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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 9th, 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

I delayed getting out the newsletter so I could bring you the UK election results.

Former SNP leader Alex Salmond and the party's Westminster leader Angus Robertson were among the high profile casualties on a night which saw the party take 35 - over half - of Scotland's 59 seats. But this was 21 down on the 56 Nationalist MPs returned two years ago. The party was also down from 50% of the popular vote to 37%.

In the UK we have a hung parliament with the Conservatives on 317 seats and all others at 331. At time of writing it is thought that the Conservatives could form a Government with the help of the DUP in Northern Ireland. The poor election for the Conservative party is being placed squarely on the shoulders of the Prime Minister.

For further coverage see <http://www.bbc.com/news/scotland>

A video introduction to this newsletter can be viewed at:
https://youtu.be/pX0D_BSnkYQ

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.

Buy a street name
Moray Council devise new way to raise cash

Read more at:
<http://www.scotsman.com/regions/aberdeen-north-east/buy-a-street-name-moray-council-devise-new-way-to-raise-cash-1-4462163>

In praise of smoking
By Jack McLean in the Scottish Review

Read more at:
<http://www.scottishreview.net/JackMcLeanMonthly001a.html>

Submarine's great leader honoured in Portpatrick
The exploits of a Victoria Cross recipient are being recognised at his former home in south west Scotland.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-40118163>

Highland ponies in their element

The bog is dirt-black and soupy, threatening to mire us at every step. All we can do is give the horses free rein to seek a safe route

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jun/02/highland-ponies-element-country-diary>

An independent Scottish foreign policy

If Scotland votes to become independent and applies for EU membership, a key new issue would be the role would it seek to play in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Read more at:

<http://sceptical.scot/2017/06/an-independent-scottish-foreign-policy/>

30 Years of Celtic Life

A short film to celebrate their 30th birthday.

View this at:

<https://celticlife.com/celebrating-30-years-of-celtic-life/>

Millionaire stakes claim to be named head of clan Buchanan

A Scottish landowner hopes to become the first chieftain of an ancient clan in more than three centuries.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/people-places/millionaire-stakes-claim-to-be-named-head-of-clan-buchanan-1-4466116>

The eerie photographs of the abandoned island of Stroma

Stroma was home to 375 people in the early 20th Century but the population vanished within 60 years.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/the-eerie-photographs-of-the-abandoned-island-of-stroma-1-4466798>

Scottish Education: A Generation, Failed

A summary of my recent analysis on the data around the SNP's performance on education appeared in today's Daily Record, along with a broader perspective and some caveats (which generally I agree with) by James McEnaney

Read more at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.ca/2017/06/scottish-education-generation-failed.html>

Jane Haining

Scot who died at Auschwitz recalled by former pupil

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-40190988>

Has the real Bonnie Prince Charlie cave been found?

Jacobite enthusiasts believe they may have found the true location of a mountain hideaway used by Bonnie Prince Charlie during his escape from Scotland after Culloden.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/has-the-real-bonnie-prince-charlie-cave-been-found-1-4467637>

Scots piper on his desire to be the first to play in every country

WHEN Ross OC Jennings started playing the bagpipes aged 13 after a school assembly demonstration, he couldn't have imagined that his skill and enjoyment of the pipes would lead to travelling the world.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/people-places/scots-piper-on-his-desire-to-be-the-first-to-play-in-every-country-1-4468668>

Saving Scotland from Financial Meltdown
A tightly argued and factually researched paper

Read more at:

<http://scottishresearchsociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SRS-WP-2017-Saving-Scotland-from-Financial-Meltdown.pdf>

The tyranny of testing

We should be celebrating Scotland's schools not destroying their morale.

Read more at:

<http://scottishreview.net/NormanReid260a.html>

Ronnie Corbett

Stars honour remarkable comedian at memorial service

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-40185272>

Scottish universities slip down the global rankings

Scotland's universities have plummeted down a global league table, leading to fears that underfunding is putting the country's reputation for excellence in higher education at risk.

Read more at:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/scotland/scottish-universities-slip-down-the-global-rankings-as-austerity-bites-5ng3scvj6>

Electric Canadian

The Great Fur Lands

Or Sketches of Life in the Hudson's Bay Territory by H. M. Robinson (1879) (pdf)

Read this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/greatfurlands.pdf>

A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography

Edited by Hector Charlesworth (1919)

You can read this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/bios.pdf>

Historical Sketch of the Bank of Montreal

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

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

Things worth doing and how to do them

Found this book to add to our Beard collection which is things for girls to do.

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/beard/index.htm>

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

Detente on the horizon in Washington's war on Trump

<http://www.conradblack.com/1299/detente-on-the-horizon-in-washington-war-on-trump>

The Madness of the Never-Trumpers - It's all falling apart for them.

<http://www.conradblack.com/1301/the-madness-of-the-never-trumpers>

Electric Scotland

The Forfar Directory and Year Book

A most interesting publication with lots of wee stories and articles. I have now added the 1908 edition which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/forfar/direct/>

THE UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTED

Smith: "Good morning, Jones. I hear you have a son and heir."

Jones: "Yes; our household now represents the United Kingdom."

Smith: "How's that?"

Jones: "Why, you see, I am English, my wife's Irish, the nurse is Scotch, and the baby wails."

Scotland in the Middle Ages

Added 3 interesting papers on various topics to our Middle Ages pages.

You can read these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/History/middleages/index.htm>

Terrorism and Education as a counter to it

This is a video I made to make the case.

You can view this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5212-Terrorism-and-Education-as-a-counter>

Wariston's Diary and Other Papers

Diary of Sir Archibak Jonston, Lord Warison (1639); The Preservaion of the Honours of Scotland (1651-52); Lord MAr's Legacies (1722-27); Letters concerning Highland Affairs in the 18th Century by Mrs. Grant of Laggan

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/wariston.pdf>

The Scottish Monasteries of Old

A Brief Account of the Houses which existed in Scotland, befoe the Potestant Reformation, for Monks following the Rule of St Benedict by Michael Barrett (1913)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/scottishmonastries.pdf>

Cromwell's Scotch Campaigns 1650-51

Lord-Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland (1743) and his Scotch Campaigns. also added to the same page a couple of accounts of his life.

You can read these books at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/england/commercial04.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw

"The Chevalier's Lament" Broadside and Robert Burns at the National Library of Scotland By Robert Betteridge

Robert Betteridge is Curator in Rare Books and Music Collections at the National Library of Scotland, in Edinburgh. He has shared this note on his work with Burns: "Robert has been working with rare books at the National Library of Scotland since 1998. His interest in Burns began as one of the co-curators of the exhibition Zig-Zag: the Paths of Robert Burns which toured Scotland in 2009 and brought together exhibits from the National Burns Collection <http://www.nls.uk/exhibitions/burns>. He is an advisor on the University of Glasgow project A Bibliography of Robert Burns for the 21st Century. He is currently cataloguing the Library's incunabula and has published on the early history of the Advocates Library and the library of Newhailes near Edinburgh." (Professor Patrick Scott)

My personal thanks to Patrick Scott, friend, mentor, and Burns scholar for his assistance in securing this article for Robert Burns Lives! I have looked to him on a regular basis in preparing these chapters for publication on our website, and he has always assisted me when called upon. Not everyone can be so lucky! (FRS: 6.08.17)

You can read this article at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives255.htm

Miscellany of the Maitland Club

Consisting of Original Papers and Other Documents illustrative of the History and Literature of Scotland in 3 volumes

I've made the contents pages available for Volume 1 so if any of that interests you then you can download the volume at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/mait.htm>

The Story

Scottish Charms and Amulets - Curing-Stones

That certain stones possessed curative properties of an occult nature was formerly the common belief of the people throughout Scotland, and even at this day is not quite extinct among us. With the exception of the crystal balls already described, the greater number of these curing-stones are merely naturally-formed pebbles, such as may be found in the bed of any stream, or picked up on the sea-shore. Some of these curing-stones are known by name, and have acquired a more than local celebrity from their association with particular individuals. Of these the chief is the Curing-Stone of St Columba, the virtues of which have been recorded by Adamnan as follows:-

Curing-Stone of St Columba.—"About the same time the venerable man, from motives of humanity, besought Broichan the Druid to liberate a certain Scotie female slave, and when he very cruelly and obstinately refused to part with her, the saint then spoke to him to the following effect:—' Know, O Broichan, and be assured, that if thou refuse to set this captive free, as I desire thee, that thou shalt die suddenly before I take my departure again from this province.' Having said this in presence of Brude, the king, he departed from the royal palace and proceeded to the river Nesa (the Ness); from this stream he took a white pebble, and showing it to his companions said to them :— "'Behold this white pebble, by which God will effect the cure of many diseases among this heathen nation.'

"Having thus spoken, he instantly added, 'Broichan is chastised grievously at this moment, for an angel being sent from heaven, and striking him severely, hath broken into many pieces the glass cup in his hand from which he was drinking, and hath left him gasping deeply for breath, and half dead. Let us await here a short time, for two of the king's messengers, who have been sent after us in haste, to request us to return quickly and help the dying Broichan, who, now that he is thus terribly punished, consenteth to set the girl free.'

"Whilst the saint was yet speaking, behold there arrived, as he had predicted, two horsemen, who were sent by the king, and who related all that had occurred to Broichan in the royal fortress, according to the prediction of the saint—both the breaking of the drinking goblet, the punishment of the Druid, and his willingness to set his captive at liberty; they then added, 'The king and his friends have sent us to thee to request that thou wouldst cure his foster-father Broichan, who lieth in a dying state.'

"Having heard these words of the messengers, St Columba sent two of his companions to the king with the pebble which he had blessed, and said to them, 'If Broichan shall first promise to set the maiden free, then at once immerse this little stone in water, and let him drink from it, and he shall be instantly cured; but if he break his vow, and refuse to liberate her he shall die that instant.'

"The two persons, in obedience to the saint's instructions, proceeded to the palace, and announced to the king the words of the venerable man. When they were made known to the king and his tutor Broichan, they were so dismayed that they immediately liberated the captive, and delivered her to the saint's messengers. The pebble was then immersed in water, and in a wonderful manner, contrary to the laws of nature, the stone floated on the water, like a nut or an apple, nor, as it had been blessed by the holy man, could it be submerged. Broichan drank from the stone as it floated on the water, and instantly returning from the verge of death, recovered his perfect health and soundness of body.

"This remarkable pebble, which was afterwards preserved among the treasures of the king, through the mercy of God effected the cure of sundry diseases among the people, while it in the same manner floated when dipped in water. And what is very wonderful, when this same stone was sought for by those sick persons whose term of life had arrived, it could not be found. Thus on the very day on which King Brude died, though it was sought for, yet it could not be found in the place where it had been previously laid."

Curing-Stones of St Fillan.—In a niche in the wall of the mill at Killin, Perthshire, there are preserved a number of stones, which are locally known as the healing or curing stones of St Fillan, and considered to be efficacious in cases of insanity and rheumatism. The stones are merely small boulders of quartzite taken from the bed of the river, but are marked by small, shallow, rounded cavities on their faces. They are now known to be nothing more than the "socket stones in which the spindle of the upper millstone used to work before the introduction of the improved machinery." It is stated that a niche has always been made in the wall of the new mill which succeeded the old one down to the present day, as a resting-place for the stones; and that on the saint's day in 1879, the villagers assembled and put clean straw under them. The precise manner in which the stones were used in effecting a cure is not clear, but it is stated that water poured over them was used by the patient—whether outwardly or inwardly is not known. A correspondent of the late Dr John Stuart, in a letter dated March 1865, also refers to the stones, and adds that each one "was supposed to have the power of healing a particular disease. The tradition of the country points them out as the identical stones blessed by the saint, and

used for healing disease through so many centuries, almost to our own time. One was called the 'heart stone,' another the 'thumb stone.' "

In a paper communicated to the Society some years ago by the Rev. Dr Hugh Macmillan, the writer describes two curing-stones of white quartz which lie on a tombstone in an old burying-ground known as Cladh Davi, on the shore of Loch Tay. These curing-stones, like those at Killin already described, were also originally socket stones. Dr Macmillan says:—"These stones are said to cure pectoral inflammation when the water is applied to the nipples; and not long since a woman, who was thus afflicted, came a considerable distance, from the head of Glen Lochay, to make use of this remedy. In all likelihood the stones belong to the series which is carefully preserved in the modern mill at Killin, as relics of St Fillan. It is said that some of the stones in the collection at the mill were lost. In all likelihood the stones in Cladh Davi are the missing ones, though how or why or when they were brought to the latter spot there is no record to tell."

Curing-Stone of St Mollo.—Martin is the only writer who describes this stone, which appears to have been held in great repute in Arran in his day for removing stitches from the sides of sick people, and for securing victory in battle to Macdonald of the Isles. The stone has now disappeared. Martin's description is as follows:-

"I had like to have forgot a valuable Curiosity in this Isle, which they call Baul Muluy,' i.e. Molvingus his Stone Globe: this Saint was Chaplain to Mack-Donald of the Isles; his Name is celebrated here on the account of this Globe, so much esteem'd by the Inhabitants. This Stone for its intrinsic value has been carefully transmitted to Posterity for several Ages. It is a green Stone much like a Globe in Figure, about the bigness of a Goose-Egg. The Vertue of it is to remove Stitches from the sides of sick Persons, by laying it close to the Place affected; and if the Patient does not out-live the Distemper, they say the Stone removes out of the Bed of its own accord, and è contra. The Natives use this Stone for swearing decisive Oaths upon it. They ascribe another extraordinary Vertue to it, and 'tis this: The credulous Vulgar firmly believe that if this Stone is east among the Front of an Enemy, they will all run away; and that as often as the Enemy rallies, if this Stone is east among them, they still lose Courage, and retire. They say that Mack-Donald of the Isles carried this Stone about him, and that Victory was always on his side when he threw it among the Enemy. The Custody of this Globe is the peculiar Privilege of a little Family called Clan-Chattons, alias MackIntosh; they were antient Followers of Mack-Donald of the Isles. This Stone is now in the Custody of Margaret Miller, alias Mack-Intosh: she lives in Baellmianich, and preserves the Globe with abundance of care; it is wrapped up in fair Linen Cloth, and about that there is a piece of Woollen Cloth, and she keeps it still look'd up in her Chest, when it is not given out to exert its qualities."

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

Alastair