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BUSINESS  
CHILDREN'S STORIES  
CLANS & FAMILIES

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DONNA'S PAGE  
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET  
FAMOUS SCOTS  
FAMILY TREE  
FORUMS  
FOOD & DRINK  
GAMES

GAZETTEER  
GENEALOGY  
HISTORIC PLACES  
HISTORY  
HUMOR  
JOHN'S PAGE  
KIDS  
LIFESTYLE  
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER  
PICTURES  
POETRY  
POSTCARDS  
RELIGION  
ROBERT BURNS  
SCOTS IRISH  
SCOTS REGIMENTS  
SERVICES

SHOPPING  
SONGS  
SPORT  
SCOTS DIASPORA  
TARTANS  
TRAVEL  
TRIVIA  
VIDEOS  
WHATS NEW

[HELP](#) [TERMS OF USE](#) [CONTACT US](#)

## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for October 30th, 2015

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

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

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

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

### Electric Scotland News

Scots could import electricity unless SNP changes plan

Scotland could switch from being an exporter of electricity to an importer unless the SNP government changes its energy policy, civil engineers have warned.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/scots-could-import-electricity-unless-snp-changes-plan-1-3931074#axzz3pp9hB5GH>

Haymarket station wins engineering award

Haymarket station has won an engineering award following a refurbishment and extension.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-34661527>

Shinty to be showcased at Hampden

Shinty is to be showcased for six months from October in the award winning Scottish Football Museum at Hampden Park in Glasgow.

Read more at:

<http://www.whfp.com/2015/07/08/shinty-to-be-showcased-at-hampden/>

Glasgow Caledonian University New York campus concerns

The building was opened two years ago but the university has yet to secure permission to award degrees.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-34654279>

The Glover whisky toasts Scottish Samurai

The blend, named The Glover, was unveiled simultaneously in Aberdeen and Tokyo.

Read more at:

<http://www.deesidepiper.co.uk/news/scottish-headlines/the-glover-whisky-toasts-scottish-samurai-1-3928382>

You can also read about Thomas Glover at:

[http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/thomas\\_glover.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/thomas_glover.htm)

Scotland to host world's first mixed golf tournament

Scotland is to play host to the world's first golfing tournament where male and female players will compete side by side.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/scotland/top-stories/scotland-to-host-world-s-first-mixed-golf-tournament-1-3926168#axzz3p5AUZ3LM>

Note: In actual fact Meg Farquhar was the first to play in mixed competitions and here is a wee bit about her...

Meg Farquhar (April 29, 1910 – November 9, 1988) was the first female professional golfer in Britain when, aged 19, she became assistant to George Smith, the resident Professional at the Moray Golf Club in 1929.

As an assistant professional, Farquhar learned all of the skills that a club professional needed. She was the first woman golf professional in Britain to play in a normally all men national championship on her home course at Lossiemouth. This was the Scottish Professional Championship of 1933 finishing ahead of many of her male colleagues. In recognition of her achievement, she was presented by the True Temper Corporation of America, with a set of the recently introduced steel shafted clubs.

Farquhar was reinstated to the amateur game in 1949 and reached the semi-final of the Scottish Ladies, played at Troon of that same year, losing to the eventual winner. She played in all of the Home International Championship in 1950 played in Newcastle, Co. Down winning all of her matches. Again in 1951 she was selected for Scotland, and repeated her achievements of the previous year by winning all her matches. Inexplicably, the selectors did not ask her to play again for Scotland although she still continued to play to a very high standard.

She won the Moray championship nine times between 1949 and 1969 while winning the Northern Counties Championship on five occasions.



From the Gettysburg Times, Friday June 30th, 1933

Scotland's Gleneagles wins bid for 2019 Solheim Cup

Gleneagles will host the Solheim Cup in 2019, marking the third time Scotland will be home to the biennial women's competition between the United States and Europe.

Read more about this at:

<http://www.golfchannel.com/news/golf-central-blog/scotlands-gleneagles-wins-bid-host-2019-solheim-cup/>

The 13-year-old girl sent on a 'day-trip' to Australia

Up until the late 1960s the UK sent children living in care homes to new lives in Australia and other countries. It was a brutal

experience for many, writes Kirstie Brewer.

You can read this article at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34656346>

## Electric Canadian

Canada has more fresh water than any other country in the world!

The Beneficial Influence of a Well Regulated Nationality

A Sermon delivered before the St Andrews Society of Montreal on St. Andrew's Day, Nov. 30th, 1857 in Saint Gabriel Street Scotch Church by The Rev. Alexander F. Kemp, Chaplain (1857) (pdf)

You can download this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/standrewsmontreal.pdf>

Deep Furrows

Tells of Pioneer trails along which the Farmers of Western Canada fought their way to Great Achievements in Co-Operation by Hopkins Moorhouse (1918) (pdf)

### FOREWORD

Once in awhile, maybe, twenty-five or thirty years ago, they used to pack you off during the holidays for a visit on Somebody's Farm. Have you forgotten? You went with your little round head close clipped till all the scar places showed white and you came back with a mat of sun bleached hair, your face and hands and legs brown as a nut.

Probably you treasure recollections of those boyhood days where a raw field turnip, peeled with a "toadstabber" was mighty good eatin'. You remember the cows and chickens, the horses, pigs and sheep, the old corn-crib where generally you could scare up a chipmunk, the gnarled old orchard—the Eastern rail-fenced farm of a hundred-acres. You remember Wilson's Emporium at the Corners where you went for the mail—the place where the overalled legs of the whole community drummed idly against the cracker boxes and where dried prunes, acquired with due caution, furnished the juvenile substitute for a chew of tobacco!

Or perhaps you did not know even this much about country life—you of the Big Cities. To you, it may be, the Farmer has been little more than the caricature of the theatres. You have seen him wearing blue jeans or a long linen duster in "The Old Homestead," wiping his eyes with a big red bandana from his hip pocket. You have seen him dance eccentric steps in wrinkled cowhide boots, his hands beneath flapping coat-tails, his chewing Jaws constantly moving "the little bunch of spinach on his chin!" You have heard him fiddle away like two-sixty at "Pop Goes the Weasel!" You have grinned while he sang through his nose about the great big hat with the great big brim, Ba-ound Ra-ound With a Woolen String!"

Yes, and you used to read about the Farmer, too— Will Garleton's farm ballads and legends; Riley's fine verses about the frost on the pumpkin and "Little Orphant Annie" and "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse!" And when Cousin Letty took you to the Harvest Home Supper and Grand Entertainment in the Town Hall you may have heard the village choir wail: "Oh, shall We Mortgage the Farm?"

Perhaps even yet, now that you are man grown—business or professional man of the great cities—perhaps even yet, although you long have studied the market reports and faithfully have read the papers every day—perhaps that first impression of what a farmer was like still lingers in a more or less modified way. So that to you pretty much of an "Old Hayseed" he remains. Thus, while you have been busy with other things, the New Farmer has come striding along until he has "arrived in our midst" and to you he is a stranger.

Remember the old shiny black mohair sofa and the wheezy, yellow-keyed melodeon or the little roller hand organ that used to play "Old Hundred"? They have given place to new styles of furniture, upright pianos and cabinet gramophones. Coffin-handles and wax flowers are not framed in walnut and hung in the Farmer's front parlor any more; you will find the grotesque crayon portrait superseded by photo enlargements and the up-to-date kodak. The automobile has widened the circle of the Farmer's neighbors and friends, while the telephone has wiped distance from the map.

In the modern farm kitchen hot and cold water gushes from bright nickel taps into a clean white enamel sink, thanks to the pneumatic water supply system. The house and other farm buildings are lighted by electricity and perhaps the little farm power plant manages to operate some machinery—to drive the washing machine, the cream separator, the churn and the fodder-cutter or fanning-mill. There is also a little blacksmith shop and a carpenter shop where repairs can be attended to without delay. Then, all these desirable conveniences may not be possessed generally as yet; but the Farmer has seen them working on the model farmstead exhibited by the Government at the Big Fair or in the Farm Mechanics car of the Better Farming Special Trains that have toured the country, and he dreams about them.

More scientific methods of agriculture have been adopted. The Farmer has learned what may be accomplished by crop rotations and

new methods of cultivation. He has learned to analyse the soil and grow upon his land those crops for which it is best suited. If he keeps a dairy herd he tests each cow and knows exactly how her yield is progressing so that it is impossible for her to "beat her board bill." No longer is it even considered good form to chop the head off the old rooster; the Farmer sticks him scientifically, painlessly, instantaneously dressing him for market in the manner that commands the highest price. So with the butter, the eggs and all the rest of the farm products.

Do you wonder that the great evolution of farming methods should lead to advanced thought upon the issues of the day? In the living room the Family Bible remains in its old place of honor, perhaps with the crocheted mat still doing duty; but it is not now almost the only book in the house. There is likely to be a sectional bookcase, filled with solid volumes on all manner of practical and economic subjects—these as well as the best literature, the latest magazines and two or three current newspapers.

Yes, a whole flock of the roosters have rusted away on top of the barn since the Farmer first began to consider himself the Rag Doll of Commerce and to seek adjustments. It is the privilege of rag dolls to survive a lot of abuse; long after wax has melted and sawdust run the faithful things are still on hand. And along about crop time the Farmer finds himself attracting a little attention.

That is because this business of backbone farming is the backbone of Business In General. As long as money is circulating freely Business In General, being merely an exchange in values, wears a clean shirt and the latest cravat. But let some foreign substance clog the trade channels and at once everything tightens up and squeezes everybody.

Day by day the great mass of the toilers in the cities go to work without attempting to understand the fluctuations of supply and demand. They are but cogs on the rim, dependent for their little revolutions upon the power which drives the machinery. That power being Money Value, any wastage must be replaced by the creation of new wealth. So men turn to the soil for salvation—to the greatest manufacturing concern in the world. Nature Unlimited. This is the plant of which the Farmer is General Manager.

On state occasions, therefore, it has been the custom in the past to call him "the backbone of his country" - its bone and sinew. Without him, as it were, the Commercial Fabric could not sit up in its High Chair and eat its bread and milk. Such fine speeches have been applauded loudly in the cities, too frequently without due thought— without it occurring to anyone, apparently, that perhaps the Farmer might prefer to be looked upon rather as an ordinary hard-working human being, entitled as such to "a square deal."

But all these years times have been changing. Gradually Agriculture has been assuming its proper place in the scheme of things. It is recognised now that successful farming is a business—a profession, if you like —requiring lifelong study, foresight, common sense, close application; that it carries with it all the satisfaction of honest work well done, all the dignity of practical learning, all the comforts of modern indention, all the wider benefits of clean living and right thinking in God's sunny places.

And with his increasing self-respect the New Farmer is learning to command his rights, not merely to ask and accept what crumbs may fall. He is learning that these are the days of Organization, of Go-Operation among units for the benefit of the Whole; that by pooling his resources he is able to reach the common Objective with the least waste of effort. He has become a power in the land.

These pages record a story of the Western Canadian farmer's upward struggle with market conditions— a story of the organised Grain Growers. No attempt is made to set forth the full details of the whole Farmer's Movement in Western Canada in all its ramifications; for the space limits of a single volume do not permit a task so ambitious.

You can download this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/deepfurrows.pdf>

Report of Six Years Experience of a Farmer in the Red Deer District  
By Rev. Leo. Gaetz (1890) (pdf)

You can download this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/reddeer.pdf>

## Electric Scotland

For the Flag  
Lays and Incidents of The South African War by Mrs. Macleod (1901) (pdf).

I was delighted to find this book as it covers the South African War of which I have very little on the site. There are many Scots highlighted in this book and also Canadians and others from across the old British Empire. Here is a wee story from many in the book...

### THE GORDONS AT THABA N'CHU

"Captain Towse, with about fifty of the Gordons, got isolated from the main body of British troops, and the Boers, with that marvellous

dexterity for which they are fast becoming famous, sized up the position and determined upon a capture. They little dreamt of the nature of the lion they had snared in their toils.

With fully 250 men they closed in on the little band of kilted men, and in triumphant tones called upon them to throw down their arms and surrender.

It was a picture to warm an artist's heart. On all sides rose the bleak, black kopjes, ridge on ridge, as inhospitable as a watch-dog's growl. On one hand the little band of Highlanders, the picturesque colour of their clan showing in kilt and stocking, perfect in all their appointments, but nowhere so absolutely flawless as in their leadership. Under such leaders as he who held them there so calm and steady their forebears had hurled back the chivalry of France and had tamed the Muscovite pride, and they were soon to prove themselves men worthy of their captain.

On the other side rose the superior numbers of the Boers. A wild motley crew they looked compared to the gem of Britain's army. Boys stood side by side with old men, lads braced themselves shoulder to shoulder with men in their manhood's prime, ragged beards fell on still more ragged shirt fronts. But there were manly hearts behind those ragged garments, hearts that beat high with love of home and country, hearts that seldom quailed in the hour of peril. Their rifles lay in hands steady and strong. The Boer was face to face with the Briton; the numbers lay on the side of the Boer, but the bayonet was with the Briton.

"Throw up your hands and surrender." The language was English, but the accent was Dutch; a moment, an awful second of time, the rifle barrels gleamed coldly towards that little group of men, who stood their ground as pine trees stand on their mountain sides in Bonny Scotland. Then out on the African air there rang a voice, proud, clear, and high as clarion note:

'Fix bayonets, Gordons!'

Like lightning the strong hands gripped the ready steel; the bayonets went home to the barrel. Rifles spoke from the Boer lines, and men reeled a pace from the British and fell, and lay where they fell. Again that voice with the Scottish burr on every note: "Charge, Gordons! Charge!" and the dauntless Scotchman rushed on at the head of his fiery few.

The Boer's heart is a brave heart, and he who calls them cowards lies; but never before had they faced so grim a charge, never before had they seen a torrent of steel advancing on their lines in front of a tornado of flesh and blood. On rushed the Scots, on over fallen comrades, on over rocks and clefts, on the ranks of the foe, and onward through them, sweeping them down as I have seen wild horses sweep through a field of ripening corn. The bayonets hissed as they crashed through breastbone and backbone. Vainly the Boer clubbed his rifle and smote back. As well might the wild goat strike with puny hoofs when the tiger springs. Nothing could stay the fury of that desperate rush.

Do you sneer at the Boers? Then sneer at the armies of Europe, for never yet have Scotland's sons been driven back when once they reached a foe to smite. How do they charge, these bare-legged sons of Scotia?

Go ask the hills of Afghanistan, and if there be tongues within them they will tell you that they sweep like hosts from hell. Ask in sneering Paris, and the red records of Waterloo will give you answer. Ask in St Petersburg, and from Sebastopol your answer will come. They thought of the dreary morning hours of Magersfontein, and they smote the steel downwards through the neck into the liver. They thought of the row of comrades in the graves beside the Modder, and they gave the Boers the "haymaker's lift," and tossed the dead body behind them. They thought of gallant Wauchope riddled with lead, and they sent the cold steel with a horrible crash, through skull and brain, leaving the face a thing to make men shudder. They thought of Scotland, and they sent the wild slogan of their clan re-echoing through the gullies of the African hills, until their comrades far away along the line, hearing it, turned to one another, saying: "God help the Boers this hour; our Jocks are into 'em with the bay'nit!"

But when they turned to gather up those who had fallen, then they found that he whose lion soul had pointed them the crimson path to duty was to lead them no more. The noble heart that beat so true to honor's highest notes was not stilled, but a bullet missing the brain had closed his eyes forever to God's sunlight, leaving him to go through life in darkness; and they mourned for him as they had mourned for noble, white souled Wauchope, whose prototype he was. They knew that many a long, long year would roll away before their eyes would rest upon his like again in camp or bloody field. But it gladdened their stern warrior hearts to know that the last sight he ever gazed upon was Scotland sweeping on her foe.

There is also a very good account of the Canadians that fought there as well and a chapter dedicated to Strathcona's Men.

You can download this book at the foot of our History of Africa page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/africa/africandx.htm>

Robert Burns Lives!

Edited by Frank Shaw



A Burns scholar who has endeared himself to the Burns Club of Atlanta over the last few years is Professor Gerard Carruthers from the University of Glasgow. He is a beloved member of this dedicated group consisting of a just under a hundred members and has spoken at our cottage more than any scholar outside the United States over the last ten years. The love for this man by our membership was evident after the passing of honorary member G. Ross Roy, who was revered by all, and the election of Dr. Carruthers in his stead. No greater tribute could be paid to anyone.

The interview below took place several years ago but is as fresh as new churned butter for breakfast in the morning. The questions asked are just as pertinent as the answers given by Gerry. So get a cup of tea or coffee and a piece of freshly buttered toast and enjoy an article I think you might find yourself going back to from time to time. This is the type information that I keep on my credenza within arm's reach. It is that good and that stack of papers is a little small considering I have been studying Burns almost on a daily basis for 20 years. Those years do not include the one when we studied Robert Burns at Chicora High School in North Charleston, SC. My 1955 text book has markings I made at that early age about what to memorize and learn for an upcoming test! Welcome, Gerry, to our pages again. And my personal thanks to good friend Terry McGuire for sending this interview to me from Scotland.

Editor's note: I have been unable to find the person(s) responsible for this interview, but Gerry has given me permission to use it. His actual comment was, "kind of you to think it worth using". I would like to credit the RT Burns Club along with participants Davina, Peigi, Alexandria, Rose, Nicholas, Janet, Beth and any others who assisted. If any of you know more about this program, please let me know and I will see that proper credit is given all the interview participants. In the meantime, many thanks to those listed above. (FRS: 10.27.15)

You can read this Interview at:

[http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns\\_lives226.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/frank/burns_lives226.htm)

Memoir on the Affairs of the East India Company

This is a book published in the 1800's and makes interesting reading. I've added a link to this book on our India page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/india/>

Memorials of the Earl of Stirling and the House of Alexander

By Rev. Charles Rogers (1877) in 2 volumes. Added this to our Clan Alexander page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/atoc/alexander.html>

Illustrations of the Practical Operation of the Scottish System of Management of the Poor

By W. P. Alison, M.D., Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh (1840). Added a link to this article to the foot of our Law page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/law/index.htm>

The Auld Scotch Minister

By Nicholas Dickson (1892) (pdf)

You can download this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/auldscotchminis00dickgoog.pdf>

Annual Report of the Illinois St. Andrew's Society, 1878-79.

Added this to our St. Andrews page. Many Scots listed in the report.

You can download this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/heritage/illinois.pdf>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in section 1 of the November 2015 issue which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

History of the Chapel Royal of Scotland

With the Register of the Chapel Royal of Stirling including details in relation to the rise and progress of Scottish Music and Observations respecting the Order of the Thistle by Rev. Charles Rogers DD., LL.D. (1882) (pdf)

You can download this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/stirlingshire/chapelroyal.pdf>

## THE STORY

The story of Highland Clearances is an emotive one. This particular article is a counter to some of the extreme stories told. However it is always useful to look at both sides.

The Highland Emigration of 1770

By Margaret I. Adam

POPULAR tradition, and even literary tradition have come to associate all the great Scottish emigration movements with poverty and distress. This is particularly so of emigrations from the Highlands. The mere mention of them suggests at once rackrents, brutal landlords, and evictions.

In the face of this prevailing impression, it is worth while to analyse the nature and the causes of the first great exodus from the Highlands, an exodus which reached its highest point of activity in the early seventies of the eighteenth century.

Emigration from Scotland was of course not new. To judge from the dispatches of the colonial governors, before the eighteenth century was well begun the Scots were already penetrating into most of the English plantations. They brought with them both their business instincts and their zest for Presbyterianism, and everywhere their trail is marked by newly planted kirks and flourishing settlements. Even the last outposts of the English in America, the frontiers of the new plantation of Georgia, depended for part of their defence upon the little settlement of Mackintoshes from Inverness.

But this emigration, considerable as it must have been, was a gradual process, and went on comparatively unheeded, whereas the violent outburst that followed close after the middle of the century drew attention at once, and was hailed by travellers, statesmen, and patriotic writers as a new and startling phenomenon.

Roughly speaking, the phase referred to may be said to have lasted from 1740 to 1775. Knox in his *View of the Highlands* (pub. 1784) suggests 1763 as the earliest date, but there are several reasons for putting it earlier. Pennant in his *Travels* gives 1750 as the starting-point for Skye. A letter in the *Culloden Papers* hints at emigration from the Western Islands as far back as 1749, while the *Scots Magazine* as early as 1747 had begun to take notice of the spread of emigration. The latter reached its zenith in the early seventies, and in 1775 received a decided check, which is attributed by most contemporaries to the general effects of the American War, and by Knox to a particular order of Congress. The lull which followed lasted almost ten years.

The emigrants were drawn from a fairly wide area. Perthshire and Strathspey contributed a few; the mainland districts of Argyllshire, Ross, and Sutherland contributed more; but the bulk of the mainland emigration was supplied by the glens of Inverness-shire, Strathglass, Glenmoriston, Glengarry, and Glen Urquhart.

The really sensational departures, however, were not from the mainland but from the islands; and the places that figure most largely in the records of the exodus are Skye, the two Uists, Lewes, Arran, Jura, Gigha, and Islay.

A few districts in America received the emigrants. Some, but not many, went to Georgia. To the majority the desired havens appear to have been the Carolinas, Albany, and Nova Scotia. To estimate the actual numbers that went is a matter of extreme difficulty. The sources of information are vague.

From the *Old Statistical Account* we gather that before 1775 emigration had taken place from some sixteen Highland parishes; the *Scots Magazine* in the numbers published before 1775 contains twenty definite references to ships leaving with Highland emigrants, apart from the mention of emigration projects which may or may not have materialised; and a variety of rather indefinite evidence bearing on the subject is supplied by the *Privy Council Papers* relating to the Colonies, the *Scottish Forfeited Estates Papers*, and innumerable contemporary writers and periodicals.

Occasionally the embarkation would take place from a regular port, like Glasgow or Greenock, and be duly noted, but more often the emigrants set sail as unobtrusively as possible from some lonely Highland loch. Gigha, the Skye ports, Campbell-town, Dunstaffnage Bay, Fort William, Maryburgh, Stornaway, Loch Broom, Loch Erribol, and even Thurso and Stromness all figure as collecting centres and points of embarkation.

Under these circumstances the numbers become in the highest degree conjectural. Two estimates, however, were hazarded, by men who were almost, or quite, contemporaries of the movement. Knox gives as his figure 20,000 between 1763 and 1773. while Garnett in his *Tour* (pub. 1800) states that 30,000 emigrated between 1773 - 1775. The latter estimate seems almost certainly exaggerated, and it is not easy to find satisfactory corroboration of even Knox's figures. The statistics furnished by the *Old Statistical Account*, and the miscellaneous sources are mostly too vague to be of much help. Our most reliable guide is certainly the *Scots Magazine*, which has the advantage of being contemporary, and of recording the emigrations as they occur. Yet if we add together all the Highland departures before 1775 chronicled by the *Scots Magazine*, the total is something under 10,000 persons. No doubt the entries in the magazine are not exhaustive, but allowing for some omissions the discrepancy between its figures and those of Garnett, and even of Knox, is very great.

A partial explanation of the latter's estimate might be found in the recruiting records of the period. Many Highlanders left the country as soldiers. A writer in the *Scots Magazine* of October, 1775, calculated that upwards of 9500 had been thus drawn from the Highlands, and of these many, like Fraser's Highlanders, eventually found homes in the New World, and might be counted in a sense emigrants.

Both at the time and later there seems then to have been a tendency to exaggerate the numbers of those emigrating at this stage. The emigrants were not many, and if this seems difficult to reconcile with the great agitation expressed at their going, the explanation can be found in the social standing and comparative wealth of the leaders of the movement.

That the emigrants included a large percentage of persons possessed of some capital is every where abundantly testified. The Scots Magazine generally gives in its entries some description of the emigrants, but only two or three times does it refer to their poverty, and once when it does, the emigrants set sail from Stranraer, and were almost certainly not Highland. The only allusions in fact to the poverty of Highland emigrants appear in connection with those from Sutherland.

What weight can be attached to such references is doubtful, for elsewhere we read in the Scots Magazine of September, 1772, that the persons emigrating from Sutherland between 1768 and 1772 took with them not less than £10,000 in specie. Now if it is borne in mind that the total number of emigrants from that area between these dates was only 500 or 630, and of these a very large percentage were women and children, it is obvious that many of the heads of households must have been persons of substance.

Possibly the allusions to their poverty can be explained by the fact that they, almost alone of the emigrants, passed through Edinburgh on their way abroad. There they became at once an object of interest and compassion, and their unusual appearance and pathetic situation no doubt supplied to Lowland eyes sufficient evidence of distress.

Apart from this doubtful case of the Sutherland people, there is no suggestion that the Highland emigrants were being driven by acute poverty. The Scots Magazine normally refers to them in such phrases as people in good circumstances, 'gentlemen of wealth and merit,' people of property,' and so on.

The impression thus given is confirmed by the mention of the amount of capital they took with them. As a typical example the 425 persons who sailed from Maryburgh in 1773 took £6000 with them in ready cash, while in a number of the Edinburgh Advertiser, dated January 17, 1792, it was stated that since 1772 £38,000 had been taken from the country by the emigrants from West Ross-shire and Inverness-shire alone.

It must be granted, then, that at least the leaders of the movement of the seventies were reasonably prosperous people. Knowing that they were strongly attached to their native land, and that they were not driven out by stress of poverty, the question naturally arises what induced them to go?

In answer to this question various suggestions have been put forward both at the time of the emigrations and afterwards.

If we disregard vague and unsubstantiated generalisations about the tyranny of landlords, these suggestions reduce themselves to the following five: the union of farms for sheep; the redundancy of the population; the effect of the Jacobite rebellions; the influence of the returned Highland soldier; and finally the rise in rents.

The first suggestion is rarely, if ever, mentioned in actual contemporaries. It is generally put forward in works written twenty years later, while a new and entirely different emigration movement was in progress. It cannot provide any satisfactory explanation for the period of the seventies, for in the districts most affected by emigration the introduction of sheep had then hardly begun.

The second suggestion comes nearer the truth. The Highlands economically utilised may have been capable of providing for all their population, but as things were, numbers had no proper employment and lived permanently upon the edge of subsistence. That was becoming increasingly true and increasingly obvious, and was soon to result in emigration on an altogether unprecedented scale. But no more than the first does this explain the prosperous emigration of the seventies. The well-to-do farmer who sublet his lands, as practically all did, was in the first instance a gainer rather than a loser by a phenomenon which created an intense and feverish competition for land, and which in so doing sent up the rents and services paid to himself.

The Jacobite Rebellions, and the influence of the Highland soldiers, have both a genuine effect upon emigration. Highland families whose fortunes had been broken in the '45, and who regarded land as an essential of existence, turned naturally to America, and in going took numbers of their old dependents with them. Thus John Macdonald of Glenaladale having been obliged to sell his estate in consequence of difficulties following the '45, left Scotland in 1772 with 200 Highlanders for Prince Edward Island, but such cases are rather isolated.

The Highland regiments had also a distinctly stimulating effect. The habit of planting ex-soldiers in America led to the establishment of a connection between the Highlands and Nova Scotia and Albany. The letters and encouragement sent home by the soldiers are frequently mentioned as promoting emigration. But even this is rather an additional stimulus than a real cause. A prosperous family of well-established social connections does not readily tear itself up by the roots simply because it happens to hear hopeful accounts of a new world. Some stronger incentive was needed to urge on the leaders of the movement, though doubtless the influence of the soldiers simplified the work of persuading some of the poorer folk to go with them.



There is left then as a possible real cause the general rise of rents in the Highlands, and this is the explanation put forward most frequently to account for the emigrations.

Pennant refers to it repeatedly. It appears again in the writings of Knox, in Heron's Observations (pub. 1792) in Walker's *Economical History of the Hebrides* (1808), in the Privy Council Papers, in the Parliamentary Debates of the period, in the *Old Statistical Account*, and elsewhere.

But while most authorities agree in mentioning the rise in rents as a cause of emigration, the manner in which they make mention of the fact varies indefinitely. Some regard the rise in rents as a piece of absolutely indefensible tyranny; some like Pennant deplore the consequences, but suggest at least a partial justification for the landlord in the corresponding rise of cattle prices; while there are others, like the writers in the *Farmers Magazine*, who go so far as to regard the rise as a benefit to the Highlands, since it compelled the adoption of more modern and economical systems of cultivation.

Who were the persons primarily affected by this rise in rents, and what was the nature of the rents previously paid?

In answer to the first question, there can be little doubt that the people immediately affected by the rise were the superior tenants, who in Highland estate economy occupied a position not dissimilar to that of feudal tenants-in-chief. On many estates the landlord does not appear to have come into direct contact with the smaller tenants or cottagers. They held from the superior tenants, the tacksmen, and could only receive an increase of rents by the landlords, indirectly, and from the evidence that follows it will seem very doubtful whether the under tenant could have paid more for his land than he was already doing.

But the same is emphatically not true of the rent paid by the tacksmen.

The position of the tacksmen was peculiar. A definition is given of the term in Carlisle's *Topographical Description of Scotland* which runs as follows: 'One who holds a lease from another, a tenant of a higher class :—this term is usually used in contradistinction to Tenants in general, who are such as rent only a Portion of a Farm.'

Normally the special emphasis is laid on the holding of a long lease or tack, a tenure which in early days might be taken as a definite mark of social as well as economic superiority.

Generally speaking the original holders of the tacks were the younger sons of the chiefs, who found that to grant farms on long leases and extremely moderate rents was the simplest if not the only possible method of providing for their large families. As might be expected, the social prestige of the holders was therefore great. 'The class of tacksmen occupy nearly the same rank in the Hebrides as belongs to that of men of landed property in other parts of Britain. They are called Gentlemen, and appear as such ; and obtain a title from the farm which they hold, nearly in the same manner as gentlemen in other parts of the country obtain from their estates.

Almost all references to them, even when abusive as those made by Burt, by Buchanan and by Duncan Forbes, still make use of the term 'gentlemen.' They prided themselves upon the upkeep of a crowd of dependents, and the support of a constant and lavish hospitality. Indeed, so far as we can gather from Pennant and the *Gartmore MSS.* their personal habits and mode of life were strikingly similar to those of the chiefs.

The relations of the tacksmen and the proprietors were naturally strongly coloured by the social and kinship ties which bound them together. All the evidence we have from Pennant, who describes the state of things before the transition, to Buchanan, who in his *Travels in the Western Hebrides* is written between 1782-1790 of those districts where the tacksmen still survived, confirms the belief that the leases were originally granted on terms abnormally favourable to the holders.

'The tacksmen,' says Anderson (1785), 'were treated with a mildness that made them consider their leases rather as a sort of property, subjected to a moderate quitrent to their superior, than as a fair and full rent for land in Scotland.'

The normal acquiescence of the proprietor in this view was not, of course, due primarily to sentimental attachments. As is well known, Highland estate values before the eighteenth century were reckoned not in money but in men. In the military organisation of the clan, the tacksmen formed an essential element, since by blood, instincts, and training they were its natural lieutenants. As such they were indispensable to the chief, and they paid for their lands in full by their services. Their money rents were altogether a minor matter, and not being fixed by any economic considerations, bore no necessary relation to the economic value of the land.

Once military services became obsolete, and the rent was the sole return made by the tacksman for his land, the revision of rents by the landlord was inevitable. Ever, if there had been no special causes at work, such as the rise in cattle prices, rents must still have risen to correspond to the altered social conditions of the Highlands.

But there are other considerations that also influence the eighteenth century proprietor. The decay of the military side of the clan system left him viewing the tacksman as an expensive and altogether unnecessary luxury on a generally poor estate. For not only did

he pay an inadequate rent, but he possessed several other drawbacks that struck most forcibly those landlords who had some ideas on estate improvement.

The tacksmen were bad farmers. Pennant, who is always most sympathetic towards them, admits candidly that they had not the habits of industry. Their establishments were frankly medieval, and as Pennant himself said, the number of labourers they maintained resembled a retinue of retainers rather than the number required for the economical management of a farm. Forty years later Macdonald, in the Agricultural Report of the Hebrides, confirms this view. Macdonald is normally most moderate in his statements, but he is emphatic in the opinion that the tacksmen, despite their many virtues and accomplishments, had been largely instrumental in holding back the agricultural progress of the Highlands. Exceptions existed, but the average tacksman appeared to regard himself as superior to the drudgery of farm work, while his natural conservatism was a bar to all improvements. The first step towards any progress in the eyes of Macdonald was the resumption by the proprietor of direct control over his estates, and direct relations with his under tenants.

This brings us to the second serious charge made against the tacksmen. Evidence abounds to prove that the tacksmen were not good masters. Exorbitant rents, heavy services, and insecurity of tenure are the characteristic marks of their dealings with their under tenants. With the ethics of such practices we are not for the moment concerned. The proprietor may have objected to them on purely moral grounds, it is certain that he regarded them as an economic grievance. By lavish subletting, or in the contemporary phrase subsetting, a tacksman might live rent free, while the proprietor could only look on and see his estate reduced to beggary by the sweating practices already mentioned. A good landlord could not but resent a system so hostile to the hulk of his tenants; a bad landlord could not but chafe at a practice so entirely unprofitable to himself.

One of the earliest pieces of evidence we have on the subject is contained in a report, dated 1737, which was sent by Duncan Forbes of Culloden to the Duke of Argyll. The report concerned certain estates of the latter which Forbes had been sent to inspect with a view to the possibility of improvements. The following is a quotation: 'The unmerciful exaction of the late tacksman is the cause of those lands (i.e. of the Island of Coll) being waste, which had it continued but for a very few years longer would have entirely unpeopled the island. They speak of above one hundred families that have been reduced to beggary and driven out of the island within these last seven years.' . . . 'But though your Grace's expectations or mine may not be answered as to the improvement of the rent, yet in this, I have satisfaction, and it may be some to you, that the method taken has prevented the total ruin of these islands, and the absolute loss of the whole rent in time coming to your Grace, had the tacksmen been suffered to continue their extortions a few years longer these islands would have been dispeopled, and you must have been contented with no rent, or with such as these harpies should be graciously pleased to allow you.'

Further corroborative evidence is found in the British Museum MSS. dated 1750 (edited Lang), which, after detailing various acts of oppression, laid down the conviction of the author that the Highlands could not be improved until the tacksmen either were deprived of their power of subsetting or held it under conditions which would protect the interests of the under tenants, or better still, were only allowed to keep such land as they and their personal servants were able to cultivate.

It must not be thought that the oppressive practices detailed by Forbes and the anonymous writer were simply the lingering relics of a past age. Where the tacksmen continue in existence, the abuses appear to have continued also even to the end of the century and later.

An English traveller writing from his personal observation in 1785 makes the following statement :

'The chieftain lets out his land in large lots to the inferior branches of the family, all of whom must support the dignity of lairds. The renters let the land out in small parcels from year to year to the lower class of people, and to support their dignity, squeeze everything out of them they can possibly get, leaving them only a bare subsistence. Until this evil is obviated Scotland can never improve.'

The Old Statistical Account gives some cases referring to the same period. In Harris while the small tenants directly under the proprietor had leases, those under the tacksmen paid more rent and held at will. In Edderachylis, while the proprietor had abandoned all claims to personal services, the tacksmen exacted them so rigorously that they were able to dispense entirely with any hired labour. However extravagant the demands, no tenant holding at will, as all did, dared to refuse them, for no tacksman would have received on his lands the rebellious tenant of another.

The writer on the parish of Tongue drew a similar comparison between the conduct of the proprietor and the tacksmen. He appealed to the authority of the former to restrain the merciless exactions of the latter, which left their tenants with neither time nor energy to cultivate their own farms. The tacksmen, he held, were little better than West Indian slave drivers.

But the heaviest indictment of all is that which appears in Buchanon's Travels. Buchanon was a Church of Scotland missionary, and the Travels are the result of his personal observations of Hebridean conditions between 1782 and 1790. The proprietors are referred to in terms of high praise, but the tacksmen incur Buchanon's unqualified condemnation.

'The land is parcelled out in small portions by the tacksmen among the immediate cultivators of the soil, who pay their rent in kind and in personal services. Though the tacksmen for the most part enjoy their leases of whole districts on liberal terms, their exactions from the subtenants are in general most severe. They grant them their possessions only from year to year, and lest they should forget their dependent condition, they are every year at a certain term, with the most regular formality, ordered to quit their tenements and to go out of the bounds of the leasehold estate . . . there is not perhaps any part of the world where the good things of this life are more unequally distributed. While the scallag and the subtenant are wholly at the mercy of the tacksmen, the tacksmen from a large and advantageous farm, the cheapness of every necessary, and by means of smuggling every luxury, rolls in case and affluence.'

We may conclude from these accounts, which might be amplified indefinitely, that the lower classes in the Highlands did not stand to lose by any change which transferred them from the power of the tacksmen to that of the owner.

To the unsentimental observer the whole system of which the tacksmen was a part appeared a hopeless anachronism. The tacksmen were superfluous middlemen who farmed badly, paid adequate rents, and by oppressive services prevented the under tenants from attending properly to their farms.

No landowner just becoming alive to the economic possibilities of his estates could reasonably be expected to allow the system to continue. Some tried to remedy matters by raising the rents of the tacksmen as they got the opportunity. In not a few such cases, owing sometimes to the greed of the proprietor, sometimes to his ignorance, and most often to want of proper estate surveys, the rents were raised too high. Raising rents, however, is only one symptom of a general transition. So long as the tacksmen had the power to shift the burdens on to the shoulders of their under tenants, a mere rise in their rentals could supply no adequate solution for the landlord's problems. There is a case, for example, mentioned in the Caledonian Mercury of 1781, of a tacksmen holding lands near Lochgilphead. During the entire period of his lease, he had, by subsetting, received always more rent than he had to pay.

If the tacksmen were to be brought to fulfil a real economic function in the estate system, there had to be changes more drastic than rent raising, and the more advanced landowners were alive to this fact. The decay or the destruction of the tacksmen system did not proceed rapidly. It was not even complete by the end of the eighteenth century. Sometimes it was held back by sentimental considerations, the still surviving tie of kinship or the pride of raising family regiments. Sometimes it was due to the poverty of the proprietor and his real economic dependence on the tacksmen. Cases exist when the tacksmen possessed all the movable stock on an estate, and were therefore more or less indispensable to its running. Sometimes the slowness is due to mere geographical situation, remote areas perhaps not receiving the influx of new ideas until late in the century.

Still the changes went on, and what concerns us chiefly was their peculiar activity about the sixties and seventies. To avoid misunderstanding let us be clear as to what the changes implied. The elimination of the tacksmen did not mean necessarily the elimination of the individuals who formed the class, nor did it mean the elimination of leaseholders.

Under the new system leases are granted, but granted on rents which represent, or are intended to represent, the economic value of the land. These leases are granted to a much wider class, and so far diminish the profit and the prestige of those who had formerly held tacks. Again, the practice of subsetting was abolished, or the services which might be exacted from subtenants limited. Some of the subtenants were promoted at once to the dignity of leaseholders. Finally the whole relations of landlord and tacksmen were put on a simple business footing, thereby extinguishing the tacksmen's partial sense of ownership, and the half-traditional of kinship. The tacksmen, in fact, ceased to form a special and privileged class. Their status was lowered as that of the under tenants was raised.

Such were the changes that the more advanced landowners were aiming at throughout the period of the first emigration. How they were carried out we can gather from the records of the Argyll estates. In the early part of the eighteenth century certain lands in Mull, Tyree, and Morven which had been for several centuries under the chief of the Clan M'Lean, fell into the hands of the reigning Duke of Argyll, who in 1732 sent Campbell of Stonerfield to investigate and report upon his newly acquired estates.

Campbell reported that the subtenants complained bitterly of the oppression of the tacksmen. This state of things Campbell proposed to alter, partly by raising the more substantial subtenants to the rank of tacksmen; partly by compelling the tacksmen to give leases to their under tenants; and partly by drawing up a fixed statement of the services the tacksmen might exact. An attempt was made also to commute the more oppressive services into money rents, and as Campbell himself was not a judge of local land values, and could not count on disinterested advice from anyone, he took the only method of fixing rents open to him, that was to invite the farmers to bid for their possessions.

It is not probable that all Campbell's ideas were put into practice. Campbell himself may not have possessed full powers, and the leases of the tacksmen could not in any case be altered until they fell in for renewal. Accordingly, we find Duncan Forbes being sent in 1737 on a similar mission to that of Campbell, a mission which resulted in the report from which we have already quoted. Forbes' policy runs on lines similar to that of Campbell, and he gives graphic details of the tacksmen's efforts to defeat his plans and unite their under tenants in an elaborate conspiracy against their own interests.

These examples, occurring earlier than most, are yet typical of the changes that begin to take place on many Highland estates. Tacksmen soon after the middle of the century found themselves continually faced with the prospect of heightened rents and lowered

social position.

Some remained and adapted themselves to the new conditions; a few became successful farmers of a more modern type. Many of them, however, clung resolutely to the habits of their fathers, and rather than acquiesce in the changes, tried to transfer themselves and their whole social system to the New World.

The point of view of the tacksman is thus stated, somewhat unsympathetically, in an article which appeared in the Edinburgh Advertiser in 1772:

Such of these wadsetters and tacksmen as rather wish to be distinguished as leaders, than by industry, have not taken leases again, alleging that the rents are risen above what the land will bear; but say they, in order to be revenged on our masters for doing so, and what is worse depriving us of our subordinate chieftainship by abolishing our former privilege of subsetting, we will not only leave his lands, but by spiriting the lower class of people to emigrate, we shall carry a class to America, and when they are there they must work for us or starve.'

To say why the under tenants went might involve an elaborate study of the psychology of the Highlanders. We can only suggest here that the habits of obedience engendered for generations were not easily overcome, while the report of Duncan Forbes on conditions in Mull showed how apparently easy it was for the ignorant under tenants to be persuaded by the tacksmen into courses almost obviously opposed to their own interests.

Such were the causes and the manner of the emigration of the seventies, a movement which deprived the Highlands of a considerable number of its influential men and a still greater proportion of its available capital. The movement has been often misrepresented both by eighteenth century and by modern writers. As recently as 1904 we find an author in the December number of the Celtic Review treating the whole incident along traditional lines, the poverty and absolute helplessness of the emigrants being contrasted with the brutality and greed of the landowners.

But such a view is not in harmony with what we have been able to discover of the facts. We would go further and say that in many respects the Highlands gained rather than lost by this particular emigration movement. Putting aside the purely sentimental writers, those who have lamented most the departure of the tacksmen appear to have been influenced less by the thought of what they were than by the dream of what they might have become. The possibilities of the tacksmen system have for the Highland reformer an almost irresistible attraction. The tacksmen had the glamour of tradition behind them. They were picturesque. They had the pleasing appearance of bridging the social gulf between owner and crofter. They had some education, some capital, and the habit of leadership, of all which qualities the eighteenth century Highlands stood in need.

But the value of this to the community was potential rather than real. In practice, the tacksmen's capital was a means of oppression not of development, his leadership led generally in the wrong direction, while his insistence on lines of social demarcation could not have been surpassed by the proprietor himself. Rather than lose his social privileges he emigrated.

Regrettable as was the loss of any good inherent in the tacksmen system, the gain was greater than the loss, and the regret expended on the emigration of the seventies is a tribute to romance rather than to economics.

Margaret I. Adam.

The same author also produced another article on the same subject which you can read below in pdf format...

[The Causes of the Highland Emigrations of 1783-1803](#)

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair