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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 31st 2019

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

Despite the SNP bluster the EU Election proves Nicola Sturgeon's rhetoric isn't working

AT FIRST GLANCE, the EU election results in Scotland look great for the SNP. They managed to gain one more seat – bringing a total tally of three out of six – as well as increasing their vote share compared to the 2014 EU elections. This, however, is a too simplistic summary of how the SNP really did. When you consider the rhetoric the SNP and Nicola Sturgeon used to motivate their base to turn out to vote, they needed over 50 per cent of the vote in Scotland to go to pro-independence parties. The SNP and Green vote, however, only managed to get around 45 per cent of the total vote share. This is a disaster for the SNP, even if they do not know it yet.

Since the 2016 referendum, the rhetoric of Nicola Sturgeon is that Scotland is being dragged out of the EU against its will, and the only way to stay in the EU is to vote for Scottish Independence. This was designed to attract unionist remain voters to the independence cause. With this election focusing on Europe, this was the SNPs chance to demonstrate that these voters have moved over to the YES camp over the past three years and that independence is in sight. With pro-independence parties only achieving 45 per cent of the vote, however, it demonstrates that when it comes to the constitutional status of Scotland, nothing has changed.

To Nicola Sturgeon's annoyance, the Liberal Democrats enjoyed a successful night. They saw a 6.8 per cent increase in their vote thanks to their strong pro-remain message. If this 6.8 per cent gain had occurred between the SNP and Green vote, then the pro-independence vote would have been over 50 per cent. The fact that this increase went to the Liberal Democrats, however, does indicate something which will petrify Nicola Sturgeon: unionists who are passionate about remaining in the EU are switching to the Lib Dems and not to the independence cause.

Since 24th June 2016, the success of Nicola Sturgeon's premiership has been dependent on her ability to convert unionist remainers to the independence cause. Her failure after three years will surely have people within the SNP start to question her success as leader. To make zero progress for the independence cause, the sole aim of the SNP, despite the chaos in Westminster is quite remarkable. Either 55 per cent of the electorate are staunch believers in the United Kingdom or Nicola Sturgeon is performing poorly. As a party which believes in independence, it is pretty clear which conclusion SNP members will start to make.

The success of the Brexit Party in Scotland will also be a cause of disappointment for Nicola Sturgeon. With one seat going to them, and another going to the Conservatives, one-third of Scotland's MEPs will have been elected on pro-Brexit mandates. This destroys the SNP's false narrative that Scotland is unanimously remain, and highlights that Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP have been ignoring over 1m Scots for the past three years. Whilst the majority of Scots did vote to remain, it is misleading for Nicola Sturgeon to claim that Scots are being dragged out of the EU against our will when over 1m Scots actually voted to leave.

Nicola Sturgeon, for the past three years, has placed the success of her political career on the ability to convert unionist remainers to the independence cause with the rhetoric that Scots are being dragged out of the EU against our will. The results from the recent EU elections demonstrates, however, that she is failing. She has failed to convert unionist remainers as the pro-independence party vote share replicates the 2014 YES vote whilst the Lib Dems are on the rise. She has failed to demonstrate that all Scots do not want Brexit with 1/3 of Scotland's MEPs being elected on pro-Brexit tickets.

To save her political career, Nicola Sturgeon must now forget about IndyRef2 and focus on her day job: running the country.

Note: I might just say that right now I have no idea of who will be the new Prime Minister of the UK. I would have been happy with either Boris Johnson or Jacob Reece Mogg but both of them would have accepted the withdrawal agreement. Gove has Scottish links but I've always found him to be far too much about himself and not enough about the country.

You can view a video introduction to this newsletter at:

<https://youtu.be/V1kMqVClg6I>

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.

Lord of the Isles medieval home in Islay recreated

The lost medieval home of the Lords of the Isles has been reconstructed in virtual reality.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-48383144>

Tearful May resigns, paving way for Brexit confrontation with EU

Fighting back tears, Theresa May said on Friday she would quit, setting up a contest that will install a new British prime minister who could pursue a cleaner break with the European Union.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-may/tearful-may-resigns-paving-way-for-brexit-confrontation-with-eu-idUKKCN1SU0UF>

Trump to have banquet with queen and will meet May on UK state visit

Trump and First Lady Melania are due in Britain on June 3 for the state visit affair and he will become only the third U.S. president to be accorded the honour, after George W. Bush in 2003 and Barack Obama in 2011.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-royals-trump/trump-to-have-banquet-with-queen-and-will-meet-may-on-uk-state-visit-idUKKCN1SU1RO>

Brexit Party dominates as Tories and Labour suffer

The Brexit Party was the clear winner in the UK European election results, with the pro-EU Lib Dems coming second.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48417228>

Parsley Box lands £3m to grow meal delivery service

The business, which recently expanded its meal range from 20 to 70 choices, uses a unique and innovative technique to make its products shelf-stable. Meals are steam cooked and vacuum-sealed to ensure that they can be stored without needing to be chilled or frozen for up to six months.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/business/parsley-box-lands-3m-to-grow-meal-delivery-service-1-4934385>

Nigel Farage sets party's sights on Peterborough byelection victory

Brexit party leader also urges supporters to prepare for possible general election

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/27/nigel-farage-sets-his-sights-on-party-winning-peterborough-byelection>

Alexander Dennis sold to Canadian firm for £320m

Alexander Dennis will now become part of the NFI Group, which makes buses for the North American market.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-48436402>

National children's literature centre in Dumfries complete

The multi-million pound transformation of a derelict Dumfries building into a national centre for children's literature has been completed.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-48431844>

How Scotland changed the face of British banknotes

There's a lot we take for granted about the banknotes in our pockets - from faces and colours to intricate two-sided designs. But they were all innovations that can be traced back to the Scottish banks which have changed the face of cash down the centuries.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-47401363>

A many deals but no Withdrawal Agreement Brexit can make us better off

The government should announce a boost to the UK economy in the event of us leaving the EU soon without signing the Withdrawal Agreement

Read more at:

<http://johnredwoodsdiary.com/2019/05/29/a-letter-to-the-chancellor>

Cooking from tins is a reality for many

The cookery writer and campaigner wants to show people that tinned food is nutritious and delicious as well as affordable

Read more at:

<https://inews.co.uk/inews-lifestyle/food-and-drink/jack-monroe-cans-food-banks/>

Buccleuch to sell off large slice of south of Scotland estate

Buccleuch has announced it intends to sell about 25,000 acres of its Borders Estate following a review of its land.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-48447208>

Scotland's role in the D-day landings

In Garlieston village hall there is a small exhibition telling how it played an important role in the run-up to the D-Day landings 75 years ago.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-48266481>

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Chairwoman Lady Smith said the children's home were places of fear, hostility and confusion.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-48458480>

Auld Scotia calling Nova Scotia

With unemployment low, skill shortages are increasing, and more occupations have been found to require recruits from beyond the UK and the European Union.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-48458640>

Trump praises high-profile Brexit proponents ahead of visit to Britain

Trump told reporters he had great respect for British politicians Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage and considered them friends, but declined to say whether he supported either man to succeed May, who will step down on June 7.

Read more at:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-trump/trump-praises-high-profile-brexit-proponents-ahead-of-visit-to-britain-idUKKCN1T01PA>

Clean Brexit says Esther McVey

THE CONSERVATIVE Party needs to reconnect with those voters we lost in droves at the recent European elections, and also attract

those who share our values but don't vote for us. That is why I have launched Blue Collar Conservatism and made it a key theme of my leadership bid.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1133642/brexit-news-tory-leadership-campaign-esther-mcvey>

Electric Canadian

The Canadian Horticulturist
Volume 28 (1905) can be read at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/Horticulturist.htm>

Wentworth Historical Society.

Added volume 3 which you can download at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/wentworth.htm>

49th Parallel

by Michael Powell 1942 starring Leslie Howard, Laurence Olivier, Richard George

Basically a thriller, where the survivors of a sunken German U-boat try to get out of Canada, first by going west towards Japan and then south to the neutral United States. But a larger theme predominates: the simple decency of everybody they encounter in Canada compared with their own single-minded ruthlessness.

You can view this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/49th.htm>

The Winnipeg General Sympathetic Strike

May - June, 1919 (pdf). An interesting account of this strike which you can read at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/alberta/WinnipegGeneralStrike.pdf>

Interview on CBC with the British High Commissioner to Canada May 23rd, 2019

I decided to video this interview which I thought you might find of interest. You can view this at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/canadainterviewwithbritishhighcommissioner.mp4>

History of NATO Veterans of Canada 2009 to 2015

A personal history by Gord Jenkins 7 Jul 2018 which you can read at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/natovetscanada.htm>

Extract of a DESPATCH from the Earl of Durham to Lord Glenelg

Dated Castle of St. Lewis, Quebec, 29 June 1838 (pdf)

You can read this interesting account at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/canada1.pdf>

Extract from a Manuscript Journal relating to the Operations before Quebec in 1759

Kept by Colonel Malcolm Fraser, then Lieutenant of the 78th Fraser Highlanders and serving in that campaign (pdf)

a really interesting account of the Battle for Quebec which you can read at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/78thhighlandersquebec.pdf>

Mound Builders

An Account of the extinct Mound Builders of Canada and the USA which you can read about at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/moundbuilders.htm>

Conrad Black

John Lukacs, R.I.P.: The American Who Understood Europe

<http://www.conradblack.com/1482/john-lukacs-rip-the-american-who-understood-europe>

Electric Scotland

The Border Settlers of North Western Virginia

From 1768 to 1795 embracing the Life of Jesse Hughes and other noted Scouts of the great woods of the Trans-Allegheny with notes and illustrative anecdotes by Lucullus Virgil McWhorter, Life Member of the Wisconsin State Historical Society; Member of the

Washington State University Historical Society, Author of "The Crime Against the Yakimas." with Preface and additional noted by William Elsey Connelley and Sketch of the author by By J. P. MacLean, Ph. D. (1915) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/america/bordersettlersofirginia.pdf>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in the June 2019 issue section 1 which you can read at: <https://electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Handy Book of the Flower Garden

Being practical directions for the propagation, culture, and arrangement of plants in flower garden all the year around by David Thomson, gardener to Lady Mary C. Nisbet Hamilton, Archerfield and Dirleton Gardens (1868) (pdf)

You can read this book at: <https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/handybookflowers.pdf>

Life of the Right Reverend George Gleig, LL.D., F.S.S.A.

Bishop of Brechin, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church dedicated to his son the Reverend G.R. Gleig, M.A., Late Chaplain-General of the Forces by the Rev. William Walker, M.A., Monymusk. (1878) (pdf)

You can read about him at: <https://electricscotland.com/bible/lifegeorgegleig.pdf>

The Life of the Right Reverend Alexander Jolly, Bishop of Moray

Second Edition by the Reverend William Walker, M.A. Monymusk (1878) (pdf)

You can read about him at: <https://electricscotland.com/bible/lifealexanderjolly.pdf>

The Memoirs of James Marquis of Montrose 1639 - 1650

By the Rev. George Wishart, D.D., translated with Introduction, Notes, Appendices, and the original Latin (part II now first published by the Rev. Alexander D. Murdoch and H. F. Morland Simpson (1893) (pdf)

You can read about him at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/other/marquisofmontrose.pdf>

The MacDonalds of ClanRanald

By Alexander MacKenzie (1881) (pdf) which can be read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/m/macdnaldsofclanranald.pdf>

The MacDonalds of Glengarry

By Alexander MacKenzie (1881) (pdf) which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/m/MacdonaldsofGlengarry.pdf>

An Old Highland Fencible Corps

The History of the Reay Fencible Highland Regiment of Foot, or Mackay's Highlanders 1794-1802 With an Account of its Services in Ireland during the Rebellion of 1798 by Captain I. H. MacKay Scobie (1914) (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://www.electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/mackay/MackaysHighlanders.pdf>

The Story

Major-party meltdown – not Remain's mythical victory – is the story of the European elections

The final results of the European Parliament elections have provoked a veritable orgy of fag-packet maths, with commentators straining to point out that, in fact, their side of the Brexit debate "won" the elections.

Perhaps the most spectacular example was Polly Toynbee in the Guardian, confidently asserting that "in these elections remain was the winner, not Farage". To prove this Toynbee tots up pro-Remain party votes and declares that a second referendum would be won by Remain, by the rather quirky margin of 50-47.

The veteran Tuscan socialist is hardly the only culprit, of course. Even the BBC has been putting up bar charts of 'hard Brexit' versus 'Remain' as if the elections were actually a poll on precisely how people want to leave the EU, handily translated into a tick for a series of parties. Never mind that the turnout was a mere 37 per cent, meaning about 15 million fewer people voted than in the 2016 referendum.

What's more, by focusing only on parties that either want No Deal or to scrap the referendum result entirely, parts of the media risk

making the debate all about the two extremes and ignoring the many people, and politicians, who want to find compromise.

Far more enlightening than pseudo-mathematical projections about a second referendum is the very detailed polling work done by Lord Ashcroft over the weekend. His survey of voters has dug into which 2017 voters went where.

It gets to the heart of the real story of these elections — the devastating blow delivered by the electorate to the two major parties. After all, it's much more important to examine what might happen in a general election that will definitely happen than in a second referendum that will probably never take place.

Fans of Conservative majority governments, look away now. According to Ashcroft's survey, of those who took part in these elections only one in five 2017 Conservative voters stayed with the party. Unsurprisingly the majority of that exodus (53 per cent of 2017 voters) was to the Brexit Party, but there was a not insignificant 12 per cent who went to the Lib Dems too.

Labour fared slightly better, with 38 per cent of their 2017 voters staying put, but they lost votes to several different parties — principally the Lib Dems, the Greens and the Brexit Party.

What will really worry both the main parties' strategists is that many of those 2017 voters may get into the habit of voting for another party. Ashcroft's figures make this starkly clear: only 43 per cent of 2017 Tory voters who turned out last Thursday said they would back the Conservatives next time out. The figures for Labour was 56 per cent — certainly better than the Tories, certainly pretty bad.

All of this comes with the usual caveat about turnout, but a bigger pinch of salt is needed because of the big political drama around the corner.

There's a Tory leadership election, with a potential new-leader bounce in the polls for whoever wins it. A personality-driven race may help take the edge off this week's meltdown, as well as keeping the Tory big beasts on the front pages for the foreseeable future. The impending arrival of Donald Trump may have a similar analgaesic effect, by diverting the public's attention for a bit.

Then there is the bigger and more difficult question of what happens next with Brexit. How can one possibly account for the myriad effects of leaving the EU at the end of October without a deal, for instance?

On the one hand it might enhance a Brexiteer Tory PM's credentials among Leave voters and shoot the Farage fox. On the other it might provoke turmoil that permanently scars the Conservatives' reputation for competent stewardship of the economy. Pro-Europeans could desert the party, too, just to add to the maelstrom. That's before we consider the possibility of another referendum in Scotland if Nicola Sturgeon gets her way.

These permutations are too many to predict with any confidence, but in the meantime these elections have at least given us a sense of the dissatisfaction many voters feel with the two biggest parties and the scale of the challenge they face in turning things round.

As has become clear from the last few days of not very private infighting among Labour's top brass, plenty on the Corbyn front bench feel the time is nigh for a far clearer, more robustly pro-Remain view. That presents its own internal challenges, of course.

How can Jeremy Corbyn pivot from the fudged 'Labour Brexit' line he's been trotting out for three years to the kind of 'Remain and reform' position now advocated by Keir Starmer and Emily Thornberry? Is there any realistic prospect of a different leader than Corbyn taking the helm, given how well trying to unseat him has gone in the past?

In a way, the Conservatives' task is both simpler and riskier, certainly in the longer term. Elect a leader and Prime Minister to deliver Brexit and sock it to Brussels, with the nuclear option of no deal firmly back on the table. It's a strategy that may appeal to party members and plenty of MPs — whether it is a strategy to create a broad election-winning coalition is another matter entirely.

All the while Nigel Farage and the resurgent Lib Dems will be rubbing their hands in anticipation of the potential spoils to come.

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

Alastair