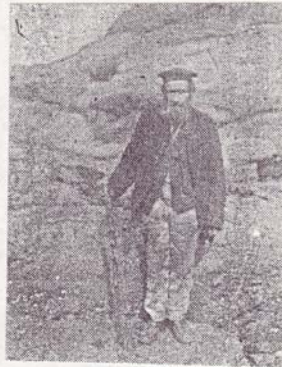


JOCK THE CAVE DWELLER

Jock The Hermit

A special tourist attraction on New Aberdour beach in the early 1900's was Edward Reid. He was an Irish man who made his home in a cave which can only be reached at low tide. The locals called him the "Aberdour Hermit" or "Jock The Caveman." You can see the cave if you turn left at the car park and go along in the direction of Pennan.



People in the area were kind to Jock. He walked about the countryside with his bag visiting the farms where he was always made welcome. In his bag he had a collection of things like shells, stones and wood that he had picked up on the beach after storms. These he would exchange for butter, cheese and eggs. He would also help on farms.

He had fresh water at hand from a spring which ran down the side of the cave. The spring which is still there today was probably the main reason Jock picked the cave. Jock grew some vegetables on a plot of land near the cave. He collected mussels and whelks and mixed them with the vegetables to make a tasty broth.

He took ill in 1922, he went to Maud hospital and died there. He was buried in a pauper's grave in Strichen churchyard.

Fond memories of Boyndlie picnic

I would never
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FROM: Fiona Clark, 18 Pittendrum
Gardens, Sandhaven.

SIR: In the year 1910 the
Boyndlie Episcopalian school pic-
nic to New Aberdour beach was
one of the highlights in my life. We
travelled by horse and cart, the
horse brass gleaming in the sun
after many rubbings. The carts
were brightly painted especially for
picnic day. At last all loaded up,
we set off, singing our hearts out.

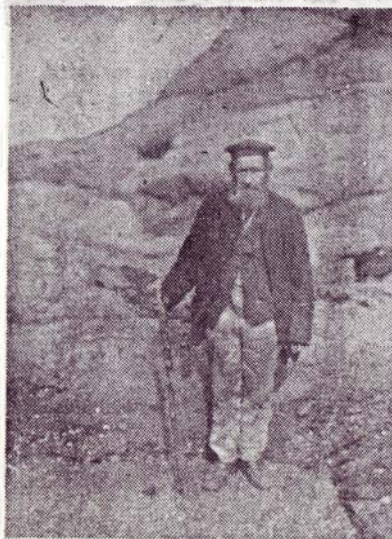
Bella Pratt was the lady-in-
charge, and what she said hap-
pened, like it or not, she had an
extremely loud voice and could be
clearly heard from one shore to
another. There was no escaping
Bella Pratt.

My parents said this was so
because her father was almost stone
deaf. Bella and her father made a
sparse living making baskets from
the branches of the Sauchwan Tree.

Scones and milk were in order
for the children, but a large pot of
tea boiled all day on a fire on the
sands for the grown-ups, by
evening the concoction was jet
black and very few sampled.

The races were run in the morn-
ing, games were played and one or
two hardy ones fell in! Later we
were allowed to roam the beach.
Most of the girls paid Caveman
Jock a visit; his invitation to enter
his humble abode was always
accepted.

Surprise could be seen on their
faces when discovering how neat
and tidy his cave actually was, of
course only if the wind allowed
could he light a fire. The position
of the inner cavity excluded most of
the elements.



Caveman Jock visited our farm
so he was no stranger to me; he had
sold my mother coloured glass
balls, flotsam from the sea, this was
a novelty in the rural parts. It was
not the fact he was unsociable but
the tide pressed him homeward
more quickly than one would have
wished.

attraction. We all took a small
amount home. I like mine sizzled a
few seconds on red hot tyangs; it
was lovely.

Just before setting home, large
earthenware containers were filled
with sea water. This was a little
luxury for the most senior who
were unable to partake on our days
fun, but would enjoy soaking their
feet before retiring to bed.

The horsemen did not allow
children on the carts until they
reached the village of New
Aberdour with the extra weight of
water and the steep hill they felt
their horses would tire easily.

A picnic was a great sight, all
the villagers came to view.
Creepin' Wullie made quite a sum
as nobody wished his handicap to
fall on them. His good manners
outshone his disability, his face a
wreath of smiles.

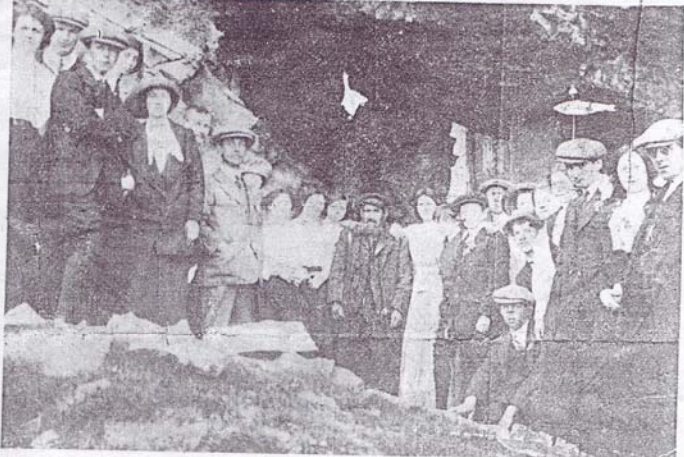
The songs were less vigorously
sang and the feet on sunburnt bod-
ies trod wearily on; at last we were
allowed on the cart to fall deep into
slumber knowing we enjoyed our-
selves to the full and that was with-
out Bella Pratt commanding so.

These are memories from my
mother, Catherine Watt, writes
Fiona Clark. Many thank-you's
sent to Billy Simpson, Cliff View,
Roseheart, for so kindly gifting
mum one of his treasured pho-

...when established, might take the place of the former Fraserburgh Gala Week Committee.

...and not set the house since he went into hiding. Miss H. Fraser, district committee officer, presided.

...at the general meeting of the company in Marischal School Councilor McEld, was seconded by Councilor David Gerard.



"The Aberdour Hermit" is pictured here with some Fraserburgh folk on a summer outing. Mr. George Mowatt is seen second from the hermit's left. The "fish" which may be seen swimming in mid-air is merely a model, which acted as a weather vane. The picture is thought to have been taken by Mr. John Fraser, whose son now lives at Yarmouth.

BUCHAN CAVE-DWELLER BROUGHT THE CROWDS

MEMORIES of a mysterious and romantic figure — a "tourist attraction" in the Buchan area half a century ago — have been stirred by the discovery of an old photograph in a Fraserburgh man's home.

The photograph belongs to Mr. Frank Tocher, 25 Mid street, who owns a huge collection of old pictures which caused many visits of yesterday. Many of Buchan's older inhabitants will remember the "Aberdour Hermit," one David Reid, an Irishman, who lived in a cave on the coast between Rosehearty and Pennan. Little was known of the man's personal history. He was Irish and that was about the only fact that was known about him — which was exactly what he wanted.

Starved of the truth about him, the local folk shrouded him with an aura of romance and mystery. As a result, he never was obliged to work — his method of winning a livelihood was to walk into the surrounding countryside, where he was welcomed and treated royally.

An actor
He acted and dressed the part, said Mr. R. F. Bandeen, Strichen librarian, and authority on the history of Buchan.

"He dressed himself in rags and bags and never told anyone about himself. His dwelling could only be reached at low tide, but many people scrambled over the rocks to see the hermit. They would have a look round his cave and leave a few coppers for him. One man came — this is the one in the photograph — Mr. George Mowatt, 4 Faithlie Street, Fraserburgh. I had been about fifteen at the time. We went on an outing

to the caves with the Saltoun Place (Fraserburgh) Independent Organisation, of which I am a member.

"We were in his cave and looked round it. I can't remember much about it — it was so long ago — but I do remember the fish and the conditions in which he lived," said Mr. Mowatt.

"The only furnishings were sacks, which were old and filthy, and a few odds and ends," he added. Reid was later removed from his cave and died at Maud when old age and rheumatism overcame him.

Jacobite
He was a refugee after the finish of the first Jacobite rebellion, who had fled to the North-east coast and set up home in the Ironhill cave. He remained in hiding there for thirty years, but when the 45 rebellion broke out he went away again. At that time, said Mr. Bandeen,

Books at Peterhead library

THE following are some of the recent additions to Peterhead Public Library: "Touch and Go" by John Stroud presents a fascinating and vivid picture of community life in a New Town where juvenile crime has become a problem.

A dedicated probation officer begins his job in the growing community with high ideals but is gradually disillusioned. He finds that in his attempt to help young offenders, he is hampered by the intransigence of a police chief who believes that all that is needed is a little less understanding and a little more intimidation.

To The Coral Strand, by John Masters is an exciting story of one man's efforts to find terms on which he can live with the new India where the first member of his family settled in the 17th century. It tells of the struggle of a woman to remake a broken, defeated man who sees himself only as the lag of the line, the fourteenth generation, the first member of his family to serve in India.

"Surgery Bell," Dr. John

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BRAMAR (Thick Fingers) ROYAL DESIDE (Assortment) 8/6 BON-ACCORRY (Pack) 2/3

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"The only furnishings were sacks, which were old and filthy, and a few odds and ends," he added. Reid was later removed from his cave and died at Maud when old age and rheumatism overcame him.

Where he came from is still unknown . . . that and other facts died with him, but Mr. Tocher's photograph proves his existence . . . one of the many fascinating snippets of historic Buchan.

The local people's kindness to the hermit were prompted by the memory of an earlier hermit, who really did have an exciting story attached to his way of life, said Mr. Bandeen. The earlier hermit, Fraser, by name lived in cave at Ironhill, near Rosehearty. It is now almost completely silted over.

Jacobite
He was a refugee after the finish of the first Jacobite rebellion, who had fled to the North-east coast and set up home in the Ironhill cave. He remained in hiding there for thirty years, but when the 45 rebellion broke out he went away again. At that time, said Mr. Bandeen, he was so old that he had to be helped on to his home before setting out.

She farmed at New Deer.
An elderly Aberdeenshire woman, Mrs. Williamina Ennals, Barrow Cottage, Balgowan Road, Bridge of Don, collapsed and died when she was out for a walk near her home.

Mrs. Ennals (64), who is survived by her husband, and grown-up family, was formerly of Milton of Culan, New Deer, which she and her husband farmed until they retired some years ago.

Family tradition?
Leo Taylor (28), who was taken on the back seat of his father's car in Inverol, Ayrshire, last week, delivered the car to the rack area of his car in Dallas, Texas.

WANTED 6 PARAFFIN HEATERS
Six people wish to buy a paraffin heater similar to that one advertised in the "Evening Express."
ALADDINQUE Paraffin Consumer Group
Phone 3778.

RING 22331
and ask the shop-keeper to come to our office. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Telephone 22331.

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"Surgery Bell," Dr. John

Farquharson has made a random dip into his recollections as a GP in the Welsh village of Crainford and presents a lively group of his patients from a stubborn old gaffer and a squallid family to an autocratic general and an elegant young lady — who both conceal surprising secrets.

Broch donation
Fraserburgh Town Council have agreed to donate the sum of £25 towards the fund maintenance being set up by Lord Provost John M. Graham of Aberdeen for the annual conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science which is to be held in Aberdeen next year.

Last week, Fraserburgh Town Council also agreed to make a donation of £25.

Jack - The Hermit.

Jack - his real name was Edward Reid was a retired sea captain and he came from Ireland. That is all anyone knew about him because he never talked about what he did before he came to live in the cave at New Abbeyside beach.

When people questioned him he would tell them nothing about his past life. When they asked him why he lived in the cave all alone he would reply, "because I choose too."

Jack was far from clean. His hair was long and his face was covered in hair. There was no shame at shaving equipment in Jack's cave!

Now you might think that local people would avoid him and steal ideas of him. Not a bit, people treated him as a very special person,

almost like royalty.

Jack didn't have a job. People in the area were very kind to him. He walked about the country side visiting the farms where he was always made welcome. In fact people always got very excited when they saw him coming into sight. Children ran to meet him and no matter how poor people were they always invited him into their houses and gave him food.

He was given the best of food. No outcates and stones for Jack. He was given the best they could offer. His table manners were very good and if soaked he would talk to people - but only about things in general and never about his past life. He was rather solemn and slow and didn't have much sense of fun.

On his travels in the countryside he carried a bag with him. In this bag he had a selection of things that he had picked up on the beach after storms. Things like twine, wood, shells and stones. People liked the glass balls used for marking nets. They called his bag 'Jock's Bounty' and they bought bits and pieces from him.

Jock also made sweeping baskets out of heath and bracken he found growing locally and sold them. If he fancied butter, cheese, eggs he would help on the farms cleaning out sheds and chicken houses.

He did go into the Post Office at New Abard and where he collected a small amount of money. He bought paraffin at the village shop with the money. He used the paraffin to

fill a stone and lamp in his cave.

Now, about his cave. It can only be reached at low tide, however, people did scramble over the rocks to visit him.

People were often shocked when they saw his home. He had a bed, a chair and a table. They were all made from wood he had found on the shore. His bed clothes were old sacks. Smoke from his stove filled the cave. When the weather was really bad and the wind and spray blowing from the sea he would cover the door ~~to~~ with planks of wood. This was the only protection he had from the wind and the rain.

Jock grew some vegetables on a plot of land near the cave. He collected mussels and whelks and boiled them with the vegetables to make a tasty broth.

He ate sea weed - this he toasted on his stone. He caught fish. People said he was an expert at catching fish and made it look easy.

Jack ate quite well. With the food he got from people as he travelled and food from the sea he would not have gone hungry.

Fresh water was right at hand. A fresh spring of water ran down the side of the cave. It is still there today. The spring of water was probably the main reason Jack picked the cave.

As Jack grew older he became very crippled and bent over. He also became bad-tempered and children would tease him and throw stones at him.

Later he hardly stirred from the cave and

6.

Local people become worried about him. He was taken into Maud hospital in 1922. He died there and was buried in the churchyard at Strichen.

2. 2 92.

Edward

Jock's Cave.

1*

~~Edmond~~ Reid was a retired sea captain, he was Irish and he lived in a cave because he chose to.

He told no-one about his past life but from many conversations he had with his acquaintances we gather he was not married. He was not a religious man and was against the intake of alcoholic beverages. But cunning Jock soon made church but

owl of smp
oatcakes

2*

a went to
hutch:

He became friendly with a near farmer neighbour the farmer's wife gave him lunch every Sunday and tried to coax him to church but he flatly refused to consider ^{such} an idea. He had excellent table manners, a ~~great~~ ^{spark} sense of humour and when one could lead him into a conversation was astonished by his philosophy, but it is regarded he had no schooling.

bruce money

flint

When he came calling to the outlying farms he travelled as the crow flies. Mother recalls there was always great excitement when the old Hermit came into view his lifestyle was shrouded in mystery so much so the local people held him in high esteem. Plain fare such as oatcakes and scones were never on offer for the hermit, always cakes and sandwiches and regardless how hard life was a penny was always to be found to pay for Jock's Bounty. This came in form of green glass balls used for marking nets but washed up on the beach after a storm, twine, pieces of wood even polished stones a collection of flotsam and jetsam. On his way home he would collect a small sum of money from the New Abudour post office, then he would buy paraffin from the village shop, his heater and lamp were both filled with this, there were no fancy goods bought by Jock.

baxter

The hermit grew a plot of vegetables near the mouth of his cave and by what he could reap from the seashore

could produce a rich in iron staple diet. Mussel Broth
shelms and crab all easily boiled and enriched with
his vegetables. Of course Dulse and tangle were both
used for food stuff Dulse was usually cooked but it
could also be chewed raw it had a pungent flavour
and was called 'Poor mans tobacco'. Even today seaweed
is used for thickening soup icecream and setting
jellies the seaweed is called Carragheen, the Purple
Laver is dried and made into Laver Bread. Fish was
plentiful and Jock made the task of catching them
look so easy.

The sad fact was Jock was far from clean his clothes
were heavily soiled his face was usually half covered
in bristly facial hair, there were no facilities to have
a shave and shower down at the cave. The lack
of ventilation when he lit his paraffin ~~stove~~^{stove} caused
black smoke to build up and billow out of his cave
This deter many visitors of declining his kind offer
to enter his 'Grand Hotel' his words not mine, he built
a lean to at the entrance of his cave with planks
of wood that had been washed up on the beach, this
gave him shelter from the cold wind off the sea
and when the weather was most inclement this was
area he did his cooking which did nothing to improve
the smoky atmosphere.

If one was hardy enough to venture in, the description
was always the same, primitive sparse but comfortable
to a fashion, he had a bed covered with sackings a table
and a chair all made out of what he gleaned
from the shore. A fresh spring of water cascaded
down the side of his cave which I gather is
still there.

But age and rheumatism took its toll on the

old Hermit, young boys teased him merciless threw stones, ostracized him cruelly. Gone had gone the great humour instead an old cantankerous man was admitted to Maud hospital in ~~1972~~ ¹⁹⁷⁹. He is buried in the Stichen Churchyard in a paupers grave.

· Flint hard brownish grey variety of quartz which readily produces fire when struck with steel

- 1* Some locals called him David, but when signing for his Bruce money his name was Edward (maybe a little more digging on that one)
- 2* Jock did not go to church when he first came to the caves but the plate of broth and oatcake seemed to attract him more, and maybe church was not so bad. He became a regular
- 3* Barter was the name of the game, Jock would clear out the byre or the Neep (turnip). Sted even the lens hous for butter cheese eggs even a chicken. But he did sell scrubbing brushes sweeping brushes made out of heather or bracken all found growing locally.
4. ~~The most~~ I have had great fun writing this out for you, if you do go looking for Jock's Cave beware of the cliffs dont be tempted to climb on them as they are crumbling, watch out for the tide as it sweeps in very quickly

Gina Clark.