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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for October 1st, 2021

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

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

Electric Scotland News

On the Covid front it's pretty clear to me that it's the non vaccinated that are now causing all the problems. When they get infected it's far more likely that they'll have to go to hospital and also into ICU. My friends Beth & Tom got Covid but they both recovered as they'd been twice vaccinated. In fact it was Tom that first caught the virus and that was due to him needing an x-rage in the local hospital.

One Canadian said on the TV today that he was against vaccination but then ended up in the ICU when he caught it. He said it was a huge wake up call for him and urged people like him to get the vaccine.

I note that gas prices are heading up and that petrol is in short supply in the UK. On looking at the analysis of why this is happening it seems it's down to political mis-management. Also a problem in the USA might mean the budget is not approved which will lead to lots of problems. Seems the real problem is that the proposed budget goes above a hard line in the constitution as to amount that can be borrowed unless congress votes a new lending limit.

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 and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. I might also add that in a number of newspapers 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 which I do myself from time to time.

The SNP's drug problem

New guidance means Scots caught with Class A drugs will no longer be prosecuted. Whatever the merits of the policy, it falls far short of what's needed to prevent deaths. But then really getting to grips with the problem would mean diverting attention from the only drug the SNP really cares about - independence.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/scotland-moves-to-decriminalise-by-the-back-door-so-what-happens-now>

The Necessity of AUKUS

The diplomacy surrounding the recent agreement between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States left much to be desired, and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson should now lead efforts to mollify the French. But this should not be the last agreement between like-minded powers to counter Chinese aggression.

Read more at:

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/aukus-submarine-deal-response-to-chinese-aggression-by-chris-patten-2021-09>

UK handles £9.4TRN assets as another nail hammered into Project Fear coffin

BRITAIN remains a formidable financial powerhouse, a new report has indicated, with an eye-watering £9.4trillion in financial assets currently managed in the UK.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1497196/en-news-brexit-news-city-of-london-france-germany-italy-project-fear>

Fears for patient care as hundreds of under-staffing alerts are revealed at flagship Queen Elizabeth University Hospital

Hundreds of alerts over staffing levels have been logged at Scotland's flagship NHS hospital, we can reveal. The official reports include 55 near-miss incidents where there was the potential for a patient to be harmed because of staff shortfalls. Staff at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH) in Glasgow have warned of under-staffing on the Datix system 339 times since 2019.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/queen-elizabeth-university-hospital-under-staffing/>

The Second Coming of George W. Bush

The public image of the 43rd President of the United States has undergone a surprising revival

Read more at:

<https://thecritic.co.uk/the-second-coming-of-george-w-bush>

Minister sorry for woeful delay in setting up Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

The Scottish government has apologised unreservedly for what was described as a woeful and wholly avoidable 13-year delay in setting up a public inquiry into child abuse.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-58733292>

Boy left isolated and lonely in disgusting hospital

A young boy with cancer was kept isolated in a disgusting Glasgow hospital unit after his mother raised concerns about the safety of the water and cleanliness, an inquiry has heard.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-58738139>

On marriage and divorce - be warned

DATA FROM THE Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows there was a 5.8 per cent rise in divorces between opposite-sex couples in England and Wales in 2016

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2021/09/on-marriage-and-divorce-be-warned/>

Message from the Governor General of Canada on the Occasion of the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

As we mark the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, I think back to how my childhood shaped me. How so many in our community, and thousands more Indigenous children across Canada, were ripped away from their homes, separated from their families and sent to residential schools, where they were not allowed to speak their languages or honour their cultures, and were punished if they did.

Read more at:

<https://www.gg.ca/en/media/news/2021/message-first-national-day-truth-and-reconciliation>

Nanos explains why minority win needs to be a 'wake-up call' for Trudeau

An overview of the Canadian Elections.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/ODXUJczYqxs>

UK economy growth surges faster than first thought

BREXIT Britain's economy grew quicker than expected during April and June, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has announced.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1498761/UK-economy-growth-latest-ONS-figures-Office-National-Statistics-Brexit-news>

German economy nightmare as imports most expensive since 1981

GERMAN imports were at their most expensive for 40 years last month, raising fresh concerns about the nation's economic health.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1498403/Germany-news-economy-imports-trade-Brexit-latest-figures>

Electric Canadian

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - the 26th day of September 2021

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26094-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-26th-september-2001>

My Canadian Journal

Added an entry for September 2021 covering the elections, covid and the truth and reconciliation day on 30th September.

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/canadandx.htm>

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Audio of Text w/ Panoramic Visuals, added to the foot of our Lifestyle page

You can listen to this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/index.htm>

French Canadians

Started work on this section with lots more to come.

You can read the start of this section at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/french/index.htm>

Pioneers of the Cross in Canada

By Dean Harris (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/Pioneersofthecross.pdf>

Pioneers of France in the new world

By Francis Parkman twenty-fifth edition (1916)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/francisparkmansw01.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

Beth has another video for you for September 29th 2021 - Place names and once removed and cemetery searching

You can watch this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

North British Review

M. Michel's book is the history of the long alliance between France and Scotland,—an alliance originally formed against the growing power of a common enemy, and afterwards strengthened and confirmed by a community of interests, and by a grateful sense of mutual benefits. Taken from the August - November 1862 issue Vol. XXXVII

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/france/francescotland.pdf>

You can also read the whole volume at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/france/northbritishreview1862.pdf>

Clan Munro of Australia

Got in their August 2021 newsletter which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/munro/index.htm>

The Inner Hebrides - Scotland's Island Paradise

Added this video around half way down this page at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/western_isles.htm

Scottish Harbours

An article I came across which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/articles/scottishharbours.htm>

Some Scotch Castles and their Stories

By Charles Turner illustrated from recent photographs (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/castles/scotchcastlestories.pdf>

Lossiemouth video

The Walk starts off down at the harbour and shows you some of the shops, bars and restaurants. Added this video to the foot of our Lossiemouth page.

You can watch this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lossiemouth/index.htm>

A Scottish Fly-Fisher

By A. Leitch (1911) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/sport/angling/scottishflyfisher.pdf>

King Kalakaua and R. L. Stevenson, c 1889

I received this card from a friend while she was in Hawaii on a visit to her daughter and added it to the foot of the page at: <https://electricscotland.com/history/women/wh36.htm>

Story

Scottish Highlands

By Ralph S. Tarr (1907)

Finding myself in Great Britain in the summer of 1907, with about two weeks of unclaimed time, I decided to gratify a long-felt desire to tramp about in the Highlands of Scotland. My main object, aside from the desire to see the country in this way, was to examine the valleys in order to satisfy myself as to the evidence of glacial erosion in that region. In the course of these two weeks I covered several hundred miles, partly on foot, partly by steamer, and partly by rail. One of the points that impressed me most of all was the very marked influence of the surrounding conditions upon the people. The country has individuality and strength which must of necessity have stamped itself upon the character of the Scotch Highlanders.

The two physiographic elements whose effects upon the people are most prominent are the topography and the climate. In the Scottish Highlands the topography is one of marked relief. Being an ancient mountain system greatly worn, it consists of a variety of hard, crystalline rocks, often very massive. The dissection by water and by ice has cut deeply into the rocks, forming broad mountain valleys with steep sides, while between the valleys prominent mountains rise to elevations frequently of from three to four thousand feet; while in one instance, Ben Nevis, the elevation is 4,400 feet. It is a maturely dissected mountain region, modified greatly by glacial erosion.

The last stage in shaping this highland region was the work of the great glacier which spread out in all directions from the Scottish Highland centre. During the period of maximum glaciation, all of Scotland was covered by ice, and during this time it seems evident that the strong relief of the region guided the ice currents, causing more rapid flow along the major valleys. As the glacier was melting away, the continental stage was succeeded by a condition of dwindling glaciers whose valley tongues descended from a series of snow-field centres in the higher mountains.

The effects of this glacial occupation are numerous and important. In the first place, the ice removed the soil that had previously existed there, leaving bare rock surfaces in many places, which, in pre-glacial times, must have been mantled with a soil of disintegration. Much of this soil, together with rock fragments ground from the mountains and valleys, was taken beyond the limits of the country and deposited in the surrounding sea. Some of it also found its way into the Lowlands of Scotland; but some, especially during the dwindling stages, was deposited in the form of moraines and gravels in the valleys. Some of the glacial soil is fairly level, making excellent farm land; but much of it is very rocky, including a large proportion of boulders plucked from the hard mountain rocks.

Besides this removal and deposition of soil, the glacier has accomplished a vast work of erosion. By it many of the valleys have been greatly deepened and their tributary valleys left hanging, often several hundred feet above the main valley bottom. The ice, sweeping across the divides, has lowered them, forming cols, and in some cases the divides have been so lowered as to connect different systems by a continuous through valley. In some cases the main valleys have been deepened several hundred feet by the process of glacial erosion and in their bottoms water has gathered, forming the picturesque lochs for which Scotland is justly noted. Some of these lochs are in rock basins of glacial erosion; but many of them owe part of their depth to a dam of moraine, which, by interfering with drainage, has ponded back the water. Some of the lochs have fresh water, others salt, and the Scotch people have recognized the similarity of these two kinds of narrow, mountain-walled water bodies by giving them the name of loch. It is true that the indented Scotch coast, into which the salt-water lochs extend, is due in part to the sinking of the land, which has admitted the sea into the valleys; but in large measure the irregular coast has been moulded by glacial erosion, as the valleys of the interior have been.

Besides deepening the valleys by glacial erosion, there has been a steepening of their sides; for glacial erosion works laterally as well as vertically. This has planed off many of the valley spurs, leaving them truncated with steep cliffs. By this combined lateral and vertical erosion, the topography of the Scottish Highlands has had its ruggedness increased, and valley slopes that formerly were moderate are now so steepened that they cannot be occupied even for pasturage. Altogether, by the change in character of the soil, by the deepening of the valleys, and by the steepening of their sides, the effect of glacial occupation has been unfavourable to agriculture. It has done a damage which the

local deposit of glacial soils has only partially repaired.

This rugged Highland region lies in the path of the stormy prevailing west winds, with the result that the amount of clouds and rainfall is excessive. This is especially true on the higher land in the west, where the rainfall reaches over eighty inches in places. Day after day it is rainy or misty, especially on the higher slopes. Naturally, in this high latitude, the summer climate is cool, and, although so near the ocean, frosts occur late in the spring and early in the autumn.

Such a region must, of necessity, be sparsely settled. That the single factor of climate is not solely responsible for this is clearly indicated by the fact that the neighbouring Lowlands are densely settled and closely tilled. The sparse settlement, though due to climatic conditions in part, depends largely upon the rugged topography and the general lack of resources. Where the rainfall is not excessive, and the topography is less rugged, as along the eastern coast near and south of Inverness, there is a fairly dense population. Also, wherever there are valleys with fairly good soil, people are living by agriculture in considerable numbers, even in the most rugged part of the Highlands; as, for example, on the lake clay and gravel soils of the valley of Glen Roy, near the base of Ben Nevis. Wherever there are other kinds of resources, as in the granite region near Aberdeen, and along the coast where fishing supplies food, people live in numbers. Thus, a map representing the distribution of population in Scotland shows a coastal fringe of greater density than the interior; a still great density of population in the Lowlands, with its agricultural and mineral resources; and a considerable density along some of the larger valleys, like that of the Caledonian Canal, and on the lower, more fertile lands of the east coast.

Omitting these regions of greater density of population, and confining attention primarily to the more rugged Highlands themselves, and especially the western Highlands, we find the occupations of the people to be very simple, and their number not great. On the uplands there are large tracts where the soil is too thin for farming; and over many miles the bare rock is exposed. Even though the soil were good in these uplands, the season is too short for farming and the climate too damp. The Scotch mist encourages a luxuriant growth of swamp-loving plants here, not only on the more level tracts, but even on moderately steep slopes. The sphagnum moss and associated heather, and other plants, thrive here to such an extent that it would be difficult to farm this land even if the temperature permitted. While unfavourable to agriculture, the peat moss, which forms extensive bogs, furnishes a supply of fuel to the valley farmers. However, in most places the dampness is sufficient to cause the development of extensive bogs even in the valleys, supplying the greater part of the demand of the sparse population.

The heather-covered upland, though useless for farming, is not wholly valueless, for it serves as pasture ground for immense numbers of sheep and is the home of the deer, grouse and rabbits, which are allowed to live here for the sport of the hunters. One of the important industries of the uplands is that connected with hunting, including personal service on the estates.

It is sheep-raising, however, that is the fundamentally important industry of the Scottish Highlands. In all Scotland, there are about four and a half million people, most of whom live in the Lowlands; but there are twenty-five million sheep, the larger number of which are in the Highlands. Four million acres in Scotland are uncultivated, and there are nine million acres of heather, while a little less than five million acres, a very large part of which is in the Lowlands, are given over to crops and grass; 21.9% of the surface is uncultivated; 40.4% is heather, etc.; and 25.2% is cultivated.

Although the greater part of the Scottish Highlands is either in heather or else utterly worthless, there is some agriculture in the valleys. Indeed, farming is undertaken even in some of the narrow valleys with rugged morainic soil; while in many of the broader valleys there are fairly extensive farms. But in these Highland valleys there is not only soil limitation, but also limitation of agriculture due to unfavourable climatic conditions. The dampness makes it difficult to dry the hay and the grain, and the shortness of the season and the prevailing cloudiness interfere with the maturing of these crops. In the western Highlands frost occurs late in August; and in the season of 1907 oats were not yet ripe on many of the farms, and grass was uncut as late as the 10th of September. There was a notable difference in this respect from place to place, but throughout much of the Highland region the grain crop for that year did not promise to yield very great returns.

The uneven, rugged, mountain masses of the Scottish Highlands have greatly interfered with communication across

country, and have encouraged the development of clans. This, together with the economic poverty of the region, tended toward that isolation which so long maintained the independence of the Highlanders. One may still see the kilt worn in the more remote districts, and the Keltic language is not uncommonly heard. Even at the railway station of some of the new lines that have pushed their way into the more remote Highlands one may hear Keltic spoken.

The effect of glaciation has somewhat diminished the degree of isolation of the various parts of this region. Passes have been lowered by the ice scouring so that they are more easy to cross; and by glacial action lakes have been formed which served as highways of early Highland travel, as they do at the present time. Where the trails of the Highlanders extend through the valleys that are modified by glacial erosion, roads have more recently been built, and, in some places, even railroads. Now an ever-increasing tourist business, making use of the roads and lochs, has developed.

Among the highways into the Highlands, none equals in importance that of the great valley occupied by the Caledonian Canal. This is a wonderful natural highway, depending in the first place upon a line of faulting across the Highlands, and, in the second place, upon the enlargement of the depression by stream, and later by glacial erosion. The passage of ice along this valley has steepened its sides, lowered its bottom, and, on the recession of the glacier, has left a series of navigable and very beautiful lochs. At considerable expense the gaps between the lochs have been crossed by canals; but this ambitious enterprise was foredoomed to commercial failure by reason of the fact that the highway traverses an unproductive region, and, furthermore, by the fact that the Caledonian Canal really leads nowhere. To-day it has degenerated largely into a mere tourist highway, far-famed for the grandeur of its unique and typically Scottish scenery.

Although the Lowlands of Scotland have come to be a very important manufacturing centre, the Highlands have practically no manufacturing. One reason, of course, is that there is no coal, and that it is difficult to bring this heavy fuel into the mountain valleys. A second reason is that there is practically nothing to manufacture excepting wool and grain. The former, scattered widely over the Highlands, is most easily gathered into small lots for shipment to the Lowlands and elsewhere. The latter is locally manufactured to some extent; and among the most notable of the manufactories of the Scottish Highlands are the whiskey distilleries.

While coal is absent, there is an abundance of water power. The heavy rainfall of this damp climate supplies plenty of water, and in numerous places this falls out of the hanging tributary valleys, cascading down the ice-steepened slopes of the main valleys. But this water-power, due largely to glacial action, is for the most part, allowed to run to waste; for there is almost no local use for it.

The few people who dwell in this unproductive region show distinct evidence of the influence of the surroundings upon their very character. The persistence and frugality of the "canny Scots," of which the Englishman often complains, find ample explanation in the surrounding conditions. It seems, of necessity, that they must overwork and undereat, both of which conditions would tend toward persistence and frugality, as well as toward the development of strong will, for which the Scotch are also noted. The Highlander seems to be stolid, in some cases even to the extent of stupidity. He is unimaginative, and lacks buoyancy of spirit. These facts were often brought out clearly when attempts were made to enter into casual conversation with the peasantry. Frequently, a passing "good morning" brought either no reply, or at most, a grunt, or a nod. There seemed little evidence of the presence of generous disposition; and, in fact, there was little reason for expecting such a disposition under the conditions amidst which they lived.

On almost every hand there was clear evidence of a general lack of enterprise; and surely, with such surroundings, there is little basis for development of a high degree of enterprise. This condition finds many illustrations in numerous directions, though perhaps in no way better than that supplied at the tourist resorts. Here, often in villages of a fair size, neither telephone nor electric lights were to be found, and at many of the large, well-patronized summer hotels, one was forced to light his way to his chamber by use of the candle, although from the window of the room one looked out upon a noisy waterfall, which, at slight expense, could have been made to develop the necessary power for electricity. Perhaps in our own country we are over-prodigious in the production of this kind of luxury; but, whether this be so or not, the Scotch are surely very backward in their development of what Americans have come to consider almost necessities.

One is struck by the physique of the Scottish Highlander. This fact finds ready explanation in the necessary continued physical exercise and in the probable elimination of the weaker members under such severe conditions of life. Altogether, a visit to the Scottish Highlands leaves, as one of its most distinct impressions, the conclusion that this is, geographically, just the region for such deeds as Scottish history records, as well as for the Presbyterian reaction from it. It is, moreover, an excellent training ground for a race of people qualified by physical strength and mental development for successful competition in other regions offering greater opportunities than this rock-bound country of clouds and mists.

END.

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

Alastair
