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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 30th, 2023

Electric Scotland News

I keep wondering on how we can get rid of our politicians as almost all are liars and obviously don't care what the public think and feel they can do better when it's obvious they are mostly inept and totally useless.

In fact it's not only the politicians but also the civil service and most of our large organisations such as the Bank of England.

Our Health service, our Justice system and our various Business organisations as well as Education are also doing a very poor job.

We need to export a lot more to bring in increasing tax revenue but I see nothing happening that helps persuade business to try exporting and to export more.

Moaning on about Brexit is ridiculous in my opinion. The EU is a mess and we're better off outside their legislative processes. Also the constant harping on about the British Empire is also a waste of time and we need to leverage our contacts with the Commonwealth. If the Empire was so bad why do we even have the Commonwealth?

Almost all the people that run our lives are pretty useless and we need to find a way to get rid of most of them and do things better and differently.

I had hoped that Scotland could have been that place but the inept SNP have shown how bad we really are and no other party in Scotland has done any better. The only political party we haven't yet tried in Scotland are the Conservatives and I think we should at least give them a chance for at least one parliamentary term. But if they can't do anything then devolution is dead in Scotland.

Let me be clear... I don't really care if a government gets it wrong as long as they admit it and move on to try and resolve the issue. I want everyone in Scotland to work to their strengths and work together no matter what party they belong to.

We need to both look after our people better but also to do better economically. Like why free school meals for all kids when many of these kids have plenty to eat. We need to focus on those that don't have enough to eat and help those that need help. We need to allow people with money to get the health care they need and if that means private health care then so be it.

We need to have a tax system that encourages businesses to make more profit and to keep more of it. They will spend the extra money which will help the economy. We also need to have a better work place so more people can enjoy going to work and thus earn more money. The fact that less people are looking for work is a real issue.

Should we revisit the Basic Income idea? We need to look at everything with fresh eyes and be prepared to think outside the box. I had hoped Scotland could be that place but it hasn't. All I see is the same old political parties doing the same old things that they've always done. We need to change that. How about getting rid of the parties altogether and just let people choose to be an MSP and not stand for a political party at all? Might that be a way to go?

I feel we need to change the way we run ourselves. And I do mean the problems with Russia and Ukraine, China and Taiwan and also the African countries. The world is a real mess and our media is also a real mess as well. Like if you read the Daily Express you'll get easily depressed and if you read the Daily Record you'll miss some valuable information as they assume economics is not of interest to their readers.

I'd be happy to hear your thoughts on how we might go forward and perhaps we can explore some possibilities together?

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. Here is what caught my eye this week...

Can Scotland reverse its industrial decline?

A large new focus for modern manufacturing has been opened in Renfrewshire, costing £90m and intended to reverse the decline of Scottish industrial employment.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65991667>

Humza Yousaf's cakeism on indy

Humza Yousaf's speech at the SNP rally was an artless effort to have his cake and eat it. He needed to satisfy impatient activists hungry for evidence of a clear strategy to win independence while showing that any such strategy was rooted in a process that would be legitimate in the eyes of opponents in the UK and the wider world as he said: 'There is no route to independence other than through a lawful, democratic process'.

Read more at:

<https://sceptical.scot/2023/06/humza-yousafs-cakeism-on-indy/>

Calls for action in schools over rights of pupils to self-identify

There are warnings of havoc in Scotland's schools amid claims of a lack of clarity and guidance over children's rights, with one pupil identifying as a fox.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/calls-for-action-in-schools-over-rights-of-pupils-to-self-identify/>

Why George Washington was no Humza Yousaf

MY HOPES for Hexithe decoupling of the Hebrides from a modern Scotland received a dramatic boost this week due to a leak from the Uddingston Secret Service HQ about a new phenomenon which has been dubbed The Tweed Revolution.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2023/06/no-legislation-without-representation-why-george-washington-was-no->

[humza-yousaf/](#)

Time to take back control from Whitehall

When we took powers back from Brussels, we handed them to regulatory agencies who turned out to be every bit as risk-averse, hidebound and uncompetitive as the Eurocrats were. Seven years on from the Brexit vote, it's time to take back control from Whitehall and try democracy instead.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/we-have-taken-back-control-from-brussels-only-to-cede-control-to-whitehall>

Olivia Chow wins crowded race for mayor of Toronto

A left-wing progressive standard-bearer has won Toronto's mayoral election, triumphing in a historically crowded field of 102 candidates.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-66026811>

Canada inflation: Here's what will cost you more at the grocery store

Statistics Canada reported Tuesday the annual inflation rate fell to 3.4 per cent in May, largely due to lower gasoline prices compared to a year ago.

Read more at:

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/canada-inflation-here-s-what-will-cost-you-more-at-the-grocery-store-1.6457632>

Kate Forbes slams HPMA's and has dig at Humza as she refers to speaking from backbenches

Ms Forbes said yesterday there had been a huge backlash. She warned it would be hugely devastating for islanders and fishermen if the scheme went ahead.

Watch her speech at:

<https://youtu.be/Pt-4QY-sQTM>

Scottish government scraps marine conservation plan

The Scottish government has scrapped its plans to create Highly Protected Marine Areas in 10% of Scotland's seas.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-66053133>

Ministers propose new education super agency for Scotland

Radical reform is being proposed to the way £3bn is spent each year on Scotland's universities, colleges, skills and apprenticeships.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-66049087>

Canada wildfire season is now the worst on record

Canada has surpassed its record for the largest area burned by wildfires in a single year. The blazes have burned more than 8.1m hectares (20m acres) across the country - 21 times above the average over the last decade.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-65816466>

Nicola Sturgeon blasted for skirting around questions at covid inquiry by dad who lost son
The First Minister gave evidence at the UK covid inquiry in London and admitted the Scottish Government made mistakes in its response to the pandemic.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/nicola-sturgeon-blasted-skirting-around-30352064>

Electric Canadian

The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education

Giving a World-Wide View of the History and Progress of the Sunday School and the Development of Religious Education. Complete in Three Volumes. Editors-in-Chief John T. McFarland, D.D., LL.D., Late Editor of Sunday School Publications, Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City., Benjamin S. Winchester, D.D., Department of Religious Education, Yale School of Religion, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. Canadian Editor: R. Douglas Fraser, D.D., Editor Presbyterian Sunday School Publications, Toronto, Canada and European Editor: Rev. J. Williams Butcher, Secretary Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Department, London, England.

You can study this at

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/sundayschool.htm>

Woodworking for Beginners

A Manual for Amateurs, with over 700 illustrations by Charles G. Wheeler, B.S. (1906) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/beard/woodworkingforbe00wheeliala.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 25th day of June 2023 - The Bucket List

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26364-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-25th-day-of-june-2023-the-bucket-list>

The Bard of Rural Ontario

Painter A. J. Casson. Added this video to the top of our Video page for Ontario.

You can get to this at:

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

Souvenir of Port Arthur and Fort William (1910) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/souveniropor00unse.pdf>

A picturesque Souvenir of Fort William (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/picturesquesouve00unse.pdf>

Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society

Added Parts 5 & 6 containing Robert Wilson, The Pioneer Teacher, London Public Schools — 1848-1871, London Grammar School and Collegiate Institute, The Western University and the Proudfoot Papers. Also added Part 7 to our collection. The Fathers of London Township, Bench and Bar in the Early Days, Gleanings

from the Sheriff's Records, Pioneer Politicians, The Wreck of the Victoria

You can read these parts at:

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

Electric Scotland

The Hobbit

By J. R. R. Tolkien (1937) (pdf)

While this is free to download I note some researchers say that this is not the 1937 version. You can read this at:

[https://electricScotland.com/kids/stories/The%20Hobbit\(1937\).pdf](https://electricScotland.com/kids/stories/The%20Hobbit(1937).pdf)

Anent Old Edinburgh

And some of the Worthies who walked its streets with other papers by Alison Hay Dunlop, edited by her Brothers with Biographical notes (1890) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/edinburgh/anentoldedinbur00dunlgoog.pdf>

Ma Ancestral Hame

A poem by Danny Lawrence Elliott

Received an email from Danny and he mentioned it had been almost 20 years since he sent me in his last poem and he sent in this poem which you can read at:

<https://electricScotland.com/poetry/ancestralhame.htm>

Edward Gunn

Got in an email from him saying he has retired at age 90 so copied his email into a page to celebrate his retirement.

You can read this and view a few pictures at:

<https://electricScotland.com/webclans/dtog/gunn-edward.html>

Rev. Elijah Kellogg

And his book, Good Old Times, about his Scots ancestry.

Excellent reading and you can get to this at:

https://electricScotland.com/history/scotsirish/Elijah_Kellogg.htm

Iceland

Why Scottish women and Icelanders are closely linked. Added this BBC report to our Scots in Iceland page.

You can watch this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/iceland/index.htm>

Islay

Why the Vikings never left Scotland. This is a report from the BBC that I added to the foot of our Islay page.

You can watch this at:

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

Rev. James Lymburn

The Minister in charge of the Martinborough Presbyterian Church, N.Z.

You can read about him at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/nz/james-lymburn.htm>

Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire

With Sketches of the Principle families in the County by Thomas Hunter (1883) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/perth/woodsforestssesta00hunt.pdf>

Variant

a radical arts magazine No.1 (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/art/varient.pdf>

Memoirs of George Heriot

Jeweller to King James VI with an historical Account of the Hospital founded by him at Edinburgh (1822)..I

added this book about him to our page for him in our Significant Scots section.

You can get to this at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/other/heriot_george.htm

The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal

Volume 19 (1923) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/medical/edinburghmedica81unkngoog.pdf>

Story

Queen Mary's return to Scotland, August 1561

On a clear day the inhabitants of Edinburgh, by merely ascending the Calton Hill or any other of the familiar heights in or around their city, can have a view of nearly the whole length of their noble estuary, the Firth of Forth. To the right or east, its entrance from the open sea, between the two shires of Fife and Haddington, is marked most conspicuously on the Haddingtonshire side by a distant conical mound, called Berwick Law, rising with peculiar distinctness from the northward curve of land which there bounds the horizon. It is thither that the eye is directed if it would watch the first appearance of steamers and ships from any part of the world that may be bound up the Firth for Edinburgh by its port of Leith. Moving thence westward, the eye can command easily the twenty miles more of the Firth which these ships and steamers have to traverse. The outlines of both shores, though the breadth between them averages twelve miles, may be traced with wonderful sharpness, pleasingly defined as they are by their little bays and promontories, and by the succession of towns and fishing villages with which they are studded. Of these, Musselburgh on the near side marks the transition from the shire of Haddington to that of Edinburgh ; after which point the Firth begins to narrow. Just below Edinburgh itself, where its port of Leith confronts the Fifeshire towns of Kinghorn and Burntisland, with the island of Inchkeith a little to the right between, the breadth is about six miles. There the main maritime interest of the Firth ceases,

few ships going farther up; but, for any eye, that can appreciate scenic beauty, there remains the delight of observing the continued course of the Firth westward to Queensferry and beyond, a riband of flashing water between the two coasts which are known prosaically as those of Linlithgowshire and West Fifeshire, but which, in their quiet and mystic remoteness, look like a tract of some Arthurian dreamland.

While something of all this is to be seen on almost any day from any of the eminences in or near Edinburgh, it is only on rare occasions that it can be all seen to perfection. Frequently, even in sunny weather, when the sky is blue above, a haze overspreads the Firth, concealing the Fifeshire shore, or blurring it into a vague cloud-like bank. Sometimes, on the other hand, when there is little sunshine, and the day seems rather sombre in the Edinburgh streets, the view of the Firth and of the other surroundings of the city from any of the higher spots is amazingly distinct to the utmost possible distance, though with the distinctness of a drawing in pen and ink. Worst of all the atmospheric conditions for a survey of the Firth, or of the scenery generally, from Edinburgh, is that of the thick, dull, drizzling, chilling, and piercing fog or mist, called locally a haar, which the easterly wind brings up at certain seasons from the sea. Up the Firth this "haar will creep or roll, converting the whole aerial gap between the opposed shores into a mere continuous trough of seething and impenetrable mist, or of rain and mist commingled, drenching the Fifeshire hills on the one side, enveloping all Edinburgh on the other, and pushing itself still westward and inland over the higher and narrower reaches of the estuary, till the aforesaid tract of gleaming Arthurian scenery is absorbed into the long foggy gloom, and even Alloa and Stirling feel the discomfort. No chance then, from any height near Edinburgh, of seeing the ships and steamers in any part of their course from the mouth of the Firth to the port of Leith. If any there be, they are down in the vast abyss of mist, at anchor for safety, or piloting their Leithward course slowly and cautiously through the opaque element, with bells ringing, horns blowing, and now and then a boom from the cannon on the deck to warn off other vessels or ascertain their own whereabouts. So even during the day; but, when the haar lasts through the night, and the opaque gray of the air is deepened into an equally opaque black or umber, the confusion is still greater. The sounds of fog-signals from the bewildered vessels are incessant; the shore lights from the piers and landing-places can throw their yellow glare but a little way into the turbid consistency; and, if any adventurous vessel does manage to warp herself into port in such circumstances, it is with excited vociferation and stamping among those on board, and no less hurry-scurry among the men ashore who assist in the feat. Happily, an Edinburgh haar at once of such dense quality and of long duration is a rare occurrence. April and May are the likeliest months for the phenomenon, and it passes usually within twenty-four hours. It may come later in the year, however, and may last longer.

Just after the middle of August 1561, as we learn from contemporary records, there was a haar of unusual intensity and continuance over Edinburgh and all the vicinity. It began on Sunday the 17th, and it lasted, with slight intermissions, till Thursday the 21st. "Besides the surfett weat and corruption of the air," writes Knox, then living in Edinburgh, "the myst was so thick and dark that skairse mycht any man espy ane other the lenth of two pair of butts." It was the more unfortunate because it was precisely in those days of miserable fog and drizzle that Mary, Queen of Scots, on her return to Scotland after her thirteen years of residence and education in France, had to form her first real acquaintance with her native shores and the capital of her realm.

She had left Calais for the homeward voyage on Thursday the 14th August, with a retinue of about 120 persons, French and Scottish, embarked in two French state galleys, attended by several transports. They were a goodly company, with rich and splendid baggage. The Queen's two most important uncles, indeed,—the great Francis de Lorraine, Duke of Guise, and his brother, Charles de Lorraine, the Cardinal,—were not on board. They, with the Duchess of Guise and other senior lords and ladies of the French Court, had bidden Mary farewell at Calais, after having accompanied her thither from Paris, and after the Cardinal had in vain tried to persuade her not to take her costly collection of pearls and other jewels with her, but to leave them in his keeping till it should be seen how she might fare among her Scottish subjects. But on board the Queen's own galley were three others of her Guise or Lorraine uncles,—the Duke d'Aumale, the Grand Prior, and the Marquis d'Elbeuf,—with M. Damville, son of the Constable of France, and a number of French gentlemen of lower rank, among whom one notes especially young Pierre de Bourdeilles, better known afterwards in literary history as Sieur de Brantome, and a sprightly and poetic youth from Dauphine, named Chastelard, one of the attendants of M. Damville. With

these were mixed the Scottish contingent of the Queen's train, her four famous "Marys" included,—Mary Fleming, Mary Livingstone, Mary Seton, and Mary Beaton. They had been her playfellows and little maids of honour long ago in her Scottish childhood; they had accompanied her when she went abroad, and had lived with her ever since in France; and they were now returning with her, Scoto-Frenchwomen like herself, and all of about her own age, to share her new fortunes.

It is to Brantome that we owe what account we have of the voyage from Calais. He tells us how the Queen could hardly tear herself away from her beloved France, but kept gazing at the French coast hour after hour so long as it was in sight, shedding tears with every look, and exclaiming again and again, "Adieu, via chcre France! je ne nous verray jamais plus / " He tells us how, when at length they did lose sight of France, and were on the open sea northward with a fair wind, there was some anxiety lest they should be intercepted, and the Queen taken prisoner by an English fleet. In the peculiar state of the relations between England and Scotland at the time, this was not an impossibility, and would hardly have been against the law of nations. There had been some angry correspondence between Elizabeth and Alary respecting the non-ratification by Mary of a certain "Treaty of Edinburgh" of the previous year, stipulating that she would desist from her claim to Elizabeth's throne of England. Elizabeth had consequently refused Mary's application for a safeguard for her homeward journey ; and there was actually an English squadron in the North Sea available for the capture of Mary if Elizabeth had chosen to give the word. But, though the English squadron does seem to have waylaid the French galleys, and one of the transports following the galleys was taken and detained for some reason or other, the galleys themselves, by rapid sailing or by English sufferance, threw that danger behind, and approached the Scottish coast in perfect safety. What then astonished Brantome, and what he seems to have remembered all his life with a kind of horror in association with his first introduction to Queen Mary's native climate and kingdom, was the extraordinary fog, the *si grand brouillard*, in which they suddenly found themselves. "On a Sunday morning, the day before "we came to Scotland," he says, "there rose so great a fog that we could not see from the stern to the prow, much to the discomfiture of the pilots and crews, so that we were obliged to let go the anchor in the open sea, and take soundings to know where we were." Brantome's measure of time becomes a little incoherent at this point; and we hardly know from his language whether it was outside the Firth of Forth altogether, or inside of the Firth about Berwick Law, that the fog caught them, if indeed he remembered that there was such a thing as an estuary at all between the open sea and Leith. He distinctly says, however, that they were a whole day and night in the fog, and that he and the other Frenchmen were blaspheming Scotland a good deal on account of it before they did reach Leith. That, as other authorities inform us, was about ten o'clock in the morning of Tuesday the 19th.

The Leith people and the Edinburgh people were quite unprepared, the last intimation from France having pointed to the end of the month as the probable time of the Queen's arrival, if she were to be expected at all. But the cannon-shots from the galleys, as they contrived to near Leith harbour, were, doubtless, a sufficient advertisement. Soon, so far as the fog would permit, all Leith was in proper bustle, and all the political and civic dignitaries that chanced to be in Edinburgh were streaming to Leith. Not till the evening, according to one account, not till next morn-ing, according to another, did the Queen leave her galley and set foot on shore. Then, to allow a few hours more for getting her Palace of Holyrood, and her escort thither, into tolerable readiness, she took some rest in the house in Leith deemed most suitable for her reception, the owner being Andrew Lamb, a wealthy Leith merchant. It was in the afternoon of Wednesday, the 20th of August, that there was the procession on horseback of the Queen, her French retinue, and the gathered Scottish lords and councillors, through the two miles of road which led from Leith to Holyrood. On the way the Queen was met by a deputation of the Edinburgh craftsmen and their apprentices, craving her royal pardon for the ringleaders in a recent riot, in which the Tolbooth had been broken open and the Magistrates insulted and defied. This act of grace accorded as a matter of course, the Queen was that evening in her hall of Holyrood, the most popular of sovereigns for the moment, her uncles and other chiefs of her escort with her, and the rest dispersed throughout the apartments, while outside, in spite of the fog, there were bonfires of joy in the streets and up the slopes of Arthur Seat, and a crowd of cheering loiterers moved about in the space between the palace-gate and the foot of the Canongate. Imparting some regulation to the proceedings of this crowd, for a while at least, was a special company of the most "honest" of the townsmen, "with instruments of musick and with musicians,"

admitted within the gate, and tendering the Queen their salutations, instrumental and vocal, under her chamber-window. "The melody, as she alledged, lyked her weill, and she willed the same to be continewed some nightis after." This is Knox's account; but Brantome tells a different story. After noting the wretchedness of the hackneys provided for the procession from Leith to Holy rood, and the poorness of their harnessings and trappings, the sight of which, he says, made the Queen weep, he goes on to mention the evening serenade under the windows of Holyrood as the very completion of the day's disagreeables. The Abbey itself, he admits, was a fine enough building; but, just as the Queen had supped and wanted to go to sleep, "there came under her window five or six hundred rascals of the town to serenade her with vile fiddles and rebecks, such as they do not lack in that country, setting themselves to sing psalms, and singing so ill and in such bad accord that there could be nothing worse. Ah! what music, and what a lullaby for the night!" Whether Knox's account of the Queen's impressions of the serenade or Brantome's is to be accepted, there can be no doubt that the matter and intention of the performance were religious. Our authentic picture, therefore, of Queen Mary's first night in Holyrood after her return from France is that of the Palace lit up within, the dreary fog still persistent outside, the bonfires on Arthur Seat and other vantagegrounds flickering through the fog, and the portion of the wet crowd nearest the Palace singing Protestant psalms for the Queen's delectation to an accompaniment of violins.

Next day, Thursday the 21st, this memorable Edinburgh haar of August 1561 came to an end. Arthur Seat and the other heights and ranges of the park round Holyrood wore, we may suppose, their freshest verdure; and Edinburgh, dripping no longer, shone forth, we may hope, in her sunniest beauty. The Queen could then become more particularly acquainted with the Palace in which she had come to reside, and with the nearer aspects of the town to which the Palace was attached, and into which she had yet to make her formal entry.

END.

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you. Also wishing our Canadian readers a Happy Canada Day on July 1st and our American friends a Happy 4th of July.

Alastair