

Building the Highland Empire: The Highland society of London and the  
Formation of Charitable Networks in Great Britain and Canada, 1778-1857

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **BUILDING THE HIGHLAND EMPIRE: THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON AND THE FORMATION OF CHARITABLE NETWORKS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND CANADA, 1778-1857**

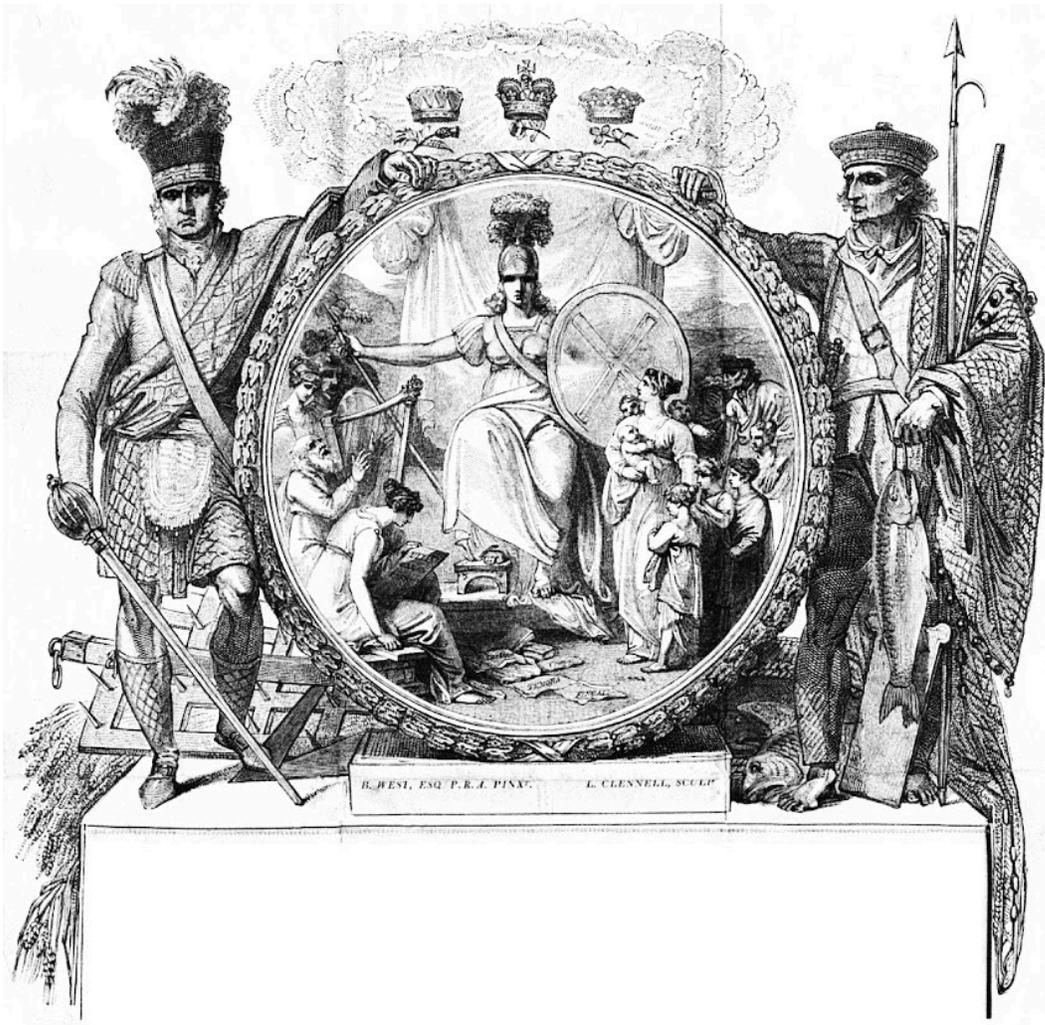
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This dissertation explores the development of charitable networks by the Highland Society of London (est. 1778) in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries—a period of rapid social and economic change in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The Highland Society of London (HSL), a voluntary association, was formed exclusively for elite Highlanders living, working, and visiting in London. At this time, members of the HSL were able to exploit the expanding British fiscal-military state through active political lobbying, socializing, charity work, and the development of an institutional network for elite Highlanders. This was achieved first by attaching to sister societies, notably the Highland Society of Scotland (est. 1784), opening subsidiary joint-stock companies to undertake specific improvement projects, such as the British Fisheries Society (est. 1786), and developing a network of branch societies throughout the British Empire linking Highlanders in London to Highlanders in Scotland, India, and British North America.

Through the development of these networks members of the HSL and their colleagues were able to lead social and economic development projects in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, help to preserve Highland culture, and provide charity for

members of their own communities on their own terms. In the process, Highland elites found in HSL circles developed the notion of a 'Highland Empire', which linked the charitable networks they formed to a wider conceptual Imperial framework. This framework was one in which Highland Scots influenced their own communities, whether in Great Britain or abroad, as well as the broader sociopolitical British imperial community through political lobbying and garnering subscriptions for improvement projects from the general public that both supported Highland culture and Highland people. This directly challenges the idea that Highland Scottish elites were more than willing to sacrifice their own culture in order to integrate themselves into the dominant Anglo-Scottish elite in order to benefit from participation in the British Empire.



[Fig. 1] *Diploma of the Highland Society of London* designed by Benjamin West (1805).

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First and foremost I would like to extend a very special thank you to my advisor, Graeme Morton for his unfailing support and enthusiasm for my research. Thank you for seeing me through the entirety of my graduate work, I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with you. I will always treasure those many years of your expert guidance. And to Kevin James, thank you for your support and advice over the years, through two degrees and many milestones, and for taking over Graeme's duties after his untimely departure from Guelph. It was a pleasure to get to know you better. Many thanks to my committee members: Rob Kristofferson and Dan Gorman for help in situating my project in its broader contexts. Many thanks also to my external examiner, Stana Nenadic, for helpful comments, which shaped the final stages of the project.

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Especial thanks goes to the President and Committee of Management of the Highland Society of London for permission to use the image created for the Society by Benjamin West, reproduced in this dissertation. To Aonghas Nicol, honorary secretary of the Highland Society of London, thank you for all your help over the years. I will be forever grateful for our many conversations (both in person and over email) and for your invaluable information. Thank you as well to Alastair Campbell Yr. of Airds and his wife Marianne for having me over for a wonderful afternoon in Inverawe to talk about the history of the HSL, and for a delicious lunch. My thanks to various funding bodies that helped facilitate my research: to the Strathmartine Trust for their support of North Americans studying Scottish history; thank you also to the St Andrew's Society of Montreal and the St. Andrew's Society of Toronto for their financial support of my research.

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**Archival Abbreviations**

AUA	Aberdeen University Archives, Aberdeen
ASCUG	Archival and Special Collections University of Guelph Library, Guelph
HAC	Highland Archive Centre, Inverness
LAC	Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
NRAS	National Register of Archives for Scotland
NRS	National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh
RHASS	Royal Highlands and Agricultural Society of Scotland, Ingliston
TFRBL	Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto

**List of Illustrations**

[Fig. 1] *Diploma of the Highland Society of London* designed by Benjamin West (1805),  
Used by kind permission of the President and Committee of Management of the Society.

## Introduction

The Highland Society of London was organized on May 28, 1778 at the Spring Garden Coffeehouse in Charing Cross, London, “in order to form a Society that might prove beneficial to that part of the Kingdom.” The Society was a voluntary association formed exclusively for elite Highlanders living, working, and visiting in London. Initially formed to ‘rescue’ Highland culture, and provide Highlanders who were not able to draw from the English Poor Law with assistance in London, the Society solidified its intentions to providing charity for Highlanders, preserving the Gaelic language, providing Gaelic education, promoting Highland culture, and encouraging the social and economic development of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> There were twenty-five original members who were a mix of lawyers, military men, merchants and politicians, and the first president of the Society was Lieutenant-General Simon Fraser, of Lovat. The lawyer John Mackenzie, Esq. of Lentrane, was chosen as the secretary, a post that he kept until his death in 1803.<sup>2</sup> The formation of the Society met well with the “natives of the Highlands resident in that metropolis. They were convinced it would promote, not only the advantage of the Highlands, but ‘*good fellowship and social union,*’ among such of its natives as inhabited the more southern part of the island.”<sup>3</sup> Shortly after it was formed the HSL’s membership grew exponentially and began to include members of Aristocracy, gentry, and petty gentry as well as tacksmen. In 1783 there were 210 members. By the

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<sup>1</sup> The Highland Society of London still exists today under the same rules as when it was formed.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 4. This version of Sinclair’s account has slightly different page numbering than other versions; only this version has been used in this dissertation. All capitalization and spelling in this dissertation, where appropriate, has been modernized. There has also been a limited use of [*sic*] where original spelling has been kept.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 5. His emphasis.

end of the period of this study there were up to 400 members at any given time.<sup>4</sup> By the early nineteenth century members of the Royal Family, notably Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, would join bringing increased social prestige to the Society. The Society quickly expanded its scope of influence throughout Lowland Scotland, the Highlands and Islands, India, and into British North America. With a membership that grew rapidly in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the Highland Society of London (HSL) represents a popular and active association of elite Highland Scots.

The study that follows is a survey of the activities of the HSL from its inception in 1778 to 1857, the year its branch society the Highland Society of Canada closed. This is a period covering the Improvement Era and the Highland Clearances, and the Society's activities were intimately tied to these two historical processes. By examining their activities it will be shown that members of the Highland Society of London (HSL) were able to exploit and negotiate the expanding British fiscal-military state in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries through active political lobbying, socializing, charity work, and the development of an institutional network of Highlanders first by attaching itself to sister societies, notably the Highland Society of Scotland (est. 1784), and then forming subsidiary joint-stock companies to undertake specific improvement projects, such as the British Fisheries Society (est. 1786).<sup>5</sup> The HSL's institutional network then extended to the Highlands by influencing Highland elites who were either in or closely connected to the Inverness burgh council by instigating and supporting the

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendices 1.1-1.5.

<sup>5</sup> The British Fisheries Society was incorporated under the title: "The British Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Sea Coasts of this Kingdom." It would become known simply at "The British Fisheries Society," which it was officially named when it re-incorporated in 1857. For the sake of continuity with other societies in this dissertation it will be referred to as the 'British Fisheries Society'. British Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Sea Coasts of this Kingdom, *Plan for Raising by Subscription a Fund for a Joint Stock Company, by the name of the British Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Sea Coasts of the Kingdom* (London, 1786).

foundation of a school and a hospital in Inverness. And finally, the HSL developed a network of branch societies linking Highlanders in London to Highlanders in Scotland, India, and British North America, ensuring the HSL's institutional network extended to where Highlanders were predominantly located in the British Empire. By examining the activities of this influential group of Highland Scots and their supporters, through the institutional framework they developed, we find a British imperial identity that placed Highland Scottishness at the centre of its expression. This identity legitimized the support of Highlanders and Highland economic development from within Highland communities.

As one of the most notable members of the HSL Sir John Sinclair argued in 1813:

Scotland considering its limited population and extent, has made a distinguished figure in history. No country, in modern times, has produced characters more remarkable for learning, valour, or ability, or for knowledge in the most important arts both of peace and of war; and though the natives of that formerly independent and hitherto unconquered kingdom, have every reason to be proud of the name of *Britons*, which they have acquired since the Union in 1707, yet, still, they ought not to relinquish, on that account, all remembrance of the martial achievements, the characteristic dress, or the language, the music, or the customs of their ancestors.<sup>6</sup>

Sinclair, a British patriot and Highland landowner, was relaying what most members of the HSL believed: that it was the differences within Britishness that made Great Britain a strong nation. Members argued that Highland Scottishness, which had been under attack

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<sup>6</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 1.

for much of the eighteenth century, was a vital part of a wider sense of British identity. Highland culture played a major role in promoting this identity, and not always within the confines of the British military. Scottish Highlanders' contribution to the expanding British fiscal-military state had been significant, especially after the last Jacobite Rebellion of 1745/46 (known as the '45), which largely ended the domestic threat to the established Hanoverian regime—a threat unfairly pinned almost exclusively on Highlanders.<sup>7</sup> The defeat at Culloden came with a range of repressive measures directed exclusively at Highland culture, and estates of the rebels were forfeited to the crown to be remade under Whig economic and social principles of cultural and economic uniformity. In particular the Act of Proscription (1747) outlawed the wearing of Highland dress and carrying of Highland weaponry. Immediately after the '45 there were efforts by Highland elites to gain from the expanding fiscal-military state, a period which saw many former Jacobites adopt a more pro-British (or Hanoverian) political stance, and they were able to do this by linking Highlanders and Highland culture to patriotism largely through their participation in the British imperial wars such as the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). Highland cultural symbols associated with martial valour were used by Highland elites to more readily integrate Highlanders into the British fiscal-military state.<sup>8</sup>

The fiscal-military state is a concept that was first explored by John Brewer wherein the English government after 1689 was able to expand the means by which to tax

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<sup>7</sup> Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands* (Hampshire: MacMillan, 1989).

<sup>8</sup> See: John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); John Brewer, "The Eighteenth-Century British State: Contexts and Issues," in *An Imperial State at War*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1994), 53; Matthew Dzinniek, "Whig Tartan: Material Culture and its use in the Scottish Highlands, 1746-1815," *Past and Present* 217, no. 1 (2012): 120; Andrew Mackillop, *"More Fruitful Than the Soil": Army, Empire, and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 53; Lawrence Stone, "Introduction" in *An Imperial State at War*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1994).

the populace and raise funds (usually by borrowing) in order to fight wars with European aggressors to preserve the British constitution and expand the territorial empire while maintaining relative domestic peace. The fiscal-military state grew exponentially through the eighteenth century with the British government borrowing enormous amounts of money and taxing its citizens to fight the various imperial and counter-revolutionary wars, especially against its greatest competitor, France. Highlanders played an important role in this expansion especially in the immediate post-Jacobite period (1746-1782). However, we find not only that Highlanders of all ranks contributed directly to imperial expansion in the form of participation in the military and colonial governments but also we find Highlanders with commercial interests in the empire. Many Highland merchants, especially second sons of Highland landowners were directly involved in the slave trade or the running of plantations in various colonial locations, and we find many of these people on the membership lists of the HSL.<sup>9</sup> As much as Highlanders were active agents of colonial expansion, there were also many discussions in the late eighteenth century as to what role the Scottish Highlands and Islands were to play in the expanding empire. Taxes and duties raised to help fund imperial expansion had hit the underdeveloped (in relation to the rest of Great Britain) economy of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland hard. The British government taxed the materials that were necessary to develop locally appropriate industries such as fishing and whisky manufacturing, which either stagnated or were undertaken illegally. Members of the HSL and their colleagues would lobby the British government to make concessions for the Highlands and Islands. The argument went that in order for industrialization to take off in the Highlands and Islands punitive

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<sup>9</sup> The Malcolms of Poltalloch are a prime example of a planter aristocracy in the Highlands. See: Allan I. Macinnes, "Commercial Landlordism and Clearance in the Scottish Highlands: the Case of Arichonan," in *Communities in European History*, ed. J. Pan Montojo and K. Pedersen (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2007).

taxes and duties had to be reduced or eliminated. Additionally, with the government's help, the development of communications would tie the Highlands and Islands to both domestic and imperial markets. This was seen to be the only solution to bring the Highlands and Islands to the same level as the rest of Great Britain, which was industrialising rapidly. Framing improvement within an imperial discourse was one way this group of elites felt they could direct the fiscal-military state to their own advantage.

Recently, historians have begun to explore the concept of a "Scottish Empire," especially Scotland's role in the Atlantic slave trade.<sup>10</sup> The history of Scottish participation in empire and metropolitan identities is still evolving but more recent work has begun to look at Scottish identities not only in relation to England but also Wales, Ireland, and the colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the case of Scottish Highlanders, however, this historiography is much less advanced.<sup>11</sup> In this period we also find Scottish Highlanders and Islanders as employees and officers of major joint-stock companies such as the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the British East India Company (EIC), which were involved in empire building through trade. Scholars have begun to look more closely at Scottish involvement in these organizations, but the involvement of Highlanders in colonial organizations has largely been understudied.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For work on Highland slave traders and plantation owners see:

<http://www.spanglefish.com/slavesandhighlanders/index.asp> (accessed 17 December 2013).

<sup>11</sup> See: John M. Mackenzie and T.M. Devine eds. *Scotland and the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); T.M. Devine *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1600-1815* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004); T.M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire, 1600-1815* (London: Penguin, 2003); Allan I. MacInnes "Jacobites and Empire: Highland connections, 1707-1753" (paper presented at the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland's Autumn Conference: The Scottish Highlands: a Historical Reassessment, Glasgow, September 21-22, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Andrew MacKillop, "Locality, Nation, and Empire: Scots and the Empire in Asia, c.1695-c.1813." in *Scotland and the British Empire*, ed. John M. MacKenzie and T.M. Devine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); George Kirk McGilvary, *East India Patronage and the British State: The Scottish Elite and Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Taurus Academic Studies, 2008); Suzanne Rigg, *Men of spirit and Enterprise: Scots and Orkneymen in the Hudson's Bay Company, 1780-1821* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2011). Many of the HBC's servants were Highland Scots or from Orkney. The Northwest

Many Highlanders found in these companies also participated directly in British or colonial politics by holding office at various times in their careers. By the time the HSL organized in 1778 the early membership lists of the HSL include many of these men who had been building their careers in the 1760s and 1770s in colonial settings, such as Sir John Macpherson (mayor of Madras 1782-83 and acting governor-general of Bengal 1785-86), and his maternal uncle Captain Alexander Macleod of the Mansfield Indiamen, both of the East India Company. Through the lens of associational culture, this study will establish these late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century imperial connections found in the membership lists of the HSL, especially those found within the fold of the North West Company (a Scottish Highland-dominated fur trading conglomerate formed in 1779 that rivalled the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) until they amalgamated in 1821), including Simon McGillivray, a London merchant and active committee member of the HSL who would go on to help found the Society's branch in Glengarry County, Upper Canada in 1818.<sup>13</sup> Associational culture was the means by which Highland identity was carried through the Scottish diaspora and the Canadian branch was not only founded by members of the parent society in London but also recreated its activities in order to provide a place for local Highland elites to come together and socialize and forge political relationships, much as they did in London. Common Highland settlers in Glengarry County and the surrounding areas were then supported by local elites connected to the Metropolis through the HSL's institutional framework. By re-positioning Highland elites into more

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Company, which will be dealt with in chapter six, was a *de facto* Highland Scottish company. Paul J. de Gategno, "Macpherson, Sir John, first baronet (c.1745-1821)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17730> (accessed 6 March 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules of the Highland Society of London February 1, 1783* (London, 1783), 11.

defined social and economic networks this dissertation brings Highlanders to the forefront of their own imperial activities. These men were driving imperial development on an equal footing with other Britons and the Scottish Highlands and Islands were at the centre of this purview. In this way this project will challenge many widely held assumptions about Scottish Highlanders' motivations for saving or promoting their own culture.

What this project reveals is that the Highland Scottish elites we find in HSL circles were able to continue to exploit, and in some cases influence, the expanding British fiscal-military state in the late eighteenth century through the institutional framework developed by the HSL. In this fashion members of the HSL and their supporters were able to develop an alternative plan of improvement of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, help preserve Highland culture, and provide charity for members of their own communities located in the Highlands, London, and Canada *on their own terms*. In the process, this institutional framework developed the notion of a 'Highland Empire', which linked economic support for charitable projects to a wider conceptual Imperial framework, which developed into the nineteenth century. This framework was one in which Highland Scots influenced their own communities, whether in Great Britain or abroad, as well as the broader socio-political British imperial community through political lobbying and garnering subscriptions for projects from the general public. A rehabilitation of the motivations for social and economic improvement by Highland elites directly challenges the idea that Highland Scottish elites were more than willing to

sacrifice their own culture in order to integrate themselves into the dominant Anglo-British elite and as a result benefit from participation in empire.<sup>14</sup>

## **Historiography**

This project is one primarily of social and economic history. However, it draws from and challenges other interconnected strands of historiography. As a voluntary association founded in London for Highland Scots and with a largely expatriate membership the HSL was a voluntary association founded in the Scottish diaspora. Owing to the nature of its activities, being both locally and internationally focused, as well as its membership, which was a blend of permanent and transient migrant Highlanders many of whom had left Scotland for the opportunities available in London, the HSL was a society of Highland Scots firmly attached to the British Empire. The move to London move led to careers in law, finance, politics and the connections necessary to build careers in the British Empire in the military, as plantation managers and slave traders, in colonial government, and officers and servants of the East India Company and the North West Company, among other opportunities. Therefore the broad conceptual framework of this project places the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and Highlanders within emerging trends in the history of the British Empire. This will be used to place the HSL's activities in their imperial contexts, especially in British North America. In this way this projects

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<sup>14</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992); J. E. Cookson, "The Napoleonic Wars, Military Scotland and Tory Highlandism in the Early nineteenth Century," *The Scottish Historical Review* 78, no. 205 (1999): 60-75; Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity 1689-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Mackillop, *More Fruitful*, "Introduction."

challenges the idea that the Highlands and Islands were a peripheral outback of the British Empire and that Highlanders were passive bystanders in its development.

The HSL was typical of the many voluntary and improvement associations and societies, which sprang up in urban Britain by the mid eighteenth century. There were thousands of clubs and societies in Britain by the Georgian period, but, as Peter Clark argues, London was “the great honey pot for societies, with several thousand founded or flourishing in George III’s reign.”<sup>15</sup> From the period *ca.* 1780-1850, societies in Britain increased in number and began to “reassess their relationship with the state,” largely in the realm of poor relief, medical aid, and education—activities in which the HSL were involved.<sup>16</sup> The voluntary association emerges as the concept of civil society gained momentum in Great Britain and with it an increasing rejection of state intervention in the economy and private interest by society’s elites. Those who championed the notion of civil society advocated and formed institutions like the voluntary association to be the mediator “between the individual and the state, or the public sphere/civil society.”<sup>17</sup> Private interests formed societies with varying purposes with the express function of influencing the government and the public to support and help direct projects developed from within those interested groups. R.J. Morris defines voluntary associations to be “forms of organization which were independent of government, formed for a limited and stated purpose which required a formal act of joining and could be left at any time, conducted through a series of stated and published rules and did not pay members for the time and skills provided.” Members joined through subscription and the funds collected

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2.

<sup>16</sup> R.J. Morris, “Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780-1850: An Analysis,” *The Historical Journal* 26 (1983): 95-96.

<sup>17</sup> Marvin Becker, *The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century: a Privileged Moment in the History of England, Scotland, and France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 1.

by the society were often used for charitable endeavours. Associations were separate from the state, but many had immense political influence. Members of similar social networks organized together and used the voluntary association to express economic and political power.<sup>18</sup> Members of the HSL negotiated the British political environment in much the same way. They used the political connections within their social circles to influence the government and the public into supporting their projects. The HSL was funded purely by memberships, subscriptions for specific projects, and charitable donations; it received no monies from the British government, and the only member paid for his time was the secretary. Yet through its activities the HSL was able to convince the government and the public to support its endeavours financially, and it achieved this through the acquisition of social capital.

Voluntary associations like the HSL not only had the effect of influencing the government and the British public through acts of charity and displays of wealth. Socializing also had the effect of bringing power and influence to a particular group. A large part of the HSL's agenda was socializing so that networks of powerful individuals would be formed by drawing in the power and influence of high-ranking members facilitating the social mobility of less powerful individuals through the act of association. Another way to describe attaining this kind of social mobility is social capital. The acquisition of social capital allowed those within certain social circles with less power to gain from association with those higher up the social scale by pooling resources gained as

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<sup>18</sup> Graeme Morton, *Unionist Nationalism: The Governing of urban Scotland, 1830-1860* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 64; R.J. Morris "Urban Associations in England and Scotland, 1750–1914: The Formation of the Middle Class or the Formation of a Civil Society?" in *Civil Society, Associations and Urban Places: Class, Nation and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. G. Morton et al (Hampshire and Burlington, Ashgate, 2006), 139.

a social group.<sup>19</sup> According to Nan Lin, networks rely on social capital. Individuals “engage in interactions and networking in order to produce profit.” By associating with high profile people in civil society, members of the HSL, who were largely lawyers, merchants, and military men (many of whom had business interests in the empire), brought attention to their actions and it was these social relations, which “reinforce[d] identity and recognition. Being assured and recognized of one’s worthiness as an individual and a member of a social group sharing similar interests and resources not only provides emotional support but also public acknowledgement of one’s claim to certain resources.”<sup>20</sup> Lawyers, for example, socialized with members of the peerage as part of the same social circle and connections brought the political and social patronage necessary to advance careers. The HSL was composed largely of an urban elite, drawing much of its membership from the professional classes, politicians, and those in high-ranking military positions residing in London for much of their careers. But it was also composed of the nobility. Members of the nobility (peers) were often in the position of President or vice-president of the Society (they did not have a patron because of their high-ranking membership) and also played an active role in all of the HSL’s activities and were often present at committee meetings. In this way it could be argued that the HSL was not like other voluntary societies we associate with the middle classes, but it must be understood that members of the HSL sought both to have influence over their own community (from all sections of society) and over civil society at large. According to Morris, “the term

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<sup>19</sup> Nan Lin, “Building a Network Theory of Social Capital,” *Connections* 22 (1999): 28-51; Alejandro Portes, “Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998), 1-24; Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital.” in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J.G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1985), 248.

<sup>20</sup> Nan Lin, “Building a Network Theory of Social Capital,” *Connections* 22 (1999): 28-30; Alberto Melucci. *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Nenadic, “introduction,” 26.

‘elite’ is an intellectual and analytical one referring to that group or groups which form the power in a community.”<sup>21</sup> In the case of Highland elites, at least in urban Scotland, associations tended to be formed expressly for Highlanders, with the purpose of distributing charity and preserving culture.<sup>22</sup> The HSL was no different: it was formed within the expatriate Highland community in London, for distributing charity to Highlanders, in London and the Highlands, preserving Highland culture, and social and economic improvement of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The difference between the HSL and the smaller Highland organizations established in urban Scotland is that the HSL set its sights beyond the immediate community in London, looking to extend power and influence to the Highlands and Islands, which were seen as the localities of their ‘community,’ as well as into the British Empire where members of this community settled either temporarily or permanently.

Within the Scottish diaspora identities were expressed through the many clubs, societies, and institutions that Scots set up in the host societies.<sup>23</sup> In the case of the HSL, which itself was a society instituted in a host society, England, branch societies were instituted in various places where Highlanders were found in the British Empire including India and British North America. This network of branch societies maintained a transnational community of Highlanders connected to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland through the parent society in London. This was a core/periphery relationship that does not fit the mould of metropolitan (London) dominance over the periphery (in

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<sup>21</sup> Morris, “Urban Associations,” 141.

<sup>22</sup> R.J. Morris, “Clubs, Societies and Associations,” in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950, vol. III Social Agencies and Institutions*, ed. F.M.L. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 437; C.W.J. Withers, *Highland Communities in Dundee and Perth 1787-1891: a Study in the Social History of Migrant Highlanders* (Dundee: Abertay Historical Society Publication No 25, 1986), 54.

<sup>23</sup> Tanja Buelmann, Andrew Hinson, and Graeme Morton, “Introduction: Diaspora, Associations and Scottish Identity,” in *Ties of Blood, Kin and Countrie: Scottish Associational Culture in the Diaspora*, ed. Tanja Buelmann et al. (Guelph: Centre for Scottish Studies, 2009), 3.

this case the Highlands), because as the Highland elites we find within the socio-political networks of the HSL conceived of themselves as a community of Highlanders that connected the Highlands and Islands to London. In other words, improvement and charitable projects conceived of in the “core” placed the “periphery” at the very centre.

The Scottish Highlands have often been assessed in terms of a ‘peripheral’ relationship to England, or even Lowland Scotland, as an area ‘colonised’ internally by more dominant forces within the British Isles.<sup>24</sup> Other arguments suggest that dominant Anglo-British forces keen on using Highland culture for its own aims brought the Gaelic-speaking areas of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland conceptually into the core.<sup>25</sup> However, this dissertation asks us to rethink this thesis and to understand that the Scottish Highlands and Islands, as an integral part of Great Britain, were a driving force within the British imperial economy through efforts of temporary or permanent migrant Highlanders located at the imperial core, London. In this way, economic and social improvement of an area peripheral to the metropolitan core was directed from within migrant communities.

Historians have begun to reassess the metropolitan contributions to empire, especially as it pertains to Scottish identity. Until recently Scottish migration to London has been an understudied topic in the history of the Scottish diaspora. Yet this particular migration is crucial to understanding the myriad of identities constructed in post-Union Britain. The move to London inevitably had an effect on the way an important group of mobile Scots constructed their identity. Despite being in the Anglo-British dominated capital—in which some conformity was often necessary to achieve political successes—

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

<sup>25</sup> Murray G. H. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

Scots did not necessarily have to give up their Scottish identity. Scots in London, Stana Nenadic argues, helped to create a sense of Britishness whilst forming a parallel Scottish identity.<sup>26</sup> “For so many Scots,” she states, “the capital city was a route to empire that shaped both personal fortunes and cultural identity, which included an identity as Scots as well as Great Britons.” The effects of this were felt further a field because London was also a “filter for a wider [British] experience, it was a prism through which the world could be viewed and it stamped a cosmopolitan character on Scottish and British identity.”<sup>27</sup> London is where we find many political and business careers being forged by members of the HSL who met at various meetings in order to strengthen these ties.

Not only metropolitan identities were formed in London but also the capital driving imperial expansion. Cain and Hopkins put forth the idea that in order to understand the development of the British Empire we must put the metropolitan economy at the centre of our analysis. The British Empire, they argue, was driven by “Gentlemanly Capitalism,” in other words, finance and commercial interests based in the City played a much greater role in the development of empire than did the industrial output of Great Britain. London is where imperial careers were made in it was largely in government, law, and finance driven by the landed interest and carried out by members of their social circles connected to them through gentlemanly occupations reinforced elite identities in the centre of the empire. The idea of the empire being commercial and driven by London finance and the landed interest was exported abroad through a “gentlemanly diaspora” where gentlemen without land in Great Britain then recreated a landed lifestyle in the

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<sup>26</sup> Stana Nenadic, “Introduction,” in *Scots in London in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Stana Nenadic (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010), 13.

<sup>27</sup> Nenadic, “Introduction,” 41.

colonies.<sup>28</sup> However this interpretation overlooks the exchange of ideas of members located in the gentlemanly diaspora who settled abroad. Members of the HSL who were lower down the social scale were given opportunities in London to further careers, which led them to a landed lifestyle, for example, in British North America with fortunes built in the London financial houses and the Canadian fur trade. These were men who spent a great deal of time across the Atlantic where there was a constant exchange of ideas and development of imperial identities.

On the other hand, the New Imperial history advocates assessing the impact of the peripheries of empire on the core (usually located in London), in order to determine both domestic and colonial Imperial identities. However, MacKillop explains, this writing of history has tended to overlook distinctions *within* the domestic British society that also had an impact in imperial settings. Examples such as Scottish identity, which were formed in London and in the empire, are also shown to differentiate British imperial participation.<sup>29</sup> We have to be aware that imperial networks were made up of reciprocal relationships, which influenced each other in a variety of ways, and not just how England affected imperial relationships both within the United Kingdom and in colonial settings or how the peripheries influenced the core.<sup>30</sup> Imperial networks are more complex than a core vs. periphery relationship, especially when it comes to identities. Imperial networks

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<sup>28</sup> P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (London, Longman, 1993); J.G.A Pocock, "The Limits and Divisions of British History: In Search of the Unknown Subject," *The American Historical Review* 87, no. 2 (April, 1982): 311-336.

<sup>29</sup> MacKillop, "Locality, Nation, and Empire," 57; Gordon Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity in Scotland, 1820-1833* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008); David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); John M. MacKenzie, "Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English Worlds? The Historiography of a Four Nations Approach to the History of the British Empire." in *Race Nation and Empire: Making Histories, 1750-Present*, ed. Catherine Hall and Keith McClelland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> John M. Mackenzie and T.M. Devine, "Introduction," in *Scotland and the British Empire*, ed. John M. MacKenzie and T.M. Devine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 2-4.

were formed in reciprocal ways through networks forged by specific cultural groups, in this case Highland elites, which contributed to British imperial identities.

Assessing reciprocal relationships within imperial networks also benefit from a multi-dimensional approach, which places the expanding networks of Highland elites within the HSL's institutional networks. The Atlantic world as a concept is a place with interconnected relationships within a fluid area encompassing the 'British Atlantic world' as well as a larger social system encompassing myriad places and myriad peoples bound together "into a common network of exchanges...shared language and laws" as well as being reinforced by trade and kinship networks."<sup>31</sup> The idea of common language does not apply here other than in part; the British Empire was conducted largely through the use of English, the *lingua franca* of trade within this international system, which included areas not within the Atlantic area such as India and South Africa in its conceptual fold. The Highland Society of London also brought the Gaelic language into its imperial framework. As chapter five will illuminate, the rescue and promotion of the Gaelic language required the reciprocal support of its institutional framework and money for projects on Gaelic literary works and Gaelic education came from throughout the British Empire. But it was not just Gaelic that helped promote Highland identity in the British Empire, revival and promotion of Highland culture by the HSL, in the form of language, poetry, songs, music and dress, facilitated the Society's improvement agenda.

Highland Scottish agency in the formation of the cultural contribution to British identity, or Highlandism, is only just starting to be studied. Highlandism normally signifies an Anglo-Scottish contribution to British identity, one that highlights Scottish

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<sup>31</sup> David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, "Introduction" in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1-3.

difference within the Union but was an identity, which did not directly challenge British unionism. However, recent work being done on Highland contributions to Highlandism shows that the first glimmers of Highlandism began immediately after the last Jacobite rebellion and came from within the Highlands itself in order to ease the passage into the British fiscal-military state through the use of Highland symbols in the army.<sup>32</sup> Matthew Dziennik has shown that in the period following the Disarming Act (what I refer to as the ‘Proscription Era’ (1746-1782)), many Highland elites had been actively trying to integrate themselves into the growing British fiscal-military state and the opportunities it provided; therefore, they were not victims of outside forces. Highlandism was the advancement of Highland imagery by Highlanders in the post-Jacobite period through the British military in order to illuminate their importance to the British state. “The Highlands,” Dziennik argues, “had national associations because certain interests *within* the region wanted it to be so.” Lowland Scots were able to employ Highlandism because it also suited their motivations of integrating Scottishness within a wider sense of Britishness, both culturally and politically.<sup>33</sup> Owing to the time period he discusses (largely the Proscription Era) great emphasis is placed on the military origins of Highlandism. An important strategy for Highland elites to integrate into the Hanoverian (Whig) elite who dominated politics for much of the Proscription Era was through the military. Loyalty to the crown was expressed through Highland regiments’ (raised by loyal Highland elites) participation in British wars. The British government put aside fears of a Jacobite resurgence in this period in order to raise much-needed Highland regiments, especially during the Seven Year’s War when an invasion from France was

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<sup>32</sup> Dziennik, “Whig Tartan,” 117-119.

<sup>33</sup> Dziennik, “Whig Tartan,” 119.

likely. Many Highland regiments that served had tartan uniforms and saw numerous victories, and thus this war and others in the late eighteenth century solidified the image of Highlanders as tartan-clad warriors fighting on behalf of the imperial nation. This was in spite of the fact that Highlanders were in a minority, in terms of raw numbers, of British soldiers.<sup>34</sup> However, as is argued in chapter one, Highlandism was also used to promote non-military identities as well. The promotion of Highland culture went beyond military symbolism to include history as well as non-military expressions of Highland culture such as Highland poetry as well as Classical pipe music, or *piobaireachd*. Cultural expressions such as these took place at piping competitions, and at meetings of the HSL, in addition to their exploration in publications of the HSL, so that the public could become more aware of the importance of Highlandism in British culture at large. This process rehabilitated the Highlander and normalized Highland culture for a pan-Britannic audience who had at times been hostile to Highlanders, particularly after the last Jacobite Rebellion. The Society depended not only on people within their immediate circles and their extended networks for support but also the British government and the British public.

Highlandism's intellectual origins began in the Scottish Enlightenment and played an important role in the dominant improvement discourse, especially after the '45. However the historical creation of the Highlands by outsiders has much earlier origins. The Lowland and Highland divide that we know today does not have deep roots in history. Before 1300, the terms 'Highland' and 'Lowland' were unknown in Scottish

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<sup>34</sup> Dziennik, "Whig Tartan," 119 and *passim*; Murray G.H. Pittock, "Plaiding the Invention of Scotland," in *From Tartan to Tartanry: Scottish Culture, History and Myth*, ed. Ian Brown (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 38-39.

historiography.<sup>35</sup> After around 1300 the Highlands were created as a geographical and cultural space and as a “culture region” were associated with the language the Highlanders spoke: Gaelic. As the Highlands emerged as an intellectual concept so markedly different than the rest of Great Britain (with the exception of Wales, which has cultural similarity through language), Highlanders, respectively, were deemed a “people beyond direct political control and cultural improvement, but demanding of it.” As the Gaelic language began to retreat from the Scottish Lowlands, the Highlands became a distinct cultural region beyond the spatial and temporal imagination of the Lowlands.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, by the eighteenth century, the Highlands had been firmly set up in opposition to the Lowlands. However, the eighteenth century was also not the first time the Highlands were deemed an area in need of Improvement. For example, in the seventeenth century the Highlands had been part of efforts by the government to unite all of Scotland into a single ‘commonwealth’ through (albeit unsuccessful) attempts to remove the Gaelic language, the very defining feature of most Highlanders.<sup>37</sup> However, at the same time, the history of the Gaels had once enjoyed a privileged position in Scottish political culture despite the Lowland/Highland divide that had been solidified by the middle ages. Highland Scots, most of whom spoke Gaelic, were thought to be descendants of the ancient and independent Gaelic kingdom of Dalriada, a fourth century dynasty originally from Ireland, which consolidated all the Scottish inhabitants between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. This identity, although largely mythical, was appropriated by the pluralist Lowland Scots and contributed to a strong collective identity used both to

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<sup>35</sup> Jane Dawson, “The Gaidhealtachd and the Emergence of the Scottish Highlands,” in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 268.

<sup>36</sup> Withers, “The Historical Creation,” 143-145.

<sup>37</sup> Withers, “The Historical Creation,” 144-145.

distinguish them from and counter to England's claims to suzerainty over the whole island of Britain. The political identity of Scotland had been from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century "essentially Gaelic, dominated by the idea of the kingdom's continuous descent from an ancient Dalriadic line of kings, who had originally settled in the west Highlands" that was championed by the Scottish Renaissance scholars such as Hector Boece (1465-1536) and George Buchanan (1506-1582), who wrote histories that championed the Dalriadic past.<sup>38</sup> Boece introduced the idea that since 330 BC Scotland had had an uninterrupted line of kings, the first being the Dalriadic King Fergus MacFerquhard. It was Buchanan's *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (1582) that had the longest staying power, being accepted by many Scottish elites until the Enlightenment.<sup>39</sup> In his *Historia* Buchanan, who drew on the work of Boece and was most likely a Gaelic speaker himself, argued that Scottish kings had been elected by Clan chiefs. This system of election was based on the traditional Highland custom of tanistry (*Tànaiste*), which dictated that inheritance of land and power was appointed from within the clan, or kinship unit, and thus differed markedly from the traditional English custom of primogeniture. This, Buchanan argued, meant that kings were held accountable to other elites in their kinship group, preventing tyranny and fostering what Roger A. Mason calls "a feudal-baronial ideology—a form of aristocratic conciliarism—that encouraged the nobility to see themselves as the king's natural-born counsellors, as responsible as he was for ensuring the common good of the realm as a whole." In this way, Buchanan argued Scotland possessed a "limited constitutional monarchy," because kings were elected and their power was kept in check by the clan system. This gave Scotland a much older

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<sup>38</sup> Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity," 1205.

<sup>39</sup> William Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation An Historic Quest* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 83.

organized system of governance than that of England, and proved Scots' sovereignty and autonomy over their own territory, with a Gaelic-centred power base.<sup>40</sup>

While the Dalriadic past was being embraced by Scotland's political elites in the medieval and early modern periods, Gaelic Scots were coming under increased scrutiny, gradually being regarded as 'savages'. James IV attempted to bring the Highlands closer to the Lowlands politically by seizing the MacDonald Lordship of the Isles in 1493. However this created a power vacuum, which James' government could not fill and had the effect of isolating the Highlands politically and separating them even more culturally from the Lowlands. It is from this point that Dodgshon argues the traditional clan system began to unravel.<sup>41</sup> This separation led many Lowlanders to ridicule Highlanders' lifestyle and language causing increased contempt towards them over the centuries. By the end of the sixteenth century, a marked hostility and contempt occurred between the Scots-speaking Lowlanders and the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders that was "commonly articulated in polarized terms as the difference between Lowland 'civility' and Highland 'barbarism'."<sup>42</sup> In the eighteenth century the 'barbarian' nature of the Highlander was emphasised within a discourse of improvement that began around 1750. As Peter Womack argues, this discourse, which portrayed the Highlander as a "fool," a comic character in British theatre; a "rogue," a military threat; and a "beggar," poverty stricken, allowed the British establishment to "convert the uncouth savage" and implement outside

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<sup>40</sup> Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 125-126; Roger. A. Mason, "Civil Society and the Celts: Hector Boece, George Buchanan and the Ancient Scottish Past," in *Scottish History: the Power of the Past*, ed. Edward Cowan and Richard Finlay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 95-98; 109; Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 85.

<sup>41</sup> Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords*, 7-31.

<sup>42</sup> Mason, "Civil Society and the Celts," 95.

authority over the Highlands.<sup>43</sup> The Reverend John Lane Buchanan, writing in the 1780s, drew a comparison between, “the African in the West Indies and the Celtic slave, or ‘scallag’ [scallywag], in the Western Hebrides.” Celts, he argued, were not at fault for their lack of food or industry, they are drawn into slavery “by a moral necessity, equally invincible; by a train of circumstances, which are beyond his power to control, but either to serve some master as a scallag or often to protract a miserable existence for some time, in the forest, and near the uninhabited sea-shores where he may pick up some shellfish, to perish, with his wife, perhaps, and little ones, through cold and hunger.”<sup>44</sup>

In spite of this perceived separation between Highlander and Lowlander from the high Middle Ages, the Dalriadic past held strong as a usable history for Lowlanders until the eighteenth century, when enlightened scholars began to conjecture man’s social and economic development, in which Highlanders were placed well below other Britons on a hierarchical scale of progress. Scholars such as David Hume (1711-1776), Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), and Adam Ferguson (1723-1816) began to explore the origins of civil society, which placed the supposed ‘primitive’ Highlands in opposition to the polite commercial societies of Lowland Scotland and Southern England. The Scottish Enlightenment’s preoccupation with man’s social progress conjectured mankind’s primitive origins and the uneven way some societies seemed to progress at different stages through social, economic, and cultural development, also known as Stadialism.<sup>45</sup> These men constructed Highlanders as ready-made example of primitive peoples who were stagnating in a retarded state of economic development and therefore had more in

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<sup>43</sup> Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance*, chapter 2.

<sup>44</sup> John Lane Buchannan, *Travel in the Western Hebrides from 1782 to 1790* (Edinburgh, 1793), 195.

<sup>45</sup> See: Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

common with indigenous peoples British explorers encountered around the world than the majority of Britons.<sup>46</sup> To enlightened thinkers, the Highlands had become an embarrassing anachronism: how could these supposed ‘savages’ be living within the same country as the more economically advanced Scottish Lowlands? Histories written by these ‘historical sociologists’ portrayed Scotland as an economic backwater sunk in feudalism. It was through a stroke of luck that through the political union with England [and Wales] Scots could begin to construct a constitutional history based on English institutions and the idea of English progress but rewritten to exclude the most extravagant English ethnic boasting. North Britishness, Kidd argues, was not a pan-British identity; it was the result of the Anglicization of Scottish Whig culture. The subversion of the Gaelic past and the adoption of English constitutional history was “the obverse side of the Anglo-British orientation of North Britons.” In other words, politically speaking, North Britishness and Anglo-Britishness were one and the same. Highlandism, for example, was used to differentiate Scottish identity within the Anglo-British paradigm, at times when Scots felt they were not receiving their equal share within the Union.<sup>47</sup>

It was as a result of Stadialist inquiry that, apparently, would be the final blow to Gaelic culture as the source of a usable past for all of Scotland. The Highlands were regarded as an embarrassing anachronism of a “retarded primitive society” by some Lowland Scottish intellectuals that would be given the same attention by the Scottish literati as was given to the native inhabitants of North America, a people with whom the Highlanders were often compared. The proud Gaelic past that had stood for all of Scottish identity would be abandoned and Scotland’s Gaelic culture would be reduced to

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<sup>46</sup> Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity.”

<sup>47</sup> Kidd, “North Britishness,” 366; Kidd, “North Britishness,” 376; 381.

the status of savagery within the Stadialist paradigm by political and urban Scottish elites keen to integrate into the new British state.<sup>48</sup> Within this paradigm, abandoning the Dalriadic past came easily to Scotland's political elites. Lowland Scottish elites began to emphasize their ethnic similarity to the English and they adopted an Anglo-British version of constitutional history.<sup>49</sup> Following the '45, Anglo-British improvement was rationalized by those who wished to see Scotland's embarrassing feudal past and history of Jacobitism erased from the history of Britain within the Stadialist paradigm, and Stadialist theories provided the ideological backing for the Whig government and its supporters for improving the Highlands and the Highlanders during the 1750s and 1760s. The Disarming Act and the abolition of Heritable Jurisdictions were the implementation of these theories into law. Those who were attempting to apply reason to knowledge were operating within a "context of quantifiable improvement," or as Murray G.H. Pittock puts it: "the teleology of civility."<sup>50</sup> This teleological approach has contributed to the idea that Scottish identity in this period took on an English character through the adoption of its constitutional history, which argued that English society had been progressing to political and societal greatness since the signing of the Magna Carta. For many Lowland Scots, this version of British history and identity retained only certain elements of Highland identity associated with the cult of primitivism such as songs, ballads, and emulation for Highland martial valour.

James Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry exemplified for the primitivists a safe cultural addition to Scottish identity by those who worried Scottishness would be subsumed by a more dominant English identity within the boundaries of Anglo-Britishness. As Richard

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<sup>48</sup> Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity," 1206.

<sup>49</sup> See Colin Kidd, "North Britishness," 361-382.

<sup>50</sup> Pittock, "The Teleology of Civility," 82.

Sher has shown the literary circle that pressured Macpherson into finding a great Gaelic epic had its own motives for supporting a culture with which it had tenuous ties. Literary men such as Henry Home, Alexander Carlyle, Adam Ferguson, Hugh Blair, William Robertson, Lord Elibank, Sir Adam Fergusson, and Robert Chalmers (the “Ossianic ‘cabal’”) were, in the 1750s, committed to struggles of literary respectability and the Scots militia.<sup>51</sup> Home and other Scots literati had encountered English rejection of their literary works in the 1750s, especially in London, and Scots had been excluded from the Militia Act of 1757, largely over fears of a Jacobite resurgence, which to many English people all Scots were suspect. Ossianic poetry is overflowing with themes of military valour and this group of Scots felt that if the English nation could be made aware that Scots not only possessed a loyal, military spirit but a literary tradition equal to anything the English, not to mention the ancient Greeks, could produce then Scotland could secure itself against English prejudice, the threat of French invasion, and be a virtuous nation worthy of union with England. Scotland, they argued, was the ancient home of British liberty over that of “free-born Englishmen.”<sup>52</sup>

But we must be clear that this is how outsiders portrayed the Highlands and used Highland culture for their own end. In many ways, for example, the Scots militia issue had more to do with intellectuals’ fears that a standing army and industrialization threatened the safety of the nation by robbing the proletariat of the imagination or curiosity needed for the British nation to flourish.<sup>53</sup> The Historical Sociologists, to use

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<sup>51</sup> Richard Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 255.

<sup>52</sup> Luke Gibbons, “This Sympathetic Bond: Ossian, Celticism and Colonialism,” in *Celticism*, ed. Terence Brown (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996), 285; Sher, *Church and University*, 259-261.

<sup>53</sup> Marvin Becker, *The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century: a Privileged Moment in the History of England, Scotland, and France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), xii.

Kidd's term, like Hume or Robertson, manipulated history in order to justify the Hanoverian succession because they sought patronage and political appointments from within its circles. These men were operating at the height of eighteenth century Whig politics, which made no room for difference in its political and economic discourse. The adoption of English constitutional history as the history of Britain was seen as the fastest way to bringing Scotland in line with England in terms of economic and social advance.<sup>54</sup> In other words, according to this line of thinking, the constitutional history of the Scots, based on the Buchananite history was no longer needed. Highlandism, as constructed by outsiders, was the result of fears of cultural homogeneity within British identity. Highlanders, in other words, have been left out of the equation. As Withers argues, "the historiographical creation of the Highlands from the eighteenth century [when the foundations of Highlandism was constructed]—has either misrepresented Highlander's views or it has omitted them altogether."<sup>55</sup> These outsiders' constructions of Highland identities, especially as they relate to British imperial identities, have become distorted within a "meta-narrative of Highland defeatism [which] has become powerful."<sup>56</sup>

This dissertation will not only explore Scottish Highlanders' cultural contributions to empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries but also their intellectual contribution to economic development both within the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and the British Empire. Historians have argued that in the late eighteenth century Highland landowners fully embraced the Whig version of economic and social progress and either subordinated or threw off their personal obligations (*duthchas*) to

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<sup>54</sup> David Allan, "'This Inquisitive Age': Past and Present in the Scottish Enlightenment," *The Scottish Historical Review* 76, no. 201: (April 1997): 70.

<sup>55</sup> Withers, "The Historical Creation of the Highlands," 144-145.

<sup>56</sup> Matthew Dziennik, "Fatal land: War, Empire, and the Highland Soldier in British America, 1756-1783" (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2011), 10-11.

their people. According to these historians, landowners were keen to keep their tenants only for a stable population to undertake kelp manufacturing and to recruit for the various British military campaigns. People were to be moved (or cleared) onto small coastal crofts to make way for increased sheep and cattle farming, which made landowners more money than from tenants' rents. Alternatively, the argument goes, people were forced off of their land and either emigrated or moved to other parts of Scotland, or eventually England.<sup>57</sup>

Yet from the viewpoint of recent work on the Highland Scottish diaspora a more dynamic picture of land change and emigration has emerged that rejects the notion that there was a systematic 'forced exodus' from the Highlands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>58</sup> Adding further support to the need for reassessment, analysis of land change has shown that the Highlands had been transitioning from a traditional to a commercial society well before the eighteenth century—a process that had been occurring since the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493, and which saw the steady decline of Gaelic power and influence in Scotland. Scholars have shown this steady decline was the result of both internal and external forces. Even before the Clearances were underway there was little desire on the part of most native Highland landowners to return to traditional Highland land management. However this did not mean that all Highland landowners intended to clear tenants off of their land—many, especially indigenous Highland landowners, retained their paternal obligations to their

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<sup>57</sup> James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community* [new ed.] (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000); Allan I. MacInnes, "Scottish Gaeldom: The First Phase of Clearance," in *People and Society in Scotland Volume I*, ed. T.M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988); for a recent attempt to argue against this see: Finlay McKichan, "Lord Seaforth and Highland Estate Management in the First Phase of Clearance," *Scottish Historical Review* 86 (2007): 50-68.

<sup>58</sup> Bueltmann et al., "Introduction: Diaspora, Associations and Scottish Identity," 1; Eric Richards, *Debating the Highland Clearances* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

tenants and sought alternatives to clearance.<sup>59</sup> While extremely useful, these rich new perspectives have focused primarily on economic forces rather than linking economics to cultural and benevolent motivations driving many landowners to develop Highland society on their own terms in the midst of growing Anglo-British influence. Highland culture was to be preserved through economic improvement, and charitable support often came in the form of employment. The support for Highland culture in a time of rapid social and economic change was not incompatible with social and economic improvement. Rather, the way forward for developing the Highland Empire was progress coupled with preservation.

This dissertation provides an alternate view of social and economic improvement during the Improvement Era that existed alongside the dominant narrative. Unlike Whig strategies for economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, which was driven largely by the enlightened literati and Government social policy advocating economic uniformity with the rest of Britain, this dissertation will explore a ‘Tory’, improvement agenda, which advocated for capitalism tempered by paternalism (or charity). For the sake of ease, the terminology that will be used here to differentiate the two strands of improvement will be Anglo-British (Whig) and Scoto-British (Tory), although within these intellectual circles there was some overlap. The intellectual trends forming Scoto-British improvement were largely driven by developing classic conservative economics, which began to take shape in the 1780s as a reaction to the loss

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<sup>59</sup> T.M. Devine, *Clearance and Improvement: Land, Power and People in Scotland 1700-1900* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2006); Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, 1493-1820* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 7-31; Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1996); Allan I. Macinnes, “Landownership, Land Use and Elite Enterprise in Scottish Gaeldom: From Clanship to Clearance in Argyllshire, 1699-1858,” in *Scottish Elites*, ed. T.M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1994), 3.

of the American colonies. Those who supported the Tories blamed this loss on protectionist policies that characterized Whig economic policy for much of the eighteenth century.<sup>60</sup> Conservative ideology in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was at its heart counterrevolutionary. Even Whigs had become fragmented because of the American and French revolutions, separating into a variety of labels including “Old,” “New,” and “Scientific,” with even some Whigs being labelled as Tories by those who opposed them. But the men we find in HSL circles were, by the formation of the HSL, leaning overwhelmingly to the Dundas/Pitt Tory camp, which believed in defending British trade and British colonies, as well as defending the British constitution from outside threats. Although some of the men we find in HSL circles still considered themselves Whigs, or some, like Henry Beaufoy who was heavily involved in the improvement of the herring fisheries with the HSL and its colleagues, were Independents, these men came together with a common goal: supporting Highlanders and the Highlands, and strong political persuasions could be set aside. Regardless of members’ individual political affiliations developing classical conservative economics increasingly drove the Highland societies’ improvement plans. However, most high-profile members of the Highland Societies were politically, or in the very least economically, conservative (many were also Tories), and as such they employed a variety of economic theories in their improvement schemes. The preservation of a natural social order was not incompatible with economic growth, or (controlled) free trade. One of the defining characteristics of classical conservative ideology is that it simultaneously or successively embraced a collection of divergences including free trade versus imperial protection.

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<sup>60</sup> Gordon Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity in Scotland, 1820-1833* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 11; Atle L Wold, “Loyalism in Scotland in the 1790s,” in *Reactions to Revolutions: the 1790s and their Aftermath*, ed. Ulrich Broich et al. (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007), 131.

Scoto-British improvers maintained that as long as wealth was created at the top and jobs created a trickle-down effect would occur, people would be employed, and would not rely on the state for assistance. The Highlands and Islands were not to be a place of equal rights for all; a ruling elite would remain. However, this ruling elite had a responsibility to the community at large (*'noblesse oblige'*), including providing for common people, because benevolence is a key characteristic of classic conservatism. In other words, poverty was to be eliminated through the creation of wealth within a hierarchical framework. Accordingly, free trade was to exist both within the 'borders' of the British Empire, borders that would be more secure through the accumulation of wealth.<sup>61</sup> Classic conservative economics advocated community support within a social hierarchy. Protectionist measures for the local economy would blend gradually with some free market ideas, which were becoming more fashionable in this period. Within an accepted social hierarchy, wealth was to be brought to all sectors of society in the Highlands and Islands in order for the community at large to benefit. In other words, Scoto-British improvement blended traditional Highland Scottish economic practices with modern, capitalist theories to develop an area, which was unlike the rest of Britain and therefore needed special attention. The ways in which economic improvement schemes were advertised to potential subscribers and the British government was that strengthening one area of the British Isles strengthened the whole. And in the case of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, strengthening the economy took special measures. Scoto-Britishness is, then, a patriotic British identity that highlighted the importance of the Highlands and Islands to the wider British economy. A genuine concern for the health and well being of

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<sup>61</sup> Corey Robin, *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Burke to Sarah Palin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Robert Eccleshall, "English Conservatism as Ideology," *Political Studies* 15 (1977): 62.

native Highlanders was an integral part of Scoto-British improvement, and many of the economic and social improvement schemes developed by the HSL and its partners, held this in mind.

These ‘special measures’ also extended to the way in which the Highlands and Islands interacted with the fiscal-military state. The British fiscal-military state saw an impressive expansion during the period covered by this dissertation in order to fund the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars against France, which threatened British imperial hegemony.<sup>62</sup> This construction of British counterrevolutionary conservatism is also known as Loyalism, which resisted radicalism arguing that maintaining the status quo would build the economy.<sup>63</sup> Dundas, as a member of the HSL, was the direct link from the HSL to the British government. Dundas as Secretary of War from 1794 to 1801 worked hard to expand British interests abroad and during his tenure we see Britain push even further into the West and East Indies as well as into France. Under the Dundas/Pitt hegemony the 1790s witnessed the largest imperial expansion in Britain’s history, taking French territories in the Caribbean: French Tobago, St. Lucia, and Martinique. Spanish Trinidad was taken in 1797. The British also gained territory from the Dutch occupying the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomalee, Malacca, Amboyna and Bandia. When the French moved into Egypt in 1798, which threatened India, Henry Dundas “trembled at the thought of losing British controlled territories in the sub-continent.”<sup>64</sup> British control over the seas and the capture of these new colonies saw trade revenues swell, as well as imports from abroad rising by nearly 59% from 1790-1800, “and the re-export of

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<sup>62</sup> Stone, “Introduction,” 9.

<sup>63</sup> Gordon Pentland, *The Spirit of Union* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), 7.

<sup>64</sup> Roger Morris, *Naval Power and British Culture 1760-1850: Public Trust and Government Ideology* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 12-13.

domestic products to the colonies rose 187%.<sup>65</sup> Highland and Island development was to rise with this reduction in free trade during this period and Loyalism to British products first appealed to Tories found in HSL circles, as a result. Loyalism as an ideology, as chapter six will illuminate, lasted longer than it did in Britain in Upper Canada. It was within this environment that many elite Highland settlers found a suitable place to settle.

Scots in general, and Highlanders in particular, participated in this defence of Imperial Britishness out of proportion to the size of the country. Certainly members of the HSL were in this camp: they argued for the defence of British ideologies in the face of threats from the Continent and favoured limited free trade either because they were direct participants in battle or had business interests in British colonies. The Tories in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century expanded the fiscal-military state to match the needs of the wars against Napoleon's France. This was achieved largely through borrowing and levying of taxes, something never before done on this scale in Britain. According to Gordon Pentland "Britain was the only state in Europe which, under the pressure of the French wars, successfully turned itself into a 'fiscal state', able efficiently to tax a large proportion of the nation's wealth and combine this with large-scale borrowing."<sup>66</sup>

Unfortunately for the Highlands and Islands, in order to help fund the wars against France, the British government placed duties on Highland goods at such a high level that it was holding back economic development in the area. The materials needed to develop traditional industries such as whisky and fishing either went underground or stagnated as a result. As we will see in chapters three and four, the HSL and its sister

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<sup>65</sup> Morris, *Naval Power*, 13.

<sup>66</sup> Roger Morris. *Naval Power*, 9; Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity*, 10; Pentland, *The Spirit of Union*, 7.

society, the Highland Society of Scotland (HSS), acted as political lobbyists in the late eighteenth century and massaged the government into reducing or eliminating taxes and duties in the Highlands. Andrew MacKillop has argued that Highland Landlords were part of a political culture, which “stressed loyalty to, and interaction with, the British ‘fiscal-military state’.” This increased participation with the fiscal-military state, he argues, took place through specialized lobby groups “that sought to influence the state, and more especially parliament, over legislation it had either passed or intended to pass.” He argues that these groups tended to work within rather than oppose the state and included such groups as the Irish Lobby or the West India Merchants. These groups represented a broad range of interests within the Atlantic World and “the aim of all, ultimately, was either to influence or, preferably, to ‘colonize’ the fiscal-military state and thereby access and exploit its financial resources.” The HSL and the HSS were no different. Both societies were engaged in political lobbying. Members set up committees that brought politicians and other members together to discuss policy changes and members were very successful in pushing for policy changes even at the height of the Napoleonic wars. The building of the Caledonian and Crinan canals, for example, which garnered considerable public, as well as private, funds were the result of Highland political lobbying from within HSL circles.<sup>67</sup> For the HSL, the answer to Highland and Island economic development lay in integrating Highlanders into a broad imperial framework, whether through the trade in Highland products, without penalizing the Highlands through high duties on products necessary for development, or participation of

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<sup>67</sup> See chapter three. Andrew MacKillop, “The Political Culture of the Scottish Highlands from Culloden to Waterloo,” *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003), 513-523. MacKillop mistakenly argues that the HSL quickly divested itself of political matters soon after the Society secured the repeal of the Disarming Act in 1782. However, one of the primary activities of members of the HSL was political lobbying.

Highlanders in colonizing territories abroad. Within economic development, however, was a constant effort to protect Highland culture, at times saving it through modern Improvement techniques such as intellectual inquiry and education. In other words, Highland culture was carried forward into the modern era through strategies of progress and preservation, which was necessary in a time of massive social and economic change.

### **Approaching the Evidence**

This project approaches social and economic improvement through the association and so the Highland Society of London papers at the National Library of Scotland as well as published material by the Society were used extensively. Highland history can be difficult to piece together owing to the lack of consistent records (or records at all) but the HSL papers contain a variety of published and manuscript sources, which allow the historian to piece together the Society's activities, the members' varied intentions, activities, and accomplishments, and the material is fairly consistent for the period covered by this project. The papers also provide a window into who were active members and who were casual since members present at various committee meetings are always listed. Hitherto an associational approach to uncovering the HSL's activities and the institutional framework has not been undertaken and it provided me with an opportunity to use these papers in a new way.

Chapter one draws primarily from published material by the HSL. This chapter focuses on the public persona the HSL wanted to portray and so much can be gleaned from the published works. As a Society that was reliant on public support for much of its

activities as well as conscious of the image it wished to portray to the public the published works, largely written on behalf of the Society by Sir John Sinclair, one of the most notable members of the Society in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, were widely available at a reasonable cost usually of one shilling. Sinclair's publications largely covered that of Highland culture and he published a history of the Society in 1813.<sup>68</sup> It is these published accounts by Sinclair that historians have relied on when the HSL has been mentioned in the historiography, if it is mentioned at all. However we must be mindful that these publications were intended largely for public consumption and so only a particular part of what the HSL wanted the public to know about them is represented in these works. They were directed at an often hostile British public who mostly did not know much about the Highlands or Highland culture other than the scant travel accounts that were coming out at the time. The HSL were rehabilitating Highland history and culture in order to garner support from those who may have had preconceived notions about Highlanders.

These HSL's manuscript papers contain minute books, correspondence between members and with other societies or groups covered by this project, treatises by important members, memorials, advertisements, accounts (albeit scattered), some advertisement and publication receipts, and receipts for the cost of musicians and singers at meetings as well as for food and drink at meetings and parties at the Freemasons' Tavern, the HSL's

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<sup>68</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic with a Literal Translation into Latin by the late Robert Macfarlan, A.M. together with Dissertation on the Authenticity of Ossian* (London, 1807); Sir John Sinclair. *Prospectus of the intended publication of Ossian's Poems in the Original Gaelic; with a verbal translation into Latin by Robert Macfarlan, A.M. Explaining the Circumstances Which Have Hitherto Retarded the Printing Thereof* (London, 1804); Sir John Sinclair, *Observations on the propriety of preserving the Dress, The Language, The Poetry, The Music, and the Customs, of the Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland. Addressed to the Highland Societies of London and of Scotland* (London, 1804); Sir John Sinclair, *Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23.

meeting place from the 1790s onwards.<sup>69</sup> The Tavern receipts were particularly useful as they demonstrated not only how many people were in attendance at meetings and dinners but also that dinners at the Tavern were lavish affairs, filled with revelry and expensive wines. Although the secretaries did not have an official account book (or it may have been lost or misplaced) accounts appear in a separate sheet and would often be dealt with and signed by members at major events.<sup>70</sup> The accounts and receipts available provided evidence as to how much of the Society's funds were spent on various charitable and improvement projects, and how this spending changed over time. As particular need arose, the Society's funds would be diverted to a particular cause or event. By the early nineteenth century as the Society's funds grew, spending on certain projects such as the Caledonian Asylum would occur at regular intervals.

It was from these rich papers that the networks built by the HSL were revealed. Scholars have noted that it is through the formation of personal and formal networks that we can analyze migrant experiences. These networks vary in how they function and to what degree they provided social mobility for those located within them and were formed in many different ways. Recent approaches in the study of Scottish migration have employed the use of personal testimonies, memoirs, and oral history to try and get a better sense of the emigrant experience, while paying close attention to the drawbacks of using these sources.<sup>71</sup> However, personal correspondence in this project has been minimal. The ideas and intentions of members were gleaned by examining the formal

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<sup>69</sup> NLS Dep. 268; NLS Acc. 10165.

<sup>70</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16; Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>71</sup> Angela McCarthy, "Introduction: Personal Testimonies and Scottish Migration," in *Scottish Migrant Networks and Identities Since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Angela McCarthy (London and New York: Tauris, 2006), 2-12.

networks formed by the HSL. As members came together for a common goal simply by being part of this particular elite group we can examine these intentions as those of the dominant number of members, especially those who were active members.

In order to fill the gap in the personal motivations, which could have been gathered from personal correspondences, this project utilizes a biographical approach. Where a particular member is highlighted or an intellectual relevant to the HSL's projects appears, a brief biography is given about that person. These biographies are then threaded through the project giving the reader a sense of the kind of people involved in the HSL's activities and networks as they developed over time. Overwhelmingly these men were Tories or in the very least supporters of Pitt and Dundas. Appendices are included at the end of the project to give the reader a visual representation of the HSL's membership over time including highlighting those who sat in important positions in the Society and titles of important members. Membership over the span of the project remained remarkably consistent with a balance of lawyers, merchants, military men, politicians and peers, and by the early nineteenth century members of the royal family. Hundreds of men, therefore, were part of the immediate network of the HSL over the period covered by this project.<sup>72</sup> Men who were active in London building social and political connections by participating in various meetings and social events of the HSL can be found simultaneously on membership lists of two or more of the branch and subsidiary societies brought within the HSL's institutional fold such as Alexander MacDonell, the first Bishop of Kingston in Upper Canada (member of both the HSL and the HSC), as well as George Dempster, MP (member of the HSS and the BFS) and the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of

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<sup>72</sup> See appendices 1.1-1.5.

Argyll (who was a member of the HSL, the HSS, and the BFS, Argyll also sat variously as president of the HSS and the HSL, and governor of the BFS).

The networks were first established by the HSL by designating existing associations to be a part of their network as in the Highland Society of Glasgow, which had been open in that city since 1727. After this the Highland Society of Scotland (HSS), which opened shortly after the HSL and shared much of the same high-profile members, was added to the network and members were given automatic membership to the HSL. Especially in the case of the HSS soon after it was designated the HSL's sister society the two societies began to work closely on a number of projects as evidenced by correspondence between these societies. In addition to running piping competitions, the HSL and the HSS worked closely together on directing economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. All of these activities were found within the minute books and provided me with the strands to continue researching the framework. Further from there the connections between London and Inverness were hinted at and then led me to the Highland Archives to look at the papers of the Inverness burgh council. Other projects such as the Gaelic dictionary, which will be discussed in chapter five, and support of the Gaelic chapel in Dundee as well as the HSL's notable charitable activities are explored in the papers of the HSL which I supplemented with other various manuscripts available in public and private archives.

The Highland Society of Scotland Sederunt Books (meeting books), which are found at the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society's library in Ingliston revealed the reciprocal relationship and cross membership with the HSL that was necessary to uncover the improvement plan and included many references to the British Fisheries Society,

which upon my investigation completed the economic improvement network developed by the HSL. Much of this source material, with the exception of the HSS's Sederunt books, have been used, notably in Jean Dunlop's *The British Fisheries Society, 1786-1893* (1978), and the work was invaluable to me. However, Dunlop did not recognise to what extent the ideas for the development of the fisheries came from within HSL circles. By taking the empirical research further and comparing the activities of the HSL, the HSS and the BFS I was able to adapt upon Dunlop's work and provide a clearer picture of the motivations of improvers found within these circles.<sup>73</sup>

The HSS's Sederunt books gave me a much different picture of the activities of the HSS than their published transactions did. The Sederunt books reveal the development of their activities and their intentions, which at times were much different than what members intended the public to see. Notably absent from the public transactions were testimonies from common Highlanders, which do occur in the private books. There has been some work done on the HSS from an environmental perspective but within the Whig economic framework.<sup>74</sup> Again, by examining the HSS's activities within the institutional framework of the HSL the HSS's activities, at least as they pertain to the 1780s and 1790s when it concentrated largely on the Highlands, it was part of the Scoto-British economic framework.

The Highland Society of Canada papers at Library and Archives Canada completed the picture of the institutional framework. Here we find similar documents to those in the HSL archive, such as minute books and letters between the HSL and the HSC as well as between members of the HSC, accounts, membership lists and evidence of

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<sup>73</sup> Jean Dunlop, *The British Fisheries Society, 1786-1893* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1978).

<sup>74</sup> Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, *Enlightenment's Frontier: The Scottish Highlands and the Origins of Environmentalism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013).

local as well as international support for Highlanders. In this way it is evident that the HSC acted as a microcosm of the activities of the HSL. The evidence for the close connection between the Canadian branch and its parent Society were unmistakable as the HSL kept a watchful eye over their high-profile branch in British North America.

## **Chapter Structure**

The chapters that follow are a narrative of the development of the HSL's institutional framework in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. In this way we can analyze the role Highland elites found within HSL networks brought Highland culture and economic development to the heart of an imperial discourse that provided support for Highlanders wherever they were located. The activities changed over time as the institutional framework was developed. And, as other societies formed for a particular function were brought into the fold the HSL maintained contact either through socializing or monetary support. As the nexus of Highland elite power in the Metropolis the HSL maintained its role as provider of charity for Highlanders in London and as the social centre for elite Highlanders when they were in the City.

Chapter one develops the image that Highlanders in the HSL promoted both as their public and private identity. This image was necessary in order to rehabilitate Highlanders in the public's mind in order to garner public support for their improvement and charitable projects. Symbols of the past were used to promote the Highland future where Highlanders would lead the development not only of industries in the Highlands and Islands but also throughout the British Empire. A patriotic identity promoted by the

HSL left the image of Highlanders' as rebels far behind legitimizing their continued inclusion in the British fiscal-military state not only as military participants but drivers of a modern economy.

Chapter two explores the rise of the HSL in London civil society. Using the social capital built by members of the HSL through association with important high-ranking members, displays of wealth at lavish social functions, and charitable donations or projects, which were directly aimed at supporting Highland communities the HSL was able to rise to the top of London high society in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, facilitating members' abilities to lobby the British government to alter policies hindering economic growth in the Highlands and Islands as well as solicit public donations for various charitable endeavours. Committees were set up amongst HSL members in London in order to lobby the Government to support specific improvement projects. As a society with many politicians within the fold the HSL was remarkably successful in garnering public funds for specific improvement projects, notably the improvement of the herring fisheries.

Chapter three analyzes the intellectual approaches underlying Scoto-British improvement plans. Stunted economic growth in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was blamed on intellectual ideas emanating from outside of the Highlands. The HSL and the HSS sought intellectuals who would help provide an alternative plan of improvement that utilised some native ideas with modern capitalist economics, while working within a largely conservative economic framework. Intellectuals such as James Anderson, John Knox, and John Gray provided ideas steeped in political economy that examined what role the Highlands and Islands could within the broader British economy. Development

by the 1780s was not taking off in the Highlands and people were faced with constant threat of starvation, and this was blamed by the intellectuals in HSL circles on punitive economic practices that were characteristic of Whig economics. So the HSL and its colleagues at the HSS brought these ideas together to form a plan of improvement, specifically designed to develop the Highlands and Islands of Scotland using appropriate methods specific to the area's needs. The improvement plan began with the idea to develop the herring fisheries, but underlying this idea was that fishing could only develop with the foundation of fishing villages, to be built in strategic locations around the Highlands and Islands. These villages were places where not only fishing would take place but also other complementary industries (notably woollen manufacturing) would develop. This development would make the fishing villages self-sufficient settlements. These would eventually turn into settlements of real significance thereby ending the employment problems in the Highlands and Islands where many people were far too reliant on the kelp industry, which in turn was reliant on wartime booms. Added to this was the notion that other planned villages, both coastal (known as 'crofts') and planned inland villages, were also to be organized so that large areas of land would be left free for increased pastoral agriculture as it was more profitable to Highland landlords in this period. In this way, people were cleared to smaller parts of Highland estates, but were also to be provided with economic activities so they might become self-sufficient, precluding the need to emigrate. This was the cornerstone of conservative (or Scoto-British) Improvement. Employment was a form of charity and was developed by Highland landowners who were not only motivated by the need to become wealthier but also had paternalistic obligations towards the people who lived on their lands. Historians

of the Highland Clearances have largely overlooked these benevolent motivations underlying economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands.<sup>75</sup>

However, Highland landowners were not the only ones to help develop the improvement plan. Common Highlanders were largely suffering subsistence crises for much of the eighteenth century, and a large part of social and economic improvement in the Highlands was to include ways in which to secure subsistence for the people who lived there. Planned villages in particular were in need of reliable food supplies in order to remain self-sufficient, as well, improved methods of raising cattle and sheep were sought in the often-rough terrain and weather of the Highlands and Islands. So Scoto-British Improvers devised ways in which to solicit information from common Highlanders who had the knowledge with which to grow food and raise animals in difficult situations. Chapter four, therefore, explores economic surveys undertaken by the HSL's sister Society the HSS. The surveys were largely a joint venture between the two societies and drew upon other similar surveys being undertaken at the same time such as the (Old) Statistical Account, by HSL and HSS member, Sir John Sinclair. Whereas the Statistical Account surveyed all of Scotland, the HSS agricultural surveys targeted all of the Highlands and Islands, and area, which included areas considered to be spatially and temporally 'the Highlands' by Scoto-British improvers. According to Highland elites located within HSL circles, the Highlands were a well-defined area. Perceptions about what the Highlands and Islands actually are have shifted over time. By the medieval era the "Highlands" were beginning to emerge in opposition to the Lowlands as a place where Gaelic was spoken and barbarity remained in opposition to the supposedly more sophisticated Lowlands. Although we know that not everyone in what was considered to

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<sup>75</sup> A recent exception is: McKichan, "Lord Seaforth."

be the “Highlands” spoke Gaelic, especially in the North East, this is what outsiders used to differentiate the area from other parts of Scotland.<sup>76</sup> To members of the Highland elite under examination here, the “Highland districts” were everything north of the Highland line. According to the men under examination here, the Highlands were the counties of: Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Elgin, Cromarty, Inverness, Argyll, Bute, Perth, Aberdeen, Moray, Banff, Stirling, Forfar, and Nairn. Some of these areas are no longer considered part of the Highlands now, notably Orkney and Shetland, but were in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. These were the areas that Highland elites sought to extend their influence. Many members of the HSL owned land in these areas and therefore there is a sense of culture and history, as well as economics in their construction of the area. The “Highlands,” in other words, remained a conceptual area rather than a geographical one, although the area was conceived of in solid geographical terms.<sup>77</sup> Strategic locations were surveyed from 1789-1799 and information solicited from common Highlanders as well as other people through competition (with incentives by offering prizes), and this information was used to help improve methods of draining, irrigation, growing food for both people and animals, as well as improving animal husbandry. The results were then published in the HSS’s first *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland* in 1799. In this way progress and preservation played out in the Highlands and Islands not only in cultural matters, as will be seen in chapter one, but also in economics as well. Scoto-British improvers argued that

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<sup>76</sup> Withers, “The Historical Creation,” 143-145; David Worthington, “A Northern Scottish Maritime Region: The Moray Firth in the Seventeenth Century,” *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 23 (2011): 181-210.

<sup>77</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 1*, [2nd ed.], Edinburgh (1812), xiii-xviii.

in order to develop the Highlands and Islands, indigenous methods had to be blended with new technologies in order for development in the Highlands and Islands to occur.

Improvement was not limited to the elements of Highland Scottishness outlined above, the HSL also worked very hard to preserve and promote the Gaelic language, which is the topic of chapter five. By the mid-eighteenth century it was perceived by many that the Gaelic language was in rapid decline and this particular group of Highlanders intended to halt this decline. Members of the HSL hired Gaelic bards for meetings, offered prizes for Gaelic poetry, worked in collaboration with the HSS to investigate the authenticity of James Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry and produce a Gaelic dictionary, and they sent scholars into the Highlands to record poetry. However, what concerns us here is also the role Gaelic played in the Society's enlightened improvement discourse. Gaelic was the 'language of improvement' because illiterate Highlanders were to be taught literacy in their native language (among other subjects). To many British improvers, improvement and education went hand-in-hand; people could not progress if they could not read; however, education was also to play a role in the preservation of Gaelic: through the act of teaching literacy in Gaelic, the language would literally be preserved within the Highlanders themselves.

It has been argued by many scholars that improvers like the HSL and the Gaelic School Society were only interested in teaching literacy with a view that Highlanders would then learn English, wiping out Gaelic in the process.<sup>78</sup> However, the HSL envisioned a multi-cultural Great Britain in which cultural differences strengthened the Union. Within this framework, the HSL argued that Highlanders should read and write in

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<sup>78</sup> Victor Durkacz, *The Decline of the Celtic Languages* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1983); Charles W J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Culture Region* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988).

English (the language of ‘progress’) but Highlanders should also express their own native culture, including a strong knowledge of their native language; bilingualism was an acceptable characteristic of Scoto-Britishness. In other words, the HSL’s imperial vision included Highland Scottish identity.

The dissertation concludes with the formation of the Highland Society of Canada in 1818, which acts as a case study to test whether or not the identity formed and expressed in London carried through the diaspora into Canada. Since its inception the HSL intended to open branch societies around the globe “wherever [Highlanders] maybe happen to reside.”<sup>79</sup> Branches had opened in places like India and Jamaica in the late-eighteenth century but at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars the HSL set about opening branches in strategic locations, especially British North America, where many Highlanders had settled after the wars, or because of the Highland Clearances.<sup>80</sup> The HSC opened in Glengarry County, Upper Canada (Now Ontario) largely by members of the HSL who were settling in the area after making fortunes in the fur trade with the North West Company. These men were largely Highlanders of modest means who did not belong to great landed families back in Scotland, so settling in this area of Upper Canada, which already had a significant settlement of Highlanders, was an opportunity to become the *de facto* landed gentry in the area. The HSC functioned in the same way as the HSL but on a smaller scale: it brought local elites together to socialize and dole out political patronage. Social capital built at this society would see some of its members enter the local Tory elite of the colony, placing Highland Scots at the very top of Upper Canadian

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<sup>79</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 86.

<sup>80</sup> Marianne McLean, *People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition 1745-1820* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991), “Introduction.”

society. Because this chapter engages with both Canadian and British historiography the society's place within the historiography of Upper Canada will be addressed within that chapter. Recently, the road to confederation has been assessed by Canadian historians such as Ian McKay as a project of liberal rule. This challenged the assumption that a Tory faction dominated early Canadian political history. However, McKay's thesis is being challenged by the recent work on transnational history, which seeks to address the relative dearth of history that places Canada in an international context. The political climate that Scottish Highlanders found within the fold of the Highland Society of Canada can be more appropriately defined as "counter-revolutionary." This chapter plays a small but nonetheless relevant role in addressing this issue.<sup>81</sup> By examining the broader framework of the 'Highland Empire' we can see that support for Highlanders crossed the Atlantic in the nineteenth century. Those who had been active in the HSL carried identities formed in the imperial Metropolis through the diaspora. Highlanders and Highland culture were supported through the institutional links formed by the HSL in London in the late eighteenth century, which continued around the globe well into the nineteenth century.

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<sup>81</sup> Allan Greer, "1837-38: Rebellion Reconsidered," *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no.1 (1995), 7; Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (2000): 617-45.

## Chapter 1: Moving beyond ‘Highlandism’: Native Highland Constructions of the Past

### Introduction

This chapter explores native Highland constructions of the past in order to assess what role history played in the promotion of Highland culture by members of the Highland Society of London. An important part of the Society’s early activities was to rehabilitate the image of Highland Scots to the British public, particularly in London where the early members of the Society had social and political ambitions. For much of the eighteenth century Highlanders had been subject to criticism not only from the intellectual realm but also in civil society. In general, since the Union Scots had been accused of being an overly ambitious group who appeared to be taking the lion’s share of opportunities presented in the political and financial centre of the empire.<sup>1</sup> The Jacobite Rebellion fuelled the resultant Scotophobics’ responses to Scottish aspirations in the capital and Highland Scots became the face of Scottish ambition especially after the 1760s with the rise of John Stuart, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute and the *Ossian* controversy. The punitive laws enacted over Highland culture following the ’45 confirmed assumptions of Highland Scottish ‘savagery’, which had been given intellectual backing by the Sociological Whigs. Members of the HSL worked within this hostile environment in order to rehabilitate Highland culture to the British public. The success of the HSL’s charitable and improvement agenda required public acceptance of Highland culture not only for the sake of preserving a culture close to its members’ hearts but also their plans for economic

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<sup>1</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 117-123.

development in the Highlands and Islands were predicated upon Highland difference from the rest of Great Britain.

Following the repeal of the Disarming Act (1746) in 1782, the HSL began to rescue and promote Highland cultural trappings, which were perceived to be rapidly disappearing like *piobaireachd* (classical pipe music), Gaelic poetry and songs. In addition, members of the HSL began to research the origins of elite Highland dress in order to promote a modern and fashionable version to be shown off in London. The rescue and promotion of Highland culture was framed within a conception of Highland history and culture, which drew upon the history of the ancient Caledonians explored by Scottish Renaissance writers such as George Buchannan. This placed Highlanders, and therefore all Scots, on an equal footing with the English within a broader conception of Britishness in the late eighteenth century. This followed a trend that began after the last Jacobite Rebellion of 1745/46 in which many Highland elites used Highland cultural symbols—a process known as Highlandism—to prove loyalty to the crown. Highlandism was usually expressed within the confines of the British military, of which Highlanders played a disproportionate role in this period, especially during the Seven Years' War (1754-1763).<sup>2</sup> However, from the early 1780s, members of the HSL used Highland history and culture to continue to legitimize Highlanders' participation in the British fiscal-military state. Many active members of the HSL were directly involved in the expansion of empire, largely through commercial interests, government, and the military; and these men used Highland symbols and history to rehabilitate the image of Highlanders in the British public's mind outside of the British military. This was a crucial

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<sup>2</sup> The War took place over a nine-year period but the bulk of it was fought in the seven-year period spanning 1756-1763.

strategy used to garner support for the Society's charitable projects from within British civil society. Not only did members of the Highland Society of London research the origins of the trappings of Highland culture such as classical pipe music, classical Highland dress, and classical Gaelic poetry and songs but they also sought to promote these cultural trappings to the British public in order to show the importance of the differences within Britishness. These differences, members argued, held the key to British greatness. The promotion of the Highland character to a sometimes-hostile British public meant portraying Highlandism as an ancient, fashionable, and, most importantly, a patriotic identity.

### **Military Highlandism in the Proscription Era, 1746-1782**

The Disarming Act of 1746, which went into effect on August 1, 1747 as the "Act of Proscription" (20 Geo. II, c. 51), was brought forth by a punitive British government shortly after the last Jacobite rebellion (1745/46). The act banned the non-military use of tartan, banned civilians from carrying Highland weaponry, and required "masters and teachers of private schools in Scotland, and chaplains, tutors" to swear an oath to teach exclusively in English, not Gaelic.<sup>3</sup> The Disarming Act was part of a series of acts (including the abolishment of heritable jurisdictions) designed to force assimilation of Highlanders with the rest of Great Britain, immediately following the defeat at Culloden.

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<sup>3</sup> This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5. [Photograph of an excerpt of the Disarming Act 1746]: Alastair Campbell, *Two Hundred Years: The Highland Society of London, 1778-1978* (Inverness: John G. Eccles, 1983), 75. Sometimes the Disarming Act is referred to as the "Disclothing Act," as a similar act was called when passed after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715.

The idea was to remove any further threat to the Hanoverian regime by forcing Highlanders to assimilate with other Britons, thereby ending political Jacobitism.<sup>4</sup>

Some historians have placed great importance on the Disarming Act as either the death of ‘real’ Highland culture or the maker of Highlandism. The fact that the Act deliberately excluded the wearing of Highland dress in the army from the ban “effectively gave the region’s material culture overtly military connotations...The military symbolism of Highland dress allowed elites to define the Highlands as a military region par excellence, and thereby to benefit from the political capital this gave them as consummate supporters of British expansion.”<sup>5</sup> The Act may have maintained the image of the Highlands as a military region for outsiders, but for Highlanders material culture was used to promote Highland identity in other ways as well. Too much has been made of the Act as an agent of cultural change, leading some scholars to make false assumptions, such as the idea that the Highland pipes were banned outside of the military under the Disarming Act.<sup>6</sup> As we shall see the promotion of Highland history and culture went beyond integration into the expanding British fiscal-military state; Scoto-Britishness, or the identity promoted by the HSL, rested on the idea that Highlanders—the modern day descendants of an ancient and indigenous culture—were as important to British identity as any other ethnic group in Great Britain, and not just because of martial valour.

What is important to note is that the Disarming Act did not include members of the British elite who were Highlanders, including Members of Parliament, peers and their

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<sup>4</sup> Womack, *Improvement and Romance*, 4; Robert Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero: the Image of the Highlander, 1745 1830* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1995), chapter 1.

<sup>5</sup> Dzinniek “Whig Tartan,” 119-120.

<sup>6</sup> Pittock also sees the Disarming Act as a watershed moment in attaching tartan to the British army when it was incorporated into Britishness. See: Murray G. H. Pittock, “Patriot Dress and Patriot games: Tartan From the Jacobites to Queen Victoria,” in *Culture, Nation, and the New Scottish Parliament*, ed. Caroline McCracken-Flesher (Lewisburgh: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 158.

sons, and those who had been allowed to carry weapons by the Hanoverian government or the king prior to the passing of the Act. Those who were included in the Act faced harsh punishments if caught including a fifteen pound fine, and imprisonment for those who could not pay. Transportation was reserved for a second offense. By the 1750s, impressment was also added as a punishment. Because of the addition of impressment to the list of punishments we have evidence that some common Highlanders were conscripted for wearing Highland dress as they appear on conscription lists. The British government preferred impressment to fines or transportation in order to supply the army with much-needed manpower, but conceivably these men might have ended up conscripted anyways (unemployed men were subject to conscription during the Seven Years' War), or enlisting themselves. However, other than the isolated incidents of impressment we do not have much evidence that many common people were convicted of wearing the Highland dress or carrying weaponry, so in reality the Act was little more than an "unenforceable threat."<sup>7</sup> In any case, in the post-Jacobite period Highland elites continued to express themselves at special occasions and in portraits through tartan, as they had done in the early modern period.<sup>8</sup> The HSL would continue this trend by asking members to come to meetings in a Highland costume based on members' research into the ancient Highland elite costume and the historical origins of tartan fabric.

Scholars have argued that the effect of the Disarming Act, and the other acts of assimilation—including the 1752 Annexing Act, which saw that Highland estates

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<sup>7</sup> John G. Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping, 1745-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1998), 34. Gibson provides an in-depth discussion about how the Highlands were policed in this period and why this proves the Act largely went unenforced. See Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping*, 25-35.

<sup>8</sup> Cheape, *Highland Habit*, 29. The Scottish Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh has some of the best examples of Highland elites expressing themselves through tartan over time, even into the Proscription Era.

forfeited to the crown would be managed according to ‘rationalised’ land management (more suited to the fertile areas of Lowland Scotland and Southern England) popular in the mid-century—accelerated the demise of Highland culture. However, this overlooks both inside and outside forces affecting the Highlands and Highlanders, and, as scholars such as Robert Dodgshon have argued, the acts did not signal the end of clanship. Traditional clanship structures had been slowly waning from at least the end of the fifteenth century. However, members within Highland Society of London circles implemented economic and social improvement from within Highland communities with every effort to preserve Highland culture and provide for Highland people, wherever they were located, but there was little desire to return to traditional land management.<sup>9</sup> It has also been argued that the imposition of cultural destruction explains the romantic takeover of Highland culture by outsiders, known as ‘Highlandism’, in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Once the Highlands were ‘civilized’, a sanitized version of Highland culture was re-made by Lowland Scots who were keen to remove themselves from the negative side of British commercial success by upholding the virtues of a forgotten civilization in order to differentiate themselves from the English within a wider conception of Britishness.<sup>10</sup>

In reality, however, the Disarming Act was not a watershed moment in the destruction of Gaelic culture and this argument neglects Highlanders’ agency in directing change in this period.<sup>11</sup> Elite Highlanders continued to wear tartan outside of the military

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<sup>9</sup> Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords*, 7-31.

<sup>10</sup> Dziennik, “Whig Tartan, 118; Kidd, *Subverting Scotland’s Past*, 205-217; Pittock, *Celtic Identity*, 94-128.

<sup>11</sup> This has remained a popular perception. For example, Hugh Trevor-Roper claims that: “This draconian law remained in force for thirty-five years: thirty-five years during which the whole Highland way of life crumbled.” Hugh Trevor-Roper, “The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland.” in *The*

in the Proscription Era and scholars like Hugh Cheape and Murray Pittock argue that this was the continuation of cultural expression, which long predates this time period, going as far back as the medieval era.<sup>12</sup> In any case, in the mid-eighteenth century, elite Highlanders continued to wear tartan on special occasions; and Highland weapons were still used (or worn) in non-military settings. Tartan appears in civilian portraits of influential Highland elites and there is some evidence that common Highlanders continued to wear the *fèileadh beag* (or small kilt) outside of the army, whether or not these kilts were of tartan cloth, however, is up for debate.<sup>13</sup>

Nonetheless, to members of the HSL, the Disarming Act—by its very existence—was an insult to the people and culture to which they belonged, and this resentment was shared by many Gaels and had been throughout the Proscription Era. For example, the poet Duncan Bàn Macintyre published poems lamenting the passing of the Disarming Act including his “Song to the breeches,” which early editions were omitted from his early printed works because of anti-English and anti-Hanoverian overtones:

Dire is our plight that the young Prince  
 should be in great adversity,  
 and that, where he ought to be established,  
 King George should be the occupant.  
 Well-informed people tell us

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*Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 24.

<sup>12</sup> Hugh Cheape, “Gheibhte Breacain Charnaid (‘Scarlet Tartans would be Got...’): The Re-Invention of Tradition,” in *From Tartan to Tartanry: Scottish Culture, History and Myth*, ed. Ian Brown (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010); Pittock, “Plaiding the Invention.”

<sup>13</sup> Hugh Cheape, *Tartan: the Highland Habit* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 1991), 22; Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping*, 60-1.

that he had no claim to London:  
'tis in Hanover his kindred were  
to us that man is a foreigner.  
'Tis this king who had no ties with us,  
that has woefully dishonoured us:  
ere he enslave us utterly  
'twere time to go to strive with him.  
What disgust he caused us,  
what annoyance and contention,  
forcibly to disclothe us  
by subjecting us to tyranny!<sup>14</sup>

According to a high-profile member of the HSL, Sir John Sinclair, Highlanders “have always been attached to their ancient garb. The Act which passed after the rebellion of 1745, therefore, was considered to them singularly oppressive; and one of the first objects of a public nature, taken up by the Society, was to procure a repeal of that obnoxious statute.”<sup>15</sup> In May 1782 the Highland Society of London formed a committee to solicit the Marquis of Graham (later 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Montrose), MP, to bring a Bill into Parliament to repeal the Disarming Act of 1746.<sup>16</sup> Members of the HSL, and future members such as Henry Dundas who sat in Parliament at the time, were successful, and

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<sup>14</sup> Macintyre would win a prize from the HSL for his poem “Glorious Restoration of the Highland Dress,” see chapter 2. Cheape, “Gheibhte Breacain Charnaid,” 18-19;  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/macintyre/breeches.htm> (accessed 15 August 2014)

<sup>15</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> The Marquis of Graham was president of the Society in 1780 and listed as a member in 1783. Alastair Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 76; Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783].

the Disarming Act was repealed only two months later on July 1, 1782, ending the Proscription Era. Soon after, members of the HSL lobbied the British Government to return the forfeited estates to the rightful owners and the Disannexing Act (24 Geo. III, c. 57) was passed in 1784. The estates were duly returned to the owners' families and monies that had been made on these estates were given to the Highland Society of Scotland when it organized that year to help with their economic improvement agenda.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the repeal of the Disarming Act (and the return of the forfeited estates) came about with ease should tell us two important things: by the 1780s, Highlanders were no longer considered a threat to the British state, and by this time the HSL already had some high profile members who were able to wield considerable influence over the British government. Members would work very hard to continue to be within favourable political circles in London in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, especially Pitt and Dundas' political circle, which was dominated by Tories, Independents, and Whigs who had split from the mainstream Whig party. The HSL's rise to prominence in London civil society in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries will be explored in the next chapter, but for now what concerns us are the Society's attempts to rehabilitate and promote Highland identity, particularly in London, where members held political and business interests. Not everyone in London supported Highland culture. Scotophobia, of the sort wielded upon John Stuart, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute, the first Scottish Prime Minister since the Union, was still present in London by the time the HSL formed in 1778. Bute was wrapped in controversy and became for the Scotophobes

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<sup>17</sup> Murray G.H. Pittock, "Plaiding the Invention of Scotland," 40; Henry Dundas joined in January 1785: Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix II, p. 47. See chapters 3 and 4.

the personification of Scottish ambitions in the capital and was subject to numerous political satires and public prints.<sup>18</sup>

Since its inception, the HSL set out to promote contemporary Highland dress first at piping competitions, which began in 1781, where many pipers would have been in military uniform. Also, the HSL worked to research the dress of the ancient Highlanders as well as “rescue” the ancient music and literature of the Gaels. The Society’s attempts to preserve and promote Highland cultural trappings from the 1780s onwards have usually been constructed as part of the process of Highlandism. Highlandism is traditionally thought to have developed from about the 1770s onwards but as we know the process began earlier and was constructed by Highlanders during the Proscription Era. In the case of Lowland Scottish elites Highlandism was a British identity based on ‘emotional’ symbols of martial valour, the ‘cult of tartanry’, and sentimental Jacobitism, which Lowland Scottish elites adopted in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries to differentiate Scottish identity within an Anglo-British paradigm. It is an interpretation of Highland identity used to express Lowland Scottish national identity, which was constructed outside of Highland Scottish circles. This was a type of ‘cultural patriotism’ associated with the British Army and had connotations with the Scots militia issue during the Seven Years’ War. And, according to Colin Kidd, by the early nineteenth century it was a kitschy accessory of British unionism, rather than a “powerful ethno-cultural identity,” which opposed it.<sup>19</sup> However, for Highland Scottish elites under examination

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<sup>18</sup> Paul Langford, “South Britons’ Reception of North Britons, 1707-1820,” in *Anglo-Scottish Relations From 1603-1900*, ed. T.C Smout (Oxford: The British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2005), 143-148; Nenadic, “Introduction,” 23; John Brewer, “The Misfortunes of Lord Bute: A Case-Study in Eighteenth-Century Political Argument and Public Opinion,” *The Historical Journal* 16, no.1 (1973): 21.

<sup>19</sup> Colin Kidd, “Teutonist Ethnology and Scottish Nationalist Inhibition, 1780-1880,” *The Scottish Historical Review* 74, no. 197 (1995): 45-68; Colin Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity in Enlightenment Ireland and Scotland,” *The English Historical Review* 109 (1994): 1197-1214.

here cultural trappings, including traditional Highland dress, bagpipe music, and Gaelic poetry and songs were tangible cultural representations, which were used to promote their native British culture. Members of the HSL were working to preserve elements of ancient Highland culture, which were perceived to be rapidly disappearing at the end of the eighteenth century, as well as to investigate their ancient origins. They did not invent these symbols and they were not used exclusively in the military.

Military recruitment was important to the economy of the Highlands and Islands by bringing in revenue for Highland landowners, and providing Highlanders with much-needed employment.<sup>20</sup> To outsiders, Highlanders' participation in the British military, as agents of imperial expansion and the preservation of British liberty, was a crucial step to integrating them into a wider sense of Britishness. Robert Clyde, for example, argues that Highlanders had been re-made by outsiders between Culloden and Waterloo from 'savages' into noble warriors in order to fill the need for soldiers in the various wars of the British in this period.<sup>21</sup> According to J.E. Cookson, it was the promotion of military symbols that facilitated the acceptance of Highland soldiers during the Napoleonic wars. The British fiscal-military state became more dependent on civilians to fill the increasing size of the British army because European mercenaries were no longer available. Scots largely fulfilled this role, and "those who controlled or who were closely involved in the warfare state of the Napoleonic period and who after the wars continued to place a high priority on power abroad and order at home believed strongly in promoting the image of military Scotland and the associated ideas of Highland warriorism." For Cookson, the HSL, which was largely composed of Tory elites, exploited patronage connections to the

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<sup>20</sup> See Andrew MacKillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil*.

<sup>21</sup> Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero*, chapter 6.

Dundas/Pitt government in the Napoleonic era in order to promote military Scotland, focusing the majority of its energies on the Ossian project and the glorification of the Highland regiments.<sup>22</sup> Pitt and Dundas played an important role in the success of the HSL's improvement projects, during the period of their political dominance. Because of this the HSL and its subsidiaries, such as the joint venture with the Highland Society of Scotland, the British Fisheries Society (est. 1786), gained funds for improvement projects from the British Government. It should not be surprising to find that Dundas was, himself, a member (even serving as president in 1799) and therefore had a vested interest in its activities.<sup>23</sup> Military symbols were important to members of the HSL; however, the promotion of military Scotland was only part of the Highland Society of London's story, and by the late eighteenth century the support of Highland culture played a much broader role in the promotion of Highland economic and social improvement. However, military connections were a way in which to garner public support for non-military endeavours, bringing considerable capital to the Society and its colleagues to undertake its stated aims.

Considering the period in which the HSL was formed and the public image the Society wished to maintain, the promotion of the British army through Highland regiments was part of the Society's agenda. The Society was engaged in evoking the martial spirit of the past, in which pipe music, Ossianic poetry, and Highland military uniforms played a major part. However, the HSL played a limited direct role in raising or supporting Highland regiments in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, choosing instead to spend the bulk of members' time and energy, as well as the Society's

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<sup>22</sup> Cookson, "The Napoleonic Wars," 60-63. As this dissertation shows, the Ossian project and military promotion played key roles in the HSL's agenda, but do not reflect the majority of its activities.

<sup>23</sup> Campbell, *Two hundred Years*, 76.

budget in the early years, on charitable and economic improvement projects such as supporting Highlanders in need in London, helping to establish a school and a hospital in Inverness, working with the Highland Society of Scotland to undertake economic and social improvements in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as well as working hard to preserve the Gaelic language from rapidly disappearing, all of which are the subjects of the following four chapters. Individual members of the HSL were engaged directly in either raising regiments themselves or participating in various Highland and non-Highland regiments in the British armed forces; as well, we find high-profile naval officers such as Sir John Lockhart Ross, of Balnagowan (1721-1790), captain of the *Tartar* during the Seven Years' War, among other assignments.<sup>24</sup> The only regiment the HSL raised in this period was the London-based Royal Highland Volunteers in 1798, which served until the Peace of Amiens (1802). The regiment was renamed The Loyal North Britons in 1803. In 1805 the Duke of Sussex became its commandant, taking over from Lord Reay. The regiment existed until 1814.<sup>25</sup> The Society also celebrated the achievements of Highland regiments, in particular the 42<sup>nd</sup>, 79<sup>th</sup>, and 92<sup>nd</sup> which played a major role in the Battle of Alexandria in 1801, and had members of the HSL among their ranks. Like the battles that Highland regiments participated in during the Seven Years' War and other campaigns of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries, the victory at Alexandria elevated the profile of Highlanders in the mind of the British public and was worth drawing attention to. The Anglo-American Benjamin West (1738-1820), one of the founders of the Royal Academy of Arts, and most famous, perhaps, for the

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<sup>24</sup> Ruddock Mackay, "Ross, Sir John Lockhart, sixth baronet (1721-1790)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/24127> (accessed 25 July 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 15.

*Death of General Wolfe* (1770), designed a silver medal that was to be given out to those soldiers and officers who deserved them and the HSL decided from 1802 to hold its anniversary dinner on March 21 in commemoration of the battle. The HSL would not become directly active in military affairs (other than ancillary activities such as the support of piping competitions and helping soldiers, sailors and their families in London) again until the Crimean War.<sup>26</sup>

Highland elites we find in Highland Society of London circles were not just supporters of British expansion through participation in the British military (or its celebration); they were often the ones driving trade and economic development both within the Highlands and Islands, and throughout the British Empire. It was argued by elites found in HSL circles that the duties and taxes placed on Highland goods in order to help fund British military campaigns were seen to be holding back Highland economic development and carefully constructed rhetoric was necessary in order to get the British government (and the British public) to support policy changes. Promoting the antiquity and importance (and difference) of Highland culture to the formation of contemporary British culture legitimized Highlanders' role not only in military expansion, but non-military economic development as well. This process required not only promoting tartan and other Highland cultural trappings such as music and literature but also the intellectual investigation of the history and culture of the ancient Caledonians, the supposed "indigenous" people of Great Britain, from whom contemporary Gaels claim ancestry.

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<sup>26</sup> Dorinda Evans, "West, Benjamin (1738-1820)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/29076> (accessed 25 July 2014); Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, pp. 26-30. There were some difficulties in getting the medal cast, the final version being decided on many years later in 1807.

But we must also reassess what Highland symbols meant to Highlanders in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. To members of the HSL tartan, music, poetry, and other Highland trappings were seen as integral to the Highland character. These men were not promoting Highland culture only for the sake of integrating themselves into the fiscal-military state (although this was one way to garner significant public support); they were trying to rescue Highland culture, which was perceived to be rapidly disappearing. The HSL's promotion of Highland culture drew upon the history and culture of an ancient past, which demonstrated Gaelic culture's continued importance to the history and culture of Great Britain. As the British Empire expanded in the late eighteenth century, Highland elites who would join the Highland Society of London made sure that Highland culture and history occupied a prominent place within it.

### **Scotophobia in Eighteenth-Century London**

Highland Scots were not only subject to criticism from the intellectual world; they also faced hostility within British civil society, hostilities that were given intellectual validation by the Sociological Whigs. The Highland Society of London organized at a time when Scots were still facing bouts of Scotophobia in London, and the Society's promotion of Highland culture served to discourage this prejudice. English Scotophobia was largely found in London. English Scotophobia in the City has a long history, but it was the most virulent in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, around the time of the formation of the HSL.<sup>27</sup> Scots have been moving to London throughout history. For example, since the Union of the Crowns (1603) many Scots seeking political

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<sup>27</sup> Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 277; Langford, "South Briton's Reception," 147.

appointments would incur the expense of moving south in order to increase patronage networks in London. In the eighteenth century the Union did not disturb this relationship and rather extended existing opportunities, especially for those involved in government. We do not have exact statistics for how many Scots moved to London in the immediate post-Union period, but what evidence exists suggests that it was a significant number. They tended to be young, single professionals who moved to London for work and opportunities not available to them back in Scotland. We find these young men (although there were Scottish women who moved to London, and not always because of marriage) overwhelmingly in the business and skilled professions and after 1760 we find them in the army.<sup>28</sup> Highland Scots were no different. Highlanders from all levels of society moved to London in search of opportunities not available at home and many members of the HSL were professionals such as lawyers and bankers. During the reign of George III (1760-1820), the numbers of Scots moving to London increased significantly. Especially during the early 1760s, many English Londoners became threatened by this influx of Scots seeking political appointments and patronage. These appointments meant that Scots were increasingly visible in London civil society during this period and this increased visibility not only in politics and notable societies such as the Royal Scots Corporation (RSC) as well as their visibility in imperial appointments, intellectual and artistic circles, led some to criticise their presence in the City. Societies like the HSL, many of whose members also belonged to the high-profile RSC, were places where Scottish elites could build their own patronage networks outside of this hostility. As Colley argues, however, the perceived (or actual) cliquishness of Scots in the City especially those who were members of Scottish associations somewhat fuelled the fire. Nonetheless, the act of

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<sup>28</sup> Nenadic, "Introduction," 13-14.

association and developing a matrix of social networks meant that Scottish elites were able to influence civil society at large irrespective of their critics' grumblings.<sup>29</sup> Highlanders who joined the HSL belonged to many different sections of the elite and it should not surprise us that the majority of members were politicians, lawyers (a majority of who had other occupations such as merchants, bankers, or petty landowners), or men in the British military, but it did draw from other sections of society, including intellectuals.<sup>30</sup> By bringing these diverse elements of the elite helped to bolster the Society's influence in London.

Earlier in the eighteenth century Scots were perceived as aliens and subject to gibes and satire, especially on the London stage and in commercial prints, but this did not really cause much animosity and Scots weren't the only group targeted.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745/46 had constructed for outsiders the image that all Highlanders were outright supporters of the Stuart cause (although we know this is not true). Especially after the '45, Highlanders were 'Othered' within the Stadialist paradigm and portrayed as savage victims of their chiefs' Jacobite ambitions. However, it must be said that in general in the eighteenth-century all Scots, Highland or Lowland, were brought into this construction. As Murray Pittock has shown, "English popular opinion often identified *all* Scots as sharing a love for arbitrary power, absolutism, and tyranny, and this played some part in the refusal to let Scotland raise a militia in the Seven Years' War, as well as feeding the widespread suspicion of a Scottish takeover of British

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<sup>29</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 117-123.

<sup>30</sup> Virtually nothing is known about common Highlanders who moved to London in search of work, or how many did. But the HSL did target common Highlanders either living or passing through London as potential recipients of charity.

<sup>31</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 122.

perquisites in the 1760s.”<sup>32</sup> The Highlander John Stuart, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute, a favourite of George III who became Prime Minister in 1762, played an important role in these popular assumptions. Bute, the first Scottish Prime Minister since the Union, was wrapped in controversy and became for the Scotophobes the personification of Scottish ambitions in the capital. Radical Whigs such as John Wilkes attacked Bute in print as a Jacobite, supporter of divine right and for the new Toryism he stood for. Scottish writers in particular were feeling the effects of English Scotophobia. David Hume reportedly feared the repercussions of a new edition of his *History of England* in the early 1760s, and the poet and author of *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* (1771) Tobias Smollett had been dealing with prejudice since the 1750s. He wrote to a friend in 1758: “The truth is there is no author so wretched but he will meet with countenance in England if he attacks our nation in any shape.”<sup>33</sup> In particular, James Macpherson (who will be discussed in more detail below) became a target not only for his relationship with the Prime minister (Bute was his patron and he dedicated *Temora* to the Earl) but also for the *Ossian* controversy that had been ranging after the publication of *Temora* (1763). Scotophobes were also wary of Macpherson because of his assumed Jacobite background and his ambitions as a politician. He, like the Earl of Bute, was seen as the epitome of Scottish ambitions. In 1763 Macpherson came under the attack of the hack poet and clergyman, Charles Churchill. Churchill, who was also a friend of the notorious Scotophobe John Wilkes, published a satirical poem on the Scots called “The Prophecy of Famine” in which Macpherson was a prime target. Not only were Scots themselves undesirable exports

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<sup>32</sup> Pittock, “Patriot Dress and Patriot Games,” 159.

<sup>33</sup> Brewer, “The Misfortunes,” 22; Quoted in Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 228.

from Scotland to England but also so were their cultural works such as James Macpherson's poems:

Thence issued forth, at great Macpherson's call

That old, new, Epic Pastoral, Fingal.<sup>34</sup>

These political controversies meant that Scots were regularly featured in many political satires in the newspapers and on stage. As Paul Langford has argued, "Scots in the South...had to endure a continual battering in the public prints. With the sole exception of the French, no other nationality was so despised and derided in the vast array of caricatures turned out by the London Press."<sup>35</sup> We must also bear in mind, though, that this was also a time anxiety due to the mid-century wars and the *perceived* rapid influx of Scots to the capital. Not all Scots were subject to hysterical Scotophobia and it certainly did not deter Scots from migrating to the City, but it existed with some regularity into the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup> What is important here, though, is that the political cartoons that are associated with these political attacks almost always linked Scottishness to tartan and therefore to the Highlands.<sup>37</sup> Images such as "The Caledonians Arrival in Moneyland" (1762) show tartan-clad Scots paying tribute to Bute and his (alleged) mistress, the Princess of Wales. Sawney in the Boghouse was a very popular image portraying Scottish ambition and 'barbarity'. The image first made its appearance in 1745 (by George Bickman) as a visual attack on Jacobites, but appeared again in 1762

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<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 228.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Langford, "South Britons' Reception, 148.

<sup>36</sup> Langford, "South Britons' Reception," 152.

<sup>37</sup> Pittock, "Patriot Dress and Patriot Games," 159; Langford, "South Britons' Reception," 143-148; John Brewer, "The Misfortunes," 21.

and 1779.<sup>38</sup> In Gillray's 1779 version the image is called "'Sawney in the Boghouse' or; A visitor from the Highlands Marvels at one of Civilization's Amenities.'" A Highlander is using a commode incorrectly because according to the image he has clearly never used one before. The poem in the background reads: "Tis a bra' bonny seat, o'my Saul, Sawney cries, I never beheld sic before my eyes, such a place in aw' Scotland I never could meet, For the High and the Low ease themselves in the street." This is interesting because although a Highlander is portrayed, the poem suggests that both Highlander and Lowlander are uncivilized. We can glean from this that it is not necessarily the Highlander who is uncivilized to the English, but all Scots.<sup>39</sup> In any case, these images portrayed all Scots as part of a "tartan horde" donning tartan garb, including kilts, during the Proscription Era and long before modern Highland clothing became popular for many Lowlanders.<sup>40</sup> In other words: in London, the Highlander is the Jacobite; the Highlander has political ambitions; the Highlander is 'the Scot'. It is within this fairly hostile environment that members of the HSL were working to rehabilitate Highland culture. As we shall see below, one of the most notable early members of the HSL, James Macpherson, who was faced with the same hostility to his creative works, had to present Highland literature in a way that was easily digestible to the wider British public.

### **Promoting the Glory of the Ancient Caledonians**

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<sup>38</sup> Langford, "South Britons' Reception," 149; 151.

<sup>39</sup> James Gillray, *Fashionable contrasts: Caricatures by James Gillray; Introduced & Annotated by Draper Hill* (London: Phaidon, 1966), plate 76.

<sup>40</sup> Pittock, "Patriot Dress and Patriot Games," 159; Pittock, "Plaiding the Invention of Scotland," 38.

Two of the stated aims of the Highland Society of London were “For preserving the martial spirit, language, dress, music, and antiquities of the ancient Caledonians” and “For rescuing from oblivion, the valuable remains of Celtic Literature.”<sup>41</sup> The Society did have contemporary concerns, as we will see later on, like paying modern bards and pipers to attend meetings and offering prizes for contemporary poetry and music, but for now we need to look at how and why members of the HSL promoted ancient Highland culture. Largely this was achieved through Highland culture’s promotion within an historical paradigm that placed Gaels at the centre of British identity. It was assumed by many Scots (not just Highlanders) that the Gaels were the inheritors of an ancient and noble race of warriors who were able to fend off the Romans but who also possessed a sophisticated culture. Shortly after the HSL was formed in 1778, members began to investigate classical pipe music, ancient poetry, and the origins of Highland dress. The continued acceptance of the Buchananite history by these men formed the historical background necessary to legitimize Highland culture within Britishness. Historians like James Macpherson and John Macpherson (1713-1765) reinterpreted ancient Scottish history for a pan-British audience in order to counter the Sociological Whigs’ denunciation of the Buchananite legacy. And James Macpherson’s history served also to ground his works of literature within this British framework.

Members of the HSL continued this trend in published texts and private circulars and letters, couching the Society’s activities in terms of patriotism, but always reminding the public that differences within Britishness were what made Great Britain a great country. As Sir John Sinclair argued in his 1813 published history of the Society, “the

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<sup>41</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix IX, p. 82.

glory of the British Empire may be upheld under the united flag, by keeping alive in its inhabitants the local distinctions of English, Scotch, Irish and, Welsh, thereby creating a generous emulation between them, which, under the direction of one free and paternal government, may promote the good and glory of the whole.”<sup>42</sup> Highlanders had already proven their loyalty to the British state through the public abandonment of Jacobitism (for those who had supported that cause) and the participation of Highland regiments raised by patriotic Highland landowners in the wars of the British during this period.<sup>43</sup> But in order for the HSL to achieve its stated aims, as well as influence the British public and the British government to accept cultural and economic support for the Highlands and Islands, and Highlanders, this patriotism had to be constantly reminded. Building the Highland Empire required unequivocal public support for the contribution of the history and culture of the Gaels to British identity.

As we saw earlier, some Lowland Scots, especially those in the Edinburgh literati, employed James Macpherson’s *Ossian* poetry as a way to convince the British government that Scots were a loyal, martial people who could have their own militia. The HSL was also interested in Macpherson’s work (he was elected a member of the HSL on 4 June 1778) and it drew much attention from members and their colleagues both in Britain and abroad.<sup>44</sup> The hope was that the *Ossian* poetry would be a prime example of ancient Gaelic poetry, which rivalled that of the finest European examples, notably Grecian epic poetry. In other words, *Ossian* was to be the ‘Homer of the Celts’. As we

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<sup>42</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 37.

<sup>43</sup> For an important survey on military recruitment and the Highland economy see: Mackillop, *More Fruitful Than the Soil*, especially chapter 5.

<sup>44</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prizes Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 1* (Edinburgh, 1799), liii; Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix II, p. 41.

will discuss later, poetry, Highland dress, and classical Highland music, would be advertised to the British public as authentic examples of the glorious culture of the ancient and indigenous warrior race, the Caledonians. The *Ossian* ‘controversy’ undermines the motivations behind the work’s promotion by both Macpherson and his colleagues in the HSL. Like his histories, Macpherson’s poetry was presented in such a way to make them more accessible to a wider audience. He, like the HSL, was very politically minded and this influenced his presentation style. Sadly, the pressure Macpherson faced from various interest groups led to him holding back information about his sources, and he passed away before much could be known.

A full investigation of the *Ossian* controversy will not be undertaken here. It is enough to point out that modern scholars such as Donald Meek, Howard Gaskill, Fiona Stafford, and Derick Thompson have shown that Macpherson integrated a variety of literary methods and his poetry was *based* on the long history of Gaelic ballad tradition that he grew up with. Ultimately, as Donald Meek argues, Macpherson “deliberately drew attention to, and creatively utilized, the rich Gaelic ballad tradition of the Highlands... [he was] not a literary hijacker; he was operating, to a considerable extent, within a tradition which was well rooted in Scotland, and which, down to his own time, had preserved an intrinsic creativity and ability to vary its forms.” The Gaelic ballad tradition Macpherson employed dates back to the Middle Ages, or the classical period of Gaelic culture, and was an integral part of Highland traditions. These ballads were circulated orally by bards and after 1600 were kept alive by “tradition-bearers” who transmitted and recited the ballads around the Highlands. Ballads were composed in

“Classical Common Gaelic,” which was the shared literary language of Ireland and Gaelic Scotland.<sup>45</sup>

Members of the Highland Society of Scotland had also been working on authenticating Macpherson’s poetry and its publication: the *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, Appointed to Inquire into the Nature and Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* (1805) was the culmination of the enquiry into the authenticity of the poetry by Henry Mackenzie that began in the 1790s. The *Report* published information from Gaelic scholars as well as informants from the Highlands whom Mackenzie interviewed, including one of their own members, Adam Ferguson. What is important to note is that the *Report* proved that Gaelic poetry did exist in the Highlands and in fact “it was common, general, and in great abundance; that it was of a most impressive and striking sort, in a high degree eloquent, tender and sublime.”<sup>46</sup> The *Report* concluded that Macpherson had indeed based his *Ossian* poetry on traditional Gaelic ballads, but had taken liberties when assembling them into the epics. Ferguson, argued that as a language “spoken in the cottage, but not in the parlour, or at the table of any gentleman,” Gaelic’s elegancies and potential for academic study had escaped polite society. Proscription and attempts at Anglicization in the post-Jacobite period meant that Macpherson had no choice but to elevate the *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* by presenting it in an epic Homeric style, favoured by the Primitivists. Far from arguing that this was deception, Ferguson supported Macpherson’s approach as he reported to the committee:

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<sup>45</sup> Donald E. Meek, “The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaptation,” In *Ossian Revisited*, ed. Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 20.

<sup>46</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, Appointed to Inquire into the Nature and Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh, 1805), 151, appendix IV, 64.

In the communications which Mr Macpherson at any time made to me, I was far from apprehending any imposture; but when the poems of Fingal and Temora appeared, I was inclined to think some pains were bestowed, and even liberties taken, in piecing together what was found in separate or broken fragments, with the defects attending all such traditionary strains. What the collector had to do, or actually did, of this sort, it is impossible to know, if he himself has kept silence on the matter. May we not, without attempting to compare the subjects together, recollect a similar tradition relating to the scattered rhapsodies of Homer himself? And as the collector left no intimation of the pains or liberties he took, we embrace Homer, as we may now Ossian, as the sole author of strains which bear his name.<sup>47</sup>

This evidence was corroborated by Derick Thomson in his *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson's 'Ossian'* (1952), one of the first authoritative modern publications on the matter. Thomson was the first to identify the exact Gaelic poems Macpherson used and concluded that Macpherson “used a range of Gaelic ballads in a variety of ways.” This has allowed recent scholars to re-interpret Macpherson’s writings.<sup>48</sup> Scholars agree that Macpherson created a modern work, rather than a strict translation of Gaelic, drawing upon the traditions of his homeland. This, it is argued, made it more digestible to a varied British public who may have been hostile to Gaelic culture. The reality is that a

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<sup>47</sup> Mackenzie, *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland*, 62-64; Fiona Stafford “‘Primitivism and the Primitive’ Poet: a Cultural Context for Macpherson’s Ossian.” in *Celticism*, ed. Terence Brown (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996), 84-85.

<sup>48</sup> See: Derick S. Thomson, *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson's 'Ossian'* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1952).

lack of understanding of the Gaelic ballad tradition led many to believe that Macpherson was acting in a deceitful way.<sup>49</sup>

The *Ossian* controversy was an attack on Highland culture and this attack fuelled the HSL's somewhat misguided attempt to authenticate the work, which began in 1779. The HSL was shocked by men like "Dr. Johnson and his adherents in their opposition to the authenticity of the poems of Ossian, having contended that the Gaelic was not anciently a written language, and having challenged their opponents to disprove their assertion by producing any Gaelic manuscripts of ancient date."<sup>50</sup> The answer to proving everyone wrong, it seemed, was publishing the work in the original Gaelic. But this required a massive expense, and expertise, neither of which the Society had at the time, although money did begin to trickle in by the early nineteenth century, largely from members of the Highland Society of London's branch at Calcutta. The HSL wished to lay the matter to rest because they were anxious to show that the Highlands possessed great epic poetry by Ossian, or "the Homer of the Celts."<sup>51</sup> The HSL argued that the Bardic tradition in Scotland went back to "ages very remote from the present." They knew this because "the existence of such poems, has been recorded by Buchanan and Boethius in their histories of Scotland, written in the sixteenth century."<sup>52</sup> Shortly after publishing the translations of *Fingal* and *Temora* "doubts were started regarding their authenticity. It was contended that they were not composed by Ossian the son of Fingal, but were fabricated by Mr. Macpherson. Though such an idea cannot with justice be maintained."

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<sup>49</sup> Meek, "The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland," 19.

<sup>50</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, NLS Dep. 268/23, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Prospectus of the Intended Publication of Ossian's Poems in the Original Gaelic; with a Verbal Translation into Latin by Robert Macfarlan, A.M.* (London, 1804), 3-4.

The problem was that Macpherson withheld his sources during the whole controversy, without any explanation, which made him suspect, and “delaying so much longer than was necessary, the publication of the original, tended to justify such suspicions.”<sup>53</sup> There was a sense of urgency by members of the HSL to get the poems authenticated due to the controversy and Macpherson’s seemingly apathetic attitude towards their publication, although he had told the Society that “he was ready to publish the original Gaelic of Ossian as soon as an adequate fund was provided for the expense of printing that work in an elegant manner.”<sup>54</sup> The point is that members of the HSL were led to believe the poetry was a literal translation of ancient texts, and this fuelled their desire to push for their authentication. This is the unfortunate side of the story. The men who sat on the committee to authenticate and publish a translation of the original poetry simply did not have the skills to undertake such a task. In any case, the manuscripts that James Macpherson had left to his executor, the secretary of the HSL John Mackenzie, were incomplete, and by the time of Mackenzie’s death in 1803 some had been lost.<sup>55</sup> The 1807 publication of the ‘original’ poems of Ossian spearheaded largely by Sir John Sinclair was an abject failure. However, not all was lost: the translated poetry also held a utilitarian purpose for the Society: the provision to students of something to read in Gaelic other than the limited religious texts supplied by organizations like the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, which were all that were available at the time. And the sale of the poetry helped fund the Gaelic dictionary, a joint venture between the HSL and the HSS, which will be discussed in chapter five.

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<sup>53</sup> Sinclair, *Prospectus*, 7-8.

<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 9.

<sup>55</sup> Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 11.

In addition to the *Ossian* poetry, James Macpherson is also known for his historical writings. It was his historical writings, which drew upon elements of the traditional medieval Scottish history from John of Fordun and George Buchanan, as well as other scholars who had explored the origins of the ancient Caledonians that Highland elites found in HSL circles used to promote Highland culture. The argument that Highlanders were the inheritors of an ancient and indigenous civilization in Great Britain placed not only Highlanders on an equal (if not superior) footing with the English, but all Scots. The culture of the Gaels, in other words, was at the heart of Scottish and British history, not the embarrassing past of rebels, which deserved to be erased. Macpherson used his scholarly inquiry not only to furnish a background for his poems but also to help contextualize them for his pan-Britannic audience.

It has often been assumed that James Macpherson (1736-1796) was a Jacobite because he was born in Ruthven near Kingussie in Badenoch, a fiercely Gaelic area and a hot bed of Jacobitism, and his kin were from the cadet branch of the Cluny family who were well-known Jacobites and who suffered under the post-'45 government repression. However, an examination of his writing proves otherwise. By the time Macpherson wrote his histories he had been exploiting opportunities available to him in London and the British Empire (he was secretary to the colonial governor of West Florida from 1764 to 1766), he was especially successful in attaching himself to Lord Bute, who acted as Macpherson's patron, and in 1780 he sat as MP for one of the Cornish boroughs, holding his seat until his death.<sup>56</sup> If he was a Jacobite in his earlier life he was not by the 1760s

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<sup>56</sup> Stafford, "Primitivism and the Primitive Poet," 91; Murray G.H. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 154; Derick S. Thomson, "Macpherson, James (1736-1796)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed.

and 1770s. Macpherson was “wedded firmly to the idea of Britain” and his histories placed Scotland on equal terms with England and demonstrated Highlanders’ continued contribution to Scottish identity within the Union.<sup>57</sup> In other words, Macpherson was a Scoto-Briton. Identity for Macpherson was always firmly placed within an historical context and he did not seek to undermine the Union, but rather to celebrate it. The HSL, too, perpetuated this notion of Scottish Highlanders’ contribution to Scottishness as a way in which to celebrate Britishness. However, this was not a homogeneous conception of Britishness; its strength lay in different but equal elements within the Union. As Sir John Sinclair argued on behalf of the HSL: Scots should be proud to be in a union with England but if “they were to be completely assimilated to the English, Scotland would become in a manner blended with England, whilst its inhabitants, at the same time, could claim no particular merit, from old English valour, virtue, literature, or fame; whereas, if they consider themselves not only as Britons, *But as Scotchmen*, there are many circumstances, connected with the more remote, and even the modern periods of their history, *which they can recollect with enthusiasm*.”<sup>58</sup> By exploring Macpherson’s motives for his historical writing is an opportunity for us to examine the identity of a high-profile member of the HSL, who promoted Highlanders’ important role in the formation of British identity. This history had a profound effect on other members of the HSL who continued to promote this history long after Macpherson’s death in order to garner support from members and the public for the Society’s activities.

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H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17728> (accessed 17 July 2014).

<sup>57</sup> Kristin Lindfield-Ott, “‘See SCOT and SAXON coalesc’d in one’: James Macpherson’s *The Highlander* in Its Intellectual and Cultural Contexts, with an Annotated Text of the Poem” (PhD thesis, University of St. Andrew’s, 2011), 211.

<sup>58</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 1. His emphasis.

When it comes to his writing, Kristin Lindfield-Ott argues, “Macpherson was first and foremost an historian. In fiction or more traditional histories, verse or prose, Macpherson’s works are unanimously set in the past.” Macpherson’s *The Highlander: A Poem: in Six Cantos* (1758), for example, was based on Fordun’s *Chronicle of the Scottish Nation* and Buchanan’s *History of Scotland*. His historical writing was biographical, not conjectural, and although he “published at the height of the Scottish Enlightenment, he was not an Enlightenment historian: he was a biographical historian, narrating political and military achievements and chronicling lives; he was an amateur historian who, spending most of his adult life in politics as a pamphleteer, Indian agent and, finally, Member of Parliament.”<sup>59</sup> Macpherson believed that “a historian worthy of the name, not a mere antiquarian, must combine the new with the old and present a synthesis for the edification of the reading public.”<sup>60</sup> In 1771 he published *Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland*. A more refined and expanded version was published in 1772. The *Introduction* was an inquiry into the religious, moral, intellectual, and political life of the English, Scots, and Irish. Unlike histories of Great Britain written by Hume and Robertson, which were really political histories of England, Macpherson’s *Introduction* is a history of *Britain* that was also “essentially a history of Celtic antiquity.” In other words, Macpherson was showing where the Gaels fit into a wider

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<sup>59</sup> Lindfield-Ott, “See SCOT and SAXON,” 184; 199, chapter 4. Kidd, on the other hand, constructed Macpherson as a “Celtic Whig” working from within the enlightened framework of Stadiatism and the Sociological Whig tradition. Kidd has misunderstood Macpherson’s reasons for exploring English liberty; he did this to compare it with Scotland’s in order to seek an equal footing within a British paradigm. He did not need to rescue Scottish Whiggism if he was writing histories of Great Britain nor did he champion English liberty over that of the Scots: Kidd *Subverting Scotland’s Past*, chapter 10. Kidd quotes very little evidence from Macpherson’s work in this chapter, relying on his own theory to critically analyze Macpherson’s works. See also: Daffyd Moore, “James Macpherson and ‘Celtic Whiggism’,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 30, no. 1 (Winter 2006), 1-24. Moore uncritically accepts Kidd’s Celtic Whiggism hypothesis.

<sup>60</sup> D.B Horn, “Some Scottish Writers of History in the Eighteenth century,” *Scottish Historical Review* 40, no. 129 (1961): 15.

British identity.<sup>61</sup> Macpherson's *Introduction* echoes a short dissertation he wrote for the introduction to *Fingal* in 1762. In this dissertation Macpherson argued that the Celts had spread northward from Gaul into Britain and then spread over to Ireland some time after that. This, according to Macpherson, was "a more probable story than the idle fables of Milesian and Gallician [the route to Britain from Spain through southern France] colonies." Apparently it was a well-known fact to Roman writers such as Diodorus Siculus that the "inhabitants of Ireland were originally Britons; and his testimony is unquestionable, when we consider that, for many ages, the language and customs of both nations were the same."<sup>62</sup> Therefore before the *Ossian* controversy was even underway Macpherson was already foreshadowing the kind of history he was to write in the 1770s.

In Macpherson's *Introduction* he argues that the ancient Caledonians, the inhabitants of Scotland that the Romans encountered, were of Celtic extraction. This history was attempting to show that as the indigenous inhabitants of Scotland, Highland Scots had a strong claim to be indigenous Britons as well. He argued that successive waves of Celtic peoples settled in Britain arriving from the south eventually settling in present-day Scotland. This gave Scots a claim to be the oldest Britons, older than that of the English. The Irish, in this scenario, were settlers from Britain and not colonizers of Scotland as the traditional history had argued since the medieval era.<sup>63</sup> Little was known about the Caledonians even in Roman times. What Macpherson could glean from writers

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<sup>61</sup> This history was so successful that Edward Gibbon cited him as his source on the Caledonians in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88). Macpherson wrote other histories such as *Original Papers, Containing the Secret History of Great Britain, from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hannover* (1775) and *History of Great Britain* based on *Original Papers* (1775) along with many historical pamphlets on various topics from the American Revolution to the history of the British East India Company. Lindfield-Ott, "See SCOT and SAXON," 187-201.

<sup>62</sup> James Macpherson, *Fingal, An Ancient Epic poem, in Six Books: Together with Several Other Poems, Composed by Ossian the Son of Fingal. Translated from the Galic Language* (London, 1762), ii-iii.

<sup>63</sup> James Macpherson, *An Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland*. (London, 1771), 90-91; 137-9.

such as Tacitus was that the Caledonians “were the most ancient inhabitants of Britain, that they were brave and numerous, that, though overcome in the field by discipline of the Roman legions, they were far from being reduced into any subjection which could derive the name of conquest.”<sup>64</sup> Macpherson attributes this lack of knowledge to the fact that the Caledonians did not have written records; they were an oral society. The fact that the Romans never successfully conquered them added to this darkness, “but when the Scots look back with regret upon that want of letters,” he argued, “which has involved in obscurity, they ought to consider that it was, perhaps, from this circumstance arose that national independence which they transmitted their posterity.”<sup>65</sup> In other words, contemporary Scots had much to be proud of this independent, glorious people from whom they were related, despite their lack of letters.

Macpherson’s *Introduction* was in large part reacting to the publication of *A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the Northern Parts of Britain, or Scotland Containing an Account of the Romans* (1729) by the Jacobite antiquary from Aberdeenshire, Father Thomas Innes (1662-1744).<sup>66</sup> It has been argued that it was Innes who provided the Scots literati with the tools to destroy the Gaelic past.<sup>67</sup> However, not all Scots literati found his history entirely convincing. In this essay Innes challenged the traditional history written by Fordun, and championed by Boece then Buchanan, that in 330 BC the royal line of the kingdom of Dalriada was established in present day Scotland, a kingdom, therefore, that predated that of England’s. At the time this version

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<sup>64</sup> James Macpherson, *Introduction* (1772), 75.

<sup>65</sup> James Macpherson, *Introduction* (1772), 76-77.

<sup>66</sup> Brian M. Halloran, “Innes, Thomas (1662-1744),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/14432> (accessed 31 July 2014).

<sup>67</sup> Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland’s Past*, chapter 6.

of Scottish history was written there was an immediate need to thwart Edward I's designs on all of Great Britain. Fordun stretched out a list of Kings to long before the Birth of Christ so that Edward would have to claim to such an ancient kingdom.<sup>68</sup> Innes poked holes in this version of Scottish history, arguing that its claims were not based in fact. "We are under no recourse," he stated, "to the Scots, who came from Ireland, for maintaining either the antiquity of the royal line of our kings beyond any monarchy now in being, or the ancient inhabitants in Britain."<sup>69</sup> However, Innes replaced the Celtic king lists with an equally dubious Pictish monarchy of which he had very little evidence to prove its existence. We have to be aware that Innes had his own agenda: his destruction of the king list and its replacement with a Teutonic Pictish monarchy was to "vindicate primogeniture in the in the interest of the Jacobite cause."<sup>70</sup> Macpherson argued that although Innes had cleaned up some of the more erroneous errors of historians such as Buchannan, "setting out upon wrong principles and being an utter stranger to the Gaelic language, he fell into unavoidable mistakes, and endeavoured to obtrude upon the world opinions, concerning the origins of the Scots, no less improbable than those tales which he had exploded with so much success."<sup>71</sup> In other words, a lack of working knowledge of classical Gaelic, which Macpherson had, meant that these texts were virtually useless to someone like Innes to use in constructing the past.

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<sup>68</sup> Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 189.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas Innes, *A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the Northern Parts of Britain, or Scotland. Containing an Account of the Romans, of the Britains Betwixt the Walls* [Vol. 1] (London, 1729. 2 Vols), 105.

<sup>70</sup> Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 189-191; Brian M. Halloran, "Innes, Thomas (1662-1744)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008  
<http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/14432> (accessed 31 July 2014).

<sup>71</sup> James Macpherson, *An Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland: or, an Inquiry into the Origin, Religion, Future State, Character, Manners, Morality, Amusements, Persons, Manner Of Life, Houses, Navigation, Commerce, Language, Government, Kings, General Assemblies, Courts Of Justice, And Juries, of the Britons, Scots, Irish and Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1772), 78.

It must be said that Macpherson was not the first to write about the ancient Caledonians. Macpherson was building upon a tradition of historical writing that had been both trying to restore John of Fordun as the ‘Father of Scottish History’ and establish an indigenous culture within Scotland that was ‘Caledonian’, not Pictish. Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh (1636-1691) inaugurated the “Gaelic Caledonian theory” in *Antiquity of the Royal Line of Scotland* (1686). In this work, Rosehaugh argued against men like James Usher and Bishop Edward Lhuyd both of who had tried to discredit the Royal line, it should be noted, long before Innes.<sup>72</sup> Jerome Stone (1727-1756), a contemporary of Innes, for example, had been working on Scottish Gaelic ballads based on the same sources as Macpherson in the autumn of 1759 when he was working as a teacher in Dunkeld “a town situated at the entrance into the Highlands.” Stone, who was known to the HSL and corroborated their knowledge of ancient Gaelic poetry, denied the Irish origins of Scotland and like the Macphersons argued that the Scots were the original inhabitants of Scotland. Stone, Sir John Sinclair argued, “being a person of much industry and strong natural parts, he resolved to learn the language principally spoken by those among whom he was settled; and after having acquired the Gaelic, he was surprised to find a variety of literary works were preserved in that language, which seemed to him to be possessed of great merit.”<sup>73</sup> Guy Miège (bap. 1644-1718?), a Swiss author, lexicographer, who lived in London later in his life, wrote *The Present State of Great Britain, and Ireland, Being A Complete Treatise of Their Several Inhabitants* (1707), which championed the Union but portrayed the Scots as the (possible) original inhabitants of Great Britain. Miège had powerful patrons in London,

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<sup>72</sup> Miège, *The Present State*, 51.

<sup>73</sup> Sinclair, *Prospectus*, 5.

including Thomas Brice, the first Earl of Elgin.<sup>74</sup> In any case, he argued that the antiquity of the Scots was without doubt because Tacitus had already mentioned the war between the Romans and the Caledonians in the time of Agricola; “for it must be owned,” he argued, “that the Scots are the posterity of the Caledonians.” What is important is Miège used Buchanan liberally in his work to comment on the antiquity and customs of the Highlanders. Miège may not be well known by today’s scholars but he was well known in eighteenth-century intellectual circles and he was still influential in the early nineteenth century.<sup>75</sup> For example, in an 1803 circular directed at members of the HSL, Walter Philip Colyear Robertson, along with Sinclair one of the HSL’s unofficial historians and active committee members, argued that according to Miège:

The origin of the Scotch monarchy is by Buchanan, Bishop Lesly, and other historians ascribed the choice of chieftains being willing to submit to any of their own number, they sent to Ireland to Fergus son of King Ferquard to come to their assistance with troops; upon which they made him king and the Crown has continued in his posterity ever since. It appears however from history that those heads of tribes and afterwards Estates of Parliament did always retain a very great power in their own hands? Those chieftains were therefore the original nobles of the nation, or they might not more properly be

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<sup>74</sup> Vivienne Larminie, “Miège, Guy (*bap.* 1644, *d.* in or after 1718),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008,

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/18687> (accessed 9 November 2013).

<sup>75</sup> Guy Miège, *The Present State of Great Britain, and Ireland, Being A Complete Treatise of Their Several Inhabitants* [Vol.2] (London, 1707), 51.

called princes, as they are by the historian Buchanan and likewise by King John of France, in a letter addressed to them.<sup>76</sup>

Robertson's point was to illuminate for members of the HSL who may not have been familiar with the Buchananite legacy, to show, as he put it, "the history and contribution of Scotland" to British history and the equal footing with which Scots and the English joined in political union. Despite the infiltration of the Normans in the eleventh century and increased cultural integration, the Gaels continued to play an important role in the formation of Scottish identity: "it this being perfectly clear that the chief of the clans were the first nobles of Scotland before the introduction of a foreign language and foreign customs into that country, it is evidently adopting foreign ideas to treat any other persons as superior to them."<sup>77</sup> Despite infiltration from outsiders, Gaels, therefore, continued to be important contributors to a national identity.

Not all of the early eighteenth-century supporters of the Caledonian theory were necessarily using a 'Gaelic origins' approach. But the theory was nonetheless used for the same end: to legitimize Scotland's equal footing with England within a political union. For example, Sir John Clerk of Penicuik (1676-1755), a Lowlander who spent a great deal of time in London, was a staunch unionist and a Scottish patriot. He was also a Roman antiquary and through his intellectual investigations of archaeology in Scotland he determined for himself that the Caledonians were the indigenous inhabitants of

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<sup>76</sup> Walter Ph. Colyear Robertson, "Remarks on the Antiquity and Superiority of Highland Chieftains Shewing the Chief of the Clans to be the First Ranks of Nobility" (1803), The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>77</sup> "Remarks on the Antiquity and Superiority of Highland Chieftains Shewing the Chief of the Clans to be the First Ranks of Nobility" (1803), The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

Scotland. Clerk wished to find greatness and purpose to the small nation of Scotland within a wider political unit; he found this in Caledonian resistance to Roman rule. “He wished to be a part of a wider world, and yet retain the essential character of an independent nationality. He was at once a Roman and a Caledonian, a North Briton and a Scot.”<sup>78</sup> As William Ferguson points out, most eighteenth-century Scots subscribed to the belief that the ancient Caledonians were their ancestors, Gaels or not.<sup>79</sup> In other words, Macpherson was operating within a tradition that not only predated him by a considerable amount of time, but also had been used to legitimize Scotland’s equal inclusion in a political union with England, a process he and other members of the HSL continued from the mid-eighteenth-century onwards. Macpherson continued to research this theory during the Scottish Enlightenment to show the Gaels’ crucial role in the concept of Britishness that made concessions for cultural and historical differences.

Macpherson’s most direct eighteenth-century Gaelic influence, however, was John Macpherson the minister at Sleat (a distant cousin of James Macpherson). John Macpherson wrote *Critical Dissertations on the Origin, Antiquities, Language, Government, Manners, and Religion, of the Ancient Caledonians, their Posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots* (published posthumously in 1768). John Macpherson studied at King’s College, Aberdeen (he would receive a DD from the same college in 1761) and after he was ordained in 1784 began to publish his verse. His *Critical Dissertations* was written in response to the controversy surrounding James Macpherson’s publication of the *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* as well as the translations

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<sup>78</sup> Iain Gordon Brown, “Modern Rome and Ancient Caledonia: the Union and the Politics of Scottish culture,” in *The History of Scottish Culture*, ed. Andrew Hook (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), 35.

<sup>79</sup> Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation*, 238.

of *Fingal* and *Temora* and he was well known to be an expert on Celtic antiquaries and culture (he, himself was a Gael). James Macpherson used some of the *Critical Dissertations* in his *History of Great Britain and Ireland* and wrote the anonymous preface to the *Critical Dissertations*.<sup>80</sup> In his *Critical Dissertations*, John Macpherson vehemently denied the Irish origins of Scotland, criticizing Stadialist scholars like William Robertson for “looking with too much contempt on the origin of societies, they have either without examination, adopted the traditional tales of their predecessors, or altogether exploded them, without any disquisition.” In other words, Macpherson was arguing that the Scottish Enlightenment’s obsession with the progression of mankind clouded the judgement of societies, which did not fit the mould, denigrating their ancient achievements. Ancient societies such as the Celts, possessed scholars and, perhaps, the best literature in all of Europe and were equal to any other classical civilizations such as the Egyptians or the Greeks. But because “our ancient historians, from the unfavourable times in which they lived, were ignorant and full of prejudice,” the achievements of these peoples had been subverted.<sup>81</sup> John Macpherson was able to denigrate Innes’ work, for example, by pointing out that: “almost all the records and historical monuments of the Scots history have been destroyed through the barbarous policy of Edward 1<sup>st</sup> of England of the Norman race, and the intemperate zeal of the reformers. A few detached pieces, which have escaped those revolutions, fatal to the antiquities of the nation, have been preserved by the industrious Father Innes. They throw little light on the antiquities of

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<sup>80</sup> Paul J. de Gategno, “Macpherson, John (1713-1765),” in *Oxford Dictionary of* ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17729> (accessed 20 July 2014).

<sup>81</sup> John Macpherson, *Critical Dissertations on the Origin, Antiquities, Language, Government, Manners, and Religion, of the Ancient Caledonians, their Posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots*. (London, 1768), 16.

Scotland, and serve only to reconcile us more to the destruction of those annals of which they are thought to be a part.”<sup>82</sup> If the printed works that remained did not provide a clear enough picture of the past, the solution was to use the history of the Gaelic language. As a well-educated Gaelic speaker who could read classical Gaelic, John Macpherson had little difficulty in using Gaelic sources (Innes was not able to), which he used liberally in the work and as such he used an etymological process to prove the Gaelic origins of the Caledonians. The strongest argument to be made was present in the Gaelic name for Scotland. As he argued: “The indigenel name of the Caledonians is the only one hitherto known among their genuine descendants, the Highlanders of Scotland—they call themselves *Albanich* to this day. All the illiterate Highlanders are as perfect strangers to the national name of Scot, as they are to that of Parthian or Arabian. If a common Highlander is asked, of what country he is, he immediately answers, that he is an *Albanich*, or Gael.”<sup>83</sup> John Macpherson’s son, Sir John Macpherson (1745-1821), who would become Governor-General of Bengal, was one of the original twenty-five members of the HSL, and wrote the dedication to the *Critical Dissertations*.<sup>84</sup>

It was to the history of the ancient Caledonians that members of the HSL looked in order to construct Highlanders’ (and therefore all Scots’) place in the Union. The HSL’s economic and cultural support was always couched in terms of patriotic difference

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<sup>82</sup> Macpherson, *Critical Dissertations*, 14-15.

<sup>83</sup> Macpherson, *Critical Dissertations*, 104.

<sup>84</sup> See more in chapter 2. The *Critical Dissertations* were dedicated to Charles Greville, Esq. (1749-1809) a well-known collector, antiquarian, mineralogist, horticulturalist, and politician who would serve under Pitt the Younger as Treasurer of the Household. Michael P. Cooper, “Greville, Charles Francis (1749-1809),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/40496> (accessed 21 July 2014). Paul J. de Gategno, “Macpherson, Sir John, first baronet (c.1745-1821),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17730> (accessed 20 July 2014).

and equal inclusion within the union, and the history of the Gaels were used as a theoretical framework. “As one of the objects of the Society seems to be the preservation of the ancient manners, customs and ideas which distinguished our forefathers,” Colyear Robertson argued, “there appears no reason why we, the original race of the island should like the inhabitants of a conquered province adopt the [customs] of others.”<sup>85</sup> Robertson argued on a second occasion against the assumption by many Britons that after the Union of 1707 all of the new titles created, including those of the royal family, “are called contrary to truth, English Peers...that North Britain is really nothing more than a Province of England.” Rather, considering that the Scots had thwarted invasion of the Romans and since the Declaration of Arbroath had been declared a nation:

Delivered from the power of their enemies by King Robert the first they add the divine providence, that legal succession which ‘we will constantly maintain, and our due and unanimous consent have made him our chief and king. To him in defence of our liberty, we are found to adhere; as well of right, as by reason of his descent [?] and to him we will, in all things adhere; for through him salvation has been brought to our people. Should he abandon our cause, or aim at reducing us and our Kingdom under the dominion of the English, we will instantly strive to expel him as a public enemy and the subverter of our rights and his own, and we will chose another king to rule and protect us.’ Surely some of the descendants of those who signed that letter are not so greatly degenerated from their ancestors that not one of them

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<sup>85</sup> Walter Ph. Colyear Robertson, “Remarks on the Antiquity and Superiority of Highland Chieftains Shewing the Chief of the Clans to be the First Ranks of Nobility” (1803), *The Highland Society of London General Correspondence*, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

would stand up against an infringement of the articles of the Union gradually gaining ground and tending to depress and annihilate that zeal for the honour of their country, that martial and heroic spirit which has rendered the North Britons in all ages unconquerable.<sup>86</sup>

The descendants of the ancient Caledonians, in other words, despite having entered into political union with England were still the inheritors of a free and proud past, a past defined by the culture and history of the Highlands. Highland difference was usually portrayed as language (Gaelic), dress, history, and music, and it was these cultural trappings that were used to remind Highlanders, and the British public, of the past. The glory of the Highland past was both a vehicle for cultural expression and a rhetorical tool used to legitimize the HSL's improvement activities to a wary British public. As Sir John Sinclair argued in a pamphlet on Highland culture he published on behalf of the HSL,

Perhaps the best mode of keeping up that national spirit, which was conspicuous, that '*fier comme un Ecossois*'[sic] became proverbial on the Continent, is occasionally to meet in that garb, which was the ancient dress of their Celtic ancestors, and on such occasions at least, to speak the national language, to listen to the national music and poetry, and to keep up the old customs of the country. With that view, the formation of the Highland Society of London, and of those societies established in Scotland, cannot be too much

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<sup>86</sup> William Ph. Colyear Robertson, "On the Intended Publication of John Brown Genealogist and on rescuing the North Britons from the Degraded Name of English, agreeably to the Act of Union," The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

commended, more especially as their meetings are intended, not merely, for the sake of social intercourse, but to relive distressed objects, to distribute honorary rewards for public services; and likewise for the purpose of carrying on such measures as might have a tendency, not only to elevate the character, and to keep up the spirit of their countrymen, but also to promote the improvement and the prosperity of that part of the United Kingdom with which they are so peculiarly connected.<sup>87</sup>

In other words, the revival and promotion of Highland culture facilitated the HSL's social and economic improvement agenda, because these activities were inextricably linked. Driving its cultural agenda, the HSL was reminding the British public of Highlanders' patriotism. There was much to be proud of in being a Highlander, and it was largely through the efforts of members of the HSL that Highland culture was becoming increasingly accepted not just as cultural trappings to be appropriated by outsiders but as a legitimate and ancient culture, to which these men held close ties. And the HSL promoted key elements of Highland culture (music, poetry, song, and dress) to the British public in a myriad of ways.

### **Highlanders and Highlandism: The Origins of Modern Highland Identity**

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<sup>87</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 6-7. 'Fier comme un Eccosais', or 'Proud as a Scotsman', was coined by the French after the formation of the Scots Bodyguard, or 'Garde Eccossaise', during the Hundred Years War, which was formed to protect the French king. M. H. Brown, "Stewart, John, third earl of Buchan (c.1380-1424)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/26483> (accessed 21 July 2014).

For the HSL, the promotion of Highland culture was both to evoke the glory of the Highland past and legitimize the inclusion of it in British culture. Music was at the forefront of the Society's cultural promotion as it was seen to be not only an important element of Highland culture, being both an integral part of Highland regiments but also an inherent part of Highland culture and history, but also under the greatest threat of disappearing. As Sinclair argued Scottish, or Highland, music was known to be ancient; however, how ancient it was up for debate. What was known of Highland music at the time is that it consisted of "three sorts, the music of war, of the dance, and of the song. In regard to the martial music, and the instrument on which it is played, namely the great Highland pipe, every exertion has already been made, and with very great success, by the London and Scotch societies, to preserve it from the oblivion to which it was fast hastening: and this was a fortunate circumstance, as there is certainly no music which a Highlander would soon follow to battle, or which animates him so much to great achievements, as the sound of the pipe."<sup>88</sup>

Modern pipe music that was played in the context of army regiments was a call to war, and was not necessarily about art, but what about the beautiful songs of the past? Therefore the preservation and promotion of Highland music was the first order of business for the HSL, in the form of the first piping competition in Scotland, which took place at the October Falkirk cattle Tryst in 1781.<sup>89</sup> There were fears by many Highland Scots that classical pipe music was rapidly disappearing: "the music of war, adapted for the great Highland pipe, is of particular description, and it was fast hastening to oblivion, when its preservation was fortunately considered to be an object worthy of attention of

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<sup>88</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 14.

<sup>89</sup> The HSL continues to be involved in piping competitions at various Highland games and gatherings in Scotland, offering prizes.

the Highland Society of London.”<sup>90</sup> Classical or ‘Great’ pipe (*céol mor* or *piobaireachd*) music was, for members of the HSL, evidence of an ancient and glorious civilization, like ancient poetry and ancient dress: “The Highland Society of London, of which one of the first Dukes of Scotland was then President [the Duke of Gordon], being desirous that the ancient spirit of the Great Pipe, which in former times called the Clans in Scotland to war, should be revived.”<sup>91</sup> The piping competitions were one such strategy to rescuing the music of the ancient Gaels (or Caledonians), restoring “the purity and perfection of the martial musick [*sic*] of our ancestors.”<sup>92</sup> Falkirk was an ideal choice for the piping competitions as it is the place that historically (and at the time) cattle and sheep were traded and sold and therefore where Highlanders on a rare occasion gathered en masse in one location. As mentioned, it has been assumed by scholars that the Disarming Act included a ban on Highland pipes; however, they were not proscribed. The idea that the pipes were banned goes back to the post-Jacobite era in which some commentators argued that the last Jacobite rebellion and the subsequent outlawing of Gaelic culture was the final blow resulting in a ‘crisis’ in Gaelic culture from which it has never recovered. This in itself was a rhetorical argument that has been perpetuated by those seeking to gain from the victim status of Highlanders whether it was economic improvers or hostile Scotophobes. But pipes continued to be played, and not just in the army. The fact that a Society, which by then already had many high-profile members (including peers and members of Parliament) and intended to exert influence over British high society, began a

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<sup>90</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 13.

<sup>91</sup> Highland Society of London, The Falkirk Tryst Bi-Centenary Piping Competition, Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 1981. Private Collection of Alastair Campbell, Yr. of Airds, 8.

<sup>92</sup> Mackenzie to Mackintosh, 7 October 1784, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

major piping competition in 1781, a year prior to the lifting of the Disarming Act, is telling enough, in spite of all the other evidence we have. It is unlikely that the HSL would have broken the law.<sup>93</sup> The music of the Great pipe had not been written down and other than in a military setting pipe music and so there were fears by Highland elites that *piobaireachd* had been falling out of favour with common Highlanders. So, piping competitions with prize money as incentive was seen to be one strategy to preserving the ancient music of the Highlanders as well as patronizing contemporary pipe music.<sup>94</sup>

For the first few years of the piping competitions, the HSL's first designated Sister Society, the Highland Society of Glasgow (1727) helped to superintend the event. As the first Highland Society in Great Britain, the HSL was keen to connect itself with the older Glasgow Society. The HSL handed the reins over to the Highland Society of Scotland in 1784, the year it organized, as it made more sense for a society, which was based in Scotland with close connections to the HSL to oversee the events, and the competitions were moved to Edinburgh in that year.<sup>95</sup> Before the HSL handed over the reins to the HSS, John Mackenzie wrote the HSG thanking members "for the repeated instances given by their worthy sister Society of Glasgow of manly zeal and exertion in restoring the purity and perfection of the favourite martial musick of our ancestors," and introduced members of that Society assuring the HSG that the HSS had "with much

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<sup>93</sup> The supposed ban on bagpipes has also been assumed by contemporary Highlanders. In the HSL's bi-centenary publication of the 1781 piping competition states: "The choice of Falkirk...as the venue of the competition was not only because in those days the Tryst was the meeting place of large numbers of highlanders, who had driven their cattle and sheep down for sale before the onset of winter, but mainly because to have held it north of Falkirk, in the Highlands themselves, would have been illegal." The "ban" on pipes is also mentioned in Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 5. As Gibson shows this goes back to the Proscription Era when a few commenters blamed the Disarming Act for the decline in pipe music, but there is no evidence for this: Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping*, 28-35. Pipes, pipers and music are not mentioned in the Act.

<sup>94</sup> Iain Macinnes, "The Highland Bagpipe: the Impact of the Highland Societies of London and Scotland." (M.Litt Thesis, Edinburgh University, 1989), 14.

<sup>95</sup> Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 6.

satisfaction and readiness undertaken the guidance and decision of this year's competition.—There can be no doubt of their executing this pleasant duty with becoming spirit—a spirit more true and laudable than that if the Glasgow gentlemen cannot be desired or expected.”<sup>96</sup> In addition to supporting the piping competitions, the Society helped pay for the publication of Gaelic music gathered by musicians and scholars in the Highlands. The Society also tried to set up a professorship of pipe music to better research their ancestor's music, but this never materialized due to a lack of scholars studying classical pipe music seriously. Other than the competitions, in order to keep pipe music alive the HSL paid pipers to play both classical and contemporary pipe music at their various meetings and events.<sup>97</sup>

Highland dress was also of great interest to the HSL. Outside eighteenth-century military uniforms, not much was known about its origins. It was largely assumed by many Scots that tartan was the pattern of clothing of the ancient Scots, which was mentioned in the Renaissance historians' texts. However, eighteenth-and early-nineteenth-century Scots knew very little about its ancient character, hence the need for research. “There are many disputes regarding the ancient Highland dress,” Sir John Sinclair argued, “and it probably varied in different ages and in different districts in Scotland.”<sup>98</sup> In this way, Sinclair is absolutely right. The modern notion that particular tartans were associated with different clans prior to the eighteenth century is hotly disputed but there is some evidence that patterns were associated with particular areas,

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<sup>96</sup> Mackenzie to George Mackintosh, Esq., 1 October 1784, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>97</sup> “Note on Ossian,” Acc. 10615/1; Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 14. Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17; Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, Dep. 268/21, p. 89.

<sup>98</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 8.

which would correspond to kinship groups. A native of Skye, Martin Martin (?-1719) commented on the fact that “every isle differs from each other in their fancy of making plaids as to the stripes in breadth and colours. This humour is as different throughout the mainland of the Highlands, in so far that they who have seen those places are able at first view of a man’s plaid to guess his place of residence.”<sup>99</sup> And there is some evidence to suggest that certain *setts* (or patterns) were associated with certain families even as far back as the sixteenth century. Cheape has argued that depending on the availability of dyes and wool certain clans would reproduce patterns.<sup>100</sup>

The use of tartan for cultural expression by a variety of groups in Scotland has a long history that predates the eighteenth century. And until recently, the importance of tartan as a political symbol in the late medieval and early modern periods has largely been overlooked.<sup>101</sup> Tartan has been, at various times, an expression of Scottish identity. There are many examples of the use of tartan in the Middle Ages when the *gàidhealtachd* played a role as an imagined space where Scots looked to for a collective identity. John of Fordun, Hector Boece, and George Buchanan pointed to the idea of the “true or ‘Old Scot’” as living in the ‘North’, where ancient martial valour and resistance to English rule had flourished, and tartan was a physical manifestation of this identity. Highland soldiers have been wearing tartan uniforms from at least the late sixteenth century (likely before) when the Highlands began to open up again to wider influences as increased prosperity and trade, as well as the participation of Highlanders in European wars revealed to a

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<sup>99</sup> Martin Martin, *A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1703), 208.

<sup>100</sup> Pittock, “Plaiding the Invention,” 41.

<sup>101</sup> Hugh Cheape, “Gheibhte Breacain Charnaid,” 13; A. Quye, H. Cheape, J. Burnett, E. S. B. Ferreira, A. N. Hulme, H. McNab, “An Historical and Analytical Study of Red, Pink, Green and Yellow Colours in Quality 18th- and Early 19th-Century Scottish Tartans.” *Dyes in History and Archaeology* 19 (2003), 1-2.

wider audience the image of Highlanders as “warrior-hero[s] swathed in tartan.”<sup>102</sup> By the early modern period tartan (or plaid) dress was part of a wider European fashion for elaborate and colourful garments, which many Highland elites (both men and women) favoured. Tartan in this case was “Gaelic’s version of Renaissance fashion” with the best wool and the best dyes being part of a cult of conspicuous consumption by elites. Tartan was also especially important during the Jacobite era as a symbol of loyalty to the Stuarts. Even as early as the 1680s at James VI (II)’s court at Holyrood there was a brief ‘cult of tartantry’, and tartan remained a symbol of Stuart loyalty from 1689-1746.<sup>103</sup> Regarding the issue of the *fèileadh beag*, the modern kilt we know today may have been worn by timber workers employed by English industrialists in Argyllshire and Lochaber in the early eighteenth century, but there were many different ways of styling the ‘belted plaid’, which included a short version.<sup>104</sup> *Breacan* was the belted plaid and *eileadh* means ‘folding’. *Mor* (‘big’) and *beag* (‘small’) signified two distinct styles of folding the belted plaid. The *fèileadh beag*, therefore, was a way of folding this cloth into a shorter style and there is plenty of evidence of its use in the seventeenth century, long before the “English” kilt.<sup>105</sup> The conclusions we can draw from this, then, is that tartan and garments resembling the modern kilt we know today pre-date the eighteenth century and the use of Highland dress to signify loyalty or allegiance predates the romantic period. It was largely the use of tartan as a badge of Jacobite loyalty that Highland dress was outlawed (albeit briefly) after the ’15, and for thirty-five years after the ’45, with the

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<sup>102</sup> Cheape, *Tartan*, 15.

<sup>103</sup> Pittock, “Plaiding the Invention of Scotland,” 34-37; Cheape, “Gheibhte Breacain Charnaid,” 24-27.

<sup>104</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 10.

<sup>105</sup> Cheape, *Tartan*, 25-26.

exception of within the British army and those elites who were exempt.<sup>106</sup> However, what concerns us here is the use of tartan and other Highland symbols in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries by members of the HSL. In this way we can link late eighteenth century constructions of Highlandism to the earlier period covered by recent scholarship. The HSL's contemporary concerns were rooted in an ancient past. In the immediate post-Jacobite/Proscription Era reconstruction and rehabilitation took place in which Highland symbols were attached to the British army to prove loyalty and to negotiate the fiscal-military state. By the formation of the HSL in 1778, highlanders were no longer a threat to the British government, and members sought to show to the (sometimes hostile) British public the continued importance of Highland history and culture both to Scottish and British identities.

After the repeal of the Disarming Act in 1782, members of the HSL began to research traditional Highland dress and it was often discussed at meetings that members should wear Highland dress, not just for special occasions. In 1784 it was suggested to wear it on the Queen's birthday and those who did "will be considered as warm friends to the spirit of the Society." At a meeting in 1797 it was also proposed that in addition to wearing the Highland garb "that one course of Scottish dishes be served up at all future dinners of this society—Resolved that all members of the committee be prepared to deliver his opinion on the above proposals at the next monthly meeting of the Society also that a button with the motto 'Clan na Gael' be used in the above proposed Highland garb." These were more markers with which members sought to identify themselves with the ancient history of the Gaels. In addition to identification with a particular ethnicity, it

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<sup>106</sup> Weaponry was outlawed in the first Disarming Act of 1716 (amended in 1725) and it was very specific including "Broad sword or target, Poignard, Whinger or Durk, Side Pistol, Gun or other warlike weapon." The 1746 act only mentions "Arms and warlike weapons." Gibson, *Traditional Gaelic Bagpiping*, 26; 36.

was also important to members of the HSL that they be fashionable to the general public. After all, guests of members attended special meetings of the Society, and these men were not always native Highlanders. Therefore, Sir John Sinclair proposed in 1813 that a “Committee of Taste” be formed to determine two kinds of dress for members to wear at large meetings, one for young members and one for the older ones and that:

The adoption of this double kind of uniform would give a consistent and interesting effect to the meetings, and it would be a proper homage to the memory of their Celtic ancestors, who were particularly distinguished for a disinclination to change the fashion of their dress. Besides the dress, it would be proper to preserve such of their ancient customs as tend to imbibe and fix in the mind those qualities of noble disinterestedness, high honour, and unconquerable valour, for which their forefathers have been so renowned. Of these... the recital of poems and songs in praise of Caledonian prowess, and the sound of that music which always led Highlanders to victory and immortal glory...nor should the Society hesitate to eat the oat cake, to taste the whiskey, to circulate the shell, and to partake of dishes, in which the ancient Scots delighted.<sup>107</sup>

It was important to members of the HSL that the image they would portray to the public was to be fashionable so as to increase their chances of acceptance by a potentially hostile London public. It was for this reason that Sinclair included explanations of the key

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<sup>107</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 11.

Highland cultural expressions, according to the HSL, such as dress, music, and poetry in the works he published on behalf of the HSL. It was also necessary to evoke history and participate in food and drink rituals associated with the Highlands, normalizing these rituals for both insiders and outsiders. The Feast of Shells, for example, was thought to be an ancient Caledonian tradition of ceremoniously passing around some kind of liquor in seashells (possibly made out of juniper berries or plants that grew on the heath) in order to evoke tradition and history while feasting on the spoils of a hunt. This ritual is mentioned frequently in Gaelic poetry, and was well known to even amateur Gaelic scholars.<sup>108</sup>

During his research Sinclair even consulted with the notorious Celtophobe, the historian and poet (and sometimes forger) John Pinkerton (1758-1826) in 1796 to help him determine the origins of tartan. Pinkerton claimed: “Buchanan (1582) is the first who mentions the present Highland dress and tartan. The latter certainly passed from Flanders, with other imports, to Scotland. The name may perhaps be Flemish, or from the French, as *ter-teint*, dyed thrice.” It is true that the word ‘tartan’ may be of French or Flemish origin but that was a modern English term for the chequered fabric. Gaels had their own word for such a fabric: *breacan*. Pinkerton then proceeded to lambast the *fèileadh beag*, and largely Sinclair ignored Pinkerton’s suggestions.<sup>109</sup> In that same year Sinclair published some of his findings to date on elite Highland dress in the *Scots Magazine*, a very popular magazine for learned Britons, published in both Edinburgh and London. In this article, Sinclair did not wish to “dispute either the genuineness, or the

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<sup>108</sup> John Clark, *The Works of the Caledonian Bards: Translated from the Gaelic* [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.] (Edinburgh, 1783)

<sup>109</sup> Sinclair, Sir John, *The Correspondence of the Right Honorable Sir John Sinclair, Bart.* [Vol.1] (London, 1831), 472-3; Sarah Couper, “Pinkerton, John (1758-1826),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/22301> (accessed 30 July 2014).

warlike appearance of the garb worn by that gallant corps, the 42<sup>nd</sup> regiment, and which by many is supposed to be the only true Highland dress,” but rather he was arguing that the *trews*, “as worn by the Rothsay and Caithness Fencibles is not only an ancient part of the dress of the Scottish Highlanders, but rivals the belted plaid, in antiquity, as well as in utility and elegance.” In his article, Sinclair drew from history and from portraits, arguing that: “there is an engraving of James I of Scotland, in the possession of George Chalmers, Esq. of the Board of Trade in which that monarch was dressed in the close *trews*; and as the picture from whence that engraving was taken must have been executed in Scotland, there being a view of Dumbarton Castle in it, there is thence every reason to imagine, that it was the dress of that sovereign during his residence in his own kingdom.” The *trews*, he argued, was part of the historical costume of Highland elites, worn also by Lowlanders at the time, and was “commonly made of a kind of chequered stuff called tartan, though sometimes of stuff of one colour only...when the *trews* were worn upon a journey, the plaid was carried over the left shoulder, and drawn under the right arm.”<sup>110</sup>

After years of research, Sinclair published his findings of Highland culture in a pamphlet in 1804, which was available to anyone, not just members of the HSL. In the pamphlet Sinclair described the ancient Highland costume:

The bonnet was not according to the present style, loaded with innumerable feathers, but, when worn by chieftains and other persons of distinction, was, in general, simply ornamented with plumes from the wing of the eagle. The bonnets of the inferior ranks had tufts, or sprigs of trees or shrubs, which distinguished the different clans...the coat or jacket, had short skirts, and was

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<sup>110</sup> Sir John Sinclair, “On the Highland Dress,” *Scots Magazine* 58 (1796): 671-674.

fitted close to the body, so as to display the shape to the best advantage. It was not made of scarlet cloth, but of some plain colour, particularly of dark blue, or dark grass green, or even, with silver or white buttons, and other ornaments. Tartan jackets, also, were common, with gold or other ornaments, as suited the colours used; there being above 100 different sorts of tartan appropriated to the different clans of families in the Kingdom.

Though the belted plaid, sometimes of larger and sometimes of smaller dimensions, was very usually worn, particularly during summer, and when persons walked on foot, yet the *trews* were also very common, more especially in the dreary seasons of the year, and among the higher orders, and those who rode on horseback...The *trews* and stockings were formerly made of the same piece, but the separation of them, and the use of hose, is a useful, though probably modern invention. The hose, which the French in Egypt called painted stockings...are chequered stockings, and are suited to every description of the Highland dress. The shoes are called brogues, and were tied with thongs. They were imperfectly tanned, and instead of being tight, so improper for long marches, were made quite easy. It was usual, indeed, for a Highlander, when he was about commencing a journey, to moisten them in the first pool he could find. The half boot and shoe in one, resembling the Roman buskin, was also worn by the Scots.

The plaid, he explained, was made of the *sett* or pattern of tartan “belonging to the clan of the individual who wore it.” It was sometimes worn loose, and sometimes tied round the body with a belt, “a part of which, being fixed by a pin to the shoulder, gave it an elegant appearance. The belted plaid was frequently adopted in war, as an easy mode of carrying that part of the dress, and it could be quickly thrown off, if found cumbersome in battle. At night it answered the purpose of a blanket.” To top off the outfit, the addition of the durk, or sometimes a sword and pistol were added because as Sinclair argued, “it was not unusual, in those martial ages, to appear at all times, with the instruments of war, which rendered them less tremendous, and preserved a manly and warlike spirit even in peace.”<sup>111</sup>

Sinclair suggested, based on his findings, that members of the HSL should wear a “uniform” (he meant costume, rather than military uniform, which is clear from the following description) to meetings and special occasions similar to this description but modernized including the bonnet with “plumes of the eagle, or any feathers of the same sort” (as members were obviously men of distinction), a coat or jacket of “tartan or of dark blue, or dark grass green cloth, or even black, with silver or gold buttons, and other ornaments, fitted close to the body with short skirts; either the trows, or the belted plaid to be worn as might be most agreeable; also hose, shoes tied with thongs, a durk, a purse, and a plaid. Persons who might not be inclined to go the whole length, to wear such parts of the above dress as they might prefer.”<sup>112</sup> This was the solidification of the elite Highland costume that we would be familiar with even today. The HSL elevated the status of the ancient (what was already thought to be ancient) Highland dress to a

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<sup>111</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 9.

<sup>112</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 11-12.

fashionable costume that would be accepted by a discerning British public, and it was promoted in such a way on purpose. The costume, which to many people in the United Kingdom was synonymous with Jacobitism, rebellion, and savagery, was now a tasteful outfit to be worn by fashionable high-ranking British elites found within HSL circles. It was crucial to the HSL's charitable agenda, which relied to a great extent on public support, that the British public accept Highlanders' culture as 'authentic' and its expression as a patriotic part of British history and culture. The general committee of the HSL decided on 4 June 1804 that it "would be a proper mark of respect to the memory of those great and distinguished characters, who formerly wore the garb; leaving it at the same time in the option of the members to wear either the whole or any part of that dress, as they prefer."<sup>113</sup>

Now that the ancient elite Highland costume had been determined, the Society began gathering information on various specific tartan patterns, asking clans to report on the patterns (or *setts*) of their family tartans in order to save these old patterns from being lost. In 1803, for example, Colyear Robertson, who, in addition to active committee member and amateur historian was secretary to the Marquis of Douglas, informed members the Marquis of Douglas "wishes much to discover whether or not the Douglasses, who certainly existed when the same language and manners extended over all Scotland, had any particular kind of tartan. It is so long since they used any that it must now be difficult to discover, but if you agree with me that the particular colours of the

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<sup>113</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 17.

tartan were chiefly those of the Coat of Arms and will take the trouble to write me two lines upon the subject I shall be much obliged to you.”<sup>114</sup>

Using the information that was remitted from various notable Highland clans, including fabric examples of tartan, the HSL produced its *Book of Certified Tartans* (1812), which were Clan tartans certified by each Clan chief. Then examples of the tartan together with any other information relevant to the task were deposited in the HSL’s archive. The HSL, and those who participated, then, lent much to the idea that clans or families wore particular tartans, but, as Hugh Cheape has shown, it is not entirely clear where or when the majority of the fifty tartans the Society collected came from. Nevertheless, through dye analysis, we now know that some were at least from the early eighteenth century, and Cheape has identified many Jacobite families’ distinctive tartans that predate the ’45. In any case, it is the period after the ’45 and prior to 1822 that we know for sure that tartans become associated with certain families, proving that this process had been going on long before the tartan mania that exploded after Walter Scott’s elaborate Highland pageant for George IV’s visit to Edinburgh in 1822.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, from its inception in 1778 to the early nineteenth-century, the HSL brought elite Highland dress (and Highland culture) up to a high standard of social prestige in the city of London, leaving its image as the garb of rebels far behind.

## Conclusion

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<sup>114</sup> Colyear Robertson to the Highland Society of London, 6 April 1803, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>115</sup> Cheape, et al., “An Historical and Analytical Study,” 3-10; Pittock, “Plaiding the Invention,” 40-41.

The poetry, music, and dress promoted by the HSL may not have been as ancient as members had hoped (although many contemporary Scots believed they were tangible cultural trappings of an ancient people) the promotion of the Gaels as the indigenous peoples of Britain with a sophisticated and glorious culture was necessary in order to counter the attack on the history drawn from Fordun, Buchanan and Boece, which had formed the basis of Scottish identity for all Scots until the Scottish Enlightenment. Scotophobia was not just predicated on fears of another Jacobite rebellion; it was framed within a discourse of the supposed inferiority of Highland Scots who, for English Londoners at least, were the face of all Scots: tartan-clad savages seeking to usurp political positions in the City by exploiting connections to the Earl of Bute or, in the case of James Macpherson, literary fame. Many Highland Scottish elites found within the membership of the HSL did not abandon the Buchananite legacy; rather the Society promoted the cultural trappings that were associated with the history of the ancient Caledonians in order to show Scots' equal footing with the English within the union. The Highland Society of London made sure that Britons knew that this history was an equal contributor to British identity, and this was reflected in the writings of both of its unofficial historians, Sir John Sinclair and William Ph. Colyear Robertson. In public pamphlets the Highland Society of London reminded the public of the great martial achievements of Highlanders, both ancient and contemporary. By the late 1770s, most Highlanders were loyal supporters of the British state, and reminding those who might have been hostile to Highlanders that they were loyal contributors to Britishness was necessary in order to garner public support for improvement schemes. Members of the HSL discussed the antiquity of Highland culture, in order to authenticate and legitimize

its promotion to both themselves and the British public in their published pamphlets. They also advertised this culture as both patriotic and fashionable, making it more easily digestible to the broader British public. Tying Highlanders to expansion of the British fiscal-military state, in the form of celebration and commemoration of the achievements of Highland regiments, as well as the importance of Highland culture to the history of Great Britain was a necessary strategy to thwart hostility towards this ancient culture, and Highlanders more generally. The work of members of the HSL to rehabilitate the Highland character led to increased public support over time for their economic and cultural improvement schemes, which will be explored in the rest of this dissertation, and increased interest in Highland culture, both within Britain, and abroad. The popularity of piping competitions and Highland games from the early nineteenth century onwards is only a small part of this wide public interest. In the immediate post-Jacobite period the need to attach Highlanders as loyal defenders of British Whig interests did not destroy Highland culture but instead tied it to a British imperial image that the HSL was able to exploit in the last part of the century, which saw increasing Tory dominance, the political persuasion of most active members of the HSL. The Highlands might have been “made in the minds of outsiders” but Highland images had national associations because Highlanders worked hard to promote them.<sup>116</sup>

In addition to commissioning Benjamin West to create the medal to award deserving men who fought at the Battle of Alexandria, in 1805 the HSL commissioned West to create an image worthy of the diploma the Highland Society of London given to members who paid full membership or did some kind of significant service for the

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<sup>116</sup> Withers, “The Historical Creation,” 155; Dziennik, “Whig Tartan,” 119.

Society.<sup>117</sup> Within this image (fig. 1) we have a Highland soldier in the livery of the time on the left and on the right is a fisherman believed to be wearing traditional Highland garb. Indeed, the fisherman is wearing the tartan trews, the traditional bonnet, and the *fèileadh mor* worn over the shoulders. But the point is that he is a fisherman. As we will see in chapter three, the HSL saw the Highland fisheries as a way in which to propel the Highlands and Islands of Scotland into modernity. Rather than this being an image of the past, it is an image of the future: Highlanders' contribution to the expanding fiscal-British military state (the soldier) and the economic development of the Highlands and Islands (the fisherman), both of which are intimately related. The two figures, unsurprisingly, flank Britannia. In other words, this image signifies Highlanders' contribution to the future of the British Empire while the past helped to bring Highlanders into the modern age. In order to build the social and financial capital necessary to undertake the HSL's vision of the future role of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland the Society had to build its social prestige in London beyond the intellectual realm and into the charitable circles of London civil society, which were building in the late eighteenth century. The late eighteenth century was the time of the great expansion of the modern voluntary association, especially in London, which the HSL was an integral part. British elites sought to influence the British government and the British public in order to accomplish certain goals. In this case the support for Highland culture as well as the support of charitable projects designed specifically for the Highland community in London and in the Highlands directly. And so, it is the Highland Society of London's rise to prominence

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<sup>117</sup> A copy can be found at the National Galleries of Scotland. The image also graces the cover of Alastair Campbell's *Two Hundred Years* and can be found on some HSL documents, as well as in this dissertation (Fig.1).

in the heart of the British Empire through acts of charity, patronage, and association that we must now turn.

## Chapter 2: Power and Prestige in the Heart of the British Empire: Building the Highland Society of London's Charitable Networks, 1778-1845

### Introduction

As the centre of the British Empire and the largest capital in the western world, rising up the professional and political ladder in London required the formation of powerful socio-political networks. As an ambitious group, professional Scots had been successful in the eighteenth century at competing with other migrants and natives alike for top positions in government, law, and finance in the City, as well as gaining prestigious career-building positions in colonial government or management positions in companies like the East India Company (particularly those connected to Henry Dundas).<sup>1</sup> Social and political networks were the necessary means by which these groups rose up the ladder, through the acquisition of social capital. The Highland Society of London, as an association, allowed those within its circles who had “gentlemanly aspirations” to benefit from association with those members who were at the top of the social scale. Unlike the nineteenth-century middle class voluntary associations, which often had a member of the elite as a patron in order to bring social prestige, we find members of the aristocracy working together with lawyers and bankers towards common goals. The social capital gained by including these high-ranking individuals benefitted the Society as these individuals used

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew MacKillop, “Europeans, Britons, and Scots: Scottish Sojourning Networks and Identities in Asia, c. 1700-1815,” in *A Global Clan: Scottish Migrant Networks and Identities Since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Angela McCarthy, (London & New York: Tauris, 2006), 19-23; Stana Nenadic, “Portraits of Scottish Professional Men in London, c. 1760-1830: Careers, Connections and Reputations,” *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 1 (2011): 1.

their social and political power gained from being a part of other influential networks of British elites.

This chapter will demonstrate how Highlanders found within HSL circles were able to push beyond rehabilitation of the image of Highlanders in the British public sphere to elevating the social status of Highland elites within London high society. It was the social capital achieved through the act of association and undertaking high profile charitable projects in the City that this group of Highland elites we find in the HSL was not only able to influence other elites located throughout Scotland, but also members of British civil society who were not Highlanders but who were part of the same social ranks. The support of the British public was a crucial measure by the Society in order to garner subscriptions and donations from beyond their own networks. Public support was also necessary when the HSL began seeking public funding for various projects, such as the Highland fisheries. Through an expanding sphere of influence members of the HSL were able to wield considerable power and influence over British civil society and rose to the top of the social ladder of late-Georgian high society. The HSL was able to achieve this through important political connections, charitable projects, and by the early nineteenth century, lavish meetings and dinners at the Freemason's Hall, the most popular meeting place for some of the most important British associational groups in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. The Hall, and the Tavern, which was a catered meeting place within the Hall, was not only the largest meeting place available until the Exeter Hall was constructed, but also the Freemasons were selective as to who could meet at the Hall, allowing only the most prestigious London associations to hold

meetings and dinners at their Tavern.<sup>2</sup> By the early nineteenth century, the HSL also drew members from the Royal family, including the Duke of Sussex, which brought considerable social prestige.<sup>3</sup> This social prestige allowed the HSL to undertake its social and economic improvement plans that took its influence around the globe.

### **The Highland Society of London's Early Years: Building Social Capital through Acts of Charity**

The Highland Society of London was first and foremost a charitable organization and it was through acts of charity that members were able to influence civil society as well as establish its members (largely Highland elites) as a coherent group. This chapter will examine the charitable projects the Society undertook in the city of London, as well as its support for a school and hospital in Inverness and the Gaelic chapel in Dundee. The distribution of charity for Scots living in London was necessary as Scots could not draw upon the English Poor Laws for assistance, and therefore Scots in need had to rely on members of their own communities, or return, if they could, to Scotland. In addition to helping members of their own communities, these acts of charity also elevated members' social status within London as well as served to extend influence to other groups of Highlanders located in Scotland, who sought help from the powerful London society. The HSL was formed with the intention:

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<sup>2</sup> Library and Museum of Freemasonry, *The Hall in the Garden: Freemason's Hall and its Place in London* (London: Lewis Masonic, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Augustus, Duke of Sussex, Earl of Inverness became president of the HSL in 1806. Royals have sat as president on and off since then, the most recent being Charles, Prince of Wales, Lord of the Isles, KT in 1978. Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 76-78.

- For Preserving the language, martial spirit, dress, music, and antiquities, of the ancient Caledonians;
- For rescuing from oblivion the valuable remains of Gaelic literature; for the establishment and support of Gaelic schools;
- For relieving distressed Highlanders at a distance from their native homes;
- For promoting the improvement and general welfare of the northern parts of the Island.<sup>4</sup>

These stated aims remained constant throughout the period covered in this dissertation, although the focus upon specific projects changed over time as, for example, projects were taken over by other organizations that the HSL worked with, as in the case of the Inverness Infirmary and Academy, or as the needs of Highlanders in London changed.<sup>5</sup> The Highland Society of London was the second voluntary association formed exclusively for Highlanders in London, the first being the Gaelic Society of London (GSL), which formed in 1777.<sup>6</sup> The original twenty-five members of the HSL had been members of the Gaelic Society of London, but had broken away to form a society with a wider agenda. The GSL's agenda was to "foster the Gaelic language and songs and the playing of the pipes, also to promote the well-being of the Highlands and further the

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<sup>4</sup> "Proclamation issued by the Highland Society of London," 7 November 1815, Scottish Collection, ASCUG, XS2 MSA018; Sir John Sinclair, *Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, pp. 6-7; Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 3.

<sup>5</sup> *The Highland Society of London with Alphabetical Lists of the Members* (London: Smith Elder and Co., 1856), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Newspapers and any other reliable records are scant for this period so there may have been other societies in the eighteenth century formed for Highlanders, but as of yet we do not have evidence for them. Tanja Bueltmann, email message to Katie McCullough, 23 May 2014. Scottish clubs and societies in England will be discussed further in Tanja Bueltmann's forthcoming: *Clubbing Together: Ethnicity, Civility and the Scottish Diaspora to 1930* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press).

education of those in the Highlands and Islands.” It is not clear if these twenty-five men continued on as members of the GSL, as the early membership lists and minute books were destroyed in a fire in 1820 and there is no evidence that the two societies worked together on any projects.<sup>7</sup> Other societies formed exclusively for Highlanders and Islanders, which had similar charitable intentions as the HSL were few but grew in the nineteenth-century first with the Morayshire Club (1813), the Club of the True Highlanders (1817), and the Orkney and Shetland Society of London (1819). Societies formed exclusively for Highlanders increased towards the end of the nineteenth century with the Caithness Association (1856), the Invernesshire Association (n.d), the Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland Association (1881); Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine Association (1884); the Forfarshire Association (1884); the Breadalbane Association (1888), and the Perthshire Association (1900). There were other Scottish charitable voluntary associations, which had a broader membership including Highlanders and Lowlanders, as well as English, Welsh and Irish people who were interested: the most powerful and well-known being the Royal Scottish Corporation (est. 1665); however, in the nineteenth-century these more inclusive societies included the Caledonian Society of London (1837), the Scottish Border Counties Association (1897), the Glasgow and Lanarkshire Association of London (1897), and the Fife Association (1896).<sup>8</sup> Many of

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<sup>7</sup> “A Brief History of the Gaelic Society of London by Mrs. Norman Stewart O.B.E. Chief of the Society 1960-1966,” NLS Acc.10165/111; *Notes and Queries relating to the founding of the Society* [By Alastair Campbell of Airds], NLS Acc.10165/11. Mrs. Stewart testified that: “I don’t know whether there was a d[e]gree of cross-membership there was. I think there is some evidence that some of the secretarial work was done by the same people, and that the first minute book of the HS had ‘Gaelic Society of London’ stamped on the cover.” Both Alastair Campbell of Airds and myself agree that this last fact does not mean that the societies were one and the same but that the secretary John Mackenzie took the expensive minute books with him to the HSL. The Gaelic Society of London continued on as a separate entity and, like the HSL, is still active today: Joyce Seymour-Chalk to Katie McCullough 23 March 2012, personal letter.

<sup>8</sup> List of Scottish Associations in London adapted from *Douglas’s Year Book of Scottish Associations*: Tanja Buelmann, email message to Katie McCullough, 23 May 2014.

these societies had similar intentions and purposes in London as the HSL, including, but not limited to, providing education, preserving Highland culture, and helping Highlanders in the city who would not otherwise be allowed to claim aid under the English Poor Laws. The closest to the HSL in intentions, but by no means close in size or political and social power, was the Morayshire Club, which, according to its nineteenth century biographers may have started earlier than 1813. The Morayshire Club had a mixture of members largely from the Morayshire area, including East India Company men, army and navy men, merchants, and intellectuals, as well as West Indian merchants. This Society met at the London Tavern and in its early years drew patronage from the Marquis of Huntly, who was also a member of the HSL.<sup>9</sup> The Morayshire club had a branch in Elgin, which set up the Elgin Education Society in 1823 to help impoverished children in the Morayshire region receive an education.<sup>10</sup> The Caledonian Society of London worked with the HSL in 1859 to found the London Scottish Rifles, later the London Scottish Regiment, which played an important role in the Crimean War (1853-1856). The “London Scottish” still exists today as a company in the 51<sup>st</sup> Highlanders.<sup>11</sup> But it was the Royal Scottish Corporation (RSC) that was the only Scottish voluntary association in London to eclipse the HSL in power and prestige, becoming the most powerful Scottish charitable voluntary association in the city of London in the late eighteenth century. As we will see later in this chapter, the HSL and the RSC almost came into competition over the establishment of the Caledonian Asylum, a school for boys orphaned during the Napoleonic wars; however, the RSC chose to leave the matter to the direction of the HSL.

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 1.4.

<sup>10</sup> W. Calder Grant and James Ray, *Annals of the London Morayshire Club* (London: Charles Skipper & East, 1894), 2-28.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.calsoclondon.org/> (accessed 7 July 2014); Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 31.

These two powerful societies largely operated independent of each other but they shared some members in this period, notably the Duke of Argyle, the Duke of Atholl, the Earl of Breadalbane, Sir John Sinclair, Henry Dundas, Sir George Gun Munro, Bart. of Poyntzfield, John Ogilvie, Esq., and John Mackenzie, Esq., the secretary of the HSL in the early years.<sup>12</sup> The RSC was formed unofficially at the time of the regal union and in 1613 it provided a poor box for impoverished Scots in London who were not allowed to claim under the English Poor Laws, but it was formally established as an association in 1665 when it established a hospital in London. Scots were also given no provision to use London hospitals or workhouses in time of need. The RSC did not have a cultural agenda like the HSL; rather, it was more dedicated to filling a much-needed gap in poverty relief in the City. The HSL supported the RSC in the nineteenth century, with members attending its famous St. Andrew's Day dinners, which were used to raise money for projects in the City. The HSL undertook similar charitable projects to the RSC in support of Scots, but largely it extended relief exclusively to Highlanders. In this way, the HSL was not in competition with the RSC.<sup>13</sup>

Like other voluntary associations operating in Britain at this time, the HSL charged members a yearly membership fee, and fines for absences. Fines and fees were put towards the secretary's salary, charity, cultural activities, and economic schemes "as may appear worthy the patronage of the Society."<sup>14</sup> The cost to join in the late eighteenth century was low by elite standards. Each member was to pay "annually, on or before the first day of March, one guinea, as his subscription." There was also hope that each

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<sup>12</sup> Scottish Corporation in London, *An Account of the Institution, Progress, and Present State of the Scottish Corporation in London* (London, 1799), 14-26.

<sup>13</sup> Justine Taylor, *A Cup of Kindness: The History of the Scottish Corporation, a London Charity, 1603-2003* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2003), xi-xii; 30-32; 138.

<sup>14</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 2.

member would pay “in future one half guinea more, in lieu of all fines for absence.”<sup>15</sup> Especially in the early years (ca. 1778-1800) members did not always pay their subscription fees, or indeed the fee to cover fines, and in reality the fines for absences were largely empty threats, as there is no evidence to suggest that fines were being charged to members.<sup>16</sup> This is not surprising for a new society that was more concerned with building prestige in its early years. The laxity the Society showed in its attitude towards fines demonstrates that it was more important to have the attendance and support of high-ranking members, which would pay off in other ways, namely through the accumulation of social capital. Therefore, in the early period, the HSL did not have a large income. In order to boost the accounts, however, the HSL tried to get members to pay a one-time fee instead of the yearly membership. Members could then become “subscribers for life” with the one time fee. By 1813 the lifetime subscription was twenty-five guineas, but those who had been elected prior to 1805 who had paid the previous annual fee instead of the lifetime membership were allowed to continue to do so. If a member had been residing outside of Great Britain for several years upon their return they only had to pay one year’s subscription and a lifetime subscription of fifteen guineas. In 1817 the lifetime subscription was the only option and was listed as “the sum of twenty-six pounds and five shillings, as a life-subscription” and the 1805 rule was still in place.<sup>17</sup> Everyone had to pay a guinea for a diploma, which members could have as a token of their membership.<sup>18</sup> When the HSL was incorporated in 1816, it was in an even

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<sup>15</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 2.

<sup>16</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16.

<sup>17</sup> *Rules of the Highland Society of London With an Alphabetical List of Members, June, 1817* (London, 1817), Pamphlets Celtic Literature #24, RHASS, pp. 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix IX, “Rules of the Highland Society of London,” p. 84.

better position to conduct business as a corporate body on a much more organized and professional scale. Incorporation allowed the HSL to invest its money, increasing revenues. In 1826, for example, the HSL has £616 10s. in its account.<sup>19</sup> There is evidence that the Society invested its funds after this period as its papers contain investment receipts.<sup>20</sup> In addition, extra funds were sought by opening every project the Society undertook to subscription. In this way projects were funded through community connections, by people with an invested interest in the project whether members or not. In order to solicit subscriptions and donations from both members of the Society and members of the public, the HSL advertised in newspapers around the country including the *Inverness Courier*, the *London Times*, and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*.<sup>21</sup> Advertising its projects not only brought in revenue but also demonstrated to the public what the Society was up to, making it publically accountable.

Those who wished to join the HSL had to be recommended by a regular member and meet certain qualifications; this ensured that membership remained within the exclusive circle of elite Highlanders. The Society was restricted to a male membership and could include “natives of the Highlands, the sons of Highlanders, proprietors of lands in the Highlands, those who have done some signal service to that part of the Kingdom; officers of Highland corps, and the husbands of Highland ladies.” The Society would bring in not only “natives of the Highlands, but several respectable characters from other parts of Scotland, from England, and European countries. Sir John Sinclair argued that “the true qualifications, therefore, to be required is, not so much the distinction of

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<sup>19</sup> “Treasury Account to Date, 1828,” Parcel Accounts and Receipts, 1817-29, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>20</sup> Parcel Accounts and Receipts, 1817-29, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>21</sup> In the early nineteenth century, for example, the HSL advertised in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, the *London Times*, the *Herald*, the *Globe*, the *Perth Courier*, the *Aberdeen Journal*, the *Scotsman*, and the *Inverness Journal*, Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1830-1850, NLS Dep. 268/18.

‘*Highland birth*’, (although that is certainly desirable and must always give preference to the candidate who enjoys that advantage), but the possession of a ‘*Highland Spirit*’.”<sup>22</sup> As the Society stipulated, however, those who only possessed the “Highland spirit” were to be elected as honorary members and these members were to be capped at ten per year in the earlier years and “twenty persons, and no more, may be elected *honorary* members, without possessing the qualifications stated in the foregoing rule” by the early-nineteenth century. Regular members still had to adhere to the original stated rules and qualifications. Admitting honorary members that were not directly involved with Highland affairs (but who had an interest in the area) greatly benefitted the Society as it brought increased revenues through charitable donations as well as attention to the needs of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to more people in the British Empire and Europe.<sup>23</sup> However, native Highlanders were always preferred. From the available evidence, it is clear that from 1799 to 1804 the majority of men proposed for membership were native-born Highlanders, the specification being written next to their names in the minute books.<sup>24</sup> The HSL also did not discriminate based on (Christian) religion and

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<sup>22</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 6. In the mid nineteenth century the HSL would open up honorary membership to “Highland ladies who are chiefs of their respective clans.” Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 4.

<sup>23</sup> *Rules of the Highland Society of London With an Alphabetical List of Members, June, 1817* (London, 1817), Pamphlets Celtic Literature #24, RHASS, p. 4. Historians have focused closely on the “Highland spirit” qualification with some arguing that it diluted the membership of any ‘true’ Highland connection. These historians have taken this idea from Sir John Sinclair’s 1813 account of the Society’s history and in that account he doesn’t explain the limitations placed on honorary members. The heavy reliance on Sinclair’s history has led to a misunderstanding of the Society’s intentions and activities because it is not very complete. Sinclair even said so himself when he wrote: “Although the preceding pages, prepared hastily for a particular occasion, form a mere outline of the nature and objects of the society, it is hoped that enough has been stated, to show that *adequate funds* alone are required, to enable so comprehensive an assemblage of rank, property, and influence in the state, to confer the most important benefits on the northern parts of the kingdom.” In other words he published a quick document to solicit public donation money and potential memberships rather than writing a comprehensive history of the Society. Nonetheless it remains a valuable document. Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 34. His emphasis.

<sup>24</sup> Minute book of the Highland Society of London, 1793-1805, Dep. 268/23, pp. 64-121.

welcomed Highlanders from Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Catholic faiths. One of the most notable Catholic members of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, for example, Alexander Macdonell, became the first Catholic Bishop of Kingston in Upper Canada. Above all what mattered to the HSL is that their membership lists were populated with native Highlanders. And native Highland Scots made up the bulk of the regular and active membership of the HSL, so it is necessary to examine some of these men in order to get a sense of the regular and active membership.

Perhaps the most notable member in the HSL's early years was John Mackenzie (?-1803) the secretary of the Society from 1778 to his death in 1803. Mackenzie undertook the day-to-day operations of the HSL from his office at 1 Fig Tree Court, Temple.<sup>25</sup> John Mackenzie, Esq. was from Lentrane, in the County of Ross, a Gaelic speaker who was educated in Scots Law at the University of Edinburgh. In 1772 Mackenzie moved to London and was admitted into the Inner Temple to complete his studies in English common law. When Mackenzie was not able to find a partnership, he felt able to abandon his legal work when he took up the position of secretary of the HSL in 1778, which paid him a nominal salary. Mackenzie straddled the world of native Highlander and urban London professional, working tirelessly to bring the needs of the Highlands and Islands into the mind of the London public. Mackenzie not only wrote numerous treatises on behalf of the HSL, alerting the British government and the British public to the needs of the Highlands and Highlanders, but he also sat as secretary of the British Fisheries Society, which had an expressed aim of developing the Highlands and Islands economically by establishing fishing villages in strategic locations in the western

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<sup>25</sup> Fig Tree Court no longer exists, as it was destroyed, along with other parts of the Inner and Middle Temple, during the bombings in London during WWII <http://www.innertemplelibrary.org.uk/temple-history/inner-temple-history-introduction-part-2.htm> (accessed 28 November 2013).

Highlands and isles. Mackenzie came from a petty landed family, the Mackenzies of Torridon (his father was Alexander Mackenzie I., of Lentrane, Tarradale, and Rhindoun) and Mackenzie himself owned lands in the area, but sold them later in his life as his schedule became too hectic for him to upkeep.<sup>26</sup> Mackenzie was adored by the members of the HSL, who presented him with a medal in 1791 to commemorate all of his work and dedication to Highlanders and their culture. Sinclair argued: “his natural benevolence, while it embraced all mankind, was yet particularly directed and fixed on his own countrymen, the Celtic race in Scotland. The same love of his country drew his attention to every object connected with its improvement or its honour.” He was given the medal in 1801 and he was requested by members to wear it at all meetings. Mackenzie’s nephew Colin Macrae, Esq. (also a barrister) would take over the position of secretary when John Mackenzie died in 1803, residing in the same office at 1 Fig Tree Court, Temple.<sup>27</sup> Macrae would also be a very active member of the HSL taking over his uncle’s duties with the HSL with fervour. Macrae was also a part time publisher and published many of the HSL’s pamphlets. This kind of dedication as well as professional and kinship connections is what made the HSL so successful in their various undertakings.

The first president and active member until his death, the Hon. General Fraser of Lovat (Simon Fraser, master of Lovat 1726-1782) native highlander, politician and army officer, was the son of Simon Fraser, eleventh Lord Lovat (1667/8-1747) who was executed by the British government for his Jacobite activities. Simon Fraser was also

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<sup>26</sup> Scots Magazine LXV, “Obituary for John Mackenzie,” (1803), 588, RHASS; Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Mackenzies With Genealogies of the Principal Families of the Name* (Inverness: A & W Mackenzie, 1894)

<sup>27</sup> Scots Magazine LXV, “Obituary for John Mackenzie,” (1803), RHASS, p. 588; Campbell, 4; Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 107. Parcel: Account and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16. There are receipts to Macrae in this box for payments related to publishing various pamphlets.

named as a Jacobite in the Act of Attainder on 4 June 1746, but he surrendered voluntarily and was held at Edinburgh Castle instead of being sent to London to face trial. Fraser finished studies on Scots law in 1750 and eventually received a full pardon. Fraser's participation with the 63<sup>rd</sup> foot or 2<sup>nd</sup> Highland battalion in North America during the seven year's war (later renumbered the 78<sup>th</sup> foot in 1759, who helped to take Quebec under Wolfe) helped to prove his loyalty to the crown and by the 1770s had risen to Major-General, and 1777 to Lieutenant-General, although he did not serve under this title, instead serving as a Member of Parliament until his death in 1782.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, when Fraser stepped in as the HSL's first president in 1778, he was a man with a varied and loyal career to both the British army and the British government. Fraser brought the Society the much-needed prestige needed to influence British civil society as evidenced by Lovat's involvement in the first achievements of the HSL, the repeal of the Disarming Act and the return of the Forfeited Estates. From the very beginning the HSL had high-profile members of the Highland elite, like Lovat, adding to its power and prestige as an organization.

The other original members of the society were a mixed group of professionals (mostly barristers belonging to the Inner and Middle Temple Halls, as well as Gray's Inn), military men, and men of empire in their early careers. Within this group we find a mixture of largely Tories, or Tory allies, as well as some Whigs, but these men came together irrespective of politics, bound by a common interest to form networks of Highland elites and support Highland culture and Highland people, and Highland social

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<sup>28</sup> Stuart Reid, "Fraser, Simon, master of Lovat (1726-1782)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/10124> (accessed 6 January 2012); Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 1-2; MacKillop *More Fruitful Than the Soil*, 63. It is important to note that many of the officers in the 63<sup>rd</sup> were themselves former Jacobites.

and economic development. Many of these first members were native Highlanders such as Major John Small (1726-1796) an army officer from Perthshire. Small served with the Black Watch under John Campbell, Fourth Earl of Loudon as a lieutenant, in Canada and the Caribbean. Before his death Small had risen to Major-General of Guernsey.<sup>29</sup> John Macpherson (Sir John Macpherson, Bart. 1745-1821) from Skye was the son of the John Macpherson, minister of Sleat, (the author of *Critical Dissertation on the Origin, Antiquities, Language, Government, Manners, and Religion, of the Ancient Caledonians* (1768)) and friend of James ‘Ossian’ Macpherson. John Macpherson was highly educated, supposedly spoke five languages (including Gaelic), and was a member of parliament at the time he joined the HSL (the Wiltshire borough of Cricklade under Lord North, and later MP for Horsham, Sussex from 1796-1802) having served various posts in India prior to this time. Macpherson also served as interim governor-general of Bengal from 1785-1786, returning to England in 1787. Macpherson gained immense wealth along with political and diplomatic ties to the Continent as well as an acquaintanceship with the Prince of Wales during his lifetime.<sup>30</sup> Other native Highlanders on the original list were the Advocate Alexander Campbell of Glenure (30 Apr 1745-17 Mar 1800)<sup>31</sup> and John Fraser of Achnagairn, Invernesshire (1742-1825). Fraser, a barrister at Lincoln’s Inn, was a partner of McTavish, Fraser & Co., a London-based fur-trading firm, which Simon McTavish (1750-1804) of the North West Company (NWC), also a member of the

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<sup>29</sup> E. I. Carlyle, “Small, John (1726-1796),” rev. Roger T. Stearn, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/25733> (accessed 8 January 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Paul J. de Gategno, “Macpherson, Sir John, first baronet (c.1745-1821),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17730> (accessed 9 January 2012).

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.thepeerage.com/p20132.htm#i201315> (accessed 3 December 2013).

HSL, formed in 1788. This was a finance firm that owned shares in the Montreal-based NWC (formed officially in 1779), which McTavish effectively controlled until his death. McTavish was from Stratherrick and was the uncle of Simon and William McGillivray (see below) who would be instrumental in opening the running the Highland Society of Canada (1818).<sup>32</sup> And finally, from the Isle of Harris there was Captain Alexander Macleod of the *Mansfield Indiamen*, a ship chartered by the East India Company.<sup>33</sup> As we can see, these imperial and political connections found within even the early members of the HSL meant that from the late 1780s Highlanders were not only placing Highlanders intellectually within the fiscal-military machine through the promotion of Highlandism, but also by organizing themselves into a notable group in London, the heart of the British Empire. This was where political patronage as well as business and personal relationships were formed allowing members of the HSL to rise up the ranks of London civil society.

As membership in the HSL grew in the early years (seventy members by June 1778, and over two hundred in 1783), the HSL brought in even more respectable characters, including more members of the gentry and nobility. For example, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Atholl, the Earl of Moray, Lord MacDonald, the Earl of Breadalbane, and the Marquis of Graham, some of who were also very active on committees, which

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<sup>32</sup> K. David Milobar, "McTavish, Simon (1750-1804)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/67085> (accessed 10 July 2014); Fernand Ouellet, "McTavish, Simon," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8 July 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mctavish\\_simon\\_5E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mctavish_simon_5E.html). Ouellet states that Fraser was McTavish's cousin, but there is some debate over that fact. In any case the two men were partners. [http://www.electricscotland.com/canada/fraser/chasing\\_ancestors.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/canada/fraser/chasing_ancestors.htm) (accessed 8 July 2014); Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix II, p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> John Knox, *A Tour through the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebride Isles* (London, 1787), 143; Edmund Burke, ed. *The Annual Register: Or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature of the Year 1825* (London, 1825), 245.

was unusual for many voluntary associations of this time because usually members of the gentry acted as patrons and were not active at meetings. By the early nineteenth century the HSL would attract members of the royal family as presidents, elevating its prestige to the very top of British civil society. Connections to the British gentry and the Royal family, as well as other high-ranking individuals in British government, not only brought the needs of Highlanders to the attention of the British government (and also the British public) but also increased the Society's social prestige, achieved through social capital drawn from high-ranking individuals who joined the Society. One such high-ranking individual who joined the HSL in the 1790s, and who would sit as president of the Society in 1799, was the Tory politician Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville (1742-1811). Dundas was half Highlander and had a keen interest in Highland culture, the welfare of the people, and the area's economic development. Dundas was the vital link for the HSL into the British government, using Dundas' close relationship with William Pitt after 1784 to lobby the British government to alter protectionist policies, which were seen to be hurting the Scottish economy. Dundas was also largely the politician who was able to convince the government to repeal the Disarming Act and secure the restoration of the Forfeited Estates, and briefly sat as commissioner of those estates in 1783 to oversee the process of winding them up. Dundas would also join the Highland Society of Scotland and play a role in the British Fisheries Society.<sup>34</sup> Another member with considerable social prestige and political power, and who had interests in agricultural improvement was George Gun Munro (1743-1846), of the Munros of Braemore, later Sir

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<sup>34</sup> Michael Fry, "Dundas, Henry, first Viscount Melville (1742-1811)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/8250> (accessed 7 July 2014).

George Gun Munro, 1<sup>st</sup> Bart. of Poyntzfield. He was the second son of the Rev. John Munro, Minister at Halkirk in Caithness. Munro married the Hon. Charlotte Poyntz, daughter of Stephen Poyntz, a Privy Councillor in Sussex, and maid-of-honour to Queen Caroline. Charlotte, a widow, brought Gun Munro a considerable fortune, which he used to buy Ardoch in the Parish of Resolis in Ross and Cromarty. Gun Munro was an avid improver of his lands and was one of the first landed proprietors on the Black Isle to undertake modern agricultural improvements.<sup>35</sup> Another notable character in the list of high profile members in this period who brought considerable social capital to the group was the Tory Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster (10 May 1754- 21 December 1835) who joined in 1784, the same year the Highland Society of Scotland formed, of which he was probably the most active member. Sinclair started his political career as a supporter of Lord North. Sinclair, who was born at Thurso Castle in Caithness and married Lady Diana Macdonald (1769-1845), daughter of Lord MacDonald of Sleat, was known as the most “indefatigable man in Britain,” and with good reason. He published many works covering all manner of topics from health and nutrition to culture, agricultural and political matters, and he sat in Parliament numerous times, although he did have some difficulties on occasion. He sat on many HSL committees (often in the chair), published many treatises on the Society’s behalf (the most famous being the 1813 *Account*), and sat as President of the Society in 1796. Sinclair is perhaps the most famous for his agricultural interests, in addition to being an active member of the HSS, he helped found

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<sup>35</sup> Alexander M.J.L. Mackenzie, *History of the Munros of Fowlis* (Inverness: A & W Mackenzie, 1898), 551-552. There is another George Gun Munro listed concurrent to Sir George Gun Munro, Bart. of Poyntzfield, in the 1783 *Rules*, but this is a Mr. George Gun Munro of Warick Court, St. Paul’s. This particular Gun Munro we find on the list of committee members in 1783 and he was an original member of the HSL, listed also in Sinclair’s *Account* as “Gun Munro, Basinghall Street.” Nothing can be found on Gun Munro of Basinghall Street. Munro of Poyntzfield is listed under the ‘M’ section of the 1783 *Rules* whereas Mr. George Gun Munro is listed under the ‘G’ section. See appendix 1.1 and 1.2.

the British Wool Society (1791) with James Anderson, and he organized the *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791-2), which the HSS would emulate on their surveys of the Highlands and Islands in the 1790s. Sinclair was also an active member of the Board of Agriculture. Sinclair could also be found in many agricultural and intellectual societies in Great Britain and on the Continent.<sup>36</sup>

The committee members in the period covering the turn of the nineteenth century were largely men of empire with various business interests around the globe such as Simon McGillivray (1785-1840), Divie Robertson (1767-1850) of Bedford Square, Walter Philip Colyear Robertson (1743-1819), and John Galt (2 May 1779- 11 April 1839).<sup>37</sup> Simon McGillivray, who was a joint secretary of the HSL in the early nineteenth century, would be instrumental in setting up the Highland Society of Canada in 1818 when he had advanced to be a vice president of the HSL. McGillivray and his older brother William (1764-1825), also a member of the HSL, were of the tacksmen class, although had risen from small tenant farmers, and their family owned a farm in Dunlichty, Invernesshire. The parents could not afford to educate all six of their children but eldest son William and his brother second son Duncan (early 1770s?-1808), who was not a member of the HSL, were able to rise up the social ladder due to their uncle Simon McTavish, who also came from a similar background, albeit much poorer, offering to provide secondary education for the boys while on a visit home in 1776. The boys'

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<sup>36</sup> Campbell, *An Account*, 76; Rosalind Mitchison, "Sinclair, Sir John, first baronet (1754-1835)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/25627> (accessed 10 July 2014). Sinclair's daughter Catherine Sinclair (1800-1864) would go on to be a successful travel and young adult fiction writer with such works as *Holiday House* (1839) and the best selling popular series of coloured *Picture Letters* for children (1861-4).

<sup>37</sup> George Kettlby Rickards, *The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 56 George III, 1816* (London, 1816), 731.

mother was McTavish's sister Ann. McTavish began his career as a fur trader in North America in the early 1770s, establishing himself at Montreal after the passing of the Quebec Act (1774). A successful fur trader McTavish who had joint-business partnerships in London and North America with other well-known traders such as the Frobisher brothers, James McGill, Isaac Todd, and Robert Grant, and it was these joint business partnerships that led to the creation of the North West Company officially in 1779. In 1787 with the foundation of firm of McTavish, Frobisher & Co. McTavish and his close partners effectively owned a majority of shares in the NWC, even though the eight others were meant to have equal shares. McTavish reorganized the NWC around his London business circles (including his McTavish, Fraser & Co), and effectively ran the NWC until his death in 1804. McTavish's patronage was extended when William McGillivray and his younger brother Duncan were given opportunities in the NWC. William took control of the NWC after his uncle's death. The younger brother Simon followed his brothers into the fur trade but from London, taking over the responsibilities of McTavish, Fraser & Co. at the age of twenty-two, marketing the NWC's furs and purchasing goods needed in the trade. In 1811 Simon would become a partner in McTavish, McGillivrays & Co. of Montreal, which would own three quarters of the shares of the NWC, Sir Alexander Mackenzie & Co. owned the rest (Mackenzie is notable for finding the overland route in North America to the Pacific in 1793). By 1814 Simon and his brother William would own most of the shares in the Montreal firm, and Simon held six of the nine shares in the London firm, making him a very wealthy man. Simon would go on to become the first vice-chairman of the Canada Club, which opened in 1810, and had members in the inner circles of the NWC, including his brother,

William. Simon McGillivray also played an instrumental role in the merger between the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 after a period of intense competition between the two companies. These men connected to McTavish all came from the same area of Invernesshire. McTavish and the brothers McGillivray are prime examples of members who used social capital and hard work to rise up the ranks of society. They did this through opportunities in the British Empire in the late eighteenth century and association with members further up the social scale in the HSL.<sup>38</sup>

Divie Robertson was another active committee member in the earlier years. Robertson was a West Indian slave trader and brother-in-law of the (eventual) Tory politician and West Indian plantation owner Sir John Gladstone, Bart. (1764-1851). Robertson left millions of pounds to his family at his death, largely made from the trade in African slaves. Robertson was a very active member of the HSL and can be found on numerous committee lists in the early nineteenth century as can Robertson's brother, Colin Robertson, was also an active committee member and also a brother-in-law of Gladstone's, and he owned estates in Jamaica, although he was not as successful as his

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<sup>38</sup> Jean Morrison, ed. "The North West Company," in *Rebellion: Simon McGillivray's Fort William Notebook, 1815* (Thunder Bay, Ontario: Thunder Bay Historical Society, 1988), 6-7; Fernand Ouellet, "McGillivray, William," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8 July 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray\\_william\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray_william_6E.html); Fernand Ouellet, "McGillivray, Simon," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8 July 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray\\_simon\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray_simon_7E.html); Sylvia Van Kirk and Jennifer S. H. Brown, "McGillivray, Duncan," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 9 July 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray\\_duncan\\_5E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray_duncan_5E.html). Ouellet claims that the men were from "poor tenant farmers" but this is a misunderstanding about what the tacksman class actually was; many tacks were quite large and did carry social prestige just below that of the laird, being a middling ground in Highland Society. McTavish may have been much less well off, but more research needs to be done on this circle of Highlanders. Information relating to the McGillivrays being of the tacksman class: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=wjones&id=I0843> (accessed 9 July 2014).

brother.<sup>39</sup> In addition to being the secretary to the Marquis of Douglas in the early nineteenth century, Colonel Walter Philip Colyear Robertson served as Colonel in Henry Dundas' nephew's (Francis Dundas) regiment of the historic Scots-Dutch Brigade in the 1770s before the brigade was disbanded in 1782-3 when the Dutch and the British, former allies, found themselves on opposite sides of the American War of Independence by 1780. Robertson lobbied to have the Brigade reconstituted as a British regiment, which was created in 1794. Robertson was the younger brother of Colonel Alexander Robertson (1741-1822), who also served in the Scots Brigade. The brothers were drawn from the petty gentry. Besides writing historical treatises for the HSL Colyear Robertson was also the author of *An Unconstitutional, Underhand Influence, Proved to Have Frustrated The Just and Gracious Intention Officially Declared By His Majesty of Preserving the Scotch Brigade* (1807).<sup>40</sup> John Galt, author and colonizer from Irvine, Ayrshire, was a well-known author by the early nineteenth century and wrote a biography of Benjamin West (*The Life and Studies of Benjamin West* (1816)), who designed the image on the HSL diplomas, and who had a close connection to the Society. His biography of West may have been his way into the HSL in spite of not being a Highlander. He moved to London in 1804, and in 1809 decided to study law at Lincoln's Inn where he no doubt made connections with other Scottish lawyers who were members of the HSL. Galt would then become secretary of the Caledonian Asylum, (see below)

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<sup>39</sup> H. C. G. Matthew, "Gladstone, Sir John, first baronet (1764-1851)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/10786> (accessed 8 July 2014); <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/43485> (accessed 19 December 2013); S.G. Checkland, *The Gladstones: a Family Biography, 1764-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 196-7.

<sup>40</sup> David Dobson, *Scots-Dutch Links in Europe and America 1575-1825*, Vol. 1 (Baltimore, MD: Clearfield, 2004); Stephen Conway, "The Scots Brigade in the Eighteenth-Century," *Northern Scotland* 1, no. 1 (2010): 30, 38; Joachim Miggelbrink, "The End of the Scots-Dutch Brigade," in *Fighting for Identity: Scottish Military Experience ca. 1550-1900* ed. Steve Murdoch and Andrew Mackillop (Leiden: The Netherlands, 2002), 92-93; 99.

when it opened in 1815. In 1824 Galt would leave the Asylum and fulfilling his colonial ambitions would be hired as secretary of the Canada Company, founding Guelph (1827), and co-founding with William Tiger Dunlop (a member of the Highland Society of Canada), the town of Goderich (1827), both in Upper Canada.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to building social capital in London, members of the HSL looked to extend their influence into key areas of Great Britain by attaching themselves to sister societies, and influencing other corporate bodies, such as the Inverness burgh council. Sister societies composed of similar membership were sought almost immediately after the HSL was formed. The first was the Highland Society of Glasgow (HSG), which had been established in that city in 1727. The HSG helped the HSL to run the Falkirk piping competitions from 1781 to 1783. In 1784, the HSS took over the piping competitions from the HSL.

The HSL's second sister society was the Highland Society of Scotland, established in 1784 (that same year it took over the piping competitions). The HSL worked closely with the HSS on agricultural matters in the 1780s and 1790s, which facilitated the HSL's influence into Scotland. The HSS, based in Edinburgh, was formed largely in response to the agricultural disasters of 1782/83, which were some of the worst in a string of subsistence crises to affect the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in the eighteenth century.<sup>42</sup> The original intentions of the HSS were:

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<sup>41</sup> Roger Hall and Nick Whistler, "Galt, John," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 7 July 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/galt\\_john\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/galt_john_7E.html).

<sup>42</sup> Alexander Ramsay, *History of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1879), 45; Ronald I. Black, "The Gaelic Academy: The Cultural Commitment of the Highland Society of Scotland." *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 14, no. 2 (1986): 1.

An inquiry into the present state of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the conditions of their inhabitants;

An inquiry into the means of their improvement, by establishing towns and villages—by facilitating communication through different parts of the Highlands of Scotland, by roads and bridges—advancing agriculture, and extending the fisheries—introducing useful trades and manufactures—and, by an extension to unite the efforts of the proprietors, and call the attention of the government towards the encouragement and prosecution of these beneficial purposes;

The Society shall also pay proper attention to the preservation of the language, poetry, and music of the Highlands.<sup>43</sup>

There were roughly 100 original members and by 1796 the HSS had 349 members.<sup>44</sup> The HSS was largely concerned with agricultural matters, as it was an agricultural organization, but its members were also concerned with cultural issues such as the authentication of James Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry and the preservation of Gaelic. The HSS modeled itself on the Highland Society of London and shortly after it was instituted John Mackenzie sent the HSS a letter with the "Resolutions of that Society, which declare the whole members of the London Society, and express the warmest regard

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<sup>43</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 1, [2<sup>nd</sup> edition]* (Edinburgh, 1812), iii.

<sup>44</sup> Highland Society of Scotland, *List of Members of the Highland Society of Scotland, [Instituted in 1784, and since constituted by Royal Charter] Alphabetically Arranged, and Distinguishing the Dates of their Admission* (Edinburgh: s.n., 1796); Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS, pp. 7-16.

and best wishes for the success and prosperity of the sister Society in their views and system of promoting the interest of their country. The meeting unanimously declared their assent to the proposition of the London Society and in return for this march of regard and respect which they have shewn.” It was decided by the HSL “that the privilege of honorary members of this institution shall in like manner be conferred on all of the members of that Society, so as to promote in the most effectual manner the views of both societies in the same patriotic line.” A couple of years later, the HSL expressed the desire to “have more intimate communication between the two societies and for that purpose propose that members of the Highland Society of Edinburgh [Scotland] be admitted honorary members of this Society and are desirous of having the same honor conferred upon them, when the members happen to be in Edinburgh.”<sup>45</sup> The Highland Society of Scotland played an integral role in the execution of economic improvement plans created by members of the HSL (many of who also held high-ranking positions in the HSS), as well as the HSL’s charitable projects notably helping to support the Caledonian Asylum, as well as working together on Gaelic projects such as a Gaelic dictionary. These societies were in constant communication throughout the period under study in this chapter and shared much of the same membership, especially those drawn from the Scottish gentry. Therefore members of each society can be considered part of the same social networks.<sup>46</sup> Ideas were exchanged between similar members at meetings of the HSL and the HSS, with constant communication forming the basis of their strong relationship. Working together, these societies pressured the British government to alter

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<sup>45</sup> Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS, pp. 123-4; Miscellaneous items found loose in the Society’s bookcase, letter dated 19 May 1786, NLS Dep. 268/19.

<sup>46</sup> *List of Members of the Highland Society of Scotland, [Instituted in 1784, and since constituted by Royal Charter,] Alphabetically Arranged, and Distinguishing the Dates of their Admission* (Edinburgh: s.n., 1796); Black, ‘The Gaelic Academy,’ 1-38. In particular, Breadalbane, MacDonald, Athole, and Argyle.

protectionist policies to help promote development in the Highlands and Islands and prevent the emigration of Highlanders. Economic development and the provision of secure employment and subsistence, it was argued, was the only way to prevent emigration because “it is impossible to deny that the legislature by making enactments, of which the tendency is to check emigration, will view [?] an obligation to ensure subsistence and comfort to the inhabitants whom such resolutions keep at home.”<sup>47</sup> These Improvers also formed new societies, such as the British Fisheries Society (1786), a joint stock company formed in London, and the British Wool Society (1791), formed in Edinburgh, in order to carry out specific improvement projects. Improvement networks, formed initially in London, were thus instituted and carried out largely by Highlanders, for Highlanders.

By 1783 the HSL already had branches in Jamaica, and India, at Calcutta, which drew its membership from East India Company men, but throughout the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the HSL instituted branch societies in Scotland and throughout the British Empire “to extend the benefit of their institution, and to unite together in a central union their countrymen, wherever situated, have resolved to issue Commissions for the establishment of branches thereof in the British colonies abroad, as well as in other places, abroad and at home, where Highlanders are resident.”<sup>48</sup> In 1798 a Highland Society in Africa at Cape Town was formed and wished “intimacy and friendship should exist between the mother society in London...empowered its

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<sup>47</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 487.

<sup>48</sup> “Proclamation issued by the Highland Society of London,” 7 November 1815, NLS Dep. 268/19. Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 15. The 1783 rules state that there was a branch in Glasgow, it is not clear if they mean the sister society or if a branch of the HSL existed briefly in the city. It is also unclear how long the branch at Calcutta lasted, as it is not mentioned in the 1856 rules. Nothing so far can be found on the Jamaican branch, the archives in Kingston do not contain any material on it and nothing can be found yet in Highland papers.

committee to transmit a copy of their minutes that the Highland Society of London may be the better enabled to judge how far their countrymen associated with the Cape deserve to be considered as a branch of their most respectable society.”<sup>49</sup> The HSL did not make the African society a branch, preferring to establish its own societies rather than be solicited. These branches then acted as franchises of the parent society. With the “requirement that gentlemen admitted into the several branches abroad, on subscribing to the rules, and contributing at once to the fund of the parent society, the full subscription of twelve guineas each, or six guineas abroad, and six guineas additional on their arrival in London, shall become members of the Society in London, and receive a diploma accordingly.”<sup>50</sup> Members had to submit all minutes and follow all the rules (as applicable) of the HSL. The Highland Society of London at Bombay, for example, sent £467 5s. “as the subscriptions you will perceive all exceed in amount the sum now required for admission as a member of the parent society; I trust diplomas will be granted to all the parties whose names are now forwarded.”<sup>51</sup> The HSL established branches in Madras (1814), Upper Canada (1818), Aberdeen (1820), Bombay (1822), Nova Scotia (1838), Prince Edward Island (1838), and New Brunswick (1842, incorporated in 1846).<sup>52</sup> These branch societies located abroad attracted members of the colonial elite, many of who were native Highlanders, ensuring the HSL’s high status remained throughout the British Empire through these connections. The HSL and its branches located abroad solicited men who governed in the colonies, including the lieutenant

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<sup>49</sup> Fulder King to the HSL, 10 July 1798, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>50</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 16,

<sup>51</sup> Andrew Farquarson to the HSL, 26 October 1839, NLS Dep. 268/19.

<sup>52</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856]. The Highland Society of London at Madras held their anniversary dinner on the same day as the parent Society in London, on March 21. Hugh David Sandeman. *Selection From the Calcutta Gazettes From of the Years 1806 to 1815* [Vol.4] (Calcutta, 1868), “from the Madras Courier March 29, 1814,” 353.

governor of Upper Canada, to join its branches as a way in which to preserve its social capital, extending it beyond London.

### **Building Financial Capital and Spending Money**

Members of the HSL also built social capital by socializing and spending money with the express intention of making new status claims. Displaying wealth was an important part of the HSL's social agenda. As the Society argued:

As tending essentially to promote the best interests of the institution, by preserving among the respectable natives of the Highlands in an about the metropolis, that social intercourse, conviviality, and mutual friendship, which arise from similarity of language, customs, and early recollections, aided by frequent meetings—which formed the original basis of union in this society; and which tend powerfully to promote the useful and benevolent purposes for which it was instituted.<sup>53</sup>

In its early years (1778-1796?) the Society committees met at the Shakespeare Tavern, Covent Garden, which was commonly used for public dinners by similar voluntary societies.<sup>54</sup> But by the late eighteenth century (about 1796) the HSL was meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, attached to the Freemasons' Hall, in Great Queen Street. The

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<sup>53</sup> “At a meeting of the social committee held at the Freemasons Tavern on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 1813,” Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-29, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>54</sup> John Feltham, *The Picture for London for 1807 Being a Correct Guide* (London, 1807), 355. It's not entirely clear when the move was made to the Freemasons' Tavern but it was roughly at the end of the century.

architect Thomas Sandby (*bap.* 1723, *d.* 1798), a founder of the Royal Academy, designed the Hall (the Tavern was within it) and both the hall and the tavern were used for many functions in addition to Masonic meetings.<sup>55</sup> The switch to the Freemasons' Tavern represents a turning point for the HSL in its climb up the London social ladder, as well as an indicator of its growing size of active membership. The Hall and Tavern became the focus of the "London Season" and the Hall and the Tavern held meetings and dinners of some of the most important and notable societies in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries including the Anti-Slavery Society, the British Foreign Bible Society, the Royal Highland School Society, and the Highland Society of London.<sup>56</sup> The Freemasons' Hall was the largest secular meeting hall in London until the large Exeter Hall was constructed between 1829 and 1831. There were other popular meeting places such as the Crown and Anchor or the London Tavern, but these were not big enough to hold large meetings. The Freemasons' Hall was built in 1776 in order to house the large numbers of Freemasons eligible to attend Grand Lodge meetings in the 1770s, moving them away from public houses and coffee houses, but it was found that the Tontine fund used to pay for the Hall was not enough and to pay for the building and the expense of its upkeep, so the Freemasons decided to open the Hall and the Tavern (which did food and drink), located within the hall, to external groups. However, they established rules as to who could use the Hall and the Tavern had a "committee of taste" to decide on deserving candidates, in order to keep the venue as respectable as possible. The HSL was one such

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<sup>55</sup> Luke Herrmann, "Sandby, Thomas (*bap.* 1723, *d.* 1798)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/24614> (accessed 18 December 2013). The records for the receipts at the Freemasons Tavern begin in 1796 but there is a gap in the record until 1818: Parcel: Accounts and Receipts 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16; Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>56</sup> The HSL met at the Freemason's Tavern for the rest of the period covered by this dissertation.

deserving society and members had their monthly committee meetings (which were dinner meetings) at the Tavern, and after 1801 a yearly ball was held on 21 March commemorate the Battle of Alexandria (where many Highland regiments were involved, including the Black Watch), in which often a hundred or more were in attendance.<sup>57</sup> Committee meetings were smaller affairs, comprising the committee members who were in town plus a few other members and guests. These meetings would have anywhere from five for dinner up to fifty in the early nineteenth century.<sup>58</sup>

According to *The Epicure's Almanack*, a guide to the best venues in London, "The good cheer served up at this [the Freemasons'] tavern, is celebrated all over the world. We will not particularize it, because there are probably more of our readers who have not once in their lives at least, either partaken of a public dinner at this house, or heard as well as read the description of one in the journals of the day."<sup>59</sup>

In order to build social capital societies had to display their wealth and this entailed "both deliberate investment in both economic and cultural resources." Through the acquisition of this social capital, those involved gain direct access to economic resources from those within their social circles.<sup>60</sup> For the HSL building social capital included spending money within their own community, including cultural activities, as well as dinners and parties. The HSL donated large amounts of money to the piping competition in Scotland run by the HSS for prizes usually £26 6s. and on a few occasions

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<sup>57</sup> Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London. *The Hall in the Garden: Freemason's Hall and its Place in London* (London: Lewis Masonic, 2006); <http://www.freemasonry.london.museum/resources/history-of-freemasons-hall/> (accessed 18 December 2013). Susan Snell, E-mail message to Katie McCullough, 12 May 2014 and 15 May 2014. Harriet Beecher Stowe mentions an 1814 meeting of the Royal Highland School Society at the Freemason's Tavern in *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands* Volume 1, chapter 8.

<sup>58</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>59</sup> The term 'tavern' in this time period was a term of respect for a venue. Ralph Rylance, *The Epicure's Almanack: Eating and Drinking in Regency London (The Original 1815 Guidebook)*, ed. Janet Ing (London: British Library, 2012), xi.

<sup>60</sup> Portes, "Social Capital," 4.

from 1829 to 1844, £73 10s. was donated.<sup>61</sup> Meetings and dinners were times when Highland culture could be expressed and various pipers and singers were hired to perform. From the 1780s to the 1820s, musicians were paid about a Guinea to perform at meetings and dinners, with pipers always receiving £1 1s., other musicians sometimes receiving less. The HSL always had a piper at meetings without fail.<sup>62</sup>

Anniversary dinners at the Freemasons Tavern were lavish affairs, and this is the only time women could attend any HSL functions. Dinners were moderately priced, with each guest costing about 15 shillings each. The Freemasons' Tavern did not charge much for the food (by elite standards), but organizations had to pay higher prices for extras on top of the food. Items like wax lights, cakes, soda, ale, port, sherry, bucellas [bucelas], madeira, claret, music, pipers, brandy, paper and pens, glass, whisky and snuff, porters and waiters, tea and coffee, and champagne for the women, had to be paid for on top of the dinner to complete the festivities. In 1818, for example, a party of ninety men and women at the Freemasons Tavern including the dinner and extras was £182 14s. or roughly £7658, or a dinner of about eighty-five pounds a head in 2005 currency.<sup>63</sup> By the 1840s the anniversary dinners were bringing in higher numbers and on March 21, 1846 141 people attended at a total cost of £209. Dinners were also opportunities to mingle with the aristocratic members of the Society, such as the Royal members or members of the peerage who acted as patrons bringing the lower orders of the Highland elite in contact with the upper orders. Dinners were also an opportunity to invite members of the British elite who were not members of the Society. For example, in addition to the usual

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<sup>61</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17; Box of miscellaneous items found loose in the Society's bookcase, NLS Dep. 268/19.

<sup>62</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>63</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17; <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/> (accessed 20 December 2013).

annual dinner on 21 March 1838, there was a special Egyptian themed dinner on 8 March that year, and a select group of men were invited including the Turkish ambassador, as well as soldiers who had been awarded medals. The dinners were convivial, and the receipts from the Freemasons' Tavern show many bottles of wine and spirits being consumed. Even smaller dinners, for the committees or General Courts were boozy. At a meeting of the General Court on 16 May 1840 twenty-eight men ordered 4 bottles of bucellas, 9 bottles of sherry, 7 bottles of madeira, 16 bottles of port, 7 bottles of claret, 6 bottles of champagne, one bottle of whiskey, one pint of brandy, and one pint of stout.<sup>64</sup>

Meetings and dinners, therefore, were luxurious affairs, befitting the HSL's social ambitions. In the early-nineteenth century some members of the HSL wished to have three meetings plus the anniversary dinner. The three meetings were to be on the third Saturday of February, April, and May, respectively, during the London Season (a necessity for a society with social ambitions). It was decided in January 1813 that subscriptions should be opened to "defray the cost, each member should pay three guineas, non-subscribing members who attend or members who introduce visitors pay 1 guinea and a half each meeting...that the fund arising from the subscriptions and payments collected for those meetings, shall be kept separate from the general funds of the society, in order that, if there should be any deficiency at the end of the season, the same may be collected among the subscribers." A few months later in March 1813, the HSL decided that subscriptions should be open for dinners as well "to prevent the recurrence of a circumstance which has sometimes taken place—when a numerous meeting being expected, and dinner ordered accordingly, it has happened that only a few members made their appearance; and those few, who attended...were left to pay an

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<sup>64</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1830-1850, NLS Dep. 268/18.

expensive tavern bill for those who neglected it,” or the HSL would have to cover the rest on credit with the Tavern, which happened on occasion.<sup>65</sup> Like with the subscription fees, the subscriptions for dinners were erratic, but those people who did buy tickets defrayed the cost significantly. On March 21, 1827, the cost for fifty people to have dinner was £67 13s. but £47 5s. was collected for tickets. But more often than not it was not this great of a proportion and the HSL would foot the bill.<sup>66</sup> This was similar to the HSL’s informal policy of not penalizing members for not attending the annual meetings or forgetting (or shirking) their annual membership, which was collected at the anniversary dinners. The HSL was composed of many wealthy and influential men that committee members, largely composed of lawyers and businessmen, would not feel comfortable chasing down for fees or handing out penalties. Maintaining social connections within this hierarchical peer group was often more important than chasing down membership dues or dinner subscriptions. Besides, high profile members often donated large sums of money to social and improvement projects at other times of the year.

In addition to socializing and building connections with similar societies, for voluntary societies like the HSL social capital was built through philanthropic endeavours. The London Gaelic chapel, which will be discussed later, was to provide a place for Highlanders to worship in their own language and seek solace within their own community, and the Caledonian Asylum, which was a school for orphaned Highland children. These two projects brought the HSL to the very top of London high society through the attraction of the upper echelons of British civil society, including royal

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<sup>65</sup> “At a meeting of the social committee held at the Freemasons Tavern on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, 1813,” Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17; “At a meeting of the social committee held at the Freemasons Tavern on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 1813,” Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>66</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

patronage. But for now we will take a look at ways in which the HSL began to support its own community in London, and, through the extension of influence over Highland elites based in Inverness, the ‘capital’ of the Highlands.

In the early years the Society’s London charity work extended largely to helping distressed Highlanders who needed help returning back to Scotland, and spent what little of its own funds it had in the early years, which were “chiefly intended for the assistance and relief of Highland Soldiers, returning to their own country from abroad.” The late eighteenth century the Revolutionary and the Napoleonic wars had left many injured soldiers or widows of soldiers killed stranded in London without the means to return home and these often sad cases were supported by the HSL.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, the Society did get bogus requests like the case of a James Riddell of Ardnamurchan who, although he was a Highlander, was not only found under examination by the Society’s committee to not be a soldier on his way home but also to have been found living in London for the past nine months, “being one of the most-noted for thieves in London.” In 1785 the committee in charge of this charity work decided that it had to be more discerning when it came to accepting “recommendation of objects to be relieved more especially as the state of the Club finances from the large arrears of subscription money requires the utmost economy.”<sup>68</sup> The HSL continued the financial support of soldiers and their families right up until the end of the Napoleonic Wars, sending in some years over forty men, women, and children home to the Highlands at a cost of one to two pounds each.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, 2 March 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21.

<sup>68</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, 2 March 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21.

<sup>69</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16. The forty people in this case were listed in the account for 1802 when the Society held a balance of £195 19s.11d. From 1799-1802 the HSL spent

On some occasions the HSL would also help lamed soldiers as well to seek medical attention or to return home.<sup>70</sup>

Charitable support for Highlanders went beyond the city of London and by the late 1780s members of the HSL decided to help the Inverness town council establish some much-needed services in the Highlands and Islands: schools and hospitals. It is through the support of these projects that we can begin to see the HSL's burgeoning influence beyond London and directly into the Highlands and Islands. Some members of the HSL such as John Ogilvie, Esq., of Argyle Street (of the HSL and the RSC) acted as liaisons between the HSL and the council connecting the two bodies together.

The provision of education for Highlanders was an extremely important part of the HSL's improvement agenda. In the late-eighteenth century the Highlands and Islands were still lacking schools in comparison to the rest of Scotland. The SSPCK had been trying to establish schools in the area since 1709, with varying degrees of success, but even by the late eighteenth century not enough schools were reaching the Highlands and Islands, especially the remote western Highlands and Islands where people did not have access to organized education. Inverness did have a grammar school dating back to the seventeenth century, which had roots dating back to the Middle Ages, but the Inverness council wanted an institution that would teach a range of subjects (typical of schools in Scotland with the designation 'academy') "stemming partly from the Scottish Enlightenment and partly from the need to teach young people practical skills such as book-keeping to help prepare them for positions in the rapidly expanding British Empire" and therefore it was decided that an academy would be instituted in Inverness, the

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roughly £140 just on free passages for people: Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16.

<sup>70</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16.

“capital” of the Highlands.<sup>71</sup>The Inverness Academy, as an institution, would draw support from all over Great Britain and the West Indies, with some Jamaican merchants donating hundreds of pounds. The Inverness Academy’s board of directors was composed of many men who were involved in the slave trade, such as Evan Baillie Esq., of Bristol, and Hugh Fraser Esq., of Jamaica making the project an important example of the connection between the Highlands and the slave trade. Baillie, for example, was a London merchant who profited heavily from the sale of enslaved Africans. His family, the Ballies of Lochfour, owned plantations in St. Kitts and Granada.<sup>72</sup> Unlike other educational schemes supported by the HSL, the Inverness Academy was not meant for the lower orders, but for those who did not necessarily wish to leave home for an education, as was oftentimes necessary due to a lack of schools in the Highlands. Inverness, as the main hub of the Highlands, was an ideal place to begin the project. “Sensible of several disadvantages which attend a university education” the Directors of the Academy argued, “as it is generally conducted and desirous not only that their young peoples should be more completely instructed in the most useful and necessary parts of learning, but they should have their education nearer home, and more under the eye and observation of their parents and friends than when sent to distant colleges...that the Town of Inverness being central to the Northern Counties the place where the Circuit Court of

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<sup>71</sup> Robert Preece, “Alexander Nimmo: Rector of the Royal Inverness Academy,” in *Alexander Nimmo’s Inverness Survey & Journal, 1806*, ed. Noël P. Williams (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 2011), 14-15.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Preece, *Song School, Town School. Comprehensive: A History of Inverness Royal Academy* (Inverness: Inverness Royal Academy, 2011), 56. The Royal Warrant and Royal Charter of Inverness Royal Academy, 1793. Royal Warrant for a Charter incorporating The Directors of the Academy of Inverness, Private collection of Robert Preece. The Infirmary was supported by West Indian merchants involved in the slave trade, and therefore as a joint project so was the Academy. Evan Baillie’s brother, James Baillie, for example, is listed as donating fifty pounds towards the Academy. The Infirmary is now the administrative office of the University of the Highlands and Islands. A plaque acknowledging the connections to slavery can be found by the main entrance. <http://www.spanglefish.com/slavesandhighlanders/> (accessed 17 December 2013); Directors Minutes, 1781-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, p. 24.

Justiciary meets twice a year; in a healthy part of the country and having a good market, affords the best situation for such an academy.”<sup>73</sup> Advertisements for the Academy were placed in papers like the *Caledonian Mercury*, the *Edinburgh Evening Journal*, the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, and “in two of the London newspapers.”<sup>74</sup>

This was an opportunity for the HSL to achieve one of its stated aims as a society, which was the establishment and support of Gaelic schools. The establishment of schools in the Highlands was an aim for the HSL not only because members felt the Highlands and Islands were in desperate need of educational services (something that was severely lacking in the area) but also because education in Gaelic would help to preserve a language members felt was rapidly disappearing.<sup>75</sup> So after a member of the HSL, the lawyer and army agent John Ogilvie, Esq. (described by the Inverness council as “a native of this place”),<sup>76</sup> who was also a director of the Inverness Academy, procured subscriptions from his colleagues in London in 1789, the HSL officially declared its support. Provost Phineas Mackintosh of Inverness wrote to John Mackenzie in London that Ogilvie had alerted the Inverness council “that the [HSL] were pleased to offer a grant of fifteen pounds towards the establishment of an academy in this town, and that it was the intention of the Society to bestow a similar sum or more on condition that the Galic [*sic*] shall be taught as a collateral branch by some of its masters. The committee cheerfully engage to comply with the terms on which this donation is granted.”<sup>77</sup> The

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<sup>73</sup> Directors Minutes, 1781-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> Directors Minutes 1787-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, p. 24.

<sup>75</sup> See chapter five for more on the Academy.

<sup>76</sup> Not much can be found on Ogilvie but he was a practicing lawyer and army agent: [http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/s/res/41?q=B%203&\\_ps=30](http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/s/res/41?q=B%203&_ps=30) (accessed 9 July 2014).

<sup>77</sup> Directors Minutes 1787-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, p. 128. Phineas Mackintosh was active in the slave trade. He and his brother William worked on a plantation in Demerera and in 1814 forwarded £285 10s. to the Inverness Academy from Demerera including £52 10s. of his own

HSL began its support in May 1790, before the school had opened, with the promise to continue the donation annually as long as the school maintained a Gaelic professor. It was through monetary support as well as the extension of personal connections between members of the HSL who were high-ranking officials in Inverness that the HSL wielded its control over the project. With the support of the HSL, as well as subscriptions from around Great Britain and the British Empire, the Inverness Academy opened in 1793.

In addition to the Academy, the Inverness burgh council sought to establish a hospital in the town and in 1797 subscriptions were opened to build one. Hospitals in the Highlands and Islands were non-existent in the late-eighteenth century leading to “the impossibility of affording effectual aid to the sick in the Highlands of Scotland, at their own habitations, so thinly scattered over a country so frequently inaccessible from the swelling of rivers, stormy weather and bad roads, has long been lamented, and has been suggested the idea of erecting, as near as possible to their homes, an infirmary, into which those cases require it will be received, and from whence medicines shall be distributed to such as it may not be deemed necessary to remove from their families.”<sup>78</sup> The Infirmary and the Academy were officially separate projects, but the town council organized them both with many of the same men sitting on the council as the board of directors for the projects. Some names of note who were involved in these projects (many of who were members of the HSL as well) were: William Mackintosh Esq.; Provost of the burgh of Inverness, John Mackintosh Esq.; William Inglis Esq.; Alexander Mackintosh Esq.; and James Clark Esq.; James Shaw Esq.; Dean of Guild of the said burgh of Inverness; of

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money. See: <http://www.spanglefish.com/slavesandhighlanders/index.asp?pageid=228370> (accessed 29 March 2013).

<sup>78</sup> Advertisement in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 29 December 1797, quoted in T.C. Mackenzie, *The Story of a Scottish Voluntary Hospital* (Inverness: Printed at the Northern Chronicle Office, 1946), 2-3.

Simon Fraser of Farraline Esq.; his Majesty's Sheriff-depute of the county of Inverness; and of Lachlan Macgillivray Esq.; William Mackintosh Esq.; Thomas Fraser Esq.; Alexander Fraser Esq.; and Angus Mackintosh Esq., Æneas [Angus] Mackintosh of Mackintosh Esq. (HSL); Phineas Mackintosh of Drummond Esq.; Francis Humberstone Mackenzie of Seaforth Esq. (HSL); Colonel Norman Macleod of Macleod (HSL), Sir John Macpherson Bart. (HSL), Sir Hector Munro of Novar, Knight of the most Honourable order of the Bath (HSL), John Ogilvie of Argyle Street in the county of Middlesex Esq. (HSL); John Wedderburn of Leadenhall Street, London Esq.; and James Wedderburn of Jamaica Esq.<sup>79</sup>

The HSL decided to support the founding of a hospital as well and in March 1798 “upon the motion of the Right Hon[ora]ble Lord Seaforth it was resolved that it be referred to the next monthly meeting of the committee to consider and report what sum the funds of the Society will admit as a subscription for the establishment of an Infirmary at Inverness for the General benefit of the Highlands.” In April 1798 the Society decided to support the endeavour with twenty pounds per annum for the Infirmary “in which medical relief should be afforded gratuitously to the poor.”<sup>80</sup> From 1798 to 1802 the HSL donated thirty-five pounds to the Inverness burgh council to help support these much-needed services for the Highlands.<sup>81</sup>

Initially the Inverness committee was enthusiastic about searching for a teacher of Gaelic for the Academy; however, they found it impossible to find a suitable teacher or interest from pupils to learn literacy in Gaelic. Reports to the HSL revealed the

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<sup>79</sup> The Royal Warrant and Royal Charter of Inverness Royal Academy, 1793. Royal Warrant for a Charter incorporating The Directors of the Academy of Inverness, Private collection of Robert Preece. See Appendix 1.2.

<sup>80</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23.

<sup>81</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 1793-1805, NLS Dep. 268/23.

difficulties they were having, and this made members of the HSL frustrated and uneasy about spending the fifteen pounds. At a committee meeting in January 1793 the members present decided that finding “the Academy is still unprovided with such professor. The committee resolved that this still be paid but requests the secretary to write a letter to the Directors of the Academy informing that till such time as a professor of Gaelic is appointed, they must...decline paying the annual salary of fifteen pounds, intended for such professor.” In other words the HSL was going to threaten the Inverness council with withdrawal of the funds if a professor was not found.<sup>82</sup>In addition, according to the HSL the hospital was taking far too long to open. The problem was predominantly about the construction. In April of 1799, Provost Inglis wrote to John Fraser Esq., of Achnagarin, Lincoln’s Inn London (partner of Simon McTavish) that the architect’s plan for the building was “too gaudy for us; our object is to erect a decent building which will do credit to the liberty of the subscribers, but by no means to forget that it is to be inhabited by the sick poor for whom provide anything beyond comfortable accommodation would be absurd.”<sup>83</sup>

John Mackenzie had visited Inverness in early 1802 to enquire “into the state of the Infirmary and Academy at that place, especially with respect to the application of the Society’s annual grant of thirty-five pounds to the Institutions, and was in consequence informed that some small progress had been made by the Gaelic professor, but that the Infirmary building was not yet completed.” The HSL were in a difficult financial state in 1802, largely because of charitable spending after the Battle of Alexandria (aiding Highland families stranded or needing help returning home from London), so a decision

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<sup>82</sup> Committee Book of the Gaelic Society [HSL], 4 January 1793, Shakespeare Tavern, Dep. 268/22.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted in Mackenzie, *The Story*, 7.

was made to end funding to the Inverness projects.<sup>84</sup> Mackenzie sent a copy of the HSL's minutes from a "Special Meeting of the Highland Society held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1802" to the directors of the Academy stating that:

Relative to the annual subscription of thirty five pounds to the Inverness Infirmary and Academy, and having also considered that no report had hitherto been received from the directors of these institutions respecting the application of the Society's grants and particularly that the Society's contribution was intended to assist but not wholly support the establishment of a Gaelic professorship, yet the professor has received no additional aid from the funds of the Academy and consequently had not been able to bestow the necessary attention to the preservation of the Gaelic language in its ancient purity which can alone be effected by public countenance and instruction, and understanding that the great benefit expected from the institution of an Infirmary namely the gratuitous administration of medical aid to the poor of the Northern Counties has not yet commenced, resolved that the Society's grants of £35 be withdrawn for the present.<sup>85</sup>

The Academy directors panicked after they received this notice from the HSL and immediately decided that the committee "are of the opinion that a proper report should be furtherwith made to the Highland Society of the state of the Gaelic class and the number

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<sup>84</sup> Highland Society Committee minutes Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, Dep. 268/24, p. 21.

<sup>85</sup> Minute Book II, Copy of Minute: "At a Special Meeting of the Highland Society held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1802," Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 4161/A; "At a Special Meeting of the Highland Society held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1802," NLS Dep. 268/1, p. 71.

and progress of the students since the institution of the Academy as well as the salaries and emoluments received by the teacher from the Academy fund.” The committee found that the Academy had done everything it had been asked to by the HSL including supplementing the HSL’s yearly donation (fifteen pounds from the thirty-five it gave for both the hospital and school) with what limited funds they had in order to give the teacher the meagre thirty pounds yearly salary (besides the profits of his class) it had promised prospective employees. This reduction in his salary was rendered necessary by the state of the Academy funds at the time, but these funds now increased by some late donations it is the opinion of the committee that the salary should be raised to its former amount.”<sup>86</sup>

On the same day the committee discussed the Infirmary and concluded that

Every possible exertion has been made by the committee of subscribers to open the Infirmary and promote the gratuitous administration of medical aid to the poor of the Northern Counties, altho’ that very desirable object has not yet been fully accomplished.—The delay appears not to be owing to any neglect or remissness on the part of the committee appointed by the subscribers, but to the neglect and delays of the contractors in completing the necessary buildings, and the difficulty in procuring proper information respecting the furniture [appropriate?] to such an establishment, and the internal regulations proper to be adopted for its government – It appears to this committee that applications have been made some considerable time ago, both at Edinburgh and London for information and direction as to these

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<sup>86</sup> Minute Book II, “Report of the Committee of Directors of the Inverness Academy to Whom the Minute of the Highland Society of London Dated 9<sup>th</sup> July was referred,” Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 4161/A.

matters, but that such information has not yet been obtained.—From the present state of matters however your committee hope and have every reason to expect that the Infirmary will be ready for the reception of patients in the course of the ensuing year.<sup>87</sup>

From the point of view of the HSL, however, the Inverness council did not do what was asked of them, and therefore they were cut off financially from the powerful society. After one final donation of fifteen pounds in 1803, the HSL ended its support of the Infirmary and the Academy, deeming the projects not worthy of their limited income at the time. Nonetheless, the support the HSL provided to these institutions started them on their way. The ‘Northern Infirmary’, as it was first called, opened in 1804, providing poor people in the area with medical facilities. The Academy may have abandoned Gaelic education (at least until the twentieth century), but it continued educating local children in subjects that would send many of them off prepared for careers in the British Empire.<sup>88</sup>

### **The Gaelic Chapel and the Caledonian Asylum**

In addition to the projects in Inverness, and helping needy Highlanders to return home, the HSL and its supporters would provide services for Highlanders in the City of London through the Gaelic chapel and the Caledonian Asylum. Both of these projects ensured the HSL’s position at the top of London high society. From the inception of the Highland

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<sup>87</sup> “At a Special Meeting of the Highland Society held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July 1802,” NLS Dep. 268/1, p. 71.

<sup>88</sup> The Royal Inverness Academy still exists today. It now has a full Gaelic immersion program offering a range of subjects taught in that language. The ‘Royal Northern Infirmary’ remained a hospital until 1999 when modern facilities were built in Inverness.

Society of London the idea for a Gaelic chapel had been a subject of great importance to its members. Not only was the chapel meant to bring the Highland community located in London together and spread influence throughout that community but also would serve as a means by which the Gaelic language could be kept alive, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter five. As John Mackenzie argued on behalf of the Society: “in a word, the establishment of a Gaelic Church in London, would have a direct tendency to awaken and keep alive sentiments of devotion, brotherly love, loyalty, genuine patriotism, and public spirit, and at the same time would serve, as a repository for a language intimately connected with the history of the descent and progress of nations.”<sup>89</sup>

During the period under investigation here, Gaelic chapels were fairly common in parts of urban Scotland where Highland Scots settled in order to find employment in the growing industrial economy, such as in Glasgow (1770), Dundee (1772), Aberdeen (1781), Edinburgh (1769), Paisley (1793), and Perth (1788), or emigration points such as Cromarty (1787). Many of these settlers still spoke Gaelic so the chapels were very important to them, and their proliferation, according to Withers, demonstrates the relative strength of the language in more urbanized areas where Highlanders settled at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>90</sup> In the case of London, there was a desire for many in the Highland community to emulate these developments in urban Scotland as “the influx of Highlanders to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, has occasioned the establishment of a Gaelic chapel in each of those cities, and they are remarkably well attended. How much

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<sup>89</sup> John Mackenzie “Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London” (late 18<sup>th</sup> century), NLS Acc. 10165/83.

<sup>90</sup> Charles W. J. Withers, “Kirk, Club and Culture Change: Gaelic Chapels, Highland Societies and the Urban Gaelic Subculture in Eighteenth-Century Scotland,” *Social History* 10, no. 2 (1985), 179-80.

more is a[n] institution wanted, and likely to prove respectable and useful in the immense cities of London and Westminster.”<sup>91</sup>

Withers argues that in the case of Highland communities in urban Scotland, at least, Highlanders were likely to form associations of their own with an initial view to preserving Highland culture and for distributing charity.<sup>92</sup> However, he argues, these societies were largely patronized by Highland elites seeking, by the end of the nineteenth century, cultural and social acceptance in the elite English speaking circles of urban Lowland Scotland. Using case studies of Highland migration into Dundee and Perth from 1787 to 1891, Withers argues that initially the establishment of Gaelic chapels and Highland societies and clubs in the two towns from the late eighteenth century onwards served to separate Highlanders from Lowlanders in the towns through the continued use of Gaelic by Highlanders. Chapels and clubs were places where Gaelic was spoken freely and charity was distributed by elites to their “less advantaged kin.” Chapels and clubs were also used as meeting places where members of a similar background could meet and discuss issues that were important to them. This activity served to maintain “a collective and separate identity within the host society,” but by the second half of the nineteenth century Gaelic became less of a focus at the chapels and the society meetings.<sup>93</sup> Despite this, Gaelic chapels and Highland clubs and societies remained important meeting places in the second half of the nineteenth century. The difference was that Highland elites, and their kin, became more concerned with incorporation into the established English speaking Lowland elites of Dundee and Perth facilitated through continued club and

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<sup>91</sup> Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London,” [n.d. late 18<sup>th</sup> century], NLS Acc10615/83.

<sup>92</sup> Morris, “Clubs, Societies and Associations,” 437; C.W.J. Withers. *Highland Communities in Dundee and Perth 1787-1891: a Study in the Social History of Migrant Highlanders* (Dundee: Abertay Historical Society Publication No 25, 1986), 54.

<sup>93</sup> Withers, *Highland Communities*, 53-58.

society meetings, or associational culture, with members of a similar class.<sup>94</sup> However, in the case of the HSL, there is a major difference: members of the HSL did not seek acceptance into elite English speaking circles except for support for their projects. In other words, unlike Highland elites located in urban Scotland, members of the HSL allowed non-Highlanders into *their* social circle, not the other way round. And, as we will see below, members of the Highland Society of London also wielded incredible influence over other parts of Great Britain, which included members of their social groups.

Since its beginnings in the late-eighteenth century, the London Gaelic chapel was established to serve all members of the Gaelic speaking community in London and bring the Highland community together. The Society argued in a late-eighteenth century circular soliciting donations and subscribers that “many natives of the Highlands live in London in various prosperous lines of business who would be willing to lend their aid to deserving or distressed countrymen, if they had opportunities of seeing and knowing them. But the extent of the metropolis is so great that the Highlanders are in a manner lost to one another for want of a common centre of resort and union. Such a centre would be provided by a Highland or Gaelic chapel; for it would be frequented by the higher classes as well as by those of more humble rank.”<sup>95</sup> Services were to be performed both in Gaelic and English, as not all members of the Highland community or those who might donate to the chapel would have spoken Gaelic, so the services had to be inclusive. Nevertheless there was an attempt to promote Gaelic to a non-Gaelic audience. “There is another object not to be passed over in the present representation,” it was argued, “and which is submitted not only to natives of the Highlands but to every ingenious and cultivated

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<sup>94</sup> Withers, *Highland Communities*, 58-62.

<sup>95</sup> “Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London for the Use of the Natives of the Highlands of Scotland,” (Water mark 1798), NLS Dep. 268/15.

mind. The performance of divine service and the composition of discourses in the Gaelic tongue, addressed to an audience in a great and refined city, would be a shelter and protection for the *Celtic*, the radical and maternal language, which from the extinction of the race of Bards, the introduction of strangers, and of new occupations, fashions and laws, is in danger of being swept away from the face of Europe and of the Earth.”<sup>96</sup> However, as is being argued here, the overall purpose of the chapel was that those who wished to worship in Gaelic were given the opportunity to do so, and the language could be kept alive through the act of services in that language.

Like Gaelic chapels located in urban Scotland, the London Gaelic chapel was also specifically intended to provide charity to the lower ranks of the Highland community. It was a common assumption by social elites in urban areas of industrial Britain, which was causing a host of societal ills, that the poorer masses would fall into trouble or ‘vice’ in cities, which were becoming increasingly overcrowded. The urban poor by the late-eighteenth century were largely living in overcrowded and dirty conditions (a phenomenon that would only become worse throughout the nineteenth century) and many people were turning to activities the urban elites frowned upon such as excessive alcohol consumption. Members of the HSL hoped that “Instead of mingling with the lower classes of London, in the ale houses, or other scenes of low dissipation, on the one hand, or remaining at home in a disheartening and gloomy solitude on the other,” the erection of a Gaelic chapel would protect:

The difference of their language, and the innocence and simplicity of their manners... are protected amidst a great and luxurious city from the contagion

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<sup>96</sup> “Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London,” [n.d. late 18<sup>th</sup> century], NLS Acc. 10615/83.

of vice; and by the same circumstances they are also unhappily cut off from many benefits attending an extensive circle of society in any station of life. By the erection of a Gaelic chapel those advantages would be in a great measure be retained, and disadvantages obviated –they would resort regularly to the Church for the worship of God, and for receiving instructions and comfort in a way intelligible, impressive, and where after divine service they would have the satisfaction of meeting and conversing with their friends and countrymen.<sup>97</sup>

For the members of the HSL who supported the idea of a Gaelic chapel, not only would it provide a place for Highlanders to worship in their own language (or not) but also provide a safe haven for common Highlanders within their own community; a community of largely native Highlanders. Originally it was decided that “the service should be performed in Gaelic and English alternatively, the latter according to the Episcopal form established.” It is not clear what religious form the Gaelic service was to be in, but in any case when it opened both English and Gaelic services would be performed in the Presbyterian faith. What mattered to the HSL, however, is that the chapel was for the Highland community and those who wished to worship in Gaelic were to be given the opportunity.<sup>98</sup> The HSL were very careful to maintain to potential subscribers that association with other Highlanders and expression of the Gaelic language would not be a potential threat to the state; rather it stood to benefit the community at large and provide a

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<sup>97</sup> “Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London for the Use of the Natives of the Highlands of Scotland,” [Water mark 1798], NLS Dep. 268/15.

<sup>98</sup> Highland Society Committee Minutes Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, NLS Dep. 268/24, p. 175.

charitable function for needy Highlanders. “The establishment of a Gaelic Chapel in London,” John Mackenzie argued:

Would not only contribute to the welfare of individuals by protecting them amidst the numerous dangers and temptations of a great and luxurious city, from the contagion of vice, by extending the circle of their Society, by receiving instruction in a way intelligible and impressive, and where after divine service they would have the satisfaction of meeting and conversing with their friends and countrymen, and of receiving their countenance and support if deserving;—but it would also, it may be confidently affirmed to conduce to the prosperity and safety of the public. All the prejudices and peculiarities of the Highlanders; all that marks and discriminates their character is friendly to good order and civil subordination. A congregation of Highlanders, far from resembling a dark malignant and seditious conventicle of malcontents, would in fact be rather a pillar and prop to the state; a security government and to all the blessings of social order. By such an institution, they would be preserved from that seditious contagion, to which by too frequent association with others of their own rank, but of a different turn of thinking, they might be exposed. The pride and glory of the Highlander, fostered by the recollection of the valorous and patriotic deeds of his forefathers is not to pull down, but to support the civil and political authority. In proportion as the Highlanders are kept together, unmixed with persons of more dissipated manners and relaxed morals, persons discontented and

murmuring against the constituted authorities in the same proportion is a barrier provided against rash innovation and political confession—. It may be indeed be remarked that with regard to revolutionary principles, the native tongue of the Highlander does not supply him with terms to convey them. The Gaelic language does not separate the ideas of government from those of regular subordination and duty.<sup>99</sup>

In other words, the Gaelic chapel was presented to potential subscribers, who might have been hostile to Highlanders or to the Gaelic language, that a chapel instituted for the purpose of worshipping in a language, which for hundreds of years had been under attack by non-Gaels, was worthy of support. Highlanders, it was argued, deserved to express their own culture within their own communities. The remnants of eighteenth century Scotophobia were still present in London and Gaelic as a “primitive” language would have invited critique from those who did not see its relevance in modern society.

This community of urban Highlanders in London would be extended to urban Scotland when the Dundee Gaelic congregation, which had been in Dundee since the late eighteenth century, asked the HSL for assistance in developing their own community support for Highlanders located in that city. In asking the powerful London society for assistance in supporting a group of Highland migrants, the Dundee congregation was consciously attaching itself to the broader networks created by the HSL in the hopes of gaining social capital. In turn, by helping the Dundee congregation members of the HSL extended their influence to a group of Highland migrants located in Lowland Scotland asserting themselves as the social leaders of the wider Highland migrant community.

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<sup>99</sup> Proposal for Establishing a Gaelic Chapel in London, [n.d. late 18<sup>th</sup> century], NLS Acc 10165/83.

In 1840, the Dundee Gaelic congregation under the Reverend Charles McAllister solicited “the assistance of the Highland Society of London towards providing them a building where they may worship God in the language of their forefathers.”<sup>100</sup> Many Highlanders left the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, “where men are plentiful and employment is scarce, very many of the honest and industrious sons of the Gael are obliged to leave their native mountains, and descend on the southern parts of the country, in order to procure the means of a scanty subsistence” and settled either temporarily or permanently in Dundee in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, like many Highlanders did in other parts of urban and rural Lowland Scotland.<sup>101</sup> Many of these settlers were poor and unemployed and the Gaelic chapels in urban Scotland, like the one in London, was to provide charity and community support for people within Highland communities. The Gaelic chapel in Dundee had been opened under direction of the presbytery of the Church of Scotland and the group, which averaged around 350 souls from May to July 1837, enlarged the salary of the minister to a comfortable standard. The chapel not only provided a place of worship for native Gaelic speakers but also provided charity for settlers who were in need.<sup>102</sup> However, by 1840 the Highland community in Dundee had grown to a point where a new larger chapel was needed but the congregation had run into difficulties from “a sudden state of trade, whereby persons in good

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<sup>100</sup> David Charles Guthrie to John MacDonald, 24 January 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838 - 30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

<sup>101</sup> Withers, *Urban Highlanders*, chapter 3; 6; T.M. Devine, “Temporary migration and the Scottish Highlands in the nineteenth century,” *Economic History Review* 32, no. 3 (1979), 345-359; David Charles Guthrie to John MacDonald, 24 January 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838 - 30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

<sup>102</sup> Charles Mackie, *Historical Description of the Town of Dundee* (Glasgow and London, 1836), 127; Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons Papers Vol. 24. *Sixth Report by the Commissioners of Religious Instruction, Scotland: 16 Vols* [Vol 6] (Edinburgh, 1838), 24; 88.

McAllister estimated that there were anywhere from 600 to 700 poor and working class Gaels in Dundee in 1837.

circumstances were reduced to difficulties, actually overwhelmed the poor mechanic or labourer,—to which classes almost wholly the Gaelic people belong,—and rendered it impossible for them to fulfill their obligations to the contractors.”<sup>103</sup> The congregation appealed to the HSL, which had already undertaken similar projects in London and in Scotland with the knowledge that the HSL were

Aware that these people are mostly of the poorer orders - who have no settings in their own right - nor means to pay for access into other congregations - many know no other tongue than their native Gaelic - and all of them of one mind, that they cannot address the almighty nor sing to His praises - with comfort or devotion - except in that same language in which they first were taught to know his great goodness. This is the language of these people, and it is the language which the Highland Society has delighted to honor - by every encouragement that would tend to improve, or perpetuate as may be seen in the records of the Society from its foundation to the present day. It occurs to me that your objects may be promoted by meeting the present call perhaps on a quarter degree than any man can suggest this any other channel and I should add to it with more profitable effect.<sup>104</sup>

The congregation needed about £600 to complete the project, and the HSL decided it would offer help to the Dundee congregation to which McAllister proclaimed: “Language

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<sup>103</sup> “Memorial to the Gaelic Congregation under the Ministry of the Reverend Charles M’Allister,” Dundee, 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence 1 April 1838-30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

<sup>104</sup> David Charles Guthrie to John MacDonald, 24 January 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838-30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

fails me to express my gratitude to you for the attention you have given to the poor Highlanders of Dundee and I sincerely trust that God for whose declaration glory we are endeavouring to erect a place of worship to our brethren from the Highlands may amply reward you not only in time but make you meet to join the redeemed in Heaven and sin to His praise throughout the endless ages of eternity.”<sup>105</sup> Aid from the powerful HSL was obviously an achievement for smaller groups of Highlanders located in other parts of Britain. The HSL required the Dundee congregation to work hard for the assistance, though, and they had to send along detailed numbers showing why they had fallen short (the project was £456 short). McAllister argued that “we have a great hopes that is the example be shown by the Highland Society of London, we will be able to raise what remains of the sum by further subscriptions in other places.” Appealing to the HSL’s charitable nature, there were hopes from the congregation that they would not have to open subscriptions but instead reminding:

The Corporation that except in Dundee, there is no place of worship in the Gaelic tongue between Perth and Aberdeen and if the congregation we represent be not able to support itself a great part of the poor Highlanders who have resorted to this districk [*sic*] will have no opportunity of religious instruction, not having sufficient knowledge of the English language to profit from the instructions in the other churches, and a great part also being too poor to pay for seats in the established churches, while if by your aid the difficulties we are under, now so far reduced, may be overcome there will be

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<sup>105</sup> Charles McAlister to David Guthrie Esq. London, 13 March 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838-30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

an open place of worship where the poorest Highlanders may resort with profit to his spiritual interests and with assurance that his fellow worshippers have with him a common feeling.<sup>106</sup>

Nonetheless, the HSL told them to open subscriptions and see how much money could be raised locally, self-help being of the utmost importance. Only then would the HSL offer funds of its own, which it did to the sum of twenty-five guineas at the end of 1840.<sup>107</sup> By offering advice and money to the Dundee congregation ensured that the HSL expanded the scope of its influence to Highland migrant communities located beyond that of the city of London asserting that its members were the social leaders of Highlanders wherever they were located.

But it was the London Gaelic chapel that ensured elite Highlanders found within the fold of the HSL had influence over the Highland community located in London, as well as bringing considerable social prestige to the Society *beyond* the Highland community because it became part of another high-profile project, the Caledonian Asylum, which drew interest from many elite groups. It was a crucial aim of members of the HSL not only to influence members of their own communities but also members of the British elite who would bring the social and political connections needed to build the Highland Empire. Subscriptions had officially been opened to fund the building in 1809 and as George Cameron has found, some high profile elites including the Duke of Sussex,

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<sup>106</sup> Charles McAlister to David Guthrie Esq. London, 13 March 1840, Dep. 268/5.

<sup>107</sup> David Guthrie to John MacDonald, 12 Feb 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence 1 April 1838 - 30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5; Charles McAlister to David Guthrie Esq., 13 March 1840, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838-30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5; "London Summary of the Proceedings of The HSL During the Season of 1840," The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 April 1838-30 April 1841, Dep. 268/5.

the Duke of Montrose, the Marquis of Huntly, and the Earls of Nairn, Breadalbane, and Selkirk, respectively, were some of its large subscribers. Money also came from men located in Barbados, St. Croix, and Surinam.<sup>108</sup> The chapel at 16 Cross Street, Hatten Gardens was dedicated on May 30, 1813; however, due to problems finding enough funds to continue the chapel and “debates and divisions arose among the hearers respecting the clergymen who officiated and an almost dispersion of the congregation was the consequence,” the London Gaelic chapel would be suspended until it became part of another important project: the Caledonian Asylum, which would not only increase services for Highlanders in London but also secure the HSL’s place with London high society.<sup>109</sup>

The Caledonian Asylum was a residential school originally instituted for orphans of Highland soldiers involved in the Peninsular War (1808-14) who were stranded in London or children whose mothers could not care for them through the loss of their husbands. For years the HSL had been supporting soldiers and their families to return home to Scotland or seek medical attention, and so the creation of a permanent resident for orphans of soldiers was intimately connected to this early charitable work. As mentioned earlier, we do not know much about the common Highlanders who were either permanently or temporarily located in the city. But owing to the disproportionate number of Highlanders who participated in the Napoleonic wars and who would have been stationed with their families temporarily in London, there is no surprise there were many

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<sup>108</sup> George G. Cameron, *The Scots Kirk in London* (Oxford: Beckett, 1979), 104. In a letter dated March 28, 1816 John Galt to Colonel Stewart Galt mentions: “the current subscriptions of the current year exceed £1100, and our friends the secretaries of the Highland Society have, I understand, received a considerable remittance from the West Indies.” This suggests very strongly that the Chapel and the Asylum were funded by monies made in the slave trade. Gaelic Chapel, 1817-20, NLS Acc. 101615/83.

<sup>109</sup> John Galt to the Reverend Thomas Chalmers, 24 January 1817, Gaelic Chapel, 1817-20, NLS Acc. 10615/83.

Highland orphans in the city. The idea for the Asylum had been born in 1808 at the start of the Peninsular War, and because of the shared membership and urging by Sir John Sinclair, it was hoped that the Asylum, and the Gaelic chapel, would be instituted under the “auspices of the Highland Society of London and Scotland for the maintenance and education of the children of Scottish sailors, soldiers and marines.”<sup>110</sup> The Royal Scots Corporation had also been toying with the idea of opening a school for the same reason, moving towards an educational agenda in 1810. Many Scots who were located in the West Indies had expressed interest in supporting schools and we find such men in the HSL and the RSC, and as we saw earlier there was much support for the Inverness Academy from slave traders and plantation owners and managers. The RSC was receiving such funds from the West Indies but decided instead to leave the issue of the Caledonian Asylum to the HSL and instead donated some of these funds to the HSL’s efforts as well as to the Scottish churches in London on the condition that they provide children of Scots with free education.<sup>111</sup>

The idea for the Asylum was suspended due to lack of funds, and in the meantime the Military Asylum (est. 1803) had reached its capacity of 1,100 children, and the Naval Asylum (est. 1798) had over four hundred, so the idea was revisited in 1815.<sup>112</sup> By the time of the second round of meetings to discuss the Caledonian Asylum, the HSL, as we saw, had already attracted members of the Royal family into its social circle. At the first meeting on March 18, 1815 the Duke of Kent and Strathearn was in the chair, and the

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<sup>110</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 334.

<sup>111</sup> Taylor, *A Cup of Kindness*, 92-97. The RSC would take a greater interest in the Caledonian School by the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>112</sup> Campbell, *Two Hundred Years*, 19; Jessica A. Sheetz-Nguyen, “Lloyd’s Patriotic Fund, 1791-1841: “To the Heroes of Trafalgar,” in *Victorians and the Case for Charity: Essays on the Responses to English Poverty by the State, the Church and the Literati*, ed. Marilyn D. Button and Jessica A. Sheetz-Nguyen (Jefferson: McFarlan & Co., 2014), 60-64.

Prince Regent (Prince of Wales) agreed to become patron of the institution. The Dukes of York and Albany, and of Surrey and Inverness, also headed up the committee to solicit subscriptions. The Duke of Kent and Strathearn was the first president.<sup>113</sup> It was deemed that the school would cost £30,000 to build and was to be funded exclusively from donations (over 160 people are named as initial subscribers, including over 90 titled Scots), so the HSL sought to attract “not only Scottish but also of English and Irish nobility” to help fund the project.<sup>114</sup> Parliament passed an act on June 14, 1815 “establishing and well governing the Charitable Institution called the *Caledonian Asylum*, for supporting and educating children of soldiers, sailors, marines, natives of Scotland, and of indigent parents, resident in London, not entitled to parochial relief.”<sup>115</sup> John Galt was named as the secretary of the Asylum in 1815 and held this post until he joined the Canada Company as secretary in 1824. After this the Reverend John Lees took over the position.<sup>116</sup>

It was decided that four categories of children were to be admitted:

1. Children who have lost their fathers in the naval or military service of the empire, whether by falling in battle or perishing by wounds or disease.
2. Children whose fathers have been disabled by wounds or illnesses acquired in naval or military service.

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<sup>113</sup> Cameron, *The Scots Kirk*, 104-5.

<sup>114</sup> Cameron, *The Scots Kirk*, 105; “The founding of the Royal Caledonian Schools 1815-1820,” in “Proposal for Gaelic Chapel and Letters,” 18 March 1815, NLS Acc. 10615/83. £30,000 was a major project, being roughly £1,257,600 in 2005 currency. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/> (accessed 20 December 2013)

<sup>115</sup> Quoted in Cameron, *The Scots Kirk*, 104.

<sup>116</sup> John Lees to John MacDonald, 21 March 1833, NLS Dep. 268/4.

3. Children whose fathers have served or are actually serving in the army or navy.
4. Children of indigent Scottish parents resident in London, and not entitled to parochial relief nor connected with the army or navy.<sup>117</sup>

The following year the HSL decided that the London Gaelic chapel and the Caledonian Asylum would become a single project. The London Gaelic chapel project had encountered some problems mentioned earlier so “debts against the chapel were to be discharged and a paper was signed approving the plan for providing at all times a place of worship in London for accomplishing the purposes for which the chapel was originally established, and to agree to transfer their interest in the London Gaelic chapel to the Caledonian Asylum.”<sup>118</sup> The subscribers of the chapel relinquished their property to the directors of the Caledonian Asylum in July of 1815 “on condition that the directors would undertake to superintend the concerns of the chapel and exert their judgment and influence in providing a proper pastor for the congregation.”<sup>119</sup> The London Gaelic chapel re-opened under the tutelage of the Asylum’s directors and was to be overseen by the “Scotch Presbytery in London.” It changed its name soon after to the Caledonian Church, streamlining the names of both institutions, which were so closely linked.<sup>120</sup>

The Caledonian Asylum was opened in 1817 adjacent to the London Gaelic chapel, and admitted forty male pupils. The HSL offered a maintenance fee of ten pounds

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<sup>117</sup> “The founding of the Royal Caledonian Schools, 1815-1820,” in “Proposal for Gaelic Chapel and Letters,” 26 June 1815, NLS Acc. 10615/83.

<sup>118</sup> “The founding of the Royal Caledonian Schools,” 26 June 1815, NLS Acc. 10615/83.

<sup>119</sup> Proposal for Gaelic Chapel and Letters, “Extracts from minutes [copy],” 15 July 1815, NLS Acc. 10615/83.

<sup>120</sup> Proposal for Gaelic Chapel and Letters, 12 November 1816, NLS Acc. 10615/83; Proposal for Gaelic Chapel and Letters, 20 December 1813, NLS Acc. 10615/83; Highland Society Committee minutes Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, NLS Dep. 268/24, p. 175; Cameron, *The Scots Kirk*, 106.

per annum, which it donated consistently. The location at Hatten Gardens was deemed too small for the growing school and in 1827 the committee of directors decided the school should move and a larger building. In that year the HSL donated the considerable sum of £115 10s. to help with the move to Copenhagen Fields, Islington.<sup>121</sup> Queen Victoria would become patron of the school in 1852, when it would be re-named the Royal Caledonian Asylum. The HSL's continued connection to the Caledonian Asylum ensured that the Society's place at the top of London high society would be maintained throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. Members held important posts on the school's educational board and the Society helped pay for the maintenance of the school until a few years ago. Caledonian Road in London in the London borough of Islington is named for the school.

## **Conclusion**

As this chapter has argued, the HSL was able to expand its scope of influence not only over civil society in London but also into Scotland as well. This was achieved through the acquisition of social capital in London, the political and financial centre of Great Britain and the British Empire. Through charitable acts and socializing with their peers as well as high-profile outsiders, members of the HSL were able to build their social prestige in the Society's early years and eventually display the HSL's wealth and immense power by the early nineteenth century. Members of the HSL in this time period represent men who held powerful positions in the British elite: politicians, landowners, colonial managers,

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<sup>121</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, "Receipt for annual subscription to the Caledonian Asylum June 4<sup>th</sup> 1827," Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-29, NLS Dep. 268/17.

bankers, lawyers, and (often high-ranking) military men, among others. Acts of charity in the City and socializing at the most popular venues for voluntary societies allowed the HSL to become one of the most powerful charitable institutions in London of the time.

The HSL was also able to expand its influence beyond London to groups of Highlanders located in the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland. Projects conceived by members of the HSL to help bring much-needed services into the Highlands such as schools and hospitals led to the development of the Inverness Infirmary and Inverness Academy, which were carried out by smaller groups of Highland elites who were then brought into the HSL's expanding network. This expanding network brought increased attention to the needs of Highlanders from the British public and funds from Highlanders located around the British Empire. Helping to facilitate these projects ensured that members of the HSL had direct influence into the Highlands. Also, the assistance of migrant communities in Lowland Scotland, as in their support of and advice to the Dundee Gaelic congregation, meant that members of the HSL asserted themselves as the leaders of the wider migrant community. The institution of sister and branch societies meant that the HSL would have the institutional structure by which it could expand its influence globally through social, political, and economic connections. By the early nineteenth century projects spearheaded by the HSL would bring royal patronage, securing its place at the top of the social ladder.

As the next two chapters will show, by working with its sister society, the Highland Society of Scotland, the HSL continued developing its networks in order to exercise influence over the British government and the British public in order to achieve its stated aims. The social and institutional links built in London brought considerable

support for economic and social development from both the British government, in the form of grants, and the British public, in the form of investments. With the purpose of directing social and economic change in the Highlands and Islands from within networks of Highlanders, the HSL and the HSS lobbied the British government and the British public to support economic and social improvement schemes in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland by arguing the central importance of the Highlands to the overall health of the British and imperial economies and of national security.

### Chapter 3: Building the New Highland Economy, 1778-1815: the Crofting System Revisited

#### Introduction

It has been argued that the crofting system was the result of Highland landowners' enthusiastic adoption of the Whig concept of economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland during the "first phase of clearance."<sup>1</sup> Over the course of the 1730s to the 1820s, crofts began to replace the communal townships (the *baile*, or basic group settlements common in Gaeldom of cottars, multiple tenant farmers, and servants). Many Highland landlords used eviction, or mass displacement, as a solution to market pressures and enlightened commercial priorities—chiefly the move towards large-scale and highly profitable sheep farming, which took up vast amounts of land. In doing so, according to Allan Macinnes and others, landlords deliberately subordinated, and in some cases threw off altogether, their personal obligations to their clansmen in order to more closely tie the Highlands to the market and adopt a more individualistic concept of the ownership of land. In other words the push towards single tenant holdings, mainly large sheep farms with one tenant, and clearing the 'surplus' population either onto crofting townships or expulsing them from the Highlands and Islands altogether. Placing people onto crofts was ideal for many landlords as it kept the population at home ready to recruit for military campaigns or to work in the seasonal kelp industry.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Allan. I. Macinnes, "Commercial Landlordism and Clearance in the Scottish Highlands: the Case of Arichonan," in *Communities in European History*, ed. J. P. Montojo and K. Pedersen (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2007), 47-49.

<sup>2</sup> T.M. Devine, "A Conservative People? Scottish Gaeldom in the Age of Improvement," in *Eighteenth Century Scotland New Perspectives* ed. T.M. Devine and J.R. Young (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 231-232; Jim Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community* [New ed.]. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000); Macinnes, *Clanship*; Allan I. Macinnes, "Scottish Gaeldom," in *People and Society in Scotland: volume 1*,

While this is part of the story, the formation of the crofting system is more nuanced than previously thought; it was part of an improvement plan, which was intended to provide employment for the entire community through the implementation of planned villages and towns where resource development and manufacturing would take place. Crofts, which are associated with the north, west, and western seaboard of the Highlands were not the only kind of planned villages that were created in the Highlands and Islands at this time: they were part of a broader trend in the restructuring of settlement in the Highlands and Islands, which included planned coastal fishing villages and towns, and planned inland villages and towns. Planned (or lotted) villages date back at least to the 1720s in Scotland and are a distinctive settlement type found both there and in Ireland in this period, distinguishing these areas from England.<sup>3</sup> This increasing trend in planned settlement was adopted by members of the Highland Society of London and their colleagues who used the concept to develop an improvement plan where economic activity would develop on a variety of planned settlements in the Highlands and Islands, leaving the bulk of estates free for sheep and cattle farming. These planned settlements, including coastal crofts, were to be centres of inhabitation, employment, and secure subsistence. Therefore the Highlands were not only a recruitment zone for the British military and potential kelp workers but also other locally appropriate industries such as fishing and woollen manufacturing. In addition, members of the HSL and their colleagues in the HSS lobbied the British government to alter mercantilist (Whig) economic

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1760-1830, ed. T. M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988), 71-87; Eric Richards, *History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions, 1786-1886* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), 21 and *passim*; Womack, *Improvement and Romance*. According to Macinnes, the second phase took place in the 1830s to the 1880s with the attempted removal of crofting, increased pastoralism, and the desire to turn entire glens into hunting ranges for large and small game.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Lockhart, "Lotted Lands and Planned Villages in North East Scotland," *The Agricultural History Review* 49 (2001): 17.

practices, which were seen to be causing mass poverty in the Highlands and Islands. Members of the HSL and the HSS also lobbied the government to improve roads and bridges as well as to lay the foundations of canals to improve communications in the Highlands and Islands in order to move Highland goods to both domestic and international markets and facilitate the development of manufacturing. By the 1780s, this was the Scoto-British, or conservative solution to poverty and the creation of wealth in the Highlands and Islands. It will be argued here, therefore, that planned settlements such as crofts and other planned villages and towns were part of a continuation of patriarchal obligations exercised by many Highland landlords and their supporters who we find in the institutional networks formed by the Highland Society of London.

The crofting system, or more accurately the ‘planned village system,’ therefore, was not only the result of an enlightened capitalist ‘improving ideology’; it was part of a developing traditional conservative economic and social policy, rooted in a culture of benevolence, which integrated a variety of economic and social theories, including free trade, intended to bring the people of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland out of poverty and into the modern era. Unlike the dominant government-supported Whig improvement agenda of the early-to mid-eighteenth century, which sought to ‘civilise’ the Highlands through labour and the promote individualism, Scoto-British improvement sought “the introduction of industry over *all* the Highlands,” not because Highlanders were socially backward or a threat to the security of Great Britain, but because mercantilist policies and ineffectual improvement schemes were causing mass poverty. This improvement plan was to be directed by private interest with government and public support where applicable. In this way we can see the development of what we now term

classical (or “traditional”) conservative economics in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland by men who were increasingly identifying with this strain of economic and social thought or were themselves members of the resurgent Tory party. This kind of economic and social thought largely arose after the American Revolution and rejected much about Whig social and economic policy, which had dominated the century.<sup>4</sup>

The improvement projects under examination in the next two chapters are familiar; and similar projects had been tried throughout the eighteenth century under the direction of government agencies like the Board of Trustees for Fisheries, Manufactures and Improvements in Scotland (1727) and the Commissioners of the Annexed Estates (notably developing planned villages and textile manufacturing), or joint stock companies such as the Honourable Society of Improvers of the Knowledge of Agriculture (est. 1727), but with little tangible success.<sup>5</sup> However, the underlying intentions shaping improvement projects in the Highlands and Islands from the 1770s onwards, as well as the origins of their intellectual development, are not as well known.<sup>6</sup> Very few individual and detailed case studies of Highland estates and the motivations for clearance by landowners exist. Some recent work has shown that the army officer and colonial administrator Francis Humberston Mackenzie of Seaforth (1754-1815), Chief of the Clan Mackenzie, for example, retained what Finlay McKichan calls “customary concerns” to his clan and people, which influenced how he managed his estates. Seaforth, a member of

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<sup>4</sup> “Memorandum respecting the present state of the British Society for the Extending the Fisheries,” May 1788, NRS GD9/3, p. 266; Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, “Loyalism and the British Atlantic, 1660-1840,” in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, ed. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> The Honourable Society of Improvers of the Knowledge of Agriculture *Select Transactions of the Honourable the Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1743).

<sup>6</sup> Historians of the Highland Clearances have largely overlooked paternal intentions. Some notable exceptions are: McKitchin, “Lord Seaforth” and A.J. Youngson, *After the Forty-Five: The Economic Impact on the Scottish Highlands* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973).

the HSL, resisted clearance for as long as he could in the late eighteenth century, preferring instead to keep multiple tenancy farms on his estates and refusing high rents offered by sheep farmers because he “neither would let his lands for sheep pasture, nor turn out his people, upon any consideration, or for any rent that could be offered.” Although Seaforth would eventually fall to external pressures, we know he tried to prevent the emigration of his people.<sup>7</sup> However, in spite of the lack of detailed case studies, by more closely examining the intentions of many Highland and Island landowners, as well as their supporters, through the lens of two very influential associations—the HSL and the HSS, both of which had many Highland landowners on its membership lists (who were also very active on committees overseeing the development of the Highland societies’ improvement projects)—it will be shown that along side the Whig improvement agenda, which dominated economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for much of the eighteenth century, there was a conservative, or Tory, agenda of free market capitalism tempered by paternalism. This improvement agenda was formed in London and its implementation was carried out through the institutional framework developed by the HSL. Members were united in their shared agenda to bring prosperity to the Highlands and Islands. In other words this was community driven support for economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands from within the Scottish diaspora.

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<sup>7</sup> McKichan, “Lord Seaforth,” 50-52. H. M. Chichester, “Mackenzie, Francis Humberston, Baron Seaforth and Mackenzie of Kintail (1754-1815),” rev. Jonathan Spain, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/14126> (accessed 7 February 2014). Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 10. Mackenzie was Col. Humberstone Mackenzie of the 78<sup>th</sup> regiment in 1783. From 1793 he is known as Lord Seaforth, Baron of Kintail.

The current chapter will look at the intellectual framework driving the improvement schemes revealing the paternalistic motives underlying the improvement plan (or the planned village system). Chapter four will closely examine the attempt to direct improvement in the Highlands and Islands using some native knowledge and ideas in order to develop social and economic development using ideas and strategies appropriate to specific areas of the Highlands and Islands in order to execute the improvement plan. Taken together these two chapters will demonstrate that at the height of the ‘Improvement Era’ the British improvers under examination here created a plan not only to provide Highlanders with secure subsistence but also with meaningful employment on increasingly commercial Highland and Island estates. Fishing, woollen and linen manufactures, kelp, legal whisky manufacturing, and mining, it was hoped, would take place on smallholdings (crofts and other planned coastal and inland villages); improvement of cattle, sheep, and other farming practices; fishing, and the establishment of light manufacturing (particularly wool products, but also linen), in often-difficult circumstances. Common Highlanders had the knowledge and skills to weather constant subsistence crises as well as how to use native Highland products, such as wool. Without input from native Highlanders and Islanders the planned village system was never going to work. Unlike improvement schemes that drew ideas for social and economic improvement exclusively from outside Highland and Island communities, Scoto-British improvement blended native Highland Scottish ideas with enlightened economic practices—blending the ‘traditional’ with the ‘modern’.

Within the socio-political networks formed by members of the HSL and the HSS we find a powerful group of men who wielded considerable influence over the British

government. It was this influence, rooted in members' attachment to the British state, which allowed them to direct change in the Highlands and Islands on their own terms. To active members of these societies, many of who were Highland landowners, 'patriotism' and 'economic improvement' were closely tied and arguments used to alter government policies always stressed the role the Highlands were to play in strengthening the wider British economy, securing the British nation, and the empire, as a whole. As we have seen, 'progress' did not mean removing all traces of native Highland culture. Scoto-British improvement preserved native ideas within a wider conception of the economic and social improvement of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. A genuine concern for the health and wellbeing of native Highlanders was an integral part of conservative—or Scoto-British—improvement schemes. These schemes would not only bring Highlanders out of poverty but also strengthen the British state through the creation of wealth and the retention of the Highland population.<sup>8</sup>

### **Progress and Preservation: Conservative Improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland**

In the mid-eighteenth century, Improvement, or human and economic 'progress' as an ideology was an important feature of the Western Enlightenment.<sup>9</sup> Enlightened

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<sup>8</sup> McCullough, "'For the Good and Glory of the Whole,'" 199 and *passim*; MacKillop, *More Fruitful*, "introduction." MacKillop places a higher level of importance on the military within the mercantilist framework to Highland landowners and improvers than this author: "So much of the region's economic activity by 1815 revolved around the concept of a mercantilist, fiscal military state which protected, often by aggressive military means, British manufactures and commerce within an protectionist imperial framework" (p. 244). However, as this dissertation shows paternalism was an equal driving force behind conservative improvers' schemes to the protection of the British fiscal-military state, the idea being that wealth could be generated for all within an acceptable hierarchical societal structure. In other words, alternatives to mercantilism were sought to build the Highland economy.

<sup>9</sup> Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity," 1197-1214; Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

Improvement was couched in a Stadialist discourse, which provided its ideological underpinnings. Scottish Enlightenment historiographers such as David Hume (1711-1776), William Robertson (1721-1793), and William Ferguson (1723-1816) argued that all human societies inevitably would progress through a series of stages: variously defined as hunting, pasturage, agriculture, and commerce. With these modes of subsistence came different sets of ideas; institutions relating to law, property, and government (drawn largely from seventeenth century writers such as John Locke (1632-1704), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), and Samuel von Pufendorf (1632-1694)); and also different sets of customs, manners, and morals, which corresponded to each stage of development.<sup>10</sup> These ideas largely formed the backbone of early-to mid-eighteenth century Improvement and some writers, such as Lord Kames (1696-1782), published handy ‘how-to’ guides for farmers seeking to ‘rationalise’ their landed estates based on ideas of social progress.<sup>11</sup> Thus Highlanders and Islanders who were perceived as rude ‘savages’ occupying a lower stage of development by non-Highlanders, could be ‘improved,’ or brought through the stages of development at an accelerated pace by Improvers keen on creating a uniform British economy.

Many improvers in the mid-eighteenth century approached Highland landowners with various ideas steeped in Whig rhetoric. The idea was to transform the people of the Highlands from a nuisance to a national resource, with assimilation (read: Anglicization)

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<sup>10</sup> Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Dublin, 1767); David Hume, *The History of England* (London: A. Millar, 1754-1762 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 6 vol.); Meek, *Social Science*, 1-2; William Robertson, *The History of Scotland [1767]* (Millwood, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1976).

<sup>11</sup> Henry Home, Lord Kames, *The Gentleman Farmer. Being an Attempt to Improve Agriculture, by Subjecting it to the Test of Rational Principles* (Dublin, 1779).

as the long-term goal.<sup>12</sup> Whigs felt that because Highlanders were socially and economically backward, they needed occupations in order to prevent rebellion. Poverty in the area, in other words, was largely blamed on idleness. When discussing the importation of linen manufacturing on her estate Lord Kames, himself a Whig, argued to the Duchess of Gordon: “there is no happiness without activity.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, wealth and stability was to be created through labour. We need to be aware that this economic improvement plan largely came from intellectuals and government officials who knew very little about the immediate needs of the area. Lord Kames, for example, knew much about Lowland Scotland but he was not as attuned to the needs of the Highlands. Kames played a central role in the Edinburgh-based British Linen Company (1746), which sought to bring linen manufacturing to the Highlands and was a spectacular failure, but had some moderate success in the Lowlands.<sup>14</sup> Scoto-British improvers, on the other hand, were more keenly aware that the area needed special attention in order to develop.

Whig strategies for economic and social improvement in the Highlands and Islands date back at least as early as the first Jacobite rising (1715) but the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 had advanced the need to improve the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The area and the people became the target of a legislative programme from the British government designed to eradicate the area’s historical distinctiveness and get people in the Highlands working. The 1752 Annexing Act saw that the rebels’ forfeited

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<sup>12</sup> Colin Kidd, *British Identity before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 134; Womack, *Improvement and Romance*, chapter 2.

<sup>13</sup> Henry Home to Jane Duchess of Gordon, 4 August 1769, Fraser Tytler of Aldourie Papers, HAC GB0232/D766.

<sup>14</sup> Stuart Handley, “Home, Henry, Lord Kames (1696-1782),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/13643> (accessed 8 February 2014).

lands would be managed on dominant Whig principles of economic improvement, by a board of directors hired by the government.<sup>15</sup> However, not all Anglo-British improvers supported punitive measures against Highlanders and largely it had been reactionaries who had supported them. So, the government decided to switch its focus to appease the majority of its supporters. Increasingly improvers in these circles supported the idea that in order for the Highlands to improve they must be brought in line through the promotion of economic development, rather than punishment.<sup>16</sup>

Economic schemes from the government and its backers were implemented in the Highlands in the early- to mid-eighteenth century either directly by government agents such as the Board of Annexed Estates (1755-1784), and the Board Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland (est. 1727), and joint-stock companies such as the British Linen Company, the already mentioned Honourable Society of Improvers, and the Free British Fisheries Society (est. 1749). In particular, the British government wished to see the importation of linen manufacturing, which had great success in the Lowlands, in the Highlands and Islands and the Board of Trustees made this industry a main priority.<sup>17</sup> By the 1770s, however, some improvers recognized that these imported ideas were unsuitable to the Highlands and Islands as the economy was not growing at a fast enough pace (largely as the area was still cut off from the rest of Great Britain), leaving most people in the Highlands to suffer in a state of abject poverty. However, landowners and improvers who were either native to the Highlands or held a close connection to the area argued to the general public and the British government that the Highlands and Islands

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<sup>15</sup> Womack, *Improvement and Romance*, chapter 2; T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War: Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), 29.

<sup>16</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship*, 211-217.

<sup>17</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship*, 216. Lord Kames can be found operating in these circles as well.

were different from the rest of Great Britain and the importation of 'foreign' ideas was causing mass disaffection, and emigration. Arguing (on behalf of the HSL) to Henry Dundas against Whig improvement, John Mackenzie stated that Highlanders for some time had been

very much afloat and unsettled, between their old attachment to their several vallies and districts, their separate language, manners, and customs, their clans and heads of families, on the one hand; and the sad constraint, on the other, of abandoning all those natural...and now inoffensive partialities, in order to adopt the language and manners of the Lowlanders; for they saw their own discouraged by the public (possibly with reason formerly) and discountenanced by their chiefs and landlords, whose ideas they found to be changed, by reason of the forfeiture of some, the foreign education of others, and the immoderate rage of rent raising of a sudden without gradation, of almost the whole. From this former, and not very distant concurrence of public and private measures to discourage whatever was next to the heart of a Highlander, for his ideas of wealth being very limited, his harmless affections and prejudices occupied the greater part of his mind, it happened that disgust very generally prevailed in the minds of that people; of which the consequences might have been very uncertain, had not the hope of ease and happiness, by emigration to America, some years past, soothed and turned aside all the unpleasant humour that was then rising.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, "Reasons for Adopting a Small Measure of very Considerable Effect on the Highlands," 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

The only solution Highlanders had been able to use themselves in the face of the failure of Whig improvement was to emigrate, which the HSL and the HSS planned to end through the implementation of appropriate employment in the area.

In his 1777 extensive treatise outlining a plan for industrialisation in the Highlands and Islands, Dr. James Anderson (1739–1808), whose ideas would form much of the Highland Society improvement plan, argued that linen manufacturing had failed in the Highlands because it was not an activity practiced by Highlanders in former times and as such this was a “powerful bar to the establishment of [it] in the Highlands of Scotland; which we all know has been attempted with much keenness and little success for many years past.” If, he argued, “the materials were originally the produce of the country, the case would be widely different. For in that case the inhabitants could at an inconsiderable expense, make small essays of their skill in manufacturing them.”<sup>19</sup> Native manufacturing, in other words, could only develop by using the knowledge and skills of the local inhabitants. Within the improvement schemes under examination here, native manufactures were to be encouraged wherever possible, especially those which would use native manpower and native products, such as woollen manufacturing. As John Mackenzie argued, woollen manufacturing was an activity that had historically taken place in the Highlands and as the “only native manufacture of the country, that of tartan woollen plaids and a coarse species of woollen cloath, was suppressed with the suppression of the Highland dress. It is now reviving with the revival of their favourite

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<sup>19</sup> James Anderson, *Observations on the Means of Exciting a Spirit of National Industry* (Edinburgh: T. Cadell, 1777), 23.

garb.”<sup>20</sup> Ultimately, he argued, improvement in the Highlands and Islands required native produce and input, from native or local inhabitants who had experience in the area. Nonetheless, Scoto-British improvers did integrate enlightened economic theories into improvement schemes because the ultimate goal of Improvement, whether Anglo-British or Scoto-British, was economic growth, or the accumulation of wealth. Wealth could only be built by integrating the latest economic theories into the balance. Conservatives increasingly adopted some ideas drawn from thinkers such as Adam Smith (1723-1790) and James Anderson who argued for a free market economic framework free from, or using limited, governmental control, something to which many Whigs were adamantly opposed to.<sup>21</sup>

In general, Whigs were in favour of private ownership of land, and government directed trade within a protectionist imperial framework. Government policy for much of the eighteenth century had been mercantilist, intervening in the market to tip the scales in favour of domestic British products. Cheaper imported materials, such as linen, for example, had import duties placed on them for sale in British markets, in order to protect British producers. Often products on which this original import duty was imposed did not have it removed or “scaled back” (a rebate) when finished products were re-exported to the British colonies, putting them at a disadvantage by making goods more expensive. The colonies were always at a disadvantage in this system as they were also banned from trading with other nations. The difference was that many by the 1780s many conservatives (including many members of the offshoots from the fractured Whig party, as well as Tories and Independents) would reject the more individualistic and mercantilist

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<sup>20</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>21</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776]. Reprinted and edited by R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

nature of mid-eighteenth century Whigs and argue instead for freer international markets. However, conservatives did support the measured use of bounties and premiums to encourage industry. They did reject, on the other hand, punitive tariffs. This was a blend of free market and government intervention favoured by many conservatives in this period, and even some Whigs who were becoming increasingly unconvinced by protectionism, especially after the loss of the American colonies. The problem was that countries were subject to duties and taxes *within* Great Britain, in order to protect Scottish, English (and Welsh) products and, especially in times of war, to raise revenue for the fiscal-military state. In some cases, Highland goods (notably the materials needed to make whisky) were often treated differently from Lowland Scotland. License fees for stills in Lowland and Highland Scotland were separate but cost roughly the same. However, common Highlanders rarely had the means with which to pay the fee.<sup>22</sup> Government intervention in the form of taxes and duties were seen to be hindering growth and contributing to the poverty of the people in in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. This area only manufactured a handful of non-agricultural products and did not have the population or wealth necessary to weather the government's desire to feed the fiscal-military machine, especially during the Napoleonic Wars. Higher Scottish taxes on the import of products such as higher quality salt from England, or duties placed in items necessary to produce finished goods, such as stills and malt for whisky production, were argued to be preventing economic development in the Scottish Highlands. The only way the Highlands and Islands were going to develop was to alter these practices, which, it was argued, were bringing in very little tangible revenue. Instead, freeing the Highlands

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<sup>22</sup> For a chart on the differences between Lowland and Highland Scottish still licensing see T.M. Devine, "The Rise and Fall of Illicit Whisky-Making in Northern Scotland, ca. 1780-1840," *The Scottish historical review* 54, no. 158 (1975): 159.

and Islands from these punitive measures and encouraging development through incentives and free markets would bring prosperity and security.<sup>23</sup>

In order to try and change government policy, members of both the HSL and the HSS spent a lot of time lobbying influential members of the British government, and arguments were framed within a utilitarian discourse. In other words development in the Highlands would benefit all of Great Britain. Freeing salt from higher Scottish duties, for example, would “materially tend to the furtherance of the great comfort of the people, the encouragement of fishery and manufacture, and the security of revenue.”<sup>24</sup> Not only did this broadly conceived argument win more support from those who may not have seen the utility giving the area special treatment but also many members of the HSL had business interests both domestically and in the empire.<sup>25</sup> Members of the HSL and their colleagues at the HSS believed strongly in limiting government involvement in the economy of the Highlands and Islands, and spent much of this period urging the government to change its policies. There was a sense, within late eighteenth century conservatism, that in civil society the government and the public had responsibilities to uphold with each other: communities would be supported from within (in this case Highlanders should be responsible for their own communities) and the government should largely be responsible for security, infrastructure, and the maintenance of law and order.<sup>26</sup> George Dempster of Dunnichen echoed this sentiment when in 1788 he argued to his good friend Francis Humberston Mackenzie, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Seaforth (both men were

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<sup>23</sup> James Anderson, *Observations on the Effects of the Coal Duty* (Edinburgh, 1792), 4.

<sup>24</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 245; Tony Aspromourgos, *On the Origins of Classic Economics Distribution and Value from William Petty to Adam Smith* (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>25</sup> Richard Ashcraft and M. M. Goldsmith, "Locke, Revolution Principles, and the Formation of Whig Ideology," *Historical Journal* 26 (Dec., 1983): 777-780; Alastair Durie ed., *The British Linen Company, 1745-1775*, Scottish Society Fifth Series Volume 9 (Edinburgh: Printed for the Scottish History Society by Pillans & Wilson, 1996), 4.

<sup>26</sup> Benjamin Ward, *The Ideal Worlds of Economics* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

politicians) that the government should be encouraged to lessen punitive laws in the Highlands of Scotland, “particularly to obtain milder salt laws, and exemption from the duty on coal and public aid towards communications with the rest of the Kingdom by roads and bridges, perhaps also some species of informal police and justice.”<sup>27</sup> Special treatment was necessary in order for the Highlands and Islands, which were still largely cut off from domestic and international markets (with the exception of a maritime trade with northern Europe) for want of modern communications.<sup>28</sup>

To Scoto-British improvers, Improvement was seen to both increase the value of land and alleviate suffering by bringing those who worked on the land out of poverty and into modernity (i.e. economic development). As Charles J. Orser Jr. explains: “a central feature of Improvement philosophy was a precise conception of land, because its proponents perceived that land could be consciously refashioned in a manner that would simultaneously increase its value and transfigure the human condition.”<sup>29</sup> Generally, Improvement involved the restructuring of both the physical environment and social relationships. Chris Dalglish argues that Improvement required fundamental changes in the ways people engaged with each other: “it privileged the individualized relationships of capitalism over those of community and kin.” Above all, restructuring the ways in which people interacted with each other resulted in significant changes to the physical

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<sup>27</sup> George Dempster to Francis Humberstone Mackenzie, 3 July 1788, Dempster Papers, TFRBL MS 00126 Vol. 2.

<sup>28</sup> David Worthington, “A Northern Scottish Maritime Region: The Moray Firth in the Seventeenth Century,” *The International Journal of Maritime History* 23 (Dec., 2011): 181-210.

<sup>29</sup> Charles. E. Orser Jr., “Symbolic Violence, Resistance and the Vectors of Improvement in Early Nineteenth-Century Ireland,” *World Archaeology* 37 (Sept., 2005): 394.

environment and domestic spaces brought on by the increasing acceptance of commercial agriculture, and “the rise to prominence of the lease system and of private property.”<sup>30</sup>

Ideas for economic and social improvements formed by the HSL and the HSS in the 1780s and 1790s also integrated free market capitalist ideas derived from the enlightened culture in which many, if not most, members had been educated. Crofting (and planned villages more generally)—as an ideology—was a product of enlightened capitalist principles because the system exemplified the theory that landscapes in the western Highlands and Islands of Scotland could be restructured into commercialised estates where pastoral agriculture and wage-labour activities would co-exist, costs would remain low, and a ready supply of labour would always be at hand to respond to shifts in the market. However, capitalism is not a monolithic process; it is a flexible system, which allowed for a multitude of modes of production.<sup>31</sup> As Immanuel Wallerstein has shown, capitalism—as a mode of production—“is not based on free labour and land. Rather... it *combines* proletarian labour and commercialised land with other forms of wage-payment and land-ownership. The existence of non-proletarianised labour and non-commercialised land is quite essential for the optimisation of opportunities for overall profit in a capitalist world-market.”<sup>32</sup> The improvement plan fits this model. The Highlands and Islands were to be a mixed market economy: wage-labourers would live on new kinds of land settlement where both resource extraction and manufacturing would take place alongside farmers on commercialized agricultural land. Free trade would allow surplus Highland products to be traded within a global economy, bringing more wealth to the area.

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<sup>30</sup> Chris Dalglish, *Rural Society in the Age of Reason: An Archaeology of the Emergence of Modern Life in the Southern Scottish Highlands* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003), 1.

<sup>31</sup> Dalglish, *Rural Society*, 4.

<sup>32</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, “Feudalism to Capitalism: Transition or Transitions?” *Social Forces* 55 (Dec., 1976): 279. His emphasis.

However, we must be cautious because conservative Highland improvers did not subscribe exclusively to free market ideas. The late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries can be seen as a time when economic policies informing Improvement were largely fluid because this was a time of economic experimentation and debate. In the late eighteenth century, it was largely the debate over free trade and *dirigisme*, which differentiated styles and schools of economic and political thought during the enlightenment. Largely those who rejected mercantilism in the late eighteenth-century formed the new economic styles of political economy and physiocracy, which late eighteenth-century conservatives increasingly adopted in measured amounts. Many of these economic theorists such as James Steuart, Adam Smith, James Anderson, and John Gray, the latter two who will be discussed in further detail below, displayed a blend of ideas, which drew from the past as well as looked forward to a new economic future, free from the barriers of the mercantilist state.<sup>33</sup> The use of free trade capitalist doctrines did not necessarily mean these improvers supported the economic liberalism we associate with nineteenth century *laissez-faire* economics because the ‘individual’ was not at the heart of late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century conservative improvement discourse; society was, in traditionalist conservative thought, a community. In this line of thinking it was the natural leaders of society (self-appointed) who were responsible for the community not the government, because:

A body of men united for any particular object, can raise such sums of money  
as many be necessary for the purpose, without any injury to their private

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<sup>33</sup> James R. Coull, “Fishery Developments in Scotland in the Eighteenth Century,” *Scottish Economic & Social History* 21 (2001): 1. Lars Magnusson, *Mercantilism: The Shaping of an Economic Language* (London: Routledge, 1994), 4-5.

fortunes; they can mutually assist each other in procuring all the lights and information that are requisite for attaining the object in view; they can prosecute the scheme, without encroaching in the time which ought to be dedicated to their own personal concerns; they can persevere in any system which it is proper to pursue, much longer than would be in the power of any individual; they can procure the assistance of other respectable bodies of men aid them in their undertaking, and can apply if necessary, with a rational prospect of success, for the support of the public, and the protection of their sovereign.<sup>34</sup>

However, a variety of economic principles were integrated into broader economic policies regarding economic and social improvement in the Highlands and Islands. By the mid-to-late eighteenth century, for some improvers mercantilism gave way to free market capitalism that preserved some elements of protectionism, largely the encouragement of certain local industries through the use of bounties and premiums, rather than punitive tariffs. This was drawn from ideas steeped in political economy, which included the rejection of domestic duties placed on Scotland (and the Highlands in particular) as a means to grow the British economy as a whole. The Highland economy, it was argued, was an integral part of the wider British and imperial economy. Political economy was a style of economic thought intended to examine society as a whole, with a goal of providing subsistence and employment for everyone. Political economy was developed in the mid-to-late eighteenth century by thinkers like Adam Smith and James Anderson,

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<sup>34</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Address to the Society for the Improvement of British Wool [2<sup>nd</sup> ed]* (London, 1791), 32-33.

both of who recognised that protectionism was not bringing uniform wealth to the nation and argued for a more flexible system combining public and private initiatives where needed.<sup>35</sup> Tories and their allies favoured these ideas as the individualist nature driving Whig economics were contributing to suffering of particular groups in Great Britain. In a letter to Sir John Sinclair, Smith, who shifted his political allegiances in the 1780s from Whig to Tory, was quite clear that he did not favour “all taxes that may affect the necessary expences of the poor. They, according to circumstances, either oppress the people immediately subject to them, or are repaid with great interest by the rich, *i.e.* by their employers in the advanced wages of their labour.”<sup>36</sup> Smith, who worked as a Commissioner of the Customs Board, saw firsthand what customs and duties were doing to the poor in the Highlands. Sinclair had been a pupil of Smith’s at Glasgow University when Smith was Professor of Moral Philosophy. Smith also introduced Sinclair to one of the most influential thinkers to shape conservative thought: Edmund Burke.<sup>37</sup>

By altering economic practices, which were seen to be hindering growth, it was argued that both the domestic and imperial economies would strengthen Britain’s position on the world stage and bring prosperity to everyone. Even as some of these ideas were being embraced in the rest of Britain, Scotland, and particularly the Highlands and Islands, was still suffering under punitive economic practices. The political economist and agriculturalist James Anderson, whose economic theories largely underlay the Scoto-British improvement plan, argued in a pamphlet against duties in Scotland that it was the

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<sup>35</sup> Magnusson, *Mercantilism*, 3-5.

<sup>36</sup> Sinclair, *The Correspondence of the Right Honorable Sir John Sinclair*, 142.

<sup>37</sup> Sinclair, *The Correspondence of the Right Honorable Sir John Sinclair*, 142; John Sinclair, *Memoirs of the Life and Works of Sir John Sinclair, Bart* (London, 1837), 39; Donald Winch, “Smith, Adam (*hap.* 1723, *d.* 1790),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/25767> (accessed 14 June 2014).

lack of a proper knowledge of how the economy affected national development that led to stunted economic growth in Scotland. “It is not surprising,” he argued, “that men who have never reflected on these subjects, should often fall into mistakes, when they pretend to decide magisterially upon it.” Products necessary for development in rural parts of Scotland, including the Highlands, such as coal and salt, often carried punitive duties for their “importation” into Scotland. In this case, the development of the fisheries was being hindered because “one of the great causes of the poverty of the people in the remote parts of Scotland, from which arose that impotence with regard to the payment of taxes, which so forcibly struck them, was the want of fuel, occasioned by the high price of coals when loaded with a duty.” This made little sense to political economists like Anderson, as the revenue collected from these areas was miniscule in comparison to what national development could do for the whole country. Instead of favouring wealthy or more densely populated areas of Britain, Anderson argued that if politicians were to be made more aware of the workings of political economy “[they] will perceive the great detriment that accrues to the to the nation at large, from the operation of this cruel, impolitic, and unproductive tax; and some of the others that operate in the same manner; and the prodigious defalcation of revenue it has long occasioned: and will of course, at once, abolish it in all places wherever situated, where it shall appear, from the scantiness of the revenue afforded by it, that it has there operated as a bar to the industry of the people, and by that means has been a cause of general poverty among them.”<sup>38</sup>

Anderson’s domestic free trade theory was adopted, and adapted, by Scoto-British improvers who argued that the only way to build the Highland economy, which had been

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<sup>38</sup> James Anderson, *Observations on the Effects of the Coal Duty*, 20-21. Coal was necessary not only as a general fuel source for Highlanders but also could be used as fuel to make their own salt.

punished by selective internal protectionism and taxes, was to make Great Britain a zone of free trade. Strengthening one area of Great Britain strengthened the whole, leaving one area to languish in poverty threatened the safety of the nation. If the whole of Great Britain was strong economically, it stood a better chance against other great European powers such as France. However, uninhibited free trade would be prevented through a system of checks and balances, including some government regulation, in order to protect domestic wealth.<sup>39</sup> National security, in other words, depended on a stable population and economic growth, and the Highlands and Islands played an important part of this nationalist discourse. Improvement schemes were presented in terms of national security, because the stronger the (whole) domestic economy was the stronger Great Britain, and its empire, would be. As the British Fisheries Society, a joint-stock company formed by members of the HSL and the HSS, argued: “[developing the fisheries is] an undertaking which for its objects to prevent the continuance of those frequent emigrations from Scotland to America, that operate as a pernicious drain to the internal strength of the kingdom; to enlarge the resources of the country, by an increase of subsistence, of population, and of wealth; to augment by a vast addition to the number of seamen, the maritime power of the empire.”<sup>40</sup> In other words, Britain’s security depended not only on people, but also employed people. This was crucial in the late eighteenth century as Great

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<sup>39</sup> In the nineteenth-century some of these ideas would be transformed into what political scientists now term “economic nationalism,” and others into economic liberalism. Improvers in HSL circles were more hostile to mercantilist ideas because domestic tariffs and taxes were seen to be hurting the Highland economy. See: David Levi-Faur, “Economic Nationalism From Friedrich List to Robert Reich,” *Review of International Studies* 23 (1997): 359-370; E. Helleiner, “Economic Nationalism as a Challenge to Economic Liberalism: Lessons from the Nineteenth Century,” *International Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (2002): 307-329.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in: Douglas Lockhart, *Scottish Planned Villages* (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 2012), 149-150.

Britain had yet to subdue its greatest global competitor: France, in spite of the efforts of the mercantilist state.

Building wealth was not only to secure the empire it was to benefit all of society, In other words, development and benevolence went hand-in-hand in classical conservative economic discourse. Conservative ideology in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries looked at all of society as a community and it was the responsibility of society's elites to provide the means by which all of society could benefit, including the provision of welfare and employment. As the arch-Tory Sir John Sinclair argued:

The great business of society, (the raising of the greatest quantity of the means of subsistence and conveniency, and the proportional distribution of these through the whole body of the people), depends upon the mutual stimulus given to each other by manufacturing and agricultural industry, and the facility of the mutual interchange of their products through the industry of commerce.<sup>41</sup>

Development (and long-term employment) and markets, in other words, were seen by these improvers to be the solution to poverty in the Highlands and Islands as well as a way in which to build the Highland (and therefore the British) economy.

Many landowners in the Highlands and Islands were keenly aware that most of their tenants were living in a state of abject poverty. Anglo-British (or Whig) Improvement had rested on the idea that Highlanders were living in a backward state of

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<sup>41</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *General Report of the Agricultural State: And Political Circumstances, of Scotland, Volume 2* (Edinburgh, 1814), 240.

economic and social development. According to this line of thinking, it was the (individual) Highlander's natural state of 'savagery', which legitimized their improvement from outsiders. However, Scoto-British improvers did not assume that the tenants themselves were to blame for their poverty; rather it was ignorance of the needs of the Highland economy and the Highland people that had led to inappropriate economic schemes. As James Anderson argued, since taking possession of lands in the Highlands he had become

more intimately acquainted with the lower ranks of people, than usually falls to the lot of those who have had a liberal education, I have been thus enabled to become better acquainted than most people of that class,—with the internal œconomy of their families, and perceive the numberless hardships they have had to struggle with...But as people in high life have no access to know these circumstances...it is not surprising if they should often find occasion for blame...In these circumstances, without pretending to a greater share of humanity than others I have been perhaps more affected with a sense of hardships of their lot, than many of those with whom I have had occasion to converse, and have embraced every opportunity that offered of undeceiving men of property and influence with regard to this particular.<sup>42</sup>

Anderson, like others who were moving away from Whig economic thought, felt that society had a duty to help the individual because “man, single and alone, is a feeble helpless creature. He has neither the strength of the elephant, nor the swiftness of the

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<sup>42</sup> Anderson, *Observations on the Means of Exciting*, 6-7.

stag; and in the little arts of cunning, to which he must have had recourse, he would have perhaps have been exceeded by the fox or wolf. But, with the aid of his fellow men, he has become the lord of creation. It is from Society...he derives that exalted pre-eminence he enjoys; and to society he must fly for protection on all emergencies.”<sup>43</sup> In other words, there was no ‘individual’; rather, it was men like Anderson (read: elites) who had an obligation to learn about the needs of the majority of society and to make sure that the whole community was supported as the economy developed. Once people were given “ready markets for the production of their native wilds,” he argued, “they [Highlanders] will become active and industrious rich and flourishing.”<sup>44</sup>

James Anderson, LLD (Aberdeen) was a political economist, agriculturalist and editor of *The Bee* who had experience farming from the age of fifteen, when he inherited his family’s tenancy of a farm in Hermiston near where he was born. In 1768 Anderson inherited a large portion of land in Daviot, Aberdeenshire when he married his first wife Margaret Seton of Mounie (*d.* 1788). Anderson managed a farm on the estate at Monkshill where he stayed until 1783 when he moved to Edinburgh (he finally settled near London in 1797 in Isleworth, Middlesex).<sup>45</sup> Although Anderson was not a native of the Highlands, he had experience in the Highlands managing land and travelling around the area, and therefore would have been familiar with the struggles people faced either managing lands or securing subsistence. Anderson would be known later on for what can be described as ‘liberal’ ideas, he would become an admirer and friend of Jeremy

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<sup>43</sup> Anderson, *Observations on the Means of Exciting*, xviii.

<sup>44</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), “Memorial Considering the Improvement of Highland Wool, Presented to a Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, June 8, 1790,” RHASS, p. 65. The Royal Highland and Agricultural Society Sederunt Books 1 and 2 cover the same dates but are not facsimiles of each other.

<sup>45</sup> Rosalind Mitchison, “Anderson, James (1739-1808),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008 <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/475> (accessed 19 May 2014).

Bentham, for example; however, early in his writing career he dabbled in conservative thought, and conservative improvers adopted some of his economic theories, namely that of internal development, domestic free trade, limited government intervention, and the provision of employment as a form of social welfare.<sup>46</sup> And in conservatives he found an audience willing to listen. Anderson, like many intellectuals of his day, dabbled in many economic and political theories, and his writings display a blend of conservative and burgeoning liberal thought. For some intellectuals the loss of the American colonies and the French Revolution created an intellectual space where many ideas opposed, blended, and coexisted in political and economic discourse. Anderson occupied this space, as his publications make clear. Although it is clear he was anti-protectionist, it is not clear if he fully supported Tories or any of the fractured Whigs associated with Lord North in the 1770s. In the early nineteenth century Whigs would adopt similar economic styles to Anderson (namely free trade) developing modern *laissez-faire* economics; however, Anderson did not support the protectionist Whig party of his generation. Anderson refused to enter into partisan discussions and could be quite critical of politicians, on either side, arguing “no person who has read my writings will suspect that I am likely to become the blind panegyrist of any minister, or the steady partizan of his opponents. With the prosperity or adversity of any party or the coming in or going out of office of any man, I take no concern; and I cannot but smile when I hear the moral character and immaculate principles of any of these persons, held up to view as objects of admiration to the multitude. If the preservation of this, or any other nation, depended on the virtue of its

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<sup>46</sup> For Anderson’s developing liberal thought after around 1800 see his “Essays on the Political Progress of Britain” found in a series in issues of *The Bee: or Literary Weekly Intelligencer* (18 vols).

ministers, it would soon be at an end.”<sup>47</sup> To Anderson, contemporary economic theories had led to stunted development in the Highlands and needless suffering of the local inhabitants and he had very little time for what he perceived to be backward economic theories, especially when these backward ideas were causing suffering, as in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Anderson employed a variety of strategies in his political economic rhetoric. For him blending free trade with measured protectionism and government aid, where needed, made more sense than focusing on one economic style. The era of the “Whig Supremacy” (1715-1760) had punished the Scottish economy, delaying development, especially in the Highlands, and so Anderson argued for a multi-faceted approach to political economy. Although he did employ a variety of economic strategies his conservative bent is revealed in his treatise *An Enquiry Into the Nature of the Corn-Laws* (1777), which he directed at the Tory, Henry Dundas (an ally and member of the HSL). In this treatise Anderson argues that protectionist policies such as imposing tariffs on grain were delaying improvement and causing suffering. Tariffs deterred the import of foreign cereals, making it difficult for common people to buy cereals in times of domestic scarcity. Anderson urged the adoption of a more beneficial system, which would find a balance between economic styles. British producers were to be encouraged to grow for domestic consumption, and any surpluses would be warehoused. In times of plenty grain from the surpluses would be sold, encouraged by the Government through bounties. In times of need cheaper imported grain would be brought in without tariffs. In other words this is regulated free trade, an idea, which was very appealing to improvers in HSL circles, although some, like Henry Dundas (possibly under the influence of Adam Smith) were

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<sup>47</sup> Anderson, *Observations on the Effects of the Coal Duty*, 13.

more sceptical about the use of bounties.<sup>48</sup> The debates over the Corn Laws were some of the most turbulent discussions in the British Parliament between the landed and manufacturing interests. Industrialists blamed not only tariffs for the high price of grain but also landowners for charging too high rent, making it difficult for common people to buy grain. Manufacturing would not take off in Scotland, it was argued, if people could not afford to feed themselves. However, Anderson did not blame landowners, stating that it was not “the rent of the land that determines the price of its produce, but it is the price of that produce which determines the rent of the land.” If the economy was better regulated, and farmers were encouraged to produce more grain, grain prices would fall and higher rents could be charged. One thing is for certain tariffs on the import of foreign grain made little sense to Anderson for either the landed or the manufacturing interest. People had to be fed affordably in hard times. Rather, a better regulated economy and the encouragement of appropriate manufactures in Scotland, such as woollen products and fishing, was the key: only then was there the “possibility of ever procuring a spirited agriculture in this country, except by encouraging manufactures, but that, by a judicious encouragement of these, the agriculture and commerce of Scotland might be effectually promoted, and all ranks of people in it live in ease or affluence.” Anderson’s economic conservatism, in other words, is revealed in his arguments for a better-regulated economic system, avoiding the pitfalls of interventionism through a better understanding of market forces, directing them as needed. Building wealth for both landowners and

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<sup>48</sup> James Anderson, *An Enquiry Into the Nature of the Corn-Laws; With a View of the Corn-Bill Proposed for Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1777), 42-60; Julian Hoppit, “Bounties, the Economy and the State in Britain, 1689-1800,” in *Regulating the British Economy, 1660-1850*, ed. Perry Gauci (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 139.

industrialists and providing secure employment and subsistence for the common people could only be achieved by changing laws.<sup>49</sup>

In a more international context Anderson experimented with both burgeoning liberal and conservative thought in *The Interest of Great Britain, with Regard to her American Colonies, Considered* (1782). In this treatise Anderson blamed Britain's loss of the American colonies on protectionist economic practices (it was essentially a tax revolt), which tipped the balance towards Britain, forcing colonists to trade with Britain in an unfair economic system. This made living in the colonies more expensive. The distance at which the colonies were located also left them with an unequal balance of power. Despite these colonies being essentially extensions of Great Britain, by virtue of their settlement (dominated by white Britons) unlike colonies such as India, which had more fewer and more transient white British settlers, those of the ruling elite in the Americas had little to no say in imperial or domestic British matters. But at the same time he shows anti-imperial sentiment, arguing that colonies acted as a drain on Britain, threatening the security and prosperity of the nation. The American colonies in particular, he argued in a treatise on fishing, were not just a drain on British people but also a waste of money and life for all the costs of maintaining and defending the colonies "all to no purpose." Instead of pursuing more colonies, Anderson advocated for the willing loss of the American colonies. Free trade should then be adopted between Britain and its remaining colonies; with America, and with other European powers. It would be necessary to sign treaties to recognize American sovereignty, and America would have to agree to remain neutral. Anderson felt that an international free-trade agreement would keep peace through mutually beneficial trading. This would develop each nation's

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<sup>49</sup> Anderson, *An Enquiry Into the Nature of the Corn-Laws*, 42-60.

economies, including those of their remaining colonies.<sup>50</sup> In addition to international free trade, Anderson advocated focusing on the development of the domestic economy. Rather than searching for more colonies Britain should look at

what unobserved treasures she possesses within herself, treasures which her own industry may effectually secure in spite of all the efforts of mankind to wrest them from her; treasures which, if they had not belonged to herself, she would have coveted, and have made inconceivable exertions, to obtain, had they been to be found at the extremities of the earth; but which seemingly, for no other reason but because they are at our door, and completely under our command, we have entirely disregarded. The treasures I speak of, are the fisheries on our coast; the value of which has never yet been attempted to be ascertained.<sup>51</sup>

In other words, wealth could be built from within the British community, using a native industry, an idea that resonated with conservative improvers. Anderson's anti-imperial and burgeoning liberal tendencies went too far for conservative improvers, but the idea of free trade and development of the domestic economy, as a benefit for all of Britain, would largely form the basis of economic experimentation among those circles.

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<sup>50</sup> James Anderson, *The Interest of Great Britain, with Regard to her American Colonies, Considered* (London, 1782), vi-vii; 39; 56; 63; appendix, 7-36; James Anderson, *The True Interest of Great Britain Considered: Or a Proposal for Establishing the Northern Fisheries* (n.p. 1783), 4. Fredrik Albritton Jonsson styles Anderson as a Whig, who became increasingly radical into the 1790s. Anderson did not self-identify with any particular party but he was staunchly anti-protectionist and anti-war for the sake of territorial gain, therefore he was anti-Mercantilist. See Fredrik Albritton Jonsson: *Enlightenment's Frontier: The Scottish Highlands and the Origins of Environmentalism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013), 102-103

<sup>51</sup> James Anderson, *The Interest of Great Britain*, appendix, 33.

In spite of his criticisms, members of the HSL and the HSS were impressed with Anderson's skill at applying political economy to practical improvement solutions, and each society used many of his theories in forming their improvement projects. In particular, both adopted Anderson's domestic free-trade theory and his ideas for implementing planned villages around the Highlands and Islands and developing native industries in the Highlands and Islands as a means to build domestic growth. Because of his useful economic theories, Anderson was to remain in HSL and HSS circles from the late 1770s through to the 1790s. For example, Anderson received patronage from Highland Society of Scotland member George Dempster of Dunnichen, MP for the Perth Burghs. "Honest" George Dempster, Esq. of Dunnichen (1732-1818), was an entrepreneurial character who personified the intentions of the Highland societies. He had been a Director of the East India Company, founded the banking company George Dempster & Co. (1763), and was a Director of the HSS. Dempster was always looking for new ways in which to bring wealth to the Highlands (and Scotland more generally) placing the blame for poverty not on the people but on wider economic forces. Dempster was a friend and colleague of Sir John Sinclair and bought the Skibo Estate in Sutherland (his brother bought nearby Polrossie) to try and bring industry and employment to the area as a way in which to bring employment and alleviate poverty in the area, which suffered from famine and underemployment. As such, Dempster employed much of Anderson's political economy in his economic thinking. Dempster and his partners (including John Mackenzie) built a cotton mill in Spinningdale on the estate in 1790, being "the first attempt to introduce the manufacture of spinning and weaving cotton into the Highlands." The area was deemed suitable for the spinning of cotton, as the climate is

damp and there was a nearby fast flowing stream for waterpower, and close proximity to the sea for easier transport of the finished products (there being no inland communications at the time save some small ferries and boats who crossed the Dornoch Firth). Dempster, who was very involved with the BFS promoted woollen manufacturing and the spinning of flax in the area as well, to complement fishing. The cotton mill was not a success due to an unreliable workforce who engaged in seasonal activities, including lambing, which precluded them working in the mill year round. Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the mill in 1806 and it was not rebuilt.<sup>52</sup>

In addition to advising George Dempster, in 1790 Anderson worked with Sir John Sinclair and the Highland Society of Scotland to develop a plan to improve the Scottish wool industry resulting in the foundation of the British Wool Society (1791), which will be discussed further in the next chapter. The HSS promoted Anderson's theory that in the past Great Britain had produced some of the finest wool in Europe, before modern improvement methods had seen native British breeds of sheep with fine wool diluted or eradicated in favour of hardier varieties like the Cheviot and the Blackface, which did not produce fine wool. This ancient fine British wool had been favoured in the continental woollen industries in the Low Countries, but had since been replaced with the Spanish Merino wool, which in the meantime had become the European leader of fine wool, and would remain so for much of the eighteenth century. To compete with Spanish wool and

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<sup>52</sup> The investors in the cotton mill were: Mr. David Dale of Glasgow, Mr. George McIntosh of Glasgow, Mr. William Robertson of Glasgow, Mr. James Robertson of Glasgow, Mr. Andrew Robertson of Glasgow, Mr. Robert Dunmore of Glasgow, Mr. Robert Bogle of Baldowie of Glasgow, Mr. Robert Mackie of Glasgow, Mr. William Gillespie of Glasgow, Mr. John Mackenzie of London, Mr. Dougal Gilchrist of Hospidale, Mr. William Monro of Achanny, Mr. John Fraser, factor to Lord Gower, Mr. Benjamin Ross of Tain, Mr. Scott of Dunninault, MP, Captain James Rattray of Arthurstone, Mr. John Ramsay, acting manager, Captain J. H. Dempster of Polrossie, and Mr. Dempster of Dunnichen.

Old Statistical Account: Account of 1791-99 vol. 20: Dyke and Moy, County of Elgin, 226; 383; [http://www.ambaile.com/en/item/item\\_photograph.jsp?item\\_id=34960](http://www.ambaile.com/en/item/item_photograph.jsp?item_id=34960) (accessed 22 June 2014). Remnants of the mill can still be seen standing today.

to expand the British economy, Anderson advocated the use of native Highland sheep breeds to be used to develop a domestic (Highland) woollen manufacturing industry. He argued that if descendants of the native fine-woollen British sheep “still exist entirely, unmixed any where it is in the Shetland Isles” and so he encouraged the improvement of these sheep. The answer to the development of a national industry, in other words, lay in the Highlands and Islands.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to his plans for the revival of a native woollen industry, Scoto-British improvers adopted Anderson’s argument that protectionist economic practices were contributing to poverty in the Highlands and Islands, such as duties on the use of English salt for home consumption. Therefore alternative economic policies had to be blended with social welfare (in the form of economic development and employment, or self-sufficiency) in order for the Highland economy to grow. In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries the British government levied taxes on a variety of Highland goods in order to help fund the Napoleonic Wars, including products necessary to develop fishing and whisky industries, for example salt, malt, grain, soap, and coal, among other products carried punitive taxes and duties. By pressuring the British government to alter or ease duties, taxes and tariffs, and by restructuring Highland estates to include crofts and other planned villages and towns, other types of activities that did not rely solely on commercial agriculture and manufacturing could develop. For example, an important part of the plan to restructure the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was the establishment of fishing villages, which were to provide Highlanders and Islanders with meaningful, and

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<sup>53</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), “Memorial Concerning the Improvement of Highland Wool, Presented to a Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, June 8<sup>th</sup> 1790. By James Anderson LLD,” RHASS, p. 62; Sir John Sinclair, *Address to the Society for the Improvement of British Wool* [2<sup>nd</sup> ed] (London, 1791), 4; 14.

sustainable, employment with the opportunity to turn a profit in an industry that would operate alongside mixed economy estates. Common people would have employment opportunities in their homeland and, as T.C. Smout has shown, these villages would act as sponges “that would suck up the superfluous population and prevent emigration.”<sup>54</sup> This was an attitude expressed by members of the Highland Society of Scotland because, as they argued, “the only other remedy [for emigration] is that of finding the means of eligible employment and subsistence for the whole population at home should, if possible, be immediately and effectively be provided.”<sup>55</sup> If Highlanders were employed in industries designed to create wealth, the argument went, this would benefit the British economy overall. Planned villages in the Highlands were part of a wider trend in Europe, and beyond, to try and ‘rationalise’ land use. The way in which villages in the Highlands and Islands differed from other small towns established prior to this period, which tended to be built around one specific industry such as a mill or a coal mine, was that they were formed within the “framework of estate boundaries” and the location for the village was usually chosen somewhere between already existing transport links and estate boundaries. But in the case of fishing villages and inland villages, these were separated from the traditional countryside.<sup>56</sup> The ideas for the planned village, according to Allan Macinnes, used by Highland landed families, was adapted from their commercialized land use in the empire: from plantations, sheep-ranges and cattle ranches they owned in the colonies. Many Highland landowners (including factors and others who owned

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<sup>54</sup> T.C. Smout, “The Landowner and the Planned Village in Scotland, 1730-1830,” in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement*, ed. Nicholas T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), 77.

<sup>55</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 532.

<sup>56</sup> John S. Smith, “The Background to Planned Village Foundation in Northeast Scotland.” in *Fermfolk and Fisherfolk: Rural Life in Northern Scotland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. John S. Smith and David Stevenson (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1989), 2-3.

smaller areas of land) “were members of the imperial exploiting classes as planters, slave traders, colonial officials, military commanders and merchant adventurers.” Members of the HSL and the HSS were well represented within these categories and the products, which were to be produced in the villages, like cured herring and woollen products, were destined for both a domestic and international market, most notably the West Indian plantations.<sup>57</sup>

Improvement was not, therefore, a monolithic process, nor was it driven by those who did not empathise with the people in the lower orders of society. People in society, John Sinclair argued, had responsibilities to each other because “filial affection may also constitute a like provision for relief of that unhappy but less numerous portion, who are reduced to the same condition of dependent indigence, through the failure of active powers.”<sup>58</sup> As stated in the HSL’s rules, the “general welfare” of the Highlands and its inhabitants was an important element of Scoto-British improvement. Improvement as an ideology was adaptable and those involved drew ideas from a variety of sources. Adaptability combined with benevolent intentions was the cornerstone of the improvement schemes under examination here.

### **Capital and Collaboration: Developing the Improvement plan**

In 1784, members of the Highland Society of London procured the restoration of the Forfeited Annexed Estates (managed by the Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates

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<sup>57</sup> Allan I. Macinnes, “Commercial Landlordism and Clearance in the Scottish Highlands: the Case of Arichonan,” in *Communities in European History* ed. J. Pan Montojo and K. Pedersen, 47-64. Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2007), 47-50.

<sup>58</sup> Sinclair, *General Report of the Agricultural State*, 248.

1755-1784) through political lobbying. The Forfeited Annexed Estates were Highland estates forfeited to the crown after the last Jacobite rebellion of 1745/6. The return of the management of these lands to Highland landowners and their factors was a big step, like the repeal of the Disarming Act, in the rehabilitation of Highlanders both to the Government's and the public's mind. By this year the Society had already attracted considerable governmental support for its endeavours as evidenced by the repeal of the Disarming Act and its rising influence in the city of London. The year 1784 also saw the formation of the Highland Society of Scotland. Unlike the HSL, which took no government money, the HSS was partially funded by the British government and had a closer relationship with the British government than the HSL, largely in order to receive support for infrastructural development needed to bring Highland goods to markets. The HSL allied itself with the HSS in agricultural and infrastructural concerns as the Edinburgh-based society was better placed to undertake agricultural projects; however, the London organization was better placed to lobby the government in Westminster. Both societies shared membership of Highland proprietors who sat in the Lords and the Commons and it was these members who sat in government that were largely responsible for procuring government money for the HSS, a society, which had more of an agricultural agenda than the HSL. In 1789 members of both societies were able to secure £3000 from the British government from "the surplus of unexhausted balance of the price of the said Forfeited Estates...to carry effectually into execution the laudable purposes of their institution," in addition to what they raised from subscriptions "from the increase of the Society's members, embracing now a large proportion of the principal noblemen and gentlemen of Scotland."<sup>59</sup> The success of this political lobbying to procure funds from the

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<sup>59</sup> "Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public

government was achieved through the collaboration of the Duke of Argyle and a committee of the Highland Society of London headed by the Earl of Moray, who convinced the Duke of Atholl and the Earl of Hopetoun, both members of the HSL, to move “forward at a critical moment in support of the bill when attempted to be thrown out in the House of Lords from the opposition of a great landlord and given their decided support to it.”<sup>60</sup> The £3000 was used by the HSS to invest and to undertake its various improvement schemes. In 1806, the HSS received a further £800 per year from Parliament for ten years, £200 of which went to pay the “salaries to the officers of the late Board of Annexed Estates.”<sup>61</sup>

The Forfeited Estates had been managed according to Whig economic principles (i.e. ‘civilisation’ through uniform economic improvement), and industries such as linen were brought into the Highlands in the early- to mid-eighteenth century. Although flax would continue to be grown, and linen would continue to be manufactured in the Highlands and Islands (and the societies would not abandon it completely), it was largely seen by the 1780s to be a failure as “hardly a vestige now remains of the linnen manufacture in those places where it was attempted to be propagated and forced, without carrying along with it the nourishing humour of the people.”<sup>62</sup> Although linen would remain an important industry in the Highlands, it never formed the backbone of industrialisation in the Highlands as the Whig improvers had hoped and concentrating on that industry had come at the expense of more suitable ones. As William Cobb, who had

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Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963.

<sup>60</sup> Sederunt Book 2(1789-1795), RHASS, 5-6. The Duke of Athole and the Earl of Hopetoun would eventually join the HSS.

<sup>61</sup> “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963.

<sup>62</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960; Macinnes, *Clanship*, 211-217.

been employed by the Board of Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland for thirteen years, argued, the heavy focus on linen in the mid-eighteenth century, prevented governmental agencies such as the Board “from giving [any] such encouragement to the fisheries.”<sup>63</sup> In light of this, from the 1770s through to the 1790s the HSL and the HSS preferred to focus on industries, which had taken place in the Highlands historically as a way to develop the economy of the Highlands and Islands, and what underlay plans for developing the conservative improvement plan was the development of a commercial fishing industry in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The revival of the fishing industry that would occupy the minds of conservative improvers from the 1770s onwards came with the recognition that an entirely new approach had to be undertaken for a commercial industry to develop because large boat fishing was impractical and Highlanders and Islanders had largely not been able to outfit themselves for a small boat fishery both from a lack of capital and local investment, not to mention the coal and salt duties. Bounties of thirty shillings per ton had been placed on large boats to try and encourage fishing around Great Britain but this was related to boat size not catch. By subsidizing large vessels, and not small vessels, and on boat instead of catches, small boat fisheries were at a disadvantage. The size of the bounty, too, encouraged outfitters to send out large fleets in order to collect the bounty, without an intention to actually fish. It was suggested by interested parties that the government could provide Highlanders and Islanders with the necessary equipment to start small boat fishing, and, if the fisherman owned property, fishing would be secondary to farming and

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<sup>63</sup> William Cobb to Argyll, 17 September 1773, NRS GD9/2.

grazing.<sup>64</sup> However, without providing people with places to live and allowing them to eat some of their own catch by removing duties on salt for home consumption, this plan was unlikely to work.

Rather, the solution seen to remedy the slow growth of the fisheries was to lobby the British government to alter or abolish prohibitive duties and taxes, to establish strategically located planned fishing villages in the western Highlands and islands and to introduce a “spirit of industry.” Fishing villages, as well as other planned inland and coastal villages, would be places where new industries would develop creating mixed economies, which would complement large-scale agricultural activity on Highland and Island estates. Without these fishing villages, it was argued, wealth would never arrive in the Highlands. As a member of the HSL argued, “I do not hesitate to pronounce, that the want of free towns and villages, at proper harbours, will prove an unsurmountable barrier against the introduction of fisheries, manufacturers, or commerce, into the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebrides; as well as a great hindrance to any solid improvement in Agriculture and Grazing.” New industrial activities were to be inspired by some basic activities, which were thought to have flourished in the Highlands at an earlier time and therefore more suited to the area. John Mackenzie argued in 1786 “if the Highlander should ever grow a laborious people, they ought to look to their materials, not from the produce of their soil (to continue to manufacture woolen cloth and tartan and linen) but in the bowels of the Earth and under the surface of the waters.” This was an improvement plan, which differed in approach from that of the Whig improvers of the mid-century because it combined traditional economic practices with more flexible economic theories.

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<sup>64</sup> David R. Raynor, “Adam Smith: Two Letters to Henry Beaufoy, MP,” *Scottish Journal of Political Economy* 43, no. 5 (1996), 583; Robert Fall, *Observations on the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons Appointed to Enquire into the State of the British Fishery* (London, 1786), 17-18.

These theories were not only derived largely from James Anderson's political economy, which appealed to conservatives found in HSL circles, but also as we will see below, from an improvement orator, John Knox, who took similar ideas to Anderson but recast them within an imperial framework. This framework appealed to men found in HSL and HSS circles, who recognized the many roles Highlanders could play in the development of the Highland Empire.<sup>65</sup>

But it was the planned villages that underlay the improvement plan, and where two of the most important industries were to develop. The importance of developing local industries, especially woollen manufacturing and commercial herring fisheries, in these planned villages (crofts, fishing villages and inland towns) cannot be understated. Fishing and woollen manufacturing were seen to be the overriding solution to slow economic development in the Highlands and Islands, was largely blamed for emigration. These industries would provide employment for common Highlanders (thereby alleviating poverty through employment), as well as tying the Highlands and Islands to an international economy through the sale of finished goods outside of the local area. Building the Highland economy in this way would benefit all of society by bringing wealth to all levels within the social hierarchy in which landowners profited the most from increased rents and workers would make an acceptable wage bringing them out of poverty. As the British Fisheries Society argued, the production of woollen cloth was especially "best suited for the western settlements" because it would provide clothing for the locals and well as the "coarse woollens required for the West Indian market, as well as more local markets in Britain where "duffels, blankets, flannels, tartans, and other articles worn in the country, and for which, imported from Liverpool, Glasgow, and

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<sup>65</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

Stirling, they now pay the chapman or merchants an increase on the price of 50 to 60 per cent.”<sup>66</sup> The Western Highlands and the Western Isles, which were thought to contain a convenient “supply of 40,000 [people] in Skye, the Long Island, the Islands of Rum, Egg, and Conna, and on the adjacent coasts of the counties of Ross, Inverness, and Argyll” were places where woollen goods might “be manufactured cheaper than any part of the kingdom” as long as some investments were made.<sup>67</sup> With fast flowing streams “to set up any machinery in motion,” and an abundance of raw materials the Highlands and Islands for “manufactures of coarse linen, together with rope and soap works would also be the answer” as well as a large workforce where even “the women might be usefully employed in the spinning of yarn and flax.” In other words, woollen and linen products, which were to be produced alongside fishing to be the staple industries on new planned settlements.<sup>68</sup>

However, the revival and development of the Scottish fisheries was the first step in implementing the Highland societies’ improvement plan. Without its revival, including the establishment of planned villages, the development of secondary activities would not be able to develop. The herring fishery seemed to be the key to unlocking wealth in the Highlands, so long as its improvement was done with care. “The fishery,” the HSS argued, “is that sort of industry which most easily be introduced, it is suited more than any other to the views and habits of the people; it is indeed already practiced among them, tho without system; and of course without much less utility than it is capable of, all that it is wanted is to furnish them a proper lesson in the mode of fishery, and a ready

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<sup>66</sup> John Mackenzie, “Report on the Present State of the Settlements of the British Society, with Observations on the Means of their Improvements,” [n.d.], NRS GD9/39.

<sup>67</sup> John Mackenzie, [n.d.], NRS GD9/39.

<sup>68</sup> John Mackenzie, [n.d.], NRS GD9/39.

market for the fish they catch.”<sup>69</sup> Fishing for local consumption was already taking place in the Highlands and the Hebrides in the eighteenth century—largely salmon and lobster for metropolitan markets, and haddock, whiting, mackerel, “flat-fish” and “lesser-fish.” In the Shetland Islands, herring, ling, cod, and tusk were fished with some regularity. The fisheries in the Highlands and Islands had traditionally been a small, regional industry usually from small open boats, and was largely a part-time occupation using what limited resources were available. There were also restrictions placed on Scottish fishermen by the British government as to where they could fish and in the Highlands and the locals simply did not have the resources to develop the industry. The purchase of salt and barrels to cure fish “or almost any fishing materials whatever” were beyond the means of most ordinary people.<sup>70</sup> Even if they could purchase salt, it was only duty free if the fish was for export. If the curing of fish was for consumption at home duties had to be paid on the salt. This may have helped commercial fishermen in other parts of Great Britain to sell more fish but what this meant was Highlanders were largely barred from consuming a product, which was in abundance. The politician Henry Beaufoy (1750-1795), a political independent who supported Pitt and Dundas and who would become a director of the British Fisheries Society, argued that it was the punitive taxes on salt, which had led to the famine in the Highlands in 1783. In a speech to the Commons, Beaufoy argued, “of all the taxes those which are laid upon the food of the people are the most unwise, and of all taxes upon food the subsistence of the poor is the most oppressive.” Beaufoy was appointed Chairman of the Commons’ Committee to Enquire into the State of the British Fisheries and would become the liaison between the government and the Highland

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<sup>69</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 487.

<sup>70</sup> Fall, *Observations on the Report of the Committee*, 16.

societies in implementing the plan to improve the herring fisheries in the Highlands and Islands.<sup>71</sup>

The herring fisheries occupied the minds of most eighteenth century British Improvers, both Whig and Tory, because, for example, the Dutch had become very wealthy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from the development of commercial herring fisheries, and there was a strong desire to emulate this success.<sup>72</sup> Since the mid-seventeenth century, herring had been considered the most important and valuable of the Scottish fisheries. As Bob Harris argues, “the fisheries were always viewed as pre-eminently a national resource capable of generating wealth, employment, maritime strength and national security.”<sup>73</sup> The Dutch had become very wealthy through their mastery of fishing from ‘busses’ (in Dutch: *Buis*), or large vessels, where the curing and packing of fish was done on the large vessel out at sea. This method of fishing required huge capital investment, skill, and commercial organization, something the British were lacking.<sup>74</sup> British attempts to emulate Dutch success in the early-to-mid eighteenth century had continually failed.

James Anderson argued that a viable Scottish fishing industry had been slow to develop because the rivalries between the two countries in the seventeenth century saw Scotland lose to its more powerful neighbour, and the Glorious Revolution, which “procured so many advantages for England, gave very little relief to the people of

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<sup>71</sup> G. M. Ditchfield, “Beaufoy, Henry Hanbury (1750-1795),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/1865> (accessed 13 August 2013). Quoted in Raynor, 580.

<sup>72</sup> James Anderson, *The True Interest of Great Britain Considered, A Proposal for Establishing Northern Fisheries* (n.p., 1783); Knox, *A Discourse*, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Coull, “Fishery Developments,” 1; Harris, “Scotland’s Herring Industry,” 39.

<sup>74</sup> Buss fishing did take place on the Clyde in the 1760s but overall it was not employed in Scotland: Harris, “Scotland’s Herring,” 41.

Scotland so that industry there was not suffered there to revive.” Even the Union, which brought a system of government “that is more favourable to the principles of liberty...yet particular events have happened since that time, which have tended very much to retard the progress of industry among the people of Scotland. Nor have they, even in the present hour, been able entirely to overcome the effects of those oppressive regulations, which were established during that system of arbitrary rule, which so long prevailed before that event took place.” In other words, punitive duties and taxes placed on goods necessary to develop certain industries in Scotland and not England had served to prevent the development not just of the fishing industry but also of other industries as well.<sup>75</sup>

In the seventeenth century there had been some independent English attempts to set up a viable fishing industry in the Hebrides, but they had failed due to lack of capital and war, effectively ending attempts to establish commercial fishing in the area until the eighteenth century. However, interest in the Scottish fisheries resumed in 1727 with the establishment of the Whig-dominated Board of Trustees for the Improvement of Manufactures and Fisheries, a body which argued that Scotland’s stagnating economy was threatening the union, and Great Britain from foreign powers. The fisheries were seen as the solution to a lack of industry and employment. This society focused largely on the competition with the Dutch, and paid premiums to those who could outfit large busses for deep-sea fishing, but there was limited success in this area. By the mid-eighteenth century Whig improvement favoured “colonization of the region” by capitalist monopolies such as the Board of Trustees. Instead of punitive measures like the Disarming Act and the abolishment of Heritable Jurisdictions, Whigs began to view

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<sup>75</sup> James Anderson, *An Account of the Present State of the Hebrides and Western Coasts of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785), iv.

commercial enterprise as a way in which to pacify the Highlander.<sup>76</sup> The Free British Fishery Society (1749-1758) was formed in attempted to establish a British fishing industry along the coast to compete with the Dutch and provide employment in the Highlands and Islands. The London-based Free British Fishery Society (FBFS) was a patriotic endeavour, which sought to thwart competition not only from the Dutch but also secure Britain's future in the commercial fishing industry and from other competitors, including French traders. The FBFS was formed to try and cut across party lines, but it was dominated by Whigs and was to utilise the Whig strategy of commercial stability through economic change. As outsiders, the members of this Society had little knowledge or experience with the problems of setting up a commercial fishing industry in the Highlands and Islands. This society also focused on the busses but no matter how many subsidies the British government provided to the FBFS, the system was extremely complicated and ineffectual, mostly due to poor management of the Society and the salt laws that put British fishermen at a disadvantage to their competitors by making the curing of fish too expensive to turn a profit, but also new competition from Swedish fishermen after 1752 and the effects of the Seven Year's War.<sup>77</sup>

The complicated salt laws had been a hindrance to the development of commercial fishing in the Highlands. The issue was that from the Union of 1707, in order to protect the domestic Scottish salt industry (run mostly by landowning elites), high duties were placed on imported salt from England known as 'great' or 'bay' salt. However, this salt was duty-free (in the form of a tax rebate) as long as it was used for

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<sup>76</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship Commerce*. 217-221.

<sup>77</sup> Harris, "Scotland's Herring," 41-43; 57. For the Free British Fisheries Society see: Bob Harris, "Patriotic Commerce and National Revival: the Free British Fishery Society and British Politics, c.1749-58," *The English Historical Review* 114 (April, 1999): 258-313.

curing fish for export, but it was not duty-free if it was used to cure fish for home consumption. Complicated customs regulations were also placed on the importation of the duty-free English rock salt (to try and curb smuggling, which was rampant in an attempt to circumvent the complicated administrative laws). In order to circumvent smuggling, the British Fisheries Society explained, for any salt used for curing fish it was necessary to build “magazines for salt, to facilitate the access of the fisher to that commodity” and so the customs officers could regulate its use. Those who fished for themselves “may import foreign salt free from excise duty, and paying only the customs which is about 3 [shillings] per bushel of 84 lib. [weight].”<sup>78</sup> According to the rules, “no fish curers can have any salt, whether foreign salt imported or British salt, into his magazines, for curing cod, ling, salmon etc. [and herring] for home consumption, excepting such as has paid the duties.”<sup>79</sup> Fish curers (not fishermen) were allowed to bring salt in from anywhere in Britain to fill magazines duty-free (but subject to customs). However, once it arrived it had to be measured by a customs officer “and kept under his, and the fish curers joint locks and keys until the fishing season arrive[s]...when the fishing season begins, the fish curer and owner of the salt, makes an oath, that he is to use the salt, for the curing of the fish that season.” The curer was allowed to sell his salt to other curers. But stockpiling, especially for local consumption, was not legal under the tangle of laws governing salt used for exported fish. At the end of the season the curer had to report to the revenue officer how much he used, upon oath, or how much he sold to another fish curer (only curers could sell to other curers) and if any

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<sup>78</sup> “Journal of the Proceedings of the Directors of the British Society,” 1 July to 20 August 1787, “Observations on the Salt Laws,” NRS GD9/3, p. 174. In the 1790s Scottish-made salt carried a duty of 5 shillings per bushel.

<sup>79</sup> “Journal of the Proceedings of the Directors of the British Society,” 1 July to 20 August 1787, “Observations on the Salt Laws,” NRS GD9/3, pp. 174-178.

salt was left over it had to be locked away again until the next season. If fishermen or curers did not adhere to these rules, there were “very heavy penalties.” In order to prove that the fish had only been cured for export, the curers had to provide “part of the tail of each fish is ordered to be cut off, by the officer.”<sup>80</sup> This complex system to cure fish for export not only favoured curers of fish for export, but prevented local fishermen from curing fish for local consumption. Fish curers were not allowed, under this system, to have “any salt, whether foreign salt imported, or British salt, into his magazines, for curing cod, ling, salmon etc. [herring] for home consumption, excepting such as has paid the duties.”<sup>81</sup> In the case of herring, local Scottish salt was practically useless, leading to fish that spoiled easily. Scottish salt was an inferior product because Scottish coastal salt pans, which used a coal-fired evaporation technique, left debris in the salt. This inferior salt was really only useful for curing cod, which could be cured in the open air, while herring could not as it rapidly deteriorated in the heat. Herring is a fatty fish, which had to be cured in barrels, and required a superior, clean salt product free of impurities. In any case, coal duties placed on the import of coal also prohibited poor Highlanders from making their own salt, and barrels were also difficult for poor people to acquire. Therefore, this complicated system was a disincentive to using imported salt, and smuggling remained a significant problem in this period. Largely, the salt laws would prevent the development of a large-scale commercial Scottish fishing industry until the early nineteenth century when they were finally lifted.<sup>82</sup> The British Fisheries Society, which was formed to provide subsistence for the poor and prevent emigration argued that

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> “Journal of the Proceedings of the Directors of the British Society,” 1 July to 20 August 1787, “Observations on the Salt Laws,” NRS GD9/3, p. 176.

<sup>82</sup> Coull, “Fishery Development,” 7; Harris, “Scotland’s Herring,” 42-48.

“it is highly expedient, as well as for the purpose of encouraging the fisheries by an extension of the market, as for that of providing a cheap and wholesome article of food for the support of the poor. That all duties at this time payable by law on such herrings, cod, ling, and salmon, or other fish, caught and cured by *British* subjects, as are removed for home consumption, should cease and determine.”<sup>83</sup>

The fishing scheme created by members of the HSL and their colleagues differed from that of the mid-century attempts, in that the idea was not to colonize the Highlands and Islands with commercial enterprise in order to civilize the locals but to strengthen the British economy as a whole by providing employment and subsistence for local people, thereby “increase the strength of her marine, advance her manufactures, enlarge her commerce, and extend her population.” Local people would then continue to develop the area using the framework provided. Improvers would then lobby the government to change protectionist laws governing the use of salt, so that Highlanders would also have a secure source of food. This reconceptualised improvement plan was not to happen by emulating the Dutch through further attempts to outfit buss fishing but rather the development of strategic fishing “stations,” where men could be employed in fishing from smaller but more numerous boats and both women and men would be employed in various other local industries. Scoto-British improvers also argued to the British government that developing the fishing industry would also “augment, by a vast addition to the number of seamen, the maritime power of the empire.”<sup>84</sup> Firmly attaching the Highlands to the British fiscal-military state was a necessary strategy, certainly at a time when Britain was almost constantly at war with European rivals. The argument went that

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<sup>83</sup> Third Report from the committee (1786), NRS GD9/3.

<sup>84</sup> “Memorial on the Prevention of Emigration,” NRS GD9/1/14.

the reason people in the Highlands and Islands were poor was the difficulties of living in a remote area with insecure subsistence and lack of employment, not because individual Highlanders were backward or purposefully idle, and fishing could ameliorate the state of “the poorer classes of Highlanders” and to provide “suitable means of employment for the surplus population at home, [and] to prevent emigration.” Considering the depressed economic situation in the Highlands and Islands at the time, it made sense to develop the fishing industry, as “the fisheries certainly make the noblest employment that can be thought of in a maritime country.”<sup>85</sup> The development of a native industry was the key to bringing wealth to the entire region. The fisheries would strengthen both the British economy and the British Empire, by providing employment and subsistence, and eventually, it was hoped, bring industrialisation to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.<sup>86</sup> In other words, political economy was the key to economic and political stability in Great Britain.

The idea for the renewed development of the fisheries, as George Dempster of Dunnichen argued, came “from the writings and journeys of Mr. [Thomas] Pennant, Dr. Anderson, and Mr. Knox.” These journeys provided much of the information about the northern seas that would form the basis of the new plan. These men “also enlarged upon the bold and original idea of improving our fisheries and sea coasts, by founding new towns near to the seas where fish are most abundant; which idea was first started by Mr. [John] Gray in *Reflections on the Domestic Policy Proper to be Observed on the*

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<sup>85</sup> “Memorandum respecting the present state of the British Society for the extending the fisheries, May 1788,” NRS GD9/3, pp. 266-267.

<sup>86</sup> Third Report from the Committee, (1786), NRS GD9/3.

*Conclusion of a Peace*, published in 1761.”<sup>87</sup> What is known about John Gray, LLD (1724-1811) of Cupar is limited, but Richard van den Berg has recently compiled some biographical information on this relatively unknown economic thinker from a variety of sources. For our purpose here we know he was a director of the BFS and a prolific pamphleteer and contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and was one of the earliest British proponents (albeit limited) of French physiocratic economics, which precedes classical economics, largely associated with thinkers like Adam Smith, some of whose ideas Gray, like James Anderson, criticized. In other words, like improvers in the Highland societies' circles, Gray believed that employment, especially in the agricultural production of land and development of natural resource-based industry, was the key to prosperity.<sup>88</sup> As Gray argued, “[t]he principal and most essential cause of the prosperity of the state is the ingenuity of the labour of its inhabitants exercised upon the fertility of its soil.” Retention of workers meant not only people to work in new industries but also rent for landowners, bringing wealth to all. Idleness was not blamed on common Highlanders within this framework; idleness was blamed on a disincentive to work without the possibility of monetary gain (Gray largely blamed payment in kind, a common practice in the Highlands in the late eighteenth-century even when it had gone out of favour elsewhere in Great Britain) and the inability to pay rent in a short-lease

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<sup>87</sup> George Dempster, *A Discourse Containing a Summary of the Proceedings of the Directors of the Society for Extending the Fisheries and Improving the Sea Coasts of Great Britain* (London, 1786), 33-34.

<sup>88</sup> Richard van den Berg, “John Gray’s Essential Principles of the Wealth of Nations,” in *English, Irish and Subversives Among the Dismal Scientists: Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology, Volume 28-B*, ed. Nigel F.B. Allington and Noel W. Thompson (Bingley, Emerald Group Publishing, 2010), 37-72. John Gray’s *Reflections on the Domestic Policy Proper to be Observed on the Conclusion of a Peace* (1761) cannot be located at this time Richard van den Berg does not have it listed in his appendix of Gray’s works, but Gray often published anonymously and sometimes he is listed as “John Gray, L.L.D.,” and others “John Gray,” adding to confusion. Gray received his honorary doctorate in civil law from St. Andrews, his *alma mater*.

system.<sup>89</sup> This was in direct opposition to mercantilism, which taught that the wealth of the ruler, the acquisition of gold, and the balance of trade were the ways in which to build the economy. Mercantilism also operated within a framework, which saw that the planet's wealth was ultimately finite. Physiocracy, like political economy, contributed to the style of economics, which would be adopted by liberals in the nineteenth-century, notably Thomas Malthus, but in the late eighteenth century, conservative improvers adopted a variety of anti-mercantilist economic theories, such as political economy and, to some extent, Physiocratic ideas (which have similar characteristics), especially those that favoured the retention of a working population through limited free trade, resource development and secure subsistence, favoured by many Highland landowners and their supporters under examination here. Wealth, in other words, was not finite; it could grow within an entirely new economic framework and a better understanding of the mechanics of economics.<sup>90</sup> Beyond his ideas for establishing fishing villages, and acting as a director of the BFS, however, Gray is not found in HSL or HSS circles, and his ideas were not as influential as Anderson's and, as we will see below, Knox who developed the idea within a more desirable framework to the HSL and its members' colleagues.

Gray may have developed the idea of placing strategic fishing villages in the Highlands as a means to develop the industry and bring wealth to all, but Thomas Pennant (1728-1798) was to bring the Highlands and Islands out of obscurity and into the eye of the British public. Pennant was a well-known eighteenth-century travel writer, naturalist, and zoologist who took two tours of Scotland in 1769 and 1772, which resulted in the publication of *A Tour in Scotland, 1769* (1771) and *Tour in Scotland and Voyage*

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<sup>89</sup> Van den Berg, "John Gray's Essential Principles," 48-9.

<sup>90</sup> John Gray, *The Essential Principles of the Wealth of Nations* (1797) quoted in Van den Berg, "John Gray's Essential Principles," 47.

to the Hebrides, 1772 (1774-6). Pennant's *Tour In Scotland* did not include the Hebrides, which was an area of particular interest to improvers, especially regarding the fisheries. However, his second tour was more organised and included the Hebrides. Before this date very few people outside of the Highlands knew about the area in any great detail. As mentioned this led oftentimes to the importation of inappropriate or ineffectual improvement schemes by improvers unaccustomed to the needs of the area. For these tours Pennant drew upon the knowledge of men like the naturalist Rev. Dr. Walker, who the HSS would hire as their in-house naturalist, and the historian David Skene. With so many interested parties looking to improve the area, Pennant's work had a very positive reception and opened the area up to the purview of the general British public. In his second journey Pennant discusses the difficulty the people of the western Highlands had in participating in the buss fisheries especially those who fished in the sea lochs where "few, a very few of the natives who possess a boat and nets; and fish in order to sell the capture fresh to the busses: the utmost these poor people can attain to are the boats and nets; they are too indigent to become masters of barrels, or of salt to the great loss of the public and to themselves. Were magazines of salt established in these distant parts, was encouragement given to these distant Britons, so that they might be enabled, by degrees to furnish themselves with the requisites for fishing."<sup>91</sup>

Pennant brought increased attention to the Highlands and Islands; however, the plan to improve the fisheries executed by the HSL and the joint-stock company organized by members of the HSL and the HSS largely from treatises written by both Anderson and

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<sup>91</sup> Charles W. J. Withers, "Pennant, Thomas (1726-1798)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/21860> (accessed 21 June 2014); Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides, 1772*, Vol. 1 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.] (London, 1776), 375; Rackwitz, *Travels to Terra Incognita*, 131.

John Knox (1720-1790), a London bookseller, pamphleteer and improvement orator. Anderson had argued in 1775 that “the attempts which from time to time have been made by the British Parliament to encourage those fisheries, have produced laws so ill adapted to the state of the country, and the circumstances of the people, as rather to repress the business they intended to promote, than encourage it.” Yet, in addition to protectionist economic policies there was also a lack of local skill and capital preventing the development of the fisheries. Tacksmen had largely been reluctant to invest in a small boat industry, which made more sense in the western Highlands and islands where fishing in sea lochs was easier than from large vessels.<sup>92</sup> Anderson was known in many political circles, not just HSL circles, for his ideas on developing the fisheries, and so he was employed by the Treasury in 1784 to determine the state of the fishing industry in Scotland, a topic he had explored in detail in his *Observations on the Means of Exciting a National Industry* (1777) and *The True Interest of Great Britain Considered: Or a Proposal for Establishing the Northern Fisheries* (1783). Those with interest in developing the fisheries noticed Anderson and he was commissioned by William Pitt to survey the west coast of Scotland to determine where fishing could take place. This tour led, in the following year, to a report to the Committee Appointed to Enquire into the State of the British Fisheries in the House of Commons. In his treatises on fishing and in his report to the Commons’ Committee to Enquire into the State of the British Fisheries Anderson criticised the lack of development regarding the fisheries in Scotland, and especially in the Highlands and Islands. If the ocean and sea lochs were teeming with herring, why should Highlanders remain in a state of abject poverty? Landowners and

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<sup>92</sup> James Anderson, *An Account of the Present State of the Hebrides and Western Coasts of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785), x.

politicians were concerned about Anderson's criticisms, especially the idea that the lack of provision for Highland fishermen insinuated they were, out of self-interest, depriving Highlanders the tools to pull themselves out of poverty, which appeared to be implicit in his arguments.<sup>93</sup> However, when examined by Henry Beaufoy in front of the Committee in 1785, as to whether or not "he imagined that the proprietors in the islands and the western coasts of Scotland behold with indifference the poverty of the lower orders of people in their estates; or, whether they do not rather make exertions to free the from that distressful poverty" Anderson answered "that he imagined that the proprietors of the western coasts of Scotland in general shew a spirit of lenity to their tenants, and the lower people under them." It was the "want of an open market" and the relaxation of duties together with a fishing industry, which after set up, would regulate itself without much public or governmental assistance and where commodities needed to maintain the industry would come to the area through the "free channels of commerce." Anderson was more concerned about domestic free trade than vilifying those who he sought to influence with his economic theories.<sup>94</sup> After his testimony Anderson published *An Account of the Present State of the Hebrides and Western Coasts of Scotland* (1785), which he reproduced the questions asked of him by Beaufoy together with his answers.

In his report to the Committee Appointed to Enquire into the State of the British Fisheries, Anderson had recommended that the Treasury provide the tools fishermen needed to undertake fishing, such as boats and nets, which had been beyond the reach of most common Highlanders. He also recommended that the fishery laws be liberalised and

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<sup>93</sup> See especially: Anderson, *Observations* and James Anderson, *The True Interest of Great Britain Considered: Or a Proposal for Establishing the Northern Fisheries* (N.p., 1783), 1-7.

<sup>94</sup> Reports From the Committees of the House of Commons Vol. X: Reprinted by Order of the House. Miscellaneous Subjects 1784-1803, 31-33.

the salt laws abolished, ideas the HSL and the HSS, and their joint operation the British Fisheries Society, would continue to push for until the early nineteenth century. It was only until then that a truly profitable industry could develop, as it was largely laws governing fishing and curing of fish, especially duties placed on English rock-salt was holding the industry back and starving Highlanders and Islanders. Anderson's recommendations in the 1770s did not lead to full support for fishermen from the government, but did lead to a handful of reforms to the fisheries laws; namely reducing tonnage bounties for busses or vessels of fifteen tons or more from thirty to twenty shillings per ton and adding a barrel bounty on cured herring. To encourage the small boat fisherman, a smaller barrel bounty was instituted. A further act extended the tonnage bounty to any vessel size and limiting the number of vessels to receive it in one trip to fifty. In other words, encouragement was now placed on catch rather than vessel size. However, British politicians still could not agree on the liberalisation of the salt laws and so in the mid 1780s Highland fishermen still remained at a disadvantage to other British fishermen.<sup>95</sup>

Anderson's contemporary, John Knox, was also interviewed by the Commons' Committee to Enquire into the State of the British Fisheries. Knox, who also used ideas steeped in political economy, advocated many of the same ideas for development as Anderson but with a more imperial focus, which was more favourable to conservative improvers. Knox, who was born in Scotland, was very interested in economic improvement, especially that of improving the fisheries in the Highlands and Islands. Not

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<sup>95</sup> See 26 Geo. III c. 81 and 27 Geo. III c. 10. Anderson, *An Account*, 21-23; Rackwitz, *Travels to Terra Incognita: The Scottish Highlands and Hebrides in Early Modern Travellers' Accounts* (New York: Waxmann, 2007), 435; Raynor, 583. See also: Anderson, *The True Interest of Great Britain*; Anderson, *Observations*.

much is known about Knox's background or personal life but he maintained strong links to his native Scotland, despite being resident in London. Like Anderson, Knox largely blamed mercantilist policies for inciting rebellion in the American colonies, and disdained the loss of life and expense of fighting Britain's cousins and had little time for an economic system which caused suffering. Knox argued that in spite of the loss of the American colonies, "there are, however, many persons, who, notwithstanding that the events and consequences of the late war have dissarranged the old delusive system of politics, and shewn its inefficacy, still adhere to opinions, which cannot be defended on any principle of justice, humanity, or national expediency." However, Knox was not anti-imperial; like Anderson, Knox distinguished colonies composed mostly of British settlers from plantation colonies, or colonies with a native majority like India. Knox felt the American colonies should have had a more equal treatment, as its settlers were de facto Britons, and because of the unequal balance there was no wonder the Americans rebelled. The loss of the American colonies was also a double disadvantage for Scotland, which had benefitted from trade with them but was, by the 1780s, "burdened with extraordinary taxes, excises and duties, without any consideration for the loss of America, and the admitting Ireland to participate in the West India commerce, by which England made her peace with that kingdom, party at the expence of Scotland, who loses proportionally to what Ireland gains, by this donation."<sup>96</sup> Knox, like Anderson, saw little reason to fight constant wars against other nations such as France as a way in which to gain and defend imperial territories. Instead, and like Anderson, Knox argued for internal development,

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<sup>96</sup> John Knox, *View of the British Empire, More Especially Scotland, Vol. 1* [3<sup>rd</sup> ed.] (London, 1785), v-vi; xxxvi-xxxvii. For Knox's pro-American, anti-mercantilist treatise see: John Knox, *The American Crisis, by a Citizen of the World; Inscribed to those members of the Community, Vulgarly named Patriots* (London, 1777).

and retention of people, as way in which to build commerce, strengthening the nation through wealth and employment. Highland fishermen would have a dual role: building a commercial fishery and as reserves for the navy. The remaining colonies would be maintained not through conquest and war (and borrowing huge sums of money and taxing its citizens to fund these wars) but through free commerce and “peace with all the world, and that for a long continuance, is, therefore, our only hope and ought to be the ardent wish of every friend of his country, and of humanity.”<sup>97</sup> In his plans for developing the Highland fisheries, Knox would argue for free passage (free trade) of Scottish goods throughout the empire as well as reducing punitive taxes and duties, putting Scotland on a more equal footing with England. Taxes should only be levied on three categories: landed property, trade and commerce (although “touched with the greatest delicacy”), and “luxuries, superfluities, and amusements.”<sup>98</sup> Scoto-British improvers favoured imperial trade as a way in which to develop the overall economy, and the HSL and HSS drew much of its membership from landowners and merchants, including West Indian merchants and notable fur-traders who supported Scotland’s equal place in an imperial economy, and so Knox’s ideas were very appealing.

Knox had undertaken sixteen tours of both the west and east coasts of Scotland from 1764 to 1780 and his hands-on knowledge gave him a reputation as a burgeoning expert on fishing in Scotland, especially in the western Highlands and islands. Knox was also well known for having practical ideas about improvement in the Highlands and in 1784 he published a *View of the British Empire, More Especially Scotland*.<sup>99</sup> In this pamphlet, Knox also advocated for the construction of canals to improve the transport

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<sup>97</sup> Knox, *View of the British Empire, Vol. 1* [3<sup>rd</sup> ed.], 8.

<sup>98</sup> Knox, *View of the British Empire, Vol. 1* [3<sup>rd</sup> ed.], 33.

<sup>99</sup> John Knox, *A View of the British Empire, More Especially Scotland* (London, 1784).

links in Scotland, but especially in the Highlands so that Highland fish could be brought to domestic and international markets more easily. Anderson was also in favour of this, but only for domestic markets. Knox and Anderson's promotion of canals, an idea unsuccessfully pursued by improvers earlier in the century, would eventually form the idea for the Crinan and Caledonian Canals.<sup>100</sup> Knox also argued in *Observations on the Northern Fisheries* (1786) that development of the fisheries in the Highlands and western Isles meant that the British "navy will be supplied with greater facility in the commencement and progress of war." Competition with other major European powers such as the French and the Dutch, who sought to gain from global markets, necessitated swelling the British navy. The Highland fisheries, therefore, would not only develop the domestic British economy and provide products to be sold at home and abroad but also provide much-needed manpower to defend colonial interests because, as Knox argued, "it is evident to a demonstration, that not only the protection of our trade and colonies depends chiefly upon the northern fisheries, but also the defence of Great Britain itself." Economic development on a global scale required markets, which were often won through the pursuit of war. The promotion of fishing within this imperial framework attracted the attention of the Highland Society of London who invited Knox to give a talk in March 1786, where he lectured on the idea of establishing fishing stations in the Highlands as a solution to stunted development, which brought him even more recognition as an expert on fishing.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Alastair J. Durie, "Knox, John (1720-1790)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/15785> (accessed 8 August 2013); Knox, *View of the British Empire* (1784), 253.

<sup>101</sup> John Knox, *Observations on the Northern Fisheries* (London, 1786), 3-4; 5.

Knox and Anderson disagreed on some fundamental reasons for developing a fishing industry in the western Highlands and the Hebrides, notably the domestic versus imperial development (or domestic and imperial free-trade); however, both agreed that the answer to the development of the fisheries was through the establishment of fishing stations. These ideas appealed to conservative improvers and the HSL adopted these recommendations with enthusiasm, and would use the ideas when members organized the British Fisheries Society with the HSS. Knox felt that stations, or towns, could be built “in the most eligible situations, both on the mainland, and on the Hebride Islands, which front the extensive line of western coasts at greater or less distances, and where the shoals of herrings pass, in their annual migrations to the south, filling sometimes one lake, sometimes another; which fishery, were the natives better accommodated, would prove a source of great national wealth; furnish the West Indies ships with freights; employ thousands of indigent people of both sexes; and bring forward into the line of active, useful industry, a country that composes a fifth-part of Great Britain.”<sup>102</sup> In other words, Knox was outlining a plan for free trade in fishing within the British Empire.

Along these lines, the HSL looked to change the state of the fisheries because it was felt that a “mine of maritime wealth” was present in the Highlands and Islands that had hitherto only benefited such foreign powers as the Dutch, “while the natives reaped no part of this plentiful harvest.”<sup>103</sup> Members attributed herring as the reasons why the Dutch became phenomenally wealthy. By emulating the Dutch, a member of the HSL argued, the Highlands had the potential to contribute to a global British economy, because like the Highlands, the Netherlands “with a soil unfertile, and not perfectly well

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<sup>102</sup> Knox, *A Discourse*, 18-19.

<sup>103</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 22.

cultivated, contains more wealth and inhabitants than several times its extent of any country in Europe.” It was not agriculture that made the Netherlands a powerful and wealthy nation, in spite of its size; it was “fishing and commerce.” If the herring fisheries were to be developed in the Highlands and Islands with this in mind, the area had the potential to contribute to Britain’s wealth and power on the global stage.<sup>104</sup> However, Scoto-Britons did not advocate the use of busses to develop the fishing industry, which had contributed greatly to Dutch success but had failed to work in Scotland; rather they adopted Anderson and Knox’s arguments for the implementation of strategic fishing villages located around the Highlands and Islands, which would allow for a commercial fishing industry to develop and secondary occupations would be implemented to ensure economic viability and permanent settlement, as well as Anderson’s argument for relieving Scotland of punitive taxes and duties. As a member of the HSL argued anonymously, the main reasons that the fisheries in the Highlands and Islands had failed to develop were “the duties imposed by government on coals, salt, and fish; the perplexities, difficulties and expences arising from custom house regulations and salt laws, the difficulties of inland communication, for want of roads and navigable cut across the Island, and above all, the want of free towns and villages.”<sup>105</sup>

Permanent settlements would comprise places where entrepreneurs could develop a local industry, and settlers would be encouraged to grow their own food, securing subsistence for the communities. In addition to export, the fish caught locally would be consumed as well. Like crofts and inland villages that were to be developed using similar

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<sup>104</sup> Member of the Highland Society of London, *The Necessity of Founding Villages*, 8-9.

<sup>105</sup> “Memorandum respecting the present state of the British Society for the Extending the Fisheries, May 1788,” NRS GD9/3, pp. 266-267; Member of the Highland Society of London, *The Necessity of Founding Villages Contiguous to Harbours, for the Effectual Establishment of Fisheries on the West Coast of Scotland and the Hebrides*. (London, 1786), 14.

principles, these planned fishing villages would also be part of the solution to the need for increased pastoral agriculture in the Highlands and Islands, which required that people leave estates to make way for livestock. Employment in these new planned villages would bring security, economic development and provide cheap and easily accessible food to feed common Highlanders. In other words, the development of the fisheries by the Highland Society of London and the Highland Society of Scotland can also be seen as a form of poverty relief for members of Highland communities. This could only be achieved“ by the joint labour of many individuals, aided by the skill of many distinct classes of manufacturers; and as the establishment of villages and towns, in certain situations, on the northern and western coast of Scotland would not only furnish the means of that *co-operation and mutual assistance*, but would likewise afford a market for some part of the produce of the fisheries, and much facilitate the conveyance of the remainder, whether sold for consumption in the inland country, or for exportation to foreign parts.”<sup>106</sup>

Therefore, the improvement scheme developed by the HSL and its partners was to revive the herring fisheries. This required the organization of capital to purchase land and set up strategic ‘stations’ in the north Highlands and Islands in areas that were ideal for navigation. These stations were to be located: “from the Murray Frith [*sic*] or thereby extend a line including the North East, the North, the North west, the Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles, let this line terminate somewhere about the mouth of Clyde within this line select certain stations advantageously situated for navigation.” This would be achieved with the grants already earmarked by the British government for fisheries in the area. In order for the stations to become self sufficient, they should be granted an

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<sup>106</sup> Third Report from the committee (1786), NRS GD9/3. My emphasis.

“exemption from duty or tax upon coal, ale, spirits, soap, salt, candles [and] leather”—all necessities for establishing villages—“let it always be understood that the proposed exemption should bear a certain proportion according to the numbers of people contained in each station. This would literally speaking cost Government nothing it would act as a principle in favour of the Highlands and Islands.” Once people were established in the fishing villages, it was argued, they could then move beyond subsistence and become real cities.<sup>107</sup> Highlanders would settle and have continual employment but “traders and adventurers” could settle who might provide their own salt and casks for the preservation of fish. Goods could also be exchanged, and manufacturing would then stimulate a viable Highland economy:<sup>108</sup> “For then shall we produce, from among the hardy sons of Caledonia, perhaps the best fishers in Europe, as we have done before.”<sup>109</sup>

Members of the HSL were very excited about Knox’s ideas and shortly after the British Fisheries Society (of which Knox was one of the first subscribers) was established, Knox was commissioned by that company to make a journey to the Highlands and Islands to determine the best places to establish fishing stations, which culminated in the publication the next year of *A Tour through the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebride Isles*, in 1786. In this publication, Knox recommends Ullapool and Tobermory as potential places for fishing stations, a recommendation the BFS accepted.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> “An Idea for Improving the Highland and Islands of Scotland,” [n.d. late 18<sup>th</sup> century], AUA MS 961.

<sup>108</sup> Member of the Highland Society of London, *The necessity of founding villages*, 14-25; Pitcairn, *A retrospective view of the Scots Fisheries* (Edinburgh, 1787), 38.

<sup>109</sup> Pitcairn, *A retrospective view of the Scots Fisheries*, 51.

<sup>110</sup> John Knox, *A Tour through the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebride Isles* (London, 1787); Alastair J. Durie, “Knox, John (1720–1790),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/15785> (accessed August 8, 2013).

Following Knox's presentation to the HSL on fishing in March 1786, the Highland Society of London and the House of Commons Fishery Committee began negotiations on a government-sponsored, but private initiative, fishing scheme. The Committee agreed to the recommendations given by the HSL that without "any considerable enlargement of the pecuniary aid already afforded by the public, the removal of those obstacles of industry, which at present impede the exertions of individuals, will effectually improve the fisheries of Britain."<sup>111</sup> Through societal as well as individual subscriptions, £40,000 "for the purchase of lands, and for the forming of 'freetowns', villages and fishing stations in the Highlands" was raised.<sup>112</sup> A subsequent Act of Parliament in July 1786 incorporated the subscribers into a joint stock venture under the title: "The British Society for the Extending the Fisheries and improving the Sea-Coasts of this Kingdom."<sup>113</sup> John Mackenzie travelled to Edinburgh in November of 1786 to meet with the Highland Society of Scotland's subcommittee on the fisheries who agreed that "the secretary do write a circular letter to members of this Society requesting their support to the stock company by subscriptions."<sup>114</sup> In 1788 the recently incorporated Highland Society of Scotland bought "ten shares in the joint stock company and recommend to the secretary futherwith to write a letter to the secretary of the British Society." Ten shares in the company amounted to £500.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> "Journal of the Proceedings of the Directors of the British Society," 1 July to 20 August 1787, NRS GD9/3; "Third Report from the Committee," (1786), NRS GD9/3.

<sup>112</sup> "Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public Aid," (1814), AUA, MS 963.

<sup>113</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, 27. More commonly the Society is simply known as the "British Fisheries Society": J. Dunlop, *The British Fisheries Society, 1786-1893* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1978), 24-5.

<sup>114</sup> Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS, pp. 127-8. Mackenzie was at two meetings regarding the fisheries on November 24 and 29, 1786.

<sup>115</sup> Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS, pp. 180-6. Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 1* [2<sup>nd</sup> edition] (1812), xxxi.

The British Fisheries Society incorporated members from both the HSL and the HSS including the Earl of Moray, Henry Dundas, the Earl of Breadalbane, the Duke of Atholl, and Lord MacDonald. Henry Beaufoy became its first director.<sup>116</sup> John Mackenzie expanded his role to include secretary of the British Fisheries Society (his nephew Colin Macrae Esq. was appointed assistant secretary) and the Duke of Argyll, who had held similar posts at both HSL and the HSS, was elected governor. In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, the British Fisheries Society bought villages from various Highland lairds and established several planned fishing villages in the Highlands: in 1788: Ullapool and Lochbroom, in Ross-Shire, and Tobermory, on the Isle of Mull; Lochbay on Skye (planned in 1790, abandoned by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century), and Pulteneytown, Caithness in 1806.<sup>117</sup> The fishing towns were slow to grow; but by 1798 Ullapool (designed by Thomas Telford), for example, had roughly one thousand settlers, some of whom were seasonal.<sup>118</sup>

The formation of the BFS was a government-supported private enterprise. This developed as a result of the social capital built by the HSL. By bringing influential politicians who were moving away from the protectionist economics that had been blamed for the loss of the American colonies and the uneven development of the economy of Great Britain, like Henry Dundas and Henry Beaufoy, into the institutional network of the HSL and the HSS reveals the increasing acceptance of an alternative

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<sup>116</sup> A complete list of the original shareholders can be found in Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 208. Appendix A. G. M. Ditchfield, "Beaufoy, Henry Hanbury (1750-1795)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/1865> (accessed 13 August 2013).

<sup>117</sup> T.C. Smout, 'The Landowner and the Planned Village in Scotland, 1730-1830,' in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement*, ed. Nicholas T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), 92.

<sup>118</sup> Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 66.

development plan for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland by the British government in the 1780s and 1790s. The development of the fisheries under the Whig hegemony had continually failed from a lack of understanding of the needs of the area. Political economy as espoused by economic thinkers like Anderson and Knox, which not only advocated the development of wealth but the alleviation of poverty and starvation, which were seen to be the solution to the threat to British instability. Government support for Scoto-British improvement did not end here as we will see below with the support of the Caledonian and Crinan canals.

Demand for Highland-caught fish did increase during this period, albeit slowly, aided in large part to the British Fisheries Society and pressure by members of the HSL and the HSS to reduce the salt laws. In the 1790s, a shortage of the superior English bay salt and competition with the English rock salt meant that Scottish salt makers were forced to make a better product and there was an increase in manufacturing in these years. However, in 1794 Scottish made salt carried a duty of 5 shillings per bushel, an increase of over 2 shillings, meanwhile English rock salt duties remained the same putting the Scottish producers again at a disadvantage. In 1799 the excise duty on Scottish-made salt was reduced; however, taxes on salt UK-wide continued to rise over the course of the Napoleonic wars. But after 1815, and decades of lobbying by salt makers and those involved in the development of the fisheries, the Scottish salt tax was repealed in 1823. The last of the salt duties UK-wide were finally lifted in 1825. This facilitated the exponential growth in the Scottish herring industry over the rest of the nineteenth century.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions*, vol. 1 [2<sup>nd</sup> edition], cvi; Christopher A. Whatley, *The Scottish salt industry, 1570-1850: An Economic and Social History* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press,

Over the course of the 1790s, the HSS continued to be involved in helping the BFS in their operations, using the information they acquired in their surveys, which will be discussed in the next chapter, and through their reports on emigration the Society pressured the government to continue aiding support the HSS and the BFS not only in pressuring the government to repeal, or in the very least alter, the salt tax but also in regulating the fisheries and pressuring the government to help develop communications, as well.<sup>120</sup> In 1805 a final report was sent “to such members of government as from the situation were led to turn their attention to the fisheries; and after much communication with the Society, a bill was framed introduced into Parliament, founded in several of its parts, on suggestions made by them; and a law passed for regulating that fishery, under a special board at Edinburgh.” This Act “For the Further Encouragement and Better Regulation of the British White Herring Fishery” (48 Geo III c.110) was passed in 1808, and a board of seven of the Trustees for Manufactures and Fisheries in Scotland were created Commissioners for the Herring Fishery. The British government agreed that: “Whereas the improvement of the British white herring fishery is an object of most essential importance to the wealth and commercial prosperity, as well as to the naval strength of this kingdom.” Bounties continued to be placed on large vessels to try and build the fishing industry. Finally the government recognized that the industry had to grow in order to build the British economy as a whole, as well as strengthen Britain’s borders. This is a testament not only to the relationship the Highland societies had with

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1987), 96-97; Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Towards Industrialization* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 220.

<sup>120</sup> In a report a Select Committee of Directors in 1794, the HSS argued that in the very least English rock salt from Liverpool (different from bay salt) should carry the same rate of duty as Scottish salt, which at the time Scottish salt had higher duties, threatening the local Scottish industry which was improving in quality in the 1790s. Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions*, vol. 1 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.], cvi-cviii.

the British government, but also a retreat of Whig economics as far as the government and Highlands and Islands were concerned.<sup>121</sup> In the hopes that the fishing industry would continue to grow, with the help of the government, planned fishing villages increased on Highland estates throughout the nineteenth century, based on projects by the HSL and the HSS. The planned fishing village of Helmsdale, in Sutherland near the Strath of Kildonan (an area that was cleared in the early nineteenth-century) for example, is a prime example of development along these lines.<sup>122</sup> In spite of the early difficulties, in the nineteenth century the Scottish herring industry grew, albeit slowly. The efforts made by the Scoto-British improvers got the industry moving and the fishing economy did explode with Scotland becoming one of the world leaders of commercial herring fishing by the late nineteenth century.<sup>123</sup>

In addition to developing the Highland fisheries, the HSL and the HSS continued to work together in this period on economic development in the Highlands and Islands. There were efforts, which would complement the initial fishing and planned village scheme, namely the development of other kinds of planned villages and towns, which required secondary employments and the provision of subsistence to be self-sufficient. Not all of the Highlands and Islands were suitable for fisheries, and so other types of activities had to be developed. As the BFS argued: “but every idle district of the Highlands does not invite a fishery, and therefore the object of the Society, requires that

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<sup>121</sup> “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA, MS 963; James Travis Jenkins, *The Sea Fisheries* [1920] (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), 122-123.

<sup>122</sup> The BFS town of Ullapool continues today a popular destination for tourists, (who not only come for the beautiful scenery and sea angling but also the annual book festival). It is also the mainland terminal for the car ferry to Stornoway and thus has a bustling local economy. It may not be what The British Fisheries Society had originally intended, but the town does maintain a local Highland economy and employs local Highland residents. Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, “introduction,” 206.

<sup>123</sup> Coull, “Fishery Development,” 1.

secondary kinds of employment should be provided.”<sup>124</sup> The intention behind the improvement plan was to create mixed-economy Highland estates where planned fishing, coastal and inland villages would complement large-scale agricultural projects and subsistence farming, both of which are the subject of the next chapter. In order for industrialisation to develop Highland landowners and their supporters also experimented with some other locally appropriate industries, which it was hoped would take place either independently in planned villages or on estates by tenants. Nevertheless, as industries, kelping and military recruitment remained important to the wider economy of the Highlands, especially during the Napoleonic Wars. Highland landowners who were members of the HSL and the HSS continued these industries as long as they profited from them. However, mining piqued the interest of some landowners in these circles. Mining was thought to have taken place historically on Highland Estates and it was hoped “that species of industry, therefore, may rise or again revive.”<sup>125</sup> Consequently, a mineralogical survey of the Highlands was undertaken in order to try and develop mining in the Highlands and Islands. In 1789, Sir John Sinclair recommended a geologist to the HSS by the name of Rudolf Erich Raspe (1736-1794), a native of Germany, to undertake the survey. Sinclair had originally hired Raspe as a prospector on his own estate in order to find gold, iron or other useful minerals. It appears that Raspe took advantage of Sinclair by having pyrite (fool’s gold) buried at Thurso. It was dug up for Sinclair to see and whetted his appetite for more prospective finds, but after having spent a month on the estate and being given funds by Sinclair, Raspe vanished. This was not Raspe’s first foray into these circles of wealthy men: members of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (including

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<sup>124</sup> “Memorandum respecting the present state of the British Society for the Extending the Fisheries, May 1788,” NRS GD9/3, pp. 266-267.

<sup>125</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Breadalbane and “some other respectable names”) had originally sent Raspe into the Highlands in 1787. Raspe made the claim to the Royal Society of Edinburgh that he could find “economic reserves of quicksilver [mercury].”<sup>126</sup> The HSL provided a sum of forty guineas as well as private subscriptions were raised from individual members such as Sinclair, the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Breadalbane, the Earl of Selkirk, Lord Daer, William Pulteney, George Dempster, MP, to complete the survey. Sinclair presented Raspe’s plan to a committee of the HSS on August 1, 1789 and Raspe’s intended plan to complete the survey was accepted and twenty-five pounds were provided “to enable him to proceed in so laudable an undertaking,” with a further twenty-five pounds being given to him on March 31, 1790. These large sums of money highlighted the importance of mineral extraction to both societies.<sup>127</sup> Unfortunately for these men, their money was spent in vain. Raspe was, quite possibly, a con man that preyed on their optimism. Nineteenth-century accounts (like that of Robert Hunt) of Raspe have certainly portrayed him in this light.<sup>128</sup> The late eighteenth century saw the protean stages of modern geology. Geology at this time straddled a place somewhere between art and science (alchemy) and the men involved quite possibly believed that Raspe could turn iron into gold. In any case, Sinclair and the others in his social circle

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<sup>126</sup> Edward W. Nield, “The Travels and Campaigns of a Fortunate Finder,” *New Scientist* (Dec 20-27, 1984), 60-2.

<sup>127</sup> Sarah Tindal Kareem, “Forging Figures of Invention in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Age of Projects*, ed. Maximilian E. Novak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 344; Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 33; Sederunt Book 2(1789-1795), RHASS, p. 8; Ramsay, *History of the Highland and Agricultural Society*, 129.

<sup>128</sup> Robert Hunt, *The Western Antiquary; or, Notebook for Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset* (1885). Raspe is most famously immortalized in Sir Walter Scott’s novel *The Antiquary* (1816) as the necromancer, Herman Dousterswivel. Raspe is best known as the author of *Baron Munchausen's Narrative of his Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia* (1786).

must have been left feeling quite foolish. Raspe never found iron, quicksilver, or any other workable veins of minerals for these men.<sup>129</sup>

In addition to mineral extraction, members of the Highland societies looked into the development of coal mining, which had taken place in the past. In 1800 a Mr. Leslie of Findrassie approached the HSS alerting members to the subject of coal. He argued that “this valuable article of fuel was known to exist in Sutherland and on Lord MacDonald’s estate in the Isle of Skye, and that there was every reason to believe, that considerable veins of this mineral was also to be found on different other parts of the north and west Highland particularly in Ross-shire, where steps had been taken by some of the heritors towards ascertaining the fact, but that there was difficulties attending the search forward of, skillful borers and implements.” Unfortunately, mining, with the exception of a minor coal mining industry largely related to salt manufacturing, did not take off in this period in spite of the improvers’ hopes, largely due to a lack of proper infrastructure.<sup>130</sup>

Whisky production, it was hoped, would complement the planned village system as it was an activity that could, theoretically, be undertaken anywhere. Whisky production had been an important economic activity in the Highlands and Islands for both sale and personal use. Malted grain used to produce whisky, like other products needed to develop industries in the Highlands and Islands such as salt and coal, had been subject to high taxes historically but continued to be levied to help pay for the Napoleonic Wars from the late eighteenth century onwards, and rose gradually during this time, rising exponentially in the early nineteenth century. The duty was placed upon not the grain, but the fermented ‘bear’ (or barley) being broken down into its components of “worts and

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<sup>129</sup> Kareem, “Forging Figures,” 350-351.

<sup>130</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 377; Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 181. The topic of coal and mineral mining in the Highlands and Islands remains an understudied topic.

wash” (in other words, the components that made the grain fermentable) to distinguish it from unmalted grain. There was concern about Scottish distillers using unmalted grain as it produced an inferior product with higher alcohol content favoured by hardened drinkers.<sup>131</sup> By 1786, the means by which to distil whisky was also subject to punitive practices in the form of license fees (duties) for still capacity, and the final product also carried duties on the final product. Although the still duties were often less in the Highlands than in the Lowlands it was forbidden to transport of whisky made in the Highlands “across a ‘Highland line’ from the Sound of Jura to the Moray Firth” and the still licenses rose during these years making it increasingly difficult for common Highlanders to afford to pay them. Stills below the size of forty gallons were made illegal, ensuring that small family distillers, which were more common in the Highlands and Islands, were punished. These punitive measures on Highland whisky production encouraged a thriving underground whisky industry with some of the “landed, professional and mercantile families were some of the illicit whisky makers best customers. Landowners supported whisky production, not only for their own personal gain (and pleasure), but also because it complemented kelp production as it could be produced seasonally when kelping was over, and the equipment was cheap. Many ordinary Highlanders depended on whisky for an income and for personal enjoyment. However, license fees and duties effectively made its legal production impossible for small Highland producers (many if not most were small family producers). License fees for a forty-gallon still, for example, rose from forty pounds in 1786 to one hundred a decade later to help pay for the Napoleonic Wars. Common Highlanders simply could not

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<sup>131</sup> Devine, “The Rise and Fall of Illicit,” 159; Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 4* (Edinburgh, 1816), 633.

afford to pay the license fees and expensive malted grain. Rather than making spirits from unmalted grain whisky production subsequently went underground. The increase in fines for illegal stills had the effect of increasing smuggling as well.<sup>132</sup> Members of the HSL were not in favour of these practices, as they were not benefitting everyone, commoners and elites alike. In 1798 the HSL recognized “that in consequence of an Act of Parliament being then in agitation which in its operation of laying higher duties on the distillation of spirits by small stills within the Highlands of Scotland would have materially affected that part of the Kingdom and have acted as a total prohibition to the use of such stills and thereby deprive the inhabitants of the enjoyment of a wholesome spirit drawn from their own grain which otherwise they could not find a market for.”<sup>133</sup> There was also an argument made by the HSS that the illicit whisky manufacturing in the Highlands was driving the Lowland side of the industry out of business because the illicit whisky was recognized to be a “more palatable beverage” and the illicit whisky producer could sell this higher quality product “at a lower rate than he could afford to do if he paid duty.”<sup>134</sup> In January of that year, “the principal Noblemen and Gentlemen connected with the Highlands of Scotland” met at the Duke of Atholl’s house in London and appointed a committee to convince William Pitt of the hardships the punitive laws had on such an important industry in the Highlands. Pitt “received them with fairness and candour and had it in consequence of such representation proposed and consented to bring forward a temporary Act only imposing such duties the committee represented were the highest which under existing circumstances such small stills could afford to pay.”<sup>135</sup> Although

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<sup>132</sup> Devine, “The Rise and Fall of Illicit,” 159-60.

<sup>133</sup> Minute book of the Highland Society of London, 1793-1805, Dep. 268/23, p. 53.

<sup>134</sup> Sederunt Book 5 [n.d.], RHASS, p. 249.

<sup>135</sup> Minute book of the Highland Society of London, 1793-1805, Dep. 268/23, pp. 53-54.

this shows that members of the HSL were able to influence the Prime Minister into conceding some revenue at the height of the Napoleonic Wars, this did not completely solve the issue, and the cost of still licenses rose as the war progressed.

Concerned that whisky production was never going to become a viable commercial industry in the Highlands and Islands, leaving Highlanders to conduct a precarious underground activity, in 1808 the HSS drew up a memorial to the Lords Treasury outlining a plan to encourage legal distillation all over Scotland and turning its manufacture into a “regular industry.”<sup>136</sup> The HSS suggested that there should be a “free intercourse for spirits between all parts of Scotland, for home consumption, and as the correlative of this proposition that the same rate of duty should be paid all over the country, without distinction of Highland and Lowland.” Highland whisky producers were not charged as high of duty on stills as Lowland producers but these punitive laws penalized people with less resources. The HSS wished to see whisky production free of barriers so that Highlanders would take the trade above ground. It was also suggested to lower the tax on the price of premium grain and allow for stills less than 50 gallons, “permitting, however, a still of any larger capacity.” By charging the same duty on stills in the Highlands and Lowlands<sup>137</sup> Members of the Highland societies were able to convince the British government to reduce fines for illicit distillation to a maximum of twenty shillings and the “Highland line” was removed in 1816; however, for the most part, the barriers preventing common Highlanders from affordably producing legal whisky would not be removed until after 1823 with the reduction of duties on the sale of

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<sup>136</sup> Sederunt Book 5 [n.d.], RHASS, p. 249.

<sup>137</sup> Sederunt Book 5 [n.d.], RHASS, p. 249-50.

Highland whisky, uniform license fees and reduction in the malt duty. These were reduced in part through political lobbying of the HSL and the HSS.<sup>138</sup>

The development of native Highland industries was nothing without markets, and the HSL and the HSS also came together to help improve communications in the Highlands and Islands. Despite efforts to develop roads and bridges in the earlier parts of the century, the Highlands, especially the western Highlands and islands were not connected to the rest of Britain by any viable communications. As a stated aim of the HSS, the improvement of roads and bridges was undertaken in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and their execution was done through political lobbying by members of the HSS and the HSL. There were efforts to develop a network of roads and bridges after the first Jacobite rebellion, organized by General Wade who surveyed the Highlands in 1724 and oversaw the construction of four roads in the 1720s and 1730s. The idea behind this was to better connect the Highlands through a series of garrisoned military forts, such as Fort Augustus, to the Lowlands, with an overall aim to pacify Highlanders by connecting them to more “civilised” areas and to bring agricultural improvement to the area. After the second Jacobite rebellion, construction began on a second set of roads in 1748 but ended in 1767, when the man then in charge, Major Caulfield, died. These roads are significant but once Jacobitism was no longer considered a threat their upkeep was no longer prioritized and so by the 1790s only a small portion of them remained usable. These roads had been useful, but it was recognized by Scotch-British improvers that “the motives which gave rise to their formation having no relation to objects of commerce and industry, the advantages derived from them are very

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<sup>138</sup> Sederunt Book 4 (1809-1810), RHASS, p. 534. Devine, “The Rise and Fall of Illicit,” 165.

imperfect.”<sup>139</sup> By the late eighteenth century the Highlands and Islands largely remained cut off from larger centres of inhabitation, or potential markets for Highland goods. Highland society improvers sought to remedy the situation, and their efforts culminated in the construction of the Caledonian and Crinan Canals linking key areas of the Highlands to international markets and contributing to the development of the fisheries, as well as lobbying for the construction of roads and bridges to further connect the Highlands to potential markets. These were integral components of the Scoto-British improvement plan, and men located within these social circles were active lobbyists for their construction.<sup>140</sup> The first major project undertaken to improve communications in the Highlands and Islands was the Crinal Canal. Primarily, Lord Salton promoted the idea for the Crinan canal in a letter to the HSS in November 1787 (although Knox and Anderson had promoted the same to the HSL in the 1770s) for “the practicability, and expediency, of a navigable communication through the isthmus of Kintyr, from Loch Gilp on the east, to Loch Crinan on the west.” HSL and BFS member Neil Malcolm 11<sup>th</sup> of Poltalloch, Jamaican merchant and a vice president of the HSL in 1783 was also a major supporter of the plan. Through much cooperation between public and private interest construction on the Crinan Canal began in 1794. The Crinan Canal was designed by John Rennie and built by the Crinan Canal Company (CCC), headed by the Duke of Argyle, which received a loan from the British Fisheries Society in the amount of £6000 that was paid back after the government gave the CCC £25,000.<sup>141</sup> The canal would link

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<sup>139</sup> Samuel Smiles, *The Life of Thomas Telford; Civil Engineer with an Introductory History of Roads and Travelling in Great Britain* (London, 1867), 55-58; Thomas Telford, *Life of Thomas Telford, Civil Engineer*, ed. John Rickman (London, 1838) appendix (L.1.); “Report of a Sub-committee of the Directors of the Highland Society of Scotland, on Considering a Letter from Mr. Telford (engineer) to Henry Mackenzie 10<sup>th</sup> December 1802,” 365.

<sup>140</sup> Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 84-85.

<sup>141</sup> Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 88; 139.

Crinan and Ardrishaig in Argyll to the Sound of Jura, opening up the Inner Hebrides to the Clyde River, and therefore Glasgow, a major imperial port linking Scotland to the British Empire. The canal was completed in 1801. As a Jamaican merchant Malcolm would have supported the easier movement to Glasgow of Highland goods destined for the West Indian market such as salted herring and woollen manufactures, which he hoped would be manufactured on his lands in Argyllshire as well as other parts of the western Highlands and islands, an idea supported by many other improvers in HSL and HSS circles.<sup>142</sup>

The Crinan Canal would help open up the western Highlands to markets; however the rest of the Highlands and Islands needed roads, bridges and another major canal project to be better connected to international markets. This major improvement plan was in part the culmination of pressure by the HSL and the HSS on the British government to spend money on much-needed infrastructure in the area. In order to lobby the British government to help fund the improvement of communications in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland the HSS developed a report on emigration for the British government and the Society then “transmitted several reports containing detailed information to Government, and therein, among the modes stated for diverting the rage of emigration.” The report had been developed over a series of meetings and it was then presented to a general meeting of the Society on January 12, 1802, and attended by “upwards of a hundred of its members.” It was decided to transmit the report to the “Chancellor of the

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<sup>142</sup> Malcolm was “a member of the standing committee of West India planters and merchants by 1800, acquired Lamb Abbey in Kent through his marriage. He was a deputy lieutenant for Argyllshire and obtained heraldic arms at the Lyon office in 1818, but the mainstay of the family’s wealth remained their Argyll estate in Jamaica,” <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/malcolm-neill-1797-1857> (accessed 14 June 2014); Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], 12; Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 3. Malcolm’s brother Dugald, was also a vice president of the HSL in 1783. The Malcolms of Poltalloch were a well-known West Indian planter family see: Macinnes, “Commercial Landlordism and Clearance in the Scottish Highlands.”

Exchequer, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and to the Right Honourable Henry Dundas.” A second report was sent in June of that year, and a third and final one on March 28, 1803.<sup>143</sup> As we have seen throughout this chapter, strategies to keep Highlanders in the Highlands included providing employment and subsistence through the development of the herring fisheries and planning coastal villages where other types of employment would develop. However, the development of economic activities in the Highlands and Islands needed “communications through the Highlands by roads and bridges not only as affording the means of employment to the people but as being in themselves great permanent objects of the highest importance to the general interests of the country,” and the reports on emigration stressed to the government to aid in the provision of roads, bridges, and canals to better connect the Highlands and Islands to markets abroad. The want of a communication network was seen to be hindering economic growth and the HSS strongly recommended that “[I]n regard to the proper mode of preventing emigration, and the great utility, it would be, in this view, as well as to grant the necessary aid to speedily set on foot the making of roads and bridges in the Highlands, and by granting additional encouragement to the fisheries.” Without this provision, Highlanders “otherwise might be driven to seek for subsistence and encouragement in foreign lands.”<sup>144</sup> The British government agreed and the Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford (1757-1834) was given the task “to survey and report upon these projected improvements.” Whilst he was surveying the Highlands, Telford

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<sup>143</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh, 1803), x.

<sup>144</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795–1808), RHASS, p. 475; p. 539; “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request a Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963; Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh, 1803), xii.

consulted with the HSS “for a variety of local information, which was regularly furnished to him by the Society and its committee, a great part of which was afterwards published by order of the House of Commons as an appendix to Mr. Telford’s reports. The Society had the satisfaction to find that their information and suggestions had been of considerable use.” In 1802 Telford recommended to the government that the venture to provide canals, roads and bridges in the Highlands and Islands be a venture between both private and public interest, something to which the HSS agreed. Telford’s report was read at a meeting between the Committee of the HSS and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on April 7, 1803, and subsequently a discussion in the House of Commons welcomed both the recommendations of the HSS and Telford and intended to “adopt for the encouragement and support of the industry and improvement of those districts, which would be the most certain means of retaining their inhabitants, and of preventing their emigration to other countries.”<sup>145</sup> In 1803 the Select Committee of the House of Commons supported the recommendations of the Highland Society of Scotland and Thomas Telford arguing that “unless liberal aid were afforded by the legislature for the encouragement of Highland proprietors in making a great effort for the improvement of their native country; and swayed by this conviction, the committee recommended to parliament what may be deemed a new experiment, in granting continual aid for the immediate benefit and improvement of a particular district, and therein for that of the entire body politic.” The committee recommended that the government pay half of the estimated cost and “the remainder of the expense should be defrayed by the proprietors of land or other persons who might be benefitted thereby. That provision should be made for

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<sup>145</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh, 1803), xiii-xiv.

keeping such roads and bridges in proper repair.” These recommendations were passed as an Act of Parliament in July 1803. The government put up £240,000 and they received £252,000 from Highland proprietors as well as other public donations to be put towards the endeavour to build a network of roads and bridges, largely thanks to the political lobbying of members located in HSL and HSS circles, as these two societies shared much of their membership, especially landed proprietors. The government was pleased to be a part of this development in aid of the Highlands. Effective communications “have diffused habits of steady industry in making them; and so combined as to afford to the inhabitants mutual intercourse on the largest scale, as well as commodious passage for their cattle, and for the conveyance of all other articles of Highland production, and of Highland traffic.”<sup>146</sup> Telford was hired the following year to develop a network of roads and bridges throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland as engineer to the Commissioners of Highland Roads and Bridges, which was established in 1803, as well as engineering the Caledonian Canal with William Jessop until 1812, when only Telford himself oversaw the project until its completion.<sup>147</sup> After 1812, construction was overseen by Telford himself until its completion. The British Fisheries Society also commissioned Telford to design and build its planned villages, further connecting him to the HSL’s plan for improvement. Telford would go on to advise the improvements of many more planned Highland villages including Keise, Staxigoe, Broadhaven, Wick

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<sup>146</sup> Telford, *Life of Thomas Telford*, appendix (L.3.) “Report of the Commissioners Appointed for the Purposes of an Act, Passed in the Forty-Third Year of the Reign of His Majesty King George the Third ‘For Making Roads and Bridges in the Highlands of Scotland’; Being a Considered Statement of their Transactions During Eighteen Years, 1803-1821,” 371-372.

<sup>147</sup> “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request a Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963; A.D. Cameron, *The Caledonian Canal* [4<sup>th</sup> edition] (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005); Thomas Telford, *Life of Thomas Telford, Civil Engineer*, ed. John Rickman (London, 1838) appendix (L.1.) “Queries Addressed to the Highland Society, by Mr. Telford,” 364 and “Report of a Subcommittee of the Directors of the Highland Society of Scotland, on Considering a Letter from Mr. Telford (engineer) to Henry Mackenzie 10<sup>th</sup> December 1802,” 367.

(Pulteneytown), Sarclet, Clyth, Lybster, Forse, Dunbeath, Helmsdale, Brora, and Portmahomack, some of which became major herring fishing stations after the mid-nineteenth century. Telford would also become a member of the HSL and in 1834 he was presented with a gift of inscribed silverware from the British Fisheries Society for all of his service to the company.<sup>148</sup>

Therefore, Thomas Telford supported the Scoto-British plan for improvement in the Highlands and Islands. Not only did he support plans to establish planned fishing villages in order to develop the herring fisheries, of which he was hired to survey and build Ullapool and Pulteneytown, but also that “the Caledonian Canal, and the bridges and roads before mentioned...they will not only furnish present employment, but promise to accomplish all the lading objects which can reasonably be looked forward to the improvement and future welfare of the country, whether we regard its agriculture, fisheries, or manufactures.” Telford very much agreed with the idea that roads, bridges, and canals would be the means to prevent emigration and build the economy, by linking the area to international markets. Most especially building the Caledonian Canal “upon the scale I have proposed, would prove the means of facilitating the intercourse from the west of England and Scotland, and the whole of Ireland, and likewise from the east side of Great Britain to America and the West Indies.”<sup>149</sup> However, where Telford did not

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<sup>148</sup> A.D. Cameron, *The Caledonian Canal* [4<sup>th</sup> edition] (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005); Roland Paxton, “Telford, Thomas (1757-1834),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/27107> (accessed 6 March 2014); Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 59; appendix 1.4.

<sup>149</sup> Telford, *Life of Thomas Telford*, 364-365.

agree with the Plan, was that he was critical of landowners who replaced traditional black cattle with sheep, as he endorsed a native industry over an imported one.<sup>150</sup>

Telford sought the help of the HSS when he was conducting his surveys of the Highlands for the report he compiled for the British government. Telford published the communications he had with the HSS in the appendices of his reports and the HSS “had the satisfaction to find that their information and suggestions had been of considerable use.”<sup>151</sup> In other words, the knowledge gained by members of the HSS in their own surveys, which will be examined in the next chapter, was used to undertake large-scale improvement projects conceived of by Scoto-British improvers and supported by the British government. The Caledonian Canal, which opened in 1822 (albeit partially completed) and cost upwards of £1,023,628 had the effect of connecting the BFS fishing villages such as Ullapool and Tobermory with the rest of Great Britain by increasing shipping traffic to the areas these towns are located.<sup>152</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the ideas driving an alternative improvement plan for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, which sat alongside the Whig version of improvement, which has dominated the narrative of economic and social improvement in the Highlands and Islands. Emerging from the development of classical conservative

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<sup>150</sup> Thomas Telford, “Survey and Reports in Reports of the Select Committee on the Survey of the Central Highlands,” *Sourcebook of Scottish Economic and Social History* edited by R.H. Campbell (London: Blackwell, 1968), 46-47.

<sup>151</sup> “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request a Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963.

<sup>152</sup> Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, 33; 86; Great Britain, *Report from the Select Committee on the Caledonian and Crinan Canals* (London, 1839), iii-iv.

ideology, a plan for improvement was developed that was to include the provision of employment and secure subsistence through the development of planned villages and towns in strategic locations in the Highlands and Islands. The formation of this plan for development is found within the institutional networks formed by the HSL. The crucial alliance with the HSS and the formation together of the BFS meant that a framework was provided upon which the improvement plan could develop. Each society had its role to play, and with a membership drawn from much of the same people, these societies were bound together by a shared agenda. This agenda was the development of locally appropriate industries, which would bring wealth to the region, within a developing conservative economic framework. This framework was one in which the leaders of society (in this case Highland elites) felt they had an obligation to provide employment and subsistence to the local inhabitants so that they would not rely on others, especially the government. The development of industry would benefit the whole community by eliminating poverty and creating wealth, within an accepted social hierarchy. Unlike the Whig version of Improvement, which espoused pacification of the region through work and stringent *dirigisme*, conservative Highland improvers advocated self-sufficiency and the provisions of markets, so that wealth could develop for the whole community. In other words, this was the development of modern free trade economics playing out in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. If markets for native Highland goods could be found, wealth would be created, but as economic patriots, the HSL and its colleagues advocated for controlled free trade, i.e. favouring British and British imperial markets above foreign ones. Nowhere in this conceptual framework were Highlanders blamed for their own poverty. Rather, Highlanders were lauded for their potential to develop the British

economy, and contribute to the wealth and security of Great Britain and the British Empire. As John Knox argued: “the inhabitants of the west Highlands and Hebrides are by no means deficient in good sense, enterprize or activity. Instead of emigrating to other countries, they would resort to crowds to settle in the free villages on their own coasts. Their knowledge of the abundance of fish in the surrounding seas would induce them to apply themselves to fisheries.” Highlanders were, therefore, recognized to be active agents in the expansion of the British Empire, through their participation in war, as a reserve of the expanding British Navy, and, most importantly, future workers of an industrial economy. And by keeping Highlanders at home and employed “their trade and consumption would increase the revenues and promote the manufactures.” This was the direction that the rest of Great Britain was headed, and it was hoped the Highlands would not be too far behind.<sup>153</sup>

In addition to developing other economic industries that could take place on Highland estates, such as mining and legal whisky production, planned inland villages and crofts were to be the solution to increased livestock rearing in much of the Highlands and Islands in this period. In order to move people onto smaller plots of land, Highlanders themselves had to be surveyed to find the best ways in which secure subsistence in the rough and unpredictable climate of the Highlands and Islands. With the aid of the HSL, the HSS would survey people who lived in the Highlands and islands to find the best way to integrate smaller-scale farming with increased sheep and cattle farming as well as how best to undertake small-scale industry such as woollen manufacturing, which would also take place in small planned villages and towns, providing the local population with viable employment. This was part of an optimistic

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<sup>153</sup> Member of the Highland Society of London, *The Necessity of Founding Villages*, 37-39.

plan by the Scoto-British improvers to develop new (but based on old) industries on their estates, in the hopes that the Highlands would join the expanding manufacturing economies of the rest of Great Britain.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Some of these industries would be adopted by nineteenth century improvers, but with limited success. See: Eric Richards, "The Prospect of Economic Growth in Sutherland at the Time of the Clearances, 1809 to 1813," *The Scottish Historical Review* 49, no. 148 (1970): 154-171.

## **Chapter 4: Building Native Knowledge for the Improvement plan: Surveying the Highlands, 1789-1815**

### **Introduction**

The plan for economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands devised by members of the HSL and their colleagues was the establishment of planned coastal villages and towns and planned inland villages and towns, as well as planned settlements on or coastal sections of Highland and Island estates (crofts), and the “introduction of a spirit of industry.”<sup>1</sup> On coastal planned villages and towns where fishing and kelping were to take place it was hoped that secondary industries would form, including woollen manufacturing. Subsistence farming was to take place nearby, and communications would be improved in order to provide access to markets for Highland products. To members of the Highland Society of London and the Highland Society of Scotland, as well as their colleagues and supporters in the British government, the social and economic development of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland required special attention, because, it was argued, imported schemes and protectionist policies were causing mass disaffection and emigration. In order to develop the British economy and prevent emigration, economic improvements had to reflect the immediate needs of Highlanders, which were employment and secure subsistence. Planned fishing villages would not only develop a commercial industry in the Highlands but would also integrate activities that already took place in the area. Kelp manufacturing remained important; and there is no doubt that this activity was part of the impetus to develop the crofting system

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<sup>1</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, “Reasons for Adopting a Small Measure of very Considerable Effect on the Highlands,” 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

(small, ocean-side communities being ideal).<sup>2</sup> However, other economic activities were to complement kelping and fishing, so that local people would be employed year round. In this way, it would not be necessary for Highlanders to leave their homeland as new commercial priorities developed. Scoto-British improvers envisioned a new Highland economy in which Highland estates would integrate sheep and cattle rearing with other economic activities such as fishing, mining, woollen manufacturing, and (legal) whisky production. The improvement of these activities would provide employment for the local population who would be moved onto planned villages leaving the bulk of land to the rearing of livestock. The development of communications (roads, bridges, and canals) would provide access to markets for Highland goods by linking the remote areas of the Highlands and Islands with markets in the south as well as, crucially, throughout the empire.

Within an accepted social hierarchy, conservative economic and social development was designed to pull the lower orders out of poverty and provide them with the means to build their own wealth through secure subsistence and industry. In addition to input from writers such as James Anderson and John Knox, as well as many others found in HSL and HSS circles the development of these industries required indigenous input as it was common Highlanders who dealt with constant subsistence crises and had historically undertaken the activities Scoto-British improvers wished to develop. Their knowledge, then, was a crucial part of developing the economic improvement scheme. From 1789 to 1798 the HSS organized surveys in order to elicit information from both expert and lay informants on various topics related to the development of the Highlands

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<sup>2</sup> James R. Coull and William P.L. Thompson, "Kelp," in *Boats, Fishing, and the Sea: A Compendium of Scottish Ethnology Vol. 4*, ed. James R. Coull et al. (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009), 151.

and Islands of Scotland in order to provide a complete picture of the area's potential. Information was gathered through competition, with prizes and medals being offered to those who reported back with the best information or results possible. Although the surveys were designed to offer anyone the opportunity to report back on information on a variety of topics the HSS deemed to be of importance in each year the competitions ran, we can see both from the rules of each year's survey and the discussions had between members of the HSS that there was a desire on behalf of members to find the most 'authentic' information as possible. In other words, they wanted information from people who lived and breathed life in the Highlands and Islands. It is through examining the process by which the surveys were conceived of and undertaken that the importance of native knowledge to these improvers is revealed. What differentiates Scoto-British improvers from those who developed improvement schemes for the Highlands using theories and knowledge from outside the physical and conceptual area of the Highlands (largely Whigs) is that Scoto-British improvers used both the ideas of members within their own political and intellectual circles who had knowledge of the area. Crucially, information from common Highlanders who had on the ground experience living in the Highlands was deemed necessary to form these improvement schemes.

### **Foraging and Famine: Crises in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland**

The improvement plan, or the planned village system, partially rested on the idea that Highlanders held the keys to suitable economic activities in the places in which they lived, but the provision of subsistence farming in the wake of numerous famines was also

an integral part of the plan. Secure subsistence had already proven to be a difficult goal to achieve in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, which underwent periodic and sometimes catastrophic famines. A return to some older ways of farming integrated with some new technologies was believed to be the answer to the constant threat of starvation. The subsistence crisis of 1782/3 was but one in a series of famines in the Highlands and Islands in the eighteenth century; however, it was the worst. Severe weather that season had caused the failure of grain and potato crops, the two staples for many people in the area, leaving many to starve.<sup>3</sup> As John Knox pointed out, “the year 1782 proved remarkably cold and wet, the crops over great part of Europe were more or less injured, and the northern climates experienced a scarcity, amounting to a famine.”<sup>4</sup> For many years leading up to the crisis, people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland had been dealing with what Dodgshon terms constant “low-order crises.” Land in the western Highland and Hebridean communities was difficult to farm, as it was an extreme environment, oftentimes subject to punishing and erratic weather.<sup>5</sup> Fishing together with potato cultivation and the production of hardier crops for cattle and sheep rearing, such as hay, was seen as a solution to starvation, but as we saw in the last chapter, Highlanders were largely prohibited from fishing for their own consumption due to the punitive laws governing the use of imported English salt, necessary for the preservation of herring. Fishing made the most sense, not only as a potential commercial industry, but one in which Highlanders could both feed themselves and sell their surplus, thereby building the local economy. The western Highlands and islands in particular had to rely on fishing

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<sup>3</sup> Robert A. Dodgshon, “Coping With Risk: Subsistence Crises in the Scottish Highlands and Islands, 1600-1800,” *Rural History* 15, no.1 (2004): 2; Youngson, *After the Forty-Five*, 86.

<sup>4</sup> Knox, *A View of the British Empire*, 78.

<sup>5</sup> Dodgshon, “Coping with Risk,” *passim*.

because, as George Dempster argued, the area was “subject to heavy rains which destroy the crops in the valies [*sic*], and to a degree of cold, as you ascend the mountains, which prevents the ripening of corn. But in answer thereto I would only observe, that no better food, especially when joined with fish, so abundant in all circumjacent seas; and that land may be cultivated to advantage for pasture and hay in climates too cold to yield corn.” Potatoes, a hardy vegetable that can grow in rocky soils with few nutrients, and on small plots, it was hoped, would be the replacement in the western Highlands and Islands for oats and barley, which often failed to ripen when the weather was particularly bad, leading to periodic starvation. The Irish and Highland potato famines, however, would reveal the potato’s weakness as a reliable source of food.<sup>6</sup>

However, as people who lived in these areas dealt with constant famine conditions throughout their lives, they were relatively adept at dealing with these low-order crises. As Dodgshon argues, “major subsistence crises occurred in a knowing context, a context in which communities had evolved practices of husbandry, customary forms of social response, and strategies of food procurement that helped to combat recurrent scarcities and famines. Environmental events capable of producing very poor harvests (i.e. late springs, wet harvests, etc [..]) occurred regularly but were moderated in their effects through these practices, strategies and responses.” As John Mackenzie explained: to an outsider, “it was very surprising where they [common Highlanders] could find the means of subsistence, considering that the country, so far as he could observe, hardly produced anything but rocks and heath.”<sup>7</sup> When conditions became so

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<sup>6</sup> See: T.M. Devine, *The Great Highland Famine Hunger, Emigration and the Scottish Highlands in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988).

<sup>7</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

bad that these strategies failed, crisis could not be averted, as in the agricultural disasters of 1782/3.<sup>8</sup>

Common Highlanders and Islanders were not alone; many peasant communities throughout Great Britain and Europe employed various strategies in order to alleviate some of the suffering when crops failed to provide adequate subsistence, or failed altogether. In the western Highlands and Islands, though, we do know that people resorted to non-agricultural sources of food (what Dodgshon terms “famine foods”) largely drawn from the ocean and coastal environments such as marine vegetables (including pepper dulse, kelp, and bladderlock), sea mammals, such as seals and whales, fish (when available), sea birds including puffins, gannets, guillemots; for their flesh and eggs, as well as various weeds found in and around arable and pasture land such as sorrel, wild spinach, burdock, nettles, among many others.<sup>9</sup> However, as David Worthington has shown in places like Easter Ross and parts of Sutherland (as well as along other parts of the coastal Highlands), marine and fresh water creatures had historically been eaten as part of a regular diet, so we must be careful in identifying non-arable foodstuffs necessarily as ‘crisis’ foods.<sup>10</sup>

Other strategies were employed by common Highlanders and Islanders, which included adapting their arable sources of food. The crofting system, for example, which could not provide enough land to grow grain, forced tenants to adapt to other crops for their mainstay, such as the potato, that required less land, allowing it to be more

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<sup>8</sup> Dodgshon, “Coping With Risk,” 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. and *passim*.

<sup>10</sup> Worthington, “A Northern Scottish Maritime Region,” 196-198; T.C. Smout and Alex Gibson, *Prices, Food and Wages in Scotland, 1550-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 233.

intensively farmed.<sup>11</sup> Over this earlier period, Dodgshon has also found evidence that some Highland and Island landlords did respond to famine conditions by using such strategies as adjusting, deferring or easing rents but this did not solve underlying problems and many people either went hungry, abandoned their tenancies (as in the case of Nigg in the ‘ill years’ of 1699-1705) or emigrated.<sup>12</sup> In the late-eighteenth century, many Improvers were keen to alleviate the underlying causes of famine and the subsequent disaffection experienced by their tenants; however, as people who did not have to deal with subsistence living, Improvers and landowners alike did not have the vital information needed to best develop a plan for secure subsistence. The answers lay in the knowledge that could be provided to improvers from surveying native Highlanders as well as inviting information from ‘experts’ by offering incentives for information in the form of essay competitions. The Highland Society of Scotland organized a sophisticated system for eliciting information from a variety of sources, including common Highlanders. With this information it was hoped that improvement plan would lead to full employment, secure subsistence and the restructuring of Highland estates to accommodate a variety of economies. Nowhere in this plan were Highlanders to be forced to live in a state of abject poverty if they stayed in their homeland or be forced to abandon their homeland altogether.

### **Surveying as Ideology: Gathering information from the Highlands**

Surveying to gather information was not a new phenomenon in the late eighteenth

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<sup>11</sup> Devine, “A Conservative People?,” 232; Dodgshon, “Coping With Risk,” 15-18.

<sup>12</sup> Karen J. Cullen, *Famine in Scotland: The ‘Ill Years’ of the 1690s* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010); Dodgshon, “Coping With Risk,” 11-12.

century.<sup>13</sup> In the seventeenth century, information regarding land and its use for government or private projects was collected by political and economic theorists such as the philosopher, economist, statistician, and founding member of the Royal Society, Sir William Petty (a contemporary and acquaintance of Thomas Hobbes, 1623-1687) who, among many other projects, surveyed parts of Ireland for Oliver Cromwell who planned to settle soldiers in order to boost an English presence in the country. Petty is considered to be one of the most important economic writers in the “formative” period of classical economics, although he was not an economist, as we would understand one to be today, he contributed the science of economic analysis.<sup>14</sup> Petty, like classical economic thinkers we find forming the improvement agenda of the HSL, was largely interested in the area’s economic capabilities, not just undertaking a project on behalf of the Lord Protector to dilute the country of Catholics. Petty also became interested in matters in England and sought to determine how labour could contribute to national prosperity (using the United Provinces and France as examples), an interest of many eighteenth-century enlightened thinkers. Petty’s method of efficiently gathering information is known as ‘political arithmetic’—the seventeenth century precursor to modern statistical analysis. This was essentially the seventeenth-century origin of political economy. Petty, like the Scoto-British improvers, was interested in looking at how a society functioned in order to determine its economic potential. This required getting to know the citizens, the commercial, fiscal, and financial capacities, and potential for development. Petty, like the classical thinkers of the late eighteenth century was also in favour of population

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<sup>13</sup> Charles W. J. Withers, “How Scotland Came to Know Itself: Geography, National Identity and the Making of a Nation, 1680-1790,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 21 (1995): 375.

<sup>14</sup> Tony Aspromourgos, “New Light on the Economics of William Petty (1623-1687): Some Findings From Previously Undisclosed Documents,” *Contributions to Political Economy* 19, No.1 (2000): 53-70.

increase.<sup>15</sup> The surveys undertaken by the HSS functioned in much the same way. The Highlands and Islands were deemed to have economic potential that had not been properly exploited, largely by outsiders who knew little about the area. Scoto-British improvers recognized the potential of the area and the people but sought new solutions to stunted economic development. This required gathering as much information about the people, the plants, the industries and the potential for wealth as well as strategies to keep people at home. In other words, employing political economy in the style of Anderson and Knox.

In Scotland, early attempts at “the construction of geographical knowledge” by men such as Sir Robert Sibbald, John Cowley, and the Earl of Buchan were largely unsuccessful, but nonetheless brought local knowledge into a more ‘national’ context and provided some of the tools necessary for later surveys as it utilised a number of different intellectual and folk methods of gaining knowledge. As Withers shows, surveying from the period 1680 to 1790 “involved the making of national space and giving value to the idea of national knowledge through a variety of intellectual practices.”<sup>16</sup> Of particular interest here is the use of the ‘questionnaire’ as a means of gathering local knowledge, which formed the basis of enlightened surveying in the late eighteenth century.<sup>17</sup> However in the eighteenth century very little was still understood about the Highlands and Islands of Scotland outside of the handful of travellers’ accounts that were coming out as the century went on.

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<sup>15</sup> David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 147; Aspromourgos, “New Light on the Economics of William Petty,” 55; T. Barnard, “Petty, Sir William (1623-1687),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/22069> (accessed 28 December 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Withers, “How Scotland Came to Know Itself,” 373.

<sup>17</sup> Withers, “How Scotland Came to Know Itself,” 371.

There had been some eighteenth-century attempts to understand the geographical space of the Highlands and Islands aside from the many travellers' accounts, which contributed immensely to the general public's understanding of the area, albeit from outsiders' perspectives. The Highlands had been mapped separately from Lowland Scotland in the eighteenth century: for example, in 1718 military road maps were created following the first Jacobite insurrection. The Reports on the Annexed Estates provide agricultural and societal information, and shortly following the second Jacobite rebellion the 1747-1755 Military Survey of Scotland, provided much detailed information about the Highlands for the British government. These surveys helped outsiders to better understand the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in order to include the area into a British national narrative.<sup>18</sup> During the Scottish Enlightenment period, surveying (or statistical analysis) in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was undertaken on a much grander scale. The most famous survey ever done of its kind, and included all the parishes in Scotland, was the *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791-99), organised by the indefatigable Sir John Sinclair, who was also the patron.<sup>19</sup> The *Statistical Account* was the culmination of ideas formed by seventeenth-century economic theorists and eighteenth-century Stadialist discourse. As Donald Withrington argues the *Statistical Account* was an idealistic work, which was the very product of Enlightenment thought. "In its very origins and conception," he argues "[and] in the willing cooperation he received from over nine-hundred ministers who shared his perception of the special enterprise to society as a whole...as part of a survey; and in the intended (and actual) use of that survey in "analysing the real state of mankind and examining...the internal

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<sup>18</sup> Withers, "How Scotland Came to Know Itself," 378.

<sup>19</sup> These are now referred to as the 'Old' *Statistical Account* as there was another one undertaken in the 1830s and 40s now referred to as the 'New' *Statistical Account for Scotland* (1834-45).

structure of society' so that a more perfect 'science of government' could be attained in order to promote the general happiness of the species."<sup>20</sup> The *Statistical Account* utilized both local and national sources of knowledge and sought to bring those sources of knowledge together to form a 'national' picture of Scotland, which included the Highlands and Islands. Each parish was surveyed and questions asked included the nature of climate, health, agriculture, customs, and natural resources of each parish. Like the surveying undertaken in the earlier period, Withers explains, "local knowledge, antiquities, folk customs were thus intrinsically worthwhile in the empirical study of local areas and claimed, too, as part of the enduring strength of the nation. Geography and chorography [description] as useful knowledges were in this period principal means to the construction of patriotism and national identity." The informants for the *Statistical Account* were largely ministers of the Church of Scotland from each parish in Scotland who were given a set of questions they were to report back on to the organizers of the project.<sup>21</sup>

However, the Highland Society of Scotland's surveys were the first effort to survey the Highlands and Islands as a separate and distinct region. These surveys were undertaken at roughly the same time as the *Statistical Account*, which should not surprise us, as Sir John Sinclair was closely involved in both endeavours. The Highland surveys had a similar end goal: to systematically gather detailed information about a particular area in order to understand it as a whole. The major differences of these surveys from the *Statistical Account* are that they focus solely on the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and they elicited information on an incentive basis, by distributing premiums for

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<sup>20</sup> Donald J. Withrington, "What was distinctive about the Scottish Enlightenment?" in *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment*, ed. J. J. Carter and J. H. Pittock (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), 16.

<sup>21</sup> Withers, "How Scotland Came to Know Itself," 375.

information remitted back to them. Hard work, therefore, was to form the basis of information solicited. The Society decided to split the premiums into two categories: “the first, to procure information and instruction to the country, and especially to those parts of it, the Highlands and Islands, which fell more immediately within the scope of the Society’s original institution on matters essential to their industry and improvement;—the second, to encourage that industry and improvement, be rewards for their exertion.” The first category was to be rewarded by honorary premiums (in the form of medals) for “essays and communications” and was aimed at landowners and intellectuals, and under the second, monetary rewards “for the successful practice of agriculture and manufactures, which was aimed at “actual farmers and tenants.”<sup>22</sup> Over the decade that the surveys were undertaken, the Society also received unsolicited information from various well-known (and some not known at all) agriculturalists, naturalists and men of letters who offered information on a variety of topics, which the Society gave them “pecuniary remuneration for their trouble.” Also, the Society received and published within the *Transactions* communications from people “whose situations placed them above such awards, marks of honorary distinction, or votes of thanks from the Society have been bestowed.” These included the Duke of Argyle, the Earl of Kinnoull, Sir John Sinclair, Sir John Clerk of Pennycuik, George Dempster, James Anderson, John Knox, the Rev. Dr. Walker of Edinburgh University (who would take the role of Professor of Natural History for the HSS), among many other notable names.<sup>23</sup>

The surveys were seen to be the solution to the ‘Highland economic problem’. If the Highlands could be ‘known’, they could be improved; if the area could be improved

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<sup>22</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xii-xvi.

<sup>23</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xx-xxi.

then Britain as a whole would prosper. This process was seen to be the solution to a nation with unequal economic development. People, including common Highlanders, were encouraged to work hard in order to provide the best information possible. This strategy of acquiring information through incentive mirrors that of the earlier Whig period, but was in keeping with the development of conservative economics. Some strategies for the encouragement (and control) of economic development by Whigs in the early- and mid-eighteenth century were that government agencies such as the Commissioners of Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland would offer premiums for information and the government offered some bounties to help export certain local British products (mostly to the colonies), most notably linen. Tariffs, as we saw in the last chapter, were also put in place to prevent the importation of cheaper, non-British goods. Conservative improvers favoured the positive side; premiums and (albeit limited) bounties, but not punitive measures such as taxes, duties and tariffs, especially on Highland products or items needed to develop local industries, such as coal and duty-free salt.<sup>24</sup> Private societies were also gathering information in the earlier eighteenth century. For example, the Honourable Society of Improvers was one of the first societies in Britain to undertake the gathering of information about agricultural improvement on a large scale and had numerous landowners and intellectuals on its membership list in 1743. The Society published essays in their *Transactions* compiled by the Society's "experts," which answered questions from various agricultural improvers and landowners in order to add to a body of scientific and agricultural knowledge. These surveys, however, did not utilise information from common people.<sup>25</sup> It was felt by these

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<sup>24</sup> Lockhart, *Scottish Planned Villages*, 7-8; Rackwitz, *Travels to Terra Incognita*, 357-370.

<sup>25</sup> The Honourable Society of Improvers of the Knowledge of Agriculture, *Select Transactions*, xviii-xxiii.

improvers that the answer to economic improvement in Scotland was the importation of outside ideas. Lord Kames, for example, argued that it was the importation of English ideas that was helping Scottish agriculture to improve. He argued: “some years ago, farmers in Scotland were ignorant and indolent; nothing to be seen but weeds and trash, not a single field in order. People who never saw better husbandry, had no notion of any better. Skill in agriculture is spreading gradually in Scotland; and young people acquire some knowledge by fight, even before they think of practice. After such advance, may we not hope, that our progress will be rapid; and that agriculture will soon be familiar among us, and as skillfully conducted as in England? May this reflection animate our landed gentry; and inflame them with a desire, to acquire riches to themselves, and lustre to their country.”<sup>26</sup> The surveys undertaken by the HSS, on the other hand, not only provided Scoto-British improvers with knowledge from a range of intellectuals and thinkers but also local knowledge from common Highlanders. At times the surveys can also provide the historian with a window into the everyday lives of the people who lived and worked in the Highlands and Islands. This chapter will assess the decade of surveying prior to the HSS’s first published *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland* published in 1799, as these are the years that all levels of Highland and Island society were surveyed providing the most detailed sample. The HSS no longer surveyed after 1799; however, it continued to offer premiums for essays and information on agricultural topics after this date, which it published in its *Transactions*, but by 1800 the Society was shifting its focus to Scotland as a whole and Highland topics began to wane.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Henry Home, Lord Kames, *The Gentleman Farmer. Being an Attempt to Improve Agriculture, by Subjecting it to the Test of Rational Principles* (Dublin, 1779), x.

<sup>27</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799); Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS. The date ranges for the Sederunt books, which were microfilmed by the National Archives of

The competitions, or surveys, began in earnest in 1789 and ran yearly. The premiums were advertised both in newspapers around the country and directly in the field—the idea being to reach as far an audience as possible. The premiums were advertised according to the subjects’ importance, with gold medals worth ten guineas being offered to the most important subjects (usually related to livestock). In order to reach the crucial demographic consisting of tenants and sub tenants (many of whom were probably illiterate) every year the HSS stipulated that “the clergy of the Highland parishes will be so good as cause publish the above advertisement, so as it may be made known to the country people who do not see a news paper, and the Society also request that the nobility and gentry of the Highlands, particularly such as are members of this Society and their factors, will please give directions for making the advertisement known to their tenants.”<sup>28</sup> This advertisement was posted with each survey to ensure that common Highlanders would be made aware of the competitions.

Each year a committee was formed to agree upon the questions in the survey. The questions corresponded to the improvement plan outlined by men like Anderson and Mackenzie: fisheries, planned villages, agriculture, woollen and linen manufacturing, subsistence farming, arable crops in general, improvement of cattle and sheep, and kelp manufacturing. Matters to be surveyed changed each year as circumstances changed. For example, in the case of wool and fishing, as new societies were founded premiums were altered. Once a society was formed for dealing with woollen articles, for example, they

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Scotland do not match the original books held privately by the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society. There is overlap with the microfilmed versions. The first Sederunt book is not number one, the second one starts at number one so date ranges have been employed here. Sederunt books 1 and 2 have the same date range, but the books are not facsimiles.

<sup>28</sup> Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS, p. 284; Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), civ.

were left out of the surveys, “as falling more properly within the department of the British Wool Society (1791)”<sup>29</sup>; and those for matters related to fisheries, were discontinued for a similar reason; namely that there was a “Board of Trustees [the British Fisheries Society], for the express purpose of encouraging the fishery of Scotland.”<sup>29</sup> In other words, information gathered in certain years was then used for the new societies that were formed to deal with particular improvement projects.

The HSS surveyed as much of the Highlands and Islands as possible, and devised a complex system of reporting that involved sub-committees located in each area. All of the Highland and Island counties were surveyed in this period, which included Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Elgin, Cromarty, Inverness, Argyll, Bute, Perth, Aberdeen, Moray, Banff, Stirling, Forfar, and Nairn. These areas were considered “The Highland Districts” in this time period. The sub-committees were made up of various local elites such as factors and magistrates and it was through these subcommittees that ideas were then transmitted back to the Society using affidavits to prevent corruption and certify the authenticity of the respondents’ replies. The surveys were divided into categories or ‘classes,’ depending on the importance of the subject. The surveys changed from year to year depending on what information was needed. As the HSS argued in their first publication: “Premiums for essays have naturally been retrenched, after the Society had procured by means of those already bestowed, as full information as could, in that manner, be obtained.”<sup>30</sup> For the categories in which money was offered as prizes (as rewards for proactive participation in the advertised improvement projects), and the value

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<sup>29</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xx.

<sup>30</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xix.

in this period ranged from ten guineas to a pound, depending on the value of the information being elicited.

In order to prevent fraud the Society demanded that competitors provide evidence of their products. In the woollen manufactures category for example, the HSS stipulated that

Competitors are to fix upon their specimens to be transmitted as above mentioned, some distinguishing mark, and at the same time to lodge a sealed note, containing an affidavit, or oath of the competitor taken before a Justice of the Peace, or other magistrates that the competing article was actually manufactured by the competitor. The affidavit as to the cloth, must further specify the quantity of the competing article manufactured by the competitor within the last twelve months.<sup>31</sup>

With their submissions, competitors had to provide the “price at which he could afford to sell it, with a reasonable profit to himself.” Those who won the premiums “had to sell the goods to this Society or to any person or persons willing to buy them, at the prices specified by the owner, make to any person such a quantity as may be desired at the same prices, and of a quality equally good. No person or company will be allowed to gain more than one of these premiums.”<sup>32</sup> In other words limits were placed on competitors to give everyone surveyed a fair chance to submit their information. These limits also ensured that the HSS had access to information from common Highlanders.

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<sup>31</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 276.

<sup>32</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 276; p. 367.

### **Aim of the Surveys: Assessing Native Information**

It is not possible here to reproduce all of the premiums offered; however, as an example, we can briefly look at the some of initial premiums offered in 1789, which largely set the tone for the rest of the surveys until 1798 when the results were published the following year. The first section of premiums offered was advertised to a general Highland audience with top prizes of a “gold medal of ten guineas value.” The first class prizes were related to black cattle, which was still a very important industry at the time.<sup>33</sup> Prevention of disease in livestock, how much land to enclose and the kinds of “grass and green crops suited to the soil and climate of the Highlands” as well as oats and “bear” (bere, or barley) intended for feeding cattle. The second class of premiums, also a gold medal for the top prize, were related to the fishing industry and included the state of the fisheries, the “present state of the salt manufacture in Scotland and the means of improving it, particularly for the purpose of the fisheries,” and the establishment of fishing villages. The third class included prizes for essays on woollen and linen manufacturing, in particular the HSS wished to see women engaged in this activity, procuring coal and peat “with the smallest loss of time and trouble to the tenants,” and finally the best way to manufacture kelp.<sup>34</sup> The fourth class of premiums was directed at landed proprietors for improvement on their estates including enclosures, the greatest “number of hands” engaged in woollen manufacturing, settling a person on the estate who could teach workers how to knit stockings in the “Aberdeen and Shetland method,” and for the proprietor who could have the most employed in linen manufacturing. The

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<sup>33</sup> Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords, and Rural Turmoil* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000), 36.

<sup>34</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xiii-xiv.

fifth class was for anyone who had the greatest number of people employed in making nets out of hemp for the fishing industry.<sup>35</sup>

The final three classes of premiums were offered to “actual farmers and tenants.” In the counties of “Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland—The Highland districts of Ross, Inverness, Nairn, Elgin, Banff, Aberdeen Perth, Sterling, Dunbarton, Argyle, and Bute.” Tenants were to report on who had the greatest proportion of land under ‘sown clover and ryegrass seed’ not less than one Scotch acre (approximately 1.3 English acres), who could raise the greatest amount of hay, from those who were not “living in market towns, or paying rent of 12s an acre, and upwards,” who could have the most arable land under turnip, the greatest amount of potatoes on one acre, and liming “heathy muir or hill ground not arable” in order to grow grass crops. The idea was to turn otherwise barren land into land which could grow food for livestock. The top prize in this category was two guineas and ten pounds of clover seeds.<sup>36</sup> These categories are important as in the crofting system small tenants still raised livestock in the common grazing area and therefore had to be able to feed not only themselves but also the animals.

The seventh class, with a top prize of six guineas, was dedicated to woollen manufacturing, including woollen cloth, worsted stockings (“not under the number of 24 pairs”), and worsted, “fit for the manufacture of stockings, spun in the Highlands of Scotland, the quantity made, of which the specimen consists, to be no less than 20 spindles.” As the 1790s wore on, premiums for woollen manufacturing were largely offered for the districts of Sutherland, Caithness, which were areas where sheep were increasingly being raised in significant numbers and Shetland and Orkney, where the

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<sup>35</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xv.

<sup>36</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xvi-xvii.

Society envisioned the proliferation of native breeds for woollen manufacturing (see below). For Caithness and Sutherland, for example, a prize of three guineas was offered “for the best parcel of worsted stockings [a casual hardy stocking], not under the number of twenty four pairs, spun and knit in the above counties, and well shaped, worth from one shilling to two shillings each pair.” In Orkney and Shetland, areas where the HSS envisioned a woollen industry using native Island sheep to develop (see below), larger prizes were offered for cloth “fit for common use...worth two shillings the yard, each piece not to be under twenty yards.”<sup>37</sup>

In addition to sheep woollen manufacturing, the HSS investigated the potential of goat hair manufactures, which could also take place on the planned villages, although their findings did not end up in the published *Transactions*. In 1798, Sir John Sinclair recommended that goat hair could be a useful industry in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. He offered to provide “some male goats of the shawl kind to any person resident in a proper situation, whom this Society may have confidence in, for trying the experiment of crossing the breed of these goats with the Highland goat.”<sup>38</sup> The ‘shawl’, or cashmere, goat was an often mixed breed goat historically raised in England for the manufacture of clothing; its hair had a very fine texture, which the Society felt “might be improved by the cross-breed with the goats of this country, whose wool, even in its present state is mentioned by Mr. Paterson, saddler, who attended by desire of the committee, to be worth a Guinea a pound to hatters, and of which hair or wool, the skin

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<sup>37</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 275.

<sup>38</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p.187; A. Conolly, “On the White-Haired Angora Goat, and on Another Species of Goat Found in the Same Province, Resembling the Thibet Shawl Goat,” *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 6 (1841): 159-172. Cashmere describes the down not the goat. Those who raised goats for cashmere would have been using mixed breed or a variety of goats. According to Scottish Fibres “once crossed with higher volume producing goats new breeds of good cashmere producers can be obtained.” [http://www.scottishfibres.co.uk/acatalog/Cashmere\\_Story.html](http://www.scottishfibres.co.uk/acatalog/Cashmere_Story.html), accessed 19 February 2013.

of an ordinary Highland goat produces a pretty large handful, which he has gathered from those he uses in the way of his profession.”<sup>39</sup> The fine hair of the imported goat was to be improved by the native Highland goat, which could increase the quantity of high-quality hair for various manufactures. As a complement to wool and goat hair production prizes were offered for the production of plants for dyeing the thread and cloth such as madder [*rubia*] a red vegetable dye used since ancient times to die natural fabrics such as wool. In 1794, for example, a prize of ten guineas was offered to whoever could grow the most madder on a Scots acre.<sup>40</sup>

The final category was that of black cattle, with a top prize of a gold medal of seven guineas value. Eric Richards has shown that in spite of the move towards crofting and large-scale pastoral agriculture, in the late eighteenth century, at least, the lower orders (mostly subtenants and servants to small scale farmers) of Highland society still participated in the raising of cattle and sheep, and so their knowledge would have been very useful. Cattle had been the largest cause of dispossession prior to 1770, because cattle required large tracts of land for grazing.<sup>41</sup> Because the lower orders had been taking care of cattle members of the HSS were keen to learn what they could from not only any person who could provide information, but the lower orders of Highland Society as well. In 1789, in particular the Society was interested in black cattle improvement in Argylshire (including the areas of Islay, Argyle, Lorne, Mull, and Ardnamurchan). There was a final category regarding spaving (spaying) “the greatest quantity of queys (heifers)

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<sup>39</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 187; “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963.

<sup>40</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), p. 365.

<sup>41</sup> Richards, *The Highland Clearances*, 68-9.

with success” in Argyle, Inverness and Perth.<sup>42</sup> Premiums for the improvement of sheep would be added in 1790.<sup>43</sup> In 1793, for example, prizes were given for the greatest number of sheep spayed in Argyle and Invernessshires; however, the top prize of ten guineas was for a special category: “a native of fixed inhabitant of the country.” In other words, native knowledge was favoured above non-native knowledge.<sup>44</sup>

As the surveys progressed over the decade, the improvement of livestock began to carry more prizes. Competitors were asked to provide information on the best bulls “proper for improving the breed of Highland cattle” from places such as Perth, Dumbarton, Stirling, Fofarshire, Crieff, Kenmore, Bendochy, Alyth, Rattrey. For the best bull from two to five years old “the property and in possession of any tenant in [Perth, Dumbarton, Stirling, Fofarshire, Crieff, Kenmore and the Highlands of Perthshire]...a gold medal of seven pounds value, or that sum in money in their option.” For bulls in possession of “small tenants, and kept on their farm from the first of June to the first of October...on which there shall not be less than twenty cows” five pounds, and for the second best bull “belonging to and in possession of small tenants” in the same districts, three pounds.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, as the surveys progressed, the development of the planned village system was revealed. The improvement plan under examination here largely rested on the idea that people would be moved onto crofts or other small planned villages and towns in order to engage in various economic activities and subsistence farming, leaving the bulk of the land to livestock rearing. Improvers envisioned these villages being zones of free

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<sup>42</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), xviii.

<sup>43</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 69.

<sup>44</sup> Sederunt Book of the Highland Society (1784-1789), RHASS; Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 280.

<sup>45</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 278.

trade (or at least altering tariffs to favour local products) in order to stimulate local economies, ensuring future self-sufficiency. Therefore, inland and coastal villages, or what we now know as ‘crofts’, were the subject of deep inquiry. In 1792, for example, a prize of ten guineas was offered “[t]o the person who shall give in the best and approved plan or delineation of an inland village, accompanied with an essay or communication, pointing out and explaining everything that may be necessary for the establishment of inland villages, and particularly the most eligible and expedient conditions of feus and leases, with directions for building the houses in a substantial manner, for regulating the settlers and establishing industry among them. A further ten guineas was offered for villages “on the coast or arms of the sea.”<sup>46</sup> In 1793 for the counties of Kincardine, Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin and Nairn, for example, a gold medal of ten guineas value was offered to the person “who shall within two years from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1794, feu or grant upon long leases, the greatest number of lots for building an inland village, which lots shall have been actually built upon, and who has laid out the said lots upon the best plan, and in the best situation.” Five pounds each were offered “to each of the first six settlers...who shall produce a certificate of their settlement, industry, and good character from the proprietor, or in his absence from his factor and his minister of the parish.” With a final three guineas being offered to any settler “carrying on a useful handicraft trade.”<sup>47</sup>

According to Scoto-British improvers, planned villages (especially crofts) would only be successful if the people who settled on them could grow enough food to survive. Therefore, subsistence farming occupied a large portion of the surveys. At the time the surveys were taking place, and shortly thereafter, many Highland and Island landowners

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<sup>46</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 198.

<sup>47</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, pp. 375-6.

were slowly implementing the crofting system and it was becoming common practice by this time to move people to the very edges of estates in the northwest and on the islands to move tenants to areas where the land was largely scrub or moorland.<sup>48</sup> So it had to be determined how people were going to be able to grow food in barren land or poor soils. Potatoes especially were seen to be the solution to this problem. For example in 1793 for the countries of Ross and Invernesshire a prize of five guineas was offered “to the person or company who shall raise the greatest quantity of potatoes on one acre in said counties.” Ross and Invernesshire, of course, contain the northwest parts of the Highlands and most of the Outer Hebridean islands where crofting was embraced by the local lairds.

By 1798 the prizes for “the improvement of barren land by potatoe [*sic*] crops” was one of the most important prizes offered. In order to determine if potatoes were an appropriate crop for the planned villages, where the land to be used for subsistence would be largely barren the premiums were extended to “the tenant in any north or west Highland districts of Scotland, within four miles of the sea, who shall improve, and bring into tillage, by an improved crop of potatoes, the greatest portion of land not hitherto in culture, and not less than two Scots acre,” carrying a first prize of eight guineas.<sup>49</sup>

Not only were people moved on to smaller plots of land because of livestock but also because of the arable land that was needed to feed the livestock. Many Premiums were offered for essays or information on who could grow the maximum amount of ryegrass seeds, sowing grass, clover, hay, and turnip on arable land, in order to feed livestock. For example, farmers in Bute and Argyle were offered premiums of seven pounds ten shillings ‘who shall have the greatest proportion of arable land laid under turnip, and

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<sup>48</sup> Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 175.

<sup>49</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 217.

twice hoed...that proportion not being less than three acres' in the Islands of Bute, Arran, and Islay, and in the districts of Cowal and Kintyre. Not less than two acres, four pounds, not less than one, three pounds. In Ross and Invernessshires "To each of the ten tenants...that shall have the greatest proportion of their arable land under a crop from sown clover and ryegrass seeds in the year 1793, that proportion not being less than one Scotch acre and the quantity of the arable land possessed by the person having that acre or more under a crop of sowing glass for said year, not being less than two, nor more than twelve Scots acre" two guineas and ten pounds weight of clover seed. In Argyle, Netherlorn and Knapdale, for the same year, the tenant with the most arable land under a "crop from sown clover and rye grass seeds in the present year" not less than four acres, seven pounds ten shillings, with smaller prizes for smaller areas of land.<sup>50</sup>

Meadowland had to be drained in order to produce more crops. In the districts of Mull and Ardnamurchan, and "the county towards Fort William, who under the present year shall drain and manure with lime, land or compost with manure, the greatest quantity of meadow ground so as to produce a crop of hay the proportion not being less than three acres" seven pounds ten shillings. Not less than two acres, four pounds ten shillings, and not less than one acre, one pound three shillings.<sup>51</sup> Conversely, irrigation, or the "judicious improvement by means of conducting water over pasture grounds, so as to eradicate heath [scrubland] and produce grass" for raising cattle and sheep, had to be performed in the dryer parts of the Highlands in order to produce enough feed for

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<sup>50</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 276; pp. 281-82.

<sup>51</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 282.

livestock. In the parishes of Bendochy, Alyth and Rattray, ten acres irrigated carried a top prize of ten pounds.<sup>52</sup>

Therefore, by assessing the content of the surveys from 1789 to 1798, before the information gathered by the HSS was published we can see the intellectual development of the crofting system included vital information from Highlanders themselves. Highlanders were the ones who had often eked out a living in often-difficult circumstances. In order to move beyond mere subsistence and into secure subsistence it was necessary to move people onto planned villages, which required provisions for the people living there. Crofts in particular were to be placed on rocky coastal areas of Highland and Island estates where growing food would be difficult. Irrigation and drainage, or the manipulation of the landscape, would accompany ways in which to grow food on small plots of land. People had to be moved onto small plots of land in order for sheep and cattle farming to increase, bringing much-needed revenues to Highland Estates. It was not necessary, therefore, for people to emigrate according to this development plan. Indigenous Highland knowledge, therefore, was a crucial element of the development of Scoto-British improvement.

### **Results of the Surveys: Native Ideas Revealed**

The publication of the first *Prize Essays and Transactions* in 1799 was the culmination of a decade of surveying in the Highlands and Islands. The process was fairly slow owing to many submissions from unsatisfactory candidates, which meant “the selection was attended with considerable difficulty, from the miscellaneous nature of the subjects, on

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<sup>52</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 280.

which these essays were written.”<sup>53</sup> And because a large proportion of the premiums were offered to “persons not in the habit of writing” [common Highlanders] there was an expectation in the beginning that “much useful matter, and practical knowledge were blended with incorrect views, and mistaken theory, on parts of the subject, on which the authors range of experience, and acquirement, had not enabled them to possess just or decided ideas.”<sup>54</sup> Many of the essays sent in by those “whose situations did not allow of their giving any tolerably arranged or tolerably expressed detail; but when the *matter* appeared useful, the Society did not scruple to adjudge premiums to the authors.” Nevertheless, these essays were re-written before publication “but with the same scrupulous attention to preserve the substance of the author’s ideas entire and unaltered.” Throughout the whole process efforts to preserve native knowledge were undertaken.<sup>55</sup>

In some cases, the Society received evidence that the competitions were leading to economic success on land, which would have previously been unused. For example, in 1796 the Society received affidavits from

George Jamieson and William Gill, who were servants to Robert Smith at Smithfield, and of William Gray late servant to Alexander Laing at Rosehill, parish of Oldmachar, Aberdeenshire, emitted before the Justice of the Peace, with a certificate from Robert Balanno, land surveyor; all certifying, that a piece of ground consisting of two Scots acres on said Robert Smith’s farm of Smithfield, and which had no previous marks of cultivation but had been over

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<sup>53</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), liii-liv.

<sup>54</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), liv.

<sup>55</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions* (1799), iv.

run with whins [gorse] broom, heath, etc., was brought into tillage and planted with potatoes, which turned out an excellent crop in 1796.<sup>56</sup>

In spite of the fact that the HSS received submissions from unsuitable candidates, this did not mean that native ideas were not acquired. Members of the upper classes, who were native Highlanders, provided useful information. Prizes for the manufacture of woollen and linen products, for example, were not intended for the middling or upper classes; however, on occasion, the HSS did receive entries from these levels of society, despite making it clear in the advertisements that prizes were meant for the country people. In 1790, Lady Sinclair, a native Highlander, submitted “several yards of cloth which had been manufactured with her ladyship’s direction in Thurso in imitation of English Queen’s cloth for ladies riding habits.” As Lady Sinclair organised many workers to produce the cloth (and also, we can presume because she was married to Sir John Sinclair), the committee decided that “a gold medal of ten guineas value with a proper inscription shall be presented to Lady Sinclair in name of the Society as a marker of their approbation of her ladyship’s patriotic exertions to improve the woollen manufactures of the Highlands and encourage others to follow so laudable an example.”<sup>57</sup> On another occasion, in 1793, the Society received submissions of woollen cloth from Mrs. Mackay and Miss Mackay of Bighouse in Caithness. The subcommittee had decided that a

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<sup>56</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 97.

<sup>57</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 30. Lady Sinclair was Lady Diana MacDonald, daughter of the first Lord MacDonald. Rosalind Mitchison, “Sinclair, Sir John, first baronet (1754-1835),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/25627> (accessed 28 March 2014).

Katherine Munro (a common Highlander) was “entitled to the premium advertised” however:

With regard to the other ladies competing there appears to have been a misapprehension of the nature of the Society’s advertisement which had in view to encourage manufactures and persons making cloth for sale as ordinary dealers, none especially as the premium advertised do not offer medals or other honorary acknowledgements, which are uniformly offered and adjudged by the Society when it is in view that people of rank shall compete for the premiums, at the same time the committee desire to express their entire approbation of thanks to Mrs. Mackay of Bighouse and the Miss Mackay, for their patriotic and laudable exertions in promoting the manufacture of their country and in that view remit to the committee on agriculture manufacturing to reconsider the Caithness report...to suggest what honorary notice ought to be taken of the competition by medals, as was done on similar occasions when ladies of rank transmitted to the society specimens of manufacture.<sup>58</sup>

These ladies may have been well meaning; but in this case the HSS were after input from the lower orders that the Society envisioned would be undertaking the manufacturing, not from higher, albeit native Highland, orders such as the Mackays. Therefore, it was decided that: “The committee are sensible that the intention of the Society, which was to encourage such manufactures of the lower ranks of the people, has

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<sup>58</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, pp. 317-8.

been misunderstood by these ladies, and the judges for the aforesaid district and therefore they recommend in future to advertise in terms more explicit showing clearly what is intended.”<sup>59</sup> Regardless of this fact, because the ladies received recognition for previous work, they continued to submit woollen cloth, stockings, and yarn. “Mrs Mackay of Bighouse, Misses Alexandria and Louisa Mackay at Bighouse and Miss Margaret MacDairmid also residing there...continued to compete on the supposition that the advertisement [included members of their class]...The alteration had escaped their notice, besides as these ladies had taken a good deal of trouble, were the only competitors and as there was no real manufactures in that district of the descriptions the Society had in view, for those reasons...this was the last year these premiums had been offered in Caithness and Sutherland.”<sup>60</sup> In spite of the misunderstanding, the Society still received input from native Highlanders, which was the goal of the surveys.

Because the HSS was eager for information from common people when it came to subsistence farming, in 1794 the Society decided that they would no longer offer premiums to a “company” or anyone of rank for the potato category. In that year the amount of land was reduced to a half Scots acre with the top prize being five guineas.<sup>61</sup> Although the Society was no longer offering a prize to anyone who could grow the maximum amount of food on a Scots acre (the former prize) in 1796 Mrs. Louisa Mackay of Bighouse reported that her land had produced “21658 English pounds of potatoes of an excellent quality” on half a Scot’s acre; however, the HSS stated that “it was not the intention of the Society that premiums should be given to people of rank and fortune, unless when it is mentioned in the advertisement; and they are particularly convinced that

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<sup>59</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 323.

<sup>60</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, pp. 66-7.

<sup>61</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, pp. 368-9.

it could not be meant that these small potato premiums should extend to people of that description.” Mrs. Mackay and others who had submitted for that year had their entries rejected.<sup>62</sup> In spite of this, Louisa Mackay was able to show that a large quantity of potatoes could be grown in a very small space, which was just the kind of information the Society was seeking and it was more than likely that a common person on her estate actually grew the potatoes. However, the Society was after direct information from common Highlanders who had experience growing food in hard times. Adequate subsistence was the key to the crofting system’s success, and the potato was to be relied upon for this.

On occasion we can catch a glimpse into everyday lives of the lower classes in the Sederunt books. The HSS did receive requests from competitors who wished to let the Society know that money, or useful items, was more useful to them, rather than medals. On March 7, 1794, the HSS received a request from Mr. Patrick Brodie, a tenant in Garvald near Haddington, “who had been found entitled to two five Guinea gold medals for essays on the subject of green cropts [crops] and requesting that the Society would grant him a silver tea pot of that value with a suitable inscription.”<sup>63</sup> A Mr. Campbell, a tenant in Comire, Appine, “who was found entitled to the £7 7s. premium, in a medal for the best bull in Argyleshire anno 1791, and requesting that the directors would agree to give [him] the above sum in money, in lieu of the medal as it would be more useful to him.”<sup>64</sup> Clearly to a small farmer who was struggling to make ends meet would find money, or a useful item such as a teapot, rather than a medal, more useful to his immediate needs. By the time of the publication of the first *Transactions* the HSS stated:

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<sup>62</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 98.

<sup>63</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 354.

<sup>64</sup> Sederunt Book 1 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 304.

“the Society allows to the successful candidates, for premiums in medals, an option of having the value of the medals paid in money.” This is clear evidence that the Society responded to the needs of common Highlanders.<sup>65</sup>

Woollen manufacturing was another important industry that the Scoto-British improvers envisioned as part of the planned village system. Woollen manufacturing had been taking place in the Highlands from ancient times, even as far back as the Bronze Age. Improvers did not want to halt the importation of the hardier varieties of sheep such as the Cheviot and Blackface as these were good all-round sheep used for both meat and wool and could be raised on a large-scale; however, their wool was inferior to that of the Merino sheep, which had made the Spanish woollen-industry the leader in Europe in the eighteenth century. It was known, however, to some people that fine-woollen sheep had existed, or still existed, on various islands in the Highlands and Islands that could rival that of the Merino, especially in Shetland. The Highlands and Islands it was hoped would develop a fine woollen industry in addition to a coarse woollen industry, to clothe slaves in the West Indies, for example, that would outstrip the Spanish as the world’s producer of fine woollen products. Those who had the knowledge of these native breeds of sheep lived in these islands and so the HSS sought to elicit information from these people so that an industry suited to the remote islands and other parts of the Highlands could develop. Therefore it is important to separate the issue of Shetland sheep from the general theme of the surveys as it was of huge importance to the Scoto-British improvers.

### **“The Finest in the Universe”: Saving the Shetland Sheep**

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<sup>65</sup> Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions*, Vol. 1 (1799), xx.

In addition to fishing, woollen manufacturing was seen by Scoto-British improvers to be the solution to slow economic development in the Highlands and Islands. It was an activity that could take place on the planned villages and towns using native produce and manpower. Here was an opportunity for these men to promote a native Highland product, which would be the key to strengthening the British, not just the Highland woollen industry. According to the improvers under examination here, indigenous knowledge was the key to promoting a native British woollen industry, not imported knowledge, or, indeed imported sheep. As discussed elsewhere, at the core of Scoto-British identity was the idea that strengthening one area of Great Britain strengthened the whole economy. Preservation or promotion of native Highland industries was an important part of the improvement plan, and it extended to the preserving and cultivation of native breeds of sheep. As Sir John Sinclair argued:

There are two objects for the advantage of this country, which cannot, indeed be too often inculcated. The first is to raise a sufficient supply of fine wool at home: the second to produce within our own territories the naval stores necessary for our fleet. Until these objects are attained, Great Britain cannot be justly accounted either an independent, manufacturing, or maritime nation.<sup>66</sup>

Not only would indigenous Island breeds of sheep save the Highland and Island woollen industry but also these breeds of sheep were also going to save the British woollen

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<sup>66</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *Address to the Society for the Improvement of British Wool* (Edinburgh: T. Cadell, 1791), 7-8.

industry. Highland wool was in high demand in the southern industrial areas of Britain and this was an opportunity for the production of a native Highland product.<sup>67</sup> Sheep were reared in Great Britain for both meat and wool and their introduction into the British archipelago dates back as far as the Bronze Age. There were many varieties of sheep native to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, including the Hebridean (or St. Kildan) and the Shetland varieties, which tended to be smaller and hardier than the other British and Continental European breeds. It is not known exactly where the Shetland sheep originated but may have come with Norse settlers who may have interbred the Norse breed with the Soay sheep from the Isle of Soay in the St. Kilda archipelago, which probably existed there already.<sup>68</sup>

Scoto-British Improvers advocated the rearing of native Highland and Island sheep, in particular Shetland sheep. James Anderson and two sheep farmers from Shetland, Arthur Nicholson Esq. Younger of Lochend and the Reverend Mr. Morrison, attended meetings of the Society in early 1790 advocating the preservation of native sheep. The result was a report on Shetland wool in 1790 by Sir John Sinclair and James Anderson, and the subsequent formation of the British Wool Society in early 1791.<sup>69</sup> Interestingly, the sheep we associate with the Clearances, the Blackface and Cheviot types, were not desired for some woollen manufacturing because their wool could not compete with Spanish Merino wool—the British wool industry’s greatest competitor. Instead Sinclair and Anderson advocated the “kindly” or soft-fleeced sheep its “whole body almost is covered with it” and the beaver sheep, the name is owing to its double

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<sup>67</sup> Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 183.

<sup>68</sup> Gunnie Moberg and Liv K. Schei, *The Shetland Story* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1988), 149.

<sup>69</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 72; Sinclair, *Address to the Society for the Improvement of British Wool*, title page.

fleece and with only fine wool around its neck. The colour of the wool “varies, sometimes being in a great measure of a pure white, at other times of a light grey which is supposed to be the softest and most silky, sometimes of a black and sometimes of a russet colour.”<sup>70</sup> These were ancient breeds of sheep found in the Shetland Islands, and it was assumed that “some remains of the [Shetland] breed of sheep may still be found in the Western Islands and perhaps in some of the remotest parts of the Highlands, where the native race of the mountains have not been contaminated by a connection and intercourse with animals of an inferior species in regard to the quality of their wool.”<sup>71</sup> Based on testimonies from both Anderson and Nicholson, the HSS determined that “the number of sheep in Shetland cannot be less than 100,000 and are probably more.”<sup>72</sup> However, because “the proprietors of the Shetland Islands have so much bent their attention to fishing, as in a great measure to neglect other occupations—no pains have yet been taken to keep up this valuable breed or to preserve it from degenerating.”<sup>73</sup>

The Society offered premiums to anyone who could find these sheep in their pure form and argued that they could be reared on other islands such as Orkney and in the Hebrides, where the sheep would be more likely to be “preserved in their highest perfection.” “Wool might be produced,” they argued, “in those Highland parts of Great Britain to the value of at least half a million.”<sup>74</sup> The reason for searching for this superior British sheep was to rival the Merino wool from Spain, which they argued was a threat to the British wool industry with its superior quality. In the report, the Society argued, “Doctor Anderson proves that from the most indisputable authorities that in ancient times

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<sup>70</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 72

<sup>71</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 72.

<sup>72</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 70.

<sup>73</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 54.

<sup>74</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 71.

the wool of Great Britain was not only greatly superior to the Spanish but was...the finest in the universe and that its present degeneracy can only be attributed to neglect. It may therefore yet be recovered under the protection of a patriotic sovereign by the encouragement of such spirited bodies as the Highland Society and by the exertions of zealous and active individuals.”<sup>75</sup> The HSS looked to native Highlanders to provide information on this unique type of sheep.

The British Wool Society was short-lived, and late in 1791 it was closed. As a nineteenth-century historian of the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society (the later name of the HSS) explained, “several farmers, as well as the Chairman, visited the pastoral districts of the south and north of Scotland, and the principal counties of England, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of sheep farming. On completing its mission, the British Wool Society was dissolved.”<sup>76</sup> Other than Sir John Sinclair’s attempts to start a woollen industry with the Shetland sheep along with his experiments on his own estate with Merino, the success of the tough Cheviot and the Blackface breeds in Scotland meant that other breeds of sheep were not raised there on a large scale.<sup>77</sup>

After the dissolution of the British Wool Society, the HSS resumed its “attention to the improvement of the breed of sheep, and the management of wool.” After 1823, the HSS continued to offer premiums “to proprietors and tenants for reports on the management of their own flocks. By the offer of these premiums, greater attention was

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<sup>75</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 78.

<sup>76</sup> Alexander Ramsay, *History of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1879), 421. Two reports were published shortly thereafter outlining the findings of the Society See: W. Redhead, *Observations on the Different Breeds of Sheep, and the State of Sheep Farming in Some of the Principal Counties of England* (Aberdeen, 1792); J. Naismith, *Observations on the Different Breeds of Sheep, and the State of Sheep Farming, in the Southern Districts of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1795).

<sup>77</sup> Rosalind Mitchison, “Sinclair, Sir John, first baronet (1754-1835),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/25627> (accessed 19 December 2012).

paid to this particular breed.”<sup>78</sup> Despite the perceived hardness of this breed of sheep, it was actually quite delicate, unlike the tougher Blackface and Cheviot types. In an 1824 report to the Society, James Baikie, Esq. of Tankerness, a sheep farmer, outlined the special needs of these sheep. Without special care and attention from shepherds and the provision of shelter, they were prey for dogs and eagles, and if they were left alone in the rough hills of Orkney they would tend to feed on seaweed, rendering their meat to be “of a disagreeable flavor, which some people have, very inaptly, supposed to resemble that of venison...their mutton, when the pasture is so ample as to render their visits to the sea shore unnecessary, is excellent. The quality and quantity of their wool, too, reap great advantages from an improved management, so as sometimes to reach three merks or four pounds in weight; while, in the wild and neglected state of the animal, it seldom exceeds 1 ½ lb.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, modern farming practices were the only way in which this native breed of sheep were going to survive in the extreme climate of the Orkney and Shetland Islands; within the framework of Scoto-British improvement, improvement and conservation went hand-in-hand.

The ‘kindly’ sheep may never have rivalled the superiority of the Merino sheep and the Spanish fine woollen industry but without the attention paid to the Shetland and Orkney sheep (as well as native Hebridean sheep) this native British breed of sheep would have disappeared. Scoto-British improvement rested on the idea that elements of native Highland characteristics could be maintained within a wider modernising project. Native advice was to be utilised in addition to ‘modern’ improvement ideas in order to protect the best of what the Highlands and Islands could offer the British economy. As a

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<sup>78</sup> Ramsay, *History of the Highland and Agricultural Society*, 422.

<sup>79</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 6* (Edinburgh, 1824), 594-595.

result of Scoto-British improvement, these special Island varieties of sheep are still bred today and are a vital part of the wider British sheep industry and can still be seen roaming the islands from whence they came.<sup>80</sup>

## **Conclusion**

As the nineteenth century opened, many agricultural improvers stuck to the original optimistic plan set out by the Scoto-British improvers in the 1770s and 1780s. In Sutherland, as Eric Richards argues, in which large areas were cleared for sheep farming in the early nineteenth century, the idea to set up a “vigorous coastal economy” where fishing and diversified industrial activities would take place on planned villages, and this was experimented on other estates throughout the nineteenth century. Clearance to the coasts from the glens was where “new and improved modes of subsistence was to be engaged in...the interior tracts would be turned over to sheep, rents would rise with productivity, the people would no longer be susceptible to periodic famine, nor would the landlord be liable for expensive relief measures.”<sup>81</sup> “The powerful formula,” he argues, “of the division of labour, with the promotion of new villages and the improvement of communications, would create a new future.” However, after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, in which Highland products had been in great demand, the economic activities were meant to complement pastoral agriculture went into steep decline, and many

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<sup>80</sup> See for example: <http://hebrideansheep.org.uk/>; <http://www.soaysheep.org/>

<sup>81</sup> Eric Richards, “The Mind of Patrick Sellar,” *Scottish Studies* 9 (1971): 4.

Highlanders and Islanders who did not emigrate slowly moved into the Scottish Lowlands and England in search of opportunities in the booming industrial centres.<sup>82</sup>

However, as this and the previous chapter have shown, in the late eighteenth century the motivations driving the new Highland economy were both benevolent and practical. A working population had to be maintained in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in order for the new economies to work. Free-market capitalist ideas were blended with efforts to preserve the best of what the Highlands could offer the modern British economy. As well, it was generally understood that the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were a vital part of Great Britain that was in need of special attention. In other words, Anglo-British improvement was not going to work in a place that was nothing like the rest of Great Britain. Scoto-British improvement was never going to work without native knowledge from all sections of Highland society. Ideas for the improvement plan had come from men within Scoto-British circles like Anderson and Knox, who were looking for international solutions to localized needs. Anderson, as someone who had managed lands in the Highlands, had witnessed first-hand the extreme poverty of the people in the Highlands and like other Scoto-British Improvers sought localized solutions to poverty. Imported economic schemes were perceived to be perpetuating hardships and thus indigenous solutions were sought. Fishing, woollen manufacturing, mining and other activities were known to have existed in the past and the revival of these industries using local knowledge was seen to be the solution to economic hardships. Secure subsistence was a crucial complement to the new planned villages, which were the modern complement to increased pastoral agriculture.

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<sup>82</sup> Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, 181.

In theory, livestock rearing could have operated on estates alongside other economic activities so long as people had the skills to develop light industrial activities, fishing, and subsistence farming on their own. These people would therefore remain in the Highlands without having to search for employment and subsistence elsewhere. Landowners would have profitable estates and the people living on them, albeit in reduced plots of land or in planned villages, would be secure. This plan was to create wealth for all social classes in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland within an accepted societal hierarchy, bringing the area in line economically and socially with the rest of Great Britain, without Anglicisation. As the HSS argued, “The aim of the Highland Society is not the increase of the wealth of the proprietors, but the extension of the productiveness and enlargement of the population of the Highlands from whence a valuable addition is to arise to that general stock of wealth and efficient strength which constitute the greatness of the British Empire.”<sup>83</sup> In this way the crofting, or planned village, system was an extension of modern economic realities and was not created just for the kelping industry and to retain a stable population to recruit for the military, although these did remain important industries in the area.<sup>84</sup> However, crofting had limited success largely due to the reliance on kelp and manpower during the Napoleonic Wars, which made landowners fast and large amounts of revenue as long as the boom lasted, and the increasing reliance on the potato as a source of subsistence, which led to the greatest famine of all in the 1840s.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Sederunt Book 3 (1795-1808), RHASS, p. 532.

<sup>84</sup> MacKillop, *More Fruitful Than the Soil*, 234-244.

<sup>85</sup> James R. Coull and William P.L. Thompson, “Kelp,” in *Boats, Fishing and the Sea: A Compendium of Scottish Ethnology Volume 4*, ed. James R. Coull et al. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2008), 151; Devine, *The Great Highland Famine*.

By the early-nineteenth century the Highland Society of London moved away from agricultural improvement and left those concerns to the Highland Society of Scotland. The purpose of developing an institutional framework was so that specific societies would continue specific improvement projects. The HSS was to look after agriculture; the British Fisheries Society was to concentrate on continuing to develop a commercial fishery in the Highlands and Islands. The improvement plan had been set in motion and so the HSL concentrated on other projects, namely Gaelic education, which is the subject of the next chapter.

After 1800, the HSS expanded from exclusively Highland concerns by switching its focus to the whole of Scotland, with a particular concern for Lowland agriculture, seeking to become “the principal agricultural society in Scotland,”<sup>86</sup> which it continues to be today. The essay competitions continued; however, the categories designed to elicit information from the country people were no longer offered. Many of the improvement schemes either did not take off, most notably mining (with the exception of coal mining, at least until 1815); or were slow to develop, such as fishing and woollen manufacturing. The reliance on kelp as a source of wealth and rental income during the boom years before the end of the Napoleonic wars allowed for its artificial importance in many parts of the Highlands demonstrating that economic realities outweighed the quick development of the Scoto-British improvement schemes. The collapse of prices after the wars dealt a blow to the Highland economy from which it did not recover.<sup>87</sup> The end of the Napoleonic wars largely meant the end of the high demand for Highland products.

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<sup>86</sup> “Statement of the Grounds upon which the Highland Society of Scotland Request Continuance of Public Aid,” (1814), AUA MS 963.

<sup>87</sup> Malcolm Gray, “The Kelp Industry in the High-Lands and Islands,” *The Economic History Review* (New Series) 4, no.2 (1951): 202.

Also, as Lord Dunfinnan, a landowner in Perthshire, noted, the fact that so many Factors either lived too far away from the estates they managed or were ignorant of what the land and people could produce “they are incapable of accommodating improvements to local situations...in the same manner, they are unqualified to appreciate the merits of the different tenants, and to take advantage of their industry, spirit, and inclination to improvement.”<sup>88</sup>

By the early-nineteenth century many western Highland and Island landowners keen to remove tenants from the bulk of their land to make way for large-scale sheep and cattle farming adopted the crofting system in one form or another. Clearance, both voluntary and involuntary became the primary solution to slow development and economic pressures in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland in the early nineteenth century. Those who remained on the crofts were largely left in a suspended state of poverty.<sup>89</sup> The heavy reliance on the potato, the food that was seen by the Scoto-British improvers to be the solution to the subsistence problem, in addition to crippling poverty after the Napoleonic Wars, meant that many Highlanders were left vulnerable to the Highland potato famine (1846-1855), and either starved or emigrated.<sup>90</sup>

However, we should not look at the efforts to improve the Highlands and Islands in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century as a story of failure. Market forces and the reliance on kelp during the Napoleonic wars did mean that the economic improvement efforts by the HSL and the HSS were slow to develop, or did not develop at all. Nevertheless the planned village system, seen by many to be the solution to

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<sup>88</sup> Henry Mackenzie, *Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Vol. 2* (Edinburgh, 1803), 227-28.

<sup>89</sup> Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*.

<sup>90</sup> Coull and Thomson, “Kelp,” 166.

stagnating economic development and rampant poverty in the Highlands and Islands, was a success. Many of the planned inland villages still exist and in the case of the fishing industry, Scotland was to become a leader in the commercial herring industry by the late-nineteenth century. The political pressure applied by the HSL and the HSS to repeal the salt laws helped the industry to grow. The Caledonian and Crinan canals, which were meant to open up the Highlands to international markets, were two of the most impressive feats of engineering before the railways. Both of these canals are still in use today. At the very least, the activities of the societies brought much-needed publicity to an area that was in desperate need of attention. Improvement, however, was to be driven by Highlanders, and not from outsiders who, according to members of the HSL and the HSS, made the situation worse through a misunderstanding or ignorance of the area's needs.

As we will see in the next chapter improvement was not limited to economic matters. Gaelic, as a language, was the 'language of improvement' and efforts to preserve and promote the ancient tongue were undertaken in the Highlands, in London, and throughout the empire via Scoto-British networks using much of the same strategies as economic improvement: blending the traditional with the modern. In addition to the economic improvement outlined here, preservation of the Gaelic language was part of the wider plan by Scoto-British improvers to prevent emigration of common Highlanders and Islanders because the language and culture of the Highlands were synonymous with Highlanders themselves. If, however, Highlanders did emigrate, the Highland Society of London would ensure that people had access, in one form or another, to their native language, in the form of education and Gaelic literature. This would ensure that not only

economic but also cultural concerns would form the backbone of Scoto-British economic and social improvement.

## Chapter 5: The Language of Improvement: Progress and Preservation of the Gaelic Language, 1778-1841

### Introduction

From the very beginning, members of the Highland Society of London were concerned with preserving the Gaelic language. Some of the original members of the HSL had been members of the Gaelic Society of London (est. 1777), which was organized to concentrate on Gaelic poetry, literature and music. When these men broke away to organize a society with a wider agenda (the HSL), preservation and promotion of the Gaelic language remained an important issue for these original (as well as subsequent) members.<sup>1</sup> According to the HSL, the Gaelic language and the Highland people were inseparable. As the first secretary, John Mackenzie, argued, “the manners and character of the Highlanders are totally inseparable from their language—let the latter be destroyed, and the other cannot exist.”<sup>2</sup> To members of the HSL Gaelic was the ‘the language of improvement’ because its preservation required intellectual inquiry and education, two cornerstones of Enlightened thought. Gaelic, a language that was rapidly disappearing, was to be preserved through a variety of means including patronage, cultural expression, academic study, and the support of education. In addition to employment and security of subsistence, preservation and promotion of the Gaelic

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<sup>1</sup> Support for the Gaelic language and Gaelic schools in Great Britain and in the British colonies remained an intention of the Society throughout the period covered by this dissertation. “The Objects. Preserving the Martial Spirit, Language, Dress, Music, And Antiquities of the Ancient Caledonians. Rescuing from Oblivion the Remains of Celtic Literature; The Establishment and Support of Schools in the Highlands of Scotland, and In Other Parts of the British Empire; Relieving Distressed Highlanders, at a Distance from their Native Homes; and Promoting the Improvement and General Welfare of the Northern Parts of the Kingdom.” Highland Society of London, *The Highland Society of London, and the Branch Societies with Alphabetical Lists of the Members* (London: Smith and Elder, 1856), 3.

<sup>2</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

language was also another strategy by HSL improvers intended to keep people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Scoto-British improvement rested on the idea that people did not have to leave the Highlands; but if they did leave there would be support. “If therefore,” the HSL argued, “great rents are the delight of individuals; if populations is the desire of government, certainly the language of the Highlander ought to be maintained, for most assuredly Highlanders themselves, that is, the ideas and customs which constitute their character, cannot be maintained without it.”<sup>3</sup> Most people in the Highlands and Islands were illiterate.<sup>4</sup> In the late eighteenth century, common Highlanders who spoke Gaelic were overwhelmingly part of an oral society, which used music (songs) and poetry to communicate ideas. Poetry, for example, was passed down through the generations orally, and remained a constant part of Highland culture well into the nineteenth century. Gaelic poets were also an important part of the Evangelical movement in the Highlands and Islands because of their ability to communicate effectively with the locals who could not read either an English or a Gaelic bible.<sup>5</sup> According to the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools (SSGS), “out of 22,501 (from the parishes of Fearn, Gairloch, Lochbroom, Kilmuir, Stornoway, Harris and North Uist) 19,367 are incapable of reading either English or Gaelic...connected to this melancholy fact, it must be observed, that the proportion who are able to read, reside in or near the district where a school is taught: but in the remote glens, or subordinate

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<sup>3</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>4</sup> Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools. *The First Annual Report of the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools. With an Appendix Respecting the present state of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland &c. Edinburgh: Printed for the Society* (London and Inverness: A. Balfour, Merchant Court, 1811), 8. This report was bound with pamphlets of the HSL, which suggests they were interested in literacy rates in the Highlands and Islands.

<sup>5</sup> John MacInnes, *The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1951), 262.

islands of almost any parish, few or none can be found to know even the letters!”<sup>6</sup> Not much other evidence exists to assess the literacy rates in these areas besides the SSGS’s survey in 1811, but considering schooling was limited at this time, it is unlikely many common Highlanders would have been able to read in either Gaelic or English. Modern education had been slow to arrive in the Highlands as Highland and Island populations were spread out, and many parents were poor and could not afford fees for elementary education even if there was a school available. Charity schools had been tried such as those run by the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) but overwhelmingly had not been very successful.<sup>7</sup> Circulating schools had also been experimented with and had shown some success in places like Wales, and the SSGS would use circulating schools as a strategy in the nineteenth century. Circulating schools would also be supported by the Highland Society of London in its quest to bring education to the Highland and Islands of Scotland, as well as for the preservation of the Gaelic language in areas, which were very remote from any major centres.<sup>8</sup>

Scoto-British improvement stipulated that these illiterate people were to be taught to read in their native language (among other subjects), and the Society spent a lot of time and money trying to support Gaelic literacy in the Highlands and Islands. Learning literacy in their own language, it was argued, would lead Highlanders to pursue other academic interests (including, crucially, English) and therefore be awarded previously unattainable opportunities abroad, if they chose to pursue them. Education—like the provision of employment, services, communications, and subsistence—was a form of welfare designed to pull people in the Highlands out of poverty, without erasing

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<sup>6</sup> Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools, *The First Annual Report*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Victor Durkacz, *The Decline of the Celtic Languages*. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1983), 45.

<sup>8</sup> Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools, *The First Annual Report*, 8.

traditional Highland culture. Bilingualism, in other words, was another key strategy for social and economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. This idea was supported by many of those in Highland Society circles and support came from across the British Empire. The Tory MP, Thomas Mackenzie of Applecross (1789-1822), extraordinary director of the Inverness Gaelic society and landowner in Ross-shire, echoed this support when he argued that: “the education of our countrymen” was an object that was of considerable importance:

And towards which I shall most willingly contribute...If the object be the establishment of ambulatory teachers for the instruction of children in English as well as Gaelic, and persons of more advanced age in Gaelic alone, it is an institution which deserves, and I have little doubt will receive, the patronage, not merely of those immediately connected to the Highlands, but of all of those who, from motives of benevolence alone, seek the extension of the advantages of education to even the poorest of their countrymen. The deep interest which I naturally feel in every matter affecting the welfare of the Highlands, is the only apology which I have to offer.<sup>9</sup>

By the mid-eighteenth century the Gaelic language, as a first language, was in rapid decline and the group of Highlanders under examination here intended to halt this

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<sup>9</sup> “The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands, with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819),” RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 27-28; <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/mackenzie-thomas-1789-1822> (accessed 14 May 2014).

decline.<sup>10</sup> In order to preserve the language, the HSL argued that Gaelic literature had to be sought out and recorded. Once this was achieved, Gaelic as both a living language and Gaelic literary culture could be subject to serious academic study, the results of which could be used as educational tools. The Society offered prizes for original Gaelic poetry (thereby continuing the Bardic tradition), as well as prizes to scholars who travelled to the Highlands to record Gaelic poetry in its original form; and working in collaboration with its sister society, the Highland Society of Scotland, to investigate the authenticity of James Macpherson's *Ossian* poetry. The idea was to be able to provide an "authentic" piece of Highland literature, which could be supplied to students learning Gaelic literacy, beyond the limited texts already available.

From the 1780s onwards the HSL worked with the Inverness burgh council to establish and support a Gaelic professor (teacher) at the Inverness Academy, which, as we saw in chapter two the HSL helped to open in addition to the Inverness Infirmary. The HSL patronized other organizations engaged in establishing schools and Gaelic publications; worked with the Highland Society of Scotland to try and establish a Celtic Chair at a Scottish University as well as to produce a Gaelic dictionary, which was completed in 1828. Money for these projects came from colleagues, friends, and kin found within the two Highland Societies' circles, through the associational networks members forged during this period. Charitable networks that linked London to Edinburgh, the Highlands and Islands to India, and the West Indies provided much needed support for the Gaelic language.

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<sup>10</sup> Durkacz, *The Decline*; Charles W J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Culture Region*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1988).

As a way in which to garner support for their improvement projects, in the late-eighteenth century members of the HSL argued both to the British government and to the general public (which included potential subscribers) that the suppression of Gaelic was causing disaffection and the subsequent emigration of Highlanders. People were leaving the Highlands in significant numbers in this period but the overall population of the Highlands and Islands was actually growing at the same time. Between 1755 and 1831 the overall population rose by fifty-four percent (from around 250,000 to around 350,000). For the islands this figure could be as much as a seventy-five percent increase prior to 1811.<sup>11</sup> Figures are not definite as returns from the parishes prior to the 1801 census were not always accurate and after 1801 the census was taken from the shires, some of which had both Highland and Lowland areas to them (such as Nairn or Aberdeen). Additionally we do not have figures for internal migration within the Highlands and Islands. However, from 1700 to 1815 as many as 23-25,000 people left for North America (most after 1760) and many others left for the Lowlands or other parts of the United Kingdom. Emigration was also not uniform, so some parts of the Highlands and Islands saw entire communities pick up and leave (for example, the Glengarry Highlanders, which will be discussed in the next chapter), with as many as a third of parishes, Allan Macinnes points out, experiencing a “net loss of population by the 1790s.”<sup>12</sup> So there was a sense by some contemporaries that the Highlands and Islands could be emptied entirely of people. For those who had plans to develop the area “the

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<sup>11</sup> Anderson, M and D. J. Morse, “The People,” in *People in Society in Scotland Volume II, 1830-1914*, ed Hamish Fraser and R.J. Morris (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1990), 8-22.

<sup>12</sup> T.M. Devine, *Clearance and Improvement: Land, Power and People in Scotland, 1700-1900* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2006), 172-73; Allan I. Macinnes, “Scottish Gaeldom: The First Phase of Clearance,” in *People and Society in Scotland Volume I*, ed. T.M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988), 74 and fn 9.

loss of a large body of the inhabitants, not to mention the shocking distress which were said to attend their removal could not fail to induce the regret of the Society.”<sup>13</sup> The reasons for emigration usually given by historians were the raising rents, the crofting system (and its effect on clanship), the expansion of sheep farming, and the availability of cheap land abroad. These are important reasons why people may have chosen to leave, but many people during the first phase of clearance were forced or urged to leave as well.<sup>14</sup> It is possible though that language, as an integral part of Highland culture, could have played a role in peoples’ attitudes towards emigration. Scoto-British improvement—as an improvement discourse—did not require people to leave the Highlands; instead it applied a variety of strategies to keep people at home, and employed. This discourse included providing support to Highlanders in the form of education both for practical and cultural purposes. As the HSL argued: “the stability of the primitive character of a people depends in a great degree on the presentation of their mother tongue in its original purity, [the Society] have at all times made it a principal object to foster and afford encouragement to the Gaelic language, which, from the change of manners the inroad of the English, and from other circumstances, has been in the state of declension for some years past.”<sup>15</sup> To many British improvers, improvement and education went hand-in-hand. People could not progress if they could not read; however, education was also to play a role in the preservation of Gaelic. Through the act of teaching people to read in Gaelic the language would literally be preserved *within the Highlanders themselves*.

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<sup>13</sup> Sederunt Book 2 (1789-1795), RHASS, p. 476.

<sup>14</sup> Devine, *Clearance and Improvement*, 172-73; Macinnes, “Scottish Gaeldom,” 74 and fn 9.

<sup>15</sup> Highland Society Committee Minutes Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, NLS Dep 268/24, pp. 19-21.

### **Revitalization and Redemption: Towards a Discourse of Gaelic Preservation**

Scoto-British improvers were up against strong rhetoric from Anglo-British improvers who sought to extinguish the Gaelic language. As we have seen, the rhetoric of Anglo-British (or Whig) improvement dictated that the Highlands should become more like the rest of Great Britain, or in the very least ‘North-British’, in order to improve socially and economically. This process was to begin by replacing Gaelic with English, a process that outsiders had been attempting for many years without success. During the post-Jacobite era, Victor Durkacz has argued, “the supplanting of Gaelic by English was the keystone of ‘improvement’.”<sup>16</sup>

However, as this chapter shows, some improvers did not push for uniformity as a way in which to improve the Highlands and Islands. Rather, preserving, or integrating the Gaelic language into a wider improvement scheme was seen as more beneficial to Highlanders than removing what made them culturally distinct from other Britons. Cultural difference was the cornerstone of Scoto-British Improvement. This alternative rhetoric of improvement stood in direct opposition to the Whig variety, which seemed to dominate intellectual debates in the 1750s and 1760s, and instead focused on promoting cultural distinctiveness within a conservative framework. Emily McEwan-Fujita has identified two types of discourses that were used by those involved in the discussions of the Gaelic language in this time period: “discourses of language death and denigration,

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<sup>16</sup> Durkacz, *The Decline*, 5.

and discourses of language revitalization and redemption.”<sup>17</sup> Anglo-British improvers used death and denigration as an excuse to eradicate the language. In other words, Gaelic, as a ‘primitive’ language, that was seen to be already in decline, would hold back the progress of Highlanders (as well as Highland economic development), and continue to foster rebellions against the state. On the other hand, Scoto-British improvers argued that as “one of the most ancient languages now extant,” Gaelic was worthy of not only preserving (redemption) but also of fostering (revitalization) its use in social and economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.<sup>18</sup>

As we saw earlier, in the late eighteenth century Scoto-British improvers were concerned about depopulation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Emigration was unnecessary, they argued; people could remain in their homeland and have secure subsistence and employment within this vision of the new Highland economy. This economy required a stable population in order to build wealth (thereby securing the British economy as a whole) and strengthen the British borders (or the fiscal-military state). Bringing wealth to the Highlands and Islands, the argument went, required a labour force, and the labour force most suited to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were the native Highlanders and Islanders. One argument given by these improvers for rapid emigration was that Highlanders were disillusioned with the British government for attempting to remove the Gaelic language, among other trappings of Highland culture. When trying to solicit public monies from the British government (in this case by petitioning the Marquis of Graham and Henry Dundas, who the Society regarded both as

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<sup>17</sup> Emily McEwan-Fujita, “Language Revitalization Discourses as Metaculture: Gaelic in Scotland From the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries,” *Language and Communication* 31 (2011): 48.

<sup>18</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960; McEwan-Fujita, “Language Revitalization,” 48-9.

having “Highland affections”) for various improvement projects, the Highland Society of London made it very clear to both the general public and the British government that the key to staving off rebellion was appeasing Highlanders; putting hostile minds at ease. Preserving a work-force required “an establishment for the continuation and cultivation of the Gaelic language, thereby finally and effectually to secure the confidence and affection of the Highlanders to the state and the country, and timeously to preclude the pernicious and impending spirit of emigration.”<sup>19</sup>

Gaelic, as a language, had been under attack by the Scottish government from at least the start of the seventeenth century when the Statutes of Iona (1609) were passed with the intention of maintaining peace in Scotland by bringing Highlands and Lowlands more closely together, including forcing Highland chiefs to send their sons to Lowland Protestant schools for English education. Throughout the seventeenth century attempts to establish English schools in the Highlands followed but had little success.<sup>20</sup> However the attack on Gaelic in the seventeenth century was part of a much wider attempt by the Scottish government at creating social and economic stability by teaching Highland Scottish elites the laws and language, and religion, of the Lowlands, where the central government was located. The language and customs of the Highlander would remain a ‘problem’ for the Scottish (and subsequently the British) government, which was

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<sup>19</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960; “At a meeting of the Highland Society, held at the Shakespeare Tavern the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1786, the Earl of Breadalbane in the chair,” [1786], AUA MS 962/2. Both the Marquis of Graham and Henry Dundas were members of the HSL in this year, and both men had strong political connections and advocated on behalf of the HSL in this period. Dundas was himself “half a Highlander.” Michael Fry, “Dundas, Henry, first Viscount Melville (1742-1811),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/8250> (accessed 3 September 2013); *Rules of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1783); John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>20</sup> C.W.J. Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland 1698 to 1891: The Geographical History of a Language* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984), 28-30.

incapable of reaching many of the more remote areas where the culture remained strong.<sup>21</sup> It was these remote areas that would be targeted by educational and evangelical organizations the HSL would come to support.

In the eighteenth century the British government took a more systematic approach in trying to extinguish the Gaelic language. The process undertaken by the British government after the last Jacobite rebellion had been to assimilate Highlanders into a Whig model of uniformity, and more often than not this meant the removal of the Gaelic language.<sup>22</sup> Eradication of Gaelic meant, like it had in earlier periods, implementing education exclusively in English. The Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK), founded by Royal Charter in 1709, was employed by the British government to teach English literacy to Highlanders. The SSPCK's wider agenda in teaching English literacy was so that Highlanders would be able to read scriptures in that language; however, it welcomed governmental support. The SSPCK was not very successful, and by the early-nineteenth century resorted to allowing scriptures to be read in Gaelic at their schools.<sup>23</sup> As we will see later on, other educational societies such as the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools (1811) and its branch the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands of Scotland (1818) supported bilingualism. The reasons for this differed from the HSL's agenda but were nevertheless supported by that Society as members saw bilingualism as a means by which to preserve Gaelic.

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<sup>21</sup> Donald J. Withrington, "Education in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Highlands," in *The Seventeenth Century in the Highlands*, ed. Lorraine McLean (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1986), 61.

<sup>22</sup> Colin Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity in Enlightenment Ireland and Scotland," *The English Historical Review* 109, no.434 (Nov. 1994): 1197-1214; Macinnes, *Clanship*, 211.

<sup>23</sup> Charles W. J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Culture Region* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 126-136.

In the eighteenth century, Anglo-British improvement in the Highlands, therefore, was to begin with eradication of the Gaelic language. Besides traditional Highland economic organization (which had already been disappearing), the most important element of Highland culture that Anglo-British improvers felt to be holding Highlanders back from potential improvement was the Gaelic language. How could the Highlands improve, so the argument went, if Highlanders continued to use a language that was ‘primitive’? These improvers saw Highlanders as a potential resource, and Gaelic, which was what defined Highland difference in their eyes, had to be removed in order to enact economic improvement in the area.<sup>24</sup>

However, to Scoto-British improvers the Gaelic language was an integral part of Highland culture that was not incompatible with economic and social improvement. Even if Anglo-Britons sought its eradication, Sir John Sinclair argued in a short pamphlet soliciting public financial support, “it may be proper to add, that even those who may wish to extinguish the Celtic as a living or vernacular tongue, must at least admit, that it should be preserved, *as a language of study and research*; a knowledge of which, from its extensive use in former times, is essential, to throw light on the History and Antiquities of several of the principle nations of Europe.”<sup>25</sup> But to Scoto-Britons, the language and the people were one and the same and in order to appease potential subscribers and donators to the Society’s improvement projects who might have been hostile to the idea of preserving Gaelic as a living language, an argument had to be made that Gaelic should be preserved for antiquarian research. In reality the HSL wanted to

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<sup>24</sup> *The Rise of the Present Unnatural Rebellion Discover’d* (London, 1745), ASCUGL, Rare Books Collection. S0183b31, pp. 7-9.

<sup>25</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, pp. 15-16. His emphasis.

support measures to protect the language in order to preserve Highland culture and continue its use in everyday life. This is why the Society supported the collection of Gaelic literature and poetry, and any organization involved in teaching Gaelic literacy.

Highlanders, within the Scoto-British improvement paradigm, were also considered a national resource; and keeping Highlanders within the Highlands required special measures to preserve their culture, not eradicate it. As the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands of Scotland (a society patronized by the Highland Society of London in the early nineteenth century) argued:

The members of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and most of those who formerly took an interest in the welfare of the Highlands, long cherished the belief that the extirpation of the Gaelic tongue was the very first step to improvement. The teaching of Gaelic was therefore almost every where forbidden and English books alone were used...It is unquestionable that this system greatly paralysed the efficiency of the schools, and impeded the improvement of the country.<sup>26</sup>

It was well known in the early nineteenth century that the efforts undertaken by the SSPCK had been ineffective. In addition to the failure of English language instruction by outsiders, Highlanders were, Mackenzie argued, disaffected by those who sought to force a foreign language upon them. “This appeared very clearly,” he argued, “to those whose

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<sup>26</sup> The Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands of Scotland, *Moral Statistics of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Inverness, 1826), 17. This society was also known as the Inverness Gaelic School Society, the Inverness branch of the Gaelic School Society, founded in 1818. [http://www.ambaile.org.uk/en/item/item\\_page.jsp?item\\_id=20988](http://www.ambaile.org.uk/en/item/item_page.jsp?item_id=20988) (accessed 19 April 2013).

policy it was to discourage and dispirit this class of people, for various methods were followed to force the English language into use in their country, with no less disgust for when the Norman dialect was of old forced on the English themselves.”<sup>27</sup> Therefore the discourse employed by members of the Highland Society of London to save the Gaelic language from disappearing, stood in direct opposition to Anglo-British improvers who sought its eradication from daily life. With this strong ideological backing formed in the 1780s, Scoto-British improvers set to work rescuing and revitalizing the Gaelic language, a process that spanned the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, and beyond.

#### **‘Rescuing Gaelic From Oblivion’: Enlightened Education Through Preservation**

By the end of the eighteenth century, the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland was in steep decline, and continued to decline well into the nineteenth century. It is estimated that in the sixteenth century there were 150,000 Gaelic speakers of a total population of 300,000 in Scotland.<sup>28</sup> In 1765, for the counties of Inverness, Argyll, Bute, Ross and Cromarty, it is estimated that close to 100% of the population spoke Gaelic as a first language. Parts of Aberdeenshire were also predominantly Gaelic speaking as late as the 1760s. However, by the 1790s, as Withers shows, “Gaelic was everywhere becoming less and less pure to one degree or another” as English took over as the dominant language. By 1806, the numbers of native Gaelic speakers had fallen to 18.51% of the population,

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<sup>27</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>28</sup> Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland*, 71-75.

or 297,737 people of a total of 1,608,420. By 1861 only 300,000 of a total of 3,062,294 people spoke Gaelic in Scotland, or ten percent of the population.<sup>29</sup>

By the late eighteenth century, members of the HSL were well aware that the Gaelic language was disappearing as peoples' primary language. This decline was partially attributed to emigration and partially to Anglicization. As we have seen, both emigration and Anglicization were blamed for the stunted economic development of the Highlands and Islands because imported industries (such as linen) and forcing English onto the local inhabitants, for whom English was an imported language, was causing disaffection. Therefore, the "rescuing from oblivion the valuable remains of Celtic literature" or the promotion and cultivation of Gaelic poetry began almost immediately after the Highland Society of London was formed.<sup>30</sup> Rescuing Gaelic included cultural expression. The HSL appointed Gaelic bards to recite ancient poetry at various meetings as did the Highland Society of Scotland, the first being Alexander Cameron the year that Society formed in 1784.<sup>31</sup> The HSL also gave rewards to modern Gaelic bards; starting in 1782 it gave an annual prize five pounds for the "best Gaelic poem on a subject set by the Society." The most notable recipient of a prize for Gaelic poetry was Duncan Bàn Macintyre (1723?-1812) from Druim Liaghart in Argyll (mentioned in chapter one), who won a prize of fifty merks<sup>32</sup> in 1784 at the Falkirk gathering, a joint prize from both the HSL and the HSS.<sup>33</sup> The poem entitled "Glorious Restoration of the Highland Dress"

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<sup>29</sup> John Lorne Campbell, *Gaelic in Scottish Education and Life Past, Present and Future* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1950), 37; Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland*, 71-75.

<sup>30</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 16.

<sup>31</sup> Black, "The Gaelic Academy," 7.

<sup>32</sup> Roughly thirty-five pounds Scots.

<sup>33</sup> Derick S. Thomson, "Macintyre, Duncan Bàn (1723?-1812)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17543> (accessed 16

commemorated the HSL's success in pressuring the British government to repeal the Disarming Act, achieved in 1782. Aside from supporting contemporary cultural expression, the HSL in conjunction with the HSS sought a more academic route to preserving the Gaelic language, which included authenticating Gaelic poetry as well as producing a Gaelic dictionary, both crucial elements of both preservation of the language and support of education.

To many interested parties the translation of James MacPherson's Ossian poetry served to provide Scotland with a national literature to rival that of the Greeks and the Romans, but to the HSL and the HSS the translation was also intended for educational purposes. At this time there were limited texts in Gaelic that could be used to teach Gaelic literacy save crude translations of religious texts. Therefore a properly translated version of *Ossian* could be used to inspire Highlanders who could not read (or speak) Gaelic by providing the best there was to offer, however misguided this intention was. Sir John Sinclair argued that Scots, now having access to some excellent Gaelic poetry, should endeavour to learn Gaelic, "as the poems of Ossian are at last to be published in the original Gaelic, many individuals may be inclined to acquire that language, for the sake of relishing the beauties of that celebrated poet in his native tongue; and, at any rate, it is of importance, that the proprietors of Highland estates, and their children, should learn it."<sup>34</sup>

In order to facilitate the publication of MacPherson's findings, money came from members of the Highland societies and from Scots abroad. All were supporting both the HSL's cultural and educational aims. This network of financial support from the empire

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April 2013); "Minute of the Proceedings at the competition for the prizes of Piping at Falkirk, extracted from the Society Record," [n.d. 1782?], NLS Dep. 268/15(29?).

<sup>34</sup> Sinclair, *Observations*, 12.

facilitated indigenous Highland projects, which Highlanders working and living abroad supported with enthusiasm. In 1783 Sir John MacGregor Murray (1745-1822) Lieutenant-General in East India Company service and Military Auditor General of Bengal wrote to John Mackenzie letting him know that the sum of £600 (approximately 6,000 Rupees) had been raised by Scottish servants of the EIC located in Calcutta, who were also members of the HSL's branch there, to help Macpherson to publish the original *Ossian*, as well as publishing "other Gaelic works." Macpherson offered the HSL one hundred pounds of this money to be put towards a Gaelic dictionary.<sup>35</sup> Murray argued that the "expediency [of] a publication much desired by all the true lovers of their Country...[by] Gentlemen in this part of the world, who are envious of being...among that number; and are anxiously solicitous for the preservation of the sublime productions of *Ossian*... We hope Mr. Macpherson will manifest a cheerful [illegible] in yielding to the calls of his country."<sup>36</sup> In 1785, the East India Company men remitted a further £200 towards Macpherson's endeavour.<sup>37</sup> Mackenzie, "observing the entire and genuine Highland spirit of your truly patriotic subscribers," replied that the HSL would see to it that their funds would immediately go towards the publication of the poetry. The HSL was impressed with the enthusiasm "that gentleman so long absent and so far removed from their native land, should nevertheless possess so vigorous and active enthusiasm for it's [*sic*] honour and ornament as not only to make them break forth into indignation at the unmerited suspicions and aspirations entertained of published by ignorance and

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<sup>35</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 42.

<sup>36</sup> John Murray to John Mackenzie, 29 October 1783, NLS Dep. 268/1; "Fingal in Account Current with John Murray Esq.," September 1783, NLS Dep. 268/1/21.

<sup>37</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 46; <http://www.thepeerage.com/p50419.htm> (accessed 16 May 2014). Murray was created 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet MacGregor on July 3, 1795.

prejudice against the greatest and refinement of its ancient genius, but also to enter into liberal and splendid measures for calling forth before the publick the great example and evidence of the old elevation of the Caledonian mind, in also the undeniable majesty of the venerable celtick bard and prince; whose appearance in person by the spirited exertions of yourself and friends, must abash...envious Cavillers that have swarm'd about his respectable representative and translation.”<sup>38</sup> Clearly the controversy had hastened the need to authenticate and publish Macpherson’s poetry, which members located within the HSL’s network supported with enthusiasm.

In 1794, after much pestering by the HSL, James Macpherson did promise the Society that he would produce and print the “originals of the Poems of Ossian, *as they have come to my hands.*”<sup>39</sup> With the assistance of a Gaelic scholar, and members of the HSL, James Morison, Macpherson did manage to prepare some Gaelic poetry to be printed just prior to his death in 1796, but refused to send them to the press. After his death, nineteen manuscripts of Gaelic poetry that Macpherson had collected when he did his tours of the Highlands in the 1750s were delivered to the HSL.<sup>40</sup> Macpherson had made John Mackenzie his executor, and was therefore left in charge of the poetry. Sir John Sinclair had argued that Mackenzie was “an excellent scholar and worthy man,” and there was hope he had the skills to properly look after the poetry. However, Mackenzie took a long time to produce anything, and it was not until just before he died in 1803 that the

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<sup>38</sup> John Mackenzie to John Murray, 17 February 1784, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>39</sup> James Macpherson to John Mackenzie, 4 July 1784, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1. My emphasis.

<sup>40</sup> Fiona Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: James MacPherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 122. See also appendix 1.2.

first sixteen pages of the poetry were printed.<sup>41</sup> Mackenzie left several executors in his will to deal with the poetry but none felt they were scholarly enough to attend to the task of organizing the translations. Even if any of these men were native Gaelic speakers, they would not have had the educational background necessary to complete the translations. Nevertheless the HSL did not give up. After Mackenzie's death the manuscripts were then put into the hands of his nephew and new secretary of the HSL, Colin Macrae for the purpose of being published under their patronage. At a general meeting of the HSL held on May 17, 1804, Sir John Sinclair, Sir John McGregor Murray, John McArthur, Alexander Fraser, and Colin Macrae, were appointed as a committee to oversee the work.<sup>42</sup> The Society decided to employ the Schoolmaster and Gaelic speaker Robert Macfarlan (1733/4–1804) to undertake the translations. Macfarlan had already done a translation of *Temora* in 1769, which was not well received, and had been employed by the HSS as a teacher of Gaelic for the Society. Macfarlan managed to put together a translation for the HSL and it was published as *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic with a Literal Translation into Latin by the late Robert Macfarlan, A.M.* were published in 1807.<sup>43</sup> The work is of three volumes with the English and Gaelic texts on facing pages. Unfortunately this work is considered to be substandard as the 'original Gaelic' Macfarlan used was from a poor English translation and therefore the final product is not accurate. The zeal for which the HSL put into this project meant that Macfarlan's lack of skills were, perhaps, deliberately overlooked with Sir John Sinclair arguing that Macfarlan was "a scholar perfectly skilled in both languages" when his

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<sup>41</sup> It is likely that as the busy secretary of both the Highland Society of London and The British Fisheries Society Mackenzie did not have much time to focus on literature.

<sup>42</sup> John Sinclair, *Prospectus*, 1-16.

<sup>43</sup> John Sinclair, *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic with a Literal Translation into Latin by the late Robert Macfarlan, A.M.* (London: W. Bulmer and Co. Cleveland-Row, St. James's, 1807).

academic knowledge of Gaelic was in fact limited.<sup>44</sup> This project was largely a campaign by many interested parties (but notably Sir John Sinclair) to produce a ‘genuine’ product to prove the Highlands had an ancient literature to rival the best in Europe. However misguided this project was, it is where the *Ossian* poetry sat within the Scoto-British improvement paradigm that should be of concern. In addition to trying to prove to the wider public that the Highlands had ancient literature, which could rival that of the Greeks and the Romans, members of the HSL wanted to produce an authentic literature for the Highlands, which could be provided to Highlanders to read which could be used in addition to the crude translations of the bible and Christian catechisms already available. The tragedy is, of course, that the controversy hastened the publication of the poetry by men who simply did not have the appropriate training to authenticate the works. The unfortunate matter is that resulted in the accusation that the HSL perpetuated a forgery through the 1807 translation of the work, which they inadvertently did.

However, the *Ossian* débâcle did not deter members of the Highland Society of London from pursuing Gaelic as an intellectual project and various other works related to Gaelic literature were patronized and supported by the HSL and the HSS: for example in 1801 the HSS helped Alexander Stewart, the Gaelic scholar minister at Dingwall, to publish a Gaelic grammar in 1801. The HSL also patronized Stewart, paying for six copies of Stewart’s translation into Gaelic of The Book of Common Prayer in 1802.<sup>45</sup> Stewart, like men found in HSL circles, believed in the utility of studying Gaelic. Both

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<sup>44</sup> Paul Henderson Scott “Macfarlan, Robert (1733/4-1804),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17495> (accessed 16 May 2014).

<sup>45</sup> Black, “The Gaelic Academy,” 15; Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1796-1808, NLS Dep. 268/16. Stewart was an honorary member of the HSS: Alexander Stewart, *Elements of Galic Grammar* (Edinburgh, 1801), frontispiece.

these aspects required serious study of the language and Stewart argued that Gaelic literacy would inspire Gaels to pursue academic interests, crucially English, which might afford them opportunities outside the Highlands. But education would also serve “to preserve it in such a state of cultivation and purity, as that it may be fully adequate to these valuable ends; in a word, that while it is a living language; it may answer the purpose of a living language.”<sup>46</sup>

In addition to supporting his Gaelic grammar, in 1807 the HSL employed Stewart to make a tour through the Highlands, “for the purpose of collecting from recitation such pieces as he should deem worthy of being preserved, and of enquiring into the existence of Gaelic manuscripts.”<sup>47</sup> Stewart was confident he could deliver as he had “reason to believe that there are scattered rays of ancient poetry still floating in the Highlands, which when carefully collected into the proper focus will shine with native lustre sufficient to puzzle those eyes who have hitherto regarded them as a pale moon swimming in the clouds with borrowed light...It is this innate propensity to rescue from oblivion the sweet verses which relate to the noble deeds of our ancestors, which recommend themselves, as precious relics [*sic*], to every breast, which glows with the least portion of Caledonian fire.”<sup>48</sup> Stewart lived up to his promise and “succeeded in presenting to the Society...about 8000 verses of ancient, and an equal quantity of modern Gaelic Poetry of merit, which the Society have it in contemplation to publish.”<sup>49</sup> These early attempts at the collection of ancient poetry and manuscripts were for preservation of

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<sup>46</sup> Stewart, *Elements*, 2-3.

<sup>47</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 21.

<sup>48</sup> Alex. Stewart to Colin McCrae, 2 May 1807, The Highland Society of London General Correspondence, 1 October 1781-30 September 1820, NLS Dep. 268/1.

<sup>49</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, 21.

a language seen to be rapidly disappearing. But this goes beyond antiquarianism: these collections served a scientific purpose intended for education and would be used as research materials to put together a Gaelic dictionary, a joint project between the HSL and the HSS, which took almost thirty years to complete.

The Gaelic dictionary was intended to examine the Gaelic language as a whole and to bring uniformity to the language through orthographical and philological study, practices which were common in Europe at the time. This was the great age of encyclopaedias and lexicography and to these men the best way to preserve a language was through careful scientific exploration to produce a work that could be used as a tool to educate. Under the supervision of the HSS and the patronage of the HSL, the dictionary project brought together all kinds of Gaelic scholars together including the Rev. John Macleod, Minister of Dundonald (1757-1841, born on the Isle of Skye), Ewan MacLachlan (1773-1822), a native of Aberdeenshire, who was a Celtic and classical scholar, poet, and librarian of King's college Aberdeen, the Rev. Dr. Alexander Irvine of Little Dunkeld, and the Rev. Alexander MacDonald at Crieff, although men like Alexander Stewart were consulted with as well.<sup>50</sup>

The dictionary was no easy feat: it required the careful collection of Gaelic poetry and manuscripts which “were but scanty: these have, however, been explored with care.”<sup>51</sup> It also required careful study of grammar and syntax—necessary skills to understand the mechanics of the language. These men were marketing Gaelic as a serious

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<sup>50</sup> Highland Society of Scotland, *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum: A Dictionary of the Gaelic Language in Two Volumes* (Vol.1) (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1828). Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ: the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation* [Vol.3] (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1915), 37. AUA MS 2145 Aberdeen University Library Bulletin Vol. III May, 1919 No. 18. Depending on the publication Ewan MacLachlan is sometimes referred to as ‘Ewen’. Subscriptions for the dictionary opened in April 1787. Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 72.

<sup>51</sup> Highland Society of Scotland, *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum*, xii.

language of study and a dictionary would be produced and disseminated to anyone interested in learning Gaelic in its ‘authentic’ form. Its utility as an educational tool was also always at the heart of the project: dictionaries were to be provided to schools where Gaelic was taught giving students access to the most up to date scholarship on the language. Broadly this project and the others that would follow, was intended to increase the availability of Gaelic texts (there were few circulating at the time, save Gaelic translations of religious texts), which could then be disseminated to schools in the Highlands.

The Highland Society of Scotland’s Gaelic dictionary was not the first attempt at Gaelic lexicography and some earlier attempts do exist. The Reverend James Fraser of Kirkhill (a native Gaelic-speaker who also collected Gaelic poetry), for example, created the first known Scottish Gaelic dictionary in the 1660s.<sup>52</sup> Robert Kirk published a vocabulary with his bible in 1690, Edward Lhuyd published a Gaelic word list in his *Archaeologia Britannica* (1707), and the Rev. David Malcolm of Duddinston published a specimen of a dictionary in 1732. One of the first proper dictionaries of the Gaelic language (and possibly the first printed secular book in Gaelic) in the eighteenth century was published by the SSPCK in 1741. Because first attempts to teach Highland children English weren’t very successful, the SSPCK decided it would be best to allow Gaelic into the classroom as a means to facilitate the learning of English, therefore quickening the demise of Gaelic.<sup>53</sup> This particular dictionary was put together by and the poet Alexander

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<sup>52</sup> David Worthington, “‘All Our Dear Countrymen’? British and Irish Expatriates East of the Rhine as Recorded in the *Triennial Travels* of James Fraser of Kirkhill (1634-1709).” *Britain and the World* 6.1 (2013): 52; James Fraser, *Chronicles of the Frasers*, edited by William Mackay, “introduction,” Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable for the Scottish History Society, 1905), ix. Fraser’s poetry and the dictionary have since been lost.

<sup>53</sup> Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*, 126-136.

MacDonald, Alasdair, MacMhaighstir Alasdair (born between 1690-1700 in Dalilea in Moidart) who called the project *Leabhar a Theagasc Ainmínnin*, or literally “a Book to Teach [the] names [of things].” This work was more of a vocabulary than a dictionary and had its shortcomings but it was a marvellous attempt and influenced the compilers of the combined Highland Societies’ 1828 dictionary. MacDonald was a fervent Gaelic champion, so it was unlikely he agreed with the SSPCK’s motives, but in them he found a benefactor and this, ironically, helped to develop modern academic study of the Gaelic language.<sup>54</sup> Following Alexander MacDonald’s 1741 efforts, The Rev. William Shaw from the Isle of Arran published his two-volume *Galic and English Dictionary* in 1780, but he had a weak grasp of the mechanics of the language and it is really just a long word list than a work of lexicography. Nonetheless Shaw collected over 30,000 articles for the project from fieldwork in the Highlands and at Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>55</sup> Alexander Robertson, a school master at Kirkmichael, Perthshire, had gotten as far as the letter ‘C’ but had become discouraged due to a lack of support. In addition to his dealings with the HSL, Robert MacFarlan published a basic work of Gaelic orthography in 1795 called the *New Alphabetical Vocabulary, Gailic and English* but it was really intended to help people to read contemporary works published in Gaelic and facilitate the learning of English in schools. As Macfarlan said himself: “the author does not indeed pretend, that it contains every vocable in use, or that it is a perfect work; nor will a candid public expect a perfect work from a private individual: the orthography, he flatters himself, will give general satisfaction; and if it be found useful, as far as it goes, he hopes to meet the

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<sup>54</sup> William Gillies and Lorna Pike, “From Medieval Beginnings to 1911,” in *Scotland in Definition: A History of Scottish Dictionaries*, ed. Iseabail Macleod and J. Derrick McClure (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2012), 203-204.

<sup>55</sup> Gillies and Pike, “From Medieval Beginnings,” 206-207.

approbation of every admirer of the language.”<sup>56</sup> An Archibald Fletcher had a Gaelic-English dictionary, which the HSL subscribed to twenty copies in 1798, and in 1803 a Dr. Jamieson proposed a dictionary to the HSL but upon closer inspection by various members: “it appearing that in the specimen of his performance circulated with the said proposal the author is altogether unacquainted with the Gaelic language, and a knowledge of that tongue being essentially requisite for the execution of his work RESOLVED that the patronage of the Society be withheld till by examination thereof, it shall be ascertained that this department of the work is conducted by a competent Gaelic scholar.” Overall, therefore, these initial attempts were not very successful and the Highland societies soon realized that without their help a suitable Gaelic dictionary was not going to happen.<sup>57</sup>

In order to support the dictionary financially, the Highland Society of Scotland used the surplus of the sales and subscriptions “after defraying all the expences [*sic*] attending the publication,” of the 1807 translation of *Ossian*, which had sold very well. The surplus was to “be invested in the Society’s funds, for the express purpose of promoting the Gaelic literature and music; especially for printing a small edition of the work in the original Gaelic, with a verbal English and Latin translation, for the use of Schools in the Highlands of Scotland, and for the publication of the Gaelic dictionary; which undertakings are, in the opinion of the committee, entitled to national

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<sup>56</sup> Gillies and Pike, “From Medieval Beginnings,” 207-8; Paul Henderson Scott, “Macfarlan, Robert (1733/4-1804),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17495> (accessed 16 May 2014); Macfarlan, Robert. *New Alphabetical Vocabulary, Gailic and English* (Edinburgh: John Moir, 1795), vii.

<sup>57</sup> Minute book of the Highland Society of London, 21 January 1793-18 May 1805, NLS Dep. 268/23, p. 62; Highland Society Committee Minute Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, Dep. 268/24, p. 52. For a more in depth discussion of the Highland societies’ dictionary project see Black, “The Gaelic Academy.”

Encouragement.”<sup>58</sup> This support as well as individual subscriptions from members of the Highland societies and the general public meant that the project was able to continue. Like the other dictionary projects, the Highland societies’ dictionary faced many non-financial obstacles as well during its production, namely the premature death of Ewan MacLachlan who played the largest role in its production, as well as difficulties in locating enough material and suitable scholars. However, in spite of these obstacles, and the fact that the project was largely a team effort and many of those involved not being in the same place, it came together in the end, and is a remarkable achievement. The two volume work called the *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum* is very detailed, bringing together all of the Gaelic works that had been written up to that point. Shortly after the dictionary was published many copies were subscribed by the HSL “for the purpose of gratuitous distribution by the Society to those schools in the Highlands who have Gaelic teachers.”<sup>59</sup> In 1832, at a cost of twenty-five pounds thirty-two dictionaries were sent separately to schools all over the Highlands and the Inner and Outer Hebrides (*Na h-Eileanan is a-staigh Na h-Eileanan Siar*), some located in the most remote areas. In addition to the thirty-two Gaelic dictionaries sent to schools in parishes located around the Highlands and Hebridean Islands, dictionaries would be sent to Canada as well.<sup>60</sup> Shortly after the *Dictionarium* was published the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod (who will be discussed below) and the Rev. Dr. Daniel Dewar worked together to publish a cheap concise

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<sup>58</sup> “Printed prospectus of Various Gaelic Works,” RHASS, A.V.1.

<sup>59</sup> Draft Minutes, “Committee of Directors 1<sup>st</sup> May 1830,” NLS Dep. 268/14.

<sup>60</sup> John Gordon to the Highland Society of London, 28 February 1832, “List of schools where Gaelic dictionaries were sent,” NLS Dep. 268/4. These included schools located at Ledaig, Tobermory, Strontian, Arileod, Saltpans, Whiting Bay, Lochquioch (Loch Quoich), Sliderry, Kildalton (Isle of Islay), Melvich, Reisgill, Balivanich, Lagganlia, Ullapool, Muirtown, Jemimaville, Lochinver, and Kinlochbervie.

version of the Gaelic dictionary in 1831, which was partially financed by the HSL.<sup>61</sup> Although the *Dictionarium Scoto-Celticum* was of high quality, it was very large and very expensive and the two men argued that: “the want of a concise and cheap dictionary of the Gaelic language proved an almost insuperable obstacle to the to the progress of education in the Highlands, and a great hindrance to those who were disposed to promote it.” Using the *Dictionarium* as well as other works that had preceded the concise dictionary the two men promised a dictionary, which “must be the most perfect that has ever been published.” The quality of this shorter work was such that a second edition was published in 1832 and twelve more editions appeared between 1832 and 1911.<sup>62</sup>

### **Support for Gaelic Schools: Gaelic as the Language of Improvement**

As a Society, the HSL was interested not only in providing texts for schools but also supporting the provision of schools in the Highlands and Islands, as well as teachers who would teach Highlanders how to read in their native tongue. The provision of education was an original stated aim of the HSL, and therefore remained an important issue throughout the period covered by this dissertation.

The provision of Gaelic teachers in the Highlands was not limited to the elementary level; in fact the first discussion about Gaelic education by members of the HSL was that of university education. From the 1780s, the HSL sought “to establish a

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<sup>61</sup> The Rev. Dr. Daniel Dewar (1778-1867) from Glen Dochart, Perthshire, was a Professor elect in Moral Philosophy at King’s College, University of Aberdeen and Principal at Marischal College. Dewar was a prolific writer. Hew Scott. *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ: the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation* [vol.7] (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1915), 361; Draft Minutes, “At a Meeting of the Directors of the HSL held pursuant to the Bye [*sic*] laws of the Corporation on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1830 being the first Saturday of the month at the Freemasons Tavern,” NLS Dep. 268/14.

<sup>62</sup> Gillies and Pike, “From Medieval Beginnings,” 216-18; The Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod and the Rev. Dr. Daniel Dewar. *A Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* (Glasgow, 1839), preface.

professorship of this [Gaelic] tongue in one of the Scotch universities” and petitioned Henry Dundas to propose the idea to the British government.<sup>63</sup> As one of “the oldest Antiquities of Europe in general would receive from diligent and learned investigation of the Gaelic or Celtic tongue which was undoubtedly the former language not only of this Island, but of a very great part of the Continent. Such an illustration which might be made a condition of the Professorship would be so new and at the same time so authentic an addition to European antiquities as might be justly held a mark of attention to the learned world.”<sup>64</sup> A Gaelic professorship (or Celtic Chair in one of the Scottish universities) was an integral part of Scoto-British improvement because Gaelic, as both an ancient and living language, deserved, members argued, to be studied seriously at a University along with other European languages. By elevating Gaelic to this level of prestige would fit well into enlightened discourse rather than it being portrayed as a backward and ‘primitive’ language. The purpose of the Gaelic professorship was also practical and its support was meant to eventually bring education to common Highlanders and, it was hoped, prevent emigration. As the HSL argued in 1786 that by establishing a Gaelic professorship “that could be so very popular and pleasing in the Highlands the people might by this indulgence joined with other gratifications of their ideas and dispositions be diverted for the present from falling again into their former habit of emigration, until such time as the more solid preventatives of fisherys [*sic*] and other improvements can be duly established.”<sup>65</sup> Education, in other words, was one of the key strategies of support for Highlanders and a year later the HSL decided to seek support from the General Assembly

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<sup>63</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>64</sup> John Mackenzie to Henry Dundas, 28 January 1786, AUA MS 960.

<sup>65</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 56

of the Church of Scotland for the Professorship because “in order to preserve the recollection of the Gaelic language to enable the ministers to address, and to instruct their congregations in the native language of that Country, and thereby to extend to that people the benefits of his Majesty’s late gracious proclamation against vice and immorality.”<sup>66</sup>

Late eighteenth-century efforts to establish the professorship were not successful but by the early nineteenth century the HSL worked with the HSS to establish the professorship.<sup>67</sup> There was much difficulty in finding a suitable candidate in this period, as the people studying Celtic literature specifically or the Gaelic language generally was limited. By 1811, however, the societies set their sight on Ewan MacLachlan, who had a reputation among Highland societies’ circles as a brilliant Gaelic scholar especially for his work helping to put together the Gaelic dictionary. As J.H. Walker of the Highland Society of Aberdeen argued to the HSL in 1820:

The [Highland] Society of London had in its contemplation to institute a professorship of the Celtic literature in one of our universities in Britain. I have been thinking and dreaming of M’Laughlan as Professor of Celtic literature in King’s College, you know yourself its a complete Highland University...we had here a Highland Principal...and a profound scholar (particularly in the Gaelic) in Ewen [Ewan] Mclaughlan to fill that of Gaelic Professor. However I am building castles in the air and you must excuse I feel

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<sup>66</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 87.

<sup>67</sup> The first Chair of Celtic was established in 1876, with John Stuart Blackie and the first Professor of Celtic languages, literature, history and antiquities at a Scottish university was Donald Mackinnon took the post at Edinburgh University in 1882. Donald Mackinnon, *Prose Writings of Donald MacKinnon, 1839-1914: The First Professor of Celtic in the University of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956); Black, “The Gaelic Academy,” 17; 34.

its what I would wish to see and what I know could easily be done by some one...In M'Laughlan's class he would have some mores bearded youths, what an excellent thing would be for the students of Divinity teaching and preaching in the Highlands the language (which is declining) in its purity.<sup>68</sup>

However, the dream of a Gaelic Professorship came to an end when Ewan MacLachlan died prematurely in 1822. By the 1830s, those who had been most active in the quest to authenticate the *Ossian* poetry and produce the Gaelic Dictionary, including Henry Mackenzie (d. 1831), Sir John Sinclair (d. 1832) had passed away and with no other suitable candidate the Highland societies put the idea of the Gaelic professorship to rest. However, it was through these early efforts by members of the Highland societies in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries that the Highland Society of Scotland continued its interest and was able to support through a grant of 100 guineas the establishment of the first Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University in 1876.<sup>69</sup>

In the realm of elementary education the HSL had more success, and in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the Society helped to both build and support education schemes that were intended to preserve Gaelic as a living language and help inspire Highlanders to pursue a varied education, which would afford them opportunities not available to them at home. The HSL's educational framework was to teach Gaelic first and English second, creating a dual role for the common Highlander: one to preserve their native language by learning to read it (thereby preserving it in the form of 'knowledge') and the other to 'progress' through modern education, both in Gaelic and in

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<sup>68</sup> J.H. Walker to Donald Mackinnon, 8 October 1820, Highland Society of London General Correspondence 1 October 1820-31 December 1827, NLS Dep. 268/2.

<sup>69</sup> Black, "The Gaelic Academy," 32-36.

English, among other subjects.<sup>70</sup> This allowed Highlanders both the opportunity to have a greater understanding of their own language; play an active role in preserving their culture; and to work and live in the other parts of Britain and the empire, and still be able to communicate with their non-Gaelic colleagues. Although other societies the HSL supported, such as the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools (SSGS) and the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands of Scotland (SEPHS), founded in 1818, had slightly different agendas, the Society nevertheless donated money to any educational scheme which closely resembled their own – teaching Gaelic first, English second. With the limited availability of schools in the western Highlands and Islands, it was necessary for the HSL to be flexible in its support for Gaelic education.

The first educational project was the support of a Gaelic teacher for the Inverness Academy, founded in 1792.<sup>71</sup> As discussed earlier, the foundation of the Inverness Infirmary and the Inverness Academy served not only to extend the Society's influence directly within the Highlands, through the Inverness town council, but also in addition to supporting the building of roads and the Caledonian Canal (projects conceived by members of the HSL and the HSS), 'modernity' would be brought to the Highlands through the establishment of much-needed services. The supporters of the Academy also had another separate improving agenda: education in general was a motivating factor for Highland Society support but it was education in Gaelic that motivated their continued financial support. It was hoped that by instructing Highlanders in Gaelic would not only

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<sup>70</sup> For an illuminating intellectual discourse on Scottish education see: George Davie, *The Democratic Intellect* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961).

<sup>71</sup> For a comprehensive account of the Inverness Royal Academy see: Robert Preece, *Song School, Town School. Comprehensive: A History of Inverness Royal Academy* (Inverness: Inverness Royal Academy, 2011).

bear the fruits of education but also “may be the means of preserving and illustrating that ancient tongue.”<sup>72</sup>

The HSL’s annual thirty-five pound donation towards the council was divided into fifteen pounds to maintain a Gaelic instructor at the Academy, and twenty pounds going to the Infirmary, and maintained this annual donation until 1802, when, as we saw, the Society decided to end its support for the Academy and Infirmary. In 1792 the directors of the Academy officially decided to fulfill the HSL’s wishes and resolved: “to advertise for a Gaelic teacher and give a salary of £15.” In the meantime, the “minister of Inverness offer[ed] to teach the Gaelic one day in the week by terms on condition that the salary for the teacher shall be applied to the purchase of books for the use of the class.”<sup>73</sup> The idea was, however, that the directors of the Academy would find the appropriate candidate for the role and raise funds to top-up the prospective instructor’s salary to a liveable wage (fifteen pounds per annum not being a sufficient yearly wage for a teacher), but acquiring a teacher was proving a difficult task due to a lack of funds and an appropriate candidate, who would stay long enough with low pay.

At first there was great enthusiasm for the Gaelic teacher by the Academy’s directors, but by the end of the eighteenth century it was quickly becoming apparent that acquiring a suitable teacher and enough students to support a teacher was proving quite difficult and in 1796 the council stated that the “Gaelic class reported unsuccessful – no students to be kept open another session...unless a reasonable number present

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<sup>72</sup> Minute Book of the Highland Society of London, 8 February 1783-17 December 1783, NLS Dep. 268/21, p. 90.

<sup>73</sup> Director’s Minutes, 1781-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, 49; Royal Academy of Inverness Abstract of Directors Proceedings, 1777-1887 [August 2 1791, Vol. 1. page 42 item 128], HAC C1/5/8/1/16; Royal Academy of Inverness Abstract of Directors Proceedings, 1777-1887 [October 19, 1792, Vol 1. page 73 item 214], HAC C1/5/8/1/16; Royal Academy of Inverness Abstract of Directors Proceedings, 1777-1887 [December 10, 1792, Vol 1. page 81 item 220], HAC C1/5/8/1/16.

themselves.”<sup>74</sup> A Thomas Fraser initially taught the Gaelic class, which did not always have pupils from year to year. Fraser also assisted James Wills who taught writing, arithmetic, and bookkeeping at the school for many years. Fraser resigned in 1795 to pursue a better teaching offer and was replaced by William Mackintosh, who did a poor job of assisting Willis (largely he was not strict enough with the students). The Directors informed Mackintosh that his salary would only be the fifteen pounds provided by the HSL. In 1797, owing to lack of extra funds: “the Academy find it necessary positively and finally to resolve that after the termination of the present session no other allowance can be made to the Gaelic teacher than the allowance made by the [HSL] while they are pleased to continue it. And they require of Mr. Mackintosh of he shall resolve not to continue the charge of the class upon these terms that he gave timeous intimation thereof in terms of the regulations.”<sup>75</sup> These terms were not good enough for Mackintosh and he too resigned in 1798. William Macrae was to replace Mackintosh but also did not last long. Finally, in 1800, Alexander MacOmie (who was possibly related to the Rector) took the post but only remained until 1802.<sup>76</sup> As we saw in chapter two, a lack of fundraising, interest and an appropriate teacher led the HSL to cut off its funding in 1803. The reasons for a lack of interest on the part of the students can only be speculated at this point. Considering the school was aimed towards a middling class of people who, perhaps, had ambitions towards careers outside of the Highlands, learning English exclusively would have made more sense in terms of practicality. In parts of the Highlands at this time, English was increasingly becoming the language of business and it would have made

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<sup>74</sup> Royal Academy of Inverness Abstract of Directors Proceedings, 1777-1887 [May 2, 1796, Vol.1. p.140 item. 320], HAC C1/5/8/1/16.

<sup>75</sup> Director’s Minutes, 1781-1798, Inverness Royal Academy Papers, NRAS 14161/A, p. 333.

<sup>76</sup> Preece, *Song School*, 77-79; 226. Gaelic classes would not begin again until 1903.

sense that students studying at a school such as this would have demanded to take literacy classes in English over Gaelic.<sup>77</sup> The Inverness Royal Academy (as it would come to be called) would not teach Gaelic as part of its curriculum again until the twentieth century.<sup>78</sup>

After the HSL ceased support for the Inverness Academy, members looked to support smaller, but no less important, projects in the Highlands where Gaelic literacy could be taught. The Society had spent a great deal of money in the late-eighteenth century and early years of the nineteenth century supporting former soldiers, as well as widows and children of soldiers, who had fought in various wars in North America and Europe, including the Napoleonic Wars, and was in arrears. Nevertheless the Society continued its patronage of Gaelic education. In July of 1802 a committee consisting of William Forbes, Patrick Small, and John Mackenzie (the secretary) decided that although the Highland Society's efforts had so far been small, they "have been crowned with adequate success are of opinion that encouragement, in the way of annual grants of small sums, should be offered to schoolmasters thoroughly conversant in the Gaelic, and situated on the frontline of the Highlands, for the instruction of the rising generation in that tongue." The Society decided to target Cargarff in the parish of Strathdon, Presbytery of Alford in Aberdeenshire, "a district that separates the Highlands from the Lowland country and where the Gaelic has maintained its ground for a long period against every discouragement, but where if not speedily succoured [*sic*], it must ultimately be obliged to retire." Cargarff was a strategic area as it was a Highland military base (and had been

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<sup>77</sup> Charles W.J. Withers, "A Geography of Language: Gaelic-Speaking in Perthshire, 1698-1879," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* (New Series) 8, no. 2 (1983): 130.

<sup>78</sup> Presently, the Academy has a thriving Gaelic program, which teaches all manner of subjects in the language: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/hi/InvernessRoyalAcademy/departments/gaelic/> (accessed 18 May 2014)

since the '45) with quite a few military families residing in the area and “a schoolmaster resides in this place who is a man of general learning and particularly an excellent Gaelic scholar; and that many of the neighbouring gentlemen would readily second and aid the Society’s endeavour in this respect.” The Society decided that “funds particularly in their present depressed state are not adequate to the prosecution upon a large scale” so only ten guineas went towards this particular endeavour in 1802, but nevertheless it was one of many projects supported in this time period so was no less significant than the Inverness Academy. David Callum & Sons Society School was opened on March 25, 1803. The school had thirty-one pupils that year ranging in age from eight to twenty-two with an average of thirteen in age for all of the students. John Gordon Minister of Strathdon and Samuel Masson Minister in Cargarff attested to the HSL that all the students taking Gaelic were reading the Catechism in Gaelic and thirteen were reading the New Testament in that language.<sup>79</sup>

By the 1820s the Highland Society of London’s finances began to recover and it started to support other educational schemes, and it continued solidly until the mid-nineteenth century. In 1833 the Society, which, as we have seen, were funding various projects already, “resolved that the secretary be directed to ascertain and report the names of all the societies for promoting education in the Highlands, to whom grants have been made, and also the names and objects of the several societies in Scotland or elsewhere

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<sup>79</sup> Highland Society Committee Minutes Book, 15 March 1802 to 25 March 1808, NLS Dep. 268/24, pp. 19-20. Not much is known about the history of the school, but a primary school in the area closed in the 1990s. It’s not clear if a school operated continuously from 1803. The present-day spelling of Cargarff is Corgarff. The contemporary spelling is used here. The base, located in Cargarff Castle, was set up during the '45 but continued to be a military station until the early nineteenth century. According to the Old Statistical Account, there had been a school there run by the SSPCK: “There is a parochial school, and schoolmaster, with a salary of 100 Merks Scots.” OSA Vol. 13 Strathdon, County Aberdeenshire, 178-179. It may have been closed and re-opened by David Callum. <http://edina.ac.uk/stat-acc-scot/> (accessed 25 July 2013).

intended to promote objects in accordance with those of this Society.”<sup>80</sup> Some of the schemes supported by the HSL in this period differed slightly from their own agenda but nonetheless contained the vital element of Gaelic literacy. In 1828 and in 1833, respectively, the HSL subscribed ten guineas to the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools (SSGS), founded in Edinburgh in 1811, “in furtherance of the objects of that Society, that they have been the means of doing extensive good in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland by their operating and also been the means of originating other Societies for the general advantage of the [people] of those remote districts.”<sup>81</sup>

The SSGS was founded by philanthropists who sought to spread evangelical Christianity through teaching Gaels, especially children, to read the bible in their own language, with the hopes that knowledge of the bible would lead to spiritual conversion. Initially, the SSGS only taught reading in Gaelic and did not teach other subjects. It was popular with some crofters and cottars who approved of its focus on literacy, which was recognized by many Highlanders to be a necessity in the changing economy. Over time, and through consumer demand, the SSGS taught what was demanded of the people: “functional bilingualism,” and English literacy would eventually (after the mid nineteenth century) be taught in SGSS schools.<sup>82</sup> In this period, however, the SGSS was focused on Gaelic literacy as a way to spread Evangelical Christianity in the Highlands. The SSGS

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<sup>80</sup> Draft Minutes, “At a Meeting of the Directors of the HSL held pursuant to the Bye laws of the Corporation on Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1833 being the first Saturday of the month at the Freemasons Tavern,” NLS Dep. 268/14. The Society also provided ten pounds to the SSGS in December 1828: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17.

<sup>81</sup> Parcel: Accounts and Receipts, 1817-1829, NLS Dep. 268/17; Draft Minutes, “At a Meeting of the Directors of the HSL held pursuant to the Bye laws of the Corporation on Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1833 being the first Saturday of the month at the Freemasons Tavern,” NLS Dep. 268/14.

<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth M.J. Ritchie, “‘A Smattering of both Languages’: Highlanders, Gaelic and English, 1811-1872.” Paper presented at the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland’s Autumn Conference: Economy and Society in Rural Scotland: a Conference in Memory of Malcolm Gray, Inverness, September 20-21, 2013, 1; 21.

were providing (albeit limited) education for Highlanders free of charge and therefore provided free education to the poorest people in the Highlands, so there's no doubt the HSL, which sought to bring education to the all of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, would support and the SSGS, which benefited greatly from the patronage of the HSL. Initially for the SSGS "education was a means to a spiritual end." As Elizabeth Ritchie has shown, the initial aim of the schools was not to improve the language or, even, to bring education to the people. Rather, "the schools used Gaelic not out of a concern for the language but as an expedient means by which to introduce people to scripture and evangelical doctrine. Time and time again when supporters expressed concern that teaching in the 'backward' language of Gaelic would impede scholars' prospects, they were reassured that not only was it effective in evangelicalism but it was the most efficient route to proficiency in English."<sup>83</sup> For the SSGS the scriptures were the most important and they "resolved to send teachers into those neglected districts with the Gaelic scriptures in their hands; that by imparting to the inhabitants the ability to read the word of God in their vernacular tongue, it might most effectually supply their educational and spiritual needs."<sup>84</sup>

This may have been the case for the SSGS but the HSL, as a non-sectarian organization, did not have an interest in evangelicalism, or religious instruction in general, and those who solicited for donations were aware of this fact. Rather, appealing to the HSL's educational agenda carried more favours (and donations). In 1840 the SSGS sent a private memorial to the HSL to remind them "such in the great work of educating the Highland youth in a language they understand and highly value." The SSGS focused

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<sup>83</sup> Elizabeth M.J. Ritchie, "The Faith of the Crofters: Christianity and Identity in the Hebrides, 1793-1843." (PhD diss., University of Guelph, 2010), 114.

<sup>84</sup> "Memorial for the Gaelic School Society to the Highland Society of London," (1840), NLS Dep. 268/5.

on the educational aspect of their work, despite that not being their primary agenda: “Commiserating the condition of their benighted countrymen and relying on the blessing of God, and the assistance of the Christian public, the Society on Support of Gaelic Schools, resolved to send teachers into those neglected districts with the Gaelic scriptures in their hands; that by imparting to the inhabitants the ability to read the word of God in their vernacular tongue, it might most effectually supply their educational and spiritual needs.” According to the SSGS, with over 80,000 people left in the Highlands who could not read “the best and most efficient mode therefore, by which the elements of education can be conveyed to them must be that adopted by the [SSGS]; for after having learned to read in their own tongue, the acquisition of the English becomes comparatively easy and accordingly a large proportion of the pupils subsequently study that language, and are thus enabled to pursue their occupation in *different parts of the empire*.”<sup>85</sup> Because the SGSS was not in the business of education, but rather evangelicalism, it made sense to appeal to the HSL’s bilingual agenda (cultural preservation and employment opportunities) in order to garner support from the powerful institution in London. Conversely, the HSL was willing to support any other institution, which was teaching Gaelic literacy because if people were reading in that language it was being maintained and preserved within those studying it. A thirst for knowledge would arise from these people and further education would be sought helping Highlanders progress towards opportunities not available at home without giving up their native culture. In other words, this was a mutually beneficial arrangement for both the HSL and the SSGS.

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<sup>85</sup> “Memorial for the Gaelic School Society to the Highland Society of London,” (1840), NLS Dep. 268/5. My emphasis.

In 1818 the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools opened a satellite branch in Inverness called the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands (SEPHS).<sup>86</sup> The SEPHS included many of the same men involved in the Inverness Academy such as Sir Aeneas [Angus] Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Baronet (chief of clan Mackintosh), Lachlan Mackintosh, Esq. of Raigmore, and James Robertson, Esq., Provost of Inverness, and included many members and subscribers of the local Highland and international British/imperial elite, including many members of the Highland Society of London and the Highland Society of Scotland.<sup>87</sup> The SEPHS's main function was: "reading of Gaelic scriptures...instruction in English, reading, writing and arithmetic, are parts of its system."<sup>88</sup> The SEPHS set its sights on the counties of "Argyle, Inverness, Nairn, Ross, Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland [Shetland], and the Gaelic districts of Moray and Perth," with a population they estimated of 416,000 people in order to survey who actually spoke Gaelic, and target the schools accordingly. Surveying to see language use mirrors the HSS's economic surveys in the Highlands and Islands, as modern means by which to preserve ancient culture. The Society received responses from ministers in 89 parishes and they determined that over half of the population could not read and most people were many miles distant from schools. The

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<sup>86</sup> There was also a Society for the Support of Gaelic schools in Glasgow founded in 1812, but there's no evidence of the HSL directly supporting this particular branch. The SEPHS sometimes referred to itself as the Inverness Education Society.

<sup>87</sup> Christine Lodge, "Mackintosh, Sir Aeneas, baronet (1751/2-1820)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/57481> (accessed 28 July 2013). Stewart-Mackenzie was married to Mary Elizabeth Frederica Mackenzie, daughter and heiress of the chief of the Clan Mackenzie, Francis Mackenzie, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Seaforth; "The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands, with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819)," RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 1-38. Some members and subscribers to note from the HSL and the HSS are: The Marquis of Huntly, The Duke of Gordon, Lord Saltoun and Divie Robertson, Esq. (one of the secretaries of the HSL).

<sup>88</sup> Society for the Education of the Poor, *Report*, 20.

Society also estimated that as of 1826 300,000 people in these areas spoke Gaelic fluently.<sup>89</sup> The SEPHS was to maintain circulating schools, which had been deemed the only way to bring schools to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The Society was wholly dependent on public donations (like the SSGS) but it received “the most distinguished support, both at home and in some of the colonies” including the large sum of £105 from the HSL in 1822.<sup>90</sup> Donations for the SEPHS came from all sections of society, from great landowners to bakers, merchants, and labourers; and from across the empire (most notably from India, from men stationed in the East India Company, for example), and those who supported it recognized the great need for education in the Highlands.<sup>91</sup> As James Alexander Stewart-Mackenzie of Seaforth (governor of Ceylon 1837-1840) wrote to the Society:

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> February, containing a printed statement of the views of the Society recently established at Inverness, for the purpose of extending to the Highlands the benefits of education. It is impossible for anyone like me, till lately a stranger to the Highlands, not to have observed with great regret, how much remains to be done both on the mainland and in the Islands, to diffuse the inestimable blessings of education among the lower orders, throughout these extensive districts...If we can but bring to maturity by cultivation, that desire to

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<sup>89</sup> Society for the Education of the Poor, *Report*, 22-27.

<sup>90</sup> “The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands, with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819),” RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 33-35.

<sup>91</sup> James Alexander Stewart-Mackenzie of Seaforth to the Society for the Education of the Poor in Scotland, 8 April 1822, India Office Records and Private Papers, Bombay Department Circulars item 7730, 1821-1822, British Library IOR F/4/643; Society for the Education of the Poor, *Report*, 20.

improve their minds which is now so alive among the Highlanders, we shall certainly advance to perfection among them those many moral virtues which ignorance and want of education can alone stifle and repress. With these sentiments, and connected as I now am, with so large a population as the Seaforth estates retain, I shall feel the liveliest interest in the progress of your infant establishment.<sup>92</sup>

Because the SEPHS was dependent on public support its agenda reflected the need to appeal to a wide sector of society including those who supported evangelicalism and/or education. As stated in the Society's laws and regulations: "the Society shall use its endeavours, not only to maintain circulating Schools for teaching Gaelic, and under certain restrictions, English, Writing, and Arithmetic, but shall encourage Sabbath Schools, in places suitable for them."<sup>93</sup> However, the teaching of Gaelic literacy did garner some criticism from its supporters. At a meeting of the SEPHS held in the Town Hall, Inverness, on April 17, 1819, some members of the meeting asked the committee to clarify the Society's position on teaching Gaelic. A speaker argued that "It came to their knowledge that an impression existed (to a certain extend at least) that the Society were indifferent to, or not so intent on, that part of their plan which provided that English, Writing, and Arithmetic, should be taught along with the Gaelic." The resolution of the

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<sup>92</sup> Alex May, "Colonial administrators and post-independence leaders in Sri Lanka (1798-2000)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2005, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/theme/93268> (accessed 29 July 2013); "The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands With an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819)," RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 28; 37.

<sup>93</sup> "The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands With an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819)," RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, p. 5.

Society “That the principal and avowed object of the Society shall be to teach Gaelic in the Gaelic districts,” the speaker argued, “must have been received with surprise, at least by those who have been accustomed to consider that to teach the Highlanders to read English, was the ready way to civilize them. This sentiment has been in force for more than a century...with some it may still exist, and while it does, it will undoubtedly lead them to consider the Society’s Resolution indicative of an undue partiality for the Gaelic, and a corresponding disregard to the other parts of their plan. This, in the absence of explanation of the Society’s reasons, false ones might be assigned, and the design of the Society misinterpreted, to the great prejudice of its interest with the public.”<sup>94</sup>

The SEPHS had an education agenda, which included both evangelizing Highlanders in their own language and the provision of a general education. Members of this Society were keenly aware that in order to convince potential subscribers to support their position on teaching Gaelic it had to be shown that “the only channel through which the rudiments of knowledge can be conveyed to the mind of a remote Highlander, is the Gaelic language.” By learning literacy in Gaelic, they argued,

[a]n appetite is generated for those stores of science which are accessible to him only thro’ the medium of the English language. Hence an acquaintance with the English is found to be necessary for enabling him to gratify his desire after further attainments. The study of it of course becomes an object of importance; it is commenced and prosecuted with increasing diligence.

These premises seem to warrant a conclusion which at first might appear

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<sup>94</sup> “The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands, with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819),” RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 15-16. Their emphasis.

paradoxical, that by cultivating the Gaelic, you effectually, though indirectly, promote the study, and diffuse the knowledge of the English... Your committee cannot but observe with pleasure, that the plan adopted by the Society, whilst it lays the foundation of knowledge to the Highlander, by teaching him to read the Gaelic, lays open to him the means of building the superstructure to any extent his situation may admit of, by teaching to read English also; and qualifies him by the knowledge of Writing and Arithmetic, for useful employments in the ordinary walks of life.<sup>95</sup>

The promise of English had to be made to the general public, no matter what the motivation for teaching Gaelic literacy.<sup>96</sup> For the SSGS, Gaelic literacy was a the conduit by which the word of God could reach Gaels; however for its branch, the SEPHS, Gaelic literacy was both an evangelizing tool and a mode with which to get Highlanders learning other subjects, or a more well-rounded education necessary to secure employment farther afield. For the HSL Gaelic literacy served to preserve the language and create a thirst for knowledge, which could lead Gaels to learn English, providing them opportunities in business or other pursuits at home and abroad. Although the agendas of the SSGS and the SEPHS differed to its own agenda, the HSL was willing to support any institution, which

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<sup>95</sup> “The First Half-Yearly Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor in the Highlands, with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, and a list of subscribers and donors (Inverness: Printed at the Journal Office, by James Fraser, 1819),” RHASS Pamphlets, Pamphlet #6, pp. 19-20.

<sup>96</sup> Initially the SEPHS had some success and managed to open a central school in Inverness to apprentice teachers for the circulating schools, but by the late 1820s financial difficulties forced this society to give up some of its schools to the SSPCK. It finally relinquished all of its schools to various organizations in 1838. Durkacz, *Decline*, 114.

sought to teach Gaelic literacy, even if it meant bending slightly to the will of other peoples' motives.<sup>97</sup>

Although the HSL did not necessarily support religion *per se*, religious texts in Gaelic were used and supported by the society because that is what was available (like at the Cargarff school). Aside from the Gaelic Dictionary and *Ossian*, it was largely religious texts that had been translated from English that were available in any great numbers at this time; distributed largely through efforts by the SSPCK, the SSGS, and larger evangelical organisations like the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804) who published 35,000 bibles and 48,700 New Testaments translated into Gaelic in this period.<sup>98</sup> So, around the time the *Dictionarium* was published, the Society concentrated its efforts on the support and dissemination of other non-religious genres of literature, and exported these to the Highlands and Islands and the British Empire.

In 1830 it was brought to the Society's attention by Sir John Sinclair that a Mr. John Reid (1808-1841/2) had compiled a collection of Gaelic works. Reid, a writer, bookseller, and publisher from Paisley, Renfrewshire, began by cataloguing a friend's Gaelic collection as a favour in 1825 but ended up compiling all known (to himself and his colleagues) Gaelic publications. It came as a surprise to Reid that "the longer I searched the more I was convinced, that the literature of the Gaelic was richer than even

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<sup>97</sup> In 1834 the HSL donated ten guineas be granted as a further donation in aid of the funds of the Royal Highland School Society, having donated ten guineas the previous year. The Royal Highland School Society (RHSS) was the London arm of the SSPCK. In its early years, like the SSGS, the SSPCK was more interested in religious conversion through literacy (first English, then Gaelic), but this London branch, like the SSGS's Inverness branch (the SEPHS), was moving towards a more general education as its primary motive. In addition to meeting at the Freemason's Tavern, like the HSL, the RHSS had many of the same members of the British elite as the HSL on its board. It is not surprising, then, that the RHSS received some funding from the HSL. "At a Meeting of the Directors of the HSL held pursuant to the bye [*sic*] laws of the Corporation on Saturday the 2[?] March 1834 being the first Saturday of the month at the Freemasons Tavern," Dep. 268/14.

<sup>98</sup> Society for the Education of the Poor, *Report*, 20-21.

its friends imagined.”<sup>99</sup> The project took Reid two years and it was in 1827 that the manuscript made its way into Sinclair’s hands. This young man impressed the HSL and “in respect to the catalogue of Gaelic works, by Mr. Reid,” the Society decided, “your committee beg to observe that the great diligence which has been used by Mr. Reid in the collection of the works entitle him to some notice from the Society; and as, in case the Society should hereafter publish any account of their transactions, a catalogue of the books in the Gaelic language would be a most important addition to it, they recommend that the sum of ten guineas be presented to Mr. Reid as a mark of the Society’s approbation of his diligence and research into compiling the catalogue, and that a copy of the catalogue be made for the use of the Society.”<sup>100</sup> The HSL gave Reid the premium in 1831, “and at the earnest request of many distinguished patrons of Gaelic literature.” Reid published the *Bibliotheca Scoto-Celtica* himself in 1832. The *Bibliotheca* is a history of Gaelic literature including other Celtic languages such as Welsh, Irish, and Cornish, and their relationship to Scottish Gaelic. The work is full of detail with histories of various authors where Reid could find the information, and a list of all the publications annotated with some criticism. Reid was aware, like members of the HSL, that Gaelic was under threat and feared that within fifty years it, like Cornish or Waldensian would “become the subject of history alone [and] although the exertions of the friends of Gaelic literature are judicious and powerful, yet they have to contend with

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<sup>99</sup> John Reid, *Bibliotheca Scoto-Celtica, or, An Account of all the Books Which Have Been Printed in the Gaelic Language* (Glasgow: John Reid, 1832), v.

<sup>100</sup> Lionel Alexander Ritchie, “Reid, John (1808-1841/2),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/23333> (accessed 24 August 2013). John Reid, *Bibliotheca Scoto-Celtica, or, An Account of all the Books Which Have Been Printed in the Gaelic Language* (Glasgow: John Reid, 1832); Draft Minutes, “Report of the Committee appointed by the Committee of Directors of the HSL on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1830 to take into Consideration a Catalogue of Gaelic Books by W. John Reid, and a Manuscript of a Gaelic and English Collection by W. Archibald Currie. Written at the Freemasons Tavern 15<sup>th</sup> May 1830,” NLS Dep. 268/14.

opponents to which they can offer but trifling resistance.”<sup>101</sup> Like his benefactors, Reid was frustrated that Gaels did not seem to want to read literature in their native tongue, instead demanding to learn literacy in English alone. How could the language be preserved, Reid argued, if

in many of these places of the Highlands, parents are also unwilling that their children should ‘*waste time*’ in learning to read the Gaelic, in consequence of which the greater part of the youthful Gael talk neither English, Scottish, nor Gaelic, but a jargon made up of the three. The Gael find it to be their interest to study the English Language, and however patriotic their feelings may be in regard to their mother tongue, yet interest is a powerful charm, and the more English is cultivated in the Highlands, the less attention will be paid to Gaelic.<sup>102</sup>

It was not just the imposition of English into the Highlands that was at fault, according to Reid, it was also the poor quality of Gaelic publications up to that date, an argument supported by his benefactors. The religious texts that were being used in schools by the established clergy were apparently substandard because they did not follow an “established rule of orthography, and not *ad libitum* as their present custom is, a custom which invariably prevents their sermons being printed for the benefit of their flock.” He noted that as “very few of them study the Gaelic beyond the writing of their discourses, which...are not spelled according to any established grammatical rule, but according to

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<sup>101</sup> Reid, *Bibliotheca*, lviii.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

the caprice of the composer.” Reid’s solution was to produce a history of Gaelic literature, which could complement other scientific projects such as the Highland Society of Scotland’s *Dictionarium*. A proper understanding of Gaelic, Reid argued, would lead Highlanders to study their native language as seriously as English thereby preserving the language in its most ‘authentic’ form. This was an argument whole-heartedly supported by the HSL because its improvement agenda included preserving Gaelic, an ancient language, through modern methods.<sup>103</sup>

In addition to supporting Reid’s Gaelic catalogue, members of the HSL were interested in supporting cheap non-religious texts to be circulated in schools. In 1840, the Caledonian Asylum solicited the help of the HSL in the publication and circulation of a Gaelic periodical. The Reverend John Lees, the secretary of the Caledonian Asylum, wrote to John MacDonald, a secretary of the HSL with a “memorandum and prospectus which I request you will have the kindness to lay before the Highland Society. The object of the memorandum...is they [The HSL] would patronise or otherwise assist the establishing of a Gaelic magazine for circulation in the Highlands...to their credit and which would be received with greater gratitude by Highlanders.”<sup>104</sup> Men in these social circles recognized that at that point in time “there are very few books printed in the Gaelic language, and even these, except the Gaelic Bible, are in consequence of their poverty beyond the reach of the great body of the people.” When it came to Gaelic periodicals, according to these men, there was “not one.”<sup>105</sup> The plan was to provide cheap publications “on every subject” to the poorest people in the Highlands and Islands

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<sup>103</sup> Reid, *Bibliotheca*, lviii-lix.

<sup>104</sup> John Lees to John MacDonald, 13 February 1840, NLS Dep. 268/5. It is interesting to note that a Religious man would support non-religious texts, but clearly Lees had varying interests.

<sup>105</sup> Proposal for Aiding the publication and circulation of a Gaelic periodical by the Reverend John Lees Secretary of the Caledonian Asylum, 15 February 1840, NLS Dep. 268/5.

of Scotland so that they could also participate in the “common blessing” that was knowledge and education. As had always been the plan, this would begin with Gaelic publications because “next to the establishing of schools and circulating libraries, as the most effectual means for promoting education, the circulation of *cheap Gaelic periodicals* would prove of essential service in disseminating knowledge and creating a taste for reading.”<sup>106</sup> Without the provision of these texts, education would be slow to arrive.

Until this point the only Gaelic periodical known had been published by the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod of Glasgow (1783-1862) church minister and major Gaelic scholar (most notably his and Dewar’s concise 1831 Gaelic dictionary), from Morvern known colloquially as *Caraid nan Gaidheal* (“Friend of the Gael”), for his work on education in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and his charity work during the potato famines of 1836-7 and 1846-7.<sup>107</sup> MacLeod edited and published *An Teachdaire Gae’lach* (1829-31) or the “Gaelic Messenger”—a monthly magazine, which had only existed for two years but had been discontinued from “want of support.”<sup>108</sup> The idea for another Gaelic periodical had been awakened by “Misters J & P Campbell booksellers in Glasgow” and MacLeod himself, but for want of funds the project had not yet taken off. MacLeod found an advocate and benefactor in the Caledonian Asylum and its associates. Both MacLeod

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<sup>106</sup> “Proposal for Aiding the publication and circulation of a Gaelic periodical by the Reverend John Lees Secretary of the Caledonian Asylum,” 15 February 1840 NLS Dep. 268/5. Their emphasis.

<sup>107</sup> H. C. G. Matthew, “Macleod, Norman (1783-1862),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17678> (accessed 31 July 2013); Gillies and Pike, “From Medieval Beginnings,” 216.

<sup>108</sup> “Proposal for Aiding the publication and circulation of a Gaelic periodical,” 15 February 1840, NLS Dep. 268/5; “Macleod, Norman (1783-1862),” H. C. G. Matthew in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/17678> (accessed 31 July 2013).

and the directors of the Asylum felt that the Highland Society of London could remedy the situation “either by contributing a sum of money annually towards its support, until the work should be sufficiently established to support itself...say 100 or 200 copies...The copies should be presented to schools in the Highlands, in which the Gaelic language is taught, *on the express condition, that the master or the best reader in the school should read the magazine through in regular portions, in the hearing of the whole school...*by this means an unusual degree of interest would be excited among new children...and a desire for knowledge would be created which would not [be] satisfied with one periodical, but in a short time would require others to gratify it.”<sup>109</sup> With HSL support, MacLeod was able to publish a new set of periodicals in this period called *Cuairtear nanGleann* (“The Traveller of the Glens”) from 1840-43. The HSL were more than happy to help as members argued:

The great number of Highlanders who are unacquainted with any other than Gaelic language at present scattered in the different Highlands of Scotland and elsewhere, in which language is a great want of useful and instructive publications, Donald MacLeod of Glasgow had determined, if he could obtain any support to issue a periodical work, in the Gaelic for the moral and religious improvement of poor Highlanders; the Society immediately resolved to subscribe for one hundred copies of the same, seventy five of which were to be placed at the disposal of the Highland and Agricultural Society of

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<sup>109</sup> “Proposal for Aiding the publication and circulation of a Gaelic periodical,” 15 February 1840, NLS Dep. 268/5. Their emphasis.

Scotland, and the remainder to be forwarded to the British possessions in North America.<sup>110</sup>

The following year MacLeod's office wrote to the HSL expressing his sheer delight at their patronage and reiterated for the Society how their patronage was supporting Highlanders both at home and abroad. "It is with lively satisfaction" that

The memorialist is able to state that the usefulness of that periodical has been very great,—not only in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and in Ireland, but also in many of the British colonies: Canada,—Nova Scotia, New South Wales, and New Zealand. That such a periodical is particularly required at the present time when the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are in a state of transition, and when a great degree of excitement exists among the people as to their future prospects, it being the anxious wish of many of them—dearly as they love their native land...that they should be enabled to other lands where they might love in greater comfort; and with which view it is of paramount importance not merely to continue to instill [*sic*] into their minds the truths of the gospel, but also to inform them of the natural capabilities and advantages viz. of the foreign lands to wish they deserve to emigrate.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> "Summary of the Proceedings of the Highland Society of London During the Season of 1840," NLS Dep. 268/5.

<sup>111</sup> "Memorial from the office of the Reverend Macleod to the Highland Society of London," 5 March 1841, NLS Dep. 268/5.

Like the other societies the HSL supported in the earlier part of the century, MacLeod appealed to the Highland Society's agenda of support through education. For his work on improving the Gaelic language and providing much-needed texts to support education, MacLeod was rewarded with an honorary membership to the HSL's branch in Upper Canada, the Highland Society of Canada in 1841.<sup>112</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, the Highland Society of London would continue its transatlantic support for Highlanders who left for British North America at this time, through its Canadian branches. It is here where we will see the Society's influence spread through the empire via support for members' kin abroad.

## Conclusion

From its very inception, the Highland Society of London sought to preserve and promote the Gaelic language. This included a variety of methods from cultural expression, to educational schemes and support for other societies engaged in the teaching of Gaelic literacy. For the HSL, teaching Gaelic literacy did not relegate the language to the spiritual realm and English to the practical; rather, teaching Gaelic literacy was the practical medium by which the language could be preserved and the inspiration for further education would arise. To Scoto-British improvers, education was the key to bringing Highlanders both cultural satisfaction and opportunities both at home and abroad; learning to read in Gaelic would, crucially, lead people to read in English, the *lingua franca* of the British Empire. English was never meant to supplant Gaelic; rather Highlanders could retain their cultural heritage by learning to read in their own language,

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<sup>112</sup> The Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 39.

preserving the language through everyday use. As the Society argued, “the maintenance of the national character of Highlanders still illustrious in defiance of all obstacles, is intimately combined with the preservation of their mother tongue, and that, as already mentioned, the purity of that ancient tongue can alone be maintained by the countenance given and propriety enforced by the sanction of public instruction in that language.”<sup>113</sup> English was seen to be a complement; another important subject like maths or Latin. At the end of the day parish schools had not been an option for many Highlanders who either lived in remote areas or could not afford the fees. Like the economic improvement schemes outlined in the previous two chapters, improvement of the Gaelic language had to utilize a two-pronged approach: that of progress and preservation, which was not paradoxical to people who saw the benefit of preserving the culture and history of the Gaels for future generations. This was no different than improvement schemes like woollen manufacturing, which Scoto-British improvers sought indigenous roots (native sheep) to improve a local industry. In other words, Gaelic was going to disappear without modern methods to save it. Highlanders were largely living in an oral culture but through “progress” (i.e. modern education) the Gaelic language could be saved. By supporting the implementation of schools in remote areas in the western Highlands and Islands, the HSL was providing not only a service members felt the Highlanders needed, but also, one that Highlanders were increasingly demanding for themselves.

In the next chapter we will examine the HSL’s efforts to influence Highlanders in other parts of the British Empire, notably British North America. The HSL had branches in India where men stationed with the East India Company or who were members of the local ruling elite had associations to come together in the two major ports in the colony,

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<sup>113</sup> Minute book of the HSL 1793-1805, NLS Dep.268/23, p. 25.

Madras and Bombay. These members remitted hundreds of pounds towards educational schemes and efforts to preserve Gaelic, as well as paying membership dues to the parent Society to help aid its charitable agenda in the city (notably helping to open and support the Caledonian Asylum and the Gaelic chapel). However, we will examine the HSL's branch in Upper Canada more closely as a case study to determine to what extent the intentions of the HSL were transferred across the Atlantic. In Upper Canada we will see some of the same methods for improving Highland culture playing out in a colonial setting. The Highland Society of Canada (HSC) was not just a branch of the HSL, it was founded by Highlanders who were members of the HSL (some holding high-ranking positions in the London society) who built successful careers as fur traders and financiers in the North West Company, dividing their time between their London financial interests and the fur trade in Canada. These men were the true "gentlemanly capitalists" who linked the colonies to the City through a society formed to promote and preserve Highland culture, bring elite Highlanders together, and provide the modern tools for social and economic improvement of the Highlands and Islands, and support Highlanders in need throughout the British Empire.

The men who set up the HSC were looking to retire in and around Glengarry County, Upper Canada, which by the late-eighteenth century already had a significant settlement of native Highlanders. These men were looking to be the settlement's community leaders, a process that was facilitated by opening a voluntary association for Highland elites in the colony that maintained direct links to London. Ideas formed in London about the role the Highlands and Islands as well as Highlanders were to play in the development of the British Empire in the era after the Napoleonic wars were

transferred to one of Great Britain's most important colony after India. The Gaelic education schemes examined in this chapter and the information gathering undertaken in the Highlands and Islands would cross the Atlantic helping to bring literacy to Highland settlers and modern agricultural methods to people who were leaving at the same time as the projects examined here were being formed. Scoto-British Improvement would provide economic and cultural support for Highlanders no matter where they were located and associations formed for Highlanders would ensure that Highland culture was carried through the diaspora and social and political connections between London and a major British colony were maintained.

## **Chapter 6: Building the Highland Empire: The Highland Society of Canada, 1815-1857**

### **Introduction**

The HSL worked hard to bring Gaelic education to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Education, especially literacy, was deemed to be lacking in the area and prior efforts had largely been ineffectual. The HSL supported as many educational projects as possible that supplied some kind of Gaelic education in order to bring literacy in Gaelic to people in the Highlands and Islands while simultaneously preserving the Gaelic language, through its continued use. Education was a vital part of the Highland Society of London's improvement plan, a plan that also included preservation and promotion of Highland culture, economic development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as well as charity for Highlanders in need that settled in London either permanently or temporarily. These projects were conceived and executed through association among Highland elites found among the membership of the HSL as well as through the institutional links forged by members over the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. It is through these institutional links that the HSL was able to offer similar support for Highlanders who emigrated abroad. These institutional links formed the basis of the Highland Empire.

From 1818 through to the 1830s and 1840s, the HSL began instituting branch societies in British North America in order to provide places for Highland elites located in the various British colonies to come together and express their culture as well as build their social capital in places, particularly in the colony of Upper Canada, where patronage

was necessary for political survival, as well as provide charity for Highland settlers, including support for Gaelic education through the provision of Gaelic texts as well as monetary support for local Gaelic schools. Like the HSL, these branches courted the political and social elite (who were often native Highlanders) to join and take high-ranking positions in each society. Throughout this period the HSL maintained constant contact with its British North American branches, ensuring connections and support would be maintained between Highlanders across the Atlantic during the height of the Highland Clearances.

The institution of branch societies had been an object of the Highland Society of London since its inception; however, it was after the Napoleonic wars that members of the HSL decided to expand the Society's influence on a more global scale.<sup>1</sup> Following the end of the Napoleonic wars (1803-1815), and in particular the end of the Anglo-American war (1812-1815), the HSL set about extending influence throughout the British Empire, particularly the British North American Colonies, which were under threat of American invasion.<sup>2</sup> In 1815 the Highland Society of London issued a proclamation stating:

Whereas the said Society [the HSL] to extend the benefit of their institution and to unite together in a central union their countrymen wherever situated have resolved to issue commissions for the establishment of branches thereof in all the British colonies abroad, as well as in other places abroad and at

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<sup>1</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1783], Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Some historians argue this is the beginning of Britain's "Imperial Century" (c.1815-1915). See especially: Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1976).

home where Highlanders are resident; and *being extremely desirous that a branch should be established in Canada* you are hereby empowered and requested, in pursuance of this resolution to found a branch of the Highland Society of London at Canada accordingly, with authority to make such bye laws as may be necessary for the management thereof, in conformity to the principles and rules of the said Society.<sup>3</sup>

In the time period covered by this study Highlanders were migrating to Canada in increasing numbers because of the immense restructuring occurring on Highland estates to make way for increased sheep farming. Many elite Highlanders had also begun settling in British North America in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly those in the military or who had commercial interests in the area, and so it made sense for members of the HSL to expand their influence into the Canadian colonies. Canada offered many white settlers opportunities not available to them at home most importantly the ownership of land, which the British government either gave to them or sold to them at a low price. Elite Highlanders who had settled in British North America were predominantly in the British military that had served in the American and French revolutionary wars, as well as the North American campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars. With military pensions many of these men settled on government Crown land offering them social and political opportunities in the burgeoning colonies that would not have been available back home. However, there were also many colonial entrepreneurs especially fur traders with North West Company who either split their time between

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<sup>3</sup> “Proclamation issued by the Highland Society of London,” 7 November 1815, Scottish Collection, ASCUG, XS2 MS A018. My emphasis.

British North America and London or settled permanently in the British colonies. It was largely these former fur traders who set up the Highland Society of Canada in Upper Canada. These men were thus given an opportunity to establish themselves as the *de facto* landed and political elite using the fortunes they made in the trade, something they could not have done back in the Highlands. In this way the HSL would extend its influence not only over other Highland elites who settled in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island but also the first major settlement of Highlanders, in Glengarry County, Upper Canada (Ontario), which had a permanent Highland settlement dating back to 1783.<sup>4</sup> The establishment of a branch of the HSL in Glengarry County brought elites of the burgeoning Highland community in Upper Canada, as well as Highlanders located in nearby Stormont County and Montreal, together to socialize and distribute charity to their community. Men who joined the Society included some of the most important members of the British North American colonial elite.

Although this chapter will touch briefly on the branches of the HSL established in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island and their contributions to an imperial identity, the main focus will be on the Highland Society of Canada, the HSL's first branch in British North America. The Highland Society of Canada (HSC) was formed in 1818 at Williamstown, Glengarry County and came together under a commission by the HSL and the direction of two important members of the HSL, Simon McGillivray, who was a vice-president of the HSL at the time, and the Rev. Alexander Macdonell (1760-1840), who would become the first Catholic Bishop of Upper Canada at Kingston, bringing the Highland settler and colonial elite together in the Colony. Many

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<sup>4</sup> Marianne McLean, *People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition 1745-1820* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991).

other members of the HSL would join the HSC in addition to McGillivray and Macdonell, including many other Nor'Westers such as Simon's brother William McGillivray, their cousin John (Dalcrombie) McGillivray, Angus Shaw, John MacDonald of Garth, Archibald Norman Macleod, and John Ogilvie.<sup>5</sup> This shared membership ensured the continued link between the two societies. The HSC was to provide camaraderie, cement political relationships, and provide charity to Highland settlers in the County, in the process drawing together the Loyalist, conservative elite of Upper Canada, many of who were native Highlanders.<sup>6</sup> Many of these men were either part of or had close ties with the 'Family Compact', or the 'Tory' establishment in Upper Canada.<sup>7</sup> As the HSL had done in London, the HSC formed relationships with the governing elite by extending invitations of membership to various high-ranking officials in the colony in order to ensure that their agenda would be realised. Elite Highlanders who joined the HSC had an imperial vision, which matched that of the Highland Society of Canada's colleagues, kinsmen, and friends in London, who kept in close contact throughout the period. Through association, maintaining links to London, and by re-creating the charitable projects of the HSL and the HSS, including the importation of educational and agricultural improvement schemes, and support for Highland culture in Glengarry County, the HSC maintained the HSL's imperial vision of a 'Highland Empire' in which Highlanders were supported within an imperial framework of community support in the years leading up to Canadian Confederation.

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix 1.4.

<sup>6</sup> Macdonell Street in Guelph is named after the Bishop Alexander Macdonell, as is Bishop Macdonell High School on 200 Clair Road West, Guelph.

<sup>7</sup> In Lower Canada the elite group is known as the Château Clique.

### **The Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1828**

In the *People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition 1745-1820*, Marianne McLean charts the waves of emigration from western Inverness to Glengarry County in Upper Canada (what are now the United Counties of Dundas, Stormont, and Glengarry). These emigrants came largely from Glen Garry, Glen Moriston, Knoydart, Eigg, Locharkaigside, Glenelg and Lochiel in the western Highlands. The original Highland settlers came to Upper Canada in 1784, and the largest settlement of Highlanders from this period was in 1815 when the British Government assisted many hundreds of people to travel to Upper Canada. By the time of the opening of the Highland Society of Canada, there was a significant settlement of native Highlanders in the area. According to McLean, the vast majority of the emigrants prior to 1815 left as entire families, and families included extended kin and friends. Largely these were not people forced directly off their lands (although some were evicted, and others lived under the threat of the clearance), she argues, but rather people seeking land, which was becoming increasingly scarce in the western Highlands due to skyrocketing rents and large-scale sheep farming. Upper Canada provided opportunities, especially, as we shall see, for community leaders who would become the *de facto* gentry of the area. Many of the common people did have some opportunities available to them in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, such as crofting and fishing (as outlined in chapters three and four), or there was the option (often a last option) of moving to other parts of Scotland.<sup>8</sup> But these particular people from western Inverness chose to settle as a community and many, at least before 1815 organised and paid for their own transport. Between 1773 (when the county was founded)

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<sup>8</sup> Devine, "Temporary migration and the Scottish Highlands," 345-359.

and 1853 over 3,500 people settled in Glengarry County from the Highland districts mentioned above.<sup>9</sup>

MacLean's study of the Glengarry Highlanders ends shortly after this chapter begins. Very little has been written about this area since MacLean's book and almost nothing exists on the Highland Society of Canada.<sup>10</sup> This chapter does not seek to present a comprehensive history of Upper Canada, instead it links to Maclean's study by showing how members of the Highland Society of London who had experience on both sides of the Atlantic attached themselves to the first significant Highland settlement in Upper Canada, forming a transatlantic bond between the Highland community there and Highland communities in Great Britain. Through camaraderie and charitable projects, the Highland Society of Canada implemented the same strategies for supporting Highlanders as its parent society did in London, in addition to sharing many members. In this way, socio-political links were maintained between the Highland community in Upper Canada and Highlanders in London. The members who joined the HSC, like the majority of members of the HSL, were loyal to the British Empire, as well as active in developing it, and overwhelmingly of the Tory persuasion. Those within the political circles of the Family Compact, or the ruling elite in Upper Canada, had built high-ranking military and successful commercial careers by exploiting the British fiscal-military state. Elevation of

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<sup>9</sup> McLean, *People of Glengarry*, 3-15.

<sup>10</sup> A few works exist that pre-date McLean's: W.L Scott, KC, "The MacDonnells of Leek, Collachie and Aberchalder," *CCHA Report 2* (1934-1935), 22-32; John Graham Harkness, *Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry: A History, 1784-1945* (Oshawa: Mundy-Goodfellows, 1946). A small blurb about the Highland Society of Canada can be found in: Rusty Bitterman, "On Remembering and Forgetting: Highland Memories within the Maritime Diaspora," in *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory: Scotia and Nova Scotia c. 1700-1990*, ed. Marjory Harper et al. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1999), 260. Campey has a small blurb in her book: Lucille H. Campey, *Unstoppable Force: The Scottish Exodus to Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn Group, 2008). Campey makes a few mistakes regarding the HSL. She states that Simon McGillivray was a president of the HSL but he never was, p. 298 endnote 30. She also states that the HSC ceased to operate after 1870. There are no records of it after 1857. Campey does not cite where she found this date.

Highland culture, acts of charity in the city of London and political lobbying on behalf of economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland had played a major role in the success of these Highland elites in negotiating their way to the upper echelons of the British colonial elite in British North America.

The first Highland settlers to the area were loyalist refugees who had initially settled briefly in New York, but following the American War of Independence (1775-1783) community leaders took these settlers to Upper Canada (some United Empire Loyalists also received free land from the crown in Lower Canada) where the British government was giving land grants to those loyal to the Crown.<sup>11</sup> Loyalists were those who had thrown off political links to the United States but who still had contact with Americans by virtue of being part of the British Atlantic World.<sup>12</sup> Loyalism does not necessarily equate with conservatism; nor are loyalists and Loyalism the same thing; however, the traditional ideas associated with Loyalism include many similarities to British traditional conservatism including: loyalty to the British crown and empire, anti-republicanism, counter-revolutionary, principles of suffering for ideology, and elite social origins, and a social hierarchy. Loyalism is much more complicated than a few reducible ideas, and as an ideology it has changed over time, and, as James Knowles points out, “Ontario’s Loyalists were a diverse group that lacked a clear and unified identity.” This identity continually evolved depending on what group was constructing it.<sup>13</sup> As Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan argue, Loyalism is a fluid, multifaceted movement, which spanned the Atlantic world and the Loyalists who settled in the St. Lawrence River valley

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<sup>11</sup> McLean, *People of Glengarry*, chapter 6; James Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> P.J. Marshall, *Remaking the British Atlantic: The United States and the British Empire after American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

<sup>13</sup> Knowles, *Inventing*, 5-6.

(where Glengarry County is), were but one group of loyalists in a much broader movement, including, as O’Gorman points out, loyalists in Great Britain who emerged after the French Revolution.<sup>14</sup> One thing that clearly defines Loyalism is that it was counterrevolutionary and as such loyalists who had settled in Upper Canada had much in common with Highland elites who began to settle there shortly thereafter. Many of the men who joined the HSL and the HSC had either participated directly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century wars fought to end revolution and preserve the British Empire, or had business interests within the British Empire they were keen to protect, especially after the loss of the American colonies.<sup>15</sup> The Highland settlers to Glengarry County who joined the HSC displayed a commitment to Loyalism, which had much in common with late eighteenth and early nineteenth century British conservatism. Those who joined the HSC who were also members of the HSL were largely Tories. So, there was common ground with members in London and settlers in the period covered by this chapter, especially those with political ambitions. Highland settlers who joined the HSC were as wedded to the British fiscal-military state as much as their kin and colleagues in London, who they shared close ties and both groups of men were counterrevolutionaries and the encouragement of white settlement of territories in British North America was in part to ensure the area remained British, especially after the end of the War of 1812 (1812-1815).<sup>16</sup> Like in London, members of the HSC sought to exert

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<sup>14</sup> Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, “Loyalism and the British Atlantic, 1660-1840,” in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, ed. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 3-8; Frank O’Gorman, *British Conservatism from Burke to Thatcher* (London: Longman, 1986), 19.

<sup>15</sup> Jerry Bannister, “Canada as Counter-Revolution: The Loyalist Order Framework in Canadian History, 1750-1840,” in *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution*, ed. Jean-François Ducharme and Michel Constant (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Marshall, *Remaking the British Atlantic*, chapter 12.

influence both over their own (Highland) community and the wider socio-political community. Therefore we can assess what contribution these people had to a British imperial identity, which was formed in Upper Canada in this period, which had much in common with the imperial identity formed within the HSL.

Recent Canadian historiography has begun to integrate the New Imperial History by highlighting the importance of the peripheries of the empire to a British imperial identity.<sup>17</sup> Canada emerges after the American Revolution, Nancy Christie argues, as both an extension of the British Empire and part of the Atlantic world. Loyalist settlers to Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick as well as settlers directly from Great Britain came together in the British provinces, connecting them to the British metropolis (London) as well as the United States and the French settlers in Québec who had become British in 1760.<sup>18</sup> According to the idea put forward by Pocock, as a 'nation state' Great Britain included the white settler colonies found within its empire, and we can better assess the contribution to an Imperial identity forged in the Atlantic world by more closely examining the subcultures found within its colonies. As this dissertation has shown, elite Highlanders played a vital role in the formation of a British imperial identity by arguing for the social and economic improvement of the Highlands and Islands as well as Highland culture, from within Highland communities, or Scoto-British identity. This included Highlanders found in London and abroad, notably India and British North America. The differences within Britishness, Scoto-British improvers argued, were what made Great Britain and the British Empire great (according to them). The New Imperial

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<sup>17</sup> Bannister, "Canada as Counter-Revolution," 101.

<sup>18</sup> Nancy Christie, "Introduction: Theorizing a Colonial Past: Canada as a Society of British Settlement," in *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas, Institutions, and Social Experience in Post-revolutionary British North America*, ed. Nancy Christie (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008), 4-5.

History asks us to look at these peripheral groups in order to assess their contribution to Britishness in the period. A set of competing subcultures existed in these white settler colonies, coming together over time as “transatlantic subjects.” Highland settlers were one of these competing subcultures that integrated into the dominant Anglo-white settlers in Upper Canada. In this way we can explore the contribution of Scoto-Britons to Britishness, and by extension early Canadian identity as well.<sup>19</sup>

The very foundation of Upper Canada in the late-eighteenth century espoused principles of loyalty and conservatism. Upper Canada was founded in 1791, for the Loyalists who had petitioned the king for a settlement separate from Québec, whose settlers they felt they had little in common. As Carol Wilton argues, “the authority of the provincial elite and their supporters rested on the twin pillars of loyalty and paternalism. Loyalty in this case meant the preservation of a way of life that was diametrically opposite from that of the United States, meaning an adherence to beliefs and institutions that conservatives felt preserved their way of life. These beliefs were enshrined in the Upper Canadian constitution (1791), values of loyalty and paternalism and anti-republicanism creating a colony with the purpose of maintaining close ties to Great Britain. Lower Canada had an identical constitution, although as Allan Greer argues, politics developed differently in each province.”<sup>20</sup>

Lord John Graves Simcoe (1752-1806) the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1791-1796 was keen on creating an “ideal British society” which relied on

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<sup>19</sup> Christie, “Introduction,” 9-14; J.G.A. Pocock, “The Limits and Divisions of British History: In Search of the Unknown Subject,” *The American Historical Review* 87, no.2 (April, 1982): 311-336.

<sup>20</sup> Allan Greer, “1837-38: Rebellion Reconsidered,” *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no.1 (1995): 10.

patronage to maintain the social order.<sup>21</sup> Paternalism, Wilton argues, “was the basis of the [Upper Canadian] elite’s ideology of social relations, which sought to replicate the hierarchical social structure of an idealized version of Great Britain.” A British model was adopted that included a “monarchical form of government and a ‘balanced constitution’ on the British model and support for an established church.” All subordinate offices in the colony were “at the disposal of the executive” so ties to elites based in the capital of York and local elites based in the counties depended on patronage.<sup>22</sup> The elites who ran the colony were known as the Family Compact, who were appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, and included John Strachan from Aberdeen, the first Anglican Bishop of Toronto, his protégé John Beverly Robinson (both of who would join the HSC as honorary members after it re-organized in 1843), and members of the Boulton family and their friends and political allies in the province including two members of the HSC, the Reverend Alexander Macdonell (1762-1840) and the Greenock native, William Tiger Dunlop (1792-1848).<sup>23</sup> Macdonell was from Glengarry in Scotland and helped to found the Glengarry Fencibles, taking the position of chaplain. The Irish nationalist and Father of Confederation Thomas D’arcy McGee would refer to Macdonell as the “greatest Tory

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<sup>21</sup> S. R. Mealing, “Simcoe, John Graves,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 1 August 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/simcoe\\_john\\_graves\\_5E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/simcoe_john_graves_5E.html); S.J.R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 45.

<sup>22</sup> Carol Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture in Upper Canada, 1800-1850* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens Press, 2000), 8; S.F. Wise, *God’s Peculiar Peoples: Essays on Political Culture in Nineteenth Century Canada*, ed. A.B. McKillop and Paul Romney (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 176.

<sup>23</sup> Gary Draper and Roger Hall, “Dunlop, William, Tiger Dunlop,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 1 August 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dunlop\\_william\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/dunlop_william_7E.html).

in Canada.”Dunlop worked with John Galt (former secretary of the Caledonian Asylum) in the Canada Company and co-founded the town of Goderich with him.<sup>24</sup>

Although the loyalist or conservative (or what would become to be known by the label ‘Tory’ in Canada by the 1830s) hegemony in the province would be challenged by the 1830s by the growing liberal factions and the integration of political trends from outside of the imperial British mainstream Tories remained the dominant political force in this period.<sup>25</sup> Concessions were made by the Tories in the 1840s like the eventual acceptance of the Durham report (creating the United provinces of Canada East and Canada West in 1841), so long as it integrated a continuing ideology of loyalty to Britain, paternalism and the hegemony of Upper Canadian society by those loyal to Great Britain and keen on replicating its core values into the province. These men would remain the dominant leaders until at least the mid 1850s, when Tory leaders would make more concessions towards liberal ideologies in the years leading up to confederation. After this point we can say that liberalism took over as the dominant economic and social order in Canada especially after parts of Ontario industrialized.<sup>26</sup>

Upper Canada was a society that conservative Highland elites, of the sort found in the HSL and the HSC, could integrate into quite easily in the early nineteenth century as

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<sup>24</sup> Wilton, *Popular Politics*, 8. Alexander Macdonell originally signed his name ‘McDonnell’: J. E. Rea, “McDonnell, Alexander,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 11 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonell\\_alexander\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonell_alexander_7E.html).

<sup>25</sup> For an in depth analysis of political debate outside of the Tory elite, and the role of ordinary people in influencing the British government see: Jeffrey L. McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). For the rise of liberalism in Canada see: Ian McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History,” *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (2000), 617-45.

<sup>26</sup> Michel Ducharme and Jean-François Constant, “Introduction: A Project of Rule Called Canada – The Liberal Order Framework and Historical Practice,” in *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution*, ed. Jean-François Ducharme and Michel Constant (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 12; McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework,” Robert Kristofferson, *Craft Capitalism: Craft Workers and Early Industrialization in Hamilton, Ontario, 1840-1872* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), chapter 1.

it was at the time largely politically conservative and Loyalist (or in the very least counter-revolutionary). Scots-Britons and their supporters envisioned economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands within an accepted social hierarchy. Classic or traditional conservative ideology underlined economic and social improvement in the area. Paternalism drove the charitable projects undertaken by members of the HSL in Great Britain, and a similar motive drove projects in Upper Canada. Men within these Highland social networks were also given an opportunity to wield a similar level of social power in a new Highland community where an idealized version of the Highlands and Islands could play out.

The Highland Society of Canada was formed and had its first meeting on November 10, 1818 at Angus MacDonnell's house near the church of St. Raphael's, Glengarry County, Upper Canada. Simon McGillivray, and his brother William McGillivray as well as the Rev. Alexander Macdonell, presented the commission from the HSL to the group. The McGillivray's brother-in-law, and fellow North West Company Highlander, and later politician, Angus Shaw (?-1832) was also present at the first meeting, as well as other Nor'Westers such as former army captain, John MacDonald of Garth (1771-1866), who settled on a farm in Cornwall, and John Ogilvie (1769-1819).<sup>27</sup> The Reverend Alexander Macdonell had played a vital role in the settlement of some Highlanders in Glengarry. As chaplain to the first Catholic regiment

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<sup>27</sup> Gratien Allaire, "Shaw, Angus," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 06 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shaw\\_angus\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shaw_angus_6E.html). Shaw also played a large part in the amalgamation of the NWC and the HBC. The Rev Alexander Macdonell, Col. Alexander MacDonell of Glengarry, John MacDonald of Garth was from Perthshire. See: C. M. Livermore and N. Anick, "McDonald, John (d. 1866)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 16 January 2014. [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonald\\_john\\_1866\\_9E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonald_john_1866_9E.html). John Ogilvie's name is sometimes spelled 'Ogilvy': Marjorie Wilkins Campbell, "Ogilvy, John," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 1 August 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ogilvy\\_john\\_5E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ogilvy_john_5E.html).

in the British Army, the Glengarry Fencibles, Macdonell had facilitated the role of the settlement of some of the men in Glengarry County in 1784 by getting the settlers land grants from the British government owing to their loyalty to the British Empire. Macdonell himself had settled in the County in 1804.<sup>28</sup> Simon McGillivray was a very active member of the HSL sitting as an honorary secretary in the early years of the nineteenth century and then as a vice-president when he helped to found the HSC. Both Simon McGillivray and Angus Shaw played major roles in the amalgamation of the NWC with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in 1821. The HBC, managed largely by Scots, would become even more powerful after this point, notably colonizing Vancouver Island on behalf of the British government in the 1840s, thwarting American interests north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel. This set in motion the formation of the future Canadian province of British Columbia.<sup>29</sup>

The HSC was not the first association in Canada where we find Highlanders in significant numbers coming together. The Beaver Club, a gentlemen's dining club which opened in Montreal in 1785, had been the social focus for the Nor'Westers in the City during the winters when trading ceased. This was a very exclusive club known for Highland hospitality that served to re-orient fur traders back into polite society after spending many months in "Indian Country." Although it was not formed exclusively for Highlanders they did dominate the membership roll, as was the nature of the Montreal fur trade, but we find Frenchmen, English, Irish and others on the lists. Among its members we find NWC men who were members of the HSL and the HSL such as John MacDonald

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<sup>28</sup> Teresa Gourlay, "Subject to Authority: Bishop Alexander Macdonell and his Scottish Religious Superiors, 1788-1804," *The Innes Review* 61, no. 2 (2010), 150.

<sup>29</sup> Mackie, *Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific 1793-1843* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); Jean Morrison ed., *The North West Company In Rebellion: Simon McGillivray's Fort William Notebook, 1815* (Thunder Bay Historical Society, 1988), 22-23.

of Garth, Angus Shaw, and the brothers McGillivray. Their uncle Simon McTavish, brother John and brother Duncan, who died before the HSC opened, were members as well. Guests were allowed and often high-ranking political elites would be invited to dinner.<sup>30</sup> The Beaver Club waned in popularity for these men after around 1804 but as NWC trade began to refocus to London the McGillivray brothers co-founded the Canada Club, a dining club, which had opened in London in 1810. The club was formed for those in the inner circles of the NWC when they were in London to socialize and talk business. In addition, these men would meet at the HSL when they were in London, extending their associational and patronage networks in the City. The HSC, therefore, can be seen as an extension of these associational networks that had already been formed across the Atlantic, with the NWC fur trade largely at the centre.

The first members of the HSC were a mixture of lawyers, politicians, military men, and businessmen, most of who born in the Highlands including the Honorable Colonel Neil Maclean of Mingary, Lieutenant Colonel Donald MacDonell, Alexander Frazer, Esq., the politician Archibald MacLean, Esq., of Mull, Roderick Macleod, Esq., Alexander Maclean, Esq., and Alexander Wilkinson, Esq.<sup>31</sup> There were sixty-five members listed to have joined in 1819.<sup>32</sup> As the HSL did in London, the HSC courted a member of the upper ranks of society to be the President of the Society, and Sir Peregrine

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<sup>30</sup> William Henry Atherton, *Montreal 1535-1914: Under British Rule 1760-1914* (Montreal: S.J. Clarke, 1914), 102-104; The Beaver Club, *The Rules and Regulations of the Beaver Club: Instituted in 1785* (Montreal, 1819), 3-12. C. M. Livermore and N. Anick, "McDonald, John (d. 1866)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 1 August 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonald\\_john\\_1866\\_9E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonald_john_1866_9E.html). The Beaver Club still exists today in The Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

<sup>31</sup> Biographical information cannot be found for all of these men. MacDonald, Allan J., "McLean, Neil (1759-1832)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, accessed January 6, 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mclean\\_neil\\_1759\\_1832\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mclean_neil_1759_1832_6E.html); D.M. Young, "McLean, Archibald (d. 1830)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 06 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mclean\\_archibald\\_1830\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mclean_archibald_1830_6E.html).

<sup>32</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 44.

Maitland, the conservative Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1818 to 1828, accepted the post as the Society's first president in 1822.<sup>33</sup>

As a branch of the HSL, the HSC was subject to the same rules and regulations but were allowed to "adopt them provisionally" as not all of the rules would apply to the colony. The HSC appointed a committee to "consider and report such modifications of them [the rules] as might appear expedient and beneficial to the interests of this Society."<sup>34</sup> The only change members made was to the HSL's stipulation that an anniversary meeting be held on March 21 to celebrate the Battle of Alexandria. Members of the HSC's first committee decided that this date was not practical in a province where there were few roads and the weather was rough in March. It was decided that June 18, which celebrated "the anniversary of the glorious battle of Waterloo" would be a better choice to have the yearly meeting for the Highland Society of Canada." The decision to use a date celebrating the defeat of Napoleon was fitting not only for the military members of the Society but also for all members' commitment to empire.<sup>35</sup>

Initially the cost to join the HSC was set at three pounds per year or a lifetime subscription of twenty pounds but this was reduced in 1819 to £1 10s. per year or ten pounds for a life membership. Even members of the HSL did not pay twenty pounds for a lifetime membership, and some of the men, although quite wealthy (some fur traders were very wealthy men), were not as wealthy as some members of the HSL. However, most of the original members of the HSC paid the twenty-pound life subscription. This

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<sup>33</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24 I3/5, p. 77; Hartwell Bosfield, "Maitland, Sir Peregrine," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed 06 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/maitland\\_peregrine\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/maitland_peregrine_8E.html). The McGillivray brothers were both from the Highlands.

<sup>34</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 10-11.

<sup>35</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 12-13.

makes sense as many of these original members had made large fortunes in the fur trade and were using their fortunes to buy large estates in Glengarry and the surrounding counties.<sup>36</sup> From 1818 to 1828, the HSC replicated, on a smaller scale, the work the HSL did in London and in the Highlands and Islands. The number one priority in the new colony was establishing a system of education for Highlanders in the area, and the establishment of Gaelic schools, as stipulated by the parent society, the HSL, was an aim of the HSC. As a new colony and one composed of emigrants either fleeing the Clearances or seeking land, “the means of bestowing generally the benefits of education were still very defunct, and where many of the Highland emigrants were...living in a state of poverty and distress” the HSC vowed to fulfil the objective of the HSL of “promoting the improvement and general welfare of the northern parts of the Islands of Great Britain, would probably in this branch thereof be modified so as to apply to the improvement and general welfare of the Highland settlement.” Although the HSC was not an agricultural society *per se*, it was in the business of supporting an entire community in a colony, which had an agriculturally based economy until the mid nineteenth century.<sup>37</sup> It was subsequently decided to distribute premiums for agricultural improvement, which would then add to “the prosperity of the Province.”<sup>38</sup> The HSC would undertake this role until the Glengarry Agricultural Society was formed in 1843.<sup>39</sup>

A Gaelic school had been instituted in the Highland colony and the HSC sought Gaelic scholars through the use of advertised premiums and in 1819 it was already

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<sup>36</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 32; p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> For an excellent work on agricultural societies in Upper Canada, many of which were modeled off of the Highland Society of Scotland, see: Ross Fair, "Gentlemen, Farmers, and Gentlemen Half-Farmers: the Development of Agricultural Societies in Upper Canada, 1872-1846" (PhD diss., Queen's University, 1998).

<sup>38</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 8-10.

<sup>39</sup> See below in this chapter.

determined that “the proficiency that some youths have already made in Gaelic indulges the pleasing hope that the language of our ancestors may in this remote quarter be long preserved in its purity.”<sup>40</sup> The HSC “ordered out a number of Gaelic dictionaries, Gaelic grammars etc. and copies of the poems of *Ossian*” in order to provide tools for the school. As we will recall from chapter five, the early nineteenth century was the height of the HSL’s Gaelic improvement project and therefore the tools were available to supply the HSC with similar support. In 1819 the HSC supported the effort of the Gaelic dictionary project by transmitting twenty pounds “as a subscription to the Gaelic dictionary now publishing under the direction of that [the HSL] society.”<sup>41</sup> Members of the HSL were pleased when the Rev. Alexander Macdonell wrote them a letter in 1820 stating “that he had received a box containing 50 copies of the original poems of the Immortal Bard [Ossian] whose memory and genius will he trust...long live on the banks of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence.”<sup>42</sup> Macdonell also informed the HSL that out of the nearly one hundred members of the HSC who had joined by 1820:

By far the major part not only understand and talk Gaelic but read an relish the beauties of that primeval language that at our meeting...our songs and our conversations are in our native tongue, nay more that we have competitions and premiums for rehearsals of select pieces of both ancient and modern Gaelic poetry, that we have even our bards who recite to us their own compositions and who if they do not exhibit the sweet voice of [Cona?] prove

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<sup>40</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 40.

<sup>42</sup> “Extracts of the Proceedings of the Society from the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1819 to the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1824,” NLS Dep. 268/43.

at least to our satisfaction that some sparks of poetic fire shall remain unextinguished among the descendants of the inspired sons of Caledonia.<sup>43</sup>

This transatlantic support for the Gaelic language not only proved that the HSC was fulfilling its obligations to its parent society but was also necessary in order to keep Highland culture alive in the diaspora. Macdonell, as a Gaelic speaker himself, clearly worked hard to keep the language alive in the colony.

Premiums were also offered by the HSC for poems and songs “composed in the country” by locals. There was an admission that although Glengarry County was obviously far removed from the Highlands and Islands and “no original poems and songs would be found, some valuable remains of Gaelic composition which have found their way to this country and never yet appeared in print and only known to a few aged persons, must inevitably have been forever lost have been rescued from oblivion.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, emigrants from the Highlands who had settled in Upper Canada possessed original oral poems and songs in their own knowledge and because of this the ancient poems and songs were preserved within the people. This mirrors arguments made by the HSL as to strategies for keeping Highland culture alive. As long as people were expressing themselves in Gaelic, the language would be kept alive. The HSC also offered premiums for annual bagpipe competitions, and members of the HSC were also found attending meetings “in the Highland garb and it is expected that their example will be

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<sup>43</sup> “Extracts of the Proceedings of the Society from the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1819 to the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1824,” NLS Dep. 268/43; Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 44.

<sup>44</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 32. According to Alexander Macdonell, author of the Account of the Highland Society of Canada, the papers relating to the early HSC’s efforts to preserve Gaelic “are now lost.” Nothing about this topic exists in the papers of the HSC. Alexander John Macdonell, *An Account of the Highland Society of Canada Branch of the Highland Society of London* (Montreal: Armour and Ramsey, 1844), 17.

generally followed.<sup>45</sup> The HSC made certain that the HSL were aware that members were keeping culture alive reporting to them at the “institutory [*sic*] meeting of the Highland Society of Canada the chair was filled by Simon McGillivray Esquire one of the Vice Presidents of this corporation, of a considerable number of gentlemen who were present every one could speak the Gaelic in its genuine purity and most of them wore the Highland dress.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, the HSC was continuing the efforts of the HSL to preserve and promote Highland culture, which had begun in the previous century. Markers of Highland identity were carried across the Atlantic through an institutional framework created by the HSL to support Highland culture wherever Highlanders were located in the British Empire.

However, economic improvement of the Glengarry settlement was “the most important object of the Society.” As a fairly new colony that was largely agriculturally based at the time, the provision of employment, like in Great Britain, was an object of the HSC. As settlers began arriving in larger numbers there was recognition that employment must be found for these people, so as to avoid destitution. The “manufacture of tartan which it is expected will meet with the attentions not withstanding the difficulties that oppose themselves incident to a new country and northern [cold] climate,” was one such strategy that the HSC promoted. It made sense in a colony, which had many sheep and Highlanders, to try and start cloth manufacturing. This would have a two-fold effect of providing employment as well as helping to preserve Highland culture, in the form of tartan cloth. Like the agricultural competitions of the Highland Society of Scotland that we saw in chapter four, premiums were offered for agricultural improvement and “a great

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<sup>45</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> “Extracts of the Proceedings of the Society from the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1819 to the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1824,” NLS Dep. 268/43.

proportion” of the HSC’s funds went towards granting premiums. These premiums included “the cultivation of the soil and the improvement of the breeds of different species of cattle.” Improvement also extended to providing charity for those less fortunate in the colony and so relieving “the wants of the poor and distressed countrymen arriving in the Canadas” also took up much of the Society’s funds. Many of the new settlers arriving in the 1820s were escaping either clearance or crushing poverty in the Highlands and so would have been in need of some help to get started in the colony.<sup>47</sup>

The HSC met almost monthly in rotation in the major settlements of Glengarry County (Williamstown and St. Raphael’s), and Cornwall in Stormont County. After 1822, the HSC also held some of its meetings in Montreal and Kingston where many of its members had business and political interests and would have stayed for extended periods. It was decided to hold a yearly meeting in September in Montreal and March in Kingston. The Montreal and Kingston meetings became informal branches of the HSC in this early period and “members at these places respectively shall be at liberty to elect a Vice President and an assistant secretary and Assistant treasurer who after each meeting shall be requested to communicate their proceedings to the Society.”<sup>48</sup> This rotation of meetings in the various areas where Highlanders were located kept up friendships and patronage in the largely rural counties of Upper Canada, as well as with Montreal the centre of commerce in the Canadas especially in the fur and timber trades and ships bearing goods for distant markets would leave there for London. Not much is known about these Montreal meetings but as the Beaver Club had fallen out of favour by this time (although it still existed), satellite meetings of the HSC would have been

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<sup>47</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 33-35.

<sup>48</sup> “At a meeting of the committee of the Highland Society of Canada held at Glengarry 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 1820,” Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5.

opportunities for Highland businessmen to socialize and build business and political relationships in an important commercial city.<sup>49</sup>

The Society also hosted a ball on the anniversary meeting in June, which brought together the local rural elites and their families who were largely kin-based elites from back in Scotland. This ball was often held at a Macdonell Inn in Williamstown, where committee meetings were also held. Meetings were also held at Gray's Inn in McMartin's Mills (later called Martintown).<sup>50</sup> The Highland Society of Canada's papers are found in the family papers of John (Dalcrombie) McGillivray (1770-1855) who was a distant cousin of the brothers Simon and William McGillivray. John McGillivray is a prime example of the kind of pseudo gentry we find in Glengarry County. Back in Scotland McGillivray was a typical 'lad o' pairts' in that he used the Scottish education system to gain a higher education, and one in English (he was a native Gaelic speaker from Strathnairn) allowing him opportunities abroad.<sup>51</sup> McGillivray had been a fur trader with the NWC, but settled in Glengarry County as a farmer and held various posts in politics in Upper Canada, including Justice of the Peace, and he also held office in the provincial legislature and financial adviser to (the then) Bishop of Kingston, Alexander Macdonell. Men like McGillivray were able to act as pseudo gentry in Canada through the wealth they acquired (McGillivray purchased a farm in Williamstown for £1450) and the patronage they gave out, especially at HSC meetings. Men like this became in the province a kind of gentlemen farmer aristocracy in a colony with no hereditary landed

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<sup>49</sup> "At a meeting of the Highland Society of Canada 5<sup>th</sup> March 1822," Highland Society of Canada 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 76-96.

<sup>50</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 55. John Graham Harkness, *Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry: A History, 1784-1945* (Oshawa: Mundy-Goodfellows, 1946), 100-131.

<sup>51</sup> R. Anderson, "The History of Scottish Education pre-1980," in *Scottish Education: Post-Devolution*, ed. T. G. K. Bryce and W. M. Humes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2nd ed., 2003); George Davie, *The Democratic Intellect*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961); Withrington, "Education," 60-69.

elite like in Great Britain.<sup>52</sup> And, according to Marianne McLean, men like McGillivray “played a mediating role between the Gaelic speaking county and the rest of Upper Canadian society.”<sup>53</sup> This would have been true of many of the other first members of the HSC such as the brothers McGillivray (Simon and William) as well as Alexander Macdonell who all spoke Gaelic and became high-ranking members of the local elite as well as in the major centres of Toronto and Kingston in the case of Alexander Macdonell who, in addition to his post as Bishop of Kingston, was very active in politics.

In the first years the HSC was open it was very active in the local community, fulfilling its stated aims of providing premiums for various cultural and economic pursuits. The records show that at least from 1819 to 1825 premiums for cultural and agricultural pursuits were given on a regular basis each year. Prizes could also vary each year or be given out more than once and the premiums were advertised in a Montreal paper to widen the audience. At a committee meeting in 1819 the Society gave a ten pound prize for the best Gaelic poetry, and the promise to give ten pounds “to the person producing at the next anniversary meeting, the best...of tartan cloth, not being less in quantity than 20 yards manufactured in Canada” as well as a two pound prize for the best pipe music.<sup>54</sup> In June 1820, children at W. Macdonell’s school in St. Andrews, which was near Cornwall, were given prizes from the HSC for their “proficiency in the Gaelic language. John Kennedy won four dollars, Alexander Macdonell came in second place and won three dollars, and Thomas McIntosh came in third with a prize of two dollars.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Fair, “Gentlemen, Farmers, and Gentlemen Half-Farmers,” 3.

<sup>53</sup> Marianne McLean, “McGillivray, John,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 13 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray\\_john\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgillivray_john_8E.html)

<sup>54</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 40-1.

<sup>55</sup> “At the Anniversary Meeting of the Highland Society of Canada held at Macdonell Inn Williamstown 19<sup>th</sup> June 1820,” Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 55. A variety of currencies

Prizes for the best Gaelic scholar remained constant until 1825. Cultural premiums could be increased in certain years. For example, in 1820 twelve dollars went to the best Gaelic poem, and eight dollars to second prize. Also in that year the prize for the best work of tartan was increased to twenty dollars.<sup>56</sup> In 1824 a prize of three dollars was offered to the “person who will appear before this Society best dressed in the Highland garb. Such garb being his own.”<sup>57</sup>

Agricultural premiums were given with regularity from 1820 to 1825 but the premiums are unfortunately not listed in the papers. But we do know that in 1822 a Duncan Cameron Esq. of Glenevis received the prize for the most oats on an acre of land, growing in total 700 bushels of oats on eight and a half acres of land.<sup>58</sup> In addition the HSC gave premiums for agriculture at the Williamstown and Cornwall Fall Fairs, of which a record does exist of the listed premiums. The premiums included first and second prizes for the best bull, the “handsomest cow,” best seed house, “breeding man,” as well as the best boars, rams, sows, and ewes. Prizes at the Fall Fairs ranged from ten dollars for the best bull to two dollars for the best ewe. Prizes for the best wheat, hay, and oats on an acre of land ranged from ten dollars for the wheat to four dollars for hay and oats. The person who could “lay out the greatest number of fruit trees within...twelve months from this date” would receive twenty dollars. There were also prizes of five dollars for girls who could produce the best examples of cloth.<sup>59</sup> Offering prizes at the important

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circulated in Upper Canada at this time. See: Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada 1784-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 245–7.

<sup>56</sup> Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 58; “Committee meeting 16<sup>th</sup> March 1824,” Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 111.

<sup>57</sup> “Committee meeting 16<sup>th</sup> March 1824,” Highland Society of Canada 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 112.

<sup>58</sup> “At a meeting of the committee of the Highland Society of Canada on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1822,” Highland Society of Canada 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, p. 76.

<sup>59</sup> “At a Meeting of the Highland Society of Canada held at Gray’s Inn, McMartin’s Mills in the County of Glengarry 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 1820,” Highland Society of Canada, 1818-1825, LAC MG24I3/5, pp. 64-5.

Williamstown and Cornwall Fall fairs would also have brought considerable prestige and publicity to the new Society.

The activities of at least the first seven years of the Highland Society of Canada acted as a microcosm of the broader activities of the HSL, and the Highland Society of Scotland.<sup>60</sup> Like the HSS, improvement of the local area was to be undertaken through incentives. Knowledge would be acquired through local peoples' hard work. These people would then report back on what they had achieved and the knowledge gained from the competitions would be used to improve the local agricultural economy. These were strategies for economic improvement, which had been experimented with in the last century in the Highlands and Islands, and these ideas crossed the Atlantic. Members also had political and economic ambitions both for themselves and the new colony and they achieved this by distributing charity and working to preserve Highland culture in Glengarry County, as well as socializing with members of their social and cultural group. Social capital, in other words, was built through cementing personal relationships, distributing charity and offering expert advice when possible. Not much in the record exists of the HSC after 1825 and the Society closed in 1828. At this point we can only speculate as to why it closed.<sup>61</sup> Some clues are given in the papers found after the HSC came back together in 1843, which hint at the political turmoil Upper Canada underwent in the 1820s and 1830s. This culminated in the 1837/1838 Rebellions, which were started by people in the two colonies who were angry at being ruled by a monarchical system dictated from Westminster that allowed for little to no political reform. The Rebellions

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<sup>60</sup> Ross Fair traces the influence the HSS had on Agricultural societies in Upper Canada through Adam Fergusson, a member of the HSS (by then called the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland).

<sup>61</sup> According to Alexander Macdonell in his Account of the HSC he states that it re-organized in 1843 after "it had ceased operation for fifteen years." However, the account book was still recording a few items up to 1832: Macdonell, *An Account*, 4.

led to some conciliation by the ruling elite in the form of the unification of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841 into Canada East and Canada West, which began the process of independence from Great Britain.

### **The Highland Society of London's Maritime Branches**

While the Highland Society of Canada was on its hiatus, the HSL was busy commissioning branch societies in the Atlantic colonies of British North America. The Highland Society of Nova Scotia (HSNS) opened in 1838, and had branches of its own in Pictou and Sydney. Branches were later established in Antigonish and Lochaber. The Highland Society of Prince Edward Island (HSPEI) also opened in 1838. The Highland Society of New Brunswick at Miramichi (HSNB) was commissioned in 1842 and in 1846:

Erected into a Body Corporate, in connection with the Highland Society of London, under the name and style of the Highland Society New Brunswick at Miramichi, for the purpose, in addition to the objects contemplated by the Parent Society, of extending relief to destitute Scotsmen, Scotswomen, or their descendants, and the education of their children, and for these purposes shall have and enjoy all general powers made incident to Corporations by the Act of the General Assembly of the Province, made and passed in the Reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth; provided that the Real Estate which the said Corporation may hold at any one time shall not exceed the

sum of two thousand pounds in value.<sup>62</sup>

The story of Highland emigration to the Maritimes is largely one of Clearance. Many of the Highland emigrants who had to leave their homeland ended up in places like Cape Breton and Pictou, Nova Scotia.<sup>63</sup> The records are thin for the Nova Scotia branches, and the early records of the HSNB were destroyed in a fire, but the Society is still going today.<sup>64</sup> Highland elites who settled in the colonies, largely United Empire Loyalists and military personnel, who largely became the colonial administrators, like in Upper Canada.<sup>65</sup> The story of these branches is principally the same: they were branches of the HSL, and therefore subject to the same rules and regulations, local Highland elites joined, the HSL kept in touch, and support was offered from London to help promote improvement schemes such as providing information on agricultural improvement and Gaelic education. The Maritime societies were engaged in similar activities as the HSL and the HSC such as encouraging agriculture and general improvement of the colonies. But overall it was education that the Maritime Provinces were lacking. As the Highland Society of Nova Scotia argued,

[F]rom the scattered position of their different locations, there are greater deficiencies of education among poor Highlanders of this province, than

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<sup>62</sup> The Highland Society of New Brunswick (Miramichi: James Pierce, 1847), 5-6.

<sup>63</sup> Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, 1773-1852* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004); Marjory Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London: Profile, 2004); James Hunter, *Scottish Exodus: Travels Among a Worldwide Clan* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2005); Eric Richards, *History of the Highland Clearances, Vol 2: Emigration, Protest, Reasons* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.highlandsociety.com/history.html> (accessed 15 January 2014).

<sup>65</sup> Robert L. Dalison, *Hope Restored: the American Revolution and the founding of New Brunswick* (Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, 2003), "Introduction."

among the settlers from any other part of Her Majesty's dominions, and I believe it would be no exaggeration to assent, that the Scottish population of this Province, possesses fewer educational advantages than have been lately afforded to the Negroes of the Bermudas and some other parts of the West Indian Islands."

Both the local clubs spent the majority of their funds on education in the 1830s and 40s, and the HSL did what it could to support the branch societies.<sup>66</sup>

The Maritime branches solicited the HSL for help with the emigrants arriving in the colonies. Members of the Highland Society of Nova Scotia would have seen desperate immigrants arriving in the colony, and alerted the HSL that many of them were running out of clothing and struggling "with the wilderness" to build homes. On occasion, the HSL provided the HSNS with supplies for the colony, especially tools for education.<sup>67</sup> A "judicious selection of school books" arrived in 1842 from the HSL to help develop the state of education in the province. Although the president of the HSNS, Charles W. Wallace, was unable to obtain "full and accurate information as to the number of children requiring education the ability and supply of teachers...in the remoter parts of

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<sup>66</sup> Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, "Constitution of the Highland Society of Prince Edward Island And an Address issued by the Committee in Favour of Branch Societies (1840)," NLS Dep. 268/19; Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, Charles .W. Wallace (President of the Highland Society of Nova Scotia) Halifax to D.L. Guthrie Esq. London, 5 March 1842, NLS Dep. 268/19; Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, "The Highland Society of New Brunswick (1847)," NLS Dep. 268/19.

<sup>67</sup> Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, "Shipping receipt for a Harrison & Sons for a case of books being sent to Halifax 12 Sept 1842," NLS Dep. 268/19; Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, Alexander Stewart Esq. to the HSL: "Respecting the Highlanders composing the Colony of Wallace, Co. Cumberland Nova Scotia, with Remarks on Their Agricultural Spirit," 3 Jan 1840, NLS Dep. 268/19.

this province” the HSL still sent the books. The province had recently established a Board of Education and the president was pleased to report to the HSL that

We are now enabled to state that there are not less than eight thousand 8000 Scotch children of Scottish descent, growing up in utter ignorance and without any prospect of raising themselves...and unless some means of education be provided for them, it is much to be feared that they can only add to the mass of vice and misery, and prove a discredit to the land of our forefathers. In bringing this...before the notice of the...Highland Society of London, we shrink from being considered as soliciting pecuniary and for our poor countrymen...as a branch of the patriotic Society [the HSL], feel it our duty to acquaint you that of education be not given now, it well in a few years be too late for these young people who will then be felt for nothing but the lowest menial offices.<sup>68</sup>

The establishment of education was major achievement in the new colony, which had little infrastructure, and the HSL was happy to support this endeavour by sending books for the children to read.

In realising that these branches were remotely located from the Highlands, some flexibility was allowed with the rules, as in Upper Canada. The Highland Society of Prince Edward Island, for example, alerted the HSL that it would try its best to fulfil its objectives but that some of the objectives were beyond their reach because as a colony

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<sup>68</sup> Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society’s Bookcase, Charles .W. Wallace (President of the Highland Society of Nova Scotia at Halifax) to D.L. Guthrie Esq. London, 5 March 1842, NLS Dep. 268/19.

located outside of the Highlands and Islands, there was not an indigenous culture to preserve as stated in the rules. However, the promotion of education “a leading object still remains to us, and opens up a field of boundless extent, in which the utmost efforts of enthusiasm will be seconded by the sober approval of understanding. The most acceptable boon that can be offered to many settlements in the Island is the opportunity and means of educating their children.”<sup>69</sup>

The Maritime branches were less elitist than the HSC; the realities of the Maritime colonies at this time was there was not the kind of established pseudo gentry or wealthy merchants like in Upper and Lower Canada, although there were some merchants and settlers from the British army and local politicians joined. These societies were more receptive to members who were not as wealthy. The cost to join the HSNB, for example, was five pounds to be a life member and five shillings to be an annual member.<sup>70</sup> Each of the branches was able to court the Governor of each province to be a chief or patron of the societies in the 1830s and 1840s. For example the patron of the HSNS in 1838 was the Governor Sir Colin Campbell, KCB (1776-1847), a Highlander from an accomplished military family. In 1838 the chief of the HSPEI was the Governor of Prince Edward Island, Sir Charles Augustus Fitzroy, K.H. (1796-1858), and the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, Sir William MacBean George Colebrooke (1787-1870) was president of the HSNB in 1847.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> “Constitution of the Highland Society of Prince Edward Island And an Address issued by the Committee in Favour of Branch Societies (1840),” Box of miscellaneous items found in the Society’s bookcase, NLS Dep. 268/19.

<sup>70</sup> The Highland Society of New Brunswick, *Highland Society of New Brunswick at Miramichi* (Miramichi: James Pierce, 1847), 3.

<sup>71</sup> Phillip Buckner, “Campbell, Sir Colin,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2 August 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/campbell\\_colin\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/campbell_colin_7E.html). The Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 90, 94; The Highland Society of New Brunswick (Miramichi: James Pierce, 1847), 15.

It is important to note that these Maritime branches, like the HSL and the HSC did not discriminate based on religious affiliation. The point of the Highland Societies in general was that they were for Highlanders as an ethnic group and therefore there was no need to discriminate. Societies soliciting aid from the parent Society in London used this as an argument to appeal to the HSL for charitable donations. As the HSPEI stated:

As the object of the Society is the benefit of all classes, of whatever religious denomination, its apparently exclusive character can be no objection to it in the eyes of those, of whatever country, who are friends to the diffusion of useful knowledge. We are convinced you will be sensible of the many important benefits which may be realized from a connexion with so eminent, wealthy and influential body as the [HSL]—the Sovereign its chief, and the most distinguished Scotsmen its members...By the formation of branch societies, a stimulus would be given to the public mind which would be felt in the remotest settlements of the colony, the slumbering energies of the people, in many a poor and neglected district, would be aroused into life and activity, and our united means made more powerfully instrumental in elevating the character, and improving the faculties of a scattered and destitute population.<sup>72</sup>

There was reassurance on behalf of the colonial societies that no Highlander would be discriminated against and it would have been well known to men connected to the HSL, a

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<sup>72</sup> “Constitution of the Highland Society of Prince Edward Island And an Address issued by the Committee in Favour of Branch Societies (1840),” Box of miscellaneous items found in the Society’s bookcase, NLS Dep. 268/19.

club for Highlanders, that the number one priority was the support of Highlanders, irrespective of religion. We know this, for example, as Alexander Macdonell was a Catholic and many members of the HSL either identified as Episcopalian, Anglican, or Presbyterian. Colonies such as PEI and Nova Scotia did have religious divisions, even among Highlanders, but this was not considered either in time of need, or when new members were considered.

According to Rusty Bitterman, members of these branches “assumed a leadership role in creating Highland identity and constructing a Highland past that would permit prominent men like [Roderick C.] MacDonald to garner support from more humble Scots on the basis of ethnic loyalty.” He argues that these branches were more interested in creating Highland symbols, which evoked a invented past as well as providing for impoverished Highland settlers without assessing why the people were leaving the Highlands.<sup>73</sup> However, Bitterman does not place these branch societies within their wider framework. Members of the HSL wanted to set up branches around the British Empire to highlight and expand the significance of Highlanders in creating the British Empire. Imperial settlement of Highlanders was not seen as the destruction of “authentic” Highland culture, rather the societies were formed partially to carry Highland culture throughout the diaspora. Scoto-Britons were aware that by the early nineteenth century emigration had become necessary for many Highlanders. The HSL ensured that those who Highlanders who left, either by choice or necessity, were supported by a network of Scottish Highlanders abroad. One such Highlander was Roderick C. MacDonald, author of *Sketches of Highlanders: With an Early Account of Their Early Arrival in North America* (1843) an officer in the 30<sup>th</sup> regiment, was a typical Scoto-Briton. He helped to

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<sup>73</sup> Bitterman, “On Remembering,” 258-9.

found the Highland Society of Nova Scotia, as well as the branches in the other two Maritime Provinces. MacDonald's book focuses primarily on the loyalty of Highlanders to the British imperial state including their participation in the Anglo-American War (War of 1812) and the 1837 Rebellions.<sup>74</sup> When the Highland Society of Canada re-organized in 1843, Highlanders' participation in the defeat of the 1837 Rebellions would be a topic of real significance for the HSL whose members would be proud of the achievements of their colleagues abroad in preserving the British Empire.

### **The Highland Society of Canada 1843-1857**

Why the HSC disbanded in 1828 is not clear. The author of the Society's 1844 *Account*, Archibald John Macdonell (Younger of Greenfield, 1822-1864), John A. MacDonald's (the first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada) law partner from 1855, speculated that its ending operation could be attributed to the passing of members, the frequency of meetings "and to the high rate at which the yearly subscription was fixed."<sup>75</sup> One thing that is puzzling is that a few of the original members who re-joined the re-organized society such as the first president of the re-organized Society John MacDonald of Garth, and William Tiger Dunlop, it is not clear why they did not know or did not say.<sup>76</sup> What can be said is that the HSL was pleased that the HSC came back together. In March 1843

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<sup>74</sup> Box of Miscellaneous Items Found in the Society's Bookcase, "Constitution of the Highland Society of Prince Edward Island And an Address issued by the Committee in Favour of Branch Societies (1840)," NLS Dep. 268/19; Roderick C. MacDonald, *Sketches of Highlanders: With an Early Account of Their Early Arrival in North America* (Saint John, NB: Henry Chubb 8: Co., 1843).

<sup>75</sup> Ben Forster, "Macdonell (Greenfield), John Alexander," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 15 January 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macdonell\\_john\\_alexander\\_15E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macdonell_john_alexander_15E.html); Macdonell. *An Account of the Highland Society of Canada*, 17-18.

<sup>76</sup> Macdonell, *An Account of the Highland Society of Canada*, 20-21; 43.

Archibald John Macdonell informed the HSL that he was enclosing “a report from the Highland Society of Canada, to the Parent Society, the Highland Society of London, which is a matter of importance. I beg you [to]...lay this before the Society as soon as possible.” Even though some time had passed the new members of the HSC knew that they still had to alert the powerful HSL and not re-organize a new Society on their own. Also, continuing the connection to colleagues in London would have been an objective as well.<sup>77</sup> George Bain, an honorary secretary of the HSL, replied that they were happy to hear of the “reorganization of the Branch Society in Canada” and that “they were perfectly satisfied with the explanation of the gentlemen to whom the original explanation was issued.” Bain closed with the assurance that “it would afford the directors great pleasure to hear of the prosperity and usefulness of the branch Society in Canada.”<sup>78</sup>

Shortly after the HSC had re-organized, the HSL informed the HSC that Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Carmichael (from Strathspey) who had been stationed in Coteau du Lac, which is near Glengarry but on the Québec side of the river, during the Rebellions had received a silver medal from the HSL for his “Highland spirit displayed on many occasions.” Carmichael received this medal from the HSL as not only had he served all over the empire, including at Waterloo, but also he played a major role in helping to put down the 1837–8 Rebellions using the Glengarry Militia.<sup>79</sup> Thus as the HSC had been on its hiatus, the people of Glengarry had been fulfilling their role in the

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<sup>77</sup> Archibald John Macdonell to the Highland Society of London, Cornwall, Canada West, 18 March 1843, NLS Dep. 268/6.

<sup>78</sup> “Extract of the Proceeding of the Highland Society of Canada a Branch of the Highland Society of London 20<sup>th</sup> December 1842 to the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1844, inclusive,” Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, 3 June 1843, LAC MG24 I3/6, p. 131.

<sup>79</sup> William Grant Stewart, *Lectures on the Mountains; or, The Highlands and the Highlanders of Strathspey and Badenoch as They Were and as They Are* (London: Saunders, 1860), 267-269.

preservation of the British Empire by serving in a Highland regiment that put down a rebellion that seriously threatened the status quo of the colonies that had been carefully maintained by conservative elites who had been ruling the colonies based on imperial principles that had been set out since the foundation of Upper Canada in 1791.

Historians still do not agree as to what the Rebellions of 1837-8 really were really about. Some argue it was the agrarian reformers versus the Montreal Merchants and their Tory political allies. Others argue as to whether or not the Rebellions were part of a wider process of revolution occurring in the British Empire such as the Irish Rebellion of 1798 and the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The republican reformers were rebelling against the way in which Upper and Lower Canada were organized politically, which was a monarchical style. The reformers wanted responsible government, and the colonial elite did not want to give it to them. Historians have also tended to look at the rebellions in each province as separate from each other; however, Allan Greer claims they were inextricably linked to a wider political critique on how British North America was governed.<sup>80</sup> The Tory elite crushed the rebellion, as there were fears of another American Revolution. Highland Scots in Glengarry County played a major role in putting down these rebellions because the community leaders who had settled there were loyal to British imperialism and it is within the fold of the Highland Society of Canada where these elites would come back together in 1843.

Lieutenant Colonel Carmichael relayed to the HSL that a monumental cairn had been erected to commemorate the participation of Highlanders in putting down the rebellions and especially to Sir John Colborne (1778-1863) “and other gentlemen, who distinguished themselves in putting down rebellion in 1837 and 1838. The cairn is located

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<sup>80</sup> Greer, “1837-38: Rebellion,” *Passim*.

on a small island in the St. Lawrence River, opposite Glengarry County and “is 52 feet square at the base and 52 feet high and surmounted by an inverted canon, and is calculated to last for a thousand years.”<sup>81</sup> Colborne, later Lord Seaton, was Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1828 to 1836 and was a member of the Family Compact who felt that the Canadas were not ready for responsible government, and during his tenure as Lieutenant Governor he organized the settlement of thousands of loyal British settlers to the province. As acting Governor General of British North America and Commander of the British forces in the Canadas from 1837, and as a defender of the British Empire, Seaton was committed to preventing revolution, like other Tory colonial administrators and members of the HSC. Members of the HSL, as political Tories themselves, were keen to preserve the British Empire as well and so news of Highlanders’ participation in this preservation went over very well indeed.<sup>82</sup>

Despite the supposed financial issues, the HSC re-organized in 1843 with £194 4s.3d. in the treasury.<sup>83</sup> The intentions of the re-organized HSC remained the same except the new members changed the rules to state that they would contribute to the “general welfare of the northern parts of the kingdom” but also “of the Highland settlements in Canada.” The 1840s saw many more settlers arriving into Canada from the Highland clearances, as well as refugees from the Highland potato famine of the 1840s, than there would have been in the 1810s and 1820s. As well, the HSC decided to open their Society

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<sup>81</sup> “Extracts of the Records of the Highland Society of London,” Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, LAC MG24 I3/6.

<sup>82</sup> B.J. Lossing. *Pictorial Fieldbook of the Revolution Vol.1* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1851), 209; A. A. D. Seymour, “Colborne, John, first Baron Seaton (1778-1863),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/5835> (accessed 17 January 2014).

<sup>83</sup> Archibald John Macdonell to the Highland Society of London, Cornwall, Canada West, 18 March 1843, NLS Dep. 268/6.

to “twelve persons [who] may be elected honorary members without any qualification.”<sup>84</sup> Allowing honorary members, as the HSL did, although in limited numbers, would bring high-ranking men who were not Highlanders in Canada into their social circles, widening members’ political connections. The gregarious MacDonald of Garth was elected the re-organized HSC’s first president, which was fitting since he was an officer of the original HSC and long time resident of the area. The first annual ball and general court meeting was held soon after the HSC re-organized, on February 22 that year, but would continue on the original anniversary date of June 18 from 1844.<sup>85</sup>

The first accomplishment of the re-organized HSC was to erect a memorial tablet to Bishop Alexander Macdonell in the Parish Church at St. Raphael’s. The gathering, which was largely composed not of Catholics, but of Protestants, assembled on June 18 at Macdonnell’s Inn Williamstown (the popular meeting place of the original group), the day of the Society’s anniversary meeting. Members of the HSC as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment of the Glengarry Militia, commanded by the Bishop’s grand-nephew, Captain J. A. Macdonell, were in attendance and they celebrated the work that the Bishop did in the Highland settlement and all of his hard work for the HSC. Like John Mackenzie of the HSL, Bishop Macdonell was a huge advocate of Highland language and culture. And like the HSL, the HSC celebrated those who worked the hardest to save and promote Highland culture. “We all know his great anxiety to preserve in this country, the language and genuine character of the Highlanders,” members of the HSC argued,

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<sup>84</sup> Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords, and Rural Turmoil* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000); Eric Richards, *History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions, 1786-1886* (London: Croom Helm, 1982); “Extract of the Proceeding of the Highland Society of Canada a Branch of the Highland Society of London 20<sup>th</sup> December 1842 to the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1844, inclusive,” Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, LAC MG24 I3/6, pp. 127-8.

<sup>85</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 23; 39.

He early conceived the idea of forming here a Highland Society, and with that object in view he procured from the Highland Society of London, the Commission under which we now act; of the Society thus formed he continued to fill the Presidential Chair with much ease and dignity while it remained in active operation. All those associated with him in that Commission with the exception of the humble individual who now addresses you, are now no more, but they all live in our memories, and one of them in particular, as the dear and sincere friend of the late Bishop—the Honourable William MacGillivray, whose cordial co-operation and generous liberality, contributed so much to the formation of the Society—may, I trust, without any irreverence, have his name associated with this day's work.<sup>86</sup>

There was hope on behalf of the HSC that in spite of his being well known as the Bishop of Kingston, and an active politician in York, the erection of this monument would remind people who visited the County that “Here were spent the best days of Bishop Macdonell, the father of his people.”<sup>87</sup>

The re-organization years were filled with fewer agricultural pursuits as these were largely taken over by the various agricultural societies that opened in the early- to mid-nineteenth century in Upper Canada such as the local Glengarry Agricultural Society (GAS) which John (Dalcrombie) McGillivray and Hugh McGillis, original members of

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<sup>86</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 26-29.

<sup>87</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 29.

the 1818 HSC, were members.<sup>88</sup> The GAS had been the brainchild of the HSC, and its formation was discussed at a meeting in 1824, though the Society did not form officially until 1843.<sup>89</sup> Like the Highland Society of Scotland, the Glengarry Agricultural Society offered premiums for anyone who could grow the most food on a set number of acres as well as improve livestock. In Upper Canada this meant prizes for the best return on wheat, rye, barley, oats, pease and Indian corn, and hay; and premiums for the best stallions, mares, bull cows, rams and boars.<sup>90</sup>

The HSC, on the other hand, was more interested in building a patronage network in Canada and providing charity for Highlanders in need in these years. Patronage networks were crucial to these men in these years, the political turmoil of the past decade or so, and the foundations being laid for future independence from Great Britain meant that members of the HSC needed to keep their Tory and counter-revolutionary ties strong. The first act listed in the new constitution of the HSC was to request “the Governor General of British North America, for the time being be respectfully requested to become chief.” This is important, as prior to the re-organization the HSC had attracted the Lieutenant Governors of the colony of Upper Canada, which brought them the necessary patronage to fulfill the goals of the Society. So the re-organized Society institutionalized the intention of asking the overseer of the United Canadas to become chief of the HSC.<sup>91</sup> The high status of members and the reputation of the former Society meant that the ruling men of the colony accepted this post with enthusiasm. In 1843 the Governor General of Canada Sir Charles T. Metcalfe 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Metcalf (1785-1846) became chief of the

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<sup>88</sup> Not much has been done on these Agricultural societies prior to confederation but Ross Fair’s “Gentlemen, Farmers, and Gentlemen Half-Farmers,” covers some of the societies’ early developments.

<sup>89</sup> Agricultural Society [n.d.], Agricultural Society papers, LAC MG24 I3/20/1.

<sup>90</sup> Agricultural Society [n.d.], Agricultural Society papers, LAC MG24 I3/20/1.

<sup>91</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 37. The United Province of Canada existed from 1841-1867.

Society. Metcalfe, who had been a colonial administrator in India during Britain's major Indian colonial expansion (ca. 1757-1818), and Governor in Jamaica during the turbulent period of 1839 and 1842 between the plantocracy and the newly freed black slaves, had overseen the Canadas in the hangover of the Rebellions.<sup>92</sup> In 1847, the Governor-in-chief of British North America, his official title, James 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Elgin and 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Kincardine (1811-1863), was solicited to become the next chief of the HSC. The HSC appealed to his Highland connections, by stating: "we recognize in your Excellency the descendant of a noble line of ancestors whose names are dear to the Highlander and associated with the proudest recollections of the proudest recollections of the history of our beloved country."<sup>93</sup> Kincardine accepted the post stating, "I willingly respond to this cordial appeal, which embodies sentiments so fitting of Highlanders and shews that when they cross the ocean they do not leave their true and loyal hearts behind them." Kincardine played a significant role in bringing unity to the Canadas through conciliatory efforts and laying the groundwork for Canada's future independence by recommending to the British government that the two Canadas be joined (this occurred in 1840) and advocated for responsible government. Kincardine also signed a reciprocity treaty with the United States, ensuring economic development in Canada and the prevention of annexation with the United States over independence within the British Empire. The gratitude expressed by the powerful Kincardine shows that this group of men was at the pinnacle of social power in Canada.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Donald R. Beer, "Metcalfe, Charles Theophilus, 1st Baron Metcalfe," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed January 16, 2014, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/metcalfe\\_charles\\_theophilus\\_7E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/metcalfe_charles_theophilus_7E.html).

<sup>93</sup> Highland Society of Canada to the Right Honorable James Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, 18 February 1847, Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, LAC MG24 I3/6, pp. 171-2.

<sup>94</sup> Report and Letter Book of the Highland Society of Canada a Branch of the Highland Society of London. Instituted in 1818, Re-organized in December 1842, LAC MG24 I3/5, pp. 127-8; Olive Checkland, "Bruce,

In 1844 there were 127 regular members listed and they were the usual mixture of lawyers, politicians, militiamen, as well as religious leaders, and the local landed elite. This included the arch Tory Sir Allan Napier McNabb, MPP for Hamilton, and Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>95</sup> The eleven listed honorary members for that year included two of the high-ranking members of the Tory elite based in York (the Family Compact) Bishop John Strachan and John Beverly Robinson.<sup>96</sup> Men like Strachan were pleased to be a part of the HSC. As Strachan told the Society's secretary Archibald J. McDonald: "you will have the kindness to offer my grateful acknowledgments for the honor they have done me and to express the great satisfaction I feel at the revival of so distinguished an institution in the Province." With that he sent them "a cheque for a small donation."<sup>97</sup> Big names such as Strachan's were crucial to keeping the Tory patronage circles close in these years. Allowing honorary members into the circle, like it did in London, brought the prestige and political connections the HSC members needed to acquire political patronage to rise up the ranks of the Canadian elite.

In order to expand the patronage networks members of the HSC decided that the Society should open its own branch societies, something it did not do in the first round of its existence from 1818-1828. Canada West, as Upper Canada was now called, was still largely rural and the major political centres were located at some distance from each other. As mentioned earlier the first HSC held some of its meetings in Montreal and Kingston, where some of its members who lived in Glengarry also spent a lot of time

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James, eighth earl of Elgin and twelfth earl of Kincardine (1811-1863)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/view/article/3737> (accessed 16 January 2014).

<sup>95</sup> Donald Beer, *Sir Allan Napier MacNab* (Hamilton: Dictionary of Hamilton Biography, 1984).

<sup>96</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 42-48.

<sup>97</sup> John Strachan to Archibald J. McDonald, 29 March 1843, Highland Society Correspondence 1843-1847, LAC MG24 I3/6, p. 331.

conducting business and serving in politics so this practice would be repeated on a more organized scale. The HSC appointed men who should organize branches in Québec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, Niagara, Hamilton, Amherstburg, Bytown (later Ottawa), Johnstown, Goderich and Perth. Sir John A. MacDonald was appointed Vice President of the Highland Society of Kingston, Sir Allan Napier MacNab in Hamilton, and William Tiger Dunlop in Goderich.<sup>98</sup> Canada's first prime minister after Confederation, Sir John A. MacDonald, whose family came from Rogart in the Scottish Highlands, would have made many of his political connections at meetings of the Highland Society of Canada as well as sitting as vice president of its branch in Kingston while he was building his successful law and political career.<sup>99</sup> Some of these branches were fleeting but the Hamilton and Toronto Branches lasted until the late nineteenth centuries. The HSC still held its yearly Highland Balls and they were advertised in Montreal papers as they were in the 1820s. This ensured that this group of men cast their net wide into the merchant elite in Montreal keeping political and business connections close to the area's gateway to London.<sup>100</sup>

Perhaps the most remarkable thing the Highland Society of Canada did during its second tenure was sending the Highland Society of London a bill of exchange for £127 “for the purpose of applying the proceeds to assist the distress prevailing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.”<sup>101</sup> This gesture towards the Highland people, many of who were in the throes of the potato famine in the 1840s, was warmly received by the HSL who

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<sup>98</sup> Macdonell, *An Account*, 48-49; Donald Creighton, *John A. MacDonald: The Young Politician* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1952).

<sup>99</sup> There is a monument to Sir John A. Macdonald in Rogart, Sutherland where his grandparents lived. Macdonald was born in Glasgow. [http://www.discoversutherland.co.uk/rogart\\_macdonald.php](http://www.discoversutherland.co.uk/rogart_macdonald.php) (accessed 16 January 2014)

<sup>100</sup> Highland Society Accounts, LAC MG24 I3/6.

<sup>101</sup> George Bain to the Highland Society of Canada, 1 April 1847, Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, LAC MG24 I3/6, p. 166.

were grateful for the generous sum “towards their poor suffering countrymen.”<sup>102</sup> Highland settlers to Canada clearly never forgot where they came from and this kind of transatlantic gesture of support kept the Scoto-British connections alive and well in these years.

In 1857 the Highland Society of Canada papers yet again mysteriously run out, again with no indication given as to why it closed. Perhaps, like in the late 1820s, the political climate of Canada kept many of its members too busy to keep up their societal duties. Many of its most high profile members would become the architects of Canadian Confederation, most notably was Sir John A. MacDonald. The late 1850s to 1867 were turbulent political years where more concessions had to be made by the Tory factions to more progressive liberal thought. Those in the Canadian colonies who were not as wedded to empire as many of the loyalists and British settlers who were, would continually challenge the loyalist/conservative hegemony. It is also possible that members joined larger societies located in political centres such as the St. Andrew’s societies of Toronto and Montreal. Nevertheless, for a significant portion of Ontario’s colonial years, the power and influence wielded by Highland Scottish settlers is remarkable. Highland Scots were by no means the majority of settlers to the province but the networks created by the powerful Highland Society of London, and the opportunities afforded to Highland Scots in the British empire, meant that Ontario’s connection to Great Britain would remain a vibrant part its history.

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>102</sup> George Bain to the Highland Society of Canada, 1 April 1847, Minutes and Proceedings 1842-1857, LAC MG24 I3/6, p. 166-7.

This chapter has only begun to touch on the contribution of Highland Scottish settlers to an Imperial identity formed in British North America as well as the political developments of Canada in the years leading up to Confederation. As historians begin to bring Canada into the New Imperial History we will begin to see a more nuanced version of early Canadian history in the years leading up to Canadian Confederation. As it stands, historians are still hammering out the various political identities present in Canada in these years.<sup>103</sup> More work also needs to be done on the intellectual exchange of ideas on economic improvement in Upper Canada in the early part of the nineteenth century, and British North America in general. Settlers drew much of their ideas for agricultural societies from Great Britain and there is potential for exploration of a transatlantic network of scientific and agricultural ideas by British settlers, which helped form agricultural development in the area. Also, by more closely examining the peripheral identities forged in parts of the British Empire we may begin to better understand reactions to nation building by the various groups involved, including Indigenous peoples' who encountered the Highland Scots who settled in Glengarry County whose voices have been so far left out altogether.

Nonetheless the Highland Society of London's imperial vision of a 'Highland Empire' continued well into the nineteenth century. Their vision, which was carried out by developing an institutional framework for Highlanders in Great Britain and the British Empire, tied Highland settlers in Canada to those resident in London. Members of the HSL who opened the Canadian branch in 1818 were the direct link between the two

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<sup>103</sup> See: Michel Ducharme and Jean-François Constant eds., *Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

societies. These men had maintained social connections and business interests, which crossed the Atlantic. Networks of support for Highland culture as well as support for Highlanders in need crossed the Atlantic to the major settlements of British North America where Highland settlers of various backgrounds came together under commissions by the Highland Society of London. Reports back to London kept the parent society abreast of what its branches were up to and these vital connections kept the Highland Empire alive well into the nineteenth century.

## Conclusions

In 1856 the HSL's membership held strong at around three hundred and eighty regular members and sixteen honorary members. In that year the chief of the Society was Prince Albert, and the President was the Duke of Argyll. Leopold George Frederick King of Belgium (Queen Victoria's uncle and founder of the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha royal line), and Prince George, Duke of Cambridge (Queen Victoria's cousin) were named among the most high-ranking members. The rest of the regular members were the usual mix of peers, gentry, politicians, lawyers, military men, and merchants, who were located in London and throughout the empire. Included in the list of honorary members of the HSL that year were Col. Sir Allan Napier MacNab and his wife, Lady MacNab, of Canada. MacNab, who was born in Canada, was the Premier of the Province of Canada in the last years before Confederation and, as we saw in chapter six, served as vice president of the Highland Society of Canada at Hamilton. MacNab was given his honorary membership in 1842.<sup>1</sup> As Confederation approached the HSL continued its connection to Canada through social and political connections such as this. However, honorary membership could also be given to people who worked hard on behalf of the HSL in the case of the Rev. Norman Mcleod (the 'Friend of the Gael') who received honorary membership in 1841. As chapter two illuminated, honorary memberships were given out sparingly but those who were given honorary membership either brought social prestige to the Society, or, in the case of Macleod, or had contributed significantly to the HSL's improvement and charitable efforts, and were rewarded accordingly.<sup>2</sup> The continued selective process

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<sup>1</sup> The Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 19-39.

<sup>2</sup> The Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 39.

by which honorary members were chosen and their social standing reveals the continued importance of the HSL after almost eighty years as a Society.

By the mid nineteenth century the HSL was at the height of its social and political power. Since its inception in 1778 to the mid-nineteenth century, the HSL built social capital in the city of London through social and political connections with members of their own community and broader civil society. This social capital allowed the HSL to achieve its stated aims during this period, which were preserving Highland culture, providing charity for Highlanders in London, developing industries and providing employment in the Highlands and Islands, and opening branch societies in strategic locations around the British Empire. These stated aims, which required public support, were achieved through public and private association, political lobbying, networking, charitable work in London, and, creating the institutional network where ideas for the social and economic improvement of people, language, and economy of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland developed. Highlanders found within the HSL's network met and discussed economic and social improvement at various meetings of the HSL, the HSS, and the BFS, bringing ideas formed by Highlanders and intellectuals brought into the institutional fold, like Dr. James Anderson, together at specified committee meetings intended to help common Highlanders pull themselves out of poverty and into the modern era, develop markets for Highland goods, and preserve Highland culture. The Highland Empire, in other words, was nothing without Highland culture, and Highland people. Examination of these activities found within the minute books and papers of each society has revealed the intentions driving an alternate Improvement discourse from the dominant strand. This alternate version is found to be focused both locally, taking care of

the community, and internationally, connecting the Highlands to the empire. And these ideas came from within the Scottish diaspora. The core-periphery relationship, in other words, was metropolitan in nature but as a transplanted, and often transient, community of Highlanders members of the HSL were operating from within a conceptual framework, which placed the Highlands at its very centre.

The 'Highland Empire' has been a term used here to describe the institutional framework and networks developed by the HSL. The institutional framework allowed the HSL to influence groups of Highland Scots located in Great Britain, India, and British North America, and has allowed us to examine elite Highlanders' engagement with the British Empire. Many members of the HSL were active agents of empire whether through the British military, joint stock companies like the East India Company, or commercial ventures such as the North West Company. The HSL provided the means by which Highlanders located in these areas to associate and develop their own patronage networks in important colonial locations, in which they were not the dominant ethnic group. However, and especially in the case of the HSL's Upper Canadian branch, not only kept community connections alive in the empire but also facilitated the rise of Highlanders' social standing in colonial locations. The HSL's hard work succeeded in elevating the status of Highlanders in the public sphere not only as heroes of British conflicts abroad but also as inheritors of an ancient race with a sophisticated culture. By pairing this ancient sophisticated culture with modern economic and social development facilitated much of the HSL's support by the British government and the British public for their improvement projects.

Through the exploration of this institutional framework and the networks of elite Highlanders that developed out of it, this project has also offered an alternative perspective on the history of social and economic improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, examined through the lens of the Highland Society of London's social and political networks forged from 1778 to 1857. The traditional treatment of Highland landowners—that they were keen to integrate into the Anglo-British elite by whole-heartedly adopting the externally driven Whig conceptions of economic and social progress—is only one side of the story. Individual landowners may have acted on impulse, or according to the immediate needs of their estates, such as Lord MacDonald's reliance on kelping to employ his tenants and maintain rents, which saw them adopt economic ideas that were more suitable to other parts of Great Britain, but the intention was to implement the improvement plan as it had been conceived in Tory circles in London.<sup>3</sup> The raising of Highland regiments in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, especially during the Napoleonic Wars, of which army recruitment and kelping were important industries, made some Highland landowners very wealthy during those years and has been the subject of much debate and inquiry. The study of Highlanders in the British military has been a fruitful lens in which to examine common Highlanders' participation in and reaction to the expansion of the British Empire, particularly in the Proscription Era.<sup>4</sup> However, those who were trying to improve the Highlands and Islands of Scotland from within Highland communities in this period have been subsumed within a dominant discourse of Whig improvement emanating from the literati of the Scottish

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<sup>3</sup> Malcolm Gray, "The Kelp Industry," 197-209.

<sup>4</sup> J.E. Cookson. *The British Armed Nation 1793-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997); Dziennik, "Fatal land"; James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*; Malcolm Gray, "The Kelp Industry in the Highlands and Islands," *The Economic History Review* (New Series) 4, No. 2 (1951), 197-209; Mackillop, *More Fruitful*.

Enlightenment. Whig, or protectionist, economics, as members of the HSL and their supporters pointed out to the British government and the British public, were causing mass poverty and stunted development in the Highlands and Islands. If one area of Great Britain remained in a stunted state of development, they argued, Britain and its Empire remained vulnerable, especially to France, who was Britain's greatest competitor in this period. However, Tory, or Scoto-British, Improvement was internally driven and promoted an agenda of capitalism tempered by paternalism. Wealth was to be created for all levels of society within an acceptable (to these elites) hierarchical framework. Many elites found in HSL circles continued their obligations to those lower on the social scale by providing employment. This was done through implementing the improvement plan based around establishing planned towns and villages on estates where new industries would take place. First an improved herring fishery on the coasts where secondary activities like woollen or linen manufacturing, and legal whisky distillation would be undertaken, in addition to kelp manufacturing and army and navy recruitment. Other planned villages and towns were to be built to accommodate a working population inland from the coasts to undertake light industrial activities. Secure subsistence for a working population in the form of fish, which was abundant, and potatoes, which took up relatively little space to grow, would ensure no Highlander ever starved again. This would leave the bulk of the estates for large-scale livestock rearing. Equally, the whole community was to benefit from improvement activities or economic development. A continued sense of loyalty, or sense of paternalism, to tenants meant that many Highland landowners, especially the ones under investigation in this dissertation, and their supporters, sought alternatives to emigration by creating and implementing the

improvement plan, which would benefit everyone from crofters to landowners. This improvement plan was conceived of at various Highland Society of London meetings in the late-eighteenth century and implemented by colleagues in Edinburgh, and through the development of subsidiary companies such as the British Fisheries Society, which acquired government support (but no government intervention) to buy land and establish planned fishing villages in the Highlands at Lochbroom, Ullapool, Pulteneytown, and Lochbroom. Estate clearance, or removal of people to crofts and other coastal and inland villages, was the solution to increased pastoral agriculture, which made landowners more money. These planned villages were also the solution to the employment and subsistence problem in the Highlands and Islands. Kelping and army recruitment, then, were only part of the solution to slow economic development in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, although due to external economic forces these remained for many landowners viable industries to complement sheep and cattle farming until the end of the Napoleonic Wars these industries would wane as demand for Highland products fell.<sup>5</sup>

Broadly this project is one of Highland agency. Highland agency has been revealed through another strand to the improvement discourse in the Highlands in the height of the Improvement Era by examining the varied activities of a well-defined group of Highland elites centred on the HSL. However, largely this project has been an examination of elite Highlanders. The development of Scottish emigrant historiography has come a long way in recent years, although the eighteenth century is still eclipsed by work on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the bulk of Scots left.<sup>6</sup> What

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<sup>5</sup> Coull and Thompson, "Kelp."

<sup>6</sup> Bueltmann et al. (ed), *Ties of Blood, Kin and Countrie*; Marjorie Harper, *Scotland No More? The Scots Who Left Scotland in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2012); Marjorie Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London: Profile, 2004); McCarthy, (ed), *A Global Clan*; An

remains is a clearer development of the voice of common Highlanders who remained in the Highlands and Islands and who worked the land in this period. As chapter four investigated, in addition to well-known experts on agricultural matters and those higher up the social ladder, common Highlanders were sought for advice on various economic improvement projects such as improving livestock and growing the maximum amount of food in small areas of rough land. Highlanders, who had been suffering continual subsistence crises for as long as contemporaries could remember, held the answers as long as ‘all of the Highlands’ could be surveyed. Information was then compiled and improvements on estates carried out. But the surveys undertaken by the HSS in the 1790s only hint at the common Highlanders’ voice, and their answers were largely communicated through various local magistrates and then through committees of the HSS into their minute books. Hunter has shown, for example during the height of the Highland Clearances until the Crofter’s War that a variety of methods can be used to uncover common Highlanders’ voices including Gaelic poetry and Highlander testimony from the Napier Commission. Similar tactics could be employed for the earlier period, or Macinnes’ “First Phase of Clearance” in order to uncover how Highlanders reacted to the various projects undertaken by the HSL and its supporters during the Improvement Era.<sup>7</sup>

Not only were Highlanders proactive in trying to develop the Highlands and Islands socially and economically and support Highland communities in Great Britain and abroad on their own terms, but also, as this project has highlighted, many members of the HSL were involved in capital development throughout the Atlantic World. This

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important exception is Andrew MacKillop’s work: Mackillop “Highland Estate Change and Tenant Emigration,” in *Eighteenth Century Scotland New Perspectives*, ed. T.M. Devine and J.R. Young (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*; Macinnes, “Scottish Gaeldom; Richards, “The Mind of Patrick Sellar,” 1-20.

project has shown the crucial links between the North American fur trade and the HSL. A relatively small group of men in the NWC who were largely from Invernesshire built a fur trade empire that rivalled that of the HBC. These same men also played an important role in amalgamating the two fur trade organizations together. Much is known about the HBC's colonial activities on behalf of the British colonial government in a time when Manifest Destiny largely informed American expansionist policy in the nineteenth century, but not as much is known about the NWC's unofficial role in this capacity.<sup>8</sup> Ideas for colonial capital development in the British North America through the trade in furs would have been discussed by members of the HSL who ran the financial side of the trade in London, such as Simon McGillivray and John Fraser. These men would go on to open other influential associations in London such as the Canada Club, which has not been studied in any detail.

We also find many members of the HSL either directly involved in the slave trade, such as Divie Robertson, or those who were plantation managers. Goods produced in the Highlands and Islands, such as salted herring and woollen fabric, were to be sent to the West Indies to feed and clothe slaves. In turn, money from the West Indies flooded into London and was used to help develop charitable projects undertaken by the HSL and their colleagues such as the Inverness Academy and the Inverness Infirmary in the Highlands, and the Caledonian Asylum and the Gaelic Chapel in London. The movement of people and capital in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries in the Atlantic World had a direct connection to the social and economic improvement of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. These 'peripheral' areas, in other words, were brought together through an association located in London, the epicentre of the British Empire. Tracing the

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<sup>8</sup> See especially Mackie, *Trading Beyond the Mountains*.

flow of capital throughout the Atlantic World will reveal more concrete involvement in the slave trade by Highland Scots, a group hitherto constructed as ‘victims’ of outside economic forces. Far from being victims, Highland Scots were driving trade throughout the British Empire and with this trade, developing their own Highland and Island estates. This directly refutes Michael Hector’s ‘internal colonialism’ argument, which this project has challenged by re-assessing Highlanders’ involvement in both domestic and imperial development through the lens of the HSL and its institutional framework.<sup>9</sup> Associations, in other words, together with personal correspondence would be another innovative way to examine social and political networks of Highlanders engaged in commercial ventures in the Atlantic World.

By re-examining the activities of Highland elites found within HSL circles during the Improvement Era this project has challenged the supremacy of the Whig interpretation of Highland history and identity in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Selective use of documents of the HSL has misrepresented the actions and activities of its members. By examining its activities as a whole, the various strands of evidence outlaying the ‘Highland Empire’ were revealed. For the eighteenth century source material for Highland history, especially estate papers for which largely high-profile estates remain in the record, is often fractured. Nevertheless, the richness of the papers of the HSL and those in its networks, especially the HSS and the BFS, has been an opportunity to present a body of work by an influential Society over a sustained period of time. Examined separately, as they have been, left us with an incomplete picture of the HSL’s activities and intentions, as well as those of its members.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hechter, *Internal Colonialism*, 79-119.

<sup>10</sup> Dunlop, *The British Fisheries*, Jonsson, *Enlightenment’s Frontier*, 121-146.

The idea that all Scottish elites bought into Anglo-British conceptions of social and economic improvement, or progress, which advocated social and economic uniformity, has overlooked other strands of identities present in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Lowland Scots often used Highland culture, or Highlandism, to alleviate fears of being subsumed within the dominant strand of Britishness, or when the benefits of union appeared to be denied to them. This identity is also known as North-Britishness.<sup>11</sup> Placing all Scottish elites within the framework of Anglo-Britishness overlooks the tangible attempts to construct and express native Highland culture by groups of Scots who operated within a separate strand of Britishness, what I have termed Scoto-Britishness, which was expressed within and throughout the diasporic associational framework developed by the HSL. By bringing together the material evidence of the HSL and the various organizations found within its institutional network, a much different story, which sat alongside the hitherto dominant Whig version of economic and social improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, has been revealed. This picture is one where benevolent intentions underlying many attempts at economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands, as well as the concern for the loss of Highland culture dominated the improvement discourse. Improvement, in other words, was the method used by members of the HSL and their colleagues to preserve a culture perceived to be rapidly disappearing.

This project ends when the Highland Society of Canada closed its doors in 1857; however, this was not the end of the Highland Society of London. The HSL is still an important institution for Highland Scots in the present day, especially with its continued support of Highland culture. The mid-to-late nineteenth century remains for scholars the

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<sup>11</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship*; Kidd, *Subverting*, especially chapter 9.

height of the re-conceptualisation of the Highlands as an empty space, cleared of people and romanticised for tourists seeking a simpler life or to express masculine ideals through sport and hunting.<sup>12</sup> However, like Anglo-British constructions of Highlandism in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the romanticization of the Highlands in the late nineteenth century omits Highlanders' points of view, yet Highland Scots did not disappear. By the mid-nineteenth century the Highland Empire had been built. High-ranking members of the HSL continued to occupy positions of power in the British government as well as in colonial settings. Far from adopting a "kitsch Gaelic identity" which emerged in the nineteenth century Highland elites continued to express their native Highland culture well beyond the period when others tried to express it for them.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Katherine Haldane Grenier, *Tourism and Identity in Scotland, 1770-1914: Creating Caledonia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity," 1214.

## Appendix

### 1.1 Original members of the Highland Society of London 28 May 1778<sup>1</sup>

#### President:

Hon. General Fraser of Lovat

#### Members:

Brigadier-General Calder  
 [James] Clarke, New Broad Street  
 [Alexander] Campbell, younger of Glenure  
 Donald Cameron, George Street, Mansion House  
 Major [John] Small  
 Duncan Stuart, Parliament Street  
 Charles Mackenzie, New Broad Street  
 [Mr.] Morison, Temple  
 [Mr.] MacDonald, Panton Street  
 Dr. Donald Munro, Jermyn Street  
 [George?] Gun Munro, Basinghall Street  
 Macdonald, New Inn  
 John Ogilvie, Conduit Street  
 Simon Houston, Mary-le-Boyne Street, Golden Square  
 Hugh Seton, Leicester Square  
 Macnab, Minories  
 Colin Mackenzie, Junior, Bishopgate Street  
 George Stuart, James Street Golden Square  
 John Fraser of Achnagarin  
 John Mackenzie, Temple  
 [Capt.] Alexander Macleod, of the Mansfield Indiamen  
 Sir John Macpherson, Bart.  
 Archibald Campbell, George Street, York Buildings  
 [Alexander?] Macsween, Gray's Inn

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<sup>1</sup> Sir John Sinclair, *An Account of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1813), NLS Dep. 268/15/23, Appendix I., 35.

## 1.2 List of Members of the Highland Society of London 13 February 1783<sup>1</sup>

### **President:**

His Grace John Duke of Atholl

### **Vice Presidents:**

Major-Gen. Archibald McNab

Major-Gen. James Murray

Major James Campbell

Mr. Neil Malcolm

### **Secretary:**

Mr. John Mackenzie, Leicester-Street

### **Committee:**

Mr. Alexander Anderson

Mr. Archibald Campbell

Mr. John Hutchinson Fraser

Mr. Simon Houston

Mr. John Mackenzie, Bishopsgate-Street

Mr. Donald Maclachlan

Colonel Duncan Macpherson

Consul Alexander Monro [Munro]

Mr. George Gun Monro [Munro]

Mr. James Morison

Captain Alexander Shaw

Mr. George Steuart.

### **Members:**

[Those names marked with [P] have been president; those with [VP] have been vice-president; those with [T] have been treasurer; those with [S] have been secretary]

#### **A.**

John Duke of Argyll, Argyll Street

John Duke of Atholl, Grosvenor Place, FRS [P]

William Adam, Junior, MP, Abingdon Street

James Adam, Adelphi

William Adam, Adelphi

Alexander Anderson, Princes Street, Mansion House

Lord Aukerville, Edinburgh

#### **B.**

James Baillie, Bedford Square

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<sup>1</sup> Highland Society of London, *Rules*, [1783]. Membership lists in the appendices are inclusive of original spellings of names and places.

Earl of Balcarras, Manchester Square  
 Doctor Blair, Edinburgh [H]  
 Sir John Borlase Warren, MP [H]  
 Thomas Brown, Craven Street, Strand

**C.**

John Earl of Caithness, Bury Street, St. James's  
 Brigadier-General Calder, Portugal  
 Donald Cameron, George Street, Mansion House  
 Hugh Cameron Cheapside  
 Andrew Cameron, Quebec  
 Hugh Cameron of Fassifairne  
 Allan Cameron, of Errach  
 Lord Frederick Campbell, MP, Craig's Court Charing Cross  
 Alexander Campbell, of Glenure  
 Archibald Campbell, Parliament Street  
 John Campbell, of Calder, MP, St. James Place [VP]  
 Col. Charles Campbell of Barbreck  
 Col. Donald Campbell of Saddel  
 Captain James Campbell, 69<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Duncan Campbell, Mincing Lane  
 Major-Gen. Arch. Campbell, Governor of Jamaica  
 Lieut.-Col. Alex. Campbell, 95<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Patrick Campbell, Adelphi  
 Mayor James Campbell, MP Parliament Street [VP]  
 Maj.-Gen. Fletcher Campbell, of Boquhan  
 Doctor James Campbell, India  
 Capt. Dugald Campbell, 87<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Major-Gen. Allan Campbell, 36<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Thomas Cheap, India House  
 James Clarke, Miles Lane, Cannon Street  
 Lieut.-Col. Colquhoun, Guards  
 Lewis Cuthbert, Jamaica Coffee House.

**D.**

Major Dalrymple, Wigmore Street [H]  
 Adam Drummond, MP, Golden Square  
 John Drummond, Golden Square  
 William Drummond, Sackville Street  
 James Duff, Cadiz  
 Captain Duncan, British Coffee House  
 Captain Robert Duncanson, 71<sup>st</sup> Regt.

**E.**

Earl of Eglintoune, Conduit Street [P]

**F.**

Doctor Ferguson, Edinburgh  
 William Forbes, Northumberland Street  
 Arthur Forbes, of Culloden  
 Captain John Forbes, Spring Gardens  
 Hon. Archibald Fraser, of Lovat, MP, FRS [VP]  
 John Fraser, Swithin's Lane  
 Captain Fraser, Canada  
 Simon Fraser, Coleman Street  
 Alexander Fraser, New York Coffee House  
 Captain Hugh Fraser, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Captain Fraser, King's Bench Walk, Temple  
 Charles Fraser, Southampton  
 John Hutchinson Fraser, Lincoln's Inn  
 Edward Fraser, of Relick  
 Hon. Ensign Fraser, 45<sup>th</sup> Regt.

**G.**

[no name] Galbraith, Jamaica  
 Alexander Duke of Gordon, Upper Grosvenor Street [P]  
 Lord Adam Gordon, Golden Square, MP [P]  
 Colonel Charles Gordon, 77<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Major-Gen. Benjamin Gordon, 48<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Marquis of Graham, MP, Grosvenor Street, [P]  
 Lieut.-Col. Colin Graham, 16<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 George Graham, of Kinross, MP  
 Alexander Grant, of Dalvey  
 James Grant, Coleman Street  
 Doctor Grant, Lime Street, [VP]  
 Captain Charles Grant, India  
 Robert Grant, Warwick Court  
 Peter Grant, Coleman Street  
 George Grant, America Square  
 Sir James Grant, of Grant  
 Colonel Hugh Grant, of Moy  
 James Grant, of Shewglie  
 Colonel Grant, 42<sup>nd</sup> Regt., Lime Street  
 William Grant, King's Bench Walk, Temple  
 Reverend Grant, Henley upon Thames  
 William Gray, Jamaica  
 Alexander Gray, Terrace, Spring Gardens  
 George Gun Munro, Warwick Court, St. Paul's

**H.**

Lord Haddo, Wimpole Street  
 Douglas Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, Portman Square

Peter John Heywood, Whitehaven  
 John Home, Scotland [H]  
 Simon Houston, Mary-le-bone Street, Golden Square

**J.**

Sir John Johnston, Glanville Street, Rathbone Place

**M.**

Alexander Macaulay, India  
 Rev. Angus Macaulay, Scots Brigade, Holland  
 Macdonald, MP, Adelphi, [VP]  
 [no name] Macdonald, of Glenulladal  
 William Macdonald, of Ranattin  
 Colonel John Macdonald, 76th Regt.  
 Lieutenant Ronald Macdonald, of the Marines  
 Dr. John Macdonald, 11<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Captain John Macdonald, of Clanronald, 22<sup>nd</sup> Light Dragoons  
 Captain John Macdonald, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Dr. Alexander Macdougall, 73<sup>rd</sup> Regt.  
 Robert Macfarlane, Walthamstow  
 Doctor Macglashan, Moor Fields  
 Hon. Lieut.-Gen. Alexander Mackay, Commander in Chief in Scotland  
 Capt. Hugh Mackay  
 Major-Gen. John Mackenzie, Marines  
 Colin Mackenzie, Senior, Sun Court, Cornhill, [VP]  
 Colin Mackenzie, Junior, Edinburgh Coffee House  
 John Mackenzie, Bishopsgate Street  
 Hon. Colonel George Mackenzie, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of 73<sup>rd</sup> Regt.  
 Lieut.-Col. George Mackenzie, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of 73<sup>rd</sup> Regt.  
 Robert Mackenzie, Clarges Street  
 Colonel Humberstone Mackenzie, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieut.-Col. George Mackenzie, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Cornet James Mackenzie, British Coffee House  
 Major Colin Mackenzie, 92<sup>nd</sup> Regt.  
 Kenneth Mackenzie, Senior, Edinburgh  
 Francis Mackenzie, Ross-shire  
 Captain C. Barrington Mackenzie, 71<sup>st</sup> Regt.  
 George Mackenzie, Tower Street  
 John Mackenzie, Leicester Street, Leicester Square  
 Rev. Donald Mackinnon, Vicar of Claybrooke  
 Rev. John Mackinnon, Argyll House  
 Charles Mackintosh, Newman Street  
 Lauchlin [Lachlan] Mackintosh, Newman Street  
 Lieutenant John Mackintosh of the Marines  
 Captain John Maclachlan, 55<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Dr. Dugland Maclachlan Charlotte Street, Rathbone Place

Alexander Maclachlan, Charlotte Street, Rathbone Place  
 Major-Gen. Allan Maclean, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieutenant Archibald John Maclean, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 John Lord Macleod, MP, India  
 Donald Macleod, of Geanies  
 Alexander Macleod of Harris  
 Dr. Hugh Macleod of Glasgow  
 Banantyne Macleod, Edinburgh  
 Colonel Macleod, of Macleod  
 Major Macleod, of Glendal  
 Captain Robert Macleod, of the Marines  
 Major-Gen. Arch. Macnab, 41<sup>st</sup> Regt. [VP]  
 Angus Macnab, India Service  
 Reverend Macnicol, Scotland [H]  
 John Macpherson, of Supreme Council, India [VP]  
 James Macpherson, MP, Norfolk Street [VP]  
 [no name] Macpherson of Inveresk  
 Lieut.-Col. Duncan Macpherson, of Clunie  
 Malcolm Macpherson, Chelsea Road  
 Alexander Macsween, West Indies  
 Simon Mactavish [McTavish], Canada  
 Dugald, Malcolm, Queen Anne Street West [VP]  
 Neil Malcolm, Queen Anne Street West [VP]  
 Donald Malcolm, Jamaica  
 Colonel John Martin, of the Marines  
 Major Hamilton Maxwell, 73<sup>rd</sup> Regt.  
 Rev. Peter Millar, Chertsey  
 Sir Thomas Mills, India  
 James Mitchell, Jamaica  
 Major Hugh Montgomery, Fencibles  
 Major-Gen. Morris, 61<sup>st</sup> Regt., MP  
 James Morrison, Paper Buildings, Temple  
 Captain Morrison, Oxendon Street  
 Sir Hugh Munro, of Foulis, Bart.  
 Major-Gen. Sir Hector Munro, KB, MP, India  
 Sir George Munro, of Pointsfield [Poyntzfield]  
 Dr. Donald Munro, Jermyn Street, FRS  
 Sir Alexander Munro, Air Street, Piccadilly [VP]  
 Captain Duncan Munro, of Culcairn  
 Hon. Major-Gen. Murray, 77<sup>th</sup> Regt., MP, FRS [VP]

**O.**

John Ogilvie, Terrace, Spring Gardens  
 George Ogilvie, Upper Marybone Street

**P.**

Major-Gen. Prevost, 60<sup>th</sup> Regt., Leicester Square

**R.**

James Rattray, India Service  
 Major-Gen. Reid, 95<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Andrew Reid, Colney Hatch  
 Sir James Riddell, of Ardnamurchan, Bart.  
 Major Archibald Robertson, Engineers  
 Captain Henry Robertson, Edinburgh  
 James Ross, Throgmorton Street  
 George Ross, MP Conduit Street  
 William Ross, Lincoln's Inn  
 Lieut.-Col. Alex. Ross [missing] Regt.  
 David Ross, Strand  
 General Charles Ross, 72<sup>nd</sup> Regt. MP  
 Sir J. Lockhart Ross, of Balnagowan, Bart.

**S.**

Hugh Seton, Leicester Square [VP]  
 Hon. Lieutenant James Sinclair, Independent Company  
 Daniel Sinclair, Camberwell  
 Doctor Shaw, Old Round Court, Strand  
 William Shaw, Quebec  
 Alexander Shaw, Canada  
 Captain Alexander Shaw, 60<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Captain Skelby, 71<sup>st</sup> Regt.  
 Colonel John Small, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Rev. John Smith, Scotland [H]  
 George Smith, India  
 George Steuart, Upper Harley Street  
 James Strachan, Mincing Lane  
 John Stuart, of Allanbank  
 Duncan Stuart, Southhampton Row, Bloomsbury  
 Hon. Frederick Stuart, India  
 Captain Charles Stuart, of Marines  
 Lieutenant William Sutherland, 78<sup>th</sup> Reg.  
 [no name] Small, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.

**T.**

Reverend Tulloch, Kent

**U.**

Gordon Urquhart, Villers Street, Strand

**W.**

Hon. James Wemyss, of Wemyss, MP

Colonel John Wemyss, Sutherland Fencibles  
Patrick Wilkie, Greenwich

### 1.3 Administrative Officers of the Highland Society of London 1815<sup>1</sup>

**President:**

Duke of York and Albany

**Vice Presidents:**

Lord Saltoun

Right Hon., Sir Arch. Macdonald, Bart.

Major-Gen. Hon, Godfrey Bosville

Sir Alexander Grant of Dalvey Bart.

Colonel David Stewart

**Treasurers:**

Simon McGillivray, Esq.

Divie Robertson, Esq.

James Hamilton, Esq.

**Auditors:**

Grant Allan, Esq.

Alexander Grant, Esq.

**Committee of Directors:**

Colin Robertson, Esq.

Alexander Macleay, Esq.

Donald Mackinnon, MD

Kenneth M. Macrae of Macrae, Esq.

William Henderson, Esq.

William Munroe, Esq.

Alexander Lamb, Esq.

John Galt, Esq.

Geddes Mackenzie Simpson, Esq.

David Cunningham, Esq.

George Young, Esq.

James Lindsey, Esq.

**Joint secretaries:**

Simon McGillivray, Esq.

James Hamilton, Esq.

**Deputy Secretary:**

Colin Macrae, Esq.

**Chaplains:**

Rev. William Mackenzie

Rev. Roderick Macleod, DD

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<sup>1</sup> Highland Society of London, *Administrative Officers of the Highland Society of London* (London, 1815).

**Officer:**  
John Ross

#### 1.4 List of members of the Highland Society of London June 1817<sup>1</sup>

**Chief:**

His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

**President:**

The Duke of Argyll

**Vice-Presidents:**

Lord John Douglas Edward Henry Campbell  
 Colonel Sir Neil Campbell of Duntroon, KCB  
 General Alexander Campbell of Monzie, MP  
 Lieut.-Gen. Duncan Campbell of Lochnell, MP  
 Captain Patrick Campbell, RN  
 John Campbell, Esq. Master in Chancery

**Treasurers:**

Simon McGillivray, Esq.  
 Divie Robertson, Esq.  
 James Hamilton, Esq.  
 Auditors: Grant Allan, Esq.  
 Colin Robertson, Esq.  
 John Watson, Esq.

**Directors:**

Nathaniel Atcheson, Esq.  
 Sir Thomas Bell, Duncan Campbell, Esq.  
 John Dingwall, Esq.  
 James Gordon Duff, Esq.  
 James Beveridge Duncan the Younger, Esq.  
 John Galt, Esq.  
 John Garden, Esq.  
 Alexander Grant, Esq.  
 Alexander Lamb, Esq.  
 Geddes Mackenzie Simpson, Esq.

**Chaplains:**

Rev. William Mackenzie  
 Rev. Roderick Macleod, DD

**Secretaries:**

James Hamilton, Esq.  
 Donald Mackinnon, MD

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<sup>1</sup> *Rules of the Highland Society of London With an Alphabetical List of Members, June, 1817* (London, 1817), Pamphlets Celtic Literature #24, RHASS, pp. 15-34.

**Deputy-Secretary:**

Colin Macrae, Esq.

**Clerk:**

Mr. George Gunn

**Officer:**

John Ross

**Members:**

[Those names marked with [P] have been president; those with [VP] have been vice-president; those with [T] have been treasurer; and those with [S] have been secretary]

HRH the Prince Regent

HRH Frederick Duke of York and Albany, KG

HRH Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, KG

HRH Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, Earl of Inverness, KG [P]

**A.**

George William, Duke of Argyll [P]

John, Duke of Atholl, KT [P]

George, Earl of Aboyne [P]

George, Earl of Aberdeen, KT [VP]

John, Viscount Arbuthnot

Lieut.-Col. Hon. Hugh Arbuthnot, Albany

Andrew Adair, younger of Balhail

Major Agnew Madras Army

Grant Allan Gower Street

Grant Allan the Younger, Gower Street

Lieut.-Col. William Charles Alston, Devonshire Street

William Anderson Russell Square

George Arbuthnot Madras

Nathaniel Atcheson, Chapel Place, Duke Street, Westminster

**B.**

Charles William, Duke of Buccleugh and Queensbury, KT

John, Marquis of Bute

John, Earl of Breadalbane [P]

Robert Walter, Lord Blantyre

Hon. Peter Rob. Drummond Burrell, MP, Hyde Park Terrace. [VP]

William Macleod, Lord Bannatyne, Edinburgh

General Sir George Beckwith, GCB [VP]

Major-Gen. Sir Thomas Sidney Beckwith, KCB, Clarges Street

Sir Thomas Bell, Dean Street

Alexander Baillie, Grosvenor Street

Colonel John Baillie of Leys, Gloucester Place  
 General James Balfour, Bolton Row  
 James Balfour of Blunain  
 Major Alexander Balmain, Madras Army  
 Alexander Barclay, Teddington  
 Charles Barclay, MP, Clapham  
 Æneas Barkly, Line Street Square  
 John Hepburn Belsches of Invermay  
 John Binney, Madras  
 John Binney the Younger, of Madras  
 Alexander Brodie of Arnhall [VP]  
 Lieut.-Gen. Archibald Brown, Sackville Street  
 John Brown, John Street, Adelphi  
 John Brown, Upper Grosvenor Street  
 Patrick Crauford Bruce of Glenelg, Upper Grosvenor Street [VP]  
 P. Bruce, Madras  
 Captain Thomas Buchanan, EIS  
 John Burnett of Countesswells

### C.

William Earl of Cathcart  
 Lord John Douglas E.H. Campbell [VP]  
 Thomas, Lord Cochrane  
 John, Lord Cawdor  
 Sir James Cockburn of Langton, Bart.  
 Sir Ewen Cameron of Fassfern, Bart.  
 Major-Gen. Sir Allan Cameron of Erracht, KCB [VP]  
 Colonel Sir Neil Campbell of Duntroon, KCB [VP]  
 Colonel Sir Colin Campbell, KCB  
 Donald Cameron of Lochiel  
 Adam Cameron of Surinam  
 Lieut.-Col. Duncan John Cameron, late 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Vet. Bat.  
 Lieutenant John Cameron, Madras Army  
 Captain Peter Campbell, EIS  
 Captain Peter Cameron, EIS  
 Lieut.-Gen. Wm. Nevil Cameron  
 General Alexander Campbell of Monzie, MP [VP]  
 Captain Alexander Campbell, EIS  
 A.D. Campbell, Madras  
 Lieut.-Col. Archibald Campbell, 84<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieut.-Col. Archibald Campbell, 6<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Rear Admiral Donald Campbell  
 Lieut.-Gen. Duncan Campbell of Lochnell, MP [VP]  
 Duncan Campbell Tavistock Square  
 Captain John Campbell, late of the 77<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 John Campbell, Charles Street, Westminster

John Campbell, Red Lion Square  
 John Campbell, Mastery in Chancery [VP]  
 Captain Patrick Campbell, RN [VP]  
 Robert Campbell of Ardchattan  
 Robert Campbell, Argyle Street  
 Thomas Caw, Great Coram Street  
 Lieut.-Col. James Chisholm, Royal African Corps  
 Colonel Archibald Christie, Chatham  
 Thomas Cockburn, Devonshire Street  
 James Cochrane, Madras  
 Colonel John Colebrook, Madras Army  
 Lieut.-Col. James Conway  
 Lieut.-Col. Charles Cunningham  
 David Cunningham, Winchester Street

**D.**

Alexander, Marquis of Douglas and Clydesdale [P]  
 George, Earl of Dalhousie, GCB  
 Wilbraham, Earl of Dysart  
 George, Earl of Dunmore  
 George William, Viscount Deerhurst  
 Thomas, Lord Dundas  
 Major-Gen. Hon. Alexander Duff  
 Right Hon. Sir William Drummond of Logiealmond  
 Right Hon. William Dundas  
 Sir John Downie  
 Lieut.-Col. Samuel Dalrymple, Madras Army  
 Kirby Dalrymple, Madras  
 Alexander Gray Davidson, Brompton  
 Henry Davidson of Tulloch, Bedford Square  
 Lieut.-Col. Robert Dick, Royal Highlanders  
 William Dick, MD  
 John Dingwall of Bruckley Castle, St. James's Street  
 Lieut.-Gen. Alexander Dirom  
 Humphrey Donaldson, Whitehall Place  
 William Douglas, younger of Castle Douglas  
 Robert Downie of Appin  
 Thomas Drever, MD Lower Grosvenor Street  
 James Drummond of Strathallan, MP [VP]  
 George Harley Drummond, of Drumtochty Castle, MP  
 James Gordon Duff, Brunswick Square  
 John Duff of Drumuir  
 Patrick Duff of Carnousie  
 James Beveridge Duncan of Damside and Marlefield, Blackheath  
 James Beveridge Duncan the Younger of Damside and Marlefield, Blackheath

**E.**

William, Earl of Errol  
 Hugh, Earl of Eglintoun, KT  
 Alexander, Lord Elibank  
 Sir Charles Edmunstone of Duntreath, Bart., MP  
 Lieut.-Col. Sir George Elder  
 Right Hon. Hugh Elliot, Madras

**F.**

James Earl of Fyfe  
 James Ochoncar, Lord Forbes [P]  
 Hon. William Fraser  
 Sir William Cunningham Fairlie of Robertland, Bart.  
 Sir Walter Farquhar of Gilmerscroft, Bart.  
 Sir William Fraser of Leadclune, Bart., Bedford Square [VP]  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir Crauford Ferguson, KCB, MP  
 John Farquharson of Haughton  
 William Farquharson of Monaltrie  
 John Fleming, Gloucester Place  
 Robert Stewart Flemyng of Kilichassie  
 Bartholomew Forbes, Baker Street  
 Major-Gen. Benjamin Forbes [V.P]  
 Charles Forbes of Auchmeden, MP, Fitzroy Square [VP]  
 John Forbes of New, Fitzroy Square [VP]  
 John Forbes, Commissariat  
 Michie Forbes, Bombay  
 Rear Admiral Alexander Fraser  
 Alexander Fraser, Lincoln's Inn Fields [T] [S]  
 Colonel Charles Fraser of Inverallochy, MP  
 Duncan Fraser of Fingask  
 Captain Fred. Alex. Mackenzie Fraser, HP, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Colonel Hastings Fraser, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieut.-Col. Fraser, Madras Army  
 James Fraser, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
 James Fraser of Belladrum [VP]  
 James Fraser, Cleveland-Row  
 John Fraser of Achnagairn  
 John Fraser, Lime Street  
 John Hutchinson Fraser of Finellan  
 Simon Fraser, younger of Belladrum  
 Captain Thomas Fraser, Cadogan Place  
 Major Thomas Fraser of Newton  
 Captain Fraser, Town-Major, Madras  
 William Fraser, younger of Leadclune, Bedford Square  
 Charles Fullarton, Madras  
 Robert Fullarton, Madras

**G.**

Alexander, Duke of Gordon, KT [P]  
 George, Earl of Glasgow  
 John, Viscount Glenorchy  
 Right Hon. Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls [VP]  
 Sir Alexander Grant of Dalvey, Bart. [VP]  
 Major-Gen. Sir Colquhoun Grant, KCB  
 John Galt, Lindsay Terrace  
 John Garden, Whitehall Place  
 John Borthwick Gilchrist, LLD, Edinburgh  
 Mungo Gilmore, Stamford Hill  
 John Goldie, Madras  
 Brigade-Major John Gordon, Madras Army  
 Robert Home Gordon of Embo, Conduit Street  
 Thomas Graham of Kinross [VP]  
 Alexander Cray Grant, younger of Dalvey  
 Alexander Grant, Serjeant's Inn, Temple  
 Alexander Grant, Fleet Street  
 Captain Alexander Grant, EIS  
 Captain Charles Grant, RN  
 Charles Grant, Jamaica  
 Charles Grant, younger of Waternish, MP  
 Lieut.-Col. Colquhoun Grant, HP, 11<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 David Macdowal Grant of Arndilly  
 Francis A. Grant, Madras  
 George Macpherson Grant of Ballindalloch and Invereshie, MP  
 Major James Murray Grant, HP, 3<sup>rd</sup> Guards  
 James Robert Grant of Mulochard  
 John Peter Grant of Rothiemurchus, MP [VP]  
 Lieutenant John Grant, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Colonel Lewis Grant, 70<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Major Robert Grant, 56<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Robert Innes Grant  
 Major-Gen. William Grant  
 S.H. Greig, Madras

**H.**

Archibald, Duke of Hamilton and Brandon [P]  
 Francis, Marquis of Hastings, KG  
 George, Marquis of Huntly, Colonel of the Royal Highlanders [P]  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir Thomas Hislop of Tothill, Bart.  
 James Steuart Hall, Orchard Street  
 James Hamilton, Hunter-street, Brunswick Square [T] [S]  
 Lieut.-Gen. George Vaughan Hart, MP  
 George Hay, Madras

Captain James Hay  
 Captain Robert Hay, EIS  
 William Henderson, Great St. Helen's  
 D. Hill, Madras  
 William Horseman, MD, Madras  
 Thomas Hoseason, Harley Street  
 William Hoseason, Jamaica  
 James Robert Hume, MD, British Army, France  
 Thomas Hutchon, Warnford Court

**I.**

Major-Gen. Sir William Inglis, KCB  
 Captain James Jarvey, late 8<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Hugh Innes, of Lochalsh, MP [VP]  
 Major-Gen. James Innes, Madras Army  
 John Innes, Broad Street Buildings  
 John Innes, Caroline Street, Bedford Square

**K.**

Thomas, Earl of Kinnoull [VP]  
 Thomas, Viscount Kirkwall  
 Charles, Lord Kinnaird [VP]  
 Charles Ker, MD  
 Isaac Ketchen, Austin Friars  
 George Kinloch, Brunswick Square  
 James Kinloch, Jermyn Street

**L.**

William, Marquis of Lothian  
 Thomas, Lord Lynedoch, GCB  
 Hon. Warwick Lake  
 Alexander Lamb, Princes Street  
 Colonel John Lamont of Lamont  
 James Lindsay, Albany  
 Captain Low, Madras Army  
 Lieut.-Col. David Lumsden

**M.**

George, Duke of Marlborough  
 James Duke of Montrose, KG [P]  
 Francis, Earl of Moray  
 William, Earl of Mansfield  
 Lord James Murray [VP]  
 Alexander, Lord Macdonald [P]  
 Right Hon. Sir Archibald Macdonald, of East Sheen, Bart. [VP]  
 Hon. Archibald Macdonald, Connaught Place [VP]

Hon. Dudley Macdonald Albany [VP]  
 Sir Hugh Munro of Fowlis, Bart. [VP]  
 Sir Neil Menzies of that ilk, Bart.  
 Sir John Macpherson of Reney [VP]  
 Sir John Macgregor Murray of Lanrick, Bart. [VP]  
 Sir Æneas Mackintosh of that ilk, Bart.  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir John Maclean, KCB, India  
 Colonel Sir John Maclean, KCB, 27<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Sir Alexander Mackenzie, of Avoch [VP]  
 Major-Gen. Keith Macalister, Wimpole Street  
 Captain Hector Macalister, India  
 Duncan Macarthur, MD, Deal  
 John Macarthur, LLD, Hinton Lodge [VP] [T]  
 John Joseph Alphonso Macarthur, Lincoln's Inn  
 John Macarthur, New South Wales  
 Duncan Maccallum, Bishopsgate Street  
 Robert Macconachie, Madras  
 Lieut.-Col. Alexander Macdonald of Lyndale  
 Major Alexander Macdonald, 76<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Alexander Macdonald, Change Alley  
 Angus Macdonald, Pall Mall  
 Donald Macdonald, Brother of Clanronald  
 James Macdonald younger of East Sheen, MP [VP]  
 James Macdonald, Inverness  
 John Macdonald, Montreal  
 John Macdonald, Kennington Common  
 Lieut.-Col. John Macdonald, Exeter  
 Colonel John Macdonald, younger of Scalpa  
 John Macdonald, Bury Court  
 John Macdonald, MD Forres  
 Reginald George Macdonald of Clanronald, MP  
 Colonel Alexander Macdonell of Glengarry [VP]  
 Rev. Alexander Macdonell, Canada  
 E. Macdonell, Madras  
 Lieut.-Col. James Macdonnell, Coldstream Guards [VP]  
 Lieut.-Col. Macdonell, Madras  
 Captain Archibald Macdougall, late 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Alexander Macfarlane, John Street, Adelphi  
 Simon McGillivray, Suffolk Lane [T] [S]  
 William McGillivray, Montreal  
 Major Duncan Macgregor, HP, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Major-Gen. John Mackintyre, Harley Place  
 John Macintyre, Jamaica  
 Duncan Mackay, Demerary  
 Hector Mackay, Jamaica  
 Captain John Mackellar, RN

Lieut.-Gen. Alexander Mackenzie of Fairburn  
 Alexander Mackenzie  
 Colin Alexander Mackenzie, Paris  
 Daniel Mackenzie, Canada  
 Duncan Mackenzie, Keppoch  
 George Falconer Mackenzie of Allangrange  
 Henry Mackenzie, Canada  
 Colonel Jabez Mackenzie, Bath  
 John Mackenzie, Paymr. Rifle Brigade  
 John Mackenzie, Bengal  
 Kenneth Mackenzie, Portland Place  
 Thomas Mackenzie  
 Rev. William Mackenzie, Smarden  
 Captain Alex. Wedderburn Mackenzie, 67<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 John Mackerrell, Nicholas Lane  
 John Macke, Mill Hill  
 Donald Mackinnon, MD, John Street, Adelphi [S]  
 Lieut.-Col. Daniel Mackinnon, Coldstream Guards  
 William Alexander Mackinnon of that ilk  
 Charles Mackintosh, Bombay  
 Captain John Mackintosh, EIS  
 Captain Mackintosh, Madras Artillery  
 Captain Archibald Maclaine, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Alexander Macleay, Queen Square, Westminster  
 Kenneth Macleay of Newmore  
 Alexander Maclean of Coll  
 Lieutenant Alexander Maclean, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieutenant Duncan Maclean, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Lieut.-Gen. Fitz. Grafton Maclean, Sloane Street  
 Captain Thomas Maclean, Madras Army  
 Archibald Norman Macleod, Canada  
 Captain C. Macleod, Madras Army  
 Captain Donald Macleod, EIS  
 Donald Macleod of Geanies  
 James Crawford Macleod, younger of Geanies  
 J.M. Macleod, Madras  
 Rev. Roderick Macleod, DD, Dean Street  
 Colonel William Macleod, Parson's Green  
 Buchanan Macmillan, Bow Street  
 Captain Roderick Macneil, younger of Barra, 23<sup>rd</sup> Dragoons  
 James Macnure, Grenada  
 Duncan Macpherson of Cluny [VP]  
 James Macpherson of Belleville  
 Colonel Robert Barclay Macpherson, HP, 71<sup>st</sup> Regt.  
 Major-Gen. Lachlan Macquarrie, Governor of New South Wales  
 Malcolm Macqueen of Ridgemont

Thomas Potter Macqueen, younger of Ridgemont, MP  
 Alexander Macrae, Clarendon, Jamaica  
 Alexander Macrae, Demerary  
 Colin Macrae, late 71<sup>st</sup> Regt.  
 Colin Macrae, Furnival's Inn  
 Colin Macrae, Demerary  
 John Macrae, Bengal  
 Kenneth Murchison Macrae of that ilk  
 William Mactaggart, Madras  
 Colonel Alexander Mair, Deputy-Gov., Fort George  
 Neil Malcolm of Poltalloch, Hanover Square  
 Marmaduke Wm. Constable Maxwell of Nithsdale  
 David Milligan, Wimpole Street  
 Captain Robert Milligan, Life Guards  
 Alexander Milne, Whitehall Place  
 William Mitchell, Harley Street [VP]  
 General James Montgomerie [VP]  
 Major Alexander Morrison, Gunnersbury House, Brentford  
 Lieutenant Donald Munro, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 George Gun Munro, Grenada  
 Hugh Munro of Tanninich  
 Colonel Robert Munro of Livingstone  
 Colonel Thomas Munro, Madras Army  
 William Munro, Demerary  
 William Munro  
 Colonel Murray, Madras Army  
 Colonel Alex. Macgregor Murray, HP, 4<sup>th</sup> Ceylon Regt.  
 Lieut.-Col. Evan J. Macgregor Murray of Glencairnaig  
 Hon. L.G.H. Murray, Madras  
 Colonel Robert Macgregor Murray  
 William Murray, Barbados

**N.**

William, Earl of Northesk, GCB

**O.**

David, Lord Ogilvie, Airly Castle  
 Colonel Samuel William Ogg, Madras Army  
 James Ogilvie, Commissariat  
 John Ogilvie, Canada  
 J.H.D. Ogilvie, Madras  
 John Ord, Tarradale

**P.**

Major-Gen. Sir Dennis Pack, KCB  
 Sir William Paxton, Piccadilly [VP]

Captain Pattullo, Madras Army  
 Captain Archibald Frederick Paxton, 11<sup>th</sup> Dragoons  
 James Perry, Tavistock House  
 Major Prendergast, Madras Army

## R.

Eric Lord Reay [P]  
 Sir James M. Riddell, of Sunart and Ardnamurchan, Bart.  
 Charles Raitt, Fenchurch Street  
 Lieut.-Gen. John Ramsey  
 Captain Hugh Reid, EIS, Barnard Street  
 Lieutenant Riddell, Madras Army  
 Andrew Robertson, Gerrard Street  
 Colin Robertson, Russell Square  
 Divie Robertson, Bedford-square [T]  
 Lieut.-Col. Donald Robertson, Kelso  
 Ebenezer Robertson, Beverly, Yorkshire  
 Francis Robertson, Lincoln Inn Fields  
 Lieut.-Col. W.P. Colyear Robertson, Charlotte Street [VP]  
 Captain John Rose, EIS  
 Alexander Gray Ross of Cromarty  
 Robert Ross, Marlborough Street

## S.

George, Marquis of Stafford, KG [VP]  
 John, Earl of Strathmore [VP]  
 Thomas Earl of Selkirk  
 Alexander George, Lord Saltoun [VP]  
 Right Hon. Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, Bart. [P]  
 General Sir James Denham Steuart of Coltness, Bart. Colonel of the Royal North British Dragoons  
 Sir John Gordon Sinclair of Stevenston and Murckle, Bart.  
 Sir John Sinclair of Dunbeath, Bart.  
 Hon. Sir Thomas Strange, Madras  
 Gilbert Salton, Bermuda  
 Andrew Scot, Madras  
 Captain Hugh Scot, Madras Army  
 Captain John Scot, Madras Army  
 John Shand of Arnhall  
 Angus Shaw, Quebec  
 Geddes Mackenzie Simpson, Tower Street  
 Alexander Sinclair, Madras  
 Captain Alexander Skene, RN  
 Andrew Smith Skene of Lethindy  
 John Spottiswoode of that ilk  
 Alexander Stewart of Bonskeid

Alexander Stewart, Madras  
 Lieut.-Col. Alexander Stewart, HP, 4<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Colonel David Stewart, Garth [VP]  
 Robert Stewart of Alderston  
 Robert Stewart, Isle of Man  
 William Stewart, Piccadilly  
 Hon. James Strange, Madras  
 Hugh Stuart, Colonial Office  
 Lieut.-Gen. Robert Stewart of Raitt [VP]  
 Charles Sutherland, Angel Court  
 J. Sutherland, Bombay

**T.**

George, Marquis of Tweedale  
 William Tate, Old Jewry  
 Henry Stuart Taylor  
 Thomas Telford  
 Anthony Tod, Daymaster, HP, 38<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Richard Townend, Aldermanbury  
 John Tulloh, Bengal  
 John Tulloh  
 Colonel Charles Turner, Royal West India Rangers

**U.**

Walter Urquhart, Great Baddow, Essex

**W.**

Sir Mark Wood of Gatton, Bart., MP  
 Robert Warden  
 A. Watson, MD, Madras  
 John Watson, Bedford Place  
 General Wemyss of Wemyss, MP

**Y.**

George Young, Lawrence Pountney Hill

**Honorary members:**

Baron Von Pfeffel  
 Emelius Leopold Augustus Duke of Saxe Gotha and Altenburgh  
 William Wilberforce, MP Kensington Gore.

## 1.5 List of Members of the Highland Society of London 1856<sup>1</sup>

### **Chief:**

Field Marshal HRH Prince Albert, KG

### **President:**

The Duke of Argyll.

### **Vice-Presidents:**

The Marquis of Stafford.

Lord Macdonald, of the Isles.

The Earl of Seafield.

### **Treasurers:**

Sir Charles Forbes, Bart.

Charles Sutherland, Esq.

James Tulloch, Esq., FRS

### **Auditors:**

Frederic William Caldwell, Esq.

Alexander Robert Irvine, Esq.

The Chevalier Macchombaich De Colquhoun, LLD

### **Directors:**

John Stone, Esq.

Captain W. H. Shippard.

James Macgregor, Esq.

J. Archibald Hamilton, Esq.

James Henry Conway, Esq.

Sir Wm. Forbes, Bart.

Alex. Halley, Esq., MD

Septimus E. Carlisle, Esq.

Wm. Fechny Black, Esq.

James Duff Gordon, Esq.

John Hutchison, Esq.

### **Chaplains:**

The Rev. John Cumming, DD

The Rev. Charles Mackenzie.

### **Honorary Secretary:**

George Bain, Esq.

### **Accountant:**

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<sup>1</sup> The Highland Society of London, *Rules* [1856], 17-39.

Mr. W. H. Marsden.

**Piper:**

Mr. William Ross.

**Officer:**

Mr. Donald Douglas.

**Collector And Messenger:**

Mr. John Burge.

**Members:**

[Those names marked with [P] have been president; those with [VP] have been vice-president; those with [T] have been treasurer; and those with [S] have been secretary  
Dates included when each member was elected.]

Field Marshal HRH Prince Albert, KG 1844

His Majesty Leopold George Frederick, King of the Belgians, KG 1820

HRH Geo. William Frederick Charles, Duke of Cambridge, KG, KP, GCH 1851

**A.**

George Douglas Duke of Argyll, Argyll Lodge Campden Hill, Kensington 1853 [P]

George Hamilton Gordon, Earl of Aberdeen, KT, KG, 7 Argyle Place 1805 [VP]

John, Viscount Arbuthnott 1819 [VP]

Lieut.-Gen. Hon. Hugh Arbuthnott, CB, MP, Albany 1816 [VP]

Arthur Duff Abercrombie, of Glassaugh 1828

George Adam, Bombay 1829

Charles Binney Adam, Bombay 1831

William Agnew 1823

Samuel Anderson, of Morden, 9 New Broad Street 1822

John Walker Anderson, 24, Chester Terrace, Regent's Park 1847

Grenville Macleod Andrews, 9 Cadogan Place 1847

William Annandale, 34, Foley Place 1832

Archibald Arbuthnott, Great St. Helens 1834

Robert Keith Arbuthnott 1824

Robert Shank Atcheson, 2 Charles Street, Trevor Square 1820

John Auldjo, FRS, Noel House, Kensington 1828

**B.**

Walter Francis, Duke of Buccleuch And Queensbury, KG, Montague House, Whitehall 1846 [P]

Wm. Plantagenet, Duke of Buckingham And Chandos 1820 [VP] [P]

John, Marquis of Breadalbane, 21 Park Lane 1814 [VP] [P]

Colonel Hugh Baillie, MP, 34 Mortimer Street 1820 [VP]

Alexander Baillie 1817

Colonel Fletcher N. Balmain 1815  
 George Bain, 18 Parliament Street 1837 [S]  
 James Balfour, of Blunain 1814  
 Charles Barclay 1817  
 Sir Henry Barkly, KCB, Governor of Jamaica 1832  
 Alexander Bell, Bombay 1829  
 Henry Beveridge 1822  
 William Scott Binney, Oriental Club 1815  
 John Binney 1815  
 William Bisset, St. Peter's House, Ryde, Isle of Wight 1850  
 William Fechny Black, Parthenon Club, 16, Regent Street 1833 [VP]  
 Lieut.-Col. Thomas Hunter Blair, Bombay 1822  
 Andrew Bonar, 8 Euston Square, Leamington 1841  
 John Boucher, Serjeant's Inn, Chancery Lane 1833  
 Mark Boyd 1842  
 William Sprott-Boyd 1844  
 Lieut.-Col. Charles John Branding, 10 Gloucester Place, Portman Square 1850  
 Alfred Brodie, 5 Cavendish Square 1852  
 John Brown 1813  
 Captain David Philip Brown, 7<sup>th</sup> Hussars 1846  
 Captain Charles Bruce, 4a Hyde Park Place 1845  
 Gilbert Stuart Bruce 1832  
 Captain Thomas Buchanan, Bombay 1809  
 Colonel William Nicol Bums, 4 Berkeley Street, Cheltenham 1845  
 Edward Burn 1833

## C.

John, Earl Cawdor, 74 South Audley Street 1822 [P]  
 The Earl of Chisholm, 33 Wilton Place, Belgrave Square 1840 [P]  
 Frederick William Caldwell, of Mishnish, Boundary House, St. John's Wood 1845  
 Lieut.-Gen. William Nevill Cameron 1807  
 Major John Cameron, Madras Army 1815  
 Donald Cameron, of Lochiel 1831  
 Donald Charles Cameron 1822  
 Robert William Cameron, Canada 1855  
 Hugh Innes Cameron, 1 Hyde Park Gate, Kensington 1845  
 Hugh Cameron, MD, 4 Bolton Street, Piccadilly 1849  
 Sir Robert Campbell, Bt., 5 Argyle Place 1814  
 Sir John Nicholl Robert Campbell, KCH 1849  
 Colonel John Campbell, of Kilmartin 1837 [VP]  
 Captain Alexander Campbell, EIS 1808  
 Captain John Campbell, Late of 77th Regiment 1805 [VP]  
 Alexander Campbell, of Monzie, Monzie Castle, Perthshire 1833  
 Alexander Duncan Campbell, Montague Square 1815  
 Duncan Campbell, Chislehurst, Kent 1816  
 John Campbell, of Glensaddel 1827

Robert Campbell, of Ardchattan 1805  
 Simon Fraser Campbell 1830  
 Septimus Edmund Carlisle, 4 Park Place, St. James' 1845  
 Lieut.-Col. Lewis Carmichael 1836  
 Captain Archibald Macra Chisholm, Late 42<sup>nd</sup> Regt. (Royal Highlanders) 1843  
 Alexander Bain Chisholm, MD 1836  
 Hon. Charles Clarke, Upper Canada 1830  
 Major John Clunes, Cheltenham 1828  
 Patrick Mac Chombaichde Colquhoun, LLD, 3 Hare Court, Temple 1855  
 Colonel James Conway 1812  
 James Henry Conway, 2 Monmouth Road, Westbourne Grove 1845  
 Lieut.-Col. John Eyre Crabbe, KH, United Service Club 1850  
 The Rev. John Cumming, DD, 7 Montague Place, Russell Square 1848  
 James Currie, 32, Lincoln's Inn Fields 1845  
 John Richmond Cuthbert, Mount Park, Greenock 1852  
 Sir David Thurlow Cunynghame, of Mulncraig, Bart., 5 Lowndes Street, Belgrave Square 1855

#### **D.**

Thomas, Earl of Dundonald, GCB 1809 [P]  
 William Henry Walter, Earl of Dalkeith, Montague House, Whitehall 1854  
 William Dalgairns, Bombay 1831  
 Alexander Gray Davidson, Godstone 1813  
 Duncan Davidson, of Tulloch 1820  
 Henry Davidson, Lime Street Square 1827  
 John Davidson, Lime Street Square 1827  
 Michie Forbes Davidson 1846  
 John Forbes Davidson 1852  
 James Davidson 1845  
 William Fleming Dick 1832  
 Peter Dickson, 24 Chester Terrace, Regent's Park 1845  
 Humphrey Donaldson 1802  
 Thomas Drever, MD 1817  
 George Harley Drummond 1809  
 Duncan Dunbar, Limehouse 1836  
 Angus Duncan 1836  
 James Beveridge Duncan, of Damside 1834  
 Anthony Dunlop, Oriental Club 1834  
 Francis Leveson, Earl of Ellesmere, 18 Belgrave Square 1825

#### **E.**

Archibald Hamilton Montgomery, Earl of Eglinton And Winton, 10 St. James' Square 1851  
 Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Waterloo Hotel Jermyn Street 1822  
 William Edmond 1840  
 Edward Merrick Elderton, 3 Lothbury 1851

Major T. H. Elliott, Madras 1815  
 Daniel Elliott, Madras 1834  
 Captain Samuel Enderby, Blackheath 1834  
 William Erskine, Bombay 1822

## F.

James, Earl of Fife, KT, Union Club 1809 [P]  
 Malcolm, Viscount Forth, 14 Dover Street, Piccadilly 1854  
 Major-Gen. C. G. Falconer, KH 1844  
 Lieut.-Col. Francis Farquharson, Bombay 1831  
 James Ross Farquharson of Invercauld, Carlton Club 1844  
 Andrew Farquharson 1829  
 John Farquharson, of Haughton 1809  
 Sir Edmund Filmer, Bart., MP, 90 Euston Square 1840  
 Archibald Finnie, Tulse Hill, Brixton 1853  
 Hope Stewart Fleming, MD, Madras 1816  
 Robert Stewart Flemyng, of Killichassie and Moness, New Court Street, Swithin's Lane 1807  
 Sir Charles Forbes, of Newe And Edinglassie, Bart., Broom Wood, Clapham 1823 [T]  
 Sir William Forbes, of Craigevar, Bart. 1855  
 George Forbes, of Auchnagathil, 7 Hyde Park Gardens 1825 [VP]  
 James Stewart Forbes, 3 Fitzroy Square 1834  
 Bartholomew Forbes 1805  
 George Forsyth, 145 Leadenhall Street 1823  
 Lieut.-Gen. Hastings Fraser, 61<sup>st</sup> Regt. 1815  
 Major-Gen. J. S. Fraser, of Madras 1815  
 Colonel Charles Fraser, of Inverullochy 1811  
 Lieut.-Col. Thomas Fraser 1815  
 Captain Fraser, Madras 1815  
 John Fraser, of Achnagairn 1819  
 John Fraser, Portman Square 1834  
 Thomas Fraser, of Escadale 1843  
 Hon. Robert Fullerton, Madras 1815

## G.

William, Lord Grantley, 10 Wilton Place, Belgrave Square 1823 [VP] [P]  
 Charles, Lord Glenelg, 4a Albany 1817 [VP] [P]  
 Robert Gillespie, 3 Billiter Court 1844  
 James S Glennie 1822  
 John Irving Glennie, 15 Devonshire Street, Portland Place 1822  
 Colonel William Gordon, Bombay 1840  
 William Gordon, Bombay 1824  
 James Duff Gordon 1847  
 Michael F. Gordon, of Abergeldy 1836 [VP]  
 John Goldie 1815  
 James Chisholm Gooden, 33 Tavistock Square 1845

Captain George Graham, Bombay 1829  
 Henry S. Graeme 1836  
 Lieut.-Col. Robert Grant, 56th Regt 1815  
 Captain George Grant, H. C. Marines 1822  
 Captain John Grant, Late 78th Regt. 1825  
 Lieut. John Grant, 86th Regt. 1815  
 Alexander Grant, St. Andrews, New Brunswick 1809  
 Charles Grant 1819  
 George Grant 1802  
 Patrick Grant 1818  
 Robert Innes Grant, 46 Lime Street 1815  
 David Charles Guthrie, 30 Portland Place 1819 [VP]  
 James Alexander Guthrie, 30 Portland Place 1847  
 Arbuthnot Charles Guthrie, 30 Portland Place 1847

## H.

William Alexander Anthony Archibald Douglas, Duke of Hamilton And Brandon, 22, Arlington Street 1847 [P]  
 Sir Peter Arthur Halkett, of Pitfirrance, Bart., 42nd Regt. (Royal Highlanders) 1854  
 General Sir Colin Halkett, GCB, GCH 1840  
 James Stuart Hall 1817  
 Alexander Halley, MD, 14 Queen Anne Street, Harley Street 1850  
 Archibald Hamilton, 11 St. Helen's Place 1848  
 William Hamilton Hart, Bombay 1831  
 Captain Robert Hay, EIS 1807  
 Captain William Hay, EIS 1809  
 Colonel William Henderson, Hammersmith 1829  
 David Henry, Mark Lane 1847  
 David Hill 1815  
 Major-General Arthur Hogg, Bombay 1831  
 Thomas Hoseason 1809  
 William Hoseason, Jamaica 1816  
 James Robert Hume, MD, 9 Curzon Street 1816  
 William Hunter, Late Surgeon-Major, Coldstream Guards, 86 Sloane Street 1844  
 John Hutchison, 19 Wilton Place, Belgrave Square 1853

## I.

John Innes, 61 Moorgate Street 1814  
 Alexander Robert Irvine, 14 Waterloo Place, Pall Mall 1836

## J.

Sir John Vanden Bempde Johnstone, Bart., MP, 27 Grosvenor Square 1844 [VP]  
 Captain Thomas H. Johnstone, Bombay 1831  
 Adam Johnstone 1835  
 David Morrice Johnston, 64 Moorgate Street 1841

George Johnstone, 53 Tavistock Square 1843  
 Lieut.-Col. Henry George Jourdan 1834

### **K.**

Thomas, Earl of Kinnoull, 58 Green Street, Grosvenor Square 1806 [VP] [P]  
 Sir Fitzroy Kelly, MP, 147 Piccadilly 1847  
 Richard H. Kennedy, Oriental Club 1840  
 Lawrence W. Keir 1839  
 Sir Charles Ker, MD 1801  
 Lieut.-Gen. John Manners Ker 1811  
 Isaac Ketchen, Nairn, NB 1817  
 John Binny Key, Madras 1834  
 James King, 4 Tavistock Place 1818

### **L.**

Frederick, Marquis of Londonderry, 35 Chesham Place 1827 [VP] [P]  
 Right Hon. Stephen Rumbold Lushington, 18 Eaton Place, Belgrave Square 1832 [VP]  
 Alexander Lamb 1816  
 Alexander Lamb, The Younger 1820  
 James Lamont, of Knockdow, Argyle Shire 1846  
 George Lawrence 1818  
 Andrew Lawrie, 10 Charles Street, St. James' Square 1853  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir David Leighton, KCB, Oriental Club 1822  
 Major - Gen. Alexander Lindsay, HCS, Early Bank, Perth 1840  
 James Lindsay 1814  
 John Lindsay, Lawrence Pounteney Lane 1836  
 James Little, Bombay 1840  
 Henry Longlands, Charlton, Kent 1818 [VP]  
 Colonel John Low, CB, Clatto, Fifeshire 1815  
 Robert Low, 17 Woburn Square 1839

### **M.**

Charles, Earl of March, 51 Portland Place 1840 [VP]  
 Godfrey 'William Wentworth Bosville Macdonald, Lord Macdonald of the Isles,  
 Armadale Castle, Broad Ford, Skye 1847 [VP]  
 Lord James P. Murray, Scots Fus. Guards, 36 St. James' Street 1845 [VP]  
 Captain Hector Macalister, Late 34<sup>th</sup> Regt.  
 Duncan Macallum 1815  
 Duncan Macarthur, MD, Deal 1809  
 Robert Macconochie, Union Club 1815  
 Ranald George Macdonald of Clanranald 1816 [VP]  
 Donald Macdonald, Brother of Clanranald 1812  
 Lieut.-Col. Alexander Macdonald, Junior United Service Club 1849  
 The Hon. Archibald Macdonald, Connaught Place 1796 [VP]  
 Major Alexander Macdonald, 76<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1806  
 Duncan George Forbes Macdonald, 4 Storey's Gate, St. James' 1852

John Macdonald, Upper Canada 1804  
 John Macdonald, Canada 1822 [T]  
 Norman H. Macdonald 1854  
 General Sir James Macdonell, GCB, KCH, KMT, 1 Chesham Place, Belgrave Square 1807  
 Lieut.-Col. Donald Macdonell, Madras Army 1815  
 Aeneas R. Macdonell, Cheltenham 1815  
 Captain Alexander Macdougall, Late 78<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1803  
 Alexander H. Mcdougall, 44 Parliament Street 1847  
 Major Duncan Macgregor, HP, 78<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1811  
 John Macgregor, MP, Athenaeum Club 1844  
 James MacGregor, 30 Charter House Square 1847  
 Thomas McGregor, 150 Cheapside 1847  
 Ronald R. McLan, 36 Charlotte Street, Portland Place 1841  
 Duncan Mackay, Demerara 1816  
 Sir James John Randall. Mackenzie, of Scat Well, Bart., 11 Upper Belgrave Street 1834  
 Sir Evan Mackenzie, of Kilcoy, Bart., Belmaduthy House, Munloch, NB 1847  
 Colonel Jabez Mackenzie, Bath 1803  
 Captain Alexander Wedderburn Mackenzie, 67<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1824  
 Rev. Charles Mackenzie 1848  
 Keith William Stewart Mackenzie, of Seaforth, Urray Cottage, Beauly, NB 1846  
 Henry Mackenzie, Canada 1817  
 William Mackenzie, of Gairlock 1833  
 Charles Roderick Mackenzie 1850  
 Angus Mckenzie, Australia 1847  
 Robert Mackerell 1815  
 James Mackillop, King's Arms Yard 1829  
 Edmund Mackinnon 1836  
 Neil Mackinnon 1810  
 William Alexander Mackinnon, of that ilk, MP, 4 Hyde Park Place 1813 [VP]  
 Colonel A. Mackintosh, of Farr, Inverness 1840  
 Captain John Mackintosh. EIS 1811  
 Charles Mackintosh, Bombay 1806  
 Aeneas [Æneas] Mackintosh, 17 Montague Square 1820  
 George Daniel Mackintosh, 17 Charles Street, St. James' 1832  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir Archibald Maclaine, KCB, United Service Club 1832  
 Commissary-General Sir George Maclean 1854  
 Captain Alexander Maclean, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1815  
 Alexander Maclean, of Coll 1817  
 Lieutenant Duncan Maclean, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1815  
 Kenneth Macleay, of Keiss, 51 Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square 1853  
 John McLennan, Bombay 1840  
 Norman Macleod, of Macleod 1836  
 Major-Gen. Duncan Macleod, CB, 3, Clift on Place, Sussex Square 1844  
 John Macpherson Macleod, 1 Stanhope Street, Hyde Park Gardens 1815  
 Donald Macleod, Bombay 1840

Cluny Macpherson, Cluny Castle, Kingussie, Inverness-shire 1839  
 Colonel Robert Barclay Macpherson, HP, 71st Regt. 1807  
 Lieut.-Col. James Macpherson, Ceylon Rifle Corps 1835  
 Captain Daniel Macpherson  
 Charles Mactaggart 1823  
 John George Mctavish 1820  
 Major James Mcqueen, 1 Douro Villas, Cheltenham 1849  
 Captain John Mcqueen, 1 Douro Villas, Cheltenham 1849  
 Thomas Potter Macqueen 1813  
 John Mcqueen 1832  
 Neil Malcolm, of Poltalloch, Great Stanhope Street 1829  
 James Malcolmson 1844  
 Robert Martin, Bombay 1825  
 John Masson 1838  
 Sir James Matheson of Achany, Bart., MP, 13 Cleveland Row, Lewis Castle, Stornaway 1844  
 Alexander Matheson, MP, Ardross Castle, Invergordon; Reform Club 1846  
 Henry Michie, Bombay 1824  
 William Middlemas, Madras 1834  
 Captain Robert Milligan 1812  
 Alexander Milne, 29 St. James' Place 1816  
 Major-General William Monteith, KLS, Oriental Club 1834  
 E. C. Morgan, Bombay 1840  
 William David Cathcart Monypenny 1850  
 Captain Peter Morrison, 3 Pall Mall, East 1839  
 Alexander Morrison, 10 Austin Friars 1845  
 Colonel Robert Munro, Livingstone 1809  
 Lieut. Donald Munro, 86<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1815  
 William Munro, Demerara 1805  
 William Munro, Jamaica 1813  
 Alexander Thompson Munro 1845  
 The Hon. Charles A. Murray 1844  
 James Murray 1846

## N.

Major-Gen. Johnson Napier 1834

## O.

Sir John Powlett Orde, Bart., 22 Norfolk Street, Strand 1830  
 John Hugh Donnel Ogilvie 1815  
 George Ogilvy 1822

## P.

George, Earl of Perth And Melfort, 2 Upper Belgrave Street, Belgrave Square 1854  
 Captain Patton 1818  
 Archibald Frederick Paxton, Amesbury 1814

Major-Gen. Sir Jeffery Prendergast 1815  
Robert K. Pringle, Bombay 1840

## R.

Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond And Lennox, 51 Portland Place 1838 [P]  
Frederick John, Earl of Ripon, 1 Carlton Gardens 1829 [P]  
James Ramsay, Bushy House, Watford 1825  
James P. Riach 1804  
John Ritchie, Bombay 1829  
Sir James Miles Riddell, of Sunart and Ardnamurchan, Bart. 1807  
David Roberts, RA, 7 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy Square 1847  
Captain Archibald Robertson, 53 Baker Street 1822  
Captain Divie Robertson 1846  
Patrick Francis Robertson, MP 1848  
Edward Lovett Robertson, 26 Norfolk Terrace, Hyde Park 1838  
Francis Robertson 1805  
Gilbert Robertson 1821  
Eben William Robertson, 26 Chester Square 1839  
Stuart Erskine Rolland, Army & Navy Club 1846  
Sir George Rose, 4 Hyde Park Gardens 1818  
George Pitt Rose, Old Palace Yard 1822  
Sir William C. Ross, 38 Fitzroy Square 1844  
Charles Ross 1818  
Robert Roy, Chester 1823

## S.

George, Duke of Sutherland, Stafford House, St. James' 1822 [VP] [P]  
William, Marquis of Stafford, 2 Hamilton Place, Lilleshall House, Newport, Shropshire 1851  
John Charles, Earl of Seafield, 17 Charles Street, St. James' 1845  
Alexander Fraser, Lord Saltoun And Abernethy 1854  
Gilbert Salton, Bermuda 1805  
Hugh Fraser Sandeman, 1 Sussex Square 1821  
Theophilus Sandeman, 1 Sussex Square 1846  
Captain George Seton, Perth 1822  
Thomas Scoular, Bombay 1824  
Captain W. H. Shippard, 53 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square 1854  
Lieut.-Col. Duncan Sim, Oriental Club 1834  
Sir John Sinclair, of Dunbeath, Bart. 1815  
Alexander Sinclair, Madras 1815  
William Shand, Jun 1838  
Charles B. Skinner, Bombay 1840  
George Smytton, Bombay 1824  
John Spottiswood, of that ilk, 16 Great George Street, Westminster 1814  
Captain James Stevenson, Bombay 1822  
Robert Steuart, of Alderston 1800

J. R. Steuart, 23, Portland Place 1822  
 William McAdam Steuart, of Glenormiston, The Cedars, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire  
 1845  
 Captain George Stevenson 1855  
 Lieut.-Col. Alexander Stewart, HP, 4th Regt. 1805  
 John Stewart, of Belladrum 1822 [VP]  
 Patrick Stewart, Bombay 1829  
 Hugh Stuart 1814  
 Thomas Graham Stirling, of Airth and Strowan 1823  
 Morris Stirling, The Larches, Campbell, Near Birmingham 1847  
 John Stone, 53 Old Broad Street 1850 [VP]  
 Charles Sutherland, Mincing Lane 1814  
 James Sutherland, Bombay 1840  
 Lieut.-Gen. G., Marquis of Tweeddale, KT 1806

### T.

Henry Stuart Taylor 1814  
 James Tulloch, ERS, 16 Montague Place, Russell Square 1842  
 John Tulloh 1807  
 Edward Rose Tunno, Upper Brook Street 1822  
 William Turnbull 1833

### W.

P. R. D. Burrell, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby, 142 Piccadilly 1810 [VP]  
 John Harding Walker, MD, Aberdeen 1820  
 James Walker, Bombay 1846  
 George Wallace, 72 Gower Street 1832  
 Robert Warden 1818  
 Robert Watson 1817  
 Henry Scrymgeour Wedderburn, of Wedderburn, Heritable Royal Standard Bearer of  
 Scotland 1821  
 John Wedderburn, Accountant General, Bombay 1822  
 Colonel Peter Whannel, Madras Army 1834  
 Thomas Williamson, Oriental Club 1831  
 James Wright, Bombay 1840

### Y.

Archibald Young, MD, Bombay 1825  
 Murdo Young 1839

### **Honorary Members:**

Prince Koslousky 1815  
 General Lord Seaton, United Service Club 1839  
 Clementina Sarah Drummond Burrell, Lady Willoughby d'Eresby 1822  
 The Right Hon. Sir Henry Pottinger, Bart. 1845  
 Hon. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, of Seaforth 1817

Baron Kenesebeck 1847

Colonel Sir Allan Napier Mac Nab, Canada 1842

Lady Mac Nab, Canada 1842

Captain Sir John Ross, RN 1834

Sir John Macneil, GCB 1839

Colonel James Fitzgibbon, Military Section of Windsor Castle 1842

Major James Glencairn Burns, Son of Robert Burns, 4, Berkeley Street, Cheltenham 1845

Major Towers, United Service Club 1814

The Rev. Norman Macleod, DD, Glasgow 1841

Mrs. Macdonald Buchanan, of Buchanan 1822

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