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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 20th, 2022

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

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

Electric Scotland News

There is much talk in Canada on Truth and Reconciliation and as Prince Charles and Camilla are currently in Canada on a tour there is talk of them apologising for the treatment of native children in residential schools. The Pope is due to visit Canada so he can apologise in person.

As I've been working for some years now on the history of Canada I have noted the many times native Indian tribes have slaughtered members of other Indian tribes as well as white people, men, women and children.

In the story this week I have provided the first chapter of a book by John McDougall in which you get a sense of the problems there were at this early period in Canadian history. I have quite a collection of the books by this author and you can read them all at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/mcdougall/index.htm>

I might add that these books were written before there were roads, railways, telegraph, etc.

I got a communication from a friend in America which said that she's noticed a lot of food price increases and folk seem to be stocking up on rice, flour, and other basic staple foods. I was watching a YouTube channel of an American farmer and he was saying they have decided to reduce the planting of wheat and canola and as they are two of the staple crops I wondered why they'd gone in this direction. They seem to be planting more barley and beans this year.

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.

The Clash of Asia's Titans

Chinese President Xi Jinping has picked a border fight that he cannot win, and transformed a previously conciliatory India into a long-term foe. This amounts to an even bigger miscalculation than Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's failure to see it coming.

Read more at:

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/china-india-standoff-himalayan-border-strategic-mistake-by-brahma-chellaney-2022-05>

Europe's Ireland Problem Is Here to Stay

Brexit created a problem that cannot be solved, only managed. Both Britain and the European Union are responsible for what happens now.

Read more at:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/05/eu-brexit-role-in-northern-ireland/629905/>

Under Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland is stuck in a rut

The SNP has been in power for 15 years at Holyrood, long enough that the generation approaching the end of secondary school has never known anything different. And yet what has actually been achieved by the SNP during its time in office? What has Sturgeon, Scotland's self-appointed chief mammy, done to improve the lives of ordinary Scots?

Read more at:

<https://www.holyrood.com/inside-politics/view,in-limbo-under-nicola-sturgeon-scotland-is-stuck-in-a-rut>

ScotRail plans to cut third of services, says RMT union

ScotRail could cause industrial carnage with plans to axe up to a third of services during an ongoing pay dispute, a union has warned.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-61468006>

New Poll Helps Explain The SNP's Reluctance to Answer Difficult Economic Questions

YouGov polling carried out on behalf of These Islands highlights a series of problems facing the SNP in their push for a second independence referendum:

Read more at:

https://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/i379/keeping_the_dream_alive.aspx

Unemployment in Scotland falls to record low

Unemployment in Scotland dropped to a record low in the last quarter, according to the latest figures. Office for National Statistics (ONS) data showed the unemployment rate for people aged over 16 between January and March was 3.2%, down 0.9% on the previous quarter.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-61475604>

Retired head on how to improve schools

Give good teachers a 15% pay rise and lose the bad ones

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/how-to-improve-schools/>

To cut rising food prices the EU should cut its tariffs and accept competition

The immediate inclination of politicians and technocrats when something goes wrong is to reach for the controls to try and exert more power over events. Unfortunately this is very often the last thing they should do.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2022/05/to-cut-rising-food-prices-the-eu-should-cut-its-tariffs-and-accept-competition/>

How climate is making Australia more unliveable

In the past three years, record-breaking bushfire and flood events have killed more than 500 people and billions of animals. Drought, cyclones and freak tides have gripped communities.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-61432462>

Mary Queen of Scots treasure bought for Scotland

A Scottish national treasure once owned by Mary, Queen of Scots, has been bought for £1.8m. The silver casket has been secured by National Museums Scotland for the nation. The casket, which was made in Paris between 1493 and 1510, will go on display at the National Museum of Scotland.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-61494813>

Electric Canadian

In the Canadian Bush

By F. C. Cooper, B.Sc., A.C.G.I., A.M.I.C.E. (1914) (pdf)

Story of a railway engineer which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/incanadianbush.pdf>

The Inuit / Eskimo People

Created a new section for them as I discovered that content on them was scattered around the site.

You can get to this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/inuit/index.htm>

Hands that Heal

The Story of Dr. J. Francis Smith, a Blinded Canadian War Veteran Who, With the Help of His Wife, Dr. Marion Dick, Has Become an Outstanding Pioneer in the Osteopathic Treatment of Mental and Nervous Disorders (1939) (pdf)

You can read about him at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/health/handsthathealsto00wain.pdf>

Experiments in Governing Canada

By D. A. O'Sullivan, D. C. L. (pdf)

An article which you can read at:

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

The Eskimo Race and Language

By Mr. A. F. Chamberlain, B.A.

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/eskimo-race-language2.pdf>

Eskimo of Hudson's Strait

BY F. F. Payne (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/eskimo-hudson-bay.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 15th day of May 2022 - Refugees

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch her video at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26208-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-15th-day-of-may-2022-refugees>

Tobermory
Canada and Scotland

An interesting wee article which you can read at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/Tobermory.htm>

Electric Scotland

Beths Newfangled Family Tree

Hi Everyone.

I hope you all are well and enjoying this glorious weather we are having.

Tom is still healing and still waiting for permission to be upright and able to work on his computer with both hands. He has teased for the last year that he could really type FAST with his two index fingers! He says now that he has worked on his side for over a year, he still can't get close to that blinding speed with only one finger typing! (He has propped up on his left side, so can't type with that finger.)

Our "farm" is making progress. Our twenty GrowBoxes are now almost all planted either with seed or a few plants. I was out early this morning and found that the tiny little lettuce seeds are already maybe a quarter of an inch high. The cucumber seeds are also showing themselves.

I enjoy watching the garden grow almost as much as I look forward to fresh veggies for us. I also have six former cat litter buckets with holes in their bottoms filled with good soil and sweet potato plants. I've never grown these before, so am looking forward to harvesting the crop!

This edition of BNFT was somehow a real delight to do. The front-page article about The Princess Royal brought back many memories of her in the Olympics and the years when she competed in events. I think you will enjoy the article.

The date of the Inauguration of the new clan Chief of the Clan Buchanan is rushing towards us. October will be here before we can turn around! All of the information you need to attend this historical event is contained in this publication.

As of mid-March, the Wildcat Haven in Scotland has no word of Finlay, the Scottish Wildcat orphan kitten removed from their care last February by the police and a vet. We'll keep you up to date on this sad situation as best we can.

Please remember to let me know if your email changes. Please remember to send me your Flowers of the Forest and queries and articles and news of your clan or Scottish group.

Please do keep safe and healthy.

Aye,
beth

You can read the June 2022 issue Section 2 at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Beth's Video Talks
May 18th 2022 - Old Friends

You can watch this at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

A Book of the Parish of Deir
Edited by Alexander Lawson, B.D., Minister of Deer (1896) (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricScotland.com/council/A_Book_of_the_Parish_of_Deir.pdf

Clan Henderson

Got in their June 2022 newsletter which you can read at:

<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/henderson/index.htm>

Devorgilla

Countess of Balliol, Foundress of Balliol College, etc.

Added her to our Scots Women section and you can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/women/Devorgilla.htm>

The Bards of Angus and the Mearns

An anthology of the counties By Alan Reid (1897) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/poetry/The-bards-of-Angus-and-the-Mearns.pdf>

Life of Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.

With Portraits and Appendix by his Great-Grandson, William Raeburn Andrew, M.A., Oxon, Barrister-at-Law, (1886) (pdf). Added this biography to our page for him under our Significant Scots section at:

https://electricScotland.com/history/other/raeburn_henry.htm

Cabrach Feerings

In the county of Banff. By the late James Taylor, J.P., Edited by Janet Anderson (1920) (pdf)

A great wee book which you can read at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/BanffMacduff/Cabrach.pdf>

Sermons by the Late William Mackelvie D.D. of Balgedie

With Memoir of the author by John MacFarlane, LL.D. (1865) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/bible/sermonswithmemo00mackgoog.pdf>

Roll of Honour of former pupils of Banff Academy

Who fell in the Great War 1914-18 (pdf)

You can examine this list at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/BanffMacduff/banffroleofhonour.pdf>

Story

On Western Trails in the Early Seventies Chapter I - Condition of Red River Country—Sublime Isolation

A genuine Canadian winter controlled the situation, especially from the Red Deer River northward and eastward. For this western country the snow was deep, and trails, when made, were easily filled and gone. As yet the population was small and hardly felt in the bigness of this immense area. The plainsmen tribes, among the Crees and Salteaux,

were bunched in lots at the last points of timber, stretching out into Canada's big, treeless plain. The buffalo kept out beyond them, and, notwithstanding the stress and storm of the rigorous winter, refused to come into the northern pastures on the Battle and Saskatchewan Rivers. With these Indians times were hard.

They could not go far out on their hunts, lack of fuel and stormy weather forbidding this, and the few buffalo their braver and hardier hunters secured barely kept the camps in life. Under such conditions, all shared alike. It was either a feast or a famine that winter, largely the latter.

Their hereditary foes, the Blackfoot tribes, including the Bloods and Piegans and Sarcees, were more favored by the movements of the wild herds, which swung up out of the plains westward into the foothills and mountains of what is now Northern Montana and Southern Alberta. Here there is a small ribboning of timber and scrub on the many rivers which parallel each other out of the mountains and run eastward and both northerly and southerly through the plains.

On these streams the inhabitants of these moving villages found fuel and shelter and vantage ground from which to rush out upon the herds and secure food and trade for their camps. The Mountain and Wood Stoneys roamed from the northern tributaries of the Missouri to the Athabasca, and generally kept inside of the foothills. These Indians were more independent than the plains tribes, as they were, almost without exception, expert wood hunters. Moose, elk, caribou, small deer, big-horn, goat, all kinds of bear and lynx, as well as buffalo, made up their larder, and yet, like that of all hunters, this was often empty.

'North of the Red Deer the Hudson's Bay Company and some free traders controlled the trade and commerce of the whole land. South of the Red Deer, and within recent years, Americans, or Long Knives, as they were called, had established some trading posts and wolfers' headquarters, and, as rumor had it, at these southern posts, "Made on the Spot Whiskey" was the chief article of trade. The whole country, both north and south, was without law. Tribal war and might dominated throughout the great North-West.

All the missionary enterprise, so far as located, was at this time confined to the North country. We were at the most southerly point of Pigeon Lake, and from that point some three hundred miles stretched between us and the boundary line; and as this line had not yet been defined, one might say there was a vast area, both in Canada and the United States, without law, and the scene of much turbulent life. Here the Indian warrior was in his glory, and the lawless white man, leaving behind all bonds and fetters, had a free hand in following the bent of his wild passions. Murder and massacre were constant occurrences, even in cold blood; but when the wildest of whiskey was running riot, then terrible orgies, both brutal and shameful, were enacted.

Such was the condition south of the Red Deer River, and away on into Montana. North of the Red Deer, the pacific and humane policy of the Honorable Hudson's Bay Company, and the fact that they had banished all intoxicating liquors from their interior posts and general trade, also that from here northward was the scene of missionary work, made a wonderful difference in conditions. While there was no government, nor yet the semblance of either civil or criminal law, still the desire of the Indians and mixed bloods and whites was to live at peace, and, for the most part, kindly relations obtained. That is, that in the northern part of these territories, while it behooved all men to keep their powder dry, as well as trust in Providence, one breathed somewhat freer and was not as tense as was constantly necessary in the southern portion.

At Pigeon Lake, the most of our people were absent, the Stonies south near the mountains, and the Crees out eastward at the points of timber. Those around us were living on rabbits and lynx and fish. Fortunately, with the buffalo so far away, the rabbits and wildcats or lynx were more numerous than usual. Mrs. McDougall took some time to distinguish between wildcat meat and venison. "Such tender venison! Look, John! See; I saved a roast until you came home!" I looked, and saw, and enjoyed the well-cooked roast, and kept my own counsel. There are times when ignorance is bliss.

Old Paul, our nearest neighbor, a French half-breed, but an ultra-Protestant (a rather strange anomaly) would visit his snares, and, as his medicine was good, would generally find from two to six cats strangled in them. As the biggest of all refrigerators was in splendid working order all through the winter of 1872 and 1873, strangled wildcat meat was at a premium, and a long way ahead of rabbits or poor fish. Indeed, wildcat was rabbit in the next stage, and rabbit was tree and plant, purely vegetarian; therefore, wildcat was vegetable, and of such man was to make his food; all natural, all reasonable, all healthy. Thus we thought and said within ourselves: "Why tell this tenderfoot lady,

'This is cat's meat,' and perplex and confuse her mind and stomach with all these metaphysical deductions, howsoever logical they might be?"

Sublime indeed was our isolation—sixty miles to Edmonton, and no trail, snow deep and winter stormy; and when at Edmonton you were nine hundred miles from the nearest post office, and about twelve hundred miles from the last railway station. Humanity was sparse and few in this large territory, and the wilderness primeval, huge in all directions. Cree and Stoney were the dominant languages used, and surely this was a most wonderful change for my Ontario girl. She and my two little daughters were often alone. My wandering, nomadic congregations were seldom at the mission, and we went to them more often than they came to us. We could move so much easier than a large camp of Indians. They had to follow the game, which was forever migrating. In such work, and with one hard trip to Edmonton and Victoria to attend district and missionary meetings, the winter of 1872 and 1873 quickly passed.

There was one very agreeable break in the loneliness of the winter, caused by a visit paid to us by father and mother and our Brother and Sister Hardisty. They travelled out by dog train, and their short sojourn was a delight to our little company. At that time Edmonton was the metropolis of the whole western country. It was only twelve hundred mile's from a railroad, and some thousand miles from a telegraph office, and there was no regular mail communication. Isolation profound was its condition, and yet, to us, in the greater wilderness, a visit from these leading citizens of this lone station was as a bright break of sunlight through the steady cloud of our loneliness.

At this time the Chairman and myself arranged to make a reconnaissance of the southwestern country as early in the spring as possible. For this purpose, we made an appointment to meet at about equal distance between Pigeon Lake and Edmonton. I was to select and furnish the guide, and my sister Nellie was to come out with father and make life less lonely at Pigeon Lake while we were away. To bring her in, I took with me my faithful Donald. I had been fortunate in securing a Mountain Stoney, a brother of Mark Ear, of whom I made mention in my former books. George Ear, like his noble brother, was a true man, and knew the country between the Saskatchewan and the 49th parallel like as a few men know their Bible. He could give you pass and ford, even as the others could chapter and verse. Wonderful brains these men have developed during the centuries for the taking and retaining of true pictures of the topography and geography of a country. They were also magnificently gifted with memory out of the long past, and, without pencil or diary, they never forgot.

Behold us, then, on the morning of one of the first days in April, 1873, bidding our adieus to the little company of loved ones and small gathering of our people, and, with pack and saddle horse, we were soon lost in the dense forest which fringes Pigeon Lake. Remember that the partings at this time were solemn. Before us were wild mountain rivers, unbridged and ferryless; wild beasts, grizzlies and mountain lions, mad wolves and madder buffalo. But, worst of all, tribal war was rampant, so that when you bade your friends goodbye, you looked into eyes more often dim than bright.

Thus, that day, we left our people. The snow had been deep; the swamps and little streams were now full, and our progress was slow. Splash, splash, plunge, plunge into water and ice and mud, and out into dense thickets, where, of recent years, only ourselves had taken time to cut out the trail. In the evening, punctual to the time appointed, we met father and Sister Nellie, and in exchange of news, and glad intercourse, we made camp and spent the night.

In the chill of the early spring morning, Nellie and her escort, Donald, started for the lonely station at Pigeon Lake, and we commenced our journey in what was, to both father and myself, after the first hundred and fifty miles, "the great unknown." We journeyed southward, along the pack trail leading to the Rocky Mountain House, as far as Weed Creek, and then across country to the Wolf Trail. In due time we had crossed the Battle and Blind Man's Rivers, and then we took the Big Red Deer. Ten years earlier father and myself had been on this same spot, and still, as far as humanity is concerned, there was no change. This great, good land was without inhabitants. The primitive condition was still in full sway, and in loneliness we rode on, speculating on the inevitable change that was coming. We knew it was coming. And now the mighty Rockies burst upon our view, and steadily towards them we persistently jogged. Jogged, I say, for on all these long journeys this was our step, from morning until night; neither a walk nor a canter, but a continuous, persistent jog forever; thus we made long distances. The hardy pioneer never thought of himself, but of his horse, and very soon he learned that the jog was the natural and most continuous step in long journeys.

After we crossed the Red Deer, we began to fall in with little bands of buffalo bulls, and often came upon single ancients, who stared at us and then lumbered away over the hills, ever and anon stopping to stand and stare us out

of countenance, if this were possible. Being rightful descendants of a distinct portion of the race, this was impossible, and on we went.

Having a good supply of food, we lost no time hunting by the way. Duck and chicken were in myriad numbers, and the tracks of deer were numerous, but we stayed not to hunt at the time. We were looking up the country and its people, if haply we might find these latter.

You can continue to read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/mcdougall/westndx.htm>

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you. I also note that this is the long weekend in Canada "Victoria Day" so hope our Canadian readers enjoy it.

Alastair