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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 19th, 2020

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

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

I was checking on the videos I put up from YouTube on our Electric Canadian site and was shocked to discover most of them were no longer available. I have thus had to put in some 3 solid hours of work to get them back. Most of them were still there but had been updated which is why I always say if a video doesn't play on the site then do copy the title and then do a search on YouTube to find if it is still available.

The videos can be found at: <https://electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/videos>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our [ScotNews](#) feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as world news stories that can affect Scotland and all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines. I might also add that in a number of newspapers you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

Brexit is finally happening in December as UK officially rejects transition extension
BREXIT will finally happen at the end of the year as the Government formally notified the European Union it will be leaving.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1295025/Brexit-news-UK-EU-transition-period-Michael-Gove-trade-deal-talks-latest-update>

St Valery: Pipers pay tribute on anniversary of forgotten Dunkirk

Pipers have paid tribute to the thousands of Scots who were killed or captured in the Battle of St Valery.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-53010741>

Inside the Scottish gin industry: What a decade of hard work and determination looks like

Scottish gin has seen a phenomenal boom over the past decade, but what's next for this ever-trending spirit? Julia Bryce finds out more...

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/lifestyle/food-drink/1355804/a-look-inside-the-scottish-gin-industry/>

Mackie's release new square sausage flavour crisps

Scotland's favourite breakfast item is finally getting its own crisp flavour.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/mackies-release-new-square-sausage-22168424>

A decade after the end of World War Two, Canada built a jet which pushed technology to its limits.
But its demise showed why smaller nations found it difficult to compete in the Jet Age.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200615-the-record-breaking-jet-which-still-haunts-a-country>

Coronavirus: Dexamethasone proves first life-saving drug

The low-dose steroid treatment dexamethasone is a major breakthrough in the fight against the deadly virus, UK experts say.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-53061281>

Coronavirus: SNP ignores how much UK has done to protect Scotland's economy

Finance Secretary Kate Forbes's call for more borrowing powers to deal with Covid crisis shows how the SNP is stuck in the past

Read more at:

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/coronavirus-snp-ignores-how-much-uk-has-done-protect-scotlands-economy-jackson-carlaw-msp-2884767>

Fall in alcohol consumption in Scotland stalls after minimum pricing

The latest report says there has been no further drop-off since year one of the regulations - while the number of deaths caused by alcohol continues to rise.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-53068778>

These trade talks are a seminal moment for Global Britain

Free trade is not always popular - but it is still emphatically the right thing to pursue

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/these-trade-talks-are-a-seminal-moment-for-global-britain>

Six months on from last year's general election, it's only the LibDems who bang on about Europe

Britain has left the European Union. Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings turned round a Conservative poll rating of barely 20 per cent, a hostile Supreme Court judgement over prorogation, Commons defeats, stalemate and resignations to deliver first a Commons majority of 80 and then Brexit itself less than six months after the Conservatives were reduced to only a bare four MEPs under Theresa May.

Read more at:

<https://www.conservativehome.com/thetorydiary/2020/06/six-months-on-from-last-years-general-election-its-only-the-libdems-who-bang-on-about-europe.html>

Electric Canadian

Canada Descriptive Atlas

Issued by direction of Hon. W. A. Gordon, Minister of Immigration and Colonization (pdf)

You can study this at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/canada.pdf>

A Woman in Canada

By Mrs. George Cran (1911) (pdf)

"If women are courageous and enthusiastic there is much to encourage them in Mrs. Cran's book."—Glasgow Herald.

"We seem to have waited a long, long time for this book . . . the patriotic Canadians will be as glad as we are to hear what a keen and kindly and absolutely honest observer thinks of it all. She has seen not only Canada, but also ' Canady/ not only the luxurious and well-ordered life of the larger cities, but also the laborious and discomfortable existence of the vast countryside which stretches to no horizon, out of sight of the high-shouldered elevators that are the Gods of the North-West. And what she sees she describes with merciless accuracy, and with the easy, lucid style that always has a real personality behind it. There is much talk to-day of Western Canada as a field for the labours of England's superfluous women—more especially the educated class—and her book will tell them the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."— Morning Post.

You can read this book at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/awomanincanada.pdf>

The New Canadian Folksong and Handicraft Festival

Winnipeg June 19-23, 1928

A Foreword from THE CANADIAN HANDICRAFTS' GUILD

Fine art must always be produced by the subtlest of all machines, which is the human hand. No machine yet contrived or hereafter contrivable, will ever equal the fine machinery of the human fingers."—John Ruskin.

Few countries can so readily and fully demonstrate this formula as Canada demonstrates it today, with her ever-increasing family of New Canadians from every craft-line of ancient Europe.

You can read this at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/TheNewCanadianinfolksongandhandicraft.pdf>

The Canadian Journey

Rivers of Memory, River of Dreams (1980) (pdf)

The Seagram Company Ltd.

1430 PEEL STREET, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA H3A 1S9

Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, a time of cataclysmic tension in our nation and the world, the late Samuel Bronfman on behalf of Seagram commissioned Stephen Leacock to write the reflective history, Canada, The Foundations of its Future.

In the introduction to that book, my father wrote: "Of all the natural resources of Canada, the greatest is its people." That premise is as valid now as it was then. Nonetheless, when we examine Canada today, we find a perplexing contrast. We are as blessed with freedom and material well-being as any nation on earth. But realistically, new — and often difficult — relationships have emerged in our social and political order. Their intensity has caused us all to reflect on two vital subjects: who are we and where are we going?

As a concerned corporate citizen, Seagram asked an outstanding group of journalists and photographers to address these questions in terms of our strengths, our weaknesses and our opportunities. Leading this team were, as editorial director, John M. Scott, former editor of Time Canada and now that magazine's Canadian correspondent, on leave of absence for this project; and Alan Grossman, a writer of wide journalistic experience here and abroad.

The quality of this work has prompted us to give it wide distribution in English and in French through a variety of Canadian magazines and by mail in both Canada and the United States. We hope that it will bring new insights to those who read and discuss it.

Our country is, after all, one of great accomplishment. For years Canada has been regarded throughout the world as a bright star in the galaxy of nations. Ours is a unique opportunity to reach together for greatness — and to achieve it. With compassionate hearts and open minds, let us dare to explore unrealized horizons as we pursue The Canadian Journey.

Charles R. Bronfman

March 1980.

You can read this at: https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/canadian_journey.htm

Muslims in Canada

Little Mosque on the Prairie

Historic site helps tell the story of Muslims in Canada, Written by Joel Trono-Doerksen.

Little Mosque on the Prairie is also a Canadian television sitcom created by Zarqa Nawaz and produced by WestWind Pictures, originally broadcast from 2007 to 2012 on CBC. Filmed in Toronto, Ontario and Indian Head, Saskatchewan, the series was showcased at the Dawn Breakers International Film Festival.

You can read this article at: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/muslims.htm> where you can also watch the first showing of the sitcom.

Electric Scotland

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Hi Everyone,

Are you still staying at home? We are. We go to town to do necessary things like getting 10% Protein sweet feed for Piper the Donkey. (Her full name is Piper, Bagpipes on the Hoof.) We also visit the grocery store for us and the drug store, drive-through

bank, and the USPS...me in mask and gloves and Tom in the car. I don't think he's been out of the car downtown since February. However, we are both still healthy, thank goodness.

Here is, BNFT for July 2020 (It was January day before yesterday!). As always, I hope you enjoy the wee publication. You'll find honors for The Learned Kindred of Currie, lots of movies made in Scotland for you to enjoy, the Scottish connections to Hillbilly's, Rednecks and Crackers and even a Scottish mountain climber who gets to the top of a Munro and dons his kilt and plays his bagpipes!

Bryan Mulcahy has another interesting and useful column for your genealogical interest. Bryan and I were corresponding the other day and we realized we have been friends since about 1988! Bryan sends his excellent columns to any group that wishes to use them in their own newsletter. They are all informative, useful, and interesting. You'll find all of his contact information at the end of his article.

There's lots more for you to read.

Please, as always, send me updates on your email if you have to change it. Also, if you're working on your genealogy during this more or less quiet time in the Scottish world, queries to help you through any genealogical brick walls. Of course, there is no charge for queries.

Bryan Mulcahy has another interesting and useful column for your genealogical interest. Bryan and I were corresponding the other day and we realized we have been friends since about 1988! Bryan sends his columns to any group who wishes to use them in their newsletter. They are all informative, useful and interesting. You'll find all of his contact information at the end of his article.

We'll have the Section A of BNFT for July just before the first of July, if the Creek don't rise. Please take care and be safe and healthy.

Aye,
beth

You can read this issue - July 2020 Section 2 at: <https://electricScotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

The Machine Gunners' Handbook

Vickers, Maxim, Lewis, and Colt Automatic Machine Guns Arranged by Lieut. J. Bostock, K.O. Yorkshire L.I. (Machine Gun Corps) Ninth Edition (pdf)

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/scotreg/theMachineGunnersHandbook.pdf>

West Highland Way

Added a video of a walk on the West Highland Way to the foot of our page about the West Highland Way and also added another video on the The Great Glen Way as it starts where the West Highland Way finishes and goes onto Inverness from Fort William.

You can watch these at: <https://electricScotland.com/travel/tours/whway/index.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - June 14th 2020 by the Rev. Nola Crewe.

You can watch her video at:

<http://www.electricScotland.org/showthread.php/5542-Thoughts-on-a-Sunday-Morning-June-14th>

The History of France

As told to Juliette by Jean Duché. Translated by R. H. Stevens (pdf)

Of a good author, as of a cook-general, the first question that is asked is: "Have you any references?" To have or not to have, that is the question I have.

I don't really pose as an historian. Indeed, I must confess that history, as it is recorded in our text-books, bores me. And so I have tried my best to do something different. Here I am telling you a story, and I am telling it in the present tense. But the most vital part of the present, surely, is the future with all its uncertainty. "What happens next, I wonder? Is Napoleon going to die in Saint Helena, or....

You can read this at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/france/The-History-Of-France.pdf>

Greek Secrets Revealed

Hidden Scottish History Uncovered. Greek inscriptions in Scotland, with a translation into English and some explanation of the

background, Book 1, Edinburgh by Ian McHaffie (2020) (pdf)

Preface

As far as I am aware, there is a greater concentration of Greek inscriptions in Edinburgh, the “Athens of the North”, than in any other place in Scotland, perhaps in Britain.

In a line from the Castle down the Royal Mile to Holyrood House there are six. Spread a little wider and we find nine more. Latin inscriptions are numerous, since Latin was the scholarly language in Europe up to at least the 1600s. Greek, however, was not widely known or used, though university students were expected to learn it.

I have set out to list, translate and explain the Greek inscriptions which can be seen in Scotland. This is the first time such a specific project has been done. Individual inscriptions are mentioned from time to time in books and are sometimes listed on the Internet, but often they are passed by unobserved, and, if noticed, often not understood nor explained. This book deals only with the inscriptions in Edinburgh.

I am certain to have missed some, so would be happy to hear of any Greek inscriptions which I have yet to see. I am also sure that there will be mistakes in this book despite the efforts of myself and others. Collating and assessing information carefully and transcribing documents and inscriptions accurately is, I find, very difficult. For any errors or omissions I apologise in advance, and would be pleased to receive corrections.

So that the information is immediately understandable, where the same Greek inscription occurs in a different place, I have repeated the information, and also given a cross-reference to where other examples of the same inscription occur.

If you wish to see the inscriptions, I have included the Ordnance Survey grid references to make them easier to locate.

I hope you enjoy dipping into this rather unusual book.

Ian McHaffie,
7 June 2020

You can read this book at: <https://electricScotland.com/history/GreekSecretsRevealedBook1.pdf>

Clan Fraser Newsletters

Added 5 of their older newsletters from December 2002 which you can read at:
<https://electricScotland.com/familytree/newsletters/Fraser/index.htm>

Story

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 plenty 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, Campbelltown, 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 £38,000 had been taken from the country by the emigrants from West Ross-shire and Inverness-shire alone.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The position of the tacksmen was peculiar. A definition is given of the term in Carlisle's Topographical Description of Scotland (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.

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

The relations of the tacksmen and the proprietors were naturally strongly coloured by the social and kinship ties which bound them together. All the evidence we have from Pennant, who describes the state of things before the transition, to Buchanan, who in his Travels in the Western Hebrides is 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 tacksmen 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 Buchanan's Travels. Buchanan 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 Buchanan's unqualified condemnation.

'The land is parcelled out in small portions by the tacksmen among the immediate cultivators of the soil, who pay their rent in kind and in personal services. Though the tacksmen for the most part enjoy their leases of whole districts on liberal terms, their exactions from the subtenants are in general most severe. They grant them their possessions only from year to year, and lest they should forget their dependent condition, they are every year at a certain term, with the most regular formality, ordered to quit their tenements and to go out of the bounds of the leasehold estate . . . there is not perhaps any part of the world where the good things of this life are more unequally distributed. While the scallag and the subtenant are wholly at the mercy of the tacksmen, the tacksmen from a large and advantageous farm, the cheapness of every necessary, and by means of smuggling every luxury, rolls in 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 tacksman 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 tacksman 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 tacksman'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 tacksman is thus stated, somewhat unsympathetically, in an article which appeared in the Edinburgh Advertiser in 1772

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

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

Such were the causes and the manner of the emigration of the seventies, a movement which deprived the Highlands of a considerable number of its influential men and a still greater proportion of its available capital. The movement has been often misrepresented both by eighteenth century and by modern writers. As recently as 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 tacksmen's capital was a means of oppression not of development, his leadership led generally in the wrong direction, while his insistence on lines of social demarcation could not have been surpassed by the proprietor himself. Rather than lose his social privileges he emigrated.

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

Margaret I. Adam.

END.

And that's it for this week and hope you all have a great weekend and mind and keep your distance, wash your hands and stay safe.

Alastair