

## Doctor Jock

In his wisdom, Jock thought he knew about all the ailments that afflicted the human frame and their subsequent cure. To that end he had a list of cures for boils, fevers, suppurating sores, fleas, stomach disorders and even madness. Animals also came under his remit and he had remedies for dogs, cats, and even rabbits. Poisons were also prepared for the elimination of rats and other vermin.

One of the main ingredients in the war against rats was arsenic. The latter was up until 1945 prescribed as stomach restorative by doctors in a water diluted dose. People could be prescribed small dosages and when the prescription was taken to the chemists they had to sign a poisons register.

It was in the late summer of 1945 just before VJ Day that Jock discovered that he needed more arsenic for his rat poison mixture. Drawing two half crowns from his pocket he growled, "Here wee Donal awa oor tae Revie's the chemist an' git a small bottle o'arsenic, tell hum Jock Smith o' Widland Place wants it tae pit doon rats an' other kinds o' beasties."

Taking the two coins I hurried over to Revies in the Longrow. The shop was a wonderland of bottles, packets, and in the window great carbouys of coloured water were on display. As I entered a bell tinkled and the chemist shuffled towards me.

"Well what do you want wee boy?" he condescendingly asked.

"I want a bottle o' arsenic for Jock Smith o' Widland Place." I replied.

My request instantly brought a sickly palor to Revie's skin, his teeth made a grating sound. Flinging his hands in the air he gasped, "Arsenic, Lord protect us! What is Jock Smith up to, last week he was over to buy saltpetre, tincture of lodium, sulphur, and sulphuric acid. No you cannot have arsenic or any other kind of poison. Purchasers of such substances have to sign a register and if the police see that I sold arsenic to a minor, then I would be in serious trouble."

Deflated, I trudged back to Woodland Place and told Jock that the chemist could not sell arsenic to a minor. He looked at me in a puzzled fashion, stroking his moustache. "Dinna wurry wee Donal

al gang oor tae Revie the morrow. Fancy thinkin ye wur a miner doon a pit. Whit wid miners dae wie arsenic onywey?”

He must have somehow obtained arsenic, for the next night I watched as he mixed up a batch in the shed in the backyard.

Some days after the arsenic incident, I was dismantling an old torch when my index finger got caught in the bulb reflector. Try as I might I could not dislodge it and I started to cry as I made my way back up to the flat. My uncle tried some soap to ease it off, but alas I howled in pain. During the operation Jock came in with dog.

“Whit’s wrang wie wee Donal?” he growled as he loosed a spittle in the fire.

“He hus stuck hus finger in yon reflector Jock, an a canna git it aff at a.” replied my uncle as Jock savagely grabbed my hand.

Looking at the problem for a few seconds he muttered, “Al need tae heat up the metal tae mak it expand, then it wull drap aff. Gie us yer lighter Erchie, an git a grip o’ wee Donal.” As the metal heated so did my skin. My shrieks rent the air, then grabbing a pair of pliers, Jock wrenched the offending metal from my finger. The latter was then plunged under a cold tap and a strange evil smelling salve put on the wound and a bandage applied. As he finished he gave me a clip on the ear and snapped, “Yer greetin lak a wuman wee Donal yer a big Jessie. Ye wull hae tae learn tae be brave in thus life.”

One day when I was playing in Sattel Street someone flung a stone which caught me behind the ear. Stunned, I realised to my horror that blood was trickling down my collar. Off I stumbled towards Woodland Place. Arriving at the latter in a distressed state I was seized by Jock.

“Whit’s wrung wee Donal?” he rumbled spinning me roughly round to peer at the wound behind my ear, from which now streamed copious amounts of blood. “Michty me that’s a gash ye hae got, if a had some cat gut a wid hae stitched it. Never mind a read in a paper that ye can pull the wound the gither, an stick it close wie gummed paper. A hae need of sticky paper an hot watter.”

At this juncture my grandmother appeared and hearing what was proposed firmly said, “Ye gowk, whit nonsense. Wee Donal needs tae gang oor tae Doctor Cameron and git stiches oor he needs tae be takin up tae the Cottage Hospital. Whit you want tae dae

could gie hum blud poisonin'. Weel a remember auld Tam, his wife tried tae dress a cut he had wie some concoction, he wis deid the next day an beeried on the Munday."

"Stap yer havers wuman!" bellowed Jock, "wee Donal wull be a richt when an feenished wie hum." Pausing to light his pipe he ordered, "Gang an git hot watter an some gum an paper."

Thus was the innovative method of stitching completed as I howled in pain. Strangely it worked and many years later I read of glues being used to hold wounds together. Mind you, all were treated in sterile conditions, not in a highland kitchen.

## Air Raid

In 1941 Campbeltown Loch, being at the approaches to the Kilbrannon Sound and subsequently the mouth of the Clyde, became a haven for naval ships from Holland, Poland, and the Royal Navy. The fleet ranged from corvettes to heavy cruisers as well as submarines and minesweepers. Strict blackout precautions were in place both for the fleet and the town dwellers. The authorities were becoming increasingly alarmed that the Luftwaffe could now reach the West of Scotland and that subsequently Campbeltown would be vulnerable to air attack.

Jock became imbued with the increasing threat of air attack. He made a blackout blind to fit over the kitchen window. When this happened on a dark evening my job was to go down into the High Street and see if I could spot any traces of gaslight peeking through gaps. If the latter was the case I received a clip on the ear followed by a tirade.

“Whit dae ye think wid heppen boy if German invaders saw yon licht? They wid rush up tae Widland Place an capture it an in nae time the High Street wid be in their hauns. Then we wid hae tae gang tae the hills like gaurrillas.”

A bewildered four year old had to listen to all this trying vaguely to imagine why we would have to be gorillas.

Sometime in 1941 the Luftwaffe penetrated as far as Glasgow and delivered a heavy raid on Clydebank causing severe damage to installations. Then they swung south down the Kilbrannon Sound and would have slipped past the town but for a Dutch ship suddenly switching on its searchlights and opening fire with a boffer gun. The rest of the fleet followed suit and the Luftwaffe obliged by dropping bombs and land mines. The Royal Hotel was hit and there was loss of life. A land mine struck a house on the Low road killing the occupants.

When Jock heard the siren going he dragged me under a settee. “Al git a bottle o’ watter frae the press an ma knife in case parachutists cam doon an try tae git intae the hoose...” At that moment a tremendous blast shook Woodland place, flinging off the blind and

rattling the dishes on their shelves. There were more explosions, then some time later the sound of fire tenders and people shouting in the street. Finally the all clear sounded.

As we scrambled from under the settee with the dog yapping deliriously, my uncle appeared in the hall. “Ur ye an wee Donal a richt Jock? Dae ye ken the Royal hus been hit an hooses oor the shore as well. Ye ur daft gan unner a settee, baith o’ ye could hae been mangled if a bomb had hit. Ye should hae gan tae the wash hoose lak a did.”

“Wash hoose!” snorted Jock, “Ye gowk if that had been hit we wid a hae been drooned in the flood.”

“Dae ye ken parachute mines wir drapped tae?”

At the mention of parachutes Jock started jumping about. “Help ma boab, they ur comin’ al hae tae gang oor an git George Stewart and Fesak, the loat o’ us an wee Donal wull gang tae the hills tae mak a last stand at the Stanin Stane.”

My uncle laughed, “They ur oanly bombs, nae crack troops. Onywey, whit could ye three auld men an a wee boy dae against the might o’ Hitler’s elite? Fesak taks too much drink an us awa wie the fairies.”

Jock snarled, “Fesak hus an auld bayonette, an a hae ma clasp knife, George hus wire tae trip them up and wee Donal hus got hus sling. Am tellin’ ye Erchie, if yon Hitler lands at the Milldam we wull be watin fur hum. He wullna git further than Glentorran.”

Luckily the invasion never came and Jock’s army eventually stood down.

## Mister Rat

Campbeltown was a strange place. Being insulated from the outside world by being at the end of a long peninsula meant that many of its inhabitants would by today's standards be classed as 'odd.'

My first encounter with such a character took place as I walked down the Main Street one Autumn afternoon. A stooped figure dressed in a greasy raincoat, wellington boots, and a torn cap shuffled towards me. Under his arm he carried a bundle of newspapers. Stopping suddenly at Cook's Corner, he shouted, "Gityercitizenoo," this translated meant "get your Citizen paper now."

One of my pals sidled up and said, "Dae ye ken who that is?"

"No." I replied.

"Weel that's Ducca the rat."

My young mind boggled at the thought of a man being called Ducca the rat. Was Ducca some kind of Arab name? Turning to my pal I whispered, "Yer kiddin', whit a strange name."

"Weel awa oor an ask hum." he replied.

Being very shy I felt too nervous to confront the newspaper seller, but goaded by my pal I sauntered over and said, "'Ur ye Ducca the rat?"

No reply came to my question, then turning to reveal a set of yellow teeth, the man let out a kind of howl followed by, "Ye wee scamp, ye scunner, am nae rat at awe, am a guid educated man an a hae been tae Glesca. Noo fur yer cheek am gan tae gie ye a richt lunnerin."

With this dire threat against me, I fled with my pal back up Main Street followed by Ducca loosing a string of unmentionable expletives.

Some hours later, I returned to Woodland Place and mentioned to Jock about what had happened. Giving me a clip on the ear, he hissed, "Dinna be annoyin' poor souls like the rat. Mind ye he hus a savage set o' teeth jist like yon Dracula. In future I wid keep awa frae hum, for if ye dinna ye wull be a goner."

After that I avoided Mister Rat.

## Infant School Days

My first introduction to education was at Dalintober Infants School. It stood opposite McDonald's Orchard and was to my young eyes a grim fortress of a building. Within the latter the rudiments of writing, reading, and arithmetic were dispensed. Initially slates were the approved writing medium and the stone pencils grated savagely on the surface. When competence was adjudged to have been attained with slates, a select few were allowed to write on paper with pen and ink.

One Spring day I took part in a writing test. Painstakingly I copied out the chalked example on the blackboard and waited for Miss Dunner to come and view my work. As I sat there dreaming, someone fired a pellet catching me a stinging blow on the ear. I turned in the direction of the shot and in doing so, my sleeve drew across the copy book I had written on. To my horror all that remained of my writing was a smudge. The teacher at that moment drew level with my desk.

"What's this Keith?" she thundered grabbing me by the ear.

"Writing," I lamely replied.

Her hot breath fanned my neck as she delivered a savage slap. "Insolence will not be tolerated Keith, you are a loser, so back to the slate for you."

Behind Dalintober School a huge excavation had been hacked into the steep hillside which was known as *The Broo*. This was where the infill for Kinloch Green had been taken as the tidal loch was pushed back from its previous boundary at Lochend Church.

The school head was a strict discipline freak and was skilled in wielding the Lochelly tawse or strap. Any pupil who ventured during lunch into *The Broo* would, if caught, be savagely strapped.

One sunny lunch break I was coerced by some boys to ascend the slope to play at Cowboys and Indians in the thick gorse bushes on the ridge. However when we reached this high vantage point the keen eyes of the school janitor spotted us and he ran to tell the head.

When we returned quietly to the school the head met us, the Lochelly strap swinging idly in his hand. His eyes seemed to gleam

in satisfaction as he applied the instrument. When finished he roared, “Let that be a lesson tae ye all!”

## The Big School

In 1949 I sat my Qualifying Exam in a hot stuffy room, watched over by a grim faced woman who sucked pan drops as she knitted furiously like a hag in the French revolution. The exam was brutal in that a good result sent you into the professional stream. Poor results meant the technical stream which was really a disguise for three years of drudgery and a feeling of hopelessness. Having achieved a pass I was assigned to the technical stream and in 1950 started at the Grammar School. Strange stories abounded concerning the latter. Once according to my father there was a head called Bilfor Dowling who was an expert with the strap and also adept at designing punishments for his long suffering pupils.

The school building was very old and seemed gloomy and menacing when approached from Stewart's Green. The thing that intrigued me was the field gun, a relic of the First War, its rusting barrel pointing down towards the loch. What was it for? Rumour had it that the gun could be fired on latecomers.

The Grammar School had a long pedigree, and we boys had nicknames for the teaching staff. Kubla Khan, Bushams, Santa, and there were many others. One lesson with Bushams, stands out in my memory. It was English language and took place in a flat roofed class room. For some reason or other he diverged into classical Greek poetry. His high pitched voice seemed to grate against the dull painted walls as we 'no hoppers' listened stupidly to long dead things that would have no practical value in our future lives

"Oh great Parnassus," he cried, "great is the muse of the gods, great is thy servant Apollo." pausing to adjust his spectacles his eyes fell upon a boy called 'the mouse.' Pointing a nicotine finger towards the boy, Bushams snapped, "What do you understand when I say oh great Parnassus?"

The boy stared at the whitewashed ceiling as if trying to dredge up inspiration, then shakily he replied, "Ye wur takin about how much ye enjoyed parsnips sur. Me faither grows them in hus plot an if ye want oany jist gie us the wink."

Bushams seemed to explode, he lurched forward and grabbed the boy by the ear. "You galoot, parsnips eh. Well for that you will write out Scott's poem, The Lay of the Last Minstrel, ten times."

Years later I wondered why, being in a technical stream I had to assimilate Greek classical poetry when my ultimate destiny was to be a labourer.

Now my path crossed with Mr Elliot the chain smoking teacher of woodwork. His class lay in an upper room, accessed by a worn stone stair. Here in a gloomy workshop the noise of hammering and sawing vibrated into the air as Mr Elliot prowled round, a steel ruler in his hand. Often he would stop to criticise a piece of carpentry and deliver a blow to the buttocks with the ruler.

One Winter's morning hurrying to school, I slipped and tore my trousers and was forced to return to Woodland Place to change. A sinister silence hung over the workshop as I crept in nearly half an hour late. As I reached my bench I whispered to my friend, "Is Elliot naw in yet?"

He did not reply straight away but flicked his eyes towards a dark recess at the back of the workshop. From the latter, like a spider coming from its lair, Elliot appeared with a Lochgelly strap swinging in his hand.

"What time do you call this Keith?" he rasped.

"It's half past nine sir." I honestly replied.

Elliot's face seemed to turn a mottled colour. "You should have been here at nine!" he exclaimed.

"Why whit heppened?" I said

Advancing towards me he growled, "You cheeky insolent boy, right hand out, it's to be six of the best for you ."

The leather stung savagely and I cried out in pain, something snapped in my normal placid behaviour. "When Jock Smith hears about this he wull be up wie hus marlin spike, he hates men that hit wee boys. So ye better keep awa frae the toon or he wull mangle ye!"

My surprising attack seemed to flummox Elliot, his aggression faded and he blanched as he said, "Get back to your bench Keith. You must know I had to punish you for being so cheeky, but don't mention it to your grandfather. Let's just keep it as our little secret."

## The Smokers' Club

The Grammar School had a new head. W.S. McIntosh arrived and he was quickly dubbed 'Dracula' as he darted about the school in his gown. Wild rumours circulated about his dislike of sunshine, and when he appeared at the head of the stairs in morning assembly, a shudder went through the onlookers. My first encounter with the new head occurred in out of school hours. It was a Saturday, and we used to go to the local chemists and buy cinnamon sticks which we then 'smoked' in secret. Our rendezvous was at a place known as the Diamond Vaults. A path led from Kinloch Green to the latter and then continued through some sheds to the Longrow South.

There we were crouched in a circle, puffing away on the sticks, when we heard the crunch of someone's shoes on the gravel. Looking up we were confronted with McIntosh glaring down at us.

"Smoking!" he exclaimed, "and filthy cinnamon sticks to boot. Report to my office on Monday, and meantime I will think of a suitable punishment."

We stared in horror at the retreating figure. What would happen to us? Would we get at best a thousand lines or at worst be publicly flogged in front of the school?

Monday morning dawned and we trudged to school. Word of our crime must have somehow filtered out for all the staff were there and glaring in our direction. Dracula began by intoning a short prayer, "Oh Lord let us give thanks for our school and all the wise governors and also remember the Empire ruled over by his Majesty, under whom thousands toil, from the humblest native, to the lord in his castle, amen."

Then came the usual school notices and other boring mundane things. Clearing his throat, Dracula leaned forward. The hour of judgement had come.

"Last Saturday as I went to the town I took the path by the place called by the locals, the Diamond Vaults. Did I find any diamonds? No I did not, but I found some S1 boys sitting smoking cinnamon sticks. I now have the names of the culprits, Donald Keith..." The full list of miscreants totalled seven pupils. As he

spoke the eyes of the staff fell upon us and the professional stream tittered at our discomfort. Continuing he said, "This filthy practice must be stamped out. Later I will liaise with the staff as to what measures can be put in place to stop the purchase of the sticks. Also suitable punishments will be meted out to the culprits. Now assembly is closed, so go to your classes at the double."

As we filed out, Santa grabbed me by the lapels and snarled, "I'll be keeping my eye on you Keith, if you are mentioned again at assembly, it will be a good hiding for you my boy."

Strangely nothing more was heard of the matter because a worse crime was perpetrated some days later, when members of the professional stream were found puffing on cigarettes behind the bike sheds.

## Cousin Callum Keith

My grandmother had a distant cousin called Callum Keith. He lived with his mother in a cottage at the foot of Putschacan Farm road. The A83 wound it's twisted way south to Campbeltown, and north to Tarbert. Near the cottage the Seafoyle Factory was in use. There in secret conditions seaweed was transformed into synthetic material and some said puddings.

My mother was cook at the canteen which was outside the works boundary. Attached to the building were living quarters where sometimes in the summer we spent the school holidays. Extra accommodation was supplied in the form of a caravan situated in front on a concrete plinth. Access to the house was up the farm road, the latter rising steeply past the spring that supplied piped running water and fed the well at Keith's Cottage.

The cottage had no electricity and relied on oil lamps. However there were plentiful supplies of eggs gleaned from a horde of free range hens, the property of mother Keith. However the income from the eggs was seriously dented by Jock's raiding the nests in the night. His philosophy was, "Thae hae plenty o' eggs. sae we can enjoy the rest."

One day whilst Jock and me were down on the shore, old Mrs Keith hobbled up to the canteen and complained to my mother that she had seen Jock and I creeping about near the hen run. My mother said she would send Jock down to discuss the matter when he returned from the shore.

I remember the day vividly, it was the summer of 1945. As we made our way to the canteen, my mother came out and gruffly said, "Auld Mrs Keith hus said she hus been losin' eggs tae sumbody, an' she says she saw ye and wee Donal hingin about near the hen run. Ye had better git doon an try an sort it oot, yersel an wee Donal."

Her words brought a stream of expletives from Jock. "Whit, dus she thinks me an' wee Donal hae been pinchin' eggs? It must hae been sum o' they Glesca foulk that work in Seafoyle. Oanywey al awa doon wie wee Donal an fan oot whit a the fuss us about."

The din from the hen run ways tremendous as we approached the cottage door. Jock hammered on the latter and roared, "It's us muther Keith, cam tae tak about yer hens eggs."

A frightened voice from the depths, replied. "Wha cums knockin' at Keith's cottage?"

"Its Jock an wee Donal."

There was the sound of a key turning in the lock and the door swung open to reveal a stooped white haired old woman. "Sae ye hae cum about ma eggs?"

"Aye wuman," replied Jock, but first me an wee Donal ar' fair parched, hae ye oany o' that malt whisky left?"

Mother Keith stood aside, "Cam in it's good tae see ye, hows yer sell yer lookin' grand?"

Formalities over we were ushered into a low living space an seated on chairs. Mother Keith sighed, "Callum is havin' a wash at the sink, he wull cam an poor ye a dram, the boy can hae a gless o' mulk."

Callum lumbered in stripped to the waist, he glowered at us as his mother commanded, "Git yer claes oan son, Jock an the wee boy wull think ye ur a sex maniac, then gie Jock a dram an the wain sum mulk."

As Callum shuffled away into the kitchen, I asked in all innocence, "Whit's a sex maniac?"

My question drew a rebuff from Jock as mother stared at the ceiling. "It's nathin wee Donal, nae fur wee boys tae wurry about."

Callum appeared with three glasses filled with whisky and a glass of milk. The former were eagerly seized upon by the adults whilst I sipped the milk. Mother Keith took a swig of malt and leaned towards Jock, "Noo wha's been stealin' ma eggs frae the run?"

Jock gulped down a mouthful. "Gran whusky mustress Keith, as tae yer eggs, weel hae ye considered it might be that workers frae the factory? A hae seen them moochin about the hen run at nicht. Sum o' they Glesca foulk, for sure they ur awfy fly."

Old mother Keith, taking another swig nodded, "Maist o' the fowk in the works ur Cameltoon fowk ye ken Jock, mind you a heard Glesca voices some o' time."

“Ah this about Callum seein me hingin about the run is rubbish, He must be blun wuman.”

Mother Keith nodded, “Aye I suppose yer richt Jock, the next time he us in Cameltoon he should git hus eyes tested.”

Whilst the debate was ongoing, Callum was swigging measures of malt so the full bottle was now half empty. His mother looked sharply across at him, “Ye ur awfy restless son. Whit’s the metter?”

“A wis thinkin’ in ganging tae Cameltoon fur the weekend muther.”

Mother Keith threw her arms in the air, “Hae ye got a wumman thar son?”

“Naw a jist want a wee rest.”

“Rest, ye hae been loongin about a week.”

Jock listening to the riposte, poured himself another measure and grunted, “Och lea hum alane wuman, a break wull dae hum guid in Cameltoon.”

“Dae hum guid ye say?” cried auld mother Keith, “a hear Cameltoons fu o’ loose wumen.”

Again my innocent mind conjured up some female that had become undone, so I naively asked, “Whit’s a loose wuman?”

A silence greeted my question, even the ancient cat stopped purring. Jock drew out his pipe and grunted, “It’s nathin fur ye tae ken about wee Donal an dinna tell yer muther ye heard such a thing.”

Callum draining his glass, yawned, “Al catch the bus frae Tarbert the morrow muther.”

Mother Keith rose and shuffled over to the fire poking the embers, she muttered “Yer a man o’ the world Jock. Dae ye think Callum will be a richt tae gang awa tae Cameltoon?”

There was silence, broken only by Callum’s heavy breathing and the dolorous tick of the *waggeta-wa* clock. Jock reached for the whisky bottle and poured himself another measure. “Och aye he wull be gran Mistress Keith, mind ye he better fan guid lodgings.”

Turning to her son who was lolling in an ancient armchair, mother Keith snapped, “hae ye any idea o’ whur ye ur gan tae stey son?”

Callum yawned, “Och al pit up at the White Hert in Main Street.”

“Weel see ye dae, an dinna gang tae sum doss hoose.”

Jock looked at the clock, then wearily sighed, “Me and wee Donal better awa noo Mistress Keith, Maisie wull be wunnerin whur we ur. As tae the hens’ eggs awe I can advise is that ye watch the workers in the factory. In fact al keep an eye oot masel.”

Turning to Callum who had decided to clip his toe nails he teasingly said, “Watch yersel in Cameltoon, keep awa frae Seniorita. It’s a guid job that the Well Close has been demolished fur a remember auld Fesak telling me when he wus a young man, if ye wannered into the place ye had tae mak sure that yer name an’ address wis on the soles o’ yer boots.”

My mother was baking scones as we entered the kitchen., “Whit were ye takin aboot doon at the cottage Jock?”

“Och aboot the hen’s eggs.”

Sniffing, as she stamped out the scones my mother angrily retorted, “Hae ye been drinkin in front o’ a wee boy?”

“Weel a only hud five drams Maisie.”

“Whit hae a telt ye aboot drinkin’ in front o’ wee Donal. Whit else wur ye takin aboot?”

Innocently in a George Washington manner I blurted out, “We whur takin aboot sex maniacs, loose wumen, an sumbody called Seniorita.”

A explosive gasp erupted from my mother’s lips. Grabbing me by the ear she yelled, “Ye auld devil Jock, fancy letting wee Donal’s ears hear such filthy talk. It’s the last time he us gan doon tae yon cottage. Onywey wha is the sex maniac ye whur takin aboot?”

Sheepishly Jock replied, “ Auld muther Keith telt Callum nae tae be comin’ in tae the hoose stripped in case wee Donal thocht he wus a sex maniac.”

“Quite richt tae, it’s nae guid fur wee boys tae hear such things an see them.” Pausing to place some scones in the oven, she snorted, “Yer tea wull be ready soon wee Donal, sae awa an wash yer hans.”

As I went to the sink I innocently asked, “Whit happened in the Well Close, Jock said Fesak had to put his name and address oan hus boots when he went there?”

My question was answered by a slap on the ear.

Next day I saw Callum boarding the Campbeltown bus watched by his anxious muther. Jock sidled up to me and purred, “A hope he disna stray frae the straight an narrow.”

In 2004 I stood in the ruins of the cottage, derelict and roofless. A place of childish memories, What became of cousin Callum Keith or the egg lady, his mother, was to be a family mystery lost in the mists of time.