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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for December 3rd, 2021

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

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

Electric Scotland News

I purchased a Haggis and Potato Scotch pie this week and have to say it was terrible. It comes from Opie's in Hamilton. I have previously had one from a store, Taste of Britain, in Toronto which also contained some Turnip which was a lot better. I might also mention that Opi's Scotch pies are also pretty poor so won't be trying any more of their products.

On the subject of Scottish food I have still to find in Canada Ox Tongue so if anyone can help me find a supplier I'd appreciate it. I did some years ago import some small tins of Princess Ox Tongue but can no longer find a supplier to ship it to me. I don't understand why it can't be found in Canada as there are so many Scots here and in Scotland every corner grocery store stocked lunch tongue which was Ox Tongue pieces with Jelly and every major supermarket stocked the full version. I did contact the Customer Services Dept. of the company and they couldn't help and they also don't export. I would say this is a fine example of a company that needs to shake itself up and do much better.

Seems many more people are shopping online these days as my cleaning lady who also works in Walmart was telling me that there are very low numbers shopping in Walmart these days. Even on Black Friday when the store should have been packed out there were very few people in the store.

I have noted also that when you do order online delivery is very slow these days so if you are still to order in for Christmas you need to get a move on or presents won't arrive in time.

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.

Thriving Brexit Britain secures £766BN in trade from 70 nations

Although the UK still has close ties with the EU in terms of trade deals, British companies are exporting more goods to non-EU countries (£13.6 billion excluding precious metals) than EU countries (£12.9 billion).

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1527801/brexit-britain-secures-billions-in-trade-70-nations-ont>

First UK, now Canada! Macron urged to start another trade war over threatened sector
EMMANUEL MACRON has been urged to launch yet another trade war, this time with Canada.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1527493/Emmanuel-Macron-France-UK-trade-deal-Canada-EU-news-farmers>

The Queen posts boozy Christmas pudding recipe - here is how to make it
The Royal Family Instagram account has posted how to make the classic festive dish on Instagram.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/queen-posts-boozy-christmas-pudding-25555592>

Christmas was cancelled in Scotland for almost 400 years and people who celebrated faced punishment

Scotland has always held Hogmanay (new year) celebrations close to its heart, but did you know that the same can't be said for Christmas?

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/christmas-cancelled-scotland-almost-400-25546386>

Evergrande set for collapse causing 'great reset' worse than 2008

China Evergrande faces £221billion of debt, and one expert has claimed the company's collapse could spark the fall of the financial system.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/finance/city/1527443/global-financial-crisis-china-evergrande-global-collapse-china-news>

New digital model of 5000 year old Skara Brae on Orkney welcomes virtual visitors

A new digital 3D model of Skara Brae on Orkney has been created to give 21st century audiences virtual access to the site. Older than Stonehenge and the Pyramids at Giza, Skara Brae Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is bringing over 5,000 years of history via an immersive digital experience of the Neolithic settlement.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/skara-brae-on-orkney-welcomes-virtual-visitors/>

Obituary: Russell Steele, journalist renowned for his peerless gifts and generosity of spirit
RUSSELL (Rusty) Steele, who has died aged 75, was a character perfectly suited to the drama that was Scottish newspapers in the late 20th century and early 21st century.

Read more at:

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19704299.obituary-russell-steele-journalist-renowned-peerless-gifts-generosity-spirit/>

Brexit Britain in huge £21.6BN win as Norway deal comes in.

BREXIT BRITAIN'S ambitious £21.6billion trade deal with Norway has now kicked in, bringing with it a whole range of benefits including a cut in red tape.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1529871/brexit-news-uk-norway-trade-deal-billion-anne-marie-trevelyan-Eu-boost>

Land beside Edinburgh Airport planned for 7,000 homes by Sir Bill Gammell

Oil and property magnate Sir Bill Gammell today announced plans for one of Europe's biggest urban expansion projects on land beside Edinburgh Airport.

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/business/land-beside-edinburgh-airport-planned-for-7000-homes-by-sir-bill-gammell-3478991>

Prostate cancer: AI pathologist used to help diagnosis

Of 105 patients tested in north Wales so far, it has correctly diagnosed every one and a similar technique is being

developed for breast cancer.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-59491186>

Why US abortion laws could be changed by Supreme Court ruling

The US Supreme Court has heard the most important abortion case in a generation, leaving supporters of abortion rights shaken and opponents hopeful after conservative judges signalled willingness to uphold stiffer restrictions.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-59340789>

Why Canada is unlocking its vault of maple syrup

CBC explains Quebec's maple syrup reserve system and how it helps prevent shortages of Canada's liquid gold.

Read more at:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/maple-syrup-strategic-reserve-1.6268352>

Electric Canadian

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - the 28th day of November 2021

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/8cycrWa4Q50>

Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs for 1912

By J. Castell Hopkins, F.S.S., Twelfth Year of Issue. (pdf)

You can read this at:

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

Battle of Quebec

Have embedded a two part video about this Battle on our Quebec page at:

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

Report of the Aberdeen Association

The object the Association shall be to collect good and attractive

periodicals and other literature, and to distribute it in monthly parcels to settlers who apply for it from outlying parts of Canada. (1898) (pdf)

You can read this at:

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

Agriculture in Canada

To provide a concise account of the agricultural industry of Canada, a representative of the Minister of Agriculture for each province consented to deal with his respective province in a descriptive article for The Agricultural Gazette. The series, which began in the May number for 1916 and continued to the end of the volume, dealt with the area and character of the agricultural lands, the history and development of the farming industry and the outlook for its future growth. By the authority of The Honourable Martin Burrell, Minister of Agriculture, the series is here reprinted as Pamphlet No.5 of The Publications Branch. (1917) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/agricuincanada1917.pdf>

University of Toronto Monthly
Volume 1 (1900) (pdf) Volume 2 (1901) (pdf)
See foot of our Magazine page for link to 19 copies on the Internet Archive.

You can read these at the foot of the page at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/index.htm>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks
December 1st 2021 - Heraldry in Scotland.

You can watch this at:
<https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Hi Everyone. Here is the last section of BNFT for 2021. I surely do hope you enjoy it.

Pete Hylton went on a wonderful trip while he is in Great Britain and you'll get to share it with him from page 19 onwards in this issue. It's as close as many of us will ever get to being there. Thanks, Pete!

Boy, oh, boy, do I have good news re my Tom! He has been home a couple of weeks and is doing fine. He finished his course of IVs and will return to his urologist in the first part of December. That is the best Christmas present in the world for us!

There is a front-page story this time about the upcoming ceremonies and the inauguration of the new Buchanan Chief, Mike Buchanan, at his home in Cambusmore, Scotland! Exciting times!

Please remember to send your email address changes to bethscribble@aol.com at any time. Please send your genealogical queries also at any time. FREE. (They really do work!)

We send our wishes that you and your friends and loved ones had a great Thanksgiving and that it continues all through the Christmas season, the New Year, and way beyond.

Love,
beth

You can download this issue at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft>

Ross-Ter 2021 End of Year Report
Produced by Doug Ross.

You can read this at:
<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/ross/RossterReport2021-39.pdf>

The Sunday at Home
A Family Magazine for Sabbath Reading was a weekly magazine published by the Religious Tract Society in London.

You can read this and a sample edition at:
<https://electricScotland.com/bible/sundayathome.htm>

Aberdeen
Topographical, Antiquarian, and Historical papers on the City of Aberdeen By John Milne, LL.D. (1911)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdeen.htm>

Our Gaelic Proverbs

A Mirror of the Past by Angus MacGillivray, C.M., M.D., D Sc., F.R.S.E., FSA Scot. (1928) (pdf). I made part of this book as the Story for this week.

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/gaelic/ourgaelicproverbs.pdf>

Dr Roger McNeill and public health in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

By J W Sheets, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Missouri, USA (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/medical/drmcneil.pdf>

Highlands and Islands Medical Service Committee Report

To the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury (c1910) (pdf)

You can read this at:

https://electricScotland.com/history/medical/Dewar_Report.pdf

The Settlement of Penang

By James Scott

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/articles/penang02.htm>

A Scotsman's journey from Longformacus to Penang

By Thrifty Traveller

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/articles/penang01.htm>

Rev. James Aberigh Mackay

Vicar of St. George's Church, Penang, Malaysia between 1859-1868

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/bible/JamesAberighMackay.htm>

Story

Our Gaelic Proverbs, A Mirror of the Past by Angus MacGillivray

As scientific historical research has proceeded, the mists of crass ignorance regarding the Highlands in the past are being rapidly dispelled, thus allowing the truth of the familiar Ossianic exhortation to stand out in true and bold relief, "Cuimhnich air na daoine bho'n d' thainig thu " (Remember those you came from), a sentiment which has inspired the Scottish Celts on many a battlefield to follow in the footsteps of their fathers.

It must, nevertheless, be remembered that history, however carefully written, can never be entirely free from individual bias. It is humanly impossible to be otherwise; and, although the historical discoveries that have recently been made, must be gratifying to the members of a society such as ours, we must not rest entirely satisfied with historical findings alone, but endeavour to widen our field of vision, and see what can be gleaned in other directions of human activities as to what manner of men our forefathers were.

Let us look at the Fine Arts, such as sculpture, one of the severest tests that can be applied in determining the attainments of a race. Have we anything to show in this direction, and, if so, how does the Celtic race in Scotland compare with other contemporaneous races?

Here in this County of Angus, and within a few miles of Dundee, several beautiful examples of sculptured stones are to be found, *e.g.*, at Glamis, Aberlemno, Dunnichen, and St. Vigean. The Celtic stones of Angus cannot be surpassed for beauty of design and artistic merit. They date back to about the eighth century A.D., and conclusively prove that a race which encouraged such artistic productions must have taken a high place among the civilised peoples of the earth. These Celtic crosses of Angus, and many others met with throughout Celtic Scotland, prove that there was a civilisation in those far-off days which compared very favourably with that of any other contemporary race inhabiting Western Europe.

Again, let us see what music has to say in support of our contention. This you must admit is also a very severe test of the attainments of a race.

Our Highland, and especially our Hebridean, music is one of the musician's greatest treasures, not merely for its historic value, which is great, but for its own intrinsic worth, which is incalculable. It shows an amazing similarity in all its qualities to that school of atmospheric music captained by Debussy. By some almost miraculous means, Gaelic civilisation evolved a music which anticipates by centuries what is, perhaps, the most significant development of music in modern years.

The folk-music of the Highlands and Western Isles is quite unlike the folk-music of any other nation, being not a rude, barbarous beginning, but a smooth, well-polished end, perfectly developed and consummately expressed.

As regards the authorship of our Celtic melodies nothing is known. They appear to be of communal rather than of individual origin, of native and not of exotic growth—in short, they may be said to represent the spiritual expression or ethos of the race.

Speaking of the Hebridean songs, it is interesting to remember that Mr. Ernest Newman, the well-known musical critic, has said that not once in a hundred years is there a composer born with such melodic invention as that found in the best of our Hebridean airs. This is surely a great compliment, especially when we recollect that most of these songs are many centuries older than the origin of written music.

What have we to say regarding our Gaelic language and literature? It is true that the Celts of Scotland in far-off times could neither read nor write, but in this respect they could claim no monopoly, for this disability applied equally to other races all over the world.

The art of reading and writing was confined almost exclusively to the cloister, and, judging by the missals and manuscripts that have been preserved to us from this source, they show a high degree of design, dexterity, and intelligence, which is creditable to their authors, *e.g.*, the Book of Deer, and the valuable and interesting collection of manuscripts preserved in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh. Besides, we have good reason to believe that illuminated missals and manuscripts were once plentiful throughout Celtic Scotland, but, to our great regret, most of these have been destroyed or lost, mainly during the Norse invasions, and the great upheavals at the time of the Scottish Reformation.

The Irish Celts, on the other hand, were more fortunate in that they did not suffer to the same extent from Norse depredations, and so the Book of Kells, and other priceless and artistic works on vellum and in metal, are to-day their much-prized possessions.

Although the number of our missals and manuscripts is somewhat scanty, we are fortunate in having a unique and valuable collection of Gaelic proverbs and familiar sayings, from which accredited source we can evaluate the basic psychology, philosophy, and manners of the Celtic race in bygone times. As has just been said, most of our printed or written matter relating, or belonging, to the past has almost entirely disappeared, but the living tongue, which cannot readily be silenced, has transmitted through successive generations the proverbs of our race. "S e 'm bial a dh' obas mu dheireadh " (The mouth gives in last). This brings me, then, to the main theme of my address—

OUR GAELIC PROVERBS: A MIRROR OF THE PAST.

Our proverbs and familiar sayings date from prehistoric and Druidical times down through the centuries. They are mostly old, and, like our sculpture and music, of native growth, therefore, of the utmost value as an index of the characteristics of the Celtic race in Scotland. Being unintentional, they are the more truthful in revealing the peculiarities, habits, thoughts, and ideas of our race. Their origin is unknown, yet it is certain they are not the product of one person or of any grade of society. They may truly be said to reflect the synthetic wisdom and folly of our race.

In the preface to his valuable collection of "Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Sayings," Sheriff Nicolson says— "These old Gaelic sayings reflect a high moral standard, an intelligence shrewd and searching, a singular sense of propriety and grace, and, what may be considered one of the tests of intellectual rank and culture, a distinct sense of humour never found among savages and clodhoppers."

"These Gaelic proverbs give very little indication of those ferocious traits which ignorance or prejudice is apt to regard as specially characteristic of our Celtic ancestors. They express very few sentiments of which any muscular Christian can disapprove. Their view of human nature is keen but kindly, critical but not contemptuous. The number of them that can be condemned on the score of morals or taste is singularly small, more than can be said for the proverbs of several great nations."

It is natural that in some of our Gaelic proverbs and familiar sayings one can discern ideas similar to those met with in the proverbs of other races; but from internal evidence we may safely infer that most of the proverbs current in Celtic Scotland down to our own time are native.

The late Dr. Cameron Gillies, a former president of the Caledonian Medical Society, while discussing this point some years ago, assured me that most of our Scottish proverbs are direct translations of the Gaelic proverbs. This can easily be understood when we remember that up to the reign of Malcolm iii (Calum Cean mor), who reigned from 1058 to 1093, Gaelic was not only the vernacular speech of the people of the greater part of Scotland, but also the language of the Scottish Court. After King Malcolm's second marriage, Gaelic was naively expelled from Court mainly through the skilful solicitation of his shrewd and subtle spouse, the Saintly Queen Margaret of Scotland, and its place usurped by her alien English tongue, Malcolm the warrior—not the politician—quietly acquiescing in this drastic innovation. This, however, was only one of the many changes that took place as the result of this Scoto-Anglican union, a union which began like a romantic, or fairy tale, but which ended in a national transformation, which in time affected every side of Scottish national life, leaving Scotland not only with a new language, but with a new race of rulers, new modes of worship, and new manners and customs. We are told that Queen Margaret used her captivating influence to modify the constitution of the Scottish Kirk, so as to bring it into conformity with her Anglican views. The ultimate effect of her meddling in political affairs was the disappearance, for better or for worse, of Celtic civilisation from the Lowlands of Scotland. Whether this sweet lady has rightly earned the designation of Saint, I know not, but there can be no doubt she played the *role* of politician effectively.

Be that as it may, Queen Margaret's influence at the Scottish Court had a far-reaching national effect. Gaelic, as the vernacular speech of the people, gradually, almost imperceptibly, receded northwards and westwards, and, having lost royal and legislative patronage, was left, presumably to die a natural death. This lethal process has gone on for over eight centuries, yet the language survives. According to last census (1921), there were 158,779 Gaelic speaking persons, who could speak Gaelic and English, and 9,829 were returned as speaking Gaelic alone. "An air is more lasting than the voice of the birds." "A word is more lasting than the riches of the world."

It was stated somewhere recently that Gaelic had now reached the twilight. Let us hope the twilight referred to is not the twilight of the evening that leads to darkness, but the twilight of the morning that leads to dawn.

During these centuries of neglect, Gaelic has, nevertheless, remained the favourite, and in many instances the only language of the people occupying certain parts of the Highlands. In an upland glen some 900 feet above sea level near the north-east end of Loch Ness, where I spent my boyhood, it was my privilege and delight to speak English and Gaelic with equal fluency, Gaelic being spoken almost universally there. Looking back to those early days, what impressed me greatly was the frequent use made of Gaelic proverbs in ordinary conversation and discussion. By long usage they became authoritative all over Scottish Celtdom, which is evidenced by the fact that by the skilful introduction of an apt proverb an argument could promptly and effectively be short-circuited without giving offence. The last word, so to speak, was said, nobody daring to question their authority. Indeed, these proverbs were

regarded as the loadstone of the life and work and destiny of our Gaelic-speaking people.

A careful study of the proverbs and familiar sayings, especially in their original garb, should show succinctly how our ancestors lived and moved and had their being. By their illuminating rays we can get a sharply focused picture of the manners and customs, the wisdoms and superstitions, the wit and nonsense of the Celtic race in Scotland in bygone days. They are interesting alike to the historian, the philosopher, the psychologist and the sociologist. They were made use of freely among our Gaelic-speaking kith and kin, notably around the blazing peat fires of a winter's evening, where neighbours and inmates gathered together for happy intercourse and mutual edification. These Highland ceilidhs, as they are called, were in large measure the schoolrooms of the past, where people of all ages gave and received information regarding the various facets of human life, mainly through the medium of Gaelic proverbs aptly introduced. At these ceilidhs anything of the nature of gossip or slander I never heard. Everything said and done was above reproach. Song and story were frequently heard, and my recollection leads me to believe that these Highland ceilidhs exercised a far-reaching influence on the youth and manhood of the clachan and country side, especially as regards the formation of character and personality.

If the Gaelic, language as a spoken tongue disappear from our Highlands and Islands, the great controlling and formative influence of our time-honoured and racial code of morals and ethics will cease to be effective, to the detriment of our Highland people.

The first collection of Gaelic proverbs and phrases was made by the Rev. Donald Macintosh, an Atholl man, who designated himself in his last will and testament—"I, the Reverend Donald Macintosh, a priest of the old Scots Episcopal Church, and last of the non-jurant clergy in Scotland." The book was first published in Edinburgh in 1785, and a second edition appeared in 1819. The number of proverbs in the first edition was 1,305, in the second 1,538. In 1881 Sheriff Nicolson, that erudite and big-hearted *Sgiathanach*, published "A Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases," numbering nearly 4,000—a scholarly publication. Besides these we have the Rev. Dr. Alexander Cameron's "Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases" in vol. ii of "Reliquic Celtics," and many interesting Gaelic proverbs are to be found in "The Literature of the Celts," by Dr. Magnus MacLean, while in February, 1926, Mr. T. D. MacDonald, a well-known Gaelic author, published his collection, numbering 648, a very convenient and interesting book.

As most of you here do not speak Gaelic I purpose reading to you some old Gaelic proverbs and familiar sayings translated into English from the original to show you the many view-points of human life and experience embraced by them, leaving the proverbs to speak for themselves as to what manner of men and women our ancestors were. The translations I purpose giving are taken almost entirely from Nicolson's collection, and, although they are very fine indeed, they, as he himself says in his preface, come far short of the originals, so please make due allowance for this obvious and unavoidable disparity.

THE DEITY—FATALISM—REPENTANCE—THE CLERGY.

We can readily gather from our Gaelic proverbs that the Scottish Celts were disposed to be religious, influenced, as they must have been, by their special, awe-inspiring environment—the everlasting hills, the boundless ocean. Curiously enough, even in my young days, Highland people seldom spoke of sacred things.

The fatalism of the Celts is associated with an omnipotent, but just, God; but the Christian idea of the Fatherhood of God is not indicated in any of the proverbs that I have come across. As regards repentance, no eleventh-hour opportunity is afforded, and purchasing repentance is regarded as folly. Nature never forgives. *Lex tadicmis*, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, being the prevailing system of punishment.

You can read the rest of this book at: <https://electricscotland.com/gaelic/ourgaelicproverbs.pdf>

END.

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

Alastair
