

# THE SCOTS CANADIAN

Issue 55

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Fall 2022

## GREAT SCOTS

*Douglas Gibson donates his latest book to the Scottish Studies Foundation*

We are always on the lookout for new and interesting projects to work on, and so when fellow board member Douglas Gibson very kindly donated the rights to have his latest book published by the Scottish Studies Foundation to be used as a fundraiser for the Scottish Studies program at the University of Guelph, we were delighted to take this project on.

Since 1968, Douglas Gibson has been one of Canada's most respected editors and publishers. He's also been a friend to many of the country's leading writers and public figures, including Alice Munro, Robertson Davies, Farley Mowat, Alastair MacLeod, and Pierre Trudeau.

In 2011, he became an author himself with the release of his first book: *Stories About Storytellers*, in which he told of his relationships with some of the heavyweights of Canadian literature and politics. Doug

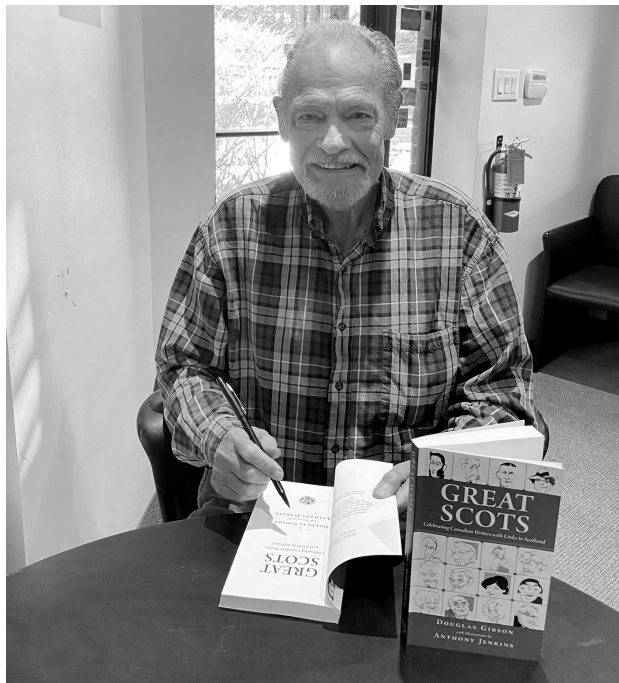
turned this memoir into a one-man promotional stage show that eventually played almost 100 times in all ten provinces from coast to coast.

On that peripatetic literary tour he discovered even more about the land and its writers and harvested many more stories, from distant past and recent memory, which led to his second book: *Across Canada By Story: A Coast to Coast Literary Adventure*.

During all of this, Doug became intrigued with the number of Canadian writers that appeared to have some connection to Scotland—the land of his birth; the more he looked into this, the more he realized that it would make for a great new book. And so this summer, after many years of research, he completed the manuscript which he named *GREAT SCOTS—Major Canadian Writers with Links to Scotland*. It features 35 writers from Sir Alexander Mackenzie to Joseph Boyden and is full of fascinating anecdotes from both his research and from his career in publishing.

Doug had no doubt about who he would ask to illustrate the book. He immediately enlisted as co-editor, his previous illustrator and former *Globe and Mail* editorial cartoonist Anthony Jenkins, who set about creating 35 magnificent caricatures of the writers featured in the book.

With text and illustrations now completed, the next step was to get the book ready for printing so Doug turned to two of his former McClelland & Stewart colleagues for help: Kong Njo and Heather Sangster. Kong was former head of design at *McClelland & Stewart* and took on the task of designing the front and back cover and was also responsible for the overall look of the book.



*Douglas Gibson signs the first batch of his new book: GREAT SCOTS—Major Canadian Writers with Links to Scotland*

Heather Sangster, who now heads up her own company, *Strong Finish*, copy-edited and proofread the book. Note that for the past 25 years, Heather has been Margaret Atwood's long-time copy editor and proofreader.

While this was going on, we then embarked on a search for a suitable printing firm—one which would agree to print on demand to avoid the need for us to store large quantities of books. By coincidence, Doug's wife, Jane, happened to mention this to a neighbour who operates a small publishing business, and she recommended *Printing Legacy*, a Scarborough company specializing in small print runs—just what we needed.

We also decided that our initial selling approach would be to promote and accept orders via our website, to be paid by cheque or PayPal, and we were delighted that our membership secretary, Catherine McKenzie, volunteered to handle the mailing of books to customers.

Thanks to a magnificent team effort, we are delighted that the book is now in print and can be ordered online via our website at [www.scottishstudies.com](http://www.scottishstudies.com)



### THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

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## From the President

Dear fellow members,

On behalf of all of us on the Board of Directors, I do hope you have had a pleasant and safe summer. Thank you for your support, contributions and encouragement which have enabled us to remain operational during the pandemic.

As you can gather from page 1, we were delighted to be able to launch Doug Gibson's new book, especially as one of our stated objectives as a registered Canadian charity is to publish documents relating to Scottish culture.

Likewise, we are pleased to include in this issue, *Scotland: A magical, mystical journey*, the story by Julie Bond which she submitted to our Chapbook Contest last year (pages 6 and 7).

Since my last report to you back in the spring, a number of activities have been keeping us busy:

### Scot of the Year

On September 9, we were delighted to have acclaimed historian Margaret MacMillan as this year's recipient of the Scottish Studies Society's Annual Scot of the Year Award. The Society is the fundraising wing of the Foundation and the celebration, held at Seeley Hall in the University of Toronto's Trinity College, was our first in-person event since the pandemic.

The evening was organized by Maggie McEwan, President of the Scottish Studies Society and VP of the Foundation. Aided by fellow Director Richard MacFarlane, Maggie put in tremendous effort, and so it was gratifying and a huge relief that everything came together so well on the night. She reported that everyone arrived at the event enthusiastic, lively, and intent on enjoying themselves.

After everyone was seated, the head table was piped in by Rory Sinclair after which MC Douglas Gibson started the evening by calling for a moment of silence in recognition of the recent death of the Queen.

After a long and respectful time had passed, Foundation Director John McMillan delivered the "Selkirk Grace" and the event got underway.

The actual award (a specially engraved quach) was presented by John Fraser, who was our Scot of the Year in 2012 and who had worked closely with Margaret when he was Master of Massey College. Margaret spoke about her pleasure in receiving the award and everyone was in agreement that she was an excellent candidate. As one of the world's most highly respected historians, she has become a familiar, stabilizing and authoritative presence, not just in Canada, but in the media worldwide. She is always in

demand when the great issues facing the world are being analyzed and discussed, more often than not—as is the case with the current war in Ukraine, lamenting that we do not seem to have learned from the past.

Coming from a country with the world's most culturally and ethnically diverse population, her uniquely Canadian perspective brings an authority valued for its impartiality and objectivity.

During the evening, Clan MacMillan Abbot Blanche McMillan read out the following poem which was sent by the Chief of Clan MacMillan, George G. MacMillan:

*Some concepts are irrational –  
No logic, purpose, plot,  
No substance, unoriginal -  
Rooted, like flowers, in rot.  
And yet their power's sensational –  
Or can be, like as not.*

*Take names.  
We know they're notional,  
An accident, a whim;  
But still we get emotional,  
And bask in borrowed fame,  
When someone quite exceptional  
Happens to bear our name.*

*And never, Margaret, let it be forgot:  
Whatever else you are, you are a  
Scot.*

It was truly a magnificent evening of fine food, great company, great music and dance—a night to remember.

### Zoom Talk

Shortly after that, on September 17, Dr. Andrew Jones presented the third in our 2022–2023 series of online Zoom Talks. His talk was titled *The Revival of Evangelicalism: Mission and Piety in the Victorian Church of Scotland*. Dr. Jones completed his PhD at the University of Edinburgh in 2018 and is currently a Postdoctoral Teaching Historian at Reinhardt University near Atlanta, Georgia. His research focuses on religion, identity and race in modern Scotland and the Scottish Diaspora.

Andrew's talk was of current significance, as just seven days earlier, following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the very first act carried out by King Charles III was to sign a historic oath vowing to uphold the Presbyterian system of Church governance in

Scotland — a throwback to the 1707 Act of Union between England and Scotland.

Whereas the reigning British monarch is also the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, ever since the 1707 Act of Union, monarchs have been required by law to uphold the Church of Scotland's Presbyterian structure, which is based on the premise that no one person or group within the Church has more influence or say than any other.

The oath thereby reflects the constitutional independence of the Church of Scotland from the state.

For many people today this may have seemed like a sectarian anachronism, but in the 18th and 19th centuries church independence was a major issue. When the Patronage Act of 1712 was passed and local lairds, councillors and landowners were given power to appoint ministers to their local kirks over the heads of their congregations, many parishioners saw this as state interference and mobilized to have this overturned.

In 1843, this culminated in what became known as "The Disruption", and in his talk Dr. Jones looked at the aftermath of this event, which was a dominant feature of the Scottish political and religious landscape until the 1920s. He also highlighted ways in which members of the Scottish Diaspora in Eastern Canada participated in these ecclesiastical developments across the Atlantic.

The recording of his talk and what turned out to be a very lively Q&A session with many questions being asked by participants, can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/3LCZ1IU>

### Upcoming Events

Additional talks to be scheduled later will include a presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Ewan titled *A Brewing Storm: Alewives in sixteenth-century Inverness*. Elizabeth recently retired as Professor of Medieval and Early Modern Scottish History at the University of Guelph, and is a trailblazer in



Margaret MacMillan and Maggie McEwan  
at the Scot of the Year event

the history of medieval and early modern Scotland.



Our fellow board member, Dr. Kate Ashley (pictured above), teaches French, English and Translation at Acadia University in Nova Scotia and will be giving a talk on the book she recently completed. Titled *Robert Louis Stevenson and Nineteenth-Century French Literature Relations at the Fin de Siècle*, the book is a comparative literary history that looks at French literature from Stevenson's perspective and at Stevenson from a French perspective.

Details on all talks will be emailed to members and will be posted on our website.

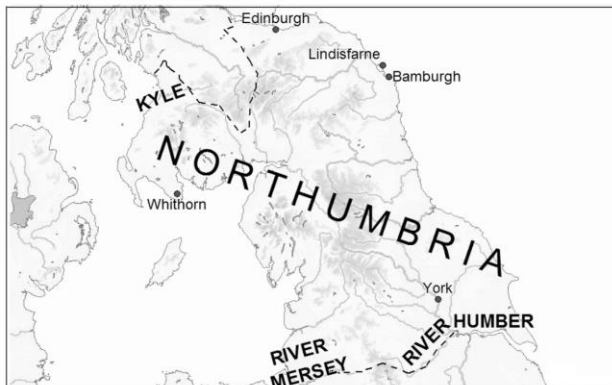
In closing, I thank you again for your support. It has been crucial in ensuring that the Scottish tradition in Canada at the academic level remains both strong and secure. Best wishes to you all, and stay safe.

David Hunter

## Report from the University of Guelph

The Centre for Scottish Studies has been exceptionally active over the past few months, and is planning a number of activities in winter and spring 2023.

Last August, the Centre hosted an international conference as part of an exciting new initiative—*Networking*



The Northumbrian Kingdom circa 800

*Jacobites*—which brought together global scholars to plot a new path in Jacobite Studies. The special guest speaker was Professor Vicci Coltman from Edinburgh University.

The title of her talk was *Wartime: Scottish officers in military service, 1793-1815*. This community event featured presentations by University of Guelph faculty, graduate students and Archival and Special Collections staff, and is part of a wider partnership between the University of Guelph and Simon Fraser University.

It will lay the foundation for further research collaborations between both universities and post-secondary institutions, museums and archives in Scotland

In September, the Centre welcomed a delegation from the Scottish Government's Office in Canada, including its new head, John Devine, who has succeeded Catriona Little in the post. We have developed a strong partnership with the Scottish Government Office and look forward to future collaborations.

On November 3, the Centre hosted an online lecture by Professor Fiona Edmonds from Lancaster University, who drew on highlights from her book *Gaelic Influence in the Northumbrian Kingdom: The Golden Age and the Viking Age*.

Her book was awarded the Frank Watson Book Prize for the best book or monograph published on Scottish History in 2019 and 2020. The prize is awarded in odd-numbered years for the best monograph, edited collection and/or book-length original work on Scottish History published in the previous two years. It was established more than 20

years ago by Dr. Cicely Watson, a champion of educational reform in Ontario, in memory of her husband Dr. Frank Watson.

Political and ecclesiastical connections are discussed in detail and the study also covers linguistic contact, material culture and the practicalities of travel, bringing out the realities of contemporary life. This interdisciplinary

approach sheds new light on the west and north of the Northumbrian kingdom, the areas linked most closely with the Gaelic world and which once stretched as far north as modern-day Edinburgh. Overall, the book reveals the extent to which Gaelic influence was multi-faceted, complex and enduring

Students at the graduate and undergraduate level continue to impress us—and the wider academic community—through conference participation and original research; and so, on Wednesday, November 30, from 4 to 6 p.m. EST, we are proud to have presentations by these students featured in a special two-



Sample pages from Guelph's extensive Jacobite collection of manuscripts, letters, and books relating to this turbulent time in Scottish history

hour colloquium titled *Truth or Treason? Sources for the Study of Jacobites in Scotland*. You are invited to attend this in-person event which will include an informal reception. (Details on how to register are on our website.)

After the revolutions of 1688, the Jacobite movement posed a serious challenge to the legitimacy of state structures throughout Scotland, England and Wales, and Ireland. Our renowned Scottish Studies Collection boasts an outstanding array of Jacobite-related materials that speak to the complexity of the Jacobite movement, the deep divisions it generated, and broad alliances in which it was implicated. Our students have been exploring these extraordinary sources as they prepare to curate a forthcoming exhibit, to be launched in 2023.

The Centre looks forward to hosting more events in the months ahead, and celebrating the remarkable success of the researchers whom you so generously support.

Kevin James,  
Scottish Studies Foundation Chair  
Director, Centre for Scottish Studies  
Professor, Department of History  
University of Guelph



# The Caricatures of Anthony Jenkins

In 2013 Douglas Gibson wrote about how much he admired the work of Anthony Jenkins in the following introduction to Jenkins' book "A Fine Line: The Caricatures of Anthony Jenkins."

Anthony Jenkins is a dangerous man. I alarm the good people who come to see my stage show, *Stories About Storytellers*, by warning them that I am going to whisk them through a list of interesting authors by showing them Tony Jenkins' caricatures of each writer. I stress, however, that this is a perilous business, because he is clearly in touch with devilish powers that would frighten off a sensible Faust. Or perhaps he drinks potions that endow him with the same sort of magical powers that Oscar Wilde revealed in *The Picture Of Dorian Gray*, where the flesh-and-blood Dorian remains eternally youthful while the portrait at home does all of his aging for him.

Tony Jenkins, I explain, is clearly in touch with the same dark powers. "When he produces a not-altogether-flattering portrait of you, day by day, week by week, month by month, you will come to look more and more like that portrait!"

The terrifying process continues to this day. So I am very keen to do everything I can to stay in his good books.

His book is one of them. When the publisher, my old friend Warren Clements, invited me to contribute a Foreword, I instantly agreed to do so, out of fear. But there was something else, too—admiration. Not to mention regret that in my publishing days I was never smart enough to think up this book.

In those days (and I was the publisher of McClelland & Stewart from 1988 till 2004, so I can't plead lack of time), I was keenly aware of Tony's excellent work in the *Globe and Mail*. On occasion I would suggest to our Art Department that he would be perfect for this or that book cover. One example that still gives me pleasure is William Weintraub's 2005 comic novel, *Crazy About Lili*, in which an earnest young McGill student meets and falls for a famous Montreal stripper. Tony's cover art, involving a dangling McGill pennant and a dangling scarlet bra, is perfect. And I once, as a private citizen, made a pilgrimage to Tony's office to buy a wonderful portrait of Alice Munro, which now hangs in our front room.

But I, like other Canadian book publishers, simply didn't wake up to see, and develop, this amazing talent in our midst.

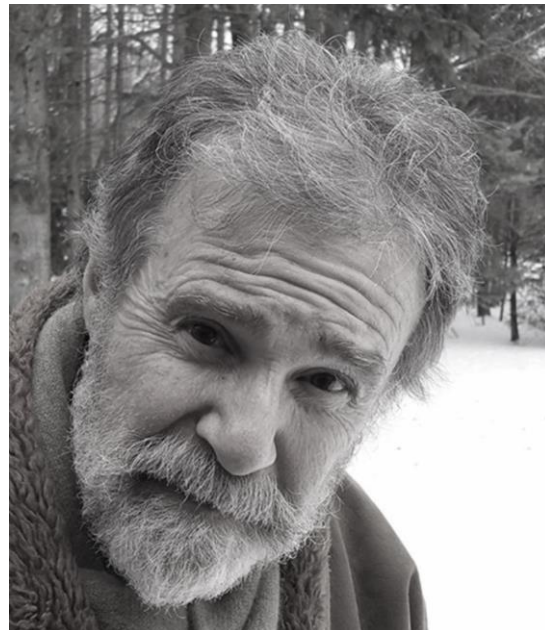
In 2011, however, when I was writing my own book, I finally saw the light. I realized that *Stories About Storytellers*, its 21 chapters devoted to descriptions of 21 authors, needed to show the authors. A book with no illustrations would seem dull, possibly even (shudder) earnestly academic. A book that used photographs of the authors would seem overly serious. Witty caricatures of the authors at the opening of each chapter was clearly the way to go. And for these caricatures, Tony Jenkins was the man, without question.

So, defying the usual publishing practice where the Publisher chooses the Illustrator, I approached Tony directly, long before I had a Publisher. I gave him a list of the authors in the book, and we made a private arrangement whereby I acquired the rights to use his portraits in the book, and in promoting the book on stage and screen (I was already thinking strange promotional thoughts). In most cases, when the author was Robertson Davies or Brian Mulroney, he already knew the look of the authors very well. In other cases, such as the cowboy author R.D. Symons, I sent along photographs to guide him. In a surprisingly short time, and after very few revisions, I had my 21 superb caricatures, which I thought caught the spirit of my book so well.

When I approached interested publishers, I stressed that these caricatures were part of the deal, thanks to a private arrangement between us. And the wise people at ECW Press recognized what an asset we had, and contributed to the cost, and made good use of his artwork. Tony's caricatures attracted widespread admiration, both in book reviews and in general comments from readers. After my stage show, despite my opening warning, the most frequently asked question is: "Who did you say did the wonderful portraits?"

Let me step aside here, away from my own experience, to discuss what I think Tony Jenkins is doing. I believe that he is trying to scale the same mountain that has challenged artists from the dawn of art: to catch, in two dimensions, the essence of another person.

People have been trying to do this from the days when cavemen drawing on the wall ranged from showing deer and other prey worth hunting to portraying the faces around the fire. Children still do it every day with crayoned portraits of Mommy. And we all know how hard it is to create a straightforward, "realistic" portrait. Graham



Anthony Jenkins

Sutherland, a veteran portrait painter of great skill, once bitterly described a portrait as a painting "with something not quite right about the mouth."

Some cultures and religions even frown on the whole concept of portrait-painting, recognizing that these attempts to catch the essence—perhaps we might daringly use the expression "the soul"—of another person represent very dangerous territory. I think most thoughtful Westerners respect the alarm felt by distant peoples that a photographer catching their image is perhaps stealing something from them.

Western art, of course, has produced many superb specialists in portraiture, too many to name here. In the case of Rembrandt, scholars estimate that at least two-thirds of his work consisted of portraits. And while the Old Master was frequently hired to produce portraits that would look good on the preening Amsterdam merchant's wall, he took the art much further. One biographer, Jakob Rosenberg, in his *Rembrandt: Life and Work* goes so far as to claim that by the end of his life, his "mature" portraiture was more than a caught moment in time: "[W]e feel, to a certain degree, the sitter's past coming into the present, and even some premonition of the future."

Another dangerous man.

We are clearly in the realm of great imagination here, far beyond mere "photographic" representation. Yet to complicate matters, here is the famous photographer, Yousuf Karsh, writing about what he tries to do in his portraits. He begins his first book, *Portraits of Greatness*, with this paragraph (and liked it so much that he opened his next book, *Karsh Portraits*, with precisely the same words): "The aim and art

of the portraitist who works with a camera are not merely to produce a likeness but to reveal the mind and the soul behind the human face.”

“Mind” and “soul” revealed by the camera. Consider, then, the challenge facing the brave artist armed only with brushes and paint, and pens and ink, who hopes with a skillful eye and a steady hand to catch that same “mind” and “soul” in a piece of art that the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as a “caricature; grotesque usu. comic representation of a person by exaggeration of characteristic traits, in a picture, writing or mime.” Interestingly, the word derives from the Italian “caricare” which means “load, exaggerate.”

A “cartoon” is defined by the same source as “a humorous drawing in a newspaper, magazine esp. as a topical comment.” We are on familiar ground here. Every reader knows, and to a greater or lesser extent enjoys, editorial-page cartoons where recognizable (possibly even labelled) figures act out embarrassing scenarios, or spout amusing, often incriminating words. Tony Jenkins can play that game very well, too, as *Globe and Mail* readers in the past were reminded by the occasional appearance of his fine political cartoons.

Canadians, I think, are reluctant to place living cartoonists in the highest ranks of the art. (Someone more cynical than your humble servant might expand that to “living artists of any sort”.) Many were startled when the American critic Edmund Wilson, in his survey of Canadian culture, *O Canada*, devoted a section to the Toronto Star’s political cartoonist, Duncan Macpherson, boldly putting him in the august company of the greats like Gilray and Cruikshank. Today, kind words about our leading exponents like Aislin (Terry Mosher) might produce the same reaction; the everyday is rarely associated with the eternal.

Yet when you, dear reader, roam through the pages of this book, I think that you will start to conjure up names of the great caricaturists of the past. Tony Jenkins may have a very different style from Hogarth, Daumier and Grosz, or the more modern masters Ronald Searle, David Levine, Gerald Scarfe and Ralph Steadman. But there is a very definite style here, one that is notably spare, using one line where others might use ten. Unused space—it would be wrong to call it “blank space”—is put to remarkable use.

Famously, defying the old proverb that “the eyes are the window of the soul,” Tony Jenkins has often seen fit to dispense with one of these valuable windows, preferring to let one eye speak for two. Again and again in these portraits, also, we see a tiny detail apparently catching the essence of the character, what in bolder times would have been called “the soul”. See for yourself.

As for me, I admire the art in this book immensely. These excitingly varied portraits constitute almost the work of a lifetime. They give us all a book to cherish by a superb artist—and a dangerous man.

## *Sarah Jeannette Duncan* (1861–1923)

### *Journalist, world traveller, and novelist*

*One of the characters featured in Douglas Gibson’s GREAT SCOTS book*

If you don’t know this amazing woman, you should. She was one of our most remarkable characters. Born and raised in Brantford, Ontario, she seemed all set to be a teacher, but decided that journalism would be more fun. Soon, in 1886, she became the first woman ever employed full-time by the *Toronto Globe*.

Using the protective male pseudonym of “Garth Grafton” she later worked for the *Montreal Star* as its Parliamentary Correspondent in Ottawa, making Sara (or Garth) the very first woman member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, a fact duly recorded in Robert Lewis’s fine book about the Press Gallery, *Power, Prime Ministers and The Press: The Battle for Truth on Parliament Hill*. There Sara played her exciting role.

But other adventures beckoned her. In 1888 she and her friend Lily Lewis set off around the world. First by train to Vancouver, then by steamer to Japan, Sri Lanka, India, Egypt, and England. The result was a very successful novel, called *A Social Departure: How Orthocia and I Went Round the World by Ourselves*.

Another result was that in India she met a museum official named Everard Cotes, who couldn’t resist this female whirlwind, and proposed to her at the Taj Mahal. She went back to India, married him in 1890, and lived there for 25 years. During that time she wrote many novels, some about North Americans in Europe, which brought her in touch with Henry James, and many about Colonial India, which allowed her to entertain E.M. Forster on his passage to India.

But it was her Canadian novel, *The Imperialist*, that gains her a place here. It’s a terrific novel, which I recommend heartily. It’s set in Brantford, as the references to nearby indigenous reserves, and games of lacrosse, help to make clear.

As the title indicates, it’s a political novel, where the young lawyer hero is keen to strengthen the ties between Canada and

Imperial Britain, a movement popular around the turn of the 20th century. What’s amusing here (and there’s lots of sly humour) is that in Canada our anti-American hero gets most of his news from American papers, and when he’s in London he can barely understand what the Cockneys are saying, while everyone assumes whenever he opens his mouth that he must be an American.

The small-town Brantford world is one she knows very well (lacrosse matches and all). The respectable Scottish-Canadian merchants at its centre are modelled on her own parents. It’s a world that’s very convincing, but surprises us in many ways, since the ties with The Old Country are so strong that a new minister is hired for the local church straight out of Scotland, without troublesome details about things like interviews.

As for the plot, there is the political question, and also a difficult love affair ... which is solved by a WOW, I NEVER SAW THAT COMING plot twist.

A final detail. The narrator says at one point: “We are here at the making of a nation.” Great themes are in play. But Sara Jeannette Duncan, like Alice Munro, realizes that little domestic details also count. She points out that in “Elgin” (Brantford) the rich social trend-setters are changing from having the big meal in the middle of the day with a light “high tea” in the evening. The change to a big meal—“dinner” or “supper”—in the evening, makes for problems with the servants that every respectable family had in those days, with the servants resenting having to work later. Who knew?

Sara Jeannette Duncan knew.

And thanks to her we all know, too.



*Sarah Jeannette Duncan*  
Sketch by Anthony Jenkins

# Scotland: A magical, mystical journey

By Julie Bond

I had always wanted to travel to Scotland. The place where my grandfather was born, my ancestors are from, and where my heart ached for, even though I had never been. But our journey started well before we ever left Canada. I started genealogical research on my ancestry in the early 2000s and found both my maternal and paternal lineage began in Scotland. In 2014, I began learning Scottish Gaelic to connect to my ancestors. It is a stunningly beautiful language with depth and heart that English cannot convey. The connection between the language and the land was so inspiring that the next logical step was to take a trip to Scotland to see this magical place for myself. And maybe get to speak a little Gaelic too.

Once we had made the decision to go, the rest just sort of fell into place. A conversation with my husband, William, and our teenage sons, Christian and Tyler, made clear that they would be happy to go wherever and do whatever I wanted. And, more importantly, that they would not complain about any of my choices. This was a trip for me to connect with my heritage and they were just happy to come along. Flights were the first thing we booked: connecting flights from Toronto, through Dublin, Ireland, into Glasgow and home from Edinburgh, with a whirlwind trip through the Highlands in between. With the flights booked, and with nearly a year before we would travel, I began watching the television series *Outlander*, as I had heard that it was historically accurate and showcased the magnificent Highland scenery. It did not disappoint.

It also piqued a curiosity about Scottish history. I had never been interested in history before this, but suddenly I wanted to know everything about Culloden and the histories of the castles that the show used as sets. This, of course, led to learning about Mary Queen of Scots, Robert the Bruce, and William Wallace—to name a few of Scotland's heroes of legend. Armed with an abundance of historical knowledge, I was ready to go see it for myself. Tours did not encompass as much as we wanted, so we decided to design a custom road trip.

A couple of nights in Glasgow gave us a chance to check out George Square and other areas around the city. My immediate impression of Scotland was hard to put into words. To say the buildings are spectacular is a grave understatement. Suddenly, I am an architecture enthusiast and a historian in one.

Everything was perfect and magical and fabulous, and I felt like I was home at last. Glasgow Central Station looks like a movie set. The design is captivating. There is so much to look at, I stood in one spot and slowly looked around in amazement. I probably looked a little crazy to anyone who noticed.

On day two, we drove through the countryside and over into the Argylls to find some of my ancestral Clan lands. I have been told that my cousins wore Lamont kilts as children, some 50 years ago, so we headed to Toward Castle and the Clan Lamont Memorial. I can only imagine what the castle would have looked like in its glory days. Unfortunately, the castle was not open to the public, but seeing it was enough, and we were able to take in the beach views as we drove. We also stopped for a snack where we had our first taste of Mackie's haggis chips. The first of many encounters with haggis on this trip.

After the ferry back from Dunoon, we headed down to Croyton, Ayrshire where my paternal grandfather was born. Driving through the villages, I can see why they settled in St. Catharines, Ontario when they immigrated to Canada. It has a similar feel to the area. It was a surreal experience to see the place where my family lived. I tried to envision what life would have been like for them at that time. I had only been in Scotland for two days, but I already could not imagine ever wanting to leave, so times must have been tough for them to have made the decision to emigrate.

The next day, after a full Scottish breakfast at the hotel, we left Glasgow early en route to Glencoe. Thanks to my history lessons, I ensured we made several stops along the way. Our first stop was Bannockburn, to pay our respects to the great hero King, Robert the Bruce. Next: the uber impressive Wallace Monument although, sadly, we did not go in. The line was longer than we anticipated, and we were on a tight schedule. Then we were off to the superbly awesome Doune Castle. Doune Castle has been featured in several television shows and movies that we love—*Outlander*, *Monty Python's Holy Grail*, *Outlaw King*, and *Game of Thrones*, to name a few—so it was a must-see stop for us. We made several stunning scenic stops along the way, each one prettier than the last, then arrived at our Glencoe hotel for the night. We had planned to go for a short hike after checking in; however, someone (I am not mentioning any



*The Jacobite Steam Train at Glenfinnan*

names, but it may have been the author) locked the keys in our rental car!

A two-hour drive from the nearest car rental office, and with no locksmith in town, the rental company advised us to break a window to unlock the door and bring the car back for an exchange. So, we did. We were getting some strange looks in the parking lot of the hotel! We had to keep explaining that it was our car, and that we were not participating in criminal activity. It makes for a funny story now, but at the time it was not so funny. William and Christian drove back to Glasgow to exchange the car. They had to drive on the opposite side of the road (we are Canadians, it is the opposite side to us), through winding country roads, at night when deer or sheep or who-knows-what-else could be on the road, with a broken window blowing the cold wind and rain in. They arrived back safely at three o'clock in the morning. Meanwhile, Tyler and I stayed at the hotel and had a fabulous dinner with a stunning view of Loch Leven. You would think William and Christian had the short end of the stick on that deal, but to hear them talk about it, it was quite an adventure, and they were happy to have had it.

In retrospect I would have opted for more time in the Glencoe area. It is spectacular, and we did not get to give it the attention it deserves. But after a short sleep, and a haggis breakfast, we were off to Fort William for a trip on the Jacobite Train to Mallaig for arguably the best fish and chips lunch we had ever had. The train was fabulous. Certainly, one of the unexpected highlights for us. The viaduct is certainly impressive, but the scenery and the stories along the way are equally as special. Ideally, we would have had time to see the Glenfinnan Monument up close, but the view from the train was enough to stir the emotions in this would-be Jacobite's heart.

Back in Fort William, we stocked up with supplies and headed north to Skye. We had booked two nights in a Wigwam north of Portree. We stopped for some obligatory external photos of Eilean Donan Castle, one



of the most photographed castles in Scotland, then continued our journey north.

The Isle of Skye captured my whole heart. Between the stunning view from Skye Bridge, the quaintness of the villages, the beauty of Portree, and the breathtaking view from our Wigwam, I did not want to leave this place. After a fabulous night's sleep, we drove to the Quiraing for a morning hike. It was perfect hiking weather when we arrived. Christian and Tyler made friends with the local sheep while William and I put our photography skills to work. With such spectacular scenery, it is easy to do. That rainy Scottish weather we had heard so much about greeted us right at the top. The walk back down was a little slower, and muddier, but still as beautiful.

After lunch, we drove south and went for a dip in the Fairy Pools in the afternoon. This was a highly anticipated outing for me, and it certainly surpassed my expectations. I swear there is magic in that water. We are accustomed to cold, Canadian water, so the temperature did not detract from the experience for me. Plus, in pure magical Scotland fashion, the skies had cleared up over us and the sun had come out, so the cold dip was quite refreshing.

I anticipated that Skye would have been my best chance to use what little Gaelic I had. I realized that I certainly was not ready for a Gaelic conversation yet. I could not work up the nerve to say a simple "Ciamar a tha sibh?" to anyone. I did not realize that at the time locals typically spoke to tourists in English unless you spoke to them in Gaelic first, so as not to appear rude. Thankfully, that seems to be changing as the use and acceptance of Gaelic is on the rise.

Our next day was spent mostly in the car en route to Inverness, but we made a few stops along the way, most notably, at Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness (no, we did not see Nessie). A 13<sup>th</sup> century castle, Urquhart Castle has a long sordid history and is quite impressive, even though much of it is in ruins. The loch front property is uniquely beautiful. I wondered how clans of the past could wage a battle amid such stunning



*The Fairy Pools, Isle of Skye*

scenery, but then I suppose the same could be said for any location in Scotland.

We started the following day in a sombre way. We toured Culloden Moor, the location of the last battle in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, which was also the last pitched battle on British soil. That place was heavy on my soul. I will not soon forget the haunting energy I felt there. We paid our respects at the Memorial Cairn and made our leave just as the clouds released their rain, like tears on the Moor. It surprised me to see subdivisions and community districts built so close to the battlefield and burial grounds. I could not imagine living so close to such a sacred space.

By the time we arrived at Cava Cairns the rain had disappeared again, and the sun was shining bright. There were only a handful of others there at the time, so we were able to take our time and explore freely. The vibe was unnerving; however, it was also beautiful, intriguing, and impressive, all at the same time. It amazes me how these sites were designed 4000 years ago to align with the sunset. After a quick shopping stop in Aviemore, we made our way through the Scottish Whisky Trail for a tasting and a scone. I officially became a whisky lover after this experience.

The next morning, we set off for St Andrew's Castle and Cathedral. We arrived early and there was a fair bit of that Scottish rain we had come to love, so we had the castle all to ourselves. The grounds, the views, even the dungeon are quite impressive. William and Christian went down the Mine and Counter-Mine tunnel. The tunnel tells a fascinating story of siege engineering. It is remarkable, to say the least.

Our next stop was the significant and imposing Stirling Castle. What an impressive building—historically and architecturally

speaking. Believed to have been built in the 12th century, the interior was lavish and grand. We could have spent hours touring the grounds, but the rain had other plans, and we had booked a boat trip on the Falkirk Wheel. The wheel was one of the unexpected



*The Kelpies by the Forth and Clyde Canal at Falkirk*

highlights of the trip for me. I thought the lift was amazing in pictures, but in real life it is something else completely. What a feat of engineering. The view from the top is truly something to behold. Again, like magic, the clouds cleared away for us, presenting the most spectacular views! We could even see the Kelpies from up there.

Once we returned to dry land, and with only a few nights left in my beloved heart's home of Scotland, we finished off the trip in and around Edinburgh. We took in Rosslyn Chapel, Hopetoun House—Lallybroch for you *Outlander* fans, followed by Linlithgow Castle—Mary Queen of Scots' birthplace, and Blackness Castle—The Ship that Never Sailed. The next day, we took in the Royal Mile and attended the Military Tattoo. Locals probably dislike the sheer volume of tourists that this event brings in—I cannot really blame them—but this was an extraordinary performance. Tradition, beauty, elegance, pride, and grace, all with the majesty of Edinburgh Castle as its backdrop.

We spent our final day exploring Edinburgh on foot. The morning was rainy, so we spent much of it indoors. We took in the National Library of Scotland and the National Museum as well. That afternoon, as the sun came out, we decided to hike Arthur's Seat but took the wrong path and hiked up Salisbury Crags instead—but what a view though! Even a wrong turn in Scotland yields magical results. We fittingly ended our trip at the World's End pub for a fish supper and a pint of Scottish beer. A perfect ending to a perfect journey.

Looking back on our whirlwind trip, William, Christian, and Tyler were true to their word. They did not complain once, even when things did not go smoothly. We all had a wonderful trip, were able to try new foods, have new experiences, and appreciate the beauty and ancestral significance that is Scotland. It was a trip we will never forget, and certainly one I will carry in my heart forever.

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