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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 2nd, 2017

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

Well my video newsletter got just 56 views and I only got a couple of comments on it so perhaps not such a good idea after all. However I've decided to keep it going for a few weeks to see how it all might play out. The two comments while saying they generally enjoyed it felt it was too long and so I'll try and make this new one shorter and it ended up at just over 22 minutes - so around 8 minutes less than the last one - so I did try :-)

This weeks video can be viewed at:

<https://youtu.be/s1wGa8jiVHs>

The First Time America Freaked Out Over Automation

It was the late 1950s, and the problem was solved quickly. But the same strains beneath the surface still haunt us.

Read more at:

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/05/30/rick-wartzman-book-excerpt-automation-donald-trump-215207>

I attended the first ever talk given in Scotland about the repercussions of bar coding. This resulted in me purchasing a computer and preparing myself for the future as I could see many sales jobs going due to its implications.

It has been estimated that a high percentage of jobs could go over the next twenty years or so due to automation. We must all have received computerised sales phone calls which can mean many banking jobs could go. This is where the Universal Basic Income comes in.

Read more at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/sip/basicincome.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 as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in newspapers such as the Guardian, Scotsman, Courier, etc. 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.

Moray constituency radio debate

Ahead of the 8 June general election, BBC Radio Scotland hosted a debate - chaired by the BBC's Andrew Kerr - in the Westminster seat of Moray.

Listen to this at

<http://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-40063273/general-election-2017-moray-constituency-radio-debate>

When will the sun go down on Scottish wind turbines?

by Jack Ponton in Think Scotland

Read more at:

http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkpolitics/articles.html?read_full=13172

German Economy Thrives at the Expense of Other EU States

A right-wing National Front (FN) party member said in an interview with Sputnik on Friday that Germany is developing its economy at the expense of the other states in the European Union

Read more at:

<https://sputniknews.com/europe/201705261054028844-german-economy-eu/>

The Scots who pioneered photography

More than 200 of the oldest photographs taken in Scotland are to go on display at the National Galleries of Scotland.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-40014732>

Britain's great explorations now online

The Royal Geographical Society is releasing the films of the scientific explorations it sponsored in the early 20th Century.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-40050593>

Carnoustie primary pupils' big effort for Small Blue butterfly

Angus primary school pupils are leading an effort to protect Scotland's smallest butterfly as part of a nationwide conservation project set for launch.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/angus-mearns/433921/carnoustie-primary-pupils-big-effort-for-small-blue-butterfly/>

Who knew the Scots were such space pioneers?

For such a small nation, Scotland punches far above its weight

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/27/scots-space-pioneers>

Scotland's Surf City

In short, the Cove doesn't just promise the perfect wave it promises your perfect wave.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/outdoors/the-hi-tech-wave-pool-that-could-turn-edinburgh-into-scotland-s-surf-city-1-4456662>

Social care is a family affair

by Eben Wilson in Think Scotland

Read more at:

http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkbusiness/articles.html?read_full=13175

Who has power over what in Scotland?

So, what do MSPs have control over, and what remains in the hands of MPs at Westminster?

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-40015816>

Graphene sieve could make sea water drinkable

A membrane made from graphene oxide could be used to 'sieve' salt out of sea water and make it safe to drink, according to scientists from the University of Manchester.

Read more at:

<http://uk.reuters.com/video/2017/05/30/graphene-sieve-could-make-sea-water-drin?videoid=371772933&videoChannel=4000>

Why Nicola Sturgeon is wrong about her mandate

Those who live by the popular vote – the very nature of referendum politics – must also expect to die by the popular vote.

Read more at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/KennethRoy260a.html>

Donald Trump is right about Germany

His diagnosis is imprecise but Merkel's economic policies really are hurting the U.S.

Read more at:

<http://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2017/05/26/trump-right-about-germany-trade-000445>

Electric Canadian

Andrew Scheer wins Conservative leadership

Saskatchewan MP knocks out front-runner Maxime Bernier in the last round of voting, social conservatives flex muscle. Read more at:

<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/05/27/maxime-bernier-leads-tory-leadership-race-after-first-ballot-andrew-scheer-second.html>

Historical Sketch of the British American Assurance Company

By J. Castell Hopkins, F.S.S. (1912)

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

Scottish Canadians

Came across this page which is an excellent read and you can read this at:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/scots/>

Conrad Black

I've always had a lot of time for Conrad Black and so as he writes from Canada on a number of issues of interest from around the world I'm intending to include links to his writings for you to view. This week we have

As Madoff victims go unpaid, Richard Breeden has been unmasked for what he is

<http://www.conradblack.com/1298/as-madoff-victims-go-unpaid-richard-breeden-has>

Electric Scotland

The Forfar Directory and Year Book

A most interesting publication with lots of wee stories and articles. I have now added the 1907 edition which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/forfar/direct/>

A Domestic Compromise

It is not often that domestic compromises are as happily arranged as one in which Abraham Lincoln, the famous American president, played a leading part.

One day the president was unusually distraught. There had been a little domestic wrangle over the colour of a wall-paper. Mrs. Lincoln was determined to have yellow; the president was equally strong on green.

The next morning he was quite cheerful, and the secretary said he supposed the affair had been settled to his satisfaction.

"Oh, yes," said Lincoln; "we've made a compromise—it's going to be yellow."

Easy-Going Journalism

Very good feeling prevails between some newspapers and their readers, as witness the following notice, published a few months ago in the local paper of a small town of the Maygars:—

A Christening.—This paper was not published yesterday for the following reason. It is a matter of common knowledge that our editor has become the happy father of a fine boy. On Sunday evening he was christened Julius. On the same evening our dear responsible editor gave an evening party, as the result of which our assistant editor and staff were rendered unfit for duty. This is of course well known to our constant readers, all of whom were present at the memorable ceremony of the christening. In any case, however, we wish to place the matter fully before our readers, and to ask them to forget the incident.

Documentary from Kilmarnock in Scotland

The other side of Scotland. This is part 5 of this series looking at how the other half live in Scotland. I added this video to the foot of the page on the Social Life in Scotland which you can view at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/sociallife/>

Inverness in the Fifteenth Century

By Evan M. Barron (1906). Added a link to this book at the foot of our Inverness page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/inverness>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in Section 1 of the June 2017 issue which can be read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Tranent and its Surroundings

Historical, Ecclesiastical & Traditional by P M'Neill, Second Edition (1884). Added a link to this book at the foot of our Tranent page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/tranent/>

Sir Alexander Glen

Arctic explorer and wartime Intelligence officer before going into the shipping industry, and eventually becoming chairman of the British Tourist Authority.

You can read about him at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/glen_alexander.htm

Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry

By Allan Cunningham (1887)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/traditional-tales.pdf>

Reasons for Scots Moving to England

An interesting article exploring how so many Scots live in England which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/scotstoengland.htm>

Looking for Nuns

A Prosopographical study of Scottish Nuns in the later Middle Ages By Kimm Curran, B.A.

[In historical studies, prosopography is an investigation of the common characteristics of a historical group, whose individual biographies may be largely untraceable, by means of a collective study of their lives, in multiple career-line analysis. The use and development of prosopography, therefore, is closely connected to the problem of scarcity of historical data. For more information see the guide at:

<http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/images/01%20verboven%20pdf.pdf>]

John Cunningham remarked that medieval Scottish convents were shrouded in mystery but had power in "molding the piety of the time [yet were] too secret in their operation to be traced." It must be this secrecy that has kept scholars away from the subject of Scottish convents as to date, no one has undertaken a complete study to assist in an appreciation of female monastic establishments and the women who lived in them. There are many reasons why this may be the case. First, many monastic historians in general consider female monastic houses to be unimportant or uninteresting in the overall history of a particular order or the movement as a whole. Secondly, excuses have been made that female houses were too poor, had scanty resources, and were "too different" from their male counterparts to render them important enough to study. Faced with these comments from historians it is no wonder that no study of female monasticism in Scotland has been attempted.

What this paper intends to give is a perspective on how female monasticism has been studied in the past, how it has changed and evolved and how it may be possible to study female monasticism in Scotland based on new methods or approaches. Finally, by using these new methods, I hope to show that we can learn something about the convents of Scotland, especially those women who

became nuns and the importance these convents may have had in their community.

You can read this paper at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/nuns.htm>

The Story

Given the German Chancellor has decided the USA and the UK can't be trusted and the President of France is looking for closer collaboration with Germany I thought I'd highlight some of the history of both countries and their connection with Scotland and Britain. I am doing this due to the very limited knowledge by Scots on our history.

Germany and France and the Scottish/British connection

This story is all about how Scotland has been dealt a bad set of cards at the hands of the French and Germans in our history and even over the past 100 years and by people still living. In ancient times Scotland actually defended both France and Germany and indeed if it wasn't for the Scots France would not exist today.

Auld Alliance between Scotland and France

The special relationship between Scotland and France, acknowledged in the phrase 'The Auld Alliance', has formed a bond between the two peoples that survives irritations and misunderstandings.

It was first and always a military alliance against the common enemy, England. Joan of Arc's personal standard was painted by a Scotsman, probably called James Polwarth, and Scots fought under her command when she relieved the siege of Orleans and at the battles of Jargeau and Patay in 1429.

According to the most complete account of The Auld Alliance, Stephen Wood's book with that title, an un-named Scotsman, after returning to Scotland after Joan's execution, continued the chronicler Fordun's manuscript Scotichronicon when a monk in Dunfermline Abbey, and recorded how he had seen and accompanied 'the marvellous Maid' in her attempt to bring about the recovery of France'. By then the Alliance itself was almost a century and a half old.

It may be credited to one of the least distinguished of our Kings, John Balliol, known as Toom Tabard, who had become King of Scots in 1292, when Edward I of England was invited to determine who had the best claim to the vacant Scottish throne. Edward compelled Balliol to accept him as his overlord. In fact Balliol, as a great landowner in England and France as well as Scotland, was already a vassal of both Edward and of Philip IV of France, though not, of course, in his new capacity as King of Scots.

These things were confused in the Middle Ages, for Edward of England himself held lands in France and so was a vassal of the French King, too. But in 1294 he was, as King of England, at war with France and so the French King saw the advantages of a Scottish ally.

That was to be the pattern of the alliance. The Scots helped France and the French helped the Scots. The French always had more benefit from the Alliance. This was partly because mediaeval wars between France and England always took the form of an English invasion of France and partly because it was easier for the Scots to invade England than for the French.

In 1419 there landed at La Rochelle 150 men-at-arms and 300 archers, from Scotland. Over the course of the next six years 17,000 men would disembark from Glasgow to make the same journey. They formed the basis of the only armies the French could put in the field for the next ten years. Without them there would be no France.

Our willingness to do so resulted in some disastrous defeats, for instance Nevile's Cross, 1346 and Flodden, 1513. Scotland would have expected French support with the Jacobite rebellion of 1745/46 but no support was forthcoming and thus the battle of Culloden and the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the ending of the clan strength in Scotland.

Read an account of the Auld Alliance at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/fortune/13Chps23To24France.pdf>

See Address delivered by Mr. Raymond Poincaré, President of the French Republic Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, 1914-1919 on November 13th 1919 at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/france/rector.htm>

Also see our French section at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/france/index.htm>

The First World War resulted in Scottish losses of 110,000 lives; equivalent to 10% of the Scottish male population aged between

sixteen and fifty years of age.

WW1 was brutal and you only need to read one of the accounts to be appalled at the carnage that went on. For example read the Introduction by General Sir Arthur W. Currie, Commander of the Canadian Corps in the book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/canadassongreat01nasmuoft.pdf>

Germany
We all know that Germany started WW1 and millions of people died in that war and that Germany introduced Poison Gas into their operations.

In some of the history on this site we note that some 30,000 Scots emigrated to Germany and another 30,000 fought for Germany in the thirty years war. See our German section at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/germany/scotsndx.htm>

Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, leading Winston Churchill to remark, shortly afterwards, 'Thank God for the French Army'. To Churchill at that time, France's army seemed a powerful bulwark against possible Nazi aggression towards other European nations.

The defeat of this powerful army in a mere six weeks in 1940 stands as one of the most remarkable military campaigns in history.

In 1939, as World War Two loomed, the British and French planned to fight an updated version of what happened in 1914-18 during World War One, but with some essential differences. The French had suffered massive casualties in frontal attacks in 1914. This time they were going to remain on the defensive in western Europe, while mobilising their military forces and industrial base to fight a total war. They planned to take the offensive some two to three years after the start of hostilities.

The 'Maginot Line' replaced the crude trenches in which so much of the 1914-18 war was fought. It consisted of a sophisticated series of fortifications, which were confidently expected to protect France's frontier with Germany, although crucially the line did not cover the Franco-Belgian frontier. In general, the slow-tempo, attritional fighting of World War One heavily influenced French military doctrine at the outbreak of World War Two.

Hitler was eager to follow up his victory over Poland in 1939 by attacking in the west, but bad weather forced the planned offensive to be postponed. Then, in January 1940, a German plane crashed in neutral Belgium, with a copy of the attack orders on board.

Hitler was forced to rethink, believing the plan compromised he turned for advice to General Erich von Manstein, who argued for a daring campaign. In effect, Manstein recognised that the Maginot Line was too formidable for a direct attack from Germany. Instead, he proposed a subsidiary attack through neutral Holland and Belgium, with the main blow against France to be launched a little later through the Ardennes. This was a hilly and heavily forested area on the German-Belgian-French border, where the Allies would be unlikely to expect an attack. The plan was to rely heavily on surprise blitzkrieg ('lightning war') techniques.

Contrary to a generally held belief, the Germans had fewer tanks than the Allies (2,500 against 3,500) at this point. However, the tanks were concentrated into Panzer (armoured) formations. The French had some equivalent formations that were of good quality, but they were dispersed rather than concentrated in the German fashion.

The attack began on 10 May 1940, with German air raids on Belgium and Holland, followed by parachute drops and attacks by ground forces. The two beleaguered nations were hastily added to the anti-German ad-hoc coalition that included France and Britain, but this only served to further complicate Allied command and control arrangements.

The Germans seized the initiative, capturing the key Belgian fort of Eben Emael with a daring airborne operation. The speed of the German advance and the brutality of the air raids gave them a huge psychological advantage, and on 14 May the Dutch surrendered.

Read about Scots in the Netherlands at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/netherlands/index.htm>

The British and French had responded to the original attack by putting into operation a plan to advance to the River Dyle, in Belgium. The Allies pushed their best forces, including the British, into Belgium. Although the initial stages went reasonably well, a French force advancing towards Breda, in Holland, was pushed back.

It soon became clear that by advancing into the Low Countries the Allies were dancing to Hitler's tune. On 13 May, the first German forces emerged from the Ardennes near Sedan, on the River Meuse. In a two-day battle, the Panzers crossed the river, despite some surprisingly stiff resistance from the second-class French defenders, and near-suicidal attacks by Allied aircraft.

A potentially decisive counterattack by two high quality French armoured and motorised divisions fizzled out into some fierce, but ultimately inconclusive fighting. Under the dynamic command of General Heinz Guderian, a pioneer of armoured warfare known

euphemistically as 'Hurry-up Heinz', the German Panzers broke out of their bridgehead. They began to race towards the Channel coast, aided by the German aircraft that ruled the skies.

With the bulk of the Allied forces fighting in Belgium, there was little to stop the German forces as they sliced across the Allied supply-lines. The German spearheads reached the English Channel on 20 May.

Lacking a centrally placed strategic reserve, the Allies tried to pull their armies out of Belgium to respond to the new threat emerging in their rear. And the Germans did not have it all their own way, as French forces under Charles de Gaulle showed how vulnerable the flanks of the German forces were to bold counterattacks.

Then at Arras on 21 May, a scratch force of British tanks and infantry gave a rough reception to Erwin Rommel's 7th Panzer Division. Yet this was all too little, too late. With German forces pushing through Belgium and the Panzers looping up from the south and west, the Allies were encircled. The Belgian army surrendered on 28 May, leaving a gaping hole on the British flank of the Allied forces.

Allied high command seemed paralysed. General Weygand replaced General Gamelin as French commander-in-chief, but it made no difference. Then General Lord Gort, the commander of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), on 23/4 May took the morally courageous decision to abandon his role in a projected Anglo-French counterattack, and fell back on the Channel ports.

The French, not surprisingly, regarded this as a betrayal, but Gort's decision saved the BEF. Between 26 May and 4 June, a hastily organised evacuation by sea, code-named Operation Dynamo, lifted 338,000 Allied troops from Dunkirk.

That the German forces failed to press their attack on Dunkirk was largely thanks to grim defence of the Dunkirk perimeter by British and French troops, and the efforts of the much-depleted RAF.

Although as Churchill, who had become Prime Minister on 10 May rightly commented, 'wars are not won by evacuation', Dynamo was a victory of incalculable importance for the BEF. The return of the troops, even without much of their equipment, gave Britain a basis on which to rebuild the Army, sheltering behind the Navy and the RAF. It also strengthened the credibility of Churchill's insistence that Britain would fight on, thus influencing the neutral USA at a time when American aid was vital.

The second act of the Battle of France began on 5 June, with the Germans striking southwards from the River Somme. Despite the fact that the French in many areas fought well, the Germans destroyed the Allied forces in the field in short order. The 51st Highland Division, which had not been grouped with the rest of the British army, was surrounded at St Valéry-en-Caux, and was forced to surrender on 12 June.

The Germans launched a major offensive on Paris on 9 June, and on 13 June Paris was declared an open city, as the French government fled to Bordeaux. The first German troops entered the French capital on 14 June, little more than a month after the campaign began.

The end came with the surrender of France on 22 June. Hitler insisted on signing the document of capitulation in the same railway carriage used when Germany had surrendered in 1918. The humiliation of France was complete.

The French collapse was as sudden as it was unexpected. It ripped up the balance of power in Europe, and overnight left the strategic assumptions on which Britain had planned to fight Hitler completely obsolete. With France out of the equation, Britain's war for the next four years was fought in the air, at sea, and in the Mediterranean - but not on the Western Front. Not until D-Day, 6 June 1944, did a major British army return to France.

The legacy for France itself was complex. Resistance groups formed, but risked bringing savage reprisals on the civilian population if they attacked the occupying forces. While de Gaulle formed an army and a government in exile in Britain, he was technically a rebel. See the Speech delivered by General de Gaulle at Edinburgh, 23rd June 1942 at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/france/degaulle.htm>

The 'legitimate' French government was that of Marshal Philippe Pétain, an aged World War One veteran, and had its capital at Vichy in central France. The Vichy regime was authoritarian and collaborated with the Germans. Arguably, the wartime divisions within French society that were created by this arrangement are still not fully healed.

And so we find that Germany started WW1 and WW2 and thus caused millions of deaths. In WW2 Viche France collaborated with Germany and hence the strong German/French alliance in the EU.

One can't but be very suspicious of both Germany and France in their role in the EU which Britain has decided to leave.

Great Britain was bankrupted due to both these world wars and America did very well during this time and while their support was needed to win both wars they did benefit financially through both of them and so took over from the British Empire.

Note also that after WW2 half of Germany's debt was written off to help them re-construct their economy while Britain got no such help. That meant that Britain had to struggle on with old and out dated manufacturing equipment.

So given the above one has to question why Britain joined the then Common Market but one has to remember that this was a trade deal whereas now the EU is more about political union.

The spying Scotsman who hunted the Nazis of New York

In the summer of 1940, as British pilots fought desperately for the skies of southern England, the battle was joined on a very different front, thousands of miles from the coast of Kent. It was fought through the political salons of Washington DC, the boardrooms and the smoky nightclubs of New York. The protagonists had no uniform save that of a well-tailored suit; their weapons were native cunning, a plausible manner, and, from time to time, a concealed revolver.

This was the secret battle for America, ordered by Winston Churchill himself, and the fate of the free world hung upon it. Read this story at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/donald_maclaren.htm

We now hear that Trump in the US is not happy with the EU and Germany is now calling for greater European integration as a result saying that the EU can't trust the USA or the UK.

Germany has benefited from the euro. The value of the euro is based on international trade and capital flows of the 18 countries that use the currency. Because Germany has a relatively stronger, more productive economy than its EU counterparts, the euro is effectively undervalued for Germany. In other words, if Germany was still using the deutschmark, the currency would be stronger, reducing exports and increasing imports. Germany would be less competitive internationally if it had a national currency. According to an International Monetary Fund report from last year, German's inflation-adjusted exchange rate is undervalued by 10 percent to 20 percent, up from 5 percent to 15 percent in 2014. And in 2016, Germany's dollar-denominated current account surplus — the amount savings exceed investment — was \$300 billion, the largest in the world.

So now we have Germany and Viche France joining together again and this is not in Britain or Scotland's best interest. One can't but wonder if Germany is trying to win a third world war but this time economically.

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

Alastair