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WHATS NEW

## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for July 2nd, 2021

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

### Electric Scotland News

Invitation to next online meeting for Fellows in Canada

I'm writing to invite you to the second online meeting for Fellows in Canada, held via video conference (Zoom).

Fellows' Meeting – 5pm (BST), Thursday 22nd of July

(N.B. 5pm in the UK (BST) is 12noon in Quebec/Toronto/Montreal and 9am in Vancouver)

Thank you to Dr Mairi Cowan FSA Scot for kindly agreeing to give a talk at the online meeting.

Dr Mairi Cowan is an Associate Professor at the Department of Historical Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga, and the title of her talk is:

A Scottish Nun in New France? Marie Hirouïn de la Conception in Seventeenth-Century Québec

These smaller group online meetings (one hour long via Zoom) provide several useful opportunities for Fellows, including:

- An opportunity for Fellows to (virtually) meet each other and make new connections.
- An opportunity to (virtually) meet Society staff and to find out more about the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the various research projects supported either through Society grant funding, Publications, Dig It! or Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF).
- And a good opportunity to learn about an aspect of a fellow Fellow's research in a short presentation.

The day before the meeting I will send the Zoom link and login details to you by email.

I look forward to seeing you via Zoom then.

With best wishes,

Andrea

Andrea Kaszewski  
Fellowship & Development Manager  
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

Email Andrea at: [Andrea@socantscot.org](mailto:Andrea@socantscot.org) if you'd like to participate.

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I added another entry to my Canadian Journal which covers update on the Pandemic, findings of massed burials on residential lands, and other matters which you can read at: [http://www.electriccanadian.com/canada\\_add6.htm](http://www.electriccanadian.com/canada_add6.htm)

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 and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. 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.

Damning data exposes horrendous abuse - Sturgeon under fire

He also accused the SNP of letting down thousands of domestic abuse victims on account of its "soft-touch justice attitude". New data show that Scottish police recorded 62,907 incidents of domestic abuse in 2019-20. This represents an increase of four percent compared to the previous year and is also the fourth consecutive year that cases have risen.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1454351/nicola-sturgeon-rise-in-domestic-abuse-figures-snp-jamie-greene-scottish-tories-ont>

Like steam before it, Fusion provides huge opportunities for Scotland and the Union  
TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGHS start not with a big bang but a whimper. Our lives are busy, events are fleeting and so all too often discoveries are made in laboratories, improved on in small workshops and so the world finds it has changed.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2021/06/like-steam-before-it-fusion-provides-huge-opportunities-for-scotland-and-the-union/>

William Blake: Biography offers glimpse into artist and poet's visionary mind

One day in 1801, when William Blake was living on the Sussex coast, he went on a long country walk when he got into an argument with a thistle. On this occasion, the prickly plant he encountered also took the form of a hectoring old man. For all Blake could see, the two were inseparable.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-57419544>

Sea shanty singer on going from postie to popstar  
Nathan Evans rose from TikTok sea shanty fame.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-scotland-57613096>

The OECD education report does not offer a solution, it is now part of the problem  
The truth is that the review is not definitive, quite the opposite. It is philosophically shallow. It is badly written. It is not based on any kind of systematic statistical evidence. In the absence of that, it has committed the cardinal error of non-statistical research: it did not deliberately seek out evidence that would contradict the views that were being put to the authors by the mainly establishment organisations which they consulted. Along with Curriculum for Excellence and Scotland's dysfunctional system of qualifications, the review is now part of the problem.

Read more at:

<https://thinksotland.org/2021/06/the-oecd-education-report-does-not-offer-a-solution-it-is-now-part-of-the-problem/>

Nicola Sturgeon's unending search for conflict demeans Scotland - The Scotsman  
I made the mistake of turning on BBC Radio Scotland in time to hear Nicola Sturgeon's grievance of the day - involving a song written by primary kids in Bradford.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/nicola-sturgeons-unending-search-for-conflict-demeans-scotland-brian-wilson-3286580>

Canada weather: Heat hits record 46.6C as US north-west also sizzles  
Canada has recorded its highest ever temperature as the country's west and the US Pacific north-west frazzle in an unprecedented heatwave.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57634700>

Canada country profile

The world's second-largest country by surface but relatively small in terms of population, Canada punches above its weight in economic terms.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-16841111>

Ireland thrown under the bus by EU: Without UK to defend it, Dublin faces wrath of bloc  
IRELAND is a lonely outlier after Brexit, facing the prospect of being trampled by its European Union partners over its low-tax status, an expert has claimed.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1455859/Brexit-news-Ireland-EU-UK-corporation-tax-foreign-direct-investment-latest>

Sir Billy Connolly announces return to TV after Parkinson's diagnosis  
SIR BILLY CONNOLLY has announced he will be making a return to TV after he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2013.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/showbiz/tv-radio/1456460/Sir-Billy-Connolly-return-TV-Parkinsons-diagnosis-latest-news>

The Orange Order in Scotland today  
By Sir Tom Devine

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/TomDevine577a.html>

Cervical cancer scandal is likely to be worse than we are being told  
WHENEVER there appears to be an emerging scandal in NHS Scotland it will inevitably be fulminant. Such is the secrecy that clouds everything the SNP touches public relations silence is no exception.

Read more at:

<https://thinksotland.org/2021/06/cervical-cancer-scandal-is-likely-to-be-worse-than-we-are-being-told/>

Museum exhibit honours Scotland's Polish parachute brigade  
Mementoes from a Polish parachute brigade formed in the UK during World War Two have gone on display in Fife.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-57636725>

UK agrees new post-Brexit deal with Singapore  
THE UK has secured a new post-Brexit agreement with Singapore in a deal hailed by Rishi Sunak as a landmark step for global Britain.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1456632/Brexit-news-trade-deal-Singapore-financial-services-rishi-sunak>

Trans-Pacific trade is a big Brexit win  
Several aspects of the CPTPP are much more attractive than EU membership

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/trans-pacific-trade-is-a-big-brexit-win/>

Net Zero by 2050 may be the law, but we still have no idea how much it will cost  
The commitment to net zero by 2050 arose from the tragicomedy of Theresa May's premiership

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/net-zero-by-2050-may-be-the-law-but-we-still-have-no-idea-how-much-it-will-cost>

## Electric Canadian

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - the 27th day of June 2021  
By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26060-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-27th-june-2021>

## The Buffalo Runners

A Tale of the Red River Plains by R. M. Ballantyne (1890) (pdf)

Nearly all the incidents in this tale are either facts, or founded on fact. The region in which the scenes were enacted, although now within the fringe of civilisation with the large and populous city of Winnipeg as its centre, formed—at the time I write of and still later when I sojourned there part of the almost unknown wilderness of Rupert's Land. R. M. B.

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/buffalorunners.pdf>

## Ontario Apple Growers

Annual Report for Year Ending October 31, 2019

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/applegrowers2019.pdf>

## Worst Canadian Stories

Collected & Edited by Crad Kilodney in two volumes (1987)

Several years ago I was sitting in the apartment of a writer friend along with a number of mutual literary acquaintances.

We were talking about the latest in the never-ending stream of Canadian story anthologies, which, predictably, was unremarkable -- neither terrible nor great -- and which had gotten a so-so review in *The Globe*. And, equally predictably it was destined to sell about 400 copies and then get remaindered.

"How do you get people to read a story anthology in this country?" moaned one of my compatriots in a drunken state.

Another friend (even drunker) replied, "Get the best writers! Demand their best work! Pay them big bucks! Put out a huge, lavish f—ing book! Take out full-page ads in the papers! Then nobody will be able to ignore it!" He put down his beer bottle with an emphatic clunk and promptly fell off his chair.

"I beg to differ," I replied calmly over my Dr. Pepper and rye. "I believe one should do the exact opposite. Dig up the most dreadful stories by the most untalented writers you can find -- if necessary, trick them into thinking you're doing a 'normal' anthology -- and publish the anthology as a book of humor. If it's truly dreadful, it'll sell, even without advertising, and I predict it would outsell most story anthologies published in this country."

This suggestion was greeted with appreciative laughter. My friends agreed the idea was brilliant, but perhaps too brilliant for Canada. They said I'd end up doing it myself and peddling it on the street. I said if it came to that, fine.

The next day, when I was sober, I still liked the idea. In fact, I liked it even more. It was either the most horribly tasteless idea or the most innovative brainstorm in the history of CanLit. I promptly called up D., an editor acquaintance of mine. I explained the idea to him. He said it sounded interesting and told me to go ahead and assemble such a collection. If it proved to be as funny as I made it out to be, he'd publish it under his imprint.

Now, don't ask me how I obtained these stories. By hook or by crook, as they say, and with the help of a few accomplices who don't want to be named. It took longer than I expected.

Any writer who showed a bit of talent had to be ruled out. To qualify, a writer had to be completely rotten or at

least deranged. Many months later, I was back to D. with a thick file, which I left with him.

Three days later, he called me back. "I can't publish this. It's awful!"

"It's supposed to be awful," I said.

"But it's awful in ways that are just too offensive. I'm sorry, I've got to say no."

I wasn't discouraged. Humor, after all, is a matter of taste, and D. is a rather serious chap. So I showed the file to several other literary people. Here are their reactions:

"Hilarious, but any publisher who did such a book would be blacklisted by all the arts councils."

"Funny but too offensive."

"I'd love to do it, but I'd get killed. You can't get away with this in Canada."

"I hate the whole idea. You're making a mockery of Canadian literature."

"Unspeakably tasteless, not to mention cruel to hold up untalented writers to ridicule."

"Is this for a joke or what? I don't get it." (Managing Editor of a major publishing house.)

"It's too good, Kilodney. I laughed so hard I wet my pants. But to take such a collection to my publisher? Forget it. Why don't you publish it yourself?"

And so it's come to that. Here it is: a collection of some of the worst stories ever written in the English language, and all of them by Canadians! You've never heard of any of these writers, and I dare say you never will again.

Unless, of course, some of them decide to sue me, which is highly unlikely because unknown writers only want to see themselves in print, and they don't cave where!

One last comment: I haven't corrected any of the mistakes in the original manuscripts, because I didn't want to tamper with anyone's artistic integrity (cough). I only wish all the other editors in this country would take an equally noble attitude toward the writers they're supposed to serve.

Then CanLit would start to get really interesting.

Crad Kilodney  
Toronto.

A great collection of interesting stories which you can read at:  
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/worstcanadianstories.htm>

## Electric Scotland

The Journal of Scottish Historical Studies (formerly Scottish Economic and Social History) is published by Edinburgh University Press on behalf of the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland. It is a fully double-blind peer-reviewed outlet for the best research in social, economic and cultural history, in historical geography and anthropology, and in historical

theory. It includes regular research and review articles, news and book reviews, and also has occasional interviews, symposia on key books, and appreciations of incidents, sources and ideas in the writing of Scotland's history.

You can read more about them at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/journal.htm>

Beth's Video Talks

Got in her talk for June 30th 2021 - A 1600's history lesson

You can view this at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/videos.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in Section 1 of her July 2021 issue.

Hi Everyone,

I am so delighted that I am able to send this to you from home and I did not have to go and have somewhere scan it for me. After all the work and frustration of mine - and, Lordy, the techs at Epson, it was a matter of checking a box to make the text readable. Whew. The little unexplained puddle you see near you is ME becoming untied of the knots that have been present for the last few weeks even in my gizzard! I especially thank executive, Milton, from Epson!

So, both the problems from the last issue are solved. The pages are straight thanks to something called "skew on" and the copy is readable.

The other good news is that Tom only found a couple of errors in this publication. As a perk from AOL, I get something called Grammarly for free. I did sign up for the more advanced one as I try and run most everything that comes to me for publication through Grammarly. (That means I simply copy and paste it to an email that does not get sent. Little red lines come up everywhere there are errors, from commas and other punctuation to spelling and even suggestions if there is an awkward sentence.) It is a wonderful boon to anyone who is an editor!

In this issue and on the front page is something I know will be wonderful! The Royal Household Division's Military Musical's Spectacular has tickets that are dear, 220 British pounds each. However, from all of the events and goodies that go along with that, it is a bargain! Just reading about it was fun!

This reminds me of when my lifelong friend, Marti, and I were in London and happened by the stables where the horses who attend the Queen live. They came riding out and several of them left wee bits of, er, er, horse poop on the ground. I made a dive to collect some and Marti hollered at me. I wanted to dry it and put it in a wee glass globe as a souvenir of the day. I also wanted to roll in the lavender field we visited and Marti wouldn't let me. I love Marti to this day, but wish I had gone ahead and done both of those things!

You'll learn about "strange to us" things that Scots consider completely normal!

Oh, and I am so sorry, but I made an error last Wednesday when I did my video for Alastair at electric Scotland. First, I must explain. Regular English is not my native language. I was born in the South and I spoke that language until I went to work in radio. At that time, I went to "Speech School." I was told I must learn to speak clearly which meant pronouncing the endings on all words! Last Wednesday, I was talking about pronunciations in Scotland. Edinburgh does not rhyme with Pittsburg and I said the ending was "boro."

In Scotland, it is not. A kind Scottish gentleman wrote Alastair and said that correctly, it is "bura." I really think I say that normally. However, I apologize and will do so on the video this Wednesday.

Remember to send me changes to your email. Please remember to send me Flowers of the Forest. Your Clan doings are welcome too. Send photos from the Scottish Games and a wee article and I'll help publicize your Clan! (FREE, no strings.) Send in your genealogical queries and any ideas you have. Everything is free, of course.

Stay safe and be careful. The virus is still out there.

Aye,

beth

You can get to this issue at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Reminiscences and Essays

By James Montgomery Stuart (1884). Includes a very good essay on The Ayrshire Ploughman and the Ettrick Shepherd.

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/books/pdf/ReminiscencesandEssays%20.htm>

Charters of the Abbey of Crosraguel

By F. C. Hunter Blair in two volumes (1886) Constant instances occur in these papers of the care which they devoted to farming, to the working of the coal-heughes, to the cultivation of woods, orchards, gardens; to the development of the fine arts, such as music and architecture; to philosophy, science, theology, and other literary pursuits. Without doubt they did much to keep alive in the hearts of the country people a knowledge of right and wrong in very stormy times.

#### Preface

THIS collection comprises all the documents at present known to exist relative to the history of Crosraguel Abbey. The Chartulary or Register of the Monastery, which was quoted by several writers of last century, and was actually in the possession of the Earl of Cassillis in 1729, has been irretrievably lost; and when I commenced some years ago to collect and edit these Charters, the only materials at hand were a few worthless legends, to be sternly discarded by the historian.

The present collection will, it is hoped, be found to contain much that is entirely new to our local history, and to give a tolerably complete narrative of the fortunes of the Abbey, with many glimpses at its interior economy, for a period of over 350 years. There are many gaps in the sequence of events, notably during the latter part of the fourteenth, and earlier part of the fifteenth centuries. Yet those were the dark ages in our national history, and few monasteries can boast of many memorials of that stormy period, save sacrilege, plunder, and oppression. The cream of the collection is undoubtedly the series of muniments from the charter chest of the Marquess of Ailsa at Culzean, to whose courtesy in allowing the documents to be printed the Association is much indebted.

Looking to the fact that the private collections throughout the country constitute an almost unexplored mine of historical wealth, we cannot too highly commend Lord Ailsa's public spirited example.

The Charters themselves are printed, as usual, without the old contractions, which only serve to puzzle and fail to instruct. I have endeavoured to weave them into a continuous narrative in the Introduction, which, with the Explanatory Notes, will enable the reader, it is hoped, to follow with ease and interest the fortunes of an opulent Ayrshire Abbey from its foundation to its fall.



Engravings are given of many of the most important among the charters, seals, and royal autographs; and the reproduction of several old prints of the Abbey will be found to be of interest.

In conclusion, I must express my thanks to those who have at all times given me generous assistance in the work, which has been essentially a labour of love; especially to Mr. Cochran-Patrick; to the Rev. J. Cameron Lees, D.D., St. Giles, Edinburgh; to Mr. Joseph Bain, London; to Lord Talbot of Malahide; to M. Bruel, Archeviste Publique, Paris; to Mr. Thomas Dickson, of the Register House; to the Rev. Walter Macleod; to Mr. Vans Agnew of Barnbarroch; to the Rev. J. F. S. Gordon, D.D.; to the Keepers of the various Public Libraries; and to many others. A special need of praise is due to Mr. James Morris, FSA Scot., for the care and skill which he has displayed in executing the drawings of the existing ruins of the Abbey buildings, and for his valuable remarks on their architectural history.

F. C. Hunter Blair  
Blairquhan, Maybole, April 1886.

## THE HISTORY OF THE ABBEY

THE Abbey of S. Mary of Crosraguel has not hitherto been widely known in Scottish history for two reasons; (1) the loss of the Chartulary and the consequently scattered condition of the Charters and other documents, which have been collected from many different sources, and are now printed together for the first time; (2) the fact that its Abbots did not, with few exceptions, play as important a part in public affairs as the heads of other monastic establishments. Yet they were men held in high honour in their own country. Many of them, as we shall find, sat in the various Parliaments of three hundred years; some of their number were from time to time members of the Privy Council, Commissioners of State, Royal Ambassadors, and high legal functionaries; and under their rule the Abbey was a centre of light to the surrounding districts. The monks of Crosraguel were the agriculturists and the schoolmasters of the time.

Constant instances occur in these papers of the care which they devoted to farming, to the working of the coal-heughes, to the cultivation of woods, orchards, gardens; to the development of the fine arts, such as music and architecture; to philosophy, science, theology, and other literary pursuits. Without doubt they did much to keep alive in the hearts of the country people a knowledge of right and wrong in very stormy times.

We shall find two leading features in tracing the history of Crosraguel from its foundation; first, a continuous endeavour on the part of Paisley Abbey to retain its superiority over its dependent house; secondly, a lasting connection between the Abbey itself and the great House of Kennedy, whose dominant influence was humorously expressed in the old saw:

"From Wigton to the town of Ayr,  
Port Patrick and the cruives of Cree;  
Man need not think for to byde there,  
Unless he court with Kennedie."

The Kennedies were maternally descended from the old Earl of Carrick who founded the Abbey, and two of the family were Abbots themselves.

The golden age of Scottish ecclesiastical architecture, inaugurated by David the First, the "sair sanct for the Crown," continued long after that monarch's death, and until the country was deluged with the Wars of Independence.

You can read this at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/history/Crosraguel.htm>

A South Ayrshire Parish

Being articles on the history of the Parish of Dailly by the Late George Turnbull, D.D. edited by Rev. John Torrance, B.D., United Free Church, Dailly (1908) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/gazetteer/Dailly.pdf>

## Story

### SCOTTISH FOLKLORE

Fairies changing a supposed Changeling.—A poor woman came in haste to beg linen rags for her child, who had been dreadfully burnt. They were immediately given, with everything that could be wanted, and the inquiry made, "How did it come about?" "Oh! leddy, the bairn never grew ony, and we thought she was a changeling; and folks told us that if we put her in a creel (basket), and the creel on the lowe (fire), the fairies would come down the lum (chimney) and tak' her awa' and gie me back my ain bairn; but they never cam', and the poor wean was a'maist burnt."—

The Reminiscences of Charlotte, Lady Wake. 1909. Ed.

"Removing Birth Marks.—"Having been born with marks of fruit on my face, the medical men considered that they were caused by aneurism, and required an operation which must have left me scarred for life. . . . Our old nurse, Effie, had arrived at a different conclusion. She was convinced of the truth of the popular belief that a dead man's hand laid upon my cheek and brow would effectually remove the marks. . . . An old man at last did die in one of the nearest cottages. I must have been taken there asleep, as no child would have forgotten it, had she been carried awake to the bed of the dead man and seen and felt his cold hand placed on her face; and I was old enough to have remembered it, for I have the most distinct recollection of being constantly stopped in our walks by the widow, who always examined my cheek in order to ascertain the state of her husband's body in the grave,—as the marks, as she told my nurse, would certainly fade away as he turned into dust. . . . Whatever the cause of the cure, the red marks faded away as I grew older, and in time disappeared."—The Reminiscences of Lady Wake. 1909.

END.

And that's it for this week and hope you all have a great weekend.

Alastair

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