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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for January 17th, 2025

Electric Scotland News

Ranald McIntyre

Found a mention of Ranald in his former pupils magazine so included it on his page and also added a link to his brother by adding a memorial to Donald Bertram McIntyre (1923–2009) (pdf)

You can get to this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/friends/ranald/ranald.htm>

While editing the page I noticed the link to the "White Rose of Scotland" was no longer available so have added a new file and now link to that.

Started on the January edit of My Canadian Journal and to start of this year I've decided to make more use of videos. You can see how I'm doing this at:

https://electriccanadian.com/canada_add18.htm

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 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...

Robert Burns axed from Higher English in Scottish exam revamp

ROBERT Burns has been controversially removed as a standalone author for Scottish pupils taking Higher English.

Read more at:

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/24848712.robert-burns-axed-higher-english-scottish-exam-revamp/>

Beyond the Flames: The Devastation of Los Angeles Fires

Listen to the Friday news roundup with Victor Davis Hanson and cohost Sami Winc as they discuss the Palisades fire in LA and the issues of water, insurance, DEI, Newsom, Mayor Bass, fire Chief Kristin Crowley, and other news from the week--Zuckerberger, Trudeau, Greenland and Panama.

Watch this at:

https://youtu.be/_tWN20bR5QI?si=L_suTYZmBNIA33cy

Reform UK TOPS national poll for the first time as RECORD number of Brits oppose immigration figures

Matt Goodwin breaks down who and what is driving the growing support for Reform UK.

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/oF8QinHwRVQ?si=1SDGKg8wyXCLJMzC>

Conrad Black: Justin Trudeau is the worst Liberal leader in history

What we have witnessed in the last few weeks has been an amateurish fiasco, one that matches the prime minister's record

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/hQQI7>

Something is rotten in the state of Starmer

The government's reactionary defensiveness is a mistake

Read more at:

<https://thecritic.co.uk/the-establishment-is-still-denying-justice-to-the-victims-of-grooming-gangs/>

New 3D printers could transform space construction

On-board manufacturing for spacecraft is one small step closer with the development of new 3D printing technology in zero gravity. Dr Gilles Bilet, from the University of Glasgow's James Watt School of Engineering, has been awarded a patent for a system to carry out construction on-demand during a space flight.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4mnl40m9mo>

BBC Scotland launches Scotcast news podcast

It's the launch day for Scotcast, BBC Scotland's new current affairs podcast. It will land in your feeds four times a week - Monday to Thursday at 17:00 - and I am your host.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5ygynwp3rno>

The man who could become Canada's future PM

Canada's Conservative Party leader - now 45 - laid out a low-tax, small government vision for the country in an essay contest on what he would do as prime minister.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9dpde9dpx0o>

Swinney is taking control of the NHS because he knows it is his Government's weakness
Daily Record Political Editor Paul Hutcheon says Swinney has presided over a remarkable turnaround for the SNP, but voters may still punish him over public services.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/swinney-taking-control-nhs-because-34458728>

Ask England: Bid to protect tartan must be OK'd by Westminster

A mill's mission to protect tartan woven in the Highlands has been met with a snag as Scotland does not have the power to safeguard it.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/highland-tartan-act/>

The chosen ones - 10 people trusted to deliver for Trump
Donald Trump's own ideas will shape America. But he can't enact them alone.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-1c0a77cb-6d64-4904-b39b-24e63a7d5cb4>

Energy privatisation is a disaster for Scotland

Energy poverty is when you can't afford to heat your home or cook your food. Almost a third - 31% - of Scots are in this category, That is more than double the rate in England. It is far higher than any EU country - and four times the levels of countries like Scandinavia or Ireland.

Read more at:

<https://sceptical.scot/2025/01/energy-privatisation-is-a-disaster-for-scotland/>

Letter to Canadians from the Governor General

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, shared a letter with Canadians. The letter captures the Governor General's reflections on hope, reconciliation, respect and thoughtful discourse, and features Canadians' reflections on hope.

Read more at:

<https://www.gg.ca/en/media/news/2025/letter-canadians>

John Swinney warns rise of Reform in Scotland

John Swinney has warned the rise of Reform in Scotland "must be confronted" as a new poll suggests Nigel Farage's party is set for a major breakthrough at Holyrood.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/john-swinney-warns-rise-reform-34485448>

Scotland never had it so good

Scotland's position within the United Kingdom in which it can hand out social benefits to its citizens without actually paying for them strongly encourages fiscal profligacy. Who would argue against greater NHS spending or free higher education when the cost will be shared with their southern neighbours?

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/0mYuh>

US-Canada relations are warming up

Americans used to consider their northern neighbours to be slightly more British and polite versions of themselves. Under Justin Trudeau, however, Canada diverged from the US both economically and culturally. Now, that costly leftward turn is about to be reset as two new leaders come to power. If only Britain could say the same.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/the-big-thaw-us-canada-relations-are-about-to-reset>

Electric Canadian

France and England in North America

A Series of historical narratives by Francis Parkman, Author of "History of the conspiracy of Pontiac", "The

Oregon Trail", etc. (1886)

You can read these at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/franceandenglandinnorthamerica.htm>

Le Massacre au Fort George

La Mémoire de Montcalm Vengée recueillis par J. M. LeMoine, Ecr (1864) (pdf) in the French language

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/lemassacreaufort00lemo.pdf>

Notes on the History of Fort George

During the Colonial and Revolutionary periods with Contemporaneous Documents and an Appendix by By B. F. DeCosta (1871) (pdf)

You can read this at:

http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/quebec/notesonhistoryof00deco_0.pdf

The World's Work

Added volume 3 in pdf format. The first article "March of Events" is about the first month of President Roosevelt's term and I was struck with the similarities with President Trump as it talks about security and doing good for the American people.

You can read this volume at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/magazines/worldswork.htm>

Jay Legere

Learning as I go in northern Canada, N. W. T. Living off-grid.

You can watch this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@jaylegere>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 12th day of January 2025 - Epiphany

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26581-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-12th-day-of-january-2025-epiphany>

My Canadian Experience

Added my journal for September to December 2024. Have also made a start on the January 2025 journal which will be work in progress.

I am now starting to make more use of videos as you'll see it my work in progress.

You can get to this at:

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

The Beaver Magazine

Added Volume 3 No. 12 (pdf)

You can read this issue at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/TheBeaverSeptember1923.pdf>

Older issues can be found at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/index.htm>

Electric Scotland

Grangemouth

Added a video about Grangemouth to our index page for the town.

You can see this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/falkirk/grangemouth/index.htm>

The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age

From the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 to the commencement of the Twentieth century by Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., Lecturer in Indian History at University College, London (fifth edition, 1903) (pdf)

Added this to our India page at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/india/economichistory.htm>

First Steam Ship Built in Aberdeen 1827 (pdf)

Found this article which you can read at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/aberdeen/firststeamshipaberdeen.pdf>

The Tron Kirk of Edinburgh

Or, Christ's Kirk at the Tron, A History by the Rev. D. Butler, M.A., Minister of the Tron Parish, Edinburgh

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/edinburgh/tronkirk.htm>

Twenty-One Aberdeen Events of the Nineteenth Century

With Illustrations by John A. Henderson, FSAScot (1912) (pdf) Includes an account of the first steam ship built in Aberdeen which I've extracted as a separate file for which see above.

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/aberdeen/twentyoneaberdeehend.pdf>

Anecdotes of the Life of Richard Watson, Bishop of Landaff

Written by himself at different intervals and revised in 1814, published by his son, Richard Watson, LL.N., Prebendary of Landaff and Wells (1817) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/england/richardwatson.pdf>

Catalogue of the McAlpine Collection of British History and Theology

Compiled and Edited by Charles Ripley Gillett, D.D., L.H.D. Librarian, 1883-1908 in two volumes, Volume I: 1500-1640, Volume II: 1641-1652 (1927) and also A Catalogue of the Publications of Scottish Historical and Kindred Clubs and Societies.

You can read these volumes at:

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

Britain's Appeal to the Gods
By Andrew Carnegie (pdf)

A wee article from him which you can read on his page at:
<https://electricscotland.com/history/other/britainsappealto00carn.pdf>

Astoria
Or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains by Washington Irving (1868) (pdf)

You can read this book at:
<https://electricscotland.com/history/pacific/astoriaoranecdote0000unse.pdf>

The Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa
By George Frederick Zook (1919) (pdf)

You can read about them at:
<https://electricscotland.com/history/england/companyofroyalad00zookrich.pdf>

Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee
With a statistical account of that kingdom, and geographical notices of other parts of the interior of Africa by T. Edward Bowdich. Esq. (1819) (pdf)

You can read this at:
<https://electricscotland.com/history/england/MissionfromCape00BowdA.pdf>

Memoir on the Affairs of the East-India Company
A Select Committee has been appointed by each of the Houses of Parliament, to enquire into the present State of the Affairs of the East-India Company, and into the Trade between Great-Britain, the East-Indies, and China, and to report their Observations thereon to the House. (February 1830) (pdf)

You can read this memoir at:
<https://electricscotland.com/history/england/memoironaffairso00eastrich.pdf>

The Manuscripts of the Duke of Athole, K.T., and of the Earl of Home
Printed in 1891 (pdf)

You can read this at:
https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/manuscriptsofduk00grea_3.pdf

Beyond the Enlightenment
Scottish Intellectual Life, 1790-1914 Edited by Aileen Fyfe and Colin Kidd (pdf)

You can read this at:
https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/dokumen.pub_beyond-the-enlightenment-scottish-intellectual-life-1790-1914-1nbsped-9781474493055.pdf

Scottish Society of Indianapolis
Got in there January 2025 newsletter with membership renewal form which you can read at:
<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/indianapolis/index.htm>

Story

Some wee stories for you taken from The Celtic Monthly...

A Musical Highland Family. — Mr. Murdo MacLeod, Stornoway, who secured the gold medal at the recent Mod for solo-singing is the third member of the family who holds the “blue ribbon” of the Comunn Gaidhealach. He is a brother of Mr. R. MacLeod, Inverness, and Mr. John MacLeod, late of Glasgow, now of Winnipeg, Canada — both gold medallists.

A Gael from Canada. — Mr. Alex. Fraser, M.A., Toronto, who represented the Gaels of Canada at the Glasgow Mod, is a Gaelic-speaking native of Kirkhill, Scotland. He has been long resident in the Colonies, but his Gaelic is still redolent of the heather. He conveyed the good wishes of the Canadian Gaels to his Highland friends in a neat Gaelic address.

GEORGE R. MACKENZIE, Glasgow.

The name of Mr. George R. Mackenzie is well-known and highly respected not only in Glasgow, the city of his adoption, but in all parts of the world, for there are few remote places where he has not established business connections. His father was John Mackenzie, a native of the Island of Skye, and the subject of our sketch was born at Broadford, Eilean a' Cheo, where he was educated at the local school, and afterwards at Madras College, St. Andrews. Equipped with a sound education, he sailed for Chili and Peru, where he spent several years, and had his own share of adventures. He was in Callao during the celebrated bombardment, and saw Valparaiso reduced to wreckage. Returning to Scotland in 1867, he entered the service of the famous British India S.N. Coy, (the present chairman of which is that popular Highlander, Mr. Duncan Mackinnon), where he remained ten years, during which his duties took him to every part of the Indian and Chinese coasts, and brought him in contact with many nationalities. On his return to the old country, he was appointed manager of the Shandon Hydropathic, a position he held for three years, after which he purchased the Royal Restaurant in Glasgow, and entered into the purveying business on a large scale, in which he proved very successful.

Read more about the Royal Restaurant at:

<https://www.electricscotland.com/lifestyle/royalrestaurant.pdf>

The great events, however, which brought Mr. Mackenzie's name most into public notice, was his connection with the great Glasgow Exhibitions of 1888 and 1901, in both of which he held the purveying and refreshment contracts. On each occasion his conduct of these very difficult undertakings gave the greatest satisfaction to the promoters and the public alike. It was at this time he founded the very successful wholesale wine and spirit business of G. R. Mackenzie, Ltd., which has now developed into such a world-wide concern, and of which Mr. Mackenzie still remains the managing director. A glance at the third page of our cover will give more particulars of Mr. Mackenzie's business than we have space to detail here.

There is hardly a part of the world which Mr. Mackenzie has not trodden, and when the Lusitania made her recent maiden voyage, the subject of our sketch was among her passengers. Such a new experience in ocean travelling was more than the clansman could resist.

Mr. Mackenzie married in 1871, and has four sons and three daughters living. His eldest son, John, who is associated with his father in the business, seems to have inherited the roving spirit of the family. He holds an extra master's certificate in the merchant service, and was connected for many years with the British India S. N. Coy., Orient Coy., Pacific Steam Navigation Coy., and other great Shipping concerns. Thomas, now resident in Montreal, took part in the Boer War, was present at 17 engagements, and was wounded at Jacobsruust, that memorable engagement in which the gallant Captain Towse of the Gordons lost his eyesight by a rifle bullet. George is in Seattle, Washington State, U.S.A., and the youngest, Robert, resides at Portage la Prairie, Canada.

It will thus be seen that the adventurous spirit is strong in the younger generation of this pushful branch of the Clan Coinneach, and the new world will be all the better of their presence.

Physically, Mr Mackenzie is a splendid representative of his race, tall and handsome, with a kindly, courteous and cheerful manner, which doubtless helps to explain his great popularity at home and abroad, and the great success which has attended his business career.

Gaelic Men of Letters
EWAN MACLACHLAN.
[By Fionn.]

This poet of culture, sweetness, and light was born in 1775 at Torrachalltainn, Coiruannan, in Lochaber, where his ancestors, who originally came from Morven, were for several generations. His great grandfather was "Ddmhnull Bin Bird, probably a Cameron, contemporary with Sir Ewan Cameron, on whose death, in 1719, he composed a Gaelic elegy, which is much admired. Ewan Maclachlan's father was Domh-null Mor, a most intelligent man, a weaver by trade, while his mother was a Mackenzie. He got his early education at Kilmallie Parish School, and studied afterwards at Fort-William Grammar School. He acted as tutor successively in the family of Cameron of Camisky, in that of Cameron of Clunes, and in that of Macmillan of Glenshean. He was from his boyhood a hard-working student. He entered King's College, Aberdeen, in 1796. It is said that he travelled to Aberdeen dressed in the mountain garb. Arriving there he determined to enter the lists as a competitor for a bursary at King's College. "Here, for the first time," says Dr. Macintyre, "he found himself engaged with entire strangers in the arena of literary strife. The various fences of trial being duly executed and given in, the hour for announcing the fate of the champions approached; the anxious expectants were assembled in the lobby of the great College Hall, where the Professors were still engaged in earnest judicial deliberation. Meantime the rustic dress of the young Highlander, his diffident manner, and rather awkward appearance drew upon him the ungenerous gibes and unmerited contempt of several young coxcombs, his rivals. It was sneeringly recommended to him to make a speedy retreat to the wilds of Lochaber, while he was comforted with the assurance that he had not the slightest chance of success. Enduring all this banter with meek but firm forbearance, he merely advised his assailants not to prejudge his case. The door of the hall was at length opened, the names of the successful competitors were announced, and the officer first called 'Ewan Maclachlan' as being the best scholar and chief bursar." After this incident his position in College was assured, and he became a marked man. After going through the regular classes and taking the degree of M.A. he entered the Divinity Hall. In the year 1800 he received a royal bursary, and was shortly afterwards appointed to the office of teacher in the Grammar School of Old Aberdeen, and assistant librarian to King's College. Maclachlan was a hard worker, and after the labours of the day found time to devote to classical studies. He never forgot his mother tongue or its rich lore. As Professor Blackie remarks— "He wedded the then study of Gaelic to that of Greek by employing himself in making a poetical Celtic version of the 'Iliad'; a work held in high estimation by his countrymen, though only a few selections from it have been published." About this time the Highland Society of Scotland entertained the project of preparing and publishing a dictionary of the Gaelic language. To Ewan Maclachlan was entrusted the Gaelic-English portion of this work, which was published in 1828. As has been well remarked, "Mr. Maclachlan brought to the undertaking great talents, profound learning, habits of industry which were almost superhuman, an intimate acquaintance with the Gaelic language and devoted attachment to the elucidation of its principles."

Unfortunately, through overstudy and work, Mr. Maclachlan's health broke down about 1820, and although he rallied a little for over a year, yet he never was himself again, but passed peacefully away on the 29th March 1822, at the age of 47 years.

As might be expected, this true Highlander left instructions on his deathbed that his body should be laid with kindred dust at the foot of his native mountains. This request was religiously complied with. At Aberdeen every mark of respect was paid to his memory. The leading people of Aberdeen, along with the Professors of both

Universities, the magistrates of the city, and the members of the Highland Society of Aberdeen, met in the College Hall to pay their last respects to the remains of departed worth, and thence accompanied the hearse, bearing those remains some distance out of town, and there bade them a long and last adieu. Glengarry (who had befriended Maclachlan in his early youth), accompanied by a large number of his clansmen dressed in their native garb, paid a tribute of regret to his departed portegé, meeting and escorting his remains while passing through the Chief's country. When passing through Lochaber the people paid every respect to the deceased by joining the procession, so that on entering the village of Fort-William the crowd was so dense that the procession advanced with difficulty. On the 15th April, 1822, the mortal remains of Ewan Maclachlan, preceded by the wail of the piobmhor, were laid to rest with those of his fathers at Killevodain in Ardgour.

HIS PUBLISHED WORKS.

In 1798 he wrote down the poems of Allan Macdougall (Ailein Dall), which were published in Edinburgh. The volume also contained Maclachlan's Gaelic poem on the seasons ("Dain nan Aimsirean"), a Gaelic translation of Pope's "Messiah," "Dim mu Chonaltradh," and a translation of part of Homer's "Iliad" into Gaelic heroic verse. In 1818 he published his "Metrical Effusions," where Greek, Latin, English and Gaelic poems appear. For the Highland Society of Scotland, engaged in 1806 in an enquiry into the authenticity of Ossian's poems, Maclachlan made a transcript of the Dean of Lismore's MS. This transcript passed into the possession of the late Rev. J. Macintyre, LL.D., of Kilmonivaig.

Is it too late to expect a volume containing Ewan Maclachlan's Gaelic and English poetry and translations? Here is work for the Lochaber Society!

THE SHEPHERD'S WIDOW

It was her last night in the wee thatched house which stood where the ploughed land merged into heather, in the wee house that had suddenly grown so unfamiliar and so eerie.

For nearly sixty years she had lived in it, since that long past day when she was young Peigie Bhan, the bride, and her heart was sore for her own folk in far away Loch Broom.

She had never been back again in all these years.

Her old neighbour, Bell MacLeay, sat beside her at the end of the house, and they saw the sun go down behind Ben Wyvis, and the lights of Dingwall begin to twinkle on the side of the Firth.

"And it is to-morrow," she said, "I will be in Dingwall myself, with my daughter Peggy. I will be living in a town."

The bees were flying home, and the air was full of pleasant country sounds.

Old Poigie's patient eyes rested on the familiar landscape, daily growing more dim for her.

"It is well that you are leaving this lonely Elace," said Bell, and her voice was low and ind. "It is hard to live alone."

"You will be thinking that, my dear, with your happy home, and the children; — and so should I in the old time when my man and me would go out at three in the morning to look to the lambs, and would leave our own wee lambies all cosy curled up in the bed. He was never very strong, my poor man, and many a cold night have I helped him with the sheep on the hill. There are two and thirty years now since he was taken from me."

The summer wind came over the barley in green gleaming billows.

“But it is wonderful, my dear,” the old woman continued; “Oh it is wonderful, and I cannot tell it to you in the English, how the Lord Himself will keep you company. In the spring of the year when I was so weak, I could scarcely leave my bed to light the fire, I would be losing courage, and saying to myself, ‘Oh, it is some day Peggy will come, and find that her mother has been dead many days’; but now I know He sent me a dream to comfort me.

“I was standing, in my dream,” she continued, fitting her thoughts carefully into the unaccustomed English, “at the ferry which lies between us and the town, and many people were there who were young with me.

I saw their faces very plain, though most of them are dead this long time. My heart it was heavy, for how was I to reach the town across the wide water? We waited for a boat, and none came, and I was distressed, when suddenly someone said, “Look, what is that coming over the sea?” As I looked I saw a great arm between me and the sky, and the next moment I felt the hand laid upon my shoulder.

“Was I afraid? Oh no, child. It was the most pleasant thing, and the Arm felt so gentle and so strong. It lifted me up and carried me right over the firth. In a beautiful smooth place it set me down, and the thought smote me that this might be a little island where the tide would come up and drown me. Some people were drowned like that one very dark night when I was a lassie in Loch Broom. But the sun began to shine, and I saw it was the green fields on the other side of the ferry. Then my heart it was glad, and I said, ‘The strong Right Arm of the Lord hath done this thing for me.’”

Oh, happy, happy souls that trust Him! be ye never so poor, so lonely, so feeble!

The little house is tenantless still, and falling into ruin, and old Peigie Bhan has got over the ferry by whose brink we all must wait some day.

M. S. Keay.

END.

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

Alastair