

THE SCOTS CANADIAN

Issue XXXX

Newsletter of the Scottish Studies Society: ISSN No. 1491-2759

Spring 2015

Canadian gold mining legend and philanthropist Robert McEwen named Scot of the Year 2015

The Scottish Studies Society invites you and your friends and family to a very special Tartan Day Celebration on Friday April 10, at The University Club of Toronto.

During the evening we will be presenting our 23rd annual "Scot of the Year Award" which was initiated in 1993 to honour individuals who have achieved distinction through their contribution to Canadian society or the international community at large. This year's recipient will be Canadian gold mining legend and philanthropist Robert McEwen.

Rob has been associated with the mining industry for 29 years. His career began in the investment industry, and then in 1990 he stepped into the mining sector. Rob is the

founder of Goldcorp Inc., where he took the company from a market capitalization of \$50 million to over \$10 billion. Rob is currently the Chairman, CEO and largest shareholder of McEwen Mining Inc. and Chairman of Lexam VG Gold Inc., exploring for gold, silver, copper, in Canada, USA, Mexico and Argentina.

Rob's philanthropic efforts are designed to encourage excellence and innovation in health care and education. In 2003, Rob and his wife Cheryl donated in excess of \$25 million to establish the McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine in Toronto. Its aim is to be a world-renowned centre for stem cell biology and regenerative medicine. To achieve this ambitious goal, a team of 15 scientists at five Toronto hospitals, as well as the University of Toronto, is working together to accelerate the development of more effective treatments for conditions such as heart disease, diabetes mellitus, respiratory disease and spinal cord injury.

The McEwen Centre is supported by philanthropic contributions and collaborates with many other research institutions throughout North America, Europe and the Asia/Pacific region.

Its research is powered by a team of recent doctoral graduates recruited from around the world, selected through a competitive process that ensures the best applicants are awarded a fellowship. Post-doctoral fellowships are a critical tool for supporting the work of McEwen Centre and their investigations allow medical breakthroughs to be found faster.

Regenerative Medicine harnesses the power of stem cells to repair, regenerate or replace diseased cells, tissues and organs. Through it, McEwen's scientists hope that one day we will be able to reverse the effects of cardiovascular disease, or allow children with diabetes to live without insulin injections or pumps.



Robert McEwen, CM

The multidisciplinary field of Regenerative Medicine includes several research areas, including stem cell biology, cellular therapy and tissue engineering.

Stem cells are undifferentiated, or unspecialized, cells that are capable of renewing themselves indefinitely. Under the proper conditions, they have a unique capability to give rise to specialized cell types (e.g., muscle cells, neurons, heart cells, etc.).

They can be used to treat diseases such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's diseases, spinal cord injury, heart disease, diabetes or osteoarthritis.

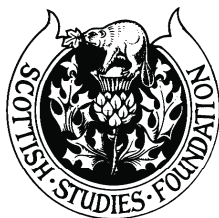
But it's not only medical research that has been receiving Rob's support, he has also given \$1.5 million to the Schulich School of Business at Toronto's York University and \$1 million to Red Lake Ontario's Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital and a further \$0.7 million to two museums and a church.

So we do hope you will be able to join us on April 10. As in the past we are planning a magnificent evening of fine food and entertainment with a Scots-Canadian flavour and, of course, it's a chance to dress up for one of the most sophisticated events in the Scots-Canadian calendar.

For more information, please contact David Hunter at 416-699-9942 or by email at davidhunter@scottishstudies.com. please visit our website www.scottishstudies.com which will be updated as the project develops.

Scots Wha Hae

*a desire to nurture and preserve
their heritage in Canada
are invited to join*



THE SCOTTISH STUDIES
FOUNDATION

*a charitable organization dedicated
to actively supporting the
Scottish Studies Program
at*

The University of Guelph

Charitable registration
No. 119253490 RR0001
www.scottishstudies.com

Colloquium to commemorate Sir John A. Macdonald

This year's Scottish Studies Spring Colloquium will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2015 at Knox College at the University of Toronto and will be devoted to a theme of commemorating the 200th birthday of Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, and his Scottish connections.

Sir John was the dominant figure of Canadian Confederation, his political career spanning almost half a century during which he served 19 years as Canadian Prime Minister.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, Macdonald was a boy when his family immigrated to Kingston in the colony of Upper Canada (today in eastern Ontario). He articulated with a local lawyer, who died before Macdonald qualified, and Macdonald opened his own practice before he was officially entitled to do so. After being successfully involved in several high-profile cases he quickly became prominent in Kingston, enabling him to seek and obtain a legislative seat in 1844. He served in the legislature of the colonial United Province of Canada and by 1857 had become premier under the colony's unstable political system.

When in 1864 no party proved capable of governing for long, Macdonald agreed to a proposal from his political rival, George Brown, that the parties unite in a "Great Coalition" to seek federation and political reform. Macdonald was the leading figure in the subsequent discussions and conferences, which resulted in the British North America Act and the birth of Canada as a nation on July 1, 1867.

Macdonald was designated as the first Prime Minister of the new nation and served in that capacity for most of the remainder of

his life, losing office for five years in the 1870s over the Pacific Scandal (corruption in the financing of the Canadian Pacific Railway). After regaining his position, he saw the railroad through to completion in 1885, a means of transportation and freight conveyance that helped unite Canada as one nation. Macdonald is credited with creating a Canadian Confederation despite many obstacles, and expanding what was a relatively small country to cover the northern half of North America. By the time of his death in 1891, Canada had secured most of the territory it occupies today.

At the colloquium, speakers will include David Wilson from the University of Toronto who will give a talk entitled *Macdonald at 200: The Perils of Presentism*, which looks at the difficulties in applying current ideals and moral standards when interpreting historical figures and their actions. Patrice Dutil from Toronto's Ryerson University will review the heritage Sir John has bequeathed to us in the paper *Sir John A: New Reflections and New Legacies* and in his paper *Commemoration in Historical Context*, the University of Guelph's Alan Gordon will look at how Sir John is remembered.

The event will conclude with a discussion led by the new Chair of Scottish Studies, Dr. James Fraser, who arrived at the University of Guelph in January from the Department of History at the University of Edinburgh where he was a Senior Lecturer in Early Scottish History. James is looking forward to meeting as many Foundation members as possible then.

Registration is \$25 for Scottish Studies Foundation members and for early-bird registrants on or before March 28 after which the price increases to \$30. A student rate of \$10 is available. As always, lunch and coffee breaks are included. Details can be seen on our website www.scottishstudies.com or you can contact the Scottish Studies office at 519-824-4120, ext 53209 or by email at scottish@uoguelph.ca



Dr. James Fraser seen here with Dr. Heather Parker

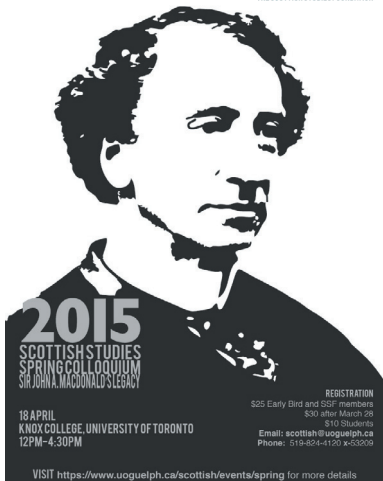
Did you know that...

During the final negotiations of Confederation at the London Conference in December of 1866, Macdonald nearly died when he fell asleep with a candle still burning in his bedroom at the Westminster Palace Hotel. Various historical accounts say he woke up to the smell of his own charred flesh and that he was badly burned by the flames, but kept it secret through the final negotiations.

Macdonald and his political allies showed up to a conference in Charlottetown with \$13,000 worth of champagne in what was likely a gesture meant to impress political leaders in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, who were meeting there to discuss a union of the Maritime provinces. It may have worked because the conference yielded an agreement that was an early blueprint for a fledgling dominion.

Hugh Macdonald may have been the only surviving son of Isabella and Sir John A. Macdonald, but son and father were never very close. According to Library and Archives Canada, Hugh was raised mostly by his aunt. When the Northwest Rebellion broke out, Hugh abandoned his legal studies against the wishes of his father to serve. He would eventually return to Manitoba after the rebellion to become the province's eighth premier.

THE CENTRE FOR SCOTTISH STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
and
THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION



Scottish Studies "Oor Club" still going strong after more than 20 years

Back in 1994 when Scottish Studies Foundation President Bill Somerville was looking for ways in which to raise funds and engage people, a chance conversation with Scottish folk singer and artist Enoch Kent led to the formation of the Scottish Studies "Oor Club." Enoch, originally from Glasgow but who now resides in the Toronto area, recalled hearing about the original Oor Club that was formed back in the late 1700s.

It was one where people met in two old tenement houses next door to one another in Duke Street in Glasgow. The wall between the two tenements had been knocked down with one house forming the speakers' room and the other the bar. Notable speakers were invited to give a talk on a topic upon which they had expertise, with a set time limit of no more than one hour (pronounced "oor" in Scots, hence the name). The idea proved popular and legend has it that Robert Burns once paid a visit to the original club.

On hearing about this, Bill immediately set about securing a venue for a Scottish Studies version of the club and in 1994 the first talk was given in the Jack Russell pub in Toronto. Since then, guest speakers have been giving presentations on a variety of topics of interest to members of the Scottish Studies Foundation and others interested in the things that Scots in Canada and overseas are getting up to. Everyone is invited to attend, as the meetings are open to all and you don't have to be famous or in the public eye to give a talk. Remember, we all have a story to tell and what may seem commonplace to you most likely will be fascinating to others.

For the past several years, the Oor Club has been nurtured under the stewardship of Scottish Studies Directors Mary Vigrow and Pearl Grieve-Nixon. The current venue is the Duke of York pub in Toronto and each month Mary and Pearl have persuaded an eclectic variety of speakers to come along to entertain and edify.

This year we were pleased to have retired Royal Ontario Museum curator Ross Fox give a fascinating talk entitled *Expressions of Scottish Identity in Silver*, which explored the forms and decoration in Scottish silver of the 17th through 19th centuries that are distinctively and unequivocally Scottish. These include quaichs, thistle cups, snuff mulls, Highland pistols, egg-shaped coffee urns, bullet-form teapots, brooches, and so on.

In March, we are delighted to have radio broadcaster Denis Snowdon as our guest speaker. Denis is the producer and host of

A Little Breath of Scotland, Canada's longest continually running radio show celebrating its 50th anniversary in October this year. Denis was born in Glasgow, Scotland, came to Canada in 1964 and has lived in Oakville ever since.

His show first aired on October 21, 1965, as a half-hour program on CHWO Radio in Oakville, and the following week it was extended to an hour-long show, and has been on the air every week since then. For more than 25 years the show was heard on Saturdays from 11 a.m. till 1 p.m., before moving to Sundays from 4 to 6 p.m. when CHWO 1250 became AM740 in 2001. The show is now also broadcast via the internet and attracts listeners from all over the world.

Denis is also the proud owner of one of the largest collections of Scottish recordings which he affectionately calls the "Vinyl Vault" and when AM740 moved to its current hi-tech digital broadcast facility a few years ago, Denis had to put in a special request for the installation of turntables in order to play his beloved LP records on the show.

Over the years, the show has featured almost all of Scotland's most popular individual singers, groups and bands and Denis has been proud to have interviewed many Scottish entertainers who have become legends worldwide. Billy Connolly, the Alexander Brothers, John Cairney and a host of others have all been guests on his show to the delight of his listeners anxious to keep in touch with Scotland.

In its early years, the signal strength from radio station CHWO was quite weak and Denis recalls hearing from one loyal listener who could only hear the station on his car radio if he parked in a certain spot which he did so he could tune in for two hours every week while the show was on.

The show has also proved invaluable to the many Scottish organizations active in the station's coverage area as every week Denis enthusiastically promotes events and activities of interest to the Scottish community. Indeed the Scottish Studies Foundation is indebted to Denis for his active support of our cause.

In Canada, of course, the Scottish/Celtic tradition remains strong and many of our homegrown musicians and artists have benefited from exposure on *A Little Breath of Scotland*. In the early 90s, the show was the first to broadcast John McDermott, the now-



Denis Snowdon on air with "A Little Breath of Scotland"

famous singer, the ninth of 12 children from a traditional Glasgow Irish family who emigrated from Scotland to Canada in the 1960s. John McDermott's musical roots are equal parts Scottish and Irish. He was discovered quite by chance when, as a circulation sales representative for the Toronto Sun, he gave an impromptu rendition of "Danny Boy" at a company party. That catapulted him into a musical career in which he has recorded more than 25 albums, three of which have gone platinum while another has reached double platinum status and yet another achieved a triple platinum ranking.

John's success has provided him with the ability to express his commitment to veterans' causes, which have always occupied a central place in his life. A current project close to John's heart is his drive to raise \$3.6 million to enhance and expand the Palliative Care unit at Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital.

We are delighted to have John as our guest speaker at our April meeting of the "Oor Club." He was our Scot of the Year in 2004 and we look forward to hearing more about his career and his support of many worthy causes. ■

Ed: For more information see:
www.scottishstudies.com/920oorclub.htm



John McDermott

Exhibitions mark Alma Duncan's place in Canadian art history

By Peter Simpson (Ottawa Citizen)

There's a photograph of an artist's conference held in Kingston in 1941, and it shows the Group of Seven's A.Y. Jackson seated in the front row. Behind him sits Alma Duncan, still young at 24, her hair held in a meticulous upbraid, her expression melancholy, or perhaps just distracted.

The image is a literal and poignant example, and although Duncan may not be in the first row of Canadian painters, she is certainly in the second. Exhibitions at the Ottawa Art Gallery and Varley Art Gallery in Unionville seek to push her even further ahead.

What makes the late Duncan a compelling figure is that she painted so compulsively, and in ever-changing choices of media and style. And she did more than just paint: she may be better known as a filmmaker of international acclaim.

ALMA is the title of the career retrospective of Duncan's work, now at The Varley Art Gallery in Unionville, Ontario until May 3, and it's a testament to a woman who must have never stopped moving. She was constantly learning new ways to create art — early portraits give way to industrial landscapes give way to films give way to posters give way to abstracts give way to the most delicate, hyper-realist drawings. Throughout, she switches media, searches for the soul of each, entreats it to make her vision on the paper, on the board, the canvas, the celluloid. Duncan had to always move, because there was so much to be done.

"She made art every single day of her life, I'd say from the moment she left McGill University in the 1930s . . . to the end of her career," says Jaclyn Meloche, a part-time

professor at the University of Ottawa and co-curator of the recent Ottawa exhibit, along with senior curator Catherine Sinclair. "There was just this curiosity. She was prolific in everything."

Duncan was born in Paris, Ontario in 1917, and spent much of her later life in Cumberland, to the east of Ottawa. The

exhibition begins with several self-portraits, including *Self-Portrait with Braids*, from 1940.

Duncan portrayed herself as what at the time would have seemed a dichotomy — a pretty young woman standing with palette and canvas, her girlish, beribboned braids contrasting with her pleated and assertively progressive trousers. She emanates determination, and precocious confidence.

Soon come the industrial scenes and landscapes, with sturdy men and women building munitions, or stripping ore from the earth. They are rendered in oil, then charcoal, then watercolours, and then on film.

In the 1940s Duncan got hired by the National Film Board, which in those days was headquartered in Ottawa under the leadership of Scot John Grierson. There she met Audrey McLaren, with whom she'd spend the rest of her life. McLaren and Duncan launched Dunclaren Productions, and started to create anew.

"They bought a \$6,000 Mitchell Hollywood camera that they set up in an Ottawa attic, and they started making shorts — little, animated stories with puppets and props," says the co-curator, Catherine Sinclair. The women took care of every step of the process. "(Duncan) carved, made paper maché," Sinclair says. "They sewed, and took thousands of shots to make one 10-minute film."

The films are charming — which sounds like a half-assed compliment, but it's not. Pairs of shoes dance whimsically with one another, tiny human figures stroll and cajole and tumble and live imaginary, full lives. The films were so well done, they were shown at the Venice Biennale, and won awards in the United States and elsewhere.

In the same room are



Alma Duncan - Self Portrait with Braids (1940)

posters that Duncan created, including a 1939 promotion for the NFB film *Look to the North*. Her design practically screams exploration and adventure. If the movie was half as exciting as the poster, the gentry must have rushed from the theatres and trekked straight to Tuktoyaktuk.

Duncan turned to abstract expressionism in the 1960s, and again found a solid footing. Her paintings of the male and female in the age of the nuclear family bring to mind paper cut-outs, though, frankly, my attention was pulled away by her painting *Untitled (Blue Circle)* from 1967. Like the best colour-field paintings, it assumes movement when looked upon. I felt pulled in, like I would fall into that blue portal, and would be content.

The latest works are perhaps the most personal: without question they are the most realist. There are two, side by side, titled *From Dawn to Dusk* and *Winter Woods*, pulled from the collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario and the National Gallery of Canada. The former is ink on paper and the latter is conté crayon on wove paper, and each shows a scene of the wooded land around Duncan's home. Each is a triumph in draftsmanship, and says much about the aging Duncan: the land is shown as a thing that is rich and alive, constantly growing and changing, like the artist herself.

It's as if the young woman in braids, decades later, was making self-portraits again. ■

Ed: This article was prompted by an email from Alma's cousin and loyal Scottish Studies Foundation member Barbara Klich. Both of Alma's parents, John and Eleanor Stewart, were of Scottish heritage. The exhibit "ALMA: The Life and Art of Alma Duncan" will be at The Varley Art Gallery, Unionville, Ontario until May 3.



Riveters in Boiler Shop by Alma Duncan

The Scot who shaped Japan

History has not been generous in crediting the crucial role played by maverick trader Thomas Blake Glover in casting off Japanese feudalism and ushering in the modern age. Today, more than a century after his death, Scotland is starting to carry out its own reappraisal of one of its greatest early entrepreneurs.

The so-called Scottish Samurai who helped topple the tyrannical Shogun rulers of the 19th century, Glover was the visionary industrialist who founded the giant Mitsubishi company and a man so revered he became the first foreigner to be awarded one of Japan's highest honours.

The fifth son of seven boys and one girl, Glover was born in Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire on June 6, 1838. He was the son of an English father, a Royal Navy officer who had been appointed the port's chief coastguard, and a Scottish mother from Fordyce in Banffshire (now divided between Moray council and Aberdeenshire council).

When Glover arrived in Shanghai in 1859 at the age of 21 to seek his fortune in foreign parts, Japan was still largely a closed society. Commodore Matthew Perry and his famous "black ships" (black, iron hulled, steam-powered warships) had compelled delegates of the Tokugawa Shogunate to sign the Kanagawa Treaty, which had opened up the ports of Shimoda and Hakoate to US trade just five years earlier.

The treaty spelt the end of a policy of isolation that had lasted for more than two centuries and the Japan that Glover found was ripe for massive change. As he launched himself into the formation of what was to be a very successful first venture, exporting Japanese tea to Europe, Glover could not have had the slightest inkling that after his death he would come to be known throughout Japan as the Scottish Samurai, or that today the house he built at Nagasaki would become a major visitor attraction, drawing about three million visitors a year.

He brought Scottish coal mining machinery and skills to bear on the



Thomas Blake Glover Memorial, Fraserburgh, Scotland

Takashima coal mine, helping to speed Japan's ability to power its emerging industrial base. Moving on from there, he imported the first locomotive to the country and set up Japan's first telephone line, from his office to the Takashima mine. He also built the first slip dock for ship repair and established a brewing company, the Japanese Beer Company, which today, under a different parent company, makes the hugely popular Kirin beer.

Glover also had a key role in the formation of one of Japan's leading companies, Mitsubishi, helping to organize coal exports for Mitsubishi in 1881. The company had close links with Glover throughout his life.

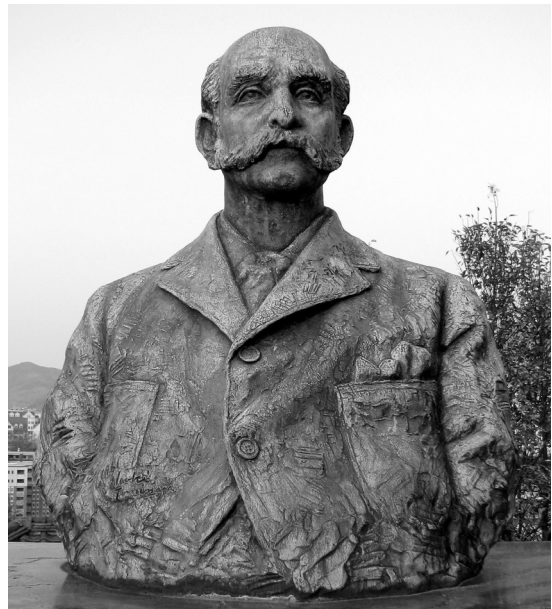
All these activities made him not just the leading merchant in Nagasaki at a time when trade with the west was blossoming, it made him a vitally important figure in Japan's industrialization. Had he done no more, that would probably have been enough to ensure his memory would be respected by Japanese historians for centuries to come.

However, Glover was also involved in Japan's Civil War, which saw the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the restoration of the emperor. Glover provided support for Ryoma Sakamoto and rapidly developed an arms business, equipping the powerful Choshu samurai clan with modern weapons. As such, he played a key role in enabling the combined samurai clans to defeat the Tokugawa Shogun in the Boshin War.

At the same time, Glover was instrumental in helping to smuggle several young men from the anti-Tokugawa faction to the west to further their education. Among these youths was Hirobumi Ito, the man who was to become Japan's first Prime Minister who later who rewarded him with the Order of the Rising Sun. In fact, academic circles in Japan are increasingly coming to reappraise Glover's role, seeing him as the godfather of the Meiji Restoration.

The importance of this is that whereas the Shogunate had been responsible for Japan's isolationist policy, many of the forces behind the restoration of the emperor were in favour of modernizing Japan.

Where the Shogun had feared that missionaries and other early western contacts were simply agents preparing for the west's inevitable invasion of Japan, the reformers argued that an industrialized, modernized Japan would be a strong Japan.



Thomas Blake Glover Statue, Nagasaki

The reformers found a willing supporter in Glover. In 1987, as part of some restoration work carried out on his house in Nagasaki, the curators discovered a hidden attic room in which it is said that secret discussions with rebel leaders were held prior to the downfall of the Shogunate.

So dynamic and energetic were his business skills that Glover earned the sobriquet "father of Japanese industry," no mean feat considering the enormous industrial powerhouse Japan has become.

It is widely believed -- though never proved -- that Glover's colourful personal life was the inspiration for the Puccini opera *Madame Butterfly*. His wife Tsuru, the daughter of a Samurai, wore butterfly emblems on her kimono, but Glover also fathered children by four other women, one of them a geisha girl called Kaga Maki. When Glover and Tsuru adopted the boy, Tomisaburo, Kaga Maki attempted suicide, an event that scandalized Nagasaki.

Glover died in 1911 at age 73. His house survived the American atomic bomb attack on Nagasaki during the Second World War and remains the oldest standing western-style building in Japan and one of the country's top tourist attractions with more than two million visitors a year. Not so lucky was his birthplace at Commerce Street, Fraserburgh, which was destroyed by a Luftwaffe bomb.

His contribution to modern-day Japan has never been forgotten. Glover in 1889 proposed the design used as the prototype of the present Kirin Beer label, and the mythical figure of a bushy mustached man once used by the brewery in its marketing based on a sketch by his daughter, Hana, was seen as a tribute to the adventurous Scot. ■

Hill House and a (slight) Canadian Connection

By Donald Fullarton

The graceful Victorian holiday town of Helensburgh on the Firth of Clyde was named after the wife of Sir James Colquhoun, who founded the town at the end of the 18th century. Handsome buildings, wide, elegant tree-lined streets, long promenade and attractive parks and gardens create a pleasantly distinguished atmosphere, even more so in summer as pleasure cruisers jostle at the pier.

In upper Helensburgh, developed by wealthy Victorian Glasgow merchants, is Hill House, now in the care of the National Trust for Scotland. This exquisite building, complete with original furnishings, is renowned as the finest domestic masterpiece of the internationally famous Scots architect, Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

Today the large grey building at the top of Upper Colquhoun Street — described as “universally regarded as Mackintosh’s finest domestic creation” — is open to the public daily from April 1 to October 31.

But the mansion would not have been built without the vision, and the cash, of publisher Walter Blackie and his wife Anna, who engaged the talented young Glasgow architect to build their dream family home.

Their granddaughter Ruth Currie, who now lives in Glasgow and is the family historian, supplied some information about the couple.

Walter Wilfred Blackie was born at 10 Kew Terrace, Glasgow, on July 31, 1860, the son of Walter Graham Blackie and his wife Marion Brodie. He was the ninth child of ten and the third son and last son.

His father was involved with his father and brothers in the book publishing company of

Blackie and Sons. As the business prospered, the family moved west to an impressive home in Belhaven Terrace in the expanding suburb of Kelvinside.

Walter later described a childhood playing in woods and fields very soon to be swallowed up by the burgeoning city. Family holidays were spent mainly down the Clyde, including the hamlets of Clynder and Cove.

He went to school at Glasgow Academy and then, aged 14, with some other boys from Glasgow, to a school in Elberfeld in Germany. His father had gone to Germany as a young man to learn the book trade and hugely admired the country. Both brothers went to school there previously, and his brother William actually died there.

After school Walter returned home to attend Glasgow University where he gained a B.Sc. Next he had a brief spell in the family



Hill House

“This was because he felt the education in the town was appropriate for his children, and where he could enjoy the countryside and sailing.

“Talwin Morris, the art designer at Blackies, introduced him to Charles Rennie Mackintosh, and Walter was impressed. The result was The Hill House.”

He continued to work in the business, becoming chairman in 1918 on the death of his older brother John, and continued his commute to work in Glasgow until the age of 77.

“He was a gregarious and sociable man,” Ruth said. “He had a wide range of intellectual interests and was a member of various societies and organizations, ranging through science, arts and politics.

“Politically he was a Liberal supporter and member of the Fabian Society. He enjoyed sailing and the hills, and holidays were spent in Scotland or touring Europe. Into old age he kept up correspondence with a wide range of family, friends, business and other contacts.”

After the Second World War and its aftermath, Walter and Anna Blackie were in their 80s and The Hill House was not really suitable for them.

However Walter had no intention of moving from the house he had lived in and loved since 1904. He died there on February 14, 1953 at the age of 92.

Before the end of that year, youngest daughter Agnes, who lived with her parents, moved with Anna to Moraig, Rowallan Street, a villa designed by A. N. Paterson.

The Hill House was bought by the Lawson family and was later for a time under the ownership of the Royal Institute of British Architects before being taken over by the National Trust for Scotland. ■



Inside one of the rooms at Hill House

business before leaving for Ontario, Canada, where he worked for a while as a lumberjack.

However any ideas he might have had of making his life in Canada ended with pressure from his father to come home to join the family business.

So after a brief spell with a publishing company in New York he returned home and joined his father, uncle, brother and cousin in Blackie and Sons.

The firm was prospering, thanks in part to compulsory education, and it was in educational books as well as general publishing that Walter was chiefly involved.

In 1889 he married Anna Christina Younger, also from Glasgow, and they set up a home in Thornville Terrace, Hillhead, which was later knocked down to make way for Hillhead High School.

Four of their five children were born there before the family moved to Dunblane. Ruth said: “He very much wanted to build his own house and decided Helensburgh should be the place.



This portrait of Walter Blackie was painted by Hilary Strain in 1928

Bovril: Canadian Invention, British Tradition

Cambridge University historian Lesley Steinitz explains the pioneering story of Bovril from its beginnings at the end of the 19th century when it won a cherished place in the heart of the British nation

Bovril was invented some 130 years ago by Scotsman John Lawson Johnston, who was born in Roslin, Midlothian, but who later moved to Edinburgh to live with his uncle, a butcher. While there, he attended Edinburgh University and came into contact with chemistry professor Lyon Playfair who triggered his interest in food science and preserving.

Eventually, he took over his uncle's butcher shop and, once established, came up with the idea of using the large quantity of beef trimmings produced in the butchery process to make his own *glace de viande* (meat glaze), a dark brown and viscous beef stock, concentrated by heating to give it a long shelf-life. This sold so well that he opened a second shop and a factory in the Holyrood area.

In 1871, he emigrated to Canada and set up business in Montreal. Somehow, in 1874, at the height of the Franco-Prussian War, he won a contract from the French government to supply its army with over 2 million cans of what he called "Johnston's Fluid Beef" and for its success in keeping the troops nourished, he was awarded the Order of the French Red Cross

This substance, which Johnston believed to be truly nutritious, overcame all the problems associated with the transportation of meat across thousands of miles of ocean and, in a brilliant marketing strategy, was to become known worldwide as Bovril.

Johnston sold his Canadian business in 1880, after his factory burned down, and

went to England where he developed the Bovril brand across Britain, based on the commercial promotion of dietetics. His factory in London opened in 1900.

It's a brand that for decades stood the test of time and still boasts iconic status in the public imagination. It's what your British granny gives you to sip when you're recovering from a bug. Bovril makes your Sunday roast gravy dark and strong.

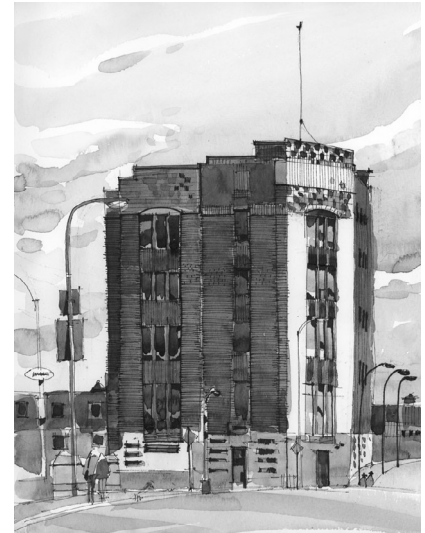
But just how did Johnston build his brand – and how did he create an image for a gloopy substance that has its own niche in the history of British food? Steinitz looks at the ways in which Johnston built a huge market for Bovril, which is just one of the products covered by her wider study of industrial health foods and culture between 1880 and 1920. It was an era marked by a new decadence as an expanding sector of the population could afford new-style convenience foods while many worried about a reversal of Darwinian evolution towards the physical and moral degeneration of the human race, caused by the evils of industry, drink and squalor.

Steinitz explains: "The practice of dietetics, eating the appropriate food to make you well, was a practice which stretched back to ancient times. Advances in the application of scientific know-how, especially chemistry and technology, opened up new possibilities for food processing and preservation and its transportation across massive distances. Many of the new food products, which often didn't resemble anything you could make at home, were attached onto older dietetic practices and were promoted not for just their convenience, cost or flavour, but also because they were health-giving. One such food was Bovril."

Bovril was an inspired name marrying together meat, myth and magic: the first part of the word 'bo' borrowed from bovine and the second part 'vril' from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's science fiction novel, *The Coming Race*, in which the Vril-ya were an underground people with awesome electrical powers.

"From the start, Bovril was heavily advertised through campaigns that tapped into the mood of the public quite brilliantly. It was British and the company worked hard to make sure it was a food of choice of the army – it was patriotic and nutritious. Advertising featured pictures of bulls: the strongest of beasts, whose meat turned British men into the strongest and smartest in Europe. Essentially Bovril was imagined as a bull in a bottle. In this way, the advertising of Bovril is strikingly different to the advertising of meat products today which rarely if ever carry images of animals," said Steinitz.

Advertising connected Bovril to the fashionable and popular physical culture



*The Bovril Building, Montreal
Watercolour by Shari Blaukopf
www.shariblaukopf.com*

movement by getting sporting celebrities to endorse the brand. One of these, the world's strongest man at the turn of the 20th century, an Adonis-like star called Eugen Sandow, had developed his rippling muscles so that his body resembled a classical sculpture which he showed off to enormous crowds in the music halls. In the 1910s Bovril was also marketed as a highly advanced, scientific beverage that had been shown in experiments to boost the weight, assumed to be muscle mass, of humans and dogs.

Advertising was only part of the story. The company needed to source beef extract and protein, which meant working with ranchers in South America and the Antipodes, with shipping lines and hundreds of retailers. It meant keeping the supply chain flowing to meet growing demand. In all these areas, the Bovril company was adept at building networks with people of influence.

As Johnston used his commercial success and his newfound wealth to march up the social scale, he exploited his network of powerful contacts to generate orders for his product which went into the armed forces, hospitals and workhouses. This gave Bovril the credibility as a legitimate health food for people to buy it also for home use. Its markets crossed class boundaries and Bovril could be drunk any time of day or night. It could also be spread on toast or added to soups and stews.

Where is Bovril today? It's still on the supermarket shelves but in many homes the squat black bottle slumbers at the back of the kitchen cupboard. "But there is still something unshakable about our belief in British backbone from tasty Bovril," said Steinitz. The black pot with the red lid lives on. ■



Wartime Bovril Poster

Directors of the Scottish Studies Foundation:

President: Maggie McEwan

Vice President: David A Y Campbell

Treasurer: David H. Thompson

Secretary: John B. McMillan

William H. Davidson

David Hunter

Dr. Heather Parker

J Douglas Ross FSA Scot

Robert J. Smart

Mary Vigrow

Honorary Directors: Harry S.

Ferguson, William Somerville

Staff:

Catherine McKenzie Jansen,

Membership Secretary

905-469-0478

catherine@mkz.com

Honorary Patrons:

Hugh Boyle

Robert Buchan

John E. Cleghorn

Professor E.J. Cowan

Harry Ferguson

John Anderson Fraser

Douglas Gibson

Alastair W. Gillespie, P.C., O.C.

Col. the Hon. Henry N.R. Jackman,

C.M., O.Ont., KSt.J.

The Hon. Donald S. Macdonald, P.C.,

C.C.

MGen. Lewis W. MacKenzie, MSC,

O.Ont., C.D.

Lewis MacKinnon

The Hon. Roy MacLaren

Dr. Alistair MacLeod

Kathie Macmillan

Michael I. M. MacMillan

Rt. Hon. Jack McConnell MSP

Alan McKenzie, FSAScot

Bill R. McNeil

Lloyd Robertson, O.C.

T. Iain Ronald

Bill Somerville

Donald Stewart

Jean Watson

Richard Wernham

Lynton "Red" Wilson, O.C.

Corporate Sponsors

The Harold E. Ballard Foundation

Cairngorm Scottish Imports

Citibank Canada

GE Canada

HBOS Canada

Korn/Ferry Canada Inc.

Walter Stewart and Associates

Benefactors:

Walter M and Lisa Balfour Bowen

Dr. Colin R. Blyth and Valerie Blyth

David Campbell

John and Pattie Cleghorn

Richard Currie

William H. Davidson

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Stewart Ferguson

Thomas L. Foulds

Constance C. Gibson

Alastair W. Gillespie, P.C., O.C.

Alan Gordon

Gordon and Shirley Grant

Helen Grant

Jon K. Grant O.C.

Ian Craig

Marie Gregor

Jane Grier

Nona Heaslip

James N. Hepburn

Hal Jackman

Roger Alexander Lindsay of Craighall

FSA Scot

James M. Main

Dr. William Ross McEachern

Joan and Don McGeachy

Alan McKenzie

C. Douglas Reekie

T. Iain Ronald

Sir Neil Shaw

Robert Smart

Donald A. Stewart

John Mac Stewart

Dr. Roselynn M. W. Stevenson

Alexander K. Stuart C.M.

The Toronto Gaelic Society

Dr. Cicely Watson

Richard Wernham

Lynton "Red" Wilson, O.C.

Patrons:

Margaret S. Adat

Olwen Anderson

Robert Anderson

Dr. Gary Ashby

Louis and Donalda Baldone

Mary G. Barnett

Peter Baxter

William David Beaton

Stephen Bennett

Ann Boden

John and Ruth Borthwick

Ian Buchanan

G. Laurence Buchanan

Robert Burns

Cairngorm Scottish Imports

Driffield M. Cameron

Donna Carmichael

Isabella Carnegie

John H. C. Clarry

Nola Crewe

Mrs. Elma Connor

Dr. John H. Cooper

Phyllis M. Corbett

Kenneth L. Coupland

Nola Crewe

Donald A. Crosbie

Antony A. Cunningham

James Cuthill

Custom Scottish Imports

Dr. Kirsty Duncan

Dorothy Dunlop

Heather J. Elliot

Margaret Eastham

Gina Erichsen

Prof. Elizabeth Ewan

Dr. & Mrs. G.T. Ewan

Fergus Highland Games

Alice Ferguson

Georgina Finlay

Dr. Harry K. Fisher

Ian Fisher

Allan C. Fleming

W. Neil & Marie Fraser

Dr. William & Mrs. Margaret Fraser

John MacKenzie Gammell

Gendis Inc. & Associates

Douglas M. Gibson

John D. Gilchriese

Mr. & Mrs. Ian Gillespie

Stan Glass

Catherine Goldie

Malcolm M. Gollert

Jon K. Grant

John Peter Fyvie

Hon. Edwin A. Goodman Q.C., P.C., O.C.

William A. Goodfellow

Alan P. Gordon

James M. Grant, Clan Grant Society of Canada

Mary Gregor

Jane Grier

James Haliburton

M. Gen. (Ret) James E. Hanna

Hall of Names (Brampton)

Mrs. Jean Hedges

Alex B. Henderson

Iain Hendry

Gordon Hepburn

David Hobbs

Ms. Geraldine Howitt

Maureen Hunt

David Hunter

James Lamont Hunter

Margaret Anne Hunter

John & Lorna Hutchinson

Andrew MacAoidh Jergens

Dr. & Mrs. Ted Kinnin

Dr. Alison Kirk-Montgomery

Barbara Klich

Captain Olof & Mrs. Sheila Kuipers

Douglas Lackie

Susan E. Lahey

Ruth and James Lillico

Loch Ness Celtic Jewellery

Elizabeth & Leonard

MacLachlan Lain

Marion F. Livingston

Ruth S. MacBeth

John H. Macdonald, FSAScot

The Hon. Donald S. Macdonald, P.C., C.C.

Miss Duncan MacDonald

The MacFie Clan Society

R. C. (Bob) MacFarlane (in memoriam)

Hugh K. N. Mackenzie

Jim and Ann Mackenzie

Margaret MacLeod

Dr. Alexander Macpherson

Dr. Kenneth and Mrs. Rhoda

MacRitchie

Gordon Main

Wilson Markle

Jack K. R. Martin

Richard C. Meech Q.C.

Gordon Menzies

William Irvine McArthur

D.D.C. McGeachy

Ian A. McKay

M.R. MacLennan

Margaret MacLeod

Mary MacKay MacMillan FSA Scot

Robert W. McAllister

Ms. Doris McArthur

Dr. K. J. McBey

Valerie McElroy

Murray McEwen

Ian McFetters

Derek McGillivray

Alistair McIntyre FSAScot

Gail McIntyre

Margaret McGovern

Donald McKenzie

Capt. Duncan D. McMillan

John B. McMillan

Mrs. Lois McRae

Douglas and Ilse McTaggart

Mr. Don McVicar

Douglas A. McWhirter

Mary Elizabeth Mick

Peter Montgomery

William & Audrey Montgomery

Allan D. Morrison

Madelein Muntz

David and Una Murray

Catherine O'May

Ann Nicol

Margaret Nightingale

Marguerite Noble

Orangeville Scottish Dancers

Mr. Gordon Paterson

Ed & Anne Patrick

Darren B. Purse

Ms. Patricia Rae

Alastair G. Ramsay

Sheldon Rankin

Hazel Rayner

Mary Arvilla Read

Sadie Reynolds

Rodger E.T. Ritchie

Kim Ritchie

Michael Paul Roberts

Mrs. John D. Rooney,

Royal Scottish Geographical Society

J. Douglas Ross FSA Scot

Dr. Robert and Laura Saunders

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Seagrave

Skara Brae Collections

Marie Scheffel

Dr. David J. Scott

Hudoneil Scott

Graham W. S. Scott Q.C.

Robert Smart

Helen B. Smith

Stanley & Margory Smith

Bill & April Somerville

Capt. Stephen Spence

Jim & Kathy Spence

Helen C. Stevens

Allan E. Stewart C.D

David R. Stewart

Helen Matthew Stewart

Ian G. Stewart

Donald Campbell Sutherland

Mr. & Mrs. J.G.C. Templeton

Dr. Paul Thomson/Michelle Perrone

David H. Thompson

Janis Todd

J. James Wardlaw

Prof. David B. Waterhouse

Dr. Cicely Watson

Joanne Watson

Mitchell Watt

Robert Watt

Ian White

Douglas Whitelaw

Studies Society Directors:

President: William H. Davidson

Vice President: David M. Hunter

Treasurer: David H. Thompson

Secretary: John B. McMillan

Heather Bridge

David Campbell

Duncan Campbell

Maggie McEwan

Edward Patrick

J. Douglas Ross FSA Scot