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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for February 9th, 2018

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

While watching the interview with Jacob Rees Mogg the other day it was interesting that he made clear that Brexit will actually be most beneficial to the poorest in our society. I hadn't actually noted that in all the time I've been reading about Brexit but of course he is correct in this. We'll be able to reduce tariffs and thus prices on products that affect the poorest in our society the most. We would also be able to change our VAT rates and again on products that affect our poorest most.

I thus wonder why this has not been made clear in all the debates we've been having and thus why isn't Labour more supportive of leaving the EU and also the SNP as they are meant to be left leaning parties and so trying to help the poorest in our society?

Jacob Rees-Mogg, North East Somerset MP and leading Brexiteer, in conversation with Professor Philip Cowley at the Mile End Institute. The conversation took place on Thursday 1 February 2018 and can be watched at:
<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5293-In-Conversation-Jacob-Rees-Mogg>

Lot's more snow of late in Chatham. I think there has been more snow this year in Chatham than I've experienced since moving here some 13 years ago now. The snow clear up guys are making a fortune and good for them although I've had to get more cash from the bank to keep them funded!

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.

If civil servants want to play politics with Brexit
They must stand up and be held to account like politicians

Read more at:

<http://brexitcentral.com/civil-servants-play-politics-brexit-stand-up-held-to-account/>

The EU refuses a soft Brexit, so we must invoke the WTO immediately
Those who called for a clean Brexit from the outset were right.

Read more at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2018/02/01/eu-refuses-soft-brexit-must-invoke-wto-immediately/>

Edinburgh teacher creates special tartan to honour NYPD detective

And now the life of a New York icon, Detective Steven McDonald, has been honoured by a classroom assistant in Edinburgh who has helped create a special tartan in his name.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/edinburgh-teacher-creates-special-tartan-to-honour-nypd-detective-1-4676911>

Scots teachers pressured to cover up knife incidents

The lives of pupils and teachers are being put at risk across Scotland because some head teachers are pressurising staff to keep quiet if they discover a youngster has a knife

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/education/scots-teachers-pressured-to-cover-up-knife-incidents-1-4681995>

Canada removes statue of controversial Jacobite slaying general

A statue of an 18th century British military officer who played a key role during the Jacobite Rebellion has been removed from its pedestal in Canada.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/canada-removes-statue-of-controversial-jacobite-slaying-general-1-4681568>

God knows, a day of rest is not to be sneered at. Especially on Lewis

Protesting against Sunday cinema-going is anathema to some. But in some places, it makes perfect sense

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/04/god-knows-a-day-of-rest-not-to-be-sneered-at-free-church-of-scotland>

UK exports in financial services jump to £95.7bn

Britain's exports in financial and professional services had a record-breaking year in 2016, according to figures released today by TheCityUK.

Read more at:

<http://www.cityam.com/280021/uk-exports-financial-services-jump-gbp957bn>

The Big Interview: Indian tycoon Sanjeev Gupta

Billionaire industrialist Sanjeev Gupta has taken Scotland somewhat by storm in the past two years, hammering out a robust presence across the steel, aluminium and hydro-power sectors.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/business/the-big-interview-indian-tycoon-sanjeev-gupta-1-4681866>

China's Huawei builds British ties in face of U.S. cold shoulder

China's Huawei said on Tuesday it will spend a further 3 billion pounds on procurement in Britain as the world's largest telecom equipment maker seeks alternatives to the United States, where it faces an effective ban.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-china-huawei-tech/chinas-huawei-builds-british-ties-in-face-of-u-s-cold-shoulder-idUKKBN1FQ23R>

Tim Martin: leave the EU tomorrow

As a company that operates almost exclusively in the UK, Wetherspoon has been largely unaffected by the referendum so far.

Read more at:

<https://moneyweek.com/tim-martin-leave-the-eu-tomorrow/>

Germany is the leading breaker of EU rules

No other country seems to lecture EU states as much as Germany. But, embarrassingly, Angela Merkel's government is in breach of European regulations more than anyone else.

Read more at:

<https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/germany-leading-breaker-eu-rules-883837?>

I had no idea my print was for Justin Timberlake

A Scottish-based artist got the surprise of his career after Sunday's Super Bowl thanks to Justin Timberlake.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-42975677>

Ruth Davidson: It's the Scottish economy, stupid

The SNP's tax plans and management of the economy could see them thrown out of office, writes Ruth Davidson.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/ruth-davidson-it-s-the-scottish-economy-stupid-1-4684622>

Housebuilder uncovers Iron Age chamber on Lewis

A 2,000-year-old underground chamber has been uncovered during work to build a house on the Isle of Lewis.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-42988416>

Stop the meddling, cut VAT and provide the confidence to grow

FEW POLITICIANS understand the undercurrents of fiscal policy. They react largely to a public clamour about tax and spend which interprets fiscal policy choices as levers to produce instantaneous results.

Read more at:

http://www.thinkscotland.org/thinkbusiness/articles.html?read_full=13447

Electric Canadian

Transactions of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers

I discovered a lot of volumes of these transaction which are very detailed and note that they are very popular downloads so assume civil engineers are enjoying the details given in these transactions.

I've added the 1923 volume and will add others each week. You can view these at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/industrial/index.htm>

Some of the topics discussed include Electric Furnaces for Heat Treatment of Steel, Power Factor, The Inspection of Ferrous Materials, Discussion on Canada's Fuel Problem, The Design and Economics of City Refuse Destroyers, Electricity for Heating Buildings, The Principles of Three-wire Distribution for Electric Railways, Electrons, Atoms and the Ether, etc.

William McNab, M.E.I.C.

A small bio of the Chairman of the Valuation Committee of the Grand Trunk Railway System which you can read at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/mcnab_william.htm

Fast in the Ice

Or Adventures in the Polar Regions by R. M. Ballantyne (pdf) which you can read at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/Fast_in_the_Ice.pdf

Memoirs of The Administration of the Colonial Government of Lower Canada

By Sir James Henry Graig and Sir George Prevost from the Year 1807 until the year 1815, Comprehending the Military and Naval operations in the Canadas during the late War with the United States of America By Robert Christie (1818) (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/canadawarusa.pdf>

Conrad Black

Trump and the State of the Union

<http://www.conradblack.com/1364/trump-and-the-state-of-the-union>

What happened to Patrick Brown is an outrage and an opportunity

<http://www.conradblack.com/1365/what-happened-to-patrick-brown-is-an-outrage>

Electric Scotland

Fur and Feather Series

Edited by Alfred E. T. Watson. Am going to bring you a few in this series and the second one is about The Red Deer which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/nature/furandfeather.htm>

Stirlingshire

Added a couple of new videos to our Stirlingshire page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/stirlingshire/>

The Picture of Scotland

By Robert Chambers in two volumes (1827)

This complaint of Johnson regarding the hopelessness of fame which attended his lexicographical labours, has hitherto been common to the Industrious Obscure who busy themselves in the compilation of Tourist's Guides, Peerages, School-Books, and Almanacs. Such publications are equally anonymous, and the purchaser thinks no more of the unknown author than he thinks of the man who made his hat or tanned the leather of his shoes. Even when they bear an authors name, no distinct idea is attached to the words—Philips perhaps, or Carey, or Goldsmith, or Debrett—any more than to the maker's name on the blade of a table-knife, or the still more hopeless initials so carefully impressed upon his work by the goldsmith.

An attempt is here made to elevate a topographical mode into the superior region of the belles lettres. It has been forced upon the notice of the present author by the success of several similar but less comprehensive works, that an interest may attach to localities of such a sort as to excite and bring into play many of the higher order of sentiments which pervade our common nature. Cities are more than mere collections of houses and men; hills are not merely accidental eminences of the earth; rivers, fortuitous confluences of running water stones, mere blocks. Such they might be when the primeval savage first set his foot amongst them; but such they are not now, after so long a connection with the fortunes and feelings of civilized man. What is it that gives the sculptured stones of Greece a superior value to the unquarried marble over which they have risen? It is because, though both are alike as old as the creation, the former have received attentions at the hands of men a hundred ages ago, have been looked upon with veneration by millions of human beings, and yet remain monuments of their early power and ingenuity. A house may thns be more than a domicile, a hill more than an eminence, a river more than a stream of flowing water; and is thus it is that, in the words of one who must have been perfectly acquainted with this occult philosophy, we may find

Tongues in the trees, books In the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing. ‘

Under these impressions I have in this work, endeavoured to direct attention almost exclusively to what may be supposed capable of exciting the moral and imaginative faculties of my countrymen. Whatever places derive an interest from the associations of history; whatever places enjoy a reputation from popular poetry and song; wherever man has fought, or loved, or sung; wherever human nature has appeared in circumstances of extraordinary peril or pain, innocence or degradation; wherever talent has arisen or virtue flourished, magnificence dwelt or misery groaned; the fanes of religion, the scenery of passion, the infant-land of genius, the graves of the good; whatever has been associated with what man most delights to observe; whatever is capable, on being mentioned, of exciting an interest in his bosom; these places, and these things receive most attention in the following pages.

To alleviate as much as possible, the gravity inseparable from topographical details, I have moreover interspersed this work with innumerable local anecdotes and stories, some of which are merely humorous, while others have the more valuable property of illustrating the manners and condition of the country in former times. In all that relates to the selection of materials, it has been my prime end governing object to be original; to say as little as possible when I could say nothing new, and to be as copious as my limits would allow, when I possessed information that was at once novel and agreeable.

It will be readily conceded, that these objects have not been attained without the employment of considerable pains. It words have been easy to copy the humdrum details and innumerable errors of my predecessors, as each and all of them have done in their turn. But to produce a work aiming at so much originality and correctness required a very different process. It scarcely becomes an author to speak at all, and far less with pride, of his labours; but it is perhaps allowable to say something in the present case, in order that the reader may know to what extent he is to rely upon the accuracy of the details which he has condescended to peruse.

Without alluding to previous historical studies, I may be permitted to state, that after employing several months of the last year in the perusal of former topographical publications and manuscripts, I began, in the early part of summer, to make a round of deliberate pedestrian tours through the country. Instead of the pilgrim's scallop in my hat, I took for motto the glowing expression of Burns, "I have no dearer aim than to make leisurely journeys through Caledonia; to sit on the fields of her battles; to wander on the romantic banks of her streams; and to muse by the stately towers of venerable ruins, once the honoured abodes of her heroes." In order to secure an acquaintance with every remarkable locality, and with its popular legends, I carried letters from my city friends, giving me a claim upon the best offices of the most intelligent persons resident in the districts which I was to visit. I was thus generally successful in eliciting, over and above the kindness of many a worthy and true-hearted Scot, the best information that was to be had regarding

all the more attractive localities of my native land.

Goldsmith speaks with just contempt of the travellers who are whirled through Europe in a post-chaise. I sedulously eschewed this practical absurdity. Except in cases where stage-coaches could convey me over a desolate and uninteresting tract, I constantly adopted the more deliberate and independent mode of locomotion, of which nature supplies the means. I had thus an opportunity of becoming familiarly acquainted at once with the face of the country and the traditions of the people; I could move fast or slow as I pleased, and make such digressions from the main route as seemed necessary. I traversed almost every vale in the lowlands of Scotland, and a greater proportion of those in the more northerly region. I saw all the towns except three or four. My peregrinations occupied upwards of five months, and extended to between two and three thousand miles.

In presenting this array of doings and sufferings to the public I disclaim being influenced by the sentiment which caused Dogberry to assert himself "one that had had losses." What I say is mere naked truth, told for the simple purpose of assuring the reader, that the work he has now got into his hands is not the catch-penny compilation of a bookseller's book shop; no patched and contorted tissue of stolen rags like too many similar publications; that it is not the crude fruit of a literary hot-bed, inflated into premature perfection by the bribe of a greedy publisher; but the result of an honest enthusiasm; an enthusiasm which the consideration of pecuniary profit could neither nourish nor inspire. I consider these assurances, moreover, the more necessary, because almost all the statement in the following pages rest solely upon my personal credit upon the idea which the public shall form of the pains I have taken, and the opportunities of observation I may be supposed to have enjoyed.

To say that enthusiasm could insure the production of a good work would be palpably absurd. It may, however, be asserted, that it is indispensably requisite to the production of a work deserving that appellation in its best sense. Money alone, though a powerful, is after all but an imperfect inspiration; and the books which it creates are no more like the productions of a purer motive, than the dowdy flowers of a secluded city dunghill resemble those which spring from the fair primeval earth, generated by the natural juices of the ground, and freshened by the nightly visits of the loving dew.

It is not the intention of the present writer to say, that because he was not conducted through his labours by the hope of gain, he has found every difficulty successfully overcome by the mere ardour of his mind. He is certain, however, that that is the burning liquid which can melt down the obstructions upon which harder instruments had been tried in vain, and that, though it may not in this case have secured, its influence must at least give the chance of, success. It has been his wish from earliest boyhood, in the words of Burns,

"That he, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or hook could make."

He has already done more than perhaps his years would give to expect, towards the preservation of what is dearest to her; the memory of her ancient simple manners and virtues; the celebration of her native wit and humour; and in a more extended view of the subject, for the reclamation of that which is altogether poetry — the wonderful, beautiful, glorious past. In the present work, he has steadily pursued the same object; conscious and certain that, though many of his own generation may not give him credit for so exalted a purpose, the people who shall afterwards inhabit this romantic land will appreciate what could not have been preserved but with a view to their gratification.

Edinburgh; February 8, 1827.

You can read these volumes at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/travel/picture.htm>

Buchanan's Popular Illustrative Guide to Strathendrick, Aberfoyle and District.

Added a link to this book at the foot of our Stirlingshire page at:

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

UK Trade with the Commonwealth

I added a pdf brief on the trade the UK is having and could have with the Commonwealth to the foot of the page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/sip/brexit.htm>

The Life of General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

By Alexander Innes Shand (1895) in two volumes

Lieutenant General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley KCB KCMG (27 April 1824 – 12 August 1893) was a British general and military writer and a Conservative politician who sat in the House of Commons from 1885 to 1892. Roots were to Cornwall and Shetland.

You can read about him at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/hamley.htm>

The EU is the Continuation of Germany By Other Means

This is a video on an interesting view which I thought you might find interesting and you can watch it at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5294-Peter-Hitchens-The-EU-is-the-Continuation-of-Germany-By-Other-Means>

The Court and Times of James the First

Illustrated by Authentic and Confidential Letters from various public and private collections edited with an Introduction and notes by R F Williams in two volumes (1848).

The work now presented to the reader owes its existence to the research of Dr. Thomas Birch, an industrious historical scholar, who died in 1766, and whose works are well known. Having access to almost every important public and private collection of manuscripts in the kingdom, he entertained the idea of putting together a consecutive series of the most interesting correspondence of the seventeenth century

You can read these at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/books/pdf/james1.htm>

A Handbook of Weather Folk-Lore

A Collection of Proverbial Sayings in various languages relating to the Weather with explanatory and Illustrative notes by Rev. C. Swainson, M.A., (1873) (pdf)

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/lifestyle/WeatherFolkLore.pdf>

The Story

The discussions on Brexit continue of course BUT there is much discussion on whether we should be in or out of a customs union. I got an email in from Lawyers for Britain explaining this and so thought you might be interested in finding out their views on this so this is the story for this week.

I might add that I am in favour of a hard Brexit. The reason I make such a play of this on the site is that the BBC is very anti-Brexit and I am finding more people watch the BBC news than read newspapers. Given that the Brexit referendum was the largest turnout we've had in our history and that a slim majority voted to leave you'd think that the BBC would be neutral on the subject and give equal reporting for both sides. However recent analysis shows they are skewing their reports and interviews some 80% towards being anti-Brexit. The charter for the BBC calls for them to be neutral and it's very clear they are not.

It's like their reporting on Donald Trump in America was totally skewed to being anti-Trump and yet again he won there Presidential election. The BBC should be held to account for their biased reporting but in lieu of that I'm doing my best to be a voice for Brexit.

The idea of the UK staying in the European Union's Customs Union after we exit from the EU has once again risen into political discourse.

This idea is expressed in different ways. One way is for the UK to stay "in" the European Union's existing Customs Union. Another way is for the UK and the EU to join together to form "a" customs union between them. Quite what the practical difference is between these two formulae is not clear. A third way it is expressed is for the UK to maintain its external tariffs in alignment with EU tariffs. Vague suggestions are made that this might only be "partial", i.e. covering some sectors of goods but not others.

But all these formulae come to the same thing. They all involve us giving up our right to set and decide the tariffs which are applied to goods entering the UK from the rest of the world. But it is not just about tariffs. Customs also operate a vast range of non-tariff controls on goods, all the way from health and other standards controls on food to, for example, safety of children's toys. In order to operate any of the variously described schemes, the UK would also have to apply this vast range of EU-mandated legislation as well.

Others have already pointed out the issue of the increased costs for UK consumers if we were to stay inside the Customs Union. We would as a result be required to continue to levy high tariffs on many kinds of goods which are available more cheaply on world markets, particularly the kinds of goods where there is no significant domestic UK industry to protect and any producer benefit of the artificially high tariffs goes entirely to producers in other parts of the EU.

The economic arguments against staying in the EU Customs Union are important, but the political and constitutional consequences are even more profound, and seem to be completely ignored by those who argue for negotiating to stay inside "the" or "a" Customs Union. As explained in the links below, remaining in the EU customs union would have profound implications for the ability of the UK to govern itself as an independent nation, and would deprive it of the ability to decide its own laws over very wide fields of domestic policy extending far beyond customs controls themselves.

It would also prevent the UK from exercising an independent trade policy or concluding its own trade agreements with states outside the EU, and would inevitably result in the UK being subject to the continuing jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) over the interpretation and application of the common rules which regulate the customs union.

The reasons why these are the inevitable consequences of remaining in the customs union are explained in an article today for Brexit Central by Martin Howe QC (<http://brexitcentral.com/remaining-eu-customs-union-brexit-political-economic-disaster/>) . A full analysis of the dire consequences of staying in any form of customs union or customs alignment with the EU is on our website here (<http://www.lawyersforbritain.org/eu-deal-customs-union.shtml>) .

With best regards,

Lawyer for Britain

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

Alastair