TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscribers wishing to take the EVENING MERCURY by the week, or for a longer period, will please leave their names at the office, and it will be regularly delivered at their residences. Subscribers whose papers are not regularly left by the Carrier Boys, will please call at the office at once and inform us of the neglect.

Guelph Evening Mercury

OFFICE:.....MACDONNELL STREET.

THURSDAY EVENING, DEC. 26.

The Maiden's Choice

OR, THE LAIRD OF BIRKENCLEUCH.

A Tale of the Covenanters.

CHAPTER II.—THE MANSION OF BIRKENCLEUCH—A MIDNIGHT MARRIAGE—THE UNDERGROUND SEACH.

The mansion-house of Birkencleuch stood on the edge of a deep rocky ravine, the rough precipitous sides of which were thickly covered with birch trees, which, though of no great size, were, many of them, very old and being crowded together, covered for the most part the surface of the steep, except in places where the shelving rock broke forth in sheer precipices, and even here where a little earth had lodged in the fissures birch bushes grew luxuriantly, relieving the sombre hue of the dark rock or grey sandstone with greenest foliage, and scenting the air with richest fragrance.

From this ravine the place evidently derived its name, and gave that name to the mansion-house and the estate of two or three hundred acres which belonged to it. The house was a quaint old building, erected on the very edge of the precipice, its rear walls being so joined to the sides of the rock on which it was built as to seem but a continuation of the same, and to look from any of the back windows was to look down into the sheer depth on the trees or bushes growing far below the rocky bed of the craggy ascent on the opposite side, clothed with its garment of living green.

The situation was beautiful and romantic, and though in all probability it was chosen as a site for the mansion from the natural means of defence which it offered in a rude and warlike age, a more picturesque place of abode could scarcely be found by one who loved the wild beauties of Nature, and could find enjoyment in the heart of the deepest seclusion.

In feudal times, it must have been a place of great strength and security, for before the use of pieces of ordnance, it would have been almost impossible to attack it from the rear, the precipice of the Cleuch affording such protection in that direction that any foe who, by dint of scrambling, should reach the base of the walls, could easily be hurled over the abyss by those stationed at the windows.—The walls themselves were of massive construction, and had numerous irregular projections, according to the form of the rock on which they were built. These projections assumed the form of turrets, wings, and abutments, and most of these had small windows or narrow loop-holes, which commanded the ravine at all points both above and below.

It will be seen, therefore, that the house of Birkencleuch had been originally a stronghold, for not only did it occupy such a defensive position, and had been constructed so as to take advantage of that position to the full, but its front approach had at one time been equally well guarded. A deep trench, now dry and partially filled with earth, showed that a moat had once been there, while marks of a drawbridge were to be seen at the entrance door, and above was a rampart with parapet still entire, and behind it room for a number of armed men, who, from their place of vantage, could make a desperate defence in case of attack.

The interior of the place corresponded well with its outward character. With the exception of two or three, all the rooms were small, and so numerous and oddly placed that the modern dwellers in the place had no acquaintance with many of them, and it was well understood that there were cells and secret chambers, the road to which was unknown, the whereabouts of which was even unsuspected.

Such was the building, at the closed entrance to which Walter Elliot dismounted, and assisted Marion to alight. As for Hugh M'Kail, he could manage to quit the saddle without help, and he had reached the ground and was holding his horse by the bridal when Walter placed Marion on the broad flat stone which lay in front of the door.

The young laird then took a whistle from his bosom and sounded a peculiar note upon it, which had the effect of bringing a heavy footstep along the passage within, when the bolts of the massive door were drawn, and the door itself pulled slowly back on its hinges.

'We are obliged to take certain precautions in these troublous times,' observed Walter to his companion, as they waited for admission, 'particularly,' he added, in a whisper, "for a week past, when a visit from the soldiery might have proved disastrous.'

'Do they suspect my father is here?' asked Marion anxiously.

'Not as yet, I think, else the curate would have had his hounds on the scent. But two meetings have been held, to which the people have flocked in good numbers; and, however faithfully they may guard the secret, we fully expect that it would leak out ere long; but this night's encounter with Charlie Allan makes it certain that suspicion will be aroused. However, we have been placed on our guard, and will be able, I think, to take measures to baffle the ruffians. But here is Andrew ready to admit us.'

At the door open door there stood an elderly man without his coat, and wearing the broad blue bonnet of the Scottish peasantry. In his hand he carried a light, which, when it revealed to him the form of Marion and Hugo, in addition to that of his master, he started, and looked for a moment scared.

'I have brought strangers with me tonight, Andrew, whom you must receive with hearty welcome,' said Walter, in a gay lightsome tone. 'Look at them, and tell me if you recognise them?'

Andrew held forward the light towards Marion's face, who stood silently smiling at him. Instantly the grave look of anxious wonder vanished from his features, and an eager joyous light leapt into his kindly eyes.

'Eh! Miss Marion,' he cried. 'Did ever onybody ken the like o' this. What for did ye not let on she was comin', Maister Walter. And there's Marjory has naething ready for her. My certie, but ye'll get a bonny flytin' for that. Come awa' in-bye. Wow, but I am glad to see ye.'

'Thank you, Andrew,' returned Marion.—'I thought you would be glad to see me for my father's sake.'

'And what for no for ye're ain, my bonnie lassie? We love oor dear ill-used minister, and sae, as yer father's daughter we are fond o' you. But bawlie dae ye ken that ye hae got a warm corner in oor hearts for yer ainsel forbye. But wha's this alang wi' ye?—Anither persecuted servant o' Christ, as I can see.'

This had reference to M'Kail, who was standing some paces from the entrance, holding the bridle of the two horses, whose form was therefore but dimly beheld in the obscurity. At this moment, however, a stout lad came from the direction of the stables, and Walter having entrusted the charge of the horses to him, Hugh was relieved of the duty, and came forward within the threshold, observing as he did so—

'I am, indeed, a humble and unworthy servant of Christ, my good Andrew, and have, like others, suffered somewhat in my master's cause.'

'As I'm a leevin' man, it's Maister M'Kail,' exclaimed Andrew, with another start of joyful surprise. 'But, gracious me, let me steek the door, for nae doot if the troopers kent ye were here they wad coont ye a grand prize.—Hand the licht, Maister Walter, for any sake hand the licht till I draw the bolts.'

Walter laughed as he took the light out of the honest fellow's hand, and they all waited till Andrew pushed the ponderous bolts into their sockets, and made the door even more secure than it was before their arrival.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Bass' Pale Ale and Guinness' Dublin Porter in pints and quarts at Geo. Wilk-

COMMERCIAL.

Guelph Markets.

MERCURY OFFICE, GUELPH. December 26, 1867.

In the early part of the week, especially on Tuesday, the market was largely supplied with every kind of produce. Since the heavy rain on Wednesday night, and consequent partial break up of the roads deliveries have been light. The demand continues quite active, and grains of all kinds show an upward tendency. To-day pork does not rule so high, the outside figure being $5.50, but the probability is that it will again reach the prices that were paid on Tuesday, when $6 were given for prime quality.

Flour, per 100 lbs,	$3 75	"	4 00
Fall Wheat per bushel,	1 55	"	1 65
Spring Wheat,	1 40	"	1 45
Oats do	0 45	"	0 46
Peas do	0 60	"	0 65
Barley do	0 95	"	1 00
Hay, per ton	12 00	"	14 00
Straw	4 00	"	5 00
Shingles per square	1 00	"	1 60
Wood per cord	3 00	"	3 50
Wool	0 27	"	0 20
Eggs, per dozen	0 14	"	0 19
Butter (firkin), per lb	0 14	"	0 16
Geese, each	0 25	"	0 35
Turkeys do	0 50	"	0 60
Chickens per pair	0 20	"	0 25
Ducks do	0 20	"	0 30
Potatoes	0 50	"	0 55
Apples per brls.	0 00	"	2 00
Lamb per lb	0 06	"	0 07
Beef	4 00	"	6 00
Beef, per lb	0 05	"	0 00
Pork per 100 lbs	4 50	"	6 00
Sheep Pelts each	0 30	"	0 60
Lamb skins	0 40	"	0 40
Hides per 100 lbs	6 00	"	6 00

Money Market.

JACKSON'S EXCHANGE OFFICE. Guelph, December, 24, 1867.

Gold, 133¾.
Greenbacks bo't at 73 to 73½; Sold at 74 to 74½.
Silver bought at 4½ to 4c. dis.; sold at 3½c to 3
Upper Canada Bank Bills bought at 50c. to 55c.
Commercial Bank Bills bought at 92c to 95c.

MONTREAL MARKETS.

Kirkwood, Livingstone & Co's. report by Special Telegraph to 'Evening Mercury.')

MONTREAL, December 26, 1867.

Flour—Fancy, $7 50 to $7 60; Superfine No. 1. $7 15 to $7 30; Welland Canal, $7 25. Bag flour, $3 50 to $3 60. Oats 41 c to 42c. Barley 85c to 90c. Butter—dairy 16c to 19c; store packed 14c to 16c. Ashes—Pots $5 45 to $5 50, pearls $5 95 $6 00.

Flour receipts three thousand one hundred brls; market firm but very quiet with trifling sales.—Grain—wheat sales of cars at $1 65; Peas no sales. Provisions—Pork unchanged; Hogs heavy arrivals, market quiet but rates maintained; Butter, only retail transactions in table sorts. Ashes quiet at former rates.

TORONTO, December 25, 1867

Flour—Receipts, 200 brls; No. 1, at $6 75.—Wheat—at $1 50. Peas—72c. Oats—55c to 55c. Barley—92c to $1 00.

HAMILTON, December 25 1867.

Fall wheat,—$1 45 @ $1 50. spring do—$1 30 @ $1 35 per bushel. Barley—70c @ 73c. Oats—50c to 52c. Peas—73c @ 75c.

Valuable Tavern Stands FOR SALE.

THE subscriber offers for sale the following valuable Tavern Stands in the village of Rockwood:

THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL, close to the Railway Station. It is only recently built, contains 17 apartments, and has a very large and well finished Hall Room or Hall; also large and commodious stables and driving shed. The house is well supplied with hard and soft water, with wood shed pig sties, splendid garden, and all other conveniences. From its nearness to the station, and the excellent accommodation it supplies, it does the largest and most profitable business in Rockwood.

THE WELLINGTON HOUSE.—This house is situated in the heart of the village, and close to the mills and stores. It was rebuilt this summer, after being burnt down, and is now rented for $225 a year. It contains 11 apartments, with store wood shed, driving shed, pig sties, and large stable. There is a plentiful supply of water on the premises. There is a good garden attached to the house.

For terms and other particulars apply to the proprietor (if by letter post-paid) at the Commercial Hotel, near the C. T. R. Station, Rockwood.

WILLIAM STOVEL.

Rockwood, 30th October, 1867

The Guelph Mercury

DAILY AND WEEKLY.

OFFICE: - - - EAST MACDONNELL STREET.

McLAGAN AND INNES,

PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

The EV'NING MERCURY

CONTAINING the latest News by Telegraph up to the hour of going to press, is published at 5 o'clock every afternoon (Sunday excepted), and mailed to all parts of the country by the evening mails on the following

TERMS:

Single copy, one year, $4. | Single copy, 3 mo's $1
" " 6 months 2. | Single do. 1 week 10c.

Copies may also be had of the News boys on the streets, price ONE PENNY. Town Subscribers are supplied at their residences by our own carriers.

In addition to the Telegraphic News given in **The Evening Mercury** will be found a vast amount of LOCAL NEWS, interesting articles on all the leading topics of the day. Special care will be taken to give CORRECT MARKET REPORTS.

Every Business Man should read it

"The Weekly Mercury"

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY,

IS THE LARGEST COUNTRY NEWSPAPER in the DOMINION, containing **40** columns of reading matter. Special care is devoted to THE WEEKLY MERCURY, and care is taken that none of the best and most select reading appears in its columns. It is the **Great Family Paper of Ontario**, and the unprecedented additions to its subscription list within the last two years, and the demand still increasing, is a certain guarantee that our assertion is correct. Our facilities now for getting up a FIRST-CLASS WEEKLY are unrivalled by even the metropolitan press, and we are determined not to relax our energies.

Letters containing money, properly registered, will be at our risk.

TO ADVERTISERS.

Business men will find THE EVENING and WEEKLY MERCURY to be unrivalled advertising mediums as their respective circulations are far in advance of any others in North Western Canada, and is the ONLY means by which extensive settlements can be reached by the judicious advertiser.

Advertising rates are very moderate, and may be learned on application at the Office.

Book and Job Printing,

Executed on short notice, at reasonable rates, and in the best style of the Art. Having every facility at our command, in this department, we defy competition as to style, quality and price.

McLAGAN & INNES, Publishers.

Office—Macdonnell Street, East of the Golden Lion, Guelph, Ontario.

October 29, 1867. daw-tf.

NOTICE

To Debtors & Creditors.

THE undersigned Executors for the Estate of the late Alexander McKinnon, deceased, hereby give notice to all parties indebted to the said Estate, to pay to J. W. BURT, acting Executor for the same, as he is the only person authorized to receive money for the said Estate, and all parties are forbid paying to any other person. All parties having claims against the Estate are hereby notified to send in the same to the undersigned on or before the expiry of six months from the date of this notice.

J. W. BURT,
ARCH. THOMSON, } Executors
JAS. W. KENNEDY,

Guelph, Nov. 13, 1867. w6m

THE GROCERY & WINE TRADE

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT.

FRANK SMITH & CO.

77 Front Street, Toronto,

BEG to intimate to their Western friends and the public generally, that they have now received a large portion of their Fall supply of

Fresh English Groceries, Wines, Brandies, &c.,

Ex. 'Planet,' 'Chaudiere,' 'City of Hamilton,' 'Glenborie,' from London.
'Avon,' 'Oneida,' 'Hibernia,' 'Peruvian,' 'Summer,' and Pericles,' from Liverpool.
'Abeona' and Glenlffer,' from Glasgow.
'Agnes' from Charente. ☞ And are daily expecting the arrival of

Fresh New Crop Fruit and Mediterranean Cargo

Ex. 'Deodara,' 'Canny Scott' and 'Mary Ann,' from Malaga, Marseilles and Denia.

JUST RECEIVING IN STORE,

303 Hhds and Tierces of Barbadoes, Porto Rico and Cuba Sugars.
522 Bbls Currants crop 1866, VERY CHEAP.
5175 Half Chests and Catties Souchong, Congou, Japan, Gunpowder, Young and Old Hyson Teas.

With a full assortment of Tobaccos, Refined Sugars, Wines and Liquors and Dry Groceries. All of which will be submitted to the trade, equal to and below Montreal prices.

☞ Inspection invited. Terms Liberal. Cash and prompt paying customers desired.

Toronto, 6th November, 1867. dwtf

CHRISTMAS BOXES.

WE WOULD INVITE THOSE ABOUT TO PURCHASE

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

to step in and examine our stock, as it is larger and more varied than ever.

D. SAVAGE.

Guelph, December 14, 1867. dw

Apothecaries' Hall,

MARKET SQUARE, GUELPH.

JUST RECEIVED

A large supply of

SYDNEY BROWN'S

PERFUME

WATCHES!

Superior to either the "Russell" or "American" Watch, containing as it does a new and

DELIGHTFUL PERFUME

for the Handkerchief, unrivalled for the sweetness of its odour and lasting properties.

Price Twenty-five Cents each

ALEX. B. PETRIE,
Chemist, Market Square.

Guelph, Dec. 7 1867. dw

Funerals, Funerals!

NATHAN TOVELL has to intimate that he is prepared to attend funerals as usual Coffins always on hand. Hearse to hire.

His Steam Planing Mill is in constant operation. All kinds of lumber, sashes, doors, blinds, mouldings, &c. He solicits a share of public patronage.

NATHAN TOVELL,

Guelph, 27th Aug. 1867. Nelson Crescent

Valuable Building Lots for Sale IN EVERTON.

THE subscriber offers for sale, cheap for cash, two valuable building lots in the Village of Everton, being No. 132 and No. 133, as laid out on the map made by Wm Haskins, Esq, P L S.—There are two-fifths of an acre of land in the two lots, and being close to the Disciples' Meeting House, and in a central part of the Village, form excellent sites for building on. For terms apply at the MERCURY Office, or (if by letter post-paid) to

DUNCAN ROBERTSON Everton P O

Guelph, Nov. 15th, 1867. wtf

DOMINION SALOON,

(LATE GRAND'S SHADES SALOON,)

OPPOSITE THE MARKET,

GUELPH.

CHOICE LIQUORS, Cigars, Oysters, &c., &c., always on hand. **Meals furnished at all Hours.**

DENIS BUNYAN.

Guelph, December 2, 1867. dawly

DEVON BULL FOR SALE

FOR sale by the subscriber, the Devon Bull "Prince William," 4 years old. He has taken eight premiums at the Provincial and County Shows, and also at the last New York State Fair. He is the best bull of the Devon breed in Canada. Apply to

GEO. RUDD,
Puslinch Plains, Guelph P O

Guelph, 9th December, 1867. w4

CARD OF THANKS.

THE subscriber begs to acknowledge the payment in full of his claim again the Puslinch Mutual Fire Insurance Company for the loss sustained on the 8th July last, by fire, in the destruction of his dwelling House and contents. Absence from the Township prevented his publicly acknowledging earlier the prompt manner in which the Company paid his claim.

JOHN CARTER.

Puslinch, 13th December, 1867. w1

CHEAP Photographs

W. BURGESS

BEGS leave to inform his friends and the public of Guelph and surrounding country that having received a large lot of **FRAMES** suitable for

Christmas Presents,

he will through the HOLIDAYS furnish all kinds of Photographs at greatly

REDUCED PRICES.

Parties wishing to make presents of Photographs to their friends should call at once.

PICTURES

of all kinds furnished in the first style of the art.

☞ Gallery above John A. Wood's Grocery Store.

W. BURGESS.

Guelph, 18th December, 1867. dw

THE BARCLAY

SEWING MACHINE.

WITHOUT any exceptions, the Barclay Sewing Machine, Manufactured by the British American Sewing Machine Company,

AT PARIS, ONTARIO,

are the best in the Dominion of Canada for general purposes. An examination is merely requested, which will be to the advantage of those intending to purchase. All machines warranted.

Also, Agent for the DALTON KNITTING MACHINES, one of the best machines in the market.

Apply to
MOSES BECHTEL,
General Agent for the County of Wellington

Blair P.O., Dec. 4th, 1867

G. A. D. C.

FIRST APPEARANCE
OF THE
Guelph Amateur

DRAMATIC CLUB!

THE above Club will make their first appearance in the

TOWN HALL,

ON

Monday Evening, Dec. 30th

On which occasion will be produced for the first time here George Almar's celebrated Drama, in two acts, entitled

"The Charcoal Burner,"

or "The Dropping Well of Knaresboro."

To conclude with an amusing afterpiece by all the members of the Club. For particulars see programme. Admission 25 cents; Reserved seats 50 cents. For sale at the Book and Drug Stores, and also by the Members of the Club.

MR. VALE, Leader of Orchestra. MORRIS ARMOUR, Manager.

Guelph, 14th December, 1867. dtd

Gold & Silver Plating

A. HOWIE & CO.

Royal Hotel Buildings, James-st.,

HAMILTON.

Watches, Chains, Rings Pencil Cases, and all kinds of Jewelry Plated in Gold.

Tea Setts Cake Baskets, Knives, Forks, Spoons, &c., Plated at reasonable rates.

Also, Door Plates & Carriage Trimmings

of every description done to order with neatness and despatch.

Orders from a distance punctually attended to.

Hamilton, November 23 1867. dw3m

GEORGE PALMER

BARRISTER and Attorney-at-Law, Solicitor in Chancery, Notary Public and Conveyancer. Office, No. 2, Day's Block, Guelph

NOTICE!

Opposite the MARKET.

Opposite the MARKET.

1,000 MEN WANTED

At the ELEPHANT Clothing Emporium

TO FILL THOSE

OVERCOATS and PEA JACKETS

which range in price from $3.50 upwards. During the present month

SMITH & BOTSFORD

will sell their CLOTHING at prices much lower than that of any other house in Guelph. It is now generally admitted that this is the only Store in town where real Bargains can be obtained.

Commercial Bank Bills taken at par.

SMITH & BOTSFORD.

Guelph, 11th December, 1867. dw-tf

DIRECT IMPORTATIONS

OF STAPLE AND FANCY

DRY GOODS!

AT THE BRADFORD HOUSE.

GEORGE JEFFREY

Has much pleasure in announcing the arrival of his

FALL AND WINTER STOCK!

WHICH WILL BE FOUND ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE IN CANADA. HE WOULD PARTICULARLY DIRECT ATTENTION TO A FEW DEPARTMENTS:

SILKS, Black and Coloured.
REPS, PRINCESS' CLOTHS,
MANTLE CLOTHS,
Some things Quite New.

And every other description of Goods will be shown as they appear in the Market.

GEORGE JEFFREY.

Guelph, September 21st 1867. d

GREAT SALE OF

BOOTS AND SHOES

PREST & HEPBURN

WILL COMMENCE

On Monday next, 23rd Dec.,

To sell off their entire Stock of Imported Goods

At Cost and Under!

and will continue until the whole is CLEARED OUT, as they intend in future to keep nothing but their **own manufacture.** This will be the best opportunity ever offered in the Town of Guelph to buy cheap Boots and Shoes, as the

Whole Stock will be sold without Reserve for Cash only.

PREST & HEPBURN.

Guelph, 16th October, 1867.

☞ Come and See the Bargains at the ☜

RUTHERFORD HOUSE!

DRY GOODS, CLOTHING

And a Cheap lot of Ladies' and Gentlemen's Underclothing,

All of which we are determined to sell cheaper than any house in the town, and our

Groceries, Crockery and Liquors are Cheaper than ever

Just Arrived from Newfoundland

100 Barrels Latest Caught Labrador Herrings,
100 Half Barrels Latest Caught Labrador Herrings,

which can be confidently recommended as the best imported this year.

Commercial Bank Bills taken at par.

Guelph, November 14, 1867. daw