



AUNT DAISY

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WEEKLY CHEER BUDGET



SHE FINDS A REAL HIGHLAND VILLAGE AT THE EXHIBITION

EVERYBODY to whom we spoke after we arrived in London said, "Are you going to the Glasgow Exhibition?" and then immediately after, "You'll love the Clachan!"

Not that these people were Scottish, nor did they appear sentimental. They were foremen of factories, business-like and full of hard facts, advertising managers, interested only in salesmanship, shop-assistants who had been to the exhibition in a cheap week-end excursion and whom you would have expected to have been more absorbed in the Amusement Park, which had several wonderfully good new features, as well as the best of all the old ones.

By the way, these week-end excursionists had rather a grumble about the exhibition being closed on Sundays! They travelled all Friday night by train, to reach Glasgow, had only Saturday at the Exhibition, and came back on Sunday; but they would have liked to have had Sunday too, at Bellahouston Park, travelling home again on Sunday night.

However, the Exhibition managers had decided that Sunday should be a closed day, and would not change their minds.

One reason was that Glasgow people do not like the "Continental Sundays" but believe in the old-fashioned "Day of Rest"; and another reason was the difficulty of arranging the question of attendants and restaurant-service, and staff generally, for the ordinary workers obviously could not work seven days a week.

It was suggested that at least the grounds could be open to the public, with the water displays and illuminations, and the bands playing; but even that would have had certain complications; so the whole exhibition remained closed on Sundays.

Faithful Model

BUT the people were right about the charm and interest of the Clachan, which was an exact representation of an old Highland village. Built with a faithful regard for every possible bit of detail and local colour, it was easily the most popular thing in the whole exhibition.

On either side of the entrance gates was a round "toll house"; and it cost sixpence to go through. Once inside, the fragrant odour of burning peat welcomed home those visitors who had long been absent from Scotland; and there before you was the cluster of cottages; nestling together with pleasant neighbourliness, under a little hill on the right. Each was a faithful copy of one of the different styles of buildings in various parts of the Highlands, from the earliest times.

Some were whitewashed; some were just sombre grey,



★ **UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.**—Their Majesties King George the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth were much intrigued with this old lady who wove her cloth in the Highland village that was specially built into the great Glasgow Exhibition.

with moss and lichen growing between the stones and on the ledges; and all were thatched, though there were differences in the thatch, too.

A little country road ran through the township; and, of course, there was a "burn" spanned by a hump-backed bridge. A smaller track led away up "the brae" to where some of the cottages stood with their peat stacks behind them.

The Loch

THE "burn" flowed into a "sea loch"—a sheet of real water, with a shingly shore, and a wooden jetty, beside which was an old boat brought from Oban, and a convincing litter of nets and lobster creels and anchors and ropes lying around.

A large and cleverly-painted canvas on the other side of the "loch" showed the roadway leading away over a moor and a mountain; from a little distance you could not tell that it wasn't real.

I wish the Clachan could have been left permanently at Bellahouston, like the Art Gallery; so

that people like me, who have only a few days in Scotland, could always get a glimpse of the traditional villages of olden times.

It was of tremendous historical interest to see the construction of the houses, evolved so cleverly from the materials at hand, to withstand the rigorous winters, and the general conditions of those days.

Take, for instance, the construction of the "Black House." I had seen pictures of these old Highland cottages, and had wondered why the thatched roof ended at about the middle of the six-foot thick walls of undressed stone—the other half forming a kind of wide stone ledge, on which bits of grass and weeds struggled to grow.

Well, it was explained to me, at the Clachan, that this is as ingenious and as effective a design as any modern engineer could suggest; for the wall, surprisingly enough, is built in two sections—an outer and an inner one of stones, with a "hearting" of earth and gravel sandwiched in between.

The "hearting" allowed the rain-water from the roof to percolate through down to the ground; and moreover, helped to keep out the fierce Atlantic gales; while the wide ledge at the top of the wall saved the

thatch a good bit, for the winds would strike the wall and be deflected straight upwards.

True To Life

INSIDE, the "Black House" was just a rectangular enclosure, divided into three compartments. One was the byre, which was entered by the only door, and was separated by a thick stone wall from the living room, between which and the bedroom was a wooden partition.

The fire was built on a round stone slab in the middle of the earthen floor of the living room, and an opening in the roof above it let out the peat smoke. A three-legged iron pot was hanging over the fire, suspended by a chain fastened to a beam in the roof.

In the bedroom were two old "box beds" against the wall, and a rough wooden floor. Authentic old furniture for the house had been lent by the National Trust—old chairs and dressers, even old pictures, many of them with historic interest—and these were shown and explained by a Lewis girl, while an aged and well-known Hebridean woman, called Mairi, sat just outside the door spinning at her old wheel.

I was shown a picture of the King and Queen bending over the dear old lady, when they opened the Exhibition on May 3. She sang her old songs at her spinning wheel, to the delight of their Majesties.

Each of the other houses was just as perfect in every detail—with different kinds of thatch, different walls, and filled with old furniture and various "bits and pieces." In one, a man was making bagpipes—he had spent his whole life at this work, and was an expert.

Another cottage contained a "smithy" completely equipped with forge, bellows and anvil. The blacksmith was busy forging lucky horseshoes for people to buy as souvenirs.

In another room was a man from St. Kilda making real Harris tweed on an old fashioned loom. There was plenty there to be bought, too, and you could give orders for any special pattern to be made for you.

At The Inn

NEARBY, a white-washed farmhouse had been converted into an inn. We were thankful to go there to "get our teas"—all proper Highland fare, pease bannocks and potato scones, and oatcake and blackberry jam—served by comely maids whose English had a strong Gaelic flavour.

Opposite the inn, near big old trees, was a West Highland keep,

or castle, with turrets and all complete, which was really the concert hall for the Clachan.

There was also a little white-washed shop where you could buy post cards and souvenirs, and which included a post office, so that you could send your greetings away with the Clachan postmark.

There was also a representation of an ancient pre-Reformation chapel or "cill" in the Clachan—only half size, but very complete, with crumbling gables, and with the "Macmillan Cross" at its portals.

Some Recipes

TALKING of pease bannocks and oatcakes, brings me to the Women of the Empire Pavilion, in which demonstrations of cooking traditional Scottish dishes were given every day. I was glad to buy the recipes of some, to bring home with me. This pavilion was one of the very best, both in its lay-out and its display.

It was designed and arranged by a woman, and the Queen was the patron. Especially interesting was the display from the Women's Rural Institutes from all over the Empire, and I saw several good pieces of work from New Zealand—especially from the Te Awapuni Women's Institute—some Maori mats and kits, a headband and a belt woven in black and red; a piupiu and some pois.

There were also some beautiful pieces of work from the Royal Society of Needlework; a fine display from well-known women-artists, members of the various societies of painters, in water colours; and really beautiful sculpture by distinguished women. Another interesting stand showed brocades and damasks woven from the silk produced by the Tallingstone silkworm farm. Beautiful enamel work, too, was exhibited, and illuminated manuscripts.

Fashion Theatre

ANOTHER feature of the Women's Pavilion was the Fashion Theatre beautifully decorated in a soft grey, with a golden carpet, similar to that used in Westminster Abbey at the Coronation, covering the arena. Four times every day, there was a mannequin parade, in which were displayed the frocks and costumes of British fabrics designed by British dress designers.

The roof of this building was fan-shaped and covered with folds of muslin; and concealed lighting threw a brilliant and becoming glow on the mannequins.

In another chamber was a display of historic dresses from the time of George IV down to the present day. Among them was the dress worn by Queen Victoria at the 1857 Exhibition! They were beautifully arranged in groups with special lighting and mirrors at the back of the cases.

There were plenty more interesting things to see at the Exhibition; but I must leave the telling of them till next time.