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## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for October 24th, 2014

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Electric Scotland News

Well as you no doubt know by now we had a terrorist attack on the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa so that's been the big news story this week in Canada. It also got high coverage around the world and as one reporter from London said... we don't usually hear much if anything about Canada over here but this is getting headlines in the national newspapers and on TV. So perhaps out of tragedy something positive might come.

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I stumbled on an old book this week which relates the life and experience of a working man. I had a wee read at it and ended up reading the entire book. It's not often you come across a book such as this that actually describes life as it was experienced in these old days. I'm now busy ocr'ing it onto the site and will be bringing this to you in the next couple of weeks. It actually describes the clothes they wore, the food they ate, the dwellings they lived in and the work they did in great detail. This is a real gem of a book.

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Having completed the book on John Wilson of India I will be starting a book on "The Life of Andrew Murray of South Africa" in the coming week. Both of these books show how Scots made a huge contribution to other countries of the world.

Should you be interested in learning more about India and the role Scots played there then see our special page for India at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/india/>

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On reviewing this newsletter I have wondered if you'd like me to include one complete story in here each week? To illustrate what I mean by this I've included a story of The Highland Emigration of 1770 which is a 15 page article from The Scottish Historical Review and so a decent read.

Please let me know if this would be of interest and if it is I can easily find interesting stories to add.

### Electric Canadian

#### Canadian Tourism

I did further work on my research on Canadian Tourism and concluded that the tourism market is concentrating on promotional work through the travel trade. I thus also did some research on the travel trade and had to conclude that they were underselling Canada as a travel destination. I've added my new findings to this report and added a new video to explain my more recent research.

You can read my report and watch the videos at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/tourism.htm>

#### Maple Syrup and Sugar

One of Canada's largest exports and so I found 3 videos showing you how its made. Of course you need a Maple tree which not many of you are likely to have but if you purchase maple syrup then the other two will show you how to convert that to maple sugar.

There are about 16,000 maple-syrup producers in North America with over 80% in Canada. In 1995 total world production was 18,981 kl, of which Canada produced 14,890 kl. The province of Québec produced 13,540 kl, which represents over 90% of the total Canadian production. The rest of the Canadian production came from Ontario (5%), New Brunswick (4%) and Nova Scotia (1%). Canada's share of the world's maple production is increasing. In 1992 Canada produced 75% of the world's production. In 1995 Canada's share was 79% and in 2012 was 85%.

Maple syrup is a pure, natural sweetener, the only other liquid natural sweetener being honey. Maple syrup has an abundance of trace minerals that are essential to good nutrition: potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, manganese, iron, zinc, copper and tin, as well as calcium in concentrations 15 times higher than honey. It contains only one-tenth as much sodium as honey, an important consideration for those on a salt-restricted diet.

Maple syrup is graded according to colour, flavour and density; standards are prescribed by law. It must be in the range of 66-67% Brix (a hydrometric scale for sugar solutions) or 32-34% on the Baumé scale (for liquids heavier than water). Anything less or more cannot be graded and sold as pure maple syrup.

You can watch these videos at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/roughing/chapter10.htm>

A History of the County of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia  
By Rev. J. R. Campbell (1876)

Now up to Chapter XV of this book which takes you up to the War of 1812-14.

You can read this book at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/yarmouth/index.htm>

## The Flag in the Wind

This weeks issue was compiled by Jim Lynch who has been away for his annual two weeks holiday which was likely well deserved given the long running referendum campaign which must have been exhausting for him.

Now is the time to look afresh at where the Scots Independent and The Flag go from here and in my opinion it needs to stop promoting the SNP as the only option for Scotland. Time to look anew at all the issues that were not dealt with in the referendum campaign and tackle them head on. Scotland can be a very successful independent country but that means we need to stop being a mouth piece for the SNP, We need to examine all the issues in great detail and look at how we can do better next time.

Now is also the time for The Flag to change and allow comments to be added so people can weigh in with their opinions. Like one of my own concerns is with the SNP insistence that Scotland should be a member of the EU. Let's get to the facts and encourage people to put the case for and against. Then Oil and Gas was portrayed as big earners for Scotland but with the oil price now down to \$85 a barrel it demonstrated that these earnings are already much lower than the SNP claimed. At that kind of price does that encourage further development of the industry or is it holding it back?

And as most of us know Global governance is now far more powerful than country and regional government so what are we in Scotland doing to prepare the next generation to be our diplomats of the future? These and other questions are now ripe for exploration so we are better informed and prepared for the next referendum whenever it arrives. Note also that more powers for Scotland may mean we lose the Barnett formula but warnings are now coming out that if that happens we may have a 5 billion black hole in our finances. These are legitimate concerns and political spin doesn't work any longer as the referendum result showed.

You can read this issue at <http://www.scotsindependent.org> and there is a Synopsis this week.

## Electric Scotland

Enigma Machine  
Added puzzle 84.

An alternative to your crossword puzzle and created by a Scots Canadian, Doug Ross.

You can join with others in our community trying to complete these at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/forumdisplay.php/17-Thistle-amp-Whistle>

You can get to the puzzles at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/>

Songs of Scotland  
Added the final pages to the 4th Volume which now completes this publication you can read at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/music/cunningham/>

Henry Dryerre  
Added the final Worthy to complete this book which you can read at:  
<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/dryerre/>

Highland Rambles  
And Long Legends to Shorten the Way by Thomas Dick Lauder (1837).

Added the final two articles to Volume 1 and we'll be starting on Volume 2 next week.

You can read these articles at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/tlauder/index.htm>

The Life of John Wilson  
For Fifty Year Philanthropist and Scholar in the East by George Smith (1879).

Have now completed this book which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/johnwilson/>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree  
Got in the November 2014 Section B issue which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

White People, Indians and Highlanders  
Tribal peoples and colonial encounters in Scotland and America by Colin G. Calloway.

Robert Stewart emailed me to say this book is now available on the web and you can read this at:  
[http://english.faculty.ifmo.ru/materials/%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%BF%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D1%8B/White\\_people\\_indians\\_and\\_highlanders.pdf](http://english.faculty.ifmo.ru/materials/%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%BF%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D1%8B/White_people_indians_and_highlanders.pdf)

Scotland's Place Names  
Should you be researching Scottish Place Names the books on this page will be a great help to you. See  
[http://www.electricscotland.com/books/place\\_names.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/books/place_names.htm)

Everybody Sing

A new song from John Henderson which you can read at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerel552.htm>

George Minton Rathbone

His genealogy and a book of his poems. This was found by John Henderson and he did the genealogy research and sent it in with a copy of his book of poems.

You can read this at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/rathbone.htm>

The Scottish Historical Review

Here is one of the articles to read here...

The Highland Emigration of 1770

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What weight can be attached to such references is doubtful, for elsewhere we read in the Scots Magazine of September, 1772, that the persons emigrating from Sutherland between 1768 and 1772 took with them not less than £10,000 in specie. Now if it is borne in mind that the total number of emigrants from that area between these dates was only 500 or 600, and of these a very large percentage were women and children, it is obvious that many of the heads of households must have been persons of substance.

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

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

The impression thus given is confirmed by the mention of the amount of capital they took with them. As a typical example the 425 persons who sailed from Maryburgh in 1773 took £6000 with them in ready cash, while in a number of the Edinburgh Advertiser, dated January 17, 1792, it was stated that since 1772 £8,000 had been taken from the country by the emigrants from West Ross-shire and Inverness-shire alone.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The position of the tacksmen was peculiar. A definition is given of the term in Carlisle's Topographical Description of Scotland (pub. 1813), which runs as follows: 'One who holds a lease from another, a tenant of a higher class:—this term is usually used in contradistinction to Tenants in general, who are such as rent only a Portion of a Farm.'

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

Generally speaking the original holders of the tacks were the younger sons of the chiefs, who found that to grant farms on long leases and extremely moderate rents was the simplest if not the only possible method of providing for their large families. As might be expected, the social prestige of the holders was therefore great. 'The class of tacksmen occupy nearly the same rank in the Hebrides as belongs to that of men of landed property in other parts of Britain. They are called Gentlemen, and appear as such; and obtain a title from the farm which they hold, nearly in the same manner as gentlemen in other parts of the country obtain from their estates.'<sup>1</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

But there are other considerations that also influence the eighteenth century proprietor. The decay of the military side of the clan system left him viewing the tacksman as an expensive and altogether unnecessary luxury on a generally poor estate. For not only did he pay an inadequate rent, but he possessed several other drawbacks that struck most forcibly those landlords who had some ideas on estate improvement.

The tacksmen were bad farmers. Pennant, who is always most sympathetic towards them, admits candidly that they had not the habits of industry. Their establishments were frankly medieval, and as Pennant himself said, the number of labourers they maintained resembled a retinue of retainers rather than the number required for the economical management of a farm. Forty years later Macdonald, in the *Agricultural Report of the Hebrides* (pub. 1811), confirms this view. Macdonald is normally most moderate in his statements, but he is emphatic in the opinion that the tacksmen, despite their many virtues and accomplishments, had been largely instrumental in holding back the agricultural progress of the Highlands. Exceptions existed, but the average tacksman appeared to regard himself as superior to the drudgery of farm work, while his natural conservatism was a bar to all improvements. The first step towards any progress in the eyes of Macdonald was the resumption by the proprietor of direct control over his estates, and direct relations with his under tenants.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

cheapness of every necessary, and by means of smuggling every luxury, rolls in ease and affluence.'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Such were the causes and the manner of the emigration of the seventies, a movement which deprived the Highlands of a considerable number of its influential men and a still greater proportion of its available capital. The movement has been often misrepresented both by eighteenth century and by modern writers. As recently as 1914 we find an author in the December number of the Celtic Review treating the whole incident along traditional lines, the poverty and absolute helplessness of the emigrants being contrasted with the brutality and greed of the landowners.

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

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

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

Margaret I. Adam.

And Finally...

Some more stories from The Book of Scottish Anecdote...

#### A POOR BUT HAPPY OLD COUPLE

A simple but touching story is related of an aged couple who lived in Castle Street, Montrose, about fifty years ago. They were extremely poor, and dependent on parish relief; but they were happy in each other's society. Some jealous neighbours, furtively listening at their door, heard them occasionally saying,—"Here's to ye, my woman, Janet;" and the wife, responding, "An' here's to you, my ain gudeman." So they could not rest until they informed old Mr Mollison, the minister, that the bodies were given to drinking, and it was not proper to encourage such persons and allow more deserving people to want. The reverend gentleman expressed himself very much shocked with the intelligence, and enquiring what hour would be the most likely to catch them at their drinking and mutual health-pledging, he was told that he would be sure to hear them between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. Next day, accordingly, Mr Mollison called on his informers, who conducted him to the door of the aged couple; and after listening a short space, he heard the "Here's to ye, my woman, Janet," &c. He knocked, and Janet opening the door, he entered, and she placed a seat for him. He found them at tea, and seeing no signs of liquor, he at once frankly stated the cause of his visit. They explained that they were happy in being spared to each other, and as jovial over their tea in saying "Here's to 'ye," as any could be over their drink. Mr Mollison, on leaving the humble residence of this simple pair, called on their jealous neighbours, and opened their eyes to the true state of affairs, and next Sunday preached on the subject as an example, and as a warning against jealousy and envy.

#### FIRST BALLOON ASCENT IN SCOTLAND

On Wednesday, the 5th day of October 1785, Sig. Vincentius Lunardi, a Florentine, having ascended at Edinburgh, in an air balloon, at 3 o'clock afternoon, descend: "a mile to the eastward of Ceres, at 20 minutes past 4 p.m. This was the first aerial voyage made in Scotland; and the daring adventure, in performing it, passed over a hour 20 miles of sea, and about 12 of land."

#### A FALLEN ANGEL

Dr Pitcairne having entered a room where a number of young ladies were assembled, one of them offered him the half of her chair, as there was a scarcity of that article of furniture in the place. She was handsome; and he enclosed her waist with his left arm, to keep her from sliding off the armless chair. "What would you say," whispered the fair one, "if I were to fall on the floor?" "My clear, I would look upon you with compassion, and say, "There's a fallen angel," was his gallant reply.

#### SIR WALTER SCOTT ON BURNS

The most truthful and graphic account of the personal appearance of Robert Burns is, perhaps, that given by Sir Walter Scott, who, when about 17 years of age, once saw the poet in a bookseller's shop in Edinburgh. "His person was strong and robust; his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect, perhaps, from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr Nasmyth's picture; but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I would have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scottish school i.e., none of your modern agriculturists, who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the douce gude man who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, and glowed (I say, literally glowed) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I ne'er saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men in my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the least presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted, nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, where he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh, but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trivial. I remember, on this occasion I mention, I thought Burns' acquaintance with English poetry was rather limited; and also, that having twenty times the ability of Allan Ramsay and of Fergusson he talked of them with too much humility as his models; there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate."

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

Alastair