

# Letter from Scotland

**“We will not see her like again.”**  
**The words of Nicola Sturgeon as she**  
**stood on the tarmac at Edinburgh**  
**airport, watching the Queen’s**  
**coffin being flown out of Scotland**  
**after the nation’s farewell.**

On Tuesday a queue 33,000 strong ran from the Royal Mile down George IV Bridge to the Meadows, people waiting up to 12 hours to file past Her Majesty the Queen lying at rest in St Giles Cathdral. Another 150,000 had lined the route from Balmoral as the funeral cortege slid quietly through the green countryside of Deeside and Perthshire and then through the white cables of the new bridge over the Firth of Forth and on into Edinburgh.



HM The Queen, Edinburgh, 12th Sept 2022  
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### Queuing for a Queen in Edinburgh

The service of thanksgiving in St Giles was relayed on loud-speakers to the crowds outside. Thousands waited on the Royal Mile to see the convoy of black cars, carrying the Queen and the royal family, make its way from the Palace of Holyroodhouse to the cathedral. Soldiers, a pipe band and the gentlemen of the Queen's Company of Archers (founded in 1676) marched smartly past. As one of the many royal commentators said, Scotland has shown the rest of the United Kingdom how to honour a Queen.

This weekend it's London's turn, though the royal family has been careful not to forget other parts of their realm, with quick visits to Glasgow, Belfast, and Cardiff. In each of the nations of the UK, there was a proclamation ceremony declaring loyalty to the new king, Charles.

It was another chance to see the soldiers and the red-jacketed gentlemen of the Lord Lyon's Court marching up the Royal Mile

to the Mercat Cross.



Joseph Morrow the Lord Lyon King of Arms flanked by Herald Adam Bruce and the Rt Hon Lord Provost Robert Aldridge Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

I wonder what all this ceremony and public mourning means? Clearly, people admired the Queen and want to thank her for 70 years of careful service. She came from a generation which believed that the aim of life is to serve, in contrast to the modern idea that the aim of life is to live to the full.

I guess the people who queue for hours also want to be part of history, to say they were there. But I also wonder if people are yearning for leadership at a time when political leaders are letting us down and in the middle of so many troubles: the cost of living, threats of war, climate change. A good monarch is a reminder that, even in a democracy, we still need leaders and we still need a constitution that protects us from tyranny and chaos.

Some reporters have made the point that during the Queen's



reign Britain has lost its empire abroad while King Charles may see the loss of the United Kingdom at home. Both Scotland and Northern Ireland are drifting away, and Wales is not far behind. The Queen replaced her empire with the Commonwealth, a much more gentle partnership, and perhaps Charles can replace the United Kingdom with a federal kingdom.

We shall see.



### Lochnagar

My own small part in the commemorations last weekend was to climb Lochnagar, the iconic mountain on the southern edge of the Balmoral estate. My sister and I arranged the expedition to celebrate her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, before we knew of the Queen's death.

While staying overnight in Ballater on Friday we learned that the road to the usual car park at Loch Muick was closed for security reasons, so my poor sister had to endure a ten mile

trek over the hills from Braemar to reach Lochnagar.

It was worth it, she said, and dedicated the climb to the Queen.



PHOTO Martin P McAdam