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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 4th, 2020

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

Great news on the vaccines becoming available with the UK taking the lead. Seems the UK is best placed in the world for availability of various vaccines. The Oxford one is the most affordable one and can be stored in ordinary refrigerators.

Seems my forecast last week on spikes in Covid-19 cases in the USA was correct. I really don't understand why people won't wear a mask or self distance.

Still plenty conflicting news on Brexit but we are within just a few weeks from getting a resolution.

I watched President Trump/s 45 minute speech to the people of the US and looks like he is correct in wanting an investigation into the voting results. Apparently CNN refused to show it but it's available on YouTube and I have a link in the News section to it.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our ScotNews feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as world news stories that can affect Scotland and all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in a number of newspapers you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

The mysterious footprints left at a fort for Gaelic kings

In peace and war, kings from all over Northern Britain gathered on this rocky outcrop in an isolated spot deep in Argyll.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/heritage-and-retro/heritage/mysterious-footprints-left-fort-gaelic-kings-3049068>

Focus Group Report

These Islands' first round of focus groups spoke to voters who were No in 2014, Remain in 2016, and are now indy-curious

Read more at:

https://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/i363/focus_groups_report.aspx

Oxford vaccine can give UK international relations a shot in the arm

Let's put the Oxford vaccine to work and help billions of people abroad

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/oxford-vaccine-can-give-uk-international-relations-a-shot-in-the-arm>

Governor General Announces 114 New Appointments to the Order of Canada

Created in 1967, the Order of Canada is one of our country's highest honours. Presented by the governor general, the Order

honours people whose service shapes our society; whose innovations ignite our imaginations; and whose compassion unites our communities.

Read more at:

<https://www.gg.ca/en/media/news/2020/governor-general-announces-114-new-appointments-order-canada>

Historic Kinora flipbook footage of Wick saved for the future

Five rare footage reels which offer a glimpse of life in Scotland in the early 1900s have been restored by experts.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-scotland-55064550>

Scotland needs direct democracy not an authoritarian leader

The Coronavirus pandemic on top of debt, perceived rip-off education, unaffordable housing and seeming rot in the heart of politics - is creating the very conditions where people will reject (possibly violently) the status quo.

Read more at:

https://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkpolitics/articles.html?read_full=14353

Canada bans mass exports of prescription drugs

Canada has banned the export of some prescription medicines in order to prevent a shortage in the country. The decision is in response to a US plan that would allow for drugs to be imported from Canada to make them cheaper for Americans.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55119428>

Canada unveils largest economic relief package since WW2

Canada's federal government will spend C\$100bn (\$77bn, £58bn) to kick-start the country's post-pandemic economy.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55139229>

Spikkin Scots: Listen to the different dialects of Scotland with our interactive map

With voices changing every 20 miles, it's difficult to quantify exactly how many dialects come under the Scots language umbrella.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/1759234/spikkin-scots-listen-to-the-different-dialects-of-scotland-with-our-interactive-map/>

Let's stand up to China's bullying by buying Australian wine

All Western countries must form a united front against China's aggression

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/in-vino-veritas-lets-stand-up-to-chinas-bullying-by-buying-australian-wine/>

Does suicide data in Scotland matter?

In mid-pandemic, does suicide data in Scotland matter? Of course it does... Or does it? The bottom line sadly is that Scottish Government does not appear to think so because it is doing absolutely nothing to capture that current data.

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/JohnMacmillan549a.html>

Tesco ready for no deal Brexit! Everything done to continue trading says supermarket CEO

THE boss of Tesco has confirmed Britain's largest supermarket chain is ready for Brexit regardless of the outcome of trade talks between the UK and EU.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1367833/Tesco-supermarket-Brexit-no-deal-trading-CEO-Ken-Murphy-latest-update>

President Trump gives what he says may be the most important speech he's ever made

Watch his 45 minute speech on the Election.

Watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5612-President-Trump-gives-what-he-says-may-be-the-most-important-speech-he-s-ever-made>

Scottish National Investment Bank's three missions set out

Fiona Hyslop, who has described the bank as the single biggest economic development of the lifetime of this Parliament, announced the finalised missions in Holyrood on Wednesday.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/politics/scottish-politics/1782718/scottish-national-investment-banks-three-missions-set-out/>

What does UK vaccine approval mean for US?

With the UK granting approval to a Covid-19 vaccine that is currently being reviewed in the US, 330 million Americans are left wondering when they will be able to get the potentially life-saving jab.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55149138>

Electric Canadian

Canadian National Parks

Address by Hon. J. B. Harker (1917) (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/canadiannationalparks.pdf>

Knights Templar of Canada

Got in the January 2020 and Summer 2020 newsletters of the Grand Priory of Canada.

You can read these at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/religion/kt.htm>

Canada-Scotland Friendship Group Relaunches on Parliament Hill

Originally founded in 2011 and relaunched on October 27th, 2020, the group is a nonpartisan committee consisting of over 40 Members of Parliament and Senators.

Good afternoon Mr. McIntyre,

On behalf of MP John Barlow, thank you kindly for your email and interest in learning more about this Parliamentary friendship group.

The intention of a Parliamentary friendship group is to expand on and deepen connection between our two countries from a political and governing perspective. Group membership is limited to Members of Parliament and Senators as Parliamentarians for Canada.

That being said, the group meets with organizations and stakeholders from across Canada and Scotland, and we certainly welcome the perspective of those interested on items of importance. If there is a subject or focus you would like Members to be made aware of or focus on (for example expanding student exchange opportunities between our countries, sharing environmental stewardship achievements from one country to another etc) we welcome those suggestions, comments and concerns.

You can email me directly at this email so your comments and suggestions can be brought to the attention of the group executive for consideration for upcoming meeting agendas.

Thanks again for your interest in learning more,

Carley Williamson

Read more at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/canada-scottish.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - 29th November 2020

By the Rev. Nola Crewe which you can watch at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5611-Thoughts-on-a-Sunday-Morning-29th-November-2020>

The Story of the Totem Pole
Or Indian Legends by William Shelton (1923) (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/storyofthetotempole1.pdf>

Silhouettes of the West
From The Globe of September 4th, 1909 (pdf)

You can read this at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/SilhouettesoftheWest1.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Musings of a Tank Commander
Got in Part 22 which you can read at:
<https://electricScotland.com/history/scotreg/tank/index.htm>

Scottish Society of Indianapolis
Got in the Newsletter Holiday edition for 2020 which you can read at:
<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/indianapolis/index.htm>

The Oxford History of the British Empire (1998)
In 5 volumes which you can read at: https://electricScotland.com/independence/sip/britishh_empire.htm

Note that there is a question of copyright on this publication which I got from the Internet archive so perhaps get it while you can.

St. Andrew's Day and Musings on its Masonic Connection
An article from Carson C. Smith, FSA Scot which you can read at:
https://electricScotland.com/history/articles/standrew_masonic.htm

Ross-Ter 2020 End of Year Report
you can read this at:
<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/ross/Ross-terNewsletter38.pdf>

Scottish Banner
Got in the December 2020 issue which you can read at:
<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/scottishbanner/index.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree
Got in the December 2020 section 1 which you can read at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

The Scottish Journal of Agriculture
Volume XIII (1930)

The period of depression through which the agricultural industry in this country has been passing is engaging the serious attention not only of farmers themselves, but of all sections of the community. The decline in agriculture is adversely affecting other spheres of national effort, and there is a growing appreciation of the necessity for improving the conditions and prospects of the industry.

It was thought that at this time readers of the Journal would be interested to view the problem, as it affects Scotland, through the eyes of experienced observers. A number of individuals whose prominent association with our national agriculture entitles them to speak with authority were accordingly invited to contribute a brief note on the subject.

You can read this at: https://electricScotland.com/agriculture/scottish_Journal08.htm

Story

Mythology in the history of Anglo-Scots relations
by Alan Sked

THERE CAN BE little doubt that the relationship with England has been the key factor in the birth, development and for some the decline of the Scottish nation. England is Scotland's larger, richer and more powerful neighbour and all the 'heroes' of Scottish history have been defined by either victory over her or defeat at her hands. Only one, of course, Robert the Bruce, truly achieved victory. The rest – including Wallace, Mary Queen of Scots and Bonnie Prince Charlie – were either executed or driven into exile.

Still, the history of Scotland is so steeped in mythology that this is always overlooked. We Scots like to dress up our past in all its finery, like Montrose on his walk to the scaffold ('dressed more like a bridegroom than a criminal', according to one eye-witness report) and our contemporary Scottish Nationalists seem steeped in medievalism ready to refight the wars of independence all over again. They cleave to a Braveheart vision of the past, however unhistorical it may be.

Mythology was always at the heart of Anglo-Scottish relations.

In 1136 the Welsh monk Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his *Historia Regnum Britanniae* which influenced English thought for centuries. This was supposedly the history of the British from their first arrival in Britain in the twelfth century BC under King Brutus, the great-grandson of the Trojan hero Aeneas, until their overthrow in the seventh century AD by the Angles and Saxons. Geoffrey's book was important because it for the first time introduced characters such as King Lear, Cymbeline and Merlin, not to mention King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. More than that, by giving future English dynasties an ancient foundation, it became the basis of a national mythology which was continued in Caxton's *Chronicles of England* (1480), Higden's *Polychronicon* (1482) and a flood of books right into the Tudor period written by authors such as Edward Hall, Richard Grafton and Raphael Holinshed. After the Reformation, indeed, it became almost apocalyptic. England became an 'elect nation' and according to Bishop Aylmer, God was an Englishman.

Moreover, it became very dangerous, for pupils of Geoffrey added that after the death of King Brutus the British kingdom had been divided. His eldest son inherited Loegria (England), his second Albany (Scotland) and the third Cambria (Wales) and under feudal law, the English king held seniority over the other two. Worse still, by the time of King Arthur, this monarch ruled all of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Scandinavia and Gaul, with Scotland as a tributary state, whose kings for centuries paid homage to England's ruler.

Over the course of centuries this mythology became a powerful ideological weapon used to justify aggression against the Scots. Edward I, Henry V, and Henry VI all based their right to conquer Scotland on their descent from Brutus. Henry VIII likewise justified his claim to Scotland on his 'Trojan-English' ancestry. No king, he said had 'more just title, more evident title, more certayn title, to any realm ... than we have to Scotland.'

One almost inevitable reaction to this English ideology was the creation of a Scottish counter-ideology, which was used in international diplomacy at the same time as Edward submitted his claim to Scotland to the Pope in 1301. Then the Declaration of Arbroath of 1320, also laid before the Pope, claimed that Scotland had had 113 kings of her own and had never been ruled by a foreigner. The full exposition of the Scottish counter-ideology, however, had to wait till the monk, John of Fordoun, published his *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* between 1384 and 1387, later continued until 1437 under the title *Scotichronicon*.

Fordoun disputed that Brutus had ever ruled the entire island, which, he maintained had been called Albion, whereas the Roman name Britannia had only referred to England. The Scottish nation, he explained, was descended from a Greek prince named Gathelus (the Greeks, remember, had conquered the Trojans) and an Egyptian princess called Scota who had married about 1,500 BC. The Scots had subsequently wandered from the Mediterranean through the Pillars of Hercules and reached the west of Scotland, via Spain and Ireland. There they founded their kingdom in 330 BC under King Fergus I. After forty-five further kings and a period of exile lasting forty-three years the Kingdom of Scotland was re-established in 403 AD, from which date, despite English hostility, it had been ruled by independent Scottish monarchs.

Like Geoffrey's *Historia*, the *Scotichronicon* dominated Scottish historical consciousness till well into the sixteenth century and had many interpreters, the most prominent being Hector Boece, Principal of the University of St. Andrews whose *Scotorum Historiae* was published in 1527. He used the tale of the forty-five fictitious kings as a constitutional and moral warning against corruption, which would, he feared, undermine the country's stability. The power of this Scottish mythology declined from the sixteenth century but was never completely broken. When Charles II was restored he had a Dutch master, Jacob de Witt, paint a series of one hundred and eleven portraits of the Scottish kings, starting with Fergus I in 330 BC right up to himself and his brother James (the future James VII and II) on the walls of Holyrood Palace. Hence the legend was used as a source of royal legitimacy as late as 1660.

The original purpose of the legend had been to legitimise Scottish independence. This seemed to have been established by Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn in 1314. And legally, of course, it had been. Yet Scottish independence remained fragile. The country was often invaded, defeated and humiliated by the English. As early as 1332 and 1333 two full scale Scottish armies were cut to pieces and their leaders slain. In 1356 Edward III again invaded Scotland devastating the South East counties in the so-called 'Burnt Candlemas'. Under Robert II attacks on England (usually at the behest of the French) brought punitive expeditions by John of Gaunt, who first ransomed Edinburgh and later burnt it. In 1400 Henry IV also led an army to Edinburgh while in 1402 the 'the

flower of chivalry of the whole realm of Scotland' was captured and held to ransom at Homildon Hill. Scotland's greatest defeat, however, came at Flodden in 1513 where the king (James IV) died along with his illegitimate son, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, two other bishops, three abbots, one dean, fourteen earls, about the same number of lords, three Highland chiefs, and a great number of lairds. Yet as a distinguished historian remarked: there was 'nothing novel about a heavy defeat at the hands of the English and Flodden was neither the first nor the last in a long series.' One need not list them all. The final humiliation, of course, was Scotland's defeat, conquest and occupation by Oliver Cromwell in the 1650s. Remarkably, there is no folk memory of this at all among contemporary Scots, unlike the visceral memory of Cromwell's record in Ireland among the Irish.

The independent kingdom unfortunately suffered other woes besides English invasions. It was cursed for example by a succession of royal minorities. In the period 1406-1488 there was no adult ruler for thirty-eight years. After Flodden in 1513 there were three royal minorities, so that in the space of more than seventy years there were no more than twenty-two years' rule by a monarch of a mature age. Mary Queen of Scots became queen when only a week old; James VI was crowned at thirteen months; and David II became king at the age of five. Worst of all were the cases of David II and James I, both kings were captured by the English and kept as virtual prisoners by them. David II, defeated in battle, was kept in England from 1346 till 1357 and was only released when Scotland agreed to pay an exorbitant ransom for him (the ransom was continually renegotiated). James I was captured by English pirates and kept a prisoner from 1406 till 1424 and also had to pay a large sum to secure his freedom.

Scotland was also subject to noble factionalism, the fifteenth century being particularly lawless. Both James I and James III were murdered while the reign of James II saw a bitter struggle between him and the Black Douglases. Before his own murder James III had to experience the murder of his own favourites by a dissident nobility. The independent Scotland created by Bruce therefore remained at the mercy of the English who invaded and devastated it and held its kings to ransom. Moreover it was a poor and lawless place as the above-mentioned murders affirm. In 1398 the chronicler of Moray wrote that 'there was no law in Scotland but he who was stronger oppressed him who was weaker.' Crimes went unpunished and justice 'lay in exile outwith the bounds of the country.' Some kings, it is true—James V for example—did try to impose justice but a prominent historian could write of Scotland as late as the 1660s as 'a country which could not afford and did not know how to administer any system of regular policing.' Independent Scotland in fact could hardly defend or administer itself.

One great hope of salvation lay with the French. An alliance with France would surely create security. But the effectiveness of the Auld Alliance is just another Scottish myth.

Alan Sked was educated at Allan Glen's School in Glasgow, before going on to study Modern and Medieval History at the University of Glasgow, followed by a DPhil in Politics at Merton College, Oxford. Sked taught at the London School of Economics where he became a leading authority on the history of the Hapsburg Empire, also teaching US and modern intellectual history and the history of sex, race and slavery. Alan Sked is now Emeritus Professor of International History at the London School of Economics.

END.

And that's it for this week and hope you all have a great weekend and mind and keep your distance, wash your hands and stay safe. Don't be stupid or selfish and instead be considerate of others and wear a mask if going shopping or into a crowded place and consider whether you should indeed go into a crowded space in the first place.

Alastair