

Jean asked her uncle to prepare a plan of defence against the threatened invasion. He

decided to call on their neighbours, and invoke their aid. When he left the house Jean barred the door behind him, but before she had time to return to the kitchen she heard voices outside. Waiting to listen, she heard someone threaten to kill her uncle unless he ordered the door to be reopened.

A hurried consultation was held inside, and Jean had time to conceal herself in a recess before the raiders broke in the door. On entering they dispersed through the house in search of Jean, but they could not find her.

"Where is Jean Kay?" demanded James MacGregor, Robert's brother. "It is not yet an hour since she was here, and she has not been seen to leave. Unless she is produced we shall kill the lot of you or burn the house and everybody in it."

So terrified was Jean's mother that she was reluctantly compelled to give way, and reveal the secret hiding-place. Jean was dragged forth, and taken to the kitchen where the MacGregors were waiting.

"It is you we want," exclaimed James. "Come now, there is no need for alarm. Here is my brother, a fine young fellow," pointing to Robert, "who intends to push his fortune. You must come with him. The horses are ready; you can either ride behind a man or by yourself."

Jean refused to go.

"I know you too well for what you are," she said. "You are not wanting me, but my money. You will never be a groat the better of it."

Appreciating the hopelessness of the situation, Jean's uncle sought to temporize with the Highlanders. "These proceedings are not very regular," he interposed. "You have broken the law by coming into this house by night; if you have any design on Jean, don't you think you should leave it alone till daybreak?"

"Who are you to interfere in this affair?" asked MacGregor angrily. "If Mistress Jean

must know what has brought us here, let me tell that only a strong affection for her would have brought my brother all the way from Balquhiddy at this hour, and she must prepare to come with us now."

The uncle made to interrupt again, and he was told to be quiet. Then Jean asked until morning to consider the sudden proposal, but her pleading was in vain.

By this time it was clear to the household that they must bow to circumstances. Resistance was out of the question, a fact which James MacGregor tried to impress further on his victim. "Our kinsman, Glengyle, is lying in the moor nearby, ready at a call with an hundred men," he added

There was no more time for words. At a signal from James MacGregor, who throughout had been the leader of the party, Duncan, another brother, took Jean in his arms and carried her outside. Her struggles for freedom unavailing, and her grief-stricken friends were kept at bay by other members of the gang. Jean was set on a horse behind Robert MacGregor, and then half of the company rode off in triumph. The other

half was posted as a guard on the house to prevent anyone leaving to give the alarm.

The departing members of the party had not gone far when Jean threw herself from the horse, but in falling she injured her side, and could not run off. To prevent a further attempt at escape, she was then laid across the shoulders of a horse in front of one of the company.

Realizing that there was now no possible means of escape she sat upright, and the rider held her in his arms. Subsequently she was placed on another horse behind a man, and in this manner the journey was continued to Buchanan where they rested at an inn.

Here a room was engaged for Jean, and a sentry placed outside the door. In the morning the party rode through the Pass of Balmaha to Rowardennan, where they halted at the inn.

Jean had not abandoned hope of flight, but she became disheartened when she learned that a clergyman was expected from Glasgow to perform the ceremony which would make her the wife of Robert MacGregor.

"Let me return to my mother," she pleaded.

"Never during all the days of your life," was the reply. "Your mother may come to see you, but you cannot return to Edinbellie."

When the clergyman arrived she refused to have anything to do with the ceremony, but she was carried to the room in the inn where he was waiting. Once again she told her captors that she would not marry MacGregor under any circumstances.

"You are now in our power, and will have to do as you are told," she was informed. "If you do not, we'll take you down to the water; a ducking would do you good."

Terrified into submission, she next appealed to the clergyman, but he took not the slightest notice of her prayer.

Robert then seized her by the wrist, and James held her by the waist, while the clergyman, without asking her consent, uttered some form of words declaring Robert and her man and wife. As soon as the ceremony was over the clergyman went off, and she had no further opportunity of protesting to an outsider

against her treatment.

Having heard that the civil and military authorities had sent out search parties, the MacGregors decided to withdraw to the fastnesses of Argyll and Perthshire. Accordingly, the day after Jean had been married she was told they were moving north. She protested again, but her pleadings were unheeded, and much against her will she was carried down to the water's edge, and placed in a small boat beside her husband and a few of his kinsmen.

After landing at Ardlui, the party went into hiding in Glen Falloch and for the next three months Jean was a nomad, visiting the various retreats of the bandit clan. At Balquhiddy she was told that she must acknowledge that she was legally married to Robert MacGregor, and that if her friends did not stop looking for her, she would be shipped to France. Every means was tried to persuade her to declare that she was well satisfied with her marriage, and that she was resolved to adhere to it. Her husband also did all he could to make her transfer her property to him, but she refused, and he threatened to kill her.

Meanwhile her friends at Edinbellie had applied for the appointment of a trustee to administer her affairs. This was granted. Her husband's next move was to ask the Court of Session for the suspension of the order appointing the trustee. He sent his brother James to Edinburgh with Jean, who was told that she had to consent to the proceedings. The Bill of Suspension was refused, and the court ordered Jean's removal to the house of a friend. She was later set at liberty by the court, and went to live in Glasgow. The privation she had endured and the agony she had suffered had so reduced her strength, however, that she fell an easy victim to smallpox, and died in Glasgow in October 1751.

Proceedings were begun against the MacGregors for abducting Jean Kay. The brothers were summoned to stand their trial at Perth, but did not appear, and were outlawed - a sentence to which the clan was quite accustomed. James MacGregor was captured at Fort William, and taken to Edinburgh. At his trial he maintained that Jean had not only consented to, but had even asked for, the abduction.

The jury could not agree on their verdict, and MacGregor saved them the trouble of pronouncing sentence by escaping from Edinburgh Castle, where he had been confined. With the help of his daughter he was smuggled out of his prison, disguised as a cobbler, and fled to France.

Robert MacGregor was ultimately captured. He was found guilty of abduction, sentenced to death, and executed. ■

The Hills Waited

by Brenda C. Macrow

The hills waited: and slow mist crept
On muffled feet along the dreaming valley.
Wind trembled, fluted thinly through the reeds
Fringing the silent lochan where we stood
Alone.

We had wandered far that day, and now,
Sore-limbed and spent, we rested in the shade
Of Rothiemurchus. The cool shadows
Grew longer as we stood, and greying twilight
Clung as a mantle to the rugged shoulder
Of old Macdhui. In the hush,
The hills breathed and we listened; and, at last,
The hills spoke.

The hills spoke: "You are part of us, and always will be;
And we will stretch white hands to steal your soul
And lift your heart to longing. Though you roam
To the earth's untrodden edges, we will send
A drift of heather and a breath of peat
To call you back along remembered ways."

A pause. The mystic moment passed, was gone.
Too soon, life stirred again. Night wove
Her dark enchantment. Day in the Lairig died;
And the lone eagle folded sombre wings
Above her rocky bed.
The stars
Were scattered dust upon the dim-blue lochan
As we, quiet-hearted, turned along the glen,
Leaving the hills, our comrades,
Remote and changeless, waiting for the dawn.

The Scottish Canadian: A Little-Known Newspaper

By Shannon O'Connor

When searching for information on nineteenth century Scottish-Canadians, I came across a little-known newspaper called the *Scottish Canadian*. Published from 1890 to 1908 by Imrie and Graham publishing company in Toronto, the *Scottish Canadian* enjoyed a modest, but sizeable national circulation of approximately 2,500 to 5,000 over the period from 1891 to 1906.

During the course of its printing history, the *Scottish Canadian* underwent many incarnations, initially starting as a weekly paper and later becoming a monthly in 1896. The paper's format also changed over the years, with the most dramatic change being its merger in October of 1893 with the

Chicago-based *North American Scotsman*. For two years the paper was published as the *North American Scotsman and Scottish Canadian*, until later resuming its original title in 1896.

Though there is little known about this long ago published newspaper, much can be gleaned from reading past issues. Unfortunately, not all of the paper's issues have survived but the University of Guelph Archives has luckily managed to collect a number of the original issues printed from 1890 to 1907.

There are also copies of the issues from 1890-1891 and 1903-1905 available on microfilm. Additionally, fifty issues of the

Scottish Canadian, printed from 1890-1891, have been digitized and made available to internet users on the Electric Scotland website: (<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/canada/scotscan/index.htm>).

While not much is known about D. L. Graham, one of the paper's publishers, its other publisher John Imrie, was an influential poet and printer who emigrated to Toronto from Scotland in 1871. Imrie was also a life member of the St. Andrew's Society and the Caledonian Society until his death in 1902. Though Imrie's poems were often printed within the *Scottish Canadian*, he left the general management of the paper up to its editor - Alexander Fraser.

Fraser immigrated to Canada in 1886 and was the editor of several popular Toronto newspapers, such as the *Toronto Mail* and the *Mail and Empire*. In addition to being the unpaid editor of the *Scottish Canadian* for the duration of the paper's publication, Fraser was also an active member and officer of the Burns' Literary Society, the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Societies, as well as the Grand Chief of the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association and the President of the Gaelic Society of Toronto. But despite his various commitments, Fraser was above all, a dedicated editor, contributing many a passionate editorial over the years.

Within the pages of the *Scottish Canadian* one can find numerous poems and short stories written by Scottish Canadian authors. The paper also served as a medium for all things Scottish, relaying news from the various regions of Scotland as well as alerting readers to the Scottish activities, such as Society meetings and St. Andrew's and Burns' Day celebrations going on across Canada. Thus, for Scottish immigrants and their families, the *Scottish Canadian* was an essential way of keeping abreast of important events in both Scotland and Canada.

"The Lump"

For years the Olympia Picture House in Arbroath, nicknamed "The Lump" stood empty. This poem by Ponder Law is sure to trigger nostalgic memories of childhood visits to movies in the early days of the cinema. Thanks to Pearl Grieve for sending this. Pearl originally hails from Arbroath and has been instrumental in organizing many of our "Oor Club" fundraising talks at the Bow & Arrow pub in Toronto.

Gaunt and quiet lang ye've stood
Damp, deserted, dusty;
Foyer, pit, stalls, gallery
Corridors cauld and musty.
In "silent" days whit soonds ye kent,
Echoin' frae wa' and rafter.
Boos, catcalls, ironic cheers -
And happy bairns' laughter.

Wi' bated breath we clutched oor seats
At "Exploits of Elaine",
When Pearl White, tied to rails,
Faced death from express train!
Or hanging from some sheer cliff-top
While gloating villains watched,
Till by the hero's mighty arms
Frae jaws o' death she's snatched!

"Red Circle" and "The Clutching Hand"
"Black Box", "The Laughing Mask" -
Each episode packed fu' wi' thrills -
Whit mair cud bairns ask?
"The Broken Coin" ga'e us a game -
A playground rough-and-tumble,
Fechtin' for a chappit maik
'Mang bodies in a jumble!

Spacemen, Daleks, "Dr. Who",
Concerted acts and solo -
We widna change the hale jing-bang
For fechtin' Eddie Polo!
He'd nae gun, nor death-dealin' ray,
This hero o' wee laddies;
It didna matter whit the odds,
His fists laid low the baddies!

Nae yodellin' cowboys rode the trail,
Nae guitars or singin';
Every man quick on the draw,
Set the townships ringin'.
Westerns of those far-off days
Had every rival faction,
And grim-faced W. S. Hart was tops
In non-stop, thrill-packed action!
Ben Turpin, Larry Semon,
Snub Pollard, Harold Lloyd,
The Keystone Cops wi' Model T's -
Their antics never cloyed!
Comics, noo a gey pair lot,
Wi' dummies, sangs and mimics;
Gie's half-an-oor o' Charlie Chap -
He'd nae need o' sic gimmicks!

New era dawns, a future bright
"The Lump" will face undaunted
But could it be - by faint echo
O' bairns' laughter - haunted?



Shannon O'Connor completed her MA on the St Andrew's Society of Toronto in the 19th century (U. of Guelph, 2008). She is 2007-08 holder of the Edward Stewart Graduate Scholarship in Scottish Studies.

The Flowers o' the Forest

by Fred G. Sykes

The poignant words and plaintive melody of this song make it one of the most beautiful in the Scottish Minstrelsy, its simple words telling of personal sorrow and national disaster following defeat at the Battle of Flodden.

Over two hundred years passed between the battle and the penning of the song by Jane Elliot, but in its lines she has crystallised the pathetic sense of loss of agile young men and the lament of their womenfolk in a heart-catching poem.

It has been described as "an immortal lyric . . . in which pathos of heart, patriotism of spirit and a music that echoes the plaintive sough of the Border Waters passed into one consummate outburst of song."

Listen to the first and last verses, between which the whole sad story of loss is told:

*I've heard them lilting at our ewe milking,
Lasses a' lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning
On ilka green loaning
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.*

*We'll hear nae mair lilting at the ewe milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning
On ilka green loaning
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.*

Born in old Minto House, Jane Elliot was the daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, and wrote the poem in 1756, the words being set to the beautiful tune of the old funeral march of the Black Watch. Jane died at Mounteviot, south of Penilheugh, in 1805.

The song is often associated with the loss of so many young men from Selkirk, but the sacrifice was wider spread, for "The Forest" was a name formerly applied to Clydesdale, Selkirkshire and a part of Peeblesshire.

It was men from all these areas, strong and skilled in archery, the elite of the Scottish army, most of whom were killed in the battle.

Certainly Selkirk's sacrifice was heavy, for tradition has it that of 80 men who left the little burgh of the Souters for the battle, only one returned -- William Brydon the Town Clerk -- bearing an English Standard.

The incident is forcefully portrayed in a statue by Thomas J. Clapperton, raised on the four hundredth anniversary of the battle, showing a Man-at-arms carrying a Standard and halberd, above the haunting words "O Flodden Field."

When unveiling the statue Lord Rosebery commented on the "almost insane chivalry" of James IV who led the Scots, his actions resulting in death for himself and so many of his followers.

Preserved in the Public Library is a banner, said to be the one brought back from the battle; the incident is stirringly commemorated at Selkirk's annual Common Riding, when the Standard Bearer "Casts the Colours" in the Market Place. Representing the tragic sole survivor returning alone to the town, his action indicates that all his comrades have perished.

Selkirk is the capital of Ettrick, built on a terrace of hills, and for many years the chimneys of its tweed mills replaced the little cottages of its Souters (or shoemakers) whose last big order was for many thousands of pairs for Prince Charles Edward's army of Highlanders.

Here, in addition to the Man-at-arms statue, are several others. Sir Walter Scott, Sheriff of the County for over 30 years; Mungo Park, the African explorer (born four miles away at Foulshiels) and J. B. Selkirk, the poet who wrote "Selkirk After Flodden," are represented, and above all soars the high spire of the Town Hall.

It was on a dark Friday in September 1513 that the Flowers of the Forest were cut down, and Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion" gives such a dramatically stirring description of the battle that the story of Flodden will long be remembered by Scots.

There had been a lull in the frequent quarrels between Scotland and England until Henry VII declared war on France, but as this country was then allied to Scotland James IV prepared to attack England.

Known as "James of the Iron Belt," because as a penance for fighting against his father he wore a sackcloth shirt and a heavily weighted iron belt, the King was popular, and when he summoned those of fighting age, a wave of enthusiasm swept the country.

All from highest to lowest were eager to follow him, and within three weeks he headed no less than 100,000 men at Edinburgh. Marching by way of Soutra Hill, his army reached Coldstream and encamped in an impregnable position at Flodden Ridge.



Selkirk Standard Bearer Guy Blair at the 2008 Selkirk Common Riding, a link with the town's turbulent past. The "Casting of the Colours" remembers the story of Flodden when Selkirk sent 80 men with the Scottish King and only one returned, bearing a blood-stained English flag.

Meanwhile Lord Surrey, the English Commander, had marched north with 38,000 men, and before the battle James foolishly allowed this force to leave Barmore Wood and cross the Till by Twisel Bridge. Surrey outflanked the Scots, and lured from his position on a spur of the Cheviots, James ordered his huts to be fired to hide the advance of his army to Braxton Hill. The English army was already marching there, and they met in the hollow below Flodden.

It was late afternoon before the battle began in earnest, and for four hours in the gathering dusk the fight continued, it being almost impossible latterly to distinguish friend from foe.

Commanded by the Earls of Home and Huntly, the Scottish left led with the long pikes, piercing the English right, but the battle raged on relentlessly and was decided by a terrible drive upon the centre, where, although the Scots fought furiously to defend their King, he was eventually killed.

As Surrey drove the remnants of the Scots army from the field, the King, 12 Earls, 15 Lords and 9,000 soldiers lay dead; Scotland's military power was broken, and scarcely a family but had lost one or more of its menfolk.

The closing words of "The Flowers of the Forest" were sorrowfully true:

"The prime o' our land now lie cauld in the clay."

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