



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILY TREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

GAZETTEER
GENEALOGY
HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORY
HUMOR
JOHN'S PAGE
KIDS
LIFESTYLE
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
RELIGION
ROBERT BURNS
SCOTS IRISH
SCOTS REGIMENTS
SERVICES

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHAT'S NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for February 28th, 2025

Electric Scotland News

I have to say that Donald Trump's decision to go against his NATO allies is a game changer for the world. Europe 'will almost certainly be at war with Russia' if Trump's Ukraine chaos continues.

Europe 'will almost certainly be at war with Russia' if Trump's Ukraine chaos continues The way to prevent that is strong defence, to spend money on defence to be prepared for the worst case, because that is the only way we are going to deter Russia." US withdrawal from NATO and failure to challenge Putin in ceasefire talks would cause a war in Europe in five years warns Former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Richard Shirreff on Frontline.

Watch this at:

https://youtu.be/907PCXXm_Lo?si=bVZE6krhmzGO8bcT

I'm actually a bit worried about the Trump Presidency which I didn't expect. He is certainly changing the world and most countries are starting to see they can no longer trust the USA. While I certainly respect the USA to do what is best for them I really can't understand why he is preferring Russia against his NATO allies.

In Canada he has a secure provider of essential energy and minerals yet he is forcing the country to seek other markets for their products. I have posted up a number of videos on this weeks news to try and provide some rationale as to what is happening in the world.

The changes Trump is making are mind blowing and it's going to lead to all kinds of issues with inflation not being the least of the problems. He is so fixated on Tariffs that he doesn't seem to realise that will increase costs for the American people. It will certainly raise costs for everyone. Then as he changed the world order to cosy up to Russia against Ukraine where does this go? The new German Chancellor has recognised that NATO is under threat from the withdrawal of the USA and has already called for a fast strengthening of Defence as well as a need to seek new trading partners in the world with Canada being an obvious choice.

Canada has the largest Ukrainian population outside of Ukraine so it is natural that Canada will continue to support the country.

Since coming to Canada I have been upset on how Canada has not used it massive store of energy and minerals to expand its markets and this is now coming home to roost as it were. So while I am upset at what is going on I think now is the time for Canada to take a giant leap in world affairs and hopefully a new Conservative Prime Minister will lead that change.

I don't blame Americans for any of this but I also suspect most of them didn't see all this coming through the new Trump Presidency. I certainly didn't see Trump abandoning Ukraine or supporting Russia and saying

Ukraine started the war, which is a ridiculous assertion.

At the end of the day it now looks like Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Turkey will now combine together to create a new NATO. What will happen with the new USA/Russian alliance is anyone's guess. And what is going to happen with China as most of Europe will likely look to do more business with them and also Japan and other Asian countries. Perhaps this will be a time for the UK to look to the Commonwealth but certainly the CANZUK looks to be making progress. That's the alliance between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK. I note in the Liberal party debate in Canada the other night CANZUK was referenced as a way forward.

You might want to read the article in our news section about America is being sold out by its leaders. as it explores where the USA might be heading.

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...

Turkey Just SHUTS DOWN Russia's Biggest Hope of Important Material Income
Erdogan's warning to Putin: Turkey won't tolerate Ukraine being colonized. Potential deepening of Turkish support to Ukraine if Moscow rejects Erdogan's stance.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/7J4UNI5qCuc?si=Ugt4v6AV4oG6JLvz>

Millions of Canadians CUT OFF US Brands & Products to Punish US Over Tariffs
Canada Strikes Back: Boycotting US Goods - Trump Faces the Consequences! Tensions between the US and Canada escalate as Trump imposes a 25% tariff, prompting Canadians to launch a massive boycott of American products and tourism. This isn't just about tariffs it's a bold statement of national pride and sovereignty.

Watch this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/89idLxeCjnc?si=ESZmwCdnTxF6-R7Y>

America is being sold out by its leaders

If Trump and Elon think they can forge a grand right-wing alliance with China and Russia, they're heading for trouble.

Read more at:

<https://www.noahpinion.blog/p/america-is-being-sold-out-by-its>

US Could Replace Canada with Venezuela for Main Oil Import

In this video, we explore Donald Trump's unexpected turn toward Venezuela as a potential supplier of heavy crude oil a move that could undercut Canada's longstanding role as America's top foreign oil source. With tense tariff threats looming over Canada and Mexico, plus sanctions on Venezuela recently relaxed for Chevron, this power play in global energy markets shows how U.S. diplomacy and geopolitics can upend long-established supply chains. Will Venezuela seize a golden opportunity, and what does it mean for Canadian/U.S. relations?

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/fykvTPWerek?si=HpbZIAheLUGuQkdH>

Emirates, KLM & Qantas Just Made a HUGE Announcement!

After years of being a loyal Boeing customer KLM's recent move to embrace Airbus has caught the aviation industry by surprise in what many industry experts see as a significant setback for Boeing.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/2mDZFjONI2A?si=ok4AlfEx-7GWFde3>

Retail Sales Just COLLAPSED Signaling a Major Economic MELTDOWN

Amazon warned the start of 2025 was rough, and boy was it. Government data on consumer spending as well goods production came in exactly that way. And while extreme winter weather played a role in each one, it was clearly the opposite of what everyone says.

Note that Walmart is also saying the same.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/NxKezAmGP2I?si=EqDNmhoUdsDBROyD>

German ambassador tells Canadians 'Europe has your back' amid Trump threats

Germany's ambassador to Canada Tjorven Bellmann joins Power & Politics to discuss the meeting between Russian and U.S. officials to start working toward ending the war in Ukraine. Bellmann says 'talks about Ukraine should be with the Ukrainians at the table.'

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/gFQupBLc4Ec?si=jy1ym2Ybb28iYRI4>

New German leader signals seismic shift in transatlantic relations

Germany's chancellor-in-waiting didn't wait for the final results of his country's election on Sunday to herald a new era in Europe. Declaring the US indifferent to this continent's fate, Friedrich Merz questioned the future of NATO and demanded Europe boost its own defences. Quickly.

Watch this at:

https://youtu.be/RjQ_HoGvi7g?si=t6ol8GW93h4FJT3E

Trump faces 'disaster' as Europe prepares to walk away from US and support Ukraine

Trump's first week of talks over the war in Ukraine have become a disaster in Europe as US allies prepare to separate from American alliances,

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/ag640yLc2q4?si=O1PXVeiXLJVUL3uq>

The island priest who fought a nuclear rockets range

By Shona MacDonald & Steven McKenzie

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3rndz513xzo>

Can Canadians get the world drinking tree sap?

While drinking tree sap does not immediately sound appealing, Canadian producers are hoping that it will be the next must-try soft drink around the world.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cde98k6e2dno>

New Scottish tartan memorialises women executed for witchcraft

A new tartan has been registered that is intended to memorialise the people mostly women in Scotland who were executed as a result of the Witchcraft Act between 1563 and 1736.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/new-scottish-tartan-memorialises-women-34745101>

Trump's problems mount as he turns his back on allies | Anne Applebaum

Trump adds to his problems as he reshapes American foreign policy by abandoning his allies, says staff writer at the Atlantic, Anne Applebaum.

Watch this at:

https://youtu.be/b_aKZwQjiHA?si=0niOLkMBf37pUoBy

World Leaders DESTROY Trump from Kyiv AFTER BETRAYAL

MeidasTouch host Ben Meiselas reports on world leaders gathering in Kyiv to show support for President Zelensky and powerfully calling out Trump.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/Dxswdi-rTV0?si=hJLSf8c-Y7fq8ilu>

AI Hype, Trump's Economic Woes & The Decline of Debate

This is a CapX podcast.

Listen to this podcast at:

<https://capx.co/the-capitalist-ai-hype-trumps-economic-woes-the-decline-of-debate>

The price of Britain's defence

In these uncertain times, one thing is clear: UK defence spending needs to be higher. At a time when growth is sluggish and the headroom to meet the Chancellor's fiscal rules is limited, however, increasing spending is a tricky political choice to make. But there are four ways the Government can make it happen.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/four-ways-to-pay-for-britains-defence>

European Security Cannot Be Found in the Past

The old Europe of the Cold War sought comfort in the past and confidence in the solitary US leadership that defined the era. Unfortunately, when it comes to its own security, Europe seemingly remains in a time warp, stuck somewhere before 1989.

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/bjttN>

Why Edinburgh has a Confederate soldier memorial

Deep in Dean Cemetery in Edinburgh, there's a grey obelisk, around 2m (6ft) high, its inscription faded. It commemorates Colonel Robert A Smith, a Scot who was struck down in Kentucky during the US civil war.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y07vnglkjo>

Third anniversary of war in Ukraine marked in Scotland

The third anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine has been marked in Scotland with a special service at the National War Memorial. First Minister John Swinney and a number of Scottish and Ukrainian dignitaries were joined by members of the Ukrainian community at the Edinburgh Castle event.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp3y1k4kj12o>

Canada to Replace US with EU and UK for Main Trade Partner
Tesla & US Energy Sector Can Take This?

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/cfTk6vcwm84?si=ftOEOxQJGtpp4kpy>

The McCrone Mythology

A 1974 memo written by Scottish Office economist Gavin McCrone has acquired a mythical status for Scottish nationalists. But how much of the mythology is true? By Sam Taylor

Read more at:

https://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/i401/the_mccrone_mythology.aspx

Electric Canadian

The World's Work

Added volume 8 where they feature the World's Fair in St. Louis and also major articles on Agriculture and Mining, etc.

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/worldswork.htm>

Metagama exodus shows how 1,500 people left the Western Isles a century ago

They sailed from Stornoway to Canada in April 1923 on the Metagama, but life wasn't easy when the Scots arrived in North America by Neil Drysdale (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/articles/Western-Isles-1500-people-left-better-life.pdf>

History and General Description of New France

By The Rev. P.F.X. De Charlevoix, S.J., Translated with notes, by John Gilmary Shea in six volumes.

You can read these volumes at"

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/newfrance6volumes.htm>

The Anglo-American Magazine

Added Volume 6 which includes articles on Alfred the Great, The New Nationalism, England's Hospitality to Representative Americans, The Anti-Saloon League, Hawaii First, The Sermon on the Mount, The Trip to Temagami, Incidents of International Courtesy, Educational Fallacies and Abuses, Nature in the Alps, In District No. 1 (an economic novel), Anglo-American Joint High Commission, Canada's Population, Good Trade Showing of Canada, Defenseless Canada, Ethics and Religion, Pan-Americanism, The Late President McKinley, President Roosevelt, What Women can do in Politics, Maximite, The Genesis of Anarchy, The Poet Markham and His Work, Our English Cousins, The Prospecting Parson, Quebec, etc.

You can read this volume at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/angloamerican.htm>

10 Most Affordable Places to Buy Land in Canada in 2025

Added this video around half way down our Lifestyle page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/index.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 23rd of February 2025 - Heroes
By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this, but mind for some reason it's duplicated but feel free to watch both at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Thoughts%20on%20a%20Sunday%20Morning%20-%20the%2023rd%20of%20February%202025%20-%20Heroes>

Canadian Journal of Industry, Science and Art
Added Volume 1 (1852-53) (pdf)

You can read this volume at"

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/canadianjournalr1185253cana.pdf>

The Beaver Magazine
Added Volume 4 No. 6 (pdf)

You can read this volume at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/TheBeaver-March1924.pdf>

Electric Scotland

COSCA

Added the last four newsletters to their page along with an article about What Do American Scots Really Want from Their Cousins Back Home in Scotland? By John King Bellasai.

You can read these newsletters at:

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

Pomphrey's Directory of Wishaw

And Handbook of the Parish of Cambusnethan with Historical Sketches of Cambusnethan and Shotts. (Third Edition) (1893) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/gazetteer/pomphreysdirecto1893wish.pdf>

Political and Social Economy

Its practical applications by John Hill Burton (1849) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/other/politicalsociale00burtiala.pdf>

Montrose

By John Buchan (1929) (pdf) in which he says of this updated version... My aim has been to present a great figure in its appropriate setting. In a domain, where the dust of controversy has not yet been laid, I cannot hope to find for my views universal acceptance, but they have not been reached without an earnest attempt to discover the truth.

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/nation/montrose.pdf>

Tales and Traditions of the Lower Cape Fear 1661-1896

By James Sprunt (1896) (pdf)

You can read this book where many Scots emigrated to at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/america/nc/talestraditionso0000jame.pdf>

Papers on Sutherland Estate Management 1802-1816

Edited by R. J. Adam, M.A., in two volumes which I've added to the foot of our Sutherland page.

You can read these volumes at the foot of our page on Sutherland at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/sutherland/index.htm>

Lewis Grassie Gibbon

Added the three books of his Scots Quair in pdf format to his page. In 2005 the first book, Sunset Song, was named the "Best Scottish Book of All Time" at the Edinburgh International Book Festival.)

You can read these book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/other/lgg.htm>

An Outline of the Life of George Robertson

Written by himself with an Introduction and Appendix by his son (1876) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/america/outlineoflifeofg00robeiala.pdf>

Moray and Nairn

By Charles Matheson, M.A., McLaren High School, Callander, With Maps, Diagrams and Illustrations (1915) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/moray/moraynairn00math.pdf>

On Veldt and Farm

The record of a journey in South Africa, in Bechuanaland, Cape Colony, The Transvaal and Natal, mainly devoted to an inquiry into the agricultural situation and the prospects for intending colonists by Frances McNab (1897) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/africa/onveldtandfarmi00fra.pdf>

Handbook on South Africa

By S. W. Silver & Co.'s (third edition) (1880) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/africa/Handbook-to-South-Africa.pdf>

Ancient Ballads and Songs of the North of Scotland

Hitherto unpublished with explanatory notes by Peter Buchan, corresponding member of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in two volumes (1875)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/ancientbaladaandsongs.htm>

Soldiers of the Legion

Trench etched by Legionnaire Bowe who is John Bowe of Canby, Minnesota and Charles L. MacGregor, Collaborator (1918) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/america/soldiersoflegion00bowe.pdf>

Some Account of John Duke of Argyll and his Family

By his Great-Niece Lady Louisa Stuart (1863) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/families/someaccountofjoh00stuauf.pdf>

Natural History & Sport in Moray

Collected from the journals and letters of the Late Charles S. John (1863) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/moray/Natural_History_Sport_in_Moray.pdf

Story

Have two stories for you this week...

MURDOCH MAOIAIN AND THE GREEN FAIRY OF QAIOK FOREST

There are many circumstances connected with this forest that give it an interest. In the centre of Gaick there is a plain of about eight miles long, and in this plain there are three lakes — “Loch-an-t-Seillich,” “Loch Viotain,” and “Loch-an-Diinn” — all abounding with excellent trout and char, and other species of fish called dorman by the country people. This fish called dorman is large, with a very big head, and is believed to prevent salmon from ascending into the lakes. Some of them weigh from twenty to thirty pounds. The hills on each side of this plain are remarkably steep, with very little rock, and of considerable height, and in the south end there is a hill of a very striking appearance. Its length is about a mile. Its height is at least 1000 feet above the plain, and its shape is that of a house. This hill is called the Doune, and is the southern boundary of the forest. It was in Gaick that Walter Cornyn was killed by a fall from his horse. He was probably a son of one of the Cornyns of Badenoch, and certainly a very profligate young fellow. Tradition says that he determined on causing a number of young women to shear stark-naked on the farm of Ruthven, which was the residence of the Cornyns in Badenoch. He was, however, called on business to Atholl, and the day of his return was fixed for the infamous exhibition. The day at last arrived, but instead of Walter, his horse made his appearance, with one of his master’s legs in the stirrup. Search was of course made instantly, and the mangled body was found with two eagles feeding upon it; and although nothing could be more natural than that birds of prey should feed upon any dead carcase, yet the whole was ascribed to witchcraft, and the two eagles were firmly believed to be the mothers of two of the girls intended for the shearing exhibition. The place where Walter was killed is called “Leumna Feinne,” or the Fingalian’s Leap, and a terrible break-neck path it is. The fate of Walter is still proverbial in the Highlands, and when persons are very much excited without the power of revenge, “May the fate of Walter Gaick overtake you!” is not an uncommon expression. Stories of witches and fairies connected with Gaick are numberless, but the following two may serve as specimens:—A noted stalker was one morning early in the forest, and, observing some deer at a distance he stalked till he came pretty near them, but not altogether within shot, and on looking over a knoll he was astonished to see a number of little neat women dressed in green miking the hinds. These he knew at once to be fairies, and one of them had a hank of green

yarn thrown over her shoulder, and when in the act of milking the deer the animal made a grab at the yarn with its mouth and swallowed it. The fairy, in apparent rage, struck the hind with the band with which she had its hind legs tied, saying, at the same time, "May a dart from Murdoch's quiver pierce your side before night." Murdoch was the person listening, from which it may be inferred that the fairies were well acquainted with his dexterity at deer-killing. In the course of that same day Murdoch killed a hind, and on taking out the entrails he found the identical green hank that he saw the deer swallow in the morning. It is said that it was preserved for a long period as a great curiosity, and no wonder! for it would make a most valuable acquisition to one of our museums had it been preserved till now. Upon another occasion the same person was in the forest, and, having got within shot of a hind on the hill called the Doune, he took aim, but when ready to fire he observed that it was a young woman who was before him. He immediately took down his gun, and then it was a deer. He took aim again, and then it was a woman, but when the gun was lowered it became a deer. At last he fired, and the deer fell in the actual shape of a deer. No sooner had he slain the hind than he was overpowered with sleep, and having rolled himself in his plaid, he laid himself down in the heather. His repose, however, was not of long duration, for in a few minutes a loud cry was thundered in his ear saying, "Murdoch! Murdoch! you have this day slain the only maid of the Doune," upon which Murdoch started up and replied, "If I have killed her, you may eat her," and immediately quitted the forest as fast as his legs could carry him. It may be remarked that this man was commonly called "Murchadh Maclan," or Murdoch, the son of John. His real name, however, was Macpherson. He had a son that took holy orders, got a living in Ireland, and it is said that the late celebrated Mr. Sheridan is descended from a daughter of his. The most extraordinary superstition, however, was that of the belief of a "Leannan Sith" or a fairy sweetheart, and all inveterate deer-stalkers that remained for nights, and even weeks, in the mountains were understood to have formed such a connection. In these cases the earthly wife was considered to be in great danger from the machinations of the fairy mistress.

END.

The Bagpipe in War

By Lieut. Ian Mackay Scobie, Upper Burmah.

Oh that I had three arms, two for the Pipe And one for the sword.—Gaelic Song.

There is no doubt that the antiquity of the bagpipe as a war instrument is very great. Dr. Fraser, a well-known authority on the instrument, says "It is more than likely that the Celts of Pannonia used the bagpipe in war, before the Christian era," and further mentions that "Prudentius, however (b. a.d. 348)—the greatest of the Roman Christian poets, is the first writer, so far as I am aware, to mention the bagpipe as a recognised instrument of war." He says:— "Signum Symphonice belli Aegyptis diderat"—which, when translated, reads:— "The bagpipe gave the signal for the battle to begin, to the Egyptians," the bagpipe sounded the charge. Thus early do we find the piper in the forefront of the battle!"

According to a Roman writer, Procopius by name, we learn that the bagpipe became "the recognised marching instrument of the Roman Infantry."

On the downfall of the Roman Empire, however, the pipes fell into disuse as a war instrument, and we hear no more of them as such until the early part of the 15th century, when they began to supersede the war song of the bards in the Highlands of Scotland.

How and when they first came into

CELTIC SCOTLAND IS

still an unsolved mystery and a bone of contention amongst historians. It is sufficient, however, to say that, although other nations certainly had pipes of various kinds, at one time or another in their history, the Highlanders of Scotland were the only ones to really develop and improve the instrument on proper lines,

composing a class of music specially suited for it, and thus making it, both in peace and war, their national instrument.

As a musical instrument of war the Great Highland Bagpipe, or “Piob Mhor,” stands without equal, its shrill and penetrating notes being well suited to the roar and din of the battle, either when calling to the charge, encouraging the pursuit, or checking the retreat, in enlivening the weary march, or in rousing the “crith gaisge” or “tremblings of valour,” to be followed later by the “mire chath,” or frenzy of battle, which hurled the Gael like a veritable avalanche on the foe.

It may be interesting to mention here that the Highland bagpipe is louder and shriller than any other, as it was always intended to be used as an instrument of war. According to the author of “The Highland Bagpipe,” pipe music has been known to have been heard at a distance of six miles, and, under specially favourable conditions, of ten miles. A bagpipe in the possession of the Duke of Sutherland, which was used in the Rising of 1745, has been ‘heard at a distance of eight miles. Up till about 1800 the war-pipe had two drones, the third one only being added at the commencement of the 19th century.

It was only natural amongst an essentially war-like people like the Highlanders that their favourite instrument should have qualities fitting it to be useful in war, and we have only to look at its repertoire of music, particularly the more ancient

“CEOL MOR,” OR PIOBAIREACHD,

to see that war indeed formed the theme of a large number of its tunes. That the pipes are eminently adapted for conveying the highest feelings of human passion and emotion, especially in regard to war, nobody can deny who has heard a Piobaireachd such as “The Desperate Battle” properly played. To a Highlander such a tune brings vividly before him the whole battle scene—the changing fortunes of the fight, the clash of arms, the shouts of the combatants, the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying, and the terrible scene of carnage as night descends on the battlefield, covering friend and foe, the living and dead, under her mantle.

Neil Munro, that most Highland of all our writers, thoroughly understands this feeling when he says, writing of the Piobaireachd “Cogadh na sith” in

“THE LOST PIBROCH”;

“Peace or war, peace or war; come which will, we care not,” sang the pipe reeds, and there was the muster and the march, hot-foot rush over the rotting rain-wet moor, the jingle of iron, the dunt of pike and targe, the choked roar of hate and hunger, batter and slash and fall, and behind, the old, old feud with Appin!”

In the preface to Ross’ Pipe Collection, written by the Rev. Norman MacLeod, we read that “the bagpipe is the instrument best adapted for summoning the clans from the far-off glens to rally round the standard of their chiefs, or for leading a Highland regiment to the attack amidst the roar of battle. . . In the Lament we expect a sadness, but even in “the summons to battle,” with all its fire and energy, it cannot conceal what it seems already to anticipate—sorrow for the slain.”

The strange effect of the pipes on Highlanders and Scotsmen generally is too well known to be entered into largely here. Whether in peace or in war, it is all the same, that indescribable thrill, that war-like feeling aroused even in the most peaceable of us, which is always a source of wonder to the stranger.

Men who, although

HIGHLAND ONLY IN NAME

or descent, or in some cases not even knowing the land of their origin, have been greatly affected on hearing the pipes for the first time, thus showing to what an extent this peculiar instrument has engraved itself in the past on the Highland character.

As a fine example of the powerful influence exercised by the pipes on the Scottish Highlander, we cull the following passage from Neil Munro's "John Splendid"—"On a sudden there rose away before us towards the mouth of the glen the sound of a bagpipe. It came on the tranquil air with no break in its uproar, and after a preparatory tuning it broke into an air called "Cogadh na Sith" — an ancient braggart pibroch made by one Macruimen of the Isle of Skye—a tune that was commonly used by the Campbells as a night-retreat or Tattoo.

"My heart filled with the strain. It gave me not only the simple illusion that I saw again the regimentals of my native country—many a friend and comrade among them in the shelter of the Castle of Inverlochy—but it roused in me a spirit very antique, very religious and moving too, as the music of his own land must in every honest Gael.

"Cruachan for ever!" I said lightly to M'Iver, though my heart was full.

"He was as much touched by that homely lilt as myself. 'The old days, the old styles!' said he. 'God! how that pibroch stings me to the core!' And as the tune came more clearly in the second part, or Crunluadh, as we call it, and the player maybe came round a bend of the road, my comrade stopped in his pace, and added, with what in another I might have thought a sob—' I've trudged the world; I have learned many bravadoes, so that my heart never stirred much to the mere trick of an instrument but one, and the Pìob Mhor conquers me. What is it, Colin, that's in us, rich and poor, yon rude cane-reeds speak so human and friendly to I'

"'Tis the Gaelic," I said, cheered myself by the air. "Never a roar of the drone or a sob of the chanter but's in the Gaelic tongue."

"'Maybe,' said he, 'maybe: I've heard the scholats like yourself say the sheep-skin and the drones were Roman—that or Spanish, it's all one to me. I heard them at Boitzenburg, when we gave the butt of the gun to Tilly's soldadoes, they played us into Holstein, and when the ditch of Stralsund was choked with the

TARTAN OF MACKAY,

and our lads were falling like corn before the hook, a Reay piper stood valiantly in front and played a salute. Then and now it's the pipes, my darling!"

Again, let us see what that well-known writer of Highland stories, James Grant, has to say in regard to the effect of the pipes on the Gael in battle. In his book, "The Romance of War," speaking of the defence of the Rock of Maya in the Peninsular War, he says:— "As the battalion (the Gordon Highlanders) moved in open column of companies along the hill-top from the camp towards the pass, Colonel Cameron addressed a few words to them, exhorting them to fight to the last man, and maintain the ancient fame of the North. He reminded them that they were not only fighting merely for the defence of Spain, but of those homes where their kindred dwelt. His voice became drowned in the din of the conflict which rolled along the face of the hills, and Stuart heard only the concluding part of the address, and part of it was in Gaelic. 'Highlanders! we shall have a bloody Sabbath here to-day; but we go forth to shed our blood that the Sabbath bells may ring in peace at home, in those green straths and wooded glens where many a Scottish heart is praying for us at this hour? The sound of the pipes, as the piper on the flank of each company struck up

"ON WI' THE TARTAN,"

was the only reply. What a gush of indescribable feeling came through every breast, when the blast of the pipe was heard at such a moment! Every eye lighted up, and every cheek flushed: the effect of the sound of that strange instrument on the sons of Caledonia is well known."

Returning to the early times when we first hear of the pipes as a war instrument, we see them used in conjunction with the bard. To quote from W. L. Manson's interesting work on the pipes: "The bards who preceded the pipers as an inspiring military force seemed themselves not only susceptible to the influence of the "Mire chath," but capable of imparting it to others. Before the battle they passed from clan to clan giving exhortation and encouragement in wild and recitative strains, and rousing the feelings of the warriors to the highest pitch of frenzy. When the noise of the fight drowned their voices, the pipers, after they became general as military instruments, kept the enthusiasm alive. Both bard and piper helped when the battle was over to celebrate the deeds of those who had survived, and the honour of those who had fallen, the piper's part of the work being more often the playing of Laments for the departed."

As time went on, however, the piper gradually superseded both the harper and the bard, and reigned supreme at the feast or on the battlefield.

In 1314, at the Battle of Bannockburn, we hear that the Clan Menzies took their pipes with them, and that they were played by one of their hereditary pipers. In fact, remains of these pipes are still in existence. There is also mention made in a poem on the battle that both bards and pipers were employed to urge the clans to victory.

At the great clan fight on the North Inch of Perth in 1390 we are told that "the clans stalked into the barriers to the sound of their own great war-pipes," and Sir Walter Scott in "The Fair Maid of Perth," tells us in his account of the fight that each side had its own piper, and that "when they saw that the conflict was well nigh terminated for want of men to support it, threw down their instruments, rushed desperately upon one another with their daggers, and each being more intent on despatching his opponent than in defending himself, the piper of Clan Quhele was almost instantly slain, and he of Clan Cbattan mortally wounded. The last, nevertheless, again grasped his instrument, and the pibroch of the clan yet poured its expiring notes over the Clan Chattan while the dying minstrel had breath to inspire it. The instrument which he used, or at least a part of it called the chanter, is preserved in the family of Macpherson of Cluny, chief of Clan Chattan, and is much honoured under the name of the "Feadan dubh," or Black Chanter." Another tradition, however, says that during the progress of the fight an aerial piper appeared, who, after playing some wild strains, let his pipes drop to the ground. Being made of glass, they were broken by the fall, except the chanter, which was of lignum vitae, and which was secured by the Clan Chattan piper, to be afterwards kept as a memento of the fight. On the retention of this "Feadan dubh" in the family is supposed to rest the prosperity of the house of Cluny.

It is said that at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411 the Highland army charged to the sound of piobaireachd "deafening to hear," and that in 1431 at the Battle of Inverlochy the warpipes were largely in evidence. In fact, all through the 15th century we continually come across references to the pipes being used in war, and towards the end of that century they may be considered to have become inseparable from the Highlander on the field of battle.

END.

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair

PS Our newsletter archives can always be found at:
<https://electricscotland.com/newsletter/index.htm>