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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 27th, 2024

Electric Scotland News

Took a couple of days of this week to enjoy the Christmas break and will also be doing the same for the New Year.

Thanks to Canada Post being on strike for most of December many in Canada didn't receive their Christmas presents sad to say. Hopefully they will turn up early in the New Year.

Next week I'll be posting my Canadian Experience Journal for the last quarter of 2024 which was not a good one for me financially but I did learn from the experience. I have also been using Instacart for some time now and my last order with them was as a direct result of getting in a promotional flyer from M & M where there were a couple of outstanding deals which I was keen to take advantage of. I found that using Instacart they don't pass on these special offers so I ended up some \$60.00 out of pocket. I have thus passed on this tale so anyone else in Canada can take note of their terms and conditions.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

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 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.

Here is what caught my eye this week...

Labour veteran Peter Mandelson to be UK ambassador to US
The prime minister is expected to name Lord Peter Mandelson - one of the best known figures in British politics - as the UK's next ambassador to the US.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpvnlxp8jko>

Long-awaited ferry the Glen Sannox to enter service within weeks
It will serve the Arran route from Troon, South Ayrshire.

Read more at:

<https://news.stv.tv/west-central/long-awaited-ferry-the-glen-sannox-to-enter-service-within-weeks>

How the Navy built Britain

Culmination of a magisterial work that entwines the story of the Royal Navy with the history of our nation

Read more at:

<https://thecritic.co.uk/how-the-navy-built-britain/>

A Personal Thank You for Your Incredible Support on My Mum's 100th birthday

Today is my Mum's 100th birthday, for which I would like to personally take the opportunity to thank each and every one of you who has taken the time to sign and share this petition.

Read more at:

<https://www.change.org/p/prime-minister-meet-with-my-99-year-old-ww2-veteran-mum-fighting-to-end-frozen-pensions/u/33122740?cs>

The link between Ukrainian democracy and Scottish socialism

Life, death and planning policy in fighting Ukraine and socialist Argyll

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2024/12/ukrainian-democracy-and-scottish-socialism/>

Conrad Black: Time's up for Trudeau's thin policy gruel

His entire policy record has been a green terror

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/u5zdS>

Big boost for UK businesses as new trade deal agreed with Japan

The deal revolves around some of Britain's most famous foods.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1991764/much-loved-british-foods-get-chance>

King Charles Delivers His Annual Christmas Message From Former Hospital Chapel

King Charles has filmed this year's Christmas message broadcast in a former hospital chapel in Fitzrovia, London.

Watch this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/avmhw0M6EZ0?si=HdXVFocUp3laVHTn>

Donald J. Trump

Merry Christmas

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/4aK1j7ZyU5A?si=s9NYMLmvxLvHWCX8>

Scotland's political circus as we approach 2026

THE LEGENDARY words of Harold Macmillan "Events, dear boy, events" have never felt so cuttingly apt as Scotland stumbles towards the 2026 Holyrood election.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2024/12/events-dear-boy-events-scotlands-political-circus-before-2026/>

Bald eagle officially declared US national bird after 250 years

The bald eagle is now officially the national bird of the US, after President Joe Biden signed a law on Christmas Eve bestowing the honour upon the white-headed and yellow-beaked bird of prey

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c23vzkdek4po>

Electric Canadian

Thoughts on this Christmas Day the 25th day of December 2024

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can read this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26573-thoughts-on-this-christmas-day-the-25th-day-of-december-2024>

Star Almanac of Canada

A Cyclopedia of Facts and Figures Relating to the Dominion with a Calendar for 1896

A 395Mb download which you can get at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/star-almanac.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 22nd day of December 2024 - Love

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26572-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-22nd-day-of-december-2024-love>

The Beaver Magazine

Added Volume 3 No. 9 (pdf)

You can read this issue at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/TheBeaverJune1923.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Simple Truth for Earnest Minds

By the Rev. Norman MacLeod (1866) (pdf)

Got this in from a friend of the site and she pointed me to the penultimate chapter of the book which is "The End of the Year". Obviously for those aged like myself it also points out how the young don't understand the old but the old do understand the young!!!

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/macleod/simpletruthforea0000unse.pdf>

Songs with Lyrics

Added three short videos to the foot of our Sing Along page which includes, Lady Gaga - Always Remember Us This Way, Simon & Garfunkel - The Sound of Silence and Abba - I have a dream. You might also enjoy listening to many of the Scottish Songs on the page.

You can watch these at:

<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/henderson/singalong/index.htm>

Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas

Enjoy our special Christmas page at:

<https://electricscotland.com/index98.htm>

Castle Unquhart

A tour done by the Scottish Isle where they feature the castle as part of their Christmas video. Have added this to the foot of our page for the castle. In the video you'll also be taken to a wonderful waterfall in the area.

You can view this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/historic/castles/urquhart.htm>

Calum I. Maclean's Fieldwork Diaries in Arisaig, Morar, and Moidart, 1954

Part one to ten (pdf). This is an updated file to bring in part 10.

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/men/fileldworkdiaries2.pdf>

Miscellany of The Scottish History Society

Added the Sixth Volume which contains Bagimond's Roll, Foundation Charter of the Collegiate Church of Dunbar, Lauderdale Letters, Memories of Ayrshire.

You can read this volume at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/shs/index.htm>

Historical writing in twelfth and thirteenth-century Scotland

The Dunfermline compilation by Alice Taylor, King's College, Cambridge (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/articles/Historical_Writing_in_Twelfth_and_Thirte.pdf

Crosses and Rock Sculptures recently discovered in Wigtownshire

By Rev. R. S. G. Anderson, B.D., FSAScot. (1927) (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/stones/CrossesSculpturesWigtownshire.pdf>

Fraser, Alexander Campbell

Emeritus Professor of logic and metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh

You can learn more about him at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/other/fraser_alexander_campbell.htm

The Staggering State of Scottish Statesmen

From 1550 to 1650 by Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet with a Memoir of the author and historical illustrations by the Rev. Charles Rogers, LL.D., FSAScot., Historiographer to the Historical Society (1872)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/staggeringstate.htm>

Scotland's National Drink Producers Fear Worst from Trump 2.0 Tariff Hike Threat
The \$9 billion (£7.1 bn) Scotch whisky industry and its 40,000 employees are holding their collective breath. As a 2nd Trump US administration looms and all this means in terms of well documented threats by the self-proclaimed teetotaler that would lead to quite catastrophic Transatlantic tariff hikes hitting sales of the amber nectar. An article by Bill Magee (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/magee/article0022.pdf>

Story

Persecutions of the MacGregors

The upper part or western extremity of Loch Katrine, or the part which is first approached by a traveller from Inversnaid on Loch Lomond, was eminently the land of the Macgregors,— the central part of their territory,— the district of seclusion and strengths and fastnesses, where they commonly sought refuge from oppression, and to which they usually retired after their unsuccessful conflicts with other clans, or after their predatory incursions into the Lowlands. This tract does not possess the picturesque or romantic interest which so powerfully characterises the scenery toward the eastern end of the lake; yet there is a rude grandeur, a lonely sublimity about it, which at least inspires awe, and fills the mind with pleasing melancholy, though it may fail to realise the images associated with its name in our fancy. When we look upon the utter desolateness which spreads around,—the bluff head-lands which project their weather-beaten fronts into the water,—the noble outline of the lofty mountains,—the bare and rugged rocks with which they are covered, —the deep ravines that form the beds of the innumerable streams which flow down their sides,—the heath-covered muirs that intervene, —and the contrasted stillness and purity of the transparent lake,—we feel that it is altogether highly characteristic Highland scenery. The Macgregors were long the entire masters of this district, and of a wide periphery of glen and mountain and lake and forest on all sides of it; but were from time to time dispossessed by the superior address and craftiness of the neighbouring clans; and they were a sad instance of the fluctuations of prosperity and character, and the violent alternations between comparative good and comparative evil, the sudden and startling mixtures of wrong done and wrong suffered, of crime and victimisation, which characterise an unsettled feudal state of society.

In the early part of the year 1602, a large portion of the west of Scotland was tossed into commotion by the renewal of some old quarrels between Colquhoun of Luss, the chief of that surname, and Alexander Macgregor, chief of the Clan-Gregor. Aggressions had formerly been committed on both sides; first by Luss and his party against some of the Macgregors, and then by John Macgregor, the brother of Alexander, against the laird of Luss and his dependants and tenants. To put an end to these dissensions, Alexander Macgregor left Rannoch, accompanied by about 200 of his kinsmen and friends, entered Lennox, and took up his quarters on the confines of Luss's territory, where he expected, by the mediation of his friends, to bring matters to an amicable adjustment. As the laird of Luss was suspicious of Macgregor's real intentions, he assembled all his vassals, with the Buchanans and others, to the number of 300 horse and 500 foot, with the design, if the result of the meeting should not turn out to his expectations and wishes, to cut off Macgregor and his party. But Macgregor, anticipating his intention, was upon his guard, and, by his precautions, defeated the design upon him. A conference was held for the purpose of terminating all differences; but the meeting broke up without any adjustment; Macgregor then proceeded homewards.

The laird of Luss, in pursuance of his plan, immediately followed Macgregor with great haste through Glenfruin, about ten miles west of Dumbarton, in the expectation of coming upon him unawares, and defeating him; but Macgregor, who was on the alert, observed, in due time, the approach of his pursuers, and made his dispositions accordingly. He divided his company into two parts, the largest of which he kept under his own

command, and placed the other part under the command of John Macgregor, his brother, whom he dispatched by a circuitous route, for the purpose of attacking Luss's party in the rear, where they should least expect to be assailed. This stratagem succeeded, and the result was, that after a keen contest, Luss's party was completely overthrown, with the loss of 200 men, besides several gentlemen and burgesses of the town of Dumbarton. It is remarkable that of the Macgaegors, John, the brother of Alexander, and another person alone were killed, though some of the party were wounded.

The laird of Luss and his friends sent early notice of their disaster to the King, and they succeeded so effectually by misrepresenting the whole affair to him, and exhibiting to his majesty eleven score bloody shirts belonging to those of their party who were slain, that the King grew exceedingly incensed at the Clan Gregor, who had no person about the King to plead their cause, proclaimed them rebels, and interdicted all the lieges from harbouring them or having any communication with them. The Earl of Argyle and the Campbells were afterwards sent against the proscribed clan, and hunted them through the country. About 60 of the clan made a brave stand at Bendoik against a party of 200 chosen men belonging to the Clan-Cameron, Clan-Nab, and Clan-Ronald, under the command of Robert Campbell, son of the laird of Glenorchy, when Duncan Aberigh, one of the chieftains of the Clan-Gregor, and his son Duncan, and seven gentlemen of Campbell's party were killed. But although they made a brave resistance, and killed many of their pursuers, the Macgregors, after many skirmishes and great losses, were at last overcome. Commissions were thereafter sent through the kingdom, for fining those who had harboured any of the clan, and for punishing all persons who had kept up any communication with them; and the fines so levied were given by the King to the Earl of Argyle, who converted the same to his own use as a recompense for his services against the unfortunate Macgregors.

Alexander Macgregor, the chief, after suffering many vicissitudes of fortune, and many privations, at last surrendered himself to the Earl of Argyle, on condition that he should grant him a safe conduct into England to King James, that he might lay before his majesty a true state of the whole affair' from the commencement, and crave the royal mercy; and as a security for his return to Scotland, he delivered up to Argyle thirty of his choicest men, and of the best reputation among the clan as hostages to remain in Argyle in custody, till his return from England. But no sooner had Macgregor arrived in Berwick on his way to London, than he was basely arrested, and brought back by the Earl to Edinburgh, and, by his influence, executed along with the thirty hostages. Argyle hoped, by these means, ultimately to annihilate the whole clan; but in this cruel design he was quite disappointed, for the clan speedily increased, and became almost as powerful as before.

About the year 1708, the well-known Rob Roy captured Graham of Killearn, and confined him during three days on an island near the head of Loch Katrine. The Duke of Montrose had, by the forfeiture of a wadset, obtained a right to dispossess Rob Roy of his property of Inversnaid and Craigrostan. In this it does not appear that there was any harshness on the part of his Grace; but Killearn, his Chamberlain, had recourse to a mode of expulsion inconsistent with the rights of humanity, and had grossly insulted Macgregor's wife in her husband's absence. Rob Roy, on his return, being informed of what had occurred, withdrew from the scene of the outrage, and vowed revenge. In order to make up for the loss of his property, he regularly seized a portion of his Grace's rent; but on Killearn he took a personal satisfaction, which certainly shows the mildness of his character when we consider the habits and mode of thinking of the Highlanders of his day. The Chamberlain was collecting rents at Cappeleroch, in Stirlingshire, when Rob Roy came upon him with an armed force, and demanded his share of the rents. For this he gave the Chamberlain a receipt; and afterwards carried the unwilling gentleman to Loch-Katrine, where he kept him in durance for three days, and then set him at liberty.

Glengyle, a lonely tract of country among the hills at the upper extremity of Loch-Katrine, belonged to a family of Macgregors, who, during the time when the name was prohibited, changed theirs to Graham. Rob Roy was of this family. He was the second son of Donald Macgregor, brother to the laird of Glengyle, and a lieutenant-colonel in the King's service,— most probably in one of the independent companies raised for the internal defence of the Highlands. The family of Glengyle were descended from a fifth son of the laird of Macgregor about the year 1430. He was named Dugald Ciar, or 'Dugald of the mouse colour. Dugald had two sons, of whom the youngest^ Gregor Dubh, or Black Gregor, was the founder of the family of Glengyle. Rob Roy

originally possessed no patrimonial estate. His father lived on Glengyle as a tenant, and latterly was tutor to his nephew, Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle, styled in the language of the Highlands, Gregor Glun-dubh, or 'the Black-knee'd Gregor, from a black spot on his knee. The lands of Craigrostan and Inversnaid were afterwards acquired by Rob Roy; and we find him sometimes styled Robert Macgregor of Craigrostan, and sometimes Baron of Inversnaid. The name of Macgregor being proscribed, Rob Roy assumed that of Campbell, from respect to the Duke of Argyle.

The character and exploits of Rob Roy are so generally known from popular tradition and from many productions of popular literature, especially from Sir Walter Scott's far-famed romance of "Rob Roy," that they need not be mentioned here; but some powerful lines by Mrs. Charles Tinsley, on his last words, are much less known, and well deserve to be transcribed. The last words were "Now it is all over—tell the piper to play, Cha till mi tuillidh"— (We return no more;) and the following are the lines upon them:—

'We return no more! we return no more!
Said the chief, ere he breathed his last;
For he knew that the reign of the fierce and free,
And the bold in deed, was past;
He knew that the slogan of Border war—
All mute as the sleuth hound's breath—
Should never awaken the hills again
With shouts whose echo was death;—
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

Did they crowd around him, the brave of old,
In the dreams of that solemn hour,
All the mighty chiefs of his royal line,
In the pride of their early powe?—
Macalpine, who reigned o'er a conquered race,
And those that held rule in Lorn—
Did he think of these as he turned to die?
And his words—were they words of scorn?
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

Did he brood o'er the wrong that 'whelmed his sires,
Making all their hearthstones bare,
Through the ages that saw them held at bay,
And hate-hunted everywhere?—
Did he call to mind their scattered haunts,
In Balquhidder and Glenstrae,
And breathe in his spirit's bitterness,
One trust ere he passed away?
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

O why was the gift of the seer of old
Withheld in that parting hour?
Why stood not the future before him then
In the might of its deathless power?
Why did it coldly, tamely, still
Its truths from the dauntless keep,
Leaving the brave, proud heart to sigh—
Ere it sank in dreamless sleep—
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

For they shall not die! for they shall not die!
Whilst the hills their fame can keep;
Whilst fancy—bold as the boldest still—
Can the gulfs of time o'erleap;
Whilst the wild, free spirit of old romance
Yet haunteth each loch and glen;
Whilst Scotland can say, from her heart of hearts,
'Thus speak not my mighty men—
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

And mighty they were those chieftains bold,
With their germs of noble thought,
By the rugged nurture of rugged times
To growths of wild grandeur brought;
With their generous love of freedom, still
Unchanged through the changes round;
And, oh, not for them 'mid their native hills,
Should those parting words resound—
'Cha till, cha till mi tuillidh!'

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you. And wishing you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year in 2025.

Alastair