



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILYTREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

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

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

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHATS NEW

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for July 10th, 2015

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

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

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

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

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

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

Electric Scotland News

Decided to do a video this week to give some background on what's in this newsletter. You can view this at:

<http://youtu.be/5jPWfB2Eyrw>

Early Cairngorm mountain people evidence found

People were active in the Cairngorm mountains thousands of years earlier than previously thought, according to archaeologists.

Excavations at sites deep in the Cairngorm glens around the Mar Lodge Estate in Aberdeenshire have produced radiocarbon dates showing humans were presents far back as 8100 BC.

Previous estimates of hunter-gatherer groups in the area were about 5000 BC. The earliest dates come from a site in Glen Dee.

Archaeologists working on the National Trust for Scotland's Mar Lodge Estate uncovered the evidence. It indicated some places were being revisited over many thousands of years.

Trust archaeologist Dr Shannon Fraser said: "It is incredible to think that what we have discovered at this one spot in a vast landscape may represent a small group of people stopping for only a night or two, repairing their hunting equipment and then moving on."

He said the glens which had been examined were "very chilly even with all our modern outdoor clothing - it is hard to imagine what it must have been like in the much harsher climate 8,000 years ago."

Aberdeenshire Council archaeologist Bruce Mann said: "Not so many years ago we thought we understood the glens of the Cairngorms as a landscape largely empty of people in prehistory." Now this work has turned such thinking on its head, and shows the importance of why we support these projects.

"In the future we'll be better informed about how we manage that land, while providing an amazing story for visitors to the area."

The National Trust for Scotland and archaeologists and environmental scientists from the University of Aberdeen, University of Stirling and University College Dublin have been working on the project.

Excavation director Dr Graeme Warren will give a public talk about the latest discoveries on 21 July at Mar Lodge, Braemar.

Commission raises stop-and-search concerns with United Nations

Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) chairman Prof Alan Miller said: "Stop-and-search has its place as a means of ensuring public safety.

"However, it should only be carried out where there is a clear legal basis for interfering with someone's basic right to privacy.

"We should all be free to go about our daily business unless the police have reasonable suspicion that we are doing something illegal.

"Police Scotland has repeatedly failed to take appropriate steps to address the concerns that the commission and others have raised.

"A review announced in February promised progress but, in reality, has not led to any tangible change."

He added: "Unlawful stop and search continues to take place on Scotland's streets. This must stop."

SHRC said it looked forward to a forthcoming report by the Stop and Search Advisory Group, established by the Scottish government, and would respond accordingly.

Read more about this at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-33379610>

Last Post: Ypres buglers' memorial milestone

Each evening at the Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium the Last Post is sounded in an act of remembrance for the soldiers who died in World War One. You can view a video and read the article at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33440968>

Tartan Day Parade 2016

I note they are now taking bookings for the Tartan Day Parade for 2016. Details can be found at:

<http://nyctartanweek.org/>

I confess to being somewhat ambivalent about this parade. I've yet to see a decent video of the event and you'd think they'd make an effort to do one on both the parade and the events surrounding it. I've also never seen a news item on it in the national newspapers online.

Electric Canadian

Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer for the last Fifty Years

Continuing to add more chapters to this book.

We are now up to Chapter XXIV and I confess that for some reason I keep forgetting to add chapters to this book on a daily basis so promise to do better in the days ahead.

In chapter XXI we read...

My sisters had come into the woods fresh from the lovely village of Epsom, in Surrey, and accustomed to all the comforts of English life.

Their consternation at the rudeness of the accommodations which we had considered rather luxurious than otherwise, dispelled all our illusions, and made us think seriously of moving nearer to Toronto. I was the first to feel the need of change, and as I had occasionally walked ninety miles to the city, to draw money for our road contracts, and the same distance back again, and had gained some friends there, it took me very little time to make up my mind. My brothers and sisters remained throughout the following winter, and then removed to a rented farm at Bradford.

Not that the bush has ever lost its charms for me. I still delight to escape thither, to roam at large, admiring the stately trees with their graceful outlines of varied foliage, seeking in their delicious shade for ferns and all kinds of wild plants, forgetting the turmoil and anxieties of the business world, and wishing I could leave it behind for ever and aye. In some such mood it was that I wrote--

"COME TO THE WOODS." [8]

Come to the woods--the dark old woods,
Where our life is blithe and free;
No thought of sorrow or strife intrudes
Beneath the wild woodland tree.

Our wigwam is raised with skill and care
In some quiet forest nook;
Our healthful fare is of venison rare,
Our draught from the crystal brook.

In summer we trap the beaver shy,
In winter we chase the deer,
And, summer or winter, our days pass by
In honest and hearty cheer.

And when at the last we fall asleep
On mother earth's ancient breast,
The forest-dirge deep shall o'er us sweep,
And lull us to peaceful rest.

[Footnote 8: These lines were set to music by the late J. P. Clarke, Mus. Bac. of Toronto University, in his "Songs of Canada."]

You can read this at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/pioneering/thompson/index.htm>

Robert Service

When I read the above article it reminded me about Robert Service, the poet, who was brought up in Scotland but became for many the Canadian poet. I have an article about him on Electric Scotland at

http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/robert_service.htm and here is a bit from that article...

Think of an Ayrshire poet named Robert who has a global following and whose fame has survived his death. Think of a poet whose fans hold a celebratory dinner each year to enjoy his life and work, and one name Burns springs to mind. However the Alloway born Rabbie died penniless in his mid 30s, while another Ayrshire poet was a multi millionaire living in the south of France when he passed away aged 84 years old. What is more, he wrote the biggest selling poem in history - yet in his home town, he is virtually unknown. His name was Robert W Service, and his life and work is finally getting the recognition it deserves later this year when the people of Kilwinning host a lavish dinner in his name.

While Scots around the globe celebrate with a Burns Supper at the end of January each year, in the wild west of Canada the people of Whitehorse gather for a dinner to honour a man they call the Bard of the Yukon. But he was no "cannuck" – for Robert W Service was born in Preston, Lancashire on January 16th 1874. His father, also called Robert, was from the town of Kilwinning where he has a bank clerk and had been posted south to cover the Preston bank when his son was born. For generations the Service family had lived in Kilwinning and when Robert senior moved north to work in Glasgow, he sent the future poet, and his brother John, to be raised by their grandparents in the Ayrshire town.

Robert began school in the town and clearly was born to be a poet because on the occasion of his 6th birthday he asked if he might say grace he came up with his first known work :

God bless the cakes and bless the jam;
Bless the cheese and the cold boiled ham:
Bless the scones Aunt Jeannie makes,
And saves us all from bellyaches. Amen

A few years later, Robert moved to Glasgow to be with his parents, and followed his father by taking a career in banking at the age of 15 (he joined the Commercial Bank of Scotland which today is the Royal Bank of Scotland). The work bored him and when a younger brother inspired him with the idea of becoming a ranch hand in Canada, his sense of adventure took him across the Atlantic in 1896.

However, it was not the romantic Cowboy lifestyle he wanted and Robert worked in tough labouring jobs for 18 months in the wilds of British Columbia. Soon his sense of adventure took him south to the warmth of California before he decided to try his old Banking skills once again and in 1902 he got a job with the Canadian Bank of Commerce in Vancouver, British Columbia. Although the great Goldrush was a thing of the past, the names of Dawson and Whitehorse stirred the blood of young Robert and he secured a posting to the latter in 1904 and to the former in 1908. When not dealing with bank matters he wandered the trails and explored the rugged countryside, finding poetry in its wilderness.

At social events, Robert was known to recite other poets work but after the Whitehorse Star had published a few of his own works, it's editor asked Service for something local. "Give us something about our own bit of earth" he said. "There's a rich pay streak waiting for someone to work.." Robert thought for a moment. "It was a Saturday night, and from the various bars I heard sounds of revelry" so the thought came into his mind ... A bunch of Boys were whooping it up ... and he was on his way. He rushed back to his bank desk to write his words down but startled a sleeping colleague who fired a shot at the intruder ! Had he not been such a poor shot, the Shooting of Dan McGrew might never have been written.

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malamute saloon;
The kid that handles the music-box was hitting a jag-time tune;
Back of the bar, in a solo game, sat Dangerous Dan McGrew,

And watching his luck was hi light-o'-love, the lady that's known as Lou.
When out of the night, which was fifty below, and into the din and the glare,
There stumbled a miner fresh from the creeks, dog-dirty, and loaded for bear.
He looked like a man with a foot in the grave, and scarcely the strength of a louse,
Yet he tilted a poke of dust on the bar, and he called for drinks for the house.
There was none could place the stranger's face, though we searched ourselves for a clue;
But we drank his health, and the last to drink was dangerous Dan McGrew.

This poem was to go on to earn Robert Service half a million pounds on its own!

We have a pdf book of his "Songs of a Sourdough" which can be downloaded at:
<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/songssourdough.pdf>

Enigma Machine

The whole collection can be found at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma>. We're currently working on puzzle 109.

Calgary Stampede

Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued the following statement on the opening of the 2015 Calgary Stampede, which is taking place from July 3 to 12, 2015:

"Today marks the opening of the Calgary Stampede, the Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth.

"An eagerly anticipated Albertan tradition, the Stampede embodies the great Canadian spirit, traditions and values that our nation was built upon.

"For more than a century, this annual internationally-recognized celebration has showcased Canada's remarkable pioneer spirit, heritage, culture and western hospitality.

"The Stampede is a premiere tourism event and one of the most recognizable symbols of Canada to the world, attracting over one million visitors every year with its acclaimed rodeos, concerts, stage shows, and competitions.

"As the festivities get underway today, I want to thank the City of Calgary, the organizers, the volunteers and all the performers for their hard work and preparations which will surely result in another memorable Stampede.

"Laureen and I look forward to once again joining Canadians in participating in this year's activities."

I might add that there are many videos of this event on YouTube.

Electric Scotland

Stories in the Scottish Dialect

This is a collection of stories we're adding over time from the pen of Alexander (Black) Harley. We've added a section for these at the foot of his page. I can only say that this collection is outstanding and in my view a "must read".

Added "The Last Journey" which you can read at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/harley.htm>

Lucy Bethia Colquhoun

Added Chapter VII. A Youthful Author and Chapter VIII. The Colquhoun Country. to this book which you can read at:
http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/sinclair_john.htm

The Weaver's Cottage

A book about this Weaver's Cottage in Kilbarchan which I've added to our Gazetteer page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/gazetteer/vol4page355.htm>

Scottish Independence and Scotland's Future

I thought I'd add the BBC video about the referendum entitled Scotland: Richer or Poorer. I thought watching this today would be worth a look to compare what was promised to what has happened. You can view this at:

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

Clan Maxwell

Worked on this family and have added a number of links to information on the Sept names. You can get to this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/m/maxwell.html>

Ralph Wardlaw D.D.

Found a book about his life and writings which I've added a link to on his famous Scots page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/wardlaw_ralph.htm

Robertson (Donnachaidh) Clan

Robertson, Small and Related Families", Hamilton, Livingston, McNaughton, McDonald, McDougall, Beveridge, Lourie and Steward by Archibald Robertson Small M.D. (1907) (pdf).

Came across this book and have added a link to it from our page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/webclans/ntor/roberts.html>

Bruce

Added three links to the Sept list for this clan. You can to these at:

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

History of Mid Calder

I added a link to this book at the foot of our History of West Calder page at:

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

Alexander Hamilton

Added a biography about him to an article on him by Gary Gianotti. The link to the book is at the foot of the article at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/articles/hamilton_alexander.htm and I read the entire book which I found most interesting.

Ravenscraig site memorial unveiled paying tribute to steelworkers

A 16ft sculpture of a steelworker has been unveiled on the former Ravenscraig site in North Lanarkshire. You can read an article about this at:

<http://news.stv.tv/west-central/1323129-the-steelman-ravenscraig-steelworks-memorial-by-andy-scott-unveiled/>

President James Buchanan

Added a biography of him to our Clan Buchanan page at:

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

The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird

Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow and Master of Balliol College, Oxford by Sir Henry Jobes and John Henry Muirhead (1921). You can read this at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/caird_edward.htm

THE STORY

DONALD MACLEOD'S "Gloomy Memories" originally appeared as a series of Letters in the Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle. These letters were afterwards published separately in a thick pamphlet which has long become so rare in this country that no money will procure it. After a search of more than twenty years, we were fortunate enough to pick up a copy of the enlarged Canadian edition in Nova Scotia, during a visit there, in 1879. The Letters originally published in this country, are given in the following pages in the form in which they first appeared, with the exception of a slight toning down in two or three instances.

I am providing the first 3 letters for the story this week and here they are...

LETTER I

I AM a native of Sutherlandshire, and remember when the inhabitants of that country lived comfortably and happily, when the mansions of proprietors and the abodes of factors, magistrates, and ministers, were the seats of honour, truth, and good example—when people of quality were indeed what they were styled, the friends and benefactors of all who lived upon their domains. But all this is changed. Alas, alas! I have lived to see calamity upon calamity overtake the Sutherlanders. For five successive years, on or about the term day, has scarcely anything been seen but removing the inhabitants in the most cruel and unfeeling manner, and burning the houses which they and their forefathers had occupied from time immemorial. The country was darkened by the smoke of the burnings, and the descendants of those who drew their swords at Bannockburn, Sheriffmuir, and Killcrankie—the children and nearest relations of those who sustained the honour of the British name in many a bloody field—the heroes of Egypt, Corunna, Toulouse, Salamanca, and Waterloo—were ruined, trampled upon, dispersed, and compelled to seek an asylum across the Atlantic; while those who remained from inability to emigrate, deprived of all the comforts of life, became paupers beggars—a disgrace to the nation whose freedom and honour many of them had maintained by their valour and cemented with their blood.

To these causes the destitution and misery that exists in Sutherlandshire are to be ascribed; misery as great, if not the greatest to be found in any part of the Highlands, and that not the fruit of indolence or improvidence, as some would allege, but the inevitable result of the avarice and tyranny of the landlords and factors for the last thirty or forty years; of treatment, I presume to say, without a parallel in the history of this nation. I know that a great deal has been done to mitigate the sufferings of the Highlanders some years back, both by Government aid and public subscriptions, but the unhappy county of Sutherland was excluded from the benefits derived from these sources, by means of false statements and public speeches, made by hired agents, or by those whose interest it was to conceal the misery and destitution in the country of which themselves were the authors. Thus the Sutherlandshire sufferers have been shut out from receiving the assistance afforded by Government or by private individuals; and owing to the thralldom and subjugation in which this once brave and happy people are to factors, magistrates, and ministers, they durst scarce whimper a complaint, much less say plainly, "Thus and thus have you done".

On the 20th of last April, a meeting of noblemen and gentlemen, connected with different districts of Scotland, was held in the British Hotel, Edinburgh, for the purpose of making inquiry into the misery and destitution prevailing in Scotland, and particularly in the Highlands, with a view to discover the causes and discuss means for meeting the prevailing evil. Gentlemen were appointed to make the necessary inquiry, and a committee named, with which these gentlemen were to communicate. At this meeting a Sutherlandshire proprietor made such representations regarding the inhabitants of that county, that, relying, I suppose, on his mere assertions, the proposed inquiry has never been carried into that district. Under these circumstances, I, who have been largely a sufferer, and a spectator of the sufferings of multitudes of my countrymen, would have felt myself deeply culpable if I kept silence, and did not take means to lay before the committee and the public the information of which I am possessed, to put the benevolent on their guard respecting the men who undertake to pervert, if they cannot stifle, the inquiry as to the causes and extent of distress in the shire of Sutherland. With a view to discharging this incumbent duty, I published a few remarks, signed "A Highlander," in the Edinburgh Weekly Journal of 29th May last, on the aforesaid proprietor's speech; to which he made a reply, accusing me of singular ignorance and misrepresentation, and endeavouring to exonerate himself. Another letter has since appeared in the same paper, signed, "A Sutherlandshire Tenant," denying my assertions and challenging me to prove them by stating facts. To meet this challenge, and to let these parties know that I am not so ignorant as they would represent; and also to afford information to the before-mentioned committee; it being impossible for those gentlemen to apply an adequate remedy till they know the real cause and nature of the disease, I addressed a second letter to the editor of the Weekly Journal; but, to my astonishment, it was refused insertion; through what influence I am not prepared to say. I have, in consequence, been subjected to much reflection and obloquy for deserting a cause which would be so much benefited by public discussion; and for failing to substantiate charges so publicly made. I have, therefore, now to request, that, through the medium of your valuable and impartial paper, the public may be made acquainted with the real state of the case; and I pledge myself not only to meet the two opponents mentioned, but to produce and substantiate such a series of appalling facts, as will sufficiently account for the distress prevailing in Sutherlandshire; and, I trust, have a tendency towards its mitigation.

LETTER II.

PREVIOUS to redeeming my pledge to bring before the Public a series of facts relating to the more recent oppressions and expatriation of the unfortunate inhabitants of Sutherlandshire, it is necessary to take a brief retrospective glance at the original causes.

Down from the feudal times, the inhabitants of the hills and straths of Sutherlandshire, in a state of transition from vassalage to tenancy, looked upon the farms they occupied from their ancestors as their own, though subject to the arrangements as to rent, duties and services imposed by the chief in possession, to whom, though his own title might be equivocal, they habitually looked up with a degree of clannish veneration. Every thing was done "to please the Laird". In this kind of patriarchal dominion on the one side, and obedience and confidence on the other, did the late tenantry and their progenitors experience much happiness, and a degree of congenial comfort and simple pastoral enjoyment. But the late war and its consequences interfered with this happy state of things, and hence a foundation was laid for all the suffering and depopulation which has followed. This has not been peculiar to Sutherlandshire the general plan of almost all the Highland proprietors of that period being to get rid of the original inhabitants, and turn the land into sheep farms, though from peculiar circumstances this plan was there carried into effect with more revolting and wholesale severity than in any of the surrounding counties.

The first attempt at a general Ocarina was partially made in Ross-shire, about the beginning of the present century; but from the resistance of the tenantry and other causes, it has never been carried into general operation. The same was more or less the case in other counties. Effects do not occur without cause, nor do men become tyrants and monsters of cruelty all at once. Self-interest, real or imaginary, first prompts; the moral boundary is overstepped, the oppressed offer either passive or active resistance, and, in the arrogance of power, the strong resort to such means as will effect their purpose, reckless of consequences, and enforcing what they call the rights of property, utterly neglect its duties. I do not pretend to represent the late Duchess or Duke of Sutherlandshire in particular, as destitute of the common attributes of humanity, however atrocious may have been the acts perpetrated in their name, or by their authority. They were generally absentees, and while they gave-in to the general clearing scheme, I have no doubt they wished it to be carried into effect with as little hardship as possible. But their Prompters and underlings pursued a more reckless course, and, intent only on their own selfish ends, deceived these high personages, representing the people as slothful and rebellious,

while, as they pretended, everything necessary was done for their accommodation.

I have mentioned above that the late war and its consequences laid the foundation of the evil complained of. Great Britain with her immense naval and military establishments, being in a great measure shut out from foreign supplies, and in a state of hostility or non-intercourse with all Europe and North America, almost all the necessaries of life had to be drawn from our own soil. Hence, its whole powers of production were required to supply the immense and daily increasing demand; and while the agricultural portions of the country were strained to yield an increase of grain, the more northern and mountainous districts were looked to for additional supplies of annual food. Hence, also, all the speculations to get rid of the human inhabitants of the Highlands, and replace them with cattle and sheep for the English market. At the conclusion of the war, these effects were about to cease with their cause, but the corn laws, and other food taxes then interfered, and the excluding of foreign animal food altogether, and grain till it was at a famine price, caused the increasing population to press against home produce, so as still to make it the interest of the Highland lairds to prefer cattle to human beings, and to encourage speculators with capital from England and the south of Scotland to take the lands over the heads of the original tenantry. Thus Highland wrongs were continued, and annually augmented, till the mass of guilt on the one hand, and of suffering on the other, became so rent as almost to exceed description or belief. Hence the difficulty of bringing it fully before the public, especially as those interested in suppressing inquiry are numerous, powerful, and unsparing in the use of every influence to stop the mouths of the sufferers. Almost all the new tenants in Sutherlandshire have been made justices of the peace, or otherwise armed with authority, and can thus, under colour of law, commit violence and oppression whenever they find it convenient—the poor people having no redress and scarce daring even to complain. The clergy also, whose duty it is to denounce the oppressors, and aid the oppressed, have all, the whole seventeen parish ministers in Sutherlandshire, with one exception, found their account in abetting the wrongdoers, exhorting the people to quiet submission, helping to stifle their cries, telling them that all their sufferings came from, the hand of God, and was a just punishment for their sins! In what manner these reverend gentlemen were benefited by the change, and bribed thus to desert the cause of the people, I shall explain as I proceed.

The whole county, with the exception of a comparatively small part of one parish, held by Mr. Dempster of Skibo, and similar portions on the outskirts of the county held by two or three other proprietors, is now in the hands of the Sutherland family, who, very rarely, perhaps only once in four or five years, visit their Highland estates. Hence the impunity afforded to the actors in the scenes of devastation and cruelty—the wholesale expulsion of the people, and lulling down and burning their habitations, which latter proceeding was peculiar to Sutherlandshire. In my subsequent communications I shall produce a selection of such facts and incidents, as can be supported by sufficient testimony, to many of which I was an eye-witness, or was otherwise cognizant of them. I have been, with my family, for many years, removed, and at a distance from those scenes, and have no personal malice to gratify, my only motive being a desire to vindicate my ill-used countrymen from the aspersions cast upon them, to draw public attention to their wrongs, and if possible, to bring about a fair inquiry, to be conducted by disinterested men, as to the real causes, of their long-protracted misery and destitution, in order that the public sympathies may be awakened in their behalf, and something effected for their relief. With these observations I now conclude, and in my next letter I will enter upon my narration of a few of such facts as can be fully authenticated by living testimony.

LETTER III

IN my last letter, I endeavoured to trace the causes that led to the general clearing and consequent distress in Sutherlandshire, which dates its commencement from the year 1807. Previous to that period, partial removals had taken place, on the estates of Lord Rely, Mr. Honeyman of Armidale, and others : but these removals were under ordinary and comparatively favourable circumstances. Those who were ejected from their farms, were accommodated with smaller portions of land, and those who chose to emigrate had means in their power to do so, by the sale of their cattle, which then fetched an extraordinary high price. But in the year above mentioned, the system commenced on the Duchess of Sutherland's property ; about go families were removed from the parishes of Farr and Larg. These people were, however, in some degree provided for, by giving them smaller lots of land, but many of these lots were at a distance of from io to r miles, so that the people had to remove their cattle and furniture thither, leaving the crops on the ground behind. Watching this crop from trespass of the cattle of the incoming tenants, and removing it in the autumn, was attended with great difficulty and loss. Besides, there was also much personal suffering, from their having to pull down their houses and carry away the timber of them, to erect houses on their new possessions, which houses they had to inhabit immediately on being, covered in, and in the meantime, to live and sleep in the open air, except a few, who might be fortunate enough to yet an unoccupied barn, or shed, from some of their charitable new-come neighbours.

The effects of these circumstances on the health of the aged and infirm, and on the women and children, may be readily conceived—some lost their lives, and others contracted diseases that stuck to them for life.

During the year 1809, in the parishes of Dornoch, Rogart, Loth, Clyne, and Golspie, an extensive removal took place; several hundred families were turned out, but under circumstances of greater severity than the preceding. Every means were resorted to, to discourage the people, and to persuade them to give up their holdings quietly, and quit the country; and to those who could not be induced to do so, scraps of moor, and bog lands, were offered in Dornoch moor, and Brora links, on which it was next to impossible to exist, in order that they may be scared into going entirely away. At this time, the estate was under the management of Mr. Young, a corn-dealer, as chief, and Mr. Patrick Sellar, a writer, as under-Factor, the latter of whom will make a conspicuous figure in my future communications. These gentlemen were both from Morayshire; and, in order to favour their own country people, and get rid of

the natives, the former were constantly employed in all the improvements and public works under their direction, while the latter were taken at inferior wages, and only when strangers could not be had.

Thus, a large portion of the people of these five parishes were, in the course of two or three years, almost entirely rooted out, and those few who took the miserable allotments above mentioned, and some of their descendants, continue to exist on them in great poverty. Among these were the widows and orphans of those heads of families who had been drowned in the same year, in going to attend a fair, when upwards of one hundred individuals lost their lives, while crossing the ferry between Sutherland and 'fain. These destitute creatures were obliged to accept of any spot which afforded them a residence, from inability to go elsewhere.

From this time till 1812 the process of ejection was carried on annually, in a greater or less degree, and during this period the estates of Gordonbush and Uppet were added, by purchase, to the ducal property, and in the subsequent years, till 1829, the whole of the county, with the small exceptions before mentioned, had passed into the hands of this great family.

In the year 1811 a new era of depopulation commenced summonses of removal were served on large portions of the inhabitants. The lands were divided into extensive lots, and advertised to be let for sheep farms.

Strangers were seen daily traversing the country, viewing these lots, previous to bidding for them. They appeared to be in great fear of rough treatment from the inhabitants whom they were about to supersede; but the event proved they had no cause; they were uniformly treated with civility, and even hospitality, thus affording no excuse for the measures of severity to which the factors and their adherents afterwards had recourse. However, the pretext desired was soon found in an apparently concerted plan. A person from the south, of the name of Reid, a manager on one of the sheep farms, raised an alarm that he had been pursued by some of the natives of Kildonan, and lout in bodily fear. The factors eagerly jumped at this trumped-up story; they immediately swore-in from sixty to one hundred retainers, and the new inhabitants, as special constables; trimmed and charged the cannon at Dunrobin Castle, which had reposed in silence since the last defeat of the unfortunate Stuarts. Messengers were then dispatched, warning the people to attend at the castle at a certain hour, under the pretence of making amicable arrangements. Accordingly, large numbers prepared to obey the summons, ignorant of their enemies' intentions, till, when about six miles from the castle, a large body of them got a hint of their danger from some one in the secret, on which they called a halt and held a consultation, when it was resolved to pass on to the Inn at Golspie, and there await the recontre with the factors. The latter were much disappointed at this derangement of their plans; but on their arrival with the sheriff, constables, and others, they told the people, to their astonishment, that a number of them were to be apprehended, and sent to Dornoch Jail, on suspicion of an attempt to take Mr. Reid's life. The people, with one voice, declared their innocence, and that they would not suffer any of their number to be imprisoned on such a pretence. Without further provocation, the sheriff proceeded to read the riot act, a thing quite new and unintelligible to the poor Sutherlanders so long accustomed to bear their wrongs patiently; however, they immediately dispersed and returned to their homes in peace. The factors, having now found the pretext desired, mounted their horses and galloped to the castle in pretended alarm, sought protection under the guns of their fortress, and sent an express to Fort George for a military force to suppress the rebellion in Sutherlandshire! The 21st Regiment of foot (Irish) was accordingly ordered to proceed by forced marches, night and day, a distance of fifty miles, with artillery, and cart-loads of ammunition. On their arrival, some of them were heard to declare they would now have revenge on the Sutherlanders for the carnage of their countrymen at Tara-hill and Pallynamuck; but they were disappointed, for they found no rebels to cope with; so that, after having made a few prisoners, who were all liberated on a precognition being taken, they were ordered away to their barracks. The people, meantime, dismayed and spirit-broken at the array of power brought against them, and seeing nothing but enemies on every side, even in those from whom they should have had comfort and succour, quietly submitted to their fate. The clergy, too, were continually preaching submission, declaring these proceedings were fore-ordained of God, and denouncing the vengeance of Heaven and eternal damnation on those who should presume to make the least resistance. No wonder the poor Highlanders quailed under such influences; and the result was, that large districts of the parishes before mentioned were dispossessed at the May term, 1812.

The Earl of Selkirk hearing of these proceedings, came personally into Sutherlandshire, and by fair promises of encouragement, and other allurements, induced a number of the distressed outcasts to enter into an arrangement with him, to emigrate to his estates on the Red River, North America. Accordingly, a whole shipful of them went thither; but on their arrival, after a tedious and disastrous passage, they found themselves deceived and deserted by his lordship, and left to their fate in an inclement wilderness, without protection against the savages, who plundered them on their arrival, and, finally massacred them all, with the exception of a few who escaped with their lives, and travelled across trackless wilds till they at last arrived in Canada.

You can read the other letters at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/gloomy.htm>

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

Alastair