



Floors Castle Roxburghshire –South East Scotland (note the boarded-up windows)

Scottish Heritage USA

NEWSLETTER

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WINDOW PAINS?

Do you ever wonder why some beautiful buildings you see in the United Kingdom contain windows that are bricked-up? Well, our ancestors had a very good reason. A window tax, based upon the number of windows in the house, was first introduced in 1696 by William III to cover revenue lost by clipping of coinage*. It was a banded tax based on the number of windows in the house that was so unpopular that on 24 July 1851 the hated Window Tax was finally abolished.

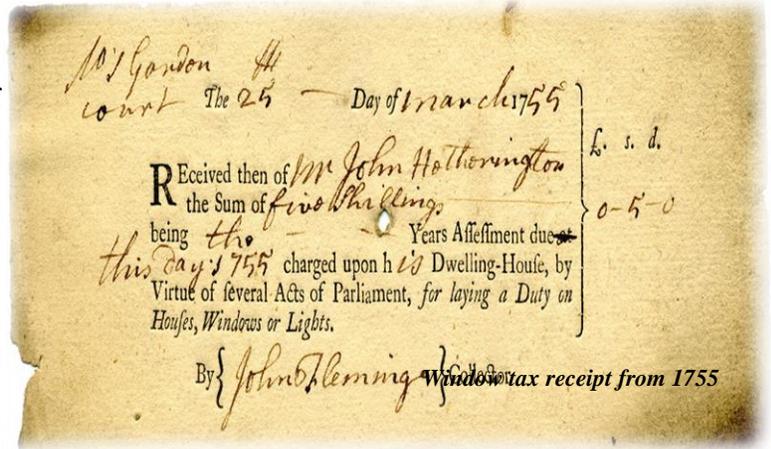
It was initially intended not to apply to poor people or exempted cottages but was designed to be in proportion with the wealth of the taxpayer. An income tax was thought to be too intrusive because the government had no business knowing how much people earned!

The Window Tax was originally levied in parts. People had to pay 2 shillings annually per house if they had fewer than 10 windows, 6 shillings if they had between 10 and 20, and 10 shillings for those with more than 20 windows. Compared to today 2 shillings then would be worth £13.50 now. The tax was increased many times especially during the wars with France.

Needless to say, the tax was unpopular and did not raise the sums projected because many avoided it by bricking up some of their windows. Because of this bricking up of the windows, the tax was also called a tax on light and air. Many doctors argued against the tax because light was deemed necessary for good health.

In Scotland, the Window Tax was not introduced until after 1748. There a house had to have at least seven windows, or a rent of at least £5 to come under the tax. When it was increased in the 1780's, some Scots opted instead of bricking up windows, for the less costly recourse of painting them black, with a surrounding white frame. Ahh, the frugal Scots. These black painted windows were known as Pitt's Pictures, after the prime minister of the day, and can still be seen in some places.

The rolls of the taxpayers include: The home of David Hume, philosopher in the new town of Edinburgh paid for 18 windows in 1773/74 and one of the most expensive was Floors Castle with 294 windows which cost £14 four shillings in 1748.



* **Clipping of Coinage:** coins were once made of pure gold and silver and through everyday use, wore down so coins were not perfectly round. Cutting or filing a small amount off the coin would most likely go unnoticed. The cut-off pieces would then be melted into a bar and sold or used to make counterfeit coins. Clipping was such a problem in Britain that it was considered high treason and punishable by death.



St. MARGARET – QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

St. Andrew (*brother of Peter and one of the 12 apostles*), although not Scottish was adopted as Scotland's Patron Saint. However, he is not the only Saint Scotland can claim.

St. Margaret of Scotland (c.1045/16 -1093), also known as Margaret of Wessex, was an English princess and a Scottish Queen. Margaret was sometimes called "The Pearl of Scotland". She was born in Hungary to the English prince Edward the Exile and returned to England in 1057. Following the Battle of Hastings, her mother the widowed Agatha, decided to leave Northumbria and return to the continent. However, a storm drove their ship northward to Scotland where they were shipwrecked in 1068 (*it is believed they landed in what is known today as St. Margaret's Hope, near the village of North Queensferry, Fife*) and given refuge by King Malcom III. Malcom was a widower with two sons, Donald and Duncan and would have been anxious to marry one of the few remaining members of the Anglo-Saxon royal family. Thus, the marriage of Malcom and Margaret occurred in 1070.

Margaret and Malcom had eight children:

Edward (c.1071) killed along with his father in the Battle of Alnwick, November 1093

Edmund (c. 1071-1097 or later)

Ethelred (c. 1072) abbot of Dunkeld, Perth and Kinross, Scotland

Edgar (c. 1074-1107) King of Scotland 1097-1107

Alexander I (c. 1078-1124) King of Scotland 1107-1124

Edith (c. 1080-1118) became Matilda, Queen of England

Mary (1082-1116) Countess of Boulogne; and

David I (c. 1084-1153) King of Scotland 1124-1153

She was the mother of three kings of Scotland (*or four if Edmund of Scotland who ruled with his uncle Donald III is counted*)!

Margaret, a very pious Christian, had a civilizing influence on her husband by reading him narratives from the Bible. She spent much of her time in prayer, devotional reading and ecclesiastical embroidery. This apparently had such an effect on the more uncouth Malcom, who was illiterate, that he had her books decorated in gold and silver. One of which, a pocket gospel book with portraits of the evangelists, is in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, England. She instigated religious reform, striving to conform the worship and practices of the church in Scotland to those of Rome and to the continental Church, which she experienced in her childhood. Because of these achievements, she was considered an

exemplar of the "just ruler", influencing her husband and children, especially her youngest son to be just and holy rulers.

She served orphans and the poor every day before she broke fast and washed the feet of the poor in imitation of Christ. She rose at midnight every night to attend the liturgy. She invited the Benedictine Order to found a monastery in Dunfermline, Fife and she established a ferry across the Firth of Forth for pilgrims travelling to St. Andrews in Fife. (*giving the towns of South Queensferry and North Queensferry their names*). She used a cave on the banks of the Tower Burn as a place of devotion and prayer, now covered beneath a municipal car park and open to the public. Among other deeds, she began the restoration of Iona Abbey and interceded for the release of fellow English exiles who had been forced into serfdom by the Norman conquest of England.

Not quite 50 years old, she died of grief on 16 November 1093, three days after the deaths of her husband Malcom III and their eldest son Edward. She was buried before the high altar in Dunfermline Abbey in Fife.

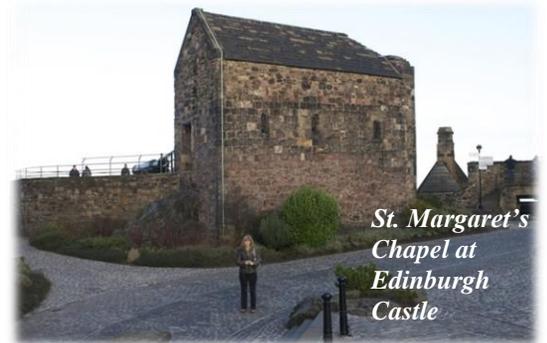
In 1250, Pope Innocent IV canonized her and her remains were reinterred in a new shrine in the Abbey. Her relics were dispersed after the Scottish Reformation and subsequently lost.



St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland



Margaret-Queen of Scotland



St. Margaret's Chapel at Edinburgh Castle



St. Margaret's Church Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland



Article & photos courtesy of Wikipedia

AN EASTER FAVORITE - SIMNEL CAKE

SIMNEL CAKE

Ingredients

1 ½ sticks butter (6 oz)	1 cup light brown sugar
3 eggs	2 cups self-rising flour
1 tsp allspice	1 lb. mixed dried fruit
½ cup glace cherries, chopped	½ cup walnuts, chopped
2 tbs milk	1 lb. marzipan
1 egg white for glaze	

Preheat oven to 325° and grease 8-inch cake pan

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs. Sift in the flour and spice and stir in the milk. Fold in the fruit and nuts.

Roll out 1/3 of the marzipan to an 8-inch circle. Cover the remainder and set aside.

Put ½ cake mixture to 8-inch greased cake pan and top with the marzipan circle. Add remaining cake mixture.

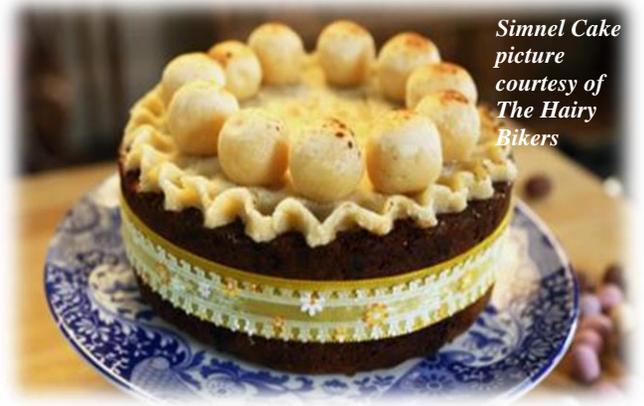
Bake for 2 ½ hours, reducing the oven heat to 300° after 1 ½ hours. Cool cake on wire rack.

Roll out slightly more than 1/3 of the remaining marzipan (saving some for the 11 balls) into an 8" circle and place on top of cake. Brush with egg white. Roll remaining marzipan into 11 balls and arrange on the cake, securing with the egg white. (The 11 balls represent the apostles minus Judas).

Place under preheated broiler for 3-5 minutes until golden.

This cake can be made 2 weeks in advance and stored in an airtight tin.

Recipe provided by Her Royal Highness, Princess Alexandra - courtesy of Scottish Heritage's "Piping Hot" cookbook



Simnel Cake
picture
courtesy of
The Hairy
Bikers



HAPPY EASTER!



Brightly colored eggs, cute bunnies (some chocolate) and hot cross buns suggest Easter to us, but these 'modern' symbols are actually so ancient they pre-date Christianity. Easter, or Eostre, actually has its roots in the pagan 'Spring Festival'.

In AD 595, Pope Gregory sent a mission of 40 monks led by a Benedictine named Augustine, prior of St. Andrew's monastery in Rome (and later the first Archbishop of Canterbury), to England. His instructions were to convert the pagans to Christianity. Augustine was advised to allow the outward forms of the old, heathen festivals to remain intact, but wherever possible, superimpose Christian ceremonies and philosophy on them. The sheer scale of the task was so colossal that, halfway on the way from Rome, the band of monks got 'cold feet' and turned back. Pleas for permission to return to Rome were refused and two years later, the group arrived in Canterbury and began their task of semi-conversion.

The Anglo-Saxon peasants did not object to the Christianization of their festivals as long as the ancient celebrations remained basically unchanged. Gradually the heathen feasts became days honoring Christ or one of the Christian martyrs or saints, e.g., Imbolc (2 February) became Candlemas, Lughnasadh (1 August) became Lammas or St. Peter in Fetters day, Sam-hain (31 October) was quickly changed to All Souls' Night, followed by All Saints' Day, and the 12-day festival of Yule at the end of December became the celebration of Christ's birth. One festival was so ancient and so deeply entrenched in the pagan psyche that, although it was to become the most important and defining event in the ecclesiastical calendar, the Church did not attempt to change its name - Eostre.

The modern imagery of Easter (eggs and bunnies) pre-dates Christianity and stems from pagan fertility symbols. The bunny was originally a hare. In the spring when the bucks and does perform their elaborate mating rituals, the hares are capable of speeds up to 25 mph, can turn on a dime in full flight, and jump more than 20 feet with ease. These feats and their hideously childlike screams when caught or injured, convinced the Anglo-Saxons that hares were more than mere animals.

The Anglo-Saxons worshiped the goddess Eostre, goddess of Spring and Dawn. Eostre was not well-known and the only mention that can be found of her is in the Venerable Bede's 8th century work *The Reckoning of Time* and tells us that during Eosturmōnaþ (April),
(continued next page)

Anglo-Saxons had held feasts in her honor, but that had died out by his time. Some believe that Bede made up the goddess. It was not until 1958 when historians discovered over 150 inscriptions from the 2nd century CE, referring to the *Matronae Austriahenae* (reliefs and statues of ancient female deities) which included Eostre as a goddess.

Folklorists have hares carrying the light for Eostre as she lit the spring dawn. The sacredness of the hare reaches back into an age still more remote, where it was probably an important part of the prehistoric spring festival in ancient British Isles people.

Hares can be easily tamed if caught young enough and the Celtic ruling classes liked to keep them in their homes as a sort of living connection to the gods – Boudicca is reputed to have charged into battle on her chariot with the family pet stuffed in her tunic! The Romans thought nothing of eating hares which the Celts regarded as taboo and only made the Celts angrier.

Eggs have been a symbol of spring rebirth from antiquity. The custom of coloring Easter eggs was started by the early Christians of Mesopotamia, who dyed eggs red to represent the blood of Christ. This idea was not officially adopted by the Church as representing the resurrection until 1610.

The two symbols of fertility, the egg and the hare, also come together in the ancient German tradition of a mythical hare that laid colored eggs for good children to find on Easter Day, Giving us the Easter Bunny and the Easter egg hunt.

Easter in Scotland is a rich church celebration, a time for relaxation and leisure. In most parts of the country, huge fires are lit on Saturday as a mark of the Pagan tradition. Easter fun in Scotland means egg hunts, horse displays and battle re-enactments'. Hot cross buns – (each bun is decorated with a cross made from flour paste), eggs, potatoes and lamb are included in the Easter feasts.

Have a HAPPY SCOTTISH EASTER!



Ostara – Johannes Gehrts 1884- note the hare in the background



Three Celtic Goddesses from the *Matronae Austriahenae*



Too pretty to eat!

Article & photos courtesy of Wikipedia

SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

1. The patron St of Scotland is St. Andrew, but who is another Scottish Royal Saint? Hint – answer is in this newsletter.
2. What is the flag of Scotland called?
3. What is Scotland's National Animal?
4. What is the Lanthorn of the North? (There may be a picture in this newsletter)
5. What is the main ingredient of cullen skink? Did you read our December newsletter ?
6. How many children was Robbie Burns thought to have?
7. How many children did Sir Walter Scott have?
8. Who was Tibbie Shiel?
9. Where are “the Twa Brigs”?
10. What is Scotland's rarest mammal?

Bonus: Who is credited with writing the Declaration of Abroath and how many signed it?



Scottish Heritage now has a presence on Facebook – just look for Scottish Heritage USA or follow the link below:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/698401680928383>

Please Note: Scottish Heritage **will** be present at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games should they be held in July(9th-11th). We hope to see you there!



Elgin Cathedral

1. Queen Margaret
2. Saltire
3. Unicorn
4. Elgin Cathedral
5. Smoked haddock
6. 12 by 4 different women
7. 4-2 girls & 2 boys
8. Wife of a molecatcher and founder of the famous Tibbie Shiel's Inn near St. Mary's Loch
9. Ayr
10. The pine marten

BONUS: Bernard of Kilwinning Chancellor of Scotland and Abbot of Abroath Abbey. 51 magnates and nobles signed the declaration



We can also be found on Instagram – check us out.