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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 13th, 2022

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

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

## Electric Scotland News

### Memorial Service for Ted Cowan

The University of Glasgow is to hold a Memorial Service for Professor Emeritus Edward James (Ted) Cowan HonFSAScot. The service will take place on Thursday 19th of May 2022 at 3pm, in the University Chapel, with a wine reception to follow in the adjacent Fore Hall. The service will also be livestreamed and can be accessed via this link.

<https://www.westreamitservices.co.uk/cowane>

A pioneer in the study of the 'people's history', Ted was passionately committed to communicating Scotland's past to all its people, and to the world. He published, co-wrote or edited 18 books and nearly 100 articles or book chapters, ranging over time from the early medieval to the modern, from the Vikings in Scotland and the Wars of Independence to the Covenanters, Scottish popular culture and folk belief, and Scottish emigration. Two books are due to be published this year: Northern Lights: The Arctic Scots, and the edited proceedings of a conference on Gaelic Galloway.

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History of Scotland by William Robertson, D. D. is a one volume edition which is the eleventh edition of this book, the original of which was in three volumes. I've made these volumes available this week with the link to it below. I would recommend you at least read the one volume edition as his view do differ somewhat to other histories and made some excellent reading.

### 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.

Priti Patel migration plan set for remarkable results - new study lays bare huge impact  
BRITAIN'S new controversial asylum deal with Rwanda could reduce the number of people making dangerous Channel crossings to zero, a new study has found.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1605964/priti-patel-immigration-rwanda-policy-australia-overseas-processing>

India to help UK launch Galileo replacement with huge new space deal

INDIA has agreed to launch UK's OneWeb satellites in a major space deal after its previous launch was foiled by

Russia.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1599752/india-uk-trade-space-deal-galileo-replacement-oneweb-satellite-isro-eu>

Forward Thinking Scots

By Norrie Hunter in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/NorrieHunter615a.html>

Media

A regular column by Hamish MacKay in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/HamishMackay615a.html>

Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine Is Transforming Europe

The war in Ukraine is one of those seminal events that occur precisely when most believe that historical trajectories have been set and outcomes largely pre-ordained. Such wars forge new fault lines that shake governments to the core, forcing them to re-examine the first principles of their foreign and security policies.

Read more at:

<https://www.19fortyfive.com/2022/05/russias-invasion-of-ukraine-is-transforming-europe/>

Inflation isn't down to Brexit

Is the cost of living crisis really down to the 'realities that Brexit has wrought', as one former Bank of England bigwig claimed recently? Come off it. Just look at Germany where food prices are soaring and food banks heaving. There's plenty to be done to offset high prices, but don't pretend EU members have it any easier.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/its-nonsense-to-blame-brexit-for-the-cost-of-living-crisis/>

If Malaysia can change its environmental credentials why can't the EU lift its Palm Oil ban? MALAYSIA, the second biggest producer of palm oil, maintains it has enough palm oil to meet global demand and keep supply chains moving.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2022/05/if-malaysia-can-change-its-environmental-credentials-why-cant-the-eu-lift-its-palm-oil-ban/>

Conrad Black: Canada's courageous defence of Ukraine

Canada has incurred more gratitude in Europe for its military assistance than at any time since the First Canadian Army largely liberated the Netherlands in 1945

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-canadas-courageous-defence-of-ukraine>

A D-Day-level assault on the intellectual and spiritual freedom of Canada's soldiers

The defence minister's peppy, multi-disciplinary and very opinionated advisory panel clearly wishes to disqualify Roman Catholics from serving as chaplains in the CAF

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-a-d-day-level-assault-on-the-intellectual-and-spiritual-freedom-of-canadas-soldiers>

## Electric Canadian

The Parish Register of Kingston Upper Canada 1785-1811

Edited with Notes and Introduction by A. H. Young of Trinity College, Toronto for The Kingston Historical Society, Kingston, Ontario. (1921) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/parishrecordskingston.pdf>

The Revd. John Stuart, D.D., U.E.L.

Of Kingston, U. C. and His Family, A Genealogical Study by A. H. Young (1920) (pdf)

You can read about him at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/John-Stuart-kingston.pdf>

Lord Strathcona

From the Aberdeen University Review (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/strathcona/lordstrathcona.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 8th day of May 2022 - Mother's Day

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26206-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-8th-day-of-may-2022-mother-s-day>

A Backwoods Christmas

A Homely Sketch of how Christmas was kept in old Ontario by Augustus Bridle (1910) (pdf)

You can read this sketch at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/articles/backwoods-Christmas.pdf>

## Electric Scotland

The Aberdonian Abroad

From the Aberdeen University Review (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdonian-abroad.pdf>

The Scotch-Irish Settlers in the Valley of Virginia

Alumni Address at Washington College, Lexington, VA by Bolivar Christian of Staunton, VA (1860) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotsirish/scotchirishsettlersinvirginia.pdf>

Beth's Video Talks

May 11th 2022 - Pinkerton and Connery

You can watch this at:

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

The Aberdeen University Review  
Produced by Aberdeen University. Links to the first 9 volumes.

I will be brining you several articles from these reviews but have provided links to them at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/Aberdeen-University-Review.htm>

A Genealogical History of the Savage Family in Ulster  
Being a revision and enlargement of certain chapters of "The Savages of the Ards" (1906) (pdf)

You can read about them at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/scotsirish/savage.htm>

The History of Scotland  
During the Reigns of Queen Mary and of King James VI till the accession to the Crown of England with a review of the Scottish History previous to that period; by William Robertson, D. D. Eleventh Edition.

You can read this at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/history/historieofscotlandrobertson.htm>

Doric Lays and Lyrics  
By James Thomson (1870) (pdf)

You can read this at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/auldsmiddyend.pdf>

Cheviot Sheep  
By John Hobson

An interesting historical article which you can read at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/cheviot.htm>

The Tower of Craigietocher  
Got in an update "The build continues – 2013 to 2019"

Phill has sent in an old update which provides more information which you can at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/history/articles/cragie2019.pdf>

Hopefully next week or so he's also going to sent in further information on the development of the grounds and out buildings.

The Border Magazine  
Found Volume 8 and have added it to our collection which you can get to at the foot of the page at:  
[https://electricscotland.com/history/newspapers/border\\_magazine.htm](https://electricscotland.com/history/newspapers/border_magazine.htm)

## Story

A Forgotten Aberdeenshire Monastery.

OUR Celtic Christian sites in Aberdeenshire have usually been ascribed to St. Columba and his Scotie disciples from Iona, but recent research has shown that most if not all of them belong to a different source and may claim a higher antiquity. The whole question of the introduction of Christianity into Pictland has recently been exposed to searching investigation by the Rev. Archibald B. Scott, minister of Kildonan in Sutherland. Mr. Scott, in his book on the "Pictish Nation," and in his simailer work on "St. Ninian," has shown that much of the credit commonly awarded to Columba

and the Scottish School of Iona, is really due to Ninian and his British missionaries from Strathclyde, who were actively spreading the Gospel in Aberdeenshire a full century and a half before Columba set foot on the pebbly beach of Iona. Ultimately, with the political ascendancy of the Scots over the Picts, the Scottish or Columban church absorbed its predecessor. While the Columban Church conformed early to Rome, the remnants of the native Pictish Church, founded from Strathclyde, continued dissidents to the last as the Culdees of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Hence all through the later Middle Ages the Roman Church writers systematically garbled the records of Celtic Christianity, ascribing to Columba and the Iona brethren much of the work which was in fact performed by Ninian and Kentigern and their disciples. Thus, to take one instance only, the famous Monastery at Deer in Buchan was believed in medieval times to have been founded by Columba, whereas in reality it was founded, a full generation before Columba even landed in Scotland, by one of Ninian's disciples, Colm, who also established churches at Oyne, Daviot, Birse, and Belhelvie, at each of which places he was afterwards confused or equated with Columba.

One of the most famous of these pre-Columban Missionaries in Aberdeenshire was St Moluag (Molocus or Lugadius as he is called in the Latin records). Unlike most of our Celtic apostles, he did not come from Strathclyde, but from the great monastery at Bangor in Ulster: "Bangor of the hosts" as it was called, from the three thousand monks which it numbered in its greatest days. From this famous monastery, which founded colonies as far away as Switzerland and Lombardy, St. Moluag was sent into Pictland in 562, the year before Columba established his community at Iona. St. Moluag laboured in Argyll, Ross, and Banff, but he is pre-eminently associated with Aberdeenshire. Three of his churches are in the valley of the Dee—Tarland, Migvie, and Durris. Others are at Newmachar and Clatt. It is interesting to note that the famous Newton Stone at Insch may be a relic of his activities in Aberdeenshire, for a recent version of its mysterious inscription contains the name of Moluag. If so, this stone is surely one of the most impressive memorials of the dawn of its recorded history which our county can boast. The great apostle of Aberdeenshire died while labouring in the Garioch on 25 June, 592, and was buried at his monastery of Rosemarkie in Ross-shire. His crozier, the Bachuill More, is still preserved, a remarkable relic of the early Celtic Church, in the hereditary guardianship of the Duke of Argyll. "It is a dull intelligence," Mr. Scott truly remarks, "which is not startled by the survival of this pastoral staff into the twentieth century."

The most important of St Moluag's foundations in Aberdeenshire was at Clova in Kildrummy. His choice of this locality for a missionary centre is amply justified by the earth houses and other evidences of a thriving prehistoric population with which this district is crowded. The site is a gentle eminence on the left bank of the Little Mill Bum, a small tributary of the Mossat which rises in Hill of John's Cairn. It is just east of Little Mill Smiddy and slightly over half a mile south of Clova House, or a mile south-west of the village of Lumsden. Near it is, or was, Simmerluak's (St. Moluag's) Well. Within a plantation may still be seen the rubble foundations of the parish Church of Cloveth, which in medieval times took the place of the old Celtic monastery. They indicate a building about 30 feet 8 inches long by 21 feet 4 inches broad exteriorly, oriented to north-east. The walls were apparently some 2 feet 8 inches thick: but as the whole south side of the building has been completely wrecked, and lies buried under a heap of stones, it is not possible to give very precise dimensions. One or two dressed slabs still lie about the site; and in the grounds of Clova House are preserved a number of fragments which show that the little church was not without architectural pretensions. These fragments comprise large portions of a square headed window with a splayed central mullion; several splayed rybats and lintels; a portion of the font; and one finely wrought stone with mouldings whose deep hollows and bold rolls seem to indicate a date in the thirteenth century. In Clova House are also preserved four remarkable stone crosses which were dug up in 1875 in the old churchyard. They are quite plain and roughly hewn, or rather hacked out, and may well be relics of the early Celtic monastery. All were found erect beneath the surface of the soil into which they had sunk, and associated with them were traces of interment. The Museum at Clova also contains a remarkable perforated bead in dark blue stone, veined in white, red, light blue, and green, which was found in 1876 under the north-west corner stone of the foundations of the ancient chapel.

Standing on this very ancient and sacred site, is it not strange to think of it as the scene of a busy little Culdee community, where manuscripts were read and copied, and where schools were established to spread religion and civilization among the rude inhabitants of Kildrummy and Auchindoir, at a period when the adjoining earth houses may still have been inhabited, and when beacons blazed often on the vitrified fort at Tap o' Noth to give warning of approaching war? Still more remarkable is the reflexion that our remote district was witness of such godly labours at a period when in the west of Europe the Lombard hordes were pouring into that part of Italy to which they gave their name, and wresting the conquests of the great Justinian from the nerveless grasp of his successors; when at Rome

Pope Gregory I was at the height of his power; when in the east the Empire was locked in that titanic struggle with Persia from which by the genius of Heraclius it emerged triumphant, only to be humbled almost to the dust before the rival might of Islam; at a period, also, before St. Augustine had landed in the pagan wilds of Saxon Kent, and when St. Columba had barely commenced his great work among the Scotie immigrants of Dalriada.

We may readily picture our little community, with its group of wooden or wattle huts, its smithy, its barns and byres, its bakery, its kiln for corn-drying, and its little heather-thatched church of uncemented stone—all enclosed by a fencible dry-built wall and earthen bank, and surrounded by the neat patches of cultivated soil upon which the holy brethren worked. The life of the inmates, too, may be realized with tolerable clearness from a consideration of the well-known characteristics of Celtic missionary monasticism. Most of them would be laymen, exempt from the heavy duties of religious service, and wholly taken up with the practical work and manual labour of the community. The religious brethren, or monks proper, were grouped into three classes—the Seniors, who were old men past active work and rich in holiness; the Working Brethren, on whom the main burden of the missionary and educational work of the monastery was cast; and the Juniors, or novices under instruction. The system of devotional exercises was very severe. A feature was the *Laus Perennis*, or “perpetual praise” maintained in the church day and night by relays of brethren. Thus in the *Life of St. Kentigern*, we have an account of his monastery at Llanelwy in North Wales, in which it is stated that three hundred and sixty-five monks, “divided into companies, so that the praise of God never ceased,” “devoted themselves to the divine office in church by day and by night, and scarcely ever went forth out of the sanctuary” that is, the *comraich* or sacred precincts of the monastery. The dress of these monks was of the simplest form, consisting of a shirt reaching to the heels, and an upper garment with hood and sleeves; shoes of hide; and a white surplice for use at festivals. All classes lived with the greatest austerity, sleeping on beds of stone, or at the best on boards covered with straw; each monk had his own cell or hut; and celibacy at any rate in the early and best days of Celtic monasticism was strictly enforced. Up in the surrounding hills—in the *Correens* or in the wilds of the *Cabrach*—would be the “diserts,” or retreats whither the holy brethren would withdraw on occasion for solitary meditation. These hermitages were a great characteristic of the Celtic monasteries. On the south side of *Tap o’ Noth*, looking towards *Clova*, is an immense jutting rock called *Cloch-Malew*, “the stone of *Moluag*,” which no doubt formed the “disert” or retreat of the Saint while labouring in these parts.

In addition to the work connected with the maintenance of the civil and religious life of the monastery, there was also the missionary activity of which each community was a centre. The brethren would go forth, generally in couples, for long periods, sometimes months on end, preaching to the natives and setting before them the ideals and standard of a Christian life. Moreover, every monastery possessed its school, and we also know that they provided systematic teaching in agriculture, and gifted seed to the faithful in the neighbourhood. In the *Life of St. Nathalan* occurs the wise and beautiful remark that “among the works of men’s hands the cultivation of the earth approaches nearest to divine contemplation”; and this thought was fully translated into practice by the Celtic church. In the East, monasticism abandoned itself to purposeless and selfish introspection: in the West, on the lines established by St. Martin of Tours, and strictly maintained by St. Ninian and his school in Scotland, it became an institution of the highest practical value for the spreading of spiritual and material blessings. It has been well pointed out that whereas the medieval monastery was a refuge whither men fled from the vices of their fellow-men, the monastery in Celtic times was a training school for warriors who boldly issued forth to wrestle with the evil around them.

We know very little of the community at *Clova* during the six hundred years of its activity. Its founder placed it under the larger settlement which he had planted at *Mortlach* in *Banffshire*. Practically the only notice of it which has been preserved amid the darkness of those early ages tells us that the church and lands of *Cloveth* were confirmed by *Malcolm Canmore* to the parent monastery at *Mortlach*. This grant, however, which is dated 1062, “has been,” in the words of our great legal antiquary, *Cosmo Innes*, “very generally denounced as a palpable forgery”. After long continuing to fulfil the high purpose of its founder, the little monastery at *Clova* was finally merged in the Anglo-Norman parochial system which replaced the old Celtic missionary organization in the twelfth century. In 1157 a bull of Pope *Adrian IV* assigned the town and monastery of *Mortlach*, with its five dependent churches and the monastery at *Cloveth*, to the See of *Aberdeen*. It has been conjectured that the old Celtic Christianity still retained its hold upon the inhabitants, since we are told by *Hector Boece* that *Gilbert de Sterling*, Bishop of *Aberdeen* from 1228 to 1239, recovered *Cloveth* from “wicked Highlanders”. Thereafter *Cloveth* became a parish, and the ancient monastery was replaced by the parochial church whose foundations remain, and which in the Roman fashion was dedicated to St. *Luke*. *Luke* was probably deliberately chosen by the Romanists from the resemblance of his name to that of *Moluag*, particularly when the honorific prefix “*Mo*” is omitted—the form which is Latinized as *Luanus* or *Lugadius*.

Macfarlane's Topographer, writing in 1725, speaks of a "chapel dedicated to St. Luke called Sommiluak's Chappel, formerly much frequented by all the northern pariochs". His testimony to the fame of the ancient monastery is powerfully reinforced by the fact that the name of its Celtic founder has outlived both the Roman dedication and the faith of Rome itself.

In the fourteenth century, as a result of the disturbances and impoverishment caused by the great struggle with the Plantagenets, it was considered advisable to merge the parish of Clova in Kildrummy. The two parishes, we are told, had been "devastated over and over again by war". Probably the military operations connected with the two sieges of Kildrummy Castle, in 1306 and 1335, had pressed heavily on the district. The union between the two parishes was accordingly carried out on 18 January, 1362, and was duly approved by Alexander, Bishop of Aberdeen, on 4 April, 1364. Thereafter the church of Cloveth fell to ruin, and the ecclesiastical history of this ancient and holy site came to an end.

Although the foundations of the medieval church are wellnigh gone, and nothing whatever remains of the turf and wooden buildings which made up the old Celtic monastery, it is impossible to visit this venerable and historic site without feelings of profound emotion, when we consider the noble work which was here accomplished at the very dawn of our country's recorded annals. No finer task has perhaps been entrusted to man than was given these early missionaries to perform. In a wild land, under circumstances of great personal hardship and danger, they lived strenuous lives of the purest self-sacrifice for the great cause to which they were unreservedly consecrated, body and soul. Moreover, theirs were practical lives, rich in well-ordered, fruitful toil, both physical and intellectual. I need not dwell upon the spiritual uplift caused by the adoption of Christianity in Pictland at large, and its political effect in bringing these out-of-the-way districts into eventual touch with the main currents of European development. Not less important was the purely local work which these monkish settlements performed in introducing to the untutored natives an improved husbandry and winning them to a higher standard of social life. It may be freely granted that by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Celtic Christianity had worn itself out, and that its absorption in the Church of Rome was necessary and inevitable, both spiritually and politically. But let us not thereby allow ourselves to forget the great work done by the native church, although all that remains to tell us of her activities are the forgotten sites of her perished monasteries, the church foundations and holy places which mark the wanderings of her great apostles, and the legends which have gathered round their names—legends which, adopted by the medieval church and garbled in her interest, have too often served only to obscure the work of the primitive missionaries.

W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON.

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair