

THE BAY STATE THISTLE



Newsletter of the St. Andrew's Society of Massachusetts Fall 2016

The St. Andrew's Society of Massachusetts is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating our Scottish Cultural Heritage, including the History & Traditions, Music & Dance, Arts & Crafts, and the Literature & Celtic Language of the Scottish People.

Dear Members,

Well it has been one long and hot summer here in New England. Some of you might not like this but I cannot wait for the cooler weather! I always look forward to the leaves changing color and the smell of the fireplace in the air. The cooler weather also means that the Loon Mountain Games are just around the corner. The society also has a packed fall ahead of us.

After the success of last year's concert we have once again asked Charlie Zahm and Tad Marks to make another visit to Massachusetts. Saturday, October 8th at the First Congregational Church in Brimfield the St. Andrew's Society will host a night of Celtic Music. The proceeds of the concert will go to the support of our scholarship fund, come and enjoy this great evening of song and help our scholarship fund. There is more information in this issue of the *Thistle*.

Although all of the plans have not been firmed up yet we are planning a new lecture series titled The J. Philip McLaren Lecture Series to take place in November at the Quincy Historical Society. Save the date of November 16th! The topic for the lecture will be the connection between Massachusetts and the Canadian Maritime Provinces with an emphasis on Nova Scotia. 2017 will be the commemoration of the Halifax explosion that took place in December of 1917. Assistance from Boston, and all of Massachusetts, were some of the first to arrive and since then there has been a very close relationship. We are also planning a special 100th anniversary commemoration for next year.

I would also like to share with you some good and some bad news. The good news, and the bad news is we are temporarily out of most of our Bay State Tartan items. We have a few sashes and a few tams in stock but ties and scarfs are out, again. Like I said this is both good and bad news. Good news because the scholarship fund is benefitting from the sales and also the tartan is getting known in Massachusetts. Bad news because we are out of the most popular items. But fear not, more are on the way from Scotland. As I mentioned at the start of this letter, the society will be present at the Loon Mountain Games again this year. We have a hospitality tent so please come on by and say hello if you are in the area. It is my favorite event of the year so I am really looking forward to it again this year. We never know what the weather is going to be but it is always a good time.

We'll enjoy what is left of summer and I hope you all have a pleasant fall.

Yours Aye,
Rev. Peter-Michael Preble, FSA Scot
President

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SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Cambridge Class at the Canadian-American club
Sponsored by the RSCDS, Boston Branch
Live music (fiddle, piano, accordion). New dancers welcome. We provide certified teachers with a strong sense of fun. No partner necessary-just bring yourself, a love of music and dance and soft soled shoes!

When: 7:45—10:15 Every Monday (including most holidays) classes for new and experienced dancers, 8:00-9:00 social dancing for all 9:15-10:15

Where: Canadian-American Club
202 Arlington St., Watertown MA

Fee: \$9:00 adults, \$5.00 students
Season pass available

For more info: <http://rscdsboston.org/classes-camb.html>

Or contact us at
CambridgeClass@rscdsboston.org

Radio Programs

Nova Scotia Kitchen Party

11:00am Saturdays

WUMB 91.9 FM—1170AM

BBC Radio Scotland

Pipeline— I hour broadcast

Sundays

1700UTC (noon EST eastern USA)

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**SASMA WEB SITE
www.st-andrews-of-mass.org**

What is the Sgian Dubh



The Sgian Dubh is a small edged knife, usually 3-4 inches in length, that is worn as part of the traditional Highland dress tucked into the top of the kilt hose with only the handle visible. It's origins are fairly unclear, although it is now a purely ornamental item, most communally applied with an underage blade, that is an essential part of the full Highland outfit.

The word sgian dubh, pronounced 'skee-an doo', translates from Gaelic to 'black knife'. This is usually derived as meaning a 'hidden' blade, with the black being used much the same way as in black market or blackmail. This is further given credence when compared to other Gaelic words, such as dubh-fhacal translated as 'riddle' or 'hidden word', or dubh-cheist translated as 'enigma' or 'hidden question'.

One theory behind the origins of the sgian dubh is that the knife evolved from another blade carried by the Highlanders, the sgian achlais. Slightly larger than the sgian dubh and likely a close relative of the dirk, the sgian achlais was carried on the upper sleeve or concealed within the jacket. During this time etiquette demanded that a guest would reveal any weapons upon entering their hosts home. As such the knife would instead be placed on display, but still within reach, usually within the top of the hose.

The sgian dubh also has a lot in common with a more practical utility blade, used for cutting fruit, food or for skinning. When the Highland Dress Proscription Act came into effect after the Battle of Culloden, it was made illegal for Highlanders to bear arms of any kind. The relatively small size of the sgian dubh was deemed acceptable and it therefore became a popular utility knife for everyday use.

The early blades varied in construction, some having a "clipped", such as found on the Bowie knife or "drop" point. The "spear-point" tip has now become universal. The earliest known blades, some housed in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, are made from German or Scandinavian steel, which was highly prized by the Highlanders. Scalloped filework on the back of the blade is common on all Scottish knives. Most early sgian dubhs are shown to have used stag horn for the construction of the handle, as it was a readily available and hardwearing.

Since the modern sgian dubh is only used in a ceremonial capacity the blades tend to be of a simple construction with a blunted edge and are typically made from stainless steel. The hilts on modern sgian dubhs are made from a variety of materials. The lower quality versions usually utilise a molded resin or plastic, which lowers the price but also the quality. The mid range again dubhs tend to utilise more traditional materials such as real stag horn (generally collected as it is naturally shed, so no harm is caused to the animals at all), which is renowned for it's hardness, or carved wood. On the higher end of the scale full metal handles are used, generally featuring some kind of coloured stone, such as a cairngorm.

SASMA WEB SITE

www.st-andrews-of-mass.org

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Applications are available on our web site or by contacting:

Dan Johnson

Phone: 781-337-7966

E-mail: danjohnbarra@hotmail.com

61% of American Presidents are of Scots or Scots-Irish descent

History and Haggis: Three Days in Scotland's Capital City

When abroad in Italy over the spring semester, I knew that I had to visit Scotland on my spring break. Although the winter would be too cold to visit Barra, where my ancestors are from, I planned to spend a few days exploring Edinburgh.

Edinburgh is unlike any city I've visited. Even on the busiest streets, you don't feel like you're in a major hub. It's a beautiful combination of history and modernity, with old buildings housing high-end boutiques, wifi-equipped public buses, and monuments at every turn.

A regal-looking man in a kilt blowing "Scotland the Brave" into his bagpipes greeted me on the corner of Waverley and Princes when I arrived from York. Behind him stood the Sir Walter Scott monument, and Edinburgh Castle loomed in the distance atop the plateau overlooking the Princes Street gardens.

I signed up for a bus tour (actually, four) around the city, since I had been averaging six kilometers per day hiking around rural Yorkshire. When short on time, bus tours are definitely the way to go, especially if you're traveling alone. I took the green Edinburgh Tours bus first, which takes you all around the city. We started in New Town with its neat rows of Georgian style buildings lined with pubs and shops. Then we saw historic Old Town, where kilt shops and monuments fill the small, steep roads. Each kirk yard and pub seems to have a story behind it. It would take a lifetime to learn them all.

Of the many museums around the city, I chose to visit the National Gallery of Art near Waverley. I've never been one for two-dimensional art, but seeing works from El Greco and other master painters was a great way to spend a Wednesday afternoon. The gallery also had a whole wing devoted to Scots painters, and I found a few new favorites. Peter Graham's *Wandering Shadows* is really something special. Even though I didn't make it out to the highlands, I could still enjoy the scenery from the canvas.

In the afternoon I took the red City Sightseeing bus to Edinburgh Castle. The castle complex has five or six museums devoted to military and royal history. I could have spent a whole day in the National War Museum or gawking at the crown jewels (the *actual* crown jewels!). By far the most interesting part of the visit was seeing St. Margaret's Chapel, the oldest building in Edinburgh.

To pay homage to my Scots heritage, I signed up for a whisky tour and tasting near the castle. It began with a ride in a plastic barrel through a mock-distillery where we learned the process of making whisky and the regional differences in taste. I can't say I'll become a whisky drinker, but I've at least checked trying it off my bucket list.

I finished my first (marathon) day with a ghost tour led by a Londoner named AWOL. We walked around St. Cuthbert's cemetery and had a close encounter with a ghost named Jenny. Taking the tour by myself wasn't one of my smarter decisions, but I somehow survived.

I didn't want to go to pubs and restaurants alone, so my lunches and dinners consisted of sandwiches from the market or eating at my hotel. After months of cappuccinos and croissants, I was grateful that the hotel served a full breakfast. On my last morning, I found the courage to order haggis. Haggis is like hot dogs: if you don't know what's in it, it's probably delicious. I made the mistake of researching it before I ate it, which put a damper on the whole experience.

On Thursday, I took the yellow Majestic bus out to the Royal Yacht Britannia, where HM the Queen and the royal family vacation and travel. It's easy to forget that Scotland is part of Great Britain and not an independent nation, since it's so vastly different from England, Ireland, and Wales. Even in Edinburgh, which is so close to England, the culture is unique.

My next stop was the Palace of the Holyrood, HM the Queen's official residence when she's visiting Edinburgh. I'll admit, I was less than impressed with the interior, which hasn't been updated much since Mary, Queen of Scots lived there. The dark paneling and heavy tapestries give its many rooms a gloomy feeling. But, the ruins of the church on the palace grounds thrilled the archaeologist in me.

I passed the Independence Camp on my way to Arthur's Seat. These few "nationalist hippies," supplied with campers and rough provisions, have set up in front of the Scottish Parliament building with the intention of staying until Scotland is free from the "tyrannical rule" of Britain.

Arthur's Seat was the last stop before heading off to Glasgow for my flight back. I "hiked" up the tallest section (which, thankfully, had stairs built into the side of it). The weather was pleasantly cool and, as always in Edinburgh, unpredictable. By the time I reached the top I had shed, put on and shed several layers. A cloud rolled in underneath the summit, and the beautiful view of the city below disappeared. While I didn't get the scenic view I had come for, the hike alone (and sitting in a cloud) were well worth it.

As someone with Scots blood, seeing Edinburgh was an unforgettable experience. One could spend a lifetime in the city and still not see everything there is to see. When I left, I knew I had to come back to Scotland, maybe to the highlands, or Glasgow, or the Hebrides. Three days in Edinburgh wasn't enough time, but it was enough to have me planning my next trip.

Submitted by,
Kate Preble
Niece of President Rev. Peter Preble

SAVETHE DATE

Here's a list of character traits that your average Scot may have (but remember, any individual may have 10% of these, or 50%, or 90%.... or none!). Every one is unique.

- We know the value of a dollar (or pound!). This doesn't mean that Scots are tight-fisted or mean, just that we're careful about spending and expect value for money.
- Polite but reserved, until we get to know you.
- Forthright and honest. We'll say what they mean, but not with malice.
- Patriotic - Scottish people might complain about the weather, or politics, or whatever but we're fiercely proud of their country and will defend it with their last breath.
- Fiery and bold. Historically Scots are brave, stubborn, and courageous. Still true.
- Social and friendly, once they know you. You might be surprised at how 'chatty' a Scot can be, especially if he/she has had a drink or two :)
- Practical and down-to-earth. One side of our personality is very grounded and matter-of-fact. We don't like pretenses or 'fake-ness'.
- Superstitious, sentimental and spiritual. Many Scottish people have a strong belief in the supernatural, and in the strength of mythical and psychic worlds. Unexpectedly emotional for such a practical people.
- Appreciate the arts. Scotland has produced more than it's fair share of artists, poets, writers & musicians. Scots especially love music, dancing, storytelling and literature.
- Hard-working. Historically this is a country founded and grown on hard work. First farmers and crofters, then heavy industrial plants and shipyards, today it's finance and service industries.
- Know how to have a good time. Celebrations, dancing, drinking, singing.... we're expert at these.
- Enjoy their food! The Scottish diet is traditionally rich in red meat, fats and sugar. Tastes great, but not so good for your health. Today's government is encouraging healthier eating - hoping to reduce the high heart-attack stats and fight obesity. Not all Scots appreciate this!

Also like 'a wee dram'. Of whisky that is. Scotch Whisky is world-famous, and for good reason. Younger generations enjoy vodka and beer too, and we don't all like whisky (personally I can't even bear the smell of it!) and the all-time favorite soft drink of Scotland is [Irn Bru](#).

Scottish people are also a talented, creative and forward-thinking bunch.

NEW LECTURE SERIES

On November 16, 2016 the St. Andrew's Society of MA and the Quincy Historical Society will be presenting a new lecture series. This series is being sponsored by Jeff and Mary Smith and will be titled:

THE J. PHILIP MCCLAREN MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

The first lecture will be held on November 16, 2016 and will be held at the Quincy Historical Society on Adams Street in Quincy.

The guest speaker, Professor Robert Allison is a history professor at Suffolk University. He will speak about the relationship between Massachusetts and Nova Scotia.

Following the lecture the 2016 scholarship recipients of SASMA will perform. Light refreshments will be available after the performance.

This is a free lecturer series and our hope is that many of our members will take advantage of it.

SASMA SCHOLARSHIP FUND RAFFLE

Two (2) tickets and an autographed Charlie Zahm CD
An evening of Celtic Music
With Charlie Zahm and Tad Marks
Saturday, October 8, 2016 7:00pm
First Congregational Church
20 Main St. Brimfield, MA
Tickets: \$2.00 each
3 for \$5.00

**NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHLAND GAMES
SEPTEMBER 18th, 19th AND 20th
LOON MOUNTAIN
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Known for its diverse program, highlights include the Gathering of the Scottish Clans, with over 60 clans and societies, Massed Bands, sheepdog trials, Celtic World Music Concerts, the New England Regional Scottish Fiddle Championship, Heavyweight Scottish Athletics, National Highland Dance Competition, Solo Piping & Drumming. Scottish Harp (Clarsach) and other instrument competitions.

Performers— Featuring the best entertainers including Skerryvore, Albannach, The Brigadoons, Charlie Zahm, John Carmichael, Glengarry Bhoys & Searson

Scottish Heavy Athletics— The New Hampshire Highland Games has become a favorite venue for most of the World's top Heavyweight athletes to compete. Watch both amateur and professionals compete on both Saturday and Sunday.

Pipe Bands -

Who can think of Scottish music without bagpipes coming to mind? Pipes and drums have long been an integral part of Scottish military regiments and Scottish life, and are part of the traditions in modern Scottish life just as they were centuries ago. Performances and competitions for solo pipers and drummers, pipe bands and drum majors will bring the iconic sound of Scotland to the festival grounds all weekend. Be sure to see Massed Bands on Saturday with over 30 pipe bands marching onto the parade grounds to perform together! On Friday night, listen to classical bagpipe music as the best pipers compete in the Piobaireachd contest.

Seminars—Seminars in Whisky Tastings and Scottish History. Demonstrations and workshops in Harp, Fiddle and Scottish Country Dancing.

SASMA WILL BE THERE. IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND, PLEASE STOP BY THE TENT AND SAY HELLO.

Importance of Scholarships

One of the purposes of the Saint Andrews Society is to promote Scottish culture and in particular the Scottish arts.

One of the ways this can be done is by the awarding of scholarships to deserving students seeking to further their education in one of the Scottish arts.

It is important that people continue participating in the Scottish arts or else they would disappear. Many years ago the Saint Andrews Society (SASMA) established a scholarship in the name of the late Dr. Robert D. Mac Curdy who served as Chieftain of Saint Andrew's Society of Bridgewater, now SASMA. Dr. Mac Curdy was educated at Boston University and was a professor of education of what is now Bridgewater State University.

Each year SASMA contacts teachers of the Scottish arts and ask them to send applications to their students. A committee then reviews the applications and makes decisions on whom to award the scholarships to. Preference is given to Massachusetts or New England applicants, however SASMA has given awards to students outside of the area, when we felt they were deserving.

Applicants may receive an award two years in a row but after that we insist that the applicant take a year off before applying again in order to give everyone an equal chance.

Some students will use the scholarship award to continue lessons with their regular teacher. The teacher may be local or far away. In that event, students will use Skype to receive their lessons. Other students will use their award to attend a school of the Scottish arts such as the Gaelic College in St. Ann, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia or Ivemark College of Piping in Petersburg, New York or The Thompson Island Fiddle School here in Massachusetts.

The Scottish Arts encompass many things. Highland dancing, bagpiping, drumming and fiddling are all Scottish arts.

Many students begin their activity when they are quite young and continue until they are adults. SASMA has made awards to people of all ages and differing levels of skill in their chosen activity. The great bulk of scholarships have been given to teenagers and young adults.

I hope this article has given you some idea of the importance of Scottish arts and how the scholarships of SASMA help promote them.

Submitted by: Dan Johnson Vice-President SAS-

Scottish Recipes

- Chocolate, Orange and Whisky Mousse

Here's a delicious sweet to finish off any meal - the chocolate, orange and whisky make a deadly combination! The quantities given below are sufficient for six servings.

Ingredients (Mousse):

8 ounces (250g) plain chocolate which has been broken into smaller pieces.
4 large eggs - separated into whites and yolks.
2 tablespoons Scotch whisky. Note that US tablespoons are smaller than those in the UK so you may want to adjust this UK measurement!
2 tablespoons double cream (whipping cream). If you adjust the amount of whisky, add a bit more cream too!
Finely grated rind of one orange.

Ingredients (topping):

5 fluid ounces (150ml or a generous half cup) double cream (whipping cream).
1 tablespoon Scotch whisky.
Pinch of caster (fine) sugar.
Finely cut orange rind for decoration.

Method:

Place the broken chocolate, whisky and cream in a heatproof bowl and sit in a pan of simmering hot water, stirring until melted. Important - don't allow the mixture to boil. Remove from the heat and allow to cool but remain melted. Whisk the egg whites until they are stiff. Beat the yolks with the finely grated orange rind. Stir the egg yolk mixture into the cooled chocolate cream. Then fold in the whisked egg whites.

Spoon the mixture into six individual dishes/glasses and chill in the fridge for at least three hours. Just before serving, whip the cream for the topping with the whisky and sugar. Decorate the mousse with the cream and the orange rind.

**St. Andrew's Society of Massachusetts
PO Box 204
North Weymouth, MA 02191**

Clan [] Sept [] _____

Print Name _____
(Last name)
(First name)
(Middle initial)

Spouse's Name _____
(Last name)
(First name)
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	Bay State Tartan Scarf	\$29.00	
	Bay State Tartan Sash	\$49.00	
	*Shipping		
	Total		

**Shipping-
Tartan tie, Scarf, Sash & Tam.....\$2.50 per item**

**THE SAINT ANDREW'S SOCIETY
OF MASSACHUSETTS
PRESENTS**

**CHARLIE ZAHM & TAD MARKS
IN CONCERT**

OCTOBER 8, 2016

7:00 pm

\$15.00 advance

\$20.00 at the door

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
20 MAIN STREET
BRIMFIELD, MA**

**Go to SASMA website or facebook page for information on how to purchase tickets in advance
www.st-andrews-of-mass.org**

Charlie Zahm is one of the most popular soloists at Celtic music festivals, Maritime, and American Traditional music events anywhere east of the Mississippi. With a baritone voice some have described as "coming along once in a generation," Charlie has become one of the most successful performers on the Celtic festival circuit, weaving magical moments of Scottish and Irish history for the listener and viewer, with passion for the performance and a chosen repertoire pleasing to all members of the family. A master of the guitar as well, Charlie brings an authentic love and respect for the music he sings-and with dashes of humor and a light in his eyes, he will draw you into the stories of his songs!

When Charlie was old enough to sing, he began appreciating the beautiful Celtic songs and melodies he first heard in the largely Scottish province of his mother's birth, Ontario, Canada. Keenly aware of his own heritage, which includes healthy doses of Scottish and Irish blood on both sides of his family, Charlie has collected several hundred popular (as well as beautiful and obscure) selections and now performs them for thousands of fans up and down the Eastern Seaboard and across America. Today, as one of the most sought-after Celtic singers on the East Coast (he is one of the few singers in the world to be invited to sing live twice with Scotland's "Black Watch"), Charlie performs regularly everywhere from concerts and festivals to television shows and Celtic-themed Caribbean cruises, where his 6'4" frame and powerful baritone make him one of the most memorable performers around.

Charlie is often joined by fantastic Baltimore fiddler Tad Marks, who has toured extensively across the U.S. and Europe with top-name groups and is considered one of the finest fiddlers on the East Coast. His down-home charm and easy-going style have made him friends across the country, and his fine fiddling on stage with Charlie ranges from hard-driving jigs and reels to the most expressive accompaniment for vocals you will ever hear. His solo CD releases have received great praise from traditional Celtic and bluegrass fiddle-music lovers alike! Tad's music has also been featured on many of Charlie's albums and dozens of additional CDs by other artists, TV commercials, and on various other projects.

Book Review

What is more Scottish than golf? A few things maybe, like Scotch whisky, thistles, and haggis, but golf certainly makes the list. Consequently, it seemed completely natural to read a couple of novels centered on golf and review them for you.

Duncan McPherson, author of The Secret History of Golf in Scotland, swears that some of what takes place in his book is fact, passed down through his family for generations, and the rest is inspired by early historical records of the game of golf. It is 16th century Scotland and the town's annual golf tournament is about to begin. More than one person has designs on winning the prize, no matter what the cost. The poor farmer, the impoverished laird, and the hired pro all have their futures, even their very lives riding on the outcome of the tournament. Whether by their own doing or happenstance, the situations these folk find themselves in are startling.

The numerous and colorful characters, the descriptions of the country side, and the portrayal of everyday life are imbued with the flavor of 16th century Scotland. If you can get through the grisly deaths and dark humor, through deals and double deals and some definite twists of fate, the book ends well. Worth the read? You decide.

St. Andrews: A novel by Alan Champorcher, was much lighter reading. This contemporary story takes place in St. Andrews, home of the "Old Course" where a young American woman has inherited a boarding house. She is confronted with problems galore. Her home is sought after by a greedy developer who is misrepresenting his true plans to everyone. Her bank account is empty. A misunderstanding has her estranged from her late mother's family.

As the story moves quickly along, Maggie has sold her house, and too late has learned it is to be destroyed. While she fights to undo her mistake, the discovery of ancient golf equipment might be the key to regain her house, and put an end to the evil plot to change the culture of St. Andrews. But the newly discovered treasure is stolen. The well-developed characters, the struggle of good versus evil, the exquisite description of the area, and finally a riveting golf match make this fast-moving story worthwhile, different, and very entertaining.

Submitted by: Avis Leary

NOVA SCOTIA - N.S.

- one of the four Atlantic provinces on the east coast of Canada
- second smallest province (P.E.I. is the smallest)
- made up of the mainland and Cape Breton Island
 - also includes over 3800 coastal islands
- capital city and largest city is Halifax - 403,437 in 2010
- Halifax is an international seaport and transportation center.
- flower - the Mayflower, tree -Red Spruce, bird - Osprey
- "Nova Scotia" means "New Scotland" in Latin.
- motto : " One defends and the other conquers"

THE PEOPLE

- There are 942,500 people living in Nova Scotia. (2010)
 - Many people live in or close to Halifax.
 - Most of the communities are along the coast.
 - First people were the Micmacs (Mi'Kmaq).
 - People came from Britain, Western Europe, and Southern Europe.
- Over eighty percent are of British ancestry, eighteen percent are of French ancestry
 - Other groups include German, Dutch, Poles, Ukrainian, Chinese, Scandinavian and native people.
- N.S. has Canada's oldest African-Canadian community.

HISTORY

- The Vikings first visited around the year 990.
- Explorer John Cabot came to Nova Scotia in 1497.
- Micmac lived there. They hunted, fished, gathered plants and berries.
 - French settlers arrived in 1605.
- A French settlement named Port Royal was built in 1605.
 - The area was turned over to the British after a war.
 - French colonists were forced to leave.
 - Some went back to France while others went to the U.S.
- Later settlers came from England, Germany, Scotland.
 - In 1783 the United Empire Loyalists came from the United States.
 - In 1784 Nova Scotia was partitioned and the colonies of New Brunswick and Cape Breton Island were created.
 - In 1820 Cape Breton Island became part of Nova Scotia again.
 - In 1867 Nova Scotia became a part of the Dominion of Canada.

