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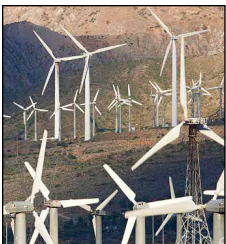
Clachnaben!

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**Newsletter for the
Clan Strachan
Scottish Heritage
Society, Inc.**

**30730 San Pascual Road
Temecula, CA 92591
United States of America**

**Phone: 951-760-8575
Email:
jim@clanstrachan.org**

**We're on the web!
www.clanstrachan.org**

Incorporated in 2008, the Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc. was organized for exclusively charitable, educational and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as except organizations under said Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Specifically, the Corporation will promote the history, tradition, and heritage of the Gaelic-Scottish culture; encourage education, the collection and preservation of records, traditions and historical material related to the history of Gaelic-Scottish culture wherever located; provide instruction on Genealogical research techniques; perform such charitable work as is compatible with the aims and objectives of Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc.; to invest in any property worldwide that has relevance to the needs and objectives of the Society; and, to engage in any other lawful activities permitted under the California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation Law and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Law. The recital of these purposes as contained in this paragraph is intended to be exclusive of any and all other purposes, this Corporation being formed for those public and charitable purposes only.

President's address

Hello the Clan,

This newsletter is chock full of information you are all asking about for our upcoming Gathering in 2019. A big THANK YOU to Jim and Rob for making it all happen!

talk soon d

Gu Deoch Gu Cairdean Gu Spors

Connecting with your clan

Are you interested in meeting up online with your long-lost kinfolk?

The Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society has created a Facebook Group for Society and non-society members to meet and stay in touch, and to assist you with researching your family's roots.

Michael Strahan, who is Vice-President and past Director of Marketing for the Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, is host of our Facebook Group. He is a published fiction author who has worked in marketing for Barnes and Noble and Intel, and as a territory sales manager for Interactive Intelligence, a telecommunications company. He lives in Indianapolis with his wife and children.

If you already have a Facebook account, look us up by typing 'Clan Strachan' in the search toolbar.

If you do not have an account, signing up, and starting your own Face Page, is free! Just go to www.Facebook.com for details.

We look forward to having you join us as friends and as Clan Strachan Historical Society Group members!



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Shenanigans & Harrumphing

**First International Strachan Clan Gathering
Banchory, Scotland
*Sunday, July 29 to Saturday, August 3, 2019***

Book your tickets now for experiences such as:

- **Opening Reception and Mixer, Banchory Lodge**
- **Coach Tour of Dunnottar Castle, Stonehaven, Fettercairn Distillery and a Guided History Tour of the Strachan District**
- **Dinner and Clan History Evening**
- **Hike to Clachnaben**
- **Trout Fishing at the Mill of Strachan**
- **Commander's Ceilidh and Dinner at Strachan Hall with The Houlies (ceilidh band) and BBQ Scottish Style**
- **Aboyne Highland Games, with the Clan Strachan Tent Reception**

You'll also have a chance to meet with our Clan Genealogist, Garry Strachan, our Y-DNA Strachan Project Administrator, Dr. Martin Strahan, Leadership of the Clan Strachan Society and Clan Strachan Charitable Trust, as well as Rob Strachan, our Clan Commander.

www.clanstrachan.org/derbhfine/2019/default.html



Clan Strachan opposes Glendye wind farm

By James Andrew Strachan

Coriolis Energy and Irish utility firm ESB are looking to develop a wind farm project and plan to place 26 wind turbines on the Fasque and Glendye estate, north of the village of Fettercairn and on the approach to the Cairn O'Mount and Clachnaben.

Whilst the Society recognizes the need to improve renewable energy and reduce carbon footprint, it is equally important to consider this area as being of paramount importance to our family's history, culture and heritage. It is uniquely beautiful, spectacular, and unspoiled; and has been further recognised as a conservation area by the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017.

After much consideration, the Society submitted an objection to the proposed development, and consider the impact of the 149.9m high turbines, access roads, and grid connections inappropriate for several reasons:

1. Contravenes Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan: Clachnaben and the Forest of Birse region is designated a Special Landscape Area (i.e., a conservation area) by the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The development of a wind farm contravenes this designation, which alone should disqualify this site for industrial development.

A: Glendye wind farm violates several clauses of Supplemental Guidance 9c, pages 70-72, which states:

"The Clachnaben and Forest of Birse Special Landscape Area (SLA) is classed as an upland landscape type. As such emphasis should be on retaining their largely undeveloped and remote character. This means ensuring that any developments are located and designed to limit their wider visibility and protect open skylines and rugged summits."

"Development must respect the strong, rolling relief and sense of wildness of the upland landscape."

"Development involving hill tracks should be undertaken in line with best practice guidance and should take account of landscape character and qualifying features of the SLA."

"Avoidance of development which erodes or interrupts the seamless relationship of this area to the Cairngorms."

"Avoidance of development which impacts upon the appreciations of Clachnaben and Mount Battock and their settings."

B. Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017, Part 1, Shaping of Marr (where Strachan and Glendye are located) states, "There is no real opportunity for wind turbines within Marr except for areas to the northwest and east of Huntly, and even in these areas there is only room for a small number of small wind turbines due to how they could affect existing sites."

Per the map on page 26 of the LDP, the area of Strachan and south has, "No strategic capacity for small, medium, or large wind turbines."

The Society assumes the 2017 conclusion is based upon an earlier study by the Aberdeenshire Council and published by SNH entitled "Strategic Capacity Landscape Assessment for Wind Energy in Aberdeenshire" (March 2014), which shows clearly that geographic area 22 (ii) The Mounth is keyed as an area of "no underlying capacity". Furthermore, the map shows area 22 (ii) is just across the B974 road from the existing fully installed Mill Hill wind-farm that is keyed as an "area that has exceeded underlying capacity."

2. Detrimental Visual Impact: Clachnaben is a stone tor that sits atop the mountain, and is regularly visited by hikers, mountaineers, and rock climbers from all over the United Kingdom, and abroad. This includes many Society Members from locations around the world, including but not limited to: America, Canada and Australia. The Aberdeen Local Development Plan, Supplemental Section 9c states,

"The ecological value of the river [Dee], its tributaries and its surroundings contributes to the landscape character, as well as being recognised as nationally and internationally important for nature conservation."

A local MSP recently referred to Clachnaben as a "natural wonder." For those outdoors-types that make the journey, the stone tor offers an unfettered 360-degree view of the surrounding Scottish countryside. The proposed wind farm



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Cairn O'Mount is one of the sites that eventually may become a wind farm.

development on Glendye would completely interrupt the view to the South and West towards Glen Esk and Glen Clova. Furthermore, it would transform skyline from Cairngorm National Park, Mount Keen (the most Easterly Munro), Lochnagar, and other areas.

The 26-turbines, nearly 149.9 meters high, are the height of a 28-story office building, and would be the equivalent of building downtown Glasgow in the Cairn O'Mount. This statement is not necessarily accurate as the Glasgow Tower, which sits at only 127 meters high, is the tallest building in Scotland. In summary, there is little doubt the turbines will have a detrimental visual impact on the Cairngorm National Park and the surrounding area.

3. Damage to Peatlands: Peat bog makes up only 3% of the earth's surface, but accumulates more carbon than all of the world's tropical rainforests combined.

The Scottish Government published its Climate Change Plan on 28 Feb 2018, and it made a commitment to restore 40 per cent of Scotland's peatlands by 2030. Unfortunately, constructing and making drainage for over 31 kms of tracks, excavating quarries and constructing plinths to foot the turbines in a grade 1 Blanket Peat Bog does not comply with the Scottish Government's own Climate Change plan.

Peatlands also act as a sponge to slow the rain runoff into the Waters of Dye and Charr, which are tributaries to the Feugh, which itself is a tributary to the Dee. The Feugh Valley is already vulnerable to flooding and there are significant concerns that removal of even the smallest amount of this rain storage system will exacerbate the potential of more flooding. It is the Society's understanding that no environmental study has yet been conducted on the impact of the wind farm's infrastructure (roads, drainage, grid connections, etc.) to determine the environmental impact of



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additional flooding.

4. Detriment to Wildlife: Developers fail to mention the blades of a 149.9m high turbine cover an area of 18,600 square meters—that's roughly 2-1/2 football pitches, and spin at a brisk 80 meters per second (180 MPH) at the tips.

As one might imagine, twenty-six (26) wind turbines will have a devastating impact on wildlife, especially rare and endangered birds such as nearby nesting Golden Eagles and Red Kites that use the hill's up-draughts as a soaring aid. According to RSPB and NESRSG records and local knowledge, Glendye has been a Golden Eagle home range since at least 1942. There are various satellite tracking websites which provide powerful evidence of the regular presence of these majestic birds in the Glendye area.

Hen Harriers, Peregrines, Merlins and Osprey are other raptors likely to be affected along with other endangered or rare birds such as Curlew, Ring Ouzel, Golden Plover, Snipe, Short Eared Owl, and many others. Otters, water voles, slow worms, adders and many other creatures also inhabit the area where the wind farm is planned, and there are fish and fresh water mussels in the rivers fed from the area.

5. Socio-Economic Impact: The Society has concerns regarding the socio-economic impact to the region, especially the hospitality sector of the economy.



Ancestral lands of Clan Strachan, as seen from the Mill of Strachan.

Many believe the Glen Dye windfarm is just the beginning. Approximately 100-turbines are necessary for a wind farm to be economically feasible for a commercial enterprise. A reasonable person can easily conclude that if Glendye Wind Farm is approved, the simple economics will result in an expansion of wind turbines across the Cairn O'Mount potentially an order

of magnitude above what is currently being proposed. This is already proving itself true. The currently approved and operating wind farm in the area has 22-turbines, and is already attempting to expand. If further expansion of Glendye is permitted, the Cairn O'Mount could in less than one or two decades start to resemble San Gorgonio Pass in Palm Springs, California.

The feedback from a few internet hiking and outdoors websites already seem to indicate that if Glendye Wind Farm received planning permission that many would no longer visit the area. This is further compounded by feedback from several of our members who enjoy visiting the Lower Deeside because of its unspoiled landscapes.

More than a few of our members have expressed that they would be less incline to holiday in this locale if the area becomes industrialised with wind farms. Simply put, it would be better to hold future gatherings and conventions in Glasgow or Edinburgh, which is already a much easier travel destination given the availability of international flights.

The development group is offering community funds (ap-



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proximately £500,000 in total each year) and investment opportunities. However, it is the Society's belief that this could, with a relative high level of confidence, potentially pale in comparison to the negative economic impact to the local economy - particularly, the hospitality sector and its suppliers (farmers, etc.).

Organisations choose venues (in part) based upon their surroundings and aesthetic appeal. Given the remoteness and beauty of the Lower Deeside, the only real reason for holding a business conference in Banchory, Fettercairn or anywhere in the surrounding area is its beautiful and spectacular landscape. For example, the Clan Strachan Gathering in 2019, the Society estimates it will be paying local businesses approximately £350 per person on meeting venues, catering for two meals, coaches, etc. This amount is a very conservative as it does not include attendees paying for their hotel accommodations, nor visiting local shops and restaurants. If we include everything, the Society estimates that at a bar-minimum, total expenditures for the week per person will be at least £1,500. At the present time we are anticipating between 75-100 people, or a minimum estimate of expenditures to local businesses of at least £112,500 and perhaps as high as £150,000.

The loss of only ten business conventions and/or wedding bookings to the Lower Deeside of a similar size per year would be lost revenue well in excess of £1.1 million per annum, which well exceeds the community funds offered by the development group.

From a pure economic perspective, the reward of community funds offered by the local development group does not



San Geronio Pass wind farm, in California, USA.

warrant the potential risk to the local economy. That risk ultimately being loss of local revenue, loss in tax revenue, and most importantly loss in jobs.

The Society is joined in our protest by several conservation and other organisations including the Clan Strachan Charitable Trust in Scotland, the Aberdeen Branch of the Scottish Green Party, Save Clachnaben Opposition Group, North East Raptor Study Group, the John Muir Trust, and several mountaineering, hiking, and other organisations.

A recent survey among local inhabitants of the area also supports our opposition to the Glendye Wind Farm. Of the 156 inhabitants who responded, 25 per cent were in favour of the windfarm, 70 per cent opposed, and five per cent had no opinion. Given there is strong opposition by a majority of the residents, the Feughdee West Community Council has expressed their strong opposition to the proposed wind farm in Glendye.

There is also strong international opposition, as at least 20 individuals (likely more) from various countries around the globe have written the Scottish Government opposing the development of the Glendye wind farm.

Additionally, the Society has received emails from both Mike Rumbles (MSP for North East Scotland) and Alexander Burnett (MSP for Aberdeenshire West) who have expressed their opposition to the Glendye Wind Farm for reasons discussed herein.

At the present time we are waiting for the Scottish government to make their final determination. The Society will be writing a follow-up to this article in a future edition of our newsletter.

Sources:

1. Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017, Supplemental Guidance: Section 9c.
https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/9c_Special_Landscape_areas_Part3.pdf
2. Local Development Plan 2017, Part 1, pages 25-26
<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20616/local-development-plan-2017-part-1.pdf>
3. Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, Appendix 8f, Settlement of Marr (2017).
<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20620/appendix-8f-settlement-state-ments-marr.pdf>
4. Strategic Landscape Capacity for Windfarms, Aberdeenshire Council (2014).
<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/the-strategic-landscape-capacity-for-windfarms/>



A history of Clan Strachan



By James Strachan

The lands of Strachan were once located on the Northern border of the Pictish Kingdom of Circind, which is bounded to the North by the Waters of the Dee and the Pictish Kingdom of Ce (pronounced /cay/).

During the 11th century, the District of Strachan fell within the Mormaerdom of Mearns, Mormaer Máel Petair of Mearns. A Mormaer was an ancient Gaelic name for a regional or provincial ruler, theoretically second in rank to the King. Mormaers were equivalent to English earls, and the term would eventually become 'earl' in Scotland as feudalism slowly took hold.

On November 12, 1094, Máel Petair murdered the Scottish King Duncan II (Donnchad mac Mail Coluim), and all of his lands were thereafter forfeit to the Crown, including the Strachan District.

The Barony of Strachan was first granted by King William ('the Lion') in 1189 - 95 to William Giffard; granted by King William in feu and in forest as a royal hunting reserve and part of the royal demesne. William Giffard died in 1207, and this is the first and last the Giffard family is mentioned as having any association with the Barony of Strachan.

The first to use the territorial designation of 'de Strachan' was Ranulf de Strachan, who is witness to a charter of Thomas de Lundie (Arb Lib, i, 65). It is with a high probability that Ranulf de Strachan came into possession of the Barony of Strachan through marriage.

Ranulf, interestingly enough, is not a traditional Highland name, but is rather of Scandinavian, or Norman, descent.

Charter evidence suggests that Ranulf de Strachan had no children, and that the barony of Strachan was inherited likely by his younger brother Waltheof de Strachan via collateral succession.



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Waltheof de Strachan in c. 1230 granted to the Priory of St. Andrews, in Fife, land in Strachan (Blarkerocch) to construct a church and hall within the Village of Strachan (St. A. Lib., 276-7).

In 1242, the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Strachan was consecrated by the Bishop of St. Andrews, David de Bernham (Cowan, *Parishes*, p. 189). Ironically, the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Strachan was a peculiar (or a detached) parish, which was not under the diocese in whose territory it is located. Although, technically within the Bishopric of Brechin's border, the Parish of Strachan was operated under the Diocese of St. Andrews, Fife (Gray, pp 23).

As with the name "Ranulf", the Christian name of "Waltheof" is also of Scandinavian origin. The name of Waltheof, though, was somewhat unusual, and generally associated with families descendant from the High-Reeve or Ealdorman of Bamburgh, who flourished in 994. This may be significant as, the Earl of Lothian and the Royal House of Dunkeld (i.e., the Crown), were both descendants of Waltheof of Bamburgh. It is therefore speculative, but if the 'de Strachan' family are of this lineage, then they would have been related by blood to the Crown, albeit to what extent is uncertain.

Waltheof de Strachan was succeeded by his son, Ranulf.

In 1264, Ranulf succeeded Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, to the Sherifdom of Banff (*Exchequer Rolls*, vol. i, Appendix to Preface, pages CLXXVIII, CLXXX; and page 15). Sherifdoms, according to Alexander Grant a Scottish Baronet and historian, were at this time generally hereditary. This suggests that Strachan of that Ilk may have been kin to Alexander Comyn. Certainly, at the very least, Alexander Comyn thought very highly of Ranulf and supported his succession as Viscount of Banff.

In 1268, Ranulf and his cousin, Michael de Strachan, were appointed attorneys of Elizabeth de Quincy, Countess of Buchan, to receive her property on her behalf (CDS / BAIN, Volume i, no. 2513).

The 13th century was a turbulent time when one trusted only family in Scotland, and these two antiquarian sources quoted above suggest that Strachan of that Ilk may have been related to the Earl or likely his wife, Countess Elizabeth de Quincy.

Ranulf de Strachan was succeeded to the Barony of Strachan by his son, John de Strachan.

Interestingly, in 1195, the lands of Beath Waldeve, in Fife, were granted by Saer de Quincy to Dunfermline Abbey (RD, no 154). However, in 1278, John de Strachan granted these same lands back to the Crown (RD, no. 87). The confirming

charter states the lands of Beath Waldeve formerly belonged to John of Strachan, son and heir of late Ranulph of Strachan, Knight, which John and his ancestors had held under King and his ancestors by hereditary right.

Subsequently, the charters of 1264, 1268, and charters associated with the lands of Beath Waldeve suggest a thesis that the 'de Strachan' family were blood kin to the earls of Buchan, and in particular to Elizabeth de Quincy, Countess of Buchan. This would play an important element in the future of Clan Strachan.

Wars of Independence

King Alexander died in 1286, and shortly thereafter, his sole heir and granddaughter (Margaret Maid of Norway) died. This void to the Crown of Scotland nearly pushed a country into civil war. To avoid civil war a panel of 12 Guardians were appointed who sought to have King Edward I of England arbitrate the matter. Edward agreed so long as the Guardians of Scotland recognized King Edward as Lord Paramount of Scotland. The two main competitors to the throne of Scotland were Robert de Bruce, 5th Lord of Annandale, and John Balliol.

The arbitrators found that John Balliol had the strongest claim, and he was subsequently crowned 30 November 1292.

King Edward I of England wasted no time and began treating King John I of Scotland as a vassal of England, humiliating him at every opportunity. Edward demanded that homage be paid, legal authority over the Scottish King in disputes brought against him by his own subjects in English courts, and also costs of defense be paid by Scotland.

In 1293, following a naval incident between the Normans (i.e., France) and instigated by the English, King Philip the Fair of France summoned Edward I to the French court with the intention to treat Edward no better than Edward was treating John I of Scotland. Edward refused this summons to appear before the King of France, and subsequently King Philip disinherited King Edward of his lands and estates in France.

In 1294, Edward declared war on France, and required King John Balliol to send troops to support his campaign against France, and also required King John's personal attendance. This was an outrage that one King should summon another to fight his battles.

Tiring of their deeply compromised king, the Scottish nobles formed another panel of 12 Guardians (Stirling, July 1295) who instead went on to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance with France – known in later years as the Auld Alliance.



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Angered by the perceived betrayal, King Edward subsequently invaded Scotland and made quick work, brutally dispatching Scots forces in Berwick-upon-Tweed (30 March, 1296), and shortly thereafter Dunbar (27 April, 1296).

After surrendering to the English in a letter written Castleton of Kincardine, King John Balliol abdicated the throne by a Deed signed in Brechin Castle on 10 July 1296. Here the arms of Scotland were formally torn from John's surcoat, giving him the abiding name of 'Toom Tabard' (empty coat).

10 July 1296, King John Balliol surrendered. Here, King John was disinherited. King Edward formally tore the arms of Scotland from John's surcoat, giving him the abiding name of "Toom Tabard" (empty coat). Scotland became occupied territory, and John Balliol was sent to the Tower of London as a traitor. He was eventually placed in the custody of the Pope and exiled to his estates at Hélicourt, Picardy, in France (1299).

Rise of Robert the Bruce and fall of the Strachans

In 1297, William Wallace, along with Sir Andrew de Moray, a Scottish military and political leader, launched a rebellion in Scotland against the English in an attempt to return King John Balliol to the throne of Scotland. However, John Balliol by this time, was quite old, and uninterested in politics or the Crown of Scotland. This created yet another empty Scottish throne, with the nearest heir being John III 'Red' Comyn, Lord of Badenock.

Robert de Bruce (son of Robert de Bruce, 5th Lord of Anandale) had never reconciled with the prior judgment that Balliol had a superior claim than his father to the throne of Scotland, and disputed Comyn's claim.

Robert de Bruce and Red Comyn met before the high altar at Greyfriar Abbey in Dumfries on February 10, 1306. A meeting that was supposed to be a peaceful, ended when Robert de Bruce murdered Red Comyn before the high altar.

This was an excommunicable offense and to avoid capture and imprisonment, Robert de Bruce immediately fled to Glasgow to meet with Robert Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow.

After promising to obey the Church if made king, Bishop Wishart absolved Robert from his sin, and further proclaimed

Robert de Bruce the rightful King of Scotland. Robert's claim as Sovereign of Scotland was not recognized by the Church, and to the contrary, Robert de Bruce was excommunicated for the murder of Red Comyn.

Regardless, the following month, on March 25, Robert de Bruce was crowned King of Scotland after much controversy. Contrary to many popular accounts, Bruce's actions at Greyfriars and subsequent excommunication severely damaged his reputation in Scotland.

Upon the death of Red Comyn, the next in line to succeed Balliol to the throne was John Comyn, 3rd Earl of Buchan.

As mentioned above, there is charter evidence confirming that Strachan of that Ilk were very closely allied to the Earls of Buchan, also likely blood kin, and were possibly cousins to John Comyn, Earl of Buchan.

Undeterred by the commotion surrounding him, Bruce coordinated a series of attacks against both English forces and those loyal to the Comyn cause and was soundly and repeatedly defeated. He was eventually forced into a long retreat into the Highlands where he went into hiding for a time.

The following Spring, Robert de Bruce returned with a vengeance and new tactics. Instead of taking and holding castles

and fortifications, his goal turned to sacking and destroying castles and fortifications loyal to Comyn or garrisoned by the English. Bruce was ruthless, and took no prisoners. He would slaughter the castle garrisons down to the last man, including prisoners who surrendered. Further, he would burn the castles and fill the wells with bodies, rubbish and dirt. Any crops would be burned, and livestock either taken, or slaughtered and burned. This strategy largely prevented the English or Comyn forces from re-taking or re-occupying these fixed fortifications, as they had successfully done in the past.

This new mobile strategy allowed Bruce to consolidate his gains. After taking control of most of Lowland Scotland, Bruce and his forces proceeded up the West Coast of Scotland, into the Highlands, and around to the Northeast.

Look for Part II of the history of Clan Strachan in an upcoming issue of this newsletter.



Robert the Bruce.



The Legend of Scota, ancestor to the Gaels

Scota and Scotia are the names given to the mythological daughters of two different Egyptian pharaohs in Irish mythology, Scottish mythology and pseudohistory.

Though legends vary, all agree that a Scota was the ancestor of the Gaels, who traced their ancestry to Irish invaders, called Scotti, who settled in Argyll and Caledonia, regions which later came to be known as Scotland, named after their founder. Some historians have debunked these legends or myths, sparking investigation of the subject by authors, historians, researchers and archeologists.

In 1955, archaeologist Dr. Sean O’Riordan of Trinity College, Dublin, made an interesting discovery during an excavation of the Mound of Hostages at Tara, site of ancient kingship of Ireland. Bronze Age skeletal remains were found of what has been argued to be a young prince, still wearing a rare necklace of faience beads, made from a paste of minerals and plant extracts that had been fired.

The skeleton was carbon dated to around 1350 B.C.E. In 1956, authors J. F. Stone and L. C. Thomas in their book, *The Distribution and Use of Faience in the Ancient East and Prehistoric Europe*, reported that the faience beads were Egyptian: “In fact, when they were compared with Egyptian faience beads, they were found to be not only of identical manufacture but also of matching design.” Many



Meritaten-tasherit.

believe that Tara Tea Tephi, Queen of Tara and Gibraltar, is buried at the Mound, along with her young firstborn son, Aedh.

The famous boy-king Tutankhamen was entombed with a priceless golden collar around his neck that was also inlaid with matching conical, blue-green faience beads.

Lorraine Evans in her compelling book, *Kingdom of the Ark*, reveals archaeological connections between Egypt and Ireland that she argues are plausible and that there is archaeological evidence to support the theory.

For instance, in 1937 in North Ferriby, Yorkshire, the remains of an ancient boat were discovered, first thought to be a Viking longship. However, continued excavation



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produced additional ships, apparently wrecked in a storm.

Further investigation showed that the boats were much older than Viking ships and were of a type found in the Mediterranean. It was concluded that these boats originated from 2,000 years before the Viking age and were radiocarbon dated to around 1400 to 1350 B.C.E.

Evans then makes connections to argue that these boats could originate from Egypt, as the timeframe fits the dating of the skeleton wearing faience beads.

While investigating the origins of the people of Scotland in the Bower manuscript, the *Scotichronicon*, Evans discovered the legend of Scots, the Egyptian princess and daughter of an Egyptian Pharaoh, who fled from Egypt with her husband, Gaythelos, in a fleet of ships with a large following of people. They settled in Scotland for a while among the natives, until they were forced to leave. They then landed in Ireland, where they formed the Scotti, and their descendants became the high kings of Ireland. In later centuries, the Scotti returned to Scotland, defeating the Picts, and ultimately giving Scotland its name.

Legend has it, though, that the Scots Gaels of Ireland and Scotland were born of two separate Scythian/Egyptian royal marriages.

The first royal marriage was between Niul, a prince from the country located northwest of the Black Sea, later known as Scythia, and Meritaten-tasherit, daughter of The Great Royal Wife, Meritaten and her husband, the Pharaoh Smenkhare, and granddaughter of Pharaoh Akhenaten and his queen, The Great Royal Wife, Nefertiti.

A controversial religious shift, sparked by Pharaoh Akhenaten to his new god Aten from the former, established god, Amun, caused an uproar among the Amun priesthood of Egypt, who reasserted their authority after Akhenaten's reign ended. This conflict and rumored deaths



Top: The legendary site of Scots' burial, at the Mound of Hostages in Kerry, Ireland.

Above: A replica of the Stone of Destiny.

by plague would have been sufficient motivation for Meritaten-tasherit to accept a foreign prince in marriage and to flee from the conflicted country.

According to legend, Niul was descended from the Scythian prince, Fénus Farsaid, one of seventy-two chieftains who built the Tower of Babel. Scythians, themselves, are



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believed to be descended from the Biblical Ham and Japheth. Ham was also, by some accounts, the Egyptian god Thoth, supposed author of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and known to Greeks as Hermes. Japheth was known to Greeks as Iapetus, a Titan, and son of the god Uranus and goddess Gaia.

The new Scythian Princess became known as Sco-ta, or Ruler of People, a title accorded her as a gesture of acceptance by her husband's people.

The couple's son Gadheal (Gael) Glas, is the legendary ancestor of the Scots Gaels of Ireland, said to have created the Gael language from the seventy-two languages originating during the fall of the Tower of Babel, confusion of languages, and dispersal of the nations. Gaelic does indeed share linguistic structural features common to classical Arabic, Biblical Hebrew and Spanish.

According to Lebor Gabála Érenn (The Book of the Taking of Ireland, a loose collection of poems and prose narratives recounting the mythical origins and history of the Irish race), Niul was present when the former Israelite slaves departed Egypt heading across the Red Sea, and Pharaoh's army drowned. Other Gaelic texts further hold that Gadheal was born in Egypt at the time Moses began leading the Children of Israel.

Author and a professor of Scottish history at the University of Glasgow, Edward J. Cowan, traced the first mention of Scots found in literature up to that time to the 12th century C.E. Scots also appears in the Irish chronicle Book of Leinster (containing a redaction of the Lebor Gabála Érenn). However, a text found in the 11th-century Historia Brittonum contains an earlier reference to Scots.

Twelfth-century sources state that Scots was the daughter of an Egyptian pharaoh who was a contemporary of Moses. She married Geytholos (Goídel Glas), the founder of the Scots and Gaels after leaving Egypt. The earliest Scottish sources claim Geytholos was a king of Greece, Neolus or Heolus, while the Lebor Gabála Érenn describes him as a



Scone Abbey in Iona, Scotland.

Scythian. Other manuscripts of the Lebor Gabála Érenn contain a variant legend where Mil Espaine appears as Scots's husband, and connects him to ancient Iberia.

The second founding Princess Scots, a daughter of Pharaoh Nekau (Nechonibus, or Nectanebo, 610-595 B.C.E.), was given in marriage to Scythian Prince Galamh, a direct descendent of Niul and Meritaten-tasher-it, the first Scots.

Egyptian rulers commonly made political alliances by

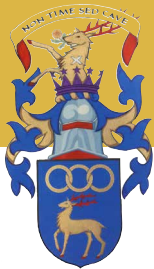
marrying their daughters into foreign royal families. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that they made such alliances with the Scythians who, over time, penetrated the Middle East as far as Palestine, and on to Egypt's border.

Their son, Eire Ahmon, or Heremon, was ancestral forebear of the Scots Kings of Ireland, a branch of which eventually founded Scotland.

This Scots and Galamh settled in Iberia. After Galamh's death, Scots, along with eight of their sons, sailed to Ireland to avenge the death of a kinsman, possibly her husband, who was killed while exploring the territory around County Kerry. While en route, several sons died in a violent storm. Irish historians place the arrival of the Gaedil, or Gaels, in Ireland between 600 and 500 B.C.E.

A battle was fought between Tuatha Dé Danann kings and princes, who ruled the area, against the wave of invaders (Princess Scots, her surviving sons and their party), called Milesians by the Tuatha Dé Danaan, because they had come from the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula (present day Galicia and Northern Portugal).

During the battle, Mac Cuill, Mac Cecht and Mac Gréine, who were kings of the Tuatha Dé Danann at that time, asked for a truce of three days, during which the Milesians would lie at anchor nine waves' distance from the shore. The Milesians complied, but the Tuatha Dé Danann are reputed to have created a magical storm in an attempt to drive the Milesians away. The Milesians then landed and defeated the Tuatha Dé Danann at Tailtiu. According to legend,



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when a Melisian, Amergin, was called upon to divide the land between the Tuatha Dé Danann and his own people, he cleverly allotted the portion above ground to the Milesians and the portion underground to the Tuatha Dé Danann.

The Tuatha Dé Danaan are a mythical supernatural Irish race said to have descended from Irish Goddess Danu and may also have had Scythian origins. Some believe their true origins date far back into prehistory.

By some accounts, this Princess Scots had brought along with her to Ireland the Stone of Destiny. Other accounts hold that the Stone arrived in Ireland with her daughter-in-law, Tara Tea Tephi. And, further accounts hold that the Stone of Destiny was brought to Ireland much earlier in history by the Tuatha Dé Danann.

Princess Scots died during the battle, along with the reigning Danaan kings and princes. Scots's grave is said to be located near the battle site on a mountain slope in view of Tralee Bay in County Kerry.

Scots and Galamh's older sons, Heremon and Heber, were the battle's only ranking survivors and, by default, became Ireland's next rulers. Heremon's wife was Israelite princess, Tara Tea Tephi (also known as Tamar), reputed to have been a daughter of Judean King Zedekiah, of the royal Davidian bloodline. She is said to have been rescued by the Prophet Jeremiah during the fall of Jerusalem and the capture of her family by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar's army. Jeremiah, who some believe was a member of the Judean royal family, is thought to have hidden her in a cave beneath the Judean Temple, then smuggled her to Egypt in approximately 588 B.C.E.

The union and reign of Tara Tea Tephi and Heremon began the Tara dynasty of Gaelic royalty, based upon the Stone of Destiny (Lia Fail), believed by some to have been the same stone the Israelite patriarch, Jacob, was laying his head upon during his vision of angels descending from, and ascending to, heaven on a ladder. According to legend, Jacob kept that stone and his family preserved it over their generations.

From Ulster (Dalriata) the Scots began to colonize the West Coast of North Britain which they called Dalriada (the valley, or plain, of Red Hair). The Scots found this an attractive location, as the local Celts (called Picts, or Caledonians, by the Romans) were friendly.

Some genealogies trace the origin of the Scots to Fergus Mór mac Eirc, of Dál Riata, a Gaelic kingdom in northern Ireland. In 506 C.E., Fergus The Great, King of Scots,

migrated to Dalriada, raised his Lion Rampant (the Lion of Judah, adopted through his Jewish heritage from Tara Tea Tephi) standard on the shores of his new land, and to seal it as the New Scots, he brought over with him the Scots Gaels' crowning stone - Lia Fail (the Stone of Destiny, also referred to as the Stone of Scone.).

Nearly 300 years later, the Scots Gaels of Dalriada and the Picts, or Caledonians, of Albany united to form the Kingdom of Scots, their common land was Scots or Scotland. Written during the reign of King Malcolm III (Máel Coluim mac Donnchada), Duan Albanach traces the earliest histories of the Picts and the descent of the Scottish kings from Fergus mac Eirc, while a companion piece, the Duan Eireannach (i.e. Irish Poem), recounts the history of the Gaels from Scythia, via Egypt, to Ireland.

Baldred Bisset, a medieval Scottish clergyman and lawyer, is credited with being the first to connect the Stone of Scone with the Scots foundation legends in his 1301 work Processus, putting forward an argument that Scotland, not Ireland, was where the original Scots homeland lay.

Bisset wanted to legitimize a Scottish (as opposed to English) accession to the throne when Alexander III of Scotland died in 1286. At his coronation in 1249, Alexander heard his royal genealogy recited for generations back to Scots. Bisset highlighted Scots's importance as the transporter of the Stone of Scone from Egypt to Scotland. In 1296, the Stone was captured by Edward I of England and transported to Westminster Abbey. In 1323, Robert the Bruce used Bisset's legend connecting Scots to the Stone in an attempt to have it returned to Scone Abbey in Scotland.

Since then, the stone has travelled back and forth between Scotland and England. Presently, it is on display at Edinburgh Castle.

These mythical traditions were incorporated into the Declaration of Arbroath, the 1320 Scottish Declaration of Independence, which announces the heritage of Scotland from Scythia via Scots. These traditions were believed in the early modern period and beyond, though they are presently given little credence, resulting in recent research into these legends. Even King James VI traced his origin to Fergus and Scots, saying, in his own words, that he was a "Monarch sprunge of Fergus race".

Note: This story is an update from one run in a previous issue of this newsletter.



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The Press and Journal

News notes adapted from the Aberdeen Press and Journal:

➔ OUTER HEBRIDES MAKES LIST OF WORLD'S TOP TRAVEL DESTINATIONS FOR 2019

By Frances Rougvie

Airbnb has named the Outer Hebrides as one of the world's top 2019 travel destinations. The islands scored among the most "trending" destinations, alongside world destinations in Canada, Ghana and New Zealand.

Praising the beautiful but rugged natural splendor of the islands and especially lauding the Isle of Barra where planes land on the shore – one of the only commercial airports in the world that has a beach runway, Airbnb reported that bookings to the Outer Hebrides have soared by nearly 150 per cent in a year, while searches for homes in the islands have leapt up by 170 per cent over the last 12 months.

Airbnb said the 19 destinations it chose to award reflected a growing interest from travelers to explore more "off-the-beaten-path" regions, cities and towns.

Of the Outer Hebrides Airbnb said: "(It is) an island chain



Calanais Standing Stones, Lewis, Scotland.

off the west coast of Scotland, with beautiful but rugged natural splendor that may seem reminiscent of that depicted in the 1995 film, Braveheart."

➔ PARROT FOR SALE?

A parrot was put on board the Blessing of Aberdeen (John Strachan Master) in November last, by a Gentleman who spoke the Captain to take special care of it before he sailed. But as the Gentleman did not leave his name and Place of Abode; And as there was no letter nor direction where to deliver the Parrot, it is cared for by the Master. 'Tis therefore expected that the Gentleman will as soon as possible, claim his Property,



which he shall have, on paying necessary Charges. Enquire at the office of the publisher of this paper.

Printed in the Aberdeen Press and Journal 28 January 1752.



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➤ CONCERN OVER FALLING GP LEVELS IN GRAMPIAN, HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES

By Tom Peterkin

The numbers of family doctors in Grampian, Highlands and the Western Isles are at lower levels than they were 10-years ago, official statistics have revealed.

General Practitioners in Scotland have seen their average income before tax slashed by 2.5 per cent while their colleagues in England and Wales benefited from pay raises. The average salary for independent contractor GPs in Scotland who account for 3,568 out of the country's 4,913 local doctors, was down 2.5 per cent from £91,800 in 2014/15 to £89,500 in 2015/16. Meanwhile, their English counterparts enjoyed a 1 per cent increase from £103,800 in 2014/15 to £104,900 last year.

Dr. Andrew Buist, deputy chair of BMA Scotland's GP Committee, said the 2.5 per cent fall in take home pay for a GP was "disappointing". Reasons for the pay disparity include higher expenses being incurred by doctors in Scotland for things like electricity bills and the costs of paying staff.

Figures for this year showed that there were 533 GPs in the NHS Grampian area, 16 doctors short of the 2008 level when there were 549, while in Highland, practice numbers fell from 102 to 98, and in the Western Isles, they fell from 12 to nine.



The reduction in the number of practices was accompanied by an increase of the average patient list size per group of doctors. In Grampian the average practice list rose from 6,736 in 2008 to 8,186 this year, while the Highland average list size grew from 3,154 to 3,359 since 2008. Over the same period, list sizes in the Western Isles grew from 2,305 to 2,993.

NHS Highland said a national GP shortage affects remote areas. A spokesman said individual practices are trying to make the best use of doctor time and develop nurse-based services.

➤ FRENCH DRINKS GIANT PURCHASES ONE OF SCOTLAND'S ICONIC WHISKY BRANDS

The Glasgow firm, Edrington has agreed to sell Cutty Sark to Paris-based La Martiniquaise-Bardinet, which already owns Glen Moray Distillery in Elgin and a grain distillery, Starlaw, in Bathgate. The deal's value was undisclosed.

Edrington's whisky portfolio includes such noted brands as The Famous Grouse, The Macallan and Highland Park. The firm acquired the Cutty Sark brand in 2010 in a deal worth nearly



£38 million. But, the company said earlier this year it wants to focus more fully on premium brands.

Named after the 19th Century, Clyde-built clipper ship now on public display in London, Cutty Sark is blended from mainly Speyside malts and was once the best-selling Scotch in the USA, where it has appeared in a raft of Hollywood movies, including Raging Bull and Goodfellas.



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➤ £200 MILLION NORTH-EAST RAIL INVESTMENT HAS TWO-MINUTE TRAVEL TIME BOOST

By Jon Hebditch

A promised £200 million rail investment between the north-east and central belt would only speed up travel time by two minutes. This shocking revelation by Transport Scotland, was made nearly three years after the cash was awarded in a 2016 deal. At the deal signing in January of that year, the Scottish Government pledged to invest the sum within ten years to reduce travel time by around 20 minutes.

Then-infrastructure secretary Keith Brown said the cash injection would involve “infrastructure improvements, double tracking at key pinch points and other opportunities to improve journey times to the central belt and on to London”. He said that together they would be “providing an economic boost to the cities and communities of the north-east”.

However, Transport Scotland’s head of rail, Bill Reeve, has revealed that the much touted improvements around Montrose Basin have been found to offer little or no time benefits. In fact, a Transport Scotland report states that the approximate £218 million investment would trim just 90 to



Geof Sheppard/commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18180296

A ScotRail service at Aberdeen, formed of a Class 170 Turbostar unit.

150 seconds from journeys between Aberdeen and Glasgow and Edinburgh.

➤ CONSERVATION CHARITY CALLS FOR REDEFINITION OF ‘CULTURE’

A conservation charity is calling on the Scottish Government to change how “culture” is defined after research suggested public attitudes are not reflected in current policy.

The National Trust for Scotland (NTS) said research suggests a “clear disconnect” between what the existing approach holds should be considered culture and what the public believes culture encompasses.

A survey of 1,115 people across Scotland, commissioned by the NRS, in order to discover what people felt should be included in the nation’s next culture strategy, found that people in Scotland have a broad view of culture – regardless of gender, age and income group – with an emphasis on places and participation. These findings suggest that ‘culture’ has a lot more to it than the current

national approach allows.

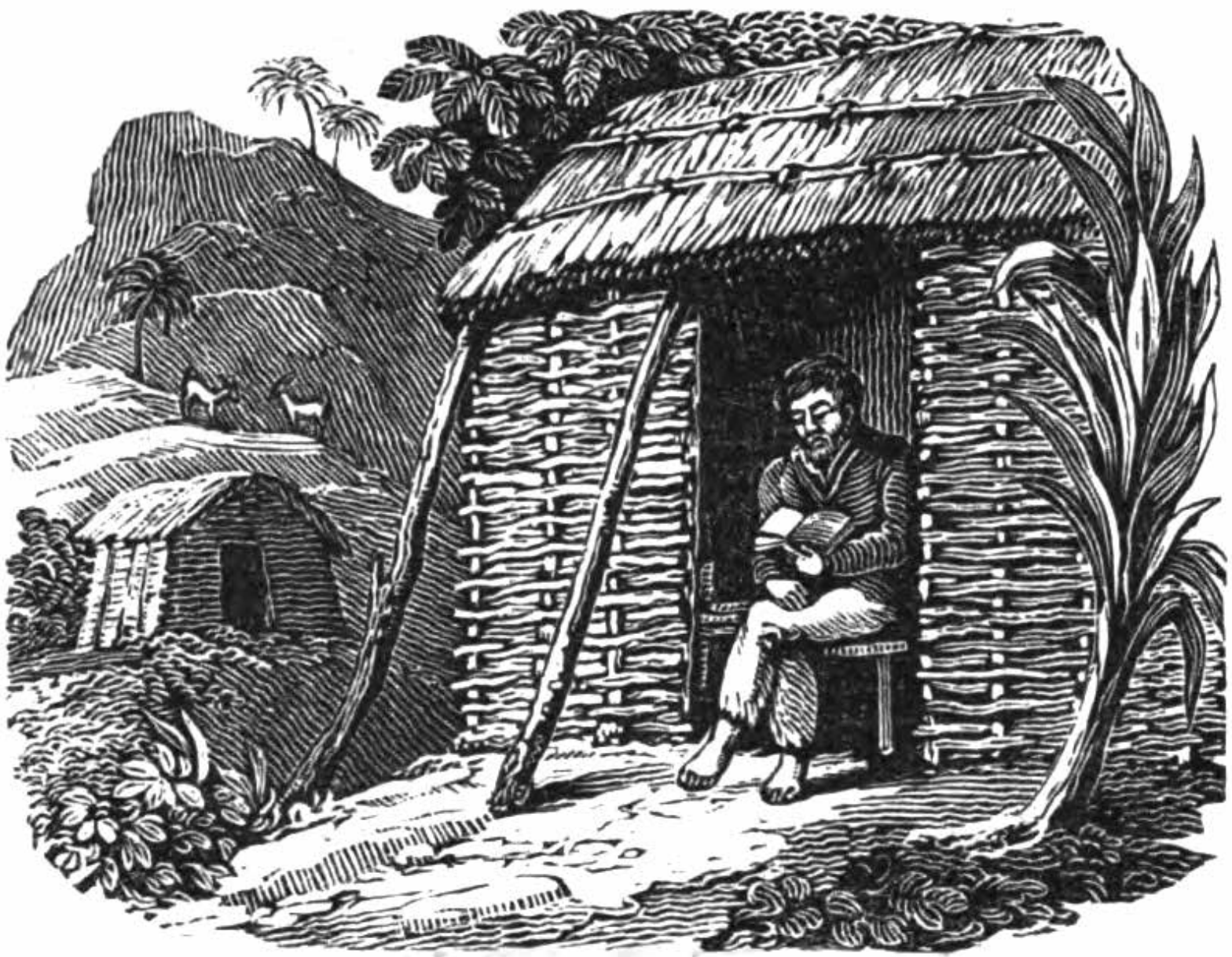
While the NTS said that the current approach largely focuses on more conventional areas of culture, such as performing arts and the creative industries, more than half (53 per cent) of those surveyed said they felt that parks, gardens and designed landscapes should be part of the proposed cultural strategy, and nearly half (48%) felt that landscapes, natural beauty and historic buildings and sites should also be included. Experiences that involved participation, like festivals and events, as well as sports, scored similarly highly, particularly among younger participants, and “intangible heritage” such as traditions, customs and stories respectfully scored, along with languages, architecture and design.



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Alexander Selcraig

The real Robinson Crusoe





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He was a pirate, a hothead and a lout, but castaway Alexander Selcraig, aka Selkirk, inspired one of the greatest yarns in literature.

Born the son of a shoemaker and tanner, in Lower Largo, Fife, Scotland, in 1676, Selcraig was quarrelsome and unruly. One of the oldest accounts, "The Life and Adventures of Alexander Selkirk," (1829) by John Howell, describes the mariner as "spoiled and wayward," made only worse "by the indulgence of his mother, who concealed as much as she could his faults from his father." Selcraig's mother, Euphan Mackie, apparently believed that, as the seventh son, he was blessed with luck and should be encouraged in his dreams of going to sea. His father, John, wanted the lad to stay home and help with his tannery and shoemaking business, creating a simmering dispute that caused so much "domestic strife and bickering," Howell writes, that John threatened to disinherit him.

Once, Selcraig was even summoned before a Kirk Session for "indecent conduct in church", but he "did not appear, being gone to sea". He had taken off to be a buccaneer in the South Pacific. But, he was back home in Largo in 1701, when he again came to the attention of church authorities for beating up his father and brothers over a harmless prank.

In school, one biographer suggests, he had shown some skill at math and geography, and with at least one voyage under his belt, in 1703 he was able to convince buccaneer William Dampier that he was the man to navigate Dampier's next privateering expedition to South America. It's

at this point, however, for reasons unclear, that Selcraig is forever known as Selkirk.

Carrying letters of marque from the Lord High Admiral authorizing their armed merchant ships to attack foreign enemies, they set sail from Kinsale, Ireland to the South Pacific. The War of the Spanish Succession was underway between England and Spain. Dampier was Captain of the *St. George* and Selcraig served on another ship, the *Cinque Ports*, *St. George's* companion ship, as Sailing Master under Captain Thomas Stradling.

In February 1704, following a stormy passage around Cape Horn, the Privateers fought a long battle with a well-armed French vessel, the *St. Joseph*, only to have it escape and warn Spanish allies of their arrival in the Pacific.

Additionally, a raid on the Panamanian gold mining town of Santa María failed when their landing party was ambushed. But, the easy capture of the *Asunción*, a heavily laden merchantman, revived the men's hopes of plunder. Selcraig was put in charge of the prize ship.

Dampier took some much-needed provisions of wine, brandy, sugar and flour off the *Asunción*, storing them on his own ship. He abruptly set the captive ship free, arguing that the gain was not worth the effort.

Therefore, in May 1704, Captain Stradling decided to strike out on his own. After parting ways with Dampier, the ship's sickened crew had spent a year at sea off South America robbing Spanish ships and coastal villages. Captain Stradling brought the





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Cinque Ports ship, with a leaky hull and restive crew, to an island known to the Spanish as Más a Tierra, located in the uninhabited Juan Fernández archipelago 670 km (420 mi) off the coast of Chile. The Cinque Ports was badly in need of a mid-expedition restocking of

fresh water and supplies. But an extended stay didn't quell Selcraig's misgivings about the ship's seaworthiness. By now, Selcraig was a skilled navigator. He began to argue with the Captain that the leaky, disease-ridden vessel was a deathtrap. He then made a lifechanging decision, demanding that the 21-year-old Captain, Lt. Thomas Stradling, whom he regarded as arrogant, leave him on the largest island, declaring he would rather be left behind on an uninhabited island than continue to sail, openly saying that the leadership was so poor that it would likely soon cause the ship to sink.

Selcraig actually had grave concerns about their vessel, and out of concern for his own safety demanded that the ship be given much-needed repairs before sailing on. He continued declaring that he would rather stay on Juan Fernández than continue in a dangerously leaky ship. Stradling believed Selcraig's fears were baseless, but Selcraig was angry and rash. Finally Stradling decided to call Selcraig's bluff and, to relieve himself of the troublemaker, gave him exactly what he had so proudly demanded: marooning.

Selcraig had hoped other shipmates would join him, further undermining Stradling, but none did. Stradling left Selcraig on shore with a musket, a hatchet, a knife, a cooking pot, a Bible, bedding and some clothes.

When he realized none of the crew was joining him in the mutiny, Selcraig frantically waded into the ocean and begged forgiveness from Stradling, who delighted in saying no, quite enjoying the moment. His unruly men were watching this pathetic show, of a hardheaded seaman begging for his life. Stradling wanted the message to sink in deeply with the crew: leave the ship and this will be you.

Finally, as the vessel sailed away Selcraig could be seen flailing his arms in an attempt to get the ship to return and allow him back aboard. But, Stradling had no inclination



to do so, and continued on his journey leaving Selcraig stranded. Perhaps feeling more stupid and angry than victimized, Selkirk finally turned his back on the Cinque Ports and resigned himself to waiting for what he thought would be a few days until another friendly ship happened by.

Though it is probable that Selcraig did mean to insult the Captain and foment rebellion among his shipmates, it eventually turned out that his warning was not entirely inaccurate: the Cinque Ports did indeed later founder. She sank off the coast of what is now Colombia. Stradling and some of his crew survived but were forced to surrender to the Spanish and endured harsh imprisonment in Lima, Peru.

Meanwhile, back on the deserted island, Selcraig initially remained along the shoreline of Juan Fernández, where he survived by eating spiny lobsters. He was lonely, miserable and full of remorse, and spent hour upon hour scanning the sea for rescue.

Eventually, hordes of raucous sea lions gathered on the beach to mate, driving Selcraig inland. Life took a turn for the better. Feral goats—introduced by earlier sailors—provided him with meat and milk, while wild turnips, cabbage leaves and dried pepper berries offered him variety and spice. When rats began attacking him at night, he simply domesticated some of the island's feral cats!

Lessons learned from his father during childhood served Selcraig well. For example, when clothes wore out, he crafted goatskin replacements, laboriously sewing with a nail. As his shoes became unusable, his newly toughened, calloused feet made further protection unnecessary. He sang psalms and improved his English by reading the Bible, also finding it a comfort in his situation.

Over time, Selcraig proved resourceful in using materials that he found on the island: he forged a new knife out of barrelhoops left on the beach, he built two huts out of pepper tree branches, one he used for cooking and the other for sleeping. His musket proved useful for hunting goats, while his knife useful for skinning them. As his gunpowder dwindled, he chased prey on foot. At one point, he tumbled right off a cliff while sprinting along, then lay helpless and unable to move for a day. His prey had cushioned his fall,



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though, probably sparing him a broken back.

At one point during his odyssey, two ships anchored nearby. Unfortunately for Selcraig, both were Spanish. As a Scotsman and a privateer, he would have suffered a grim fate if captured, therefore he did his best to hide. But, he was spotted and hotly pursued by Spanish sailors, who eventually gave up the chase and sailed away without him.

After four years and four months as a marooned castaway (1704–1709), Selcraig's long-awaited deliverance came by way of the Duke, a ship piloted by his old friend William Dampier, and its sailing companion, the Duchess. Thomas Dover led the landing party that met Selcraig on February 2, 1709. By then, Selkirk was like a bearded beast on two legs, clothed in goatskins and "so much forgot his Language for want of Use, that we could scarce understand him, for he seem'd to speak his words by halves," as Rogers reported. Selcraig was almost incoherent with joy.

He told his story of survival as best he could. He might not have been believed, but Rogers' navigator was none other than William Dampier, who recognized Selkirk as a comrade from the St. George-Cinque Ports voyage. Dampier likely told Selkirk the bittersweet news that he had been all too right about the decrepit Cinque Ports.

The Duke's Captain and leader of the expedition was Woodes Rogers, who mischievously referred to Selcraig as the island's governor. Before they sailed away, the former castaway caught goats whose meat helped heal Rogers' men of scurvy.

Captain Rogers was impressed by Selcraig's physical strength and the peace of mind he had attained while living on the island, observing: "One may see that solitude and retirement from the world is not such an insufferable state of life as most men imagine, especially when people are fairly called or thrown into it unavoidably, as this man was."

Rogers helped

Selcraig shave and gave him clothes. The crew offered him food, but his diet of fresh fish, goat and vegetables made the Duke's stale and over-salted rations hard to stomach. His rock-hard feet swelled in the constraint of shoes. In recognition of not only his past skill but also of his ordeal, Rogers made him a navigator as the Duke's Second Mate, then later gave him command of one of their prize ships, the Increase, before it was ransomed by the Spanish. Finally, Selcraig was headed home. But not immediately.

Selcraig returned to privateering with a vengeance. At Guayaquil, in present-day Ecuador, he led a boat crew up the Guayas River, following a number of wealthy Spanish women who fled. The crew stole the gold and jewels the women had concealed in their clothing.

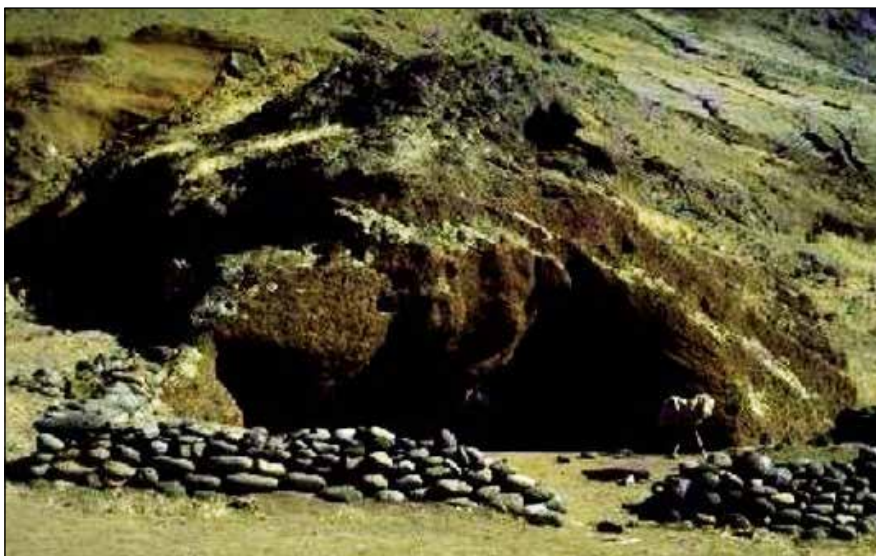
His part in the hunt for treasure galleons along the coast of Mexico resulted in the capture of Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación y Desengaño, renamed the Bachelor, on which Selcraig served as Sailing Master under Captain Dover heading toward the Dutch East Indies.

Selcraig completed his around-the-world voyage via the Cape of Good Hope as Sailing Master of the Duke, arriving at the Downs off the English coast on October 1, 1711. He had been away from home for eight years.

Selcraig's experiences as a castaway and story of survival were widely publicized after his return to England, arousing a great deal of attention. Captain Rogers included an account of Selcraig's ordeal in a book chronicling their privateering expedition, entitled, "A Cruising Voyage Round the World" (1712). The following year, prominent essay-

ist, Richard Steele, wrote an article about Selcraig for "The Englishman" newspaper.

Selcraig appeared set to enjoy the life of ease and celebrity. His share of Duke's plunder was about £800 (equivalent to £107,400 today). For the better part of two years, he dined out on his adventures, wandering from pub to pub in Bristol and London, telling tales





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of the South Seas for free meals and a pint.

After a few months in London, his former personality again made appearances. In September 1713, he was charged with assaulting a Shipwright in Bristol and may have been kept in confinement for two years.

When he finally returned to Lower Largo, he wanted little to do with his relatives. Some biographers say (though others doubt) that he began trying to replicate the best of his life on Juan Fernández, down to a cave-like shelter he built behind his father's house, from which he would gaze upon the Largo harbor. He evidently became something of a loner and resumed his drinking and fighting. He met and eloped with, but apparently did not marry, Sophia Bruce, a young dairymaid. Later, while on a visit to Plymouth in 1720, he married Frances Candis, a widowed innkeeper.

He enlisted in the Royal Navy, and was soon off to sea again, serving as Master's Mate on board the HMS Weymouth, then engaged in an anti-piracy patrol off the west coast of Africa.

When Daniel Defoe published "The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe", few readers missed that the hero's experiences closely resembled Selcraig's. An illustration on the first page of the novel shows a rather melancholy-looking man standing on the shore of an island, gazing inland. He is dressed in hirsute goat skins, his feet and shins are bare. Yet Crusoe's island is located not in the mid-latitudes of the South Pacific but 4,300 km (2,700 miles) away in the Caribbean, where the furry attire would hardly be comfortable in the tropical heat. This incongruity supports the popular belief that Selcraig was a model for the fictional character, although literary scholars now accept that his was "just one of many survival narratives that Defoe knew about".

Crusoe captivated readers unlike anything in its time (and is now considered by many the first true English novel). Laced with politics and social theory, it was part adventure, part Christian allegory, part utopianist attack on British society. The first printing, of a thousand copies, quickly went to a second, third and fourth. The book was translated into French, Dutch, German, Spanish and Russian, making Crusoe one of the world's most recognized fictional characters. But the author, who had been repeatedly imprisoned for his opposition to the British government, remained anonymous, selling the copyright and ultimately only making a fraction of what he deserved.

In November 1720, at age 44, Selcraig returned to the

only life that ever meant anything to him, signing on as the first mate of a naval warship, the HMS Weymouth, bound for Guinea and the Gold Coast of Africa in search of pirates. It would be another cursed voyage, plagued by yellow fever and perhaps typhoid. The ship's terse log recorded dozens of deaths within a year's time, often three or four a day. On December 13, 1721, it recorded another. "North to northwest. Small Breeze and fair," it read. "Took three Englishmen out of a Dutch ship and at 8 pm. Alexander Selkirk . . . died."

As with the others, they threw his body overboard, leaving behind both women who claimed to be his wife.

On December 11, 1885, Lord Aberdeen delivered a speech, and his wife, Lady Aberdeen, unveiled a bronze statue and plaque in memory of Selcraig outside a house on the site of his original home on the Main Street of Lower Largo. David Gillies of Cardy House, Lower Largo, a descendant of the Selcraigs, donated the statue, created by Thomas Stuart Burnett. Thus, today, Lower Largo's tribute to its famous son consists of one bedroom-size exhibit room at the Crusoe Hotel, where artifacts and photographs of the Juan Fernández Archipelago, site of his marooning, are displayed, and the outdoor statue of Selcraig on Main Street, dressed in goatskins, looking out to sea.

The Scotsman is also remembered in his former island home. In 1869, the HMS Topaze crew placed a bronze tablet at a spot called Selkirk's Lookout on a mountain of Más a Tierra, in the Juan Fernández Islands to commemorate his involuntary sojourn. On January 1, 1966 Chilean President Eduardo Frei Montalva renamed Más a Tierra Robinson Crusoe Island after Defoe's fictional character to attract tourists. The largest of the Juan Fernández Islands, known as Más Afuera, then became Alejandro Selkirk Island, although Selcraig probably never saw that island, which is located 180 kilometres (110 miles; 100 nautical miles) to the west of Más a Tierra.

In February 2005, while excavating a site not far from Selkirk's Lookout, an archaeological expedition to the Juan Fernández Islands found part of a nautical instrument that could have belonged to Selcraig. It was "a fragment of copper alloy identified as being from a pair of navigational dividers" dating from the early 18th (or late 17th) century. Selcraig is the only person known to have been on the island at that time who is likely to have had dividers, and was even said by Rogers to have had such instruments in his possession.



Scottish druids

Druids were people in ancient Britain and France who served a wide variety of roles — “philosophers, teachers, judges, the repository of communal wisdoms about the natural world and the traditions of the people, and the mediators between humans and the gods,” writes Barry Cunliffe in his book “*Druids: A Very Short Introduction*” (Oxford University Press, 2010). He notes that, curiously, the ancient texts don’t call Druids “priests” directly.

The English word *Druid* derives from Latin *Druides* (pronounced [Dru'ides]), which is the same as the term used by Greek ethnographers, δρῦιδης *Druidēs*). The native Celtic word for Druid is first attested as Latin *Druides* (plural), may mean “oak-knower”, confirmed by Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*; (Welsh: Derwydd; Old Irish: Druí; Scottish Gaelic: Druidh).

Almost everything we know about druids is second-hand knowledge. Surviving texts that mention them were written by non-Druids, something that poses a problem to modern-day historians trying to understand who they were and how their role changed over time.

Most of what is known about them comes from Greek and Roman writers such as Diodorus, Julius Caesar, Tacitus, Pliny the Elder, Strabo, Cicero and others. These have the virtue of being the work of people who lived when Druids still existed. The problem is that almost all relied on secondhand information of unknown quality, much of it very old even by their time. Moreover, none wrote more than a few sentences about Druids.

In general, Greek and Roman accounts of Druids fall into three categories.

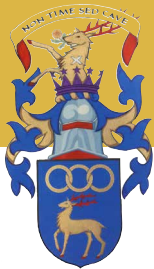
Some, mostly Greek, treat them as great philosophers and scientists worthy of admiration. Others, mostly Roman, make them into bloodthirsty barbarian priests, epitomes of backwardness, ignorance and cruelty. Yet others, like Julius Caesar, suggest that they were both. We have no means of telling which are closest to the truth.

In general, the further away from real Druids an ancient author lived the nicer he tended to think they were. This could mean that the more favourable accounts of them are mere wish-fulfillment, fashioning romanticized portraits of noble savages.

Those who lived closer to Druids may be regarded as staying more faithful to a brutal reality. On the other hand, the writers who were geographically closer to Druids had the strongest possible motive for exaggerating the danger and the horror that Druidry represented, justifying their conquest by Rome. By this reckoning, the more favorable accounts, mostly produced by Greeks who had themselves been conquered by Rome, could be the more truthful. We can never know.

The Roman





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writer Diodorus divided the learned classes into Bards, Soothsayers and Druids (whom he said were philosophers and theologians). Another Roman writer, Strabo, echoed this division, labeling them Druids (philosophers), Bards, and Vates (soothsayers).

Regardless of who exactly the Druids were, it is clear that they were often revered. Druids could be found in Britain and Gaul (modern-day France), as well as other parts of Europe and perhaps even in the Middle East. The writer Dio Chrysostom, who lived about 1,900 years ago, compared

Druids to the Magi and the Brahmins of India. The “Celts appointed those whom they call druids, these also being devoted to the prophetic art and to wisdom in general,” he wrote (translation courtesy University of Chicago website).

Similar to the monks of the Christian era, Druids apparently combined the duties of priest, judge, scholar, and teacher. Some were advisers to the rulers of that time. Julius Caesar noted that all men of any rank and dignity in Gaul were included either among the Druids or among the nobles (equites),

indicating that they formed two classes. He confirmed that the Druids constituted the learned priestly class (*disciplina*), and as guardians of the unwritten ancient customary law, they had the power of executing judgments, among which exclusion from society was the most dreaded. As far as we know, Druids were not a hereditary caste. They enjoyed exemption from military service as well as from payment of taxes.

The core points of Druidic doctrine reported in Roman sources is their belief in metempsychosis, and their practice of human sacrifice. However, reports of atrocities used to justify imperial conquest are considered critically throughout history. Their reported reverence for various aspects of the natural

world, such as the ritual of oak and mistletoe described by Pliny the Elder, has also been associated with animism.

Druidism is said to have acknowledged a Supreme Being, whose name was synonymous with the Eastern Baal, visibly represented by the sun; and such remnants of the ancient worship as are still traceable in the language of the people, would indicate its having been a species of sun-worship.

Thus, everything believed to move prosperously among many of the Celts was to move sunwise. They believed: a boat going to sea must turn sunwise; immediately after

marriage, a man or woman must make a turn sunwise. There were relics of fire-worship, too. Certain days were named from fire-fighting. Beallteine, or ‘the first day of winter’, the former supposed to mean the fire of Baal or Bel, the latter closing the saimhre, or summer period of the year, and bringing in the geamhre, or winter period, are evidence of this. Julius Caesar stated that there existed a Druidic doctrine of the original ancestor of the tribe, whom he referred to as Dispater, or Father Hades.

There are places

in Scotland where within the memory of living men the teine eigin, or ‘forced fire’, was lit once every year by the rubbing of two pieces of wood together, while every fire in the neighbourhood was extinguished in order that they might be lighted anew from this “sacred” source.

Ancient sources provide some tantalizing hints to the things that the Druids held in great importance. “The principal point of their doctrine”, reported Caesar, “is that the soul does not die and that after death it passes from one body into another. With regard to their actual course of studies, the main object of all education is, in their opinion, to imbue their scholars with a firm belief in the indestructibility of the human soul,





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which, according to their belief, merely passes at death from one tenement to another; for by such doctrine alone, they say, which robs death of all its terrors, can the highest form of human courage be developed. Subsidiary to the teachings of this main principle, they hold various lectures and discussions on astronomy, on the extent and geographical distribution of the globe, on the different branches of natural philosophy, and on many problems connected with religion”.

— Julius Cesar, “De Bello Gallico”, VI, 13

In one passage, Pliny the Elder (who lived almost 2,000 years ago) discussed the importance to Druids of mistletoe and of the fifth day of the moon. He said that mistletoe “is gathered with rites replete with religious awe. This is done more particularly on the fifth day of the moon, the day which is the beginning of their months and years, as also of their ages ...” (translation by John Bostock).

He also mentioned the importance of animal sacrifice and fertility to the Druids. They “bring thither two white bulls, the horns of which are bound then for the first time. Clad in a white robe the priest ascends the tree, and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, which is received by others in a white cloak. They then immolate the victims” while offering prayers, wrote Pliny the Elder. “It is the belief with them that the mistletoe, taken in drink, will impart [fertility] to all animals that are barren, and that it is an antidote for all poisons.”

Today, it is often said that the Druids practiced human sacrifice. This may not be accurate. Ancient sources indicate that Druids served alongside several other classes that also performed spiritual functions. The identity and role of these other classes changed, depending on the culture and the time.

Diodorus stated that while the Druids were always present during a human sacrifice, it was another group known as the “Vates” that carried out the sacrifice itself.

Therefore, precisely how widespread human sacrifice was among the cultures that the Druids served is another mystery. It’s important to note that much of the writing that survives comes from Roman writers who could have been hostile toward the Druids and the cultures they served.

How widespread Druidism was in the ancient world is also a mystery. It certainly flourished in the British Isles and Gaul. Julius Caesar claimed that Druidism originally came from Britain, and those who wished to study it in depth travelled there.

One of ancient names for the Island of Iona was *Isla na Druidhneach* - Isle of the Druids. Iona is a tiny island off the southwest coast of Mull in the Inner Hebrides. The Island, however, shows no traces of megalithic structures which may indicate that it was indeed considered sacred. In 83 C.E.,

Demetrius of Tarsus had been asked by the Roman Emperor to draw a map of the North of Scotland. Demetrius told Plutarch that on sailing around the coast, he had discovered an Island which was a retreat for holy men who were considered inviolate by the local people. Some scholars believe this Island he mentioned was Iona.

When the Scots Clan system was becoming firmly established, every heir or young chieftain had to give a public exhibition of his courage before being accepted. He was then placed on a pyramid of stone encircled by his Clan, who vowed to follow and obey him. The Chief Druid then eulogized the ancestry and noble deeds of the family. Before a battle, in a speech known as *Brosnachaidh Catha* “Incentive to Battle,” the Chief Druid would also pour scorn on the enemy and praise the fighting men of his Clan.

This practice was attested to by historian Tacitus, who described the fear of the Roman army on the shores of the Menai when faced by an awesome panoply of Druids.

The Romans – always a superstitious people – believed that on Anglesey the Druids practiced all sorts of weird and evil rituals. Magic and soothsaying, even human sacrifice, they told themselves, were carried out on this distant island. Such beliefs were commonly held by the troops at the time. The Roman General Suetonius Paulinus led his legions out from the fortress town of Chester, heading for a final reckoning with the Druids on the Island of Anglesey, off the coast of Wales, or *Mona*, as it was then known. Eventually Suetonius and his legions reached the shores of the Menai Straits. Knowing that the time had come to make a final stand, the tribesmen and their priests gathered on the opposite shore of the Island.

Tacitus gave the following description: “On the shore stood the forces of the enemy, a dense array of arms and men, with women dashing through the ranks like the furies -- The Druids pouring forth dire imprecations with their hands uplifted towards the heavens, struck terror into the soldiers.”

The Druids, the supposedly human-sacrificing enemy priests, struck a chill in everyone’s hearts, but it was the appearance of the women, wild haired and bearing torches, that most frightened the Roman legionaries. They were not used to facing such an enemy.

Urged on by their officers, the Roman cavalrymen swam their horses across the Straits while the infantry made the crossing in small, flat-bottomed boats. Tacitus simply said: “they bore down upon them, smote all who opposed them to the earth and wrapped them in the flames they had themselves kindled.”

What happened was a massacre. Men, women and children - armed and unarmed, young and old - fell under the swords



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of the Romans. The bodies of the dead and dying were unceremoniously hurled onto makeshift funeral pyres. Suetonius and his soldiers then roamed across the island, destroying the Druids' sacred oak groves, smashing their altars and temples and killing anyone they could find.

Tacitus further reported that after the Romans crushed the rebels they found widespread evidence of human sacrifice, a claim that may have been exaggerated to cast the Druids in a negative light.

Whether Druidism truly originated in Britain is unknown. It is possible that Druids originated much farther afield. Druidism is often associated with the Celts, whose settlements have been found as far east as modern-day Turkey. Additionally, Celtic mercenaries served as far away as Egypt (during the reign of Cleopatra VII) and even Judaea.

As far as we know, a Druid's instruction was secret, and was carried on secretly in caves and forests. Druidic lore consisted of a large number of verses learned by heart, and Caesar remarked that it could take up to twenty years to complete the course of study. There is no historic evidence during the period when Druidism was flourishing to suggest that Druids were other than male. However, Phillip Freeman, a classics professor, discussed a later reference to Dryades, which he translated as Druidesses, writing that "The fourth century A.D. collection of imperial biographies known as the *Historia Augusta* contains three short passages involving Gaulish women called "Dryades" ("Druidesses")." He pointed out that "In all of these, the women may not be direct heirs of the Druids who were supposedly extinguished by the Romans—but in any case they do show that the druidic function of prophecy continued among the natives in Roman Gaul." Additionally, Druidesses are mentioned in later Irish mythology, including the legend of Fionn mac Cumhaill, who, according to the 12th century *The Boyhood Deeds of Fionn*, is raised by the druidess Bodhmall and a wise-woman.

What was taught to Druid novices anywhere is conjecture. Of the Druids' oral literature, not one certifiably ancient verse is known to have survived. Even in translation and in Druidic documents, if there ever were any, none have survived.

Writers such as Diodorus Siculus and Strabo wrote about the role of Druids in Gallic society. Both Diodorus and Strabo reported that Druids were held in such respect that if they intervened between two armies they could stop the battle. Strabo reports that Druids were acting as arbiters in public and private matters, but he noted that by his time, they no

longer dealt with cases of murder. Julius Caesar said that Druids could punish members of Celtic society by a form of "excommunication", preventing them from attending religious festivals.

When Druidism began is unknown. Cunliffe, an emeritus professor of European archaeology at the University of Oxford, notes that the earliest written reference to them dates back about 2,400 years ago, while Druidism surely goes back much earlier than this. How far back is unknown.

People today often associate Stonehenge with Druidism. However, Stonehenge was constructed mainly between 5,000 and 4,000 years ago whereas the earliest written reference to the Druids dates back to about 2,400 years ago. So, again, there is a gap in time and the question of whether Druidism existed when Stonehenge was built, and if so in what form, is an open one.

It has been speculated that in Britain the Druidic social influence was already in decline by the mid-first century B.C.E., and in conflict with emergent new power structures embodied in

paramount chieftains, while others find the decline was in the context of Roman conquest itself.

Druids were seen as essentially non-Roman: a prescript of Augustus forbade Roman citizens to practice "druidical" rites. Under Tiberius Caesar, Pliny reported, the Druids were suppressed—along with diviners and physicians -- by a decree of the Senate, which had to be renewed by Emperor Claudius in 54 C.E.

"A force was next set over the conquered, and their groves,





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devoted to inhuman superstitions, were destroyed. They deemed it indeed a duty to cover their altars with the blood of captives and to consult their deities through human entrails,” wrote Tacitus (translation courtesy Perseus Digital Library).

The story of Vortigern, as reported by Nennius, provides one of the very few glimpses of Druidic survival in Britain after the Roman conquest: unfortunately, Nennius is noted for mixing fact and legend in such a way that it is now impossible to know the truth behind his text. For what it is worth, he asserts that, after being excommunicated by Bishop Germanus, the British leader Vortigern invited twelve Druids to assist him.

Christianity spread throughout Europe and the British Isles, as Druidism gradually faded away. After the first century C.E., the continental Druids disappeared entirely and were referred to only on very rare occasions. Cunliffe noted that Druids were still present in Ireland in the eighth century C.E. but in a much reduced form, and the offices of bardd and of dryw “seer” persisted in medieval Wales into the 13th century and possibly as late as the time of Owain Glyndŵr (d. 1416).

Purges of bards during the Welsh campaigns of Edward I supposedly culminated with the legendary suicide of The Last Bard (c.1283). One of the last entries in the Annals of Owain Glyndŵr makes a final reference to “seers”. Some believe that Druids retreated into the Scottish Highlands and others believe they went underground, and are still secretly among us.

When Druids are portrayed in early Irish sagas and saints’ lives set in the pre-Christian past of the Island, they are usually accorded high social status. According to Irish law-texts, which were first written down in the seventh and eighth centuries, with the coming of Christianity the role of the Druid (Old Irish drui) in Irish society rapidly reduced to that of a sorcerer who could be consulted to cast spells or practice healing magic and that his standing declined accordingly.

“Druids are now seen to be the makers of love-potions and casters of spells but little else,” Cunliffe writes. “The mood is captured by one 8th-century hymn that asks for God’s protection from the spells of women, blacksmiths and druids!”

Among archaeologists, there is currently no consensus over how material evidence relates to the Druids even within

the same country. Not a single artifact has been turned up anywhere which experts universally and unequivocally agree to be Druidic. In 2007, one archaeologist, Andrew Fitzpatrick, suggested that there is plenty of material evidence for people with religious knowledge and skills in Iron Age Britain but little for a specialized priesthood.

Though Druidism generally faded away during the Middle Ages, in a religious context it has been revived in more modern times, albeit about a millennium after the ancient form became extinct. These modern attempts at reconstructing, reinventing or reimagining the practices of the Druids in the wake of Celtic revivalism are known as Neo-Druidism.

John Aubrey (1626–1697), an English antiquary, natural philosopher and writer, had been the first modern writer to connect Stonehenge and other megalithic monuments with the Druids.

All around Europe at the end of the 15th century different peoples began to define themselves more closely as national groups according to the language and culture that they had in common. As part of this process they looked into their past for heroic figures and achievements and there some found the Druids. For north-western Europeans Druids were especially interesting because they were the only figures in their ancient past whom the much-admired Greeks and Romans had found impressive as philosophers and

scientists. Accordingly, between 1490 and 1530, the Germans, Welsh and British cultures took Druids up in succession as wise, pious and enlightened ancestors, using the most favorable of the ancient texts.

John Toland (1670–1722), an Irish rationalist philosopher and freethinker, shaped ideas about the Druids current during much of the 19th century and founded the Ancient Druid Order, which existed from 1717 until it split into two groups in 1964. Toland was fascinated by Aubrey’s Stonehenge theories, and wrote his own book about the monument without crediting Aubrey.

From the 18th century, England and Wales experienced a revival of interest in the Druids. They recognized burial mounds and defensive earthworks as human constructions, but did not know how old they were. They did realize that Stonehenge was one as it looked so different from anything else, but thought it was probably Roman or early medieval.





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The Druids seemed to provide a genuine common past which was all the more important for being at the very dawn of history. Furthermore, they were now associated with large and impressive religious monuments which were enduring features in the landscape. As a result of all this, for most of



the 18th century Druids were celebrated as wise and common ancestors by the English, Scots and Welsh alike. To reconcile devout Christians to them, they were rapidly assimilated to the Bible by making them practitioners of the original and good religion revealed by Jehovah to the ancestors of humanity.

By the early 19th century, however, the three British nations were starting to diverge again. It had been the Scots who had first made a fuss of Druids and they were delighted when the English came to share their enthusiasm.

In time, the English had long forgotten that the Scots had liked Druids first. Instead they associated them more with their own prehistoric monuments, above all Stonehenge, and ignored the Scottish equivalents.

This was also a time when Scots were starting to worry that they might be swallowed up completely in a British identity based firmly on Englishness. They began adopting different cultural symbols such as the kilt, clan tartans and bagpipes.

It was the writer most famously associated with this process of Scottish cultural revival, Sir Walter Scott, who also declared war on the Druids. He asserted they were unimportant, obscure and unpleasant and that no sensible person should attach any importance to them.

The Welsh adopted exactly the opposite tactic. They realized that the English were now obsessed by Druids while perceiving that Wales could claim to be the land which most clearly reflected the ancient British language and heritage.

From the late 18th century onwards, they fervently took up the Druids as heroic ancestral figures in the hope the English would respect and cherish Welsh culture the more as the product of a Druidic tradition that all now perceived as important.

Like the Scots, they began to accumulate national symbols: a distinctive dress (for women), a national anthem, a national instrument (the harp) and a national flower (the daffodil).

The central institution of modern Welsh culture was the national competition of poets and musicians, the Eisteddfod, which evolved in the course of the 19th century with Druids built into its opening ceremony, the Gorsedd. This thrives, like the Eisteddfod itself, to the present day.

The impact on the English was ironic. While the Scots turned their backs on

Druids, early Victorian England continued to regard them as very important. The distinctive difference was that it turned back to the hostile Roman texts and reinvented them as the most unpleasant feature of the national past: the barbarism from which Britain had eventually commenced its ascent to civilization, Christianity, modernity and world supremacy.

This was greatly helped by two prominent features of the age. One was the acceptance of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution as a means of accounting for the development of species. This was linked to the spectacular industrial and technological developments of the period to produce a cult of progress in which the old and primitive were automatically devalued and despised. According to this view, prehistoric Britons had been disgusting savages simply because they were socially and technologically simple.

The English began to include Druids in their history books but generally as villains, drawing on ancient texts which portrayed them as bloodthirsty priests of a barbarous religion.

Some strands of contemporary Neodruidism, like the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, are a continuation of the 18th-century revival and thus are built largely around writings produced in the 18th century and after by second-hand sources and theorists. Some are monotheistic. Members of other Neodruid groups may be Neopagan, or occultist, Reconstructionist or non-specifically spiritual. Additionally, Druids have become symbols to contemporary people who want things to be greener, funkier, more organic and more libertarian.

The British Museum website is suitably blunt on the subject, stating that "Modern Druids have no direct connection to the Druids of the Iron Age. Many of our popular ideas about the Druids are based on the misunderstandings and misconceptions of scholars 200 years ago. These ideas have been superseded by later study and discoveries."



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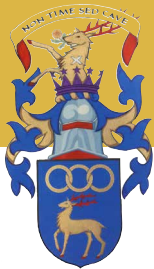
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P.O. Box 871
Carlsbad, CA 92018 (USA)
dennis@clanstrachan.org



Dr. T. Martin Strahan
Director, Clan Strachan Y-DNA Project
Administrator,
Subordinate Officer / Director *
martin@clanstrachan.org



Michael Strahan
Vice President, Director
Telephone: +317/715-8527
mike@clanstrachan.org



Judy Carole Strawn
Newsletter Editor, Subordinate Officer / Director*
Telephone: 323/375-9225
judy@clanstrachan.org



James Andrew Strachan, FSA Scot
Co-Founder, Treasurer, Director,
Immediate Past President
P.O. Box 890955
Temecula, CA 92589 (USA)
Telephone: +951/760-8575
jim@clanstrachan.org



Susie Strachan
Co-Newsletter Editor, Subordinate
Officer / Director*
Susie@clanstrachan.org



Andy Strachan
Clan Chaplain, Subordinate Officer /
Director *
andy@clanstrachan.org



Walter Strachan
Regional Commissioner, Maritimes Canada,
Subordinate Officer / Director *
walter@clanstrachan.org

George Duncan Strachan
Corporate Secretary, Public Relations,
Director
george@clanstrachan.org



OFFICERS

Garry Bryant
Genealogist, Subordinate Officer/
Director*
Telephone: +801/451-5613
garry@clanstrachan.org



Webmaster / Subordinate Officer / Director*
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Paul McKeough
Genealogist USA, Subordinate Officer/
Director*
paul@clanstrachan.org



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Genealogist & UK, Subordinate Officer /
Director*
Member of AGRA (now united with
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garry-uk@clanstrachan.org



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INGREDIENTS

- 6 Diced medium potatoes
- 4 1/2 Cups shredded cabbage or kale
- 2 Sliced onions
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1/3 Cups cream
- 1 Cup sharp or mild shredded cheddar cheese

Salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Traditional Scottish recipe: Kailkenny

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 400° F.

Cook the potatoes in a pan of salted boiling water until tender. Drain, mash with the butter and cream, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Cook the cabbage / kale, and onion over medium heat until the onions are nearly transparent and the cabbage (or kale) has become limp.

Add the cabbage / kale and onions to the mashed potatoes, mixing well. Pour mixture into a baking dish. Cover with the cheese, lightly sprinkling salt and pepper to taste over the cheese.

Bake at 400° for 10 minutes, or until the cheese begins to bubble.