

14/12/3
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box file

LOCAL LETTERS TO THE

Account of the 1838 Snowstorm: Empir tions: Is an Egg Board Wanted? Free Bu for Infirmary Nurses.

FROM

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by Mr H. M.

L. Morrison
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invitations:—

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and Mrs Bews, Mr
Mr and Mrs Brand,
l. Huntly, Miss M.
J. F. Grucksank,
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and Mrs Davidson,
Miss Dey, Mr W.
nas A. Davidson,
ynnie, Miss H. A.
Mr Calder, Aber-
L. H. M. Fraser,
Darnier, Inach, Mr
Forrest, Banff, Mr
rdon, Huntly, Miss
Inverurie, Mr and
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Mr and Mrs Horn-
on, Cairnion; Mr
Miss J. Henderson,
one and partner,
Police Station,
Miss S. M. Lovie,
Huntly, Mr I.
tinty, Affleck; Mr
Misses C. and J.
A. Milver, Miss

M. McConachie,
M'Kay, Miss N.
Miss E. Menzies,
Mr J. Milne,
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Mearns, Miss G.
Mrs V. Matthews,
ellscat; Miss C.
and Mrs Morris-
Huntly; Miss M.
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Huntly,
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and Mrs J. S.
Miss B. Reid,
erford, Mr and
Mr A. Robson,
Mr J. Rait, Miss

Miss H. Spence,
S. Simpson, Miss
and Mrs C. C.
Turriff; Mr P.
Mr and Miss
on, Huntly, Miss
A. and R. Thom-
and Mrs A. M.

Whitecross, Mr
Mrs R.
r and

The Muckle Storm of 1838
Sir,—George Webster, the Sheriff
Officer, stationed at Oldmeldrum, was
born in 1801, and would have been
thirty-seven years of age in the year of
the "Muckle Storm"—1838. His duties
called him to the greater part of Aber-
deenshire, so that his recorded experi-
ences may satisfy your inquiring cor-
respondent in the "Press and Journal."

The snowstorm lasted altogether just
three months. It commenced on Janu-
ary 8, when snow fell continuously for
the next eighteen days.

There was no communication between
Aberdeen and Inverness either by coach
or horseback, but a gentleman, having
very urgent business, left his carriage at
Elgin and managed to get south on
horseback via the Glens o' Foudland,
where the twelve-feet-deep snow was
frozen over, and thus carried the horse
and rider so far of the journey.

On February 17 it is reported that the
snow was still falling, and the frost was
more intense than at the beginning of
winter, and was more severe than had
ever been experienced by the living
generation in the neighbourhood.

In some rooms, where clothes were
drying, they became like a sheet of ice
notwithstanding that they were within
sight of the fire. "The temperature this
week has been equal to the temperature
of any part of the States, and, generally
speaking, of Canada, too.

"It was a prodigious storm; the snow
lay to such a depth that the roads were
straikit owre between the tops of the
dykes." The only kind of foot road was
on the top of dykes.

Mr Webster was on the roads for
eighteen days, and amongst other things
assisted the mail-gig driver to reach
Oldmeldrum from Aberdeen. They
plunged along—riding bits and travel-
ling bits—through fields "an' a' gate,"
till they were a mile beyond New-
machar. It was drifting thick and get-
ting dark, and all of a sudden Mr
Webster was faced with something into
which he bumped. He called to the gig
driver. "Hulloa, Geordie, there's the
milestone; we'll soon be at the Inn of
Whiterashes and get a gweed boose to
make up for this."

As it turned out, there was no such
luck, for the supposed milestone was
nothing else than the lum of a house.
Mr Webster then engaged in conversa-
tion down the lum with the tenants, who
pleaded to be released, but the only
reply from Webster was, "Man, a' the
sodgers i' the barracks 'o' Aiberdeen
couldna lat ye oot wi' a day's wark."

Since 1838 the worst winters of the
writer's experience were those of 1881
and 1895, in which year one Sunday
afternoon hundreds of Aberdonians
walked 'over the ice on the River Dee
from the Bridge of Dee to Cults, and
the thickness of ice was such as to carry
the crowd without a single mishap.—W.

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