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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for August 25th, 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

The big story this week in Scotland is the issuing of the GERS report which looks at Scotland's finances. I've added a couple of news stories for you to read below.

My friend Nola Crew was down at the weekend and she told me she's now been told she'll be the new Grand Prior of Canada and will be invested at the St James Priory Investiture in September in Toronto. While normally as Grand Chancellor she should automatically have been selected the current Grand Prior decided that two others should be allowed to stand and so they all had to issue documents stating their qualifications and why they should be selected. Nola's submission can be viewed at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/religion/nolacrewcv.pdf>

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.

Double Take

A page from the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<http://www.scottishreview.net/Doubletake3a.html>

Mull of Kintyre

Looking back on a Scottish mega-hit

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-40946649>

Scotland's mysterious rocking stones

They were massive boulders balanced on the smallest of points that could be moved with the touch of a finger.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/scotland-s-mysterious-rocking-stones-1-4535021>

Named Person plans still won't work, warn legal chiefs

The revival of controversial plans for a state-appointed Named Person for every Scots child could face another court defeat after legal chiefs warned the Scottish Government has failed to fix the flawed legislation.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/revived-named-person-plans-still-won-t-work-warn-legal-chiefs-1-4534929>

Who was the 2,500-year-old Ballachulish Goddess?

She was found face down in deep peat in the Highlands and dates to more than 2,500 years ago.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/who-was-the-2-500-year-old-ballachulish-goddess-1-4534045>

The man behind the Hong Kong miracle

John Cowperthwaite deserves the credit for the rise of Hong Kong

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/the-man-behind-the-hong-kong-miracle/>

Scotland's drug death crisis

The newly published figures of annual drug-related deaths (DRD) in Scotland are appalling

Read more at:

<http://sceptical.scot/2017/08/scotlands-drug-death-crisis/>

Archaeologists return to North East seat of Pictish kings

Archaeologists have returned to a likely seat of Pictish kings in the North East of Scotland to further explore the high status site.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/archaeologists-return-to-north-east-seat-of-pictish-kings-1-4536178>

Scone Spy

Coastal Cuppie are local heroes in Pennan, near Fraserburgh

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/scone-spy-coastal-cuppie-are-local-heroes-in-pennan-near-fraserburgh/>

Afternoon tea in a room with a view

If you're a regular driver on the Crieff-Comrie-Crianlarich road, you'll have spotted the distinctive facade of the Four Seasons Hotel in St Fillans.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/lifestyle/food-drink/491905/four-seasons-afternoon-tea-ultimate-balanced-meal/>

Macron's 100 days

Coming down to earth with a bump. French president made early international impact but quickly lost popularity at home.

Read more at:

<http://www.politico.eu/article/macrons-100-days-coming-down-to-earth-with-a-bump/>

Latest GERS Figures: A Quick Summ

The latest Scottish Government GERS figures confirm what informed commentators have been saying for a long time now: Scotland increasingly spends more per capita on public services than the rest of the UK

Read more at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.ca/2017/08/latest-gers-figures-quick-summary.html>

GERS 2016-17: A Journey in Graphs

Regular readers of chokkablog will know what's coming next: I've churned the handle of my GERS Spreadsheet and here come the graphs ...

Read more at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.ca/2017/08/gers-2016-17-journey-in-graphs.html>

The European Court of Justice is not an impartial court
And has no role to play in post-Brexit EU-UK relations

Read more at:

<http://www.lawyersforbritain.org/eu-deal-ecj-jurisdiction.shtml>

Why won't the government admit the true cost of renewable energy?
Flexibility measures have been presented as a saving. But that is illusory

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/why-wont-the-government-admit-the-true-cost-of-renewable-energy/>

Brussels has overplayed its hand on EU law after Brexit

This week the government published a series of position papers on the legal ramifications of Brexit. Written off as unrealistic and ill-informed in the press, the documents actually show that the government understands the complications and is willing to compromise. In fact, it is the EU's response that is unreasonable.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/brussels-has-overplayed-its-hand-on-eu-law-after-brexit/>

The Decline of the Western Tourist

Citizens of China, India, and other emerging markets are traveling for pleasure in ever greater number

Read more at:

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/08/23/the-decline-of-the-western-tourist-china-india/>

Free trade creates jobs should now be the Brexiteers' mantra

That means being more expansive, even more positive and looking at the big picture, not as insular Europeans, but as fully engaged, global citizens.

Read more at:

<http://brexitcentral.com/free-trade-creates-jobs-brexiteers-mantra/>

Germans are worried Brexit will wreck their economy as China welcomes closer ties with UK
Germany's finance ministry warned that a failure to get a good deal could damage the country

Read more at:

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4291318/germans-are-worried-brexit-will-wreck-their-economy-as-china-welcomes-closer-ties-with-uk/>

Cheesed off! EU faces trade battle with Canada

BRUSSELS was today facing the prospect of a trade dispute with Canada after European farmers vented their fury at new rules surrounding imports of cheese.

Read more at:

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/845296/CETA-EU-Canada-trade-cheese-quotas>

Singapore could seek new trade deal with EU due to Brexit

SINGAPORE could seek to rewrite its long-awaited free trade deal with the European Union because of Brexit, it was claimed today.

Read more at:

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/843733/Brexit-news-Singapore-new-trade-deal-EU>

Electric Canadian

Last week I told you about the Toronto police officer who bought a shirt and tie for a shoplifter he was called to arrest. Constable Jeyanesan realised that the 18-year-old, whose father has recently fallen ill, had attempted to steal the clothes for a job interview. Jeyanesan has since received a call from the teenager who says he has successfully landed a position in the service industry.

Alzheimer Society of Toronto Music Project

"Our dear mother was diagnosed with vascular dementia several years ago. Early in the disease, I can't say we really noticed a whole lot of change in her personality. We did however notice that she was starting to experience some forgetfulness. And as the disease progressed, so did the forgetfulness. In the past several months, mom has started to wander from her care home.

The last episode unfortunately resulted in a fall which landed her in the emergency room. This has been mom's home for the past 2 months. As with any change in routine for someone with dementia, this has caused a great deal of anxiety for our mother.

A relative mentioned that music may be a good thing to try to help soothe her. I decided to give it a try. I cannot tell you how comforting my mother found the music. I felt that I was able to connect with my mom in such a special way. I was able to bring her joy, and sometimes tears, through the music. It was magical!

One day in the hall during a visit, the social worker saw my mom and me listening to music on my phone. She asked if I had heard about the Alzheimer Society of Toronto Music Project. She told me that the society provides personalized iPods for people with Alzheimer's & dementia free of charge. And it was easy to register for and that I could do it online!

Thank you so much for taking time out to download her favorite music also!

Although Dementia is a really terrible disease, this Music Project has allowed us to create some beautiful new memories.

See <http://alz.to/get-help/music-project/>

Life of Thomas McCulloch of Pictou
By His Son William McCulloch, D.D. edited by his granddaughters (1920) (pdf)

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

Great Lakes
Gardening on the Great Lakes published in 1993.

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/greatlakes.pdf>

Forest and Stream Weekly Journal
Added volume 2 which you can read at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/Forestandstream.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.

Who Was Really at Fault in Charlottesville?
<http://www.conradmblack.com/1321/who-was-really-at-fault-in-charlottesville>

The Vatican's American Problem
<http://www.conradmblack.com/1322/the-vatican-american-problem>

The media misconstrues the situation in North Korea, Charlottesville
<http://www.conradmblack.com/1323/the-media-misconstrues-the-situation-in-north>

Electric Scotland

Memorial of the Hon. TH. H. Baird
For the Enactment of Measures to Preserve the Constitution and Union of the States presented to the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863, and Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary (1864)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/part2.htm>

Merchant Seamen and the War
Record of the Twelfth Session of the Joint Maritime Commission, London, 26-30 June 1942 (pdf). Added a link to this book at the foot of our Scottish Regiments page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/>

The Navy in Battle

By Arthur Hungerford Pollen (1919) (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/NavyinBattle.pdf>

Passages from the Past

By His Grace The Duke of Argyll in 2 volumes (1907) (pdf). Added links to these volumes to the foot of our Records of Argyll page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/argyll/>

Prehistoric Annals of Scotland

By Daniel Wilson, LL.D. in two volumes (1863)

During the interval that has elapsed since the first edition of this work appeared, the relations which it aimed at determining between Archaeology and kindred sciences have been matured to an extent then very partially apprehended, The progress of antiquarian investigations, and the value they have acquired in recent years in relation to other studies, render the changes demanded in a second edition unusually extensive. I have accordingly availed myself of the opportunity to remodel the whole. Fully a third of it has been entirely rewritten; and the remaining portions have undergone so minute a revision as to render it in many respects a new work.

One object aimed at when this book first appeared, was to rescue archaeological research from that limited range to which a too exclusive devotion to classical studies had given rise; and, especially in relation to Scotland, to prove how greatly more comprehensive and important are its native antiquities than all the traces of intruded arts. In some respects the aim has been so effectually accomplished, that it has become no longer necessary to retain arguments constructed with a view to the refutation of learned or popular systems involving Roman, Danish, or other foreign sources of native art; or to combat Phoenician, Druidical, or other theories, invented to substantiate equally baseless systems of pseudo-historical fable. In other directions, however, speculations then indulged in, have since been followed out to an extent compared with which the boldest of them can no longer seem extravagant. In the application of the term Prehistoric—introduced, if I mistake not, for the first time in this work,—it was employed originally in reference to races which I then assigned reasons for believing had preceded the oldest historical ones of Britain and Northern Europe. But since then the term has become identified with a comprehensive range of speculative and inductive research, in which the archaeologist labours hand in hand with the geologist and ethnologist, in solving some of the most deeply interesting problems of modern science. The plan of this work only embraces the evidence derived from a narrow insular area; but, limited though its pages are to the pre historic arts and ethnic affinities of one country, and that apart from regions hitherto productive of the most primitive traces of human art: it will nevertheless be seen that the evidence which bears on the great question of the antiquity of man finds many illustrations from Scottish chroniclings. Now also that the relations of archaeological investigations to other scientific inquiries are intelligently recognised, the evidence and speculations embodied in these volumes in reference to prehistoric and pre-Celtic races may acquire a new significance and value. The careful study of the primitive antiquities of Britain led me to the conviction, set forth in the former edition, that we must look to a much more remote period, and to earlier races than any of those with which classic historians have familiarized us, for the beginnings of our insular history. Since then, long residence on the American continent, and repeated opportunities of intercourse with the Aborigines of the New World, have familiarized me with a condition of social life realizing in the living present nearly all that I had conceived of in studying the chroniclings of Britain's prehistoric centuries. The experience thus acquired in novel fields of ethnological research, have materially aided me in the revision of opinions originally based on purely speculative induction ; and recent opportunities of renewed study on the scenes of my earlier investigations, have enabled me to enlarge in many respects the; illustrations which Scottish antiquities contribute to the broader aspects of Archaeological science.

The Second Volume is chiefly occupied with subjects of antiquarian and historical research of a very recent date, when compared with the essentially prehistoric traces of man. Nevertheless they are replete with interest in their bearings on national arts, customs, and social progress; and are of no less value to the historian than those of earlier periods have become to the geologist. To those also the opportunities for revision which a second edition supplies have afforded means for making numerous additions and alterations, which I venture to hope accomplish more nearly than formerly the ambitious aim then set before me, of establishing a consistent and comprehensive system of Scottish Archeology.

Along with the other changes by which this edition of the Prehistoric Annals of Scotland aims at more effectually achieving the purposes implied in its title, the pictorial illustrations have been greatly increased, several of the former plates and woodcuts have also been reenoraved from new drawings: and in addition to those, I have to acknowledge the great liberality with which the Councils of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain, and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, have placed their woodcuts at my service. To my friends Professor Simpson, George Harvey, Esq., and Thomas Constable, Esq., I am also indebted for other illustrations with which the following pages are enriched.

You can these at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/domestic/prehistoric_annals.htm

The Sutherland Evictions of 1814

Former and Recent Statements respecting them examined by Thomas Sellar (1883) (pdf)

The publication, in the course of the past year, of statements injurious to the memory of Mr. Patrick Sellar has cast upon the writer, as his representative, the task of entering on a public discussion of matters, long gone by, in which Mr. Sellar took part.

It is needless to say that this discussion would gladly have been avoided, if only on account of the reluctance felt by Mr. Sellar's family to publish to the world a narrative of personal details. They also felt that the public might justly resent the intrusion of personal matters into the consideration of a great question,—namely, the question by what means improvement in the condition of the Highlands may best be effected.

The apology which the writer has to offer is that the discussion is not of his seeking, but has been thrust upon him. It was not to be avoided, unless he was willing to permit the memory of his father to rest under unmerited obloquy.

It was the intention of the writer to go at length into the history of the Sutherland clearances—their antecedents, concomitant circumstances, and results—feeling, as he did, that a narrative of mere personal details relating to Mr. Patrick Sellar would be an inadequate performance of his duty. He had provided himself, to some extent, with material for the purpose, but the appearance of Mr. Mackenzie's book ('The History of the Highland Clearances'), and the allusions in the press to Mr. Patrick Sellar, have necessitated an early publication; and he has had to content himself with a short statement, in the introductory chapter, which he hopes will give a sufficient general outline of the circumstances.

The writer, and the writer only, is responsible for the statements and arguments put forward. For obvious reasons—in order that no one should feel himself compromised by those statements and arguments—he has avoided all communication, direct or indirect, with the representatives of persons concerned in any manner with the management of the Sutherland Estate.

THOMAS SELLAR.

Hall Geove, Bagshot: May 1883.

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/clearances/sutherlandevictions.pdf>

The Royal Air Force
Its Organisation, Duties and Prospects as a Profession or Trade by T. Stanhope Sprigg (1935)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/raf01.pdf>

The Story

I said last week I'd bring you a story about Wind Power so here it is...

The Scottish wind-power racket
Credit: By John Constable and Matt Ridley | CapX | 10 August 2017

Imagine a sausage factory – the luckiest, most profitable sausage factory in the world. Its machines crank out their sausages, and lorries carry them to supermarkets. So far, so normal.

But this particular factory makes as many sausages as the management and staff choose. If they feel like taking the day off, the lorries and shelves stay empty. If they want to go a bit wild, they sometimes make so many sausages that there aren't enough lorries to take them away. Or they carry on cranking out sausages even if the shelves are already full.

And here's the really amazing thing: even when the lorries can't cope or there is no demand for sausages, the factory gets paid. Indeed, they get paid more for not sending the sausages to the shops than for sending them. This is such great business that the factory is actually building an extension, so it can threaten to make even more unwanted sausages.

Does all that sound completely mad? Of course it does. But it's what happens in the British electricity industry – where the blackmailing, money-printing sausage factory is a wind farm in Scotland.

There are currently about 750 wind farms north of the border, with roughly 3,000 wind turbines. Their total generating capacity amounts to 5,700 MW. The actual amount produced varies according to the weather. But at its maximum, that wind capacity is more than the 5.5 GW peak demand on the Scottish grid.

What this means, of course, is that the output from Scottish wind turbines is often more than the Scottish system can absorb. That requires the surplus energy to be exported to England and Wales. But that isn't as easy as it sounds.

The wind farms are distributed across Scotland, sometimes in very remote regions, so there is a real problem in getting their energy

down to the English border – let alone getting it across. For some years now, Scotland's total export capacity has been only 3.5 GW, well under the peak output of the wind farm fleet.

So, reinforcements and new links are being introduced. These range from the hugely controversial, and to many environmentally unacceptable, £820 million Beaulieu-Denny upgrade, to the massive Western Link, a subsea connector from Hunterston to Deeside that is set to come online this year at a cost of more than £1 billion – and will entail a standing charge on energy bills across Britain of about £100 million a year for 35 years.

Yet in spite of the cost, these upgrades cannot completely address the problem: there is still more wind power in Scotland than can be reasonably and affordably absorbed into the system, or exported to its neighbours, partly because the wind fleet keeps growing.

Why has so much been built? Partly, it is because of income-support subsidies. This top-up of nearly 100 per cent over the wholesale price – funded, of course, from consumer bills – makes wind farms very attractive, at least until they wear out (by which time developers hope to have sold them on to naive pension funds and investment trusts).

There is also the political situation. In England and Wales, onshore wind is effectively dead, due primarily to the strong local resistance the turbines tend to attract, to which government eventually responded.

In Scotland, the story is different. The country is intensely urbanised, with most voters located in the cities. Rural objectors were simply too few in number to have much influence, no matter how strong their environmental or economic arguments.

Subsidies to onshore wind in the UK now cost a little under £600 million a year, with Scottish wind taking about half, yet the Scottish government continues to ignore the protests and consent to new wind farms as if they cost almost nothing at all.

Which as far as Holyrood is concerned, is in fact true. Part of the attraction for Scottish politicians is that the subsidies that pay for Scottish wind farms come from consumers all over Great Britain. Scottish consumption is about 10 per cent of the British total – so when the Scottish government grants planning permission to the wind industry, it is simply writing a cheque drawn overwhelmingly on English and Welsh accounts. Taxation without representation, in fact.

But a careless government and a lucrative subsidy system doesn't explain the full flourishing of Scotland's wind industry. Bizarre as it may seem, the fact that the Scottish grid cannot physically absorb all this wind power is also an attraction – because subsidised wind farms can actually earn more per unit generated when that unit is thrown away than when it is sold to consumers. In other words, they really do get paid more for not making sausages than they do when selling normally.

The explanation is simple. A wind farm receives roughly half of its income from the wholesale price and half from subsidy, the infamous Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC). When the grid is either at or close to capacity, National Grid stops the wind farm from generating, in order to prevent damage to the overhead wires and, at worst, a major system disruption.

When this happens, the wind farm will keep its wholesale income – which is fair enough, since it was contracted in to the system. But it loses its ROCs, because those are only issued for electricity actually sold to consumers.

What happens then, however, is that the wind farm will ask for compensation for the lost ROCs. The euphemism for “being paid for not producing sausages” is “constraint payment”. And often – and this is the crucial point – they will ask for more compensation than they are losing in income.

When one of us, John Constable, first exposed this problem back in 2011, the average compensation being paid was nearly four times the lost income. One wind farm, Crystal Rig, was asking for (and receiving) £991/MWh in compensation when it was losing about £50/MWh.

Naming and shaming worked, and prices fell. But they are still well above the income lost, with onshore wind farms regularly asking for between £60 and £90/MWh in compensation when they are only losing about £45/MWh.

The result is that wind farms in Scotland have a higher average income per unit of power generated, because local demand is low and the grid system is hopelessly congested – leaving National Grid no option but to buy them off at any price.

For National Grid, this is just a pass-through cost, so they don't care much about it – they simply increase the amount they're charging consumers. But for consumers, it's a truly terrible deal. Since 2010, we've paid £328m to wind farms not to generate – mostly to onshore Scottish wind farms, though England's offshore farms have also started to get into the act. Last year, the total was £82m. This year, it's already reached £50m.

The result is that there is a perverse incentive to locate wind farms in Scotland, even though they aren't welcome and the grid can't take their output. In fact, some wind farms that are already being “constrained off” on a regular basis are considering major extensions

to their capacity.

Take Fallago Rig in the Borders. This 48-turbine wind farm, with a capacity of 144 MW, was built in the teeth of fierce local resistance in 2013. Since then, it has received £21,713,858 in payments to stop generating, at an average price of £82/MWh – roughly double the lost income. That lost generation, about 264,954 MWh, is equivalent to 16 per cent of its output during that period.

In spite of this, its owners EdF, the economic wizards behind Hinkley Point C, are proposing to add a further 12 turbines, each over 126.5m in height. Is this about saving the planet? Or because the farm's owners know they are on to a very good thing and are determined to make out like bandits?

Yet remarkably, this isn't the end of the counter-economic insanity. When a Scottish wind farm is stopped from generating because of a bottleneck in the system, it throws the whole British market out of balance: supply no longer matches demand. A generator that was contracted-in to the market has been told to stop. That means that the market on the other side of the bottleneck is now short. National Grid, which is responsible for fixing these problems, has to buy last-minute supplies to make up for it. And that is very expensive indeed.

It's quite difficult to determine which payments to these emergency generators – who are said to be “constrained on” to the system – are caused by Scotland's capacity and export problems, and which by power station failures or errors in demand forecasts (among other factors). But either way, it's big money.

And in a supreme irony, it is more than likely that the same large companies getting constraint payments on one side of the bottleneck (because the Scottish grid can't cope) also get paid to start up their gas turbines in England to make up for the shortfall. Laugh? It's enough to make a grown bill-payer cry.

The remedies are obvious. First, existing wind farms should not be allowed to demand compensation in excess of income lost. Second, we should carefully weigh up the costs and benefits of building new grid and reinforcing existing lines. It may well be much cheaper to shut wind farms down and compensate their owners, at the correct rate of course, rather than build another subsea interconnector on the east coast – or reinforce the landlines over the border to the main centres of load.

Third, and most importantly, the Government in Westminster should put its foot down, in the interests of us all, and stop Holyrood consenting new wind farms and extensions in Scotland. Or at least ensure that if MSPs want to play fast and loose with consumer bills, those should be Scottish bills. That might focus minds.

Dr John Constable is Director of the Renewable Energy Foundation. Matt Ridley is a journalist and author.

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

Alastair