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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for February 17th, 2023

### Electric Scotland News

Of course the big news story this week is the resignation of Scotland's First Minister. Too early to say what is going to happen in the weeks ahead but we'll keep you posted. There is currently no suggestion as to whether this will hurt the Independence movement or not but there is suggestions that it might be hard to find a replacement but we'll wait and see what happens.

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Got an email in asking me to support people that were cleared from Scotland to get compensation from the Scottish Government. I did ask how much money Scotland could afford to pay as an Independent country. He did come back to tell me that Scotland would have plenty of money when they gained their independence.

It did make me think about how in Canada we are being asked to pay billions to the First Nations in compensation. I'm all for equal rights but I can't see why the people of today are being asked to pay such large sums for what their parents did.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

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.

Governor General Simon completed successful State visit to Finland

Today, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, completed a State visit to the Republic of Finland. The visit celebrated 75 years of friendship with Finland and showed Canada's support to the Arctic community as the world continues to adapt to these times of international unrest.

Read more at:

<https://www.gg.ca/en/media/news/2023/governor-general-simon-completed-successful-state-visit-finland>

Conrad Black: Canada's failing health system is but a symptom of a broken nation  
The erosion of Canada's competitiveness is reflected in its health-care system

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-canadas-failing-health-system-is-but-a-symptom-of-a-broken-nation>

Crisis for Nicola Sturgeon as 30,000 quit SNP over gender reform and IndyRef2

The First Minister is under rising pressure to abandon her Gender Recognition Reform (GRR) Bill altogether in a bid to halt the meltdown.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/snp-crisis-30000-people-cancel-29193882>

Councils sucked into a downward spiral of cuts by out-of-touch SNP  
Record columnist Anas Sarwar says the desperate situation in his home city is mirrored up and down the country thanks to the 'relentless damage done by Scottish Government'.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/anas-sarwar-councils-sucked-downward-29199570>

Rolls-Royce leads landmark aviation deal set to inject billions into UK economy  
The deal, announced this morning, was signed between Rolls Royce, Airbus and Air India and will support new highly skilled jobs in the UK.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1734555/rolls-royce-aviation-deal-britain-rishi-sunak-air-india-airbus>

Nicola Sturgeon's resignation speech in full as First Minister steps down  
The First Minister made the announcement this morning after almost eight years leading the Scottish Government.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/nicola-sturgeons-resignation-speech-full-29224220>

Talking about porn with our children will be horrible, but absolutely vital  
I wish I'd never watched porn. Once its images are in your mind, it's hard to be free of them.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/dorothy-byrne-opinion-porn/>

Canadian MP Urges Canada & UK To Negotiate End Of Frozen Pensions  
Gord Johns, the Canadian Member of Parliament for Courtenay-Alberni in British Columbia, is calling for Canada to negotiate with the UK government to lift the freeze on the cost-of-living index for recipients of the British State Pension who reside in Canada.

Read more at:

<https://www.canzukinternational.com/2023/02/canadian-mp-urges-canada-uk-to-negotiate-end-of-frozen-pensions.html>

Joanna Cherry calls for Nicola Sturgeon's husband Peter Murrell to resign as SNP chief executive  
The MP for Edinburgh South West said that Murrell should make way for a Neutral caretaker CEO

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/joanna-cherry-calls-nicola-sturgeons-29231196>

Scots schoolboy who defied bullies to grow hair for sick kids gets chop after three years  
Vandaad Fardim from Aberdeen, was just five when he decided to donate his locks to be made into a wig for a child who had lost their hair during treatment.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scots-schoolboy-who-defied-bullies-29223420>

Sturgeon the illusionist

Now that Nicola Sturgeon has resigned as First Minister, the battle to rewrite her legacy will begin in earnest. But while her supporters, and some commentators, would have you believe she was a political titan, her record in charge of Scotland has been an abject tale of style over substance.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/sturgeons-time-in-office-has-been-an-abject-failure-dont-let-the-snp-mythmakers-tell-you->

[otherwise/](#)

## Electric Canadian

Rennie's Agriculture in Canada

Modern principles of agriculture applicable to Canadian farming to yield greater profit by Wm. Rennie, Sr., Late of the O.A.C., Guelph (1916) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/renniesagricultu00rennuoft.pdf>

Paris Foundary and Agricultural Works

Established 1859 (pdf)

Some old pictures of farm machinery which you can see at:

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

Guide Book and Atlas of Muskoka and Parry Sound Districts

By W. E. Hamilton (pdf). Added this book to the foot of our Muskoka page along with a YouTube video on Parry Sound.

You can get to this at:

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

The Campaign of 1815

Paper read by Mr. R. E. Kingsford, M.A., at a meeting of the Canadian Institute (pdf)

Interesting view of the Battle of Waterloo which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/1815.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday morning - 12th February 2023

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can view this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26308-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-12th-day-of-february-2023>

Paris, Brant County, Ontario

Added a YouTube video about this town to the foot of our Ontario page at:

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

The Mortuary Customs of the Blackfeet Indians

From the Proceedings of the Canadian Institute by the Rev. John McLean, B.A., Fort McLeod, Alberta (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/Mortuary-customs-blackfeet-indians..pdf>

## Electric Scotland

Hylton Newsletter

Got in their January 2023 newsletter which you can read at:

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

Beth's Video Talks  
Get out of Jail Free

You can view this at:

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

Annals of the Caledonians, Picts, and Scots and of Strathclyde, Cumberland, Galloway, and Murray  
By Joseph Ritson, Esq. in two volumes (1828)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/annals.htm>

Burns Supper 2023  
Got in a great pdf file on the Burns Supper in Louisville.

Some excellent pictures of the attendees which you can view at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/Louisville/BurnsNightGala2023.pdf>

An Old St Ronan's Wood, Innerleithen, Scottish Borders  
Added this YouTube video to the foot of our Border Tales page at:  
<https://electricscotland.com/bordertales/index.htm>

A Survey of the Province of Moray  
Historical, Geographical, and Political by John Grant and William Leslie (1798) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/moray/asurveyprovince00leslgoog.pdf>

David Young Cameron  
Scottish Painter and Etcher

You can learn about him at:

<https://electricscotland.com/art/david-young-cameron.htm>

Bibliotheca Burnsiana  
Life and Works of Burns, Title Pages and Imprints of the various editions in the private library of James M'Kie, Kilmarnock, prior to the date 1866 (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/burns/bibliothecaburn00mckigoog.pdf>

Special Reports on Educational Subjects - Volume 12  
Educational systems of the chief crown colonies and possessions of the British Empire, including reports on the training of native races by the Board of Education (1905) (pdf)

An interesting report which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/educationalst04educgoog.pdf>

Memoirs of the Church of Scotland

In Four Periods I. The Church in her infant-state, from the Reformation to the Queen Mary's abdication II. The Church in its growing state, from the abdication to the Restoration III. The Church in its persecuted state, from the Restoration to the Revolution IV. The Church in its present state, from the Revolution to the Union by Daniel Defoe

(1717) (pdf)

This is one of those books where the letter s is written as the letter f so a wee bit challenging to read.

You can read this book at:

[https://electricScotland.com/bible/Memoirs\\_of\\_the\\_Church\\_of\\_Scotland\\_in\\_Fou.pdf](https://electricScotland.com/bible/Memoirs_of_the_Church_of_Scotland_in_Fou.pdf)

## Story

Thought I'd provide you with a biography of one of the "Father's of Canada" - John R. Booth

BOOTH, JOHN RUDOLPHUS, industrialist; b. 5 April 1827 near Waterloo, Lower Canada, son of John Booth and Eleanor Rooney (Rowley); m. 7 Jan. 1853 Rosalinda Cooke (d. 1886) in Kingsey township, Lower Canada, and they had five daughters and three sons; d. 8 Dec. 1925 in Ottawa.

The second eldest of the five children of an Ulsterman and his wife, John R. Booth was born in the Eastern Townships. Historian William E. Greening reports that as a child he "spent his spare time building miniature mills and bridges along the tiny rivulet that flowed through his father's farm." Whatever his early interests, it was with a modest elementary education that he left home as a youth. He contemplated joining the California gold rush before finding employment with the Central Vermont Railroad, chiefly as a carpenter on bridge projects. He also had some involvement in the construction of a paper mill in Sherbrooke, Lower Canada, and a sawmill near Hull. Upon completion of the latter, its owner, Andrew Leamy, engaged him to manage the operation for a year. He then ran a shingle mill in premises in Hull rented from Alonzo Wright, but within months it was destroyed by fire.

Around 1854 Booth and his wife had moved across the river to Ottawa, where J. R., as he became known, furthered his understanding of the lumber trade and water-power. Having leased Philip Thompson's large sawmill on Chaudière Island, between Hull and Ottawa, which was selected in 1857 as Canada's capital, he tendered successfully in 1859 for a contract to supply lumber and timber for the new Parliament Buildings [see Thomas McGreevy]. In harvesting timber for this project, he is credited with introducing horses to replace oxen in skidding logs to water. (The acreage he acquired southwest of Ottawa for pasturing his horses would later become the Dominion Experimental Farm.)

The financial success of the contract, and of a short-lived partnership with American lumberman Albert W. Soper, allowed Booth in 1864 to purchase the Thompson mill and the adjoining mill-lots of Lyman Perkins. More significant, his reputation for reliable performance facilitated his access to additional capital. In 1867, with the backing of the Bank of British North America and on the advice of his cousin Robert R. Booth of Pembroke, he bought the valuable pineries on the Madawaska River previously owned by John Egan. Following this acquisition, which he later described as the basis of his fortune, he joined the effort to construct works to facilitate timber drives, as a founder of the Upper Ottawa Improvement Company, formed in 1868 to build dams, slides, and piers; in 1888 he would become the founding president of the Madawaska Improvement Company Limited. In addition to steadily expanding his milling and driving operations, he had established docks and a lumber storage and distribution centre in 1868 at Rouses Point, N.Y., a planing mill and box factory in 1875 in Burlington, Vt, and a sales office in 1877 in Boston. With these facilities he was said to be "the only Canadian lumberman at the time who manufactured his own lumber in his own American mill."

During the economic downturn of 1874–76 Booth had continued to accumulate timber limits at low prices, thus eliminating his dependence on other suppliers. Eventually covering 640,000 acres, his limits extended throughout the Ottawa watershed, encompassing parts of the Madawaska, Bonnechere, Petawawa, Mattawa, and Montreal rivers in Ontario and the Coulonge, Black (Noire), Dumoine, and Kipawa rivers in Quebec. Montreal lumber merchant and biographer George Arthur Grier has claimed that Booth, an incessant traveller throughout his domain, "knew the forest as a sailor knows the sea, and his success was largely due to the fact that he never overestimated its potentialities." Between 1872 and 1892 his manufacture of lumber increased from approximately 30 million board

feet to 140 million, an expansion that made his operations the largest in the world. Booth's output of 115 million feet in 1896 was more than double that of any other major Ottawa valley firm, including McLachlin Brothers of Arnprior [see Daniel McLachlin] and Bronsons and Weston of Ottawa [see Henry Franklin Bronson]; by 1900 all of the coastal mills in British Columbia [see John Hendry] were producing only 100 million feet annually.

As a natural extension of milling, Booth's operations had grown to include a far-reaching transportation network. His involvement with forming and financing the Canada Atlantic Railway in 1879 [see Donald Alexander Macdonald (Sandfield); William Goodhue Perley] had drawn him into construction when the original proponents were unable to complete the project. He embraced this new phase of his career with enthusiasm. Railways offered his lumber business three major advantages: reduced labour costs on timber drives, freedom from the seasonal constraints on shipping, and speed. In 1882 Booth completed the 136-mile linkage of the CAR between Ottawa and Coteau-Landing on the St Lawrence, from which point the line eventually secured access to the Central Vermont; initially, the crossing had to be done by barge, but in 1890 this interruption was eliminated by the opening of a railway bridge across the river. To link the pinelands of Georgian Bay, his own upper limits, and the Ottawa River, Booth had started in 1884–86 with a small railway connecting lakes Nipissing and Nosbonsing. Next, the Ottawa, Arnprior and Renfrew and Ottawa and Parry Sound railways were chartered in 1888 and amalgamated in 1891 as the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway, which was built in 1892–96. During construction, in 1893 Booth successfully disputed the rights to a strategically important pass near Wilno, which the rival Canadian Pacific had also claimed, and he sought to influence the southern boundary of the newly created Algonquin Park [see Aubrey White] to avoid conflict with his line. (In the end, it ran through the park and Booth secured limits there.) Apart from the advantage the OAPS offered Booth in the lumber trade, for others the route cut 800 miles off the journey from Chicago to Montreal, with mile-a-minute service along the Ottawa–Montreal segment. To secure even more traffic, especially grain, Booth established elevators at Depot Harbour near Parry Sound, as well as at Duluth, Milwaukee, and Coteau-Landing. He eventually added a small fleet of ships to what was recognized as the largest privately owned railway in the world. The OAPS was merged in 1899 into the Canada Atlantic, and in 1904 Booth sold it for \$14 million to the Grand Trunk, which he served as a director until it became part of the Canadian National system.

The empire of J. R. Booth was constantly susceptible to devastation by fire, in the bush, on his railways, and at the Chaudière. His mills were severely damaged in 1893 and again in 1894, when, not surprisingly, he needed 20 British, 5 American, and 3 Canadian firms to underwrite his insurance. In 1895 his Burlington facility was gutted. The disastrous fire of 1900 that cut through Hull and Ottawa caused Booth losses estimated at between one and one and a half million dollars. A major fire in 1903 consumed 10 million feet of lumber, 8 railway cars, and numerous buildings and nearby homes. On the occasion of a conflagration at his mill in September 1913, the second in a week, his son and superintendent, Charles Jackson, discounted the likelihood of arson: the fire, he told the Ottawa Evening Journal, appeared "to be just one of those things which visit such plants periodically." The risk had become such a concern to Ottawa's residents and city council, however, that there was considerable resistance in 1917 to J. R. Booth's use of a river-lot at the end of Bronson Avenue for storage. It was the government's need for the property to house a new heating plant for the Parliament Buildings that pushed Booth's mountains of lumber out of Ottawa.

With vast timber resources at his disposal, Booth's concepts of conservation were largely defined in terms of controlling bush fires, which he usually blamed on settlers and prospectors. At the same time his mills attracted attention as concern mounted over the effect of sawdust, trimmings, and other waste on navigation and fisheries. Following the passage of federal legislation in 1873 that prohibited dumping in water, Booth was convicted and fined. Despite a vigorous legal campaign begun against him and other owners in 1885 by Antoine Ratté, an Ottawa wharfinger and boatbuilder whose business suffered from mill refuse, Booth declined to alter his practices until early in the 20th century. He complied, it appears, only because a fire that destroyed much of his plant provided an opportunity to introduce new procedures to eliminate dumping directly into the water.

Beginning in the 1850s, the periodic public examinations of the crown's water rights and works at the Chaudière, including Albert and Victoria islands, had become matters of consequence to the industrial complexes concentrated there. Crown reviews led to legal adjustments to Booth's ownership in 1889 and 1901. His interests stood to be affected too by Quebec's grant to private hands of 31 acres of river-bed, which figured prominently in the complex legal preparations begun in 1900 by Æmilius Irving and others for a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada over



jurisdiction and the exact location of the Ontario-Quebec boundary. In February 1903 a perplexed Ottawa Citizen asked "Who owns the river?" The matter was no clearer in 1905 when Ezra Butler Eddy of Hull took Booth to court over water diversion.

As the traditional lumber trade approached its zenith – the final raft of squared timber would be taken down the Ottawa by Booth's men in 1908 – Booth embarked upon a number of new ventures. Following a fire at McKay Milling at the Chaudière, he purchased the site for pulp production, a sector pioneered by Eddy. Constructed in 1905, the new plant let him make more effective use of the large quantities of softwood he had previously been forced to sell. Also in 1905, his winning bid for the 1,700-square-mile concession of the Montreal River Pulp Company allowed him the convenience of cutting both pulpwood and pine in the same limits. With 26 grinders, the ground-wood section of Booth's mill was capable of a daily production of 182 tons; four digesters provided 30 more of sulphite pulp. Upon encountering difficulties in disposing of his pulp, Booth entered the papermaking business with a mill that put out some 150 tons of newsprint daily. Other new undertakings were purely speculative. In association with Michael John O'Brien, for instance, Booth used the Dominion Nickel-Copper Company to consolidate mineral properties in the Sudbury area. These holdings, which the principals never intended to develop, would be sold in 1915 to the British America Nickel Corporation, a syndicate organized by Frederick Stark Pearson. Booth's ventureship was also evident in his board positions, including directorships in Foster-Cobalt Mining (1907) and Canada Cement (1909).

By all accounts Booth, a short man with a white beard and unfading physical vitality, was a picturesque figure, though his rough language, disdain for publicity, and plain dress put him, according to Sandra Gwyn, "decidedly beyond the pale" in Ottawa society. Still, his commercial stature commanded attention. Even late in life, he was renowned for his memory, his detailed knowledge of plant operations, and his direct participation in virtually every aspect of his firm, an involvement that periodically led to injury. There are any number of stories about visitors who eventually located him in his lumber yards or at building sites. One typical legend credits him with identifying a new horse on the day of its arrival at his mill, despite the fact that about 500 horses worked in his yards and woods. Not until 1921, during a trade slump and when Booth was 93, did he convert his operation from a sole proprietorship to John R. Booth Limited.

His managerial style was captured by Charles Christopher Jenkins in Maclean's (Toronto) in 1922: "So far as one can learn, John R. Booth has never encouraged initiative or originality in those he has hired as executives, a failing which seemingly has not debarred him from becoming one of the wealthiest and mightiest masters of industry in Canada." More recently, archivist Neil Forsyth has portrayed Booth as "autocratic in the extreme; employees did what they were told or departed." In testimony to the royal commission on the relations of labour and capital in 1889, Booth frankly professed no knowledge of regulations under the Ontario Factories' Act. Writer Doris French has characterized his association with labour as "old-fashioned and feudal"; no model employer, J. R. knew that his workforce was transient, seasonal, and traditionally resistant to organization. He was a leading figure in opposing a general strike that affected his Burlington mill. In 1891 Booth and eight other owners were hit with a massive, prolonged strike by Chaudière millworkers over subsistence wages and 11 or 12-hour days, an action eventually led by the Knights of Labor. The call-up of police and the militia probably had Booth's approval if not his active encouragement. In a strike in 1918 unionized paper-mill workers in Ottawa demanded increased wages from Booth or a public investigation, but he flatly refused any concession; they struck again in 1921.

There were, of course, paternalistic exceptions in Booth's treatment of labour. During a strike at the Grand Trunk that shut down his mills in July 1910 and put 2,000 men out of work, he paid his employees full wages for their lost time. In the somewhat misleading words of the Citizen, "By one of the most generous acts in a long career of charitable deeds and looking after the best interests of his many employees, Mr. Booth had again shown the men that he was one of them." He has also been credited with introducing the eight-hour day to the forest industries of the Ottawa valley in 1911 on his own initiative.

Although there is some indication that Prime Minister Sir Charles Tupper may have attempted to recruit him as a Conservative candidate in May 1896, Booth was by no means prominent politically. He usually devoted such time as he cared to allocate to public affairs to matters directly related to his industrial concerns. As a papermaker, for example, he joined ranks with Charles Christopher (Carl) Riordon, E. B. Eddy, and others to campaign for

prohibitions on the export of unmanufactured pulpwood to the United States, and he successfully lobbied for cutting rights to birch in Algonquin Park. Only in opposition to Sir Wilfrid Laurier's advocacy of reciprocity in the federal contest of 1911 did he appear to take an active role in the electoral process.

In Ottawa, Booth, a Presbyterian, quietly made substantial financial contributions to community projects, including the Young Men's Christian Association building and St Luke's Hospital [see Annie Amelia Chesley], which he helped found in 1897 and endowed in 1914 with a new wing. Described as "a believer in and a generous patron of clean, manly sport," he was a member of the Ottawa Amateur Athletic Club and the Ottawa Rowing Club. In 1903 he was named honorary president of the Canadian Reading Camps Association, which distributed literature to and promoted night schools in lumber and mining camps. At the time of World War I, he made the largest donation to purchase equipment for the No.1 Automobile Machine-Gun Brigade.

By the time he was in his nineties, Booth had achieved a reputation of legendary proportions tinged with the romance of the northern woods, even though by 1919 his production was being eclipsed by W. C. Edwards and Company Limited and others. On 27 March 1920, in a rare public appearance and to a "rousing ovation," Booth dropped the puck for a Stanley Cup match between the Ottawa Senators and the Seattle Metropolitans. Within the timber industry he received plaudits as honorary president of the Canadian Lumbermen's Association. Booth's achievements inspired C. C. Jenkins to describe him in 1922 as one of those "men who have transformed the dreamy melody of the living waters into a roaring chant of commercial conquest." In the words of Michael Grattan O'Leary in the Evening Journal in 1925, the Booth to remember was "not the great magnate whose wealth is the envy of many and the wonder of more; but the great pioneer, the man whose genius and imagination tamed the wilderness . . . and, above all, did more than any man of his time to build up this Ottawa Valley." On the occasion of his death in December 1925, following two months of confinement at his Ottawa residence, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King generously referred to him as "one of the fathers of Canada." Buried beside his wife in Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa, Booth was survived by his sons Jackson and John Frederick and his daughter Helen Gertrude Fleck.

Booth's fortune was a subject of much speculative commentary during the latter years of his life, with estimates ranging up to \$100 million. At the time of the marriage in 1924 of his granddaughter Lois Frances Booth to Prince Erik Christian Frederik Alexander of Denmark, it was rumoured that Booth contributed half of her \$4-million dowry. J. R. issued a formal denial. At his death his estate was officially valued at almost \$7.7 million; the property was later re-evaluated upwards. Although succession duties exceeding \$4 million were paid in 1927, Ontario Premier Mitchell Frederick Hepburn subsequently claimed more and invoked the legislature to overcome the legal obstacles. The heirs eventually paid another \$3 million.

Contemporaries often referred to J. R. Booth as a lumber king, the equivalent perhaps of today's media moguls. Booth understood the regional economy of the Ottawa valley and its relationship to international trade as well as or better than any of his peers. Through hard work, resolute determination, and longevity he contributed greatly to the private economy of the government town that Ottawa had become.

Jamie Benidickson

END

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

Alastair