

**Travels to terra incognita:
The Scottish Highlands and Hebrides in early modern
travellers' accounts
c. 1600 to 1800**

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Martin Rackwitz**

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Erstgutachter:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Riis

Zweitgutachter:

Prof. Dr. Allan I. Macinnes

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**‘Wenn jemand eine Reise thut,
So kann er was erzählen.’**

Matthias Claudius
(1740-1815)

**‘The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of
thinking how things may be, to see them as they are.’**

Samuel Johnson
(1709-1784)

Abstract

In the early modern period, Scotland and particularly the Highlands were among the least-known regions of Europe. Their image was overshadowed by myths and stereotypes that often dated back to the late Middle Ages. Chroniclers such as Hector Boece provided Scotland with a history that dated back to the times of ancient Egypt and Greece and created an image of it as a country where miracles actually took place. This thesis examines the stereotyping of Scotland and the Scots and its reflection in the late medieval and early modern travellers' accounts. It analyses the opening up of the country to foreign visitors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Special emphasis is put on the discovery of the Highlands and Hebrides. This region kept its distinctive Gaelic tradition and identity until far into the nineteenth century. The accounts of foreign visitors offer a unique insight into Highland life and culture and cover all aspects ranging from the social organisation of the people in clans and their different agricultural techniques to their distinctive customs and manners. In the course of the eighteenth century the Highlands underwent radical economic and social changes. This thesis analyses the restructuring of the Highland economy and its impact on Highland society. It also deals with the attempts of the various public and private bodies to halt the economic decline of the region and to prevent the people from emigrating in large numbers to North America. Special consideration is paid to the promotion of the fishing industry and the development of kelp production on the western seaboard. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers' accounts that are dealt with in this thesis are valuable sources on the social and economic history of the Highlands and Hebrides. They illustrate the discovery of this hitherto unknown region and reflect its painful integration into Great Britain. The appendix includes 120 short biographies of travellers and 115 maps showing their individual routes.

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Martin Rackwitz

Editorial note

Wherever possible I make use of printed editions of travellers' accounts. Manuscript accounts are used only where there is no printed edition available or the printed edition does not include the full text of the original manuscript. Not all of the accounts that are dealt with in this thesis were originally written in English, but for convenience I make use of English editions as far as possible. In a very limited number of cases, however, the English translation differs considerably from the original. In these cases the text of the original account is given in the notes. Wherever possible I make use of the first edition or an improved, enlarged or corrected second edition that was published in the author's lifetime. In case a later edition or reprint is used, the date of the original publication is given in square brackets after the entry in the bibliography. The dates given in the text with regard to travellers' observations and comments refer to the year or years of their tour or tours. They do not refer to the date of publication of the account, which was often several years after the tour. The date of publication is given in the first reference in the footnotes. In quotes and titles the author's spelling, italicisation, emphasis and capitalisation of words are strictly adhered to. Place names in the Highlands have undergone frequent changes of spelling over recent centuries. In order to obviate confusion all place names apart from those included in quotes are given the spellings found on modern Ordnance Survey maps. In quotations where necessary the modern spelling is inserted in square brackets. Parish names are given in accordance with the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*. Appendix no. 1 includes biographical entries for most travellers who receive three or more references in the text or notes. The [map] in the heading of the biographical entry denotes that a map showing the individual traveller's route is given in appendix no. 12 on the attached CD-ROM.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|--|
| <i>ADB</i> | <i>Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie</i> , 55 vols. (Leipzig, 1875-1910) |
| <i>APS</i> | <i>The Acts Of The Parliaments Of Scotland</i> , 11 vols. ([Edinburgh], 1814-1844) |
| BL | British Library, London |
| d. | penny/pence (of pre-decimal currency) |
| <i>DNB</i> | <i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> , 22 vols. (London, 1908-1909) |
| ECL | Edinburgh Central Library |
| EUL | Edinburgh University Library |
| fo./fos. | folio/folios |
| HMC | Historical Manuscripts Commission |
| MS./MSS. | manuscript/manuscripts |
| NAS | National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh |
| <i>NBG</i> | <i>Nouvelle Biographie Générale</i> , 46 vols. (Paris, 1855-1866) |
| NLS | National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh |
| NMS | National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh |
| <i>NSA</i> | <i>The New Statistical Account Of Scotland</i> , 15 vols. (Edinburgh, 1845) |
| <i>OSA</i> | <i>The Statistical Account Of Scotland</i> , 20 vols., D.J. Withrington and I.R. Grant general eds. (Wakefield, 1973-1983) |
| p./pp. | page/pages |
| PRO | Public Record Office, London |
| RCAHM | Royal Commission On The Ancient And Historical Monuments Of Scotland |
| s. | shilling(s) |
| <i>SHR</i> | <i>Scottish Historical Review</i> |
| SHS | Scottish History Society |
| <i>SND</i> | <i>Scottish National Dictionary</i> , 10 vols., W. Grant ed. (Edinburgh, [1931]-1976) |
| SSPCK | Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge |
| <i>TGSI</i> | <i>Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness</i> |

Note on coinage: If not stated otherwise, all values prior to 1707 are in £-Scots, thereafter in £-sterling. From 1603, the exchange rates between Scotland and England were standardised at 12:1 – thus, £12 Scots was equivalent to £1 sterling. The merk is two-thirds of a £: thus, 1 merk Scots amounted to 13s. 4d.; 100 merks amounted to £66 13s. 4d.

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Introduction

The Highlands are but little known even to the inhabitants of the low country of Scotland, for they have ever dreaded the difficulties and dangers of travelling among the mountains; and when some extraordinary occasion has obliged any one of them to such a progress, he has, generally speaking, made his testament before he set out, as though he were entering upon a long and dangerous sea voyage, wherein it was very doubtful if he should ever return.

But to the people of England, excepting some few, and those chiefly the soldiery, the Highlands are hardly known at all: for there has been less, that I know of, written upon the subject, than of either of the Indies; and even that little which has been said, conveys no idea of what a traveller almost continually sees and meets with in passing among the mountains; nor does it communicate any notion of the temper of the natives, while they remain in their own country.¹

When Edmund Burt, the author of these lines, was sent to the north of Scotland in the mid-1720s, he was virtually travelling to ‘terra incognita’. Since the earliest tales of travellers to Scotland, the country had been regarded as a land of myth and miracles. Medieval and early modern travellers gave accounts of their tours that made the rest of Europe believe in a country that was utterly strange and different. Virtually every account of Scotland, however miraculous, was accepted as true, and late medieval scholarship did little to correct that image. Hector Boece’s *Scotorum Historiae* (Paris, 1527) finally established Scotland’s reputation as a country where miracles came true.

Medieval geographers were no more precise in presenting a picture of the real Scotland. On the Continent, throughout the Middle Ages, it was often believed that Scotland was a separate island located to the north-east of England and considerably larger than its southern neighbour. It was not until the end of the sixteenth century that geographers gave a more accurate concept of Scotland. Although its shape was well known by then, many early eighteenth-century travellers still faced great difficulties once they passed the Highland line.

The accounts of travellers visiting Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflect the process of opening up Scotland to the rest of Europe. The image of Scotland abroad, and the perception of the Scots and their culture by foreigners, are aspects often neglected in ordinary histories. However, travellers’ accounts help to fill this gap and offer a unique insight into what was considered typically Scottish.

¹ E. Burt, *Letters From A Gentleman In The North Of Scotland To His Friend In London*, ed. by R. Jamieson (5th edn. London, 1822), vol. i, pp. 4-5. [hereafter: Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822]

By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries travelling had long been an established tradition in Europe.² For centuries it was considered as an essential part of a gentleman's education. Scions of aristocratic families had for centuries taken the Grand Tour of the Continent to finish their education at the famous universities in France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany and the Low Countries. However, Britain was, generally speaking, still a largely unknown country, as even Britons themselves preferred to tour the Continent instead of their own country. Britain had to wait until the eighteenth century before it attracted similar attention. To be more precise, it was England (and its capital London) that first attracted travellers' attention from the Continent due to its liberal form of government and its astonishing progress in trade and manufacture. In contrast, Scotland was regarded as remote and backward, and few continental travellers made the effort to visit it. Hardly any of them went on to the Highlands, which at that time was considered an extremely dangerous place. By the end of the eighteenth century this image had given way to 'Ossian' enthusiasm. Dozens of travellers toured Scotland every summer season, and particularly the Highlands, to feel the magic of the mountains and to experience the relics of a bygone culture.

The motives for undertaking the hardships of travelling to the Highlands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were many. Generally speaking, throughout the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, travellers shied away from the Highlands since the area was regarded as an impenetrable thieves' den, extremely dangerous to travellers. The road-building scheme of General Wade and his successor, William Caulfield, from the 1720s, and the military coercion that followed the Jacobite uprisings of 1715 and 1745, opened up the north of Scotland to outsiders. However, it was not until the publication of Macpherson's *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1760),

² For travel as a means of education and widening one's horizon see W. Griep and H. Jäger (eds.), *Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Heidelberg, 1986); I. Kuczynski, 'Gesellschaftlicher Auftrag und Eigenständigkeit des Individuums: Englische Reisende am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts', in *Sehen Und Beschreiben: Europäische Reisen im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. by W. Griep (Heide, 1991), pp. 44-59. For the importance of the traveller's account as a literary genre and its development in the eighteenth century in Germany and Great Britain see P.J. Brenner (ed.), *Der Reisebericht: Die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989); R. Omasreiter, *Travels Through The British Isles: Die Funktion des Reiseberichts im 18. Jahrhundert* (Heidelberg, 1982).

commonly known as the 'Ossian', that the Highlands suddenly became the focus of public attention all over Europe. The Romantic movement sparked off a huge interest in the ancient culture of Scottish Gaeldom and turned the Highlands, in less than two decades, into one of Europe's most popular travel destinations.

The accounts of two centuries of travellers to Scotland, and particularly to the Highlands and Hebrides, offer a unique perspective on the history and culture of this region. The discovery of this little-known area by British and continental travellers gives a fascinating impression of Highland life and the changes it underwent from the early modern period to industrial age. The accounts written by visitors illuminate the predominantly oral tradition of the Highlands and are a valuable contribution to our knowledge of old Highland life. Customs and habits that were considered obvious and not worth recording by the locals, often seemed to foreigners very strange and well worth their attention. The various nationalities of travellers and their individual motives for travelling the Highlands offer an insight into a vast spectrum of life there. There are hardly any topics, ranging from natural history, social and economic affairs, religious matters, customs and manners, the military or the appreciation of Highland landscape, that travellers did not write about or comment on. Whatever their motives for travelling to the Highlands, every single account offers a unique perspective and has to be analysed individually for its specific value as a historic source. Therefore, the appendix includes a short biography for any traveller who receives three or more references in the text or footnotes. The biographies provide all the necessary information about the travellers and their journeys, and, wherever possible, a map showing the individual traveller's route is attached.

In spite of the Union of Crowns in 1603 and the Union of Parliaments in 1707, English interest in the Highlands was negligible. The Jacobite uprisings of 1689, 1715 and 1745-46 dramatically changed that attitude and led to a growing awareness of the Highlands, although from a perspective that regarded the region primarily as a threat to the political and economic stability of Great Britain. When the social and economic difficulties of the region became apparent in the second half of the eighteenth century, various government bodies and organisations sent representatives to the north to report on the state of affairs and to propose schemes for an economic

and spiritual revival of the Highlands. Their reports show the harsh process of transformation undergone by the region during its integration into the British economy. A detailed account of the hardships of the rural population is given by them. The various schemes adopted to turn around the economic deprivation and depopulation of the Highlands display the different attitudes of the numerous public and private organisations established to tackle the crises of the Highlands.

The individual motives for travelling through the Highlands are also reflected in the different literary styles of these accounts. They vary from official reports, private letters and hastily written diaries that were never intended for publication, to elaborate travelogues. The rise of the traveller's account as a literary genre during the eighteenth century, and the popularity of the Highlands as a travel destination in the later decades of that period, led to an ever-growing number of accounts of tours, voyages and journeys to the Scottish Highlands being published.

However, most research into travellers' accounts of that period dealt with a few well-known travellers, such as Martin Martin (1690s), Daniel Defoe (early eighteenth century), Edmund Burt (mid-1720s), Thomas Pennant (1769, 1772) and, last but not least, the illustrious duo Samuel Johnson and James Boswell (1773).³ Only in fairly recent years have academics begun to look beyond the accounts of the 'usual suspects' and to draw from the rich fund of less well-known and unpublished tours to Scotland. Marie-Hélène Thevenot-Totems's *La Decouverte De L'Ecosse Du XVIIIe Siecle A Travers Les Recits Des Voyageurs Britanniques* (Paris, [1990]) is the first study that dealt with a greater number of printed as well as unpublished accounts of eighteenth-century Scotland, focusing on travellers from the British Isles.

However, a comprehensive analysis of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers' accounts relating to the Highlands is still absent. Moreover, such an analysis must start in the late Middle Ages as the image of the Highlander was

³ The dates in brackets refer to the years of their visits to Scotland. For earlier studies of English or continental visitors to Scotland see M.I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770 – 1830 Et Leurs Curiosites Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931); E. Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996; first published 1986); D. Cooper, *Road To The Isles: Travellers in the Hebrides 1770-1914* (Glasgow, 1990; first published 1979); H. Etzrodt, *Schottlandreisen im 18. Jahrhundert: Wie der Engländer die Hochlande sah* (Berlin, 1939); P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891); M. Lindsay, *The Discovery of Scotland* (London, 1979; first published 1964); T.C. Smout, 'Tours in the Scottish Highlands from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries', *Northern Scotland*, vol. v (Aberdeen, 1983), pp. 99-121. All of these studies focus on a few well-known published accounts.

overshadowed by centuries of propaganda and stereotypes. In order to distinguish the factual observations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers to Scotland from their preconceived notions or supposed knowledge, that is stereotypes, it is necessary to include the late medieval chronicles and early modern geographical descriptions in such an analysis. Since there were no reliable guidebooks to Scotland, seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century travellers still turned to reference books such as Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* (Paris, 1527) or Camden's *Britannia* (first published London, 1586), even if they had become hopelessly antiquated. Moreover, the chroniclers and early modern geographers were enthusiastic plagiarisers, thereby establishing and perpetuating a fund of stereotypes that was hard to eradicate from the minds of future generations. This analysis must also make a brief reference to the late medieval and early modern travellers to Scotland, before about 1600. Their accounts reflect these stereotypes, thus helping to expose them. The safest indication of stereotyping can, however, be found in the purely fictitious and satirical accounts. Their authors seldom visited Scotland, but culled their information from supposed common knowledge. Moreover, the authors of satirical pamphlets and diatribes about Scotland condensed into a nutshell the public's received opinion of that country. Last but not least, the stereotypes of Scotland varied from country to country, and it is, therefore, necessary to draw upon the accounts of travellers from as many different countries as possible. A Frenchman's opinion of Scotland during the Auld Alliance would hardly have been shared by an English visitor, nor would they have agreed on the notion of the Highlander during the period of the Jacobite rebellions.

It is also necessary to examine the development of the infrastructure and the beginning of tourism in the Highlands. Until the rise of the Romantic movement in the 1760s, the Highlands was a most 'exotic' travel destination, largely unknown to outsiders. The infrastructure required by travellers, such as roads, inns and stables, lagged considerably behind that of the established routes of travel on the Continent. Tours of the Highlands often resembled minor expeditions, and the hazards and dangers involved did, of course, influence the travellers in their perception and opinion of the country and its people.

Once stereotypes have been identified and laid aside, it is possible to use the accounts of travellers as a source on Highland life and Highland culture. Because of

its isolation, the Highlands became the last major region of the British Isles to retain its Celtic/Gaelic identity. In the isolated parts this distinctive identity survived until well into the twentieth century.⁴ Highland life was based on an oral tradition that kept comparatively few written records. Therefore, the observations of foreign visitors are a particularly rich and interesting source on everyday life in the Highlands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Travellers experienced a social structure and an agrarian economy that differed so much from what they were used to at home that they prepared detailed accounts of what they perceived to be a curious and 'exotic' world. These accounts give a detailed insight into the various agricultural techniques, livestock breeding and fishing. Moreover, their observations demonstrate the economic changes that affected the Highlands in the eighteenth century and finally led to the collapse of the old socio-economic order. It is, therefore, necessary to look at the development of clanship in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the changes in the Highland economy and their impact on Highland society and Highland life.

The Highland tourist boom in the second half of the eighteenth century coincided with the collapse of the old social and economic order. Many travellers observed shocking scenes of poverty, evictions and emigration and made detailed proposals to counter this decline. Their schemes to revive the Highland economy and to halt the impoverishment of huge parts of the population have to be analysed in the context of contemporary government policy. The extension of the fisheries on the western seaboard, for example, was largely shaped by travellers such as the Scottish philanthropist John Knox.

Finally, it is necessary to examine the customs and manners of the Highlanders. In ordinary histories these aspects of Highland life are often marginalised. Travellers' accounts, however, are a particularly rich source with respect to local manners. These customs and manners were an important mark of distinction and, therefore, greatly contributed to the cultural identity of a people. For seventeenth- and eighteenth-century foreign visitors to Scotland, the cultural differences between

⁴ The dissolution of clanship from the top had already begun in the seventeenth century, but its demise, generally speaking, had not yet changed the common clansmen's lives to such an extent that they lost their distinctive Gaelic cultural identity and sense of self-belonging. See chapter 5.

the English, the Scots and the Highlanders were far more obvious and striking than they are for tourists in times of globalisation and increasing cultural assimilation.

This study is based on the analysis of more than 400 accounts of travellers to Scotland from Great Britain, Germany, France and Scandinavia, covering the period from the late Middle Ages until about 1800. As well as the analysis of approximately 300 printed accounts, this study includes more than 100 lesser-known accounts that are still in manuscript in the British Library, the National Archives of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland and numerous local archives from all over England and Scotland. The analysis focuses on the Highlands and Hebrides and thus reflects, in a unique way, the opening up and the discovery of this hitherto little-known region. It also shows the great importance of travellers' accounts as a rich, but much-neglected source on traditional Highland life and how it changed throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The appendix including 120 short biographies of travellers and 115 maps showing their individual routes makes this study an important reference work on travellers to Scotland, and particularly to the Highlands.

1. The image of Scotland in the late Middle Ages and early modern age

Before turning to medieval travellers and their accounts of Scotland, it is necessary to examine the image of Scotland in the late Middle Ages and early modern age. This must include a brief examination of the reference material about Scotland available at that time. It has to be asked, what was known about Scotland abroad, and how did future visitors gain information about the country and its inhabitants. It soon becomes obvious that reliable reference material, such as maps, geographical descriptions or histories of the country, were rather scarce until the sixteenth century. As for most countries lying at the fringes of the known world, myth tended to fill the gap created by a lack of accurate and reliable information. This applied to Scotland even more than to other countries on the outskirts of Europe.

Scotland's position at the periphery of the ancient and medieval world resulted in a considerable lack of knowledge about the country in general, and the Highlands and Hebrides in particular. In contrast to England, the Romans had been unable to hold their acquisitions north of Hadrian's Wall for very long. Whereas Roman geographers and historians could give a more or less accurate concept of the shape of England and a description and history of its inhabitants, Scotland proved to be a far more difficult task. In spite of repeated excursions into the north of Scotland and a circumnavigation, the Romans had no clear concept of what was beyond the mountains. Roman historians considered the people of Scotland to be very different from the rest of the subdued peoples and could find little common ground with them. The use of the term 'Picti' as 'painted people' from the third century AD onward clearly shows the extent to which these people were considered different. The gradual retreat of the Romans from Scotland during the third and fourth centuries AD ushered in an obscure period of Scottish history.

Although the Roman presence in Scotland ended, the image of Scotland and its people established by them survived into the Middle Ages largely unaltered. Until the seventeenth century, Greek and Roman writers were held in great repute, and their works on the geography and nature of foreign countries were highly esteemed for their scientific value. On the Continent those works were often the sole reference material available on Scotland and by no means were considered antiquated.

In the sixteenth century the horizon of the known world was expanded dramatically when naval expeditions led to the discovery of new continents and foreign cultures. A growing demand developed for maps, geographies and cosmographies. However, geographers were still heavily indebted to their Roman predecessors and drew much information on European countries and the history of their peoples from their writings. At a time when geography and ethnography were not yet considered to be different sciences, and most geographers, publishers and printers had never visited the countries described, the Roman writers offered an attractive fund of knowledge on foreign countries and the history of their peoples.

1.1. The mapping of Scotland in the late Middle Ages and early modern age

Today, travellers are likely to use maps as a major source of information about a foreign country. Maps can provide information about the location of a country, its size, its physical nature and its cities and roads. During the Middle Ages and early modern age it was far more difficult to obtain such information about foreign countries. Invariably, this information was scarce, antiquated and unreliable. Consequently, foreign countries inspired the popular imagination and were associated with myth and miracles. Scotland lay at the periphery of the known world, and information was even more difficult to obtain. Early historians such as Major, Boece, Leslie and Buchanan all began their histories of Scotland with a general description. They had to provide detailed descriptions of the important features of the country as, until the end of the sixteenth century, there were no reliable maps of Scotland to guide their readers.

A brief examination of the maps of Britain and Scotland available in the late Middle Ages and early modern age shows the extent to which historians and geographers relied on the work of their Greek and Roman predecessors. The earliest map of Scotland is to be found in a map of the British Isles in the *Geographia* of the Greek astronomer, mathematician and geographer Ptolemy (c. 90 AD to 150 AD).¹ Contemporary copies of Ptolemy's *Geographia* are not known to have survived. The

¹ For a detailed study of the history of maps of Scotland see D.G. Moir, *The Early Maps Of Scotland To 1850*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1973-1983). [hereafter: Moir, *Early Maps*]

oldest surviving copies are of Greek origin of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Copies brought to Italy in the early fifteenth century were translated into Latin and first printed without maps at Vicenza in 1475. The Bologna edition of 1477 included 26 maps. The many late fifteenth-century editions all contained 27 maps. As Ptolemy had never visited Britain, he had to rely on secondary sources for information. According to the number and distribution of place names, which were given in detail only for the south-west and the east coast of Scotland, it is likely that most of the information and place names were acquired during the Roman campaigns in Scotland from 80 to 83 AD. He was also able to utilise Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*, written at the end of the first century AD. Itineraries of travellers and works of other topographical writers also contributed to his *Geographia*.

Ptolemy placed Scotland to the north of England, but stretching in an eastward direction, with the west coast facing north. The likely reasons for Ptolemy's erroneous location of Scotland have been widely discussed without reaching a proper conclusion. Nevertheless, Ptolemy's description dominated concepts of Scotland until the late Middle Ages.²

Other surviving medieval manuscript maps of Britain reveal common features with regard to Scotland. Whereas the mapping of England made considerable progress, this was not true of Scotland, which was increasingly portrayed as a mere appendix to England and shown in far less detail than its southern neighbour. The map of Matthew Paris, a monk of St Albans, probably prepared in the mid-thirteenth century from reports by travelling monks in the retinue of Norman landowners in Scotland, described England in some detail. Far less detail was given on Scotland, and the country north of the firths of Forth and Clyde bore hardly any similarity to reality. His map clearly highlighted the town of Stirling and its strategically important bridge as the dividing line between the known south and the more or less unknown north of the country.

The 'Gough Map', an anonymous manuscript map, showed similar features relating to Scotland. Its supposed date varies from late thirteenth century to about

² Geographers knew from the early sixteenth century about Ptolemy's error. However, atlases appeared till the end of the century giving Scotland's position according to him. See P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891), p. xxvi. [hereafter: Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*]

1360. According to D.G. Moir, the map may have been used as an official map for Edward I. It described England and Wales in some detail, including rivers, roads and place names, whereas ‘Scotland, with exaggerated length and poor detail, has the shape of a thumb projecting northward from England’.³ A considerable number of place names was given for southern and central Scotland and for the east coast up to Aberdeen, the areas of Scotland known to the English in respect of Edward’s military campaigns. For the areas out of reach of the English army, the lack of information was obvious. North of Inverness the author could only refer to shire names, and Wick was the only town included. The west of Scotland, north of the Clyde, was virtually ‘terra incognita’. Here the author placed deer and wolves in his map, showing that there was no further information available.

Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century maps of Britain show that the cartography of England made some progress, whereas large parts of Scotland remained unknown. The publication of Ptolemy’s maps in 1477 and the numerous subsequent editions made maps of Britain, though very unreliable, widely available on the Continent.⁴

In the sixteenth century, cartography all over western Europe made enormous progress, with engraved and printed maps increasingly replacing manuscript maps. Furthermore, Scotland was no longer shown as a mere appendix to England as separate maps of Scotland were engraved for the first time in Italy about 1566. The circulation of maps of Scotland was given a major boost by the publication of Abraham Ortelius’s *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* in 1573 and Gerhard Mercator’s *Atlas* in 1595 when both collections included separate maps of Scotland.⁵

Ortelius’s and Mercator’s maps reflected a huge progress in cartography by projecting Scotland on a grid relating to degrees of longitude and latitude. The

³ Moir, *Early Maps*, vol. i, p. 5.

⁴ Don Pedro de Ayala’s account of Scotland in 1498 shows the lack of knowledge about Scotland’s geographical position at the end of the fifteenth century. He wrote: ‘She borders on England by land, and by sea on Brittany, France, Flanders, Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Ireland. She is surrounded by these countries. ... Towards the west there is no land between Scotland and Spain. Scotland is nearer to Spain than London, and the voyage is not dangerous.’ G.A. Bergenroth (ed.), *Calendar Of Letters, Despatches, And State Papers, Relating To The Negotiations Between England And Spain*, vol. i (London, 1862), pp. 174-175. [hereafter: *Calendar State Papers (Spain)*] Don Pedro de Ayala was the Spanish ambassador at the court of James IV in 1496-97.

⁵ Ortelius’s map of Scotland, published in 1573, was based on a map of the British Isles engraved by Mercator in 1564. Swedish Bishop Olaus Magnus’s *Carta Marina*, a nine-sheet map of northern Europe published in 1539 in Venice, showed the regions from Greenland in the west to the White Sea in the east. The map delineating the east coast of Scotland relates to its putative Gothic associations.

coastline was fairly accurately drawn, and the interior of Scotland was also shown in far more detail. The number of accurately located place names multiplied. However, Ortelius's outline of the Scottish west coast, north of the Clyde, was distorted and lacked the accuracy shown in the mapping of the east coast. Mercator's map of 1595 shows a vast improvement in the accuracy of the west coast and suggests that he must have had access to new maps since engraving his map of the British Isles in 1564. Mercator's improved map of 1595 became the basis for all maps of Scotland over the next 60 years until it was replaced in 1654 by a new map by Robert Gordon.⁶

Robert Gordon's map showed more detail of the interior of Scotland, but it was less accurate in respect of the coastline. His outline of the north coast of Scotland and the shape of Lewis fell short of the standard of Mercator's 1595 map. However, most maps of Scotland published until the early eighteenth century were based on Robert Gordon's 1654 map.

At the end of the sixteenth century, maps of Scotland in general were widely available, but travellers still faced huge difficulties as there were no maps of the separate shires. In addition, the scale of the Mercator map was not large enough for use as a travelling map. All this changed when Timothy Pont traversed all Scotland up to the Orkney Islands and the Hebrides in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in preparation for a series of large-scale maps describing in detail all the shires of Scotland. After Pont's death, his manuscript maps were revised for printing by Robert Gordon of Straloch from about 1636 to 1648 and finally passed on to Joannis Blaeu in Amsterdam, the leading publisher of maps and atlases at that time. In 1654 Joannis Blaeu published volume v of his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, sive Atlas Novus*, containing maps of Scotland and Ireland. Of the 46 maps of the Scottish counties or regions, 36 were drawn by Timothy Pont. The Pont maps were remarkably accurate and immensely rich in detail. However, the coverage of Scotland in the Blaeu/Pont *Atlas* was very uneven, with central and northern

⁶ John Speed's 'The Kingdome of Scotland', in *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (London, 1611), was one of the most important maps of Scotland based on Mercator's map of 1595. Richard Blome's 'A mapp of the Kingdome of Scotland', in *Britannia: Or, A Geographical Description Of The Kingdoms Of England, Scotland, and Ireland ...* (London, 1673), was one of the last maps based on the 1595 Mercator outline. The scale of Speed's map (19 Scottish miles to 1 inch) and Blome's map (14 Scottish miles to 1 inch) made them unsuitable as travelling maps. Gordon's map was included in J. Blaeu (ed.), *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, sive Atlas Novus*, vol. v (Amsterdam, 1654).

Scotland neglected in comparison with southern Scotland and Fife. It is very likely that Blaeu's haste to get volume v of his *Atlas* printed led Gordon to compromise on Pont's manuscript maps of central and northern Scotland. Gordon finally covered these areas in two small-scale maps titled 'Braid-Allaban, Atholia, Marria Superior, Badenocha, Strath-Spea, Lochabria, ...', covering west-central Scotland, and 'Extima Scotiae Septentrionalis ora ...', covering northern Scotland. Whereas the Hebrides and the Orkney Islands were covered by nine large-scale maps, the central and northern Highlands were covered only by two small-scale maps and thus remained less known than the rest of the country. The Pont maps made Scotland one of the best-charted parts of the world. However, the Blaeu/Pont *Atlas* was unsuitable for a travelling map, and travellers made scarce use of it.⁷

In spite of the availability of these more accurate county maps, travellers still faced great difficulties in progressing through the Highlands. As there were no guidebooks to the Highlands, and roads through the mountains were non-existent, travellers had only faint ideas of what they could expect. In the early eighteenth century, Daniel Defoe highlighted these difficulties when he described the area north and west of Inverness:

Our Geographers seem to be almost as much at a loss in the Description of this North Part of *Scotland*, as the *Romans* were to conquer it; and they are oblig'd to fill it up with Hills and Mountains, as they do the inner Parts of *Africa*, with Lyons and Elephants, for want of knowing what else to Place there.⁸

Travellers in the Hebrides faced similar difficulties. A remarkably accurate map of the coastline of the Western Isles has been available since Nicolas de Nicolay's map of Scotland, published in Paris in 1583. However, this was a marine chart rather than a map. It included a detailed outline of the coastline with the capes,

⁷ For Pont's importance in the mapping of Scotland see also I.C. Cunningham (ed.), *The Nation Survey'd* (East Linton, 2001).

⁸ [D. Defoe], *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, vol. iii (London, 1727), p. 200. [hereafter: Defoe, *Tour*] It is doubtful whether Defoe had been to the north-western Highlands himself. This volume included a scale reduction of the northern part of Herman Moll's 1717 map of Great Britain. The map showed Scotland, including a few main roads and the road distances, at a scale of circa 29 miles to 1 inch. Defoe's *Tour* replaced Camden's *Britannia* as the leading travel guide to Scotland until the early 1770s. Defoe's *Tour* was a carefully crafted set of journeys intended for publication and sale. Revised editions were printed in 1732, 1742, 1753, 1762, 1769 and 1778 (all London). For a discussion of Defoe's arrangement of his *Tour* and his literary skill see the chapter 'The Guidebook As Epic: Reportage and Art in Defoe's *Tour*', in P. Rogers, *Eighteenth Century Encounters: Studies in Literature and Society in the Age of Walpole* (Brighton, 1985), pp. 115-150.

firths and ports named, but it did not include any geographical features of the interior of the mainland or the islands apart from the names of the regions. In 1546 Nicolay had acquired the manuscript from which the printed map was later prepared. Because of the map's detailed and accurate outline of the coastline, it has been suggested that it was the result of several voyages and surveys of the coast – maybe in preparation for James V's voyage to Orkney and the Hebrides in 1540. Nicolay referred in the dedications of this map to Alexander Lyndsay, a Scottish pilot and hydrographer. There are no records connecting Alexander Lyndsay to James V's voyage to the Hebrides in 1540, but this name is to be found among the crew list of James IV's flagship, the *Great Michael*, in 1513. It may have been this man, who had learnt his business on the *Great Michael*, who then chartered the coastline of Scotland and prepared the manuscript map for James V, printed by Nicolay nearly half a century later.⁹ This map was so accurate that it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that it was replaced by Murdoch Mackenzie's sea charts of Orkney and Lewis, the first sea charts of British waters based on triangulation. The ambitious plans of later cartographers such as John Adair to map all the shires of Scotland, including the Western Isles, were troubled by financial difficulties and delays. They produced hardly any new charts suitable for mariners. For most of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the mapping of the Hebrides made hardly any progress, and seamen still depended on the knowledge of the local pilots to guide their ships through the treacherous waters of the Western Isles. Mackenzie's charts were a major improvement in the mapping of Orkney and Lewis, but their accuracy and value for mariners was doubted as late as the mid-1780s.¹⁰

⁹ For details on Nicolay's map and Alexander Lyndsay see Moir, *Early Maps*, vol. i, pp. 19-23, and vol. ii, p. 3. Nicolas de Nicolay became seigneur (lord of the manor) of Arfeville in Bourbonnais and so was known also as Nicolay d'Arfeville. Nicolay's map was of an outstanding accuracy. Its outline of the Scottish coast was more accurate than the Mercator map of 1595, the Gordon/Blaeu map of 1654 and Herman Moll's map of 1714. John Adair used Nicolay's map (although it was by then more than 100 years old) for his *Description of the Sea-Coast and Islands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1703). Although Adair travelled round all the Scottish shires from the 1680s to the 1710s, the outcome of his survey was meagre, and maps of only a few mainland shires were ever printed. For mariners, Nicolay was still referred to as the most accurate map of the Scottish coastline and its islands until the 1730s.

¹⁰ For the controversy on the accuracy of the Mackenzie charts between Dr James Anderson and Murdoch Mackenzie see D. Webster, 'A Cartographic Controversy: In Defence Of Murdoch Mackenzie', in F. MacLeod (ed.), *Togail Tir: Marking Time: The Map Of The Western Isles* (Stornoway, 1989), pp. 33-42. [hereafter: MacLeod (ed.), *Marking Time*]

The progress in cartography and knowledge about Scotland was reflected in the increasing number of geographical descriptions of Britain and Scotland being published. Early modern historical and geographical descriptions tried to give an overall picture of a country, ranging from its geography to the customs, manners and history of its people. From the sixteenth until the eighteenth century such descriptions were an important source of information about foreign countries.¹¹ Their importance was reflected by the extent to which travellers borrowed from and referred to these works. What kind of information did these descriptions provide about Scotland? What was the image of Scotland presented?

1.2. The image of Scotland in the historical and geographical descriptions from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century

A study of the historical and geographical descriptions of Britain and Scotland from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century shows how Scotland as a country became known to the outside world and in which way these works influenced the image of Scotland abroad. A brief examination of the reference works about Scotland that were available in Britain and Germany until the eighteenth century will explain how a stereotyped image was established and endured through the centuries.¹² This study

¹¹ Wilhelm Serlin, the publisher of Rutgerus Hermannides's *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien/ als Engellands/ Schottlands und Irrlands* (Frankfurt am Main, 1666) [hereafter: Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*], informed his readers in the dedication that he would like to enable them to take part in conversation about Great Britain as if they had visited the country themselves. The description and chronicle were based on the best accounts of persons who had travelled to and spent some time in Great Britain. He also recommended it to politicians and would-be travellers who for lack of finance were unable to visit Great Britain themselves. The section about Scotland was first published in R. Hermannides, *Britannia Magna sive Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae & adjacentium Insularum Geographico-Historica Descriptio* (Amsterdam, 1661), pp. 409-573. [hereafter: Hermannides, *Britannia Magna*]

¹² The earliest books about Scotland and its history were published in Paris during the 1520s. They were written in Latin, and as this was the lingua franca at that time, these books could be read all over Europe. Geographies were published all over Europe, and this study includes works from Scotland, England, France, the Low Countries and Germany. The comparison shows that the stereotyped images and prejudices about Scotland were not confined to certain states as authors and editors widely borrowed from and translated each other's works. In the course of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, in Germany Latin increasingly gave way to French as the language spoken by educated people. English was not spoken among educated people until the 1780s. A market for English books, therefore, hardly existed until the nineteenth century. This explains the considerable lack of English geographies in Germany. Germans preferred, apart from their own editions, either the Latin editions or French publications to obtain information about Britain. The various histories and geographies analysed in this chapter give an impression of the image of Scotland on the Continent. It should be remembered that access to these works was limited to a very small class of people. Only educated and

focuses on the purported origin of the Scottish people, their supposed ancient and modern customs, and the image of Scotland as a country where miracles were commonplace. Special emphasis is given to the image of the Highlands.

Historians naturally faced the problem that they had no direct experience of their period and had to rely on information drawn from previous sources. Geographers similarly often drew entirely on secondary material. Thus they tended to present stereotyped images, especially when dealing with countries on the periphery of the known world, isolated from the main travel routes. Jean-Baptiste d'Audiffret discussed this problem in the preface to his *Histoire Et Geographie Ancienne Et Moderne*:

J'avoue que j'ai profité dans l'exécution de ce dessein des lumières de quelques personnes intelligentes qui ont parcouru la plus grande partie de l'Europe où elles ont fait des observations très-justes; cela m'a donné lieu de remarquer plusieurs fautes dans les cartes ordinaires, & j'ai été surpris qu'on les ait admirées jusques aujourd'hui. Il arrive presque toujours que ceux qui se contentent de copier les autres, ne donnent au public que des connoissances ou fausses ou incertaines; on sçait que la plupart des Geographes n'ont pas dit les choses comme elles sont en effet, mais comme ils soupçonnoient qu'on souhaitoit qu'elles fussent; c'est ce qui est cause que les anciens se contredisent souvent, & qu'ils ne demeurent pas d'accord de ce qu'ils ont avancé.¹³

In many historical and geographical descriptions of Britain, Scotland was often dealt with as a mere appendix of England. The sections relating to Scotland were usually disproportionately small in comparison to those relating to England. The descriptions of the Scottish shires were often limited to their geographical features and lacked the in-depth information about the history and manners of their inhabitants provided for the English counties. This becomes even more obvious when dealing with the Highland areas of Scotland. The authors were unable to provide further information beyond apparent geographical features and obscure mythological traditions attributed to these areas. However, on the Continent these works considerably influenced and shaped the image of Scotland and its people. The lack of up-to-date information and the unquestioning reliance on unsubstantiated sources created a stereotyped image that was reflected in the expectations of early

well-off people could afford to buy these works, and most of the population, especially in rural areas, was illiterate and neither had access to these works nor could ever think of travelling to a foreign country.

¹³ J. d'Audiffret, *Histoire Et Geographie Ancienne Et Moderne*, vol. i (Paris, 1694), sig. *4r. [hereafter: Audiffret, *Histoire Et Geographie*]

travellers to Scotland. The establishment of a mythological tradition began with the search for the origin of the Scottish people.¹⁴

1.2.1. The supposed origin of the Scottish people

Much of Scotland's image as a country of myth and miracles can be traced back to Hector Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*, published in Latin in Paris in 1527.¹⁵ It was not the first history of Scotland. The chronicles of Andrew Wyntoun, John of Fordun and Walter Bower were available as manuscript copies, and John Major's considerably more sober *Historia Maioris Britanniae* was published in Paris in 1521. However, foreign visitors had no access to the manuscripts and had to rely on the available printed sources. As Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* was written in Latin and soon after translated into French and vernacular Scots, it made Scotland and its history accessible to a wider audience on the Continent and in Britain. His credulity earned him much criticism from fellow British authors, but on the Continent his reliability was not seriously questioned.¹⁶ At a time when information about Scotland was scarce, Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* was considered a useful source of knowledge, and authors and publishers borrowed widely from it. It became the first guidebook to Scotland and immediately made its way into most travellers' accounts for the next two centuries. Boece's Scotland was an attractive country to which to travel. Its antiquity and history reached back for thousands of years and could rival those of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. Additionally, his Scotland offered a

¹⁴ In the following section 1.2.1., dealing with the supposed origin of the 'Scottish people', this term includes all inhabitants of Scotland. The term 'Scots' is used to refer to the Dalriada Scots, who migrated from Ireland to the west coast of Scotland from probably the fourth century AD onward.

¹⁵ Reliable English translations of Boece and Camden were soon prepared. Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* (Paris, 1527) was translated into Scots vernacular by John Bellenden and published in Edinburgh c. 1536. A translation into English was done by William Harrison in 1577. Camden's *Britannia* (London, 1586) was translated into English by Philemon Holland and published in London in 1610. Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum historia* (Edinburgh, 1582) was first published in English in London in 1690. The translation was done by James Fraser, who had been in charge of the experiments with 'caremyle' in London in the mid-1680s. See note 112. For convenience quotations refer to the English editions.

¹⁶ The theologian and cosmographer Sebastian Münster (1488-1552) wrote that Boece was considered by many as untrustworthy, but nonetheless used him extensively as a source for his *Cosmographia*, first published in Basle in 1544. The edition published in Basle in 1628, which I have used, included all the curiosities attributed to Scotland by Boece. See S. Münster, *Cosmographia, Das ist: Beschreibung der gantzen Welt ...* (Basle, 1628), pp. 88-96. [hereafter: Münster, *Cosmographia*] Münster believed the Scythians to have been the first inhabitants of Scotland. See *ibid.*, p. 88.

catalogue of miracles and strange things that could not be found anywhere else so close to the civilised world. Natural history as a science was yet in its infancy, and Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*, more than any other publication in the sixteenth century, revolutionised the image of Scotland abroad. Its scientific value may rightly be questioned, but the image of Scotland abroad soon became synonymous with Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*.¹⁷

Borrowing from Fordun and Bower, Boece provided Scotland with a history and a succession of kings starting in ancient Greece, Troy and Egypt. The origin of the Scots was traced back to Egypt, where Gathelus, a royal knight of Greek origin, was supposed to have married Scota, daughter of the Egyptian King Pharaoh. In order to escape the Plagues of Egypt, he left the country and finally reached Scotland via Spain and Ireland.¹⁸ Such myths about Scotland's past were readily absorbed on the Continent and soon became an essential part of all books about Scotland for the next 200 years. As most authors used Boece as a source for their works, whatever their attitudes towards him, they discussed his myths, thereby spreading them all over Europe. Boece was soon added to the canon of supposedly 'established

¹⁷ See, for example, Jehan Desmontiers, *Summaire de l'origine description & merveilles Descosse ...* (Paris, 1538). See also Petruccio Ubaldini, *Descrittione del Regno di Scotia, Et Delle Isole Sue Adiacenti* (Antwerp, 1588). Both authors borrowed heavily from Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*. It is doubtful if Desmontiers had ever been to Scotland. Ubaldini, however, spent most of his life in England during the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth I. He may have had some personal experience of Scotland as he claimed in the preface to *Descrittione*. Nonetheless, *Descrittione* was little more than a paraphrase of Boece. For details see entries nos. 17 and 37 in A. Mitchell, 'A List Of Travels, Tours, Journeys, Voyages, Cruises, Excursions, Wanderings, Rambles, Visits, Etc., Relating To Scotland', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xxxv (Edinburgh, 1901), pp. 455, 465. Supplements in vol. xxxix (Edinburgh, 1905), pp. 500-527, and in vol. xlv (Edinburgh, 1910), pp. 390-405. [hereafter: Mitchell, 'List']

¹⁸ See H. Boece, *The History And Chronicles Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1821), vol. i, pp. xix-xxiii. The translation was by John Bellenden. [hereafter: Boece, *History*] Such myths must, of course, be considered in the context of the Anglo-Welsh mythologies connecting the Tudor dynasty with Brutus, refugee leader from ancient Troy, Constantine and King Arthur. It is important to stress that Fordun dismissed the Brutus origin myth advanced by Geoffrey of Monmouth, which was used by the English kings to legitimise their claims over Scotland and to promote the idea of Britain as a single geopolitical entity under English hegemony. With respect to *Origo gentis*, Fordun tried to establish a Celtic origin for Scotland in opposition to Geoffrey's emphasis on Brutus and the Britons. In this respect the chronicle tradition of Fordun, Bower and particularly Boece must be seen as an attempt to bolster Scottish national identity, and to give Scotland a worthy status among the other ancient European kingdoms and nations. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historians, geographers and travellers, who used Boece as a reference work or guidebook, were not necessarily aware of this intention and, therefore, sometimes ridiculed his mythological history of Scotland. For the relationship between geography, historical tradition and national identity in the late Middle Ages and early modern age see C.W.J. Withers, *Geography, Science And National Identity* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 40-47. [hereafter: Withers, *Geography*]

knowledge' about Scotland as the following analysis of the histories and geographical descriptions relating to Scotland will show.¹⁹

Most British authors were very critical of Boece, dismissing his *History* as unreliable and preferring to draw their information about Scotland's early past from the ancient Roman writers. Early modern historians considered the Roman writers to be reliable and beyond question.

George Buchanan extensively discussed the origins of the Scottish people in the second and third books of his *History of Scotland*. He was in general more favourable to Boece than his contemporaries and defended his writings against their criticism. However, for a late sixteenth-century humanist like him, the ancient myths were no longer a serious option. He rejected the mythological Greek or Egyptian origins of the Scottish people and blamed the old Scottish writers for the insertion of these fabulous myths into the history of their nation.²⁰ In refuting them he left the question of Scottish origin to the ancient authors without finding a proper answer to their contradictory theories.²¹

Buchanan faced, like his predecessor Boece, the problem that, according to Aristotle's classical teaching and common contemporary belief, the northern parts of the world were the home of wild and uncivilised barbarians. Moreover, the Bible and European literary tradition associated the north with the dark, barbaric and evil forces that threatened Christianity. Buchanan agreed with Boece that no northern region is so far away from the sun that its inhabitants must necessarily remain in a barbaric and miserable state.²² However, in contrast to Boece, he could not simply contradict

¹⁹ Such myths were quite popular and were told to visitors to Scotland until the second half of the eighteenth century. The Englishman Sir Roger Newdigate, who toured Scotland in 1766, noted on his visit to Edinburgh Castle: 'There are no rooms worth seeing here in one of them tis said is King Pharoah's Crown, wh. wch. y. Kings of Scotland used to be crowned but tis many years since.' Warwickshire Record Office, R. Newdigate, 'Journal of a Tour from Nottingham, through Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland to Edinburgh and Dunkeld returning via the west coast to Manchester', MS. CR 136 A/563, fo. 21r. [hereafter: Warwickshire Record Office, Newdigate, 'Journal', MS. CR 136 A/563]

²⁰ See G. Buchanan, *The History Of Scotland* (London, 1690), pp. 46-47. [hereafter: Buchanan, *History*]

²¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 38-93.

²² For the contemporary notion of the 'barbaric north' and Boece's and Buchanan's rejection of it see A. Williamson, 'Scots, Indians And Empire: The Scottish Politics Of Civilization 1519-1609', *Past & Present*, no. 150 (Oxford, 1996), pp. 46-48, 52. [hereafter: Williamson, 'Scots, Indians And Empire']. As the people of the north were supposed to be less intelligent than those of the south (Aristotle), many continental scholars could not believe that a scholar like Buchanan could have been born in Scotland.

this dogma by creating a history based on traditional myth. Buchanan's idea of 'civilisation' was centred on liberal government, which made it difficult for him to establish a coherent picture of Scotland's early past as a civilised cultural nation reaching back to Roman times or even beyond. To search for this civilisation in the Gaelic tradition of Scotland was no option for Buchanan. The state of the Highlands in the 1580s and the growing perception of the Highlanders as lawless 'savages' by the government and the Lowland elites made it impossible for him to derive a Scottish civilisation from the Gaelic culture based on its militarised kin structures. For these reasons Buchanan could not provide Scotland with a history of 'civilisation' reaching back for thousands of years as Boece did, and he had to remain ambivalent towards the early history of Scotland.²³

Camden also discussed extensively the origin of the Scottish people. He surveyed the supposed origins of the Picts and Scots, based on a detailed analysis of classical authors.²⁴ Although he considered the Picts to be natives of Scotland and the Scots to have emigrated from Ireland into Scotland, he felt unable to trace their origins any further, or shed light on the numerous contradictory theories by ancient authors on the origins of these peoples. All he could provide was a survey of these authors' writings, which gave him the confidence to dismiss as myth any connection of the Scottish people to the Greeks or Egyptians. He claimed that 'the Scottish writers falsly devised *Scota* the Aegyptian Pharaoes daughter to be the Foundresse of their nation'.²⁵ Writing about the lack of knowledge of the origin of the Scottish nation, he rejected all the myths created to fill this gap:

The beginning and Etymologie of the Scottish Nation, like as of other neighbor nations round about, are so full of obscuritie, and lie over-sprede under the mist of darkenesse, in such sort, that even Buchanan himselfe, though otherwise a man of a very deepe insight, either hath seene little therein, or seene to himselfe alone: for in this point he hath come short of all mens expectation. Wherupon I have forborne a long time to take this enterprize in hand, left with others in admiring fables, I should full sweetly please my selfe, and fall into folly. For, a man may with as great probability derive the Scots pedigree from the Gods, as from *Scota* that supposed and counterfeit daughter of the Aegyptian King *Pharao*, wedded (forsooth) unto *Gaithelus*, the sonne of Cecrops founder of Athens. But, as this conceit arising from the unskilfulnesse of Antiquitie, is of the better sort ingenuous Scots rejected: so, that other opinion of later daies, drawen without all sense from a Greeke fountaine, that Scots should be so called, as it were, ..., that is, *obscure*, I vterly disallow

²³ See also Camden's criticism of Buchanan in respect of his ambivalence.

²⁴ See W. Camden, *Britain, Or A Chorographical Description Of The Most flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1610), part i, pp. 114-127. [hereafter: Camden, *Britain*]

²⁵ *Ibid.*, part i, p. 7.

and condemne, as a device of envious persons, to the slanderous reproch of a famous and valiant Nation.²⁶

In the introduction to the second part, relating to Scotland, Camden explained why he did not want to get involved in the speculations and forgeries of Scottish historians' explanations of their nation's origin:

But before my penne commeth to Scotland, thus much I thinke it good to advertise the reader afore hand, that I leaue the first originall of the Scottish nation to their own Historians: also the primitue derivation of their name, to the learned among them banishing al conjectures whatsoever of others, which either hasty credulity or carelesse negligence hath forged, as well in the late foregoing age, as in these our daies.²⁷

In making occasional references to Hector Boece, he was very critical of his *History* and seriously doubted its value:

This *Hector* in the reflourishing time of learning, wrote the Scottish historie elegantly, and that out of such hidden and farre fetched monuments of antiquity, that *Paulus Iovius* wondered in his writings, there should be records exstant for above a thousand yeeres, of these remote parts of the world, Scotland, the *Hebrides* and the *Orcades*: considering that Italie the nource of fine wits, for so many ages after the Goths were cast out, was defectiue of writers and records.²⁸

Having rejected Boece's *History* as myth, Camden was surprisingly uncritical of classical authorship on Scotland whose authority he did not question. Discussing the origin of the Scots, the derivation of their name and their supposed link to the Scythians, he referred to Diodor and Strabo:

But whether this name were imposed upon this nation by their neighbours, in regard of Scythian maners, or because they came out of *Scythia*, let them here advise well upon it. Surely, both [Lib.6.] Diodorus Siculus, and also [Lib.4.] Strabo, compare the first Britans inhabiting Ireland, (which is the native countrey indeed of the wild Irish, and those that be right Scots) with the Scythians for their savage nature. Besides, they drinke bloud out of the wounds of men slaine: they establish leagues among themselves, by drinking one anothers bloud; and suppose, that the greater number of slaughters they commit, the more honour they winne: and so did the Scythians in old time. To this we may adde, that these [wild] Scots, like as the Scythians, had for their principall weapons, bowes and arrows.²⁹

Camden linked the 'wild Scots', his phrase for Highlanders, to the Irish and Scythians and thus helped to promote their image as wild and barbarous people. This is not surprising as the native or 'wild Irish', in the sixteenth and seventeenth

²⁶ Ibid., part i, p. 119.

²⁷ Ibid., part ii, p. 3.

²⁸ Ibid., part ii, p. 34 [recte 43].

²⁹ Ibid., part i, p. 121. The term 'wild' is printed in square brackets in the original text.

centuries, were regarded as the most barbaric people in Europe.³⁰ Comparing the Highlanders to the wild Irish did even more to establish their image abroad as an uncivilised and barbaric nation.

Most continental authors had not visited Scotland and were grateful for any kind of information about the country. Their geographies and histories offered a huge variety of theories on the origin of the Scottish people, which were traced back to various regions from all parts of Europe. A study of German and French geographical and historical descriptions of Scotland shows that the appearance and language of a people were then the most important criteria for tracing their origin.

Martin Zeiller (1589-1661) gave in his *Itinerarii Galliae, Et Magnae Britanniae, Pars II. Oder der Raißbeschreibung durch Franckreich/ Großbritannien/ oder Engelland/ unnd Schottland/ etc. Ander Theil/ Von den Raisen durch die Königreich Engelland/ Schott: und Irrland/ etc.* (Strasbourg, 1634) a survey of the origin of the Scottish people and considered them to be a mixed race of Picts and Scots. In the course of time the Scots gradually subdued and absorbed the Picts. Zeiller tried to describe the origins of both peoples. He noted that Bede attributed the Picts' origin to the Scythians; Boece to the Agathyrasis; Pomponius Laetus and Aventinus to Germans or other Picts living in France. Zeiller also wrote that Camden was the only author who considered the Picts to be native Britons, who once had inhabited the whole north of the British Isles and who later formed an alliance with the Scots to fight the Romans. On the origins of the Scots, opinions differed even more:

Es sein aber diese Schotten erstlich auß Irland (allda sie/ wie *Orosius*, *Beda* und *Eginardus* bezeugen/ gewohnt haben) hieher kommen. Und werden sie vielleicht von ihren Nachbarn anfangs *Scoti*, gleichsam *Scythae*, sein genant worden; gleich wie die Engelländer/ so nahend an Schotten wohnen/ sie nicht Schotten/ sondern offtmals *Skyttes* und *Skets* nennen. Wie sie dann auch vorzeiten so wild gewesen/ als immer die Scythen seyn mögen. Wie aber/ unnd woher diese Scythen ins Irland kommen seyen, wird nit unbillich gefragt? Sie die Schotten rühmen sich/ daß sie auß *Hispania*, und zwar auß *Gallaecia* kommen seyen. Das aber Scythen oder Sarmater auch in *Hispania* gewohnt haben/ das bezeugt *Silius Italicus*, so auß *Hispania* bürtig gewesen selber; nemblich die *Cancani* in *Cantabria*, und die *Lucensii*; von welchen die *Luceni*, (so *Orosius* in Irland setzet) und die *Gangani* in Irland werden herkommen sein.³¹

³⁰ When discussing the supposed customs and manners of the Scottish people, it becomes obvious that comparisons to the Irish did little to enhance the image of the Highlanders abroad in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See chapter 1.2.3. and note 53.

³¹ M. Zeiller, *Itinerarii Galliae, Et Magnae Britanniae, Pars II. Oder der Raißbeschreibung durch Franckreich/ Großbritannien/ oder Engelland/ unnd Schottland/ etc. Ander Theil/ Von den Raisen durch die Königreich Engelland/ Schott: und Irrland/ etc.* (Strasbourg, 1634), pp. 121-122. [hereafter:

Zeiller himself linked the origin of the Scythians to the Germans. However, the above-quoted passage gave an interesting reason for tracing back the Scots to the Scythians. This theory seemed plausible to Zeiller not because of an understandable migration of the people, but for the wild appearance of the Scots. Their appearance was used as the main element for tracing their origin, whereas the supposed migration of the Scythians to Spain was merely used to make the missing link between both peoples. Zeiller's next theory related the origin of the Scottish people, and the Highlanders in particular, to the Goths. Again, this explanation was entirely based on the appearance and customs of the Scottish people:

Und ist glaublich/ daß/ wegen der Feinde einfäll/ sich hernach der Teutschen mehr hieher ins Irlandt begeben haben; darunder auch Gothen/ Vandaler und Francken/ als die Saracener mit der zeit *Hispaniam* überfallen haben/ mögen gewesen sein. Es sein zwar/ wie abermals *Cambdenus* sagt keine anzeigungen mehr der Gothischen Sprach übrig: Aber die Schotten unnd Irländer gehen noch also/ wie vorzeiten die Gothen/ bekleidet. Dann in dem *Sidonius* einen Gothen beschreibet/ so mahlet er uns gänzlich einen wilden Schotten vor.³²

Zeiller explicitly linked the Highlanders, or the 'wild Scottish' as he called them, to the Goths, a people renowned as troublemakers in European history. Although he had certainly never seen a Goth, it seemed only natural to him that the Scottish people, and particularly the Highlanders, must have descended from them. The similarity of the Scottish garb to the supposed dress of the Goths was evidence enough for him to link the two peoples. He also referred to Ammianus who wrote that the Scots had roamed about Britain causing trouble, long before they settled down.³³ The image of the Scots was, therefore, closely linked to unruly and warlike troublemakers. Finally, Zeiller described the defeat of the Picts by the Scots:

Es sein aber gemelte Schotten/ nach dem sie zu den obgedachten *Pictis*, oder den alte Britannern kommen/ nicht also bald zu hoch gestiegen; sondern in dem Winckel/ der am ende deß *Britanniae* gelegen ist/ als den sie anfangs eingenommen/ lang besessen; biß sie zu einer zeit die *Pictos*, ihre Nachbarn und Bundsgenossen/ schier ganz erlegt/ und außgetilgt/ und also auß zweyen Mitternächtischen Britannische Königreichen/ nemblich dem Pictisch un Schottischen/ eines gemacht; auch endlich den theil deß Northumbrischen Königreichs/ um Edinburg herumb/ in ihren gewalt gebracht haben ...³⁴

Zeiller, *Itinerarii*] Zeiller had access to a copy of Camden's *Britannia*. The arrangement of his arguments resembled Camden's. Compare Camden, *Britain*, part i, pp. 121-123. For a catalogue of authors consulted by Zeiller see his 'Catalogus Auctorum' in *Itinerarii* [pp. vii-xii]. Zeiller consulted more than 100 authors for his description of Great Britain ranging from Roman authors to all major authors of his time.

³² Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, pp. 122-123.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

Rutgerus Hermannides dismissed, in 1666, the idea of the Scottish people having descended from the Egyptians or Greeks. He believed that the Scottish people were a mixed race descended from the Goths, the Irish and tribes formerly living in Gallia Belgica.³⁵ He made a clear distinction between the civilised Lowlanders and the Highlanders, whom he described as barbarians and likened to the Irish:

Die Niederländer haben alle Städte und die Fläche am Seegestade in Besitz: Wehen bey ihnen selbst/ daß sie noch geschickter als die Engelländer/ mit denen sie eines Herkommens und sich auch einerley Zungen gebrauchen. Die Oberländer wohnen im Gebirge und Wäldern/ werden von den andern Barbaren und Wald-Leute genannt. Und ist auch an dem/ daß obwol dieselbe der Sprache nach Einzöglinge; sinds doch die Sitten betreffend Iren.³⁶

Bernhard von Zech, in 1688, did not believe in all the myths created about the origin of the Scottish people and, therefore, refused to speculate: ‘Die Geschichte von diesem Reiche sind durch die Fabeln solcher massen dunckel worden/ daß man den wahren Ursprung nicht wol herausbringen, und was gewisses melden kann.’³⁷

Claude Jordan de Colombier’s *Voyages Historiques de l’Europe* is one of the best examples of what kind of information future travellers could find in late seventeenth-century historical and geographical descriptions.³⁸ Furthermore, it highlights the way authors plagiarised each other and established a canon of myths and miracles relating to Scotland. His information about the origin of the Scottish people included all the well-known references to mythology. In fact, he did not know where to place the Scottish people and thought it most likely that they had descended from the Irish. This assumption was based on the similarity of their language and manners:

³⁵ Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*, book iii, p. 1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, book iii, p. 7.

³⁷ [B. von Zech], *Der Europäische Herold* (Jena, 1688), p. 718. [hereafter: Zech, *Europäische Herold*]

³⁸ C. Jordan de Colombier, *Voyages Historiques de l’Europe*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1693-1697), experienced numerous editions in subsequent years. A German edition, *Curieuse und Historische Reisen durch Europa*, 8 vols. (Leipzig, 1698-1710), was published by Johann Ludwig Gleditsch. [hereafter: Jordan de Colombier, *Curieuse Reisen*] The translation was by August Bohse. Jordan de Colombier claimed that the descriptions were based on travels in various countries. However, it is most doubtful if he or his contributors ever travelled to the countries described. It is more likely that he compiled and plagiarised information from previous sources. The descriptions focused on the history of foreign countries, but also provided information about the peoples, their customs and natural curiosities. Jordan de Colombier’s *Curieuse Reisen* were widely plagiarised by German authors. They copied complete passages from his work and thus spread his marvellous descriptions. Quotations refer to the German edition to show the extent of the plagiarism. This will be dealt with in greater detail when discussing the supposed manners of the Scottish people and the natural curiosities of the country.

Einige *Autores* haben dafür gehalten/ daß *Schota*, eine Tochter eines *Aegyptischen* Königes dieses Reich gegründet/ und ihm ihren Nahmen gegeben: andere glauben/ dessen Ursprung käme von einem Grigischen Wort/ welches so viel als dunckel heißt/ weil die alten Einwohner ihre Gesichter und Haare schwarz färbeten/ umb sich dadurch hren Feinden desto entsetzlicher zu machen. Eben selbige Geschicht-Schreiber suchen mühsam/ welche Völcker dieses Reich zum ersten bewohnt haben. Einige wollen/ daß sie aus Schweden/ andere aus Dennemarck/ und wieder andere/ daß selbige aus Norwegen gekommen: aber die sicherste Meinung ist wohl/ daß sie aus Irriand sich dahin gemacht/ indem sie noch ein Theil deren ihrer Sprache und Gewohnheiten haben.³⁹

Having accused geographers and historians of plagiarism, Jean-Baptiste d’Audiffret, in 1694, did not refer to any Egyptian or Greek origin for the Scottish people. He stressed in his preface that he did not copy any previous authors, but simply wrote what seemed to him closest to the truth.⁴⁰ He believed that the Picts painted their bodies to frighten their enemies and had their origin in Scandinavia, whereas the Scots had migrated from Ireland into western Scotland and finally subdued the Picts.⁴¹

James Beeverell, in 1707, discussed the origin of the Scottish people at large. Beginning with Roman historians he stressed that in none of their writings of the first and second centuries AD could the terms ‘Picts’ or ‘Scots’ be found. Instead, the Romans used the term ‘Caledonii’ to refer to the inhabitants of Scotland. He faced the well-known difficulties in tracing back the roots of the Picts and Scots. He referred to the Picts as painted people and linked the origin of the Scots to the Scythians. This link was based on the assumption that the ancestors of the Scottish people shared the supposed skill of the Scythians in their adoption of the bow as their main weapon.⁴²

In the eighteenth century most British geographical descriptions no longer referred to Boece’s Egypt or Greece as the origins of the Scottish people. Bede’s and Buchanan’s explanation of the Scots’ migration from Ireland into the Hebrides and western Scotland had become the prevalent view and still is the accepted view among modern historians. After the Union of Parliaments in 1707, a number of new or revised geographical descriptions of Great Britain, including Scotland or ‘North Britain’ as it was called now, were published. John Chamberlayne’s *The Present*

³⁹ Jordan de Colombier, *Curieuse Reisen*, vol. iv (Leipzig, 1698), p. 536.

⁴⁰ See Audiffret, *Histoire Et Geographie*, vol. i (Paris, 1694), sig. *4v.

⁴¹ See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 206-207.

⁴² See J. Beeverell, *Les Delices De La Grand’ Bretagne, & de L’ Irlande* (Leide, 1707), vol. vi, pp. 1057-1062. [hereafter: Beeverell, *Delices*, 1st edn. 1707]

State Of Great Britain went through numerous editions and, following the Hanoverian succession, also included an account of 'His Majesty's dominion' in Germany. Guy Miede's *The Present State Of Great-Britain And Ireland* also experienced numerous editions and was published in German in 1718.⁴³

Although reliable information and books about England and Scotland became more widely available in Germany following the Hanoverian succession, the public image of Scotland still lagged behind. German authors and publishers continued to present a decidedly mythological image of Scotland. Nicolaus Gundling (1671-1729) wrote about the Scottish people:

Man kan nicht sagen, was sie eigentlich für eine Nation seyn, doch siehet man, daß sie ziemlich überein kommen mit denen Irländern, daher es *probable* ist, daß sie entweder von denen Irländern, oder die Irländer von ihnen herkommen. *Scotia* soll so viel heissen als *Skythia*, ihre Sprache ist so beschaffen, daß man nicht weiß, wo man sie hinrechnen soll, und kann nicht *decouvriret* werden, ob sie nicht etwa eine Gothische Sprache, und ob nicht die Schotten etwa gar von denen alten Gothen noch herkommen. Ihre Tracht ist Gothisch.⁴⁴

Gundling thought it difficult to trace the origin of the Scottish people in European history. He used the appearance of the people and their seemingly incomprehensible language to establish their supposed origins from either the Irish or the Goths. According to his idea of their ancient customs, he even speculated that they might not be a European people at all, but a wild people from outside Europe:

Daß es eine wilde *Nation* seyn müsse, erhellet daraus, weil sich die Britannier ihrer vormahls nicht erwehren können, *item*, daß sie sich mit Fett und einer *Couleur* anzustreichen pflegten, welches bey andern Europäischen *Nationen* nicht gebräuchlich.⁴⁵

Until the middle of the eighteenth century, German geographies and travel guides stuck to hopelessly antiquated views of Scotland and thus gave a false impression of the country. Paul Ludolph Berckenmeyer's hugely popular *Curieuse Antiquarius* included in its seventh edition (1738) all the varying speculations about the origin of the Scottish people. Plagiarising Boece, he referred to the Egyptian

⁴³ G. Miede, *Geist- und Weltlicher Staat von Groß-Britannien und Irrland* (Leipzig, 1718). The translation was by Johann Bernhard Heintzelmann. Part ii contained a detailed description of Scotland, including the manners and customs of its people. Since 1661, Swiss-born Guy Miede (1644-1718?) had lived mainly in London and was likely to have known Scotland from first-hand experience. References refer to the English edition. G. Miede, *The Present State Of Great-Britain And Ireland* (2nd edn. London, 1711). [hereafter: Miede, *Present State Of Great-Britain*]

⁴⁴ N. Gundling, *Ausführlicher Discours über den ietzigen Zustand Der Europäischen Staaten*, vol. i (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1733), p. 689. [hereafter: Gundling, *Discours*]

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 689.

Pharaoh's daughter Scota and to Greek or Scythian origins.⁴⁶ An analysis of the supposed customs of the Scottish people underlines the longevity of this stereotyped and prejudiced image of Scotland.

1.2.2. The supposed customs of the Scottish people

The previous chapter has shown that the Scottish people, and the Highlanders in particular, were often compared to wild or barbaric peoples. What was known outside Scotland about their way of living? What distinctive customs and manners were they supposed to have?

When discussing the supposed customs of the Scottish people, it is interesting to realise that most authors distinguished between their ancient and their modern customs. The sections about their ancient customs were usually far more extensive than the ones about their contemporary customs. This clearly indicates that information from ancient authors was more available than precise up-to-date knowledge of the habits of the Scottish people. To remedy this lack of information authors were forced to draw on mythology. Foreign countries had always been associated with strange customs. The customs attributed to the Scottish people were particularly strange, interesting and entertaining, and must be considered to a certain extent as an answer to the early modern reader's voracious appetite for curiosities.

The supposed ancient manners of the Scottish people included all the attributes already used by Greek and Roman authors to describe barbarians. For example, the ancestors of the Scottish people were commonly accused of cannibalism. Most early modern histories and geographies included references to supposed cannibalism among the ancient inhabitants of Scotland.⁴⁷ British writers, such as John Major in

⁴⁶ P.L. Berckenmeyer, *Neu- vermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius* (7th edn. Hamburg, 1738), p. 215. [hereafter: Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*] First published in 1709, it proved to be so popular that it appeared in a seventh revised edition in 1738. A translation into French was published in 1729. This guidebook focused mainly on natural curiosities, and every subsequent edition included more marvellous descriptions. Scota and the Scythians as supposed origins of the Scots were not referred to in the third edition in 1711 and were first introduced in the fourth edition in 1712. Despite more reliable information about Scotland being available, this guidebook increasingly described Scotland as a country where miracles became fact.

⁴⁷ References to cannibalism among the ancient inhabitants of Scotland can also be found in the histories written by Boece and John Leslie. However, both authors related this barbaric custom exclusively to the ancient tribe of the 'Ordovices', who were supposed to have lived in Annandale in pre-Roman times. Boece and Leslie accused them of having fed on their captives. Leslie stressed that

his *Historia Majoris Britanniae tam Angliae quam Scotiae* (Paris, 1521) and William Camden, tried hard to dismiss these claims. Both blamed St Jerome for having invented this allegation when he wrote about his experiences in France:

What shall I [St Jerome] say of other nations – how when I was in Gaul as a youth, I saw the Scots, a *British* race, eating human flesh, and how, when these men came in the forests upon herds of swine and sheep and cattle, they would cut off the buttocks of the shepherds and the paps of the women, and hold these for their greatest delicacy?⁴⁸

Major argued that if this allegation had been true at all, it certainly could not have been applied to the Scottish people in general. Furthermore, writers of Bede's generation (writing 300 years after St Jerome) did not mention this supposed custom at all, while Strabo had attributed it to the Irish and to certain savage Scots.⁴⁹ Camden blamed a misinterpretation of names as the origin of this allegation. According to him, St Jerome wrote, in different manuscript copies, about the Attacotti, Attigotti, Catacotti or Cattiti, but never about Scoti. Camden was also confident that due to structural evidence in the text St Jerome could not have referred to the Scottish people when writing about cannibalism.⁵⁰ However, both authors proved to be somewhat unsuccessful in refuting this allegation as it was frequently repeated by authors from the Continent until the middle of the eighteenth century.⁵¹ Cannibalism among the ancient Scottish people, and their special preference for the

this custom should not be attributed to the Scottish nation in general. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xxvii, and *The Historie Of Scotland, Wrytten First In Latin By The Most Reverend And Worthy Jhone Leslie Bishop Of Rosse, And Translated In Scottish By Father James Dalrymple*, ed. by E.G. Cody, vol. i (Edinburgh, 1888), p. 99. [hereafter: Leslie, *Historie*] The accusations against the Ordovices will not be mentioned again as their effects on the foreign perception of Scotland cannot be compared to the far more damaging impacts of the accusations of cannibalism based on St Jerome. Leslie also mentioned St Jerome's accusations, but dismissed them by writing that some thought the supposed cannibal was not a Scotsman but a Scythian. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 100. Leslie, and particularly Boece, wanted to portray Scotland as a civilised, cultured nation. That is why neither of them spent much time on debating St Jerome's allegations.

⁴⁸ J. Major, *A History Of Greater Britain As Well England As Scotland*, ed. by A. Constable, SHS, vol. x (Edinburgh, 1892), p. 44. [hereafter: Major, *History*]

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵⁰ See Camden, *Britain*, part i, p. 127.

⁵¹ The English also accused the Scots of cannibalism as a means of political propaganda to be utilised by a dominant culture against those they wanted to colonise. The legend of 'Sawney Bean' and his family, who supposedly lived as cannibals in a cave in Galloway in the reign of King James VI, first appeared as written history in England probably between the 1720s and 1734. There is evidence that the legend was part of the oral culture of Scotland, however its publication in England in the wake of the Union can be considered as a piece of 'colonial fiction' to demonstrate the superiority of the English in contrast to the savage and uncivilised Scots. For details about the legend of 'Sawney Bean' see F. Black, 'A Taste of Scotland: Historical Fictions of Sawney Bean and his Family', in E. Cowan and D. Gifford (eds.), *The Polar Twins* (Edinburgh, 2000), pp. 154-170.

buttocks of men and the breasts of women, was quoted by many subsequent Dutch,⁵² French and German authors. Wilhelm Serlin wrote, in his description of the whole world in 1656, about Scotland: ‘Die *Pictii* färben ihre Haar/ assen Menschen Fleisch/ sonderlich die Brüste von den Weibern/ so sie vor Leckerbissen hielten.’⁵³ Apart from this, Serlin informed his readers that the Picts used to paint their bodies, branded special signs into their arms and hands, shaved their heads except for a curl in the forehead and used mysterious characters similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics. Boece was his authority on their simple life based on hunting and their conduct in peace and war.

Jordan de Colombier, writing about the culinary habits of the ancient people of Scotland, believed their preference for raw buttocks and breasts was based surely on taste:

Die alten Völcker in Schottland assen Menschen-Fleisch/ und speiseten als eine grosse *delicateresse* die Hinterbacken des Manns-Volcks und die Frauen Brüste/ ohne daß sie selbige erstlich kochen liessen; sich einbildend/ sie hätten roh bessern Saft und Geschmack/ als wenn sie abgekocht wären.⁵⁴

⁵² See, for example, L. de Heere, *Beschrijving Der Britsche Eilanden*, ed. by T.M. Chotzen and A.M.E. Draak, (Antwerp, 1937), p. 31. [hereafter: Heere, *Beschrijving*] The Dutchman Lucas de Heere (1534-1584) lived from 1567-77 in exile in England. He consulted most British and continental classical, medieval and contemporary geographers and historians as sources. His main source on Scottish history was Münster’s *Cosmographia*. See Heere, *Beschrijving*, pp. xliii-liv, 144. Heere was not completely uncritical of his sources. He rejected the Brutus myth and likewise dismissed Boece’s fables about the origins of the Scottish people. He considered the Scots to have descended from the Irish and to have mixed with the Picts. See *ibid.*, pp. 16, 40, 31. In respect of the marvels attributed to Britain and particularly to Scotland, he was a far more credulous compiler. See, for example, his belief in the authenticity of giants’ bones and the metamorphosis of the ‘barnacle geese’. See *ibid.*, pp. 27, 29, 43.

⁵³ W. Serlin and G. Fickwirth, *Orbis Lumen Et Atlantis Ivga Tecta Retecta: Das ist: Neue außführliche Entdeck- Vnd Beschreibung der gantzen Welt ...* (Frankfurt, 1656), p. 426. Cannibalism was often also related to the Irish in seventeenth-century geographies. In the early modern age the Irish were considered the wildest and most uncivilised people in Europe. Serlin and Fickwirth wrote about the supposed customs of the ancient Irish that they even fed on their own parents: ‘*Strabo* bezeugt/ die Irrländer seyn weit wilder gewesen/ dann kein ander Volck in Groß Britannien. Sie assen Menschenfleisch zur Speiße/ und sonsten allerdings frässig. Sie meineten/ es wehre ein ehrlich Werck/ daß einer seiner abgestorbenen Eltern Körper esse/ sambt seinen Brüdern und Schwestern.’ *Ibid.*, p. 428. Their supposed habits included all the attributes related to barbaric people who could otherwise only be found in remote continents. Zeiller, for example, accused the wild Irish of being especially inclined to fornication and incest. See Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, p. 154. This information was also taken from Strabo. Being likened to the wild Irish enhanced the perception on the Continent that the Highlanders were an utterly wild and barbaric people. In both cases the lack of factual knowledge about the country was blamed on the wild manners of their inhabitants so that travellers could not feel safe among them.

⁵⁴ Jordan de Colombier, *Curieuse Reisen*, vol. iv, p. 538.

Nicolaus Gundling combined the alleged cannibalism of the ancient Scottish people with their supposed appearance in order to compare them to the natives of Madagascar. Even as late as the mid-eighteenth century, it did not seem inappropriate to German authors to liken Scotland and its ancient population to exotic tribes in the South Seas:

Hieronymus saget gar, als er sich in Trier aufgehalten, habe er da junge Schotten gesehen, welche Menschen gefressen. Dieses können die Schotten nicht leiden, daß sie sollen Menschen-Fresser gewesen seyn; darum hat der Bischoff *Johann Lesle*, der unter der *Maria* und *Elisabeth* gelebet, gesaget, es müsse sonst ein anderer Kerl gewesen seyn, welchen *Hieronymus* da gesehen. Gemahlet haben sie sich wie die Brasilianer, und die auf der Insul *Madagascar*.⁵⁵

The lack of reliable information and the vivid imagination associated with foreign countries established an image of Scotland that had lost touch with reality. St Jerome's and Boece's writings, despite being hopelessly antiquated, were still respected in an age when natural sciences, Enlightenment philosophy, trade and travel had made rapid progress.

Paul L. Berckenmeyer's *Curieuser Antiquarius* highlights the gap that had opened by the eighteenth century between the public image of Scotland abroad and the real state of affairs. He presented Scotland principally as a country full of marvellous miracles and gave hardly any factual or reliable information about the land, its inhabitants and their products. His chapter about the Scottish people was full of descriptions of the most curious habits and did not distinguish between ancient and modern customs, merely citing a compilation of strange and curious habits that he culled from previous authors. He began with a paragraph about the ancient inhabitants feeding on human flesh, which was copied almost verbatim from Jordan de Colombier's *Curieuse Reisen*, and went on to assert that children were denied the use of foster-mothers. Mothers who could not suckle their children were accused of adultery. He also asserted that men pronounced insane or suffering from contagious diseases were sterilised. Any women who had sexual contact with these men were buried alive. He then mentioned that King Ewenus III (Ewen III) made a law of the 'ius primae noctis' in which the monarch was entitled to sleep with any noble virgin when she was married. This privilege was said to extend to any nobleman, before the marriage of common people. This law was supposedly repealed by King

⁵⁵ Gundling, *Discours*, vol. i, p. 689.

Milcolumbus III (Malcolm III) in 1062 AD and replaced by a tax on newly married couples, which was reputedly still in force.⁵⁶ Lastly, he claimed that the prisons are emptied of their inmates every six months.⁵⁷ One would presume that subsequent revised editions of the *Curieuser Antiquarius* had been cleared of these obscure descriptions when more reliable and up-to-date information about Scotland became available in the mid-eighteenth century. However, the section on Scotland in later editions included even more obscure descriptions. The section about the Scottish people in the seventh edition (1738) not only included all the obscure ‘facts’ of the previous editions, but was also enriched by the information that the notorious King Evenus III also made a law that allowed thieves to perform their profession without punishment as long as they were not caught in the act.⁵⁸ Reliable information about the Scottish people was extremely scarce. All Berckenmeyer could offer to his readers was that the Highlanders had never been subdued by the Romans, and that the Scottish people were in general very good soldiers, who could live on scarce provisions. His imagination ran wild again when he wrote about the inhabitants of the Shetland Islands. He claimed that they were of such a strong nature that it was common among them to remarry at the age of 100 and to go to sea to earn their living from fishing up to the age of 130 or 140.⁵⁹ The reader will look in vain for any information about the customs of the Highlanders.

⁵⁶ For a detailed discussion of the legend of King Evenus III, the supposed introduction of the ‘ius primae noctis’ in Scotland and its replacement by the ‘marcheta’ see J. Wettlaufer, *Das Herrenrecht der ersten Nacht: Hochzeit, Herrschaft und Heiratszins im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt/Main, New York, 1999), pp. 140-149. Hector Boece wrote about the legend of King Evenus III and thus spread it far beyond Scotland. Samuel Johnson, travelling the Hebrides in 1773 and enquiring after the islanders’ former manners, claimed that the payment of the ‘Mercheta Mulierum’ was still practised in the tiny island of Ulva. He wrote that Macquarry, the proprietor of Ulva, used to demand a sheep at the marriage of a virgin, but the payment was now made in money. See S. Johnson, *A Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1775), p. 331. [hereafter: Johnson, *Journey*]

⁵⁷ See Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius* (4th edn. Hamburg, 1712), pp. 176-177. These obscure supposed habits had their origin in Boece’s *Scotorum Historiae*. They were compiled from the chapter about ‘the new Maneris and the auld of Scottis’ and from book iii, chapter v, about King Evenus III and his laws. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, pp. liv-lxii, 82-84. The laws of King Evenus III were taken up by Buchanan. See Buchanan, *History*, p. 107. King Evenus III and his laws became an essential part of every description of the habits of the Scots. Zeiller described them in detail and referred to Buchanan (book 4) as his source. See Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, p. 129. Berckenmeyer’s *Curieuser Antiquarius* shows the extent to which antiquated sources were consulted and plagiarised until the eighteenth century, thus establishing a very misleading image of Scotland.

⁵⁸ See Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, 7th edn. 1738, p. 224.

⁵⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 221.

Berckenmeyer's *Curieuser Antiquarius* proved to be so popular in Germany that numerous subsequent editions were published until 1752. To satisfy the readers' demands for curiosities about foreign countries, every new edition included more marvellous descriptions. Thus in Germany, by the mid-eighteenth century, the image of Scotland and its inhabitants had increasingly drifted away from an up-to-date presentation of the country towards a land of myth and miracles.

This was considerably different to the treatment of other countries. The information provided in eighteenth-century works about foreign countries such as England, France, the Low Countries or Italy, proved to be far more reliable and relied less on mythology. Scotland and Ireland,⁶⁰ on the other hand, were the least-known countries in western Europe, and the quality of the information about them could only be compared to the accounts of the remote parts of eastern or northern Europe such as Romania, Russia or Lapland.

Early eighteenth-century German encyclopaedias gave a similar impression of Scotland and its inhabitants. The information provided was antiquated, inadequate, often contradictory and far from a realistic account of life in Scotland. What kind of basic information about the customs, manners and religion of the Scottish people did these encyclopaedias provide? A brief comparison of three German encyclopaedias shows what was known in early and mid-eighteenth-century Germany about the style of living in Scotland.⁶¹ Erdmann Uhse's *Universal-Geographisch-Historisches Lexicon* (4th edition 1710) offered, under the entry 'Ecosse', a one-page article focused mainly on the marvellous miracles and natural curiosities of the country. The article contained hardly any precise information on the contemporary customs of the Scottish people. All it could offer was that the inhabitants were rough and wild so that neither the Romans nor the present government were ever able to subdue and govern them properly. Lacking reliable up-to-date information, the article over-elaborated the fictional curiosities, which Uhse related to the inhabitants' ancient

⁶⁰ For the information about Ireland and its image in eighteenth-century Germany see A. Oehlke, *Irland und die Iren in deutschen Reisebeschreibungen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt, 1992). Oehlke shows that knowledge about Ireland was very scarce until the end of the seventeenth century and that its image was dominated by myth. See *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁶¹ For a study of the information about Scotland available in eighteenth-century Germany see M. Maurer, 'Was wußten die Deutschen des 18. Jahrhunderts von Schottland?', in W. Siebers and U. Zagratzki (eds.), *Deutsche Schottlandbilder: Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte* (Osnabrück, 1998), pp. 13-30. [hereafter: Siebers and Zagratzki (eds.), *Deutsche Schottlandbilder*]

customs. As usual, the reader was informed that the ancient inhabitants were cannibals, treating women's breasts and men's buttocks as delicacies. Furthermore, he repeated Berckenmeyer's assertion that women were not allowed to let their children be suckled by foster-mothers without being suspected of adultery, and ill and insane people were castrated to prevent the spreading of diseases. The fable of the longevity of Shetlanders also paraphrased Berckenmeyer in an article that clearly showed the lack of any reliable information about Scotland, offering instead a compilation of myths and miracles plagiarised from earlier sources.⁶² The attributes ascribed to Scotland and its inhabitants contained mythical stereotypes such as cannibalism, superhuman strength and longevity that had been applied to all barbaric peoples since the ancient Greeks and Romans. Finally, by focusing on the alleged natural curiosities (e.g. the famous barnacles, a supposed intermediate stage between a plant and an animal, or the furious white oxen),⁶³ the article created the impression of a marvellous and exotic country more likely to be found on a different continent. However, the lack of verifiable information made such descriptions seem accurate, and ordinary readers had little reason to question them.

Zedler's *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschaften und Künste* (1743) gave a rather different impression of Scotland. In a detailed article the focus was no longer on the miracles attributed to Scotland. Instead, it gave a reliable survey of the geography, history, religion and government of Scotland.⁶⁴ The miracles and natural curiosities that dominated Erdmann Uhse's description of Scotland were now limited to a minor reference. Not surprisingly, the furious white oxen were now said to be extinct. Nevertheless, this section still mentioned most of the natural curiosities already described by previous authors, including the accusation of cannibalism among Scotland's ancient inhabitants, while managing to argue convincingly that this was more likely to have been a myth created by St Jerome. Cannibalism among the ancient Scottish people was no longer presented as a fact, but rather referred to as a myth.

⁶² See E. Uhse, *Universal-Geographisch-Historisches Lexicon* (4th edn. Leipzig, 1710), pp. 330-331. The article about Scotland was very similar to contemporary editions of Berckenmeyer's *Curieuser Antiquarius*. Uhse and Berckenmeyer clearly concentrated on the supposed curiosities relating to Scotland.

⁶³ For a detailed discussion of these natural curiosities see chapter 1.2.4.

⁶⁴ See J.H. Zedler (ed.), *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. xxxv (Leipzig and Halle, 1743), pp. 1045-1062.

However, eighteenth-century German encyclopaedias offered contradictory information about Scotland, and the Highlands in particular. Philipp Balthasar Sinold von Schütz's *Reales Staats- Zeitungs- und Conversationslexikon* (5th edition 1711) contained a reference to the work of the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK).⁶⁵ The Highlanders were described as wild pagans, which made it necessary to spread the true religion among them:

Im übrigen werden die Nord-Schottländer die Berg-Schotten oder Hochländer, die auf den Insuln aber, die wilden Schotten genennet, welche meistentheils noch wenig Erkäntniß vom Christenthum besitzen, daher hat im Jahr 1708 die jetztregierende Königin Anna diejenige Societät, welche etliche liebevolle Hertzen zu Aufbauung einiger Schulen in den Schottischen Gebürgen und Insuln, und zu Unterweisung des dasigen blinden Volckes, unter sich aufgerichtet, mit herrlichen Privilegien versehen, auch etliche 1000 Stück Bibeln in Schottischer Sprache drucken lassen, und selbige unter die Schottischen Unterthanen auszutheilen befohlen.⁶⁶

This reference was included, mainly unaltered, in numerous editions from 1711 until 1777. P.B. Sinold von Schütz and J. Hübner were not the only ones at that time to believe that quasi-pagans could yet be found in the Highlands. Although it was well known by then that Iona and Scotland were a cradle of Christianity in Europe, German authors assumed that the Highlands were still inhabited by pagans. Nicolaus Gundling (1671-1729) wrote this about the Highlands: 'Man meynet, daß in denen Bergen und Wäldern noch Heyden seyn; denn wer kan allenthalben hinkommen, sie sind allezeit hartnäckigt gewesen.'⁶⁷ However, at the same time the German audience could read in Zedler's *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschaften und Künste* that the Scottish people were one of the first peoples in Europe to have been converted to the Christian religion. In Zedler there were no pagans or Highlanders who had to be converted to Christianity. On the contrary, he

⁶⁵ The SSPCK was founded in 1709 to promote Protestantism and the English language among the Highlanders. In 1725 an annual government grant, known as the 'Royal Bounty', was made to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to support the SSPCK, its schools and itinerant ministers in the Highlands.

⁶⁶ P.B. Sinold von Schütz, *Reales Staats- Zeitungs- und Conversationslexikon* (5th edn. Leipzig, 1711), p. 1349. Quoted in Siebers and Zagratzki (eds.), *Deutsche Schottlandbilder*, p. 19. The authorship is often erroneously attributed to Johann Hübner who wrote the foreword. See also J. Hübner, *Vollständige Geographie* (4th edn. Hamburg et al., 1743), vol. i, pp. 363-364, 383. [hereafter: Hübner, *Geographie*] Hübner referred to the Highlanders as wild and barbaric people who were still fairly ignorant of religion. Sinold von Schütz and Hübner clearly wrote about the Highlanders from a missionary point of view, associating them with other peoples who had not yet fully received the Christian religion.

⁶⁷ Gundling, *Discours*, vol. i, p. 690. Gundling also wrote that Robert Sibbald had travelled in those areas of the Highlands that were still populated by pagans. See *ibid.*, p. 693.

stressed that it was Scottish monks who spread the Christian religion on the Continent and in Germany:

Immittelst ist dieses gewiß, daß in den alten Schriften Zeugnisse genug zu finden, daß gar frühe Christen in Schottland gewesen sind. **Origenes** zählet sie unter die Erstlinge des Christenthums. ... Gleichwie nun die Schottländer die Christliche Religion gar zeitig und durchgehends annahmen; also waren sie auch sehr eifrig, diese Lehre unter andere Völcker fortzupflanzen. Was durch den **Aidan** in Bekehrung der Sachsen in der Nördlichen Gegend von Engelland geschehen, dasselbige wird von allen vor wahr erkannt; wie denn auch unterschiedene Schotten an vielen Orten von Deutschland die Christliche Religion zu befördern sich angelegen seyn lassen.⁶⁸

Such contrasting descriptions about the state of religion in Scotland in the mid-eighteenth century give the impression that factual knowledge was so scarce that the contradictory ideas of Scotland, and the Highlands in particular, could exist side by side. German authors, likewise, could not agree on the state of manufacture and trade in Scotland. Nicolaus Gundling (1671-1729) wrote that the Scottish people neglect manufacture and do not like trading, whereas Hübner wrote, in 1743, that the Scots were bad farmers and prefer trade.⁶⁹

1.2.3. The image and the supposed customs of the Highlanders

The previous discussion has shown that the image of the Scottish people abroad was determined, until the eighteenth century, by prejudices ranging from supposed cannibalism among their ancestors to paganism in the Highlands. It is now necessary to examine more closely the image and the supposed customs of the Highlanders in particular. As the Highlands were the least-known part of Scotland, what was known about its inhabitants? What was supposed to determine their way of life, their customs and habits?

Before turning to the image of the Highlanders in more detail, it is necessary to ask how Britons and continentals gathered first-hand information about Scots. Scots had been a common sight on the Continent since the Middle Ages, and Scottish

⁶⁸ J.H. Zedler (ed.), *Grosses vollständiges Universal Lexicon Aller Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. xxxv (Leipzig and Halle, 1743), pp. 1050-1051.

⁶⁹ See Gundling, *Discours*, vol. i, pp. 690, 695, 698. See Hübner, *Geographie*, vol. i, p. 363. Gundling's main argument for the Scots' neglect of manufacture and trade was that pride, stemming from ideas of nobility, prevented this involvement. See *ibid.*, pp. 695, 698. Travellers often reported that the Scottish nobility considered it inappropriate to their social position to make a living of manufacture or trade.

monasteries and colleges existed in many European cities.⁷⁰ In addition, the sons of the Scottish nobility often spent a part of their education studying at the famous universities on the Continent, where incidentally many learned Scots were employed as academic teachers. But how did people in the late Middle Ages and early modern age get into contact with Highlanders? The Highlands were inaccessible to foreigners and considered far too dangerous to visit. It was, therefore, up to the Highlanders to leave their mountain refuge and intermingle with the people of the Lowlands and England through trade. The growing demand in England for beef led to an increasing cattle trade with the fairs in the Lowlands. In these places traders were likely to associate with large numbers of Highlanders selling their cattle and buying meal and other provisions. Smaller parties of Highlanders were also involved in driving the cattle to England. Scottish, English and French merchants also regularly met Highlanders on the west coast of Scotland on the Clyde and Loch Fyne, where they bought the Highlanders' catch of herring and provided them with salt for curing their fish. Apart from the west coast fish trade, Scottish foreign trade was mainly conducted by Lowland east coast merchants with Highlanders rarely involved. The royal burghs on the Scottish east coast were integrated into a trading network all around the North Sea and especially the Baltic, where migrating tradesmen and pedlars from Scotland were a common sight.⁷¹ Scottish merchants imported wood from Norway, ores from Sweden and claret from France. Their main product was wool exported to the Low Countries and the staple of Bruges. While foreign trade was dominated by Lowlanders, the image of the Highlander, considered to be far more involved in robbery and plunder than in trade, suffered by comparison. Parties

⁷⁰ A very useful collection of essays documenting the relations of the Scots with Europe from 1200 to 1850 is to be found in T.C. Smout (ed.), *Scotland And Europe 1200-1850* (Edinburgh, 1986). [hereafter: Smout (ed.), *Scotland And Europe*]

⁷¹ See R. Mitchison, *A History of Scotland* (2nd edn. London, 1982), pp. 138, 146. For Scots around the Baltic see T.A. Fischer, *The Scots in Germany* (Edinburgh, 1902); *The Scots in Eastern and Western Prussia* (Edinburgh, 1903); *The Scots in Sweden* (Edinburgh, 1907). For a detailed study of Scottish merchants, pedlars and craftsmen in Denmark see T. Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot ... Scottish Danish relations c. 1450-1707* (Odense, 1988), vol. i, pp. 39-80. [hereafter: Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*] For Scots in Poland see A. Bieganska, 'A Note On The Scots In Poland, 1550-1800', in Smout (ed.), *Scotland And Europe*, pp. 157-165. Fynes Moryson and William Lithgow, who knew Poland from their travels in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, confirmed the large number of Scots living in Poland. Lithgow wrote that 30,000 Scots families lived in Poland and described it being 'a Mother and Nurse, for the youth and younglings of *Scotland*, who are yearely sent hither in great numbers'. W. Lithgow, *The Total Discourse, Of the Rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteene Yeares Travayles, from Scotland, to the most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (London, 1632), p. 422. [hereafter: Lithgow, *Travels*]

of Highlanders regularly invaded the bordering Lowland areas to rob and drive away the cattle, and, on the Continent, Highlanders were still mainly associated with warfare. In the early modern age, tens of thousands of them served as mercenaries mainly in the armies of Denmark,⁷² Sweden, the Low Countries, Poland and France, and acquired a reputation as fierce warriors. Lowlanders had settled around the North Sea and the Baltic, and were well known, but Highlanders remained a rare species on the Continent apart from their appearances as mercenaries in wartime. Therefore, their image was soon circumscribed by their profession as soldiers. If people on the Continent had no personal knowledge of Highlanders, what was the image provided in reference works and descriptions of Scotland? An analysis of their image must start in the late Middle Ages to chart changing attitudes to them.

Scottish chroniclers from the late fourteenth century made a clear distinction between Highland and Lowland culture. It must be stressed, however, that none of the late medieval and early modern historians discussed in this chapter was crucially concerned with the Highlands in his survey of Scottish history. In the 1380s John of Fordun defined the differences in language, dress and customs. His distinction between ‘civilised’ Lowlanders and ‘savage’ Highlanders was based on a combination of geographical and linguistic factors. His main argument was their difference in language. He compared them as follows:

Mores autem Scotorum secundum diversitatem linguarum variantur; duabus enim utuntur linguis, Scotica, videlicet, et Theuthonica, cujus linguae gens maritimas possidet et planas regiones, Scoticae vero [linguae] montanas inhabitat et insulas ulteriores. Maritima quoque domestica gens est et culta, fida, patiens et urbana, vestitu siquidem honesta, civilis atque pacifica, circa cultum divinum devota, sed et obviandis hostium injuriis semper prona. Insulana vero sive montana, ferina gens est et indomita, rudis, et immorigerata, raptu capax, otium diligens, ingenio docilis et callida, forma spectabilis, sed amictu deformis, populo quidem Anglorum et linguae, sed et propriae nationi, propter linguarum diversitatem, infesta, jugiter et crudelis. Regi tamen et regno fidelis et obediens, necnon facilliter legibus subdita, si regatur.⁷³

⁷² See Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 81-112.

⁷³ John of Fordun, *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, ed. by W.F. Skene, vol. i (Edinburgh, 1871), p. 42. Lingua ‘Scotica’ referred to Gaelic, lingua ‘Theuthonica’ to English. I use the Latin original as the English translation by F.J.H. Skene tends to be unreliable. The manuscript copies vary slightly in this passage. For details see *ibid.*, p. 42. For the possible variations in the translation of this key passage see A. Grant, ‘Scotland’s “Celtic fringe” in the late Middle Ages: the MacDonald Lords of the Isles and the kingdom of Scotland’, in R. Davies (ed.), *The British Isles, 1100-1500* (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 119-120. The English translation of this passage reads: ‘The manners and customs of the Scots vary with the diversity of their speech. For two languages are spoken amongst them, the Scottish and the Teutonic; the latter of which is the language of those who occupy the seaboard and plains, while the race of Scottish speech inhabits the highlands and outlying islands. The people of the coast are of domestic and civilized habits, trusty, patient, and urbane, decent in their attire, affable, and peaceful, devout in Divine worship, yet always prone to resist a wrong at the hand of their enemies. The

It is significant that Fordun did not refer to the different social organisation of both peoples. He made no contrast in his analysis between the ‘clan system’ in the Highlands and the ‘feudal system’ in the Lowlands. Nicholson argued that ‘This does not mean that neither clans nor feudalism existed; but it does suggest that there was in Fordun’s time no clear-cut demarcation between the two.’⁷⁴ The clan system was based on kinship, and the same could be applied to the great baronial families of the Lowlands. Feudal conveyancing was general both in the Highlands and the Lowlands, and ‘Yet in neither region was feudalism by itself capable of providing the secure social grouping necessary for survival in the time of lawlessness over which the early Stewarts presided.’⁷⁵ While Fordun described the Highlanders as savage, he clearly made the point that they were obedient to the king. If governed properly, they could easily be made to submit to the force of law. Later chroniclers and historians such as Bower, Major and Camden, increasingly abandoned this view and considered the Highlanders to be untameable barbarians and natural rebels against the king and the rule of law. Moreover, these authors gradually abandoned the attitude that this distinction was primarily based on the difference in language, and focused instead on the difference in the social organisation. This shift led finally to the condemnation of clanship as the main source of the disorderly and rebellious character of the Highlanders.

Fordun’s continuator, Walter Bower, Abbot of Inchcolm, took up the distinction between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders and further elaborated it. In his *Scotichronicon*, written in the 1440s, he also emphasised the savage character of the Highlanders while stressing initially, in accordance with Fordun, their obedience to the king. He characterised them as

highlanders and people of the islands, on the other hand, are a savage and untamed nation, rude and independent, given to rapine, ease-loving, of a docile and warm disposition, comely in person, but unsightly in dress, hostile to the English people and language, and, owing to diversity of speech, even to their own nation, and exceedingly cruel. They are, however, faithful and obedient to their king and country, and easily made to submit to law, if properly governed.’ John of Fordun, *Chronicle of The Scottish Nation*, ed. by W.F. Skene, vol. ii (Edinburgh, 1872), p. 38. M. Lynch argues that the beginning of this explicit distinction between Highland and Lowland culture in the chronicles coincided with a growing concern in the parliament and the king’s council about the lawlessness of the Highlands. See M. Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (2nd edn. London, 1992), p. 67. [hereafter: Lynch, *Scotland*]

⁷⁴ R. Nicholson, *Scotland: The Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974), p. 206.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

fierce and untameable, uncouth and unpleasant, much given to theft, fond of doing nothing, but their minds are quick to learn, and cunning. They are strikingly handsome in appearance, but their clothing is unsightly. They are always hostile and savage not only towards the people and language of England, but also towards their fellow Scots because of the difference in language. They are however loyal and obedient to the king and the kingdom, and they are easily made to submit to the laws, if rule is exerted over them.⁷⁶

However, this judgement was merely a copy of Fordun and did not reflect Bower's own view of the Highlanders. His attitude towards them was far less positive, and this was reflected both in those passages where he added to the chronicles of his predecessor, and in his continuation, where he felt free to express his own views. He used the term 'caterans' in a new meaning, applying it to the Highlanders in general, and stressing their disorderly behaviour by comparing them to poisonous animals:

But alas! the poison that God has forbidden to spider, toad and reptiles abounds beyond measure in human nature, since poisonous deeds are perpetrated to such an extent among the Irish and among highland and wild Scots whom we call Catervans or Ketherans, that, as it is written, "They lie in wait for someone's blood. They hide their snares against the innocent for no cause; seizing anything that is of value they fill their caves with spoils and contrive deceit against their own lives."⁷⁷

Bower's comments reflected the bias of the Lowland chroniclers towards the Highlanders. In his view all Highlanders were 'wild caterans', 'untameable and rebels against the kings and law-makers of Scotland' and 'wicked men' who posed a threat to the peace and security of the 'domesticated men with skills'.⁷⁸ One might say that Bower initiated the vilification of the Highlanders in Scottish historiography as natural rebels against the rule of law.

In Scotland, by the late Middle Ages, the image of the 'barbaric' Highlander was thus clearly distinguished from the 'civilised' Lowlander. Fordun's and Bower's distinctions, however, were also based on classical definitions, examples and motifs of 'civilisation' and 'barbarity'. Therefore, these distinctions must not be interpreted entirely as contemporary sociological observations on the state of Scottish society. The key distinctions between 'civilised' men and 'barbarians' in the late medieval chronicles were based on classical authors, such as Cicero's notion of man's progress

⁷⁶ W. Bower, *Scotichronicon*, ed. by D.E.R. Watt, vol. i (Aberdeen, 1993), p. 185. In the Latin original Bower used exactly the same terminology as Fordun to stress the Highlanders' obedience to the king. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 184.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 49. Bede, of course, referred to animals. Bower used the quotation from Bede to make a parallel with the Highlanders.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. vii (Aberdeen, 1996), pp. 359-361. The 'domesticated men with skills' were, of course, the Lowlanders.

from a state of nature to a state of civilisation.⁷⁹ He believed that civilised men lived in the cities and on the plains, that they lived from agriculture and that they were governed by the rule of law. In contrast, barbarians lived in the woods and mountains, they lived from supposedly primitive pastoralism, and they were not governed by the rule of law, but lived in disorder. Although these were undoubtedly simplified notions of civilisation and barbarity, it was tempting to apply them to the different lifestyles of the Lowlanders and the Highlanders in Scotland. In the public perception these obvious distinctions confirmed Cicero's notion.

This distinction was adopted in the first printed books about Scotland in the early sixteenth century. Printing had revolutionised the spread of information. Printed books now provided people all over Europe with information about Scotland, its history and inhabitants. It is now necessary to examine the image that sixteenth-century British authors provided of the Highlanders and how their works influenced authors on the Continent.

In 1521 John Major clearly distinguished between Highlanders and Lowlanders with two different kinds of Scots known to foreigners as 'Wild Scots' and 'householding Scots'.⁸⁰ Major wrote that the wild Scots speak Irish and lag behind the householding Scots in dress, behaviour and morals. On the other hand, they are more warlike, which he thought more natural for people living further north and in forests. Major subdivided the wild Scots into two classes: firstly, those who possessed cattle, sheep and horses, and for fear of losing them paid more obedience to the king and the law; and secondly, the indolent Highlanders who did not possess any livestock and delighted solely in a life of chase and indolence. They were unwilling to take up employment and existed on the efforts of others, following their savage chiefs into a life of robbery and plunder. Major made it perfectly clear that he regarded these Highlanders as a threat to the government and the rule of law. He stressed that the Scottish kings still had great difficulty in withstanding the inroads of these men.⁸¹ In contrast to Fordun, Major no longer considered all Highlanders to be obedient to the king. To him, the indolent Highlanders were a threat to the

⁷⁹ See W.R. Jones, 'The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe', *Comparative Studies In Society And History*, vol. xiii (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 396-398.

⁸⁰ Major, *History*, p. 48.

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, p. 49.

government and the well-being of the nation. Although Major did not vilify the Highlanders to the extent that Bower did, he clearly reflected the change of attitude towards them. As Major's *History* was one of the first printed books on Scotland, this was the image of the Highlanders that spread abroad.

Major's description of the indolent Highlanders' garb and weapons gives an idea of what they looked like in the early sixteenth century:

From the mid-leg to the foot they go uncovered; their dress is, for an over garment, a loose plaid, and a shirt saffron-dyed. They are armed with bow and arrows, a broadsword, and a small halbert. They always carry in their belt a stout dagger, single edged, but of the sharpest. In time of war they cover the whole body with a coat of mail, made of iron rings, and in it they fight. The common folk among the Wild Scots go out to battle with the whole body clad in a linnen garment sewed together in patchwork, well daubed with wax or with pitch, and with an over-coat of deerskin.⁸²

Undoubtedly, Highland mercenaries, wearing their distinctive garb and their own arms when fighting on the Continent, must have made a lasting impression. Outside the British Isles the image of the Highlanders soon became synonymous with that of wild, rough and fierce fighting men. Major finished his description of them by stressing their irreconcilable hatred of the Lowlanders and English:

Our householding Scots, or quiet and civil-living people – that is, all who lead a decent and reasonable life – these men hate, on account of their differing speech, as much as they do the English.⁸³

Boece's attitude towards the Highlanders was markedly different from his predecessors. His notion of the Highlanders and their customs was not included in a separate chapter, but is to be found in the chapter about 'the new Maneris and the auld of Scottis'.⁸⁴ It is important to stress that Boece did not write about the customs of the Highlanders and Lowlanders, but about the customs of the ancient Scots and the Scots in his time. What customs did he attribute to the ancient Scots? Boece admired their ingenuity, wisdom and chivalry. He stressed their strength, vigour and

⁸² Ibid., p. 49. Major did not mention any firearms among the Highlanders' weapons. It seems as if firearms were not yet used by them. He also referred to the harp as the Highlanders' instrument. There was no mention of the bagpipes. See *ibid.*, pp. 49-50. In the early sixteenth century the Highlands, and particularly the western Highlands, had far closer ties to Ireland than to the Scottish Lowlands. The harp was the traditional instrument of the Gaels in Ireland as well as in the Highlands of Scotland. As was usual among sixteenth-century historians, Major did not clearly distinguish between Highlanders and native Irishmen.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 50. Major had a pronounced Anglophile agenda, which must have contributed to his reservations about the Highlanders.

⁸⁴ See Boece, *History*, vol. i, pp. liv-lxii.

virtue in war and peace. He also emphasised their moderation in sleep, food and drink. Their food was plain and made only from home-grown products. They ate only breakfast and supper, consumed their meat half-raw, and spent the day in exercise and hunting. Their clothes were plain; they refused beds and instead used to sleep on the ground or on straw. Their sons were brought up in the same manner to accustom them to the same hardy and simple lifestyle. In war the nobility led the commoners into battle, and an insult or injury to any one of them was regarded as an injury to all of them that had to be avenged with the blood of their enemies. Being wounded in battle made them even fiercer and more committed. On the march they killed the first beast they encountered, dipped their swords in its blood and tasted from it. They despised cowardice, and deserters from the army were slain. They lived in moderation and temperance, but gluttons and drunkards were allowed a generous final meal and drink before they were drowned. Boece's notion of the ancient Scots included all the attributes that were, roughly 250 years later, ascribed to the 'noble savage'.

However, according to Boece, these virtues had begun to decline due to the increased intimacy with the English in the reign of King Malcolm Canmore (1058-93). In the eleventh century they began to disappear from Scotland, making the Scots in his time very different from their ancestors. He bemoaned that drunkenness had replaced sobriety and temperance had given way to gluttony and luxury. In short, the temperance and 'honourable maneris of thair eldaris' had given way to a life 'of avarice and lust' in his time.⁸⁵ Consequently, the Scots had become effeminate and had lost their ability to defend themselves against the incursions of the English.

He made no explicit distinction between Highlanders and Lowlanders, but implied that the Highlanders came far closer to this heroic lifestyle and had preserved far more of the ancient customs than the anglicised Lowlanders. It is, therefore, not surprising that subsequent authors found many of these virtues preserved in the lifestyle of the Highlanders. Given the popularity of Boece's *History*, it is not surprising that his arguments dominated the discussion of the subject for the remainder of the sixteenth century. Most subsequent authors projected these

⁸⁵ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. lv.

supposed customs of the ancient Scots onto the Highlanders and thus contributed to an antiquated and stereotyped image.

Boece's attitude towards the lifestyle and the customs of the Highlanders was, therefore, in sharp contrast to that of Major and Bower. He admired the Highlanders for their preservation of certain ancient virtues, and he did not share his predecessors' view that the Highlanders were inferior to the anglicised Lowlanders in respect of their morals or lifestyle. On the contrary, he considered them as superior to the effeminate Lowlanders because of their hardy, warlike and plain way of living.⁸⁶ Like his predecessors, Boece emphasised the wild lifestyle of the Highlanders, but his idea of them was much closer to the notion of the 'noble savage' than to the notion of the 'uncivilised barbarian' that dominated the works of his predecessors and fellow historians. He even considered them, to a certain extent, to be the redeemers of the nation because of their lifestyle and old virtues. The loss of these ancient virtues had left the country weakened, and he thus promoted the Highlanders' moderation and hardiness to a role model for the nation.⁸⁷

Continental authors furiously plagiarised this very popular chapter. Unfortunately, they gave a much distorted version of the manners of the Scots and Boece's underlying idea of the virtues of the Highlanders. They stressed their hardy and plain lifestyle, but focused clearly on the more curious and strange customs, while overemphasising their importance on contemporary Scotland.⁸⁸

Boece's notion of the ancient manners of the Scots was continued by John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, in his chapter on 'The Ald Scottis Maneris And Present Lykwyse, Cheiflie Of Thame Quha Occupies The Mountanis Called Hebrides'.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ See also E.J. Cowan, 'The Discovery Of The Gàidhealtachd In Sixteenth Century Scotland', *TGSI*, vol. lx (1997-98), pp. 264-268. [hereafter: Cowan, 'Discovery of the Gàidhealtachd'] Cowan argues that Scottish historians began to romanticise the Highlands, its people and their culture as early as the sixteenth century when they deplored the loss of the old virtues among the Scots. See *ibid.*, pp. 259-260, 264-268, 278. In my view, this romanticising should not be overestimated. These authors may have regretted the loss of certain old virtues among the Scots, but the majority of sixteenth-century historians considered the Highlanders, their disorderly behaviour and their customs as barbaric and a threat to civilisation. To them the Highlanders were not a role model, and civilisation could only be found in Lowland life. Boece's and Leslie's admiration for the Highlanders were not representative.

⁸⁷ The rehabilitation of the Highlanders after the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles (1493) was presented in Boece, Leslie and Buchanan in a way similar to the rehabilitation of the Highlanders in the wake of the Romantic movement. The Highlanders no longer posed a serious threat to the Hanoverian succession after their final defeat at Culloden in 1746.

⁸⁸ See chapter 1.2.2.

⁸⁹ See Leslie, *Historie*, vol. i, pp. 89-97. Leslie's *Historie* was first published as *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum libri decem* (Rome, 1578). In the 1675 Latin edition this caption read 'qui

Clearly inspired by Boece, Leslie wrote that the customs and virtues Boece attributed to the old Scots were still preserved among the Highlanders. It is needless to quote Leslie's paraphrase of Boece's attributes, but it is important to stress that Leslie projected this lifestyle and manners entirely onto the Highlanders of his day. They had preserved exactly those virtues and customs whose loss Boece had bemoaned half a century earlier. Thus Leslie contributed considerably to the antiquated and stereotyped image of the Highlanders.⁹⁰

George Buchanan inserted a paragraph about the Highlanders' customs into the geographical description of Scotland that formed the first book of his *History*. In it he described some of the Highlanders' curious customs that can also be found in many later works about Scotland. The Highlanders, he wrote, were still boiling the flesh of an animal in its own hide⁹¹ or, when hunting, eating it raw, squeezing out the blood. They still drank the juice of the boiled flesh and lived on whey, bread and cakes made of oats and barley. After a small breakfast of oats and barley-cakes, they would spend the rest of the day hunting, not having any food until the evening. According to Buchanan, the Highlanders of his day preferred dark, brown plaids instead of their old, more colourful ones so that they would be more difficult to discover when lying in the heather. Wrapped in their plaids they spent nights in the heather, even during snowy winters. He wrote that the Highlanders still liked their hardy way of living and refused to sleep in beds. Instead, they still slept on the ground strewn with fern or heath. They were still contemptuous of the commodities of an effeminate way of life such as beds and blankets. Even when going abroad, they still preferred to sleep on

Montana et Hebrides incolunt' – the Highlands and Hebrides. J. Leslie, *De Origine Moribus et rebus gestis Scotorum Libri Decem* (n.p., 1675), p. 53. Leslie's *Historie*, covering the period from the origins of the Scottish people until 1436, was compiled from Major's *Historia Maioris Britanniae* and Boece's *History*. The section from 1436 to 1562 is far more detailed and a valuable source written from a Catholic point of view on the time leading up to the Reformation. Leslie's geographical description of Scotland is more detailed than those of Major and Boece and is likely to have been based on personal observation.

⁹⁰ Another important explanation for Leslie's admiration for the Highlanders was the adherence of their majority to the Catholic religion after the Reformation.

⁹¹ Froissart attributed this custom to the Scots in their military campaigns in the fourteenth century. See chapter 2.1.2. It seems to have been practised in the remote parts of the Highlands and Islands until the early eighteenth century. Richard Franck toured the Highlands in 1656-57 and attributed it to the inhabitants of Strathnaver. See R. Franck, *Northern Memoirs, Calculated for the Meridian of Scotland* (London, 1694), pp. 176-177. [hereafter: Franck, *Northern Memoirs*] See also Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 172-173. Burt related this custom to the meaner sort of people in the islands. He did not know it from personal observation.

the floor, wrapped in their own plaids, in order to preserve their hardiness.⁹² Buchanan's discussion of the Highlanders' customs was undoubtedly inspired by Boece, but it also reflected the extent to which Renaissance writers were influenced by their Greek and Roman predecessors. His account of the Highlanders' heroic conduct in war, their fearless character, hardy upbringing and lifestyle included all the topoi and vocabulary that the ancient authors had applied to the Celts. Tacitus had detected values in the Caledonian tribes that had been lost among the effeminate Romans of his time. Buchanan found these values preserved in the Highlanders' lifestyle and noted that they had been lost among the Lowlanders.⁹³

Buchanan's description of their armour was similar to Major's, although in his time only few Highlanders carried swords or Lochaber axes. The halberd was no longer mentioned as part of their weaponry. He also wrote that the Highlanders were still fond of music. Their instruments were ornamented harps, called 'Clarshachs', and in war they used bagpipes instead of trumpets.⁹⁴

William Camden's *Britain* contained only casual reference to the Highlanders. This is rather strange, considering the extent of his geographical description and the fact that half of Scotland belonged, in respect of its geography and its cultural identity, to the Highlands. Although Camden gave a description of all the shires of Scotland, he mentioned the Highlanders only casually when writing about Breadalbane. His idea of the Highlanders was dominated by their wild habits, their cruelty, hatred, warlike spirit and their inclination to robbery. Even more than Major, he considered them a danger to the civilised people living in the rest of Scotland. In fact, parliament had to intervene and make a law allowing the punishment of other members of a clan for the crimes of one member:

There inhabite these regions, a kinde of people, rude, warlicke, ready to fight querulous, & mischeeuous: they be commonly termed *High-landmen* who being in deed the right progeny of the ancient Scots, speake Irish, and call themselues *Albinich*; their bodies be firmly made and well compact, able withall and strong, nimble of foote, high minded,

⁹² See Buchanan, *History*, pp. 23-24.

⁹³ See Cowan, 'Discovery of the Gàidhealtachd', pp. 279-280. It has been shown in chapter 1.2.1. that Buchanan did not consider the Gaelic tradition of the Highlands as a possible beginning for a history of 'civilisation' in Scotland. Likewise, he did not consider the Highlanders' lifestyle, behaviour and their attitude towards the government as a role model for Scotland, although they had preserved certain timeless, universal virtues.

⁹⁴ See Buchanan, *History*, p. 24. Bagpipes seemed to be used only for military purposes and the Highlanders' main instrument was still the old Celtic harp. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bagpipes became synonymous with the Highlanders as the harp, hitherto the traditional instrument of the Highlands, fell into disuse during that period.

inbread and nuzeled in warlick exercises or robberies rather, and upon a deadly fued and hatred most forward and desperate to take revenge. They goe attired Irish-like in stript or streaked mantles of divers collours, wearing thicke long glibbes of haire, living by hunting, fishing, fowling, and stealing. In the warre, their armour is an head-peece or Morion of iron, and an habergeon or coate of maile: their weopons bee bowes, barbed or hooked arrowes, and broade backswordes: and being divided by certaine families or kinreds which they terme *Clannes*, they commit such cruell outrages, what with robbing, spoiling and killing, that their savage cruelty hath forced a law to be enacted, whereby it is lawfull. That if any person out of any one Clanne or kinred of theirs, hath trespassed ought and done harme, whosoever of that, Clanne or linage chance to bee taken, hee shall either make amends for the harmes, or else suffer death for it, when as the whole *Clan*, commonly beareth feud for any hurt received by any one member thereof, by execution of lawes, order of iustice, or otherwise.⁹⁵

Unlike Major, Camden no longer made any distinction between the law-abiding Highlanders and those indolent ones who were making their living merely from robbery. To him all Highlanders were cruel savages and made their living from plunder and killing, making the law passed against them more than justified. In the 200 years between Fordun and Camden, the image of the Highlander in Scotland and abroad had undergone a fundamental change from that of a member of a wild but law-abiding culture to the stereotyped reputation of a cruel and barbarous robber. As foreigners had no access to the manuscript copies of Fordun and Bower, they had to draw their information from the printed books. The image of the Highlander provided by Major and Camden speaks volumes. It needs no further explanation that visitors to Scotland considered the Highlands to be a ‘no-go area’.

Camden’s description of the Highlanders was of the utmost importance as it was included in most of the works about Scotland that were published on the Continent. Camden’s *Britain* appeared in numerous editions and was easily available. It soon became the main source of information for foreigners about the

⁹⁵ Camden, *Britain*, part ii, pp. 39-40. This Act, titled ‘Additioun to the actis maid aganis notorius theiffis and foimaris of clannis’, was passed on 29 Nov. 1581. It is printed in *The Acts Of The Parliaments Of Scotland*, vol. iii ([Edinburgh], 1814), pp. 218-219. [hereafter: *APS*] This Act was directed against the ‘clannis of theiffis/ brokin men/ and foirnairis vpoun trew men’, and marked a significant change in government policy to bring the Highlands under control. It held the clan chiefs responsible for ensuring that the people living on their lands abide by the law, and issued a *carte blanche* to the government to persecute any clan member for the crimes committed by any other member of the same clan. For the objectives and effects of the Acts on the Highlands passed under James VI see J. Goodare, *State and Society in Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 254-285. [hereafter: Goodare, *State and Society*] Goodare argues that in the minority of James VI the policy-makers in the Lowlands and Highlands usually ignored each other, and that the government did not consider the Highlands as a serious problem until the 1580s. The government had adopted a similar policy towards the Borders since the early sixteenth century. The ‘general band’ made the landlords responsible for the crimes committed by their tenants and followers. For details see *ibid.*, pp. 257-263.

state, the constitution, the system of justice, the geography and regional history of England, Scotland and Ireland. Although the section about Scotland (54 pages) was very concise in comparison to the description of England (822 pages), Camden's *Britain* soon established its reputation as the most important guidebook to Scotland. No other geographical description was so often referred to by visitors. For its time the detailed descriptions of every shire, including its towns, agriculture, trade and commerce, natural curiosities, and the history and habits of the people, made it the first guidebook for travellers to the British Isles. These were the reasons for Camden's success in shaping the image of the Highlanders and their fearsome reputation on the Continent, which persisted into the eighteenth century. Considering the Highlanders' regular appearances as mercenaries on the Continent and Camden's description of them in their native country, it is understandable that the Highlands were considered to be an area far too dangerous to travel to until the second half of the eighteenth century. The lack of visitors travelling to the north of Scotland meant that the stereotyped and prejudiced image of the Highlanders was not questioned but taken for the absolute truth. However, Camden was scarce in detail on the actual way of life in the Highlands. Apart from writing about the Highlanders' striking garb, different language, wild manners and organisation in clans, he did not give any further information about their way of husbandry, their dwellings, festivities or local habits. Thus the image of the Highlanders was focused on the obvious differences to the other people living in Britain. More detailed information about their way of life was not available. The further away from Britain the writer, the more stereotyped the descriptions of Highlanders became, and imagination soon filled the vacuum created by the lack of reliable information. An examination of the image of the Highlanders in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century continental publications explains the way stereotypes were established.

Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia* is a good example of the errors that occurred when neither author nor publisher had ever been to the country they described. The *Cosmographia* was gathered from a study of the works of ancient and contemporary geographers, historians and travel writers, and was enriched by the

information that Münster's contributors collected in foreign countries.⁹⁶ That this method proved to be far from reliable is obvious from the edition published in Basle in 1628. In this edition the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland were obviously mixed up. The different parts of the country and their population were described as follows. The Grampian Mountains were the dividing line:

Dieser Berg trennet Schottlandt in zwey gleiche Theil/ deren das eine gegen Mittag zu/ das Ober Schottlandt/ das ander aber gegen Mitternacht das Nidere genennet wirdt. Das obere Schottlandt ist dem anderen an fruchtbarkeit uberlegen/ und hat auch höfflichere Burger/ die man Männer vom hohen Land zu nennen pflegt/ und gebrauchen sich mehrertheils der Engelländischen Sprach. Das nider Schottland aber ist rauch/ unerbawet und wild/ derowegen seine Einwohner die wilde oder grobe Schottländer im nderen Land werden genennet: Seind von den Irrländischen/ und haben demnach auch derselben Sitten/ Sprach und Gebrauch zu kriegen noch an sich. Seind mit langen Saffrenfarben Röcken bekleidet: brauchen wider ihre Feinde Bogen und Pfeil/ darneben breite Schwerdter/ und unter den Röcken die allerspitzigsten Dolchen.⁹⁷

Münster's *Cosmographia* was undoubtedly one of the outstanding descriptions of the world in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, it seems that the knowledge of Scotland in Switzerland and Germany at that time was still pretty limited, otherwise such blunders could not have passed the printing press undetected.

Martin Zeiller's description of Highlanders in 1634 clearly focused on the striking differences in their appearance to the rest of the population. He mentioned their wild look, different language, weapons and garb, and stressed their inferiority of manners in comparison to the Lowlanders:

Was nun ferners dieser Inwohner deß Schottlands sitten unnd gebräuch anlangen thut/ so ist oben gesagt worden/ daß die rechte Schotten noch was wild und grob/ die sich der Irländischen sprach/ der bögen und pfeile/ breiten Degen und spitzigen Dolchen (so sie unter den Gürteln tragen) gebrauchen/ und ihr Gewand mit Saffran färben: hergegen die andern Schotten/ so in den Provintzen gegen Engelland zu wohnen/ unnd welche von den *Anglo-Saxonibus* herkommen/ English reden/ auch höfflicher/ sinnreicher/ und besser qualificirt/ als jene/ seyen.⁹⁸

Zeiller seems to have had no personal knowledge of Highlanders apart from, perhaps, having seen them as mercenaries in the Thirty Years' War. Writing about

⁹⁶ One of Münster's contributors was Edinburgh-born Alexander Alane, who as an emigrant adopted the surname 'Alesius'. He prepared the earliest known prose description of Edinburgh. His description must have been prepared before 1529 when he left Scotland for the Continent, never to return. He communicated his description to Münster, who included it together with a wood engraving of the town in his *Cosmographia*. For details about Alexander 'Alesius' and his description of Edinburgh see P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Scotland Before 1700* (Edinburgh, 1893), pp. 105-108. [hereafter: Hume Brown (ed.), *Scotland Before 1700*]

⁹⁷ Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. 88-89.

⁹⁸ Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, pp. 124-125.

their character and habits, he did not go into great detail, but summarised previous authors in stressing the Highlanders' warlike spirit and their inclination for robbery. He clearly felt unable to give a proper judgement of his own:

Man tadelt gleichwol auch an ihnen (wie dan kein Land und Nation gantz ohne tadel ist)/ daß sie zum theil rachgirig/ kühn/ verschlagen/ un zu den auffruhrn/ auch zum fressen/ rauben/ etc. solle geneigt sein/ davon ich aber andere urtheilen lasse.⁹⁹

Zeiller's idea of Highlanders typified their image in Germany during the Thirty Years' War. His description of them was very similar to the text attached to an etched pamphlet by Georg Köler, which showed Highland soldiers, probably men of Mackay's regiment, in Swedish service at Stettin in Germany in 1630. The engraving and the inscription underneath put in a nutshell what made Highlanders, here called 'Irishmen', famous on the Continent. The Highlanders, one of them barefooted, were dressed in their traditional garb and armed with muskets, bows and arrows, and long knives. Moreover, the author emphasised their hardiness, their moderation in food and drink, their ability to march or run more than twenty German miles a day and their warlike spirit:

Es ist ein Starckes dauerhafftigs Volck behilft sich mit geringer speiß hatt es nicht brodt so Essen sie Würtzeln. Wans auch die Notturfft erfordert können sie des Tages Über die 20 Teutscher meil weges lauffen, haben neben Musqueden Ihre Bogen und Köcher und lange Messer.¹⁰⁰

The remainder of the pamphlet was completed by a more detailed description of the Highlanders and their native country. The author stressed the hard living conditions and noted that the Highlands were more suited to cattle and sheep breeding than farming. Moreover, he characterised the common Highlanders' plain garb as barbaric and emphasised once more their simple and moderate way of living:

Daß gemeine Volck braucht sich schwartzer Kleider/ denn die Schaaf deß Landes sind alle schwartz/ sind aber gantz Barbarisch gemacht/ tragen auch Kappen.

Auß diesem Land nun wie gemeld/ sind Königl. Mayst. in Schweden 8. hundert dergleichen Irren angelangt/ welches sonst ein hartes und tauerhafftes Volck/ schwartz als die Zügäuner/ gebrauchen sich in Kriegswesen Musqueten/ Köcher/ Pfeil/ Bögen und lange Messer/ sind kurtz von Person/ lauffen geschwind und so es die Notdurfft erfordert deß Tages 16 bis in 20. Meilwegs/ behelffen sich mit geringer Speiß und wenn sie nicht Brodt haben/ lassen sie sich an den Wurtzeln auß der Erden begnügen. Ihre Führer ziehen

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 125.

¹⁰⁰ [G. Köler], *Kurtze Beschreibung/ deß auß Irrland/ ... ankommten Volcks* (n.p., 1632), Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Inv. IH 225. [hereafter: Köler, *Kurtze Beschreibung*] According to Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, p. 98, twenty German miles corresponded to about 75 English miles (120 kilometres). As was usual among early modern German writers, Köler made no distinction between Highlanders and native Irishmen.

in gantz Püntgefärbten reinen seidenen Kleidern auff/ in Schuch alle von Baast gemacht un gebunden/ ein hurtiges/ geschwindes unnd zum schiessen ein gewieses Volck ...¹⁰¹

Counter-Reformation propaganda clearly associated the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, with all the attributes of barbarians from the north. It portrayed the Swedish intervention in the Thirty Years' War as an invasion of northern barbarians mainly consisting of Lapps, Livonians and Scots.¹⁰² The national caricatures embodied the notion of the uncivilised, pre-social savages of Europe. The uncivilised and sylvan character of these peoples was illustrated by leafy branches on the Livonian's hat and the Scot's pack. The Lapp as the archetypal primitive barbarian was shown barefooted and seemingly eating leaves. The Scot, at least, wore shoes but was visibly dressed in animal skins.¹⁰³ For the Counter-Reformation propaganda the involvement of soldiers from Scandinavia, the Baltic, and Scotland clearly confirmed the old stereotype relating back to the Greek and Roman philosophers about the dark forces of uncivilised and savage barbarians who inhabited the sylvan regions of northern Europe.¹⁰⁴ The image of the 'northerner' as a barbaric and uncivilised savage was further boosted by the publication of Pierre Martin de La Martinière's *Voyage des pais septentrionaux* (Paris, 1671). This hugely popular travel narrative, based on the author's sea voyage along the Norwegian coastline to

¹⁰¹ Köler, *Kurtze Beschreibung*. Interestingly, neither in the etching nor in the description was there any mention of claymores. A memorandum, titled 'Skotske Høvedsmænd', by Scottish Captain James Cullen to the Danish authorities in autumn 1565 still mentioned the claymore among the Highlanders' weapons but made no mention of muskets. Between the mid-sixteenth century and the Thirty Years' War the musket had replaced the claymore in the Highlanders' arsenal of weapons. See Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 86-89, 98. Captain Cullen's memorandum also emphasised the Scottish soldiers' sparing use of food and drink.

¹⁰² See Williamson, 'Scots, Indians And Empire', pp. 50-55.

¹⁰³ For the Counter-Reformation caricature of the barbaric northerners see *ibid.*, p. 55. Such caricatures, however, must be seen as political propaganda. The association of the Scots with exotic and supposedly uncivilised peoples had a long history in European arts. In the Valois Tapestries a wild Scot was shown joining Moors and other exotics in a mock siege of an elephant. See *ibid.*, p. 51. In a tournament at Bayonne in 1565 two groups of costumed knights were featured. One represented the civilised nations, while the group representing the savage powers were costumed as 'wild Scotsmen, demons, Turks and nymphs'. *Ibid.*, p. 49. Lucas de Heere's drawings of the people of the British Isles showed a Highlander in a manner rather distinctive from the rest of the population. The Highlander was not dressed in a kilt or plaid, but wore a brat (a coarse kind of apron), which was in sharp contrast to the rest of the figures who were portrayed in their elaborate costumes. Furthermore, he carried a claymore and a dagger. His dress and the order of the plates associated him to the wild Irish, the imaginative reconstruction of the naked and painted Picts, and a hooded Eskimo. See Heere, *Beschrijving*, pp. lxxii-lxxxii, and plates nos. G XV, L III, G I, G XVI, L X, G XVIII, G XX, A, (all unpaginated).

¹⁰⁴ Jean Bodin's *Les Six Livres de la République* (Paris, 1576) contributed further to the supposed image of the savage nature, barbarity and cruelty of the northern peoples.

Lapland, Spitzbergen, the Kola Peninsula, Siberia, Novaya Zemlya, Greenland and Iceland in 1670, reached numerous editions and was soon translated into English (London, 1674), German (Hamburg, 1675) and Dutch (Amsterdam, 1685). It cemented the image of the ‘north’ as a wild land of demonic darkness, which was populated by uncivilised and cruel savages.¹⁰⁵

Rutgerus Hermannides’s *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien* (1666) included several paragraphs about the customs of the Highlanders. Starting with a general description of the habits of the Scottish people, which was mainly culled from Boece, he moved on to concentrate on the supposed habits of the Highlanders. The image he presented of them included many attributes already used by Greek and Roman writers to describe barbarians. He stressed their superhuman strength and swiftness. According to him, the Highlanders still caught partridges for physical education and competed and fought with wild animals:

Von Leibe sind sie also behänd und geschwind/ daß sie mit wilden Thieren Wettlauff halten: so starck/ daß sie mit eben diesen ergrimmeten Thieren zu ringen sich darstellen und sie gleichsam außfordern.¹⁰⁶

To him it was not surprising that people educated in such a lifestyle hardly suffered from diseases and often lived to venerable ages. Hermannides gave further examples of the Scots’ superhuman physique by citing a Scot called Dünscanus Marchmartin, who was said to have lived in Germany, in the immediate past, and to have breakfasted on a quarter of an ox before doing a journey of 100,000 paces. He had also spent sixteen years of his life living in snowy wastes, surviving only upon raw salmon.¹⁰⁷ Such descriptions undoubtedly added to Scotland’s reputation abroad as a

¹⁰⁵ The English edition read *A New Voyage Into The Northern Countries: Being a Discription of the Manners, Customs, Superstition, Buildings, and Habits of the Norwegians, Laponians, Kilops, Borandians, Siberians, Samojedes, Zemblans and Islanders* (London, 1674). A second edition was published with the title *A New Voyage To The North: Containing, A Full Account of Norway; the Laplands, both Danish, Swedish and Muscovite; Of Borandia, Siberia, Samojedia, Zembla and Iseland* (London, 1706). At Novaya Zemlya four natives were captured and later exhibited as exotic creatures in Copenhagen. See *ibid.*, pp. 227-232, 247. Although there was no reference to the Highlanders of Scotland, many of the stereotypes and the supposed habits of these Scandinavian savages, such as cruelty, barbarity and superstition, could have been easily applied to the Highlanders as well. For a discussion of the stereotyping of the supposedly uncivilised and demonic ‘northerner’ in La Martinière’s *Voyage* see R. Hagen, ‘Early Modern Representations of the Far North – The 1670 Voyage of La Martinière’, *ARV – Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, vol. lviii (Stockholm, 2002), pp. 19-42.

¹⁰⁶ Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*, book iii, p. 9.

¹⁰⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 9.

land of myth and miracles. Hermannides finished his description of the customs of the Scots by stressing that the Scottish marshes, swamps and mountains were still inhabited by dangerous robbers who ambushed whoever they encountered.¹⁰⁸ Next to Boece, Hermannides's main source of information seems to have been Camden as his descriptions of the shires of Scotland were mainly culled from Camden's *Britain*. His next reference to Highlanders could, therefore, be found in a description of Breadalbane. Hermannides paraphrased Camden, stressing the wild and uncivilised behaviour of the Highlanders and their special inclination to robbery:

In dieser Provintz wohnen nun insonderheit grobe/ bößhafte gewaltübende Leute. Nennen einen Menschen gemeiniglich *High-Landmen*. Und daß eben dieser Landschafft Einsassen der uralten Schotten Abkunfft ist/ erhellet auch darauß/ weil sie sich Irländischer Sprache gebrauchen/ und unter einander selbst daheim nicht anders als Albinnich heissen. Sind trefflich wohlgesetzte starcke Kerl/ geschwinder Füsse/ aufgeblasenes Hertzens/ und in Kriegerischen oder vielmehr räuberischen Stücken geübt.

Es mag auch wol kein Volck gefunden werden/ das rachgieriger ist als eben dieses. Sie gehen auff Irländisch in kurtzen Zipffel-Röcken/ und haben lange dicke Haare auf dem Haupt. Ihre Nahrung besteht in der Jagt/ im Fischerey-Wesen/ und im Raube.¹⁰⁹

Hermannides ended by describing the law made to prevent Highlanders from feuding. Such descriptions show the way in which Camden shaped the image of the Highlanders abroad, and it was not until the second half of the eighteenth century that these stereotypes were abandoned by continental writers.

The Highlanders' simple and plain way of living fascinated people outside Scotland. It soon became another essential ingredient of almost every description of them. Most authors culled such descriptions from Buchanan, and the examples usually referred to were the Highlanders' refusal to sleep in beds and the way they prepared their food when in the mountains.¹¹⁰ Most authors informed their readers that the Highlanders always carried a little bag of meal with them, and were still eating their meat either raw, having squeezed out the blood, or cooked it in its own hide. To prepare meat broth they were still turning the stomach of a cow or ox inside out, using it instead of pots.¹¹¹ The Highlanders' ability to endure the toughest physical challenges without proper food was also referred to by most authors. Using

¹⁰⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8, 193. See Miede, *Present State Of Great-Britain*, part ii, pp. 39, 40-41. See also Beeverell, *Delices*, 1st edn. 1707, vol. vii, pp. 1267-1268.

¹¹¹ See Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*, book iii, pp. 8, 194. See Miede, *Present State Of Great-Britain*, part ii, p. 40. See also Beeverell, *Delices*, 1st edn. 1707, vol. vii, pp. 1266-1267.

Dion's *Roman History* and Robert Sibbald as sources, Miede wrote that the Highlanders used to chew in wartime the roots of a certain plant, which they called 'Karemyle', to fight hunger and thirst.¹¹² This enabled them to survive several days without food. Beeverell added that the Scots held this custom in common with the Scythians. He claimed that the Scots, therefore, still believed that they shared common ancestors with the Scythians.¹¹³

Boece, Buchanan and Camden were the main sources used by all subsequent authors in Britain as well as on the Continent until the middle of the eighteenth century. A closer examination of subsequent geographies and histories of Scotland will not provide any new information or descriptions of the Highlanders. Although geographies and histories were updated after the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the Union of Parliaments (1707), the descriptions of the Highlanders remained mainly unaltered. Revised editions reflected the progress made in manufacture and trade in the Lowlands, but in the Highlands of Scotland time seems to have been halted. Late seventeenth-century works in Britain and on the Continent provided the same old, stereotyped images of the Highlanders as in the sixteenth century, portraying them as the offspring of the old Scots, stressing their wild and uncivilised behaviour.¹¹⁴

A slight change in the attitude towards the Highlanders can be recognised in the early eighteenth century. Although James Beeverell and Guy Miede clearly culled their information from Boece, Buchanan and Camden, they added an idealised impression of the Highlanders' plain and simple way of living in the mountains. Beeverell compared them to mankind in its initial stage, stressing that their way of

¹¹² See Miede, *Present State Of Great-Britain*, part ii, p. 40. The modern book-name of 'caremyle' is 'bitter vetch'. The plant's common name in Gaelic is 'corra-meille'. The physician, botanist and geographer Robert Sibbald (1641-1722) wrote about the use of 'caremyle' in his *Scotia Illustrata* (Edinburgh, 1684), p. 43. He particularly recommended the plant in time of dearth and scarcity in his handbook for the populace titled *Provision For The Poor In Time of Dearth & Scarcity* (Edinburgh, 1699). A second edition was published in Edinburgh in 1709. Inspired by Sibbald, various experiments with 'caremyle' were conducted at the court at Westminster in the mid-1680s by James Fraser, who reported his findings to Sibbald. The marvellous quality of 'caremyle' to suppress hunger soon became widely known outside Great Britain. M. Martin (1690s), J. Robertson (1768), T. Pennant (1769, 1772) and T. Garnett (1798) wrote about the Highlanders' use of 'caremyle' to suppress hunger.

¹¹³ See Beeverell, *Delices*, 1st edn. 1707, vol. vii, pp. 1270-1271.

¹¹⁴ See Richard Blome, *Britannia: Or, A Geographical Description Of The Kingdoms Of England, Scotland, and Ireland ...* (London, 1673), pp. 291-292, 299. [hereafter: Blome, *Britannia*] See Audiffret, *Histoire Et Geographie*, vol. i, pp. 238, 248, 254. See Jordan de Colombier, *Curieuse Reisen*, vol. iv, p. 538. See also Beeverell, *Delices*, 1st edn. 1707, vol. vii, pp. 1263-1271.

living has not changed over the centuries. He anticipated the image of the ‘noble savage’ who was content with his own simple way of living:

Je m’imagine que les Patriarches du premier Monde, qui vivoient tant de Siècles, avoient une force de corps & une santé pareille à celle-là. Ces Sauvages sont si contents de leur état & de leurs manières, qu’ils ne voudroient pas les changer avec tous les avantages & les délicatesses des *Ecossois* civilisez; ... Ils affectent même ces manières dures & sauvages, & ne veulent pas, disent-ils, se laisser corrompre par le luxe des Etrangers.¹¹⁵

For Beeverell there were no other people in Europe robust enough to live like the Highlanders: ‘Ils sont extrêmement forts & robustes, & si endurcis à toute forte de fatigue, qu’il n’y a point d’homme en *Europe* qui put vivre comme eux sans en mourir.’¹¹⁶ However, he also reiterated the well-known prejudices against the Highlanders. He blamed them of being ignorant of religion, malicious and cruel, and being zealous Jacobites.¹¹⁷ The change of attitude towards the Highlanders was also reflected in Miege’s description of their customs. He predicted that they would not be able to prevail with their old-fashioned way of living in a rapidly changing economic situation. The Union of England and Scotland, and the integration of the Highlands into the British trading empire, would inevitably change life in the Highlands. Whereas many authors wished the Highlanders to be civilised by force, Miege expressed his regret at the loss of their old virtues: ‘Their Ancient Discipline begins to grow into desuetude by their Commerce with other Nations, to the no small detriment of their Health and Morals.’¹¹⁸ The image of the Highlanders presented by Beeverell and Miege anticipated the emergence of the ‘noble savage’.¹¹⁹ Those

¹¹⁵ Ibid., vol. vii, pp. 1267-1268.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., vol. vii, p. 1266.

¹¹⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. vii, pp. 1268, 1269-1270. Beeverell often erred about the Highlanders’ state of religion. For example, he blamed the inhabitants of Islay for their ignorance of religion. See *ibid.*, vol. vii, p. 1363. The second edition of 1727 contained a wrong addition that most of the population of Islay were Roman Catholics. See J. Beeverell, *Les Delices De La Grand’ Bretagne, & de L’ Irlande* (2nd edn. Leide, 1727), vol. vii, pp. 1456-1457. [hereafter: Beeverell, *Delices*, 2nd edn. 1727]

¹¹⁸ Miege, *Present State Of Great-Britain*, part ii, p. 41.

¹¹⁹ The image of the Highlander as a ‘noble savage’ made its first appearance in the accounts of visitors to the Highlands at roughly the same time. William Sacheverell, for example, travelled from Tobermory via land to Iona in 1688. He described his travels on Mull and his encounter with the local Highlanders as follows: ‘I thought my self entring upon a new Scene of Nature, but Nature Rough and Unpolish’d, and (if I may be allow’d the Expression) in her undress. Men, Manners, Habits, Buildings, every thing different from our own, and if we thought them Rude and Barbarous, no doubt the People had the same Opinion of what belong’d to us; and the wonder was mutual. During my stay, I generally observ’d the Men to be large Bodied, Stout, Subtile, Active, Patient of Cold and Hunger: There appear’d in all their Actions a certain generous air of freedom, and contempt of those trifles, Luxury and Ambition, which we so servilely creep after. They bound their Appetites by their necessities, and their happiness consists not in having much, but in coveting little. The Women seem to have the same Sentiments with the Men; tho’ their Habits were mean, and they had not our sort of

European people who considered themselves as ‘civilised’ had been thrilled, since the ancient Greeks (with fear and fascination), by the ‘barbarian’. Once the barbarian no longer posed a threat to civilisation in the eighteenth century, his image turned to that of the ‘noble savage’. These ‘stages of evolution’ can undoubtedly be applied to the image of the Highlander and its representation in eighteenth-century literature. By the end of the eighteenth century the Highlanders had reached a stage in which they were no longer compared to the Goths, the Scythians or other mythological and supposedly barbaric peoples from eastern Europe or Asia, but to ‘noble savages’ who could otherwise only be found in the newly discovered continents of the western and southern hemisphere.

Eighteenth-century geographies increasingly presented the Highlands as an area ripe for conversion. That the Highlanders were generally depicted as being ignorant of religion has already been mentioned and needs no further discussion. The efforts of the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, founded in 1709, were referred to by most eighteenth-century authors. The need to spread the ‘true religion’ among the ignorant likened them to pagans in newly discovered parts of the world. The overall image of the Highlanders in the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century geographies was that of an ignorant and uncivilised people. Contemporary geographies and histories showed a huge lack of factual knowledge and understanding of Highland life and culture, and, therefore, provided stereotyped and prejudiced images of an area that in their view had yet to be civilised. The catalogue of miracles and natural curiosities usually associated with Scotland did little to correct the country’s uncivilised image.

1.2.4. Scotland’s image as a land of myth and miracles

Sixteenth- to eighteenth-century histories and geographies usually presented Scotland as a land of myth and miracles. The discussion of the origin of the Scottish people has already shown in what way mythology had influenced the image of the

Breeding, yet in many of them there was a Natural Beauty, and a graceful Modesty, which never fails of Attracting.’ W. Sacheverell, *An Account Of The Isle of Man, ... With a Voyage to I-Columb-kill* (London, 1702), pp. 128-129. This was an astonishing description of the Highlander for its time. It anticipated the notion of the Highlander as a ‘noble savage’ in the accounts of Romantic travellers in the late eighteenth century by at least six decades.

Scots abroad. To many authors the Scots, and the Highlanders in particular, seemed to be a strange and mysterious people. Knowledge about them was so scarce that authors, many of whom had never been to Scotland, associated them with a variety of strange and curious habits. Centuries of copying and plagiarising promoted these myths to the status of ‘established knowledge’ and gave them an aura of authority. Scotland, therefore, had established a reputation as one of the most curious countries to be found in Europe.

What kind of miracles could visitors to Scotland expect to find? Again, many of the miracles and natural curiosities attributed to Scotland can be traced back to Hector Boece. His *History* included many of the miracles that fascinated travellers for centuries. Travellers had a voracious appetite for curiosities (however marvellous they seemed), and geographies and histories of Scotland provided them with a whole catalogue of obscure attractions until the end of the eighteenth century. Considering the progress made in natural sciences from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, it is quite astonishing that Scotland preserved its reputation as a country of myth and miracles for so long. The sheer number of miracles attributed to Scotland makes it necessary to concentrate on some of the more famous ones.¹²⁰

The table of the natural curiosities and miracles was undoubtedly headed by the famous ‘solan geese’,¹²¹ the ‘barnacle geese’ or ‘claik geese’, and the Scottish dogs’ ability to detect thieves.¹²² References to the solan geese, ‘barnacle geese’ and the

¹²⁰ A parody of the wonders attributed to Scotland is, for example, to be found in T. Kirk’s diatribe *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners* ([London], 1679), p. 17.

¹²¹ Nowadays, the solan goose is more commonly known as the gannet. A description of the solan goose was first printed in Major’s *History*. See *ibid.*, pp. 34-35. Major was far less credulous than Boece. ‘Barnacle geese’ and dogs that detect thieves were not mentioned in Major’s *History*. The solan geese were usually referred to in connection with a description of the Bass Rock near North Berwick or Ailsa Craig in the Firth of Clyde. The Bass Rock and its geese became a major curiosity not to be missed by any traveller. Conrad Gesner included a detailed description and drawing of the solan goose in his *Historiae Animalium*, vol. iii (Zurich, 1555), p. 158. Travellers gave various, and often contradictory, accounts regarding the supposed habits of the solan geese.

¹²² In this thesis the terms ‘barnacle goose’ and ‘barnacle geese’ are put in inverted commas, as early modern travellers only used these terms with regard to the birds’ fabulous origins. Boece’s *History* was preceded by a ‘Cosmographe And Discription Of Albion’. Most of the miracles dealt with were included in this geographical description of Scotland. For the description of the solan geese see Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xxxvii. For the marvellous barnacles that turn into geese see *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. xlvi-1. For the dogs that detect thieves see *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. xli-xlii. However, the ‘barnacle geese’ already seem to have been a famous miracle a century before Boece. They were referred to by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, who visited Scotland in 1435. The myth of the ‘barnacle geese’ was created by the Welshman Giraldus Cambrensis. He had travelled to Ireland in 1185 and had introduced these marvellous birds in his *Topographia Hibernia*, written around 1186-87. See Giraldus

sage Scottish dogs show how long authors, publishers and travellers used sources as antiquated as Boece, and demonstrate the way perennial reiteration forced belief in these ‘miracles’. What were these miracles? According to Boece, the ‘barnacle geese’ were a species that originated from floating tree trunks:

And howbeit thir geis ar bred mony sindry wayis, thay ar bred ay allanerly be nature of the seis: for all treis that ar cassin in the seis, be proces of time apperis first worme-etin, and in the small boris and hollis thairof growis small wormis: first, thay schaw thair heid and feit, and last of all thay schaw thair plumis and wingis; finaly, quhen thay ar cumin to the just mesure and quantite of geis, thay fle in the aire as othir fowlis dois: as was notably provin, in the yeir of God M.CCCC.XC, in sicht of mony pepill, beside the castell of Petslego.¹²³

That subsequent authors and travellers provided a great variety of different and contradictory theories on their origin seems to be in the nature of this marvellous animal. The ‘barnacle geese’ became an essential part of most geographies and travellers’ accounts of Scotland until the end of the seventeenth century.¹²⁴ Other famous miracles and natural curiosities, largely culled from Boece, included: the mixing of the flesh of slaughtered young foxes among animal fodder in order to protect them from being attacked by foxes; ‘fishes without fins’, a ‘floating island’ and ‘waves without wind’ in Loch Lomond; a Loch Ness, which never freezes and immediately melts any ice cast into it.¹²⁵ Furthermore, there were a number of ‘deaf stones’ that completely muffled the sound of a gun shot, certain stones in Argyll that

Cambrensis, *The First Version Of The Topography Of Ireland*, translated and ed. by J. O’Meara (Dundalk, 1951), pp. 22-23.

¹²³ Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xlvi.

¹²⁴ A drawing of the ‘barnacle geese’, growing out of a tree and falling into the water, could be found in the Latin edition of S. Münster, *Cosmographiae universalis* (Basle, 1552), p. 49. The drawing and description of these marvellous birds were no longer included in the German edition of Münster’s *Cosmographia* (Basle, 1628). However, the Latin edition published in Basle in 1552 had no reference to the solan geese. To Münster’s successors and publishers the solan geese seem to have replaced the ‘barnacle geese’ as an attraction. Camden believed that the ‘claik-geese’ did not grow from trees on the shore, but emerged from the ocean itself. He wrote, however, that it has been proven that young birds came from the old and rotten keels of ships. See Camden, *Britain*, part ii, p. 48. Thomas Kirk, when returning from the Orkney Islands to Caithness in 1677, wrote about the various speculations on the birth of the ‘barnacle geese’. He was one of the very few travellers who did not believe in the myth of the birds’ emergence from wood. See P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours In Scotland 1677 & 1681 By Thomas Kirk And Ralph Thoresby* (Edinburgh, 1892), pp. 31-32. [hereafter: Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*] Sir Robert Moray (died 1673) wrote a paper entitled ‘On Barnacles’, which was published in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, vol. xii (London, 1678), pp. 925-926. He described the supposed evolution of birds from shells attached to rotten trunks, washed up on the shore. He claimed to have observed this phenomenon in Uist.

¹²⁵ Until the end of the eighteenth century the marvels attributed to Loch Lomond and Loch Ness were referred to by most visitors. The marvels and islands of Loch Lomond were particularly famous ever since Geoffrey of Monmouth’s description in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* (completed in 1136). See Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History Of The Kings Of Britain* (Harmondsworth, 1973), pp. 219-220.

ignited straw on contact, and caves that turned water into stone. Lastly, the oil floating on the water of St Catherine's well was an attraction referred to by most visitors to Edinburgh.¹²⁶

Buchanan criticised Boece's *History* for being over-credulous in its description of Scotland.¹²⁷ However, Buchanan plagiarised many of Boece's miracles and introduced new ones into his *History*, such as the 'Pigmies Ile' (Ylen Dunibeg) at the north point of Lewis.¹²⁸

It is of no great use to trace the appearance of every single miracle through the histories and geographies from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century as most authors copied the same sources. It is more informative to look at the presentation of these curiosities and the importance that geographies, histories and guidebooks about Scotland attributed to them.

John Monipennie added to his *The abridgement or Summarie of the Scots Chronicles ...* (London, 1612) a 'Short Description Of The Westerne Iles of Scotland' and 'A memoriall of the most rare and wonderfull things of Scotland'. He summarised Boece's *History* and added to it a description of the Western Isles, which he had mainly culled from Donald Monro. Monipennie's *Abridgement* was, in a nutshell, the fusion of the mythological history of the Scottish people with the natural curiosities of the Western Isles. This book undoubtedly contributed to the impression that Scotland was a country of myth and miracles unparalleled elsewhere in Europe.

¹²⁶ The oil was famous for the treatment of skin diseases. The Dane Peder Svave referred to it in 1535. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 57. The Pomeranian nobleman Lupold von Wedel visited the well in 1584. Like many other travellers, Wedel ordered the well to be emptied, and when a new supply of oil emerged, he tested it for himself. See 'Journey Through England And Scotland Made By Lupold Von Wedel In The Years 1584 And 1585', *Transactions Of The Royal Historical Society*, new series, vol. ix (London, 1895), p. 244. [hereafter: Wedel, 'Journey'] Kirk visited the well in 1677 and wrote that its oil was used for 'anointing little children's joints for the rickets'. Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 42. These travellers probably obtained their information regarding the well from Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*, but references to the well can be traced back to the 1420s.

¹²⁷ See Buchanan, *History*, p. 13.

¹²⁸ This island was first described by Donald Monro. Monro's *Description Of The Western Isles of Scotland, called Hybrides* was based on a tour through the Hebrides in 1549. It was first published in Edinburgh in 1774. [hereafter: Monro, *Description*] George Buchanan used a manuscript copy of Monro's *Description* as the source for the description of the Hebrides included in his *History*. Via Buchanan's *History* the 'Pigmies Ile' made its way into most subsequent works. According to Monro, there were small bones and little heads, alleged to be of the said pygmies, to be found under the floor of the church in this island. See Monro, *Description*, p. 37.

Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia*, though highly acclaimed for its outstanding accuracy and quality at its time, gave a similar, obscure impression of Scotland. That the Highlands and Lowlands were mixed up in the edition published in Basle in 1628 has already been discussed. Münster wrote that Boece had a reputation for being untrustworthy.¹²⁹ Nonetheless, he made extensive use of his *History*. Most of the section about the geography and history of Scotland in Münster's *Cosmographia* was culled from Boece, and it is not surprising that he also gave an impression of Scotland as a country where miracles were commonplace. A quarter of the Scottish section dealt with natural curiosities and miracles, and some of these are worth examining in more detail. It soon becomes obvious that authors not only copied from Boece, but also exaggerated and added, over time, to his miracles. Münster, for example, wrote that there were no mice to be found in the whole of Scotland, and if introduced they would soon die.¹³⁰ He next wrote that there were lakes in Scotland that freeze only partially but never completely, and that there were oxen in Carrick whose fat, if melted, never coagulates. Münster continued with the well-known 'deaf rock' before giving a description of the various curiosities to be found at Loch Lomond.¹³¹ Münster's description of the famous stone in Argyll that ignites straw laid upon it also differed considerably from Boece. Münster gave the following description of this stone:

So sagt man auch von Argadia/ es wachse daselbst ein besonderer Stein/ welcher/ nach dem er eine weil mit Stroh oder Werck underlegt gewesen/ endlich von sich selbst anfang zu brennen.¹³²

¹²⁹ See Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 89.

¹³⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 89. Münster plagiarised Boece who, however, limited this phenomenon only to rats in Buchan. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xxxv. Similar marvels were attributed to various districts of Scotland. Franck reported that the locals in Ross believed that the earth had an antipathy to rats. He found it absurd that the people in other parts of Scotland believed that by spreading the earth from Ross across their fields they would get rid of rats. See Franck, *Northern Memoirs*, p. 176. John Brand attributed the same qualities to the earth in the parish of Dunnet in Caithness. See J. Brand, *A Brief Description Of Orkney, Zetland, Pightland-Firth & Caithness ...* (Edinburgh, 1701), p. 158. [hereafter: Brand, *Description*] These marvels were told to travellers until far into the eighteenth century. In 1775 the English agriculturalists George and Matthew Culley were well assured that rats would not live in Sutherland and would die very soon when brought into the shire, although they abounded in the neighbouring shires of Caithness and Ross. See Anne Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798* (Oxford, 2002), p. 126. [hereafter: Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*]

¹³¹ See Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 89. Münster wrote that the floating island had excellent grazing and was well stocked. Boece did not mention any grazing or livestock on the floating island. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xxx.

¹³² Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 90. According to Münster, the stone caught fire and started to burn, whereas Boece reported that the straw laid upon the stone caught fire: 'It is said, in this cuntre is ane

Münster is a typical example of how the miracles attributed to Scotland vary, and how every author and traveller added their own reading of such curiosities. It is unnecessary to discuss those variations in further detail. However, it can be said that the descriptions of these curiosities tended to become more exaggerated and embellished as the seventeenth century progressed. Münster finished his section on the natural curiosities with a very detailed description of the Bass Rock and the solan geese. His description contained also the curious myth that the solan geese were unable to fly if they could not see the sea:

Auff disem Felsen sollen sich sonderbare Gänß auffhalten/ Soleniers genandt/ ... stellen ihre Näter also an/ daß sie das Meer stätigs vor augen behalten/ dann wo sie dasselbige ein mal auß dem Gesicht verlieren/ entgehet ihnen alle bewegliche krafft/ daß man sie alß in ihrem vollen schlaff/ fahen und greiffen kan.¹³³

Geographers and travellers used every opportunity to stress the exceptional character of the curiosities to be seen in Scotland. Thus they added to Scotland's image of a country full of singular miracles, which could not be found anywhere else in the world.¹³⁴ Münster described how the solan geese on the Bass Rock hatched their eggs while standing on one leg: 'Ihre Weiblein stehen auff einem Fuß/ brüteln die Eyer also auß/ und weichen auch nicht darvon/ biß die Jungen zum außschlieffen gelangen ...'.¹³⁵ He next stressed that this peculiar bird hatched nowhere else than on

stane of sic nature, that it kendlis cauld stra, or hardis in fire, quhen it is involvit thairwith.' Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xxxi.

¹³³ Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 90. This myth was not mentioned in Boece but seems to have been very popular with Germans. When Lupold von Wedel visited the Bass Rock in 1584, he was shown this phenomenon by the locals. See Wedel, 'Journey', p. 242.

¹³⁴ This was, however, a common feature of travel literature. The singularity of the curiosities, and particularly the indigenous animals, that could be found in foreign countries were stressed by all travellers until the mid-eighteenth century when a more scientific approach emerged.

¹³⁵ Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 90. It is interesting to note that Münster used the plural 'eggs'. Many geographers and travellers concurred that the solan geese never laid more than one egg, which was hatched with their right leg. See, for example, Wedel, 'Journey', p. 242. The naturalist John Ray (in 1661) and Thomas Kirk (in 1677) also wrote that the solan geese laid only one egg apiece. See *Memorials Of John Ray ...*, ed. by E. Lankester for the Ray Society (London, 1846), p. 154. [hereafter: Ray, *Memorials*] See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 11. See also T. Morer, *A Short Account Of Scotland* (London, 1702), p. 17. Morer wrote that the name 'Solon-Goose' might be derived from the habit of this bird in hatching its egg with the heat of the foot, 'quasi Sole on'. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Travellers continued to write about this myth until the late eighteenth century. See, for example, J.G. Dunbar (ed.), *Sir William Burrell's Northern Tour, 1758* (East Linton, 1997), p. 120. [hereafter: Burrell, *Northern Tour*] William Burrell probably consulted Defoe's *Tour*, at that time the common guidebook to Scotland, for his description of the Bass Rock. The Reverend John Wesley visited the Bass Rock in May 1772 and noted about the solan geese: 'It is peculiar to these that they lay but one egg, which they do not sit upon at all, but keep it under one foot (as we saw with our eyes) till it is

the Bass Rock and could not live anywhere else. If removed to other locations, these birds were sure to die quickly:

Ja es hat auch diser Ort nicht allein für Schottlandt/ sondern auch vor allen andern orten der Welt/ die Freyheit/ daß die jetztgemeldte Vögel nirgend anderstwo understehen zu nisten: und so bald man sie in ein andere Landtschafft verschickt/ wöllen sie gleichsam ersticken/ und nemmen (biß sie endlich sterben) geschwind vom Leib ab.¹³⁶

Joshua Childrey's *Britannia Baconica: Or, The Natural Rarities Of England, Scotland, & Wales* (London, 1661) matched the expectations raised in the title and offered natural curiosities by the dozen. However, only 7 out of 184 pages referred to Scotland, and this section contained hardly any useful information about the country and its people, as the paragraph about the Hebrides shows:

In *Alize*, one of these Isles (saith *Ortelius*) is abundance of *Soland-Geese*: And the same Author saith, that another Isle of them is a fertile soil for Corn, and rich in Veins of Metal.¹³⁷

The information provided was based on a Roman author and was hardly of any use. However, the book was the richer in natural curiosities. Compiled from the writings of authors ranging from Plutarch to Camden, and enlarged by his own observations, Childrey offered a survey of miracles ranging from the extinct wild bulls of the Caledonian forest to the 'barnacle geese' on the Bass Rock.¹³⁸ Childrey's book reads like a dictionary of natural curiosities, and there seemed to be nothing else of note in Scotland apart from these miracles.

How closely Scotland was associated with miracles to a continental audience in the early seventeenth century has already been shown in Münster's *Cosmographia*. It has to be asked if the rapid progress in science and philosophy on the Continent, and in Scotland, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had any effect on the image

hatched.' N. Curnock (ed.), *The Journal Of The Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, vol. v (London, 1914), p. 462. [hereafter: Wesley, *Journal*]

¹³⁶ Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. 90.

¹³⁷ J. Childrey, *Britannia Baconica: Or, The Natural Rarities Of England, Scotland, & Wales* (London, 1661), p. 181. *Britannia Baconica* was soon after translated into French.

¹³⁸ Childrey made no distinction between the 'barnacle geese' and the solan geese. He was obviously not aware that these birds were two different species. Childrey gave a summary of the discussion among the learned about the reproduction of these geese. He offered the simple solution that it has now been proven that they come from eggs and hatch like all other geese. This is rather surprising for an author who did not question any of the sources or curiosities presented in his book. On the contrary, in the preface Childrey asked his readers not to dismiss these curiosities, however strange, as fiction simply because they were beyond their understanding. Childrey claimed that all the miracles described were true. See *ibid.*, [sig. A8r. – sig. A8v.]

of Scotland abroad. It soon becomes obvious that, despite this progress, Scotland maintained its reputation on the Continent as a country full of ‘natural wonders’. The miracles remained an essential part of Scotland, and few authors and publishers, even if they doubted their veracity, could afford to exclude them from their works. A catalogue of the well-known miracles attributed to Scotland was prefixed as elegiac verses to Rutgerus Hermannides, *Britannia Magna*.¹³⁹

Even Jean-Baptiste d’Audiffret, who complained that authors tended to describe a country from supposition rather than reality, did not live up to his own principles. He wrote, for example, that the islands in Loch Lomond were a kind of republic with their own laws and customs:

... il y a dans ce Lac plusieurs Isles qui composent entr’elles une espece de Republique où les mêmes Loix & les mêmes Coûtumes sont gardées, elles ont un commerce réglé les unes avec les autres, & quand quelqu’une manque de provisions ou de secours, les autres lui fournissent abondamment tout ce qu’elle peut avoir de besoin; les principales sont Inche-merin, Inche-fadd, Inche-launak, Inche-connaghan, & Inche-davannan.¹⁴⁰

German geographical and historical descriptions referred to the usual natural curiosities until the middle of the eighteenth century, culminating in Paul Berckenmeyer’s *Curieuser Antiquarius* with a completely distorted picture of Scotland. The guidebook’s chapter on Scotland focused exclusively on the supposed strange habits of its people and the curiosities attributed to the country. Berckenmeyer informed his readers that there were still wild white oxen to be found, which could not be tamed as they refused any grass that had been touched by man. Berckenmeyer did not mention that even Boece considered them to be nearly extinct at his time.¹⁴¹ About the ‘barnacle geese’ Berckenmeyer offered two different theories. They either grew on trees or hatched from the resin of firs. He explained to

¹³⁹ See Hermannides, *Britannia Magna*, sig. ++2r. – sig. ++2v. This catalogue of miracles was not included in the German edition.

¹⁴⁰ Audiffret, *Histoire Et Geographie*, vol. i, pp. 249-250. Fellow Frenchman Jordan de Colombier wrote of Loch Lomond that the most important islands all float on the loch. See Jordan de Colombier, *Curieuse Reisen*, vol. iv, p. 537.

¹⁴¹ See Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, 4th edn. 1712, p. 174. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xl. There was great confusion among the authors about what kinds of wild animals could be found in Scotland. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors could not agree at all whether wolves, bears or aurochs were extinct or could still be found in Scotland. Hermannides, for example, wrote that furious bears and wild aurochs were still to be found in the remainder of the Caledonian forest near Dunkeld. See Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*, book iii, pp. 82-83, 135.

his readers that science had still to discover the proper origin of these birds.¹⁴² Even the capabilities of the unique Scottish dogs seem to have further improved over the centuries, as Berckenmeyer wrote that they were able to detect not only thieves but also robbers and murderers.¹⁴³ Berckenmeyer finished his section about these curiosities writing that there were no cats to be found in Scotland.¹⁴⁴ Similar information was included, with minor variations, in all subsequent editions until the middle of the eighteenth century. It is hard to believe that in the age of Linnaeus and Thomas Pennant, German guidebooks still offered such images of Scotland. Berckenmeyer's description of St Catherine's well exemplifies that eighteenth-century authors were far from critical of their sources and often, instead of demystifying such miracles, added even further to them:

Unweit der Stadt Edenburg ist eine Quelle/ auf dessen Wasser ein besonderes Oel empor schwimmt/ welche immerdar in ihrer Völle bleibet/ und nimmer übergeheth: Denn wenn nicht von dem Wasser oder Oel geschöpffet wird/ so bleibet der Brunnen in seinem Wesen/ doch gehet er nicht über: So bald aber Menschen dabey kommen/ Wasser oder Oel zu schoepffen/ quillet sie von Stund an dermassen zu/ daß/ wenn gleich noch so viel daraus geschöpffet wird/ sie dennoch stets voll bleibet/ auch nicht der geringste Abgang verspühret wird. Das Oel wird zu vielen äusserlichen Mängeln und Gebrechen gut befunden.¹⁴⁵

Berckenmeyer's picture of Scotland was closer to Isidore of Seville or Boece than to Linnaeus or Pennant. Having discussed the natural curiosities, it has finally to be asked which miraculous features or habits were associated with the Scottish people?

The discussion of the image of the Scottish people has shown that reliable information about the living conditions and habits of the Scots, and the Highlanders in particular, was scarce in the early eighteenth century. For example, German dictionaries, geographies and histories tended to concentrate on these supposed ancient habits, drawn from a pool of ancient authors, which gave a thoroughly distorted picture of life in Scotland. Erdmann Uhse's *Universal-Geographisch-*

¹⁴² See Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, 4th edn. 1712, pp. 174-175.

¹⁴³ See *ibid.*, p. 175.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 176. See also Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, p. 120; [B. von Zech], *Der Iztregirenden Welt Große Schaubühne ...* (Nuremberg, 1675), p. 808; Zech, *Europäische Herold*, p. 721. Hermannides attributed this phenomenon to Sutherland only. If cats were introduced into this shire, they would not survive. He thought this was very curious as neighbouring Caithness abounded in such animals. See Hermannides, *Geschicht- und Land-Beschreibung/ Deß Königreichs Groß-Britannien*, book iii, p. 42. Once such myths were established, authors and travellers added their own interpretations.

¹⁴⁵ Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, 4th edn. 1712, p. 170. Natural curiosities were a key element of travel literature. Therefore, neither travellers nor publishers could be expected to renounce their inclusion or to demystify them.

Historisches Lexicon, Jordan de Colombier's *Curieuse Reisen* and Berckenmeyer's *Curieuser Antiquarius* all borrowed heavily from Boece. It is not surprising that their favourite character in Scottish history was the mythical King Evenus III, as his evil laws were dealt with in great detail.

Apart from these curious and ancient habits, geographies and histories were full of stories about people in Scotland reaching biblical ages. Reports about men and women living up to 180 years were interspersed with many descriptions of the Scots. Such longevity was usually attributed to the inhabitants of the Northern and Western Isles and particularly the island of Jura. A closer examination of the phenomenon of longevity shows how such myths were created and the way they spread in various forms through subsequent publications.

It goes without saying that all these stories were based on hearsay, and none of the authors had ever met any of these extremely old people. Secondly, all of them were said to have lived in very remote parts of the country, which made it extremely difficult to verify or dismiss such stories. The example usually referred to was a man called Lawrence, who was said to have lived on the Shetland Islands and to have married at the age of 100. He was reported to have made a living from fishing until he died at the age of 140 years.¹⁴⁶

Miege included a survey of the stories about greatly aged people in his *Present State Of Great-Britain*.¹⁴⁷ This survey is worth having a closer look at because it illustrates the way in which such myths became established. Miege reported about several persons having lived up to 180 years in good health and gave Martin Martin's *Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1703) as his main source. Travellers usually picked up such myths from histories and geographies and included them in their accounts. This time the spread of such a myth seems to have worked in the opposite direction. One of the examples Miege referred to is a certain 'Gillouir Maccrain', who was said to have reached 180 years living on the island of Jura.

¹⁴⁶ Buchanan mentioned Lawrence when describing the Shetland Islands. See Buchanan, *History*, p. 37. Subsequent authors like Uhse and Berckenmeyer included this story in their descriptions of Scotland. Uhse attributed such longevity to the Scots in general. See E. Uhse, *Universal-Geographisch-Historisches Lexicon* (4th edn. Leipzig, 1710), p. 331. See Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, 4th edn. 1712, pp. 173-174. Miege also picked up this story and named Buchanan as his source. However, he mixed up the islands, noting that the celebrated Lawrence lived in the Orkney Islands. See Miege, *Present State Of Great-Britain*, part ii, p. 9.

¹⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, part ii, pp. 9-10.

Although this man was first mentioned by Martin Martin, the author did not meet him as this man was said to have died about 50 years earlier.¹⁴⁸ Martin gave further examples of longevity on Jura and wrote that this island was considered the most wholesome place, not only among the Western Isles, but also in the whole of Scotland. This information was picked up and spread by subsequent authors, and Jura soon developed a reputation for the longevity of its inhabitants and its wholesome climate. The first edition of James Beeverell's *Les Delices De La Grand' Bretagne ...* (Leide, 1707) did not contain any references to either the wholesome climate or the longevity of the people living on Jura. However, such information was included in the second edition (Leide, 1727). The paragraph on the island of Jura then included the following reference: 'Cette Ile, qui appartient aussi au Duc d'Argyle, passe pour l'endroit le plus sain, qu'il y ait dans toute l'Ecosse; aussi les habitans y parviennent ils à un fort grand âge.'¹⁴⁹

German geographers referred to the wholesome climate and the longevity of the people of Jura until far into the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁰ Travellers were likewise fascinated by such stories and inserted them into their accounts. The Welsh zoologist Thomas Pennant visited Jura in 1772 and wrote about the island:

The women are very prolific, and very often bear twins. The inhabitants live to a great age, and are liable to very few distempers. Men of ninety work; and there is now living a woman of eighty who can run down a sheep. The account given by *Martin of Gillouir Mac-Crain*, was confirmed to me. His age exceeded that of either *Jenkins* or *Par*: for he kept a hundred and eighty christmasses in his own house, and died in the reign of *Charles I.*¹⁵¹

Once such myths were established and introduced into the geographies and guidebooks, it was difficult to get them out of the travellers' minds and accounts.

¹⁴⁸ See M. Martin, *A Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1703), p. 234. To the best of my knowledge there is no previous mention of 'Gillouir Mack Crain' (Martin's spelling) in any geography, history or traveller's account of Scotland. I therefore attribute the origin of this 'miracle' to Martin Martin. Gillouir Mack Crain must have died in the 1640s as Martin had travelled the Western Isles in the 1680s and 1690s.

¹⁴⁹ Beeverell, *Delices*, 2nd edn. 1727, vol. vii, pp. 1453-1454. See also *A Voyage To Shetland, The Orkneys, And The Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1751), pp. 23-24. [hereafter: *Voyage To Shetland*] It is very doubtful if the unidentified author knew these islands from personal experience.

¹⁵⁰ Reference to the wholesome climate of Jura or 180-year-old Gillouir Mack Crain could be found in Hübner, *Geographie*, vol. i, p. 378, and A. Büsching, *Neue Erdbeschreibung*, part ii (Hamburg, 1754), p. 1239. See also J.H. Zopf, *Neueste Geographie*, vol. ii (Leipzig, 1763), p. 48. Zopf copied mainly from Büsching.

¹⁵¹ T. Pennant, *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides; MDCCLXXII*, part i (Chester, 1774), pp. 214-215. [hereafter: Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*]

Thomas Pennant's accounts of his tours in 1769 and 1772 were widely used as guidebooks until the end of the eighteenth century and further enhanced Jura's reputation as a wholesome and prolific place. Thus the remarks about Jura made by Martin in the late seventeenth century had shaped the image of the island and dominated it even a century later.¹⁵² Frenchman Pierre N. Chantreau visited Jura in 1789 and claimed to have met an 85-year-old woman who ran the inn on the island and was the niece of an 188-year-old man, who had served in the army that delivered King Charles I to the Parliamentary forces.¹⁵³

Geographical descriptions that provided a hopelessly antiquated picture of Scotland were neither confirmed nor denied in Britain or the Continent in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In Great Britain works of such a kind were published until the nineteenth century. Finally, an examination of two of these geographical descriptions, published in the late eighteenth century, shows how difficult it was to eradicate prejudices and stereotypes that had been established over the centuries.

The Modern Universal British Traveller ... (London, 1779) included, for example, under the description of the Isle of Skye the following information:

It is remarkable that in this island there are neither rats or mice; but weasels are so numerous, that they are frequently heard in houses rattling behind chests or beds, as rats are in England.¹⁵⁴

Such a passage reads more like Hector Boece than a late eighteenth-century publication that claimed on its title page 'Being The Result Of An Actual and late

¹⁵² See, for example, the description of the parish of Jura and Colonsay by the Revd Mr Francis Stewart in *The Statistical Account Of Scotland*. Stewart (in 1792-93) likewise stressed the longevity of the Jura population. See D.J. Withrington and I.R. Grant (general eds.), *The Statistical Account Of Scotland 1791-1799*, vol. xx (Western Isles) (Wakefield, 1983), pp. 370-371. [hereafter: *OSA*] *The Statistical Account Of Scotland* was originally published by Sir John Sinclair and printed in 21 volumes between 1791 and 1799. Sinclair published the parish returns just as they came in to him, and the reports for one county may be scattered throughout several volumes. The Withrington and Grant edition brings together the parish returns in groupings by counties. The *New Statistical Account* was also published by counties in 1845.

¹⁵³ See P.N. Chantreau, *Voyage Dans Les Trois Royaumes D'Angleterre, D'Ecosse Et D'Irlande, Fait En 1788 Et 1789* (Paris, 1792), vol. iii, p. 124. [hereafter: Chantreau, *Voyage*] Chantreau paraphrased Pennant's account of Jura. Moreover, he claimed to have met several octogenarians and nonagenarians who showed no signs of their age.

¹⁵⁴ C. Burlington et al., *The Modern Universal British Traveller; Or, A New, Complete, And Accurate Tour Through England, Wales, Scotland, And The Neighbouring Islands* (London, 1779), p. 811. [hereafter: Burlington, *Modern Universal British Traveller*] The articles descriptive of Scotland were written by Alexander Murray, MA. This information might have been taken from Johnson, *Journey*, p. 189. Johnson claimed that there were no rats on Skye because of the weasels.

General Survey of the Whole Kingdom'. It is not surprising that this work also included a description of a supposed Druids' temple near Dunrobin in Sutherland, where worshippers seated in galleries were sprinkled with the blood of sacrificed humans.¹⁵⁵ Fortunately, by 1779, no traveller had to rely on works like this any longer as more reliable accounts of Scotland had become widely available.

The last geographical description dealt with is George A. Walpoole (ed.), *The New British Traveller* ... (London, c. 1784). Likewise, the publisher described this work in the title page as 'Being The Result Of An actual and late General Survey, accurately made by a Society of Gentlemen'.¹⁵⁶ *The New British Traveller* was scarce on information about the actual living conditions in Scotland and particularly in the Highlands. Nonetheless, it contained descriptions of the Bass Rock and its solan geese, of the floating islands of Loch Lomond, of the longevity of the inhabitants of Jura, and of the mountain 'Arkill' in Sutherland, where all the deer bred on this mountain were said to have forked tails.¹⁵⁷ The information given about the Scottish shires was likewise antiquated, superficial and unreliable. For example, the castles of Stirling and particularly Dumbarton were described to be among the strongest in Europe. Because of their important military position they were said to be well garrisoned and always kept in good condition.¹⁵⁸ Travellers who had been to those castles, however, gave a very different impression. They wrote about them being garrisoned by only a few invalids and reported about their neglected state.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ See Burlington, *Modern Universal British Traveller*, p. 799.

¹⁵⁶ The arrangement of the title page bore great similarity to C. Burlington's *Modern Universal British Traveller*. However, the works were quite different. In Burlington's *Modern Universal British Traveller* the Scotland section numbered 112 out of 836 pages. In Walpoole's *New British Traveller* only 19 out of 520 pages dealt with Scotland and its islands. The articles about Scotland were written by Alexander Burnett, LLD.

¹⁵⁷ See G. Walpoole (ed.), *The New British Traveller; Or, A Complete Modern Universal Display of Great-Britain And Ireland: Being A New, Complete, Accurate, And Extensive Tour Through England, Wales, Scotland* ... (London, c. 1784), pp. 493-494, 497, 502, 503.

¹⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 498, 497.

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, 'Observations Upon A Jaunt To The West Country, With Mr. James Robinson', *The Scottish Antiquary or Northern Notes and Queries*, ed. by J.H. Stevenson, vol. xi (Edinburgh, 1897), p. 77. The unidentified author wrote, in 1781, that Stirling Castle was garrisoned by invalids and in poor repair. See T. Thornton, *A Sporting Tour Through The Northern Parts Of England, And Great Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland* (London, 1804), p. 256. [hereafter: Thornton, *Sporting Tour*] Colonel Thornton wrote that Dumbarton Castle was garrisoned by only a few invalids. His account was based on tours to the Highlands, mainly in 1783-84. See M. Brander, *Soho for the Colonel: On the Trail of Colonel Thornton* ([London], 1961), pp. 211-212. For the dating of Thornton's *Sporting Tour* see also the entry in NLS, 'James McKinlay's extensively amended interleaved copy of Sir Arthur Mitchell's "List of Travels, Tours, etc relating to Scotland"', Acc. 5620, no pagination. See also Marc de Bombelles, *Journal de voyage en Grande Bretagne et en*

1.3. Summary

Having examined the information about Scotland provided in the histories, geographical descriptions and guidebooks to the country, one must conclude that the image of Scotland was composed wholly of stereotypes. Authors all over Europe copied from each other for centuries, and thus established a stereotyped and prejudiced view that overshadowed the image of Scotland until the late eighteenth century. The Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, were regarded as a mysterious people with strange habits, who lived in a country of marvellous miracles. The reputation of the Highlanders was particularly bleak. Their image as barbarians started to crystallise in the late fourteenth century and did not change until the beginning of romanticism in the late eighteenth century. The lack of new and reliable up-to-date information cemented the Highland's reputation as a backward area inhabited by wild and barbaric people. The stereotyped descriptions of their wild manners made it advisable for travellers not to visit the area as it was regarded as unsafe. As a consequence, alternative information about the Highlands was difficult to get because travellers stayed away.

However, visitors had travelled to Scotland all through the Middle Ages, and some of their accounts have survived. These early accounts offer a fascinating insight not only into life in medieval Scotland, but also into what was perceived by travellers to be particularly Scottish in comparison to England or other countries previously visited. Even when those travellers did not visit the Highlands, their reasons for staying away reveal a lot about their attitudes towards the Highlands and the reputation of its population.

Irlande 1784, ed. by J. Gury (Oxford, 1989), pp. 199, 197. [hereafter: Bombelles, *Journal de voyage*] Bombelles wrote that Stirling Castle was in great disrepair and garrisoned by 60 invalids, while a 50-year-old invalid was in charge of Dumbarton Castle. Travellers in the 1780s generally noted that the garrisons at Stirling, Dumbarton, Fort Augustus and Fort William were neglected and in bad repair.

2. Medieval and early modern travellers to Scotland until about 1600

The exact number of travellers to Scotland in the Middle Ages and early modern period is not known, as we have surviving accounts or records of only a few travellers. Unfortunately, this represents only a tiny fraction of the visitors to Scotland during that period, for, considering its relations to the Continent and Scandinavia, it would undoubtedly have attracted a far greater number.¹ Sir Arthur Mitchell's 'List' contained, including the supplements of 1905 and 1910, the accounts of 46 'visits' to Scotland before 1600.² P. Hume Brown (ed.) in *Early Travellers* gave a dozen accounts of visitors to Scotland before 1600. This book was published more than a century ago, and there is no modern study of medieval and early modern visitors to Scotland. *Early Travellers* was confined to printed sources. However, it is still a most valuable source as it includes many of the important and detailed accounts of the early visitors to Scotland.

What motivated these people to travel to this mythical and comparatively unknown country on the fringe of Europe? Which parts of the country the early travellers went to and, equally significantly, what they wrote about their visits to Scotland, is no less important. It has been decided to divide these accounts into two groups, determined by date of visit and using 1500 as the dividing line. There are two main reasons for making such a distinction. Firstly, the rapid expansion of the known world changed the perception that Scotland lay at the fringe of the medieval world.

¹ J.K. Cameron's study of the autograph albums of travellers to Scotland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has shown that there were many more visitors to Scotland than previously known. Unfortunately, most of the diaries and accounts of these mainly aristocratic and student visitors from Germany and Scandinavia are lost. Nonetheless, their autograph albums tell which persons they visited, with whom they stayed and which routes they took. Cameron has shown that many 'overseas students' included a stay at Scottish universities in their educational tour. See J.K. Cameron, 'Some Continental Visitors To Scotland In The Late Sixteenth And Early Seventeenth Centuries', in Smout (ed.), *Scotland And Europe*, pp. 45-61. For Danish students at St Andrews and Aberdeen c. 1590 - c. 1615 see Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 283-291. Cameron's study of the matriculation rolls of the University of St Andrews for the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries also shows a considerable number of Dutch theology students who included Scotland, and particularly St Andrews, in their educational tour. For details see J.K. Cameron, 'Some Students From The Netherlands At The University Of St Andrews In The Late Sixteenth And Early Seventeenth Centuries', in *Gericht verleden* [essays on church history dedicated to W. Nijenhuis], ed. by C.G.F. de Jong and J. van Sluis (Leiden, 1991), pp. 49-72. [hereafter: Cameron, 'Students From The Netherlands At St Andrews']

² Not all of the 46 persons mentioned had actually been to Scotland themselves. All of them wrote about Scotland, however, many only paraphrased what they had been told by visitors to Scotland or what they had culled from previous sources. For details see Mitchell, 'List'.

Secondly, the rapid spread of the printing press, using moveable and reusable letters, made information more easily available. By the sixteenth century printed information provided travellers with more convenient information about their future destinations. This, of course, raises the question of how books on Scotland had influenced its image abroad. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the influence of the works discussed in chapter 1 on sixteenth-century travellers and how this was reflected in their accounts of Scotland.

2.1. Medieval travellers to Scotland before 1500

Mitchell listed ten accounts of ‘visits’ to Scotland before 1500. Seven of these were included in Hume Brown’s *Early Travellers*. The small number of accounts that have been preserved, and the uncertainty about whether all of the authors had actually been to Scotland themselves, does not allow a clear distinction of travellers in terms of statistical categories. However, the early visitors to Scotland whose accounts have been preserved can roughly be divided into three main categories. Firstly, English or French visitors who were involved in the military conflict between Scotland and England; secondly, visitors coming to Scotland on diplomatic missions; and thirdly, knights visiting Scotland. I would like to concentrate on the accounts of those travellers who can be regarded as exemplary for these categories.

2.1.1. King Edward I’s campaign in Scotland in 1295

The three earliest accounts of visitors were all related to the military campaigns and rivalry between Scotland and England. The description of King Edward I’s campaign in Scotland in 1296 by an unidentified author concentrated on the military actions and the movements of the armies.³ The ‘diary’ documented Edward I’s campaign in the north-east of Scotland, by the end of which Scotland had lost its king and was under Edward’s rule. The author was mainly interested in describing the military actions and did not give detailed descriptions of the country, its inhabitants or their customs and manners. There is no doubt that this diary is an important source on a

³ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 1-6.

crucial period in the history of Scotland. However, because it is entirely focused on military matters, it is of no great use as a description of the life and times of the country.

2.1.2. Jean Froissart's accounts of Scotland (fourteenth century)

A century later the chronicler, poet and court historian Jean Froissart (c. 1337 - c. 1410) wrote his chronicles.⁴ They covered the period from 1326 to 1400 and included many descriptions of military actions and life in Scotland at that time. The sections relating to Scotland were mainly based on the accounts communicated to Froissart by knights who had been in Scotland and had taken part in these battles. Such passages can, therefore, be regarded as accounts of travellers to Scotland. Froissart also travelled many other countries in Europe to gather material for his chronicles. He travelled to Scotland in 1365 and mentioned a visit to William, Earl of Douglas, at his castle at Dalkeith and a stay at the court of King David II.⁵

I would like to concentrate on two accounts of Scotland and the Scots in Froissart's *Chronicles*: firstly, an account 'of the manners of the Scots, and how they carry on war'.⁶ Froissart clearly concentrated in his account of warring Scots on their hardy character and simple way of living. He wrote that they could march up to 20 or

⁴ Froissart was a native of Valenciennes in Hainault, outwith the French kingdom. Philippa of Hainault married Edward III and became queen of England. Froissart served her in the 1360s. This might explain his affection for the English.

⁵ See *Sir John Froissart's Chronicles Of England, France And The Adjoining Countries, From The Latter Part Of The Reign Of Edward II. To The Coronation Of Henry IV.*, newly translated and privately printed by T. Johnes, vol. iv (The Hafod Press, 1805), pp. 13, 30. Froissart's chronicles had been translated first into English by Lord Berners in 1523-25. Lord Berners's translation is superior in literary quality, but Johnes's translation is more faithful. All references to Froissart's chronicles relate to the edition translated and privately printed by Thomas Johnes, 4 vols. (The Hafod Press, 1803-1805). [hereafter: Froissart, *Chronicles*] Froissart spent six months in Scotland and is said to have penetrated as far as the Highlands when he was in the service of Philippa of Hainault, Queen of England. See T. Johnes, *Memoirs Of The Life Of Sir John Froissart* (The Hafod Press, 1810), p. 7. Johnes did not give any further information about the places visited by Froissart in the Highlands. Froissart visited Aberdeen and Stirling which might be considered as bordering on the Highlands in the fourteenth century. I have been unable to verify that he penetrated beyond the Highland line. Froissart used the term 'la sauvage Escose' very freely and even applied it to places such as Stirling.

⁶ See Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. i (The Hafod Press, 1803), pp. 31-32. This account was given in the context of the events in the year 1327. Froissart's sources for the events from 1326 to 1356 were the chronicles of Jean le Bel, canon of St Lambert of Liège. Jean le Bel took part in the expedition of King Edward III's army into Scotland in 1327. Froissart's account was taken, therefore, from an eyewitness report, and he surely had the opportunity to verify the described habits during his stay in Scotland in 1365.

24 miles a day or night without halting. On their invasions into England they were not accompanied by any baggage train, did not carry any wine or bread, and existed simply on river water and half-sodden meat. Moreover, they did not bring their own livestock as they intended to live off the land. Froissart stressed that in such campaigns they had ‘no occasion for pots or pans; for they dress the flesh of their cattle in the skins, after they have taken them off’.⁷ Moreover, they all carried little bags of oatmeal, which they mixed with water into little biscuits and baked on broad metal plates. Due to their simplicity of life they were able to outperform any other soldiers on the march.

Froissart attributed the image of the hardy and simple warrior to the Scots in general and did not make any particular distinction between the Highlanders and Lowlanders. In the wake of the growing cultural and economic divide between the Highlands and the Lowlands, sixteenth-century historiography attributed this lifestyle exclusively to the Highlanders. Froissart’s account of the manners of the Scots in warfare strikingly anticipated the image of the Highlanders in early modern times. It shows that a very simple way of living, with certain habits like the cooking of meat in its skin, was once common all over Scotland before it was gradually relegated to the Highlands, where its survival became synonymous with the habits of the ancient Scots.

Secondly, I would like to look briefly at the expedition of the French army to Scotland in 1385. Froissart’s account was based on the reports of French knights who took part in that campaign, and presented a vivid picture of what they experienced in Scotland and what they thought of the Scots in the late fourteenth century.⁸

⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 32. This custom became attributed exclusively to the Highlanders in most sixteenth- to early eighteenth-century histories, geographical descriptions and travellers’ accounts of Scotland. For references to this custom see chapter 1.2.3.

⁸ Froissart’s account of the role of King Robert II in this campaign was biased and overshadowed by his antipathy for him. His antipathy became even more obvious in his account of the battle of Otterburn in 1388. This bias raises questions about Froissart’s reliability as a chronicler. For the political and military events of the 1370s and 1380s and Froissart’s coverage see S. Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings* (East Linton, 1996), pp. 108-158. [hereafter: Boardman, *Early Stewart Kings*] Froissart’s reliability as a chronicler of the 1385 and 1388 campaigns is seriously questioned in A. Grant, ‘The Otterburn War From The Scottish Point Of View’, in A. Goodman and A. Tuck (eds.), *War And Border Societies In The Middle Ages* (London, 1992), pp. 43-48. However, Froissart’s account of the living conditions in Scotland and the French knights’ experiences presents an interesting picture of contemporary Scotland.

In 1385 the French sent an army of about 500 to 1,000 knights, by sea, to Scotland to support the Scots against the English. Froissart described their amicable welcome by the Earls of Douglas and Moray. The common people, however, were not so supportive of the French. Their lack of enthusiasm was due to the belief that the French force would be an economic burden rather than a help against the English. They wanted the French knights to be sent home again.⁹ Apart from the military action, Froissart's account focused mainly on the tensions that arose between the common Scots and the French knights.

According to Froissart, Scotland's inability to satisfy the demands of their guests for lodgings and supplies pointed to a poor standard of living.¹⁰ He wrote that Edinburgh, despite being the capital of the kingdom, was unable to accommodate the whole French army so that many French noblemen had to lodge at places as far distant as Dunfermline, Kelso, Dunbar and Dalkeith.¹¹ He reported that Edinburgh did not consist of more than 4,000 houses¹² and could not be compared to French cities like Tournay and Valenciennes. The living conditions of the rural population in the Lowlands must have been very simple at that time, as the common people lived in houses that they built within three days from nothing but 'five or six poles and boughs to cover them'.¹³ Tensions between the common Scots and the French

⁹ See Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. iii (The Hafod Press, 1804), pp. 9-10.

¹⁰ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 10. French visitors to Scotland during the time of the Auld Alliance generally stressed the importance of the Scots as allies in the wars against their common enemy England. When describing life in Scotland, however, they clearly stressed its inferiority to France in cultivation, economy and civilisation. Froissart's descriptions of the Scots on their military expeditions and of their bravery at Otterburn in 1388 on the one hand, and the experiences of the French army during its stay in Scotland in 1385 on the other, clearly showed this dual attitude towards the Scots at that time. A similar attitude towards Scotland is to be found in Estienne Perlin, *Description Des Royaulmes D'Angleterre Et D'Escosse* (Paris, 1558). Perlin was favourable to Scotland, however, less because of its own merits than its usefulness as an ally to France and as a country from which to launch attacks on England. See chapter 2.2.3.

¹¹ See Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 9. Johnes wrote that Kelso would have been too far distant to host the French. He thought it should have been Kelson. I have been unable to locate that place. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 10, read this place name as Kelso. Lord Berners read it as 'Cassell'.

¹² T. Johnes and Lord Berners gave this figure as 4,000 houses. French editions referred to Edinburgh consisting of no more than 400 houses. Kervyn de Lettenhove's scholarly edition (28 vols., Brussels, 1867-1877) gave both figures. See vol. x, p. 335, and vol. xxiv, p. 286. I have been unable to establish the original figures given in the various manuscripts. 400 houses seems to me more likely. 4000 houses would correspond to 16,000 to 20,000 inhabitants, a figure only reached in early modern times. According to G. Barrow, the population of Edinburgh is estimated at 12,000 in 1550. See *Lexikon Des Mittelalters*, vol. iii, p. 1576.

¹³ Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 10. See also *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 49. It has to be considered that the huts of the rural population were regularly burnt down by the English in their campaigns in Scotland. Froissart also wrote that the Scots usually avoided open battles with the English, but withdrew with their cattle and provisions at the English approach. The Scots' attitude to avoid open battles and sieges

knights seem to have arisen right from the latter's arrival. Provisions were dear, and the French felt abused that their Scottish 'allies' could demand such prices. Froissart added that the varlets sent out by the French in the country to forage were beaten, robbed and sometimes slain by the rural population. Although the French sent them out in very large parties, they lost more than 100 varlets in a single month.¹⁴ When the French knights returned from their invasion of England, tensions seem to have boiled over.¹⁵ The Scottish Lowlands were devastated by the English and suffered from famine. The additional strain the French put on the remaining provisions led to frequent riots, and even the Scots nobility joined in accusing the French of having done more mischief to their crops and timber forests than the English.¹⁶ Provisions became scarce, and plans to ease the problem by splitting their force made the French fear for their lives. The Scots, on the other hand, were unwilling to let the French go without compensation for the damages caused.¹⁷ In the end, it must have been as much a relief to the French to return home as to the Scots to see them leave the country. According to Froissart, the French commander finally realised that there would not be enough provisions to supply him through the winter. Furthermore, he feared that any delay could lead to a serious depletion of his forces at Scottish hands, and consequently was forced to cancel plans to overwinter in Scotland. Instead, he sailed home after having compensated the Scots for the damages caused.¹⁸

Froissart's account of the French expedition to Scotland, therefore, gives the impression that the French knights considered Scotland to be a poor, backward and even hostile country. He gave an especially insulting account of the common Scots, whom he repeatedly described as mean, rude and worthless people:

In Scotland you will never find a man of worth: they are like savages who wish not to be acquainted with any one, and are too envious of the good fortune of others and suspicious of losing any thing themselves, for their country is very poor.¹⁹

also explains Froissart's remarks that there were very few walled towns in Scotland. This was confirmed by Aenas Silvius. See *Commentarii Rerum Memorabilium*, by Pii Secundi Pontificis Max. (Frankfurt, 1614), p. 4.

¹⁴ See Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, pp. 11, 34.

¹⁵ The Scottish and French knights had invaded Northumberland and withdrawn on the arrival of the English army. The English invaded and devastated the Borders, Lothian and Edinburgh. The Scots and French devastated Cumberland at the same time. The promised support for the Scots by a French invasion of England from the Low Countries never appeared.

¹⁶ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 49-50.

¹⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 50, 52.

¹⁸ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 50-53. Another reason for the tensions between the Scots and the French arose about who should be in charge of the taken castles.

¹⁹ Froissart, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 10.

The account of the French expedition to Scotland reads like a clash of cultures. The French knights, who were used to different standards of life and comfort, undoubtedly must have regarded Scotland as a barbarous country. Froissart described their feelings at their return to France:

They said they had never suffered so much in any expedition, and wished the King of France would make a truce with the English for two or three years, and then march to Scotland and utterly destroy it: for never had they seen such wicked people, nor such ignorant hypocrites and traitors.²⁰

Froissart's account of the French expedition to Scotland, therefore, presented a very unfavourable picture of the country. This can partly be blamed on the author's bias towards Robert II and the Scots.²¹ The outcome of this disastrous campaign undoubtedly contributed to the negative image of the Scots. The failure of the expedition, however, must mainly lie with the French. They were the driving force but failed to deliver the promised invasion of southern England. In the end, the Scots had to carry the burden and suffered the consequences of provoking an English counter-attack on Scotland.

2.1.3. John Hardyng's account of Scotland

In the reign of James I another chronicler, John Hardyng (1378-1465?), visited Scotland and spent three and a half years there. Hardyng was in English service, and it was intended that he should procure documentary evidence of England's superiority. Although he returned from Scotland with the requested documents, there is no doubt that they were forgeries. Despite his hostile intentions, it is interesting to consider his account of Scotland as he spent more time there than any other early traveller. Hardyng structured his description around the imaginary manoeuvring of an invading English army across Scotland. He left no doubt about the purpose of his visit, and the opening lines of his description of Scotland read:

²⁰ Ibid., vol. iii, p. 52. These comments were heavily influenced by Froissart's pro-English tendencies.

²¹ Philippe Contamine suggests the main reason for Froissart's unfavourable account of the Scots was that 'they retain that element of savagery which makes them less inviting than the aristocratic Anglo-French milieu in which Froissart feels so entirely at ease'. P. Contamine, 'Froissart And Scotland', in G.G. Simpson (ed.), *Scotland And The Low Countries* (East Linton, 1996), p. 57. Froissart's chronicles suggest that he was not the most fervent supporter of the Auld Alliance.

How the maker of this booke reporteth the distaunce and miles of the tounes in Scotland, and ye waye how to conueigh an armie aswell by lande as water, into the chefest partes therof.²²

However biased such an attitude, he presented a favourable picture of Scotland. His account in metre was not very detailed considering his three-year stay in Scotland, nonetheless he stressed the abundance of corn and cattle in the Carse of Gowrie and the rich lands along the coast of Angus and Kincardine.²³ Not surprisingly, Hardyng's coverage of the Highlands was limited; either his knowledge about the Highlands was poor, or he did not consider this area to be of any interest to an English invading force. His wanderings through the Borders and Lowlands showed a sound knowledge of local geography, but he was unable to provide similar detail about the Highlands. His description of the Highlands provided no further information beyond a mere mention of the shires that made up that area:

Where that the same may easely you mete,
To vitayle your armye, whersoer ye go,
Ouer all the mountaynes, drye mosses and wete,
Wher the wild Scottes do dwel, than passe vnto,
That is in Mare and Garioth also,
In Athill, Rosse, Sutherland, and Chatnesse,
Muresse, Lenox, and out ysles I gesse.²⁴

2.1.4. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's visit to Scotland in 1435

In 1435 the visit of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), later Pope Pius II, took place. His motives for travelling to Scotland are not fully established, and the accounts offer contradictory versions. Silvius himself was unusually brief and imprecise about the object of his mission and described it as follows: 'Prius autem quam Philippus ab Anglicis deficeret, cardinalis Aeneam in Scotiam misit, qui

²² H. Ellis (ed.), *The Chronicle Of John Hardyng* (London, 1812), p. 422. [hereafter: Hardyng, *Chronicle*] Hardyng, for example, greatly admired the strength of Dumbarton Castle and wrote that it was impossible to take this fortress without laying siege to it and starving out its garrison. See *ibid.*, p. 426.

²³ See *ibid.*, pp. 425-426.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 426. The Harleian manuscript (BL, MS. Harl. 661) includes a very rough map of Scotland consisting of three pages with topographical notes by Hardyng. He seems to have prepared his description of Scotland from these notes. They reveal a slightly more detailed knowledge about the north of Scotland as they contain more place names. Hardyng used the term 'Wilde Scottes' to indicate the areas that were inhabited by Highlanders. For details see footnote 12 in Hardyng, *Chronicle*, p. 414.

praelatum quendam in regis gratiam reduceret.’²⁵ His biographers gave the following object of his mission: ‘Hinc ulteriorem in Britanniam nunc Scotiam missus ad regem adversus citeriores Britannos, qui paci adversabantur, sollicitandum, ad Calexinum ingressus oceanum ...’.²⁶ This makes it difficult to decide whether Silvius came to Scotland to meet King James I either on a diplomatic mission to reconcile him with a certain bishop, or on a military mission to incite him to war against England.²⁷ Whatever the object of his mission, his accounts of the country present an interesting picture of what an outstanding fifteenth-century Italian humanist thought about contemporary Scotland. Silvius’s initial experiences in Scotland were not too positive. Caught at sea by adverse winds and storms for twelve days in his passage from Sluys to Scotland, he finally reached the shore at Dunbar, having given up any hope of ever reaching safe ground again. In gratitude for his escape Silvius made a barefooted pilgrimage in icy weather conditions to the nearest shrine of the Blessed Virgin at Whitekirk, near North Berwick.²⁸

Aeneas Silvius was undoubtedly one of the most prestigious visitors to Scotland in medieval times. As an Italian nobleman in the service of the papal court, a journey to Scotland must have confronted him with a way of living which was quite different to what he was used to at home in a mid-fifteenth-century Italy at the centre of sciences, arts and civilisation. A journey to the fringe of the known world must have been a severe challenge even for such an experienced traveller, and may have seemed like a journey to a different world. It might be expected that his accounts of Scotland would read like a clash of cultures. However, the observations of a prominent visitor like Silvius provide an interesting impression of the living

²⁵ *Commentarii Rerum Memorabilium*, by Pii Secundi Pontificis Max. (Frankfurt, 1614), p. 4. [hereafter: Pius II, *Commentarii*]

²⁶ *Opera Omnia Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei*, Pii II. Pont. Max. per Ioan. Antoninum Camp. Episcopum Aretinum, Vita (Basle, 1551), sig. b3v. – sig. b4r. [hereafter: Pius II, *Opera Omnia*, Vita]

²⁷ For further details about the variations of the accounts see Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 24, and Mitchell, ‘List’, pp. 450-451. Cecilia Ady considered the objective of reconciling the king with a bishop as a mere pretext. She thought Silvius was sent to Scotland ‘to avert a renewal of hostilities in France by providing employment for the English on the Scottish Border’. C.M. Ady, *Pope Pius II* (London, 1913), p. 41. If so, Silvius failed in his mission as James I did not start war against England.

²⁸ In this pilgrimage he is said to have contracted the illness in his feet which troubled his later life. See Pius II, *Opera Omnia*, Vita, sig. b4r. On his return from Scotland he was offered a sea passage back to Sluys on the same vessel. Silvius declined and travelled back by way of England. Once again he was fortunate. The ship was wrecked within sight of land, and all lives on board save four were lost. See Pius II, *Commentarii*, p. 5.

conditions in Scotland at that time. I would like, therefore, to concentrate on two accounts of Scotland from Silvius's works. The first is a geographical description (*Opera Omnia Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei*, chapter 'De Europa', p. 443), the second is an account of his stay (*Commentarii Rerum Memorabilium*, pp. 4-5).²⁹

Silvius's geographical description of Scotland reveals some interesting features about its image in the mid-fifteenth century. It shows contrary examples of accurate knowledge about the country on the one hand, and traditional mythological elements on the other. In contrast to the general opinion founded on Ptolemy, Silvius correctly gave Scotland's position as stretching to the north and not in an easterly direction. This representation is surprising in an age dominated by Ptolemy's notion of the world and vague ideas that Scotland might even be a separate island from England. Whatever his factual knowledge about the country, he could not resist making enquiries into the myth of the 'barnacle geese':

I had previously heard that there was a tree in Scotland, that growing on the banks of rivers produced fruits in the form of geese, which, as they approached ripeness dropped off of their own accord, some on the ground and some into the water; that those which fell on the ground rotted, but that those submerged in the water immediately assumed life, and swam about under the water, and flew into the air with feathers and wings.³⁰

However, he failed in his efforts to see the creation of these marvellous birds:

When I made enquiries regarding this story, I learned that the miracle was always referred to some place further off, and that this famous tree was to be found not in Scotland but in the Orkney Islands, though the miracle had been represented to me as taking place among the Scots.³¹

He also wrote that the country was destitute of wood and that the poor begging at the church doors were given coals to burn as alms.³²

Silvius's account of his stay in Scotland was slightly more detailed. Again, he considered it noteworthy that Scotland was a part of the same island as England, that it was scantily supplied with wood, and that the people used a 'sulphurous stone dug from the earth' for fuel.³³ In describing the towns and their domestic houses he wrote that the towns were unwallled, and 'the houses are for the most part constructed

²⁹ As these accounts are interspersed in separate Latin works, I refer to the reliable translations in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 25-29.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³² Hume Brown suggested that peat was the common fuel and the use of coal was confined to a narrow area in the Lothians. See *ibid.*, p. 26.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

without lime'.³⁴ In the country the roofs of the houses were made of turf, and 'the doors of the humbler dwellings are made of the hide of oxen'.³⁵ In remarking on the living conditions of the Scots he observed that the common people were poor and lacked all refinement while they lived on a diet of flesh and fish to repletion, whereas bread was a luxury and the wine had to be imported. Silvius wrote, 'There are said to be two distinct countries in Scotland – the one cultivated, the other covered with forests and possessing no tilled land.'³⁶ His description of the Highlanders was very concise and seems to have been based on hearsay rather than on personal observation. He wrote that they lived in the wooded region, spoke a language of their own and 'sometimes use the bark of trees for food'.³⁷ He wrote that the Scottish foreign trade consisted of hides, wool, salted fish, and pearls, which were exported to Flanders. Lastly, Silvius reported about some natural curiosities in Scotland, which he misunderstood and consequently, as Hume Brown has shown, got wrong.³⁸

The remainder of Silvius's account concentrated on his return by way of England. He used the disguise of a merchant as a previous stay in London had aroused English suspicions.³⁹ Nonetheless, the account of his return throws some light on the tense Anglo-Scottish relations of that time. Silvius spent one night at Berwick (initially a Scottish town that often changed hands and finally fell to the English in 1482) and reported that the inhabitants of that part of England were as ignorant of all refinement as the Scots. Again, white bread and wine were unknown and caused great wonderment among the people, whom he described as 'barbaros'.⁴⁰ Silvius reported that at two o' clock in the morning the priest, his host with all his children, and all the other men fled from their house 'to a distant keep for fear of the Scots, who for purposes of plunder were in the habit of crossing the river at ebb-tide during the night'.⁴¹ It was not until Newcastle that Silvius considered himself safe

³⁴ Ibid., p. 26.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 26-27.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

³⁸ For details see *ibid.*, p. 27.

³⁹ According to Pius II, *Commentarii*, p. 4, he had previously been refused a passport to Scotland. Being an emissary of Cardinal Albergata, who negotiated the peace of Arras between Burgundy and France in 1435, it is no surprise that the English were suspicious of Aeneas Silvius.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 5. There was a 'clerical' element in these comments. Medieval clerics tended to see things in terms of a 'savage' populace requiring salvation.

⁴¹ Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 29. Hume Brown suggested that this 'keep' was, possibly, Norham Castle, about six miles above Berwick on the banks of the Tweed.

and back to civilisation. The final comment on his journey to Scotland speaks for itself:

Qui ubi dies illuxit, itineri se commisit, atque ad Novum castellum pervenit, quod Caesaris opus dicunt: ibi primum figuram orbis, & habitabilem terrae faciem visus est revisere: nam terra Scotia, & Angliae pars vicina Scotis, nihil simile nostrae habitationis habet, horrida, inculta, atque hiemali sole inaccessa.⁴²

In the end, Silvius could not think of his tour to Scotland other than as a journey into a barbaric and uncivilised country. It turned out to be a clash of cultures.

2.1.5. The knightly visits by Ghillebert de Lannoy in 1431, Jacques de Lalain in 1449, Georg von Ehingen in 1458, and Regnault Girard in 1434-36

Such images of a barbaric and backward country, however, could not deter the next three travellers from visiting Scotland in the mid-fifteenth century. All three visitors were experienced knights, who had travelled and fought all over Europe and the Mediterranean in search of adventure and in defence of the Christian religion against the infidel. Moreover, it seems that knight errants such as Lannoy, Lalain and Ehingen were the only group of visitors that travelled voluntarily to Scotland in late medieval times.

Ghillebert de Lannoy passed through Scotland in 1431 on his pilgrimage to the purgatory of St Patrick on an island in Lough Derg in County Donegal in Ireland.⁴³ The account of his tour through Scotland is very concise, but nonetheless includes some interesting observations. He travelled via Berwick, Dunbar, St Andrews, Perth⁴⁴ and Stirling to Dumfries. From there he left Scotland for Carlisle. He noted that Berwick was a walled town with a strong castle. Dunbar had also a very strong castle, but the town was desolate because of the wars. St Andrews, Perth and Stirling all had strong castles but were otherwise unwalled, as was Dumfries.⁴⁵ St Andrews

⁴² Pius II, *Commentarii*, p. 5.

⁴³ See C. Potvin (ed.), *Oeuvres De Ghillebert De Lannoy: Voyageur, Diplomate Et Moraliste* (Louvain, 1878), pp. 166-169, 205. [hereafter: Potvin (ed.), *Oeuvres De Lannoy*] Lannoy had already tried to make this pilgrimage in 1414, but he was taken prisoner in England. See *ibid.*, pp. 49, 187. See also *NBG*, vol. xxix (Paris, 1859), p. 479.

⁴⁴ In the Middle Ages and early modern period Perth was also known as St John's town.

⁴⁵ See also Froissart's, Silvius's and Major's remarks that the towns in Scotland were not walled. This does not mean that the Scottish towns were not fortified at all. They were protected by ditches, earthworks or minor walls. These comments must be seen against the background that visitors from the Continent were used to elaborate fortifications consisting of ramparts and massive walls such as

was the most splendid town in Scotland, and Lannoy described it as a ‘bonne ville non fermée, et y a une belle esglise nommée Saint-Andrieu, sy a très beau chastel et est éveschié toute la meilleure d’Escoce’.⁴⁶ Lannoy could have taken a more direct route to Ireland, but he obviously wanted to get a first-hand impression of Scotland.

The Burgundian knight Jacques de Lalain travelled to Scotland in 1449 to challenge James Douglas, brother of William, 8th Earl of Douglas.⁴⁷ According to his less than impartial biographer, Lalain had previously visited the courts of France, Spain and Portugal, and proven himself superior to all knights. According to Hume Brown, the account of Lalain’s travel to Scotland focused entirely on an exhaustive and repetitive description of the joust between the parties of three Burgundian and three Scottish knights, which took place in the presence of King James II at Stirling on 25 February 1449. The account does not seem to have included any further descriptions of Scotland. However, Lalain’s visit to Scotland proves the high regard the Scottish knights were held in by fellow knights on the Continent at that time. Scottish chivalry seems to have justified the long journey to the Scottish court.

In 1458 the Swabian knight Georg von Ehingen visited England and Scotland. He was one of the most far-travelled warriors of his time and had visited ten different kingdoms during his journeys, which stretched from Babylon to Portugal and from Sicily to Scotland. The narrative of his travels and adventures was written in a plain and entertaining style. It was, however, very concise about his stay in Scotland. He did not provide any description of the country, its people or their habits, but limited his account to his stay at the court of James II. Ehingen wrote that the king and his wife⁴⁸ entertained him well and honoured him with a series of festivities and a

those at Carcassonne in France. Such fortifications could not be found in Scotland because there was no tradition of siege warfare.

⁴⁶ Potvin (ed.), *Oeuvres De Lannoy*, p. 168. See also Beaugué’s and Perlin’s mid-sixteenth-century descriptions of St Andrews as the most splendid town in Scotland. See chapter 2.2.3.

⁴⁷ I have had no access to *Histoire du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain frere et compaignon de l’ordre de la Toison d’Or: Ecrite par Messire George Chastellain Chevalier, Historiographe des Ducs de Bourgogne Philippe le Bon et Charles le Hardi* (Brussels, 1634). I use the translation in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 30-38. Hume Brown erroneously dated this joust 1448. See G. Burnett (ed.), *Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum: The Exchequer Rolls Of Scotland*, vol. v (1437-1454) (Edinburgh, 1882), p. lxxv. See also Bower, *Scotichronicon*, vol. ix (Aberdeen, 1998), p. 141.

⁴⁸ Ehingen gave the following description of Mary of Gueldres: ‘Die künigin war ain hertzugen von Gellern und niderlendisch dütsch.’ ‘Des Schwaebischen Ritters Georg Von Ehingen Reisen Nach Der Ritterschaft’, ed. by Franz Pfeiffer, *Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart*, vol. i (Stuttgart, 1842), p. 28. An English translation was prepared by Malcolm Letts (ed.), *The Diary Of Jörg Von Ehingen* (London, 1929). [hereafter: Ehingen, *Diary*] The first edition of Georg von Ehingen, *Itinerarium, Das ist: Historische Beschreibung/ weylund Herrn Georgen von Ehingen raisens nach*

number of valuable gifts, which included a stallion.⁴⁹ Although the diary was thin on information about contemporary Scotland, the visit of a knight so famous as Georg von Ehingen shows that the Scottish king and his court had a good reputation among continental knights in the late Middle Ages.

Moreover, the Auld Alliance required a number of French knights to visit Scotland on diplomatic missions. In 1434 the French King Charles VII sent Maître Regnault Girard, knight, Seigneur de Bazoges, as an ambassador to James I to fetch his daughter Margaret who had been betrothed to the Dauphin in 1427.⁵⁰ Girard was not too pleased about his mission to Scotland and tried to avoid the dangerous sea voyage in winter. However, the French king forced him to travel to Scotland, and in January 1435 Girard landed on the west coast of Scotland after a sea voyage of 56 days from La Rochelle. The negotiations with the Scottish king proved difficult and were deliberately delayed by the Scots. Girard had to extend his stay in Scotland until March 1436 before he finally returned with James's daughter to France. During this time he visited Dumbarton, Linlithgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Dundee, Perth and Stirling. He was particularly impressed by the great hospitality shown to him by the Scots and noted:

To speak truth, in all the places where I went, I was most honourably treated, for the sake of the King of France, and the greatest civilities were shown me as well by churchmen and nobles as by the common people, and they all evinced so much good will in all that concerned the King of France, that I had an impression that nowhere could be found more loyal Frenchmen.⁵¹

This impression was truly different from Froissart's half a century before. There is no indication that Girard visited the Highlands, or that he left an account of the local population.

der Ritterschafft/ vor 150. Jaren/ in X. unterschiedliche Königreich verbracht ... (Augsburg, 1600) was edited by Dominici Custodis and printed by Johan Schultes. It was faulty and incomplete and must be considered as unreliable. It included a portrait of King James II and a very concise history of James I and James II.

⁴⁹ Ehingen listed the gifts and festivities in his honour as follows: 'Item. The King presented me with two tents and a cloth of black satin, and to each of my pages he gave ten ducats, there being four pages. Item. The Queen gave me a fine jewel worth 30 ducats, and a stallion worth quite 100 gulden, and much honour was shown me in hunting, dancing and feasting.' Ehingen, *Diary*, p. 40.

⁵⁰ See 'A Journey To Scotland In The Year 1435', in J. Jusserand, *English Essays From A French Pen* (London, 1895), pp. 24-61. [hereafter: Jusserand, 'Girard's Journey'] Jusserand's summary of Girard's journey concentrated on the lengthy negotiations Girard had with the Scottish king. It barely mentioned Girard's impressions of the country. I have had no access to the unpublished French manuscript (National Library, Paris, MS. Français 17330).

⁵¹ Jusserand, 'Girard's Journey', pp. 41-42.

2.1.6. Don Pedro de Ayala's stay in Scotland in 1496-97

Don Pedro de Ayala's description of Scotland is one of the most artful, informative and fascinating. It is included in a letter written from London to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain by Don Pedro de Ayala, dated 25 July 1498.⁵² Ayala was the Spanish ambassador at the court of James IV for a little over a year from the summer of 1496 to the end of 1497 when he moved to London. In his own words, the object of his letter was to send Ferdinand and Isabella, as they had requested, a 'description of the King and the kingdom of Scotland'.⁵³

Ayala gave a vivid and favourable account of King James IV with whom he had a close and somewhat paternal friendship.⁵⁴ He drew a picture of a pious, liberal, temperate but energetic king, whose courage sometimes turned into overconfidence and carelessness for his own safety. Ayala highlighted the warlike spirit of James IV, thereby voicing concerns about the stability of the current peace between England and Scotland: 'He loves war so much that I fear, judging by the provocation he receives, the peace will not last long. War is profitable to him and to the country.'⁵⁵

⁵² See *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i (London, 1862), no. 210, pp. 168-179. For the political context of Ayala's description of James IV and his kingdom see N. Macdougall, *James IV* (East Linton, 1997), pp. 282-287. [hereafter: Macdougall, *James IV*]

⁵³ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 169. Ayala was originally sent to Scotland in late June or early July 1496 to deceive James IV about a possible marriage alliance between Spain and Scotland. See Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 124-125. Ayala's letter was written in retrospect as he had left Scotland in October 1497 for London, where he was to renegotiate a revision of the peace of Ayton on behalf of James IV. Ayala grasped the opportunity to put himself into a favourable light and to stress his crucial involvement in the negotiations that led to the peace of Ayton between England and Scotland in September 1497. During his stay in London, Ayala was in fierce rivalry with the Spanish ambassador to London, De Puebla. Ayala undoubtedly seized the opportunity offered by this description to give a very favourable account of the Scottish king and his country, which must not be taken out of the special context of the years 1496-97. Nonetheless, Ayala's contemporaries highly praised his knowledge about Scotland. Johannes de Matienzo, sub-prior of Santa Cruz, described in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, dated 18 July 1498, Ayala's expertise about Scotland as follows: 'He knows England well, but Scotland still better. He is, in fact, the only man who knows Scotland, all others looking on the Scotch only as their enemies, and flying into a passion as soon as the name of Scotland is pronounced.' *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 161. The Venetian ambassador to London, Andrea Trevisano, prepared his account of Scotland in the same year entirely from what he was told by Ayala about the country.

⁵⁴ In a separate letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, also dated 18 July 1498, Johannes de Matienzo wrote about the relationship between Ayala and James IV: 'Don Pedro de Ayala lives like a gentleman, and is much beloved by the King, by the people, and by foreigners, even by the King of Scots, who esteems him like a father.' *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170. Ayala previously wrote that the peace of Ayton was made 'against the wishes of the majority in his kingdom'. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

He feared that the king's ambitious and self-assured character might turn into a disadvantage and danger to himself and the country:

He is courageous, even more so than a King should be. I am a good witness of it. I have seen him often undertake most dangerous things in the last wars. I sometimes clung to his skirts and succeeded in keeping him back. On such occasions he does not take the least care of himself. He is not a good captain, because he begins to fight before he has given his orders.⁵⁶

However, Ayala immediately delivered James IV's own reason for his style of leadership:

He said to me that his subjects serve him with their persons and goods, in just and unjust quarrels, exactly as he likes, and that, therefore, he does not think it right to begin any warlike undertaking without being himself the first in danger.⁵⁷

Ayala repeatedly praised James IV's successful policy in strengthening the power of the king over his nobility, especially in the western Highlands. He wrote that the Scots were used to fighting the English, and if there was not a war between both countries, then the Scots used to fight with one another. But King James IV, since coming of age, had suppressed such internal feuding.⁵⁸ On James IV's troubled relationship with the islanders of the western seaboard Ayala commented:

The inhabitants are very warlike and agile. I saw them in the last war. They do not know what danger is. The present King keeps them in strict subjection. He is feared by the bad, and loved and revered by the good like a god. None of the former Kings have succeeded in bringing the people into such subjection as the present King. He went last summer to many of the islands, and presided at the courts of law.⁵⁹

This was undoubtedly an idealised characterisation of James IV, although it also reflects that his court was more civilised than that of his predecessor. It is, however, evidence of his strong leadership qualities and the way he tightened the grip on his nobility and destroyed the Lordship of the Isles as a 'parallel kingdom' in the west.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 169-170. See also *ibid.*, p. 175. Ayala accompanied James IV in his military campaigns in 1496 and 1497. Some authors read this characterisation of James IV as an anticipation of his death on the battlefield of Flodden in 1513. However, the disastrous defeat of Flodden was caused by a combination of lack of direction to his troops, his giving away of an advantageous position and his use of the wrong tactics. See Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 273-276. Ayala's account of James IV's courageous leadership and personal bravery in battle reflected the key virtues a late medieval king was expected to have. James IV's portrait as a very energetic king must also be seen against the background of his father's defective leadership qualities. This became even more obvious in Ayala's praise for James IV's controlling of the internal feuding in Scotland.

⁵⁷ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 170.

⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 171.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173. This was also to stress the difference to the political failure of James III.

Ayala also gave the portrait of a highly intellectual king who spoke Latin (very well), French, German, Flemish, Italian, Spanish, and Gaelic.⁶⁰

Ayala's admiration for James IV sometimes tempted him to present the king in a brighter light than he actually deserved. This was clearly the case in respect of James IV's private life. Ayala wrote that the king had done some 'dishonourable things' and had 'love intrigues' when he was a minor. He put the blame for these deficiencies on those holding the government during the king's minority. He claimed, 'As soon as he came of age, and understood his duties, he gave up these intrigues.'⁶¹ However, Ayala frankly wrote in the next sentence that at the time of his arrival in Scotland the king kept mistresses and even had an illegitimate son. His belief that the king had given up 'his lovemaking' to avoid scandal was surely over-optimistic.⁶²

Ayala's figures for the king's revenues were likewise exaggerated and cannot be trusted.⁶³ He did write that the king's revenues were primarily drawn from the export duties on wool, hides and fish, whereas his income from import duties was inconsiderable. According to Ayala, James IV had also a considerable revenue from taking and subletting the guardianships of the orphaned children of the better classes until they came of age. The king also received revenues from the vacancies of

⁶⁰ Ayala did not use the term 'Gaelic' but described it instead as 'the language of the savages who live in some parts of Scotland and on the islands'. *Ibid.*, p. 169. Macdougall suggests that the king's knowledge of Flemish, German and Spanish may have been exaggerated. See Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 285.

⁶¹ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 170.

⁶² See *ibid.*, p. 170. James IV kept on having mistresses, which Ayala could not know about as he had left Scotland by then. For James IV's later mistresses see Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 113-114, 285-286.

⁶³ Ayala gave the king's revenues as follows: Revenues from crown land £50,000 Scots which was equivalent to 40,000 ducats; from customs 25,000 ducats a year; from the administration of the law 25,000 ducats; from wardships 20,000 ducats; no figures were given for revenues from vacant bishoprics and abbacies, and the rent (not in money, but in kind, for his kitchen) from fisheries, meat and poultry etc. See *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, pp. 170-171. Burnett put Ayala's figures in the frame. 'While the gross revenue from the customs in the reign of James III. amounted on an average to £ 3300, their yield during the five years now in question [1497-1501] was, as has been seen, only £ 3106.' G. Burnett (ed.), *The Exchequer Rolls Of Scotland*, vol. xi (Edinburgh, 1888), p. lii. No Treasurer's accounts survived for the period between May 1498 and February 1501. Moreover, totals of overall royal income are imprecise because the Exchequer and Treasurer's accounts are incomplete and the exact value of ecclesiastical properties is unknown. Royal income may also have been considerably augmented by sums which were diverted away from royal officials to the king's private use. See Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 146-150, 165-166, 168-169 (note 105).

bishoprics and abbacies. According to Ayala, the king was in want of nothing, but his revenues did not allow him to put any money aside.⁶⁴

Having given a description of the king and his revenues, Ayala continued with a description of the country. He wrote that Scotland was a part of the same island as England and reckoned, according to what he had read in books and seen on maps, that it was of the same size as its southern neighbour. In comparison to the English, the Scots were poor although the quality of the land was the same.⁶⁵ Ayala argued that the Scots were not industrious and had previously spent too much time on war. He continued that the country had so much improved under James IV that 'it is worth three times more now than formerly, on account of foreigners having come to the country, and taught them how to live'.⁶⁶ Like most visitors to Scotland, Ayala stated that the Scots had animals, meat, wool and hides in abundance. He stressed the immense flocks of sheep in the country, and particularly in the Highlands. Furthermore, he stated that there were such immense quantities of fish to be found that the Scots could easily supply Italy, France, Flanders and England with salmon, herring and stock fish.⁶⁷

Like the other contemporary visitors to Scotland, Ayala considered the agriculture to be slightly neglected. In that respect the Scots were not so sophisticated, and there was still room for improvement:

The corn is very good, but they do not produce as much as they might, because they do not cultivate the land. Their method is the following: they plough the land only once when it has grass on it, which is as high as a man, then they sow the corn, and cover it by means of a harrow, which makes the land even again. Nothing more is done till they cut the corn. I have seen the straw stand so high after harvest, that it reached to my girdle. Some kind of corn is sown about the Feast of St. John, and is cut in August.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ See *Calendar State Papers (Spain)*, vol. i, p. 171.

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 171. In a later passage Ayala clarified his comments about the wealth of the Scottish kingdom. He wrote that the Scots were not rich, 'but on the other hand, they are not so poor but that they live as well as others who are much richer; only they have nothing to put into their strong boxes'. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172. Hume Brown suggested that the foreigners must have been the Flemings. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 43. Ayala's remarks that the country had trebled in value under James IV were grossly exaggerated. Macdougall considers Ayala's figures about the king's revenues and the size of the Scottish army (120,000 horses) to have been also grossly exaggerated. See Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 283.

⁶⁷ See *Calendar State Papers (Spain)*, vol. i, p. 172.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 172. Given that the Feast of St John is celebrated on 24 June, this seems to be a very short period. Nonetheless, Moray is renowned for its fruitfulness.

Ayala wrote very favourably about the hospitality of the Scots, which was of such a nature that they even competed with one another as to who should host foreigners in their houses. Furthermore, he characterised the Scots as ‘vain and ostentatious by nature’, very keen on keeping up appearance, courageous, strong, quick, agile and ‘envious to excess’.⁶⁹

The letter continued by giving a geographical and political description of the country. In describing the running of the government his remarks seem to have been taken mainly from hearsay. He stressed:

The prelates are very much revered; they have the larger share in the Government. Spiritual as well as secular Lords, if they have a title or a dignity, belong to the General Council. It meets four times a year in order to administer justice. It is a very good institution.⁷⁰

Ayala’s description of the towns and of the commodities of life is quite interesting as he gives a very different impression of the standard of living in the towns to the bleak descriptions of Froissart and Silvius. Such contrasting accounts are probably founded less on the progress made over the decades than on the authors’ different attitudes towards Scotland. Ayala wrote, ‘The houses are good, all built of hewn stone, and provided with excellent doors, glass windows, and a great number of chimneys.’⁷¹ According to him, the people used the same furniture as in Italy,

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 172.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 173. Macdougall suggests that Ayala may have confused the General Councils with the sittings of the Lords of Council. There seem to have been no General Councils during Ayala’s stay in Scotland. This confusion might indicate that these imperfect remarks on the Scottish government were not based on personal experience but on hearsay. Ayala prepared this letter from his recollection roughly a year after he had left Scotland. Nonetheless, the government seems to have been run by the first two estates in the General Council as there was no mention of parliaments, because there were none during his stay in Scotland. See Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 283.

⁷¹ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 174. As a generalisation about the state of Scottish towns and villages at the end of the fifteenth century, this was undoubtedly exaggerated. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century travellers often referred to wooden shutters instead of glass windows. See, for example, *A Perfect Diurnall Of Some Passages and Proceedings Of, and in relation to the Armies In England, Ireland, and Scotland*, no. 42, 16-23 September 1650 (London, 1650), p. 509. [hereafter: *Perfect Diurnall*] Its author, an unnamed English soldier, wrote about the Scottish lairds’ houses: ‘They have few or no Glasse-windows, and those they have have wodden shuts below and Glasse above.’ See also T. Kirk’s account in 1677 in Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 10. Apart from the houses in High Street and Canongate, travellers often referred to the buildings of Edinburgh as poor and run-down. Moreover, in the sixteenth century wooden galleries were built upon the second story on the outside of the houses in the High Street. See, for example, F. Moryson, *An Itinerary Written By Fynes Moryson* (London, 1617), part i, p. 273. [hereafter: Moryson, *Itinerary*] John Conyers of Walthamstow visited Edinburgh in 1676 and complained that the houses in the High Street looked like wooden buildings because of the disgraceful wooden galleries. However, according to him, this custom began to be laid aside, and the people started to build piazzas in front of their shops. Conyers confirmed that the lower parts of the windows were made from wood and only the upper parts of glass. See Essex Record Office, J. Conyers of Walthamstow, ‘My Northerne Journey

Spain and France and claimed that this standard of living was not just a recent achievement, 'but inherited from preceding ages'.⁷² However, he supported the evidence of Froissart, Lannoy and Silvius, saying 'There is not more than one fortified town in Scotland, because the Kings do not allow their subjects to fortify them.'⁷³

On landownership Ayala wrote, 'The whole soil of Scotland belongs to the King, the landholders being his vassals, or his tenants for life, or for a term of years.'⁷⁴ According to Ayala, the landholders 'are obliged to serve him [the king] forty days, at their own expense, every time he calls them out'.⁷⁵ However, Ayala's remark that the king was able to draw 120,000 mounted soldiers, excluding the islanders, within 30 days from his vassals must be treated as a gross exaggeration. The same argument must be applied to his other remarks about the strength of the Scots' army.

Ayala's remarks about the Highlanders were scarce, and he usually referred to them when writing about the Western Isles. He wrote that they 'are very warlike and agile' and 'speak the language, and have the habits of the Irish'.⁷⁶

Ayala stressed the old friendship between the French and the Scots, whose gentlemen usually sent their younger sons who would not inherit property to France.

Ayala included some very interesting and revealing impressions about the Scots' trust in their own strength in his vague description of the geographical

with my Cosine Conyers, of the Tower, 1676', MS. D/DW Z6/2, fo. 14. [hereafter: Essex Record Office, Conyers, 'Northerne Journey 1676', MS. D/DW Z6/2] This is a typewritten transcript of the original manuscript (Essex Record Office, MS. D/DW Z6/1), which is partly unpaginated and illegible due to faded ink.

⁷² *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 174. Ayala could be right as far as the aristocracy was concerned.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 174. John Major stated in 1521 that Perth was the only walled town in Scotland. See Major, *History*, p. 29. Edinburgh was fortified in 1450 after the battle of Sark. However, neither Ayala nor Major reckoned Edinburgh as a fortified town. The town wall of Edinburgh was extended and strengthened after Flodden. Major, however, taught at that time in France.

⁷⁴ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 174. The clan chiefs on the western seaboard were hardly willing to acknowledge the king as their feudal lord. In a previous passage Ayala wrote that crown lands were let by leases of three years. See *ibid.*, p. 170. Major wrote that 'the houses of the country people are small, as it were cottages, and the reason is this: they have no permanent holdings, but hired only, or in lease for four or five years, at the pleasure of the lord of the soil; therefore do they not dare to build good houses, though stone abound'. Major, *History*, pp. 30-31. Major complained in the same passage about the lack of investment in the countryside due to the insecurity of leases. This seriously hindered the improvement of the countryside and clearly contradicted Ayala's exaggerated remarks about the state of the buildings in the villages.

⁷⁵ *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 174.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 173, 174.

position of Scotland.⁷⁷ He wrote that ‘Scotland is powerful enough to defend herself against her neighbours’, and that ‘no King can do her damage without suffering greater damages from her’ in war on land. However, the seemingly unlimited self-confidence of the Scots in their own strength was far more dangerous: ‘On land they think themselves the most powerful kingdom that exists; for they say the King of Scots has always a hundred thousand men ready to fight, and they are always paid.’⁷⁸

To summarise, Ayala gave an idealised portrait of James IV and an exaggerated account of the economic and military strength of Scotland. His account of Scotland described the country as equal in size and strength to England and was, in my opinion, quite over-optimistic. This was dramatically proven fifteen years later on the battlefield of Flodden.

2.1.7. Andrea Trevisano’s account of Scotland

The last account of Scotland before 1500, dealt with here, was made by a diplomat who had never been himself to Scotland. Andrea Trevisano, the Venetian ambassador to the English court, had, however, met Don Pedro de Ayala during his stay in London. Trevisano frankly admitted that he got his information about Scotland from Ayala, whom he praised highly for the peace deal that he had brokered between Henry VII and James IV.⁷⁹ Trevisano’s account may, therefore, be regarded as a supplement to Ayala’s account of Scotland. Trevisano does not seem to have been the most critical listener as he repeated many of Ayala’s exaggerations without comparing them with other sources. He wrote, for example, that

the kingdom of Scotland is very rainy; and that the country, wherever there are no mountains (which are of the most rugged description, and almost uninhabitable), is the most fertile of the whole island; that the royal family is so ancient, that there is no mention in history of any but the present race; and that the people are very handsome, and are divided into two classes, one of which inhabits the towns, and the other the country.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ See note 4 in chapter 1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175. Apart from the gross exaggeration and the error that the common soldiers were paid, it revealed the overconfidence already described in James IV’s character that may have contributed to the events leading to Flodden.

⁷⁹ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 51, 53-54. Trevisano’s account is given in *ibid.*, pp. 50-54.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51. These were the exaggerations told him by Ayala. Interestingly, Trevisano described England, which he knew from personal experience, also as ‘the most beautiful, the best, and the most fertile part of the whole island’. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

Trevisano not only repeated the figures given to him by Ayala, but also added generously to them so that the reported size and strength of the Scottish army completely lost touch with reality. Trevisano wrote that the Scottish king could easily raise 50,000 or 60,000 men, whom he would dismiss after 30 days and replace by a force of equal size. If required, an even larger army could be raised at any time.⁸¹ Trevisano's account of the Highlanders is far more interesting than his unreliable figures. Although he had never seen or visited them in their country, he praised their courteousness and sophisticated lifestyle beyond all comparison:

The inhabitants of the country are called the wild or savage Scots, not however from the rudeness of their manners, which are extremely courteous. The nobility reside on their estates, where they have generally great forests for hunting game. They have excellent houses, built for the most part, in the Italian manner, of hewn stone or brick, with magnificent rooms, halls, doors, galleries, chimneys, and windows. These savages are great soldiers, and when they go to war, the privilege of guarding the king's royal person belongs to them.⁸²

Although he called the Highlanders 'savages', this was a surprisingly positive impression of them and their nobility's cultivated lifestyle. Considering that James IV was not always at ease with the Highlanders, it is even more interesting that Trevisano erroneously promoted them to the king's personal guard. The image of the Highlanders he presented was in stark contrast to the contemporary attitude towards them and to James IV's policy regarding the Highlands and Islands.

2.1.8. Summary of the visitors to Scotland before 1500

The great majority of the visitors to Scotland between the thirteenth and fifteenth century considered it a backward and barbaric country. This applied particularly to travellers from more developed areas such as France and Italy. First of all, visitors to Scotland were confronted by travelling conditions that lagged far behind the infrastructure provided on the Continent. Roads hardly existed, and travellers faced difficulties in finding accommodation outside the big towns. Scotland had neither trade roads nor pilgrimage routes of international importance. It lacked, therefore, a

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, p. 52.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

basic infrastructure such as a network of hostels, which had long been in existence along such routes on the Continent.⁸³ Another factor, which undoubtedly had a negative impact on Scotland's image, was that most visitors at that time did not volunteer to visit, but were forced more or less to travel there.⁸⁴ Scotland was not a destination of choice. The vague ideas about Scotland and the scarcity of reliable information had left it as an unknown and almost mythical country at the fringe of the known world. This applies particularly to the Highlands. Apart from Edward I, none of the visitors discussed had penetrated far into the Highlands. Froissart used the term 'la sauvage Escose' very freely, even when referring to royal burghs like Stirling. The descriptions of the Highlanders in the accounts of Scotland at that time were extremely meagre, briefly worded and stereotyped, which reflected the general lack of knowledge about them. Information about the Highlanders was usually confined to mentions of their different language, their different garb, their plain way of living and their 'uncivilised' behaviour. However, their 'positive' reputation as fierce warriors was never questioned. Broadly speaking, most travellers considered Scotland a barbaric country, even in its supposedly 'civilised' Lowland parts. However, in the northern and western parts of the country there were yet people to be found who were even more 'uncivilised' and barbaric than the rest of the nation. In consequence, this image made the Highlands a 'no-go area'. There were very few favourable accounts of Scotland, and these must be seen in the light of the political attitudes and intentions of their authors. The Scottish court, however, enjoyed a reasonably favourable reputation as the visits of some prominent knights have shown.

One factor that must not be underestimated in its impact on the image of fifteenth-century Scotland is that authors copied and plagiarised each other on a large scale. Everything was taken for granted, and once myths were established, it was impossible to get them out of travellers' minds and travellers' accounts.

⁸³ For a study of the travelling conditions in medieval Europe and the travelling experiences of Scots on the Continent see D. Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe: The Medieval Kingdom and its Contacts with Christendom, c. 1215-1545*, vol. i (East Linton, 2000), pp. 1-26. Like in Denmark, there were few trade roads because people sailed.

⁸⁴ Froissart and the knight errants were the exception.

2.2. Sixteenth-century travellers to Scotland

In the sixteenth century the number of visitors to Scotland rose sharply, making it impossible to look at every individual account of Scotland. However, the main categories of travellers stayed roughly the same. The visits of Englishmen to Scotland were usually related either to military campaigns or to diplomatic missions. The French were still the most important group of visitors from the Continent, and their travels to Scotland were usually related to their support of the Auld Alliance against the English. Even after the break-up of the Auld Alliance in the 1560s, the French remained the most important group of visitors from the Continent. Although the sixteenth century brought an end to knights travelling across Europe in search of adventures, travelling was still an essential part of every nobleman's education. Lupold von Wedel's travels to England and Scotland in 1584 might, however, be regarded as a continuation of the tradition of late medieval travelling knights and noblemen.

One major invention changed all aspects of travelling to foreign countries in the sixteenth century. The printing press made information much easier to access. In the early sixteenth century the first printed books about Scotland were published and spread information about the country and its history all over Europe. Travellers no longer had to rely on the stories told about Scotland by Scots abroad or previous visitors to the country. By the close of the century Camden's *Britannia* provided the first detailed and reliable geographical description of the country. It was widely used as the first 'guidebook' for travellers to the British Isles. However, the spread of information by books did not necessarily mean that the picture presented of Scotland was a reliable account of the country. As I have discussed in the first chapter, books such as Hector Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* (1527) provided the country with a mythological history and an image that took roughly two centuries to shake off.

In the following chapters I would like to concentrate on some of the more elaborate accounts of visitors to Scotland. The first account to be discussed was written by a Danish diplomat and exemplifies the way early works published about Scotland influenced the perception and the image of the country and immediately made their way back into travellers' accounts.

2.2.1. Peder Svave's visit to Scotland in 1535

The Dane Peder Svave (1496-1552) was sent to Scotland in April 1535 on a diplomatic mission on behalf of the future Danish King Christian III.⁸⁵ The object of his mission was to seek military support against the town of Lübeck, which, according to Christian III, had offered the Danish kingdom to Henry VIII and 'sounded the trumpet for world disorder'.⁸⁶ Svave was instructed on 1 February 1535 to ask James V for naval aid in the form of five or six men-of-war and for permission to approach the famous seamen Robert Barton and Robert Fogo to bring their ships in support.⁸⁷ Svave's diary of his mission to Scotland focused on his negotiations with the Scottish king and his ministers. He did not achieve the object of his mission as James V first wanted to enquire into the origin of the quarrel and sent no more than words of support to Christian III. Despite the serious matter of his mission, Svave had the time to take a few notes of his travels and his impressions of the country during his stay in Scotland in May and June 1535.

Svave reached the Firth of Forth in early May. He took notes about the Bass Rock and anchored near the Isle of May before he finally landed at Dundee. From there he rode to Edinburgh, then went on to Dryburgh, Jedburgh and Melrose where he met King James V in the abbey and informed him about the object of his visit. The impression that Svave gave of Scotland was typical of his time. Although he was a diplomat who had previously travelled to many European countries, Svave was a very credulous traveller and let himself become heavily influenced by Boece. His account reflected, in a unique way, how Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* had shaped the image of the country. Apart from his negotiations with the Scottish government, Svave's account concentrated on the curiosities he either saw for himself or was told about during his stay and travels in Scotland. He reported, for example, about his meeting with John Scott, a hermit famous for his repeated, long periods of fasting

⁸⁵ Peder Svave's diary was written in Latin. It is included in vol. iii, pp. 241-250, of C.F. Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra det Kongelige Geheimearchiv, indeholdende Bidrag til dansk Historie af utrykte Kilder*, 7 vols. (Copenhagen, 1852-1883). I use the translation in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 55-58. For Svave see *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, vol. xiv (Copenhagen, 1983), pp. 235-236, and Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 32, 85, 141, and vol. ii, p. 295.

⁸⁶ D. Hay (ed.), *The Letters of James V* (Edinburgh, 1954), p. 311.

⁸⁷ For Svave's instructions see *ibid.*, pp. 310-311, 290.

and his immunity from hunger.⁸⁸ Svave was obviously told all the fables attributed to Scotland. He mentioned in his diary, for example, a ‘floating island in Scotland, which deflects from one shore to the other with the ebb and flow of the tide’, and a bird called the gannet which nested in great numbers on the Bass Rock and ‘lays no more than one egg, and hatches it under its foot in a standing position’.⁸⁹ During his stay in Edinburgh Svave visited the usual attractions such as St Catherine’s well. Svave also mentioned the other curiosities shown to foreign visitors, including what he presumed to be a volcano: ‘Not far from Edinburgh there is a mountain that constantly smokes like Etna. I saw it myself.’⁹⁰ Predictably, Svave enquired about the famous tree that produced birds. The replies were always the same:

All replied that no doubt was possible on the matter, that it was a fact they were so produced, that those which fell into the water became alive, and that those which fell on the land had no principle of life, that in the sap of the wood and even in the root the shapes of birds are found carved out, so that they can be perfectly distinguished, that the hinder parts are produced first, that the young adhere to the tree till they come to maturity, that the birds themselves do not bring forth, and that when full grown they are delicate eating.⁹¹

Svave’s diary of his stay in Scotland was thin on descriptions of the countryside he travelled through, its people and their habits. Nonetheless, he mentioned the Highlanders in his diary, which, in a nutshell, reflected what foreigners thought they knew about them and their lifestyle in the early to mid-sixteenth century. His brief description is ample evidence of the lack of knowledge about the Highlanders as a different people and their way of living. Svave’s remarks reflected the myths that dominated this image:

The wild Scots live in the manner of the Scythians, they are ignorant of the use of bread; when they are hungry they outstrip a stag in swiftness of foot, overtake it and kill it, and so sustain life: they eat the flesh raw, only squeezing out the blood.⁹²

These excerpts show that, despite the close economic and dynastic relations between Scotland and Denmark⁹³ at that time, factual knowledge about Scotland and particularly the Highlands was very scarce. More Scots left Scotland for Denmark than Danes visited Scotland. The imbalance of Scotland’s relations with its close

⁸⁸ For details about John Scott see Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 56.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁹³ James III married Margaret of Denmark in 1469. The dynastic relations were renewed in 1589 by the marriage of James VI to Anne of Denmark.

allies caused it to remain a generally unknown and mythical country, and the account of visitors like Svave did little to change that image.

2.2.2. Nicander Nucius's account of Britain in 1545

Nicander Nucius's account of Britain⁹⁴ was very concise, and it cannot be ascertained whether his remarks about Scotland were taken from personal observation. However, Nucius was a far-travelled man, and in 1545 he visited England in the entourage of Gerard Veltwick, a minister of the Emperor Charles V. Nucius's knowledge about Scotland was very superficial, and his account concentrated on some well-known features of the country. He gave Scotland's position as being to the west of England, which was very untypical of his time as Scotland was generally assumed to be to the north-east of England. He correctly gave the River Tweed as the border between both countries, and stressed the fortifications built along its banks due to the constant quarrel and fighting between both kings.

Nucius wrote that the Scots had 'also cities renowned and large' in which they performed their foreign trade with the Continent. He described the Scottish court as being in 'no way inferior to that of England'.⁹⁵ Nucius reported that the Scots were on friendly terms with the French, but to the English they were 'most hostilely bent', and 'being tributary to the English' the Scots had often, but unsuccessfully, started wars against the English to cast off their superiority.⁹⁶ According to Nucius, the Scots failed to shake off the English yoke because 'the English kept them down by superior skill in war and force', and 'For the Scotch are a more barbarous people in their manner of living than the English'.⁹⁷

The remainder of Nucius's account dealt with the climate and the animals of Britain, among which he mentioned bears, wolves and foxes as carnivorous animals. He also stressed the great number of horses, oxen and sheep. He wrote that the livestock was unattended, 'Yet no one dares to steal any of them; since the extreme

⁹⁴ Printed in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 59-62.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

punishment of death awaits the perpetrator'.⁹⁸ Like most visitors from southern Europe, Nucius noted the absence of vines, olive trees and fig trees, but stressed the length of the days in summer. He also referred to coal as being found in most places and commonly used for fuel.

Nucius's overall impression of Britain was quite positive, and he wrote about the standard of living that it 'lacks nothing of the things that are necessary and profitable, and useful to men. Nay, even things apparently scarce, are easily to be procured, and at little cost.'⁹⁹

2.2.3. Jean de Beaugué's and Estienne Perlin's accounts of Scotland in 1548-49 and 1551-52

Jean de Beaugué's and Estienne Perlin's accounts of mid-sixteenth-century Scotland should be dealt with together as both accounts were written by Frenchmen at roughly the same time. Both accounts were, strictly speaking, not primarily travellers' accounts, and they give quite varied impressions of Scotland. Nonetheless, Beaugué is known to have visited Scotland in 1548-49, whereas we can gather from Perlin's narrative that he spent some time in Britain (chiefly in London) during the last two years of King Edward VI's reign.¹⁰⁰ The accounts were written in very different styles, as one author was a soldier and the other either an ecclesiastic or a physician. A comparison of both accounts gives insight into the French attitude towards Scotland and the state of the Auld Alliance at that time. As Beaugué's account mainly focused on military matters and Perlin's concise account was of a more general nature, I would like to treat them mainly from the point of view of what they

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 61. In this passage of his account Nucius did not distinguish between England and Scotland, but wrote about the 'whole island'. In respect of the Scots, Nucius was not in line with contemporary authors. The Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, had a bad reputation for being notorious thieves. Hume Brown stressed that the punishment for theft in Scotland was not so severe as in England. In Scotland a man was not to be hanged for less than the price of two sheep, in England he was hanged for stealing one.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁰⁰ In Mitchell, 'List', pp. 458-459, it was suggested that Perlin was not an ecclesiastic but a medical student from Paris, who may have visited Scotland as a medical attaché to the French army of occupation during the regency of Mary of Guise, and that the date of his visit was earlier than 1551-52. The accounts were originally published as Jean de Beaugué, *L'Histoire De La Guerre D'Escosse ...* (Paris, 1556) and Estienne Perlin, *Description Des Royaulmes D'Angleterre Et D'Escosse* (Paris, 1558). I use the translations in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 63-70 and 71-79.

reveal about the image of Scotland among its French allies at that time. It must be stressed that both accounts had a strong political anti-English bias.

Beaugué accompanied the expedition of André de Montalembert, Sieur d'Essé, sent by the French King Henry II to assist the Scots against the invading English in 1548. Although Beaugué focused on military matters, he visited quite a number of Scottish towns and other sites of which he prepared brief descriptions. These included St Andrews, Perth, Aberdeen, Montrose, Dundee, Dunbar, the Bass Rock and its fortifications, the Isle of May and Inchkeith. Based on the towns described by Beaugué, he seems to have spent most of his time in the Lowlands of the Scottish east coast. He did not give any descriptions of places in the west or the Highlands of Scotland. Beaugué's descriptions of the Scottish towns include some interesting information. He wrote, for example, about St Andrews that 'it cannot be fortified because it is nearly as large as Thurin'.¹⁰¹ Aberdeen, Montrose, Dundee, the Isle of May, and Inchkeith in comparison could easily be fortified. Despite the devastation caused by the English, Beaugué gave a very favourable account of the Scottish towns. He wrote that Perth was 'a very pretty place, pleasant and well fitted to be the site of a good town', Aberdeen was 'a rich and handsome town, inhabited by an excellent people', and Montrose was 'a beautiful town'.¹⁰² He was particularly favourable towards the burgh of Dunbar which was

in such an excellent tract of country, and accommodated with so many of the good things which profit the life of man, that if the town were enclosed with walls (since a harbour could easily be made and at little cost) we might reckon it among the most beautiful towns in the isles of the ocean.¹⁰³

Beaugué's account of the Scottish mode of warfare differed considerably from what earlier French visitors to Scotland had written. According to Beaugué, 'The Scots never take the field unless great and extreme necessity drive them to arms.'¹⁰⁴ He wrote that the Scots, when at war, lived at their own expense and, therefore, brought with them provisions for only a few days. Once the provisions were consumed, the campaign was finished and the army was gradually dissolved, even if

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65. Later that century the area around the cathedral was encircled by a wall. The wall is clearly shown on John Slezer's general prospect of St Andrews, included in the 1693 edition of his *Theatrum Scotiae*. The wall remains little changed today.

¹⁰² Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 66.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

the object of the campaign had not been accomplished. However, until then the Scots tried to meet the enemy face to face and fought with ‘invincible obstinacy’.¹⁰⁵ Interestingly, Beaugué did not present the Scots as fighting for their freedom against a stronger neighbour that threatened their independence, but portrayed the Scots themselves as ambitious instigators of the wars with England. In his view the Scots hated the English and attacked them because of ‘their [the Scots’] ambition to be masters and their jealousy of the greatness of the English’.¹⁰⁶ A Frenchman, fighting on the Scottish side, would have been expected to give a different explanation rather than such an opportunistic motive. Beaugué stressed that the Scots were neither less warlike nor any whit inferior to the English. However, because of the mutual distrust among the Scots, it was easier for the English to suppress them. Beaugué left no doubt about the imbalance of power within the Franco-Scottish alliance. He claimed that all the merits for driving the English out of Scotland must have been with the French, ‘for from the day when the army of France set foot in Scotland, the good fortune of the English, which had long been their companion, began to leave them more and more’.¹⁰⁷

Estienne Perlin’s description differed very much in its impression of Scotland. He visited England in 1551-52, but there is no conclusive evidence whether he knew Scotland from personal experience. However, he included the latter in his description of the kingdoms of England and Scotland. He wrote that although the Scots had always been faithful allies to the Crown of France, they had profited far more from France than vice versa. Perlin left no doubt that Scotland owed its independence entirely to the kings of France who had always protected it from England.¹⁰⁸ For Perlin the Auld Alliance was anything but an alliance of equal partners. He wrote about the Scots that

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 65. Fellow Frenchman Perlin, who was undoubtedly not the greatest admirer of Scotland, nonetheless, mentioned and praised the Scots’ contribution to driving out the English in the campaign of the Sieur d’Essé. Perlin wrote that the Scots ‘showed themselves as bold and courageous as lions’. Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁰⁸ Impressions of the weakness of the Scottish royal dynasty were already expressed on the Continent in the late fourteenth century. Thomas, 3rd Marquis of Saluzzo, wrote in the mid-1390s of a dream visit to the court of a Scottish king who was unable to defend his kingdom against the English without the assistance of the French. Perlin reflected, like Saluzzo, the contemporary French view that the Scots depended on French diplomatic and military support to defend their kingdom against the English. See Boardman, *Early Stewart Kings*, pp. 194, 215.

without the assistance of the kings of France, their country would have been lost, and fallen into the hands of the English. The kings of France never abandoned their friends in distress, for once the English took many of their places and burned much of their country, but they had succour and assistance from the French, who with great diligence drove the English out of Scotland like mutineers and villains, where the said Scots showed themselves as bold and courageous as lions, at which time there was a great defeat of the enemy.¹⁰⁹

In his unstinting praise of the king of France, Perlin was even more explicit about his view of the relationship between Scotland and France:

How happy oughtest thou to esteem thyself, O kingdom of Scotland, to be favoured, fed, and maintained, like an infant, on the breast of the most puissant and magnanimous King of France, the greatest lord in the whole world, and future monarch of that round machine, for without him thou would'st have been laid in ashes, thy country wasted and ruined by the English, utterly accursed by God! Thou knowest well if I lie. He helpeth thee with gold, silver, and garrisons, and affords the succour of every sort, and loves thee like his own.¹¹⁰

An author who was as biased as Perlin cannot be expected to have delivered an impartial account of Scotland. However, his description showed the balance of power in the Auld Alliance and reflected the French attitude to its junior partner. It needs no further mention that in Perlin's description of Scotland nothing could compare to what could be found in France.¹¹¹ From his point of view Scotland was a big country, but most of its land was poor and uncultivated. Furthermore, its cities and villages could not be compared to those of France, for 'All the cities and places of this kingdom are small, except St. Andrews, which is pretty large'.¹¹² He wrote that the capital Edinburgh was a small town of about the size of Pontoise due to its recent burning by the English.¹¹³ Perlin remarked about the houses of the common people that they were 'badly built and proportioned'.¹¹⁴ It is not surprising that Perlin considered the Scots an economically poor people. He wrote that a merchant in Scotland having an annual rent of 400 *livres* was esteemed to be among the richest men of the country, whereas merchants in France, Flanders, Germany, Spain,

¹⁰⁹ Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 73. Most scholars agree that the French effectively kept the kingdom afloat in the 1550s. Mary, Queen of Scots, was educated in France.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹¹¹ It must be remembered that Perlin visited Scotland at a time when the country was suffering from recent English devastation and economic decline. In general, the economy of Scotland stagnated during most of the sixteenth century and remained well below the levels of the fifteenth century. It was not until the 1590s that the economy and Scottish foreign trade increased again due to the security which the anticipated succession of James VI to the English throne would provide. Perlin's exaggerations about the improvements achieved by the Scots with the help of the French are clearly contradicted by the economic figures.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 77. See also Beaugué's description and comparison of St Andrews to Turin.

¹¹³ Perlin referred to the burning of Edinburgh by the Earl of Hertford in 1544. See *ibid.*, p. 75.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

Portugal and England often had 12,000 or 15,000 *livres* per annum. Although he noted the general scarcity of gold and silver in Scotland, the country did not suffer from want as it was

plentiful in provisions, which are as cheap as in any part of the world; and truly the milors of that country, and the *gentilemans* (that is to say, the gentry), labourers, and tradesmen, who have any money, may live very comfortably.¹¹⁵

Perlin stressed the multitude of cattle in Scotland, on which account their flesh was cheap. He noted the absence of vines and wrote that wine was very dear, ‘but the Scots drink beer, *godalles* and *alles*, with a quantity of milk’.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, according to Perlin, the Scots imported wine from Bordeaux and Rochelle in exchange for their products. Perlin remarked that bread was tolerably cheap in his time, but ‘the poor people put their dough between two irons to make it into bread, and then made it what is esteemed good food in that country’.¹¹⁷ Like most contemporary travellers, Perlin considered the royal family of Scotland one of the oldest in the world, a common belief at that time which was undoubtedly fuelled by Hector Boece’s creative writing skills. Perlin also noted an interesting custom practised in Scotland:

In this country (as I have seen it practised) a man who is possessed of an hundred golden, or sun crowns, will lend them to a merchant, for which the merchant will maintain him a whole year in his house, and at his own table, and at the end of the year will return him his money.¹¹⁸

Like many other travellers from southern countries, he observed that the people did not use wood for fuel, but coal.¹¹⁹

Perlin grossly exaggerated the progress made by the Scots with the help of the French. His assertion that ‘within these fifty years it [the kingdom of Scotland] is nearly doubled, and is worth six times its former value’ was rightly refuted by Hume

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73. In Scotland the standard of living and prices was, generally speaking, lower than in the further developed countries such as England, France or northern Italy.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 77. This practise was confirmed by Fynes Moryson. See chapter 2.2.6.

¹¹⁹ The Italian physician Jerome Cardan, who travelled to Scotland in 1552 to treat the Archbishop of St Andrews, was likewise astonished about the Scots burning stones. Referring to peat and coal, he wrote: ‘The nature of both soil and stones in Britain is ... so bituminous that not only are there stones that burn, but a kind of earth also with heather roots in it.’ He noted that this soil and these stones were abundantly consumed in Scotland and the price asked was much lower than that of firewood in Italy. H. Yule, ‘The Travels Of Jerome Cardan In Scotland’, *The Geographical Magazine*, ed. by C.R. Markham, vol. i (London, 1874), p. 242.

Brown.¹²⁰ Perlin described Scotland as having few merits of its own other than being a useful ally to the French king because ‘the said kingdom of Scotland serves him as a buckler against his enemies, and a means for conquering England’.¹²¹ It is very unlikely that Perlin ever visited the Highlands or had personal experience of the Highlanders as his remarks about them were of the most general kind:

Also it is to be noted that there are some savages in some of the counties of Scotland, but that from day to day the country strengthens and amends, and is in a daily state of improvement.¹²²

2.2.4. Lupold von Wedel’s journey to Scotland in 1584

In 1584-85 the Pomeranian Junker Lupold von Wedel (1544-1615) visited England and Scotland.¹²³ He was a knight errant who belonged more to the late medieval world of chivalry than to the age of Humanism. Like Georg von Ehingen more than a century before, Wedel had travelled all over Europe. His travels included visits to Egypt and the Holy Land in 1578-79 and to Spain and Portugal in 1580-81. Wedel spent most of his life either travelling, or fighting in various European wars. He fought against the Turks in Hungary and the Catholic powers in France and Germany.

Wedel’s diary is quite different in style when compared to the previous accounts of Scotland mentioned above. It reads as if the author has written down his observations and remarks the moment they entered his head. It also looks as if he did not borrow from other authors or tried to embellish his style. Therefore, his observations can be considered to be genuine and free from other influences, making them all the more valuable. Wedel recorded on a daily basis the towns and villages he travelled through, the posts where he changed horses, the towns he lodged in and

¹²⁰ Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 74.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹²³ See ‘Journey Through England And Scotland Made By Lupold Von Wedel In The Years 1584 And 1585’, *Transactions Of The Royal Historical Society*, new series, vol. ix (London, 1895), pp. 223-270. [hereafter: Wedel, ‘Journey’] This is a translation by G. von Bülow of the section relating to England and Scotland from the original manuscript. The German edition prepared by M. Bär in the same year reads ‘Lupold von Wedels Beschreibung seiner Reisen und Kriegserlebnisse’, *Baltische Studien*, ed. by the Gesellschaft für Pommersche Geschichte und Alterthumskunde (Stettin, 1895), pp. 1-609. [hereafter: Wedel, ‘Reisen und Kriegserlebnisse’] Wedel referred in his diary also to a ‘Book of Manners’, which he described as an illustrated companion to his diary. Unfortunately, it seems to have been lost.

the distances he rode, thus showing how much time it took to travel in late sixteenth-century England and Scotland.¹²⁴ He made personal and geographical entries and took notes of everything that seemed of interest to him. His observations show a certain credulity that was quite typical of visitors to Scotland at that time. Moreover, the passages relating to Scotland show a higher degree of credulity than the more sober ones relating to England, which undoubtedly underlined Scotland's status as a widely unknown country.

Wedel arrived in London on 17 August 1584 and immediately set out for the Queen's court, which was at that time at the Palace of Oatlands. He intended to continue his travels to Scotland and needed a passport for that country. He was given an audience and was questioned by the Queen's secretary Francis Walsingham, who soon provided him with the requested papers. Wedel noted that some gentlemen of the court found the issue of a passport to him very remarkable. They informed him that 'to Germans and other nations passports had often been refused, because at this time the queen was not on good terms with the Scotch'.¹²⁵

On 29 August, Wedel and his companions set out for Scotland. The travelling party was made up of seven persons: Wedel, Ewald von der Goltz, a Saxon nobleman Franz von Trotha accompanied by his tutor and his servant, a Bavarian nobleman Wulf Sigmunt von Haunsberg, and Johann Wachendorf. Apart from

¹²⁴ From the figures Wedel provided in his itinerary for the travel from London to Berwick the following conclusions on travelling in late sixteenth-century England can be drawn. On the way north the party travelled on hired post-horses, they rode on average circa 30 miles a day and changed the horses about every 10 miles. On the way south they travelled on bought horses and rode circa 22 miles a day. On the way north they took one full day rest, on their return they had two days on which they rode no more than 12 miles and spent the remainder of the day visiting York and Cambridge. Travelling by post-horses was a faster way of travelling because the horses did not need to be rested. According to Wedel, this method of travelling was more expensive than riding your own horses, which was cheaper but roughly took a third more time as these horses had to be rested more often. Moreover, when galloping fast to Scotland, the travelling party had more serious accidents with the hired horses than when riding slowly back to London on their own horses. In Scotland Wedel spent more time on sightseeing and was less determined to make miles, so that it is not possible to give exact figures for how many miles he travelled a day. Nonetheless, the figures he gave correspond roughly to the daily distances given above.

¹²⁵ Wedel, 'Journey', p. 228. When Wedel met Walsingham at Oatlands, the pro-English party in Scotland had just suffered a serious setback, and their leaders had been forced to flee to Berwick. Wedel arrived in Scotland at a time when Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, Governor of Berwick from 1568 to 1584, had recently received the Earl of Arran, under James VI the virtual ruler of the kingdom, and had initiated the negotiations that led to the Treaty of Berwick in 1586, which made James VI an ally of the English queen. See W.D. Robson-Scott, *German Travellers in England 1400-1800* (Oxford, 1953), p. 44. [hereafter: Robson-Scott, *German Travellers*] In a later passage Wedel wrote about the Earl of Arran that he was 'not much liked in the country, for it was his doing that both the last and old regent were murdered'. Wedel, 'Journey', p. 249.

Wachendorf, none of the travelling party seems to have been able to speak English. Wachendorf, originally from Cologne, lived as a merchant at the 'Stalhof', the headquarter of the Hanse merchants in London.¹²⁶ Wedel noted that Wachendorf spoke English and served as an interpreter to the travelling party. They travelled on hired post-horses¹²⁷ along the English east coast and reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 6 September. Wedel observed that Berwick had stronger fortifications than any other town in England and was garrisoned with about 1,000 soldiers. In Berwick Wedel and his party were welcomed by the Governor, Lord Hunsdon, and entertained with a splendid dinner, which included plenty of drink. Wedel remarked on the absence of any silver cutlery on the tables as they had to eat from tin dishes and wooden plates. According to Wedel, the English entertained and honoured their German guests by drinking with them from extra large cups in rough quantities. To please their guests the English drank far more than they were used to because the Germans were famous for their hard drinking.¹²⁸ On 12 September, Wedel crossed the border after he was given the assurance of a safe passage. North of the border they were welcomed and escorted by Scottish emissaries. Wedel immediately observed that these men were dressed in very plain, long coats, and the horses they provided were small, with bad saddles and bridles without bits. The Scottish gentlemen parted soon after, and Wedel and his companions were guided by a servant to Dunbar where they spent the night. The next morning they rode to Tantallon Castle, from where they rowed to the Bass Rock. The boat trip to the Bass Rock can be considered as sightseeing in the modern meaning, as the Bass Rock with its fortification and birds was one the most famous attractions to be seen in Scotland. They had to hand over their armour and weapons and were then allowed into the fortification. Like most contemporary travellers, Wedel was fascinated by the strength of the island fortress and the number of geese to be found on the rock. He

¹²⁶ Max Bär suggested that Johann Wachendorf was presumably a son or a relative of Adam Wachendorf, who served from c. 1565 as the secretary of the 'Stahlhof' at London. See Wedel, 'Reisen und Kriegserlebnisse', p. 326.

¹²⁷ Travelling on post-horses seems to have been a rather expensive way of travelling. Wedel bought seven horses for their way home from Edinburgh, 'having hitherto spent much money on procuring post-horses'. Wedel, 'Joumey', p. 247.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 240. The German edition is even more explicit: '... haben ein Gesoffe uber iren Gebruch mit uns angefangen, große Gleser in Soffen uns zugetrunken, welches uns nur zu Gefalle geschen, weil alle Nation van der Teutschen Saufen zu sagen wißen ...'. Wedel, 'Reisen und Kriegserlebnisse', p. 329.

gave a detailed description of the solan geese that reflected the contemporary knowledge and the myth established about these birds. Wedel wrote that they laid only one egg apiece, which they hatched with the right foot, and that they were unable to fly if they could not see the sea. Wedel believed in this myth because he was shown how a boy caught one of the birds when it was cornered and could not see the water.¹²⁹ Wedel described the method of catching these birds. A boy was lowered down on a rope, killed the geese with a cudgel and then threw them into the sea where they were picked up by a boat. He noted that the owner of the Bass Rock made at least 1,000 crowns a year from the birds' flesh, feathers and fat, which was an efficient remedy against paralysis when rubbed on the limbs.¹³⁰

From Dunbar the party rode along the shore of the Firth of Forth to Edinburgh, where their guide parted from them. On the way to the capital Wedel noted that the people at Prestonpans made large quantities of salt from boiling sea water. Next he was shown the battlefield of Pinkie by a survivor. Just outside Edinburgh Wedel visited Kirk o' Field and gave an account of the story of the murder of Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley. He blamed Mary, Queen of Scots, and her lover¹³¹ for the murder, and gave an account of her fate and imprisonment by the English queen. On 16 September, he visited St Catherine's well, requested it be emptied, and took some oil to persuade himself of its qualities. From Edinburgh Wedel went to Leith, took a boat to Kinghorn, and rode to Perth to meet the king and his court. Like most travellers of his time, Wedel was fascinated by natural curiosities, an example of which was to be seen south of Perth. Wedel's description of this curiosity is a good example of the style of his diary and the fascination such curiosities had for visitors to Scotland.

There lies a stone in the middle of the field, where the oats were still in heaps. This stone is of considerable size, but it moves by being touched, and indeed, I could make it move to and fro with my thumb. We met a peasant, who told us that the king had been here also, and

¹²⁹ See Wedel, 'Journey', p. 242. Wedel saw and described more 'miracles' during his comparatively short stay in Scotland (12 September to 2 October 1584) than during the seven months he spent in London and England. This underlined Scotland's image as a country of myth and miracles.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 242. According to the figures Wedel provided for the value of the Scottish money, this was equivalent to £2,400 Scots. Svave in 1535 gave the annual revenues of the Bass Rock as 400 gold pieces, John Taylor in 1618 as at least £200, Sir William Brereton in 1635 as £200 sterling, John Ray in 1661 as £130 sterling. In the early seventeenth century, £200 sterling would correspond to £2,400 Scots.

¹³¹ The German edition reads 'lovers' instead of 'lover'. This refers to Mary's third husband, James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell.

caused men to dig under the stone with the intention to move it from its place and to see what was underneath; but whatever pains they took, they could not manage it.¹³²

The next day the party were allowed to see the king while attending a church service led by the Archbishop of St Andrews, Patrick Adamson. Wedel described the young James VI as ‘a fine gentleman, twenty years old as they say, of a smooth appearance, having no beard’.¹³³ The royal court, however, did not make a great impression on Wedel, and he noted, ‘The court does not show much royal splendour.’¹³⁴ The meeting with the king at Perth was the climax of Wedel’s tour to Scotland, and the time approached to return to London. They returned via Burntisland to Leith and Edinburgh, where they visited the castle and Holyrood Palace, which he described as ‘a building of mean appearance’.¹³⁵ In Edinburgh they witnessed how the Archbishop of St Andrews had to flee the town to save himself from a crowd of angry women intent on stoning him to death. Wedel remarked that the bishop supported the king in his attempt to make himself the head of the Church as the Queen of England had done. He wrote that many of the bishops and lords who opposed the king’s ambitions had to take refuge in England, and that the people feared this to be a step towards the reintroduction of popery (Roman Catholicism).

In Edinburgh the party also met with Colonel William Stewart and his wife Erica, a German Countess of Manderscheid.¹³⁶ Wedel noted that she was accompanied by ‘an English Countess of Arron, to the husband of which belongs the island *Morfama*, where the geese, called cleggus (cleg-goose) grow’.¹³⁷ This coincidental meeting offered Wedel the opportunity to insert an account of the ‘barnacle geese’ in his diary. Predictably, his version of this curiosity varied

¹³² Wedel, ‘Journey’, p. 244.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 245. In 1584 James VI was eighteen years of age.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹³⁶ Colonel William Stewart of Houston. He also entertained J.P. Hainzel von Degerstein and C. Waser on their tour in 1592. He was the ‘Éminence grise’ of Scottish-Danish relations. See Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. ii, pp. 78-79.

¹³⁷ Wedel, ‘Journey’, p. 247. In 1581 James Stewart of Bothwellmuir was made Earl of Arran, Lord of Avane and Hamilton. He lost his title and fell from power as governor of Scotland in 1585. However, he was not married to an ‘English Countess of Arron’ as Wedel claimed. He was married from 1581 to Elizabeth, recently wife of Robert Stewart, Earl of Lennox. She was the former widow of Hugh Fraser, Lord Lovat. For details see G.E. Cokayne (ed.), *The Complete Peerage*, vol. i (London, 1910), pp. 222-223, and J.B. Paul (ed.), *The Scots Peerage*, vol. iv (Edinburgh, 1907), pp. 368-372. The meeting with the English countess seems to have been more of a pretext to insert the myth of the ‘barnacle geese’ in his narrative.

considerably from what other travellers contributed to the subject. His account must, therefore, be considered more a proof of Scotland's status as a largely unknown country, whose image was dominated by myth, than a useful contribution to contemporary science:

These geese do not grow on trees, as the tale goes in Germany, but the trees, being fir trees, stand close to the water, which comes dashing against them, and in consequence of the wetting certain abscesses form on the trees like branches, with living germs in them. When spring is coming these abscesses break open, the germ falls down into the water, receives nourishment, grows and is changed into a goose. This, however, is not so much a peculiarity of the trees, but of the water, for the same has been observed on ships being a long time in the water, on which this manner of bringing forth fruit is said to occur also.¹³⁸

On 29 September, Wedel left Edinburgh. For their journey back the party bought seven horses with bridles, saddles and all harness for a total of 47 crowns.¹³⁹ Wedel returned via the Scottish east coast and Berwick back to England and London, where he spent the following winter until returning to the Continent in April 1585. When he left Scotland, Wedel made a summary of his impressions of the country. He wrote that 'Scotland is well fitted for agriculture, only the vine does not grow here.'¹⁴⁰ In comparison to England, however, Scotland was a poor country. He noted that the villages looked very poor, that the stone walls of the houses did not reach the height of a man and that the roofs were covered with turf. Like many other contemporary travellers, he remarked that the towns were not walled and generally consisted of only one street. The houses in the towns were built of wood, and the exteriors were covered with boards. According to him, the Scots wore plain and simple clothing. Wedel remarked that the Scots had innumerable children, but though they appeared to be very poor, he insisted that the country was not impoverished. Last but not least, Wedel commented on the value of the Scottish money and compared it to the coins used in Germany:

As to the coinage I first mention the penny, twelve of which make a shilling, and twenty shillings a pound. Two pounds are equal to three marks, thirty-four shillings make a taler,

¹³⁸ Wedel, 'Journey', p. 247.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 247. According to Wedel's figures, this was equivalent to £112 16s. Scots. They had to leave one horse behind at Alnwick as it was foundered. Instead, they bought a fresh one for seven crowns.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 248. It must be considered that Wedel only visited East Lothian, Midlothian, Fife and Perth. He saw the most fruitful parts of Scotland (apart from Moray) during the time of harvest. It is remarkable that Wedel did not write about the huge numbers of livestock in Scotland.

and forty-eight shillings a crown. There are also fourpenny- and eightpenny-pieces, half silver, half copper; the penny-pieces are only copper.¹⁴¹

The sections of Wedel's diary relating to Scotland show that it was, as late as at the end of the sixteenth century, a largely unknown country. Wedel did not make any mention of Highlanders or the Highlands, which underlined that this part of Scotland was virtually 'terra incognita'. Even for far-travelled people like Wedel the Highlands were out of reach.

2.2.5. Hainzel von Degerstein's and Waser's tour to Scotland in 1592

The splendour and prestige of Elizabethan England attracted a number of young noblemen from Germany who included England in their Grand Tour to acquire knowledge of the world.¹⁴² Johann Peter Hainzel von Degerstein (1572-1608) was typical of that new type of visitor to the British Isles. Hainzel set out from Switzerland, and travelled through Germany and the Low Countries before he arrived in London, where he stayed from mid-December 1591 until early March 1592. He then extended his tour through the British Isles to Scotland and travelled as far north as Aberdeen. He spent altogether eight weeks north of the border before setting out for Ireland, which was more than any other German traveller had achieved in the late sixteenth or the early seventeenth century. Unfortunately, all that is left of his tour is an itinerary prepared by his tutor and travelling companion Caspar Waser (1565-1625).¹⁴³ Nonetheless, it includes some interesting information about Hainzel's and Waser's tour through Scotland. Curiosity and acquiring knowledge of the world were not the only objectives of their tour, as they also visited

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248. A table comparing the English and Scottish weights and coins is to be found in Moryson, *Itinerary*, part i, pp. 282-283.

¹⁴² The increased attraction the British Isles had for German travellers came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War on the Continent and the English civil war in the middle of the seventeenth century. The death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603 also caused a decline of the prestige of the English court. It was not until the Restoration that German travellers began, again, to visit the British Isles in increasing numbers. See Robson-Scott, *German Travellers*, p. 78.

¹⁴³ 'The British Itinerary of Johann Peter Hainzel von Degerstein, by Caspar Waser', ed. by J.K. Cameron, *Zwingliana*, vol. xv (Zurich, 1980), pp. 259-295. [hereafter: Waser, 'Itinerary'] For Waser see *ADB*, vol. xli (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 227-228. Waser must have prepared the German version of the itinerary more than a decade later from notes taken during their travels, as he referred, for example, to the king as James VI and I of Great Britain. Hainzel and Waser were introduced to the king at Dalkeith Palace on 7 May 1592. See Waser, 'Itinerary', p. 280, and the editor's notes on pp. 281, 263.

some friends from Scotland whom they knew from their studies at Basle and Heidelberg.¹⁴⁴ Hainzel's and Waser's visits to all four Scottish universities also reflected their high regard for Scottish scholars and the good reputation of the Scottish universities. Their visit to Scotland was basically a tour of intellectuals (they had letters of introduction by Theodore Beza), and after their return to England they also visited the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

Waser obviously consulted both Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* and Camden's *Britannia* as guidebooks to Scotland as can be seen from his remarks on Berwick-upon-Tweed and Cowie, a 'free burgh' north of Dunnottar.¹⁴⁵ Waser may have used Boece initially during their tour, and may later have consulted Camden when compiling their itinerary more than a decade after the tour. It is, however, interesting that Waser used the comparatively unreliable Boece for information about Berwick and not Camden's recently published *Britannia*, which was at that time the most up-to-date guidebook to the British Isles and was referred to by all contemporary travellers.

The Borders seem to have been an insecure and dangerous area in the early 1590s. Waser noted that they were given an armed escort of soldiers by the English deputy Governor of Berwick to guide them for many miles safely into Scotland because of the danger of the area.¹⁴⁶ Hainzel and Waser continued their tour via Dunbar and Haddington to Edinburgh. It seems that they were more interested in meeting their friends at Aberdeen, as they only spent two days in Edinburgh, and then went on to meet King James VI at Dalkeith Palace before setting out for the north. In contrast to Wedel, who saw the king only from a distance, Hainzel and Waser were given an audience as they had a letter of introduction from Theodore Beza to the king. Moreover, James VI made an entry in Hainzel's 'Stammbuch'.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Hainzel and Waser befriended Robert Howie (c. 1565 - c. 1645) and John Johnston (c. 1565-1611) who studied at Basle and Heidelberg respectively. They met Johnston at London and visited Howie at Aberdeen. See *ibid.*, pp. 262, 265, 268. Even after their return to Scotland, Johnston and Howie kept in touch with their academic friends on the Continent. See J.K. Cameron (ed.), *Letters of John Johnston c. 1565-1611 and Robert Howie c. 1565-1645* (Edinburgh and London, 1963).

¹⁴⁵ See the editor's notes in Waser, 'Itinerary', pp. 265, 285.

¹⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 278. See also Wedel, 'Journey', p. 241. Wedel was assured a safe passage by the Governor of Berwick, and he was then met by an escort of Scottish gentlemen at the border.

¹⁴⁷ 'Stammbuch' is the German term for 'Album Amicorum'. It consisted of blank leaves of paper or vellum bound in the form of a book. It was intended for the signatures and armorial bearings of the owner's friends and acquaintances as he moved from one university or country to another.

Hainzel and Waser did not pay a visit to the Bass Rock in this stage of their journey, which underlines the assumption that it was more important to them to reach Aberdeen. They crossed the Firth of Forth from Leith to Kinghorn and rode to St Andrews, where they spent another six days and were entertained by the authorities of the city and the university. They continued their tour via Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose and Dunnottar to Aberdeen, where they spent four days with their friends. On their way back they chose a slightly different route, via Laurencekirk, Forfar and Perth, before returning to Edinburgh, where they remained for nearly three weeks. This time they used the opportunity for an excursion to the Bass Rock. However, Waser does not seem to have been as impressed by its curiosities as Wedel, for he did not repeat the usual myth about the solan geese, but merely noted that they were good to eat.¹⁴⁸ From Edinburgh Hainzel and Waser continued their tour via Stirling to Glasgow, where they made their presence known to the professors of the university.¹⁴⁹ Before leaving for the south-west and a boat for Ireland, they made a trip to Dumbarton.

Hainzel's and Waser's tour included the traditional elements of a journey to Scotland, such as visits to its famous curiosities like the Bass Rock, Dunnottar Castle and Dumbarton Castle. It also reflected the high reputation of the Scottish universities and the rise of Glasgow. Subsequent visitors, such as the German count in 1609 or Geizkofler in 1611, included Glasgow in their tours, and most travellers in the seventeenth century agreed that it was the most beautiful city in Scotland.

2.2.6. Fynes Moryson's travel to Scotland in 1598

In April 1598, the Englishman Fynes Moryson (1566-1630) set out for Scotland. Moryson was one of the most widely travelled persons of his time and had spent

¹⁴⁸ See Waser, 'Itinerary', p. 286. John Taylor, the self-styled 'Water Poet', visited the Bass Rock in 1618 and noted about the solan goose that it was 'a most delicate Fowle, which breeds in great abundance in a little Rocke called the *Basse* ... It is very good flesh, but it is eaten in the forme as wee eate Oysters, standing at a side-board, a little before dinner, unsanctified without Grace; and after it is eaten, it must be well liquored with two or three good rowses of Sherrie or Canarie sacke.' J. Taylor, *All The Workes Of John Taylor The Water-Poet* (London, 1630), part i, p. 138. [hereafter: Taylor, *Workes*] Many travellers did not like the taste of the solan goose and wrote that its flesh tasted like fish.

¹⁴⁹ See the editor's note in Waser, 'Itinerary', p. 269.

most of the 1590s travelling all over Europe. Before visiting Scotland, Moryson had been to Bohemia, Germany, the Low Countries, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Switzerland and the Holy Land.

Moryson entered Scotland via Berwick and went to Dunbar, Haddington and Edinburgh. From there he went to Leith, crossed the Firth of Forth to Kinghorn and rode to Falkland Palace. He intended to continue his travels to St Andrews and wanted to return via Stirling to Edinburgh. However, ‘this journey being hindred’, ‘some occasions of unexpected businesse’¹⁵⁰ forced him to return speedily to England the same way he had come. Moryson does not seem to have spent a very long time in Scotland, but nonetheless gave useful advice on travelling in Scotland in general and made some interesting observations about the country.

First of all, Moryson recommended his readers to read Camden, ‘an Authour without exception’, whose words Moryson followed as close as possible in his geographical description of Scotland.¹⁵¹ Far more interesting than his paraphrase of Camden is the practical advice he gave to future travellers to Scotland. Moryson explained that in Scotland a horse might be hired for two shillings the first day and for eight pence for every subsequent day. Moreover, according to him, the horse lenders sent a footman to return the horse.¹⁵² Moryson noted that the inns in Scotland were not of the same kind as the inns in England. The Scots did not have public inns, ‘but in all places some houses are knowne, where passengers may have meate and lodging’.¹⁵³ He wrote that these lodgings had no signs in the street and provided accommodation for travellers only. The horses had to stay in stables at different buildings in the side streets.¹⁵⁴ Moryson wrote that the other method for travellers to find accommodation was to go directly to the house of some townsman they were

¹⁵⁰ Moryson, *Itinerary*, part i, p. 274.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, part iii, p. 152. See also *ibid.*, part i, p. 272.

¹⁵² This was confirmed by Kirk’s account of the services of the footmen. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 20.

¹⁵³ Moryson, *Itinerary*, part iii, p. 62. See also *ibid.*, part iii, p. 156.

¹⁵⁴ Sir William Brereton lodged (in 1635) at Patrick Mackellen’s inn at Ayr. He noted that the inn had no stable, and he was constrained to seek a stable in the town. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 156. See also T. Kirk, *A Modern Account Of Scotland ...* ([London], 1679), p. 15. Kirk wrote in this satirical description of Scotland about the inns: ‘... they have not Inns, but Change houses (as they call them) poor small Cottages, ... your Horses must be sent to a Stablers (for the Change-houses have no Lodging for them) where they may feed voluptuously on Straw only, for Grass is not to [be] had, and Hay is so much a Stranger to them, that they are scarce familiar with the name of it’.

acquainted with, ‘for most of them will entertaine a stranger for his money’.¹⁵⁵ As to the price of fodder, he wrote that grass and hay were rare in Scotland, and that oats and straw, or grass in summer, cost eight pence a day and night. As for meals he noted that at a common table a supper or dinner could be had for six pence, which included a free bed for the night. If a traveller wanted to eat in his own chamber, he could get meat at a reasonable rate. Moryson finally remarked that up to 20 or 30 years ago coaches had not been used in Scotland. However, since the Union of England and Scotland¹⁵⁶ they had become more frequent, nonetheless they were still far less common than in England.

From his own experience in Scotland, Moryson noted that passengers were served a ‘sleeping cuppe of wine’ before going to bed. Moreover, he noted about the habits of the Scots in entertaining their guests that they ‘used to drinke healths not without excesse, and (to speake truth without offence), the excesse of drinking was then farre greater in generall among the Scots then the English’.¹⁵⁷

Moryson’s notes about his observations in Scotland were very concise as he had to cut his visit short and to return to England earlier than expected. He mentioned the strength of the fortifications of Berwick to prevent the Scots from making inroads, and noted that here provisions, especially seafood, might be obtained in abundance and at very low cost. Moreover, at Berwick he saw the habit, previously mentioned by Estienne Perlin, that the creditor was given free lodging by the debtor for the period of the loan:

And here I found that for the lending of sixtie pound, there wanted no good Citizens, who would give the lender a faire chamber and good dyet, as long as he would lend them the mony.¹⁵⁸

He described Dunbar as a small, poor and ruined town. At Falkland Palace, ‘of old building, and almost ready to fall, having nothing in it remarkeable’, he met King James VI, who was ‘at that time lying there to follow the pastimes of hunting and hawking, for which this ground is much commended’.¹⁵⁹ Moryson noted during his travels in Scotland the general scarcity of trees and wood, especially in Lothian and

¹⁵⁵ Moryson, *Itinerary*, part iii, p. 62.

¹⁵⁶ The Union of Crowns in 1603.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, part iii, p. 156.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, part i, p. 272. Thus the creditor could avoid the formal taking of interest.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, part i, p. 274.

Fife. As for the remainder of his concise notes, it must be said that they were mainly culled from Camden and do not cast any new light on the state of affairs in Scotland in the late sixteenth century. Like most of his predecessors who visited Scotland in the sixteenth century, Moryson did not report anything about the Highlands apart from his mention that there were many woods, mountains and lakes on the west side of Scotland. It seems he had no personal knowledge of the Highlands and its people, and, according to his travelling plans, he never intended to visit that area.

2.2.7. Henri, Duc de Rohan's, tour to Scotland in 1600

Henri, Duc de Rohan (1579-1638),¹⁶⁰ visited Scotland in 1600. In the previous two years he had travelled through Bavaria, Tyrol, Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, and finally England. Unfortunately, Rohan's account of Scotland¹⁶¹ was extremely concise and suffered greatly from his awkward style of writing which rendered the meaning of some passages incomprehensible.

The most striking feature of Rohan's account was his praise for Scottish hospitality to foreigners. Rohan was full of praise for the affection the Scots had shown to him. He wrote that the Scots' hospitality exceeded all other nations, and he felt induced to compare the virtues of the Scots to his native country France.¹⁶² He was likewise full of praise for James VI, whom he described as a great king 'worthy to govern his own kingdom, and much more'.¹⁶³ Rohan was a Huguenot, and he made no secret of his wish to see 'heaven-sent' James VI become also king of England:

He seems to have been sent at a remarkable crisis; for God is wont to bring forth great men in a country, when He wishes to change a kingdom from one hand to another, or to ruin or elevate the nation. At the present moment, England is in such a crisis, and what leads me to think that it is the Scottish king and no other whom God wishes to be the instrument of his purposes is the validity of that king's claim, his rare virtues, and the advantage he has by his residence in it of appropriating the whole island. ... He must have been sent, therefore

¹⁶⁰ See *NBG*, vol. xlii (Paris, 1863), pp. 516-520.

¹⁶¹ *Voyage Du Duc De Rohan, Faict en l'an 1600, En Italie, Allemagne, Pays-bas Uni, Angleterre, & Escosse* (Amsterdam, 1646). For Scotland see *ibid.*, pp. 205-218. Rohan inserted in the account of his travels in Scotland a concise geographical and historical description of the country which he mainly culled from Buchanan. See *ibid.*, pp. 209-211. I use the translation of the passages relating to his travels in Scotland in Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 91-95.

¹⁶² See *ibid.*, pp. 91-92. Such hospitality must be seen against the background of his description of Scotland as a poor country that was 'niggard in producing what is necessary to human life'. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

(and God grant I may be a true prophet!), that the whole of this kingdom might be placed under one head, that the whole of this beautiful island of Great Britain (which has never chanced before) might be brought under the same God, the same faith, the same law, the same king.¹⁶⁴

Rohan did not give an itinerary, and it is impossible to reconstruct the route he travelled in Scotland. The only places described in slightly more detail were Edinburgh and Leith, but his account of them was of the most superficial kind. Furthermore, Rohan seems to have been a rather careless observer as he wrote, for example, that the buildings in the Canongate and High Street were constructed of wood. He did not realise that the houses were made of stone behind the wooden galleries.¹⁶⁵ Rohan did not bother to provide any descriptions of the other towns and places he saw because ‘they possess neither splendid buildings, nor remarkable antiquities, nor things worthy of special mention’.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, Rohan thought it impossible to give any account of their origin because the writings of the Scottish historians were so contradictory that it was useless to consult them. However, he mentioned that he had visited the towns of Linlithgow, Stirling and Dunfermline. He only mentioned these places because of the people he saw or met there. In Linlithgow he saw Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of the king, in Stirling he saw the king’s son, Prince Henry, and in Dunfermline he saw Anne of Denmark, the wife of King James VI. Rohan’s overall impression of Scotland was that of a poor country, but he was deeply impressed by the people he met and the true hospitality he was shown by the Scots.¹⁶⁷

2.2.8. A German count’s visit to Scotland in 1609

In 1609 and 1611 two German travelling parties visited Scotland. Despite being early seventeenth-century travellers, these particular Germans should be dealt with here because they belonged to a cluster of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 92. Rohan seems to have been very close to King James VI who made him godfather to Prince Charles. This might have influenced Rohan’s extremely favourable account of the king.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 93.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁶⁷ The Scots’ extraordinary hospitality to foreigners was confirmed by all continental visitors to Scotland. Dutch students at the University of St Andrews in the early seventeenth century also reported of the great love of the Scots for foreign visitors and travellers. See Cameron, ‘Students From The Netherlands At St Andrews’, p. 61.

German visitors to Scotland.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, the account of the unidentified German count and his travelling party in 1609 was a mixture of a traveller's account and a geographical description, and it exemplifies the difficulties in dealing with the early travellers to Scotland.¹⁶⁹

The count's party set out from London on 2 May and reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 9 May.¹⁷⁰ They travelled on hired post-horses from London to Edinburgh, changing the horses 28 times.¹⁷¹ As there was no post service beyond Edinburgh, the travelling party continued their tour on hired horses. From Edinburgh they returned to North Berwick on 16 May to visit the Bass Rock, a 'must-see' for contemporary travellers to Scotland. The author gave a lengthy description of the solan geese nesting on the Bass Rock. His account included the myth that these birds hatched their eggs under only one foot, and that they were unable to fly if they could not see the water.¹⁷² From Edinburgh they travelled on 18 May to Linlithgow, where they viewed a number of ore mines recently dug by German miners from Meissen. After returning to Edinburgh, they crossed the Forth at Leith and rode to St Andrews. Zeiller gave a brief account of the burning of George Wishart and the subsequent murder of Cardinal David Beaton (both 1546), which was paraphrased from Buchanan's *History*. The travelling party then moved on to Dundee, Perth, Falkland

¹⁶⁸ See also Wedel in 1584 and Hainzel von Degerstein/Waser in 1592.

¹⁶⁹ The account of the tour through England, Scotland and Ireland is included in M. Zeiller, *Itinerarii Galliae, Et Magnae Britanniae* (Strasbourg, 1634), part ii, pp. 231-284. Zeiller claimed that the account was written by a travelling companion of the count and passed on to him. Regrettably, Zeiller made several alterations to the account. He abridged some passages and added his own remarks and descriptions to others. The original account undoubtedly would have been more valuable as a contemporary source on early seventeenth-century Scotland.

¹⁷⁰ The Borders seemed to have been pacified and safe for travellers after the Union of Crowns in 1603. There were no hints in the accounts of the German count in 1609 and Geizkofler in 1611 that they had to be protected by escorts when crossing the border.

¹⁷¹ Wedel, who travelled from 29 August to 6 September 1584 from London to Berwick-upon-Tweed, changed the horses 23 times. Both parties needed eight days for the stages from London to Berwick on hired horses. They took roughly the same route via Waltham, Royston, Huntingdon, Newark, Doncaster, Northallerton, Darlington, Durham, Newcastle, Morpeth, Alnwick, Belford and Berwick. The infrastructure and the travelling times from England to Scotland via the east coast do not seem to have improved considerably between 1584 and 1609 despite the Union of Crowns. See also Geizkofler in 1611.

¹⁷² See Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, part ii, pp. 255-260. It is difficult to distinguish which descriptions were prepared by the travellers and which information Zeiller added from sources like Camden's *Britannia*. Zeiller wrote that the travellers caught a solan goose and brought it to a place where it could not see the sea and, therefore, was unable to fly away. Returned to the sea, the goose flew away. Whereas this myth was presented as the gospel truth, Zeiller dismissed the myth about the metamorphosis of the 'barnacle geese' growing from trees as nonsense. He referred instead to Camden's theory about the origin of the 'barnacle geese'.

Palace and Dunfermline. The descriptions of these places were mainly culled from Camden. In Culross the travelling party stayed with Sir George Bruce who showed them his coalmines, which spread deep and far under the Firth of Forth. They entered the mines by land and returned to the surface in a shaft in the middle of the Forth, from where they were brought back to the shore in a vessel.¹⁷³ The travelling party was shown next George Bruce's salt-works¹⁷⁴ before they moved on to Stirling and Glasgow, which they reached on 30 May. The information about both towns was rather superficial and, again, culled from Camden. The party penetrated from Glasgow to the fringe of the Highlands to pay a visit to Loch Lomond. Unfortunately, no descriptions of Highlanders were given, and Zeiller seems to have been satisfied with repeating the highly publicised myths about the natural curiosities attributed to the loch by Boece and subsequent authors. The party returned via Dumbarton to Glasgow, where they were received by John Hamilton, 'Earl of Edinburgh'¹⁷⁵, who retreated with his guests on 1 June to Paisley Abbey. They moved from Paisley to Irvine and Ayr, where they set sail for Ireland on 6 June. Zeiller finished the travellers' account with a geographical description of the south-west of Scotland, which he culled from authors ranging as far back as Ptolemy and Ortelius.

Zeiller's blending of the travellers' account with information, which he paraphrased from contemporary geographical descriptions and histories of Scotland, makes it difficult to determine the amount of first-hand information included in the journal of the tour. The absence of any descriptions of the contemporary customs and

¹⁷³ See Zeiller, *Itinerarii*, pp. 265-267. The coalmine at Culross was one of the great technical attractions of Scotland until it was flooded in March 1625. The drainage system, which consisted, according to Zeiller, of two waterwheels with 41 and 34 buckets, fascinated all travellers. John Taylor visited the mine in 1618 and prepared a lengthy description of it, comparing it to a man-made wonder. According to him, the mine was drained by a horse-mill which powered a well with an iron chain and 36 buckets. See Taylor, *Workes*, part i, pp. 132-133.

¹⁷⁴ According to Zeiller's informants, the mine and the salt-works used to employ 560 persons whose number had risen at his time to 1,000. John Taylor was also shown the salt-works. He noted that the works produced 90-100 tons of salt per week which served most parts of Scotland. Additionally, some salt was exported to England, and a much larger quantity was exported to Germany. See Taylor, *Workes*, part i, p. 133. Sir William Brereton confirmed (in 1635) the enormous number of salt pans along the shores of the Firth of Forth and noted that most of the salt was exported to the Low Countries. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 148. The huge salt and coal trade from the Firth of Forth to the Low Countries was also confirmed by Thomas Tucker in 1656. See 'Report By Thomas Tucker Upon The Settlement Of The Revenues Of Excise And Customs In Scotland. A.D. MDCLVI', *Miscellany Of The Scottish Burgh Records Society* (Edinburgh, 1881), pp. 18-22.

¹⁷⁵ This title did not exist and was probably the result of an error by Zeiller.

habits of the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, is regrettable, nonetheless it shows the lack of information about them. Furthermore, the route chosen by the travelling party was fairly typical of most sixteenth- and seventeenth-century travellers as it included the contemporary attractions and ‘must-sees’ of a tour in Scotland.¹⁷⁶ It combined visits to the major and historic towns of the Lowlands with those places that were famous for their marvels and natural curiosities, such as the Bass Rock, Loch Lomond or Ailsa Craig. Such places had become synonymous with Scotland and had shaped its image abroad.

2.2.9. Ferdinand Geizkofler’s tour to Scotland in 1611

Unfortunately, the account of another German, Ferdinand Geizkofler (1592-1653), who travelled to Scotland on horseback in September 1611, also seems to have been very sparse in detail.¹⁷⁷ Nonetheless, it is known that Geizkofler visited Scotland from curiosity and to acquire a first-hand impression of the distinctive Scottish culture. Geizkofler’s travels through Germany, the Low Countries, England and Scotland, and his subsequent stay at Brussels for studying in the winter of 1611-12 must be described as an educational journey.¹⁷⁸

Before he set out from Amsterdam for London, Geizkofler asked his father for permission to visit Scotland (as the customs and habits of the Scots were said to be very different from the English) and added that a trip to Scotland would not take too much time.¹⁷⁹ He was granted permission and bought in London four horses for himself, his travelling companion and tutor Dominikus Orth, and a Scot named Alexander Lauson who had previously served Otto of Hesse as an interpreter.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ See also chapter 4, note 311.

¹⁷⁷ See K.O. Müller, ‘Ferdinand Geizkoflers Studienreise nach den Niederlanden und England in den Jahren 1611/12’, in *Literarische Beilage des Staats-Anzeigers für Württemberg*, no. 1 (Stuttgart, 1922), pp. 1-14. [hereafter: Geizkofler, ‘Studienreise’]

¹⁷⁸ This was reflected in Geizkofler’s letters written to his father during his travels. He wrote in German, Latin, Italian, Spanish and French. Geizkofler’s tutor D. Orth wrote in German. The letters from Scotland are said to be extremely concise as the travellers were obviously in a hurry. See *ibid.*, pp. 2-3, 9.

¹⁷⁹ The Dutch theology student Godefried van der Hagen wrote in 1617 from St Andrews that the Scots had a common language with the English although their dialect was different. However, their customs, he wrote, were much more similar to those of the French. See Cameron, ‘Students From The Netherlands At St Andrews’, p. 59.

¹⁸⁰ Otto, the eldest son of Moritz, Count of Hessen-Kassel, is said to have visited Scotland in the same year. Geizkofler met him in London, but there is no account known of a visit by Otto to Scotland.

Geizkofler bought the horses for £21 sterling and sold them later due to bad weather and the hazards of the journey in Edinburgh for £16 sterling before continuing the return journey on hired post-horses. They left London on 20 August and travelled via Oxford, Coventry, Nantwich, Chester, Warrington and Preston to Lancaster. Their tour of Scotland included Dumfries, Lanark, Hamilton, Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, Dundee, St Andrews, Edinburgh, Dunbar and Berwick. Due to the lack of time the scheduled visits to Dumbarton and Dunfermline were abandoned. The return journey on hired post-horses from Edinburgh to London (via Newcastle, Durham, York, Stamford [Stamford?], Huntingdon and Cambridge) took eight days, the same time it took Wedel in 1584 and the German count in 1609. Geizkofler is said to have written that Scotland could not be compared to England in respect of its fertility, and that they experienced more hospitality and honesty among the Scots than among the English.¹⁸¹

Geizkofler was, in respect of the time he spent in Scotland and the places he visited, very much in the tradition of his predecessors. Apart from his visit to Glasgow, he followed the usual route through the Lowlands and along the big towns of the Scottish east coast. There is no hint that Geizkofler intended to include the Highlands in his tour. In respect of the travelling conditions, the Union of Crowns does not seem to have brought a major boost to the infrastructure. Geizkofler's stages and his time schedule were very similar to those of Wedel and the German count. Moreover, Geizkofler complained that they had to wait at the posts on their way back from Edinburgh to London for up to two hours for fresh horses although they were in possession of passes. Back in London they were given an audience with the king. However, their letters of introduction (issued by his father Zacharias, a wealthy Augsburg merchant and former 'Reichspfennigmeister', i.e. minister of finance of the Holy Roman Empire) infuriated the king, and he did not speak to Geizkofler at all.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ See Geizkofler, 'Studienreise', p. 9.

¹⁸² His letter of introduction to King James I of Great Britain included a reference to the Habsburg Court in Austria with which at that time James I was not on friendly terms.

2.2.10. Summary of the sixteenth-century visitors to Scotland

For most of the sixteenth century there were no major changes in the travelling patterns of visitors to Scotland compared to the fifteenth century. The reasons for visiting Scotland were roughly the same: war, diplomacy, wanderlust and curiosity. Scotland was still far away from being a major travel destination, and many visitors had travelled previously to most countries of Europe and the Middle East before turning to Scotland. At the end of the sixteenth century, however, a new type of traveller appeared. Travellers such as Hainzel von Degerstein and Geizkofler visited Scotland from curiosity and included it in their educational tour of the British Isles. These travellers had visited England previously and then extended their tours to Scotland to widen their horizon and to experience its distinctive culture. However, with the beginning of the Thirty Years' War on the Continent and the civil wars in all three kingdoms (Scotland, England, Ireland) in the middle of the seventeenth century this type of traveller soon disappeared from the British Isles.

The areas visited by foreign travellers in the sixteenth century remained roughly the same. The usual route of entrance to Scotland was via Berwick and Dunbar to Edinburgh. Travellers seldom left the Lowlands, and the most northern places visited, apart from Aberdeen and the east coast, were Dundee, Perth or Stirling. The south-west of Scotland and Glasgow¹⁸³ were of no interest to travellers until the late sixteenth century. Until then, most travellers confined their tours to the Scottish east coast and the ancient towns of Edinburgh, St Andrews, Dundee, Perth and Stirling.

At the end of the sixteenth century, Scotland and Ireland still remained largely unknown parts of the British Isles in comparison to England. Reliable knowledge about the Celtic fringes of the British Isles was scarce, and their image was dominated by myth. Detailed and reliable geographical and historical descriptions, such as Camden's *Britannia*, were available to travellers by the end of the sixteenth century. However, such descriptions focused on England, whereas Scotland and Ireland were only referred to marginally. Moreover, even in the 1590s travellers still

¹⁸³ It was not until the seventeenth century that travellers became increasingly interested in visiting Glasgow due to its rise as a merchant town.

consulted Boece for information about Scotland. The lack of up-to-date and reliable information about these countries left them with a quasi-mythical status. The few travellers who made the effort to visit Scotland were often heavily influenced and prejudiced by what they had heard and read. It is, therefore, not surprising that Scotland's mythical status was widely reflected in their accounts. The Highlands and Hebrides were the most remote and least accessible parts of the country, and their inhabitants had a particularly fearsome reputation. Therefore, visitors to Scotland stayed away from these parts as they were considered too dangerous for travellers. The Highlands remained virtually 'terra incognita', and there were no accounts of foreign travellers to that region. Most sixteenth-century visitors to Scotland did not even mention the Highlands. The few exceptions merely paraphrased what they had read in the histories and geographies. As none of the visitors discussed knew the Highlands from personal observation, they only contributed to the stereotypes and prejudices about the Highlanders as savages and utter barbarians. Nothing was really known about their way of living, which was often likened to that of ancient and mythical peoples like the Scythians.

These stereotypes and the Highlanders' bad reputation had turned the Highlands into a 'no-go area'. This negative image could not be shaken off and prevailed in the public perception and travellers' minds until far into the eighteenth century.

3. Satirical and fictitious accounts of Scotland

In the early seventeenth century a new type of ‘account’ of Scotland appeared. Satirical, fictitious and often highly abusive accounts of Scotland were published and reprinted in various forms all over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of these accounts were written by authors who had never been to Scotland. Such accounts were not only very popular at that time, but also seem to have been quite a lucrative business, given that they were reprinted several times until the end of the eighteenth century. All of these accounts and pamphlets were written by Englishmen, and they were usually published anonymously or under pseudonyms. Due to the nature of their content such descriptions cannot be considered realistic accounts of Scotland, nor do they cast new light on the living conditions north of the border. They did, however, clearly summarise the prejudices and the common beliefs about Scotland at that time. Furthermore, such accounts heavily influenced travellers to Scotland who borrowed from them and inserted bits of them into their own accounts of Scotland, thereby cementing the abuse and prejudice written about the country.

3.1. Sir Anthony Weldon’s *A Perfect Description Of The People and Country Of Scotland*

Sir Anthony Weldon’s *A Perfect Description Of The People and Country Of Scotland* may be identified as the first satirical and likewise abusive account of Scotland.¹ Weldon’s account of Scotland has been reprinted, copied and paraphrased

¹ The authorship of this work is not entirely ascertained. This account was first published as *Terrible Newes From Scotland, ... Written, By a Gentleman imployed in the Service for the Publique, and dedicated to the Commissioners of Scotland* (London, printed for T. W. 1647). Another edition, giving the name of the author, read *A Perfect Description of the People and Country of Scotland, by James Howel, Gent.* (London, printed for J. S. 1649). The edition titled *A Perfect Description Of The People and Country Of Scotland* (London, printed for J. S. 1659) no longer gave an author. There is no conclusive evidence whether to attribute this work to James Howell or to Sir Anthony Weldon. From internal evidence it must have been written by someone who accompanied King James VI on his visit to Scotland in 1617, and Weldon is known to have taken part in this visit. External evidence also suggests Weldon as the author. Anthony à Wood wrote that Sir Anthony Weldon fell into disgrace at the court after a libel, written by him upon the Scottish nation, was found among his papers. However, the earliest version of this account is to be found in a manuscript letter signed ‘Johne E., Frome Leithe, neir Edinburghe, the 20 of Junii, 1617’. This letter was printed (including a response) in *Miscellany Of The Abbotsford Club*, vol. i (Edinburgh, 1837), pp. 289-317. This seems to be the ‘original’ version of this account. Hume Brown considered Tanner’s MSS., no. 237, in the Bodleian Library the original manuscript of this account. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 97. I refer

by generations of writers and in consequence has contributed considerably to Scotland's bad reputation. Nothing of Weldon's *Description* must be taken literally, and it can only be considered as a source of English prejudices and stereotypes about Scotland at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Weldon's *Description* reflected the distaste amongst the English political classes for a Scot who had ascended the English throne. It might also be considered as a complaint by the English political classes who feared for their influence at court because of the dominance of James VI's (I's) Scottish councillors and cronies. It goes without saying that from Weldon's point of view nothing in Scotland could be compared to the civilisation and joys of life that could be found in England. However, Weldon's account summarised to a certain extent the English attitude towards Scotland, and much of his abuse can also be found in the accounts of English travellers to Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Weldon's mocking account concentrated primarily on the want of cleanliness that he attributed to the Scots in general.² He described Scotland as a country that was good enough for the Scots, claiming that no other people would bother to conquer it because of the 'stinking people' that inhabited it.³ Moreover, Weldon used the abundance of fowl in Scotland for a pun to mock the Scots' 'foul-houses, foul-sheets, foul-linnen, foul-dishes and pots, foul-trenchers, and napkins'.⁴ His mockery of the Scots was unlimited and culminated in sheer abuse:

Pride is a thing bred in their bones, and their flesh naturally abhors cleanliness; their breath commonly stinks of Pottage, their linen of Piss, their hands of Pigs turds, their body of sweat, and their splay-feet never offend in Socks. To be chained in marriage with one of them, were to be tied to a dead carkasse, and cast into a stinking ditch ...⁵

to *A Perfect Description Of The People and Country Of Scotland* (London, 1659). [hereafter: Weldon, *Description*] This edition was cleared of the awkward spelling that prevailed in the verbatim Abbotsford Club edition of the 1617 letter.

² It was a favourite topic of English travellers to Scotland until the nineteenth century to blame the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, of uncleanness and having the itch.

³ Weldon, *Description*, p. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2. This was one of the favourite passages picked up by subsequent travellers. Thomas Cave, for example, travelled Scotland in 1763 and complained about the Scots' filthiness. On his return he wrote about the inn at Moffat: 'our hotel ... being as indifferent in its kind as any one I almost ever saw, everything foul but linen, foul meat, foul rooms, foul plates'. C. Holme (ed.), *A History Of The Midland Counties. ... Also A Diary Of A Journey By The Late Sir Thomas Cave, Bart., Of Stanford Hall, From Stanford To The North Of Scotland And Back* (Rugby, 1891), p. 225. [hereafter: Cave, *Journey*]

⁵ Weldon, *Description*, p. 19. This was of course pure propaganda and prejudice. The only trace of truth in these abusive allegations was that the Scottish women did wear neither stockings nor shoes as all seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers confirmed. See chapter 8.1.1.

Whatever the Scots touched they spoilt with, and Weldon described their food, fish, butter and cheese as disgusting. He used the abundance of deer in Scotland for another pun to complain about ‘dear Lodgings, dear Horse-meat, and dear Tobaco, and *English Beer*’.⁶

Despite Weldon’s gross and insulting exaggerations, there are certain conclusions that can be drawn from his mockery. Weldon wrote, for example, that because of the king’s visit ‘it hath been as unlawfull for the common people to eate Wheate’.⁷ However, at the same time he was scathing about the Scots’ heavy reliance on oatmeal for their diet, and claimed that men and horses lived to the same extent on oats. His ridicule included the allegations that the Scots believed St Andrew presented Christ an oatcake after his 40 days’ fast and that the feeding of the five thousand could not have been done with barley-loaves but oatcakes.⁸

This mockery underlined that oatmeal must have been the main staple of the Lowland Scots’ diet. This must have seemed quite unusual to an Englishman, otherwise he would not have taken his mockery to such lengths.⁹

Weldon also hinted at the lack of trees and wood in the Lowlands, writing that

had *Christ* been betrayed in this Countrey, (as doubtlesse he should, had he come as a stranger) *Judas* had sooner found the Grace of Repentance, then a Tree to hang himself on.¹⁰

Moreover, his remark that he saw ‘little Grasse, but in their Pottage’ and that ‘the word Hay is Heathen-Greek unto them’ confirmed the accounts of contemporary travellers to Scotland that providing grass and hay for the horses was quite difficult.¹¹

⁶ Ibid., p. 3. It is needless to say that most contemporary travellers agreed that accommodation and provisions in Scotland were cheap in comparison to England.

⁷ Ibid., p. 4. Hume Brown suggested that there was no need to limit the consumption of wheat during the king’s visit as the diet of the Lowland Scots chiefly consisted of oatmeal. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 98.

⁸ See Weldon, *Description*, pp. 13-14. Oatcakes must have been synonymous with Scotland. The Swede Henrik Kalmeter commented in 1719: ‘The Scotts in England for that reason oftentimes remember their friends beyond the Tweed or in the land of Cakes, which name is given to Scotland of certain sort of bread made of oats and called cakes.’ ‘Journal Of Henry Kalmeter’s Travels In Scotland 1719-1720’, ed. by T.C. Smout, *Scottish Industrial History: A Miscellany* (SHS, fourth series, vol. xiv) (Edinburgh, 1978), p. 3. [hereafter: Smout (ed.), ‘Kalmeter’s Travels’]

⁹ See also Weldon, *Description*, p. 5.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4. Hume Brown commented that the Scots wanted James VI’s visit to be postponed until the grass had grown for cattle. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 98. Travellers complained about the lack of grass and hay in Scotland all over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See, for

It is needless to discuss Weldon's further abuse of the Scots in more detail as none of his allegations of fornication, adultery, theft, murder and blasphemy can be taken seriously. These allegations were mainly a reflection of English unease about the Church of Scotland and its radical brand of Presbyterianism. Given Weldon's authorship of this highly abusive pamphlet, it is no surprise that he fell into disgrace at the court of King James I of Great Britain, whose origins he described in the final sentence of this pamphlet as follows:

And therefore to conclude, The men of old did no more wonder, that the great *Messias* should be born in so poor a Town as *Bethlem* in Judea, then I do wonder, that so brave a Prince as King *James*, should be born in so stinking a Town as *Edenburg*, in Lousy *Scotland*.¹²

Weldon's pamphlet seems to have been quite a success as all subsequent satirical and abusive accounts of Scotland used it as an example. The way in which Weldon influenced future generations of authors and travellers becomes obvious in the next pamphlet.

3.2. **Thomas Kirk's *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being, An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners***

In 1679 Thomas Kirk of Crookridge in Yorkshire (1650-1706)¹³ privately printed a coarse diatribe against Scotland, entitled *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being, An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners*.¹⁴ For good reason neither the author's name nor the place of publication were given on the title page.

Kirk's pamphlet is particularly interesting because it was published just two years after Kirk had returned from a three-month tour of Scotland that led him as far north as Orkney. Kirk kept a detailed diary of his tour in Scotland, which he

example, Fynes Moryson's (1598) and Thomas Morer's (1689) warnings about the difficulties of providing for horses in Scotland. For details see chapter 4.1.1.

¹² Weldon, *Description*, p. 21.

¹³ See *DNB* entry Kirke, Thomas.

¹⁴ [hereafter: Kirk, *Account*]

apparently never intended to publish.¹⁵ Kirk's satirical and abusive diatribe against Scotland shows that the author had a good knowledge of the country, and the diary of his tour in 1677 shows how he acquired that knowledge. If Kirk's diatribe is compared with the private diary of his tour, it is hard to believe that they were actually written by the same person. Kirk's *Account* was a more general kind of description and was clearly intended as an imitation of Sir Anthony Weldon's *Description*. Kirk's diary, in contrast, was not intended for publication, and it was, therefore, free of any kind of imitation or literary embellishments. Its plain, straightforward but detailed style makes it the far more valuable source on life in seventeenth-century Scotland. The comparison of Kirk's *Account* with his private diary gives an amazing insight into what travellers really saw and experienced in seventeenth-century Scotland on the one hand, and what they published about the country on the other. To see the difference between Kirk's experiences during his tour in Scotland and the image he presented in his *Account*, it is necessary to give some basic information about his tour in Scotland in 1677.

Kirk started in May 1677 in Yorkshire and reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 24 May. He moved on via the coastal route to Edinburgh, where he stayed for a week, before moving on via Queensferry, St Andrews, Dundee, Aberdeen and Banff to Inverness. Having spent four days in Inverness, he boarded a ship for Kirkwall, reaching Orkney on 28 June. After a couple of days on Orkney he returned south via the east coast of Caithness and Sutherland. Kirk did not call at Inverness on his way back, but used the ferries at Cromarty and Ardersier. He then went on via Fochabers, Huntly, Aberdeen, Brechin and Perth to Edinburgh, where he stayed for another two weeks. On 12 August, he left for the south-west and travelled via Stirling, Glasgow and Ayr to Portpatrick, where he embarked on 24 August on a boat for Ireland.

During his travels in Scotland Kirk was treated very well by the local nobility and gentlemen, who often drank with him deep into the night and provided him with letters of introduction for the next stages of his journey. Kirk had no reason to complain, and his diary was full of appreciation and praise for the hospitality of the gentlemen with whom he stayed. He had had a safe journey, apart from two slight

¹⁵ See P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours In Scotland 1677 & 1681 By Thomas Kirk And Ralph Thoresby* (Edinburgh, 1892). Kirk's private diary of his tour in 1677 appeared first in print as an appendix to *Letters Of Eminent Men, Addressed To Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.* (London, 1832), vol. ii, pp. 403-456.

rows with drunkards in the inns at Banff and Hamilton, and had no reason to fear his Scottish hosts, being neither robbed nor threatened. He even met with Highlanders and had a look at the Highlands, although at his time that area was notorious for its supposed dangers to travellers. Kirk did not suffer any harm from the Highlanders. He was well treated and had overwhelmingly positive experiences in Scotland. Nonetheless, he gave a completely different idea of the country, its people, and the Highlanders in particular, in the pamphlet, which he published after his return to England.

In this pamphlet Kirk used the full scale of prejudice and abuse against the Scots. Moreover, he went far beyond the abuse that Weldon had cast on them. Kirk mocked the antiquity that the Scottish historians attributed to their nation, and wrote that the Scots had brought the Plagues of Egypt, including lice, with them from their wanderings. Moreover, he compared the shape of Scotland to a louse that sucked its nutriment from England. The Orkney and Shetland Islands had to bear the brunt of his mockery:

Italy is compared to a Leg, Scotland to a Louse, whose legs and engrailed edges represent the Promontories and buttings out into the Sea, ... A Louse preys upon its own Fosterer and Preserver, and is productive of those Minute-Animals called Nitts; so Scotland, whose Proboscis joyns too close to England, has suckt away the nutriment from Northumberland, as the Countrey it self is too true a Testimony, and from its opposite A---, has calved those Nitty Islands, called the Orcades and the Shetland (quasi Shite-land) Islands.¹⁶

He mocked the symbol of Scotland, the thistle, writing it was

wisely placed there, partly to shew the fertility of the Countrey, Nature alone producing plenty of these gay Flowers, and partly as an emblem of the people, the top thereof having some colour of a flower, but the bulk and substance of it, is only sharp, and poysonous pricks.¹⁷

Kirk also ridiculed the backward state of Scottish agriculture and the Scots' lack of knowledge about how to manure their fields and to improve their soil. He also ridiculed the rude dwellings made of mud and turf in which the common people in the countryside lived in:

The Houses of the Commonalty are very mean, Mud-wall and Thatch the best; but the poorer sort live in such miserable Hutts as never eye beheld, it is no difficulty to piss over

¹⁶ Kirk, *Account*, pp. 2-3. Hume Brown considered parts of this quotation and similar passages too explicit to be included in *Early Travellers*. Nonetheless, such passages show the full extent of abuse used by English authors against the Scots.

¹⁷ Kirk, *Account*, p. 3.

them; Men, Women, and Children pigg altogether in a poor Mouse-hole of Mud, Heath, and such like matter, in some parts where Turf is plentiful; they build up little Cabbins thereof, with Arched Roofs of Turf, without a stick of Timber in it; when the House is dry enough to burn, it serves them for Fuel, and the remove to another.¹⁸

Kirk's description of the Highlanders' garb, with which he was acquainted from personal observation, was not too far-fetched, apart from the allegation that the Highlanders sprinkled their dirks with poison.¹⁹ Although he had no adverse experience of the Scots and the Highlanders, his characterisation of the latter was damning:

The people are Proud, Arrogant, Vain-glorious boasters, Bloody, Barbarous, and Inhuman Butchers. Couzenage and Theft is in perfection amongst them, and they are perfect English-haters, they shew their pride in exalting themselves and depressing their Neighbours.²⁰

As if this was not enough, he wrote about the fictitious dangers that travellers had to face among the Highlanders:

... their spirits are so mean, that they rarely Rob, but take away life first, lying in Ambuscade, they send a brace of Bullets on Embassy through the Travellers body; and to make sure work, they sheath their Durks in his lifeless trunk; perhaps to take off their fine edges, as new Knives are stuck in a Bag-pudding.²¹

His account of the Highlanders' cruelty, likewise, must not be taken seriously. It must be considered as pure political propaganda in an effort to portray them as uncivilised barbarians and robbers:

Their Cruelty descends to their Beasts, it being a custom in some places to feast upon a living Cow they tye in the middle of them, near a great fire, and then cut collops of this poor living Beast, and broil them on the fire, till they have mangled her all to pieces; nay, sometimes they will only cut of as much as will satisfie their present Appetites, and let her go till their greedy Stomacks calls for a new supply; such horrible Cruelty as can scarce be parallel'd in the whole world! Their Theft is so well known that it needs no proving ...²²

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 11. As Kirk provided a description of the Highlanders' garb in his less biased private diary of the tour, I refrain from giving the description from the *Account*. It should be noted that there was no mention of the Highlanders sprinkling their dirks with poison in Kirk's private diary.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11. Despite Kirk's antipathy towards the Highlanders, he wrote nothing of that kind about them in his private diary. Most seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers to Scotland were prejudiced and blamed the Highlanders for being notorious thieves. However, the overwhelming majority of travellers in the Highlands did not have any of their belongings stolen. On the contrary, all travellers praised the Highlanders' great hospitality and their assistance to travellers.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13. Accusations of the Highlanders being sly and mean robbers were common prejudice throughout the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries. This image did not change until the Romantic movement in the 1760s. From his experience in Scotland, Kirk did not have the slightest reason to write about the Highlanders in such an abusive way.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 13. Hume Brown commented that James Bruce was mercilessly ridiculed for attributing this custom to the Abyssinians. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 262. These allegations might have had their origin in a misinterpretation by travellers of the custom of bleeding cattle, which

Moreover, Kirk described Scotland as an expensive country for travellers, writing that strangers were overcharged in the change houses (inns).²³ This was in stark contrast to all other contemporary travellers who considered Scotland a comparatively cheap country. However, Kirk's private diary of his tour contained similar allegations. He was told that Orkney was the most plentiful place in Scotland, where everything could be had at low cost. However, the bill at the inn at Kirkwall, where they lodged for two nights, amounted to £4 sterling.²⁴

To conclude, Kirk's *Account* was in stark contrast to the experiences of his tour in Scotland in 1677. He deliberately presented a distorted and abusive picture of Scotland that was in no way justified by his own experiences in the country. Such distortions might be explained mainly in his attempt to imitate Sir Anthony Weldon's *Description*. However, Kirk's *Account* must have been very successful as it was reprinted under various titles four times until 1746.

A closer look at the various reprints reveals some interesting features. Firstly, this pamphlet was reprinted in 1699, 1708, 1714 and 1746. It cannot have been mere coincidence that all these reprints were published at times of extraordinary tension between England and Scotland. Moreover, there seems to have been an increased demand (or at least a ready market) for diatribes against Scotland at times such as the Darien disaster,²⁵ the Union of Parliaments, the abortive Jacobite rebellion of 1708, the Hanoverian succession and the Jacobite rebellion of 1745-46. The timing of the

prevailed among the Highlanders as well as the Abyssinians. The French diplomat Marc de Bombelles visited James Bruce during his tour of Scotland in October 1784. Bruce told him about his travels and adventures in Africa. Bombelles remarked that Bruce was well known for his exaggerated or fanciful stories. See Bombelles, *Journal de voyage*, pp. 199-200.

²³ See Kirk, *Account*, p. 16.

²⁴ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 31. Kirk claimed to have eaten and drunk but moderately at the inn at Kirkwall. However, if he was right, the bill seems to have been unusually high for his time.

²⁵ In 1695 a 'Company of Scotland tradeing to Affrica and the Indies' had been founded. In 1697 the planned establishment of a trading colony at Darien, on the narrow isthmus of Panama, was announced, attracting major investment from all over Scotland. However, the place was ill-chosen. It was a swamp in Spanish territory, and the two expeditions to Darien in 1698 and 1699 turned into disaster. Only a few Scottish settlers survived the sea voyage, the fever-ridden swamps and the hostile natives of 'New Caledonia'. In April 1700 the colony surrendered to Spanish troops. The English government, pressurised by the East India Company, had repeatedly refused to support the Scottish settlers. The Darien disaster consumed a huge share of the cash available in Scotland at a time when the country was already suffering from a series of bad harvests. It put additional strain on the Anglo-Scottish relations because many Scots had lost their investment and blamed the English for having jeopardised the expedition in order to protect the East India Company and its trade.

reprints shows the uneasy relationship between both countries and the deep mistrust of the English for the Scots until far into the eighteenth century.

Secondly, some of the reprints included an added letter and a poem that were even more abusive than Kirk's diatribe. The first (anonymous) reprint, which was entitled *A Journey To Scotland, Giving A Character Of That Country, the People and their Manners* (London, 1699), included 'A Description of Scotland, in a Letter from an Officer in the Army, to his Friend in London' and a poem entitled 'The Rebel Scot'. The description in the letter was a summarised paraphrase of the most abusive passages of Weldon's *Description*. The added poem is attributed to John Cleveland (1613-1658). His poem 'The Rebel Scot' was undoubtedly one of the most offensive diatribes against Scotland ever written, and it must be seen against the background of the civil war in the 1640s. The Royalist Cleveland did not try to hide his indignation at what he considered as the 'treachery' of the Scots who had sold their captive king in January 1647 to the English parliament.²⁶ 'The Rebel Scot' included verses such as:

Oh may they never suffer Banishment!
Had *Cain* been *Scot*, God would have chang'd his Doom,
Not forc'd him wander but confin'd him home; ...
A *Scot* when from the Gallow tree got loose
Drops into *Styx*, and turns a *Soland* Goose.²⁷

²⁶ Charles I had surrendered to the Scots in May 1646 at Newark to escape from the English Parliamentary forces. In January 1647 the English parliament was still dominated by the Presbyterian moderates.

²⁷ Quoted in *A Journey To Scotland, Giving A Character Of That Country, the People and their Manners. By an English Gentleman. With A Letter From an Officer there, And A Poem On the same Subject* (London, 1699), pp. 15-16. Some catalogues attribute this edition to the humorist Edward Ward (1667-1731), however, it is a reprint of Kirk's *Account* to which the letter and the poem were added. An unidentified English traveller in 1704 also finished his account of a tour in Scotland with these lines of Cleveland, thereby expressing his utter disgust about the Scots. See *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), p. 62. See also chapter 4.1.4. There was an intensified literary abuse of Scotland during Cromwell's occupation. In 1652, for example, two vulgarly coarse poetical descriptions were written about Orkney. Their author, probably J. Emerson, must have had first-hand experience of Orkney. He compared its geographical situation to 'a turd in a full chamberpott' and accused the Orcadians of being unclean, smelly and lice-ridden. The same author insulted the Highlanders in 1653, describing them as 'brutish', 'drunken sotts' and 'the worst of Scotts'. See *Poetical Descriptions Of Orkney. M.DC.LII*. ([Edinburgh], 1835), pp. ix, x, xvii, xxx.

3.3. Satirical and fictitious letters about Scotland

In 1705 a pamphlet titled *A Description of Scotland, and its Inhabitants*, written by E.B., was published in London and sold for 2d. per copy.²⁸ This pamphlet was written as a letter addressed to an unnamed, fictitious, English student who intended to finish his studies at Edinburgh. It began with a Latin translation of some lines of Cleveland's 'The Rebel Scot', and in the remaining narrative the author tried to prevent the student from going to Scotland. The author of this pamphlet was acquainted with Weldon's *Description*, as he not only referred to it but also attempted to imitate it.

The pamphlet included all the well-known mockery and prejudice about Scotland, ranging from the Scots' supposed origin from Egypt to their alleged uncleanliness. Moreover, the author accused the Scots of being notorious thieves. He claimed: 'Theft, as being one of their liberal Sciences, is rather cherish'd than punish'd ...'.²⁹ It is not surprising that the author gave a very unfavourable impression of the Scots. He ridiculed their hospitality by writing that 'you might, with as much safety, enter into a League of Friendship with a *Cannibal*, (who wou'd upon the first opportunity eat you up) as with a *Scotchman*'.³⁰ A particularly unfavourable impression was given of Edinburgh, the fictitious student's destination. The author claimed that the town was full of sewage and human waste, and he accused its inhabitants of relieving themselves at high noon in the middle of the principal street.³¹

²⁸ [hereafter: E.B., *Description*] An abridged version of this pamphlet was published as 'Scotland Characterised: In a Letter written to an English Gentleman, to dissuade him from an intended Journey thither', in W. Ruddiman (ed.), *The Edinburgh Magazine, Or Literary Amusement*, 31 May 1781, pp. 229-232.

²⁹ E.B., *Description*, p. 6. The references to the Scots' supposed origin from Egypt and their supposed thieving might have been used to compare them to gypsies, who suffered from the same prejudices and who for the first time appeared in Scotland during the rule of King James IV. They were also supposed to have come from Egypt.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³¹ See *ibid.*, p. 4. Despite the author's exaggerations, there was some truth in his words as Edinburgh was one of the dirtiest and smelliest towns in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Old Town lacked a proper sewage system, and human waste was usually poured out of the windows into the streets and closes in the evenings. All seventeenth- and eighteenth-century visitors to Edinburgh wrote and warned about the nightly dangers coming from above in the closes of the Old Town. This was confirmed by Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 18, and J. Taylor, *A Journey To Edenborough In Scotland*, ed. by W. Cowan (Edinburgh, 1903), pp. 134-135. [hereafter: Taylor, *Journey*] Taylor travelled to Scotland in 1705, the year this pamphlet was published.

The Scots' Presbyterianism also provoked the author's ridicule. He blamed the Scots for being lenient with adulterers and fornicators, and turned the meaning of the stool of repentance upside down:

If they detect a Lady of Pleasure, they oblige her, publicly, in the time of Divine Worship, to mount a Theatre of Ignominy, call'd, forsooth, *The Stool of Repentance*, to the end all the *Geude Brethren* may know where to have a Whore.³²

The author of the pamphlet was no less biased about the Scottish universities. He acknowledged that there had been some eminent Scottish scholars in the past. However, he claimed that they had acquired their knowledge during their travels in foreign countries because 'their own affording only *Pedantry, Poverty, Brutality, and Hypocrisie*'.³³ He likened studying at Scottish universities to feeding upon husks with swine, and compared a Scottish 'Master of Arts' to a '*Padua Physician*' or a '*Salamanca Doctor of Divinity*'.³⁴ The University of Edinburgh provoked the author's particular ridicule. According to him, it took four years to obtain the degree of 'Master of Arts', but any sum of money could shorten that period. He ridiculed its degrees:

... then they oblige you with a most ample *Diploma*, written in an effeminate sort of *Latin*, and as fulsome as a Mountebank's Panegyrick on his own Balsom, or Wonder-working *Panacea*: the Scope of it is, to satisfie your Friends, to whom returning, that you have spent much Money, travel'd many Miles, endur'd great Hardships, and taken extraordinary Pains, to very little purpose.³⁵

The pamphlet finished with a poem ridiculing the Scots' education. It included the following lines to prevent the English student from travelling to Scotland:

But stay – What's your Pretence? come let me know,
It's to refine your Intellect you go.
Sir, you affront your *English* Education,
To borrow Learning from its Neighbour Nation.³⁶

³² E.B., *Description*, p. 6. Again, this was pure propaganda. The kirk sessions were particularly strict in censuring such vices. See, for example, Martin, *Description*, p. 126. Burt wrote that this allegation was a common joke among the English. He confirmed the former zeal of the kirk sessions in prosecuting such vices. However, he wrote that there were also increasing signs of contempt for the 'stool of repentance' in more recent days. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 182-192.

³³ E.B., *Description*, p. 2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5. The University of Salamanca (founded in 1242) was famous for its teaching of Catholic theology. In the sixteenth century Padua had been leading in medicine.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Such pamphlets, published close to the Union of Parliaments, reveal the English attitude towards the Scots at that time. They also illustrate the extraordinary tension between both countries that preceded the Union.³⁷ The English public did not consider Scotland an equal partner in the merger, but mocked and ridiculed it mercilessly. Mocking and ridiculing the Scots remained a popular subject in England throughout the eighteenth century. The next example of a fictitious journey to Scotland, published c. 1760, was typical of what the English thought about the Scots as late as the second half of the eighteenth century.

3.4. John English's fictitious travels through Scotland

Diatribes against Scotland were not confined to letters or pamphlets. About 1760, a book was published in London whose title page speaks volumes about its content and, therefore, deserves to be given in full. It read: *John English's Travels Through Scotland. Containing, A curious and entertaining Account of the Manners and strange Customs of the Inhabitants. With many humorous Anecdotes, and Natural Discoveries. Quae regio in terris Scoti non plena Cacatûs. Virg. mutat. mutand.* London: Printed for W. Morgan, in Paternoster Row.³⁸

This was an utterly ridiculous account of a fictitious tour of Scotland as a mere pretext for the author's prejudices against the Scots. John English, merely another pseudonym for John Bull, was serving as an apprentice boy in a barber's shop when he heard one of his customers ask: 'Why is a *Scotsman* compared to a Fart?'³⁹ To

³⁷ In 1703 the negotiations broke down, and a union seemed further away than ever. In England the Whigs were driven from office, and the Scottish parliament passed the Act of Security as a specific riposte to the Act of Settlement.

³⁸ [hereafter: English, *Travels*] There is no date of publication given, and the various catalogues attribute this book to the period between 1750 and 1780. However, it must have been published later than 1754 because it plagiarised Burt's *Letters*, which were first published that year. The book contains 95 pages and was sold at 1s. 6d. The frontispiece opposite the title showed the women of fishermen carrying their lazy husbands ashore. It was taken from Burt, *Letters* (London, 1st edn. 1754), vol. i, p. 130. The description of the fishermen's wives in the text (pp. 65-66) was likewise plagiarised from Burt's *Letters*.

³⁹ English, *Travels*, p. 7. See also *ibid.*, p. 18. Astonishingly, the author provided the answer to this question just a few pages later. Having previously asked in vain a Welshman and an Irishman, John English got the answer to his question from two Englishmen: 'A *Scotchman* is compared to a Fart, because, as a Fart never returns to the Place it escapes from; so a *Scotchman* when he once gets out of his own Country, never desires to go back again.' *Ibid.*, p. 17. This answer, in a nutshell, completely reflects the content and 'intellectual' level of this book.

search for the answer John English quit his profession and set out for Scotland. He travelled to Edinburgh where he met another purely fictitious character, Mr Cornwall, a rich Englishman, who invited English to accompany him on his tour through Scotland.

It is not surprising that no itinerary was provided, as this fictitious tour was mainly culled from Kirk's *Account* and Burt's *Letters*, the latter having been first published in 1754. The unidentified author blended the most abusive passages of Kirk and Burt, and spiced them up with some even more disgusting descriptions from his own imagination. English began the account of his travels with some well-known comparisons about Scotland and the Northern Isles plagiarised from Kirk's *Account*, which has already been discussed. The fact that the author extensively plagiarised Kirk shows how influential his diatribe against Scotland had remained, although nearly a century had past since its first publication in 1679. Once he arrived in Edinburgh, English described ad nauseam the uncleanness of the town and its inhabitants. The Scots were portrayed as the most unclean and stinking people on earth, and Edinburgh was compared to Marseilles. What both towns had in common, according to English, was the human waste thrown out of the windows into the streets, thereby fouling the clothes of the people walking on the pavements.⁴⁰ English recommended clearing the streets of Edinburgh by 10 p.m. because: 'Then *Cloacina's* Drum beats the Tattoo, for all the expectant Jourdans, Closestools, &c. to exonerate their foul Contents into the Street, from all the Windows.'⁴¹ The remainder of English's account of Edinburgh continued to focus on the supposed uncleanness of the Scots, his fictitious experiences with 'the falling Pestilence' and the way in which to protect from it.⁴²

The supposed uncleanness of the Scots seems to have been the author's favourite motif. It recurs throughout the narrative and was also used for a little gibe against the accession of a Scot to the English throne in 1603. For example, English and Cornwall declined to board the stagecoach when they left Edinburgh for their tour through the country because

⁴⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 35-37, 54-55. English's descriptions of the uncleanness of Edinburgh and its inhabitants were mainly culled from Burt's *Letters*. English gave the same examples and details as Burt and enriched them with purely fictitious adventures.

⁴¹ English, *Travels*, p. 54.

⁴² See *ibid.*, pp. 20-59.

we shall probably be therein exposed to sit in close Contact with some of the Natives, and in Consequence, be in imminent Danger of contracting their favourite Amusement, the Itch; though a very disagreeable Exercise to *Englishmen*: yet *James, the first Scotch King* that came into *England* was often heard to declare, that he thought Scratching to be too great a Happiness for a Subject.⁴³

English spread in the narrative of his travels through Scotland the usual nonsense about the supposed dangers that travellers had to face. Having rejected the stagecoach, they also refused to travel on horseback because of the dangers of riding Scottish ‘ill-going Brutes, on very bad Roads’. Additionally, English revived the most common prejudices and basic fears travellers shared about Scotland when he referred to

the Dangers that might arise from the Natives suspecting them to be rich Folks, and be thereby enticed to rob them; and robbing an *Englishman* is counted no Crime in that Country.⁴⁴

Although it is very unlikely that the author knew the Highlands and its population from personal observation, he included an account of them in his fictitious tour. His account included all the stereotypes he copied from Kirk’s *Account* plus additions of his own. He copied Kirk’s description of the Highlanders’ garb verbatim and added the following information: ‘their Knees and Part of their Thighs being naked, which are consequently the sweetest, or rather the least Stinking Parts of their Bodies, from the free Access of the Air to them’.⁴⁵ English’s account of the miserable dwellings of the common people, of the Highlanders’ garb and arms, of the Scottish women, and of the powers and the lifestyle of the Scottish lairds does not contain any valuable information apart from being a detailed enumeration of the contemporary English stereotypes and prejudices about Scotland.⁴⁶ His account of the powers of the

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 58-59. English later claimed that ‘the Itch is a Proof of having *Scotch* Blood in one’s Veins!’ Ibid., p. 78. See also *ibid.*, p. 94. Although these travels and adventures were pure fiction, they were typical examples of the English prejudices against the Scots. See also, for example, Taylor, *Journey*, pp. 135-136.

⁴⁴ English, *Travels*, p. 59. See also *ibid.*, p. 84. The fear of being robbed was the most common prejudice against travelling in Scotland. The author did not give any reference to Burt from whom he plagiarised most passages. Burt, however, wrote that he was never robbed during his travels in Scotland, even when he carried huge sums of money along with him. He wrote that travelling in Scotland, and particularly in the Highlands, was actually safer than travelling in England. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 133-134.

⁴⁵ English, *Travels*, p. 81.

⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 80-93. These sections were more or less plagiarised from Kirk’s *Account*.

Scottish lairds included even a compulsory ‘*ius primae noctis*’. The author plagiarised this nonsense, again, from Kirk’s *Account*.

Nonetheless, such accounts of Scotland must have been quite popular in the eighteenth century, given that they were reissued in various forms every few years. Moreover, these accounts cannot have passed without shaping the image of Scotland abroad or influencing prospective visitors to the country. It was surely no encouragement to travel to a country about whose inhabitants the following allegation was common belief:

As it has been remarked by all Writers of Voyages, that Lousiness and a Passion for Stealing, Filching and Purloining go together; so among no other People yet known is Theft in higher Vogue or Practice than among the Natives of *Scotland*.⁴⁷

Following such insults against Scotland, it is no surprise that the author’s summary of the country read as follows:

John English was now convinced, by Experience, of the Propriety of that Postulatum, *Why is a Scotchman compared to a Fart?* because whatever Mortal is so lucky as to once get out of *Scotland*, as a Fart from its Enclosure, never desires to return thither.⁴⁸

3.5. Tobias Smollett’s *The Expedition Of Humphry Clinker*

An analysis of the fictitious accounts of Scotland would be incomplete without a brief examination of Tobias Smollett’s epistolary novel *The Expedition Of Humphry Clinker* (2nd edn. London, 1771).⁴⁹ *Humphry Clinker* was the fictitious journey of the Welshman Matt Bramble and his entourage to the north of England, and ultimately Scotland, in search of a cure for his various physical ailments. The novel developed from an initial circuit of spas into a tour of Scotland, which included visits to Edinburgh, Stirling, Loch Lomond, Inveraray, Glasgow and the islands of Islay, Jura, Mull and Iona.⁵⁰ *Humphry Clinker* was distinctive because it showed Scotland in an overwhelmingly positive light. Smollett (1721-1771), a Lowland Scot from

⁴⁷ English, *Travels*, p. 85.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95. In oral tradition there is still a similar joke referring to haemorrhoids.

⁴⁹ [hereafter: Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*] It was first published in Dublin in 1771. Since *Humphry Clinker* has been discussed by generations of academics, it is here sufficient to focus on its importance in breaking up the contemporary stereotypes and prejudice and acting as a powerful promoter of Scotland.

⁵⁰ The information provided about these islands was very superficial and was mainly culled from sources such as Martin’s *Description*.

Dunbartonshire who had moved to London in 1739, was well aware of the prejudice and stereotyping of his native country and its people. In the course of the narrative, Smollett introduced every stereotype about Scotland, ranging from its supposed filthiness, backwardness and stinginess to its poor food and disloyalty, in order to overturn it and to show the true character of the country and its people.⁵¹

Smollett's strategy of breaking up stereotypes and countering the 'Scotophobia' of his time was particularly exemplified by the introduction of two secondary characters, firstly the Englishman Humphry Clinker and, secondly, the Scottish army veteran Lieutenant Lismahago. In his initial appearance, Humphry Clinker showed all the attributes usually associated with the Scots by the English. He appeared ragged and filthy, although this was no fault of his own. By inflicting these attributes onto the otherwise admirable character of Humphry Clinker, Smollett tried to lessen the antipathy of the English audience to the impoverished Scots. In the character of Lieutenant Lismahago, Smollett overturned stereotypes such as Jacobitism and Scottish disloyalty. Beneath the surface Lismahago was portrayed as a strong, modest, scholarly and dignified character. His loyal military service to the king and Great Britain exemplified the worthiness of the Scots as British citizens. However, the figure of Lismahago included also an inherent criticism of the relations between England and Scotland. Despite his loyalty and the hardships he had suffered in his service to the king, Lismahago was not promoted beyond a lieutenant. This is often interpreted as a criticism that the Scots had not been given a fair representation in the union of England and Scotland, and that their services to Great Britain were not appreciated appropriately. The impact of the Union on Scotland was also raised in a discussion between Bramble and Lismahago after the travelling party's return to England. Lismahago gave a detailed account of the way in which Scotland's economy had suffered from the Union while the English had profited. Bramble tried to defend the Union, but he had to acknowledge that the Scots had often lost as a result.⁵² The future marriage of the Scot Lismahago to Bramble's sister Mrs Tabitha was no coincidence and symbolised the union of North and South Britain.

⁵¹ Matt Bramble's sister Tabitha, for example, thought that Scotland was an island in which there was nothing to eat but 'oat meal and sheep's heads'. Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, vol. ii, p. 211.

⁵² See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 102-108. For a detailed discussion of the importance of *Humphry Clinker* as a masterpiece of pro-Scottish propaganda see J. Glendening, *The High Road: Romantic Tourism, Scotland, and Literature, 1720-1820* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp. 157-173. Smollett's portrait of Scotland

Matt Bramble (who bears great similarity to Smollett himself) was full of praise for the Scots' military contribution to Great Britain, their hospitality, their industriousness abroad and the great learning of the Edinburgh Enlightenment. He also appreciated the scenic landscape of the Highlands, but he did not include the Highland culture in his appraisal apart from repeated references to the Highlanders' great hospitality and their well-known agility, hardiness and courage that made them excellent soldiers.⁵³ He considered the Highlanders idle because they mainly lived from cattle breeding, which, in his view, did not require much attendance and labour.⁵⁴ He was particularly critical of the common Highlanders' attachment to their chiefs, which had not yet been broken despite various Acts of Parliament:

The chieftainship of the Highlanders is a very dangerous influence operating at the extremity of the island, where the eyes and hands of government cannot be supposed to see and act with precision and vigour. In order to break the force of clanship, administration has always practised the political maxim, *Divide et impera*. The legislature hath not only disarmed these mountaineers, but also deprived them of their ancient garb, which contributed in a great measure to keep up their military spirit; and their slavish tenures are all dissolved by act of parliament; so that they are at present as free and independent of their chiefs, as the law can make them: but the original attachment still remains, and is founded on something prior to the *feudal system*, about which the writers of this age have made such a pother, as if it was a new discovery, like the *Copernican system*.⁵⁵

The novel's main character had little sympathy for clanship and the supposedly backward Highland culture. This was surely founded in Smollett's upbringing on the fringes of the Highlands at a time when the Highlanders still had a fearsome reputation for their unrest and incursions into the Lowlands. Bramble regarded the Highland society as backward and repressive, and he even proposed to hasten its collapse through the introduction of greater commerce in order to promote property and independence among the Highlanders.⁵⁶

as a rural and healthy counterpart to life in urbanised England contributed to its idealised image in the Romantic period. He repeatedly referred to Scotland as 'Arcadia', 'Scotch Arcadia', 'paradise' or 'Scottish paradise'. Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, vol. iii, pp. 40, 58, 44, 46.

⁵³ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 50-51. At the same time he reminded his readers of the havoc caused by a few thousand Highlanders in 1745-46.

⁵⁴ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 49.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 52.

⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 54-55. The economically progressive Lowland society and its cultural heritage were Smollett's ideal. He ignored, however, the fact that this ideal was threatened by growing commerce and the emerging Industrial Revolution. After all, these economic changes would lead to living conditions that were similar to those in the big cities of England from which the novel's main character Matt Bramble tried to escape.

Apart from his criticism of the Highland society, Smollett outlined an overwhelmingly positive portrait of Scotland in *Humphry Clinker*, which made the novel strikingly different from contemporary fictional travel writing of Scotland. As a piece of pro-Scottish propaganda *Humphry Clinker* was a phenomenal literary success, and Smollett achieved his objective to show the English how much the Scots had contributed to the Union. By 1840 *Humphry Clinker* had reached more than 40 editions. Moreover, it was soon translated into many European languages, introducing Scotland to a wider audience and contributing to the break-up of stereotypes and prejudice.

3.6. Conclusion of the satirical and fictitious accounts of Scotland

The satirical and fictitious accounts of Scotland, published between the early seventeenth and the late eighteenth centuries, presented a comparatively distorted and unfavourable image of Scotland. Such accounts must not be taken literally, however, there was a certain grain of truth behind the gross exaggerations, simplifications and distortions that were partly confirmed by contemporary travellers to Scotland.

The satirical and fictitious accounts were as repetitive as the geographical descriptions, and they likewise concentrated on some well-known stereotypes about Scotland, such as the Scots' supposed uncleanliness or their inclination to theft. The amount of reliable information about Scotland that can be drawn from these accounts is limited. However, they are valuable sources as they reflected in a unique way the common stereotypes and prejudices about Scotland.⁵⁷ Apart from reflecting these stereotypes, the accounts influenced the image of Scotland and promoted its already stereotyped perception to 'common knowledge'. Having analysed these stereotypes and prejudices, one can easily understand why Scotland, and the Highlands in particular, remained a largely unknown country. Considering the image of Scotland

⁵⁷ All these prejudices could also be found, for example, in *Perfect Diurnall*, no. 42, 16-23 September 1650, pp. 505-512. Its author, an English soldier who marched with the English army from Berwick to Edinburgh in September 1650, accused the Scots of uncleanliness, adultery, fornication, Sabbath-breaking, laziness, cowardly murders, theft and telling lies. The author was extremely biased against the Scots and provided the same catalogue of prejudices as could be found in the satirical accounts of Scotland.

as it was reflected in these accounts, it is not surprising that travellers were not keen to visit the country and preferred to stay away. Many prospective travellers were deterred from visiting Scotland when reading such accounts, especially at times when information about the country was scarce. In the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, readers tended to be more credulous than they were in later times when reliable accounts of Scotland were ready to hand. In a time when only few travellers knew Scotland from personal observation, such accounts were given greater credibility than we would expect nowadays.

Last but not least, these accounts reflected the state of the Anglo-Scottish relations from the Union of Crowns until long after the Union of Parliaments. It becomes immediately obvious that this relationship was not always an easy one. The English had a huge repertoire of prejudices against the Scots. On the other hand, anti-English propaganda in Scotland reached similar levels at times such as the Darien disaster or the aftermath of the Union of Parliaments. However, as junior partner the Scots were never able to pour as much ridicule and scorn on the English as vice versa. To judge by the number of reprints, there seems to have been a ready market and a huge demand in England for such satirical and abusive publications about Scotland. When this is set beside the popularity of English anti-Jacobite propaganda after 1745, it is not surprising that such material was in demand until far into the second half of the eighteenth century. The times of 'new releases' or reprints usually coincided with and reflected periods of increased tension between England and Scotland. However, there is no indication that the new releases or reprints had been orchestrated by the government. On the contrary, the satirical and fictitious accounts were often published anonymously, or using pseudonyms, and printed privately. This seems to have been the only way of evading the government's censorship and clampdown on such publications, or the threat of libel.⁵⁸ Moreover, most contemporary publications were usually dedicated to some outstanding figure in public life. However, these pamphlets did not include any dedications, and it is hard to imagine that important members of the public would have been pleased if any of these works had been dedicated to them.

⁵⁸ James VI (I) had tried to clamp down on anti-Scottish propaganda after his accession to the English throne in 1603. The accession of the Stuarts to the English throne had led to a renewal of anti-Scottish propaganda in England.

It is quite astonishing that *John English's Travels Through Scotland* were published roughly at a time when Macpherson's *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1760) caused a major reassessment of the image of Scotland, and particularly the Highlands. Nonetheless, the publication of this simple-minded diatribe shows that parallel to the reassessment of Scotland's image there was still a demand by the public in England for such abusive accounts of Scotland. These diatribes, printed in the second half of the eighteenth century, also show that the old popular image had come into conflict with the intellectual one that saw Scotland as a crucible of the Enlightenment.

The publication of Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* in 1771 was a real breakthrough. The Scottish-born Smollett was the first author to use the medium of the novel to counteract the contemporary 'Scotophobia' and to show the English a more realistic image of his native country. In *Humphry Clinker* he overturned the popular stereotypes and presented a particularly positive picture of the Lowlanders. He also appreciated the traditional virtues of the Highlanders, although, as a Lowlander and an anglicised Scot, he had reservations against the repressive nature of the Highland society. The novel was a phenomenal success throughout Europe. It created new interest in Scotland, boosted the country's popularity and suggested that its popular image had drifted increasingly away from the real state of affairs north of the border.

4. From drove road to mail-coach service: the development of the infrastructure and travelling conditions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland

In 1793 the Welsh zoologist and traveller Thomas Pennant reflected on his first tour to the Highlands of Scotland in 1769:

This year [1769] was a very active one with me; I had the hardiness to venture on a journey to the remotest part of *North Britain*, a country almost as little known to its southern brethren as *Kamtschatka*. I brought home a favorable account of the land. Whether it will thank me or not I cannot say, but from the report I made, and shewing that it might be visited with safety, it has ever since been *inondée* with southern visitants.¹

Pennant did not exaggerate. When he set out in June 1769, there was hardly anything known about the Highlands of Scotland and their population. The account of his tour in 1769 was the decisive breakthrough in introducing the Highlands to a wide audience in Great Britain. There was a huge appetite for a reliable traveller's account of the Highlands that gave an idea of how the country looked, including the customs and manners of its population. Pennant reflected on the publication of his account:

About this time [1771] I gave to the public my *Tour in Scotland*, in one volume octavo, containing xviii plates. A candid account of that country was such a novelty, that the impression was instantly bought up; and in the next year another was printed, and as soon sold.²

The success of his 1769 tour inspired Pennant to an even more challenging naval expedition to the Hebrides in 1772. The phenomenal success of Pennant's travelogues must be seen against the background of his being a pioneer in bringing the Highlands to the attention of British and European travellers. Moreover, it reflected the status of the Highlands as 'terra incognita' until the late 1760s.

From the early seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century the Highlands turned from one of the least accessible and least-known areas to one of Europe's most favourite tourist spots. Coaches laden with tourists rushed through glens that were regarded as recently as the mid-eighteenth century as definitely unsuitable for travellers. The political and infrastructural changes in Scotland in the eighteenth century opened up the Highlands to outsiders. By the end of the century, touring the

¹ T. Pennant, *The Literary Life Of The Late Thomas Pennant, Esq. By Himself* (London, 1793), p. 11. [hereafter: Pennant, *Literary Life*]

² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Highlands had changed from a real challenge into a routine trip. Travellers could choose from a variety of tours on the coach using well-constructed roads and regularly calling at comfortable inns. The making of the roads through the glens had major impact on the Highlands and changed Highland life in all its aspects. However, touring the Highlands could still be regarded as an adventure if travellers left the main roads and walked through the more remote glens. In the Hebrides in particular, 'progress' was slower, and the interior of the islands was still not fully accessible to travellers. However, once travellers made the effort to visit the remote areas, they were rewarded with the discovery of a traditional way of living that had vanished in areas close to the main roads many years before.

This chapter will examine the different methods of travelling in Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. How did travellers discover Scotland, and which experiences did they have in respect of the roads, the inns and the care provided for their horses and themselves? Special emphasis will be paid to the making of the military roads in the Highlands under General Wade and his successor Caulfield. What did contemporary travellers think about these roads, and what did they write about their impact on Highland life?

4.1. Travelling in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland

Fynes Moryson included brief practical advice for travellers to Scotland in his *Itinerary*, and it is necessary to look at the travelling conditions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland in general before dealing with individual aspects of Highland life as described by travellers. Which methods of travelling could visitors to Scotland choose from, and which advantages, disadvantages or problems did they face?

4.1.1. Horse hire and travelling on horseback

Horses were the main means of transport throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Travellers could use either their own horses or hire so-called 'post-horses' at the post-stations in the towns and villages. At these stations along the main roads a

number of horses were kept mainly for royal messengers to allow them to change horses and deliver their messages quickly. In most places in England the post-stations were established at the local inns, and the innkeepers also functioned as postmasters. It seems that this could also be applied to the early post-stations north of the border. However, in Scotland the functions of postmaster and innkeeper seem to have been separated earlier than in England.

In the early seventeenth century the postmasters were given the exclusive right to hire out horses. In Scotland the charge appears to have been 2s. Scots per mile for those riding with the king's commission and 2s. 6d. Scots for others. In England 3d. sterling was charged per mile.³ The monopoly was renewed in the 'Postal Act for the United Kingdom' in 1711.⁴ Despite the monopoly, horse hiring does not seem to

³ See A. Haldane, *Three Centuries of Scottish Posts* (Edinburgh, 1971), p. 9. [hereafter: Haldane, *Scottish Posts*] It can be argued that the horse-hiring business was given exclusively to the postmasters as an additional source of income to their fixed salaries at a time when the post-stations were mainly used by the government and the circulation of private mail was still in its infancy.

⁴ This Act fixed the rate for the hiring of horses at 3d. sterling per mile. For Scotland this meant a far greater increase in rates than for England. This rate was applied to the English mile which was now also used for reckoning distances in Scotland. The previously used Scottish mile was of a longer but undefined length, and the figures given vary widely. Haldane gives the English mile at 1,760 yards and the Scottish mile at approximately 1,934 yards. See *ibid.*, pp. 33-34. I. Adams, *Agrarian Landscape Terms: A Glossary For Historical Geography* (London, 1976), p. 8, gives the Scottish mile at 1,976 yards. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* gives the English mile at 5,280 feet (1,760 yards) and the Scottish mile at 5,951 feet (c. 1,984 yards). Because of the regional variations there was no exact length of the old Scottish mile, nonetheless it was considerably longer than the English mile. According to D.G. Moir, in cartography the English 'computed' mile was put at 60 miles to a degree, while the Scottish remained at 48 to 50. Moir gives no exact date for the adoption of these scales. See Moir, *Early Maps*, vol. i, p. 158. Travellers regularly complained about the length of the Scottish mile. See, for example, NLS, W. Salkeld, 'Letter describing tour in Scotland c. 1700', MS. 1003, fo. 129r. [hereafter: NLS, Salkeld, 'Letter c. 1700', MS. 1003] Such complaints were frequent until far into the eighteenth century and suggest that the old Scottish mile, like many other Scottish measures, was still in use long after the Union of 1707. Dr John Clephane, travelling from Scarborough to Kilravock (Nairnshire) in September 1750, complained about the miles in Scotland: 'N.B. - Miles very long in this country; cannot go above three miles' journey riding. Why miles so long?' 'Dr. Clephane's journey from Scarborough to Kilravock, 1750', in C. Innes, *Sketches Of Early Scotch History* (Edinburgh, 1861), p. 552. However, Clephane was full of praise for the condition of the roads along the Scottish east coast. In 1784 the French geologist Faujas de Saint-Fond noted while travelling on the Isle of Mull: 'The miles of Scotland, particularly those of the isles, are nearly double the length of the English miles.' Faujas presumed that his guides had been talking about English miles, and, unaware of the difference, he set out too late from Aros to Torloisk and got caught in the dark halfway. B. Faujas de Saint-Fond, *Travels In England, Scotland, And The Hebrides* (London, 1799), vol. ii, p. 12. [hereafter: Faujas, *Travels*] Faujas's *Travels* was first published as *Voyage en Angleterre, en Ecosse et aux Iles Hébrides*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1797). [hereafter: Faujas, *Voyage*] The translation is reliable. Sarah Murray noted (in 1800) about the distances on Mull: 'Dugall said it was only one Mull mile, which is fully two measured miles. The people in Mull jocosely say of their miles, that they make up in measure for what their roads want in quality.' S. Murray, *A Companion And Useful Guide To The Beauties In The Western Highlands Of Scotland, And In The Hebrides*, vol. ii (2nd edn. London, 1805), pp. 198-199. [hereafter: Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii] It was not until 1824 that the local variations were abolished in the 'Act for the Uniformity of Measures'.

have been the most profitable business. Hired horses were regularly pushed to their limits, and the charges hardly covered the injuries they suffered. During most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it seems to have been accepted in England as a natural solution that the innkeepers also functioned as postmasters. In Scotland, however, it seems that the postmasters were less involved in the horse hiring and left this trade to the innkeepers.⁵ The separation of both professions became necessary with the establishment of the mail-coach in 1784.⁶ The growing pressure on timetables and delivery times on the one hand, and the increase in private traffic and demand for horses on the other, could no longer be handled by one person. The postmasters concentrated on ensuring that the mail-coaches ran on time, whereas the innkeepers dealt with private traffic and its demand for horses. However, in late eighteenth-century Scotland a parallel structure seems to have been in place as travellers could hire horses from both the postmasters and the innkeepers. Neither of them wished to quit the business, nor did they wish to leave it to the other at a time when private travel was growing rapidly and promised good profits.

Hiring fresh horses at every stage proved to be a fast but comparatively expensive method of travelling.⁷ These livery stables also provided travellers with footmen. Riding hired horses allowed for a very fast pace. Although the travellers were riding unfamiliar mounts, they often pushed them to their limits, and the risk of accidents was pretty high.⁸ If travellers used their own horses, they could minimise this risk, but their horses had to be rested more often, reducing the maximum daily distance by at least a third to roughly 20 to 30 miles. Moreover, every three to four days the horses had to be rested for at least a half and preferably a full day.

A major problem for all travellers was that of fodder for their animals. Grass and hay were scarce and at certain times of the year hardly available. In his *Itinerary* (1617) Moryson warned prospective travellers to Scotland about the scarcity of grass and hay, and Morer issued a similar warning in his *Account* (1702). Such advice does not seem to have been taken very seriously or to have deterred many travellers from

⁵ See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, p. 149.

⁶ In 1784 mail-coaches were introduced in England. The earliest mail-coach service in Scotland was on the London to Edinburgh route in 1786.

⁷ See Wedel's tour in 1584. See chapter 2.2.4.

⁸ Wedel's travelling party had more dangerous accidents on the hired horses on their way to Scotland than on the horses they bought for their return.

visiting Scotland. However, most of the travellers visiting Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries complained about the difficulties of providing for their horses. Many had to change their plans and routes or to cut their visits short. Some travellers even lost their horses due to the lack of appropriate fodder. Horses often had to feed on straw and oats or whatever was available in times of scarcity. Quaker missionary Thomas Story visited Scotland on a preaching tour in June 1696. He experienced difficulties in providing for the horses in places such as Cupar in Fife and complained ‘we could get neither Grass, Hay, nor Straw, for our Horses, but only Thistles, for which we paid 1s. 9d.’.⁹ Even in the big towns provisions seemed scarce. In 1709 Edmund Calamy had to abandon his plan to proceed to Elgin and Inverness because he could not get any hay for his horses at Aberdeen. He blamed the loss of two horses on feeding them instead on straw and oats.¹⁰ Edmund Burt had similar difficulties in Inverness about 1725. He wrote that he could not get any hay for his horses:

... and I [Burt] have had it brought me forty miles by sea, at the rate of half-a-crown or three shillings a truss. I have given twenty-pence for a bundle of straw, not more than one of our trusses, and oats have cost me at the rate of four shillings a bushel, otherwise I must have seen, as we say, my horses’ skins stripped over their ears.¹¹

Providing for horses remained a major problem in the Highlands until far into the eighteenth century, and the unpredictability of the weather often made things worse. Bishop Robert Forbes gave an idea of how tense the situation was after a severe winter or spring when the Highlands suffered from a general shortage of provisions. Travelling parties put an additional strain on the few supplies available, and Forbes’s journals of his episcopal visitations¹² show the problems travellers faced in such circumstances. On his visitation to the diocese of Argyll in late June 1770 Forbes made enquiries about the road from Inverness to Fort William and the possibilities

⁹ T. Story, *A Journal Of The Life Of Thomas Story* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1747), p. 91. [hereafter: Story, *Journal*] It must be stressed that the 1690s were years of bad harvests, scarcity and famine in Scotland.

¹⁰ See E. Calamy, *An Historical Account Of My Own Life, With Some Reflections On The Times I Have Lived In*, ed. by J.T. Rutt (London, 1829), vol. ii, p. 204. [hereafter: Calamy, *Account*]

¹¹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 80. He continued that after the harvest, however, oats and straw were available at reasonable prices.

¹² J.B. Craven (ed.), *Journals Of The Episcopal Visitations Of The Right Rev. Robert Forbes, M.A.* (London, 1886). [hereafter: Forbes, *Journals*] Bishop Forbes visited the dioceses of Ross and Caithness in 1762 and the dioceses of Ross and Argyll in 1770.

about providing for the horses. The locals referred to the severity of the season and advised him against travelling to Argyll. Forbes summed up the situation:

Indeed, the ... people of Inverness gave us very bad Encouragement, that, after journeying from the General's Hutt and Fort-Augustus, we could have neither Hay nor Corn for the poor Brutes; no, not at Fort-William, as the Severity of the Cold Spring, long continued, had consumed every Kind of Provision for Cattle, great numbers of which had died from Want, particularly in several parts of the Highlands. And, indeed, the late Spring was severely felt, not only in Scotland, but throughout England, France, and even Italy.¹³

Despite this warning, Forbes left Inverness in a chaise and soon faced serious problems in caring for his horses. At the General's Hut he could get only corn but no grass or hay. The landlord warned him once more about the lack of provisions further down the road. At Fort Augustus the innkeeper had no hay to spare, but he assured Forbes that he could get hay and corn at Low Bridge (over the River Gloy) although he knew that this was not true. At Low Bridge there were no provisions for man or beast. When the travelling party reached Fort William, they were lucky to get cut grass for the horses. Additionally, Forbes bought some malt at twenty pence per peck at the local brewery to feed to the horses. He faced similar problems on his way back at Kingshouse (now Kingshouse Hotel) where he could not get any grass. Fortunately, they had brought some corn along, which they fed to the horses. The Highland economy did not have the resources to stockpile supplies, and adverse seasons often put further strain on them. Travellers were well advised to carry sufficient oats or corn for their mounts.

Moreover, the poor quality of the hay in Scotland was a constant reason for complaints by travellers until the close of the eighteenth century. The English agriculturalist George Culley toured the Lowlands in 1771 and called the badly cured hay 'a general evil in Scotland, though much better than was formerly I am told'.¹⁴ An unidentified English traveller toured the Highlands in the summer of 1789 and noted that 'the Hay is not only in itself execrable (perhaps the best they have) but it is put into Racks so small that it [is] almost absolutely impossible for Horses to come at it.'¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., p. 283.

¹⁴ Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 81.

¹⁵ NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080, fo. 21v.

Because of its scarcity, hay was very expensive in Scotland. An analysis of travellers' bills shows that its price in comparison with other fodder like oats or beans was considerably higher in Scotland than in England. Despite the obviously poor quality of the hay, the innkeepers could ask high prices for it. Patrick Cokburn, innkeeper in Hamilton, charged Lord Yester for the care of his seven horses from 12 to 18 May 1713 a total of £42 2s. 10d.¹⁶ The three major items, accounting for more than half of the bill, read as follows:

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|------------------|
| for hay to them five nights at 8s. each horse is | 14 | 00 | 00 |
| seven pecks ¹⁷ and one fourth part oats ¹⁸ & beans to them for five | | | |
| days at three fourth parts to each horse is | 05 | 12 | 06 |
| for six nights hay to three saddled horses at 6s. each is | 05 | 12 | 00 ¹⁹ |

These figures show that feeding horses on hay was more expensive than feeding them, for example, on oats and beans. The other items listed on the bill confirm that hay was very expensive in comparison to any other fodder provided.

In England the charges for hay were far lower than those for corn. The bills of a ten-day journey by the Marquess of Tweeddale from London to Yester in East Lothian, in May 1755, show that at none of the inns in England did the charges for hay exceed those for corn. At most of the inns where the marquess stopped, the charges for corn were more than double, and sometimes four or five times higher than, those for hay.²⁰ These figures underline the fact that hay must have been comparatively expensive north of the border.

¹⁶ See NLS, 'Travel and London expenses', Yester Papers, MS. 14661, fo. 2.

¹⁷ 4 lippies made 1 peck, 4 pecks made 1 firloft, 4 firlofts made 1 boll. Due to the regional variations the exact size of the peck used at Hamilton in 1713 can no longer be determined. See A. Gibson and T. Smout, *Prices, Food And Wages In Scotland 1550-1780* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 371-375. [hereafter: Gibson and Smout, *Prices, Food And Wages*] The Swede Henrik Kalmeter gave in 1720 the following comparison of the Scottish and English measures: 'A boll is 224 lbs English weight, a firloft or bushel is ¼ of that, or 56 lbs, and a peck is 14 lbs.' Smout (ed.), 'Kalmeter's Travels', p. 43.

¹⁸ A 'fourth part oats' seems to have been the usual ration for a horse. The Englishman John Conyers noted in 1676 about the measurements in Scotland: 'And a usuall Bait for a horse is a Forepit of Oats as they call it or a Fore-part, i.e. a quarter of a pecke but 'tis as much as our ordinary halfe-pecke.' Essex Record Office, Conyers, 'Northerne Journey 1676', MS. D/DW Z6/2, fo. 33.

¹⁹ See NLS, 'Travel and London expenses', Yester Papers, MS. 14661, fo. 2. The correct sum should have been £5 8s.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, fos. 5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 22, 24, 26, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45-48.

4.1.2. Travelling by coach

In seventeenth-century Scotland travelling by coach was hardly possible. Coaches depended on proper roads with a level surface, and such roads hardly existed outside Edinburgh, Glasgow and some parts of Fife. These bad road conditions prevented any use of private coaches outside the big towns and also hampered any efforts to establish regular coach services within Scotland. In contrast to England,²¹ there were no regular and reliable coach services between the major towns in Lowland Scotland until the second half of the eighteenth century.

However, first attempts at a stagecoach service from Edinburgh to England via Berwick, and between Edinburgh and Glasgow, stretched as far back as the 1670s. The coach service between Edinburgh and Glasgow introduced by William Hume in 1678 took six days for a return journey. Despite hefty fares of £4 16s. Scots in summer and £5 8s. Scots in winter, and an annual subsidy of 200 merks (equivalent to £11 2s. 6d. sterling), it was soon abandoned, and it was not until 1749 that a regular wheeled service became established between both towns.²²

North of the Tay coaches were hardly used and proved to be more of a burden than a help as there were hardly any roads suitable for coaches or wheeled transport.²³ The Reverend Thomas Morer, who visited Scotland in 1689 as chaplain to a Scottish regiment fighting for William III, provided a brief account of the state of the roads and the ‘public transport system’ that gives some idea of the use of coaches in late seventeenth-century Scotland:

Stage-Coaches they have none, yet there are a few *Hackneys* at *Edinburg*, which they may hire into the Country upon urgent occasions. The truth is, the Roads will hardly allow 'em those Conveniences, which is the reason that their Gentry, Men and Women, chuse rather to use their Horses. However their Great Men often Travel with *Coach and Six*, but with so much caution, that besides their other Attendance, they have a *Lusty Running Footman* on each side the *Coach*, to manage and keep it up in rough places.²⁴

²¹ In England regular stagecoach services were first introduced in 1637. In the 1650s such services were established on all major highways radiating from London. See J. Parkes, *Travel in England in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 81-96. [hereafter: Parkes, *Travel in England*]

²² See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, p. 76.

²³ Until the construction of the military roads, coaches must have been a very unusual sight in the north of Scotland. This was confirmed by Burt's account of the arrival of the first coach at Inverness by sea in 1725.

²⁴ [T. Morer], *A Short Account Of Scotland* (London, 1702), p. 24. [hereafter: Morer, *Account*]

Heavy rain and adverse weather often turned the existing roads into deep and muddy tracks that were unsuitable for any wheeled vehicles, including carts.²⁵ Coaches became stuck on such roads, and the back of a horse remained the only reliable form of travel, even in the Lowlands, until the 1720s.

Lord Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford, was one of the first visitors to travel Scotland by coach. He expressed his astonishment at the unexpected meeting with another coach and six near East Barns in Haddingtonshire in May 1725.²⁶ Coaches still seemed to be a very unusual sight in the countryside, even in the vicinity of the main road to England. Lord Harley continued his tour by coach as far north as Stirling, Dunblane, Perth and Scone. Although by the late 1720s and 1730s the military roads opened the north of Scotland for coaches, most travellers stuck to horseback.

After the 1760s the extended network of military roads allowed the use of coaches on many roads in the Highlands, however, in comparison to horseback, coaches were an inflexible, slow and expensive way of travelling. The disadvantages and limitations of travelling by coach were manifold. Coaches could not be used on all roads in the Highlands. They proved to be a massive burden in areas like Appin and Lochaber, where there were still major gaps in the road system and several lochs had to be crossed by ferries.²⁷ Moreover, travellers by coach had to stay on the major roads, and shortcuts or side trips into neighbouring glens were impossible unless the coach remained behind on a main road. In comparison to travelling on horseback, coaches were rather slow. Many small inns could not afford to keep a large number of horses at hand, and travellers by coach had four faced difficulties in obtaining fresh horses. They often had to cover long distances without being able to change the horses, which slowed down their pace. Moreover, travellers often had to get off and walk next to the carriage to make it easier for the horses to make steep ascents, and

²⁵ On his journey to Edinburgh in 1705, Joseph Taylor noted that even in the Lowlands sledges instead of carts were the main means of transport. See Taylor, *Journey*, p. 99.

²⁶ See 'A Journey Through Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, And Notts To The Northern Counties And Scotland', HMC, *Report On The Manuscripts Of His Grace The Duke Of Portland, K.G.*, vol. vi (London, 1901), p. 112. [hereafter: Harley, 'Journey'] This was the Countess of Roxburgh on her way to Broxburn.

²⁷ This was confirmed by Bishop Forbes's problems with his coach in this area in 1770. William Thomson (1785), Maximilien Lazowski and Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld (1786), and Dorothy and William Wordsworth (1803) all faced difficulties in this area.

they sometimes had to lend a hand and push the carriage. At steep ascents such as the Pass of Corrieyairack travellers were advised to hire extra horses to get the coach safely over the top. Lastly, coaches were more likely to break down as the rough surface of some roads and the open cross-drains put a strain on the shaft and wheels.

The term ‘public transport’ was not applicable to the Highlands until the early nineteenth century. By then travellers had the choice between using the stagecoach or the mail-coach. Stagecoaches primarily transported people, but also carried a limited amount of mail. They were bigger than mail-coaches, accommodating up to sixteen people (most of whom had to sit on the outside of the coach), and slower, but had the advantage of being cheaper. The faster mail-coaches primarily transported mail, but could also accommodate up to six persons, of whom three had to sit on the outside of the coach.²⁸ A first attempt at running a stagecoach between Perth and Inverness was made in 1803, but it was soon abandoned. It was successfully restarted in 1806, and the ‘Caledonian’ coach did the fourteen-hour journey three times a week in summer and twice in winter.²⁹ A regular stagecoach service between Inverness, Perth, and Aberdeen was established in 1811. By 1821 there were seven daily coaches to and from Inverness, and a regular coach ran between Inveraray and Oban.³⁰

Eighteenth-century travellers in the Highlands had to provide their own transport or could hire coaches and horses from the innkeepers at the major inns in the towns of the Lowlands. The Highland innkeepers usually had no coaches at hand. Sometimes travellers were lucky enough to get a small, open chaise at one of the bigger inns for a day trip to the tourist attractions in the vicinity. However, travellers by coach were very limited in their options, and travelling on horseback remained the common method of exploring the Highlands for those who wanted to leave the beaten track.

²⁸ For a useful discussion of the various types of public coaches available to travellers in late eighteenth-century England see K. Küttner, *Beiträge zur Kenntniß vorzüglich des Innern von England und seiner Einwohner*, vol. v (Leipzig, 1796), pp. 124-127.

²⁹ See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, p. 99. Haldane remarks that until the completion of the Tay Bridge at Dunkeld in 1809 this route must have been interrupted by a ferry. The German traveller Theodor Fontane decided in 1858 against the east coast train and travelled on the stagecoach from Perth to Inverness. He reported that the four expensive seats in the coach remained empty, whereas the sixteen cheaper seats on the outside of the coach were immediately filled.

³⁰ See A. Haldane, *New Ways Through The Glens* (London, 1962), p. 138. [hereafter: Haldane, *New Ways*]

4.1.3. The services of the footmen

For the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries footmen were of the utmost importance to travellers either on horseback or travelling by coach. They were provided by stables to return the horses at the end of a stage or journey. Their services, however, went far beyond that. They knew the roads, ran next to the horses, served as guides and interpreters, and often carried part of the luggage. In the evenings they cared for the horses and at the end of the tour returned them to their owners.

One might suppose that footmen running next to the horses would delay travelling. Travellers, however, agreed that footmen were not only able to run long distances at a very fast pace but also to keep up with the fastest horses. Thomas Kirk wrote in 1677 about their services:

Here [Dundee] we took a footman along with us for a guide, it being the custom in these parts to travel upon hired horses, and they send a footman along with them to bring them back again; this footman serves as a guide all the way, and when you alight, he takes care of the horse: they will undertake to run down the best horse you can buy in seven or eight days; they run by the horse's side all the way, and travel thirty and forty miles a day with ease: you may have a horse and a guide for twopence per mile.³¹

The services of footmen remained essential for travellers even after the construction of the military roads, and Kirk did not exaggerate the pace they were able to sustain. William Mildmay travelled the Highlands in a carriage in July and August 1736. He wrote of the Highlanders whom he hired as footmen:

They are very Strong, well looking Handsome people, & for the Generallity, Tall; very Nimble, & can walk, or Run, faster, & farther, than any people whatever, and being inured to Hardships from their Infancys, can live harder, & bear more fatigue. we had some of them that run with us for Guides, & Travell'd above 100 Miles as fast as we went with a Coach & 6 good Horses: and they are hired by people that travel the Country on Horseback to go with them for Guides, & run all the way if they go never so farr, by the Side of their Horses.³²

³¹ Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 20. A charge of two pence per mile for a horse and a footman must have been very cheap in comparison to England, considering the greater length of the Scottish mile.

³² Essex Record Office, W. Mildmay, 'Notebook containing journal of a tour round England and Scotland', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fos. 37-38. [hereafter: Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326] This was confirmed by the pace of the Highland soldiers accompanying Mildmay from Fort Augustus to Crieff in three days. See *ibid.*, fo. 58.

Comparing Kirk's and Mildmay's accounts of the footmen's services, it becomes obvious that the new roads did not put an end to their profession. Although road construction did not make them obsolete, the qualifications were changing for a footman or a guide for travellers. Edmund Burt gave a striking example of the services he expected the footmen to provide in future. He was due to inspect a place in the mountains that he could not get to without a guide. On his way he discussed with him the impact of the new roads. His guide could not speak English, but told Burt through an interpreter that he used to be a weaver until English soldiers burnt down his house and loom in 1715 although he had not been involved in the rebellion. Since then he had to make his living as a guide. Burt remarked about his guide's future:

... when the roads are finished according to the plan proposed, there will be but little occasion for those people, except such as can speak English, and may by some be thought necessary for interpreters in their journeys: - I say they will be useless as guides alone, reckoning from the south of Scotland to this town [Inverness] the mountain way (for along the coast hither, the road can hardly be mistaken), and counting again from the Lowlands to the west end of the opening among the mountains that run from hence quite across the island.³³

The new roads proved to be a gateway for the English language into the Highlands, and Burt predicted rightly that the guides and footmen would no longer cope without knowledge of it.³⁴ Future travellers also expected the guides and footmen to serve as interpreters.

Footmen or guides remained essential for travellers even on the main roads. In 1773 Johnson and Boswell hired four horses and two Highlanders to accompany them from Inverness via Fort Augustus to Bernera. Their footmen ran next to the horses, showed the way, served as interpreters and returned the horses when they had reached the west coast.

³³ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 200.

³⁴ The Highland gentry, including those on the western seaboard, had become increasingly bilingual following the Statutes of Iona in 1609, while the common Highlanders stuck to Gaelic. This was to change in 1709 when the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) started to propagate the English language amongst the common people all over the Highlands. Teaching common Highlanders the English language, and pushing back the use of Gaelic, had always been considered an essential part of the strategy to 'civilise' them.

4.1.4. Roads, inns, accommodation and food in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Lowland Scotland

Travelling in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Lowland Scotland was difficult. The few roads that existed were very bad, and getting accommodation and provisions at the inns often proved difficult, even along the main routes.³⁵ Many travellers, depending on their social status, provided themselves with letters of introduction to avoid these difficulties. Once they were introduced to the local gentlemen, their hosts usually issued them new letters of introduction for the next stages of their travels. Travellers usually called at the local inn, sent a messenger with a letter of introduction to the gentleman to whom they were recommended, and then waited for his reply. If the host was at home, the travellers were invited, entertained with food and drink in the evening, and were often asked to stay for the night. At that point they were provided with new letters of introduction for the next stages of their journey.

Two Englishmen, who travelled Scotland separately in 1704 and 1705, left accounts of what the roads, the inns and accommodation in Scotland looked like shortly before the Union.³⁶ The first traveller was an unidentified Englishman, probably from London. He toured Scotland in April 1704 and travelled without a footman. He had no letters of introduction and, therefore, had to rely on the local inns. On his return from Edinburgh and Glasgow he stopped on a Sunday at Crawfordjohn and attended the church service there. Before he went to church, he stopped at the local inn or ‘minch-house’ (here spelt ‘minsh-house’), which seems to have been no more than a simple hut.

... I gott safe to Crawford John or Crawford Jhon, a small poor village of 2 or 3 poor houses, and a poor church; one of which houses happened to be a minsh-house or ale-house, and here I sett up my horse in a little hurdled confinness of a stable, hardly fitt for a hog-house, and went into the minsh-house. The houses here are of much such building as

³⁵ For the state of the inns in seventeenth-century England and travellers’ experiences see Parkes, *Travel in England*, pp. 127-151.

³⁶ It should be noted that there was a great deal of tension between Scotland and England in the years before the Union due to the failure of the Darien scheme and the uncertainty about the Anglo-Scottish relations. See, for example, William Salkeld’s comments from Edinburgh around 1700. He wrote that the Scots ‘promise themselves such mountains of gold’ from the Darien scheme that they murmured about a downright invasion of England in case the English should try to jeopardise the project. NLS, Salkeld, ‘Letter c. 1700’, MS. 1003, fo. 126r. Joseph Taylor, who visited Edinburgh in September 1705, gave an account of the poisoned atmosphere after the trial and execution of Captain Green at Leith in April 1705. See Taylor, *Journey*, pp. 122-125.

those at Dullwich-wells near London: the walls are either of earth or loose stones, or are radled; the roofes are of turfe, and the floors of the bear ground; they are but one story high, and the chimney is a hole in the roofe, and the fire-place is in the middle of the floor; their seats and bedds are of earth turfed over, and radled up near the fire-place, and serve for both uses. Their ale which they sell is pale, small, and thick, but at the most ordinary minsh-houses they comonly have good French brandy, and often French wine, so comon are these French liquors in this country. This village is situate in a bottom amongst high hills; the church indeed is of somewhat better building then the houses, but such an one in most parts of England would be taken for a barne.³⁷

The traveller was not impressed with the comfort of this ‘minch-house’. He was eager to leave Scotland as soon as possible and moved on, although travelling on a Sunday was regarded in most parts of Scotland as Sabbath-breaking.³⁸ Between Elvanfoot and Moffat he noted about the road conditions:

... the road, or rather sheep tracts (for since I left Dowglas I hardly saw any other) were so obscure, I could hardly find a way, and the rocks were so thick and close, that I had often much ado to gett myselfe and horse between them.³⁹

He soon lost his way and had to spend a stormy night in the hills in continual fear of being robbed. He finally made his way to Moffat and Lockerbie, where he stayed for his last night in Scotland. His account of the accommodation at Lockerbie is ample evidence of what travellers had to face, even in the Lowlands and Borders, if they travelled without letters of introduction and had to rely on the local inns.

It had rained all this day from before noon till night; and to comfort me here, the room wherein I were to lay was overflown with water, so that the people layd heaps of turfe for me to tread on to gett from the door to the fire place, and from thence to the bed; and the floor was so worn in holes, that had I tread aside a turfe, I might have sunk up to my knees in mudd and water, and no better room was to be had in this town: nay, what was worse my room had but halfe a door, and that to the streete; and the wall was broke down between the stable and me, so that the room lay open to the stable. This was but a comfortless night’s lodging after my last on the bogg, but I was forced to bear it; so layd 2 case of pistolls (that I had with me) by my bedd’s head, and slept dogg’s sleep till morning, and had the advantage of overhearing if any one attempted to steale my horse: and yet the people here had French wine, though it was always spoiled for want of being well cellar’d.⁴⁰

³⁷ *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), pp. 53-54. The original manuscript of the journal is NLS, MS. 2506. ‘Minch-house’: an inn, alehouse or tavern. This term was used only by this English writer and may not be authentic. See *SND*, vol. vi, p. 278. The inns or public houses in Scotland were usually called ‘change houses’.

³⁸ Travellers often complained that the local people were angry about travelling on the Lord’s Day. On Sundays travellers were often not ferried over rivers or were not served at inns. Sunday was usually a day lost for travellers. See chapter 8.2. about the strict religious observance of the Sabbath.

³⁹ *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), pp. 56-57.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62. Hume Brown gave a concise survey of the Scottish monarchs’ efforts from 1356 to 1567 to establish comfortable inns throughout the country. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 89.

For obvious reasons he was overjoyed when he recrossed the border to his native England on the following day. On leaving Scotland he noted in his journal:

... I passed a small stream, and was, to my joy, on English ground, and hope I shall never go into such a country again. I had heard much talke of it, and had a mind to see it for variety; and indeed it was so to me, for I thank me God, I never saw such another, and must conclude with the poet, Cleveland, that
 Had Cain been Scott, God sure had changed his doom,
 Not made him wander, but confined him home.⁴¹

This traveller's attitude was fairly typical of his time. Scotland in general was considered a very dangerous country to tour, and most travellers did not hide their fears about travelling there.⁴² The Londoner Joseph Taylor was no exception, and his experiences were similar to those of his countryman in the previous year. Taylor was very much afraid of travelling to Scotland in the first place. He noted when crossing the border at Berwick in August 1705:

We had a great deale of cause to leave our Country with regret, upon account of the discouragements we receiv'd from every body, even upon the borders of Scotland, and by what I could gather from the discourse of all persons I convers'd with, I concluded I was going into the most barb'rous Country in the world; Every one reckon'd our Journy extremely dangerous, and told us 'twould be difficult to escape with our lives, much less without the distemper of the Country, Yet notwithstanding all these sad representations, we resolv'd to proceed, and stand by one another to the last ...⁴³

After a visit to Edinburgh he set out again for England in September. He noted about the houses along the road from Linton to Moffat that they 'were more like Hog styes', and complained about the road itself 'considering 'twas the great road to England, though I could, in some places scarce discern whether there was any road or no'.⁴⁴ Although he was travelling on a major route, obtaining provisions was not easy. When the travelling party arrived half-starved at Linton, there were hardly any to be got 'but a few Eggs, and a Neck of Mutton as black as a Shoe, which we could not have obtain'd had not I gain'd favour with the Hostess'.⁴⁵ Between Linton and Moffat they met a party smuggling wine from Scotland to England. At Moffat they stayed at the local inn, which happened to be the provost's house. However, they

⁴¹ *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), p. 62.

⁴² However, in the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries the roads in Scotland were safer for travellers than the ones in England. The 1690s saw a dramatic rise in highway robberies in England, and travelling became nearly impossible by the end of 1692. See Parkes, *Travel in England*, pp. 156-160.

⁴³ Taylor, *Journey*, p. 95.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.

could not get any fodder apart from oat straw for their horses, and Taylor noted that their animals looked like skeletons when they left Scotland. Here the travellers were more fortunate in their provisions, but their accommodation did not please them at all.

We here met with good wine, and some mutton pretty well drest, but looking into the beds, found there was no lying in them, so we kept on our cloaths all night, and enjoy'd ourselves by a good fire, making often protestations never to come into that Country again.⁴⁶

Like the English traveller of the previous year, they were overjoyed when they approached the border to England, and they did not hesitate to express their disgust about Scotland and the Scots.

As soon as we set footing on English ground, we embrac'd one another with Extasies of Joy, as coming into a new World. The Air Climate and every thing else seem'd like Paradise. Carlisle Fair hapned to be at that time, and there being abundance of Scotchmen drest Cap a pee with Bonnets Cloaks and Swords, upon the road, returning from thence to their own Country: Mr Harrison in a rapture took out all the Scotch mony he had, and scatter'd amongst them, for which we had a great deal of pleasure, to see them scramble
...⁴⁷

Despite the obvious prejudice against Scotland, these accounts highlight the state of the roads and inns in Lowland Scotland at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Scotland had neither a proper infrastructure, nor was it able to provide for larger travelling parties outside the big towns. Travellers faced difficulties in finding accommodation and providing for themselves and their horses, even in the Lowlands and Borders. Travellers to the countryside were well advised to provide themselves

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 149.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 154. As late as the 1770s some travellers expressed a very similar attitude towards Scotland. The Englishman George Culley commented upon crossing the border into Scotland in 1771: '... after you leave the Tweedside the country becomes open and barren, the villages like the idea I have of Indian hutts'. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 80. The American Quaker Jabez Fisher, travelling Scotland in 1775, wrote on leaving Scotland from Gretna for Carlisle: 'Here we bid Scotland a long long Adieu without the least expectation of ever visiting it again, or without a wish ever more to behold its Nakedness, Dirt and Customs.' On crossing the border into England he remarked that the country now offered a far more pleasing aspect. He wrote that the people were cleaner, more decent and had totally different dress and manners. His observations culminated in the statement: 'The Land shews the industry of the People instead of declaring their Negligence.' K. Morgan (ed.), *An American Quaker In The British Isles: The Travel Journals of Jabez Maud Fisher, 1775-1779* (Oxford, 1992), p. 76. [hereafter: Morgan (ed.), *Journals of J. M. Fisher*] The Englishman Henry Skrine revealed a similar attitude when he crossed the border into Scotland at Gretna in 1787. He immediately noted that everything was dirtier and more neglected than in England, which he blamed entirely on the Scots' laziness and ignorance. Instead of the 'healthy peasant, and the neat cottage, which adorn the most remote English villages', he was confronted all along his way to Glasgow by 'mud-built sheds' and 'miserable wretches, ragged, bare-footed, and squalid, almost beyond the power of description'. H. Skrine, *Three Successive Tours In The North Of England, And Great Part Of Scotland* (London, 1795), pp. 34-35. [hereafter: Skrine, *Tours*]

with letters of introduction, and the above-mentioned experiences were rather the rule than the exception. Even in a town such as Edinburgh travellers regularly complained about the poor accommodation at the inns.

In his second letter Edmund Burt gave an account of his experiences at the local inns during his journey from England to Scotland around 1725. He crossed the Tweed at Kelso and stopped at the local inn, where he was offered potted pigeons. Although he was desperately hungry after a long day's journey, he could not eat a single bit of what he was served. He noted about the food:

When I came to examine my cates, there were two or three of the pigeons lay mangled in the pot, and behind were the furrows, in the butter, of those fingers that had raked them out of it, and the butter itself needed no close application to discover its quality.⁴⁸

He ate instead a crust of bread, drank a pint of good claret and moved on although it was getting dark. Dusk overtook him on a moor, and the next inn he called at was hardly better than the one he had left. According to Burt, it was nothing but a smoky little house with a few shadows sitting round a peat fire. He was disgusted with the food he was now offered:

Here I was told I might have a breast of mutton done upon the *brander* (or gridiron): but when it was brought me, it appeared to have been smoked and dried in the chimney corner; and it looked like the glue that hangs up in an ironmonger's shop: this, you may believe, was very disgusting to the eye; and for the smell, it had no other, that I could perceive, than that of the butter wherewith it was greased in the dressing; but for my relief, there were some new-laid eggs, which were my regale.⁴⁹

Burt wondered which of his sins were responsible for this ordeal in Scotland. However, the accommodation and linen that he found in this house were as good as in the best inns in England.

One might suppose that such poor inns could only be found in the countryside and that travellers were better provided for in the towns. However, Edinburgh had its own challenges for foreign visitors, and Burt's experiences during his stay in the capital were fairly typical of his time. His supper in an Edinburgh tavern and his way home through the narrow wynds and closes of the Old Town were experiences shared by generations of travellers.

⁴⁸ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 14.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 15.

Being a stranger, I was invited to sup at a tavern. The cook was too filthy an object to be described; only another English gentleman whispered me and said, he believed, if the fellow was to be thrown against the wall, he would stick to it. ...

We supped very plentifully, and drank good French claret, and were very merry till the clock struck ten, the hour when every-body is at liberty, by beat of the city drum, to throw their filth out at the windows. Then the company began to light pieces of paper, and throw them upon the table to smoke the room, and, as I thought, to mix one bad smell with another.

Being in my retreat to pass through a long narrow *wynde* or alley, to go to my new lodgings, a guide was assigned me, who went before me to prevent my disgrace, crying out all the way, with a loud voice, 'Hud your haunde.' The throwing up of a sash, or otherwise opening a window, made me tremble, while behind and before me, at some little distance, fell the terrible shower.

Well, I escaped all the danger, and arrived, not only safe and sound, but sweet and clean, at my new quarters; but when I was in bed I was forced to hide my head between the sheets; for the smell of the filth, thrown out by the neighbours on the back side of the house, came pouring into the room to such a degree, I was almost poisoned with the stench.⁵⁰

Most visitors to the capital had similar experiences in their lodgings. The poor state of many inns and the notorious filth of the capital often deterred travellers from progressing further into the country.⁵¹ Many visitors to Scotland simply had enough and just wanted to return after having seen (and smelled) the capital. Until the construction of the New Town in the late 1760s and 1770s, it was common among foreign visitors to complain about the poor state of the accommodation to be found in Edinburgh.

⁵⁰ Ibid., vol. i, pp. 17-18. See also Taylor, *Journey*, p. 134. Not all visitors to Edinburgh were as lucky as Burt to escape the nightly blessings from above. The accommodation at the inns in Edinburgh caused frequent complaints from foreign visitors until the end of the eighteenth century. In 1763 the Englishman Thomas Cave described the Red Lion Inn as 'a shocking house' and complained about it: 'Drunken landlady. Dr. Spier, going into his chamber, trod in a bird's nest. Pretended to eat a very nasty dinner of salt haddock, black mutton, cold chicken in a periwig of feathers, tarts covered with black dirt instead of white sugar, seemed to have been first tasted by the mice.' Cave, *Journey*, pp. 198-199. See also *ibid.*, p. 244. Cave portrayed the Scots as a filthy people and was very likely to have been influenced by Weldon's *Description* and Kirk's *Account*.

⁵¹ According to the author of a 'List of Inns and Inn-keepers in Scotland', published in *The Gentleman's Magazine, And Historical Chronicle*, ed. by Sylvanus Urban (pseudonym), vol. xli (London, 1771), pp. 543-544, the citizens of Edinburgh acknowledged that they had the worst inns and taverns in the whole of Scotland. [hereafter: *Gentleman's Magazine*] After the construction of the New Town in the 1770s and 1780s, there was a dramatic improvement in the number and quality of hotels. See W. Creech, *Letters Respecting The Mode Of Living, Trade, Manners, And Literature, &c. Of Edinburgh, In 1763, And The Present Period* (Edinburgh, 1792), p. 20. [hereafter: Creech, *Letters*] William Creech (1745-1815) was an Edinburgh publisher and Lord Provost of the city from 1811-13.

4.1.5. Travelling in the Highlands before the ‘Wade roads’

The lack of a proper infrastructure proved the biggest problem to travellers in Scotland.⁵² So-called ‘roads’ existed only in the Borders, the Lowlands and along the east coast of Scotland, and what travellers thought about them has been shown above. Acts to improve the roads were passed in 1617, 1661 and 1669. The 1669 Act authorised the sheriff of the county and the Justices of the Peace to call on the occupiers of the land for road building and maintenance for up to six days per year for a man and a horse. This compulsory service, known as ‘statute labour’, was enforced in June and July. However, these Acts were largely ignored, and neither ‘statute labour’ nor the tolls levied on roads, bridges and ferries led to major improvements of the poor state of the roads in Scotland.⁵³

The only existing roads to the north of Scotland were along the east coast via Dundee, Aberdeen, Banff or Huntly, Elgin, Inverness and the east coast of Ross-shire, Sutherland and Caithness.⁵⁴ However, these roads were in such poor condition that all transport, apart from creels on horseback, had to be done by ship. Along the Scottish east coast ships proved to be a real and fast alternative to travel by land. A journey from Edinburgh to Inverness or Orkney along the east coast roads usually took ten to fourteen days, whereas, weather permitting, ships reached these destinations in two to three days. Travellers such as Thomas Kirk and his party were lucky to catch a ship from Inverness to Kirkwall, and they did not let such an opportunity to get a break from the poor roads slip through their hands.

⁵² For the development of the road system and travel in England see S. and B. Webb, *The Story of the King's Highway (English Local Government Series, vol. v)* (London, 1963). The authors also marginally refer to the roads and travel in Scotland. See *ibid.*, p. 168, and notes on pp. 180-181.

⁵³ In the eighteenth century road maintenance was financed by the turnpike system. Widely adopted after 1750, it began with an Act in Midlothian in 1713 that authorised the Justices of the Peace as trustees ‘to erect or cause to be erected a Gate or Gates, Turnpike or Turnpikes in or cross any Part or Parts of the said Highways or Roads and to receive and take For every Horse with a Load ... the Sum of One Sixth Part of a Penny Sterling And for every Cart Waggon or Sledge passing laden or unladen ... the Sum of One Halfpeny Sterling’. H. Hamilton, *An Economic History Of Scotland In The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1963), p. 224. See also D.G. Moir, ‘The Roads Of Scotland’, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. lxxiii, no. 2 (Edinburgh, 1957), pp. 101-110, and vol. lxxiii, no. 3 (Edinburgh, 1957), pp. 167-175. The turnpike system was not applied to the military roads in the Highlands.

⁵⁴ This was confirmed by the routes taken by Thomas Kirk in 1677, Thomas Story in 1692, Edmund Calamy in 1709, Daniel Defoe and John Macky in the early eighteenth century. Kirk caught a ship from Inverness to Kirkwall, and John Brand sailed in 1700 from Leith to Kirkwall, both returning via Caithness.

Apart from their bad state, these roads were poorly signposted, and reliable maps, suitable for the demands of travellers and showing the exact distances between places, did not exist until well into the eighteenth century.⁵⁵ Travellers, therefore, had to hire guides, who used to run next to the horses and were usually provided at cheap rates by the livery stables. Apart from their knowledge of the roads, the guides were also used as interpreters. The English language gradually receded in use the further north one travelled, and Lowland Scots, Englishmen and foreign visitors did not speak Gaelic.

Such travelling conditions in the Lowlands and along the Scottish east coast might have seemed rather backward. However, they were far better in comparison to what travellers faced in the Highlands, where there was no road system at all apart from the drove roads until General Wade started the road-building scheme on behalf of the government in 1725.⁵⁶ Road building by 'statute labour' was unsuitable for the Highlands. The area was too thinly populated, and the technical difficulties of building roads and bridges through the mountains by unskilled labour were too great.⁵⁷ In fact, there were no bridges, and travellers had to ford rivers or be carried across them by the Highlanders. This total absence of roads and bridges meant that carriages were of no use at all, and travellers had to use the drove roads that were often not even suitable for riding horses. They had to lead their horses and had to walk next to them as these paths were deep and muddy from the livestock driven over them. The bigger and heavier English and Lowland horses had great difficulties

⁵⁵ The earliest detailed, large-scale maps suitable for travellers in Scotland were *Taylor and Skinner's Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain, Or Scotland* (London, 1776). These maps included the inns, the stages and tolls along the roads. For a list of the early road maps of Scotland see Moir, *Early Maps*, vol. ii, pp. 27-43. Before the publication of these maps, travellers mainly relied on itineraries to get the distances between the post-stages and villages. For a list of the itineraries see H.G. Fordham, *The Road-Books & Itineraries Of Great Britain 1570 To 1850* (Cambridge, 1924), pp. 17-31. [hereafter: Fordham, *Road-Books & Itineraries*] Most itineraries and maps showed the distances between places in 'computed' and 'measured' miles. Distances given in computed miles were often unreliable as they were based on the old, estimated distances. Distances given in measured miles were more accurate because they were taken from various methods of measurement, such as the chain or wheel. Travellers often complained about the unreliability of computed miles and preferred distances to be given in measured miles. It must be stressed that the mapping of the Hebrides lagged considerably behind the rest of Scotland. A fairly accurate sea chart of the coastline of the Western Isles was printed by Nicolas de Nicolay in 1583, but the interior of the islands remained largely unexplored and unmapped. See chapter 1.1.

⁵⁶ For the history and a map of the drove roads see A. Haldane, *The Drove Roads of Scotland* (Newton Abbot, 1973). [hereafter: Haldane, *Drove Roads*]

⁵⁷ Above all, the chiefs had no interest in roads being built through their territories as will be seen from Burt's *Letters*.

in walking on the boggy and deep ground in the Highlands. The smaller and lighter Highland horses were far more suitable for this ground. There were few (recognisable) inns, and the travelling parties had to carry all their provisions, including those for their horses. If the travellers did not stay with the local Highland gentry, they had to stay in tents or in the smoky huts of the common Highlanders. The Englishman John Taylor gave an idea of what the paths and the accommodation were like when he travelled the Highlands in August 1618. From Brechin he penetrated into the hills in order to catch up with the Earl of Mar and other Highland noblemen for a great hunt in the Braes of Mar and Badenoch. He wrote about his first encounter with the paths and accommodation in the Highlands:

Then I tooke another guide, which brought me such strange wayes over mountaines and rockes, that I thinke my horse never went the like; and I am sure I never saw any wayes that might fellow them. I did go through a Countrey called *Glaneske*, where passing by the side of a hill, so steepe as the ridge of a house, where the way was rocky, and not above a yard broad in some places, so fearefull and horrid it was to looke down into the bottome, for if either horse or man had slipt, he had fallen (without recovery) a good mile downeright; but I thanke God, at night I came to a lodging in the Lard of *Eggels* Land, where I lay at an Irish house, the folkes not being able to speake scarce any English, but I sup'd and went to bed, where I had not laine long, but I was enforced to rise, I was so stung with Irish Musketaes, a creature that has sixe legs, and lives like a monster altogether upon mans flesh, they doe inhabite and breed most in sluttish houses, and this house was none of the cleanest, the beast is much like a louse in *England*, both in shape and nature; ... and had not this High-land Irish house helped me at a pinch, I should have sworne that all *Scotland* had not beene so kind as to have bestowed a Louse upon me: but with a shift that I had, I shifted off my Canibals, and was never more troubled with them.⁵⁸

Maps of the Highlands that were suitable for travellers did not exist.⁵⁹ Travellers depended completely on local guides who knew the area and served as interpreters because the common Highlanders spoke nothing but Gaelic. In such travelling conditions it was vital to have the protection and the support of the local Highland nobility on their own territory. Without their support there were no accommodation, provisions, guides or interpreters to be had. However, much of the discomfort involved in travelling in the Highlands was compensated by the

⁵⁸ 'The Pennyles Pilgrimage, Or The Money-Lesse Perambulation Of John Taylor, Alias, The Kings Maiesties Water-Poet', in Taylor, *Workes*, part i, p. 134. Whether Taylor was attacked by lice, or whether this was merely a fictitious embellishment of his adventures, cannot be established. However, this episode fully reflected the English prejudice about the Scots', and particularly the Highlanders', supposed uncleanliness. Hume Brown located 'Glaneske' as Glen Esk, the basin of the upper reaches of the North Esk, in the parish of Lochlee, Forfarshire. He identified the 'lodging in the Lard of *Eggles* Land' as the castle of Lochlee, which belonged to Lindsay of Edzell, which is locally pronounced 'Aigle'. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 119.

⁵⁹ This was confirmed, for example, by Defoe's comments in the early eighteenth century about the maps of the area north and west of Inverness.

Highlanders' generous hospitality and their great assistance to travellers. Such travelling conditions did not change until General Wade finished the first stage of a network of major roads through the Highlands in the late 1720s and 1730s.

Defoe's experience of travelling the Highlands in the pre-Wade era was reflected in the advice he gave to prospective travellers. He stressed the importance of having the support of the chiefs when travelling through their land, and gave an idea of what his travels were like in a country without roads, inns or towns:

We therefore turned our Faces to the South, and with great Satisfaction after so long and fateaguing a Journey; and unless we had been assisted by the Gentlemen of the Country, and with very good Guides, it had been next to an Impossibility to have pass'd over this Part of the Country. I do confess if I was to recommend to any Men whose Curiosity tempted them to travel over this Country, the best Method for their Journeying, it should be neither to seek Towns, for it would be impossible to find such in proper Stages for their Journey; nor to make themselves always burthensome to the High-land Chiefs, tho' there I can assure them they would always meet with good Treatment, and great Hospitality.

But I would propose Travelling with some Company, and carrying Tents with them, and so encamping every Night as if they were an Army.

It is true they would do well to have the Countenance of the Gentlemen, and Chiefs as above, and to be recommended to them from their Friends from one to another, as well for Guides as for Safety, otherwise I would not answer for what might happen: But if they are first well recommended as Strangers, and have Letters from one Gentleman to another, they would want neither Guides nor Guards, nor indeed would any Man touch them; but rather protect them if there was occasion in all Places; and by this Method they might in the Summer time Lodge, when, and wherever they pleased, with Safety and Pleasure; travelling no farther at a Time, than they thought fit; and as for their Provisions, they might supply themselves by their Guns, with very great plenty of Wild Fowl, and their Attendants and Guides would find convenient Places to furnish other Things sufficient to carry with them.⁶⁰

It is not surprising that vessels were the main means of transport and travel all along the Scottish west coast and in the Hebrides, considering the isolation of that area until the second half of the eighteenth century. In the Hebrides travellers had to rely on the hospitality of the natives as there were hardly any inns. The few inns that

⁶⁰ Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, pp. 211-212. This advice was directed to travellers to the north-western Highlands. However, it is very doubtful if Defoe had been to this area. Nonetheless, he included it in his account. The style of his account of the area north of Glen Mor varies considerably from his previous narrative and reads more like a geographical description. This suggests that he had not been to the area himself. It shows once more the inaccessibility of the Highlands and the lack of knowledge about the region as recently as the early eighteenth century. Defoe wrote about the Western and Northern Isles of Scotland that he did not visit them personally and 'neither was it likely any Person whose business was meer Curiosity and Diversion, should either be at the Expençe, or the the Risque of such a hazardous Passage where there was so little worth Observation to be found'. *Ibid.*, p. 211. This comment reflected the typical English attitude to the Highlands before the Romantic movement. It was not until the late 1760s and early 1770s that travellers like Thomas Pennant or Samuel Johnson considered the Hebrides worthwhile visiting because of their particular remoteness and traditional culture.

existed hardly deserved to be called so. William Sacheverell and his party travelled in August 1688 from Tobermory via land to Iona. After a day's journey of sixteen miles, which they thought felt more like 26 miles, his party finally arrived wet and weary at a '*Change-House* (so they call a House of Entertainment) if a place that had neither Bed, Victuals or Drink, may be allow'd that name'.⁶¹ The reception was very poor, and they had to spend the night on wet green fern for beds. No wonder that they left early next morning. According to Martin, in many places there was not even a demand for inns as the locals were happy to host the few visitors to their remote islands. He wrote that an inn had recently been established on the tiny island of Pabbay, but he also remarked that it was 'not at all frequented for eating, but only for drinking, for the Natives by their hospitality render this new invented House in a manner useless'.⁶²

Without the assistance of the local population, travelling in the Hebrides was impossible. Martin warned particularly of the dangers of fording the sounds of the Outer Hebrides. He remarked that any travellers by land from North Uist to Benbecula and South Uist were in need of a guide to direct them across the channels at the right fords during low tide, otherwise they could not pass without danger.⁶³ This problem had not yet been removed by the early nineteenth century. James MacDonald visited the Outer Hebrides in 1802 and also warned about the dangers of these crossings. He wrote that there were neither ferries at high tide nor poles to

⁶¹ W. Sacheverell, *An Account Of The Isle of Man, ... With a Voyage to I-Columb-kill* (London, 1702), p. 130. [hereafter: Sacheverell, *Account*] In 1688 Sacheverell (c. 1664-1715) was part of a diving expedition searching on behalf of the Admiralty in the Bay of Tobermory (Mull) for the remains of the *Florida*, a sunken ship of the Spanish Armada. However, Sacheverell's hope of finding a treasure in the wreck did not materialise. During his six-week stay at Tobermory he made the journey to Iona. He later became Governor of the Isle of Man.

⁶² Martin, *Description*, p. 78. The island of Pabbay lies in the Sound of Harris. It is so remote and tiny that hardly any foreigners apart from fishermen visited this island in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

⁶³ See *ibid.*, p. 87. John Lanne Buchanan, missionary minister in the Outer Hebrides from 1782 to 1790, issued a similar warning about the dangers of crossing the fords of Uist at low tide. He warned that the paths were always washed away and that there were no visible objects to direct travellers: 'A stranger, on this account, without a guide, is almost sure of losing, not only his way, in going across these broad plains, but also his life. ... It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to have skilful guides when travelling over either countries.' In the hills and on Harris pillars had been erected and stones had been placed on top of rocks to direct the locals and strangers. J.L. Buchanan, *Travels In The Western Hebrides: From 1782 To 1790* (London, 1793), p. 150. As an itinerant missionary Buchanan knew well about the dangers of travelling in the Long Island.

direct travellers at low tide and that lives were frequently lost. His comments speak volumes:

Zum Behuf und zur Sicherheit der Fremden ist vollends nicht die geringste Anstalt vorhanden. Die Unfälle, welche unglücklicherweise die Einwohner alle Jahre an ihren Mangel an Vorsicht erinnern, werden als gewöhnliche Ereignisse betrachtet. Ein Mensch ertrinkt nach dem andern, und doch stecken die Nachbleibenden keinen Pfahl auf, oder setzen einen Stein hin, um den Furth zu bezeichnen. Ich sah zwar wirklich einige Haufen Steine aufgerichtet, welche man *Ford-Cairns* nennt; allein sie sind nicht für Fußgänger, sondern für die Schiffer bestimmt, und führen den fremden Wanderer oft irre.⁶⁴

For these reasons the Highlands beyond Glen Mor⁶⁵ and the Hebrides remained largely inaccessible and unknown to outsiders and were hardly visited by travellers until the 1760s. The Highlands south of Glen Mor lost that isolation and inaccessibility in the first phase of road making under General Wade in the 1720s and 1730s.

4.2. The ‘Wade roads’ and their impact on the Highlands

The old ways (for roads I shall not call them) consisted chiefly of stony moors, bogs, rugged, rapids fords, declivities of hills, entangling woods, and giddy precipices. You will say this is a dreadful catalogue to be read to him that is about to take a Highland journey.⁶⁶

This was how Edmund Burt assessed the ‘roads’ in the Highlands before the road-building scheme by General Wade. It is no wonder that the Highlands were considered inaccessible and were hardly known to outsiders. The road-building scheme conducted under General Wade from 1725 to 1736 had a major impact on the Highlands and made the region for the first time accessible to outsiders. Pennant, on his first tour to the Highlands in 1769, summed up the difference made by Wade’s efforts:

These roads, by rendering the highlands accessible, contributed much to their present improvement, and were owing to the industry of our soldiery; they were begun in 1723, under the directions of Gen. Wade, who, like another *Hannibal*, forced his way through rocks supposed to have been unconquerable: many of them hang over the mighty lakes of the country, and formerly afforded no other road to the natives than the paths of

⁶⁴ [J. MacDonald], *Reise durch Schottland, seine Inseln, Dänemark und einen Theil von Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1808), vol. ii, p. 69. For James MacDonald see also chapter 5, note 138, and the biographical entry in appendix no. 1.

⁶⁵ Glen Mor, also known as Glen Albyn or the Great Glen, stretching from Inverness in the east to Fort William in the west.

⁶⁶ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 191.

sheep or goats, where even the Highlander crawled with difficulty, and kept himself from tumbling into the far subjacent water by clinging to the plants and bushes of the rock.⁶⁷

For travel in the Highlands, it is, therefore, more reasonable to distinguish between a pre- and post-Wade era than between the seventeenth century and the eighteenth, as the conditions did not change much or improve until the Wade roads were built. These were primarily constructed as military roads to facilitate the movement of troops to the various garrisons built for the pacification of the Highlands. Nonetheless, travellers quickly made use of these roads and the adjacent inns. The building of the Wade roads and their impact on Highland life was witnessed and described by Edmund Burt, one of the most interesting visitors to the Highlands in the early eighteenth century.⁶⁸ Burt's *Letters* provide a fascinating account of the Highlands in this transitional stage.

While the reasons for building proper roads for the first time through the Highlands had been entirely military, their impact on Highland life went far beyond this. They made the area for the first time accessible to influences from outside, and the road builders were soon followed by visitors bringing industry, trade, commerce and liberal political ideas into the Highlands.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ T. Pennant, *A Tour In Scotland MDCCLXIX* (3rd edn. Warrington, 1774), pp. 213-214. [hereafter: Pennant, *Tour 1769*] Pennant's account, first published in 1771, introduced the Highlands to a large audience and was used by most subsequent travellers as a guidebook to the region. It replaced Defoe's *Tour* as the leading travel guide to Scotland.

⁶⁸ The different functions erroneously attributed to Mr or 'Captain' Burt vary from being an engineer officer, an army contractor to an illiterate hack-writer. See *DNB* entry Burt, Edward [sic]. There is no evidence that Burt held a military rank. Burt worked for the Treasury as a collector of rents for the unsold Forfeited Estates. General Wade gave Burt's position as follows: 'His Majesty has been pleased to Constitute Edmund Burt Esqr. under the Privy Seal of Scotland to be Receiver General and Collector of the unsold Forfeited Estates in North Britain for the use of the Publick ...'. NLS, G. Wade, 'Letterbook, 1725-32, of Field-Marshal George Wade', MS. 7187, fo. 54r. [hereafter: NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187] By 1725 two estates had not been sold, the estates of John Grant of Glenmoriston and William, 5th Earl of Seaforth. In photocopies (PRO) NAS, State Papers, Scotland (Series II) (S.P.54), 1707-1782 Letters and Papers, RH2/4/325, fo. 128, Wade referred to Burt as 'Edmund Burt Esqr. the Kings Receiver for the Seafort Estate'. See also J. Salmond, *Wade In Scotland* (2nd edn. Edinburgh, 1938), pp. 98-112. [hereafter Salmond, *Wade*] In 1729 Burt seems to have been overseeing mines in Sunart. See NAS, Royal Bounty Papers 1725-1730, CH1/5/51, fo. 501. Burt's letters were probably written between 1727 and 1728, except for the last letter which was probably written in 1736. They were not published until 1754, a year before the author's death. Burt did not intend to publish his letters when he wrote them. For Burt's commission and the likely dates of his letters see also Sir K. Mackenzie, 'General Wade And His Roads', *Transactions Of The Inverness Scientific Society And Field Club*, vol. v (1895-1899), pp. 153-155.

⁶⁹ Bringing industry to the 'idle' Highlanders had always been considered a means to 'civilise' them. However, the military purpose of the roads clearly dominated. With regard to the Highlands, in mid-eighteenth-century terminology, 'industry' did not yet relate to the processing of raw materials or the mass production of goods in huge factories as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but to the

After the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 the government in London became increasingly worried about the Highlands as a threat to the political and economic stability of Great Britain. Recurring rumours about Jacobite activities and the failed attempt of an insurrection in 1719, assisted by the Spaniards, led to growing fears in the government that the Highlands would turn into a major threat to the stability of the whole nation.⁷⁰ The government realised that its repressive policies after the 'Fifteen had failed and that it was unable to enforce law and order in the glens. It was able to control the areas adjoining its military barracks, but it was unable to control the remote regions effectively. The government's efforts to disarm the Highlanders after 1715 had widely failed, and only the loyal clans had been willing to hand over their weapons. Most of the Jacobite clans had kept their weapons. The guns and pistols they had handed over to the government were antiquated and useless. Some of this weaponry had only scrap value and was brought in specially from the Low Countries (the Netherlands) in order to get the compensation paid by the government in accordance with the Disarming Act of 1716. Moreover, new weapons had been brought into the Highlands by the Spaniards in 1719, and robberies and blackmail were on the increase again despite the threat of severe punishment. The government felt unable to control this situation or to enforce law and order. It was unable to act

production of goods made mainly by hand (sometimes assisted by the use of primitive machines) in manufactories. This provided the Highlanders with continuous employment, a steady income and so kept them away from plunder and rebellion.

⁷⁰ An increasing number of memoranda to the government were prepared in the early 1720s about the state of the Highlands. See, for example, 'Memorial Addressed to his Majesty George I. concerning the State of the Highlands, by Simon Lord Lovat, 1724' in Burt, *Letters*, 5th ed. 1822, vol. ii, appendix II, pp. 254-267. Lord Lovat's 'Memorial' would have benefited first of all himself. General Wade was sent to the Highlands in July 1724 to verify Lovat's 'Memorial'. Lord Lovat, however, was executed as a Jacobite in 1747. 'An Account of the Highlanders & Highlands of Scotland' and a 'Memorial concerning the Highlanders, Sheriefships, Vassallages &c. of Scotland' were written to Viscount Townshend, Secretary of State, by James Erskine, Lord Grange, in December 1724 and January 1725. See NAS, Mar and Kellie Papers, GD124/15/1263 and GD124/15/1264/1-4. See also BL, 'Some Remarks on the Highland Clans, and Methods proposed for civilizing them', c. 1725, Add. MS. 22,547. These memorials usually contained complaints and prejudices against the Highlanders such as idleness, malice, inclination to robbery and theft, popery and Jacobitism. The proposals for 'civilising' them included the building of forts for the deployment of government forces, the creation of Highland companies loyal to the government, the disarming of the Highlanders, increased patrols for cattle thieves and robbers, the breaking of the clan chiefs' power and jurisdiction over their vassals, and the persecution and deportation of the Catholic priests in the Highlands. Lord Grange considered the Highlands a danger to the rest of Great Britain if the government did not bring the area under control. He warned that otherwise 'it must remain a Country of little value, but dangerous to the Peace & Liberty of the rest of the Island'. NAS, Lord Grange, 'Account 1724', Mar and Kellie Papers, GD124/15/1263, fo. 7. However, Lord Grange also had Jacobite connections. A flood of similar memoranda was prepared after the 'Forty-Five.

and dictate policies in the Highlands and instead had to wait for its enemies to make the first move. This left the government in London feeling helpless and uneasy, especially as the north of its own country was vulnerable to foreign attack at any time. That the Union of 1707 was regarded widely as an economic and political failure even in the Lowlands of Scotland did not make things easier.⁷¹ By 1724 measures had to be taken to regain the initiative. General Wade was sent to the north of Scotland to report on the state of the Highlands and to make proposals to bring the Highlanders under the effective control of the government in London.

4.2.1. General Wade's mission to the Highlands in 1724

On 4 July 1724, Wade set out for Scotland to check if Lord Lovat's 'Memorial' concerning the state of the Highlands gave a reliable impression of the region. On 10 December of the same year Wade submitted his 'Report, &c., relating to the Highlands' to King George I.⁷² Wade shared in many respects Lord Lovat's view of the Highlands as a lawless area where the majority of the people were opposed to the king. He concluded that there were 22,000 clansmen in the Highlands able to carry weapons. Only 8,000 of them belonged to superiors well disposed to the king, whereas 11,140 had taken part in the 'Fifteen and must still be supposed to be disaffected with the king.⁷³ Another 3,000 of the Atholl and Breadalbane men went out in the 'Fifteen, but without their superiors.⁷⁴ Wade explained the functioning of

⁷¹ A motion to dissolve the Union was narrowly defeated in the Lords in 1713. In 1725 the revival of higher duties on malt, which were against the spirit of the Treaty of Union, sparked off serious riots in Scotland, and particularly in Glasgow.

⁷² Printed in New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers Relating To The Jacobite Period 1699-1750*, ed. by J. Allardyce, vol. i (Aberdeen, 1895), pp. 131-149. [hereafter: New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers*] It also includes the 'Scheme delivered to the King' by Wade in April 1725. Wade's 'Report' of 10 December 1724 is also printed, excluding the 'Scheme', in Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, appendix II, pp. 268-284. It is necessary to discuss Wade's report and his proposals in detail as they summarised the contemporary unease about the Highlands and reflected the 'official' view of the government towards the 'Highland problem' in the 1720s.

⁷³ A total of 12,000 Highlanders loyal to the exiled Stuarts was given in an undated 'Account of the Highland Clans in Scotland' laid before Louis XIV by the Scottish Jacobites. See J. Browne, *A History Of The Highlands And Of The Highland Clans* (Glasgow, 1838), vol. ii, pp. 427-430.

⁷⁴ For Wade's list of the loyal and the rebellious clans and their respective strength see New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers*, vol. i, p. 144. According to Wade, the strongest loyal clans were headed by the Duke of Argyll with 4,000 men; Lord Sutherland and Strathnaver with 1,000 men; Lord Lovat and the Frasers with 800 men; and the Grants with 800 men. The Jacobite clans that took part in the 'Fifteen included the tribes and clans of Lord Seaforth with 3,000 men; the MacDonalDs of Sleat with 1,000 men; the MacDonalDs of Glengarry with 800 men; the MacDonalDs of Moidart with 800 men;

the clan system and the Highlanders' methods of waging war, and gave the names of those clans that he considered especially addicted to rapine and plunder.⁷⁵ He described the lawless state of the Highlands, the levying of 'black-meal' by the Highlanders bordering on the Lowlands, the methods of lifting cattle and the use of 'tascał-money' to recover the stolen animals.⁷⁶ He blamed the Camerons and other clans of having bound themselves by oath never to take tascał-money, and reported of cases in which those suspected of having broken that oath had been murdered in 1723. He explained the utter failure of the Disarming Act of 1716 and argued that it had been obeyed only by the loyal clans, whereas the rebellious clans had handed in useless weapons that they had bought specially for this purpose while retaining their own firearms and swords.⁷⁷ This left the loyal clans unprotected against their rebellious neighbours. Moreover, the Spaniards had brought an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 arms to the Highlands and had passed them on to the disloyal clans in 1719. Wade blamed the failure of the Highland companies raised by William III on the lack of proper control, which had led to corruption in their command and a failure to prosecute common criminals. Wade criticised the location of two of the four barracks built in the Highlands and proposed to quarter more and better provisioned troops in them. He blamed the lawless conditions, particularly in the shires of Ross and Inverness, on the general want of Justices of the Peace and the shortage of proper

the MacDonalds of Keppoch with 220 men; the Camerons of Lochiel with 800 men; the MacLeods in all with 1,000 men; and the Duke of Gordon's followers with 1,000 men. The figures given by Wade correspond in general with the figures given in an anonymous and undated map of Scotland showing the forts, the proposed military roads, and the names and numbers of men that could be raised by the various clans. See NLS, Wade Collection, Acc. 10497, map 58 (a). The map was probably prepared in the mid or late 1720s. Wade's figures also correspond with the figures given in a hand-drawn map of the Highlands by Clement Lempriere c. 1731. See NLS, C. Lempriere, 'A description of the Highlands of Scotland, the situation of the several clans and the number of men able to bear arms, as also ye forts lately erected and roads of communication or military ways carried on by His Majesty's command', Acc. 11104, Map Rol. a. 42. [hereafter: NLS, Lempriere, 'Map c. 1731', Acc. 11104, Map Rol. a. 42]

⁷⁵ According to Wade, these were the Camerons in the west of Inverness-shire, the Mackenzies and others in the shire of Ross who were vassals to the Earl of Seaforth, the MacDonalds of Keppoch, the Breadalbane men, and the MacGregors on the borders of Argyll. See New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers*, vol. i, p. 134.

⁷⁶ 'Black-mail' or 'black-meal', any kind of payment extorted by intimidation or pressure. 'Tascał-money', the monetary reward formerly offered in the Highlands for information about stolen cattle and their thieves. See *SND*, vol. ii, p. 150, and vol. ix, p. 222.

⁷⁷ Wade stated in his 'Report to His Majesty concerning the Highlands of Scotland', 31 January 1725, that the government had paid by the Disarming Act of 1716 'near 13,000 *l.* for broken and useless arms, that were hardly worth the expence of carriage'. Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, appendix III, p. 309.

persons able to execute the varying duties of civil magistrates. This shortage resulted in three persons who had participated in the rebellion against the king in 1715 being installed as deputy sheriffs in those areas. In respect of the Seaforth estate, Wade reported that the factor appointed by the Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates was still unable to collect the rents and had been attacked by more than 400 armed men when he tried to collect the money, accompanied by a government force of 30 soldiers in 1721.⁷⁸ Wade complained that rents from the Seaforth estate to the amount of £800 sterling had been sent to France as recently as 1723. The last paragraph of Wade's report included his most important observation on the Highlands. In it he wrote about the disadvantages regular troops faced when they had to engage the inhabitants of mountain regions:

The Serennes in France, and Catalans in Spain, have in all times been Instances of this Truth. The Highlands of Scotland are still more impracticable, from the want of Roads, Bridges, and from excessive Rains that almost continually fall in those parts, which by Nature and constant use become habitual to the Natives, but very difficultly supported by the Regular Troops.⁷⁹

Wade referred to the Battle of Glenshiel in 1719 and explained the dangers regular troops were exposed to in the mountains. They were ambushed and shot at from the top of the hills without being able to return fire.⁸⁰ Making the mountains accessible for regular troops via a network of roads and bridges was to become Wade's task for the next decade.

Wade's report was accompanied by eleven proposals to end the lawless condition of the Highlands and to force the disloyal Highlanders into submission. His proposals included the establishment of Highland companies with a force of 250 to 300 loyal Highlanders under tough control to disarm their disloyal brethren. He wanted barracks to be built at Inverness, a strengthening of the existing barracks at Killichiumen (Fort Augustus), and a galley to be built on Loch Ness to supply it. The

⁷⁸ Edmund Burt was appointed receiver of the rents of the Seaforth estate after the disarming of the Mackenzies in autumn 1725. On 28 September 1725, Wade instructed his officers commanding in the Highlands 'upon due application made by Mr Burt, or by any of his substitutes, forthwith to send with him such a party of men as shall be thought necessary to assist in collecting the rents of the estate, formerly the Seaforth's.' Quoted in Salmond, *Wade*, p. 102. See also Wade's order to support Burt in NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187, fo. 54r.

⁷⁹ New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers*, vol. i, p. 139.

⁸⁰ Burt accused the Highlanders of malice and atrocities in this battle. He blamed them for having murdered and mutilated the wounded and dead government soldiers with their dirks. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 80-81. There is no evidence for such atrocities to be found in contemporary travellers or authors.

prospective commanders of the barracks had to live in their garrisons and to report regularly about any developments in their area to the commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland. Wade wanted all garrisons and castles in Scotland, and particularly Edinburgh Castle, to be inspected, repaired and strengthened, plus a regiment of dragoons stationed between Perth and Inverness. He also wanted the justice system to be tightened by regular quarter sessions held at Fort Augustus, Ruthven, Fort William and, if necessary, at Bernera opposite the Isle of Skye. Furthermore, he wanted the carrying or concealing of weapons in the Highlands to be punished as a felony or by transportation for the first offence. Last but not least, Wade wanted the costs for the prosecution of criminals to be shifted from the prosecutor to the public.

It is astonishing that Wade's detailed proposals of 10 December 1724 did not include any plans for road building to facilitate the movement of troops to the forts in the Highlands. In his scheme,⁸¹ delivered to the king in April 1725, Wade outlined what he considered 'the effectual and practicable Means of reducing the Highlanders to a due obedience to his Majesty's Government'. He wanted an Act of Parliament allowing the deployment of troops in Scotland to disarm the clans one by one, at fixed deadlines, starting with the vassals and tenants of the Earl of Seaforth. Any unauthorised people found carrying arms after the deadline 'should be transported to serve as Soldiers in any of His Majesty's Plantations in America, or Garrisons beyond the Seas'. Wade also included a list of purposes for which he required finance. This list included the item 'For mending the Roads between the Garrisons and Barracks, for the better Communication of his Majesty's Troops'. Wade estimated that it would take two years and an additional expense of £20,000 sterling from the government to put into execution his ambitious plans to pacify the Highlands.

⁸¹ In New Spalding Club, *Historical Papers*, vol. i, pp. 146-149. Also subsequent quotations if not stated otherwise.

4.2.2. The disarming of the Highlanders in 1725 and the making of the ‘Wade roads’

Wade’s scheme was approved, and in summer and autumn 1725 the disarming of the Highlanders and the building of a military infrastructure in the Highlands began. At the same time the paths of General Wade and Edmund Burt must have crossed in the Highlands. In 1725 neither of them would have thought that they were to spend most of the next decade in the north of Scotland.

Wade’s ambitious plans for the Highlands soon faced trouble and delays. This time, however, the problem was not caused by the Highlanders but by the urban population of the Lowlands. The Highlanders handed over their weapons without any major disturbances or resistance.⁸² In a report to the king of 31 January 1726, Wade wrote that his meticulous preparations for the disarming in the previous year had obviously impressed some Highland chiefs so much that they assured him of their obedience and submission even before he set out from Edinburgh. He summarised that in 1725 his troops collected 2,685 weapons as stated in the Disarming Act of 1725 and that 230 licences to carry weapons were issued to foresters, drovers and cattle dealers.⁸³

However, in 1725 the urban population in the Lowlands, and particularly the citizens of Glasgow, took up arms and caused trouble to Wade. They protested against a rise in the malt tax that was, viewed as a breach of the Union, to be imposed only on Scotland.⁸⁴ Wade managed to suppress the Malt Tax riots, and in

⁸² The form of a summons, signed by Wade at Inverness, 16 August 1725, for all the Highlanders living on the forfeited Seaforth estate to disarm is printed in Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, appendix III, pp. 322-323. In this summons Wade required the said Highlanders to hand in all their ‘Broad Swords, Targets, Poynards, Whingars, or Durks, Side-pistol, or Pistols, Guns, or any other warlike weapons’ to him or the commanding officer at the castle of Brahan (principal seat of the Earls of Seaforth, four miles south-west of Dingwall) on or before 28 August 1725. The Mackenzies and the other clans that lived on the formerly Seaforth estate complied with the required disarming. However, they complained that they were in fear of insults and depredations from the neighbouring Camerons who had not yet delivered their arms to the government forces. Wade had to protect the disarmed clans from their neighbours until all the clans had handed over their weapons. For Wade’s account of the disarming of the several clans in 1725 see *ibid.*, vol. ii, appendix III, pp. 303-308.

⁸³ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, appendix III, p. 309. Wade’s report is erroneously dated 31 January 1725, instead of 1726. The number of surrendered weapons hardly corresponded to the 5,000 to 6,000 weapons estimated by Wade to have been brought into the country by the Spaniards in 1719. Either Wade had exaggerated this figure in his report in 1724, or his disarming campaign was not very successful and the Highlanders had been able to hide a lot of their weapons.

⁸⁴ For Wade’s suppression of the Malt Tax riots see Salmond, *Wade*, pp. 88-97.

1726 he focused again on the real issues in the north. The Highlanders stayed calm and did not cause any trouble to his troops. In a letter from Edinburgh, dated 9 August 1726, he wrote about the state of the Highlands to Lord Townshend, Secretary of State:

I can with satisfaction assure your Lordship that the Disarming Act has fully answer'd all that was proposed by it, their being no Arms carried in the Highlands but by those who are legally qualified, Depredations are effectually prevented by the Highland Companies, and the Pretenders Interest is so low, that I think it can now hope for no effectual Assistance from that Quarter ...⁸⁵

However, making the Highlands accessible proved to be far more difficult than expected, and delays were caused not only by the adverse conditions in the mountains but also by the slow handling of the matter by the government. The works at the barracks were delayed by bureaucracy, and Wade feared that no progress would be made in the summer of 1726 and spring 1727. On 9 August 1726, Wade wrote from Edinburgh to Townshend that

Captain Romer who is appointed by the Board of Ordnance to carry on those works having been but a few days arrived from London, and as he tells me without the proper powers to authorise him to make contracts, or even to purchase the materials in order to begin the work early next Spring.⁸⁶

The construction of the roads faced similar delays, and the two years scheduled for the programme soon passed by. The supply of equipment, machinery and building material to the working parties was slow, and the bridge building lagged far behind the road making.⁸⁷

Apart from the technical difficulties of building the roads through the glens, the provisioning of the troops involved proved to be a major problem. When Wade arrived in 1725 in the north of Scotland to disarm the Highlanders, he had to bring in all the provisions for a force consisting of six companies of newly raised Highlanders and four battalions of foot. His preparations included a ship from London bringing

⁸⁵ NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187, fo. 83v. In a letter from Inverness, dated 23 September 1726, Wade assured Henry Pelham, Secretary at War, that the Highland companies 'have effectually answer'd His Majesty's Intentions by hindring the Highlanders from returning to the use of Arms, preventing Depredations, and preserving the Peace and quiet of the Country'. Ibid., fos. 85v.-86r.

⁸⁶ Ibid., fo. 82v. Pressurised by Wade, the Board of Ordnance soon after granted Captain Romer the necessary powers. Wade informed Townshend on 16 September 1726 from Fort Augustus that preliminary works at this barracks had begun.

⁸⁷ The Tay Bridge at Aberfeldy was not passable for carriages until 1733, and it was not finished until 1735. The bridge over the River Spean on the Inverness to Fort William road was not finished until 1736.

ammunition and ordnance stores, the building of ovens at Inverness to bake 'amunition bread' for the soldiers and the provision of 40,000 lb of biscuit for the troops' stay in the mountains.⁸⁸ Even after the disarming of the Highlanders, the provisions for the hundreds of troops involved in road building proved to be a major difficulty. The fragile economy of the Highlands, often struggling to feed its own people, obviously lacked the necessary resources to provide for the road-building parties, and Wade had to bring in supplies over long distances from the Lowlands. Wade informed Pelham in a letter from Blair Atholl, dated 20 July 1728, about the difficulties of providing for the 300 men working on the Inverness to Dunkeld road:

There is so great a scarcity of Provisions in this barren Country, that I am oblig'd to bring my Biscuit, Cheese &ca: for the support of the workmen from Edo: [Edinburgh] by Land Carriage, which though Expensive is of absolute necessity.⁸⁹

The progress in road making was slow and occupied most of the summer seasons for the next decade.⁹⁰ Apart from giving a brief survey of the roads built by Wade, I would like to concentrate on the comments of eyewitnesses and contemporary travellers and their assessment of the roads' impact on Highland life.

Wade ordered four major military roads to be built during his time as commander-in-chief in Scotland (1725-40). The first road he ordered was the one connecting Inverness and Fort William. Work on the road through Glen Mor began as early as 1725 and continued until 1736, including the bridge over the River Spean. This road was clearly Wade's priority as its completion enabled a quick and safe movement of troops from the east coast to the west coast of Scotland.⁹¹ It connected

⁸⁸ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, appendix III, p. 293.

⁸⁹ NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187, fo. 102v. On average Wade employed about 500 men in road making during the summer. The privates employed in road making were paid an extra six pence a day on top of their pay as soldiers, corporals eight pence, and sergeants a shilling. However, the extra money was paid for working days only, and even in summer road making was often interrupted by storm and rain. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 189.

⁹⁰ For a detailed study of the roads built or repaired and the sums spent on such works for the individual years from 1725 to 1740 see Salmond, *Wade*, pp. 113-156.

⁹¹ Wade must have attributed the utmost importance to this road. In 1731-32 he realigned the section from Dores to Foyers and built a new and more convenient road right along the southern shore of Loch Ness. It was during the construction of this new section that Wade's soldiers had to blast their way through the famous 'Black Rock'. See Salmond, *Wade*, pp. 162-165. Lempriere's map (drawn c. 1731) shows the old road and the new road. See NLS, Lempriere, 'Map c. 1731', Acc. 11104, Map Rol. a. 42. Another map of the Highlands, drawn by Lempriere and dated 1731, also shows the two parallel roads. See BL, K. Top. xlviii (12).

the three garrisons at Fort George in Inverness,⁹² Fort Augustus and Fort William. Wade's second major road was to connect Inverness to the roads in the Lowlands. Work on the Inverness to Dunkeld road started in 1728 and continued until 1730. In 1730 Wade concentrated on building the road from Crieff to Dalnarcadoch. The main difficulty in building this road was the crossing of the River Tay, and the bridge at Aberfeldy was not fully completed until 1735. When finished, this road was to join the Inverness to Dunkeld road at Dalnacardoch. In 1731 Wade built the Dalwhinnie to Fort Augustus road over the Pass of Corrieyairack. Between 1734 and 1740 Wade had further plans for roads in mind, for example a road from Ruthven to Braemar, and another one from Fort William via Kinlochleven and the Devil's Staircase to Glen Coe and the south.⁹³ However, neither of these roads was built during Wade's time in Scotland.

The technical difficulties of building the roads through the glens and over the hills were immense. Burt witnessed the road making in its different stages and gave a first-hand impression of the hardships involved in this task. Subsequent travellers grew to appreciate the general's work.

4.2.3. The difficulties of road making and its assessment by contemporary travellers

In his final letter 'Concerning the New Roads', likely to have been written in 1736, Burt gave a detailed description of the construction of the roads and the technical difficulties Wade, his engineers and the soldiers had to face. Burt explained the different techniques used to build the roads through bogs and mosses, to bridge fords, to circumvent declivities, to remove obstructive woods, and to make steep ascents and precipices accessible.⁹⁴

To assess the difference the Wade roads made, it is useful to have a brief look at what the paths through the hills were like before travellers could ride over bridges

⁹² This garrison was in the town of Inverness and was blown up by the Jacobites in February 1746. The new Fort George was built after the 'Forty-Five to the east of Inverness at Ardersier Point.

⁹³ For details see Salmond, *Wade*, pp. 252-261. A map of the Ruthven to Braemar road, drawn by Joseph Avery in 1735, can be found in NLS, Wade Collection, Acc. 10497, map 58 (b). For an unsigned and undated map of a proposed road from Callander to Fort William see *ibid.*, map 58 (m).

⁹⁴ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 183-234.

and roads with a plain and level gravel surface. Burt gave an idea of what travelling in the Highlands was like without the Wade roads. He wrote about the difficulties that he faced in one of his journeys with a guide into the hills:

From the river's side I ascended a steep hill, so full of large stones, it was impossible to make a trot. This continued up and down about a mile and half.

At the foot of the hill, tolerable way for a mile, there being no great quantity of stones among the heath, but very uneven; and, at the end of it, a small bourn descending from between two hills, worn deep among the rocks, rough, rapid, and steep, and dangerous to pass. ...

From hence a hill five miles over, chiefly composed of lesser hills; so stony, that it was impossible to crawl above a mile in an hour. But I must except a small part of it from this general description; for there ran across this way (or *road*, as they call it) the end of a wood of fir-trees, the only one I had ever passed.

This, for the most part, was an easy, rising slope of about half a mile. In most places of the surface it was bog about two feet deep, and beneath was uneven rock; in other parts the rock and roots of the trees appeared to view.

The roots sometimes crossed one another, as they ran along a good way upon the face of the rock, and often above the boggy part, by both which my horses' legs were so much entangled, that I thought it impossible to keep them upon their feet.⁹⁵

At the top of the hill Burt faced even more dangers when he had to cross a bog with his horses. The horse carrying his portmanteau broke through the surface and sank 'almost up to the back' in the bog. Neither Burt nor his guide could ease the horse's burden as it struggled to break free. Fortunately, after about a quarter of an hour the horse got out 'bedaubed with the slough, shaking with fear, and his head and neck all over in a foam'.⁹⁶ These dangers were typical of what travellers had to face all over the Highlands, and Burt's description of the paths gives an idea of the Herculean task Wade and his soldiers faced in making the Highlands accessible.

One of the most hazardous but necessary tasks in road building was to level the ground and remove all the obstacles either on or below the surface. If rocks and stones proved to be too big to be lifted with machines or to be hacked with axes, they had to be blown up with gunpowder. Burt explained the technique used to build the roads through the mosses. Once the ground for the road had been dug out to the gravel or rock, it was filled in the following manner:

First with a layer of large stones, then a smaller size, to fill up the gaps and raise the causeway higher; and, lastly, two, three, or more feet of gravel, to fill up the interstices of the small stones, and form a smooth and binding surface. This part of the road has a bank on each side, to separate it from a ditch, which is made withoutside to receive the water from the bog, and, if the ground will allow it, to convey it by a trench to a slope, and thereby in some measure drain it.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid., vol. i, pp. 296-297.

⁹⁶ Ibid., vol. i, pp. 299, 300.

⁹⁷ Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 197-198.

If there were no loose stones to fill the bed of the road in a moss, it was filled with timber and fascines topped by a layer of gravel dug out of the side of a nearby hill. The standard breadth of the roads was sixteen feet or more, surface permitting, enclosed by banks and drains.

Protecting the roads from water running from the hills after heavy rains proved to be a major problem, not only to Wade's engineers, but also to his successors. On the roads built by Wade along hill slopes, open paved cross-drains, sunk in the gravel, were used.⁹⁸ The jolting caused by the open cross-drains was not liked by travellers.⁹⁹ Culverts were not used until later in the eighteenth century. Sarah Murray described the damage caused by the torrents to the surface of the road over the Pass of Corrieairack when she passed it in her carriage in 1796:

The road is so cut up by these violent torrents, from the top of the zig-zag to the entrance on the plain, that for four or five miles, scarcely ten yards can be found free of them; which is, indeed, sufficient to pull a slight carriage to pieces.¹⁰⁰

Despite open cross-drains and the culverts used in the later eighteenth century, every spring the roads were in a deplorable state. The autumn and winter rains and the spring meltwaters washed away whole sections. Much money and labour had to be employed during the short road-making season every summer to repair the damages of the previous months.

Wade tried to avoid steep ascents by going round the sides of the hills. However, where the road could not be built round a hill and the ascent was too steep for a straight line, the road had to be built in traverses or zigzags, supported by bulwarks of stones and mortar. Burt gave a detailed description of the Dalwhinnie to

⁹⁸ See fig. 1 in W. Taylor, *The Military Roads In Scotland* (2nd edn. Colonsay, 1996), p. 36. [hereafter: Taylor, *Military Roads*]

⁹⁹ Colonel Thornton, for example, complained in the mid-1780s about the inconveniences the open drains on the road from Crianlarich to Killin caused to travellers by carriage: 'The water courses are made, in the most extraordinary manner, like ditches of about two feet deep and two broad, no trap for *springs* could be better conducted.' Thornton, *Sporting Tour*, p. 55. He had removed the fore springs of his carriage as a precaution, but the drains broke one of the hind springs. He had to continue this stage on foot to save the other spring. See also NLS, N. Phillips, 'Nathaniel Phillips' Scottish Journey July – September 1791', Acc. 8311, no pagination. See entry for 26 July. [hereafter: NLS, Phillips, 'Scottish Journey 1791', Acc. 8311]

¹⁰⁰ S. Murray, *A Companion, And Useful Guide To The Beauties Of Scotland, To The Lakes Of Westmoreland, Cumberland, And Lancashire*, vol. i (London, 1799), p. 279. [hereafter: Murray, *Companion*, vol. i]

Fort Augustus road over the Pass of Corrieyairack (2507 ft.).¹⁰¹ He reported that the road was built on the southern declivity in seventeen traverses ‘like the course of a ship when she is turning to windward’, each leg about 70 to 80 yards in length, apart from those places where the hill did not admit that extent. The traverses and the turnings were supported by stone walls of ten to fifteen feet in height. Burt’s summary of the road over the Corrieyairack was full of praise: ‘Thus that steep ascent, which was so difficult to be attained, even by the foot-passenger, is rendered everywhere more easy for wheel-carriages than Highgate-Hill.’¹⁰² Mildmay confirmed Burt’s praise for that road. He travelled the pass by coach in 1736 and noted in his diary:

Wensday August ye 1st left Fort Augustus, in our Road crossed the High Mountain called Coriarig, down wch the General has made the Road in Several Links to make the Desent easy, and in Several places there is circles made with walls to Turn a Carriage wth 6 Horses in upon any occasion, wch are at certain distances on the Side of the Mountain, wch with the Links of the Road make a pretty figure as you approach it, and certainly the Road down this place is exceedingly well laid out ...¹⁰³

However, Burt’s and Mildmay’s sober descriptions of the pass hardly corresponded with the image of the Corrieyairack road at the end of the century. Sarah Murray intended to travel the Corrieyairack road from Fort Augustus to Dalwhinnie in a coach in 1796, but she was warned about the dangers involved by a fellow traveller:

¹⁰¹ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 202-204. For Wade’s account of the expenses of building the Corrieyairack road see Taylor, *Military Roads*, pp. 55-56. The seventeen traverses were later reduced to thirteen. The road over the Pass of Corrieyairack fascinated and, at the same time, frightened generations of travellers. It was considered one of the steepest and most dangerous roads in the Highlands. The Corrieyairack road was given up in the late 1820s when the Laggan road was built, but continued to be used as a drove road until the end of the nineteenth century. See Salmond, *Wade*, p. 250, and Taylor, *Military Roads*, p. 56. The Devil’s Staircase, built in 1749 on the road from Stirling to Fort William, gained a similar notoriety among travellers for its supposed dangers. An unidentified traveller, who used the Devil’s Staircase in August 1788, described the horror of that section of the road and concluded his tour: ‘And let no one Regret (to make use of the words of one of my Fellow Travellers) that he has not gone round the base of Ben Nevis or descended from Mountains by means of the Devil’s Staircase.’ NLS, [A.L.], ‘Tour to the North Highlands of Scotland [along with Messrs. Heron and Jobling] in Aug. 1788’, Acc. 10285, fo. 13. [hereafter: NLS, A.L., ‘Tour 1788’, Acc. 10285] The Ord of Caithness and the Pass of Killiecrankie also inspired many travellers’ imagination about their supposed dangers. George Culley compared the road over the Ord of Caithness to ‘a hanging staircase, without a rail, along a descent of more than 200 perpendicular yards; and yet, what is most remarkable, there is none other way than this of entering into Caithness’. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 127. George Culley added this description to the journal of his brother Matthew, who had travelled over the Ord of Caithness in 1775. It is unlikely that George had any first-hand experience of this road, but his comment clearly reflected the supposed dangers of this road. See also *ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁰² Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 203-204.

¹⁰³ Essex Record Office, Mildmay, ‘Journal’, MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fos. 55-56.

The day he crossed Corryarraick was a continued violent rain and storm of wind, which gave it the appearance of wild desolation, beyond any thing he could describe; and the whole of the road itself, he said, was rough, dangerous, and dreadful, even for a horse. The steep and black mountains, and the roaring torrents, rendered every step his horse took, frightful; and when he attained the summit of the zig-zag up Corryarraick, he thought the horses, himself, man and all would be carried away, he knew not whither; so strong was the blast, so hard the rain, and so very thick the mist: and as for cold, it stupified him. He thought it almost a miracle to escape unhurt from such horrid wastes, roaring torrents, unwholesome vapour, and frightful fogs; drenched from top to toe, frozen with cold, and half dead with fatigue. He said he had heard people had gone that pass in a carriage, but he was sure it was impossible. The governor's family assured him it was done frequently; and turning to me, said, "here is one who means to do so to-morrow, in a chaise." - The gentleman stared, and added, "then I must alter my journal, for I thought it impossible."¹⁰⁴

Various tales about the dangers of the pass and the lives lost in crossing it, which Mrs Murray repeated in full, could not deter her from taking the risk. The blacksmith carefully checked her coach, and she set out the next day with no more than two extra horses for a perfectly safe passage. Other travellers expressed their feelings about the Corrieyairack in a less flowery but no less impressive style. Henry Skrine, in 1793, likened it to the wilds of Siberia,¹⁰⁵ and an anonymous traveller, who toured the Highlands in August and September 1794 by foot, described in his diary the stages from Blair Atholl to Fort Augustus via the Corrieyairack as 'a wild and barbarous Country: the road from Dalwhinie to F. augustus is shocking'.¹⁰⁶

Building zigzag roads over the mountains was not the only challenge to the road makers. Wade and his soldiers often had to blow their way through the rocks if the ground for the road was too narrow. Burt gave a vivid account of the boring and blasting of the 'Black Rock', a notorious narrow pass on the Inverness to Fort Augustus road. The rocks descended straight from the hills to the shore of Loch Ness, and in 1731-32 Wade had to blast and cut the route for the new road along the shore straight through the rocks:

There the miners hung by ropes from the precipice over the water (like Shakespear's gatherers of samphire from Dover Cliffs) to bore the stone, in order to blow away a necessary part from the face of it, and the rest likewise was chiefly done by gunpowder; but when any part was fit to be left as it was, being flat and smooth, it was brought to a roughness proper for a stay to the feet; and, in this part, and all the rest of the road, where the precipices were like to give horror or uneasiness to such as might pass over them in

¹⁰⁴ Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, pp. 272-273. Pennant largely contributed to this image. He wrote in the influential account of his 1769 tour that people often perish on the summit of this hill. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 202.

¹⁰⁵ See Skrine, *Tours*, pp. 141-142.

¹⁰⁶ NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278, no pagination. See entry for 27 August 1794.

carriages, though at a good distance from them, they are secured to the lake-side by walls, either left in the working, or built up with stone, to a height proportioned to the occasion.¹⁰⁷

One of the first travellers to make use of the new roads was William Mildmay in 1736. He travelled in his carriage and was full of praise for the comforts and beauties of the new road from Inverness to Fort Augustus along the shores of Loch Ness. He noted in his diary:

... we went from Inverness directly to Fort Augustus, the first Part of the Road very pleasant, and the whole of the Road upon that, That was made by General Wade, wch is an exceeding fine one, and made the journey very pleasant by the vast variety of it, and the easy manner of assending & desending those high Mountains, the road over them has little low stone walls on each side for the Safety of Travellers, and most certainly the Generals Road in the Highlands is an exceeding fine Peice of Work, and most deservedly admired, they told me it was full Ten Years in bringing it to Perfection at vast trouble & Expencc, and in severall places He was oblig'd to Blow up a Passage through the Rocks, when you leave the Town of Inverness the Generals Road for the first 12 Miles runs by the side of the Famous Loch Ness quite straight, and on the other Hand of you is a wood, and as the Road is as good as Gravell walk this first 12 Miles journey in it is beyond expression pleasant ...¹⁰⁸

The passage through the 'Black Rock' was undoubtedly one of the most difficult and finest masterpieces of road building performed by Wade and his engineers, and it was admired by generations of travellers. An obviously learned servant, who travelled in the entourage of the Duke of Gordon through his estates in the Highlands in 1742, could hardly hide his enthusiasm about this road. He noted:

... but to be short, this work is the most wonderfull undertaking that is, or has been in the known world, and much more surpriseng than the via Appia of the Romans, or what the Guinacavas, Emperours of Perou, did there before the Spaniards conquer'd that fine Country ...¹⁰⁹

The accounts of the supposed dangers of the passage along the 'Black Rock', however, vary considerably. The sober accounts of Burt and Mildmay hardly corresponded with the spectacular descriptions of the same place at the end of the eighteenth century. For example, Sarah Murray, who passed the 'Black Rock' in a carriage in 1796, gave a somewhat exaggerated account of the dangers involved:

¹⁰⁷ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 213-214.

¹⁰⁸ Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fos. 51-52.

¹⁰⁹ EUL, 'Cosmo -George Duke of Gordon's Jaunt to the Highlands in the year 1742', MS. Dc.5.68., [fo. 9r.]. [hereafter: EUL, 'Duke of Gordon's Jaunt 1742', MS. Dc.5.68.] See also *ibid.*, [fo. 5r.]. The traveller was told that the passage through the 'Black Rock' cost the government £5 sterling per foot. See *ibid.*, [fo. 5v.]. This figure, however, seems to have been grossly exaggerated. Wade's budget for 1732 was the usual £3,000 sterling. Wade noted that more than 2,000 yards of the realigned road had to be cut through solid rock. See Salmond, *Wade*, p. 140.

At about fifteen miles from Inverness, I came within sight of the Black Rock, and it seemed as if it were impossible to pass by it; In truth, it does require courage and steady horses to perform it, it being a narrow shelf blown out of the rocks; and to get upon it is by a road almost as steep as the ridge of a house, winding round a huge projecting mass, that looks as if it were ready to crush the bold adventurer who dares come under its brow; for it actually hangs over part of the carriage in passing it. Trees branching, shrubs and bushes bending over and sprouting from every chink of the rocks, towering almost to the sky; and on the right hand feathering down to the water, over a rocky precipice of perhaps eighty or a hundred feet perpendicular; and no security whatever, either in climbing to the shelf, or upon it, should the horses there take fright.¹¹⁰

The Romantic movement caused a complete reassessment of the human feelings towards nature and landscape. Although travelling in Scotland was more convenient than ever before, travellers' accounts at the height of the Romantic movement gave a different impression. The 'terror' and 'horror' evoked by the sight of certain mountains, cataracts, gorges, and passes such as the Corrieyairack, the 'Black Rock' or Killiecrankie became an essential ingredient of travellers' accounts. The estimated dangers in passing these places were usually grossly exaggerated. Bishop Forbes gave an account of the horror the Pass of Killiecrankie evoked in his female travelling companion when passing through it in a chaise in 1762. His account illustrated the love-hate relationship of female travellers in particular, during the Romantic movement, to spectacular places of nature. It showed also the gap between the real and estimated dangers of using the Highland roads.

Nor let me here pass unnoticed the many grand Precipices, ye very Brinks of which we pass'd along; one of qch in Gilliecrankie (or Killiecrankie) was so dreadfully awful to the timerous Eye of my Companion and Fellow-Traveller, that she said it made her Heart dunt, &c. I told her the Road was extremely good, and though the Wheels of the Chaise seemed to us to be upon the very Brink of the Precipice, yet I could assure her they were several Feet from it, and there could be no danger, as there was a Parapet upon it. But this availed nothing at all. Still she was frightened. I then begged her, as She happened to be next to the Precipice, to look at me, which would take of her Eye entirely from the awful Prospect. "And yet," said she, "I cannot keep my eye off it."¹¹¹

Forbes and his travelling companion finally got off the chaise and walked along the pass. We can only guess at Sarah Murray's feelings had she travelled the Pass of Killiecrankie a few years earlier. Since she was prone to exaggeration, one would not expect her account to read so soberly. However, the road had been realigned when she travelled the pass in a chaise in 1796. She noted: 'The old road was tremendous;

¹¹⁰ Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, pp. 238-239.

¹¹¹ Forbes, *Journals*, p. 142. Pennant described this pass in 1769 as 'a scene of horrible grandeur'. Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 105.

but now that it is taken higher up the mountain, it has lost all its horrors, and retains its beauties ...'.¹¹² The comments of contemporary travellers about the Highland roads reflected the change in the perception of the Highlands during the eighteenth century. When the roads were built, they were considered outstanding masterpieces of engineering skill, and this was reflected in the praise of travellers. In the 1720s and 1730s travelling in the Highlands was still a real adventure. By the 1760s the Highlands were pacified and opened up to outsiders. However, the Romantic movement changed the perception of the Highlands fundamentally. In its wake visitors again regarded travelling in the Highlands, even along the main roads and well-trodden paths, as a challenging adventure although there were no longer any exceptional dangers involved. The pendulum of the Romantic movement had swung the perception of the Highlands back again to an image that was closer to the one at the beginning of the century than to post-'Forty-Five reality. Wade would probably not have been amused about some of the comments made by Romantic travellers about the supposed dangers of his roads. However, the comment made by the servant in the Duke of Gordon's entourage in 1742 surely would have pleased the general. The servant referred to the Bible for the right words of appreciation for the Wade road from Fort Augustus to Crieff, which he praised as 'the best, I believe, in Europe, ... and once a Person has got into this Road, 'tis like that which Isaiah alludes to 35.8. for he must be a fool if he goes out of it'.¹¹³

4.2.4. The impact of the new roads on the Highlands

The changes the new roads brought to the Highlands can best be judged from the comments of those who witnessed their construction or knew life in the Highlands shortly before and after the making of the roads. A comparison of Defoe's and Burt's comments about clanship shows the changes the new roads made to the traditional structure of Highland society. Defoe, who travelled Scotland around the time of the Union, stressed the isolation of the north-western Highlands in the early eighteenth century. Nonetheless, he wrote that the Highlanders north of Glen Mor were no

¹¹² Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, p. 202.

¹¹³ EUL, 'Duke of Gordon's Jaunt 1742', MS. Dc.5.68. [fos. 5r.-5v.].

longer so wild and barbarous as earlier writers have pretended. He stressed that the gentry of the Mackenzies, MacLeans, 'Dondonalds', Gordons, McKays and other clans appeared, at court and in the army, to be gentlemen as polite and finished as those from any other country, including England. However, due to the inaccessibility and isolation of the area, clansmen were still firmly under the grip of their chiefs and did not know very much about different ways of life.

Here are few Towns, but the People live dispers'd, the Gentry leading the Commons or Vassals, as they are call'd, to dwell within the respective Bounds of their several Clans, where they are, as we may say, little Monarchs, reigning in their own Dominions; nor do the People know any other Sovereign, at least many of them do not.¹¹⁴

When Burt arrived in this area in 1725, the disarming of the clans had just begun. He witnessed the submission of the chiefs, the disarming of their vassals and the building of the new roads. Burt gave a first-hand impression of the impact of the road building on Highland society. He reported from personal experience about a Highland chief who tried to keep his vassals in total dependency:

This chief does not think the present abject disposition of his clan towards him to be sufficient, but entertains that tyrannical and detestable maxim, - that to render them poor, will double the tie of their obedience; and accordingly he makes use of all oppressive means to that end.

To prevent any diminution of the number of those who do not offend him, he dissuades from their purpose all such as show an inclination to traffic, or to put their children out to trades, as knowing they would, by such an alienation, shake off at least good part of their slavish attachment to him and his family. This he does, when downright authority fails by telling them how their ancestors chose to live sparingly, and be accounted a martial people, rather than submit themselves to low and mercenary employments like the Lowlanders, whom their forefathers always despised for the want of that warlike temper which they (his vassals) still retained, &c.¹¹⁵

The social and economic dependency of the vassals on their chief was soon to loosen when the new roads opened up the Highlands and made the glens accessible for trade, commerce and new political ideas. It is not surprising that the above-mentioned chief still tried to retain memories of the past and to remind his vassals of traditional values after having seen his economic grip on them beginning to slip away. Burt gave another striking example of how the opening up of the Highlands altered the relationship between the chiefs and their vassals once they could choose

¹¹⁴ Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, p. 202. Again, it has to be stressed that it is doubtful whether Defoe knew this area from personal experience.

¹¹⁵ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 51-52. For fear of reprisals Burt was afraid of giving names in his letters.

to work for several employers. This time a chief complained to him that the opportunity for his vassals to work for the English seriously undermined his control over them:

One of the chiefs, at his own house, complained to me, but in a friendly manner, as though I had seduced some of his subjects from their allegiance: he had occasion for three or four of those of his clan, whom I employed about a piece of work at home, which they only could do; and, when he was about to pay them for their labour, he offered them six-pence a-day each (being great wages, even if they had not been his vassals), in consideration he had taken them from other employment; upon which they remonstrated, and said he injured them, in calling them from sixteen-pence a-day to six-pence; and I very well remember he then told me that if any of those people had formerly said as much to their chief, they would have been carried to the next rock and precipitated.¹¹⁶

The roads brought new economic opportunities to the Highlands, and the common Highlanders had to think twice before rejecting these opportunities.¹¹⁷ A better living for themselves and their children was at stake.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the clan chiefs were suspicious of the new roads as they threatened the isolation of their territories. Objections to the roads and bridges, and the inconveniences they would cause, were, however, made by all ranks of clansmen. The objections of the chiefs were more of an ideological kind in preserving their social and economic status. According to Burt, the chiefs and the other gentlemen complained

that thereby an easy passage is opened into their country for strangers, who, in time, by their suggestions of liberty, will destroy or weaken that attachment of their vassals which it is so necessary for them to support and preserve.¹¹⁸

Moreover, they objected that once their fastnesses were laid open, they would no longer be safe from invasions, and that ‘the bridges, in particular, will render the ordinary people effeminate, and less fit to pass the waters in other places where there are none’.¹¹⁹ The middle ranks objected that the roads would be an inconvenience because the gravel would soon wear away the hoofs of their horses and make them

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 21-22.

¹¹⁷ After the Union of 1707 the lairds increasingly spent their time away from their Highland estates. However, they had to squeeze more money out of their estates to finance their stays in Edinburgh and London. The necessary economic reorganisation of the Highland estates loosened the ties between the Highland gentry and the clansfolk and hastened the break-up of the clan system. Against the background of such economic changes all ranks of clansfolk, from the tacksmen to the cottars and labourers, had to look for alternative work outside the Highlands. The beginning of the industrialisation in the Lowlands and the vast stretches of unoccupied land in the British colonies offered these alternatives.

¹¹⁸ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 220.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 220.

unserviceable. Burt explained that shoeing the horses was no alternative. There were no farriers in the Highlands because there were neither enough people within a reasonable distance to maintain them, nor did the Highlanders have the money to shoe their horses. The lowest class of Highlanders had similar objections. They complained that the gravel was intolerable to their naked feet and would soon destroy their thin brogues.¹²⁰

The Highlanders' objections to the military roads were also shared to a certain extent by James Erskine, Lord Grange. In a memorandum of 1725 Lord Grange emphasised the importance of the military roads in civilising the Highlanders, but warned at the same time that no more roads should be built than were absolutely necessary. He feared that the local population would consider the roads as a threat to their way of living and might use force to prevent their construction. However, his proposals for the roads that should be built went far beyond Wade's plans and anticipated Caulfield's road scheme, including the military road to Skye.¹²¹

For obvious reasons Wade gave a different impression of the changes the new roads had on the Highlands. From the general's point of view, these roads were a military necessity. Nonetheless, they also meant progress for the Highlanders as they opened up the area to trade and industry. Wade claimed that the attitude of the Highlanders towards the new roads soon changed when they realised the opportunities they offered for transporting goods. In a letter from Fort Augustus, dated 16 September 1726, Wade informed Townshend about the progress of the road from Fort William to Inverness. He wrote that the road would be ready for the use of coaches before midsummer next year, and that 'the highlanders from the ease and convenience of Transporting their Merchandize begin to approve and applaud, what they at first Repined at, and Submitted to with reluctancy'.¹²²

¹²⁰ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 220-221. Burt's remarks do not seem to have been exaggerated. Travellers had difficulties all over the eighteenth century in getting lost horseshoes replaced and fitted in the Highlands. See, for example, NLS, J. Pattison, 'A Tour through part of the Highlands of Scotland in 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 40. [hereafter: NLS, Pattison, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322] Pattison's horse had lost a shoe on a rocky road on Mull and threatened to fall lame. Pattison had either to leave the road or to lead his horse for six miles until the shoe could be fitted again at a local village, two miles out of his way. Travellers agreed that the women usually did neither wear shoes nor stockings, and that the common Highlanders avoided the roads and preferred to walk on the heather next to them.

¹²¹ See NAS, Lord Grange, 'Memorial 1725', Mar and Kellie Papers, GD124/15/1264/1, fos. 2, 4-5.

¹²² NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187, fo. 85r. This seems to have been over-optimistic. The great majority of travellers confirmed the Highlanders' continuing reluctance about the new roads.

Wade's view about the success of the new roads was shared by members of the government. Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord Advocate, travelled on the new road from Dunkeld to Inverness in August 1728. He wrote in a letter from Inverness, dated 23 August 1728, to an unidentified recipient at the Home Office about the impact of the new road on the Highlanders:

From this Country you Expect no news. But it Cannot be disagreeable to hear, That the people Universally have put on the Pacifick Contented Disposition, as they Observe, that the measures taken to preserve the peace and to Support the Authority of the Government, tend at the Same time to their Immediate advantage. In coming from Perth I Chose the Highland road, By Blair in Atholl, and Russen [Ruthven] in Badenoch, and in my Journey had great Releif from the Highways, that are Carrying on by Gen: Wade, it is no wonder the Highlanders Should be astonished at the undertaking, for to tell you the Truth, I was not a litle Surprised at the Regularity and Success, of the work, Roads so Rugged and Cross, that a Single Horseman Could not Pass without Danger, and that were difficult Even for people a foot, are now as Smooth as the Road from London To Hampstead, and in a litle time will be passable by ane Army with its Artillery, notwithstanding the abrupt Declivity of some of the mountains – Here and there its true ane Old Highland Chief, a fool or a thief, is found to Grumble at this work, which will make the Outmost Recesses of the mountains no Shelter for Rebels or Robbers, But the Gross of the people like it, Because it opens a Communication with the LowCountry, and yeelds Safe and easy means of Exchanging their native Commodities Against those of their neighbours; In short this Project which Compleats the intention of Disarming the Highlands is so far from being ill Received by the people, That by the Wisest of them, it is Looked upon as a sort of Satisfaction for the Loss of their Weapons, Since it gives the Troops access to come Wherever there is Occasion to Defend them, So well has Mr. Wade known How to Guild the Pill, that Deprives them of the power of hurting the Government.

After What I have sayed you Expect to hear that every thing is Quiet and Peacible here, and indeed it is so.¹²³

The Wade roads made a real difference to the Highlands, less because of their military significance than for their long-term impact. They opened up the Highlands to industry and commerce, and the area came under intensifying economic pressure from the Lowlands. The subsequent economic and social changes were to alter Highland life irreversibly. However, few visitors to the Highlands thought about the long-term impact when they travelled on the new roads. Most travellers did not seriously question the necessity of the military roads to 'civilise' the Highlanders. For them the roads were simply convenient and opened up a strange and old-fashioned world that was hitherto inaccessible.

Anne Grant's comments about the military roads were quite typical of her time. When she settled down in the Highlands in 1773, she was one of the few visitors

¹²³ NAS, Duncan Forbes of Culloden to an unidentified recipient at the Home Office, 23 August 1728, (PRO) State Papers, Scotland (Series II) (S.P.54), 1707-1782 Letters and Papers, RH2/4/328, fos. 141-142.

initially rather sceptical about the usefulness of the military roads. She did not want to take it for granted that they were ‘to civilize the country so speedily and effectually; the people were very *civil* when they were well treated’.¹²⁴ Instead, she feared:

These roads will afford access to strangers, who dislike and despise the natives, because they do not understand them; and to luxuries they cannot afford to pay for, and would be happier without.¹²⁵

However, when she was told that the Highlanders around Loch Oich still considered cattle lifting as legitimate, she immediately changed her mind. The Highlanders whom she had regarded initially as ‘innocent sylvan beings’ and ‘innocent peasants’ she now considered ‘plunderers’ and ‘thieves’.¹²⁶ Within minutes she was completely converted about the necessity of the military roads and admitted:

I felt a kind of horror on finding that the cluster of innocent peasants’ cottages I had been admiring was merely a den of thieves. I now began to hold the military road, and civilizing the natives, in all due reverence. Nay, such a complete convert was I become, that I felt inclined to admire a happy thought of a worthy good-natured Irishman, Governor Caulfield, at Fort George, who most poetically exclaimed,

“Had you seen these roads before they were made,
You would hold up your hands, and bless Marshal Wade.”¹²⁷

4.2.5. Travelling the Highlands between Wade and Caulfield

Travelling conditions in the Highlands were appalling when Wade began his ambitious scheme to open up the north of Scotland to outsiders. The catechist James Murray gave a vivid account of the living conditions of the common Highlanders and the hardships catechists faced on their travels from village to village in the Highlands. In a letter of 22 July 1726 to Nicol Spence, agent for the Church, he wrote that a journey from Edinburgh to ‘Kilmaly’ in Lochaber (probably Kilmallie, parish in the Lochaber district, includes Fort William) took him six days because he could not hire a horse between Balquhiddar and ‘Kilmaly’. Instead, he had

¹²⁴ [A. Grant], *Letters From The Mountains; Being The Real Correspondence Of A Lady, Between The Years 1773 And 1807* (4th edn. London, 1809), vol. i, p. 107. [hereafter: Grant, *Letters*]

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 107.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 109-110.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 110. According to Jamieson, this couplet was to be found on an obelisk erected near Fort William to commemorate Wade’s making of the road from Inverness to Inveraray. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 219-220. However, Wade never built a road from Inverness to Inveraray. The road from Inverness ended at Fort William.

to hire a man to come along with me to carry my Baggage which was as dear for hire to me as if I had a horse, viz 2/3 Scots each mile, and a great fatigue to my selfe climbing hills, weading waters and Mosses, from the head of Glenurchy [Glen Orchy] to the Breas of Glencoe [Braes of Glen Coe] wch is a pice of very ill shoollid [shovled] Road.¹²⁸

Murray reported that the servant had to carry his shirts and blankets because

here I must not expect to get bed cloaths or bed in every house I come to (though I find the people abundantly kind, as yet, according to their ability) but they have for the most part neither beds nor bed-cloaths to themselves, except one plaid and one pair of blankets that the good-man & Good-wife have for their own bed wch is a Sorry hand-full of Straw; heather, or fearns, shaken on the floor, for none of the Common people have any bed Steeds of Timber or feather or Chaff beds served up in Teiking [Ticking] or Coars harn.¹²⁹

He asked that his allowance should be augmented, and continued to explain the hardships of travelling catechists in the Highlands:

I cannot say that in weaty weather when I am treavling from town to town in Winter that my foot will be drie from time that I rise and go out in the morning, till I go to bed at night, for I have been so severall days already in this Countrie, besides the weading of waters daily if I treavel one mile of way, for there are no Bridges upon their Watters here, and how it will agree with me every Cold, frosty, Snowy & weaty night in the winter time changeing my quarters, and every night my bed, and to lie in my own Cloaths, which some times will be weat and Cold, on a Sorry pickle of neasty fearns &c or hand full of Straw or heather time must determine ...¹³⁰

Murray's account gives a vivid impression of what travelling and accommodation were like before the Highlands were made accessible by the new roads. For ordinary people without letters of introduction or servants, travelling in the Highlands was a real hardship.

For visitors to the north of Scotland the new roads now meant a major improvement. It was now possible to travel comfortably for the first time from Edinburgh to Inverness and Fort William by coach. Hitherto coaches were an unusual sight in the north of Scotland. Burt described the astonishment of the common people at the first arrival of a coach, by sea, at Inverness in 1725.

The description of these puny vehicles [carts] brings to my memory how I was entertained with the surprise and amusement of the common people in this town, when, in the year 1725, a chariot with six monstrous great horses arrived here, by way of the sea-coast. An elephant, publicly exposed in one of the streets of London, could not have excited greater admiration. One asked what the chariot was: another, who had seen the gentleman alight, told the first, with a sneer at his ignorance, it was a great cart to carry people in, and such like. But since the making of some of the roads, I have passed through them with a friend, and was greatly delighted to see the Highlanders run from their huts close to the

¹²⁸ NAS, James Murray, at 'Kenmore in Lochaber', to Nicol Spence, 22 July 1726, General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Papers 1726, CH1/2/53, fo. 173.

¹²⁹ Ibid., fo. 173.

¹³⁰ Ibid., fo. 173.

chariot, and, looking up, bow with their bonnets to the coachman, little regarding us that were within.

It is not unlikely they looked upon him as a kind of prime-minister, that guided so important a machine; and perhaps they might think that we were his masters, but had delivered the reins into his hands, and, at that time, had little or no will of our own, but suffered ourselves to be conducted by him as he thought fit; and therefore their addresses were directed to the minister, at least in the first place; for motion would not allow us to see a second bow, if they were inclined to make it.¹³¹

Work on the Inverness to Dunkeld road did not start before 1728, and the unusual sight of a coach in the Highlands was confirmed by General Wade. He wrote to Townshend from Edinburgh on 10 September 1727:

I found the highlands in perfect Tranquility and the great Road of Communication so far avanc'd that I travelled to Fort William in my Coach and Six to the great wonder of the Country People who had never seen such a Machine in those parts.¹³²

Although the Wade roads made the Highlands accessible for travellers, a proper infrastructure, including inns and accommodation, still lagged behind. Burt reported in one of his earlier letters about the state of the inns when he came to Scotland. He emphasised that not only were the inns in the Highlands in such a miserable state, but also those in the Lowlands. He complained that they were far from inviting, that the rooms were often as dirty as the streets and had obviously never been washed or brushed. He remarked that travellers should not wonder if they stumbled over clods of dried dirt when going from the fireside to bed. He observed that the space between the floor and the bedstead was usually filled with lumber and dust. His worst criticism, however, was aimed at the walls and curtains of the chambers. He noted: 'But it is nauseous to see the walls and inside of the curtains spotted, as if every one that had lain there had spit straight forward in whatever position they lay.'¹³³

¹³¹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 77-78. The editor remarked that the Highlanders were too social and friendly to pass any stranger without a cordial greeting. Sarah Murray related a similar incident to General Wade. According to her, the Highlanders crowded around his coach, paying the utmost reverence and respect to the drivers, but took no notice of the general inside the coach. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, p. 371.

¹³² NLS, Wade, 'Letterbook', MS. 7187, fo. 98v.

¹³³ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 147. See also John Loveday's complaints about the filth in the Scottish inns. See J. Loveday, *Diary Of A Tour In 1732 Through Parts Of England, Wales, Ireland And Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1890), p. 163. [hereafter: Loveday, *Diary*] Loveday toured the Borders and Lowlands in 1732. His complaints resembled Burt's. Although he did not refer to him, he might have copied from his *Letters*. Loveday's *Diary* included references to Pennant, Johnson and Boswell. Loveday continually added to the original manuscript from the works of later travellers. See Loveday, *Diary*, p. 227.

Travellers from outside the Highlands who used their own horses also faced the problem of accommodating them in the narrow stables of the Highland inns. The stables were often too small for any horses but shelties. Burt reported that he was once charged a shilling in damages when the narrow frame of the door and part of the roof had to be taken down to accommodate his large horses.¹³⁴ At another Highland inn, which he described as ‘a most wretched hovel’, he first had to fill the holes in the walls with straw. However, the gaps were not closed for long as soon after a hungry cow came along and plucked out the straw from the outside.¹³⁵

Inns were built along the new roads at regular intervals, but often they could provide travellers with no more than a firm roof above their heads. The supply of provisions still seems to have been a problem, and travellers often had to carry their own provisions over long distances. In his final letter Burt summarised the progress made for travellers, but warned them not to expect too much:

Notwithstanding there may be no remains of my former letters, I believe your memory may help you to reflect what wretched lodging there was in the Highlands when those epistles were written. This evil is now remedied, as far as could be done; and in that road, where there were none but huts of turf for a hundred miles together, there now are houses with chimneys, built with stone and lime, and ten or twelve miles distance one from another; and though they are not large, yet are they well enough adapted to the occasion of travellers, who are seldom many at a time in that country. But I would not be understood that there is any better accommodation than before, besides warm lodging.¹³⁶

Burt’s warning of over-optimism about the new inns along the roads was justified, and Mildmay’s experiences in 1736 may well give an idea of how modest progress was apart from having a firm roof above one’s head. Although the road through Glen Mor had been finished recently, except for the bridge over the River Spean, Mildmay could not proceed to Fort William because

there is no Town, but only the Fort, except a few of the Highland Huts scatter’d up & down: I did not go to it, it being above 20 Miles beyond Inverness, & we did not design to going Higher up in the Country than that, because of the Difficultys of meeting with any Accommodation for ourselves, or our Horses, wch in many places where we were, we found very bad ...¹³⁷

¹³⁴ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 307-308.

¹³⁵ See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 327-328.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 218.

¹³⁷ Essex Record Office, Mildmay, ‘Journal’, MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fos. 43-44. The foundation stone of the ‘High Bridge’ over the River Spean was laid on 16 June 1736, and the bridge was completed in October 1736.

Mildmay stressed in his journal that he was very well entertained and provided for by the officers at Fort George and Fort Augustus. At Fort George he had ‘great variety of Fish Fowls, Game, and many other good things at Dinner, wch were as Handsomely dressd as at any place I ever saw’. He continued, ‘This I mention because many people immagine there is hardly any provisions to be met with in Scotland, & that the things are so badly dress’d there is no eating ’em.’¹³⁸ However, once he left the garrisons, the accommodation soon deteriorated, and there were no proper inns on his way back to the Lowlands. If travellers had no letters of introduction or used routes where there were no gentlemen’s seats to call at, they had to be prepared to make sacrifices. Mildmay returned from Fort Augustus on the Corrieyairack road to Dalnacardoch and continued his travels via the Tay Bridge at Aberfeldy to Crieff. He described villages such as ‘Garva Moor’ (Garvamore) and Dalnacardoch as ‘poor’ and ‘miserable’, and he remarked about Dalwhinnie, where he stayed overnight, ‘I shou’d not say lay there, because the Hut wou’d not aford us a Bed, but we set up there’.¹³⁹

The recollections of a journey by Simon, Lord Lovat, from Inverness to Edinburgh by coach in 1740, give a similar impression of the travelling conditions in the Highlands. His chariot was thoroughly checked and repaired before setting out, and as a precaution Lord Lovat brought his wheelwright as far as Aviemore. However, the military roads soon took their toll, and eight miles beyond Aviemore the axle-tree of the hind wheels broke in two. Lord Lovat and his two daughters were forced to continue to Ruthven riding bareback accompanied by footmen. The chariot was pulled by manpower to Ruthven, where the local English wheelwright and a smith took two days to repair it.¹⁴⁰ Four miles beyond Ruthven it broke again. It was mended once more at Dalnacardoch, and Lovat continued to Castle Drummond where he became stormbound. Three miles after he left Castle Drummond for

¹³⁸ Ibid., fo. 50. The Highlands could not shake off its image as a region of scarcity for another 200 years, and travellers were advised to carry a proper supply of provisions. Travellers agreed that the entertainment at the gentlemen’s houses was always plentiful. The comfort of the inns, however, varied hugely. Travellers to remote regions, such as Sutherland and Gairloch in particular, were warned about the difficulties in obtaining provisions at the local inns. See, for example, the experiences of George Thornhill of Diddington (1760), Bishop Forbes (1762) and Matthew Culley (1775) in this region. See note 249 for details.

¹³⁹ Ibid., fo. 56.

¹⁴⁰ There was a major garrison at Ruthven.

Ardoch, the axle-tree of the fore wheels broke, and he lost another day waiting for the smiths to arrive and to make a new axle-tree. Finally, they reached their destination in safety, but the journey from Inverness to Edinburgh on the Wade roads had taken eleven days.¹⁴¹ Such misfortunes were apt to happen on the military roads. In rainy weather these roads were often deep and muddy, and their gravel surface became rough. In winter they were hard and frozen. When fog settled down in the glens, the drivers were often unable to see the road, and its uneven surface easily destroyed wheels, axles and shafts. Once a coach was damaged, it could take hours for the nearest smith to come and to repair the damage, provided he had the necessary spare parts at hand. That is why, despite the military roads and the inns built alongside, travelling in the Highlands could not be compared to travelling in the rest of the country. Additionally, travellers faced difficulties in providing for themselves, and especially for their horses, until far into the second half of the eighteenth century. It needs no further mention that in those areas that were unaffected by road building, travelling conditions had hardly changed and the infrastructure remained very rudimentary.

However, there is some evidence that even in those areas that were not affected by the new roads, a very basic infrastructure was in place for drovers and travellers. There were scattered alehouses or inns along some of the major drove roads that could also accommodate and provide for travellers. Although these roads needed major upgrading, it seems as if on certain sections even light two-wheeled chaises could have been used. The hand-drawn 'Diagram with description of the proposed roads from Callander to Fort William'¹⁴² shows two proposed routes for roads from Callander to Fort William. Its author described the 'road conditions' and the state of the five alehouses and inns along the existing 'road' between Callander and Fort William. He observed on the road sections until Achinturin on the border of Breadalbane and Argyllshire that they were generally flat, dry and easily mended. He wrote that he brought even a light two-wheeled chaise to 'Edinkipe' (Edinchip near

¹⁴¹ See H.G. Graham, *The Social Life Of Scotland In The Eighteenth Century* (4th edn. London, 1937), pp. 40-41. [hereafter: Graham, *Social Life*]

¹⁴² NLS, Wade Collection, Acc. 10497, map 58 (m). Neither authorship nor date of this hand-drawn map are known. It was most likely prepared for the road-building schemes under General Wade in the 1720s and 1730s or Caulfield in the late 1740s and 1750s. Roads along the proposed routes in this map were built by Caulfield, but it is known that Wade had already intended to build a road along these routes.

Lochearnhead). However, most of the work had to be done on this section. At several sections he proposed to change the course of the road. West of Loch Dochart he proposed two alternative routes. The first was to continue via Glen Orchy to the head of Loch Awe, then to Bonawe Ferry at Loch Etive and Shian Ferry at Loch Creran to Fort William. The author noted on these sections that ‘the dry Road ... through Glenorchy, Bona Ferrie, and by Appin; is always good, wants a litle help in some places’ and that good boats should be kept at the ferries. The second route was to continue through the Braes of Glen Coe to Fort William. According to the author, this section led mainly through forests, bogs and mosses. The sketch of this section is far less detailed and more inaccurate, showing the lack of precise knowledge about this remote area. Nonetheless, he wrote that a rough, stony road already existed and that a new ‘horse Road good in dry weather’ should be built along the driest parts of the bogs. Along the ‘road’ from Callander to Fort William, the author mentioned an inn at ‘Kilmehug’ (Kilmahog, north of Callander), an alehouse at ‘Edinkipe’ (Edinchip, near Lochearnhead), a ‘good inn’ at ‘Suy’ (Suie, near Luib in Glen Dochart), an alehouse, which ‘may be made better’ at ‘Achinturin’ (between Tyndrum and Bridge of Orchy), and a ‘good inn’ at ‘Achallader’ (east of Loch Tulla).¹⁴³ These notes show that a basic infrastructure, including provisions and accommodation in alehouses or inns, existed even in areas like Rannoch, which had not yet been affected by road building and were among the least accessible and most desolate parts of the Highlands. However, these roads or paths must have been very poor in most parts, and the stages between these inns were often very long. Unfortunately, there are no further contemporary descriptions that could provide more information about their state or about the time period when this map might have been drawn.

¹⁴³ The inn at Kilmahog was no longer marked on *Taylor and Skinner’s Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain, Or Scotland* (London, 1776). The alehouse at Edinchip was also no longer marked on *Taylor and Skinner’s Survey* of 1776. It seems to have been replaced by the nearby Lochearnhead Inn. The inn at Suie was also no longer marked on *Taylor and Skinner’s Survey* of 1776. Instead, there was an inn at ‘Liargastan’ (Liangarston, opposite Auchlyne, two miles east of Luib). The alehouse at Achinturin and the inn at Achallader were also no longer marked on *Taylor and Skinner’s Survey* of 1776.

4.2.6. The Highlands' reputation among travellers

One aspect that must be dealt with in respect of the travelling conditions is the reputation of the Highlands after the disarming of the clans. It was of the utmost importance for travellers to know whether an area was safe or not. The Highlands were officially pacified and safe after 1725. The existing barracks were strengthened, new barracks and roads were built, and government troops and companies of loyal Highlanders were employed at various places to enforce law and order. The government considered all these measures necessary to pacify an area that was notorious for unrest. Burt witnessed the implementation of these measures, and his *Letters* described the lawless state of the Highlands when he arrived there. He wrote about cattle thieving, depredations and the Highlanders' supposed inclination to theft and robbery. It was thus the more astonishing that he declared the Highlands safe for travellers. He was neither robbed nor threatened, and none of his possessions was stolen during his extensive travels in the Highlands. Moreover, he felt safer among the Highlanders than in his native England, even when he carried large sums of money with him and when he slept in the common Highlanders' huts.

Personal robberies are seldom heard of among them: for my own part, I have several times, with a single servant, passed the mountain-way from hence [Inverness] to Edinburgh, with four or five hundred guineas in my portmanteau, without any apprehension of robbers by the way, or danger in my lodgings by night; though, in my sleep, any one, with ease, might have thrust a sword, from the outside, through the wall of the hut and my body together. I wish we could say as much of our own country, civilized as it is said to be, though one cannot be safe in going from London to Highgate.¹⁴⁴

This was a surprising attitude for his time, and it was not shared by many of his contemporaries. The great majority, particularly the English, considered the whole of Scotland as unsafe and would never have dared to think even of going to the Highlands without a proper reason. Scotland had a poor reputation, and the Highlands in particular were considered primarily as a hiding place for robbers and thieves. Despite the Union and the above-mentioned government measures, it was not until some decades later that Scotland and the Highlands were considered a safe destination for travellers.

¹⁴⁴ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 133-134. A guinea was a former British gold coin with a value of 21 shillings.

A more common attitude towards Scotland can be found in a contemporary letter of the Oxford antiquary Thomas Hearne in which he enquired of Dr Richardson about the safety of travelling in rural Scotland in 1732. Hearne's friend John Loveday intended to travel along the Picts' Wall (Antonine Wall), and he wanted to know 'whether in such a journey it may be safe travelling for two or three persons out of the high roads, if they have a mind to seek antiquities, and go into bye-roads', and 'whether there may be danger in such sort of travelling out of the high roads'. Loveday also wanted to know whether 'Is it best to go by land or water from Edinburgh to St Andrews and Aberdeen?'¹⁴⁵ Such enquiries were ample evidence of the fear and suspicion many people had of travelling even to the Lowlands of Scotland a quarter of a century after the Union. However, Loveday toured Scotland the same year as far north as Stirling, Perth and Dundee in perfect safety.

Mildmay, undoubtedly, would not have taken Burt's view as gospel truth and neither did Lord Lovat. He provided Mildmay, on his way back from Fort Augustus to Crieff, with an armed guard of soldiers from a Highland company, partly to protect him from supposed robbers in the hills and partly to assist him in case of an accident. This is ample evidence that even after the disarming of the Highlanders the region was still considered unruly and dangerous to travellers. Mildmay wrote about the Highland soldiers' incredible hardiness:

My Lord Lovett was so obliging to order us a Guard of 4 Soldiers out of the Garrison at Fort Augustus & a Corporal, to Attend us from thence down to Crief, in order to protect us from Robbers in the Mountains, and to Assist in case of any Accidents; they run by the side of the Coach all the way, & kept up, tho' we had 6 good Horses, and they were themselves Loaded wth all their Arms, & Accoutrements, beside their Plaids, wch is 7 yards of course Stuff wound round 'em. any of our people wou'd think this hard Duty, & hardly be able to compass it, but these Highlanders do it with great Ease, & when they are dry don't want to swig down great Draughts of ale or Strong Beer, but will take off their Bonnetts & Dip up a little water at a spring & run on wth great Spirits. they are used to fare hard & great exercise, wch enables to bear fatigue.¹⁴⁶

After the 'Forty-Five the Highlands were for some time still considered unsafe for travellers. Johnson, for example, wanted to take a pair of pistols along to the Hebrides in 1773, but was finally convinced to leave them with Boswell's wife at Edinburgh after he was assured that there were no more robbers to be met with in the

¹⁴⁵ Loveday, *Diary*, p. xiii.

¹⁴⁶ Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fo. 58. Mildmay and his armed escort needed three days to travel from Fort Augustus to Crieff. This confirms the pace the Highlanders were able to run next to the horses or carriages of travellers.

Highlands.¹⁴⁷ ‘Mary Hanway’¹⁴⁸ travelled the Highlands in 1775 and wrote in her response to Johnson’s *Journey* that the Highland roads were actually safer from robberies than the roads in England. She issued the Highlands a carte blanche in respect of their safety for travellers.

There is hardly ever such a thing heard of, as a Highland highway robber; their roads are not, like ours, infested by those pests to society. Your purse and your person are here equally secure nor do their news-papers, like ours, shock humanity every month with an account of five or six and twenty poor wretches condemned to an ignominious death, the consequence of English voluptuousness.¹⁴⁹

No other visitor to the Highlands described better than Matthew Culley the huge gap between the supposed dangers involved in travelling in the Highlands and the real

¹⁴⁷ See J. Boswell, *The Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1785), p. 48. [hereafter: Boswell, *Tour*] In 1795 the English businessman and traveller John Pease also thought about buying a pair of double-barrelled pistols before he set out on his journey to Scotland. There is, however, no evidence in the text that he actually bought those guns.

¹⁴⁸ *A Journey To The Highlands Of Scotland. With Occasional Remarks on Dr. Johnson’s Tour: By a Lady* (London, [1777]) is commonly attributed to Mary Ann(e) Hanway, the author of the novels *Ellinor* (1798), *Andrew Stuart* (1800), *Falconbridge Abbey* (1809) and *Christabelle* (1814). However, there is no contemporary evidence for her being the author of the *Journey*. No hint as to authorship was given in the original publisher’s advertisement in the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 14 March 1777, London, 1. A similar advertisement in *Aris’s Birmingham Gazette*, 28 April 1777, too, gave no hint as to the authorship. Elizabeth Hagglund has shown that there was no attribution to Hanway in any of the numerous reviews that followed the publication of the *Journey*. Additionally, no mention of the *Journey* was made in any reviews of Hanway’s four novels or in the prefaces or title pages of those novels. Nor did any contemporary dictionary of biography attribute the *Journey* to Hanway. Hagglund argues that the *Journey* received a reasonable reception and that there was little reason for continued secrecy if its author had gone on to publish other works. In a revised entry for P. and J. Schlueter (eds.), *An Encyclopedia of British Women Writers* (revised and expanded edition, New Brunswick, 1998), p. 302, Kathleen L. Fowler claims that Hanway wrote the *Journey* as ‘a very young woman, apparently’. The attribution is based on ‘internal evidence’ which is not specified. Thereby, Fowler has changed her position in the 1st edition of the *Encyclopedia* (1988), in which she claimed that the *Journey* was erroneously attributed to Hanway. For a detailed discussion of the authorship of the *Journey* see E. Hagglund, ‘Tourists And Travellers: Women’s Non-Fictional Writing About Scotland 1770-1830’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2000, pp. 38-68. [hereafter: Hagglund, ‘Tourists And Travellers’] The catalogue entries of the British Library and National Library of Scotland attribute the *Journey* to Hanway on the basis of S. Halkett and J. Laing (eds.), *Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature* (Edinburgh and London, 1928), vol. iii, p. 202. However, no evidence for the attribution was given by Halkett and Laing. There is no convincing evidence linking Hanway to the *Journey*, but, for want of an alternative attribution, the *Journey* is hereafter referred to as Hanway, *Journey*.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 136. Mary A. Hanway may have referred to infanticide. In England many more women were executed for infanticide than in Scotland. Travellers agreed about the small number of severe crimes, apart from cattle lifting, in the Highlands after 1746. The only exception was Matthew Culley. He saw near Inverness in 1775 a McIntosh hung in irons who had ‘headed a most dangerous gang of villains who infested this neighbourhood, robbing all who came in their way and not infrequently murdering the lonely traveller’. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 136. This must, however, be dismissed as scaremongering, since none of the contemporary visitors to that area reported about any particular dangers to travellers at that time. Culley himself did not face any danger from robbers during his extensive tour of the Highlands. Instead, he was welcomed everywhere with exceptional hospitality.

state of affairs. He summarised upon his return from a lengthy journey to Ross-shire, Sutherland and Caithness in 1775:

Besides the remarks I have made, where I paid any particular visits, concerning the kindness and hospitality of this country, I must not forget here in general to remark that I found nothing but real honesty in the manners of folk with whom I had any transactions, and saw, with pleasure, my own prejudice in this respect but very indifferently founded. Before I was acquainted with North Britain, I durst not have ventured to travel in these parts alone, such was the notion I had conceived of the rapacity of the natives, but now that I have actually traversed different parts of their country, I have so perfect a confidence in the integrity and discretion of these Northern inhabitants, that I could sleep in the poorest hutt amongst them without apprehension of ill consequence of anything, excepting, perhaps, their want of cleanliness. In this respect, there is no doubt, they fall rather much short of their neighbours towards the south, but I doubt much if any people can excel them in the practice of those virtues which properly depend upon the heart. In this respect, they possess a warmth and sensibility which, when observed, can hardly fail to conciliate your affectionate esteem even in spite of the disagreeable circumstances which disfigure their outward persons, and their particular manner of life.¹⁵⁰

4.3. The second phase of road making after the 'Forty-Five

Having examined the state of the Highlands and the travelling conditions before and after the road-building scheme of General Wade, we must look briefly at the activities of his successors in Scotland and the influence of their work on travel in the Highlands. The road- and bridge-building scheme of Wade effectively stopped in 1736 with the completion of the 'High Bridge' (over the River Spean at Spean Bridge) on the Inverness to Fort William road. The scheduled roads and bridges were completed, and although Wade had further roads in mind, none of them were built during the remainder of his time in Scotland. From 1733 government funding decreased, and Wade spent less time in Scotland. Under the guidance of Major William Caulfield, Inspector of Roads, Wade's troops concentrated on repairing and maintaining the roads instead of building new ones. In May 1740 Wade handed over the command in Scotland to Lieutenant General Clayton. In its wake the government concentrated on maintaining the existing roads. There were no new roads built apart from the Stirling to Crieff road in 1741-42 and the beginning of the works on the Dumbarton to Inveraray road in 1744. It was an irony that the Jacobites benefited most from the military roads in the 'Forty-Five, allowing them a quick advance from the Highlands into the Lowlands.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 145.

After the 'Forty-Five Major Caulfield, Inspector of Roads until his death in 1767, took over as the main road maker in Scotland. A new road-building scheme was begun with a parallel military survey of the Highlands from 1747-55. The military action in the wake of the great Jacobite rebellion had not only shown the lack of infrastructure in the Highlands, but also the absence of large-scale maps for the use of the military.¹⁵¹

First of all, Caulfield finished the Dumbarton to Inveraray road (1744-50). He then built a narrow web of roads and crossroads all over the north of Scotland. In respect of the opening up of the Highlands, the most important Caulfield roads were the Stirling to Fort William road (1748-53), the Coupar Angus to Fort George road (1748-57), the Tarbet to Crianlarich road (1752-54) and the Dalmally to Bonawe road (1752-54). Moreover, Caulfield penetrated into the north-western Highlands beyond Glen Mor by building roads from Fort Augustus to Bernera (1755-63) and from Contin to Poolewe (1761-63).¹⁵² Between 1740 and 1767 Caulfield built an overall network of 800 to 900 miles of military roads in Scotland at an expense of £130,000 sterling and an additional £12,500 sterling for their maintenance. Although this was roughly three to four times the mileage built by Wade, Caulfield could never step out of the shadow of the overmighty general who got all the credit as the father of the roads in the north of Scotland. Nonetheless, it was to Caulfield's credit that he built the 'Road to the Isles' from Fort Augustus to Bernera, thereby making the Hebrides more accessible and bringing them closer to the mainland.

In the day-to-day business of road making Caulfield's work did not differ very much from Wade's work apart from two important aspects. Firstly, the Highlands could finally be regarded as pacified after the oppressive government measures following the 'Forty-Five, and, secondly, Caulfield could rely on a basic network of

¹⁵¹ For details of the military survey which was extended to the south of Scotland see Moir, *Early Maps*, vol. i, pp. 103-113. For the maps prepared by the military under Wade and Caulfield see *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 44-56.

¹⁵² For a detailed table of the military roads built by Wade, Caulfield and their successors see Taylor, *Military Roads*, pp. 7, 9. The Contin to Poolewe road was never upgraded over its full length to the standard of the other military roads. Moreover, it is doubtful whether this road has ever been extended to Poolewe. The completed sections soon fell into disrepair. See *ibid.*, pp. 83-85. John Knox, who travelled the Highlands and Hebrides in 1786, wrote that this road was never completed apart from a section at Loch Maree. See J. Knox, *A Tour Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The Hebride Isles, In MDCCLXXXVI* (London, 1787), pp. 104-106. [hereafter: Knox, *Tour*] An analysis of 1770s and 1780s maps of the Highlands proves that this road was never built over its full extent.

roads and barracks that made the supply of his troops easier. The daily business of building roads through the wilderness, however, was as difficult as ever before. William Burrell toured the Highlands extensively on horseback in 1758 when the road making under Caulfield was at its height. His account showed the difference between the new roads and the old paths in the Highlands, and gives ample evidence of how travelling conditions deteriorated once he left the new military road from Inveraray to Tyndrum.

Beyond Inveraray the military are making a new road to Teyendrom [Tyndrum], which there is to fall in to the great road from Sterling to Fort William. They have already compleated 4 miles, which we passed in our way to Port Sonachan Ferry, 15 miles distant. The instant we left the new road we found ourselves in the most horrid paths that can be conceived, up and down steep hills, through bogs in some places, in others filled with large loose stones where our horses had no firm footing or, what was worse, now and then staircases of solid, craggy rock.¹⁵³

However, after the 'Forty-Five and the completion of the Caulfield roads, spending on the Highlands slipped down on the government's list of priorities. Jacobitism was a spent force, and the Highlands were no longer considered a threat to the political and economic stability of the nation. Subsequent governments were increasingly unwilling to spend large sums of money on maintaining the military roads, while at the same time the forces in the Highlands were gradually reduced.¹⁵⁴ This caused serious problems for road maintenance. In contrast to the Lowlands, the military roads in the Highlands could not be operated by the turnpike system as there was not enough traffic to yield the necessary revenues. The reduction of the military and falling government spending meant that 'statute labour' was increasingly relied upon, but such efforts were hampered by the depopulation of the Highlands. Nonetheless, the main roads were kept in repair by the government. The Yorkshireman James Bailey witnessed these efforts when, in the summer of 1787, he encountered a working party repairing the road between Kingshouse and Tyndrum. He noted that the party consisted of an overseer and 50 to 60 Highlanders who 'sung

¹⁵³ Burrell, *Northern Tour*, p. 85.

¹⁵⁴ From 1767 until 1784 no money was made available by the government for the building of new roads. However, from 1770 to 1784 the spending on maintaining the existing roads was not reduced and averaged £7,000 sterling per annum. From 1784 onward spending was gradually cut, and the number of soldiers involved in road maintenance was reduced. The new road from Fort William through Glen Coe to Kingshouse in 1786, replacing the old road over the Devil's Staircase, and the road from Dulsie Bridge to Aviemore in the 1790s were the last military roads built. See Taylor, *Military Roads*, pp. 104-106.

a kind of oar-Song to the strokes of their pick-axes, without seeming to notice us'.¹⁵⁵ He continued that the workers lived like nomads in about a dozen tents next to the road and were always prepared to move on to where their labour would be required next. According to Bailey, their few simple belongings were their plaids and their oatmeal. An unidentified English traveller in 1789 was obviously quite happy with the condition and the maintenance of the military roads. His account does not suggest that the cuts in spending and the labour force on the military roads led to an immediate deterioration. He made the very popular small Highland tour along Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Loch Tay, Inveraray and Loch Lomond. He noted about the road conditions:

With Respect to the Roads in Scotland – they are in general good, & particularly when we consider that there are no Turnpikes north of Perth; what are called the Country Roads are made by Gent.n of the Country, and the military Roads are repaired etc by parties of soldiers who regularly come for that purpose.¹⁵⁶

Despite such efforts, some minor military roads fell increasingly into disrepair in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. Henry Skrine from Somerset travelled in 1793 along the east coast to Inverness, continued through Glen Mor to Fort William, and returned via Fort Augustus and the Pass of Corrieyairack to Dunkeld and the Lowlands. He angrily remarked that the military roads and the inns had fallen into 'a shameful state of repair' although they were still subsidised by the government. Moreover, he doubted whether all the money that had been made available had been invested in the inns, as they were 'permitted to become almost ruins'.¹⁵⁷ He concluded that the conditions in Scotland had hardly improved since his first tour to Blair Atholl, Loch Tay, Inveraray and Loch Lomond in 1787.¹⁵⁸

Robert Anstruther, Inspector of the Military Roads, informed the government in a memorial of 25 March 1799 that 599 miles of military roads and 930 bridges

¹⁵⁵ NLS, J. Bailey, 'A Journey In Scotland, with Sketches of some Picturesque Ruins in that interesting Country', MS. 3295, fo. 299. [hereafter: NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295] Johnson and Boswell had met, in 1773 near Anoch, a far smaller party of soldiers repairing the road from Fort Augustus to Bernera.

¹⁵⁶ NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080, fo. 22v. On the other hand, the author claimed that 'in some of the Inns the floors have not been washed for ½ a year'. Ibid., fo. 21v.

¹⁵⁷ Skrine, *Tours*, p. 144. Skrine did not refer to any particular road or inn, but referred to their condition in general. However, the majority of travellers in the late 1780s and 1790s did not share that view. Robert Heron and John Lettice both travelled the Highlands in 1792 and were very pleased with the roads and inns.

¹⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 161.

were currently kept in repair at the public expense. He wrote that it would be difficult to keep these roads in good repair if the government pulled out of their maintenance agreements, as the Highlanders were too poor and the area was too thinly populated. In warning about the probability of a rapid deterioration of poorly maintained roads, he commented that all the progress made in civilising the Highlanders and promoting the fisheries and manufacture of linen and cotton was at stake. He concluded that if the roads were to be abandoned, 'the Highlanders will in a few years relapse into their former Ignorance, or desert their country'.¹⁵⁹ During the nineteenth century the maintenance of the military roads in the Highlands was gradually passed from the military to the civil and local authorities.¹⁶⁰

Apart from the government, local noblemen were also involved in road making. In those areas where there was no need for a military road, the local noblemen took the initiative and built the missing links between the military roads. The Earl of Breadalbane, for example, built a road along the north side of Loch Tay from Kenmore to Killin and Glen Dochart, where it met the military road from Stirling to Fort William. According to Pennant, Lord Breadalbane built this road, including 32 stone bridges, at his sole expense to facilitate travelling.¹⁶¹ This road was necessary to complete the small Highland tour, which included Blair Atholl and Loch Tay as its northernmost points.

Road making on the islands did not start until the 1780s, and it was not conducted by the military, but by the 'statute labour' of the local population. In consequence, these works were not guided by experienced military overseers, but by the local gentlemen and their tacksmen. Moreover, the locals drawn for this work lacked the necessary experience and equipment for such a task. It is not surprising that these efforts were relatively unproductive. John Knox witnessed the work of such a road-making party, made up of 200 to 300 people, near Portree on Skye in the summer of 1786. He gave a damning account of their efforts:

At this time the inhabitants of Sky were mostly engaged upon the roads in different parts of the island, under the inspection of the gentlemen and tacksmen, and accompanied, each party, by the bagpiper. Many of these people had to travel eight miles from home, and the greatest part of them were at a loss for lodgings, excepting that which the cold earth and

¹⁵⁹ NLS, R. Anstruther, 'Memorial in relation to the Roads of Communication made at the Public Expence through the Highlands of Scotland', Adv. MS. 33.4.19, fo. 2r.

¹⁶⁰ For details see Taylor, *Military Roads*, pp. 104-115.

¹⁶¹ See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 91-92.

the open sky afforded. --- Yet, after all these labours and inconveniences, no effectual roads, and much less effectual bridges, can be made through these bogs and rocks, without the aid of the military, and proper tools. A single company of soldiers assisted by the country people, under the direction of an experienced overseer, would render the island more essential service in one year, than all the unsupported exertions of the inhabitants can, in seven years.¹⁶²

For travellers such bits and pieces were not very helpful. The new road soon ended west of Portree, and Knox had to call in a local peasant to guide him through the swamps to a farm only four miles away.

4.4. Travelling conditions in the Highlands after the 1760s

The 'Forty-Five scared away travellers and tourists for roughly a decade, and they did not return to the Highlands until the mid and late 1750s. Most of the visitors to the Highlands in the wake of the great Jacobite rebellion were government informants and officials preparing reports on the economic prospects of the Highlands and the conversion of its population to that of loyal subjects of the government.¹⁶³

4.4.1. Travelling in the Highlands south of Glen Mor

The publication of James Macpherson's *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1760)¹⁶⁴ – commonly known as the 'Ossian' –

¹⁶² Knox, *Tour*, pp. 136-137. Moreover, these works kept the peasants away for several days from working on the farms in summer and autumn. Road building by 'statute labour' had a negative impact on the local agriculture.

¹⁶³ See, for example, NLS, 'Some Remarks on the Highland Clans, and Methods proposed for Civilizing them', Adv. MS. 16.1.14; [E. Bruce], *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750*, ed. by A. Lang (Edinburgh, 1898); and NLS, 'Informations regarding the Highlands' [c. 1750], MS. 98. In the 1750s the Highlands were swarming with inspectors for the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

¹⁶⁴ Macpherson claimed to have translated three major pieces of ancient Gaelic poetry: *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry ...* (Edinburgh, 1760); *Fingal, An Ancient Epic Poem, ... composed by Ossian* (London, 1762); and *Temora, An Ancient Epic Poem, ... composed by Ossian* (London, 1763). However, some commentators soon raised the suspicion that many of these poems were not literal translations of ancient Gaelic poetry from old manuscripts, or taken verbatim from oral sources as Macpherson claimed, but compositions of his own. It was not until 1805 that a report by the Highland Society of Scotland conclusively proved that Macpherson had blended extracts of old Gaelic sources with his own compositions. The 'Ossian' controversy inspired many travellers to visit the Highlands in search of ancient Gaelic poetry. Dr Johnson was one of Macpherson's fiercest critics and repeatedly accused him of forgery. For Macpherson's importance in the discovery of the Highlands and Hebrides see also

sparked off a storm of interest in the Highlands that coincided with a radical change of Scotland's position within Great Britain. The rise of Glasgow to the second city of the empire, the beginning of the industrialisation of the Lowlands, and the importance of Edinburgh as the leading centre of Enlightenment thought transformed Scotland from a marginal part of Great Britain into an engine of its progress. The new interest in the Highlands also coincided with an ambitious road-building programme by the government aimed at pacifying and opening the Highlands to outside influence. Scotland's growing importance and the Romantic movement turned the country, and particularly the Highlands, into a major travel destination. The increasing number of visitors led to improvements in 'public transport' in Scotland, especially in its countryside.

Initially, these improvements were slow and limited to the Lowlands. In April 1749 a twice-weekly stagecoach between Edinburgh and Glasgow was set up. A coach left from Edinburgh every Monday and Thursday, and from Glasgow every Tuesday and Friday. The fare was 9s. per passenger.¹⁶⁵ Until the 1760s progress was slow and travelling times were static, even on the all-important London to Edinburgh road. There seems to have been no regular coach service on this route at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Before the establishment of regular stagecoach services, travellers made their own arrangements for the hire of a coach and advertised its departure in the newspapers to fill any empty seats. An advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 May 1734, announced:

A Coach will set out towards the End of this Week, for London or any Place on the Road; to be performed in Nine Days, or 3 Days sooner than any other Coach that travels the Road.¹⁶⁶

E. Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 92-97.

¹⁶⁵ See *Scots Magazine*, May 1749, p. 253. According to Graham, the journey took twelve hours one way. See Graham, *Social Life*, p. 41. Additionally, in July 1749, 'a caravan was set on foot to go between Edinburgh and Glasgow, to go and return twice every week'. *Scots Magazine*, September 1749, p. 459. The fare was 5s. per person, but this service was abandoned shortly after. Haldane suggests that this vehicle was used for transporting goods and passengers and took two days each way. See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, p. 76. A single journey of two days seems to be far too long, considering that the passengers were allowed no more than 14 lbs of baggage. There was no incentive to use this vehicle, as people could easily walk from Edinburgh to Glasgow (distance c. 40 miles) in less than two days with an equal luggage allowance.

¹⁶⁶ *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 May 1734.

For that purpose 80 stout horses had been stationed at proper distances along the road. Travellers interested in this coach had to report to Alexander Forsyth, opposite the Duke of Queensberry's lodging in the Canongate. Moreover, the advertisement promised that 'Gentlemen and Ladies will be carried to their entire Satisfaction.' The nine-day journey from Edinburgh to London must have been completed at a staggering pace, considering that the stagecoach service operating on this route in the 1750s took ten days in summer and twelve days in winter in either direction. Private coaches for London were frequently advertised in the Edinburgh newspapers until the early 1750s. However, the introduction of a regular stagecoach service in 1752 did not put an end to private travel arrangements.¹⁶⁷ In January 1752 an advertising campaign was started in the *Caledonian Mercury*, announcing a regular, monthly stagecoach service between London and Edinburgh starting in March of the same year. The advertisement read:

This is to give Notice to all Gentlemen and Ladies, That there will be a regular STAGE COACH betwixt London and Edinburgh, and will begin on the first of March next to set out from Hosea Eastgate's, at the Coach and Horse Yard, the Corner of Dean street, Soho, London, the first of every Month, at Six in the Morning; and from John Somervell's in the Canongate, Edinburgh, the 15th of every Month, at the said Hour, to go in twelve Days, with four Horses and a good Glass Coach, to carry four Passengers, to pay five Guineas each Passenger, and to be allowed 20 lb. all above to pay 6d. per lb. To pay half when the Places are taken, and the other half when set down. Perform'd by me, if God permit, Hosea Eastgate.
N.B. Care will be taken of any small Parcels, paying for them proportionable to their Value, and no Charge taken of them without the Values being known.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ See, for example, *Caledonian Mercury*, 2 December 1751, 16 December 1751, 3 February 1752. In many of these private advertisements the coaches were to set out from John Somervell, Canongate, Edinburgh. The regular stagecoach service between Edinburgh and London, which commenced in March 1752, also set out from John Somervell, gunsmith in the Canongate. It was unusual for a gunsmith to operate a coach service as this business was usually run by innkeepers. One reason might have been that after the disarmament of the Highlands following the 'Forty-Five, competition among gunsmiths grew fierce and they had to diversify. In the early 1750s gunsmiths from Highland towns such as Doune moved to Edinburgh and Leith to look for new markets and to continue their businesses. In this way Somervell may have had to diversify and also extend his coach-hiring business. Moreover, travelling to England was still dangerous, and travellers had to arm to protect themselves from robbers. Private coaches for London continued to be advertised well after the establishment of a regular stagecoach service. John Somervell and Hosea Eastgate continued to operate private coaches in addition to their stagecoach service on the London to Edinburgh route. See the advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury*, 8 November 1753.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 6 January 1752. This advertisement was run in the *Caledonian Mercury* every week from 13 January 1752 until 27 February 1752. On 17 March 1752, it was advertised that this service was to continue, that outside passengers were to pay half-price and that regular books were kept at the places of departure.

The service began operations in March 1752. There seems to have been a great demand for the service as it was soon upgraded. An advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury*, 23 July 1753, announced that

the regular STAGE COACH betwixt London and Edinburgh, is altered from a Two-End Coach to a genteel new full Glass one, to carry six Passengers, and six Horses when required ...

However, further upgrading was soon needed. In February 1754 it was announced that the service will be altered to ‘a new genteel Two end Glass Machine, hung on Steel Springs, exceeding light and easy’,¹⁶⁹ and on 15 August 1754 the new coach had been introduced:

The EDINBURGH STAGE-COACH, for the better Accommodation of Passengers, is now alter’d to a new genteel Two-end Glass Machine, hung on Steel Springs, exceeding light and easy, to go in ten Days in Summer and twelve in Winter, to set out the first Tuesday in March and continue it from Hosea Eastgate’s, the Coach and Horses in Dean-Street, Soho, London, and from John Somervell’s in the Canongate, Edinburgh, every other Tuesday, and meet at Burrow-Bridge on Saturday Night, and set out from thence on Monday Morning, and get to London and Edinburgh on Friday. In the Winter to set out from London and Edinburgh every other Monday Morning, and to get to Burrow-Bridge on Saturday Night; and to set out from thence on Monday Morning, and get to London and Edinburgh on Saturday Night. Passengers to pay as usual. Perform’d, if God permits, by your dutiful Servant, Hosea Eastgate.¹⁷⁰

The continuation of the improved and fortnightly service was advertised in the *Caledonian Mercury* until 6 May 1760.¹⁷¹ On 12 May 1760, it was announced in the *Caledonian Mercury* that the stagecoach service run by Mr Hosea Eastgate between London and Edinburgh has been closed down.¹⁷²

The running of a regular, fortnightly stagecoach service between London and Edinburgh from March 1752 until May 1760 proves that both capitals were fairly well connected. However, the early stages of many other ‘regular’ coach services, especially on minor routes, are difficult to reconstruct. Dates are often contradictory, and operators changed frequently. Moreover, many services were neither ‘regular’ nor reliable and were soon abandoned.¹⁷³ According to Haldane, a monthly

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 14 February 1754. This advertisement was run in the *Caledonian Mercury* every Thursday until 8 August 1754.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 15 August 1754. The coaches met at Broughbridge, east of Ripon in the North Riding, Yorkshire.

¹⁷¹ By then the service was run fortnightly throughout the year, taking twelve days for the journey.

¹⁷² There were no reasons given for the closure of this route.

¹⁷³ For example, it was announced in the *Caledonian Mercury* on 12 December 1751: ‘That there is a POST-CHAISE to go from the House of Robert Ross Stabler at the Head of the Cowgate, Edinburgh, to INVERNESS, once every three Weeks. Each Passenger who is to take a Seat in said Chaise is to

stagecoach from Edinburgh to London was operated again from 1763, and in 1767 stagecoaches left Edinburgh for Stirling twice a week and for Perth three times a week.¹⁷⁴ In 1784 the stagecoach services were challenged by the introduction of mail-coaches, which also transported a limited number of passengers.¹⁷⁵ A mail-coach service between London and Edinburgh, taking 60 hours each way, was introduced in 1786.¹⁷⁶ The mail-coach was a major improvement in travelling between England and Scotland, and the travelling time was soon reduced. Mail-coaches were faster, safer and more comfortable than stagecoaches. The introduction of the mail-coach marked the beginning of the golden age of coach travel. It was faster for three reasons: Mail-coaches used better horses, they were given higher priority when changing these horses, and they were exempted from stopping and paying tolls at the turnpikes. In 1801 the Scottish musician, poet and travel writer Alexander Campbell was full of praise for the speed and convenience of the mail-coaches linking Edinburgh and London. He noted about the improvements on that route:

In short, so speedy and easy is the communication now between London and Edinburgh, that, in passing from the one capital to the other, the time in which the journey is performed, owing to the rapidity of the conveyance, shortens, as it were, the distance so wonderfully, that, on stepping into the mail coach at Edinburgh, and descending the steps into the inns at Berwick, Newcastle, York, and London, it seems but travelling through one

pay Two Pounds Sterling. The Chaise is to go continually every three Weeks, whether Passengers or not.' The success of this service has to be doubted. The advertisement did not reappear, and the service was not mentioned in subsequent months.

¹⁷⁴ See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, p. 77. A table of the coaches going from London to Edinburgh, including the inns, tolls, distances of the post-stages, horse and chaise hire, is to be found in J.M. Armstrong, *An Actual Survey of the Great Post-Roads Between London and Edinburgh ...* (London, 1776). Francois de La Rochefoucauld noted during his stay in England in 1784 that the post-chaises went for twelve or sixteen miles at a spanking pace of at least eight miles per hour before both the carriage and the two horses were changed. See N. Scarfe (ed.), *A Frenchman's Year In Suffolk* (Woodbridge, 1988), p. 5. However, the use of coaches did not guarantee speed and varied considerably, even between the Lowlands and Dumfries and Galloway. Jabez Fisher needed, in September 1773, eight hours by coach to cover the 23 miles from Kinghorn to Anstruther in Fife. When he reached Anstruther at one o' clock in the morning, he remarked sarcastically: '... having been 8 hours travelling 23 Miles, such is the mode of travelling in Scotland'. Morgan (ed.), *Journals of J. M. Fisher*, p. 59. In contrast, in May 1776, Fisher travelled 'without any Stoppages except now and then to change Chaises and procure a little cold Collation' the 150 miles from Portpatrick to Carlisle in 28 hours. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176. In 1775 Matthew Culley praised the excellent state of the military road from Portpatrick to Carlisle. There were no tolls along this road, and its upkeep was entirely done by soldiers. See Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 166.

¹⁷⁵ The mail-coach had a unique, patented design.

¹⁷⁶ This was indeed a major improvement in comparison to the ten to twelve days needed for that journey in the mid-eighteenth century.

and the same city, stretched along an immense thoroughfare crowded with people eager in the acquirement of fame and wealth.¹⁷⁷

The Swiss traveller Marc Auguste Pictet travelled in the summer of 1801 from London to Edinburgh by mail-coach. He confirmed the rapid progress made in reducing travelling times, noting that the mail-coach usually took 28 hours from London to York and another 30 hours from York to Edinburgh. These figures show the fast pace of the mail-coaches, and Pictet arrived at York even an hour earlier than scheduled. He completed this journey in a mail-coach pulled by four horses, seating four passengers inside with a driver and an armed guard outside. The mail was carried in a box at the back of the coach. He remarked that passengers were allowed two meal breaks of twenty minutes and one of one hour each day. According to Pictet, the roads were so good and the coaches so comfortable that passengers could even sleep in them. The horses were changed every fifteen or sixteen miles, and this was done so quickly that passengers hardly noticed it.¹⁷⁸ His appraisal of the mail-coach speaks volumes: ‘L’invention du *mail-coach* (carrosse de la malle) est à mon sens, une de celles qui peuvent indiquer une civilisation portée à son *maximum*.’¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ A. Campbell, *A Journey From Edinburgh Through Parts Of North Britain* (London, 1802), vol. ii, p. 346. [hereafter: Campbell, *Journey*]

¹⁷⁸ See M. Pictet, *Voyage De Trois Mois En Angleterre, en Ecosse, et en Irlande ...* (Geneva, 1802), pp. 41-43. [hereafter: Pictet, *Voyage*] Pictet thought that the establishment of mail-coaches was a very clever idea as it enabled the government to transport mail quickly at the expense of the passengers. According to him, that was why the government paid Mr Palmer, the inventor of the mail-coach, a pension of £1,000. See *ibid.*, p. 42. Pictet covered the journey from Edinburgh to Glasgow in a ‘télégraphe’ that took less than six hours for 43 miles. See *ibid.*, p. 50. Pictet was Professor of Philosophy and Experimental Physics in Geneva and a member of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh. Derek Aldcroft’s study of journey times in eighteenth-century Britain confirms Pictet’s observations. According to Aldcroft, the journey time between London and Edinburgh (399 miles) by stagecoach or mail-coach (inclusive of stops) was 14 days in 1658 (i.e. an average speed of 1.2 mph), 230 hours in c. 1750 (1.7 mph), 59 hours in c. 1810 (6.8 mph), and 42.38 hours in the 1830s (9.4 mph). See D.H. Aldcroft, ‘Aspects of Eighteenth Century Travelling Conditions’, in *Der curieuse Passagier: Deutsche Englandreisende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts als Vermittler kultureller und technologischer Anregungen*, Colloquium der Arbeitsstelle 18. Jahrhundert Gesamthochschule Wuppertal, Universität Münster 11-12 Dec. 1980 (Heidelberg, 1983), p. 38.

¹⁷⁹ Pictet, *Voyage*, p. 41. The Swede Eric T. Svedenstierna had a completely different experience on the same route only two years later. He travelled on the mail-coach from Berwick to Dunbar with a drunken driver, ‘who, under the pretence of letting his horses recover their breath, increased his state of intoxication several times between each station’. Then the armed mail guard joined in the coach, ‘where he manoeuvred so clumsily with his loaded gun and pistols that we were all certainly in greater danger than anyone who wanted to take this opportunity of robbing the mail’. Svedenstierna finally took hold of the gun to avoid any accidents. However, this incident was the only time that Svedenstierna travelled with a drunken driver. M.W. Flinn (ed.), *Svedenstierna’s Tour Great Britain 1802-3* (Newton Abbot, 1973), pp. 118-119. [hereafter: Flinn (ed.), *Svedenstierna’s Tour*] Svedenstierna’s tour was originally published as *Resa, igenom en del af England och Skottland, åren*

The progress in public transport was also confirmed by the German traveller Emilie Harmes. She visited Scotland in 1800 and recollected that public transport in Great Britain as a whole was well developed. She praised the comfort of the coaches and noted that there was no shortage of carriages or horses on the important routes. Carriages and horses were changed on these routes at the relevant stages or inns, every twelve to fifteen miles, which were covered in about three to four hours. She noted that this business was entirely run by innkeepers and that the government was not involved. The major inns along the much-frequented routes held from twelve to eighteen carriages for travellers, making it easy to hire one. Changing carriage and horses usually took about half an hour. However, she considered travelling by coach in Great Britain slightly more expensive than in Germany.¹⁸⁰

In 1788 mail-coach services were introduced from London to Glasgow and between Edinburgh and Glasgow. In 1798 a mail-coach was established between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, which was upgraded to a daily mail-coach between Aberdeen and Inverness in 1811.¹⁸¹ At the turn of the nineteenth century, a mail-coach system was well established between England and Scotland and between the major Lowland cities. However, these services did not include the Highlands, and travellers to that area had to provide their own transport.¹⁸² Even in the middle of the

1802 och 1803 (Stockholm, 1804). A German translation was published as *Erich Th. Svedenstjernas Reise durch einen Theil von England und Schottland, in den Jahren 1802 und 1803* (Marburg, 1811).

¹⁸⁰ See [E. Harmes], *Caledonia: Von der Verfasserin der Sommerstunden*, vol. iii (Hamburg, 1803), pp. 232-235. [hereafter: Harmes, *Caledonia*] These comments referred to the main routes in Great Britain. However, in the Highlands coach services had not yet been fully developed. Harmes wrote that she travelled from Glasgow to Oban in a 'Postchaise' which was pulled by two horses. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 128, see also vol. iii, p. 233. By this she probably meant a hired coach. She boarded the coach in Glasgow and took it with her to Oban because there were no other coaches on that route apart from one at Inveraray. The return journey from Oban to Dunkeld was done on a hired coach from Inveraray. Harmes did not change coaches on her way to and from Oban. The fact that she had to bring her own coach from Glasgow to Oban shows that the innkeepers in the Highlands did not have huge numbers of coaches on standby, as was common in the rest of the country. Nor was there a regular stage- or mail-coach service on that route in 1800. The German traveller Johanna Schopenhauer noted in 1803 that horses were scarce in the Highlands. Therefore, she hired a coach, a driver and four horses at Perth for her small tour of the Highlands and did not change them until Dumbarton. See *A Lady Travels: Journeys In England And Scotland From The Diaries Of Johanna Schopenhauer*, ed. by R. Michaelis-Jena and W. Merson (London, 1988), pp. 68-69, 84. [hereafter: Michaelis-Jena and Merson (eds.), *Lady Travels – Johanna Schopenhauer*] Her travels in England and Scotland were first published in J. Schopenhauer, *Erinnerungen von einer Reise in den Jahren 1803, 1804 und 1805: mit einer Reise-Charte*, 3 vols. (Rudolstadt, 1813-1817). However, by 1803 she would not have faced difficulties in getting horses on this popular route.

¹⁸¹ Before the introduction of mail-coaches the mail was transported by foot post. In the early eighteenth century the foot posts were upgraded to horse posts. For details see Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, pp. 305-306.

¹⁸² See chapter 4.1.2.

nineteenth century, when stage- and mail-coach services were established on the main Highland roads, travellers preferred to use their own transport, allowing them more flexible routes and longer stays.

By the mid-1760s the system of roads designed by Caulfield was completed, and within the next decade the small and the grand Highland tours developed along these roads. The small tour lasted about ten days by horse or carriage and included Perth, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Kenmore, Loch Tay, Killin, Tyndrum, Dalmally, Inveraray, Loch Lomond and Dumbarton.¹⁸³ The grand tour took about four weeks by horse or carriage and usually started at Edinburgh. Travellers on the grand tour either went along the east coast to Inverness, or took the Wade road by Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Dalwhinnie and Aviemore. From Inverness the grand tour included Glen Mor, Fort Augustus and Fort William. Travellers next proceeded to Dalmally either along the west coast via Oban, or via the Devil's Staircase and Tyndrum; they then continued to Inveraray, Loch Lomond, Dumbarton and Glasgow. By foot the grand tour took at least two to three months if a traveller included occasional side trips to attractions off the main roads. For those travellers who did not have the time to spare more than one or two days, the Trossachs became a favourite destination. Situated at the fringe of the Highlands, and within easy reach of Glasgow, Stirling and Edinburgh, the Trossachs offered travellers and day tourists a view of the Highlands without having to abandon the vicinity and comforts of the great Lowland towns. The Trossachs became the first region of Scotland that was fully developed for tourism. New roads and inns were built, and by the end of the eighteenth century daily coach tours were offered from Glasgow and Stirling to attract travellers and day

¹⁸³ Thomas Pennant proposed this route, including the return via Glasgow, Stirling and Hopetoun House to Edinburgh, as the 'petit tour' of Scotland. Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 91. He did not include the Trossachs in this route because he had not been there. Nonetheless, the Trossachs soon became one of the favourite destinations for travellers in the Highlands. John Knox wrote about the small tour: 'It may also be termed the *short way to health, spirits, and vigour.*' Knox, *Tour*, p. 9. The English landscape painter Joseph Farington made the small tour of the Highlands in 1801. The scenery along the route exceeded his expectations in all respects, and he commented that 'cold must be the feeling, and bad taste, of those who may express disappointment'. Nonetheless, he found the following verses about the Highlands written in pencil on the wall of the inn at Luss:

Bleak are thy Hills O North,
And bare thy plains,
Barefooted are thy Nymphs,
And Bone & Skin thy Swains.

The Diary Of Joseph Farington, ed. by K. Garlick and A. MacIntyre, vol. v (New Haven and London, 1979), p. 1663. [hereafter: Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*]

tourists.¹⁸⁴ At the eastern entrance to the Highlands, Dunkeld became the most popular destination among day trippers.¹⁸⁵ However, travellers by horse or carriage had to stick to the main routes. This was the only way they could be sure to find proper road conditions, acceptable inns at regular distances and help in case of accidents.

Despite all efforts to keep the roads in good repair, the age of travelling by horse and carriage was an age of accidents. Horses shied, carriages broke down, and it was difficult to get spare parts off the main roads. Mrs Hanway's tour through the Highlands in 1775 was troubled by such incidents. Her horses shied several times at steep ascents and broke the shaft of the carriage three times between Crieff and Pitmain. She could not get fresh horses that were suitable for the roads through the mountains. Luckily, nobody was injured, but the party had either to continue on foot or to travel on at a very slow pace with a broken shaft to the next village. As the innkeepers controlled the hire of horses, they usually had a stock of spare parts and a smith at hand to repair broken wheels, springs or shafts.¹⁸⁶ Travelling by coach was particularly dangerous in bad weather conditions. In 1784 the French geologist Faujas de Saint-Fond faced these dangers on his way from Bonawe to Oban. His travelling party had spent too much time on examining an ancient cairn near Bonawe and consequently were caught in the dark on the road to Oban. Heavy clouds darkened the horizon, and thunderstorm and rain soon set in. The road became increasingly bad, and the drivers had to get off the carriages and to walk in front of the terrified horses to search for the track of the road. Finally, the whole travelling party was advised to get off the carriages as the drivers had lost the way and were afraid that the coaches might turn over and fall down some precipice. Faujas recollected what travelling in these conditions at night was like:

We did as we were directed, and it was full time to adopt this course; for we were upon the edge of very steep rocks, some supported the chaises, some held back the wheels, and others endeavoured to find some traces of the road. In this manner we proceeded

¹⁸⁴ Harmes noted, in 1800, that bothies including makeshift beds had been built along the shore of Loch Katrine to provide shelter for travellers. See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. iv (Hamburg, 1804), pp. 13-14. See also Dorothy Wordsworth's visit to the Trossachs in 1803. In 1810 the publication of Sir Walter Scott's ballad *The Lady of the Lake* gave the Trossachs an additional boost and made them the most popular destination for day trippers to the Highlands.

¹⁸⁵ 'Ossian's Hall', a Romantic folly above the Falls of the River Braan, and the ruins of the cathedral on the banks of the River Tay became synonymous with the 'picturesque' in the Romantic period.

¹⁸⁶ See Hanway, *Journey*, pp. 84, 110-112. The open drains of the military roads were particularly hazardous for carriages.

slowly onwards, with much trouble and great fear, not knowing where we were, nor where we were going. ...

Such was our situation in this wild region: embarrassed by our horses and carriages; creeping along steep and slippery declivities, where it was scarcely possible to keep our footing, and the rain continuing with increased force.¹⁸⁷

The decision to get off the coaches was right, as they had to cross swollen torrents. At one of the torrents the first chaise crossed the knee-deep water without accident, but the second chaise turned over at the steep bank. Fortunately, the chaise was lifted before the horses were hurt, and, apart from the baggage, nothing was damaged. The travelling party followed the banks of the river, hoping to make their way back on the road, but finally their coaches became stuck. However, they had meanwhile reached the vicinity of Oban, and their calls for help were answered by local Highlanders. Equipped with pickaxes the Highlanders built a makeshift road and pulled the carriages out of the river.¹⁸⁸

Moreover, there were still gaps in the road network. The Loch Leven ferry at Ballachulish and the Connel ferry over the tidal waters of Loch Etive were notorious among travellers, and many feared for their lives or horses when crossing these lochs. William Burrell's horses had to be swum over Loch Leven in 1758. At Rubha Garbh ferry at Loch Creran he imprudently embarked with the horses and nearly drowned when they were frightened halfway across.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, the road over the Devil's Staircase was unsuitable for carriages and gigs, and it was not until the building of the new road via Glen Coe in 1786 that this gap was closed. Appin and Lorne still remained a difficult area to traverse. Travellers by horse and carriage who continued their journey from Fort William to Bonawe or Oban faced major difficulties until the early nineteenth century. William Thomson, travelling in 1785 from Oban to Appin House, noted that the road was tolerably good, but his party was obliged to cross two lochs by ferry with their horses, 'which is not a very pleasing

¹⁸⁷ Faujas, *Travels*, vol. i, pp. 313-314. On the dreadful condition and the dangers of the road from Dalmally to Oban see also *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 298-299.

¹⁸⁸ See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 312-319. While being stuck in the riverbed and waiting for help, Faujas and his travelling companions realised the beauty of the spot and got carried away by 'Ossian' enthusiasm. They mistook a local miller for the Celtic bard before being 'rescued' by Highlanders. Despite this Romantic episode, Faujas insisted on the truth of his nightly adventure. He advised future travellers to set out early from Oban to Dalmally and not to travel from Bonawe to Oban by night or in bad weather. When dusk fell, travellers should stay instead in the little inn above the bridge of Bonawe because there were no villages between Bonawe and Oban.

¹⁸⁹ See Burrell, *Northern Tour*, p. 88.

undertaking, the currents being very rapid'.¹⁹⁰ The Pole Maximilien Lazowski, who made the grand Highland tour with his French pupil Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld in 1786, nearly drowned in the Falls of Lora at the entrance of Loch Etive. The falls could only be safely passed at high tide. However, his boatmen tried to cross the bar an hour before high tide, their boat was spun round by the current, and Lazowski and the crew narrowly missed being smashed against the rocks before they were finally rescued by local fishermen.¹⁹¹ By 1803 things had hardly improved, and travellers still faced the same difficulties in crossing Loch Etive. Dorothy and William Wordsworth encountered a ferry that was unsuitable for carrying a horse and carriage. When the boatmen finally managed to push the horse onto the ferry, it was so frightened that Dorothy Wordsworth feared it would stamp through the bottom of the ferry, capsize the boat and drown the whole crew. Fortunately, they reached the other side, and at Loch Creran Wordsworth decided to swim the horse over after her experience at the Loch Etive ferry.¹⁹²

Travelling the Highlands by coach was still difficult. Many smaller roads were not suitable for coaches, and some travellers had to send their carriage a long way round before they could continue their journey. Bishop Forbes realised, on his visit to the diocese of Argyll in 1770, that the roads west of Fort William were hardly suitable for his carriage. On his way to Ballachulish he became stuck at an enclosure that had to be taken down by the locals to free his carriage. He noted that at this occasion the country folk gathered in order to 'see a Chaise where a Chaise never was before'.¹⁹³ Before reaching Ballachulish, Forbes had to admit that the roads were too narrow. He decided to return the chaise to Fort William and to send it instead via Kinlochleven. However, this was easier said than done, and the turning of the chaise

¹⁹⁰ [W. Thomson], *Prospects And Observations; Or A Tour In England And Scotland* (London, 1791), p. 113. [hereafter: Thomson, *Prospects*] In 1795 the Reverend John Henry Michell and the Duke of Somerset faced similar problems in transporting their chaise over Loch Etive and Loch Creran. See J.H. Michell, *The Tour Of The Duke Of Somerset, And The Rev. J. H. Michell, Through Parts Of England, Wales, And Scotland, In The Year 1795* (London, 1845), pp. 103-104. [hereafter: Michell, *Tour*]

¹⁹¹ See N. Scarfe (ed.), *To the Highlands in 1786* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 185-187. [hereafter: Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*] The ferry across the tidal basin of the South Esk near Montrose caused travellers by horse and carriage similar difficulties until a timber bridge was built in 1793-96.

¹⁹² See D. Wordsworth, *Recollections Of A Tour Made In Scotland A.D. 1803*, ed. by J.C. Shairp (3rd edn. Edinburgh, 1894), pp. 153-157. [hereafter: Wordsworth, *Tour*] Wordsworth's account was first published in 1874.

¹⁹³ Forbes, *Journals*, p. 302. Johnson and Boswell abandoned their chaise at Inverness in 1773. The Fort Augustus to Bernera road was also unsuitable for carriages.

on the narrow road above a precipice turned out to be a major difficulty that could only be solved ‘with much ado, by the management of men’s hands’.¹⁹⁴

The number of visitors to the Highlands from the 1760s until the mid-1770s remained comparatively small.¹⁹⁵ Due to the gaps in the road network hardly any of them travelled by carriage. Most of these visitors travelled on horseback and either stuck to the main roads, or continued on foot once they left them. The Highlands beyond Glen Mor and the Hebrides, apart from Mull, Iona and Staffa, remained largely isolated and were ignored by the ordinary tourist or traveller.¹⁹⁶ Pioneers to these areas like James Robertson, Thomas Pennant, or Johnson and Boswell had to renounce the comforts of carriages and inns at regular distances and had instead to walk and rely on the hospitality of the Highlanders.

By the 1780s touring the Highlands had received an additional boost and had become extremely popular. The Romantic movement, the ‘discovery’ of the Fingal’s Cave on Staffa by Sir Joseph Banks in 1772, and Johnson’s controversial *A Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1775) caused a sharp rise in visitors.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 303. In 1769 Pennant found the military roads generally excellent, ‘but from *Fort William* to *Kinloch-Leven*, very injudiciously planned, often carried far about, and often so steep as to be scarce surmountable; whereas had the engineer followed the track used by the inhabitants, those inconveniences would have been avoided’. Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 213.

¹⁹⁵ For the 1760s and 1770s there are on average the accounts of two to three travellers per year. For the 1780s and 1790s this number rises to five to ten accounts per year. See Mitchell, ‘List’.

¹⁹⁶ This was confirmed by Knox’s remarks about the poor infrastructure north and west of Inverness that deterred travellers from visiting the area. The poor state of the roads, the lack of bridges, and the old and rotten ferries caused travellers great inconveniences. See J. Knox, *A View Of The British Empire, More Especially Scotland* (3rd edn. London, 1785), vol. ii, pp. 477-478. [hereafter: Knox, *View*]

¹⁹⁷ The discovery of ‘Fingal’s Cave’ on the island of Staffa by Joseph Banks in 1772 was coincidental. First of all, Banks had intended to accompany James Cook on his second expedition to the Pacific, but, when he was rejected by Cook, he decided to go instead on an expedition to Iceland. On his way through the Hebrides to Iceland, a Mr Leach informed Banks about the natural curiosities and basaltic pillars that could be found on Staffa. Banks became interested in Staffa and decided to have a look at it, as it was on his way to Iona. He communicated his account and drawings of Staffa and Fingal’s Cave to Pennant, who included them into his *Tour And Voyage 1772*. Pennant had not visited Staffa. The international success of Pennant’s travelogue introduced Staffa to a wide audience in Great Britain and on the Continent. Banks was very enthusiastic about his ‘discovery’ and commented on the grandeur of Fingal’s Cave: ‘Compared to this what are the cathedrals or the palaces built by man. Mere models or playthings imitations as diminutive as his works will always be when compared to those of nature.’ R.A. Rauschenberg (ed.), ‘The Journals Of Joseph Banks’s Voyage Up Great Britain’s West Coast To Iceland And To The Orkney Isles. July to October, 1772’, *Proceedings Of The American Philosophical Society*, vol. cxvii, no. 3 (Philadelphia, 1973), p. 207. [hereafter: Rauschenberg (ed.), ‘Banks’s Voyage’] According to Sarah Murray, Mr Leach was ‘a speculative gentleman from Ireland’. Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 182.

The Highlands were now regarded as a place of natural beauty, and the Highlanders were no longer considered dangerous rebels but ‘noble savages’.

By the 1780s the Highlands south of Glen Mor were prepared to receive the ever-growing numbers of visitors. The small and grand Highland tours were no longer a challenge. Accommodation along both routes was easily available, and the horses could be rested and fed at all inns. Although innkeepers also hired out mounts, fresh horses were available only at the major inns. A full service of fresh horses and post-chaises at every stage along the roads was not yet established all over the north of Scotland. Taylor and Skinner, therefore, informed travellers in their ‘List of the Stages on the Great Roads’ that ‘there are good Inns on all the Roads, with Post Chaises and Horses at every Stage, as far North as Inverness by Aberdeen.’¹⁹⁸ This addition clearly shows that the inns and stage posts in the Highlands and north of Glen Mor still lagged behind the infrastructure provided for travellers along the east coast of Scotland. Many keepers of the smaller inns could not afford to keep a large number of horses on standby. They had not the stables or the hay, corn and straw to offer such a service. Therefore, travellers could still face difficulties in getting fresh horses at minor inns.¹⁹⁹ Travellers in the Highlands also had to provide their own coaches. Emilie Harmes hired (in 1800) a coach in Glasgow for her journey to Oban. The return journey from Oban to Dunkeld was made in a coach from Inveraray, the only place where travellers could hire a coach along these routes. Although travelling in the Highlands was very popular by 1800, the hiring out of coaches seems to have been an unprofitable business, even along the stages of the small Highland tour. The English landscape painter Joseph Farington made the small tour of the Highlands in 1801 and noted that there were no chaises kept at Callander, Killin, Tyndrum,

¹⁹⁸ *Taylor and Skinner’s Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain, Or Scotland* (London, 1776), [p. 3].

¹⁹⁹ See, for example, Mary Hanway’s problems in getting horses that did not shy. The Edinburgh engineer John Baine had serious problems in getting a pair of horses at Blair Atholl in September 1792. See NMS, J. Baine, ‘Journey to the Highlands’, MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fos. 15-23. [hereafter: NMS, Baine, ‘Journey’, MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B] This is a transcript of the unconnected notes of Baine’s travels (EUL, J. Baine, ‘Narrative of a tour in the Highlands in 1793’ [sic, recte 1792], MS. Dc.6.95.). Baine was on a mission to Loch Bay in Skye, where he was to inspect the building of a pier on behalf of the British Fisheries Society. The Duke of Atholl, member of that society, refused Baine’s request for horses and bluntly replied: ‘Hire them, I am no horse hirer.’ NMS, Baine, ‘Journey’, MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fo. 15. The smaller inns had no facilities to provide fresh horses. This delayed also the establishment of a daily mail-coach from Perth to Inverness until 1836. See Haldane, *Scottish Posts*, pp. 99-101. This confirms the difficulties travellers sometimes had on this route in getting fresh horses.

Dalmally and Kenmore. He reported that the innkeepers at these villages had kept chaises from 1791 to 1793, but had lost money on the venture. The landlady of the inn at Killin told Farington that her husband had lost £10 a year while he kept a chaise. The innkeepers, therefore, had abandoned this service, and travellers had to hire coaches for the Highlands at Edinburgh, Stirling or Glasgow.²⁰⁰

Many of the inns along the military roads developed from the camps that were built about every ten miles for the soldiers formerly employed in road making. These inns were usually called the ‘kingshouses’ as they were situated along the king’s roads. They were run or let out by the government and subsidised with money from the Forfeited Estates. These inns made life much easier for travellers, who no longer had to depend on letters of introduction to the local gentlemen. They were able, therefore, to make more flexible arrangements for the stopovers and stages of their tours. The kingshouses were usually well stocked with provisions for travellers and their horses so that their parties no longer had to carry huge amounts of provisions. Nevertheless, letters of introduction remained important for entertainment and ‘socialising’ in the evening.²⁰¹

In addition to the kingshouses, a number of inns for travellers were built along the main routes by private means. The Duke of Argyll, for example, built a new inn at Inveraray in 1750 and upgraded the one at Arrochar in 1787.²⁰² The Earl of

²⁰⁰ See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, p. 1652.

²⁰¹ See, for example, Faujas, *Travels*, vol. i, pp. 251-258. Faujas was lavishly entertained by the Duke of Argyll who also gave him valuable information and assistance for his further tour to Staffa.

²⁰² See NLS, W. Hastings, ‘Journal of a tour in the Highlands’, Acc. 4462, fos. 57-59. [hereafter: NLS, Hastings, ‘Journal’, Acc. 4462] This is a microfilm of BL, Add. MS. 39,889. Hasting’s draft of this tour consists of NLS, MSS. 19200-1. Hastings complained, however, that the newly upgraded inn at Arrochar was very poorly managed. By 1789 it seems to have been better run and was referred to as ‘a good Inn’. NLS, ‘A Tour in Scotland’, MS. 1080, fo. 24r. Most travellers rated the new inn at Inveraray as excellent and the best in the Highlands. However, Robert Burns was not treated very well on his visit in 1787 because the innkeeper was too occupied with the overflow of guests from the Duke of Argyll. Burns is said to have inscribed the following epigram in one of the windows:

Whoe’er he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he come to wait upon
The Lord their God – his Grace.

There’s naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger;
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in an anger.

Breadalbane upgraded the inn at Killin, and the Duke of Atholl built an inn at Blair.²⁰³

However, the accommodation and provisions varied considerably and so did the accounts about the inns in Scotland. The picture for the 1750s and 1760s is contradictory and inconclusive. The Reverend John Wesley, who travelled along the east coast to Inverness in 1753, noted about the inns in Scotland:

What miserable accounts pass current in England of the inns in Scotland! Yet here [Thornhill], as well as wherever we called in our whole journey, we had not only everything we wanted, but everything readily and in good order, and as clean as I ever desire.²⁰⁴

This view was strongly contradicted by the Reverend Francis Gastrell in 1760.²⁰⁵ Gastrell travelled most of the Wade road from Dunkeld to Inverness in a carriage and returned via the east coast of Scotland. He took notes of all the inns he stayed in and bitterly complained about the filthiness of the accommodation and the poor quality of the food. He pronounced the inns and accommodation at Ecclefechan, Moffat, Dalnacardoch, Aviemore, Turriff and Laurencekirk as very filthy. In some of these inns he returned the food and preferred to eat his own provisions. He was, however, quite pleased with the claret served in the Scottish inns.²⁰⁶ At Aviemore two

Quoted in R. Chambers (ed.), *The Life And Works Of Robert Burns*, vol. ii (Edinburgh, 1851), p. 99. [hereafter: Chambers (ed.), *Life And Works Of Robert Burns*] Burns had provided himself with a diamond with which he scratched verses on the windows of inns.

²⁰³ Travellers' impressions of these inns varied widely. In 1775 the Reverend Alexander Carlyle described the inn at Killin as 'a well built publick house', run by a landlord and landlady from Cumberland, and the inn at Blair as 'an Excellent Publick house'. NLS, A. Carlyle, 'Aug. 1775, Highland Excursion', MS. 23771, fos. 4r., 15v. [hereafter: NLS, Carlyle, 'Excursion 1775', MS. 23771] Colonel Thornton described the inn at Killin as the best he had ever seen, and the one at Blair as tolerably comfortable. See Thornton, *Sporting Tour*, pp. 55, 66. His praise of the inn at Killin might have been biased because he claimed that it was run by a fellow Yorkshireman who knew him well. John Baine described the inn at Blair in 1792 as one of the worst in the Highlands. See NMS, Baine, 'Journey', MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fo. 16.

²⁰⁴ Wesley, *Journal*, vol. iv (London, 1913), p. 61. Wesley (1703-1791), the founder of the Methodist Church, went on 21 preaching tours to Scotland between 1751 and 1790.

²⁰⁵ NLS, F. Gastrell, 'Journey in Scotland', Acc. 5741. [hereafter: NLS, Gastrell, 'Journey', Acc. 5741]

²⁰⁶ Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travellers generally agreed that there was good French claret to be had even in the poorer Scottish inns. See the two English travellers in 1704 and 1705. See also Harley, 'Journey', p. 113. Even in the early nineteenth century, many travellers were astonished at the excellent quality of wine served in the Highland inns. The English landscape painter Joseph Farington summarised (in 1801) that 'the Wine is much better than will usually be found at English Inns'. Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, p. 1663. According to Farington, the wine at Perth was 'very well', at Dunkeld 'middling', at Blair Atholl 'middling', at Kenmore 'very well', at Killin 'very well', at Tyndrum 'excellent', at Inveraray 'very well' and at Arrochar 'excellent'. *Ibid.*, vol. v, pp. 1738-1739. No inn in England got an 'excellent' rating for its wine. Duncan Forbes of Culloden gave a vivid example of how much wine and liquor some travellers drank on their journeys.

travellers who arrived after Gastrell's party had to spend the night in a dirty hut among their horses because there was not enough accommodation at the inn for more than one travelling party. Gastrell's comments about the filthy state of the inns in Scotland were shared by most of his fellow Englishmen in the mid-eighteenth century as Scotland still struggled to shake off its image as a filthy nation.²⁰⁷ It is not surprising that the only inn Gastrell was pleased with was run by the wife of an Englishman at Perth.

In 1771 the *Gentleman's Magazine* included a 'List of Inns and Inn-keepers in Scotland' that assessed among others the inns along the roads from Crieff and Dunkeld to Inverness. Again, the assessments varied widely, and the inns at Dalwhinnie, Dalmagarry and Inverness were given very poor ratings. The entries for Dalwhinnie and Dalmagarry read: 'horrid single house, kept by a Highland savage,

He drank on several evenings during a journey from Leith to Inverness, via the east coast of Scotland in April 1715, up to nine or ten bottles of wine besides strong ale. See appendix no. II of *Major Fraser's Manuscript*, ed. by Alexander Fergusson (Edinburgh, 1889), vol. ii, pp. 159-169. Edmund Burt enjoyed, in the mid-1720s, the hospitality of Duncan Forbes of Culloden at Culloden House and noted: 'Few go away sober at any time; and for the greatest part of his guests, in the conclusion, they cannot go at all.' Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 135.

²⁰⁷ See also the image of the 'filthy Scots' in the satirical accounts and fictitious travels to Scotland. Most foreign visitors started their tour at Edinburgh, and the filthy state of the Old Town did little to give a favourable impression of Scotland. Jemima Grey, who called on her Highland tour in 1755 at Edinburgh, was disgusted about the appearance of the capital. She experienced the town of Edinburgh as 'certainly the worst & dirtiest in the world' and described the closes as 'dark, dirty & stinking beyond description'. Her judgement on Edinburgh read: 'In short I never saw a Town I could so little bear to live in as Edinburgh.' Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, J. Grey, 'Journal of a Northern Tour 1755', MS. L30/9A/7, fos. 31-32. [hereafter: Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, Grey, 'Northern Tour 1755', MS. L30/9A/7] This was confirmed by Francis Gastrell. See NLS, Gastrell, 'Journey', Acc. 5741, fo. 13. John Wesley, who was otherwise quite pleased with the inns in Scotland, noted, during a visit in 1761, the filth in Edinburgh's High Street: 'But how can it be suffered that all manner of filth should still be thrown even into this street continually. Where are the magistracy, the gentry, the nobility of the land? Have they no concern for the honour of their nation? How long shall the capital city of Scotland, yea, and the chief street of it, stink worse than a common sewer? Will no lover of his country, or of decency and common sense, find a remedy for this?' Wesley, *Journal*, vol. iv (London, 1913), p. 452. In 1795 the English businessman and traveller John Pease made the following remarks on the state of public hygiene in Edinburgh and Scotland: 'The Scotch seem to be an improving People; but I am sorry to say their Shitteries are in a state of Barbarism – the *Situation* chose to build it in, the *place* itself; the many *Daubs* upon the Wall, the Condition of the *Seat*, and the intolerable *Stench* issuing from it, will be an eternal Reflection upon the Nation.' J. Pease, 'Journal of a Traveller in Scotland 1795-1796', *SHR*, vol. xxxvi (1957), p. 35. [hereafter: Pease, 'Journal 1795-1796'] The original journals are NLS, MSS. 6319-6321. The German traveller Johann Georg Kohl visited Edinburgh in 1842 and recollected that the Irish population in the Old Town and the Canongate used to keep their pigs inside their tenements. The police tried to remove these pigs in the wake of a cholera epidemic, but had to lower them down on ropes from the fourth floor because they had been too well fed to be driven down through the narrow doors and staircases. See J.G. Kohl, *Travels In Scotland* (London, 1844), pp. 41-42. Such incidents give an idea of the filthiness of the Old Town until well into the nineteenth century. In the Old Town of Edinburgh there were a major cholera epidemic in 1831-32 and frequent outbreaks of typhoid in the 1830s and 1840s.

with four thumbs' and 'execrable, filthy hut'.²⁰⁸ Until the 1770s travellers could never be sure what they would encounter in Highland inns and often had bizarre experiences. An unidentified lady in the entourage of Bishop Percy in 1773 was given, late in the evening, the so-called 'best chamber' in the inn at Cairndow at Loch Fyne. However, she heard snores and found a naked hidden Highlander sleeping in a bed that she had taken for a clothes press. On complaining about having to share the room with a naked Highlander, she was given what she supposed to be a room of her own. However, she soon heard snoring again, and the next morning she realised that she had shared the room with no less than three soldiers and two elderly Highlanders who had slept hidden in various presses.²⁰⁹

Towards the close of the century conditions seem to have improved, and most travellers agreed that the inns along the main roads provided acceptable to good standards of service. Lazowski and his pupil La Rochefoucauld spent a year in Suffolk in 1784, travelling England extensively in 1785, before setting out for the Highlands of Scotland in 1786. They now knew both countries, and La Rochefoucauld observed that in Scotland 'The inns are not numerous and are apt to be not very agreeable, but you will find several places where we were well fed: in Edinburgh, we lived in luxury.'²¹⁰ He made particular complaints that the inns (as anything else) in Scotland were not so clean as those in England.²¹¹ His tutor Lazowski, on the contrary, very much appreciated even the limited comforts that the

²⁰⁸ *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xli (London, 1771), p. 544. According to the author of this list, the citizens of Edinburgh acknowledged that they had the worst inns in all Scotland. The author applied the same to their taverns. See *ibid.*, pp. 543-544. The Englishman Edward Topham, who spent the winter 1774-75 in Edinburgh, confirmed the poor state of the inns in the capital. See [E. Topham], *Letters From Edinburgh* (London, 1776), pp. 17-24. [hereafter: Topham, *Letters*]

²⁰⁹ See BL, T. Percy, 'Observanda in the Tour into Scotland, Aug. 8, 1773', Add. MS. 39,547, fos. 20v.-22r. [hereafter: BL, Percy, 'Tour 1773', Add. MS. 39,547] The two elderly Highlanders turned out to be the parents of one of the damsels of the inn.

²¹⁰ Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 226. In many Scottish inns the food was better than it could be assumed from the outside appearance of the inn. Lazowski wrote that the Ship Inn in Bervie was 'pitiful', and that the only inn between Stonehaven and Aberdeen was 'less a house than a cabin'. However, in Bervie they dined on 'good bread, game, good beer, wine, and even a sweet course'. Their accounts of the other inn varied. Although they could not get any bread, Lazowski was obviously pleased with the menu: 'And yet there wasn't too much to complain of: one can dine well enough, with veal cutlets, fresh eggs and slices of grilled beef.' La Rochefoucauld did not share his companion's view and described the meat as 'wretched'. *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 147. Scarfe thinks he has identified the latter inn as Jeally Brans Inn (5½ miles from Stonehaven, 8½ miles from Aberdeen).

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

Highland inns offered to hungry and tired travellers. After a journey by boat from Fort William to Portnacroish he commented on the local inn:

There's no choice of inns here in the Highlands. There's usually one at the end of a stage, a day's journey. Obviously they aren't very sophisticated, but it's impossible to find them wretched or inadequate. You always seem to be able to find tea, sugar, rum and wine; and, to eat, as we did here, fresh eggs, calf's head ragoût, boiled chicken, and an excellent bullock's tongue, with a potato cake.²¹²

However, travellers' impressions of the inns differed widely, even if they stayed at the same inns in the same year or just one year apart from each other. A close examination of twelve journeys that were mainly made along the routes of the small or grand Highland tours between 1786 and 1796 shows that the great majority of these travellers regarded the inns as acceptable or good. Henry Skrine (small tour in 1787, grand tour in 1793) was the only traveller who found them to be very poor. Two unidentified authors (of a small tour in 1789²¹³ and a grand tour in 1794²¹⁴) and Eliza Dawson (small tour in 1786²¹⁵) assessed them as varying from poor to good, whereas the remainder of the travellers regarded them as acceptable to very good.²¹⁶

²¹² Ibid., p. 184. This was surely not applicable to the General's Hut, an inn halfway on the road from Inverness to Fort Augustus. La Rochefoucauld noted: 'The beds are only rough bits of wood nailed together, with straw for warmth. Chairs are tree-stumps. The light gets in only through a door which serves as door, chimney and window. The straw roof-thatch is full of holes and used as a hen-roost.' Ibid., p. 167. Moreover, the innkeeper and his family all suffered from scabies. La Rochefoucauld refused their oatcakes and, donning gloves, ate nothing but fresh eggs. In 1788 A. L. wrote the following about the General's Hut: 'Here you meet with nothing but Meanness Dirt and Misery.' NLS, A.L., 'Tour 1788', Acc. 10285, fo. 9. He said the same about the inn at Letter Findlay and summarised: 'Let no Traveller expect any thing further at these Houses than Corn for his Horses, and if the weather is by any means tolerable he will find himself infinitely more comfortable in the open atmosphere than surrounded by walls, containing Stench and Filth.' Ibid., fo. 10. The General's Hut must have declined rapidly in the late 1770s and 1780s. At their visit in 1773 Johnson and Boswell had found the inn 'not ill-stocked with provisions'. Johnson, *Journey*, p. 68.

²¹³ NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080.

²¹⁴ NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278.

²¹⁵ NLS, E. Dawson, 'A Tour through part of England and Scotland, by Eliza Dawson in the Year 1786', Acc. 12017. [hereafter: NLS, Dawson, 'Tour 1786', Acc. 12017]

²¹⁶ These travellers were Nathaniel Phillips (Mull and small tour in 1791), Robert Heron (small tour in 1792), John Lettice (grand tour in 1792), Thomas Pakenham, 2nd Earl of Longford, (small tour in 1793), R. Willis (from Dunkeld to Elgin, via Aviemore and Dulsie Bridge, in 1793), Chevalier de La Tocnaye (grand tour in 1793) and Charles Hatchett (small tour in 1796). These travellers were also generally pleased with the conditions of the military roads. Henry Skrine's view about the decay of the roads and inns in the Highlands, therefore, cannot be considered to be representative. This survey does not include the small Highland tour in 1796 by John Henry Manners, 5th Duke of Rutland. The duke did not make use of the local inns, but stayed with the local nobility. Haldane's conclusion, that until the early nineteenth century many of the Highland inns were 'still only wayside cottages providing little more than the rough spirit, illicitly distilled' and had hardly any comfort, is unjustified. Haldane, *Drove Roads*, p. 42. See also Haldane, *New Ways*, pp. 178-182. This neither reflects the improvement of the Highland inns along the main roads in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, nor was it confirmed by the majority of the late eighteenth-century travellers.

In 1792 Robert Heron (small tour) and John Lettice (grand tour) travelled the Highlands without knowledge of each other's plans. They subsequently agreed that there were no better inns to be found than in Scotland and particularly in the Highlands.²¹⁷

Although the inns had clearly improved towards the end of the eighteenth century, Scotland was still lagging behind by English standards. Additionally, Scotland was still suffering from a severe 'image problem'. The comments, made by the English landscape painter Joseph Farington during his tour of Scotland in 1801, show how difficult it was to demolish old stereotypes. Every inn he lodged at in England and Scotland was assessed on a scale ranging from 'excellent' to 'bad'.²¹⁸ Farington assessed the inns at Edinburgh, Kenmore, Arrochar and Dumfries as 'excellent'. The inns at Dunbar, Perth, Weem (near Aberfeldy), Killin, Tyndrum, Inveraray, Cairndow, Hamilton, Moffat and Gretna Hall were assessed as 'very well'. The inns at Dunkeld, Lanark and Douglas Mill (Douglas) were assessed as 'comfortable'. The inns at Haddington, Kinross, Dumbarton and Annan were assessed as 'middling'. The inns at Pease Bridge (1.25 mile south-east of Cockburnspath), Roslin, Queensferry, Blair Atholl, Dalmally and Luss were assessed as 'indifferent'.²¹⁹ The inns at Musselburgh and Elvanfoot were the only inns in Scotland assessed as 'bad'. Farington assessed in total 50 inns in England and 29 in Scotland. An analysis in statistical terms shows the poorer standard in Scotland.²²⁰

²¹⁷ See R. Heron, *Observations Made In A Journey Through The Western Counties Of Scotland* (Perth, 1793), vol. i, p. 264. [hereafter: Heron, *Observations*] See also J. Lettice, *Letters On A Tour Through Various Parts Of Scotland, In The Year 1792* (London, 1794), pp. 235, 361. [hereafter: Lettice, *Letters*] Skrine did not share this view in 1793 when he complained about the falling standards of the inns along the military roads.

²¹⁸ See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, pp. 1737-1739. Also subsequent references in the text if not stated otherwise.

²¹⁹ Farington assessed the inn at Luss as 'indifferent' but 'Better than 13 years ago'.

²²⁰ This analysis does not include the Tontine Inn at Glasgow. According to Farington, the Tontine was considered 'the first place for accomodation in Glasgow'. *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 1666. Nonetheless, he assessed the Tontine as 'House good – bad waiting', but did not assign a particular category to the inn. He complained: 'With regard to the Tontine Tavern as a place to reside at I have to say that the rooms are very good, and the attendance the most negligent. Then, the provissions are served moderately yet perhaps as well as they can afford, and the Wine is tolerable. – On the whole it is not a comfortable House, everything seems disorderly and confused. No one seems to be attentive or responsible.' *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 1680. Farington presumed that the Star Inn was more pleasantly situated and offered better service. The overwhelming majority of late eighteenth-century travellers, however, was very pleased with the Tontine.

| | England | per cent | Scotland | per cent |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 'Excellent' | 19 | 38% | 4 | 13.8% |
| 'Very Well' | 19 | 38% | 10 | 34.5% |
| 'Comfortable' | 2 | 4% | 3 | 10.3% |
| 'Middling' | 5 | 10% | 4 | 13.8% |
| 'Improving' | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| 'Indifferent' | 4 | 8% | 6 | 20.7% |
| 'Bad' | 1 | 2% | 2 | 6.9% |
| Inns assessed | 50 | 100% | 29 | 100% |

Although the inns in Scotland were (in statistical terms) only slightly worse than their English counterparts, Farington's remarks give a rather different impression. At Tyndrum he commented on Scotland:

The great objection to the Scotch is their want of cleanliness, of this they seem to have no feeling beyond what is forced upon them. At their Inns tolerable & often very good rooms will be found, and they so far comply with the Customs in the South as to furnish their Tables in a suitable manner, but whoever ventures to the Kitchen if not very indifferent as to what is neat or dirty will have cause to retire quickly that the relish for his dinner may not be abated. In short where the Scotch may be said to be left to themselves they live in a state of disorder, smoke and filth, most disgusting to those who are accustomed to the polished neatness and regularity which is so generally found in England.²²¹

A comparison of the above figures with Farington's remarks clearly shows that the real difference between England and Scotland was smaller than his comments suggested. In the common perception, however, Scotland still struggled to shake off its image as a filthy nation. Therefore, it is not surprising that Farington's comment on leaving Scotland echoed the two English travellers who visited Scotland in 1704 and 1705:

At Dumfries, & at Gretna Hall, we found a material difference in the Inns from what we have lately been accustomed to. An attention to the minutiae of convenience & a neatness which farther North is seldom seen. – Indeed it began to appear like travelling in England.²²²

In 1793 the Englishman R. Willis was full of praise for the military roads and the inns alongside. The journal of his tour to Nairn and Moray suggests that travellers

²²¹ Ibid., vol. v, p. 1657.

²²² Ibid., vol. v, p. 1692. See also chapter 4.1.4.

did not suffer from a want of provisions in the Highlands. He wrote about his stay at the inn at Pitmain:

The cheapness of the inns is wonderful. We had to-day for dinner, fine fresh trout, a shoulder of mutton, two fowls and bacon, hung beef, and salmon salted, vegetables, cheese, and an excellent bottle of port; and the sum total was four shillings and twopence.²²³

Provisions seem to have been easily available at the end of the eighteenth century, and most travellers agreed that Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, was a comparatively cheap destination. The English agriculturalist Matthew Culley travelled in 1775 to Ross-shire, Sutherland and Caithness, and spoke very favourably of the cheapness of victuals in Scotland and particularly in the Highlands. He commented:

Any person who has lived any time in other parts of the kingdom cannot fail to remark the low price of victuals and of every article of life, in these northern parts of the kingdom. The difference one finds in this respect is indeed surprising. At Helmsdale, for instance, my companion and I both breakfasted, and each of us had our horses twice fed, besides some linen washed which we had left here, and yet the whole charge only amounted to 1/ 6d. This, however, was greatly short of another instance of the same kind which occurred to us at a farming inn in Caithness, where three of us dined upon the good plain cheer of the country, and had also the horses well fed all of which cost us no higher charge than 4d.²²⁴

An unidentified traveller to Nairn and Moray dined in September 1779 at Elgin on broth, haddocks, flounders, corned beef, bacon, ham, chickens, spinach, cabbage, quarter of mutton, tarts, rice pudding, potatoes, bread and beer, cheese, good porter and good wine. He noted that all dishes were 'well served', 'excellent & well dressed', and that they were not charged more than eight pence per head.²²⁵ La Rochefoucauld's summary of his 1786 tour was that travellers were not overcharged at the inns in Scotland and that it was a cheap country to travel and live in. He reckoned that travelling expenses in Scotland were about a third of those in England, while the living costs were only about a quarter of those in England.²²⁶ Joseph Farington confirmed the moderate bills at the inns in Scotland. He rested on his way

²²³ [R.L. Willis], *Journal Of A Tour From London To Elgin Made About 1790* (Edinburgh, 1897), p. 65. [hereafter: Willis, *Tour*] For his praise of the roads and inns see *ibid.*, p. 64. Useful impressions of the state of the Scottish inns and the hospitality of the landlords and landladies can be found in the notes to W. Scott, *Waverley* (Harmondsworth, 1972), pp. 73, 496-497.

²²⁴ Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 134. However, like most of his compatriots, Culley complained repeatedly about the filthy state of the Scottish inns. See *ibid.*, pp. 95, 106, 107, 136.

²²⁵ NAS, 'Journey to the north August 1779', Clerk of Penicuik Muniments, GD18/2118, no pagination. See entry for Friday, 2 [recte 3] September.

²²⁶ See Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, pp. 224, 226, 152.

to Inveraray and Dalmally in the summer of 1792 at the Hamilton Arms and noted: 'I do not recollect that in any part of Scotland we have been charged more than 1s / 6d for eating, here it was only 1s & we had 3 or 4 things.'²²⁷ In the summary of his 1801 small tour of the Highlands he mentioned that provisions were easily available. The prices charged varied locally, but were, generally speaking, moderate.²²⁸ Nathaniel Phillips's expenses of his tour through the Highlands in summer 1791 suggest, however, a slightly different picture. According to his bills, it was not difficult to spend quite a lot of money for a decent meal in Scotland. Phillips dined, for example, for 14 shillings at Haddington, for 6s. 8d. at Dumbarton, for 4s. 9d. at the inn at Cairndow, and for 5s. 6d. at Taynuilt Tavern.²²⁹ His servants, however, often dined and breakfasted for less than a shilling. Phillips's travelling expenses amounted to the small fortune of £211 9s. 5½d. sterling for his 63-day tour from London to the Highlands and back. His tour included Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inveraray, Oban, the Isle of Mull, Loch Tay and Dunkeld. Unfortunately, his expenses were not specified in any great detail, with comments such as: 'Road Expenses from Edinburgh to Glasgow & through the Highlands round by Oban & the Isle of Mull £5 5s.' and 'Expenses at Edinburgh Hire of 6 Horses the tour thro' the Highlands £71 14s.'²³⁰ Phillips must have been used to a very comfortable lifestyle as he complained that there were no coffee houses in Oban and Drimnin in Morvern.²³¹ Nonetheless, he was pleased with most of the inns at which he stayed. Travellers were advised to carry sufficient Scottish notes and small change as there was a general shortage of cash in the Highlands. The innkeepers rarely accepted English notes and were often unable to change gold coins.²³² On the stages between the inns travellers could rely

²²⁷ ECL, J. Farington, 'Tour In Scotland July To September 1792 By Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook ii, fo. 10. [hereafter: ECL, Farington, 'Tour 1792', MS. QYDA 1861.792]

²²⁸ See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, pp. 1663, 1665, 1740-1741.

²²⁹ See NLS, Phillips, 'Scottish Journey 1791', Acc. 8311, no pagination. See the entries for 15 July, 24 July, 25 July, 27 July.

²³⁰ See *ibid.*, last page of the manuscript. The summary of his travel expenses does not correspond with his daily entries. Phillips mentioned that the bills for travelling through the Highlands were paid by a Mr Cameron. This suggests that not all the expenses of the travelling party may have been included in Phillips's diary. See entry for 23 August.

²³¹ See *ibid.*, entries for 28 July and 7 August. Phillips had earned a huge fortune as a sugar-planter in Jamaica.

²³² See NLS, [A.L.], 'August 1785 – Tour to Edinburgh, Stirling, Glasgow, Lough Lomond, and the Falls of Clyde in Company with Mr. Heron', Acc. 10285, [fo. 6r.]. [hereafter: NLS, A.L., 'Tour 1785', Acc. 10285] See also NLS, J. Stuart, 1st Marquess of Bute (then Lord Mountstuart), 'Journal of the tour round the Western Islands of Scotland 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 1r. [hereafter: NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587] In June 1763 the French Colonel de La Rochette noted, on his

on the hospitality of the Highlanders who usually declined to accept money for their services. When travellers stopped at their huts or shielings, they were provided with free oatcakes, butter, cheese and milk. Farington made the small tour of the Highlands in 1801 and described the unselfish modesty of the Highlanders as follows:

One quality I cannot pass unnoticed. I never travelled among a poeple who appeared to be less selfish. Any recompence offered to them for the trouble they take is recd. as more than their due. They often express that it is so, and at Cottages I found ready assistance disclaiming at the same time any view of reward.²³³

Some inns, however, had a very poor reputation. Kingshouse near the southern ascent to the Devil's Staircase, on the much-frequented road from Stirling to Fort William, was notorious among travellers for its poor and filthy condition. From a distance, the inn must have seemed like an oasis in the desert to travellers who had either passed through the barren country of the Black Mount and Rannoch Moor, or come via Glen Coe or the steep slopes of the Devil's Staircase. Its strategic position in the middle of the long and barren section of the road from Tyndrum to Fort William made it a natural resting place for travellers. The government knew about its importance and, therefore, subsidised its upkeep. Nonetheless, travellers were not at all pleased with the inn, and their accounts reflected their disappointment. William Thomson visited Kingshouse in 1785 and described it as a 'lonely hut' that suited only drovers and that had 'not a bed in it fit for a decent person to sleep in'.²³⁴ He reported that the landlord not only had the inn rent free, but was also allowed £9 per annum by the government. However, the government subsidies do not seem to have been invested in upgrading the inn, as the accounts of subsequent travellers will show. Neither did the subsidies encourage the landlords to stay long in this inhospitable place, as travellers reported a fast turnover of innkeepers. In summer 1787 James Bailey crossed the Devil's Staircase and wanted to rest at Kingshouse. He could hardly hide his disappointment:

Of provisions, at this inn, the "negative catalogue" was copious indeed; and never was outward appearance so egregiously fallacious, as in this present instance; or the old

tour to the remains of the Roman camps near Crieff in Perthshire, that money was very rare in Scotland. See NLS, de La Rochette, 'French account of a tour from Falmouth to Edinburgh and Perthshire 1763', MS. 3803, fo. 56v. [hereafter: NLS, La Rochette, 'Tour 1763', MS. 3803]

²³³ Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, p. 1664.

²³⁴ Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 120.

cautionary hint (*Fronti nulla fides*) so apposite and appropriate as when we were promising ourselves, at the least, a tolerable repast within this specious dwelling.²³⁵

The interior could in no respect match the outer appearance, and Bailey noted with disgust: ‘No Indian wigwam can, however, go beyond the interior of this edifice in poverty and filth ...’.²³⁶ His expectations of proper refreshment were bitterly disappointed. He was unable to get any provisions apart from eggs and a leg of mutton, which he described as follows: ‘A bone of mutton also was produced, but this, as it was nearly bare, and had, perhaps, passed through many and unclean hands; it disgusted as soon as seen.’²³⁷ In the inn Bailey met several people, ‘black as Cyclops, who seemed intoxicated with Whiskey’, and he took his leave of Kingshouse without regret.²³⁸ Most travellers had similar experiences at Kingshouse. It is not surprising that Mrs Murray did not recommend staying there and described it as ‘a miserable place, fit only for drovers’.²³⁹ The inn remained in an extremely poor state until far into the nineteenth century. The German traveller Eduard Meißner, for example, in 1817 missed the Devil’s Staircase on his way from Ballachulish to Fort William and went to Kingshouse instead. When he realised the condition of the inn, he declined to stay for the night and preferred to walk back all the way to Ballachulish for accommodation.²⁴⁰

Travelling along the main tourist routes did not usually cause any problems. However, travellers had to be careful that their tours did not coincide with the circuit journeys of the judges. On their circuit the judges and their clerks filled all the rooms in the local inns. In 1784 the French geologist Faujas de Saint-Fond was on his way to Staffa with an entourage of three carriages and ten persons when, unfortunately, his tour coincided with the circuit of the judge. Faujas’s travelling party had difficulties finding accommodation at Luss, Tarbet and Inveraray. At Luss they were

²³⁵ NLS, Bailey, ‘Journey’, MS. 3295, fo. 297. Bailey imitated Johnson’s account of the inn at Glenelg.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 297.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 298.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, fo. 298.

²³⁹ Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, p. 83. See also *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 343. Dorothy Wordsworth made similar complaints about its miserable and wretched state in 1803. See Wordsworth, *Tour*, pp. 176-177. This was also confirmed by R. Hill, *Extract Of A Journal Of A Second Tour From England Through The Highlands Of Scotland ...* (London, 1800), p. 24. [hereafter: Hill, *Second Tour*]

²⁴⁰ See E. Meißner, *Bemerkungen aus dem Taschenbuche eines Arztes während einer Reise von Odessa durch einen Theil von Deutschland, Holland, England und Schottland* (Halle, 1819), p. 254. [hereafter: Meißner, *Reise*]

turned away, at Tarbet some of them had to sleep in their carriages, and at Inveraray they were denied access to the inn because of the imminent arrival of the judge.²⁴¹ Fortunately, they had letters of introduction to the Duke of Argyll who entertained them cordially as his guests during their three-day stay at Inveraray Castle.²⁴² Moreover, he provided them with letters of introduction to Mr Maclean of Torloisk on Mull.

Off the main roads, inn building and services still lagged behind, and until the end of the eighteenth century, travellers faced difficulties in getting fresh horses or provisions. Joseph Farington, for example, decided in the summer of 1792 on an unusual route to Inveraray. He sailed up Loch Long and immediately faced difficulties at the inn at Lochgoilhead. Although the inn had been described to him as ‘a tolerable good one’, there were no horses available.²⁴³ The horses were in the hills and while the locals went to fetch them, Farington and his party were provided with freshly boiled eggs, good butter and oat-bread. Although the Highlanders returned after about an hour with three horses, there were no saddles available, nor could they provide a sufficient number of horses for Farington’s servants. Additionally, guides were still necessary off the main roads. On his way to the ferry to Inveraray, Farington had to take a Highlander for a guide for the road along the River Goil and through Gleann Beag (or Hell’s Glen). He described this route as ‘very broken & bad impassable by a carriage of any kind & only passable with safety for the little Horses of the Country’.²⁴⁴ Off the beaten track, most places were similar to this, and travellers still depended on the locals for guides, interpreters and assistance.

By the end of the eighteenth century, a tourist industry had developed along the main roads to satisfy the demands of the ever-increasing number of visitors to the Highlands. By then numerous guidebooks to the Highlands were published. Mrs Murray’s *Companion*, for example, included proposals for routes, information about

²⁴¹ See Faujas, *Travels*, vol. i, pp. 232-235, 241-242. Faujas met the judge two days later for dinner at Inveraray Castle. John Leyden and his party toured the Highlands in 1800 and had a similar experience at Lochgilphead. They had to clear their rooms in the local inn to make space for the sheriff and his clerks. Fortunately, the sheriff invited them to stay at his nearby seat on the shore of Loch Fyne. See J. Leyden, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800*, ed. by J. Sinton (Edinburgh, 1903), pp. 61-62. [hereafter: Leyden, *Tour*]

²⁴² John, 5th Duke of Argyll (1723-1806).

²⁴³ ECL, Farington, ‘Tour 1792’, MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook ii, fo. 20.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, notebook ii, fo. 21.

the attractions along the roads, an assessment of the inns and the road conditions, and information about the places where to rest and provide for the horses.²⁴⁵ The importance of Murray's *Companion* must not be underrated. Many visitors to the Highlands took her assessments and recommendations for gospel truth. Some innkeepers, however, felt offended by her comments. Joseph Farington was taking notes (in 1801) about the Breadalbane Arms at Killin when he was taken aside by the landlady, a Mrs McDougal. She feared that he might write an account of her inn and complained bitterly to him that in her account of Scotland, Mrs Murray had referred to the Breadalbane Arms as a house where a traveller had to bring along his own provisions and where accommodation was very bad.²⁴⁶ Mrs McDougal and her late husband felt badly treated because Mrs Murray had had no reason to give such an unfavourable account. She added that Mrs Murray later felt ashamed of her comments and, therefore, disguised her identity when she returned to Killin on her second tour of the Highlands in 1800. However, Mrs McDougal had recognised her, and Mrs Murray apologised for her unfavourable account.²⁴⁷

Interestingly, Murray's *Companion* was written for a male as well as a female audience. She did not make a particular distinction between tours suitable for men or women. This was an unusual approach at a time when women were 'tourists' and were supposed to travel only along the main roads in a 'protected environment', i.e. under the care of men. In contrast, most men considered themselves not tourists but travellers. They wanted to leave behind the 'protected environment' and the convenience and security of the main roads in search of, often imaginary, dangers

²⁴⁵ See Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, pp. 37-95. The second volume of the *Companion* (first published London, 1803) dealt with the western Highlands and the Hebrides. Two guidebooks for touring these areas were prefixed on pp. 17-110. Further guidebooks for travellers to the Highlands were: R. Heron, *Scotland Described* (Edinburgh, 1797); T. Richardson, *Guide To Loch Lomond, Loch Long, Loch Fine, And Inveraray* (1st edn. Glasgow, 1798; 2nd improved edn. Glasgow, 1799); and C. Ross, *The Traveller's Guide To Loch Lomond, And Its Environs* (Paisley, 1792). For late eighteenth-century guidebooks to Scotland see also Fordham, *Road-Books & Itineraries*, pp. 42-44. Next to these publications, the accounts of Thomas Pennant and Samuel Johnson were used as guidebooks.

²⁴⁶ Murray had given a truly damning account of the inn and the innkeeper: 'At Killin is a very bad inn, very dear, and very dirty, bad wine, bad bread; in short, if you have nothing of your own with you to eat and drink, you will be very ill off: besides, the landlord in 1796, was a drunken saucy creature; and charged much higher, and provided far worse entertainment, both for man and beast, than any other innkeeper I met with. The misfortune is, there is but one inn at Killin, and there you must sleep.' Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, p. 80.

²⁴⁷ See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, pp. 1652-1653. Farington assessed the Breadalbane Arms at Killin as 'very well', and he was assured that the inn had offered the same comfort five years earlier when Mrs Murray had called. *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 1739.

such as climbing hills or exploring cataracts. Sarah Murray did not consider travelling primarily as a gender issue. She undoubtedly considered herself a traveller and not a tourist. She claimed, at her first visit to Staffa in 1800, that she was only the ninth foreign female traveller to visit the island and the first woman to do it on her own without male company. She claimed also to have been the first woman to pass the Gulf of Corryvreckan, a notorious whirlpool between the islands of Jura and Scarba.²⁴⁸ Sarah Murray's travelogues and guidebooks were directed at a mixed audience, and the growing number of female travellers in the nineteenth century shows that travelling was no longer an exclusively male domain.

4.4.2. Travelling in the north-western Highlands and in the Hebrides

The north-western Highlands and the Hebrides remained a challenge for travellers long after touring the Highlands south of Glen Mor had become a routine trip. North of Glen Mor the infrastructure rapidly deteriorated, and travellers depended far more on the hospitality and assistance of the local population. The inns were scarce, even along important and busy routes such as the one from Inverness to the Orkney Isles. Moreover, their standard varied considerably, and travellers were advised to carry a certain amount of provisions. George Thornhill of Diddington toured the east coast of Sutherland and Caithness in 1760 and noted about the difference to the areas he had travelled before:

We found the Gentlemen very Civil and desirous of Entertaining us at their houses wch was of Great service to us in these parts as there was no other Inns in the Country than little hutts that one Could have got an egg at & no more.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 177, 283-289. The Gulf of Corryvreckan and its supposed dangers to sailors were an essential part of any geographical description or traveller's account of Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Murray provided a grossly exaggerated account of the dangers she faced when passing the whirlpool.

²⁴⁹ Huntingdon County Record Office, G. Thornhill of Diddington, 'Diary of travel: Scotland 30th June 1760', MS. TH148/5/274, fo. 14r. See also Bishop Forbes's experiences on this route in 1762. Forbes was strongly advised to buy provisions before setting out for Caithness. He was told about Caithness that it was 'so poor and despicable a Country that I could have no good thing to eat in it'. Forbes, *Journals*, p. 187. However, most of the inns along the road to Thurso were all right, and the local gentlemen were very keen to entertain the bishop. Forbes praised the generous hospitality of the gentry and the locals. The only difficulty he faced was to get proper provisions for the horses at certain inns. Matthew Culley had a similar experience in 1775 when he travelled along the east coast of Sutherland and Caithness to Dunbeath, and then crossed over the moors to Thurso and Sandside House, near Reay. He had minor difficulties in providing for his horses and himself. According to him, on the barren moors of Caithness corn and hay were scarce, and all that he could get for himself at a farmhouse next to the track was butter, eggs, milk and whisky. There he also found a spot of grass

Towards the Hebrides the roads and the travelling conditions got even worse. Caulfield had laid the foundation by building two roads to the west coast. Nonetheless, access to the Hebrides via the north-western Highlands remained difficult. The Fort Augustus to Bernera road was not suitable for carriages, and the Contin to Poolewe road was never completely finished. Moreover, the existing sections of this road were in a very poor state.

On the Hebrides travellers had either to walk or to hire local horses. These horses often had no saddles, and the only bridles available were made of wood.²⁵⁰ Guides and interpreters were essential. There existed hardly anything that deserved the term 'road', and the ordinary Hebrideans did not speak English. Another factor that made travelling in the Hebrides distinct from travelling on the mainland was the influence of the weather. The roads on the mainland allowed travelling even in adverse weather conditions. However, in the Hebrides vessels were the only means of transport between the islands, and journeys were extremely vulnerable to adverse weather. The autumn gales usually ended the travelling season by mid-September. Travellers were well advised to be back on the mainland by then if they did not want to become stuck on the islands. Nonetheless, most visitors to the Hebrides were not spared the experience of being caught and delayed by gales.

The journals of Dr Samuel Johnson's and James Boswell's joint tour to the Hebrides in 1773 show how the travelling conditions deteriorated once they left Inverness. Johnson summarised:

where he could feed his horses. George Culley later added a note to his brother's journal in which he expressed his particular gratitude to the local gentlemen for their hospitality and assistance to travellers. See Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, pp. 129, 131. Bishop Pocke also travelled along the east coast of Caithness and Sutherland on his way back from Orkney in 1760. He did not comment on the inns along the road. However, he obviously did not have any difficulties in obtaining provisions. The observations of George Thornhill, Robert Forbes and Matthew Culley were made independently and cannot have been plagiarised from one another. The image of great scarcity that was often attributed to this region was not confirmed by contemporary travellers. The inns were fewer in this area, and not all of them were well stocked. However, no contemporary traveller faced serious problems in getting accommodation or provisions.

²⁵⁰ See, for example, NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fo. 194, and Boswell, *Tour*, p. 398. In the 1720s Burt made this observation about the bridles of the Highlanders' horses: 'Instead of ropes for halters and harness, they generally make use of sticks of birch twisted and knotted together; these are called *woodies*; but some few have ropes made of the manes and tails of their horses, which are shorn in the spring for that purpose.' Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 75. Horse-collars and cruppers were usually made of straw-bands.

We were now to bid farewell to the luxury of travelling, and to enter a country upon which perhaps no wheel has ever rolled. We could indeed have used our post-chaise one day longer, along the military road to Fort *Augustus*, but we could have hired no horses beyond Inverness, and we were not so sparing of ourselves, as to lead them, merely that we might have one day longer the indulgence of a carriage.²⁵¹

At Inverness they hired four horses for themselves, their servant and the baggage. The horses belonged to two Highlanders who ran next to Johnson and Boswell to show them the way and to take the horses back once they reached the west coast. Travelling conditions on the 'Road to the Isles' were not easy. The garrison at Bernera had been reduced over the years as had spending and labour on the road leading to it. The road was steep and narrow in many places, and accommodation at the two inns at Anoch and Glenelg was indifferent at best. Johnson described Anoch and its inn as

a village in *Glenmollison* of three huts, one of which is distinguished by a chimney. Here we were to dine and lodge, and were conducted through the first room, that had the chimney, into another lighted by a small glass window.²⁵²

He later took a closer look at the inn and noted: 'The house was built like other huts of loose stones, but the part in which we dined and slept was lined with turf and wattled with twigs, which kept the earth from falling.'²⁵³ However, they were well provided with food and drink and set out the next morning for Glenelg. They were told they would find at Glenelg 'a house of lime and slate and glass'.²⁵⁴ Their expectations of magnificence were to be bitterly disappointed, and Johnson noted sarcastically about the inn:

Of the provisions the negative catalogue was very copious. Here was no meat, no milk, no bread, no eggs, no wine. ... Here however we were to stay. Whisky we might have, and I believe at last they caught a fowl and killed it.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 58. Johnson and Boswell had travelled from Edinburgh all along the Scottish east coast to Inverness by post-chaise.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 74. Should be Glen Moriston. Anoch is no longer marked on modern Ordnance Survey maps. When Bailey called at this inn in 1787, the old landlord had moved to another part of Inverness-shire. In 1773 the innkeeper had complained to Johnson and Boswell that his rent had been raised from £5 to £20 in the last 25 years, which made him seriously consider emigration to America. The inn Bailey found in 1787 was enlarged by one more apartment with glass windows and a chimney piece. The furniture was in a neat, clean state, and Bailey was provided with a dainty dinner of smelts from the River Moriston. See NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fos. 182-183.

²⁵³ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 76.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

The accommodation was even worse. There were beds available for Johnson and Boswell, but they preferred not to make immediate use of them. Johnson recollected: ‘Out of one of the beds, on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge.’²⁵⁶ Their footmen finally found some hay which Johnson ordered to be strewn on the beds before they retired for the evening. Johnson slept in his riding coat, and ‘Mr. Boswell being more delicate, laid himself sheets with hay over and under him, and lay in linen like a gentleman.’²⁵⁷ However, we know from Johnson’s letters to Mrs Thrale that this was less because of Johnson’s hardiness or Boswell’s need for comfort, than because of their fear of catching the itch.²⁵⁸ When they arrived on Skye, Johnson noted about the travelling conditions on the islands:

It need not, I suppose, be mentioned, that in countries so little frequented as the Islands, there are no houses where travellers are entertained for money. He that wanders about these wilds, either procures recommendations to those whose habitations lie near his way, or, when night and weariness come upon him, takes the chance of general hospitality. If he finds only a cottage, he can expect little more than shelter; for the cottagers have little more for themselves: but if his good fortune brings him to the residence of a gentleman, he will be glad of a storm to prolong his stay. There is, however, one inn by the sea-side at Sconsor, in Sky, where the post-office is kept.²⁵⁹

Visitors to the Hebrides still needed letters of introduction because of the small number of inns. The smaller and less-frequented islands often had no inn at all. Moreover, travelling in the islands was slow. Travellers could make up to 20 or 30 miles a day on the roads on the mainland, but on the islands they were lucky if they were able to ride their Highland horses. Often travellers could only walk next to their horses. On Skye Johnson complained: ‘A walk upon plowed ground in England is a dance upon carpets, compared to the toilsome drudgery, of wandering in Skie.’ He reckoned: ‘Twelve Miles, by computation, make a reasonable journey for a day.’²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107. On Iona Johnson and Boswell also had to sleep on hay for the lack of any other accommodation.

²⁵⁸ See B. Redford (ed.), *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, vol. ii (Oxford, 1992), p. 77. [hereafter: Johnson, *Letters*] Mrs Boswell had warned them about the dangers of catching the itch in the Highland lodgings and provided them with sheets for their protection. However, Johnson did not believe in their protective power. See also *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 72.

²⁵⁹ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 120. The Reverend Donald M’Nicol, minister of Lismore in Argyllshire, contradicted Johnson. He wrote that there were inns on Skye at Broadford, Portree and Dunvegan. See D. M’Nicol, *Remarks On Dr. Samuel Johnson’s Journey to the Hebrides* (London, 1779), p. 121. [hereafter: M’Nicol, *Remarks*] As a celebrity Johnson seldom made use of the ‘general hospitality’ of the common islanders, but preferred to stay with the local gentry.

²⁶⁰ Johnson, *Letters*, vol. ii, pp. 78, 79.

Such conditions did not fundamentally improve until the turn of the century. In some areas of the Highlands travelling conditions even got worse because of the falling government spending on road maintenance and inns and the exacerbating depopulation of the area.

The Fort Augustus to Bernera road undoubtedly suffered heavily from these developments. Once the barracks at Bernera were abandoned in 1790, the road and the inns along it must have quickly deteriorated. Baine called on his way to Skye at Anoch Inn in 1792 and described it as the worst he had ever seen in the Highlands. He complained about the lack of proper furniture and wrote that the inside of the house was as wet as the outside. He could not get any provisions for breakfast apart from cheese, butter, oat-bread and whisky. He described the condition of the road as very poor and complained bitterly about the lack of any acceptable accommodation. In one of the huts along the road he even had to share a bed with the landlord's wife.²⁶¹

When Mrs Murray returned in 1802 from Skye to Fort Augustus, things seem to have become even worse. She also complained bitterly about the poor state of the road and the want of any decent accommodation for travellers. According to her, the only accommodation available for travellers was Mr M'Rae's shieling at Cluanie, which was no more than a miserable hut.²⁶² Murray wanted the government to build decent houses for travellers at Cluanie, Anoch and Bernera. In the meantime, the inn at Anoch must have deteriorated further. She noted when she called at Anoch: 'I did not enter the hut inn at Oenoch, as the outside had a worse appearance than the shilin in Cluonie.'²⁶³ At the close of the eighteenth century the 'Road to the Isles' and the inns along the way had fallen into disrepair, and travelling to Skye was more hazardous than in Johnson's and Boswell's time.

²⁶¹ See NMS, Baine, 'Journey', MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fos. 46-49. See also his comments about the bad treatment at the inn at Bracadale on Skye. See *ibid.*, fos. 86-90. Baine was very biased against the Highlanders and considered them second-class people. This surely contributed to the unfavourable account of his journey to Skye.

²⁶² This shieling must have been roughly at the place where the Cluanie Inn now stands.

²⁶³ Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 435.

4.5. Effects of tourism

The 1760s and 1770s were a crucial period in the perception of the Highlands. Within a decade the Highlands and its population lost their image of being a threat to British civilisation and instead became the object of scientific curiosity. Various factors contributed to this dramatic change of image. First of all, the Highlanders were no longer a threat to the political stability of Great Britain. The Jacobites were finally defeated, and the Highlanders and the Highland regiments had become the king's most reliable soldiers. Moreover, the publication of James Macpherson's *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1760) sparked off the Romantic movement and spread the image of the Highlander as a 'noble savage' all over Europe. In the public perception the Highlander turned from rebel to hero, and the Highlands became a major destination for travellers from all over Europe. The perception of nature and landscape had also fundamentally changed. Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry Into The Origin of our Ideas Of The Sublime And Beautiful* (London, 1757) initiated a significant reassessment of nature, and the rough landscape of the Highlands became a major destination for artists and landscape painters such as William Gilpin or Joseph Farington. Earlier visitors to the Highlands had regarded the mountains as dreadful, naked, bleak and horrid. In a metamorphosis parallel to that undergone by the Highlander, the Highland scenery, with its mountains, torrents and waterfalls, was now considered beautiful, sublime or picturesque. Whereas in the 1720s Edmund Burt had complained about the repulsive ugliness of the Highland landscape, the English poet Thomas Gray wrote in 1765 about his feelings towards the Highlands:

I am returned from Scotland charmed with my expedition; it is of the Highlands I speak; the Lowlands are worth seeing once, but the mountains are ecstatic, and ought to be visited in pilgrimage once a year. None but those monstrous creatures of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror.²⁶⁴

Those who were able to go on a journey had money to spend, and the rising number of travellers and tourists led to the development of a tourist industry along the main roads and major tourist destinations. Tourists often needed assistance, and visitors to Scotland were usually full of praise for the help they received from the

²⁶⁴ *The Letters Of Thomas Gray*, ed. by D.C. Tovey, vol. iii (London, 1912), p. 95.

locals, but sometimes they felt overcharged and cheated. Although only a tiny minority of travellers made such complaints, their stories throw light on the way in which professions such as boatmen tried to make as much money as possible from foreign visitors. Alexander Wilson travelled the Lothians and Fife in 1789, and he described the techniques of the boatmen at Kinghorn (Fife) to swindle travellers waiting for a passage over the Firth of Forth:

The inhabitants are almost all boatmen, and their whole commerce being with strangers, whom perhaps they may never see again, makes them avaricious, and always on the catch. If a stranger comes to town at night, intending to go over next morning, he is taken into a lodging. One boatman comes in – sits down, promises to call you in the morning, assists you to circulate the liquor, and after a great deal of loquacity, departs. In a little another enters, and informs you that the fellow who is just now left you, goes not over at all; but that he goes, and for a glass of gin he will awake you, and take you along with him. Willing to be up in time, you generously treat him. According to promise, you are awakened on the morning, and assured that you have time enough to take breakfast, in the middle of which hoarse roarings alarm you, that the boat is just going off. You start up, call for your bill, the landlord appears, charges you like a nobleman – there is no time for scrupling – you are hurried away by the boatman on the one hand, and genteelly extorted by the landlord on the other, who pockets his money, and bids you haste, lest you lose your passage; and perhaps, after all, when you get on board, you are detained an hour or more by the sailors waiting for more passengers. Such, and a thousand more mean tricks, are practised on the unsuspecting stranger, and all under a show of the most extreme kindness.²⁶⁵

The impact of growing tourism on the Highlands can be shown best along the most popular routes and the places of particular interest to foreign visitors. The route through Glen Mor and boat trips from Fort William or Oban to Mull, Iona and Staffa were particularly popular. At these places the impact of tourism was clearly visible by the end of the eighteenth century. Boatmen seem to have been among the first professions to adapt to the growing number of tourists. The boatmen of Fort William, for example, asked for a comparatively high fare for the passage to Iona and Staffa, knowing well that most travellers could afford their services and were, though sometimes reluctantly, willing to pay the price demanded. However, some travellers fell victim of this pricing policy, and complaints were frequent. In 1793 the boatmen of Fort William requested four guineas for the passage to Iona and Staffa from the French émigré Chevalier de La Tocnaye. However, he could not afford that sum and had to renounce on the trip, which was supposed to be the climax of his Highland

²⁶⁵ A. Wilson, *The Poetical Works Of Alexander Wilson* (Belfast, 1844), pp. 346-347. [hereafter: Wilson, *Poetical Works*] It must be stressed that the overwhelming majority of travellers had no complaints against the boatmen at Queensferry and Kinghorn.

tour.²⁶⁶ When the Duke of Somerset and Reverend John Henry Michell returned from Staffa in July 1795, the oarsmen's demands were so excessive that an argument erupted. Revd John Michell recollected:

When we crossed to the opposite side of Mull, we had some altercation with the boatmen, whose demands were so exorbitant, that, for the first time, we had reason to lament that imposition is not confined to English boatmen.²⁶⁷

Ferrying tourists to Staffa was an extremely lucrative business given the huge margin of profit. It is not surprising that the Highlanders on Mull wanted to participate in this business and, therefore, tried to lure away travellers from the boatmen of Oban. John Stoddart was on his way from Mull to Staffa on a good, well-manned vessel he had brought from Oban when the people of Aros (Mull) persuaded him to send it back and instead use one of their boats. He recollected:

They said, that we might be detained a long while at the other side of the island: that the accumulating expence would produce no equivalent advantage, and that their own boats, which we might hire at any time, were fully equal to the one which we had brought.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ See [J. de La Tocnaye], *Promenade D'un Français Dans La Grande Bretagne* (Dublin, 1797), p. 287. [hereafter: La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*] La Tocnaye (Jacques Louis de Bougrenet, Chevalier de La Tocnaye) had fled his native country in the wake of the French Revolution and came to England in 1792. In 1793 he visited Scotland and remained until 1795. The account of his tour through England and Scotland was originally published under the title *Promenade autour de la Grande Bretagne; précédé de quelques détails sur la campagne du duc de Brunswick* (Edinburgh, 1795). La Tocnaye was short of money and, therefore, had to travel on foot. However, from his experience of a trip by coach from Glasgow to Stirling, La Tocnaye remarked that travelling by coach was so advanced and fast in Great Britain that the passengers had hardly any chance to get a reliable impression of the people, their manners and the country they were travelling through. He concluded, therefore, that the accounts of travellers by coach could not be trusted. See *ibid.*, pp. 228-229. So La Tocnaye made a virtue of necessity and travelled by foot. He intended to publish his account and took the opportunity to distinguish it from the journals of other contemporary travel writers who toured the country by horse or coach.

John Stoddart had a similar attitude towards travelling. Travellers by horse or coach, he remarked, were denied 'one very great, and very valuable source of knowledge, which belongs almost exclusively to the foot-traveller; it is a ready, and unconstrained intercourse with the people of the country'. J. Stoddart, *Remarks on Local Scenery & Manners in Scotland during the Years 1799 and 1800* (London, 1801), vol. i, p. 117. [hereafter: Stoddart, *Remarks*] Moreover, he noted that travelling by foot was common in Scotland, whereas in England it was presumed that 'nothing but necessity can compel a man to walk'. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 117. However, Stoddart and his travelling companion Mr Nattes finally purchased a Highland sheltie on which they rode alternately.

²⁶⁷ See Michell, *Tour*, p. 99. According to James MacDonald's annotations to the German translation of Faujas's *Voyage*, the fare for a boat and six oarsmen from Mull to Staffa had risen to £1 sterling in 1796. See B. Faujas de Saint-Fond, *Reise durch England, Schottland und die Hebriden ...* (Göttingen, 1799), part ii, p. 20. [hereafter: Faujas, *Reise*] This was a truly excessive fare. In the mid-1790s an average Highland subtenant or crofter earned about £8 to £10 per annum from selling two cows. The boat fare for a trip to Staffa had gone out of proportion to the level of prices and income in the Hebrides.

²⁶⁸ Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, p. 296.

A boatman from Aros guided them to the village of Lagganulva on the west side of Mull from where the boat for Staffa set out. Despite adverse weather conditions the boatmen set out for Staffa the next day, although they knew well that their efforts were doomed to fail. However, their second attempt on the following day was more successful, and Stoddart was landed safely on the island. In the end, Stoddart paid the boatmen for both days. According to him, the regular price of a boat to Staffa and back was fifteen shillings and two bottles of whisky to the oarsmen, in addition to which he paid five shillings for the failed attempt and gave the boatmen another two bottles of whisky.²⁶⁹ Frequent complaints by travellers suggest that overcharging and cheating tourists was not uncommon among the boatmen of Oban and Mull. John Wood and his party sailed (in 1801) on a hired boat from Auchnacraig on Mull to Oban, when the boatmen suddenly refused to land them at Oban under the pretext that the wind had shifted. Instead, they offered to land them on the island of Kerrera, opposite Oban. However, when they were just about to land on Kerrera, the skipper asked them under the pretence of another shift of the wind how much they would give if he tried to land them at Oban. As Wood and his party were anxious to get to the mainland, they had to give in to this extortion in order to get the original contract fulfilled. Wood noted that ‘our passage to Kerrera would have been 2/6 [2 shillings 6 pence] so we agreed to give them 10 s. to land us at Oban being more than the double of the ordinary and fixed rate’.²⁷⁰

At other tourist spots conditions were not very different. Stoddart remarked that at Loch Lomond, at the entrance to the Highlands, boats could be hired for fishing or cruises on the lake, ‘but an extravagant price is asked for them, the usual consequence of a great resort of strangers’.²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 309.

²⁷⁰ NLS, J. Wood, ‘Journal of a Jaunt to the Island of Mull in the month of October 1801’, MS. 3038, fo. 53. [hereafter: NLS, Wood, ‘Journal 1801’, MS. 3038] According to Sarah Murray, the cost of a passage from Oban to Auchnacraig, in a very good sailing boat, was six shillings. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 32. Murray travelled to Mull in 1800 and 1802. In 1817 the German traveller Eduard Meißner wanted to continue his pedestrian tour of the Highlands from Oban to Staffa, but bad weather and the exorbitant fare asked by the boatmen compelled him to abandon his plan. He complained bitterly that the huge influx of tourists had turned the local people into crooks. See Meißner, *Reise*, p. 249. Maximilian Löwenthal travelled to Staffa via Oban in 1822 and confirmed that the local innkeepers, coach and boat hirers overcharged tourists. See M. Löwenthal, *Skizzen aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise durch Frankreich, Großbritannien und Deutschland* (Vienna, 1825), vol. ii, p. 101. [hereafter: Löwenthal, *Reise*]

²⁷¹ Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, p. 228. Eliza Dawson reported (in 1786) that little shelties were kept at Ben Lomond by the locals for hire to travellers who wanted to ascend the mountain. See NLS,

On the west coast Oban soon became the centre for tourists travelling the Highlands or heading for the Hebrides. Oban's rapid rise at the end of the eighteenth century was mainly due to the private initiative and investment of the Stevenson brothers and the expansion of tourism. Oban was an unimportant village until 1778 when the Stevenson brothers chose it due to its natural harbour for the seat of their shipyard and building company.²⁷² Thereafter the village grew rapidly and soon became the main harbour for trips to Mull and the adjacent islands. By 1800 travellers reported that Oban was regularly overcrowded during the travelling season with tourists who were on their way to Mull, Iona and Staffa.²⁷³ For the local Highlanders foreign visitors became a source of income, and travellers could enjoy the advantages of a flourishing tourist industry.²⁷⁴ On Staffa a piper from Ulva played martial pibrochs²⁷⁵ for tourists, and on the passage between the islands the

Dawson, 'Tour 1786', Acc. 12017, fo. 49. The locals served as guides, and climbing Ben Lomond became very popular among late eighteenth-century travellers.

²⁷² The united parishes of Kilmore and Kilbride were surveyed for the *OSA* by the Reverend Mr Patrick MacDonald in 1791-92. P. MacDonald (1729-1824) was minister of that parish since 1757 and must have known it like nobody else. The *OSA* gave the population of Oban as 586. According to the *OSA*, Oban was of no importance until a customs house was built in 1764. It then profited as a clearing out and meeting place for the herring-busses, but it was not until the foundation of the building and trading company by the Stevenson brothers in 1778 that Oban became the centre of the surrounding area and attracted a great influx of people and trade. The *OSA* referred to the Stevenson brothers as the 'founders' of Oban. *OSA*, vol. viii (Argyll, mainland), p. 283. Despite its growing importance, by 1792 Oban still lacked a proper quay for discharging goods. See *ibid.*, vol. viii, pp. 281, 283.

²⁷³ See G. Douglas, *Tour in the Hebrides A.D. 1800* (Aberdeen, 1927), pp. 24-25. [hereafter: Douglas, *Tour*] Douglas had been admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1796 and was appointed Sheriff-Depute of the shire of Kincardine in 1812. At the time of his Highland tour he was not yet a figure of public importance, so he was not given special treatment in the local inns. According to Douglas, in late July and early August 1800 Oban was so overcrowded with tourists that it was difficult to get accommodation. Douglas met Sarah Murray at Oban. Mrs Murray confirmed that Oban was buzzing with travellers heading for Mull, Iona and Staffa. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 133-134. Emilie Harmes stayed also at Oban in July 1800. She reported that the village was so full of foreigners that the local inn could no longer provide accommodation for them. Visitors had to be accommodated in the private houses of the local gentlemen. See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. ii, pp. 180-182. In 1801 Joseph Farington reported that Oban was such a magnet for tourists in summer that even the inn at Dalmally, which was 22 miles distant, made most of its money from travellers heading for Oban. See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, vol. v, p. 1658.

²⁷⁴ In 1857 the German traveller Titus Ullrich made a typical tourist's tour of the Highlands, including a day trip on a steamer from Oban around Mull, calling at Staffa and Iona. By then Oban was a true tourist village with a flourishing tourist industry specialising in day trips to Mull, Staffa and Iona. See T. Ullrich, *Reise-Studien aus Italien, England und Schottland* (Berlin, 1893), pp. 348-366. [hereafter: Ullrich, *Reise-Studien*] He afterwards visited the Trossachs and reported that this area was also entirely dependent on tourism. See *ibid.*, pp. 386-391.

²⁷⁵ Pibroch, the classical or 'big' music of the Scottish bagpipe, a piece of pipe-music consisting of a theme, the urlar, and a series of variations, often extempore, arranged in a regular pattern or sequence. See *SND*, vol. vii, p. 105.

boatmen entertained their guests with Gaelic songs and legends.²⁷⁶ On Mull the locals were keen to show visitors their traditional customs. John Wood reported (in 1801) that the women were anxious to amuse visitors by singing Gaelic songs and showing them traditional customs such as ‘waulking the cloth’ as a substitute for the fulling-mill. He was also informed about the traditional techniques of burning the grain out of the husk (‘graddaning’) and the use of hand mills (querns) for grinding corn.²⁷⁷

Increasing tourism affected the Highlanders’ life in many ways. The locals on Iona adapted particularly quick to the rising number of visitors. First of all, the tombstones and grave-slabs among the ruins had to be cleaned from layers of dung. For centuries the islanders had used the ruins for stables for their cattle. Many visitors complained that they were unable to see the carvings and inscriptions on the tombstones and grave-slabs as they were hidden below layers of dung.²⁷⁸ Joseph Banks reported in 1772 about the ruins of the nunnery:

Here was little worth observing every thing being in an absolute state of desolation the very chappel turned into a cow house in which no one monument was to be seen but one which had lately been dug by Mr. Pennant from under above 3 feet of cow dung.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ See Leyden, *Tour*, pp. 37, 40-41. See Douglas, *Tour*, p. 34. See also NLS, Patisson, ‘Tour 1780’, MS. 6322, fo. 49. At Blair Drummond Leyden met two Germans, Baron Vincke of Prussian Minden and Mr Burgsdorff, and a Swiss traveller from Geneva, Sir Francis D’Ivernois. The Germans were also on their way to Staffa. At Oban Leyden met ‘M. Berlepoche, a Saxon lady ... who ... is both a poetical and political writer’. Leyden, *Tour*, p. 33. This lady was undoubtedly Emilie Harmes, the author of *Caledonia*. Harmes (1755-1830, née von Opper) had been married to Friedrich Ludwig von Berlepsch (1749-1818), but she had secured a divorce from her husband and married in 1801 August Heinrich Ludwig Harmes. After accompanying the Germans to Ulva, Leyden did not join their boat to Staffa due to fog. He visited the island a day later. The Germans took also a piper along with them to Staffa. See Leyden, *Tour*, pp. 10-11, 33, 35-38, 50-52. The German Samuel H. Spiker travelled to Staffa in 1816. He reported that there was a fixed place at the east end of Loch na Keal (on the west coast of Mull) from where the boat for Staffa usually left. However, this boat was in a poor state. During the passage, the oarsmen entertained their guests with Jacobite songs about the Young Pretender. See S.H. Spiker, *Travels Through England, Wales, & Scotland, In The Year 1816* (London, 1820), vol. i, pp. 201-202. [hereafter: Spiker, *Travels*] It was originally published as *Reise durch England, Wales und Schottland im Jahre 1816* (Leipzig, 1818).

²⁷⁷ See NLS, Wood, ‘Journal 1801’, MS. 3038, fos. 29-30. Demonstrations by the locals of traditional techniques such as ‘graddaning’ and the use of querns were very popular with travellers to the Highlands. These techniques were described by Martin, Burt and Pennant and became an essential part of all subsequent travellers’ accounts. For details about these techniques see chapters 6.2.2. and 6.2.3.

²⁷⁸ See, for example, NAS, A. Menzies, ‘Journal of Archibald Menzies, General Inspector, 1768’, Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E729/9, fo. 71. [hereafter: NAS, Menzies, ‘Journal 1768’, E729/9]

²⁷⁹ Rauschenberg (ed.), ‘Banks’s Voyage’, p. 210. Banks noted also that the churchyard of the abbey was so overgrown with plants that it was impossible to search for inscriptions in the summer time.

After Dr Johnson's famous visit in 1773 Iona quickly gained in popularity, but the ruins still seem to have been in a much neglected state for at least another 25 years.²⁸⁰ In 1787 Lachlan Mactavish visited the island and informed the Duke of Argyll that the tombs and inscriptions were still buried under layers of dung because the islanders still folded their cattle in the ruins at night. He urged the duke to enclose the ruins and to appoint a keeper to clear them of rubbish and to give access to visitors who may come to see them.²⁸¹ Mactavish's proposals do not seem to have been implemented immediately. Lord Mountstuart (later 1st Marquess of Bute) visited Iona in August 1788, and, once again, the nunnery had to be cleared of cattle dung before the visitors were able to search for antiquities.²⁸² A year later the German mineralogist Rudolf Erich Raspe also urged the Duke of Argyll to protect the ruins against future dilapidation and decay.²⁸³ Nonetheless, in 1795 cattle were still roaming freely in the nave of the abbey.²⁸⁴

Measures to protect the ruins were first taken in the 1750s. In 1757 the new leases for the two farms on Iona obliged the tenants to erect stone walls within seven years to enclose the abbey. A 1769 map showed these stone walls in place.²⁸⁵ However, these enclosures must soon have become neglected, as most visitors in the 1770s and 1780s reported that the islanders' animals were roaming freely among the ruins. The frequent complaints by visitors about the poor state of the ruins were not in vain. New measures to protect the ruins were taken in the 1790s. In 1791 the ruinous enclosures at the abbey and the nunnery were rebuilt. Moreover, the Duke of Argyll gave firm orders to prevent further stone robbing.²⁸⁶ However, the locals

²⁸⁰ At that occasion Dr Johnson immortalised Iona by describing it as 'that illustrious Island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. ... That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.' Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 346-347.

²⁸¹ See NAS, L. Mactavish, 'Journal of the tour of the Hebrides by the Committee of Directors of the Society, 1787, July 1 – Aug. 20', British Fisheries Society Papers (1773-1877), GD9/1, fo. 97. [hereafter: NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1] The journal is published on microfiche by W.T. Johnston, 'Two new towns for Scotland Tobermory and Ullapool' (Sgann Microforms, Edinburgh, 1982).

²⁸² See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 26v. See biographical entry in the appendix no. 1 under Stuart, John (4th Earl and 1st Marquess of Bute).

²⁸³ See RCAHM, *Argyll: An Inventory Of The Monuments*, vol. iv (Iona) (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 151. [hereafter: RCAHM, *Argyll*, vol. iv (Iona)]

²⁸⁴ See Michell, *Tour*, p. 100.

²⁸⁵ See RCAHM, *Argyll*, vol. iv (Iona), p. 150.

²⁸⁶ See *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 151.

obviously undermined the attempts to prevent them from using the ruins of the nunnery for a barn. Thomas Garnett reported (in 1798) that a few years ago the duke's factor ordered a door with lock and key to protect the nunnery from further destruction, but the locals had broken the lock to shelter their cattle at night, tying the door fast with ropes.²⁸⁷

Moreover, in the eighteenth century the ruins were vandalised and defaced by both locals and visitors. The locals used stones and carved monuments of the ruins for building purposes, while superstitious people and visitors completely destroyed the once impressive altar of Iona Abbey in less than a century. William Sacheverell visited Iona in 1688. He was lucky to see the altar before the arrival of 'mass tourism'. At the time of his visit it was still almost entire. He described it as very noble in its kind and

one of the finest pieces of white Marble I ever saw; it is about 6 foot long, and 4 broad, curiously vein'd and polish'd, it is all yet entire, except one Corner, which has been broke by Accident.²⁸⁸

There was no mention that the superstitious or tourists chipped off further bits and pieces of the altar as lucky charms or souvenirs. Martin, writing at the transition from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, did not mention it either, so this custom must have begun at a later time.²⁸⁹ References to people chipping off pieces of the altar-slab in the abbey can be traced back to the mid-eighteenth century. John Campbell, schoolmaster at Airds (Appin), visited Iona Abbey in 1749. He noted:

By the wall on the east end stands a piece of white, Marble, 5 feet long, 5 broad, and two inches thick, supposed to be the Altar or Communion Table, very much broke off one

²⁸⁷ See T. Garnett, *Observations On A Tour Through The Highlands And Part Of The Western Isles Of Scotland, Particularly Staffa And Icolmkill* (London, 1800), vol. i, p. 250. [hereafter: Garnett, *Tour*]

²⁸⁸ Sacheverell, *Account*, p. 132. Travellers' assumptions about the origin of the marble altar varied widely. Pococke reckoned (in 1760) that the marble was from Tiree. See D.W. Kemp (ed.), *Tours In Scotland 1747, 1750, 1760: By Richard Pococke, Bishop Of Meath* (Edinburgh, 1887), p. 82. [hereafter: Pococke, *Tours*] The Reverend John Walker stated (in 1764) that the marble was said to be from the local quarry. See M.M. McKay (ed.), *The Rev. Dr. John Walker's Report On The Hebrides of 1764 and 1771* (Edinburgh, 1980), p. 144. [hereafter: McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*] According to Knox (1786), the marble was brought from a quarry near the church of Strath in the Isle of Skye. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 151. Knox did not himself visit Iona. Pococke and Knox were obviously unaware that a quarry existed on Iona itself.

²⁸⁹ Martin provided the following description: 'The Altar is large, and of as fine Marble as any I ever saw.' Martin, *Description*, p. 257. The late seventeenth-century references to Iona in MacFarlane's *Geographical Collections* likewise did not include any hints about people deliberately breaking off pieces of the altar.

corner by the Country People, who, taking it to be a Relict of St Colm, imagine it an antidote for any disease in Man or Beast.²⁹⁰

With growing numbers of visitors ‘vandalism’ got worse. Even on an island such as Iona nothing was sacred, and the impact of vandalism became increasingly evident. Pococke reported (in 1760) that the common people broke off pieces from the marble slab and used them as ‘a Medicine for man or beast in most Disorders, and especially the flux’.²⁹¹ In the course of the 1760s the condition of the altar deteriorated rapidly. John Walker commented (in 1764) that the altar-slab had been gradually broken and carried off since Sacheverell’s visit, because ‘the Vulgar in the Highlands are all desirous of having a Bit of it as a Relick of Columba, and from the Superstitious Perswasion, that the Possession of it preserves from Shipwreck’.²⁹² Archibald Menzies noted in 1768:

The high alter of St Margarets is now quite destroy’d there was a very fine Slab of blue marble upon it but is almost all destroy’d as the Sailors have carry’d it piece meall away out of a piece of Superstition, as they believe no Ship can sink that has a piece of it on board.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ ‘Observations Taken At Icolmkill, By Mr John Campbell, March 5, 1749.’, in Forbes, *Journals*, p. 307. The original manuscript of Campbell’s account is listed as no. 141 in Mitchell, ‘List’, p. 504. It was in the possession of Sir Arthur Mitchell in 1901, but its present whereabouts are unknown. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the subsequent travellers recorded their observations on Iona and its antiquities independently or by drawing on the writings of earlier travellers. John Campbell’s account has been used or plagiarised in slightly different versions by Burrell (1758), Pococke (1760), Walker (1764), Forbes (1770) and D.S. Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan, who published ‘An Account of the Island of Icolmkill’, *Archaeologia Scotica: Or Transactions Of The Society Of Antiquaries Of Scotland*, vol. i (Edinburgh, 1792), pp. 234-241. Burrell and Forbes did not visit Iona, but they had access to either Campbell’s account or a copy of it. Burrell’s travelling companion Mr Symonds visited Iona. See Burrell, *Northern Tour*, pp. 93, 6-7. John Walker used Campbell’s account in his posthumously published *Essays On Natural History And Rural Economy* (Edinburgh, 1808), p. 142. Forbes copied the account of Iona from a copy held by Ballachulish junior. See Forbes, *Journals*, p. 306. Pennant used the manuscripts of Pococke’s tour in 1760 in preparation for his own accounts. The earliest published account that included references to ‘vandalising’ the altar of Iona Abbey was Pennant’s *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i (Chester, 1774). The travel journals of Burrell, Pococke, Walker, Menzies, and Forbes were not published until the late 1880s or later. Plagiarism from a printed copy on the part of these authors can thus be ruled out, but Campbell’s manuscript account of Iona, and the various copies made from it, must have been well known and easily accessible. Campbell’s manuscript copy was notable for its errors that contributed to the numerous different and contradictory accounts that had been made of the ruins and monuments on Iona in the second half of the eighteenth century. See RCAHM, *Argyll*, vol. iv (Iona), p. 150.

²⁹¹ Pococke, *Tours*, p. 82. Many travellers agreed that the people of Iona were particularly superstitious. For examples of their superstition see Martin, *Description*, pp. 262-264. See also Rauschenberg (ed.), ‘Banks’s Voyage’, p. 211.

²⁹² McKay (ed.), *John Walker’s Report*, p. 144.

²⁹³ NAS, Menzies, ‘Journal 1768’, E729/9, fo. 70.

By 1772 almost all of the altar and slab had been chipped off and carried away. Pennant noted that only ‘a very small portion’ of the slab had remained, and even that, he wrote, ‘we contributed to diminish’.²⁹⁴ A year later, it seems as if there was hardly anything left to be taken away. Johnson commented that there was once a marble altar, but it had been destroyed by the superstition of the locals who used its pieces as defence against shipwrecks, fire and miscarriages.²⁹⁵ The more the altar was diminished, the bigger became its supposed former size. Pennant reported (in 1772) that the altar was vulgarly supposed to have reached from side to side of the chancel, but he dismissed that exaggeration on account of Mr Sacheverell who saw it in 1688 when it was almost entire and measured only six feet by four.²⁹⁶ Once the altar had been completely destroyed, travellers were told incredible tales about its former size. In 1798 Thomas Garnett was guided around the ruins of Iona Abbey. The local schoolmaster, Allan MacLean, informed him that at the upper end of the chancel formerly stood a large table or altar of white marble that ‘reached from one side of the chancel to the other, which is eight yards’.²⁹⁷ Garnett reported that there were no remains of that altar, but a good specimen of it was in the museum of Anderson’s Institution in Glasgow, brought from Iona by the founder.²⁹⁸

On Iona the few islanders who were capable of speaking English offered themselves as guides to foreign visitors, showing them around the ruins and telling them the legends of St Columba and his disciples.²⁹⁹

Despite Iona’s popularity among travellers, it is rather surprising that the island lacked appropriate accommodation for visitors until the early nineteenth century.

²⁹⁴ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 253. According to Pennant, the superstitious people believed that a piece of the stone conveyed to the possessor success in whatever he undertook.

²⁹⁵ See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 351.

²⁹⁶ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 253.

²⁹⁷ Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 255. He, too, dismissed the schoolmaster’s account as hugely exaggerated.

²⁹⁸ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 255. Garnett was himself a professor at the Andersonian Institution in Glasgow. This specimen of the altar-slab is no longer identifiable in the collections of the Hunterian Museum or of Strathclyde University. It seems to have been acquired by the Revd J.F.S. Gordon in 1864 and was set then into the upper surface of the wooden altar of St Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Willow Acre, Glasgow, from which it was transferred in 1975 to St James’s Episcopal Church, Springburn, Glasgow. This piece, measuring 4 inches x 3 inches, is believed to have been given by Dr Johnson to Professor John Anderson in 1773, but this belief clashes with Garnett’s statement that it was brought from Iona by Anderson himself. See RCAHM, *Argyll*, vol. iv (Iona), pp. 140-141. See J.F.S. Gordon, *Iona* (Glasgow, 1885), p. 14.

²⁹⁹ Most visitors were shown around the island by Allan MacLean, the master of the charity school. He was one of the few islanders who were able to speak English. He acted also as guide and curator of the ruins until about 1840.

Most visitors were day tourists, and the only ‘inn’ on the island was hardly encouraging to stay for a longer time. According to Garnett (1798), the inn was a simple hut near the nunnery, and it must have been in a deplorable state. He reported that the floor was liquid mire because of the roof having been open, except where two or three boards had been put over to prevent the rain from falling on the beds. Moreover, Garnett and his travelling companion Mr Watts were not alone in their room. Garnett recollected:

We had, however, plenty of companions in the room; for, besides the light infantry, &c. in the beds, we had several chickens, a tame lamb, two or three pigs, a dog, and some cats, which last went and came at pleasure through a hole in the roof, so that we could not expect a very comfortable night’s rest.³⁰⁰

George Douglas visited Iona on 3 August 1800. He described the inn as ‘a most wretched hovel’ and summarised: ‘Detention by contrary winds or other causes there would be a serious evil even to the most enthusiastic antiquary.’³⁰¹ Sarah Murray visited Iona exactly one week later. She reported that some improvements had been made since Garnett’s visit in 1798. However, she stressed that the inn could not be compared to a hotel. According to her, the public room of the inn had a new ceiling, which kept the rain out and the floor dry. The room contained two beds, and she was told that travellers could be accommodated with sheets.³⁰²

However, some travellers were not pleased about the way the islanders cared for their guests. Complaints about the greediness of the islanders can be traced back as early as 1772.³⁰³ Banks reported that people on Iona behaved differently from the other Highlanders. He recollected about his arrival on the island:

We were receivd here by a number of people who told us that they had heard of our coming & proferd us every convenience the town could afford. But we soon found the difference between these & the simple people we had had to do with before. Few strangers as these people had seen those few had corrupted the hospitality of their countrey. One of the first questions askd us after we had agreed to accept their offers was how much we would give a question which had not been put to us since we came into the highlands till this time.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 244. However, the fatigue of the day and a little whisky toddy provided them some hours of sleep, from which they were awoken by the attempts of a young cock to crow which had mounted on Garnett’s bed. In 1773 Johnson and Boswell spent the night on Iona in tolerable beds of hay in a barn. James Bailey spent a night on Iona in 1787 and recollected the inn as a ‘wretched hovel’. NLS, Bailey, ‘Journey’, MS. 3295, fo. 379.

³⁰¹ Douglas, *Tour*, p. 35.

³⁰² See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 228.

³⁰³ Again, the subsequent travellers’ observations about begging on Iona must have been made independently. Banks’s and Douglas’s accounts were not published until the twentieth century.

³⁰⁴ Rauschenberg (ed.), ‘Banks’s Voyage’, p. 209.

The image of greediness stuck to the people of Iona for a long time to come. Edward Clarke visited Iona in 1797 and gave a most disturbing picture of his reception on the island. He expected to find a place of piety as it had been praised by Dr Johnson, but these expectations were speedily succeeded by feelings of an opposite character:

We found ourselves surrounded by a crowd of the most importunate and disgusting objects I ever beheld. Bedlam, disgorged of all its inhabitants, could hardly have presented a more dismaying spectacle. Close and directly opposite to me, a miserable idiot grinned horribly in my face; while on my right hand a raving lunatic, seizing my elbow, uttered in my ears a loud and fearful cry. Here a wretched cripple exposed his naked sores; there a blind and aged beggar besought pity on his infirmities. All the warm feelings excited by the ruins of Iona, or the retrospect of its former glory, were in one moment obliterated. It seemed the hospital of the Hebrides, a general infirmary, for the reception of every malady that could afflict human nature. ... here seemed to be a concentration in one general mass of every description of infirmity, disease, and wretchedness. A few trifling donations soon dispersed the major part of this melancholy assembly; all but the madman, whose afflicted mind no gratuity could gratify, no commiseration alleviate, and with whom no entreaty would avail.³⁰⁵

George Douglas reported (in 1800) that as soon as he landed he was surrounded by the local population. Some of them harassed him to buy shells and soft green pebbles while others were begging him for charity.³⁰⁶

Unfortunately, Iona was not the only place where tourists left their marks. Soon after Flora MacDonald (1722-1790) was laid to rest at Kilmuir on Skye, travellers started to break off pieces of the tombstone. The current Celtic cross marking her grave is the third memorial. The previous two tombstones were destroyed by travellers and tourists and taken away for souvenirs.

On Staffa travellers carved their names into the basaltic pillars and fired shots inside Fingal's Cave to hear the echo.³⁰⁷ Moreover, similar to their behaviour on

³⁰⁵ W. Otter (ed.), *The Life And Remains Of The Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke* (London, 1824), pp. 239-240. [hereafter: Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*] The 'madman' served as a tourist guide. He showed Clarke around the ruins although he could speak only Gaelic and needed an interpreter.

³⁰⁶ See Douglas, *Tour*, p. 34. Highlanders begging tourists were a very unusual sight. Isolated reports of begging were limited to very few places, such as Iona, which were particularly frequented by tourists. Generations of visitors to Iona reported about the locals, and particularly the children, offering or selling shells and pebbles to tourists. See M. MacArthur (ed.), *That Illustrious Island: Iona Through Travellers' Eyes* (Iona, 1991), pp. 31, 32, 34. [hereafter: MacArthur, *Iona*] See also Ullrich, *Reise-Studien*, p. 362. Sarah Murray, for example, encountered (in 1796) children begging and harassing travellers along the road from Spean Bridge to Fort William. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, pp. 266-267. The Highlanders often asked travellers for tobacco, but travellers did not report of widespread begging in the Highlands, as was the case in the towns of the Lowlands. On the contrary, in spite of the poverty of the Highlanders, travellers often reported on their generosity and their refusal to accept any payment for their assistance.

Iona, tourists and boatmen broke off pieces of the pillars for souvenirs, in spite of the presence of a custodian on the island who requested the visitors not to damage the basaltic pillars.³⁰⁸ At Tobermory travellers chopped off pieces of the stern of the *Florida*, a sunken ship of the Spanish Armada of 1588. Its stern had served for many years as a staircase at the landing place until the British Fisheries Society built a pier in 1788. Since then it had lain neglected on the shore. Edward Clarke's account (of 1797) throws light on what 'conservation' and 'preservation' were like in the late eighteenth century:

A part of it [the stern of the *Florida*] lay neglected upon the shore when we arrived, which was somewhat diminished before our departure, from the desire we all felt to possess a relic of so curious a piece of antiquity. The master of a herring buss, who resides in the village, saw us employed in sawing off a part of it; and assured us, he was present when it was raised from the bottom of the harbour. Mr. Campbell, comptroller of the customs, assisted us in taking it away, and I recommended him to place the remainder in some place to secure it from being used as a substitute for peat, by those who might prefer a wood fire to one composed of turf; as future travellers may by that means be enabled to obtain a portion of it, if any should come after me sufficiently influenced by local enthusiasm to appreciate such a relic.³⁰⁹

Hunting tourism also left its marks on the Highlands. In the 1780s and 1790s deer stalking and grouse shooting became increasingly popular among the aristocracy and the emerging, wealthy, non-aristocratic upper class. In consequence, Highland proprietors turned their estates into deer forests or grouse moors and advertised in the newspapers for shooting parties. In the late eighteenth century hunting and fishing tourism concentrated on Speyside and Deeside. Mar Lodge (Aberdeenshire) and Glen Shee (Perthshire) became prime destinations for deer stalking and grouse shooting. During the shooting season the inns at Spittal of Glenshee and Braemar were often overcrowded with sportsmen. In August 1800 George Douglas reported that the inn at Spittal of Glenshee was entirely occupied by a large party of grouse shooters. At Braemar Douglas and his travelling companion

³⁰⁷ See Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, p. 307. The members of Lord Mountstuart's travelling party showed more respect to this natural curiosity and fired only blanks from a fowling gun. See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 26r.

³⁰⁸ See Löwenthal, *Reise*, vol. ii, p. 105. The German Carl Carus visited Staffa in 1844. At Oban he boarded the steamship 'Brenda' and steamed via Tobermory to Staffa and Iona. On the steamer the tourists were entertained by a group of blind fiddlers playing Scottish songs. At Staffa the boatmen chipped off pieces of the basaltic pillars and presented them to Carus for a souvenir. Carus was physician to Friedrich August II, King of Saxony, and accompanied him on his three-month tour of Great Britain. See C.G. Carus, *England und Schottland im Jahre 1844* (Berlin, 1845), vol. ii, pp. 213-216.

³⁰⁹ Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, pp. 226-227.

had to sleep on tables as the inn was entirely occupied by sportsmen.³¹⁰ Although this kind of tourism was still in its infancy in the late eighteenth century, it was soon to become one of the most important sources of income all over the Highlands. The publication of Thomas Thornton's *Sporting Tour* (London, 1804) gave an additional boost to fishing and hunting in the Highlands. Unfortunately, the eviction of people in order to transform land into deer forests contributed chiefly to the depopulation of the Highlands in the nineteenth century.

4.6. Summary of the travelling conditions in Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Travelling in early modern Scotland proved to be a hazardous and slow business. The infrastructure for travel lagged considerably behind England, and the few existing roads were often impassable for any wheeled vehicles. In the seventeenth century carriages were of no use to travellers and could hardly be used outside Edinburgh and Glasgow. Horseback was the usual form of travelling. In the Lowlands and along the east coast of Scotland, inns had been established to provide travellers with fresh horses and accommodation. However, travellers depended on the services of footmen as guides and interpreters.

The Highlands remained largely inaccessible to outsiders until the military roads were built in the 1720s and 1730s. Although these roads were primarily built for the military, they opened up the Highlands to all kinds of influence from the outside. After the 'Forty-Five the network of roads was improved and partly extended beyond Glen Mor. However, in the areas untouched by the roads, travelling was still slow and hazardous, and on the islands travelling conditions had hardly changed at all. Whereas tourists could rush in a carriage from one attraction to another along the main routes south of Glen Mor, the interior of the Hebrides was still difficult to reach and, therefore, hardly known to outsiders. By the end of the eighteenth century the Highlands south of Glen Mor had become a major tourist spot. However, a tour beyond Glen Mor or to the Hebrides remained one of the last challenges for travellers in Europe.

³¹⁰ See Douglas, *Tour*, p. 50.

The improvements in infrastructure were reflected by the slow but gradual advance of travellers towards the north of Scotland. Step by step travellers pushed the boundaries of their tours further. In the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries most visitors to Scotland did not penetrate beyond the Lowlands. They entered Scotland via the east coast road, visited Edinburgh and Glasgow, and decided to return to England. The more adventurous might include Dundee, Perth and Stirling.³¹¹ The only way to travel to the very north of Scotland was via Aberdeen and the east coast, and the very few visitors who took this route carefully avoided the Highlands. This did not change until the 1720s and 1730s when Wade made the first inroads into the Highlands. However, few adventurers then dared to travel these roads, and those who did had to stick to them as there were no alternatives. By then the northern boundaries of a journey were pushed to Inverness and Glen Mor. The improved network of military roads in the 1750s and 1760s enabled travellers to choose from a variety of routes. The small and the grand Highland tours soon developed as travellers' favourites, and the number of visitors on these routes quickly rose. For most travellers Glen Mor remained the northernmost destination. Real adventurers, however, penetrated beyond it and visited the Hebrides. In the 1770s Pennant, Johnson and Boswell pushed the boundaries for travellers to the Inner Hebrides. Skye, Mull, Iona and Staffa became the favourite destinations of visitors to

³¹¹ See, for example, John Ray in 1661. Ray visited Edinburgh, Stirling and Glasgow. The Frenchman Jorevin de Rocheford visited Glasgow, Falkirk and Edinburgh around the same time. See *The Antiquarian Repertory*, vol. ii (London, 1779), pp. 149-152, 184-188, 197-199. John Walker visited Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling and Glasgow in 1674. See Somerset Record Office, J. Walker, 'A journey taken from London into Scotland, Anno 1674', MS. DD/WHb3087. [hereafter: Somerset Record Office, Walker, 'Journey 1674', MS. DD/WHb3087] John Conyers, in 1676, and William Salkeld, around 1700, travelled to and from Edinburgh on the east coast route and did not proceed further north than the capital. See Essex Record Office, Conyers, 'Northerne Journey 1676', MS. D/DW Z6/2, and NLS, Salkeld, 'Letter c. 1700', MS. 1003, fos. 126-129. Ralph Thoresby did not extend his tour in 1681 beyond Edinburgh, Stirling and Glasgow. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, pp. 49-56. See also the two English travellers in 1704 and 1705 discussed in chapter 4.1.4. Edinburgh was likewise the northernmost destination of Hamon L'Estrange's tour (c. 1709). See Norfolk Record Office, H. L'Estrange, 'Diary of travel', MS. LEST NF 2. [hereafter: Norfolk Record Office, L'Estrange, 'Diary', MS. LEST NF 2] No year is stated for L'Estrange's visit to Scotland, and the dates given in his diary of travel are contradictory. However, 1709 might be a possible candidate. L'Estrange toured France and Italy in 1713-14 and died at Basle in 1715. All these travellers were 'tourists'. Their visits to Scotland were not related to any official mission. In contrast to travellers with a mission, tourists usually did not proceed further north than Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth, Stirling and Glasgow. They all chose very similar routes, a fact which shows that there were hardly any alternative routes for travellers in Scotland in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Kirk's tour by land to the Orkney Isles in 1677 was a unique exception.

the Western Isles. By the end of the eighteenth century the boundaries were pushed to the Outer Hebrides.

The last boundary was to fall with the invention of the steamship. St Kilda was hailed by generations of travellers as the 'Ultima Thule' and the last challenge since Martin's *A Late Voyage To St. Kilda, The Remotest of all the Hebrides, Or Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1698) had introduced the island and its population to a larger audience. On 28 July 1838, the first steamer with tourists and a brass band on board anchored in Village Bay. By 1877 steamers regularly left from Glasgow for trips to St Kilda, and the last bastion of traditional Gaelic culture in the Highlands and Islands fell to 'mass tourism'.³¹²

³¹² See T. Steel, *The Life and Death of St Kilda* (London, 1988), pp. 123-125. [hereafter: Steel, *St Kilda*]

5. Images of Highland society

The glory of the Chief was the glory of all his kindred and name: and the numbers and fidelity of his vassals and tenants, again, were what constituted the power and consequence of the Chief. The produce of the land, corn, cattle, fish, and game, were spent on the estate, but chiefly at the mansion-houses of the great, in generous hospitality. And in those times, the Highlanders were better fed, and, in general, finer men than they are present.¹

When William Thomson travelled the Highlands in 1785, clanship had long passed its peak and was undoubtedly in severe decline, on the verge of total collapse. Nonetheless, for many more years the Highlands remained synonymous with clanship for most visitors to Scotland. The organisation of Highland society into clans was the major feature distinguishing Highland life from the rest of Europe and, therefore, fascinated travellers from many countries. Their assessment of the social and economic functioning of clanship, however, differed widely.

From the late Middle Ages to the early modern period, the image of the Highlanders in contemporary historiography underwent a dramatic change. In the 200 years between Fordun and Camden, the image changed from that of a wild but law-abiding people to the stereotype of cruel, barbarous robbers and thieves.² Camden's *Britannia* (1586) spread the image of the Highlanders' wild habits, their warlike spirit, cruelty, hatred and inclination to robbery and theft, to all Europe. Moreover, Camden attributed their infamous reputation as robbers and thieves to their social organisation in clans. He linked clanship directly to lawlessness and described it as such a threat to social and economic stability that parliament had to intervene with legislation. This made any member of a clan liable for prosecution for the crimes committed by any fellow member of that clan.

The stereotypical view of clanship, as being opposed to the government and the rule of the law, was regularly renewed during the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. This did not change fundamentally until the 1760s when clan society had been fatally wounded and no longer posed a threat to the political and economic stability of Great Britain. The Jacobite uprisings of 1689-90, 1715 and 1745-46 further cemented the image of clanship as an ill-gotten loyalty to tyrannous

¹ Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 131.

² See chapter 1.2.3. about the image and supposed customs of the Highlanders.

and mischievous chiefs. By then, however, the Highlands were deeply split between supporters and opponents of the House of Stuart.

Although travellers did not begin to penetrate the Highlands in greater numbers until after 1760, due to the inaccessibility of the region, there is hardly any topic discussed so frequently and passionately in their accounts as that of clanship. Their impressions depended, of course, very much on their political attitudes, and this offers an insight into this subject from the most differing and contrary points of view. It will soon become obvious that clanship was a far more complex socio-economic entity than the simplified image of the clans as 'families' or the stereotype of an archaic, static and backward society. This argument was often used by the government and Whig supporters to vilify the Highlanders and to justify intervention in their affairs.

Before discussing individual aspects of clanship, as described by travellers, it is necessary to examine briefly its overall development from its origins in the Middle Ages until its disintegration in the second half of the eighteenth century. This will establish the historical framework; then one can move on to examine travellers' accounts of the late seventeenth century that can be drawn upon as reliable and valuable contributions to our understanding of its functions.

5.1. The development of clanship from the late Middle Ages until the late eighteenth century

For centuries Highland life was organised on the basis of clanship that functioned via the mutual obligations between the chief and his clansmen. The development of clanship had its origins in the political upheaval and social dislocation in the high Middle Ages. The emergence of clans was neither limited to the Highlands of Scotland, nor did it exclude non-Celts, as clans were of Anglian, Anglo-Norman, Flemish, Celtic and Norse-Gaelic origins.³ However, clanship blossomed in the Gaelic culture, which was retreating from the thirteenth century towards the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland. Geographical isolation protected these

³ See A.I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton, 1996), p. 1. [hereafter: Macinnes, *Clanship*]

areas from many outside influences, allowing the development of a distinctive Gaelic culture in the western Highlands and the rise of the semi-independent Lordship of the Isles until 1493. However, the power of kingship and centralised government was increasingly felt in this area. In the late Middle Ages the balance of power shifted towards the king and his government, neither of whom could tolerate such a powerful rival on their western seaboard. The forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493 removed the Lord of the Isles as a rival to the king and officially brought the western seaboard under royal supremacy. It marked the beginning of a gradual decline of the power held by the Highland chiefs.

From the 1580s onward the government increased its pressure on the chiefs of the western seaboard and utilised its supremacy more effectively in an attempt to gain control over all the Highlands.⁴ Following a series of military expeditions to the islands, financial strings were tightened, and payments of the royal rents by the chiefs, irregular in the past, were collected promptly. In the Statutes of Iona of 1609 the government tried to bring the chiefs of the western seaboard under effective control, wanting to ‘civilise’ them. The nine clauses of the Statutes had military as well as cultural implications. Clauses 3 and 7 required ‘military retinues to be limited’ and the ‘carrying of firearms to be suppressed’, whereas clauses 6 and 8 required the ‘chiefs and leading clansmen to educate their eldest sons in the Lowlands’ and ‘Gaelic bards to be suppressed’.⁵ Other clauses (nos. 2 and 5) targeted the culture of competitive feasting in which the chiefs tried to impress and exceed each other by the amount of food, and particularly drink, they were able to provide.⁶

⁴ For an analysis of the government policy under James VI viewing the Borders and the Highlands as lawless ‘problem areas’ see J. Goodare, *State and Society*, pp. 254-285. Goodare argues that James VI realised that the Union of Crowns would defuse the ‘problem area’ of the Borders. That is why James VI could reshape his policy and divert more resources to pacifying the Highlands. However, the violence used by the government in achieving its objective, and its support for the territorial expansion of loyal clans like the Campbells or the Mackenzies, evoked counter-violence and revenge. Despite its repeated military campaigns, the government could not permanently strip the clan chiefs of their autonomous military power, and the Highlands remained a problem for subsequent governments. See *ibid.*, pp. 283-285.

⁵ Quoted in J. Goodare, ‘The Statutes of Iona in Context’, *SHR*, vol. lxxvii, no. 203 (1998), p. 50. Goodare argues that the Statutes of Iona were only one piece in the jigsaw puzzle of legislation passed under James VI (I) and should not be singled out as the decisive turning point. It was the continuous pressure by the government on the chiefs from 1596 to 1617 that ‘civilised’ them, forced them to cooperate with the government and to adopt a second identity as British gentlemen. It also deprived the clans in the Western Isles of their distinctive military structure. See *ibid.*, pp. 54-57.

⁶ Hosting and feasting at weddings or funerals were far more than mere social obligations. These festivities were vital opportunities to show a clan’s strength and military power. The clan elite could

The overall intention of the Statutes was to limit the military power of the chiefs, to push back the Gaelic culture, and to limit excessive feasting and drinking, which was an essential part of traditional Highland life, but which often led to quarrels and fighting in its aftermath. The extent to which the Statutes of Iona were implemented and had changed Highland life is controversially debated.⁷ However, they undoubtedly caused loosening ties between a clan gentry who were bilingual and bicultural and their clansfolk. The limitation of the festivities, which were a vital link between the clan gentry and the clansfolk, and the abolition of the highly respected bards, whose institutionalised task was to promote the shared belief of the clan in a common and heroic ancestry, were a dangerous legacy that was to estrange the clan gentry from the clansfolk.⁸ The government's intervention, therefore, between 1596 and 1617 gradually undermined clanship and traditional Highland life. The Statutes were generally complied with by the clan gentry who increasingly began to spend their time away from their estates, thereby contributing to the break-up of clanship. However, their options were limited. Resistance, resulting in a likely conquest and plantation of the islands by the government, was a poor option for them and their vassals.⁹

In the course of the seventeenth century, financial pressure and government intervention steadily increased on the chiefs. There is plenty of evidence for the chiefs' increasing demand for money. Voluntary contributions to the household of the chief, usually levied only at special occasions, were now converted into regular taxes. The geographer Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch (1580-1661) reported, for example, as early as c. 1630 on Strathnaver (Sutherland):

It is a habit common to all those districts where the ancient language [Gaelic] is spoken, that they revere, court, and love their Chief in the highest possible degree; fight, and readily

expect every township within their influence to contribute a certain number of able-bodied men. Old Highland traditions such as collective hospitality, feasting and drinking clearly declined in the aftermath of the Statutes of Iona. Martin Martin, writing at the end of the seventeenth century, regarded these practices as belonging to the past. The accumulated debts of the Highland gentry also contributed to the decline of such expensive traditions.

⁷ See Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 65-66.

⁸ E. Burt described the bard's function in the cohesion of the clan as follows: 'The *bard* is skilled in the genealogy of all the Highland families; sometimes preceptor to the young laird; celebrates, in Irish verse, the original of the tribe, the famous warlike actions of the successive heads, and sings his own lyrics as an opiate to the chief when indisposed for sleep ...'. Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 62-63. Burt witnessed the duties of the bard at various festivities in the chief's house.

⁹ Though the Statutes of Iona did not mention plantations, the government clearly considered this an option, as it has been shown in the repeated attempts to colonise Lewis (1598, 1605, 1607) and the scheduled, but withdrawn, attempt to colonise Uist (1607).

lay down their lives for him in dangers; and in addition to the usual burdens of their farms, whenever necessity arises, as when the Chief is giving his daughter in marriage, or paying his debts, or redeeming mortgaged estates, or acquiring new ones, they contribute willingly by way of extraordinary dues the fourth or the fifth cow (for it is unusual to rear male cattle), all cheerfully without distinction of wealth or poverty. This tax, formerly wont to be applied to the aforesaid uses, is now, though the occasions have ceased, regularly exacted every five or three years, and patiently endured, as custom so directs.¹⁰

Moreover, the Covenanting movement and the Scottish civil war (1644-47) forced the chiefs to decide for either the Covenanting or the Royalist side.¹¹ The extensive fighting in the Highlands in 1644-45 and the ongoing Royalist resistance against the Cromwellian occupation had polarised the clans politically, devastated their lands and exhausted the chiefs economically and financially. Once the chiefs and the leading clan gentry were forced onto the stage of Scottish politics, they were not satisfied with a subsidiary role in the country's decision-making. Their increased involvement in Scottish politics required their presence at parliament in Edinburgh and accelerated their integration into the landed classes. Absenteeism from their estates in the Highlands and increased expenses, needed to finance the lifestyle of the capital, were the logical consequences. Rapidly increasing private debts became the main problem of the chiefs throughout the later seventeenth century. Increased taxation by the Restoration government added to their problems. To satisfy the ever-growing demand for cash, an economic reorganisation of their estates became inevitable. The second half of the seventeenth century marked a decisive shift in the interpretation and functioning of clanship. The chiefs began to reassess and reorganise their estates from the landowners' point of view, and they increasingly considered their traditional role as protectors of their clan to be of minor importance. The late seventeenth century saw the shift from traditional clanship to a commercial interpretation of clanship by the chiefs and the leading clan gentry. Absenteeism, rising rents and the neglect of traditional elements of clanship led to loosening ties between the clan gentry and the clansfolk. The decision by the chiefs and the leading clan gentry to exchange life among their clansmen on their native Highland estates

¹⁰ 'Cathenesia, Strathavernia, Rossia Sutherlandia, &c.', in MacFarlane, *Geographical Collections*, vol. ii, p. 455.

¹¹ For details see Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 88-121. Macinnes argues that the Covenanting movement and the Scottish civil war committed the clans 'irrevocably to Scottish as against pan-Gaelic politics' and produced a cultural response that associated the traditional values of clanship with the Royalist cause. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

for life among the landed classes in the capital was not forced upon the chiefs. The clan elite chose to redefine their position within the state and society, and decided against the traditional values of clanship. They knew, however, that the blossoming of Gaeldom and traditional Highland life had passed its peak, and that the growing commercialism would not have stopped at their lands.

After the Union of 1707 the Highland elite had to redefine their political and economic role in the United Kingdom. However, as they had already been integrated into the leading political and economic circles of Edinburgh, this final step was not too great a challenge. The shift to London, however, estranged them even further from their traditional roots. The obligations of the chiefs to their clansmen became even more neglected, and the integration of the Highlands into the British economy brought another round of increased commercialisation, which caused the disintegration of clanship.¹²

The Jacobite rebellions of 1689-90, 1715 and 1745-46 seemed to confirm the reputation of the Highlands as a lawless and rebellious area. However, the Highlanders were deeply split into Jacobite and Whig clans since almost as many of them had fought for the exiled Stuarts as fought against them. Following each rebellion, the government increasingly intervened in the Highlands in its attempts to subdue and 'civilise' the Highlanders and open up their lands to the rule of the law. For the image of clanship the Jacobite rebellions were a massive disservice, as they allowed government propaganda to present clanship solely in the light of a misunderstood loyalty to tyrannical and mischievous chiefs. It is, therefore, not surprising that it became the main objective of the government to break the power of the chiefs over their vassals and to release the latter from what it considered a kind of 'slavery'.

The abolition of the heritable jurisdictions in 1747 has often been considered as the demise of traditional clanship, as it officially released the vassals from their obedience to the chief and dissolved the mutual obligations among them. However, the economic obligations of the clansmen renting their land from the chief remained and kept them in total dependence of the chief as the owner of the land.

¹² For the beginning of the disintegration of clanship and the chiefs' neglect of their obligations to their vassals see also A.I. Macinnes, 'Scottish Gaeldom: The First Phase of Clearance', in T.M. Devine and R. Mitchison (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1988), vol. i, pp. 70-72.

Many chiefs and members of the leading gentry had, however, long abandoned their part of the mutual obligations to their clansmen. As the nucleus of Highland life, clanship was an ailing patient long before the 'Forty-Five. The signs of disintegration and the decline of traditional Highland life could not be missed by late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century travellers such as Martin Martin and Edmund Burt.

Those travellers in the wake of the 'Forty-Five could only witness the complete collapse of clanship, traditional Highland life and the depopulation of the glens. Their accounts offer an interesting insight into the final stages of clanship, covering its decline from the often vilified, yet dominant, feature of Highland life to an idealised transfiguration in the Romantic movement.

5.2. The relation between landownership and the social structure of Highland society

Highland society was strictly hierarchical. Its social and economic structures made it an entity in which one could not function without the other. It is, therefore, necessary to examine briefly the relation between landownership and the social structure of Highland society before discussing travellers' impressions of clanship.

The members of a clan were defined by their belief in a common ancestry and were governed by a 'chief' as the head of a clan. The chiefs were originally the military leaders of their clans at the time of migration and the acquisition of land in the high Middle Ages. From this function they later derived the sole 'ownership' of the land the clan occupied. In the earlier stages of clanship this was not ownership in legal terms, and many chiefs even had difficulties in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in proving legal title to the land they held. Initially, the chief administered the land as a trustee on behalf of his clan. However, with the establishment of feudal structures in the high and late Middle Ages, most chiefs began to treat the land as their property. The chief subdivided the land and let it to the various ranks of his clansmen ranging from close relatives like the chieftains to tacksmen, tenants and subtenants. The mutual obligations that kept the clan together, and made it function as an economic and social entity, resulted from the recognition of the chief's

authority as the head of the clan, his sole ownership of the land occupied by the clan, and its subletting. The tacksmen became the key figures in this elaborate system of land distribution and mutual obligations. They were the middlemen between the chief and the tenants, the latter cultivating the ground and working in the fields. The tacksmen received their land from the chief and paid their rent to him. They subdivided the land, let it out to the tenants and collected their rents. They were in charge of allotting grazing grounds and organised the tenants' personal duties to the chief.¹³

This system may seem to have been very similar to the feudal system in the rest of the country. However, there was a basic difference. In the clan system the vassals followed their chief as the head of their family. Their military service and their duties to him were founded less in his status as the proprietor of the land than in his authority as the main representative and heir of their common ancestor.¹⁴ They had to follow their chief's call irrespective of where they lived and what land they possessed.¹⁵ In contrast, in feudalism the military service and the duties of the vassals to their lord were based solely on his position as the proprietor of the land. The element of a common ancestry did not exist, and the feudal lord was entitled to the military service of all the people who held land under him irrespective of their family relations. The attempts to establish feudal overlords in the Highlands by marriage or royal grants were nominal and did not affect the Gaelic population and their social organisation in clans.¹⁶ However, from the late Middle Ages onward the chiefs

¹³ At first glance, tacksmen might look like parasites in the clan system. However, they played a crucial role in the management of land. They ran the communal economy of the traditional Highland townships, and their gradual eclipse in the second half of the eighteenth century contributed much to the dissolution of the traditional Highland economy and the decline of Highland life. Despite their high social position, their main importance lay in their economic function as managers of the land. Therefore, the tacksmen and their function will be discussed mainly from an economic point of view. See chapter 6.1.

¹⁴ It was vital for the internal strength and harmony of a clan to keep alive the shared belief in a common and heroic ancestor. However, this sense of filiality was deceptive as the clansmen were totally dependent on their chief. Their economic position resembled that of the Roman clientele.

¹⁵ This principle was weakened with the establishment of 'bastard feudalism' in which smaller clans took (not always voluntarily) the 'protection' of stronger clans, sometimes even adopting the name of their 'protectors'. However, 'bastard feudalism' did not establish kinship based on blood relation, which was the core principle of clanship. People who had no blood relation to the chief often lived on his land and took protection from him. These people either were descended from the more ancient occupiers of the land or were broken men from other clans.

¹⁶ See W.F. Skene, *The Highlanders Of Scotland*, ed. by A. MacBain (Stirling, 1902), p. 101. See also W.F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland: A History Of Ancient Alban*, vol. iii (2nd edn. Edinburgh, 1890), p. 284. [hereafter: Skene, *Celtic Scotland*]

increasingly adopted the rights of feudal landlords, such as the jurisdiction over their vassals.¹⁷ Moreover, clanship itself developed towards feudal structures when the closest kinsmen of the chief acquired as property the land let to them by the chief. They founded families, their lands became hereditary, and they thus established new rival houses within the clan. Despite its assimilation of feudal structures in the late Middle Ages, clanship retained its core principle that the authority of the chief was primarily derived from lineage and not from landownership. This was the distinctive feature of clanship, and it survived until the early eighteenth century when feudal structures had long ceased to exist outside the Highlands.

Although the common clansmen were totally dependent on their chief in economic terms and jurisdiction, clanship had primarily a very strong protective function. The clan elite, i.e. the chief and his leading gentry, had to provide protection and security of possession for their people within their lands.¹⁸ The chief had to defend the integrity of the land on which the clan lived, and had to protect his following and their property from rival clans and cateran bands.¹⁹ The protective function of clanship must not be underestimated in a region that was, until the second half of the seventeenth century, outside the effective control of the government and the established law.²⁰ In such circumstances the survival of a clan depended on the number of armed men a chief could muster to defend the territory and property of his clan in a region scarce in resources. The need for manpower forced the chiefs to cultivate as much of their land as possible, and to subdivide it into the smallest sustainable units in order to place and feed as many men as possible. Although this did not result in an efficient form of agriculture, efficiency was second to the need for manpower.

¹⁷ The heritable jurisdictions of the clan chiefs were not abolished until 1747.

¹⁸ This obligation was known as '*duthchas*'. The growing neglect of this vital obligation by the clan elite in the course of the eighteenth century led to the dissolution of clanship, emigration, clearances and the depopulation of the Highlands.

¹⁹ A 'cateran' was a Highland marauder or irregular fighting man. Caterans operated in bands, came down from the Highlands to the Lowlands and carried off cattle and corn from those who were not able to offer resistance. See *SND*, vol. ii, p. 55.

²⁰ Overpopulation, social and economic displacement, and the geography of the Highlands favoured the emergence of cateran bands that operated in areas such as Lochaber, Rannoch and on the fringe of the Lowlands. Their activities were a major contribution to the image of the Highlands as a lawless and violent region, which in turn was extended in the public perception to the Highlands and clanship in general. However, it has to be stressed that these cateran bands of surplus, landless men operated outside of the clan society and that the Highland economy suffered as much from them as the bordering Lowlands.

The population pressure on arable land and grazing grounds remained far into the eighteenth century. However, parallel to the integration of the chiefs into the landed classes in the second half of the seventeenth century, the government began to step up its pressure on the Highlands. Its attempts to enforce a more effective peace, to suppress feuding, to establish law and order, and to offer protection from clans notorious for excursions on their neighbours, led to a gradual decline of the clan chiefs' need for huge armed followings. Their demand for money, however, multiplied, and the Highland estates faced increasing commercialisation.²¹

In the wake of the commercial reorientation of the Highland estates, the links between the different ranks of clansmen loosened, and the clan gentry abandoned their traditional obligations to their vassals. Early travellers like Martin Martin and Edmund Burt, in the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, witnessed this crucial transitional stage in clanship. Their accounts describe both traditional clanship and the increasing signs of its disintegration.

In the course of the eighteenth century, clanship finally turned from a social system that had offered its members protection in exchange for loyalty, into an oppressive system. The common interest and the mutual dependence between the clan elite and the clansfolk gave way to the economic exploitation of the commoners by their gentry. Moreover, by the end of the eighteenth century many Highland and island estates had new owners from the Lowlands or England. They had no blood relation to the people living on their land. Nor did they feel indebted to any clan spirit or traditional obligations bound on landownership, but expected proper returns from their investments in their new estates. Sheep farming promised greater profits than traditional small-scale farming. Wherever sheep were introduced, the local

²¹ This commercial reorientation was headed by the House of Argyll on its clan lands in mainland Argyll and on Mull and Tiree. See Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 142-148. The object of this reorganisation was to produce higher money rents. Land, like any other capital asset, should produce a revenue, and it should, therefore, no longer be allocated as a token of kinship or as a reward for military service, but to the highest bidder. Another result of the chiefs' growing demand for cash was their increasing indebtedness to their lesser gentry by wadsets (i.e. gentlemen who received lands from their chief as security for providing loans). Accumulating debts also forced the chiefs to convert wadsets into outright sales. However, the lesser gentry as the beneficiaries of these sales agreed to hold their newly acquired land within the feudal superiority of the clan elite. This created a deceptive appearance of stability on the land market in the Highlands in the later seventeenth century. See *ibid.*, pp. 143-144. Nonetheless, some chiefs still had no legal title to these lands, and the wadsetting and sale of land even within the ranks of the clan gentry was the final step in turning land formerly under trusteeship into private property.

subtenants were soon resettled or forced to leave.²² When visitors such as Thomas Pennant or Johnson and Boswell travelled the Highlands in the mid to late eighteenth century, many traditional elements of clanship had long gone. This was, of course, also due to the proscription of the wearing of tartan in Scotland (1747) which was (by penalty of deportation) in force until 1782, although the Highlanders did not always strictly adhere to it. Instead, Pennant or Johnson and Boswell witnessed the economic decline, impoverishment and emigration of large parts of the Highland population. The references to clanship in their accounts vary from wistful nostalgia to relief about the Highlanders being freed from slavish dependence on their chiefs. Travellers' impressions illustrate the controversial assessment of clanship, its traditional elements and its disintegration.

5.3. The stereotyping of the Highlanders and clanship in travellers' accounts and official reports until the 1750s

As source material, the accounts of the early visitors to the Highlands are comparatively difficult and disappointing. The amount of unbiased information, based on the travellers' personal observations, is limited. There are a number of travellers to the Highlands in the early and mid-seventeenth century,²³ however, the first detailed accounts of Highland life by travellers relate from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Before that time, the contributions of travellers' accounts to our knowledge of Highland life are relatively poor. Most travellers either were too afraid of the Highlanders or had no more than a cursory glance at the fringes of the Highlands before returning to the Lowlands. Consequently, their accounts seldom reached beyond the level of paraphrasing the well-known stereotypes about the Highlanders.

²² 'Blackface' and 'Cheviot' sheep were a particular threat to the traditional Highland township, the '*baile*'. Both breeds needed extensive stretches of land. The more robust Blackface grazed on higher ground in the hills. This land, around the shielings, had traditionally been reserved for the summer pasture of the Highlanders' black cattle. The Cheviots were twice as profitable as Blackfaces, but they were less robust and needed lower pastures for wintering, threatening the arable stretches in the glens close to the traditional Highland townships. The rise of the textile industry in the second half of the eighteenth century caused a massive demand for wool.

²³ See, for example, John Taylor in 1618, Gilbert Blakhal in 1639-43, Richard Franck in 1656-57, and George Fox in 1657. However, their accounts included hardly any detailed descriptions of Highland life beyond the stereotypes presented in the histories and geographical descriptions of Scotland.

The accounts of Richard Franck's tour in 1656-57 and George Fox's tour in 1657 are fairly typical of this dilemma. Although Franck penetrated deep into the Highlands, he did not provide any detailed information about the Highlanders' way of life, confining himself to writing about some of their 'barbarous' customs, such as the boiling of the meat in its hide, which could be taken from any major history or geographical description of Scotland.²⁴ The Quaker missionary George Fox's account of his encounter with Highlanders is even less informative. He merely mentioned that he was lucky to escape with the Lord's help from their devilish pitchfork attacks on him.²⁵

No early traveller exemplified the biased attitude towards the Highlanders better than Thomas Kirk. During his tour of Scotland in 1677 he made two short local trips from Bonar Bridge and Inverness into the Highlands. In his private diary he noted the reasons why he did not penetrate from Inverness further into the Highlands than the eastern shore of Loch Ness:

About the further end of this Lough are great fir-woods, but they are so full of rogues that we durst not see them: none dare pass the Highlands without a guard of ten or twelve, at the least.²⁶

He did not have any negative experiences with Highlanders during these local trips. However, the polemic diatribe against Scotland, which he published two years after his tour, not only included all the well-known prejudices against them but was also embellished with further abuse of his own.²⁷ Fear of the Highlanders prevented most seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century travellers from penetrating into the hills. Instead, they reproduced stereotypes and prejudices, thereby enhancing those fears and creating a vicious circle that was hard to break.

John Macky's²⁸ and Daniel Defoe's accounts of their tours are further examples of the limited amount of information that can be drawn from the early

²⁴ See Franck, *Northern Memoirs*, pp. 176-177.

²⁵ See G. Fox, *A Journal Or Historical Account Of The Life, Travels ... of George Fox* (3rd edn. London, 1765), p. 259. [hereafter: Fox, *Journal*] George Fox (1624-1691) was the founder of the Society of Friends.

²⁶ Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 29. Kirk also wrote that the Highlanders did not like the English. See *ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁷ See chapter 3.2.

²⁸ [J. Macky], *A Journey Through Scotland* (London, 1723). [hereafter: Macky, *Journey*] The date of his journey cannot be precisely ascertained but must have been in the early 1720s. Macky was a Scotsman and worked as a spy from 1690-92 at the French court to inform the government in London about the activities of the exiled Jacobite court.

visitors to the Highlands. Both authors became increasingly vague when they described the area. They switched the style of their accounts from a narrative of their travels to a geographical description. This makes it very difficult to ascertain whether the descriptions were taken from personal observation.

Moreover, however antiquated it had then become, the image of clanship in the travellers' accounts was dominated, until the early eighteenth century, by Camden's biased and unfavourable account of the Highlanders. Macky's account is a striking example of this dilemma. He claimed to have returned from Inverness to Brechin through the hills and must have met Highlanders during this stage of his travels. However, instead of providing a description of the Highlanders taken from personal observation, he paraphrased the relevant passages of Camden.²⁹ Moreover, Macky described clanship as being entirely opposed to the established government of Scotland. He gave a brief, but totally antiquated, survey of the clans and the rise of the MacDonalds in the western Highlands. He wrote that the MacDonalds still dominated all the other clans and took up arms in any invasion,

which shews that their Resentments were not so much against the Family of the *Stewarts* as against the Establish'd Government of *Scotland*, which in all Reigns they have endeavour'd to disturb.³⁰

Additionally, Macky linked clanship to lawlessness and compared clan society in general to Arabic tribes, blaming both of them for regarding extortion and robbery as a legitimate contribution to their subsistence:

I can compare them [the clans] to nothing liker than the *Arabs*, who are divided into Tribes as they, and have their Chiefs. They are very good Subjects to the Grand Seignior, while the Port sends them their annual Allowance; but whenever that is wanting, they make bold with the Caravans and the Pilgrimages to *Mecca*, to make Reprisals, and so make their Revenue from the Port absolutely necessary.³¹

²⁹ See Macky, *Journey*, pp. 127-128, and J. Dalrymple, *A Second Edition Of Camden's Description Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1695), pp. 145-146. Mildmay's observations on clanship in 1736 also had a striking resemblance to Camden's. See Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fos. 40-42.

³⁰ Macky, *Journey*, p. 129. Macky described the MacDonalds as 'the common Disturbers of the Nation' until James V brought them to obedience. *Ibid.*, p. 129. He did not make any mention of the government-supported territorial expansion of the loyal and Protestant Clan Campbell into MacDonald territory. The MacDonalds finally lost Kintyre and Jura in 1607 and Islay in 1615 to the Campbells. See D. Gregory, *The History Of The Western Highlands And Isles Of Scotland, From A.D. 1493 to A.D. 1625* (2nd edn. London, 1881), pp. 311-312, 363-390. Before the loss of these lands, the MacDonalds suffered from internal and external feuding which resulted in a severe economic decline of their lands. See Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 62-63. By the 1720s the Clan MacDonald had long lost the dominance it had in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

³¹ Macky, *Journey*, pp. 129-130.

Defoe's comments about clanship show a similar pattern of interpretation. His observations were not very specific, but his distinction of several forms of clanship clearly reveals the political nature of his comments.³² Defoe observed that there were three different forms or stages of clanship in the Highlands. He distinguished between the clans in the north-western Highlands, the central Highlands, and those in the western Highlands that were under the rule of the House of Argyll.³³ At first glance, this might seem like a geographical distinction or might reflect the gradual opening up of the Highlands to foreign visitors. A closer examination, however, reveals that this distinction was mainly based on different stages of 'civilisation' and the clans' and their chiefs' attitudes towards the Union.

According to Defoe, in the north-western Highlands the chiefs still had absolute power over their vassals. They reigned like little monarchs in their dominions, their vassals lived in the respective boundaries of their clan, and many of them did not know any other sovereign than their chief.³⁴

In the central Highlands progress was clearly visible. The Highlanders living in this area had lost much of their former barbarity and had become much more civilised. Their chiefs had taken the necessary decisions on behalf of their vassals. They had opted against barbarity and decided for the road of progress and civilisation. Defoe commented:

As is the Country [the Grampian mountains], so are the Inhabitants, a fierce fighting and furious Kind of Men; but I must add that they are much chang'd, and civiliz'd from what they were formerly, if Mr. *Camden's* Account of them is just. I mean of the Highlanders of *Bradalbin* only; tho' I include the Country of *Loquhabre*, and *Athol*, as adjoining to it.

It is indeed a very bitter Character, and possibly they might deserve it in those days; but I must insist that they are quite another People now: And tho' the Country is the same,

³² Defoe's comments about clanship are of particular importance as his *Tour* was used as the leading guidebook to Scotland until the early 1770s and had influenced generations of travellers.

³³ This distinction could not have been related to the opening up of the Highlands by the road-building scheme under Wade because Defoe had travelled through the north of Scotland roughly a decade earlier.

³⁴ See Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, p. 202. The notion of the clan chiefs as little emperors or kings was common among English travellers to the Highlands in the early eighteenth century. The Englishman Daniel Taylor had been three times to the Highlands on business, and he wrote to his half-brother William, in a letter from Edinburgh, 7 October 1710, that the Laird of Grant was like a little emperor to his clan. See P.A. Taylor (ed.), *Some Account Of The Taylor Family* (London, 1875), pp. 173-174. Daniel Taylor was very biased against the Highlanders. He ridiculed them as 'Subterraneans' and mocked that he was led by his business partner, the Laird of Rothiemurchus, to his 'pallace under ground', a 'House cover'd wth Turf & walls of Dirt', where he 'had a good Entertainment of Stinking Fish & Venison'. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

and the Mountains as wild and desolate as ever; yet the People, by the good Conduct of their Chiefs and Heads of Clans, are much more civilized than they were in former times.³⁵

Defoe's political interpretation of clanship becomes even more obvious in his appraisal of the Duke of Argyll. The gentlemen and vassals under his leadership were relieved from the despotic rule of the chiefs, they were allowed a mind and opinion of their own, and they were far more civilised and less misguided than the Highlanders in the north-western parts of Scotland. Consequently, they posed far less of a threat to the peace and stability of Great Britain than the rest of the Highlanders. Defoe commented:

It is true that the greatest Part of these Western *Highlands*, may be said to be subject, or in some Respect to belong to the House of *Argyle*, or to speak more properly, to the Family or Clan of the *Campbells*, of whom the Duke of *Argyle* is the Chief; but then it should be noted too, that those Western Gentlemen are not so blindly to be led, or guided by their Chiefs as those in the North; nor when led on, are they so apt for Mischief and Violence. But as many of them are toucht with the Cameronian Whig, or at least the *English Whig Principles*, they would venture to enquire what they were to do, and whom to fight against, at least before they dipt far in any hazardous Undertaking.³⁶

For a fierce Whig and Unionist such as Defoe, the evolution of clanship had reached its most progressive form in the liberal stewardship of the Duke of Argyll towards his vassals. In other words, the only civilised Highlanders were those loyal to the government. The others remained uncivilised, barbaric savages who lived under a despotic clan system and were misled by their chiefs.³⁷

These images of the Highlander and clanship were not exceptional and fairly reflected the prejudices against the Highlands in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.³⁸ Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, for example, commented upon his return from a tour of the Highlands in 1739:

I had no great satisfaction in the north but I behoved once in my Life to see it. Some of the people especially in Aberdeenshire are virteous & industrious but the rest a panel of idle vain mortals. The Highlanders where I past [sic] are a race of men who will not merit any regard from the rest of mankind unless they change their manners.³⁹

³⁵ Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, p. 220. Note, again, the dominance of Camden as the leading reference book until the 1720s.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

³⁷ It is not surprising that this prejudiced Whig interpretation of clanship and Highland society did not include any reference to the Massacre of Glencoe.

³⁸ When Macky and Defoe published their accounts in the mid-1720s, Burt wrote his *Letters*. He was also a staunch Hanoverian and mainly shared their view of clanship. To him, not all Highlanders were necessarily Jacobites, but the chiefs abused their vassals' 'slave-like notions of patriarchal power' to lead them into rebellion as in 1715. Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 203.

³⁹ NAS, J. Clerk of Penicuik, 'A Trip to the north of Scotland as far as Inverness in May 1739', Clerk of Penicuik Muniments, GD18/2110, no pagination. See last page of the journal.

Such impressions prevailed for a long time to come and could be found particularly in the accounts of agents and travellers on behalf of the government until the 1750s.⁴⁰

*The Highlands of Scotland in 1750*⁴¹ is one of the many accounts and memoranda written by government agents travelling and spying in the Highlands in the wake of the 'Forty-Five. The uprising had revived old stereotypes and fears about the Highlanders, and 'civilising' them became the government's top priority. Its author left no doubt about the objective of his travels in the Highlands and his observations on the people: 'I shall propose what appears to me the most likely means to Civilize the Barbarous Highlanders, and Improve their Country.'⁴² It is not surprising that Bruce was extremely biased against the Highlanders. Because of its violently Whig, Protestant and anti-Jacobite attitude, his account and proposals must be read with every allowance for prejudice. Nonetheless, they clearly reflected the contemporary unease and prejudice of the Lowlanders, the English and the government against Highland life and particularly clanship. To Bruce clanship was at the heart of all unrest in the Highlands. It was of crucial importance to him to break the power of the lairds over their vassals.⁴³ He considered the lairds' sole ownership of the land to be at the core of clanship. This led inevitably to a slave-like dependence of the commoners on their lairds and to frequent unrest in the Highlands. Bruce, therefore, proposed to force the Jacobite lairds to issue written twenty-year leases to their tenants, and to abolish any personal service of the tenants to the

⁴⁰ See, for example, *A Journey, Through Part of England and Scotland. Along with the Army Under the Command of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland* (London, [1746?]), pp. 94-95. The authorship of this journal is attributed to James Ray. [hereafter: Ray, *Journey Through Part of England and Scotland. Along the Army of the Duke of Cumberland*] Ray's characterisation of the Highlanders included all the prejudices of Camden. Ray's *Journey* was very popular and reached the third edition in 1747. Much of it was also used in his *Compleat History Of The Rebellion, From its first Rise, in 1745, to its total Suppression at the glorious Battle of Culloden, in April, 1746* (York, 1749). This work also proved to be very popular and reached numerous editions.

⁴¹ A. Lang (ed.), *The Highlands of Scotland in 1750* (Edinburgh, 1898). [hereafter: Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*] This polemical and fiercely Whiggish account is attributed to Edmund Bruce, a government agent who travelled the Highlands incognito in 1749. Bruce claimed to have travelled extensively between the Pentland Firth, the Point of Ardnamurchan, Inverness, the east coast of Scotland and Argyllshire in preparation for this account. In contrast to the authors of similar memoranda after the 'Forty-Five, Bruce had an extensive first-hand experience of the Highlands.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴³ A 'laird' is a landed proprietor, the owner of an estate of land of any size from the largest to a single farm, frequently followed by the name of the estate. See *SND*, vol. v, p. 492. In the Highlands the lairds often had huge estates and belonged to the clan gentry. The lairds had considerable power over the tenants living on their estates.

proprietors of the land. The tenants, on the other hand, would be obliged to improve their land once they were granted long-term leases. On the Forfeited Estates no tenant should be granted more land than he could work on with his domestic servants, in order to avoid subletting and the establishment of new dependencies.⁴⁴ Bruce clearly regarded clanship as an oppressive economic system that enabled the lairds to keep their vassals in total dependence and to incite them to unrest at any time. In his view, there was only one solution to civilise the Highlanders. The tenants had to be given security of lease. This practice should be implemented on all Forfeited Estates, on any land let out by the crown and, if possible, be extended on land held by private landlords. This was the only way to break the chiefs' tyrannical power over their vassals, and

By this means the Tenants will Enjoy the Fruits of their own Industry, and know the Sweets of Peace and Liberty; which will put it out of the Power of their Tyrant Chiefs to Induce them to Rebel against a Government, to whom they will be indebted for every thing they Possess.⁴⁵

Bruce's attitude towards clanship was very similar to Defoe's political interpretation. Bruce was full of praise for the chiefs of the loyal clans such as 4th Lord Reay, chief of the Clan Mackay. According to Bruce, the Mackays of Strathnaver were once reckoned 'the most Barbarous and Wicked of all the Clans'. However, Lord Reay had not only civilised them, but also made them 'the most Religious of all the Tribes that dwell among the Mountains' and 'short of none in their Zeal and Affection to His Majesty'.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the Jacobite clans were synonymous with rebellion, unrest and lawlessness. Like many contemporary authors, Bruce singled out the various branches of the MacDonalds and the Camerons as particularly lawless. He accused them of being idle, arrogant and making a living solely from theft and plunder. Bruce's allegations against the MacDonalds speak volumes:

... the few McDonalds who live in Kintire are brought to Industry by the Example of their Neighbours the Campbells; but great numbers of the Keppoch, Glengarry, and Clanronald Families, tho' not worth a Shilling, would be ashamed to be seen at any Kind of Labour tho' they think it no Shame to Steal or go through the Country asking assistance of their Neighbours (which they call thigging) or living upon free Quarters wherever they happen to

⁴⁴ See Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*, pp. 145-147.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9. The Mackays had supported the government in 1715 and 1745. Bruce also highly praised the improvements initiated by 4th Lord Reay on his estate.

be, and they Reckon it an Honour done to other people that they should be entertained by them.⁴⁷

For Bruce the Highlanders were clearly split between rebellious, disloyal clans and honest, loyal clans. The Jacobite clans were idle thieves, whereas the loyal clans, such as the Campbells, were examples to their neighbours in bringing industry and civilisation to the Highlands. The Protestant, but Jacobite, Clan Cameron attracted the particular scorn of Bruce. He accused them of a whole catalogue of deficiencies, including violent Jacobitism, wickedness, idleness, thieving, inhospitality and disregard for any religion.⁴⁸ Moreover, he blamed them for various crimes, such as having killed the livestock and destroyed the house of a minister who dared to accept a vacant tenancy that had been held formerly by an evicted tenant of the Clan Cameron.⁴⁹ Bruce's distorted version of the Massacre of Glencoe (1692) reveals the true nature of his account as pure political propaganda. Whereas Defoe simply ignored the killing of the MacDonalds of Glencoe, Bruce described it as the destruction of 'that Nest of Rebels Thieves and Cutthroats' and claimed:

The whole Neighbourhood looked upon this as a Judgment from Heaven on so wicked a Crew, but the Jacobites to this day never fail to represent it in the most Odious Light, in order to throw Dirt upon the Memory of King William.⁵⁰

Like many contemporary Whig writers on the Highlands, Bruce equated Jacobitism with lawlessness and unrest. This stigmatisation was often used as a pretext to dismantle clanship in the Highlands. However, by the mid-eighteenth century it was obvious that the Whig equation of clanship and unrest was misleading. The notion

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 52-53. In the public perception of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the MacDonalds replaced the MacGregors as the archetypal Highland villains.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 82-86. Bruce explained the Protestant religion of the Camerons as 'a part of the Pretender's Political Scheme'. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 91-93. This incident is supposed to have taken place in 1725, and it was also mentioned by Edmund Burt.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79. However, it must be stressed that the MacDonalds of Glencoe had a bad reputation for thieving, even by Highland standards. On 13 February 1692, 38 members of the MacDonalds of Glencoe were murdered by a detachment of government soldiers under the command of Captain Robert Campbell of Glenlyon, who acted on secret orders of the Lord Advocate, Dalrymple of Stair. Chief Alasdair MacIain had missed by five days the deadline set for 1 January 1692 to swear an oath of loyalty to King William III. The government decided to make an example, and the MacDonalds of Glencoe were finally chosen as targets. An enquiry into the massacre in 1695 exonerated William III although he had signed the order sanctioning the army to extirpate Highland rebels, and the blame was put on Dalrymple of Stair and the deputy Governor of Fort William. The massacre led to a serious deterioration of the Anglo-Scottish relations. The participation of the Campbells damaged their reputation in the Highlands. For further details see Lynch, *Scotland*, pp. 305-307.

that the clans were either constantly at war with each other, or preparing for it, was no longer true. The last major clan battle had taken place in 1688 near Spean Bridge. This final outburst of 'Highland unrest' and 'war' between two clans had occurred nearly three decades before the Jacobite rebellion of 1715. By the 'Forty-Five more than half a century had passed, by which time the majority of the chiefs had been successfully integrated into the British aristocracy in economic and political terms. It is no coincidence that many of the chiefs and clans who took part in the 'Forty-Five had been the losers in this integration. The economic reasons for joining the rebellion and trying to overturn the 'established order' of the Hanoverians were often as strong as the participants' adherence to the Stuarts. It would be wrong to blame the Jacobite rebellions entirely on clanship and the adherence to the Stuarts, without paying attention to the economic circumstances of the leading participants. The Hanoverians had the more prosperous clans on their side, whereas Jacobite clans such as the MacDonalds of Keppoch, the MacGregors and the MacDonalds of Glencoe were either landless or possessed only marginal property. Many of the chiefs who were 'out' for the Young Pretender in 1745 faced acute financial difficulty and may have considered a change of government as a solution to their debt problem.

These generalised and stereotyped accounts cannot contribute to a balanced view of Highland life and clanship. They do, however, show the importance of recognising the political intentions of the visitors to the Highlands and the ways in which they had influenced contemporary attitudes to Highland life. It is, therefore, necessary to assess every individual traveller's account against the background of the author's motivation in visiting the Highlands.

However, despite this widespread prejudice, at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, travellers prepared the first detailed and comparatively reliable accounts which allow a deeper and less-biased insight into Highland life and clanship.

5.4. Travellers' impressions of clanship

The Highlanders are divided into tribes, or clans, under chiefs, or chieftains, as they are called in the laws of Scotland; and each clan again divided into branches from the main stock, who have chieftains over them. These are subdivided into smaller branches of fifty or sixty men, who deduce their original from their particular chieftains, and rely upon them as

their more immediate protectors and defenders. But for better distinction I shall use the word chief for the head of a whole clan, and the principal of a tribe derived from him I shall call a chieftain.

The ordinary Highlanders esteem it the most sublime degree of virtue to love their chief, and pay him a blind obedience, although it be in opposition to the government, the laws of the kingdom, or even to the law of God. He is their idol; and as they profess to know no king but him (I was going further), so will they say they ought to do whatever he commands without inquiry.

Next to this love of their chief is that of the particular branch from whence they sprang; and, in a third degree, to those of the whole clan or name, whom they will assist, right or wrong, against those of any other tribe with which they are at variance, to whom their enmity, like that of exasperated brothers, is most outrages.

They likewise owe good will to such clans as they esteem to be their particular well-wishers; and lastly, they have an adherence one to another as Highlanders, in opposition to the people of the Low-country, whom they despise as inferior to them in courage, and believe they have a right to plunder them whenever it is in their power. This last arises from a tradition, that the Lowlands, in old times, were the possession of their ancestors. ...

The chief exercises an arbitrary authority over his vassals, determines all differences and disputes that happen among them, and levies taxes upon extraordinary occasions, such as the marriage of a daughter, building a house, or some pretence for his support and the honour of the name. And if any one should refuse to contribute to the best of his ability he is sure of severe treatment, and if he persisted in his obstinacy he would be cast out of his tribe by general consent; but instances of this kind have rarely happened.

This power of the chiefs is not supported by interest, as they are landlords, but as lineally descended from the old patriarchs, or fathers of the families; for they hold the same authority when they have lost their estates, as may appear from several, and particularly one who commands in his clan, though, at the same time, they maintain him, having nothing left of his own.

On the other hand, the chief, even against the laws, is to protect his followers, as they are sometimes called, be they never so criminal. He is their leader in clan quarrels, must free the necessitous from their arrears of rent, and maintain such who, by accidents, are fallen to total decay.⁵¹

Burt's description of clanship was undoubtedly an idealised one as clanship had long passed its peak by the early eighteenth century. Nonetheless, his account included all of the traditional key elements that made clanship function as a social and economic entity. Burt highlighted the authoritarian position of the chief as the military leader, protector and supreme judge of his clan.⁵² He clearly stressed that it was the chief's function to protect his followers in military and economic terms. The chief had to protect the lives and property of his clansmen against rival clans and had to support his followers in times of economic difficulty or mishap. In exchange for his

⁵¹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 15. This was undoubtedly an idealised description of clanship. Burt also showed in his letters that many chiefs neglected their obligations to their vassals. See chapter 5.4.3.

⁵² Like most English visitors to the Highlands, Burt tended to overemphasise what he considered to be the oppressive or exploitative elements of clanship in comparison with its protective power. Burt was particularly critical of the chiefs' absolute judicial power. See, for example, *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 52, and vol. ii, pp. 148-152. On one occasion, a Highland chieftain clapped his hand on his broadsword and offered to send Burt the heads of two or three of his men whom Burt complained had not treated him with the necessary civility.

protection he could expect his vassals' absolute loyalty. According to Burt, the chief did not have to coerce his vassals into loyalty as they took particular pride in their obedience and love of him. The Highlanders' love for their chief was not limited to the lower class of people, and those nearer in rank to the chief shared the same love and obedience to him. Burt mentioned an encounter, during his travels, with a Highland gentleman, probably a chieftain or a tacksman, who explained to him the Highlanders' special adherence to their chief. The gentleman acknowledged the inconvenience of a Highland life, but he emphasised that they got used to it by degrees in the various stages of their life from childhood to marriage and parenthood; but above all, he said, 'is the *love of our chief*, so strongly is it inculcated to us in our infancy; and, if it were not for that, I think the Highlands would be much thinner of people than they now are'.⁵³ By this and many other instances Burt was fully persuaded 'that the Highlanders are at least as fond of the race of their chiefs as a Frenchman is of the house of Bourbon'.⁵⁴

On the other hand, Burt was very critical of the Highlanders' love for their chiefs and their slavish obedience to them. He was particularly anxious that the newly raised Independent Companies might pose a danger to the government in case of renewed Jacobite unrest in the Highlands.⁵⁵ Six companies, made up entirely of Highlanders, had been established in 1725 to help to disarm the Highlanders and to prevent blackmailing and cattle thieving in the north of Scotland. Three companies had 100 soldiers each, and the others consisted of 60 soldiers each, making 480 in total. The Independent Companies were raised from ordinary tenants and were commanded by their chieftains or chiefs. Burt feared that in case of renewed Jacobite unrest the officers might switch sides and drag their men into an anti-government rebellion. He was convinced that these companies posed a threat to the government because of the chiefs' political unreliability and the common people's slavish adherence to their leaders. Therefore, Burt wanted the dissolution of the Independent Companies:

⁵³ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 8.

⁵⁵ After the Jacobite rebellion of 1715, Independent Companies made up of loyal Highlanders, and commanded by their own leaders, were considered as an option to pacify the Highlands. However, such companies were disbanded in 1717. After being re-established in 1725, the Independent Companies were amalgamated in the Black Watch in 1739, so called because of their dark, green tartan. The Black Watch became the first Highland regiment. See Lynch, *Scotland*, p. 331.

I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, or even *second-sighted*, yet I foresee that a time may come when the institution of these corps may be thought not to have been the best of policy. I am not unaware it may be said, they are raised in order to facilitate the *disarming*, and they are useful to prevent the stealing of cattle; but both those reasons are not sufficient to alter my opinion of their continuance.⁵⁶

Martin gave an impression similar to Burt's of the relationship between the chief and his vassals in the late seventeenth century.⁵⁷ In referring to the Hebrides, he singled out the particular love of the common clansfolk for their chief. He also illustrated the pride which the whole clan took in their chief's reputation, which was why they were so willing to contribute to his social and economic prosperity, far in excess of their own obligations. He noted:

The Islanders have a great respect for their Chief and Head of Tribes, and they conclude Grace after every Meal, with a Petition to God for their Welfare and Prosperity. Neither will they, as far as in them lies, suffer them to sink under any Misfortune: But in case of a decay of Estate, make a voluntary Contribution on their behalf, as a common Duty, to support the Credit of their Families.⁵⁸

Martin also reported on the traditional retinue of a chieftain. He referred to the household of his former pupil, Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat.⁵⁹ His retinue included a principal standard-bearer, a quartermaster and 'a constant Sentinel on the top of their Houses called *Gockmin*, or in the *English Tongue Cockman*, who was obliged to Watch Day and Night'.⁶⁰ Wherever the chieftain went, he was accompanied by

a competent number of young Gentlemen called *Luchktach*, or *Guard de Corps*, who always attended the Chieftain at home, and abroad; they were well Train'd in managing the

⁵⁶ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 24-25.

⁵⁷ Martin is undoubtedly one of the most important seventeenth-century sources on the Hebrides, not only regarding its geography but also life in the islands. Being a local and speaking the Gaelic language, he had access to information that was unavailable to outsiders. Sir Robert Sibbald described Martin's importance to the survey of the Hebrides in a letter to Hans Sloane, Secretary of the Royal Society of London: 'He was borne in the Isle of Sky, was Governour to ye Chieffs of ye Clans in ys isles and heth yt interest and favour with them, they will doe for him what they will doe for no other. yr. Language is his Mother Language, and he is well acquainted with yr Maners and Customes and is the person here most capable to Serve the Royall Society in the accounts of what relateth to ye description of ys Isles.' Quoted in Withers, *Geography*, p. 87. For Martin's relationship with Sibbald and his work for the Royal Society see *ibid.*, pp. 87-94.

⁵⁸ Martin, *Description*, pp. 209-210. In the late seventeenth century the reputation of a chief and his clan still depended to a certain extent on his ability to impress his guests with lavish entertainment. However, the importance of competitive feasting had been continually receding since the Statutes of Iona in 1609. It must also be stressed that the chiefs expected certain duties of their vassals that were officially 'voluntary contributions'.

⁵⁹ Donald MacDonald, younger of Sleat, - afterwards 4th Baronet. Born c. 1665, he led the Sleat men at Killiecrankie in 1689. He died in 1718, two years after being forfeited.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Sword, and Target, in Wrestling, Swimming, Jumping, Dancing, Shooting with Bows and Arrows, and were stout Seamen.⁶¹

Additionally, the chieftain was attended night and day by a ‘Galloglach’ (galloglass), a particularly strong and courageous armour-bearer, whose task was to prevent his master from any surprise.⁶² Moreover, every family had two ‘Marischall Taeh’ or stewards, who had to be ‘well versed in the Pedigree of all the Tribes in the Isles, and in the Highlands of *Scotland*’, for it was their task to assign every man at table his seat according to his rank.⁶³ However, this custom had recently been abandoned. Finally, every chieftain had his cup-bearers and purse-masters. Some of these offices were hereditary, but all of them were a great honour to the person called upon and thus strengthened the bond between the chieftain, his gentry and vassals.⁶⁴ Some offices were also linked to certain privileges. For example, the ‘Galloglach’ had double rations of meat, and the quartermaster had a right to the hides of certain cows.⁶⁵ In Martin’s time the chief could rely on the loyalty of his gentry and their vassals. The clan gentry served as an officer class to their chiefs and were well trained in arms and warfare. It was the Highlanders’ loyalty to their superiors that offered them protection, but it also led them into unquestioning allegiance to the ill-fated Jacobite rebellions of 1689 and 1715.⁶⁶

John Campbell, in 1752, emphasised that the Highlanders still loved and respected their chieftains to such an extent that they were happy to sacrifice their

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 104. ‘The Head of ane Family hath commonly ane Armour Bearer who goes in his Full Armour before his Master, intervening betwixt him and all Hazard in tyme of Warr. This is calld Galloglach.’ J.L. Campbell (ed.), *A Collection Of Highland Rites And Customes* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 41. [hereafter: Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*] This collection is edited from the copy made by the Welsh Celtic scholar Edward Lhuyd (1660-1709) from the manuscript of the Revd James Kirkwood (1650?-1708).

⁶³ Martin, *Description*, p. 108.

⁶⁴ Burt also made an account of the various offices in the entourage of a chief. However, he was no Gaelic speaker, and he travelled the Highlands roughly 30 years later than Martin. From the late seventeenth century to the mid-1720s, the Highlands and clanship had changed greatly. Burt was an English outsider, attached to the military, and could not have gained such insight into clan affairs. In contrast to Martin, who was a native and belonged to the clan gentry, Burt could not have gained access to the meetings of chiefs and clan gentry as Martin had. Burt’s account of the ‘hanchman’s’ duties on a drinking bout, in which the ‘hanchman’ had to stand behind his chief in order to protect him from any insults, was purely fictitious and shows his ignorance of the offices in the entourage of a chief. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 59-61.

⁶⁵ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 103, 104.

⁶⁶ By 1745 clanship and personal loyalty had rapidly dissolved. Many clan elites were deeply split in their loyalty, and there were also severe splits between them and their vassals. See chapter 5.4.3.

lives for them. Even the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions did not destroy the Highlanders' adherence to their nobility:

Now they will go through Fire and Water at the Command of their Chieftains, and the whole ocean cannot drown their Love and Respect for them, neither can all the Mines of *Peru* buy off their Allegiance from them, for they would sooner sacrifice their Lives and Interest in their Cause, than they would for all the crowned Heads in Christendom ...⁶⁷

Burt's assertion, that the chiefs would retain their authority even when they had lost their estates, is of particular interest because it underlines the distinctive character of clanship and feudal rule. In the feudal system the loss or forfeiture of land resulted immediately in the loss of the authority over the vassals attached to the land. This was obviously not the case in clanship, and it proves that its core principle of lineage before landownership was still in place in the early eighteenth century.⁶⁸ Without this fundamental difference the forfeited and exiled Jacobites would have been unable to call their clansmen to arms in the 'Fifteen and the 'Forty-Five. They had lost their estates, but their authority was still largely intact.

Burt's and Martin's accounts of clanship clearly highlighted the close relationship and the mutual obligations between the clan gentry and the common clansmen. This bond was additionally strengthened by ancient customs such as fosterage.

5.4.1. Fosterage

Fosterage was one of the key elements that strengthened the bond between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk. It was an ancient custom in the Gaelic tribal

⁶⁷ J. Campbell, *A Full and Particular Description Of The Highlands of Scotland* (London, 1752), p. 18. [hereafter: Campbell, *Description*] Campbell regretted that the loyalty of the Highlanders had been abused by some of their chiefs in 1745. He reminded the government that not all of the Highlanders had been Jacobites. He proposed not to disaffect the Highlanders, but to make use of them in the British army as they were the bravest and most loyal soldiers the government could recruit. See *ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

⁶⁸ Burt may have been referring to William Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Seaforth and chief of the Clan Mackenzie. Seaforth's estate was forfeited after the 'Fifteen, but his vassals kept on paying their rents to their exiled chief in France. In 1725 Burt was appointed to collect the rents of the estate. He, therefore, knew the authority of a forfeited and exiled chief over his vassals from his own experience. See chapter 4.2.1. In 1726 Seaforth made a deal with the government and gave up his Jacobite activities for a pardon. The forfeiture of his estate, however, was not reversed until 1741. William Mackenzie died in 1740. For details see B. Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746* (London, 1980), p. 204. [hereafter: Lenman, *Jacobite Risings*]

societies in Scotland and Ireland, but its form altered from the late Middle Ages to the early modern period from an unwritten law to written contracts with specific regional variations.⁶⁹ However, the core principle of fosterage remained the same. The children, and particularly the sons, of the clan gentry and tacksmen were given to different families of lower ranking to be reared and nursed by them until they were returned to their natural parents between the age of six and nine.⁷⁰ This was to strengthen the bond between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk. The receiving family did not consider this as a burden, but as a sign of special trust and honour. According to Burt, the vassals were so eager to be honoured with this privilege that

When a son is born to the chief of a family, there generally arises a contention among the vassals which of them shall have the fostering of the child when it is taken from the nurse; and by this means such differences are sometimes fomented as are hardly ever after thoroughly reconciled.⁷¹

He also wrote that a lifelong friendship developed between the foster-child and the children of the foster-family, which probably gave them a privileged position in the service to the young chief on his succession. Moreover, Johnson noted that the foster-parents did not necessarily have to be of the same clan as the natural parents, and that children were also given to members of other clans with whom the parents were on friendly terms. This practice was used to bolster relations between friendly clans and thus helped to prevent feuding.

Burt did not mention any mutual economic obligations that accompanied the fosterage agreement, and neither did Pennant in the account of his voyage to the Hebrides in 1772. Pennant wrote that the great Highland families used to foster their heir with a wealthy tenant, who educated him at his own expense and repaid the

⁶⁹ For local examples of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century written contracts of fosterage see Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. iii, pp. 321-323. These contracts included mutual obligations. Both the foster-father and the natural father agreed to contribute a certain number of livestock for the child's upbringing.

⁷⁰ See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 82. Royal children were also given to leading members of the nobility for their education. James VI (I), for example, had been brought up by the 1st Earl of Mar and his Countess. After his marriage to Anne of Denmark, James VI (I) was born a son. He wanted to appoint as guardian his friend from childhood, the 2nd Earl of Mar, but Anne opposed the idea vehemently. James was guided not only by sentiments of gratitude towards the Mar family, but also by political considerations. In Denmark noble infants were generally brought up by others than the parents but there were many exceptions to this rule both for girls and boys. See Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 278-282.

⁷¹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 58-59.

honour shown to him by returning the foster-child with ‘a number of cows, proportioned to his abilities’.⁷² A strong bond developed between both families, and the whole family of the fosterer was under the protection of the chieftain and held in the highest esteem.

Nonetheless, agreements specifying the mutual obligations of the natural parents and the foster-parents were an essential part of the fosterage. Johnson observed that the custom of fosterage was fast disappearing when he visited the Hebrides, although he noted that at the time of his visit MacLean of Coll educated the heir of Maclonich.⁷³ Moreover, Johnson gave a detailed account of the mutual economic agreements that accompanied the fosterage on Mull. He noted that the natural father sent a number of cows with his child, to which the foster-father added the same number. The natural father then provided the pasturage for the cows free of rent, and from any subsequent increase of the herd, one half would go to the fosterer and the other half became the property of the foster-child. If there was only one calf between two cows, it became the child’s. When the foster period ended after six years, the child was returned together with the cows donated by both parties plus half of their progeny. The returning flock did not become part of the property of the natural father, as he merely assumed a trusteeship over the animals, which remained the property of the child. Johnson described the terms of ownership as follows:

These beasts are considered as a portion, and called *Macalive* cattle, of which the father has the produce, but is supposed not to have the full property, but to owe the same number to the child, as a portion to the daughter, or a stock for the son.⁷⁴

At first glance, this practice may seem burdensome to the fosterer. However, he received for the period of the fosterage as many cows from the natural father as he contributed himself. Moreover, the pasturage for all these cows was free of rent; he had all of their milk and was allowed to keep half of the calves when the fosterage had come to an end. All the fosterer paid at the end was the number of cows he initially contributed. Nonetheless, the fosterer was undoubtedly in a weaker economic position than the natural parents, and there is also evidence that the gentry and the tacksmen exploited this situation. John Lanne Buchanan, missionary minister

⁷² Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 48.

⁷³ See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 313.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

in Harris from 1782-90, gave a bleak impression of the decline of fosterage and its abuse by the gentry and the tacksmen.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ See J.L. Buchanan, *Travels In The Western Hebrides: From 1782 To 1790* (London, 1793), pp. 171-179. [hereafter: Buchanan, *Travels*] It has to be stressed that the value of this source is questionable. Buchanan was tried and found guilty of fornication and attempted rape by the Harris Kirk Session and as a consequence deposed. His personal allegations against the local gentry and the tacksmen on Harris, whom he repeatedly accused of exploiting their subtenants, were surely influenced by his trial. Buchanan made particular allegations against Dr William MacLeod, tacksman of Luskentyre; Dugald Macaulay, tacksman of Miavaig; and William MacNeil of Rodel, tacksman of St Kilda. In 1788 Buchanan was found in bed with one of MacLeod's maidservants. He was found guilty of having attempted to rape Macaulay's wife in 1783. MacNeil was an elder in the Harris Kirk Session which processed the charges against Buchanan. Therefore, Buchanan's allegations against these three tacksmen were undoubtedly influenced by his personal circumstances. For details on the trial see Alasdair Maclean's preface to J.L. Buchanan, *Travels In The Western Hebrides from 1782 to 1790* (Waternish, 1997), pp. vii-ix. Buchanan repeated his allegations against the tacksman of Luskentyre and the steelbowman at that place in his *A General View Of The Fishery Of Great Britain* (London, 1794), pp. 169-171, 219-222. [hereafter: Buchanan, *General View*]

To make matters worse, Buchanan revoked part of the allegations made against the Harris clergy. He had entrusted his *Travels* to the editorial care of William Thomson who, Buchanan claimed, had inserted the allegations without his knowledge. Buchanan, *General View*, includes a postscript titled 'A respectful Reply to the Directors of the Royal Bounty' in which he distanced himself from the allegations: 'Something like ill humour may be gathered from such a publication. An offence perhaps was taken, but not designedly given by the author [Buchanan], from the scurrilous personalities of Wm. the now Rev. Dr. Thomson, once Assistant Minister at Monivaird [Monzievaird], against some few of the Directors, from an old spite. The author being a stranger in town, was unguardedly advised to put his works into his hands, when going through the press, (as is done by others in similar circumstances.) But that Rev. gentleman abused the confidence placed in him, and discharged his whole wrath against part of the clergy and others, under the said author's name; though he durst not attack his adversaries under his own. These scurrilities the author disclaims, and he has since resented the indignity severely; and shall purge out all his dirty eructations from his second edition. Nor will he ever trust him, or any one such, to take the charge of the press, to steal one foul sentiment into his future productions. This public declaration, (after placing the saddle on the right ass,) will it is hoped, clear Mr. J.L.B. from any imputation of ingratitude to his friends; a sin he never shall be guilty of, to his knowledge.' *Ibid.*, pp. 246-247. The announced second corrected edition of Buchanan's *Travels* was never published. Allegations against individual persons, and particularly members of the clergy on the Outer Hebrides, must, therefore, be treated with the utmost care as they cannot be attributed to Buchanan beyond reasonable doubt. Unfortunately, Buchanan wrote only about 'scurrilities' without providing the names of the wrongfully accused individuals. Although Buchanan assured the truth and correctness of his observations on the general living conditions of the poor in the Outer Hebrides once more at the end of the postscript, his revocation remained imprecise and contributed little to clarify the situation: 'In writing his *Travels*, he [Buchanan] hereby declares, that he had nothing more at heart than the interest of the poor people of those Isles, and the honour of the Directors, to whom addressed his mind on the head of religion; and when they disprove, by fair and impartial arguments, any one assertion he has advanced, (the forged scurrilities excepted) then the author shall acknowledge [sic] his error publicly: but until that is done (which shall never happen unless speedily reformed, he must be indulged the liberty of maintaining firmly the truths he has published; and the public may rely on his veracity.' *Ibid.*, p. 253. Buchanan did not provide any names for the alleged clergymen apart from his explicit confirmation of the lack of qualification of the catechists in Harris. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 240-242. See Buchanan, *General View*, p. 251. However, Buchanan's general observations about life on the Outer Hebrides seem to have been less affected by these affairs. They were partly confirmed by other travellers and reflected the harsh living conditions of the common people in the late eighteenth century. Buchanan's adversary William Thomson had travelled the Highlands in 1785. In 1788 Thomson published the account of his tour anonymously as *A Tour In England And Scotland, In 1785. By an English Gentleman*. In 1791 he published a second enlarged and improved edition of his tour under the title

According to Buchanan, the tacksmen abused the fosterage to exploit their subtenants and to enrich themselves. He confirmed that it used to be an honour for the foster-parents to care for the child of their tacksman, but made no mention of the tacksman paying for the board and lodging of his child. On the contrary, the tacksman expected the foster-parents to return his child when it was ten or twelve years old, well-nurtured and accompanied ‘with a present of cows, sheep, or goats, and clothes, in proportion to their respective abilities’.⁷⁶ The tacksman chose, therefore, the most substantial of his subtenants for foster-parents to make sure that his child would be sent home at the end of the fosterage well-nourished, clothed and accompanied by considerable livestock. According to Buchanan, the respect the tacksman paid to the foster-parents solely depended on the amount of presents they had heaped on the foster-child. If the return was less than expected, the foster-parents could not hope for any favours in future from the tacksman or their former foster-child. Neither of them would care for the foster-parents who would soon decline to the status of beggars.⁷⁷

Prospects And Observations; On A Tour In England And Scotland: By Thomas Newte, Esq. It must be stressed that Thomson did not visit the Outer Hebrides and that neither of his editions included any vicious allegations against landowners and clergy on the Outer Hebrides like the ones in Buchanan’s *Travels*.

Buchanan (fl. 1780-1816) and Thomson (1746-1817) must have known each other long before they split over the publication of Buchanan’s *Travels*. Both were natives of Perthshire, studied theology (Buchanan at Glasgow, Thomson at St Andrews and Edinburgh), entered into the service of the Church of Scotland and became assistant ministers in neighbouring parishes in Mid-Perthshire. From 1776 to 1778 Thomson had been assistant to James Porteous, minister of Monzievaird and Strowan (Perthshire). Due to complaints of the parishioners about the ‘gaiety of his disposition, and some amorous adventures’, Thomson resigned his post in 1778 and settled in London as a man of letters. J. Watkins and F. Shoberl (eds.), *A Biographical Dictionary Of The Living Authors Of Great Britain And Ireland* (London, 1816), p. 346. [hereafter: Watkins and Shoberl (eds.) *Biographical Dictionary*] Buchanan had been assistant to Robert Menzies, minister of Comrie, until the latter’s death in 1780. From 1782 to 1790 he was a missionary minister of the Church of Scotland to the Western Isles. After his deposition he resided in London. The reasons for their split seem to have been profane. Buchanan gave Thomson a lot of material for the publication of his *Travels*, and he was highly displeased when Thomson published it as an octavo instead of a folio volume. See *ibid.*, p. 44.

Allegations of neglect of parishioners against the established clergy of the Church of Scotland in the Highlands, however, were also raised by other ministers. Niel Douglas, travelling through Argyll and Kintyre in 1797 as a preacher on behalf of the Relief Synod, also made serious accusations against the local ministers of the Church of Scotland. See N. Douglas, *Journal Of A Mission To Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland ...* (Edinburgh, 1799), pp. 78-79, 90-93, 96-100, 147, 156. His accusations of neglect and embezzlement must, however, be treated with care as they were part of a ‘propaganda war’ between the Relief Synod and the Established Church.

⁷⁶ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 173.

⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 173.

Buchanan accounted for several particular cases of the abuse of the foster-parents on Harris. In the first case he cited a rich subtenant, Monro, called Macandy, and his wife who were subtenants under different great tacksmen and had nursed children for all of them. They had possessed a great flock of sheep, a vast herd of cows and a good farm. Additionally, they had lent some money to their tacksmen and had raised his son. However, when they had grown old and blind, their former foster-child, who had become the new tacksmen, left them to the exploitation and mercy of his brother-in-law who served as a steelbowman.⁷⁸ The steelbowman took no account of their age, or that they had raised his brother-in-law, and when they had been reduced to such poverty that they had to ask their former foster-child to return the money they had lent to his father, he refused to do so, leaving his foster-parents in total poverty.⁷⁹

In the second incident Buchanan referred to the exploitation of a Macdonald, Callum M'Innish, the foster-father to another son of the above-mentioned tacksmen's family. In this case the tacksmen not only sent his son to be nursed by the foster-parents, but also sent his servants to work in their neighbourhood at the cost of the foster-parents. This the foster-parents refused, and they were immediately driven off their land.⁸⁰ Buchanan reported a third case in which a tacksmen refused to return money entrusted to his father by the foster-parents. Buchanan wrote that although the tacksmen knew that the tenant's claim was just, he refused to return the loan because the tenant was unable to provide a receipt. Thus the tenant was reduced to absolute poverty by the offspring of the man for whose children he had once cared.⁸¹

These may have been isolated incidents that were related to one particular family of tacksmen on Harris with whom Buchanan was not on friendly terms owing to his trouble with the local Kirk Session. Nonetheless, these incidents suggest a pattern of abuse and show the decline of fosterage as an institution in the Gaelic

⁷⁸ 'Steelbow' was a condition of land-tenancy whereby a landlord provided the tenant with stock, growing grain, straw and implements under contract that the equivalent in quality and quantity should be returned at the end of the lease. See *SND*, vol. ix, p. 19. Steelbow was particularly practised in the Northern and Western Isles. Steelbow, as tenure of land, provided great profits for the landowners, but it prevented any improvement of the land. By the end of the eighteenth century, steelbow had become synonymous with the exploitation of the subtenants and was regarded as a very hurtful method of subletting land.

⁷⁹ See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 173-176.

⁸⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 177.

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, p. 178.

society of the Western Isles in the late eighteenth century. Kinship, and fosterage in particular, had turned from a strengthening bond between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk into abuse and exploitation. The commercial reorientation of the estates had dissolved most bonds between the landowners and the people living on their land.

It is interesting to notice that Martin made hardly any mention of fosterage in his *Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland*, although this custom must have prevailed to a far greater extent in the time of his travels in the late seventeenth century than in the time of Burt, Pennant, Johnson and Buchanan. As a native of Skye and ‘governor’ to young MacLeod of Dunvegan, he must have been familiar with that practice. He included this custom in his chapter about ‘The Ancient and Modern Customs of the Inhabitants of the Western Islands of Scotland’. However, his explanation seems unlikely. Firstly, he wrote that this custom worked in the opposite direction (i.e. the master reared the child of his tenant), and, secondly, his account lacked any mention of the purpose of strengthening the bond between the various ranks within the clan. Martin’s account suggests that fosterage was more the result of an accident of nature:

Besides the ordinary Rent paid by the Tenant to his Master, if a Cow brought forth two Calves at a time, which indeed is extraordinary, or an Ewe two Lambs, which is frequent, the Tenant paid to the Master one of the Calves, or Lambs; and the Master on his part was obliged, if any of his Tenants Wives bore Twins, to take one of them, and breed him in his own Family. I have known a Gentleman who had sixteen of these Twins in his Family at a time.⁸²

Nonetheless, the remainder of his travel account is richer in examples of the mutual obligations between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk, which show also the protective character of clanship.

5.4.2. The protective function of clanship

Mutual obligations between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk lay at the heart of clanship. The clansfolk were obliged to obey and to follow their gentry, who had to protect the lives and the property of their vassals in return. The chief’s castle was the clan’s prime place of retreat in times of danger, but it was also the place

⁸² Martin, *Description*, pp. 108-109.

where the chief received his guests and entertained his kindred with lavish hospitality. The clan economy was based on similar mutual obligations. The clan gentry, and particularly the tacksmen, collected the rents of the land that was let out to the subtenants, but they also had to protect their vassals from economic difficulties that were no fault of their own and had not resulted from negligence. Martin gave ample evidence that this principle was still in place in the late seventeenth century. On the Outer Hebrides the gentry still felt responsible for their clansmen and protected them in times of need. Martin wrote, for example, that MacNeill of Barra replaced the number of milch cows that his tenants had lost from the severity of the season or other misfortunes.⁸³ Moreover, the chief protected his tenants not only from economic difficulties but also from the hardships of old age. Again, Martin referred to MacNeill of Barra:

When any of these Tenants are so far advanced in Years as they are incapable to till the Ground, *Mackneill* takes such Old Men into his own Family and Maintains them all their Life after.⁸⁴

Additionally, the chief also functioned as a marriage broker. Martin reported that when a tenant's wife or husband died, MacNeill of Barra searched, on request, for a suitable match for the widow or widower. The marriage was soon conducted in order to avoid the land falling into waste and to protect the surviving partner from falling into poverty.⁸⁵

On the mainland the economic reorientation of the estates had already progressed. Nonetheless, Burt reported of similar support for the tenants by their gentry when they were hit by adverse weather or other misfortunes. He noted that a proportionate rebate was made in the tenant's rent when torrents had washed away the soil in the glens and straths and had left nothing behind but rock and gravel.⁸⁶ Moreover, according to Burt, the chief also relieved his subtenants on a regular basis from arrears in their rents to ease their burden once they had fallen into debt:

The poverty of the tenants has rendered it customary for the chief, or laird, to free some of them, every year, from all arrears of rent; this is supposed, upon an average, to be about one year in five of the whole estate.⁸⁷

⁸³ See *ibid.*, p. 97.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁸⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 97.

⁸⁶ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 339.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 57.

The heritable jurisdictions of the chiefs also contributed to the protection of the kindred. At first glance, it may seem contradictory that the absolute judicial power of the chief offered protection for his kindred, and government propaganda made, of course, every effort to vilify it as the basis of the chief's arbitrary power over his vassals. However, the chief was responsible for the protection of all of his kindred, and this included even those of his clansmen who had been caught red-handed in cattle lifting or other offences against neighbouring clans. As the government had not yet been able to establish its judiciary all over the Highlands, such crimes were dealt with by the chiefs. Understandably, it was the chief's task to do everything possible to save the lives of his clansmen and to get them back from their captors. There was no need to involve the state or the courts in solving such disputes between rival clans, and an appropriate compensation for the offended party often saved the offenders' lives.⁸⁸ The absence of a written law and an independent judiciary had, of course, its dangers. If the robbers were of inferior rank and a proper ransom or compensation could not be expected, then there was no hope of a mutual settlement and the robbers' lives were likely to be lost. In these circumstances, the offended party could neither afford to prosecute the robbers in the courts, nor did they want to attract the retribution of the robbers' clansmen. The chances of being spared by the captors and to be ransomed by their chief depended largely on the robbers' social status. The ransom (in cash or cattle) was raised partly by the chief or the chieftain and partly by other clan members who were involved in the same business and, therefore, willing to sacrifice their profits in order to save the lives of their clansmen. Burt wrote that the chiefs seldom encouraged the theft of cattle, but if they did so, they received two thirds of the spoil, and the remainder was distributed among the robbers.⁸⁹ In return the chief's share could be used for paying the ransom in a failed

⁸⁸ The Highlanders frequently refused to acknowledge the authority of the courts and held their Lowland judges in contempt. Burt reported of various trials in which Highlanders, who had been accused of cattle thieving, did not acknowledge the authority of the Lowland courts, their laws and even threatened the judges. See, for example, *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 132-133. Moreover, cattle lifting was common practice in the Highlands, and the Highlanders did not consider it a crime.

⁸⁹ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 130-131, 144. Burt named the Camerons, Mackenzies, Breadalbane men, MacGregors and the MacDonalds of Keppoch and Glencoe as the main clans involved in cattle lifting. All of them were Jacobite clans, and Burt, a staunch supporter of the Hanoverians, was more than happy to believe any information provided by clans allied to the Hanoverians.

attempt. In the Lowlands such cases of theft would have been dealt with inevitably by the courts, and the robbers would have faced severe if not capital punishment. In the Highlands the chief could protect his vassals from prosecution and solve the matter without getting the judiciary involved. It is not surprising that observers who were sympathetic to the Whigs, or the government, claimed that the Highland chiefs encouraged and supported such crimes and prevented their vassals from being brought to justice. From the government's point of view, heritable jurisdictions did not offer the vassals any protection. It lay at the heart of the lawlessness of the Highlands, keeping the vassals under the arbitrary rule and firm control of their chiefs, and encouraging them to commit all kinds of crime.

5.4.3. The dissolution of the traditional ties between the clan gentry and the common clansfolk

When travellers started to discover the Highlands in the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, the signs of the decline of clanship could no longer be ignored. This decline was due to two developments. On the one hand, the financial and economic pressure on the Highland gentry had intensified throughout the seventeenth century.⁹⁰ On the other hand, the increased government intervention that followed the Statutes of Iona, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, was directly targeted against the traditional culture of Highland life. Many traditional customs had been either abolished or slowly abandoned during the course of the seventeenth century, leading to a growing dissolution of the ties between the various ranks of clan society.

The dissolution of the ties between the clan gentry and their vassals began on the mainland and spread from there to the Western Isles. In both areas the decline of clanship began at the top of the clan hierarchy.

The integration into the landed classes and the move to Edinburgh and London alienated the leading clan gentry from their vassals. The new political, economic and social status of the Highland gentry among their fellow gentry in Great Britain did

⁹⁰ For example, the debts of the MacLeods of Dunvegan rose from £66,700 Scots in 1649 to £129,000 Scots by 1663. See T.M. Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War: The social transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester, 1994), p. 15. [hereafter: Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War*]

not make it advisable to continue a lifestyle that was exclusively based on the needs of Highland life and the benefits of their vassals in the hills. In the changing political and economic environment of the seventeenth century new skills were required, whereas old virtues and customs lost their importance. Economic skills, for example, became more important, while the importance of military skills receded in a time when the government or its lieutenants, such as the Campbell Earls of Argyll, increasingly policed the Highlands to establish law and order. Some traditional customs not only became obsolete, they also became directly opposed to the objectives of government policy.

The ritual cattle lifting on enemy clan territory, as Martin explained, used to be an opportunity for the young Highland gentry to prove their military qualities to their vassals and to show their leadership skills. The challenges involved in a successful raid strengthened the bond between the young chieftain and his followers. However, this custom destabilised the Highland economy, thwarted the government's attempts to establish law and order, and often resulted in renewed feuding. Moreover, activities such as cattle raiding could hardly be considered appropriate to the Highland gentry and the new political and social role they wanted to adopt. It is, therefore, not surprising that this tradition had already been abandoned on the Hebrides in the mid-seventeenth century. Martin noted in the 1690s:

Every Heir, or young Chieftain of a Tribe, was oblig'd in Honour to give a Publick Specimen of his Valour, before he was owned and declared Governour or Leader of his People, who obey'd and follow'd him upon all Occasions.

This Chieftain was usually attended with a Retinue of Young Men of Quality, who had not before hand given any proof of their Valour, and were ambitious of such an opportunity to signalize themselves.

It was usual for the Captain to lead them, to make a desperate Incursion upon some Neighbour or other that they were in feud with, and they were obliged to bring by open force the Cattle they found in the Lands they attacked, or to die in the attempt.

After the performance of this Achievement, the young Chieftain was ever after reputed Valiant, and worthy of Government, and such as were of his Retinue acquired the like reputation. This Custom being reciprocally used among them, was not reputed Robbery; for the Damage which one Tribe sustained by this Essay of the Chieftain of another, was repaired when their Chieftain came in his turn to make his specimen; but I have not heard an instance of this practise for these sixty years past.⁹¹

The ritual raid was followed by a series of ceremonies by which the successful young chieftain's authority was acknowledged by himself and his followers. According to Martin, the young chieftain was placed on a pyramid of stones, his friends and

⁹¹ Martin, *Description*, pp. 101-102.

followers standing in a circle round about him, 'his elevation signifying his Authority over them, and their standing below, their subjection to him'.⁹² He was then given by a close friend the sword worn by his father, and

Immediately after the Chief Druid (or Orator) stood close to the Pyramid, and pronounc'd a Rhetorical Panegyrick, setting forth the ancient Pedigree, Valour, and Liberality of the Family, as Incentives to the young Chieftain, and fit for his imitation.⁹³

Martin did not comment whether these rites were still practised when the traditional ritual cattle raids had been abandoned, but it is obvious that these ceremonies were held to strengthen the bond between a new chief and his vassals. However, they must have seemed somewhat hollow, when the young chief was no longer able to show his prowess and his ability to lead and to protect his followers.

The government could still not prevent cateran bands from lifting cattle in the second half of the seventeenth century, but it was able to make it clear to the Highland gentry that ritual raids, and similar activities that might lead to renewed feuding, were no longer an acceptable practice.

Burt's account reflected the gentry's changing attitude to their vassals. Again, the demise of traditional values of clanship started at the top of the clan hierarchy. Burt's observations in the 1720s show that the new social role adopted by the clan elite had a serious impact on their relationship with their vassals. He cited the case of a chief for whom keeping face among his English friends was more important than the care of his vassals. Burt claimed that the common clansfolk used to express their relation to their chief by taking him by the hand wherever they met him, but in the presence of an English gentleman, the chief was not amused by this display of loyalty by his vassals. Burt noted:

Concerning this last, I once saw a number of very discontented countenances when a certain lord, one of the chiefs, endeavoured to evade this ceremony. It was in presence of an English gentleman in high station, from whom he would willingly have concealed the knowledge of such seeming familiarity with slaves of so wretched appearance, and thinking it, I suppose, as a kind of contradiction to what he had often boasted at other times, viz. his despotic power in his clan.⁹⁴

The dissolution of clanship had gone so far that the chief had become ashamed of his clansmen's appearance and poverty.

⁹² Ibid., p. 102.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 102.

⁹⁴ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 6.

However, there were even more alarming signs of the dissolution of clanship. Emigration from Argyll, Sutherland, and the central Highlands to Georgia and the Carolinas started in the 1730s. Around the same time, certain chiefs seem to have lost any scruples in respect of the treatment of their own clansmen. The two most powerful chiefs in Skye, Norman MacLeod of Dunvegan and Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat, devised a scheme to deport some of their tenants with their wives and children to America, where they would work as cheap labourers on the plantations. Again, it was the chiefs who put profit in favour of the traditional values and obligations of kinship.⁹⁵

The Jacobite rebellion of 1745 is a good yardstick in discussing the dissolution of clanship. By then this dissolution was well advanced, and personal loyalties were tested to the limit. The ties between the chiefs and their gentry had loosened, and a chief's decision was no longer accepted by all members of the clan gentry. Even the elites of traditionally Jacobite clans, such as the Chisholms or Macintoshes, were deeply split in their loyalties, whereas in 1715 both clans had supported the Stuarts' cause. Cameron of Lochiel, for example, only joined the uprising in 1745 when his reluctance was overcome by the Young Pretender's assurance that, in case of failure, he would receive a pension of at least £700 per annum (the equivalent of the annual income from his estate). Living close to the garrison at Fort William, Lochiel was well aware of the risks of supporting the rebellion. Many branches of the Camerons were also reluctant to join in, and many of Ludovick Cameron of Torcastle's men deserted the army of the Young Pretender after the victory at Prestonpans (21 September 1745) and returned to the Highlands. The Camerons had traditionally been strict Jacobites and had supported the Stuarts in 1689-90 and 1715, but by 1745 their elite was also deeply sceptical and divided about the rebellion.⁹⁶ By the 1740s the dissolution of clanship not only affected the loyalty of the clan elites to their

⁹⁵ See Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War*, p. 16.

⁹⁶ See B. Lenman, *The Jacobite Clans of the Great Glen, 1650-1784* (London, 1984), p. 159. [hereafter: Lenman, *Jacobite Clans*] See also Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 203. Pennant gave an idealised account of Lochiel's support of Charles Edward Stuart. Pennant's informant was most likely John Cameron of Fassfern, Lochiel's sole surviving brother, who had returned quite recently from England. His exile had been imposed on him by the government in its attempt to break the Clan Cameron. Pennant's account of Lochiel saving the city of Glasgow from being plundered when the Jacobite army retreated from England was probably also communicated to him by Fassfern. See J.S. Gibson, *Lochiel of the '45: The Jacobite Chief and the Prince* (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 61, 90.

chiefs, but also created deep divisions between the clan gentry and their vassals. The Mackenzies in Easter and Wester Ross, the MacLeods and MacDonalds in Skye, and the Mackintoshes and other members of Clan Chattan in Strathnairn and Badenoch had come out in 1715, but stayed at home during the 'Forty-Five because of commercial tensions between the clan elites and their followers. Some chiefs even used the Jacobite defeat at Culloden as an opportunity to rid themselves of personal obligations to their followers by distancing themselves from their Jacobite clansmen, or by handing them over to the government forces.⁹⁷

5.4.4. Clanship – a protective or an oppressive social and economic system?

Most visitors to the Highlands considered clanship an oppressive social and economic system. The reasons for such an impression were twofold. Firstly, the great majority of visitors travelled to the Highlands in the wake of the Romantic movement. By then clanship had collapsed as a social and economic entity, leaving the vassals in a unilateral economic dependence on the landowners. The government measures after the 'Forty-Five, such as the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions (1747),⁹⁸ had been intended to break the power of the chiefs, but they had failed to release the vassals from their economic dependence on their chiefs as landowners. Moreover, in the wake of the 'Forty-Five, the state was not yet in a position to fill the vacuum of judicial power in the Highlands that had been created by the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, and in more remote areas the chiefs still exercised their judicial power because of the lack of Justices of the Peace. Often tenants had no access to JPs, or could not afford to go to court, and complaints were frequent against chiefs abusing the vacuum of power to exploit their tenants. Christopher Teesdale, Captain in the Buffs, wrote on 24 November 1753 (from Laggan Achadrom) that the tenants of Glengarry were so afraid of their chief that they were unwilling to cooperate with the military. They would only obey their chief, even though they were

⁹⁷ See Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 214-215.

⁹⁸ The 146 Scottish nobles and gentry who had remained loyal to the British State in the 'Forty-Five, and whose heritable jurisdictions had been abolished or modified, were compensated with a total of £493,000 sterling. The Duke of Argyll, who was the leading Scottish politician to promote the abolition of heritable jurisdictions for economic reasons, received £25,000 sterling. These compensations were the 'largest injection of political capital' into Scotland since the Union of 1707. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

frequently suppressed and exploited by him. Teesdale complained that Glengarry was still able to suppress and evict his tenants because the state could not guarantee their rights and was unable to protect them from abuse and exploitation by their landowners. He blamed the miserable situation of the tenants mainly on the lack of Justices of the Peace:

Too many of the Poor Highlanders are Ignorant of their happiness and Freedom, and yet behave with a Slavish Submission to their Lairds, Especially in this district. upon my threatening a Tenant of Glengary's lately before Mr. Douglass for being accessary in assisting a thief to Escape my Partys' he replyd he feared nobody but Glengary, and if he pleased he could hang him. when any of Glengarys tenants fails in paying trifles of their Rent he makes no Ceremony – never proceeds against them according to Law, never regards any Lease he grants them, but even in the depth of Winter turns them out of their miserable Habitations, & pays himself by selling the best Cows or Horses they have, and the Fear of this illegal and unjust treatment makes too many of those poor Wretches pay an implicit obedience to all the Commands of their Chiefs, in my humble opinion if there were a greater Number of Justices of the Peace in the Highlands a great Number of abuses might be rectified, and the poor Peoples rights and properties better defended, there are many places in the Highlands where in Case of oppression, the Party injured is above five or Six twenty miles from any of his Majesties Justices of the Peace, and the Expence of Carrying Witnesses so great a length leaves them too often to the Determination of many of their Lairds.⁹⁹

To a certain extent, this must be regarded as propaganda by a government officer stationed in the Highlands with the arduous task of implementing the law in the lands of Glengarry. The MacDonalds of Glengarry were notorious Jacobites and had a particularly bad reputation for their lawlessness. Nonetheless, Captain Teesdale clearly pointed at the failure of the government to protect the common people, to enable them to take legal action against their oppressors and to fight for their rights in the courts. Complaints about the lack of Justices of the Peace and regular judges in many remote areas of the Highlands remained common until the 1780s.¹⁰⁰ The shift

⁹⁹ NLS, 'Military Reports from the Highlands, 1753-4', MS. 10691, fos. 25v.-26r.

¹⁰⁰ The lack of Justices of the Peace and regular judges in the remote areas of the Highlands still made it necessary for the lairds to exercise their old powers. Johnson wrote that on many of the small islands, jurisdiction in minor cases was still exercised by the local lairds. See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 215-216. On Coll the local laird still had to 'exercise his jurisdiction to a certain degree' and had to imprison a woman for theft in the vault of his old castle because the island was too remote from judicial establishment. Boswell, *Tour*, p. 362. Some lairds were also unwilling to renounce their old powers. Boswell reported that Maclean of Lochbuie could not be persuaded, as late as 1773, that he had lost his heritable jurisdiction. A few years earlier, the laird was fined by the Court of Justice for unlawfully imprisoning several persons in the dungeon of his old castle. Boswell's father sat as one of the judges at his trial. See *ibid.*, pp. 429-430. James Anderson travelled the Hebrides in 1784 and complained bitterly that the islands were too distant from the courts and JPs so that the common people could not afford to pursue their rights against their oppressors. He proposed, therefore, to establish five new sheriffdoms in the Hebrides to allow the people quicker access to judges. See J. Anderson, *An Account Of The Present State Of The Hebrides And Western Coasts Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785), pp. 87-91. [hereafter: Anderson, *Account*]

from mutual obligations to a unilateral dependence of the vassals on their landowner must have given clanship the character of an oppressive and exploitative system. Secondly, most visitors, and particularly those from England, came from countries that had by this time comparatively liberal governments. Clanship and the rule of the chiefs reminded them of absolute power that was now considered as unjust, dangerous and antiquated in the political thinking of Enlightenment Europe. Although urban Lowland Scotland was a hotbed of liberal and progressive thinking, the Highlands derived no benefit from it. Abject poverty and emigration were obvious indications that the Highland society and economy were in a deep crisis. Against the background of these economic and philosophical developments, many travellers were quick to blame clanship as the mother of all evil in the Highlands.

Defoe's account of clanship has already shown to what extent it had been influenced by his political views, and the observations made by other travellers must also be checked against their political background. It is not surprising that the impression of clanship as an oppressive system dominated most accounts.

Burt witnessed several examples of the chiefs abusing their unlimited power over their vassals and exploiting their servants.¹⁰¹ His conversations with common Highlanders made him particularly critical of the chiefs' judicial power, which he considered arbitrary and contrary to the benefit of the community. In his view, there was a direct link between the chiefs' power and the poverty of the people, which forced them into a life of plunder and robbery. He summarised:

It may, for aught I know, be suitable to clannish power; but, in general, it seems quite contrary to reason, justice, and nature, that any one person, from the mere accident of his birth, should have the prerogative to oppress a whole community, for the gratification of his own selfish views and inclinations: and I cannot but think, the concerted poverty of a people is, of all oppressions, the strongest instigation to sedition, rebellion, and plunder.¹⁰²

Pennant presented a rather more balanced view of clanship. On his voyage to the Hebrides in 1772 he was often confronted by the misery of the common people,

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 50-52, and vol. ii, pp. 150-160. Again, for fear of reprisals, Burt gave no names.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 52. Eighteenth-century Englishmen rejected any kind of absolute power as being contrary to the liberty of the individual and the benefit of the nation. The attempts of the later Stuarts to establish absolute royal power, and the support of some parts of the Highlands for the cause of the then exiled Stuarts, made English visitors to Scotland very suspicious of the clan system and any form of absolute rule. Moreover, the joint attempts to topple the Hanoverians by the Jacobite clans and France, the embodiment of absolute power and Roman Catholicism, caused great nervousness in early eighteenth-century England.

but he also witnessed the fact that certain chiefs still felt obliged to care for their vassals. He welcomed the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions and feudal structures in general, but he regretted at the same time that the patriarchal duties of the chiefs had also been destroyed. His comments anticipated the transfiguration of clanship in the Romantic period.

The highlanders may bless the hand that loosened their bonds: for tyranny more often than protection was the attendance on their vassalage. Yet still from long habitude, and from the gleams of kindness that darted every now and then amidst the storms of severity, was kindled a sort of filial reverence to their chieftain: this is still in a great degree retained, and may by cherishing, return with more than wonted vigor. The noxious part of the feudal reign is abolished; the delegated rod of power is now no more. But let not the good part be lost with the bad: the tender relation that *patriarchal* government experiences, should still be retained: and the mutual inclination to beneficence preserved. The chieftain should not lose, with the power of doing harm, the disposition of doing good.¹⁰³

Pennant dreamt of a Highland society in which the chiefs had been stripped of their oppressive power, but had stuck to their patriarchal obligations to their vassals. He was full of praise for MacLeod of Dunvegan who came close to emulating his ideal chief. MacLeod had relieved his tenants from oppressive rents and ‘has received instead of the trash of gold, the treasure of warm affections, and unseigned prayer’.¹⁰⁴ Pennant was confident that this attitude would pay dividends for the chief not only in financial terms, but also in the affection of his clansmen. However, such an idealistic and paternalistic attitude could hardly be sustained through a period of growing economic pressure on the Highlands. Far more often, Pennant was confronted with the impacts of the rapacity of absentee landlords. When he approached the island of Canna, he saw hundreds of cattle, and the island gave an impression of fertility. However, a short conversation with the natives soon dispelled this impression. The crop had failed in the previous year, and the islanders had neither bread nor meal and were living entirely on fish and milk. Moreover, their supply of fish-hooks was almost exhausted. Despite being surrounded by rich fishing grounds, the islanders could not engage in the fisheries to support their living. Equipping a boat with the necessary lines and hooks was simply beyond their financial limits. Pennant observed that the miserable living conditions on Canna were typical of the Western Isles. On the one hand, the islanders could not grow more

¹⁰³ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 294.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, part i, pp. 293-294.

crops because the land was needed for breeding large numbers of cattle for export to satisfy the demands of their rapacious landlords. On the other hand, the islanders were too poor to get involved in the fisheries.¹⁰⁵ The chiefs' and absentee landlords' spiralling demand for money to improve their estates and to finance their households in London and Edinburgh soon showed them the limits of a paternalistic attitude. Oppression and exploitation soon became the rule rather than the exception in the Hebrides. Pennant's voyage to the Hebrides concluded with a dream vision. On his last night in the Western Isles a figure appeared to him. The apparition lamented the decline of clanship and the transformation of the chiefs from caring patriarchs of their clans to rapacious absentee landlords. The days of mutual fidelity, protection and hospitality for the kindred were gone. Instead, greed and exploitation had become the characteristic feature of landownership in the Western Isles. It was Pennant himself who spoke via the apparition to the public:

The mighty CHIEFTAINS, the brave and disinterested heroes of old times, by a most violent and surprizing transformation, at once sunk into the rapacious landlords; determined to compensate the loss of power, with the encrease of revenue; to exchange the warm affections of their people for sordid trash. Their visits, to those of their fore-fathers, are like the surveys of a cruel land-jobber, attended by a set of quick-sighted vultures, skilled in pointing out the most exquisite methods of oppression, or to instruct them in the art of exhausting their purses of sums to be wasted in distant lands.¹⁰⁶

Pennant lamented the impoverishment of the common islanders that forced them to emigrate, and he severely criticised the lack of interest of the landed gentry in their clansmen's fate. He pleaded to the landowners to remember their old virtues and obligations, to return to their estates and to support their clansmen:

RETURN to your country: inform them with your presence; restore to them the laudable part of the antient matters; eradicate the bad. Bring them instructors, and they would learn. Teach them arts adapted to their climate; they would brave the fury of our seas in fishing. Send them materials for the coarser manufactures; they would with patience sit down to the loom; they would weave the sails to waft your navies to victory; and part of them rejoice to share the glory in the most distant combats.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ See *ibid.*, part i, pp. 271-274.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, part i, pp. 365-366.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, part i, p. 367. This was not an entirely utilitarian programme. In his dream vision Pennant clearly outlined two scenarios. The Highlanders either faced emigration or starvation, or, if trade and industry were introduced to them, they would be transformed to loyal subjects of the king and would supply the navy with stout seamen and the army with able soldiers. To Pennant the choice was clear. Either the Highlanders would be lost to the United Kingdom, or they would be integrated to the great benefit of all.

Dr Johnson bluntly characterised the Highlands, before the establishment of law by the British government in 1747, as a primitive society lacking any of the institutions that distinguished a civilised society. To him, the absence of a superordinate government and a superordinate judicature that were able to enforce the law, even in remote areas, was clear evidence of a primitive and backward society.¹⁰⁸ To rectify this situation the execution of law was laid in the hands of the proprietors of the country, who, in his view, were ‘often ignorant, and often partial; but in the immaturity of political establishments no better expedient could be found’.¹⁰⁹ In Johnson’s view, clanship and the execution of law at the hand of the local lairds must be blamed for the inevitability of lawlessness and oppression.

Those who had thus the dispensation of law, were by consequence themselves lawless. Their vassals had no shelter from outrages and oppressions; but were condemned to endure, without resistance, the caprices of wantonness, and the rage of cruelty.¹¹⁰

To him, the abolition of provincial judicature (i.e. the heritable jurisdictions) extended ‘the general benefits of equal law to the low and the high’ and was a clear step towards the perfection of government.¹¹¹ Johnson did not consider it worth mentioning that clanship had, contrary to the evidence of wantonness and oppression, offered a centuries-old system of protection.¹¹² In a later passage of his account, Johnson did give a slightly more specific account that also made reference to the patriarchal position of the chief. Nonetheless, he emphasised once more that in a mainly agricultural society, a Highland laird had greater power over his vassals than

¹⁰⁸ Johnson’s comments must be set against a prejudicial opinion of Gaelic culture that regarded Highlanders as barbarians with a primitive language. See, for example, Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 267-269.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹¹² Interestingly enough, Johnson regretted that during his stay on the Isle of Skye he had been too late to experience the peculiar appearance and the antiquated lifestyle of the Highlanders. He lamented the clans’ loss of their original character, their ferocity of temper, their military ardour, their dignity of independence, their contempt of government and their reverence for their chiefs. He concluded that all that was left of their former way of life was their language and their poverty. See *ibid.*, p. 128. This lament on the decline of ancient Highland life was in a marked contrast to his assessment of clanship as a primitive, lawless and oppressive form of society. His appraisal of the government measures after the ‘Forty-Five fitted ill with this retrospective and nostalgic view of traditional Highland life. Johnson should have known about the extent to which Highland life had changed from T. Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland in MDCCLXIX* (Chester, 1771). A second edition was published in 1772, and Johnson had a copy of it in his travel luggage.

a king over his people. Johnson overemphasised the laird's absolute and arbitrary power over the life and death of his vassals.

The Laird has all those in his power that live upon his farms. Kings can, for the most part, only exalt or degrade. The Laird at pleasure can feed or starve, can give bread, or withhold it.¹¹³

Again, there was no mention of the mutual dependence between the chief and his kindred, and Johnson described the chief's absolute power over all aspects of life as follows:

Not many years have passed since the clans knew no law but the Laird's will. He told them to whom they should be friends or enemies, what King they should obey, and what religion they should profess.¹¹⁴

However, the more time Johnson spent in the Western Isles, the more he learnt about Highland life, and the more he seems to have come to a slightly more balanced view of clanship and its historical development. He acknowledged, for the first time, the compelling necessity of heritable jurisdictions against the background of the separate history and culture of the Highlands, and he admitted that the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions had its positive and negative aspects. He concluded that the heritable jurisdictions had become the natural form of government in the Highlands because the 'feudal constitution naturally diffused itself into long ramifications of subordinate authority', and because the Highlands were so secluded and inaccessible to outsiders that 'national justice could not find its way'.¹¹⁵ Johnson acknowledged that there was no other option but to entrust the power to decide disputes to the lairds because there had always been a need for judicial power, and because the people considered their lairds as their natural judges. However, he was still very critical of clanship, and he clearly summarised that the remoteness of the Highlands had made it easy for the judges to abuse their power, to exploit their vassals and to turn clanship into an oppressive social system:

It cannot be supposed that a rugged proprietor of the rocks, unprincipled and unenlightened, was a nice resolver of entangled claims, or very exact in proportioning punishment to offences. But the more he indulged his own will, the more he held his vassals in

¹¹³ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 195.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 196. However, the chief and his followers did not necessarily have to share the same religion.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 213.

dependence. Prudence and innocence, without the favour of the Chief, conferred no security; and crimes involved no danger, when the judge was resolute to acquit.¹¹⁶

Mary Hanway,¹¹⁷ in 1775, epitomised the extent to which, particularly English, travellers put clanship on the same level with tyranny. She was often at odds with Johnson's account of the Highlands, but she also stressed the oppressive elements of clanship far more than its protective function, and compared the chiefs' power to the unlimited power of despotic oriental potentates. It is not surprising that, in her view, such a 'primitive' form of social organisation lacked any protection of the individual by the state and must have resulted in slavery and continuous warring and feuding. Her account of Highland life reads like the 'survival of the fittest':

Let it be observed too, that their rapacious neighbours took every possible advantage of their weakness, or want of force; and, as is the common practice of war, to have the *power* to distress, and the inclination to *use* that power, was exactly one and the same thing. This, however, will cease to surprise, when we consider that every chieftain was absolute monarch, and sovereign disposer of his own particular clan; that he styled himself patron and proprietor of all his tenants, whose wills, pursuits, and passions he held in vassalage. By virtue of this authority, however originally obtained, or with whatever tyranny carried on, these chieftains, could with all the supremacy of an oriental potentate, lead forth their slaves to battle; and that, without any nice regard to the justice of the cause, or to the propriety of the bloody engagement. The mandate of the chieftain was the universal law as far as his own *chieftaincy* extended, and he could direct the warrior to twang his bow, or discharge his musquet, upon any occasion, without assigning any equable reason for so doing: Hence, it very frequently happened, that, a chieftain would involve his slavish subjects in the calamities of public contest, to gratify his private ambition, his envy, or his avarice. Such, in fact, was the general practice all over this country, till the union with England regulated the power, and put an end to the inhospitable bickerings of these petty princes, and chieftains: Add to which, the many wise acts since passed, have given a proper proportion of liberty to the commonalty.¹¹⁸

Hanway's notion of Highland life swung from one extreme to the other. Near Crieff she was forced to take shelter in a little hut where the Highlanders treated her 'with untaught good-nature and hospitality'.¹¹⁹ Her comment about the Highlanders' kindness to strangers included every element of the image of the 'noble savage', free and unspoiled by the convention of modern civilisation:

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 213. Again, Johnson did not hide his notion of the Highlands as a primitive society. He clearly regarded the Highland lairds as having been uneducated and uncivilised people. That the Gaelic culture of the Highlands was not per se inferior to the English education and civilisation did not enter his mind.

¹¹⁷ See chapter 4, note 148, for the discussion about the authorship of this work.

¹¹⁸ Hanway, *Journey*, pp. 124-126. The liberty, which the English gave so generously to the Scots, led of course, in Hanway's view, to industry and the civilisation of the Scots. See *ibid.*, pp. 126-127. It was pure fiction that the chiefs forced their vassals to fight in public contests for them. Roman-style gladiator contests did not exist in the Highlands of Scotland.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

But alas! this Arcadian liberality is too seldom found in houses of the genteel and polished part of the world; for, certainly, benevolence is cemented with our beings, and we are delighted in obeying the dictates of nature; till art, that spoiler of many natural good qualities, makes us assume a look and behaviour, foreign to our hearts ...¹²⁰

Hanway published her *Journey* as a critique of Samuel Johnson's unfavourable account of Scotland, but her comments reveal often a similar attitude of cultural superiority towards the supposedly 'primitive' Scot or Highlander. She attended a church service in the Highlands and ridiculed the inelegant appearance of the common women who 'wear a plaid, which reaches to their feet, and is wrapped over their head, so that nothing is left to be seen but their noses', while the poorest women 'walk forth arrayed in their blankets; so that when all are assembled in this strange fashion they really have just the appearance of a set of lunatics'.¹²¹ Her account of the bagpipe showed a similar pattern, comparing its sound to non-human animal noises that were offensive to the ears of a civilised and cultured lady like her:

In many houses, they still retain the ancient custom of the pipers playing all the time the company are at dinner, on his *horrid bagpipes*; this is to *me* more dreadful, than the grunting of pigs, the screaming of owls, and the squalling of cats. All these creatures in a concert would be to my ears pleasing, compared to that discordant instrument to which I have a natural antipathy.¹²²

Hanway applied the same stereotypes to Scottish towns and landscape. English towns were superior to Scottish towns, and so was the man-made, cultivated English landscape to the unimproved, natural state of Scottish countryside.¹²³

Other authors, such as Edward Topham, concentrated more on the economic impact of clanship. He made clanship directly responsible for the economic and

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp. 81-82. Hanway's notion of the Highlands as a region where the people used to live (and still lived) in an Arcadian, unspoiled civilisation was a recurrent motif in her *Journey*. She wrote, for example, from Loch Lomond to Lady Mary B ---: 'I write this from a place, my dear Lady Mary, of which I am (to use a woman's word) *extravagantly* fond, being one of those rural, and romantic spots which the Arcadian swains were poetically supposed to enjoy in the Golden Age.' Ibid., p. 34.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 134.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 132-133.

¹²³ In her view, Glasgow had more '*metropolitan dignity*' and was a more agreeable town than Edinburgh because it came closer to the model of English towns. Ibid., p. 16. See also *ibid.*, pp. 8-10, 15-17. In agriculture, the Scots had only recently begun to improve their countryside after the English model. See *ibid.*, pp. 161-162. The *Journey* was written in a patronising style that reminded the reader constantly of the author's supposedly superior English upbringing and civilisation. It is doubtful that this was intentional, because the author blamed Dr Johnson repeatedly for displaying such an attitude. See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 64-67, 153-159. After all, the author's attitude to the Scots was often as harsh as Dr Johnson's unfavourable account of Scotland. For a discussion of Hanway's *Journey* as a display of supposed English superiority see also Hagglund, 'Tourists And Travellers', pp. 45-52, 65-66.

social turmoil in the Highlands that he encountered during his stay in Scotland in 1774-75. He wrote that clanship had a baneful influence over the morals of the people 'in making them ever ready at the call of their Chieftains, for acts of violence and oppression' and being 'totally subversive of industry and improvements of every kind'.¹²⁴ According to him, clanship and feudal rule caused the peasants to be

fond of solitude, neglectful of themselves, and totally void of that active principle which leads men into public society, which animates them against every obstacle, and at length opens their way to riches.¹²⁵

Topham acknowledged that clanship (i.e. the heritable jurisdictions) had been abolished by his time, but he claimed that the impact of this oppressive system could still be seen in the poverty and emigration from the Highlands. His main argument against clanship was that it prevented any social and economic progress because the vassals were not allowed to reap the fruits of their labour. They had no right of property and, therefore, no incentive to invest in improvements such as manuring the ground, drainage, rotation of crops and enclosing the fields. In his view, the only solution to this dilemma was to introduce the English system of renting farms on lease, as had already been successfully introduced into Germany, Denmark and Russia where the vassals had lived in a similar state of slavish dependence on their landowners as in the Highlands of Scotland. These objections against the economic deficiencies of clanship were justified, but his conclusion that such a system 'likewise deprived him [the husbandman] of all attachment to his native country' completely missed the point.¹²⁶ Contemporary travellers unanimously agreed that the Highlanders had a particularly strong attachment to their native country, but that their hopeless economic situation and their abject poverty forced them to leave their farms. Topham's argument that because of clanship the common Highlanders 'have become a nation of wanderers by profession' and 'have no local attachments' shows the same ignorance of the interrelation between Highland society and Highland economy.¹²⁷ The former need for manpower had led to an overpopulation of the

¹²⁴ Topham, *Letters*, p. 163.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 165. Topham's conclusions reveal the full extent of his ignorance of Highland life, culminating in his assertion that clanship, and its inherent lack of right of property, made the Highlanders 'live poor, as their fathers did before them, and nothing seems hereditary but idleness'. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

Highlands, and the export of soldiers and the seasonal migration of Highlanders to the Lowlands for the harvest were vital factors in keeping the Highland economy viable.

Most travellers considered the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions as a major achievement in releasing the common Highlanders from what many observers supposed to be the tyranny of their chiefs. William Thomson described it as

a most remarkable proof and example of that principle of correction and amendment, which is inherent in political grievances; and that abuses, carried to extremities, lead to reformation.¹²⁸

Moreover, he gave the hereditary jurisdictions direct responsibility for the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 because it had enabled the chiefs of certain clans to call their vassals to arms. Most travellers, and particularly the English, shared his view of heritable jurisdictions as having been at the heart of clanship, making it an oppressive and tyrannical social system.¹²⁹

John Lettice travelled the Highlands in 1792 and clearly regarded the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions as a civilising influence on the Highlanders. He felt no regret at the demise of clanship and traditional Highland life. He was very convinced of the superiority of the English culture and summarised the recent changes in the Highlands in an attitude that can only be described as cultural imperialism:

¹²⁸ Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 284-285.

¹²⁹ This view was also shared in Germany. The translator (Eobald Toze) or the publisher of the 1760 German edition of Burt's *Letters* commented in its preface on clanship: 'Das Merkwürdigste in der inneren Einrichtung des schottischen Hochlandes ist die Eintheilung der Inwohner in Clans oder Stämme, und die daraus fließende patriarchalische Regierungsform, die einzige, die man in irgend einem Lande in Europa findet, und die das Haupt oder den Obersten eines Clans zu einem unumschränkten Herrn über seine Vasallen, und diese schlechterdings zu seinen Sklaven macht. Diese allzu grosse Gewalt der Stammhäupter ist die eigentliche und wahre Quelle aller aufrührischen Bewegungen gewesen, welche die Hochländer von Zeit zu Zeit wider die großbritannische Regierung unternommen haben, weil die Glieder eines Clans ihrem Oberhaupte einen blinden Gehorsam zu leisten und auf dessen Befehl alsobald die Waffen zu ergreifen verbunden waren. Das großbritannische Parlament ist hiedurch veranlassen worden, einige neue Verfügungen zu Abstellung dieser Ungemächlichkeiten zu machen. ... und endlich hat es [das Parlament] beschlossen, die Erbgerichtbarkeit des hohen Adels in Schottland, welche den hochländischen Stammhäuptern vornemlich Gelegenheit gegeben, ihre Gewalt auf eine tyrannische Weise zu mißbrauchen und dadurch so viel Unheil zu stiften, völlig aufzuheben.' E. Burt, *Schottländische Briefe, oder merkwürdige Nachrichten von Schottland, und besonders von dem Schottischen Hochlande, und den Sitten, Gewohnheiten und der Lebensart der Hochländer oder Bergschotten* (n.p., 1760), sig. *3v. – sig. *4v. [hereafter: Burt, *Schottländische Briefe*] The German publisher equated clanship and heritable jurisdictions with the Jacobite rebellions and tyranny. The social position of the vassals was literally described as those of 'slaves'. These comments went beyond a mere summary of Burt's impressions of Highland society and put clanship in a far darker perspective.

With regard to the civilization of the highlands; many circumstances, beside the cultivation of our language and other advantages of education have concurred to its advancement. The abolition of clanship must be reckoned among the first in its effect; the establishment of the three forts with their English garrisons; the military roads; the improvements in agriculture, trade and manufactures; the occasional residence of the Scottish nobility, and opulent gentry; travellers from England and the south of Scotland, whether led by curiosity or by business; and even parties of gentlemen, who visit the highlands about autumn, for the diversion of shooting, or the chase, deserve all to be taken into this account.¹³⁰

However, by the end of the eighteenth century, the first attempts at a transformation in attitudes towards clanship can be noticed. In the wake of the Romantic movement, travellers reinterpreted the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions as the negative turning point and forced break-up of the union between the clan elite and the clansfolk. The heritable jurisdictions were no longer regarded as an exertion of power and a means of oppression, but were reinterpreted as a patronising institution that had kept the clan together. Travellers such as Robert Heron (in 1792) blamed its abolition for the disintegration of clanship, absentee landlordism and the depopulation of the Highlands:

The abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, taking away that dignity and authority which attached every landholder to the rural seat of his family; and the complex and refined luxury of great towns conspiring, at the same time, to seduce them thither; the Great have left the country, carrying with them that income which it affords them, to be laid out where its expenditure can contribute nothing to the benefit of those poor people by whose labours it is raised.¹³¹

In the early nineteenth century, visitors were often confronted with the economic and social depredation of large parts of the Highlands. The worse the misery and the exploitation of the common Highlanders, the more travellers tended to glorify the past in an effort to come to terms with what they had seen. They were

¹³⁰ Lettice, *Letters*, p. 265. It is not surprising that Lettice was a staunch supporter of a Union dominated by British (i.e. English) civilisation. He wrote about the demise of the traditional Highland garb: 'The highland dress, which, for so many ages, had been a peculiar object of national attachment, has, in a great measure given way to a British mode of attire. ... When a highlander begins to throw off any article of his national dress, it is a pretty good pledge for his parting with the whole, as soon as he can with convenience equip himself in the English way ...'. *Ibid.*, pp. 265-266. Lettice's ideal state of the Union would have been a complete annihilation of the Scottish national and cultural identity as was the case after the 'Forty-Five until 1782 when the proscription of the wearing of tartan in Scotland was lifted.

¹³¹ Heron, *Observations*, vol. i, pp. 198-199. He, likewise, wrote that the prohibition of the traditional Highland garb destroyed the union between the clan elite and its commoners and led to 'more selfish and meaner motives' replacing the 'high spirit of national honour which served to maintain the Highland character'. *Ibid.*, p. 199. Lettice, travelling the Highlands in the same year as Heron, would have hardly agreed with either of Heron's assessments.

shocked by the hardships of Highland life and contrasted their impressions to a supposedly 'golden age', in which the chief had treated all of his kindred as generously as his own family. Again, the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions was regarded as the turning point in which the 'golden age' of clanship was destroyed.

Robert Forsyth did not consider this Act as a measure to release the vassals from the power of their chiefs, but instead concentrated on its economic impacts. According to him, the chiefs were no longer the patronising heads of their kindred, but were reduced to the status of mere proprietors of the land. The services of their followers were no longer needed for defence, and it did not take a long time before the chiefs began to raise rents and forced their vassals to leave their farms. The pecuniary interests of the individual proprietors won the upper hand against the old ideals of clanship, and the depopulation of the land was an inevitable consequence.¹³² Forsyth contrasted these unhappy developments in the immediate aftermath of the 'Forty-Five with what he regarded as the 'golden age' of Highland life and Highland hospitality before the break-up of the clan spirit. He acknowledged that Highland life had been violent, and that the various clans constantly had to defend their territory and possessions against their rapacious neighbours; but that, Forsyth claimed, was exactly what had formed the special relationship of mutual dependence between the chief and his kindred, and had prevented the chief from becoming a despotic ruler over his kindred.

But we must not suppose, on this account, that these chiefs had it in their power to act as despots or with barbarity towards their own people. On the contrary, the connection was maintained by mutual benefits and kind offices. The people paid only a trifling rent or tribute to their chief. On his part, the most condescending manners were employed, his house was the general resort of his clan, and his revenue was spent in entertaining them. Thus hospitality and polite manners were diffused amongst these barbarians in every clan; the highest and the lowest were the companions in arms, and even the kindred of each other, who depended for their safety upon their mutual fidelity and courage.¹³³

Many visitors to the Highlands in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, and particularly foreigners, tended to transfigure and to glorify pre-'Forty-Five Highland life when they were confronted with the social and economic decline

¹³² See R. Forsyth, *The Beauties of Scotland*, vol. v (Edinburgh, 1808), pp. 192-194. [hereafter: Forsyth, *Beauties of Scotland*]

¹³³ *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 184. There is no mention of the economic reorganisation of the estates in areas such as Argyllshire, which had started long before 1747 and had been a significant contribution to the dissolution of clanship.

of the region. The Romantic movement had provided them with a notion of ‘stages of evolution’ that caused them to regard the Highlanders in terms of ‘noble savages’ who had led a plain but satisfying life until their clan system was forcefully broken up. This notion, and the elaborate set of emotions that accompanied travel writing in the Romantic movement, caused many writers to ignore the fact that the living conditions of the common Highlanders had never been easy, even before the break-up of the clans. These travellers lamented the loss of a lifestyle that fired their imagination, but their accounts of the Highlands, however, revealed nothing of true Highland life.

The transfiguration of ancient Highland life in the Romantic period must also be seen as a response to the disastrous social and economic decline of the Highlands in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This change of attitude affected foreign visitors as well as authors from the Highlands. Like many other contemporary travel writers, the Scottish musician and poet Alexander Campbell (1764-1824), born in Tombea on the shores of Loch Lubnaig, glorified clanship and bemoaned the decline of traditional Highland life. In 1801 he remarked that the young chieftains no longer had to prove their dexterity in hunting or ritual cattle raids. Campbell bemoaned the decline of clanship and traditional Highland life:

The solemnities in the inauguration of a chief are no more. The voice of the bard is silent in the hall. The deeds of other times are no longer recounted as incentives to emulate their forefathers. The system is altogether changed; and the manners of civilized Europe are rapidly prevailing in the remotest corners of the Highlands and Western Islands.¹³⁴

The Romantic movement had finally succeeded even in glorifying customs such as the ritual cattle raid. This tradition had been particularly associated with clanship and Highland life and had been regarded, as recently as the mid-eighteenth century, as a typical sign of an uncivilised, lawless and barbaric society.

5.4.5. Continental travellers’ impressions of clanship and Highland life

Next, it has to be examined whether visitors from the Continent had a different impression of Highland society and clanship in comparison with British, and

¹³⁴ Campbell, *Journey*, vol. i, p. 185. Campbell was a strong believer in the authenticity of the Ossianic poems.

particularly English, travellers to the Highlands. In contrast to English travellers, who were the great majority of visitors to Scotland, those from the Continent had not been affected by the Jacobite rebellions and had not experienced the Highlanders as a threat to their culture and way of life. One might suppose that French, German or Scandinavian travellers were, therefore, less biased towards the Highlanders and had different impressions of Highland life and clanship. However, a close examination of the accounts of continental visitors does not reveal any major differences in the perception of clanship.¹³⁵ There may be two main reasons for the absence of a different notion of clanship. Firstly, most of the visitors from the Continent became aware of the Highlands in the wake of the Romantic movement, when Highland society and clanship were already in severe decline. French travellers began to arrive in greater numbers in the 1780s and 1790s. The earliest German travellers to the Highlands – though in far smaller numbers – set out at the same time, but there are no detailed accounts of their tours earlier than Emilie Harmes's tour in 1800.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ This analysis considers only travellers who personally visited the Highlands. Their nationality or origin and the date of their tour are given in brackets. For the full titles see the bibliography. B. Ferner (Swedish, 1760); La Rochette (French, 1763); J. Fisher (Pennsylvania, 1775); B. Faujas de Saint-Fond (French, 1784); M. de Bombelles (French, 1784); A. de La Rochefoucauld (French, 1786); M. Lazowski (Franco-Polish, 1786); P.N. Chantreau (French, 1788-89); J. de La Tocnaye (French, 1793); E. Harmes (German, 1800) and J. Schopenhauer (German, 1803). Later French and German travellers to the Highlands are not considered, as clanship disintegrated even more rapidly in the early nineteenth century. Moreover, the 'tartanisation' of Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, in the wake of Sir Walter Scott's novels in the early nineteenth century obscured many travellers' view of clanship and the history of the Highlands. For German travellers' impressions of Highland life see also A. Hiley, 'German-speaking travellers in Scotland, 1800-1860: and their place in the history of European travel literature', unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1986), pp. 271-280, 747-771. [hereafter: Hiley, 'German-speaking travellers in Scotland, 1800-1860'] Unfortunately, some Swedish visitors to Scotland in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were more interested in visiting and spying out ore mines, salt-works and particularly ironworks. Henrik Kalmeter (1719-20) and Eric Svedenstierna (1803) did not visit the Highlands. Bengt Ferner travelled to Inveraray in 1760, but he did not comment on clanship or Highland life. Jabez Fisher travelled to Blair Atholl in 1775, but he did not comment on clanship or Highland life apart from complaining about the visual offensiveness of the Highlanders' poverty.

¹³⁶ For Emilie Harmes as a forerunner of the nineteenth-century German travellers to Scotland see also Hiley, 'German-speaking travellers in Scotland, 1800-1860', pp. 72-79. B. Faujas de Saint-Fond recollected having met in Edinburgh in October 1784 the German Count Hartfield from Berlin ('Hartefeld' in the German edition). According to Faujas de Saint-Fond, Count Hartfield was on an educational tour and 'had pushed his researches as far as the Hebrides, and visited the isle of Staffa; in his passage to which, he told us, he encountered the most imminent danger'. Faujas, *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 221. There is no reason to doubt this information, and Count Hartfield might well have been the first visitor to Staffa from Germany. However, there is nothing known about Hartfield's tour. The Swede Uno von Troil (1746-1803), who accompanied Banks in 1772, is usually referred to as the earliest continental visitor to Staffa. German mineralogist Rudolf E. Raspe travelled the Highlands and Hebrides in 1789 to prepare a mineralogical survey on behalf of the Highland Society. On 2 January 1790, Raspe laid his diary of the tour before a subcommittee of that Society. However, there seems to be no journal of his tour, nor anything which reveals more about his travels and impressions of the

Secondly, by the late eighteenth century the accounts of important travellers such as Edmund Burt, Thomas Pennant and Samuel Johnson had been published. Their accounts were soon translated into many European languages, and they were widely used as guidebooks and influenced generations of travellers, thus creating a preconceived image of Highland life.¹³⁷ Moreover, the image of the Highlander was principally shaped by a few individual travel writers. James MacDonald, for example, had a huge influence on the perception of the Highlander in Germany. During his stay at Weimar and Leipzig from 1796 to 1798, he assisted Christian Rudolf Wilhelm Wiedemann in the German translation of Faujas de Saint-Fond's travelogue and contributed the preface and notes. In 1800 he accompanied the German poetess and traveller Emilie Harmes on her tour to Mull, and in 1808 the account of his 1802 tour to the Outer Hebrides was published in German.¹³⁸

Due to the old connections between France and Scotland, the French were the earliest visitors from the Continent who travelled to the Highlands in greater numbers.¹³⁹ Unfortunately, the accounts of some French travellers are rather disappointing. Early visitors often had hardly anything to say about clanship,

Highlands than the findings of his mineralogical survey. See J. Carswell, *The Prospector: Being the Life and Times of Rudolf Erich Raspe* (London, 1950), pp. 220-231. Raspe was the author of *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*.

¹³⁷ See, for example, the comments about clanship and Highland life made by the translator or editor in the preface to the 1760 German edition of Burt's *Letters*. In 1758 Burt's *Letters* had been translated into Dutch.

¹³⁸ See J. MacDonald, *Reise durch Schottland, seine Inseln, Dänemark, und einen Theil von Deutschland*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1808). [hereafter: MacDonald, *Reise*] The translation from the English manuscript was done by D.W. Soltau. However, the publisher Georg Joachim Göschen misdated MacDonald's tour in Scotland: MacDonald toured Scotland in 1802 rather than 1804. Göschen also censored MacDonald's sections relating to German politics. For MacDonald's connections with Germany, his joint tour with Emilie Harmes, and his own tour of the Highlands and Hebrides, see A. Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 8-28, 101-114, 130-133. [hereafter: Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar*] MacDonald (1772-1810) was born in Paible, North Uist. Some sources give his date of birth as 1771. He was a Gaelic speaker and believed strongly in the authenticity of Macpherson's 'Ossian'. This attitude also heavily influenced Emilie Harmes's account of their joint tour in 1800 and the account of his own journey in 1802; it is, moreover, very evident in his preface and annotations to the German translation of Faujas de Saint-Fond's tour. MacDonald strongly defended the authenticity of the Ossianic poems and wrote about the Highlands as 'diese wilden und fürchterlich schönen Gegenden, wo das ununterrichtete, aber vielleicht auch das unverdorbenste Volk von ganz Europa lebt'. Faujas, *Reise*, part i, p. xii. In Germany no travel writer, before the novelist Sir Walter Scott, had shaped the image of the Highlands like James MacDonald. In 1800 Harmes was a divorcee, and her relationship with MacDonald, who had been appointed minister of Anstruther (Fife) the year before, caused him many problems.

¹³⁹ For French travellers and émigrés to Scotland between 1770 and c. 1800 see M.I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770 – 1830 Et Leurs Curiosités Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931), pp. 33-88. For the visits to Scotland of Faujas de Saint-Fond, Pierre N. Chantreau and the Chevalier de La Tournay see *ibid.*, pp. 33-38, 41-46, 78-82.

concentrating on superficial comments or repetitions of well-known stereotypes. Later visitors, in contrast, were sometimes so heavily influenced by the Romantic movement that it obscured their view of the social and economic reality of the Highlands.

The French Colonel de La Rochette travelled to the Highlands of Perthshire in 1763. His account of Highland life and clanship was very concise, but it clearly reflected the decline of traditional Highland life. He noted that the Highlanders had lost most of their ancient customs and manners and that the absolute power of the chiefs over their vassals had been broken.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, he remarked that the Highlanders still had an extraordinary respect for the heads of their families, although the Highlands themselves had changed a lot since the last rebellion. Roads had been built, the Highlanders had been disarmed, the wearing of their traditional garb had been prohibited and English schools had been established among them.¹⁴¹ He gave a lengthy account of the importance of the pipers, claiming that they had succeeded the bards and that every chief had to employ several pipers otherwise he would lose the affection of his vassals. La Rochette clearly stressed the importance of the bagpipe as a military instrument without which the Highlanders were unwilling to fight.¹⁴² The remainder of his account of the Highlanders dealt mainly with stereotypical behaviour such as cattle lifting. He noted that, before the roads were built, the Highlands were full of thieves who often lifted entire herds of cattle. Every Highlander was obliged to follow the trace of stolen cattle on his land, and the locals had an astonishing ability to recover them from thieves.¹⁴³ La Rochette simply equated 'clans' with 'familles', without paying attention to the more complex economic and social obligations of clanship.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ See NLS, La Rochette, 'Tour 1763', MS. 3803, fos. 52v., 62r. Interestingly, La Rochette dated the abolition of vassalage in the rule of King Charles II. This is most likely a simple mix-up of Charles II and George II, as he wrote that this happened after the last rebellion in 1745. See *ibid.*, fo. 62r. La Rochette prepared three slightly different drafts of his tour to Scotland and his account of the Highlanders. The first draft is fos. 42r.-43r.; second draft fos. 48r.-49v. and fos. 52r.-53r.; third draft fos. 54r.-57r. and fos. 62r.-62v.

¹⁴¹ See *ibid.*, fo. 52v. He also wrote that there had been plans to abolish the use of the Gaelic language. He met Highlanders who served in the army, and, according to him, they were allowed to carry arms and to wear kilts, whereas the other Highlanders were forced to wear trousers. See *ibid.*, fo. 52v.

¹⁴² See *ibid.*, fos. 52v., 61v.

¹⁴³ See *ibid.*, fos. 52v.-53r. This section reads a bit like a summary of Burt's account of cattle lifting in the Highlands.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, fos. 52v., 62r.

The Frenchmen Faujas de Saint-Fond and Marc de Bombelles toured the Highlands in the summer and autumn of 1784 without knowledge of each other before they met at Killin. Although Faujas's account of the Highlands was very detailed, he did not comment at all on clanship. This is astonishing as he included lengthy descriptions of the Highlanders' customs and manners, but totally failed to comment on their social organisation in clans.¹⁴⁵ The French diplomat Marc de Bombelles also largely ignored the clan system. However, he compared the position of the Highland nobility to that of the aristocracy in France and Germany. He concluded that the Highland aristocracy, and particularly the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Breadalbane, the Duke of Gordon and the Duke of Atholl, had far greater power over their vassals than the 'Comtes souverains d'Allemagne' (i.e. 'Reichsgrafen' or landgraves). The Highlanders still regarded these noblemen as their masters, any one of whom, Bombelles claimed, was able to call a thousand or twelve hundred of their vassals to arms. However, there was no longer any need for such action as the government treated these Highland noblemen with respect.¹⁴⁶ One might argue that the geologist Faujas and the diplomat Bombelles were not greatly influenced by the Romantic movement, nor were they particularly interested in the controversy about the authenticity of the Ossianic poems. As will be seen from the accounts of subsequent French and German travellers, their impressions of Highland life and clanship were heavily influenced by the Ossianic poems and the Romantic movement. Faujas's and Bombelles's lack of interest in these subjects might explain why they did not write about clanship in great detail.

Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld visited the Highlands in 1786, and his impressions of Highland life and clanship were clearly influenced and obscured by the Romantic movement. Although he equated clanship with Jacobitism, his point of view was completely different from the stereotyped Whig attitude. La Rochefoucauld's notion of clanship was less influenced by party politics than by a Romantic transfiguration of Jacobitism. He reckoned that all Highlanders were still loyal to and proud of their adherence to the exiled Stuarts and were willing to

¹⁴⁵ This is particularly regrettable as Faujas was a keen observer. As a mineralogist he had a scientific approach to gathering information. His observations on other aspects of Highland life show great detail and accuracy.

¹⁴⁶ See Bombelles, *Journal de voyage*, p. 184.

sacrifice their lives at any moment for the Young Pretender. The old connections between France and the Jacobites, the Romantic movement and its appraisal of the ‘noble savage’ had obscured La Rochefoucauld’s sense of the political reality of the Highlands 40 years after the last Jacobite rebellion. He wrote about the Highlanders’ Jacobite feelings:

These simple inhabitants maintain steadfastly the same fidelity and warmth for their ancient chiefs. They speak of the present king of England only with contempt, and will never call him king, referring to him merely as *George*, or even *The Governor*. When they spoke of the Old Pretender, it was only as “King James”. And if we recall with them their ancient kingdom, so dear to them and so respected, they get carried away so far as to show you the wounds they received in his service. ... They can’t speak of Culloden without getting heated, and the thought that they are subjected to the English is one that grieves and torments them in such a terrible way that I’m sure that all these clansmen loyal to the flag of the Pretender would even now be ready to risk trying conclusions yet again.¹⁴⁷

La Rochefoucauld’s misconception of the Highlanders’ supposed adherence to the Stuarts becomes even more obvious in his comments about the Duke of Argyll.¹⁴⁸ He blamed the ‘present’, 5th Duke of Argyll for having betrayed the Jacobite sympathies of his clansmen when siding with the English in the Jacobite rebellions. Therefore, La Rochefoucauld claimed, the duke ‘has made his people regard him with a sort of mistrust, and even indignation’.¹⁴⁹ La Rochefoucauld’s notion that Jacobitism and

¹⁴⁷ Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, pp. 173-174. The supposed fervent Jacobitism of the Highlanders seemed strangely out of touch with the political reality in the Highlands. Nonetheless, La Rochefoucauld’s Franco-Polish travelling companion Lazowski shared his view. See *ibid.*, p. 222. However, Boswell noted on his stay with Flora MacDonald on Skye in 1773 that the Highlanders had a high esteem for the present king and that they were far less enthusiastic about the Pretender. He acknowledged that ‘I must do the Highlanders the justice to attest, that I found every where amongst them a high opinion of the virtues of the King now upon the throne, and an honest disposition to be faithful subjects to his majesty ...’. Boswell, *Tour*, p. 240. In 1746 Flora MacDonald had helped Bonnie Prince Charlie to escape from government troops searching for him. Boswell took the opportunity to include in the journal of his tour a lengthy account of the Young Pretender’s escape in the Hebrides. The Highlanders’ loyalty to the Hanoverians had already been proven by the Highland regiments in the Seven Years’ War (1756-63) and the American War of Independence (1775-83). The majority of the Highland regiments were raised from the Clan Campbell, headed by the staunchly Hanoverian 3rd Duke of Argyll. However, Jacobite noblemen such as Simon Fraser, son of the executed Lord Lovat, also seized the opportunity and recruited troops in order to rehabilitate their families. See A. Mackillop, *More Fruitful Than The Soil: Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (East Linton, 2000), pp. 41-52. See also Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 216-217.

¹⁴⁸ See Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 192. La Rochefoucauld did not distinguish between Archibald Campbell, 3rd Duke of Argyll (1682-1761), and John Campbell, 5th Duke of Argyll (1723-1806).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 192. The 3rd Duke of Argyll had supported the Hanoverians in the ‘Forty-Five. While the Campbells of Argyll had no Jacobite sympathies, this was not true of the Campbells of Breadalbane or of Cawdor. Travellers usually referred to the Dukes of Argyll as being great benefactors to their people and as being revered by them. Sarah Murray, for example, reported (in 1800) that the Duke of Argyll treated his tenants in the Ross of Mull and Iona very well. He neither raised their rents nor expelled them from their farms and let them participate in the profits from kelp production. In 1802 the duke offered to supply his tenants on Tiree with coal from Greenock at cost, as there was a general

clan spirit were still preserved by the Highlanders is the more surprising because he recognised that the landed clan elite, and particularly the tacksmen, exploited and overcharged the small peasants.¹⁵⁰ The miserable living conditions of the vast majority of the Highlanders did not prevent foreign visitors, however, from obscuring their impressions of Highland life by a romanticised point of view.

Fellow Frenchman Pierre N. Chantreau's account of Highland life and clanship also suffered from this preconception. His attitude was influenced by the Romantic movement even more strongly than La Rochefoucauld was.¹⁵¹ To him, the Highlanders were the embodiment of a modest, healthy, content and happy people that lived in a natural state of mankind. They lived in great reverence and obedience to their chiefs, and though they enjoyed few natural resources, they were satisfied with what little they had.¹⁵² However, Chantreau's idealised notion of Highland life was soon to clash with the bitter reality. On the tiny and rocky island of Rhum he was confronted with the harsh living conditions of the locals. The unfortunate islanders depended on outside help as they were unable to provide for themselves. Their laird, MacLean of Coll, had to buy oats to prevent them from starving or leaving the island. Therefore, Chantreau considered him as a role model of a responsible laird who was loved by his vassals because he cared for them like a father for his children.¹⁵³ Despite the harsh reality, Chantreau still wanted to believe that the islanders' plain and unspoiled way of living was superior to urban life in

shortage of fuel in the western Highlands due to the wetness of the season. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 254-255, 374-375. See also Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. i, pp. 100-103. According to the *OSA*, the 3rd duke had introduced linen manufacture into the parish of Inveraray in 1748. Around 1776 the 5th duke had established at a very considerable expense a woollen manufacture, including machinery and houses at the water of Douglas (c. four miles south-west of Inveraray). See *OSA*, vol. viii (Argyll (mainland)), p. 147.

¹⁵⁰ See Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 173.

¹⁵¹ Chantreau considered himself a philanthropist. He announced in the preface to his account that he wanted to report on the living conditions, customs and manners of the people in Scotland and Ireland because there were no satisfying accounts of them. However, his attitude was so heavily influenced by Rousseau and the image of the 'noble savage' that it sometimes obscured his account of the Highlanders.

¹⁵² This passage reads: 'Nous avons aussi remarqué dans nos différentes courses, que ces bonnes gens vivent contents dans les bornes de la plus rigide économie, et que la nature les récompense de leurs privations par une santé robuste et imperturbable.' Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 14.

¹⁵³ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 98. However, the owner of Rhum could not sustain this attitude forever, and the developments on Rhum anticipated the economic and social changes in many areas of the Highlands. In 1826 MacLean of Coll had 300 tenants shipped from Rhum to Canada, and in 1845 the Marquess of Salisbury purchased the island for £24,000 to develop it as a deer forest. See J. Hunter, *The Making Of The Crofting Community* (Edinburgh, 1976), p. 46. [hereafter: Hunter: *Crofting Community*] See also Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War*, pp. 81, 185.

France because they were not dependent on unnecessary luxuries. His admiration for their simple and unspoiled way of living was clearly influenced by Rousseau and the image of the ‘noble savage’:

Les insulaires d’Ecosse rioient de tout leur cœur de l’air avec lequel nous le mangions; mais les bonnes gens avoient bien d’autres motifs de se rire de nous. Que de réflexions leur manière d’être m’a fait faire! Quelle étoit différente de celle de nos citadins! Combien ceux-ci perdroient à la com paraison [sic]! Les autres, me disois -je, sont vigoureux, sains, agiles et sans d’autres besoins que ceux de la simple nature; que d’avantages sur les habitans des villes dont l’existence est méthodique, et auxquels il faut un *régime de vie* et *leurs aises*. Oui, Jean Jacques l’avoit bien dit, qu’il n’y a, de vraiment libres, que ceux qui, pour se servir, n’ont pas besoin de mettre la main d’un autre au bout de leurs bras.¹⁵⁴

The Chevalier de La Tocnaye was far less influenced by the image of the ‘noble savage’ than his fellow Frenchmen. He toured the Highlands on foot in 1793 and spent a lot of time among the common people. He remarked that in former times a clan was like a family and that all its members, no matter rich or poor, had to follow the orders of their chief, particularly in times of feud. He acknowledged that these times had gone, but that there were still signs of the common Highlanders’ adherence to their chiefs. La Tocnaye witnessed how some poor Highlanders had rejected a lump sum of sixteen *louis* by a foreign colonel, instead joining their chief’s regiment although he could pay them no more than three *louis*.¹⁵⁵ The idea of a clan as a great family clearly fascinated La Tocnaye, and the dissolution of clan ties led to this melancholic comment:

Ces idées cependant commencent a tomber, et j’ose dire que c’est dommage, car quoique ces sentiments tendent a separer une famille du reste de la société, cependant ils en unissent les membres si étroitement, qu’on ne peut s’empêcher d’y trouver quelque chose de respectable et d’intéressant.¹⁵⁶

La Tocnaye’s regretful farewell to clanship and clan spirit must be judged against the background of his belief that the chiefs had no real power any longer and that

l’autorité qu’y peuvent encore preserver les chefs de famille, n’est que volontaire, et en raison du respect, et de l’interet qu’ils inspirent, mais dans aucuns cas ils ne peuvent jamais en abuser’.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 99.

¹⁵⁵ See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 300-301. The French *louis d’or* was equivalent to the English *guinea*.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

However, the reality of power in the Highlands was different. The chiefs may have been stripped of their political and judicial power, but they had not lost their power as landowners. La Tocnaye's view of clanship largely ignored the economic dependence of the common Highlanders on their chiefs as landlords. For many Highland landlords it was money that counted, and few of them had scruples in abusing their position to exploit their tenants.

It is interesting to speculate whether women gained a different impression of clanship than men, or whether the 'Ossian' enthusiasm was more likely to obscure their perception of Highland life? In respect of Emilie Harmes, the latter is undoubtedly true. She travelled the Highlands in 1800, and her impressions of Highland life were heavily influenced and obscured by her 'Ossian' enthusiasm.¹⁵⁸ This sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish her factual observations from her preconceived notion of the Highlander as 'noble savage'. Moreover, it is obvious that Harmes had read a number of travellers' accounts of Scotland before she set out, as many of her observations were clearly influenced by other authors.¹⁵⁹ She referred, for example, to John Lanne Buchanan in her discussion of the appalling living conditions of the subtenants, labourers and 'scallags' on the Outer Hebrides.¹⁶⁰ She

¹⁵⁸ Harmes's 'Ossian' enthusiasm was fuelled by her close contact with Johann Gottfried Herder, whom she deeply admired and to whom she dedicated her *Caledonia*. Her travelling companion James MacDonald, a staunch believer in the authenticity of the 'Ossian', added further to this enthusiasm. Although MacDonald considered Harmes's account to be largely correct, he felt unable to translate it into English because of its bleak sentiment. See Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar*, p. 111. For Harmes's tour of Scotland and her fervent 'Ossian' enthusiasm see also A. Gillies, 'Emilie von Berlepsch and her *Caledonia*', *Proceedings Of The Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society*, vol. xv, part i (Leeds, 1972), pp. 1-14. [hereafter: Gillies, 'Emilie von Berlepsch and her *Caledonia*'] In 1773 Herder had published the essay 'Auszug aus einem Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder alter Völker', which had massively boosted the 'Ossian' enthusiasm in Germany. However, he never visited Scotland.

¹⁵⁹ In her *Caledonia* she referred to the accounts by Thomas Pennant, Samuel Johnson, William Gilpin and John Lanne Buchanan. These authors had been translated into German in 1779-80 (reprinted 1784), 1775, 1792-93, and 1795 (2nd edn. 1812) respectively. She also referred to the accounts of Faujas de Saint-Fond and John Lettice as well as to the *Statistical Account* by Sir John Sinclair, which had been partially translated into German in 1794-96. For the accounts of Scotland consulted by Harmes see also Gillies, 'Emilie von Berlepsch and her *Caledonia*', pp. 5, 13. After her return, she read Thomas Garnett's account of his tour in 1798 and realised that her route through Argyllshire had been very similar to his. Garnett's *Tour* (London, 1800) was translated into German in 1802. Harmes admitted that his account made her *Caledonia* seem slightly redundant. Nonetheless, she justified her account by claiming that it was more personal and emotional than Garnett's account, which was written in a very functional style. Garnett had copied entire paragraphs from Pennant and Knox.

¹⁶⁰ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. iii, pp. 76-79. 'Scallag', a kind of land-labourer in the Highlands, a farm-servant. See *SND*, vol. viii, p. 40. John Lanne Buchanan is not beyond doubt as a source on the exploitation of the common people in the Outer Hebrides by their landowners because of Thomson's unauthorised additions to his account. See note 75.

had not been to the Outer Hebrides and knew nothing of the living conditions of the locals from personal observation. Nonetheless, she refused to accept that the landowners were able to abuse their privileged position and exploit their own clansmen to such an extent. Instead, she blamed John Lanne Buchanan for being untrustworthy and having exaggerated the fate of the common islanders. However, she was fully aware that the system of landownership in the Highlands offered no security to the great majority of the people and kept them in abject poverty. The lack of long leases prevented any investment and kept the tenants in total dependence and submission to their landowners, without any prospect of improving their lives.¹⁶¹ Harmes was well aware of the common Highlanders' problems, but her account hovered between her recognition of the harsh reality of Highland life and her quest to find content and happy 'noble savages'. Therefore, her observations on the living conditions of the Highlanders often became obscure and relied entirely on this 'noble savage' image. While describing a walk among the ruins of Dunollie Castle, she included a lengthy dream sequence about 'Ossian' and a vanished golden age of Highland life that was unspoiled by the vices of modern times.¹⁶² Leaving the ruins, she set out in search of the descendants of this noble race of ancient heroes. She met several Highlanders, but she was unable to make up her mind whether to pity them for their miserable living conditions, or to admire them as plain, poor, but happy and contented people.¹⁶³ At Oban Harmes was invited to join a party intending to travel by cutter to Staffa, Skye, the Outer Hebrides and St Kilda. However, she declined the opportunity and made her return. Her indebtedness to the image of the Highlander as 'noble savage' is most obvious in her comment about the inhabitants of St Kilda, whom she had never met. Having decided not to visit the island, her preconception about its inhabitants speaks volumes:

¹⁶¹ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. i, pp. 98-100. Harmes particularly criticised some landowners for publicly auctioning their land to the highest bidders, and landowners on the Hebrides who granted no leases longer than one year. Her unspecified criticism of the landowners in the Hebrides was not fully justified, as many of them offered already longer leases before 1800. She particularly referred to the Duke of Argyll and the Earl of Breadalbane as role models for landowners. According to Harmes, these noblemen granted leases of 19 or 38 years, thus offered their tenants security and encouraged investment. She did not realise that the public auctioning of land, the dispossessing of tenants and the introduction of large-scale sheep farming had been initiated on the Campbell lands in Argyll. See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 100-103.

¹⁶² See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 164-174. Dunollie Castle is a ruined stronghold of the Macdougalls on the Argyll coast one mile north of Oban.

¹⁶³ See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 174-176.

St. Kilda, wo Menschen wohnen, die noch kein Geld kennen, keine Processe, keine Zeitungen, überall keine Bücher, da sie nicht lesen noch schreiben können; die wie Gens auf ihren Bergen herumklettern und dabey, wie man mich versichert, das lustigste, offenerzigste, gutmüthigste Völkchen ausmachen, das velleicht jetzt auf Erden lebt.¹⁶⁴

This was the archetypal image of the ‘noble savage’, and it hardly reflected the living conditions of St Kilda at that time.¹⁶⁵

Johanna Schopenhauer’s impression of the Highlanders was very similar to Harmes’s. She made the small Highland tour in 1803 and was also heavily influenced by the Romantic movement, the Ossianic poems and the image of the ‘noble savage’.¹⁶⁶ She clearly realised the Highlanders’ poverty and their miserable living conditions, but she, too, was unable to make up her mind whether to pity them or to admire them because of their seeming contentment and happiness.¹⁶⁷ Wherever she met with Highlanders along the road, she described them as simple, plain, content and happy people despite their abject poverty and miserable living conditions.¹⁶⁸ In her account there was no mention of Highlanders complaining about exploitation and evictions by their landowners, and she clearly regarded them as ‘noble savages’ who lived in a natural state of mankind.

The Romantic movement, Sir Walter Scott and the ‘tartanisation’ of Scotland in the early nineteenth century did little to correct that image. Although, for many years to come, foreign travellers to the Highlands were confronted with the miserable living conditions of the Highlanders, the majority of these visitors had a preconceived notion of the Highlander as ‘noble savage’, and this image dominated their accounts for the next decades.¹⁶⁹ The changing image of the Highlander in the

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 186. She wrote that the people of St Kilda were not used to money, newspapers and books as they could neither read nor write. Nonetheless, she wrote, they were probably the happiest, frankest and most faithful people in the world.

¹⁶⁵ The remoteness of St Kilda and its supposedly unspoiled population made the island a prime destination for Romantic travellers at the end of the eighteenth century. Henry Lord Brougham visited St Kilda in August 1799. Like Harmes, he had a strong notion of the islanders as ‘noble savages’. However, he also wrote about the islanders’ exploitation by their tacksman. See H. Brougham, *The Life And Times Of Henry Lord Brougham* (Edinburgh, 1871), vol. i, pp. 99-108. [hereafter: Brougham, *Life*] Harmes’s notion of the life of the St Kildans was completely at odds with reality. William MacNeil, the then tacksman of the island, was particularly oppressive. See chapter 6.5.3.

¹⁶⁶ See Michaelis-Jena and Merson (eds.), *Lady Travels – Johanna Schopenhauer*, pp. 74-76.

¹⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 54, 69-71, 74-76. She described the Highlanders’ dwellings as ‘perhaps the most wretched human habitations in civilized Europe’. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁶⁹ There was a similar tendency in the perception of the population of the mountainous parts of Switzerland as ‘noble savages’ in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Like the Highlanders, the Swiss were stereotyped with the dual notion of peaceful herdsmen and fierce

late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries was less a matter of the nationality or gender of a foreign visitor, or the historic relations between his or her home country and Scotland, than a matter of how much the visitor's observations and perception of the Highlander were influenced by the Romantic movement and, later, by Sir Walter Scott.

5.5. The image of the Highlander in the nineteenth century – Theodor Fontane's *Beyond the Tweed* (1860)

Finally, it is necessary to examine the way in which the image of the Highlander changed up and to the mid-Victorian era. The Scottish barrister, antiquarian and novelist Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was the most important figure in shaping the image of his country in the early nineteenth century. He became the most popular novelist of his time, and his collections of Scottish folklore and historical novels attracted visitors to Scotland from all over Europe. It became fashionable to travel Scotland with reference to Mary Stuart, William Shakespeare or the figures of Scott's historical novels. Scott's novels and the subsequent 'tartanisation' of Scotland created a preconception of the Highlands that challenged the objectivity of many foreign visitors and was extremely difficult to dislodge.¹⁷⁰

warriors. In the Romantic movement, travellers often compared the Highlanders to the people of rural Switzerland as there were many obvious parallels between both peoples. Scotland and Switzerland both had to fight for centuries to keep their independence from their more powerful neighbours England, and France, Burgundy and Austria respectively. Travellers likened the myths surrounding William Wallace to that of Wilhelm Tell. The Highlanders' way of life was also in many respects similar to that of the rural Swiss population. Moreover, although the industrialisation increasingly marginalised the Highlanders and the rural population of Switzerland within their own countries, both peoples started to dominate the image of their countries abroad. For parallels in the foreign perception of the Highlanders and the Swiss see H. Utz, *Schotten und Schweizer – Brother mountaineers: Europa entdeckt die beiden Völker im 18. Jahrhundert* (2nd edn. Frankfurt am Main, 1996). As Switzerland had been a part of the Grand Tour of the Continent for centuries, many travellers to Scotland had visited Switzerland before. At the same time travellers began also to explore Norway and compared the Highlanders' way of life to that of the Norwegians.

¹⁷⁰ Three milestones in the 'tartanisation' of Scotland can be highlighted. Firstly, the foundation of the Highland Society in London in 1778 which aimed at the preservation of ancient Highland tradition. Secondly, the visit of King George IV to Edinburgh in August 1822. It was the first visit of a British monarch to Scotland since Charles II's 'visit' in 1651. The visit was organised by Sir Walter Scott, and George IV arrived in Edinburgh in full Highland dress, including a Royal Stewart Tartan. He was welcomed by bagpipers, hailed as 'Chief of the Chiefs', and the whole royal visit was turned into a huge, farcical display of everything that was supposed to be 'Highlandish'. The Highland dress now represented the spirit of the Scottish nation as a whole rather than a formerly despised part of it. Hugh Trevor-Roper argued that supposedly ancient Highland symbols such as the bagpipe or the kilt, which were used in 1822 to represent Scotland, had only been introduced to the Highlands in the seventeenth

The German journalist and novelist Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) lived from 1855 to 1859 as a Prussian journalist in London. In 1858 he fulfilled a childhood ambition in visiting Scotland. Two years later he published the account of his tour as *Jenseit des Tweed – Bilder und Briefe aus Schottland* (Berlin, 1860).¹⁷¹ Fontane's travelogue was intended as a guidebook to Scotland. He followed the traces of Mary Stuart, the characters of Shakespeare's historical plays and, of course, the characters in Sir Walter Scott's historical novels. His account reflected the extent to which Sir Walter Scott had shaped the image of his native country focusing, in a previously unknown way, on its Romantic side. In 1871, the hundredth anniversary of Walter Scott's birth, Julius Rodenberg asked Fontane to write a tribute to Sir Walter Scott for the periodical *Salon für Literatur, Kunst und Gesellschaft*. In his tribute Fontane described the national significance of Scott's works and his influence on shaping the image of Scotland abroad:

Der *Nationalitätsidee* hat er [Scott] vorgearbeitet und Ausdruck gegeben wie kaum ein zweiter. Die Wirkung war um so tiefer, als er völlig unsystematisch verfuhr. Nichts Prinzipielles; die lebendigen Gestalten wirkten, nicht die tote Abstraktion. Was uns jetzt, wo wir im Vollbesitz der Resultate sind, als ein Natürliches, immer Dagewesenes erscheint, war vor kaum siebenzig Jahren ein Neues, ein Werdendes. Er wirkte in diesem Sinne reformatorisch. Dreißig Jahre lang war er vor Europa der „*Sprecher* Schottlands“, und man darf sagen, er hat dies Land zu dem gemacht, was es ist oder doch bei anderen Völkern gilt und bedeutet. Es gibt wohl kaum ein anderes kleines Land, vielleicht mit alleiniger Ausnahme der Schweiz, an dessen Schicksalen die Welt seit Beginn dieses Jahrhunderts so lebhaften Anteil genommen hätte und noch nähme als an Schottland. Wenn es möglich wäre, einen Gebildeten aus den neunziger Jahren des vorigen Jahrhunderts über die Highlands und Lowlands, über die Länderstrecken „jenseits des Tweed“ zu befragen, so würden wir *sehr* unvollkommenen Vorstellungen begegnen, im günstigsten Falle solchen, wie wir sie jetzt von Jütland oder Finnland oder Norwegen hegen. Erst Walter Scott war es, der uns die Geschichte, die landschaftlichen Schönheiten, die Sagen und Sitten Schottlands bis zu einem Grade erschloß, daß man behaupten darf, die Schicksale der Stuartprätendenten von 1715 und 1745 zählen zu den bekanntesten und beliebtesten

and early eighteenth centuries. Originally, these items were far less associated with the Gaelic tradition of the Highlands than, for example, the harp had been. See H. Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 19-32. Murray Pittock has argued that Scott's successful transfer of Jacobite symbols from the Stuarts to the Hanoverians helped to dull the radical edge of Jacobitism. Between 1820 and 1860 Jacobitism was even turned into a tourist industry. See M. Pittock, *The Invention Of Scotland: The Stuart myth and the Scottish identity, 1638 to the present* (London and New York, 1991), pp. 88-90. Thirdly, Queen Victoria's love for the Highlands. In 1848 Queen Victoria and her husband Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha chose Balmoral Castle on the River Dee for their summer residence. They bought the castle in 1852 and began to build a new castle in the Victorian Baronial style, which was modelled after Sir Walter Scott's residence Abbotsford in the Scottish Borders. Victoria's regular attendance at the Braemar Highland Gatherings and the royal couple's enthusiasm for Balmoral and Deeside made the Highlands a very fashionable place to visit.

¹⁷¹ A reliable English translation is T. Fontane, *Beyond the Tweed* (London, 1998). [hereafter: Fontane, *Beyond the Tweed*] Fontane's *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland*, ed. by H. Reuter (2nd edn. Berlin, 1991), includes *Jenseit des Tweed* (vol. ii, pp. 31-309) and Fontane's letters, essay and lecture on Scotland. [hereafter: Fontane, *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland*]

Kapiteln, die die Weltgeschichte aufzuweisen hat. Das liegt nicht in dem Gewicht der Dinge selbst, daß liegt lediglich in der *poetischen* Bedeutung, die ihnen der nationale Dichter gab.¹⁷²

Fontane's essay reflected the way in which the foreign perception of Scotland focused on Scott's Romantic characters. Fontane was well aware of the difficulties involved in giving a realistic account of a country whose image was dominated by romance and myth. His travelogue reflected the narrow line between a realistic account and the reproduction of stereotypes and preconceived images. He addressed this problem in a lecture on the Scottish Highlands and its people.¹⁷³ Fontane explained to his audience:

... aber es bleibt beim Leser selbst jener verzeihliche Irrtum nicht aus, der die Schilderung mit dem Geschilderten unwissentlich verwechselt und die Makellosigkeit, den Schwung und imposanten Vollklang der poetischen Beschreibung auf das beschriebene Objekt überträgt.¹⁷⁴

The danger of stereotyping referred to the landscape and people of Scotland in general, but it was strongest in respect of the Highlands and its population. Scott had introduced the fate of the Old Pretender and Bonnie Prince Charlie to a wide audience on the Continent, and travellers such as Fontane did not seriously question Scott's Romantic notion of the Highlands or the Jacobite rebellions. At Culloden Moor, Fontane's romanticised perception of the Highlanders became more than obvious. His equation of Highlanders with Jacobitism obscured his view of their real history. He presented to his audience as historical facts what was in reality nothing but 'tartanised' history:

Culloden Moor is the celebrated battlefield on which the Stuarts, after making three attempts to reinstate themselves, were finally and for ever defeated. I pause for a moment to review the most essential of the facts.

Prince Charlie, the much-sung son of the Pretender, landed in Scotland on 27th June 1745. The clans, almost without exception, rallied round him. On 10th September he entered

¹⁷² Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 483-484.

¹⁷³ In Fontane, *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland*, vol. ii, pp. 7-30. Fontane gave the lecture 'Das schottische Hochland und seine Bewohner' on 8 February 1860 in Arnims Hotel, Unter den Linden, Berlin. He intended to include it in *Jenseit des Tweed*, but finally decided against it. Instead, he published the lecture in the periodical *Europa. Chronik der gebildeten Welt*, Leipzig, no. 16. Neither his lectures on England and Scotland, nor his essay on Sir Walter Scott have been translated into English.

¹⁷⁴ Fontane, *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland*, vol. ii, pp. 7-8. At famous attractions such as Loch Katrine, preconceived notions and expectations could easily pervert travellers' observations. For example, Fontane praised Sir Walter Scott's setting of his ballad *The Lady Of The Lake* (Edinburgh, 1810). When Fontane visited the place where Ellen Douglas put her boat ashore and met the king, he admitted that 'no maiden could here step ashore from the lake without being immediately taken for the Lady of the Lake herself'. Fontane, *Beyond the Tweed*, p. 120.

Perth and on the 19th Edinburgh, and two days later defeated the English, who had come to meet him, on the plains of Prestonpans. All Scotland rejoiced over the victory.¹⁷⁵

That Fontane's simplistic and distorted account of the beginning of the 'Forty-Five was far from the historic truth, needs little illumination. Many Highland clans failed to rally for the Young Pretender, and not all Scotland rejoiced in his initial success. Even at the height of their success in 1745, the Jacobites remained in the minority, and their support outside the Highlands was very small. Fontane's equation of Scots with Highland clans and Jacobitism reflected the common perception of Scotland in Europe after Sir Walter Scott. His travelogue omitted Scotland's importance at the cutting edge of industrialisation and science.¹⁷⁶ Instead, his travelogue was dominated by the Romantic spirit in which Sir Walter Scott had veiled the image of Scotland. Fontane's lecture on the Scottish Highlands and its people, therefore, epitomised the Romantic image of the Highlander in mid-nineteenth-century Europe. To Fontane, Highland history had begun only with Montrose in the 1650s. Montrose's resistance, in the Highlands, to Cromwell marked the beginning of what Fontane called a century of glory for the Highland clans:

Erst mit dem Auftreten Montroses gewannen die Dinge ein völlig verändertes Ansehen, und ein Jahrhundert voll Glanz und Ruhm brach für die Clans an. Die Hochlande, die bis dahin, politisch genommen, ein so gleichgültiger Fleck Erde gewesen waren wie etwa Finnland oder der Küstenstrich zwischen Bergen und Dronheim, kamen plötzlich zu einer historisch-politischen Bedeutung und wurden die Felsenfestung, in die sich das Stuarttum, diese Verkörperung von Absolutismus und Katholizismus, zurückzog und von wo aus es seine Ausfälle zur Wiedereroberung eines verlorenen Reiches machte. Ob die Sache, für die damals die Hochlande eintraten, eine unbedingt hohe und reine war, ob, wenn sie rein war, die Herzen und Hände es gleichfalls waren, die für diese Sache fochten, das alles mag unentschieden bleiben; ja es mag zugegeben werden, daß selbstsüchtige Motive den Ausschlag gaben und daß die Häuptlinge aus Trotz, aus Ehrgeiz und Eitelkeit, nicht aber aus Loyalität und Vasallentreue ihre Clansleute aufs Schlachtfeld trieben.

So waren die *Häuptlinge*, aber so waren nicht die Clansleute selbst, und es bleibt als eine Tatsache bestehen, daß Mut, Treue und Selbstverleugnung des sogenannten "gemeinen Mannes" sich selten glänzender bewährt haben als in *diesen* Kämpfen. Wieviel davon auf den Clangeist überhaupt und wieviel auf das Einzelindividuum kommt, ist freilich schwer zu bestimmen und bleibe dahingestellt. Ich übergehe die Zeit des Montrose, ebenso die Zeit seines großen Nachfolgers, des Graham von Claverhouse, Grafen von Dundee, und verweile nur wenige Minuten noch bei jenem letzten Stuart-Aufstande, dessen anziehende Geschichte durch Walter Scotts "Waverley"-Roman so allgemeines Eigentum der gebildeten Welt geworden ist. Mit wenig tausend schlecht bewaffneter Hochländer, ohne ein einziges Geschütz, stieg Prinz Charlie (der Sohn des Prätendenten) ins Niederland hinab, schlug die englischen Regimenter, Truppen, die sich in Frankreich und Flandern ausgezeichnet hatten, und drang siegreich vor bis in das Herz von England. Aber

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 147.

¹⁷⁶ On his return from Iona and Staffa, Fontane called at Glasgow. However, when he saw the smoking chimneys of its factories, he returned immediately to the more pleasing and history-laden Edinburgh.

glorreicher als diese Tage beinahe rätselhaften Sieges waren die Tage des *Unglücks*: bei Culloden geschlagen und nahezu vernichtet, stellte sich ein übriggebliebener Rest des Hochlandheeres aufs neue unter die Fahnen des Prinzen und erklärte sich bereit, zu fechten und zu sterben. Der Prinz, die Nutzlosigkeit ferneren Blutvergießens einsehend, lehnte ab. 30000 Pfund Sterling waren auf seinen Kopf gesetzt; Hunderte wußten, wo er sich verbarg, aber nicht einer hatte Lust, das Blutgeld zu verdienen. Der Prinz entkam, die Sieger wateten in Blut, und der Clangeist wurde gebrochen. Wüst, wild, roh hatte er begonnen, seine Sterbestunde aber sah ihn im Dienst einer Idee und opferfreudig einstehen für das Höchste, dessen das Menschenherz fähig ist: für Liebe und Treue.¹⁷⁷

This glorification of the Highlander, his noble character and his spirit of self-sacrifice for a higher cause became archetypal for this period in the wake of Scott and the Scottish Revival. In the public perception, the Highlander had turned from rebel to hero, and the new stereotypes were also applied to the past. Fontane's characterisation of the Highlander showed the way in which the stereotype of a primitive, sly villain had been replaced by the stereotype of a heroic, 'noble savage'. The glorification of the Highlander in the Victorian Age contributed largely to the stereotyped image of the noble Highlander that still resonates at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Despite reproducing this image, Fontane was well aware that it fell short of a realistic account of the Highlands and its people. He visited the Highlands in the wake of the great potato famine of the 1840s that had led to a new wave of emigration. The last paragraph of Fontane's lecture read like an epilogue on the Highlands. Fontane reflected on the gulf that had opened between the image of the Highlands and the harsh reality:

Die Hochlande sind tot; der Clangeist ist gebrochen, die Glens ihrer alten Bewohner beraubt; fremdes Leben hält seinen Einzug, die alte Sitte stirbt hin und mit der nationalen Sitte natürlich auch die nationale Tracht. Man fängt bereits an, Gesellschaften zu gründen, um als Kuriosität das wenige zu hegen und zu pflegen, was noch da ist, man will nicht völlig ersterben lassen, was so viel zum Ruhme und zur poetischen Verherrlichung des Vaterlandes beigetragen hat. Es steht dahin, ob diese Bemühungen von dauerndem Erfolg gekrönt sein werden; aber was immer auch ihr Resultat sein möge, das *wahre* Fortleben, das Leben in Lied und in Gesang, das Leben im Herzen und in der Erinnerung der Menschen, *dies* Fortleben ist dem schottischen Hochlande für alle Zeit gesichert. Seine historische Aufgabe, wenn das alte Land der Clans jemals eine solche hatte, hat es längst erfüllt; es schien, über seine Zeit hinaus, nur aufbewahrt zu sein, um in der Fülle seiner Anomalien den benachbarten Kulturstaaten eine neue und unerschöpfliche Quelle der Poesie zu bieten. Der Romantik des Rittertums hat sich die Romantik der Clans längst zugesellt, und

“Was ewig im Gesang soll leben,
Muß im Leben untergehn.”¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Fontane, *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland*, vol. ii, pp. 14-15.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 29-30.

It is interesting to note that this romanticised notion of the Highlander prevailed not only in the public perception, but also in Scottish historiography until the late twentieth century. It seems as if the Highlands entered history only after their transformation in the eighteenth century or, more precisely, after the supposedly ‘timeless Gaelic Arcadia’ had come to an end in 1746.¹⁷⁹ It is only in recent years that the works of academics such as Tom Devine, Robert A. Dodgshon, James Hunter and Allan I. Macinnes have challenged this stereotyped view. Their works, focusing on the economic and political history of the Highlands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, argue persuasively that the decline of clanship, Highland life and Gaelic culture was triggered off by the increasing alienation of the clan elites from their estates and vassals. The supposedly ‘timeless Gaelic Arcadia’ was not destroyed by outside forces, but primarily eroded from within, starting at the top of the social pyramid.

5.6. Conclusion

Clanship and its impact on Highland life were undoubtedly among the most controversial, and hotly debated, topics in travellers’ accounts of seventeenth- and particularly eighteenth-century Scotland. Most visitors to the Highlands regarded clanship, heritable jurisdictions and the chiefs’ sole ownership of the land as the main reasons for the unrest, lawlessness and the economic deprivation of the Highlands. The Whig equation of clanship with Jacobitism and lawlessness often dominated this debate.

It is not surprising that most visitors to the Highlands left Scotland with a negative impression of clanship and Highland life. Until the mid-eighteenth century, the term ‘clan’ was laden with stereotypes ranging from lawlessness and unrest to economic exploitation. These connotations had been established in the late sixteenth

¹⁷⁹ See, for example, M.H. Thevenot-Totems, *La Decouverte De L’Ecosse Du XVIIIe Siecle A Travers Les Recits Des Voyageurs Britanniques* (Paris, [1990]), vol. i, pp. 350-363, vol. ii, pp. 743-769. Again, clanship and Highland life prior to 1746 are described in a romanticised way. Clans are presented as harmonious large families that were headed by paternal chiefs. The author blames the collapse of this supposedly stable and ‘Arcadian’ way of Highland life on the traumatic economic changes after 1746, without paying due attention to the symptoms of its decline in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

century and had been carefully continued by government propaganda until the aftermath of the 'Forty-Five. Travellers preparing for their journey to the Highlands could find hardly any positive connotation of clanship in the guidebooks to Scotland. When 'mass tourism' conquered the Highlands in the later decades of the eighteenth century, Highland society and the Highland economy were in a shambles. Clanship had collapsed, and the mutual obligations between the clan elites and their vassals had given way to a unilateral exploitation of the latter. Commoners who could afford to leave the Highlands emigrated. Visitors to the Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth century were, therefore, confronted with the remnants and debris of a collapsed society and economy. Many foreign visitors and short-term travellers were quick to blame clanship for the 'Highland crisis' that soon became a symbol for the oppression and exploitation of the commoners. That clanship was, in its initial form, a strong, protective socio-economic system was often neglected in their accounts. When late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century travellers wrote about the former power and glory of clanship, it was often from a romanticised perspective. They created the impression of a clan as a big family with a patronising, loving and caring chief at its head, who splendidly redistributed his income among his vassals in lavish entertainment at his castle. The transfiguration of clanship and Highland life was particularly strong among foreign travellers who arrived in the wake of the Romantic movement. The 'Ossian' enthusiasm had reached fever pitch and obscured many visitors' impressions of Highland life. Many foreign travellers simply turned a blind eye on the hardships of Highland life in their search for the 'noble savage' and mankind in its natural state. The gap between their preconceived notion of clanship and mankind in its natural state on the one hand, and the harsh reality of Highland life in times of economic crisis on the other hand, could hardly have been wider.

Few travellers had the opportunity to give less biased or romanticised accounts of clanship. It was left to late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century authors such as Martin Martin or Edmund Burt, who either knew the Highlands from childhood or had spent several years among the Highlanders, to prepare accounts of Highland society and clanship that were more balanced. They, too, had missed the peak of clanship, but their accounts still emphasised the mutual dependence and obligations between the Highland elite and their vassals. Although Highland life and clanship

were already in gradual decline at that time, their accounts offer interesting glimpses into the functioning of clanship and the structure of Highland society.

**Travels to terra incognita:
The Scottish Highlands and Hebrides in early modern
travellers' accounts
c. 1600 to 1800**

**Dissertation
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Band II

6. Highland economy

They [the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands] stand much in need of instruction in the cultivation of their country, and have little to communicate, that can be useful to the more cultivated parts of the kingdom. The practice of farmers in England or Scotland, three or four hundred years ago, would but little edify their successors in the present times. The skillful cultivators in Scotland and England, have therefore nothing to expect from this quarter. On the contrary, it is to them that the inhabitants of these remote countries must be indebted for their skill and proficiency in agriculture.¹

These comments, in the introduction to John Walker's *Economical History Of The Hebrides And Highlands Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1808), fairly reflected the common perception of the backward state of agriculture and economy in the north of Scotland.

The harsh physical conditions of the Highlands, the distinctive social structure of Highland society and the reclusiveness of the region until the eighteenth century, had resulted in the development of a unique economic system. In the early modern period, economic progress, rising trade and the expansion of cities had profoundly changed the living and working conditions of the people in many parts of western Europe. The Highlands of Scotland, however, had been only marginally affected by these developments and had remained a comparatively stable, though backward, economic region. Most visitors to the Highlands came from agriculturally and economically more developed regions and, therefore, took particular interest in the agricultural techniques of the Highlanders. Many of the instruments and techniques used, for example, the 'cascrom', a crooked spade for digging the ground in the northern Highlands and the Western Isles, had hardly changed for centuries and were unique to that area. Supposedly old-fashioned techniques, such as the burning of the

¹ J. Walker, *An Economical History Of The Hebrides And Highlands Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1808), vol. i, pp. 4-5. [hereafter: Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*] Walker's *Economical History Of The Hebrides* was the result of six journeys made to the Highlands and Hebrides between 1760 and 1786. Walker was Professor of Natural History at Edinburgh from 1779 until his death in 1803. His *Economical History Of The Hebrides* was published posthumously by his friend Charles Stewart in 1808. The author was by no means biased against the Highlanders, stressing that 'wherever the Highlanders are defective in industry, it will be found upon fair enquiry, to be rather their misfortune than their fault, and owing to their want of knowledge and opportunity, rather than to any want of a spirit for labour. Their disposition to industry, is greater than is usually imagined, and if judiciously directed, is capable of being highly advantageous both to themselves and to their country.' Ibid., vol. i, pp. 12-13. The author made particular reference to the successful cultivation of the moss of Kincardine by Highlanders and the digging of the Forth-Clyde Canal. The settlement of Highlanders on the moss of Kincardine will be discussed in chapter 6.8.

grain out of the husk or the use of querns (hand mills), seemed very strange to many foreign visitors and attracted their particular attention.

However, many travellers were not only curious to see the Highlanders' antiquated agricultural methods, but were also interested in teaching them new and more effective agricultural techniques, particularly when the economic situation of the Highlanders deteriorated dramatically in the second half of the eighteenth century. Many government and private organisations sent out members to criss-cross the Highlands and report on the state of the agriculture and economy in order to teach the Highlanders new techniques such as the enclosing of fields, the use of fertilisers and the rotation of crops. These measures, and the encouragement of textile production in the Highlands, were meant to provide the Highlanders with a source of income at a time when more and more ploughed land was taken over by more lucrative herds of cattle and particularly flocks of sheep. The resettlement of the Highlanders from the glens to the coast and the encouragement of the fisheries by the government must be seen against the same background.

The changes in Highland agriculture and economy in the seventeenth, and particularly in the eighteenth century, attracted the attention of many visitors to the area. Their accounts give ample evidence of the changes that took place when the Highlands lost their quasi-autonomous agricultural status in the course of the eighteenth century and were integrated into the British economy.² Travellers did not

² Whether the economic and political changes that rocked the Highlands in the eighteenth century were inevitable, is increasingly questioned regarding the form and pace of their implementation. The agricultural and economic changes faced by the Highlands were similar to the challenges faced by other regions in Europe with traditional and inefficient agricultural structures. T.M. Devine refers to Denmark, where the necessary commercial and social changes in agriculture were accompanied by legislation that protected the small landholders from falling into abject poverty by compensating them with leaseholds of four to six acres. This state intervention led to a modernisation of Danish agriculture without causing social upheaval. The main difference between the Danish and the Scottish methods was that in Denmark the small tenants were protected and compensated by the state and its laws, whereas the Highland tenants had no legal rights and no security of tenure. British legislation favoured the landowners and made it easy for them to get rid of their tenants. See T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* (London, 1999), pp. 179-181. [hereafter: Devine, *Scottish Nation*] Scottish travellers were well aware of the Danish approach. In 1785 the Scottish traveller William Thomson noted that Lord Breadalbane granted long leases to his tenants on the banks of Loch Awe. Thomson observed that this had very positive effects on the land and had led to major improvements. He compared the long leases granted by Lord Breadalbane to those granted on the crown estates in Denmark. Thomson particularly praised the legislation of the Danish government under Count Bernstorff, such as the granting of perpetual leases and a fair rise of rent in proportion to the increased value of their farm produce. He recommended the introduction of similar legislation in Scotland, as he thought that nothing could be more conducive to industry, population and national wealth. See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 87-89. Unfortunately, the Highland landowners (backed by the government)

only describe the overall changes, but they also commented on their impact on the individual tenant. The integration of the Highlands into the economy of the quickly industrialising United Kingdom created such a need for change that the individual tenants were often unable to cope with its impact. Rising rents and the introduction of large-scale sheep farming finally forced many Highlanders to decide between a life in abject poverty or emigration. The accounts of travellers to the Highlands cover the broad span from an intact and largely self-sufficient agricultural economy to the introduction of sheep and the depopulation of certain areas. Travellers visiting the Highlands in the later decades of the eighteenth century became witnesses to a developing economic crisis. Their proposals for a strengthening of the Highland economy and a halting of depopulation show the full extent of the crisis and explain why even the government's ambitious programmes to encourage industry and fishing failed to turn the tide.³

had decided on the opposite way and Thomson criticised the government in particular because of its unwillingness to use the law to protect tenants' holdings. See *ibid.*, pp. 125, 127-128. For the socio-economic changes in Denmark see also T. Kjærgaard, *The Danish Revolution, 1500-1800, An Ecohistorical Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1994). [hereafter: Kjærgaard, *Danish Revolution*] For a comparison of the changes in landownership see T.C. Smout, 'Landowners in Scotland, Ireland and Denmark in the Age of Improvement', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, ed. by O. Feldbæk et al., vol. xii, no. 2 (Stockholm, 1987), pp. 79-97. Smout also emphasises the legal protection of the tenants in Denmark. The 'Bauernschutz', i.e. the protection of farmers, was part of a strategy by the Danish government to strengthen its own position against the nobility. See *ibid.*, pp. 89-90, 94.

³ Again, it must be stressed that, with regard to the Highlanders, in mid-eighteenth-century terminology, 'industry' related more to regular 'work' and 'employment' than to the mass production of goods in huge factories. See chapter 4, note 69. In spite of emigration, it must be stressed that there was an overall rise in population figures in many areas of the Highlands until the early to mid-nineteenth century. From 1755 (Webster, 'Account of the Number of People in Scotland') until the 1790s (Sinclair, *Statistical Account*) the overall population of the Western Isles rose from 50,699 to 71,891. Until 1801 it increased to 77,098. This was a rise of 42 per cent for the period from 1755 to the 1790s, and a rise of 52 per cent for the period from 1755 to 1801. See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. xxxviii-xl. The population statistics for the individual parishes show that in more than nine out of ten parishes in the Western Isles the population figures rose between 1755 and 1801. In most of the Western Isles population figures reached their peak between 1821 and 1841. See W.H. Murray, *The Islands of Western Scotland* (London, 1973), pp. 308-309. [hereafter: Murray, *Islands of Western Scotland*] Devine, *Scottish Nation*, p. 187, estimates the increase of population from 1801 to 1841, along the western seaboard from north Argyll and in the Hebrides, at a staggering 53 per cent. Therefore, it would be wrong to write about a general depopulation of the Highlands in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, even for hard-hit areas such as Sutherland. Statistics clearly prove that in the majority of the parishes in Sutherland population figures rose or remained stable until the 1830s and 1840s. See A. Mackenzie, *The History Of The Highland Clearances* (Edinburgh, 1994), p. 528. This book was first published in Inverness in 1883. However, in certain parishes whole traditional Highland townships were evicted and either resettled to the coast or forced into emigration. The overall rise in population in the Highlands until the 1840s was mainly due to the widespread introduction of potatoes, smallpox vaccination and temporarily flourishing industries, such as kelp production in the Hebrides. It has to be doubted whether the old agrarian economy of the Highlands, which had been hovering for centuries between a low-level sufficiency and occasional shortage, could have sustained this sharp rise in population without substantial change. To tackle the growing pressure

This chapter will examine the changes from a traditional Highland economy in the seventeenth century up to its collapse in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Particular attention will be paid to government initiatives to encourage industry in the Highlands, to stop emigration and to prevent the region from becoming the poorhouse of the nation. The period under review is overshadowed by the dissolution of traditional Highland townships and the creation of crofting communities.⁴ In order to understand the social and economic impact of this convulsion in Highland life, it is first of all necessary to examine briefly the social structure and economy of the traditional Highland township.

6.1. The economy of the traditional Highland township (*baile*), the tacksman's function and their decline

For centuries life in the Highlands and Hebrides had been focused on traditional Highland townships (*bailtean*). For most of the year, the Highlanders lived in these clusters of huts on the fringes of the level and fertile stretches of land at the bottom of the glens. The location of the huts had to be chosen carefully on some rising, rocky spot at the foot of a hill. This secured them from flooding rivers in the glen and from burns cascading down the hills, and prevented the wasteful use of valuable arable land for building purposes.⁵ Therefore, the huts were usually built on the demarcation between infield and outfield, and were moved periodically as another measure to prevent the exhaustion of arable land. Edmund Burt described in the 1720s, not without irony, how these traditional Highland townships looked like from a distance:

A Highland town, as before mentioned, is composed of a few huts for dwellings, with barns and stables, and both the latter are of a more diminutive size than the former, all irregularly placed, some one way, some another, and, at any distance, look like so many heaps of dirt; these are built in glens and straths, which are the corn-countries, near rivers and rivulets, and also on the sides of lakes, where there is some arable land for the support of the inhabitants.⁶

on land by further subdivision or seasonal employment of large parts of the landless population in fishing and kelping, were not long-term solutions. This became obvious after the collapse of the kelp industry after the Napoleonic Wars.

⁴ Croft, a smallholding. Crofter, one who occupies a smallholding, formerly a subtenant. See *SND*, vol. iii, p. 250.

⁵ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 323. See also *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 49, 51.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 27. In contrast to Lowland or English villages, Highland townships were not nucleated villages but consisted of scattered huts, which were attached to the individual

In the Hebrides the people lived either in *bailtean* at the bottom of the glens or along the coastline. For most of the year the *baile* was at the centre of communal Highland life and economy, apart from a brief period in summer when the Highlanders, and particularly the women and children, moved with their cattle and sheep to their shielings and summer grazing grounds in the hills.

For the remainder of the year the Highlanders lived in *bailtean* and worked on their scattered strips of land close to their huts. Usually the tenants and subtenants had no, or only limited, right of tenure. Many had no written lease, and the issue of long-term leases was unusual until the late eighteenth century.⁷ Arable land, therefore, was usually reallocated every year, and the land that was not fit for agriculture was used for common grazing. On the common grazing every tenant and subtenant of the *baile* was allowed to graze a certain number of cattle, sheep and goats according to their social and economic position.⁸ The lack of written leases and right of tenure was not yet a disadvantage for the tenants as the chief and the

smallholdings. See also Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 176. On his first tour to the Highlands in 1769, Pennant commented on a Highland village near Braemar (Aberdeenshire): 'The houses of the common people in these parts are shocking to humanity, formed of loose stones, and covered with clods, which they call *devols*, or with heath, broom, or branches of fir: they look, at a distance, like so many black mole-hills.' Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 117. A drawing of a cottage on Islay (taken from Pennant's account of 1772) is reproduced in appendix no. 2. Outside the Highlands of Scotland the periodic moving of houses had already been given up in the Middle Ages. For example, on the island of Funen (Denmark) the periodic moving of houses came to an end between roughly 950 and 1100 AD. Increasing efficiency in agriculture made the regular moving of huts and houses unnecessary. See T. Riis, 'Das Städtewesen Dänemarks im 11. Jahrhundert', in J. Jarnut and P. Johanek (eds.), *Die Frühgeschichte Der Europäischen Stadt Im 11. Jahrhundert* (Cologne et al., 1998), p. 236.

⁷ In the later decades of the eighteenth century, the issue of written leases for up to nineteen years was considered the most appropriate way of establishing right of tenure in order to attract investment and soil improvement.

⁸ This is called 'souming', i.e. the process of determining the total number of livestock in terms of 'soums' that a common pasture can properly support in order to allocate a proportional share among the tenants. A 'soun' (or 'soume') was the unit of pasturage that could support a certain fixed number of livestock. The 'soums' varied regionally. See *SND*, vol. viii, p. 432. 'If the tenant is to hire his grazing in the hills, he takes it by *soumes*; - a *soume* is as much grass as will maintain four sheep; eight sheep are equal to a cow and a calf, or forty goats; but I do not remember how much is paid for every *soume*.' Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 57. These figures reflect the amount of land different animals need to feed upon. See also Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 279. Pennant noted that on the island of Rhum one soun was reckoned a milch cow or ten sheep. A horse was reckoned two soums. Every person was at liberty to make up his soun with what species he pleased. If a person kept an oversized flock on the common grazing, the other tenants were entitled to be compensated from the oversized herd. Souming was only applied to rough pasture in the hills. High-quality pasture, scattered among the arable spots, was individually held. See M. Gray, *The Highland Economy 1750-1850* (Edinburgh, 1957), p. 20. [hereafter: Gray, *Highland Economy*]

tacksmen had the moral obligation (*duthchas*) to provide every member of the clan with a sufficient stretch of land for his subsistence. However, it is obvious that the lack of tenure was not favourable to investment and improvement of the ground as the tenants could not expect to reap the benefits of their investments. Burt, for instance, commenting in the 1720s on the lack of enclosures in the Highlands, remarked that the tenants either were too poor to afford the construction of enclosures, or had to face higher rents and a subdivision of their farms when they invested in enclosures and improved the value of their land.⁹ On the other hand, the tenants often resisted any investment and improvement in the land that might alter their way of life or drive them off their ground. The Duke of Gordon's servant commented (in 1742) on the duke's lands between Invergarry and Lochaber:

The Plain is most improvable, & of an excellent soil, & wants only industrious Inhabitants to make it one of the best Cornfields in Scotland, but such is the force of Custom, if any Person would venture to improve, and alter their Method of living, he would be in danger to loose all, if not his Life in to the Bargain. The Duke of Gordon has a vast tract of Ground there, which if in the low country, would pay a very considerable Rent, and yet has not one half penny by it.¹⁰

The key figures in running the Highland economy were the tacksmen.¹¹ They were often younger sons of proprietors and held their 'tacks',¹² directly from them. Tacksmen often paid only nominal rents that were far below the economic value of the land. Although a tacksmen usually managed each township and the tacksmen's house was the focal point of management for the scattered township, his own holding was not necessarily confined to one *baile*. He belonged to the lesser clan gentry and

⁹ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 51. James Robertson raised similar concerns when he visited the Highland parts of Banffshire and Moray in 1771. He also blamed the lack of investment, the absence of enclosures and the backward state of local agriculture on short leases (which rarely exceeded nine years), the raising of rents at their expiry and the redistribution of commonly held ground. He commented on the disadvantages of this system: 'The only effect of improvement therefore according to the present leases, is, either to produce an increase of the rent, or to drive the Tenant away, & leave another to reap the reward of his labours.' D.M. Henderson and J.H. Dickson (eds.), *A Naturalist in the Highlands: James Robertson His Life and Travels in Scotland 1767-1771* (Edinburgh, 1994), p. 161. [hereafter: Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*] Most travellers proposed, therefore, the deduction from tenants' rents to cover their investments in improvements or a refund commensurate with their expenses at the expiry of their lease. See, for example, Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, pp. 170-171. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, enclosures were considered as yardsticks of improvement and progress in agriculture.

¹⁰ EUL, 'Duke of Gordon's Jaunt 1742', MS. Dc.5.68., [fos. 7r.-7v.].

¹¹ For a detailed study of the tacksmen's various functions within proprietary and non-proprietary clans see Macinnes, *Clanship*, pp. 14-23.

¹² A 'tack' was a farm or a piece of land held on lease. The line between a tacksmen and the tenant of a large farm was not always clear cut.

served also as officer to the chief until the disarmament of the clans in the aftermath of the 'Forty-Five.¹³ In contrast to the small tenants and subtenants, the tacksmen and large tenants had developed over the centuries a hereditary right to their farms, although this did not imply that they always possessed written leases. The tacksmen was unable to work all the ground of his farm and, therefore, sublet most of it to tenants and subtenants. The tacksmen was the link between the landowner and the common clansmen who worked the ground. Dr Johnson described the social and economic position of the tacksmen as follows:

Next in dignity to the Laird is the Tacksman; a large taker or lease-holder of land, of which he keeps part, as a domain, in his own hand, and lets part to under tenants. The Tacksman is necessarily a man capable of securing to the Laird the whole rent, and is commonly a collateral relation. These *tacks*, or subordinate possessions, were long considered as hereditary, and the occupant was distinguished by the name of the place at which he resided. He held a middle station, by which the highest and the lowest orders were connected. He paid rent and reverence to the Laird, and received them from the tenants.¹⁴

The social and economic position of the tacksmen as a link between the landowner and the people working on the land was closely scrutinised by foreign visitors whose comments varied widely. Some observers compared tacksmen to parasites, while others attributed to them a pivotal function in the Highland economy.¹⁵ To assess the

¹³ The tacksmen were a military officer caste. They were vital in organising the mobilisation of a clan by sending round the fiery cross and summoning the able-bodied men of their townships to the assembly place of the clan. The clans on the western seaboard and in the Hebrides had particularly militarised kin structures until the early seventeenth century. Here the lesser clan gentry were split between tacksmen and household men (*buannachan*). The *buannachan* were the warrior class of their clan and mainly protected the clan territory. However, they served also as mercenaries to native Irish chiefs, particularly in the north of Ireland, in their struggle against the introduction of English supremacy. The *buannachan* were a distinct class from the tacksmen who managed and worked the ground. Nonetheless, many younger sons of the clan elite and tacksmen, who had no prospect of succeeding to land or leases, were employed in this mercenary business. Thus downward social mobility from the clan elite was limited, and at the same time the martial ethos of clanship was strengthened. See Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War*, pp. 6-7. The defeat of Hugh O' Neil, Earl of Tyrone, in 1601, the secession of the MacDonells of Antrim and the Ulster plantations put an end to the involvement of the *buannachan* in Ireland.

¹⁴ Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 196-197. Johnson was well aware that the tacksmen's leases were no longer safe when he visited the Western Isles in 1773. See *ibid.*, pp. 197-198. The dissolution of clan ties, the auctioning of farms to the highest bidder and the large-scale introduction of sheep had forced many tacksmen out of business. Moreover, the tacksmen had lost their military function after the 'Forty-Five.

¹⁵ The majority of travellers, particularly in the later decades of the eighteenth century, regarded tacksmen as unnecessary land traffickers who made their living from exploiting their subtenants. See, for example, La Rochefoucauld's comment in Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 173. James Bailey observed (in 1787) that the landowners and tacksmen on Mull withheld the revenues from kelp, thus suppressing their tenants. He complained: 'These [the revenues from kelp] although they may appear great advantages in favour of these islanders, are not so duly apportioned amongst the great bulk of them as to be of any very general utility. They are absorbed, principally, by the great land-holders, or their inferior agents, the tacksmen; those worse than locusts in these famished countries.' NLS,

tacksman's role, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the tacksman's economic function before 1745 and its subsequent decline.¹⁶

Dr Johnson was one of the few foreign travellers who regarded the tacksmen as pivotal to the running of the Highland estates, even after the 'Forty-Five. The removal of tenants and the banishment of their tacksmen was, he thought, no solution to the economic crisis of the Highlands. Instead, he wanted to revive the function of the tacksmen in order to revive the Highland economy. He warned of the dangers of losing the tacksmen and their expertise, particularly in times of absentee landlordism:

As the mind must govern the hands, so in every society the man of intelligence must direct the man of labour. If the Tacksmen be taken away, the Hebrides must in their present state be given up to grossness and ignorance; the tenant, for want of instruction, will be unskilful, and for want of admonition will be negligent. The Laird in these wide estates, which often consist of islands remote from one another, cannot extend his personal influence to all his tenants; and the steward having no dignity annexed to his character, can have little authority among men taught to pay reverence only to birth, and who regard the Tacksman as their hereditary superior; nor can the steward have equal zeal for the

Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fo. 364. John Lanne Buchanan made similar allegations against the tacksmen in the Outer Hebrides. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 38-39, 159-161. Charles Dibdin blamed the tacksmen for mass emigration because of their power to 'harrass and rack-rent' the tenants. C. Dibdin, *Observations On A Tour Through Almost The Whole Of England, And A Considerable Part Of Scotland*, vol. ii (London, [1802]), p. 221. [hereafter: Dibdin, *Tour*] Dibdin made these comments after a tour of Scotland in 1800. However, by then the tacksmen had lost their initial key function in Highland economy, and many of them had emigrated. Despite their often severe criticism of tacksmen in general, most travellers were dependent on the hospitality of this class of people. For travellers in the Hebrides, the local tacksman or minister was usually the first contact.

¹⁶ See also E. Cregeen, 'The Tacksmen and their Successors', *Scottish Studies*, vol. xiii (Edinburgh, 1969), pp. 93-144. [hereafter: Cregeen, 'Tacksmen'] According to Macinnes, competitive bidding for estates can be traced back in Kintyre to the outset of the eighteenth century. See Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. 222. After 1737 it became the standard procedure on the Duke of Argyll's lands as part of the attempt to reorganise his estates and to cut out the tacksmen. In 1737 Duncan Forbes of Culloden travelled on behalf of the 2nd Duke of Argyll to Morvern, Mull, Tiree and Coll to reorganise the duke's estates in these areas. These were mainly lands the Campbells had taken over from Maclean of Duart. The Duke of Argyll wanted to give the land directly to the tenants and wanted to grant them leases for nineteen years, thereby eliminating the tacksmen. The Dukes of Argyll were the first major landowners in the Highlands to reorganise and 'improve' their estates to raise higher rents. Due to their close alliance with the Hanoverians, they no longer depended on a huge armed following in which the tacksmen served as officers. For Forbes of Culloden's reorganisation of the Argyll estates and the tacksmen's attempts to preserve their privileged position, see his report to John, 2nd Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, 24 September 1737, in Parliamentary Papers, 1884, XXXIII-XXXVI: *Report Of Her Majesty's Commissioners Of Inquiry Into The Condition Of The Crofters And Cottars In The Highlands And Islands Of Scotland*, pp. 387-394. [hereafter: PP, 1884, XXXIII-XXXVI: *Crofters Commission Report*] Fifty years after Forbes of Culloden's suggestion of leasing land directly to the tenants, a Director of the British Fisheries Society noted about the duke's estate on Mull: 'The duke of Argyll has forbidden subtenants. The other proprietors have not. It is the condition of the subtenants that is least to be envied in the Highlands. They are bound to cut, carry, and dry the tacksmen's peat. This, and their own, engrosses their time and labour from the middle of May until the middle of July, the most precious season for fallowing their land and fetching manures.' Piscator (pseudonym), 'Account Of A Voyage To The Hebrides, By A Committee Of The British Fishery Society, In The Year 1787', in J. Anderson (ed.), *The Bee, Or Literary Weekly Intelligencer*, vol. viii (Edinburgh, 1792), p. 175. [hereafter: Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage'] The other proprietors on Mull were Mr Maclean of Lochbuie, Mr MacLean of Coll and Mr Maclean of Torloisk.

prosperity of an estate profitable only to the Laird, with the Tacksman, who has the Laird's income involved in his own.¹⁷

Johnson clearly made the point that a tacksman and his subtenants, all from the same clan, were far more effective than importing foreign stewards or issuing leases to foreigners.¹⁸ However, the idea that the farmers' negligence could be easily avoided if they were given security of tenure and long leases was not considered by Johnson. The best remedy against negligence and ignorance would surely have seen the tenant enjoy the fruits of his own labour.

Interestingly, Johnson also cited a particular mode of subtenure on the island of Coll that underlined the local tacksmen's strong position and control of their tenants. A tacksman allowed some of his inferior neighbours to cultivate some of his ground on the condition that they performed all the work and contributed a third of the seed. The tenants were allowed to keep a certain number of cows, sheep and goats, and to reap one third of the harvest. Thus the tenants had to till the tacksman's land in exchange for the right to keep the produce of their own seed and the allowance to graze a few animals.¹⁹

Other travellers provided further examples of the way in which the tacksmen kept a firm grip on their tenants. James Anderson noted, in his account of the Hebrides in 1784, that many tacksmen had a quasi-monopoly on the supply of provisions to their tenants. They imported meal from the Lowlands for about 16 shillings per boll and sold it to their tenants at prices from 24 to 28 shillings. In general, Anderson reckoned, their margin of profit was at least 50 per cent, but on grain and other articles it was even higher. Nonetheless, he did not consider them profiteers. Taking into account their expenses for transport, 'languid' sales, long credits, precarious payments and low turnover, he argued that these prices were not

¹⁷ Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 201-202.

¹⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 217. Johnson argued that foreign tenants would never accept their landowner as a 'chief'. Instead, they would regard him as a mere trafficker in land. Until the mid-eighteenth century the tacks stayed in the hands of local clan members, and it was hard for outsiders to rent tacks. On the Clanranald estate, in 1755, ten out of thirteen tacksmen were of the name of Macdonald; on the Lochiel estate eleven out of thirteen tacksmen were Camerons; on the Mackinnon estate nine out of fourteen tacksmen were Mackinnons; on the Lovat estate eleven out of twelve tacksmen were of the name of Fraser. In Lewis it seems to have been easier to outsiders to rent a tack. In 1718 out of 64 holders of large tacks, only 22 were of the name of Mackenzie, four of MacIennan and three of Matheson, the rest were 'outsiders'. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 13.

¹⁹ See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 298.

excessive.²⁰ However, he accused the landowners and tacksmen in certain parts of the mainland and the Hebrides of forcing their tenants to maximise their income by additional small-scale fishing. According to Anderson, these landowners supplied their tenants with boats, equipment and meal, but forced them to sell their entire catch exclusively to them. The proprietors paid their tenants ridiculously low prices for their catch, creamed off the profits and kept their tenants in total dependence.²¹

John Knox also reported that the tacksmen walked a narrow line between supplying their subtenants with vital equipment and exploiting them. He wrote that it was common practice in the Hebrides that

A tacksman or farmer, subjects his farm, or part of it, at very little more than he pays himself, to several sub-tenants, on condition of their fishing for cod, ling, &c. in his boats; the fish to be delivered to him at certain prices, agreeable to the size, and also herrings at the current rates in the season.²²

The tacksman employed a servant in each one of his boats who was responsible for checking that he (the tacksman) received his two-sevenths share of every catch. The remainder belonged to the crew, who, at the end of the season, were thus enabled to settle their account for lines, hooks, hemp, meal and the other necessities of life that had been advanced by the tacksman. The processing of the catch was done by the tacksman. This system enabled the subtenants to participate in the fisheries, but it also kept them totally dependent on their tacksman. This dependence and monopoly no longer existed in those places where the farmers took their leases directly from the proprietors and where there were several merchants to whom the farmers and fishermen could sell their catch. In Stornoway, for example, the fishermen were direct tenants of the proprietors, and they procured boats from the local merchants and traders. There were, therefore, no tacksmen controlling the business here, and the farmers and fishermen paid the merchants and traders one seventh of their catch for the use of their boats and the advance of salt, hooks and lines. The fishermen processed their own catch and sold it direct to local merchants. This system not only gave the farmers and fishermen a bigger share of their catch, it also enabled them to

²⁰ Anderson, *Account*, p. 166. See also *ibid.*, pp. 164-167.

²¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 21-24. Anderson made it clear, however, that this practice was restricted to the fisheries for foreign export and to the north-west coast and the islands north of Barra.

²² Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 339.

choose between several merchants from whom to hire boats and sell their catch.²³ These examples illustrate the strong dependence of the tenants on their tacksmen in those areas where the latter still functioned. Anderson and Knox were well aware that some tacksmen and factors might feel tempted to exploit their position.

William Thomson (in 1785) also made a clear distinction between the traditional tacksmen and those incomers who had replaced them. He remarked that the tacksmen had nearly vanished and that nowadays the chiefs frequently let their land, in large lots, to

renters; who sub-let it, again, in small parcels from year to year, to the lower class of the people, and squeeze every thing out of them that they can possibly get, leaving them only a bare subsistence.²⁴

Before the 'Forty-Five, the tacksmen often had no written leases and paid only a nominal rent to their chiefs on the understanding that it was more important to supply them with able soldiers than cash. After the 'Forty-Five, the tacksmen lost their

²³ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 339. Referring to Stornoway, either Knox contradicted himself at a later date, or this liberalisation must have been a fairly recent achievement. In his tour of 1786, Knox accused the Earl of Seaforth's factor on Lewis of having exploited his monopoly in the cattle trade and the fisheries. The small tenants and part-time fishermen had to sell their cattle and their entire catch exclusively to the factor, who paid the fishermen £13 per ton for ling and sold it on the spot for £18. Thus the current factor's father was said to have amassed a fortune of £20,000 from this monopoly. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 191-193. It is not clear from this passage whether this exploitation referred to the past and had been abandoned by the time of Knox's visit in 1786, or whether it was still in practice. If so, it clearly contradicted Knox's account of the fishermen at Stornoway given in his *View*, vol. i, p. 339. Contradictions in Knox's argument were not unusual. See chapter 7.1.2.3. However, there is strong contemporary evidence for the suppression of the small farmers on Lewis. Captain John Barlow of the Buffs, who was stationed on the Outer Hebrides from 1753 to 1754, confirmed the exploitation of the Lewis subtenants by Mr Colin Mackenzie, factor to Lord Fortrose. According to Barlow, the factor was 'in all respects a bad man' who had 'neither Humanity nor Common Honesty'. Barlow reported that the factor had imposed a fine of thirteen shillings and four pence upon several poor people 'for selling their Herrings to the best advantage, and not disposing of them to his Son in Law at his own price'. He had also issued an order 'prohibiting any Cattle to be sold but to his Drover under the Penalty of two pounds Scotch and the Cattle to be returned'. The factor was even suspected of murder. Barlow gathered his information from the local minister because the common people were too afraid to provide information about the factor. NLS, 'Military Reports from the Highlands, 1753-4', MS. 10691, fos. 12v.-13r. In the 1780s and 1790s, the majority of visitors to the Western Isles reported that the tacksmen exploited their subtenants with regard to the fisheries. John Lanne Buchanan made allegations similar to those of Anderson and Knox against landowners, and particularly tacksmen, in the Outer Hebrides in respect of fishing and kelping. He claimed that many kelp workers slipped even deeper into debt during the summer kelping season. They ran out of provisions and had to buy meal etc. from their tacksmen on credit. The credit was due to be repaid with the kelp they made, but when they did not produce enough, the deficiency was added to their debts. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 159-161.

²⁴ Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 124-125. However, Thomson also acknowledged that some landowners began to change their minds and let their land in small lots directly to the people who worked the ground. He described the social and economic position of the former tacksmen as 'the middling rank in society, and consequently the strength and heart of the country'. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

function as a military officers caste, and in the second half of the eighteenth century their lands were taken over by foreign incomers who were able to pay higher rents. These incomers had to recoup their money, and they either extorted it from the subtenants or introduced sheep on land that had formerly been used for agriculture. Like the subtenants, the tacksmen became victims of the economic reorganisation of the Highland estates. Their services were no longer required, and Thomson noted that the tacksmen and their subtenants emigrated in large numbers from the northern and western Highlands.²⁵

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, it was also considered a good policy to reduce the holdings of the tacksmen in favour of the tenants. Indeed, farms were reduced to such an extent that a tenant was able to manage all the land he occupied with the help of his children and the servants of his family, without subletting ground.²⁶ The tenant was granted a written lease directly from the landowner, eclipsing the tacksmen, and at the same time could hope to acquire sufficient stock for one of these reduced farms. Robert Heron predicted (in 1794) that this policy, including the issue of written leases, would encourage industry and greatly improve the living conditions of the Hebrideans.²⁷ However, many tacksmen were not going to give up their privileged position without opposition. John Lanne Buchanan claimed that the tacksmen on Harris opposed the intentions of Alexander

²⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 125, 127.

²⁶ This policy was particularly implemented on the Annexed Estates in order to break subletting, personal services and personal loyalties. The Annexing Act of 1752 prohibited rents of more than £20, multiple holdings and subletting. However, releasing the subtenants from their tacksmen did not always have the envisaged effect. Subtenants lost the use of utensils that had formerly been provided for them by the more capitalised tacksmen. On the annexed Coigach estate on the west coast of Ross and Cromarty, the tenants were freed from their principal tacksmen, but things quickly deteriorated. Improvements became neglected as the new small tenants disregarded the rules of herding and stopped maintaining enclosures. See A.M. Smith, *Jacobite Estates of the Forty-Five* (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 66-67. [hereafter: Smith, *Jacobite Estates*] Pennant visited the Coigach estate in 1772 and noted that the tenants had been granted long leases by the Commissioners. This kept the tenants contented, and Pennant noticed no signs of emigration from the estate. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 314.

²⁷ See R. Heron, *General View Of The Natural Circumstances Of Those Isles, Adjacent To The North-West Coast Of Scotland ...* (Edinburgh, 1794), pp. 74-75. [hereafter: Heron, *General View*] Heron wrote that Lord MacDonald, the proprietor of North Uist, was a particular advocate of reducing the holdings of the tacksmen in favour of the tenants. See *ibid.*, pp. 23-24. John Lanne Buchanan also praised Lord MacDonald's efforts to raise the living conditions of his tenants and reduce the immoderate farms of his tacksmen. According to Buchanan, Lord MacDonald's tenants lived in a state of affluence in comparison to the subtenants of his tacksmen. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 29-30. The survey of North Uist (in 1793) for the *Statistical Account* did not mention any particular efforts by Lord MacDonald to reduce the holdings of his tacksmen. Nor did it mention any efforts by Lord MacDonald to reduce the rents that the tacksmen charged their subtenants.

MacLeod, the new owner of the island, to improve the living conditions of the common people and to encourage industry and manufacture among them.²⁸ To achieve these aims Captain MacLeod had initiated an ambitious programme of improving the island's infrastructure and had founded various manufactures. Most of his contemporaries were full of praise for his improvements. A closer examination of his improvements makes it difficult to understand why the tacksmen should have had any interest in undermining his investments. According to an unidentified Director of the British Fisheries Society, who visited Harris in 1787, Captain MacLeod had built at Portmore (i.e. Rodel) a new pier of 300 feet long and 22 feet wide. A second pier to enclose the harbour was currently under construction. Next to the harbour he had built a large storehouse and an inn, and he had also begun to build new houses for the local people. A new road had been constructed from the harbour to the town and continuing on to the west side of Harris. A manufactory and school for teaching children the art of spinning had also been built, spinning wheels had been provided and the arrival of an instructor was daily expected. A schoolmaster instructed the children in the English language, reading and writing. A small bark had been built to import shell-sand from a neighbouring island for improving the soil. Captain MacLeod had also plans to construct a mill for grinding corn and fulling cloth. Moreover, he had taught the local people to catch cod, ling and turbot and had provided them with boats and fishing tackle.²⁹ Captain MacLeod's beneficent improvements were not limited to the locals at Rodel. The people of St Kilda were

²⁸ Captain Alexander MacLeod had bought the island for £15,000 from his chief, Colonel MacLeod of MacLeod, in 1778 with money from his career in the East India Company. His investments in the fisheries at Rodel were not continued after his death in 1790. His son Alexander Hume MacLeod, the new proprietor of Harris, preferred to retain a lucrative civil post in India. See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 71-72. See also W.C. Mackenzie, *History Of The Outer Hebrides* (Paisley, 1903), pp. 485-486. [hereafter: Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*]

²⁹ See Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. viii (1792), pp. 280-283. In 1784 Captain MacLeod had asked the Board for the Annexed Estates for financial assistance towards roads and a pier in Harris. However, the Board could not help because MacLeod's plea came too late and the Board's activities were wound up with the restoration of the Annexed Estates in that year. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 209. Another participant in the 1787 expedition of the Directors of the British Fisheries Society noted that the encouragement of the fisheries had not yet been fully accepted by the local population. Lachlan Mactavish reported that Captain MacLeod had provided his tenants at Rodel with boats, lines and hooks gratis, but 'yet still they go but unwillingly to work; and notwithstanding, that he gives them the highest price for their fish, over and above the encouragements already mentioned, few or none of them can be got to attend to the business but when he agrees to give them stated wages'. NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fo. 104.

also to profit from his benevolence. The unidentified Director of the British Fisheries Society reported that

when the present lease of St Kilda expires, for it makes part of the lease of a tacksman, he means to exact no other rent from the inhabitants but what they can easily afford to pay in feathers, and to give them perfect freedom.³⁰

According to John Lanne Buchanan, Captain MacLeod also encouraged shoemakers, weavers, turners, wrights and masons to settle down at Rodel. Captain MacLeod's contemporaries were full of praise for his improvements, and the Director of the British Fisheries Society even compared him to 'a second czar Peter'.³¹ Pierre N. Chantreau visited Rodel on Harris in 1789. He confirmed the huge progress made in agriculture and manufacture by Captain MacLeod and remarked about his standing among the people: 'Aussi les insulaires, parmi lesquels il vit, le regardent-ils comme une divinité, descendue sur la terre, pour améliorer leur sort.'³²

However, according to Buchanan, the tacksmen were aware that assisting MacLeod in his plans to emancipate the tenantry would reduce their influence and in the end 'utterly overthrow their established system of passive obedience among the inferior class of men'.³³ Therefore, they paid him only lip service and reluctantly supported him on rare occasions. In the end, MacLeod gave up his plans, and the tacksmen on Harris continued to suppress their subtenants.³⁴

³⁰ Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. viii (1792), p. 283.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 280.

³² Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 82. For Chantreau's account of Captain MacLeod's improvements see *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 81-82.

³³ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 32. It must be remembered that Buchanan was very biased against the tacksmen on Harris and particular the tacksman in Luskentyre.

³⁴ Neither the Director of the British Fisheries Society nor Chantreau reported that Captain MacLeod became disillusioned in his later years. Nor did they refer to particular resistance to his plans by the local tacksmen. The tacksmen on Harris kept their tacks after the death of Captain Alexander MacLeod in 1790. Most of them had leases for 38 years (granted by MacLeod of MacLeod) of which eighteen years were still to run. Those tacksmen, whose leases were only for nineteen years and had expired in 1792, were continued in their possessions by Alexander Hume MacLeod, then at his post in India. He did not expel them and raised their rents only moderately. It seems as if Alexander Hume MacLeod was neither particularly interested in improving the living conditions of the subtenants on Harris, nor in continuing his father's efforts to reduce the holdings of the tacksmen. Instead, he left the island to their administration while he was in India. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 72. On the other hand, the 'terror regime' of the tacksmen does not seem to have been as bad as John Lanne Buchanan had claimed. The Revd John MacLeod, minister of Harris, did not confirm Buchanan's allegations against the tacksmen of Harris. He reported (in 1792) that the tacksmen were 'generally humane and beneficent' to their subtenants and were 'accordingly loved and honoured' by them. *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 74. However, as patronage was still very much a live issue, ministers had to be careful not to offend local landowners. John Lanne Buchanan repeatedly accused the clergy of the Outer Hebrides, and particular that of Harris, of neglecting their duties to the common people and collaborating with the

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, landowners increasingly eclipsed the tacksman's role as middleman between them and their small tenants. Moreover, they increasingly took profitable rising businesses such as kelp-making away from the tacksmen and demanded the profits for themselves.³⁵ However, in contrast to the subtenants and cottars, the tacksmen often had the financial resources to buy land and livestock in North America and to restart their business. In 1773 Johnson had clearly realised that, in particular, the prosperous tenants had sold their livestock, taken the money and emigrated to America. He feared 'that none will stay but those who are too poor to remove themselves, and too useless to be removed at the cost of others'.³⁶ These observations were confirmed by William Gilpin. He travelled through the Highlands in 1776 along the route of the small Highland tour and observed the departure of a group of tenants who were emigrating from the Earl of Breadalbane's estates to America. News of successful emigrants had spread through the country, and at Killin about 30 families, in all more than 300 people, had gathered to march to Greenock where a ship for North America was waiting for them. Gilpin's comments about the emigrants clearly illustrate that it was the rich tenants who left the country first:

Many of them were possessed of two or three hundred pounds, and few of less than thirty or forty; which at least shewed, they had not starved upon their farms. They were a jocund crew; and set out, not like people flying from the face of poverty; but like men, who were about to carry their health, their strength, and little property, to a better market.³⁷

John Lanne Buchanan also confirmed Johnson's and Gilpin's observations. He noted in the 1780s that it was the substantial farmers who were turned out of Clanranald's estates on the mainland, Canna and South Uist. These farmers were not yet

local landowners in suppressing and exploiting them. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 39, 73-77, 237-240. The truth about the living conditions of the subtenants on Harris is probably somewhere between the two accounts.

³⁵ For details of this development see chapter 7.2.

³⁶ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 307. Boswell confirmed that the tacksmen and big tenants were the first to emigrate. See Boswell, *Tour*, p. 245.

³⁷ W. Gilpin, *Observations, Relative Chiefly To Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, On several Parts of Great Britain; Particularly The High-Lands of Scotland* (London, 1789), vol. i, pp. 170-171. These observations also illustrate that, with regard to emigration, the pull-factor was sometimes stronger than the push-factor. In 1775 Matthew Culley reported from Easter Ross that two years ago the whole inhabitants of one glen had emigrated to America 'not because the farms they occupied were rented at too high a value, but because they were by some means given to understand that America was a much better country to live in, which by the way, is a very different account of the matter from what we have heretofore been told'. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 123.

impoverished, and they could afford the passage for their families to America. They would have no truck with the tacksmen, preferring to emigrate before their children or they themselves would be reduced to poverty. Buchanan commented on the emigration of the substantial tenants:

There is a notion, not only among the common people, but also among those whose property and rank give them some influence in the government, that it is only the poorest of the people that emigrate; on which account, they think, that emigrations are the less to be regretted. They are under a great mistake. It is only people of some property, and that not inconsiderable, who can afford to transport themselves and their families to distant countries.³⁸

Nonetheless, the whole community often followed their tacksmen into emigration, and many tacksmen were happy to accept their former subtenants again as farmers on the plains of North America.

Before the making of the crofting community, Highland agriculture was dominated by joint farms that were operated in the 'runrig' system. A number of tenants shared a large farm, and the arable land belonging to it was subdivided in irregular stretches among them. To make sure that none of the joint tenants (usually four to eight) was disadvantaged, the stretches were further subdivided into individual strips, which were also regularly reallocated to the joint tenants.³⁹

The tacksmen and large tenants were the only exceptions to joint tenancy as they held their farms individually. However, they were unable to work all their ground and, therefore, sublet most of it.⁴⁰ The tacksmen were responsible for the allotment of land belonging to joint-tenant farms. Burt described the way in which tacksmen, here called 'upper-tenants', administered joint-tenant farms:

The gentlemen, who are near relations of the chief, hold pretty large farms, if the estate will allow it, - perhaps twenty or thirty pounds a-year, and they again, generally, parcel them out to under-tenants in small portions: hence it comes, that, by such a division of an old farm (part of an upper-tenant's holding), suppose among eight persons, each of

³⁸ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 29. Due to his bias Buchanan concealed the fact that many tacksmen were also victims of the economic changes. Those who refused to pay rocketing rents or to press for more money from their subtenants were also forced from their tacks.

³⁹ To foreign travellers, the frequent reallocation of land seemed rather curious, and, therefore, they tended to emphasise the periodic allotment of land although this was not an essential feature of runrig. In Perthshire and parts of Inverness-shire this practice had been abandoned by the late eighteenth century, and fixed runrig had become the characteristic feature. In the western Highlands and the Hebrides periodic runrig was still common until joint farms were dissolved and transformed into small individual crofts. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 20. See also Hunter, *Crofting Community*, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁰ Gray reckoned that only a small fraction of land was directly occupied by tacksmen or large tenants. He calculated that the peasants, i.e. small tenants, subtenants, cottars and labourers, held at least 80 per cent of the land and stock. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 28.

them pays an eighth part of every thing, even to the fraction of a capon, which cannot in the nature of it be paid in kind, but the value of it is cast in with the rest of the rent, and, notwithstanding the above-mentioned customs are placed in an upper-tenant's rental, yet they properly belong to the chief, for the maintenance of the family in provisions.⁴¹

Burt emphasised that the tacksmen were responsible for securing and collecting the clan chief's revenue from his lands. Every subtenant had to pay his share of the rent. The rents were mainly paid in kind, i.e. from the produce of a farm such as barley, oatmeal, sheep, lambs, poultry and butter. Burt emphasised that money was still scarce in the Highlands and seldom used for paying rents.⁴²

Apart from agriculture, the tacksmen were also responsible for organising the landowner's other revenues from his lands, such as forestry, fishing, quarrying or kelping. The droving of cattle to the higher grazing grounds in the summer and to the fairs in the Lowlands in the autumn belonged also to the tacksmen's organisational responsibilities, as did the recruitment of an additional, seasonal workforce from cottars or labourers for sowing and harvesting.

Therefore, in the traditional Highland economy tacksmen were inextricably linked with the management of the *bailean*, and particularly the regular re-allotment of land to the tenants and the mobilisation of the workforce of the *baile*. In 1772 Thomas Pennant described the way in which joint-tenant farms were operated on the Isle of Arran, although he acknowledged that this method was very much on the decline. He noted that up to eighteen tenants shared a farm and each of them had a ridge of arable land that he was reallocated by lot every year. The tenants joined in

⁴¹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 52.

⁴² See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 52. Devine reckons that, because of the growing debt crises of many Highland chiefs in the seventeenth century, rents in kind or victuals were gradually converted to a cash value. This implies that food rents, which were formerly consumed internally, were increasingly marketed. On the MacLeod estates on Harris and Skye, rents were mainly paid in kind until the 1640s. By the 1680s money rents made up half of the total value and by the 1740s more than three quarters. See Devine, *Clanship To Crofters' War*, p. 15. Burt gave a slightly different impression, but did not refer to individual estates. Nonetheless, he included an extract from a rent roll that listed the tenants' rents in kind and their monetary value. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 52-58. However, the growing commercialisation of the Highlands in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries makes it very plausible that rents were increasingly paid in money instead of victuals. Black cattle, which were easy to sell, became the main source of the Highlanders' income and the chiefs' revenues. Pennant noted (in 1769) that the rents around Braemar (Aberdeenshire) were generally paid in money, whereas the rents in Easter Ross were paid in kind. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 117, 166. Johnson noticed (in 1773) that the population of the tiny island of Muck paid their rents by exporting corn, and that the tenants on the island of Coll used to pay their rents in kind (cattle and corn) until the mid-1760s. See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 158, 298. It is difficult to establish any general pattern for the replacement of victual rents in certain areas by cash rents. A lot seems to have depended on the local landlords, particularly in remote areas.

ploughing, every tenant kept one or two horses, and the pasture and moorland belonging to the farm was used for common grazing. Pennant observed that the lack of enclosures caused the tenants great problems in preserving their corn from their stock.⁴³

The dissolution of the traditional Highland townships in the second half of the eighteenth century also caused the end of joint-tenant farms, runrig farming and the need for tacksmen. Multiple-tenant farms in the glens and in the interior of the islands were now let to large individual tenants who often stocked them with sheep to recoup higher rents. Multiple tenants were forced from their land and were resettled on small 'crofts' along the coast. These crofts were often on less fertile land and too small to guarantee a living, forcing the crofters to engage in small-scale fishing and kelping.⁴⁴ Crofting communities, therefore, had no need of tacksmen, and their demise went hand in hand with the socio-economic change in the Highlands. This process was well documented by visitors to the Highlands, and their accounts cover the period from the traditional economy of the *baile* to the emergence of crofting communities.

The economy of the *baile* was mainly centred on agriculture and livestock breeding. In the mainland Highlands it was also supported by fishing in the local lochs and rivers; on the seaboard and in the Hebrides the Highlanders supported their living by small-scale coastal fisheries.

⁴³ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 176-177. On Islay cattle also destroyed the tenants' corn for want of enclosures. See *ibid.*, part i, p. 228. See also Burt's remarks on the want of enclosures in the Highlands. On many of the islands, and particularly the smaller and more remote ones such as Canna or Rhum, runrig farms were still the dominant form of agriculture in the 1770s. See *ibid.*, part i, p. 278. On Iona, for example, the conversion of joint farms to individual crofts must have taken place around 1800. Thomas Garnett visited the island in 1798, and he reported that the arable ground was still worked by runrig. Sarah Murray visited Iona in 1800, and she noted that the island consisted of two equal farms, which were subdivided into about 30 small farms. See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 271. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 224. George Douglas and John Leyden also visited Iona in 1800, but neither of them commented on the change in agriculture from runrig to crofting on the island. From this time, those who were allocated crofts moved out of the central village and built houses on their own land. After more and more people had moved out, the village was relocated along one main street on the east coast facing St Ronan's Bay. See also MacArthur, *Iona*, pp. 21-22. See also RCAHM, *Argyll*, vol. iv (Iona), p. 9.

⁴⁴ The unsustainable size of the crofts was deliberately chosen by the landowners in order to make their tenants work in the kelp industry. Although kelp production was very labour-intensive, it yielded great profits to the landowners, particularly in the early nineteenth century. The tenants who collected and burnt seaweed did not participate in the huge profits made by the landowners. See chapter 7.2.2.

6.2. Highland agriculture in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Agriculture and livestock breeding had been for centuries the basis of the Highland economy. Due to the physical nature of the Highland landscape, only a tiny amount of the soil could be used for crop production, whereas the vast remainder of the country was suitable only for cattle, sheep or goat breeding. Until the 1750s, the Highlands south of Glen Mor were characterised by a mixture of agriculture and pastoralism, whereas north of Glen Mor pastoralism was clearly dominant.⁴⁵ The few fertile stretches of land in the glens could not even bear enough crops to feed the tiny population, leaving the Highlanders and Hebrideans heavily dependant on the additional income from cattle breeding to balance rent payments and to buy additional meal in the Lowlands for winter provision.⁴⁶

One of the earliest and most detailed sources on the state of agriculture and farming in the Western Isles in the outgoing seventeenth century is Martin Martin's *Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1703). As a member of the lesser clan gentry who were in charge of land-management, Martin was quite familiar with the different agricultural techniques and their advantages and weaknesses.⁴⁷ His detailed descriptions are a fascinating insight into the traditional agriculture of the Western Isles, the instruments and methods used and the diet of common Hebrideans. His account was particularly detailed for the Isle of Lewis,⁴⁸ the largest island of the Outer Hebrides (or Long Island), and for the Isle of Skye, his

⁴⁵ In the second half of the eighteenth century, pastoralism and particularly sheep rapidly spread into the central and western mainland Highlands. By 1802 sheep had spread all over the hills of Perthshire, Argyll and the mainland west coast as far north as Loch Broom. Sheep also dominated on Mull and were advancing in Skye. See Devine, *Scottish Nation*, p. 174. In 1801 sheep were also advancing in the smaller islands. Sarah Murray reported that the proprietor of Rhum, Colonel MacLean of Coll, ordered in 1801 that one of the island's six farms should be stocked with sheep. Although the respective tenant stocked his farm with only half the number of sheep it could support, their wool was sold for £50 while the rent for the whole farm was only £60. These figures show the profits that could be made from sheep farms and explain why many landowners felt tempted to let their land to sheep farmers. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 398-399.

⁴⁶ The Highlanders' other main source of additional income resulted from their participation in the harvest in the Lowlands. Crops in the Highlands usually took longer to ripen, which enabled the Highlanders to participate in the Lowland harvest without having to neglect their own crops.

⁴⁷ Martin was sometimes also referred to as 'factor to the Laird of MacLeod'. See, for example, *DNB*. This is disputed by many modern authors, but if Martin was at one time factor to the MacLeods, then he must have been indeed very familiar with the agriculture of the Hebrides.

⁴⁸ Martin's principal informant on Lewis was most likely John Morison, tacksman of South Bragar (c. 1630-1708). Martin characterised him as 'a Person of unquestionable Sincerity and Reputation'. Martin, *Description*, p. 315. See also *ibid.*, p. 28.

native island and the largest island of the Inner Hebrides. These islands can be regarded as representative of the agriculture and economy of the Hebrides. Moreover, many of the methods described were also applied on the western seaboard of the mainland Highlands and were still in use many decades after Martin had compiled his account. Starting with Martin, an analysis of travellers' observations will show the changes in Highland agriculture from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century.

6.2.1. Crop production, tools and manure

Cereal production in the Highlands and Islands varied greatly in technique from that used in the Lowlands, due mainly to the different physical nature of the Highlands. Although to many foreign visitors the tools and methods used for tilling ground, manuring, harvesting, threshing and grinding corn seemed very backward, these techniques reflected the particular demands of agriculture in the difficult conditions of the Highlands and Islands. In the Highlands there were very few stretches of level ground in the glens or along the coast, and the layer of fertile soil was often very thin. In the Western Isles crops could only be grown on the level and fertile strips along the coasts. Moreover, the soil was often littered with rocks and stones.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, the Highlanders carefully cultivated these small fertile strips for growing oats, bear, barley and rye.⁵⁰ In contrast to wheat, which was mainly grown on the fertile plains of the Lowlands, these cereal crops were less demanding and, therefore, better adapted to the less fertile soil and the harsher climate of the Highlands. The instruments and techniques used were particularly adapted to the difficult type of soil. Martin reported that the majority of the cultivated soil in the Western Isles was dug with spades instead of using ploughs. Cultivating land by spade required a larger labour force and more time, but it yielded higher returns than

⁴⁹ In the Lowlands fields had been cleared from rocks and stones in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The stones had often been used to enclose the fields and to protect them from wind.

⁵⁰ 'Bear' is a kind of barley, hardier than the ordinary kind, but of inferior quality. Ordinary barley has two rows of grain on the head, bear four. It is also called 'big', 'bigg' or 'bere'. See *SND*, vol. i, p. 69. The potato, on which the Highlanders became so dependent during the second half of the eighteenth century, had not yet achieved any widespread acceptance in Martin's time. For the rapid expansion of potato cultivation on the western seaboard see chapter 6.6.3.

ploughed land.⁵¹ Martin described the technique used in the Western Isles to dig the ground, to manure it with seaweed and to level it again:

The Natives are very industrious, and undergo a great fatigue by digging the Ground with Spades, and in most places they turn the Ground so digged upside down, and cover it with Seaware; and in this manner there are about 500 People employ'd daily for some Months. This way of labouring is by them call'd **Timiy**; and certainly produces a greater Increase than Digging or Plowing otherwise. They have little Harrows with wooden teeth in the first and second rows, which breaks the Ground, and in the third row they have rough Heath, which smoothes it: This light Harrow is drawn by a Man having a strong rope of Horse-hair across his breast.⁵²

The 'cascrom', or crooked spade, was the most important tool for agriculture throughout the Western Isles and major parts of the mainland Highlands. It was used on any ground that could not be ploughed. The use of spades must have seemed very antiquated and ineffective to foreign visitors. However, the cascrom was the only tool suitable for tilling even the tiniest and rockiest bits of arable land in the Highlands and Islands. Johnson described its use as follows:

Their corn grounds often lie in such intricacies among the craggs, that there is no room for the action of a team and plow. The soil is then turned up by manual labour, with an instrument called a crooked spade, of a form and weight which to me appeared very incommodious, and would perhaps be soon improved in a country where workmen could be easily found and easily paid. It has a narrow blade of iron fixed to a long and heavy piece of wood, which must have, about a foot and a half above the iron, a knee or flexure with the angle downwards. When the farmer encounters a stone which is the great impediment of his operations, he drives the blade under it, and bringing the knee or angle to the ground, has in the long handle a very forcible lever.⁵³

On some islands, such as Harris, the greater part of the arable land was still worked with crooked spades by the end of the eighteenth century. However, Harris was particularly mountainous and craggy, and on the more fertile islands, such as Skye,

⁵¹ According to Martin, the island of North Uist was an exception. There more land was cultivated by plough than by spade. Nonetheless, he confirmed that on North Uist, land dug by spade yielded higher returns than land under the plough. See Martin, *Description*, pp. 53-54. Pennant reported (in 1772) that on the Isle of Skye eight men were required to dig as much in a day with their cascroms as a single plough. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 288.

⁵² Martin, *Description*, p. 3. This description referred to the Isle of Lewis, but Martin reported that this technique was also used on other islands, such as Skye. See *ibid.*, p. 140. Crooked spades for digging the ground or planting potatoes were used in the Hebrides until the twentieth century. Some travellers reported that the people in the western Highlands fixed their harrows directly at the tails of their horses, without making use of harnesses. When the horse's tail had become too short to affix the harrow, the Highlanders lengthened it with sticks. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 43. According to Pennant, this custom was still practised on the Isle of Skye in 1772. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 288. Heron wrote (in 1794) that this custom was occasionally still practised on the Island of Gigha. See Heron, *General View*, p. 51. James Kirkwood and Edward Lhuyd (late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries) referred also to this custom, but they provided no further clues to its location. See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 53.

⁵³ Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 179-180.

the majority of the corn fields were now tilled with the common Scottish plough, drawn by four horses. Although soil cultivated by spade still yielded higher returns, authors began to question this technique as it did not repay the investment of a greater labour force.⁵⁴

The difficult condition of the soil often limited the use of ploughs. Even on a comparatively flat island such as North Uist, two different horse-drawn ploughs had to be used to till the ground properly. The soil had to be broken up and roots beneath the surface cut by a smaller plough that was fixed before the main plough. The smaller plough was also used to facilitate digging, but it could not replace the spade. Martin noted on the use of ploughs in North Uist:

The way of Tillage here is commonly by Ploughing, and some by Digging; the ordinary Plough is drawn by four Horses, and they have a little Plough also call'd Ristle, i.e. a thing that cleaves, the Culter of, which is in Form of a Sickle, and it is drawn sometimes by One, and sometimes by Two Horses, according as the Ground is; the design of this little Plow is to draw a deep Line in the Ground, to make it the more easie for the big Plow to follow, which otherwise would be much retarded by the strong Roots of Bent lying deep in the Ground, that are cut by the little Plow. When they dig with Spades, it produceth more increase; the little Plow is likewise used to facilitate Digging as well as Plowing ...⁵⁵

The 'ordinary plough' used in the Outer Hebrides was particularly light in comparison to the old Scots plough and, therefore, depended on a 'ristle'. John Walker described (in 1764) the ordinary plough used on Harris and most other places in the Outer Hebrides. Its whole length was but four feet and seven inches, and it was drawn by four horses abreast. It had but one handle by which it was directed, the mould-board was fastened with two leather thongs, and the soke and coulter were bound together at the point by a ring of iron.⁵⁶ These ploughs differed slightly from island to island, but all the various types were so light that they depended on the use of a ristle. Walker prepared a detailed account of the ristle's shape and function:

It is of the Shape of a Plough, but is only two feet and an half long and drawn by one Horse. It has no Soke, but has a sharp crooked Coulter, which is drawn through the Soil, near 10 Inches deep. The use of it, is to be drawn before the Plough, in order to cut the strong twisted Roots, of a number of repent Plants, with which the Sandy Soil in the long Island is particularly infested; and which are powerfull enough to obstruct the Progress of so weak a Plough as that which is commonly used.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See Heron, *General View*, pp. 17, 33.

⁵⁵ Martin, *Description*, pp. 53-54. The 'ristle' or 'reestle' was called the 'sickle plough' in England.

⁵⁶ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 55. The old Scots plough was thirteen feet in length and very heavy. Walker described what is known as a 'thrapple' plough. It is thought to have developed from the primitive Norwegian 'ard'. See *ibid.*, p. 233.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55. The use of a ristle, drawn by two horses to cut but not to open the furrow, followed by the Scottish plough, drawn by four horses to open out the furrow and turn over the sods, was still

In the mainland Highlands the use of ploughs was also limited in many places by the shallowness of the fertile layer, which prohibited their effective use. Nonetheless, the Highlanders had developed special techniques to employ ploughs on as much ground as possible to maximise time and manpower. These techniques were unique and caught the attention of visitors. Burt noticed in the mid-1720s that most of the Highlanders' instruments, such as spades, ploughs and ploughshares, harrows, harnesses and bolts, were not made of metal but entirely of wood.⁵⁸ He met with a farmer who led four horses in front of the plough, but who walked backwards with his face towards them and the furrow. When Burt enquired whether this awkward method was common to the Highlands, the locals seemed astonished and asked him whether a different method was used in other parts of the country. They explained that the man guiding the plough went backwards because there were hidden rocks in the ground that could just be seen peeping through the surface of the soil. By this method the farmer should see and avoid them by guiding the horses accordingly, otherwise the plough might be destroyed by the rocks.⁵⁹

However, many small tenants and subtenants neither owned a plough nor could afford to keep horses. They often had to hire ploughs and horses from their tacksman, even although they were obliged to work several days per week for him. These additional costs prevented the use of ploughs even on those stretches of land where they might have been applied successfully. Many foreign visitors regarded the use of spades as an obvious sign of backwardness in Highland agriculture. Moreover, they often blamed the Highlanders for sticking to their traditional habits and,

common on Coll in the mid-1790s. See Heron, *General View*, p. 40. It shows that certain agricultural techniques had hardly changed from the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries.

⁵⁸ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 41. La Rochefoucauld noticed (in 1786) that all the Highlanders' farm-tools were half-wood and half-iron. See La Rochefoucauld's sketch and description of the Highlanders' ordinary tools in Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 171. Reproduced in appendix no. 3.

⁵⁹ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 41-42. According to Kirkwood and Lhuyd, this custom was not universal throughout the Highlands, but limited to 'some places'. Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 53. It was, however, practised at least until the middle of the eighteenth century. Sir John Clerk of Penicuik observed this custom in 1742 and regarded it as a particular indication of the backward state of the agriculture in the Highlands. See 'Sir John Clerk, To Roger Gale, Giving An Account Of His Journey To Dalguise, In The Highlands, With A Description Of The Countrey And Inhabitants', in *The Family Memoirs Of The Rev. William Stukeley, M.D., And The Antiquarian and other Correspondence Of William Stukeley, Roger & Samuel Gale etc.* (Surtees Society, vol. lxxx) (Durham et al., 1887), vol. iii, pp. 424-425.

therefore, rejecting the introduction of any new methods or improvements.⁶⁰ James Hogg visited Barvas (Isle of Lewis) and observed, in 1803, that although the parish contained a lot of arable and fertile land, the ploughs used seem to have been of a very primitive kind. They consisted of crooked trees, through each of which a square hole was cut at the most crooked end. Here the stick that served for the plough-head was fixed, and, by wedging it above or below, the farmer gave the plough more or less depth. Wedging the plough-head at the sides gave it more or less width. The plough was drawn by four ponies abreast, but their irregular pace made it nearly impossible for the driver to keep the plough in line and the slender coulter was ineffectual in steadying its course.⁶¹ Hogg reckoned that this method was practically unique and mocked that he ‘could venture a wager that Cain himself had a more favourable method of tilling the ground’.⁶² These impressions show that improvements and agricultural progress in most parts of the Hebrides were still lagging behind the rest of Scotland even in the early nineteenth century.

Due to the difficult condition of the ground and the limited use of ploughs, cereal production in the Highlands was very labour-intensive. Given the arduous task of digging the ground with spades, it is rather surprising that the Highlanders seem to have neglected their crop after it was sown. Travellers generally observed that the Highlanders’ corn was choked up with weeds while many people, and particularly men, were idly hanging around.⁶³

Seaweed was the most common type of manure used in the Western Isles and along the western seaboard. After stormy weather and at low tide, the broad fronds of seaweed (*alga marina*) were either collected from the beaches or cut from the rocks. They were put in creels that were carried by horses to the fields. Strawn and left to rot on the patchy stretches of arable land, the fronds provided the predominantly

⁶⁰ See, for example, Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, pp. 45, 84-85, 88-90. See also Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. ii, pp. 89-90. Blaming the Highlanders for ignorance of improvements in agriculture was a common feature in travellers’ accounts.

⁶¹ See J. Hogg, *A Tour In The Highlands In 1803* (Edinburgh, 1986), pp. 114-116. [hereafter: Hogg, *Tour*] This is a facsimile reprint of the 1888 edition.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁶³ See, for example, Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 82. Although it was a common stereotype to accuse the Highlanders of laziness, travellers generally confirmed the neglected state of their crops. See also Burt’s comments about the men’s unwillingness to assist the women in harvesting. Interestingly, the Highlanders seem to have paid more attention to their potato crop. See *ibid.*, p. 82. This might underline the risen importance of the potato as the Highlanders’ main diet in the late eighteenth century.

sandy soil along the coastline with a number of minerals and thus prevented it from becoming exhausted.⁶⁴ Heron described (in 1794) the method of manuring with seaweed on Harris and the returns the soil yielded:

Sea-weeds are the ordinary manure. These are borne from the beach, most commonly on the backs of the cultivators. The manure is then spread thick upon the field, in beds, with regular intervals left for furrows. The furrow is next cut with the spade; the turfs and clods spread over the manure; and the whole left in this condition, till the season for sowing, late in spring. 200 large *creels* of sea-ware are the proportion of this manure necessary for the produce of a boll of barley, - or of 12 or 14 barrels of potatoes, the more common and profitable crop. The clods over the manure, are again broken with a hoe, at the time of sowing. The barley is then sown thin, or the potatoes are planted with a dibble. The harrowing of the soil over the seed with a hand-rake, terminates the labour.⁶⁵

On ground thus manured and dug by spade, barley produced in a favourable year yields of sixteen- to twentyfold, and potatoes from eight- to tenfold.⁶⁶

In some areas, seaweed was made into compost with sods and dung, turned over once and then spread in a thin layer on the rigs.⁶⁷ Along the coast the Highlanders also used shells for manure. They could be strewn on the fields or heaped on the dunghills, where they were left to moulder and were spread with the dung on the fields at a later time.⁶⁸

However, seaweed also served other purposes than that of manure. According to Martin, cows and horses often had to feed on seaweed for want of fodder at winter's end or in early spring.⁶⁹ The vulgar natives also ate the fronds, using them for medicine for various diseases, or reduced them to ashes for preserving food such

⁶⁴ Seaweed was a particularly effective manure against soil exhaustion. Martin cited certain areas on Skye that yielded oats twenty- or thirtyfold, and barley a hundredfold, when manured with seaweed. See Martin, *Description*, p. 139. In East Lothian, huge quantities of seaweed were also applied for manure with good results. This practice was referred to by Brereton (1635), Conyers (1676), Defoe (early eighteenth century) and Lord Harley (1725).

⁶⁵ Heron, *General View*, p. 18. Heron referred to Harris, but this technique, so-called 'lazy bed' cultivation, was used all over the Hebrides. The potatoes were planted in ridges of heaped earth and layers of seaweed, divided by furrows to provide the plants with the necessary depth of topsoil. On Harris and North Uist the usual rotation of crops was barley or potatoes in the first year, followed by black oats in the second and third year. In the fourth year, the land was left untilled and afforded excellent grass for fattening cattle. See *ibid.*, pp. 18, 26.

⁶⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 18. Heron also observed that the islanders did not yet make full advantage of the abundance of seashells for manure. These are excellent results compared to eighteenth-century Schleswig-Holstein.

⁶⁷ See Pococke, *Tours*, p. 160. Pococke referred (in 1760) this method to Caithness.

⁶⁸ See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 178-179. See also Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 177.

⁶⁹ Sheep on the Shetland Islands also fed upon seaweed for much of the year. See [J. Campbell], *An Exact And Authentic Account Of The Greatest White-Herring-Fishery In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1885), p. 23. [hereafter: Campbell, *White-Herring-Fishery*] This is a reprint of the edition of 1750. Sheep on North Ronaldsay (Orkney) are still fed upon seaweed to this day.

as seal-meat or cheese.⁷⁰ On Heisker (or Monach Islands, 7.5 miles west of North Uist) the inhabitants often had to burn dried seaweed, cow dung and barley straw for want of fuel, thereby destroying their only sources of manure.⁷¹

In the glens of the mainland Highlands manure was also scarce. Here the Highlanders had no access to seaweed, and the main manure was either straw or the livestock's dung. Straw, however, was in heavy demand, being also required for winter provision for horses and other livestock and for thatching the Highlanders' huts. Moreover, the Highlanders destroyed most of their straw by 'graddaning', i.e. their traditional method of separating grain from the husk by fire. Manure was so scarce that the Highlanders periodically tore down the roofs of their huts in spring and early summer and used the thatch for manure.⁷² When the Highlanders had taken down the roofs of their huts, they moved on with their cattle to their summer pastures and shielings in the hills.

Burt gave several striking examples of the lack of manure in the mainland Highlands. He observed that the Highlanders had hardly any manure to supply and enrich the soil with minerals. According to him, there were no limestone, chalk or marl to be found in the Highlands.⁷³ Even in those places where there was limestone, it was often not utilised because the general shortage of fuel made it too expensive to

⁷⁰ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 10, 64, 69, 149, 155-156, 186-187, 269. Martin was particularly fascinated by the marvellous ability of the cows on Skye to anticipate low tide, even if they had no view of the sea. Two hours after the beginning of ebb tide the cows came down from the hills, one after another in perfect order, in order to feed upon seaweed. See *ibid.*, pp. 155-156. According to Martin, there was no shortage of seaweed in his time. By the end of the seventeenth century, kelp production had not yet reached the western seaboard. Nonetheless, he was fully aware of the economic potential of seaweed and kelp in the Western Isles for soap and glass production. See *ibid.*, pp. 342-343. Kelp production spread to the Hebrides in the 1730s, but it was not until the 1750s that it became a major economic factor. Travellers who visited the Western Isles in the later decades of the eighteenth century reported on a shortage of seaweed for manuring the soil due to the huge demand for kelp by the glass and soap industry. See chapter 7.2.2.

⁷¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

⁷² James Hogg, for example, noted (in 1803) that the islanders on Lewis still stripped the roofs of their huts at the beginning of every summer and spread the thatch upon their fields for manure. The soil thus manured usually produced good crops. See Hogg, *Tour*, pp. 116-117. Using roof-thatch for manure was not limited to the Highlands. It was also practised by the tenants in the less fertile areas of the Lowlands. John Conyers, for example, referred (in 1676) to this practice on Coldingham Moor in Berwickshire. See Essex Record Office, Conyers, 'Northerne Journey 1676', MS. D/DW Z6/2, fo. 11.

⁷³ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 49. This was not correct. The Highlands lacked chalk and marl, but in many areas there was limestone in abundance. The islands of Lismore and Shuna in Argyll, for example, consist of limestone rock. Lismore is a particularly fertile island and exported limestone in the second half of the eighteenth century. See Faujas, *Travels*, vol. i, p. 331. See also Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 121.

burn for manure.⁷⁴ Moreover, the government tax on shipped coal worsened the situation. An additional duty of 3s. 3d. had to be paid for every ton of coal shipped to the north of the Red Head promontory on the Scottish east coast between Arbroath and Montrose. The effects of this duty were extremely destructive. Pennant criticised (in 1772) the tax as a ‘thoughtless imposition’ and an ‘infinite prejudice and discouragement of rural economy’.⁷⁵ It obliged the farmers to neglect the cheap manure nature had provided for them and instead import their lime at a cost of about seventeen pence per boll from the Earl of Elgin’s limekilns on the Firth of Forth.⁷⁶ Due to this lack of fuel in the Highlands, the farmers could not burn their lime with the imported coal at less than twenty pence per boll.⁷⁷ The tax on imported coal disadvantaged the north of Scotland to such an extent that even in the vicinity of Montrose, just a few miles north of the Red Head promontory, it was no longer profitable to burn the local limestone. In the 1730s and 1740s lime had been applied very successfully for improvements in this area, but the tax had pushed up the

⁷⁴ See, for example, NMS, Baine, ‘Journey’, MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fo. 100. Baine was referring to the Isle of Skye.

⁷⁵ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 141.

⁷⁶ These limekilns were situated on the shore between Inverkeithing and Charlestown in Fife. They were built amidst ‘inexhaustible beds of lime-stones, and near immense seams of coal’. *Ibid.*, part ii, p. 217. The kilns were placed in a row, with their openings beneath a covered way formed by arches and pillars, and had a convenient pier for shipping the lime. Their construction cost above £12,000. In 1772 they constantly employed 120 men. The kilns supplied the whole north and east of Scotland with burnt limestone. The value of the kilns’ produce of lime-shells, unslaked lime, lime and limestone rose from £3,874 14s. 0d. (from Martinmas 1770 to Martinmas 1771) to £4,630 11s. 4d. (from Martinmas 1771 to Martinmas 1772). See *ibid.*, part ii, pp. 217-218. These figures show the rising demand for burnt lime for manure in agriculture and for limestone for building, and reflected the investment and improvements made in agriculture. Francis Douglas gave an indication of the amounts of lime that were required to improve soil. He travelled along the Scottish east coast in 1780 and reported that Aberdeen imported vast quantities of lime from the Earl of Elgin’s kilns because there were no limestone or marl in the vicinity of the city. A boll of powdered lime cost 1s. 4d., and a boll of lime-shells cost from 2s. 3d. to 3s. A boll contained 128 Scots pints or about 64 English gallons (wine measure). If the limestone was good, a boll of lime-shells yielded 2½ to 3 bolls of powdered lime, and the farmers often spread up to 80 bolls of the latter on an acre. See F. Douglas, *A General Description Of The East Coast Of Scotland, From Edinburgh To Cullen* (Paisley, 1782), pp. 179-180. [hereafter: Douglas, *East Coast Of Scotland*]

⁷⁷ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 141. However, there were some exceptions, and some improvers introduced burnt limestone for manure on their Highland estates. Nonetheless, the lack of fuel and the high duties on imported coal made burnt limestone a very expensive manure and prevented its widespread use. See, for example, Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 143. Limestone was also successfully applied in converting moss, bogs and land covered by heather into pasturage and land fit for agriculture. Liming and marling counteract acidification of the soil. For the various applications of limestone in this process see Knox, *Tour*, p. 145, and *ibid.*, appendix pp. 79-81. Liming was the first important innovation adopted by the agricultural improvers. In the Lowlands lime had been spread on the ground since the early eighteenth century. See Smout (ed.), ‘Kalmeter’s Travels’, pp. 5-6. Liming and marling had also been successfully applied to recover wet and acid soils in Denmark since the 1760s. See Kjærgaard, *Danish Revolution*, pp. 50-56, 142.

expenses for burning it to the same level as those of burnt lime from the Earl of Elgin's kilns.⁷⁸ Moreover, during the summer months, the farmers in the north had to spend up to three months cutting and drying peat for fuel when they could be better employed in their fields.⁷⁹ The high duties on imported coal remained a major problem for Highland agriculture and hampered its progress until the nineteenth century. Even fertile places, such as the island of Lismore, could not make full use of their natural resources and suffered severely from the government's taxation of coal. John Knox noted (in 1786) that the people of Lismore were poor and had to live part of the year on milk alone. To Knox, their poverty was the obvious result of a failed government policy:

Hitherto it [Lismore] has derived little advantage from the limestone, owing to the want of good peat, the neglect of timber, and still more, the duty upon coals. Thus, with the advantages of navigation, in every direction, and of a soil lying upon the richest manure, the people are indigent, and frequently obliged to import meal for their subsistence.⁸⁰

Moreover, the already poor quality of the soil in the Highlands was not helped by the climate. For over a millennium the soil had gradually acidified. Abundant rain in combination with low evaporation resulted in very wet soils in which the surplus water washed away the lime and caused the pH value to drop. The moorland and bogs, which constituted most of the Highlands, had a pH value as low as four, which prevented the growth of most cultivated plants.⁸¹ The most successful strategy to recover these lands for agriculture was to drain them of surplus water, then lime and

⁷⁸ See Douglas, *East Coast Of Scotland*, pp. 61-62. For his criticism of this tax see *ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

⁷⁹ See R.B. Sher (ed.), *Journal of a tour to the North of Scotland, Alexander Carlyle* (Aberdeen, 1982), pp. 20-21. The original manuscripts are NLS, A. Carlyle, 'Journal of a Tour to the Northern Highlands in Aug. & Sept. 1765', MSS. 23766-7. The title has been changed as Carlyle did not visit the Highlands in 1765, but travelled along the east coast from Edinburgh to Inverness.

⁸⁰ Knox, *Tour*, pp. 55-56. For Knox's criticism of the government's duties on coal see also *ibid.*, pp. 60, 162-164. Knox likewise criticised high duties on imported salt and the lack of customs houses in the Hebrides, which prevented the islanders from curing their catch properly. The high duties on shipped coal prevented the islanders from making their own salt for preserving their catch. Knox's criticism of the duties on imported coal and salt were fully shared by Anderson, who had travelled to the Hebrides in 1784. See Anderson, *Account*, pp. 34-35, 45-47, 61-63, 64-66. Knox and Anderson were particular in their criticism of these duties, believing that Scotland faced major disadvantages in comparison to Ireland. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 248. See Anderson, *Account*, p. 65. In consequence, huge amounts of coal and salt were smuggled from Ireland to the western seaboard of Scotland. It was not until 1796 that the government relaxed the strict laws and salt was allowed to be kept outside of locked storerooms.

⁸¹ The optimum pH value for growing agricultural plants is about seven, i.e. 'neutral' ground.

marl them, and subsequently raise the pH value. However, the above-cited duties on coal prevented a widescale application of lime and burnt lime in the Highlands.⁸²

Winter apart, the Highlanders' cattle moved freely on the unenclosed hills. Their dung, however, was too precious to be lost. In summer and harvest, therefore, they folded their cattle overnight in some part of the outfield to manure the ground.⁸³ In winter the cattle were housed, and the Highlanders carefully collected every piece of dung. Burt remembered that the women in the vicinity of Fort William used to collect the dung from the garrison and the local stables in creels and spread it with their hands upon the land, 'even breaking the balls, that every part of the little spot might have its due proportion'.⁸⁴

In the Hebrides yields varied locally, but Dr Johnson reckoned (in 1773) that barley, which was not sown without very copious manure, yielded tenfold, whereas oats, the Highlanders' main diet, yielded only threefold.⁸⁵

6.2.2. Harvesting, threshing and preserving the crop

The Highlanders' method of harvesting and processing their crops was also unique and seemed antiquated and ineffective to visitors. Travellers to the Highlands and Hebrides concurred that, although the Highlanders cut the oats with sickles, they did not apply this method to barley, which they pulled up by the roots.⁸⁶ At first glance, this method must have seemed like a waste of resources. The botanist James

⁸² The Danes faced similar difficulties in recovering acid soils. In Denmark, as in the Highlands, deforestation accelerated the acidification of the soil as evaporation was reduced. See Kjærgaard, *Danish Revolution*, pp. 49-56. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Denmark imported huge quantities of coal from Britain for fuel. This not only stabilised the remaining forests, but also allowed access to coal for a wider share of the population in the countryside. See *ibid.*, pp. 120-129. Unfortunately, there are no figures to what extent coal was used for burning limestone. Nonetheless, due to the import and promotion of coal by the Danish government, the country successfully avoided an agricultural and social crisis in the countryside. According to John Walker, a Danish traveller (or industrial spy) learnt from the Scots the technique of burning limestone with peat. This method was later applied very successfully in Jutland, Schleswig and Holstein, where there was plenty of limestone and peat, but no lime apart from what was made with imported coal or local wood. See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. i, p. 164. Unfortunately, the British government did not change its attitude on the taxation of coal until the end of the eighteenth century and thus worsened the agricultural and social crisis of the Highlands.

⁸³ See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 169.

⁸⁴ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 50.

⁸⁵ See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 180. Again, these were good yields compared to Schleswig-Holstein.

⁸⁶ See Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*, p. 94. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 95. See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 181. See Heron, *General View*, p. 18. See Hogg, *Tour*, p. 116.

Robertson noted this custom on Skye in 1768, and the locals explained to him that they had no other material to thatch their houses. If they were to cut the barley, the straw would be rendered a great deal shorter and they would likewise lose the strongest parts of it. For this reason they neither cut the straw nor threshed it, but cut off only the ears. They then spread a thin layer of straw loosely over the roof and fastened it with heather ropes that were kept at full stretch by stones tied to the ends.⁸⁷

Harvesting and preserving the crop from the weather also caused considerable difficulties in the frequently wet climate of the Highlands and particularly Western Isles. In these northern latitudes corn did not ripen before September or October, and the wet autumn weather was as unfavourable to the ripening of the grain as to drying it after it had been cut. Travellers generally observed that a considerable part of the Highlanders' crop was destroyed by wet weather.⁸⁸ It was, therefore, of vital importance to the Highlanders to use the rare sunny intervals to harvest their crops. One might assume that every hand was needed during harvest, but foreign visitors often observed that work in the field and harvesting were mainly done by women and children while the men stood idly by and watched them.⁸⁹ Johnson, however,

⁸⁷ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, pp. 95-96. According to John Walker's report of 1764, the islanders on Lewis used the same technique. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 43. Robert Heron confirmed (in 1794) that the islanders used oat straw for cattle fodder, whereas that of barley was used for thatching. See Heron, *General View*, p. 18.

⁸⁸ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 43-44; Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 82; Bombelles, *Journal de voyage*, p. 195. Bombelles observed (in 1784) that many farmers on the shores of Loch Fyne had no barns. Part of their harvest had to be stored in the open and was, therefore, spoiled by the weather.

⁸⁹ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 43-45. The most common explanation travellers gave was that the men thought of themselves as gentlemen. They considered it below their status to assist the women in the harvest. Manuring and spreading dung on the fields were also mainly done by women. See Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*, pp. 6-7. See Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 172. Pennant observed (in 1769) about the women in Caithness: 'The tender sex (I blush for the *Cathnesians*) are the only animals of burden: they turn their patient backs to the dunghills, and receive in their *keises*, or baskets, as much as their lords and masters think fit to fling in with their pitchforks, and then trudge to the fields in droves of sixty and seventy.' Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 183. Patisson noted in 1780: '... in the highlands the most laborious work, & drudgery is performed by the women from their earliest age, in the east country there is greater civilization, & altho women are by no means freed from Labour, yet it is of such a kind, & so equally shared with the men, that it contributes to render them more healthy, & robust ...'. Nonetheless, he saw women doing most of the harvesting near Nairn and commented: 'The women cut down most of the corn, & it is pleasing to see with how much activity, & spirit, they use the sickle – if there are any men at work with them the women always take the lead.' NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 94. See also Lettice, *Letters*, pp. 163-164. The advocate Patrick Walker remarked on the laziness of the Highlanders during his two-month stay on the Isle of Arran in the summer of 1797: '... for in all the Scots Islands and the more northerly ones, the men are the laziest animals alive, allowing the Females to work at all kinds of hard and masculine work, while they do little else than sleep and eat, work a Stocking or the like.' NLS, P. Walker, 'Journals of Tours

observed harvesting on Raasay and gave a slightly different impression of the men's involvement. He reported that the women reaped the corn with sickles and the men bound the sheaves. As usual, the Highlanders sang as they worked, and 'The strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation of the harvest song, in which all their voices were united.'⁹⁰ Despite the men's assistance in harvesting on Raasay, vital days were often lost, and the Highlanders had to bring in the harvest when it was either not yet ripe or wet.⁹¹ Drying and preserving the grain from moisture were probably the most important tasks at the end of the harvest. The methods used varied locally. Bishop Pococke reported (in 1760) a rather unusual way of preserving barley and straw for cattle fodder in Caithness and Orkney:

They make a foundation of loose stones five feet in diameter, lay chaff on it, and add a heap of corn in the middle, then they sett up straw on end all round the stones, and put in more corn, and as it fills they bind it round with straw ropes, and so continue raising the straw untill it is about eight feet high, & they finish it in the shape of a cone, covering the top well with straw, and bind it round with such ropes of straw as they lay over their thatched houses.⁹²

The most common way to preserve corn was in barns. However, travellers often observed that the Highlanders' hovels and barns were hardly fit to keep the moisture out, and if it were not for the air sifting through the openings, the corn would have been surely spoiled.⁹³ The importance of drying and preserving corn was highlighted by the Duke of Argyll, who had constructed an innovative building for that purpose in Glen Shira, north-east of Inveraray. It was a barn of three stories in which every sheaf of wheat and barley was stored separately so that the flow of air could dry the corn and straw and also prevent the latter from heating. John Leyden prepared (in 1800) a detailed description of it:

It is constructed in the form of a semicircle, with numerous ventilators. The low story forms a double range of stalls for black cattle in winter. The floors of the upper stories are formed

through Scotland with Notes Descriptive and Historical', Adv. MS. 20.5.1, fo. 145. [hereafter: NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.1] See also NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fos. 59-62. Although Walker often cited and copied Pennant in his journals, these comments were based on his own observations. Walker clearly refuted Pennant's assertion that the men of Arran were working hard and had no time for amusement or indolence. See *ibid.*, fos. 60, 69.

⁹⁰ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 139. In the Highlands most kind of work was accompanied by singing. Songs, such as those for waulking (fulling) the cloth or rowing, provided rhythm for the work and helped the workers or oarsmen to keep in step.

⁹¹ See, for example, Heron, *General View*, p. 18.

⁹² Pococke, *Tours*, p. 159. Heron reported that a similar method was used in the Hebrides. The islanders thatched their stacks with straw, ling (a species of bog-grass) or heather. See Heron, *General View*, p. 70.

⁹³ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 43-44.

of boards placed at six inches' distance, and the walls and roofs are provided with wooden hooks for suspending sheaves of corn or bundles of hay, which are deposited green or new cut, and are soon dried in the wettest seasons.⁹⁴

However useful and innovative, this building remained unique in the Highlands. The common farmers in other parts of the country could not afford such a building. When the corn was cut, the sheaves were piled together and covered with thatch. In the intervals between rain showers the thatch was taken off, and the sheaves, when dry, were carried to the barn. This laborious work was repeated until the whole crop had been secured.⁹⁵ In wet weather the corn was carried as soon as it was cut into barns built with wicker, where it was dried by means of the circulating air.⁹⁶ The Highlanders also used drying kilns. John Lanne Buchanan reported in the 1780s from the Outer Hebrides that the kilns were quite small and that the islanders did not spread their barley on the surface above the straw to be dried. Instead, they cut the ears off the barley and laid them next to each other upon the bare ribs of the kiln.⁹⁷

Instead of threshing the corn, the Highlanders used to burn it out of the husk. This method seemed particularly awkward to foreign visitors and attracted their special criticism. Martin, as a native of Skye, explained the purpose of this custom:

The ancient way of dressing Corn, which is yet us'd in several Isles, is call'd *Graddan*, from the Irish word *Grad*; which signifies quick. A Woman sitting down, takes a handful of Corn, holding it by the Stalks in her left hand, and then sets fire to the Ears, which are presently in a flame; she has a Stick in her right hand, which she manages very dextrously, beating off the Grain at the very Instant, when the Husk is quite burnt, for if she miss of that, she must use the Kiln, but Experience has taught them this Art to perfection. The Corn

⁹⁴ Leyden, *Tour*, pp. 26-27. This building must have been a very remarkable construction since it was referred to by many travellers as a model for a west country barn. See Bombelles, *Journal de voyage*, p. 195. See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 122. See Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 83. See Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. ix (Edinburgh, 1792), p. 93. According to the unidentified Director of the British Fisheries Society, hay and corn were dried in the following manner: 'The duke of Argyll's barn at Inverary, is about 300 feet long, supported on wooden posts, the floor is raised six or seven feet above the ground; between the floor and the ground the hay is carried as soon as cut, and there it is turned over till dry, and then stacked. The corn is carried into the barn in the same condition; each sheaf is hung upon a separate peg. The barn is full of latticed wooden windows which admit of the air freely.' John Wood reported (in 1801) that the construction was capable of drying 600 to 800 bolls of grain and was also used for drying potatoes. He stressed the high expenditure for the construction. See NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fos. 59-61. Bombelles wrote (in 1784) that the expenses for this useful building had been so high that other landowners could not afford to copy it. Interestingly, Knox claimed (in 1785) that other gentlemen have adopted the same plan though on a smaller scale. Therefore, many thousand bolls of corn had been preserved from being spoiled by moisture. See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 122. However, subsequent travellers did not mention any copies of this unique building.

⁹⁵ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 306. See also Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 122.

⁹⁶ See Knox, *Tour*, p. 102. Knox referred to Loch Hourm on the western seaboard of Inverness-shire, but this method was universal throughout the Highlands.

⁹⁷ See Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 156.

may be so dressed, winowed ground, and backed, within an Hour after reaping from the Ground. The Oat-bread dressed as above is loosening, and that dress'd in the Kiln, Astringent, and of greater strength for Labourers: But they love the *Graddan*, as being more agreeable to their taste.⁹⁸

Martin continued that this custom has been diminished since the increased use of mills. However, travellers' accounts give a different impression as they repeatedly mention 'graddaning' and its local variations. Given the wet weather conditions in the Hebrides and the constant threat of rain, this custom was often the only way to dry the harvest before continual showers destroyed it. However, the disadvantages of this method were obvious, and foreign observers did not spare their criticism.

Burt reported in the 1720s that this custom was still practised in parts of the Highlands, and particularly in some of the Western Isles, in order to dry the usually wet oats and simultaneously burn off the husk. He remarked that separating the burnt husk from the grain was often imperfect, as the cakes, so-called bannocks, made from it were often very black.⁹⁹ He considered this method particularly harmful as it deprived the Highlanders of the straw for thatching their huts, making their beds or feeding their cattle during the winter.¹⁰⁰

To many foreign visitors, 'graddaning' and the use of querns (hand mills) were clear indicators of the backwardness of the Highlanders.¹⁰¹ The English spy Edmund Bruce wrote about 1750 that 'graddaning' was once practised in many parts of the mainland Highlands and all over the Hebrides, but it had been given up by all except the Camerons, MacDonalds, some MacLeans and some of the people on the Isle of

⁹⁸ Martin, *Description*, p. 204. Martin added an anecdote of an English captain whose vessel had anchored at Bernera, opposite the Isle of Skye. The captain saw two women burning the corn out of the husk. Seeing flames and smoke, and not knowing what to make of it, he ran to the local people and told them that he had just seen two mad women busily burning corn. When the locals arrived at the scene, there was great laughter at the Englishman's ignorance of this custom. See *ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

⁹⁹ A 'bannock' is a round, flat, thickish cake of oatmeal, barley, pease or flour, baked on a girdle. See *SND*, vol. i, p. 39.

¹⁰⁰ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 169-170. Winter and spring were a difficult period for livestock. Fodder was dear, and the cows were often too weak to get back on their feet again. Additionally, the Highlanders sometimes bled their cattle in winter when they did not have enough winter provisions for themselves.

¹⁰¹ In 1737 Duncan Forbes of Culloden reported to the Duke of Argyll that the farmers on the duke's estates in Morvern, Mull, Tiree and Coll still used their antiquated methods, such as plucking the grain, burning it out of the husk and grinding it in querns. For these reasons the Duke of Argyll had hardly any revenues from his mills on these estates. Moreover, there was no fallowing of land on the duke's estates. Forbes of Culloden regarded these techniques as clearly indicative of the farmers' backwardness. See PP, 1884, XXXIII-XXXVI: *Crofters Commission Report*, p. 392.

Skye.¹⁰² Bruce remarked that although Lochiel had built two watermills in the 1730s, his people continued burning the straw and grinding the corn in querns because of the great distance of these mills. Moreover, he reckoned that the Highlanders' 'Natural Laziness' and their unwillingness to part with old customs prevented them from using the mills more frequently.¹⁰³ In the more remote parts of the mainland Highlands and in the Western Isles, this custom seems to have been practised until far into the second half of the eighteenth century. Richard Neilson, Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands, travelled the length of the west coast of the mainland Highlands in 1755. His report to the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland exemplifies what improvers and government inspectors thought about the state of agriculture in the Highlands:

Through the whole of the Countrys of Moydart [Moidart] Arrasaick [Arisaig] Morrer [Morar] and Knoydart the little arrable Ground they have lyes along the sides of the Hills where ploughs cannot go, and therefore it is generally turned over with Spades. The meal is prepared by burning the Straw, fanning the ears of Corn from among the ashes, and grinding them in hand mills or Quearns, there being no water mill in the Country, though I presume it is needless to inform the honble. Board that there is no scarcity of water falls. What adds much to the folly of this Custom of burning the Straw is, that During the winter Season numbers of their Cattle perish for want of forage.¹⁰⁴

James Robertson noted, on his visit to the Isle of Skye in 1768, that 'graddaning' was still the common way of dressing corn on the island. He witnessed the involvement of several women in this process, each of them having her particular task. The women had chosen a flat piece of ground exposed to a drying wind. Robertson remarked that this work could only be done in fair weather and when the

¹⁰² See Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*, p. 95. The majority of these people had fought for the Jacobites in 1715 and 1745. Bruce's comments must be treated very carefully because of their inherent political nature. After the defeat of the Stuarts at Culloden, 'graddaning' and the use of querns were surely not confined to supposedly backward and Jacobite clans on the western seaboard. The Duke of Gordon's servant, for example, referred (in 1742) to these practices in the area between Garvamore and Fort Augustus. See EUL, 'Duke of Gordon's Jaunt 1742', MS. Dc.5.68., [fos. 5v.-6r.].

¹⁰³ Lang (ed.), *Highlands in 1750*, p. 95. Despite his biased attitude, Bruce made some reasonable proposals. He recommended that planting potatoes would be an excellent method to fight the Highlanders' shortage of bread and to recover wild and barren soil. Moreover, he recommended that on the Forfeited Estates no tenant should be given more land than he could work with his own servants and that personal service should be abolished. See *ibid.*, pp. 144, 146-147. The abolition of multiple holdings, subletting and personal service became a vital part of the Annexing Act in 1752.

¹⁰⁴ EUL, R. Neilson, '2nd Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 1755, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fo. 43. [hereafter: EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623]

wind was neither too calm nor too strong. Then the sheaves were brought in and the procedure began:

... then two or more women are employed in the operation, and first they lay down some of the shealings of Corn on their right hand, in order to prevent the fire from going out. A woman sitting down takes a handful of the Corn holding it by the straw, sets fire to the ears which presently take flame, observing carefully when all the Chaff of the ears is burnt, & having another already kindled, she all at once extinguishes the first lighted against the ground, & throws the remainder of the straw over her shoulders, and so on, opposite to this woman stands or sits another with a stick, with which she spreads the detached ears until they are properly burnt, then she rakes them out from the flames, in a heap towards the left hand & so on until they have graddaned all they intend, as it has layen all this time in one heap since it was taken out of the flames, it is now properly dried they put it into a large Tub & treads it with her feet & rub it with their hands & winnow it four or five times, by which means, they separate all the Chaff, & leave nothing except the mere cuticle, & now they have no more to do, but to carry it to the Miln or grind it in their Quarns ...¹⁰⁵

By this method, in favourable weather conditions, a woman could make a boll a day ready for the mill, for which she received one peck of the grain in wages. Robertson, however, acknowledged that this custom was now infrequent due to the increased use of mills. Furthermore, islanders who still 'graddaned' their corn would be in breach of their tacks.¹⁰⁶

Nonetheless, the islanders retained 'graddaning' particularly in remote places and in the smaller islands. Pennant witnessed this technique on the island of Rhum in 1772. He reported that notwithstanding the island's several rivers there was not a single mill and all threshing and grinding were done at home. The locals still burnt the corn at the ear instead of threshing it. Pennant distinguished two different methods. In the first method, the ears were cut off, dried in a kiln and then set alight on the floor. Finally, the locals picked out the grains, which by this operation had become as black as coal. In the second method, the locals did not even bother to cut off the ears, but simply burnt the whole sheaf. Pennant criticised this method as particularly ruinous as it deprived the Highlanders of thatch and manure. Consequently, it had been prohibited in some of the islands.¹⁰⁷

However, either there must have been many exceptions, or the abolition of this custom was not properly enforced. Johnson wondered, during his stay on the Isle of

¹⁰⁵ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, pp. 90-91. It was widespread practice among the Highlanders to separate the chaff by treading grain with the feet and hands in a tub. In the mid-1720s Burt referred to this custom as common practice among the Highlanders. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 89-90.

¹⁰⁶ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 91.

¹⁰⁷ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 280-281.

Skye in 1773, why the locals still stuck to their antiquated and harmful customs in a country where everything had to be obtained with so much difficulty. He acknowledged that ‘graddaning’ was a convenient way to dry grain and to escape the theft of the thresher, but his verdict on this tradition was damning: ‘Thus with the genuine improvidence of savages, they destroy that fodder for want of which their cattle may perish.’¹⁰⁸ ‘Graddaning’ was still practised in some remote parts of the mainland Highlands and some of the small islands in the late eighteenth century, and it is easy to understand why many travellers did not like the Highlanders’ bannocks and considered them indigestible.

However, by the 1780s most of the harvest was threshed with flails even in places such as the Outer Hebrides. Not surprisingly, threshing was mainly done by women. John Lanne Buchanan provided an account of the flail and its use in the Outer Hebrides:

Their flail consists of a hand-staff and a short thick supple, either of wood, or tangle, bound to the staff by a thong, six inches distant. With this implement dangling round their right arm, they [the women] thrash the oats and barley. They never swing the flail round their head; nor stand upright at this work.¹⁰⁹

6.2.3. The use of querns for grinding

The next stage, the grinding of corn, also differed considerably from other areas of Great Britain. Although the Highlands and Islands had abundant rivers, there were hardly any watermills, and the Highlanders used hand mills, so-called querns, to grind their corn. A quern was composed of two round stones, each between a foot and a half and two feet in diameter. The bottom stone had a hollow, which was about five or six inches deep, and within this hollow the upper stone was placed. This stone was flat, about three to four inches thick and matched the hollow. In its centre was a large round hole that went through to the bottom stone whereby the oats were conveyed between the stones. The upper stone was driven by sticks that were fixed in a number of smaller and less deep holes in the exterior of its surface. Thus the upper stone was revolved, thereby grinding the oats poured into the central hole. The quern

¹⁰⁸ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 181.

¹⁰⁹ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 155.

was placed on a cloth, and the meal ran out at the sides of the quern ready to be collected from the cloth.¹¹⁰

Although this method must have been very ineffective in comparison to watermills, the Highlanders did not have to pay a miller, transport their corn over long distances, and they were able to grind oats whenever required. In an economy that was dependent on imported meal and was always on the brink of shortage, these were obvious advantages. It is, therefore, no wonder that querns were used in many parts of the Highlands, and particular in the Western Isles, well into the nineteenth century.

In 1769 Pennant saw a quern near Kinlochleven and considered it ‘rather preserved as a curiosity, being much out of use at present’.¹¹¹ However, the use of querns was not yet in such a steep decline as Pennant assumed. Particularly in the Western Isles, the quern remained the common tool for grinding corn. James Robertson confirmed the use of querns on Skye in 1768,¹¹² and Pennant witnessed this technique once again when he visited the island of Rhum in 1772. He was particularly critical of the quern’s efficiency. He wrote that, while a quern could be purchased for about fourteen shillings, the method of grinding was very tedious, requiring two pairs of hands to grind a single bushel of corn in four hours.¹¹³

Dr Johnson also observed the use of querns on Raasay and Skye in 1773. He explained that there were watermills in both islands, but their location was too distant from the islanders’ settlements, requiring the women to continue grinding their oats in querns.¹¹⁴ Boswell, however, added that querns were so slow that they had gone almost entirely out of use.¹¹⁵ The Directors of the British Fisheries Society noted on their visit to the island of Canna in 1787 that the new tacksman was currently building a watermill and that all corn was hitherto ground in querns.¹¹⁶ Heron

¹¹⁰ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 171-172. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 211-212.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212. Pennant clearly considered querns as primitive machines and referred to the Moors who also used such simple hand mills.

¹¹² See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 91.

¹¹³ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 281. See also the engraving ‘Women at the Quern and the Luaghad with a view of Talyskir’ in the appendix no. 4.

¹¹⁴ See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 236.

¹¹⁵ See Boswell, *Tour*, p. 314.

¹¹⁶ See Piscator (pseudonym), ‘Voyage’, in *The Bee*, vol. viii (1792), p. 178. Lord Mountstuart, who visited Canna in the following year (1788), doubted that it would be possible to obtain a constant supply of water for the mill. The tacksman admitted to him that a windmill would have been the better option. See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fo. 35v.

summarised (in 1794) that mills were still rare in the Hebrides and that the use of querns was still common among the islanders. Nonetheless, he limited the use of querns on Harris to the ‘meaner families’ and noted that all principal tacksmen had their own mills but did not allow access to every tenant.¹¹⁷ By the end of the eighteenth century, the use of querns was slowly on the decline as more and more watermills were built in the Hebrides. However, the expenses for using a mill still deterred many poor tenants. Garnett noted (in 1798) that there were now several mills on Mull, but that many islanders still used their querns when they were in immediate want of meal or could not afford the expense of the mill. Nonetheless, Garnett and his travelling companions faced some difficulties when they asked to be shown the use of a quern, and it took several attempts before the locals would finally produce one. To Garnett, querns were an obvious indicator of a rude and backward people, and he reckoned that a single watermill or windmill was more efficient than 100 querns.¹¹⁸ Emilie Harmes confirmed Garnett’s account when she visited Mull two years later. She recollected that querns had been replaced only recently by watermills, but many of the poorer people still used their querns in order to save the expense of the mill.¹¹⁹

The Highlanders’ tools for agriculture were, generally speaking, comparatively primitive but sufficient for their needs. For example, instead of a hair sieve to sift the meal, the islanders on Rhum used a sheepskin that was stretched round a hoop and perforated with small holes made with a hot iron.¹²⁰ The meal was mixed with water and formed to little, round and flat cakes, so-called bannocks, which were then baked

¹¹⁷ See Heron, *General View*, pp. 70, 18. Heron was undoubtedly one of the best-informed travellers and writers on agricultural and economic matters of his time. He was a leading member of Sir John Sinclair’s team that assembled and edited the entries for the *Statistical Account*. Heron proposed that mills should be built on every estate, and that all tenants should be obliged in their leases to use the mills in order to abolish grinding with querns. See *ibid.*, p. 88.

¹¹⁸ See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, pp. 154-156.

¹¹⁹ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. ii, pp. 137-138. However, it is difficult to establish whether these comments were an actual reflection of progress on Mull. Harmes’s account of the Isle of Mull suggests that she copied major sections of Pennant’s account of the islanders’ customs into her account. Pennant had attributed these customs to the inhabitants of the Isle of Skye in 1772. Harmes described the customs of the Hebrideans in her account of Mull because she did not visit the Isle of Skye. Therefore, her comments are more likely to reflect antiquated customs in more remote parts of the Hebrides. She also borrowed from Garnett. Wood reported (in 1801) that ‘graddaning’ and querns were almost entirely abandoned on Mull and that good corn-mills had been erected everywhere throughout the country. See NLS, Wood, ‘Journal 1801’, MS. 3038, fos. 29-30.

¹²⁰ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 281. John Lanne Buchanan confirmed that this custom was still practised in the Outer Hebrides in the 1780s. See Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 157.

on a girdle. The bannocks were a major component of the common Highlanders' diet. In some fertile Lowland areas bordering on the Highlands, the locals seem to have mixed various sorts of corn, peas and beans for making bread. Bishop Pococke noted (in 1760) that on the Black Isle the locals made 'bread of pease, mixed with barley or Oats and sometimes with pease alone, and they sow Oats with Rye and make bread of them together'.¹²¹ Around Dingwall the locals had such a plentiful supply of beans that they made bread of it alone.

Agriculture in the Highlands never exceeded domestic requirements. Martin cited certain areas in Skye that exported corn in plentiful years to neighbouring areas, but on the whole the Highlands had to import meal from the Lowlands to provide for the winter and spring when their own produce was exhausted.¹²² To finance these imports, livestock, and particularly cattle breeding, became the Highlands' main source of revenue.

6.3. Livestock breeding in the Highlands

Due to their physical nature, the Highlands were more suitable to livestock breeding than to agriculture, and all foreign visitors to Scotland emphasised the huge number of animals bred in the country, and particularly in the Highlands. Whereas the Highlands south of Glen Mor were characterised by an even mixture of farming and pasturage, north and west of Glen Mor livestock breeding was clearly dominant.

The Highlanders bred horses, cattle, sheep and goats. John Walker provided (in 1764) figures for the ratio of the various animals kept on Highland farms. If a farmer on Skye kept 160 black cattle, the number of horses usually amounted to 20 (8:1). On

¹²¹ Pococke, *Tours*, p. 178. This custom was confirmed by William Thomson in 1785. He noted that the custom of mixing meal of barley, peas, oats and rye was confined to Moray and the fruitful carse in the Lowlands. In Aberdeenshire, the Highlands and the less fruitful areas of Scotland, the locals abhorred mixing different sorts of corn. See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 191-192. Patrick Walker noted (in 1797) that the islanders of Arran mixed ground corn and peas and made pottage of the meal. See NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fo. 96.

¹²² See, for example, Martin, *Description*, p. 140. However, Martin made less reference to the import of meal in the Western Isles than Walker and Pennant did in the 1760s and 1770s. When Martin travelled through the Hebrides in the late seventeenth century, the islands were far less dependent on imported meal than 70 years later. The rise in population, the conversion of farmland into pasture and increasing whisky-distilling made the Highlanders far more dependent on imported meal. John Knox reckoned (in 1786) that in the western Highlands about a quarter to a third of every year's produce of barley was distilled into whisky. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 27. See also chapter 6.3.2.

smaller farms the proportion of horses was higher (6:1). A farm of 160 black cattle would also be stocked with 120 sheep and 20 goats.¹²³ In the Outer Hebrides the proportion of horses was considerably higher. Walker later calculated that on the islands the ratio of horses to black cattle was one to four.¹²⁴ However, cattle were by far their most valuable stock.¹²⁵ All visitors to the Highlands agreed that the indigenous animals were far smaller than other breeds, nonetheless they stressed their exceptional hardiness. The various animals had quite different functions in the Highland economy. Horses were mainly bred for work in the field, for transport and in some areas for export; cattle were reared exclusively for export, whereas sheep and goats were bred to supply the Highlanders with wool, milk and meat.

¹²³ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 209. Walker related these figures to Skye in 1764. The new sheep breeds had not yet come to the island so that these figures are fairly representative of the old agrarian order.

¹²⁴ See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, p. 46. On Tiree the islanders kept immense numbers of horses. Archibald MacColl, minister of Tiree, reported (in 1792) that the islanders kept 1,400 horses and 1,800 head of black cattle. A few years earlier there had been even more horses on the island, but orders were given to reduce their number. MacColl blamed the 'present division of the lands and plan of husbandry' for the disproportionate number of horses. He wrote that the island's black cattle and horses were 'mostly in a starving condition' and that the number of horses should be reduced to 250. *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 273-274.

¹²⁵ Many travellers claimed that the Highlanders abhorred pork and, therefore, bred no pigs. The geographer Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch (1580-1661) wrote about Strathnaver: 'Pork is here, as everywhere, rather scarce. And it may suffice to say this once about the whole kingdom, that pork is generally despised, and left to be consumed by the mean populace, and that many utterly abhor it.' 'Cathenesia, Strathnavernia, Rossia Sutherlandia, &c.', in MacFarlane, *Geographical Collections*, vol. ii, p. 454. Burt thought this was more of a myth, nonetheless he confirmed that he saw hardly any pigs in the Highlands. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 117-118. Faujas also noted (in 1784) the absence of hogs in the Highlands. See Faujas, *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 78. This was also confirmed by Lord Mountstuart. See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 33r. Their observations were correct. However, a more likely explanation is that pigs do not feed on grass as cattle or sheep do, and that the Highlanders could not afford to feed pigs on corn, meal or straw. However, Martin mentioned occasionally hogs, for example, on the island of Lingay (off the north coast of North Uist). See Martin, *Description*, p. 69. In the 1770s efforts were made to introduce hogs to the Highlands. Pennant reported that they were first introduced on Arran in 1770. On Skye hogs had not yet been introduced by 1772 for want of appropriate fodder. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 177, 310. According to John Walker, the number of pigs in the Highlands was 'inconsiderable'. They were 'kept but in few places, and in many extensive districts not one of them is to be seen'. Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, p. 171. The English agriculturalist Matthew Culley clearly contradicted this view of an absence of pigs in the Highlands. In 1775 he made an extensive tour of the north and west of Scotland and claimed to have seen pigs 'everywhere up and down those parts of the country through which we travelled'. In one instance he counted a herd of no fewer than 73 animals that fed upon wild berries and was tended by a herdsman. He admitted, however, that the pigs were 'of a very bad kind, worse than those which are bred in Ireland'. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 134.

6.3.1. Horse breeding for agriculture and transport

Horses were particularly bred for their use in agriculture and transport. Where ploughs could be utilised, they were usually pulled by two pairs of horses abreast. Many small tenants, however, could not afford to keep a sufficient number of horses for ploughing. Most tenants, particularly on joint-tenant farms, therefore, shared horses. There was a direct link between runrig agriculture, joint-tenant farms and the number of horses bred. Pennant observed (in 1772) that on the Isle of Arran every tenant of a joint-tenant farm kept one horse or more, and he reckoned that there were altogether 1,058 horses on the island.¹²⁶ He considered this figure far higher than the number of horses that was actually needed for agriculture on the island. Moreover, they consumed huge amounts of corn and peas often causing scarcity.¹²⁷ However, some of these horses were bred for export, and he noted that the island made about £300 per annum from the sale of horses.¹²⁸ It is impossible to verify Pennant's figure for horses, but it would be wrong to dismiss it as an exaggeration.

¹²⁶ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 176-177. It is interesting to notice that James Robertson, who visited the island in 1768, suggested that there were far fewer horses kept on Arran. He reckoned their number to be 250. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, pp. 69-70. Robertson's and Pennant's figures for livestock on Arran varied greatly. Although less than four years had passed between their visits, Robertson reckoned (in 1768) the number of cattle at 8,000 – 9,000 (Pennant in 1772: 2,000 plus 3,183 milch cows), of sheep at 12,000 – 13,000 (Pennant: 1,500), and of goats at 200 (Pennant: 500). Archibald Menzies, General Inspector of the Board for the Annexed Estates, noted (in 1768) about the northern parts of Arran: 'Their Grounds are overstock'd as they have no regular souming, The Hills are commonty and they are not at pains to keep Grounds for Winterings, - They breed their own Bulls in short are very bad managers of Cattle.' NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9, fo. 26. The absence of foreign bulls for breeding underlines that the Highlanders were more interested in rearing cattle than in improving their breed. In 1797 Patrick Walker was told that Arran imported more horses than it exported. See NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fo. 99.

¹²⁷ Similar allegations were made in 1793 against the subtenants on North Uist. The subtenants did not have enough carts and, therefore, kept huge numbers of horses. It was recommended that carts be provided so that the number of horses could be reduced. The fodder thus saved would allow them to keep greater numbers of black cattle. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 125. John Walker renewed these allegations. He blamed the tenants on South Uist, North Uist and Benbecula for not using carts, although these flat islands were suitable for wheeled transport, even for heavy goods. See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. i, p. 134.

¹²⁸ Horses from Arran were often sent to Ireland. Islay and Eigg also exported horses to Ireland, Skye and Lewis bred horses for Uist, and Strathnaver sent its horses to the Orkney Islands. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 41. Unfortunately, Pennant gave no absolute figures for the number of horses exported from Arran. However, their number can hardly have been more than 100 or about 10 per cent of the island's total stock. John Walker (drawn from his tour of the Hebrides in 1764) reckoned the value of a horse exported from Mull at £3 and from Skye at £4. Walker provided no figures for the economy and the level of prices on Arran. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, pp. 155, 207. The export of horses from the islands seems to have been quite susceptible to seasonal fluctuation. The innkeeper at Auchnacraig (Mull) informed Patisson in 1780 that the farmers of Mull had been unable

There are good reasons to believe that the Highlanders kept huge numbers of horses. Most tenants could not afford a full team for ploughing, but they kept at least one or two horses to contribute to cooperative work. Moreover, due to the lack of proper roads, transport was a great problem in the Highlands and required great numbers of horses.

Moreover, horses were easy to keep as they did not need to be housed or attended by herdsmen, but could be left alone to feed in the hills. In fact, most of the Highlanders' horses roamed semi-wild in the hills for most of the year and were only caught when needed for work.¹²⁹ Burt reported on the various methods used to catch them. Sometimes the Highlanders hunted them into bogs, they could be driven up a steep hill where the nearest of the pursuers tried to catch them by their hind legs, or even chased over the heath and rocks until the horses laid down for weariness and want of breath.¹³⁰

In economic terms, Highland horses were not such a waste of resources as Pennant suggested. They needed relatively little attention and grazed for most of the year in the hills. In winter and spring, when fodder was scarce, they came down from the hills and fed like cattle on seaweed. Last but not least, they were far more suitable to the difficult terrain of the Highlands and Islands than the bigger and heavier horses imported from the Lowlands.¹³¹

In transport Highland horses were irreplaceable. Most Highland settlements were not connected by roads, and all goods had to be transported either on horseback, in creels (large baskets attached to the sides of a horse) or on sledges. Vital resources such as peat for fuel, or seaweed for manure, had often to be carried

to sell their horses at the Dumbarton fairs. There were very few buyers, and in consequence prices were very low. He feared that this would be the end to horse breeding on that island. See NLS, Pattison, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 69. However, his fear seems to have been exaggerated. In 1787 Bailey referred to horses as a major export product of Mull. See NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fo. 363. Lord Mountstuart visited the island in 1788 and wrote that horses were still bred for export and sold from five to twenty guineas per head. See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 11r.

¹²⁹ See Martin, *Description*, p. 154. See also Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 37.

¹³⁰ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 37-38. Again, Burt stressed the small size of the Highlanders' animals: 'They are so small that a middle-sized man must keep his legs almost in lines parallel to their sides when carried over the stony ways ...'. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 38.

¹³¹ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, pp. 40-41. See Martin, *Description*, pp. 10, 269. This argument was harshly rejected by John Walker. He criticised: 'The number of horses is by far too great upon every Highland farm. They are so numerous, because they are inefficient; and they are inefficient, because they have neither stature nor food to render them sufficiently useful.' Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, p. 48.

over long distances and, therefore, required greater numbers of horses than transport by cart or carriage. Although sledges were a primitive form of transport, they were ideal for a rough country without roads. The Highlanders kept using sledges not only long after roads had been built, but also in areas that had been rendered suitable for carts and wheeled transport. Jacob Patisson wondered (in 1780) why the Highlanders still transported their goods on very primitive sledges on the southern banks of Loch Lomond. Again, this work was mainly done by women. He noted:

They [the Highlanders] have very little notion of the advantage of a wheel carriage in this part of the country – instead of which they use large baskets fastned upon two sticks – the short ends of which serve as wheels, & drag on the ground – the long as shafts – they cut a droll appearance & we mett with vast numbers of them mostly driven by women, who in this country carry the whip – as a badge of Slavery.¹³²

Carts were not unknown in the Highlands, but their use was limited to the new roads or the direct vicinity of the towns. Burt saw a number of carts at Inverness in the 1720s. He explained that these vehicles were of no great use outside the town and, therefore, most goods were still carried on horseback or sledges. He commented:

There is little need of carts for the business of the town; and when a hogshead of wine has been to be carried to any part not very far distant, it has been placed upon a kind of frame among four horses, two on a side, following each other; for not far off, except along the sea-coast and some new road, the ways are so rough and rocky that no wheel ever turned upon them since the formation of this globe; and, therefore, if the townsmen were furnished with sufficient wheel-carriages for goods of great weight, they would be seldom useful.¹³³

Additionally, the few carts used were of an extremely primitive kind. Their wheels were about a foot and a half high and ‘made of three pieces of plank, pinned together at the edges like the head of a butter firkin, and the axletree goes round with the wheel’.¹³⁴ They were soon worn down and, moreover, unequally into oblong shapes, which caused a disagreeable noise when moving over the cobbles. To Burt, the small, unshod Highland horses, their lack of proper bridles, and these primitive carts

¹³² NLS, Patisson, ‘Tour 1780’, MS. 6322, fos. 8-9. See also La Rochefoucauld’s sketch of a sledge and basket in 1786 in Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 171. Reproduced in appendix no. 3.

¹³³ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 76-77. See also the drawing of a sledge in Burt, *Letters*, 1st edn. London, 1754, vol. i, opposite p. 86. Reproduced in appendix no. 5. John Walker confirmed the very limited use of carts in the Highlands. According to him, there were only a few carts in Kintyre, and it was not until 1756 that the first cart was used in the royal burgh of Campbeltown. See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. i, p. 134.

¹³⁴ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 76. See also the drawing of a cart drawn by a Highland horse in Burt, *Letters*, 1st edn. London, 1754, vol. i, opposite p. 86. Reproduced in appendix no. 5.

were a perfect picture of the Highlanders' wretchedness and misery.¹³⁵ Patisson's observations about the carts used by the Highlanders in 1780 suggest that their design had made little progress since the 1720s as they were still of a very primitive kind:

It is true we mett with a few with wheels, but they were exceedingly awkward, and generally made of the slice of a large Tree cut horizontally, & a hole cut in the middle for the axle – they were solid or nearly so, & it is probable not unlike what the Grecian Heroes used to manage with so much dexterity – I wished for Antilochus to inform me.¹³⁶

Despite the progress in road building, horse-drawn sledges and creels remained the main means of transport in the Highlands for most of the eighteenth century. John Walker considered the want of carts to be one of the biggest obstacles to the progress of the economy in the Highlands and Islands. It tripled or quadrupled the expense for carriage and particularly prevented the use of natural manure. He urged, therefore, the landowners to improve the roads on their land and make them accessible to carts.¹³⁷

In spite of these exhortations, the Highland economy depended on great numbers of horses for agriculture and transport until well into the twentieth century. In addition, the Highlands and Hebrides had become a breeding ground for horses for many parts of Scotland.

6.3.2. Cattle rearing

Since the late Middle Ages cattle had been the Highlands' most important product. As Highland agriculture could not produce sufficient provisions for the whole year, the Highlanders depended heavily on an additional source of income to pay their rents and to buy meal for the winter and spring.¹³⁸ The Highlands proved to be a

¹³⁵ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 75-76.

¹³⁶ NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 9.

¹³⁷ See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. i, p. 134.

¹³⁸ John Walker and Thomas Pennant provided figures that show the extent to which large parts of the central and western Highlands had become dependent on the import of meal in the 1760s and early 1770s. Walker reckoned that, in 1762, 30,000 bolls of meal were imported into Argyllshire from Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and Caithness. According to Walker, these imports were not a singular incident, but Argyllshire had to import great quantities of oatmeal every year because huge stretches of cultivated land had been converted to pasturage. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 155. In 1769 Pennant provided some striking examples of the relation between meal imports and cattle exports. The people of Lochaber had to import annually 6,000 bolls of oatmeal at a cost of about £4,000. Their rents were about £3,000 per annum. To finance these expenses they exported annually

good breeding ground for cattle, and travellers reported from the late Middle Ages on the huge numbers of cattle reared in the northern parts of Scotland. Cattle were bred mainly for export to the Lowlands, and particularly to the rapidly expanding cities in England, with the great advantage that they could be easily sold and turned into badly needed cash.¹³⁹ The average farmer sold off about a fifth of his herd every autumn, but in spite of the huge numbers of cattle bred, beef remained a rarity in the common Highlanders' diet.¹⁴⁰ Cattle were the Highlanders' most important asset and the overwhelming majority used mutton or goat for home consumption and saved their beef for export.¹⁴¹ Heron provided (in 1794) figures for the islands of Coll and

3,000 head of cattle which raised about £7,500. The inhabitants of Glencoe imported annually meal for about £300 and paid £241 rent for their land. Their revenues from exported cattle were about £700. These figures show the narrow balance between self-sufficiency and shortage in the Highlands. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 208, 211. The people of Arran had to import annually 500 bolls of oatmeal. The islanders on Rhum did not produce more than a quarter of their consumption of bear and oats. Pennant also reported that the country around Loch Broom, the island of Mull, and Breadalbane did not produce sufficient corn for their population and were dependent on meal imports. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 177, 278, 313, 352, and *ibid.*, part ii, p. 36. Moreover, on Islay and Jura huge amounts of grain were consumed every year for distilling whisky, making the islanders dependent on imported corn. Pennant reported that, notwithstanding the excellency of the land, above £1,000 worth of meal had to be imported annually on Islay, and that in 1772 a famine was only prevented by the seasonable arrival of a meal ship. See *ibid.*, part i, pp. 228-229, 214. This was confirmed by John Leyden in 1800. He wrote that there had been a huge shortage of grain on Islay and Tiree in 1799 and that the people had to live mainly on fish and potatoes. A boll of barley cost 30 shillings, but when distilled illegally into whisky, it could be sold for five to six guineas. In many places the poor tenants were dependent on the additional income from illicit distilling. See Leyden, *Tour*, p. 79. See also MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. i, pp. 162-165. Heron wrote (in 1794) that the distillation of barley led sometimes to meal shortages on Tiree. See Heron, *General View*, p. 42. Banks noted (in 1772) about the Hebrideans: 'They brew no ale but use spirit instead of it. Every man of any condition has in his house a still with which he distils malt spirits chiefly from barley but sometimes from oats.' Rauschenberg (ed.), 'Banks's Voyage', p. 212. Wood reported (in 1801) that the islanders on Mull grew good bear, but very little of it was consumed at the table unless in a liquid state. See NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fo. 42. Robert Heron remarked (in 1792) that if the Highlanders could not live without whisky, then they should at least distil it themselves instead of importing it from the Lowlands. He hoped that increased whisky-distilling would bring industry among the Highlanders and would promote the cultivation of grain in the Highlands. See Heron, *Observations*, vol. i, p. 270.

¹³⁹ Next to the English cities, the army and particularly the navy made a huge demand on beef. It is difficult to establish a coherent pattern for the development of cattle prices for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In spite of undulations, the prices remained at least stable with a tendency to rise. See Gibson and Smout, *Prices, Food And Wages*, pp. 193-197, 204-216. See also Gray, *Highland Economy*, pp. 142-143. Considering that the Highlands were more suitable to livestock breeding than agriculture, it is easy to understand why Highland landowners increasingly converted farmland to pasture, as cattle were a more secure source of income.

¹⁴⁰ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 37. This ratio is roughly confirmed by Heron's figures for cattle exports from Coll and Tiree. See Heron, *General View*, pp. 40, 42.

¹⁴¹ See, for example, Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 211. However, a small number of cattle were slaughtered by the locals and salted for winter provision. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 279. Martin reported (in the 1690s) that the islanders were accustomed to salt their beef in the hide, which excluded exposure to the air and was reputed to preserve it better than when packed in barrels. This beef was shipped to Glasgow, repacked in barrels and exported to the Indies. See Martin, *Description*,

Tiree that show the ratio of cattle breeding for export and home consumption. Coll was stocked with 1,300 black cattle, 250 of which on average were annually exported and 30 slaughtered on the island. Tiree was stocked with 1,800 black cattle, 260 of which were annually exported and about 70 were slaughtered on the island.¹⁴²

However, it usually took four years before cattle were heavy enough for collection by the drovers for the fairs of the Lowlands and England. Until then cow's milk played an important part in the Highlanders' diet, particularly during the summer and winter months when milk and cheese respectively (made by the women in June and July in the shielings) were the Highlanders' main food. Even the best cows did not give enough milk to enable the Highlanders to produce a surplus of milk or cheese. Milk must have been scarce, and some travellers reported that the Highlanders used to kill half of the calves in order to ease the pressure on the milch cows. Richard Neilson reported (in 1754) that the Highlanders killed the male calves at eight days old, and the surviving calves were suckled by the whole herd. According to Neilson, the Highlanders believed that the quantity of milk was thus increased and that the cows could be covered sooner than when each suckled a calf. The same custom was observed with regard to the Highlanders' goats.¹⁴³

Cattle rearing was comparatively easy during the summer months when most of the older livestock was roaming free in the hills. However, milch cows and calves needed pasture of superior quality and were fed under the supervision of the women

p. 69. Cattle slaughtered and salted in the islands do not, however, seem to have been of inferior quality. At the time of John Walker's visits (1764 and 1771) most of the cattle slaughtered in the islands, salted and packed in barrels for export, were the ones refused by the drovers and which would not survive the winter. See, for instance, McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 65.

¹⁴² See Heron, *General View*, pp. 40, 42. Heron seems to have culled these figures from the report for the *Statistical Account* prepared by Archibald MacColl, minister of Tiree, in 1792. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 273. According to these figures, on Coll c. 19 per cent of the cattle were annually exported and 2.3 per cent were consumed on the island. On Tiree c. 14 per cent of the cattle were annually exported and 3.9 per cent were consumed on the island. Export rates of 15 to 20 per cent and home consumption of 2 to 4 per cent of the cattle bred may be considered as representative for the Highlands and Islands in general. In 1793 North Uist was stocked with c. 2,000 cows, of which about 300 (i.e. 15 per cent) were annually exported. See *ibid.*, vol. xx, p. 106. An average subtenant on North Uist usually sold off one in six cows per year. See *ibid.*, vol. xx, p. 111.

¹⁴³ See NAS, R. Neilson, 'Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 6 November 1754, Board of Manufactures – Trustees' Reports, NG1/7/4, fos. 39-40. See also EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fo. 116. Neilson reckoned that two cows produced through the year about two stones of butter and four stones of cheese. See *ibid.*, fo. 116. Martin referred to a similar custom in Skye. He reported that when a calf was slain, it was usual to cover another calf with its skin to suckle the cow whose calf had been killed, otherwise she gave no milk. See Martin, *Description*, p. 155.

in the higher summer pastures around the shielings. Pennant described the way the Highlanders and their cattle spent the summer in the hills:

Here [Glen Tilt, north of Blair Atholl] we refreshed ourselves with some goats' whey, at a *Sheelin*, or *Bothay*, a cottage made of turf, the dairy-house, where the Highland shepherds, or graziers, live with their herds and flocks, and during the fine season make butter and cheese. Their whole furniture consists of a few horn-spoons, their milking utensils, a couch formed of sods to lie on, and a rug to cover them. Their food oat-cakes, butter or cheese, and often the coagulated blood of their cattle spread on their bannocks. Their drink milk, whey, and sometimes, by way of indulgence, whisky.¹⁴⁴

The most difficult period in cattle rearing came in the winter and spring. During that time the hills provided no fodder, and the Highlanders' main concern was to get their animals through this period of scarcity. John Walker noted in the 1760s that although black cattle were the staple of the Hebrides, the islanders had only recently started to make hay to support their cattle in winter. However, the small quantities produced were hardly enough to support the young cattle that were most in need of it.¹⁴⁵ Preserving the livestock in winter was an old problem, and Martin provided very graphic descriptions of how men and beasts struggled to survive that season.

Martin reported that cattle were exposed to the rigour of the coldest seasons, became mere skeletons in the spring and were often too weak to rise from the ground without help. Therefore, many cattle died for want of hay and straw in winter and spring, and Martin claimed that he knew farmers who had lost above 100 cows at a time merely for want of fodder. However, the animals that survived recovered with the new grass, and their beef was sweet and tender.¹⁴⁶ Providing for cattle became increasingly difficult after December, and the Highlanders had to reduce their herds and dispose of some animals before that time. Martin reported that the locals on the

¹⁴⁴ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 108-109. A drawing of shielings on Jura (taken from T. Pennant's account of 1772) is reproduced in appendix no. 2. It is still common practice in the mountainous parts of Europe, such as the Alps, to move cattle for the summer months to the higher grazing grounds in the hills. It is interesting to note that Pennant wrote that the Highlanders also bled their cattle in the summer. Most travellers associated this practice only in respect of the scarcity of the winter and spring months. See also notes 100 and 153.

¹⁴⁵ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 78. Walker claimed that the people of South Uist had not started making hay until 1756 although the island (including Benbecula) annually exported 700 black cattle. Coll likewise exported 'a considerable number' of black cattle and horses. However, the island could export far more animals if the islanders made proper provisions for their support. Walker wrote that the locals were 'yet Strangers to the Practice of making Hay' when he visited them in 1764. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁴⁶ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 155, 337.

tiny island of Lingay (off the north coast of North Uist) fattened their cattle with seaweed until December before they were slaughtered.¹⁴⁷ Usually none but milch cows were housed during winter, while all other cattle had to stay in the open, making Highland agriculture and livestock breeding particularly vulnerable to the seasons.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the Highlanders' dependence on the income from cattle rearing led in many parts of the Highlands and Islands to serious overstocking of grazing grounds, thus increasing pressure on rare resources. Pennant reported that on Skye alone 5,000 cattle had perished due to the severity of the winter of 1771-72, exacerbated by overstocking and the failure of the crop in the preceding season. Islay was also overstocked, resulting in the loss of many cattle for want of fodder. On Mull, too, the graziers had suffered greatly from the loss of cattle in the preceding winter.¹⁴⁹ John Walker noted that in the late eighteenth century 'over all the farms in the north, there is kept above one third more of cattle, than what by the present management can be properly supported'.¹⁵⁰ He was aware that instead of gain this policy would inevitably lead to loss.

Scarce resources and overstocking literally forced the Highlanders to sell their cattle at any price in autumn. In 1780 the innkeeper of Auchnacraig on Mull informed Jacob Patisson that the island's oxen could not be sold for more than 40 to 70 shillings at the Dumbarton fairs. Despite the low prices, the Highlanders had to sell their cattle because they were unable to feed them through the coming winter in the hope of higher prices next year.¹⁵¹

During winter the larger tenants grazed their cattle on the so-called 'winter-parks', which were on their driest and best land. Only in very severe winters did they feed their cattle on straw. In April the cattle grazed during day on 'moor-grass' or

¹⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁴⁸ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 229. Pennant referred to Islay, but this could be applied to most of the Hebrides. However, he reported that the poor tenants on Skye, who had no proper winter pasture, had to house their cattle and feed them on meagre rations of oatmeal.

¹⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, part i, pp. 309, 229, 353. The death toll among cattle on Skye must be seen against the background that the island exported annually about 4,000 cattle. Johnson confirmed (in 1773) that the island had not yet recovered from the severe winter of 1771-72. See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 177.

¹⁵⁰ Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, p. 50.

¹⁵¹ See NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fos. 68-69. The innkeeper blamed the low price on the huge numbers of cattle exported from Ireland to England. Robert Heron claimed (in 1794) that the tacksmen and factors purchased sometimes 'with unfair advantages' the subtenants' stock for export. Heron, *General View*, p. 79. According to him, the tacksmen and factors were likely to underpay the subtenants because they knew that the subtenants had to sell their animals irrespective of the level of prices.

‘cotton-grass’ and were driven back for the night to the dry grounds. The poorer tenants, who had no winter-parks, took their cattle under their roof for the night and tried to keep them alive by little rations of meal, which were initially designated for themselves and their families.¹⁵²

In winter the poor tenants and subtenants were sometimes forced to bleed their cattle. When the provision of oatmeal began to fall, the Highlanders took their cattle into their huts, bled them and boiled the blood into cakes. These cakes, together with a little milk and a handful of oatmeal, were their main diet at that time of the year. Burt accused the Highlanders of bleeding their cattle so immoderately that the beasts were unable to rise from the ground on their own, and several people were needed to help them up.¹⁵³ However, due to the introduction of potatoes and the expansion of the herring fisheries, the Highlanders no longer seem to have been forced to bleed their cattle by the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁴

The cattle that survived the winter and spring recovered and quickly gained weight during the summer on the higher grazing grounds.¹⁵⁵ In the late summer the animals were driven from the hill pastures back to the glens, and the three- to four-year-old beasts were sold off to the drovers. The drovers collected the animals and slowly drove them to the fairs at the fringe of the Highlands at Dumbarton, Falkirk and Crieff. Martin described how the animals from Skye were swum over the kyles to the mainland:

They begin when it is near Low Water, and fasten a twisted *Wyth* about the lower Jaw of each Cow, the other end of the *Wyth* is fastned to another Cows Tail, and the number so tied together is commonly five. A Boat with four Oars rows off, and a Man sitting in the Stern, holds the *Wyth* in his hand to keep up the foremost Cows head, and thus all the five Cows swim as fast as the Boat rows; and in this manner above an hundred may be Ferried

¹⁵² See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 308. This account referred to the Isle of Skye.

¹⁵³ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 28, 30-31. However, this accusation seems to have been slightly exaggerated as other authors confirmed only the occasional bleeding of cattle. Knox added that in the 1780s the animals bled were sustained by a small allowance of oatmeal, and that the boiled cakes made of their blood were particularly favoured for feeding the children. See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 122. Bleeding the cattle was also practised in the Shetland Islands. John Campbell wrote in 1750: ‘They [the Shetlanders] bleed their Cows here once or twice a Year, and they take the Blood and boil it, thickning it with a little Oatmeal, then they pour it into Vessels and eat it, with a little Milk; this was Food I did not admire, though Curiosity induced me to taste it.’ Campbell, *White-Herring-Fishery*, p. 22.

¹⁵⁴ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. i, pp. 191-192.

¹⁵⁵ Scottish cattle were considerably smaller than English or Irish animals. It is estimated that an adult Scottish beef animal of about four years and older contained on average about 240 lbs of edible meat and fat, or 310 lbs deadweight carcass. English customs officials valued Scottish beasts in the 1660s on average at only 60 per cent of the Irish equivalent, presumably because of their smaller size. See Gibson and Smout, *Prices, Food And Wages*, pp. 193-194.

over in one day. These Cows are sometimes drove above 400 Miles further South; they soon grow Fat, and prove sweet and tender Beef.¹⁵⁶

Highland rivers were crossed in a similar mode. When the cattle were driven into the water, the drovers made loud noises to prevent the foremost animal from turning around. Otherwise the remainder of the flock would follow, and the weakest animals might be driven away and drowned by the torrent.¹⁵⁷

Cattle droving was slow business as the beasts had to be given sufficient time to rest, graze and put on weight.¹⁵⁸ In 1762, near Dalwhinnie, Bishop Forbes encountered a party of drovers on their way from Skye to the fair at Crieff. One of the drovers described his work. The drovers had four or five horses to carry their provisions and the blankets they required for open-air camps. Progress was slow as they never set out before eight in the morning. They marched the cattle at leisure so that they might graze a little as they went along. At midday the cattle would be rested and given time to feed, allowing the drovers their own meal break. The drovers made sure that when evening approached, the herd would be rested at a suitable place where the beasts could graze, drink and rest. The drovers spent the night wrapped in their plaids watching over the herd. The drover explained that the proprietor did not travel with his cattle, but had appointed a deputy who was responsible for bringing the herd to the fair in good shape at the appointed time, where they would meet again. The flock consisted of about 1,200 head and was divided into eight separate droves to avoid trouble at narrow passes or bridges and prevent too much pressure on grazing grounds along the roads.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Martin, *Description*, pp. 205-206. Horses were swum over the kyles in the same way: 'They were taken over by fours, by little boats, a pair on each side held with halters by two men ...'. Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 284. The kyles, which separate the Isle of Skye to the east (Kyle Akin) and to the south (Kyle Rhea) from the mainland, are between a mile and half a mile broad. Martin wrote about two crossings, but all seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers, such as Martin, Pennant and Knox, agreed that most animals were swum from Kylerhea to Glenelg on the mainland. See also Haldane, *Drove Roads*, pp. 73-79.

¹⁵⁷ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 33-34. Burt compared their size to that of large Lincolnshire calves.

¹⁵⁸ Haldane estimated the usual daily progress southward at about ten to twelve miles. See Haldane, *Drove Roads*, p. 35. The final fattening up of the beasts before they went to the butchers was done on the rich meadows of England.

¹⁵⁹ See Forbes, *Journals*, pp. 235-237. Until the second half of the eighteenth century, the 'stances', i.e. the resting and feeding places for the night, seem to have been used without payment. Droves were often welcomed as the cattle provided the ground with valuable manure. See Haldane, *Drove Roads*, p. 37. However, Burt had already mentioned in the 1720s that drovers 'pay a certain tribute, proportionable to the number of cattle, to the owner of the territory they pass through, which is in lieu

The drovers Bishop Forbes met in 1762 were on their way to the cattle fair at Crieff, a fair that was described by John Macky in the early 1720s. He reckoned that at the Highland fair of Crieff at least 30,000 cattle were sold, mainly to English drovers. However, the Highlanders also offered themselves for a shilling a day to drive the cattle to England and to return home at their own charge. The Highland gentlemen at the fair were dressed in slashed waistcoats, ‘trousings’ (breeches and stockings of one piece of striped stuff), plaids and blue bonnets. Moreover, they were armed with poinards, pistols and broadswords.¹⁶⁰

The Highlanders depended heavily on the revenue from their annual sale of cattle. Considering that from an economic point of view cattle breeding was safer than agriculture and promised higher returns, it is easy to understand why in the second half of the eighteenth century more and more tilled land was converted to pasture. However, it was not until the large-scale introduction of sheep that huge numbers of people had to make way for animals.

6.3.3. Sheep breeding

For centuries sheep were one of the Highlanders’ most useful animals, providing them with meat, milk and wool. Highland sheep were easy to breed as they were kept in the open all year and did not have to be housed during winter. Knox reported that the sheep were left during the winter on the heath and in the hills, where they sought shelter from the weather in the lee of hollows. He claimed that they were sometimes buried under the snow for several weeks, fed upon their own and each other’s wool and would thus hold out against cold and hunger. Nonetheless, even after a moderate winter many of them were found dead when the snow had melted.¹⁶¹ As cattle were mainly reserved for export and milch cows were reserved for their milk and cheese

of all reckonings for grazing’. Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 33. With the commercialisation of cattle farming and increasing pressure on pastures in the second half of the eighteenth century, the landowners charged drovers for using stances on their land.

¹⁶⁰ See Macky, *Journey*, p. 194. Macky wrote that the English drovers ‘paid down above Thirty Thousand Guineas in ready Money to the *Highlanders*; a Sum they had never seen before, and proves one good Effect of the *Union*’. Macky’s bias against the Highlanders has already been discussed in chapter 5.3., but it becomes, once more, very obvious in his final word on the fair: ‘There was no leaving any Thing loose here, but it would have been stollen.’ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹⁶¹ See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 123.

products, mutton was the common Highlanders' main supply of meat.¹⁶² Sheep were also kept on common pasture together with cattle in about equal numbers. However, they were only bred for domestic demand, and they were always second to cattle (as the Highlanders' main source of income) in the traditional Highland economy. Moreover, until the first phase of the Industrial Revolution and the beginning of mechanised processing of wool, there was, apart from Aberdeenshire stockings, no market for sheep and, therefore, no incentive to breed larger stocks than required for domestic demand. Highland sheep were, like all other farm animals in the Highlands, considerably smaller than their southern equivalents. They yielded on average only a quarter in wool and mutton of southern sheep.¹⁶³ Therefore, there was no demand for such 'inferior' animals outside the Highlands. For these reasons sheep played an important role in the traditional Highland economy, but they never acquired a dominant position until new breeds and specialised sheep farmers from the Lowlands, the Borders and England began to introduce their flocks in huge numbers to the Highlands.

The introduction of new breeds such as 'Blackface', 'Cheviots' and 'Lintons' in the second half of the eighteenth century had disastrous effects on the socio-economic structure of the Highlands. Cheviots, for example, needed better pasture on lower ground that had traditionally been reserved for cattle grazing or even used for agriculture. As such land was limited, these sheep breeds began to rival the Highlanders and their cattle for scarce resources. The conversion of tilled land to sheep farms posed a vital threat to many tenants and forced them from their farms.

However, the impact the new sheep farms would make on the Highlands was, at their inception, not necessarily viewed in a negative light. On the contrary, in the age of improvement, many landowners considered large-scale sheep farming as a solution to the economic crisis of the Highlands. Visitors to the Highlands vigorously

¹⁶² The common Highlanders also consumed the carcasses of those sheep that had died from 'braxy'. As the course of this fatal disease is very rapid and mainly affects the intestines of the animal, the Highlanders washed the carcass and ate the other parts apart from the intestines. Sarah Murray reported that the servants and lower people were very keen to buy the carcasses. They skinned them, cut them up, and washed and soaked them thoroughly in a burn. Finally, the meat was salted and kept for use. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 251-252. See also *SND*, vol. ii, p. 256. As a protection against 'braxy' the heather on clay and gravelly soils was regularly set alight. See Hogg, *Tour*, p. 70.

¹⁶³ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 39.

discussed its effects, with opinions ranging from staunch defence of this 'improvement' to dire warnings about its disastrous effects.

Robert Heron (in the 1790s) was one of the great advocates of the new development. He was fully aware that incoming sheep farmers from areas such as Clydesdale took over more and more farms in the Highlands because they were able to pay higher rents than traditional Highland farmers. He was also well aware of the complaint that the new sheep farms forced the Highlanders from their stretches of land. Nonetheless, he played down the depopulation of the Highlands and claimed that the Highlanders would even benefit:

By insensible degrees, however, the Highland farmers learn to imitate the practices of those strangers whom they see acquire opulence where they themselves can barely subsist. They find the same management which enriches strangers, succeed with themselves.¹⁶⁴

Heron also justified the progress of sheep farming because of its positive impact on the British economy. He reckoned that from a wider perspective the sheep's wool and meat would support a far larger population outside the Highlands than those few Highlanders who would have to leave their farms. His arguments were clearly influenced by Adam Smith's theories of political economy and his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). Heron even argued that the large-scale introduction of sheep in the Highlands would not only serve a higher purpose for the British nation, but it would soon also restore the initial loss of population:

Meanwhile, it is unreasonable to complain of the present depopulation of the Highlands of Scotland. It is much more inconsiderable than has been said. Those who are induced to leave the Highlands, find employment elsewhere, without being obliged to forsake their country. By those modes of managing the lands, which are complained of as depopulating, maintenance is obtained from them for a much greater number of mankind, than they could before maintain. And, all this maintenance is either consumed within the kingdom, or at least exchanged for commodities equally necessary, which are consumed within it. The natural course of human affairs, and the exertions of individuals, and of associated bodies, directed to this particular purpose will shortly be seen to restore to the Highlands, that population which they may seem to have lost.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Heron, *Observations*, vol. i, p. 248.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 251-252. See also *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 220, 247-252, 281. Heron made these comments while travelling along the shore of Loch Tay from Kenmore to Killin. He later met a number of Lord Breadalbane's tenants at the inn in Killin, where they had come together to divide up 100 Cheviots, which Lord Breadalbane had, by the advice of Sir John Sinclair, presented to his farmers to improve the breed of sheep on his estate. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 264. On this tour Heron did not visit the north-western Highlands, where the arrival of new sheep breeds began to force whole communities from their land. Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster was a great advocate of the introduction of Cheviots in the Highlands.

One of the most interesting and informative accounts on the extension of sheep farming in the Highlands was written by James Hogg, the ‘Ettrick Shepherd’.¹⁶⁶ Born in Ettrick (Selkirkshire), traditional ‘sheep country’, he learnt the business of sheep breeding in his childhood. Hogg toured the Highlands in 1803, and his observations reveal much about the progress of sheep farming and its impact on Highland life. He noted that the hills on the northern bank of Loch Awe were well stocked with sheep and that a gentleman was just introducing Cheviots on his farm there.¹⁶⁷ In other parts of Argyllshire the introduction of Cheviots had already progressed. At Fort William Hogg visited Thomas Gillespie who had left the Borders in the early 1780s, leased a farm from MacDonald of Glengarry and introduced Cheviots from his native country to his land in the Highlands. Glengarry supported the introduction of new sheep breeds on his estate by exacting no rent from Gillespie until the land let to him raised a profit. Over the past twenty years, Gillespie had acquired many neighbouring farms and accumulated land stretching from Loch Garry to the Atlantic coast. The Cheviots thrived, and Gillespie and Glengarry benefited greatly from their introduction as their land increased hugely in value.¹⁶⁸ Hogg did not mention what had happened to the subtenants when Gillespie introduced the new breeds of sheep. However, John Stoddart had travelled the Highlands extensively in 1799 and 1800, and he had also met Mr Gillespie. Stoddart described Mr Gillespie as ‘one of the first adventurers in sheep-farming, on a great scale, in the Highlands’.¹⁶⁹ According to Stoddart, Gillespie had rented land stretching 30 miles in length and had stocked it entirely with sheep. The impact was obvious: ‘In this vast extent, formerly dwelt a numerous clan ready to take up arms at the will of their chief, Glengarry. Now there are only a few huts, inhabited by peaceable herdsmen.’¹⁷⁰ In other parts of the

¹⁶⁶ James Hogg (1770-1835). He is also famous as a novelist and poet.

¹⁶⁷ See Hogg, *Tour*, p. 35. Hogg wrote that an earlier attempt to introduce Cheviots on a farm at Dalmally had been abandoned in its infancy.

¹⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 38-39, 52.

¹⁶⁹ Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. ii, p. 67.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 67. Stoddart defended the large-scale introduction of sheep in the Highlands for the same reasons as Heron. Stoddart wrote that estates were now let usually for £100 per annum for every 1,000 sheep, far more than agriculture could produce. He was aware that the tenants were driven off their land, but he argued that ‘a greater quantity of animal food is produced to the community, and the manufacturing towns receive an accession of numbers’. Moreover, ‘the peasantry, instead of having months of alternate indolence, and labour, are regularly employed throughout the year’. *Ibid.*, vol. ii,

Highlands the situation was no different. Stoddart commented on the near-complete depopulation of Glen Croe (Argyll) due to the introduction of large sheep farms:

The system of farming, which now prevails over almost the whole of the Highlands, necessarily annihilates the population; and this part of the empire seems to be converted into a mere sheep-walk for the rest. I will not pretend to say, that this partial evil, in modern politics, is not compensated by the prevalence of manufactures, and other employments, in the more populous parts of the empire; but still it is an evil to the places where it prevails.¹⁷¹

Stoddart was also one of the first travellers aware of the ecological damage done to the Highlands by sheep. He observed:

The mountains themselves are affected by the pasturage of sheep; the grass being bitten close on the summits of the steeps, admits the rain, which gradually loosening the rocky fragments, prepares them for being rolled down by the floods, and forms those stony torrents which spread down the mountain-side, bearing with them the character of desolation, and often overspreading whole fields at their base.¹⁷²

Hogg mentioned another highly controversial 'improvement'. At Inveroran (at the south-west end of Loch Tulla, midway between Tyndrum and Kingshouse) he met a Mr M'Callum who had taken an extensive farm on the Strathconon estate in Easter Ross, which Hogg had visited the year before. Mr M'Callum informed Hogg

that all that extensive estate was let to sheep farmers, saving a small division on the lower end, which the General had reserved for the accommodation of such of the natives as could not dispose of themselves to better advantage.¹⁷³

Again, the subtenants had to make space for sheep, and only those who could not afford to leave were allowed to stay in a kind of 'reservation' on the estate.

As an advocate of sheep farming, Hogg did not mention any particular incidents with respect to the conversion of the Strathconon estate to sheep pasture. John Lettice, however, had toured the Highlands in 1792, and he witnessed the subtenants' resistance against the introduction of sheep in Easter Ross. He reported on the outbreak of riots provoked by the removal of 37 subtenants and their families from their farms in order to consolidate the land into a single sheep farm let to one

p. 68. However, he reckoned that the changes after 1746 had come too fast for the common people and had not been slowed down by the state.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 248. The only person Stoddart met in Glen Croe was a solitary shepherd and his family.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 68-69. Stoddart was well aware that 'the picturesque appearance of the country' and its 'character of solitude and stillness' were the result of the displacement of people by sheep. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 68. On Tiree and Coll the number of sheep had been reduced in the late 1780s and early 1790s from 14,000 to 1,100 because of their damage to the land, particularly on Tiree. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 272.

¹⁷³ Hogg, *Tour*, p. 37.

tenant. He first considered the reports about evictions to be exaggerated, but he soon realised the scale of the tenants' anger.¹⁷⁴ At Inverness he attended the opening of the trial of the Ross-shire rioters. He reported that a huge crowd of peasants from all over Ross-shire and Sutherland had gathered and waited anxiously for the outcome of the case. The rioters were

indicted and accused of the crimes of riot, assault, and battery, by assembling with a number of other persons, and forcibly relieving, from a poind-fold, certain cattle confined therein; and, at the same time, assembling and beating the gentleman and his servants, who had poinded the cattle.¹⁷⁵

In court it was found that the cattle, mentioned in the indictment, were the subtenants' cows and horses that had been removed from their old pastures to make way for the incoming sheep. Moreover, Captain Cameron, the prosecutor, had not given fair and legal notice of his entrance of the tenants' premises. The jury considered the tenants' action as legitimate self-defence against the threat of violence used by Captain Cameron, his brother and their servants. They delivered a verdict of 'not guilty', and the subtenants were acquitted. However, not all small farmers were so lucky. The next day Lettice attended briefly the trial of the 'cottage farmers', who had assembled in an armed crowd and had driven away the sheep, intending to force them out of Ross-shire and Sutherland. This time the farmers were found guilty. Two of them were sentenced to transportation for seven years, others to fines and imprisonment and those less culpable were dismissed.¹⁷⁶ Lettice showed sympathy

¹⁷⁴ See Lettice, *Letters*, pp. 341-342. Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan (1721-1790) was the first improver to introduce large-scale sheep farming in Easter Ross in the late 1770s and 1780s. He restrained his small tenants who led a campaign of intimidation against the incoming sheep farmers from the south. After his death in 1790 the protest took a more violent form. The 'Ross-shire riots' had their beginning on the estate of Sir Hector Munro of Novar (1726-1805) in 1791. He let the greater part of his land to two brothers, Captain Allan Cameron and Mr Alexander Cameron, natives of Lochaber, and, more significantly, sheep farmers. In 1792 the conversion of arable land and common pasture to sheep walks led to the eviction of the small tenants and the outbreak of armed resistance. For a detailed study of the events leading to the 'Ross-shire riots' and the trial of the revolting small tenants see E. Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances*, vol. i (London, 1982), pp. 185-186, 249-283. [hereafter: Richards, *Highland Clearances*]

¹⁷⁵ Lettice, *Letters*, p. 363. According to Lettice, these were the words of the indictment.

¹⁷⁶ For details about their trials see *ibid.*, pp. 363-366. The two small tenants who had been sentenced to transportation for their involvement in the riots escaped from prison at the Tolbooth of Inverness on the night of 24 October 1792. Despite a reward of £10 for their apprehension, Hugh Breck Mackenzie and John Aird were never caught. Moreover, there is strong evidence that they were assisted in their escape by prison staff and the public. See Richards, *Highland Clearances*, vol. i, p. 272. The riots in Easter Ross were not mentioned in the *Statistical Account* because the reports for the affected parishes of Contin and Urray had already been returned in 1791 and 1791-92. However, the Reverend Roderick Mackenzie, minister of Contin, clearly knew what was to come. He reported to Sir John Sinclair: 'The population is on the increase, but it is feared will soon decrease, as the gentlemen are

for the subtenants' desperate situation, and he dismissed the profit motives of the landowners:

It is not, indeed, credible, till proved by fact, that any thing in human shape should be so sordid and so savage, that, to become worth a few pounds more, (and what else but a halter?) he would reduce a being of his own species, happy but to earn a bare subsistence by the sweat of his brow, to such a piteous state of helplessness and despair.¹⁷⁷

encouraging shepherds to come and settle on their properties, which must necessarily remove the present inhabitants, and force them to go in quest of bread to other countries, as there are no manufactures established here to employ them.' *OSA*, vol. xvii (Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty), p. 331. In September 1837 the Reverend Charles Downie, minister of Contin, reported for the *New Statistical Account* that only one out of eleven landowners resided in the parish, and that the natives did not leave their native soil until they were swept off it to make way for extensive farmers. Despite evictions and the introduction of Blackface and Cheviot sheep, the parish's population had remained stable. It had risen slightly from 2,000 in 1792 to 2,023 in 1831. The Revd Charles Downie reported that the people of his parish 'enjoy in a very limited degree, the pleasures and advantages of society; yet they are in general not dissatisfied with their condition'. *NSA*, vol. xiv (Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty), p. 239. See also *ibid.*, pp. 237, 238, 240-241.

¹⁷⁷ Lettice, *Letters*, p. 366. Whether the disastrous impact of sheep on the social structure of the Highlands could have been foreseen remains difficult to evaluate. Many experts, such as Matthew Culley and David Loch, welcomed the gradual improvement of estates by the introduction of new sheep breeds in the 1770s, but they did not foresee the long-term consequences. In 1775 the English agriculturalist Matthew Culley praised Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan for his introduction of new breeds of black cattle, sheep and horses. He called him 'a blessing to his fellow creatures' for he spread industry, prosperity, comfort and happiness in an otherwise barren and uncultivated country. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 120. Culley particularly recommended the extension of sheep breeding since, in his view, these animals were best adapted to the country. He reckoned that it would not take long until the proprietors would realise the benefits of large-scale sheep farming, and he predicted that they would soon breed ten times as many sheep as they did at the moment. Moreover, this extension was not incompatible with the breeding of cattle and the cultivation of corn. He remarked: 'Were the people of this country to pursue a proper mode of management they might breed as many black cattle as they do at present, grow more corn, and at the same time keep ten sheep for one they now do.' *Ibid.*, p. 127. He likewise praised Hector Munro of Novar who spent a huge share of the fortune that he had acquired in India on the improvement of his estate. See *ibid.*, p. 132. David Loch commented (in 1778) on the improvements of estates in Easter Ross: 'Sir John Gordon, and all the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood, are improving their estates much to their own and country's advantage. But, above all, my good old friend Captain Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan, has exerted himself greatly, not only in improving his lands, but in bringing into this part of the country the best breed of fine wooled sheep, black cattle, and horses, that England could afford; for this purpose, he spared neither pains nor price to get the choicest. They are thriving and increasing as he could wish, and much more than he expected.' D. Loch, *A Tour Through Most Of The Trading Towns And Villages Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1778), p. 55. [hereafter: Loch, *Tour*] In 1776 Loch had been appointed Inspector General of the woollen manufactures by the Board of Trustees for Manufactures and Fisheries. By the early nineteenth century, most authors had become very critical of sheep breeding and warned about the rapid depopulation of some parts of the Highlands. See, for example, Willis, *Tour*, p. 64. See also Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 390-392. John Walker explained the advantages of sheep in comparison to black cattle, but he pleaded for a sound mixture of agriculture, cattle rearing and sheep farming in the Highlands. He gave repeated warnings about the economic dangers of focusing entirely on sheep breeding. See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, pp. 149-153.

However, in the end the subtenants' resistance was futile. As can be seen from Hogg's journal, by the turn of the century all their land had been converted to sheep walks.

Most commentators were far less sympathetic to the subtenants than Lettice and supported the introduction of sheep in Ross-shire. Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, for instance, welcomed the suppression of the subtenants' opposition. He praised Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan's tough stance and defended large-scale sheep farming as being more beneficial to the public and the individual landowner than subletting land for small-scale farming.¹⁷⁸ Mackenzie's explanation of the outbreak of the riots showed no sympathy for the small farmers' rights. He reported that strong symptoms of opposition to sheep farming began to appear in 1791 among the lower order of people, while the gentlemen were beginning to realise its advantages. Sheep were more profitable than black cattle and began to replace the latter. Low country cattle could no longer be grazed in the hills of Ross-shire, but had to be sent to Sutherland.

These circumstances induced the lower classes inhabiting the low country to make common cause with the dispossessed Highlanders; and at the unfortunate time when the spirit of revolution and revolt was fast gaining ground over the whole kingdom, an open insurrection broke out in Ross-shire, in the summer of 1792.¹⁷⁹

Mackenzie welcomed that the gentlemen and magistrates of the county had assembled a small military force, proceeded against the insurgents, dispersed them, arrested their leaders and tried them in court. This firm action, he wrote, 'completely quelled the spirit of rebellion amongst the people in general' and

from that period, the sheep farmers have met with no interruption in the management of their concerns, and the system has spread to a most surprising extent in a very short period of time.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Before turning his attention to the introduction of sheep, Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan had experimented in the late 1760s with extensive wood plantations. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 34. Thomas Pennant visited the estate in 1769 and praised its owner as 'the best farmer and the greatest planter in the country'. Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 166.

¹⁷⁹ G. Mackenzie, *General View Of The Agriculture Of The Counties Of Ross And Cromarty* (London, 1813), pp. 131-132. [hereafter: Mackenzie, *General View*] For Mackenzie's full account of the introduction of sheep in Ross-shire and Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan's role see *ibid.*, pp. 126-138. Mackenzie wrote that the improvement of the Highlands of Ross-shire was still in progress, but 'there are some districts still too populous for improvement'. *Ibid.*, p. 137. Mackenzie clearly advocated the eviction of tenants in favour of sheep.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

Mackenzie was not the only advocate for the extension of sheep farming in the Highlands. Hogg repeatedly praised the suitability of the Argyllshire glens and hills for sheep and wondered why more of them had not yet been introduced. In his boundless admiration of sheep he completely overlooked their fateful impact on the Highlands. In the typical attitude of an ‘improver’ his comments speak for themselves:

The greater part of this district [Argyll] is certainly calculated only for the rearing of these useful animals, sheep, yet there are still many places not stocked with them, or but very partially so. But as there is now such a number of enlightened farmers in the country and its neighbourhood, experience, the most effectual teacher, will soon convince the natives of their real interest.¹⁸¹

The landowners and sheep farmers undoubtedly made huge profits, but it has to be doubted whether large-scale sheep farming was in the real interest of the majority of the Highlanders.

No doubt, Hogg was one of the biggest advocates for the extension of sheep farming in the Highlands, and he praised their introduction at every opportunity. He reported that the ‘Valley of Strathinashalloch’ (Strath na Sealga, between Loch Maree and Dundonnell, Ross and Cromarty) was now inhabited only by Mr Macintyre’s shepherds because the tenants had left after the last term, leaving behind considerable crops of corn and potatoes. The estate was owned by a Mr Davidson, but the greatest part of it was farmed by Mr Macintyre who had converted the land to a sheep farm. Mr Macintyre rented the land for £200 per annum, which Hogg reckoned to be an excellent bargain because it would yield annual returns of £600 to £700 once it had been properly stocked.¹⁸² The Dundonnell estate faced similar prospects. Hogg noted that there was huge pressure on the land, that the valleys were impoverished by perpetual cropping and that most of the mountains laid waste. He reckoned that the estate would bring more than £2,000 if converted to sheep walks, but at the moment the natives held only ‘small parcels of diminutive sheep’ around their dwellings and paid no more than £700 rent to Dundonnell. Nonetheless,

¹⁸¹ Hogg, *Tour*, pp. 44-45.

¹⁸² See *ibid.*, pp. 88-89. At the time of Hogg’s visit in 1803, the land was not yet fully stocked with sheep as Mr Macintyre had only just entered at Whitsunday. Ten years later Mr Macintyre enjoyed great success. George Mackenzie praised him as ‘an example of activity and good management’. According to Mackenzie, Macintyre had an extensive sheep farm and had successfully cultivated the ground around his residence at Letterewe (Loch Maree). Mackenzie, *General View*, p. 257.

Dundonnell was still loath to ‘chase them all away to America’.¹⁸³ Hogg outlined Dundonnell’s options. Either he could decide against a higher profit and in favour of his loyal tenants, or he could accept the sheep farmers’ higher bids, evict his tenants and commercialise his estate:

He [Dundonnell] hath, however, the pleasure of absolute sway. He is even more so in his domains than Bonaparte is in France. I saw him call two men from their labour a full mile, to carry us through the water. I told him he must not expect to be served thus by the shepherds if once he had given them possession.¹⁸⁴

Heron wanted to promote sheep breeding in the Highlands because he was convinced that Britain as a whole would benefit economically, whereas Hogg advocated sheep breeding because the landowners would profit more from it than from traditional agriculture and farming. Thomas Pennant was far more critical of the economic effects of large-scale sheep farming, and he dismissed both arguments. He noted (in 1772) that the hills of Perthshire and Argyll were already almost entirely stocked with south country sheep, which had expelled the breed of black cattle. He gave a clear warning of the economic dangers of this development:

Sheep are found to turn more to the advantage of the proprietors; but whether to the benefit of the community, is a doubt. The live stock of cattle of this kingdom decreases: from whence will our navy be victualled? or how will those, who may be able to purchase animal food, be supplied, if the mere private interest of the farmer is suffered universally to take place? Millions at this time look up to Legislature for restrictions, that will once more restore plenty to these kingdoms.¹⁸⁵

On his tour to Mull and Staffa in 1784, Faujas de Saint-Fond witnessed the way southern sheep breeds gradually advanced into the Highlands, displacing the traditional breed. His comparison of both breeds shows why the traditional Scottish breed had no chance against its southern brother. According to Faujas, the wool of the traditional Scottish breed was much superior to that of the southern sheep, but the

¹⁸³ Hogg, *Tour*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁵ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 17. Highland Perthshire and Argyll had already been taken over by southern sheep. Three years earlier Pennant had witnessed the first arrival of the new sheep breeds in Lochaber, then still dominated by cattle. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 208. By 1775 new sheep breeds were rapidly spreading throughout Lochaber. That year Matthew Culley visited Mr Stewart of Ballachulish who was very keen to improve his breed of sheep. Matthew’s brother George added that Mr Stewart and many of his neighbours had lately adopted sheep farming on a large scale. The breed that they had been recommended was the ‘blackfaced or short sheep, a kind perhaps of all others best adapted to live upon a mountainous exposed country like this’. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 140. On Skye, in 1772, by comparison, there were no sheep kept apart from those used for home consumption and wool production for the islanders’ clothing. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 310.

latter produced about twice as much wool as its Scottish counterpart. Moreover, the southern sheep was fatter and heavier and as a consequence sold at a much higher price. He reckoned that a southern sheep, in good condition, sold for half a guinea and often twelve shillings, whereas a traditional Scottish sheep seldom brought more than six or seven shillings.¹⁸⁶ It is, therefore, not surprising that these ‘wool and meat machines’ took over most of the Highlands in less than half a century, expelling in their advance cattle, traditional Scottish sheep breeds and, last but not least, the Highlanders themselves.

However, there were also big differences between the newly introduced southern breeds. The Blackface was hardier than the Cheviot and, therefore, more suitable for higher grounds. It could thrive on heather hills, coarse and exposed pastures. The Cheviot required lower, more protected and better pastures, particularly in winter time. On the other hand, the Cheviot yielded more profit than the Blackface. It produced a third more wool, which sold between nineteen to twenty shillings per stone, whereas Blackface wool fetched only eight to ten shillings per stone.¹⁸⁷

Mr George Malcolm described the way the new sheep farms were run.¹⁸⁸ According to Malcolm, the grounds were not common as in England, but were all separate properties, divided into extensive farms, with distant marches, from 3,000 to 4,000 acres. These huge farms were stocked with several herds, and a single flock seldom had more than 700 or 800 acres on which to graze. These farms were almost exclusively stocked with sheep, and the farmer sowed only a little corn and kept a few cows for his own use. The hills were not enclosed, and every shepherd had to take care that his flock did not overgraze any area. Moreover, in bad weather he had to keep the sheep on the part of the farm where they were most sheltered from

¹⁸⁶ See Faujas, *Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 80-81.

¹⁸⁷ See J. Naismyth, *Observations On The Different Breeds Of Sheep, And The State Of Sheep Farming, In The Southern Districts Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1795), p. 4. [hereafter: Naismyth, *Observations*] John Naismyth toured the Borders, Dumfriesshire and Galloway in 1793 on behalf of the Society for the Improvement of British Wool. For a comparison that proves the superiority of the Cheviot over the Blackface see notes in *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸⁸ ‘A Letter from Mr. George Malcolm, concerning Sheep-Farms’, in Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, appendix vii, pp. 400-405. [hereafter: Malcolm, ‘Letter’] This account referred to sheep farms in the Borders near Langholm, but the new sheep farms in the Highlands were run in the same manner. Many of them were run by farmers from the Borders, who had taken over farms in the Highlands and converted them into sheep pasture.

storms. Hogs (i.e. young male sheep from weaning to first shearing) needed dry pasture, well mixed with heath. Ewes and lambs needed plentiful grass on low pastures, whereas the wethers (i.e. castrated male sheep, also known as ‘weddors’) were fit for the higher grounds. The farmer usually sold off wethers older than three years and about a seventh or eighth part of the elder ewe stock. These animals were mainly sold to the English. Teviotdale wethers sold on average from ten to fifteen shillings, and ewes sold from six to ten shillings. Wool sold on average from three shillings and six pence to six shillings and six pence per stone English (16 lbs to the stone). In most places sheep were smeared with a mixture of tar and butter to keep them warm and to protect their fleece from vermin such as the ‘cade’.¹⁸⁹ Most farmers kept less than one sheep per acre, and rents stood from two shillings to three shillings and six pence per sheep. Malcolm reported that rents for sheep farms had risen ‘from a third to double’ since about 1760.¹⁹⁰ This rise made sheep farming in the Highlands a volatile business, as the farmers could hardly improve their farms, relying mainly on rising prices from their stock. A bad season resulting in the loss of many sheep posed a serious threat to Highland sheep farmers. The sheep farmers in

¹⁸⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 402. There were already serious doubts about the usefulness of smearing sheep in the late 1770s. David Loch reported (in 1778) that sheep farmers in East Lothian, Dumfriesshire, Moffat, Lauder, Galashiels, Kelso and Easter Ross had greatly reduced the amount of tar or totally abandoned smearing. Abandoning this practice had not resulted in a deterioration of their sheep. On the contrary, their sheep were in a better condition and produced more wool of a better quality. In Moffat and Kelso manufacturers complained about the poor quality of tarred wool and accordingly paid lower prices for it. Loch summarised: ‘Here I must observe, that all the merchants, manufacturers, and dealers, over all the sheep countries, complain much of this pernicious custom, and they all agree, that those who tar least have most wool, and get double the price of those who tar heavy; at the same time that their sheep thrive much better. In short, the whole body of the people (the old obstinate store farmers excepted) abhor this base practice, and, with one voice, declare it does hurt, in place of service, to the health of the sheep.’ Loch, *Tour*, pp. 50-51. See also *ibid.*, pp. 32, 40-44, 48, 55.

Naismyth, however, presented a very different picture. He reported (in 1793) that the majority of sheep breeders still believed in the positive effects of smearing their animals. Naismyth wrote that the majority of sheep farmers in the Borders, Dumfriesshire and Galloway still thought that smearing was necessary to defend their sheep from the cold and damp of winter and to destroy the vermin which lodged in their fleeces. Thus it prevented the loss of fleeces every spring as the result of scratching and rubbing. Experiments had shown that untreated sheep thrived in the short term as well as smeared ones, but in the long term they gave less wool. Moreover, their wool was of poorer quality and less fit for the purposes of manufacture. See Naismyth, *Observations*, p. 6. Smearing was finally abandoned when the textiles industry required wool of greater purity and prices for smeared wool plunged. Wool prices in general rose steadily throughout the 1770s and 1780s. See Loch, *Tour*, p. 44. See also Naismyth, *Observations*, p. 5. In the Borders smearing sheep with a mixture of grease and tar had been practised for centuries. Christopher Lowther reported on this practice in 1629. See C. Lowther, *Our Journall Into Scotland, Anno Domini 1629, 5th Of November, From Lowther*, ed. by W. Douglas (Edinburgh, 1894), p. 14.

¹⁹⁰ Malcolm, ‘Letter’, p. 403.

Tweeddale, Clydesdale, Annandale and Galloway sold mainly wether hogs (i.e. male sheep (castrated or not) before their first shearing) and some lambs. Again, most of the stock was sold to the English, who fattened them on their commons for slaughter. Since the early 1760s, hogs had sold from five shillings to eight shillings and six pence. Malcolm reported that sheep were liable to a number of fatal diseases, the 'rot' being the worst. Sheep were particularly vulnerable to contract the 'rot' when pasturing on wet and marshy ground during the rainy season in August and September.

Last but not least, it is worthwhile examining the way in which certain landowners used the threat of converting arable land to sheep pasture as a powerful tool in Highland politics. Lord Mountstuart gave an example of the way sheep were used as a threat that hovered above the tenants' heads like the sword of Damocles. He visited Canna on behalf of the British Fisheries Society in 1788, and his account gives a vivid impression of the dangers that the introduction of sheep posed to the tenants and the traditional Highland economy. He reported that Canna was a country made for sheep, but he wondered why there were none to be seen. He explained that many disputes had arisen where flocks were kept and that the subtenants had joined unanimously in a petition to the tacksman, Mr MacNeill, to remove them.¹⁹¹ Moreover, Lord Mountstuart reported that the subtenants had bound themselves under a heavy penalty not to reintroduce them. Before the arrival of the tacksman, the tenants used to quarrel amongst themselves, but the threat that Mr MacNeill's plan posed of converting the island to a sheep farm had obviously convinced them to put their quarrels to one side and unite against the large-scale introduction of sheep. Lord Mountstuart wrote that Mr MacNeill had leased the island for 24 years, five of which had already passed. On the security of this lease he had invested in a house, a garden, an inn and a mill. Despite already making huge profits from his tack, he wanted to convert the whole island to a sheep farm when the subtenants' leases expired in two years. This threat explains the subtenants' reaction of trying to ban

¹⁹¹ Hector MacNeill had obtained a 24-year lease of Canna from Clanranald in 1781. He had originally leased lands near Campbeltown in Kintyre. When he left for Canna in 1781 or 1782, he had not yet paid the rents to the Duke of Argyll for these lands for part of 1779 and whole of 1780 and 1781. The rents had not been paid by 1785 when his creditors started legal action to recover his debts in the Inverness-shire court. See J.L. Campbell, *Canna: The Story Of A Hebridean Island* (3rd edn. Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 133-134. [hereafter: Campbell, *Canna*]

sheep from the island. However, Lord Mountstuart considered their chances to be slim and commented laconically that ‘Mcneil’s plan of a sheep farm will certainly cause emigration’.¹⁹²

However, there is also another plausible explanation. The threat of evictions on Canna was a recurrent theme to convince or ‘force’ the British Fisheries Society to choose the island for one of its fishing villages. In 1787 MacDonald of Clanranald, the proprietor of Canna, had formally offered land on the island to the British Fisheries Society when its Directors toured the Hebrides. One of the Directors noted in his account of their tour that Canna had an excellent harbour and sufficient population for the establishment of a fishing village. Moreover, he noted that the tacksman on the island, Mr MacNeill, had offered to cooperate with the Society. The anonymous Director noted also that many of the islanders on Canna faced eviction by an expansionist tenant unless the Society came to their aid.¹⁹³ Nonetheless, the Directors did not respond immediately to the offer made by Clanranald. The expansionist tenant could have referred to none other than Mr MacNeill, the sole tacksman on the island. It seems that the threats were renewed in the following year. The same story was repeated to Lord Mountstuart during his visit to Canna in 1788, this time to force the British Fisheries Society to take a decision.

In this case the tacksman’s plan to convert the island to a sheep farm was just a pretext to put pressure on the British Fisheries Society, and it was not intended to be

¹⁹² NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fo. 41v. See also *ibid.*, fos. 36r.-36v. This comment seems to have been inserted later. The ‘Small Isles’, including Canna, were surveyed for the *Statistical Account* in 1794-95. The figures given in the *OSA* do not vary considerably from the figures given by Lord Mountstuart in 1788. Mountstuart reckoned the population of Canna at 320, the *OSA* at 304. According to Mountstuart, the tacksman paid a rent of £206 to the owner, MacDonald of Clanranald. The *OSA* put the rent for Canna at about £240 (kelp included). See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fos. 36v.-37r. See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 238, 241. These figures suggest that the subtenants were successful in preventing the conversion of their land to sheep pasture. These plans (due to be put in practice in 1790) had obviously not been implemented by the mid-1790s. The parish of the Small Isles was surveyed again for the *New Statistical Account* in January 1836 by the local minister, Revd Donald MacLean, but his account did not include figures for the population or rent of Canna. It might be argued that the tacksman’s plan shows the general pattern of greedy incoming tacksmen and sheep farmers who put money before people. Mountstuart commented on Mr MacNeill’s greed: ‘He pays Clanronald £206 & talks of putting still more into his pocket, his own profits are doubtless at least equivalent to the Proprietors ...’. NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fo. 36v. Thirty tons of kelp formed a considerable part of Canna’s resources, and Lord Mountstuart saw the islanders busily involved in collecting and burning seaweed. See *ibid.*, fos. 36v.-37r.

¹⁹³ See Piscator (pseudonym), ‘Voyage’, in *The Bee*, vol. viii (1792), pp. 177-178. See also J. Dunlop, *The British Fisheries Society 1786-1893* (Edinburgh, 1978), pp. 90-91. [hereafter: Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*]

implemented in the near future. Moreover, in the 1770s and 1780s kelp-making had become an increasingly lucrative business. This industry was very labour-intensive and depended on a huge workforce. Until the late 1780s kelp prices had risen steadily, and it would have made no sense from an economic point of view to evict the workforce from Canna and not to cash in on the kelp boom.¹⁹⁴ Finally, Mr MacNeill and MacDonald of Clanranald on the one side, and the British Fisheries Society on the other, could not agree on the financial terms of purchasing land on Canna for the proposed fishing village, and in 1791 the Directors turned their back on the island. Canna was not cleared for sheep until May 1851.¹⁹⁵

Whether the conversion of Canna to a sheep farm was a real threat or merely used as a pretext in order to influence a favourable decision of the British Fisheries Society cannot be finally answered, as rising kelp prices in the mid-1790s may have contributed to postpone the introduction of sheep. However, this episode clearly shows that the threat of eviction and the introduction of sheep were a powerful tool in Highland politics. Moreover, it exemplifies the way incoming sheep could radically change and destroy a socio-economic entity that had developed over centuries. Sheep had always been a vital part of the traditional Highland economy, but the introduction of huge sheep farms meant a death blow to the old Highland economy and traditional Highland life.

The overwhelming majority of travellers acknowledged the need for change in the Highlands to stop the impoverishment and emigration of the Highlanders. However, they did not consider the introduction of sheep as an appropriate measure, but instead turned their attention to an extension of the fisheries and kelp industry. Part of the change from life in the traditional Highland townships in the direction of

¹⁹⁴ Kelp production was indeed a relatively new business on Canna. John Walker surveyed the island in 1764 and gave its population at 253 and the yearly rent at 1,600 merks Scots. He reported that Canna 'exports a good many Cattle, but no other Article'. He did not mention kelp production or sheep breeding on Canna. McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 229. Edward Clarke visited Canna in 1797 and reported that the islanders' chief employment was the manufacture of kelp. See Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 259.

¹⁹⁵ See Campbell, *Canna*, pp. 119-127, 162. It is interesting to note that these threats were totally ignored by another 'high-profile' member of the 1787 Directors' tour. Lachlan Mactavish had accompanied the Directors of the British Fisheries Society as a representative of the Board of Trustees for Manufactures and Fisheries. He prepared his own account of their tour of the Hebrides in 1787, but he did not mention the threat of evictions on Canna although he must have had access to the meetings of the Directors and the local landowners. See NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fos. 97-98.

the making of the crofting community was the resettlement of the Highlanders from the glens in the interior to the coastal strips. Against the background of this, often forced, migration, an extension of the fisheries and increasing kelp production seemed to be reasonable options.

6.4. Fisheries in the traditional Highland economy

Since the late Middle Ages the waters of western Scotland, and particularly around the Hebrides, had been famous for their rich fishing grounds. Fishing in the coastal waters and the lochs of the Highlands had for centuries played a vital role in the life of the Highlanders, who were dependent for many months of the year on fish as a major part of their diet. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the contribution of the fisheries to the traditional Highland economy and its changing role towards the end of the eighteenth century, when bodies such as the British Fisheries Society began to promote fisheries all over the western seaboard.¹⁹⁶

The natural preconditions for successful fisheries on the western seaboard were excellent. The seas around the Hebrides were well stocked with herring, cod, ling and all species of shellfish. Moreover, the coastline and the islands provided abundance of natural harbours and bays that offered shelter from bad weather. These natural advantages were realised quite early, and from the early seventeenth century onwards the government took measures to promote the fisheries on the western seaboard by building magazines for casks and salt in various parts of the Hebrides. Martin (1690s) reported that on the island of 'Hermetra' (Hermetray, off the north coast of North Uist) the foundations of such a magazine for casks and salt could still be seen. It was built by the English in the time of King Charles I to promote fisheries, but its effectiveness was prevented by the outbreak of the Civil War.¹⁹⁷ After the Restoration renewed efforts were made. King Charles II invested money in cooperation with some merchants in a joint company for catching and curing fish in the Hebrides. In the beginning the business was quite successful, and Martin was

¹⁹⁶ The extension of the fisheries on the western seaboard was the most important government measure to halt the economic decline of the Highlands in the late eighteenth century. It will, therefore, be dealt with separately in chapter 7.

¹⁹⁷ See Martin, *Description*, p. 51. He also mentioned the ruins of another English magazine in one of the islands in Loch Maddy (North Uist). See *ibid.*, p. 55.

assured that their fish was the best in Europe. However, when the king withdrew his money, the merchants quarrelled among themselves, and it did not take long before the company was shut down. According to Martin, this was the last effort made to promote the fisheries until the end of the seventeenth century.¹⁹⁸ In fact, a new initiative to promote the fisheries around the Northern Isles and the western seaboard was not launched by the British government until 1750.¹⁹⁹ During this time the Highlanders were still involved in fishing, but their efforts never exceeded beyond domestic demand, and there were no plans to establish an export industry.

In his account of the Isle of Skye, Martin described the fisheries of the islanders in great detail, reporting on the methods of catching and curing various species of fish.²⁰⁰ The locals caught herring, cod, ling, mackerel, haddock, whiting and turbot. Martin reported that the best time to take fish with a rod was in warm weather, when the fish were near the surface of the water. Cod and ling were best caught with a piece of herring, whiting, thornback, haddock or eel for bait. The 'grey-lord', alias 'black-mouth', a fish of the size and shape of a salmon, took limpet for a bait, but it was also caught with the short white goose feather lure pulled behind a rowed boat. As this species swam near the surface of the water, it was also caught easily with a spear secured to a rope.²⁰¹

Herring was the islanders' most important catch. Salted or dried fish, and particular herring, were a major part of the Highlanders' diet in winter and spring. However, salt was very expensive and the common Highlanders could hardly afford it. Instead of salting the herring, therefore, the islanders gutted them, tied them at the neck with a rush and hung them in pairs using a heather rope suspended from the

¹⁹⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 340-341.

¹⁹⁹ The initiative of 1750 will be discussed separately in chapter 7.1.1. At this point, it is only necessary to stress that a new bounty was granted to the owners of herring-busses to support the herring fishery. The herring-busses could stay for long periods at sea and were thus more economic, but they depended on feeders to bring casks, salt, and victuals and to take the cured fish home. However, the initiative failed due to the regulations attached to the payment of the bounty. Its payment was irregular and the complicated salt laws jeopardised the effort. For a contemporary account of the failure of the bounty see Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 319, 321-322, 192-193. See also Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 220-221.

²⁰⁰ Again, this can be regarded as representative for most of the Hebrides.

²⁰¹ See Martin, *Description*, p. 144.

ceilings of their huts. Thus herring could be preserved for up to eight months without a loss of taste.²⁰²

Shellfish also constituted a major component of the islanders' diet. The bays and harbours abounded with most kinds of shellfish and Martin reported that on the Kyle of Scalpay, for example, the locals usually gathered between fifteen and twenty horse-loads of oysters from the shore after a low spring tide. Shellfish were eaten mainly by the poor. Martin reported that the sands on the coast of the village of 'Bernstill' afforded at spring tides such numbers of mussels as was sufficient to maintain 60 persons per day. This was a great support to many poor families in the area as the 1690s were years of scarcity.²⁰³

The islanders caught also whales and seals. Catching these species was a more complex task that took the combined efforts of the whole community. Captain John Dymes reported (in 1630) that a great school of young whales had come into one of the lochs of Lewis, where they were immediately enclosed by the islanders in their boats. Lacking more efficient tools, the locals killed more than 100 of them with their swords, bows and arrows. They cut up the whale-meat and for want of salt powdered it with the ashes of burnt seaweed, smoked it and ate it like bacon.²⁰⁴ Martin described the way whales were caught to the east of Lewis. The islanders employed many boats to chase the whales into the bays, where they tried to wound one of them and run it ashore. The remainder of the school followed the wounded animal and ran themselves ashore, where they would be killed. Martin noted that 50 young whales were killed in this manner in c. 1690. Subsistence whaling was important and whale-meat was particularly eaten by the poorer sort of people, who found this food to be very nourishing.²⁰⁵

²⁰² See *ibid.*, p. 144. Martin wrote that this method was only applied to herring caught after 10 September.

²⁰³ See *ibid.*, p. 145. Burt confirmed in the 1720s that shellfish were a particular part of the poor tenants' diet. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 30. On the east coast, mussels were also a major component of the Highlanders' diet. Robertson reported (in 1767) that mussels constituted the principal food of the inhabitants of Dornoch (Sutherland) except for the summer months. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 22. John Lanne Buchanan reported in the 1780s that the poor kelp workers in the small islands of the Outer Hebrides often had nothing but shellfish and mussels to live on during the kelp-making season. See Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 160.

²⁰⁴ See 'Description Of Lewis By Captain Dymes (1630)', in Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, appendix F, pp. 593-594. On the Faroe Islands, to this day, whales are caught in this manner.

²⁰⁵ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 5-6. Whale-meat was a welcome contribution to the islanders' diet. Martin reported that some years ago 160 little whales ran themselves ashore on Tiree. This happened in time of scarcity and the natives ate them all, telling Martin that their meat was very nourishing and

Catching seals also took the combined efforts of the islanders. Around Heisker (or Monach Islands) the natives formerly used to catch seals by twisting together several small ropes of horsehair in form of a net narrowed at one end like a purse. By opening and shutting the net, the seals had nowhere to escape in the narrow channels between the islands. However, the more common method of taking seals was to beat them to death with clubs. Martin explained how this method was used on the rock of 'Eousmil' (probably Causamul, off the west coast of North Uist), which was famous for the taking of seals in October. The locals approached the rock by boat against the wind to avoid being driven away by the ocean or alerting the seals by their smell. The resting places of the seals were then surrounded, and the islanders clubbed them to death round the head. Martin reported that at one occasion 320 seals were killed in this way on the rock. The flesh of the seals was regarded as excellent food, being salted with the ashes of burnt seaweed and commonly eaten by the meaner people in spring. To avoid the strong smell of the meat, they would eat it with long sticks rather than forks.²⁰⁶ Additionally, the meat of seals was used for a variety of medical purposes:

The Flesh and Broth of fresh Young *Seals*, is by experience known to be Pectoral; the Meat is Astringent, and used as an effectual remedy against the *Diarrhea* and *Dysenteria*; the Liver of a *Seal* being dry'd and pulveriz'd, and afterwards a little of it drunk with Milk, *Aquavite* or Red-Wine, is also good against *Fluxes*.²⁰⁷

The great lochs and rivers of the Highlands and in the interior of the islands also offered plenty of opportunities for fishing. In these waters the Highlanders mainly caught trout, salmon and eel.²⁰⁸ In the season there was plenty of salmon.

wholesome. See *ibid.*, p. 269. Martin recommended a more vigorous pursuit of whaling on the western seaboard, as there were many narrow bays where whales could be easily caught. See *ibid.*, p. 343.

²⁰⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 61-64. Burt reported that the fishermen on the east coast around Inverness intercepted the seals on their return from the shore to the sea and knocked them down with clubs. Martin and Burt agreed that shooting seals was not successful. See Martin, *Description*, p. 63. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 45. Seals were caught all over Scotland's coasts. Pennant described the dangers involved in taking seals in the caves on the shore of Caithness. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 182-183.

²⁰⁷ Martin, *Description*, p. 64. James Robertson reported (in 1768) that the islanders on Skye also burnt seal oil in their lamps. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 99.

²⁰⁸ Some authors reported that the Highlanders despised eel and pike. See, for example, Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 122. However, other authors reported that in some places eel was a major component of the Highlanders' diet. An unidentified author wrote that 600 to 700 people at 'Spanizidell' in Sutherland rode at high speed to catch sand eels on the sandbanks at low tide. Within a few days, the catch was so abundant that it fed the locals for most of the year. The rush for this fish was such that the locals took no care of those who fell and were trampled on by their horses. Sand eels were also taken at Dornoch, at the 'Ferry of Unes' and in other parts of Sutherland. See 'The

Burt reported that even the children at Inverness caught salmon-fry with crooked pins, and Mildmay claimed that the River Ness was so full of salmon that they could be taken in some parts with one's own hands.²⁰⁹ Many fish were caught when they returned to the rivers and lochs to spawn. Then the locals stretched nets made of hemp across the rivers in anticipation of the fishes' arrival, or they placed baskets and hampers below little waterfalls, hoping that the salmon, in their attempts to jump the falls, might fall into them.²¹⁰ In the late eighteenth century, however, most of the salmon seems to have been exported, and travellers agreed that there were difficulties in obtaining salmon even in towns such as Perth and Inverness. William Anderson, for example, wrote (in 1787) that most of the salmon caught in the River Tay was exported to London and that it had become a rarity in Perth. The Chevalier de La Tocnaye observed that the salmon fishery on the River Ness had been leased by Londoners so that it was difficult to purchase salmon in Inverness.²¹¹

The Highlanders on the western seaboard, however, never extended the fisheries beyond domestic demands, and it was left to other nations, such as the Dutch, to reap the benefits from the rich seas to the north and west of Scotland.

Description of the Province of Southerland', in MacFarlane, *Geographical Collections*, vol. iii, pp. 101-102. Martin reported that the islanders had no objections to eating eel. He described the method of taking them in Loch Bhruist on the island of Berneray (off the north coast of North Uist). 'There is likewise plenty of Eels in this Lake, which are easiest caught in September, and then the Natives carry Lights with them in the Night time to the Rivulet running from the Lake, in which the Eels fall down to the Sea in heaps together.' Martin, *Description*, p. 43. Bishop Pococke reported (in 1760) that in Sutherland eel was only eaten by the common people. See Pococke, *Tours*, p. 131. Johnson, in contrast, wrote that the vulgar inhabitants of Skye abhorred eel. See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 136.

²⁰⁹ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 122. See Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fo. 50. The huge numbers of salmon in the rivers of Scotland created many myths about the method of taking them. Boece, for example, wrote that the people fixed cauldrons in the waterfalls and waited for the leaping salmon to fall into them. See Boece, *History*, vol. i, p. xliii. Richard Franck claimed that the locals along the River 'Errit' (River Ericht, formed by the Ardle and the Black Water, flows ten miles south-east to the Isla, two miles north-east of Coupar Angus) put pots of boiling water on submerged rocks in the river to trap migrating salmon. See Franck, *Northern Memoirs*, pp. 127-128. It was a recurrent myth in travellers' accounts of Scotland that the employers were forbidden by an ancient law to feed their servants more than two or three times a week on salmon. See *ibid.*, pp. 112-113. See J. Brome, *Travels Over England, Scotland and Wales* (London, 1700), p. 180. See Macky, *Journey*, p. 119. There was no such law, but servants did stipulate to their employers that they should not have to eat salmon more than three times a week. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 194. The same myth existed in Norway.

²¹⁰ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 56. Pennant observed this method in the River Tummel near Faskally. However, he admitted that it was not very successful and the landowner had hired out the taking of fish at the falls for £1 14s.

²¹¹ See [W. Anderson], *A Journal, Being An Account Of A Short Tour Or Excursion From Edinburgh 1787* (Nairn, 1912), p. 34. [hereafter: Anderson, *Tour*] See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, p. 272.

Captain John Dymes visited Lewis on behalf of the government in 1630. His observations show the huge lead the Dutch had over the Scots. He noted of the fisheries on Lewis:

But the great and rich comoditie wch might bee made of this land is the Fishinge whereof the inhabitants doe make but small benefitt besides their owne food, there beinge in the Island not above a dozen boats wch doe kill anie fish for sale.²¹²

In contrast, the Dutch made at the same time enormous profits:

But the Dutch wch have fished there theis two last yeares past have found that great and extraordinary gaine thereof, whoe onely wth 4er Busses wth 16 men and 25 netts in a Busse have within the space of three monethes killd three hundred last of Herrings by their factors and owne confession vnto mee was sold the last year at Danske [Danzig] for 400 gilders p last wch is about some 38 li sterlinge at wch rate the 300 last did come to 11400 li of wch if there bee rebated one third part for all chardges (wch is as much as needs to bee) it will plainly appeare that those 4er Busses in lesse then three monethes space did make 7500 li cleare gaine. The Master of one of those Busses wch transported me from the Island into the mayne continent did protest vnto mee that the fish was in such great abundance yt they were sometymes constrained to cast it into the sea againe they haveing more in halfe their netts then they were able to save, and he was of opinion that if there had bene a thousand Busses more there was fish enough for them all. As for the Cod and Ling the Dutch doth kill none of it themselves, but buyeth it at easie rates of the Inhabitants; wch are alsoe so farr from haveing the true industry of killinge that fish, that one boate with our Newfoundland men will kill more in a daie then they doe with one of their boates in a yeare.²¹³

The Dutch had big seaworthy ships, whereas most Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, had only small open boats that could not be used further out than ten to fifteen miles from the coastline.²¹⁴ Only the east coast mariners, and particularly those of the East Neuk of Fife, had seaworthy ships, but they lacked a system of busses and feeders as used by their Dutch rivals. Moreover, the Dutch had superior knowledge and skills in curing fish.²¹⁵ Martin deeply regretted that the Dutch who had settled in Stornoway in Lewis after the restoration of King Charles II had been expelled. He wrote that they had brought the islanders a great deal of money for their

²¹² 'Description Of Lewis By Captain Dymes (1630)', in Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, appendix F, p. 593.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 593.

²¹⁴ See B. Lenman, *An Economic History of Modern Scotland, 1660-1976* (London, 1977), p. 41. [hereafter: Lenman, *Economic History*]

²¹⁵ For a mid-eighteenth-century account of the Dutch method of curing and barrelling of herring see Campbell, *White-Herring-Fishery*, pp. 27-28. For criticism of the British method of herring-curing see Anderson, *Account*, pp. 111-115. Even in the late eighteenth century, herring cured by the Dutch was still superior to British herring. John Knox, therefore, demanded (in 1786) the introduction of strict laws to guarantee the quality of British herring. He referred to the Dutch who disposed of any catch that was not salted within ten hours or before six o' clock in the evening. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. cxxix-cxxx.

sea products, but even more important they had taught the locals the art of fishing. Martin would have liked the Dutch to remain in Stornoway so that, in pursuance of their business, they would have continued to pass on their knowledge to the local population, who had utilised it to surpass all their neighbours in the art of fishing.²¹⁶

The Hebrides had great potential for successful fisheries, and Martin was surely one of its greatest advocates. Although Martin regretted the expulsion of the Dutch from Stornoway, he wanted the Scots (and the British following the Union) first and foremost to make use of the riches of the sea. He outlined his agenda and criticised the waste of opportunities:

If the *Dutch* in their Publick Edicts call their Fishery a Golden Mine, and at the same time affirm that it yields them more profit than the *Indies* do to *Spain*, we have very great reason to begin to Work upon those Rich Mines, not only in the Isles, but on all our Coast in general. We have multitudes of Hands to be employ'd at a very easie rate; we have a healthful Climate, and our Fish, especially the Herring, come to our Coast in *April*, or *May*, and into the Bays in prodigious Shoals in *July*, or *August*. I have seen Complaints from *Loch Essort* in *Skie*, that all the Ships there were loaded, and that the Barrel of Herring might be had there for Four Pence, but there were no Buyers.²¹⁷

However, there was no response to his proposals. The Scottish fisheries in the rich waters of the western seaboard remained in a rudimentary state for nearly one more century. Pennant's account (1772) of the neglected state of the fisheries on Canna,

²¹⁶ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 347-348. In his efforts to attract trade and industry to the Hebrides, Martin repeatedly stressed the hospitality of the islanders and assured that the Western Isles were safe to merchants and foreigners. See *ibid.*, pp. 344-346. He did not mention that those Lowlanders who had been encouraged by King James VI (I) in 1598 and 1605 to settle down at Stornoway had been forcefully ousted by the MacLeods. However, this was an act of self-preservation against government-backed Lowland noblemen, who exploited a fratricidal power struggle among the MacLeods of Lewis and wanted to take over the island. John Lanne Buchanan's version that the heir to MacLeod with his neighbours 'fell upon the unfortunate strangers from the low-lands, and massacred them to the number of many hundreds in one night' is also misleading. James VI (I) had not sent, as claimed by J.L. Buchanan, 'a colony of industrious fishermen from the shire of Fife, in Scotland, with several Danes and Dutchmen, to teach and to exhibit an example of useful industry to the natives'. He had actually dispatched a government-backed invasion force as part of his attempt to subdue the clans on the western seaboard. Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 193. Dutch fishermen did not settle down at Stornoway until 1628. However, there were frequent complaints by the locals about their presence in the waters around Lewis, dating back to the 1590s. In 1629 Captain Mason proposed that the king should buy Lewis from the Earl of Seaforth and repatriate the Hollanders. See Mason, 'Proposals Concerning The Lewis Fisheries (1629)', in Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, appendix E, p. 589. See also *ibid.*, pp. 148-235, 303-305. For a near-contemporary account of the fight between the new settlers and the MacLeods and the foregoing events see 'The Ewill Trowbles Of The Lewes', in *Highland Papers*, ed. by J.R.N. Macphail, vol. ii (SHS, Edinburgh, 1916), pp. 265-288. [hereafter: SHS, *Highland Papers*]

²¹⁷ Martin, *Description*, p. 349. Martin's agenda must be seen in the context of his attempts to interest the government in the Hebrides. Moreover, he knew about Jacobite sympathies in the Western Isles and considered it the best way to fight this disaffection for the present government by promoting fisheries, industry and trade among the islanders. See also chapter 7, quotation 11.

where the islanders could neither afford boats nor had enough money to buy fish hooks, shows how little had changed in the eighteenth century.²¹⁸

By the end of the eighteenth century, on the western seaboard fish had become an even more important part of the subtenants' and crofters' diet. The efforts of the British Fisheries Society had made no major impact on the great majority of the coastal population. Most people still had no seaworthy boats, and their methods of catching fish had remained basic and unchanged over the centuries. Fishing was still limited to coastal waters, or even the beaches, as Clarke witnessed during his visit to Loch Bracadale (Skye) in August 1797:

Our sailors were in hopes a shoal of herrings had been cast on the shore. As soon as we arrived we found the country people in crowds, filling their baskets with small fish, which lay in myriads on the shore. They called them cuddies, as a general appellation, but I found them to consist of the young of the lithe, and various other fish found in these seas. Mr. Donald Grant, the tacksman of the land, then explained to me the reason of their appearance. His poor labourers and tenants, according to a usual custom, had built a circular rampart on the beach with loose stones. The tide overflowing, it filled the interior space with these fish, and afterward retiring through the interstices of the stones, left the fish an easy prey, exposed upon the sand.²¹⁹

Apart from the East Neuk fishermen, on the eastern seaboard things do not seem to have been very different. Burt reported in the 1720s that the fishermen around Inverness and the Moray Firth could not compete in their ill-equipped boats against the Dutch herring-busses. The local fishermen were unable to fish in the open sea, and they accused the Dutch of scaring away the herring from their coast. Additionally, their method of curing the catch for export was very poor and brought the Scottish ships into disrepute at foreign markets.²²⁰

²¹⁸ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 271-274.

²¹⁹ Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 298.

²²⁰ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 159-160. A more aggressive attitude towards the Dutch was taken by John Campbell in 1750. He complained about the way the Dutch exploited the waters around the Shetland Islands. He wanted the British to take over this highly profitable business and demanded that the Dutch fishing fleets should be expelled from the islands. See Campbell, *White-Herring-Fishery*, pp. 26-29. Knox had a similar attitude in 1786. He also demanded that the British should break the dominance of the Dutch and French around the Scottish coasts. See Knox, *Tour*, appendix, pp. 76-77. For a history of the Dutch fishery around the Shetland Islands and statistics for their number of ships, seamen and the size of their catch see *ibid.*, appendix, pp. 64-68. In all European markets British herring was trailing the Dutch. See *ibid.*, appendix, pp. 67-68.

6.5. Fowling

Fowling was a major component of the Highlanders' life and economy in many parts of the Western Isles. Apart from catching birds and eggs for subsistence, the islanders exported feathers and bird products to the mainland. For many communities on remote and small islands, birds were a major source of food and money to pay their rents. Although the overall importance of fowling declined in the course of the eighteenth century, it is easy to reconstruct its former importance from the accounts of late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors.

Fowling was mainly referred to with respect to very remote islands such as the Flannan Isles (also known as 'Seven Hunters', c. 20 miles west of Lewis), Rona (c. 45 miles north-north-east of the Butt of Lewis), Sula Sgeir (11 miles west of Rona) and, most famous of all, St Kilda (c. 50 miles west of Harris).²²¹

6.5.1. Fowling in the Flannan Isles

Some of the earliest and most interesting descriptions of fowling are to be found in 'A Descriptione of the Lews by John Morison indueller there'.²²² Morison described the way the inhabitants of Lewis sailed every summer to the Flannan Isles to catch birds and collect feathers:

The way they kill the fowls is, one goath and taketh a road [rod] 10 or 12 foot long, and settis his back to a rock or craig, and as the fowls fleieth by, he smiteth them continuallie,

²²¹ Apart from the remote island communities in the Hebrides, fowling was also mentioned on the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth and Ailsa Craig in the Firth of Clyde. However, none of these rocks was permanently inhabited by a native island community. Instead, the fowlers came from the mainland and visited these islands only during the fowling season. On both islands fowling was only a source of additional income and will, therefore, not be discussed in greater detail. For a late eighteenth-century account of the harvesting of young gannets on the Bass Rock see Wilson, *Poetical Works*, pp. 340-341. According to Wilson, a fowler was let down by a rope over the verge of the rock. He was protected by a feather pillow bound to his breast to prevent the sharp pointed rocks from wounding him. Being thus secured he picked the young birds from their nests and threw them into the sea, where they were picked up by boats and sold in Edinburgh. This method is still used on the Faroe Islands.

²²² A reliable transcript is in I.F. Maciver, 'A 17th Century "Prose Map"', in MacLeod (ed.), *Marking Time*, pp. 23-31. [hereafter: Morison, 'Descriptione'] The transcript in MacFarlane's *Geographical Collections*, vol. ii, pp. 210-215, is unreliable. The author of this description of Lewis is not, as stated in MacFarlane (p. xxxi), John Morison, minister of Urray (died 1747), but John Morison, tacksman of South Bragar (c. 1630-1708). The description was most likely prepared between 1683 and 1685. The original manuscript is NLS, J. Morison, 'Descriptione of the Lews', Adv. MS. 34.2.8, fos. 193-194. Morison was probably the main informant on Lewis for Martin's *Description*.

and he hes ane other attending to catch all that falls to the ground; for the fowls flee there so thick that those who are beneath them can not see the firmament.²²³

Martin also reported about fowling on the Flannan Isles. He reported that the islanders of Lewis had a right to these islands and came once every summer to ‘make a great purchase of Fowls, Eggs, Down, Feathers, and Quills’.²²⁴ The great importance of this trip was underlined by an elaborate set of rites and rules that had to be followed before fowling could commence. The Lewismen approached the islands only in easterly wind. If the wind turned westerly, they would sail straight home again. On arrival they fastened their boat with ropes to a rock and fixed a wooden ladder to climb onto the island. Once on the island, all of them uncovered their heads, turned towards the sun and thanked god for their safe arrival. Then they visited the ruins of a chapel dedicated to St Flannan and performed several prayers before they would start fowling:

When they are come within about 20 paces of the Altar, they all strip themselves of their upper Garments at once, and their upper Clothes being laid upon a Stone, which stands there on purpose for that use, all the Crew pray three times before they begin Fowling: the first day they say the first Prayer, advancing towards the Chappel upon their Knees; the Second Prayer is said as they go round the Chappel; the Third is said hard-by or at the Chappel, and this is their Morning Service. Their *Vespers* are perform’d with the like number of Prayers.²²⁵

The mode of taking birds was also strictly regulated. Martin reported that ‘it is absolutely unlawful to kill a Fowl with a Stone, for that they reckon a great Barbarity, and directly contrary to ancient Custom’.²²⁶ It was also unlawful to kill a bird before they had ascended by the ladder or after the evening prayers had been said. Moreover, the visitors were forbidden to name a number of places and islands by their common names.²²⁷ Martin considered this account superstitious, but several people from Lewis, and two persons who had been to the Flannan Isles, assured him of the sanctity of that place.²²⁸

²²³ Morison, ‘Descriptione’, p. 27.

²²⁴ Martin, *Description*, p. 16.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17. Martin stressed that every novice on board who was not versed with the customs of that place ‘must be instructed perfectly in all the Punctilio’s observ’d here, before Landing’. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²²⁷ For details of this superstition see *ibid.*, p. 18.

²²⁸ In 1549 Sir Donald Monro, Dean of the Isles, referred to the Flannan Isles as holy islands. He reported that there were wild sheep in the islands that were hunted by retainers of MacLeod of Lewis. See Monro, *Description*, p. 42.

6.5.2. Fowling in Rona

Donald Monro reported (in 1549) that Rona had an abundance of corn and sheep. The islanders paid their rent to MacLeod of Lewis with meal, mutton and dried fowls.²²⁹

John Morison also prepared an account of fowling on Rona. According to him, Rona was inhabited by only five small tenants and their families. The islanders shared everything in common and grew a considerable amount of bear for victual. However, Morison stressed that fowl were their main food. He prepared the following account of the islanders' method of taking birds:

The best of ther sustinance is fowll which they take in girms, & sometym in a stormie night they creep to them, where they sleep thickest, and throwing some handfulls of sand over there heads as if it wer haile they take them be the necks.²³⁰

From the grease of the birds, and particularly of the solan goose (i.e. the gannet), the islanders made an oil, called 'Gibanirtich', which was very effective for healing sore wounds and cancers either on men or beasts.

Between 1681 and 1684 Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat (1630-1725) prepared an account of the islands of Hirta and Rona for Sir Robert Sibbald. He reported that Rona had been inhabited for many generations by five families that seldom exceeded 30 souls. They lived as a commonwealth, and those who had fewer children adopted some from the larger families until the numbers were even. The surplus population of above 30 souls had to leave the island and was sent to Lewis and the Earl of Seaforth, the proprietor of Rona. The islanders paid their rent in meal and feathers of sea fowls.²³¹

Martin included a lengthy account of the living conditions on Rona in his *Description* (pp. 19-25). This account was communicated to him by Mr Daniel Morison, minister of Barvas (Lewis), to whose glebe Rona belonged. Martin's

²²⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

²³⁰ Morison, 'Description', p. 27.

²³¹ See 'An Account of the Isles Hirta & Rona', in MacFarlane, *Geographical Collections*, vol. iii, p. 29. [hereafter: Mackenzie, 'Account of Hirta & Rona'] George Mackenzie of Tarbat was connected to the MacLeods through the marriages of several close relatives, and it was probably through these alliances that he gathered his information about Hirta and Rona from 'intelligent persons dwelling on the place'. It is most likely that he had never visited either of the islands. For the dating of his account see M. Harman, *An Isle called Hirte* (Watnish, 1997), p. 85. [hereafter: Harman, *Hirte*]

account of Rona characterised the islanders as ‘noble savages’, similar to those of St Kilda. Martin reported that there were five tenants in the island who took their surnames from the colour of the sky, rainbow and clouds, and who did not use money or gold on the island. However, about fourteen years previously, a swarm of rats had come to Rona and destroyed the islanders’ corn. A few months later, seamen landed on the island and stole the islanders’ bull. These misfortunes led to the extinction of the island’s population, but some years later a new colony of settlers and sufficient provisions were sent to the island by the minister of Barvas. However, the boat supplying the islanders and collecting their rents was lost the next year, and Martin could not tell whether the new colony had survived.²³² It is rather surprising that Martin did not include any reference to fowling in his account of the island.

6.5.3. Fowling in St Kilda

The air is full of feathered animals, the sea is covered with them, the houses are ornamented by them, the ground is speckled with them like a flowery meadow in May. The town is paved with feathers, the very dunghills are made of feathers, the ploughed land seems as if it had been sown with feathers, and the inhabitants look as if they had been all tarred and feathered, for their hair is full of feathers, and their clothes are covered with feathers. The women look like feathered Mercuries, for their shoes are made of a gannet’s skin; every thing smells of feathers, and the smell pursued us all over the islands; for the Captain had concealed a sack full in the cabin.²³³

The importance of fowling in the remote island communities can be shown best with respect to St Kilda.²³⁴ One of the earliest detailed descriptions relating to St Kilda and its inhabitants was prepared by Sir Robert Moray.²³⁵ Moray gave detailed information about agriculture, fowling and religious practices on the island. He

²³² See Martin, *Description*, pp. 24-25. In 1764 Walker gave the population of Rona at 9. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker’s Report*, p. 25. From the 1790s until 1844, a succession of shepherds and their families stayed on the island. In 1844 the last permanent inhabitants left the island.

²³³ J. MacCulloch, *The Highlands And Western Isles Of Scotland* (London, 1824), vol. iii, pp. 195-196. [hereafter: MacCulloch, *Highlands*] The geologist John MacCulloch visited St Kilda in 1815.

²³⁴ St Kilda consists of four rocky islands, the main island in the centre (Hirta) and the adjacent islands of Soay, Boreray, Dun and a number of smaller stacks. Only Hirta was inhabited, but there were shelters for the fowlers on the other islands and stacks. In this thesis ‘St Kilda’ refers to the whole archipelago, ‘Hirta’ to the main island. Martin Martin’s map of St Kilda (1698) is reproduced in appendix no. 6. For a detailed study of fowling on St Kilda, including the breeding cycles of various birds, see also Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 205-226.

²³⁵ First published as R. Moray, ‘A Description of the Island of Hirta’, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, vol. xii (London, 1678), pp. 927-929. [hereafter: Moray, ‘Description’] The account must have been prepared before his death in 1673. There are no records of Moray visiting St Kilda. He probably gathered the information about St Kilda during a visit to South Uist.

reported that there were ten families living on Hirta whose food was only young fowls and eggs. The women were mainly employed in harrowing the land, while the men were climbing the cliffs for seabirds. Good and bad climbers were mixed so that none of the cliffs and rocks remained unexploited. The fowlers were secured by a rope that was not made of hemp, but of ‘cow-hides salted, and the thongs cut round about, and plaited six or nine fold’.²³⁶ The fowlers worked in pairs:

Each end of the rope is tied about each one of their middle, and he that is foremost goes till he comes to a safe standing, the other standing firm all that time to keep him up, in case his feet should have slipped: when the foremost is come to a safe standing; then the other goes, either below or above him, where his business is; and so they watch time about; seldom any of them being lost when this is observed.²³⁷

Moray also described another method of catching birds that must have been very successful:

An ordinary way of killing the fowls in the mist is this, some of these fellows lie beside the door of the little houses they have in their islands, flat upon their backs and open their breasts; which when the fowls perceive, they perch upon them, and are presently taken. And thus hundreds are killed in one night.²³⁸

Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat reported (between 1681 and 1684) that St Kilda was frequented by such incredible numbers of seabirds that ‘so far as one can see, the sea is covered with them, and when they rise, they darken the sky’.²³⁹ Due to the incredible number of birds, the ordinary method of taking them was quite simple: ‘A man lies upon his back with a long Pole in his hand, & knocketh them down, as they fly over him.’²⁴⁰ The islanders stuffed the fat of the birds in the stomach of the ‘Gare-fowl’, dried and smoked them over their fires and finally exported them to the mainland, where they were used as a remedy for aches and pains.²⁴¹

Martin Martin was undoubtedly the most important seventeenth-century visitor to St Kilda. He accompanied John Campbell, minister of Harris, to whose parish St

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 929.

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 929. Nonetheless, fatal accidents could not always be avoided. Moray reported: ‘The men seldom grow old; and seldom was it ever known that any man died in his bed there, but was either drowned or broke his neck.’ Ibid., p. 928.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 929.

²³⁹ Mackenzie, ‘Account of Hirta & Rona’, p. 28. Again, it must be stressed it was unlikely that Mackenzie had any personal knowledge of St Kilda.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

²⁴¹ See *ibid.*, p. 28. To Mackenzie of Tarbat and Martin, the ‘Gare-fowl’ (i.e. the great auk) must have been a very common bird. Martin’s description of the ‘Gairfowl’ and its habits is particularly interesting as this bird became extinct in the 1840s. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 48-49.

Kilda belonged, on his visit to the island in June 1697. He stayed for about three weeks and prepared a lengthy account of the island and its inhabitants. Martin's visit coincided with the 'steward's' annual visit to St Kilda to collect the rent on behalf of the island's owner, MacLeod of MacLeod. Martin reported that the steward's retinue usually consisted of 40 to 60 persons, but there were about 60 to 70 foreigners on the island at the time of his visit. There are a number of reasons for the increased interest in St Kilda at that time. Firstly, the minister wanted to remove 'Roderick the Impostor' from the island. Roderick had established a bizarre religious cult centred on his person under the pretext of which he seduced the island's women. He had been taken from the island before, but had obviously returned and renewed his cult. John Campbell and Martin forced him to revoke his cult in public and removed him to Skye, where he remained, permanently banished from St Kilda.²⁴² Secondly, in 1697 a quarrel had arisen between the islanders and the steward about the payment of the rent, and the islanders felt unfairly treated by him.²⁴³ Another reason, not suggested by Martin, may have been the famine in the Highlands and Islands that had been caused by a series of poor harvests in the 1690s. St Kilda was comparatively unaffected by this as it was less dependent on corn than any other island in the Hebrides. Fowl, eggs and fish contributed to the islanders' diet more than anywhere else in the Western Isles. Martin mentioned no shortage of food in St Kilda in comparison to 'late Years of scarcity' on Lewis and a deterioration and scarcity of grain in Uist.²⁴⁴

²⁴² See *ibid.*, pp. 135-158.

²⁴³ See *ibid.*, pp. 92-95.

²⁴⁴ Martin, *Description*, p. 2. See also *ibid.*, pp. 76, 79. Alexander Buchan later claimed that the islanders were angry about the steward and his party, who on their annual visits carried away huge amounts of provisions. See A. Buchan, *A Description Of St. Kilda* (Edinburgh, 1727), p. 24. [hereafter: Buchan, *Description*] Buchan, an army veteran, was catechist on St Kilda from 1705 to 1709 and minister and schoolmaster of the island from 1710 until his death in 1729. It must be stressed that although Buchan spent more time on St Kilda than any other foreigner, he plagiarised much of Martin's *Voyage*. This is particularly regrettable as Buchan was from the Gaelic-speaking parts of Aberdeenshire. He must have noticed customs that were new and curious to him, but not to Martin who was a Hebridean himself. See also Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 127-128. Visitors frequently accused the steward of exploiting the islanders. Henry Lord Brougham visited St Kilda in 1799 and wrote: 'The tacksman (whom the people think a steward) resides twice a-year there, to plunder under the name of *MacLeod's factor*. He pays £20 sterling only to Macleod, and makes above twice as much himself.' Brougham, *Life*, vol. i, p. 106. For further examples of the steward's exploitation of the St Kildans see *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 107. In 1778 St Kilda had been sold, with Harris, to Captain Alexander MacLeod. After his death in 1790, his son Alexander Hume MacLeod inherited both islands. William MacNeil of Rodel continued as tacksman while Alexander Hume MacLeod remained in India. MacNeil was removed as tacksman in 1804 when St Kilda was sold to Lieutenant Colonel Donald

Martin described farming, stock breeding and fowling on St Kilda. He reported that the islanders grew oats and barley and bred horses, cows and sheep.²⁴⁵ However, his account stressed that fowling was the most important source of food and revenue in the remote island community. Martin clearly described the way in which the islanders' lives were centred on the breeding cycles of various birds. Wild fowl, and particularly fulmars and 'solan geese' (i.e. gannets), were the St Kildans' most important products. Martin reckoned that the islanders took more than 20,000 gannets per annum.²⁴⁶ Upon enquiry, the islanders told him that they had consumed 22,600 gannets in the year before his visit. They assured him that this figure was even lower than the average due to the badness of the season and the loss of many birds in the currents around the stacks.²⁴⁷ The gannets usually arrived at St Kilda in March and stayed on the island until November. There were various methods

MacLeod of Achnagoyle. MacNeil must have been a very oppressive tacksman. In his time as leaseholder of St Kilda, all visitors to the island reported on the inhabitants' oppression. Although John Lanne Buchanan had not visited St Kilda, he also made severe accusations of exploitation against the tacksman. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 136-137. However, Buchanan's allegations against MacNeil were surely influenced by his trial in the Harris Kirk Session in which MacNeil was an Elder. For the St Kildans' oppression by MacNeil see also Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 98-101.

²⁴⁵ Martin numbered the horses on the island at eighteen. They were only used for transporting peat and grain. He reckoned the number of cows and calves at c. 90, and the number of sheep at no more than 2,000, including those on the adjacent islands. See Martin, *Voyage*, p. 27. Alexander Buchan confirmed these figures. See Buchan, *Description*, p. 9. The Reverend Kenneth Macaulay (1723-1779) visited St Kilda as a missionary for the SSPCK in 1758. He reckoned the number of horses on the island at 10, the number of cows (including calves) at 40 and the number of sheep on the main island, Boreray and Soay at c. 1,900 altogether. However, it must be stressed that the number of the islanders had dwindled from about 180 at Martin's visit in 1697 to 88 at the time of Macaulay's visit due to a severe smallpox outbreak in 1727 that had killed roughly two thirds of the population. See K. Macaulay, *The History Of St. Kilda* (London, 1764), pp. 127, 123, 129, 118-119, 196. [hereafter: Macaulay, *History*] Macaulay's *History* bears likewise great similarity with Martin's *Voyage*. Johnson and Boswell met Macaulay in 1773 when he was minister at Cawdor. After their conversation Johnson and Boswell doubted Macaulay's authorship of the *History*. Boswell was told later that it had been written by Dr John MacPherson of Skye from the material collected by Macaulay. See Boswell, *Tour*, p. 126. For details about the doubts of Macaulay's authorship see also Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 91-92.

²⁴⁶ See Martin, *Description*, p. 281.

²⁴⁷ See Martin, *Voyage*, p. 115. Although the islanders overexploited the gannet colonies, these figures seem to have been exaggerated. A sustained consumption of more than 22,600 gannets per year and 16,000 eggs per week (mainly collected from gannets) on the island would have resulted in the disappearance of that species in just a few years. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 12-13. Unfortunately, none of the early visitors to St Kilda, such as Martin, Buchan or Macaulay, provided figures for the number of fulmars consumed, although they agreed that this bird was the islanders' preferred fowl. Buchan claimed that the number of birds and eggs taken had receded considerably since Martin's visit in 1697. As a result, he wrote, the islanders were poorly fed and the number of fatal accidents from fowling in the cliffs had risen. He also reported that the islanders were driven by poverty to eat 'unclean Meats, which breeds unclean disease', whereof more than twenty people have died on the island. Buchan, *Description*, p. 23. See also *ibid.*, pp. 15-17. Harman has shown that the islanders suffered by 1727 from severe malnutrition due to overpopulation and a continuous overexploitation of the island's natural resources. See Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 126-128.

employed in catching them. The gannets dived out of the sky for fish with a force that could pierce wood to a depth of one inch. For this reason, the locals fixed fish on wooden planks in the hope that the birds would go for this bait.²⁴⁸ However, the birds were usually caught when they were sleeping. Martin stressed the importance of taking the ‘sentinel’:

When they sleep, they put their Head under their Wings, but one of them keeps Watch, and if that be surpriz'd by the Fowler, (which often happens), all the rest are then easily caught, by the Neck, one after another; but if the Sentinel gives warning by crying loud, then all the Flock make their escape.²⁴⁹

The islanders depended on seabirds for food for most of the year, and in consequence their lives centred on the breeding cycles of the birds. With regard to the important seabirds, the fowling season began in March and April when the islanders took adult gannets on Boreray and Stac an Armin. In May the islanders took adult fulmars and a limited number of their eggs. Additionally, gannets' eggs were taken on Boreray and the stacks apart from Stac Lee. From May until late July gannets and fulmars were not disturbed while hatching, and the islanders were mainly fowling for puffins, which were their main supply of fresh meat during the summer months. From late July until September gugas (i.e. young nestling gannets) were taken. In late August and September young fulmars were taken. From February to May guillemots and shearwaters also contributed to the islanders' diet.²⁵⁰

The islanders had to make sure that they also took the young birds from the adjacent rocks before they became fully-fledged and the colonies returned south again. Most of the young birds took wing at roughly the same time in autumn, which put the fowlers under great pressure in that season. On Stac Lee, a rock, a quarter of

²⁴⁸ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 281-282. Buchan and Macaulay confirmed this rather peculiar method. See Buchan, *Description*, p. 9. See Macaulay, *History*, p. 134.

²⁴⁹ Martin, *Description*, p. 282. Macaulay denied that the people of St Kilda believed in the myth of a ‘sentinel’ guarding the gannets. However, he reported that the fowler could distinguish from the birds’ noises if they were alarmed or not. When he had killed a gannet, the other birds mourned over its death. In their mourning the birds were so distracted that they were easy to catch. See Macaulay, *History*, pp. 141-142. John Lanne Buchanan told a typical traveller’s tale about the sentinel. He reported that the fowler approached the sentinel with a white towel around his breast to deceive it. When the sentinel gave alarm, the fowler stood back, but when it mistook him for a returning gannet and did not give the alarm, he gently lifted it up and placed it next to the nearest sleeping gannet. The fowler then woke up the gannet, which immediately attacked the sentinel for its negligence. In the subsequent confusion and fighting, the birds were easy to take. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 124-125. Buchanan could only repeat this marvellous story from hearsay as he had never been to St Kilda.

²⁵⁰ See Harman, *Hirte*, p. 210.

a mile west of Boreray, the islanders had built a 'Pyramid-House' from stone where they could stay when taking fowl on the rock. As the weather tended to become changeable in August, and landing at the stack was difficult due to strong currents, the islanders had only a small window of opportunity of taking the young birds and adults before they returned south. Martin reported that there were so many birds on the stack that it was visible from more than twenty leagues in fine weather, and that it was 'perfectly White with *Solan* Geese sitting on and about it'.²⁵¹ Stac Lee afforded between 5,000 and 7,000 gannets yearly. The islanders used to draw its fowlers by lot who then acted on behalf of the whole community. On the stack they knocked down as many birds as they could reach and carried them to a casting point, where they were thrown into the water and collected by the crew of the boat. After the fowlers' return, the catch was divided among the islanders according to their proportion of land on the main island. The birds taken on Stac an Armin were marked on the feet to distinguish their owners.²⁵²

The other main method of taking seabirds was by climbing the cliffs on a secure rope. Martin reported that the islanders had only three ropes in the whole island. The ropes were 24 fathoms long and made of hemp. Salted cowhides were cut into one long piece and twisted round the ordinary ropes of hemp to protect them from fraying on the rocks. These ropes were among the islanders' most valuable assets. They belonged to the community and were not to be used without the general consent of all. The fowlers worked in pairs and were secured by a rope to one another so that they could assist each other in case of a fall. This method sometimes caused one fowler to pull his partner into the sea, but in most cases the fowlers were rescued. On the cliffs the fowlers caught birds with gins made of horsehair, which were tied to the end of fishing rods. The fowlers put the noose over the bird's head about the neck and drew it instantly. The fowlers were very successful because the birds did not try to escape, but chose rather to defend their eggs and offspring and die upon the nest. Gins were also placed upon the rocks and fastened by stones. In these traps the islanders caught 40 to 50 birds a day.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Martin, *Voyage*, p. 39.

²⁵² See *ibid.*, pp. 39-41, 45. Boreray, Soay and the stacks were common property. The catch from these stacks was divided among the community.

²⁵³ See *ibid.*, pp. 104-106, 66-67.

Next to their boat, the ropes were the islanders' most valuable property and accordingly caught the attention of most foreign visitors.²⁵⁴ Kenneth Macaulay described (in 1758) the various types of ropes used on the island. Moreover, his account suggests that the more valuable ropes had changed from community property into private possession. He distinguished two types of ropes used by the islanders. He reported that the islanders were divided in two fowling parties, each consisting generally of four persons. Each party had at least one rope made of a

strong, raw cow hide, salted for that very purpose, and cut circularly into three thongs all of equal length; these thongs being closely twisted together, form a three fold cord, able to sustain a great weight ...²⁵⁵

To protect these ropes from the sharp edges of the rocks, the cord was lined with sheepskins dressed in much the same manner. These ropes were about 30 fathoms long and lasted for about two generations.²⁵⁶ In addition to these ropes made of cowhides, the islanders used also ropes made of horsehair. These ropes were usually about nine to ten fathoms long. They were used in more accessible places and for taking smaller birds.²⁵⁷ Macaulay's account suggests that the more valuable ropes made of cowhide no longer belonged to the community in general, but that they were owned by private individuals. He reported that such a rope was 'the most valuable implement a man of substance can be possessed of in St. Kilda' and that 'in the testament of a father, it makes the very first article in favour of his eldest son'.²⁵⁸ Should it get into a daughter's possession in default of male heirs, the rope was 'reckoned equal in value to the two best cows in the isle'.²⁵⁹

The birds that build their nests in subterraneous holes were hunted with dogs. Macaulay's witness account of the dogs' abilities, however, seems to border on the marvellous:

²⁵⁴ The islanders' boat served the whole community, but every islander had a separate section allocated to him: 'It [the boat] is very curiously divided into Apartments proportionable to their Lands and Rocks; every Individual has his space distinguished to an Hair's breadth, which his Neighbour cannot encroach so much as to lay an Egg upon it.' *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116. Every 'shareholder' was obliged every summer to cover his section of the boat with turf to protect it from the sun. For the boat or boats used by the St Kildans see also Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 267-274.

²⁵⁵ Macaulay, *History*, p. 182.

²⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 182.

²⁵⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 185.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 183. Macaulay calculated the total number of cows on the island at no more than 40, including those belonging to the steward. This underlined the great value of the cowhide ropes.

They are a mixture of the tarrier, spaniel, and those that take the water: Of their own accord they sally out early enough and soon return, bringing five or six puffins at a time. ... These dogs have a wonderfully sagacity, and are so trained, that they neither destroy the fowls themselves, nor part with them till they meet the people of the family to which they belong, in spite of threatenings, flattery or bribes.²⁶⁰

Eggs were also a vital component of the islanders' diet. Martin reported that two years before his visit the St Kildans had surprised a party of foreign sailors who were stealing eggs on Soay. The islanders became very annoyed about the intruders and drove them away by dropping stones from the cliffs above.²⁶¹ Martin calculated that the islanders consumed more than 16,000 eggs per week.²⁶² The gannets on Stac Lee were allowed to hatch their first egg in contrast to those on Boreray and Stac an Armin.²⁶³ The reasons for this exception were obvious. Thus the harvest of the gugas (i.e. young gannets) on Boreray and the adjacent stacks could be spread over a period of about three weeks. The gugas on Stac Lee were taken first, followed by those on

²⁶⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 186-187. See also Martin, *Voyage*, p. 108.

²⁶¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 38-39. Some of the foreigners collected the eggs in their breeches. On approach of the islanders, they had to leave their prey and trousers behind and 'those Tarpawlin Breeches were no small Ornament there, where all wore girded Plaids'. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁶² See *ibid.*, pp. 12-13. Martin reported that the crews of the minister's and the steward's boats had consumed about 16,000 eggs during their three-week stay on the island. The number of visitors in the entourage of the steward and the minister must have been altogether between 60 and 70. The population of the islanders was about 180 from 27 families. See *ibid.*, pp. 12-13, 79, 99. See also Martin, *Description*, p. 290. This means that every visitor was given between eleven and twelve eggs per day. Martin claimed that the islanders consumed even greater numbers of eggs per day. According to Buchan, the number of families had risen from 27, at the time of Martin's visit in 1697, to 30 or 33 during his stay. Buchan reported that the number of inhabitants did not usually exceed 200. See Buchan, *Description*, pp. 8, 4. At the time of the publication of Buchan's *Description* in 1727, disaster struck the island in form of an outbreak of smallpox. However, from the evidence of Daniel MacAulay, minister of Bracadale (Skye), the number of inhabitants must have shrunk by then to 122. Daniel MacAulay reported (in 1728) that, between harvest and winter 1727, 77 people had died from smallpox and three from other diseases, leaving behind nine men, ten women, fifteen boys and eight girls. He added that only four families had survived, bearing 26 orphans. Three men and eight boys fowling on Stac an Armin (north of Boreray) became stuck on the rock from about 15 August 1727 until 13 May 1728 because the islanders were unable to man a boat and take them home. The stranded fowling were finally rescued by the steward's boat in May 1728. See NAS, Royal Bounty Papers 1725-1730, CH1/5/51, fos. 338-341. The common explanation is that the smallpox virus had been carried to St Kilda when one of the islanders brought home the clothes of a man from St Kilda who had died from the disease in Harris in the previous year. However, as the virus has an incubation period of seven to seventeen days, the islander may have carried the virus himself. Many of the male survivors were from the group of fowling stuck on Stac an Armin. This ensured that the traditional fowling techniques continued after the smallpox outbreak. At the time of Kenneth Macaulay's visit in 1758, the number of the islanders had recovered to 88. See Macaulay, *History*, p. 211.

²⁶³ See Martin, *Voyage*, p. 41. Kenneth Macaulay confirmed (in 1758) that the eggs on Boreray and Stac an Armin were plundered, but 'all the eggs laid in the rock called *Lij* [Stac Lee], are held inviolably sacred' by an ancient custom. Macaulay, *History*, p. 144. According to Macaulay, the young gannets from the first egg were ready to be taken in September, but those from the second egg were not fit for the table until October. See *ibid.*, p. 144.

Boreray and Stac an Armin a few weeks later because they were the result of a second laying. The young birds from the first hatch became fully-fledged in August, the second hatch in September.²⁶⁴ This was to avoid the risk that all young birds on various rocks became fully-fledged at the same time and left before the fowlers could take a sufficient number of them. As the stacks were particularly difficult to land on, it made the fowlers also less vulnerable to periods of bad weather, which were not unusual for that time of the year. Finally, it reduced the risk of taking too many birds and eggs at a time, which could endanger the long-term survival of the species.²⁶⁵

The birds and eggs were stored in little storage houses (*cleitean*), which were made of stone. A typical *cleit* was a long, narrow building, with side walls converging slightly until they were spanned by lintels, which were topped with rubble, soil and turf. The inner wall was often built with an open construction. The outer wall was built against the inner wall, consisting of smaller stones and was usually slightly battered.²⁶⁶ Most visitors compared the *cleitean* to little pyramids. There were about 1,100 *cleitean* on Hirta (excluding 110 of which only the foundations remained), about 40 on Soay, about 50 on Boreray and about 80 on Stac an Armin. There were no *cleitean* on Dun.²⁶⁷ The islanders had no salt to preserve their catch when Martin visited the island in 1697. After the birds had been plucked, gannets and fulmars were slit in the back and the entrails were removed. The birds were then dried and could be preserved in the *cleitean* for up to a year. When Kenneth Macaulay visited St Kilda in 1758, the islanders also pickled their catch of

²⁶⁴ Martin reckoned that the taking or leaving the eggs in the nests advanced or retarded the hatching of the fowls by eighteen days. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 33, 51.

²⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 41-42. Nonetheless, Buchan reported that the number of birds and eggs on St Kilda had fallen considerably since Martin's time. Food shortages and malnutrition surely contributed to the terrible death toll of the smallpox epidemic in 1727.

²⁶⁶ For a detailed survey of the *cleitean* and their distribution over the islands see Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 159-161.

²⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 160-161. See also Macaulay, *History*, pp. 47-48. In 1697 Martin reckoned the number of *cleitean* on St Kilda at more than 500, including 40 on Boreray, and several on Stac an Armin. He did not provide an exact figure for the *cleitean* on Stac an Armin, but he reported that 800 gannets were dried and preserved on the stack. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 43-45, 66, 114-115. Harman's figures include all *cleitean*. When a *cleit* collapsed, the islanders usually built a new one next to it from the stones of the old one. This might explain the discrepancy in the number of *cleitean*. According to Macaulay, *cleitean* were also used for storing peat. See Macaulay, *History*, p. 48. Buchan reported of an elaborate set of rules and compensation in case the owner of a *cleit* had not secured the door properly and animals belonging to his fellow islanders were hurt or died in his *cleit*. For details see Buchan, *Description*, p. 27.

fulmars. He reported that ‘every family has a great number salted in casks for winter provisions, and the amount of the whole is about twelve barrels’.²⁶⁸

The fulmar was particularly valuable to the islanders, and it seems as if they became increasingly reliant on it during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The fulmar lays only one egg per year, whereas the gannet lays several eggs per year. The numbers of birds and eggs taken suggest that the islanders paid more attention to preserving the fulmar stock from overexploitation than to preserving the gannets.²⁶⁹ Even if Martin exaggerated the figures, they still suggest that the islanders took far too many gannets and eggs to keep the number of this species stable. The decline in the number of gannets breeding on St Kilda made the islanders the more dependent on the fulmar. The numbers of fulmars consumed per islander each year were more or less stable, which suggests that the survival of this species was not endangered.²⁷⁰ The fulmar was the islanders’ favourite fowl. The oil it spat out when approached was used for medicine against aches in the bones and

²⁶⁸ Macaulay, *History*, p. 149.

²⁶⁹ Unfortunately, the accounts give contradictory information about the number of fulmar eggs taken. Some authors reported that these eggs were not taken at all as the fulmar lays no replacement egg. Others reported that only a few eggs were collected and eaten. Even if there was a change over time, the islanders seem to have been very careful not to take too many fulmar eggs in order to ensure the survival of this species. For details about these contradictions see Harman, *Hirte*, p. 208.

²⁷⁰ Martin reported that the islanders usually took more than 22,600 gannets per year, including between 5,000 and 7,000 annually from Stac Lee alone. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 40, 115. According to Steel, a late eighteenth-century observer calculated that the islanders took about 20,000 gannets each year on Stac Lee and Stac an Armin. In the nineteenth century the number of gannets taken was in steep decline. In the first half of the century no more than 5,000 birds were taken each year. By 1841 the catch had dropped to an average of 1,400 per year, and at the beginning of the twentieth century only about 300 young gannets were killed and preserved for winter provision. This decline by far surpassed the decline of the island’s population. In comparison, the ratio of fulmars killed per inhabitant remained fairly steady during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From 1829 to 1843 about 12,000 fulmars were taken each year. This gave a consumption of 120 fulmars per head per annum for a population of approximately 100 islanders. In 1901, by which time the population had fallen to 77, c. 9,000 fulmars were taken. This meant that every islander consumed about 117 fulmars per year. In 1929, 4,000 fulmars were taken by the island’s remaining population of 36. This meant a consumption of about 111 fulmars per islander and year. The figures for slaughtered gannets and fulmars are taken from Steel, *St Kilda*, pp. 57-58. However, Steel’s population figures are not as precise as Harman’s. The ratio of fulmars consumed per islander is calculated on the basis of Harman’s more precise population figures. See Harman, *Hirte*, pp. 124-125. Harman’s figures for the numbers of birds killed and eggs taken vary from Steel’s, but they also show that the taking of gannets declined faster than the decrease of the island’s population, whereas the decline in the number of fulmars taken was fairly in line with the decrease of the island’s population. See *ibid.*, pp. 219-221. Edward Daniel Clarke visited St Kilda in 1797 and reported that ‘the fulmar seemed the principal food when we were there’ and the islanders lived almost entirely on ‘fulmar broth’. Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 269. The increase and decrease of breeding colonies also has natural reasons, but the decline of gannets on St Kilda seems to have been at least partially due to constant overexploitation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Precise data for the size of the breeding colonies of various species on St Kilda is only available for the recent past.

‘stitches’.²⁷¹ The techniques used to catch unfledged fulmars, before they could spit out their oil in defence, were varied. Martin reported that the fowler usually approached the young bird from behind, took hold of its bill and tied it with a thread to prevent the oil from running out of its stomach. When the catch was brought home, the thread was removed and the oil was drained in a dish. The other method of preventing the fulmar from ejecting its oil before it could be collected sounds incredible:

... the Inhabitants take care to prevent this, by surprizing the Fowl behind, having for this purpose a Wooden Dish fixed to the end of their Rods, which they hold before his Bill as he spouts out the Oyl.²⁷²

The fulmar oil was drained and kept in gannets’ stomachs.²⁷³ The oil was also exported to other islands where it was used as a purge or vomiter.²⁷⁴

The fat of the fulmars and gugas (i.e. young gannets) was melted and also preserved in gannets’ stomachs. The islanders called this product ‘giben’. All visitors to St Kilda agreed that ‘giben’ was one of the islanders’ most important products. It was used for food and medicine. Martin reported that the islanders used to add it to their oatmeal brochan (gruel) and melted it instead of butter on various boiled land- and sea-plants. According to him, ‘giben’ was an essential ingredient of the islanders’ cuisine: ‘They use this *Giben* with their Fish, and it is become the common Vehicle that conveys all their Food down their Throats.’²⁷⁵ ‘Giben’ was also widely used for medicine. Martin noted that ‘giben’ was ‘the most Sovereign Remedy’ and ‘their great and beloved *Catholicon*’ against the cough that the islanders always contracted at the arrival of the steward.²⁷⁶ ‘Giben’ was also exported to other islands

²⁷¹ Martin, *Voyage*, p. 57.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

²⁷³ Martin provided no figure for the quantity of oil ejected by the fulmar from its nostrils. Buchan reckoned that it was a mutchkin of pure oil, Macaulay reckoned near an English pint. See Buchan, *Description*, p. 13. See Macaulay, *History*, p. 148. The English pint is 0.57 litres. A mutchkin was a quarter of a Scottish pint. Due to the regional variations it is impossible to determine its precise capacity, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Scottish pint was considerably larger than the English. It varied between 1.72 litres in 1618 and 1.69 in 1779. See Gibson and Smout, *Prices, Food And Wages*, pp. 368-370.

²⁷⁴ See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 57-58.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113. Harman writes that ‘giben’ was made from fat of young fulmars and gugas to which the islanders added the oil from fulmars. See Harman, *Hirte*, p. 207. However, neither Martin, Buchan nor Macaulay mentioned fulmar oil as an ingredient of ‘giben’. See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 76-78, 112-114. See Martin, *Description*, pp. 185, 285. See Buchan, *Description*, p. 23. See Macaulay, *History*, p. 145.

²⁷⁶ Martin, *Voyage*, p. 76. See also *ibid.*, pp. 77-79.

where it was used for medicine. It was an effective remedy ‘for the Healing of Green Wounds’, in Lewis it was used successfully for treating cancer and in Skye for treating fistulas.²⁷⁷ It was also applied to animals. Macaulay reported that it was used in the Western Isles to treat cattle when seized with violent colds or obstinate coughs.²⁷⁸

Moisture was the biggest threat to the islanders’ provisions. Wind passing through the *cleitean* was important to dry fowls, but it also carried moisture to the eggs stored inside. Therefore, turf-ash was scattered all over the eggs. Thus they could be kept for six to eight months before they would turn. Martin observed during his stay on St Kilda that foreign visitors had difficulties in digesting the eggs, but the islanders liked to eat them even when they were rotting.²⁷⁹

The islanders also made cloth from birds. Martin reported that the women wore neither shoes nor stockings. Instead, their shoes were made from the necks of gannets

which they cut above the Eyes, the Crown of the Head serves for the Heel, the whole skin being cut close at the Breast, which end being sowed, the Foot enters into it, as into a piece of narrow Stockin.²⁸⁰

Although these shoes did not last for more than three to five days, the supply of gannets was more than sufficient.

The birds’ entrails, bones and wings were mixed with straw and scattered over the fields for manure.²⁸¹

The importance of fowling in the remote islands cannot be overestimated. Buchan, for example, reported (in 1727) that his wife had only recently introduced a cock and some hens to St Kilda and that many of the islanders had never seen any before.²⁸² Until the island’s evacuation in 1930, life on St Kilda was thus centred on wild birds and their breeding cycles.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

²⁷⁸ See Macaulay, *History*, p. 145. See also Martin, *Description*, p. 185.

²⁷⁹ See Martin, *Voyage*, pp. 114-115, 66.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 110-111.

²⁸¹ See *ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁸² See Buchan, *Description*, p. 9. Martin did not mention any tame fowl on St Kilda.

6.6. The Highland economy in the 1750s and 1760s and the government's attempts to encourage manufacture

The 1750s and 1760s were a crucial period in the economic and social transformation of the Highlands. After the 'Forty-Five, the government took particular interest in the Highlands in its attempt to pacify the region once and for all. Encouraging industry, manufacture and trade among the Highlanders was an essential part of that strategy. While tourists still stayed away, scared by the 'Forty-Five, travellers and inspectors on behalf of various government commissions swarmed all over the Highlands. Their task was to inform the government about the state of agriculture, manufacture, trade and fisheries in the Highlands and Islands. This included the identification of appropriate locations for the encouragement of textile production or the foundation of fishing stations. Afterwards they had to report on the progress of these businesses. Despite the apparent political bias of the government travellers towards the Highlanders, their reports to various commissions and to the Church of Scotland provide a detailed picture of the economy in this crucial transitional period. Five 'travellers' deserve particular attention as their reports and accounts give a detailed insight into the transformation of the Highland economy after the 'Forty-Five. Richard Neilson travelled the west coast and the mainland Highlands in 1754 and 1755 on behalf of the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland.²⁸³ Francis Grant travelled the Highlands in 1756 on behalf of the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates.²⁸⁴ William Burrell (in 1758) was one

²⁸³ Neilson's report of 1754: NAS, R. Neilson, 'Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 6 November 1754, Board of Manufactures – Trustees' Reports, NG1/7/4, fos. 33-55. [hereafter: NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4] Neilson's report of 1755: EUL, R. Neilson, '2nd Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 1755, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623. [hereafter: EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623] For the history of the Board of Trustees for Manufactures etc. in Scotland see R.H. Campbell, *States of the Annual Progress of the Linen Manufacture 1727-1754* (Edinburgh, 1964), pp. v-x.

²⁸⁴ NAS, F. Grant, 'The Report of Mr. Francis Grant General Riding Officer and Inspector', Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E729/7. [hereafter: NAS, Grant, 'Report 1756', E729/7] As the Trustees hardly had time to inspect the Annexed Estates personally, they decided to appoint a 'Riding Officer' or 'General Inspector' as their substitute. Francis Grant was the first 'General Inspector' appointed. He died in 1762 and was succeeded by Archibald Menzies, Younger of Culdares, in 1764. The 'General Inspector' toured the Highlands in summer, first with a salary of £100 plus 10s. 6d. per day travelling expenses. When Menzies was appointed, this was raised to £150 and one guinea per

of the first tourists who travelled extensively through the mainland Highlands after the great Jacobite rebellion. He was particularly interested in agricultural and economic matters.²⁸⁵ John Walker visited the Western Isles in 1764 and 1771 on behalf of the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge.²⁸⁶ Archibald Menzies, successor to Francis Grant as General Inspector, covered the western seaboard and the Hebrides (in 1768) on behalf of the Board for the Annexed Estates. He was to examine the state of farming, manufacture and fisheries in the Western Isles and west coast of Scotland, and to make a particular survey of the annexed estates of Barrisdale and Coigach.²⁸⁷ An analysis and comparison of their

day. He had to make reports on the general conditions of the estates and (as in Menzies's case in 1768) on individual projects as described in his instructions. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 48. The Commissioners for the Annexed Estates were in charge of the estates that had been formerly owned by Jacobites and had been forfeited to the Crown after their owners' participation in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745-46. The Commissioners were answerable to the Barons of the Exchequer. After the 'Forty-Five, 41 estates were taken over. The majority were sold off to repay debts, but thirteen estates were annexed to the Crown by Act of Parliament in 1752. Although the Annexing Act was passed in March 1752, it was not implemented until 1755. The rents and profits of these estates were used to 'civilise' the Highlanders in the widest sense of the term. This included the spread of the Protestant religion, the English language and the stimulation of industry and trade. The revenues from the Annexed Estates were also used to subsidise the construction of bridges in the Highlands. Next to the SSPCK, the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates played a crucial role in the government's efforts to extirpate the Gaelic culture of the Highlands and to 're-educate' the Highlanders as loyal servants to the Hanoverians. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 6. For a list of the Annexed Estates after the 'Forty-Five and their regional distribution see Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, pp. 237-238, 24. The Board for the Annexed Estates, operating from 1755 until 1784, was not a revival of the Commission for the Forfeited Annexed Estates, which had been set up in 1715 and operated until its dissolution in 1725. The latter's primary task was to sell off estates forfeited after 1715. Its board members were paid, whereas the members of the Board for the Annexed Estates worked on an honorary basis. The estates administered by the Board for the Annexed Estates were not for sale, and their revenues were reinvested to promote industry and 'civilisation' in the Highlands. For the distinction between these commissions see *ibid.*, p. 25.

²⁸⁵ J.G. Dunbar (ed.), *Sir William Burrell's Northern Tour 1758* (East Linton, 1997). [hereafter: Burrell, *Northern Tour*] This edition is prepared from NLS, W. Burrell, 'Tour. Description by Sir William Burrell of a tour made by him in 1758, chiefly in Scotland', MS. 2911. The manuscript also includes a summary of economic statistics (fos. 42v. – 44) abstracted from the journal. These statistics are not included in the printed edition. The original manuscript is referred to as NLS, Burrell, 'Tour 1758', MS. 2911.

²⁸⁶ McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*.

²⁸⁷ NAS, A. Menzies, 'Journal of Archibald Menzies, General Inspector, 1768', Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E729/9. [hereafter: NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9] Unfortunately, Menzies's journal of 1768 is incomplete. Menzies travelled to Bute, Kintyre, Arran, Gigha, Islay, Colonsay, Oronsay, Iona and Lorne. His journal breaks off at Loch Aline in Morvern. The remainder of his journal is lost. The surveys of the annexed estates of Barrisdale and Coigach are also lost. Menzies inspected the Annexed Estates every summer from 1765 to 1769. For details of the estates visited during these years see Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 100. Menzies resigned his post as General Inspector in 1771 to become a Commissioner of Customs, but he offered to continue his service as inspector gratis. He died in 1777. A successor was not appointed until 1780.

reports and journals will highlight the transformation of the Highland economy in the 1750s and 1760s. It will also show the government's strategies to bring manufacturing and industry to the Highlands and the impact these efforts made in the long term.²⁸⁸

6.6.1. The encouragement of linen manufacture in the Highlands

The encouragement of linen production was a key element in the government's policy after the 'Forty-Five to bring manufacture and industry to the Highlands in order to 'civilise' their inhabitants. In 1749 the Board of Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland²⁸⁹ turned its attention to the manufacture of linen in the Highlands. That year £800 of the Malt Surplus tax were spent by the Trustees on the establishment of spinning schools, training for apprentice tradesmen and the distribution of wheels and reels among the Highlanders.²⁹⁰ However, more regular funds were needed if the manufacture of linen was to be successfully established in the Highlands.

In 1753 a huge debate erupted about the renewal of the bounty on exported linen. The Scots warned about the consequences to the manufacture of coarse linen in the Highlands if the bounty was not continued. However, parliament decided against a continuation, but awarded Scotland an 'equivalent' for the bounty of £3,000 per annum for nine years, to start from the expiry of the bounty in 1754.²⁹¹ These funds enabled the Trustees to initiate an ambitious scheme for promoting linen manufacture in the Highlands. The scheme was based on the establishment of four new linen manufacturing stations in places where there had previously been none. These stations would serve as centres for their respective areas and would supply the

²⁸⁸ This analysis will focus on the main government plans and strategies. As most of the reports had been prepared for the Board for the Annexed Estates, I will not deal with the affairs of individual estates. For the management of individual Annexed Estates see Smith, *Jacobite Estates*.

²⁸⁹ In this chapter referred to as 'Trustees'.

²⁹⁰ See A.S. Cowper, *Linen In The Highlands 1753-1762* (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 2. [hereafter: Cowper, *Linen*]

²⁹¹ See A.J. Durie, *The Scottish Linen Industry in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1979), p. 89. [hereafter: Durie, *Scottish Linen Industry*] According to Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 116, the money came from the 'unallocated funds' for Scotland. Before the allowance of the 'equivalent', there had been frequent complaints in the early 1750s that the British government had disadvantaged the Scottish and Irish linen manufactures in order to protect the English linen industry. See, for example, Campbell, *Description*, p. 6.

local population with seeds, raw material, wheels and reels. The Trustees estimated that the cost of setting up each station would be £630. This sum included: the expenses for the station buildings; the houses for employees; the provision of linseed; premiums and utensils for raising flax; utensils for bruising and swingling flax; training of apprentices; salaries for the main employees; maintenance of the spinning schools and the distribution of wheels and reels among the local population. The Trustees originally intended to name four particular places for the stations, but decided against it, fearing that the local landowners might feel tempted to raise their demands. Instead, they listed twelve possible locations ranging from Loch Broom in the north-west to Glen Moriston and Strathglass in Inverness-shire. In June 1754 the scheme was advertised, and in July 1754 the Trustees were offered land for purchase at Loch Carron and Loch Broom by Mr John Mackenzie of Delvine and Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Coull respectively.²⁹² The Trustees decided to proceed with the establishment of one station at Loch Carron and one at Loch Broom. They appointed Richard Neilson, manufacturer, Canongate, Edinburgh, as their General Riding Officer or Surveyor of Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland. In August 1754 the Trustees sent Neilson to Loch Carron and Loch Broom to inspect suitable places for the two stations and to meet the local landowners to discuss the Trustees' plans. At both locations Neilson was to prepare a report about the following matters: the possibility of building a harbour; the communication by sea and land; the nature of the soil; the rent of the ground; the number of inhabitants; how they were supplied with provisions; the level of prices; the distance from peat, wood or coal for firing; the trade carried out; the wages and rates for labour; the structure and costs of houses and the best method of building.²⁹³ Weather permitting, he was also to visit 'Lochnua' (Loch Nan Uamh, two miles south of Arisaig, Inverness-shire) and Glen Moriston, where the Trustees also intended to establish linen stations.²⁹⁴ On 12

²⁹² See Cowper, *Linen*, pp. 4-5. Three linen manufacturing stations were finally built at Lochcarron (at the head of Loch Carron), Inverlael (at the head of Loch Broom) and near Invermoriston (at the entrance of Glen Moriston to Loch Ness). To avoid confusion the stations are referred to as being at Loch Carron, Loch Broom and Glen Moriston.

²⁹³ See 'Instructions by the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland to Richard Neilson General Riding Officer or Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – For his first Survey', Edinburgh, 2 August 1754, in NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fos. 29-32.

²⁹⁴ Neilson conducted a superficial survey of Glen Moriston on 19 and 20 August. On 20 August, he delivered to Mr Grant of Glenmoriston copies of the Trustees' plans and their proposals to the

August 1754, Neilson set out on his circuit. He was accompanied by William Tod, manager of the British Linen Company, and Patrick Macgilliwie, Inspector of Bleaching, and a young man who was to make the sketches of the proposed linen stations and villages.²⁹⁵ The party rode via Stirling to Fort William, followed Glen Mor to Inverness, crossed to the west coast for Loch Carron and Loch Broom, and returned to Inverness. Because of Neilson's riding accident they did not pay a second visit to Glen Moriston, but returned via Perth to Edinburgh, where they arrived on 8 September 1754. A more detailed survey of the Glen Moriston estate was made by Alexander Shaw later that year. Shaw submitted his 'Report' to the Trustees on 4 January 1755 and concluded that there was a suitable location for a linen manufacturing station on the shore of Loch Ness.²⁹⁶

On 6 November 1754, Neilson submitted his 'Report' to the Trustees in which he outlined his proposals for the encouragement of linen manufacture in the Highlands. Neilson and Tod were Lowland manufacturers, merchants and supporters of the Hanoverians. Their accounts reflected the contemporary attitude of the government towards the Highlanders and highlighted also the political agenda of their mission. William Tod, for example, summarised that the Highlands still lacked industry and that

the Inhabitants look upon themselves rather as a conquered than a free People: They are still useless nay dangerous to the state. Having no employment they meet in numbers together, and pass their time in telling nervs and stories. They paint to their young people and children the happy state they were formerly in when allowed to wear their dress and Arms. They tell them a thousand stories and impress them with a Belief, that their present misery and want is entirely owing to the Government. Thus they instill and nurse up amongst the young a spirit of discontent, which is the natural attendant on poverty and pride. Many of these enlist themselves in foreign service, or go to the american plantations. Such of them as remain at home live an idle poor Life, in the manner already mentioned; and being disaffected to the Government, are ready at all times to embrace every opportunity which affords the smallest prospect of gratifying revenge or of bettering their circumstances.²⁹⁷

proprietors. Mr Grant of Glenmoriston welcomed the Trustees' interest in establishing a linen manufacturing station at Glen Moriston. See *ibid.*, fo. 36. Neilson intended to conduct a second, more detailed, survey of Glen Moriston after his return from the west coast. However, he injured his foot in a riding accident between Loch Broom and Contin and had to abandon the second survey of Glen Moriston. See *ibid.*, fo. 49.

²⁹⁵ Macgilliwie was acquainted with the Highlands and spoke Gaelic. See Cowper, *Linen*, p. 6.

²⁹⁶ See 'Report Alexander Shaw to the Honourable Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland anent a Manufacturing Station proposed to be set up at Glenmoriston', in NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, appendix no. 7, fos. 64-73. Shaw, stamp-master and manufacturer at Elgin, was put in charge of the planned station at Glen Moriston in the same month.

²⁹⁷ 'Letter from William Tod one of the Managers of the British Linen Company to the Secretary to the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', in NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fo. 58.

To Tod, the consequences that had to be drawn from this analysis were obvious. He regarded the encouragement of industry and manufacture as an appropriate means to defuse the Highlanders' potential for rebellion:

It is the young people which the Government must take care of, and of whom any good can be expected. I apprehend therefore that teaching these the english Language and inuring them to labour and industry, are the most effectual methods for civilizing that Country.²⁹⁸

Neilson's and Tod's proposals were not just about the encouragement of linen manufacture in the Highlands. They were part of a broader scheme to 'civilise' the Highlanders.

In his report to the Trustees, Neilson suggested that the Highlanders at Loch Broom and Loch Carron should initially be supplied over land from Inverness with flaxseed and spinning wheels gratis. With rising demand, production supplies could be imported by ships that would also return the spun yarn to export markets such as Liverpool. To assist Highlanders unfamiliar with the conversion of flax to linen, an experienced flax-raiser was to be engaged who would tour the country at the Trustees' expense. Neilson's plans for linen manufacture did not contradict his further recommendation that the Highlanders should convert their arable land to cattle pasture in order to produce more winter provisions.²⁹⁹ The flax to supply the Highlanders was to be raised on the more fertile grounds around Contin, Strathpeffer and Dingwall. There it could be produced in great quantities and be supplied to the Highlanders on the west coast. However, the Highlanders had first to be taught the art of spinning flax to yarn. For this purpose spinning schools had to be built, where the spinners and weavers could be taught on coarse cloth before moving on to finer cloth.³⁰⁰ The expense of training the apprentices was to be met by the Trustees, who would also feed them as an incentive to the attendance of their schools. At a later stage, the successful apprentices would be employed and sent out to the more remote glens to teach their fellow countrymen the art of spinning. Finally, Neilson listed the

²⁹⁸ Ibid., fos. 58-59.

²⁹⁹ See *ibid.*, fo. 51.

³⁰⁰ See *ibid.*, fo. 53. In 1755 Neilson stressed once more that women should first be taught to produce coarse yarn before moving on to fine yarn. This was supported by trials made in Ross-shire. In contrast, in Lochaber women were taught immediately to produce fine yarn. These trials had failed. See EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fo. 121.

buildings needed for the scheme and made recommendations about whom to employ as spinning mistresses and teachers at these schools.³⁰¹ The linen manufacturing stations were to combine a technical school and a manufactory, and reflected the Trustees' policy of encouraging manufacture and industry at all levels and age groups in the Highlands.³⁰²

Tod fully backed Neilson's proposals. He not only proposed the construction of several linen manufacturing stations, but also suggested the establishment of a network of merchants who could supply the Highlanders with flax and merchandise their homespun yarn. This network should also be used informally to 'police' the Highlands. He recommended that two houses should be built in every Highland glen, and in one of them a man should be housed

whose Business should be to sell meal, salt, soap, Tobacco and other small things for the use of the Country people. Such a man might be employed in giving out flax to the poor people to spin, in receiving back their yarn, and paying them for their Labour; and when that was collected together in any quantity, he could send it to the head Town or village of the district, which might be at too great a distance to carry a smaller parcel. By this method the principal manufacturer or merchant in the Head village would have a correspondent in every Glen of the Country round him and the Government a sure friend in every small Highland Glen or village in Scotland.³⁰³

Neilson's and Tod's reports reflected the high expectations of the Trustees. Moreover, there were encouraging signs that linen manufacturing stations and spinning schools might alter the behaviour of the Highlanders. Neilson had initially complained about their idleness and their slow and imperfect manner of spinning wool, but where they had been supplied with spinning wheels, reels and lint, they had made good progress. Neilson reported that the locals at Strathcarron had been supplied for several years with wheels, reels, lint and proper instructions for spinning

³⁰¹ See NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fos. 51-55. In contemporary poor relief the distribution of flax and wool for spinning was widespread throughout Europe.

³⁰² For Neilson's exact plans and maps for the proposed stations and villages see *ibid.*, appendices 8-10, fos. 75, 77, 79. In 1755 Neilson proposed to build a fourth 'principall Station' at Glenelg. He reported that the soil at Glenelg was very favourable for the production of flax. He recommended that the station should be built near the shore between Kirkcoun and the barracks at Bernera (near Glenelg). The station should include a harbour from which Knoydart, Arisaig and Moidart could be supplied by boat with spinning wheels and flax. See EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fo. 50. Funds were made available to the prospective manager, Mr Robert Campbell, but the station was never built, and Campbell joined the army. After the Seven Years' War (1756-63) Campbell settled down at Callander where he began the manufacture of linen, supported by the Board for the Annexed Estates. However, his business failed. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 116. For Neilson's exact proposals (in 1755) for building locations of a 'principal station', a 'station' or only a 'spinning school' see EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 125-127.

³⁰³ NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fo. 60.

by Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Coull and Bailie Mackenzie in Dingwall. Since then they had ceased to be lazy and had made such progress that the yarn spun was of better quality than that produced around Dingwall.³⁰⁴

Government bodies were not the only institutions that regarded flax-raising, spinning schools and linen manufacture as a lucrative business in the Highlands. In the late 1740s and 1750s private landowners also promoted linen manufacture on their land. Once more, Whig landowners in Argyll were at the forefront of this improvement. Their increasing importance in the production of coarse linen in the Highlands in the 1750s and 1760s was not only due to their proximity to Glasgow, but also to the circumstances of the younger sons of the Campbell elite who had no immediate prospect of acquiring land and who were actively encouraged to get involved in this trade as an alternative employment to the law or the military service.³⁰⁵ Hector Maclean of Torloisk, the elder brother of Lachlan Maclean of Torloisk, petitioned the Duke of Argyll in 1749 to be allowed to lease the duke's land at Penmore on Mull in order to use it for his experiments with clover and flax on his own land. In 1752 he set up a spinning school at Torloisk for the employment of the daughters of the local tenants.³⁰⁶ In the Outer Hebrides linen production was also introduced by private initiative. Captain Barlow of the Buffs reported (in 1753) on the establishment of a linen manufactory by Lady Margaret MacDonald on North Uist,

which thrives mightily, and is of Infinite use in Employing Numbers of poor Children, all the Principal Farmers of the Country are likewise keen adventures [sic] in this undertaking.³⁰⁷

Following the submission of Neilson's report, the Trustees began to appoint the main employees for the linen manufacturing stations. On 29 November 1754, Ninian Jeffrey, stamp-master and manufacturer of Kelso, was put in charge as 'principal undertaker' at Loch Carron. On 17 January 1755, Alexander Shaw, stamp-master and manufacturer of Elgin, was put in charge at Glen Moriston. Neither of them had any

³⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, fo. 43.

³⁰⁵ See Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. 225.

³⁰⁶ See J. Currie, *Mull: The Island and its People* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 145. [hereafter: Currie, *Mull*] Hector Maclean of Torloisk died unmarried in 1765.

³⁰⁷ NLS, 'Military Reports from the Highlands, 1753-4', MS. 10691, fo. 16r. It seems that private linen manufacturing in the Highlands was more successful than the business carried out in the government-built linen manufacturing stations.

difficulty in producing a certificate of loyalty to the House of Hanover, which was necessary for a position with the Board of Manufactures. However, the appointment of John Ross, merchant of Dingwall, as principal undertaker at Loch Broom caused a problem. He had been chosen by the Trustees in the autumn of 1754, but had been denounced as a Jacobite. His appointment was delayed while the charges were investigated, and it was not until late June 1755 that he finally arrived at Loch Broom.³⁰⁸ The ‘principal undertakers’ were a combination of manager and entrepreneur, and, as will be seen from later accounts, their economic activities often reached far beyond the management of their station.³⁰⁹ The principal employees at the stations such as a master heckler, a master wheelwright, a master flax-raiser and a spinning mistress were appointed by the end of 1755.³¹⁰ Construction works at the three sites began in 1755, but the setting up of the stations proved to be more difficult than expected. In 1755 Neilson reported to the Trustees that the buildings at Glen Moriston had greatly advanced, but the station was not yet operational because many of the employees necessary to run it were not yet at the site.³¹¹ The station at Loch Carron was also troubled by difficulties. Neilson reported that the buildings were ‘in great forwardness’, but there were difficulties in supplying the builders due to a lack of boats, fishing equipment and fuel.³¹² However, the cultivation of flax had made great progress, and Neilson was informed by Mr Jeffrey, the station’s principal undertaker, that he could have distributed even more flaxseed among the local population, such was the demand for seed and spinning wheels. Moreover, the poor Highlanders of the country were moving to Loch Carron in order to work at the manufactory and to have their children taught in the spinning school.³¹³ At Loch

³⁰⁸ See Cowper, *Linen*, p. 17. Dunlop suggests that the allegations had probably been made by someone who wanted the position for himself. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 39.

³⁰⁹ See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 116. Ninian Jeffrey was also factor of the annexed Coigach estate, where he fell into arrears with the rent. In the end, he faced financial difficulties at Loch Carron and Coigach. See *ibid.*, pp. 53, 119. Knox was full of praise for the agricultural improvements made by Jeffrey at the new settlement of New Kelso. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 121-122.

³¹⁰ For a list of the appointments and their respective salaries see Cowper, *Linen*, pp. 18-19.

³¹¹ See EUL, Neilson, ‘2nd Report 1755’, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 83-85, 127.

³¹² *Ibid.*, fo. 127.

³¹³ See *ibid.*, fos. 58-62, 127. A. Smith is more cautious about the progress of the station at Loch Carron as the new settlers faced severe difficulties on arrival. Their accommodation was totally inadequate. The architect had misjudged the quantity of lime used in the buildings and the settlers had to live in earthen houses during the winter. Problems continued after Neilson’s visit. The settlers’ crop failed, and in 1756 they had to ask for meal from the Cromartie estate. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 118. However, Mr Jeffrey had to provide a positive impression of the progress of his station. He would have faced tough questioning if he failed to account for any progress.

Broom work on the construction site was halted, and only one of the existing buildings was deemed fit for a linen station.³¹⁴ Loch Broom had lagged considerably behind the others as it had faced severe problems right from the beginning. The principal undertaker, John Ross, eventually arrived in June 1755, delayed by the investigation into his alleged Jacobite sympathies. Moreover, the construction costs proved to be far higher than expected. Instead of £630, which had been allocated for the set-up of each station, a representative of the Board of Manufactures calculated (in 1787) that the station at Loch Broom had actually cost £300 for the land and another £1,100 for the buildings.³¹⁵ Work on the buildings was well under way before the Trustees had even acquired the ground. At Loch Carron the Trustees bought twelve acres for £180 in 1756, at Loch Broom twelve acres were bought for £262 10s. in April 1756, and at Glen Moriston 107 acres were bought in 1757 at the expense of £375 with an additional interest of £35 11s.³¹⁶

After the initial problems had been overcome, the production of yarn and linen seems to have run smoothly for a number of years, although on a far smaller scale than predicted and still at a loss to the Trustees. Nonetheless, Bishop Pococke gave a favourable account of the progress of the spinning schools when he visited the north-western Highlands in 1760. He reported that the linen manufactory at Glen Moriston was 'built out of the forfeited Estates' and taught 40 girls to spin in three months before another 40 girls were admitted.³¹⁷ The flax was bought from outside, and six looms were employed for spinning. The country people also produced large quantities of yarn, which were sold to the spinning station. The station consisted of a principal building with offices added on each side.

The future of the three linen manufacturing stations was secured, but only for the period of the grant. £420 had been allocated (starting from the second year) for

³¹⁴ See EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 75-76.

³¹⁵ See NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fos. 111-112. Cowper, *Linen*, pp. 20-21, gives the expense for the land at Loch Broom at £262 10s. However, it was not the expense for the land but for the buildings that spiralled out of control and nearly doubled the original estimate.

³¹⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

³¹⁷ Pococke, *Tours*, p. 101. Pococke was incorrect as in 1760 the Board for the Annexed Estates was not yet involved in supporting the linen stations. Pococke also referred to the linen stations at Loch Carron and Loch Broom, although he did not visit them. He did not provide any further information other than these stations were of the same kind as the one at Glen Moriston. See *ibid.*, p. 114. Pococke was pleased about the visible progress in teaching local children to spin, but he seems to have been unaware that the stations were running at a loss.

their upkeep.³¹⁸ However, the stations were not making money, and the Trustees were well aware that linen production had not lived up to their expectations. The amount of yarn and linen produced was far below the scheduled targets, and in consequence the stations failed to qualify for premiums. The Trustees soon became disillusioned, especially as expenses for carriage were particularly high, and in 1759 they accepted the offer of the British Linen Company to supply the stations with flax and to buy their yarn. However, in the early 1760s the financial problems worsened, and in 1762 the Trustees decided to switch the use of the fund for its final year to a scheme in Bute, thereby discontinuing the supply and merchandising contract with the British Linen Company.³¹⁹ When the initial grant of 1753 came to an end, the future of the linen manufacturing stations was in severe doubt. The stations were dependent on subsidies, and the principal undertakers and the Trustees for the Board of Manufactures appealed to the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates to take over the enterprise. The Board for the Annexed Estates had just been granted £1,200 to encourage manufactures in the Highlands, and in July 1763 decided to spend £977 of that sum on subsidising the three existing linen stations and to encourage linen manufacture in Badenoch, Strathspey and Braemurray.³²⁰ The decision by the Board for the Annexed Estates to take over the struggling linen stations was influenced by two important arguments. Firstly, the Trustees for the Board of Manufactures had given them an exaggerated account of the acceptance of the stations by the Highlanders. The Trustees had claimed that even in midwinter the Highlanders came from all over the country to the stations to provide themselves with flax and to return yarn. Secondly, if the Board for the Annexed Estates did not take over, the money would have been invested in vain, the progress made in ‘civilising’ the Highlanders lost and the Highlanders would soon return to their former idle lifestyle.³²¹

³¹⁸ See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 116.

³¹⁹ See Durie, *Scottish Linen Industry*, p. 90.

³²⁰ See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 116. For a detailed account of how this money was spent (in 1764) on the distribution of linseed, itinerant flax-raisers and salaries for spinning mistresses etc. see *ibid.*, p. 117. Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 39, claims that, after the expiry of the initial grant at the end of 1762, the appeals by the Board of Manufactures to the Treasury, and afterwards to the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, for further funding failed, and ‘in 1765 the stations were returned to their original owners to be kept up by them during the pleasure of the Board’. However, the Board for the Annexed Estates continued funding the stations at Glen Moriston, Loch Carron and Loch Broom after 1762. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, pp. 116-117. See also Durie, *Scottish Linen Industry*, p. 90.

³²¹ See Cowper, *Linen*, pp. 29-30.

The funds of the Board for the Annexed Estates, however, were also limited, and the Board soon realised the financial burden it had inherited from the Board of Manufactures. Moreover, the political and economic climate in Scotland changed rapidly in the 1760s. The foundation of the linen stations and spinning schools in the mid-1750s had been mainly a political measure to civilise the Highlanders. The more the Jacobite threat in the Highlands receded in the second half of the eighteenth century, the less the government was willing to subsidise struggling manufacturers in that region. There were also strong economic reasons for the government to abandon the subsidies to the linen stations and spinning schools in the Highlands, as these stations were not able to compete with the highly mechanised large-scale production of textiles in industrial cities such as Glasgow or Paisley. By the 1770s and 1780s linen production in the Highland shires was trailing hopelessly behind the Lowlands.³²² Additionally, the manufacture of linen became increasingly sidelined by textiles made of cotton or wool.

The takeover by the Board for the Annexed Estates marked a new era in promoting manufacturing in the Highlands. The Board of Manufactures had withdrawn from the Highlands, and the Board for the Annexed Estates became the sole official body for promoting manufacturing there. Although the Board of Manufactures had passed the financial burden on to the Board for the Annexed Estates, it kept possession of the buildings at Glen Moriston, Loch Carron and Loch Broom.

The takeover did not solve the financial difficulties of the linen manufacturing stations. There is clear evidence that the stations still struggled in the mid-1760s despite the subsidies granted. Their progress reports were often combined with requests for more support, and the stations were nowhere near the self-sufficiency that had been envisaged at their inception. In 1768 Archibald Menzies, General

³²² The government statistics for linen production are very reliable, as all linen for sale had to be inspected and stamped. Pennant's and Knox's figures for linen manufacture in the separate shires of Scotland show how far production in the Highlands lagged behind the Lowlands in the 1720s, 1770s and 1780s. According to Knox, the Lowland shires produced linen worth £764,489 sterling for the period 1 November 1781 to 1 November 1782, whereas the Highland shires produced linen worth only £10,611 sterling. See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 83. For a comparison of linen manufacture in the Highlands and Lowlands, Pennant's and Knox's tables are given in full in the appendix. See appendices nos. 7.1. and 7.2. Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld visited Paisley in 1786 and provided a detailed account of its booming textiles industry. See Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, pp. 208-215.

Inspector for the Annexed Estates, returned a damning report on the linen manufacturing stations' activities. He inspected the stations at Glen Moriston and Loch Broom and criticised the immense sums of money that had been spent on buildings in places where hardly anyone lived. Additionally, there was not sufficient ground around the stations for raising flax, and the crop was always at the mercy of heavy rainfall. To make matters worse, the distance of the stations from the east coast made it unprofitable to import foreign flax. Although Menzies reported that the station at Glen Moriston had been built at 'one of the most unfit Situations in that Country, as there are hardly any Inhabitants near it for several miles every way', he considered it the only station that might survive because of its outstations in more populous and fruitful places such as Urquhart, Fort Augustus, The Aird or Inverness.³²³ In his view, there was no future for the manufacture of linen at Loch Carron and Loch Broom. He suggested that these two stations might switch to spinning wool because the west coast was far more suitable for rearing sheep than for raising flax. In a further step the spun wool could be manufactured at places where corn could be procured to feed the workers. Menzies's report fell short of calling for the immediate closure of the two stations, but it clearly reflected a shift in policy. The Board for the Annexed Estates had lost confidence in manufacturing linen in an area where sheep and wool promised far greater returns. All in all, Menzies concluded, the stations were a waste of money.³²⁴ It is not surprising that the Board

³²³ NAS, A. Menzies, 'Report General Inspector upon the Estates of Lovat & Cromarty 1767 & 1768', Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E787/24/1, fo. 9. [hereafter: NAS, Menzies, 'Report 1767 & 1768', E787/24/1] Menzies did not visit the Loch Carron station, but he reported that it was facing the same difficulties as the other stations.

³²⁴ See *ibid.*, fos. 8-10. See also Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, pp. 118-119. The agriculturalist Matthew Culley proposed a similar change in policy when he visited Ross-shire and Sutherland in 1775. He strongly recommended the extension of sheep farming in these areas and criticised 'that the absurd and preposterous method of growing flax in a country not fertile enough even for the culture of corn in sufficient quantities for the support of its inhabitants, cannot be too much exposed, or too severely condemned'. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 127. It is interesting to note that Pennant gave (in 1769) a favourable impression of the linen station and spinning school at Glen Moriston. He provided the same figures as Pococke and confirmed that the station was still being supported by money from the Annexed Estates. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 198, 162-163. The source for Pennant's information is uncertain. He had not visited the station personally, as at no time did he make a diversion from the Inverness to Fort William road to Glen Moriston. However, Pennant consulted the manuscripts of Pococke's 1760 tour before writing his own accounts, and it is very likely that he took this information from them. Pennant's account of the linen station at Glen Moriston represented, therefore, an antiquated picture. Pococke had died in 1765, four years before Pennant travelled to Scotland. Pennant did not refer to the stations at Loch Carron and Loch Broom when he travelled the western seaboard in 1772. During his tour of the Western Isles, James Robertson stayed

for the Annexed Estates had wanted to get rid of the linen stations since the late 1760s, as did the Board of Manufactures in respect of the buildings. In 1770 the Board of Manufactures leased the stations at Glen Moriston and Loch Carron to their undertakers for nineteen years. The station at Loch Broom was leased to Colin Mackenzie, kelp merchant. They were leased free of rent upon the condition that the undertakers continued the manufacture of linen and kept the buildings in repair. However, receding subsidies from the Board for the Annexed Estates led to a severe decline in linen manufacture, and the buildings at Loch Carron and Loch Broom deteriorated rapidly.

Despite the obvious problems with the linen manufacturing stations in the 1760s, many commentators still considered spinning schools and linen production as a promising business in the Highlands and Hebrides. John Walker, for example, visited the Hebrides in 1764 and reported on the successful establishment of a spinning school at Stornoway by the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates in 1763. He acknowledged that the locals were initially opposed to the idea and that the women were averse to attending the school ‘from groundless Reports of a Design to send them to the Plantations, but these Fears being dispelled, the School was immediately filled’.³²⁵ According to him, the spinning mistress and her husband, who was a heckler (i.e. a flax-dresser), had been recruited from Fife. However, in spite of the language barrier, the islanders proved to be apt pupils. Within three months the school had taught 51 girls from the age of 9 to 25 years to spin linen yarn from lint. 2,288 spindles of linen yarn had been spun in the course of fourteen months, and he reckoned that, if the school was sufficiently supported, the production of linen yarn would become universal throughout Lewis in three to four years. He, therefore, recommended the employment of a flax-raiser plus an expert weaver at Stornoway.³²⁶ Referring to this success he recommended, in his report to the Commissioners in 1771, the construction of additional spinning schools on Coll, Tiree and Canna.³²⁷

on 9 October 1768 at New Kelso, but he did not provide an account of the state of the linen manufacturing station.

³²⁵ McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 47.

³²⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 47. According to Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, p. 538, the spinning of linen yarn in Lewis prospered until the competition of cotton rendered this business unprofitable.

³²⁷ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, pp. 174, 188, 229.

From 1763 until its dissolution in 1784, the Board for the Annexed Estates was the sole official body for promoting industry and manufacture in the Highlands. In respect of the linen manufacturing stations, this period was overshadowed by a constant decline. Menzies's report of 1768 has shown that the Board for the Annexed Estates had become disillusioned about the future of the linen stations at least fifteen years before the restoration of the estates to their former proprietors put an end to its activities in the Highlands.³²⁸ There seems to have been no shortage of children being sent to the spinning schools for training, but the stations had been accumulating losses ever since their foundation. In these circumstances the decline of the buildings must have begun in the 1760s because money, even for necessary repairs, was scarce. After the buildings were leased to their undertakers, their decay accelerated as linen production receded and the settlers moved away. By the late 1780s, in two out of the three initial stations, linen production had been abandoned and the buildings were in a ruinous state. John Knox reported about his visit to Loch Carron in 1786:

Many years ago, the Board of Trustees at Edinburgh purchased several acres of land at the head of the loch, and sent Mr. Jeffries of Kelso to instruct the inhabitants in spinning, weaving, &c. Many small houses were built, and a number of people were collected together, which gave the place an appearance of a populous, though detached village. The Trustees built a house and ware-rooms for Mr. Jeffries; but the design failed, after a great sum of money had been expended in the experiment.³²⁹

Despite the failure of the linen station, the money had not been utterly wasted. Knox emphasised that the country around Loch Carron was greatly indebted to Mr Jeffrey because of the improvements he had made in agriculture, gardening, draining and the planting of trees and hedges. Mr Jeffrey had founded a new village, New Kelso, where formerly had been nothing but heath and bog. The people of New Kelso now produced excellent crops on square fields, divided by hedges (enclosures), and their progress had become the admiration of their ignorant neighbours.³³⁰ However, according to Knox, the foundation of this colony had not been easy. Initially, the Highlanders had been so averse to these improvements that Mr Jeffrey had been forced to hire soldiers from the barracks of Bernera for digging, planting and

³²⁸ The responsibilities of the Board for the Annexed Estates were passed on to the Treasury.

³²⁹ Knox, *Tour*, p. 121.

³³⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

trenching. Moreover, many thousand acres of improvable land were still lying under a bed of moss, which Mr Jeffrey and his son intended to bring into agriculture if they were granted long-term leases for the land.³³¹

Knox's account of the linen station at Loch Carron was confirmed a year later by Lachlan Mactavish. Mactavish accompanied the Directors of the British Fisheries Society on their tour of the western seaboard in 1787 as a representative of the Board of Manufactures in order to inspect the stations at Loch Carron and Loch Broom. His report confirmed that some lasting improvements had been achieved at Loch Carron, but they were mainly the results of Mr Jeffrey's private investments. The linen manufacturing station had been abandoned, and the buildings were in severe decay:

This station is in the possession of the original undertaker on a lease from the Board which expires in two years. And altho the land here is in a better state of cultivation than that at Lochbroom, being inclosed and subdivided with hedge-rows, and carrying good crops of sown grass, bear & oats, yet I found the buildings if possible in a more ruinous condition, except the part used by the tenant as a dwelling house, which is in tolerable repair. These tho intended for the accomodation of manufacturers do not appear to me to have been properly constructed for that purpose; neither does it appear that they were ever intirely finished; and they are now in general, in so wretched a condition, as to be improper for byres & stables, the only purposes for which they ever have been used.³³²

At Loch Carron the money had left at least some positive impact on the country. At Loch Broom, however, things had gone completely wrong. Mactavish inspected the remains of the linen manufacturing station at Inverlael near the head of the loch, and his verdict was damning. He reported that he found the twelve acres of land that the Board of Manufactures had purchased for the station from Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Coull in 1756

in the possession of one of Sir Alexander's tenants, without inclosure and in a most wretched state of cultivation, and the buildings which cost the Board £1100 Ster. (altho am perswaded the real expence could never have exceeded £400:) a perfect ruin: nor could I learn that any branch of manufacture was ever carried on there; so that upon the whole a

³³¹ See *ibid.*, p. 122. Knox's assertion that the local population initially opposed the improvements in agriculture is not confirmed by the account given by Mr Jeffrey to Neilson in 1755. Other sources also confirm a warm reception for the new settlers at Loch Carron. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 118.

³³² NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fo. 116. According to Mactavish, the construction of this station had cost the Board of Manufactures £1,620 instead of the £630 that had been allocated for its foundation. Mactavish strongly advised the Directors of the British Fisheries Society to keep a close eye on their fishing villages in order to avoid the mistakes that had been made by the Board of Manufactures in respect of its linen manufacturing stations. However, the Directors of the British Fisheries Society do not seem to have given much thought to the failure of the linen manufacturing stations. Soon after, they made similar mistakes in the setting up of the fishing stations. In both cases a lack of knowledge about local circumstances, a lack of supervision and sloppy accounting of the allocated funds led to failed investments.

more flagrant instance of the abuse of public money, which appears to have been all jobbed away, can hardly be produced.³³³

In 1791 the Board of Manufactures finally pulled the plug on funding and sold the buildings at Glen Moriston, Loch Carron and Loch Broom for £1,590.³³⁴

Next, the reasons for the failure of the stations have to be discussed. First of all, it has to be asked whether there was a real need for linen manufacturing in the Highlands and, secondly, whether the Highland linen stations were competitive as far as quality and price were concerned. With regard to need, the answer must be negative. With regard to the quality of their products, the Highlanders might have been able to compete, but the costs were too high compared to the mass-scale production of linen in the Lowlands. On top of that, the remote location of the two west coast stations was undoubtedly the biggest obstacle to a successful establishment of linen manufacture in the Highlands. Transport to and from the stations at Loch Carron and Loch Broom proved to be particularly difficult, and high carriage costs greatly contributed to their financial difficulties. Obviously, the Trustees had not considered this factor sufficiently although Neilson had warned them. In 1754 he informed them about the poor state of the cross-country roads and the main roads that connected Loch Carron and Loch Broom to Inverness. He reported that the road from Loch Carron to Dingwall and Inverness was ‘so remarkably bad that a Horse, with a Load on his back, would find difficulty to travel it’.³³⁵ He also provided the Trustees for the Board of Manufactures with detailed figures for the cost of carriage:

If the roads, leading to Inverness, Dingwall and the other parts of the low Country, were repaired, it would open an easy communication and render carriage cheaper: or were the Inhabitants more industrious, and so numerous as to encourage the importation of meal and

³³³ See *ibid.*, fo. 112. According to Mactavish, the construction of the linen manufactory cost the Board of Manufactures near £1,400, including the price of the land. Another investigation into the failed station concluded in 1789 that the buildings were never completed, although the full sum of money had been expended. A lack of supervision and proper accounting were blamed for the failed investment. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 40.

³³⁴ See Cowper, *Linen*, p. 31. According to J.C. Lees, *A History Of The County Of Inverness* (Edinburgh and London, 1897), p. 212, the station at Glen Moriston was closed in the same year.

³³⁵ NAS, Neilson, ‘1st Report 1754’, NG1/7/4, fo. 41. The land connection from Loch Broom via Dingwall to Inverness was in a similarly poor state. Neilson reckoned that the county could not afford to improve the road for wheeled transport. See *ibid.*, fo. 47. In 1755 he repeated his warning about the lack of proper roads along the west coast. He warned that the cross-country roads to Moidart and Arisaig, and from Loch Carron to Loch Torridon, were in a very poor condition. See EUL, Neilson, ‘2nd Report 1755’, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 30, 36, 62.

other necessities by shipping they would certainly be better and cheaper provided than they are at present.

From what has been already said it appears, that the Inhabitants are mostly supplied with provisions from their own Farms. The price of meal just now at Dingwal is nine merks per Boll. The Carriage of it to Lochcarron varies according to the season of the year. In summer the hire of a Horse which will carry about 126 lib weight is 2s 6d, In Harvest and Winter 3s 4d and in spring and seedtime from 4s. to 5s. and if loaded back and forward they will pay an half more.³³⁶

In 1754 and 1755 the Trustees do not seem to have taken Neilson's warnings seriously. However, they soon became aware of the problems caused by the remote location of the stations. In the general report of the work of the Board of Manufactures for 1758, the Trustees acknowledged that the stations were too far distant from the markets. The land carriage of flax to the stations and of yarn to the markets caused huge expense. Moreover, the output of yarn of the stations on the west coast was not big enough to bear the expense of sea transport, although sea transport was usually cheaper than land carriage. During winter the roads were impassable, and production at Loch Carron and Loch Broom was frequently halted because the supply of raw material was interrupted.³³⁷ Neither Loch Carron nor Loch Broom were connected directly to the towns on the east coast via the roads built by Caulfield in the second half of the 1750s and 1760s. In fact, the roads leading to the north-west coast and the cross-country roads in that area remained so bad that both stations were excluded from wheeled transport until the end of the eighteenth century.

The wrong choice for the location of the stations was obviously the biggest mistake. Some authors put part of the blame on Neilson and Tod who inspected the sites and recommended construction.³³⁸ Neilson's and Tod's over-optimistic account of the economic viability of the stations on the west coast may have evoked false hopes, but they had given a clear warning to the Trustees about the poor road connections and the need for their improvement. Their assumptions about the economic viability of the stations were made upon the premise that the carriage problem would be solved by the public. The main blame, however, lay with the government and the Trustees for the Board of Manufactures. The government

³³⁶ NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fo. 40.

³³⁷ See Cowper, *Linen*, p. 22.

³³⁸ See, for example, Durie, *Scottish Linen Industry*, p. 90.

considered the establishment of linen manufacturing in the Highlands as a political rather than a business matter. It regarded manufacturing as a means to 'civilise' the Highlanders, and the economic viability of the stations was not sufficiently checked. The attempt to establish a new industry among an unskilled population that had no previous experience of the business was doomed to fail. The distance of the stations to the markets, poor communication and a climate that was unfavourable for raising the necessary raw material contributed to the failure. On the other hand, the Trustees consulted merchants who were experienced in the linen trade, but they had already decided on Loch Carron and Loch Broom as locations for linen manufacturing stations even before Neilson and Tod were sent out to inspect them. The offer of cheap land at these remote locations led the Trustees to ignore alternative options and Neilson's repeated warnings about poor communications. Neilson and Tod were instructed to report about suitable sites at Loch Carron and Loch Broom, but they were not in a position to question the general suitability of these two loch sites.

Moreover, a huge share of the Board of Manufactures' funds was spent on the purchase of land and the construction of buildings. Although this 'static' approach failed to establish permanent linen manufacturing in the Highlands, there were successful alternatives that left a more permanent impact on the Highlands. Duncan Grant, a linen manufacturer at Forres, was employed by the Board of Manufactures to introduce flax-spinning in the Highland parts of Badenoch, Strathspey and the Braes of Moray. He visited these areas, handed out flax and taught the local population spinning and heckling. He reported that in 1761 he had taught 160 girls in Badenoch to spin and another 187 in Strathspey in 1763. Grant's expense of £140 in 1761 was paid by the Board of Manufactures. According to Durie, this money was well invested as the business carried on, even after the subsidies were withdrawn. This sum was small in comparison to the expenses for the setting up and running costs of the linen manufacturing stations, and in contrast to the ailing stations it succeeded in creating long-term employment.³³⁹

³³⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 91. After the withdrawal of the Board of Manufactures' subsidy for the manufacture of linen in the Highlands, the Board for the Annexed Estates supported Grant. A. Smith is more critical of Duncan Grant's achievements. According to her, Grant was allowed £300 in 1764 for the promotion of flax-spinning. However, Grant claimed extraordinary expenses, beyond his allowance, which fuelled allegations of embezzlement. Smith shows that Grant was more interested in spinning yarn than weaving cloth. Hardly any of the yarn spun for Grant was woven into cloth in the

Finally, it has to be asked why the government kept on funding the linen stations through various official bodies for so long despite their obvious failure. One of the main reasons for the government's continuing financial support for the linen stations and spinning schools was the negative experience it had with the settlements for decommissioned soldiers and sailors in the Highlands. After the Seven Years' War the government had encouraged veteran soldiers and sailors to settle down on the Annexed Estates in order to place 'loyal citizens' among the Highlanders and to encourage industry and manufacturing. However, most of these settlements failed, and subsequent travellers often found no more than ruins. Pennant commented (in 1769) on a settlement near the River Tummel on the annexed Struan estate in Perthshire:

Not far off were some neat small houses, inhabited by veteran soldiers, who were settled here after the peace of 1748; had land, and three pounds in money given, and nine pounds lent, to begin the world with. In some few places this plan succeeded; but in general, was frustrated by the dissipation of these new colonists, who could by no means relish an industrious life; but as soon as the money was spent, which seldom lasted long, left their tenements to be possessed by the next corner.³⁴⁰

Highlands. Therefore, the effect of his business on the male labour market in the Highlands was minimal. See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, pp. 120-123.

³⁴⁰ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 102. There were three new settlements for retired soldiers on the annexed Struan estate at Kinloch Rannoch, Georgetown and Black Park. According to Pennant's route, this description must have referred to the settlement at Kinloch Rannoch. In 1772 Pennant noted the following at the bottom of Loch Broom (Ross-shire): 'Observe some houses built for the veteran soldiers and sailors; but as usual, all deserted.' Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 314. Twelve soldiers had been settled at the end of the Seven Years' War on the farm of Ullapool, which had been divided into individual crofts. A year after Pennant's visit the farm was returned to the factor. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 40-42. For the failed settlement at Benniebeg near Drummond Castle (Perthshire) see Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 91. Once all the inhabitants were dead or removed, Benniebeg was flooded by Lady Perth because the settlers' wretched hovels spoiled the approach to Drummond Castle. The remains of the settlement are now covered by the Pool of Drummond. For a failed settlement in upper Strathearn see Heron, *Observations*, vol. ii, p. 450. Pennant was usually full of praise for the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, but he clearly considered the veteran colonies to be a total failure. He described the colonies as a 'Utopian project' and commented on the Commissioners' misjudgement: 'But, as these gentlemen, with rare patriotism! discharge their trust without salary, they ought not to be liable to censure, like hireling placemen, on every trifling failure.' Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 91. For a study of the failed settlements of veterans, including the three colonies on the annexed Struan estate in Rannoch, see Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, pp. 145-155. Pennant's appraisal for the Commissioners was over-optimistic because their work left little permanent mark on the Highland economy. Some of Pennant's contemporaries were more critical. Bishop Pococke commented (in 1760) on the economic value of the Annexed Estates: 'Those Estates are in the Government and given for publick uses, but they are so charged by allowing large salaries to factors and by debts due on them, that little as yet is got by them, but the Crown has great influence by having them in their hands.' Pococke, *Tours*, p. 97. William Thomson had a similarly low opinion of the use of the revenues from the Annexed Estates. He wrote that the money was 'generally wasted in stipends for insolent factors, or land-stewards, or in donations to such speculative projectors, as happened to enjoy the favour of the leading men among the Trustees'. Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 208.

In the end, each of the linen manufacturing stations was a failure, and the government's efforts to promote industry and manufacturing among the Highlanders had left little or no permanent mark. Apart from the subsidised undertakers, no one else profited from the vast sums of public money that had been pumped into linen manufacturing in the Highlands. On the contrary, there is evidence that in other parts of the Highlands private manufacturers were forced out of business because they were unable to compete with their subsidised counterparts.³⁴¹ In the end, it could only be hoped that the British Fisheries Society would not repeat the mistakes made by the Board of Manufactures and the Board for the Annexed Estates. In the late 1780s the British Fisheries Society started its ambitious programme to build fishing villages along the western seaboard and to promote industry and fisheries among the Highlanders, but it too was soon facing serious challenges.

6.6.2. The economy of the Hebrides in the mid-1760s

Before dealing with new industries, such as the production of kelp for export or the extension of the fisheries in the 1780s, it is necessary to have a closer look at John Walker's report of the Hebrides in 1764 and 1771. Walker visited the Hebrides in 1764 and 1771 on behalf of the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. He was instructed to submit several reports on the state of the economy, religion and education in the Hebrides. In March 1771 he submitted his report to the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates and set out for a second tour of the Hebrides to visit those islands that he had missed out on his first tour in 1764.³⁴² His report to the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates was based on the information he had gathered from local ministers during his tour of the Hebrides in 1764. Walker's figures for the economy of all the major islands of the Hebrides are of particular importance, as he visited the islands during the crucial transitional stage from a traditional Highland economy to the dawning of a new era. His figures

³⁴¹ See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 122.

³⁴² In 1764 he had missed out Scarba, Seil, Luing, Lismore and several other smaller islands.

uniquely reflect the importance of traditional businesses such as cattle breeding, but they also show the rise of new businesses such as kelp production.³⁴³

6.6.2.1. The economy of the Outer Hebrides in 1764

Lewis exported annually 700 head of black cattle to the Scottish mainland, about 100 were sold to ships calling at Stornoway, and another 300 were salted and sent to the ports on the Clyde. The revenues from cattle export totalled c. £1,430. In addition, the island's exports were:

| product | £ | s. | d. |
|------------------------------------|-------|----|----|
| 50 tons of kelp | 162 | 5 | 0 |
| 200 anchors of aqua vitae (whisky) | 250 | 0 | 0 |
| 140 barrels of 'Dog Fish Oil' | 315 | 0 | 0 |
| 17,000 dried ling | 637 | 10 | 0 |
| 750 barrels of herring | 1,575 | 0 | 0 |
| 48 barrels of salmon | 80 | 8 | 0 |

Additionally, the spinning school at Stornoway exported from October 1763 to December 1764 linen yarn worth £228 16s.³⁴⁴ Lewis also exported 50 barrels of dried cod, 117 barrels of 'Mud Cod', above 2,000 sheepskins with wool upon them and about 38 stones of feathers that were mainly the product of Sula Sgeir, Rona and the Flannan Isles.³⁴⁵ Lewis neither exported nor imported any grain. To a Lowlander like Walker, agriculture on Lewis must have seemed to be in a comparatively backward state. His comments speak volumes:

³⁴³ For clarity this analysis includes only the major islands such as Lewis, Harris, North Uist, South Uist (including Benbecula), Barra, Skye, Coll, Tiree, Mull, Jura and Islay. Walker's statements on the weights and measures used in the islands are very precise. Nonetheless, the perplexing variety of weights and measures used contemporaneously reflects the utter confusion that existed in Scotland in 1764 and does not allow a clear analysis in statistical terms. Walker's comments about the weights and measures used on Mull speak volumes and deserve to be given in full: 'In most parts of the Highlands the Standard Weights and measures of Scotland are altogether unknown. The Inhabitants deal with one another according to certain local weights and measures of their own, which are unpractised and even unknown in their immediate neighbourhood. Nay in, many places, as in the Isle of Mull, they have none that are in general use, and the People buy and sell almost quite by guess.' McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 156. See also *ibid.*, pp. 15-17.

³⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 42.

³⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 42. Walker did not give the revenues for these exports.

Agriculture is not perhaps conducted in any part of the World, in a more rude and artless manner than in this Country. They know of no grain, besides Bear and grey Oats, no Manure but Sea Wrack, and scarce any Instrument of Agriculture, but the Carschrome, which is a crooked Spade, and a little Harrow with wooden Teeth which is drawn by a Man. The plough is a thing but lately known to the Inhabitants of the Lewes, and they [sic] are still but few of them in the Country. There is not one in all the Parish of Wig, the Land in that part of the Island being still cultivate entirely with the Spade.³⁴⁶

Until nine years before Walker's visit, potatoes were unknown on the island. The making of hay was an even more recent improvement and was practised in only a few places. Walker also reported that bear was not reaped but pulled up by the roots and that 'graddaning' was still common among the people. Sheep were not shorn as the wool was plucked by hand.³⁴⁷

Harris exported about 250 head of live black cattle and another 100 salted carcasses, to a total of £455. The island also exported 100 tons of kelp worth £325.³⁴⁸ Harris also exported a little butter, cheese, some wool and the skins of sheep, otters and seals. The island seldom exported or imported any grain.³⁴⁹

North Uist exported annually 400 head of black cattle, 100 of them salted. The islanders also made 500 tons of kelp for export worth £1,625. In 1762 the islanders had exported a record 800 tons of kelp. That year the revenues from kelp were at least three times higher than the rent for the whole island. However, the leases expired that year and rents were raised. The average rent for one acre on North Uist was 4½d., including the value of kelp. Kelp accounted for nearly half of the value, and without it an acre would be let for no more than 2½d. Additionally, the island exported annually 300 stones of butter and 200 stones of cheese amounting together to £120.³⁵⁰ In respect of its population of 2,465, North Uist had comparatively little arable land. Therefore, the island had always been dependent on meal imports. In 1760 the islanders had to import 1,200 bolls of meal, but their consumption had

³⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

³⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 43. The method of 'graddaning' that Walker observed on Lewis was less destructive than in other parts of the Highlands. Walker reported that the islanders on Lewis cut off the heads of the stem and then burnt them to dry the grain. The middle part of the straw went to the cattle. In other parts of the Highlands the heads were burnt with the stem.

³⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 54. In 1771 Colonel MacLeod of MacLeod, the proprietor of Harris, maintained that the island exported 300 tons of kelp per annum. See *ibid.*, p. 233. However, the island was for sale, and this figure may have been exaggerated to push up the price. In 1792 Harris produced about 450 tons of kelp to the great detriment of its agriculture and pastures. See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 66-67.

³⁴⁹ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 54. Walker did not give the revenues for these exports.

³⁵⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 63-65.

steadily risen since the introduction of large-scale kelp production had changed their diet:

They consume a much greater Quantity of Grain, since the Kelp Manufacture was introduced than before. The Sustenance of the labouring Servants formerly consisted chiefly in Fowl, Fish and Milk, with little or no Bread, but they require and consume a great deal of Bread and Meal ever since they have been employed as Manufacturers.³⁵¹

South Uist (including Benbecula) exported annually 700 head of black cattle that amounted to £980. Benbecula exported annually 200 tons of kelp and South Uist 100 amounting to £975. Additionally, South Uist exported 5,000 dried ling that yielded £225.³⁵² South Uist sent also a considerable quantity of butter and cheese to the Clyde. After a wet summer the island exported some grain, but it had to import grain after a dry summer.³⁵³

Barra exported annually about 140 head of live black cattle and another 160 head salted.³⁵⁴ Walker claimed that kelp-making on the island began in 1763 when the islanders produced 40 tons. In 1764 they produced more than 60 tons ‘and as they advance in the Knowledge of making it, will probably produce a greater Quantity’.³⁵⁵

6.6.2.2. The economy of the Inner Hebrides in 1764

Skye exported annually:

| product | £ | s. | d. |
|--|--------------|----------|----------|
| above 3,000 head of black cattle at £1 16s. each | 5,400 | 0 | 0 |
| about 200 horses at £4 each | 800 | 0 | 0 |
| 200 tons of kelp at £3 15s. per ton | 750 | 0 | 0 |
| 516 barrels of herring at £1 per barrel | 516 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 tons of dried cod | 70 | 0 | 0 |
| in total | 7,536 | 0 | 0 |

³⁵¹ Ibid., p. 65. Crop production on the island would surely have receded when most of the seaweed was burnt instead of being used for manure. Moreover, kelp production was very labour-intensive, and kelp workers did not have the time to care for their crops in summer.

³⁵² See *ibid.*, p. 77.

³⁵³ See *ibid.*, p. 77. Walker did not give figures for these products.

³⁵⁴ For want of casks they were salted and packed in their hides. The carcasses kept very well and were exported to the ports on the Clyde, where they were sold to the ships.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

As there were only four or five stills in the island, the locals imported whisky at a yearly expense of above £1,500.³⁵⁶ Kelp production was still in its infancy, and Walker reckoned of its potential:

Besides the making of Kelp, there is Scarce any thing in Sky, that can be called Manufacture. The Island produces about 200 Ton annually yet this is but a small Quantity compared to what it might produce with proper Improvement.

The Planting of Sea Weeds is the Improvement here meant. The most simple of all kinds of Cultivation, but if I mistake not, would turn out the most profitable.³⁵⁷

Coll exported about 40 tons of kelp annually amounting to £160. Whisky was the other main export of the island. Coll yielded more bear than its population could consume, and the island had nine distilleries, each of them consumed an average of about 40 bolls of bear per year. The spirits were exported all over the Highlands and brought money to the island, but Walker reckoned it more beneficial to raise hay upon land that afforded the surplus grain.³⁵⁸ He also reported that there were excellent fishing grounds for cod all around Coll. There was a particularly good cod bank between Coll and Canna, from which the islanders sometimes returned with their open boats loaded to the very limit with fish. However, they were often unable to preserve their catch. Walker commented:

This makes the Island of Coll, one of the most favourable Situations in the World, for curing dry Cod; but for want of Salt, the Inhabitants have never been able to make the attempt.³⁵⁹

The economy of **Tiree** was unusual in comparison to the other islands because its exports were far higher than its imports. The island exported annually about 400 bolls of bear and meal, which amounted to £240. It also exported 150 barrels of

³⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 207. Walker did not mention whether this figure represents the number of legal stills on the island or whether it includes the illicit stills. It is, however, very unlikely that the islanders would have told a visitor like Walker, travelling on behalf of the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates, about their illicit stills. Therefore, his figures for stills in the islands are probably confined to legal stills.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

³⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 171, 173. Walker did not provide any specific figures for the revenues from the export of whisky. The boll in Coll was 'to a Trifle double that of Lithgow [Linlithgow]'. The Linlithgow boll had been established as the standard unit for dry measure in Scotland in 1618. It became abolished in 1696, and grain was to be sold by weight at eight stone troy weight to the Linlithgow boll. Nonetheless, the boll continued to be used and in 1765 the boll was still the general measure all over Scotland. Its actual weight differed from shire to shire. The stills on Coll consumed all in all nearly 720 Linlithgow bolls of grain. *Ibid.*, pp. 173, 16-17.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 175. Compare Pennant's account (in 1772) of the deplorable state of the fisheries on Canna. The islanders on Canna had neither boats nor ropes and hooks to fish for cod on the bank between their island and Coll. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 271-274. Pennant did not visit Coll.

salted beef to the ports on the Clyde amounting to £230. Due to a fatal deficiency disease of its cattle, the number of live animals exported from the island was negligible. Tiree also exported 44 tons of kelp amounting to £143,³⁶⁰ plus a great quantity of whisky and a little linen cloth and yarn. The islanders imported three hogsheads of foreign linseed per annum. The salt for curing their beef exports was imported from Ireland.³⁶¹ The fisheries on Tiree were in a much neglected state. Walker noted that there was ‘not a Net nor long Line in all the Island’ despite its great potential for herring, cod and ling.³⁶²

Mull exported annually:

| product | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|------------------|
| c. 2,000 head of black cattle at £1 14s. per head | 3,400 | 0 | 0 |
| 500 horses at £3 per head | 1,500 | 0 | 0 |
| 100 tons of kelp at £3 10s. per ton | 350 | 0 | 0 |
| 170 bolls of fern-ashes at 12s. per boll | 102 | 0 | 0 ³⁶³ |

Walker reported that the main article of import was oatmeal from Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and Caithness. He criticised the islanders of Mull and the people of Argyll for neglecting agriculture in favour of cattle breeding:

Their injudicious attachment to Pasturage and the neglect of the Plough leaves the Country uncultivated, subjects them often to the want of Bread and runs away with the Profits of their Cattle.³⁶⁴

Moreover, he was critical of the huge amounts of grain used by the people of Mull for illegal distilling to the great detriment of the island:

A great Quantity of Aquavita[e] [is] distilled, which the People are at Liberty to do without Duty and without Restraint, which brings some money into the Island, but this instead of being an Advantage, is greatly prejudicial to the Country. Though it yeilded no Revenue it would be worthwhile to maintain Excisemen over all the Highlands and Islands, to prevent

³⁶⁰ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 187. This deficiency disease also prevailed among cattle on Canna, Muck and Coll.

³⁶¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 187-188. Walker did not provide any figures for the value of these imports.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³⁶³ See *ibid.*, p. 155.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155. Walker did not provide any specific figures for the meal imports of Mull. This criticism was a direct opposite to Neilson's recommendations in 1754. Neilson wanted the Highlanders to give up growing corn because their crops were of inferior quality. He recommended the conversion of corn-land to pasture and a concentration on cattle breeding. More pasture would reduce their loss of cattle in winter and enable them to import more meal of superior quality from the east coast. See NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fo. 51.

the Destruction of the Grain, and the Harm done to the People, by the excessive use of that spirituous Liquor.³⁶⁵

Sheep were particularly valuable on the Isle of Mull. In the south of Scotland a cow was equal in value to twelve sheep, but on Mull the value of a cow was equal to about five sheep. Therefore, many farmers considered stocking their land with southern sheep:

The high Value of Sheep in the Island, and in many adjacent Highland Countries upon the Main Land, seems to render Sheep Farming more lucrative and inviting than the Grazing of Black Cattle. This Prospect of turning their Pasture to more Account, has prevailed on many Gentlemen and Farmers in these Countries, to enter upon Sheep Farming and to bring Sheep from the South of Scotland for Stocking their Grounds. But while the Cause subsists, which has enhanced the Price of Sheep in these Parts, it will render their attempts very precarious, and if it should be removed, the Sheep will then fall to the same, or to a lower value than in other Places.³⁶⁶

Walker cited a farm in Ardgour (on the northern shore of Loch Linnhe opposite Fort William) that had been stocked recently with ewes and wethers brought from Douglas in Clydesdale. Their wool and lambs fetched high prices at Fort William, and the farm would have been extremely profitable if foxes had not destroyed nearly 40 lambs. Walker's final comment was that the damage done by foxes made sheep farming in the Highlands a vain attempt.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 161.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 157. According to Walker, the high value of sheep in Mull and the neighbouring Highlands was mainly due to the huge damage done to the lambs by eagles and particularly foxes. However, the rising demand for wool caused the boom in sheep to continue. By 1800 sheep had taken over Mull, and the revenues from sheep breeding were higher than that of cattle. Moreover, the indigenous breeds had been replaced by southern sheep. See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. ii, p. 91. See also Devine, *Scottish Nation*, p. 174.

³⁶⁷ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, pp. 157-158. Here, Walker was wrong. Foxes caused considerable damage to sheep, but their numbers soon dwindled all over Scotland due to relentless hunting. Walker later admitted his error and acknowledged that since 1764 the fox had been almost totally destroyed. See Walker, *Economical History Of The Hebrides*, vol. ii, pp. 149-150. Travellers often encountered hunters whose only task was the extirpation of foxes. Francis Grant travelled the Highlands in 1756 on behalf of the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates. He reported frequent complaints about the damage done by foxes. In Coigach (north-west corner of Ross and Cromarty) the tenants of an annexed estate handed over a petition to him, claiming that one of them had lost fourteen lambs in a single night to foxes, and another one had eight lambs killed in a fortnight. The tenants complained strongly to Grant about the huge damage done by foxes to their lambs, sheep, calves, foals and goats. Their losses were confirmed by the local minister. The tenants also complained that the extensive deer forests provided shelter for the foxes. Moreover, the foresters prohibited their keeping dogs to protect their animals. The tenants requested that one man per district should be allowed to shoot foxes. In return, they would pay for his expenses. Grant reported that professional huntsmen were employed for this purpose in areas such as Breadalbane, and he proposed to pay premiums on destroyed foxes, eagles and roaming dogs. See NAS, Grant, 'Report 1756', E729/7, fos. 12-14. The inspected lands in Coigach belonged to the estate annexed from George Mackenzie, 3rd Earl of Cromartie (died 1766). After the 'Forty-Five the Highlanders were forbidden to carry arms, and any

The population on **Jura** made a living mainly from planting barley, oats and potatoes. The number of black cattle was comparatively small as most of the island was too steep and craggy for cattle pasture. Moreover, the island could not provide sufficient winter pasture, and many cattle were lost in that season. Walker, therefore, reckoned that the island was more suitable for sheep breeding. He recommended that the hills should be stocked with sheep, which could be driven at a small expense to the markets in Stirlingshire and Clydesdale. He reckoned that ‘under the management of skillfull Sheep farmers ... their Wool alone, would amount to more than the whole Product of the Island at present both in Corn and Cattle’.³⁶⁸

Islay exported mainly black cattle. In 1763, 2,800 head of black cattle had been exported amounting to £4,140. The islanders imported yearly above 50 hogsheads of American flaxseed from Ireland and also sowed a considerable quantity of their own. In return, they exported linen yarn annually to the amount of about £1,000.³⁶⁹ The island produced sufficient grain for its inhabitants, and in good seasons the islanders even saved a considerable quantity.³⁷⁰ Islay exported likewise some kelp and a

one doing so faced deportation to the colonies. Bishop Pococke reported (in 1760) that there were so many foxes in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright that £20 per annum was expended on a huntsman to kill them. See Pococke, *Tours*, p. 26. Robertson reported (in 1768) that the number of foxes in Cowal had been reduced to near-extinction so that sheep could safely graze. He also reported on a similar scheme for foxes and eagles on Skye. Landowners paid a premium of four shillings for every head of a fox and two shillings and six pence for every head and feet of an eagle. See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, pp. 77, 99. Johnson reported (in 1773) that the premium paid for foxes in Skye was so successful that the island would soon be freed from that predator. According to him, the premium had been gradually raised from three shillings and six pence to a guinea. It was paid from a voluntary tax of six pence in the pound by the local farmers. See Johnson, *Journey*, p. 137. By 1768 sheep could now be kept out all night in the Braes of Perthshire since the number of foxes had been greatly reduced. See NAS, Menzies, ‘Report 1767 & 1768’, E787/24/1, fo. 11. Bishop Forbes reported (in 1770) that a professional hunter had killed 60 foxes in Strathnairn and another 300 in Stratherrick in two years. The hunter was paid £22 for his services by the local gentlemen and farmers. In Lochaber, too, a professional hunter was employed to destroy foxes. See Forbes, *Journals*, pp. 287, 314. In 1775 the people in Sutherland still housed their sheep at night as a precaution against the havoc caused by foxes. According to Matthew Culley, however, this precaution would soon become unnecessary since the local gentlemen had agreed to pay five shillings for every pair of foxes’ ears delivered to them. He claimed that in 1774 no fewer than 357 pairs were thus brought in, and he was confident that foxes would soon be exterminated. See Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 126. Lettice met (in 1792) a professional hunter near Fort Augustus who informed him that he and several others were paid by the county to destroy foxes and eagles. Five shillings were paid for every fox taken. See Lettice, *Letters*, pp. 345-346.

³⁶⁸ McKay (ed.), *John Walker’s Report*, p. 117.

³⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 100.

³⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 100. This was strongly contradicted by Pennant, who visited Islay in 1772. He reported that the islanders spent annually more than £1,000 on corn imports. Between 1764 and 1772 whisky distillation on Islay seems to have greatly increased. See note 138.

considerable quantity of butter and cheese.³⁷¹ Walker reported that meanwhile potatoes were cultivated all over the Hebrides, but nowhere to a larger extent than on Islay. On Islay all potatoes were planted with spades in ‘lazy beds’. The size of the fields ranged from ten, to twelve and even fifteen acres. The plant yielded more returns than the islanders could consume, and the surplus was exported to the ports on the Clyde. Walker discussed the pros and cons of extending the cultivation of potatoes in the Highlands. There was a moral as well as an economic side of the argument:

It has been questioned whether the Cultivation of Potatoes, is in fact advantageous to the Highlands, or ought to be encouraged, as they tend to discountenance Industry, by affording so great a Quantity of Sustenance with so little Labour.³⁷²

For economic reasons Walker strongly argued for the extended cultivation of potatoes. However, he wanted their introduction limited to ‘waste Land’.³⁷³ In referring to the positive effects of potato cultivation on Islay, he made a comparison with grain, maintaining that potatoes could be planted on hitherto uncultivated land and also yielded higher returns. Due to the potato’s greater nutritional value, less labour was required to produce sufficient food, and the islanders could spend more time in manufacturing:

This Abundance [of potatoes on Islay] is not only of great use in reclaiming the Soil, but has also a very friendly Influence upon the Progress of the Linen Manufacture in the Island and must certainly have the same Effect in every other Country. For where the Manufacturing People depend entirely for their Sustenance upon Grain, the Train of Labour necessary for that Purpose, becomes almost their Constant occupation throughout the Year; but when chiefly supported by Potatoes, their Sustenance not only comes cheaper, but leaves them more time to employ in Manufacture.³⁷⁴

Walker also dismissed the opinion that the extended cultivation of potatoes necessarily resulted in a decline of grain production, citing the islands of South Uist and Skye. Potatoes were first planted on South Uist around 1740, but at the time of Walker’s visit there were more than 900 acres of additional land under the spade and plough. The quantity of corn, grass and cattle on several farms had thereby increased by a third over that period. On Skye, Walker claimed, there was not a farm of £20

³⁷¹ See *ibid.*, p. 100. Walker did not provide any specific figures for these exports.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 101. This objection shows once more the Lowlanders’ bias against the supposed laziness of the Highlanders.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 101. Walker’s terminology. Wasteland, land currently not being used for agriculture.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

rent per year that had not at least twenty acres of corn fields added to it over the last twenty years by planting potatoes on ground that had never been cultivated before.³⁷⁵ He finally reckoned that potatoes were far more useful than harmful to the islanders, provided that their cultivation was confined to wasteland and was not extended to cereal ground. He recommended: ‘That in every Lease of Grounds, it should be expressly Stipulated, that no Potatoes should be planted upon any Land, wherever the Plough or Spade have formerly been.’³⁷⁶

Walker’s figures for the economy of the main islands of the Hebrides highlighted the basic characteristics of the old agrarian order, while also pointing to important future developments. Firstly, all over the Hebrides cattle breeding was still far more important than sheep breeding. Sheep were only bred to satisfy domestic demands. However, on Mull and the neighbouring mainland, southern sheep were already on the advance. Secondly, on the Outer Hebrides, and particularly on both Uists and Harris, the economic importance of kelp production had already caught up with that of cattle breeding. Walker rightly predicted that the production of kelp could be extended even further, and it was only a few years later that the revenues from kelp production surpassed those from cattle breeding on the Outer Hebrides.³⁷⁷ In the Inner Hebrides the rising economic importance of kelp was slightly delayed in comparison to the Outer Hebrides. In the Inner Hebrides the revenues from kelp would eventually catch up with that of cattle exports, but they would not surpass the latter. Thirdly, the growth in cattle exports and the rising numbers of kelp workers led to increased meal imports. Moreover, much of the islanders’ own grain crop was illegally distilled into whisky destined for paying rents or for illegal export, thereby

³⁷⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 102.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 102. See also *ibid.*, p. 101. Unfortunately, Walker did not include the Isle of Arran in his report. However, James Robertson visited Arran in 1768 and prepared a detailed account of the island’s agriculture. He confirmed the quickly rising importance of potato cultivation, particularly for winter food. He noted about Arran and its people: ‘Through the whole of this Island, they sow Oats, barley, some pease, great quantities of potatoes in beds, and some hemp and flax. ... They live meanly, their food in the summer is mostly fish, milk, and greens, in the winter potatoes and herring, seldom eating much bread.’ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 70. He also confirmed that potatoes were planted on ground that was not cultivated previously. Near ‘Sandwick’ (Arran) the beach was rising, and the locals planted potatoes as a first crop to recover the ground. See *ibid.*, p. 71.

³⁷⁷ John Lanne Buchanan, missionary minister in the Outer Hebrides from 1782 until 1790, confirmed that by 1790 kelp had become more important than cattle and horse breeding. He wrote about the Outer Hebrides: ‘Horses and cows were formerly the staple trade of these isles, and they have raised the prices of both wonderfully of late from what they were formerly. Now kelp has taken the precedence; an article some years past unknown over all these countries.’ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 157.

increasing the demand for imported meal.³⁷⁸ In the long term, meal imports could only be reduced by an extension of potato cultivation, and Walker rightly predicted the rising importance of potatoes for the Hebrideans' diet. Fourthly, apart from Lewis, the fisheries were not yet a major business. Fish were mainly caught for home consumption, but Walker rightly predicted the great future potential for export.³⁷⁹ Walker's figures clearly show the importance of the traditional businesses in the Highlands, but he also rightly predicted the emergence of new industries, such as sheep breeding, kelping and the fisheries. The effects that kelp production and the promotion of the fisheries had on Highland life and the Highland economy will be dealt with separately in chapter 7.

Walker's figures for the economy of the Hebrides were largely confirmed by Pennant, who travelled to the Inner Hebrides in 1772. His figures for the economy of islands such as Jura, Islay, Oronsay, Colonsay, Canna and Skye confirmed that cattle breeding was still far more important than kelping in the early 1770s. Pennant reported that Jura annually exported 300 to 400 head of cattle at £3 each, Islay 1,700 head of cattle at 50 shillings each, Oronsay 80 head of cattle at £3 each, Colonsay about 220 head of cattle at £3 each, Canna about 60 head of cattle, Skye c. 4,000 head of black cattle yielding from 40 shillings to £3 a head, and Mull about 1,800 head of cattle at 30 to 50 shillings each.³⁸⁰ According to Pennant, on Jura 200 tons of kelp were produced annually selling from £3 10s. to £4 per ton, on Oronsay and Colonsay 40 or 50 tons of kelp were produced annually selling from £3 10s. to £4 per ton, on Canna about 20 tons of kelp were produced every third year and on Skye about 300 tons of kelp were made annually.³⁸¹ A comparison of these figures shows

³⁷⁸ The landowners and tacksmen often tolerated or even promoted private distilling in order to participate in the revenues.

³⁷⁹ That the investments and efforts of the British Fisheries Society in the late 1780s had no success in the long term was not due to a lack of potential for the fisheries, but due to the wrong investment strategy. See chapter 7.1.

³⁸⁰ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 213, 229, 238-239, 272, 309, 353. Cattle breeding was susceptible to the seasons, and the winter of 1771-72 was particularly severe. In 'normal' years the revenues from cattle exports must have been even higher, which underlines their dominance over kelp exports.

³⁸¹ See *ibid.*, part i, pp. 214, 239, 275, 310. Pennant did not provide any figures for kelp production on Islay and Mull.

that in the Inner Hebrides the revenues from cattle exports were still between five and nine times higher than the revenues from kelp exports.³⁸²

Fifteen years later, revenues from cattle were still more important than those from kelp production in the Inner Hebrides, but the gap was slowly closing. In 1787 Bailey reported from Skye that cattle exports brought an annual net return of more than £12,000. Kelp had also become lately ‘an article of considerable importance’, of which between 500 and 600 tons were produced annually.³⁸³ He reported from Mull that the island exported about 1,500 head of black cattle annually at an average of £3 to £4 each. In comparison, the islanders burnt annually more than 300 tons of kelp, which fetched £6 per ton, and ‘as the demand for that article is increasing, it will, undoubtedly be more and more considerable’.³⁸⁴

6.6.3. The rapid expansion of potato cultivation in the second half of the eighteenth century

In 1764 Walker rightly predicted the rising importance of the potato for the Hebrideans’ diet. A discussion of the economy of the western seaboard in the 1760s would be incomplete without an analysis of the rapid expansion of potato cultivation. The 1750s and 1760s were a crucial period that saw the spread of the potato from the Outer Hebrides to the Inner Hebrides and finally all over the west coast of the mainland Highlands. Its arrival marked not only a huge change in agriculture, but also in the Highlanders’ diet.

Martin Martin (1690s) mentioned potatoes as part of the Hebrideans’ ‘ordinary diet’, but, however, from other accounts it seems likely that they did not achieve any widespread acceptance on the western seaboard at that time.³⁸⁵

³⁸² On Jura the revenues from cattle exports were only about 1.5 times higher than that of kelp. This was due to the comparatively small number of cattle exported from the island.

³⁸³ NLS, Bailey, ‘Journey’, MS. 3295, fo. 242. At an average of £6 per ton (the price Bailey provided for a ton of kelp from Mull) the revenues from kelp amounted to £3,300. Thus, on Skye, in 1787 revenues from cattle were 3.6 times higher than those from kelp. However, it must be stated that on Skye kelp production contributed less to the local economy than on the other islands of the Inner Hebrides. See also chapter 7, note 191.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 363. According to Bailey’s figures, on Mull, in 1787 the revenues from cattle were 2.9 times higher than those of kelp.

³⁸⁵ Martin, *Description*, p. 201. Some modern authors claim that Martin was in error and question the reliability of his account of the potato. Nonetheless, by the late seventeenth century the potato was already in widespread use in Ireland. Given the close connections between the western seaboard and

Roughly 30 years later, Edmund Burt wondered why the Highlanders did not grow potatoes. Although potatoes yielded higher returns than corn, he reported that the Highlanders were unwilling to relinquish any of their corn-lands. Moreover, he claimed that the landlords' demands for rent in kind were another objection to the planting of potatoes.³⁸⁶

Potatoes were first introduced on a large scale in the early 1740s on South Uist and Benbecula. Growing pressure on land in the second half of the eighteenth century led to a rapid extension of potato cultivation. In comparison to grain, potatoes could be planted in small plots and on hitherto uncultivated ground. Their yield was three times greater than oats and up to eight times greater than barley.³⁸⁷

The government bodies that were involved in the economic development of the Highlands were also interested in the region's potential for growing potatoes. Richard Neilson, Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands, reported (in 1755) on the successful introduction of potatoes in Morvern to the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland:

Within these few years it is that these people began to plant Potatoes. But they now find this Root of Such Singular Service that it is planted in great quantities on the sides of the Hills that were formerly uncultivated.³⁸⁸

Morvern produced sufficient meal and potatoes to serve its population for ten or eleven months of the year. Further north potatoes were introduced at a later date. Glenelg produced, in a good season, sufficient meal and potatoes to serve the people for ten months of the year, Kintail and Loch Alsh for seven to eight months. At Loch Maree, the second northernmost point of Neilson's travels, he noted that only a few potatoes were grown, but he was informed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie that the country produced, in a good season, sufficient meal and potatoes to serve the people for ten to eleven months. Moidart and Arisaig imported additional potatoes from Eigg and Muck. In the hinterland to the east, such as Glen Garry and around Loch Arkaig, only a few potatoes had been planted, and meal was still the staple diet. In

Ireland, it is very unlikely that the Hebrideans would have been unaware of the potato. See Hunter, *Crofting Community*, pp. 51, 233. Perhaps the islanders had started importing potatoes from Ireland several decades before they began growing them in their own islands.

³⁸⁶ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, pp. 29-30.

³⁸⁷ See Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. 221.

³⁸⁸ EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 10-11.

more interior parts of the Highlands, such as Rannoch, only very few potatoes were planted.³⁸⁹ Neilson's report suggests that in the early and mid-1750s potato cultivation progressed towards the north and the hinterland of the west coast of the mainland Highlands. This was a truly rapid advance for the potato, considering that it was first introduced on the mainland west coast in 1752. Neilson also visited Loch Broom to inspect the progress of the local spinning station, but he did not provide figures for the local agriculture.

The gradual advance of the potato in the 1750s towards the north of Scotland was confirmed by Pococke. He noted (in 1760) about the cultivation of potatoes in Sutherland: 'They are not yet come into the use of potatoes, but are making a very small beginning; in the middle and south parts of Scotland they are in plenty.'³⁹⁰ Wherever potatoes were planted, they soon became a major part of the people's diet. On Barra the first potatoes were planted in 1752, and by 1764 the islanders ate them for at least three months in every year.³⁹¹ Archibald Menzies reported (in 1768) to the Board for the Annexed Estates about the success of potato cultivation in Lorne:

Sow [sic] great Quantities of Potatoes upon the Continent - this plant has been a great blessing to the Highlands in general, as it has sav'd them buying a great deal of meal and has made them bring a great deal of Barren Ground to bear Grain and Straw for feeding their Cattle in Winter.³⁹²

Owing to the rising population pressure, the Highlanders on the western seaboard became even more dependent on the potato. From the 1770s onward, travellers unanimously reported that potatoes constituted the main food of the local population. Pennant reported (in 1772) that many of the common islanders already lived on a diet based chiefly on potatoes and fish. Faujas noted (in 1784) that the common islanders' diet on Mull consisted chiefly of potatoes and milk. An

³⁸⁹ See *ibid.*, fos. 11, 28-29, 35-36, 46, 55, 67-68, 88, 97-98, 110.

³⁹⁰ Pococke, *Tours*, p. 128.

³⁹¹ See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, 'Journal 1788', MS. 9587, fo. 53r. On St Kilda potato cultivation seems to have begun soon after their introduction to the other islands of the Hebrides. The earliest reference to the cultivation of potatoes is to be found in Macaulay, who visited the island in 1758. He reported: 'Potatoes have been introduced among that people only of late, and hitherto they have raised but small quantities of them.' Macaulay, *History*, p. 38.

³⁹² NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9, fo. 84.

unidentified traveller, in 1794, reported that the Highlanders at Loch Fyne and along the western seaboard lived mainly on herring and potatoes.³⁹³

Despite numerous references to the increasing dependence of the Highlanders on a single crop, none of the travellers warned about what might happen if the potato crop should fail. In their view, the potato was the ideal crop to feed the ever-growing number of people on the western seaboard. Thus the Highland economy and Highland society turned down the fateful road that led to the cataclysmic potato famine of the mid and late 1840s. The potato blight in 1846 changed Highland life irreversibly, but the origins of this disaster had been laid roughly a century earlier.

6.7. Agrarian change, improvements and living conditions on Mull around 1800

Having discussed the organisation and the traditional techniques of Highland agriculture, it is worthwhile to take a more detailed look at agriculture and living conditions on the Isle of Mull in the early nineteenth century. In 1801 John Wood, of Easter Fossoway (Kinross-shire), toured the Isle of Mull and prepared a detailed account of the state of its agriculture. His account included general descriptions of landownership and agriculture, but he also described the improvements made on individual estates, such as those of General Clephane at Torloisk.³⁹⁴ Wood's account is particularly interesting because it reflects the transitional stage in which multiple-tenant farms on Mull were broken up and partitioned into individual smallholdings. Wood described the various classes of landholders and compared the traditional agrarian system, based on farms held in common, with the newly created individual crofts.

The principal proprietor of land on Mull was the Duke of Argyll. As well as the duke, a number of gentlemen held extensive estates on the island, which were mainly

³⁹³ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 214, 306; Faujas, *Travels*, vol. ii, p. 76; NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278, no pagination, see entry for 14 August 1794. See also Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, p. 258.

³⁹⁴ See NLS, J. Wood, 'Journal of a Jaunt to the Island of Mull in the month of October 1801', MS. 3038. [hereafter: NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038] The journal was described in the *Scotsman*, 4 April 1905, p. 6, where the author erroneously read 'Elipham' instead of 'Clephane'.

used for cattle rearing. These gentlemen also let land to tacksmen who sublet it further. Wood described the various classes of landholders as follows:

The lands held in lease are occupied by two classes of people one of these generally rent one or more large farms at moderate rents, and are denominated Tacksmen, they seem to live in easy circumstances, have good houses and are very hospitable to Strangers – The other class are termed commoners who hold their small possessions in two different ways, provincially called Crofting and Farthing land, the first is a farm divided into eight, ten, or twelve parts, the lines of division running from the side of some Loch or river to the top of the hill, the possessers are commonly taken bound to make the dykes, sometimes two parts are included in one inclosure although possessed by two persons, they hold these during good behaviour, and if it should happen that they are turned out at the end of a five years they receive some consideration for their improvements, the rent for each croft is from eight to twelve pounds St[erlin]g per an[num], which in extent and value is reckoned equal to a Farthing land, the original of this last we did not learn but beleives [sic] to be derived from some old valuation, its extent is as follows. viz – eight cows with their rearing one horse and twenty Sheep with a small piece of ground for potatoes which is succeeded by a crop of oats or bear, the rent the same as the crofts but the tenants are taken bound to perform all the work necessary about the proprietors Farm, and furnish fewil [fuel] for the fire, it is to be hoped that the example set by Mrs Clephane of dividing these farms into parts whereby every person has it in his power to manage his little farm as he finds most for his advantage, and relieving the people from these servitudes which in every civilized country must greatly depress the spirit of the people will be followed by all the other proprietors in the Island.³⁹⁵

The estate of General Clephane must have been at the cutting edge of improvements on Mull at that time. Earlier improvements, such as enclosure by stone dykes, had been made by the estate's previous owner, Mr Lachlan Maclean of Torloisk.³⁹⁶ After his death the estate fell to General Clephane, but his absence on foreign service left the management of the estate in the hands of his wife. She was assisted by a farmer from the Lowlands who was experienced in the cultivation of green crops, turnips and potatoes.³⁹⁷ On the Clephane estate, the partition of multiple-tenant farms into crofts was accompanied by the abolition of the tenants'

³⁹⁵ NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fos. 35-38.

³⁹⁶ See *ibid.*, fo. 33. Lachlan Maclean of Torloisk (1720-1799) had been married in 1763 to Margaret Smith. Their daughter Marianne was born in 1765. As Marianne remained an only child, she became heiress to the estate. She married William Douglas Clephane of Kirkness in September 1790. At the time of Wood's visit to Torloisk, General Clephane was on foreign duty. General Clephane was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Grenada in August 1803 and died there only two months later. Marianne Maclean Clephane ran the Torloisk estate during her husband's absence and after his death. In the 1820s Mrs Maclean Clephane and her new factor Alexander Shiells combined the smallholdings on the Torloisk estate into larger farms in order to allow for more efficient farming. Mrs Maclean Clephane died in 1840. Lachlan Maclean of Torloisk was famous for his hospitality, and many visitors to Mull, Staffa and Iona paid him a visit. His daughter continued to receive travellers, but her social rigidity embarrassed many of her guests. Faujas (1784), Lord Mountstuart (1788), Garnett (1798), Mrs Murray (1800) and Walter Scott (1814) stayed at Torloisk. For Marianne Maclean Clephane see Currie, *Mull*, pp. 172-185.

³⁹⁷ See NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fo. 34.

personal services to the proprietor. Wood reported that Mrs Clephane had ‘adopted a more liberal plan in letting small possessions, by dividing the lands so as each person or at most every two has his possession inclosed by a stone dyke’, moreover, she had ‘relieved all her vassals of every degree of servitude except each one day in the year’.³⁹⁸ To Wood, providing the subtenants with their own, individual strips of land was a huge step in the right direction. He considered the transformation of farms held in common to individual crofts as ‘a very considerable advantage and a powerful stimulus to industry’.³⁹⁹ To Wood, the disadvantages of land held in common were all too obvious:

The holding of lands under the denomination of Farthings and half Farthings without division is certainly very prejudicial to the interest of both parties, an instance which frequently occurs under these circumstances I shall remark namely, when a person observes his cow amongst the cornfields he will reason thus “the beast no doubt is eating the grain but if I am not thereby a gainer I do not suffer near so much as my neighbours, as the eight, tenth, or twelfth part of the loss only falls upon me ...”⁴⁰⁰

Wood made various recommendations about how to improve agriculture and farming on Mull. He proposed the introduction of new kinds of grain as the cereals commonly grown by the locals ‘do scarcely deserve the name of grain, and seem a degree inferior to the wild oat which usurpes possession in our corn fields in the low country’.⁴⁰¹ Wood acknowledged the excellent quality of the Highland cattle, but, nevertheless, he made several recommendations to improve their breeding. He suggested that the calves should stay through the suckling period with their mothers instead of being separated and brought to the udder only twice a day for suckling, with a few of the best milch cows kept aside to provide milk for the tenants. Moreover, Wood proposed that green crops such as turnips, cabbages or kale should be planted and fed to calves during their first winter and spring. This measure would increase the calves’ weight and reduce the number of losses during winter.⁴⁰²

Agriculture had made major strides in the Lowlands, but on Mull things had hardly changed. Wood noted that there were hardly any ploughs, most of the land

³⁹⁸ Ibid., fos. 35, 34. See also *ibid.*, fo. 38. These measures were in line with contemporary agrarian reforms on the Continent.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., fo. 35.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., fo. 38.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., fo. 42.

⁴⁰² See *ibid.*, fos. 41-42.

was still worked with spades and the islanders used harrows with wooden teeth.⁴⁰³ Wood described the growing of potatoes in 'lazy beds', which by 1800 had become the island's main crop. Preparations for planting potatoes began in the autumn when seaweed and dung were spread on the ground and left to lie for several weeks on the surface. Towards spring the land was formed into ridges, and the tubers were planted. When the plants appeared on the surface, they were covered again by earth dug from the trenches between them. This procedure was repeated several times, and the potatoes harvested were plentiful and of excellent quality.⁴⁰⁴ In order to prevent soil exhaustion, potatoes were rotated with a crop of oats or bear. The furrows were turned over with spades and harrowed. Potatoes were carried home in creels upon the backs of ponies, but grain and hay were transported on hooks and sticks fastened together and slung across the back of the horses.⁴⁰⁵

Wood's account of the living conditions of the crofters and subtenants on Mull highlighted the hardships of life in the Hebrides in the early nineteenth century. By then, the islanders had become dependent on potatoes for most of their diet, with grain used mainly for illicit distilling. Wood reported on the diet of the lower classes:

... their bear however is good but very little of it ever arrives at the table unless in a liquid State and in this shape it affords a convincing proof that the highland people can make excellent Whisky without the aid of the excise people, the natives drink it pure and unmixed with water which I believe in ordinary years is the principal beverage [beverage] of the Lower Class, their food consists chiefly of potatoes herrings and cheese, potatoes is taken for three fourths of the year three times a day along with the articles already mentioned and sometimes with milk or salt ...⁴⁰⁶

The crofters and those possessing farthing land lived in clusters of ten to twelve huts, surrounded by a proportionate number of inferior huts. The huts were composed of stone walls four to six feet high and three to four feet thick, inclining strongly inwards towards the top and rounded at the corners. The roof timber was very simple and consisted of a few small branches that were laid very flat, fastened with heather ropes and covered with bracken or straw. This roofing was kept on by a

⁴⁰³ See *ibid.*, fo. 44. In spite of the progressive state of agriculture, harrows with wooden teeth were still used in some parts of the Lowlands in the late eighteenth century. The English agriculturalist Matthew Culley saw them in use near Stirling in 1770. See Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, p. 56. An unidentified traveller in 1776 reported that the soil between Dumbarton and Stirling was so light that the farmers used harrows with wooden teeth. See NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1021, fo. 15.

⁴⁰⁴ See NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fos. 44-45.

⁴⁰⁵ See *ibid.*, fos. 45-46.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, fos. 42-43.

huge number of heather ropes that were laid across it, weighted down at their ends by large stones to prevent wind damage.⁴⁰⁷

Wood was astonished at the speed in which the locals took down their huts, moved to another place and rebuild them in just one day. He recollected that the small farmers had hardly any personal belongings to take with them when moving house:

In May 1800 when I was first in that country I saw the tenantry of one village removing to another, early in the morning they begin by taking the top of their houses the timber which composes it they tie in bundles, two of these are fastened together near to one of the ends and are slung across a horse the other ends dragging [sic] on the ground, this is almost the whole of the portable goods belonging to the house which they possess, in any of the houses that I went into I observed no furniture whatever except a pot, and platter and some blankets spread upon some heath nicely placed with the top uppermost, and supported on the sides and by stones, and this serves for a bed and I could suppose it if clean to make a pretty comfortable one - when they arrive at the place of their destination which happens early in the day, they instantly proceed to erect their new habitation, beginning with the walls which their predecessors occupied which require little repair, they then proceed to put on the roof which they accomplish with great facility and before night they can sleep under the cover they have formed during the day.⁴⁰⁸

Wood's observations show that the common people had hardly any personal belongings beyond the necessities of life. Roof timbers were one of the small farmers' most valuable possessions, and Wood was told that it was common practice among the landlords to take away their tenants' roof as a form of punishment.⁴⁰⁹

Wood's account of life on Mull around 1800 shows that agriculture lagged far behind the Lowlands and that the great majority of the common people still lived in very poor circumstances. Most of them had hardly any personal belongings beyond the bare necessities in a life dominated by small-scale farming and compulsory work for their landlords. Their diet depended chiefly on potatoes and herring.

⁴⁰⁷ See *ibid.*, fos. 46-47.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, fos. 49-50. Jacob Patisson made similar observations in Glen Croe in 1780. He noted that the subtenants took nothing along with them when moving house apart from their roof timber. See NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 16.

⁴⁰⁹ See NLS, Wood, 'Journal 1801', MS. 3038, fos. 50-51.

6.8. Improvements on the Blair Drummond estate in the late eighteenth century

The common perception of the Highlanders was that they were considered idle and incapable of improving the land they were living on. However, there are a number of examples that illustrate the enthusiasm of the Highlanders to improve their land, once they were given long leases and were allowed to reap the benefits of their investment and labour. The Blair Drummond estate near Doune is an outstanding example of late eighteenth-century improvements.⁴¹⁰ Moreover, the improvements were conducted entirely by Highlanders who had been settled on the estate to cultivate the nearby moss of Kincardine.⁴¹¹ In the 1760s and 1770s the estate's owner Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), acquired considerable reputation as an improver, but it was crucially the draining of those parts of the moss of Kincardine on his estate, which earned him particular respect among contemporary agriculturists.⁴¹²

In 1741 Lord Kames had married Agatha, younger daughter of James Drummond of Blair Drummond. His wife succeeded in 1766 to the estate, which included also a great part of the moss of Kincardine. The moss covered about 2,000 acres, of which about 1,500 belonged to the Blair Drummond estate. The moss was

⁴¹⁰ The Blair Drummond estate is two miles south-east of Doune (Perthshire) on the River Teith. Due to its location close to one of the main roads leading into the Highlands, the estate was visited by a number of travellers who prepared accounts of the improvements carried out on the estate. The colony that settled on the moss soon became a tourist attraction and was included in guidebooks. See, for example, J. M'Nayr, *A Guide From Glasgow, To Some Of The Most Remarkable Scenes In The Highlands Of Scotland, And To The Falls Of The Clyde* (Glasgow, 1797), pp. 32-39. This account was based on the updated entry prepared for the *OSA*. See note 412 for details.

⁴¹¹ This moss is also known as Blairdrummond Moss.

⁴¹² Among numerous other works Lord Kames wrote *The Gentleman Farmer; being an attempt to Improve Agriculture by subjecting it to the test of Rational Principles* (Edinburgh, 1776). This book reached its sixth edition in 1815. The cultivation of the moss of Kincardine was described as an outstanding example of agricultural improvement in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. Edinburgh, 1797), vol. xii, pp. 389-397. The entry for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was written in 1792. See *ibid.*, vol. xii, p. 395. Its author, however, can no longer be established. C. Macfarquhar, the editor of volumes i to xii of the 3rd edition, died while preparing the article 'Mysteries'. He left no list of contributors for the volumes edited by him. The entry 'Moss of Kincardine' was dropped from subsequent editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The entry, including updated footnotes, was also printed in the first edition of the *OSA*, vol. xxi (General Index) (Edinburgh, 1799), pp. 151-181. The updated footnotes were written in 1796. References refer to the *OSA* (Withrington and Grant (eds.)), vol. xii (North and West Perthshire), pp. 574-604. After Lord Kames's death in 1782, his son George Home-Drummond continued the cultivation of the moss. Samuel Johnson had quite a low opinion of Lord Kames. Discussing the merits of Scottish literati with Boswell, Johnson replied on Boswell's "But, Sir, we have Lord Kames." Johnson. "You *have* Lord Kames. Keep him; ha, ha, ha! We don't envy you him." J. Boswell, *The Life Of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1793), vol. i, p. 512.

on a bed of rich and fruitful clay and consisted of two different areas. In the interior area, the so-called High Moss, the peat and moss were between seven and twelve feet deep. At its extremities the High Moss was surrounded by the so-called Low Moss, which was scarcely three feet deep due to the digging of peat. Drainage and cultivation started on the Low Moss and worked their way into the High Moss. In 1768 the first tenant was settled on the Low Moss to start draining and cultivating the ground. The cultivation of the High Moss began in 1774.

About 90 per cent of the new settlers were common Highlanders. Most of them were from the neighbouring parishes of Callander and Balquhider and had been driven from their land in consequence of the establishment of extensive sheep farms. Their resettlement on the moss of Kincardine was hailed as a successful effort to prevent landless Highlanders from emigrating to America.⁴¹³

One of the most interesting accounts of the cultivation of the moss of Kincardine was prepared by the landscape painter Joseph Farington, who visited the Blair Drummond estate in 1792. Moreover, Farington described in great detail the Highlanders' contribution to this large-scale project. In contrast to the widespread stereotype of the Highlanders' idleness, Farington was full of praise for their efforts in cultivating the moss. There had been a previous series of futile attempts to cultivate the moss through burning, trenching and draining. To Farington, the Highlanders' hardiness and perseverance made all the difference:

The only Poep[e] [sic] established in this Colony are Highlanders, and their industry & Oeconomy are exemplary. These qualities are so necessary to render an undertaking of this kind successful, it is not probable that any other description of poep[e] [sic] in Britain would answer the purpose. They have to maintain themselves & families while they are carrying on the arduous business of removing a solid moss of 7 feet deep in order to make good land in the room of it. This they do by occasionally hiring themselves to neighbouring gentlemen & farmers, & with the wages thus gained they provide themselves with sustenance while going on with their main object. But the great difficulty does not rest solely in the man. The wife & the children, so soon as they have strength, assist and I saw the woemen [sic] employed in digging & removing the moss with as much vigour & effect as the men.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, p. 395. See *OSA*, vol. xii, p. 575. According to Robert Heron, who visited the Blair Drummond estate in the autumn of 1792, not all settlers on the moss were from the neighbouring Highland parishes. Heron wrote that Lord Kames invited 'a number of families from the remoter Highlands' to settle down on the moss. Heron, *Journey*, vol. ii, p. 443.

⁴¹⁴ ECL, Farington, 'Tour 1792', MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook iii, fos. 11-12. The settlers' occasional work for other gentlemen and farmers was necessary, as no more than 40 workers could clear the moss at any one time due to the limited supply of water for the disposal of the peat. When there was no water available in one section of the moss, the tenants repaired their drains and cleared the peat from roots and trunks.

The technique used to dispose of the High Moss was quite astonishing. A mile distant from the moss, a waterwheel raised up to 60 hogsheads of water per minute from the River Teith into a cistern.⁴¹⁵ From the cistern the water was led by underground wooden pipes (eighteen inches in diameter within) and an open aqueduct to the moss. There it was diverted by sluices into different reservoirs that belonged to various divisions of tenants. The reservoirs filled small channels that had been cut through the moss into the clay. These channels were two feet wide, two feet deep (below the surface of the clay) and had an inclination of one foot in 100 yards. Along these drains the Highlanders dug up the High Moss down to the clay and disposed of it into the channels where the rapid flow of the water carried it away to the River Forth. A six-inch-thick layer of moss was left lying on the clay until spring when it was burnt and reduced to ashes for manure.⁴¹⁶ The flow of the water to dispose of the peat could be directed via locks to any part of the moss.⁴¹⁷

A steady supply of water was crucial for clearing the moss. The ever-growing number of settlers required the development of an elaborate distribution system to ensure that every tenant had the same access to water. In the initial stages the water was mainly used to carry off the peat in order to cut roads into the moss and to prepare reservoirs. These reservoirs could be filled overnight when work on the moss was halted. Moreover, the tenants were encouraged to build drains for collecting rain. The possessions of the tenants lay parallel to each other and to the drains cut through the moss. When tenants were allocated water to their section of the moss, they cut the peat along the banks of the drains and disposed of it in the water. Water was so crucial that on a favourable day hundreds of men, women and children could be seen disposing of moss even by moonlight.⁴¹⁸ However, the digging up and floating away

⁴¹⁵ For a sketch of the wheel for raising water see *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, opposite p. 393. However, the pipes leading from the cistern to the moss could not admit more than 40 hogsheads of water per minute. The waterwheel, cistern, pipes and aqueduct had been built in 1787. The tenants on the moss had offered to pay Mr Home-Drummond the interest on any sum that might be expended in procuring a better supply of water. Mr Home-Drummond graciously declined his tenants' offer. The expenses for the waterwheel etc. exceeded £1,000 and were paid solely by Mr Home-Drummond. See *ibid.*, vol. xii, pp. 393-394.

⁴¹⁶ See *ibid.*, vol. xii, pp. 391-392.

⁴¹⁷ See ECL, Farington, 'Tour 1792', MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook iii, fo. 12.

⁴¹⁸ See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, pp. 396, 395.

of the moss was often hampered by trunks and roots of large trees that had been submerged in the moss for centuries.⁴¹⁹

Farington also prepared a detailed description, together with several sketches, of the makeshift huts that the Highlanders built when they first settled down on the High Moss. In contrast to their former homes, the Highlanders were unable to construct the walls of their huts from stone due to the softness of the ground. Therefore, they had to dig their foundations into the moss, using sections of it for walls:

A moss Cottage is a habitation cut or scooped out of the solid moss, & to make one is the first step on taking possession of a tract of this dreary waste. After marking out the space which it is to occupy a trench is dug, leaving a sufficient thickness of solid moss for a wall. A line is then drawn for the compass of the inside of the House, and the scooping commences. ...

When the inside is cleared, piles are erected on which a roof rests, (not on the moss wall) which consists of a few rough timbers, on which thatch is laid which finishes the dwelling.⁴²⁰

However, the moss cottages were only temporary dwellings for the new settlers. All settlers on the moss had been granted long leases of at least 38 years and in consequence were encouraged to invest in better accommodation. Once the ground had been cleared of moss and peat, the clay surface was stable enough to bear houses made of brick. Many older settlers already lived in brick houses, and the new settlers were eager to follow their example. Farington was shown around the settlement by Mr Home-Drummond. He witnessed the complete process from floating off the peat to the completion of new brick houses. Farington noted that there were many brick houses in the moss colony and that it was common to see a small brick kiln attached to a moss cottage or a partially built house. He also met with a shoemaker who lived comfortably with his family in a self-constructed house built from home-made bricks. However, the new tenants did not move from their humble moss cottages

⁴¹⁹ Most authors suggested that the trees had been cut down by the Romans during their campaigns in Scotland in order to prevent the natives from seeking shelter in the woods. This hypothesis was backed by Roman cutlery that had been found while draining the moss.

⁴²⁰ ECL, Farington, 'Tour 1792', MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook iii, fos. 10-11. See also Farington's sketches of a moss house in the appendices nos. 8.1. and 8.2. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, p. 396, the walls were three feet thick. Farington also enquired into the state of health of the adults and children who were living in these dwellings. According to him, the parents and their children were in good health, and none of them were subject to any epidemic disease. See ECL, Farington, 'Tour 1792', MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook iii, fo. 11.

until their new homes were completed.⁴²¹ The number of brick houses is a safe indicator of the progress of the settlement and its growing wealth. The total population of the colony on the moss increased between 1792 and May 1796 from 620 to 764, whereas the number of brick houses on the moss increased over the same period from 69 to 102.⁴²² These figures suggest that a rapidly growing percentage of the settlers were no longer living in moss cottages, but had moved on to houses built of brick. To encourage the colonists to invest in better houses, they were relieved from the payment of a tax upon bricks. Moreover, the money spent on building new houses circulated mainly among the colonists themselves. Some settlers had brick kilns and sold bricks, others offered their horses and carts for hire to transport lime and coal.⁴²³

Despite obvious progress, there was still a lot of work to be done. In 1793 the French émigré La Tocnaye visited the Blair Drummond estate and reckoned that it might take up to another twenty years to drain the whole moss and make it fit for agriculture. He added that the settlers had leased their land on the moss for 40 years. For the first twenty years the tenants paid no rent, but they were obliged to drain and cultivate the ground.⁴²⁴

Draining and cultivating the moss involved considerable hardships and great expense. Earlier attempts had shown that to cultivate one acre of the moss would require an expenditure of £12 to £15, amounting to a grand total of at least £20,000. Although the improved land could be let to tenants, it seemed more plausible to attract tenants by favourable terms to settle down on the moss and to carry out the improvements themselves.⁴²⁵ Therefore, Lord Kames had to offer huge incentives to

⁴²¹ See *ibid.*, notebook iii, fo. 10. See also Harnes, *Caledonia*, vol. iii, pp. 268-269.

⁴²² See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, pp. 396-397. See *OSA*, vol. xii, pp. 599-600.

⁴²³ See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, p. 397.

⁴²⁴ See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, p. 212. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, p. 395, the tenants were initially granted leases of two times nineteen years to which were later added another nineteen years, making in all 57 years. As will be seen, La Tocnaye's account of the leasing terms must have referred to the settlers on the High Moss. La Tocnaye confirmed, during his second visit to Scotland in 1796-97, that the cultivation of the moss was making good progress. See [J. de La Tocnaye], *Promenade D'un Français Dans L'Irlande* (Dublin, 1797), p. 270. [hereafter: La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans L'Irlande*]

⁴²⁵ Around the same time a similar approach was taken to cultivate the extensive moors along the River Eider near Stapelholm in the Duchy of Schleswig. To this purpose, in 1761, the Danish government decided to settle several hundreds of colonists from southern Germany on the moors. These people had lost their property in the Seven Years' War and had been promised new houses and pastures once they had cultivated the moors. However, the draining of the moors proved to be

attract prospective settlers to the moss. In 1767 the first tenant settled on the Low Moss. The tenant was allowed eight acres of land on a 38-year lease. He was also given a proper quantity of timber and two bolls of oatmeal to live on while building a house. The greatest incentives, however, were long leases and low rents. During the first seven years the tenant paid no rent, in the eighth year one merk Scots, and for every subsequent year the rent was raised by one merk until the end of the first nineteen years. During the last five years of this lease, the tenant also paid one hen per year. During the second nineteen years the tenant paid 12 shillings for every acre of cultivated ground, and 2s. 6d. for every acre still covered by peat in addition to two hens per year. These terms were also applied to all subsequent settlers. On top of these favourable terms the tenants had an abundance of fuel in their vicinity. It is not surprising that merchants were among the first to settle down on the moss. They not only dug up the moss, but also sold the peat for fuel. By 1792 the settlers had made a virtue out of necessity and yearly sold peat worth £100 for fuel at Stirling and Doune.⁴²⁶

However, the colony on the moss grew slowly in the beginning despite security of tenure and favourable rents. In 1769 five new tenants rented eight acres each. In 1772 the colony grew by two new settlers, in 1773 by another three and in 1774 by another one. By 1774 there were thirteen settlers altogether on the Low Moss, who had cultivated 104 acres, i.e. eight acres each. Following the successful establishment of a settlement on the Low Moss, the cultivation of the High Moss was begun in 1774. However, access to the High Moss was difficult and impracticable for horses. Moreover, the High Moss was between six and twelve feet deep. At first, a road had to be cut into it by floating off the moss down to the clay. In 1775 twelve new tenants settled down on the High Moss, followed by six in 1776, one in 1777, four in 1778, three in 1779, one in 1780, one in 1781 and another one in 1782. Each of these tenants leased eight acres so that, by 1782, 42 tenants had settled down on either the Low Moss or High Moss, occupying 336 acres. The slow increase of the settlement

extremely difficult. Most colonists soon gave up and moved away. The Danish government finally withdrew its financial support for the colonists in 1767 and the project failed miserably. Instead of cultivating the moors, the remaining colonists lived mainly from selling peat. Bit by bit the area was drained and cultivated in the nineteenth century and, finally, in the 1920s and 1930s. For details see I. Gooss, *Die Moorkolonien im Eidergebiet* (Kiel, 1940), pp. 5-15.

⁴²⁶ See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, pp. 391-392, 395-396.

on the High Moss was less for the want of tenants than for the want of water to float off the peat. As the new settlers on the High Moss had to remove a layer of moss up to twelve feet deep, they did not pay any rent for the first nineteen years of their leases. Afterwards the same conditions were applied to them as to the tenants on the Low Moss. After Lord Kames's death in 1782, his only son, George Home-Drummond, inherited the estate. In 1783 a second road and drain were cut into the High Moss. Between 1783 and 1785, 55 new tenants settled down on the High Moss and disposed of 440 acres of peat and turf. Between 1787 and 1790 another eighteen tenants settled down on the High Moss, taking eight acres each. To motivate the colonists various premiums were offered. A new plough was given to the colonist who removed the greatest quantity of peat down to the clay in the space of one year. The second most successful tenant was given a pair of harrows, and the third a spade and 10 lbs of red clover seed.⁴²⁷

By the end of the eighteenth century, the colony on the moss of Kincardine was referred to as an exemplary success in the cultivation of wasteland and in the prevention of emigration of landless Highlanders. The progress and growing wealth of the colony was also reflected by the rising numbers of settlers, horses, carts and cattle. From 1792 to May 1796 the number of people living on the moss rose from 620 to 764, the number of horses and carts from 34 to 54, and the number of cows from at least 115 to 201. The number of Scottish acres cleared from peat had risen from 300 to 400.⁴²⁸ Emilie Harmes visited the moss colony in 1800. According to her, the number of colonists had risen by then to 800, the number of horses and carts to 60 or 70, and the number of cows to 250. She claimed that nearly 400 acres of moss had been cultivated and gave the number of brick houses as 96.⁴²⁹

The Highlanders who had been resettled on the moss kept their different garb, language and traditions. In the beginning, the Lowlanders had been apprehensive about the huge influx of landless and poor people from the Highlands, but the Highlanders' exemplary character, decency and industry prevented any of them from

⁴²⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. xii, pp. 392-393, 394, 397.

⁴²⁸ See *ibid.*, vol. xii, p. 396. See *OSA*, vol. xii, pp. 599-600. An unidentified traveller reckoned in the 1790s that 360 acres of the moss had already been removed. See NLS, 'From Glasgow to Stirling', Dunlop Papers, MS. 9278, fo. 70v. Neither the author nor the exact date of the tour can be established.

⁴²⁹ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. iii, p. 269.

getting in trouble with the law.⁴³⁰ Harmes also stressed the settlers' industry and decency. Moreover, she reported that they were supported by the Highland Society and that a school for their children had been established. Finally, Harmes recommended that landowners in Germany should follow Lord Kames's example in cultivating wasteland and providing landless farmers with a new place to live.⁴³¹

However, with agriculture progressing rapidly in the final years of the eighteenth century, some more critical voices emerged. Thomas Garnett visited the Blair Drummond estate in 1798. He did not question the usefulness of the cultivation of the moss as a whole, but he was critical of the method that had been applied to drain it. He particularly criticised the waste of manure caused by disposing of the peat into the river:

This Herculean labour, for so it may be truly termed, might, in my opinion, have been spared, and such an immense quantity of rich vegetable earth, as well as the dung in the stable of Augeas, might have been turned to much better use than by sending a river through it, to wash it off the ground.⁴³²

Garnett proposed instead to drain the moss and to lime it properly. Recent experiments had shown that mixing peat with lime produced a most fruitful soil for potatoes, grain and grass. He reckoned that an acre of moss, which could not have been let for a penny before being improved by draining and liming, could afterwards be let easily for up to 25 or 30 shillings.⁴³³ His view was shared by John Stoddart who remarked that the scheme to cultivate the moss

⁴³⁰ See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3rd edn. 1797), vol. xii, p. 395.

⁴³¹ See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. iii, pp. 269-270, 272-273. Harmes's appraisal for the successful colony and the decency of the Highlanders seem to have been copied from the entry in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and adapted for a German readership.

⁴³² Garnett, *Tour*, vol. ii, p. 159.

⁴³³ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 160-163. Garnett referred particularly to the experiments made by Mr John Smith of Swindrig-muir (Swindridge Muir) on his estate four miles west of Beith (Ayrshire). The results of Smith's experiments were published in a pamphlet entitled *An Account Of The Improvement Of Moss, &c. In A Letter To A Friend* (2nd edn. Dunse [sic], 1797). Smith recommended draining and liming as the most successful methods for cultivating bog-land. The expenses for draining and liming could be easily recouped by the subsequent rich crops on the improved soil. For a detailed account of the successful draining and cultivation of a large morass near Poltalloch in West Argyll see Leyden, *Tour*, pp. 73-76. This morass, measuring about 3,000 acres, was owned by a Mr Malcolm (probably Mr Malcolm of Poltalloch) who had utilised 500 acres of it for an experimental farm run by the agriculturalist Mr Gow. The morass went down to a depth of four to twelve feet through which Gow had cut trenches to a depth of nine to eleven feet, reaching the gravel at its base. After the morass had been drained and stabilised, the gravel was extracted for road making, and its irregular surface was levelled at a cost of £2 13s. 4d. per acre. The trenches themselves were arched with dried black bottom peat, which was insoluble in water. The first crop was potatoes. In 1800 the soil was fertilised with shell-sand, which proved very effective to the point that Gow was considering the construction of a kiln to exploit limestone from a nearby knoll for additional manure. Within three years he had thus

seems to have fully answered every expectation; but more recent theorists have contended, that the whole advantage might have been more effectually obtained, by the simple application of lime.⁴³⁴

James MacDonald reported that Lord Kames's method of draining the moss was the most successful because it produced the most fertile soil, even though it was also the most expensive. More recent improvers preferred to set the dry peat alight in hot summer days and to burn it to ashes layer by layer. The ashes provided excellent manure for crops and grass. However, the cheapest and quickest way to cultivate a peat bog was to manure and dry it with straw and sand. The surface was tilled afterwards, but only in places where the moss was already dry and the surface stable enough to use oxen and horses for pulling the plough. However, the soil produced by this last method was inferior in quality to the soil produced by the other methods.⁴³⁵

Despite a few critical voices, the cultivation of the moss of Kincardine was a success story. Moreover, the Highlanders who had settled down on the moss had proven that they were neither idle nor incapable of improving the ground they were living on. Once they were given security of tenure, they worked hard and turned wasteland into one of the most fruitful spots in Scotland. Robert Heron's account of the cultivation of the moss of Kincardine (in 1792) was full of praise for their achievements:

The indolence of the Highlanders was roused by the prospect of wealth which opened to them: For it is remarkable that although the Highlanders be indolent at home; yet they possess such energy of character, and such vigour of constitution, that if you place them, where there are objects to rouse desire, and where industry can avail them; they never fail to exert themselves with a degree of activity and ingenuity and commonly with success, such as few others are capable of.⁴³⁶

Unfortunately, most landless Highlanders were denied such opportunities in Scotland and had instead to emigrate to make a fresh start.⁴³⁷

cultivated 200 acres of the morass, which was now producing luxuriant crops of corn, turnip and potato. Leyden added that Gow had initially been regarded as a madman by the locals. Although they viewed his progress with astonishment, they were still unwilling to forsake their antiquated methods of cultivation.

⁴³⁴ Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. ii, pp. 309-310.

⁴³⁵ See MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, pp. 290-293.

⁴³⁶ Heron, *Journey*, vol. ii, p. 444.

⁴³⁷ Impoverished Highlanders were also settled in their hundreds at New Lanark. In the early 1790s Mr Dale recruited many Highlanders from Argyll, Inverness-shire, Caithness and the Hebrides for his cotton-mills at New Lanark in order to prevent them from emigrating to North America. New Lanark became an exemplary early industrial settlement that provided its workforce with decent housing, education and social security. See, for example, Garnett, *Tour*, vol. ii, pp. 235-236.

6.9. Conclusion

The traditional Highland economy was a comparatively stable system until the mid-eighteenth century. Its main purpose was to sustain as many men as possible on the limited resources of a mostly infertile country. There was a close bond between the Highland nobility who owned the ground and the vassals who worked it. Every landowner was obliged for moral and military reasons to provide as many of his vassals with a stretch of land for their sustenance. This obligation led to a fragmentation of the arable ground into many small parcels that were regularly reallocated among the farmers. However, fragmentation and frequent reallocation prevented investment in the soil, and Highland agriculture remained in a basic state producing hardly enough to sustain the farmers. The tacksmen were the key figures in charge of running this economy, managing the traditional Highland villages and reallocating the ground. They leased their tacks directly from the landowners and had developed over the centuries heritable rights to their tacks. The common Highlanders lived in *bailtean* in the glens and along the coast. Their daily life was mainly centred on agriculture, cattle breeding and fishing in the lochs or coastal waters. Traditional Highland agriculture hardly produced enough crops to sustain the Highlanders, and they depended in consequence on meal imports from the Lowlands, Moray or Caithness. These imports and the rents for the farms were paid with the revenue derived from raising cattle. These animals were the Highlanders' most valuable asset and as such were given preferential treatment on grazing grounds over sheep and goats, which were only bred for home consumption. Fishing in the Highland lochs and coastal waters also contributed to the Highlanders' living. However, apart from cattle breeding and the seasonal occupation of the Highlanders as labourers at Lowland harvests to finance meal imports, the traditional Highland economy was largely self-sufficient and focused on satisfying domestic demands.

This focus changed when the landed Highland aristocracy became increasingly involved in Scottish and British politics in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Rising expenditures for households in Edinburgh and London led to rising debts and drained money from the Highlands. The Highland landowners lived beyond their means and accumulated massive debts. In the subsequent commercial

reorientation, land was no longer leased out at nominal prices for military service or personal loyalties, but instead had to produce revenues like any other form of capital. The first indications of this change of attitude can be found in the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries.

The commercial reorganisation of the Highland estates resulted also in the gradual decline of the tacksmen. The landowners no longer required their military and managerial services. Land held by tacksmen was auctioned to the highest bidder, thereby destroying personal bonds of loyalty within the clan hierarchy. In order to recoup their investment the new owners had to abandon the traditional runrig system of agriculture. They no longer had any familial bond with the people on their land. Multiple-tenant farms were dissolved, subtenants lost their land and were resettled to coastal areas, where they were given small crofts. These crofts were often either too small or situated on land too infertile to support former subtenants, who were now forced to take additional employment in the upcoming businesses of kelping and fishing. Again, the landowners reaped most of the benefits of these labour-intensive businesses.

The 1730s witnessed major efforts to reorganise estates in Argyll and to get rid of surplus population in Skye. However, these measures had been preceded by the changing attitude of the landed Highland aristocracy towards their estates and their clansmen. After the 'Forty-Five, many landowners completely abandoned their obligations to their people. After the Union of 1707, and particularly with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the Highlands became integrated into the British economy, and landowners began to produce for the British market or for export to the colonies. The traditional Highland economy collapsed, and many tenants lost their land, were resettled or emigrated. The remaining population became concentrated on the coastal strips, where they barely made a living from crofting, fishing and kelp production for export. At the same time the glens were taken over by cattle and soon after by ever-increasing numbers of sheep from southern Scotland or England.

There is no doubt that the traditional Highland economy could not compete with improved methods in other parts of the country. It was comparatively inefficient and, therefore, no longer sustainable. There is also no doubt that traditional Highland

agriculture had to be modernised, but it is doubtful whether the chosen path of forced resettlement and the creation of a crofting community was the right one. Other countries, such as Denmark, faced similar pressure to modernise their inefficient agriculture. However, the agricultural modernisation of Denmark did not result in social unrest, evictions, forced resettlements or the impoverishment of the overwhelming majority of the small farmers. Travellers such as William Thomson were well aware of these alternatives, but the British government backed the interests of the landowners and neglected the demands of the tenants.

7. **New industries for the Highlands: fishing and kelp production on the western seaboard**

It cannot be expected, that the gentlemen of this country [the Highlands and Hebrides] should execute commercial schemes to render their vassals independent; nor, indeed, are such schemes suited to their way of life and inclination; but a company of merchants might, with proper management, turn to good account a fishery established in this part of Scotland – Our people have a strange itch to colonize America, when the uncultivated parts of our own island might be settled to greater advantage.¹

In the second half of the eighteenth century, clanship and the traditional Highland economy collapsed, causing the biggest social and economic change experienced in the area. Population pressure on the coastal strips increased, and it became vitally important to provide the Highlanders with work that would enable them to earn a living. Two industries, fishing and kelping, became particularly important in these attempts to stop the impoverishment of huge numbers of the population and to prevent their emigration to North America. This chapter will examine the contribution of travellers in shaping the extension of the fisheries in the later decades of the eighteenth century. It will also analyse the way in which new industries, such as kelping, changed Highland life. Finally, it will be necessary to examine the success of these industries and to evaluate the impact they have made on the Highlands.

7.1. **The encouragement of the fishing industry**

When a spirit of trade, and improvements shall become more universal, pervading every shore, and every valley of the nation; when the fisheries shall be better understood, and the coast rendered accessible to vessels of every description, and in all kinds of weather, Britain will find customers within itself, sufficient to employ a million of people.²

John Knox's vision of fishing as a pillar of British wealth reflected the high hopes and expectations that accompanied the incorporation of the British Fisheries Society in 1786.³ The foundation of the Society was the biggest economic initiative in the

¹ Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, vol. iii, p. 56.

² Knox, *Tour*, p. clxxii.

³ The title given in the Act of Incorporation was 'The British Society for extending the Fisheries and improving the Sea Coasts of this Kingdom'. Gradually, the Society became known as 'The British Fisheries Society'. The Society officially adopted the latter title at its re-incorporation in 1857. For convenience the Society is hereafter referred to as 'British Fisheries Society'.

Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Society was dedicated particularly to the promotion of fisheries on the western seaboard in order to halt the economic decline of the region, to prevent the landless Highlanders from emigrating and to provide thousands of them with a new future. However, this initiative was not the first of its kind, and the economic potential of fishing on the western seaboard had been known for centuries.⁴

Since the late Middle Ages the rich seas of the Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Hebrides and the lochs on the western seaboard had attracted fishing vessels from all over northern Europe. Since the seventeenth century the Dutch had been systematically exploiting the rich fishing grounds around the Northern and Western Isles of Scotland, while the British fishing industry still lagged behind them. In Scotland only the fishermen of the East Neuk of Fife were, to a certain extent, able to compete with the Dutch, but they lacked the support of feeders for their herring-busses. The regular presence of the Dutch was a nuisance to many observers who realised the huge commercial potential of the fishing industry, unlike the governments in Edinburgh and London who did little to encourage it.⁵ Ignorance and prejudice against the Highlanders proved to be tough obstacles to the opening up and the economic development of the Western Isles. At the turn of the eighteenth century Martin commented on the state of the region:

There are many Bays and Harbours that are Convenient for building Towns in several of the other Isles if Trade were settled among them; and Cod and Ling, as well as Fish of lesser size, are to be had generally, on the Coast of the Lesser as well as of the larger Isles. I am not ignorant that Foreigners, sailing through the Western Isles, have been tempted from the Sight of so many Wild Hills, that seem to be covered all over with Heath, and fac'd with High Rocks, to imagine that the Inhabitants, as well as the Places of their residence are barbarous, and to this Opinion, their Habit, as well as their Language have contributed. The like is supposed by many that live in the South of *Scotland*, who know no more of the Western Isles, than the Natives of *Italy*; but the Lion is not so fierce as he is painted, neither are the People describ'd here, so barbarous as the World Imagines.⁶

⁴ Don Pedro de Ayala, the Spanish ambassador at the court of James IV from 1496 to 1497, reported (in 1498) to the Spanish king: 'It is impossible to describe the immense quantity of fish. The old proverb says already "piscinata Scotia". Great quantities of salmon, herring, and a kind of dried fish, which they call stock fish (stoque fix) are exported. The quantity is so great that it suffices for Italy, France, Flanders, and England.' *Calendar State Papers* (Spain), vol. i, p. 172. Ayala tended to exaggerate, nonetheless his account shows that Scotland was famous for its rich seas. See also chapter 2.1.6. Stockfish was part of the Norwegian heritage in Scotland.

⁵ For an account of the attempts to encourage fishing in the seventeenth century see Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 9-21.

⁶ Martin, *Description*, pp. 344-345.

Martin included in his *Description* a chapter entitled ‘A Brief Account of the Advantages the Isles afford by Sea and Land, and particularly for a Fishing Trade’.⁷ In this chapter he proposed to the government a series of measures for the encouragement of the fisheries in the Western Isles. In his view, the government would benefit from the promotion of fisheries as much as the islanders:

The Settling a Fishery in those Parts, would prove of great advantage to the Government, and be an effectual Means to advance the Revenue, by the Customs on Export, and Import, &c.⁸

Moreover, fisheries would be a nursery for stout and able seamen upon whom the government could draw on all occasions. Martin’s detailed proposals included the building of magazines for storing casks and salt at the most central and convenient places, such as Loch Maddy (North Uist), Hermetray (island in the Sound of Harris, 1¾ miles north-east of North Uist), the ‘Island Glass’ on the coast of Harris, and Stornoway in the Isle of Lewis. The Isle of Skye was to play a pivotal role in Martin’s plans. He considered it the most central and convenient place with regard to the islands and the west coast of the mainland Highlands. He, therefore, proposed to develop Skye as a centre for trade and fishing for the entire western seaboard. He listed a number of places that were particularly suitable for establishing a trading and fishing colony. These were the island of Isay in Loch Dunvegan and Loch Uig (Uig Bay) on the west coast, Loch Portree and Sconser on the east coast and the island of ‘Dierman’ on the south coast. According to Martin, these locations had abundant stocks of all sorts of fish, and they offered enough space for the settlement of a considerable number of people and the construction of storehouses.⁹ Martin also proposed the unification of Skye, Lewis, Harris, North Uist and South Uist into one ‘Sheriffalty’ for the better government of these islands. Because of the great distance of the Outer Hebrides from Inverness, the capital of the current shire, he suggested the founding of a Royal Burgh on Skye that would serve as the new capital. Additionally, he proposed that the government should consider

Whether they should not make the Isle of *Skie* a Free Port, because of the great Incouragement such Immunities give to Trade, which always issues in the welfare of the Publick, and adds Strength and Reputation to the Government.¹⁰

⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 336-349.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 344.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

Martin was well aware of the great potential of the fishing industry in the Hebrides. He referred to the huge profits made by the Dutch and recommended their fishing industry as a role model:

If the *Dutch* in their Publick Edicts call their Fishery a Golden Mine, and at the same time affirm that it yields them more profit than the *Indies* do to *Spain*, we have very great reason to begin to Work upon those Rich Mines, not only in the Isles, but on all our Coast in general.¹¹

In contrast to most seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors, Martin did not consider the Dutch primarily as competitors. He recommended that the British should learn from the superior fishing and curing skills of the Dutch, and he regretted that the Dutch fishing colony at Stornoway on Lewis had been expelled.¹²

Martin's *Description* was a plea to the government not to continue to ignore the region. He was well aware of Jacobite sympathies in the Western Isles. He was also aware that the government at Edinburgh regarded the region mainly from a military point of view and considered it a threat to the political stability of Scotland. Therefore, he wanted the government to realise firstly the economic potential of the Hebrides and, secondly, to open up the region to trade and industry, paying particular attention to fishing. He pleaded with the government for the construction of fishing stations, storehouses for salt and casks, and customs houses in order that the islanders could fully participate in the industry. As a result, both the islanders and the government would reap the benefits from the rich waters of the Hebrides. In addition, the islanders would break out of their isolation, and rising trade, living standards and contacts with the rest of the kingdom would gradually wear away their Jacobite sympathies. Martin's proposals were as much of an economic as a political programme to integrate the Western Isles into the evolving United Kingdom. Martin referred to the attempts in the seventeenth century to promote fisheries, trade and industry among the islanders, underlining the short duration of these initiatives that had left no permanent impact on the Western Isles.

Martin was not the only commentator who had realised the potential of the fisheries in the Hebrides. John Adair commented (in 1707) that the fisheries on the

¹¹ Ibid., p. 349. See also chapter 6, quotation 217.

¹² See *ibid.*, p. 347.

western seaboard might yield even greater profits than the fisheries on the east coast or in the Northern Isles. He was critical of the lack of reliable maps of the west coast that had resulted in the frequent loss of ships, but he stressed at the same time that apart from this deficiency the waters of the Hebrides were safe for fishing boats. Moreover, he was convinced that the Scots might even surpass the Dutch in these waters if a number of harbours were built in the islands. He argued that this would enable the Scots to process their catch on land and would give them an additional advantage over the Dutch.¹³

Unfortunately, Martin's and Adair's proposals fell on deaf ears, and it was not until 1750 that a major new initiative was launched to encourage fishing. In the meantime, in 1720 an English effort to set up a new company and to promote the fisheries in Scotland was blocked by strong opposition north of the border. The Convention of the Royal Burghs regarded the foundation of the 'Company of the Grand Fishery of Great Britain' as a breach of their privileges and immunities that had been confirmed at the Union. The establishment of the Board of Trustees for the Improvement of Fisheries and Manufactures in 1727 was also intended to promote the fisheries, but despite its support it failed to make them profitable and pulled out in favour of supporting the linen industry in the late 1740s.¹⁴

7.1.1. The encouragement of herring fishing in 1750 and its failure

Before discussing the new government initiative of 1750, it is necessary to have a brief look at the general situation of the fishing industry in Scotland at that time. The economic potential of herring fishing was well known, but there was a lack of uniformity in its pursuit throughout Scotland. On the east coast, and particularly along the coast of Fife, herring fishing had been a profession on its own for centuries. A social, and often also local, distinction existed between farming and fishing communities. Many coastal settlements were pure fishing villages that had prospered

¹³ See NLS, J. Adair, 'A Short Account of the Kingdom of Scotland with the Firths, Roads, Ports and Fishings about the Coast.', Adv. MS. 19.3.28, fos. 42r.-43r. Adair, of course, had to justify his survey of the western seaboard. See chapter 1.1.

¹⁴ See B. Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National Revival: The Free British Fishery Society and British Politics, c. 1749-58', *English Historical Review*, vol. cxiv (Oxford, 1999), pp. 288-289. [hereafter: Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National Revival']

over the centuries. The profits from fishing had been reinvested in better boats and equipment, and, consequently, the degree of professionalism among the local fishermen was consistently high. Defoe, for example, described the herring fishing on the east coast in the early eighteenth century as ‘a common Blessing to all this Shore of Scotland ... like the Indies at their Door’ and reported on a flourishing herring export from Aberdeen to all major cities of the Baltic.¹⁵ The comparatively high skills of the east coast fishermen were also a result of the close trade relations between the burghs of the Scottish east coast and the Dutch, who were the world’s leading fishing nation in the early modern period. On the west coast the situation was very different because there was no social or local separation between farmers and fishermen. Even along the coast the Highlanders and Hebrideans lived mainly from the land. Small-boat fishing in open vessels contributed to their diet, but was not conducted with any great expertise. The common Highlanders lacked the financial resources to invest in bigger boats and better equipment, and, in consequence, the activities of these farmers/part-time fishermen were limited to coastal waters.¹⁶

In spite of their superior skills in comparison to the Highlanders, the east coast fishermen were also unable to compete with the Dutch. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the waters around Great Britain were dominated by Dutch fishing fleets. The continuing presence of the Dutch herring-busses in the sea around the Shetland Islands was the main reason for the British government’s new initiative to encourage its own herring fishing. The British envied Dutch predominance and decided to build a fishing fleet of their own to rival them.¹⁷ To encourage the construction of herring-busses, an Act of Parliament was passed in 1750. This Act

¹⁵ Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, p. 186.

¹⁶ See M. Gray, *The Fishing Industries of Scotland 1790-1914* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 7, 101. [hereafter: Gray, *Fishing Industries*]

¹⁷ [J. Campbell], *An Exact And Authentic Account Of The Greatest White-Herring-Fishery In Scotland, Carried On Yearly In The Island Of Zetland, By The Dutch Only* (London, 1750) expressed very clearly the sentiment against the Dutch herring-busses in what were supposed to be ‘British’ waters. The anonymous author of *Voyage To Shetland* (1751), p. 11, claimed that the British herring-busses had Dutch instructors on board for training in catching, salting and packing herring. This assertion, however, must be dismissed as it was contradicted by all other contemporary accounts on herring fishing. It is very likely that the author had no personal knowledge of any of the islands described. The 1750 initiative did not break the dominant position of the Dutch fishing industry, but it at least created competition. The gradual decline of the Dutch fisheries in the second half of the eighteenth century must be seen partly as a long-term consequence of the emergence of the subsidised British herring fleet. See C. Wilson, *Anglo-Dutch Commerce & Finance In The Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 20. Despite the gradual decline of the Dutch fisheries, for several decades the British still considered them as their fiercest rivals.

granted an annual bounty of 30 shillings per ton to the owners of all decked vessels from 20 to 80 tons burden that were built and fitted for the Shetland fisheries after the commencement of the Act.¹⁸ The money for the bounty was to come from the revenue of His Majesty's customs.¹⁹ The same Act of Parliament set up the Society of Free British Fishery. The company was incorporated for 21 years with statutes for the regulation and management of the herring fishing and the curing, sorting and packing of the catch. The company was allowed to raise a share capital of £500,000 with the government agreeing to pay three per cent of the total capital every year for fourteen years in order to recruit subscribers. The capital was to be used to build herring-busses and storehouses. Although the Society of Free British Fishery was founded by the same Act of Parliament that allowed the bounty to the owners of fishing vessels, it is important to note that the bounty was not limited to the members of this new company. Every owner of a fishing vessel that met the regulations, and was built after the Act, was allowed to apply for the bounty.²⁰

The payment of the bounty, however, was tied to a series of regulations. Before setting out, the busses had to be inspected by customs officers to make sure that they contained the proper fishing equipment as stipulated by the Act. The time that the busses had to spend at sea was also strictly regulated. All busses that were bound for the Shetland Islands had to rendezvous at Bressay Sound on or before 11 June and were not allowed to start fishing before the thirteenth of that month. The autumn fisheries in the Western Isles faced similar restrictions. The herring-busses had to meet at Campbeltown on 1 September.²¹ Once the busses were cleared out, i.e. inspected and approved by the fisheries and customs officials, they were free to go to sea where they had to remain for the next three months. During this period they were, on penalty of forfeiting the bounty, allowed neither to return to port nor to buy fish

¹⁸ See Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National Revival', p. 294. Until 1750 the British herring fishing was mainly carried out from open boats that were seldom bigger than sixteen feet and were manned by four or five men. In contrast, the Dutch used herring-busses from 20 to 80 tons. These decked vessels had a crew of ten to sixteen men, transported also a number of small open boats and could stay at sea for several months. Like present day factory ships, the busses had storage for casks and salt so that the catch was processed on the vessel. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁰ The system of bounties, though slightly altered over the years, remained in place until 1830.

²¹ For further details about the times of clearing out and the rendezvous see Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 204-211.

from local fishermen.²² The string of red tape and regulations that was tied to the payment of the bounty contributed to the failure of the Act. In spite of the bounty, the British herring fleet could still not match the Dutch, and the Society of Free British Fishery soon faced serious financial difficulties. In 1757 the government increased the bounty from 30 to 50 shillings per ton, but private fishermen profited more from the increase than the members of the Society. Moreover, the bounty was tied to the customs revenues, and in 1766 they did not yield enough in Scotland to pay the increased bounty. Archibald Menzies, travelling the western seaboard on behalf of the Board for the Annexed Estates in 1768, feared that if the bounty was not paid more regularly, the herring fishery on the west coast would suffer greatly or even have to be abandoned.²³ In Scotland, in 1771, the bounty was reduced again to 30 shillings in order to allow more regular payment. In England the bounty remained at 50 shillings until 1780 when it, too, was reduced to 30 shillings.²⁴ The fluctuating number of herring-busses in response to the increase, decrease or failure of the bounty reflected the industry's dependence on public subsidies.²⁵ The financial difficulties of the Society of Free British Fishery were also affected by uncompensated wartime losses. In consequence, the charter incorporating the Society was not renewed when it expired in 1771.

²² See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 216. The object of the bounty was as much to encourage the fishing industry as to train huge numbers of seamen for Great Britain's steadily increasing commercial fleet, and particularly the navy. The government considered herring fishing in many respects as a nursery for the navy.

²³ See NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9, fo. 4.

²⁴ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 10. In England, customs yielded enough revenues to pay for the increased bounty.

²⁵ For detailed statistics on the number of herring-busses, tonnage, number of men employed and barrels of herring taken between 1750 and 1783, see Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. 233. This statistic shows clearly the extent to which the number of busses, the men employed and the size of the catch depended on the payment of the bounty. From 1766 to 1770 the payment was irregular, and the number of herring-busses over that period dropped from 261 (in 1766) to 4 (in 1771). Over the same period, the size of the catch fell from 21,146 barrels of herring to only 385. See appendix no. 9. However, there are two difficulties when dealing with the number of boats and busses that were involved in the herring fishing in the second half of the eighteenth century. Firstly, the small boats that did not qualify for the bounty were not registered. Secondly, the herring-busses that applied for the bounty were registered, but not every owner of such a vessel applied for the bounty because of the red tape and regulations attached to its payment. Figures for Great Yarmouth (England) have shown that many herring-busses that qualified for the bounty did not apply because of these regulations. In Scotland, too, there must have been owners of herring-busses that were eligible for the bounty, but who preferred to operate independently. The irregular payment of the bounty in the mid-1760s was surely a contribution to this state of affairs. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 11.

The period from 1750 until 1785, when the fishery laws were investigated by a committee of the House of Commons, was characterised by a complicated system of subsidies, red tape, rendezvous and complex salt laws.²⁶ Many of these factors were obstacles to the extension of the fisheries, and all in all they prevented any progress. The strict salt laws proved to be particularly damaging to the extension of the fisheries.

Nevertheless, the Scottish salt industry had initially benefited from the Union of 1707. According to Article 8 of the Treaty of Union, salt produced in Scotland should be exempt for the period from 1707 to 1713 from the duty on domestic salt levied in England. Thereafter, the duty imposed on salt made and sold in Scotland would be less than one third of the rate charged in England, at 1s. per bushel opposed to 3s. 4d. Foreign salt imported into Scotland was to be charged with the same duties as charged with in England. This meant that Scottish salt was initially favoured rather than English penalised. Moreover, the Scottish marine salt industry was protected from rock salt imports from Liverpool and Cheshire.²⁷

However, huge quantities of salt were required to cure the catch, and most of this had to be imported from France or the Mediterranean. The Scots were prohibited from importing rock salt from England, and the salt produced in Scotland by crystallising sea water was too weak for preserving fish.²⁸ Until 1719 curers paid full duty on salt, but they were refunded the duties when the barrels of preserved fish were ready for export. However, this system encouraged embezzlement and tax evasion. Curers often applied for a full refund of their duties when they had not used the full quantity of salt for curing fish. The unused salt was put aside for private purposes or resale. Moreover, this practice severely damaged the reputation of the

²⁶ For a detailed list of fifteen different fees and duties charged and certificates required at Greenock for a herring-buss of 64 tons, in order to apply for the bounty, see Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 224-225.

²⁷ For the impact of the Union on the Scottish salt industry see C. Whatley, *The Scottish Salt Industry 1570-1850* (Aberdeen, 1987), pp. 44-49, 87-90.

²⁸ The Swede Henrik Kalmeter even claimed (in 1720) that it was forbidden to salt herring in Scotland with Scottish salt as it was not strong enough to preserve fish. See Smout (ed.), 'Kalmeter's Travels', p. 49. For an account of the Scottish salt industry in the mid-seventeenth century see 'Report By Thomas Tucker Upon The Settlement Of The Revenues Of Excise And Customs In Scotland. A.D. MDCLVI', *Miscellany Of The Scottish Burgh Records Society* (Edinburgh, 1881), pp. 5-24, 33-35. Tucker reported that huge quantities of salt were boiled and sold at night to evade taxes. See *ibid.*, pp. 5-7. Most foreign travellers, such as the Frenchman Jorevin de Rocheford (c. 1661), confirmed that the salt boiled along the shores of the Firth of Forth was too weak and that fish pickled in it was apt to spoil. See *The Antiquarian Repertory*, vol. ii (London, 1779), p. 188.

British fish exports. The catch was often badly cured and improperly preserved. In 1719 new salt laws were passed in order to tackle embezzlement and to raise the quality of British fish exports. Under the new laws salt for the fisheries was sold free from duty. In order to prevent it from being used for non-fishing purposes, curers were required to import their salt through customs houses only, to keep it under lock and key, and to keep detailed records of the quantities used. Since 1735, curers had also to give security for the proper use of their salt. These laws remained in place, without major alterations, until 1785.²⁹

The accounts of John Walker, who visited the Hebrides in 1764 and 1771, and Thomas Pennant, who visited the Highlands and Hebrides in 1769 and 1772, gave a vivid impression of the way in which red tape, regulations and the salt laws complicated and discouraged, instead of promoting, fishing. Pennant explained:

A vessel of eighty tuns takes out a hundred and forty-four barrels of salt: a drawback of two shillings and eight-pence is allowed for each barrel used for the foreign or *Irish* exportation of the fish; but there is a duty of one shilling per barrel for the home consumption, and the same for those sent to *Ireland*.³⁰

John Walker, too, considered the strict control and supervision of the salt supplies by the customs officers a major obstacle to the establishment of a large-scale fishing industry. Particularly in summer, the reimbursement of duties on salt used to cure fish for export was too low and, therefore, discouraged the islanders from pursuing fishing. He criticised:

To every other method of prosecuting the Summer Fishery in the Western Islands, there is this Discouragement that by Law there is a Debenture only for a Bushel of Salt for each Barrel of Herrings that are cured and Exported. A Bushel is indeed sufficient to cure a Barrel during the Winter Fishery but in the Summer Season, from the first Appearance of the Shoals in the middle of July, to the middle of September, each Barrel requires two Bushels of Salt to cure it well, so that the Fishers Premium, by the Debenture, amounts only to the Duty upon the one half of his Salt.³¹

²⁹ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 115.

³⁰ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 321. For Pennant's criticism of the failed government policy on the fisheries see also *ibid.*, part i, pp. 319, 192-193, and Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 220-221.

³¹ McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 45. The amount of salt needed for curing a barrel of herring for export also varied according to its destination. For the European market 2 bushels of salt were needed per barrel, whereas 3.5 bushels were needed per barrel destined for the West Indies. In 1788 more than two thirds of the white herring exports from Great Britain were destined for the West Indies. 'White herring', i.e. pickled herring, was mainly used to feed the slaves working on the plantations in the Caribbean. More salt was required for curing 'white herring' than for curing 'red herring', which was preserved by a combination of salt and smoke. Due to the reimbursement of the duties on salt for exported fish, white herring was mainly destined for export, whereas red herring was destined for home consumption. The duties on salt for curing fish for home consumption were not reimbursed. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 12-13.

The collection of the salt duties proved to be another problem. One would assume that the duties would have greatly benefited the Treasury, but contemporary authors told a different story. The expense for administration and tight control consumed more than two thirds of the revenues. James Anderson reported (in 1785) to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury:

It must here be remarked, that in no branch of revenue, is the difference between the gross amount and the net produce so great as in the salt-duties; the gross amount being in England about L.900,000, and in Scotland L.36,000; the net produce in England about L.250,000, and in Scotland L11,000 *per annum*: So that above two-thirds of the gross revenue is destroyed in the expence of management, and in drawbacks.³²

Anderson's verdict on the current salt laws was damning. He concluded that they restrained the fisheries, damaged trade and encouraged fraud and smuggling. He reported that every year great quantities of rock salt were smuggled from Ireland to the west of Scotland.³³ In Ireland taxes on coal were lower so that rock salt could be boiled at a lower cost. Additionally, the duties on the ready salt were far lower than those in Great Britain. Consequently, he recommended that the British government should abolish all duties on salt, including those on the transport of crude rock salt or the salt manufactured from it. After all, he argued, most of the revenues were consumed anyway by the expense for administration and salaries.³⁴

³² Anderson, *Account*, pp. 203-204. Anderson had travelled the western seaboard in the previous year on behalf of the Treasury in order to study the fishing industry in Scotland.

³³ Archibald Menzies reported (in 1768) that rock salt from Cheshire was shipped to the salt-works at Larne (Northern Ireland), dissolved in sea water, boiled up again into salt and then smuggled into Scotland. See NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9, fo. 42.

³⁴ See Anderson, *Account*, pp. 61-64. In the *Account* the section about the salt laws was 'a little altered from the original Report'. *Ibid.*, p. 61. In his *Account* Anderson pleaded for the total abolition of duties on salt. In his hearing by the select committee of the House of Commons he proposed a (in his view) simplified version of the salt laws. However, this version was as bureaucratic and unworkable as the laws it was to replace. For details of his simplified salt laws see Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 116. The salt laws proved to be such a tricky issue that the select committee failed to come to a conclusion. To abolish duty would make salt easily available, stop fraud and smuggling, and end costly enforcement. However, until the introduction of income tax during the French Revolutionary Wars, a large share of the state's revenue came from customs duties on imported and exported goods. In 1786 the value of a ton of English salt stood at £1. The duty charged on it was £12, while the duty on foreign salt stood even higher. The country, after the costly Revolutionary War in North America, simply could not afford to abolish the duty on salt. With all other commodities considered taxable already taxed, to remove the salt duty would significantly impact on revenue generation. Thus it was not until 1798 that a major reform of the salt laws was approved by parliament, the year before the introduction of income tax. See *ibid.*, pp. 116-117. Stebbing Shaw witnessed (in 1787) a dispute between excise officers and local fishermen at Inveraray who had been detected salting fish with smuggled salt. See [S. Shaw], *A Tour, In 1787, From London, To The Western Highlands Of Scotland* (London, [1788]), p. 159. [hereafter: Shaw, *Tour*]

John Knox came to similar conclusions. He likewise reckoned (in 1785) that under King George II (1727-60) the expense of administration and the salaries for excise officers consumed the biggest part of the revenues from the duties on salt, candles, infant manufactures, farm horses and carts. In the Highland counties of Argyll, Inverness, Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney and Shetland, the cost of collecting the customs exceeded, in 1782, the amount of money levied by £535 18s. 8d.³⁵

In these circumstances the cost of collecting the duties on salt in the Highland ports must have been out of proportion to the amount of money levied. Keeping tight control on the salt supply in the Highlands not only harmed the expansion of the fisheries, but also lost the state money. The situation was made worse by the fact that in Scotland almost all catches were cured as white herring.³⁶ Not only was more salt than for red herring required for this method, but nearly all money levied from the duty had to be reimbursed because white herring was mainly destined for export. Moreover, the heavy duties encouraged smuggling. In these circumstances the government initiative of 1750 was doomed to fail.

To summarise, there were three main reasons for the failure of the 1750 initiative. Firstly, the strict salt laws severely disadvantaged the British fishing industry in comparison to other nations. Secondly, only decked vessels from 20 to 80 tons qualified for the bounty. On the west coast this restriction excluded practically all farmers/part-time fishermen from applying. The open small-boat fishing, which employed most hands on the west coast, did not benefit from the government's initiative. Moreover, the vessels applying for the bounty were forbidden to buy any fish from the open boats. The impact of this restriction was devastating. John Knox commented in 1785:

This restraint was a grievous hardship to the poor natives, whose fisheries were thus limited to their own consumption; and the supply of the thinly inhabited wilds of their neighbourhood. It ruined their fishery, discouraged industry, and left these unhappy people

³⁵ See Knox, *View*, vol. i, p. xxxix. For the same year the revenues levied from excise in these six counties exceeded the expense by £1,246 16s. 6d. After the deduction of the loss upon customs the revenue from the six counties was only £710 17s. 10d. Knox did not specify the revenues levied from the duties on individual products, but he put salt on top of his list. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. xxxviii. Knox argued that the English had been overtaking Scotland since the Union of 1707, thereby destroying its trade and manufactures. See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. xxxii-xl.

³⁶ In 1780 England exported 7,697 barrels of white herring and 24,083 barrels of red herring, whereas Scotland exported 25,122 barrels of white compared with only 119 barrels of red herring. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 14.

solely at the mercy of every superior who might choose to oppress them in all their operations by land and water.³⁷

Thirdly, the bounty was related only to the size of a vessel, and not to the size of the catch, which meant boats were built ‘to catch the grant rather than the fish’.³⁸ The bounty was successful in establishing a herring fleet of ultimately more than 200 vessels, but this fleet never became independent of public subsidy.³⁹ Without the payment of the bounty the boats did not make any profit. When its payment became irregular, the number of boats involved in herring fishing dropped sharply. Many boats were designed for more than one purpose and were easily employed with a hired workforce in other trades. John Walker, for example, reported (in 1764) that the five herring-busses on Islay that qualified for the bounty were employed for several months per year in carrying kelp from the Highlands to Liverpool, Belfast, Derry and other ports in Ireland.⁴⁰ In 1778 the six herring-busses of Irvine (Ayrshire) were employed in the coal and coastal trade during the intervals in the fishing season.⁴¹ Therefore, the bounty was ineffective in establishing a long-term herring industry, fishing villages, or in increasing employment beyond seasonal work.⁴² However, it is questionable whether a performance-related bounty would have been a better option to encourage herring fishing on the western seaboard. Knox reckoned (in 1785) that such a scheme was impracticable because herring fishing was volatile to the movements of the shoals, and the necessary up front investments for buildings,

³⁷ Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 216-217.

³⁸ Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, p. 328. In 1775 Matthew Culley commented on the failure of the bounty: ‘The gentlemen here [Ross-shire, Sutherland] say, with what truth I will not pretend to determine, that the bounty given by Government to the vessels fitted out for the British Herring Fishery, however well meant, does hurt instead of good to this institution, for that the vessels belonging to the British Herring Fishery are not so industrious as those which properly belong to the country: they add that the vessels belonging to the British Herring Fishery, coming chiefly, if not solely for the benefit of the bounty, break the shoals of herrings, to the great injury of the smaller vessels, and of the trade in general.’ Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, pp. 125-126. Culley initially wanted to cross from Easter Ross to Loch Broom in order to visit the fishing station for curing red herring, which had been set up recently by a private company from Liverpool on the Isle Martin at the main entrance to the loch. However, he found that route impracticable and abstained from a visit to the west coast.

³⁹ As the Dutch were very secretive about the level of premiums paid to their fishing industry, there are no exact figures available. However, due to their superior method of catching and curing herring, the Dutch vessels were less dependent on public subsidies than the British. Even after 1750 the Dutch managed to stay ahead of the British. They kept their dominance of the European white herring market until the end of the century although their advantage was gradually declining.

⁴⁰ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker’s Report*, pp. 103-104.

⁴¹ See Loch, *Tour*, p. 37.

⁴² See Gray, *Fishing Industries*, p. 5.

quays and casks could not be recouped if the herring did not appear. Moreover, he reckoned that a performance-related bounty would attract adventurers from other parts of Britain, who would destroy the honesty of the Highlanders. Finally, he argued, it would open the door for boundless frauds upon the government.⁴³

By the early 1780s it had become more than obvious that the current bounty system had failed to provide the expected boost to the British fishing industry. The British could still not match the Dutch. Moreover, new competitors had emerged in the Swedes and Irish who extended their fisheries and pushed into the European market.⁴⁴ The time was ripe for other options for the revival of the British fishing industry. The fishery laws expired in 1785, and it was decided that a committee of the House of Commons should examine every aspect of the fishing trade before any decisions about its future could be taken.

In addition, from the 1750s to the 1780s the economic situation in the north of Scotland had deteriorated dramatically. In the wake of the dissolution of the clans and the economic reorientation of the Highland estates, population pressure on the coastal strips had considerably increased. As new sheep breeds were progressing in the Highlands, more and more Highlanders were resettled from the glens in the interior to the coastline. The new crofts they were given were not big enough to sustain a living, and the public subsidies for the herring fishing had failed to create new jobs on the western seaboard. Apart from Stornoway, which had moved to fourth position in the export of white herring, only the towns along the Clyde and the coast of Ayrshire had profited from the subsidies.⁴⁵ Even there the subsidised vessels

⁴³ See Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 248-251. It is interesting to note that Pennant also mentioned a performance-related premium. However, it seems to have been anything but encouraging. He wrote that Campbeltown in Kintyre was the rendezvous of vessels for the fishery in the Western Isles. The vessels cleared out there on 12 September and had to return to their different ports by 13 January, 'where they ought to receive the præmium of 2l. 10s. *per* tun of herrings; but it is said to be very ill paid, which is a great discouragement to the fishery'. Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 221.

⁴⁴ For a table of the bounties, premiums and drawbacks for the encouragement of the Irish fisheries in Europe see Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 321-322.

⁴⁵ The main harbours for the export of white herring were Greenock, Campbeltown, Port Glasgow and Stornoway. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 15. The town of Greenock seems to have benefited most from the bounty. David Loch reported (in 1778) that Greenock was rising as an important harbour with 100 herring-busses at c. 50 tons each. See Loch, *Tour*, pp. 68-69. John Lettice reported (in 1792) that 1,000 persons were employed in the herring fishery and that more than 45,000 barrels of herring were landed at Greenock. According to Lettice, the inhabitants of Greenock had always preferred trading to fishing and without the bounty would not have become engaged in the herring fisheries. He, therefore, considered the bounty as a great success with regard to Greenock's herring fishery. Moreover, many Highlanders had moved permanently to Greenock to work in the

were often used for other purposes than herring fishing. In the course of the eighteenth century, the herring shoals had moved gradually from the east coast of Britain to the west coast. To many landowners and outside observers, an extension of the fisheries along the western seaboard seemed to be the natural solution to provide new jobs for the Highlanders and to prevent mass emigration to North America.

The expiry of the old bounty laws was accompanied by an extended discussion on the best method to encourage fishing. From 1778 to 1786 the Highland Society had made money available for premiums on the best method of curing in the Dutch manner, but the promotion of fishing was never high on its agenda. Numerous pamphlets on this topic were written in the late 1770s, but it was not until 1784 that it received widespread public attention. Many Scottish writers and travellers, such as James Anderson, William Thomson and John Knox, who all visited the Highlands and Islands at that time, contributed to the discussion. Their accounts reflected the hope that was put in the fisheries to turn around the economic decline of the Highlands and Islands. An analysis and comparison of their accounts will, firstly, show the unsatisfactory state of the fishing industry at that time and, secondly, explain the various schemes under consideration.

7.1.2. The proposals to encourage the fisheries by James Anderson, William Thomson and John Knox

In the mid-1780s a series of travellers toured the Highlands and Islands. They examined the living conditions of the local population, reported about the state of the fishing industry and discussed various schemes for its extension in order to raise the standard of living on the western seaboard. Two travellers, James Anderson and John Knox, deserve particular attention, as their opinions and accounts had great influence on the discussion about the most suitable method to encourage fishing on the western seaboard.

The Scottish agriculturalist and economist James Anderson travelled the western seaboard in 1784 on behalf of the Treasury as part of his enquiry into the

fishing industry. See Lettice, *Letters*, pp. 118-119, 121. The herring, of course, were caught all along the western seaboard, but due to the restrictions tied to the bounty the people in the western Highlands and Islands did not profit from it.

state of the fishing industry in Scotland. He was one of the earliest writers to direct public attention to the fisheries. His *Observations On The Means Of Exciting A Spirit Of National Industry ...* (Edinburgh, 1777) dealt, among other topics, with the importance of fishing as an industry in Scotland. His treatise *The True Interest Of Great Britain Considered: Or A Proposal For Establishing The Northern British Fisheries ...* (n.p., 1783) cast further light on the potential of a fishing industry in Scotland. In 1785 he reported the findings of his mission to a committee of the Commons and published *An Account Of The Present State Of The Hebrides And Western Coasts Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785).

The writer and traveller William Thomson made the great tour of Scotland in 1785. His account was initially published anonymously as *A Tour In England And Scotland, in 1785* (London, 1788). A second enlarged edition was titled *Prospects And Observations; On A Tour In England And Scotland: Natural Oeconomical, And Literary* (London, 1791).

John Knox had devoted himself, since 1764, to the improvement of the fisheries and manufactures of Scotland and had made no less than sixteen tours of that country between 1764 and 1775. Between 1784 and 1786 he published a number of essays and books that dealt mainly with the improvement of the fisheries in Scotland.⁴⁶ He became one of the leading experts on that subject and in 1786 was commissioned by the newly founded British Fisheries Society to make ‘a more extensive journey in the highlands and isles than had ever been performed by an individual’.⁴⁷ The following year he published at the request of the Society the account of his tour, titled *A Tour Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The Hebride Isles, In MDCCLXXXVI* (London, 1787).

⁴⁶ These included *A View Of The British Empire, More Especially Scotland; With Some Proposals For The Improvement Of That Country, The Extension Of Its Fisheries, And The Relief Of The People* (London, 1784). A greatly enlarged 3rd edition was published in 1785. [hereafter: Knox, *View*] In 1786 Knox published *Observations On The Northern Fisheries* (London, 1786) and *A Discourse On The Expediency Of Establishing Fishing Stations, Or Small Towns, In The Highlands Of Scotland And The Hebride Islands* (London, 1786). Knox referred to the planned fishing settlements as ‘small towns’ because, in his view, the settlements were to grow to the size of towns. In reality, none of the settlements built by the British Fisheries Society on the west coast attracted a sufficient number of settlers to be described as a ‘town’. In this thesis, the planned fishing settlements are, therefore, referred to as ‘villages’.

⁴⁷ *DNB*, vol. xi, p. 329.

7.1.2.1. James Anderson's proposals to encourage the fisheries

Anderson's report to a committee of the House of Commons led to a series of changes in the fishery laws in 1785. He gave a detailed survey of the living conditions on the western seaboard and explained to the House why the overwhelming majority of the Highlanders lived in abject poverty and misery. He reported that the small-boat fishermen on the north-west coast and on the islands north of Barra were allowed to sell their catch only to their landlord, who provided them with boats and fishing equipment.⁴⁸ The landlord charged his tenants heavily for the use of his boat and the supplies provided. He bought the fishermen's catch at prices fixed by him and sold it for export. As the fishermen could only sell to their landlords, they became totally dependent on them and were unable to repay their debts or to go fishing on their own account. Moreover, the bounty laws prohibited the busses from purchasing their catch, and the strict control of the salt supplies prevented the small-boat fishermen from curing and preserving their catch. All in all, the way in which the small-scale fishing was organised along the north-west coast of Scotland kept the common Highlanders in total dependence on their landlords. Instead of being able to make a living from fishing, they were exploited.

The owners of herring-busses did not face these problems, but the fishery and salt laws caused them huge delays and expenses. Anderson included an account of the necessary steps the owner of a herring-buss had to observe when importing foreign salt for curing fish. First, a regular entry of the salt had to be made at the customs house and a duty paid of about 2 pence and a halfpenny, or 2 pence and 3 farthings, per bushel of salt. Next, a bond had to be granted (for the excise duty, being 10 shillings per bushel), with surety, at a charge of 7 shillings and 6 pence. Fees for report, entry, and for waterside officers guarding a cargo, amounted to about 2 guineas or more. If any of the salt was to be sent to another port, a warrant had to be obtained from the customs house to ship that quantity of salt. A coast-bond was then granted at a cost of another 15 shillings. When the salt arrived at the intended

⁴⁸ See Anderson, *Account*, pp. 21-23. According to Anderson, the islanders on Barra and on the islands south of it did not suffer from this exploitation as small-boat fishing for export had not yet been established in those parts. This oppression was not practised in Argyllshire or on the east coast of Scotland.

port, it had to be reported, entered in the books and bonded again at the expense of another 15 shillings. When it was sold to fish curers, it had to be entered into the transfer book kept at the customs house. Finally, the purchaser, on getting the salt into his custody, had to bond it again at the extra expense of 7 shillings and 6 pence before it could be cleared out and shipped. Thus for every movement of salt from one port to another two bonds had to be granted, and every time any part of the salt was sold without it being removed, another bond had to be granted.⁴⁹ These were the standard procedures that had to be followed with every shipment or movement of salt. These procedures were further complicated by the small number of customs houses and the great distances between them. Even if a buss was lost at sea, it was nearly impossible for the owner to recover the salt bond.⁵⁰ It is not surprising that bureaucracy and loss of time made this system unworkable and greatly disadvantaged the British herring-busses.

Finally, Anderson concluded that it would be more efficient and cheaper to provide the common Highlanders directly with boats and fishing equipment than to support the herring-busses by public subsidies. He reckoned that it would cost £24 to provide six families of five persons each with ground, a boat and fishing equipment. Thus the capital required to provide one Highlander with a living from fishing would be sixteen shillings. Anderson reckoned that once the fishing villages were established, other professions would settle down amongst them. He calculated that it would cost the government only twenty shillings to provide for a family of five so that for every £1,000 sterling thus applied, 400 families (totalling 2,000 persons) could be settled on the western seaboard. If £5,000 sterling were applied over twenty years in that way, 200,000 people could be settled along the west coast. However, in order to make this scheme a success, the salt laws had to be abolished and the fishery laws liberalised. Once these steps were taken, hundred thousands of Highlanders would be able to make a living from fishing, and the industry would blossom and become independent of public subsidies.⁵¹ Additionally, Anderson proposed the

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 170-172. Anderson got this account in writing from an experienced buss-owner and included it in the illustrations of his report to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

⁵⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 174-176.

⁵¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 309-313. With the benefit of hindsight, this scheme seems to have been that of a megalomaniac and totally unworkable. However, in the optimistic climate of the mid-1780s, Anderson's ideas were considered as a serious option for reviving the Highlands and Islands.

immediate construction of a canal from Crinan to Lochgilhead and (at a later time) a canal from Fort William to Inverness in order to ease transport and communication in the Highlands.⁵²

Many of Anderson's proposals were adopted by the committee of MPs. In 1785 it recommended the abolition of the rendezvous system which still caused unnecessary journeys for the busses although the number of rendezvous had been increased in 1779. The start of the fishing season was also advanced by two weeks in order to match the arrival of the Dutch fleet. Until 1785 the Dutch fishing season began two weeks earlier than the British. In consequence, they were able to supply the markets earlier with their fish than did their British competitors. Additionally, British busses were now allowed to transfer their catch from one vessel to another

Although John Knox was one of the fiercest critics of Anderson's scheme, his own proposals reveal a similar over-optimism and loss of reality.

⁵² See *ibid.*, pp. 57-58, 54-56. Anderson included abstracts of Mr Watt's surveys and estimates for both canals in the appendix. Watt calculated the expense for the canal from Fort William to Inverness at £164,030 19s. 4d. (without taking in the value of the land occupied by the canal), and for the Crinan Canal at £34,879 0s. 0d. (at 7 feet depth) or £48,405 5s. 7d. (at 10 feet depth). An alternative canal through Kintyre at Tarbert would have cost £17,988 10s. 6d. (at 7 feet depth), £23,884 7s. 0d. (at 10 feet depth), £73,849 9s. 5d. (at 12 feet depth) or £120,789 9s. 0d. (at 15 feet depth). See *ibid.*, appendices nos. v, vi, vii, viii, pp. 378-402. Anderson considered the construction of the Crinan Canal to be a priority, as the volume of trade was not yet great enough to justify the construction of a canal through Glen Mor. He wanted the latter canal to be built at a later time, when the new fishing villages on the west coast had been established and the volume of trade had risen considerably. See *ibid.*, pp. 385-394. This view was strongly opposed by John Knox. He considered the canal through Glen Mor to be the top priority in order to promote the standard of living in the north of Scotland. See Knox, *View*, vol. ii, pp. 422-433, 675. Knox reckoned the expense for the canal from Fort William to Inverness at £164,000 (at 10 feet depth) and for the Crinan Canal at £60,000 (at 12 feet depth). These estimates were roughly in line with Mr Watt's estimates. However, Knox dismissed Anderson's figures for the profitability of the Crinan Canal and claimed that the canal would yield less than one per cent profit per year, thus making it unattractive to investors. See Knox, *View*, vol. ii, pp. 410-422, 679-680. Knox, too, wanted a canal to be built at Crinan, but the canal through Glen Mor was his top priority. Anderson's view of these matters was vice versa. Both canals were finally built. The Crinan Canal was built between 1793 and 1801. The Caledonian Canal, connecting Fort William to Inverness, was built between 1803 and 1822. Both canals accumulated huge losses and became financial disasters because the growing size of vessels and steam power soon made them obsolete. Garnett reported (in 1798) that work on the Crinan Canal had almost come to a halt for want of money. By then the overall expenses for the canal were estimated at £80,000. See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, pp. 106-108. John Leyden witnessed the work on the Crinan Canal in 1800. He reported that the canal had already cost £110,000 and that another £10,000 was required for its completion. At the time of his visit only 300 workers were employed in its construction instead of the usual 800 to 900 workers. See Leyden, *Tour*, p. 61. James Hogg visited the Highlands in the first year of the Caledonian Canal's construction and anticipated, against contemporary belief, that the canal would never become economically viable. See Hogg, *Tour*, pp. 45-50. For the failure of these canals see Lenman, *Economic History*, pp. 149-150. Anderson's and Knox's differences about the canals contributed to their mutual antipathy. Knox, for example, ridiculed Anderson's figures for the profitability of the Crinan Canal, writing that they qualified him 'for the strait waistcoat'. Knox, *View*, vol. ii, p. 679.

and to send it home before they had been at sea for three months. British busses still had to stay at sea for that period, but now they could take at least several boat loads and send their catch to the markets earlier than before. Another important improvement was that the herring-busses, after having stayed at sea for three months, were now allowed to buy fish from the owners of small boats. These measures created a market for the Highlanders and their small-boat fishing. One strong argument in support of this opening up of the market for small boats was that the lochs on the north-west coast were generally more suitable for small boats than for the heavier busses.

However, two major obstacles had not been dealt with in 1785. The first was mounted when new bounty laws were passed by parliament in July 1786. The new laws included two bounties, one related to the size of a vessel and another paid for the size of the catch. Busses were now subsidised with a tonnage bounty of twenty shillings and could draw an additional barrel bounty of four shillings for their herring. The tonnage bounty enabled the owners of busses to stay in business even when the herring shoals had failed for a year or two, which was not uncommon on the west coast. The barrel bounty encouraged the fishermen to take as many catches as possible. Most important, the catch of the small boats was no longer excluded from the bounty. Although the small boats themselves were not supported by the bounty, they could sell their catch to busses that were now eligible for a bounty of one shilling per barrel of herring bought from non-bounty vessels.⁵³ This was still far from Anderson's recommendation of a direct support for the Highlanders and their small-boat fishing, but now there was at least a market for their catch. The biggest issue, however, was not yet solved. MPs could not agree on a reform of the salt laws, and it was not until 1798 that the complicated and bureaucratic salt laws were finally abandoned. It is not surprising that Thomson and Knox repeatedly raised the issue of salt laws in their accounts.⁵⁴

⁵³ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 21-23.

⁵⁴ John Knox welcomed the decisions taken by parliament, but he considered the reform of the fishery laws as half-hearted. He was critical of the failure to bring solutions to the big issues concerning the salt laws and the small-boat fishery. For his discussion of the pros and cons of the reform of the fishery laws in 1785 and his proposals for further improvements see Knox, *View*, vol. ii, pp. 644-662. The want of salt remained a major nuisance until the end of the century. John Lanne Buchanan wrote (in 1794) that the Hebrideans were happy to exchange eighteen barrels of fresh herring against one barrel of salt. Moreover, he was told by a minister in Skye that, for want of salt, heaps of herring were

7.1.2.2. William Thomson's proposals to encourage the fishing industry

While the committee of MPs was busily deliberating Anderson's report and the evidence given to the House of Commons, William Thomson set out for the grand tour of the Highlands. His proposals to encourage fisheries were very different from Anderson's recommendations. Thomson proposed the development of Oban as a centre for manufacture and fishing on the west coast, but his scheme was based on old ships as floating training stations.⁵⁵ He wanted the government, or a newly founded society, to provide 50 old warships or East Indiamen to be moored in safe situations in various lochs along the west coast. These ships would be manned by experienced naval officers, seamen and fishermen and be used for the training of apprentices for the fishing trade. Each ship would take about 100 apprentices who would be instructed in seamanship and fishing. For this purpose huge numbers of small boats and nets would be required. Each small boat was to be manned by four experienced fishermen and the same number of apprentices who would live on the training ships during their education. Thomson feared that otherwise these boys would return to their indolent way of life once they were returned to their families on shore. The curing of the catch would be done either on board or in appropriate locations on the shore, before the barrels were shipped by other vessels to the different markets. Moreover, Thomson proposed the invitation of fishermen from Norway, the Low Countries and Yarmouth (England) to instruct the apprentices in open sea fishing.⁵⁶ Once the apprentices had finished their training, the government would supply a boat and nets for every six recruits that they could use to provide for themselves and their families. These boats would be encouraged by a bounty on their catch. Thomson also made a curious proposal to encourage competition among the training vessels:

An emulation between the fishing vessels would be heightened, if different ships were manned, and drew their apprentices from different clans: and, that the whole might be

rotting on the shore before they were finally disposed of as manure. See Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 71, 105, 178-179.

⁵⁵ See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 92-99.

⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 96. In contrast to many contemporary writers, Thomson did not want to ban the Dutch busses by law or force from fishing in British waters. Instead, he proposed to learn from their superior knowledge of catching and curing fish, thus improving the quality of Scottish fish. This was the only way that would enable the Scottish fishermen to equal, if not excel, the Dutch in the European markets. See *ibid.*, p. 173.

cheered and animated to industry, and new adventurers allured from land, each ship might be allowed a small band of their national music.⁵⁷

He considered his proposals as more practicable than those schemes that argued for planned fishing villages along the coastline. In his view, the training vessels could follow the migration of the herring shoals and thus deliver a more certain and more productive fishery. Moreover, the training vessels would also encourage law and order more effectively among the fishermen than the four fishing bailiffs who were currently employed on the west coast for that purpose. Thomson's scheme was clearly influenced by the success of the Dutch herring fisheries. They used busses to transport the crew, their stores and small boats to the fishing grounds where they became floating headquarters.⁵⁸

However, Thomson was not entirely opposed to the concept of planned fishing stations or fishing villages. He proposed, for example, that the government should build public wharves, storehouses and curing houses 'upon a moderate scale at first; but upon such a plan, that they may be enlarged as exigencies may require'.⁵⁹ He also proposed that the planned villages should be laid out in a like manner. A number of houses, proportional to immediate demands, should be built in the first instance, and these buildings could be increased afterwards on the same plan to cater for an increased population.⁶⁰ He was also quite enthusiastic about the station built for the drying of cod and ling by a private company at Loch Torridon.⁶¹ The driving forces

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 95. He proposed to station a training vessel at Tobermory or Oban for the Campbells, another at Ullapool for the Mackenzies, another at Loch Buie (Mull) for the MacLeans, another at Canna for the MacDonalds and another at Stein (Loch Bay, Isle of Skye) for the MacLeods. He hoped that this would create a spirit of emulation as existed among the Highland regiments. See *ibid.*, p. 98.

⁵⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 102. See also Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 9.

⁵⁹ Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 100.

⁶⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 100. This was a far more cautious and realistic approach toward planned villages than the proposals of Anderson or Knox, who intended to settle up to 200,000 people in such villages, or (respectively) wanted to construct altogether 40 new villages along the coastline from Arran to Dornoch. Thomson's relatively cautious approach was surely influenced by the slow progress of the large-scale settlements built by the British Fisheries Society at Tobermory (Mull), Ullapool and Lochbay (Skye). The settlement at Lochbay, for example, was delayed so often that some islanders lost confidence and emigrated to America before it was ready. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 87-90. The planning and construction of large settlements consumed too much time and money in places where swift action was required and where small settlements would have been sufficient in the beginning.

⁶¹ Thomson had not visited Loch Torridon. According to Mactavish, who visited the station in August 1787, construction had not started before early 1786. Nonetheless, the description and sketches of the station included in Thomson's *Prospects* are very detailed and useful. It must be stressed that this station had been built by private initiative before the British Fisheries Society's proposals to build fishing villages all along the west coast. In 1787 the station was offered for sale to the British

behind this station were Kenneth Mackenzie of Torridon and Alexander Mackenzie of Coull. John Knox visited the station in 1786 and also stressed its potential for the curing of herring:

Here Mr. Mackenzie has erected a large and commodious curing-house, after the model of those on the coast of Labradore and other northern parts of America. It is the first of the kind that has been erected in Scotland. The principal design of this building is to dry cod and ling, in any weather, under cover; an improvement of the greatest importance in that watry climate, and which merits, at least, the thanks of the public.

The buildings have likewise all manner of conveniencies for curing herrings, a branch that may be carried on to any extent; for which employ, nature has formed a creek where some hundred boats may lie in perfect safety, under any winds, from whatever quarter they blow.⁶²

By 1791 the station at Loch Torridon consisted of a stage and wharf, 80 feet long and 20 feet broad, which projected about 18 feet over a solid rock. Any vessel that did not exceed a draught of 14 feet could come close to the wharf. The wharf was covered so that any fish landed could be split and cleaned, even in adverse weather conditions. This building could also be used for drying nets. Attached to it was a slate-covered salt store. The whole wharf was big enough for the coopers and curers to perform their work under cover. By 1791 cod, ling and herring were cured at Loch Torridon. Close to the wharf was the curing house, 20 feet broad, 80 to 90 feet long, and 20 feet high. It was divided into five stories that could be accessed by moveable stepladders. The ground floor was used for storing herring barrels, and the upper stories were used for drying cod and ling. More than 3,000 fish could be spread and dried at a time. To let in air for circulation the side walls consisted of wooden panels that could be opened and shut according to the weather. The walls of the wharf and the curing house were made of wood, but Thomson proposed to replace them with

Fisheries Society. The Society, however, was not legally entitled to purchase private companies. Moreover, the Directors of the Society were not impressed when they visited the station in 1787. They had an unfavourable opinion of its situation because of its distance from the fishing grounds and the barren nature of Loch Torridon. Additionally, they were very critical of the fact that all the buildings were constructed from wood. All in all, Mactavish feared that the expenses for such stations might exceed the profits derived from them. See NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fos. 114-115. Nonetheless, he considered that the shed used for curing dried fish was a very useful improvement with regard to the wet climate of the west coast. For further examples of fishing stations built by private companies and gentlemen, after the model of the fishing villages of the British Fisheries Society, see Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 96-97. These private initiatives prove that the schemes that were centred on fishing villages and had been developed by James Anderson and John Knox had a huge impact beyond the activities of the British Fisheries Society. Many landowners on the north-west coast copied the idea and built (with varying success) their own fishing stations or fishing villages.

⁶² Knox, *Tour*, pp. 214-215. This method of curing cod and ling was similar to that of curing stockfish in Norway.

ones of stone and lime. He also recommended slate or heather roofs. Despite his proposals for improvement, Thomson considered these buildings well constructed and worthy of imitation.⁶³

In contrast to his appraisal for this private initiative, Thomson was critical of the fishing villages that had been founded in 1788 by the British Fisheries Society. Although he did not have any first-hand experience of the villages founded at Tobermory (Mull) and Ullapool, he considered the scheme adopted by the British Fisheries Society to be half-hearted.⁶⁴ He felt that if the Society was confined to building villages, it would contribute little to the promotion of fishing. He also argued that the Society had to provide their tenants and prospective settlers with boats, nets, hooks, lines, salt and casks, as these people were too poor to purchase such necessary equipment on their own. He considered the storing of such equipment in the Society's villages, where it could be purchased by the tenants at moderate prices, as a step in the right direction.⁶⁵

Thomson's most severe criticism was directed at the government and its taxation of salt and coal. He argued that the British fish curers could not compete

⁶³ See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 101-106. See also the drawings of these buildings in the appendix no. 10. A similar station for curing cod and ling had been built around 1782 at Loch Gairloch by Sir Hector Mackenzie, but in contrast to the one at Loch Torridon it seems to have been poorly managed, at least in the early years. John Knox visited the station at Loch Gairloch in 1786 and noted that huge amounts of fish were rotting in the sheds. The tenants delivered their catch only once or twice a week to the station, leaving the contractor with the unenviable task of salting the fish before it putrefied. Apart from paying a stipulated price to the fishermen, the contractor also paid Sir Hector Mackenzie about a halfpenny for each fish above a certain size. However, he also had great difficulty in selling the rotting fish, and one cargo was actually returned as unsaleable. Knox, therefore, proposed that the Torridon method of curing should also be applied at Gairloch. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 217-218. Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, a close friend of Sir Hector, provided a very different picture of the station's success and Sir Hector's role in it. His account (published in 1813) was influenced either by their friendship or, more likely, the dramatic improvement of the station's management. According to Sir George, Sir Hector provided the local fishermen with wood for boats and houses. Moreover, he often incurred losses by paying the fishermen the money owed to them by the fish curers without recovering it from the latter. Mackenzie was not subsidised by the government. According to Sir George, the people of Gairloch caught on average above 20,000 cod per year. See Mackenzie, *General View*, pp. 261-262. The *OSA*, vol. xvii, p. 400, stated the production at Gairloch at 30,000 to 40,000 cod per year. According to John Knox, 41 boats with a crew of four to six men each belonged to Loch Gairloch and landed 18,000 cod and 500 ling in February and March 1786 alone. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 218. There was a long tradition of catching and curing cod at Gairloch. Neilson reported (in 1755) that there was a fishing station on Longa Island near Gairloch. His informant, Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Gairloch, advised him that the fishermen of this station frequently caught and cured 20,000 cod in a season. See EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fo. 65.

⁶⁴ It must be remembered that Thomson had made his tour of the Highlands in 1785. His criticism was introduced between 1788 and 1791 in the second edition of his account.

⁶⁵ See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 100-101.

with the Dutch on foreign markets until they had free access to salt of the very best quality at reasonable prices. It will be remembered that a number of changes was made to the fishery laws in 1785 and 1786, but the complicated salt laws had been exempted from this liberalisation. Thomson regarded the restrictions on the manufacture of salt in Scotland 'not only to be highly impolitic, but partial and unjust, even to a degree of astonishment, to that part of the united kingdom'.⁶⁶ According to his analysis, the Dutch were able to refine salt to a higher purity than the English and Scots. As long as Dutch salt was superior to British, the British herring curers would be unable to sell their products on the European markets. Thomson was convinced that the Scottish curers could greatly improve the quality of their products once they were allowed to import, without any restrictions, raw (i.e. unrefined) rock salt from England. He criticised the Act passed in 1786 that allowed the import of refined English rock salt into Scotland for the sole purpose of curing fish, while the import of the raw material was still prohibited. He considered this restriction as the biggest obstacle to the progress of the Scottish fishing industry and, therefore, demanded its abolition. He also demanded that if parliament could not agree on a free import of raw rock salt from England into Scotland in general, then it should allow at least its import to places such as Port Seton to supply the area around the Firth of Forth, to Inverness to supply the Orkney and Shetland Islands, to Ayr and Campbeltown to supply the south-west coast, and to Oban, Stornoway (Lewis) and Tobermory (Mull) to supply the north-west coast. Thomson considered the import of raw rock salt from England as the key to success for the Scottish fishing industry. He explained that sea water on the coast of Scotland contained about three per cent salt. Consequently, the salt manufacturers had to evaporate 97 tons of fresh water out of 100 tons of sea water in order to obtain 3 tons of salt. In contrast, if they had the use of rock salt, they would be enabled, by dissolving this substance in sea water before boiling, to obtain 23 tons of salt out of 100 tons of this solution. To boil 3 tons of salt out of 100 tons of sea water, 48 tons of coal were needed, whereas from a solution of rock salt the manufacturers would be able to boil between 15 and 18 tons of salt with 48 tons of coal. Next to saving fuel and time, the salt boiled from dissolved rock salt also had a higher purity than salt boiled from sea water. Moreover, the great expense

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 107.

of manufacturing salt in Scotland was a huge incentive to the Irish to refine British rock salt and to smuggle it into Scotland. Finally, Thomson considered the restrictions on the import of raw rock salt from England to Scotland to be illegal. He claimed that the restriction, to refine English rock salt only within ten computed miles from the salt-pits in Cheshire or at places approved by parliamentary privilege, had been made before the Union of 1707 and could, therefore, not be applied to Scotland.⁶⁷ Apart from obvious fraud and smuggling, the financial impact of the current salt laws was devastating. Thomson claimed that the increased fisheries of Scotland now needed above 12,000 tons of salt per year. More than 9,000 tons, therefore, had to be imported annually from Portugal because the salt boiled from sea water in Scotland was not fit for curing fish. Thus between £25,000 and £30,000 sterling were annually spent on salt from Portugal. In his view, this expense could easily be saved. If the Scots were allowed to import raw rock salt from England, they would be able to manufacture salt of the highest quality at costs that were at least a quarter under the rate at which salt was currently imported from Portugal. Moreover, the Scottish fishing industry would not only become totally independent of foreign salt imports in time of war, but free importation of raw rock salt from England would also put an end to the smuggling of salt into Scotland by the Irish, who had English rock salt and coal free of duty.⁶⁸

Thomson's proposal to station 50 old warships or East Indiamen along the west coast as training vessels for the fisheries might be considered to have been as unrealistic as Anderson's scheme for settling 200,000 fishermen and craftsmen in planned fishing villages along the western seaboard. However, his criticism of the government, and particularly its taxation of salt, was quite justified. Finally, it is necessary to examine John Knox's analysis of the fisheries on the western seaboard and his proposals for their encouragement.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 106-111. This view, however, could only have referred to the period from the Union of 1707 until 1786, when the new legislation allowed the import of refined English rock salt to Scotland, but at the same time prohibited the import of raw rock salt.

⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

7.1.2.3. John Knox's proposals to encourage fisheries

In the mid-1780s John Knox was undoubtedly the leading promoter of fisheries in Scotland. His proposals and schemes were centred on the foundation of a string of fishing villages all along the western seaboard. He first expressed the idea of planned fishing villages, as the nucleus of an economic revival of the Highlands, in his *View*. In order to revive the Highland economy, he demanded the total abolition of any form of feudal aristocracy or subordination so that

every man, of whatever degree or profession, should be master of his own time in all seasons, whether at the height of the harvest, or the fisheries, without the interference of any superior whatever. This implies the erection of towns at convenient distances, and in the most eligible situations, on those extensive shores; which towns should be endued with all the privileges of royal boroughs, for the distribution of justice, as well as the conveniency of the inhabitants in whatever relates to trade, navigation, and fisheries.⁶⁹

He proposed that the government should appoint a committee of 'disinterested persons, having no connections in, or with the Highlands' that would enquire into the most suitable places for the foundation of new villages.⁷⁰ During their infancy each of the new villages would require a territorial revenue of £300 or upwards for the support of a clergyman, a free-school, a resident surgeon and a superintendent of the fisheries. Each village would have the following features: a quay for vessels of fifteen feet draught or upwards; a range of warehouses for casks, salt, nets, grain, meal, timber, kelp etc.; sheds for the persons employed in gutting, salting and curing fish; a market place; a corn-mill; a church and a glebe for the minister; a schoolhouse; a house and shop for an apothecary; a house for the superintendent of the fisheries; a public inn and a piece of common ground with a stone quarry free of charge for the inhabitants. Additionally, fifteen to twenty dwelling houses would be built for coopers, ship and house carpenters, net makers, blacksmiths and masons. To encourage these craftsmen to settle down in the new villages, they would be allowed to live in these houses free of rent. Each house would also have three little enclosures for a garden, for potatoes and for the support of a cow. After the full establishment of the village, these houses would become the property of the village as a future form of

⁶⁹ Knox, *View*, vol. ii, p. 434.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 434-435. This committee of 'disinterested' persons was necessary to prevent bribery, influence and partiality.

revenue. The villages would be exempted from taxes and excises upon coal and salt and would be given liberty to sell their herring to any vessel, irrespective of the qualification for the bounty. Knox reckoned that the foundation of such a village, including the quay and the above-listed buildings, would cost £10,000. He proposed, altogether, the construction of eight such villages. Including endowment and the expenses for the completion of the Forth-Clyde Canal, the construction of the Crinan Canal and a canal from Inverness to Fort William, Knox reckoned the total costs of his scheme at £384,000.⁷¹ This expense, he reckoned, ‘would be repaid in a few years by the increase of trade, fishing, and navigation; besides opening new markets for English manufactures, and the increase of revenue thereby’.⁷² This scheme also included a number of regulations for the uniform outline of the streets and houses of these villages. Finally, Knox set out the locations at which the eight new villages should be built. These were at the planned Crinan Canal, Oban, Loch Sunart, Loch Urn (Loch Hourn),⁷³ Gareloch (Gairloch), Loch Ewe, Loch Broom and Loch Laxford.⁷⁴ The suitability of these places for new villages was backed by the charts and accounts of Mr Mackenzie.⁷⁵

However, by 1786 Knox was pursuing a different strategy. In March 1786, in a lecture to a Committee of the Highland Society, he outlined the most favourable method for the investment of Society funds in the promotion of fisheries on the western seaboard. A few months later, the lecture was published under the title *A Discourse On The Expediency Of Establishing Fishing Stations, Or Small Towns, In The Highlands Of Scotland And The Hebride Islands* (London, 1786).⁷⁶ Here Knox laid out his new scheme. He proposed:

⁷¹ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 435-438. He estimated the costs for the construction of a canal from Inverness to Fort William at £164,000 and for the Crinan Canal at £60,000. See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 432-433.

⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 438.

⁷³ In the previous editions of his *View* Knox had proposed the building of a fishing village at Bernera, but this location was dropped in the 3rd edition in favour of Loch Hourn as a more suitable location. See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 684.

⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 442-469. Knox’s recommendation of Loch Laxford (Sutherland) as a suitable site for a new village between Loch Broom and Cape Wrath was entirely based on Mackenzie’s favourable account of that place.

⁷⁵ Knox had no doubt about the accuracy of the nautical charts prepared by Mackenzie. James Anderson, however, was engaged in an acrimonious dispute with Mackenzie about the reliability and usefulness of his charts. Knox defended Mackenzie and attacked Anderson’s ‘Report to the Lords of the Treasury’ in May 1785. For Knox’s remarks on Anderson’s ‘Report’ see Knox, *View*, vol. ii, pp. 670-703. See also chapter 7.1.3.

⁷⁶ [hereafter: Knox, *Discourse*]

To put these extensive and valuable shores in a situation for prosecuting the fisheries effectually, and at all seasons of the year, FORTY fishing stations, or small towns, will be necessary, *in the first instance*; being only one station for every twenty-five miles, on a coast of one thousand miles, and for every five thousand people, who reside on that coast, besides those who inhabit the interior country, the younger part of whom would soon become regular fishers.⁷⁷

In each of these villages, which were to be erected all along the coastline from Arran to Dornoch, buildings would be needed for all sorts of craftsmen and professions as listed in his *View* the year before. Each village would consist of 16 large houses at £80 each and 20 small houses at £25 each. For a public well, paving, and other incidental expenses, Knox reckoned £220 per village. Thus the expenditure for each village of 36 houses would be £2,000, amounting to a total of £80,000 for the scheduled 40 villages.⁷⁸ As the government was unlikely to provide the money, he recommended that this sum should be raised by individual subscription. After the villages had been successfully established, the new tenants would be able to pay a small yearly rent, providing the subscribers with a return of three to four per cent in an average year. Later the houses could be sold and the principal investment repaid.⁷⁹ Again, Knox proposed that every house should have an acre of land attached to it on which the tenants could raise vegetables and potatoes. He reckoned that for each of these villages a minimum of 50 Scots acres of land would be required. To encourage subscriptions from private investors, the government should subsidise in these villages the construction of customs houses and quays. In such circumstances the local landowners would be happy to cooperate with the government and to support the new settlers. Knox was convinced that if his proposals were followed, the United Kingdom would profit as a whole. The encouragement of fisheries on the western seaboard would not only train thousands of seamen for the navy, but it would also

prove a source of great national wealth; furnish the West India ships with freights; employ thousands of indigent people of both sexes; and bring forward into the line of active, useful industry, a country that composes a fifth-part of Great Britain.⁸⁰

He was aware that the government was unlikely to finance the proposed scheme, and he appealed, therefore, for subscriptions from the members of the Highland Society.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 36.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Again, Knox claimed, their subscriptions would be of benefit to the whole country. The increased number of seamen would considerably reduce the risk of war, and, consequently, trade and commerce would flourish in the British Empire. Investing in the fishing villages would in the long term save up to £100,000,000 sterling, which would relieve the war budget and lessen the tax burden.⁸¹ In Knox's view, the new villages might prove one day to be 'as walls of brass for the defence of this highly favoured and justly celebrated island'.⁸²

Knox's change of strategy is rather surprising and begs one huge question. In the initial scheme of 1785 Knox proposed the establishment of eight new fishing villages at a cost of £10,000 each. A year later, he proposed 40 new fishing villages at a cost of £2,000 each, without changing the specifications for the necessary buildings or the outline of the villages. Nor was there a reduction in the number of dwellings and buildings that were required for the future settlers and manufacturers. In both schemes the money had to be put up in advance, as the prospective settlers did not have the financial resources for the necessary investments. So, if the planned villages were identical, how was Knox going to build these settlements in 1786 for only a fifth of the original expense calculated the year before? Unfortunately, he did not provide the answer for this 'miraculous' reduction of construction costs.⁸³

Knox's tour of the Highlands and Hebrides in 1786 on behalf of the British Fisheries Society gives a vivid impression of the task that lay ahead of the Society. He complained about the lack of customs houses along the western seaboard which caused the busses and bounty ships to make great diversions. For example, Oban and Ullapool were the only two customs houses on the mainland coast between the Mull of Kintyre and Thurso on the Pentland Firth.⁸⁴ Moreover, the one at Ullapool, though ideally situated for the white fish fishery (cod, plaice, haddock) in the open ocean and the herring fishery in the lochs, did not have the authority to clear out bounty

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 20-22. That Britain needed a strong navy to protect its colonies and trade was one of Knox's favourite arguments for the encouragement of the fisheries. He elaborated this argument once again in his 'Dissertations On The Ancient And Modern State Of The Highlands, And The Hebride Isles', which is prefixed to his *Tour*. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. clxvi-clxix.

⁸² Knox, *Discourse*, p. 39.

⁸³ For further fundamental deficiencies in this scheme see chapter 7.1.3.

⁸⁴ A customs house was not built at Oban until the early 1760s. Before its construction the nearest customs house was at Fort William. See Pococke, *Tours*, pp. 71, 74.

vessels.⁸⁵ He also reported a widespread lack of salt among the common Highlanders, even at the height of the herring season, which prevented curing of their catches. A number of these fishermen had died as a result of consuming ill-preserved fish. This was due to a lack of salt.⁸⁶ Knox also visited the private fishing station on the Isle Martin at the main entrance to Loch Broom that was run by Mr Woodhouse of Liverpool. This man had invested £5,000 in buildings for curing red herring. Despite this investment and the employment of a number of local fishermen, he had been so handicapped by the administration of the salt laws by the collector of the customs house at Ullapool that he decided to give up and to withdraw his capital.⁸⁷ Only after he had advertised his buildings for sale, was the collector of customs at Ullapool dismissed by the Commissioners of the Customs at Edinburgh. Upon this news Mr Woodhouse withdrew his advertisements and continued his business to the great benefit of himself and the local fishermen and labourers on the coast.⁸⁸ The private fishing company at Culag on Loch Inver had also been seriously disadvantaged by the collector of the customs house at Ullapool. In 1775 Mr Joseph Bacon, of Douglas in the Isle of Man, and Mr Donald Ross, his local partner, had constructed a large curing house. Mr Ross had invested nearly 2,500 guineas in the business, but he was now out of pocket. He laid some of the blame for his failure on 'the vexatious trouble' with salt at the hands of the same collector at Ullapool.⁸⁹ This trouble ended up in court and was settled narrowly in favour of the collector. At the

⁸⁵ See Knox, *Tour*, p. 231. Vessels on the bounty had to clear out at either Oban or Stornoway (Lewis).

⁸⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 87-88, 91-92, 114, 162-164, 247-248.

⁸⁷ The nearest customs house to Isle Martin was Stornoway. Woodhouse applied successfully to the Commissioners of Customs for a collector and a surveyor stationed at Isle Martin. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 41-42.

⁸⁸ See Knox, *Tour*, p. 236. In 1787 the Directors of the British Fisheries Society visited Isle Martin. One of them reported that Mr Woodhouse's overseer was in constant residence and that there was also a collector and comptroller of customs on the island. Busses, however, could still not clear out from the island for fishing. According to the Director, Mr Woodhouse bought the fish from the country people for five shillings per thousand, although he had also some boats and nets of his own. The Highlanders working for him were allowed to settle down and to cultivate the land on Isle Martin and a neighbouring island free of rent. The Director reckoned their number at 50 and characterised them as most industrious. If extra hands were needed, they were brought in from the mainland. According to the Director, Mr Woodhouse could cure 7,000 barrels of herring a year, each containing from 600 to 800 fish. See Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. ix, pp. 118-119. The existence of a customs house and the flourishing state of Woodhouse's curing station on Isle Martin were surely factors that contributed to the Directors' decision to build a fishing settlement at Loch Broom instead of Loch Ewe.

⁸⁹ Knox, *Tour*, p. 245.

time of Knox's visit, Ross and Bacon were trying to transfer their four-acre feu, including its buildings.⁹⁰ Knox feared that, once the company changed hands, hundreds of local Highlanders would lose their vital income and would be forced to leave their land. He reported that Mr Ross was not only the sole employer in the area, but he also supplied the locals with oatmeal and barley on credit. The fishermen paid back these advances in money or fish. At the time of Knox's visit, these people had fallen greatly behind in their payments, and Mr Ross was owed £359 by 162 individual tenants. Knox reckoned that altogether 972 people were dependent on Mr Ross. He feared that should Mr Ross quit his business, due to his trouble with the customs officer at Ullapool, 'many families must abandon their native country, unless some effectual measures shall be adopted for their relief, from another quarter'.⁹¹

Moreover, Knox reported of growing tensions between the Highlanders who lived along the coast and the fishermen of the herring-busses. The latter accused the Highlanders of the night-time cutting or stealing of nets and buoys.⁹² On the other hand, the crofters made serious allegations against the fishermen. Since the mid-1750s there were repeated complaints by the farmers on the shores of Loch Hourn and Loch Broom that the crews of the herring-busses cured their catch on the verge of the grassland, cut wood indiscriminately or walked over their fields in large numbers, thus destroying the grass for cattle.⁹³ The problems between crofters and

⁹⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 245.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 247. In 1790 the station was sold to the fish curer Donald MacDonald. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 96. Mr Ross's withdrawal did not lead to an immediate emigration of large parts of the local population. The fishing station was situated at Culag near Lochinver in the parish of Assynt. Knox reckoned (in 1786) the population of that parish at 2,500. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 246. In 1794 the parish was surveyed for the *Statistical Account*, and its population was given at c. 3,000. See *OSA*, vol. xviii, p. 309. Culag was close to the boundary of the parish of Lochbroom. Knox computed (in 1786) the number of people living around Loch Broom at 1,000 and the number of people living around Little Loch Broom at 500. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 232. The parish of Lochbroom was surveyed in 1792-93, and its population was given at 3,500. According to Dr Webster's survey (in 1755), the parish had a population of 2,211. See *OSA*, vol. xvii, p. 555. Mr Ross's fishing station must have employed tenants in both parishes, and there was no decline in population figures for either parish after his withdrawal from the business. However, the sharp rise in population figures for the parish of Lochbroom up to 1792 was mainly due to the new fishing village, which had been built at Ullapool between 1788 and 1792 and which attracted a huge influx of new settlers. If Mr Ross's successor had laid off local fishermen and labourers at Culag, they would have easily found new employment at Ullapool. The foundation of a new fishing village at Ullapool by the British Fisheries Society was based on Knox's recommendation, and it was surely the 'effectual measures ... from another quarter' Knox had pleaded for in 1786.

⁹² See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 88-89, 94.

⁹³ See Smith, *Jacobite Estates*, p. 161.

professional fishermen had a long history, and Thomson also pointed to the lack of bailies for the supervision of the fisheries on the western seaboard. The quarrels among the fishermen themselves, however, were even worse. The local boat fishermen accused the herring-busses of scaring away the herring from the lochs. This was a very serious allegation as it was commonly believed that the herring shoals might remain in one loch for several weeks, provided they were not disturbed during the first days. The herring-busses, however, did not want to waste time when the shoals had entered a loch, as it was easy for them to follow the shoals to the next loch if they moved on. The boat fishermen, however, did not have that mobility and were, therefore, keen not to disturb the shoals during the first days of their arrival. On top of that, boat fishermen and herring-busses blamed each other for stealing the other's catch and destroying nets, buoys and other equipment.⁹⁴ By the mid-1780s the lawlessness and disorder that surrounded the herring fishery on the west coast seems to have reached intolerable levels. In Knox's view, the establishment of fishing villages with resident superintendents or bailies would undoubtedly contribute to a tougher supervision and policing of the herring fleets.

Having finished his survey of the fisheries on the western seaboard, Knox submitted his proposals for the appropriate locations of fishing villages to the British Fisheries Society. He had earmarked altogether 29 locations for these new fishing villages.⁹⁵ Fourteen of these villages were to be built on the west coast of the mainland Highlands, whereas fifteen new villages would be founded in the Hebrides.⁹⁶ The locations on the mainland coast were at West Loch Tarbert (Argyllshire), at **Crinan** or **Lochgilphead** (Argyllshire), **Oban** (Argyllshire), 'Lochnanuach' (Loch Nan Uamh, Inverness-shire), **Berneria** in Glenelg (Inverness-shire), Loch Duich (Ross-shire), Loch Carron or the Bay of Plock (Bay of Plockton, Loch Carron, (Ross-shire)), Loch Torridon (Ross-shire), Loch Gairloch (Ross-shire), **Loch Ewe** (Ross-shire), Little Loch Broom (Ross-shire), **Loch Broom** (Ross-shire),

⁹⁴ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 122. The allegation that the herring-busses on the bounty scared away the shoals from the lochs was confirmed by the complaints of the Ross-shire and Sutherland gentlemen to Matthew Culley in 1775. See note 38.

⁹⁵ This figure shows that Knox had finally abandoned his initial scheme of building eight new fishing villages in favour of his far more ambitious scheme of 40 new villages as outlined in 1786.

⁹⁶ Knox divided the importance of the fishing villages in several categories. The places given here in bold type were the stations that Knox considered the most eminent.

Loch Inver (Ross-shire) and **Loch Laxford** or **Loch Inchard** (Sutherland).⁹⁷ In the Hebrides new fishing villages would be built at ‘Loch Dalgaül, or the Harbour of the Small Isles’ (Small Isles, Jura), Ramsay Bay (Port Ramsay, Lismore), **Tobermory** (Mull), Loch Lye (Skye),⁹⁸ ‘Kirkabul Bay’ (Kirkapol Bay, Tiree), ‘Irin’ (Coll),⁹⁹ Canna (Canna), **Loch Bracadale** (Skye), Loch Bay (Skye), Portree (Skye), ‘Elen Oransay’¹⁰⁰ (Skye), **Loch Boisdale**, **Loch Eynort** or **Loch Skipport** (all South Uist), Loch Eport or Loch Maddy (both North Uist), Tarbert (Harris) and Loch Roag (Lewis).¹⁰¹ Knox’s recommendation of these locations was based on a number of factors: their advantage with regard to the fisheries; the harbours and the convenience of general navigation; the number of people in the vicinity of these lochs or harbours; the communication with the hinterland; rivers, or fresh water; and the supply of fuel, limestone and freestone.¹⁰²

During his tour of the Highlands and Hebrides, Knox not only inspected locations for new fishing villages, but he also collected £4,775 of subscription money for the British Fisheries Society. By May 1787 the capital of the Society had risen to £25,000.¹⁰³ This was a considerable sum of money, but it was far below the estimate of £80,000 that was required for Knox’s ambitious building programme.

The various schemes that were laid out to the public to promote the fisheries were often contradictory. It was left to parliament to reform the fishery laws, and to the British Fisheries Society to decide on the best way in which to apply its funds. It is now necessary to examine, briefly, the controversy between James Anderson and

⁹⁷ See Knox, *Tour*, p. 275. The town of Oban was of particular importance to Knox’s plans. He wanted Oban to become the central harbour for the fisheries and trade in the southern Highlands. Due to its natural harbour, he also considered Oban the ideal location for a royal dockyard and a magazine for the navy. See *ibid.*, pp. 44-47.

⁹⁸ Knox gave this place as ‘Loch Lye, Sky’. *Ibid.*, p. 276. He named the Duke of Argyll as proprietor of the ground. The Duke of Argyll had no property on Skye. Knox listed the locations from south to north, and it is most likely that he meant Loch Buie on Mull. Knox listed also Loch Bracadale, Loch Bay, Portree and Isleornsay erroneously as being on the island of Canna instead of the Isle of Skye. Knox’s knowledge of Highland geography and his spelling of Gaelic place names were sometimes slightly confused, as he was neither a native of the Highlands nor a Gaelic speaker.

⁹⁹ It is most likely that Knox referred to Loch Eatharna near Arinagour (Coll).

¹⁰⁰ This place should be Isleornsay, a village near the tiny island of Oransay, off the east coast of Sleat (Skye). Knox’s attribution of this place to Canna was wrong (see above), but his reference to Lord MacDonalld as the proprietor made sense.

¹⁰¹ See *ibid.*, p. 276.

¹⁰² See *ibid.*, pp. 273-274.

¹⁰³ See *ibid.*, appendix, p. [104].

John Knox. Although they were the leading writers on fishery policy in the mid-1780s, their public attitudes could not have been more different.

7.1.3. The Knox versus Anderson controversy

One would assume that Dr James Anderson and John Knox would have cooperated in their attempts to revive the economy of the western seaboard. They both considered an extension of the fisheries as the most appropriate means, but instead of combining their efforts for a common purpose, they argued and quarrelled viciously in public about each other's scheme.

The final section of Knox's *View*¹⁰⁴ included a response to Dr Anderson's *Account*. Knox accused Anderson of not having spent enough time in the Hebrides and not having spoken to the local proprietors about the possibilities of establishing fishing villages on their land. He dismissed Anderson's scheme to settle 200,000 people along the western seaboard as unrealistic. He ridiculed:

Then follows some plans of premiums to individual families in the Highlands, by which "5000l. a year, thus applied, would settle annually 2000 families, or 10,000 persons – this continued for 20 years, would amount to 200,000 persons, not to take into the account the increase by natural procreation." Probably another 200,000, provided the doctor shall send requisite annual supplies of provisions from the moon or elsewhere, for such a body of people in a desert country.¹⁰⁵

Knox also dismissed the premiums proposed by Anderson and argued that the management and supervision of this subsidy would require too many inspectors, whose salaries would exceed the £3,500 laid out for premiums. However, Knox's estimate was grossly exaggerated.¹⁰⁶

In order to get to the heart of the controversy, it is necessary to leave the level of polemic and vicious allegations and to examine the fundamental differences in

¹⁰⁴ See 'Remarks on sundry Passages in Dr. Anderson's Report to the Lords of the Treasury, and his subsequent Evidence and Dissertations before the Committee on the British Fisheries, May 1785', in Knox, *View*, vol. ii, pp. 670-703. Unfortunately, Knox's vicious attacks and personal allegations against Anderson did not contribute to a productive and scientific debate about their differences of approach in promoting the fishing industry. At one point Knox claimed even that Anderson would not hesitate to blow up the Paps of Jura or the Cuillin Hills on Skye in order to make the weather more favourable to farmers. See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 693-694. Such allegations were, of course, utterly ridiculous.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 691-692.

¹⁰⁶ Knox reckoned that 1,000 additional inspectors at £20 salary each would be required to manage the system of premiums proposed by Anderson. See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 692.

their proposals. Knox was particularly critical of Anderson's ambivalent and sometimes contradictory attitude on the duration of public subsidies for the fisheries, and this seems to have been at the heart of their controversy.¹⁰⁷

Anderson had explained to the Fishery Committee of the House of Commons that he considered bounties and premiums to be only of secondary importance in promoting the fisheries on the western seaboard. In his view, the main objective was

to bring the people of those distant regions from that dispersed situation in which they now live, into close communities, where they can exercise commerce and arts, and mutually give and receive aid from the industrious exertions of each other. Unless this be first done, he [Anderson] conceives it is altogether impossible ever to make the fisheries on our coast be a matter of great importance, or to bring the fish to market so cheap as to enable the undertakers to go on without public aid. From this consideration, he conceives, that till such measures are adopted, bounties and premiums for the fisheries must be accounted in a great measure an useless expenditure of the national treasure, which he should not be willing, unless in particular circumstances, to advise.¹⁰⁸

Anderson reckoned that once the new fishing settlements were fully established, the villagers would be able to run the fisheries without any further support from public subsidies as they could sell their catch to the other inhabitants of the villages.¹⁰⁹ In the meantime the tonnage bounty could be gradually withdrawn while a variety of performance-related premiums could be paid to encourage industry and competition among the different fishing villages and boats.¹¹⁰ The continuation of performance-related bounties contradicted Anderson's assertion that the fishing settlements would be able to operate without public subsidies, but it made perfect sense to encourage industry. Moreover, with a budget of £3,500 these premiums were far cheaper than the tonnage bounty. However, there was no clear timetable for the withdrawal of the tonnage bounty.

It is rather surprising that Knox's scheme was so similar to Anderson's. He, too, aimed at the foundation of fishing villages that would be able to support themselves once they had reached a certain size and had established themselves as

¹⁰⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 691.

¹⁰⁸ Anderson, *Account*, pp. 258-259. Anderson extracted these passages from the 'Third Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to enquire into the State of the British Fisheries, 14 July 1785'. Anderson is referred to as 'he'.

¹⁰⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 309, 312-313.

¹¹⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 298, 312-313. Anderson proposed premiums for the ten most successful boats (over fifteen tons) that had caught the greatest value of fish in proportion to the size of the boat and the crew, and the best sorted and cured specimen of British-caught white herring. See *ibid.*, pp. 285-286, 288, 294-297, 302.

market places for their hinterland. Even in respect of the bounty, Anderson's and Knox's positions were not far apart. Knox, too, considered the tonnage bounty an expensive and inefficient way of subsidising the herring fisheries. However, despite his objections to the tonnage bounty, he made no plea for a performance-related bounty. He considered such a bounty too risky because of the unpredictability of the herring shoals. He also feared that it might favour fraud and abuse.¹¹¹

In fact, Anderson's and Knox's schemes were not very different. The underlying idea was the same. Both wanted to establish fishing settlements that would serve as market places for the villagers and the surrounding countryside. Both wanted the small-boat fishery to be included in the existing system of subsidies so that its catch could also be marketed. Although Knox considered Anderson's estimate of the settlement of 200,000 people on the western seaboard as totally unrealistic, his concept of 30 to 40 new fishing villages was no less grandiose. Anderson's ambivalence and contradictions in respect of the continuation of public subsidies to the fisheries were undoubtedly matched by Knox's calculation for the construction of five times as many villages as had originally been scheduled, still at the initial expense of £80,000.

Moreover, both concepts suffered from the same fundamental weakness. Both schemes were based on the assumption that the new fishing settlements would stimulate demand, thus creating their own markets, which would then attract further settlers. Creating a demand for products for which there was no previous requirement was a huge risk. Next to the establishment of a fishing trade, the success of the settlements depended entirely on a huge influx of new settlers, such as blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, shoemakers, weavers, butchers, millers, bakers, brewers and merchants, who then created the demand and market for each other's products and services. In Knox's scheme the fishing villages would also serve as market towns for the area. Regular fairs were to be held at which the local farmers and fishermen could sell their products to the town people and to merchants from all parts of Britain.¹¹² However, once the influx of new settlers came to a halt, the economy and settlement would stagnate. If new settlers did not arrive in sufficient numbers, or if

¹¹¹ See Knox, *View*, vol. i, pp. 248-251.

¹¹² See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 442-444.

foreign merchants stayed away, then there was no market for the local products, and the settlements were doomed to fail. Moreover, the Highlanders had always been self-supporting. They grew their own crops, caught their own fish, produced their own household goods and made their own clothing and brogues. It was difficult to persuade these people to settle down in the new fishing villages, to pursue a single trade or to purchase life's necessities from other people in a complete reversal of their normal behaviour. Finally, there was always the incentive to emigrate and to continue the old subsistence way of life in North America.¹¹³

Although Anderson and Knox were often at odds, their schemes were similar, and neither of them seems to have spent sufficient time in finding a solution for the problems that would inevitably arise when the planned villages did not grow fast enough to be economically viable. This problem will have to be kept in mind for the discussion of the economic development of the planned villages that were built according to Knox's proposals by the British Fisheries Society in the late 1780s.

It is, after all, difficult to find any substantial reasons for Knox's vicious allegations against Anderson, apart from their involvement in the controversy about the accuracy of Mackenzie's sea charts and their disagreement about whether to build first the canal from Fort William to Inverness or from Crinan to Loch Fyne. Both men were experts on Highland fisheries. The promotion of the fishing industry was one of the most prestigious projects of its time, and it might have been hard for Knox to accept that Anderson's scheme and proposals for reform, which he considered half-hearted or unworkable, had been debated by parliament. The reform of the fishery laws in 1785-86 was mainly based on Anderson's recommendations. Damaged pride might have contributed to Knox's dislike of Anderson. The less the fundamental differences are, the more people tend to focus on minor issues, and Knox undoubtedly elevated minor disagreements with Anderson to matters of principle. When the money to promote the fisheries was made available by the British Fisheries Society, Knox was commissioned to survey the western seaboard and to recommend suitable locations for the foundation of new fishing villages.

¹¹³ The British Fisheries Society was made aware of the Highlanders' way of life by the local landowners. The Society tried to solve this matter by giving the settlers in its villages a small stretch of land on which they could grow their own food. Thus they tried to combine life in a fishing village with the 'independence' of a crofter's life. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 52.

However, he died in 1790, with the fruits of his work still in infancy at the first two settlements at Tobermory and Ullapool. It is now necessary to examine briefly the way in which Knox's recommendations were put into practice by the British Fisheries Society and how the proposed fishing settlements developed.

7.1.4. The British Fisheries Society Directors' tour of the western seaboard in 1787 and the construction of fishing villages at Tobermory, Ullapool and Lochbay

In July 1786 the British Fisheries Society was incorporated, and one month later its various officers were elected. The Duke of Argyll was elected Governor, and the Earl of Breadalbane was chosen as deputy Governor.¹¹⁴ By May 1787 the Society had collected £25,000 in subscriptions, and it was decided to start with two new fishing villages on the western seaboard. One settlement should be south of the Isle of Skye and the other north of it. Preliminary decisions about the locations were taken on 18 May 1787 so that the committee of Directors could inspect these places on their forthcoming tour of the western seaboard.

In the south Tobermory (Mull) and its excellent natural harbour seemed to be the obvious choice. Moreover, the land belonged to the Duke of Argyll who was happy to offer it at a reasonable price to the Society. The search for a suitable location in the north proved to be more difficult. After a process of elimination, the Society came up with two possible locations, one at Loch Broom and the other at Loch Ewe (both Ross-shire).¹¹⁵ The main criteria for this future village were its proximity to the great lochs of the north-west coast and its distance from Stornoway (Lewis), where there were already a customs house and a fishing trade.¹¹⁶ The decision about which of the two places to choose was left to the committee of Directors. In June 1787 the Directors set out for their tour in order to inspect the

¹¹⁴ For an abstract of the Act of Incorporation and the list of the Directors and other officers see *ibid.*, pp. 209-211. The Governor, his deputy, the Directors, the Auditors and the Secretary were re-elected on 26 March 1787.

¹¹⁵ Tobermory, Loch Broom and Loch Ewe had all been recommended by Knox for fishing settlements of the most eminent category.

¹¹⁶ The Directors decided against establishing a new fishing village on the Outer Hebrides because the transport and construction costs were particularly high and the fishing trade was already fully established at Stornoway. See *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

proposed locations and to consult the local landowners.¹¹⁷ Having seen both lochs, the Directors finally decided for Loch Broom. There were three main reasons that weighted in favour of Loch Broom. Firstly, none of the three suitable harbours at Loch Ewe was for sale. Secondly, Loch Broom had a unique reputation for the regularity of herring shoals.¹¹⁸ Thirdly, there was already some infrastructure, such as a customs house, in place, and the locals had experience in the fishing and curing trade that had been established by Mr Woodhouse in 1775 at Isle Martin at the entrance to Loch Broom. The fact that the linen manufacturing station built by the Board of Manufactures in 1755 at Inverlael at the head of Loch Broom had been a failure obviously did not deter the Directors of the British Fisheries Society from investing at Loch Broom again.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ The committee was made up of the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Breadalbane, Sir Adam Fergusson, George Dempster, Isaac Hawkins Browne and Francis Humberstone Mackenzie of Seaforth. It was during this tour that the Directors were formally offered land for purchase on Canna by its proprietor MacDonald of Clanranald. The Directors did not immediately respond to the offer, and when it was repeated a year later to Lord Mountstuart, it was combined with the threat that non-acceptance would result in the eviction of the subtenants and the establishment of a sheep walk. As it was well known that it was one of the Society's prime aims to prevent emigration, Clanranald's behaviour can be interpreted as an attempt to force the Society to accept his offer. See chapter 6.3.3. However, when the Directors met Clanranald in 1787, they had already decided on Tobermory as the most suitable location for a settlement south of Skye. It would have been easy to inform him that Canna was not considered as a location for one of the first two fishing villages, but that it was still in the race for a later settlement. See Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. viii, p. 178. In 1788 Clanranald obviously wanted to speed up that decision. It seems that neither Clanranald nor the Directors were totally frank with each other. In 1789 George Dempster approached Clanranald again about the purchase of land for a fishing station on Canna. However, the land that was destined for the British Fisheries Society was leased to the local tacksman, Hector MacNeill, whose lease was to run for another twelve years. The negotiations between the Society, Clanranald and MacNeill finally broke down in 1791 because they could not agree on compensation for the tacksman, nor the price of the land. Despite its favourable location, Canna was thereafter no longer considered by the Society for a fishing settlement. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 90-91. In Knox's scheme Canna was not considered an eminent site. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 276. He did not visit the island in 1786. John Lanne Buchanan blamed the Directors entirely for the breakdown of the negotiations and absolved Clanranald from any blame. See Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 152-154.

¹¹⁸ The only other place in Scotland with a similar reputation for huge herring shoals was Loch Fyne in Argyll. All travellers confirmed that the loch was full of herring boats during the season. An unidentified traveller in 1794 reckoned their number at 3,000 and reported that 60,000 barrels of herring were salted and exported to the West Indies, in addition to the huge amounts cured by the locals for their own use. See NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278, no pagination. See entry for 14 August 1794. According to John Henry Michell, in 1794 the herring fishery on Loch Fyne was valued at £30,000. See Michell, *Tour*, pp. 87-88. See also Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 219-221, for his account of the herring fishery on Loch Fyne. However, the herring fishery was totally reliant on shoal migrations, and there were years in which the herring did not appear at all in the lochs on the Scottish west coast.

¹¹⁹ It is interesting to note that James Bailey, who was then on his way to Skye, met Mrs Dempster, who was travelling to Dunrobin Castle in Sutherland to meet her husband, George Dempster MP, at Fochabers. She told Bailey that less than six weeks ago her husband and the Earl of Breadalbane had nearly drowned in their attempt to land on Staffa. Their vessel lost its masts in a storm and the

The final decision about the locations was taken by the Directors in 1788 on the recommendations made by the investigating committee. Although the Society began with the foundation of only two settlements at Tobermory and Ullapool, the choice of locations and the layout of the villages showed that they were modelled on the requirements stated by John Knox. The construction and development of Tobermory and Ullapool has been studied in detail by Jean Dunlop,¹²⁰ and it is sufficient to state here that in the long term the villages did not attract the numbers of settlers expected and struggled to establish themselves as market places for their hinterland. Moreover, building a planned village on a green field in the Highlands proved to be more difficult and more expensive than initially anticipated.

However, in the late 1780s the Society's enthusiasm was still unlimited, and some Directors were already planning the next settlements, which were to be on Canna and at Lochbay on Skye.¹²¹ The reasons for the Society's abandonment of its plans for Canna have already been discussed. It is interesting, however, to examine the development of the settlement at Lochbay because it epitomised the Society's difficulties and explains the reasons for the failure of the settlements on the west coast. As with Canna, the issue of an additional settlement at Lochbay was spearheaded by George Dempster. Canna and Lochbay had several factors in common that weighted heavily in favour of the construction of a fishing settlement.

Directors of the British Fisheries Society were lucky to make it back to Fort William. In consequence, Bailey abandoned his plan to visit Staffa and instead contented himself with a visit to Iona. See NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3294, fos. 322-324, and NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fos. 354-355. However, either Mrs Dempster or Bailey must have grossly exaggerated these perils as they were not mentioned in the accounts written by the unidentified Director of the British Fisheries Society or Lachlan Mactavish, who accompanied the Directors as a representative of the Board of Manufactures. Mactavish reported that the Directors intended to visit Staffa and Iona on Monday, 2 July, but the wind set in from the north-west with a heavy swell and prevented them that day from seeing either of the islands. On Wednesday, 4 July, the Directors got the use of the Bailie of Tiree's boat and visited both islands to their great advantage. See NAS, Mactavish, 'Journal 1787', GD9/1, fo. 96. In the end, according to Mactavish's account, there had been no hazard at all in this voyage, and the Directors had enjoyed every comfort during their 'cruise' of the western seaboard.

¹²⁰ For the construction of Ullapool from 1788 to 1790 see Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 46-65. For its further development until 1798 see *ibid.*, pp. 66-79. A particularly interesting account of Ullapool in 1797, and the method of curing red herring for the London market, can be found in Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, pp. 291-294. Clarke was shown around the smokehouses and reported that herring for the London market was smoked three times on wooden spits. Herring for continental sale was smoked up to five or six times in order to drain off more liquid. Clarke was also shown a vessel for transporting live cod, turbot and lobsters to London. For the construction of Tobermory see Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 80-87.

¹²¹ Knox had proposed the construction of four fishing settlements on Skye, but he considered only Loch Bracadale to be suitable for an eminent station. See Knox, *Tour*, p. 276.

Next to their proximity to the fishing grounds, Canna and Skye faced the immediate threat of emigration, and Dempster felt obliged to intervene on behalf of the Society in order to prevent the people from leaving their land. The Society acquired 1,000 acres at Lochbay including the farms of Stein and Lusta in 1790, but work on the settlement at Lochbay did not start before 1791. Trouble with various surveyors and contractors delayed work on the settlement until 1794. By then many Highlanders on Skye had lost confidence in the Society and their employees at Lochbay. Of the 34 people who had applied for lots in the settlement in October 1791, fifteen had withdrawn their applications by July 1792.¹²² By 1793 these and other problems seem to have nearly put an end to the young settlement. Many of the settlement's problems, however, seem to have been caused by the Society or its employees themselves. John Baine, of Edinburgh, surveyed the harbour at Lochbay and reported to Mr John Rennie, engineer,¹²³ in March 1793 that the houses that had been built at the new settlement were empty because the common Highlanders could not afford to pay the rent:

Three houses built here, each consisting of two apartments about 10, or 12 feet square and two Garrets over them in which, Sir, you could not stand upright, are let at a rent as great, if not greater than is given for equal accomodation in Edinburgh, or London. You will think £11, or eleven guineas an extravagant rent for two paltry rooms, good enough indeed for fishermen's houses; but it is not to be expected that a highland fisher [sic] can give such a rent. Mr Shaw at Dunvigan lays the blame upon a Mr Roy, who was agent for the Society at the time when these houses were erected, saying that he employed people in the depth of winter when they could hardly work. – Mr Shaw himself taking no charge farther than advancing money, and it seems the high rent is in consequence of the Sums expended upon the buildings, by this bad management.¹²⁴

Baine, therefore, proposed that the new settlers should be allowed to build their own huts and dwellings for a transitional period until they were in a position to afford better houses. In order to preserve the plan of the village, the settlers would have to confine their dwellings to a pattern of streets with their best lots reserved for those

¹²² See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 88. For the problems between the Society and the prospective settlers see also NMS, Baine, 'Journey', MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fos. 118-119. Baine was told (in 1792) that the settlers were idle and unwilling to pay for anything they received.

¹²³ Rennie had initially agreed to make the survey for the harbour at Lochbay, but he could not leave his work at the Crinan Canal. Baine replaced him as surveyor.

¹²⁴ NLS, J. Baine, 'A Report by Mr. Baine of his Survey of Loch Bay - To Mr. Rennie the Engineer - & given in by him to the Highland Society 6. May 1793', Adv. MS. 16.1.13, fo. 31r.

who boosted investment by building superior houses.¹²⁵ Work on the harbour, storehouse, schoolhouse and inn were resumed in 1794 and completed four years later. In 1798, 23 settlers had established themselves in the village, built their own huts or houses and begun to farm the strips of land allocated to them by the Society. The settlers at Lochbay had been given the same amount of land as the ones at Ullapool, but the quality of land at Lochbay was far better. Whereas the settlers at Ullapool had to go fishing to support themselves, the settlers at Lochbay could easily make a living from the land they had been given. Therefore, fishing for cod, ling and herring never really took off at Lochbay, and the settlement developed into a crofting community.¹²⁶

The struggle of Tobermory and Ullapool, and the failure of Lochbay, did not prevent the Society from building another fishing settlement in the early nineteenth century. But this time it was built on the Scottish east coast just to the south of Wick (Caithness), called Pulteneytown. It is ironic that its success finally led to the decision to abandon the settlements on the west coast that had been the initial focus of the Society's activities. The success of Pulteneytown, however, was no coincidence. The plans for Pulteneytown show, right from the beginning, that the Society had learnt its lesson from its failures on the west coast.

7.1.5. The foundation of Pulteneytown

The settlement at Pulteneytown was the last village built by the Society and the only one that became a commercial success. Until 1785 the fisheries on the east coast of Caithness had been neglected because of the rendezvous system. Most busses from the Scottish east coast were involved in the Shetland fisheries and, therefore, had to meet at Bressay Sound. After the beginning of the fishing season, the busses remained in the rich waters around the Shetland Islands. The abolition of the rendezvous system in 1785, on the recommendation of James Anderson, opened up

¹²⁵ See *ibid.*, fos. 31r.-31v. The initial problems of finding tenants for the buildings and settlers for the village at Lochbay were confirmed by John Lanne Buchanan. See Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 160-162.

¹²⁶ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, pp. 89-90. The failure to establish a fishing trade at Lochbay was also partly due to the lack of herring shoals in the Minch.

the sea east of Caithness, and the construction of a safe harbour became necessary.¹²⁷ An extension of the small natural harbour at Wick was recommended to the Society as early as 1790 by the engineer Thomas Telford, who had been surveying the east coast from Duncansby Head (Caithness) to Portmahomack (Ross-shire). The Directors had to choose from a number of places that were suitable for an extension of their harbour and the foundation of a fishing village, and it was not until 1803 that the Society signed the contract and bought 390 acres of land on the south side of the mouth of the River Wick. The new harbour at Pulteneytown was completed in 1811 and could accommodate 400 boats.¹²⁸ The decision for a harbour at Wick, and the foundation of Pulteneytown to the south of it, was clearly influenced by the Society's experience of the failure of its settlements on the west coast. The fishing villages at Tobermory, Ullapool and Lochbay had been built in scarcely populated places, and they had failed to attract a sufficient number of new settlers to establish themselves as economically independent and viable market towns. The Directors had realised that it was difficult to establish villages in places where there were neither sufficient people nor trade. They did not want to repeat their mistakes and decided to build the new fishing village just to the south of Wick because Wick had a sufficient population and had already established itself as a market place for the area.¹²⁹ Town lots for Pulteneytown were laid out in 1808, and between 1813 and 1819 its population rose from 300 to 1,174.¹³⁰ Moreover, Pulteneytown had a proper structure of settlers from all professional backgrounds. In contrast to the Society's settlements on the west coast, the new settlers were not part-time crofters and fishermen but had to dedicate themselves to one profession such as labourer, fisherman, cooper, blacksmith etc. Thus a high degree of specialisation was achieved among the settlers,

¹²⁷ Wick harbour was already seriously overcrowded by 1793, and there were urgent calls for a new harbour. See *OSA*, vol. xviii, pp. 247, 243.

¹²⁸ See Gray, *Fishing Industries*, p. 33. In 1806 parliament had granted the British Fisheries Society £7,500 towards the construction of the new harbour at Pulteneytown. In comparison to the fishing settlements on the west coast, Pulteneytown was mainly financed with public money. See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 159.

¹²⁹ In 1793 the population of the parish of Wick was reckoned at no less than 5,000. The population of the burgh of Wick was reckoned at 1,000. See *OSA*, vol. xviii, p. 253. The *OSA* recorded for the town of Wick 'about 12 shopkeepers, 9 or 10 shipmasters, 50 coopers, including apprentices, a few house, ship, and boat carpenters, together with masons, smiths, weavers, shoemakers, taylor, &c. sufficient for the size of the place'. *Ibid.*, vol. xviii, p. 256. Many of these tradesmen were occasionally employed as fishermen. At Ullapool, Tobermory and Lochbay most of these craftsmen had to be attracted from other places to settle down in the new fishing settlements.

¹³⁰ See Dunlop, *British Fisheries Society*, p. 161.

avoiding the crofting structure that had dominated the settlements on the west coast, and particularly Lochbay. One factor was of great significance in this: the better quality of the Caithness soil allowed local farms to provide the new settlers with a ready supply of cheap food. Fishermen and coopers earned enough to buy these provisions and did not depend on additional income from small-scale farming. Moreover, the Society took strict measures to prevent the emergence of a crofting structure at Pulteneytown by prohibiting the fishermen or coopers in the settlement from extending their small lots.¹³¹ These measures proved successful, and there was clear separation of fishermen from farmers. In the end, Pulteneytown was the only settlement where the British Fisheries Society achieved its initial aim in establishing a professional fishing trade and attracting a sufficient number of settlers from various professions for the creation of an independent and viable settlement. Moreover, it was the only establishment of the British Fisheries Society that could maintain itself from its rents and harbour dues. Its success finally led to the Society's abandoning the failed or struggling settlements on the west coast.¹³² When the Society faced a further extension of the harbour at Pulteneytown, it seemed to be a comfortable solution to raise the money by selling its other settlements. Lochbay was sold for £2,800 in 1838, Tobermory fetched £5,000 in 1844 and Ullapool was sold for £5,250 in 1848.¹³³

7.1.6. Contemporary criticism of the British Fisheries Society

It did not take long before the British Fisheries Society was severely criticised for its failure to make an impact on the western seaboard. John Lanne Buchanan, the disgraced missionary minister in the Outer Hebrides, put the blame mainly on John

¹³¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 160-161. It must be stressed that such restrictions would have been counterproductive in attracting new settlers to the fishing villages on the west coast. The Highlanders lived traditionally in farming communities and were only occasional fishermen. Many travellers claimed that the Highlanders were particularly suited for the fisheries and could, therefore, easily be trained to become professional fishermen. This, however, did not take into consideration the Highland farming mentality. This ethos was partly reflected in the amount of land that was purchased by the Society for its settlers at Pulteneytown: 390 acres of generally fertile land in comparison to 2,000 acres of less fertile ground at Tobermory, 1,600 acres at Ullapool and 1,000 acres at Lochbay. See *ibid.*, p. 158.

¹³² In the early nineteenth century the herring shoals began to appear less regularly on the west coast in favour of the east coast. This undoubtedly contributed to the Society's decision to refocus its efforts on Pulteneytown.

¹³³ See *ibid.*, p. 171.

Knox and the Directors.¹³⁴ He claimed that Knox did not understand enough about the fisheries in the Hebrides and dismissed his 1786 scheme as unrealistic.¹³⁵ He accused the Directors of negligence in putting their confidence (and their money) in Knox's proposals and having failed to take alternative locations into consideration. He considered Ullapool, Tobermory and Lochbay to be unsuitable places for fishing settlements. In his view, Loch Broom was not visited by any shoals apart from those in the herring season; Tobermory was too far away from the fishing grounds and was also unsuitable for a market or trading town; and the harbour at Lochbay was an unsafe landing when there were gales in the north-west. Moreover, at none of these places were the locals particularly experienced in fishing.¹³⁶ Buchanan also criticised the Society for wasting its money on the construction of over-elaborate houses for the prospective settlers. In his view, houses covered with straw or heather would have been good enough in the beginning, and the Society's funds would have been expended better on vessels and fishing tackle.¹³⁷ That the Directors had neglected the Outer Hebrides in their plans for fishing settlements was, in his opinion, a fateful mistake.¹³⁸ He was convinced that the fish around the Outer Hebrides were more plentiful and vastly superior in quality to any that could be found on the coasts of

¹³⁴ Buchanan and Knox had met at East Loch Tarbert (Harris) in the summer of 1786 when Knox had been visiting the western seaboard. West and East Loch Tarbert are divided only by a narrow isthmus of 600 or 700 yards, and Knox immediately realised the potential of these lochs for a safe harbour and a fishing settlement. Nonetheless, he did not recommend Tarbert for a station of the most eminent category. He recommended the construction of the main fishing settlement at one of the major lochs on the east side of South Uist. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 169-173, 276. See also Buchanan, *General View*, p. 156.

¹³⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 128, 130. Buchanan's criticism that Knox should have marked out the stations in the north first instead of beginning in the south, however, was wide of the mark. See *ibid.*, pp. 124-125. Knox's survey of the proposed settlements from south to north did not influence the priority of the settlements. In fact, Knox wanted to build more stations in Inverness-shire, Ross-shire and Sutherland than in Argyllshire. See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 275-276.

¹³⁶ See Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 145, 148-150, 146-147, 136, 158-164. Instead, he claimed, the Society should have invested at Eigg, Canna and South Uist. See *ibid.*, p. 239.

¹³⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 140, 233. It will be remembered that the Board of Manufactures had also been criticised for spending most of its funds on the construction of linen manufacturing stations instead of supplying the local population with spinning wheels, reels and flaxseed. See chapter 6.6.1.

¹³⁸ It must be remembered that the Directors had decided to build the new fishing settlement in the northern section at a proper distance from Stornoway. Buchanan, on the other hand, had resided for most of the 1780s on Harris and was particularly insistent on a fishing station at Tarbert. Buchanan underplayed the hardships of the subtenants on the mainland and in Argyll. He also exaggerated the exploitation of the common people on Harris. These distortions can only be seen as an attempt to exaggerate the need for the British Fisheries Society to become engaged at Tarbert. For examples of this rhetorical device in influencing public opinion see *ibid.*, pp. 158-166, 168-171. Buchanan made a similar plea in favour of Tarbert in his *Travels*, where he compared its situation and its respective advantages to the Strait of Panama. See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 211-218.

mainland Scotland. Therefore, Tarbert (Harris) was the most suitable place for a fishing station on the western seaboard because of its proximity to the deep-sea herring shoals within an hour's sail to the west. Buchanan had attended the meetings in which Knox and Dempster had been made aware of the unique location of Tarbert, and he was most surprised to find that it had not been chosen for the Society's first fishing settlement.¹³⁹ Buchanan concluded that the Directors must have rejected the Outer Hebrides purely out of prejudice.¹⁴⁰ However, like most commentators who were not natives of the western Highlands and Hebrides, Buchanan overestimated the islanders' wish to exchange their traditional livelihood of farming for that of professional fishing.¹⁴¹ Nonetheless, his plea to the British Fisheries Society to include the Outer Hebrides in their scheme shows how little had changed for the common people at those places where the Society had not become involved.

In the Hebrides, the proposed seat of the fisheries, the natives (as already remarked) till reduced by servitude, had always a military turn, and have on all occasions supported that brave spirit, with great reputation, against the enemies of the state; and that active turn would be easily converted to the sea, their natural element, by a little assistance to carry on the fisheries, and, by this means, prepare a set of brave tars to man the royal navy, when necessary; whereas at present their spirits are crushed, and they have no heart to fight for a country where slavery is almost entailed on them; as any other country would be more eligible to them than their own, while unlimited power is in the hands of a few tyrants, who render their situation more wretched than the beasts of burden are under humane masters.¹⁴²

Buchanan's account of the living conditions of the common islanders might have been exaggerated in order to attract the British Fisheries Society's attention to the Outer Hebrides, but it shows clearly that the fishing stations had no more than local impact and had failed to ease life on the western seaboard. Moreover, he claimed that many prosperous people in the Hebrides had not invested in the stock of the Society. Some feared for their money because they knew that there was hardly any security, but others had refused to invest in order to prevent change and to keep tight control

¹³⁹ See Buchanan, *General View*, pp. 173, 155-156, 168-169.

¹⁴⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁴¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 132-133. However, Buchanan acknowledged in his analysis that the reasons for the British Fisheries Society's failure to establish a permanent fishery at its settlements lay in the Highlanders' preference for crofting or emigration in place of full-time fishing. See *ibid.*, pp. 161-162. Only the poorest class of people, who had no land at all and who could not even raise the money to emigrate, could be attracted to the fishing trade. This was no different in the Outer Hebrides. It was less the case that the people on the Outer Hebrides were particularly suitable for the fisheries, than that mere necessity forced them to pursue that business.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133. The islanders' former participation in the Jacobite rebellions seems to have been forgotten by Buchanan.

over their tenants.¹⁴³ Buchanan concluded his criticism of the British Fisheries Society with the recommendation that if the Society wanted to avert ruin, it had to concentrate its remaining resources on the Outer Hebrides and particularly on East Loch Tarbert (Harris) and Loch Maddy (North Uist).¹⁴⁴ This recommendation fell, however, on deaf ears within the Society. Instead of indulging in another doubtful experiment on the west coast, the Directors decided, after lengthy deliberations, to invest their remaining stock on the east coast of what was to become the flourishing settlement at Pulteneytown.

7.1.7. Conclusion of the attempts to encourage fisheries on the Scottish west coast

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was great optimism about the economic potential of fisheries on the Scottish west coast. However, until the mid-eighteenth century the herring and white fish fisheries were dominated by the Dutch. Repeated efforts to establish a British fishing industry along the Scottish west coast had failed because of either the Civil War in the 1640s and 1650s or internal disagreement among the entrepreneurs. A fresh government initiative to break the dominance of the Dutch fishermen in British waters was launched in 1750, but the complicated system of subsidies, premiums and restrictions made it unworkable. Moreover, the bureaucratic salt laws hugely disadvantaged the British and Scottish fishermen in comparison to their main rivals. The failure of the 1750 initiative led to a major reform of the fishery laws in 1785, but the politicians could not agree on a liberalisation of the salt laws. Parallel to the reform of the fishery laws, expert observers were sent to the western seaboard to report on the state of the fishing

¹⁴³ See *ibid.*, pp. 218-219. The latter allegation was directed (once more) against the tacksmen and not against the proprietors. Buchanan wrote that it was in the interest of the proprietors to promote the fisheries and to raise the standard of living in the Hebrides, but 'it was not the political interest of the vassalage [tacksmen] to promote a scheme that would at once ruin their own importance, and diminish their influence among a people, who, if set free, would at once desert them, to improve their own and their master's interest'. *Ibid.*, p. 219. Buchanan levelled his accusations particularly at the steelbowman at Luskentyre, castigating him for having successfully opposed the foundation of a fishing settlement at Tarbert to secure his personal privileges, although the proprietor of the land was in favour of the station. See *ibid.*, pp. 219-222. It must be remembered that Buchanan was particularly biased against the tacksmen and the steelbowman at Luskentyre.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 240-243.

industry and to devise schemes for its promotion. In a climate of unlimited optimism and enthusiasm about the potential of the fisheries, most schemes proved to be far-fetched and unrealistic. Moreover, most schemes were based on the assumption that it would take only a comparatively small sum of money to develop a chain of fishing settlements in the Highlands and Hebrides that in turn would attract great numbers of settlers from outside who would develop these villages into independent fishing and trading towns. The construction of planned villages was considered the most promising scheme. However, the state did not have the money to support these settlements, and in 1786 the British Fisheries Society was founded to raise the money by public subscription. The Society built three fishing villages on the west coast at Tobermory, Ullapool and Lochbay, but none of them lived up to their expectations. By 1800 the success of the British Fisheries Society was, politely speaking, modest. First of all, the funds of the Society had allowed only the construction of three fishing villages in which no more than 3,000 people had finally settled. The ambitious schemes of James Anderson or John Knox, to attract up to 200,000 settlers or to build a chain of 30 to 40 fishing villages all along the west coast, had been quickly shelved. Secondly, Ullapool and Lochbay struggled to attract a sufficient number of settlers from outside in order to establish themselves as market towns and become economically viable. On a local level the Society's settlements provided employment for a few hundred people, but they failed to stem the tide of emigration from the Highlands and Islands. Thirdly, the Society's prime target of establishing a fishing trade on the west coast was achieved only at Ullapool and (to a lesser degree) at Tobermory. The settlers at Ullapool depended on fishing, while Tobermory proved to be too far distant from the fishing grounds and became instead a centre for local trade and commerce. The settlement at Lochbay turned finally into a crofting community. Pulteneytown on the Scottish east coast became the only settlement of the Society that lived up to its expectations. Ultimately, it must be admitted that the fishing villages on the west coast did not stop the economic decline of the region and made little permanent impact on the Highlands and Hebrides. Their failure, however, was partly due to the migration of the herring shoals from the west coast to the east coast at the end of the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, the main reason for the failure of the British Fisheries Society was to believe that its villages, which had

been designed on the drawing board, could be established successfully in the harsh environment of the Highlands and Hebrides. Moreover, the Directors of the Society underestimated the Highlanders' attachment to the soil. A community that had been living for centuries from agriculture and cattle breeding could not be transformed in a few decades into a fishing community. This error, however, was shared by many outsiders.

7.2. The rise of the kelp industry on the western seaboard

The making of kelp became one of the most lucrative and important businesses on the western seaboard in the second half of the eighteenth century. In contrast to the government-backed efforts to encourage the fisheries, the kelp industry did not receive any public subsidies and developed independently from the state. Making kelp was a very labour-intensive process, and the kelp industry had a huge impact on the social and economic development of the Highlands and Hebrides.

The reduction of seaweed to kelp was not a new chemical process. The seaweed harvested was mainly deep-sea tangle, ‘*Laminaria digitata*’ or ‘*Laminaria saccharina*’, which were drift-weeds cast by storms upon the west coasts in great quantities. The other species harvested were wrack-weeds, which grew within the tidal range, mainly on the east coasts. These were ‘*Fucus nodosus*’, ‘*Fucus serratus*’ and ‘*Fucus vesiculosus*’, which are also known as knobbed, black and bladder wracks.¹⁴⁵ Kelp was a major source of iodine and potassium salts. Its chemical composition varied locally, but the percentages were usually potassium chloride 17 per cent to 25 per cent, sodium chloride (common salt) 14 per cent, potassium sulphate 10 per cent to 14 per cent, sodium carbonate 4 per cent to 5 per cent, iodine 1 per cent to 6 per cent, a little magnesium salt and much insoluble ash.¹⁴⁶ On the east coast of northern England and Scotland the burning of seaweed for the production of glass seems to have been practised since the mid-seventeenth century. In 1661 the English traveller John Ray mentioned the making of kelp all along the shores from Scarborough to Whitby and near Dunbar in East Lothian.¹⁴⁷ On his way back from Scotland to England, Hamon L’Estrange also reported the use of kelp in the alum-works of the Duke of Buckingham near Whitby.¹⁴⁸ In the Orkney Islands

¹⁴⁵ See Murray, *Islands of Western Scotland*, p. 215. John Walker reckoned (in 1764) that 90 per cent of all the kelp in the Hebrides was produced from the last three species. See McKay (ed.), *John Walker’s Report*, pp. 211-212.

¹⁴⁶ See Murray, *Islands of Western Scotland*, p. 215.

¹⁴⁷ See Ray, *Memorials*, pp. 148, 156.

¹⁴⁸ See Norfolk Record Office, L’Estrange, ‘Diary’, MS. LEST NF 2, fos. 6-7. The most likely date of his tour is 1709. For the use of kelp for glass production in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Scotland see also J. Turnbull, *The Scottish Glass Industry 1610-1750* (Edinburgh, 2001), pp. 8-10. Glass production in seventeenth-century Scotland was based around the Firth of Forth. There is evidence of glassworks at Leith, Westpans, Morison’s Haven, Port Seton, Kirkcaldy and Wemyss. See *ibid.*, p. 3. Henrik Kalmeter prepared (in 1720) an account of the use of burnt seaweed in the bottle-works at Leith. See Smout (ed.), ‘Kalmeter’s Travels’, p. 24.

kelp production had started in 1722, and in the 1740s and 1750s the revenues from kelp amounted to about £2,000 per annum.¹⁴⁹

7.2.1. The early stages of kelp production on the western seaboard up to the 1770s

One of the first writers to realise the economic potential of making kelp in the Hebrides was Martin Martin. He reported that each island afforded many thousand loads of seaweed that might be successfully used for making kelp for glass and soap.¹⁵⁰ However, kelp production did not begin in the Hebrides until the mid-1730s. As with the cultivation of potatoes, the knowledge of reducing seaweed to kelp spread from Ireland to the Outer Hebrides. In 1735 Hugh MacDonald, tacksman of Baleshare, had invited the Irishman Rory MacDonald to North Uist to introduce the technique of burning seaweed for kelp. In 1746 kelp production started on Tiree (again by an Irish entrepreneur), and in 1748 it spread to Harris.¹⁵¹ In the 1750s and 1760s it spread rapidly all over the western seaboard, becoming most successful in the Outer Hebrides.

The initial conditions for making kelp in the Hebrides were ideal and explain the rapid expansion of this new industry. Abundance of seaweed, as a cheap and regenerative raw material, could be gathered from the beaches or cut from the rocks at low tide. The process of gathering, drying and burning the collected seaweed required neither sophisticated equipment nor special knowledge, and the ready product was easy to export. All that was needed were hooks and sickles to cut the weeds from the rocks and ponies to transport the wet raw material to the beaches for drying. Ponies, it will be remembered, were kept by the Highlanders, and particularly the Hebrideans, in far greater numbers than required for agriculture. After drying on the beach, the weed was burnt layer by layer in shallow makeshift kilns ringed by rough stones until it fused into a 'hot and pasty mess'.¹⁵² The kilns were about

¹⁴⁹ See A. Fenton, *The Northern Isles: Orkney and Shetland* (East Linton, 1997), p. 58. [hereafter: Fenton, *Northern Isles*]

¹⁵⁰ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 342-343.

¹⁵¹ See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 105. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 130. See Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, p. 548.

¹⁵² Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 129.

twenty feet long, four feet broad and three feet deep. The best kelp was made in fair weather, as the proportion of salt in the final product was lower when the weeds were exposed to rain while being burnt. The kilns were built with the long side facing the wind so that the weeds burnt faster and more evenly.¹⁵³ While burning, the glutinous liquid was stirred with long iron tools, which were known as 'clatts'. After it had cooled and hardened, kelp was sold in bars. In the whole process of reducing wet seaweed to kelp, the final product had lost 95 per cent of its initial weight. The only suitable places for making kelp were, therefore, the beaches where the wet seaweed was landed. The gathering and burning required a huge, but unskilled, workforce, which could easily be drawn from the ever-increasing number of landless Highlanders who had been removed from the glens or the interior parts of the islands and had been resettled on the coastal strips.¹⁵⁴ Social mobility and resettlement of the common clansmen in the Highlands and Islands were undoubtedly speeded up by the ever-growing demand for workers in the kelp industry. The rapid expansion of the kelp industry on the western seaboard was also supported by the interruption of foreign barilla supplies.¹⁵⁵ In normal circumstances it would have been difficult for kelp produced in the Western and Northern Isles to compete with the superior quality of barilla from Spain, the Canary Isles, France, Italy and Sicily. However, the Seven Years' War (1756-63) not only interrupted foreign supplies, but also forced the glass, soap and chemical industry to search for alternative suppliers in the British Isles.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ See Rauschenberg (ed.), 'Banks's Voyage', pp. 205-206. On Orkney the process of kelp-making was slightly different. The Orcadians began to collect seaweed as early as mid-November, when the winter gales had torn the ware loose and cast it ashore. The tangles were then spread out to dry on the grass, on stone foundations or on 'steethes' at the head of the beach. The fronds and the softer parts were used for manuring the fields. Burning seaweed started in May. The Orcadians also preferred round kilns which were stone-lined and about five feet in diameter and two feet deep. See Fenton, *Northern Isles*, pp. 64-66.

¹⁵⁴ John Walker reported on the Hebrides in 1764: 'There is certainly no European Country, at present, that equals this Cheapness of Labour.' McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 41.

¹⁵⁵ Barilla was impure alkali made from the ashes of saltwort and other plants. It was imported mainly from Spain and used in the glass industry. See *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1st edn. Edinburgh, 1771), vol. i, p. 522.

¹⁵⁶ Britain's involvement in all major wars of the second half of the eighteenth century undoubtedly favoured the thriving of its own kelp industry, which reached its peak after Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1809. Its rapid decline and collapse after 1815, however, shows its susceptibility to higher-quality foreign supplies. Robert Jameson's 'Table of the Proportion of *Alkali* contained in different kinds of *Barilla* and *Kelp*' clearly illustrated the inferiority of Scottish kelp in comparison to barilla from Spain:

The high duties on foreign salt also contributed to the competitiveness of kelp producers in the Western and Northern Isles.

In the mid-1750s the trade in kelp and fern-ashes on the Scottish west coast seems to have been controlled by merchants from Liverpool and Ireland. Initially, these merchants did not share their knowledge and produced the kelp themselves, paying the locals only a small sum for gathering seaweed and fern. Richard Neilson reported (in 1754) to the Board of Manufactures:

All this west Coast is visited yearly about the month of August by people from Liverpool and Dublin on purpose to make Kelp and Fern Ashes, which they carry away with them. These people allow the Farmers from 6s. to 8s. for every Ton of Kelp or Ashes produced from Sea Weeds and Ferns gathered in their possessions.¹⁵⁷

However, the reduction of seaweed to kelp did not require special knowledge, and the locals soon began to produce the kelp themselves, thus getting a higher share of the profits. In 1755 Neilson reported that the Highlanders in Morvern, Moidart, Arisaig, Gairloch and at Loch Ewe produced small quantities of kelp themselves and sold the ready product for 40 to 50 shillings per ton to merchants from Liverpool and Ireland.¹⁵⁸

| | | in the 100 lb | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------|-------|---------|
| barilla | Alicante – good | 23½ | | |
| | Tenerife – bad | 8 lb | 7 oz | 120 gr. |
| kelp from | Norway indifferent | 2 lb | 11 oz | |
| | Shetland – indifferent | 2 lb | 6 oz | |
| | Lewis – indifferent | 2 lb | 11 oz | |
| | west Highlands – much damaged | 1-3 d of lb | | |
| | Arran | 3½ lb | | |
| | Islay – good | 4 lb | | |
| | Mull – good | 4½ lb | | |
| | Morvern – good | 4½ lb | | |
| | Isle of Skye – good | 5 lb | | |
| | Leith shores | 4 lb | | |

See R. Jameson, *Mineralogy Of The Scottish Isles* (Edinburgh, 1800), vol. ii, pp. 248-249. [hereafter: Jameson, *Mineralogy*] Jameson's *Mineralogy* was the result of his extensive travels all over Scotland. The original diaries of his tours are EUL, MSS. Dc.7.126-136. Jameson (1774-1854) studied natural history under Dr John Walker at Edinburgh University from 1792 to 1793. The Swedish metallurgist Eric Svedenstierna confirmed (in 1803) the inferior quality of Scottish kelp and reported that it was used, nonetheless, with advantage because of its cheapness. See Flinn (ed.), *Svedenstierna's Tour*, p. 120.

¹⁵⁷ NAS, Neilson, '1st Report 1754', NG1/7/4, fo. 42.

¹⁵⁸ See EUL, Neilson, '2nd Report 1755', MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623, fos. 14, 30-31, 37, 71. The price for fern-ashes was considerably lower than for kelp. A herring barrel of fern-ashes fetched only six shillings. See *ibid.*, fo. 31. John Walker confirmed (in 1764) that the islanders on Coll and Jura had no initial knowledge in the 1750s and 1760s of the value of seaweed for kelp production. See notes 161 and 162.

It is, however, difficult to establish any regular and detailed patterns for the increase in kelp production for the early years up to the 1770s. Overall figures are rare, and kelp production was a seasonal business. Although seaweed was a regenerative raw material, it could only be cut every two to three years. The figures represent, therefore, only individual years and do not allow precise conclusions on the average annual production or the growth for specific areas or islands. Gray reckoned that the annual overall production of kelp on the western seaboard did not exceed £2,000 for the period 1750 to 1770.¹⁵⁹

John Walker's report on the Hebrides in 1764 gives, nonetheless, valuable insight into the kelp production and the prices fetched for the individual islands. Moreover, it shows the centres of kelp production in the Hebrides. The figures provided by Walker are as follows:

| island | tons produced | price per ton (£, s., d.) | | | reference (p.) |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|----|---|----------------|
| Lewis | 50 (in 1763) | 3 | 5 | - | 41, 42 |
| Harris | 100 | 3 | 5 | - | 54 |
| North Uist | 500 (every year) ¹⁶⁰ | 3 | 5 | - | 65 |
| Benbecula | 200 (annually) | 3 | 5 | - | 77 |
| South Uist | 100 | 3 | 5 | - | 77 |
| Barra | 40 (1763), 60 (1764) | 3 | 5 | - | 87 |
| Skye | 200 | 3 | 15 | - | 207 |
| Coll | 40 ¹⁶¹ | 4 | - | - | 171 |
| Tiree | 44 | 3 | 5 | - | 187 |
| Mull | 100 | 3 | 10 | - | 155 |

¹⁵⁹ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 125. On the Orkney Isles, for example, the annual revenue from kelp is reckoned at £2,000 for 1740 to 1760, rising to £6,000 for 1760 to 1770. At the same time the price for a ton of Orkney kelp rose from 45 shillings between 1740 and 1760 to four guineas between 1760 and 1770. On Orkney the rising revenue from kelp cannot be solely explained by the higher price per ton. The price for a ton of kelp nearly doubled, but the overall revenue from kelp tripled, showing that the industry expanded faster than the rise in prices. The worth of kelp estates on Orkney rose seven- or eightfold from about 1720 to 1790. See Fenton, *Northern Isles*, pp. 61-62. It was not until the 1770s that kelp production in the Western Isles exceeded that of the Orkney Isles.

¹⁶⁰ Walker added that 800 tons of kelp had been made in the year 1762 because the season was particularly favourable.

¹⁶¹ Walker added that kelp production was begun on this island in 1754, when the local minister sold the right of cutting seaweed on his farm for two guineas to some English people who made 25 tons of kelp from it. But now, he commented, the islanders knew about the value of seaweed and no longer made similar deals.

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|-----------|---|---|-----|
| Colonsay | 40 | 4 | - | - | 125 |
| Jura | 40 (in 1762) ¹⁶² | no figure | | | 125 |
| Islay | 'some kelp' | no figure | | | 100 |

Walker's figures show that the Uists and Benbecula were at the centre of kelp production in the 1760s. In the Inner Hebrides kelp production was most advanced on Skye.¹⁶³ Walker's comments also reveal that the locals in some of the less important islands, such as Coll and Jura, had no initial knowledge of the value of seaweed for kelp production. However, the prices for kelp rose rapidly, the industry expanded fast, and the locals soon changed their minds and began to produce kelp themselves. Walker rightly predicted the great potential of the industry in places such as the Isle of Skye. He suggested, therefore, that more seaweed could be produced on loose stones weighing between 50 and 200 lbs that could be placed at the ebb mark.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, Walker's figures illustrate the rise in kelp prices during the Seven Years' War when Great Britain was cut off from foreign imports of barilla. According to Neilson, kelp fetched no more than 40 to 50 shillings per ton before the outbreak of war. After the war, prices had risen to a level of £3 5s. to £4 per ton. By 1768 the price for kelp from the coast of Lorne (Argyll) was £3 10s. per ton.¹⁶⁵ The prices provided by Neilson (1755), Walker (1764) and Menzies (1768) were in line with the prices given by the Scottish mineralogist Robert Jameson in 1800. According to Jameson, the average price for a ton of kelp was £2 5s. for 1740 to 1760 and £4 4s. for 1760 to 1770.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Walker added that in the year 1762 an Irish kelp manufacturer paid £10 for the right of cutting seaweed on Jura and made 40 tons of kelp. Again, the islanders had realised that this was too good a bargain and had since chosen to produce the kelp themselves.

¹⁶³ James Robertson confirmed (in 1768) the progressive state of kelp production on Skye. He reported that the people of Skye made 'annually a considerable quantity of Kelp for which they receive about three pounds sterling & sometimes more for each Tun'. Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 98.

¹⁶⁴ See McKay (ed.), *John Walker's Report*, p. 212.

¹⁶⁵ See NAS, Menzies, 'Journal 1768', E729/9, fo. 84.

¹⁶⁶ See Jameson, *Mineralogy*, vol. ii, p. 243. Kelp prices are, generally speaking, difficult to deal with. Firstly, they varied according to the season. In wet summers the amount of kelp produced was considerably smaller than in dry summers. Secondly, the quality of kelp varied from island to island. (For the different proportion of alkali in kelp see *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 248-249.) It is, therefore, difficult to establish whether individual references to prices relate to kelp of a particular quality (from a particular island) or to kelp in general. There is no continuous series of prices for a particular area or one island for the years of the kelp boom. However, it is safe to say that prices rose steadily from 1750 to 1800, apart from a temporary decline in the late 1780s and early 1790s. Prices peaked in the early nineteenth

7.2.2. The expansion and heyday of the kelp industry from the 1770s until about 1815 and its impact on Highland life

In the 1770s and 1780s kelp production on the western seaboard increased rapidly, as did the demand for kelp workers. Kelp prices, however, were susceptible to foreign competition. The average price for a ton of kelp was £5 in the 1770s and £6 in the 1780s, but it fell in the late 1780s and early 1790s due to increased foreign imports.¹⁶⁷ It is, therefore, necessary to analyse first the expansion of the industry and, secondly, its socio-economic impact on the Highlands and Hebrides.

Thomas Pennant's figures for the kelp production of individual islands of the Inner Hebrides in 1772 reflected the growing economic importance of this industry. On Jura, for example, kelp production had increased by 500 per cent since the locals had begun to produce kelp themselves. Instead of 40 tons made by the Irish kelp manufacturer in 1762, the islanders produced 200 tons per annum, which were sold from £3 10s. to £4 per ton. On Oronsay and Colonsay 40 to 50 tons were produced annually, selling from £3 10s. to £4 per ton. On Canna 20 tons of kelp were produced every third year, and on Skye production had risen to 300 tons per year.¹⁶⁸

Rising demand and profits also led to improved methods of production. Again, the Uists were at the forefront of progress. Mr MacDonald of Boisdale, for example, had greatly increased the amount of seaweed for kelp production by tumbling rocks into the sea. Moreover, he had discovered a new technique for making kelp during the winter months. He collected the common tangles (*alga marinae*) that were thrown on the shore in great quantities particularly in the winter months. He cut off the long

century before slipping slightly back. The business remained profitable until 1815 when renewed foreign supplies began to drag prices down. In 1822 kelp prices collapsed, and the kelp bubble burst, depriving landowners and subtenants in the Hebrides of their main source of income. War, and a disruption of foreign supplies, generally pushed kelp prices up. The figures provided by Mackenzie, Gray and Murray vary slightly. According to Mackenzie, prices peaked at £22 per ton at the commencement of the nineteenth century, falling back to an average of £10 10s. for the period 1800 to 1822. According to Gray, the price for a ton of kelp rose to £10 in 1800 and peaked at £20 from about 1807 to 1810. After 1810 prices slipped to £10 for high-quality kelp and £4 for low-quality kelp and finally collapsed in 1822. Murray reckons that kelp prices peaked about twenty years earlier than it was estimated by Mackenzie and Gray. According to him, kelp prices reached their peak at £22 per ton during the American War of Independence. In its aftermath prices slipped to £10 until their collapse in 1822. See Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, pp. 548-549. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, pp. 127-128, 133, 135, 155-156. See Murray, *Islands of Western Scotland*, pp. 215, 217.

¹⁶⁷ See Jameson, *Mineralogy*, vol. ii, p. 243. See also note 176.

¹⁶⁸ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 214, 239, 275, 310. According to Banks, in 1772 the price for a ton of kelp was £4 10s. to £5. See Rauschenberg (ed.), 'Banks's Voyage', p. 206.

fronds and wettest parts and used them for manure, but the large, strong stalks were piled up in small stacks like haystacks, laid across each other to let the air pass through and thus dried sufficiently to be burnt slowly for kelp.¹⁶⁹

The American War of Independence (1775-83) caused another sharp rise in demand and prices for kelp. Jacob Patisson visited Mull in 1780 and reported that the government had encouraged the production of kelp on the island, since Britain had been cut off from foreign supplies, particularly from Spain. Most kelp was made on the west coast of the island and the adjacent smaller islands, whereas hardly any was produced on the shores of the Sound of Mull. Although the kelp was of an inferior kind, it answered the present need and was sold for £7 or £8 per ton, of which the tacksmen and farmers allowed the kelp workers about 30 shillings.¹⁷⁰

According to John Knox, in 1786 a ton of kelp from Scotland fetched from £4 to £5, whereas kelp from Ireland fetched only £3 per ton because it was less pure and often mixed with gravel and stones. At the same time the expenses for cutting, drying and burning a ton of kelp in Scotland were £1 11s. 6d. The huge margin of profit made kelp a very lucrative business, and by 1786 production in the Hebrides had risen to 200 tons in Lewis, 400 to 500 tons in Harris (including the adjacent small islands), 500 tons in Skye and 300 tons in Mull. The Uists, however, remained the centre of kelp production. In 1784 the estate of MacDonald of Clanranald had produced 900 tons of excellent kelp.¹⁷¹

In most parts of the Hebrides kelp production continued to rise throughout the late 1780s and early 1790s, but the rise in prices for kelp began to slow down due to the rising import of foreign barilla and potash. James Bailey visited Skye and Mull in 1787 and reported that Skye was producing 500 to 600 tons per annum while Mull exported more than 300 tons. At the same time the price for a ton of kelp had risen to £6.¹⁷² According to a Director of the British Fisheries Society, who visited the western seaboard in the same year, the price for a ton of kelp had risen to £5, £5 10s. and even £6.¹⁷³ The slowing down of prices and profits had not yet affected

¹⁶⁹ See Anderson, *Report*, pp. 151-152.

¹⁷⁰ See NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 69. The price of £7 to £8 per ton clearly contradicts Murray's estimate that kelp prices reached £22 per ton during the American War of Independence. See note 166.

¹⁷¹ See Knox, *Tour*, pp. 30, 194, 157, 152, 59-60, 79.

¹⁷² See NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fos. 242, 363.

¹⁷³ See Piscator (pseudonym), 'Voyage', in *The Bee*, vol. ix, p. 53.

production, and islands such as the Uists and Benbecula still seemed to be on fire and covered in thick smoke during the kelp-making season.¹⁷⁴ According to Lord Mountstuart, kelp production had risen by 1788 to 800 tons on North Uist, 200 tons on Benbecula, 960 tons on the Clanranald estate including South Uist, 30 tons on Canna and 250 tons on Tiree. The price for a ton of kelp from North Uist stood at £6 10s.¹⁷⁵ In the early 1790s the signs of a cooling down and recession in the kelp industry could no longer be ignored. The ministers of Harris, North Uist and South Uist were very concerned about the slump in kelp prices. They feared that its manufacture in the Hebrides would have to be abandoned if the government did not protect it against foreign competition by putting higher duties on the import of foreign barilla and potash. In the parish of Kilfinichen and Kilvicheoan (Mull), the slump in kelp prices had by 1791 depressed production from between 130 and 150 tons per year to as little as 70 tons.¹⁷⁶ Despite receding prices and dwindling profits, the overall production had increased considerably, particularly in the Uists. According to the accounts returned by the local ministers in the 1790s for the *Statistical Account*, the average amounts of kelp manufactured yearly in different areas were as follows: Lewis, 210 tons; Harris, 450 tons; North Uist, 1,200 tons; South Uist (including Benbecula), 1,100 tons; Skye, 440 tons; Argyllshire islands, c. 500 tons.¹⁷⁷ The huge production of kelp in the Uists and Harris required a massive workforce. Hugh Monro, minister of Uig (Lewis), reported, for example, that many of the men in his parish migrated in the summer months to Harris and the Uists for seasonal employment in the kelp industry.¹⁷⁸

At first glance, the rise of the kelp industry and its great margin of profit might look like a solution to the overpopulation and the pressure on land on the western seaboard. Many landless Highlanders found seasonal employment in the kelp industry, but the accounts of travellers show that kelp was anything but ‘manna from the sea’. Travellers to the western seaboard unanimously agreed that the huge profits did not reach the workers, but were mainly absorbed by the landowners and their

¹⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 211.

¹⁷⁵ See NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fos. 54r., 57v., 51v., 36v., 44r. Calve Island in the Bay of Tobermory produced 13 tons of kelp. See *ibid.*, fo. 11r.

¹⁷⁶ See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 68, 105-106, 128-129, 293.

¹⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. xx, pp. xvii, 105-106, 128.

¹⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, vol. xx, p. 45.

tacksmen as the shores were held in tack with the land. Dr Johnson's opinion that the landowners had certainly as much right to profit from the rise in prices as the kelp workers was not shared by many travellers.¹⁷⁹ John Lanne Buchanan, missionary minister in the Outer Hebrides from 1782 until 1790, reported that kelp had become the main staple of these islands and that its revenues exceeded those from the export of black cattle and horses. Although kelp-making yielded huge profits, the overwhelming majority of the people employed in its production did not participate in the wealth that was brought to the Outer Hebrides. Kelp-making did not bring the subtenants greater freedom, but, on the contrary, it was organised in a way that tightened the landowners' and, at those places where they were still in charge of land-management, the tacksmen's grip over their subtenants and excluded them from the profits of the business. Buchanan reported on the miserable situation of the kelp workers and their families:

This is the hardest labour which the people have throughout the year, and at the time they are worst fed; because their own potatoes, or little grain, are, by this time, mostly consumed. The oat-meal, by them called the white meal, or *min bhan*, by way of distinction from the graddan meal, which is blackened by the smoke and ashes of the straw, being purchased, is very sparingly dealt among the people, that if possible, they may not eat more of it than the price given them for making each tun of kelp can afford: and thus, instead of paying part of their rents with their Summer's labour, they may sink deeper into their master's debt.

Lord Macdonald deals on very liberal principles with his kelp-makers. They are well fed, and therefore can save a part of their gain; but such as have run in arrears with the tacksmen, are miserably ill off. They are obliged to straiten their belts very considerably: and in these times hunger is written in legible characters in the face of the wretched labourer.

The nature of this work requires their attendance by night and by day, frequently, in some of the remote little isles, where even the slender assistance of their poor families cannot reach them with (*wilks*) periwinkles, or any kind of shell-fish. Such poor men as these can hardly afford to keep a milch-cow: some of them have two ewes, bound together by a rope called *caiggean chaorich*, to give a little milk for the poor starved children at home; but of this luxury the father of the family cannot then partake; and they are frequently obliged to kill these milch-ewes for their food, when their families are at the point of starving.

When the cuddies, or other fish, happen to be on the coast, those poor men make a kind of livelihood; but when they are not, their case is deplorable – one while at the kelp, and immediately thereafter running to the shore for wilks, oysters, clammy fish, *crechan shell-fish*, or any that can be eat, to quiet a hungry stomach. The meagre looks and feeble bodies of these belaboured creatures, without the necessary hours for sleep, and all over in dirty ragged clothes, would melt any but a tyrant into compassion. Yet if any quantity of their set compliment of kelp remains unfinished, the deficiency must be accumulated to their former debts, to make up the pretended loss of the cruel man.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁸⁰ Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 159-161. The wages of the kelp workers were paid partly in cash and partly in meal. The meal advanced by the landowner was then deducted from the workers' wages. The wages of the kelp workers responded little to the rise in prices for kelp in the late eighteenth century.

Buchanan's account of the exploitation of the kelp workers by their tacksmen may have been exaggerated, but the other visitors to the Hebrides in the 1780s made similar allegations. Faujas de Saint-Fond visited Mull in 1784 and commented on the kelp production that 'this useful object of industry is exclusively engrossed by the *lairds*, or a few wealthy persons'.¹⁸¹ James Bailey visited Mull three years later and received a similar impression. He also observed that the revenues from kelp were, like those from cattle and horses, not spread among the common people, but principally absorbed by the great landholders and their tacksmen.¹⁸² William Thomson reported that landowners such as Cameron of Fassfern sold a ton of kelp for £6 while he paid his kelp workers no more than a shilling per day.¹⁸³ John MacLeod, minister of Harris, reported (in 1792) that kelp production was a blessing for the subtenants as it provided them with an income to buy provisions for the summer months. However, he also acknowledged that the proprietors and tacksmen benefited most from this industry, creaming off profits of at least 100 per cent. He reported that kelp was the main staple of Harris and about 350 hands were employed for about five or six weeks every dry summer. The tacksmen of the shores were the proprietors of the seaweed and paid their labourers from £1 5s., £1 10s., £1 15s., £2 10s. to £3 per ton, according to the difficulty of collecting the seaweed from the shore and manufacturing it into kelp. MacLeod reported that in the southern islands a man, assisted by his family, could make four to five tons of kelp per season, but on Harris a subtenant could consider himself lucky if he got more than a ton of kelp from his lot, because the tacksmen portioned their shores into small lots with as many manufacturers as they could find. In the kelp-making season the tacksmen supplied the workers with meal at market price, but in a season of scarcity the workers' earnings from kelp were not sufficient to pay for both provisions and the rent for their land. In the mid-1780s the tacksmen sold the ready product for £5 to £6 per ton, but since then prices had fallen considerably due to the increased import of

Moreover, the landowners tended to recoup rising expenses for wages by increasing the rents of the workers. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, pp. 132-133.

¹⁸¹ Faujas, *Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 79-80.

¹⁸² See NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fos. 363-364. Faujas's and Bailey's observations on Mull were made independently. Because of the French Revolution, Faujas's account was not published until 1797. Bailey's account is still in manuscript.

¹⁸³ See Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 121-122.

barilla from foreign countries. MacLeod even feared that kelp production in the Hebrides might have to be given up if prices continued to fall, as it would become more profitable for the farmers to use the seaweed as manure for their land.¹⁸⁴ However, in the mid-1790s kelp prices rose again and the profits of the landowners with them. Robert Heron commented in 1794 on the manufacture of kelp in the Hebrides:

The *making of the kelp* is happily a very profitable labour to these good people. Labour, without any very expensive preparations or instruments, is almost the only thing necessary to manufacture the kelp for the market. It is therefore one of the most lucrative to the possessors, of all the productions of these Isles.¹⁸⁵

Edward Clarke reported (in 1797) that the usual expense for labour was about two guineas per ton of kelp, which could then be sold on the shore for at least eight guineas, earning the landowner six guineas.¹⁸⁶ This margin of profit earned fortunes for the great proprietors in the Hebrides. On his visit to Canna in 1797, Clarke was informed that if kelp kept its present price, MacDonald of Clanranald would make £6,000 from his kelp, and Lord MacDonald would even earn £10,000.¹⁸⁷ An analysis of the major proprietors' revenues from kelp underlines the unequal distribution of the profits. While the kelp workers were paid only minimal wages, which were just sufficient to cover their rising rents, the proprietors earned fortunes. The figures provided by Clarke were not exaggerated. At the peak of the kelp boom in 1809, the gross returns to Clanranald, main proprietor of South Uist, amounted to £13,277, less than a quarter of which went in manufacturing expenses, leaving a net income of £10,047. In 1812 the gross returns to Lord MacDonald, proprietor of North Uist, were estimated at more than £14,000. The Earl of Seaforth, proprietor of Lewis, made a little less than £2,000 per annum, and the Duke of Argyll and MacNeill of Barra were said to make almost as much.¹⁸⁸ However, there were exceptions to the

¹⁸⁴ See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 66-68. The figures given by MacLeod were identical with the ones provided by Robert Heron in 1794. See Heron, *General View*, p. 16. Heron was involved in compiling the ministers' returns and it is likely that he culled these figures from John MacLeod.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁸⁶ See Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 260. These figures were in line with Jameson. According to Jameson, the price for a ton of kelp reached £11 in 1800. In the western Highlands the expenses for manufacturing kelp were at the same time between £1 and £1 10s. per ton. See Jameson, *Mineralogy*, vol. ii, pp. 243-244.

¹⁸⁷ See Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 259. Clarke wrote that the first toast usually given at all festive occasions in the Hebrides was, therefore, to 'a high price to kelp and cattle'. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁸⁸ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 135. See also *NSA*, vol. xiv, p. 176. Mackenzie and Murray reckoned that the Earl of Seaforth's annual revenues from kelp on Lewis peaked at £8,000. See

rule, and some landowners let their tenants participate in the kelp boom. Sarah Murray, for example, reported that the Duke of Argyll did not raise the rents of his tenants in the Ross of Mull and Iona and allowed them to keep the profits from kelp-making.¹⁸⁹

It is interesting to note that Clarke attributed the huge profits of the kelp industry to the proprietors and not to the tacksmen. Earlier travellers, such as Faujas or Bailey, reported that the proprietors, and particularly the tacksmen, creamed off the profits. The rise of the kelp industry and the distribution of its profits reflected also the gradual eclipse of the tacksmen. In the early stages the proprietors exercised only a loose control over the making of kelp on their shores and often left the organisation of the business to the tacksmen as subordinate entrepreneurs. Thus the tacksmen were able to draw the lion's share of the profits. The rents they paid to the proprietors reflected neither the value of the seaweed on the shores, nor the rising market value of kelp. However, when kelp prices began to rise sharply, the proprietors closed this loophole and took greater control over the business in order to reap the profits for themselves. Fixed, and comparatively low, duties (paid by the tacksman to the proprietor) on every ton of kelp produced were replaced by duties that reflected the actual market value of the product, thus transferring the profits from the tacksmen to the proprietors. In some places new leases to tacksmen even banned them from making kelp. In 1766 a tack in Lewis declared that the tacksman was 'not to Cut any seaware fit for making Kelp', and this restriction became standard policy on the Seaforth estate.¹⁹⁰

The employment of great numbers of men in the kelp industry during the summer months had a huge negative impact on agriculture. There was not only a shortage of men for cultivating the fields during the kelp-making season, but there was also a shortage of manure since there was hardly any seaweed left for manuring

Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, p. 549. See Murray, *Islands of Western Scotland*, p. 217. Murray's estimate that kelp revenues from Mull peaked at £15,000 per annum seems, however, to be grossly exaggerated. Kelp production on Mull did not exceed that of either of the Uists. In 1793 the *OSA* gave the annual kelp production of North Uist at 1,200 tons and that of South Uist (including Benbecula) at 1,100 tons. In contrast to these figures, kelp production in the three parishes of Mull amounted to no more than 350 tons around that time. See *OSA*, vol. xx, pp. 105-106, 128, 293, 336, 343. Even at the peak of the kelp boom, the Uists kept their lead, and kelp production on Mull was only of minor importance.

¹⁸⁹ See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 254-255.

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 131.

the ground. Concerns about the excessive use of seaweed for kelp-making soon arose, particularly in the comparatively fertile places that were less dependent on kelp production as a source of revenue. The locals obviously thought that the seaweed might be better used in agriculture. Thomas Pennant reported (in 1772) from Skye that 300 tons of kelp were annually made on the island, 'but it is thought not to answer, as it robs the land of so much manure'.¹⁹¹ In the Outer Hebrides, where kelp production was greatest, the negative impact on agriculture was felt the most. John MacLeod, minister of Harris, warned (in 1792) of the consequences of the late kelp boom on his island:

This manufacture is thought to be brought to its utmost extent of late, in consequence of the high prices some years ago, which encouraged the people to convert all the sea-ware produced by these shores into kelp, regardless of the detriment to their corns and pastures, which have degenerated much through want of the manure formerly afforded by the shores. All the seaware, now used for manure, is such as is cast ashore after the kelp-making season is past.¹⁹²

On Barra there was great competition for seaweed between the farmers, who used it for manure, and the landowners, who wanted it to be reserved for kelp production. Edward MacQueen, minister of Barra, reported (in 1793) that agriculture on the island suffered because the proprietors prevented the people everywhere from cutting seaweed for manure.¹⁹³ The neglect of agriculture during the kelp boom was universal throughout the Hebrides. Edward Clarke observed on his tour of the Hebrides in 1797:

The discovery of manufacturing kelp has effected a great change among the people; whether for their advantage or not, is a question not yet decided. ...

But the neglect of tillage, which is universally experienced since this discovery was made, is already sensibly felt; and promises to overbalance the good which is derived from it. The lands lie neglected, and without manure: and if naked rocks are to succeed corn fields, and the labourers desert the pursuits of husbandry to gather sea-weed, the profits arising from kelp to individuals, will ill repay the loss occasioned in the community at large, for the want of those necessaries they are accustomed to derive from their lands.¹⁹⁴

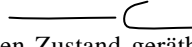
¹⁹¹ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 310. Twenty years later no more than 400 tons of kelp were annually produced in the seven parishes of Skye. Due to substantial emigration, comparatively fertile stretches of land and easy communication with the mainland, Skye was less dependent on kelp-making than other islands in the Hebrides. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. xvii.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, vol. xx, pp. 66-67.

¹⁹³ See *ibid.*, vol. xx, p. 138.

¹⁹⁴ Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, p. 259.

In the mid-1790s kelp prices recovered again owing to the war with Spain.¹⁹⁵ According to Jameson, the average price per ton was £6 from 1780 to 1790, but it rose to £11 until 1800.¹⁹⁶ Prices reached their peak at around £20 per ton after the French invasion of Spain in 1809. Kelp manufacture in the Hebrides experienced a renaissance and reached its peak from around 1800 to 1815 when Britain was cut off from foreign supplies owing to Napoleon's conquest of Europe. The Outer Hebrides, and particularly the Uists, remained the centre of production. James MacDonald's account of his tour of the Hebrides in 1802 reflected the outstanding importance of kelp manufacture in those islands. He sailed along the east coast of South Uist and cast anchor at the entrance to Loch Boisdale. He recollected how the view of the coast was dominated by the smoking kilns, which could be seen and smelled from a distance of twelve miles:

Die Ansicht des Landes war sonderbar. Ich zählte vierzig bis fünfzig Feuer längs der Küste, und von jedem derselben stiegen dicke Rauchsäulen empor, die wir schon zwölf Meilen von der Küste riechen konnten. Es waren Brennereien, wo Kelp gemacht wird. Man bedient sich dazu kleiner Brennöfen von 12 bis 16 Fuß lang, 2½ bis 3 Fuß breit, und 2 Fuß tief. Nachdem man den See-Tang an der Sonne getrocknet hat, wird er in diesen Oefen, die man fast bis oben anfüllt, zu Asche verbrannt; diese Asche wird mit langen Stangen, welche vorn mit einem Eisen von dieser Form  beschlagen sind, so lange umgerührt, bis sie fast in einen flüssigen Zustand geräth. In diesem Zustande läßt man sie abkühlen, da sie denn die Festigkeit des Sandsteins und die Farbe der Bleimulden bekommt. Einige von den Oefen enthielten zwei Tonnen, oder 4000 Pf. Kelp, welche zwanzig Pf. Sterl. werth sind.¹⁹⁷

MacDonald's estimate of the value of land in the Outer Hebrides underlined the islanders' huge dependence on the revenues from kelp:

Hier finden wir demnach, daß auf jeden Bewohner zwei und zwanzig Acres Land, zu dem jährlichen Preise von einem Schilling und 9¾ Pence Sterling fallen. Diese Summe, welche in Vergleichung mit andern Gebirgsgegenden in Schottland sehr hoch scheint, wird jedoch nicht von dem Ertrage des Landes bezahlt, sondern vier Fünftel davon werden durch das Kelp-Brennen gewonnen. Das Land an sich selbst bezahlt nur ungefähr vier Pence vom Acre; das übrige muß durch Arbeit und durch den Gewinn von der See aufgebracht werden.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Spain had left the coalition against France in 1795 and joined it a year later in its war against Great Britain.

¹⁹⁶ See Jameson, *Mineralogy*, vol. ii, p. 243. John Leyden, visiting the western seaboard in 1800, illustrated the susceptibility of kelp prices. He reported that owing to the war with Spain, kelp from Knapdale, Jura and various parts of Argyll was sold for twelve guineas per ton. In peacetime it was worth only five guineas as it was almost immediately superseded by the superior Spanish barilla. See Leyden, *Tour*, p. 78.

¹⁹⁷ MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, pp. 60-61. MacDonald was born at Paible (North Uist) in 1771 or 1772 and was, therefore, very familiar with the manufacture of kelp.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 66-67.

Like all other visitors to the Hebrides, MacDonald was very critical of the distribution of the revenues from kelp. He complained that the money went almost entirely into the pockets of the great proprietors, who spent it in England, while the common islanders lived in poverty. He reckoned that the revenues from kelp made up more than 75 per cent of the proprietors' income.¹⁹⁹

7.2.3. The decline and collapse of the kelp industry after 1815

The kelp boom provided the great proprietors with a constant flow of money, but hardly any of the revenues were spent or reinvested in the islands. The drain of money and lack of investment were to haunt the proprietors when kelp prices began to fall and the bubble finally burst. The reasons for the rapid decline of the kelp industry in the Hebrides after 1815, and its collapse in 1822, were manifold. After the defeat of Napoleon, the Hebrides faced renewed competition from high-quality barilla from the Mediterranean. Moreover, the import duties on salt and barilla were lowered, and in 1825 the salt excise duty was abolished. The exploitation of potash deposits in Germany, and the development of a cheap method of producing soda from salt, forced a slump in the prices for kelp from the Hebrides. After 1811 the price for a ton of high-quality kelp slipped from £20 to about £9 to £10 and remained there until the early 1820s. Poor-quality kelp was hit hardest by the slump in prices, and by 1822 some grades were already sold for as low as £4 10s. After 1822 the price for high-quality kelp also came increasingly under pressure. In 1824 prices slipped to £8 per ton, in 1825 to £7 and in 1828 to £4 15s. By 1834 the market value of a ton of high-quality kelp from the Hebrides had slipped to a meagre £3.²⁰⁰ At this level kelp manufacture was no longer profitable as wages were still at about £3 to £4 per ton. The market value of kelp had declined faster than the fall of the kelp workers' wages, and this time-lapse reduced further the producers' margin of profit. Many landowners pulled out of the business, and without them as middlemen the kelp workers could not sell their products, since the landowners had controlled and monopolised the manufacture and sale. When the returns for the *New Statistical*

¹⁹⁹ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 78.

²⁰⁰ See Gray, *Highland Economy*, pp. 155-156.

Account were compiled in the 1830s and early 1840s, kelp production seems to have already been abandoned on the mainland coast. In many places in the Hebrides production had fallen considerably. Moreover, the producers now concentrated their efforts on high-quality kelp, since low-quality kelp could no longer be sold.²⁰¹

The kelp revenues from Harris exemplify how quickly things changed after 1822. In 1825 the island's net proceeds were about £2,180, in 1826 they slipped to about £800, in 1828 to about £280, and in 1829 kelp production caused a loss.²⁰² The collapse of the kelp industry was also reflected in the island's rents. When kelp had been in great demand, the rental of Harris had amounted to £7,000 per annum, but by 1837 it was reduced to £3,500.²⁰³ During the boom, rentals in the Hebrides rose quickly, but when kelp prices collapsed, the rents followed suit. In the 1790s the rental of South Uist was £2,200. At the height of the kelp boom it rose to £15,000. When the boom was over, rentals had slipped to £5,000 by 1837.²⁰⁴

The bursting of the kelp bubble hit the common islanders as hard as the proprietors. For years the wages from kelp-making had enabled the tenants to pay their rents, but wages also declined in the wake of the collapse of kelp prices. At the peak of the boom the landowners had paid more than £4 in wages per ton of kelp, but this was afterwards reduced to less than half. On Barra, for example, kelp prices had slipped from about £16 to £20 per ton to about £2 10s. to £4 per ton. At the same time the kelp workers' wages had slipped from £4 4s. per ton to about £1 15s. to £2 per ton. The local minister blamed the use of barilla and salt as substitutes for kelp for the slump in prices.²⁰⁵ On South Uist wages were reduced from between £2 12s. 6d. and £3 3s. per ton to £2 per ton in 1837.²⁰⁶ Nonetheless, kelp-making was no longer profitable, and Roderick MacLean, the local minister, reported (in 1837) for

²⁰¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

²⁰² See Mackenzie, *Outer Hebrides*, p. 549.

²⁰³ See *NSA*, vol. xiv, p. 157.

²⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, vol. xiv, p. 194. Gray reckoned, however, that between 1790 and 1815 the rents of kelp estates did not increase more than the general agricultural rents. See Gray, *Highland Economy*, p. 134. However, on the mainland estates the rise in rents was mainly due to the introduction of sheep and the improvement of the soil by methods such as draining, enclosing and the increased use of manure. On the kelp estates, in contrast, there was hardly any investment in the soil, and the rise in rents was entirely due to the rise in kelp profits. The accounts of foreign visitors have shown clearly that agriculture was neglected during the kelp boom, and that the soil suffered from a lack of manure since most of the seaweed was reduced to kelp.

²⁰⁵ See *NSA*, vol. xiv, p. 214.

²⁰⁶ See *ibid.*, vol. xiv, p. 194.

the *New Statistical Account*: 'The wages of kelp makers has [sic] been consequently reduced, and, indeed, the manufacture would not be continued at all, but to enable the tenants to pay their rents.'²⁰⁷ For the tenants it was impossible to make a living from crofting alone, since their crofts had been deliberately reduced to a size that forced them to gain additional income from kelping or fishing. Moreover, the soil was often poor and had been neglected during the kelp boom. The biggest problem in the aftermath of the kelp boom, however, was overpopulation. During the boom years, landowners had discouraged emigration since a huge workforce was required for gathering and burning the seaweed. Between 1755 and 1801 the population of the Hebrides had increased on average by 52 per cent, but when the kelp boom ebbed, the workforce far exceeded demand. Without the revenues from kelp, the islands were unable to sustain their population in spite of the large-scale introduction of potatoes. A new cycle of emigration, eviction and clearance began.

The proprietors were also hit hard. During the boom years, they had wasted their money in London and Edinburgh and had failed to invest their resources or to diversify their business operations. Their total dependence on kelp revenues was cataclysmic, and most proprietors faced severe financial trouble when the boom had come to an end. As a consequence, all major hereditary estates on the western seaboard changed hands between the 1820s and the 1850s. The Outer Hebrides, the centre of kelp manufacture, were hit hardest, and not a single estate remained in the hands of the hereditary proprietors. In 1825 the Earl of Seaforth sold Lewis to Mr Stewart-Mackenzie in order to pay off his debts. In 1844 Lewis was finally sold to James Sutherland Matheson, ending the Mackenzies' 234-year ownership of the island. MacLeod of Harris and MacNeill of Barra also lost their hereditary estates in the Long Island.²⁰⁸ Lord MacDonald had to sell North Uist (but managed to preserve some parts of his family's possessions in Skye), whereas MacDonald of Clanranald not only had to sell South Uist to Colonel Gordon of Cluny, but also lost all his

²⁰⁷ Ibid., vol. xiv, p. 194. Finlay MacRae, minister of North Uist, confirmed the lack of profitability of kelp-making. He reported (in 1837): 'Now it puts little into the pocket of the proprietor, and in many instances is only manufactured to enable the crofters to pay for their small possessions.' Ibid., vol. xiv, p. 176.

²⁰⁸ Harris was bought for £60,000 by the Earl of Dunmore. MacNeill of Barra had invested in an extensive soda manufactory on the island. However, production ran at a loss and had to be abandoned. He had to sequester his whole property for the benefit of his creditors, and in 1837 the manufactory was for sale. See *ibid.*, vol. xiv, p. 208.

possessions on the western mainland and in the Inner Hebrides. Here large parts of Skye, most of Mull, and all of Raasay, Ulva, Islay, Lismore, Rhum and Eigg changed ownership.²⁰⁹

7.2.4. Summary of the kelp industry

The kelp industry brought temporary relief to the western seaboard at a time when clanship rapidly disintegrated after the 'Forty-Five. Until the end of the eighteenth century, kelp-making became the main staple of the Outer Hebrides. In the Inner Hebrides and on the mainland coast, it did not reach a dominant position, nonetheless the tenants also became dependent on the additional revenue from it for rent income. Kelp could be produced most profitably on the shores, and the rise of the kelp industry, therefore, contributed greatly to the resettlement of tenants from the interior to the coastal strips. The crofts they were allocated were not in themselves sufficient to provide a living, forcing them to seek additional work in the kelp industry. Kelp-making required a huge workforce and, therefore, stopped emigration, which led to a sharp rise of the population in the Western Isles. The patterns of settlement on the western seaboard today are partly a result of the economic and social changes caused by the rise and fall of the kelp industry in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Kelp production also gave the potato crop a more important role in the Hebrides, since the rising population could no longer be sustained from grain and dairy products.

At the peak of the kelp boom, the great proprietors in the Hebrides earned fortunes, while the subtenants and crofters were largely excluded from these profits. The proprietors had total control of the business and raised their workers' rents in order to keep control over them and gain maximum profits. Nonetheless, the small tenants and crofters had, generally speaking, a secure income from kelping during the summer months, which enabled them to pay their rents and to buy provisions for the remainder of the year. Moreover, it reduced their dependence on the crop returns in the autumn. However, the great beneficiaries of the kelp boom were the great

²⁰⁹ See T.M. Devine, 'The Emergence of the New Elite in the Western Highlands and Islands, 1800-60', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Improvement and Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 109-110.

proprietors who had gradually taken its profits away from the tacksmen. Instead of consolidating their finances and reinvesting their revenues in their islands, they usually wasted their money in London and Edinburgh. Kelp-making was a vulnerable business, since kelp from the Hebrides was inferior in comparison to barilla from the Mediterranean, and prices fluctuated according to the availability of foreign supplies. The vulnerability of the industry became obvious in the slump in prices and the recession of the late 1780s and early 1790s when foreign imports flooded the British market. However, for most of the second half of the eighteenth century, and the early nineteenth century, Britain was at war and was cut off from foreign supplies and competition. This isolation created a rising demand for kelp from the Hebrides, but the boom ebbed when peace was restored in 1815 and foreign supplies became more easily available. Greater foreign competition and new chemical methods of producing soda from salt led to a fast decline in the kelp industry in the Hebrides in the 1820s and 1830s. Kelp-making became unprofitable and revenues collapsed. The proprietors were not prepared for the decline of the industry. Most of them became insolvent and had to sell their islands. The new owners had no familial relations with the people living on their land and often tried to get rid of the surplus population, which resulted in a new wave of emigration, evictions and clearances.

The revenues from kelp-making offered a unique chance for the development of the Hebrides. Unfortunately, the greed and imprudence of many absentee proprietors did not lead to the necessary investments in their properties. When the kelp boom had ebbed, the islands faced exactly the same economic and social problems as before this short-lived period of illusory prosperity.

8. The customs and manners of the Scots and the Highlanders

The desire to meet foreign peoples with different ways of life and strange customs has always been a major incentive for visiting foreign countries. Travellers' observations on the customs and manners of the local population are among the most interesting and fascinating features of travel literature in general. Since travellers were usually not familiar with the way of life in a foreign country, their accounts often included detailed descriptions of the customs and manners of the local population. These accounts offer a valuable contribution to our understanding of daily life in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland and the way it differed from England. Travellers' observations and their accounts are of particular importance with regard to the Highlands of Scotland. The Highlanders' Gaelic culture was mainly based on oral tradition, much of which, unfortunately, has been lost with the demise of clanship and the emigration of the Highlanders in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

8.1. The change of manners at the Scottish border

It has been shown in chapter 4 that many travellers observed a sudden change in the appearance of the countryside, the villages and their inhabitants when crossing the Anglo-Scottish border. Travellers generally agreed that the countryside north of the border was more barren and less fertile. They also claimed that the villages and their population looked poorer and less clean than those south of the border.¹ Some of these observations can be dismissed as pure propaganda or had been heavily influenced by the supposed superiority of the English civilisation and way of life over the Scottish.² Although the Anglo-Scottish border had become increasingly permeable after the Union of Crowns in 1603, and both countries finally became one nation in 1707, the people on both sides of the border retained many of their traditional customs and manners. There is a coherent pattern in the accounts of

¹ See, for example, Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 49-50.

² See, for example, the unidentified English traveller to Scotland in 1704; Joseph Taylor (1705); Jabez Fisher (1775) and Henry Skrine (1787). On crossing the border, all of them stressed that Scotland appeared like an 'uncivilised' country in comparison to the supposedly 'civilised' England. See chapter 4, note 47.

foreign visitors to Scotland, showing that certain customs, such as the people's dress, still changed abruptly at the border, even at the end of the eighteenth century. To most foreign travellers these customs were their first encounter with life in Scotland. Their observations, therefore, deserve particular attention as they illustrated the differences between England and Scotland and highlighted what made Scottishness at that time. By the end of the eighteenth century the contrasts between England and Scotland were still striking. R.L. Willis remarked (in 1793) when crossing the border into Scotland between Longtown and Langholm:

Langholm is the first Scotch village you enter, and the change of manners, dress, and character, strike most forcibly at once. It is scarce more violent at Dover and Calais, the people of either sex were in general without shoes or stockings, with a kind of stole, they call a maud, over their shoulders, and slung across like a sash. The men wore Highland bonnets, and the women, a singular cap most singularly disfiguring, called a mutch. Their faces, too, or as a sailor would say, the cut of their jibs, were different from their neighbours. The tackle of the horses underwent a change too, the bridle was of rope, and the harness curiously composed of detached pieces spliced together at odds and ends; it was a time, however, when the horses were much employed on the road.³

8.1.1. The women's and children's habit of not wearing shoes and stockings in Scotland

One of the most striking differences in the appearance of the people north of the border was in their clothes. It is a recurrent motif in travellers' accounts that neither women nor children in Scotland wore shoes or stockings, but instead preferred to go barefoot. Almost every visitor to Scotland referred to this striking difference, most of them when crossing the border into Scotland or shortly after.⁴

A small minority of travellers claimed, however, that this change in dress could already be observed in the northern counties of England long before the Scottish

³ Willis, *Tour*, p. 43.

⁴ See, for example, *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), p. 51; Warwickshire Record Office, Newdigate, 'Journal', MS. CR 136 A/563, fo. 20r.; Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, pp. 83, 114; BL, Percy, 'Tour 1773', Add. MS. 39,547, fos. 17v., 29v.-30r.; Thomson, *Prospects*, pp. 48, 50; NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fo. 105; NLS, 'M[y] Journey to Scotland', MS. 15905, fo. 9. The unidentified author of this tour in 1790 was apparently a young lady travelling with her brother and friends from Hampshire to Scotland. She complained repeatedly about this custom on the stages from Carlisle to Longtown and from Langholm to Mossbail. For further references see Lettice, *Letters*, p. 23; Michell, *Tour*, p. 64; Michaelis-Jena and Merson (eds.), *Lady Travels – Johanna Schopenhauer*, pp. 54-55; J. Mawman, *An Excursion To The Highlands Of Scotland And The English Lakes* (London, 1805), pp. 84, 93. [hereafter: Mawman, *Excursion*] In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, English satirical writers repeatedly ridiculed Scottish women for not wearing shoes and stockings and accused them of a want of cleanliness. See chapter 3.

border was reached. Marchioness Jemima Grey, for example, travelled in 1755 from Wrest Park (Bedfordshire) to Taymouth Castle (Perthshire). She observed a change in the dress of the people during the stage from Newcastle to Edinburgh and commented:

N:B: Shoes & Stockings most superfluous parts of Cloathing – quite Le Grand Superflu. Witness the numberless dirty Human animals I have seen without them from Newcastle hither.⁵

Marchioness Grey's comment may seem extreme, but it was not untypical of the attitude of eighteenth-century English visitors to Scotland. Although she had already noted the absence of shoes and stockings in the northern counties of England, most foreign visitors associated this habit particularly with Scotland and regarded it as a striking proof of the country's lack of 'civilisation'. English female travellers in particular considered the wearing of shoes and stockings as a dividing line between 'civilisation' and 'barbarity'. Mary Hanway, for example, stressed (in 1775) the contrast between the supposedly 'sophisticated' English lady and the 'primitive' Scottish woman. Her first comment about Edinburgh dealt with the appearance of the women in the streets:

On entering Edinburgh, the metropolis of Scotland, the very capital in which once resided her kings; an Englishwoman is rather struck with disgust, than pleasure – for the streets are narrow, except a very few of the principal ones; and, from the stupendous height of the houses, dark and gloomy; and what, in my opinion, most shocks English delicacy, is, to see all the streets filled with the lower class of women, that wear neither shoes nor stockings; nor can it fail to strike any female, with an air of poverty, to whom such sights are unusual. But so much has custom rendered it supportable, and even agreeable to these people, that, I actually heard a young Highland woman say, she thought the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on her was the being obliged to wear shoes; but, though she was now tolerably reconciled to them, she never could prevail on herself to bear the confinement of stays.⁶

⁵ Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, Grey, 'Northern Tour 1755', MS. L30/9A/7, fo. 30. This derogatory comment was surely influenced by her aristocratic upbringing. An unidentified English traveller to Scotland observed (in 1789) on his stage from Belford (Northumberland) to Berwick: 'Long before you enter Scotland, you are presented with the disagreeable Sight of the female Sex walking barefooted.' NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080, fo. 7v. In 1820 the German traveller Heinrich Meidinger also saw many barefooted women and children in the fields and along the roads on his stage from Alnwick (Northumberland) to Berwick-upon-Tweed. See H. Meidinger, *Briefe von einer Reise durch England, Schottland und Irland* (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1821), p. 122. [hereafter: Meidinger, *Reise*]

⁶ Hanway, *Journey*, pp. 8-10. Again, it must be stressed that these lines not only reflected a strong sense of English 'superiority', but were also the comments of an English upper class lady on common women, thus reflecting a class difference. She also made derogatory comments on the appearance of lower class women when attending a church service in the Highlands. See *ibid.*, pp. 133-134. Although there is little known about Hanway's life, she must have been well off, otherwise it would have been impossible for such a young lady to travel to the Highlands of Scotland in order to write a reply to Dr Johnson's *Journey*. In her later life she made a living as a novelist.

Such attitudes to Scottish women were not confined to female visitors from England. The comments made by Englishmen were often as harsh. The overwhelming majority of them considered the sight of women walking barefoot as disgusting or even offensive. The English landscape painter Joseph Farington, for example, described it as ‘a striking instance of remains of barbarism, as the men universally wear stockings & shoes’.⁷

At first glance, it seemed obvious to associate this custom with poverty. Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld, for example, commented in 1786 on the Scots, when returning to England from his tour of the Highlands: ‘The habit of wearing neither stockings nor shoes is, I suppose, a distressing feature of poverty.’⁸ There is, however, plenty of evidence that the women could well afford shoes and stockings, but did not do so for reason of convenience. William Thomson, for example, wrote that the Scottish women sometimes cut off their stockings deliberately,⁹ while numerous other travellers reported of their encounters with well-dressed women who held their shoes and stockings and did not put them on until they came into town. Stebbing Shaw attended (in 1787) a fair at Hamilton and had this observation on the people flocking in from the countryside:

The disgusting custom of the native women walking bare feet was on this occasion particularly striking, who were all neatly decked upwards and chiefly in white, with their shoes and stockings dangling in their hands, till they approached the place of exhibition, where they appeared with them on. Such is the effect of habit on the human frame; for scarce any thing will induce them to confine their feet in these ornaments but upon the most particular occasions. The plea of poverty cannot any longer be applied, when we behold the head and body well arrayed. Thus they expose their lower extremities to the hardships of

⁷ ECL, Farington, ‘Tour 1792’, MS. QYDA 1861.792, notebook i, fo. 6. However, the accounts are contradictory with regard to whether men in Scotland wore shoes and stockings. The majority of late eighteenth-century travellers agreed that men did wear shoes and stockings, but some travellers, such as William Thomson, claimed that men could also often be seen walking barefoot. It seems that in the Borders and Lowlands the majority of men used to wear shoes and stockings, but their percentage receded the further north travellers penetrated into the Highlands. Jabez Fisher, for example, reported (in 1775) repeatedly that women and children went mostly barefoot, but stressed that the men wore shoes and stockings. See Morgan (ed.), *Journals of J. M. Fisher*, pp. 61, 69. During his tour of the Highlands in 1801, Farington blamed the women’s ugliness, and their inferior appearance to the men, mainly on their hard labour in the fields and their exposure to the elements without hats, shoes or stockings. On the other hand, he appreciated that the children in the Highlands did not wear shoes and stockings, which, in his view, contributed to their healthy and strong constitution. See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, pp. 1664, 1655.

⁸ Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 226.

⁹ See Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 50. Thomson claimed that it was still customary among the common people in Scotland to wash the bride’s and bridegroom’s feet on the eve of the wedding. He related this ceremony to the absence of wearing shoes and stockings. See *ibid.*, p. 50.

fatigue and weather, while the meanest of the other sex enjoy the advantage of entire covering or dress.¹⁰

These observations were confirmed by numerous travellers all over the country, who also rejected the argument that walking barefoot in the countryside was linked to poverty. An unidentified English traveller in 1789 noted, for example, that the Highlanders often carried their shoes in order to spare them. He also stressed that the women in the Highlands were in general cleanly dressed ‘excepting their dirty feet which is owing to their being bare’.¹¹ The Chevalier de La Tocnaye met near Alloa (Clackmannanshire) a well-dressed woman walking barefoot, who upon his enquiry showed him her shoes, which she carried wrapped in her handkerchief. He observed that it was common practice among the ordinary women in Scotland to put on their shoes and stockings only when entering a town, and to take them off immediately after leaving.¹² This habit changed little over the years. The English dramatist and songwriter Charles Dibdin observed in 1800:

Indeed, so prevalent is the custom, that even those who, from a desire to rank better than their neighbours, indulge themselves in the luxury of arming their feet and legs against briars and tenpenny nails, are very sparing of their finery, and never fail to walk bare-foot till they arrive at the outskirts of a town, where, by the side of some rivulet, after having performed the necessary ceremony of ablution, they equip themselves in these ensigns of superiority, and trot on, consciously regarding all the bare-foot tribe as their inferiors.¹³

Like most other foreign visitors, Dibdin regarded the women’s habit of walking barefoot as disgusting and disgraceful. He commented:

I cannot resist this opportunity of reprobating in the strongest terms the revolting, not to say indecent practice in the women of going without shoes and stockings. There can be no motive for it, and, however custom may have inured them to endure it, nothing can prevail on me to believe that it is done by inclination; and, indeed, were not that admitted it must involve something more than a suspicion that Scotch women have an inclination to be very beastly, which is really not the case, for their manners though free like the French, are in general artless enough, and yet, if not to inclination, to what can this strange unfemine custom be owing? It is not to distress, for I have seen women, whom I should have supposed, by their white dresses caps, and veils, had been tricked out for a public place, had I not by accident cast my eyes upon two liver-coloured columns, for Scotch legs are pretty stout, supported by what nature had intended for human feet, but what, by the weight of the body, and by various strains and contusions, were distorted into ugly form and monstrous disproportion.¹⁴

¹⁰ Shaw, *Tour*, pp. 130-131.

¹¹ NLS, ‘A Tour in Scotland’, MS. 1080, fo. 21v.

¹² See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 204-205.

¹³ Dibdin, *Tour*, vol. ii, pp. 170-171.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 169-170.

He was well aware that it was not good conduct for travellers to criticise immediately the traditions and customs of their host nation, but he pleaded for the abolition of walking barefoot:

The numbers of barefooted ladies we met, with caps valuable enough each to have bought half a dozen pair of shoes were astonishing. It would certainly add considerably to the consequence of Scotland if this horrid custom were abolished.¹⁵

Although many women put on their shoes and stockings when they came into town, at the end of the eighteenth century the urban lower class women still walked barefoot in the streets. Mary Hanway was shocked by this custom during her visit to Edinburgh in 1775, and so was the English advocate and journalist John Stoddart when he arrived at Leith in 1799 by boat from London. He found it very disagreeable and distasteful to be confronted with the sight of neatly dressed women who trudged through the streets and entered the houses without wearing shoes and stockings. He associated walking barefoot with poverty and a want of cleanliness, but explained that it was confined in the larger towns to the poorest class of people and could not be found in the houses of the opulent.¹⁶ In the countryside, however, it was common to see the female servants of respectable families walking barefoot, and even respectable women themselves preferred not to wear their shoes until they had to put them on. At Alexandria, halfway between Dumbarton and Loch Lomond, Stoddart watched the local people flocking to church on a Sunday. He noted:

Among the rest, two beautiful young women, apparently daughters of a respectable farmer, and dressed in laced cloaks and bonnets, came very nearly to the church door barefooted; and stopping at a small brook, by the road side, washed their feet, put on their stockings and shoes, preparatorily to entering the church.¹⁷

Nineteenth-century visitors to Scotland were still astonished at seeing neatly dressed women and children in the countryside walking barefoot and carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands. In the towns, however, this custom was confined to female servants.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 174.

¹⁶ See Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, pp. 34-36.

¹⁷ Ibid., vol. i, pp. 218-219.

¹⁸ See, for example, Meidinger, *Reise*, p. 156. Meidinger also stressed that this was not due to poverty, but to tradition and convenience.

8.1.2. 'Caledonian washing'

Another typical Scottish custom that seemed very strange to foreign visitors was the way in which the women washed their linen and clothes. Instead of washing them in a river, Scottish women put them in tubs, filled them with water and began to trample on them. An anonymous English visitor to Scotland in 1704 could hardly hide his amusement at this uncouth method when he first saw it practised near Dunbar:

Their way was, they putt their linnen in a tubb about knee-high, and putt water to it, and gott into the tubb without shoes or stockings; and so standing upon their linnen, and holding vp their cloaths to their middles, to save them from soap, trode round and round vpon the linnen till the water was foul, and then poured it out and putt in clean, till the linnen was so white as they thought fitt. At first I wondered at the sight, and thought they would have been ashamed, as I was, and have lett down their cloaths till I were by; but tho' some would let them down halfe way their thighs, others went round and round, sometimes with one side towards me, and sometimes with another, without letting down their cloaths at all, or takeing any notice of me; and particularly a couple of young wenches that were washing together, at my coming by, pulled vp their cloaths the higher, and, when I was by, stood still and fell a-laughing. I was surprised at this, and was resolved to say somewhat to the next I came to, that shewed no more modesty than these had done. It happened the next was a sturdy old woman; and the water spattering vp, and the sun shineing hott on her skin, I told her she would spoile her breeches. And looke, your honour, (says she) these are but old ones; they have 2 great holes in them already: (and seeing I had not assurance enough to stand it, cryed after me) and do but see how shagg'd they are: and still, when I was at a further distance, (sayd she) When you go to England, I must gett you to buy me a new pair. So being out of the reach of her thumb and nailes, I ventured to looke back, and saw her holding vp one legg as if she meant to shew me what a dismall condition those breeches of hers were in, and still she had something to say. Spoile my breeches, brother! (quoth she.) I never durst to say any thing to any of them afterwards. In a village in this country, I saw a young wench a-washing in this manner, when an old fellow sate leaning with his elbow on his knee, and smoaking his pipe, with his nose at the very taile of her; and severall boys were playing about her, and other people were sitting at their doors hard by her; so vsuall a thing is this odd way in this country.¹⁹

This method must have been strikingly different from washing clothes in England, since it was one of the first peculiarities usually referred to by travellers on crossing the border. The Englishmen Sir William Brereton (in 1635) and John Ray (in 1661) both witnessed this method at Dunbar and prepared accounts of it.²⁰ To English visitors this method must have seemed a uniquely Scottish custom. Lord Harley observed this method of washing in 1725 at Ayton, the first Scottish village north of

¹⁹ *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV* (Edinburgh, 1818), pp. 38-40. Although this and the other descriptions by Brereton (1635), John Ray (1661), Taylor (1705), Lord Harley (1725), Burt (mid-1720s) and James Ray (1746) were all very similar, they must have been made independently since James Ray's *A Journey, Through Part of England and Scotland. Along with the Army Under the Command of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland* (London, [1746?]) was the first of these accounts published.

²⁰ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 135, 143, 150; Ray, *Memorials*, p. 153.

the border, and referred to the washing women as ‘Scotch “trampers”’,²¹ while W. Gibson simply called it ‘caledonian washing’.²² Thomas Kirk included (in 1679) a description of the women trampling and washing their linen in tubs in his satirical account or diatribe against Scotland, ridiculing the Scots’ religious feelings:

The exercise of their Arms, I shou’d say Feet, is much about Linnen; Sheets are sufferers, a fit receiver is provided (not unlike a shallow Pulpit to mind them of their Idol Sermons) wherein foul Linnen is laid to suffer persecution, so they turn up all, and tuck them about their wasts, and bounce into a Buck-tub, then go their stock, and belabour poor Lint till there be not a dry thread on’t. Hence came the invention of Fulling-Mills, the Women taught the Men, and they put in practice.²³

Most English visitors considered this method of washing primitive. Sir William Brereton questioned its effectiveness and commented on the cleanliness of Scottish linen:

Their linen is as sluttishly and slothfully washed by women’s feet, who, after their linen is put into a great, broad, low tub of water, then (their clothes being tucked up above their knees) they step into the tub and tread it, and trample it with their feet (never vouchsafing a hand to nett [to clean] or wash it withal) until it be sufficiently cleansed in their apprehensions, and then it looks as nastily as ours doth when it is put unto and designed to the washing, as also it doth so strongly taste and smell of lant and other noisome savours, as that when I came to bed I was constrained to hold my nose and mouth together.²⁴

However, in Brereton’s view, this method had a rather interesting side effect. He commented: ‘... the women only neat and handsome about the feet, which comes to pass by their often washing with their feet’.²⁵

Joseph Taylor described (in 1705) women doing their laundry in the streets of Edinburgh and added that they put their clothes together with a little bit of cow dung into the tub before they started to tread them. Like his fellow Englishman the year

²¹ Harley, ‘Journey’, p. 111. Lord Harley added that it was not unusual to see two women in the same tub trampling linen with their feet. John Slezer’s plate ‘The Prospect of ye Town of Dundee from ye East’ showed, in the foreground, several women washing and beating cloth. Two women share one tub and support one another with their arms. See J. Slezer, *Theatrum Scotiae* (London, 1693), plate no. 39. The sketch in the 1754 edition of Burt’s *Letters* also showed two women treading clothes in one tub. See also note 28.

²² W. Gibson, ‘Sketch of a Two Months Tour in Scotland, performed on Horseback in the Summer of 1773’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. lxii (London, 1792), p. 718.

²³ Kirk, *Account*, p. 5.

²⁴ Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, p. 143. Like most contemporary Englishmen, Brereton was very critical of the Scots’ cleanliness. Most English travellers refused to sleep in Scottish linen due to their fear of catching lice.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

before, he was shocked that the women did their washing in this manner in the open streets and without any manner of shame or modesty.²⁶

Since this custom seemed very strange and curious, most foreign visitors referred to it almost immediately after crossing the border. Most descriptions of washing women referred to places such as Ayton or Dunbar, which were along the main road from Berwick to Edinburgh.²⁷ However, Edmund Burt clearly stated that this custom was universal throughout Scotland, including the Highlands. He observed women doing the laundry in tubs along the banks of the Ness at Inverness. Moreover, he reported that the washing was done in this manner not only in summer,

but in the hardest frosty Weather, when their Legs and Feet are almost literally as red as Blood with the Cold; and often two of these Wenches stamp in one Tub, supporting themselves by their Arms thrown over each other's Shoulders.²⁸

In Scotland all washing seems to have been done with the feet instead of the hands. When a room or floor had to be cleaned, it was likewise done with the feet. First, a wet cloth was spread upon the floor. Then the women tucked up their skirts, stood upon the cloth and shuffled it backward and forward with their feet. This operation was repeated until the whole floor had been washed. Afterwards they washed the cloth, spread it again and wiped the floor until the dirty water was completely removed.²⁹

James Ray, a volunteer in the army of the Duke of Cumberland, reported, in September 1746, that those women in Inverness who could not afford a tub trod their clothes in the river upon a large stone under water, seldom using soap.³⁰ Like all other foreign visitors, he stressed the entertainment bystanders derived from this practice:

²⁶ See Taylor, *Journey*, p. 136. Taylor partly blamed the common occurrence of the itch in Scotland on this method of washing. He also refused to sleep in Scottish linen. See *ibid.*, p. 136.

²⁷ It must be kept in mind that this was the main road into Scotland that was used by almost every traveller until the 1750s.

²⁸ Burt, *Letters*, 1st edn. London, 1754, vol. i, p. 52. See also the drawings of female servants washing linen opposite p. 52. Reproduced in appendix no. 11. During his visit to Inverness in 1677, Thomas Kirk also noted the great number of women trampling linen and clothes in the river below the bridge. See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, pp. 27-28. See also Burrell, *Northern Tour*, p. 85.

²⁹ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 88-89. When Burt observed this method for the first time, he ordered a mop to be made and the girls to be shown the use of it. He failed, however, to persuade them to change their old method.

³⁰ See Ray, *Journey Through Part of England and Scotland. Along the Army of the Duke of Cumberland*, p. 88.

You'll see in a warm Morning, the River Edges lin'd with these Sort of Women that are Maid-servants, and frequently as many Soldiers admiring their Legs and Thighs, and particularly their Motion in treading, which always put me in mind of the Negroes dancing.³¹

By the end of the eighteenth century, treading clothes and linen in tubs was still common practice in the rural areas of Scotland.³² In the big cities, too, linen and clothes were still trod in tubs, but this work was no longer performed openly in the streets but at public wash-houses. In Glasgow, for example, public wash-houses had been built along the banks of the Clyde. These laundries provided the maids at a fixed price with hot and cold water, tubs and a piece of grass land for drying the washed linen in the sun and air. Richard Hodgkinson visited (in 1800) such a public wash-house in Glasgow, which was frequented by at least 300 women who were busy doing their laundry. He considered these houses not only as a huge step forward with regard to public hygiene and cleanliness, but they also spared the people in the streets the unpleasant sight of the 'trampers' splashing in their tubs full of dirty clothes and water.³³

8.2. The Scots' piety and their strict observance of the Lord's Day

'L'Ecosse est le Pays des Bibles – the Land of Bibles.'³⁴ Colonel de La Rochette's comment, made during his visit to Scotland in 1763, was fairly typical of the impression most foreign visitors got of the extraordinary piety and religious devotion of the Scots. Almost every visitor to Scotland wrote about the great importance of religion to the people north of the border and their strict observance of the Lord's Day.³⁵ Here, it is necessary to look at two aspects; firstly, at travellers' impressions

³¹ Ibid., p. 88.

³² See, for example, J.H. Manners, 5th Duke of Rutland, *Travels In Great Britain*, vol. ii (London, 1813), p. 170. Manners saw this custom in East Lothian in 1796. See also Dibdin, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 341.

³³ See NLS, R. Hodgkinson, 'Memorandums of a Journey into Scotland June 1800', Acc. 4848, vol. ii, fos. 15-17. In 1799 Charles Dibdin visited this public washing ground and prepared an account of it. See Dibdin, *Tour*, vol. i, pp. 340-341.

³⁴ NLS, La Rochette, 'Tour 1763', MS. 3803, fo. 57r. La Rochette reckoned that there were more than 2 or 3 million Bibles spread among Scotland's population, which was estimated at 1.2 to 1.5 million people. See *ibid.*, fos. 49v., 57r. Scots literacy was high; by the middle of the eighteenth century everybody could read (at least in the Lowlands). Bibles were used as the preferred reading primer.

³⁵ Again, these characteristics of the Scots were ridiculed in numerous satirical and polemic accounts of Scotland. See chapter 3.

of the Scots' piety and, secondly, the way in which the Scots' religious devotion affected travellers.

8.2.1. Travellers' impressions of the Scots' piety

From the time of the Reformation, Scotland was famous for the religious devotion of its people and the Church of Scotland's radical brand of Presbyterianism. Most travellers observed that north of the border religion played a far more important role in the people's life than in England.

Sir William Brereton visited Scotland in 1635.³⁶ His account reflected the increasing religious tension within the Church of Scotland and gave ample evidence of the Scots' strict brand of Presbyterianism. He reported that the introduction of English rites in the church service was opposed by most of the congregation and their ministers. In Ayr the opposition of the congregation went so far that they staged a walkout during the service on Easter Day because the local minister insisted on kneeling during communion.³⁷ Church discipline and the observance of the Lord's Day were strictly enforced upon the people. Brereton attended a service at Greyfriars Kirk in Edinburgh and observed the public shaming of several women upon the stool of repentance. He reported that adulterers had to stand over a period of one year on every Sunday upon this stool so that the whole congregation knew about their sinful behaviour. Brereton also reported that officers patrolled the streets of Edinburgh in order to apprehend those who loitered in the streets upon the Lord's Day during service and sermon-time. Those picked up were committed to the Tolbooth. The officers also searched houses, and those found tippling or gaming in church-time were committed to the prison. Those who left church before the service was finished were also detained and handed over for punishment to the bailiffs of the town.³⁸ On

³⁶ Sir William Brereton had strong Puritan leanings and subsequently distinguished himself as a general in the Parliamentary army.

³⁷ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers*, pp. 147, 156. These tensions were caused by the imminent introduction of a new Prayer Book and the rising influence of the bishops in the Privy Council. The new Prayer Book was finally introduced on 23 July 1637. It was meant to bring the liturgy of the Church of Scotland in line with that of the Church of England. However, its introduction led to walkouts and rioting, and it was abandoned within a week. The bishops were widely seen as a threat to the Presbyterian nature of the Church of Scotland. In 1640 the Scottish estates declared bishops unlawful.

³⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

Sundays services were held in the morning and in the afternoon, each of which usually lasted for about three hours. Moreover, most people stayed in church between the morning and afternoon service.³⁹

During the rule of the Covenanters, public services came to a complete standstill on Sundays and on religious festivals since the observance of the Lord's Day was enforced with the utmost strictness. The Catholic priest and missionary Gilbert Blakhal, for example, wrote that during Easter 1643 the Covenanters had forbidden all ferries to cross the Firth of Forth from Saturday noon until Monday. Blakhal finally had to ride to Stirling to cross the Forth.⁴⁰

Religious tension remained high in Scotland throughout the seventeenth century. The accounts of the preaching tours of the Quaker missionaries George Fox and Thomas Story give ample evidence of the religious fanaticism and intolerance of the mid and late seventeenth century. George Fox visited Scotland on a missionary tour in 1657. Because of his teachings he was banned from preaching by the town councils of Edinburgh and Perth, and was finally ordered to leave the country.⁴¹ Roughly half a century later, Thomas Story and his fellow missionaries Thomas Rudd and John Bowstead faced even greater difficulties. In 1692 Story and his fellow preachers travelled along the east coast from Edinburgh to Inverness. They preached in every town along the route and were often incarcerated or banned because of their teachings. In many places they had a hostile reception, and their teachings were not welcomed by the locals. In Old Nairn they were bombarded with dirt, and in Edinburgh an angry crowd threw stones at them. While preaching in the streets of Hamilton, they were beaten up and nearly lynched by an angry mob of Cameronians. The magistrates did little to protect them from the mob, and some of them, Story claimed, even participated in the violence and rioting.⁴² In the eighteenth century religious tensions slowly ebbed away. Story revisited Scotland in 1696,

³⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁰ See *A Breiffe Narration Of The Services Done To Three Noble Ladyes, By Gilbert Blakhal, Preist Of The Scots Mission In France, In The Low Countries, And In Scotland. MDCXXXI-MDCXLIX* (Spalding Club) (Aberdeen, 1844), p. 162. Despite his hatred of the Covenanters, Blakhal's narrative gives a reliable impression of the religious mania of the Covenanters' rule.

⁴¹ See Fox, *Journal*, pp. 255-260.

⁴² See Story, *Journal*, pp. 64, 73, 75. Although the Cameronians, the radical wing of the Covenanters, had become increasingly isolated and were defeated in 1679 at Bothwell Bridge, the south-west of Scotland remained a stronghold of a particularly strict Presbyterianism.

1717, 1728 and 1730, but in none of these visits did he face risks that were similar to those of his preaching tour in 1692. During his third visit to Glasgow in 1717, he even remarked that its citizens had become far more moderate than they used to be.⁴³

Other missionaries and visitors to Scotland confirmed that the Scots were still a very religious people, but their zeal and bigotry had ebbed, and towards the second half of the eighteenth century they had become more tolerant. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, made 21 tours of Scotland between 1751 and 1790, preaching to every Methodist congregation along the east coast as far as Inverness. In none of his missionary tours did he experience the zeal and fanaticism that had faced seventeenth-century missionaries.⁴⁴ In May 1764 Wesley preached on a meadow outside Dundee and summarised: 'Poor and rich attended. Indeed, there is seldom fear of wanting a congregation in Scotland. But the misfortune is, they know everything; so they learn nothing.'⁴⁵ However, many foreign visitors, and particularly those from France, still regarded the Scots' strict Presbyterianism with suspicion. The French Colonel de La Rochette described it as a very dreary religion, particularly with regard to the observance of the Sabbath, adding that it was also very receptive to bigotry and fanaticism.⁴⁶

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, most foreign visitors were still very impressed by the Scots' piety, but there were also increasing doubts about the sincerity of their religious devotion and the strict interpretation of the Bible. It seems as if a gap had opened between the display of piety in public and a softening attitude towards religion in private.

The Englishman Edward Topham spent seven months in Edinburgh in 1774-75 and noted that the ministers of the Church of Scotland were far more zealous than their English counterparts. The congregations showed a similar zeal, particularly with regard to the observance of the Sabbath. He reported that at observance hours

⁴³ See *ibid.*, pp. 91-97, 585-589, 664-666, 667-669. From 1698 until 1714 Story had lived in Pennsylvania, before he returned to London in 1714.

⁴⁴ The reception of missionaries depended of course very much on their teachings, and Methodism was surely more in line with the common belief than the teachings of other sects. Nonetheless, eighteenth-century visitors provided, generally speaking, a picture of a far more tolerant Scottish society than did the seventeenth-century visitors.

⁴⁵ Wesley, *Journal*, vol. v (London, 1914), p. 72. Like many contemporary clergymen, Wesley had a particularly low opinion of the philosopher David Hume, calling him 'the most insolent despiser of truth and virtue that ever appeared in the world'. *Ibid.*, p. 458.

⁴⁶ See NLS, La Rochette, 'Tour 1763', MS. 3803, fo. 56r.

the streets of the capital were virtually empty. To be seen in the streets after the summons of the bell, or to read any book that was not related to religion, was considered wicked and abominable. However, Topham was not very impressed by the ministers of the Church of Scotland. He accused them of preaching nonsense and absurdities from the pulpit, and was unsure whether the Scots' piety was real or merely pretended. He commented on the Scots' display of piety:

But far be it from me to say, that the Scotch nation have more real religion than the English: I only affirm, let their principles be what they may, that there is a greater appearance of regard to public worship, and more respect paid to the Sabbath.⁴⁷

The ministers of the Church of Scotland led an unenviable and unsociable life. Topham observed that the clergy were constantly being watched by the public, deprived of all enjoyments of life and liable to be deprived of their office for the slightest offence. Moreover, it was esteemed immoral for a minister to attend the theatre or places of public enjoyment. Many of them, therefore, sought pleasure at home in the bottle and drank heavily.⁴⁸

However, towards the end of the eighteenth century there were growing signs that, in the big cities at least, the strict observance of the Lord's Day was no longer taken as seriously as it had been. Most kinds of work were still considered inappropriate, but instead of devoting the Sundays to religious studies, the men at least seem to have devoted themselves exclusively to the bottle. Numerous visitors to Scotland in the 1790s and in the early nineteenth century reported that the observance of the Lord's Day had degenerated into total idleness and boredom.

⁴⁷ Topham, *Letters*, p. 191.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 237. During Topham's visit to Edinburgh the theatres were well attended, but a few years earlier the ministers used to preach against them as places of ungodliness. See *ibid.*, p. 101. William Creech confirmed that in the 1760s any clergyman who had been seen attending the playhouse would have incurred Church censure. See Creech, *Letters*, p. 33. In 1756-57 the staging of the tragedy *Douglas*, written by John Home, minister of Athelstaneford in East Lothian, caused a major scandal in Edinburgh. Alexander Carlyle, minister of Inveresk, was prosecuted by the Church for having attended the play. He became a leading figure of the Edinburgh Enlightenment, and his prosecution by the Church may be considered as a prelude to the beginning conflict between the Church and the Edinburgh Enlightenment intellectuals. In the early eighteenth century, Edinburgh society was even more firmly in the grip of the Church. At the time of Joseph Taylor's visit to Edinburgh in 1705, the Church allowed no staging of plays or other public entertainment. See Taylor, *Journey*, p. 137. The ministers were also under close scrutiny. Burt reported in the mid-1720s that ministers had been suspended for having a shoulder of mutton roasted on a Sunday morning or having powdered their wig. One minister had even been suspended for having ridden on horseback to church on a Sunday, instead of walking, in order to arrive in time for the service. His suspension, however, was lifted after lengthy deliberations by the General Assembly. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 176-178.

During his stay in Glasgow in 1793, the Frenchman La Tocnaye was made aware of the Scots' ambivalence in the observance of the Lord's Day. When he whistled a tune in his room, his landlady rushed in, closed the window and reminded him that it was inappropriate to sing, whistle or dance on a Sunday, although drinking and sleeping were accepted means of spending the day.⁴⁹ As if it had not been shocking enough to whistle on a Sunday, La Tocnaye even enquired whether there was a Catholic chapel in Glasgow. This enquiry shocked his landlady completely: '--- *Catholique!* --- a-t-elle répétée --- *Catholique!* --- en faisant une grimace comme si elle eut vu le diable --- *Catholique!* et elle est sortie de ma chambre sans dire un mot.'⁵⁰ He returned to Scotland for a second visit in 1796-97, but things had not changed for the better. He commented on the observance of the Sabbath in Edinburgh:

On observait toujours le Dimanche avec la même régularité, c'est a dire que les dames le passaient au sermon et les hommes à leur bouteille: j'ai connu un ministre qui faisait sa barbre le samedi, parce que c'est un travail que l'on répugne à faire le dimanche. Il est fort heureux qu'il ne crut pas un travail de mettre ses culottes.⁵¹

The more lenient observance of the Lord's Day in the last decades of the eighteenth century was also reflected in the Edinburghers' attitude towards the theatre. Topham reported in the mid-1770s that the clergy had until recently preached against the theatre, but in the mid-1790s the opposition against the staging of comedies had collapsed. La Tocnaye described the change of attitudes as follows:

Comme tout passe et tout change: il y a vingt ans que le peuple d'Edimbourg, démolit et brula la comédie comme l'œuvre du diable et il y va à présent (*assister au souper du seigneur*) recevoir la communion! encore vingt ans, et peut-être on jouera la comédie dans les Eglises.⁵²

Foreign visitors to Edinburgh were not the only ones who noted the decline in the Scots' piety in the later decades of the eighteenth century. The publisher William Creech, later Lord Provost of Edinburgh, confirmed their observations. He painted a particularly bleak picture of the decline in the observance of the Lord's Day in the

⁴⁹ See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 226-227.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 227. He finally attended a Catholic church service. However, it was held in Gaelic, and he did not understand a single word apart from the Virgin Mary's name.

⁵¹ La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans L'Irlande*, p. 263. John Stoddart confirmed (in 1799) that laughing and levity were looked upon as culpable, while singing or humming a tune would be subject to a severe reprimand. He also claimed that men did not shave on a Sunday. See Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, p. 145; vol. ii, p. 271.

⁵² La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans L'Irlande*, p. 262.

capital. He compared the manners of the people of Edinburgh in the 1760s to those of the 1780s and 1790s and noted a sharp decline in the citizens' piety. He complained that in 1763 the people were interested in religion, that the Sunday was strictly observed as a day of devotion and that it was disgraceful to be seen on the streets during the time of public worship. In 1783, however, church attendance was much neglected, particularly by the men, and 'Sunday was by many made a day of relaxation'.⁵³ The ministers had abandoned the visiting, catechising and instructing of the families in their parish, and, in consequence, if the people did not go to church, 'they may remain as ignorant as Hottentots, and the Ten Commandments be as little known as obsolete acts of parliament'.⁵⁴ His verdict on the decline of manners and moral in the capital was damning, claiming that drunkenness, rioting, crime and adultery had sharply risen. The number of brothels had increased twentyfold and that of prostitutes more than a hundredfold.⁵⁵

Perhaps Creech was particularly strict with his fellow citizens. Other sources suggest that religion still mattered much more in Scotland than in England at the end of the eighteenth century. John Pease, a twenty-year-old young man from the north of England, travelled to Scotland in 1795-96. He arrived in Glasgow on a Sunday and took quarters at the Tontine Inn. He observed that the coffee-room was two-thirds empty and remarked:

In England, such a place on a Sunday would be the most crowded, but in Scotland the people are more religious; at least have the appearance of being so, and many of the Subscribers would as soon go into the Clide as the Coffee-Room on Sundays.⁵⁶

⁵³ Creech, *Letters*, p. 25.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 27-32. He stressed, however, that this moral decline was not confined to Edinburgh, but could be observed throughout the big cities of Great Britain. See *ibid.*, p. 36. Creech's observations on the decline of manners in Edinburgh must have caused some publicity. Lettice, for example, included an abstract of Creech's *Letters* in the account of his tour of Scotland in 1792. See Lettice, *Letters*, pp. 525-534. A vicious, and for its time fairly unrepresentative, comment on the Scottish clergy and the piety of the people was made by the German Barthold Georg Niebuhr, then a student of mathematics and natural sciences at Edinburgh. He wrote to his fiancée Amalie in May 1799: 'Schottland steht weit und breit, und seit dem Anfang der Reformation in einem hohen Ruf von Religiösität. – Die Geistlichkeit taugt im Allgemeinen nicht. Das räumt jeder ein, der das Land kennt. Die Frömmigkeit des Volks ist meistens Augendienst, eine gewohnte Formalität ohne allen Einfluß auf Gesinnung und Handlungsweise.' B.G. Niebuhr, *Lebensnachrichten über Barthold Georg Niebuhr aus Briefen desselben und aus Erinnerungen einiger seiner nächsten Freunde* (Hamburg, 1838), vol. i, p. 235. [hereafter: Niebuhr, *Lebensnachrichten*] Niebuhr later became one of the leading German statesmen and historians.

⁵⁶ Pease, 'Journal 1795-1796', p. 41.

Other travellers had similar experiences. On his visits to Edinburgh in 1798 and 1799 the evangelist Rowland Hill, for example, often preached to immense crowds. He claimed to have preached on several occasions to up to 20,000 people on Calton Hill, and even in small rural towns, such as Keith or Huntly, several hundreds or thousands gathered to listen to him.⁵⁷

To many foreign visitors, the Lord's Day still seemed to be held in a far higher regard than they were used to at home. The people still did not want to be seen in the streets during the church service, but at home private devotion seems to have been observed to a lesser degree. Johanna Schopenhauer visited Edinburgh in 1803. On a Sunday she was picked up by a friend for a drive, but the blinds of the carriage were carefully closed so that none of the people going to church might see who was driving for pleasure on that sacred day. Musical instruments, all books of a non-religious nature, playing cards and needlework were carefully locked away out of temptation's reach. Everyone went to church and afterwards spent time at home at religious devotion. Since all diversions were forbidden, the gentlemen were left with the bottle after meals while the ladies had their tea.⁵⁸

In the big towns piety and the strict observance of the Lord's Day had undoubtedly declined in the late eighteenth century, but the countryside does not seem to have been affected by that development. The people of Skye, for example, strictly observed the Sabbath and had little sympathy for anyone travelling or doing business on the Lord's Day. The Edinburgh engineer John Baine, then on his way to survey Lochbay, had a fierce argument with a local who accused him of Sabbath-breaking if he continued his journey on the Lord's Day.⁵⁹ Moreover, travellers reported of numerous encounters with country people who were dressed in their best apparel and had walked for many miles to attend the church service. These people

⁵⁷ See R. Hill, *Journal Through The North Of England And Parts Of Scotland* (London, 1799), pp. 19, 38, 46, 51-52. [hereafter: Hill, *Journal*] See also Hill, *Second Tour*, p. 19. An immediate response to Hill's *Journal* was written by the Edinburgh minister John Jamieson, *Remarks On The Rev. Rowland Hill's Journal, &c.* (Edinburgh, 1799).

⁵⁸ See Michaelis-Jena and Merson (eds.), *Lady Travels – Johanna Schopenhauer*, p. 59. Interestingly, Schopenhauer wrote that the English observed the Sabbath as strictly as the Scots. She reported from London that music and dancing were strictly forbidden and shops, theatres and exhibitions were closed. She commented: 'The fanatical pedantry with which the sanctity of the Sabbath is guarded here, surpasses even that of the Jews who prohibit only work, not play.' Again, the ladies were bored to death on Sundays, while a 'true Englishman divides his Sunday between public worship, domestic devotions and the bottle'. *Ibid.*, pp. 162, 163.

⁵⁹ See NMS, Baine, 'Journey', MS. 914.11(093.3)*1792B, fos. 71-75.

showed a heartfelt sincerity that earned them admiration.⁶⁰ Poverty was no obstacle to piety. On the contrary, many travellers observed that the poorest sort of people showed a particular devotion to religion. Joseph Farington, for example, noted that the common Highlanders were particularly pious, and that if they had any books in their huts, they were usually the Bible or books on religious matters.⁶¹

In the nineteenth century the Scots' strict observance of the Lord's Day often attracted more criticism than praise. Many foreign visitors regarded the strict interpretation of the Sabbath to be excessive, particularly since much of the day was spent in total idleness. The German prisoner of war Georg Holzenthal summarised (in 1812) his impression of the Scottish Sunday:

Es ist so weit mit dem buchstäblichen Verstehen der Bibel gekommen, daß man z.B. unter dem **Sonntag heiligen** ein totales Müßiggehen versteht, auch die unbedeutendste Handarbeit z.B. Schreiben, Stricken u.s.w. wird für unerlaubt gehalten, für die größte Sünde aber tanzen, Musick zu machen, oder auch nur mit dem Munde zu pfeifen und zu singen.⁶²

The German historian Friedrich von Raumer was likewise critical of the Scots' observance of the Sunday. In August 1835 he visited a Presbyterian church service in Edinburgh and noted that, because of the absence of an organ and instrumental music, the singing was horribly discordant. He wondered:

It is quite an arbitrary notion to regard the employment of musical instruments as displeasing to God, or to believe that He will be more pleased with false singing than with no singing.⁶³

He was equally unimpressed by a 'lamentable hippocratic' clergyman who delivered an 'endless tapeworm of an extempore prayer' that lasted 'at least twice as long as a German sermon, but with a double portion of repetitions and tautologies'.⁶⁴ Raumer had also a strong antipathy to the hordes of preachers in the streets of Edinburgh,

⁶⁰ See, for example, Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. i, pp. 145-146; vol. ii, p. 271. See also NLS, Carlyle, 'Excursion 1775', MS. 23771, fo. 5.

⁶¹ See Garlick and MacIntyre (eds.), *Diary Of Farington*, p. 1664. Farington added that this strict piety could also be found among the Lowlanders and that religion, in general, was observed more strictly in Scotland than in England.

⁶² G. Holzenthal, *Briefe über Deutschland, Frankreich, Spanien, die balearischen Inseln, das südliche Schottland und Holland* (Berlin, 1817), p. 222. [hereafter: Holzenthal, *Briefe*] Holzenthal was a first lieutenant in the service of Schaumburg-Lippe. He was interned with captive French officers at Hawick from 1812 until his release in 1814.

⁶³ F. von Raumer, *England In 1835* (London, 1836), vol. iii, p. 172. [hereafter: Raumer, *England In 1835*] Raumer's account was originally published as *England im Jahre 1835*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1836).

⁶⁴ Raumer, *England In 1835*, vol. iii, pp. 172-173.

who taught excessively about nothing else but sin, vengeance, punishment, death, damnation, the wrath of God and the dreadful judgement of the last day. Many Scots tried to prove to him that theirs was the only proper mode of Sunday observance, but Raumer was not convinced, especially since he saw how many people indulged all too freely in whisky on the Lord's Day.⁶⁵ In Glasgow he complained about the widespread poverty for which he blamed partly the huge number of licensed liquor shops.⁶⁶ The ban on all kinds of entertainment on a Sunday and the lax licensing laws had a dreadful effect on the people. He wondered:

The people, it is said, after hearing two sermons, shall read edifying books at home. What does that mean, they *shall*? Are 1393 crowded gin-shops, in one town, the places where this *shall* – this categorical imperative – is carried into effect?⁶⁷

8.2.2. Travelling on Sundays

The strict observance of religious festivals and the Lord's Day was often a nuisance to travellers. Many Scots regarded travelling on a Sunday as Sabbath-breaking. Most visitor attractions were closed, and the boatmen and innkeepers operated only limited services or no service at all. Travellers, therefore, usually had to stay at their inn and rest on Sundays. Those who went on the road often faced difficulties in getting food at inns. John Loveday, for example, travelled (in 1732) on a Thursday from Drumlanrig to Douglas, not knowing that the sacrament was to be administered on the following Sunday. He recollected:

We encountred great hardships to day, for setting out early in ye morning, without having eaten or drunk anything, as We thought to breakfast at Lead-hills, And That affording no Entertainment yt we could digest, We were forced to travel-on wth empty Stomachs to Douglass-Mill, where it was after 12 before We arriv'd: ye Landlord & his Wife were at Kirk, It being a solemn Fast, as ye Sacrament was to be administred on ye Sunday following, so ye Wheaten-bread & Wine was lock'd up, & ye good people did not come home 'till ye Evening, when We met great numbers on foot or horseback, returning from Kirk.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 173-175.

⁶⁶ However, the figures he gave do not suggest an extraordinary level of poverty in Glasgow. He claimed that around 5,000 inhabitants out of a population of 202,000 were classified as poor and that £17,280 was required to maintain them. See *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 183.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 184.

⁶⁸ Loveday, *Diary*, pp. 113-114. The administration of the sacrament must have been a very special religious ceremony. Travellers reported that in many parishes the sacrament was administered only once a year. It was preceded by a church service on Thursday and followed by another service on Monday. At these occasions huge crowds flocked to the church, and the inns and shops were closed. See, for example, NLS, Gastrell, 'Journey', Acc. 5741, fo. 54 (in 1760 at Perth); NLS, Dawson, 'Tour 1786', Acc. 12017, fo. 26 (in 1786 at Perth); NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3294, fos. 60-61 (in 1787 at

In 1772 Joseph Banks happened to land on Islay just at the time when the sacrament was being administered. Such was the confluence of the people from all over the island that although three clergymen officiated by turns, the communicants passed and re-passed until after six o'clock. Banks was obviously not aware of the great importance of this day for the islanders and nearly made a huge mistake. He recollected:

This whole day it rained immoderately to which circumstance chiefly we owe the preservation of our characters for had we done any kind of work even walkd out botanizing on a day held so sacred in this countrey the black seal would have been irreversibly set upon us.⁶⁹

Travelling, therefore, (by land or sea) usually came to a halt on Saturday evening and was not resumed until Monday morning, the Sunday being a lost day. Since any work was forbidden, innkeepers and their servants often refused to serve travellers. An unidentified English visitor travelled on a Sunday in 1789 from Arrochar to the Inverarnan Inn at the northern extremity of Loch Lomond. He noted about the reception at the inn:

Reach a small dirty public House called Ault Arnin Inn [Inverarnan], just upon the Edge of Perthshire, where (as Dr. Johnson somewhere says) the List of negatives was very copious; no Mutton, no Beef, no veal, no Bread, no fish, and in short nothing but Oatcakes and butter. The religious Folly (I can call it nothing else) of these people is astonishing: It being sunday, every one that cou'd talk English was gone to Church / 8 miles distant /, so that I was entirely to trust to the very small smattering of Erse, that I had picked up, to make myself understood; with this however / after having mentioned the above negatives / and a few signs, I made shift to ask if they had any Chickens, to which they answered in the Affirmative; I then desired them to dress one, but instead of obeying, they spoke something, the meaning of which I cou'd not guess; soon after the Hostler who talked good English came home and explained the matter by telling me, that tho' they had Chickens they cou'd not think of dressing them on a Sunday.⁷⁰

Despite torrential downpours, he was not served a warm meal and had to ride back to Arrochar. Other travellers were luckier as they at least got a warm meal in the

Leuchars, Fife); Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, pp. 179, 224 (in 1796 at Perth and at Inverness). In the Kirk, even today, the sacrament is administered only once a month (St Machar's, Aberdeen, 2002).

⁶⁹ Rauschenberg (ed.), 'Banks's Voyage', p. 201.

⁷⁰ NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080, fos. 23v.-24v. In 1746 the English soldier James Ray had a similar experience. In observance of the Lord's Day the keeper of the post-house at Keith (Banffshire) refused to prepare any meat for dinner. Ray could not get any food apart from one or two eggs with some wine or thick ale because 'their [the Scots'] seeming Strictness in Religion will not let them do any Labour, even so much as dressing a Dinner of Fowls or Meat for themselves or Travellers'. Ray, *Journey Through Part of England and Scotland. Along the Army of the Duke of Cumberland*, p. 97.

evening. John Macky, for example, landed on a Saturday night from the Isle of Man at Kirkcudbright and took quarters in the local inn.

Next Day I expected, as in *England*, a piece of good Beef or a Pudding to Dinner; but my Landlord told me, that they never dress Dinner on a *Sunday*, so that I must either take up with Bread and Butter, a fresh Egg, or fast till after the Evening Sermon, when they never fail of a hot Supper. Certainly no Nation on Earth observes the Sabbath with that Strictness of Devotion and Resignation to the Will of God: They all pray in their Families before they go to Church, and between Sermons they fast; after Sermon every Body retires to his own Home, and reads some Book of Devotion till Supper, (which is generally very good on *Sundays*); after which they sing Psalms till they go to Bed.⁷¹

It was no coincidence that travellers who dared to set out on a Sunday faced particular difficulties in the south-west of Scotland. In the seventeenth century, Dumfriesshire, Galloway, Lanarkshire and Ayrshire had been strongholds of the Covenanters. Although the radical Covenanters in the south-west had been defeated by 1679, many elements of their strict brand of Presbyterianism seem to have survived well into the eighteenth century. Daniel Defoe reported in the early eighteenth century:

It is the Honour of *Scotland*, that they are the strictest Observers of the Lord's-Day of any Nation in the World; and, if any part of *Scotland* are more strict Observers of it than the Rest, it is in this Part, and all the Country from *Dumfries*, and the Parts adjacent to *Glasgow*, and the *Clyde*, inclusive of both, the Towns of *Dumfries* and *Glasgow*; and tho' this Country of *Galloway* may be the poorest and empty of Commerce, it is, perhaps, the most religious Part of all *Scotland*. Some People, I know, will not think that an Equivalent for their Poverty; as to that, let every Body think for themselves; 'tis my Business only to relate the Fact, and represent Things as they are.⁷²

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, some visitors, at last, had serious doubts about the Scots' piety and their observance of the Sabbath. An unidentified traveller made the following recommendation in 1785:

Every Traveller should cautiously examine his Horseshoes on the Saturday for a Scotchman will not work (without a good Bribe) on a Sunday for they affect to be wonderfully religious.⁷³

⁷¹ Macky, *Journey*, pp. 3-4. Macky probably travelled in the early 1720s.

⁷² Defoe, *Tour*, vol. iii, pp. 69-70. As a dissenter, Defoe was particularly aware of all aspects concerning religion. The observance of the Lord's Day was particularly strict in Glasgow. Bishop Poccoke reported (in 1760) that all people attended church service since they were forbidden to walk out on Sunday in company. The Sunday observance was enforced on behalf of the magistrates by so-called 'compurgators' who apprehended and publicly prosecuted Sunday desecrators. See Poccoke, *Tours*, p. 51.

⁷³ NLS, A.L., 'Tour 1785', Acc. 10285, [fo. 6r.].

Whether in the late eighteenth century the Scots' strict observance of the Sabbath was genuine or pretended can only be decided on an individual basis, but for travellers the Sundays remained a nuisance. Travelling was not only regarded as Sabbath-breaking, but most attractions were also closed to the public. In 1786 Eliza Dawson was denied access to Edinburgh Castle because of the Sabbath.⁷⁴ Robert Burns made (in 1787) a similar mistake when he hoped to get access to the Carron Iron Works on a Sunday. It is no surprise that his request was denied, and Burns is said to have scribbled the following epigram with a diamond on a window of the inn at Carron:

We cam na here to view your warks
 In hopes to be mair wise,
 But only, lest we gang to hell,
 It may be nae surprise:

But whan we tirl'd at your door,
 Your porter dought na hear us;
 Sae may, should we to hell's yetts come,
 Your billy Satan sair us!⁷⁵

In the remote parts of Scotland the strict observance of the Sabbath is still practised in the twenty-first century. There were neither ferry nor flight connections to Stornoway (Lewis) on Sundays until October 2002. Shops and businesses remained closed on the island, and the introduction of a Sunday flight connection was strongly opposed by the local Free Church, which feared for the traditional observance of the Sabbath and argued that travelling on Sundays is against God's law.

8.3. The customs and manners of the Highlanders

Most foreign visitors noticed an immediate change in the customs and manners of the people when they crossed from England into Scotland. Those travellers who extended their tours to the Highlands of Scotland observed a similar change in the behaviour of the people when they left the Lowlands and entered the Highlands. It is now necessary to examine the way in which the customs and manners of the

⁷⁴ See NLS, Dawson, 'Tour 1786', Acc. 12017, fo. 19.

⁷⁵ Quoted in Chambers (ed.), *Life And Works Of Robert Burns*, vol. ii, p. 115.

Highlanders differed from those of the Lowlanders. What did foreign visitors experience as typically Highland-like?

The English traveller Henry Skrine gave a striking example of the difference in manners between the Lowlanders and the Highlanders. He toured Scotland in 1787 and commented:

It must be confessed, however, that the common people of Scotland are more than a century behind the English in improvement; and the manners of the Lowlanders in particular cannot fail to disgust a stranger. All the stories that are propagated of the filth and habitual dirtiness of this people are surpassed by the reality; and the squalid unwholesome appearance of their garb and countenances, is exceeded by the wretchedness that prevails within their houses. Their manners are equally unpleasant, being uncommunicative and forbidding in the extreme; and whole groups of villagers fly from the approach of a traveller, like the most untamed of savages.⁷⁶

The Highlanders, in contrast, were completely different people:

The Highlanders, a manly, bold, and hardy race, are courteous in their manners, civil in their address, and hospitable to the utmost extent of their little power. Their houses it is true are mean and inconsiderable; but within they are often as clean as their poverty will allow; and their doors are never closed against the necessities or curiosity of a stranger.⁷⁷

John Campbell gave (in 1752) further examples of the Highlanders' great hospitality. He stressed that their way of entertaining guests and strangers was far superior to the entertainment to be found in the Lowlands. Instead of wasting their own and their guests' time and money in games of cards or dice, the Highland gentlemen offered their guests true hospitality. He reported that strangers were welcomed by the host's whole family and seated in a chair near the fire to warm themselves. A servant provided them with clean stockings and shoes while their dirty clothes and shoes were cleaned. In the meantime a sheep was killed for the broth and the host urged his guests to eat their fill. At bedtime the servants prepared beds of clean straw and blankets for their master's guests. The next morning travellers were provided with breakfast and if they set out before the break of dawn, the master ordered a servant to accompany them until clear daylight. For all their kindness, Campbell claimed, the Highlanders expected no reward unless a pinch of snuff, a chew of tobacco and some news, of which they were mighty fond.⁷⁸ This undoubtedly contributed to their legendary hospitality to strangers and travellers.

⁷⁶ Skrine, *Tours*, p. 71.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷⁸ See Campbell, *Description*, pp. 20-23.

8.3.1. The Highlanders' extraordinary curiosity and communicativeness

'O novelty how does thou govern the world!'⁷⁹ Jacob Patisson's comment on the Highlanders' desire for news and information was typical of the experiences of many visitors to the Highlands. Travellers unanimously reported that the Highlanders' curiosity was unrivalled.

Richard Sullivan witnessed (in 1778) a striking example of the Highlanders' thirst for news. While travelling from Dalmally to Inveraray, he observed a Highlander driving his cart upon a steep bank while reading, at the same time, a newspaper, which, Sullivan assumed, was 'probably "as old as the hills"'.⁸⁰ The Highlander was reading the paper so eagerly that he neither saw Sullivan passing by nor realised that his cart was gradually overturning, spreading its content all over the bottom of the bank. Once he had brought his cart back on the road, he turned his attention again to his paper 'as if his very existence depended upon it'.⁸¹

Wherever Highlanders happened to meet travellers, they accompanied them for miles, eager to get news about anything that had happened in the outside world.⁸² They were not necessarily interested in the latest news, but such was the demand that any news would do. Jacob Patisson met a local farmer on Mull 'whose Eyes sparkled at the sight of us, & whose ears tingled for Information' and who desired to know 'how matters were going on in our world!'⁸³ Patisson was not quite sure whether to brief him on politics, agriculture or religion, so he informed him about the recent war with the French, Lord George Gordon's confinement in the Tower and the harvest in the Lowlands. Whatever topic Patisson raised seemed to satisfy him. After walking a little way back with the travellers and having stilled his thirst for news, he finally left them without taking leave.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 39.

⁸⁰ [R. Sullivan], *Observations Made During A Tour Through Parts Of England, Scotland, And Wales* (London, 1780), p. 223.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁸² The Highlanders even neglected their farm work in order to accompany travellers and get news from them. See J.L. Buchanan, *A Defence Of The Scots Highlanders* (London, 1794), p. 88. [hereafter: Buchanan, *Defence*]

⁸³ NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 39.

⁸⁴ See *ibid.*, fo. 39. Lord George Gordon was the president of the Protestant Association, formed to secure the repeal of the Act by which (in 1778) the Catholic disabilities imposed by the statute 11 and 12 William III had been removed. Meetings of this body became violent and resulted in severe anti-Catholic riots in London in early June 1780. In the riots criminals were freed, and prisons were set

Fortunately, the Highlanders' fondness of news and tobacco was so well known that travellers could easily prepare themselves for their journey. James Bailey, a Yorkshireman, visited the Highlands in 1787. When he approached a Highland village of eight to ten huts, on the road from Fort Augustus to Ratagan, he suddenly found himself surrounded by more than twenty Highlanders who were eager for news, tobacco and snuff. Bailey had provided himself with ample supplies of each and remarked: 'These things may be considered, like the salt of the Arabs, as the symbols of amity, and to ask or bestow them, are equally friendly.'⁸⁵ He had also learnt the necessary Gaelic phrases to enquire about the distances between his stages and to shake off the locals in case they should become too importunate:

Since it is natural for those who live in parts remote and sequestered to be solicitous about the quid novi, I was also apprized that, as a matter of course, I should be interrogated, in my turn, with "quati err naiseh?" Have you any news? to which I might answer "Haniel tat", Not any", when I should be suffered to pass on.⁸⁶

The curiosity and communicativeness of the country people was so well known that some travellers even played jokes upon them. On his way from Fochabers to Elgin, the Frenchman La Tocnaye met a local farmer who wanted to know from which country he was. La Tocnaye replied (just for fun) that he was from Turkey, whereupon the farmer insisted that he must be a physician. La Tocnaye initially denied this, but he soon changed his mind. Once he had 'admitted' to being a physician, the farmer bombarded him with questions concerning the health of his wife and children. La Tocnaye played the game and replied with medical clichés that obviously satisfied the farmer. For the next stages of his tour he had to stick to this role, since the farmer had told everyone along the road that a Turkish physician was in the area. Wherever La Tocnaye called, the locals gathered to see him, and he was not happy about his newly acquired celebrity status. He finally fled the inn before his disguise could be detected.⁸⁷

alight. The riots were finally quelled by government troops. Gordon was sent to the Tower and imprisoned until his trial for high treason in February 1781. There was no proof that he had approved the riots, and he was acquitted. See *DNB*, vol. viii, pp. 197-198.

⁸⁵ NLS, Bailey, 'Journey', MS. 3295, fo. 194.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 121. Such a precaution was truly useful as travellers often reported that on the first noise of a carriage whole families, men, women and children, turned out of their huts to meet the passing travellers. See, for example, Pease, 'Journal 1795-1796', p. 50.

⁸⁷ See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 261-264.

The Highlanders' inquisitiveness was not confined to accompanying travellers for miles in search of news. The Revd John Lanne Buchanan reported that the Hebrideans boarded without delay every vessel that came into their harbour. If no foreign vessel had docked for some time, the islanders sometimes went to sea and searched for vessels passing their coasts in order to get news from their crews.⁸⁸

In the early nineteenth century the Scots still had a reputation for their curiosity and great communicativeness.⁸⁹

8.3.2. The Highlanders' fondness for tobacco and snuff

And now Tobacco, that base stinking weed,
That Indian witchcraft, smoaking in their head;
Turnes Virile Acts, and delicat discourse
To pot, and Pypes, reciprocally recourse:
Nay; they're so bent, though when its spent to flashes,
They'll smoake it out, even Asses, sucking Ashes,
It was a damn'd devyce, a fatall curse,
To honesty, and health, and to the Purse,
It spoyles their Memory, and blinds their sight,
Dryes up the moisture of the Carnall Wight.
Some take it for the fashion, some for Rheume,
Some for the Tooth-ach, othirs for the fleume:
Some for the Head-ake, some for Melancholy;
Some for to sharp their wits, and banish folly:
Some for their Pallet, in their warbling throt,
Some for good fellowship, to Pype and Pot.
Then here's the slavrye of this slabby sin,
Another Pype, another Pot, brings in.
Some Ladyes too, have head-akes in their Toes
And for remeed, takes Physick at their Nose:
Some suck it stinkingly, and with distast,
And yet forsooth, they take it to live chaste,
Mixt with Perfums, and Oyles, sweet seeds, and snuff,
They swallow downe in gluts this Pagane stuff.⁹⁰

The Highlanders' fondness for tobacco and snuff was as great as their desire for news. Tobacco and snuff were so popular among them that they could even be used as a form of currency.

⁸⁸ See Buchanan, *Defence*, p. 89.

⁸⁹ See, for example, Holzenthal, *Briefe*, p. 215.

⁹⁰ W. Lithgow, 'Scotland's Welcome to her Native Sonne and Sovereigne Lord King Charles', quoted in Hume Brown (ed.), *Scotland Before 1700*, pp. 293-294. The Scot William Lithgow, the farthest-travelled man of his generation, wrote this poem in 1633 about his countrymen.

Since the mid-seventeenth century the geographical descriptions of Scotland referred to the Scots', and particularly to the Highlanders', love of tobacco. James Brome visited Scotland in 1669 and reported that the Highlanders were great lovers of tobacco and 'a little Mundungo will make them at any time very serviceable and officious'.⁹¹ Thomas Morer visited Scotland in 1689 and wrote about the Scots' addiction to tobacco and particularly to snuff:

They are fond of *Tobacco*, but more from the *Snush-Box* than *Pipe*. And they have made it so necessary, that I have heard some of 'em say, That should their Bread come in competition with it, they would rather Fast than their Snush should be taken away. Yet mostly it consists of the coarsest [sic] *Tobacco*, dried by the Fire, and powdered in a little Engine after the form of a *Tap*, which they carry in their Pockets, and is both a *Mill* to grind, and a *Box* to keep it in.⁹²

His observations were confirmed by John Loveday. He noted during his tour of Scotland in 1732 that he had not seen a smoker or a pipe in Scotland, 'yet they consume vast quantities of Tobacco, for there are None from ye richest to ye poorest but Who take Snuff at a most immoderate rate'.⁹³ The snuff-mill soon became an integral part of the Highlanders' dress. It was fastened at the belt and worn like a purse in front of the plaid.⁹⁴ In the Outer Hebrides the men commonly chewed their tobacco and kept it in leather bags made of sealskin. These bags were called 'spleuchans' and kept the tobacco soft and tasty. The old women ground their tobacco into snuff and kept it in sea nuts, which grew on the large tangles or red seaweed. These nuts were about seven inches in circumference and half an inch thick. The kernel was carefully removed through a small round hole made for the purpose. The women shook the snuff out of this hole on the palms of their hands and applied it with a pen made for the purpose. These shells or nuts were very precious, and the richer sort of people bound them in silver.⁹⁵

Those Highlanders who lived close to the Lowlands purchased their tobacco in the market towns on the fringes of the Lowlands. John Walker met (in 1674) great numbers of Highlanders in Perth who came down from the hills in order to barter

⁹¹ Brome, *Travels*, p. 184. Brome's description of the Highlanders was mainly plagiarised from Boece.

⁹² Morer, *Account*, p. 20.

⁹³ Loveday, *Diary*, p. 165.

⁹⁴ See Essex Record Office, Mildmay, 'Journal', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326, fo. 40.

⁹⁵ See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 107-109.

dirks, poultry and other small traffic for tobacco.⁹⁶ In the interior of the Highlands and in the Hebrides, the supply of tobacco was scarcer, and the locals often accompanied travellers for miles in the hope for a piece of it.⁹⁷ To many poor people in the remoter parts of the Highlands, tobacco must have been very expensive, and passing travellers were often the only source of supply. Travellers unanimously reported that the Highlanders hardly ever begged them for money or food, but they were frequently asked for tobacco or snuff.⁹⁸ John Lanne Buchanan provided a graphic example of how dear tobacco was in the remoter parts of the Highlands. He reported from the Outer Hebrides that the gentlemen filled their noses with long quids of it ‘and these, when thrown away, are gathered carefully by the poorer sort, for a second turn’, adding that servants sometimes spent their whole yearly wages on tobacco.⁹⁹

Travellers to the north of Scotland were, therefore, well advised to provide themselves with a sufficient supply of snuff for the Highlanders. Edward Lhuyd recommended, around 1700, that ‘Snuff is useful amongst them to make acquaintance’,¹⁰⁰ and many travellers followed his advice since tobacco and snuff were the only rewards that the Highlanders would usually accept for their services. Johnson and Boswell, Jacob Pattison, James Bailey, Lord Mountstuart and the Chevalier de La Tonnay provided themselves with snuff before they set out for the Highlands.¹⁰¹ Travellers usually rewarded the Highlanders with tobacco when they stopped at their huts and were offered bannocks, cheese and milk, when they were guided and accompanied on difficult sections of the road or had to be carried over swollen rivers. John Lanne Buchanan reported in the 1780s from the Outer Hebrides: ‘In passing to and from the islands, tobacco is necessary to a gentleman, if he wishes

⁹⁶ See Somerset Record Office, Walker, ‘Journey 1674’, MS. DD/WHb3087, [fo. 5].

⁹⁷ See, for example, NLS, Pattison, ‘Tour 1780’, MS. 6322, fo. 42.

⁹⁸ See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 68, 90-91; Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 107; Anderson, *Tour*, pp. 42-43; Meißner, *Reise*, p. 223.

⁹⁹ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 107.

¹⁰⁰ Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 45. It is interesting to note that Martin Martin, who wrote at much the same time as Edward Lhuyd, mentioned a tobacco plantation on Barra. He reported that ‘some years ago Tobacco did grow here, being of all Plants the most grateful to the Natives, for the Islanders love it mightily’. Martin, *Description*, p. 91. However, there is no other contemporary evidence for this plantation, and it seems to have been a short-lived experiment.

¹⁰¹ See Johnson, *Letters*, vol. ii, p. 74; NLS, Pattison, ‘Tour 1780’, MS. 6322, fo. 42; NLS, Bailey, ‘Journey’, MS. 3295, fos. 193-194; NLS, Lord Mountstuart, ‘Journal 1788’, MS. 9587, fo. 1; La Tonnay, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, p. 258.

to avoid both delay and imposition.’¹⁰² He added that in order to avoid gross charges any knowing man would distribute his tobacco liberally and could thus be sure of a speedy and very cheap passage through the islands.¹⁰³

Even in the most remote places, such as St Kilda, the Highlanders soon became addicted to tobacco. Kenneth Macaulay visited the island in 1758 and reported that the islanders had ‘a most violent passion for tobacco; a branch of luxury, of which the total want of that commodity can only cure them’.¹⁰⁴ The islanders bought their annual supply of this article from the steward. Despite their strong appetite, they had to manage their supply very carefully as it was impossible to procure a new supply until the steward’s return in a year’s time. To the St Kildans tobacco was as indispensably as salt, iron and timber, and they bartered away their cows, sheep, grain and feathers to procure it.¹⁰⁵

Many travellers, however, considered the Highlanders’ consumption of snuff excessive. W. Gibson, for example, reported that they took their snuff from a quill, which was shaped like a toothpick. From this instrument, he was told, they sometimes snuffed up five or six pinches in immediate succession ‘without any visible irritation or discomposing effect’.¹⁰⁶

Nothing illustrates the Highlanders’ fondness for snuff and whisky better than an anecdote related by La Tocnaye. A Highlander was asked what he would imagine to be the greatest joy in his life. After a short pause for deliberation he answered: ‘A kirk fu’ o’ sneeshin, an’ a well o’ whisky.’ He was then asked what he would wish for if this had been fulfilled. He replied: ‘Mair sneeshin, an’ mair whisky.’¹⁰⁷

However, there were also very critical voices to be heard in the Highlands. At Inverness a gentleman of the medical profession informed Thomas Garnett that cancers were very common in that country, particularly among the labouring class of people. This complaint affected mainly the lips, tongue and nose, and the physician

¹⁰² Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 107.

¹⁰³ See *ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁰⁴ Macaulay, *History*, p. 223.

¹⁰⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁰⁶ W. Gibson, ‘Sketch of a Two Months Tour in Scotland, performed on Horseback in the Summer of 1773’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. lxiii (London, 1793), p. 221.

¹⁰⁷ La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 281-282.

rightly suspected that the Highlanders' huge consumption of unadulterated whisky, snuff and tobacco contributed its share towards these diseases.¹⁰⁸

8.3.3. The Highlanders' fondness for whisky

The fondness of a Highlandman for whiskey is proverbial; but perhaps it was never more forcibly expressed, than by a man of this neighbourhood [Braemar], who said "he was aye wae, when the taste was out of his mouth."¹⁰⁹

Since the sixteenth century it was common for travellers to comment on the drinking habits of the Scots. Most visitors remarked that the Scots in general drank to excess far more than the English.¹¹⁰ Thomas Kirk's tour of Scotland in 1677 gives an idea of the extent to which drinking was common among the gentlemen and ordinary people. Kirk hardly ever left his hosts in a sober state as they usually entertained him with drink until the small hours. As a result, he and his company often had difficulty in safely continuing their journey on horseback.¹¹¹

The Highlanders had a particular reputation for their fondness for alcohol and their hard drinking. Martin Martin travelled through the Hebrides in the 1690s. His account of the drinking customs of the Hebridean clan nobility speaks volumes, although he claimed that these drinking binges had recently been abolished:

The manner of Drinking used by the Chief Men of the Isles, is called in their Language *Streah*, i.e. a *round*, for the Company sate in a Circle, the Cup-bearer filled the Drink round to them, and all was drank out, whatever the Liquor was, whether strong, or weak; they continued drinking sometimes twenty four, sometimes forty eight hours: It was reckon'd a piece of Manhood to drink until they became drunk, and there were two Men with a Barrow attending punctually on such Occasions. They stood at the door until some became drunk, and they carried them upon the Barrow to Bed, and returned again to their Post as long as any continued fresh, and so carried off the whole Company one by one as they became drunk. Several of my Acquaintance have been Witnesses to this Custom of drinking, but it is now abolish'd.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. ii, pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁹ Stoddart, *Remarks*, vol. ii, p. 169. Stoddart added that at Blair Atholl 'Athol brose', a mixture of whisky, honey and eggs (nowadays the eggs are often replaced by oatmeal), was considered as an indispensable dainty in feasts and an important addition to the 'materia medica'. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 182.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Moryson, *Itinerary*, part iii, p. 156. Generally speaking, the Scots also drank a lot of wine, but in comparison to the English they, and particularly the Highlanders, drank more Whisky instead of sherry, port or beer.

¹¹¹ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, pp. 24-26, 33, 34, 39, 45.

¹¹² Martin, *Description*, p. 106. Edward Lhuyd provided a very similar account of the drinking habits of the Highland nobility. He also stressed that the drinking binge was not finished until all spirits were emptied. See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 50.

He added that among persons of distinction it was reckoned an affront to broach a cask of wine, ale or whisky and not to see it all consumed at one meeting. If anyone left the drinking round, if only for a few minutes,

he is obliged upon his return, and before he take his Seat, to make an Apology for his absence in Rhyme, which if he cannot perform, he is liable to such a share of the Reckoning as the Company thinks fit to impose; which Custom obtains in many Places still, and is called *Beanchiy Bard*, which in their Language signifies the Poets congratulating the Company.¹¹³

When men of distinction met for business or drinking, they retired to a house. The door was left open, but a rod was put across it that signalled to travellers that common people were not welcome to participate. If a commoner entered despite this sign, it was reckoned as a major affront to the company, and the intruder was forcefully removed.¹¹⁴

The Highlanders' love of whisky was well known to travellers, and many of them carried a bottle (or more) along to reward the Highlanders on special occasions. Martin Martin, for example, reported that the oarsmen on his passage to St Kilda were given so much whisky to support them that upon their arrival at Boreraay scarcely anyone of the crew was sober enough to manage cable or anchor.¹¹⁵

Edmund Burt related several anecdotes from the 1720s about the excessive drinking of the Highlanders. He reported that it was usual for some of the gentlemen to drink three or four quarts of whisky at a sitting. He claimed that those who could afford it drank without moderation. He mentioned a drinking bout between four English officers and the same number of Highland gentlemen. The parties consumed huge quantities of whisky, and the English stood no chance against their hosts. One English officer got a fit of gout, another got a very dangerous fever and a third lost skin and hair by the handful. The fourth confessed to Burt that, when drunkenness and debate ran high, he often pretended to be drunk.¹¹⁶ The Highlanders explained to Burt that the nature of their country necessitated hard drinking, but he reckoned that

¹¹³ Martin, *Description*, pp. 106-107.

¹¹⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 107. In the Highlands two crossed sticks at the door of a house or hut was a sign that the people inside did not want to be disturbed by travellers. When the door was left open, travellers were welcome. See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part ii, p. 49.

¹¹⁵ See Martin, *Voyage*, p. 7. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the oarsmen who rowed travellers to Mull or Staffa expected a few bottles of whisky for consumption during the passage as part of their payment.

¹¹⁶ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 161.

they mistook a habit and custom for necessity. The collector of customs at Stornoway informed him that about 120 families drank yearly 4,000 English gallons of whisky and brandy. Given that many of these families were too poor to afford huge quantities of these spirits, the more prosperous remainder must have been drinking even more immoderately. Children were not exempted from heavy drinking, as from the age of six or seven they were frequently given as much spirits at a time as an ordinary wine glass would hold.¹¹⁷

The anecdote related by La Tocnaye has illustrated the Highlanders' fondness for whisky, and most travellers were astonished (if not shocked) at the vast quantities of that liquor that were consumed in the Highlands. Many travellers observed that it was common practice in the Highlands to begin the day with a glass of whisky. James Robertson noted (in 1768) that on Skye the islanders drank a great deal of spirits and those who could afford it 'seldom or never neglect taking a good bumper in the morning, even some go the length of taking their morning freaghk fraughk in moderation'.¹¹⁸ The Hebrideans considered a large bumper of whisky in the morning as a necessary 'corrector' for the moist climate of their islands.¹¹⁹ Dr Johnson confirmed this practice, but he added that the Highlanders were 'not a drunken race ... but no man is so abstemious as to refuse the morning dram, which they call a *skalk*'.¹²⁰ Johnson did not know whether the women also took a 'skalk' in the morning, but Nathaniel Phillips reported (in 1791) of Mr Drimnin, his host at Drimnin in Morvern: 'Servants without Caps, or Hats, Shoes, or Stockings – Every Morning the first thing done, is drinking a dram of Whiskey – women, as well as the men.'¹²¹ George Douglas confirmed (in 1800) that it was part of the Hebrideans' hospitality to offer their guests a glass of whisky in the morning. Before sitting down to breakfast, Mr Stewart, his host at Aros on Mull, served 'a glass of mountain dew', and none of the men and women of Douglas's party declined the offer.¹²² Douglas

¹¹⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 161-162.

¹¹⁸ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 85. Freaghk fraughk, friochd is a bumper of whisky. See *ibid.*, p. 105.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹²⁰ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 123.

¹²¹ NLS, Phillips, 'Scottish Journey 1791', Acc. 8311, fo. 21.

¹²² Douglas, *Tour*, p. 29. See also Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 120.

reckoned that ‘the moistness of the climate requires this antidote’ and that it did not do any harm if consumed moderately.¹²³

Entertaining one’s guests with food and drink had always been a sign of good hospitality, particularly in the Highlands where inns were scarce and travellers depended on the hospitality of the local population. Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld had spent a year in Suffolk before he set out for a tour of the Highlands in 1786. He explained the importance of drinking in Highland hospitality:

All the highlanders are very polite. The grandees and gentlemen are even flattered if you call to see them at home, and they won’t let you go without having drunk your health with you – another of their customs. They all seem to drink, and their drinks are rum, brandy and what they call *whisky*. It is distilled from grain and they drink truly unbelievable quantities of it.¹²⁴

The Scots’ drinking habits must have been quite different from those of the English. On his return to England La Rochefoucauld compared the Scots to the English and summarised his observations on Scotland. He confirmed the culture of heavy drinking north of the border, but he did not consider it as a deficiency of the Scots’ character. On the contrary, it made them an even more loveable people:

The Scots have great courage and would do anything for what they call “a dram of whiskey”, that is, about two glasses of whiskey, which is distilled from grain and of such potency that I could only manage half a glass. But the Scots drink great quantities and can do nothing without “a drop”. Here they start drinking from the moment they wake up: a stable-boy can’t start working with his horses until he’s drunk the usual “drop”: very different from the stable-boys of England, where they don’t drink till after dinner, but then make up for lost time. But I must say I find the Scots a fine, good people, fit for anything. They are free people, too “new” to be extremely polished.¹²⁵

¹²³ Douglas, *Tour*, p. 29.

¹²⁴ Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, pp. 175-176. Much of the whisky consumed in the Highlands was illegally distilled, and much of the brandy, rum and claret was smuggled in order to avoid duties. Even the innkeepers in the north of Scotland participated in smuggling. Bishop Forbes, for example, reported (in 1762) that Kenneth Mathieson, innkeeper at Fortrose (opposite Fort George), served his guests good claret that he had imported himself in order to avoid duties. See Forbes, *Journals*, p. 151. The customs and excise officers in the north of Scotland sometimes turned a blind eye to smuggling. Burt mentioned an incident in the mid-1720s in which a customs officer who was stationed at the Moray Firth had taken money from smugglers. They then threatened to make the bribe public, and the customs officer no longer enforced the law for fear of exposure by the smugglers. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 160-162. In the later decades of the eighteenth century, the government increased its efforts and sent customs cutters and warships to the western seaboard in order to prevent the smuggling of alcohol and salt from Ireland into Scotland.

¹²⁵ Scarfe (ed.), *Highlands 1786*, p. 226. See also *ibid.*, p. 225: ‘They [the Lowlanders] are generally keener on drinking than the English, which is evident proof that they are not quite so polite.’ The comments made by other travellers were far less benevolent about the drinking habits of the Scots and particularly the Highlanders. In 1775 the English agriculturalist Matthew Culley commented that the Highlanders spent all their revenue from the herring fishery on drink. His comments speak volumes: ‘... yet all these pecuniary advantages are expended on spirituous liquors partly imported from abroad and partly manufactured at home, a strong propensity to drinking such liquors being observable in all uncivilised countries; as is notorious amongst the savages in North America, the inhabitants of

The Chevalier de La Tocnaye had a similar impression of the Scots' drinking habits.¹²⁶ He confirmed the excessive drinking in Scotland and recollected that sometimes his hosts drank so many toasts to him and to the restoration of the monarchy in France that he needed the help of the walls to walk back to his inn.¹²⁷ He was told that the common people around Stonehaven were notorious for their excessive drinking. They were said to consume up to one or two bottles of whisky per day, thus ruining their health and dying at a young age.¹²⁸ La Tocnaye even claimed that from a young age children were used to drinking whisky. He wrote that new-borns were given a large spoon of whisky to give them strength. He was very astonished that the children in Scotland actually liked drinking whisky, although the strength of this liquor could easily close up the throat of any adult who was not used to drinking it.¹²⁹

Many foreign visitors were very critical of the Scots', and particularly the Highlanders', huge whisky consumption. Some travellers even had very unpleasant experiences with drunken landlords or drunken Highlanders in the inns. The inn at Brodick, Isle of Arran, for example, was a notorious rendezvous for drunkards. Patrick Walker spent two months on Arran in the summer of 1797. Whenever he called at the inn at Brodick, the innkeeper, his wife and the guests were very drunk, and every corner of the inn smelled of whisky.¹³⁰ The inn was also used as a courtroom, and the innkeeper served as bailie, but this did not prevent him from being drunk.¹³¹ On his way to Arran, and on the island itself, Walker met with scores of drunken people. He reflected on his observations that whisky was a most pernicious liquor that ruined the health and character of the people. So many lives

Lapland, and the Hottentots of Africa, all of whom are exceedingly desirous of intoxicating liquors'. Orde (ed.), *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals*, pp. 133-134.

¹²⁶ As a royalist émigré, La Tocnaye had spent a year in London before he set out for Scotland in 1793. Like La Rochefoucauld, he was, therefore, particularly qualified to compare the manners of the English and the Scots.

¹²⁷ See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, p. 242.

¹²⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 251.

¹²⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 263. Pennant wrote in 1769: 'Midwives give new-born babes a small spoon full of earth and whisky, as the first food they taste.' Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 101.

¹³⁰ See NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.1, fos. 85, 136-140. Johanna Schopenhauer had a similar experience in the inn at Luss (Loch Lomond) in 1803. The inn was full of intoxicated Highlanders, and the drunken landlord repeatedly entered her room. See Michaelis-Jena and Merson (eds.), *Lady Travels – Johanna Schopenhauer*, p. 82.

¹³¹ See NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.2, fo. 57.

had been ruined that Walker demanded a tenfold increase of the duty on whisky in order to reduce its consumption. He blamed the excessive consumption of whisky for crime, ill health, poverty, envy and public disorder that threatened the heart of British society.¹³² Worst of all, in the parish of Kilbride the islanders abused the administration of the sacrament through excessive drinking. Between 1,500 and 2,000 people had gathered for this special day from all corners of the island. Walker observed:

One Clergyman preached in English in the Church, while another placed in a Tent, harranged [sic] to the surrounding multitude in Gallic: and the wine, tho' mixed with water, went so smoothly down, that it was found necessary very often to refill the Pewter Cups, for they had but two Silver ones and they were used in the Church. To some, this tasting only produced a relish for more, and caused a very strong thirst, which they seemed as desirous to remove by the hearty swigs of Whisky, which they seemed to be swallowing in two or three neighbouring blanket tents.¹³³

Walker was not the only Scot who was very critical of the drinking habits of his countrymen. The Revd James MacDonald, a native of North Uist, likewise considered the culture of heavy drinking as a major evil and the main reason for the social and economic crisis of the Highlands. He observed of the people of the Outer Hebrides that many of them had become very successful businessmen and soldiers in all parts of the world, but when they returned to their native country, they soon fell back to their old habit of idleness, poverty and drunkenness.¹³⁴ His comments on the Hebrideans' fateful addiction to strong drinks showed clear signs of desperation:

Die große und allgemeine Ursache der Hebridischen Ausartung liegt in dem Hange zu starken Getränken, und diese Ausartung ist eine unbezweifelte Thatsache. So sind, zum Beispiel, von zwanzig angesehenen Männern, die seit zwanzig Jahren auf dieser Insel [he refers to the Outer Hebrides] gestorben sind, sechzehn durch ihre Völlerei ins Grab gebracht worden. Ihr Geist und ihr Charakter waren zerstört, ehe ihre kraftvollen Körper dem Gifte unterlagen. Völlerei wird nicht als entehrend betrachtet; ein sicherer Beweis, daß sie allgemein herrschend ist. Kein Stand ist von diesem Vorwurfe frei. Ehe dieß schändliche Laster nicht durch gute Beispiele, oder durch die Erschwerung der Mittel, sich starke Getränke zu verschaffen, ausgerottet wird, wird der Hebridier in seinem eigenen Lande nicht aufhören, ein Wilder zu seyn. Sobald er sein Vaterland und dessen Wisky [sic] verläßt, sehen wir ihn wieder in der angebornen Würde seiner Nation erscheinen.¹³⁵

¹³² See NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.1, fos. 74, 136-140.

¹³³ Ibid., fo. 144. The whisky distillers often 'hijacked' the administration of the sacrament to sell their liquor. Francis Grant, for example, reported in 1756 to the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates that the whisky distillers often travelled to the places where the sacrament was administered. Huge crowds of Highlanders usually gathered for these very special occasions, providing the distillers with a ready market for their spirits. See NAS, Grant, 'Report 1756', E729/7, fo. 45.

¹³⁴ See MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, pp. 86-88.

¹³⁵ Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 88-89. The second main reason for the crisis of the Hebrides, MacDonald argued, was the absenteeism of the major landowners, which drained the economy of the islands and

The evil of heavy drinking was not limited to the Highlanders. Its baneful impacts were also clearly visible among the lower classes in the streets of the big towns, particularly on Sundays. He remarked on the people of Edinburgh:

Der schwere Nationalfluch des **Saufens** ruht jetzt in dieser Stadt nur noch auf dem gemeinsten Pöbel. Einige von diesem habe ich viehisch betrunken in den besuchtesten Straßen angetroffen. Der Sonntag ist der Trunkenheit besonders gewidmet, und der Puritaner, der an einem Sonntage vor einem musikalischen Instrument, oder vor einem Opernhause zurückschauern würde, glaubt keine Sünde zu begehen, wenn er an diesem Tage den Erwerb der ganzen vergangenen Woche in der Schenke versäuft, und besinnungslos zu seiner darbedenden Familie zurücktaumelt.¹³⁶

The Highlanders' strong sense of pride and their fondness for drink were a recipe for trouble and often caused disorder and fights. Heron reported that huge crowds of Highlanders met every Saturday for the fair at Dunkeld. During and after business hours huge quantities of whisky were consumed, which initially warmed the affections and promoted good fellowship. However, as the alcohol showed its effect, the Highlanders' strong sense of honour and valour became fiercer. Friendly conversations turned into heated arguments, pride and honour were easily hurt, uproar followed and

the whole terminates in a desperate fray, producing abundance of blue eyes, bloody noses, loosened teeth, and broken ribs. Hardly ever a market-day passes over at Dunkeld, without occasioning, in this way, more or less work for the surgeon.¹³⁷

The Highlanders' excessive drinking at funerals also became a recurrent motif in travellers' accounts. Many travellers included anecdotes of this custom in their account, but only few actually observed this practice. The most common anecdote regarding Highland funerals was that the mourners were so drunk that they forgot to pick up the coffin or corpse on their way to the burial ground.¹³⁸ There is, however, plenty of evidence that even in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries the Highlanders still met after funerals for drinking, dancing and singing. After Johnson and Boswell landed on Mull, they wanted to reward their boatmen and

prevented any investments for the improvement of living conditions for the common people. See *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 89.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 94-95.

¹³⁷ Heron, *Journey*, vol. i, p. 178.

¹³⁸ See, for example, Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 248-249. Murray knew about this only from hearsay and claimed that such incidents no longer happened. In 1798 Garnett was told a similar story by an eyewitness. See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 120. See also Meißner, *Reise*, pp. 222-223.

servants with rum and brandy from a local inn, but a funeral a few days before had exhausted all stocks.¹³⁹ Nathaniel Phillips had to share the inn at Dalmally with a party of Highlanders who had assembled after a funeral and spent most of the night drinking whisky and singing.¹⁴⁰ The Highlanders' excessive drinking at funerals became the stuff of legend and will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 8.3.4.

Over the decades the numerous references to the drinking habits of the Scots and the anecdotes about drunken Highlanders created in the contemporary travel literature an unenviable image of the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders, as a nation of drunkards. Interestingly, this image did not clash with the notion of the Highlander as a 'noble savage'. The letters of Barthold Georg Niebuhr, written during his studies at Edinburgh, exemplified the duality of the Scots' image. In January 1799 he wrote to his fiancée in Germany about his expectations of the Highlanders:

Deine Erwartungen von dem Volk würdest Du so sehr betrogen finden, als Du mit ganzer Seele Dich der majestätischen Natur freuen würdest. Die Nation in Hoch- und Niederland soll dem Laster des Trunks ergeben und der gemeine Mann nicht ein Haar besser seyn als bei uns, außer daß er sehr abgehärtet und kriegerisch ist. Der Bergschotte ist seit undenklichen Zeiten ein Wilder, und gegenwärtig, da er allmählich anfängt sich zu civilisiren, muß er, wie alle Wilden, sehr verlieren. Seine schönen Seiten kennen zu lernen, dazu gehört eine Kenntniß seiner Sprache, auf die ich's, bei der Ungewißheit sein Land zu sehen, nicht anlegen mag, und was befremdend ist, wozu es an Hilfsmitteln so sehr fehlt.¹⁴¹

The unfavourable image of the Scot as a drunkard became a common stereotype in German accounts of Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century. Georg Holzenthal, a German prisoner of war who had been interned at Hawick from 1812 to 1814, reported about the Scots that the men and women spent any loose change on ale, porter and whisky. Of the latter, mixed with water and sugar, even the women poured down unbelievable quantities until they were drunk. His summary of the drinking habits of the Scots revealed a lot about their image abroad: 'Betrunken seyn ist hier zu Lande keine Schande, denn man sieht es alle Tage zu häufig; niemand nimmt Notiz davon, ... und man kann wohl sagen: ländlich sittlich!'¹⁴² Maximilian

¹³⁹ See Boswell, *Tour*, pp. 415-416.

¹⁴⁰ See NLS, Phillips, 'Scottish Journey 1791', Acc. 8311, fo. 23.

¹⁴¹ Niebuhr, *Lebensnachrichten*, vol. i, p. 218. In April 1799 he made similar allegations in a letter to his fiancée in which he described the Scots as being selfish, boozy, idle and filthy. See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 231. However, he completely changed his mind about the character of the Scots after an eight-day tour of south-east Scotland in August 1799. From the experience of this journey he was full of praise for the plain but true hospitality of the country people. See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 251-252.

¹⁴² Holzenthal, *Briefe*, p. 219.

Löwenthal, who travelled to the Highlands and Hebrides in 1822, spread a similar message about the Scots. He wrote that they often took comfort in illicitly distilled whisky, in trying to escape from their poverty and misery.¹⁴³

8.3.4. Highland funerals

The funeral rites in Scotland, and particularly in the Highlands, were strikingly different to those in England. Many travellers observed or attended funerals and took notes about the way these ceremonies were conducted. In the Lowlands the death of a person was announced by the ‘bellman’. This acted as a general invitation to both the funeral and the ‘latewake’, a guarding of the corpse that was held each night at the house of the deceased. When someone died, the body was kept in the house until burial. Most Scottish houses had only one or two rooms, so the family lived, slept and ate beside the corpse. Descriptions of the bellman and his task were a recurrent motif in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century accounts of Scotland. During his stay in Dumfries in 1661, John Ray observed a bellman announcing a funeral. He noted:

When any one dies, the sexton or bell-man goeth about the streets with a small bell in his hand, which he tinkleth all along as he goeth, and now and then he maketh a stand, and proclaims who is dead, and invites the people to come to the funeral at such an hour. The people and minister many times accompany the corpse to the grave at the time appointed, with the bell before them, where there is nothing said, but only the corpse laid in.¹⁴⁴

The way in which the bellman announced someone’s death was always the same except for the name and address of the deceased. Thomas Kirk wrote it down in 1677:

Belovved brouthrin and sustars, I let yaw to wot, thaut thir is ane fauthfill broothir lawtli dipawrtid out of thes prisant varld, aut thi pleswir of Almoughy God: his naum is Wooli Voodcock, thrid sun to Jimmi Voodcock, courdinger: he liggs aut thi sext dour wethin the noord gawt closs on the nauthir haund, and I wod yaw gang to his [burial] before twa a clock.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ See Löwenthal, *Reise*, p. 118. In the Netherlands the image of the ‘drunken Scot’ was no different. Johan Meerman, Heer van Dalem en Vuren, travelled to Scotland in 1774 and 1786. He reported about the Scots: ‘Van de *Whiskey*, een soort van sterken drank van Geerst gestokt, en waneer men er niet aan gewoon is van een allernaangenaamsten smaak en bedwelmend, maakt men een groot gebruik.’ ‘De gemeene Man zoekt in den *Whiskey*, of Gersten-brandewyn, zyne zorgen, zyn verdriet en zyne armoede te smooeren.’ J. Meerman, *Eenige Berichten Omtrent Groot-Britannien En Ierland* (The Hague, 1787), pp. 355, 394. All over Europe the Scots became known as hard drinkers. For the Scots’ culture of heavy drinking in the Victorian Age see Devine, *Scottish Nation*, pp. 350-355.

¹⁴⁴ Ray, *Memorials*, p. 161. He also observed bellmen at Dunbar and other places in the Lowlands.

¹⁴⁵ Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, pp. 7-8. Kirk also included this passage verbatim in his diatribe against Scotland published in 1679. A very similar version of the bellman’s or ‘cryer’s’

The burial itself was a comparatively plain ceremony. The corpse was carried in a procession to the churchyard where it was laid to rest. At the grave no sermons or prayers were said.¹⁴⁶ The dead, except for noblemen, were not laid to rest within the church, but in the churchyard.¹⁴⁷ The procession accompanying the deceased from his house to the churchyard was headed by a number of men of rank. Then followed the coffin, which was covered with black cloth. It was not carried on the shoulders as in England, but on three poles with three men on each side of the coffin. Behind the coffin followed a great number of men in rows or files. The final party was made up of the women who walked without any distinction of quality and order.¹⁴⁸ Some foreign visitors considered the plain burial rites of the Scots undignified and disgraceful. Thomas Morer, chaplain to a Scottish regiment fighting for William III in 1689, had to bury one of the English officers in the church of Dalkeith. The funeral was performed in the English manner and obviously made a great impression on the Scots. He reported that the liturgy was delivered by heart and

so well satisfied many of the *Scotch* of that Town, that they could not forbear calling it a *Christian Burial*, and said that theirs was like the Burial of a Dog, in comparison of the *Other*.¹⁴⁹

The public announcement of deaths and funerals by the bellman was a typical Scottish custom and was referred to by generations of travellers until the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁰

announcement was published in Morer, *Account*, p. 67. Morer wrote, however, that the cryer first announced the death and one or two days later went about a second time, notifying the hour and house where the neighbours should assemble to attend the deceased to the place of burial. See also Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 216-217. Burt added that in the Highland towns and villages funerals were also announced by the bellman.

¹⁴⁶ See Ray, *Memorials*, p. 161; Morer, *Account*, p. 68; Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 219; Burrell, *Northern Tour*, p. 85; Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 19.

¹⁴⁷ See Hume Brown (ed.), *Tours 1677 & 1681*, p. 8; Morer, *Account*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 67-68. Burt reported that the corpse was carried upon a bier, the nearest in relation to the deceased carried the head, and the next of kin was on his right hand and so on. The men went in rows of two in front of the bier, and the women followed in the same order behind it. All the way the bellman tinkled his bell in front of the procession. In the Highlands the funeral procession was headed by a piper, whose pipes were hung with narrow streamers of black crape. See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 217.

¹⁴⁹ Morer, *Account*, p. 68. To a certain extent this must be treated as anti-Scottish propaganda.

¹⁵⁰ See, for example, Taylor, *Journey*, pp. 137-138; Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 18. Chantreau explained that the ringing of the bell imitated the laments of the mourners. This, however, was pure fiction.

In the Highlands funerals were different from those in the Lowlands, but the accounts of travellers are often contradictory and confusing. People of inferior rank, however, were also buried in a very simple manner. The coffin was covered with a plaid, put on a ladder and carried by the neighbours of the deceased to the churchyard where it was put in the grave without any ceremony.¹⁵¹ What Burrell thought was a ladder was described in more detail by Bishop Forbes in 1770. He observed three funerals during his second tour of the Highlands and reported that the corpse was placed on a bier or frame in the middle of two long poles. These poles were long enough to be laid on the shoulders of two men at each end without incommoding one another or being too close to the deceased. Thus, by change of hands, the Highlanders could carry the corpse over long distances without any fatigue.¹⁵²

Men and women of rank, in contrast, were laid to rest in great style. Many visitors to the Highlands wrote about such funerals, some met parties returning from such events, but few travellers actually observed or attended the funeral of a Highland gentleman or his wife. The funerals of Highland chiefs and other high-ranking gentlemen were traditionally accompanied by a series of festivities, which often lasted for several days.¹⁵³

Edmund Burt attended several funerals of common people during his stay in the Highlands in the mid-1720s. He reported that the funeral of a Highlander, if not in the lowest circumstances, was accompanied by a series of festivities. The friends and acquaintances of the deceased assembled with the relatives and spent the first night dancing until the morning, just as if it was a wedding although the corpse lay in the same room. If the deceased was a woman, the widower led up the first dance; if a man, the widow.¹⁵⁴ When a member of the upper class had died, the nearest relatives also hired women to mourn and lament at the funeral. These women covered their heads with a small piece of green cloth and every now and then broke out into ‘a

¹⁵¹ See Burrell, *Northern Tour*, p. 85. Like most Englishmen, Burrell regarded this method as barbarous.

¹⁵² See Forbes, *Journals*, p. 290.

¹⁵³ Funerals had become increasingly elaborate, and an Act of the Scottish Parliament of 13 September 1681 limited the number of mourners in order to reduce the amounts spent on mourning clothes, funeral decoration and entertainment. See *APS*, vol. viii, p. 350.

¹⁵⁴ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 107. Burt added that the Highlanders buried all their dead in this manner even if the deceased had moved to the Lowlands.

hideous howl and Ho-bo-bo-bo-boo' as it was done in parts of Ireland.¹⁵⁵ Burt explained that this part of the ceremony was called a 'coronoch', and that it was often the cause of 'much drunkenness, attended with its concomitants, mischievous rencounters and bloody broils' as the Highlanders generally attended such funerals fully armed.¹⁵⁶ From ancient times the Highlanders held their dead in great respect and erected piles of stones over the spot at which their ancestors were supposed to be buried.¹⁵⁷ Burt often observed instances of this regard for the dead. In one place a plough was carefully guided around a heap of stones in the middle of a field. In the Highlands arable ground was dear, and when Burt enquired whether the pile marked a rock beneath the surface and why it had not been removed, he was informed that it was a burial place. The Highlanders deemed it a kind of sacrilege to remove a single stone from the pile, and the children, from their infancy, were taught the same veneration. Burt was stunned by this veneration for the dead:

Thus a parcel of loose stones are more religiously preserved among them than, with us, the costly monuments in Westminster-Abbey; and thence I could not but conclude that the inclination to preserve the remains and memory of the dead is greater with those people than it is among us.¹⁵⁸

Burt was one of the few travellers who actually attended the funeral of a Highland gentleman. Although he had been invited to a number of these funerals, he attended only one, but upon enquiry he was informed that the procedures were always the same. Printed letters, signed by the nearest relation, were sent around to the relatives and friends of the deceased. If the invitation was general, it was announced by the beat of a drum. The friends of the deceased usually met at the house of mourning on

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., vol. ii, p. 108. The hiring of mourners was confirmed by Edward Lhuyd. See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 85. At the end of the eighteenth century it was still common in the Outer Hebrides for mourning women to line the route although they had no relation to the deceased. John Lanne Buchanan reported in the 1780s from the Outer Hebrides: 'It is common to see women coming out to stand by the way-side, who are strangers, as the corpse is carried along, with certain mournful ditties in their mouths, and making great lamentations; while they in the mean time ask some of the attendants where the corpse came from, and whether they are men or women.' Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 169.

¹⁵⁶ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 108. Coronachs, i.e. funeral songs, were much disapproved of by the Presbyterian clergy as they were considered contrary to true Christian belief. In 1642 the Synod of Argyll prohibited this practice and threatened to invoke the civil authority to suppress it. For details see the notes in Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, pp. 86-87. In spite of the clergy's disapproval, coronachs seem to have been practised until far into the eighteenth century, as the references by Lhuyd, Burt, Pennant and John Lanne Buchanan illustrate.

¹⁵⁷ This was a tradition all Celtic peoples had in common.

¹⁵⁸ Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. ii, p. 109. He added that the Highlanders kept their tradition of raising funeral piles even when they had moved into the towns.

the day before the funeral. This meeting began in silence, but the bottle was soon introduced, and the mood of the ceremony became boisterous. The mourners who had gathered in front of the house joined in, and the nearest relatives and friends of the deceased served wine, plum cake, sweetmeats and other dishes, with pipes and tobacco. Drinking was compulsory and it was deemed an offence to refuse a drink. When everybody had eaten and drunk their fill, the crowd accompanied the corpse to the burial, which was conducted without any service. Then part of the company returned to the house of the deceased, 'where all sorrow seems to be immediately banished, and the wine is filled about as fast as it can go round, till there is hardly a sober person among them'.¹⁵⁹ The drinking upon this occasion, Burt was informed, sometimes went on for several days. Since almost all of the Highland gentlemen were related to one another in some degree by consanguinity, marriage or clanship, funerals were to them 'a kind of business' and took up a good part of their time.¹⁶⁰ Burt explained that it was, therefore, deemed an unforgivable insult to refuse such an invitation without a reasonable excuse.¹⁶¹ The Highlanders were known to be vain and proud people, and the wearing of black after the funeral also served another purpose. Burt observed:

The day following, every one that has black puts it on, and wears it for some time afterwards; and if the deceased was any thing considerable, though the mourner's relation to him was never so remote, it serves to soothe the vanity of some, by inciting the question, "For whom do you mourn?" – "My cousin, the laird of such-a-place," or "My Lord such-a-one," is the answer to the question begged by the sorrowful dress.¹⁶²

The 'latewake' (also 'lakewake' or 'lykewake', i.e. the watch by the dead) was primarily a sign of paying respect and was practised far into the second half of the eighteenth century. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had banned this practice in 1645 because it was accompanied by too much drinking and jollity, but the ruling was largely ignored.¹⁶³ One of the most interesting descriptions has been prepared by Thomas Pennant in 1769:

The *Late-wake* is a ceremony used at funerals. The evening after the death of any person, the relations and friends of the deceased meet at the house, attended by bagpipe or fiddle; the nearest of kin, be it wife, son, or daughter, opens a melancholy ball, dancing and

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., vol. i, p. 219.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., vol. i, p. 221.

¹⁶¹ See *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 218.

¹⁶² Ibid., vol. i, p. 220.

¹⁶³ See S. Livingstone, *Scottish Customs* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 47. [hereafter: Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*]

greeting, *i.e.* crying violently at the same time; and this continues till day-light; but with such gambols and frolicks among the younger part of the company, that the loss which occasioned them is often more than supplied by the consequences of that night. If the corps remains unburied for two nights, the same rites are renewed. Thus, *Scythian*-like, they rejoice at the deliverance of their friends out of this life of misery.¹⁶⁴

According to Pennant, singing at funerals was still practised in some places. He explained that the songs were generally in praise of the deceased or a recital of their or their ancestors' valiant deeds.¹⁶⁵ Pennant also described a curious custom concerning the funeral of a Highlander:

On the death of a Highlander, the corps being stretched on a board, and covered with a coarse linnen wrapper, the friends lay on the breast of the deceased a wooden platter, containing a small quantity of salt and earth, separate and unmixed; the earth, an emblem of the corruptible body; the salt, an emblem of the immortal spirit. All fire is extinguished where a corps is kept; and it is reckoned so ominous for a dog or cat to pass over it, that the poor animal is killed without mercy.¹⁶⁶

In the Highlands funeral processions coming within sight of one another sometimes began a race to the cemetery to secure the right of first entry, since the superstitious belief prevailed that the person last buried had to keep watch over the graveyard until the next funeral took place. This was called the graveyard watch (*Faire Chlaidh*). The spirit of the deceased had only a very short spell of sentinel duty if his procession arrived first.¹⁶⁷

At a time when it was still important to demonstrate the strength of a clan, the funerals of men of distinction were usually attended by great crowds. Upon notice of

¹⁶⁴ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 99. Pennant reckoned that this custom was derived from their northern ancestors and referred to Olaus Magnus's *Historia De Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555). Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) was Archbishop of Uppsala. Edward Lhuys stated that, excepting piping, they made all kinds of music at latewakes. See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 85. John Lanne Buchanan wrote that on the Outer Hebrides the islanders seldom displayed much mirth at latewakes as they did in many parts of Scotland, but sat down with great composure and lauded the good qualities of the deceased. See Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 170.

¹⁶⁵ See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 99. Pennant admitted that he did not observe a coronach in Scotland, but he had assisted at one in the south of Ireland. For details of the Irish coronach see *ibid.*, pp. 99-101.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98. These animals were killed in order to protect the body and spirit of the deceased from witchcraft. It was common belief that witches adopted the form of an animal, preferably that of a cat or dog. Salt was also believed to prevent the body of the deceased from swelling. See J.G. Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1900), p. 241. [hereafter: Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*] John Gregorson Campbell, minister of Tiree from 1861-1891, collected these superstitious beliefs entirely from oral sources. In many parts of Europe, earth and/or salt were placed on or near the corpse, sometimes on a plate. Besides its association with purity, salt was a general apotropaic and was supposed in early modern England and elsewhere to ward off evil spirits from the dead and to stop the deceased's ghost from walking. See S. Wilson, *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-Modern Europe* (London and New York, 2000), p. 295.

¹⁶⁷ See Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*, p. 242. However, no traveller observed such a race.

invitation the gentlemen of the country sent orders to assemble their vassals and tenants to accompany them to the funeral in full arms. At the funeral procession the hierarchy of the attending gentry had to be strictly observed since any injury or offence could result in violence among the armed followings. John Campbell wrote (in 1752) that

it sometime [sic] happens upon a Dispute of Precedency, that they lay the Corpse down, and draw their broad Swords, in which Science they are naturally well skilled, and often would do much more Mischief than is commonly done, were it not for the Interposition of their Heads.¹⁶⁸

In the past the combination of vanity, alcohol consumption and bearing arms had sometimes led to bloody disputes among the clans at funerals, but this was no longer the case in the second half of the eighteenth century. Campbell's account of armed fighting at Highland funerals can only have referred to a bygone age. It is, therefore, quite surprising that he still referred to it as a present custom, while claiming at the same time that other traditions, such as pipers accompanying the procession and playing all the way to the grave or mourning women making noises and enumerating the heroic qualities and warlike deeds of the deceased, had already been abandoned.¹⁶⁹

Tales of the splendour, feasting and bloody battles that were once part of the great funerals in the Highlands became a recurrent motif of travellers' accounts. Many travellers in the Romantic period were fascinated by these tales and wrote about the Highlanders' funeral rites. However, since only a few of them had actually witnessed such a funeral, their accounts were sometimes confusing and contradictory. Nonetheless, travellers' accounts of the second half of the eighteenth century give an idea of what Highland funerals were like and illustrate the extent to which the old traditions and festivities were still practised.

The funeral of a man of rank was still accompanied by a series of festivities. In 1760, in Mull, Bishop Pococke met a party returning from a great burial and wrote that, according to his belief, it was still common practice for the relatives and friends of the deceased to spend three days at the funeral, eating, drinking and dancing round

¹⁶⁸ Campbell, *Description*, pp. 25-26.

¹⁶⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 26.

the corpse.¹⁷⁰ Dr Johnson's account of his tour of the Hebrides in 1773, however, was contradictory on this issue. On the one hand, he reported from Skye:

Funerals were formerly solemnized by calling multitudes together, and entertaining them at great expence. This emulation of useless cost has been for some time discouraged, and at last in the Isle of Sky is almost suppressed.¹⁷¹

On the other hand, he reported from the island of Coll:

The disposition to pompous and expensive funerals, which has at one time or other prevailed in most parts of the civilized world, is not yet suppressed in the Islands, though some of the ancient solemnities are worn away, and singers are no longer hired to attend the procession. Nineteen years ago, at the burial of the Laird of Col, were killed thirty cows, and about fifty sheep. The number of the cows is positively told, and we must suppose other victuals in like proportion.¹⁷²

Despite these contradictions, it is safe to suggest that at the time of Dr Johnson's visit neither the pompous funerals, nor the mourning women who accompanied these processions, had been completely abandoned, particularly in the remoter parts of the Hebrides. It has been shown that many people, and particularly the clergy, regarded coronachs as contrary to Christian belief. Nonetheless, they were practised until far into the eighteenth century, and there are strong reasons why John Campbell and Dr Johnson were not in line with the other contemporary authors. Campbell's *Description* (1752) was an overwhelmingly positive portrait of the Highlanders that was clearly intended to rehabilitate them after the 'Forty-Five. This purpose would not have been served by describing them as backward, superstitious and practising supposedly 'unchristian' funeral rites.¹⁷³ Johnson's case was similar. He did not want to rehabilitate the Highlanders, but in the course of his tour he drew much information from the local ministers who, like Campbell, had no interest in showing their congregation as backward, superstitious or 'unchristian'.¹⁷⁴ It can, therefore, be assumed that Campbell did not want to reveal the true extent of the Highlanders'

¹⁷⁰ See Poccoke, *Tours*, p. 88.

¹⁷¹ Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 266-267.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Campbell, *Description*, pp. 14-15. Campbell explicitly defended the Highlanders against accusations of paganism and superstition.

¹⁷⁴ Johnson's main informant on life in Skye and the Highlands was Donald MacQueen, minister of Kilmuir in Trotternish (Skye) from 1740 until his death in 1785. MacQueen was probably the best-known and most distinguished minister in the Highlands in his time. He was host to Thomas Pennant in 1772 and accompanied Johnson and Boswell through Skye in 1773. See H. Scott (ed.), *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, vol. vii (Edinburgh, 1928), pp. 171-172.

superstitious practices with regard to their funeral rites, whereas Johnson failed to question the motivation of his informants.

Nonetheless, Johnson stated that the funeral of a laird, accompanied by great festivities, was still within living memory. This view was supported by other contemporary visitors to the Highlands and Islands. In the early 1780s Matthias D'Amour spent eleven months on the island of Raasay as a servant to the MacLeods. He recollected that the Hebrideans buried their dead in a way that was contrary to his idea of decorum. The nearest relative of the deceased welcomed the mourners, and then they sat down next to the grave and commenced 'eating and drinking as at a festival'.¹⁷⁵ Anne Grant also confirmed (in 1786) that the funeral of a Highland laird was still celebrated in such a great style that it often put a severe financial burden on the family of the deceased.¹⁷⁶ She wrote that the relatives and friends were expected to attend and to contribute to the festivities that accompanied the funeral. Whatever the financial background of the family, on these occasions there was always plenty to eat and drink. Bread, cheese and whisky were distributed among the peasantry, but despite the cheerfulness, the gathering never exceeded the bounds of respect and decorum.¹⁷⁷

At the end of the eighteenth century it was still common for the mourners to assemble after the burial for eating, drinking and dancing. It has been mentioned that Nathaniel Phillips (in 1791) shared the inn at Dalmally with a party of Highlanders who had just returned from a funeral and spent the night drinking and singing. Thomas Garnett travelled the Highlands in 1798 and confirmed that funeral dances were still kept up in some parts of the country. Every evening from the death to the internment the neighbours of the deceased gathered for dancing. The dances were

¹⁷⁵ P. Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of Mr. Matthias D'Amour* (London, 1836), p. 137. [hereafter: Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*] Rodgers claimed that he wrote down D'Amour's memoirs as they were told him by D'Amour himself and that everything was based on fact. According to Rodgers, D'Amour was born in 1749 at Antwerp and spent his life as a servant. After his service to the MacLeods of Raasay he entered into the service of the Duchess of Gordon. However, some sections of D'Amour's account of his stay in the Hebrides are close to Pennant's travel accounts or Johnson's *Journey*. It is, therefore, difficult to ascertain the extent to which D'Amour's account is based on his own observations or plagiarised from Pennant or Johnson.

¹⁷⁶ In 1773 Anne Grant (née Macvicar) had moved from Glasgow to Fort Augustus, where her father had been made barrack-master. In 1779 she married James Grant, the garrison chaplain who was also minister of the neighbouring parish of Laggan. She stayed at Laggan until 1803, two years after the death of her husband. As the wife of a Highland minister she became very familiar with the customs of the Highlands.

¹⁷⁷ See Grant, *Letters*, vol. ii, pp. 111-112.

started by the nearest relatives and accompanied by solemn and melancholy laments. These dances, Garnett reckoned, 'may perhaps be intended as an expression of joy that their friend is removed from this vale of tears and misery, to a better state of existence'.¹⁷⁸ Garnett did not think that the dancing clashed with the decorum of the occasion, but he was highly critical of the excessive drinking that followed the burial.¹⁷⁹

However, magnificent funerals that were followed by days of feasting had become rare and were confined to the remote parts of the Highlands. While travelling in a remote part of the Highlands in 1800, Sarah Murray heard of the preparations for the burial of a minor laird. She claimed that at least six cooks were employed for a week preparing the feast. The relatives and friends of the deceased had sent meat, fowl, fish and game of all sorts, and the markets of Glasgow, Greenock and Liverpool were resorted to for supplying the rest.¹⁸⁰

There was, however, growing resistance against this tradition within the Highland community itself. The wife of a Highland gentleman told Murray that she had requested her husband that should she die first, he would desist from tradition and renounce the usual festivities. However, he refused, claiming that he would be thought 'covetous, unfeeling, and void of affection for her'.¹⁸¹ Apart from the obvious expenses for food, drink and entertainment, many travellers considered it very awkward that the widow, the widower or the closest relative of the deceased had to welcome the mourners and start the dancing and celebrations, however deep their pain and sorrow.¹⁸²

It is not always possible to establish the exact extent to which the old traditions accompanying a Highland funeral were still adhered to at the end of the eighteenth

¹⁷⁸ Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, p. 119. This guess was made by many travellers. See, for example, Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 99.

¹⁷⁹ See Garnett, *Tour*, vol. i, pp. 119-120. However, Garnett later contradicted himself. On Mull, he claimed, 'they have not given up feasting at funerals, though dancing is not common'. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 162. After the burial the mourners retired instead to a hill or rock near the churchyard and drowned their sorrow in whisky.

¹⁸⁰ See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 249. This story was based on hearsay and, therefore, cannot be verified since Murray neither provided the name of the deceased gentleman nor the place and date of his burial.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 250. The Revd James MacDonald confirmed that it was difficult to break with tradition. The mourners expected to be well provided for, and the family of the deceased would have been regarded as stingy if they failed to do so. See MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, p. 185.

¹⁸² See, for example, Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, p. 137; Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 248.

century. However, there can be no doubt that in most areas these traditions were in severe decline. The Revd James MacDonald's account of a huge funeral on South Uist in 1802 leaves no doubt that the celebrations that accompanied the burial were a far cry from what they used to be in earlier times and lacked much of their former dignity. He reported that the funeral was attended by at least 300 men. Once the deceased had been laid to rest, some men began to distribute bread and cheese among the mourners, which immediately caused commotion and disorder. Other men distributed whisky, and the common people were particularly anxious to refill their glasses again and again. There was plenty of whisky, and after less than an hour nine tenths of the crowd, and particularly the lower class of people, were very drunk. Quarrels erupted, and soon after the mourners began to fight one another. MacDonald witnessed one man drinking nine full glasses of whisky within a quarter of an hour and then starting a fight that ended with a bloody nose. James MacDonald fled the scene before the funeral degenerated into complete chaos and disorder. Nonetheless, he was told by Hugh MacDonald, his host on the island, that it was customary to drink excessively at funerals and that the family of the deceased would have been regarded as stingy and unworthy if they had failed to provide sufficient food and drink for the mourners.¹⁸³

On the Continent such accounts undoubtedly contributed to the Highlanders' reputation as excessive drinkers. Consequently, no traveller's account dared omit any anecdotes about drunken Highlanders at funerals, even if they were drawn only from hearsay. Eduard Meißner, for example, reported (in 1817) that it was still common practice among the Highlanders to drink excessively at funerals. In consequence, they would sometimes lose the corpse and would not recover it until the next day. He added that the recent funeral of the chief of the Chisholms had resulted in the death of seven mourners due to excessive drinking.¹⁸⁴ This information was based entirely on hearsay. Meißner thus underlined stereotypes and myths that resulted in the image of the Highlander drifting further away from the reality of Highland life.

¹⁸³ See MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, pp. 183-185. John Lanne Buchanan confirmed that the funerals on the Outer Hebrides sometimes ended in turmoil, writing that the islanders 'seldom separate while the cask contains any spirits to wash down their sorrow: which seldom happens before their griefs are converted into squabbles [sic], and broken heads, which some of them carry home as marks of remembrance for their lost friends'. Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 169-170.

¹⁸⁴ See Meißner, *Reise*, pp. 222-223.

8.3.5. Highland weddings

Similar to funerals, the ceremonies and festivities that accompanied a wedding in the Highlands were different from those of the Lowlands and England. Many travellers not only had the opportunity to observe a wedding, but were also invited to attend. The so-called ‘penny-wedding’ was a typical Scottish tradition that was practised in the Lowlands as well as the Highlands. Penny-weddings were common among the lower class people, such as servants or maids, and took their name from the custom that the guests contributed to the expense of the wedding. The wedding was followed by a dinner or supper, and afterwards the evening was spent in music and dancing. Edmund Burt reported that the bride had to go round the room and kiss every man in the company, and in the end everybody put money into a dish according to their inclination and ability.¹⁸⁵ By this means, he explained, the newly married couple was able to pay for the expense of the wedding and to set up their own household. The donations were not restricted to money. Food, household goods and livestock were also welcome in order to allow the newly married couple a life independent from their employers.

John Campbell prepared (in 1752) a similar account of Highland weddings. He reported that the guests brought presents such as beef, mutton and fowl of all sorts so

¹⁸⁵ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 214-215. Burt admitted, however, that he had never attended a wedding in Scotland. The Revd John Lanne Buchanan reported in the 1780s that at a penny-wedding in the Outer Hebrides every guest paid a shilling, which was twice as much as the value of what they could eat, thus enriching the young couple. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the General Assembly repeatedly ordained the presbyteries to put penny-weddings under severe restrictions. In 1647, for example, the presbyteries of Haddington and Dunbar limited the number of guests at these weddings to twenty. The men were not to give more than a shilling and the women eight pence. Moreover, all piping, dancing, singing and loose speech was to cease. Additionally, it was ordained that the couple about to marry had to make a deposit of £20 Scots or similar guarantee. This deposit was forfeited if the rules for a penny-wedding were not observed. See R. Chambers, *Domestic Annals Of Scotland*, vol. ii (Edinburgh, 1858), pp. 161-162. However, such attempts were futile, and John Lanne Buchanan commented laconically: ‘These penny weddings, and all promiscuous meetings, it is said, contribute much to population.’ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 168. Sarah Murray attended several weddings during her tours of Scotland in 1796, 1800 and 1802. She reported that at penny-weddings the guests were often so numerous that the newly wed couple could furnish their house or take a small farm from the profits of the wedding, as many guests donated a shilling or more. The musicians were also paid from the guests’ donations. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. i, p. 131, vol. ii, p. 379. Pierre N. Chantreau added that the guests sometimes even put together the money to pay for the dowry of a poor bride, thus strengthening their sense of community. See Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 18. See also D. Stewart, *Sketches Of The Character, Manners, And Present State Of The Highlanders Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1822), vol. ii, pp. xxii-xxiv. This account was, however, heavily influenced by the Romantic movement and the ‘tartanisation’ of Scotland in the early 1820s.

that the wedding was of no expense to the married couple, who could live from the remainder for many months. Upon these occasions the Highlanders were very merry and ‘nothing is to be seen save Feasting and Dancing for whole Weeks successively’.¹⁸⁶ At the marriage of common people, the bride was accompanied by about two- or three-dozen maids, and the bridegroom had an equal number of young men attending him. On the day of the wedding the bridegroom and his attendants fetched the bride and her maids from the house of her father or another relative. After having taken some refreshment and having received the blessings of the bride’s relatives, they set out for the church. Upon that occasion neither the bride nor her maids wore any caps, but their hair were simply bound up with large knots of ribbon ‘which make them appear like so many Goddesses, there being so much Simplicity in it’.¹⁸⁷ When the procession arrived at the church, the best man led the bride and the other guests according to their order into church. After they were seated, he left again and re-entered with the bridegroom. After the marriage ceremony the party returned to the bride’s house for the wedding feast. Upon arrival, a man at the door passed round a two-handed wooden bowl of home-brewed strong ale (called ‘Tin Cog’) for drinking to the health and prosperity of the newly married couple and the prompt arrival of a child. While the bowl went round, a woman stepped forward and broke an oatmeal cake over the bride’s head. This ceremony was followed by a splendid dinner.¹⁸⁸

During his tour of the Highlands in 1771, James Robertson happened to come across a Highland wedding in a village near Dalmigavie in upper Strathdearn (a valley in Inverness-shire, watered by the River Findhorn). Although he had no formal invitation to the wedding, he went to the bride’s house where the company

¹⁸⁶ Campbell, *Description*, p. 23. Highland weddings were accompanied by feasting and dancing before and after the wedding ceremony, but these celebrations did not continue for weeks.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24. It is interesting that Campbell mentioned knots, since the Highlanders usually loosened all knots on the bridegroom’s and bride’s dress (including her hair) before the marriage ceremony to protect themselves from witchcraft. See note 211. In his defence of the Highlanders Campbell played down their superstitious practices. See note 173.

¹⁸⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 24-25. During his travels in the Hebrides, Pierre N. Chantreau was invited to attend the wedding celebration of the children of two large tenants of the Duke of Argyll. Chantreau reported that the first toast was drunk to the bride, the second to the bridegroom, the third to their future children and the fourth to the guests. However, the couple were very unlucky. A few days later the bridegroom drowned in a storm, and the bride committed suicide upon the news of his death. See Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, pp. 106-115.

had assembled to wash her feet.¹⁸⁹ Far from resenting his intrusion they bade him a hearty welcome. In return he distributed snuff among them and asked for a bottle of whisky to be opened in order to remove any restraints against his presence. However, there was no whisky available, and the bridegroom had gone to fetch some. In the meantime the maid was busy preparing the bride's cap. The company was quite restrained until the bridegroom returned. One or two bumpers of whisky were given to everybody, and the fiddler was ordered to play. The dancing, cheered by repeated bumpers of whisky, continued until six in the morning. Drinking continued throughout the breakfast, and at half past seven the party left for the church. The bride was dressed in a tartan gown, a linen apron, a linen neckerchief, a large cap and a tartan plaid. She was accompanied by her maid on her right and the best man on her left. The bridegroom followed, dressed in a blue bonnet, short coat, tartan kilt and tartan hose with brogues. Once the bridegroom had left the house, he asked the bride's father for permission to marry his daughter, which was happily granted. On their way to the church the Highlanders fired shots, and the villagers along the road returned this salute with either a gun or a pistol.¹⁹⁰ The marriage ceremony was the one used by all Presbyterians, except that before joining hands the clergyman asked the company if there were any objections to the union. After the ceremony the company refreshed themselves in a public house, before returning to the couple's house. In the meantime a barn had been prepared for the wedding party. When the best man led the bride into the barn, her mother threw pieces of bread and cheese over her daughter's head. These pieces were then collected and eaten by the attendants.¹⁹¹ This ceremony was followed by a supper of boiled mutton and oatmeal

¹⁸⁹ The washing of the bride's feet was also mentioned by William Thomson. He reported that on the eve of the marriage the relatives and friends met at the respective houses for washing the bride's and bridegroom's feet. This ceremony was performed in great mirth and jollity. His explanation, however, that this custom originated from the lack of shoes or stockings among the common people, seems rather simplistic. See Thomson, *Prospects*, p. 50. According to Livingstone, this ceremony was a remnant of Druidical purification rites and symbolic of a fresh start in life. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 31. A more likely explanation seems to be the washing of the feet as an *Imitatio Christi* on Good Thursday (Skire Thursday). In fifteenth-century Scotland, almsgiving and other charitable works might well have belonged to royal duties on Skire Thursday, as acts of humility and as an imitation of the bishop's and the Pope's *Imitatio Christi* in the washing of the feet. See Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol. i, pp. 248-249.

¹⁹⁰ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, pp. 173-174. Robertson's description of the Highlanders' garb and their use of guns and pistols suggests that the prohibition of the Highland dress and the disarming of the Highlanders were no longer strictly adhered to in 1771.

¹⁹¹ See *ibid.*, p. 174. 'Breaking the cake' at weddings was a common custom throughout Scotland. If the cake broke into many small pieces, it meant that the marriage would be fruitful; but if it remained

broth.¹⁹² Before and after the supper, the guests were given a bumper of whisky. The supper was provided by the newly wed couple, but the guests paid afterwards for all their liquor, which Robertson considered a very reasonable arrangement as some of them drank at least two bottles of undiluted whisky. Immediately after supper the party began to dance, the bridegroom, bride, best man and bridesmaid taking the floor first. The celebrations lasted until two o'clock in the morning. Then the company parted and returned home, and the newly wed couple went to bed without any particular ceremony.¹⁹³

The washing of the bride's feet on the eve of the wedding was often accompanied by another ceremony. A basin or bucket of water was provided, and the young unmarried women of the neighbourhood assembled. The ring to be used at the wedding ceremony was thrown into the water, and the women scrambled to get it out first. The lucky one was believed to be the next bride.¹⁹⁴

The marriage ceremony itself was very simple. Edmund Burt was told that there was nothing extraordinary in it, apart from not using the ring as in England.¹⁹⁵ James Robertson reported also of a very simple Presbyterian ceremony.¹⁹⁶ Thomas Pennant witnessed an impromptu marriage on Skye. The minister explained the duties of the marriage state to the betrothed and asked whether they took each other willingly. Then he joined their hands and concluded the ceremony with a prayer.¹⁹⁷

in large lumps, it was a bad omen and could signify infertility. Lord Harley observed this ceremony at 'Lenton Brigg' (East Linton, East Lothian) in 1725. When the bride entered the house, a cake was broken over her head, and the party scrambled for the pieces. See Harley, 'Journey', p. 125. See also Campbell, *Description*, p. 25. Matthias D'Amour reported in the early 1780s from the Hebridean island of Raasay: 'Festivities of weddings were generally held in some large room or barn. On their return from kirk or chapel, the party is met at the door by a person provided with a sievefull of short-bread; which he or she throws over the head of the bride as she enters the place: which is meant, I suppose, to prefigure the plenty with which they desire she may always be supplied.' Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, p. 123.

¹⁹² See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 174. Again, this seems to have been the standard wedding supper in the Highlands. D'Amour noted from the Hebrides: 'The wedding dinner always consisted of broth, or soup, the meat being boiled down.' Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, p. 123.

¹⁹³ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 175.

¹⁹⁴ See, for example, Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, pp. 122-123. See also Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 32.

¹⁹⁵ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 215. However, Burt was the only author who noted that the marriage ceremony was performed without a ring for the bride. The bridegroom did not usually wear a ring, and it is only a twentieth-century custom to exchange rings during the marriage ceremony.

¹⁹⁶ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 174.

¹⁹⁷ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 300-301.

Sarah Murray related a similar story from Mull. On their way to the local minister, a couple met a missionary minister who performed the marriage on the spot and thus saved them a long walk. According to Murray, the marriage ceremony of the common people in the western Highlands was very laconic and consisted only of joining hands and a short exhortation from the minister for the couple's future behaviour.¹⁹⁸

In the Highlands courtship and betrothal seem to have varied locally. Martin reported (in the 1690s) on a curious ancient custom in the Hebrides. A man took a maid for his wife and kept her for a year without marrying her. If she pleased him, he married her at the end of the year and legitimated any children born to them. However, if he did not love the maid, he returned her with the dowry to her parents, while the children stayed with him. This custom, however, was considered very unreasonable and had been abandoned long before.¹⁹⁹ Pennant reported that the

¹⁹⁸ See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, p. 247. Given that marriages were performed so easily in Scotland, it is obvious why those people who could not get married without difficulty in England fled across the border to Gretna, where the local smith or any other person could perform a legally valid marriage. Two witnesses were all that was required. References to young runaway lovers from England getting married at Gretna Green became a recurrent motif in travellers' accounts, particularly in the Romantic period. However, by the end of the eighteenth century many travellers reported that the marriage ceremony lacked any decency. The smith and his assistants were often drunk and were more interested in the fee than in delivering a decent ceremony. The people of Gretna were also very concerned about the reputation of their village as every parent's nightmare. Joseph Mawman's account of his call at Gretna Green in 1804 speaks volumes: 'At Gretna-green, we had the curiosity to call upon the high-priest of Hymen. It was at an early hour in the morning, and we could not be favoured with his society, without paying it's [sic] price in whiskey. A quart of this fiery spirit he drank before his breakfast. He told us, that he had married upwards of fifty couples in a year; that sometimes they came in coaches and six, and sometimes on foot; and that his charge for performing the ceremony varied, from fifty guineas to a bottle of his favourite liquor.' Mawman, *Excursion*, pp. 196-197.

¹⁹⁹ See Martin, *Description*, p. 114. These 'trial marriages' were also often referred to as 'handfasting'. S. Livingstone and many folklorists argue that their main purpose was to ensure that an heir would be born. A simple declaration before a witness bound a couple hand in fist for a year and a day, for which time they agreed to live together. If the couple split up after the expiry of this period, any children were left with the father. They were treated as legitimate and had equal standing with the brothers and sisters of a formal marriage. No stigma was attached to the woman, and she was free to look for a new partner. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 37. However, there are serious doubts about this interpretation of Martin's account. A.E. Anton convincingly argues that 'handfasting' was not a 'trial marriage' but a betrothal and promise of future marriage. Moreover, he argues that this passage of Martin's *Description* probably did not refer to the medieval and early modern custom of 'handfasting', but to 'mariageis contractit for certane yearis' that were forbidden in the Statutes of Iona in 1609. These 'marriages' had little to do with 'handfasting', and the measures taken against them suggest that there was a custom in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland of taking women as concubines. 'Handfasting' was outlawed by the 1939 Marriage (Scotland) Act. See A.E. Anton, "'Handfasting' in Scotland", *SHR*, vol. xxxvii, no. 124 (1958), pp. 90-91, 94-100. However, these 'marriages' may also have been part of the medieval Scandinavian heritage in the Western Isles. The *Jyske Lov*, written down in 1241 during the rule of the Danish King Waldemar II, stated (book i, article 27) that a woman who had been living together for three winters with a man, and had been in

bridegroom privately obtained the consent of the woman before he demanded her formally from her father. The formal plea was made in the following manner: The lover and his friends assembled on a particular hill allotted for that purpose in every parish. One of them was dispatched to obtain permission to wait on the daughter. If he was successful, he was sent out again to invite the father and his friends to join them on the hill for a cask of whisky. Then the lover took his future father-in-law by the hand, plighted his troth, and the daughter was surrendered up to him.²⁰⁰ At the wedding attended by Robertson, the bridegroom simply asked the bride's father if he was willing to let him have his daughter. Immediately afterwards, the whole company set out for church for the marriage ceremony.²⁰¹ In the 1780s marriage contracts were still usual among the common people on the Outer Hebrides. The friends of both parties involved were invited to meet to make up the contract of marriage. John Lanne Buchanan attended such a meeting and reported that it began with a set speech by the friends of the young man, informing the parents of the cause and design of their meeting.²⁰² The speech was of considerable length and explained the good qualities of the young man who aspired to the match. It also underlined the worthiness of his friends. The young man's party hoped that the woman's party would then make an offer of such a dowry as might be worthy of themselves and the young man. A dowry was paid in cattle, sheep and goats since livestock was more valuable to them than money. Even if the woman's parents had no livestock, they had to name a number of cows. Otherwise, the young man might feel offended, and his dignity would have suffered in the eyes of his neighbours. Twenty cows were reckoned as a moderate dowry, and many promises far exceeded this figure. If the

charge of the keys to his house and had had sexual intercourse with him should be his lawful wife. See K. von See (ed.), *Das Jütsche Recht* (Weimar, 1960), p. 44.

²⁰⁰ See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 186-187.

²⁰¹ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 174. The wedding had surely been preceded by an informal request for the bride in which the consent must have been given and the financial details had also been addressed.

²⁰² Livingstone gives a different account of this custom. According to her, in the Western Isles the 'Rèitach' or formal asking was a complicated affair that usually took place after it was known that a young couple wanted to marry. There was a gathering of friends at the bride's home in which one of them had been appointed to represent the bridegroom-to-be, in asking for the bride's hand. A form of game was played in which the issue was not directly addressed: the talk would be of other things, until a friend addressed the matter by saying 'that he had heard there was a ewe lamb, or a boat that was needing looked after and he would be glad to arrange for this to happen'. Then the father would agree and miraculously a fiddler, the best man and the maids would be present and the celebrations began, although the company pretended that it was a great surprise to them. Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 31.

young couple were satisfied with each other during the courtship, the marriage contract was agreed upon and the celebrations began. However, at the time of payment, a kind of representative value of the livestock had to be found as most parents did not own sufficient animals. Buchanan was told that

a year old cow stood for one; three ewes for another; a spinning wheel for a third; two blankets for a fourth; a small chest for a fifth; and so on until the number agreed upon was completed.²⁰³

On the Saturday after the marriage contract was settled, the couple's names had to be given to the parish clerk who published the banns in the church the following day.²⁰⁴ Buchanan added that the islanders disliked this procedure for fear that others might step forward to claim a prior right. He had witnessed such objections, and the people, therefore, did not wish their names to be announced and instead preferred a private marriage. If there were no objections, the couple were married by the clergyman in the usual manner, and, last but not least, the bridegroom was reminded of his duties to his wife. Afterwards the bride was led home in triumph, and the celebrations began.²⁰⁵ On the Isle of Arran the courtship and marriage were performed in a similar manner, consisting of two separate stages. According to Patrick Walker, the usual manner was as follows:

After the woman has given her consent and the friends of both parties have been made acquainted with it, the intended husband goes with a parcel of his friends and a bottle of whisky, to the woman's place of residence, where a party of her friends are ready, but the bride does not appear. One of the man's party advances to the door, and says in Erse, "we want a maid to be a wife to such a one." (naming him): One of the woman's party answers, "we want a husband for our Daughter, but what has he, or how is he to support her? He then tells what he has, and asks what Tocher she is to have? this is sometimes a Cow, a Sheep, or a sum of Money, according to their circumstances: if they are not able to give her any Tocher, they answer, that she is herself a Treasure to any man."²⁰⁶

The party was then admitted, everything was settled, the bottle of whisky was emptied and the pair were put to bed. According to Walker, this was called the 'Contract night', and the marriage did not take place for another eight to ten days.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 165.

²⁰⁴ The money paid to the Church for calling the banns was known as 'cryin' siller'. The couple wishing to marry had to leave a pledge or pawn, either money or clothing. In case of a penny-wedding this was forfeited. If there were legitimate objections and the marriage was called off, the pawn went into the poor box. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 33.

²⁰⁵ See Buchanan, *Travels*, pp. 165-167.

²⁰⁶ NLS, Walker, 'Journals', Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fos. 70-71. 'Tocher', a bride's dowry.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 71.

On the morning of the marriage, the country people gathered and danced to the tunes of a piper or fiddler before they set out for church. After the clergyman had married the couple, the festivities continued, though in a somewhat disorderly fashion. Walker reported:

The moment the Ceremony is performed all the people either on foot or horseback, drive as hard as they can to the Bridegrooms house, and the first there gets a certain quantity of Whisky: this is called "Riding the Brewes", and from the great confusion attending it, is often productive of many accidents.²⁰⁸

Dancing was resumed, guns were fired and the celebrations continued until late in the night. The morning after the wedding began once again with dancing, followed by a great breakfast of butcher's meat and broth of which all were kindly invited to partake before the party finally departed.²⁰⁹

The Highlanders were also well known for their superstition, and their weddings were no exception. Robertson observed that the bridegroom had put a sixpence into his right shoe before he set out for church, for the purpose of defending him from witchcraft.²¹⁰ Thomas Pennant reported that during the marriage ceremony the Highlanders took great care that no dogs passed between the couple, and particular attention was paid to 'the leaving the Bridegroom's left-shoe without buckle or latchet, to prevent witches from depriving him, on the nuptial night of the power of loosening the virgin zone'.²¹¹ Other superstitious rites had already been

²⁰⁸ Ibid., fo. 72.

²⁰⁹ See *ibid.*, fos. 72-73.

²¹⁰ See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 175. It was a common belief that a sixpence or silver coin in the shoe would protect the bearer from witchcraft.

²¹¹ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 187. Again, it was a common belief that witches adopted the form of animals. During his tour of the Hebrides in 1772, Pennant attended a wedding on Skye and noted that 'the bridegroom put all the powers of magic to defiance, for he was married with both shoes tied with their latchet'. Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 301. See also *ibid.*, part ii, pp. 44-45. Pennant claimed that the loosening of every knot was still strictly observed and that a similar custom prevailed in France. It was a common belief throughout Europe, and many parts of the world, that loosening a man's knots and buckles before the marriage ceremony, or untying a woman's hair and knots when in labour, would protect them from impotence or miscarriage, as witches were believed to cause impotence or to prevent childbirth by tying a knot in a handkerchief or cord. See M. Leach (ed.), *Folk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary Of Folklore, Mythology And Legend* (San Francisco, c. 1996), pp. 586-587. These customs were confirmed by numerous travellers and were practised until at least the end of the eighteenth century. See, for example, Buchanan, *Travels*, p. 167. The Revd Dr Thomas Bisset, minister of Logierait (Perthshire), reported in 1791 for the *Statistical Account* on the superstitious beliefs of the Highlanders in his parish: 'Immediately before the celebration of the marriage ceremony, every knot about the bride and bridegroom, (garters, shoe-strings, strings of petticoats, &c.) is carefully loosened. After leaving the church, the whole company walk round it, keeping the church walls always upon the right hand. The bridegroom, however, first retires one way

abandoned. Pennant explained a peculiar (and dangerous) custom that was formerly practised:

As a test, not many years ago a singular custom prevailed in the *Western Highlands* the morning after a wedding: a basket was fastened with a cord round the neck of the Bridegroom by the female part of the company, who immediately filled it with stones, till the poor man was in great danger of being strangled, if his Bride did not take compassion on him, and cut the cord with a knife given her to use at discretion. But such was the tenderness of the *Caledonian* spouses, that never was an instance of their neglecting an immediate relief of their good man.²¹²

8.3.6. The superstition of the Highlanders

The Highlanders were well known for their superstitious rites, and many travellers had a particular interest in these practices. It is impossible to enumerate every local superstitious belief as described by travellers, but it is necessary to examine the major superstitious beliefs that were common throughout the Highlands and Islands.

However, a word of warning must be issued. In an age in which religion was of far greater significance to the people's life than it is today, the accounts and comments made by travellers on the superstitious habits of the local population were liable to stress their supposedly wild and 'uncivilised' nature, and thus also functioned as a reassurance to the traveller and his readers of their supposedly superior cultural background. Moreover, the topic of superstition provided travel writers with a unique opportunity to put particular emphasis on bizarre customs and rites in order to spice up their accounts. It should be kept in mind that most readers

with some young men, to tie the knots that were loosed about him; while the young married woman, in the same manner, retires somewhere else to adjust the disorder of her dress.' *OSA*, vol. xii, p. 713.

²¹² Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 187. D'Amour claimed that this custom was still practised in the Hebrides. He witnessed it at the wedding of the Duke of Manchester and Lady Susan Gordon, although, in this instance, the duke's part was performed by proxy. See Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, p. 124. According to Livingstone, 'creeling the bridegroom' symbolised the sharing of life's burdens together. This custom was also practised in various forms in Ayrshire and Berwick. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 46. D'Amour also mentioned another curious custom that he claimed to have witnessed himself. After the wedding celebration the married couple retired to their hut. A little later the guests followed, finding the couple undressed and seated in bed. Then the guests assembled round them and passed round the whisky. Finally, each of the two had a glass of whisky thrown in their face before the guests retired. See Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, pp. 123-124. There is no contemporary evidence of this strange custom, but similar post-nuptial rites existed in Galloway. In the 'beddin' o' the bride' the womenfolk undressed the bride and put on her night attire while the men had to stay outside. Then the bridegroom entered and undressed. As the bride sat up in bed, all the men came in and claimed a kiss. The bride then threw her left stocking, and whoever was hit would be the next to marry. This was locally known as 'throwin' the hosen'. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, p. 45.

never had a chance to visit the people described and, therefore, had a voracious appetite for curiosities, which they expected to be satisfied by a good travel writer.

8.3.6.1. Celtic superstition relating to pre-Christian times

Until the end of the eighteenth century, travellers to the Highlands of Scotland still met with traditions and superstition that had their origins in pre-Christian Celtic rituals. The celebration of Beltane was one of the oldest Celtic traditions, relating back to pre-Christian times. Beltane is the Scottish and Irish Gaelic name for May Day. On this day witches were believed to be particularly active, and on the eve of the feast bonfires were lit to protect the cattle from their evil spells. Beltane was usually celebrated on 1 May.²¹³ Martin Martin reckoned that the term Beltane was derived from an ancient pagan god of the Britons called Belus or Belinus. He assumed that this god was the equivalent to the Assyrian god Bel [Baal] or Belus, and that the term Beltane meant the fire of Bel or Belus.²¹⁴ According to Martin, this feast originated from the custom, practised by the Druids in the islands, of extinguishing all the fires in the parish until the tithes were paid. Only upon payment were the fires rekindled.²¹⁵ Martin did not refer to any particular rituals relating to livestock on that special day, but, according to other authors, Beltane was a very important feast to the pastoral communities of the Highlands at which they asked for protection for their animals. Edward Lhuyd noted that on the third day of May the Highlanders sprinkled their cattle with a mixture of the animals' urine, dung and men's urine in order to protect them from evil charms and witchcraft.²¹⁶ Pennant reported that on 1 May the herdsmen of every village held their Beltane, a rural sacrifice to secure a blessing for their animals. The ceremony was as follows:

They cut a square trench on the ground, leaving the turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal and milk; and bring, besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whisky; for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on

²¹³ According to some sources, Beltane was celebrated on the third day of May. The eighth day of May was also called Beltane day. See *SND*, vol. i, p. 96. See also Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 19.

²¹⁴ See Martin, *Description*, p. 105. This attribution was denied by J.G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1902), pp. 268-269. [hereafter: Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight*]

²¹⁵ See Martin, *Description*, p. 105. This was, of course, pure speculation.

²¹⁶ See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 67. See also note 283.

the ground, by way of libation: on that, every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them: each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and flinging it over his shoulders, says, *This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this to thee, preserve thou my sheep*; and so on. After that, they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals: *This I give to thee, O Fox! spare thou my lambs; this to thee, O hooded Crow! this to thee, O Eagle!*²¹⁷

After the ceremony they dined on the caudle, with any leftovers hidden by two of the celebrants. On the following Sunday they reassembled and finished the leftovers. Pennant also reported that at Beltane the herdsmen gathered dry wood, set it on fire and danced three times southward round the pile. He added that Beltane – like other pre-Christian rituals – often had to be performed in secrecy and was on the decline as the clergy were discouraging such superstition.²¹⁸

The celebration of Beltane was connected to pre-Christian Druidical times, and some authors described rituals performed on that day that still had a strong resemblance to the supposed human sacrifices of the Druids. John Gillies, for example, reported that at a supposed Druid temple at ‘Findowie-more’ near Deanshaugh (Perthshire) a fire was kindled on 1 May in honour of the god Belus or Baal. He fantasised that at this place the ‘delinquents, transgressing the rules of the Druids, were obliged to walk bare-footed upon hot cinders, and likewise to do other penance’.²¹⁹ He added that it was still a custom in some parts of the Highlands for youths at Beltane to kindle fires, make up an effigy in the form of a human body and throw it into the fire as a kind of sacrifice to Baal.²²⁰

There were further hints to supposed Druidical human sacrifices that could still be found in the rituals performed at Beltane. An unidentified English traveller in 1794 wrote that at Beltane numbers of people assembled and baked a cake that was then broken into small bits, one of which was blackened. These bits were put into a bonnet, and everyone drew their piece. The person who drew the blackened piece

²¹⁷ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, pp. 97-98. Pennant did not witness this ceremony. He was given this account by a local gentleman.

²¹⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 291, 186. According to some modern authors, Christianised elements were also integrated in the Beltane. For example, cattle were made to pass through the smoke of the fire in order to cleanse and protect them from evil in god’s name. Charms were also believed to have extra powers at Beltane, and the cattle were often blessed and sprinkled with urine. In early modern times Beltane had become a mixture of pagan and Christian elements. See Livingstone, *Scottish Customs*, pp. 102-103.

²¹⁹ J. Gillies, *One Day’s Journey To The Highlands Of Scotland. March 12. 1784.* (Perth, 1784), p. 9.

²²⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 9.

was obliged to jump three times over the fire, but in former times, the author reckoned, he was likely to have been sacrificed in the fire to their god Baal.²²¹

Other superstitious rites also had their origins in the time of pre-Christian sun-worship. Travellers, for example, unanimously agreed that the Highlanders paid great attention to the clockwise performance of certain tasks. Martin Martin, for example, reported that the locals and strangers always left the ‘*Loch siant Well*’ on the Isle of Skye in the same direction. They walked three times around the well sunways (i.e. clockwise) from east to west after drinking from its water, which was believed to cure diseases such as stitches, headaches, stones and consumption.²²² The tenant on the tiny island of Fladday (Eilean Fladday) in the Sound of Raasay always made a tour sunways round the island before going to sea in his boat.²²³ Upon their arrival on the neighbouring island of Oronsay, the natives of Colonsay were accustomed to circle the church clockwise before entering upon any kind of business. The natives of Eigg were accustomed to walk clockwise round a heap of stones on their island that was called ‘Martin Dessil’ and was consecrated to the saint of that name.²²⁴ Martin was rowed several times from one island to another, and on every occasion the oarsmen insisted on a clockwise passage, even although Martin had forbidden them to do so. Despite the clockwise turn, the boat was repeatedly forced to return because of contrary winds. On embarking on a journey from Jura to Colonsay, he forbade his oarsmen to make such a turn. The boat arrived safely at its destination in spite of the superstitious oarsmen’s disbelief in the possibility of travelling without a clockwise turn.²²⁵

²²¹ See NLS, ‘Tour in Scotland August 1794’, Acc. 8278, no pagination. See the notes after the itinerary. At first glance, such rituals read like the product of the vivid imagination of travel writers. However, these Beltane ceremonies were confirmed by reliable sources such as the local ministers. The Revd James Robertson, minister of Callander, reported in 1791 to Sir John Sinclair that the people in his parish also made a cake of oatmeal that was divided in many equal portions. One portion was blackened before they were all put into a bonnet. Then the participants were blindfolded, and everyone had to draw a portion. The person drawing the blackened bit was assigned to Baal and would have been sacrificed in former times. However, Robertson reported that this custom was fast disappearing. See *OSA*, vol. xii, pp. 183-184. The notion that the Druids performed human sacrifices went back to Roman authors. Nonetheless, up to the end of the eighteenth century, even learned men believed in its practice despite a lack of evidence.

²²² See Martin, *Description*, p. 140.

²²³ See *ibid.*, p. 167. Martin claimed that the birds made the same clockwise tour around the island before arriving in March and leaving in August.

²²⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 247-248, 277.

²²⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 119. In Gaelic the right-hand turns, imitating the course of the sun, were called ‘*Deiseal*’.

This superstition proved to be particularly hard to suppress, and there are numerous examples of it until the end of the eighteenth century. The Revd Mr Shaw, minister of Elgin, informed Pennant that in the shire of Moray the herdsmen danced at Beltane three times clockwise round the fire. At marriages and baptisms they made a procession around the church, following the course of the sun.²²⁶ The Revd Mr James Robertson, minister of Callander, reported in 1791 that the Highlanders considered it the ‘lucky way’ to perform tasks from east to west, following the course of the sun. The opposite way was considered ‘unlucky’. Therefore, when Highlanders bathed in or drank out of a consecrated fountain, they always approached it clockwise from east to west, going along the southern side. They approached graves in the same manner, and when the glass went round in company, it also imitated the course of the sun.²²⁷

The motion of the sun was also imitated in numerous other rituals. Patrick Walker, for example, reported in 1797 from the Isle of Arran that when a woman was in childbirth, the moment the child was born the midwife lit a blackened candle and walked around the room in the direction of the sun, at the same time turning the candle in contrary circles. This, the islanders believed, would keep away witches and prevent their incantations having any effect.²²⁸

8.3.6.2. Foretelling the future, second sight and shoulder blade-reading (*slinneineachd*)

When Martin Martin gathered the information for his *Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland*, the Royal Society of London had asked him to pay particular attention to the phenomenon of second sight. Second sight, i.e. the ability to foretell future events, was undoubtedly the most famous supernatural belief in the Highlands, and it was widely recognised and accepted by the natives and visitors alike. Martin dealt with it in great detail. In a separate chapter, titled ‘An Account of the *Second*

²²⁶ See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 291.

²²⁷ See *OSA*, vol. xii, p. 184. In parts of nineteenth-century rural England the coffin was also carried clockwise round the churchyard. Throughout Europe leftward or anti-clockwise circling was linked to bad luck and witchcraft. See J. Simpson and S. Roud (eds.), *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 295, 211-212. [hereafter: Simpson and Roud (eds.), *Dictionary of English Folklore*] See also Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*, pp. 229-230.

²²⁸ See NLS, Walker, ‘Journals’, Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fo. 75.

Sight, in Irish call'd *Taish'*, he examined this phenomenon and related numerous examples that were mainly drawn from his native island of Skye.²²⁹ He defined second sight as follows:

The *Second Sight* is a singular Faculty of Seeing, an otherwise invisible Object, without any previous Means us'd by the Person that sees it for that end; the Vision makes such a lively impression upon the Seer, that they neither see nor think of any thing else, except the Vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear Pensive, or Jovial, according to the Object which was represented to them.²³⁰

Martin was very well acquainted with these visions, but the number of people afflicted had already severely declined by his time. He reported that 'it was much more common twenty Years ago than at present, for one in ten do not see it now, that saw it then'.²³¹ From his experiences with these people he explained that this gift affected men and women alike, and that it did not descend lineally in a family. He knew of parents who possessed it, but whose children did not, and vice versa.²³² He also stressed that the people affected were neither known to be mad, nor did they suffer from any mental illnesses. Interestingly, he claimed that children, horses and cows were also affected by these visions. That children might be frightened by these apparitions seems fairly obvious, but that horses and cows would also see them sounds rather curious. He argued that he knew of several instances in which horses and cows had behaved very strangely and had shown, for no obvious reasons, signs of distress and great fear. However, the reason for their strange behaviour became obvious when seers confirmed that they saw visions at the same time as the animals had gone wild. To him, it was, therefore, evident that these animals also had the same

²²⁹ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 300-335. Martin was well aware that many people considered second sight as superstition, and he also knew about the objections made to it by the scientific community. Although he had spent several years in Edinburgh and was in contact with the Royal Society of London, he clearly believed in second sight. He related an incident in which a seer predicted the death of one of his acquaintances. Martin wrote that he did not pay any attention to the prediction until it was proven by the death of the person at the predicted time. He added that at the time of the prediction the seer was still a novice, but he was now a very skilful seer in the parish of St Maries in the north of Skye. Martin also stated that several seers had correctly predicted his visits to certain places although his coming was pure coincidence. See *ibid.*, pp. 302, 303. The parish of St Maries referred to the parish of Kilmuir, which in Gaelic signified the church of Mary, to whom it had been dedicated in ancient times. See *OSA*, vol. xx, p. 166.

²³⁰ Martin, *Description*, p. 300.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

²³² See *ibid.*, pp. 303, 311, 301. Lhuyd contradicted Martin and claimed that second sight 'descends from Father to Son for some Generations'. He also claimed that those possessed of the gift could prevent the evil from threatening others, but they could not save themselves. Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 36.

visions. He denied that the seers were impostors and that the people who believed them were credulous and easily impressed. He stressed that the seers were generally illiterate and well-meaning people and that none of them had any intention of making any gain from their gift. Moreover, the correctness of their visions had been confirmed by numerous people of all ranks. Finally, he added that second sight was not confined to the Highlands of Scotland, but that there were also instances of this gift in the Low Countries, Wales and the Isle of Man.²³³ Having explained the characteristics of the second sight and the social background of the seers, Martin related numerous examples from the Hebrides in which visions and predictions had become reality. Before analysing these incidents in more detail, it is necessary to examine whether these visions and predictions followed a common pattern and whether they can be arranged in certain categories.

The visions can generally be distinguished in two categories. Firstly, visions that involved living people, contemporary with the seer and often his friends or relations, and occurring within a short time of the forecast. The second category contains visions of events that often involved persons who were not yet born. This type of vision was far more difficult to explain. The visions often reached far into the future, and the images and their meaning had no obvious relation to the seer's contemporary environment. Nonetheless, there were numerous examples in which the contemporaries of the seer were sufficiently convinced of the seer's gift and recorded the visions despite uncertainty as to their veracity.²³⁴

The examples provided by Martin referred mainly to visions of the first category. He related numerous instances (mainly from the Isle of Skye) in which

²³³ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 308, 306-307, 309, 312-313.

²³⁴ See F. Thompson, *The Supernatural Highlands* (London, 1976), pp. 54-55. [hereafter: Thompson, *Supernatural Highlands*] Coinneach Odhar, also known as 'Sallow Kenneth' or the 'Brahan Seer', was the most famous example of visions of the second category. He is reputed to have been a native of Lewis in the seventeenth century who rightly predicted the fate of the House of Seaforth and numerous other future events. The little information that survives about him in official records, however, contradicts this description of him handed down in folk tales and legend. It is more likely that the original Coinneach Odhar was a sixteenth-century inhabitant of Urray parish, in Ross, who was accused of being the ringleader of a band of witches in 1577-78, and that several prophecies attributed to him relate to sixteenth-century events. The fate of the sixteenth-century Coinneach Odhar is unrecorded, but others accused with him were certainly executed for witchcraft. For official records relating to the apprehension and trial of Coinneach Odhar see NAS, Exchequer Records, E1/7, fos. 67-68; NAS, Munro of Foulis writes, GD 93/92. For further details on his life and prophecies see W. Matheson, 'The Historical Coinneach Odhar And Some Prophecies Attributed To Him', *TGSI*, vol. xlvi (1969-70), pp. 68-75.

common people had apparitions. One man had seen at noon five men on horseback riding northward. When he ran to the road to meet them, the riders had disappeared without a trace. He told his neighbours about his vision. The next day Sir Donald MacDonald and his retinue came along the very same road, and the man realised that this was the party he had seen the day before. However, the man was assured that at the time of his vision Sir Donald MacDonald had been at Armadale, 40 miles to the south.²³⁵ Visions of death were among the most common instances of second sight. In his analysis Martin explained that some seers found themselves in a crowd of people carrying a corpse. After such visions the seers were able to name and describe the coffin-bearers, but they were unable to say anything about the corpse.²³⁶ Martin gave several examples that had been related to him by the local population or minister. Whilst at supper with four other men, one man was reputed to have suddenly seen a corpse in a shroud on the table. A few days after the vision, a family member died and was laid on that very table. In another instance a man had a vision of several men carrying a corpse to the church. The funeral procession did not take the common road, but instead went through a field. The neighbours did not believe in the seer's vision, but shortly afterwards one of their neighbours died, and his corpse was carried through the very field to the church as the common road was blocked by deep snow. In yet another instance some men from Harris, who were sailing round the Isle of Skye, suddenly saw two men hanging down by the ropes that secured the mast of the ship. Contrary wind then forced the ship into the harbour at Broadford on Skye, where they found Sir Donald MacDonald holding a sheriff's court. Two criminals were sentenced to death and were hanged in the ship's mast.²³⁷

However, Martin also related a famous instance of a vision that belonged to the second category, as it seemed to be most unlikely at the time of the prediction and took several years to fulfil. Martin reported that a seer in the island of Eigg had told his neighbours that he

had frequently seen, an Apparition of a Man in a Red Coat lin'd with Blue, and having on his Head a strange sort of Blue Cap, with a very high Cock on the fore part of it, and that

²³⁵ See Martin, *Description*, p. 314.

²³⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 304.

²³⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 314, 318, 320. For examples of accidents that were predicted by seers and happened soon after see *ibid.*, pp. 323-324, 325.

the Man who there appeared, was kissing a comely Maid, in the Village where the Seer dwelt ...²³⁸

The seer predicted that a man in such a dress ‘would certainly debauch or marry such a Young Woman’.²³⁹ However, the locals did not believe the seer and ridiculed him although several other of his predictions had previously come true. The story was then discussed on Skye where it was also dismissed. Martin himself was told the story by Norman MacLeod of Graban, in the presence of several honourable gentlemen in Edinburgh in September 1688. Eighteen months later a six hundred man strong government force, headed by a ‘Major Ferguson’, landed on the island of Eigg and took revenge on the locals for the killing of one of its soldiers on the Isle of Skye. The murderers had come from Eigg, and in their revenge the soldiers forcibly took the above-mentioned maid on board of one of their ships where she was raped.²⁴⁰ Thus, more than eighteen months later, the seer’s prediction was proven right. Martin also related two instances of second sight from St Kilda. He claimed, however, that apart from ‘Roderick the Impostor’ and one woman, none of the islanders pretended to have had the gift.²⁴¹

Martin reported that the gift of the second sight was already much on the decline at the end of the seventeenth century, nonetheless the subject remained very popular among writers. Edmund Calamy, for example, felt suitably inspired by Martin’s tales of second sight to make further enquiries into this phenomenon when he visited Scotland in 1709. He discussed it with Sir George Mackenzie, 1st Earl of Cromartie, who strongly believed in this gift and related many examples to him. However, upon numerous enquiries Calamy was informed that second sight had much abated throughout the Highlands.²⁴² Nonetheless, publications such as John Frazer’s *Deuteroskopia Or, A brief Discourse concerning the Second Sight, Commonly so called* (Edinburgh, 1707) or Theophilus Insulanus’s (pseudonym) *A Treatise On The Second Sight, Dreams and Apparitions: With Several Instances*

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 331.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 331.

²⁴⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 332. Martin might have referred to the attack on Eigg in May 1690 by a naval force under the command of an Ulster naval commodore, Edward Pottinger. The number of victims is unquantifiable as there was an effective cover-up of the murders and rapes.

²⁴¹ See Martin, *Voyage*, p. 133.

²⁴² See Calamy, *Account*, vol. ii, pp. 188-189.

sufficiently attested (Edinburgh, 1763) contributed to the fund of scientific literature and meant that no travel writer on the Highlands could ignore this topic.²⁴³ It is, however, not surprising that most eighteenth-century travellers did not witness any examples of second sight. Nonetheless, Thomas Pennant reported another famous instance that was related to him by an eyewitness. Shortly after the Battle of Prestonpans (21 September 1745, won by the Jacobites), Duncan Forbes, the Lord President, then at his house at Culloden, suddenly turned to the window and told Pennant's witness that the Jacobite uprising would be defeated on this spot. A little more than half a year later the prophecy was fulfilled when the Duke of Cumberland crushed the rebels in the Battle of Culloden (16 April 1746).²⁴⁴

Dr Johnson, usually suspicious of everything Scottish, was particularly interested in this subject and discussed it in considerable detail. He felt unable to determine whether second sight was an impression made by the mind upon the eye or vice versa. Moreover, in his view, it was difficult to judge how far second sight had receded in the recent past and to what extent it still existed in the Highlands. The dilemma was simple:

The Islanders of all degrees, whether of rank or understanding, universally admit it, except the Ministers, who universally deny it, and are suspected to deny it, in consequence of a system, against conviction.²⁴⁵

He also wondered why most tales of second sight dealt with predictions of death, misery or suffering. He concluded that the gift of second sight itself had actually no particular connection to this darker side of life, but that human beings had a far stronger sense of suffering, misery and pain than of joy. This, he argued, was evident in the way mankind looked at history as a record of wars, treason and calamities.²⁴⁶ Unfortunately, a meeting with a seer on Skye contributed little to answer Johnson's questions, as the man, in his view, was very gross, ignorant and unable to speak English.²⁴⁷ With all his prejudice against Scotland, and particularly the Gaelic tradition of the Highlands, in mind, he was at least satisfied that: 'By pretension to

²⁴³ The author of the latter treatise was the Reverend Donald MacLeod of Hamer (c. 1729-1781).

²⁴⁴ See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 180.

²⁴⁵ Johnson, *Journey*, p. 252.

²⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 250-251.

²⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 255.

Second Sight, no profit was ever sought or gained.²⁴⁸ Moreover, in his final word on this subject he admitted that second sight was one of the few things Scottish that had actually made an impact on him: 'I never could advance my curiosity to conviction; but came away at last only willing to believe.'²⁴⁹

Most tales of second sight were based on hearsay and followed the common pattern in which the seer predicted the death of a person that soon after occurred. During his tour of the Highlands in 1780, Jacob Patisson made particular enquiries into second sight, but all he could find were several stories from hearsay. In one story, a servant had warned his master, a captain fighting for the government in the 'Forty-Five, not to become engaged at Culloden. He claimed to have seen an apparition of him, slain and with blood running down from his forehead. His master, however, would not be intimidated and fell at Culloden, killed by a bullet to his forehead. In another tale, a minister had an apparition of his sister being stretched out on a bier. He did not believe in the vision as his sister was in good health. Nonetheless, she died a few days later. Patisson was unable to gather any first-hand information, and he, therefore, concluded that these stories could not be trusted. He summarised:

In the western Islands it [second sight] is said to be much more believed, & indeed it is credited in proportion to the distance, or obscurity of the place, & the consequent ignorance of the people.²⁵⁰

Matthias D'Amour was one of the few travellers who actually witnessed a case of second sight, although his story followed the well-known pattern. He claimed that while he was a servant to the MacLeods of Raasay, another servant came to him and told him that he had seen flames coming out of the sea, gliding towards the hall of a

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 256. The examples of second sight related by Johnson and Boswell were, as usual, based on hearsay and dealt with accomplished predictions of deaths and arrivals. See Boswell, *Tour*, pp. 180, 401.

²⁵⁰ NLS, Patisson, 'Tour 1780', MS. 6322, fo. 24. See also *ibid.*, fo. 38. Sarah Murray reported (in 1800) that the belief in second sight had almost disappeared from the Highlands, yet tales still remained of that gift. The story related by her was also based on hearsay and followed the common pattern. A midwife had a vision of two bodies being carried into Castle Lochlan where they were wrapped in linen sheets. The next day two corpses were washed ashore and buried in the way predicted by the seer. See Murray, *Companion*, vol. ii, pp. 295-296. Emilie Harmes also travelled the Highlands in 1800 and related from hearsay some tales of second sight in which deaths and accidents were correctly anticipated. She added that this phenomenon created huge interest not only in Britain but also on the Continent. She was told that one out of six Highlanders had this gift. This information must, however, be regarded as a huge exaggeration. See Harmes, *Caledonia*, vol. iii, pp. 82-86.

house and finally resting at a place that was known as the 'women's house'. He told D'Amour that there would soon be a death in the family. Soon after, the daughter of a nearby farmer fell ill with the smallpox in the hall of that very house and died in the room that was known as the 'women's house'.²⁵¹

The Frenchman Pierre N. Chantreau was very critical of any religious or superstitious beliefs. He related a story from the Isle of Skye that exemplifies the way in which some of these second sight stories were circulated. He was told that a seer had correctly predicted the time of arrival of a laird and his servant. Moreover, the seer was also correct with regard to the laird's clothing and the name, age and appearance of his servant. Upon enquiry, Chantreau was informed that the 'prediction' was not circulated until two days after the laird's arrival. Moreover, the 'seer' proved to be a local farmer who lived within half a mile of the port at which the laird had landed, and who could have been easily informed about his return. The laird, however, believed in this prophecy. Chantreau considered him very naive and ridiculed the credulity of the islanders.²⁵²

The final word on second sight is left to the Reverend James MacDonald, who had the rare opportunity of meeting a seer during his tour of the Highlands and Hebrides in 1802. On South Uist he met a Mr Duncan MacIntyre who was renowned for having the second sight. The seer had been brought to the meeting upon a false pretext so that he could not prepare for any interrogation about his gift. Upon enquiry, Mr MacIntyre explained that in his younger days he had far more visions. In his youth he saw faces at least once a week, or every fortnight, but these visions had become less frequent over the years, as was the case with other seers. He reckoned that in his younger days there were up to a hundred times as many seers than now. However, most people were now afraid to speak about their visions. Upon further enquiry, Mr MacIntyre explained that he had his last vision twelve years before when he saw the funeral procession of the schoolmaster of North Uist. The schoolmaster died two months later and was laid to rest in the way Mr MacIntyre had anticipated. The seer also explained that he had never foreseen a pleasant event and that all his visions had been anticipations of deaths, funeral processions, corpses and accidents.

²⁵¹ See Rodgers (ed.), *Memoirs Of D'Amour*, pp. 135-136. Again, it must be stressed that this story might have been made up by D'Amour.

²⁵² See Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, pp. 93-95.

Most of his visions appeared at dusk or late in the evening after he had been listening to stories of war, death, shipwreck or witches. On the evening of his vision of the schoolmaster's death, he had been visited by a relative whose daughter was dying, and they had talked about her funeral. He also claimed to know many more people who had second sight. Most of them were women, and he explained that they were, generally speaking, more frequently affected by visions. Moreover, their visions of faces were usually more precise than those of male seers.²⁵³ However, in the end James MacDonald was not convinced by the seer. He reckoned that the seers were usually deceived by their own imagination. The rough nature of the Highlands and the dangers of the hills and sea made very strong impressions on the popular mind. Most Highlanders lived in constant fear for their relatives and friends who were in the hills or on the sea, and MacDonald reckoned that it was only natural in these circumstances that people had visions of accidents happening to their loved ones.²⁵⁴

Second sight was not the Highlanders' only gift to forecast future events. Pennant reported that they also had a sort of divination that was called '*Sleinanachd*, or reading the *speal-bone*, or the blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton well scraped', and he related yet another extraordinary story of foretelling the outcome of the Battle of Culloden.²⁵⁵ In this incident a common soldier, who had retreated with Lord Loudon before the rebels to Skye, proclaimed victory on the very moment the Battle of Culloden was decided. In spite of the great distance of the battlefield, the soldier pretended to have discovered the event by looking through the bone. Reading the shoulder blade was a different power of divination as it did not involve visions or apparitions, but the interpretation of the marks on sheep bones. This technique was similar to the augury of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and it attracted the particular attention of travellers from the scientific community. The events forecast by the diviners, however, were very similar to those predicted by seers and mainly focused on gatherings of people, life and death. Pennant related another instance from the island of Rhum in which a female diviner had prognosticated correctly that

²⁵³ See MacDonald, *Reise*, vol. ii, pp. 170, 175-180.

²⁵⁴ See *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 170-174, 180-182.

²⁵⁵ Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 179.

five graves were soon to be opened, one of them for an adult and the other four for children, including one of her own kin.²⁵⁶

Pennant, however, never witnessed an instance of second sight or shoulder blade-reading. Nonetheless, as an experienced travel writer he knew about the expectations of his readers and did not disappoint them. His description of these predictions was a typical traveller's tale that lacked any truth:

These pretenders to second sight, like the *Pythian* priestess, during their inspiration fall into trances, foam at the mouth, grow pale, and feign to abstain from food for a month, so over-powered are they by the visions imparted to them during their paroxysms.²⁵⁷

8.3.6.3. The Highlanders' belief in supernatural beings and powers

Most travellers to the Highlands were highly educated and came from a well-off urban background. They were often unfamiliar with the traditions and beliefs of an oral culture and agrarian society. The oral tradition and folklore of the Highlands and Islands is particularly rich in supernatural beings. Foreign visitors recorded many of these beliefs, but due to their vast number it is impossible to examine every local belief in supernatural beings. Instead, it is necessary to focus on those beliefs that could be found all over the Highlands. These included the belief in brownies and fairies.

²⁵⁶ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 282. At first glance, these examples might look like isolated incidents. Only very few travel writers included instances of this mode of divination in their accounts, and the majority of travellers focused instead on the phenomenon of second sight. In the Highlands and Islands, however, gazing at the shoulder blade of a sheep was an ancient and widespread technique to foretell future events. Edward Lhuyd explained around 1700: 'They [the Highlanders] have a care not to touch [sic] it with the Teeth or a Knife. They by it foretell deaths, commotions, and tumultuary conventions within the bounds.' Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 35. According to John Gregorson Campbell, minister of Tiree 1861-1891, this mode of divination was practised as a profession or trade. Important events in the life of the owner of the slaughtered animal could be foretold by interpreting the marks on the shoulder blade, speal or blade-bone of a sheep or black pig. The flesh had to be boiled thoroughly so that it could be stripped off without the use of knives, scrapers or teeth since any scratch would render the bone useless. The bone was then divided into upper and lower parts, corresponding to the natural features of the district in which the divination was made. Much depended on the skills of the diviner, but certain marks indicated a crowd of people meeting for a funeral, fight or sale. The largest hole or indentation was the grave of the beast's owner, and from its position his living or dying that year was prognosticated. If it was to the side of the bone, it meant death; if it was in the centre, it meant worldly prosperity. Campbell also related two instances from popular tradition from Barra in which the celebrated shoulder blade-reader Mac-a-Chreachaire, a native of that island, prognosticated correctly the fate of the island and Kiessimul Castle, the seat of the MacNeills who were then chiefs of the island. The Massacre of Glencoe (1692) is also reputed to have been prognosticated by diviners. See Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*, pp. 263-266.

²⁵⁷ Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, p. 282.

A 'brownie' was a benevolent household sprite, usually shaggy and of peculiar shape, who haunted houses, particularly farmhouses. If treated well by the servants, the brownie performed many tasks of drudgery for them while they were asleep.²⁵⁸ The Reverend John Brand visited the Orkney and Shetland Islands in 1700 on behalf of the General Assembly and suggested that this superstition had receded in the recent past. He reported on the Shetlands:

Not above 40 or 50 Years ago, almost every Family had a *Brouny* or evil Spirit so called, which served them, to whom they gave a Sacrifice for his Service; as when they Churned their Milk, they took a part thereof and sprinckled every corner of the House with it for Brounies use, likewise when they Brewed, they had a stone which they called *Brounies Stone*, wherein there was a little hole, into which they poured some Wort for a Sacrifice to Brouny.²⁵⁹

Brand related two allegorical stories to emphasise that sacrifices should not be made to them as they were spirits of the devil. These stories, however, were propaganda purely for the purpose of eradicating this supposedly Catholic superstition. Brand's final word on brownies and fairies speaks volumes, and raises once more the suspicion that he presented a distorted picture of the true extent of the belief in brownies in the Shetlands:

Now I do not hear of any such appearances the Devil makes in these isles, so great and many are the blessings which attend a Gospel dispensation: The Brounies, Fairies and other evil Spirits that haunted and were familiar in our Houses were dismissed, and fled at the breaking up of our Reformation (if we may except but a few places not yet well reformed from Popish Dregs) as the Heathen Oracles wer [sic] silenced at the coming of our LORD, and the going forth of his Apostles.²⁶⁰

Because of his bias, Brand did not want to (or could not) acknowledge the full extent of the belief in supernatural beings. What did other travellers report on this subject, and did they suggest a different picture? Martin Martin wrote in great detail about the belief in witchcraft and the evil eye, but he was astonishingly economical on

²⁵⁸ See *SND*, vol. ii, p. 285. Throughout most of Scotland brownies were considered as benevolent spirits, but in the Shetland Islands they were regarded as evil spirits because they served as well as haunted the people. This belief was coherent with the general idea of the far north as the home of the dark and evil forces. See chapter 1.

²⁵⁹ Brand, *Description*, p. 112. Martin also included an account of the Shetland Islands in his *Description*, pp. 371-392, but it cannot be drawn upon to verify the information provided by Brand. Martin probably never visited the Shetlands and copied this account mainly from Brand's *Description* (1701), which had been published only two years before his *Description* (1703). Additionally, like many other ministers of the Church of Scotland, Brand was likely to (deliberately) underestimate the extent to which superstition still prevailed in these islands. His informant was the local minister, and it is very unlikely that the islanders told either their minister or a visitor like Brand the full extent of their superstitious beliefs since they knew about the intention of the Church to eradicate them.

²⁶⁰ Brand, *Description*, p. 113.

brownies and fairies. According to him, in the Western Isles the belief in brownies was also on the decline. He reported that on Vallay, a small island off the north-west coast of North Uist, the locals had a flat thin stone ‘called *Brownies* Stone, upon which the ancient Inhabitants offered a Cows Milk every Sunday, but this Custom is now quite abolish’d’.²⁶¹

In the north-western Highlands cattle rearing was the Highlanders’ main employment, and it is not surprising that the people believed in a special species of brownie, the ‘Gruagach’, who either protected or haunted their cattle.²⁶² As a reward for its protection and in order to protect their cattle from disease, sacrifices were made to the Gruagach. When James Robertson visited the Isle of Skye in 1768, the belief in the Gruagach had only recently been abandoned. He reported:

Not many years ago the milk maids held a superstitious custom of making a libation of their milk every Saturday night to Gruagach ie Brownie uttering a sort of prayer, beseeching he would take under his protection for the ensuing week all their Cattle at any time, when they omitted to perform this piece of worship, they imputed their misfortune wholly to this neglect they had been guilty of, by not presenting Brownie with his usual libation.²⁶³

Although sacrifices were no longer made to the Gruagach, the islanders still feared its power. According to Robertson, around the year 1763 or 1764 the servants of Mr Donald MacQueen, minister of Kilmuir, raised a dyke near to a flat stone with a little hollow in the middle. This stone was the local brownie’s stone on which the dairymaids made their offerings to the Gruagach. One of the labourers proposed to use the stone as material for the dyke, but his more superstitious companions considered this idea a most atrocious impiety and insisted that the stone should remain where it was. Mr MacQueen, desirous of checking any superstitious notions, finally decided to raise the stone and use it for the dyke. Beneath the stone a horse-load of charred wood was found, suggesting that ‘this stone seems to have been one of the Druid Altars & the Charcoal the fuel used by them in sacrifice’.²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Martin, *Description*, p. 67.

²⁶² The gender and shape of the Gruagach seems to have varied locally. Gruagach, i.e. long-haired one, is a common Gaelic name for a maiden, a young woman, and in most parts of the Highlands it was associated with a long-haired female. In parts of Skye, however, the Gruagach was male and in the shape of a tall young man with long yellow hair. See Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*, pp. 184-185.

²⁶³ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 94.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95. Robertson clearly believed that the Druids performed human sacrifices. He considered the brass or bronze instruments found by Mr Gershom Stewart, minister of Kilbride 1747-1795 (Isle

Mr MacQueen's crusade against local superstition seems to have been quite successful. Thomas Pennant visited the Isle of Skye in 1772 and observed that only a few superstitious beliefs persisted among the islanders. Brownies had been put to flight, and the belief in second sight prevailed only among the most ignorant people. He also made enquiries into the Gruagach, but he was unable to obtain any information on the nature of this spirit. It seems, however, that in 1772 milkmaids still made offerings to it on a certain flat round stone, four or five feet in circumference.²⁶⁵

A year later Pennant was followed by Johnson. According to him, Mr MacQueen had made further progress in his fight against superstition. Johnson reported that on Skye the brownies no longer received sacrifices. Nothing had been heard of them for many years, and the Reverend Donald MacQueen had abolished all offerings, including those to the Gruagach on the island of Trodday (Eilean Trodday), opposite the northern tip of Trotternish.²⁶⁶

The final word on brownies is left to Pierre N. Chantreau. In his criticism of all matters spiritual, he considered brownies and other superstitious beliefs to have been invented only in order to extort money from an ignorant people. Swindlers, he claimed, urged the people to donate money or to make sacrifices to these spirits. If they refused to do so, their animals would be sure to suffer harm. The Gruagach, he claimed, was just another invention to extort a second payment from credulous people. Fortunately, the ministers had abolished many of these superstitious beliefs, and the islanders no longer believed these swindlers.²⁶⁷

There was also widespread belief among the Highlanders in the healing powers of certain stones. In an area where there were hardly any physicians, apothecaries or

of Arran), to have been 'instruments for sacrifice' and described one of them as a 'flesh fork'. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁶⁵ See Pennant, *Tour And Voyage 1772*, part i, pp. 310-311. Mr MacQueen was also Pennant's main informant on Skye. The nature of the Gruagach seems to have been very vague. Pennant could not describe it, and neither could Johnson tell whether it was a good or an evil spirit. It looks as if most travellers after Pennant drew their information heavily from his account. It is no coincidence that travellers such as Johnson, Boswell and Chantreau dealt with the belief in brownies and the Gruagach in their account of the Isle of Skye. Pennant's inability to provide a clear picture of the Gruagach left subsequent authors struggling for information.

²⁶⁶ See Johnson, *Journey*, pp. 246-247. According to Johnson, Gruagach meant 'the Old Man with the Long Beard'. This must have been a misunderstanding.

²⁶⁷ See Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, pp. 91-92. Chantreau culled much of his information from Pennant and Johnson. It is unlikely that he had any first-hand knowledge of these beliefs.

veterinary surgeons, alternative methods of curing diseases in humans or animals had to be found. James Robertson reported (in 1768) from Skye that the islanders used fossil ammonites to cure certain diseases in their cattle. They called these stones 'Cramp stones' and used them to cure cows of the 'Cramp' by washing the affected part with the water in which the stones had been steeped. Belemnites were also used as charm stones. They were called 'Clach Bots' because they were believed to cure horses of worms. The islanders either applied the stones in powder or let the horses drink the water in which the stones had laid for some time.²⁶⁸ If cattle were injured by viper or adder bites, the islanders washed the wound with water in which the 'adder-stone' had been steeped. Robertson explained that many of the common people throughout Scotland believed that

on a certain day in Summer, numbers of Serpents assemble, & by twining themselves together, compose of foam & their scales, these Adderstones, which they perforate by passing thro' them.²⁶⁹

Robertson was shown such an adder-stone by Mrs Gordon at Fodderlater. This stone was frequently lent to people who came from many miles in quest of it. As there was a belief that no person could prosper who withheld an adder-stone from its rightful owner, the stone was treated with the utmost care and duly returned to its owner. The adder-stone shown to Robertson was 'about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in diameter, almost globular with a hole thro' it like a bead'.²⁷⁰ Mrs Gordon likewise showed him a 'toad-stone', a 'snail-stone' and a number of round pebbles, to all of which she attributed great virtues. The toad-stone was an unperforated amber bead, the snail-stone a smooth oblong crystal and the pebbles were collected from the seashore or the channel of a river. The adder-stones, Robertson added, were never employed to cure goats because it was believed that such an application would rob them of their power.²⁷¹

The Highlanders believed in the power of magic stones until at least the end of the eighteenth century. Edward Clarke reported (in 1797) from Mull that such stones were handed with veneration from father to son and were esteemed as a remedy for

²⁶⁸ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 87.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164. This notion has existed since Pliny the Elder's *Historia naturalis*.

²⁷⁰ Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 165. Robertson did not believe in the stone's effectiveness and scratched it with a bit of flint, only to discover that it was made of glass.

²⁷¹ See *ibid.*, p. 165.

every kind of disease in human beings or animals. After lengthy negotiations Clarke was able to buy two stones with magic powers. By holding one over the head of any diseased cattle, pouring water over it and letting the water dribble over the animal, it was believed that an infallible cure had been procured. The other stone was a sovereign remedy against infertility of cows if used in the same way. If either of the stones was dipped into water, it was said to cure headache, toothache and rheumatism. He was also shown some fossil shells, elf shots and oblong pebbles. The latter were called ‘Cockaroo-hoo-pan’ and were believed to be a sovereign antidote against female infertility.²⁷²

During his visit to the island of Jura, Pierre N. Chantreau observed a very curious and superstitious ceremony to heal a sick man. The patient was suffering from pleuropneumonia, but the islanders attributed his illness to witchcraft. In order to cure him the evil spirits had to be cast out of his body. This was performed by two ninety-year-old women who were ridiculously dressed and uttered Gaelic verses as they waved a magic wand to drive out the evil spirits. The patient recovered because of his robust constitution, but the local population attributed his recovery to the above-mentioned ceremony.²⁷³

8.3.6.4. The Highlanders’ belief in the evil eye and witchcraft

The belief in the evil eye and witchcraft was widespread in early modern societies. Phenomena that could not be otherwise explained, such as the sudden illness of humans or animals, were often attributed to magic powers. The evil eye was a kind of ‘black’ witchcraft, which – in contrast to ‘white’ or benevolent and protective

²⁷² See Otter (ed.), *Life Of Clarke*, pp. 228-229. In Strath Fillan (Perthshire) the owner of a relic advertised its magic power in the local inn. La Tocnaye was shown the relic in 1793. It was made of silver, plated with gold, and looked like the upper part of a crosier. When animals had fallen ill, they would be cured by water that had been run through the hollow of the relic. The owner explained that if the cure was to fail, the water would immediately boil when run through the relic. As this did not happen, the people could rely on its magic power that was confirmed by an ancient certificate. The relic earned its owner a small sum as credulous people sometimes came from a distance of 100 miles to fetch water. La Tocnaye did not believe in its magic power, but considered it very curious to find a relic and its superstition among Presbyterians. See La Tocnaye, *Promenade Dans La Grande Bretagne*, pp. 294-295. This relic was shown to many travellers. See, for example, NLS, ‘Tour in Scotland August 1794’, Acc. 8278, no pagination. See entry for 18 August 1794.

²⁷³ See Chantreau, *Voyage*, vol. iii, p. 125.

witchcraft – harmed the being or object it was directed against.²⁷⁴ The belief in the evil eye was not particularly confined to the Highlands and Islands, but its folk culture was particularly rich in tales of this dubious gift. Moreover, its meaning in Highland life was reflected in a number of Gaelic proverbs, such as ‘Fluich do shuil ma lean e rithe’ (Wet your eye lest it sticks to it – which was said by the owner of an object admired or coveted by another person who was suspected of possessing the evil eye.).²⁷⁵ The person affected by the evil eye was commonly believed to have the power to make the object of his or her desire his or her own or to spirit it away with the help of charms.

In the pastoral society of the Highlands of Scotland, livestock constituted the people’s most valuable possession. Therefore, many tales of the evil eye related to envy and the deliberate harming of someone else’s animals. Martin Martin reported that it was a received opinion in the Highlands and Islands that

Women by a Charm, or some other secret way, are able to convey the increase of their Neighbours Cows Milk to their own use, and that the Milk so charmed, doth not produce the ordinary quantity of Butter; and the Curds made of that Milk are so tough, that it cannot be made so firm as other Cheese, and is also much lighter in weighr [sic].²⁷⁶

However, there was a safe method to detect the culprit. Martin explained:

The Butter so taken away, and joynd to the Charmer’s Butter, is evidently discernable by a Mark of separation, viz. The diversity of colours, that which is charmed being still paler than that part of the Butter which hath not been charmed; and if Butter having these Marks be found with a suspected Woman, she is presently said to be guilty.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁴ The most comprehensive survey of the belief in the evil eye is still R.C. MacLagan, *Evil Eye In The Western Highlands* (London, 1902). [hereafter: MacLagan, *Evil Eye*] In the case of the evil eye the border between witchcraft and superstition is not clear cut. Elderly women were particularly suspected of having the evil eye, a hint to its association with witchcraft. However, as the locals developed a set of fixed rules and rituals to counter its effects, it might also be considered as a kind of superstition. The belief that certain people could inflict disease, harm or death simply by a glance dated back to ancient classical authors such as Pliny.

²⁷⁵ Quoted in Thompson, *Supernatural Highlands*, p. 42.

²⁷⁶ Martin, *Description*, p. 120.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 120. The methods to detect the charmer varied locally. During his stay on the Isle of Arran in the summer of 1797, Patrick Walker witnessed how a local woman was accused and found guilty of witchcraft and possessing the evil eye, after a cow had gone dry. He reported that in order to discover the culprit ‘all the Females are turned out of the house, and one totally unconnected with the Family is brought in; she puts a Pot containing a little of the milk, covered with a green turf, upon the fire, which is allowed to drie quite up to a cinder, without being touched, and if as was the case here, any person comes to the door of the house, while this is going on, they are held to be the evil persons: their notion is, that while the milk is burning, the person is tortured with such an internal flame, that nothing can relieve it but coming to the spot’. NLS, Walker, ‘Journals’, Adv. MS. 20.5.3, fos. 74-75. Walker thought that this ceremony was totally ridiculous. However, the people in the Highlands and Islands held their belief in similar ceremonies until the early twentieth century. Donald J. MacLeod stated in the preface to the 1934 edition of Martin’s *Description* that he knew of three worthy old church elders who solemnly set out together to test all the milk basins of a whole village in order to

To recover the loss, the Highlanders usually took a little of the rennet from all the suspected persons and put it in an eggshell full of milk. When that from the charmer was added, it immediately curdled.²⁷⁸

In the common perception cattle and children were particularly susceptible to the negative effects of the evil eye. The charms to protect them from this danger were manifold. Some women protected their cream by immersing the root of groundsel as an amulet, but more often nuts, or white ‘molluka beans’, were used as protection against witchcraft or the evil eye. They were worn about the children’s neck and were believed to change their colour to black when any evil was directed against their bearer. Martin confirmed that these beans changed their colour, but he was unable to give a cause. He reported that he had one of these beans in his possession, which had been given to him by Malcolm Campbell, Steward of Harris. A few weeks before Martin’s arrival on Harris, for several days all of Mr Campbell’s cows had given blood instead of milk. This sudden change was attributed to witchcraft. In order to restore the cows’ milk, Mr Campbell’s wife was advised by her neighbours to lay a ‘White Nut, called the *Virgin Maries Nut*,’ into her milking pail.²⁷⁹ She followed this advice and found that the first cow produced only blood, but the nut in her pail turned from white into dark brown. However, when the nut was used for the other cows, they gave pure, good milk, which was ascribed to the virtue of the nut. After its successful application Mr Campbell presented Martin with this very nut.²⁸⁰

Salt and ashes were also used as an antidote against the evil eye. Lhuyd reported that the Highlanders put these ingredients on a spoon, pronounced some

detect the culprit after the milk of a cow failed to produce cream. A penny was gently placed upon the surface of the cream in each basin. If it sank, the milk was regarded as honest. If the cream was so consistent that it bore the weight of the penny, the owner of the cream came under suspicion of having adulterated, by magic means, the cream with the milk of his neighbour. See M. Martin, *A Description of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1994), p. 34.

²⁷⁸ See Martin, *Description*, pp. 120-121.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39. This nut was also known as St Mary’s nut or in Gaelic ‘*àirne Muire*’. It was a kind of bean (‘*Mucuna urens*’ or ‘*Dioclea reflexa*’) that was brought to the shores of the Hebrides by the Gulf Stream. It was rarely found and considered lucky. See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customs*, p. 69. According to Martin, its kernel was also ground into powder and drunk in boiled milk or whisky to cure diarrhoea and dysentery. See Martin, *Description*, pp. 12, 76, 254.

²⁸⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 123, 121, 38-39.

charmed words over it, then spat on the salt and ashes and finally applied it to the affected person.²⁸¹

The belief that people afflicted with the evil eye were able to cast spells over long distances was neither limited to the seventeenth century nor to the western seaboard. James Robertson, for example, reported in 1771 on this superstitious belief in the central Highlands. Again, a sample of milk had failed to yield butter or cheese, and the deficiency was attributed to the evil eye. However, the method of undoing the spell varied from that of other regions. In the Badenoch area the leaves of the small bistort, milkwort and yellow devil's bit were put into a rag that was then tied and immersed in the bewitched milk.²⁸²

Aside from these particular charms, which were applied in individual cases, the Highlanders also sought a more general protection from the evil eye and all kinds of witchcraft. Although the method used sounds very curious, it is confirmed by many travellers and more recent research into the oral tradition of the Highlands. According to the Welsh Celtic scholar Edward Lhuyd, on the third day of May each year the Highlanders took the urine and dung of their cattle, mixed it with their own urine and then sprinkled their cattle with it. This was believed to be an antidote against charms and all kinds of witchcraft.²⁸³

In the remote areas of the Highlands the belief in witchcraft lasted longer than in other more accessible parts of the country. It is not surprising that the last

²⁸¹ See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 66. It is, however, not entirely clear from this passage whether this charm was applied to cure the person afflicted with the evil eye or his or her victim. Spitting was an ancient device to repel witchcraft and the evil eye. See Simpson and Roud (eds.), *Dictionary of English Folklore*, p. 339.

²⁸² See Henderson and Dickson (eds.), *Robertson: Life and Travels*, p. 168. For examples of the various counter-spells used in the western Highlands and the Hebrides in the nineteenth century see Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight*, pp. 57-66.

²⁸³ See Campbell (ed.), *Highland Rites And Customes*, p. 67. The Highlanders believed that at or around Beltane witches were particularly active. Counter-spells were also believed to have particular effectiveness around that time. Pennant reported that the cattle were sprinkled with urine on the first Monday in every quarter. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 186. According to John Gregorson Campbell, stale urine, which was kept for the scouring of blankets and other cloth, was regularly sprinkled not only on the cattle but also on the doorposts and walls of a house to keep fairies and any kind of mischief at a distance. This sprinkling was regularly done on the last evening of every quarter of the year. See Campbell, *Superstitions of the Highlands*, p. 49. See Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight*, pp. 11, 14. See also MacLagan, *Evil Eye*, pp. 135-139. In folklore urine had an essential role as a counter-spell to cure illnesses, based on the idea that the magic link between the witch and her victim could be exploited to cause pain to the witch, using the victim's urine as the medium. It could be heated in a witchbottle, or baked in a cake. The witch would hurry to her victim's house, beg for mercy and undo her spell. See Simpson and Roud (eds.), *Dictionary of English Folklore*, p. 372.

witchcraft trial in Scotland that resulted in an execution is commonly believed to have taken place at Dornoch (Sutherland) in the 1720s.²⁸⁴ In this case the evidence is very poor, and even the year of the trial cannot be fully ascertained as the presbytery minutes of Dornoch for the period covering the execution did not survive. The main source of information is Edmund Burt, the tax collector in the entourage of General Wade. He reported that at the beginning of the year 1727 two women, a mother and daughter in the shire of Sutherland, had been accused of witchcraft. The trial was held by the deputy sheriff, the women were found guilty and sentenced to be burnt to death. The younger woman managed to escape from prison, but her mother was not so lucky and was burnt in a pitch barrel in June that year at Dornoch.²⁸⁵

Although this is all the contemporary information that is available on this trial, it is a strong reminder that in the Highlands there was still a strong belief in witchcraft. Burt repeatedly reported cases of alleged witchcraft, and in one contemporary incident two Highlanders had threatened the life of an Englishman who questioned the existence of witches.²⁸⁶ Burt clearly considered such accusations as a hallmark of a backward and superstitious society, arguing that there were hardly any accusations of that kind to be found in cities. Moreover, in his opinion, no witness who testified to having seen persons flying on broomsticks through the air, cramming human bodies made of flesh and bones through keyholes or disguising as cats, could be taken seriously. Most of all, he was critical of the persistence of this superstition among the common people and, also, with some of the ministers and supposedly educated jurors at these trials.²⁸⁷ In the county of Sutherland alone, several people had been found guilty and had been sentenced to death in recent years because of this ignorance. He called for the annulment of the Witchcraft Acts and argued that they were mainly used to get rid of unwanted persons who had done nothing wrong and who could not be otherwise prosecuted with any seeming

²⁸⁴ In Scotland witchcraft was a punishable offence from 1563 until the repeal of the Witchcraft Act in 1736.

²⁸⁵ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, p. 230. Pennant confirmed the date in 1769, but provided no further details of the trial apart from expressing his abhorrence of this ridiculous superstition. See Pennant, *Tour 1769*, p. 169. For a useful discussion of this famous 'last witch' and the myths surrounding her see E.J. Cowan and L. Henderson, 'The last of the witches? The survival of Scottish witch belief', in J. Goodare (ed.), *The Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 205-209.

²⁸⁶ See Burt, *Letters*, 5th edn. 1822, vol. i, pp. 230-234.

²⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 270-274.

appearance of justice. Burt's references to witchcraft were ample evidence that as late as the 1720s this superstition was still strong in the Highlands with all its fateful consequences.

8.4. Conclusion

The customs and manners of the Scots, and particularly those of the Highlanders, varied considerably from those of the English. Many travellers observed immediate changes in the appearance and behaviour of the people when they crossed the border into Scotland. The most striking difference in people's appearance north of the border was the women and children without shoes and stockings. Some travellers, however, claimed that this habit could already be observed in the northern counties of England. Many foreign visitors regarded this habit as a sign of poverty, but frequent encounters with well-dressed country people carrying their shoes in their hands prove that this habit was less a matter of poverty than convenience. When crossing the border into Scotland, travellers observed almost immediately that the method of washing cloth was very different from that used in England. Most foreign visitors were quite astonished to see the women trampling their linen and cloth in large tubs or in the rivers at any season of the year, and descriptions of the 'Caledonian washing' became a recurrent motif in travellers' accounts.

Another notable difference from England was the stricter observance of the Sabbath in Scotland, which had its origin in the particularly harsh brand of Presbyterianism that still survives in parts of the Outer Hebrides to this day. The strict observance of the Lord's Day often caused travellers problems in that they were unable to continue their journey on a Sunday and had instead to stay in a local inn. Since any kind of work or entertainment was considered as Sabbath-breaking, the men often spent their time drinking, a habit that drew particular criticism from foreign visitors.

Apart from these differences, the customs and manners of the Lowlanders were not very different from those of the English. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Lowlanders were already anglicised and, with respect to their garb and language, similar to the English. However, things changed completely once travellers

progressed to the Highlands. The traditional Highland garb looked very different, and the Gaelic language, which was still common throughout the Highlands, had nothing in common with English. Moreover, the customs and manners of the Highlanders were very different from those of the Lowlanders. Whereas the Lowlanders displayed a certain indifference, the Highlanders were exceptionally hospitable and generous to foreign visitors. Travellers unanimously agreed that the Highlanders were very pleased when foreigners came to their villages, particularly in the more remote parts. Passing travellers were a major source of information, and the locals often accompanied them for miles, busily asking for the latest news and information on politics and the outside world. Despite their company and support for travellers, the Highlanders refused to accept any money as a reward for their services. However, they were always keen on a piece of snuff or a dram of whisky. Indeed, the Highlanders were so keen on snuff and whisky that many travellers carried a sufficient supply of these luxuries as a form of currency.

Some travellers were fortunate enough to be invited to weddings or funerals. These occasions were usually well attended, and, in order to ease the financial burden of the young couple, the guests contributed to the cost of the feast by providing victuals and small amounts of money. This also enabled the couple to establish their own household. As in the Lowlands, the burial rites in the Highlands were very simple. However, before and after the funeral the relatives and friends of the deceased met for eating, drinking and dancing. At the death of persons of rank these festivities could last for several days. However, there were also critical voices. Some travellers observed funerals at which the crowd lacked any decency and seemed to have come together for the sole purpose of getting drunk on the spirits provided by the relatives of the deceased.

The feasts and superstitious beliefs of the Highlanders were also a recurrent motif in travellers' accounts. Some of the feasts, such as the Beltane, went back to pre-Christian Celtic rituals. The Highlanders' preference for clockwise movements was also a reflection of pre-Christian sun-worship. As most travellers came from urban or more highly developed areas, they were quite astonished at the numerous superstitious beliefs that still prevailed in the pastoral society of the Highlands. It was widely believed that future events could be foretold by techniques such as

shoulder blade-reading. Moreover, in the Highlands there was a strong belief that many people were afflicted with dubious gifts such as the second sight or the evil eye. In both cases the persons with these gifts had no wish to possess them. Instead, they were often haunted by their affliction, which they could not escape. The people with these abilities were feared in their community as they could often predict future tragic events or were supposed to have the power to harm animals or humans, simply by looking at them. The belief in evil spirits and spells was widely spread among the Highlanders, as was the belief in lucky charms and counter-spells. Finally, it must be emphasised that in a society that was obsessed with superstition the belief in black magic, witchcraft and witches lasted longer than in other parts of the country.

Conclusion

Travellers' accounts offer a unique insight into Highland life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and reflect the opening up and discovery of this hitherto unknown region. They are a valuable source for the history of a predominantly oral culture that produced comparatively few written records of the everyday life of the common people.

The accounts of travellers can be relied upon only when their factual observations can be distinguished clearly from contemporary stereotypes and when they contain independent information not culled from others. In this respect the image of Scotland and the Highlands was particularly rich. For centuries the image of Scotland was dominated by myth. Situated at the edge of the medieval world and far away from the main routes of trade and travel, it had remained one of the least-known countries in early modern Europe. For centuries historians and geographers had contributed to its mythological image by enthusiastic plagiarism, thereby establishing an antiquated and misleading impression of the country and its people. Until the late sixteenth century it was even, for example, a received opinion that Scotland was a separate island to the north-east of England. Moreover, historians like Boece created an image of Scotland as a country where miracles actually took place. He attempted to secure for Scotland a premier place among the old and civilised nations in Europe. For this purpose he provided it with a history that dated back to the times of ancient Egypt and Greece. This was a worthy attempt to rival the old enemy England and the myths surrounding its Tudor dynasty, but his vivid imagination did little to provide foreigners with a realistic impression of the country. Since reference works on Scotland were scarce, Boece's *Scotorum Historiae* (Paris, 1527) became the main guidebook to Scotland and its people until the end of the sixteenth century. Its influence on continental publications, however, lasted considerably longer, as the myths created by Boece could still be found in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century French and German histories and geographies of Scotland.

The image of the Highlander suffered particularly from prejudice. In the fifteenth century the centralisation of power and of the feudal society on the monarch

led to a widening political and cultural rift between the increasingly anglicised Lowlanders and the Highlanders, who had retained their own kin structures and Gaelic cultural identity. This conflict erupted in the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles by James IV in 1493 despite the fact that at his court James IV venerated Gaelic culture at the same time as contemporary European culture. It continued to simmer below the surface until the seventeenth century. In essence, this process led to a vilification of the Highlander in government propaganda and fifteenth- and sixteenth-century historiography. The Highlander was primarily presented as lawless, primitive and barbaric, and the Highlands became equated with lawlessness and unrest. This image was spread through geographies such as William Camden's *Britannia* (1st edn. London, 1586), a reference book that was widely consulted and copied by continental authors. Moreover, most of the continental authors had never been to Scotland, and the Highlanders' fearsome reputation as mercenaries did little to enhance their image abroad. Thus the Highlands remained 'terra incognita', and foreign visitors kept their distance.

The lack of factual knowledge about Scotland and the bad image of the Highlander were reflected in the accounts of most medieval and early modern visitors. These visitors usually stayed away from the Highlands and only travelled through the Lowlands and along the east coast of Scotland. Moreover, the few travellers who made the effort to visit Scotland were often heavily influenced and prejudiced by what they had heard or read. The Highlands were still considered far too dangerous for travellers, and no first-hand accounts of that region had been prepared by foreign visitors. Instead, travellers paraphrased what they had read in histories and geographies, thus contributing to the stereotyping of the Highlander as a savage and utter barbarian. This negative image was difficult to dislodge and prevailed in the public perception until the mid-eighteenth century.

The stereotyping of the Scots was also reflected in the contemporary seventeenth- and eighteenth-century satirical and fictitious accounts of Scotland. These works, whose authors often had never been to Scotland, described the Scots as a dirty and lazy people and ridiculed their religion and learning. Although these works had little informative or literary value, there was a popular demand for them, particularly in times of heightened tensions between England and Scotland, such as

the Darien disaster, the Union of Parliaments or the Jacobite rebellions. With respect to the Highlanders, these accounts spread the image of dangerous barbarians who made a living from plunder, thieving and even robbing and killing passing travellers.

Travelling in Scotland was a hazardous task because the development of a tourist infrastructure, which included roads, inns, stables, post-stations and stagecoach services, lagged considerably behind that of England. The Highlands in particular remained largely inaccessible to foreign visitors, other than the military, until the mid-1720s when the military road building began under General Wade. The forced opening up of the north of Scotland had purely military reasons, but travellers began to follow suit and made use of the new roads. However, travellers were still dependent on guides and interpreters and relied upon the hospitality of local gentlemen, since the travel infrastructure along these roads developed very slowly. Excepting the military roads, travelling conditions had hardly improved, and travellers were totally dependent on the assistance of the local population. Seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century tours of the Highlands involved considerable hardships, but were compensated for by the Highlanders' great hospitality and helpfulness. Before 1760 the Highlands were a highly 'exotic' travel destination, but in the wake of the Romantic movement and the 'Ossian' enthusiasm, the number of visitors quickly doubled every year in the 1780s and 1790s. Moreover, Thomas Pennant's ground-breaking accounts of his tours in 1769 and 1772 not only introduced the Highlands and Hebrides to a large audience, but also showed that the region could be visited in perfect safety. By then the road network south of Glen Mor had been greatly expanded. Along the popular routes of the small and grand Highland tours, inns and stables had been built so that travellers could easily progress by coach or horse on stages of up to 20 or 25 miles per day. Stagecoach services along the main Highland routes south of Glen Mor were not introduced until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. North of Glen Mor, and particularly in the Hebrides, travelling was still a very hazardous business. The few roads available were not suitable for carriages, and travellers had to continue their journeys by horse or foot. There were few inns in the north-western Highlands and the Hebrides, and travellers, therefore, were still dependent on letters of introduction to the local gentlemen and ministers. Guides and interpreters were also essential

since there were no detailed maps suitable for travellers to the Highlands and Islands north and west of Glen Mor. Moreover, the further to the north-west one travelled, the less the locals understood the English language. Glen Mor, therefore, remained a dividing line for travellers until far into the nineteenth century when steamboats and the railway offered alternative ways of travelling to the north-western Highlands and Islands. The great majority of tourists stuck to the popular routes south of Glen Mor, and comparatively few travellers progressed beyond it towards the Hebrides. In the Western Isles travelling still involved some risks, particularly since the weather could change quickly and travellers were often caught in storms. In the Hebrides Mull (including the adjacent islands Iona and Staffa) and Skye were the most popular islands for travellers since they were within easy reach of the mainland. In the 1780s the boundaries of travel were pushed to the Outer Hebrides, and St Kilda became the ultimate challenge for any traveller.

Clanship was one of the most controversial of the topics discussed by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century visitors to the Highlands. During this period clanship changed from a protective socio-economic system to a unilateral exploitation of the vassals by the Highland elite. In the late seventeenth century, travellers like Martin Martin described the mutual dependence of a chief and his vassals. The chief defended the territory and property of his clansmen, executed jurisdiction and helped his tenants if they had lost their property or livestock by accident. However, the signs of the increasing alienation of the clan elite from their vassals could not be ignored. Martin also reported that some traditional customs, such as the ritual cattle raid at the introduction of a new chief in order to prove his worthiness, had already been abandoned. The forced opening up of the Highlands in the 1720s led to a further loosening of the ties between the chiefs and their vassals. Travellers such as Edmund Burt observed how the chiefs abandoned their obligations to their vassals and at the same time began to lose control over them. In the second half of the eighteenth century travellers noticed the dissolution and collapse of clanship, which resulted in evictions and mass emigration from the Highlands and Islands. The dissolution of clanship was not primarily the result of the 'English' or 'Hanoverian' suppression of the Highlanders in the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745. It had already started in the seventeenth century at the

top of the social pyramid when the Highland elite became increasingly involved in politics in Edinburgh and London and so were away from their estates and clansmen for longer periods of time. The widening gap between the clan elites and their vassals in the aftermath of the Statutes of Iona (1609), and the commercial reorientation of the Highland estates in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, proved to be the driving forces behind the dissolution of clanship.

The assessment of clanship by foreign visitors was, of course, heavily influenced by their motivation in visiting the Highlands and their political attitude towards the Highlanders. Travellers' comments on clanship, therefore, varied from outright damnation as an oppressive and exploitative social system to a romanticised and simplified description of clans as huge families that were headed by paternal chiefs. Neither of these extreme attitudes gave a fair impression of the functioning of clanship as a socio-economic system that reflected the special needs of life in the harsh environment of the Highlands. These extremes were the result, to a large extent, of the stereotyping of the Highlander. Until the mid-eighteenth century, the term 'clan' was laden with stereotypes that had been established in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and had been carefully continued by government and Whig propaganda until the aftermath of the 'Forty-Five. Clanship, heritable jurisdictions and the chiefs' sole ownership of the land were usually named as the main reasons for the unrest, lawlessness and economic deprivation of the Highlands. When the Highlands were flooded with travellers in the second half of the eighteenth century, Highland society and its economy was in a shambles, and many tourists were quick to blame clanship for the 'Highland crisis'. The chiefs' sole ownership of the land and the lack of an independent judicial system had left the vassals at the mercy of their superiors and seemed an obvious reason for the impoverishment of huge numbers of the population. It might be seen as a reaction on the growing social and economic crisis of the Highlands that Romantic travellers switched from one extreme to the other. The reassessment of the Highlander in the wake of the Romantic movement saw his image change from that of an uncivilised barbarian to a 'noble savage'. This glorification also had a profound impact on the image of clanship. Confronted with the poverty and misery of the great majority of the Highlanders, many tourists began to glorify the old times in which the clans were still believed to

have been large families that were headed by paternal chiefs who cared for their vassals. This view, of course, was heavily influenced by 'Ossian' enthusiasm and the supposed grandeur of ancient Highland life, and it created an image of clanship and Highland life that existed only in the imagination of Romantic travellers. Some travellers in the 1760s to 1780s, however, did not rush along the roads in their carriages, but instead visited the remoter areas and took the time to look in depth into the relationship between the dissolution of clanship and the social and economic crisis of the Highlands. Travellers such as James Robertson, Thomas Pennant or James Anderson were comparatively little influenced by government propaganda on the one side and 'Ossian' enthusiasm on the other. They gave a fairly balanced view of the former importance of clanship and its decline, and emphasised that the right of tenure and an independent judicial system were the key to halting the social and economic decline of the Highlands.

Clanship was inextricably linked to the old agrarian order of the Highlands. Its main purpose was to sustain as many men as possible on the limited resources of a largely infertile country. Every chief was obliged, for moral as well as military reasons, to provide as many of his vassals as possible with a stretch of land for their sustenance. This obligation led to the fragmentation and frequent reallocation of the land and prevented investment in the soil. On the local level this economy was run by the tacksmen. They were in charge of managing the traditional Highland villages and reallocating the land among the common clansmen who worked the ground. The great majority of common Highlanders worked only tiny stretches of land as subtenants of a larger tenant or tacksmen, and thus lacked the financial background to invest in the improvement of the soil. Highland agriculture, therefore, remained in a comparatively backward state and lagged considerably behind the Lowlands, where the soil was more fertile and had been improved by draining, liming and enclosure. Traditional Highland agriculture did not produce enough crops to sustain the people, and additional revenues had to come from the export of cattle. These animals were the Highlanders' most valuable asset and were, therefore, given preferential treatment to other livestock. The revenues from cattle breeding for the English market enabled the Highlanders to pay their rents and buy provisions, such as oatmeal, to survive through the winter to the spring. Small-scale fishing in the lochs

and coastal waters also contributed to their making a living. The harsh physical conditions of the Highlands led to the development of unique agricultural techniques that often looked antiquated and inadequate to foreign visitors. Nonetheless, instruments such as the 'cascrom' or techniques such as 'graddaning' had developed over centuries and reflected the particular needs of the difficult Highland soil or the unpredictable weather conditions in the Hebrides. The old agrarian order of the Highlands remained relatively stable until the late seventeenth century when the focus of the Highland economy was changed by the rising financial demands of the Highland elites' households in Edinburgh and London. These demands drained money from the Highlands as land was no longer leased out at nominal prices for military service or personal loyalty, but had instead to produce revenues like any other form of capital. The commercial reorganisation of the estates meant the eclipse of the tacksmen whose military and managerial services were no longer required. Land was auctioned to the highest bidder, a process that began on the Duke of Argyll's land in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The incoming farmers were often from the Lowlands or England and had no personal bonds with the people living on the land. They were agrarian entrepreneurs and had to recoup their investments. They modernised their farms by combining the tiny stretches of land, or converted arable land to pasturage since far greater profits were promised by cattle breeding and, in a second stage, sheep. In this process of restructuring, many Highlanders were resettled from the interior glens to the coastal strips. The traditional Highland townships in the interior were dissolved and replaced by crofting communities. Since the new crofts were often too small to sustain a living, the crofters were forced to gain additional income from rising industries such as fishing and kelping. Despite a fresh start, the living conditions of many crofters deteriorated still further. In most areas the landowners creamed off the profits from fishing and kelping, and many impoverished or landless Highlanders were forced either to move to the industrial cities of the Lowlands or to emigrate. The restructuring of the Highland economy and the introduction of southern sheep were well documented in the accounts of travellers. The majority of them welcomed the changes for the benefit of the British economy. Moreover, the integration of the Highlands into the economy of Great Britain and its empire exposed the old agrarian

order to a pressure that it could not have survived without extensive modernisation. Many foreign visitors acknowledged this need for reform, but they warned of the social problems and misery that would result from the fast pace and radicalism of these changes.

At the time of restructuring, many hopes were put in the extension of the fishing industry and kelp production. Both industries were labour-intensive and had the potential to create many new jobs for those Highlanders who had lost their tiny farms and had been resettled to the coastal strips. The potential of the fisheries for herring and white fish had been known since the seventeenth century. Authors such as Martin Martin made detailed plans for their extension, but it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that the British government began to subsidise the construction of a British fleet to exploit the rich seas around the Northern and Western Isles. However, the complex system of subsidies, premiums, salt laws, restrictions and red tape put British vessels at a huge disadvantage in comparison with their Dutch rivals and prevented any real progress. The failure of the Society of Free British Fishery, and the increasing economic crisis on the western seaboard in the 1780s, led to renewed efforts to promote the fisheries in order to revive the region. The discussion about its promotion was dominated by James Anderson and John Knox. Both had visited the western seaboard to gather first-hand information in preparation for their reports. They reported that the great majority of the Highlanders were excluded from the profits of the fishing industry since they could neither afford small boats nor salt to cure their catch and were not allowed to sell it to the subsidised herring-busses. Many travellers commented on the damaging effects of the current legislation and recommended a reform of the fishery and salt laws that would allow the common Highlanders to participate in the profits. It was not, however, until the early nineteenth century that the final obstacle, the salt laws, was to be removed. Despite their bitter personal differences, Knox and Anderson favoured the construction of planned fishing villages over direct support to small-scale fishermen. In the end this concept proved to be a failure. The planned villages built by the British Fisheries Society at Tobermory, Ullapool and Lochbay did not attract the necessary numbers of settlers to become economically viable and failed to revive the economy on the western seaboard.

Next to the extension of the fishing industry, the promotion of kelp production was the great hope for employment on the western seaboard. Kelp manufacture first spread from Ireland into the Hebrides and then all over the western seaboard, where it soon became a major source of revenue. The gathering, drying and burning of seaweed for kelp required a huge workforce and provided many small subtenants, crofters and labourers with an additional income to pay their rising rents. The kelp produced on the western seaboard was lower in quality than that from the Mediterranean, but the rise of the industry was favoured by the frequent interruption to barilla and potassium supplies from southern Europe. In the Outer Hebrides kelp production became the main source of revenue in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, far outstripping the revenues from cattle exports. However, the enormous profits were almost exclusively creamed off by the landowners who failed to reinvest the money and diversify the economy of the islands. The common people, on the other hand, were unable to save any money earned during the kelp boom as their wages were consumed by rising rents. The susceptibility of the kelp industry to foreign competition became evident in the late 1780s and early 1790s when prices fell for several years in a row. They recovered in the wake of the Napoleonic conquest of Europe, but declined with the restoration of peace and stability on the Continent. The collapse of kelp prices in the 1820s found the western seaboard utterly unprepared. Many of the great proprietors became bankrupt, and a new wave of evictions and emigration began when the huge workforce, which had been crammed into the coastal strips, was no longer required. Travellers and authors such as John Lanne Buchanan or James MacDonald charted the rise and fall of the kelp industry by describing its potential for economic recovery on the western seaboard and, also, by warning that there would be no lasting improvement if the great majority of the people were excluded from its profits or if its revenues were not reinvested. In the end the kelp boom was a wasted opportunity. Instead of improving the living conditions on the western seaboard, it reinforced the exploitation of the common people by the landowners and, once the revenues had dried up, turned into an economic and social disaster.

Scotland was an 'exotic' travel destination until the rise of the Romantic movement, and there were many myths about the supposed customs and manners of

its people. Although the Lowlanders had become increasingly anglicised over the centuries, they had kept some of their traditional customs, which were quite different from those of the English. On crossing the border, many travellers immediately observed striking differences, such as the lack of shoes or stockings among the rural population, the washing of clothes in tubs or the strict observance of the Sabbath.

The Highlanders were, yet again, a different people from the Lowlanders. Although they had a poor reputation until the emergence of the Romantic movement, travellers unanimously agreed that they were exceptionally friendly, helpful and hospitable to foreign visitors. They often accompanied and assisted them for miles without expecting any reward for their services. One reason why travellers were so welcome in the Highlands was that they brought news and scarce products, such as snuff or tobacco, of which the Highlanders were particularly fond. Because of the isolation of the Highlands, their people retained many of their distinctive customs and manners. Some of these customs, e.g. the celebration of Beltane and the clockwise turns, went back to pre-Christian times. The Highlanders' weddings and funerals were prime examples of their great hospitality, and travellers were often invited to take part. At these occasions huge numbers of people met and often spent days feasting, dancing and drinking. The Highlanders also had a particular reputation for their superstitious beliefs, many of which survived until the nineteenth century despite the efforts of the Church to eradicate them. The belief in fairies, brownies, second sight, the evil eye or charms was widespread, particularly among the ordinary folk. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, gifts, such as the second sight or the evil eye, attracted a huge interest from the scientific community and were widely discussed in travel writing on the Highlands. The majority of travellers found these supernatural phenomena hard to authenticate and reported that, although the belief in them was still strong, the number of people possessing these gifts had greatly receded over the years. In the later decades of the eighteenth century, travellers unanimously agreed that the belief in the supernatural was fast disappearing. This was partly a reflection of the decline of the traditional Highland culture in general, but also the result of the Church's continuing efforts to eradicate superstition among the Highlanders. All in all, travellers' accounts give a fascinating

insight into all aspects of Highland life and its decline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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1. Original sources

1.1. Manuscripts

- 1.1.1. Travellers' accounts
- 1.1.2. Official reports
- 1.1.3. Memoranda etc. relating to the Highlands (written by private individuals)
- 1.1.4. Maps
- 1.1.5. Others

1.2. Published texts

- 1.2.1. Travellers' accounts (including guidebooks and satirical and abusive accounts)
- 1.2.2. Autobiographies, biographies, correspondence, memoirs
- 1.2.3. Newspapers, magazines, pamphlets
- 1.2.4. Chronicles, geographies and histories (written between the 15th and the 18th century, used by travellers as guidebooks or written after their visit to Scotland)
- 1.2.5. Maps
- 1.2.6. Others

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Lebenslauf Martin Rackwitz

Persönliche Daten:

Rackwitz, Martin Ernst Konrad
Kartwinkel 17
48163 Münster

geb. am 18.04.1970 in Münster / Westfalen

Schulbildung:

1976 - 1980

Ludgerus-Grundschule Münster-Albachten

1980 - 1989

Gymnasium Paulinum Münster

1989

Allgemeine Hochschulreife

Wehrdienst:

06.1989 - 05.1991

Soldat auf Zeit, Raketenartilleriebataillon 150 Wesel
Ausbildung zum Reserveoffizier
1992 Leutnant, 1996 Oberleutnant der Reserve

Hochschulausbildung:

Studium der Anglistik, Geschichte, Philosophie und Pädagogik
gymnasiales Lehramt

SS 1991 - SS 1993

Grundstudium

Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel

WS 1993/94 - SS 1994

2 Auslandssemester

University of Stirling (United Kingdom)

WS 1994/95 - WS 1997/98

Hauptstudium

Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel

02.1998

1. Staatsexamen

Gesamtnote: „mit Auszeichnung“

06.1998

Magister Artium

Gesamtnote: „mit Auszeichnung“

Hauptfach:

Mittlere und Neuere Geschichte

1. Nebenfach:

Alte Geschichte

2. Nebenfach:

Englische Philologie

07.1998

Doktorand am Historischen Seminar der CAU

07.1998 - 06.2000

Promotionsstipendium des Landes Schleswig-Holstein zur
Förderung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses

07.1999 - 06.2003

Forschungsaufenthalt am Department of
Scottish History, University of Edinburgh

08.2004 - 11.2004

Lehrtätigkeit (Englisch, Geschichte) an der Humboldt-Schule
Kiel

10.2004

Doktorprüfung

Gesamtnote: „magna cum laude“ (sehr gut) (1,0)

**Travels to terra incognita:
The Scottish Highlands and Hebrides in early modern
travellers' accounts
c. 1600 to 1800**

**Dissertation
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Martin Rackwitz**

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Band III

Appendix 1

biographies

(in alphabetical order of travellers)

list of biographies

| traveller | date of travel |
|---|--------------------------------|
| A.L. | 1785, 1788 |
| Anderson, James | 1784 |
| Anderson, William | 1787 |
| Anon., NLS, 'M[y] Journey to Scotland', MS. 15905 | 1790 |
| Anon., <i>North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV</i> | 1704 |
| Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1021 | 1776 |
| Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080 | 1789 |
| Anon., NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278 | 1794 |
| Bailey, James | 1787 |
| Banks, Joseph | 1772 |
| Bombelles, Marc de | 1784 |
| Boswell, James | 1773 |
| Brand, John | 1700 |
| Brereton, William | 1635 |
| Brome, James | 1669 |
| Brougham, Henry Peter | 1799 |
| Buchanan, John Lanne | 1782-90 |
| Burns, Robert | 1787 |
| Burrell, William | 1758 |
| Burt, Edmund | 1725-36 |
| Calamy, Edmund | 1709 |
| Campbell, John | cannot be established |
| Carlyle, Alexander | 1765, 1775 |
| Cave, Thomas | 1763 |
| Chantreau, Pierre Nicolas | 1788-89 |
| Clarke, Edward Daniel | 1797 |
| Clerk of Penicuik, John | 1739 |
| Conyers of Walthamstow, John | 1676 |
| Culley, George and Matthew | 1770, 1771, 1775 |
| D'Amour, Matthias | 1781-82 |
| Dawson, Eliza | 1786 |
| Defoe, Daniel | early 18 th century |
| Dibdin, Charles | 1799, 1800 |
| Douglas, Francis | 1780 |
| Douglas, George Lewis Augustus | 1800 |
| Douglas, Niel | 1797 |
| Farington, Joseph | 1788, 1792, 1801 |
| Faujas de Saint-Fond, Barthelemy | 1784 |
| Fisher, Jabez Maud | 1775, 1776 |
| Fontane, Theodor | 1858 |
| Forbes, Robert | 1762, 1770 |
| Franck, Richard | 1656-57 |
| Garnett, Thomas | 1798 |
| Gastrell, Francis | 1760 |

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Gilpin, William | 1776 |
| Grant, Anne | 1773-1803 |
| Gray, Thomas | 1764, 1765 |
| Grey, Jemima | 1755 |
| Hanway, Mary Ann(e) | 1775 |
| Harley, Edward | 1725 |
| Harmes, Emilie | 1800 |
| Hastings, Warren | 1787 |
| Hatchett, Charles | 1796 |
| Heron, Robert | 1792 |
| Hill, Rowland | 1798, 1799 |
| Hodgkinson, Richard | 1800 |
| Hogg, James | 1803 |
| Holzenthal, Georg | 1812-14 |
| Johnson, Samuel | 1773 |
| Kalmeter, Henrik | 1719-20 |
| Kirk(e), Thomas | 1677 |
| Knox, John | 1786 |
| La Rochefoucauld, Alexandre de | 1786 |
| La Rochette, (?) de | 1763 |
| La Tocnaye, Jacques Louis Chevalier de | 1793, 1796-97 |
| L'Estrange, Hamon | probably 1709 |
| Lettice, John | 1792 |
| Leyden, John | 1800 |
| Loch, David | mid to late 1770s |
| Loveday, John | 1732 |
| Löwenthal, Maximilian von | 1822 |
| Lowther, Christopher | 1629 |
| MacDonald, James | 1802 |
| Macky, John | early 18 th century |
| Mactavish, Lachlan | 1787 |
| Manners, John Henry | 1796 |
| Martin, Martin | 1690s |
| Mawman, Joseph | 1804 |
| Meißner, Eduard | 1817 |
| Menzies, Archibald | 1768 |
| Michell, John Henry | 1795 |
| Mildmay, William | probably 1736 |
| Morer, Thomas | 1689 |
| Moryson, Fynes | 1598 |
| Murray, Sarah | 1796, 1800, 1802 |
| Neilson, Richard | 1754, 1755 |
| Newdigate, Roger (?) | 1766 |
| Pattisson, Jacob | 1780 |
| Pease, John | 1795-96 |
| Pennant, Thomas | 1769, 1772 |
| Percy, Thomas | 1773 |
| Phillips, Nathaniel | 1791 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pococke, Richard | 1747, 1750, 1760 |
| Raumer, Friedrich von | 1835 |
| Ray, James | 1746 |
| Ray, John | 1661 |
| Robertson, James | 1767, 1768, 1771 |
| Sacheverell, William | 1688 |
| Salkeld, William | c. 1700 |
| Schopenhauer, Johanna | 1803 |
| Shaw, Stebbing | 1787 |
| Skrine, Henry | 1787, 1793 |
| Stoddart, John | 1799-1800 |
| Stuart, John | 1788 |
| Sullivan, Richard Joseph | 1778 |
| Svedenstierna, Eric Thomas | 1803 |
| Taylor, John | 1618 |
| Taylor, Joseph | 1705 |
| Thomson, William | 1785 |
| Thoresby, Ralph | 1681 |
| Thornhill of Diddington, George | 1760 |
| Thornton, Thomas | mainly 1783, 1784 |
| Topham, Edward | 1774-75 |
| Walker, John (?) | 1674 |
| Walker, John | 1764, 1771 |
| Walker, Patrick | 1797 |
| Wedel, Lupold von | 1584 |
| Willis, R.L. | 1793 |
| Wood, John | 1801 |
| Wordsworth, Dorothy | 1803 |

Biographies of selected travellers

The authors are listed in alphabetical order. The titles of the tours are given in the headings. [map] denotes map of the traveller's route in appendix no. 12 on the attached CD-ROM at the back of this volume.

A.L., NLS, 'August 1785 – Tour to Edinburgh, Stirling, Glasgow, Lough Lomond, and the Falls of Clyde in Company with Mr. Heron', 'Tour to the North Highlands of Scotland [along with Messrs. Heron and Jobling] in Aug. 1788', Acc. 10285: [map]

Both manuscripts were written by 'A.L.', but there is nothing known about the author's identity. In 1785, as well as in 1788, the objective of the tours seems to have been tourism. In August 1785 the author travelled mainly through the Lowlands, Lanarkshire and the Borders. In August 1788 he journeyed to Inverness by way of Perth, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Dalwhinnie and Aviemore, returning to Glasgow via Fort Augustus, Fort William, Tyndrum and Loch Lomond. The author used *Taylor and Skinner's Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain, Or Scotland*. A.L. and his companions travelled on horseback. The 1785 journal commences and ends at Berwick-upon-Tweed. The journal of A.L.'s 1786 tour to the lakes in Cumberland also starts at Berwick, ending near Hownam in Roxburghshire. The 1788 journal starts at Alnwick and ends in Kelso. These places suggest that A.L. lived somewhere in Northumberland between Alnwick and Berwick.

Anderson, James (1739-1808), Scottish agronomist and economist, *An Account Of The Present State Of The Hebrides And Western Coasts Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785):

James Anderson was born at Hermiston, near Edinburgh, in 1739. At the age of fifteen he lost his parents and took charge of his family's farm. He attended Cullen's lectures on chemistry to improve his agricultural knowledge and published several important works on the Corn Laws, national industry and agriculture. In 1780 he received an LLD from Aberdeen University. In 1783 he moved to Edinburgh and

became increasingly involved in the debate about the promotion of Scottish fisheries. In August 1784 he was sent by Pitt to the western seaboard to survey the fisheries. He recommended the foundation of fishing villages, and his report to parliament was influential in reforming fishery policy and the fishery laws. His proposal to establish a network of fishing villages sparked off a heated argument with his rival John Knox (see entry). In 1790 Anderson founded the weekly magazine *The Bee*, which specialised largely on economics. In 1797 he retired to Isleworth and focused on agricultural experiments. He died in 1808. Anderson's exact route through the Highlands and Hebrides cannot be established.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Anderson, William, Scottish law student or lawyer, *A Journal, Being An Account Of A Short Tour Or Excursion From Edinburgh 1787* (Nairn, 1912): [map]

There is some confusion about the identity of the author of *A Journal, Being An Account Of A Short Tour Or Excursion From Edinburgh 1787* (Nairn, 1912). The original manuscript journal was signed 'Written 20 July 1788, By W.A.', and the journal is generally ascribed to William Anderson, an Edinburgh law student or lawyer. In the preface to the journal the author claimed that neither he nor any of his three travelling companions was older than sixteen years of age when, on 19 April 1787, they set out from Edinburgh for a small tour of the Highlands. This suggests that William Anderson was at that time a law student at the University of Edinburgh or served an apprenticeship to the Law at an Edinburgh law firm. However, a 'Narrative of a Journey from Edinburgh to Dresden in 1814', *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. xi (1914), pp. 376-394, is written in the same hand and is likewise attributed to William Anderson, the author of the journal of the 1787 Highland tour. In the notes of the 1814 Dresden journey, however, William Anderson is referred to as born in Edinburgh about 1765, the youngest son of James Anderson and Sarah Cargill. This does not match with the claim by the author of the journal of the 1787 Highland tour that at that time none of the travellers was older than sixteen. To make matters worse, neither the graduation rolls of the University of Edinburgh nor the records of the Faculty of Advocates include a suitable candidate who matches the

author (or authors) of these tours. There is no further information available on the author of the journal of the 1787 Highland tour. The author of the 1814 Dresden journey served his apprenticeship to the Law partly in the office of Messrs Hill in Glasgow and Edinburgh. He practised as a lawyer in Edinburgh for over 30 years. He was an accomplished scholar and transcribed numerous chartularies of ancient Scottish abbeys for the Advocates' Library. In politics he was a strong Whig, and among his intimate friends were Lord Cockburn and Sir Adam Ferguson. The author of the journal of the 1787 Highland tour and his three young travelling companions set out from Edinburgh on 19 April 1787 and travelled to Perth by way of St Andrews and Dundee. From Perth they continued their journey to Glasgow by way of Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Loch Tay, Killin, Loch Lomond and Dumbarton. From Glasgow they returned via Falkirk to Edinburgh. The author and his three companions travelled on foot, and the tour lasted thirteen days.

Anon., NLS, 'M[y] Journey to Scotland', MS. 15905: [map]

The author of this tour through England and Scotland, from August to October 1790, has not been identified but was apparently a young lady from London who travelled with her brother and friends from Hampshire. The party travelled by carriage, setting out from London on 16 August 1790, and crossed into Scotland at Langholm on 30 August. They travelled through the Borders to Edinburgh, where they stayed for a week. They then continued their journey via Stirling to Callander, Killin, Tyndrum, Inveraray, Loch Lomond, Dumbarton and Glasgow, where they stayed for three days. They returned to England via Falkirk, Edinburgh, Dunbar and Berwick. The author listed all the inns along the road where they changed horses.

Anon., *North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV (Edinburgh, 1818): [map]*

There is nothing known about the author, but it appears probable that he was a Londoner. The author set out from London on 30 March 1704 and reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 10 April. He then travelled along the coast to Edinburgh, Falkirk and Glasgow. He returned to England via Hamilton, Douglas, Elvanfoot, Moffat and Carlisle, which he reached on 18 April. He arrived safely back in London on 27

April. The author travelled alone on horseback. He had a great prejudice against the Scots and was very afraid of being robbed.

Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1021: [map]

The author of this tour of England and Scotland, from 21 May to 11 June 1776, has not been identified. He set out from Carr, near Blackburn, and entered Scotland on 28 May at Gretna, continuing his journey via Dumfries, Sanquhar, Leadhills and Hamilton to Glasgow. After a boat trip on Loch Lomond he resumed his journey via Stirling, Crieff and Kenmore to Blair Atholl, the most northern point of his tour. He returned south via Dunkeld, Perth, Queensferry, Edinburgh, Dunbar and Berwick to England. The author spent little more than two weeks in Scotland, travelling part of the way by carriage and part on horseback.

Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080: [map]

The unidentified male author of this tour started on 11 June 1789 from Newcastle and travelled on horseback along the east coast to the Lothians, Stirlingshire, Fife, Angus and Perthshire before continuing along the route of the small tour of the Highlands. From Glasgow he made a detour along the River Clyde to the Borders, finally returning to England via Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, Galloway and Dumfriesshire. The journal ends on 21 August 1789 in Cambridge where the author apparently resided. The author's unconnected personal observations, written on the verso of the leaves of his travelling journal, are particularly interesting with respect to the living and travelling conditions in Scotland.

Anon., NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278: [map]

The author of this tour through the Highlands of Scotland, in August and early September 1794, has not been identified. He set out from London on 1 August and must have travelled by coach to Carlisle. He crossed the border into Scotland on 4 August and proceeded via Moffat and Elvanfoot to Lanark (5 Aug.), where he prepared a detailed description of the work in the cotton-mills. Having spent a day at Glasgow (8 Aug.) the author continued via Dumbarton (9 Aug.) to Luss (11 Aug.). The next day he was ferried across Loch Lomond and climbed to the top of Ben

Lomond. He then continued his journey through the Highlands by way of Inveraray (14 Aug.), Dalmally (15 Aug.), Tyndrum (17 Aug.), Killin (18 Aug.), Kenmore (20 Aug.), Dunkeld (21 Aug.), Blair Atholl (22 Aug.), Dalnacardoch (25 Aug.), Dalwhinnie (26 Aug.) and Fort Augustus (27 Aug.) to Inverness (29 Aug.). From there he travelled along the east coast via Fort George (31 Aug.), Nairn, Forres (1 Sept.), Elgin (3 Sept.), Fochabers (4 Sept.) and Banff to Aberdeen, where the journal breaks off. According to his itinerary, the author covered 546 miles of Scotland on foot. At Kenmore he parted with his friend and companion, a Mr Booth. The writer had a very pro-government attitude and welcomed the defeat of the Highlanders at Culloden and their subsequent 'civilisation' by force. The author's quote from G.B. Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* (act ii, scene 5) and his keen interest in history and antiquities suggest that he was a learned man.

Bailey, James (died 1816), English vicar, NLS, 'A Journey In Scotland, with Sketches of some Picturesque Ruins in that interesting Country', MSS. 3294-95: [map]

There is little known about the Revd James Bailey, vicar of Otley, Yorkshire. His name is not included in the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*. In the university records of Cambridge and Oxford there is only one suitable candidate. According to the *Alumni Oxonienses* (1715-1886), a James Bayley, son of James Bayley, of Manchester, Lancashire, matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, on 23 February 1759, aged eighteen. He graduated BA in 1762, MA in 1765. This might have been the author of this manuscript tour, considering that in the parish records he is often referred to as James Bailey junior. According to *The Register Of The Church Of All Saints, Weston, Near Otley*, ed. by James Singleton, (Yorkshire Parish Register Society, vol. liv, Leeds and London, 1916), pp. 58, 81-84, James Bailey was minister of Weston Parish from 1773 until 1794. In 1786 he was inducted vicar of Otley and held that office until his death in 1816.¹ He was buried in Guiseley Parish churchyard. Bailey travelled from July to September 1787 on the route taken fourteen years earlier by Dr Samuel Johnson and James Boswell. His journal includes detailed descriptions of the

¹ See H. Speight, *Upper Wharfedale: Being A Complete Account Of The History, Antiquities and Scenery Of The Picturesque Valley Of The Wharfe, From Otley To Langstrothdale* (Otley, 1988), p. 69.

country and its people. The author also relates personal experiences and includes many historical anecdotes and legends. The journal is clearly written as a narrative similar to Johnson's *Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland*. It includes several sketches of picturesque ruins and was obviously intended for publication. Bailey travelled on a pony and at Fort Augustus took a fourteen-year-old boy, son of the local innkeeper, as an interpreter and porter during his stay on Skye and Mull. A painting of James Bailey is reproduced in H. Walker, *This Little Town Of Otley* (Otley, 1974), p. 11.

Banks, Joseph (1743-1820), English explorer and naturalist, 'The Journals Of Joseph Banks's Voyage Up Great Britain's West Coast To Iceland And To The Orkney Isles. July to October, 1772', R.A. Rauschenberg ed., *Proceedings Of The American Philosophical Society*, vol. cxvii, no. 3, (Philadelphia, 1973), pp. 186-226: [map]

Sir Joseph Banks was educated at Harrow and Eton. In 1760 he was entered as a gentleman commoner at Christ Church, Oxford. He left Oxford without a degree in 1763, having inherited a considerable fortune from his father in 1761. During his studies Banks acquired a profound knowledge of natural history and in recognition was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1766. He spent most of the following years travelling and collecting natural history specimens. In 1766 he travelled to Newfoundland and Labrador and from 1768-71 sailed around the world with James Cook. However, owing to personal difficulties, Banks was excluded from Cook's second expedition to the South Seas in 1772. Instead, Banks decided to undertake a journey to Iceland, accompanied by Dr Solander and the Swedish Bishop Uno von Troil. On their way to Iceland they sailed via the Hebrides and visited the islands of Islay, Jura, Oronsay, Mull and Iona. During their stay at Drimnin in Morvern they heard about the basaltic pillars on Staffa and decided to visit the island. Banks's account of Staffa and his drawings of Fingal's Cave were included in the first part of Thomas Pennant's *Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII* (Chester, 1774), and they made the island a magnet for scientists from all over Europe. On his return from Iceland he called at the Orkney Isles. From 1778 until his

death in 1820 Banks was President of the Royal Society and was influential in promoting the position of science in Great Britain.

Further reading: Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 88-92.

Bombelles, Marc de (1744-1822), French diplomat, *Journal de voyage en Grande Bretagne et en Irlande 1784*, J. Gury ed. (Oxford, 1989): [map]

After a military career in the Seven Years' War Marc de Bombelles joined the diplomatic service. In the 1760s and 1770s he was sent on diplomatic missions to Vienna, Naples, the Low Countries and Regensburg. Due to his differences with Marie-Antoinette over Austria it was not until 1785 that he was awarded his first ambassadorial post at Lisbon. Although Bombelles's journey to Great Britain in 1784 was styled as an important official reconnaissance mission, his tour of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales had little to do with diplomacy and was mainly an attempt to get him out of the Abbé de Breteuil's way. After the French Revolution Bombelles quit the diplomatic service, represented Louis XVI on a secret mission to St Petersburg, joined the Duke of Brunswick's campaign and finally retired to Austria and Prussia. He returned to France in 1816. Bombelles travelled by coach.

See entry in *Dictionnaire De Biographie Française*

Boswell, James (1740-1795), Scottish advocate and biographer, *The Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1785): [see map Johnson, S.]

James Boswell was born in Edinburgh in 1740. He was partly educated at school and partly at home by private tutors. From 1753 to 1759 he attended the arts course at Edinburgh University before switching to law. In 1759 he attended Adam Smith's lectures at Glasgow but in the spring of 1760 ran away to London. On his return Boswell studied law from 1760 to 1762. Because of his irregular lifestyle he was forced to study at home under strict supervision. In July 1762 he passed his examination in civil law and soon after moved to London. In May 1763 he first met Samuel Johnson (see entry), whom he greatly admired and with whom he developed a lifelong friendship until Johnson's death in 1784. In 1764-65 Boswell made an

extensive tour of the Continent, in the course of which he visited the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. After his return to Scotland in 1766 he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates and for the next seventeen years practised law in Edinburgh. Johnson and Boswell had long made plans to make a joint tour of the Hebrides, and in 1773 they finally met in Edinburgh and set out for the Western Isles. Boswell published his account of their tour in 1785, ten years after the publication of Johnson's *Journey* and one year after the death of his travelling companion. Boswell's *Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1785) was a great success as it not only recorded their three-month journey in the Hebrides but also provided an intimate portrait of Dr Johnson. In 1782 Boswell succeeded his father as Laird of Auchinleck, but his repeated attempts to start a career in politics were a miserable failure. In 1786 he was called to the English bar and moved with his family to London. However, he rarely practised as a lawyer there and, instead, spent most of his time writing *The Life Of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, which was finally published in May 1791. His biography of Johnson secured Boswell a prime place among the British literati. Despite his success as an author, Boswell's later years were overshadowed by his frustration at the failure of his political and professional career, his irregular lifestyle and heavy drinking. He died in 1795 in London. Boswell's private papers were long believed to have been destroyed shortly after his death, but most of them were recovered in the 1920s at Malahide Castle near Dublin.

See entry in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Peter Martin, *A Life Of James Boswell* (London, 2000)

Brand, John (1668?-1738), Scottish minister, *A Brief Description Of Orkney, Zetland, Pightland-Firth & Caithness* (Edinburgh, 1701):

John Brand was educated at Edinburgh University and graduated MA in 1688. He was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Edinburgh and in 1694 was ordained minister of the parish of Borrowstouness, Linlithgowshire. In 1700 he was a member of a delegation appointed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to visit the Orkney and Shetland Isles. The commission was made up of seven ministers and a ruling elder. The journey lasted from 12 April until late June 1700. In the following

year he published the account under the title *A Brief Description Of Orkney, Zetland, Pightland-Firth & Caithness*. It is an interesting account of the living conditions in the Northern Isles. Martin Martin copied most of his account of the Northern Isles from this work. Brand died in 1738.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Brereton, William (1604-1661), English Parliamentary commander, P. Hume Brown ed., *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891), pp. 132-158: [map]

Sir William Brereton was born in 1604, the son of William Brereton of Handforth, Cheshire, and Margaret, daughter and coheiress of Richard Holland of Denton, Lancashire. He succeeded his father in 1610 and was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1623. In 1627 he was created a baronet. He was elected MP for Cheshire in 1627-28 and to the Short and Long Parliaments in 1640. In 1634-35 he travelled through Holland, the United Provinces, England, Scotland and Ireland. In June and July 1635 he visited Scotland, entering via Berwick and travelling on horseback along the east coast to Edinburgh. From the capital he moved via Falkirk to Glasgow. He left Scotland through Ayrshire and Wigtownshire, crossing from Portpatrick to Ireland. His journal is particularly interesting with regard to the state of religion in Scotland and the Scots' resistance to King Charles I's attempts to bring the Church of Scotland in line with the Church of England. Brereton himself had strong Puritan leanings. He also kept detailed records of his expenses in the local inns. In the English civil war he distinguished himself as a Parliamentary commander and was crucial in defeating the Royalists in Cheshire. He died at Croydon in 1661.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Brome, James (died 1719), English travel writer, *Travels Over England, Scotland and Wales* (London, 1700): [map]

There is nothing known about James Brome's early years. In 1676 he was ordained rector of Cheriton, Kent, and in 1677 he became vicar of the adjoining parish of Newington. He was also chaplain to the Cinque Ports. In 1700 Brome published his *Travels Over England, Scotland and Wales* (London, 1700). (D. Wing, *Short-Title*

Catalogue 1641-1700, vol. i (New York, 1994), no. B4861) In the preface (sig. A2)

Brome informed the reader

that these Papers had in all probability lain long buried in Dust and Obscurity, had not some false Copies, which by chance came lately to the true Author's notice, stole Clandestinely into the World under the specious Title of *Mr. Roger's Three Years Travels over England and Wales, &c.* which are indeed so unadvisedly patch'd together, so wretchedly Curtail'd, so horribly Imperfect, and abominably Erroneous, that the right Author was obliged in his own Vindication to publish from his own true Manuscript, which hath been formerly, and of late, perused by the Hands of some Learned Men, a more Authentick Copy.

(The full title of the unauthorised version reads *An Historical Account Of Mr. Rogers's Three Years Travels over England and Wales* (London, 1694), Wing no. B4857. A second edition was published in 1697, Wing no. B4858.) A second edition of Brome's authorised *Travels* was published in London in 1707 (not listed in Wing). He died in 1719. Brome visited Scotland in 1669. He travelled on horseback and foot and visited Berwick, Dunbar and Edinburgh. He returned to England via Falkirk, Glasgow, Hamilton and Dumfries. His observations on the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow are of special interest. A book on travels through Portugal, Spain and Italy (published in 1712) was erroneously attributed to Brome.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Brougham, Henry Peter (1778-1868), British Whig Party politician, Lord Chancellor 1830-34, *The Life And Times Of Henry Lord Brougham: Written By Himself* (Edinburgh, 1871):

Henry Peter Brougham, 1st Baron Brougham and Vaux, was born in Edinburgh in 1778. He was educated at Edinburgh High School and in 1792 entered the University of Edinburgh. He completed the four years' course of humanity and philosophy, distinguished himself in the university's debating societies and in 1795 began to read law. Brougham spent his mid-term vacations on walking tours and in travelling across Europe. In the summer of 1799 he set out on a voyage to Denmark, Sweden and Norway. On his way to the Faroe Islands he sailed through the Hebrides and called at St Kilda. A letter written from Stornoway, dated 14 August 1799, describes his visit to St Kilda. It is included in his memoirs, *The Life And Times Of Henry Lord Brougham*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1871). His account was heavily influenced by the Romantic movement and the notion of the islanders as 'noble savages'. It reads like a

visit to native tribes in the South Seas or the interior of Africa. In 1800 Brougham became an advocate and began to practise law. From 1802 onwards he was a regular contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. In 1805 Brougham settled in London and read English law, supporting himself mainly by writing for the *Edinburgh Review*. He was called to the English bar in 1808. In the early 1800s he had distinguished himself as an anti-slavery campaigner and in 1810 became MP for Camelford. He embarked on a distinguished political career, campaigning for parliamentary reform, a reform of English civil law and better public education. In November 1830 he was knighted and sworn in as Lord Chancellor. He held that office under two prime ministers until November 1834, during which time he was largely responsible for parliamentary reform and the reform of the English judicial system. In the 1840s he backed the repeal of the Corn Laws. During the 1848 upheaval in France he tried without success to obtain French citizenship and a seat in the National Assembly. Brougham spent much of the last 30 years of his life at Cannes, France, where he died in 1868. He also designed the so-called ‘brougham’, the first four-wheeled carriage drawn by one horse only.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Frances Hawes, *Henry Brougham* (London, 1957)

Buchanan, John Lanne (fl. 1780-1816), Scottish missionary minister and author, *Travels In The Western Hebrides: From 1782 To 1790* (London, 1793):

John Lanne Buchanan was born in Menteith in Perthshire and educated at the grammar school of Callander and Glasgow University. He was assistant to Robert Menzies, minister of Comrie, until his death in 1780. From 1782 until 1790 Buchanan was a missionary minister of the Church of Scotland in the Outer Hebrides, residing mainly in Harris. He was a Gaelic speaker and must have had a profound knowledge of the living conditions in the Outer Hebrides. His *Travels In The Western Hebrides: From 1782 To 1790* (London, 1793), however, must be treated very carefully. Firstly, the editor, William Thomson, made unauthorised alterations to the text. Secondly, Buchanan was found guilty of fornication and attempted rape by the Harris Kirk Session and as a consequence deposed. For details see chapter 5, note 75. Buchanan’s personal allegations against some landowners and

tacksmen on Harris had surely been influenced by the fact that they had sat as church elders during his trial. After his deposition Buchanan resided in London. He published two more books on the Highlands and died in 1816.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Burns, Robert (1759-1796), national poet of Scotland, *The Life And Works Of Robert Burns*, R. Chambers ed., 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1851-1852), vol. ii, pp. 78-92, vol. ii, pp. 98-104, vol. ii, pp. 113-145, vol. ii, pp. 145-157, vol. iv, pp. 14-18: [map]

Robert Burns was born in 1759 at Alloway, Ayrshire, the son of a farmer. He received a little formal schooling from a teacher and sporadic instruction from other sources. Nonetheless, he read most of the important eighteenth-century English writers as well as Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden. His knowledge of Scottish literature was confined, in his childhood, to orally transmitted folk songs and folk tales. On the death of his father in 1784 Burns became tenant of the farm of Mossgiel. In the mid-1780s Burns rapidly developed into a poet, turning to verse to express his emotions of love, friendship or amusement. In his poetry he rebelled against the social conditions and the austere Established Church of his time. In 1786 he published his *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock, 1786). The volume was an instant success and was praised by simple country folk as well as the sophisticated Edinburgh critics. The phenomenal success of Burns's poetry was undoubtedly supported by his popular notion as a 'noble peasant', the son of a poor farmer, and his lack of formal education. In 1786 Burns moved to Edinburgh where he was patronised by its literati. In the following year he made several tours through various parts of Scotland, including the Borders, the Highlands, Ayrshire and Galloway. His tour of the Highlands with William Nicol in August and September 1787, in a chaise, led through the central Highlands to Inverness and Loch Ness before he returned along the east coast to Edinburgh. On his way he wrote poems such as 'The Birks of Aberfeldy' and 'The Humble Petition of Bruar Water to the Noble Duke of Athole'. Edinburgh unsettled Burns, and in the summer of 1788 he moved to a farm at Ellisland, Dumfriesshire. Struggling with farming, he finally obtained a post in the excise service in 1789 and moved to Dumfries, where he lived

until his death in 1796. Along with writing poetry, Burns spent much time in his later years in collecting and writing Scottish songs.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Burrell, William (1732-1796), English advocate and antiquary, *Sir William Burrell's Northern Tour 1758*, J.G. Dunbar ed. (East Linton, 1997): [map]

Sir William Burrell was educated at Westminster School and St John's College, Cambridge. He qualified LLB in 1755, took his LLD in 1760 and was admitted as an advocate at Doctors' Commons in the same year. He practised chiefly at the Admiralty Court but also became chancellor of the dioceses of Worcester and Rochester. In 1768 he was elected MP for Haslemere before becoming a Commissioner of Excise in 1774. A stroke in 1787 forced him to withdraw from public life. In 1789 he succeeded to the baronetcy of his father-in-law. Burrell was particularly interested in antiquarian pursuits, ultimately focusing on the history of the county of Sussex. Burrell travelled to the Highlands of Scotland and part of Ireland (Belfast, Antrim, Giant's Causeway) between early July and late October 1758. It is not known why Burrell decided to visit Scotland as at that time the Highlands were still largely undiscovered by travellers. Whatever his motives, Burrell was one of the earliest tourists to visit this practically unknown region. He rode on horseback and was accompanied by his travelling companion John Symonds Esq. and two servants. They usually stayed at inns but in the Highlands often made use of the hospitality of the local gentry. Burrell may have carried a copy of Andrew Rutherford's *An Exact Plan of His Majesty's Great Roads through the Highlands of Scotland* (published 1745) with him.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Burt, Edmund (died 1755), English, collector of rents in the Highlands, *Letters From A Gentleman In The North Of Scotland To His Friend In London*, R. Jamieson ed. (5th edn. London, 1822):

There is nothing known about Burt's life before his arrival in the Highlands in 1725 in the entourage of General Wade, who referred to him as 'Receiver General and Collector of the unsold Forfeited Estates in North Britain for the use of the Publick'

or ‘Edmund Burt Esqr. the Kings Receiver for the Seafort Estate’. Burt remained in the north of Scotland for many years. In 1729 he was referred to as an overseer of mines in Sunart. The remaining two unsold forfeited estates, those of Glenmoriston and Seaforth, were finally sold in 1730 and 1741, making Burt’s position redundant. When his appointment for the Treasury came to an end, it is likely that he was compensated with another post and was made barrack-master of Fort George in Inverness. During his stay at Inverness Burt was also appointed Justice of the Peace, and there were several complaints by the town’s magistrates about his harsh behaviour as a judge. By 1745 Burt seems to have retired to London. His *Letters From A Gentleman in the North of Scotland To His Friend in London*, 2 vols. (1st edn. London, 1754) were probably written between 1727 and 1728, except for the last letter, which was written in 1736. There is no contemporary evidence that Burt was a captain or held a military rank. There is likewise no contemporary evidence that he was an army engineer or road builder. According to the obituaries in the *Scots Magazine*, Burt died at London on 4 February 1755. When writing his *Letters*, Burt did not intend to publish them. For details see also chapter 4, note 68. Burt travelled extensively through the Highlands on both foot and horseback.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: J.B. Salmond, *Wade In Scotland* (2nd edn. Edinburgh, 1938), pp. 98-112.

Calamy, Edmund (1671-1732), English nonconformist divine, *An Historical Account Of My Own Life, With Some Reflections On The Times I Have Lived In*, J.T. Rutt ed. (London, 1829): [map]

Edmund Calamy was born at London in 1671, the only son of the ejected minister Edmund Calamy ‘the younger’ (1635?-1685). As a nonconformist he was not allowed to study at Oxford or Cambridge and in March 1688 left for Utrecht, Holland. He stayed in Utrecht until 1691 and attended lectures in philosophy and civil law as well as divinity. During his studies at Utrecht he was offered a chair at Edinburgh University by its principal William Carstares who had gone over to find suitable candidates. After the Glorious Revolution nonconformists were admitted to English universities. Calamy returned to England in 1691 and on Richard Baxter’s

advice studied divinity at Oxford, where he was much influenced by Chillingworth. In June 1694 he was publicly ordained at Samuel Annesley's meeting house at Little St Helen's. In 1695 he became assistant to Daniel Williams at Hand Alley, Bishopsgate. In 1703 he succeeded Vincent Alsop as pastor of a large congregation in Westminster. In April and May 1709 Calamy visited Scotland on the invitation of his friend Carstares. Calamy also took the opportunity to look for a suitable university in Scotland for his eldest son. On his visit Calamy was accompanied by two other clergymen, a student of divinity, his wife's nephew and two servants. The party travelled on horseback. They visited Berwick, Dunbar, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Dundee, Forfar, Brechin and Aberdeen, the northernmost point of their tour. They returned by way of Perth, Stirling, Glasgow, Hamilton, Douglas and Dumfries. During his visit he had the degree of doctor of divinity conferred on him by the universities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow. A visit from Aberdeen to Elgin and Inverness had to be abandoned due to the loss of two horses. Calamy's journal is a valuable account of the fraught Anglo-Scottish relations after the Union and the attempted Jacobite invasion of 1708. He spoke very favourably of the Scots' hospitality to strangers. Apart from a tour of the west of England in 1713, Calamy spent the remainder of his life with his congregation at Westminster. He published numerous sermons, but his lasting fame rests on his biographies of nonconformist ministers. He died in 1732.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Campbell, John (1708-1775), British miscellaneous writer, *A Full and Particular Description Of The Highlands of Scotland* (London, 1752):

John Campbell was born in Edinburgh in 1708, his father being Robert Campbell of Glenlyon, and his mother a Berkshire woman from Windsor. At the age of five he was taken to Windsor by his mother and educated under the direction of an uncle. He was intended for a legal profession but, instead embarked on a literary career, focusing on history, especially military history. In 1750 Campbell published *An Exact and Authentic Account Of the Greatest White-Herring-Fishery In Scotland, Carried on Yearly in the Island of Zetland, by the Dutch Only* (London, 1750). The author's claim to have resided for five years on the island causes, however, some

confusion about Campbell's upbringing. Whatever the duration of his stay on Shetland, he had a profound knowledge of the living conditions on those islands. Campbell was a staunch supporter of the Hanoverians and in 1752 published *A Full and Particular Description Of The Highlands of Scotland*, a work in which he vigorously defended the Highlanders against allegations of Jacobitism and, instead, illustrated their worthiness as loyal subjects to the crown, particularly in the army. In 1754 he received the degree of LLD from Glasgow University. Campbell spent most of his life as a writer in London and died there in 1775.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Carlyle, Alexander (1722-1805), Scottish, minister of Inveresk, *Journal of a tour to the North of Scotland*, Alexander Carlyle, R.B. Sher ed. (Aberdeen, 1982), NLS, 'Aug. 1775, Highland Excursion', MS. 23771: [2 maps]

Alexander Carlyle was born in 1722 at Prestonpans, Haddingtonshire. He was educated at the universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leyden. In 1743 he received an MA from Edinburgh University. In the summer of 1745 he volunteered in the defence of Edinburgh against the Jacobites before he matriculated at Leyden the following November. In 1748 he was ordained minister of Inveresk, a charge he retained until his death. In 1756-57 he was reprimanded for having attended the staging of John Home's tragedy *Douglas* at an Edinburgh theatre. In 1760 he received a DD from King's College, Aberdeen. Carlyle became a leading figure of the Moderate Party of the Church of Scotland and was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1770. He was part of the Scottish Enlightenment and a close friend of celebrities such as David Hume, Adam Smith and Tobias Smollett. In August 1765 Carlyle set out for a tour of the Scottish east coast that led him as far north as Inverness. He travelled by horseback and was accompanied by his cousin and friend William Wight (1730-1782), Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Glasgow University. In 1775 Carlyle made another tour of the north (NLS, A. Carlyle, 'Aug. 1775, Highland Excursion', MS. 23771), this time to the Highlands of Perthshire and Badenoch.

See entries in *Dictionary of National Biography* and *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*

Cave, Thomas (1712-1778), English barrister, MP and local historian, ‘A Diary of a Journey from Stanford Hall to the North of Scotland and back, in the year 1763, by Sir Thomas Cave, Bart., of Stanford Hall’, *A History Of The Midland Counties*, C. Holme ed. (Rugby, 1891), pp. 183-241: [map]

Sir Thomas Cave, 5th Baronet, of Stanford, Northamptonshire, was born in 1712. He became a barrister-at-law and a member of the Inner Temple. He was elected MP for Leicestershire in four successive parliaments. He married in 1736 and had two sons and six daughters. In 1755 Thomas Cave was appointed chairman of a local committee formed to collect material for a history of Northamptonshire, but the publication of this work was delayed by his death in 1778. In July and August 1763 Sir Thomas Cave set out in a carriage for a tour of Scotland. He travelled along the east coast to Edinburgh and then moved on to Brome Hall, Lord Elgin’s seat in Fife, where he spent several days. From there he made a tour of the Highlands by way of Perth, Dunkeld, Kenmore and Crieff. He also visited Stirling, the Carron Iron Works and Glasgow before he returned by way of Edinburgh and Dumfries to England. Sir Thomas Cave had a very biased view of the Scots and complained repeatedly about the filthiness of the country. He died in 1778 and was buried at Stanford. His eldest son, also named Thomas (1737-1780), succeeded him as 6th Baronet.

See entry in *Burke’s Genealogical And Heraldic History Of The Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage*

Chantreau, Pierre Nicolas (1741-1808), French historian and publicist, *Voyage Dans Les Trois Royaumes D’Angleterre, D’Ecosse Et D’Irlande, Fait En 1788 Et 1789* (Paris, 1792): [map]

Pierre Nicolas Chantreau was born in Paris in 1741, the son of an advocate and royal councillor. In 1767 he moved to Spain, where he was Professor of French at the Royal Military Academy at Avila until 1782. After his return to France he worked in public education. In 1788-89 he travelled through England, Scotland and Ireland. He was in favour of the Revolution and in 1792 was sent on a secret mission to Spain to report on the French emigrants. In 1793 he returned to France and worked as a publisher. In 1796 he was appointed Professor of History at the ‘central-school’ at Auch where his violent anti-clerical attitude caused official censure. In 1803 he was

appointed Professor of History at the military academy at Fontainebleau. Chantreau visited Edinburgh and Glasgow, later travelling along the east coast to Aberdeen, where he boarded a ship to the Orkney Isles. He called at Papa Westray and then continued his voyage to Lewis. From Stornoway he sailed to Harris, Skye, Canna, Rhum, Mull, Lismore, Iona and Jura before landing at Londonderry in Ireland. His account of life in Scotland and in the Hebrides was heavily influenced by his strong anti-clerical views.

See entry in *Dictionnaire De Biographie Française*

Further reading: Margaret I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770-1830 Et Leurs Curiosités Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931)

Clarke, Edward Daniel (1769-1822), English traveller, antiquary and mineralogist, *The Life And Remains Of The Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke, LL.D.*, W. Otter ed. (London, 1824): [map]

Edward Daniel Clarke was born in 1769 at the vicarage of Willingdon in Sussex. He was educated at Tonbridge grammar school and Jesus College, Cambridge. He graduated BA in 1790 and MA in 1794. In 1790 he became tutor to Henry Tufton, with whom, in the following year, he made a tour of Great Britain. In 1792 he travelled to Italy as a companion to Lord Berwick. He returned to England in November 1793 but, again, set out for the Continent in January 1794 for a tour of Germany, Switzerland and Italy. From summer 1794 until the autumn of 1796 he was tutor in the family of Sir Roger Mostyn in Wales. He then became tutor to Berkeley Paget, son of Lord Uxbridge, with whom, in the summer of 1797, he went on an extensive journey of the western seaboard of Scotland. Clarke and his pupil visited the islands of Arran, Jura, Mull, Lismore, Coll, Staffa, Iona, Canna, Rhum, Barra, St Kilda, Lewis and Skye. They returned on horseback via Glen Mor and the east coast of Scotland. Clarke spent most of the next decade travelling on the Continent and in the Middle East, during which time he compiled a huge collection of antiques and minerals. In 1808 he was appointed Professor of Mineralogy at Cambridge University. In 1817 he was also elected librarian of the university. He published numerous works on travel, antiquities and mineralogy. He died in 1822. Clarke's journal of his tour of Scotland is particularly detailed about St Kilda

although his account of the islanders was heavily influenced by the notion of the 'noble savage'.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Clerk of Penicuik, John (1676-1755), Scottish judge and antiquary, NAS, 'A Trip to the north of Scotland as far as Inverness in May 1739', GD/2110: [map]

Sir John Clerk of Penicuik studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1700. In the same year he married Lady Margaret Stuart, eldest daughter of Alexander, 3rd Earl of Galloway. In the following years his wife's cousin, James, 2nd Duke of Queensberry, strenuously promoted Clerk's political career. After some early success as an advocate and through the influence of his brother-in-law, James, 5th Earl of Galloway, he was elected to the Scottish parliament as a member for the burgh of Whithorn in 1702. He continued to represent it in the Scottish parliament until 1707, thereafter in the first British parliament. In 1706-07 he was placed on the commission to negotiate the Union of Parliaments. In 1708 he was promoted to the newly constituted Scottish Court of Exchequer. In 1722 he succeeded to the title and estates of his father. He gathered a huge collection of antiquities, and his house at Penicuik became a centre for the cultivated society of Edinburgh. Sir John Clerk made numerous journeys through Scotland, mainly through the Lowlands and southern counties. In summer he usually set out for the southern Highlands where he restored his health by drinking goat whey. In 1739 he made a major tour of the north of Scotland, which led him as far as Inverness. He returned via the east coast to Penicuik. In his journal he stated that he had never previously been further north than Aberdeen, which he visited in 1709. On his 1739 tour of the Highlands Sir John Clerk travelled in a carriage while his two travelling companions travelled on horseback.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: *Memoirs Of The Life Of Sir John Clerk Of Penicuik* (Scottish History Society) (Edinburgh, 1892)

Conyers of Walthamstow, John (1650-1725), English MP, Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, ‘My Northerne Journey with my Cosine Conyers, of the Tower, 1676’, MS. D/DW Z6/1,2:

John Conyers of Walthamstow, Essex, was born in 1650. In 1666 he matriculated at Queen’s College, Oxford, aged sixteen. He became barrister-at-law, Middle Temple, in 1672. He was MP for East Grinstead 1695-1708, for West Looe 1708-10, and, again, for East Grinstead from 1710 until his death in 1725. In August and September 1676 he visited the north of England and Scotland. He travelled on horseback by way of Berwick and Dunbar to Edinburgh. His account of the Scottish capital is particularly interesting. The manuscript also includes useful observations about the Scots’ dialect, their weights and measures, and their garb.

See entry in *Alumni Oxonienses* (1500-1714)

Culley, George (1735-1813), Culley, Matthew (1731-1804), English agriculturalists, *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798*, A. Orde ed. (Oxford, 2002): [3 maps]

The brothers Matthew and George Culley were pioneer farmers from the north of England. They were the eighth and ninth of the eleven children of Matthew Culley of Denton, near Darlington in County Durham, and his wife Eleanor Surtees. Being younger sons Matthew and George did not inherit land although their father probably left them some capital to start their chosen career as farmers. Matthew and George farmed in partnership. George Culley became a disciple of the pioneer livestock breeder Robert Bakewell. Also among the Culleys’ correspondents was the agriculturalist Arthur Young, who, in 1786, encouraged Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld to make a tour of Scotland. Matthew and George Culley began farming at Denton, but in 1767 they moved to Northumberland and took a 21-year lease of a farm at Fenton near Wooler, bringing with them their livestock from Denton. From the mid-1770s onwards they rented additional farms from several landowners until in the mid-1790s they managed nine farms in the area between Wooler and the Tweed. Matthew Culley first visited Scotland in May 1770. He travelled on horseback through the Borders to Edinburgh and toured through the Lowlands between the capital, Stirling and Glasgow. He then travelled through Fife

and Angus to Aberdeen. George Culley visited Scotland in November 1771. He also travelled on horseback and mainly visited the Borders and the Lowlands between Edinburgh in the east and Greenock in the west. In 1775 Matthew Culley made a major tour of the north of Scotland. He travelled on horseback all along the east coast to Caithness and returned south via Glen Mor, Argyllshire, Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire. At Monkshill, Aberdeenshire, he visited the farm of the agronomist and experimental farmer James Anderson (see entry), who travelled along the western seaboard on behalf of parliament in 1784. In Easter Ross Culley visited Sir John Lockhart Ross of Balnagowan and Hector Munro of Novar, whose controversial 'improvements' were to lead to the Ross-shire riots in 1792. Matthew Culley's journal of 1775 presents some textual problems. It is a conflation of two journals, made on journeys in 1773 and 1775. Matthew Culley probably intended to publish the journal, and in its present form it was partially prepared for publication. In 1778 George Culley entrusted his brother's material to the Edinburgh schoolmaster and author William Perry. In 1778 Perry's own business affairs were in difficulties and he found himself unable to do the editorial work. He handed over the Culley material to the Revd Samuel McKnight, also in Edinburgh. McKnight took the journal of 1775 as his base text and joined to it the journal of 1773. He added some material of his own on Galloway and left out Matthew Culley's account of a visit to Ireland from Stranraer. He sent batches of the edited text to Perry, who passed them on to George Culley. McKnight also asked for money. Some money was sent, but when at the end of June 1778 McKnight asked for more, the Culleys appear to have jibbed. Perry was chagrined and, having now come to terms with his creditors, offered to start again himself, but at the same time he asked George Culley to stand surety for him. This George Culley evidently refused, and the whole publication project fell through. It is impossible to say exactly which changes McKnight made in the process of editing as he never sent back the original manuscript. Only a typewritten, incomplete transcript of the 1775 tour, probably made in 1951, seems to have survived.² Although the journal reads like one continuous journey, it is not clear how much of the journey was made in 1773 and

² There are 21 pages of the transcript relating to Culley's journey through Dumfriesshire and Galloway missing.

how much in 1775. Matthew Culley made another tour of the Scottish Lowlands and Borders in 1794. At home the Culleys were successful improvers. They bred the 'Border Leicester', which became a basis for sheep flocks especially in northern England and southern Scotland. George Culley also wrote several books on the agriculture of the county of Northumberland and the improvement of livestock breeding. The travel journals of the Culley brothers are of particular interest with regard to the improvement of the agriculture and livestock breeding in Scotland.

For George Culley see entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: *Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798*, ed. by Anne Orde (Oxford, 2002), pp. 1-21; D.J. Rowe, 'The Culleys, Northumberland Farmers, 1767-1813', *Agricultural History Review*, vol. xix (1971), pp. 156-174.

D'Amour, Matthias (1749-1836?), servant to the MacLeods of Raasay and to the Duchess of Gordon, *Memoirs Of Mr. Matthias D'Amour*, P. Rodgers ed. (London, 1836):

There is little known about Matthias D'Amour's life apart from what he revealed to Paul Rodgers, the editor of *Memoirs Of Mr. Matthias D'Amour* (London, 1836). D'Amour was born in 1749 in Antwerp and spent the first half of his life as a valet. He first served several masters in France before setting out for England in 1776. Soon after his arrival in London he was employed as a companion to a Mr John Mackenzie on the Grand Tour of the Continent. They travelled through France, Italy, Switzerland and the Low Countries. They met the French naturalist Buffon, and in Florence they saw Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender. After their return to London, D'Amour served with several masters and in 1781-82 spent eleven months on the island of Raasay as a servant to the MacLeods. Thereafter he entered into the service of the Duchess of Gordon with whom he stayed for ten years, partly at Gordon Castle and partly at the duchess's London residence. In 1793 he quit service after a row with the duke and settled at his mother-in-law's home at Woodhall near Sheffield. He then moved to Retford and began business as a coal merchant. In 1800 he moved with his wife to Sheffield where they ran a restaurant and poulterer's shop. In 1826 they retired from all business. D'Amour was still alive when his *Memoirs*

were published in 1836. His date of death is not known. Rodgers claimed that he wrote down D'Amour's *Memoirs* as they were told to him by D'Amour himself and that everything was based on fact. However, some passages of D'Amour's *Memoirs* bear great resemblance to the accounts of Pennant and Johnson, and plagiarism cannot be ruled out. Nonetheless, D'Amour's *Memoirs* are particularly interesting in respect of the customs and manners of the islanders on Raasay and Skye.

Dawson, Eliza (1770-1858), English autobiographer, NLS, 'A Tour through part of England and Scotland, by Eliza Dawson in the Year 1786', Acc. 12017: [map]

Eliza Dawson was born in 1770 at Oxton near Tadcaster, Yorkshire, the only child of a land surveyor. According to her journal, she was 'a Girl of sixteen, who has never been above thirty miles from home' (fo. 1) when she set out for Scotland in July 1786. She travelled by carriage and was accompanied by a cousin and uncle. The party's first visit was to friends at Rosemount near Perth, staying there for about three weeks and then continuing their journey along the popular route of the small Highland tour. In 1791 Dawson married the Scottish advocate Archibald Fletcher who was 24 years older than her. They were happily married for 37 years until the death of her husband. Eliza died at Edinburgh in 1858.

See entry Fletcher, Eliza in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Defoe, Daniel (born 1660-61?, died 1731), English journalist, political spy and novelist, *A Tour Thro' the whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, 3 vols. (London, 1724-27): [map]

Daniel Defoe was born in 1660 or 1661 in the parish of St Giles's, London. As a nonconformist, or dissenter, Defoe's father could not send his son to university at Oxford or Cambridge. Instead, he sent Daniel to the excellent academy at Newington Green, which was kept by the Reverend Charles Morton. Although Defoe was intended for the Presbyterian ministry, he decided against it and set up a merchant business. Initially, his business flourished and Defoe travelled widely at home and abroad, but in 1692 he became bankrupt, having sustained severe losses from insuring ships during the war with France. Defoe welcomed the Glorious Revolution and became William of Orange's leading pamphleteer. However, his nonconformity

got him into trouble with the government, and he was arrested in May 1703. Part of the deal to release him from prison in 1704 seems to have been that Defoe agreed to work as a pamphleteer and intelligence agent for the newly appointed secretary of state Robert Harley, afterwards the 1st Earl of Oxford. In this capacity Defoe was sent to Scotland in August or September 1706, at a time when the Union with Scotland was the prime objective of English foreign policy. His duties were apparently to act as a secret agent with the party favourable to the Union. He stayed in Scotland throughout 1707 and returned to England in the beginning of 1708. However, the threatened French invasion of Scotland in the spring of 1708 forced Defoe to return north. He continued to work as a pro-unionist spy and was sent to Scotland once again in 1712. Throughout the 1710s Defoe continued to write for various political masters, which brought him, once again, into trouble with the law in 1713. He also wrote several works on economic theory and argued that Britain would profit most from free trade because of the strength of its economy. In his later years he achieved great success as a novelist, being the author of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724). Between 1724 and 1727 he published *A Tour Thro' the whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, 3 vols. (London, 1724-27). The third volume dealt with Scotland and because of its detailed descriptions soon replaced Camden's *Britannia* as the leading guidebook. It is, however, very doubtful whether Defoe had any first-hand experience of the Highlands to the north and west of Glen Mor although he included an account of them. It is more likely that he did not travel further north than Elgin or Inverness. His account of Scotland was based on his travels through the country as a spy, keeping his political masters in London in touch with public opinion, and has a fiercely Unionist attitude. Defoe's final years were, once more, troubled by financial difficulty and it is thought that he died in hiding from his creditors in 1731.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Maurice Lindsay, *The Discovery of Scotland* (London, 1979), pp. 82-99.

Dibdin, Charles (1745-1814), English dramatist, actor and songwriter, *Observations On A Tour Through Almost The Whole Of England, And A Considerable Part Of Scotland*, 2 vols. (London, [1801-02]): [map]

Charles Dibdin was born in 1745 at Southampton, Hampshire. He was intended for the Church, but his excellent voice enabled him to pursue a career in music. In his boyhood he sang as a chorister at Winchester Cathedral and gave private concerts. As a young man he moved to London to sing in the theatres and began to compose his own music, mainly ballads, sea songs and operas. His first operetta was staged in 1764, and by 1778, when he became composer to Covent Garden, he had produced eight operas. During the 1780s and 1790s he also managed theatres and had huge success as a solo entertainer. Dibdin visited Scotland in 1799 and 1800, travelling, on horseback, mainly through the Borders and Lowlands. In 1801-02 he published the account of his tours in two volumes. They included numerous plates of views, which were adopted from drawings made by Dibdin himself. In the early nineteenth century Dibdin's voice declined. His popularity fell rapidly, his music shop failed and bankruptcy followed suit. He died at London in 1814.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Douglas, Francis (1710?-1790?), Scottish miscellaneous writer, *A General Description Of The East Coast Of Scotland, From Edinburgh To Cullen* (Paisley, 1782): [map]

Francis Douglas was born in or near Aberdeen and commenced business as a baker in that city. Around 1748 he opened a bookseller's shop. In 1750, in conjunction with the druggist William Murray, he set up a printing house and published the *Aberdeen Intelligencer*, a weekly newspaper with Jacobite leanings. It was discontinued after a few years, but Douglas carried on the printing and bookselling business until about 1768 when he took a farm at Drum, Aberdeenshire. In the Douglas peerage case he supported the successful side and was rewarded with the life-rent of the Abbots-Inch farm near Paisley, where he died around 1790. His approach to farming is said to have been more theoretical than practical, and his farm in Aberdeenshire was poorly run. In 1780 Douglas travelled on horseback along the east coast from Edinburgh to

Cullen, and his account is particularly detailed on the progress of agriculture in the counties of Fife, Angus, Mearns, Aberdeen and Banff.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Douglas, George Lewis Augustus (1773-1847), Scottish advocate and sheriff-depute of Kincardineshire, *Tour in the Hebrides A.D. 1800* (Aberdeen, 1927): [map]

George L.A. Douglas was born in 1773, the second son of the advocate John Douglas of Tilquhillie. His father had died before his birth. After 1794 he joined a body of volunteer infantry in Edinburgh, whose purpose was to assist the civil magistrate in checking and suppressing riot and insurrection within the parishes of Edinburgh, Canongate, St Cuthbert's and Leith. Douglas became a private in the 'Centre New Town Company'. In 1796 he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates. On 25 July 1800, he set out with two English friends, Mr Senhouse of Nether Hall and Mr Norris of Hawley, for a tour of the Highlands and Hebrides. The final destination was Staffa and Iona. The tour lasted a little more than three weeks, and the party travelled through Stirlingshire and Argyllshire to Oban. From there they crossed to Mull, Ulva, Staffa and Iona. They returned via Glen Coe, Tyndrum, Loch Tay, Dunkeld and Braemar to Inchmarlo near Banchory in Kincardineshire, the area of his ancestry. Here the journal stops. In 1812 Douglas was appointed sheriff-depute of Kincardineshire. From 1814 to 1818 he was also Dean of Faculty of Marischal College, Aberdeen. He married in 1837, died in 1847 and was buried at Banchory-Ternan churchyard. Douglas and his companions travelled through the mainland Highlands in a carriage, which was left at Oban while they crossed to Mull and the adjacent islands.

Douglas, Niel (1750-1823), Scottish poet and preacher, *Journal Of A Mission To Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland, In Summer And Harvest 1797, By Appointment Of The Relief Synod* (Edinburgh, 1799):

Niel Douglas was born in 1750 and was educated at the University of Glasgow. He does not seem to have belonged to the Scottish establishment and has been well described as a 'wavering nonconformist'. As an author he first appeared in the

character of a minister of the Relief Church at Cupar, Fife, in 1789. By 1793 he had moved to Dundee, where he officiated as a minister of Relief Charge, Dudhope Crescent. Douglas was a fluent Gaelic speaker and from July to September 1797 went on a mission to Argyllshire on behalf of the Relief Synod. He travelled on foot and preached mainly in Cowal, Knapdale and Kintyre. In 1799 he published the account under the title *Journal Of A Mission To Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland, In Summer And Harvest 1797* (Edinburgh, 1799). In 1798 he moved to Edinburgh and afterwards to Greenock, but by 1805 he had settled in Glasgow. Around 1809 he seceded from the Relief Church and set up on his own account as a 'preacher of restoration' or 'universalist preacher'. In 1817 he was tried for sedition before the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh. He was acquitted and died in 1823. Douglas published numerous religious poems and theological works. He was also a social reformer and wrote pamphlets against the slave trade, duelling and church patronage. His *Journal* is particularly interesting with regard to the rivalry between the ministers of the Relief Synod and the established clergy of the Church of Scotland.

See entry Douglas, Neil [sic] in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Farington, Joseph (1747-1821), English landscape painter, ECL, 'Tours in Scotland in 1788 and 1792 by Joseph Farington, R.A.', 'Tour In Scotland July To September 1792 By Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA 1861.788 and MS. QYDA 1861.792: [3 maps]

Joseph Farington was born in 1747 at Leigh in Lancashire. In 1763 he became a pupil of the landscape painter Richard Wilson. He joined the Incorporated Society of Artists in 1768 and was admitted as a student to the Royal Academy in the same year. He was elected an associate of the Academy in 1783 and became a full member in 1785. Farington made three painting tours of Scotland in 1788, 1792 and 1801. From June to October 1788 he travelled through the Lowlands in the company of John Knox (see entry), for whom he prepared drawings and engravings for his projected work on the picturesque scenery of Scotland. This project was, however, abandoned owing to Knox's death in 1790. Farington revisited Scotland from July to September 1792, this time travelling along the River Clyde, through Argyllshire, the Trossachs and Fife. In September and October 1801 he visited Scotland for a third

time and travelled along the popular route of the small Highland tour. Between 1789 and 1816 Farington published several collections of views of the English lakes, of the cities and towns of England and Wales, and of the River Thames. He died in 1821 near Manchester. Farington's journal of his 1788 tour deals mainly with his drawings. The journals of 1792 and 1801 are more detailed in his observations on the countryside and its people. The 1801 journal is particularly detailed about the state of the inns that he had visited. In 1788 and 1792 Farington travelled mainly on horseback. In 1801 he travelled by carriage.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Faujas de Saint-Fond, Barthelemy (1741-1819), French geologist, *Travels In England, Scotland, And The Hebrides* (London, 1799): [map]

Barthelemy Faujas de Saint-Fond studied law at Grenoble and Valence, qualified as an advocate and quickly made a career in law. His interest, however, was in natural sciences, particularly geology and mineralogy. He was strongly influenced by his fellow countryman and naturalist Buffon and in the 1770s and 1780s published numerous works on mineralogy and volcanoes. In 1784 Faujas was inspired to travel to England and Scotland by Sir Joseph Banks's account and drawings of the basaltic pillars of the Hebridean island of Staffa, which had been included in Thomas Pennant's *Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII* (Chester, London, 1774-76). Faujas's account is particularly detailed on the geology and agriculture of the Highlands. In 1785 Faujas was appointed Royal Commissioner for Mines and Quarries, a position that allowed him to travel widely throughout France and Europe. In 1793 he was appointed Professor of Geology at the newly created Musée d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. Faujas and his party travelled to Scotland by post-chaise and continued their tour through the Highlands in hired carriages.

See entry in *Dictionnaire De Biographie Française*

Further reading: Margaret I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770-1830 Et Leurs Curiosites Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931); Maurice Lindsay, *The Discovery of Scotland* (London, 1979), pp. 187-213.

Fisher, Jabez Maud (1750-1779), American Quaker and businessman, *An American Quaker In The British Isles: The Travel Journals of Jabez Maud Fisher, 1775-1779*, K. Morgan ed. (Oxford, 1992): [map]

Jabez Maud Fisher was born in 1750 in Philadelphia, America. The Fishers, a Quaker family, had emigrated from England to America during the lifetime of William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. J.M. Fisher's father had moved to Philadelphia in 1745, and his firm 'Joshua Fisher & Sons' soon became the wealthiest Quaker merchant house in that city before the American Revolution. In 1774 J.M. Fisher was one of Philadelphia's most active conservatives, and his opposition to the movement of independence from Britain brought him into conflict with his fellow colonists. In April 1775, therefore, his father removed him from the limelight by sending him to Britain. He also directed his son on arrival in Britain to settle the accounts of their family business and establish commercial connections with merchants and manufacturers dealing in goods that could be marketed in Philadelphia. Owing to the outbreak of the War of Independence, J.M. Fisher was stranded in Britain and settled in London. In September and October 1775 he made a tour of Scotland that led him to Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth, Blair Atholl, Stirling, Glasgow and Ayr. On his tours through the British Isles Fisher was usually accompanied by friends and other Quakers who acted as guides and established contact with their local brethren. In Scotland Fisher and his party travelled on horseback. His journals show that he was heavily influenced by Edmund Burke's ideas on aesthetics. He appreciated the beauties of the Highland landscape but was shocked by the poverty of its people. In May 1776 he briefly revisited Scotland on his return from a tour of Ireland, taking a coach from Portpatrick to Carlisle. In 1778 he returned to New York (then still under British control), but he could not get through the lines to Philadelphia, which was held by the colonists. He subsequently returned to Britain in order to wait for the end of the war. In November 1779 he fell ill at Leeds and died on 1 December from scarlet fever and an ulcerated throat.

Fontane, Theodor (1819-1898), German journalist and novelist, *Beyond the Tweed* (London, 1998): [map]

Theodor Fontane was born at Neuruppin in 1819. He was educated at the Gymnasium Neuruppin (1832-33) and the Berliner Gewerbeschule (1833-36). In 1836 he started training as a chemist and after finishing his apprenticeship worked in that profession until 1849. His real interest, however, was in writing. In the spring of 1844 he set out for a first visit to England and London. In 1852 he returned for a second visit and spent the summer as a journalist in London. From 1855 to 1859 he worked in London as an official correspondent for the Prussian government and reported for German newspapers about British politics, economy and culture. On 9 August 1858, Fontane set out from London for a tour of Scotland. He was accompanied by his German friend Bernhard von Lepel, and they travelled by train to Edinburgh, continued by mail-coach to Inverness, boarded a steamer on the Caledonian Canal to Fort William, visited the islands of Mull, Staffa and Iona, and returned via the Crinan Canal to the Clyde and Glasgow. They arrived back in London on 24 August 1858. Fontane and Lepel travelled in the footsteps of Mary Stuart. Their account of Scotland, and particularly the Highlands, was heavily influenced by Sir Walter Scott's Romantic notions and the 'tartanisation' of Scotland. In 1859 Fontane returned to Germany and lived until his death in Berlin in 1898 as a journalist, travel writer, war correspondent, essayist and novelist.

See entry in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*

Forbes, Robert (1708-1775), Scottish, Bishop of Ross and Caithness, *Journals Of The Episcopal Visitations Of The Right Rev. Robert Forbes, M.A., Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Caithness, And Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Argyll, 1762 & 1770*, J.B. Craven ed. (London, 1886): [2 maps]

Robert Forbes, Bishop of Ross and Caithness, was born in 1708 at Rayne in Aberdeenshire. He graduated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1726. He was ordained in 1735 and appointed minister of the Episcopal congregation at Leith, which became his home for the rest of his life. He was arrested during the 'Forty-Five on suspicion of intending to join the Jacobites and remained loyal to their cause until his death. In 1762 the Episcopal clergy of Ross and Caithness elected him their

bishop. In 1762 and 1770 Forbes made two extensive tours of the Highlands, visiting his northern flock in the dioceses of Ross and Caithness and in the diocese of Argyll, which was then variously administered from Ross, Moray or Caithness. Forbes was one of the first visitors who travelled the Highlands by coach, causing him some problems in remote areas such as Lochaber and Appin.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: 'Life Of Bishop Robert Forbes', in *Journals Of The Episcopal Visitations Of The Right Rev. Robert Forbes, M.A.*, ed. by J.B. Craven (London, 1886), pp. 3-54.

Franck, Richard (1624?-1708), English captain in the Parliamentary service, *Northern Memoirs, Calculated for the Meridian of Scotland* (London, 1694): [map]

Richard Franck was born around 1624 in Cambridge. He is said to have been educated in his home town, but the available information is contradictory. According to the *DNB*, it is unlikely that he was a member of the university. Moreover, according to the *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (until 1751), he was neither registered as a student nor did he graduate at the university. On the other hand, P. Hume Brown (ed.), *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891), p. 182, wrote that we learn from Franck himself that he was a native of Cambridge, that he received 'a slender education' at its university and that the impending civil war drove him for a time to take his residence in London. The confusion of the war might explain his absence in the *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, but, whether he attended university or not, his account of Scotland and his style of writing suggest a considerable degree of learning. At the outbreak of the English civil war Franck joined the Parliamentary side and probably obtained the rank of captain. It seems likely that the unsettled state of affairs in the Commonwealth in the second half of the 1650s led him to quit England for a while and retreat to Scotland. Moreover, there is another, and very convincing, reason for his extensive tour of northern Scotland in 1656-57. His *Northern Memoirs* clearly illustrate that Franck was a passionate angler. Although his route is very difficult to reconstruct, it is safe to say that he visited Dumfries, Glasgow, Dumbarton, Loch Lomond, Stirling, Loch Earn, Perth, Forfar, Brechin, the Highland parts of

Aberdeenshire, Loch Ness, Inverness, the eastern coast of Ross-shire and Sutherland, Nairn, Forres, Elgin, Aberdeen, Dundee, Fife, Edinburgh, Dunbar and finally Berwick. Franck is likely to have written the account of the tour in 1658, although the final version was not ready until 1685 and the account was not published until 1694. It is in the form of a dialogue between Arnoldus (Franck himself) and Theophilus, but its bombastic and pedantic style makes it difficult to read. On his return from Scotland Franck settled at Nottingham, but there is little known about his later years. About 1690 he went to America, where he wrote another book, and by 1694 he was back in London. He died in 1708.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Garnett, Thomas (1766-1802), English physician and natural philosopher, *Observations On A Tour Through The Highlands And Part Of The Western Isles Of Scotland, Particularly Staffa And Icolmkill* (London, 1800): [map]

Thomas Garnett was born at Casterton, Westmorland, in 1766. At the age of fifteen he was articled at his own request to the celebrated surgeon and mathematician John Dawson of Sedbergh, from whom he obtained a considerable knowledge of chemistry and physics. In 1785 he matriculated at Edinburgh University. He graduated MD in 1788 and afterwards completed his medical education in London. In 1790 he practised at Bradford but in the following year moved to Knaresborough and Harrogate. In 1795 he considered emigrating with his wife to America but by a lucky coincidence was offered a professorship at Anderson's Institution at Glasgow. As a lecturer and physician he enjoyed great success at Glasgow. In 1798 he set out for an extensive tour of the Highlands. He travelled through Argyll, visited the islands of Mull, Staffa and Iona, proceeded through Glen Mor to Inverness, and returned via the Wade road through the central Highlands. He travelled by foot, but covered the section from Inverness to Perth on horseback. He was accompanied by the miniature-painter W.H. Watts. Garnett published his account in two volumes in 1800. However, he had plagiarised entire sections from the accounts of Thomas Pennant and John Knox. After his return from the Highlands Garnett's private and public life fell apart. In 1798 his wife died in childbirth. He never recovered from that blow, and his physical and mental health began to decline. In 1799 he was

appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry at the Royal Institution. However, he had enemies within the Institution and struggled to meet the popular demands of his audience. After lecturing for two seasons he resigned his post, commenced medical practice in London and was appointed physician to the Marylebone Dispensary. There he contracted typhus and died in 1802.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Gastrell, Francis (c. 1707-1772), English, vicar of Frodsham, Cheshire, NLS, 'Journey in Scotland', Acc. 5741: [map]

There is little known about the Revd Francis Gastrell who was the author of this journey to Scotland in 1760. In the records of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge there is only one entry for that name, and it can be ruled out that Gastrell took his degree at a Scottish university. None of the matriculation and graduation rolls of the four Scottish universities includes his name, and there is no reference in his journal of any previous visit to Scotland. According to the *Alumni Oxonienses* (1715-1886), a Francis Gastrell matriculated at Christ Church College, Oxford, on 14 December 1721, aged fourteen. He graduated BA in 1725 and MA in 1728. This was most likely the author of this tour, but his name is not included in the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, and his career in the Church of England is, therefore, difficult to trace. In 1753 Gastrell purchased New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, with the view to making it an occasional residence. His fixed residence was at Lichfield. In the garden of New Place stood the famous mulberry tree planted by Shakespeare, which naturally attracted many visitors. Annoyed at the incursions onto his property, Gastrell cut it down in 1756. According to Boswell's *Life Of Samuel Johnson* (see entry for 25 March 1776), Gastrell cut it down 'with Gothick barbarity ... to vex his neighbours'. He also demolished the house at New Place in 1759, being unwilling to pay the assessment for the poor at Stratford as well as at Lichfield. The mansion torn down by Gastrell was, however, not the house Shakespeare had lived in since that building had already been demolished by a previous owner in the early eighteenth century. On 24 August 1760, Gastrell set out in company with a Mr Brodie (a relation of Brodie of that ilk) and other friends and travelled via Warrington, Preston, Lancaster, Kendal and Penrith to Carlisle. He continued his journey into Scotland via

Moffat, Bield and Linton to Edinburgh, where he stayed from 1 to 5 September. He then proceeded via Stirling, Crieff, Aberfeldy, Dalnacardoch, Aviemore and Grantown-on-Spey to Forres, where he arrived on 12 September and stayed for three weeks. During his stay Gastrell was frequently invited to Brodie Castle (3.5 miles west of Forres). On 4 October Gastrell began his return journey to Edinburgh by way of Elgin, Banff, Aberdeen, Brechin, Forfar, Perth, Crieff and Stirling. After another three-day stay in the capital, he returned on 23 October via Dunbar and Berwick to England. The journal ends on 8 November near Warrington. The start and finish of the journal in the vicinity of Warrington correspond with a reference of 1760 to Gastrell's incumbency as vicar of Frodsham, south-west of Warrington. Gastrell and his party travelled partly on horseback and partly in his chaise. Gastrell was very prejudiced against the Scots and frequently complained about the poor standard of the Scottish inns. The journal includes several references to places in Scotland that are associated with Shakespeare's plays.

See entry in *Alumni Oxonienses* (1715-1886)

Further reading: James Sinton, 'Notes On The Rev. Francis Gastrell's Tour Through Scotland In 1760', *Transactions Of The Hawick Archaeological Society*, (1927), pp. 55-60.

Gilpin, William (1724-1804), English miscellaneous writer, *Observations, Relative Chiefly To Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, On several Parts of Great Britain; Particularly The High-Lands of Scotland* (London, 1789): [map]

William Gilpin was educated at Carlisle and St Bees. In 1740 he matriculated at Queen's College, Oxford. He graduated BA in 1744 and MA in 1748. For a short time he held a curacy in London before he took a school at Cheam, Surrey, where he remained for nearly 30 years. In 1777 he was presented by William Mitford to the vicarage of Boldre in the New Forest, near Lymington, where he remained for the rest of his life. In the 1760s and 1770s Gilpin made a number of tours through various parts of Britain and published the accounts in a series of five works with similar titles that were lavishly illustrated by aquatint drawings. Gilpin's descriptions and aquatint drawings of landscape and nature created a new style of travel writing. His tour of the Scottish Highlands in 1776, along the route of the small Highland

tour, introduced its natural beauty to a wide audience. The account of this tour was not published until 1789, nonetheless it greatly contributed to the reassessment of the Highland landscape and turned it into a favourite destination for generations of artists and landscape painters.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Grant, Anne (1755-1838), Scottish miscellaneous writer, *Letters From The Mountains; Being The Real Correspondence Of A Lady, Between The Years 1773 And 1807* (4th edn. London, 1809):

Anne Grant (née Macvicar) was born at Glasgow in 1755. In 1757 her father, an army officer, was commissioned to North America, and Anne and her mother followed him a year later. In America she was brought up in the company of Dutch settlers. In 1768 Anne's father suddenly returned to Scotland and engaged in business in Glasgow. In 1773 he was made barrack-master of Fort Augustus, Inverness-shire, and his family followed him to the Highlands. In 1779 Anne married the Revd James Grant, the garrison chaplain who was also minister of the neighbouring parish of Laggan. They had eight children, and she stayed at Laggan until 1803, two years after the death of her husband. During this time she learnt Gaelic and became very familiar with all aspects of Highland life. The death of her husband left her with no provision except for the trifling pension accruing to the widow of an army chaplain. In 1803 Anne moved with her family to the neighbourhood of Stirling. She had long been writing short poems, and their publication was now suggested. She was also encouraged to publish a selection of her correspondence, written during her stay in the Highlands. Her *Letters From The Mountains* were first published in 1806 and became an immediate success. Numerous editions followed suit and eased her financial problems. In 1810 she moved to Edinburgh, where she lived as a highly respected writer until her death in 1838.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Gray, Thomas (1716-1771), English poet, *The Letters Of Thomas Gray*, D.C. Tovey ed., 3 vols. (London, 1900-12): [map]

Thomas Gray was born in London in 1716. He was educated at Eton and Peterhouse College, Cambridge, but left without a degree in 1738. During his studies at Peterhouse he began to write Latin verse of considerable merit. From 1739 to 1741 he made the Grand Tour of France, Switzerland and Italy in company with Horace Walpole, the son of the prime minister. In 1742 Gray settled in Cambridge and began to write English poetry. The publication of 'An Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard' in 1751 secured Gray a prime place in English poetry. He was a precursor of the Romantic movement and one of the earliest travellers to visit the Highlands because of its natural beauties. In August 1764 Gray travelled through the Lowlands and the Borders. He revisited Scotland in September and October 1765 and spent several weeks with Lord Strathmore at Glamis Castle. During that stay he visited Arbroath, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl and Loch Tay. There is no journal of his 1765 visit to Scotland, but several of his letters written during that period survived and have been edited. In 1768 Gray was appointed Professor of History and Modern Languages at Cambridge (a post he had unsuccessfully applied for in 1762) when his predecessor died in a riding accident. Gray died at Cambridge in 1771.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Grey, Jemima (1722-1797), Anglo-Scottish aristocratic lady, Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, Bedford, [Wrest Park (Lucas) Archive], 'Journal of a Northern Tour 1755', MS. L30/9A/7 and MS. L30/21/3/9: [map]

Jemima, Marchioness Grey and Baroness Lucas of Crudwell, was born in 1722. She was the first daughter of John Campbell, 3rd Earl of Breadalbane, being the only surviving child by his first wife, Amabel, eldest of the four daughters and coheirs of Henry Grey, Duke of Kent, Marquess Grey etc. In 1740 she married Philip Yorke, 2nd Earl of Hardwicke. In July 1755 Jemima Grey travelled by coach to Scotland. After a week's stay at Edinburgh she proceeded by way of Stirling and Crieff to Taymouth. She stayed at Taymouth Castle from 28 July until about 10 September when she returned to England. During her stay with her relatives at Taymouth she made trips to Dunkeld and Blair Atholl. Her 'Journal of a Northern Tour 1755' was

part of her letters to her friend Catherine Talbot (1721-1770), transcribed by Grey's daughter Amabel. Jemima Grey must have spent most of her upbringing in England since she considered herself to be far more English than Scottish. She was shocked by the poverty of the country people in Scotland, but her feelings toward and descriptions of the Highland scenery, and particularly of Dunkeld and the valley of the River Tay, anticipated the emergence of the Romantic movement. Jemima Grey died in 1797 when the Marquessate of Grey became extinct, the Barony of Lucas of Crudwell devolving on her eldest daughter.

See entry in *Complete Peerage*

Hanway, Mary Ann(e) (born 1755-59?, died 1823-25?), English novelist, *A Journey To The Highlands Of Scotland. With Occasional Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Tour: By a Lady* (London, [1777]): [map]

There is very little known about Hanway's life. Neither the exact date of her birth nor death can be established. She was married but died childless. There are reasonable doubts about her being the author of the anonymously published *Journey To The Highlands Of Scotland. With Occasional Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Tour: By a Lady* (London, [1777]). No review or contemporary publication cites her as the author of this tour in 1775. However, if she was the author, she must have travelled to the Highlands as a young lady. Hanway wrote four novels in her later years. The author travelled by coach.

See entry in *Encyclopedia of British Women Writers*, ed. by P. and J. Schlueter (revised and expanded edn. New Brunswick, 1998). For a discussion about her authorship see also chapter 4, note 148.

Harley, Edward (1689-1741) (2nd Earl of Oxford), English bibliophile, 'A Journey Through Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, and Notts To The Northern Counties And Scotland', HMC, *Report On The Manuscripts Of His Grace The Duke Of Portland, K.G.*, vol. vi (London, 1901), pp. 81-147: [map]

Edward Harley was born in 1689 and educated at Westminster School. In 1724 he succeeded his father, Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford, as the 2nd Earl. Unlike his father, Edward eschewed politics and, instead, preferred to surround himself with the

leading poets and men of letters of his time. Throughout his life Lord Harley spent a fortune on his huge collection of books, manuscripts, prints, pictures, medals and coins, some of which are now preserved in the British Library. In May 1725 Lord Harley set out for a visit to Scotland. He travelled along the east coast to Dupplin House near Perth, where he stayed for a week. He then returned via Stirling and Edinburgh to England. Lord Harley travelled all the way by carriage. He died in 1741 in London and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Harmes, Emilie (=Berlepsch, Emilie von) (1755?-1830), German authoress, *Caledonia: Von der Verfasserin der Sommerstunden*, 4 vols. (Hamburg, 1802-04): [map]

The divorced German poetess, feminist and political writer Emilie Harmes (née von Oppel, divorced von Berlepsch) travelled to Scotland in 1799 to visit the Revd James MacDonald (see entry), whom she knew from his days in Weimar and Leipzig from 1796 to 1798 and who was considered as a suitable husband for her. After staying for a short time with MacDonald at Anstruther, she moved to Edinburgh where she spent the winter 1799-1800. In the summer of 1800 she accompanied MacDonald on a journey to the Hebrides. They parted at Oban, and Harmes only managed to visit the island of Mull before she rejoined MacDonald and returned to Edinburgh. She returned to Germany in 1800 and married August Harmes the following year. She was heavily influenced by her friendship with Johann Gottfried Herder and their joint enthusiasm for James Macpherson's 'Ossianic' poetry. Harmes travelled by coach.

Further reading: Alexander Gillies, 'Emilie von Berlepsch and her *Caledonia*', *Proceedings Of The Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society*, vol. xv, part i (Leeds, 1972), pp. 1-14.

Hastings, Warren (1732-1818), English, Governor General of India, NLS, 'Journal of a tour in the Highlands', Acc. 4462 (=microfilm of BL, Add. MS. 39,889): [map]

Warren Hastings was born at Churchill near Daylesford, Oxfordshire, in 1732. He was abandoned by his father at an early age and was brought up by his uncle Howard

Hastings, who sent him to Westminster School, London. On the death of his uncle in 1749 Hastings had to leave school and took a junior appointment in the East India Company. In 1750 he left for India where he remained until 1785, apart from a spell back in England from 1765 to 1769. In spite of great difficulties that resulted from political rivalries within the Company, Hastings rose quickly through the ranks and finally became Governor General with wide responsibilities for the British settlements in India. He retired from India to England in 1785. However, past rivalries caught up with him, and in 1786 an impeachment process against him was introduced in the House of Commons (a prosecution by the House of Commons before the House of Lords). The subsequent trial before the House of Lords lasted from 1788 to 1795 when he was finally acquitted. After his acquittal Hastings retired to the life of a country gentleman. He died at Daylesford in 1818. Hastings visited the Highlands of Scotland in September 1787 on the eve of his trial before the House of Lords. He set out from Edinburgh and travelled mainly along the popular route of the small Highland tour, visiting Dunkeld, Loch Tay and Loch Lomond. He returned via Glasgow, Paisley and Lanark to Edinburgh. Hastings travelled by carriage with a considerable entourage, and some smaller inns had difficulty in accommodating his party. Hastings commented on scenery, architecture, commerce and economy, and paid special attention to the standard of food and comfort in the inns.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Hatchett, Charles (1766-1847), English chemist, *The Hatchett Diary: A tour through the counties of England and Scotland in 1796 visiting their mines and manufactories*, A. Raistrick ed. (Truro, 1967): [map]

Charles Hatchett was born in London, the son of a coach maker. He followed into his father's business and in 1790 was sent to St Petersburg to deliver a coach for Catherine of Russia. However, Hatchett was particularly interested in mineralogy and chemistry and on his way called at leading German chemists such as M.H. Klaproth in Berlin and A.G. Werner in Freiberg (Saxony). These encounters raised his curiosity and steered him towards mineralogy and chemistry. At Freiberg he also met the Italian mineralogist Andre Savaresi who later accompanied him on his tour of England and Scotland in 1796. After his return to London, Hatchett set up a small

manufacturing chemical business and laboratory. He became a distinguished chemist and a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. The diary of his tour dealt mainly with geology, mineralogy, mining and ironworks. Hatchett travelled through Scotland in a hired coach.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Heron, Robert (1764-1807), Scottish miscellaneous writer, *Observations Made In A Journey Through The Western Counties Of Scotland; In The Autumn Of MDCCXCII* (Perth, 1793), *Scotland Described: Or, A Topographical Description Of All The Counties Of Scotland: With The Northern & Western Isles Belonging To It* (Edinburgh, 1797): [map]

Robert Heron was born in 1764, the son of a weaver in New Galloway, Kirkcudbrightshire. He was taught privately by his mother until his ninth year when he was sent to the parish school. At the age of eleven he was employed in giving lessons to the children of some of the neighbouring farmers, and at fourteen he was appointed master of the parochial school of Kelton. By the end of 1780 he had saved sufficient money to enable him, with the help of his parents, to enter the University of Edinburgh in order to study for the Church. He financed his studies partly by teaching, but mainly by miscellaneous work for booksellers. In his later years Heron published numerous works on history, travel and topography, but many of them had only limited success. He often faced financial difficulties, and some of his works were written while he was in the debtors' prison. In October 1792 Heron travelled on horseback through the Highlands along the route of the small Highland tour. In the following year he published the account under the title *Observations Made In A Journey Through The Western Counties Of Scotland*, 2 vols. (Perth, 1793). The second volume dealt with a tour through Lanarkshire, Dumfriesshire, Galloway, Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. In the 1790s he was also a leading member of Sir John Sinclair's team that gathered and edited the ministers' returns for the *Statistical Account*. In 1794 Heron published *General View Of The Natural Circumstances Of Those Isles, Adjacent To The North-West Coast Of Scotland, Which Are Distinguished By The Common Name Of Hebudae Or Hebrides* (Edinburgh, 1794). This work was mainly culled from the replies made by the ministers in the Hebrides

for Sinclair's *Statistical Account*. In the 1790s Heron also published two topographical descriptions of Scotland, *Scotland Delineated* (1st edn. Edinburgh, 1791) and *Scotland Described* (1st edn. Edinburgh, 1797), which were widely used for guidebooks. In 1799 he moved to London in order to obtain more constant literary work. He edited two newspapers, *The Globe* and *The British Press*, and also acted as a parliamentary reporter. In 1806 his newspaper *The Fame* failed, and he was, once again, confined by his creditors to Newgate Prison. There he contracted a fever and was moved to the hospital of St Pancras, where he died in April 1807.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Hill, Rowland (1744-1833), English preacher, *Journal Through The North Of England And Parts Of Scotland* (London, 1799), *Extract Of A Journal Of A Second Tour From England Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The North Western Parts Of England* (London, 1800): [2 maps]

Rowland Hill was the sixth son of Sir Rowland Hill, 1st Baronet. He was born in 1744 at his father's seat, Hawkstone Park, Shropshire. He was educated at Shrewsbury and Eton. In 1764 he entered St John's College, Cambridge. As a student he visited prisoners and the sick and preached wherever the opportunity offered in Cambridge and its neighbourhood. As a result he was often insulted and assaulted by mobs. He graduated BA in 1769, but six bishops refused to ordain him because of his irregular preaching. However, in 1773 he was ordained to the curacy of Kingston, Somerset, by Dr Wills, Bishop of Bath and Wells. He continued to preach wherever he found an audience and made extensive evangelical tours throughout England and Scotland. His eloquent and eccentric style of preaching attracted huge crowds and often led to disturbances. Hill visited Scotland in 1798 and 1799. In 1798 he visited Edinburgh, Linlithgowshire, Stirlingshire, Perthshire, Fife and Dundee. In the following year he made the grand tour of the Highlands and also visited Fife, Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. Throughout his life Hill was at the forefront of the great religious and philanthropic movements in Britain. He was the first chairman of the committee of the Religious Tract Society. He was also an active promoter of the interests of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the

London Missionary Society. Moreover, he was an active campaigner for vaccination. He died in 1833.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Hodgkinson, Richard, NLS, ‘Memorandums of a Journey into Scotland June 1800’, Acc. 4848: [map]

There is little known about Richard Hodgkinson. His main reason for travelling to Scotland was to visit relatives who were farmers in Kirkcudbrightshire, where he stayed from 5 to 12 June 1800. He then continued his journey through Scotland by way of Ayr (12 June), Glasgow (13 June), Stirling (15 June) and Edinburgh (16 to 18 June). He returned via Middleton, Selkirk and Hawick to England. Hodgkinson seems to have lived near Westhoughton, halfway between Wigan and Bolton, Lancashire. He travelled almost exclusively by mail- or stagecoach. His journal is particularly detailed on local farming.

Hogg, James (1770-1835), Scottish poet and novelist, *A Tour In The Highlands In 1803* (Edinburgh, 1986): [map]

James Hogg, also known as the ‘Ettrick Shepherd’, was born in 1770 at Ettrick, Selkirkshire. According to his own account, he received in all less than a year’s education. At the age of seven he began to herd ewes, and at sixteen he was a fully qualified shepherd. In the 1790s he worked as a shepherd in the Borders and in the hills of western Perthshire. In 1796 he wrote his first poems and songs. In 1800 he returned to Ettrick and two years later made the acquaintance of Walter Scott, who was in quest of further material for his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Both Hogg and his mother supplied him with ballads and folk songs of the Borders. In June 1803 Hogg made a tour of the western Highlands. He travelled on foot through Argyllshire, the western districts of Inverness-shire and Ross-shire before he sailed over to Lewis. One of Hogg’s motives for visiting the Outer Hebrides might have been that the lease of his farm at Ettrick expired that year and he was seriously considering renting a large sheep farm on Harris. The farm, however, turned out to be disputed property, and he had to abandon his plan. After his return to Ettrick he wrote the account of his tour in a series of letters addressed to his friend Walter

Scott. However, the letters were somehow mislaid, and they were not rediscovered among his papers until the 1880s. With the help of Scott, Hogg's miscellaneous poems were published in Edinburgh in 1807. However, he lost his earnings from this publication in an unsuccessful farm in Dumfriesshire. In 1810 Hogg settled in Edinburgh and embarked on a literary career. His poems and novels met with varying success, and he struggled for much of his life with financial difficulties. The farms that he leased in the Borders were not successful, and his London publisher, Cochrane, twice went bankrupt. Hogg died in 1835. His letters are particularly interesting with regard to the progress of sheep farming and the state of agriculture in the Highlands. Hogg was one of the very few travellers who had part of their belongings stolen in a Highland inn. At Shiel Inn (Glenshiel) Hogg suspected the local Highlanders of having stolen a bundle of his letters of introduction, without which he felt unable to continue his tour through the sparsely populated county of Sutherland.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: James Hogg, *Memoir of the Author's Life and Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by Douglas S. Mack (Edinburgh and London, 1972), pp. 1-91.

Holzenthal, Georg, German prisoner of war, *Briefe über Deutschland, Frankreich, Spanien, die balearischen Inseln, das südliche Schottland und Holland* (Berlin, 1817):

There is little known about Georg Holzenthal apart from what is revealed by the author himself in his *Briefe über Deutschland, Frankreich, Spanien, die balearischen Inseln, das südliche Schottland und Holland* (Berlin, 1817). Holzenthal was a first lieutenant in the service of Schaumburg-Lippe. In the course of the Napoleonic Wars he found himself, between 1809 and 1811, in Austria, Germany, France, Spain and the islands of Mallorca and Menorca. He arrived at Leith as a POW on board of the *Zealous* in January 1812. He was then interned with captive French officers at Hawick until his release in February 1814. Although the German principalities had joined the coalition against Napoleon in 1813, the release of the German POWs was delayed until February 1814. On 25 February 1814, Holzenthal sailed with other

German POWs on board a Berwick smack to Yarmouth. In March 1814 he crossed to The Hague and returned through Holland to his native Bückeburg in Germany. Throughout his two-year internment at Hawick he seems to have been treated very well.

Johnson, Samuel (1709-1784), English lexicographer, essayist and literary critic, *A Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1775): [map]

Samuel Johnson was born in 1709 in Lichfield, the son of a bookseller. He first attended school at his home town but was later moved to Stourbridge. In 1728 he was entered as a commoner at Pembroke College, Oxford, but around 1730 left prematurely owing to a lack of funding. As a young boy Johnson had read Martin's *Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland*, this kindled a desire to visit the Hebrides. After a short and unsuccessful spell as a teacher at Lichfield, Johnson moved in 1737 to London and made a living as a journalist and essayist for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1745 he turned his attention to Shakespeare and in 1746 began to work on his *Dictionary of the English Language*. While working on the *Dictionary*, he continued writing for various magazines and, from 1750, edited his own literary magazine *The Rambler*. The *Dictionary* was finally published in 1755 and immediately became the standard authority. It earned Johnson a great reputation as a man of letters, but it did not solve his financial difficulties. In 1765 Johnson received an LLD from Trinity College, Dublin. In May 1763 he made the acquaintance of the Scottish advocate James Boswell (see entry), with whom he began a friendship that lasted until his death. In the late summer of 1773 Johnson and Boswell set out for a tour of the Hebrides, in the course of which they visited the islands of Skye, Raasay, Coll, Mull and Iona. They travelled by coach along the east coast to Inverness, continued on hired horses to Bernera on the west coast and travelled on foot through the islands. As well as fulfilling his childhood wish of visiting the Hebrides, Johnson also made enquiries into the authenticity of Macpherson's 'Ossianic' poetry. His public denunciation of Macpherson's 'translations' as a forgery resulted in a bitter quarrel with him. In 1775 Johnson published the account of his tour. His anti-Scottish attitude and his distaste for the Gaelic culture of the Highlands aroused a storm of protest, particularly north of the

border. Nonetheless, his journal inspired generations of travellers to follow his traces in the Hebrides. In 1774 Johnson made a tour of Wales with his friends, the Thrales, and in 1775 accompanied them to Paris. Johnson spent his final years in London as the most famous man of letters of his age. He died in 1784 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, not far from his great adversary Macpherson.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: James Boswell, *The Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1785); James Boswell, *The Life Of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1793); Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 98-118; Pat Rogers, *Johnson And Boswell: The Transit of Caledonia* (Oxford, 1995). A full bibliography of the secondary literature relating to Johnson's *Journey* can be found in S. Johnson, *Reisen Nach Den Westlichen Inseln Bei Schottland*, ed. by V. Wolf and B. Zabel (Frankfurt am Main, 1982), pp. 284-298.

Kalmeter, Henrik (born c. 1693), Swedish industrial spy, 'Journal Of Henry Kalmeter's Travels In Scotland 1719-1720', T.C. Smout ed., *Scottish Industrial History: A Miscellany* (SHS, fourth series, vol. xiv) (Edinburgh, 1978), pp. 1-52: [map]

Henrik Kalmeter was a Swedish industrial spy who had previously visited Germany and Holland and came to Scotland in 1719 at the age of 26. He was employed by the *Bergskollegium* in Stockholm, an official body responsible for the Swedish mining industry, and stayed with his uncle Krumbein, an immigrant music teacher, at Edinburgh in 1719 and 1720. Kalmeter was to report to the *Bergskollegium* on the state of the mining industries in Great Britain. He travelled mainly through Lanarkshire, Stirlingshire, the Lothians and Fife. In 1720 he left Scotland for England and France.

Further reading: Sven Rydberg, *Svenska Studieresor till England under Frihetstiden* (Uppsala, 1951)

Kirk(e), Thomas (1650-1706), English miscellaneous writer, *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being, An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners* ([London], 1679), *Tours In Scotland 1677 & 1681 By Thomas Kirk And Ralph Thoresby*, P. Hume Brown ed. (Edinburgh, 1892): [map]

Thomas Kirk was born in 1650, the son of Gilbert Kirk(e) of Cookridge near Leeds, Yorkshire. In May 1677 he set out for a three-month tour of Scotland that led him as far north as the Orkney Isles. Kirk was a friend of Ralph Thoresby (see entry), and from his remarks it can be gathered that Kirk was a country gentleman, a Justice of the Peace and a staunch Tory. On 28 May 1677, he crossed the border into Scotland and travelled to Edinburgh, where he stayed for a week. He then travelled along the east coast to Inverness and boarded a vessel to Kirkwall. He returned via the east coast of Caithness, Sutherland and Ross-shire to Inverness. From there he continued his journey on a slightly more inland route to Edinburgh. He left Scotland via Glasgow, travelled along the coast of Ayrshire and Galloway to Portpatrick and embarked on a vessel to Ireland. Kirk spent more time and travelled further in Scotland than most seventeenth-century travellers. Two years after his return to England he published a diatribe against Scotland, titled *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being, An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners* ([London], 1679). This abusive and stereotyped account was in stark contrast to the private journal of his tour, which was not published until 1832. His published diatribe and his private journal, which apparently was not intended for publication, illustrate the huge contrast in the image of Scotland and the real experiences of visitors. In his later years Kirk contributed some minor publications to the *Philosophical Transactions*. He died in 1706. After his death the private journal of his 1677 tour passed into the hands of his close friend Ralph Thoresby, who gave it a place among the other manuscripts in his museum at Leeds. See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Knox, John (1720-1790), Scottish philanthropist, *A Tour Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The Hebride Isles, In MDCCLXXXVI* (London, 1787): [map]

John Knox was born in Scotland and earned a large fortune as a bookseller in London. In 1764 he retired from business and devoted himself to the improvement of the fisheries and manufactures of Scotland. He made numerous tours of Scotland, the most important in 1786 through the north-western Highlands and the Hebrides. On this tour he surveyed suitable locations for the establishment of fishing villages. He wrote numerous works on the promotion of the Scottish fisheries and was a driving force behind the British Fisheries Society's foundation of new fishing villages at Tobermory and Ullapool. He did not see the completion of these villages and died at Dalkeith near Edinburgh in 1790. In 1786 Knox travelled by boat.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 130-146.

La Rochefoucauld, Alexandre de (1767-1841), French diplomat, *To the Highlands in 1786: The Inquisitive Journey Of A Young French Aristocrat*, N. Scarfe ed. (Woodbridge, 2001): [map]

In 1786 eighteen-year-old French Count Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld travelled to Scotland with his Franco-Polish tutor Maximilien de Lazowski. In 1785 they had travelled through the industrial Midlands and south-west England. Inspired by the agronomist Arthur Young, they set out in March 1786 on a three-month tour of the Highlands of Scotland and part of Ireland between Armagh and Dublin. Their main objective was the study of agriculture in Scotland. La Rochefoucauld and Lazowski travelled through Scotland on foot. After their return to France, La Rochefoucauld had a brief period as a lieutenant colonel under Lafayette before withdrawing to his wife's family estate. Under Napoleon, La Rochefoucauld entered the diplomatic service and in 1802 was appointed chargé d'affaires in Saxony. In 1805 he became ambassador to Austria and in 1808 ambassador to the Low Countries. He continued to hold government posts after Napoleon's fall from power before finally retiring in 1831.

See entry in *Dictionnaire De Biographie Française*

La Rochette, (?) de, French officer, NLS, ‘French account of a tour from Falmouth to Edinburgh and Perth-Shire 1763’, MS. 3803: [map]

There is little known about the author of this manuscript. La Rochette was a French officer, who appears to have been acting, at least in 1763, in the services of the Duc de Nivernais, then ambassador at St James’s, in connection with Acadian and other French prisoners. In a note he is called Colonel de La Rochette, but he describes himself as being addressed as General. La Rochette travelled to Scotland in June 1763 by order of the Duc de Nivernais. He entered Scotland at Gretna and proceeded via Moffat, Bield and Linton to Edinburgh. From there he went on a tour of the Roman camps in Perthshire, travelling via Falkirk and Stirling to Crieff, where he spent three days surveying the remains of the camps in its vicinity. He returned via Perth, Kinross and Queensferry to Edinburgh. He left Scotland by the same route he entered. The journal contains general observations on Scotland, a detailed description of Edinburgh and a general account of the Highlanders. It includes detailed descriptions and drawings of the remains of the Roman camps around Crieff.

La Tocnaye, J. Chevalier de (=Bougrenet, Jacques Louis de) (1767-1823), French émigré, counter-revolutionist author and traveller, *Promenade D’un Français Dans La Grande Bretagne* (Dublin, 1797), *Promenade D’un Français Dans L’Irlande* (Dublin, 1797): [2 maps]

The Chevalier de La Tocnaye was a French Royalist cavalry officer, of Breton origin, who fled his native country in the wake of the Revolution. He came to England in 1792 and soon became bored with his life of inactivity in London. In 1793 he set out for a tour of England and Scotland and remained in Scotland until 1795. La Tocnaye regarded travel writing as a source of income and first published the account of his tour in Edinburgh in 1795. In 1796-97 he set out for a tour of Ireland that also included a detour to Scotland. The account of his tour of Ireland was published in Dublin in 1797. La Tocnaye had plenty of time but no money and, therefore, was forced to travel on foot. From 1798 to 1800 he travelled through

Norway and Sweden. The account of this tour was published in Brunswick in 1801. La Tocnaye returned to France in 1802.

See entry in *Dictionnaire De Biographie Française*

Further reading: Margaret I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770-1830 Et Leurs Curiosités Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931)

L'Estrange, Hamon (1687-1715), English nobleman and traveller, Norfolk Record Office, Norwich, 'Diary of travel', MS. LEST NF 2:

Hamon L'Estrange was born in November 1687, the eldest son of Sir Nicholas L'Estrange, 4th Baronet, of Hunstanton, Norfolk, and his wife Anne Wodehouse, daughter of Sir Thomas Wodehouse, of Kimberley, Norfolk. On 14 November 1706, Hamon matriculated at Christ Church College, Oxford. The university records give his age at matriculation as seventeen, but this is clearly contradicted by his birth and baptism in November 1687. If seventeen was his correct age at matriculation, he must have entered Oxford in 1704. Whatever the date of matriculation, he left without a degree. The date of Hamon L'Estrange's visit to Scotland, likewise, cannot be precisely established since the dates given in his journal are contradictory. 1709 seems to be the most likely date of his tour to Scotland. He travelled along the east coast (Berwick, Dunbar) to Edinburgh and returned via Kelso in the Borders. In 1713-14 L'Estrange made the Grand Tour of the Continent and visited France and Italy. He died at Basle in August 1715.

See entries in *Complete Baronetage*, vol. ii (1625-1649), and *Alumni Oxonienses* (1500-1714)

Lettice, John (1737-1832), English poet and divine, *Letters On A Tour Through Various Parts Of Scotland, In The Year 1792* (London, 1794): [map]

John Lettice was born at Rushden, Northamptonshire, in 1737. He was educated at Oakham school and in 1756 admitted to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. He graduated BA in 1761, MA in 1764 and became a Fellow of his college. He spent the late 1760s and early 1770s as chaplain and secretary to the British embassy in Copenhagen and afterwards visited other countries of the Continent. In August 1792 he set out for an extensive tour of the Highlands by coach that covered Argyll, Glen

Mor and the east coast from Inverness to Edinburgh. At Inverness he attended the trial of the 'Ross-shire rioters', who had put up resistance against the introduction of large-scale sheep farming in Easter Ross. In 1799 he became tutor to the Beckford family and in 1804 was nominated to the prebend of Seaford in the church of Chichester, both of which he held until his death in 1832. Lettice regarded the Gaelic language and culture of the Highlands as inferior to 'English civilisation'. He welcomed the abolition of clanship and the forceful opening up of the Highlands after 1746.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Leyden, John (1775-1811), Scottish physician and poet, *Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800*, J. Sinton ed. (Edinburgh, 1903): [map]

John Leyden was born in Denholm, Roxburghshire, and was educated at Edinburgh University, where he greatly distinguished himself as a scholar. Alongside medicine he studied natural science and modern European languages as well as Hebrew, Arabic and Persian. In 1800 Leyden set out for the Highlands and Hebrides in order to investigate the 'Ossianic' question. On his tour he met two Germans and a Swiss whom he accompanied on their way to Mull and Staffa. In 1803 he left Britain for Madras in India, where he practised as a surgeon. In the following years he travelled widely in India and the Far East and became an expert on Asian languages. He died from a sudden fever on an expedition to Java in 1811. During his tour of the Highlands and Hebrides in 1800, Leyden travelled mainly on foot. The horses were used for carrying the baggage.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Loch, David (died 1780), Scottish writer on commerce, *A Tour Through Most Of The Trading Towns And Villages Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1778):

David Loch was born at Over Carnbee, Fife, and raised as a sailor. He rose to the rank of master in the merchant service and afterwards settled at Leith, where he prospered as a merchant and shipowner. He was for some years a member of the annual convention of the royal burghs. In 1776 he was appointed Inspector General

of the woollen manufactures of Scotland by the Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland. He was afterwards Inspector General of the fisheries of Scotland. He died at Edinburgh in 1780. He published several essays and pamphlets on the promotion of the woollen manufacture, trade and commerce in Scotland. His *Tour Through Most Of The Trading Towns And Villages Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1778) is a detailed account of the state of the manufacture and commerce of all major Scottish towns in the 1770s. Loch lavished particular detail on the textile manufactures. His route and mode of travelling cannot be established.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Loveday, John (1711-1789), English philologist and antiquary, *Diary Of A Tour In 1732 Through Parts Of England, Wales, Ireland And Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1890): [map]

John Loveday was born in 1711, the only son of Thomas Loveday of Caversham, Oxfordshire, and Feenes Manor, Berkshire. He attended Reading school and in 1728 matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford, as a gentleman-commoner. He graduated BA in 1731 and MA in 1734. Possessed of an ample patrimony he lived until his death in 1789 in studious retirement as a country gentleman at Caversham. He contributed numerous papers under various pseudonyms to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. As an undergraduate Loveday had shown a great interest in history and archaeology and later befriended the English antiquary Thomas Hearne. In May 1732 he set out for an eighteen-week tour of England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, mainly in search of antiquities. He arrived in Scotland on 1 August and travelled via Annan, Dumfries, Douglas and Hamilton to Glasgow. From there he proceeded to Stirling, Culross, Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth and Dundee. He returned via St Andrews and the south coast of Fife to Edinburgh. On 20 August he reached Berwick-upon-Tweed and returned to England. Loveday and his travelling companions travelled on horseback. Before Loveday's departure his friend Thomas Hearne had enquired about the dangers of travelling away from the main roads in Scotland.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Löwenthal, Maximilian von (1799-1872), Austrian civil servant and author, *Skizzen aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise durch Frankreich, Großbritannien und Deutschland* (Vienna, 1825): [map]

Maximilian Freiherr von Löwenthal was born in Vienna in 1799. After studying law in his home town, he travelled extensively through France, Great Britain, Holland and Germany. Löwenthal visited Scotland in June 1822. He set out from London and travelled north via Oxford, Stratford, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Carlisle. He crossed into Scotland at Gretna and continued via Moffat and New Lanark to Glasgow. From there he travelled through Argyllshire to Oban and visited the islands of Mull and Staffa. He continued his tour on Loch Linnhe and along the Caledonian Canal to Inverness and returned through the Grampians to Perth and Edinburgh. In Scotland Löwenthal travelled by stagecoach, cart, steamer and rowing boat. On his way back to London he visited York and Cambridge. After his return to Austria, Löwenthal made a distinguished career as a civil servant. He was crucial in developing the postal and telegraph communication in his native country and in negotiating international communication links. He was ennobled in 1863 and created a Baron in 1868. He retired in 1867 and died in Vienna in 1872. Löwenthal was also a distinguished literary figure. Together with his wife Sophie he ran one of Vienna's leading literary salons. He was the author of the tragedy *Die Caledonier* (1826) and the comedy *Anna Lovell* (1841), which was set at the court of Charles II. Löwenthal was a great admirer of Macpherson's 'Ossianic' poetry, Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott.

See entry in *Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815-1950*

Lowther, Christopher (died 1644), sheriff of Cumberland, *Our Journall Into Scotland, Anno Domini 1629, 5th Of November, From Lowther*, W. Douglas ed. (Edinburgh, 1894): [map]

Sir Christopher Lowther, of Whitehaven, Cumberland, was the second son of Sir John Lowther, of Lowther, Westmorland. His date of birth is not known. According to the *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, he matriculated as a pensioner from St John's, Easter 1628. Lowther visited Scotland as a young man in November 1629 in the company of Mr R. Fallow and Peter Mauson. They travelled via Carlisle, Hawick, Selkirk and

Dalkeith to Edinburgh, where they stayed for several days. From the capital they moved on via Queensferry and Kinross to Perth, returning by the same route to England. Lowther's account includes one of the most interesting descriptions of early seventeenth-century Edinburgh. It is particularly detailed about the Scottish law courts. In 1640 Lowther became sheriff of Cumberland. He was created a baronet in 1642 and died in 1644. He was buried at St Bees, Cumberland. Lowther and his companions travelled on horseback.

See entries in *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (until 1751) and *Complete Baronetage*

MacDonald, James (1771?-1810), Scottish minister and travel writer, *Reise durch Schottland, seine Inseln, Dänemark und einen Theil von Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1808): [map]

James MacDonald was born on North Uist in 1771 or 1772. He studied theology at the University of Aberdeen and spent the years 1796 to 1798 in Weimar and Leipzig, where he contributed to the debate among German writers on the authenticity of James Macpherson's 'Ossianic' poetry. He returned to Scotland in 1798 and was ordained minister of Anstruther Wester in 1799. In 1800 he set out for a joint tour of the Highlands and Hebrides with the German poetess Emilie Harnes (see entry). In 1802 he made a second extensive tour of the Hebrides, the account of which was published in German in Leipzig in 1808. He quit his ministry in 1804 and spent the following years travelling on the Continent as a tutor to young MacDonald of Clanranald. In 1808 and 1809 he was sent on a diplomatic mission to Gothenburg where his former pupil Clanranald had got himself into severe trouble. He returned to Edinburgh in 1809 and died the following year.

Further reading: Alexander Gillies, *A Hebridean in Goethe's Weimar: The Reverend James MacDonald And The Cultural Relations Between Scotland And Germany* (Oxford, 1969)

Macky, John (died 1726), Scottish, government agent and travel writer, *A Journey Through Scotland* (London, 1723): [map]

John Macky was a Scot of good education, but nothing is known about his parents or birth. According to his own account, he was sent in the wake of the Glorious

Revolution to Paris in order to spy on the Jacobites at the French court. In 1692 he passed on vital information about a French expedition against England and by doing so enabled the English government to prepare its defence. In 1693 he was appointed inspector of the coast from Harwich to Dover in order to prevent treasonable correspondence between England and France. After the peace of Ryswick in 1697 he was in charge of the packet-boats from Dover to France and Flanders. After the death of William III in 1702 the service was discontinued, and Macky managed an estate possessed by him and others on the island of Zante, in the dominion of Venice. After the battle of Ramillies in May 1706 he was in charge of the packet-boats to Ostend, with instruction to observe closely all naval preparations at Ostend and the other coastal towns. In 1708 he discovered the naval preparations at Dunkirk for a Jacobite invasion of Scotland. Nonetheless, he came under the suspicion of the government and was thrown into prison where he remained until the accession of George I. After his release he established a packet-boat service to Dublin, but the business ran at a loss and was soon abandoned. Ultimately, he went abroad and died in 1726 in Rotterdam. His memoirs of his time as a secret agent were published posthumously by his son in 1733. A French translation was published in the same year. He also wrote *A Journey Through England* (1st edn. London, 1714), *A Journey Through Scotland* (London, 1723), and *A Journey Through The Austrian Netherlands* (London, 1725). The year of Macky's visit to Scotland cannot be precisely established, but it must have been sometime between 1715 and the early 1720s. Macky travelled on horseback and toured extensively through the Lowlands, the Borders and the south-west of Scotland. He also travelled along the east coast to Inverness and returned through the Highland parts of Moray and Aberdeenshire, but he did not provide the exact route of his way through the hills. It is difficult to establish how far Macky penetrated into the Highlands since his account of the Highlanders was mainly culled from sources such as Camden's *Britannia*.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Mactavish, Lachlan, representative of the Board of Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, NAS, ‘Journal of the tour of the Hebrides by the Committee of Directors of the Society, 1787, July 1 – Aug. 20’, British Fishery Society Papers, GD9/1, fos. 96-123: [map]

There is little known about Lachlan Mactavish’s life. He was a representative of the Board of Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures and in the summer of 1787 accompanied a committee of directors of the British Fisheries Society on their tour of the western seaboard.³ The committee was made up of John Campbell, 4th Earl of Breadalbane, Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran, Isaac Hawkins Browne, George Dempster of Dunnichen and Francis Humberstone Mackenzie of Seaforth. Their task was to inspect suitable locations for the establishment of fishing villages. In the course of their voyage they visited Mull, Staffa, Iona, Canna, South Uist, Benbecula, Skye, Harris and Lewis. In late July and early August the committee of the British Fisheries Society dispersed at Ullapool and Poolewe, and the directors returned home by land. Mactavish stayed on ship and returned via Raasay, Skye, the Sound of Mull, Luing and Islay to Ayr, where he arrived on 20 August. On Islay he stayed for four days with Mr Campbell of Shawfield. In 1792 an unidentified director of the British Fisheries Society published his account of the tour under the pseudonym ‘Piscator’ in *The Bee, Or Literary Weekly Intelligencer*.

Manners, John Henry (1778-1857) (5th Duke of Rutland), *Travels In Great Britain*, 3 vols. (London, 1805-13): [map]

John Henry Manners, 5th Duke of Rutland, was born at Rutland House, Knightsbridge, in 1778. He was educated at Ealing school, Middlesex, and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was admitted as a nobleman in 1794, matriculated in 1795 and graduated MA in 1797. He succeeded his father to the dukedom at the age of nine. During his summer vacations at Cambridge (foreign travel was impossible because of the war) he made tours of Great Britain with his tutor George King. In the summer of 1796 they set out on a tour of Scotland. They reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 23 August and progressed along the east coast to Edinburgh. There they

³ A reference of 1789 refers to Lachlan Mactavish as ‘general surveyor of the fisheries’. See NAS, Breadalbane Papers, GD112/7/17, no. 3.

hired four horses and continued their journey in hackney-coaches. The horses were later returned at Buchanan near Loch Lomond. From Edinburgh they continued their tour by way of St Andrews, Dundee, Perth, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Loch Tay, Killin, Tyndrum, Inveraray, Loch Lomond, Dumbarton, Stirling and Glasgow. They returned to England in early October via Lanarkshire and Dumfriesshire. The duke and his tutor usually stayed with the local nobility and spent much time on field sports. They shot grouse and deer with the Duke of Atholl at Blair Atholl, with the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray and with the Duke of Montrose at his seat at Buchanan near Loch Lomond. In politics Manners was a Tory. He held numerous honorary offices and was Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire from 1799 until his death. He died in 1857 at Belvoir Castle and was buried in the mausoleum there.

See entry in *Complete Peerage*

Martin, Martin (born 1655-60?, died 1718), Scottish traveller and writer, *A Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1703), *A Late Voyage To St. Kilda, The Remotest of all the Hebrides, Or Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1698):

Martin Martin was probably born between 1655 and 1660 at Bealach, near Duntulm, on the Isle of Skye. He was the third of the three children of Donald Martin, chamberlain of Trotternish, and Mary, daughter of Alexander, son of Donald MacDonald (Domhnall Gorm Òg) of Sleat, 1st Baronet. The Martins of Bealach (clann Mhàrtainn a'Bhealaich) were a minor but distinguished gentry family closely associated with the local chiefs, the MacDonalds of Sleat. In accordance with the Statutes of Iona Martin Martin was educated in Edinburgh, where he entered the university in 1679. In 1681 he graduated MA. Between 1681 and 1695 Martin was tutor to each of the heirs of the two major Skye chiefships; from 1681 to 1686 to Donald MacDonald of Sleat, later 5th Baronet (known as Domhnall a'Chogaidh), and from 1686 to 1695 to Roderick MacLeod of Harris (Ruairidh Òg). Most of this latter period Martin spent in Edinburgh where the young chief attended university. During his stay at Edinburgh Martin came into contact with the geographer Sir Robert Sibbald and the Royal Society of London. As a native of the Hebrides, a member of the clan gentry and a Gaelic speaker, Martin was very familiar with the Hebrides and

was, therefore, chosen by the Royal Society to make a survey of the Western Isles. Martin's *A Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (1st edn. London, 1703) was the outcome of numerous travels in the Hebrides throughout the 1680s and 1690s (particularly in the years 1697, 1698 (with the geographer John Adair), and 1699-1701) and became the first book in print on the Hebrides. In June 1697 he spent three weeks on the remote island of St Kilda, the account of which was published as *A Late Voyage To St. Kilda, The Remotest of all the Hebrides, Or Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1698). Martin was not a trained scientific writer, and his *Description* is a comparatively unorganised collection of the geography, agriculture, antiquities, superstition, customs and manners of the Hebrides and its population. His naïve style, his apparent credulousness, his eagerness to relate outlandish medical observations, and above all his belief in the second sight, led to his being ridiculed by some of the London virtuosi and literati. Nonetheless, until the publication of Pennant's accounts in the 1770s, it remained the only 'scientific' book on the Hebrides and was widely used by travellers and scientists. Dr Johnson read it as a pupil and, although he had a low opinion of its literary merits, was inspired to visit the Hebrides. Between 1703 and 1707 Martin moved between the Highlands and London, before, in early 1708, moving to London permanently. Shortly thereafter, he became tutor to the third son of the Earl of Bradford with whom he toured Italy. He then relocated to the Low Countries and, for a short time, studied medicine at Leyden.⁴ He did not graduate at Leyden, nonetheless on his return to England he began to practise as a physician in Middlesex. His final two years were taken up in an attempt to salvage the money owed by Sir Donald to his brother John Martin and lost with the forfeiture of the MacDonald estate following the 1715 rising. Martin himself, however, appears to have taken advantage of the renewed interest in the Scottish Gàidhealtachd by publishing a second edition of the *Description* in 1716. In October that year he graduated MD at Rheims. He died on 9 October 1718 at his lodging in Knightsbridge, London, and was buried three days later in St Martin's-in-

⁴ According to the *DNB*, Martin entered Leyden University on 6 March 1710 and graduated MD. The records of Leyden University give his age at matriculation as 41. See R.W.I. Smith, *English-Speaking Students of Medicine at the University of Leyden* (Edinburgh and London, 1932), p. 153. This is, however, very unlikely as he would have received his MA at Edinburgh University at the age of twelve.

the-Fields. Martin's *Description* is the most detailed account of ancient Hebridean life.

See entry in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 10-22.

Mawman, Joseph (1764-1827), English author and bookseller, *An Excursion To The Highlands Of Scotland And The English Lakes, With Recollections, Descriptions, And References To Historical Facts* (London, 1805): [map]

There is little known about Joseph Mawman apart from what can be gathered from his obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Mawman was an eminent bookseller in York. In 1801 he succeeded to the business of Mr Charles Dilly in the Poultry, London, which had been a great meeting place for literary men, including Boswell and Johnson. Mawman visited Scotland as a tourist in 1804. He travelled by carriage along the east coast to Edinburgh and then proceeded to Glasgow. From there he made a tour along the shores of Loch Long and Loch Fyne to Inveraray. He returned to Glasgow by way of Loch Lomond. He returned through Lanarkshire and Dumfriesshire to England. He published the account of his tour under the title *An Excursion To The Highlands Of Scotland And The English Lakes, With Recollections, Descriptions, And References To Historical Facts* (London, 1805). In 1812 Mawman moved his business to Ludgate Hill, London. He died there on 13 September 1827, aged 63.

See obituary in *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xcvi, part ii (1827), p. 283.

See also entry in Ian Maxted, *The London Book Trades 1775-1800, A Preliminary Checklist Of Members* (Folkestone, 1977), p. 151.

Meißner, Eduard (1785-1868), German physician and traveller, *Bemerkungen aus dem Taschenbuche eines Arztes während einer Reise von Odessa durch einen Theil von Deutschland, Holland, England und Schottland* (Halle, 1819): [map]

There is little known about Eduard Meißner other than that which can be ascertained from the lives of his well-known father August Gottlieb Meißner (1753-1807) and Eduard's son Alfred von Meißner (1822-1885). Eduard Meißner was born in 1785,

the year his father moved to Prague. In 1810-11 Eduard Meißner made a journey to Rome. It is only from Eduard Meißner's *Bemerkungen aus dem Taschenbuche eines Arztes während einer Reise von Odessa durch einen Theil von Deutschland, Holland, England und Schottland* (Halle, 1819) that we can gather information about his intervening years. He reveals that he spent seven months in Paris in 1809, travelled for two years through Italy, spent eight months in Vienna, and more than four years as a physician in eastern Poland and in the Ukraine. He then spent the winter of 1816 in Berlin, working at Professor Karl Christian Wolfart's 'Magnetisches Klinikum'. In 1817 Meißner travelled to Britain. On his visit to Scotland he met his future wife, Carolina May of Invermay. Their son Alfred was born in Teplitz in 1822. In July 1817 Meißner set out from London for Scotland. He first visited Edinburgh and in late July and August made a pedestrian tour of the Highlands, walking on average between 25 and 34 English miles per day. He took a steamer from Leith to Alloa and moved on to Callander and the Trossachs. He climbed on Ben Lomond, crossed across the loch to Luss on the western side and then walked through Argyll to Inveraray and Oban. He turned north-east and intended to proceed through Glen Mor, but he missed the Devil's Staircase and called instead at Kingshouse. Shocked by its wretched state he immediately turned round and walked back to Ballachulish. From there he continued along Glen Mor to Inverness. Owing to a chance invitation to Brodie Castle near Forres he abandoned his initial plan to visit Ross-shire. After a few days' stay at Brodie he returned south through the Grampians and made another detour to the Trossachs and Loch Lomond. He continued via Dumbarton and Glasgow to Edinburgh, from where he took a smack to London. After spending a few more weeks in London he left for the Continent at the end of October. By 1822 Meißner was established as a spa doctor in Teplitz (Teplice), Bohemia. In the tense political climate of the 'Vormärz' (period from 1815 to March revolution of 1848) he got into trouble with the local authorities since he supported the revolutionary movement against Metternich's authoritarian government. In 1830 he had to leave Teplitz when he publicised the cover-up of an outbreak of cholera by the local authorities. He moved to the spa town of Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) and in 1835 settled in Prague. He retired as physician in the 1850s and died in 1868. His later years were overshadowed by his troubled relationship with his son Alfred.

See A. Hiley, 'German-Speaking Travellers In Scotland, 1800-1860: And Their Place In The History Of European Travel Literature' (University of Edinburgh Ph.D., 1986), vol. iii, pp. 27-31.

Menzies, Archibald (died 1777), General Inspector of the Board for the Annexed Estates, NAS, 'Journal of Archibald Menzies, General Inspector, 1768', Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E729/9: [map]

Archibald Menzies, Younger of Cudraes, was appointed General Inspector of the Board for the Annexed Estates in 1764. He was to examine the state of farming, manufacture and fisheries in the Highlands and Western Isles. From 1765 to 1769 he inspected the annexed estates every summer. In 1768 he was ordered to prepare a particular survey of the annexed estates of Barrisdale and Coigach. In August and September of that year he sailed through the Hebrides and visited Bute, Kintyre, Arran, Gigha, Islay, Colonsay, Oronsay, Iona, Mull and Lorne. The journal is incomplete and breaks off at Loch Aline in Morvern. The remainder of the journal and the surveys of the above-mentioned annexed estates are lost. Menzies resigned his post as General Inspector in 1771 to become a Commissioner of Customs. That year he was also appointed to the Board for the Annexed Estates. He died in 1777.

See Annette M. Smith, *Jacobite Estates of the Forty-Five* (Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 46, 48, 100.

Michell, John Henry (1759-1844), English Reverend, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, *The Tour Of The Duke Of Somerset, And The Rev. J. H. Michell, Through Parts Of England, Wales, And Scotland, In The Year 1795* (London, 1845): [map]

John Henry Michell was born in 1759 at Brighton, Sussex, the second son of the Reverend Henry Michell. He was educated at Eton and in 1778 was admitted to King's College, Cambridge. In 1782 he graduated BA, in 1785 MA. He was a Fellow of the college from 1781-1804. In 1795 he accompanied the twenty-year-old Edward Adolphus Seymour (1775-1855), 11th Duke of Somerset, on an extensive tour through England, Wales and Scotland, which amounted altogether to 2,735 miles. The tour started on 15 May in London and led them through the Midlands, North

Wales and the northern counties to Scotland, where they arrived on 7 July. They travelled through Dumfriesshire and Lanarkshire to Glasgow, from where they continued their journey through Argyllshire to Oban. Then they crossed to Tobermory on Mull and visited the islands of Staffa and Iona. They continued their journey through Glen Mor to Inverness and returned via the east coast to Perth. From there they made another excursion into the central Highlands to Blair Atholl and Loch Tay. They next moved on to Edinburgh via Kinross and Stirling. From the capital they made an excursion to Fife and St Andrews before finally returning to England in late September. Revd John H. Michell and the duke travelled in a carriage although on Mull they relied on hired horses. From Leven at Loch Lomond to Edinburgh they were also accompanied by a Mr Campbell who spoke Gaelic and knew the Highlands well. During their tour they met Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, Alexander Carlyle (see entry), minister of Inveresk, and the Revd John Home, the author of *Douglas*, who told them how he had persuaded James Macpherson to publish his 'translations' of ancient Gaelic poetry. In 1804 Michell married Margaret, third daughter of George Wagner, hatter, of Pall Mall. From 1803 to 1844 Michell was rector of Buckland, Hertfordshire. From 1812 to 1822 he was also rector of Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, and from 1822 to 1844 rector of Kelshall, Hertfordshire. He died in 1844 at Bath.

See entry in *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (1752-1900)

Mildmay, William (c. 1705-1771), English lawyer and diplomat, Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, 'Notebook containing journal of a tour round England and Scotland', MS. D/DMy/15M50/1326: [map]

William Mildmay of Moulsham Hall, Essex, was born about 1705. He was the only son of William Mildmay, chief of the East India Company's factory at Surat. He was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and graduated MA in 1728. He was admitted to the Middle Temple, of which he subsequently became a bencher. Mildmay was one of the two commissioners accredited to Paris from 1750-56 to settle the disputes over Nova Scotia, St Lucia, Tobago, etc. On the death of his distant cousin Benjamin Mildmay, Earl Fitzwalter, on 29 February 1756, William Mildmay inherited considerable estates in Essex. He served in the county militia and

was created a baronet in February 1765. He died in 1771 at Bath. Mildmay had no offspring and the baronetcy became extinct. The exact date of his tour through the Highlands is difficult to establish. According to the dates given in his journal, July and August 1736 seem to be the most likely time of his visit. Mildmay travelled by carriage and crossed the River Tay at General Wade's bridge at Aberfeldy, which had been completed in 1735. The objective of his visit seems to have been tourism. He visited Edinburgh and proceeded along the east coast to Inverness. From there he moved westward to Fort Augustus, but, since the care of his horses became increasingly difficult, he returned to the Lowlands by way of Dalwhinnie, Aberfeldy and Crieff. The commander of the garrison at Fort Augustus provided him with a military escort for the stages to Crieff. Mildmay's account is particularly interesting with respect to the military roads built by General Wade in the 1720s and 1730s since he was one of the first travellers to travel along them in a carriage.

See entry in *Complete Baronetage*

Morer, Thomas (1651-1715), minister of St Anne and St Agnes, Aldersgate, London, *A Short Account Of Scotland* (London, 1702):

Thomas Morer was born in 1651, son of Maurice Morer, of Westminster. In 1671 he matriculated at Merton College, Oxford. In 1675 he graduated BA. In 1677 he became vicar of Hillingdon with Uxbridge, Middlesex. In 1688 he became canon of Sarum. From 1688 until his death in 1715 he was minister of St Anne and St Agnes, Aldersgate, London. In 1689 he visited Scotland as a chaplain to a Scottish regiment fighting for William III. His *Short Account Of Scotland* (London, 1702) is one of the most interesting accounts of late seventeenth-century Scotland. Morer visited the following places: Edinburgh, Killiecrankie, Perth, Forfar, Dundee, Dunblane, Stirling, Linlithgow, Falkirk, Kilsyth, Glasgow and Ayr. In October 1689 his regiment left from Loch Ryan for Carrickfergus in Ireland.

See entry in *Alumni Oxonienses* (1500-1714)

See entry in *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, vol. vi (Salisbury Diocese)

Moryson, Fynes (1566-1630), English traveller, *An Itinerary Written By Fynes Moryson ...: Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell Through The Twelve Dominions Of Germany, ... England, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1617):

Fynes Moryson was born in 1566, the younger son of Thomas Moryson of Cadeby, Lincolnshire. His father was Clerk of the Pipe and MP for Great Grimsby in 1572, 1584, 1586, and 1588-89. His mother was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Moigne of Willingham, Lincolnshire. His father died in 1591, his mother in 1587. He matriculated at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, in 1580. He graduated BA and obtained a fellowship about 1584. In 1587 he graduated MA. The college allowed him to study civil law, but Moryson felt more attracted to visiting foreign countries. In 1589 he obtained a licence to travel, and from 1591 to 1597 he journeyed all over the Continent and the Middle East. He visited Germany, the Low Countries, Denmark, Poland, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and France. While travelling in the Low Countries in January 1593, he entered himself as a student at Leyden University. He returned to England in May 1595 but in December set out with his younger brother Henry for a journey to the Holy Land. They travelled through Germany to Venice, where they boarded a ship to Joppa. They visited Jerusalem, Tripoli, Aleppo and Antioch, where Henry died in July 1596. Fynes continued to Constantinople and in July 1597 arrived back in England. In April 1598 Moryson travelled to Scotland. He visited Edinburgh and Fife, but 'unexpected businesse' compelled him to cut his visit short. At Falkland Palace he met King James VI. Moryson's journal is particularly interesting with regard to the travelling advice he gave to future visitors. In November 1600 Moryson took up employment in Ireland. On the death of George Cranmer (13 Nov. 1600), the chief secretary of Sir Charles Blount, the Lord-deputy, Moryson was immediately appointed to his post. Over the next years he aided his master in the suppression of the Earl of Tyrone's rebellion. In May 1603 he returned with Blount to England and remained in his service until his master's death in 1606. From 1606 to 1609 Moryson prepared an abstract of the history of the twelve countries he had visited, but the manuscript proved so bulky that Moryson destroyed it. Instead, he turned his attention to a briefer record of his travel experiences. It was to be in five parts, written in Latin, but they were never entirely finished. By 1617 he had finished the first three parts and had translated

them into English. They were published under the title *An Itinerary Written By Fynes Moryson ...: Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell Through The Twelve Dominions Of Germany, ... England, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1617). The manuscripts of the final two volumes were printed separately in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Moryson died in 1630.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Murray, Sarah (1744-1811), (=Aust, Sarah), English topographical writer, *A Companion, And Useful Guide To The Beauties Of Scotland, To The Lakes of Westmoreland, Cumberland, And Lancashire* (London, 1799), *A Companion And Useful Guide To The Beauties In The Western Highlands Of Scotland, And In The Hebrides* (2nd edn. London, 1805): [2 maps]

Sarah Murray is known as an authoress by the name of ‘The Hon. Mrs. Murray, of Kensington’. Her first husband was William Murray, brother of the Earl of Dunmore. After his death in 1786 Murray married Mr George Aust. Sarah Murray visited the Highlands in 1796, 1800 and 1802. In 1796 she travelled, mainly by carriage, through Argyllshire and the central Highlands. Four years later she visited the islands of Mull, Staffa and Iona. She continued her tour of the Hebrides in 1802 and visited the islands of Mull, Ulva, Coll, Eigg, Rhum, Skye and Scalpay. Her journals were written in a lively style, included practical advice for travellers such as route-planning and assessments of the local inns, and were widely used for guidebooks. Sarah Murray was one of the earliest women to visit the Highlands and Hebrides on her own, travelling at a time when women were still expected to be accompanied by men. She died at Kensington in 1811.

See entry Aust, Sarah in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Neilson, Richard (fl. 1754-55), General Riding Officer, or Surveyor of Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland, NAS, ‘Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland’, 6th November 1754, Board of Manufactures – Trustees’ Reports, NG1/7/4; EUL, ‘2nd Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the

Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland’, 1755, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623: [2 maps]

There is little known about Richard Neilson other than his work for the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland. He was a linen manufacturer and had 45 (later 60) looms at work in a factory at the Canongate, Edinburgh. In 1754 and 1755 Neilson travelled extensively along the west coast and through the mainland Highlands on behalf of the above-mentioned Commissioners. His task was to inspect suitable places for the establishment of linen manufacturing stations, particularly at Loch Carron and Loch Broom. In 1754 Neilson was joined by Mr William Tod, a manager of the British Linen Company. Neither of them were Gaelic speakers, and they were accompanied by Mr Patrick Macgilliwie, Inspector of Bleaching, who was not only acquainted with the Highlands but also spoke Gaelic. They travelled on horseback. Their tour lasted from 12 August to 8 September 1754. From 14 June to 25 August 1755 Neilson made a second extensive tour of the north-western Highlands in order to report about the progress of the linen manufacturing stations and to search for further suitable sites. This time Neilson sent his horses from Airds via Inverness to Loch Carron and travelled on foot through Morvern, Sunart, Moidart, Arisaig, Morar and Knoydart. See A.S. Cowper, *Linen In The Highlands 1753-1762* (Edinburgh College of Commerce) (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 6; Alastair J. Durie, *The Scottish Linen Industry in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1979), p. 134.

Newdigate, Roger (?) (1719-1806), English MP and antiquary, Warwickshire Record Office, Warwick, ‘Journal of a Tour from Nottingham, through Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland to Edinburgh and Dunkeld returning via the west coast to Manchester’, MS. CR 136 A/563: [map]

This manuscript journal of a tour in Scotland is ascribed to Sir Roger Newdigate, 5th Baronet of Arbury and Harefield. He was born in 1719, the seventh and youngest son of Sir Richard Newdigate, 3rd Baronet. Sir Roger was educated at Westminster School. He succeeded to the baronetcy on the premature death of his elder brother, Sir Edward Newdigate, 4th Baronet, in 1734. He matriculated at University College,

Oxford, in 1736, and was created MA in 1738 and DCL in 1749. He was MP for Middlesex from 1741 to 1747 and for Oxford University from 1750 until 1780. He was a High Tory, and in 1767 Horace Walpole called him ‘a half-converted Jacobite’. He was an active promoter of canals and a collector of antiquities, many of which he presented to the University of Oxford. He was married twice and died without offspring in 1806 when the baronetcy became extinct. Sir Roger travelled to Scotland in August 1766, and the main objective of his visit seems to have been tourism. He travelled in a carriage and took the popular route of the small Highland tour.

See entries in *Dictionary of National Biography* and *Complete Baronetage*

Pattisson, Jacob (1759-1782), English medical student or physician, NLS, ‘A Tour through part of the Highlands of Scotland in 1780’, MS. 6322: [map]

There is little known about Jacob Pattisson. In the cover of the manuscript a later hand refers to him as Jacob Pattisson MD, originally of Witham in Essex, who moved to Edinburgh to prosecute his medical studies. At some time he was President of the Royal Medical, Physical, and Speculative Societies in the University of Edinburgh. According to the same hand, Dr Pattisson died in Edinburgh on 13 March 1782, aged 23, and was buried at St Cuthbert’s. If this information is correct, Pattisson travelled through the Highlands as a student or shortly after his graduation. The catalogue of Edinburgh University medical graduates, however, does not include a ‘Jacob Pattisson’ or a similar person who graduated in the late 1770s or early 1780s, before March 1782. The author crossed the Forth at Queensferry and travelled along the Fife coast to Stirling. He continued his tour via Loch Lomond and Argyllshire to Mull, Staffa and Iona. He returned via Fort William, Inverness and the east coast to Edinburgh. The author and his companion William Lister travelled on their own horses, which they also took over to Mull. The tour lasted from 9 August to 2 September 1780.

Pease, John (1775-1808), English merchant and Quaker, 'Journal of a Traveller in Scotland 1795-1796', *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. xxxvi (1957), pp. 25-51: [map]

There is little known about John Pease. After leaving school, his father placed him in a business in Newcastle upon Tyne, from which place the journey to Scotland started. Pease accompanied a Mr Taylor, of the Newcastle firm, who had previously visited Scotland. The main objective of their journey seems to have been business, but little in the journal relates to it. This objective also explains their late departure. They did not set out until 22 November 1795, which was unusually late in the season for a major tour of the north. Pease and Taylor bought a light gig for their journey, but they also travelled on horseback. First, they travelled along the east coast to Edinburgh, where they stayed for a couple of days. They then made an excursion to Falkirk and Stirling before returning to the capital. Next, they moved on to Glasgow, from where they made another excursion to Paisley, Irvine and Kilmarnock before returning, once more, to Edinburgh. On 17 December 1795, Mr Taylor took the mail-coach to London, and three days later Pease set out on his own for a tour of the north of Scotland. He travelled all along the east coast to Inverness, where he arrived on 11 January 1796. From there he returned south on the Wade road, but the journal abruptly stopped on 15 January at Blair Atholl. It is not known how Pease returned to England. The author's attention was mainly directed to the country he passed through and to the people he saw. His adherence to religion seems to have been weak since he did not make any attempts to get into contact with fellow Quakers in Scotland. By 1797 Pease was living in Leeds, where he had joined his uncles in their family business of stuff merchants. John Pease died of a heart attack in 1808.

Pennant, Thomas (1726-1798), Welsh traveller and zoologist, *A Tour In Scotland MDCCLXIX* (3rd edn. Warrington, 1774), *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII*, 2 vols. (Chester, London, 1774-76): [2 maps]

Thomas Pennant was born in 1726 in Downing near Holywell, Flintshire. He attended school at Wrexham and in 1744 matriculated at Queen's College, Oxford, but left without a degree. In the following years he became a distinguished naturalist. He corresponded with Linnaeus and in 1757 was elected a Fellow of the Royal

Society of Uppsala. About 1761 he began work on his *British Zoology*, the first part of which was published in 1766. In the meantime he travelled on the Continent and met with fellow naturalists Buffon and Pallas. In 1767 he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of London. In 1769 he set out for his first tour of the Highlands. He travelled on horseback through Perthshire and Aberdeenshire and continued along the east coast to Caithness. On his return he travelled west along Glen Mor and returned through Argyllshire to the Lowlands. The account of this tour, first published in 1771, was a phenomenal success. There was a huge demand for a reliable account of the north of Scotland, and numerous editions followed suit. Encouraged by the success of his first tour, he decided to make a second tour of Scotland, this time focusing on the western seaboard. From June to August 1772 he sailed on board the cutter *Lady Frederick Campbell* all along the west coast and the Inner Hebrides, visiting the islands of Arran, Gigha, Jura, Islay, Oronsay, Colonsay, Iona, Canna, Rhum, Skye and Mull. He wanted to continue his voyage to the Outer Hebrides, but abandoned this when he was informed about the outbreak of a fever epidemic on those islands. Instead, he returned via Argyllshire and Perthshire to the Lowlands. On this voyage he was accompanied by the botanist, John Lightfoot, the author, in 1777, of *Flora Scotica*, a study of Scotland's native flora based on the Linnaean system; the Gaelic scholar, John Stuart, who also served as an interpreter; and Moses Griffith, a Welsh servant, whom he had trained to draw the sketches for his travelogues. The account of his second tour was published in two parts in Chester (1774) and London (1776). Illustrated by numerous sketches it was another huge success. In the 1770s and 1780s Pennant made further tours of England and Wales and published numerous works on travel and zoology, including a *History of Quadrupeds* (1781) and an *Arctic Zoology* (1784). He died at Downing in 1798. Pennant was the decisive figure in the discovery of the Highlands in the second half of the eighteenth century. He published not only the first scientific travel accounts of the Highlands and Hebrides but also showed that these parts of Scotland could be visited in perfect safety. Dr Samuel Johnson praised him as the best travel writer of his time, and Pennant's accounts were widely used as guidebooks to the Highlands until the end of the eighteenth century.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Elizabeth Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp. 70-87.

Percy, Thomas (1729-1811), English, Bishop of Dromore, BL, ‘Observanda in the Tour into Scotland, Aug. 8, 1773’, Add. MS. 39,547: [map]

Thomas Percy was born in 1729 in Bridgnorth, Shropshire, the son of a grocer. He was educated at Bridgnorth grammar school and Christ Church, Oxford. He graduated BA in 1750 and MA in 1753. In 1770 he received a DD from Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In 1753 he was presented to the vicarage of Easton-Maudit, Northamptonshire, which became his home for the next 29 years. In 1756 he was also appointed rector of Wilby. Inspired by Macpherson’s ‘Ossianic’ poetry, in the early 1760s Percy began work on his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. Numerous friends and scholars from all over Britain contributed to this work, and it was finally published in three volumes in London in 1765. In the following years Percy published numerous books on northern history and ancient northern languages as well as religious works. In 1769 he was appointed chaplain to the king, in 1778 became Dean of Carlisle and in 1782 Bishop of Dromore in Ireland. He held the latter office until his death in 1811. In 1773 Percy visited Scotland and travelled to Inveraray. He was accompanied by several friends, the party travelling by coach. The tour from Alnwick Castle (Northumberland) via Edinburgh and Glasgow to Inveraray and return lasted from 8 to 16 August 1773. Percy’s journal is very detailed about the standard of the inns he visited.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Phillips, Nathaniel (1730-1813), merchant and Jamaican sugar-planter, NLS, ‘Nathaniel Phillips’ Scottish Journey July – September 1791’, Acc. 8311: [map]

Nathaniel Phillips was born in 1730, the illegitimate son of a Mile End merchant. There is little known about his early years. His name is not included in the university records of Cambridge or Oxford. In the Slebech Papers in the National Library of Wales, Nathaniel Phillips is first mentioned as coming to Jamaica in 1759, as a merchant in his father’s West Indian business. He soon took complete control of the family concern and as early as 1760 felt capable of purchasing a sugar estate. By

1761 he had become a part owner of Pleasant Hill, a property at St Thomas in the east of Jamaica, with the prospect of becoming full owner by his marriage to the heiress of his co-owner. Having made the transfer from merchant to planter, he soon made a huge fortune. In 1771 he returned to Britain, taking his two little daughters with him. Thereafter, in spite of a protracted stay in Jamaica from 1775 to 1789, he became an absentee planter. In 1785 he killed a compatriot in a duel that was the outcome of a dispute over the conviction of one of his slaves. In 1789 Phillips finally returned to London. In 1792 he bought the Slebech Estate, Pembroke, which had been formerly owned by the Barlow family. In July 1791 Phillips set out from London for a tour of Scotland. He travelled in a coach and six along the east coast to Edinburgh. After staying in the capital for a week he moved on to Glasgow. From there he proceeded through Renfrewshire, ferried over the Clyde from Greenock to Dumbarton, and continued his journey through Argyllshire to Oban. From Oban he set over to Mull and stayed from 31 July to 6 August at Kilfinichen House. His deer stalking excursions on the island were not successful since, according to his journal, most of the deer had given way to great flocks of sheep. He then visited Iona and Staffa and returned to Oban by way of Tobermory and Drimnin (Morvern). He continued his journey along the route of the small Highland tour via Dalmally, Tyndrum, Loch Tay, Dunkeld and Perth. He returned to England by way of Selkirk and Hawick. The journal ends at London. Phillips kept a detailed account of his travelling expenses (inns, meals, road tolls), which amounted to more than £211. This figure and his complaints about the lack of coffee houses at Oban and Drimnin suggest that he was used to a very high standard of living and that money did not matter to him. Phillips died in 1813.

See B.G. Charles, 'The Records of Slebech', *The National Library Of Wales Journal*, vol. v (1947-8), p. 189; 'Journeys Through The Caribbean', transcribed by Clare Taylor (Aberystwyth, 1974), p. 1; Clare Taylor, 'The Perils Of A West Indian Heiress: Case Studies Of The Heiresses Of Nathaniel Phillips Of Slebech', *Welsh History Review*, vol. xii, no. 4 (1985), pp. 495-513.

Pococke, Richard (1704-1765), English traveller, Bishop of Ossory, *Tours In Scotland 1747, 1750, 1760: By Richard Pococke, Bishop Of Meath, D.W. Kemp ed., (SHS, vol. i) (Edinburgh, 1887): [2 maps]*

Richard Pococke was born at Southampton in 1704. He was educated by his grandfather, the Revd Isaac Milles, at his school at Highclere Rectory. In 1720 he matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He graduated BA in 1725, BCL in 1731 and DCL in 1733. In 1725 he was appointed to the precentorship of Lismore Cathedral by his uncle, Thomas Milles, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore. In 1734 he became vicar-general of his uncle's diocese. From 1733 until 1742 Pococke travelled all over Europe and the Middle East. He visited Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia, and upon his return climbed several glaciers in the Swiss Alps. The account of his tour in the Middle East was published in two parts in 1743 and 1745. The work attained great celebrity and earned Pococke a premier place among the European scientific travel writers. It was soon after translated into German, French and Dutch. In 1744 Pococke was made precentor of Waterford, and in 1745 he was given the archdeaconry of Dublin. In 1756 he was appointed Bishop of Ossory and in 1765 Bishop of Meath. In the 1740s and 1750s Pococke made several tours of England, Scotland and Ireland. He visited Scotland in 1747, 1750 and 1760. In 1747 he travelled along the east coast to Edinburgh, proceeded to Stirling, Dumbarton and Glasgow, and returned via the Ayrshire coast to Ireland. In 1750 he visited Dumfries and travelled up the River Nith to Drumlanrig Castle. In April 1760 he set out on a six-month journey during which he travelled on horseback all over Scotland. This included the Isle of Mull, Iona, the wilderness of Sutherland and the Orkney Isles. Pococke kept detailed and illustrated journals of his travels in the British Isles, which were obviously intended for publication. Although none of these journals were published during his lifetime, he had given the manuscripts to Thomas Pennant who made use of them for his accounts. Pococke was the first systematic and scientific explorer of the comparatively unknown regions of Britain. He died in 1765 at Charleville near Tullamore, Ireland.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Raumer, Friedrich von (1781-1873), German historian and traveller, *England In 1835* (London, 1836): [map]

Friedrich von Raumer was born in 1781 in Wörlitz near Dessau. He was taught at home until 1793 when he was sent to the Joachimsthal'sche Gymnasium at Berlin. On finishing school, he matriculated in May 1798 at the University of Halle for the study of law. In 1801 he moved to Göttingen. During his studies he developed a keen interest in history, which was to dominate his future life. Although he began a career in the Prussian civil service, he concentrated mainly on his historical studies. His early research focused on the Middle Ages and the 'Stauferzeit' (1125-1254). He quit the civil service in 1811 when he was appointed Professor of Staatswissenschaften at the University of Breslau (Wrocław). In 1819 he became Professor of Staatswissenschaften and History in Berlin and was elected Rector of the university in 1822. Between 1823 and 1825 his history of the Hohenstaufen was published in six volumes. The restoration of peace in 1815 enabled Raumer to begin extensive travels throughout Europe. Between 1815 and 1817 he spent several months in Italy and Rome, completing his research on the Hohenstaufen. In 1827 and 1830 Raumer visited Paris. In 1835 and 1841 Raumer visited Great Britain. In 1835 he spent most of his time in London but in August also made a short tour of Scotland. He visited Edinburgh, Stirling and Glasgow. Because of bad weather, he had to abandon several attempts to see the Trossachs and the Hebrides. Raumer spent only a week in Scotland before he boarded a ship at Glasgow for Belfast. He published his account in German in 1836. An English translation was published in the same year. Raumer's *England In 1835*, 3 vols. (London, 1836), was written in a series of letters concerning all aspects of government, public life, economy, religion and education in England and, to a lesser extent, Scotland. In Britain the work was received with considerable criticism. Raumer continued to travel to foreign countries throughout the 1840s and 1850s, including a visit to the United States of America in 1844. Next to his numerous works on history, he published accounts of most of the countries he visited on his extensive travels. He died in 1873.

See entry in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*

Ray, James (born 1700?), chronicler of the 'Forty-Five, *A Journey, Through Part of England and Scotland. Along with the Army Under the Command of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland* (London, [1746?]): [map]

James Ray was a native of Whitehaven, Cumberland. On the advance of the Jacobite army on England in the autumn of 1745, he intended to join the royal garrison at Carlisle, but the town surrendered to the rebels before he arrived. Ray followed the advance of the Jacobites to Derby and reported all the information he could obtain about them to the Duke of Cumberland. He joined Cumberland's army at Stafford on 5 January 1746. He then marched with Cumberland's army into Scotland until the decisive victory at Culloden on 16 April 1746. It is not surprising that Ray had a strong bias against the Scots, and particularly the Highlanders. Nonetheless, his *Journey, Through Part of England and Scotland. Along with the Army Under the Command of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland* (first published c. 1746) and his *Compleat History Of The Rebellion, From its first Rise, in 1745, to its total Suppression at the glorious Battle of Culloden, in April, 1746* (first published 1749) are among the most trustworthy accounts of the Jacobite uprising and the state of feeling in England and Scotland. They are also valuable accounts about life in Scotland in general, and in the Highlands in particular. Both accounts proved to be very popular and reached numerous editions in the wake of the rebellion. Ray travelled on horseback and came through Edinburgh, Stirling, Perth and Blair Atholl, where, in February 1746, he stayed in the Duke of Atholl's castle for about four weeks. He then followed the Duke of Cumberland's army along the east coast to Culloden and afterwards stayed at Inverness and Fort Augustus until September 1746 when he was commissioned back to England. Ray's *Journey* was re-edited in 1825 under the title 'Journal of an English Medical Officer who attended the Duke of Cumberland's Army, as far North as Inverness, during the time of the Rebellion', in *The Contrast: Or Scotland As It Was In The Year 1745, And Scotland In The Year 1819* (London, 1825), pp. 13-169. There is, however, no convincing evidence that James Ray served in a medical function in Cumberland's army.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Ray, John (1627-1705), English naturalist and botanist, *Memorials Of John Ray, ... With His Itineraries*, E. Lankester ed. (London, 1846): [map]

John Ray was born in 1627 at Black Notley, Essex. He attended the grammar school in nearby Braintree and in 1644 matriculated at St Catherine's Hall, Cambridge. In 1646 he moved to Trinity College. He graduated BA in 1648 and was elected a Fellow at Trinity in the following year. Until 1662 he lived as a Fellow at the college. In 1660 he published his first work, a catalogue of the plants growing around Cambridge. When he had exhausted the Cambridge area as a subject of his studies, he began to explore the rest of Britain. In August 1661 he visited Scotland. He travelled on horseback along the east coast to Edinburgh, proceeded to Stirling and Glasgow, and returned through Lanarkshire and Dumfriesshire to England. In 1662 he travelled to Wales and Cornwall with the naturalist Francis Willughby. They agreed to undertake a study of the complete natural history of living things, Ray being responsible for plants and Willughby for animals. This task was to determine his future life, but after the Restoration Ray's fortunate circumstances came to an abrupt end. He was a thorough Puritan and in 1662 lost his fellowship when he refused to take the oath that was prescribed by the Act of Uniformity. For the remainder of his life he was supported by prosperous friends while he pursued his career as a naturalist. From 1663 to 1666 he travelled widely through the Continent in order to study its flora and fauna. Back in England he published numerous works on botany and died in 1705 at Black Notley.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Charles E. Raven, *John Ray, Naturalist: His Life and Works* (2nd edn. Cambridge, 1950)

Robertson, James (died 1796), Scottish botanist, *A Naturalist in the Highlands: James Robertson His Life and Travels in Scotland 1767-1771*, D.M. Henderson and J.H. Dickson eds. (Edinburgh, 1994): [3 maps]

There is little known about James Robertson's early years. From his journals it is obvious that he did not speak Gaelic and travelled in the company of an interpreter, which suggests that he was raised in the Lowlands. He may have been from Edinburgh as there is no hint in his journals that he visited a home outside

Edinburgh. Via his paternal aunt Janet Robertson he came to the attention of John Hope, Professor of Botany at Edinburgh University. Robertson became an assistant gardener and Hope trained him in botany, making a survey of the flora and fauna of the Highlands and Islands on behalf of the Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates. Between 1767 and 1771 Robertson made altogether five journeys through the Highlands and Islands. On returning from each tour he prepared an account of his observations for the Commissioners. In 1767 he travelled along the east coast to Caithness, Sutherland and Ross-shire. In 1768 he made a tour of the west coast and Inner Hebrides. In 1769 he visited the Orkney and Shetland Isles. In 1770 he travelled once more to the Orkney Isles and continued from there to the Outer Hebrides. The account of this tour has not yet been located. In 1771 he made a tour of the central Highlands, Ross-shire and Sutherland, and returned via Glen Mor, Argyllshire and Perthshire to Edinburgh. Robertson travelled by foot and frequently left the main roads. His travels were plagued by a shortage of money since his allowance by the Commissioners does not seem to have covered his expenses. These inadequate payments may have contributed to Robertson's abandonment of his service to the Commissioners after his 1771 tour, for in early 1772 he went to sea as a surgeon's mate on an East Indiaman. He subsequently served first as an assistant surgeon and then as a surgeon in India. During these years he was in contact with Sir Joseph Banks (see entry) and Warren Hastings (see entry), who travelled through the Hebrides and Highlands in 1772 and 1787 respectively. He continued as a surgeon in India until 1788. In 1789 he returned with a small fortune to Scotland and bought the Bargarvie Estate near Cupar, Fife. However, he seems to have overspent on the estate, a new mansion and improvements. He died in 1796, having accumulated considerable debts. Robertson travelled through the Highlands and Islands when they were still largely unknown to outsiders. His journals are particularly detailed on the natural history and flora of the Highlands, but he also paid great attention to the living conditions and farming in the region.

Sacheverell, William (1664?-1715), English, Governor of the Isle of Man, *An Account Of The Isle of Man, ... With a Voyage to I-Columb-kill* (London, 1702): [map]

William Sacheverell was the son of William Sacheverell, Esq., of Barton, near Nottingham, MP and minister of William III. His father's first wife died in 1664, and William was the son of his father's second wife. It is, therefore, most likely that he was born in or shortly after 1664. There is nothing known about his early years. In August 1688 Sacheverell was part of a diving expedition searching, on behalf of the Admiralty, in the Bay of Tobermory (Mull) for the remains of the *Florida*, a sunken ship of the Spanish Armada. However, Sacheverell's hope of finding a treasure in the wreck did not materialise. During his six-week stay at Tobermory he made the journey across the Isle of Mull to Iona. His account of the latter is one of the earliest descriptions of that island. In 1692 Sacheverell became deputy Governor of the Isle of Man and from 1693 to 1694 held the office of Governor. In 1694 he was removed from office, but there is evidence that he held the seal of office until the appointment of Colonel Nicholas Sankey as his successor in 1696 when Sacheverell was appointed one of the Commissioners of Revenue. He died in 1715.

See the editor's preface to W. Sacheverell, *An Account Of The Isle Of Man*, ed. by J.G. Cumming (Publications of the Manx Society, vol. i) (Douglas, Isle of Man, 1859), pp. vii-xvi.

Salkeld, William (1671-1715), English legal writer and judge, NLS, 'Letter describing tour in Scotland c. 1700', MS. 1003, fos. 126-129:

William Salkeld was born in 1671, matriculated at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1687 and entered himself as a student of the Middle Temple in 1692. He was called to the bar in 1698 and on marrying settled in Dorset in 1700. Around that time he also travelled to Edinburgh via Berwick and Dunbar and returned by the same route. Salkeld was very biased against the Scots and reported about the tension with England following the failure of the Darien scheme. In 1713 Salkeld was appointed chief justice of the great sessions for the counties of Carmarthen, Cardigan and Pembroke. In January 1715 he became serjeant-at-law and, in spite of the change of

dynasty, presided over the Carmarthen circuit until his death in September of that year.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Schopenhauer, Johanna (1766-1838), German authoress, *A Lady Travels: Journeys In England And Scotland From The Diaries Of Johanna Schopenhauer*, R. Michaelis-Jena and W. Merson eds. (London, 1988): [map]

Johanna Schopenhauer was born at Danzig (Gdansk) in 1766. At an early age she learnt German and Polish and as a young woman was taught English and French. Her English teacher was Richard Jamieson, a Scottish minister to the English merchant community at Danzig. He also served as her tutor, and it is likely that he kindled her interest in Scotland. In 1784 she married a wealthy Danzig merchant. Her husband was much-travelled, fiercely anti-Prussian and, above all, a very keen Anglophile. Together they made several tours through much of Europe. In 1787 they visited England and London for the first time. In 1793 they moved to Hamburg when Danzig was annexed by Prussia. In 1803 Johanna Schopenhauer, her husband and her fifteen-year-old son Arthur (the famous philosopher) set out for another major tour of Europe. They visited the Low Countries, Belgium and Britain before they returned to the Continent to continue their journey through France and Austria. From London the Schopenhauers went on a tour of England and Scotland. They visited Edinburgh, travelled along the route of the small Highland tour to Glasgow and returned to England via Lanark and Moffat. They travelled through the Highlands in a hired coach. In 1805 Johanna lost her husband by what was believed by many to have been suicide. A year later she moved to Weimar, then the cultural capital of Germany, where she began a career as a biographer, travel writer and novelist. She died in Jena in 1838. Johanna Schopenhauer prepared her account of England and Scotland from her diaries more than a decade after she had visited these countries, which explains a few minor inaccuracies. Her notion of the Highlands was heavily influenced by her fervent enthusiasm for the 'Ossianic' poems.

See entry in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*

Shaw, Stebbing (1762-1802), English topographer, *A Tour, In 1787, From London, To The Western Highlands Of Scotland* (London, [1788]): [map]

Stebbing Shaw was born near Stone in Staffordshire in 1762. He was educated at Repton school and in 1780 was admitted as pensioner at Queens' College, Cambridge. He graduated BA in 1784, MA in 1787 and BD in 1796. About 1785 Shaw became tutor to Sir Robert Burdett's son, the future Sir Francis Burdett. In August and September 1787 Shaw and his seventeen-year-old pupil made a tour from London to the Highlands of Scotland. First, they travelled through Dumfriesshire and Ayrshire to Glasgow. From there they proceeded along the route of the small Highland tour to Blair Atholl, the northernmost point of their tour. They returned via Perth, Kinross, Edinburgh, Dunbar and Berwick to England. The following year Shaw anonymously published the journal of the tour, but it was received with little favour. In the 1790s Shaw successfully published several books on travel, topography and local history in England. In 1795 he was elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and in 1799 succeeded his father in the rectory of Hartshorn. He died in 1802. In 1787 Shaw and his pupil had travelled mainly by carriage, but they sometimes sent it ahead to the next major inn and made detours on horseback into the countryside.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Skrine, Henry (1755-1803), English traveller, *Three Successive Tours In The North Of England, And Great Part Of Scotland* (London, 1795): [2 maps]

Henry Skrine was born at Warleigh, Somerset, in 1755. In 1774 he entered Christ Church, Oxford, and graduated BCL in 1781. He was called to the bar in 1782. Skrine spent most of his time travelling through England, Wales and Scotland. He visited Scotland twice. In 1787 he travelled along the popular route of the small Highland tour. In 1793 he travelled along the east coast to Inverness, continued via Fort Augustus to Fort William and returned through the central Highlands to the Lowlands. He died at Walton-on-Thames in 1803.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Stoddart, John (1773-1856), English journalist, *Remarks on Local Scenery & Manners in Scotland during the Years 1799 and 1800* (London, 1801): [map]

John Stoddart was born at Salisbury in 1773. He was educated at Salisbury grammar school and matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford. He graduated BA in 1794, BCL in 1798 and DCL in 1801. In 1799 and 1800 Stoddart lived in Edinburgh and made several journeys through Scotland, in most of which he was accompanied by the watercolour painter John Claude Nattes. Initially, they intended to travel through Scotland on foot, but when this became too tedious, they bought a Highland sheltie on which they rode alternately. Stoddart's perception of the Highlands was heavily influenced by the Romantic movement and its aesthetics of picturesque scenery. He made the tour along the banks of the River Tweed in the company of Walter Scott. In 1801 Stoddart was admitted a member of the College of Advocates, and from 1803 to 1807 he was the king's and the admiralty advocate at Malta. After his return to England he practised in Doctors' Commons. From 1812 to 1816 he was a leading writer with *The Times*. After a difference with the paper in February 1817 he set up a rival daily, entitled *The New Times*. It appeared under various titles until about 1828. Around 1826 he quit *The New Times* and was appointed chief justice and justice of the Vice-Admiralty Court in Malta. In the same year he was knighted by King George IV. He stayed in Malta until 1840 and died in London in 1856.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Stuart, John (1744-1814), (4th Earl and 1st Marquess of Bute), MP and diplomat, NLS, 'Journal of the tour round the Western Islands of Scotland 1788', MS. 9587: [map]

John Stuart was born in 1744 at Mount Stuart, Bute. He was educated at Winchester and Oxford. In 1793 he was created DCL by Oxford University. From 1766 to 1776 he was MP (Tory) for Bossiney. Through his wife he acquired valuable estates near Cardiff and elsewhere in South Wales, and, in consequence, he was created Baron Cardiff of Cardiff Castle in 1766. He was envoy to Turin from 1779 to 1783 and Auditor of the Imprest from 1781 until the abolition of the office in the following year. From March to December 1783 he was ambassador to Spain, a position he held again (as Earl of Bute) in 1795-96. From 1794 until his death in 1814 he was also

Lord Lieutenant of the county of Bute. In 1794 he succeeded his mother as Baron Mount-Stuart of Wortley, and in 1796 he was created Viscount Mountjoy of the Isle of Wight, Earl of Windsor and Marquess of the county of Bute. He died in 1814 at Geneva. In August 1788 John Stuart (then Lord Mountstuart) travelled on board the revenue cutter *Royal George* round all the Hebrides. He was accompanied by Dr John Stuart, minister of Luss, Dunbartonshire. Lord Mountstuart visited Bute, Islay, Mull, Lismore, Staffa, Iona, North Uist, Lewis, Skye, Raasay, Canna, Oban and Kerrera. The manuscript also includes fragments of a journal (12 to 19 October) relating to a cruise in Loch Fyne and observations on Barra, North Uist and South Uist. The journal is particularly interesting with regard to the living conditions and the economy of the Western Isles and the planned fishing villages of the British Fisheries Society.

See entry in *Complete Peerage*

Sullivan, Richard Joseph (1752-1806), English miscellaneous writer, *Observations Made During A Tour Through Parts Of England, Scotland, And Wales* (London, 1780): [map]

Richard J. Sullivan was born in 1752, the third son of Benjamin Sullivan of Dromeragh, Co. Cork. Early in his life he was sent to India, a relative being chairman of the East India Company. On his return to Europe he travelled through England, Scotland and Wales. He visited Scotland in September 1778 and travelled along the route of the small Highland tour. He was accompanied by four gentlemen, and the party travelled in several carriages. Sullivan's notion of the Highlands was heavily influenced by his admiration for the 'Ossianic' poems. In 1785 he was elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1787 he became MP for New Romney. He was created a baronet in 1804. He died at his seat, Thames Ditton, Surrey, in 1806.

See entry Sullivan [sic], Richard Joseph in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Svedenstierna, Eric Thomas (1765-1825), Swedish ironmaster, *Svedenstierna's Tour Great Britain 1802-3: The Travel Diary of an Industrial Spy*, M.W. Flinn ed. (Newton Abbot, 1973): [map]

Eric Thomas Svedenstierna was a Swedish industrial spy and travelled in 1802-03 through England, Wales and Scotland in order to gather the latest technical and economic information on iron-making. In 1796 he was employed by the *Jernkontor* or Iron Bureau, which was the executive body of the Swedish Ironmasters' Association. He subsequently became its director of pig iron production. At the end of the eighteenth century Great Britain overtook Sweden as the main producer of iron in Europe, and new British technologies such as puddling posed a serious threat to the Swedish iron industry. Svedenstierna's mission was to gather the latest information on iron manufacture and its cost-effectiveness. In preparation for his journey he studied guidebooks carefully and identified the leading iron manufacturers. After a three-month stay in London he was provided with letters of introduction from the Swedish consul-general and from leading scientists. In March 1803 he set out for a tour of England, Wales and Scotland, where he travelled through the Lothians, Fife and Lanarkshire. He visited the Clyde Iron Works near Glasgow, but avoided the Carron Iron Works near Falkirk since visitors were generally denied access. He returned via Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire to England. In May 1803 renewed hostilities between Great Britain and France forced him to abandon his tour of England. He returned to London and took a ship to Sweden. He became the editor of the *Jernkontorets Annaler* and published several articles on steel-making. During his tour Svedenstierna was careful not to be too investigative and arouse suspicion. He did not want to offend his hosts or fellow scientists, who had provided him with letters of introduction, and often, therefore, curbed his curiosity. Svedenstierna travelled by coach. His journal was obviously written for a more general readership, nonetheless it is a valuable account of the state of the British iron industry in the early nineteenth century.

Taylor, John (1580-1653), English poet, ‘The Pennyles Pilgrimage, Or The Money-Lesse Perambulation Of John Taylor, Alias, The Kings Maiesties Water-Poet’, *All The Workes Of John Taylor The Water-Poet* (London, 1630), part i, pp. 122-144: [map]

John Taylor was born at Gloucester in 1580. He was sent to a grammar school but became, as he said, ‘mired’ in Latin accident and was apprenticed to a Thames boatman. He was subsequently pressed into the navy and saw action at Cadiz (1596) and Flores (1597). After his return to London he worked as a waterman, transporting passengers up and down the Thames. The rising number of coaches, however, made this business unprofitable, and Taylor became increasingly dependent on the earnings from his writings. He called himself ‘the Water Poet’ and in the late 1610s and 1620s made a series of journeys, some of them on England’s waterways, which he described in whimsical poems. He announced his adventurous travels in advance in order to attract a sufficient number of subscribers for the account. In 1616 Taylor visited the Continent and published the account of his wanderings in the following year. On 14 July 1618, he set out from London for a journey on foot to Edinburgh without taking any money in his pocket, nor ‘begging, borrowing, or asking meat, drink, or lodging’. Instead, he tried to live entirely from the hospitality of the local nobility. This adventure was probably an attempt to outdo the dramatist Ben Jonson who, about a week or two earlier, had also left London on foot for Edinburgh. Taylor arrived at Edinburgh on 13 August and then proceeded via Stirling, Perth, Forfar and Brechin to the Highlands. In the Braes of Mar he joined the Earl of Mar and other leading Scottish noblemen in a huge hunt that lasted for several days. Taylor spent altogether 35 days hunting and travelling, mainly in the Braes of Mar and Badenoch. Upon his return to Edinburgh (by way of Forres, Elgin, Huntly, Kincardine o’ Neil, Dundee and Queensferry) he met Ben Jonson in Leith. Taylor returned to England on 30 September. He was one of the earliest visitors to Scotland who had penetrated deep into the Highlands. His account of the Highlanders was very positive, which was unusual for his time. Before he set out, he had obtained 1,600 names for his account of the tour, but more than half of the subscribers refused to pay on the ground that Taylor had not observed the conditions of the journey. In 1620 Taylor travelled to Prague where he was entertained by the queen of Bohemia. On the

outbreak of the English civil war he moved to Oxford, where he wrote royalist pamphlets. After the surrender of the city in 1645, he returned to London and kept a public house until his death in 1653.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Taylor, Joseph, English barrister, *A Journey To Edenborough In Scotland*, W. Cowan ed. (Edinburgh, 1903): [map]

There is little known about Joseph Taylor beyond that he was a barrister of the Inner Temple. Its records include a Joseph Taylor being admitted 'by certificate from the Middle Temple' in 1701. Taylor travelled on horseback through Scotland in 1705, accompanied by two friends. They set out from London and reached Berwick-upon-Tweed on 31 August. The next day they continued their journey along the coast and reached Edinburgh, where they took quarters for a week. On 8 September they returned via Linton, Bield and Moffat to Carlisle and ultimately London. Taylor visited Edinburgh at a time of increased Anglo-Scottish tensions and was very prejudiced against the Scots.

Thomson, William (1746-1817), (pseudonym Newte, Thomas), Scottish miscellaneous writer, *A Tour In England And Scotland, In 1785* (London, 1788), *Prospects And Observations; On A Tour In England And Scotland: Natural, Oeconomical, And Literary* (London, 1791): [map]

William Thomson was born in the parish of Forteviot, Perthshire, in 1746. He was educated at the parish school, Perth grammar school and St Andrews University. He became librarian to Thomas Hay, 8th Earl of Kinnoull, at Dupplin Castle, Perthshire. Encouraged by the earl, Thomson completed his theological studies at St Andrews and Edinburgh and was ordained in 1776 as assistant to James Porteous, minister of Monzievaird, Perthshire. Because of the complaints of his parishioners, he resigned in 1778 and settled in London as a man of letters. Over the next 35 years he wrote and edited numerous works, especially on history and travel. In the summer of 1785 Thomson made an extensive journey of the Highlands. He travelled from Glasgow through Argyll to Oban, continued north along Glen Mor to Inverness and returned along the east coast to Edinburgh. He published an anonymous account of his tour in

1788, and a second enlarged edition was published under the pseudonym 'Thomas Newte' in 1791. In 1793 Thomson published J.L. Buchanan's (see entry) *Travels In The Western Hebrides*, having made unauthorised alterations to the text, which caused a bitter dispute between them. Thomson died in London in 1817.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Thoresby, Ralph (1658-1725), Yorkshire antiquary and topographer, *Tours In Scotland 1677 & 1681* By Thomas Kirk And Ralph Thoresby, P. Hume Brown ed. (Edinburgh, 1892): [map]

Ralph Thoresby was born in 1658, the second son of John Thoresby, a wealthy Leeds wool and cloth merchant. He was educated at Leeds grammar school. In 1677 he was sent to London to acquire mercantile knowledge in the household of a relative, John Dickenson, a cloth merchant of Leeds and London. In February 1678 he returned to Leeds, where he remained until July before being despatched to Rotterdam to continue his mercantile training and to learn Dutch and French. A serious form of ague compelled him to return to Leeds in December 1678. On the death of his father in 1679 he carried on his wool and cloth business. From his youth Thoresby had had a particular interest in antiquarian studies, and in September 1681 he visited Scotland. He crossed the border at Berwick-upon-Tweed and travelled along the east coast to Edinburgh. From there he made a tour to Stirling, Glasgow and Falkirk. After another stay in Edinburgh he returned via Selkirk and Hawick to England. Thoresby's tour lasted only eleven days, and his account is comparatively concise and superficial, having prepared it from his notes many years after his return to England. Increasingly, from the 1680s onwards, Thoresby made a reputation as an antiquary and collector of coins and medals. At Bishop Edmund Gibson's request he revised the account of the West Riding of Yorkshire in Camden's *Britannia*. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1697, his qualifications being papers on botanical subjects and northern Roman remains. Thoresby finally withdrew from business in 1705 and devoted himself mainly to the extension of his museum, his collection of antiques and the composition of his topographical work *Ducatus Leodiensis*, which was finally published in London in 1715. He also wrote a history of the Church in Leeds, which was published under the title *Vicaria Leodiensis*

(London, 1724). Thoresby died in 1725. In his early life he had strong Puritan leanings and zealously attended nonconformist gatherings. In 1699, after long consideration and much correspondence with his friend John Sharp (1645-1714), Archbishop of York, he publicly conformed to the Church of England. Thoresby was a close friend of Thomas Kirk(e) (see entry) who had visited Scotland in 1677. After Kirk's death in 1706 the private journal of his tour to Scotland passed into the hands of Thoresby. Thoresby intended to write a biography of his friend, but he died before completing this task. Among Thoresby's correspondents were also the naturalist John Ray (see entry), the antiquary Thomas Hearne and the nonconformist divine Dr Edmund Calamy (see entry).

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Daniel H. Atkinson, *Ralph Thoresby, the Topographer; His Town and Times*, 2 vols. (Leeds, 1885)

Thornhill of Diddington, George, English traveller, Huntingdon County Record Office, 'Diary of travel: Scotland 30th June 1760', MS. TH148/5/274: [map]

There is little known about George Thornhill of Diddington, the author of this manuscript tour of Scotland in July and August 1760. The main objective of his visit seems to have been tourism. He travelled on horseback and penetrated deep into the Highlands at a time when the north of Scotland was still unknown to the outside world. He travelled along the east coast by way of Edinburgh and Aberdeen to Inverness, where he hired a servant, a guide and four more horses. He then proceeded to John o' Groats on the Pentland Firth. After his return to Inverness he continued his tour along the Wade roads to Dunkeld by way of Fort Augustus, Dalwhinnie and Blair Atholl. At Dunkeld he moved westward along the shores of Loch Tay to Inveraray, Dumbarton and Glasgow. He returned south through Lanarkshire and Dumfriesshire. Thornhill was very grateful for the hospitality of the gentlemen in Sutherland and Caithness since there were, according to his account, no inns to accommodate and entertain foreign travellers.

Thornton, Thomas (1757-1823), English sportsman, *A Sporting Tour Through The Northern Parts Of England, And Great Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland* (London, 1804): [map]

Thomas Thornton was born in London and educated at the Charterhouse and Glasgow University. His father, Colonel William Thornton, commissioned him into his regiment, and Thomas Thornton was later also appointed colonel of the West York Militia. Thornton's main interest, however, lay in falconry and field sports. Between 1782 and 1789 he seems to have been in Scotland almost every year. His *Sporting Tour Through The Northern Parts Of England, And Great Part Of The Highlands Of Scotland* (London, 1804) was culled from several Highland tours, particularly in the years 1783 and 1784. In 1794 he was court-martialled and resigned his commission the following year. After falling out with the government owing to his Francophile views, he dedicated his later years entirely to falconry and hunting, mainly in Yorkshire and Wiltshire. In 1802 he set out for a sporting tour of France. He sold his estates in England and in 1815 moved to France where he bought an estate. He died in Paris in 1823. Thornton's *Sporting Tour* dealt mainly with hawking, shooting and fishing, and established the Highlands as a prime destination for sportsmen. Thornton travelled mainly by carriage or horseback.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Michael Brander, *Soho for the Colonel: On the Trail of Colonel Thornton* (London, 1961)

Topham, Edward (1751-1820), English journalist and playwright, *Letters From Edinburgh: Written in the Years 1774 and 1775* (London, 1776):

Edward Topham was born in 1751 and was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, but left without taking a degree. After leaving the university he travelled on the Continent for eighteen months. In the autumn of 1774 he set out for Scotland in company with his old school-fellow Sir Paul Jodrell. They arrived in Edinburgh in early November 1774 and stayed in the Scottish capital until the end of May 1775. During his time at Edinburgh Topham wrote a series of 46 letters to various friends in England in which he reported about life in that city and commented on food and drink, amusement and entertainment, customs and laws, trade, the Kirk, dress, the

Scots language, education, hospitality and superstition. His letters provide a detailed picture of life in the Scottish capital at the heyday of the Scottish Enlightenment. Topham also reported on the hostile reception of Dr Samuel Johnson's (see entry) account of Scotland by the people of Edinburgh. Topham returned to England in June 1775 and published his letters in the following year. He settled in London and in 1776 purchased a commission in the first regiment of Life Guards. He left the army in the mid-1780s and lived the life of an eccentric. He wrote several plays and in 1787 started the daily newspaper *The World*, which specialised in reports about the private life of celebrities and brought him into trouble with the law. He disposed of the paper in 1792 and soon after retired with his three daughters to a country life in Yorkshire. He died at Doncaster in 1820. His eccentric lifestyle often made him the object of satire and caricature.

See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*

Further reading: Maurice Lindsay, *The Discovery of Scotland* (London, 1979), pp. 171-186.

Walker, John (?) (died c. 1711), English traveller, Somerset Record Office, Taunton, 'A journey taken from London into Scotland, Anno 1674', MS. DD/WHb3087: [map]

This manuscript tour is ascribed to John Walker, but there is little known about the author. In August 1674 he set out for a tour of Scotland and travelled on horseback to Edinburgh. He proceeded by way of Queensferry to Perth, Dunblane, Stirling, Glasgow, Hamilton, Douglas, Moffat and Carlisle. The motivation for his visit seems to have been tourism. The commonplace book of John Walker (?) also contains the journals of a journey to the Netherlands in 1671, a tour of Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk in 1672, a voyage to Paris by way of Calais in 1673, a Grand Tour of the Continent in 1675, and a tour of Wales in 1676. It also includes several manuscripts of speeches made (or to be made) in the House of Lords. On the reverse of the volume are copies of various documents relating chiefly to the office of Usher of the Exchequer and addresses and replies to parliament relating to the time of King Charles I and Charles II. The author's extensive travels (perhaps as part of his education) and his

connection to parliament and the House of Lords suggest that he was from a noble or landed background.

Walker, John (1731-1803), Scottish minister and naturalist, *The Rev. Dr. John Walker's Report On The Hebrides of 1764 and 1771*, M.M. McKay ed. (Edinburgh, 1980):

John Walker was born in 1731 in the Canongate, Edinburgh, where his father was rector of the local school. From there he went to Edinburgh University where he studied for the ministry. During his studies he also attended the lectures of Professor William Cullen, who introduced him to chemistry, botany, agriculture, geology and mineralogy. Walker was licensed to preach in 1754 and in 1758 was ordained minister of Glencorse, near Edinburgh. There he met the agricultural improver Henry Home, Lord Kames, who also served as a member of the Board of the Annexed Estates. Home became a lifelong friend of Walker and introduced him to many leading European scientists of his time. In 1762 Walker became minister of Moffat, a position he held until 1783 when he was transferred to the parish of Colinton, near Edinburgh. From the early 1760s Walker was held in great repute for his knowledge of natural history, and in 1764 he received a commission from the Commissioners for the Annexed Estates to make a survey of the Hebrides. At the same time he was also asked by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and by the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) to prepare a report on the state of religion and education in the Highlands and Islands. In 1764 Walker travelled extensively on foot all over the Hebrides and in 1765 submitted his reports to the General Assembly (NAS, J. Walker, 'Report concerning the state of the Highlands and Islands', CH1/1/55, fos. 590-628) and the SSPCK. He made another journey through the Hebrides in 1771 and visited those islands that he had missed out in 1764. In 1765 he received the honorary degrees of MD from Glasgow University and DD from Edinburgh University. In 1779 Walker succeeded Dr Ramsay as second Regius Professor of Natural History at Edinburgh, while retaining his clerical post at Moffat. Walker became a leading figure of the Edinburgh Enlightenment and scientific life. He was a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Natural History Society of Edinburgh, the Highland Society and the Agricultural Society of

Edinburgh. Walker also lectured on agriculture. Encouraged by the newly established Board of Agriculture, he wrote *An Economical History Of The Hebrides And Highlands Of Scotland* (2 vols.), which was posthumously published in Edinburgh in 1808. In 1790 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. John Walker died in Edinburgh on 31 December 1803 and was buried in the Canongate churchyard.

See entries in *Dictionary of National Biography* and *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*

Walker, Patrick (died 1837), advocate, NLS, ‘Journals of Tours through Scotland with Notes Descriptive and Historical’, Adv. MSS. 20.5.1-3: [map]

Sir Patrick Walker of Coates was the second son of William Walker of Coates. He was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates on 5 June 1798. He became Usher of the White Rod in 1806, was knighted on 28 July 1814, and died unmarried on 3 October 1837 at Drumsheugh, near Edinburgh. On 24 July 1797, Walker set out from Edinburgh and travelled via Falkirk, Glasgow, Kilmarnock, Irvine and Saltcoats to Brodick on the Isle of Arran. He stayed from 26 July until 4 September on Arran, made several excursions into the interior and walked around the whole island. He afterwards returned via Rothesay on Bute, Rosneath, Gourock, Greenock, Port Glasgow, Renfrew and Paisley to Glasgow. The journal ends on 13 September at Edinburgh. The journal is particularly detailed on the farming and geology of Arran as well as the living conditions and the customs and manners of its people.

See entry in Francis J. Grant (ed.), *The Faculty Of Advocates In Scotland 1532-1943* (Scottish Record Society) (Edinburgh, 1944)

Wedel, Lupold von (1544-1615), German knight errant and traveller, ‘Journey Through England And Scotland Made By Lupold Von Wedel In The Years 1584 And 1585’, *Transactions Of The Royal Historical Society*, new series, vol. ix (1895), pp. 223-270: [map]

Lupold von Wedel was born in 1544 on his father’s estate at Kremzow, Pomerania. On the death of his father in 1552 he was sent to school at Stargard but left shortly afterwards and entered as a page in the service of Count Volrad von Mansfeld. In the following years he accompanied his master on numerous tours all over Germany. His

service to Count Mansfeld undoubtedly kindled his restless desire for travelling and visiting foreign countries. From 1561 to 1606 Wedel spent most of his time either travelling or fighting in various wars all over Europe. In 1578-79 he visited Egypt and the Holy Land and in 1580-81 Spain and Portugal. In 1583-84 he was engaged in the war of Cologne. In August 1584 he set out from Flushing, in the Low Countries, for a tour of England and Scotland. After a short stay in London he took the road for Scotland. Wedel travelled on horseback and was accompanied by six German compatriots, only one of whom spoke English. He travelled along the east coast to Berwick-upon-Tweed, progressed to Dunbar, visited the Bass Rock, and finally arrived in Edinburgh. After a short stay he set out for Perth where he observed King James VI at worship. He afterwards returned to Edinburgh, spent another week in the capital and then returned along the east coast to London. He spent the following winter in the English capital and in late April 1585 returned to Germany. In 1591-92 he fought for the French Protestant army against the Catholic League, and in 1592-93 he fought for the town of Strasbourg against the Duke of Lorraine. From 1593 to 1606 he travelled all over Germany. In 1606 he retired to his estate at Kremzow where he died in 1615. Wedel was a knight errant and belonged more to the late medieval world of chivalry than to the age of Humanism.

See entry in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*

Willis, R.L., English traveller, *Journal Of A Tour From London To Elgin Made About 1790 (Edinburgh, 1897): [map]*

There is little known about R.L. Willis, the author of *Journal Of A Tour From London To Elgin Made About 1790: In Company With Mr. Brodie, Younger Brother Of Brodie Of Brodie* (Edinburgh, 1897). R.L. Willis was the son of a deputy governor of the Turkey Company and the great- or great-great-grandson of Sir Richard Willis, secretary to King Charles I and 'Captain-General' of the counties of Lincoln, Rutland, and Northampton. (See p. 13 of the journal.) He travelled in the company of one of the younger brothers of the Laird of Brodie. Brodie House in Moray was their eventual destination. The journey took place in late June and July of 1793. From London to Perth Willis and Brodie travelled mainly on horseback. From Perth to Aviemore they took the post-chaise. At Aviemore they were met by friends

of Brodie and continued their journey on horseback. From Brodie House they made excursions to Elgin, Fort George and Pluscarden Abbey. The journal contains several references to William Gilpin (see entry). The original manuscript is NLS, R.L. Willis, 'Late Eighteenth Century Manuscript Journal of a tour from London to Elgin', Acc. 8211.

Wood, John, NLS, 'Journal of a Jaunt to the Island of Mull in the month of October 1801', MS. 3038: [map]

The author of this journal was Mr John Wood, Easter Fossoway, Kinross-shire. He set out from Kinross on 15 October 1801 in a covered gig and was accompanied by two travelling companions, a Mr Rennie and a Mr Thomson. The party travelled via Stirling, Tyndrum and Bonawe to Oban, where they arrived on 18 October. From there they crossed to the Isle of Mull where they stayed for about a week, mainly at Torloisk and Gruline. They returned via Oban, Inveraray, Dumbarton, Glasgow and Stirling to Kinross, where the journal ends on 29 October. The journal is particularly detailed on the methods of farming on the mainland and on Mull.

A full description of the journal is given in the *Scotsman*, 4 April 1905, page 6.

Wordsworth, Dorothy (1771-1855), English poetess, *Recollections Of A Tour Made In Scotland A.D. 1803*, J.C. Shairp ed. (3rd edn. Edinburgh, 1894): [map]

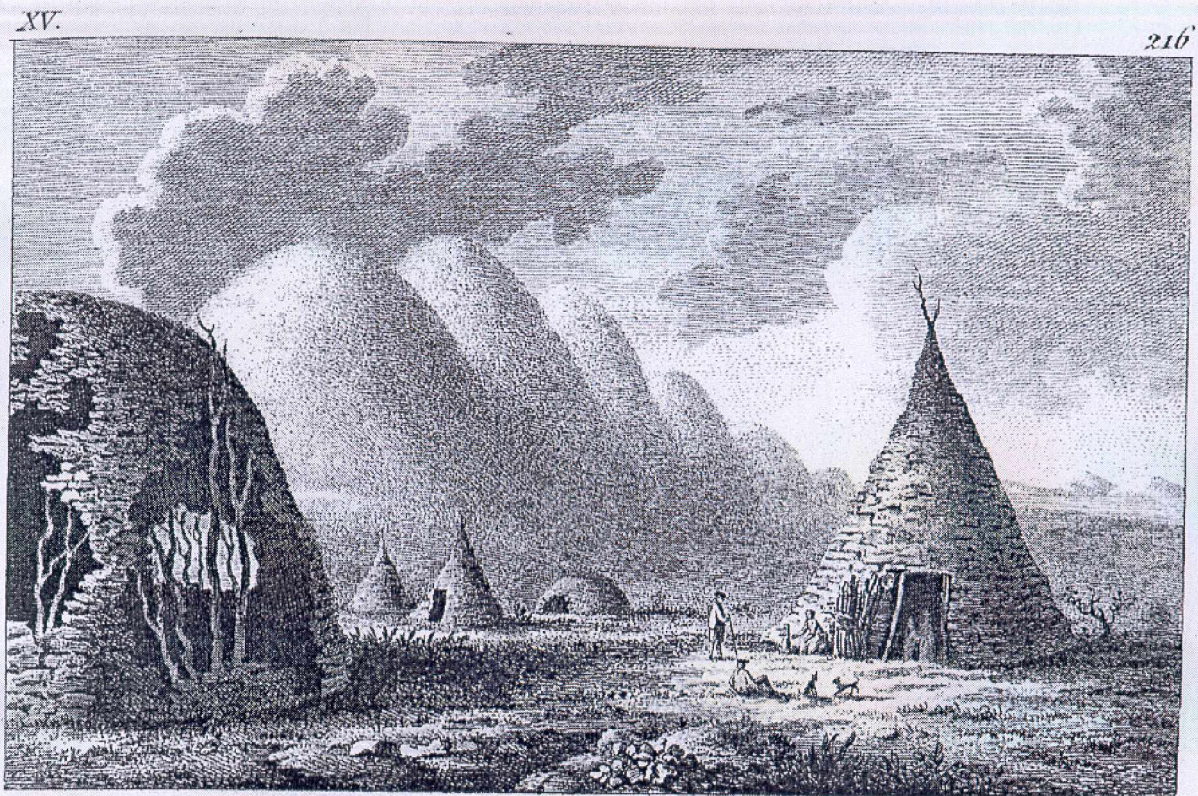
Dorothy Wordsworth was born in 1771 at Cockermouth, Cumberland. After the early loss of both parents she was brought up by a cousin on her mother's side, Mrs Threlkeld, who lived in Halifax. Her parents' early death bound Dorothy to her brothers John and especially William, in whose household she lived for most of her life. In December 1799 Dorothy and William moved to Dove Cottage in Grasmere, Westmorland. From there, in August 1803, Dorothy, William and their close friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge set out for a six-week tour of Scotland. For Dorothy and Coleridge it was their first visit to Scotland, William seems to have already visited it in 1801. The party travelled in an 'outlandish Irish car', drawn by a single horse. First, they travelled through Dumfriesshire and Lanarkshire to Glasgow. Then they proceeded to Loch Lomond where Coleridge left them owing to illness. Dorothy and William continued their tour through Argyllshire and returned via Glen Coe to the

route of the small Highland tour. On their way back (via Loch Tay, Dunkeld, Crieff and Callander) they made a detour to the Trossachs. They returned via Edinburgh and the Borders to England. Dorothy's journal of the tour was her only work ever written for publication, although it was not given to the public until 1874. In the 1810s and 1820s she made further tours in Cumberland and Westmorland (1805, 1818), the Continent (1820), Scotland (1822) and the Isle of Man (1828). Dorothy spent the remainder of her life at Grasmere, unmarried and keeping house for her brother. She died at Rydal Mount, Cumberland, in 1855, having survived her brother by nearly five years.

See entry in *Encyclopedia of British Women Writers*, ed. by P. and J. Schlueter (revised and expanded edn. New Brunswick, 1998)

Appendix 2

Pennant, T., *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII*, part i (Chester, 1774), plate XV, opposite p. 216.



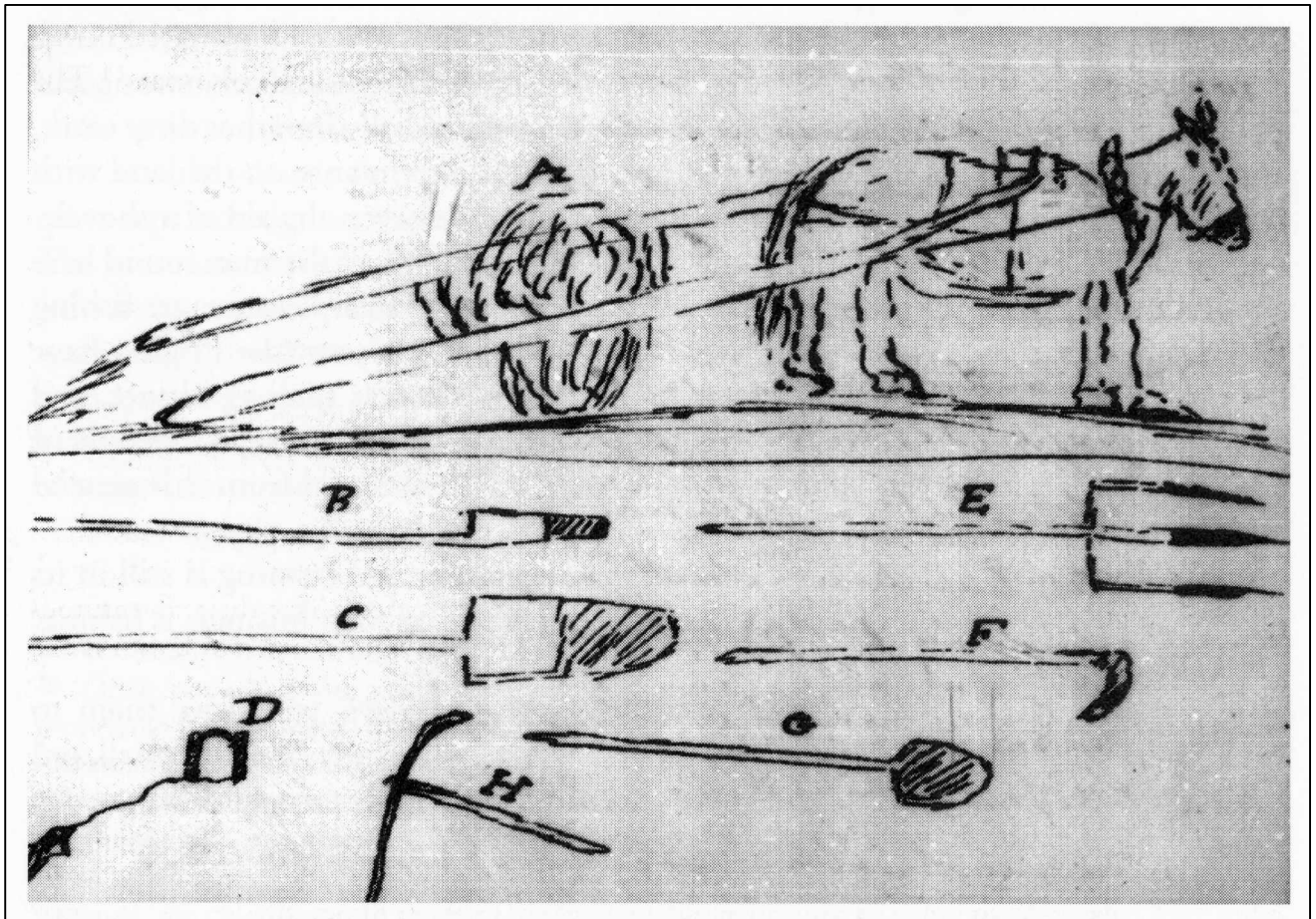
Sheelins in JURA and a distant View of the Paps.



A Cottage in ILAY.

Appendix 3

La Rochefoucauld, A. de, *To the Highlands in 1786: The Inquisitive Journey Of A Young French Aristocrat*, ed. by N. Scarfe (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 171.



‘The landscape is generally wild, with very little wood. It is quite well peopled and poor, having small holdings; the people living in awful houses, yet with their pitiful plots cleared all round them. On the next page I’ve drawn the ordinary tools they make use of. The cart, a sort of sledge, as you see, is merely two wooden poles, touching the ground and without wheels, on which they have fixed a large basket (A). The tool (B) is for clearing the ground or cutting turf. This (C) is their spade. The fork (E) is very large, as in my sketch. (F) is the mattock and (D) is the bridle [and bit] that they harness their horses with. All the farm-tools are half-wood and half-iron. The reason for these carts is the steepness of the slopes so that they are obliged to put post-nails (*crampons*) at least an inch long in the horses’ front shoes, and not to shoe their back feet, so that they don’t slide.’

Appendix 4

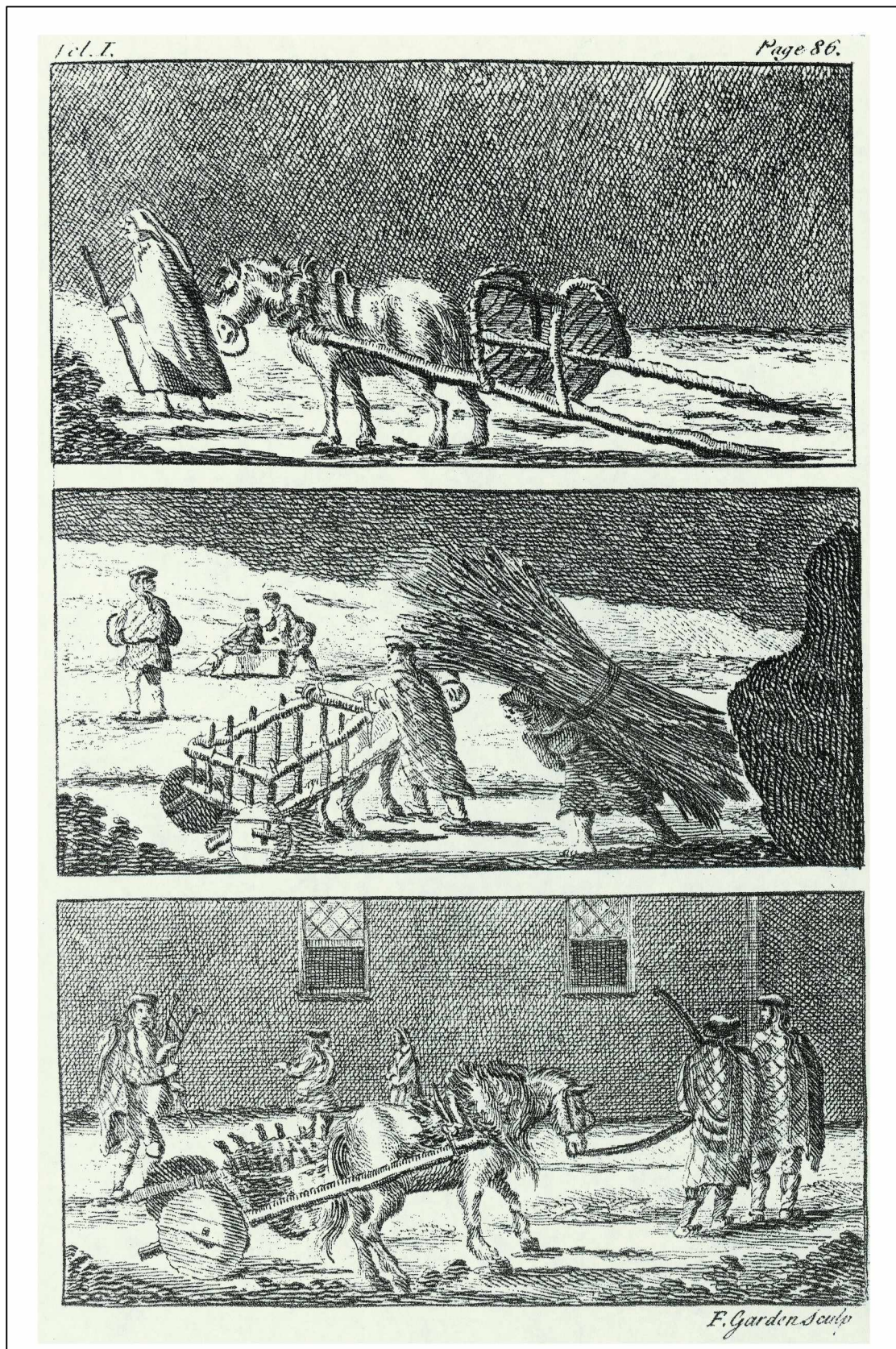
(artist: Moses Griffith)

Pennant, T., *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII*, part i (Chester, 1774), plate XXXIV, opposite p. 286.



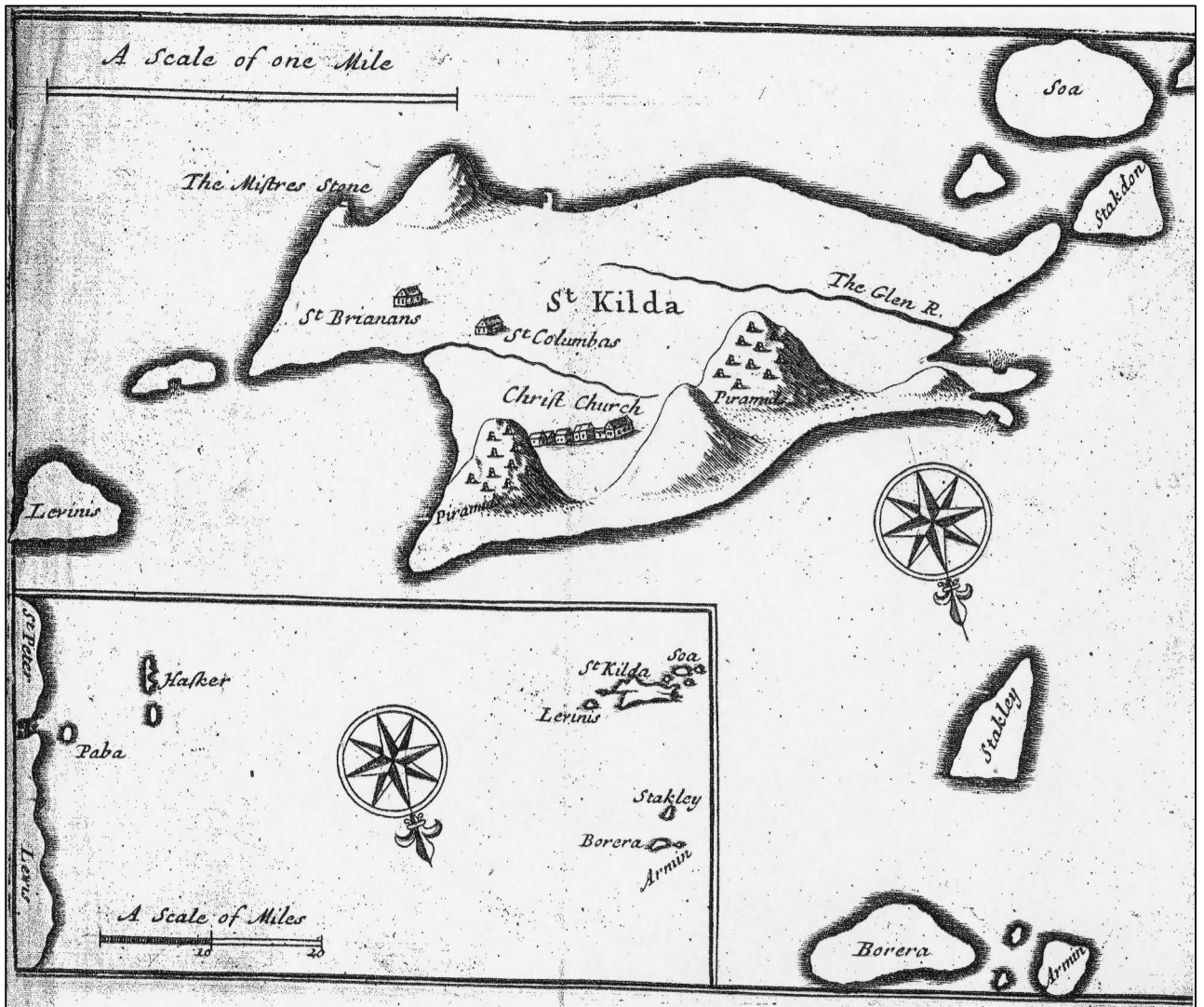
Appendix 5

Burt, E., *Letters From A Gentleman in the North of Scotland To His Friend in London* (1st edn. London, 1754), vol. i, opposite p. 86.



Appendix 6

Martin, M., *A Late Voyage To St. Kilda, The Remotest of all the Hebrides, Or Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1698), map opposite title page



Appendix 7.1.

Pennant, T., *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII*, part ii (London, 1776), p. 467.

| A P P E N D I X. | | | | | | | 467 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|-----|
| ACCOMPT of LINEN CLOTH stamped in SCOTLAND, | | | | | | | |
| From 1st Nov. 1727 to 1st Nov. 1728; and | | | | From 1st Nov. 1770 to 1st Nov. 1771. | | | |
| Shires. | Yards. | Value. | Price per Yard at a Medium. | Yards. | Value. | Price per Yard at a Medium. | |
| <i>Aberdeen</i> - | 41.040 $\frac{2}{8}$ | 1.539 0 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ | - - | 198.177 | 14.716 1 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1 5 $\frac{9}{2}$ | |
| <i>Air</i> - | 26.699 $\frac{4}{8}$ | 2.086 17 2 | - - | 193.413 | 10.530 1 8 | 1 1 | |
| <i>Argyle</i> - | 432 | 32 8 0 | - - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Banff</i> - | 101.618 | 3.810 13 6 | - - | 54.385 | 3.132 9 0 | 1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Berwick</i> - | 9.293 | 365 16 1 | - - | 56.129 | 5.645 4 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Bute</i> - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Caithness</i> - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Clackmannan</i> - | 2.895 | 240 10 2 | - - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Cromarty</i> - | - | - | - | 5.591 | 187 7 0 | 0 8 | |
| <i>Dumbarton</i> - | 66.027 | 2.356 8 6 | - - | 173.892 | 11.618 17 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 4 | |
| <i>Dumfries</i> - | 3.002 | 152 13 8 | - - | 43.167 | 2.134 8 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 0 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Edinburgh</i> - | 747 | 198 17 0 | - - | 214.834 | 19.487 12 0 | 1 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Elgin</i> - | 1.254 | 47 12 6 | - - | 63.676 | 2.344 8 4 | 0 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Fyffe</i> - | 361.985 $\frac{6}{8}$ | 30.175 10 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ | - - | 1.885.622 | 72.138 3 2 | 0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Forfar</i> - | 595.821 $\frac{4}{8}$ | 14.733 13 0 $\frac{5}{8}$ | - - | 5.700.851 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 147.456 19 3 | 0 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Hadinton</i> - | 363 | 18 3 0 | - - | 111.835 | 10.838 6 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Inverness</i> - | 10.696 | 401 2 0 | - - | 223.798 | 6.425 5 2 | 0 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Kincairdine</i> - | 27.885 $\frac{5}{8}$ | 1.045 14 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ | - - | 118.628 | 4.030 3 2 | 0 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ | |
| <i>Kinross</i> - | 53.921 | 2.906 19 0 | - - | 79.450 | 2.852 3 1 | 0 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Kirkcudbright</i> - | - | - | - | 1.302 | 114 19 10 | 1 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Lanerk</i> - | 272.658 $\frac{5}{8}$ | 9.968 0 3 | - - | 2.019.782 | 172.347 12 9 | 1 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Linlithgow</i> - | 6.353 | 476 9 6 | - - | 2.204 | 188 4 1 | 1 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Nairne</i> - | - | - | - | 14.734 | 852 12 8 | 1 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Orkney</i> - | - | - | - | 21.088 | 2.257 12 5 | 1 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Peebles</i> - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Perth</i> - | 477.743 $\frac{5}{8}$ | 23.955 0 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ | - - | 1.674.717 | 66.153 6 3 | 0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Renfrew</i> - | 85.527 $\frac{3}{8}$ | 6.852 14 9 | - - | 684.557 | 70.177 9 6 | 2 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Ross</i> - | 10.844 | 402 6 6 | - - | 10.145 | 410 9 4 | 0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Roxburgh</i> - | 15.822 $\frac{6}{8}$ | 914 16 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ | - - | 55.625 | 3.379 10 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Selkirk</i> - | 8.732 $\frac{4}{8}$ | 436 12 6 | - - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Stirling</i> - | 2.548 $\frac{1}{8}$ | 191 2 9 | - - | 47.956 | 2.278 15 0 | 0 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| <i>Sutherland</i> - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| <i>Wigton</i> - | 67 | 3 7 0 | - - | 16.996 | 691 0 5 | 0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ | |
| Total | 2.183.978 | 103.312 9 3 | 0 11 $\frac{4}{8}$ | 13.672.548 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 632.389 3 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | |

Appendix 7.2.

Knox, J., *A View Of The British Empire, More Especially Scotland* (3rd edn. London, 1785), vol. i, pp. 82-83.

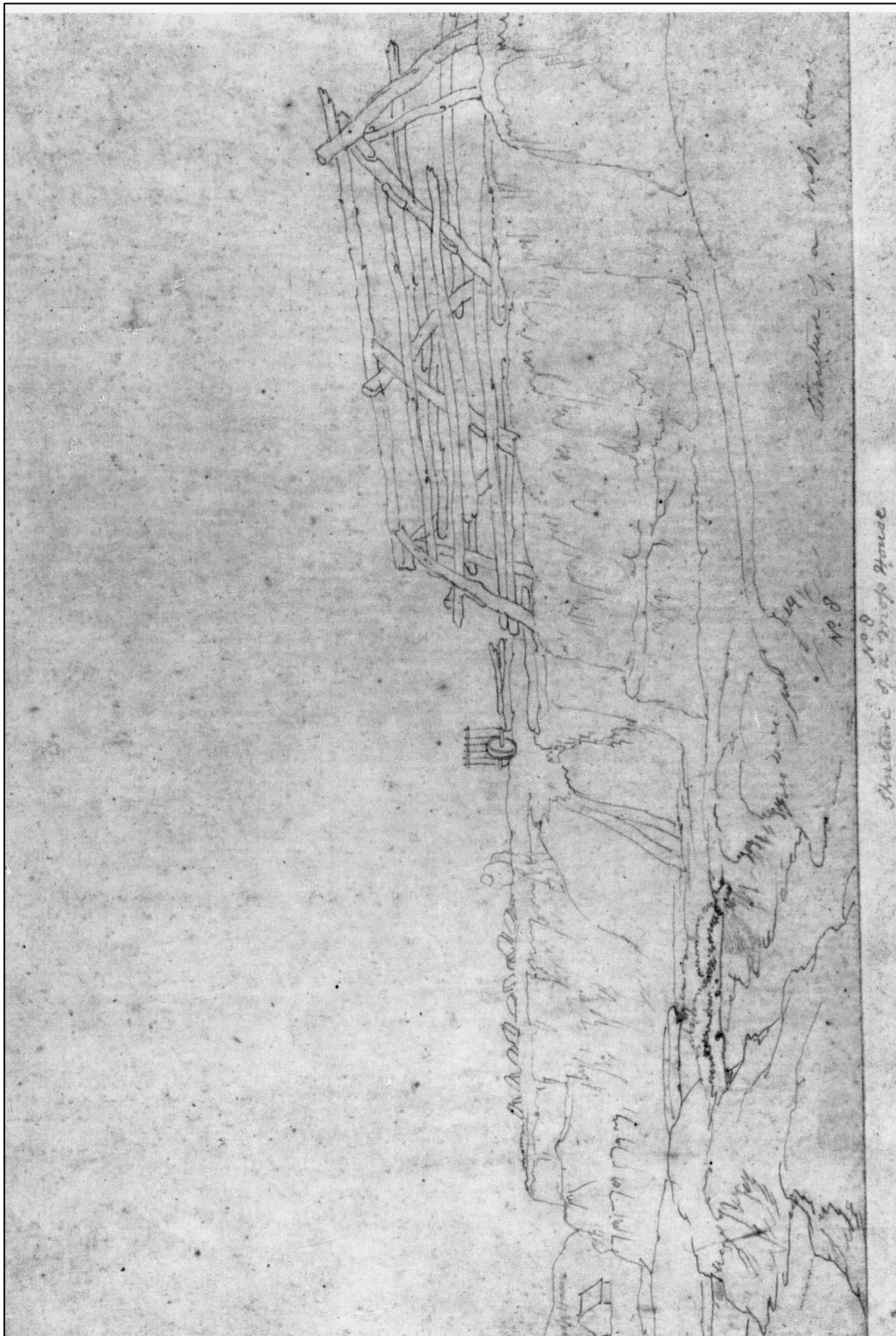
| ANNALS OF SCOTLAND. 83 | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------|----|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| * Account of linen cloth stamped in Scotland, from the first of November, 1781, to the 1st of November, 1782, distinguishing of | | | | | | |
| the quantity, value and price per yard, at a medium, in each shire; and likewise the total quantity, total value, and price per yard, at a medium, in Scotland. | | | | | | |
| Shires. | Yards. | Value. | | | Price per yard at a medium. | |
| | | £. | s. | d. | s. | d. |
| Aberdeen | 158,032 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 13,631 | 19 | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Air | 63,490 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 3,716 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| *Argyle | 4,666 | 282 | 4 | | 1 | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Banff | 41,354 | 2,875 | 13 | 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| *Bute and Arran | | | | | | |
| Berwick | 24,263 | 1,593 | 13 | 8 | 1 | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| *Caithness | 1,525 | 58 | 1 | $\frac{1}{2}$ | | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Clackmannan | | | | | | |
| *Cromarty | 4,365 | 163 | 13 | 9 | | 9 |
| Dumfries | 24,804 | 1,137 | 17 | 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | 11 |
| Dunbarton | 118,798 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 7,840 | 7 | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | 3 $\frac{10}{12}$ |
| Edinburgh | 180,120 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 27,229 | 8 | 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 3 | 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ |
| Elgin | 49,671 | 1,802 | 10 | 6 | | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Fife | 2,300,739 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 90,303 | 15 | 8 | | 9 $\frac{2}{12}$ |
| Forfar | 6,742,387 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 177,105 | | 8 | | 6 $\frac{2}{12}$ |
| Haddington | 27,500 | 1,562 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 1 $\frac{7}{12}$ |
| *Inverness | 292,509 | 8,601 | 11 | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | 7 |
| Kincardine | 104,046 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 4,084 | 2 | 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | 9 $\frac{5}{12}$ |
| Kinross | 87,411 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 4,075 | 18 | 5 | | 11 $\frac{1}{12}$ |
| Kirkcudbright | 2,256 | 201 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 7 $\frac{4}{12}$ |
| Lanerk | 1,571,798 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 163,577 | 11 | 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 2 | 1 $\frac{3}{12}$ |
| Linlithgow | 5,286 | 460 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 8 $\frac{1}{12}$ |
| *Nairn | 10,468 | 641 | 18 | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | 2 $\frac{1}{12}$ |
| Orkney | 18,294 | 1,858 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 $\frac{1}{12}$ |
| Peebles | | | | | | |
| Perth | 1,699,682 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 81,195 | 4 | 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | 11 $\frac{5}{12}$ |
| Renfrew | 1,577,451 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 166,637 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 $\frac{4}{12}$ |
| *Ross | 24,020 | 827 | 12 | 2 | | 8 $\frac{3}{12}$ |
| Roxburgh | 44,698 | 3,416 | 13 | 7 | 1 | 6 $\frac{3}{12}$ |
| Selkirk | | | | | | |
| Stirling | 95,922 | 7,354 | 14 | 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | 6 $\frac{4}{12}$ |
| *Sutherland | 725 | 36 | 5 | | 1 | |
| Wigton | 20,459 | 827 | 19 | 6 | | 9 $\frac{8}{12}$ |
| Total stamped in Scotland | 15,348,744 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 775,100 | 7 | 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ | | |
| Do. from Nov. 1, 1782, to | | | | | | |
| Nov. 1, 1783. | 17,074,777 | 866,983 | 10 | 6 | | |

Appendix 8.1.

Edinburgh Central Library,

Farington, J., 'Tour In Scotland July To September 1792 By Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA
1861.792

sketch no. 8 'Structure of a moss House'

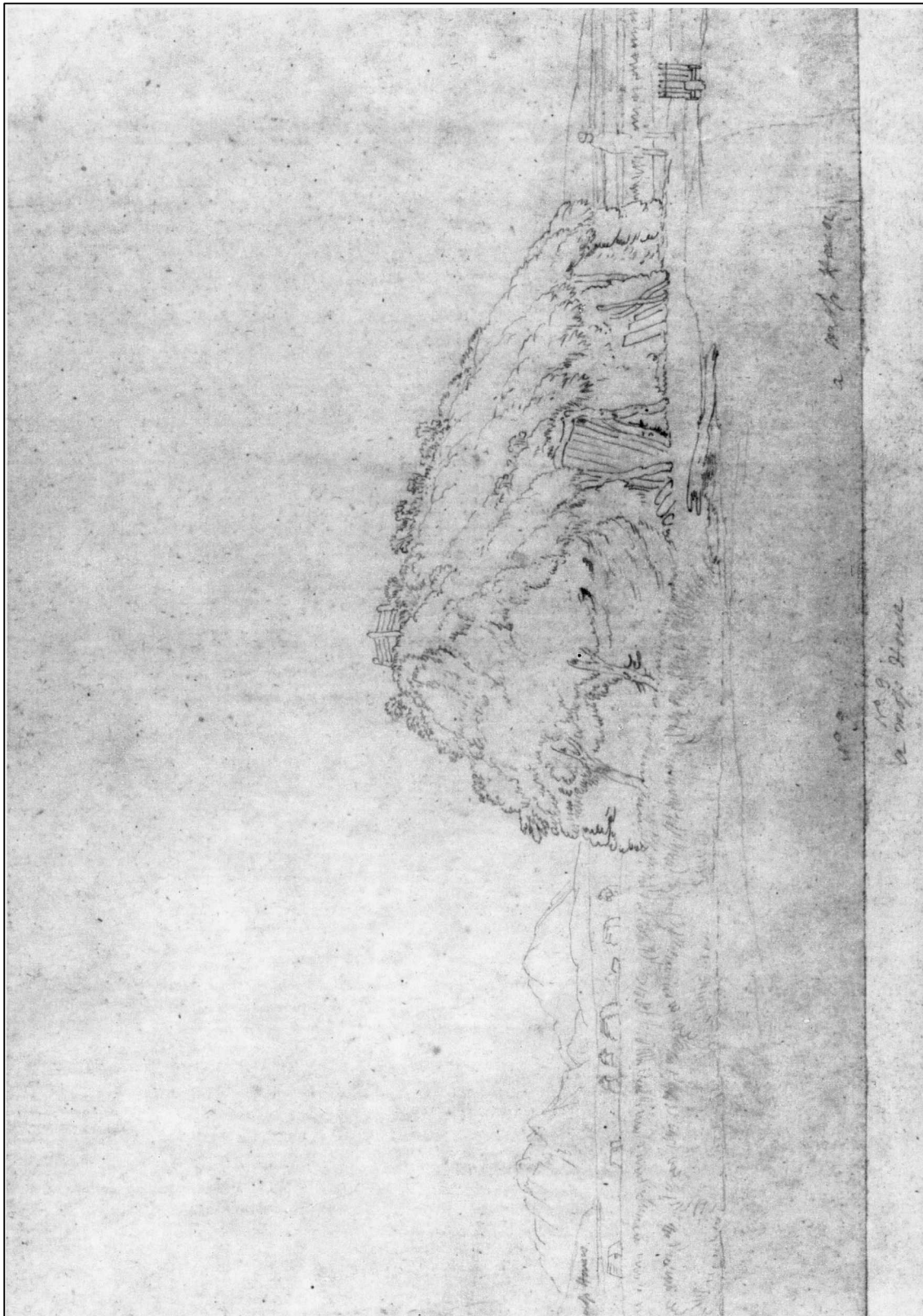


Appendix 8.2.

Edinburgh Central Library,

Farington, J., 'Tour In Scotland July To September 1792 By Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA
1861.792

sketch no. 9 'a moss House'



Appendix 9

Knox, J., *A View Of The British Empire, More Especially Scotland* (3rd edn. London, 1785), vol. i, p. 233.

| HERRING FISHERIES. 233 | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>An Account of the Number of Busses fitted out in Scotland from the Year 1750 to the Year 1783, both inclusive, with the Amount of their Tonnage, Number of Men, and the Barrels of Herrings taken. Extracted from the Custom-House Books at Edinburgh.</i> | | | | | |
| Anno | Number of Busses. | Tonnage. | Number of Men. | Barrels of Herrings taken, | Bounty, at 30s. per ton. |
| 1750 | | | | | |
| 1751 | 2 | 148 | 33 | 213 | |
| 1752 | 4 | 301 | 67 | 424 | |
| 1753 | 8 | 518 | 116 | 519 | |
| 1754 | 6 | 403 | 89 | 564 | |
| 1755 | 1 | 77 | 17 | 67 | |
| 1756 | 1 | 77 | 17 | 64 | |
| 1757 | 2 | 103 | 24 | 317 | |
| 1758 | 3 | 181 | 41 | 245 | |
| 1759 | 3 | 181 | 41 | 4 | |
| 1760 | 13 | 554 | 130 | 3089 | |
| 1761 | 17 | 745 | 174 | 4046 | |
| 1762 | 49 | 2056 | 489 | 12949 | |
| 1763 | 87 | 3691 | 865 | 3054 | |
| 1764 | 119 | 5131 | 1206 | 8831 | |
| 1765 | 157 | 7056 | 1651 | 39691 | |
| 1766 | 261 | 12476 | 2881 | 21146 | |
| 1767 | 263 | 12556 | 2898 | 28162 | |
| 1768 | 202 | 9553 | 2207 | 15538 | |
| 1769 | 185 | 3868 | 899 | 17822 | |
| 1770 | 19 | 861 | 201 | 1878 | |
| Summer 1771 | 4 | 210 | 47 | 385 | |
| Winter 1771 | 25 | 1039 | 236 | 2447 | |
| Summer 1772 | 95 | 4029 | 948 | 8489 | |
| Winter 1772 | 74 | 3373 | 789 | 13759 | |
| Summer 1773 | 86 | 3621 | 859 | 17197 | |
| Winter 1773 | 104 | 4718 | 1094 | 24858 | |
| Summer 1774 | 115 | 4913 | 1150 | 25134 | |
| Winter 1774 | 134 | 6436 | 1584 | 31459 | |
| Summer 1775 | 101 | 4277 | 1003 | 13396 | |
| Winter 1775 | 180 | 8795 | 2028 | 40070 | |
| Summer 1776 | 68 | 2859 | 670 | 7743 | |
| Winter 1776 | 226 | 11334 | 2695 | 44115 | |
| Summer 1777 | 64 | 2663 | 623 | 8546 | |
| Winter 1777 | 176 | 9064 | 1977 | 34767 | |
| Summer 1778 | 96 | 4372 | 1014 | 9623 | |
| Winter 1778 | 124 | 6505 | 1490 | 31335 | |
| Anno 1779 | 206 | 10191 | 2343 | 29367 | |
| 1780 | 181 | 8963 | 2061 | 19885 | |
| 1781 | 136 | 6449 | 1494 | 16625 | |
| 1782 | 147 | 7291 | 1667 | 3457 | |
| 1783 | 153 | 7272 | 1687 | 13595 | |

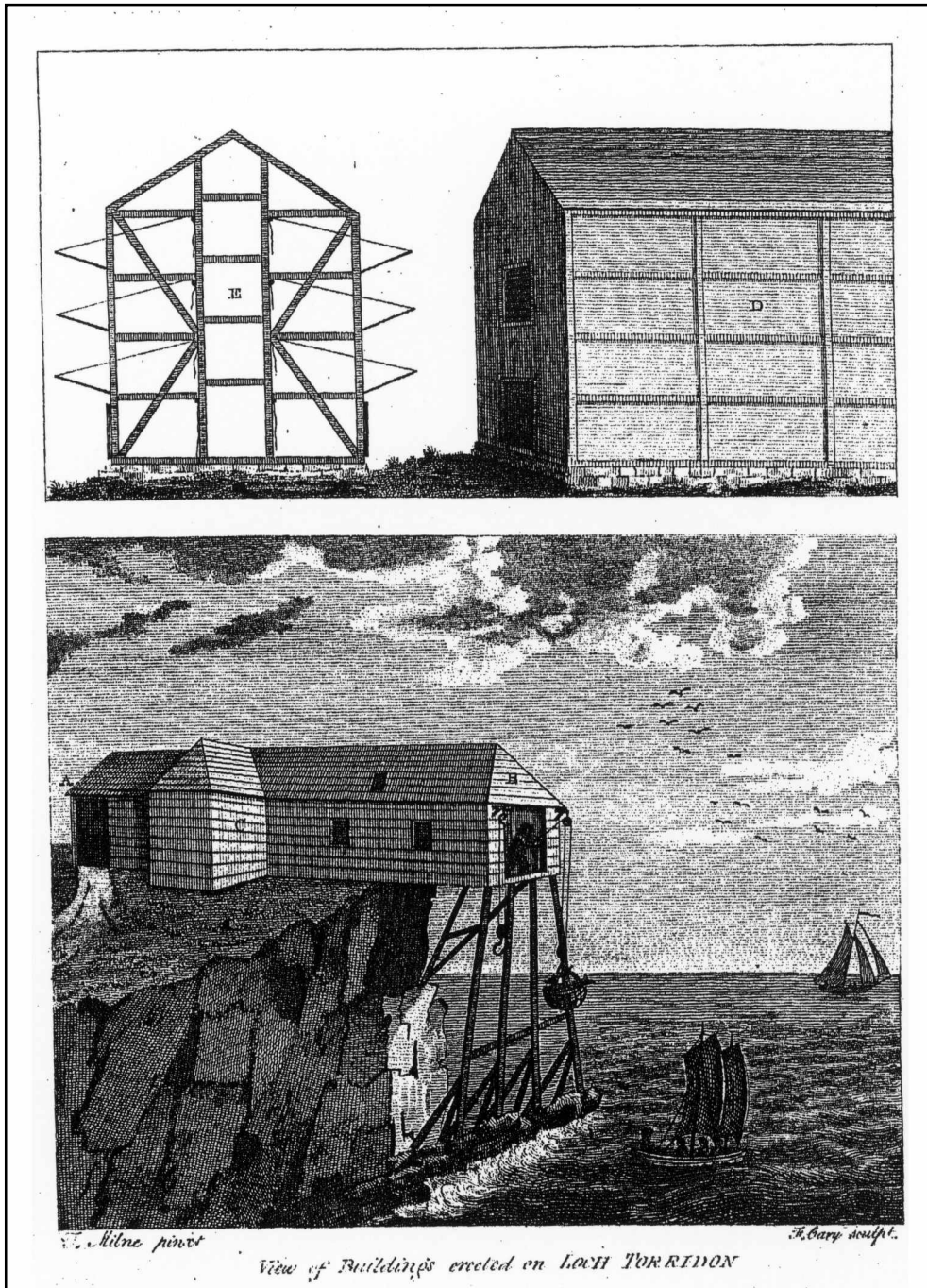
Not regular
early paid.

Raised to 30s.
of the bounty from 50 to 30s. in the winter 1771, 1761 & 51.

Average annual amount of bounty paid since the reduction

Appendix 10

Thomson, W., *Prospects And Observations; On A Tour In England And Scotland: Natural, Oeconomical, And Literary* (London, 1791), opposite p. 104.

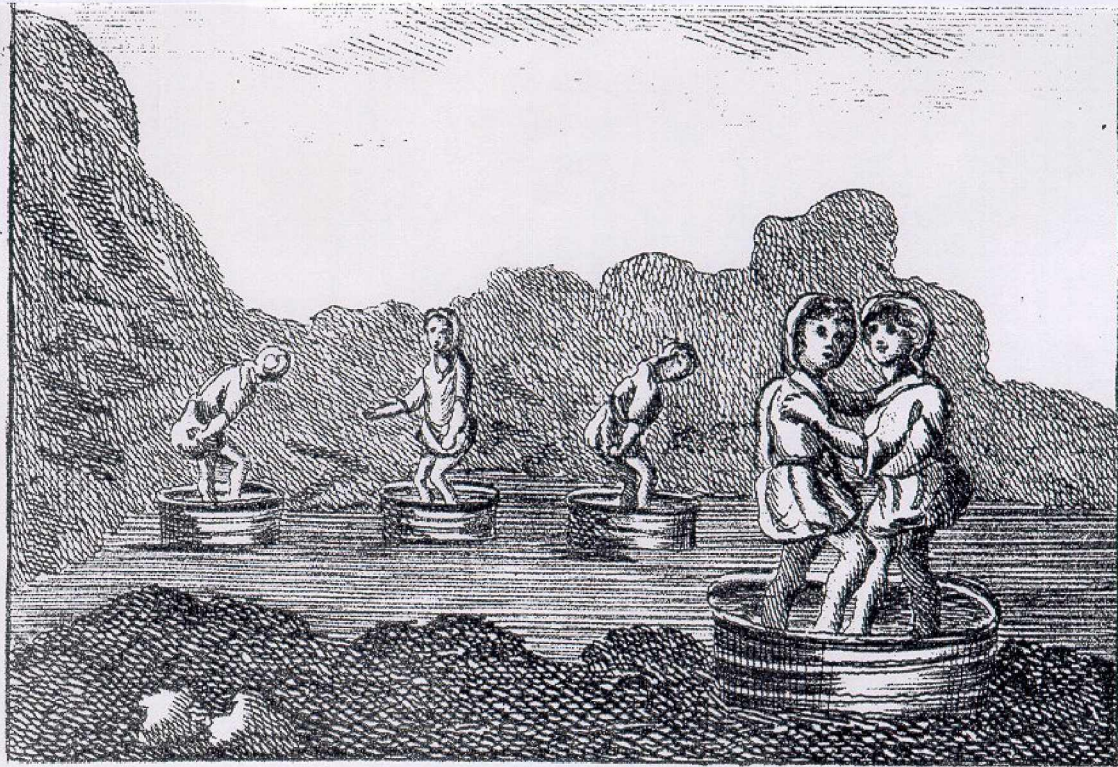


'A B represents the stage or wharf, the roof of which, being pretty high, is, at times, convenient for hanging up the nets and lines to dry. C is the salt-house. The whole height of the curing-house, part of which is represented by D, is divided into five stories by four pair of wooden gratings, which run from end to end of the house. Each of the gratings, being seven or eight feet in breadth, leaves a space between them, where, with the assistance of moveable step-ladders, they can, with the greatest ease and convenience, spread the fish, and turn them when necessary.

On the ground floor the herring-barrels are stowed in rows, which neither prevents access to, nor the use of the gratings above, where they can spread more than 3,000 cod or ling at a time. E is a section of the curing-house.'

Appendix 11

Burt, E., *Letters From A Gentleman in the North of Scotland To His Friend in London* (1st edn. London, 1754), vol. i, opposite p. 52.



Appendix 12

maps

(in alphabetical order of travellers)

Pages 754 to 868 containing the travellers' maps can be found on the attached CD-ROM at the back of this volume.

map taken from Robert Heron, *Scotland Delineated, Or A Geographical Description Of Every Shire In Scotland, Including The Northern And Western Isles* (2nd edn. Edinburgh, 1799)

list of maps

| traveller | date of travel |
|---|--------------------------------|
| A.L. | 1785, 1788 |
| Anderson, William | 1787 |
| Anon., NLS, 'M[y] Journey to Scotland', MS. 15905 | 1790 |
| Anon., <i>North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV</i> | 1704 |
| Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1021 | 1776 |
| Anon., NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080 | 1789 |
| Anon., NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278 | 1794 |
| Bailey, James | 1787 |
| Banks, Joseph | 1772 |
| Bombelles, Marc de | 1784 |
| Brereton, William | 1635 |
| Brome, James | 1669 |
| Burns, Robert | 1787 |
| Burrell, William | 1758 |
| Calamy, Edmund | 1709 |
| Carlyle, Alexander | 1765 |
| Carlyle, Alexander | 1775 |
| Cave, Thomas | 1763 |
| Chantreau, Pierre Nicolas | 1788-89 |
| Clarke, Edward Daniel | 1797 |
| Clerk of Penicuik, John | 1739 |
| Culley, George | 1771 |
| Culley, Matthew | 1770 |
| Culley, Matthew | 1775 |
| Dawson, Eliza | 1786 |
| Defoe, Daniel | early 18 th century |
| Dibdin, Charles | 1799, 1800 |
| Douglas, Francis | 1780 |
| Douglas, George Lewis Augustus | 1800 |
| Farington, Joseph | 1788 |
| Farington, Joseph | 1792 |
| Farington, Joseph | 1801 |
| Faujas de Saint-Fond, Barthelemy | 1784 |
| Fisher, Jabez Maud | 1775, 1776 |
| Fontane, Theodor | 1858 |
| Forbes, Robert | 1762 |
| Forbes, Robert | 1770 |
| Franck, Richard | 1656-57 |
| Garnett, Thomas | 1798 |
| Gastrell, Francis | 1760 |
| Gilpin, William | 1776 |
| Gray, Thomas | 1764, 1765 |
| Grey, Jemima | 1755 |
| Hanway, Mary Ann(e) | 1775 |

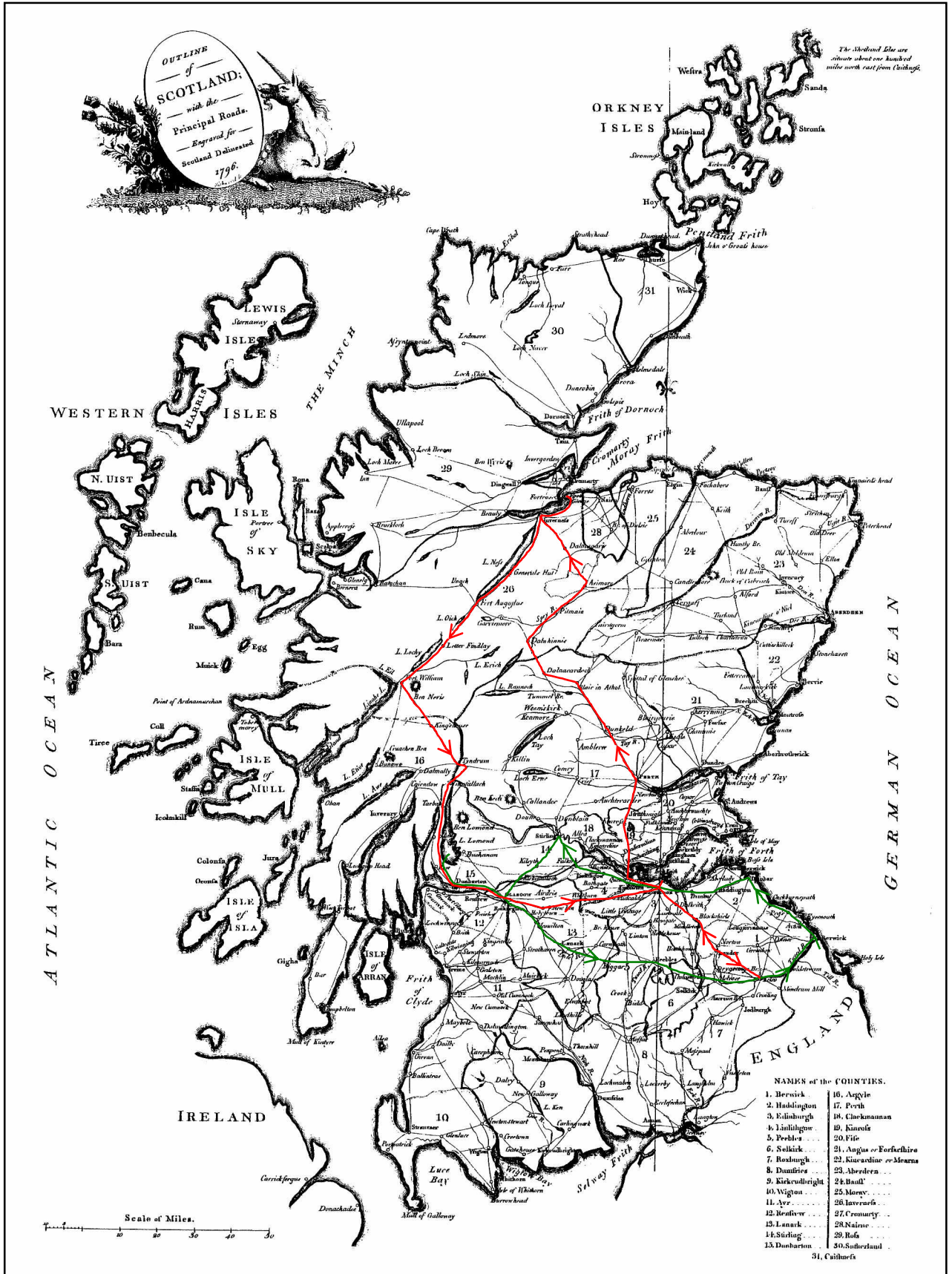
| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Harley, Edward | 1725 |
| Harmes, Emilie | 1800 |
| Hastings, Warren | 1787 |
| Hatchett, Charles | 1796 |
| Heron, Robert | 1792 |
| Hill, Rowland | 1798 |
| Hill, Rowland | 1799 |
| Hodgkinson, Richard | 1800 |
| Hogg, James | 1803 |
| Johnson, Samuel; Boswell, James | 1773 |
| Kalmeter, Henrik | 1719-20 |
| Kirk(e), Thomas | 1677 |
| Knox, John | 1786 |
| La Rochefoucauld, Alexandre de | 1786 |
| La Rochette, (?) de | 1763 |
| La Tocnaye, Jacques Louis Chevalier de | 1793 |
| La Tocnaye, Jacques Louis Chevalier de | 1796-97 |
| Lettice, John | 1792 |
| Leyden, John | 1800 |
| Loveday, John | 1732 |
| Löwenthal, Maximilian von | 1822 |
| Lowther, Christopher | 1629 |
| MacDonald, James | 1802 |
| Macky, John | early 18 th century |
| Mactavish, Lachlan | 1787 |
| Manners, John Henry | 1796 |
| Mawman, Joseph | 1804 |
| Meißner, Eduard | 1817 |
| Menzies, Archibald | 1768 |
| Michell, John Henry | 1795 |
| Mildmay, William | probably 1736 |
| Murray, Sarah | 1796 |
| Murray, Sarah | 1800, 1802 |
| Neilson, Richard | 1754 |
| Neilson, Richard | 1755 |
| Newdigate, Roger (?) | 1766 |
| Pattisson, Jacob | 1780 |
| Pease, John | 1795-96 |
| Pennant, Thomas | 1769 |
| Pennant, Thomas | 1772 |
| Percy, Thomas | 1773 |
| Phillips, Nathaniel | 1791 |
| Pococke, Richard | 1747, 1750 |
| Pococke, Richard | 1760 |
| Raumer, Friedrich von | 1835 |
| Ray, James | 1746 |
| Ray, John | 1661 |
| Robertson, James | 1767 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Robertson, James | 1768 |
| Robertson, James | 1771 |
| Sacheverell, William | 1688 |
| Schopenhauer, Johanna | 1803 |
| Shaw, Stebbing | 1787 |
| Skrine, Henry | 1787 |
| Skrine, Henry | 1793 |
| Stoddart, John | 1799-1800 |
| Stuart, John | 1788 |
| Sullivan, Richard Joseph | 1778 |
| Svedenstierna, Eric Thomas | 1803 |
| Taylor, John | 1618 |
| Taylor, Joseph | 1705 |
| Thomson, William | 1785 |
| Thoresby, Ralph | 1681 |
| Thornhill of Diddington, George | 1760 |
| Thornton, Thomas | mainly 1783, 1784 |
| Walker, John (?) | 1674 |
| Walker, Patrick | 1797 |
| Wedel, Lupold von | 1584 |
| Willis, R.L. | 1793 |
| Wood, John | 1801 |
| Wordsworth, Dorothy | 1803 |

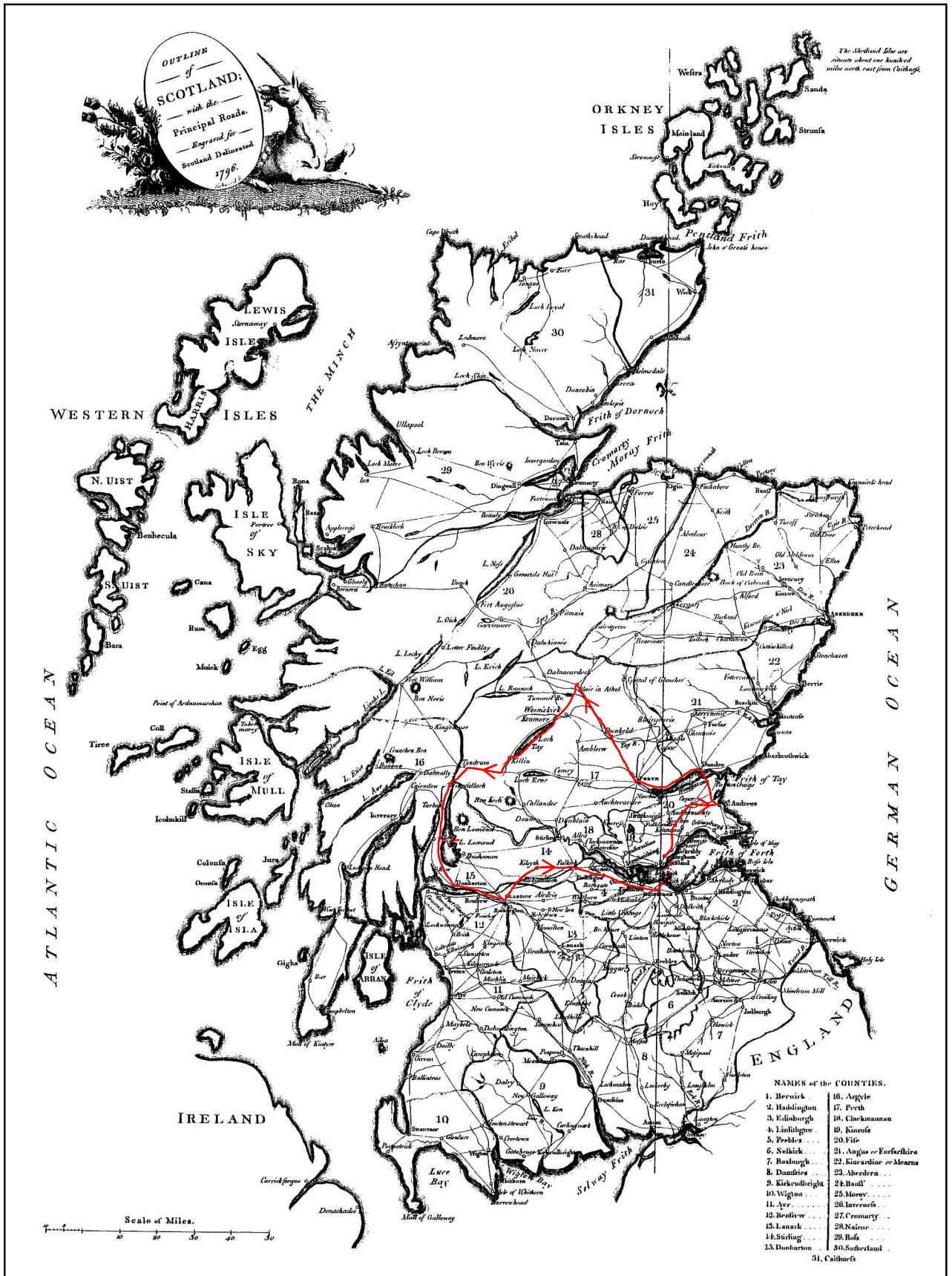
A.L.:
 NLS, 'August 1785 – Tour to Edinburgh, Stirling, Glasgow, Lough Lomond, and the Falls of Clyde in Company with Mr. Heron', 'Tour to the North Highlands of Scotland [along with Messrs. Heron and Jobling] in Aug. 1788', Acc. 10285
 date of travel: 1785, 1788

tour 1785

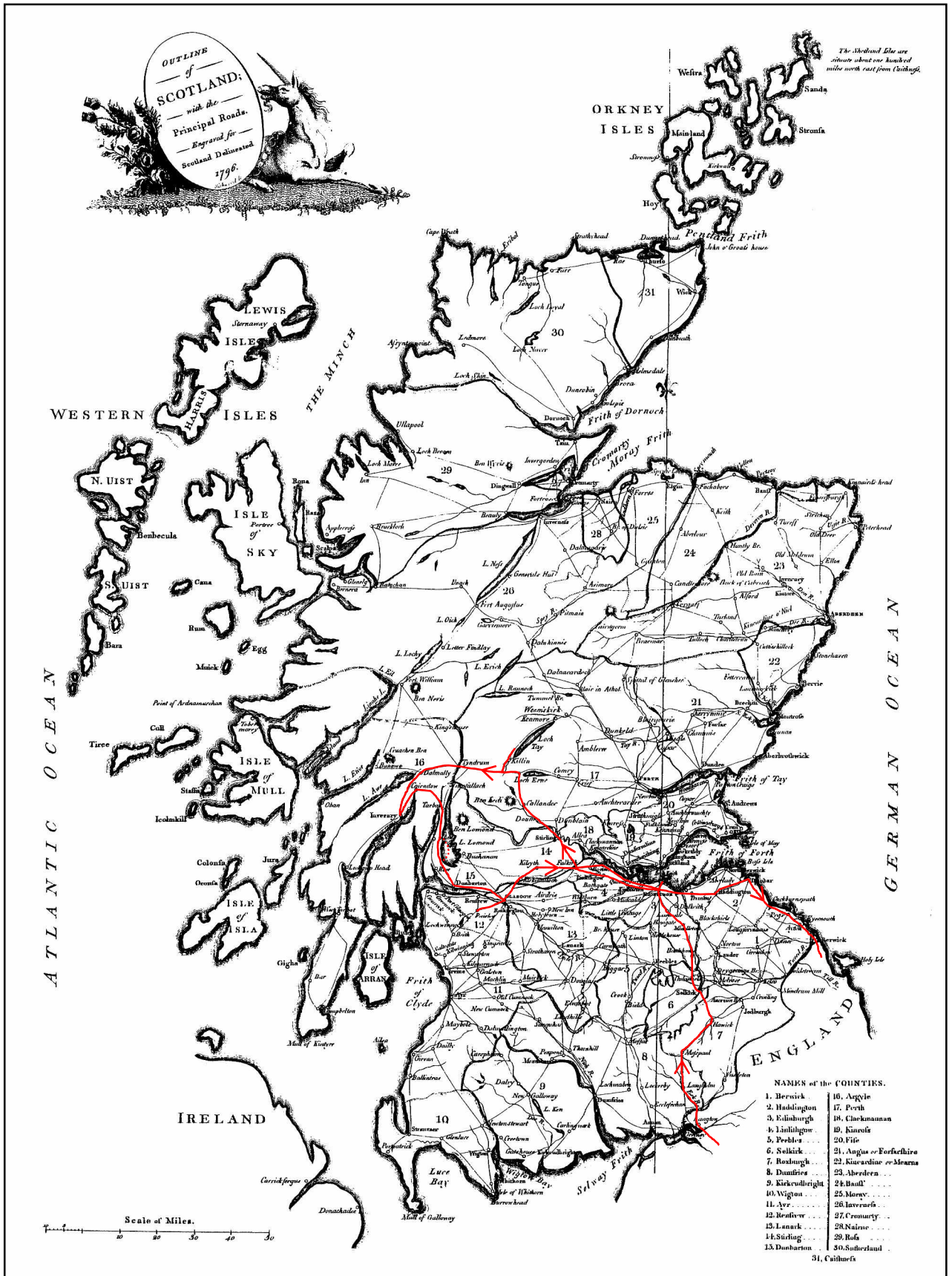
tour 1788



Anderson, William, Scottish law student or lawyer:
A Journal, Being An Account Of A Short Tour Or Excursion From Edinburgh 1787 (Nairn, 1912)
 date of travel: 1787



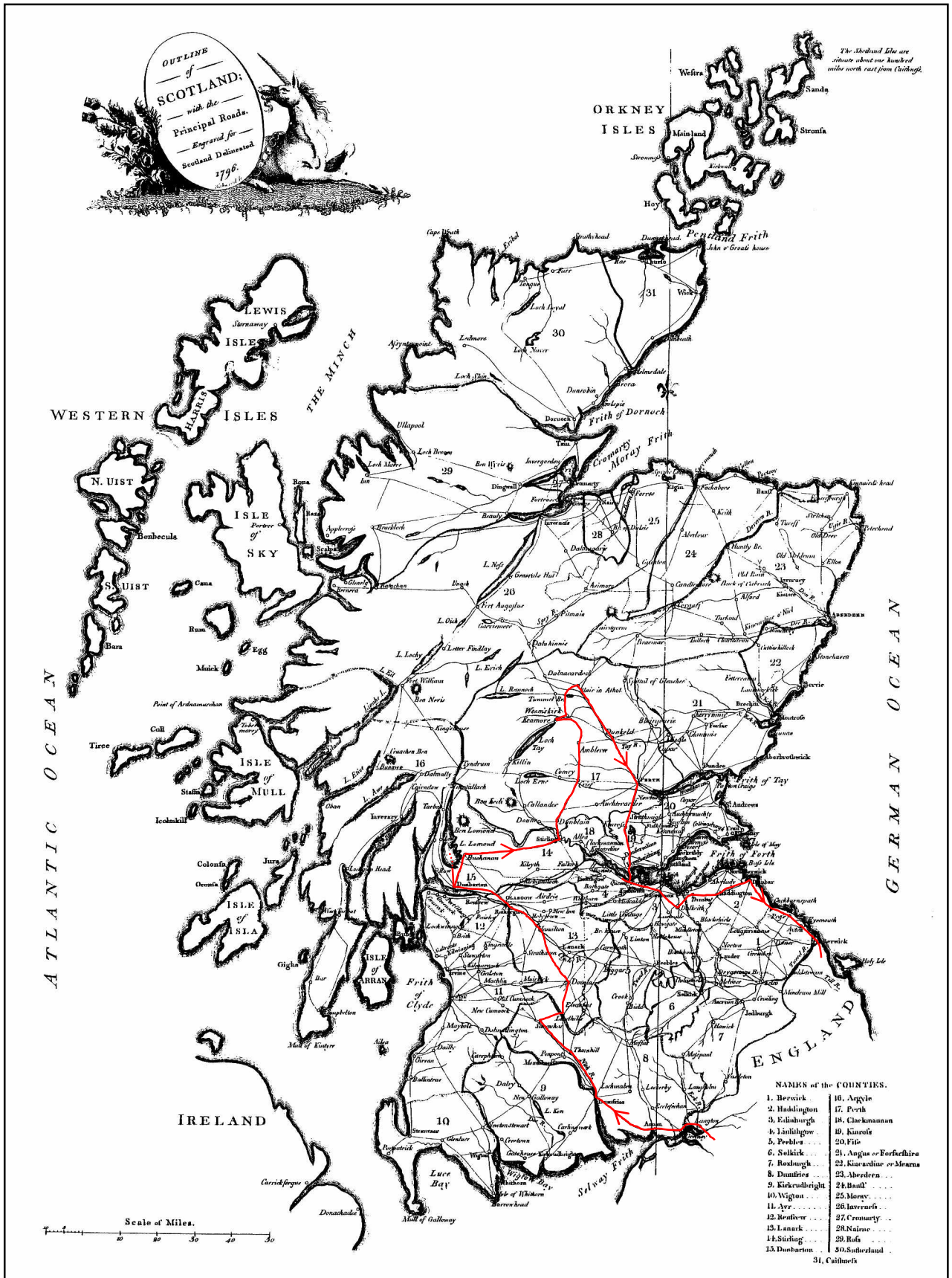
Anon.:
NLS, 'M[y] Journey to Scotland', MS. 15905
date of travel: 1790



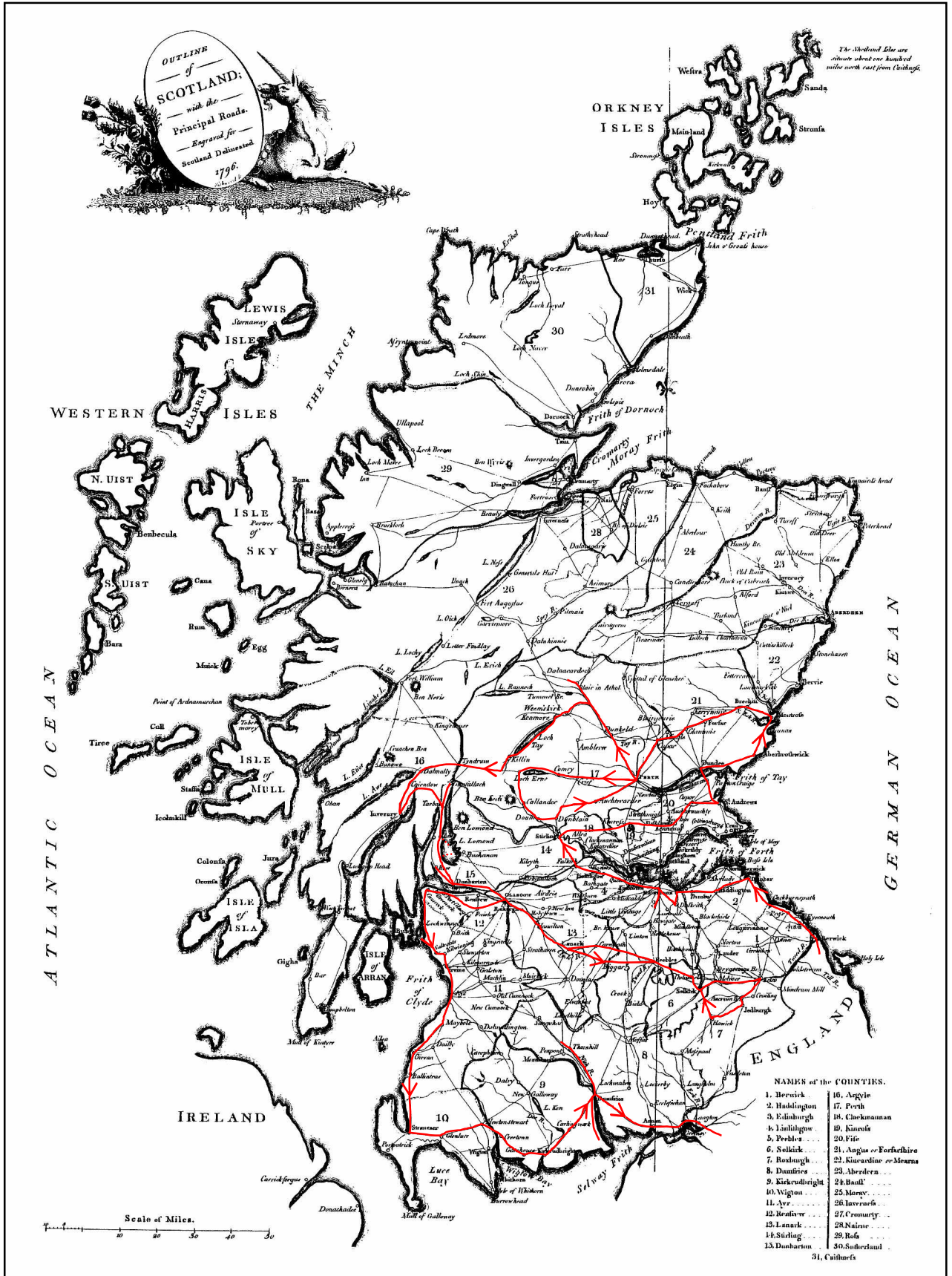
Anon.:
North Of England And Scotland In MDCCIV (Edinburgh, 1818)
 date of travel: 1704



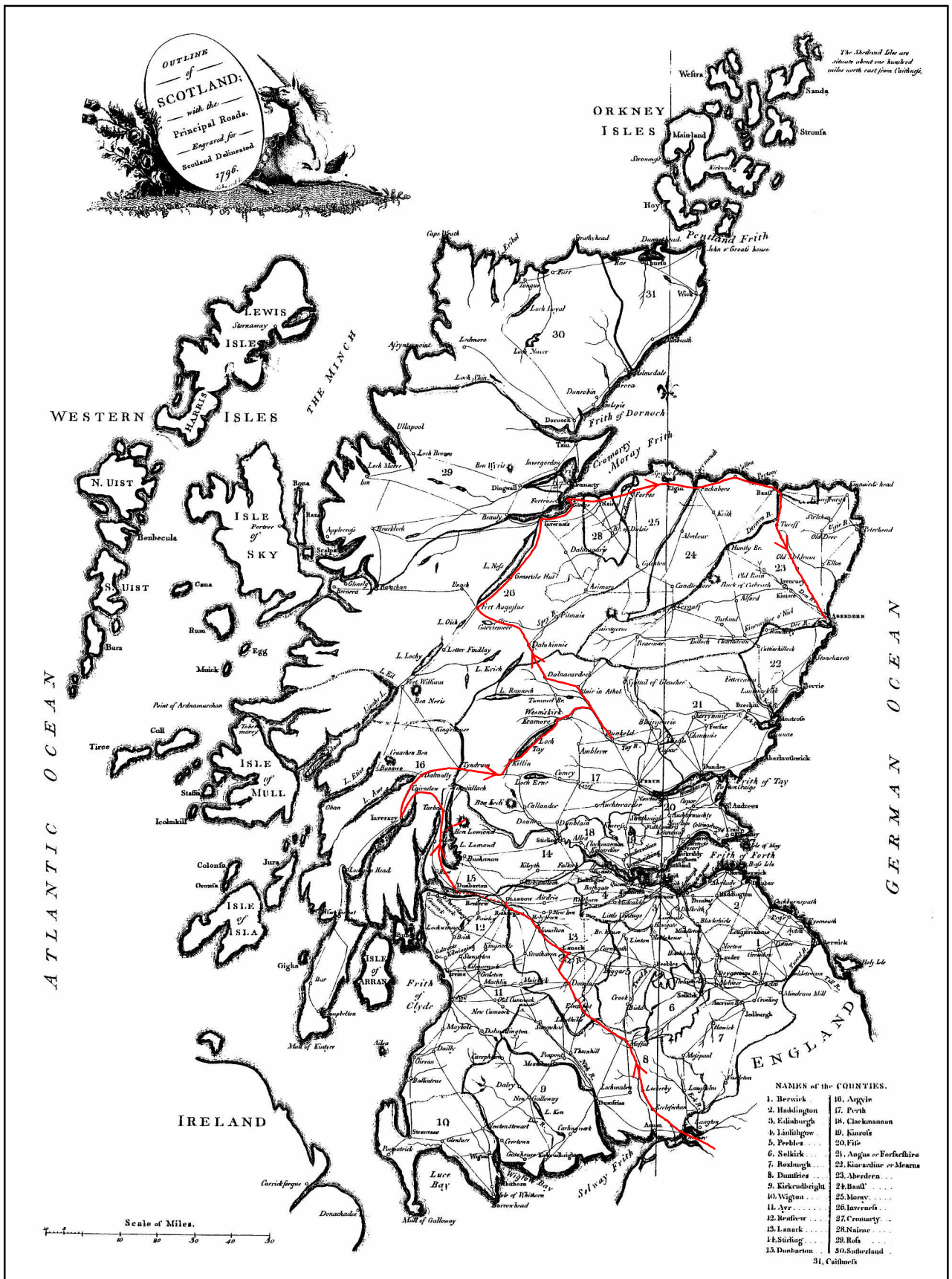
Anon.:
 NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1021
 date of travel: 1776



Anon.:
 NLS, 'A Tour in Scotland', MS. 1080
 date of travel: 1789



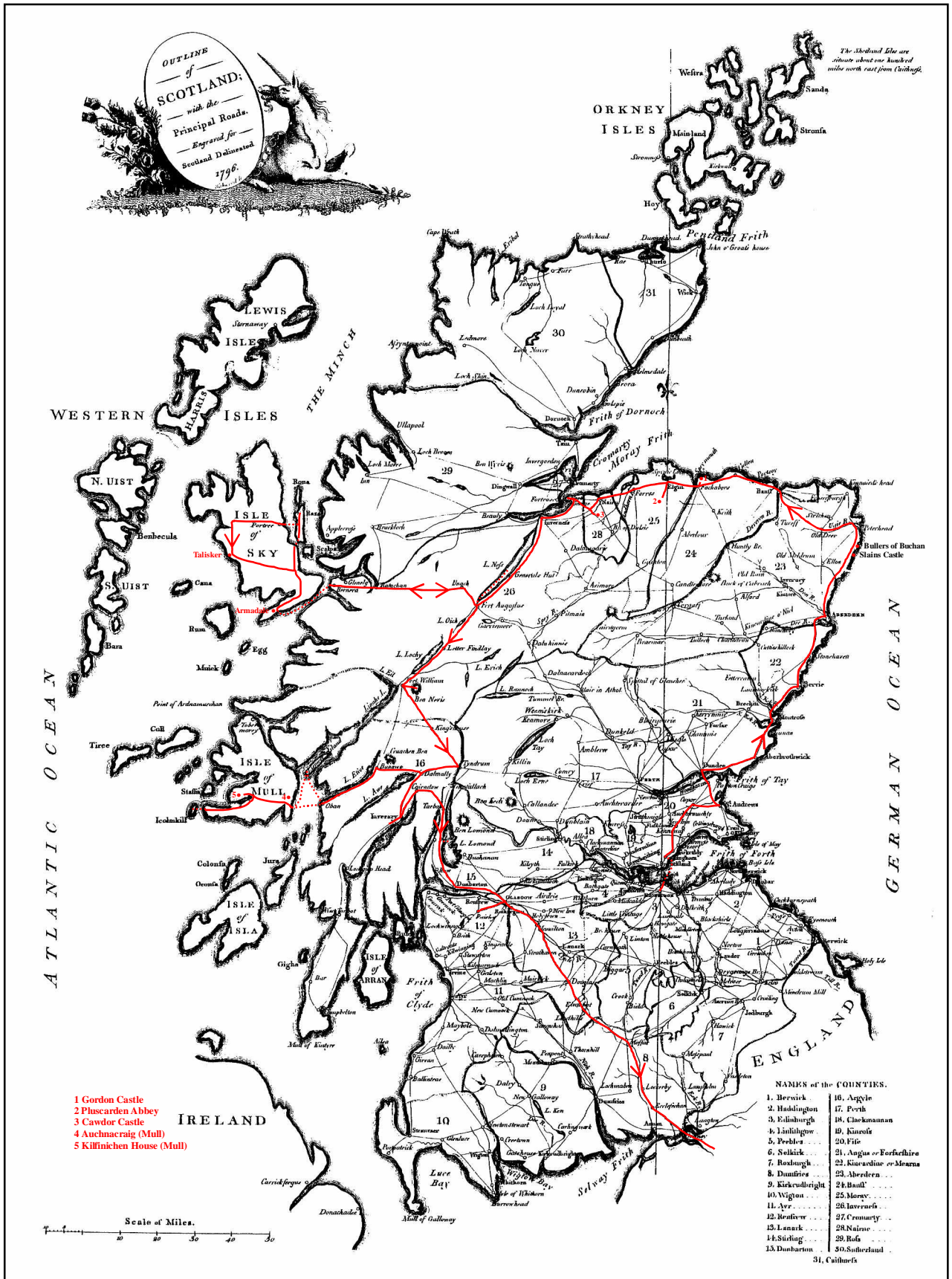
Anon.:
NLS, 'Tour in Scotland August 1794', Acc. 8278
date of travel: 1794



Bailey, James (died 1816), English vicar:

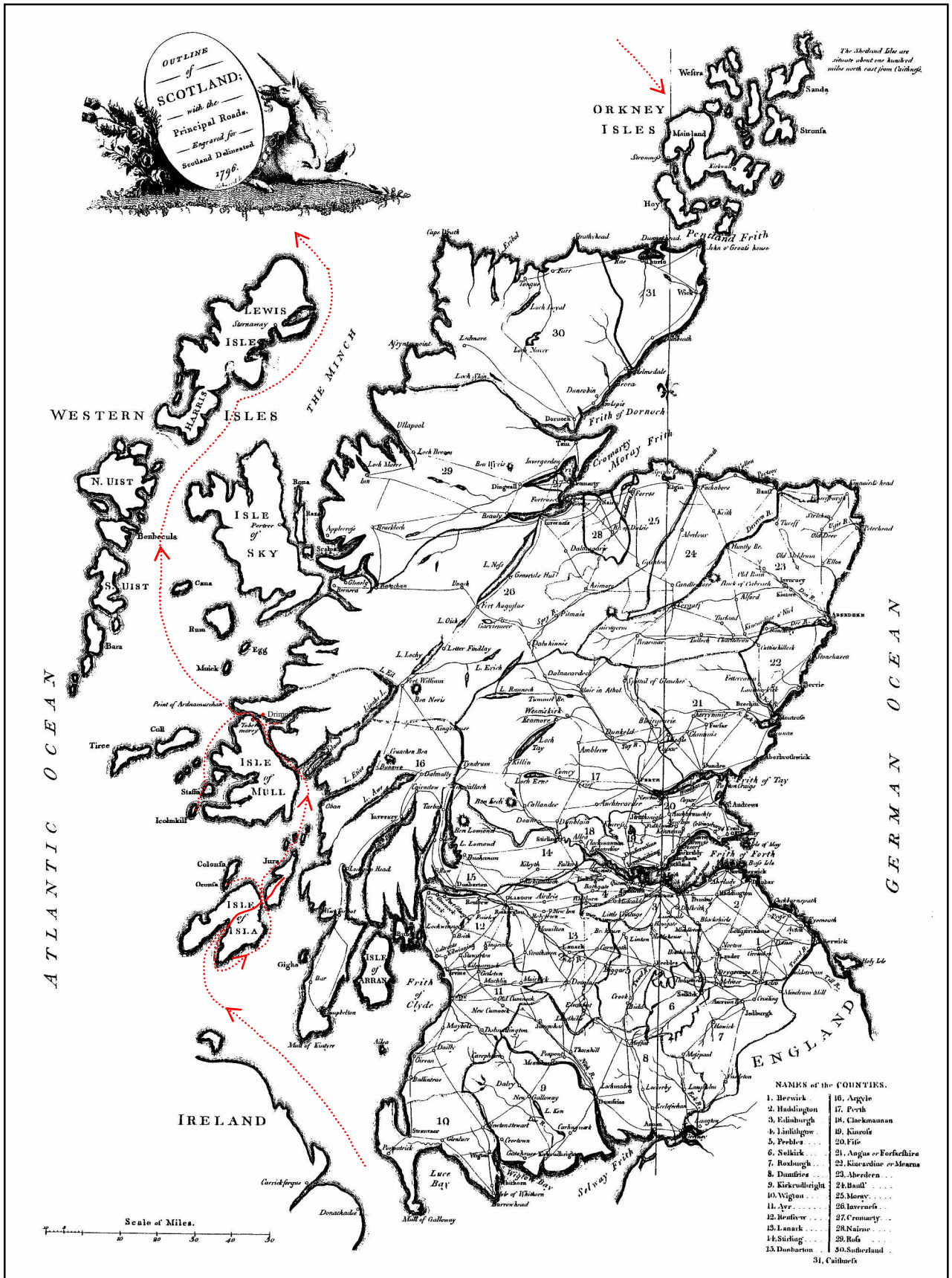
NLS, 'A Journey In Scotland, with Sketches of some Picturesque Ruins in that interesting Country', MSS. 3294-95

date of travel: 1787

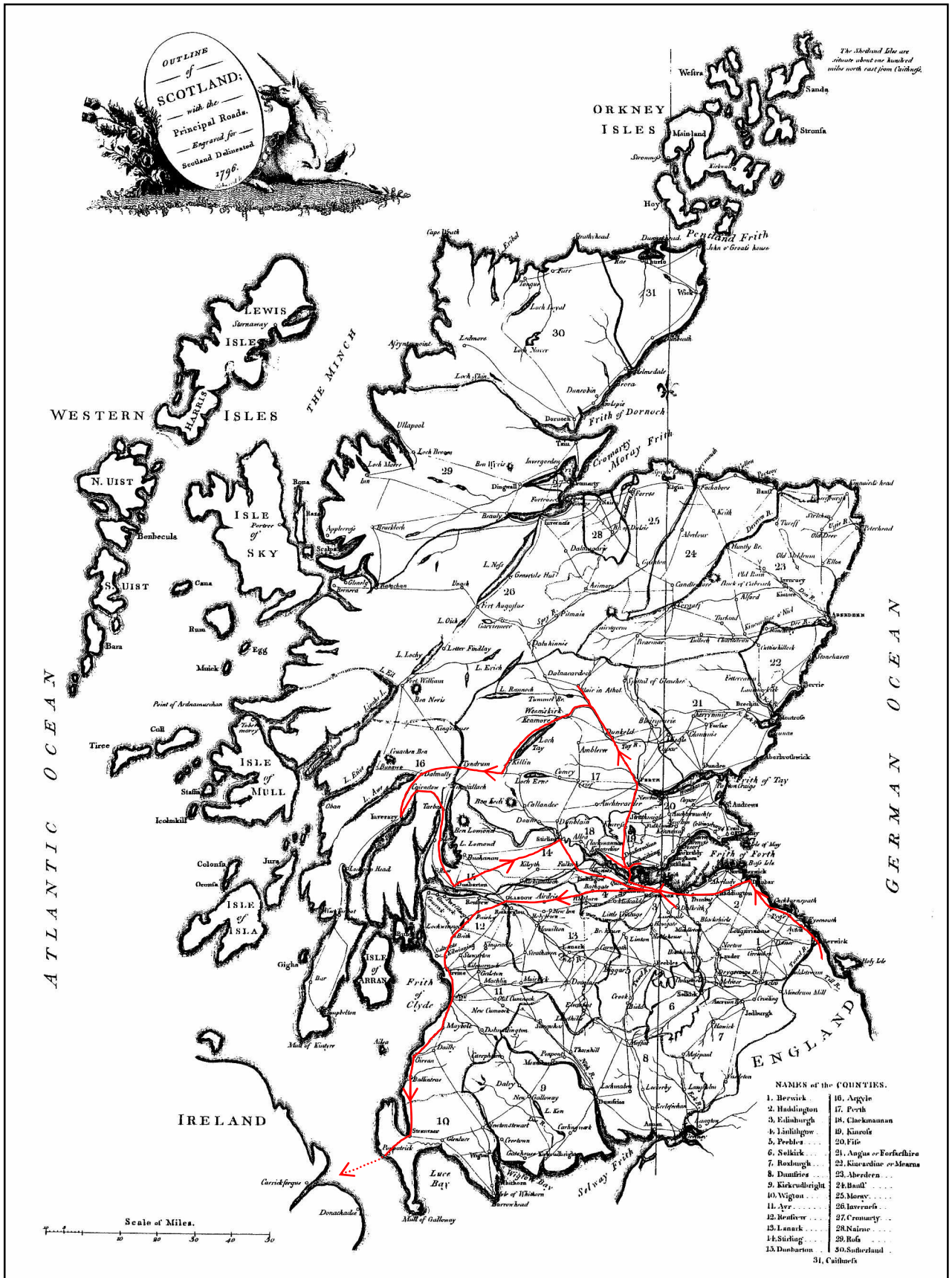


Banks, Joseph (1743-1820), English explorer and naturalist:

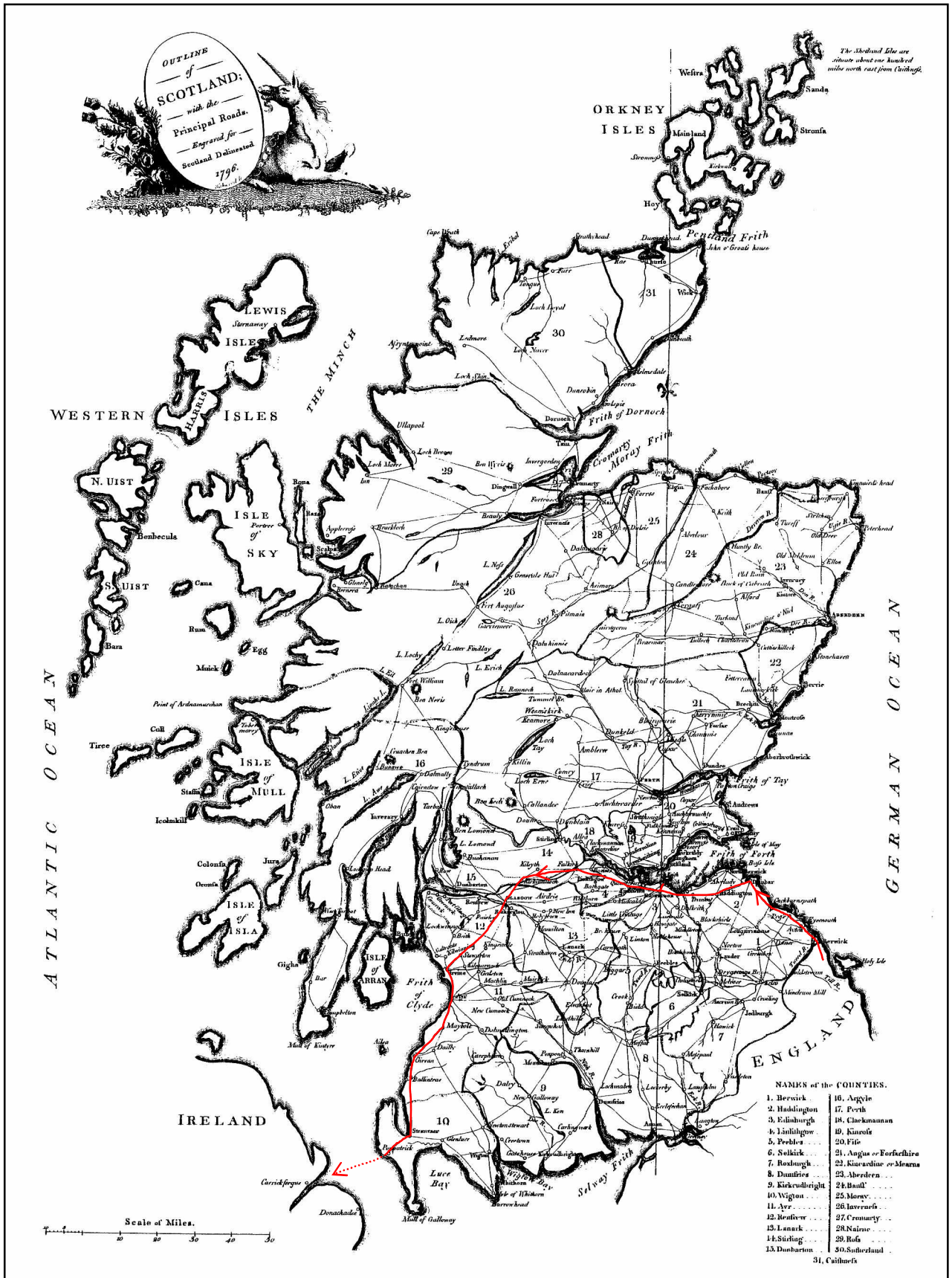
'The Journals Of Joseph Banks's Voyage Up Great Britain's West Coast To Iceland And To The Orkney Isles. July to October, 1772', R.A. Rauschenberg ed., *Proceedings Of The American Philosophical Society*, vol. cxvii, no. 3, (Philadelphia, 1973), pp. 186-226
 date of travel: 1772



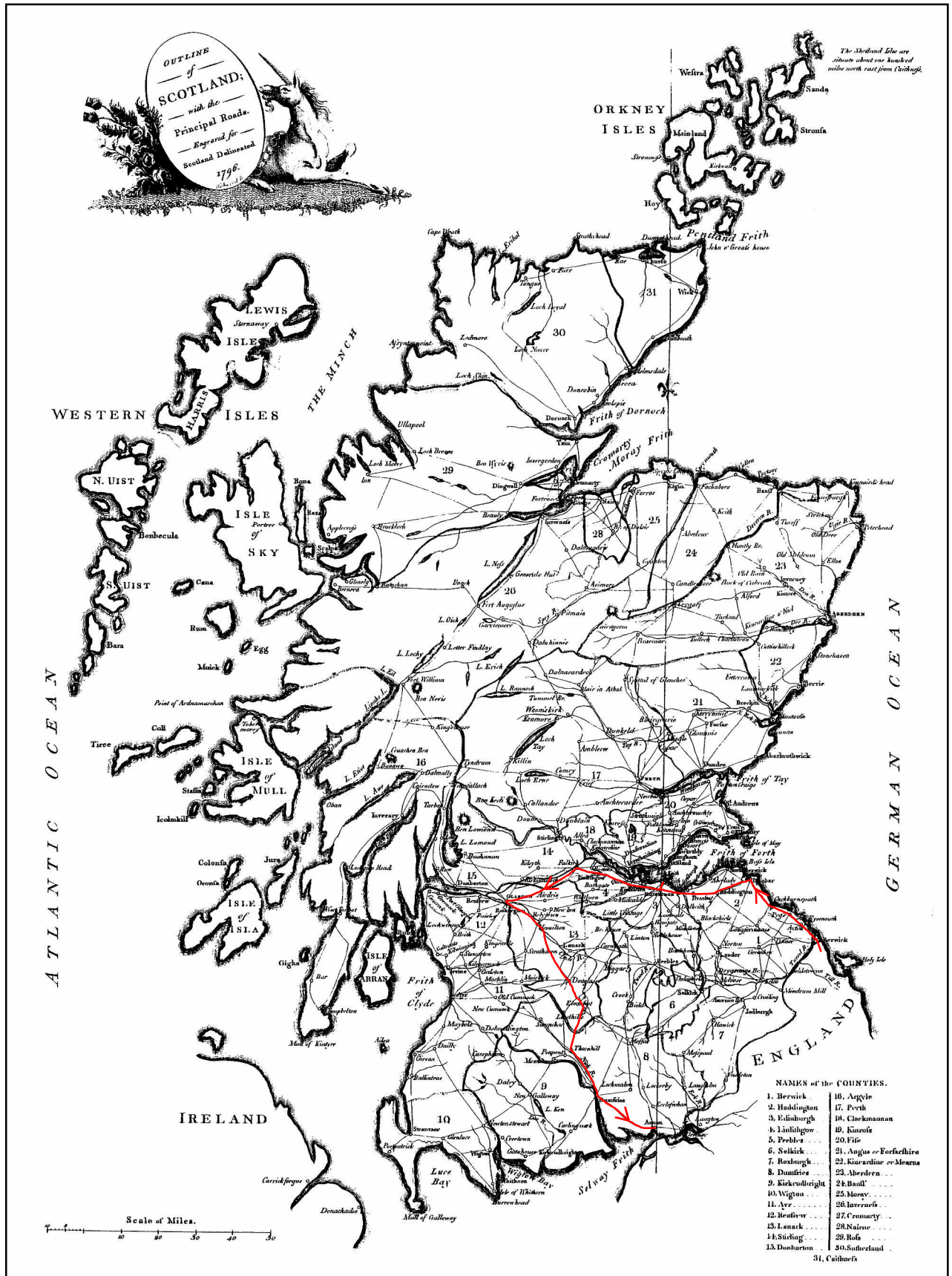
Bombelles, Marc de (1744-1822), French diplomat:
Journal de voyage en Grande Bretagne et en Irlande 1784, J. Gury ed. (Oxford, 1989)
 date of travel: 1784



Brereton, William (1604-1661), English Parliamentary commander:
 P. Hume Brown ed., *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891), pp. 132-158
 date of travel: 1635

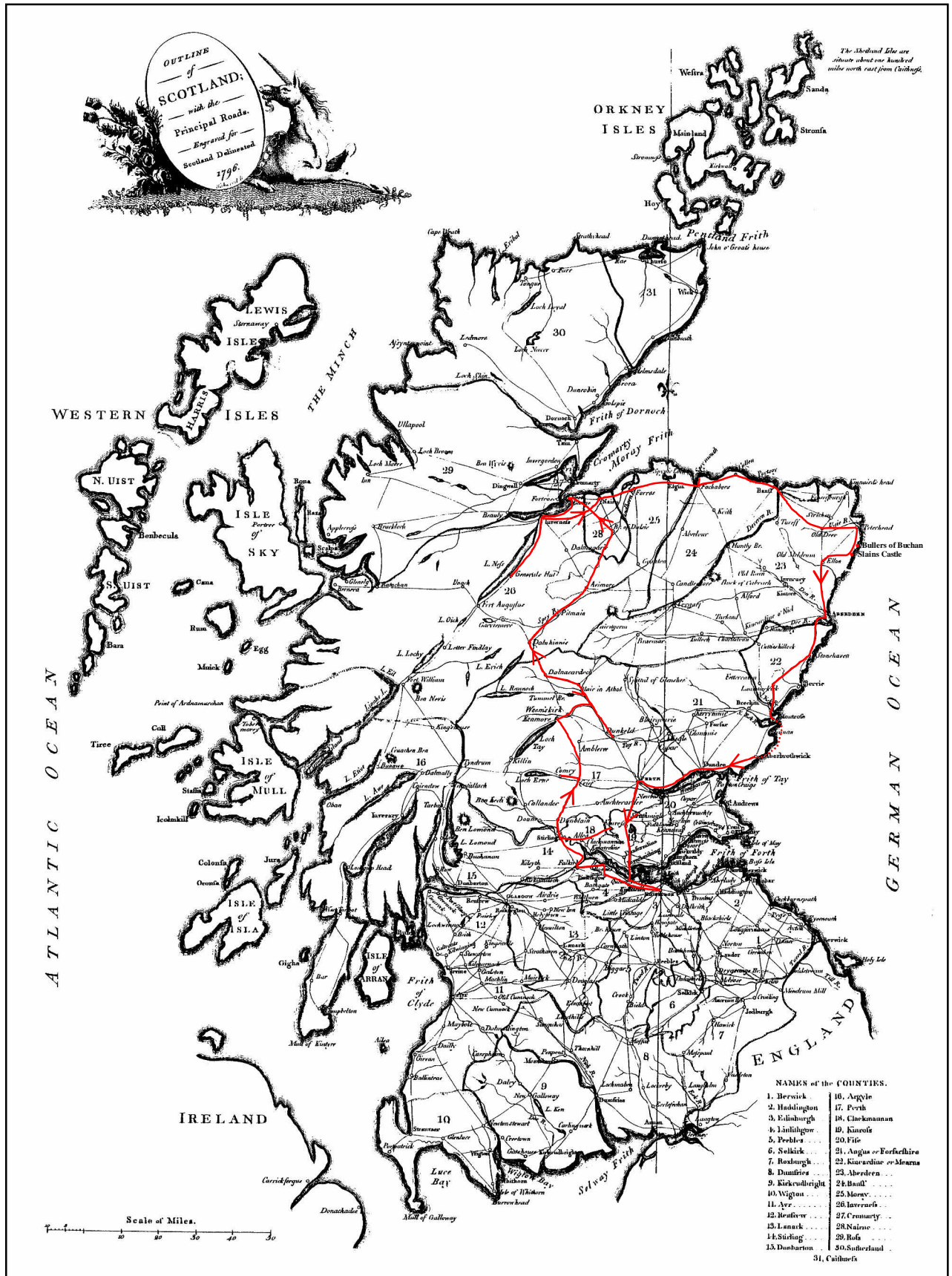


Brome, James (died 1719), English travel writer:
Travels Over England, Scotland and Wales (London, 1700)
 date of travel: 1669

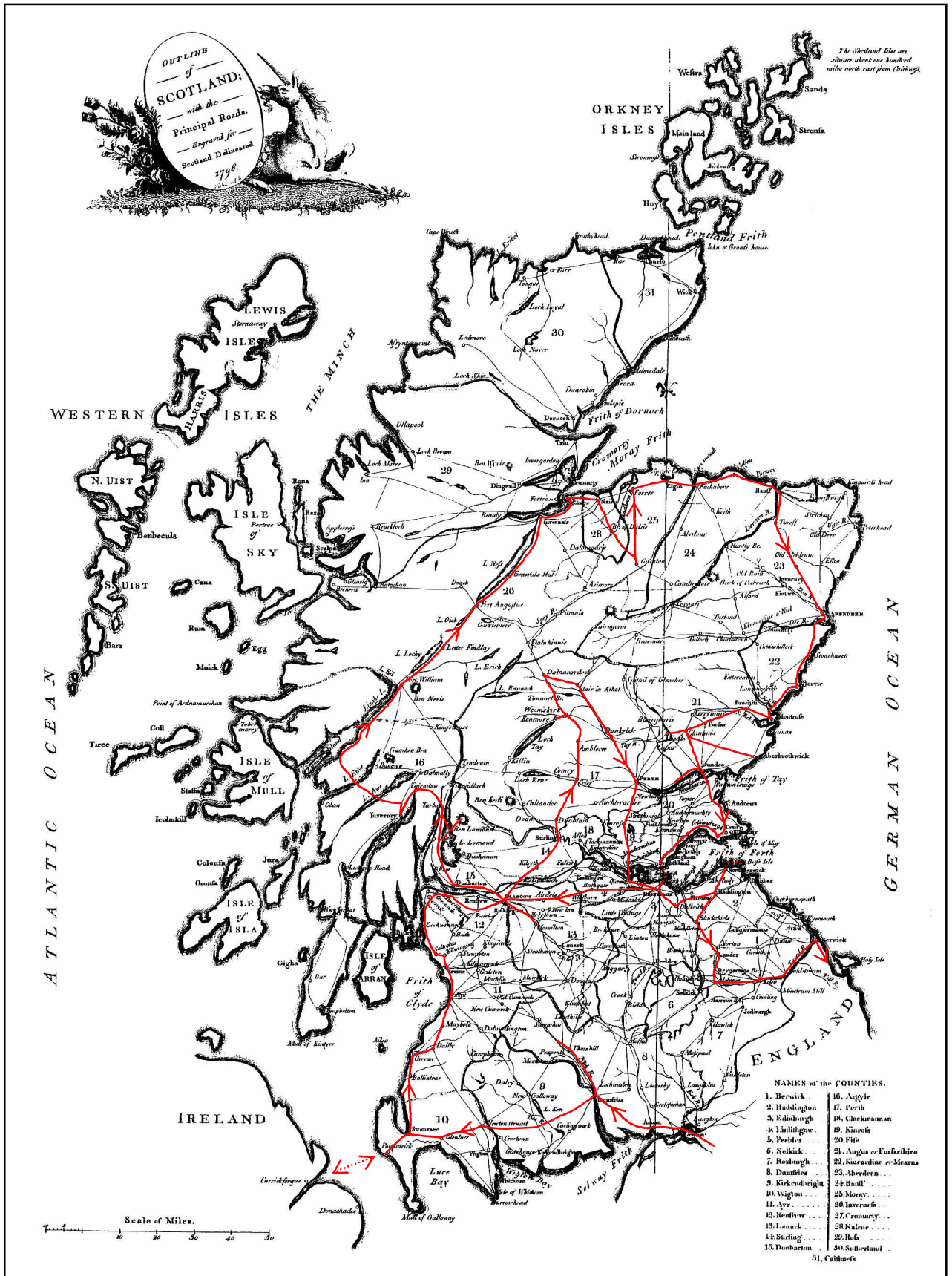


Burns, Robert (1759-1796), national poet of Scotland:

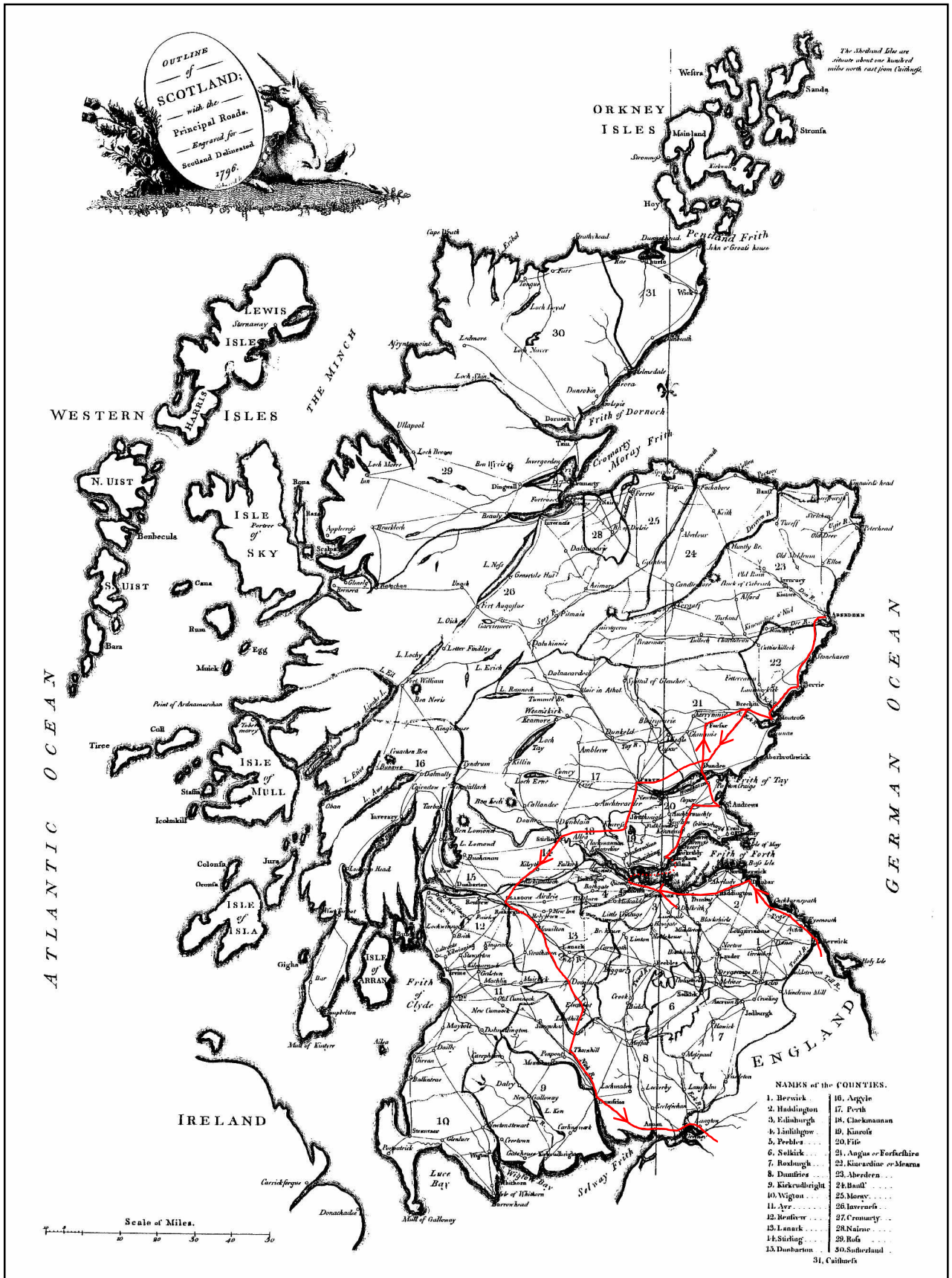
The Life And Works Of Robert Burns, R. Chambers ed., 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1851-1852), vol. ii, pp. 78-92, vol. ii, pp. 98-104, **vol. ii, pp. 113-145**, vol. ii, pp. 145-157, vol. iv, pp. 14-18 'Northern Tour' August and September 1787



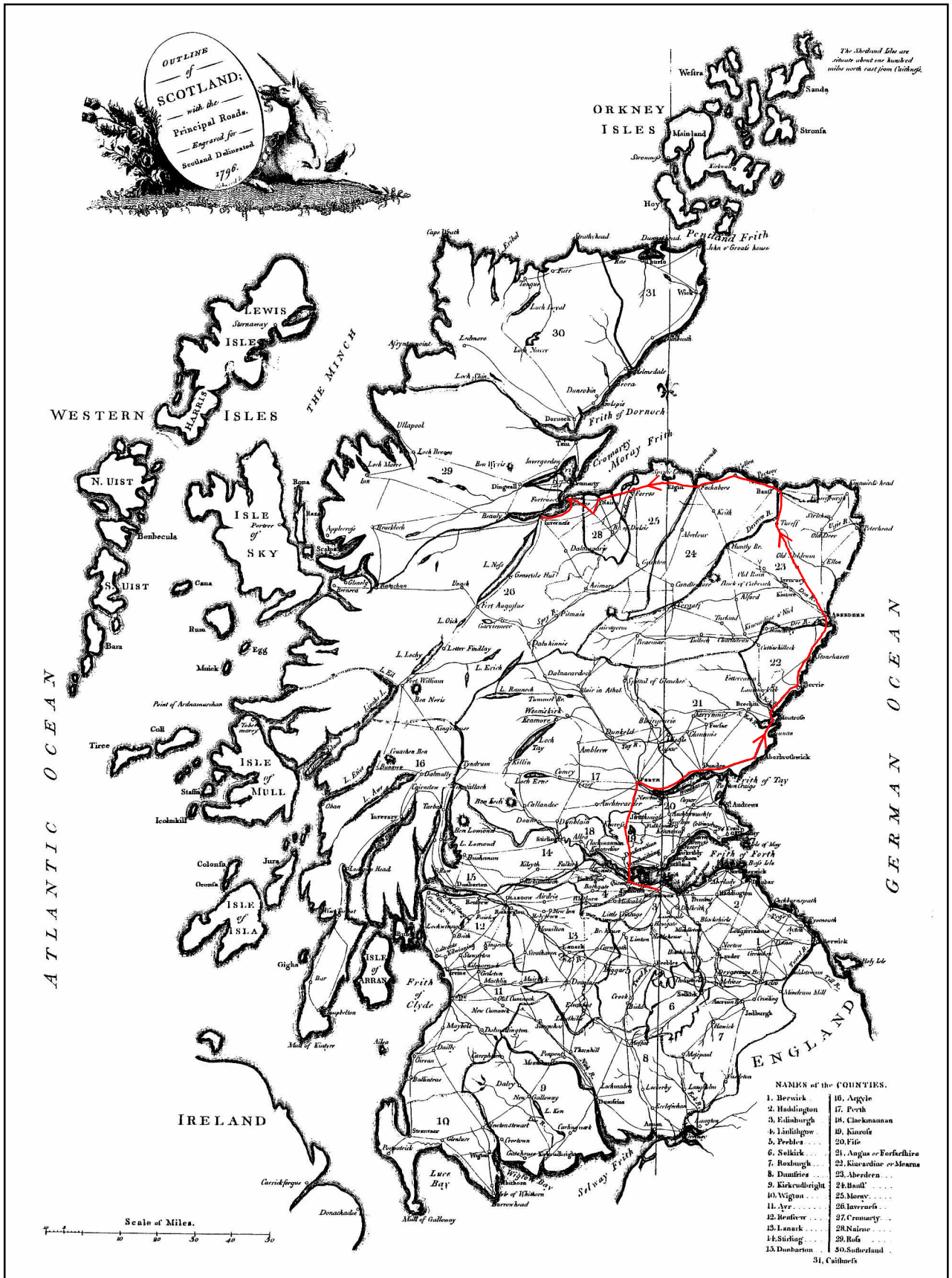
Burrell, William (1732-1796), English advocate and antiquary:
Sir William Burrell's Northern Tour 1758, J.G. Dunbar ed. (East Linton, 1997)
 date of travel: 1758



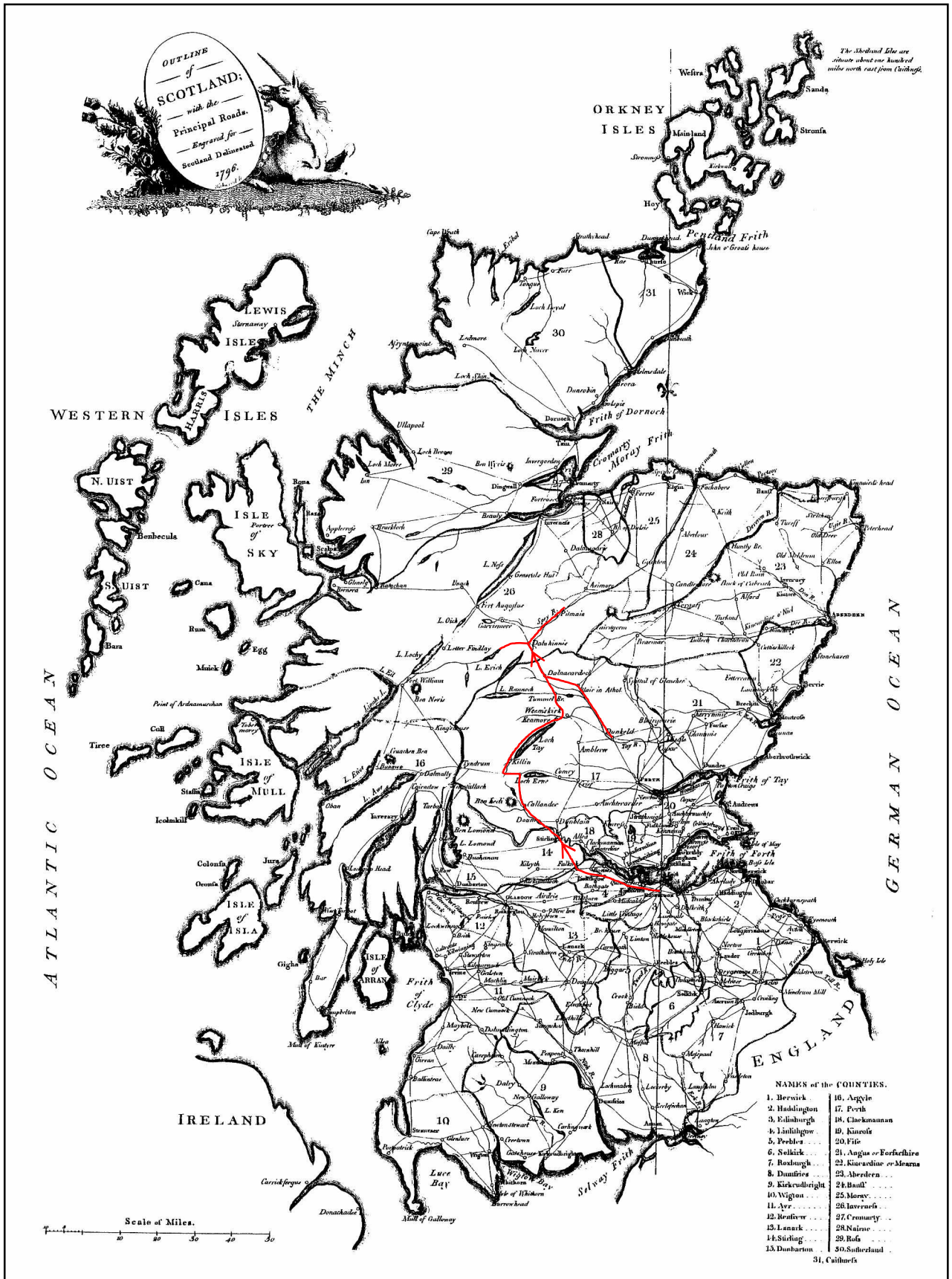
Calamy, Edmund (1671-1732), English nonconformist divine:
An Historical Account Of My Own Life, With Some Reflections On The Times I Have Lived In, J.T. Rutt ed. (London, 1829)
 date of travel: 1709



Carlyle, Alexander (1722-1805), Scottish, minister of Inveresk:
Journal of a tour to the North of Scotland, Alexander Carlyle, R.B. Sher ed. (Aberdeen, 1982)
 date of travel: 1765

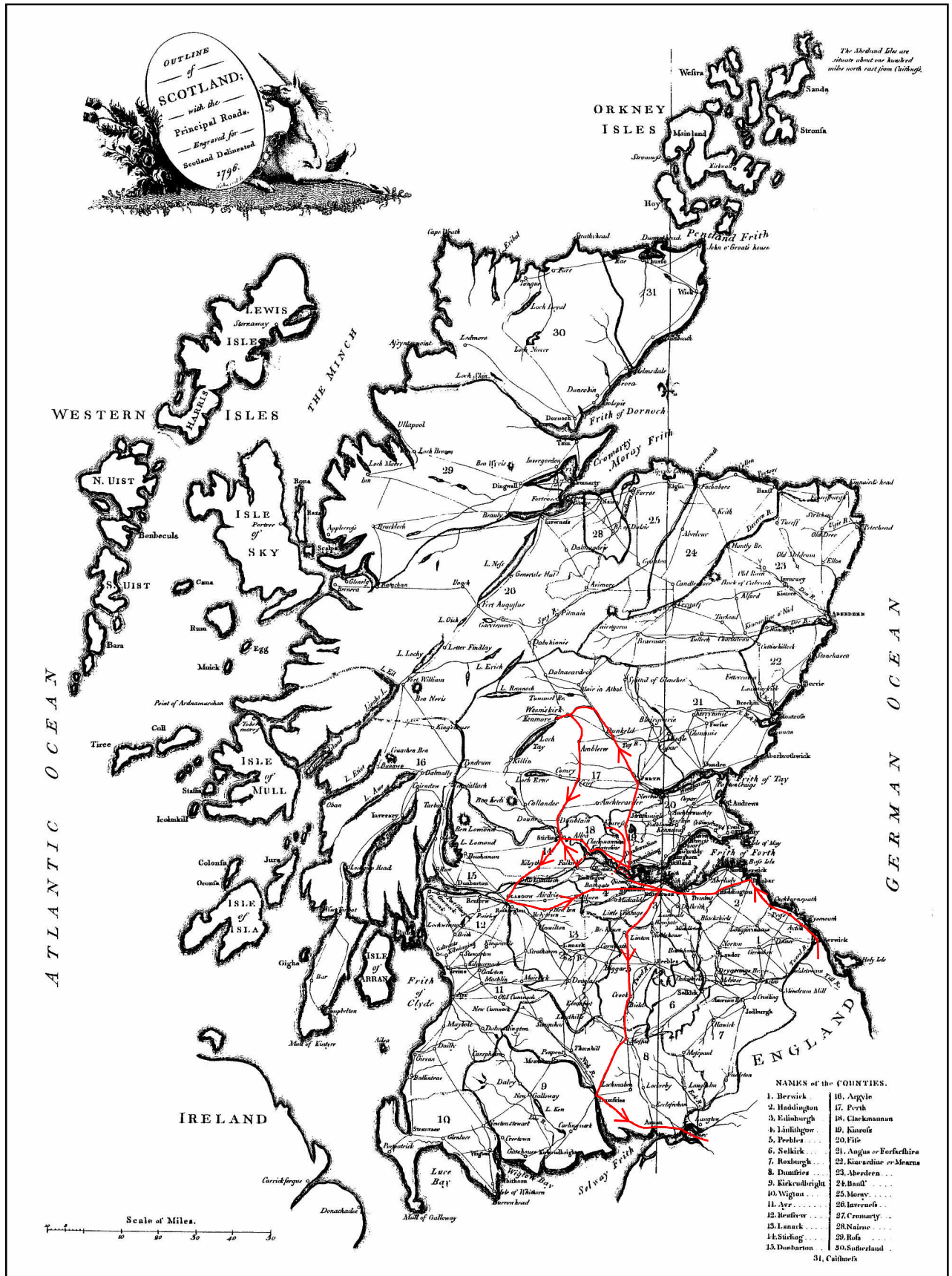


Carlyle, Alexander (1722-1805), Scottish, minister of Inveresk:
NLS, 'Aug. 1775, Highland Excursion', MS. 23771
date of travel: 1775

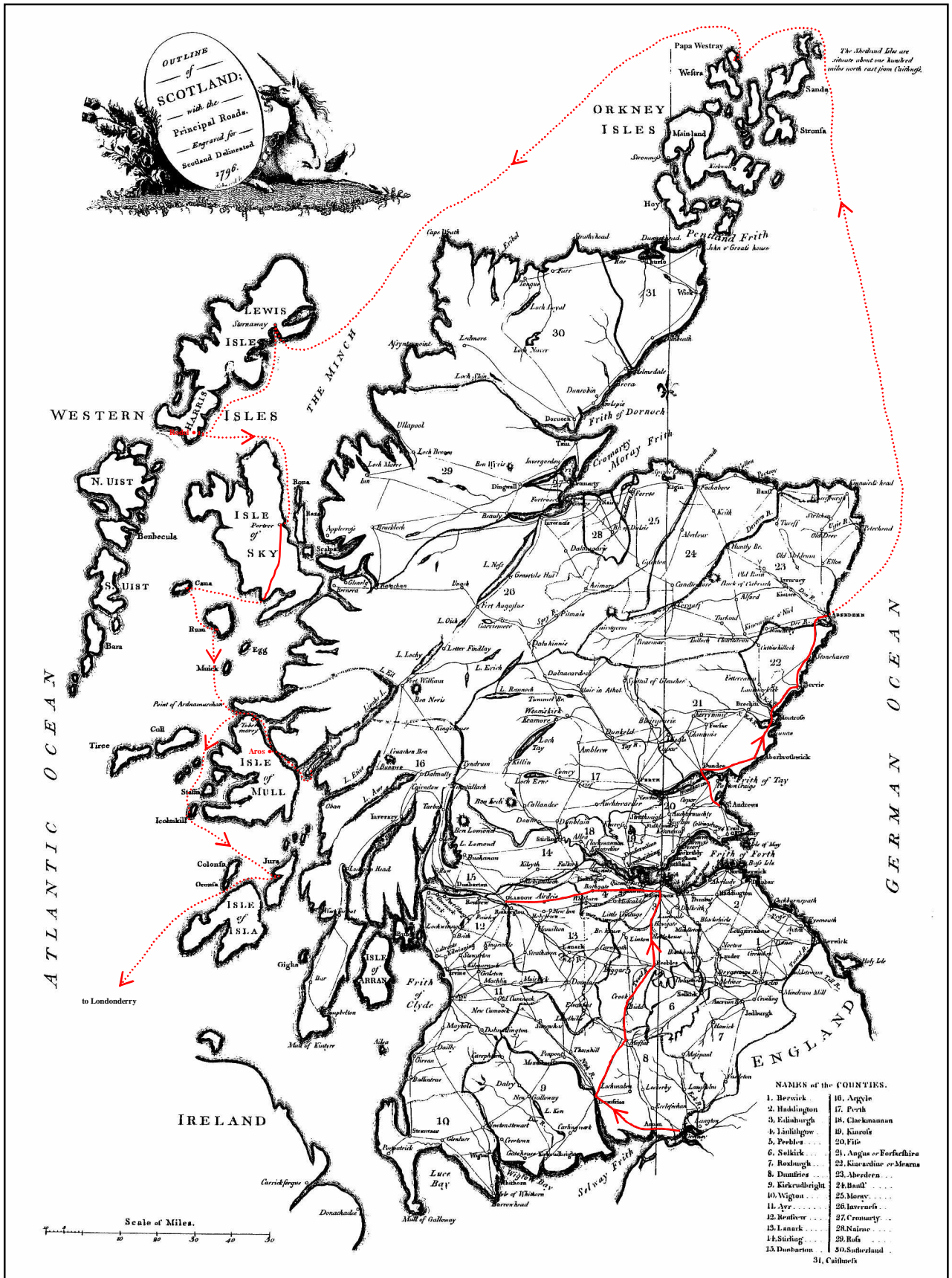


Cave, Thomas (1712-1778), English barrister, MP and local historian:

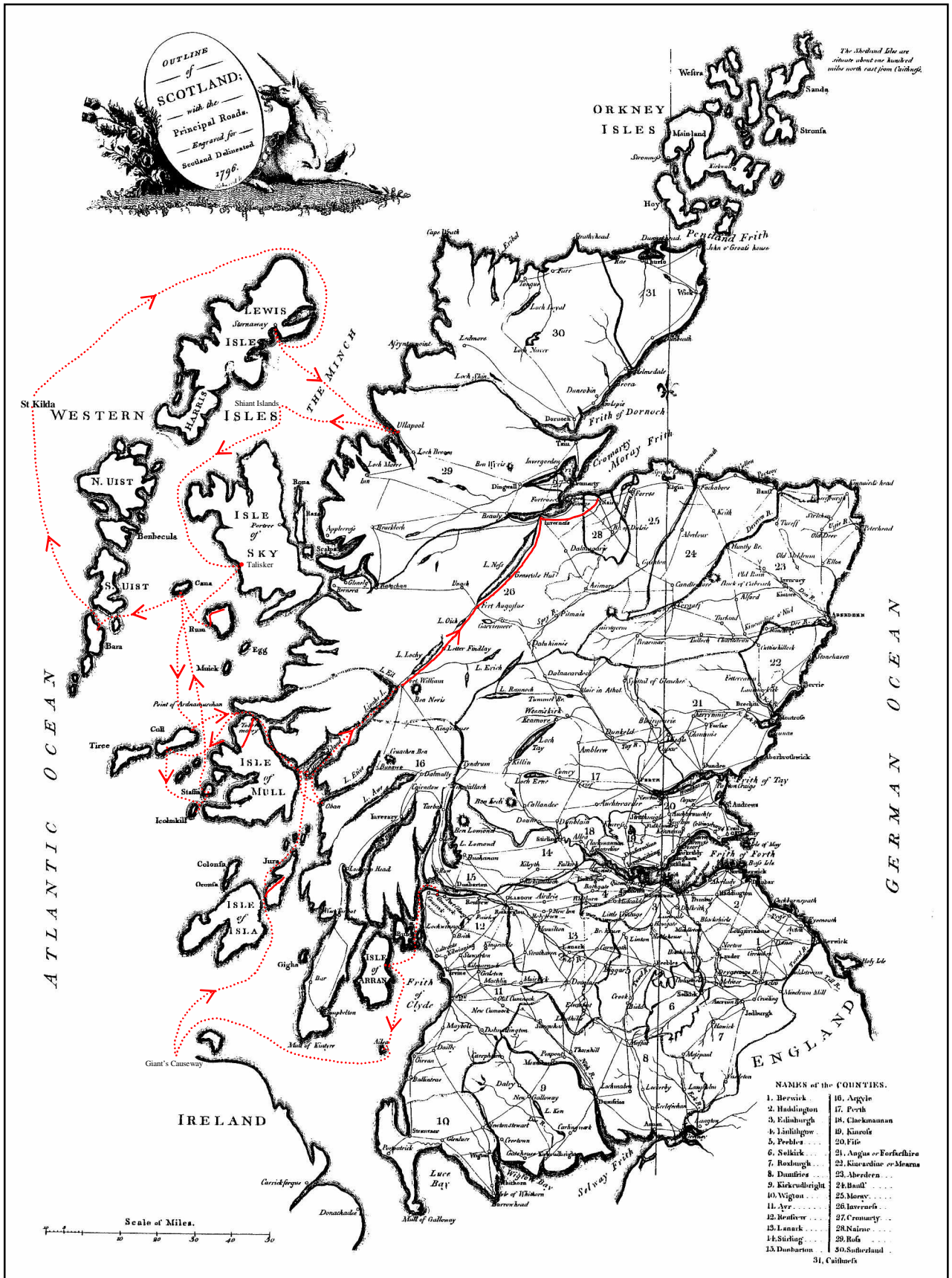
'A Diary of a Journey from Stanford Hall to the North of Scotland and back, in the year 1763, by Sir Thomas Cave, Bart., of Stanford Hall', *A History Of The Midland Counties*, C. Holme ed. (Rugby, 1891), pp. 183-241
 date of travel: 1763



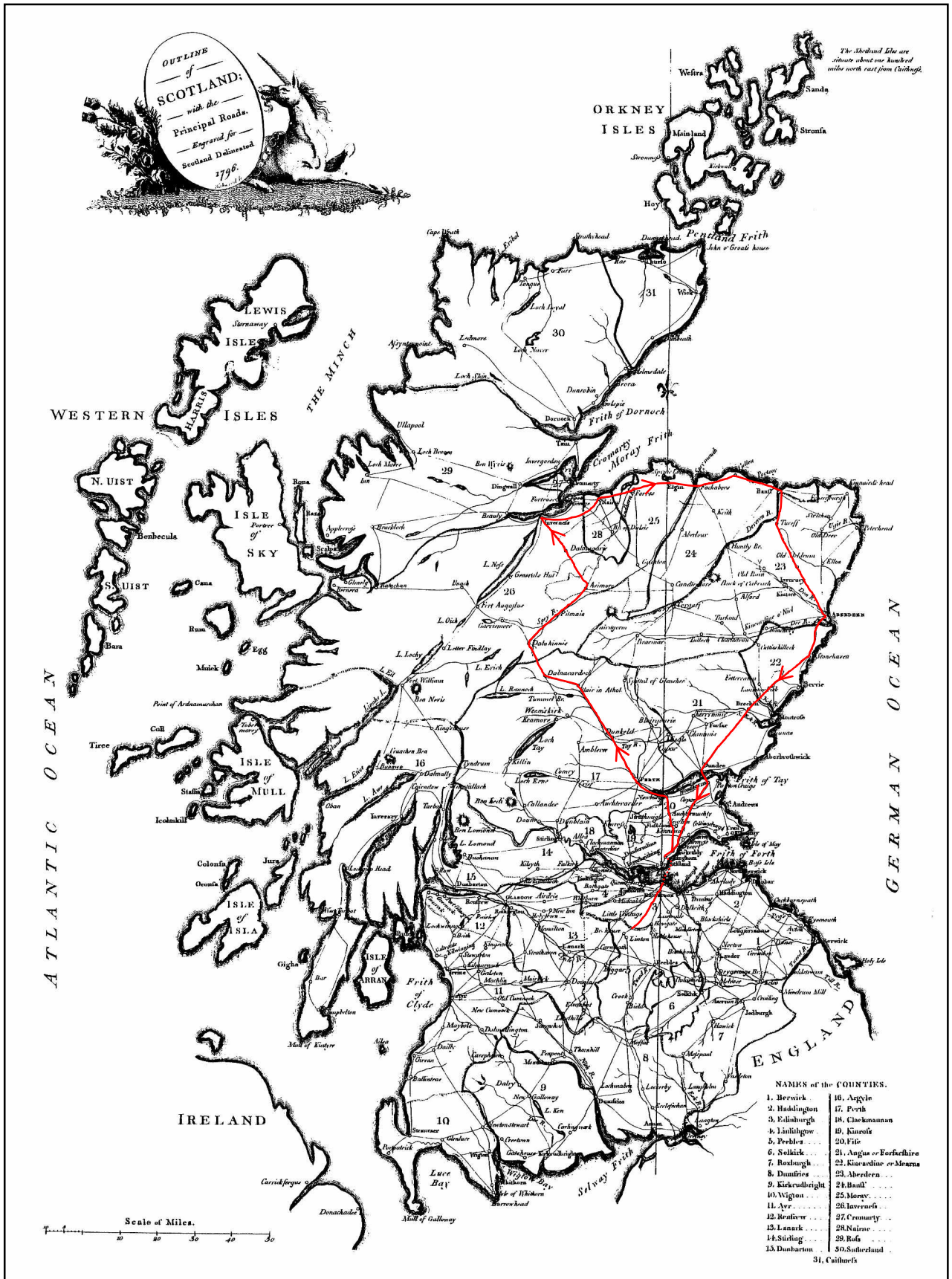
Chantreau, Pierre Nicolas (1741-1808), French historian and publicist:
Voyage Dans Les Trois Royaumes D'Angleterre, D'Ecosse Et D'Irlande, Fait En 1788 Et 1789
 (Paris, 1792)
 date of travel: 1788-89



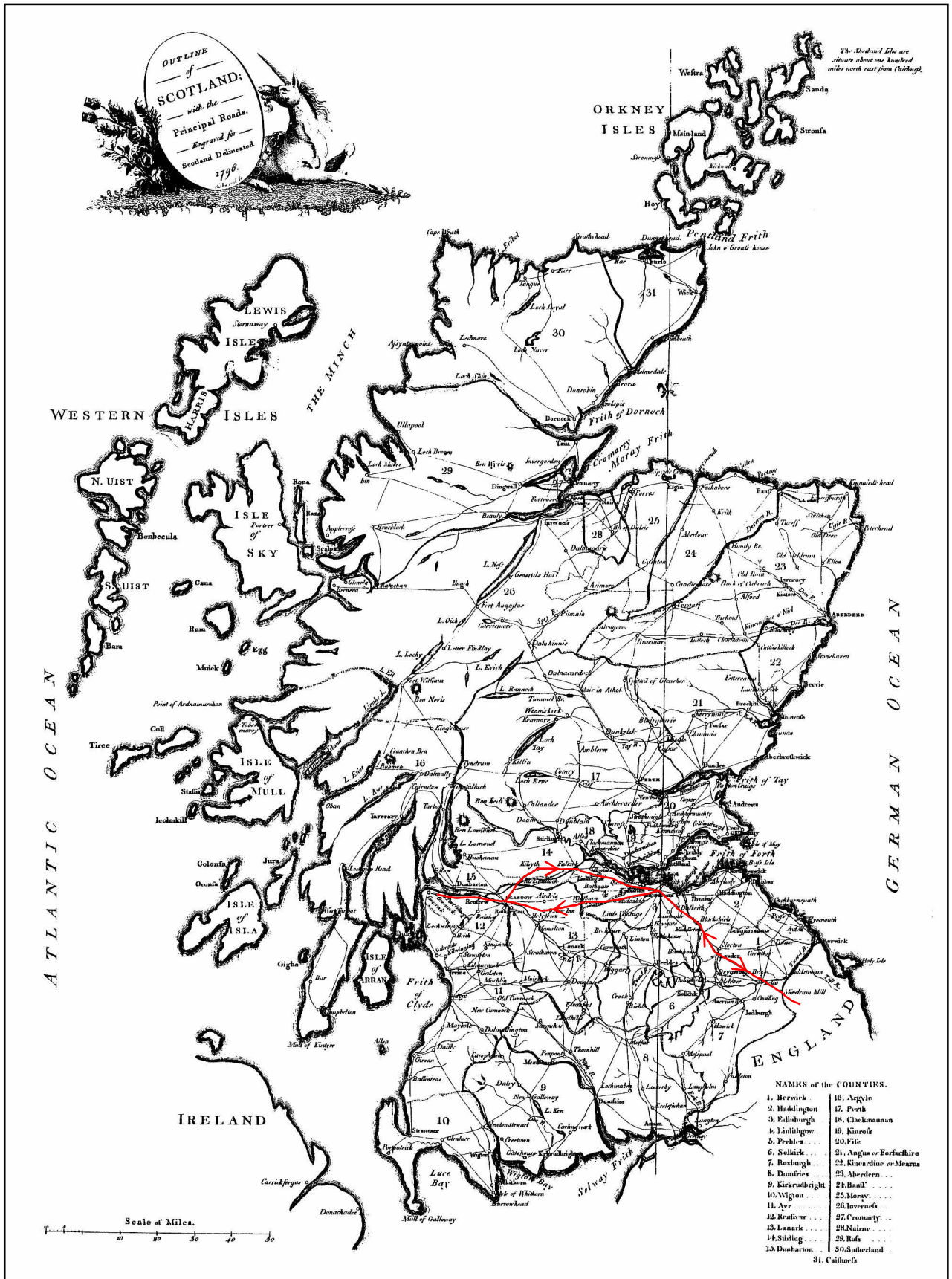
Clarke, Edward Daniel (1769-1822), English traveller, antiquary and mineralogist:
The Life And Remains Of The Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke, LL.D., W. Otter ed. (London, 1824)
 date of travel: 1797



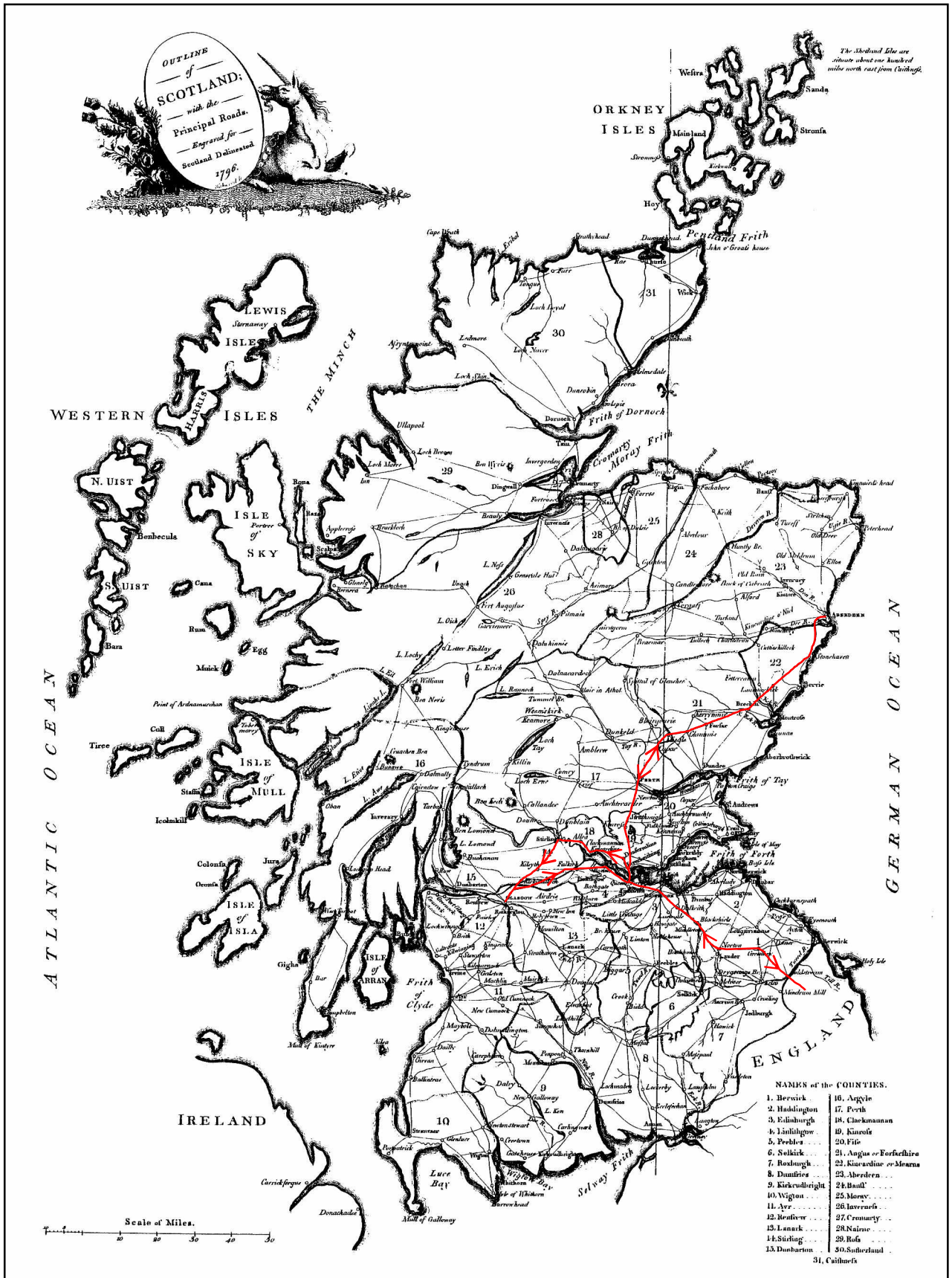
Clerk of Penicuik, John (1676-1755), Scottish judge and antiquary:
 NAS, 'A Trip to the north of Scotland as far as Inverness in May 1739', GD/2110
 date of travel: 1739



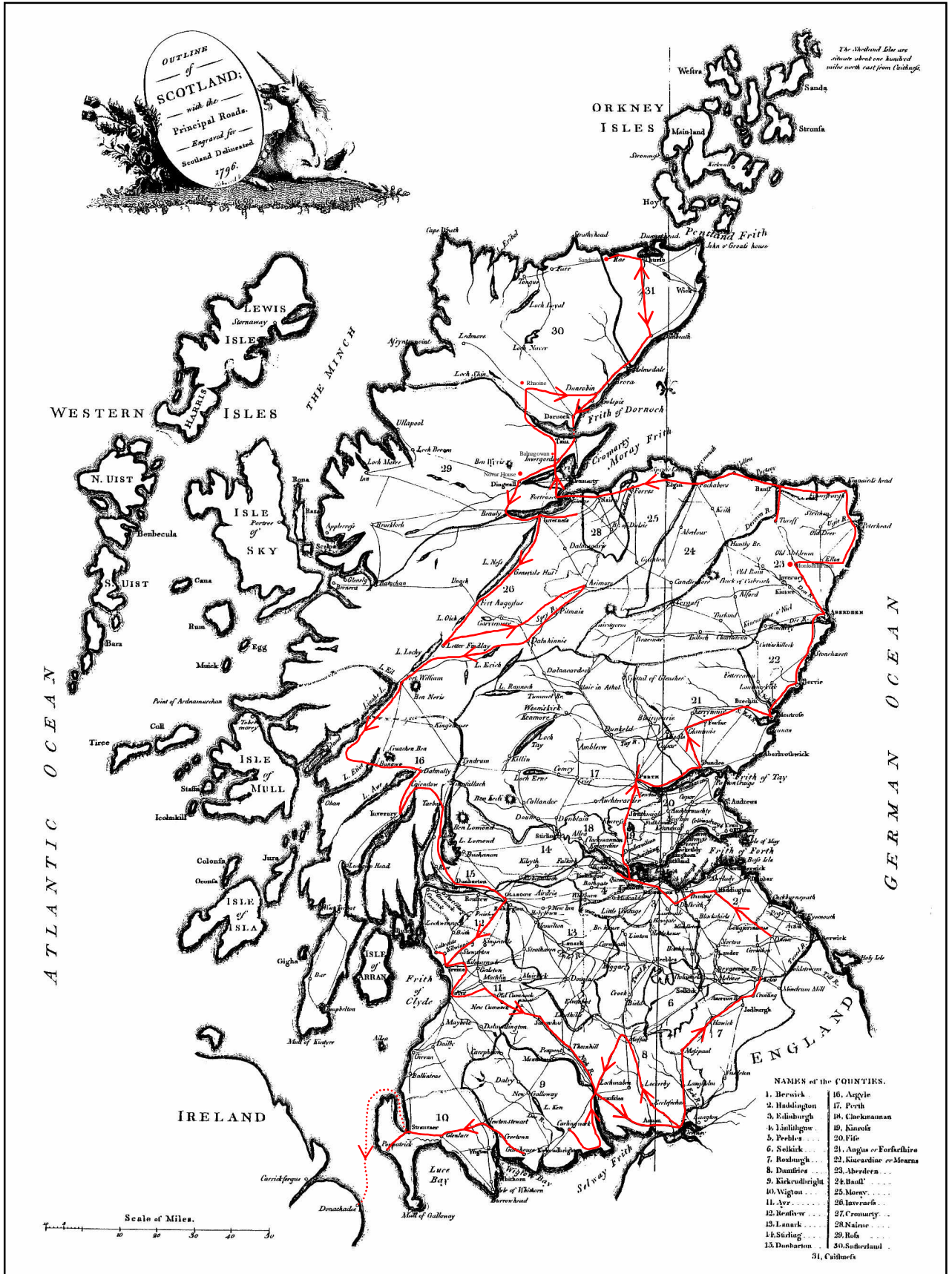
Culley, George (1735-1813), English agriculturalist:
Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798, A. Orde ed. (Oxford, 2002)
George Culley: Journal 1771



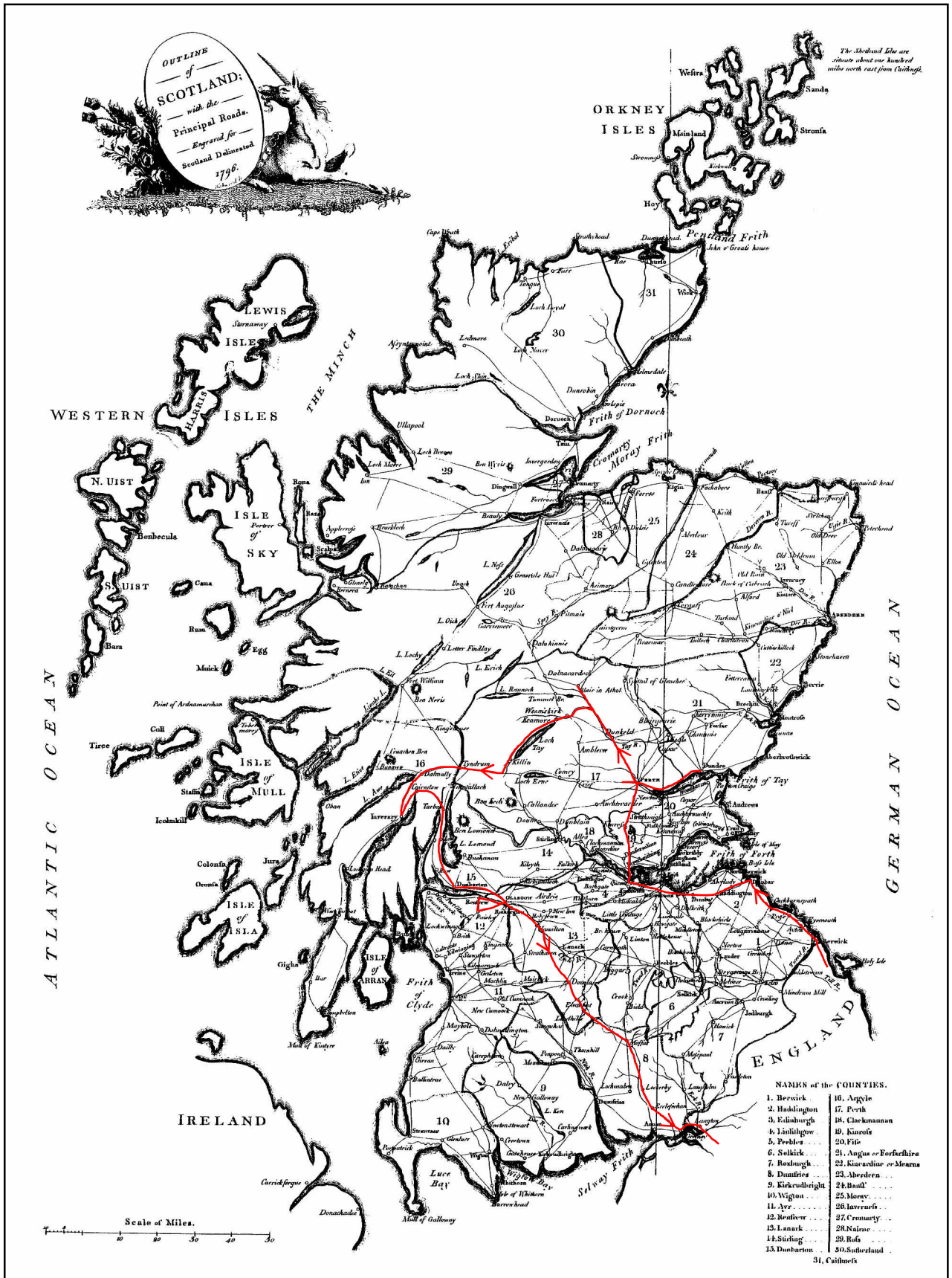
Culley, Matthew (1731-1804), English agriculturalist:
Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798, A. Orde ed. (Oxford, 2002)
 Matthew Culley: Journal 1770



Culley, Matthew (1731-1804), English agriculturalist:
Matthew And George Culley: Travel Journals And Letters, 1765-1798, A. Orde ed. (Oxford, 2002)
 Matthew Culley: Journal 1775



Dawson, Eliza (1770-1858), English autobiographer:
 NLS, 'A Tour through part of England and Scotland, by Eliza Dawson in the Year 1786', Acc. 12017
 date of travel: 1786



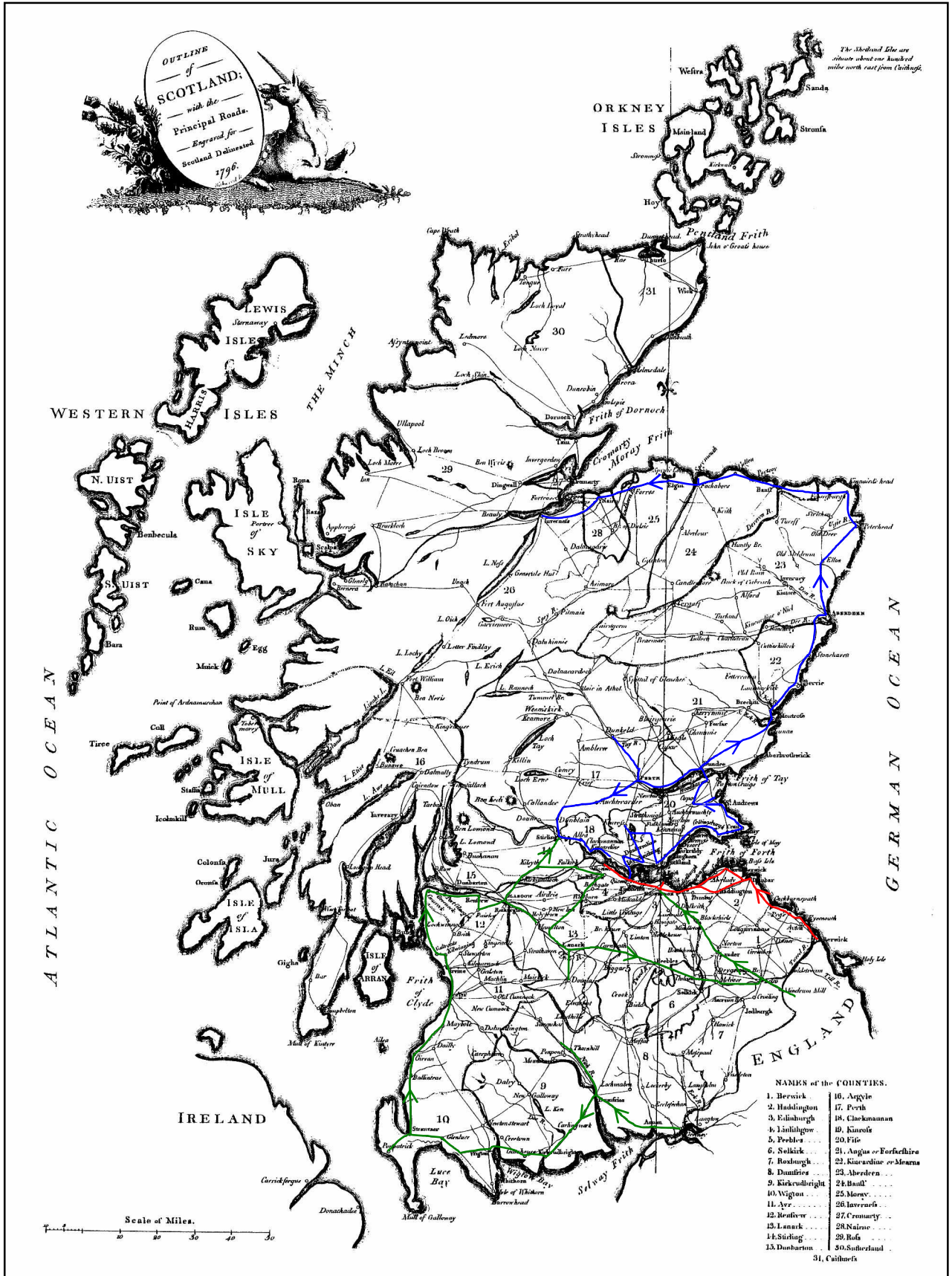
Defoe, Daniel (born 1660-61?, died 1731), English journalist, political spy and novelist:
A Tour Thro' the whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies, 3 vols. (London, 1724-27)

the exact dates of his travels cannot be established

south-eastern Scotland

south-western Scotland

northern Scotland



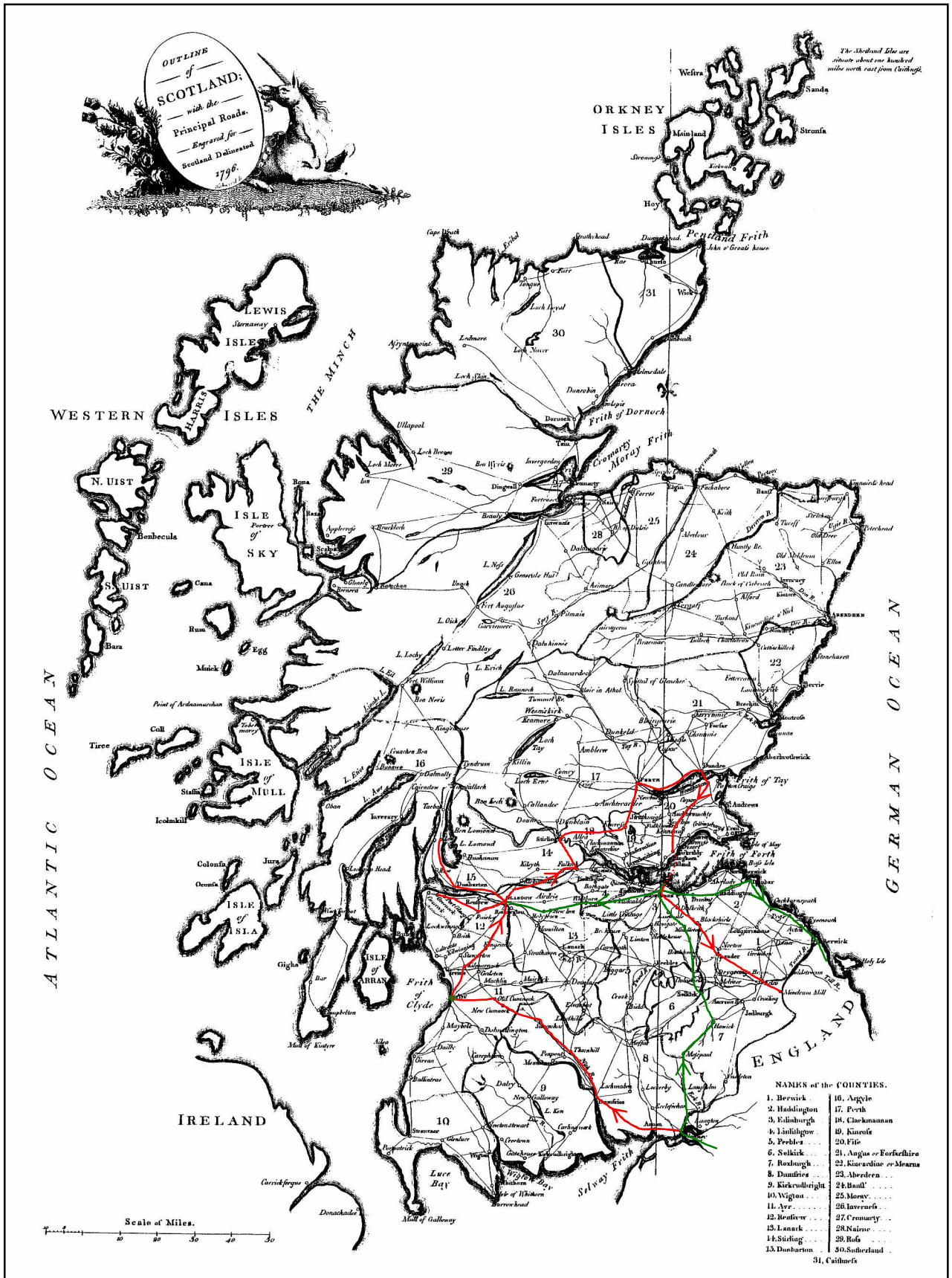
Dibdin, Charles (1745-1814), English dramatist, actor and songwriter:

Observations On A Tour Through Almost The Whole Of England, And A Considerable Part Of Scotland, 2 vols. (London, [1801-02])

date of travel: 1799, 1800

tour 1799

tour 1800



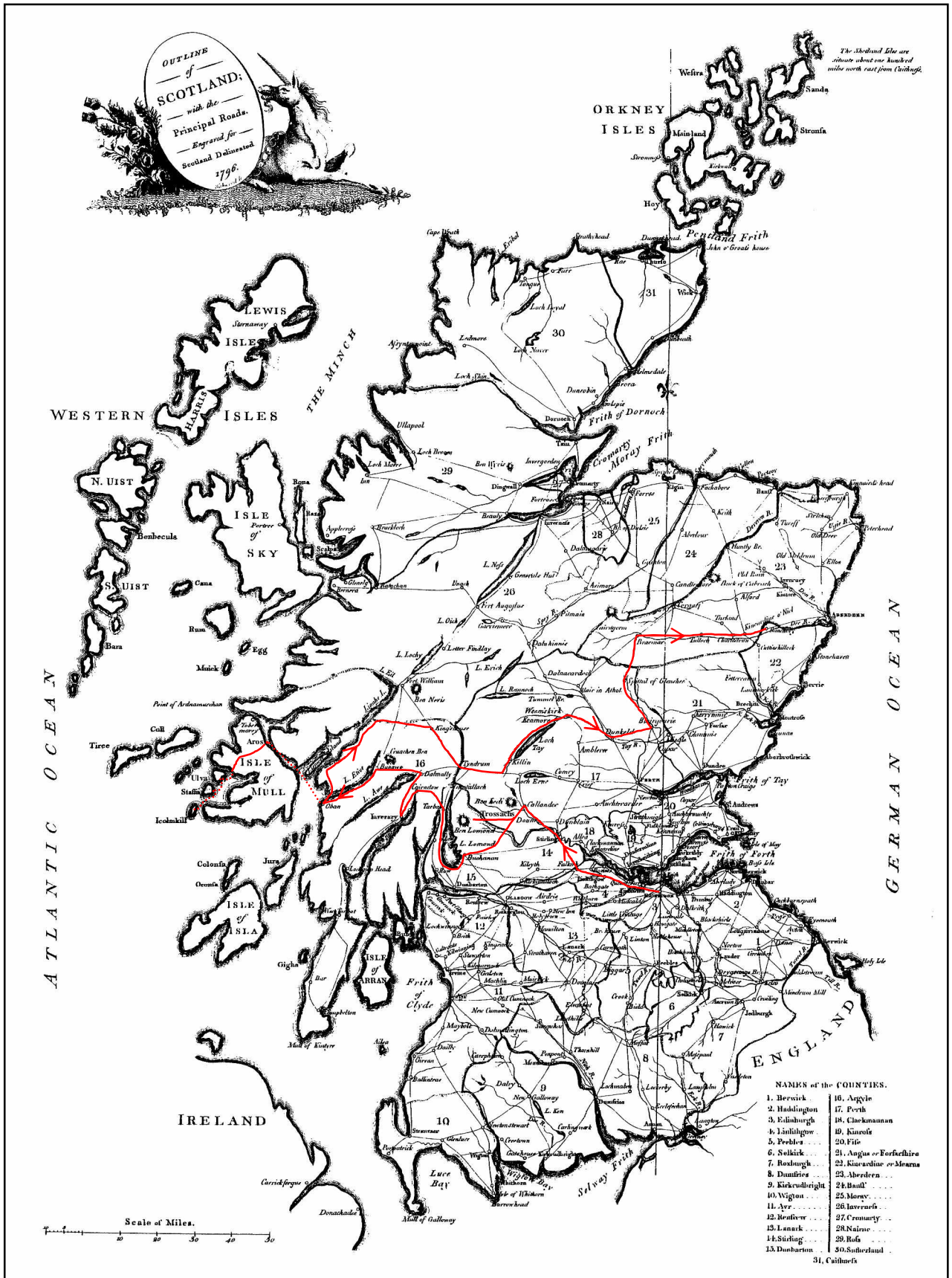
Douglas, Francis (1710?-1790?), Scottish miscellaneous writer:
A General Description Of The East Coast Of Scotland, From Edinburgh To Cullen (Paisley, 1782)
 date of travel: 1780



Douglas, George Lewis Augustus (1773-1847), Scottish advocate and sheriff-depute of Kincardineshire:

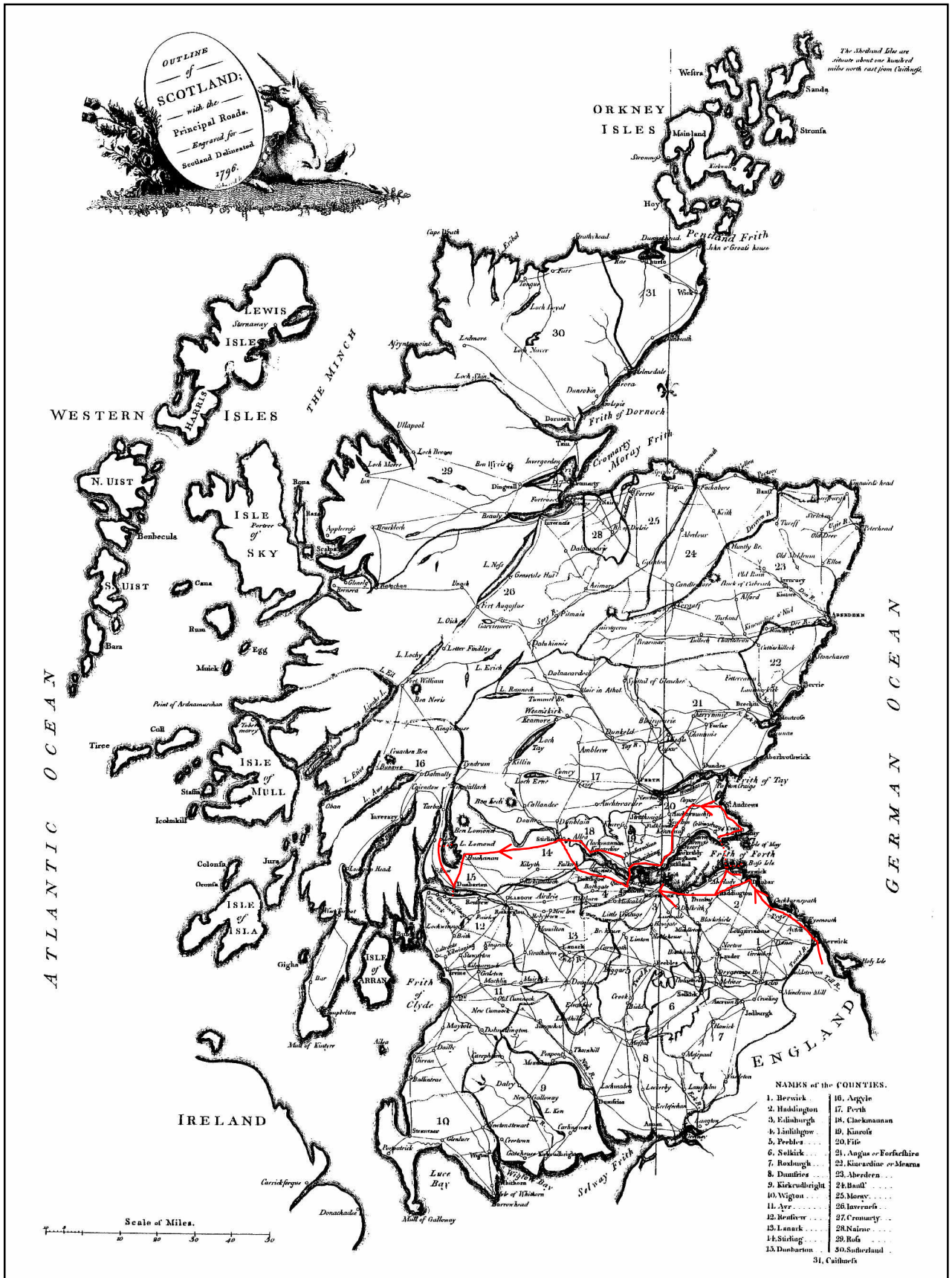
Tour in the Hebrides A.D. 1800 (Aberdeen, 1927)

date of travel: 1800

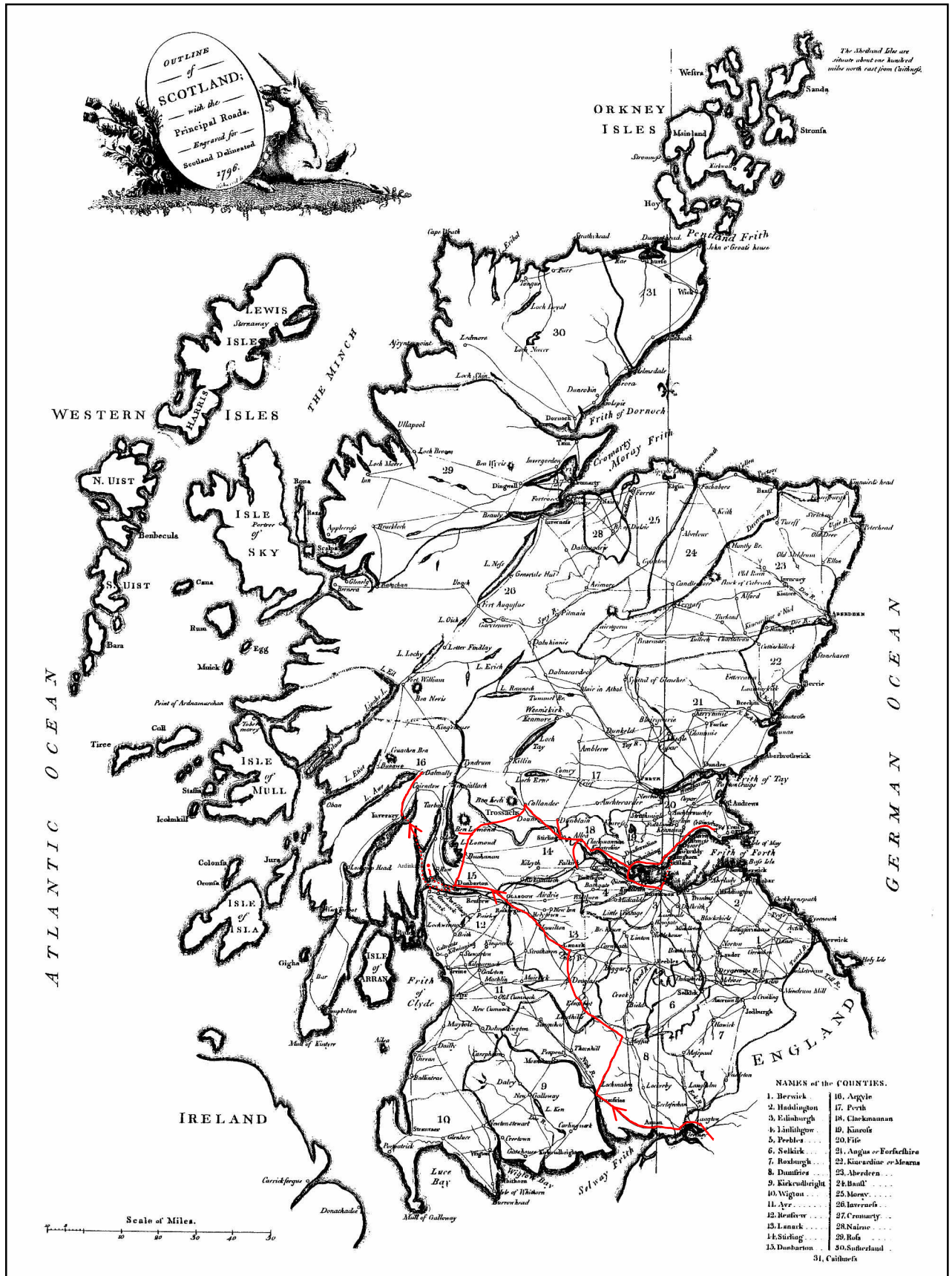


Farington, Joseph (1747-1821), English landscape painter:

ECL, 'Tours in Scotland in 1788 and 1792 by Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA 1861.788
 date of travel: 1788

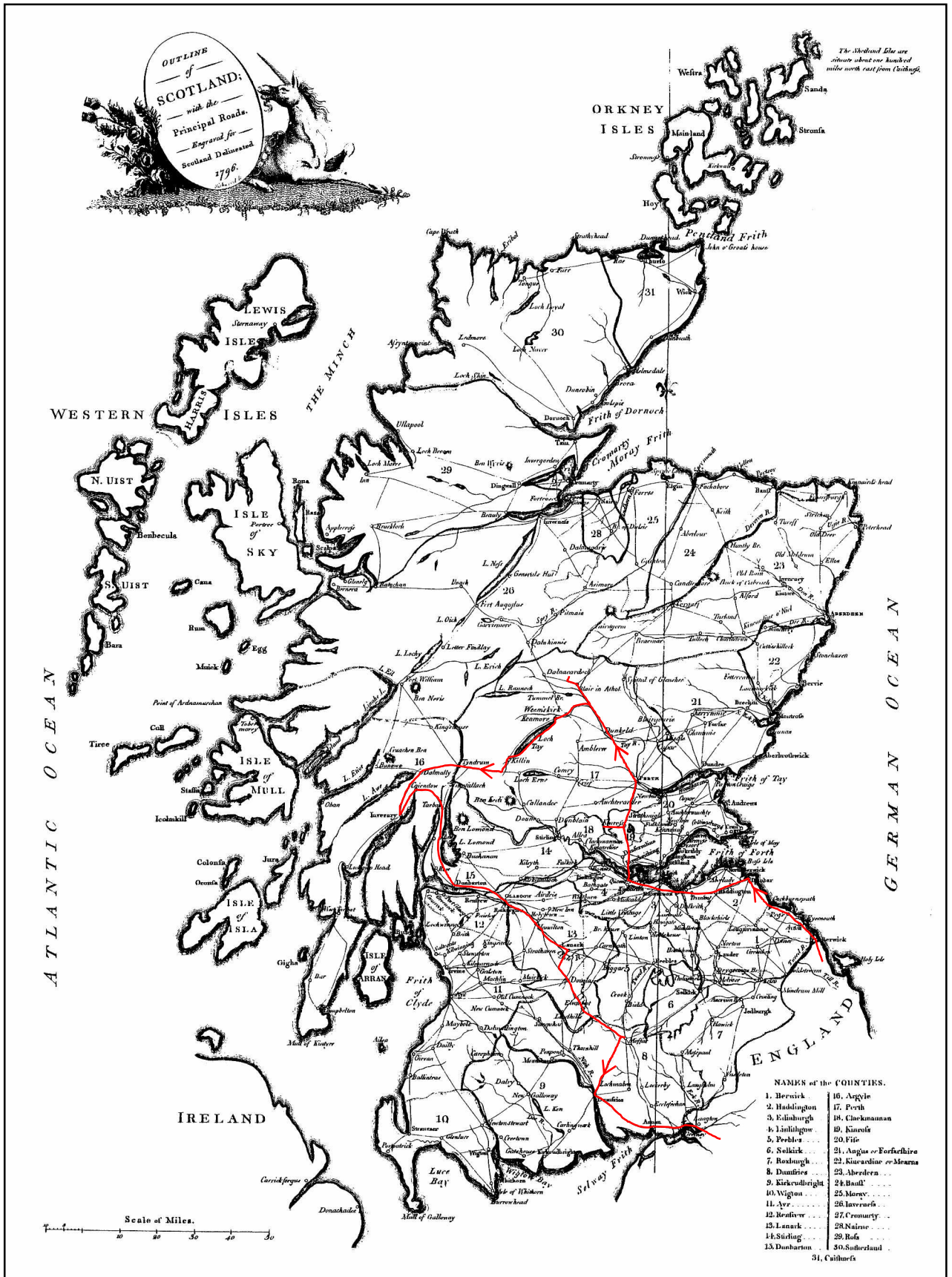


Farington, Joseph (1747-1821), English landscape painter:
 ECL, 'Tour In Scotland July To September 1792 By Joseph Farington, R.A.', MS. QYDA
 1861.792
 date of travel: 1792

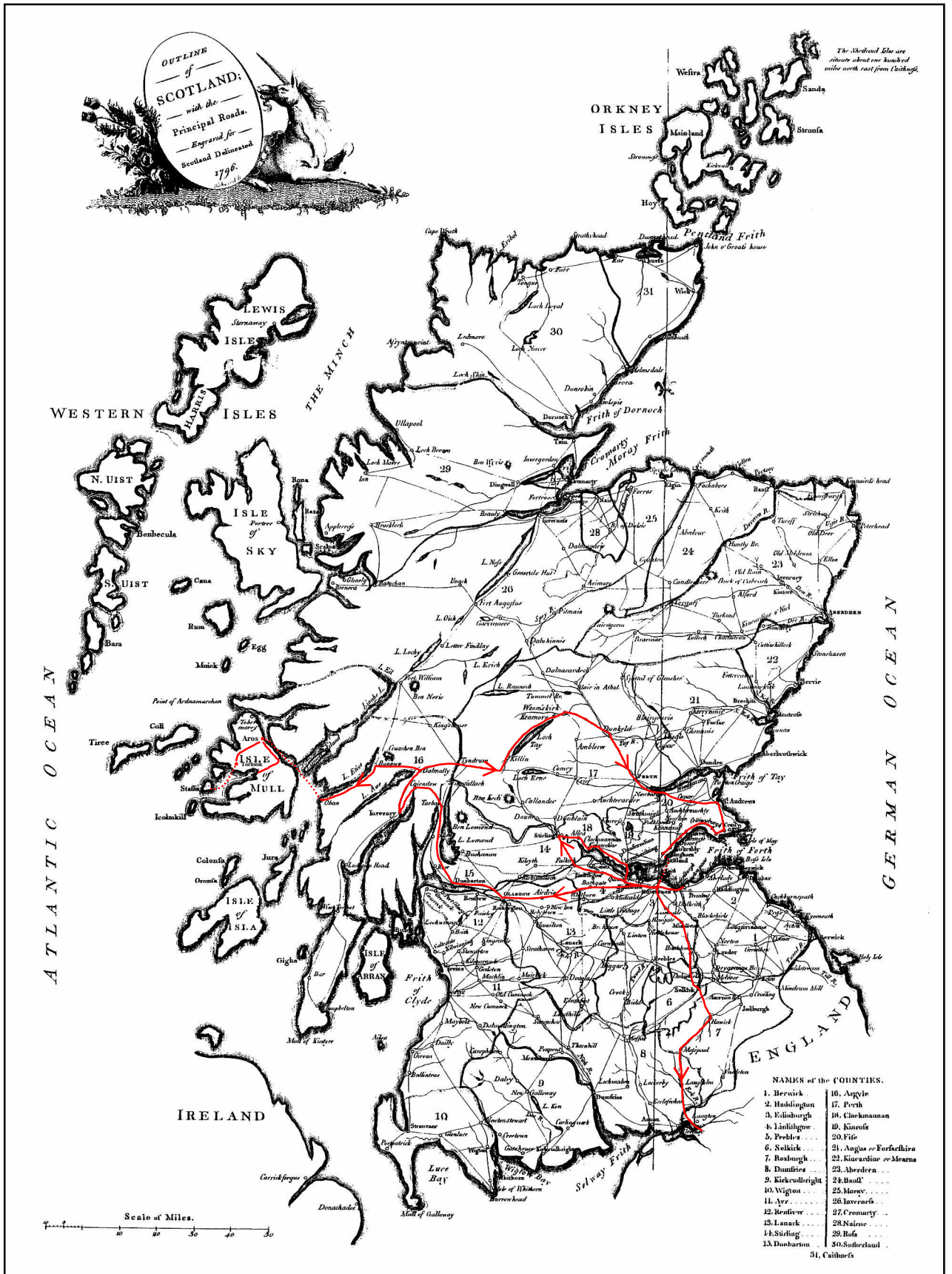


Farington, Joseph (1747-1821), English landscape painter:

The Diary Of Joseph Farington, K. Garlick and A. MacIntyre eds., vol. v (New Haven and London, 1979), pp. 1624-1693, 1719-1741
date of travel: 1801



Faujas de Saint-Fond, Barthelemy (1741-1819), French geologist:
Travels In England, Scotland, And The Hebrides (London, 1799)
date of travel: 1784



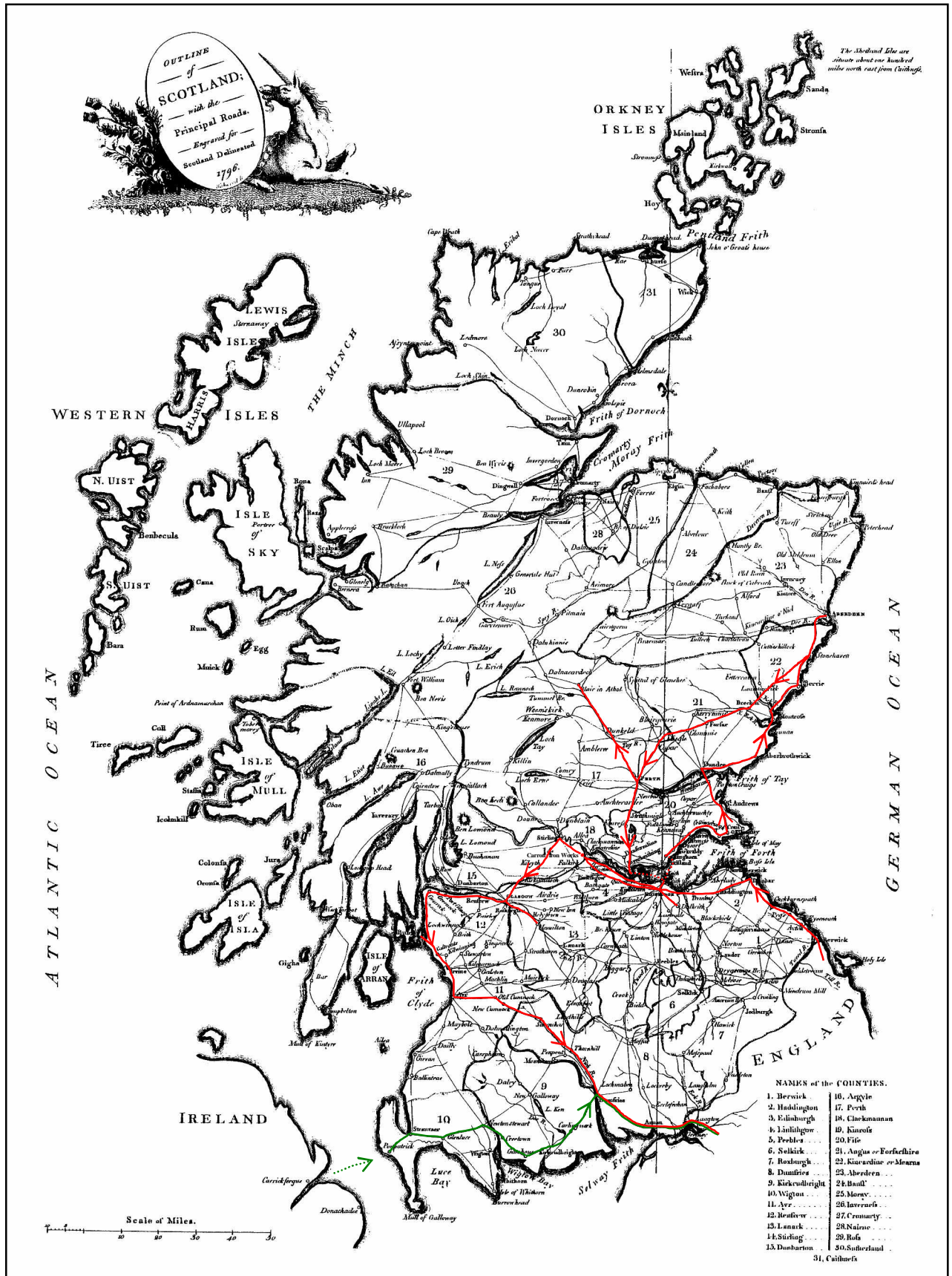
Fisher, Jabez Maud (1750-1779), American Quaker and businessman:

An American Quaker In The British Isles: The Travel Journals of Jabez Maud Fisher, 1775-1779,
K. Morgan ed. (Oxford, 1992)

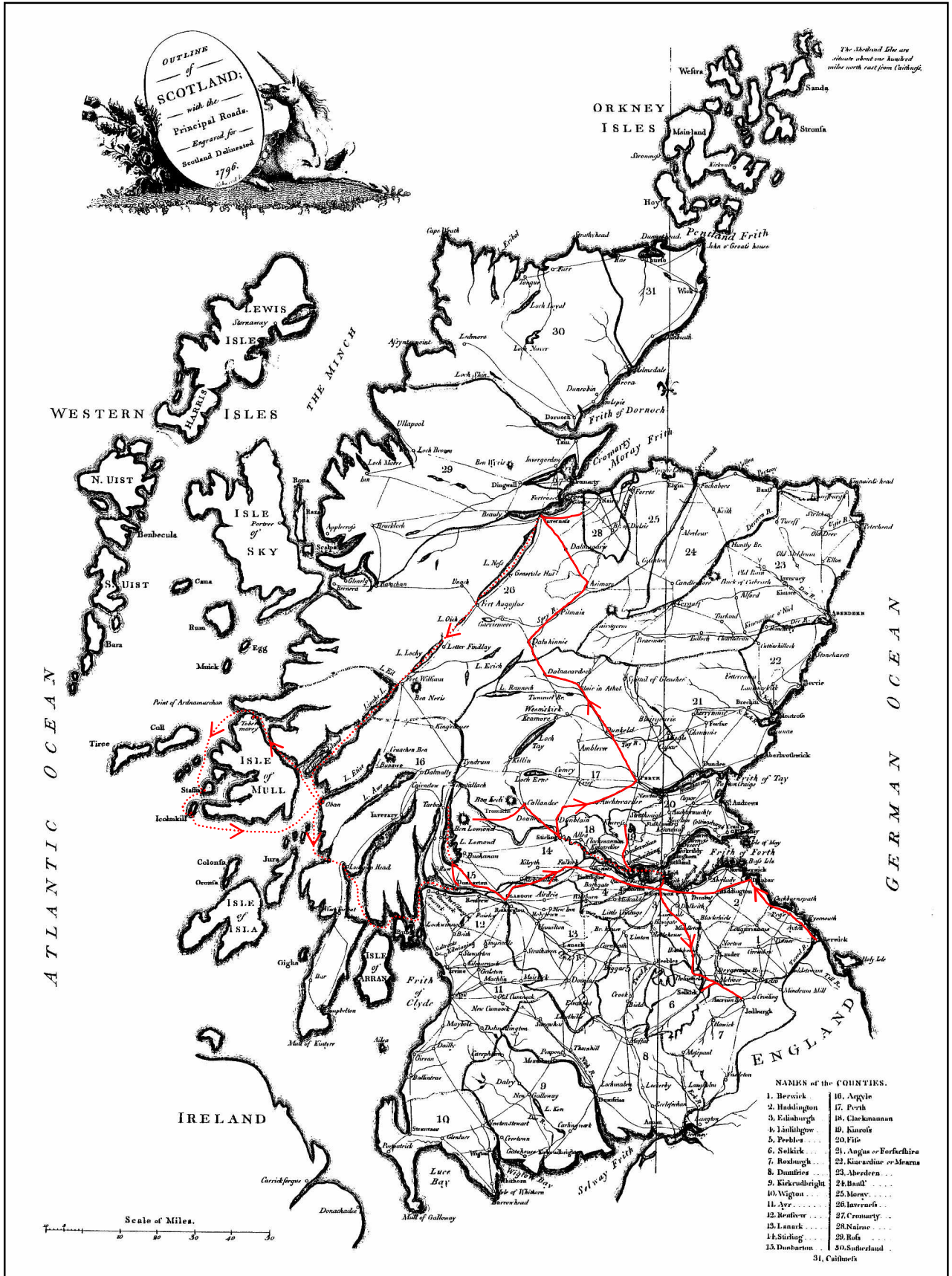
date of travel: 1775, 1776

tour 1775

tour 1776



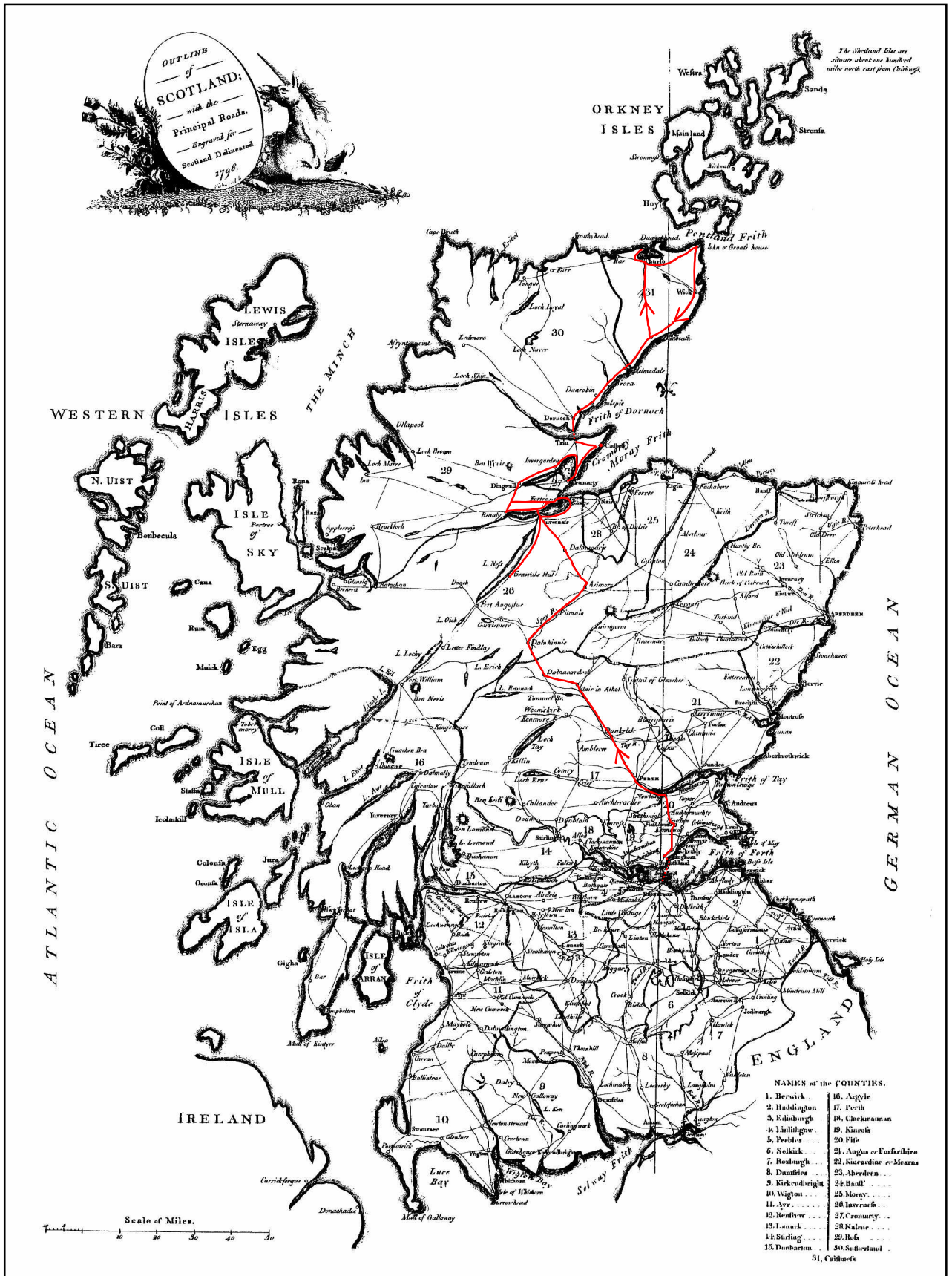
Fontane, Theodor (1819-1898), German journalist and novelist:
Beyond the Tweed (London, 1998)
 date of travel: 1858



Forbes, Robert (1708-1775), Scottish, Bishop of Ross and Caithness:

Journals Of The Episcopal Visitations Of The Right Rev. Robert Forbes, M.A., Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Caithness, And Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Argyll, 1762 & 1770, J.B. Craven ed. (London, 1886)

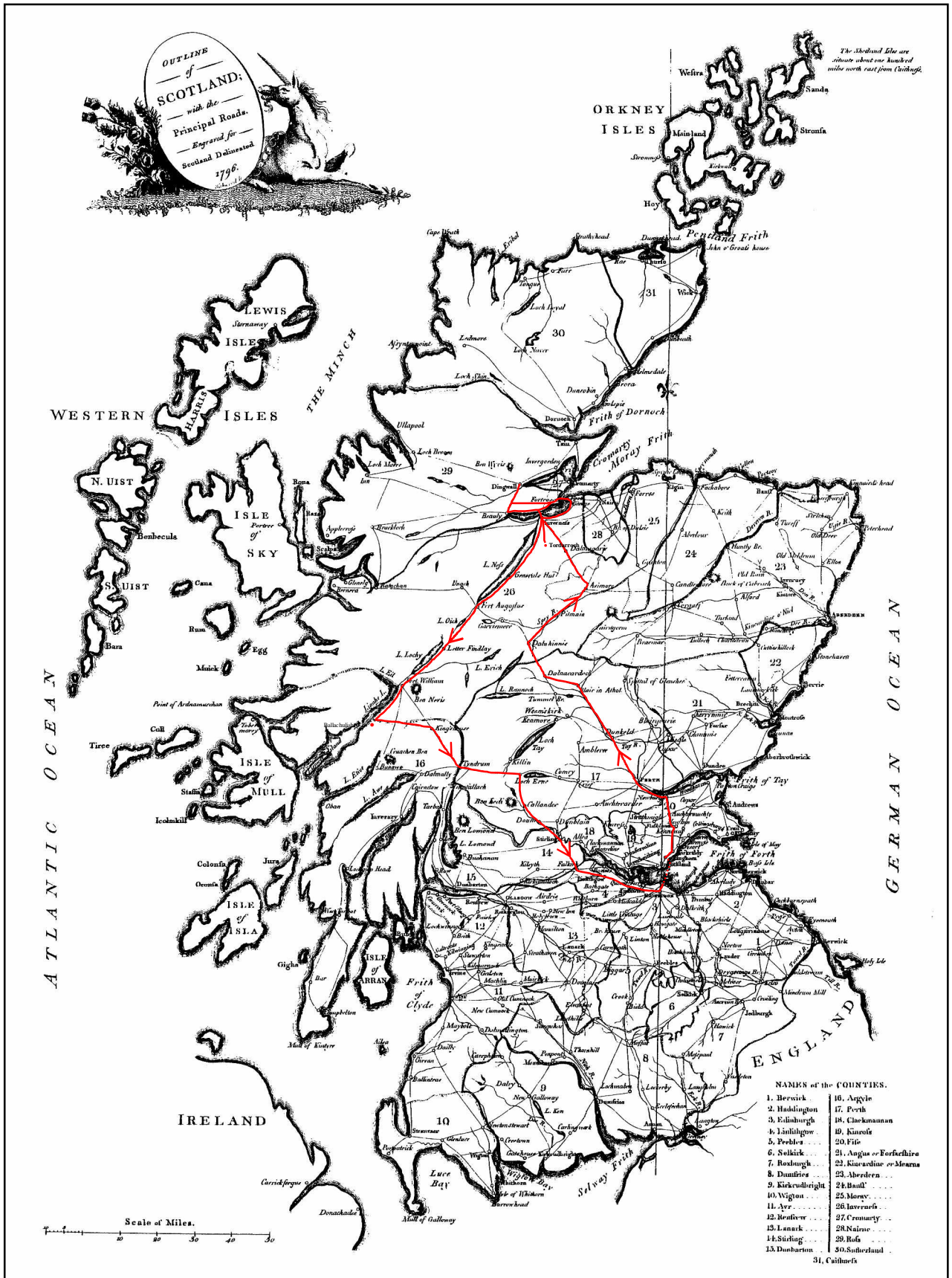
date of travel: 1762



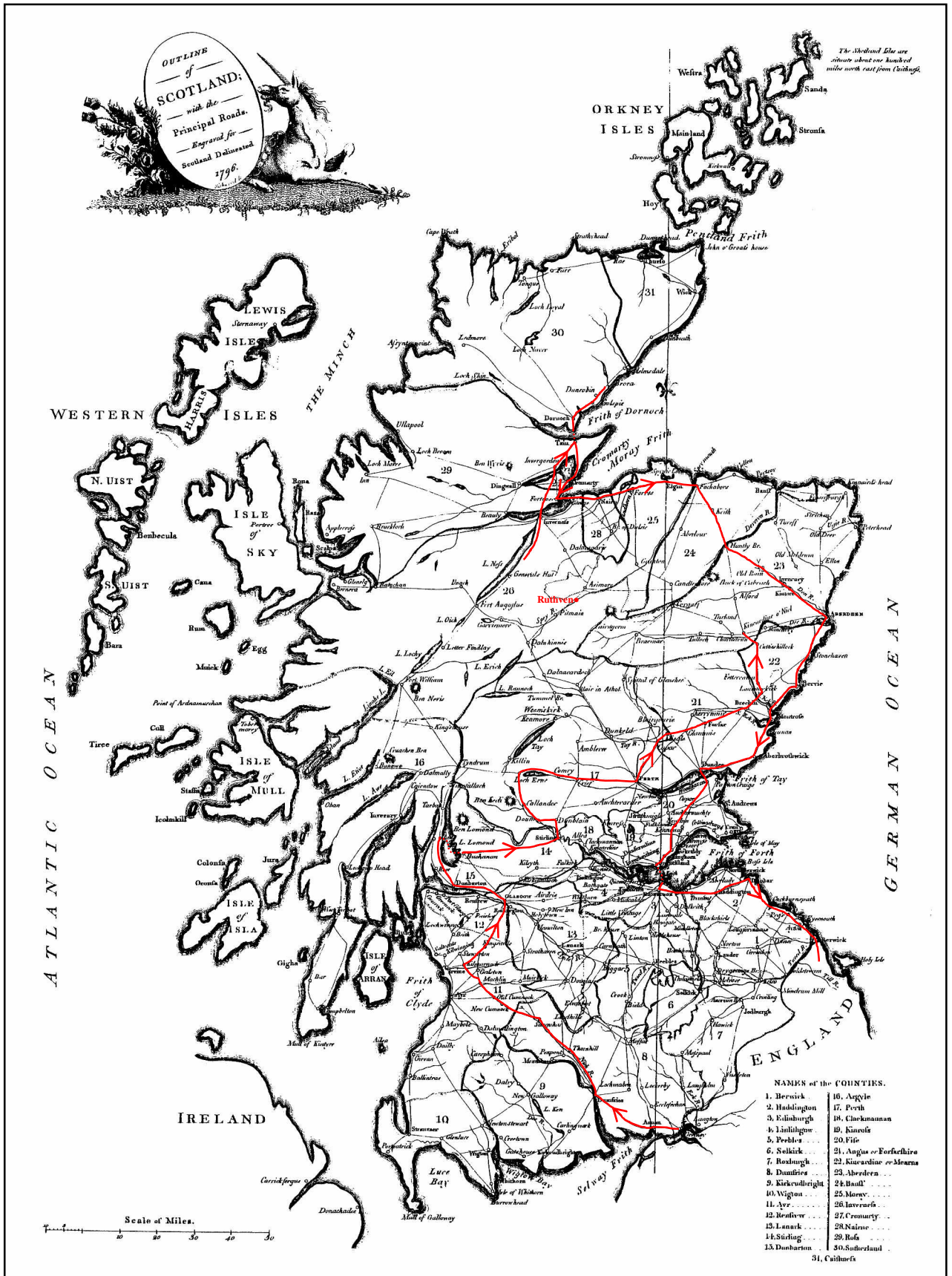
Forbes, Robert (1708-1775), Scottish, Bishop of Ross and Caithness:

Journals Of The Episcopal Visitations Of The Right Rev. Robert Forbes, M.A., Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Caithness, And Of The Dioceses Of Ross And Argyll, 1762 & 1770, J.B. Craven ed. (London, 1886)

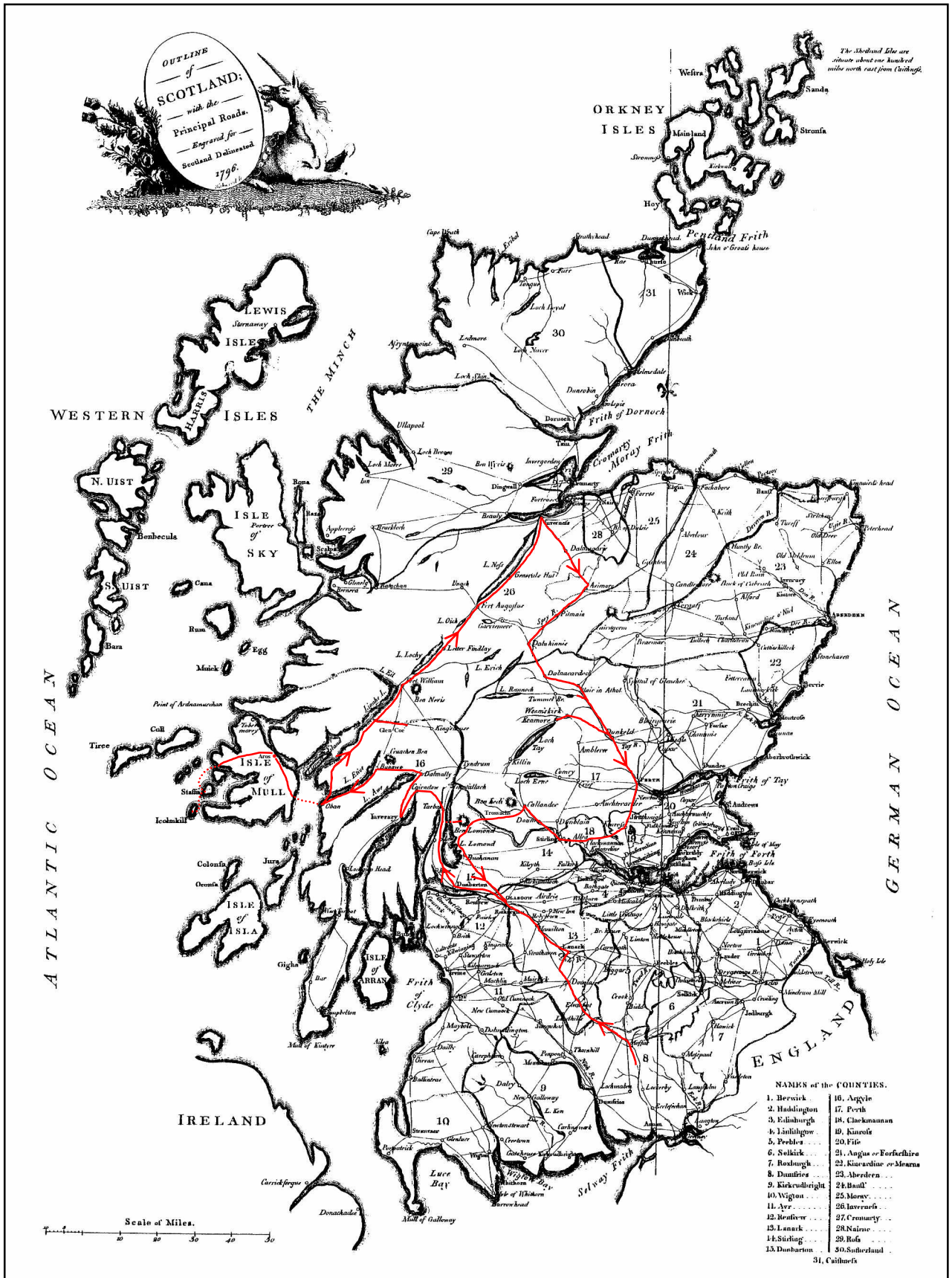
date of travel: 1770



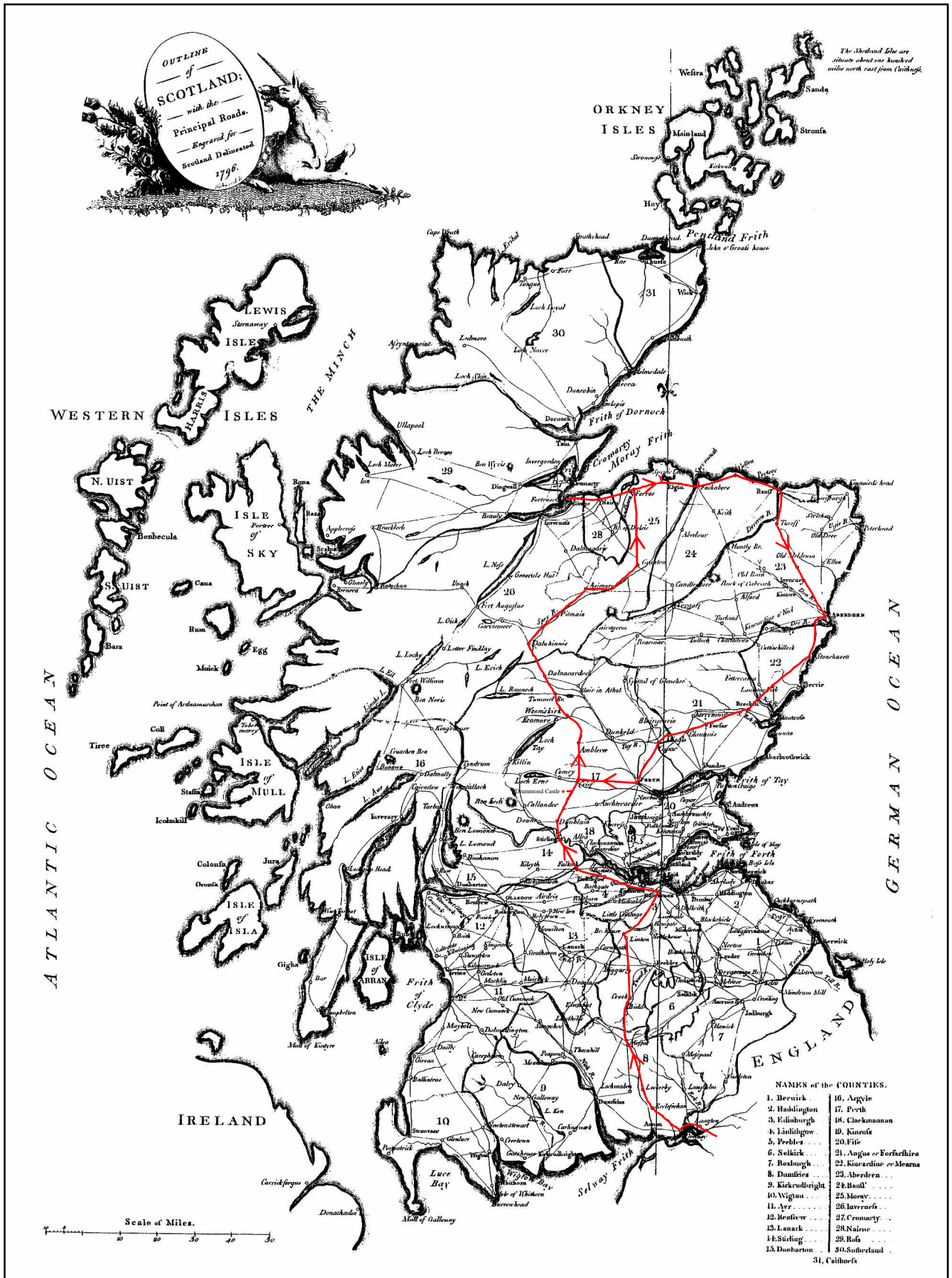
Franck, Richard (1624?-1708), English captain in the Parliamentary service:
Northern Memoirs, Calculated for the Meridian of Scotland (London, 1694)
 date of travel: 1656-57



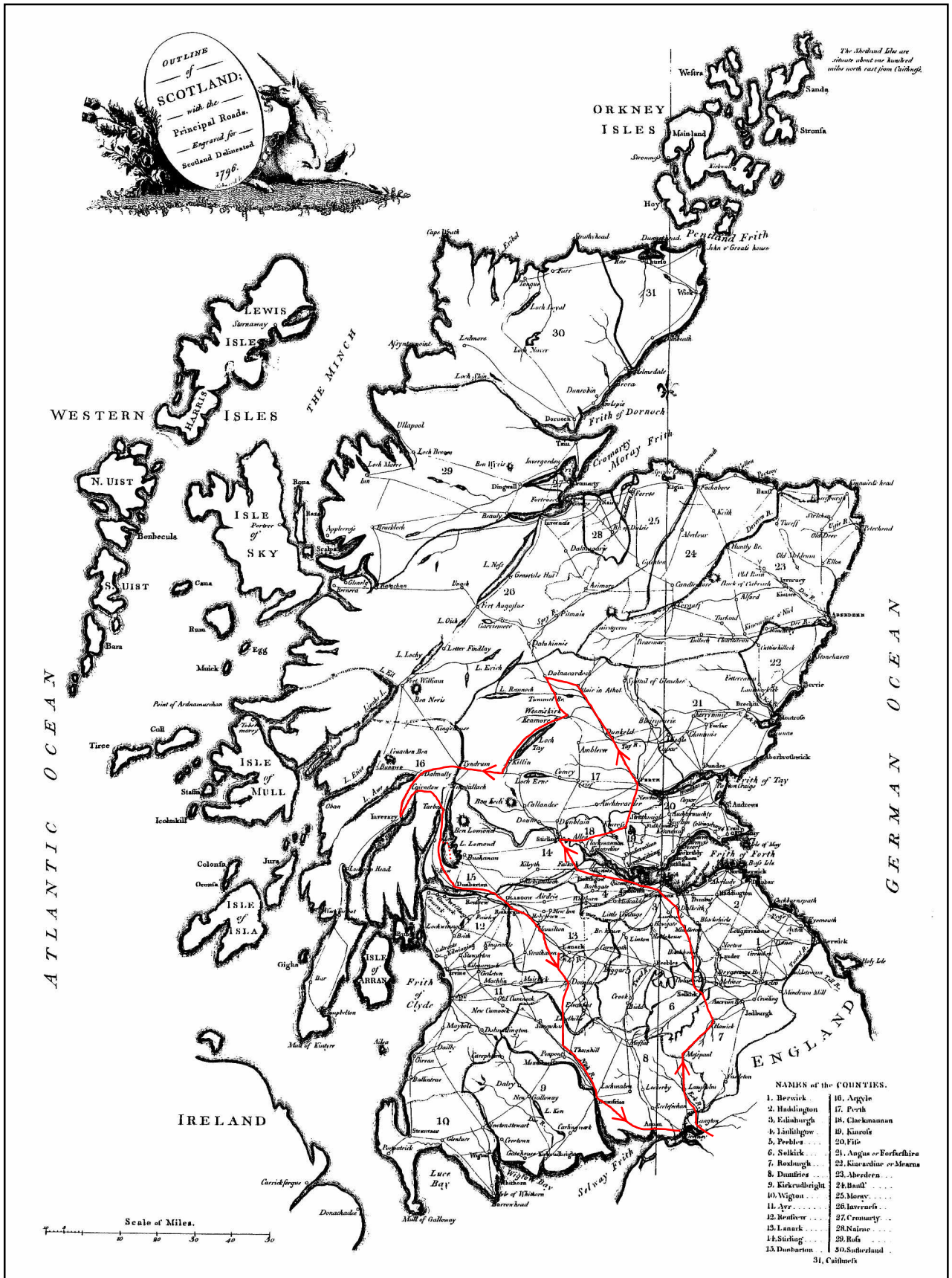
Garnett, Thomas (1766-1802), English physician and natural philosopher:
Observations On A Tour Through The Highlands And Part Of The Western Isles Of Scotland,
Particularly Staffa And Icolmkill (London, 1800)
 date of travel: 1798



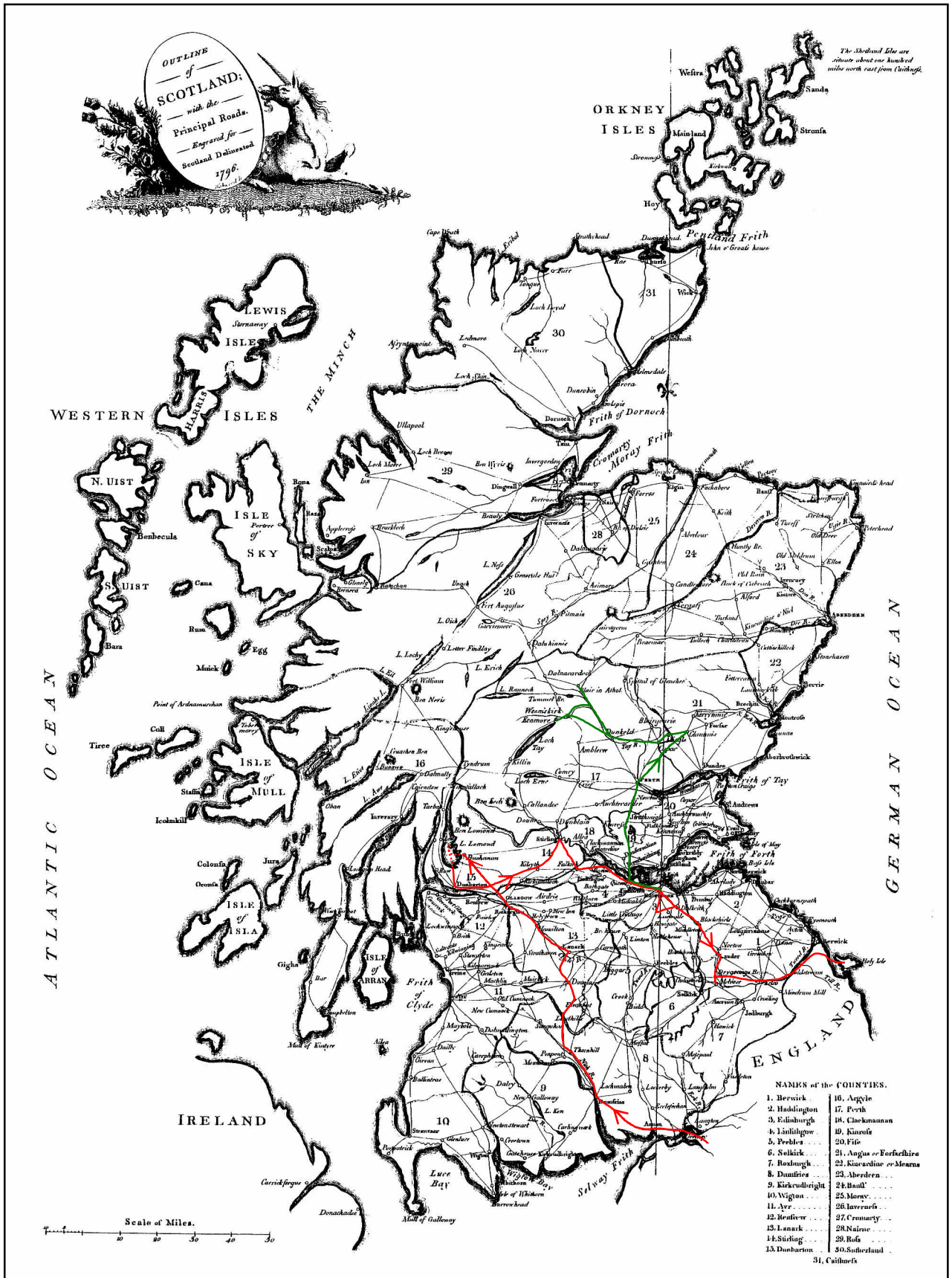
Gastrell, Francis (c. 1707-1772), English, vicar of Frodsham, Cheshire:
 NLS, 'Journey in Scotland', Acc. 5741
 date of travel: 1760



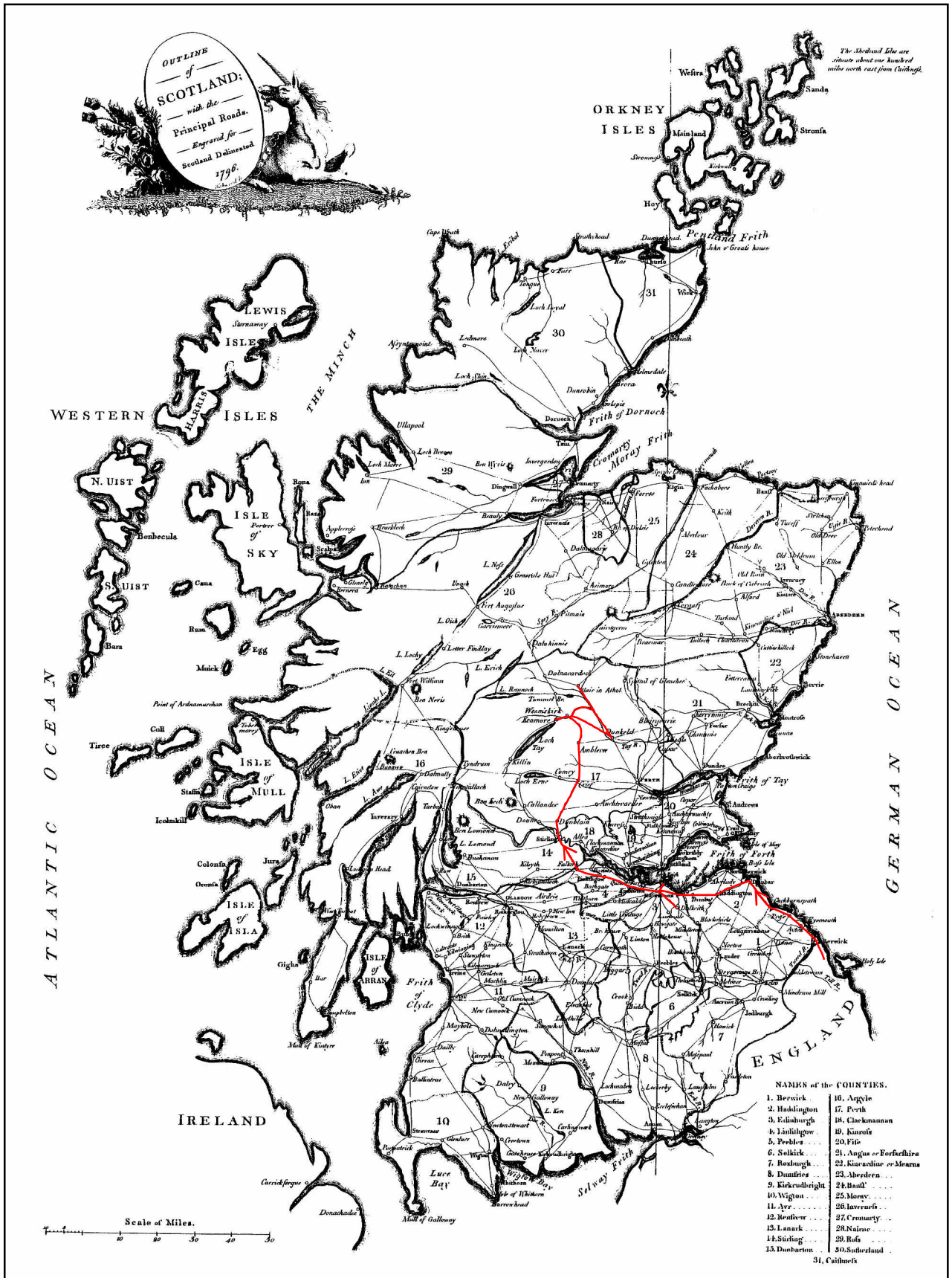
Gilpin, William (1724-1804), English miscellaneous writer:
Observations, Relative Chiefly To Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, On several Parts of Great Britain; Particularly The High-Lands of Scotland (London, 1789)
 date of travel: 1776



Gray, Thomas (1716-1771), English poet:
Gray And His Friends, D.C. Tovey ed. (Cambridge, 1890)
The Letters Of Thomas Gray, D.C. Tovey ed., 3 vols. (London, 1900-12)
 date of travel: 1764, 1765
 tour 1764
 tour 1765



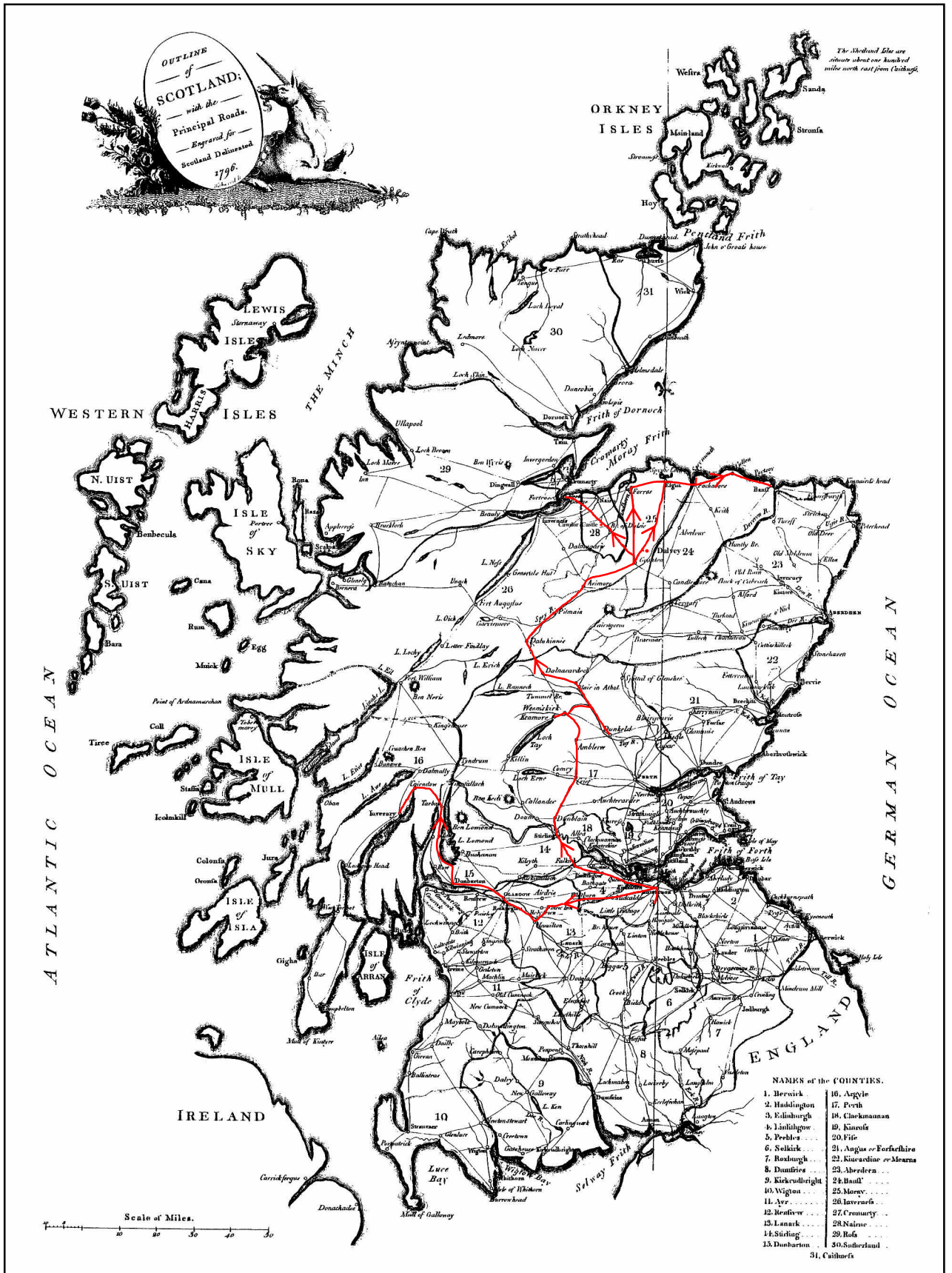
Grey, Jemima (1722-1797), Anglo-Scottish aristocratic lady:
 Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, Bedford, [Wrest Park (Lucas) Archive], 'Journal of a Northern Tour 1755', MS. L30/9A/7 and MS. L30/21/3/9
 date of travel: 1755



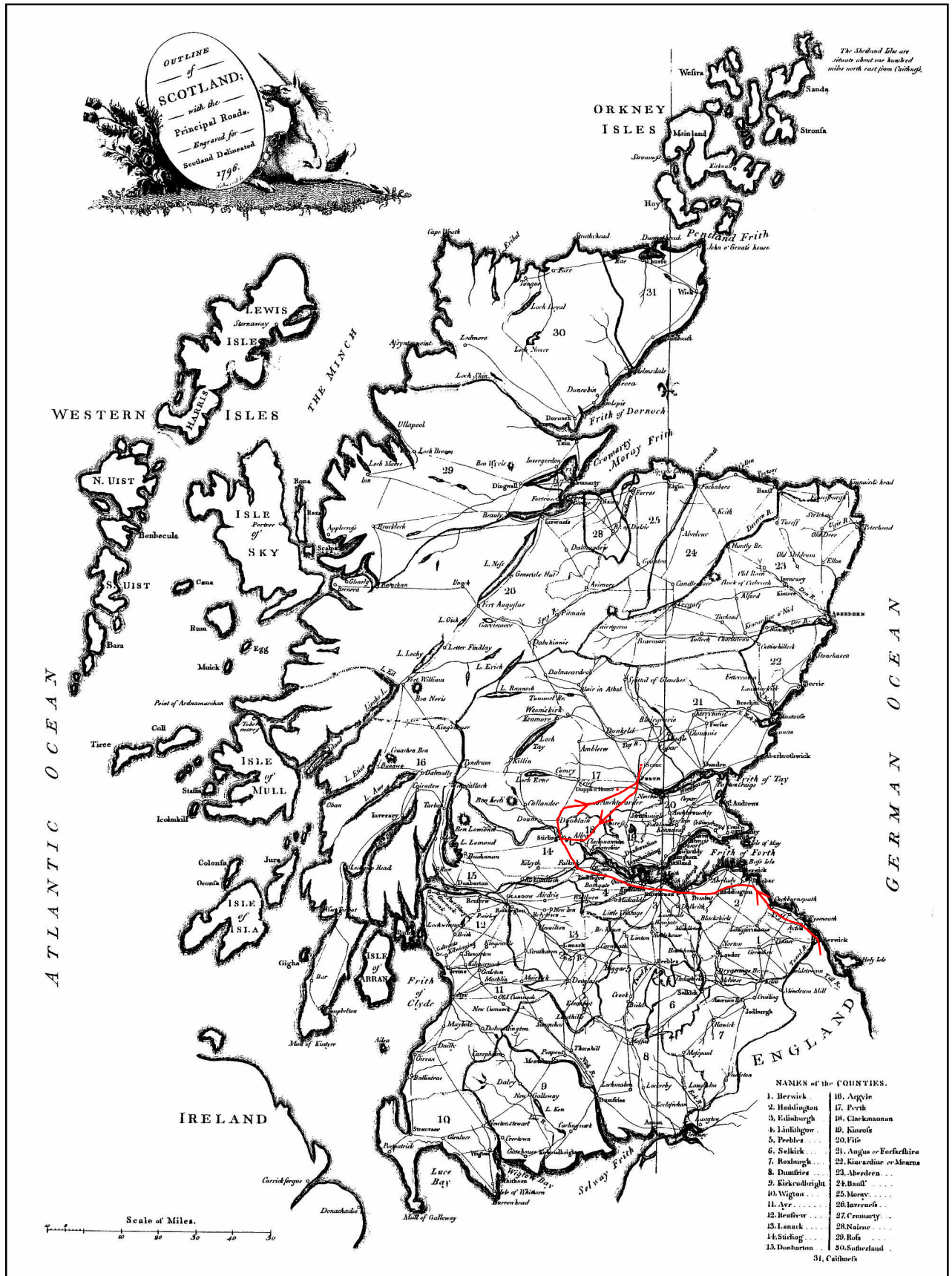
Hanway, Mary Ann(e) (born 1755-59?, died 1823-25?), English novelist:

A Journey To The Highlands Of Scotland. With Occasional Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Tour: By a Lady (London, [1777])

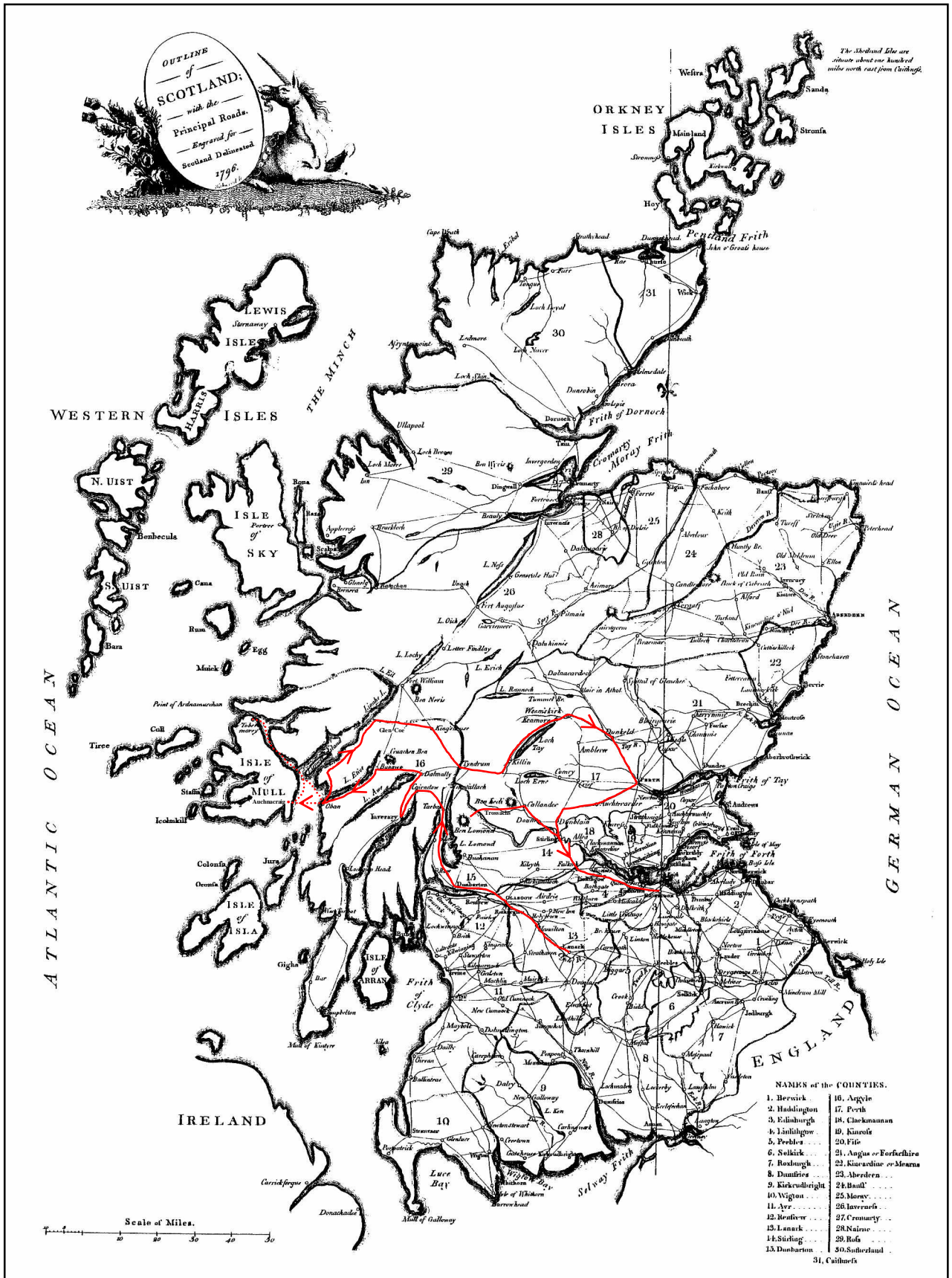
date of travel: 1775



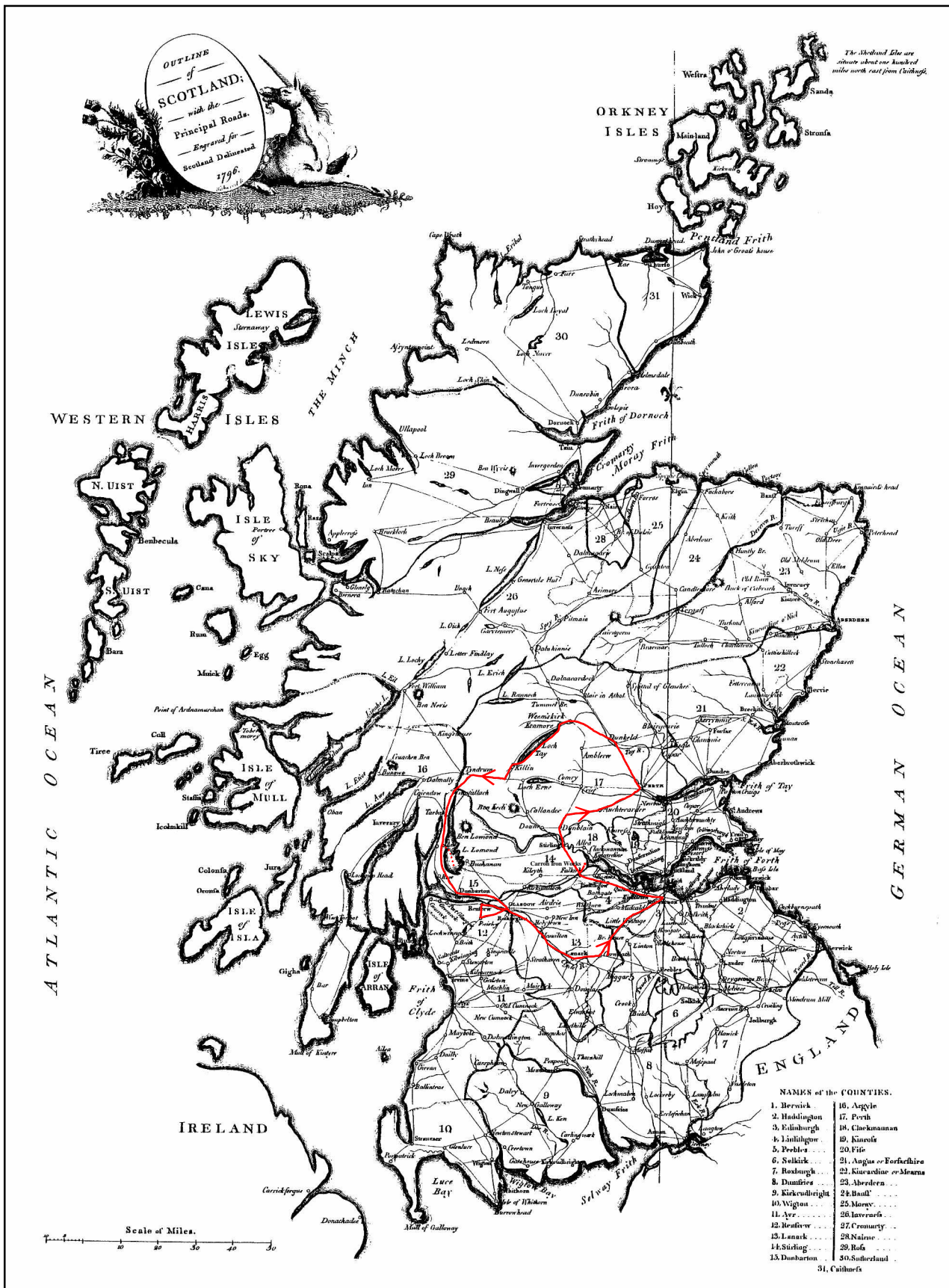
Harley, Edward (1689-1741) (2nd Earl of Oxford), English bibliophile:
 ‘A Journey Through Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, and Notts To The Northern Counties And Scotland’, HMC, *Report On The Manuscripts Of His Grace The Duke Of Portland, K.G.*, vol. vi (London, 1901), pp. 81-147
 date of travel: 1725



Harmes, Emilie (=Berlepsch, Emilie von) (1755?-1830), German authoress:
Caledonia: Von der Verfasserin der Sommerstunden, 4 vols. (Hamburg, 1802-04)
 date of travel: 1800



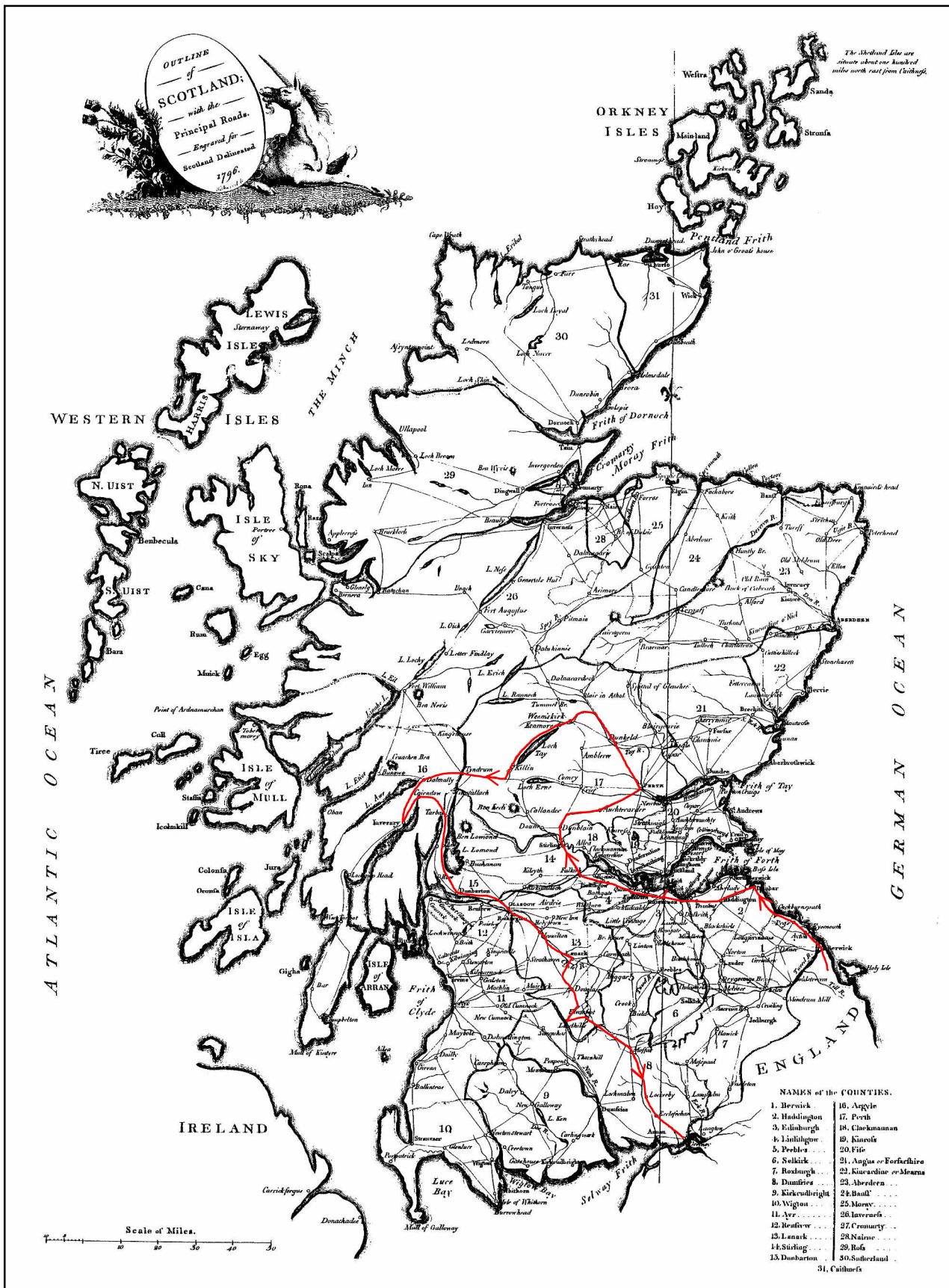
Hastings, Warren (1732-1818), English, Governor General of India:
 NLS, 'Journal of a tour in the Highlands', Acc. 4462 (=microfilm of BL, Add. MS. 39,889)
 date of travel: 1787



Hatchett, Charles (1766-1847), English chemist:

The Hatchett Diary: A tour through the counties of England and Scotland in 1796 visiting their mines and manufactories, A. Raistrick ed. (Truro, 1967)

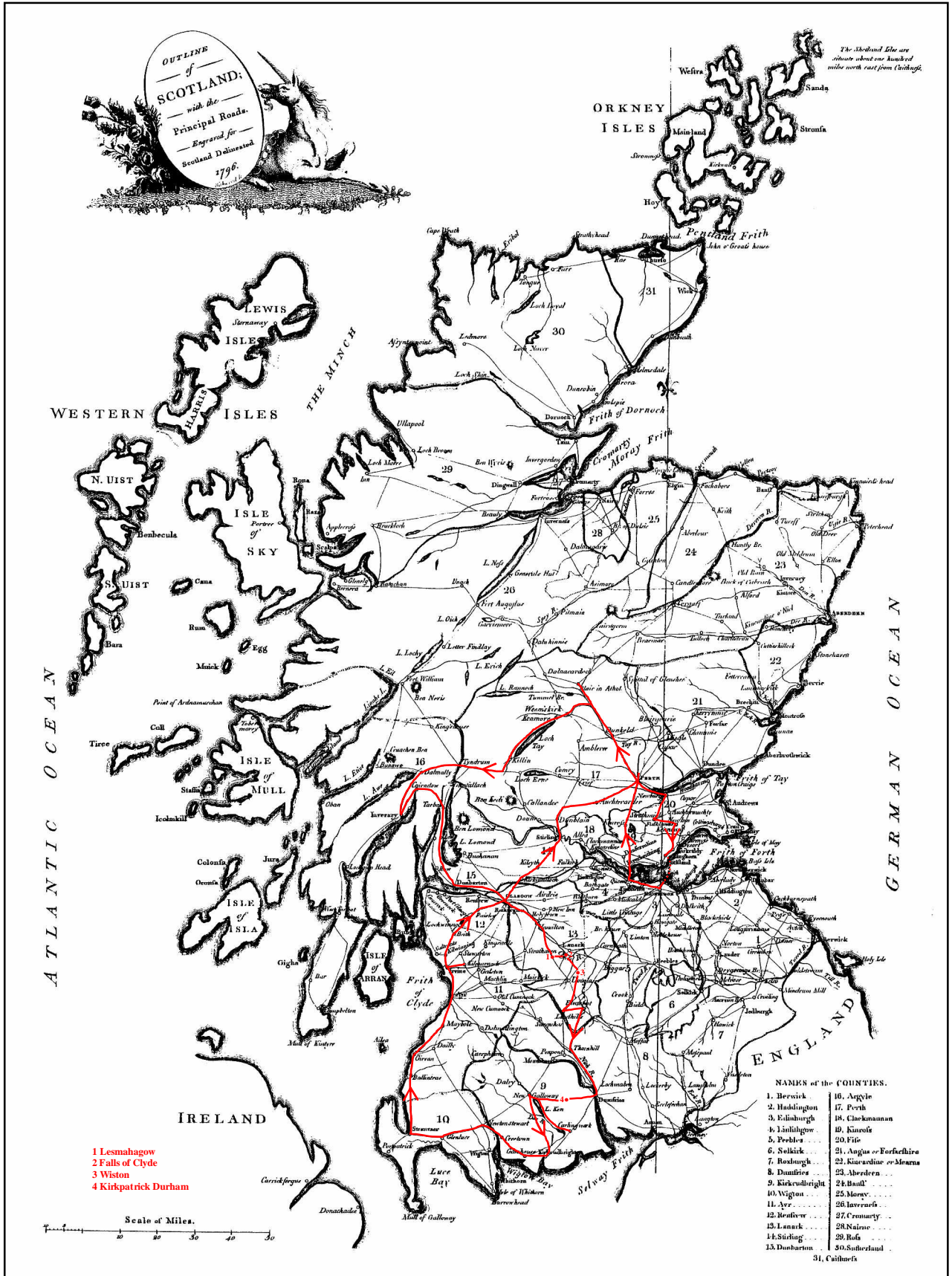
date of travel: 1796



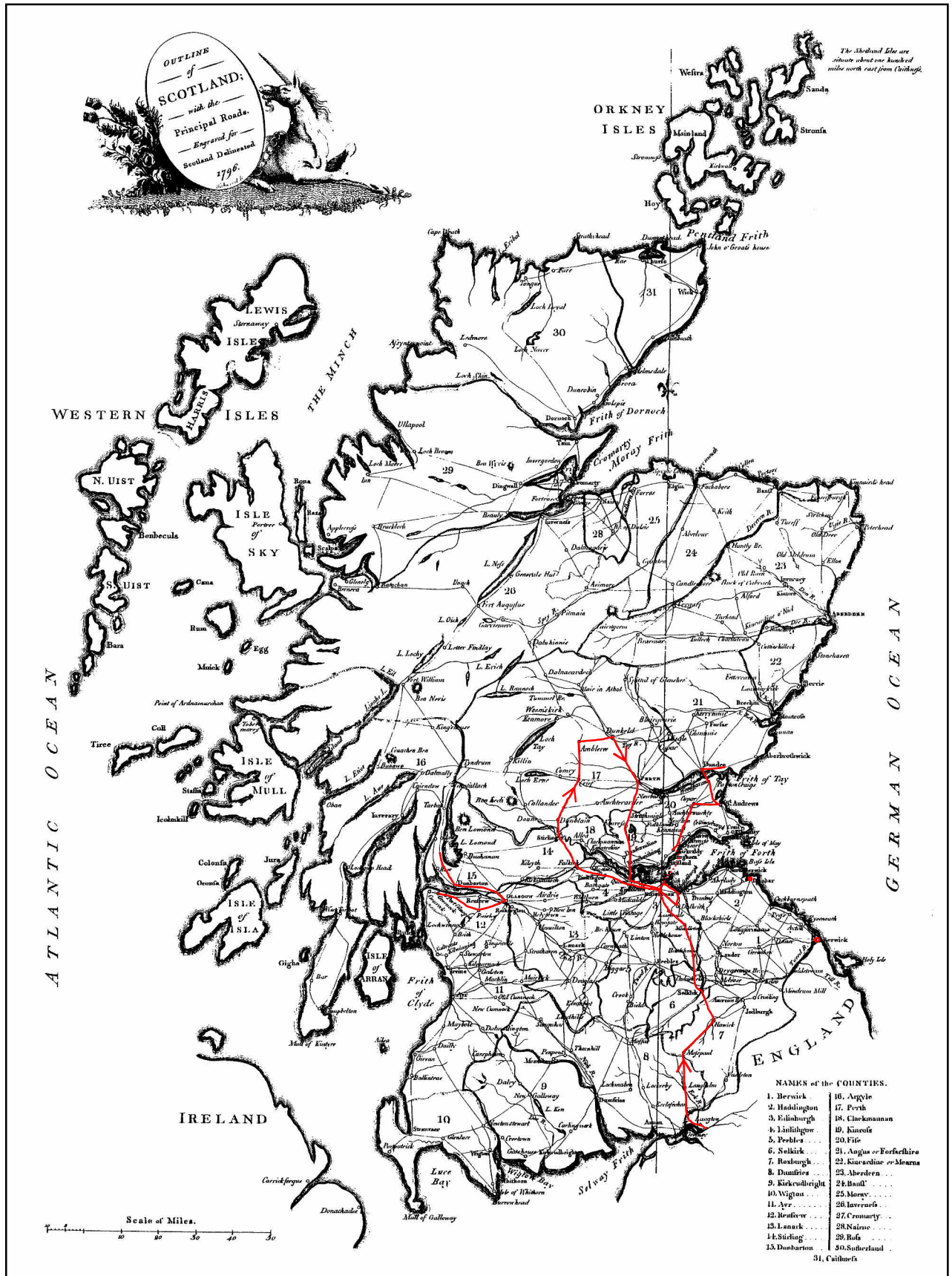
Heron, Robert (1764-1807), Scottish miscellaneous writer:

Observations Made In A Journey Through The Western Counties Of Scotland; In The Autumn Of MDCCXCII (Perth, 1793)

date of travel: 1792



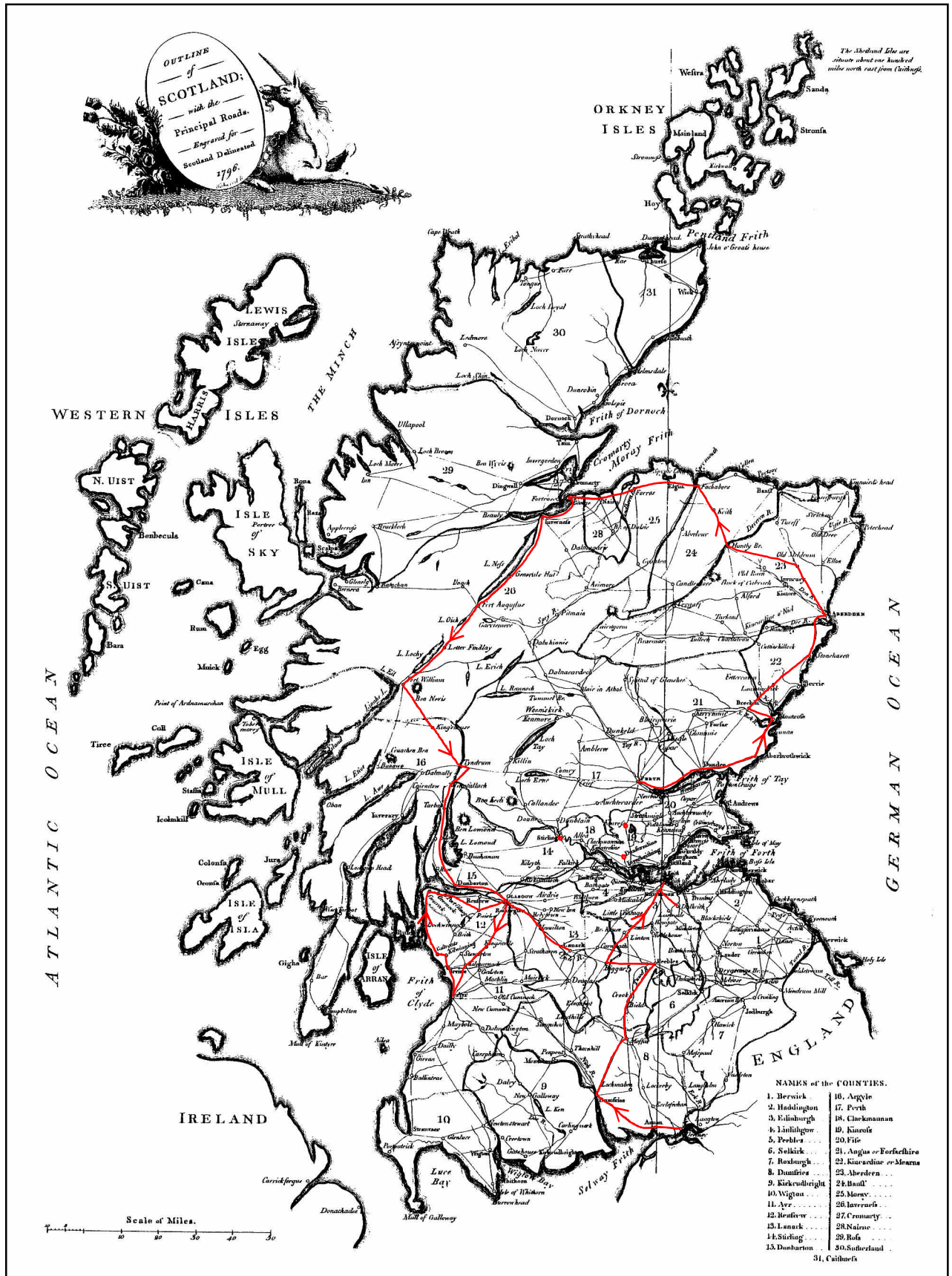
Hill, Rowland (1744-1833), English preacher:
Journal Through The North Of England And Parts Of Scotland (London, 1799)
 date of travel: 1798



Hill, Rowland (1744-1833), English preacher:

Extract Of A Journal Of A Second Tour From England Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The North Western Parts Of England (London, 1800)

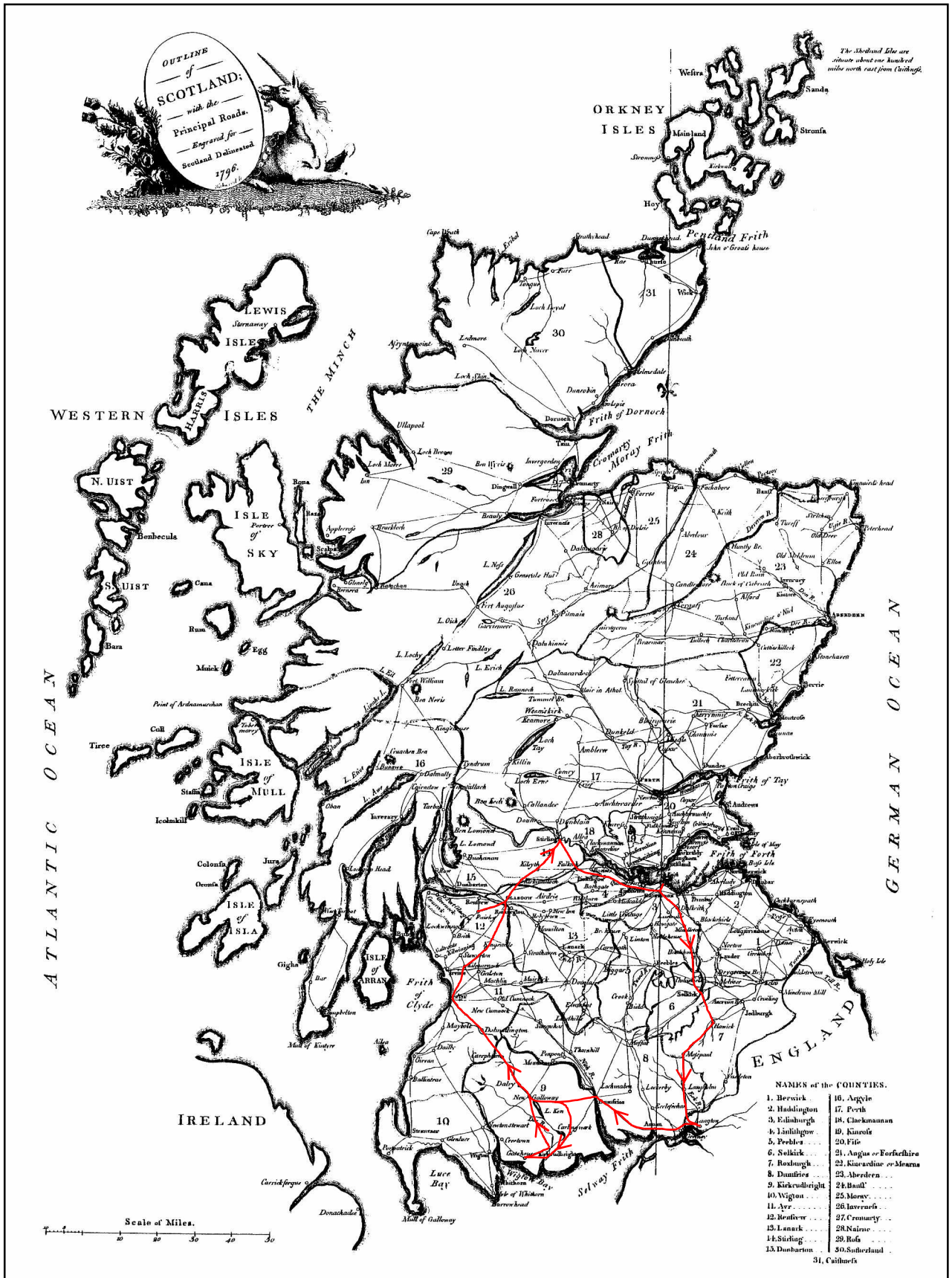
date of travel: 1799



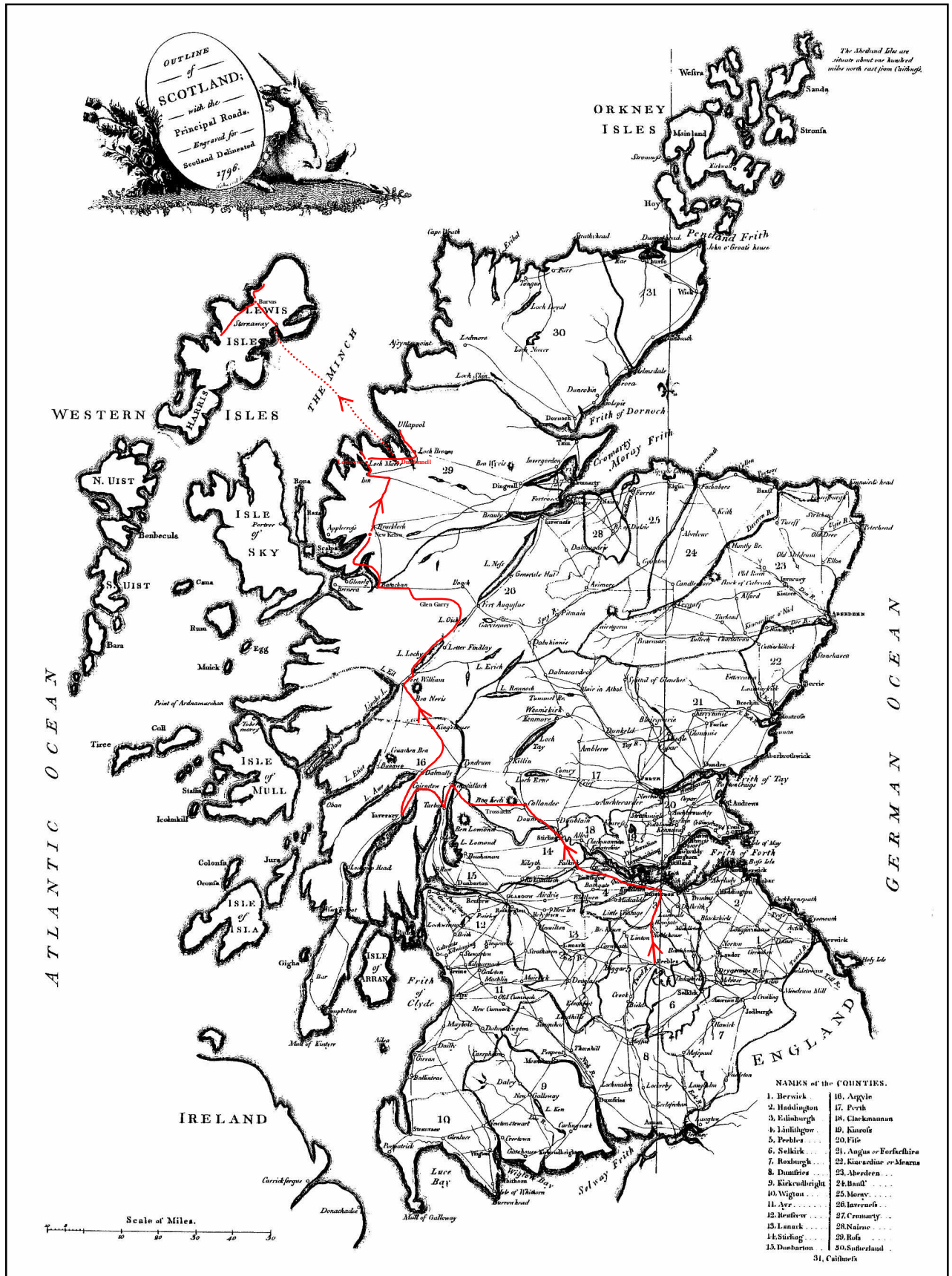
Hodgkinson, Richard:

NLS, 'Memorandums of a Journey into Scotland June 1800', Acc. 4848

date of travel: 1800



Hogg, James (1770-1835), Scottish poet and novelist:
A Tour In The Highlands In 1803 (Edinburgh, 1806)
 date of travel: 1803



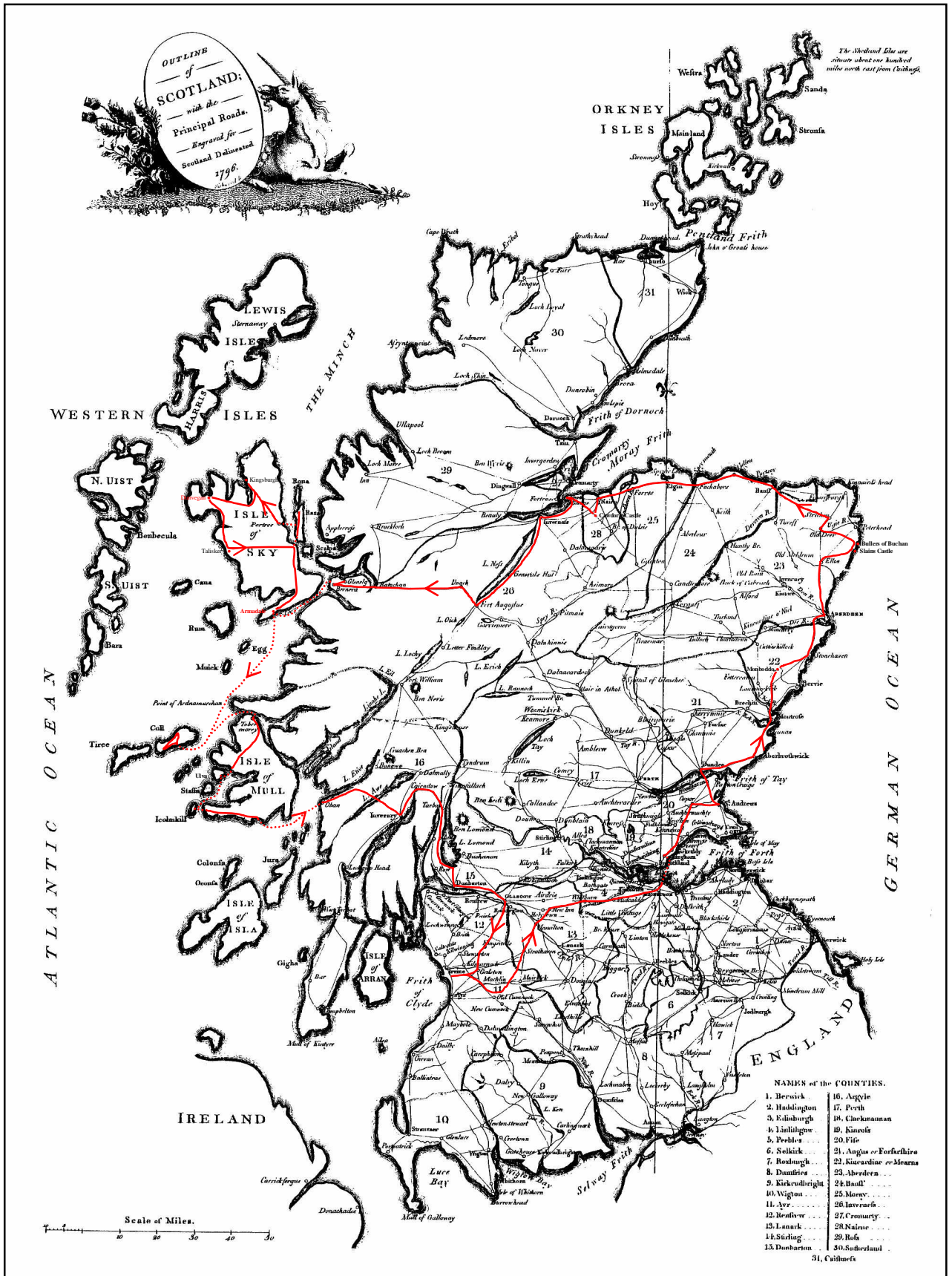
Johnson, Samuel (1709-1784), English lexicographer, essayist and literary critic:

A Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland (London, 1775);

Boswell, James (1740-1795), Scottish advocate and biographer:

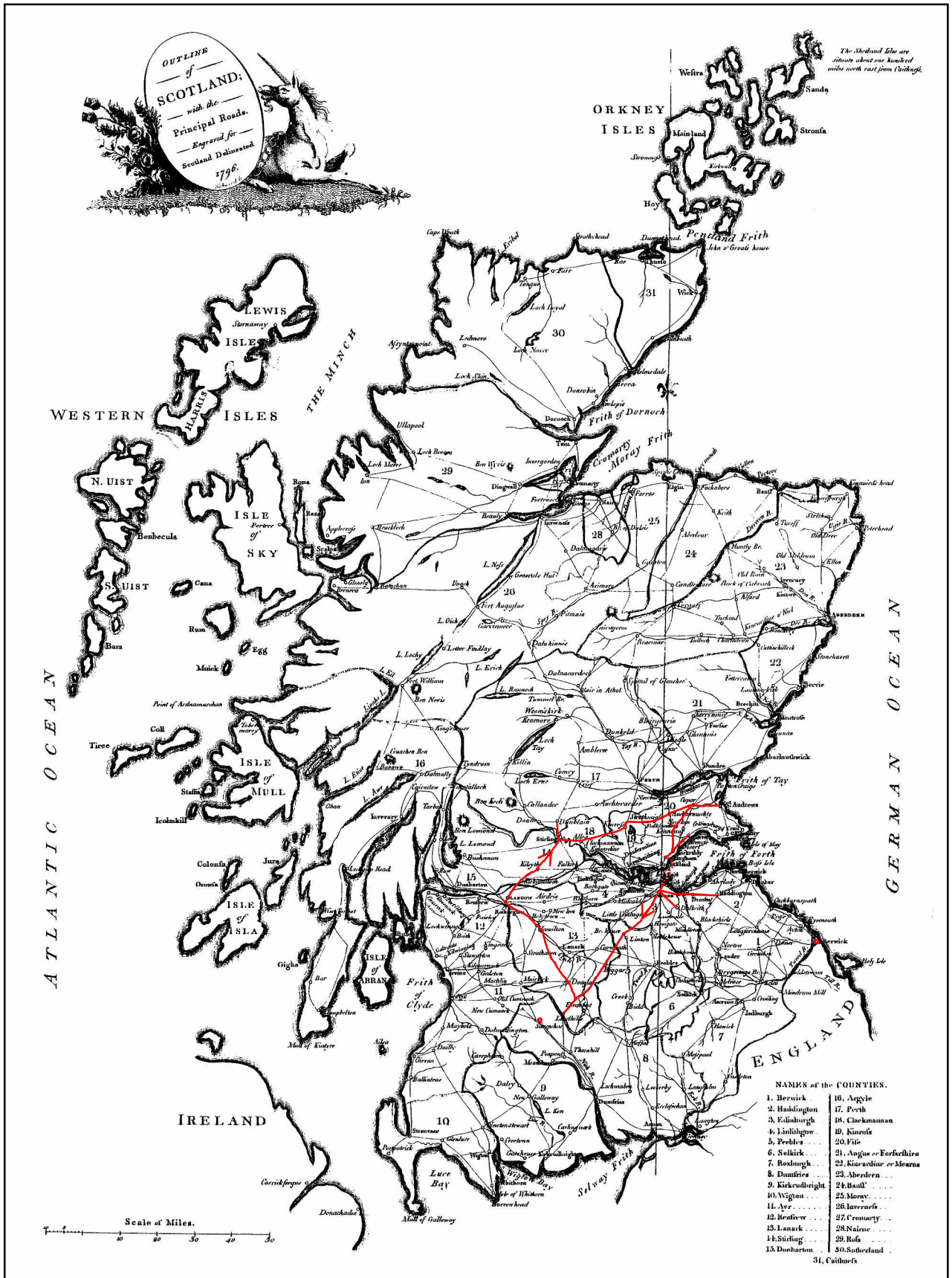
The Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D. (London, 1785)

date of travel: joint tour in 1773



Kalmeter, Henrik (born c. 1693), Swedish industrial spy:

'Journal Of Henry Kalmeter's Travels In Scotland 1719-1720', T.C. Smout ed., *Scottish Industrial History: A Miscellany* (SHS, fourth series, vol. xiv) (Edinburgh, 1978), pp. 1-52
 date of travel: 1719-20

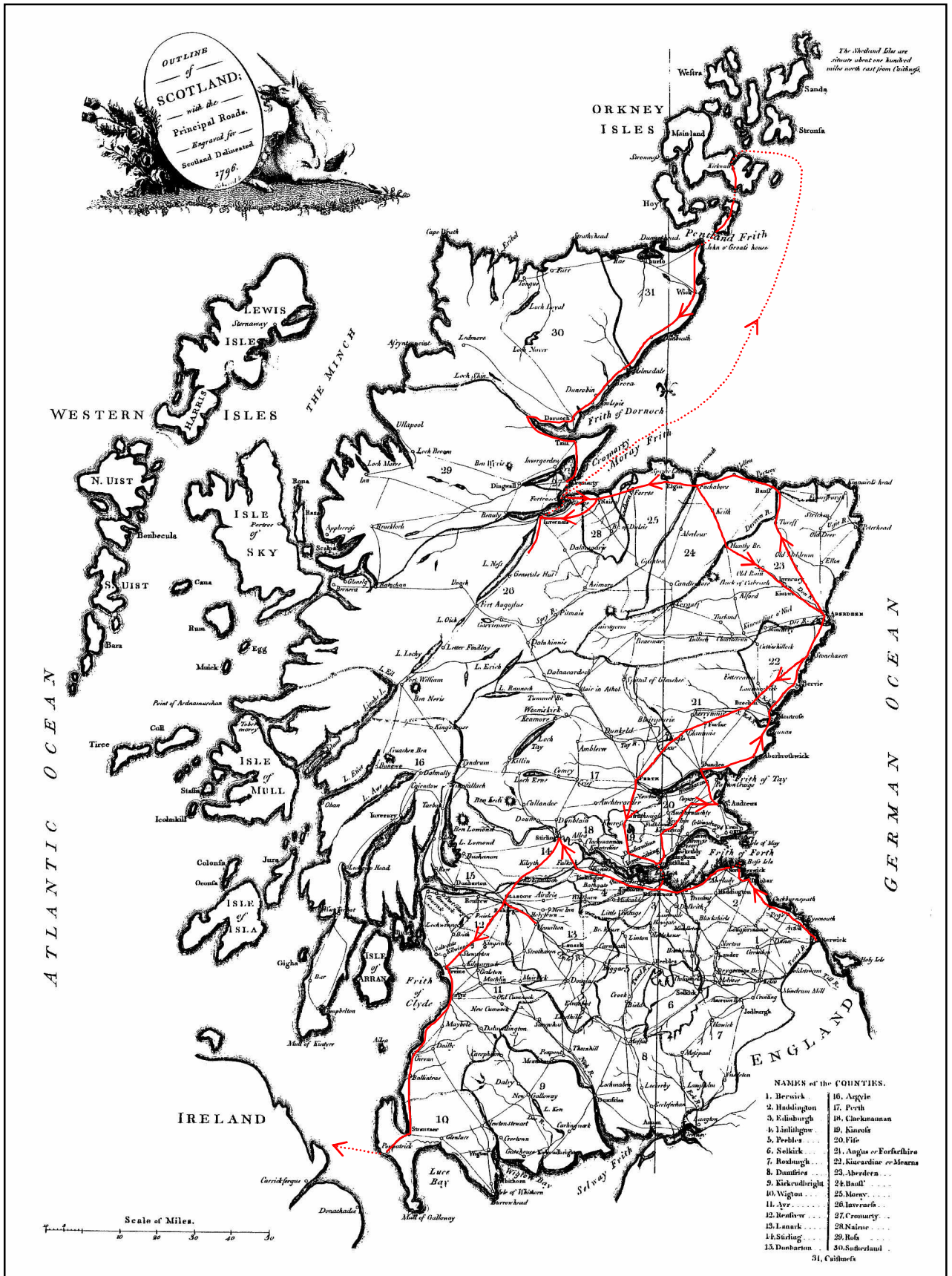


Kirk(e), Thomas (1650-1706), English miscellaneous writer:

Tours In Scotland 1677 & 1681 By Thomas Kirk And Ralph Thoresby, P. Hume Brown ed.

(Edinburgh, 1892)

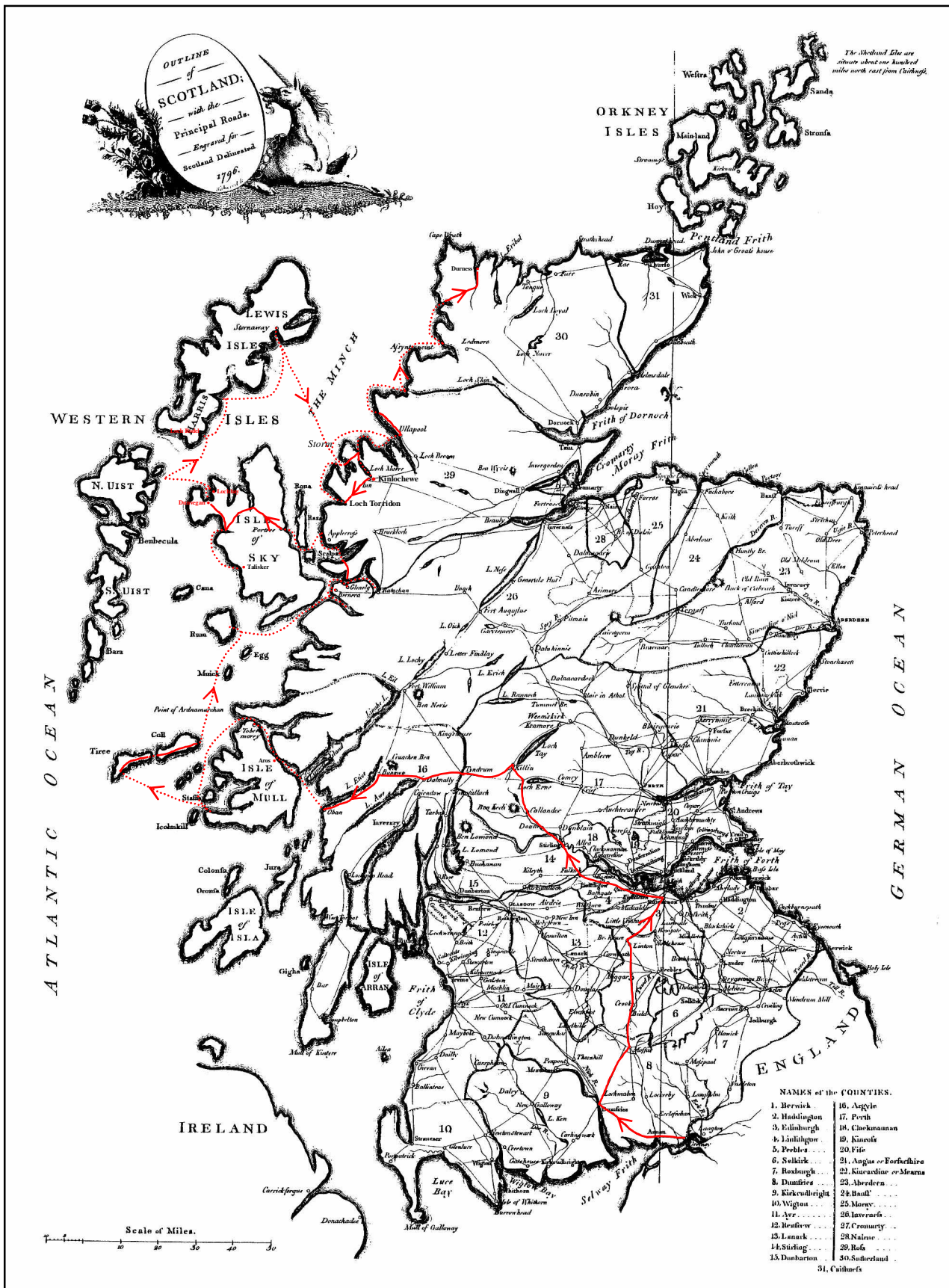
date of travel: 1677



Knox, John (1720-1790), Scottish philanthropist:

A Tour Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The Hebride Isles, In MDCCLXXXVI (London, 1787)

date of travel: 1786

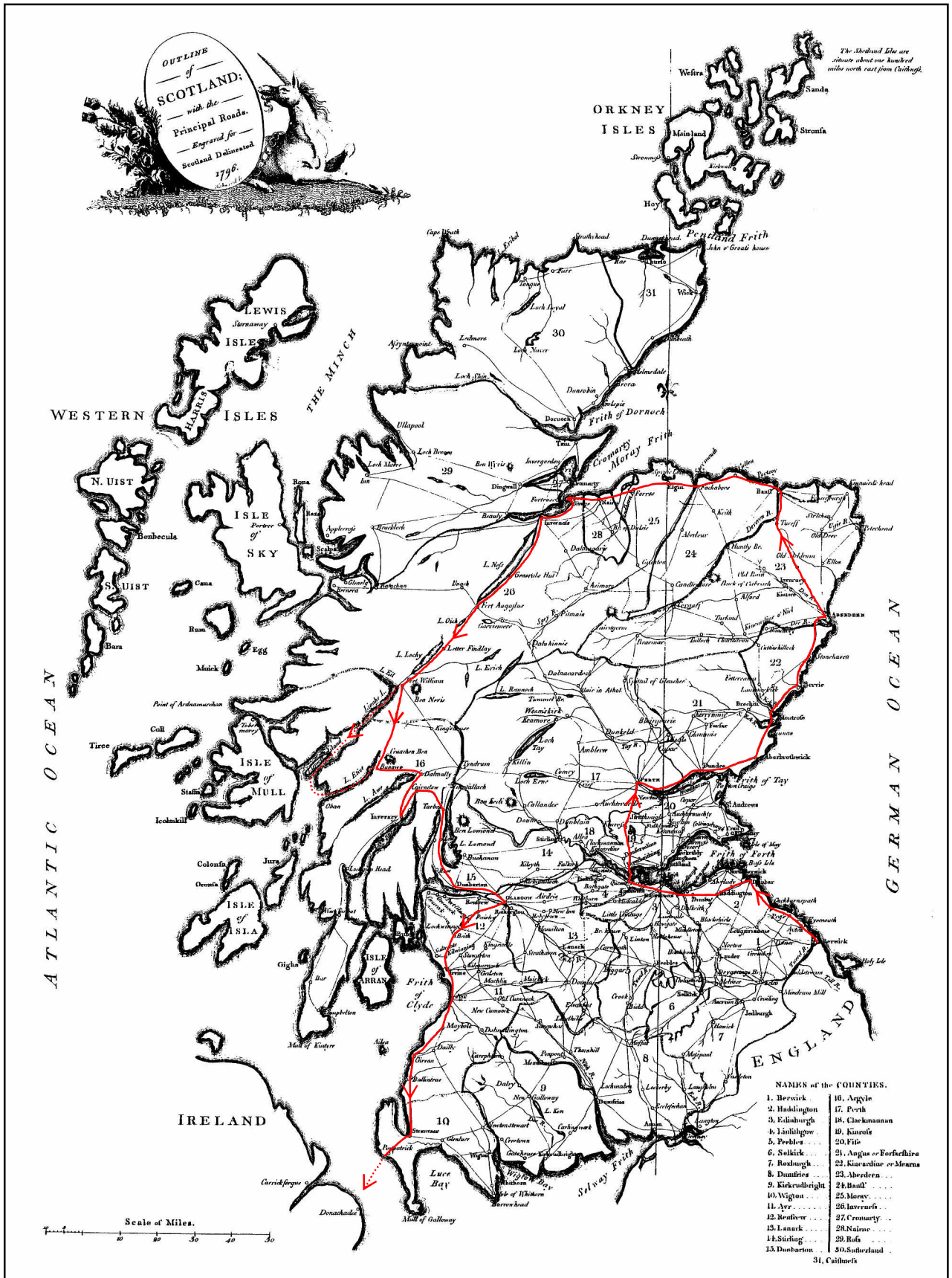


La Rochefoucauld, Alexandre de (1767-1841), French diplomat:

To the Highlands in 1786: The Inquisitive Journey Of A Young French Aristocrat, N. Scarfe ed.

(Woodbridge, 2001)

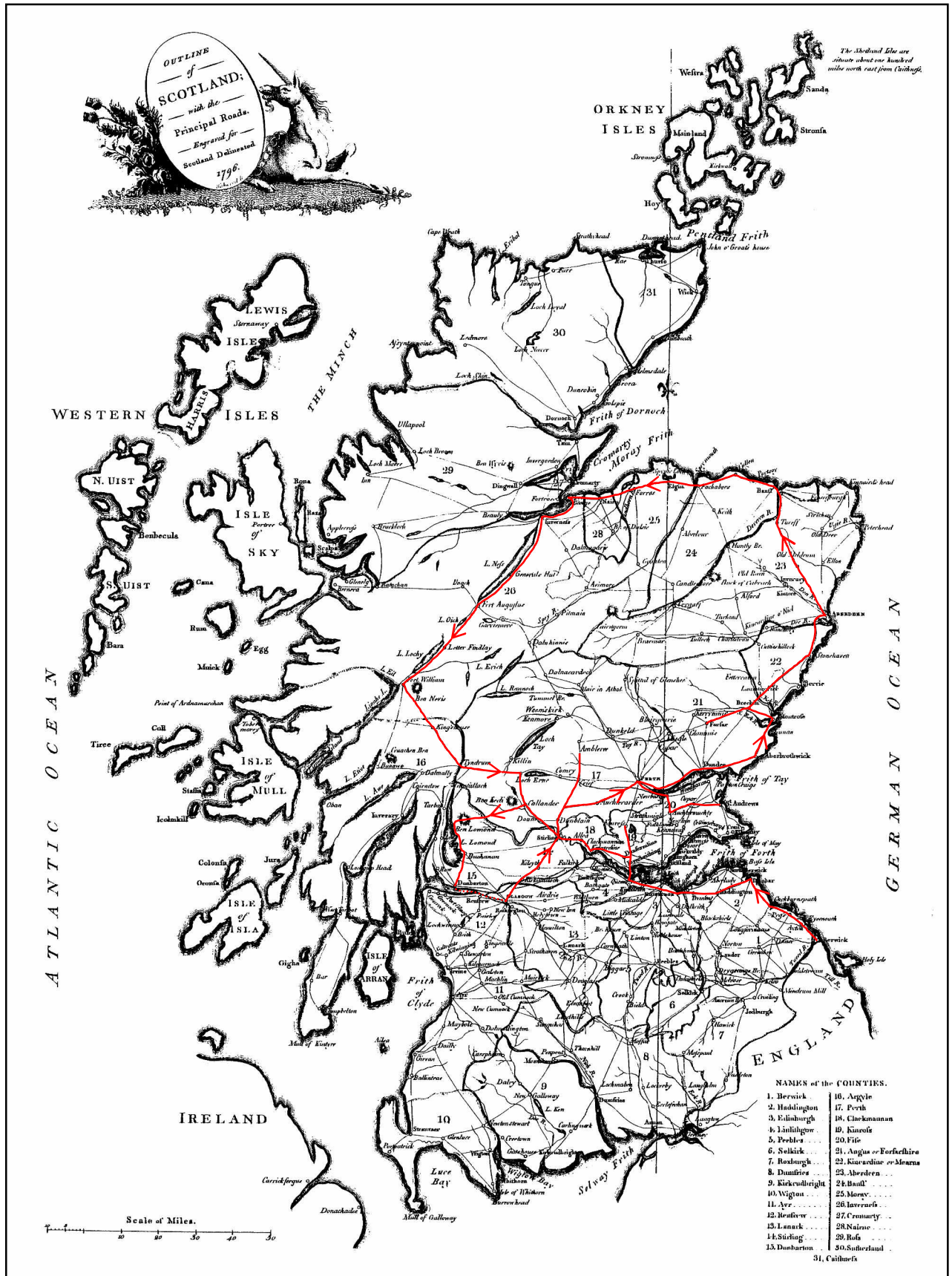
date of travel: 1786



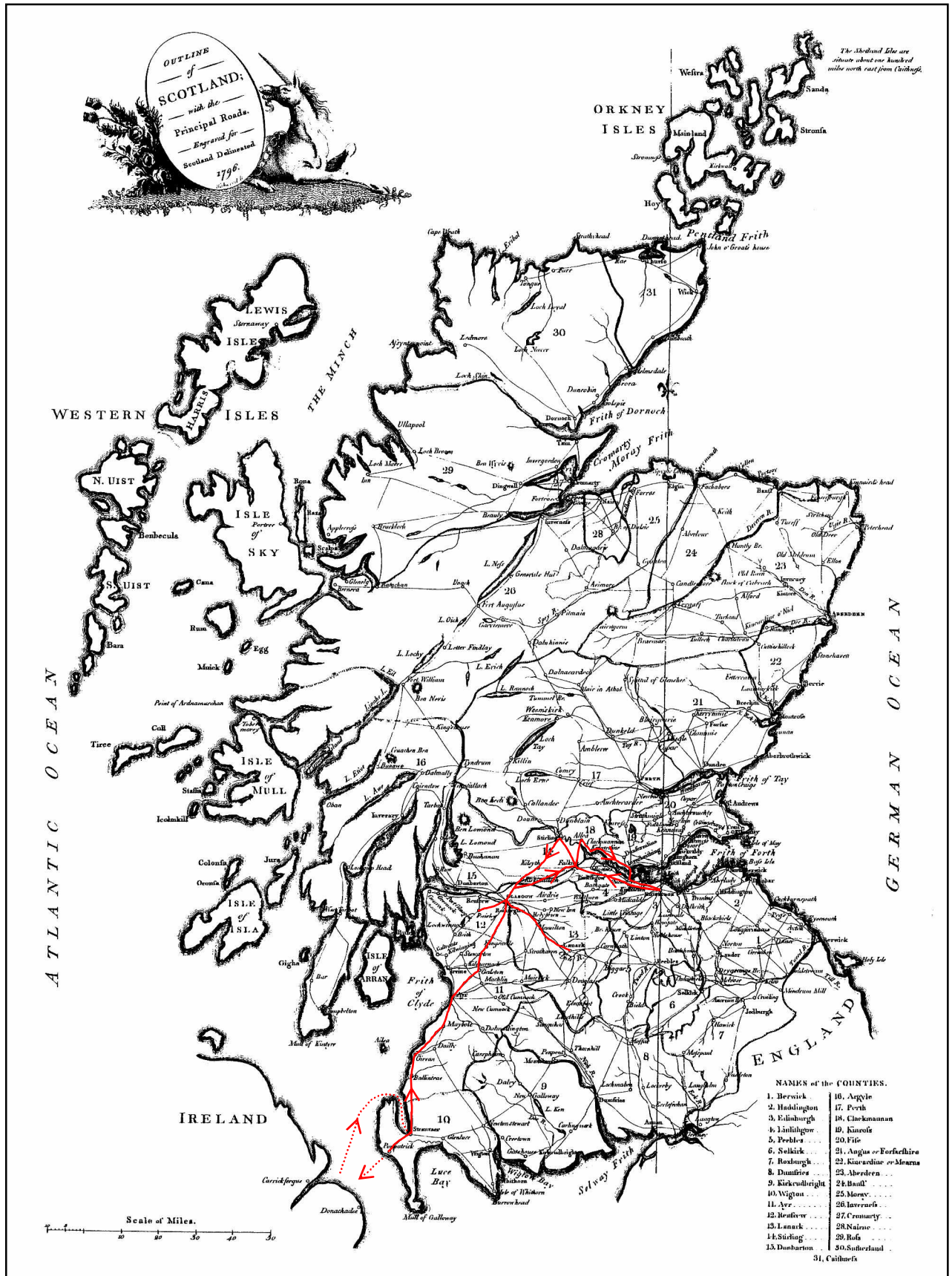
La Tocnaye, J. Chevalier de (=Bougrenet, Jacques Louis de) (1767-1823), French émigré, counter-revolutionist author and traveller:

Promenade D'un Français Dans La Grande Bretagne (Dublin, 1797)

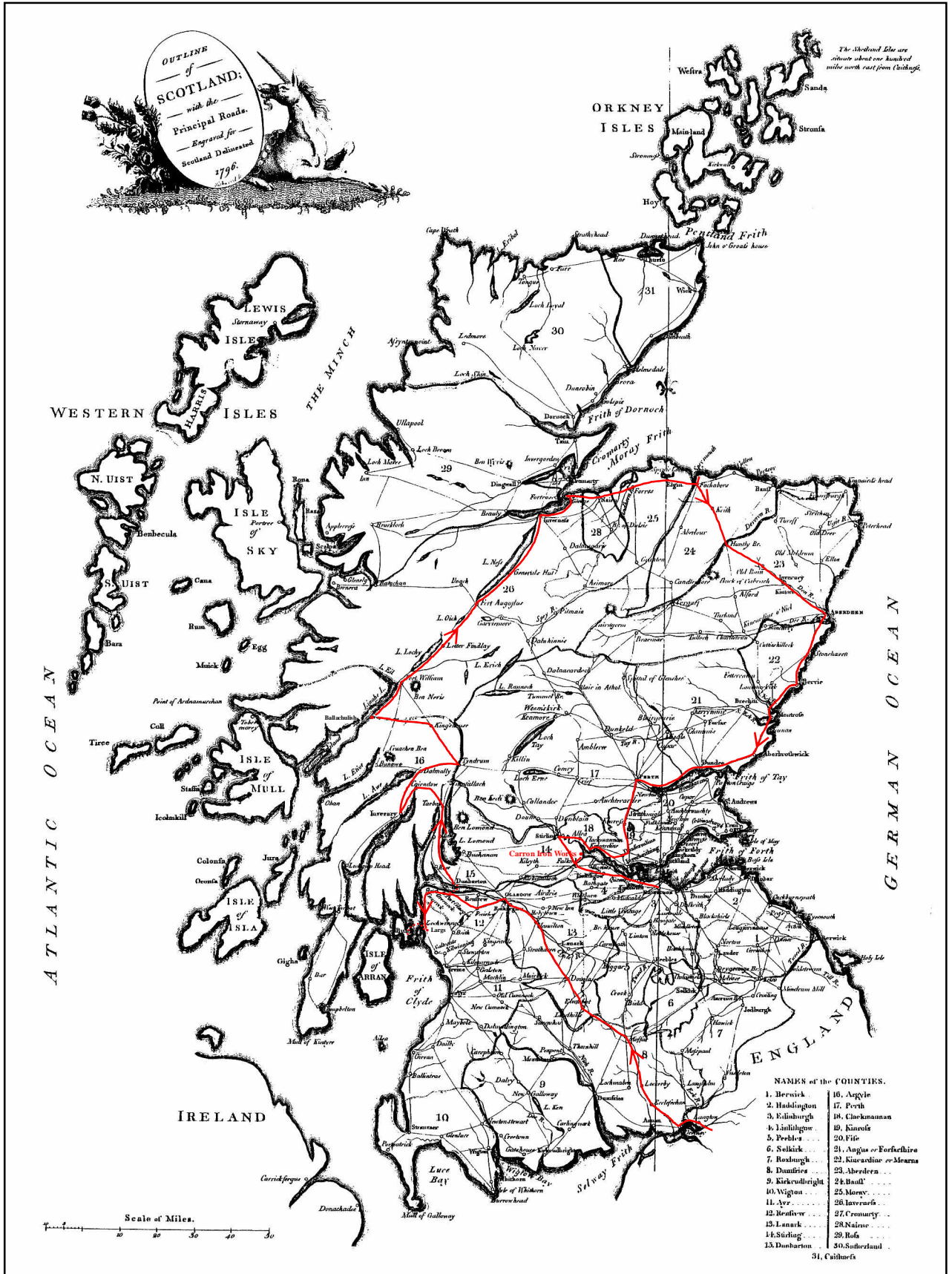
date of travel: 1793



La Tocnaye, J. Chevalier de (=Bougrenet, Jacques Louis de) (1767-1823), French émigré, counter-revolutionist author and traveller:
Promenade D'un Français Dans L'Irlande (Dublin, 1797)
 includes a detour to Scotland in 1796-97



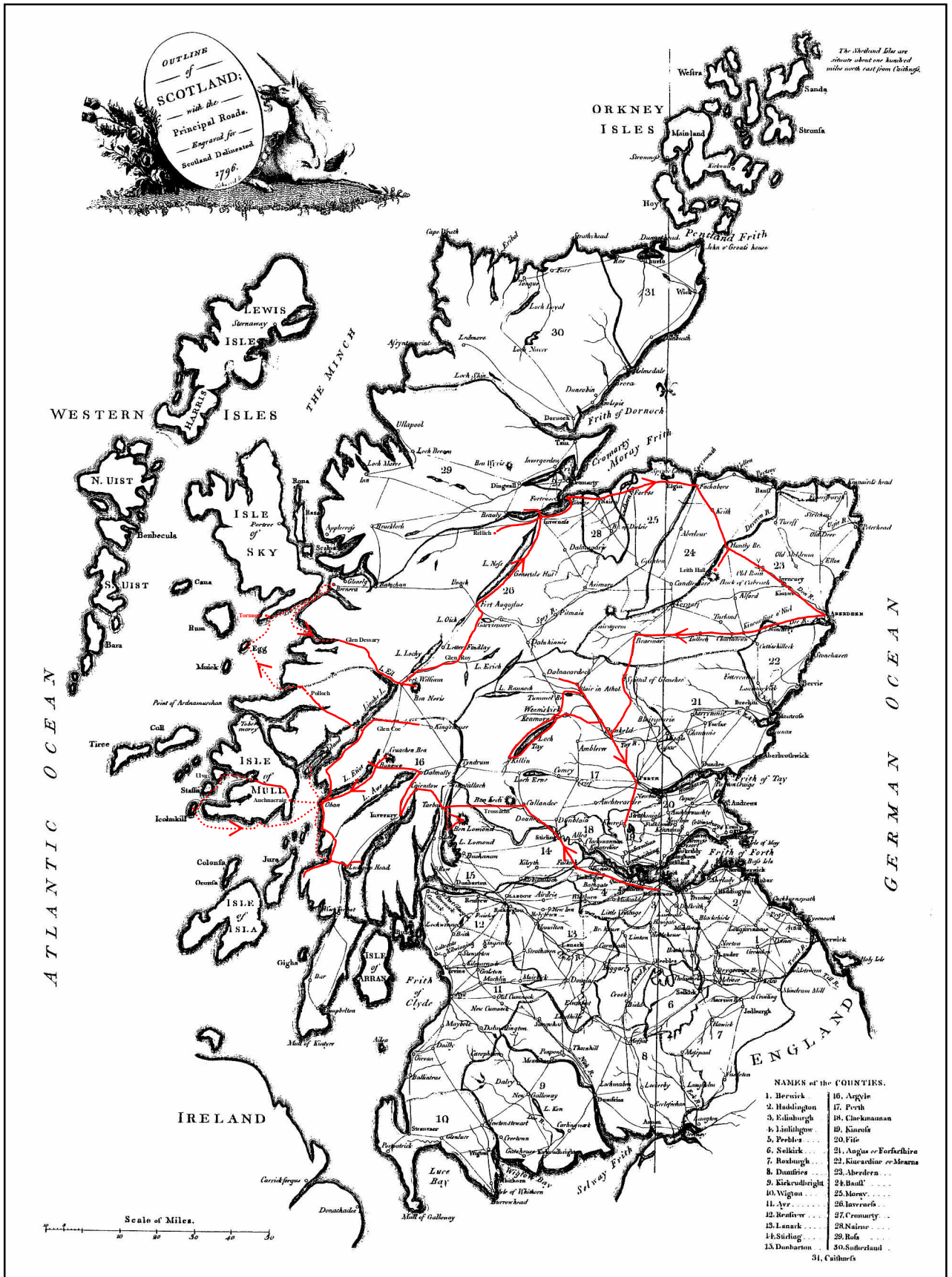
Lettice, John (1737-1832), English poet and divine:
Letters On A Tour Through Various Parts Of Scotland, In The Year 1792 (London, 1794)
 date of travel: 1792



Leyden, John (1775-1811), Scottish physician and poet:

Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800, J. Sinton ed. (Edinburgh, 1903)

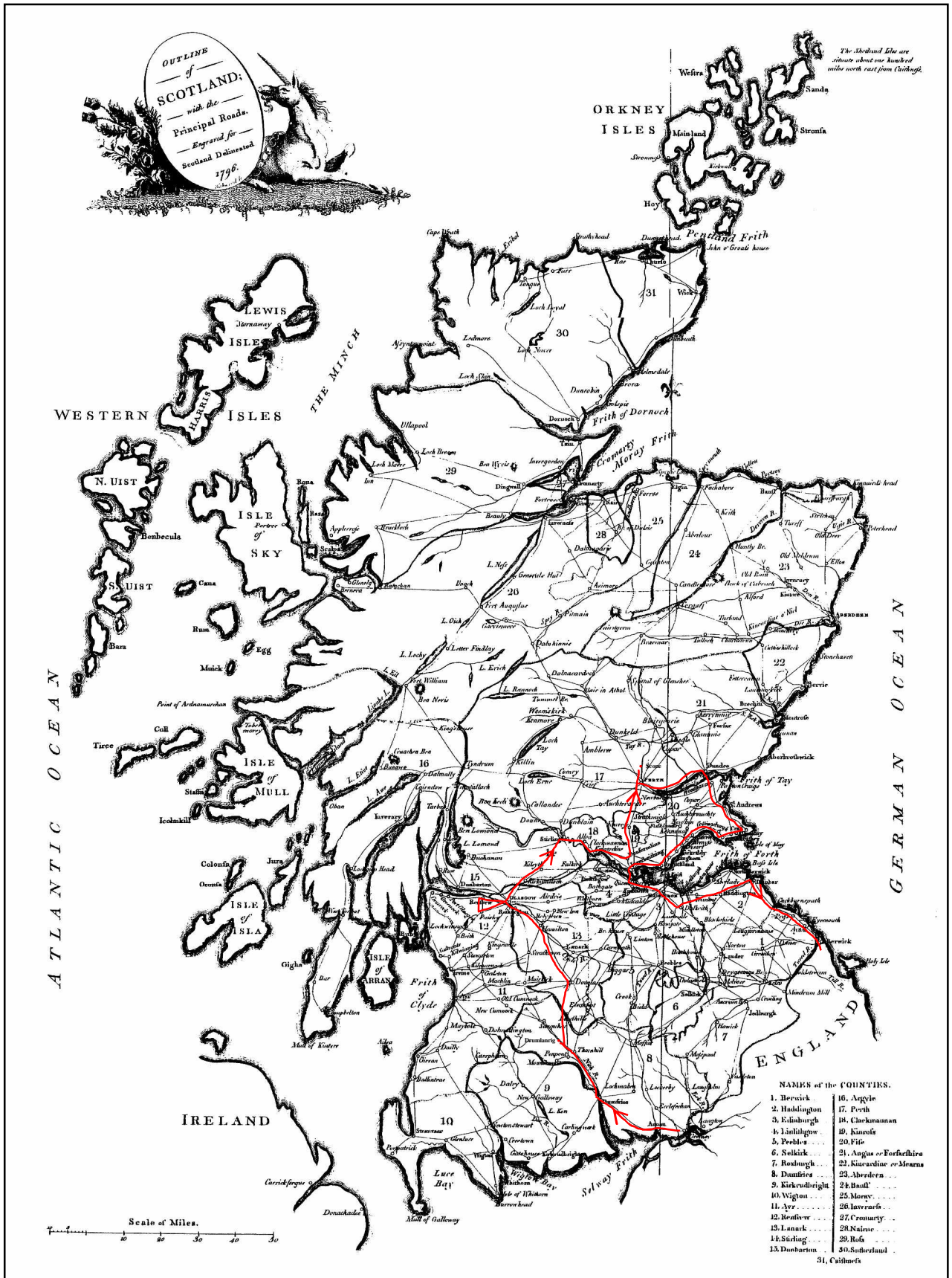
date of travel: 1800



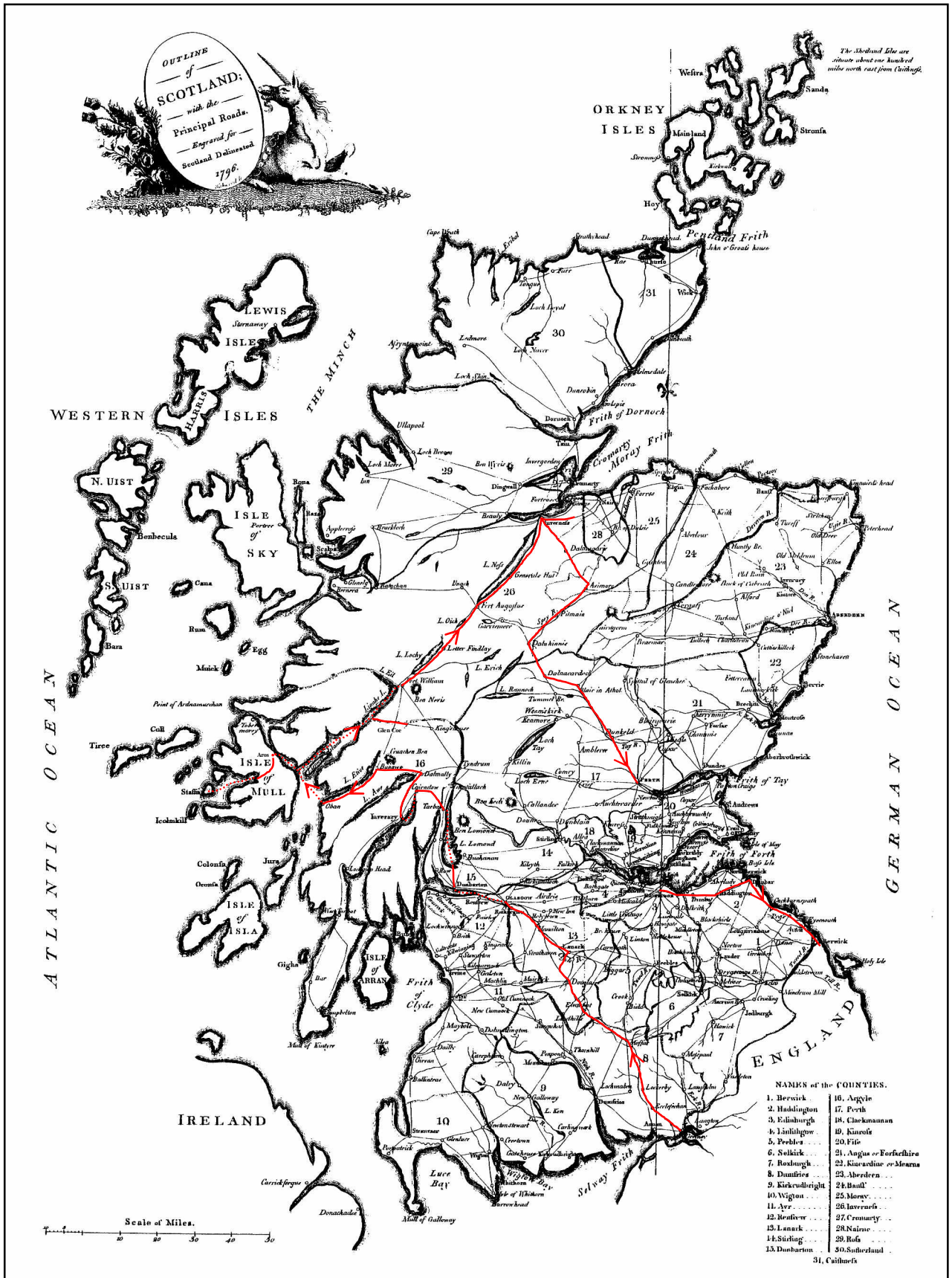
Loveday, John (1711-1789), English philologist and antiquary:

Diary Of A Tour In 1732 Through Parts Of England, Wales, Ireland And Scotland (Edinburgh, 1890)

date of travel: 1732



Löwenthal, Maximilian von (1799-1872), Austrian civil servant and author:
Skizzen aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise durch Frankreich, Großbritannien und Deutschland
 (Vienna, 1825)
 date of travel: 1822

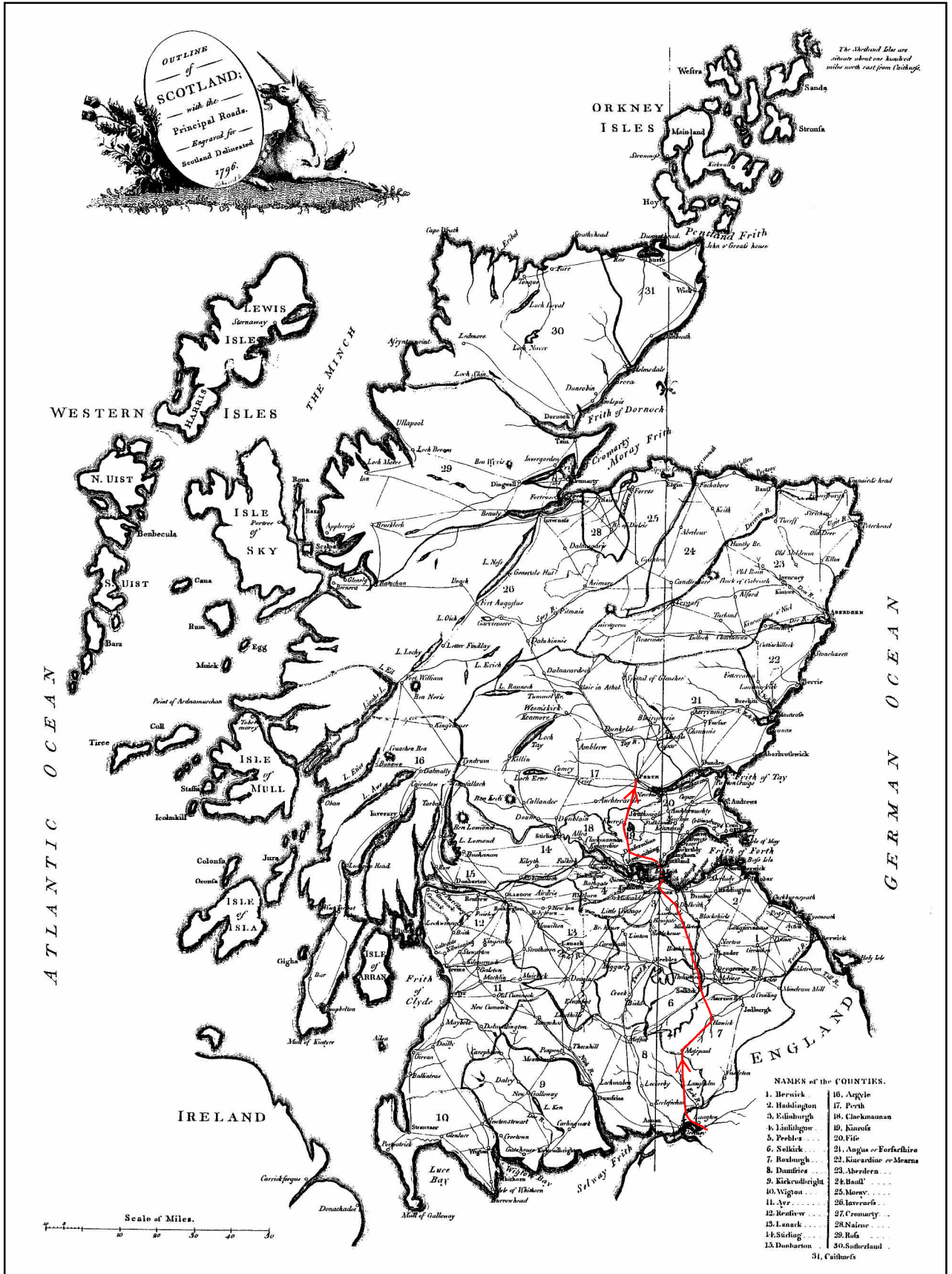


Lowther, Christopher (died 1644), sheriff of Cumberland:

Our Journall Into Scotland, Anno Domini 1629, 5th Of November, From Lowther, W. Douglas ed.

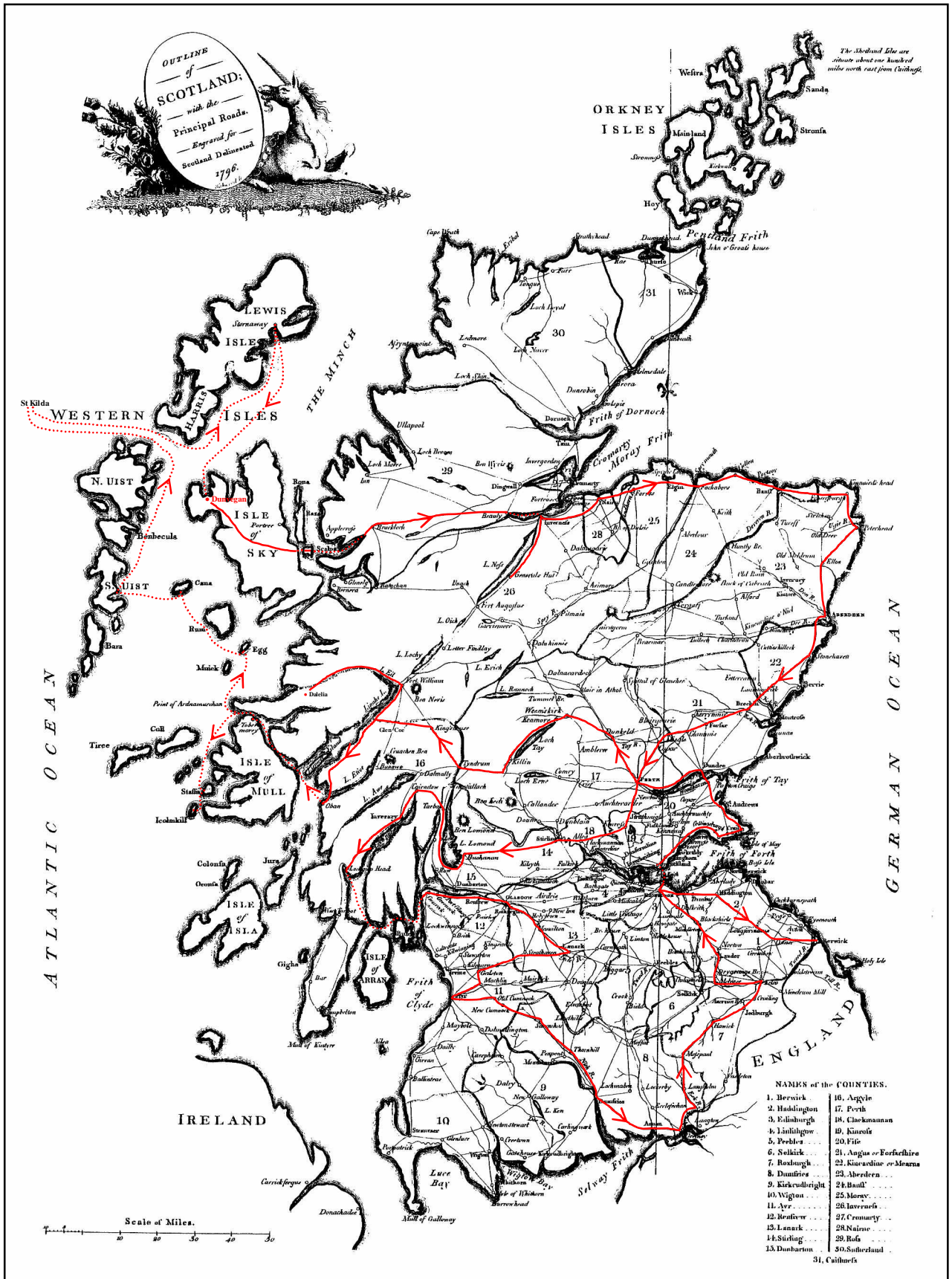
(Edinburgh, 1894)

date of travel: 1629

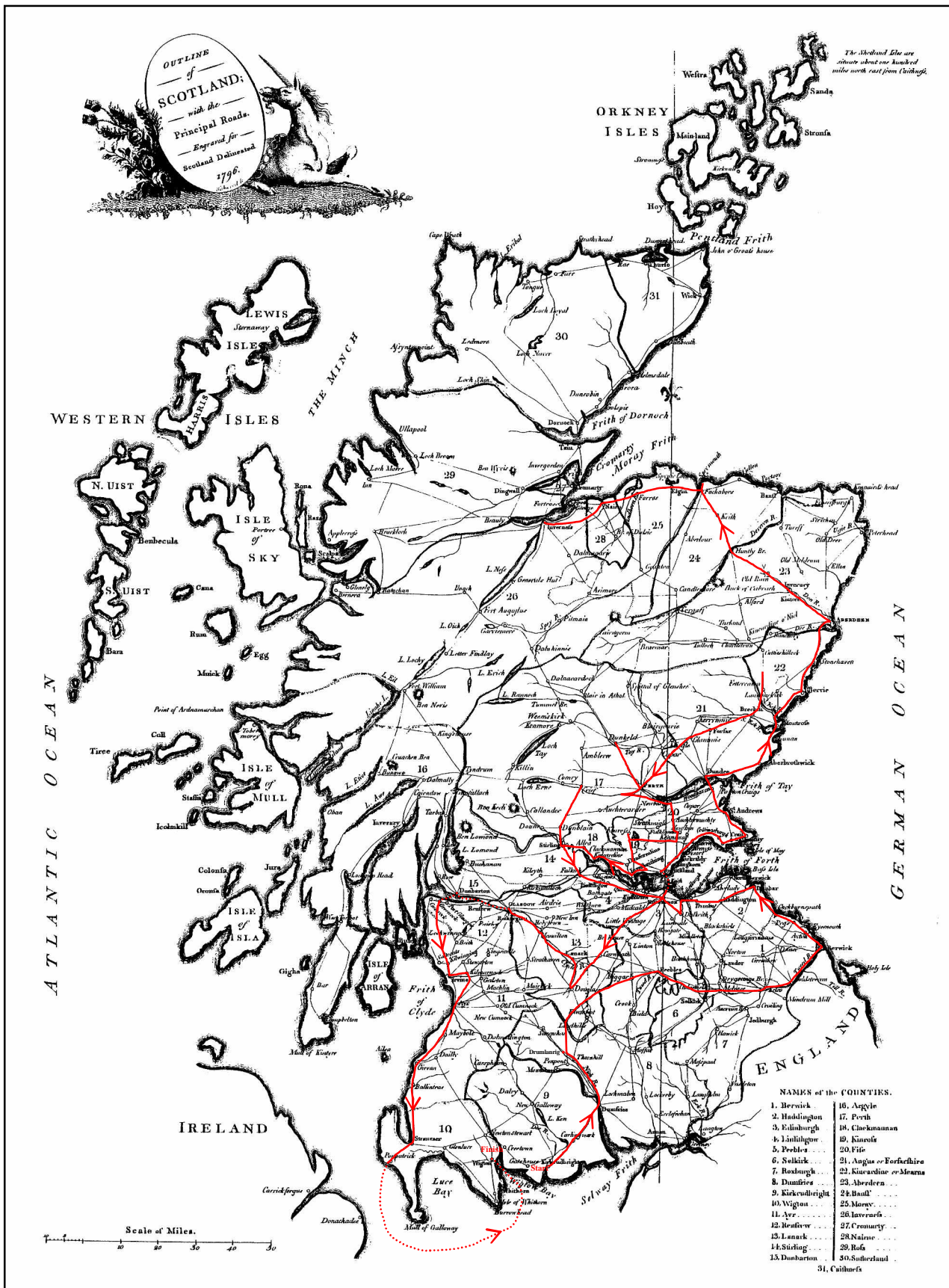


MacDonald, James (1771?-1810), Scottish minister and travel writer:

Reise durch Schottland, seine Inseln, Dänemark und einen Theil von Deutschland (Leipzig, 1808)
date of travel: 1802 (Note: The publisher G.J. Göschen misdated MacDonald's tour in Scotland:
MacDonald toured Scotland in 1802 rather than 1804.)

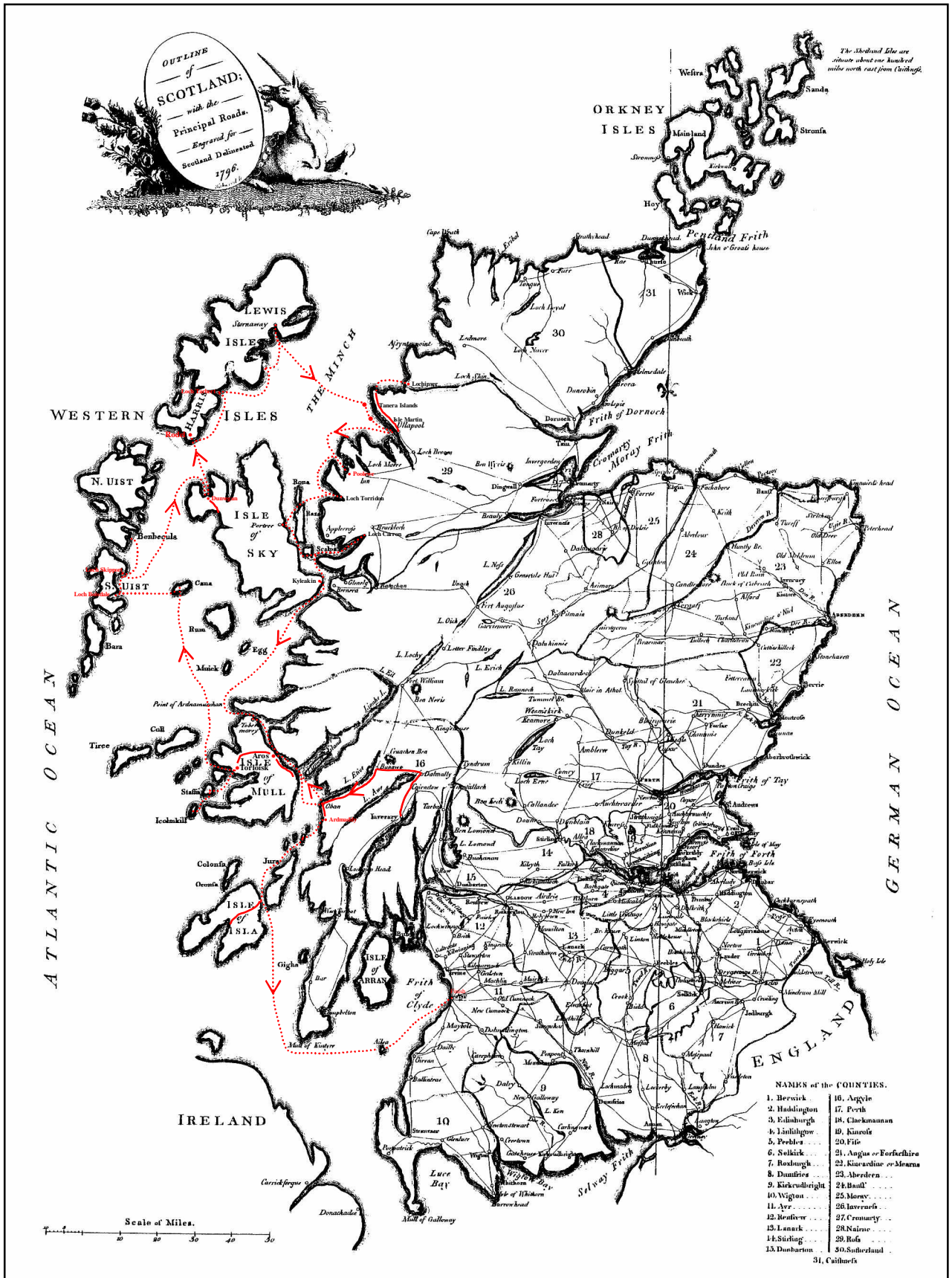


Macky, John (died 1726), Scottish, government agent and travel writer:
A Journey Through Scotland (London, 1723)
 the exact date of his tour cannot be established

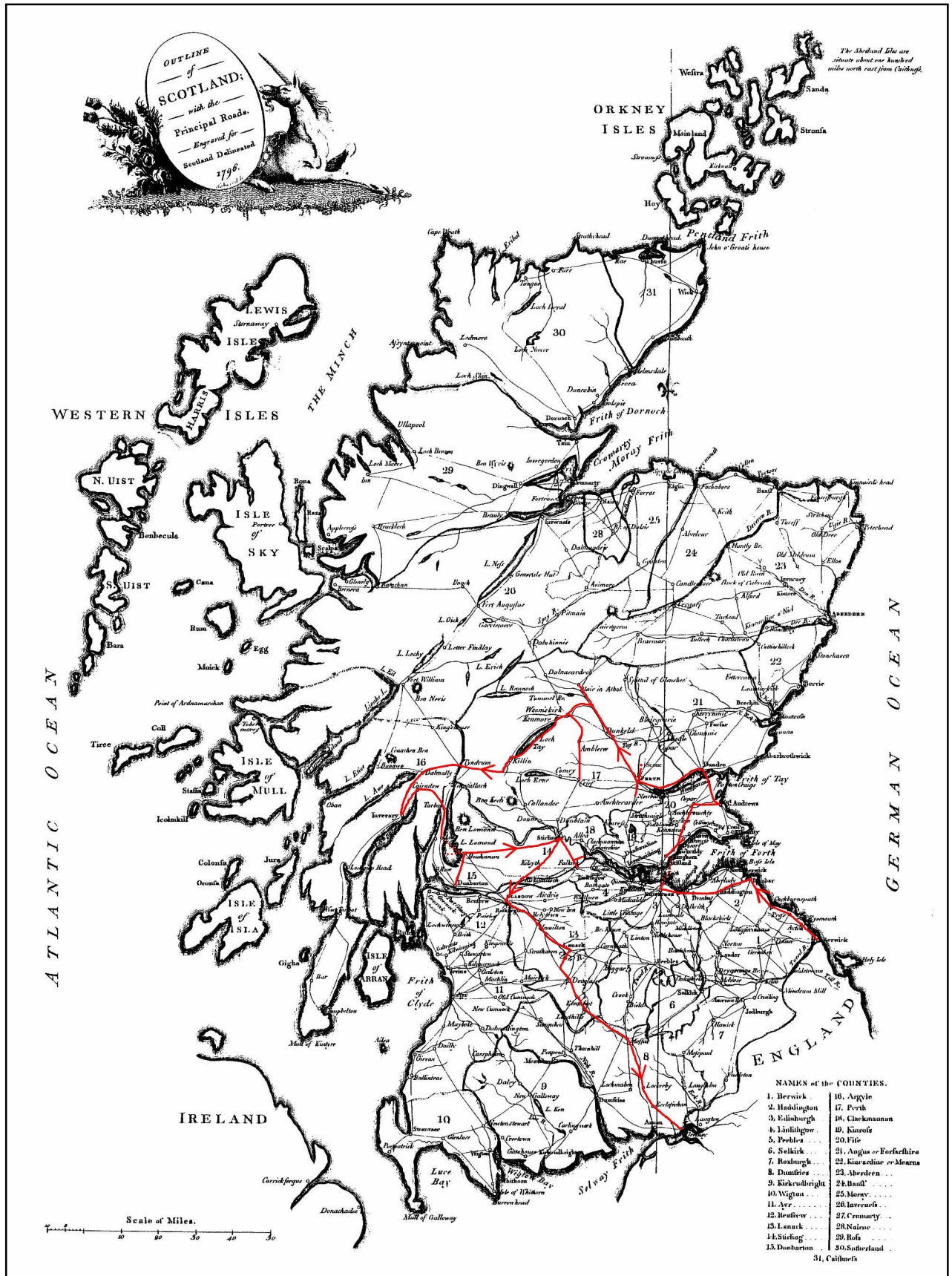


Mactavish, Lachlan, representative of the Board of Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland:

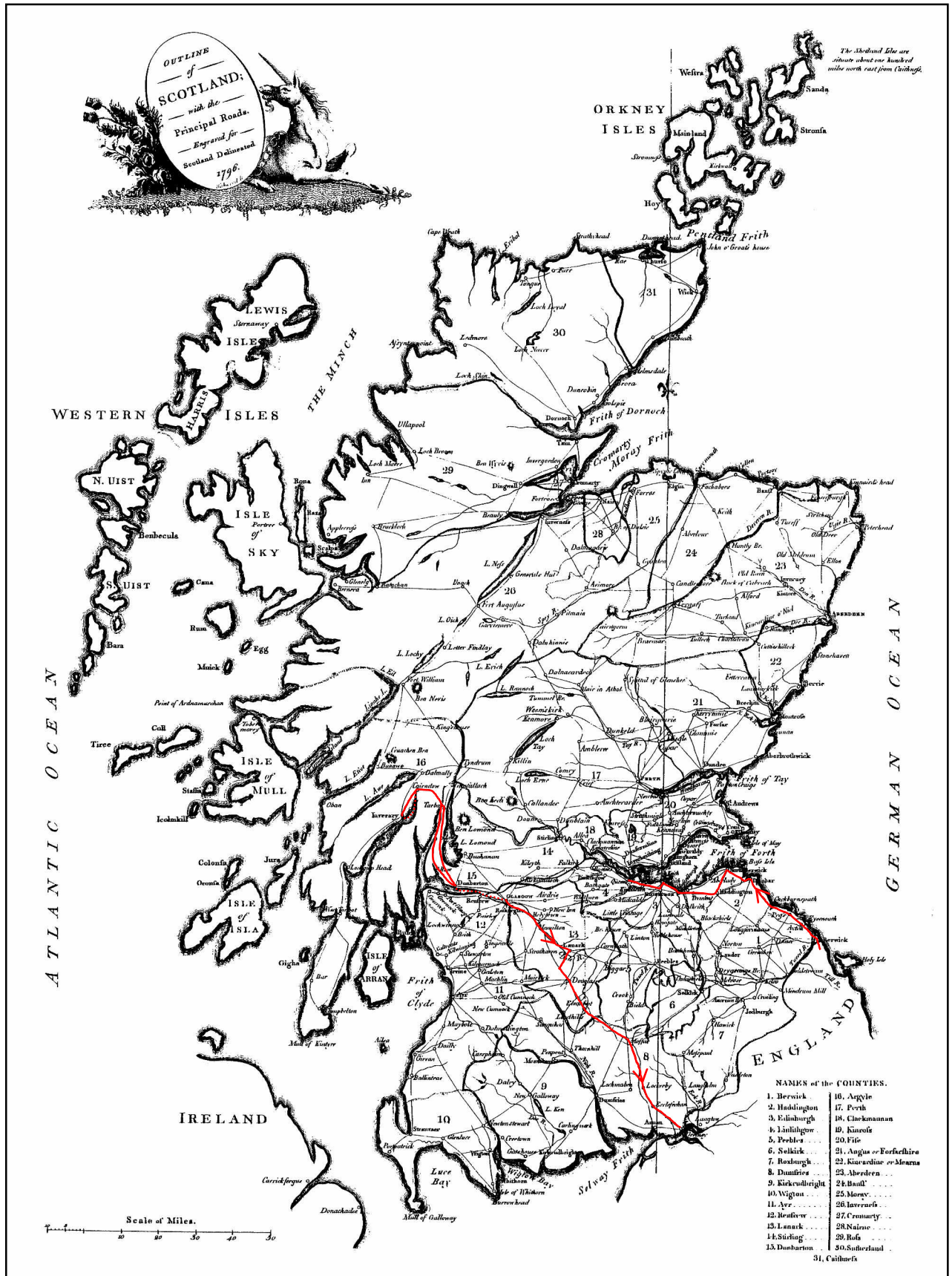
NAS, 'Journal of the tour of the Hebrides by the Committee of Directors of the Society, 1787, July 1 – Aug. 20', British Fishery Society Papers, GD9/1, fos. 96-123
 date of travel: 1787



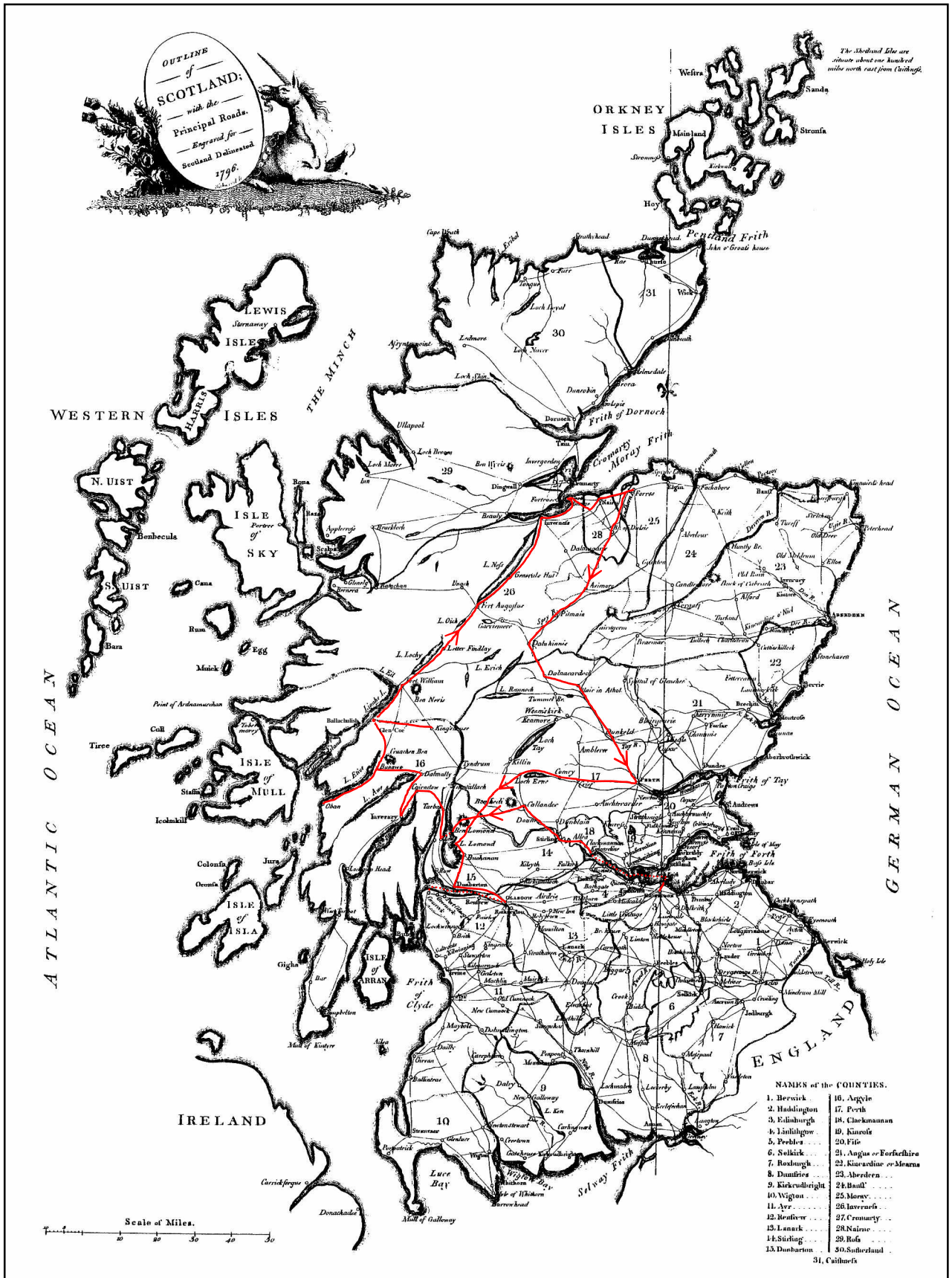
Manners, John Henry (1778-1857) (5th Duke of Rutland):
Travels In Great Britain, 3 vols. (London, 1805-13)
date of travel: 1796



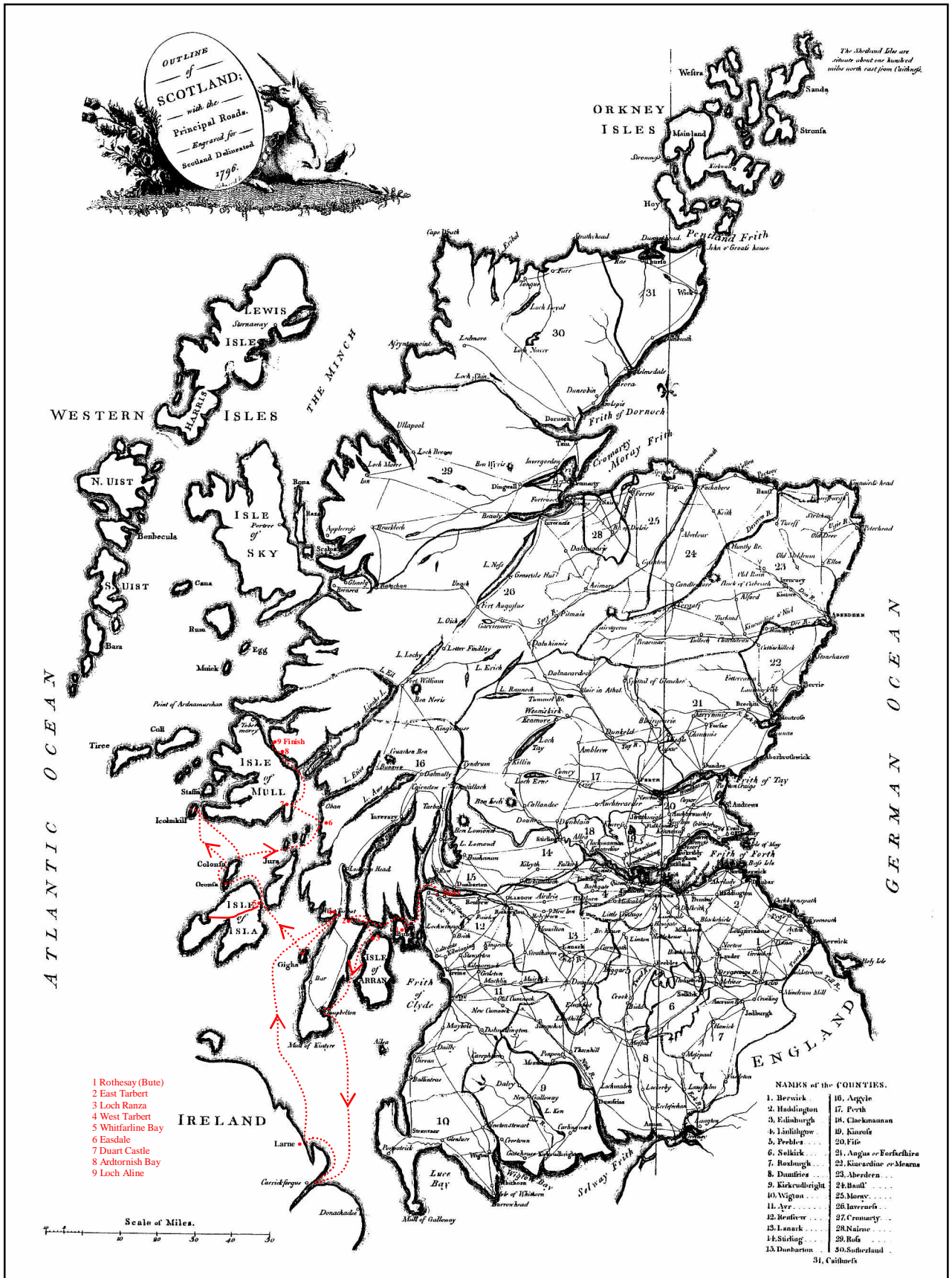
Mawman, Joseph (1764-1827), English author and bookseller:
An Excursion To The Highlands Of Scotland And The English Lakes, With Recollections, Descriptions, And References To Historical Facts (London, 1805)
 date of travel: 1804



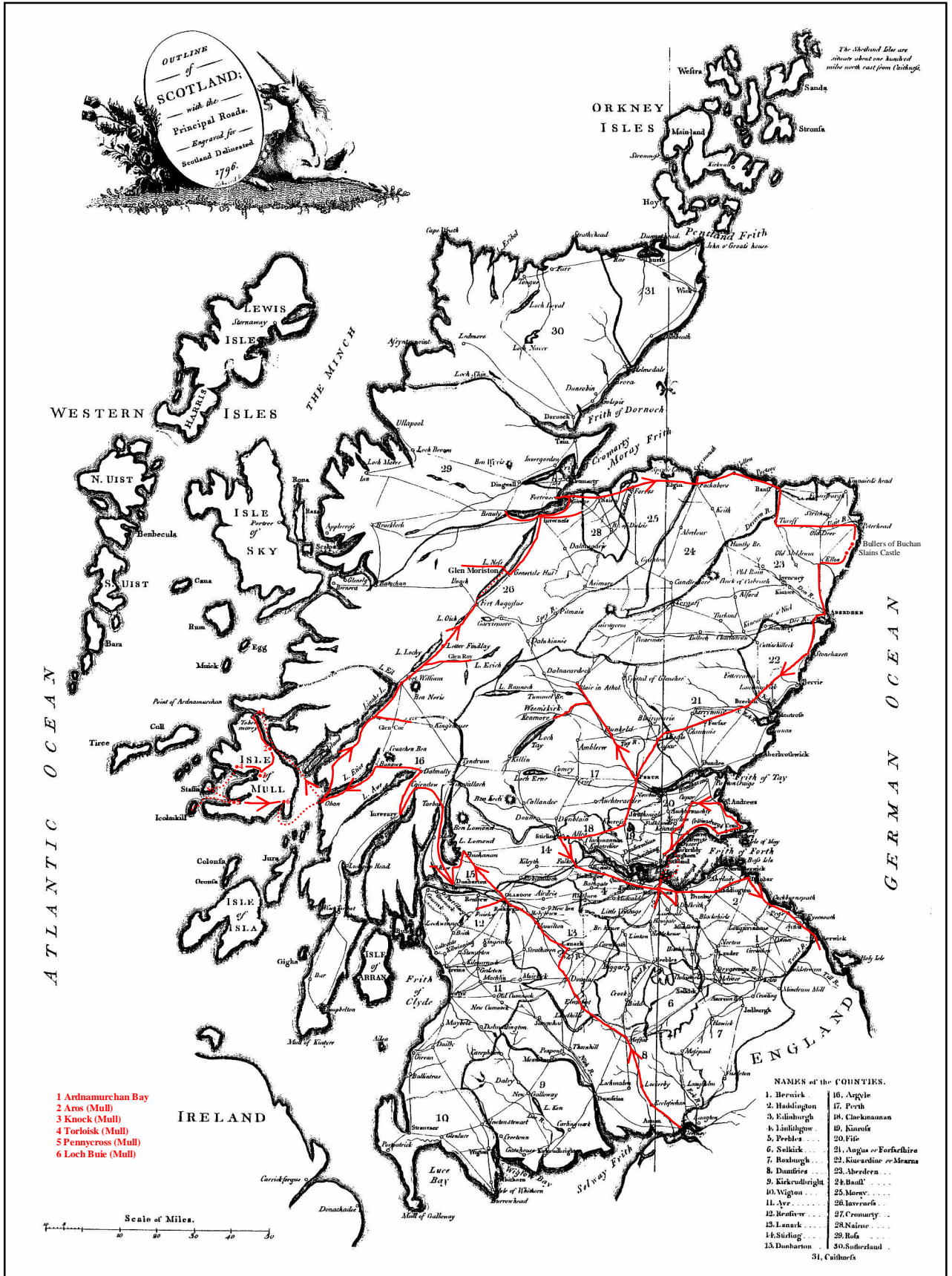
Meißner, Eduard (1785-1868), German physician and traveller:
Bemerkungen aus dem Taschenbuche eines Arztes während einer Reise von Odessa durch einen Theil von Deutschland, Holland, England und Schottland (Halle, 1819)
 date of travel: 1817



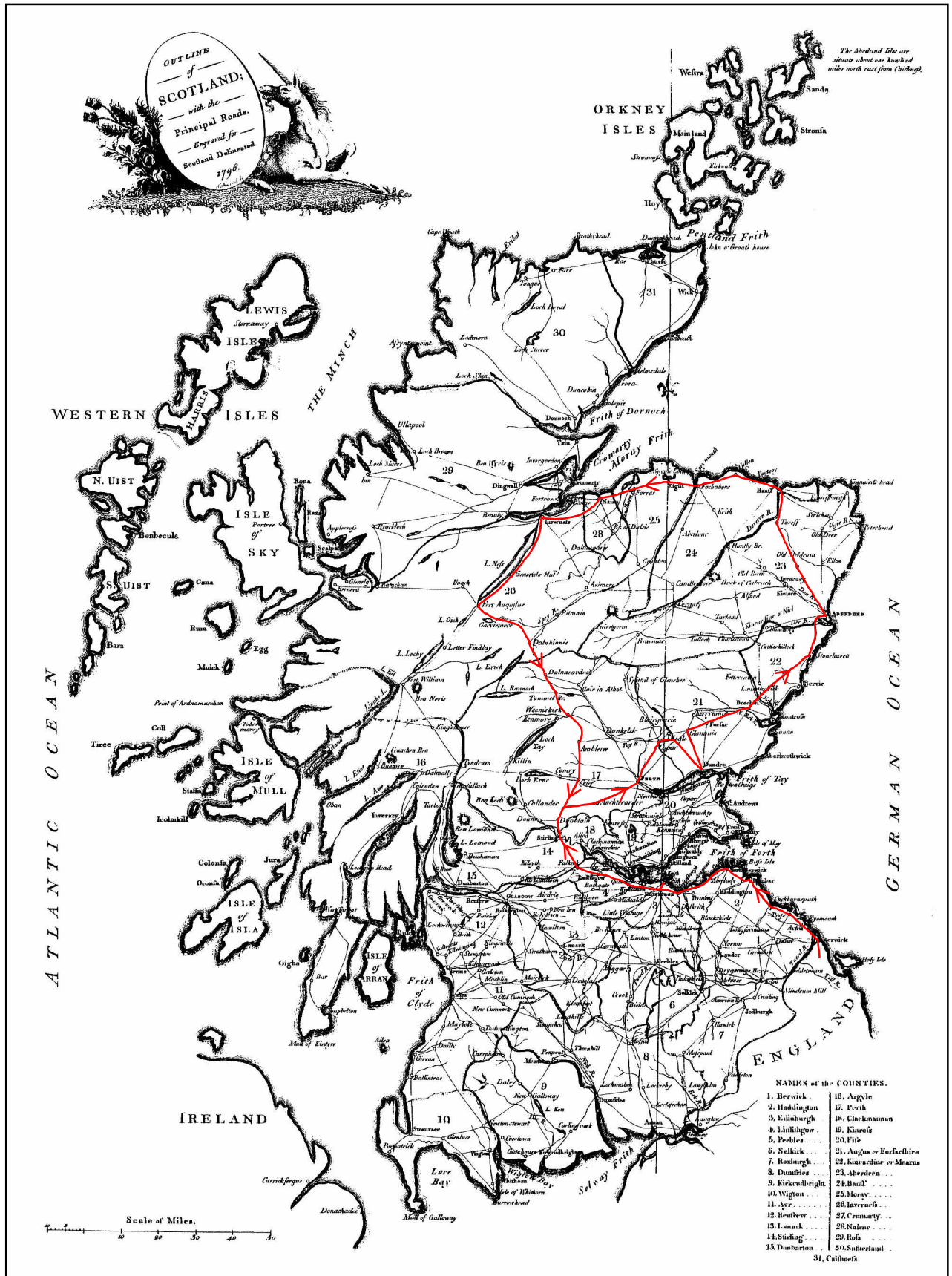
Menzies, Archibald (died 1777), General Inspector of the Board for the Annexed Estates:
 NAS, 'Journal of Archibald Menzies, General Inspector, 1768', Exchequer - Forfeited Estates (1745), E729/9
 date of travel: 1768



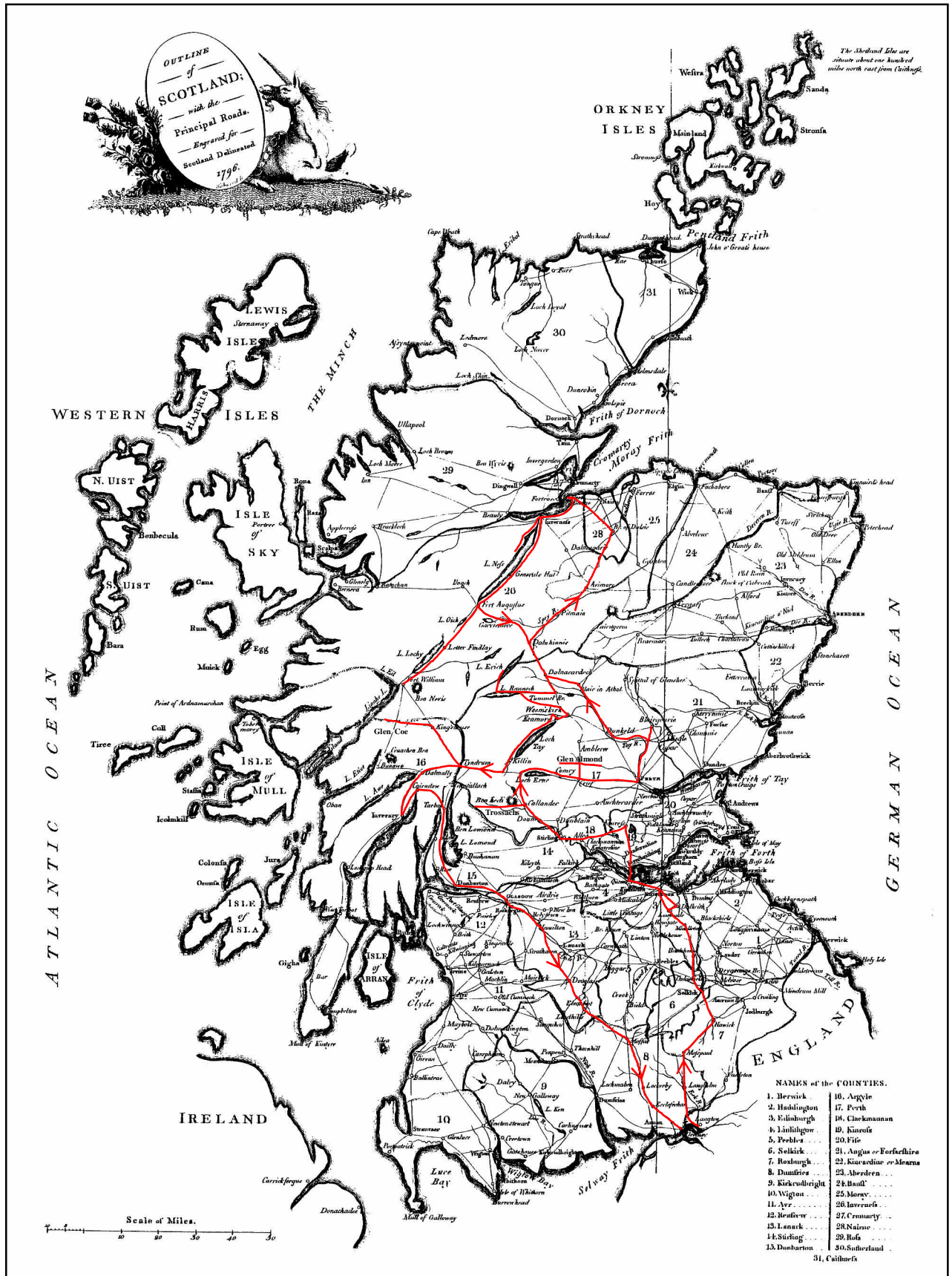
Michell, John Henry (1759-1844), English Reverend, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge:
The Tour Of The Duke Of Somerset, And The Rev. J. H. Michell, Through Parts Of England, Wales, And Scotland, In The Year 1795 (London, 1845)
date of travel: 1795



Mildmay, William (c. 1705-1771), English lawyer and diplomat:
Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, 'Notebook containing journal of a tour round England and Scotland', MS. D/DMY/15M50/1326
date of travel: probably 1736

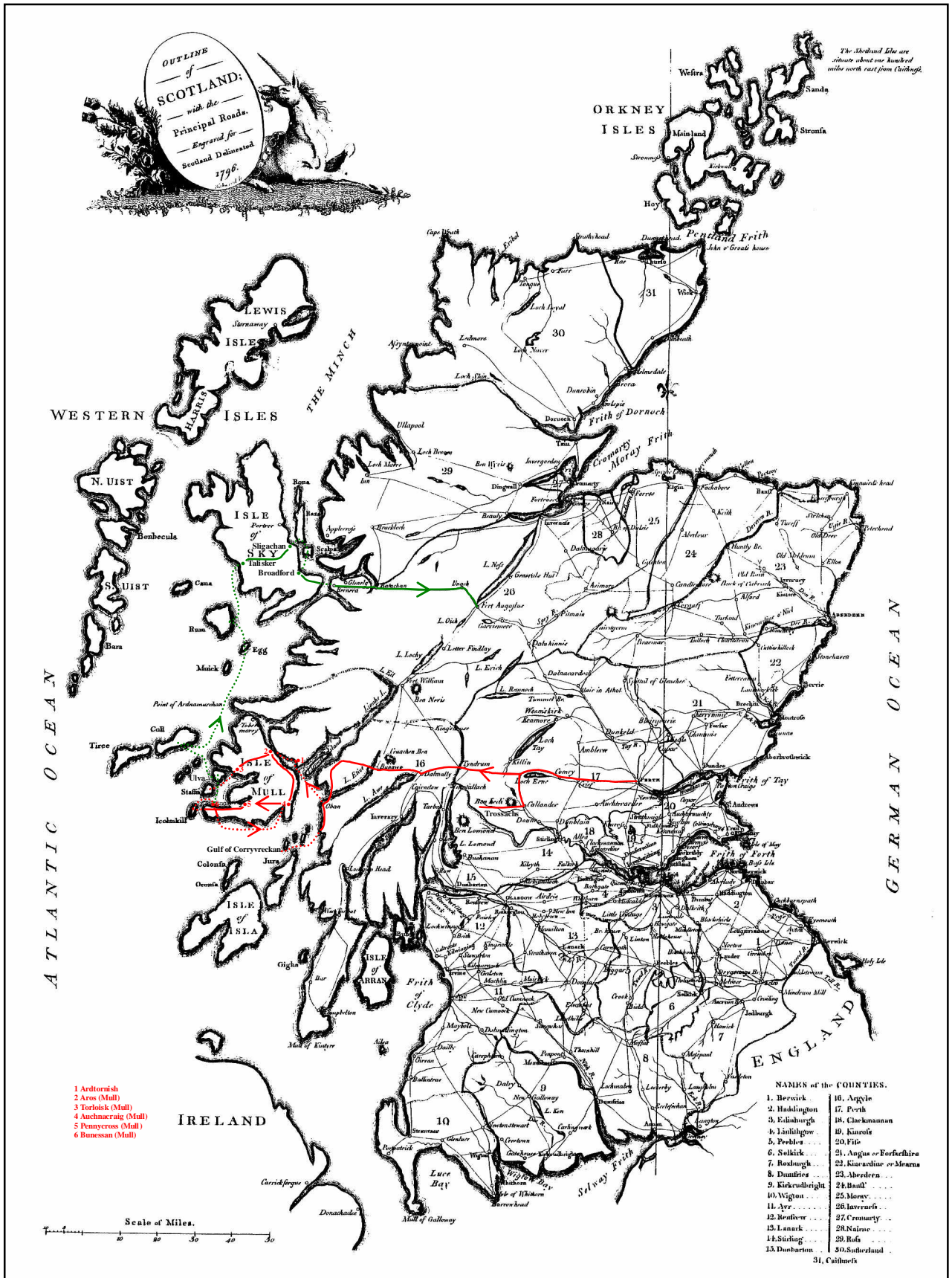


Murray, Sarah (1744-1811), (=Aust, Sarah), English topographical writer:
A Companion, And Useful Guide To The Beauties Of Scotland, To The Lakes of Westmoreland, Cumberland, And Lancashire (London, 1799)
 date of travel: 1796



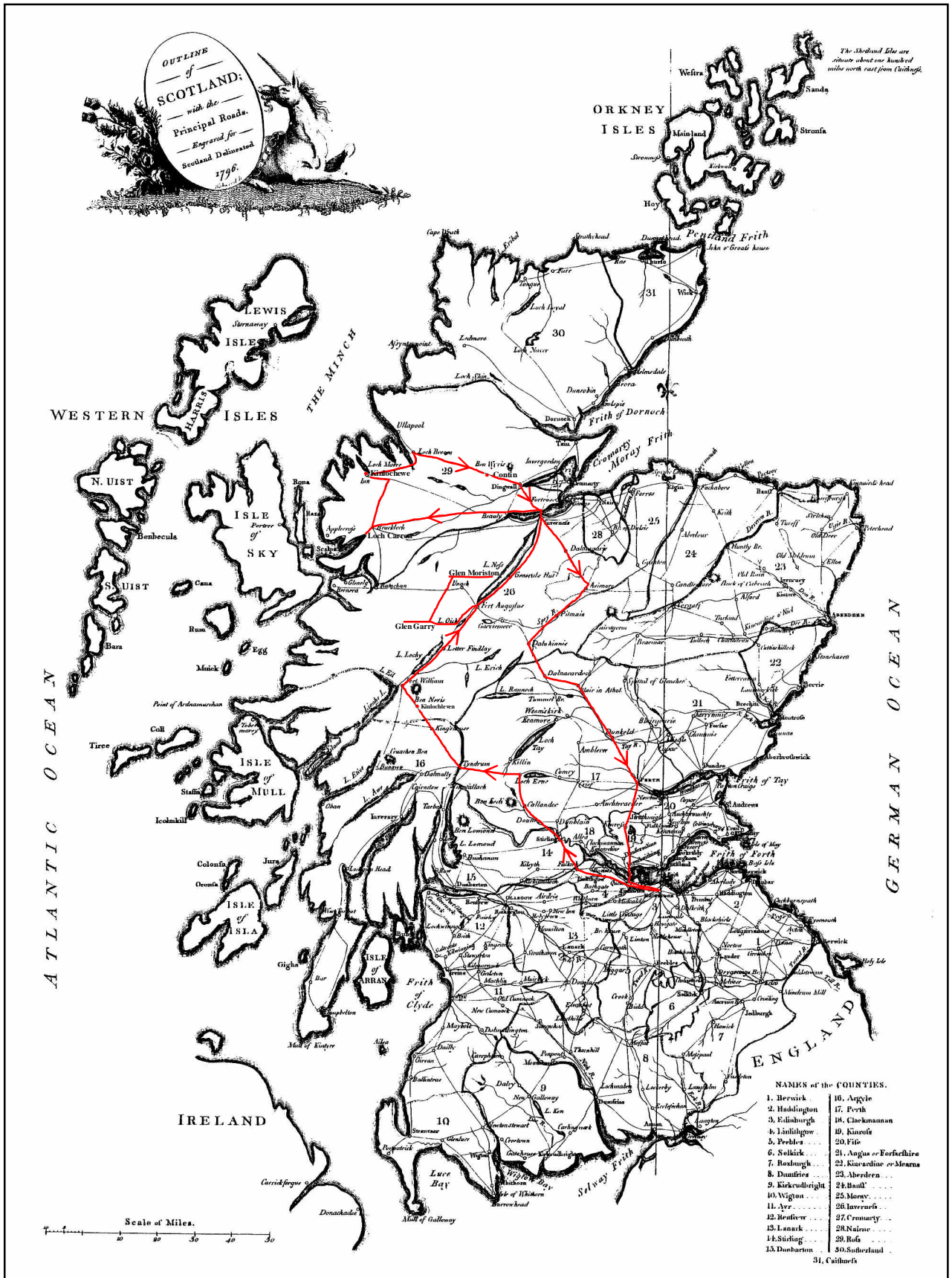
Murray, Sarah (1744-1811), (=Aust, Sarah), English topographical writer:
A Companion And Useful Guide To The Beauties In The Western Highlands Of Scotland, And In The Hebrides (2nd edn. London, 1805)
 date of travel: 1800, 1802

tour 1800
 tour 1802



Neilson, Richard (fl. 1754-55), General Riding Officer, or Surveyor of Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland:

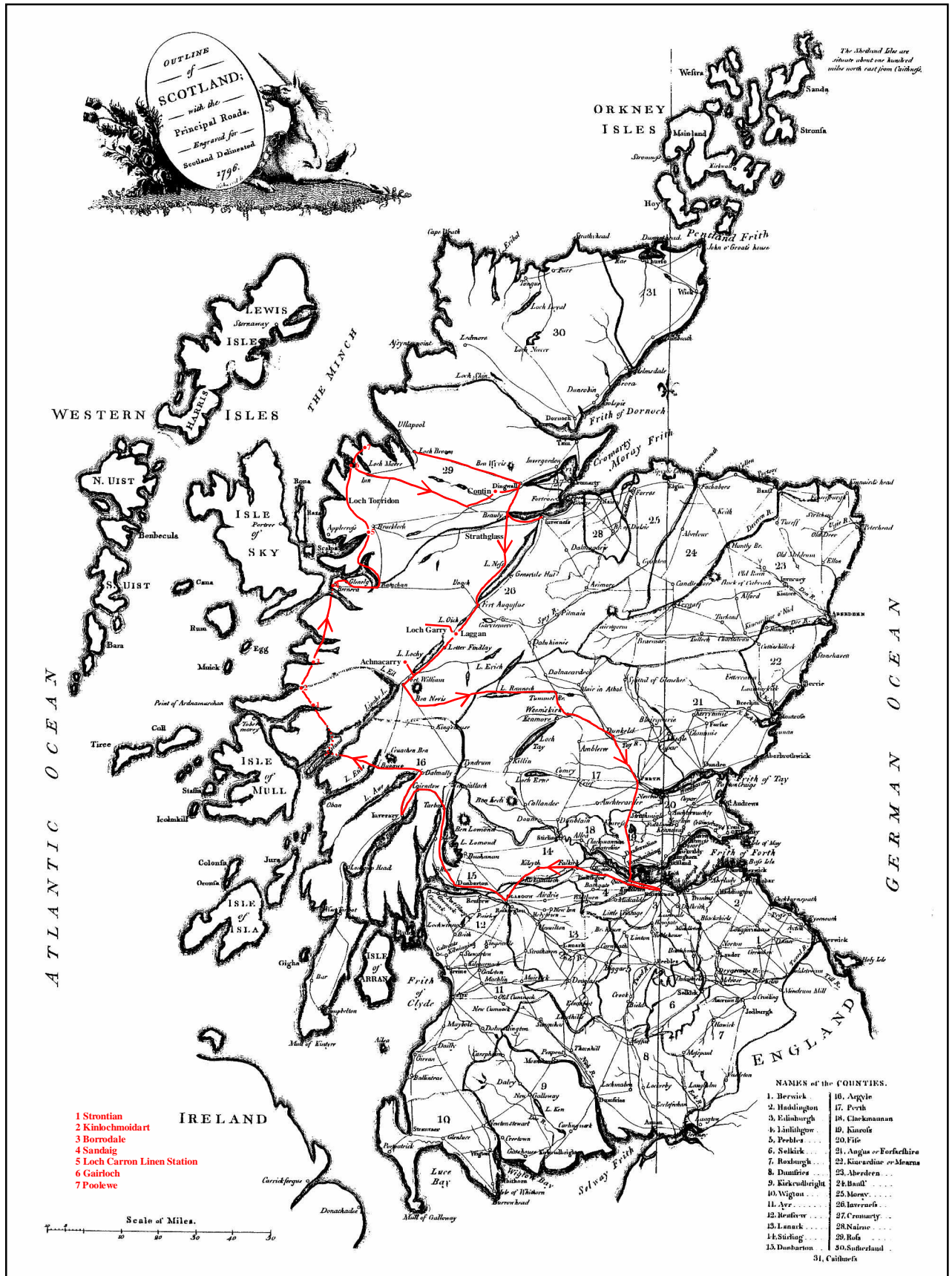
NAS, 'Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 6th November 1754, Board of Manufactures – Trustees' Reports, NG1/7/4
 date of travel: 1754



Neilson, Richard (fl. 1754-55), General Riding Officer, or Surveyor of Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland:

EUL, '2nd Report Richard Neilson General Surveyor of the Manufactures in the Highlands of Scotland – To the Commissioners and Trustees for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland', 1755, MS. Laing, Div. II, No. 623

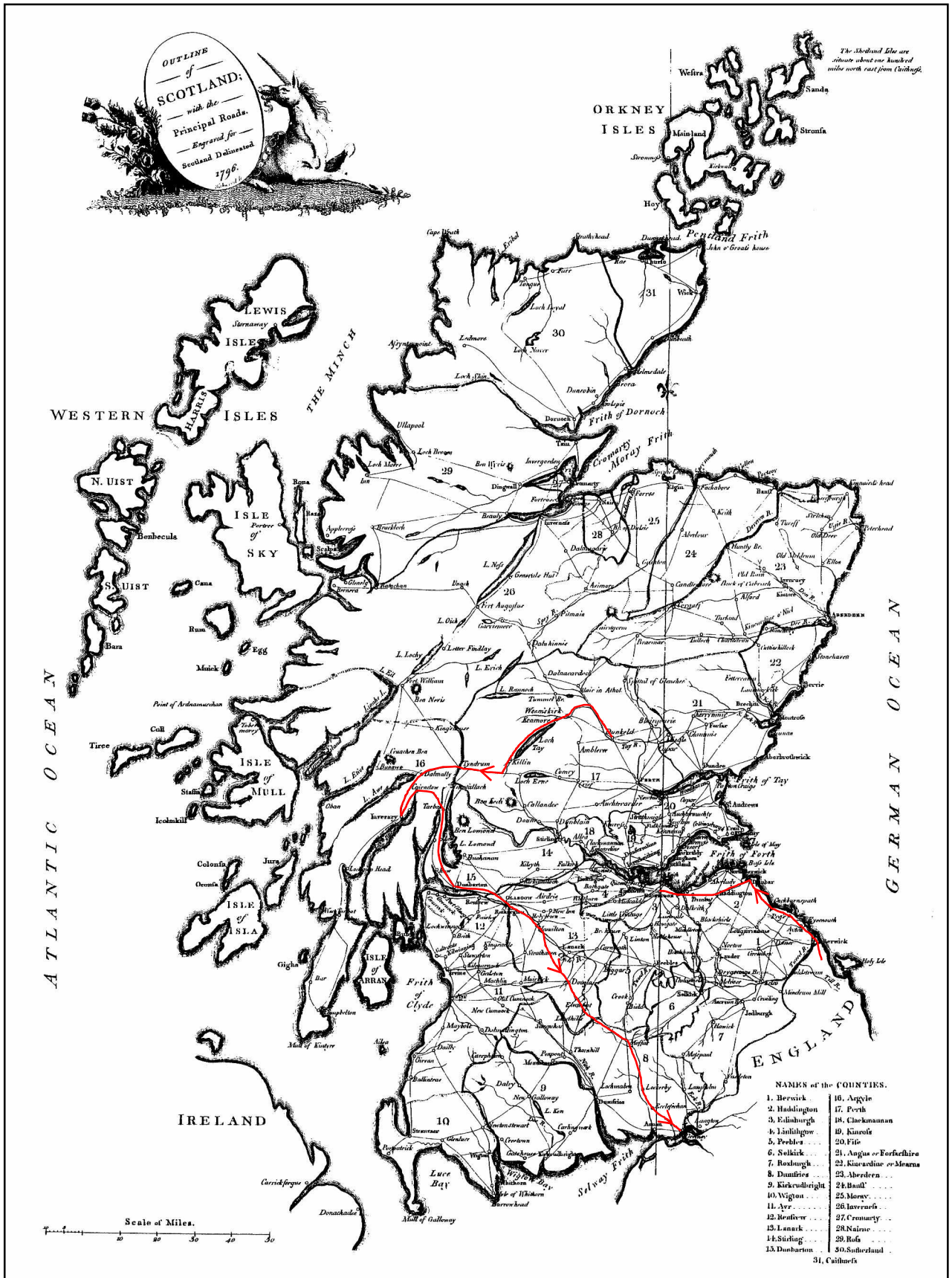
date of travel: 1755



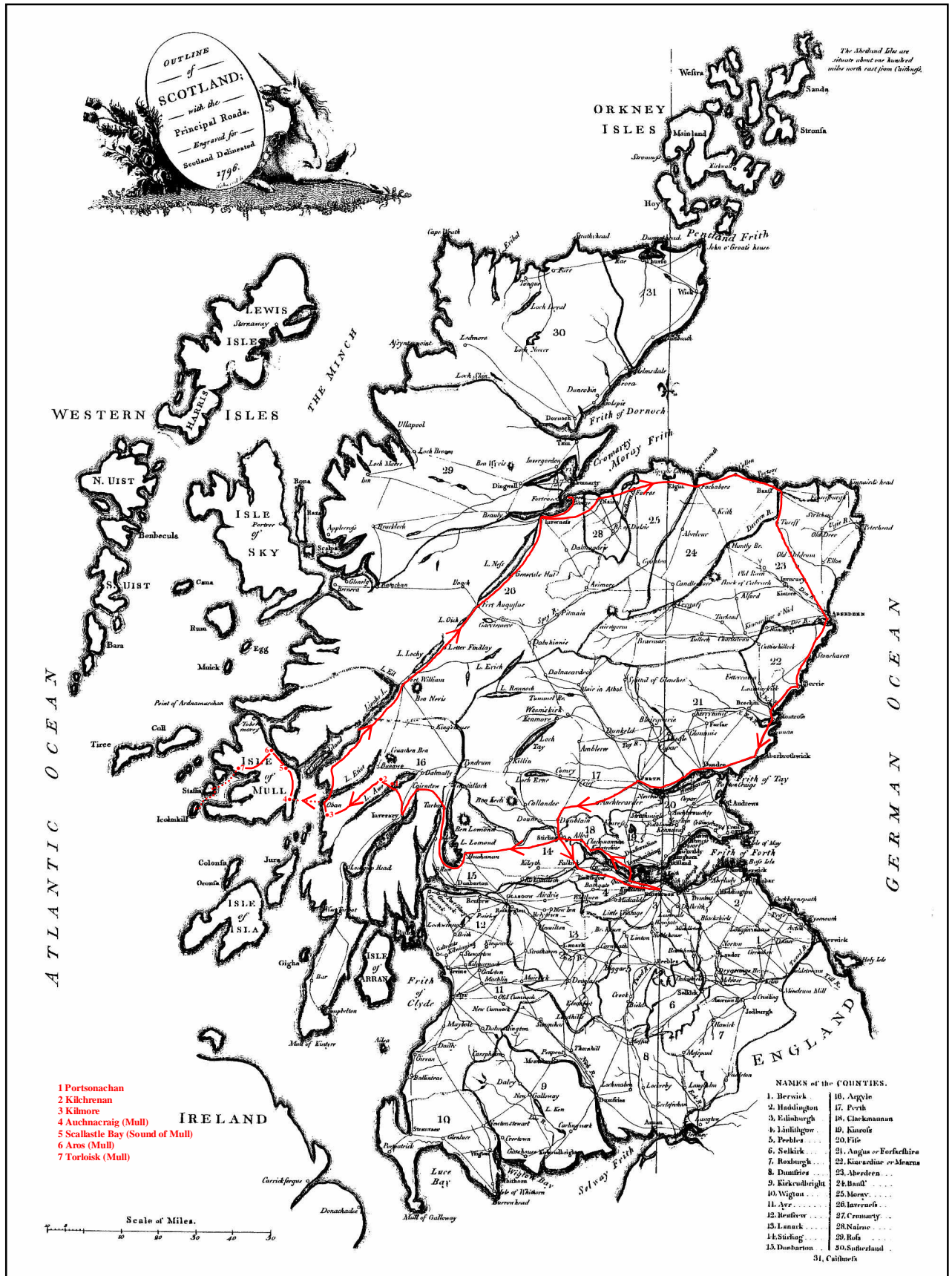
Newdigate, Roger (?) (1719-1806), English MP and antiquary:

Warwickshire Record Office, Warwick, 'Journal of a Tour from Nottingham, through Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland to Edinburgh and Dunkeld returning via the west coast to Manchester', MS. CR 136 A/563

date of travel: 1766



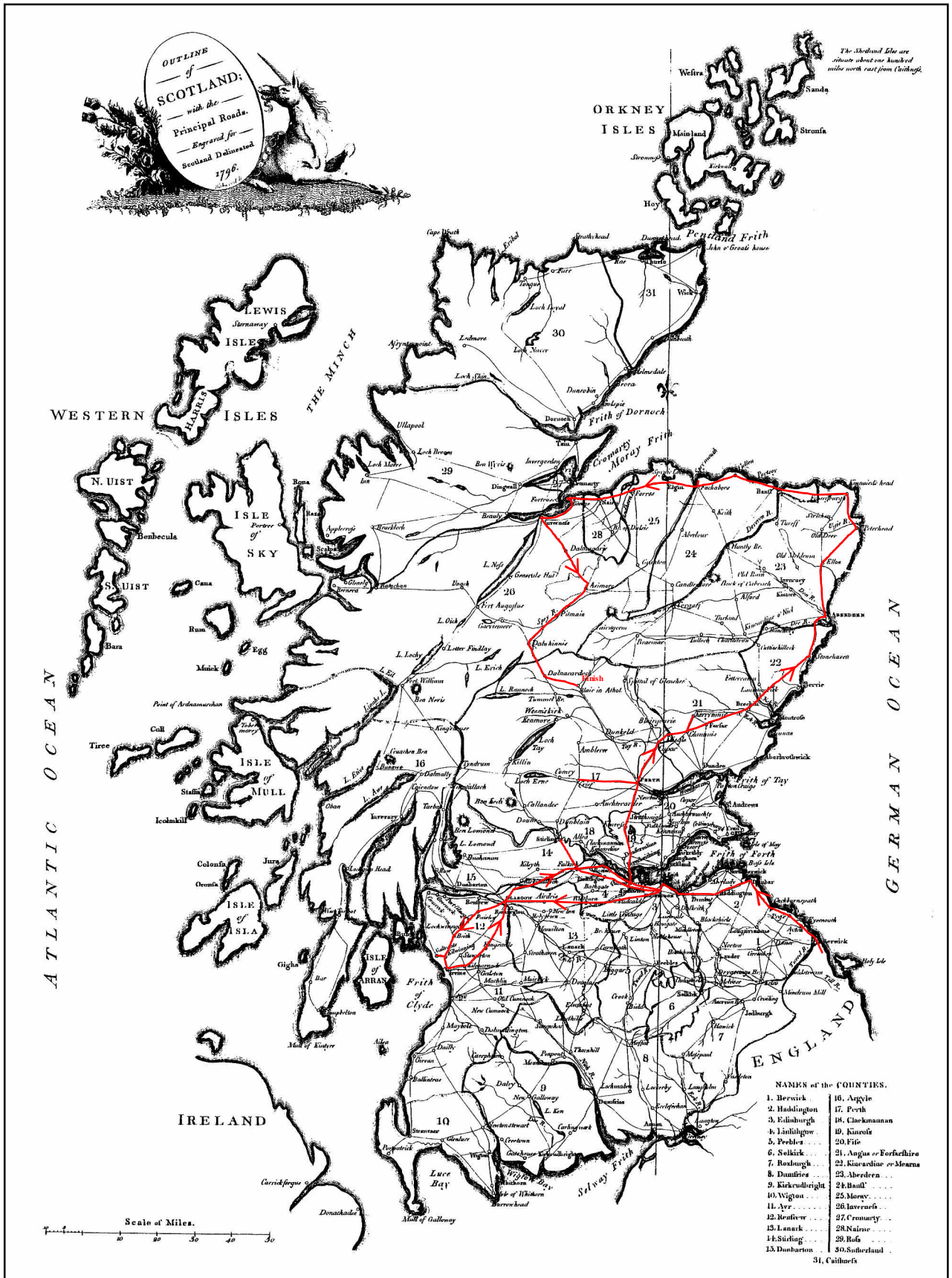
Pattison, Jacob (1759-1782), English medical student or physician:
 NLS, 'A Tour through part of the Highlands of Scotland in 1780', MS. 6322
 date of travel: 1780



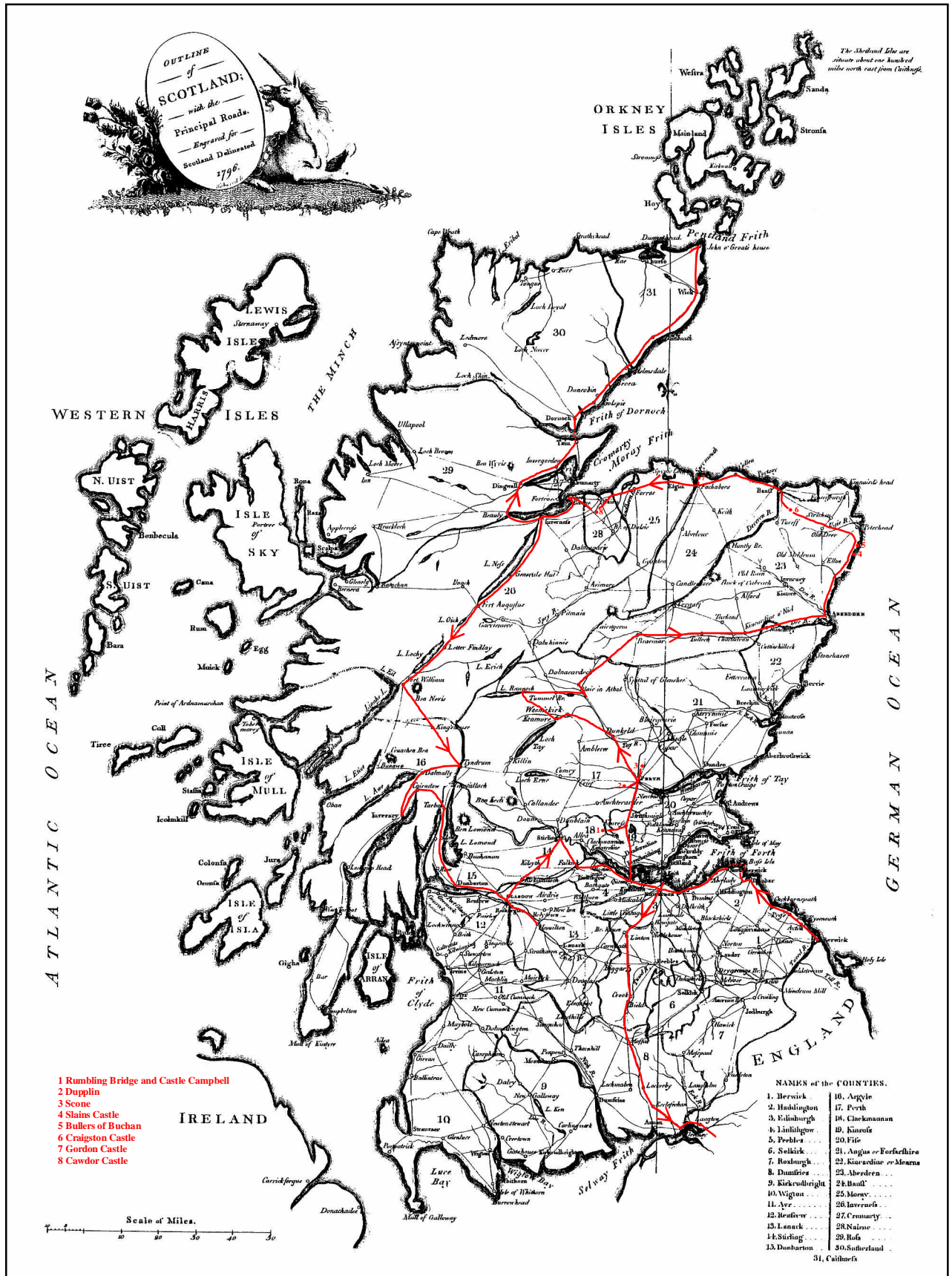
Pease, John (1775-1808), English merchant and Quaker:

'Journal of a Traveller in Scotland 1795-1796', *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. xxxvi (1957), pp. 25-51

date of travel: 1795-96



Pennant, Thomas (1726-1798), Welsh traveller and zoologist:
A Tour In Scotland MDCCLXIX (3rd edn. Warrington, 1774)
 date of travel: 1769

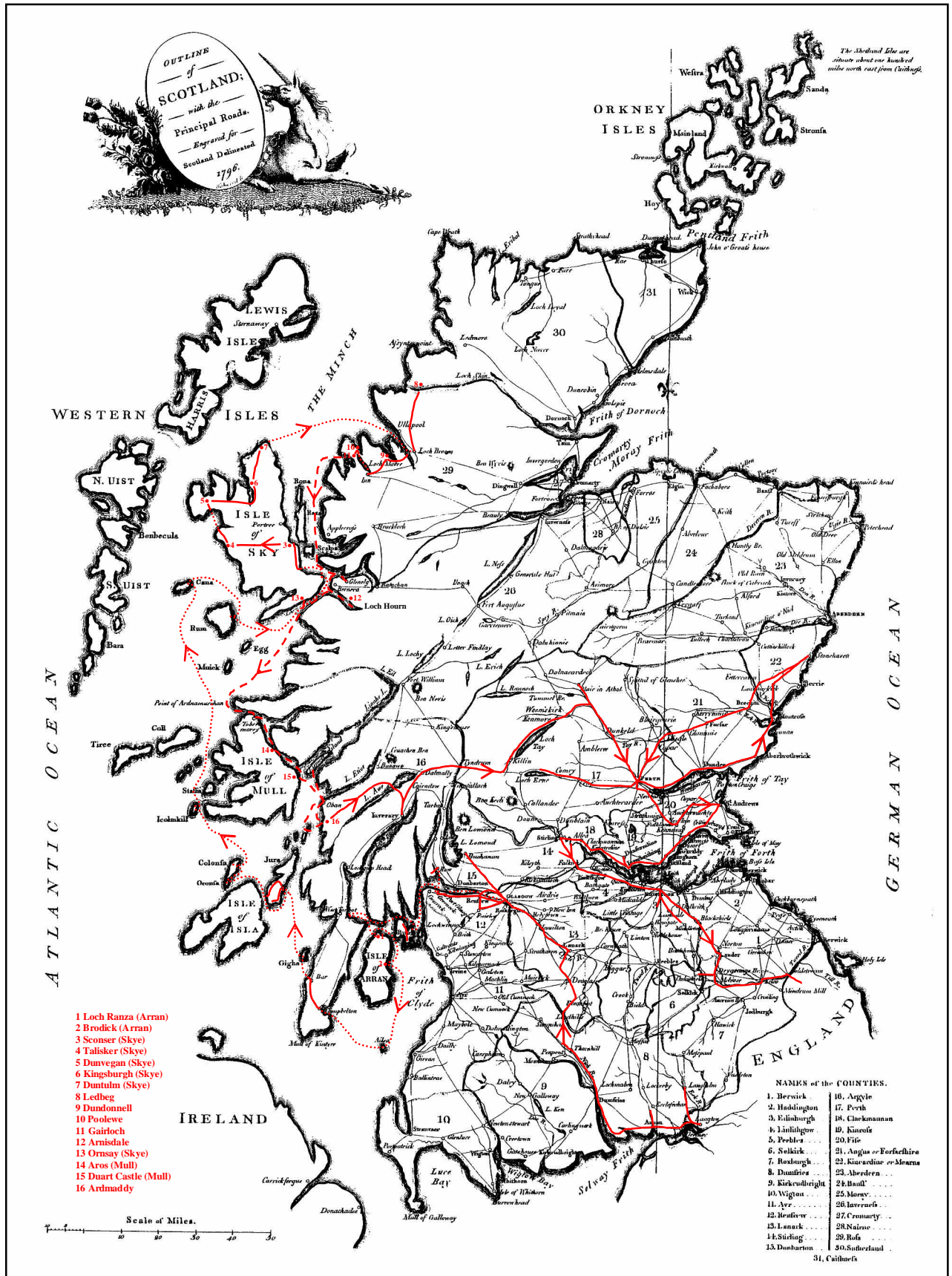


Pennant, Thomas (1726-1798), Welsh traveller and zoologist:

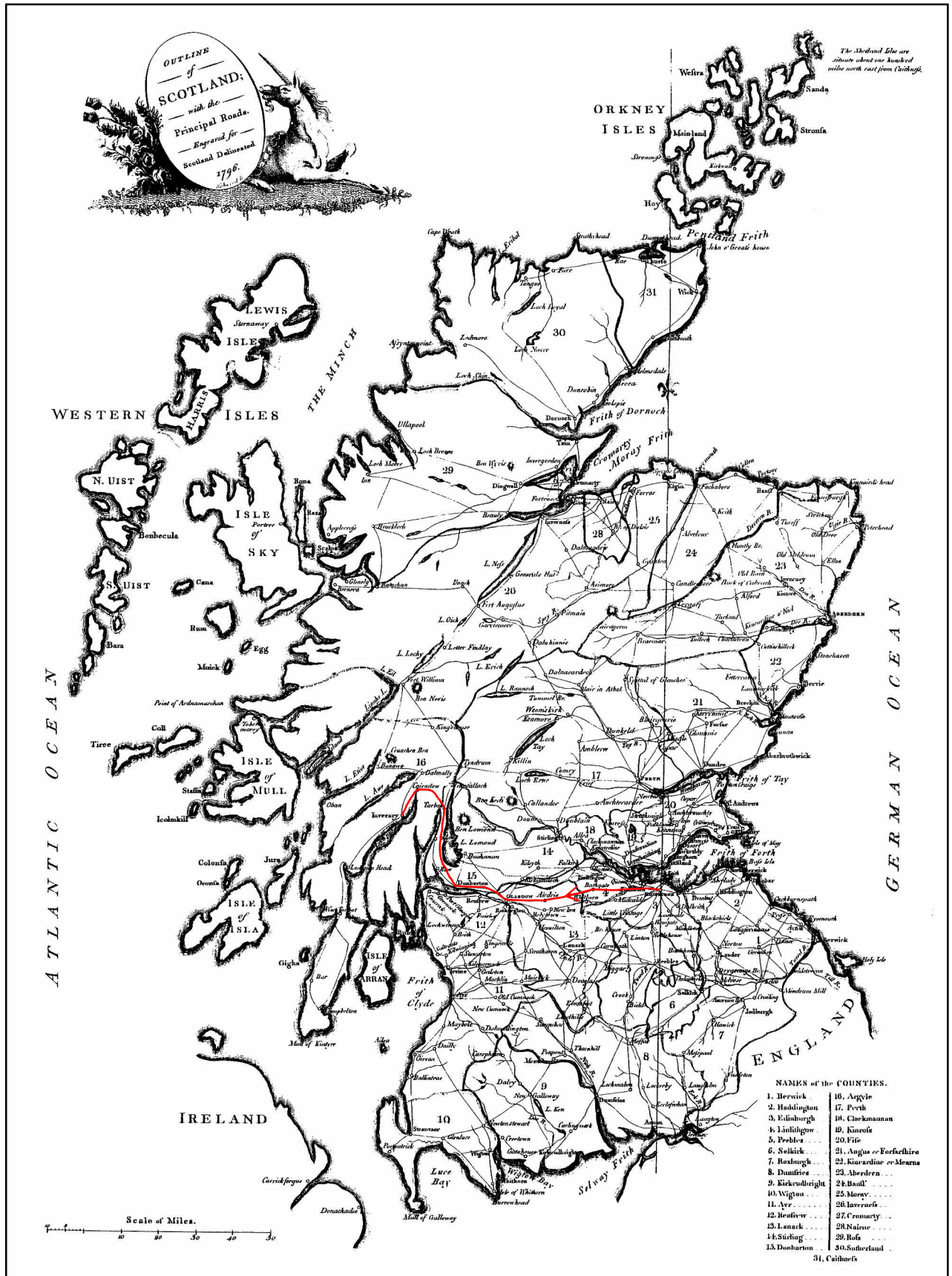
A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCLXXII, 2 vols. (Chester, London, 1774-76)

date of travel: 1772

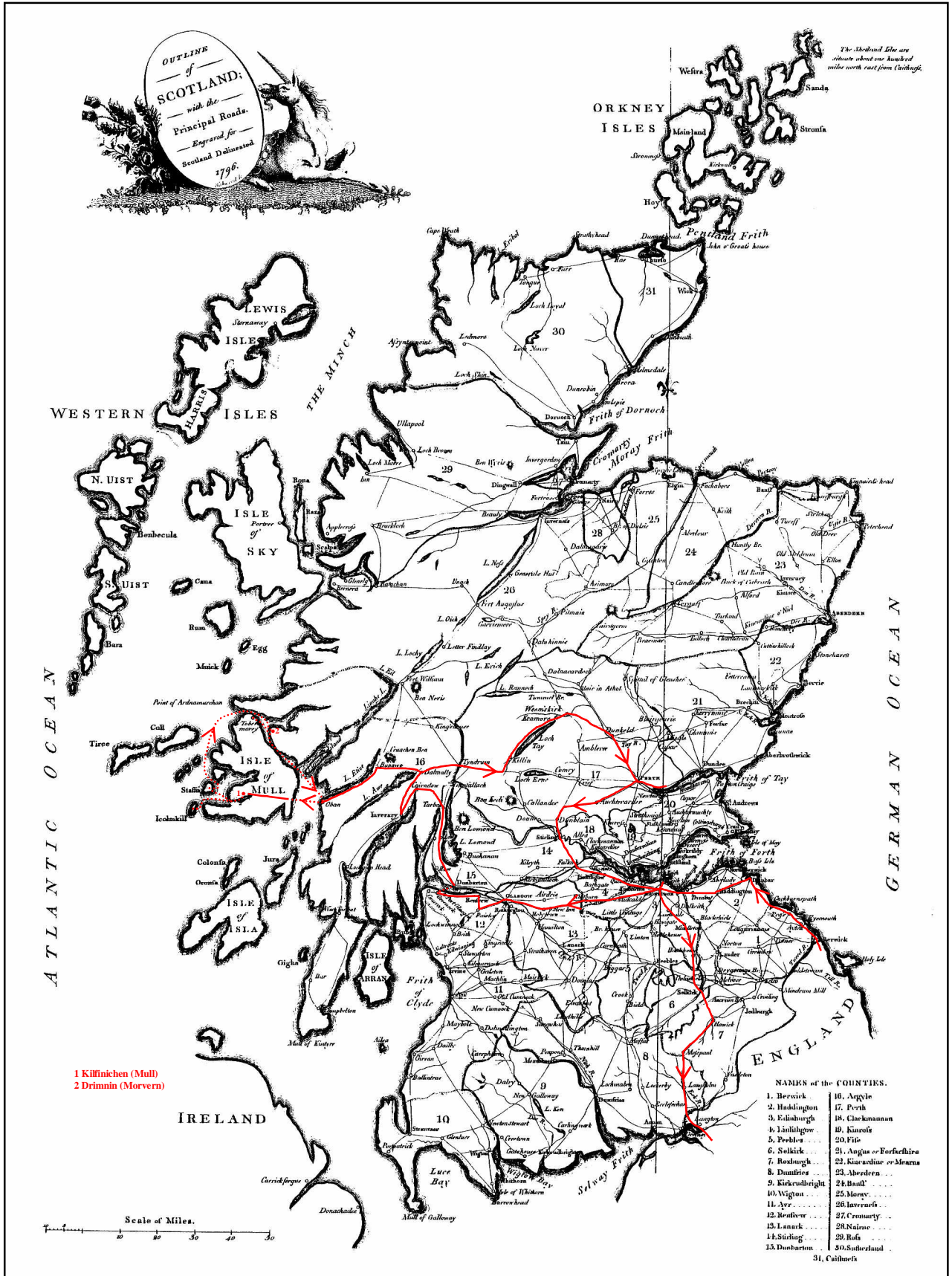
Outward bound
 Homeward bound - - - - -



Percy, Thomas (1729-1811), English, Bishop of Dromore:
BL, 'Observanda in the Tour into Scotland, Aug. 8, 1773', Add. MS. 39,547
date of travel: 1773



Phillips, Nathaniel (1730-1813), merchant and Jamaican sugar-planter:
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 date of travel: 1791



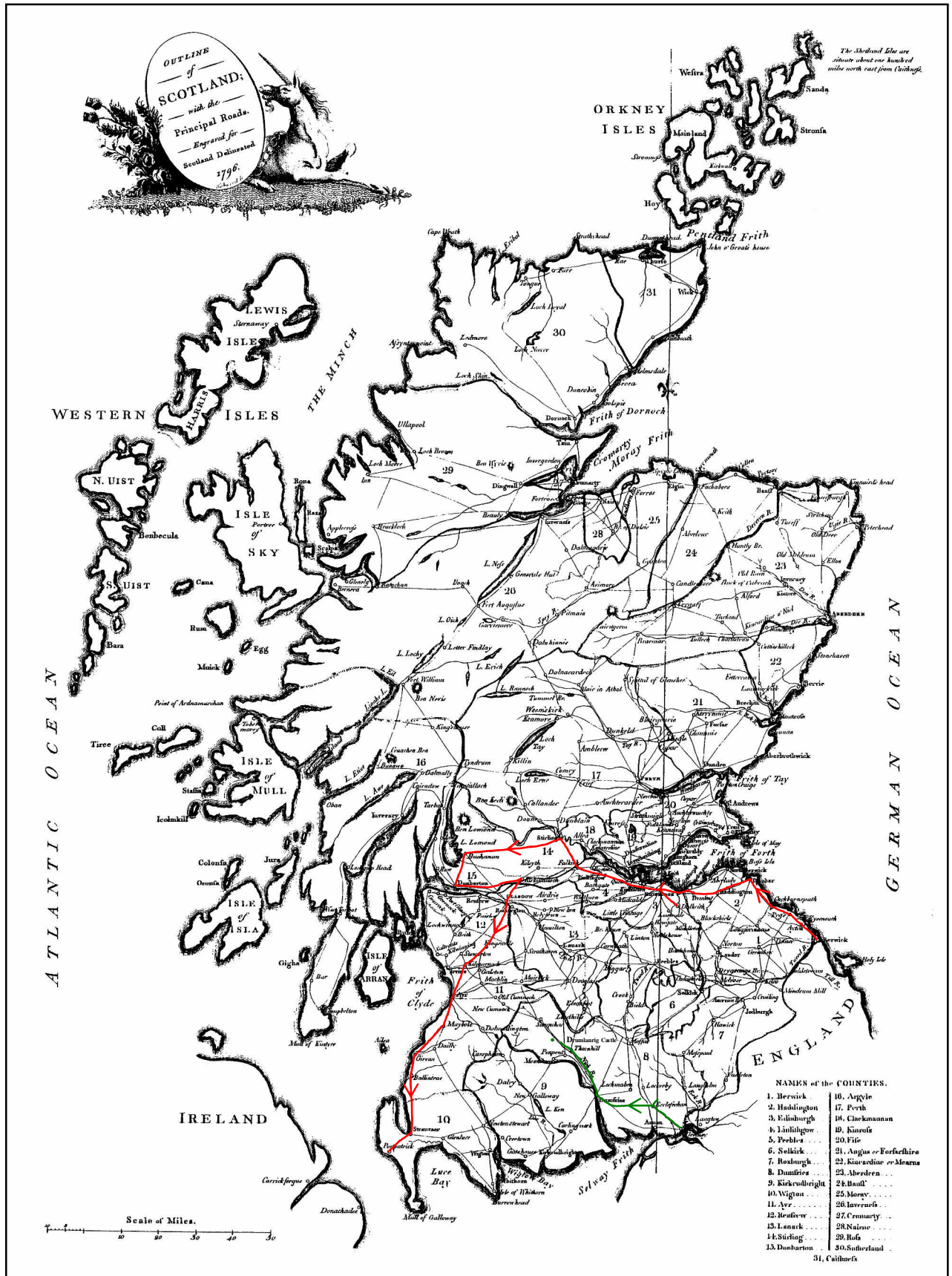
Pococke, Richard (1704-1765), English traveller, Bishop of Ossory:

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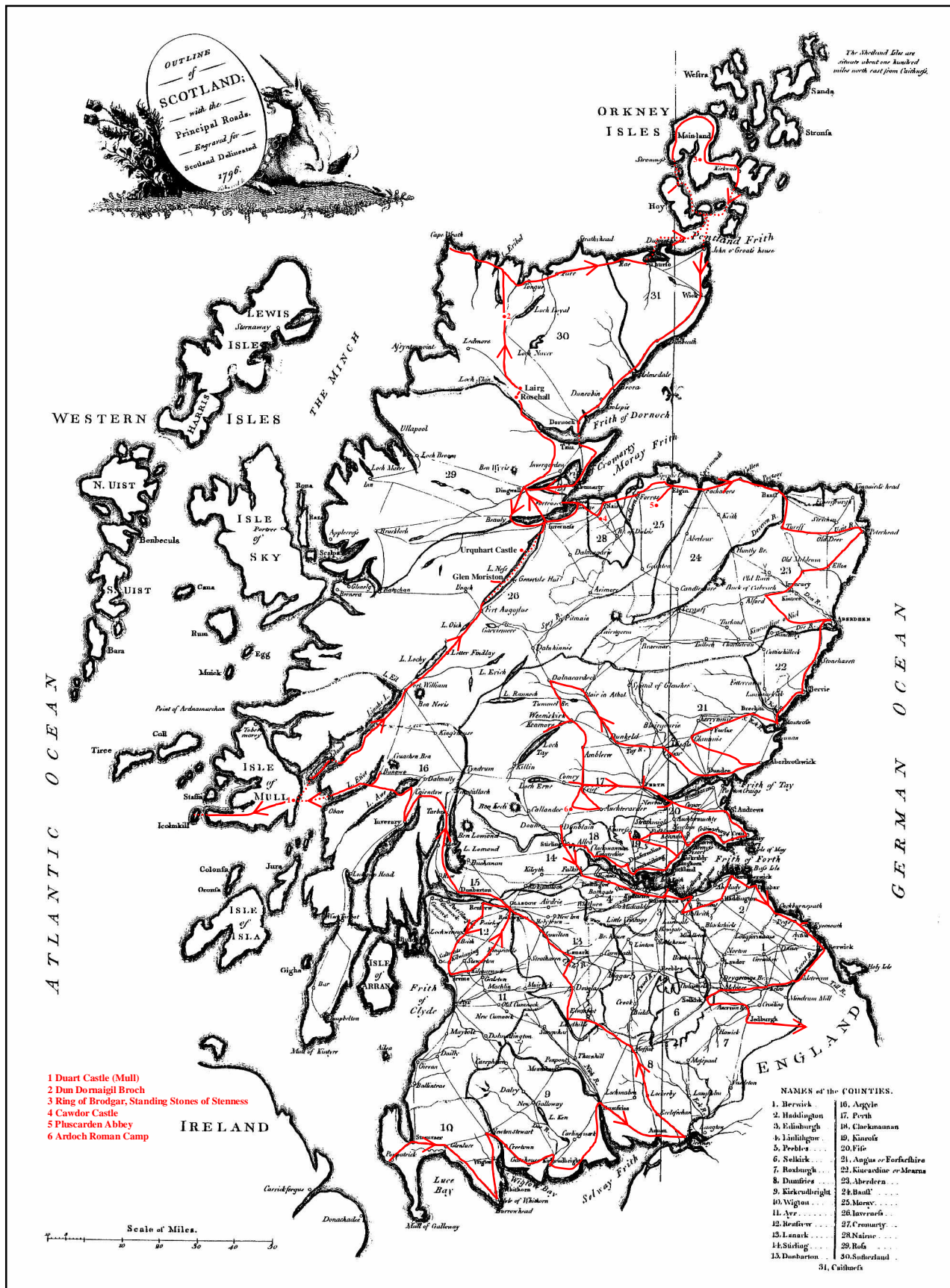
date of travel: 1747, 1750

tour 1747

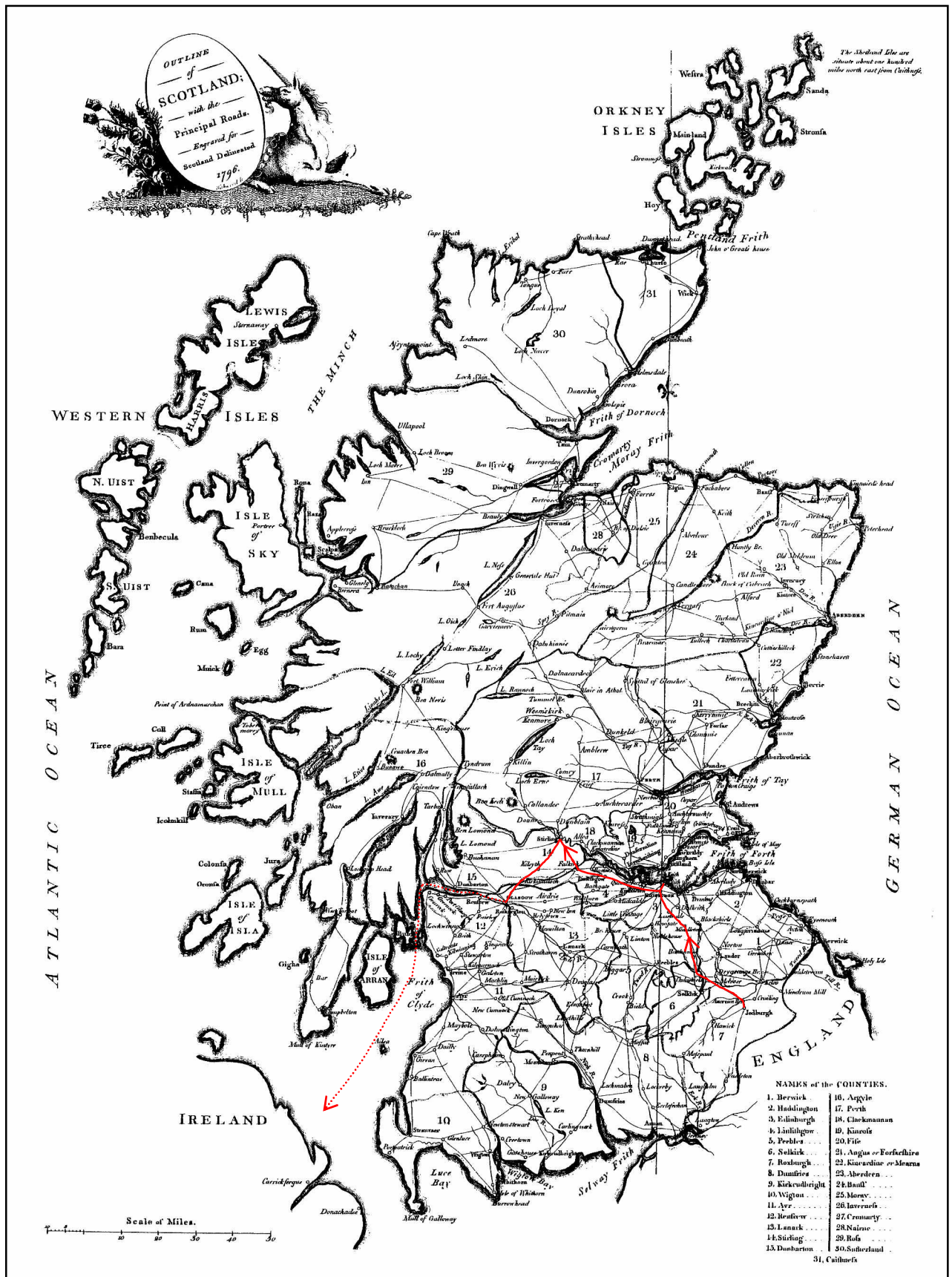
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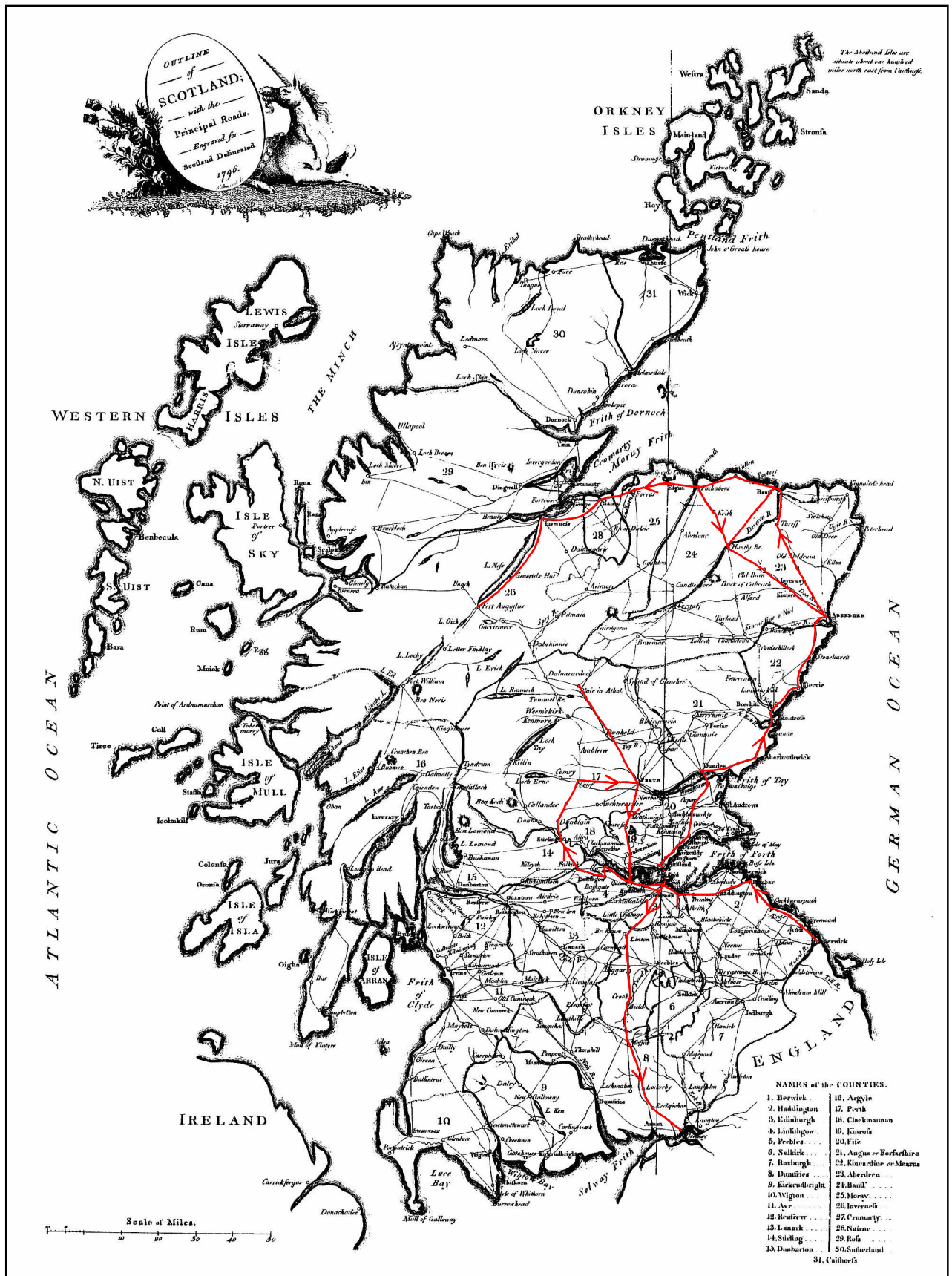
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date of travel: 1746



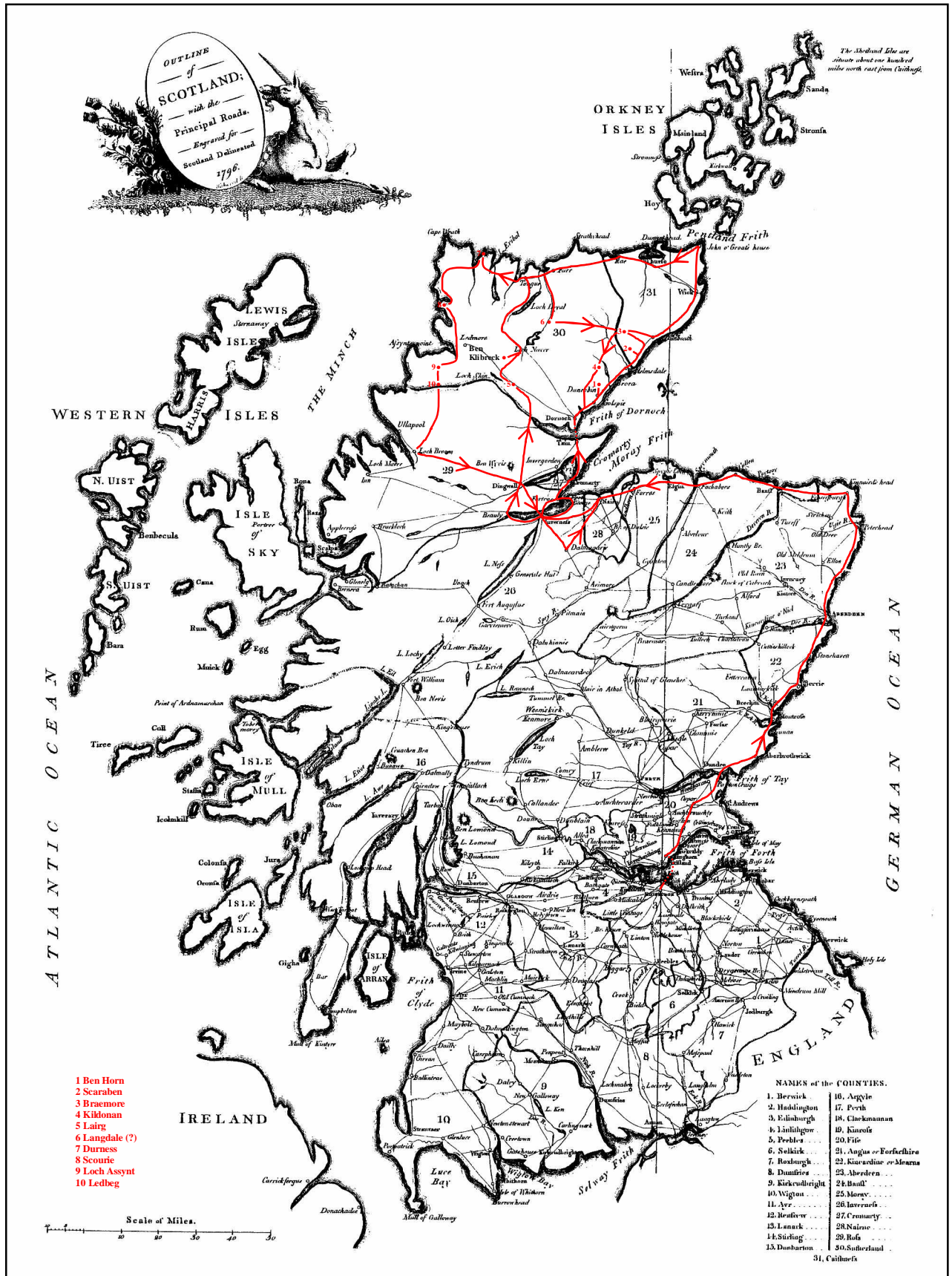
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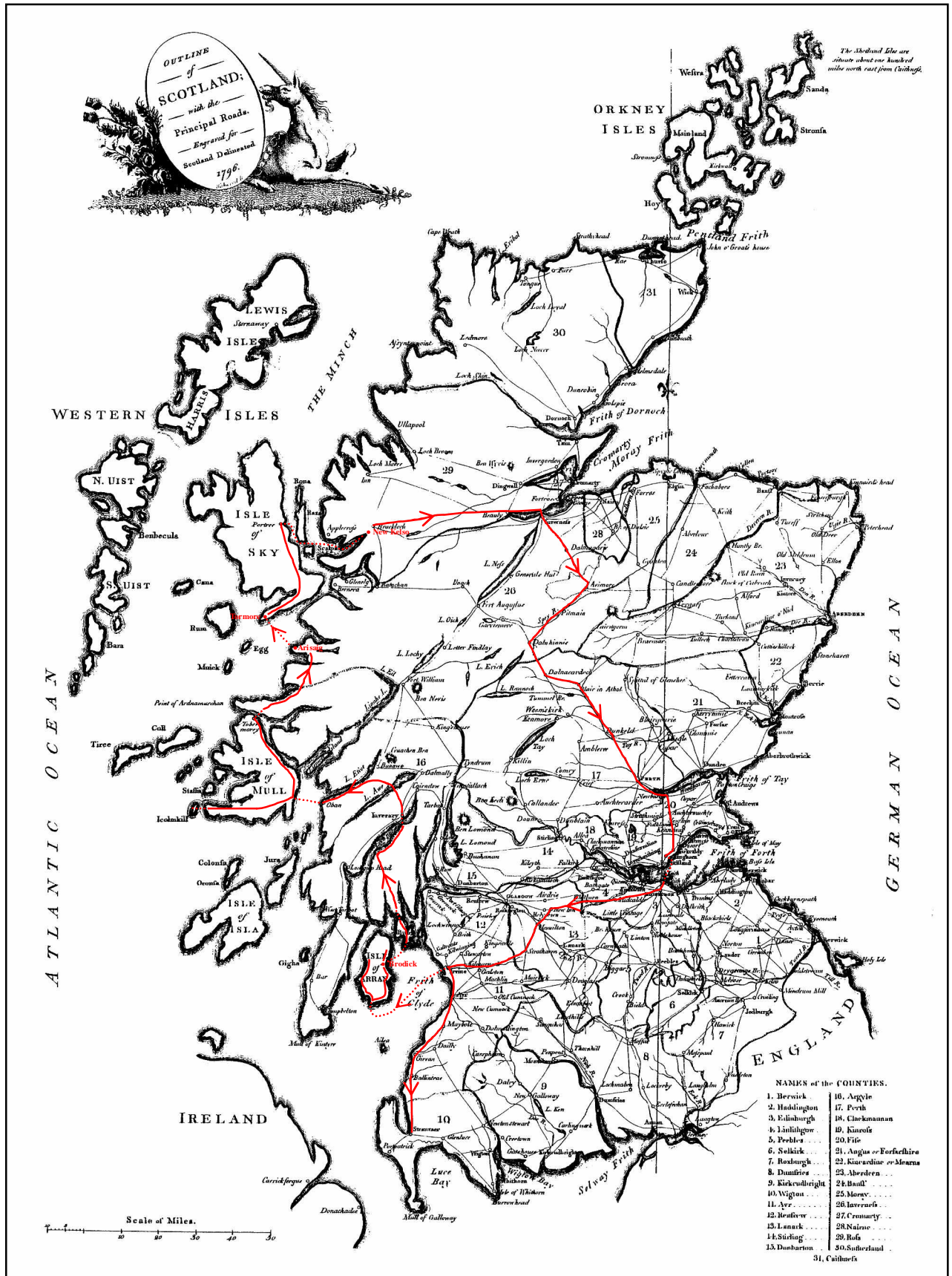
'Remarks made in a Tour through several of the Western Isles and West Coast of Scotland, 1767'



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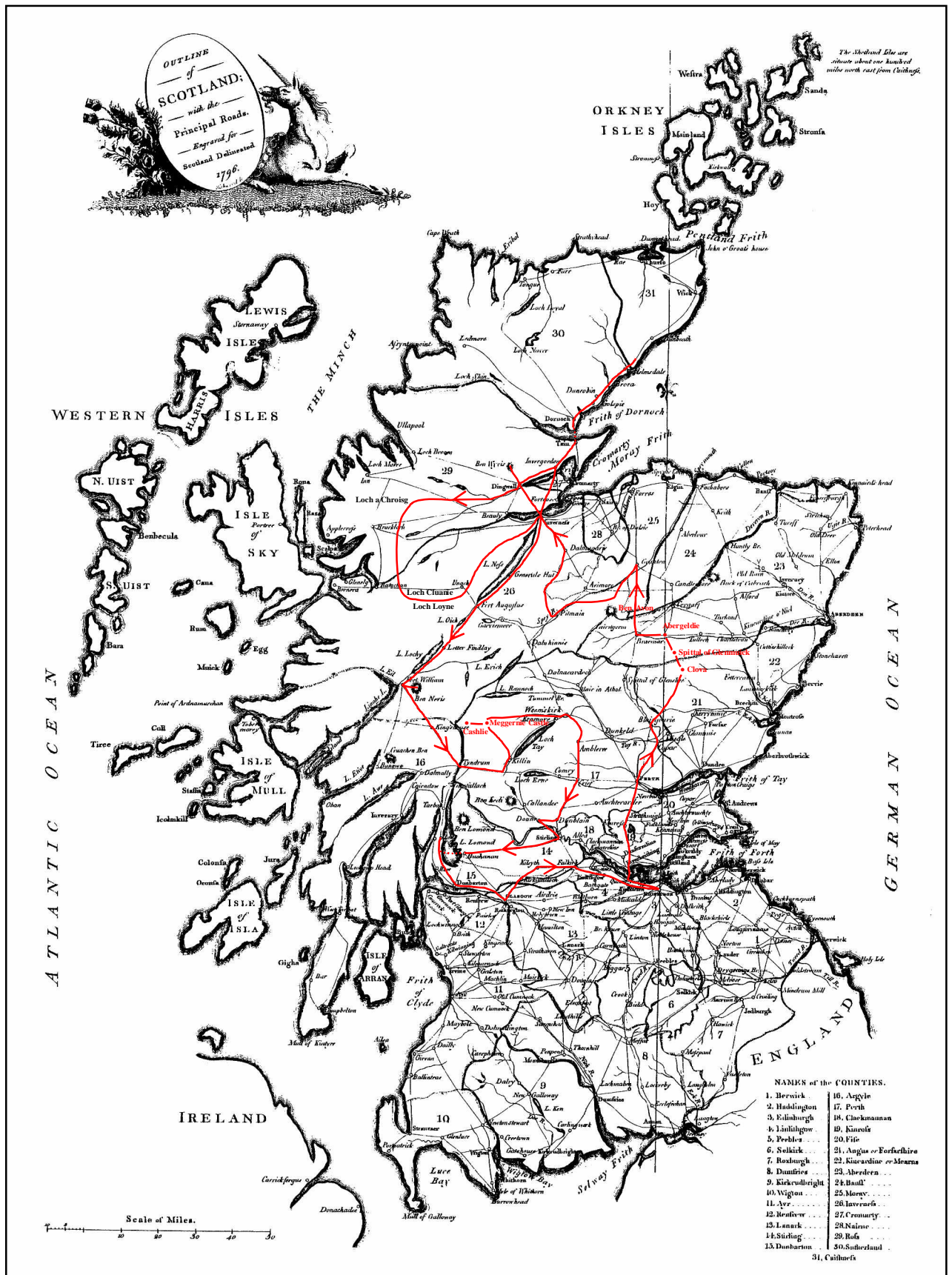
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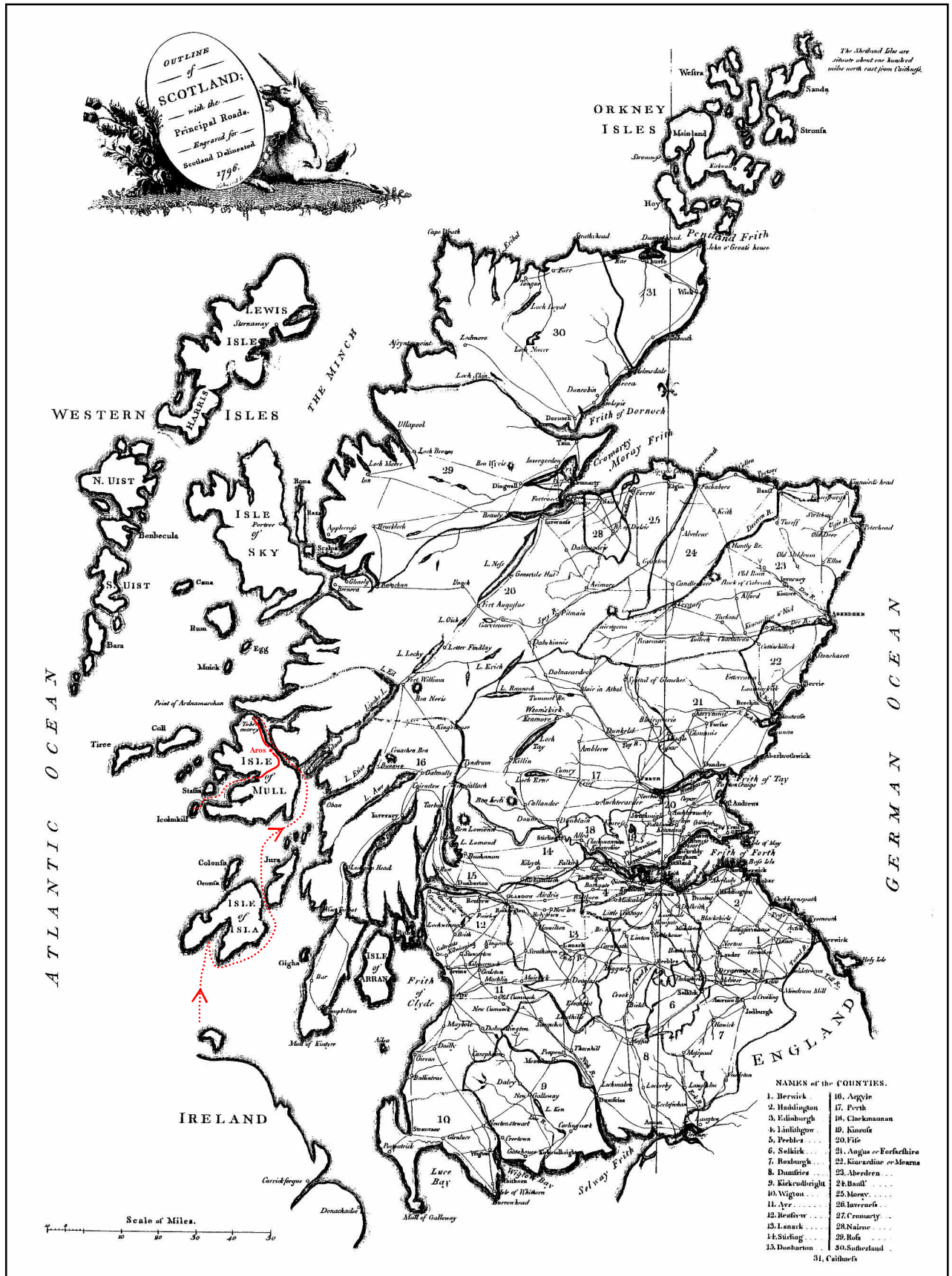
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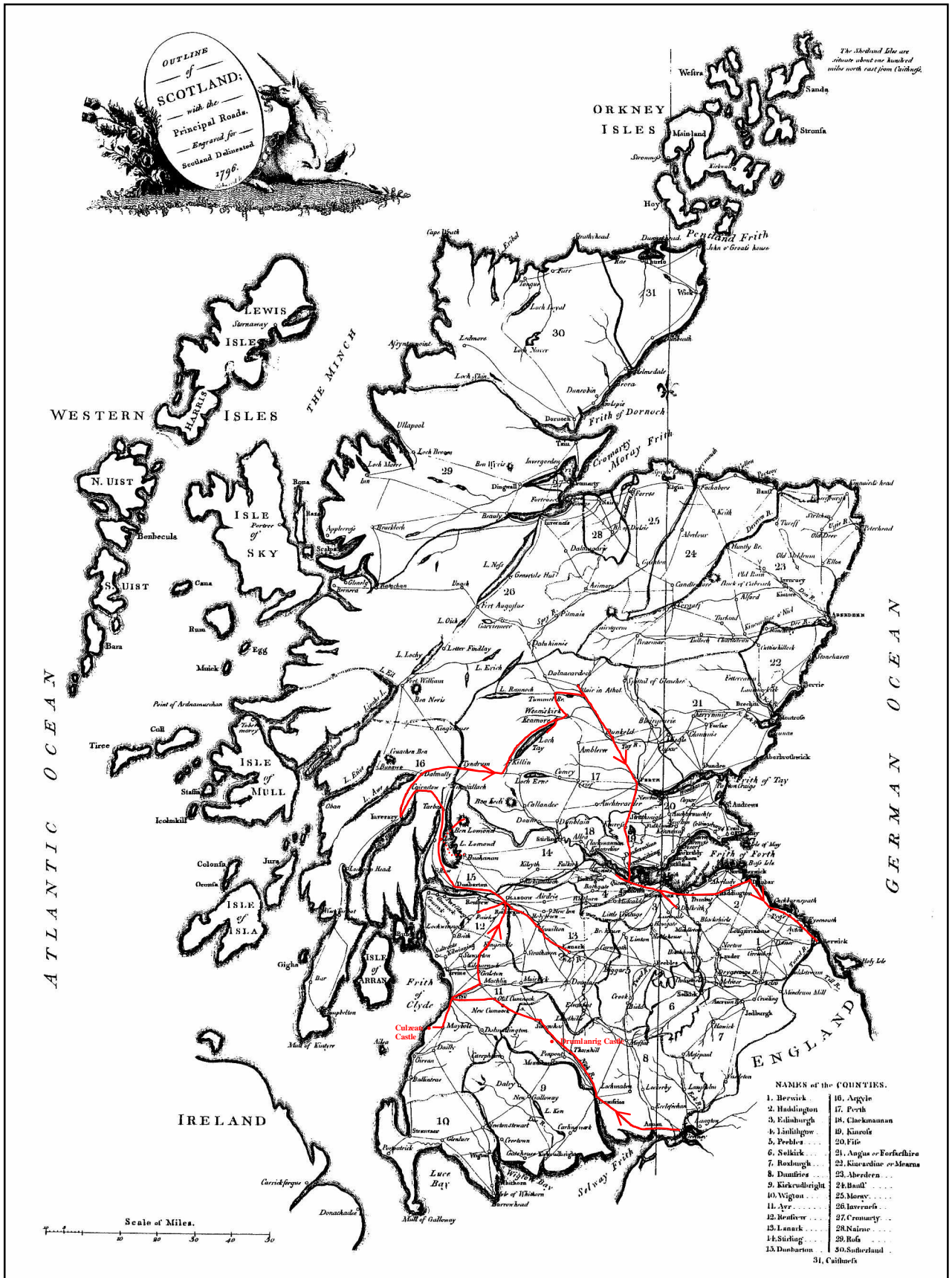


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 date of travel: 1688

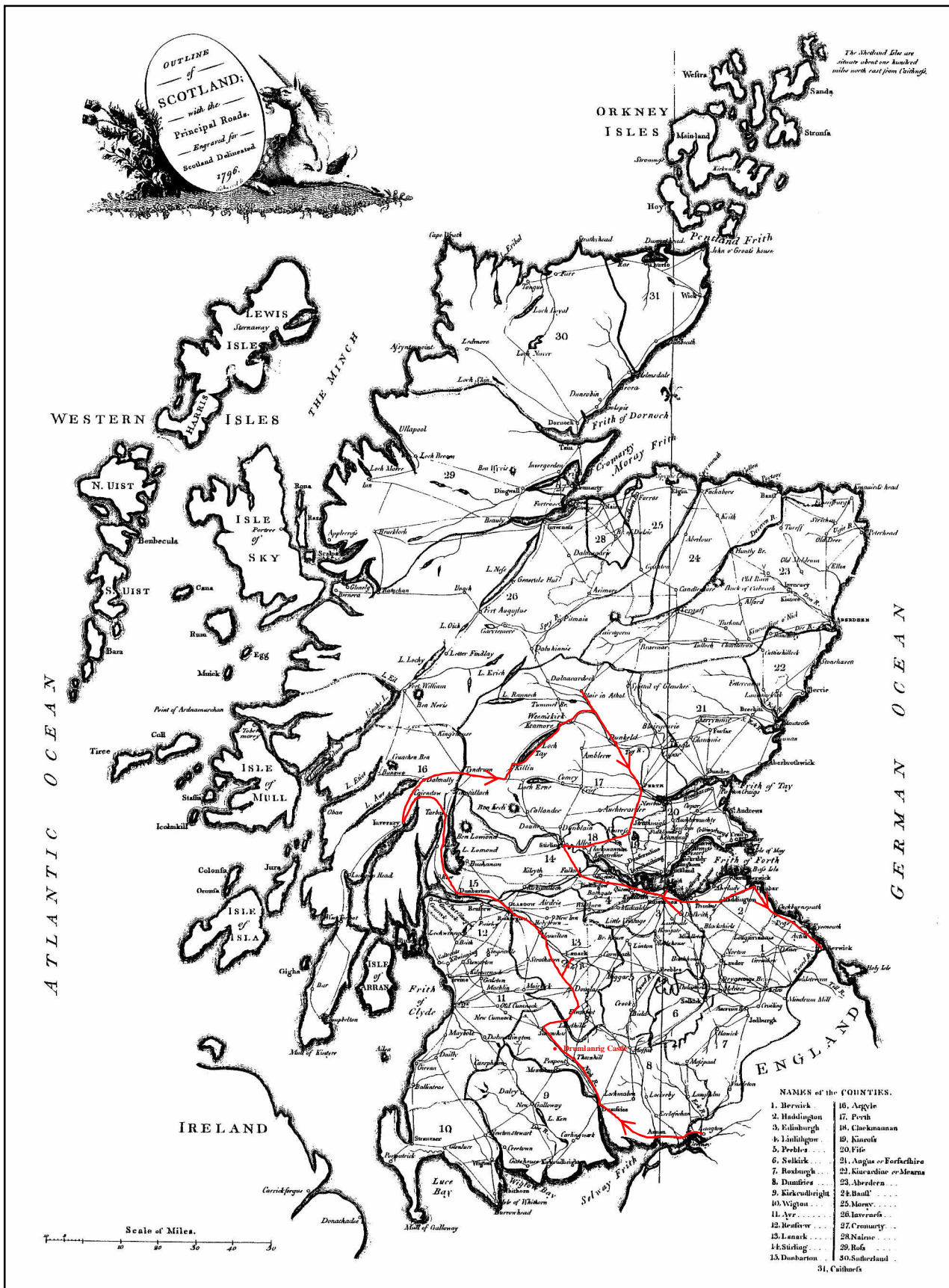


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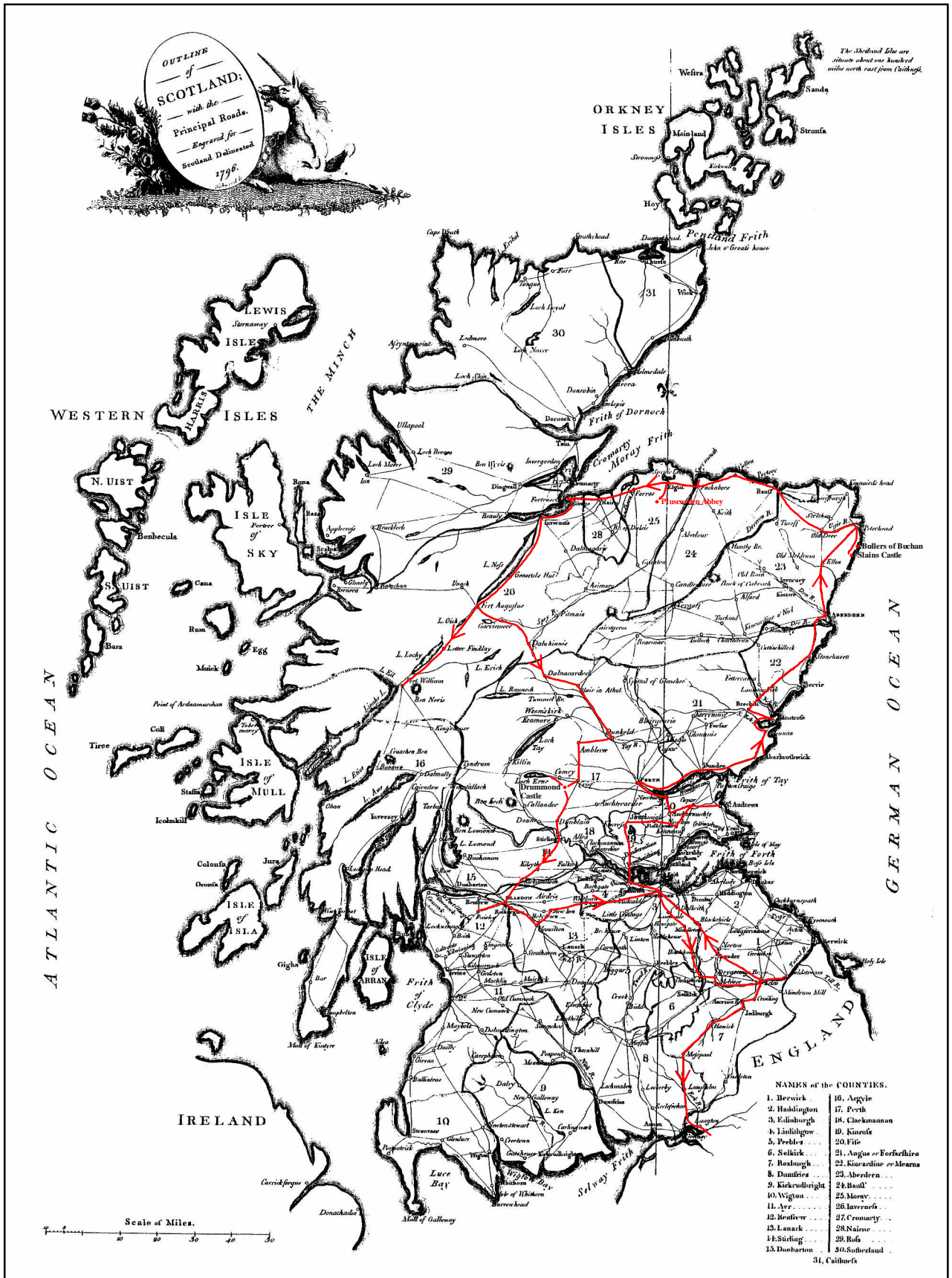
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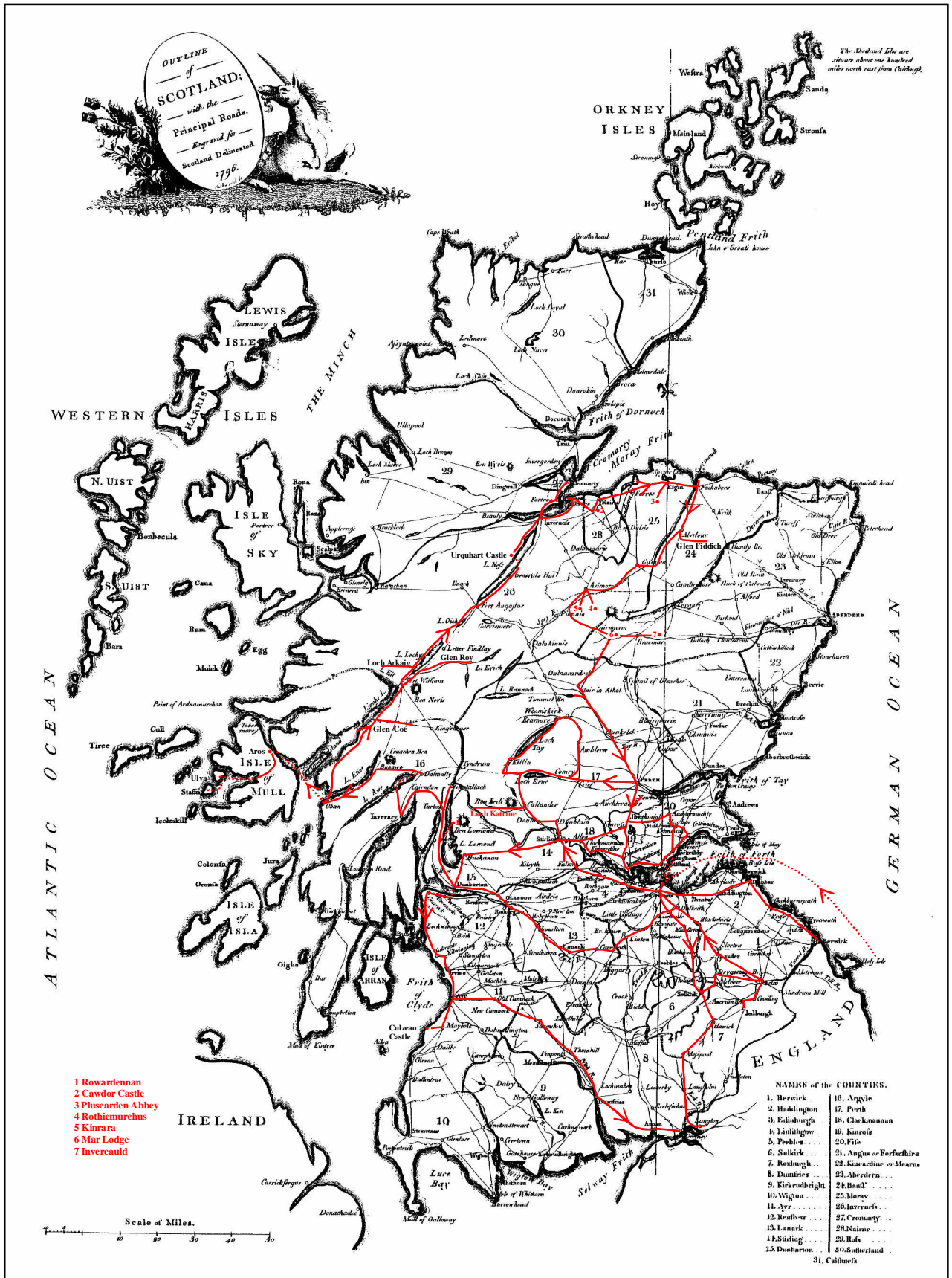
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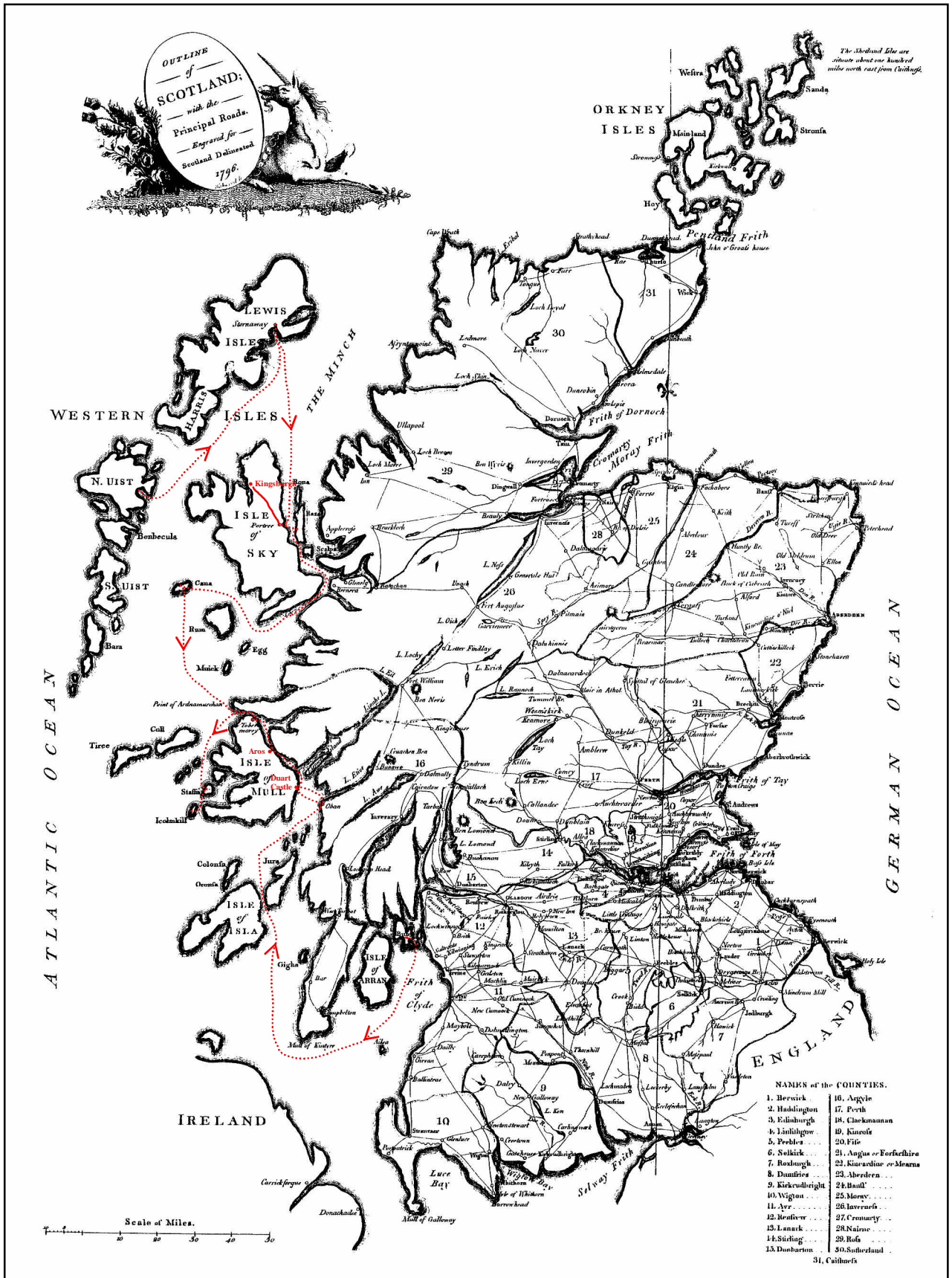
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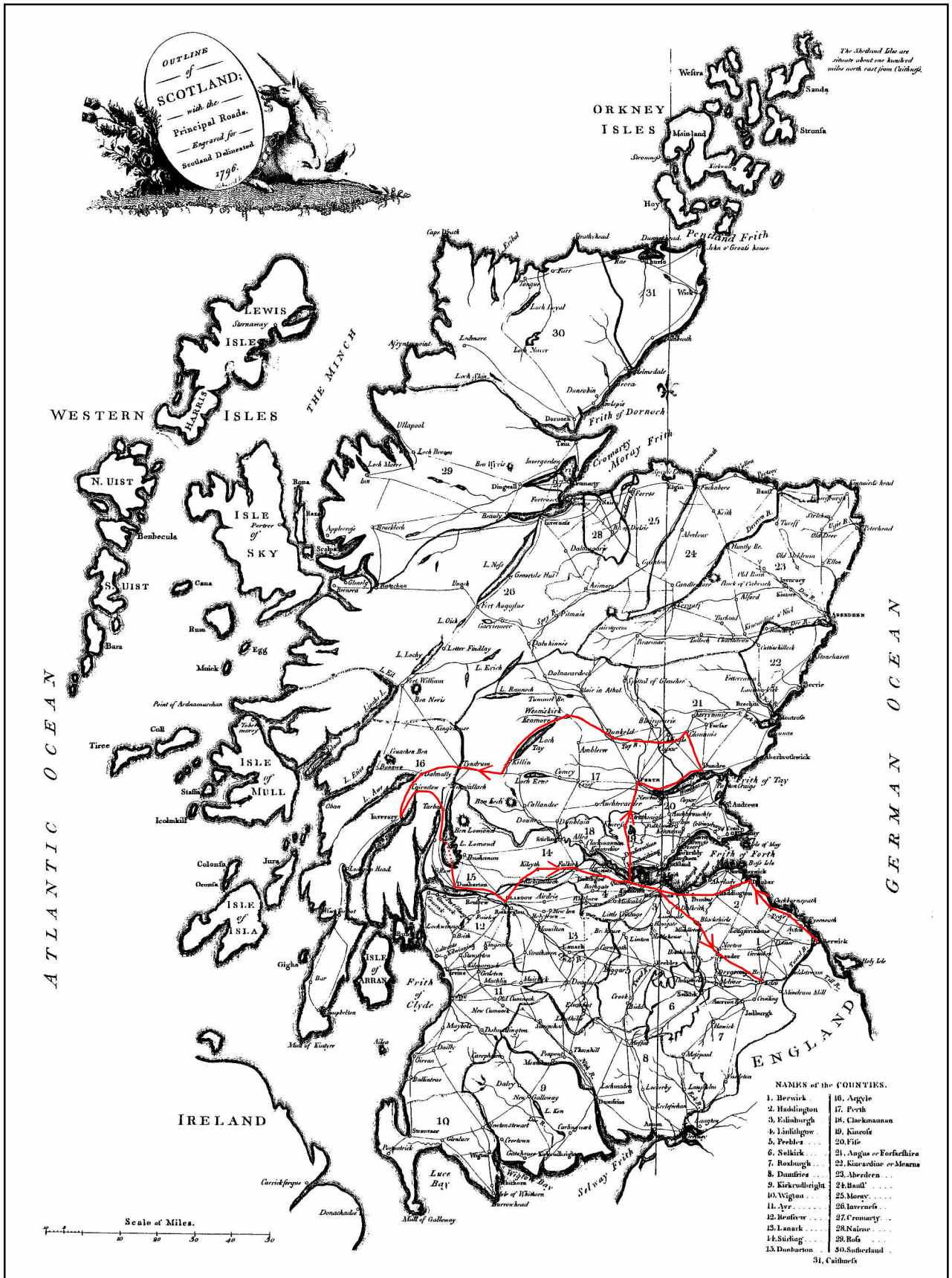
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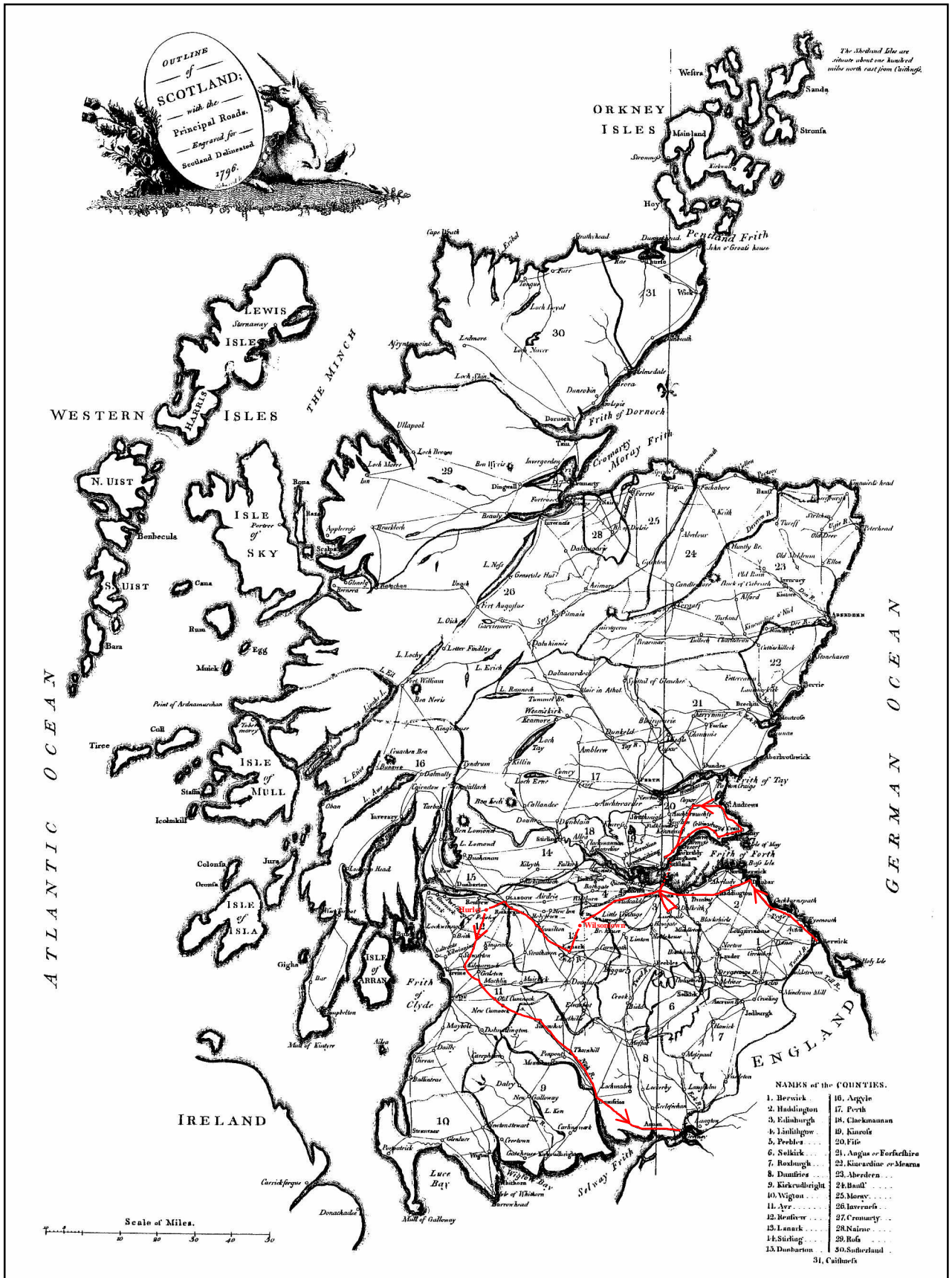


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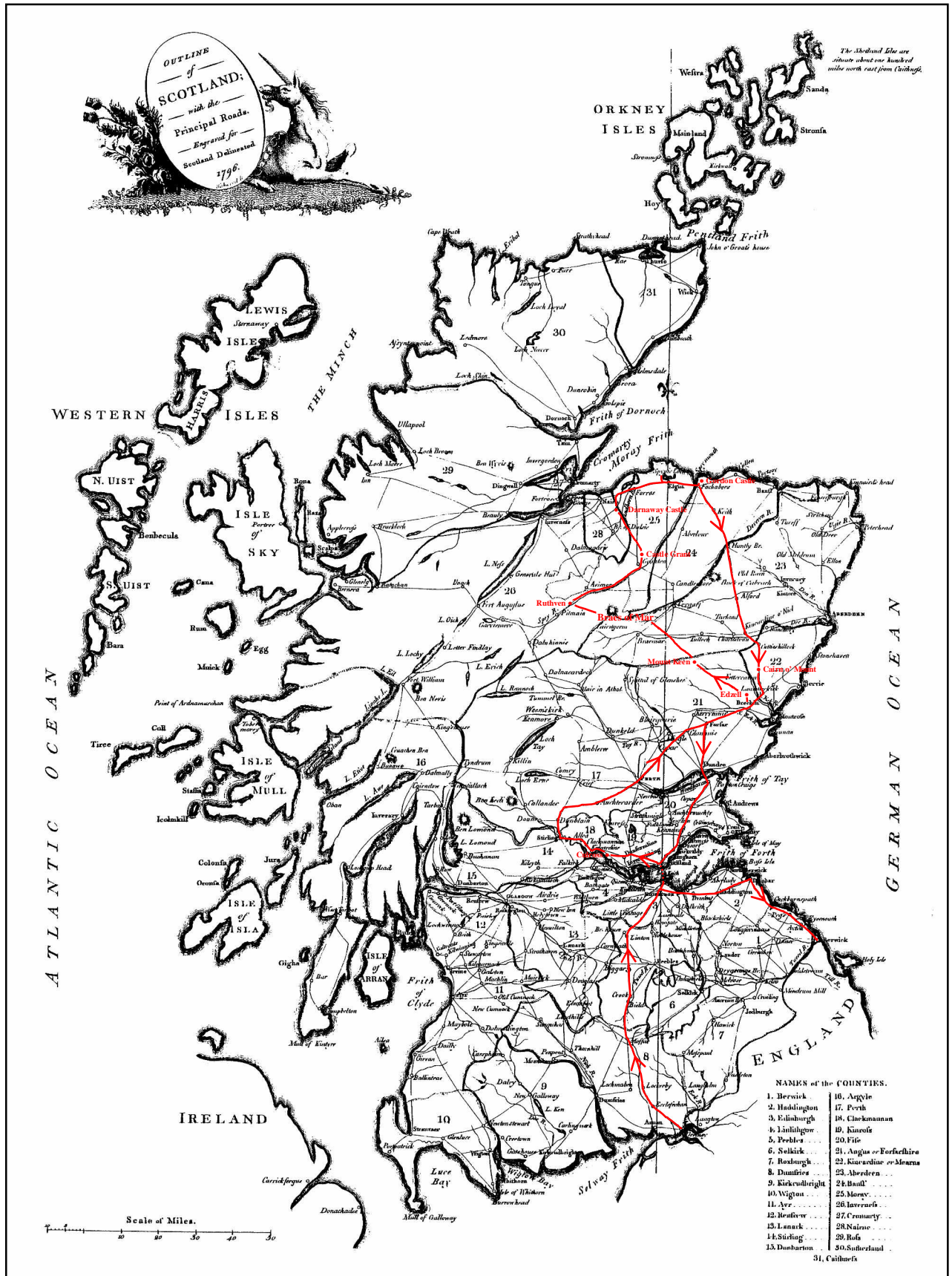
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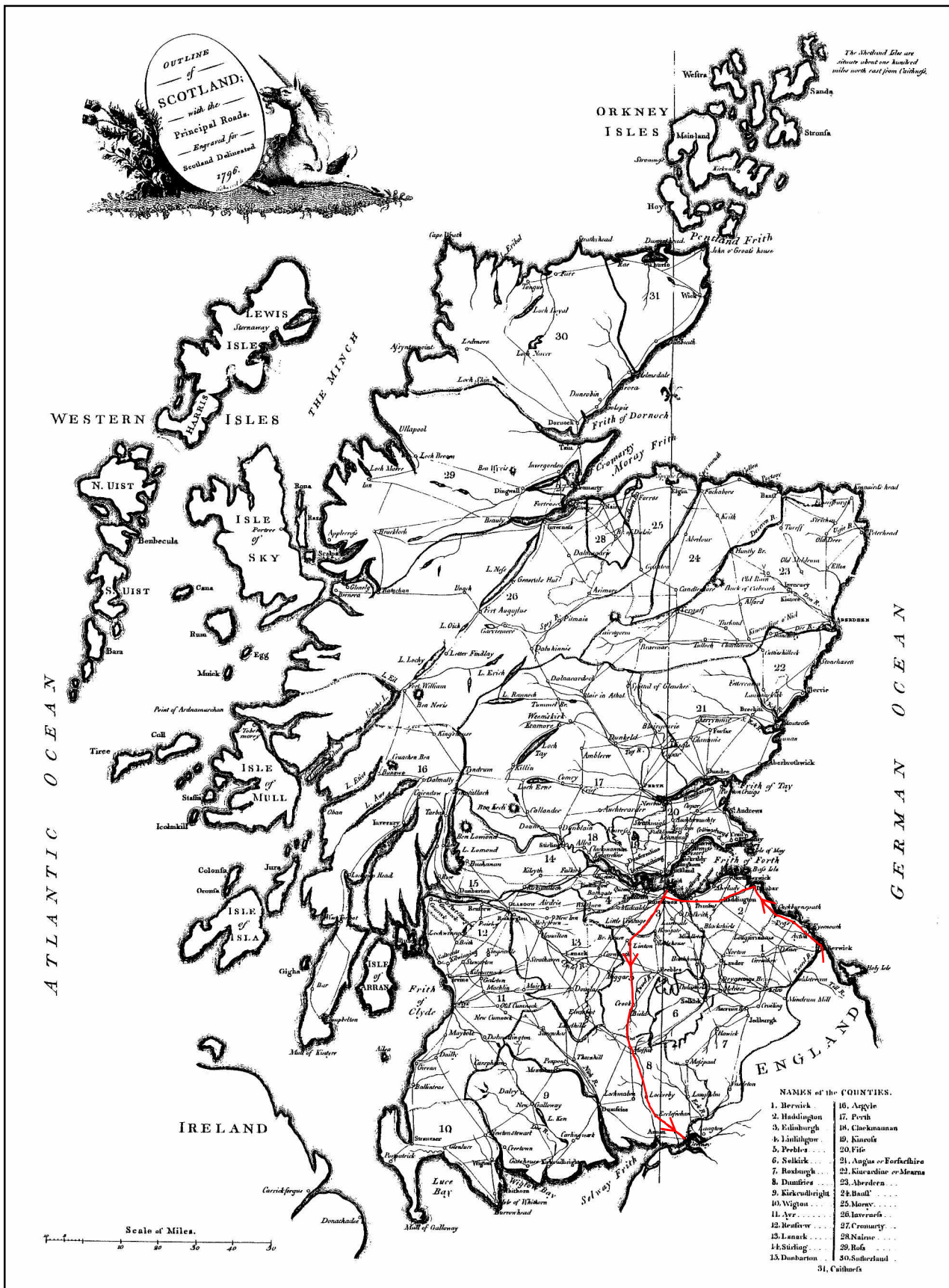
date of travel: 1618



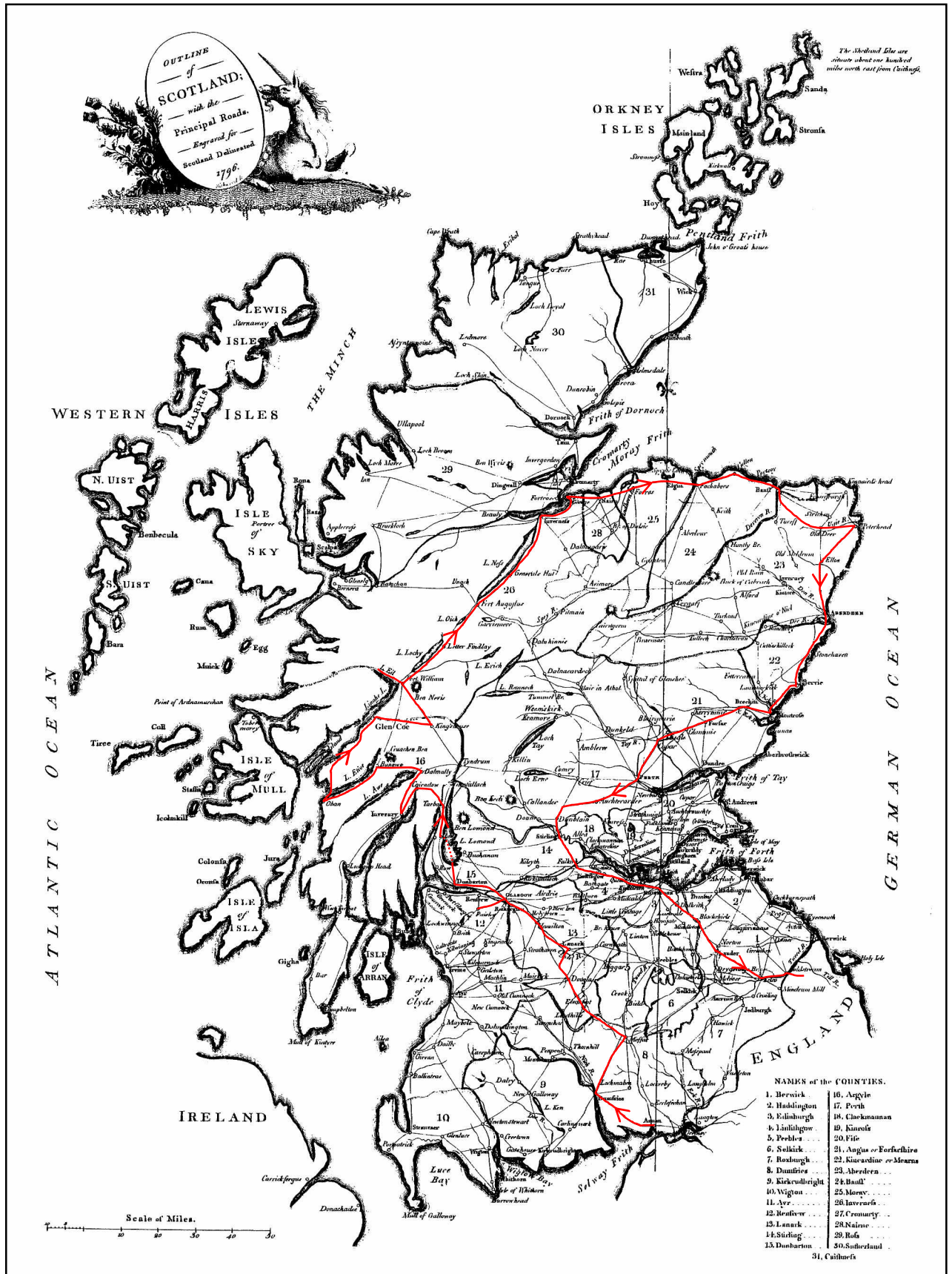
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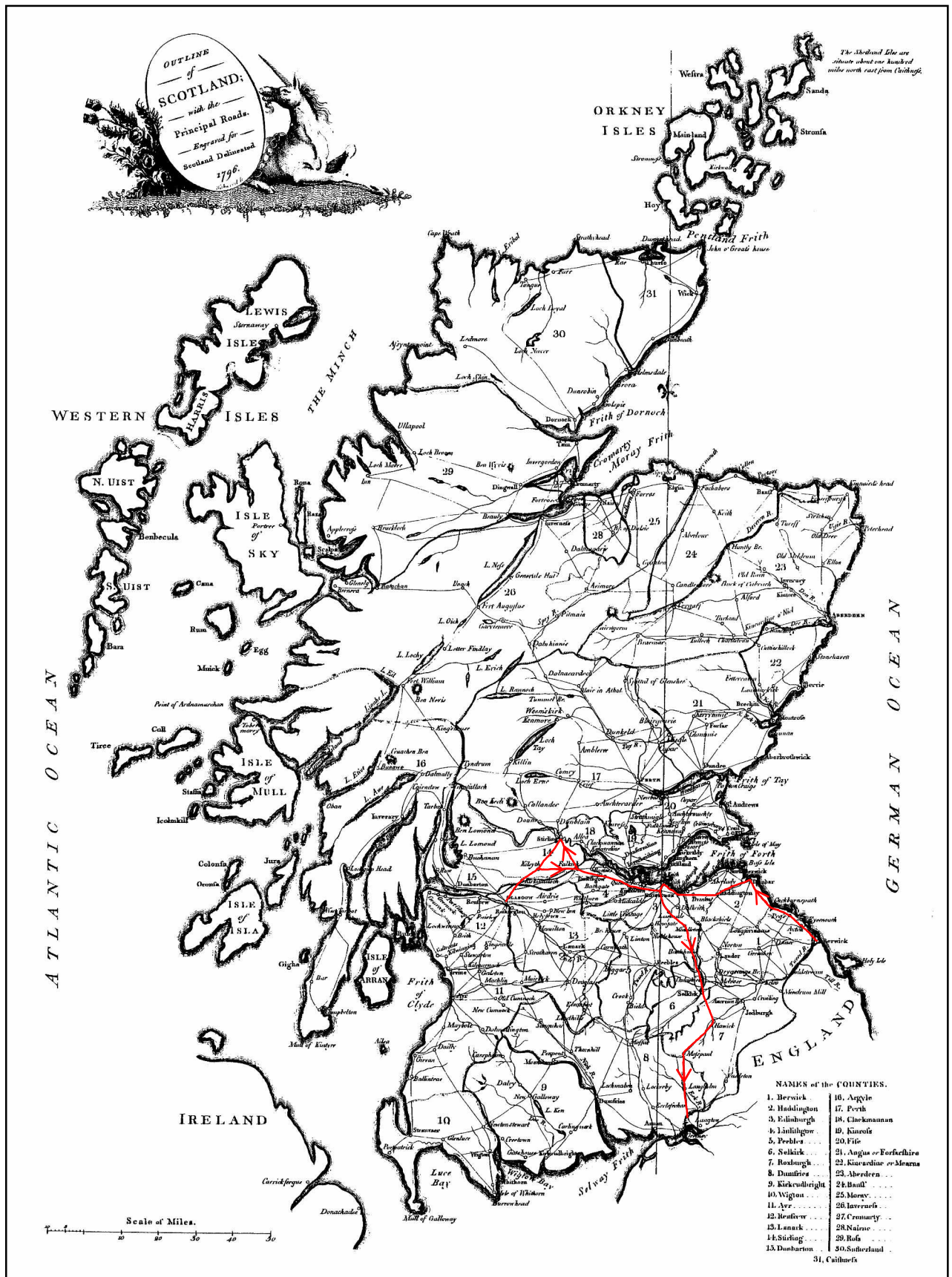
date of travel: 1705



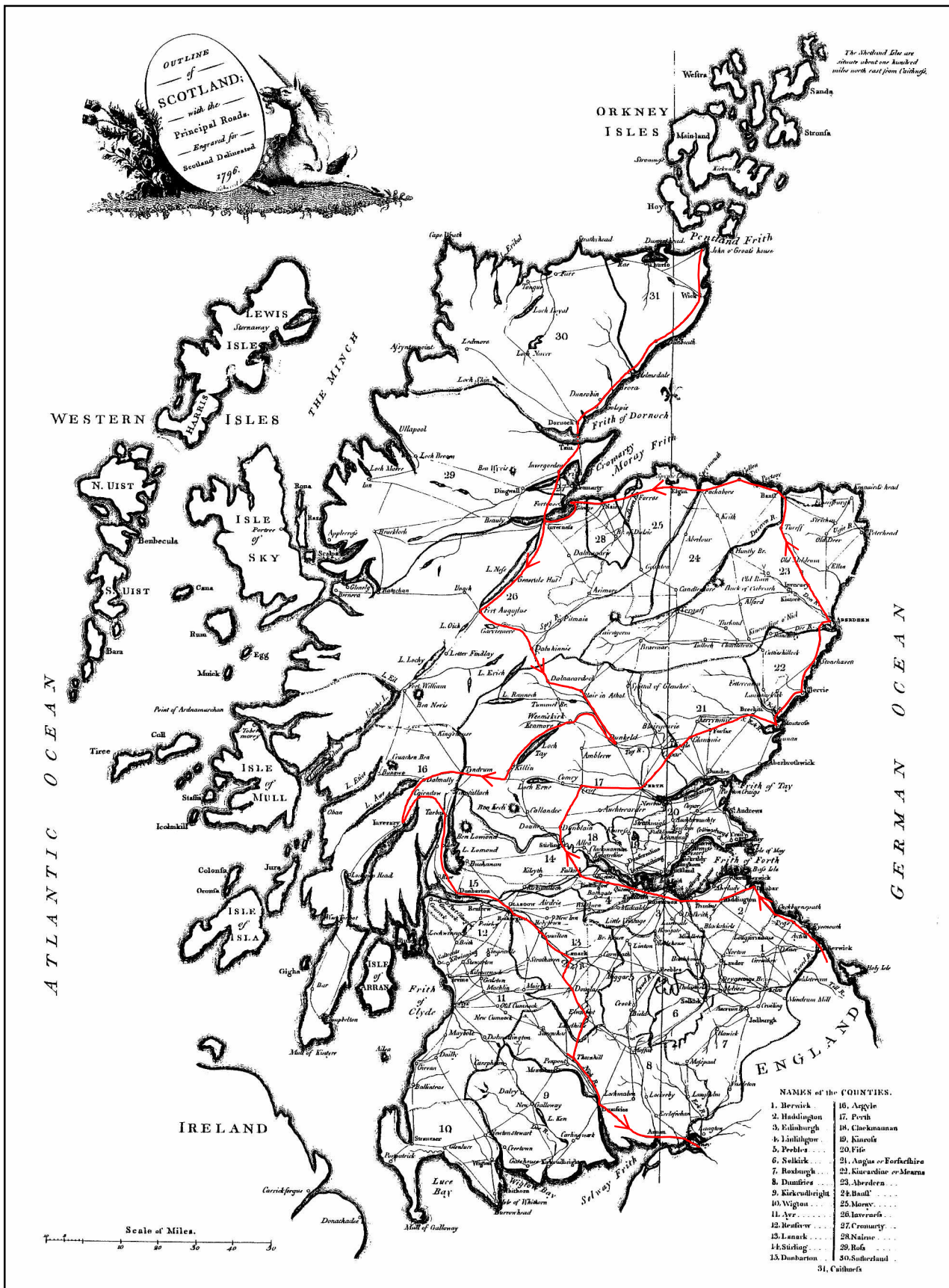
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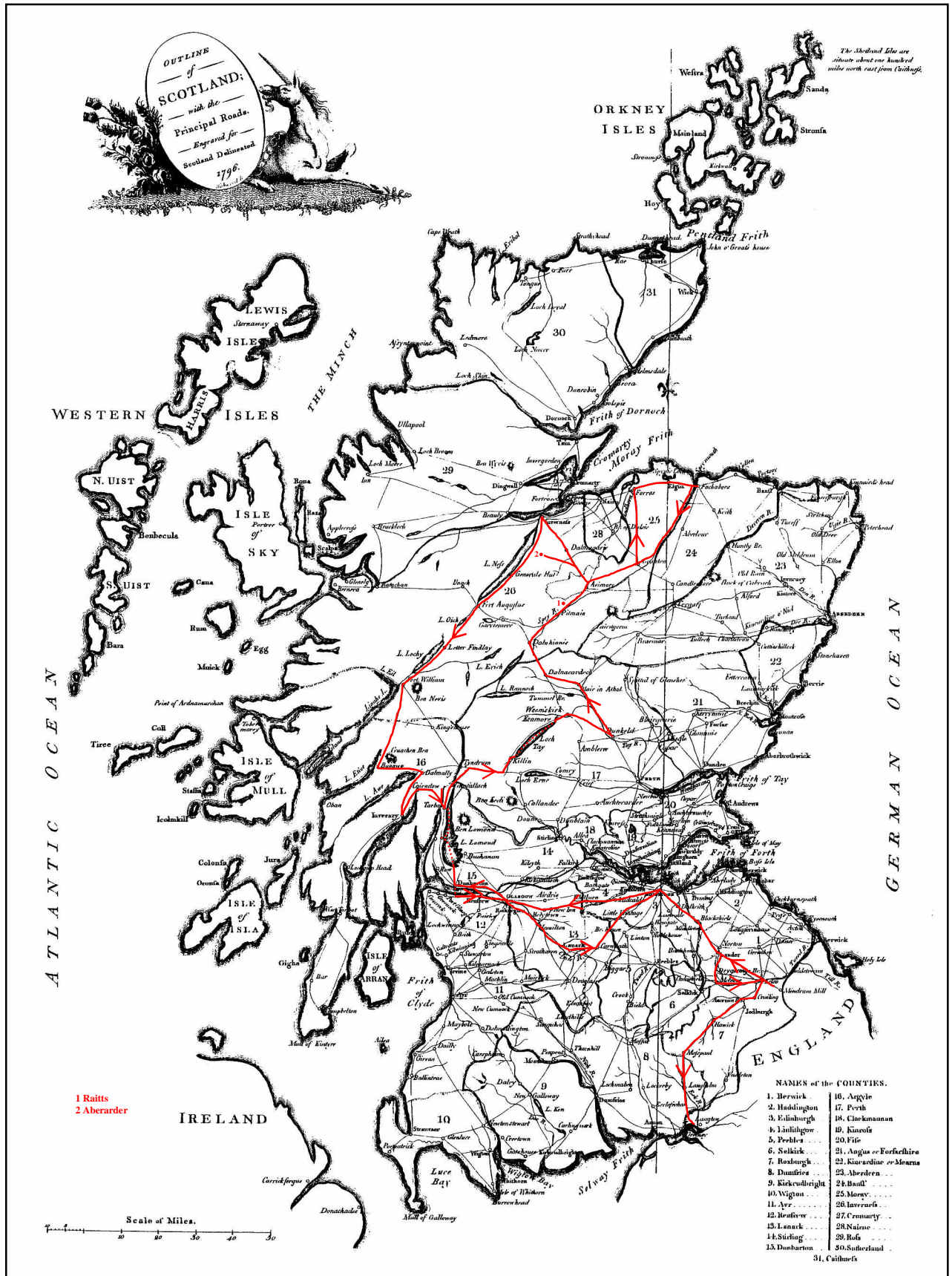
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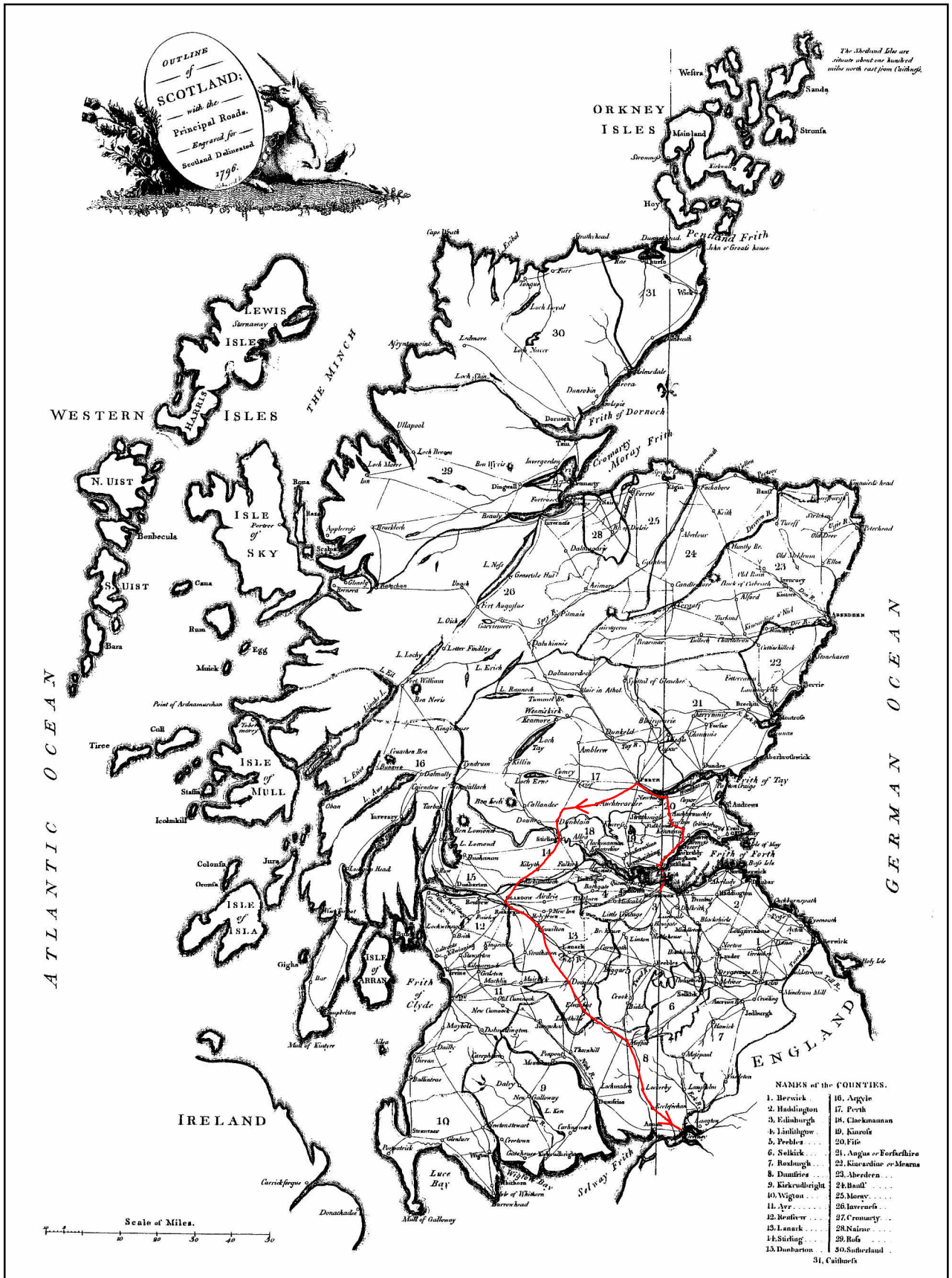


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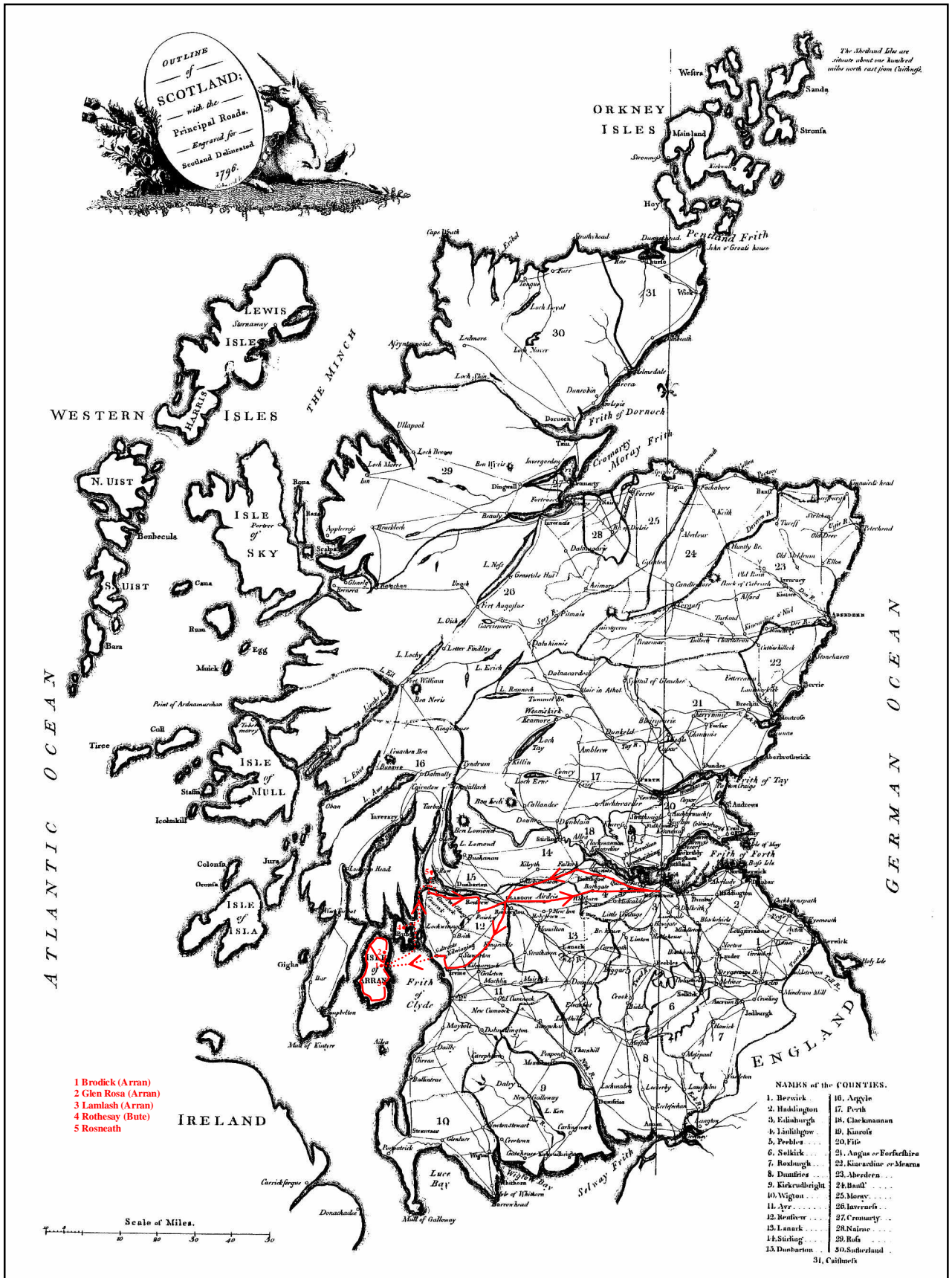
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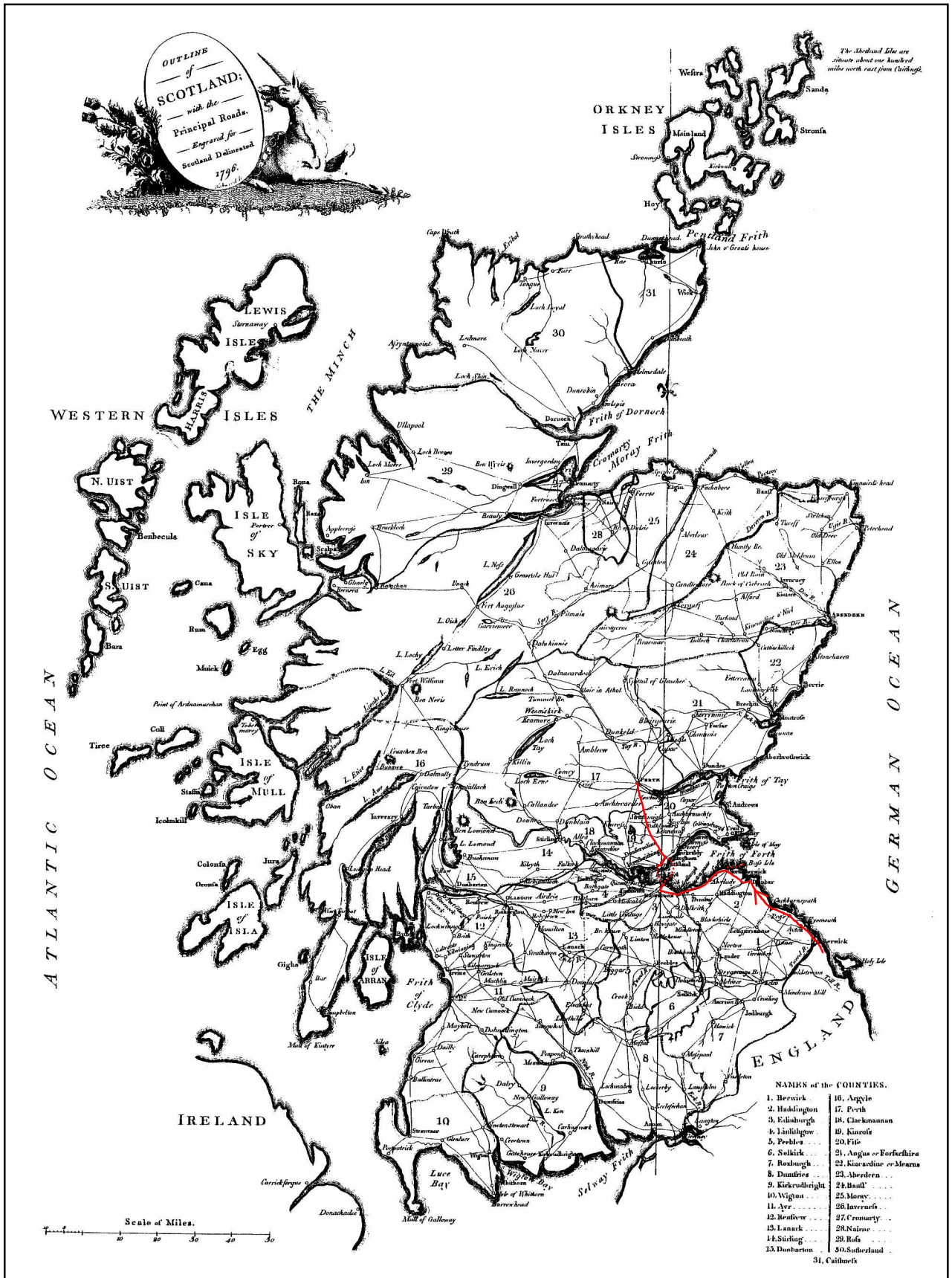
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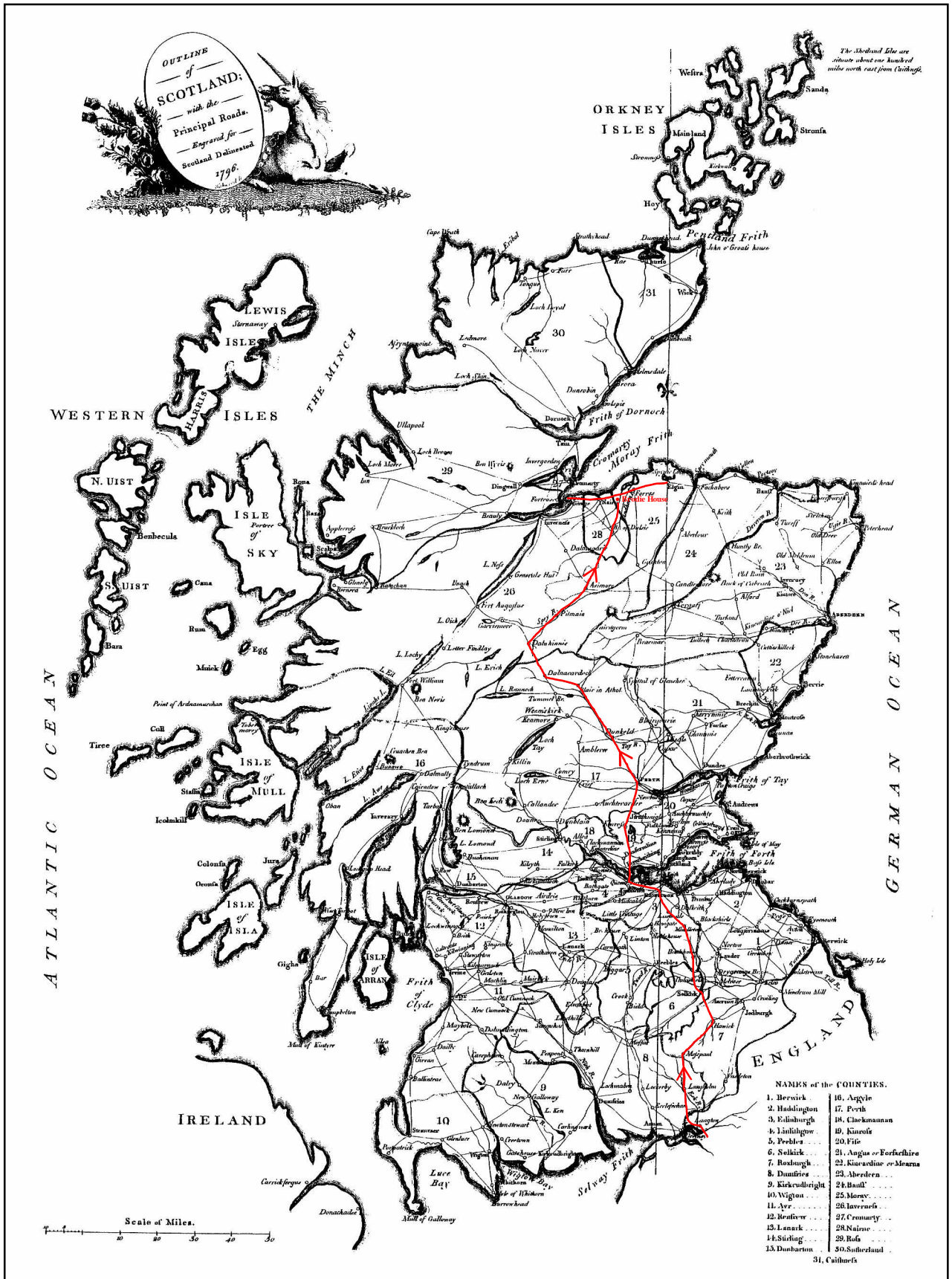
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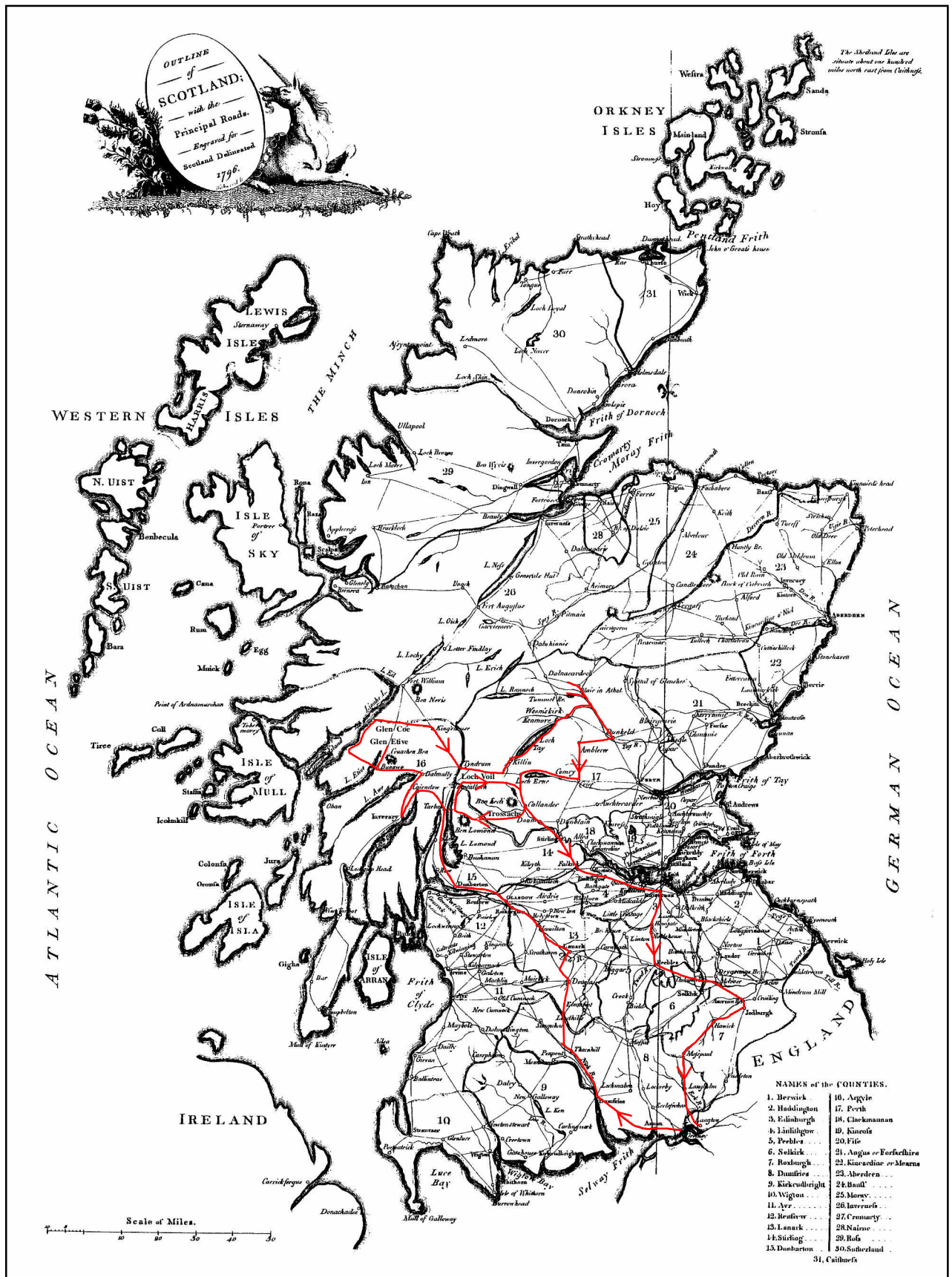
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Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Einleitung¹

Im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit zählten das schottische Hochland und die Hebriden zu den am wenigsten bekannten Regionen Europas. Schottland lag am Rande der bekannten mittelalterlichen Welt und das Hochland im Norden und die Hebriden im Westen waren buchstäblich *Terra incognita*. Neben der geographischen Trennung vom schottischen Tiefland zeichneten sich das Hochland und die Hebriden auch durch die unterschiedliche Lebensweise und Kultur ihrer Bewohner aus. Durch das Vordringen germanischer Stämme vom Süden her wurde die keltische Urbevölkerung Schottlands zunehmend in die weniger fruchtbaren Berge und Inseln im Norden und Westen zurückgedrängt. Während die Bevölkerung im schottischen Tiefland im späten Mittelalter zunehmend anglisiert wurde, entwickelten sich das Hochland und die Hebriden zum letzten zusammenhängenden Lebensraum der gälisch sprechenden, keltischen Urbevölkerung der Britischen Inseln.² Aufgrund ihrer Abgeschlossenheit hielten sich die distinktive Lebensweise und Kultur der Hochländer bis weit in die Neuzeit.

Im Gegensatz zur übrigen Bevölkerung der Britischen Inseln handelte es sich bei der Kultur der Hochländer um eine weitgehend mündlich überlieferte Tradition, das heißt, es gibt vergleichsweise wenig schriftliches Quellengut, das über die Lebensweise der Hochlandbevölkerung im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit Auskunft gibt. Das vorhandene schriftliche Quellenmaterial beschränkt sich

¹ Um Verwirrung zu vermeiden und die Vergleichbarkeit mit dem englischen Text zu gewährleisten, wird auf die Eindeutschung der englischen Personen- und Ortsnamen verzichtet. Historische Begriffe und Namen britischer Institutionen, für die es keine vergleichbaren deutschen Begriffe gibt, werden kursiv im englischen bzw. gälischen Original wiedergegeben.

² Wales und Irland kamen bereits im späten 13. bzw. 16. Jahrhundert effektiv unter englische Kontrolle. Die keltische Urbevölkerung von Wales wurde verhältnismäßig schnell durch die Anglonormannen unterworfen und assimiliert. Die keltische Urbevölkerung Irlands wurde weitgehend enteignet und unterdrückt oder von aus England oder dem schottischen Tiefland nachrückenden Siedlern in den wenig fruchtbaren Westen der Insel verdrängt. Das schottische Hochland und die Hebriden blieben dagegen bis ins frühe 18. Jahrhundert außerhalb der effektiven Kontrolle der Regierungen in London und Edinburgh und konnten daher ihre eigenständige keltische Kultur und Identität bewahren. Mit Verweis auf die sehr viel detailliertere englische Version dieser Studie wird auf die Wiederholung allgemeiner Literaturhinweise zur schottischen Geschichte verzichtet.

oftmals auf die Wirtschaftsgeschichte der adligen Großgüter im Hochland. Über das Leben der einfachen Landbevölkerung ist dagegen vergleichsweise wenig bekannt.

Gerade hier kommt dem Reisebericht als historischer Quellengattung besondere Bedeutung zu. Die Beobachtungen und Aufzeichnungen von Reisenden durch das Hochland können diese Wissenslücke füllen. Dennoch liegt eine systematische Untersuchung der Reiseberichte aus der frühen Neuzeit über das schottische Hochland und die Hebriden bisher nicht vor. Die hier vorliegende Arbeit soll diese Lücke schließen. Unter Hinzuziehung bislang nicht ausgewerteter Handschriften aus den *county record offices* (Kreisarchive) werden die Reiseberichte von ca. 400 Besuchern des Hochlandes vom späten Mittelalter bis etwa 1800 systematisch ausgewertet. Die verschiedenen Motive der Reisenden und ihre vielfältigen Interessen erlauben nicht nur eine detaillierte Rekonstruktion der Lebensbedingungen im Hochland, sondern zeigen auch die gravierenden Veränderungen, welchen das Leben im Hochland im Zuge der Integration Schottlands in den Britischen Staat und sein entstehendes Weltreich unterworfen wurde.

Vor der eigentlichen Auswertung der Beobachtungen und Aufzeichnungen der Reisenden sind jedoch einige grundsätzliche Fragestellungen bezüglich des Quellenwertes der einzelnen Reiseberichte zu beantworten. Es gilt zunächst für jeden einzelnen Reisenden zu prüfen, inwieweit seine Beobachtungen und seine Wahrnehmung des Lebens im Hochland von seinen Beweggründen, diese entlegene Region zu bereisen, beeinflusst worden sein könnten: Die persönlichen Eindrücke eines jeden Reisenden hängen unter anderem entscheidend davon ab, ob es sich um eine Auftragsreise oder um einen freiwilligen Besuch gehandelt hat. Im Anhang Nr. 1 finden sich deshalb die Kurzviten aller Reisenden mit drei oder mehr Erwähnungen im Text. Sie geben Auskunft über die Herkunft, Vorbildung und den Beruf der Reisenden sowie die Beweggründe ihres Schottlandbesuches. Im Anhang Nr. 12 können die besuchten Gegenden den beigegeführten Karten mit den jeweiligen Reiserouten entnommen werden.

Die Nationalität eines Reisenden, seine Vorbildung und das eventuell im Vorfeld der Reise konsultierte Referenzmaterial über Schottland (Chroniken, Geographica) haben ebenso entscheidenden Einfluss auf das vom Leben im

Hochland vermittelte Bild gehabt. Um die tatsächlichen Beobachtungen eines Reisenden von den zeitgenössischen Vorurteilen und Stereotypen zu unterscheiden, gilt es im ersten Teil dieser Studie (Kapitel 1-3) zu analysieren, welches Bild vom Hochland in den verfügbaren Chroniken und Landesbeschreibungen über Schottland vermittelt wurde. Anschließend gilt es zu untersuchen, inwieweit die etablierten Stereotype in den Berichten der mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Reisenden reflektiert wurden. Besondere Bedeutung fällt dabei den fiktiven Reisen nach Schottland zu. Obwohl die Autoren dieser „Lügenreisen“ in den seltensten Fällen Schottland aus eigener Anschauung kannten, so reflektieren ihre Berichte doch die gängigen Vorurteile gegenüber dem Hochland und seinen Bewohnern.

Nach der Identifikation und Unterscheidung der gängigen Stereotype von den tatsächlichen Beobachtungen der Reisenden gilt es im zweiten Teil der Studie (Kapitel 4), die Erschließung des Hochlandes und die Entwicklung des Reisens in dieser schwer zugänglichen Region zu analysieren. Die mit einer Reise in der frühen Neuzeit verbundenen Strapazen und die realen oder imaginären Gefahren haben die Wahrnehmung und das Urteil über das bereiste Land nicht unerheblich beeinflusst. In welchem Maß haben die Rückständigkeit der Infrastruktur im Hochland, das Fehlen eines flächendeckenden Straßennetzes, der schlechte Zustand der Gasthöfe und die angenommene Wildheit der Einheimischen zum schlechten Image der Region und zur negativen Berichterstattung durch Besucher beigetragen? Darüber hinaus muss untersucht werden, wie sich die in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts aufkommende Romantik³ auf das Reiseverhalten und die Wahrnehmung des Hochlandes und seiner Bewohner ausgewirkt hat.

Im dritten Teil der Untersuchung (Kapitel 5-8) stehen die eigentlichen Beobachtungen der Reisenden über das Leben im Hochland im Mittelpunkt. Wie lebten die Menschen im Hochland, wovon lebten sie, welche Produkte bauten sie an und welchen wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Veränderungen wurde ihre Lebensweise vom 16. bis ins 18. Jahrhundert unterworfen? Besonderes Augenmerk ist hierbei

³ Als Epochenbegriff bezeichnet die Romantik eine geistige, künstlerische, insbesondere literarische Bewegung in Europa zwischen 1790 und 1850. In Großbritannien zeigten sich die Vorläufer der Romantik bereits in den 1760er Jahren durch ein sich allmählich wandelndes Natur- und Menschenverständnis, das Natürlichkeit und Schlichtheit in den Mittelpunkt des Lebens rückte. Vor diesem Hintergrund wurden die rauhe, naturbelassene Landschaft des schottischen Hochlandes und die einfache Lebensweise seiner Bewohner zu einem oftmals verklärten Gegenmodell zum fremdgesteuerten Leben der Menschen in den entstehenden großen Industriestädten.

zunächst auf die Entwicklung des Clansystems zu werfen (Kapitel 5). Bis weit ins 18. Jahrhundert lebten die Hochländer in Clanen (Familienverbänden). Dies war ein bedeutender Unterschied zu den Gesellschaftsstrukturen im übrigen Europa und fremde Besucher kommentierten ausführlich über die Funktionsweise des Clansystems und die Aufgaben der verschiedenen Familienmitglieder. In unmittelbarem Zusammenhang mit dem Clansystem stand auch das Wirtschaftssystem im Hochland (Kapitel 6). Das von einem Clan bewohnte Land gehörte allein dem Clanoberhaupt (*chief*). Als Schutzherr seines Familienverbandes war das Clanoberhaupt jedoch verpflichtet, allen auf seinem Grund lebenden Familienmitgliedern einen angemessenen Teil des Bodens zum Ackerbau und zur Viehzucht zur Verfügung zu stellen. Die schwierigen geographischen Voraussetzungen für Ackerbau und Viehzucht im Hochland und auf den Hebriden führten zur Entwicklung besonderer Geräte und Arbeitsmethoden. Diese Instrumente und Arbeitstechniken waren den speziellen lokalen Erfordernissen angepasst, sie wirkten aber oftmals sehr befremdlich auf außenstehende Besucher. Umso reichhaltiger sind daher die Beschreibungen der landwirtschaftlichen Produktionsprozesse und desto besser lassen sich aus den Berichten der Reisenden die angebauten Pflanzen und deren Verarbeitung rekonstruieren. Dabei ist auch zu beachten, welchen Veränderungen diese traditionellen Arbeitsprozesse im Laufe der Jahrhunderte und der Integration des Hochlandes in die Wirtschaft des Britischen Empires unterworfen wurden. Auf der anderen Seite ist zu fragen, welchen Einfluss die im 18. Jahrhundert als Antwort auf die Einbindung Schottlands in das Britische Weltreich neu aufgekommenen Industriezweige, wie z.B. der staatlich geförderte Heringsfang oder die Herstellung von Kelp, ein aus Seegrass gewonnenes Grundprodukt der Glas- und Seifenindustrie, ihrerseits auf die Siedlungsstruktur und Lebensweise der Hochländer gehabt haben (Kapitel 7).

Letztlich gilt es, sich auch mit der besonderen Kultur der Hochländer und ihren speziellen Sitten und Bräuchen zu beschäftigen (Kapitel 8). Welche Änderungen im Aussehen und Verhalten der Bevölkerung haben fremde Reisende bemerkt, als sie zunächst die Grenze von England nach Schottland passierten? Wie unterschieden sich die Sitten und Bräuche der Hochländer wiederum von denen der Bevölkerung im schottischen Tiefland?

Für alle hier aufgeworfenen Fragestellungen bietet sich der Reisebericht als historische Quelle besonders gut an. Die speziellen Aufträge der Reisenden und ihre vielfältigen Interessen ermöglichen es, ein umfassendes und detailgetreues Bild vom Leben im schottischen Hochland und den Hebriden in der frühen Neuzeit zu rekonstruieren. Die große Zahl der ausgewerteten Berichte, die unterschiedliche Nationalität der Reisenden und ihre verschiedenen Beweggründe, das Hochland zu besuchen, ermöglichen es zugleich, die weit verbreiteten Vorurteile und zeitgenössischen Stereotype über die Hochländer herauszufiltern und den tatsächlichen Lebensverhältnissen im Hochland gegenüberzustellen.

In der Forschungsstelle zur historischen Reisekultur in der Eutiner Landesbibliothek habe ich zunächst unter Berücksichtigung der neueren Literatur zur Bedeutung und methodischen Auswertung des Reiseberichtes als historische Quelle⁴ den Stellenwert Schottlands in der frühneuzeitlichen europäischen Reisekultur untersucht. Es kristallisierte sich schnell heraus, dass Schottland bis zur aufkommenden Romantik im späten 18. Jahrhundert kein klassisches Reiseziel war. Im Gegensatz zur Bildungsreise und dem etablierten Kanon von Sehenswürdigkeiten der *Grand Tour* auf dem europäischen Kontinent verkörperten Reisen nach Schottland und insbesondere in das Hochland den Aufbruch in ein noch weitgehend unbekanntes und sagenumwobenes Land. In dem anschließenden vierjährigen Forschungsaufenthalt in Schottland wurden die publizierten Reiseberichte und die von der Forschung bisher kaum beachteten handschriftlichen Berichte systematisch erfasst und ausgewertet. Dabei habe ich alle mir bekannt gewordenen Reiseberichte in den Beständen der British Library, der National Archives of Scotland (ehemals Scottish Record Office), der National Library of Scotland, der National Museums of Scotland (ehemals Royal Museum of Scotland) sowie der untergeordneten Kreisarchive erhoben und hinsichtlich der Beobachtungen über die

⁴ Zu den verschiedenen Aspekten der Bedeutung des Reisens als Bestandteil der Erziehung der geistigen und wirtschaftlichen Eliten siehe W. Griep und H. Jäger (Hrsg.), *Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Heidelberg, 1986); W. Griep (Hrsg.), *Sehen Und Beschreiben: Europäische Reisen im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert* (Heide, 1991). Zur Entwicklung des Reiseberichtes als literarischer Gattung und seiner Funktion im 18. Jahrhundert in Deutschland und in Großbritannien siehe P.J. Brenner (Hrsg.), *Der Reisebericht: Die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989); R. Omasreiter, *Travels Through The British Isles: Die Funktion des Reiseberichts im 18. Jahrhundert* (Heidelberg, 1982).

Lebensverhältnisse im schottischen Hochland und auf den Hebriden analysiert und funktional wesentlich ergiebiger und um wichtige Bereiche erweitert dargestellt. Insgesamt umfasst der ausgewertete Quellenkorpus über 400 Schottlandberichte, hauptsächlich von Reisenden aus den britischen Inseln, Deutschland, Frankreich und Skandinavien. Über 100 dieser Reiseberichte sind bisher nicht publiziert und deshalb von der Forschung kaum beachtet worden.

Für den Zeitraum vom ausgehenden Mittelalter bis zum Anbruch des 17. Jahrhunderts liegen die Berichte von etwa 40 Schottlandreisenden vor. Allerdings sind ihre Aufzeichnungen oftmals nicht nur sehr knapp, sondern sie konnten auch nur über das Tiefland aus eigener Erfahrung berichten, da sie das Hochland wegen seiner Unzugänglichkeit und der vermeintlichen Wildheit seiner Bewohner möglichst weiträumig mieden. Aus dem 17. Jahrhundert sind etwa 50 Reiseberichte überliefert, aber nur ein knappes Dutzend der Besucher drang auch in das Hochland vor. Aus der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts sind die Berichte von etwa 50 Reisenden erhalten, von denen einige wenige im Anschluss an die militärische Erschließung Nordschottlands in den 1720igern auch tief in das Hochland vordrangen. Die weitaus überwiegende Zahl der Berichte stammt aus der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts. Nach einer etwa zehnjährigen Pause mit deutlicher verminderter Reiseaktivität im Anschluss an die Niederschlagung des großen Jakobitenaufstandes von 1745-46 und die militärische Besetzung der Clangebiete entwickelte sich das schottische Hochland ab etwa 1760 im Zuge der aufkommenden Romantik schnell zu einem der beliebtesten Reiseziele in Europa. Für die 1780iger und 1790iger Jahre sind im Durchschnitt nicht nur zwischen fünf und zehn Berichte pro Jahr erhalten, sondern die Reisenden drangen nach der gewaltsamen Befriedung des Hochlandes auch immer tiefer in die entlegenen Gegenden im Nordwesten und in die Hebriden vor. Gerade im Zusammenhang mit der neueren Forschung zur Wirtschafts-, Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte ergeben diese Reiseeindrücke fremder Besucher ein aussagekräftiges und facettenreiches Bild vom Leben im schottischen Hochland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, das wesentlich ergiebiger ist als in der bisher vorliegenden Literatur.⁵ Die Subjektivität der einzelnen Reiseberichte als historischen Quellen

⁵ Die bisher vorliegende Literatur, wie z.B. M.I. Bain, *Les Voyageurs Français En Ecosse 1770 – 1830 Et Leurs Curiosites Intellectuelles* (Paris, 1931); E. Bray, *The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883* (Edinburgh, 1996; zuerst publiziert 1986); D. Cooper, *Road*

stellt dabei kein Hindernis dar, weil sich der Wahrheitsgehalt der einzelnen Berichte durch den Vergleich mit zeitgleichen oder zeitnahen Reisen gut bestimmen lässt. Die sehr große Zahl von über 400 ausgewerteten Reiseberichten erlaubt eine zuverlässige Einordnung der einzelnen Berichte bezüglich ihres Wahrheitsgehaltes und ihrer Aussagekraft. Aufgrund des Anhangs mit den 120 Kurzbiographien der Reisenden und 115 Karten mit den jeweiligen Reiserouten kommt dieser Studie auch der Charakter eines umfassenden Nachschlagewerkes zu, da es bisher keine Sammlung der Biographien und Reisekarten von Schottlandbesuchern für den Zeitraum von ca. 1600 bis 1800 gibt.

1. Das Schottlandbild im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit

Bevor man sich mit den im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit nach Schottland aufgebrochenen Reisenden und ihren Berichten beschäftigen kann, muss man zunächst kurz beleuchten, welche Arten von Nachschlagewerken und Informationen den Reisenden im Vorfeld zur Verfügung standen und welches Bild von Schottland und seinen Bewohnern in diesen Werken vermittelt wurde. Schottland lag an der Peripherie der mittelalterlichen Welt und dementsprechend gering war das gesicherte Wissen über das Land und seine Bewohner. Je weniger gesichertes Wissen vorhanden war, desto mehr wurden die Wissenslücken mit phantasievollen Geschichten und Mythen gefüllt. Das galt besonders für das unzugängliche Hochland im Norden und die Hebriden im Westen.

To The Isles: Travellers in the Hebrides 1770-1914 (Glasgow, 1990; zuerst publiziert 1979); H. Etzrodt, *Schottlandreisen im 18. Jahrhundert: Wie der Engländer die Hochlande sah* (Berlin, 1939); P. Hume Brown (Hrsg.), *Early Travellers In Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891); M. Lindsay, *The Discovery of Scotland* (London, 1979; zuerst publiziert 1964); T.C. Smout, „Tours in the Scottish Highlands from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries“, *Northern Scotland*, Bd. V (Aberdeen, 1983), S. 99-121, befasst sich nur mit wenigen gut bekannten und leicht verfügbaren publizierten Reiseberichten. M.H. Thevenot-Totems, *La Decouverte De L'Ecosse Du XVIIIe Siecle A Travers Les Recits Des Voyageurs Britanniques* (Paris, [1990]) zog zwar auch einige nicht publizierte Quellen hinzu, befasst sich aber ausschließlich mit britischen Reisenden aus dem 18. Jahrhundert und deren Schottlandbild. Insbesondere durch die Berücksichtigung der neueren Forschungsergebnisse zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Hochlandes von A.I. Macinnes und T.M. Devine ergibt die vorliegende Arbeit wesentliche neue Erkenntnisse über die sozioökonomischen Veränderungen in dieser Gegend und ordnet diese Prozesse durch die Einbeziehung der Reisenden vom Kontinent in den europäischen Kontext ein. Siehe hierzu vor allem in Kapitel 6 der englischen Version der Studie die Vergleiche mit Dänemark, dessen Landwirtschaft im späten 18. Jahrhundert einem ähnlichen Modernisierungsdruck gegenüberstand, das sich jedoch für eine staatlich gesteuerte und sozial ausgewogenere Neuordnung seiner Landwirtschaft entschied.

1.1. Die Darstellung Schottlands in der mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Kartographie, in Chroniken und in Landesbeschreibungen

Landkarten sind oftmals die erste Informationsquelle über die Lage und Natur eines fremden Landes. Eine Analyse der im Altertum und Mittelalter vorhandenen Landkarten zeigt bereits sehr deutlich, wie wenig über die Lage und Beschaffenheit Schottlands gewusst wurde. Bis ins frühe 16. Jahrhundert wurde die Position Schottlands nach der vom griechischen Astronomen, Mathematiker und Geographen Ptolemäus (ca. 90-150 n. Chr.) gefertigten Karte der Britischen Inseln angegeben. Gemäß Ptolemäus lag Schottland im Norden von England und erstreckte sich nach Osten in Richtung Dänemark, wobei die schottische Westküste nach Norden zeigte. Obwohl dieser Irrtum im frühen 16. Jahrhundert erkannt war, wurden noch bis zum Ende desselben Jahrhunderts Landkarten gedruckt, die diesen Fehler enthielten.

Die erhaltenen handschriftlichen Landkarten aus dem Mittelalter vermitteln ebenfalls nur ein sehr vages Bild von Schottland. Während auf der Karte von Matthew Paris (im mittleren 13. Jahrhundert angefertigt) und der anonymen „Gough Map“ (zwischen dem späten 13. Jahrhundert und ca. 1360 angefertigt) England verhältnismäßig detailliert dargestellt wurde, ist Schottland nur als Appendix an England und ohne große Detailtreue abgebildet worden. Der Schottlandteil beider Karten enthält wesentlich weniger Städtenamen, Ortsnamen und Landstraßen. Das Hochland nördlich der Mündungen von Clyde und Forth enthält fast gar keine Eintragungen mehr, ein Umstand, der den Mangel an Wissen über diese Region sehr deutlich widerspiegelt.

Auch auf dem Kontinent wurde das Schottlandbild in der Kartographie bis weit ins 16. Jahrhundert von Ptolemäus geprägt und es gab sogar die weit verbreitete Ansicht, dass es sich bei Schottland eventuell um eine eigene, nordöstlich von England gelegene Insel handeln könnte. Eine separate Karte von Schottland wurde erstmals um 1566 in Italien gedruckt. Mit Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1573) und Gerhard Mercators *Atlas* (1595) kamen deutlich präzisere und zuverlässigere Landkarten von Schottland in Umlauf. Ab 1654 löste Robert Gordons

Schottlandkarte die Mercator-Karte ab. Gordons Karte enthielt mehr Details im Landesinneren, der Verlauf der schottischen Nordküste und der Hebriden-Insel Lewis waren jedoch deutlich unzutreffender dargestellt. Der 1654 von Joannis Blaeu veröffentlichte fünfte Band des *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, sive Atlas Novus* enthielt 46 Einzelkarten der schottischen *shires* (Grafschaften), 36 davon von Timothy Pont im späten 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert angefertigt. Die Karten Ponts zeichneten sich durch eine enorme Detailfülle aus und machten Schottland zu einem der am besten kartographierten Länder Europas. Das Hochland und der Norden waren jedoch im Vergleich mit den anderen Landesteilen Schottlands deutlich unterrepräsentiert. Daniel Defoe kommentierte im frühen 18. Jahrhundert äußerst zutreffend, dass die Geographen in die Karten vom schottischen Hochland einfach Berge und Flüsse einzeichneten so wie sie das Innere von Afrika mit Löwen und Elefanten ausfüllen würden, weil sie nicht wüssten womit sie den Freiraum sonst füllen könnten.⁶ Trotz der enormen Fortschritte in der Kartographie eignete sich keine dieser Karten wegen ihrer Größe und ihres Maßstabs als Reisekarte. Erst im Jahr 1776 erschien mit *Taylor and Skinner's Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain, Or Scotland* die erste detaillierte Kartensammlung von Schottland, die speziell für Reisende angefertigt worden war. Die Erkundung und Kartographie der Hebriden hingegen verlief noch schleppender. Die Seekarten zeigten oft nur den Küstenverlauf und enthielten kaum zusätzliche Informationen über das Innere der Inseln. Bis weit in die zweite Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts benutzten Seeleute die bereits 1583 von Nicolas de Nicolay in Paris veröffentlichte Seekarte als Standardkarte für die Hebriden.

1.2. Das Schottlandbild in den Chroniken und Landesbeschreibungen vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert

Die mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Geschichtsschreiber und Verfasser von Landesbeschreibungen (Geographica) standen gewöhnlich vor dem Problem, dass sie weder die beschriebene Epoche noch das behandelte Land aus eigener Anschauung

⁶ Siehe D. Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies*, Bd. III (London, 1727), S. 200.

kannten. Umso mehr waren sie auf die Werke ihrer Vorgänger und ältere Quellen angewiesen. Anhand von drei Fragestellungen soll geklärt werden, welches Schottlandbild in den frühneuzeitlichen Chroniken und Geographica vermittelt wurde und inwieweit es von älteren Quellen und Autoren beeinflusst war. Hierbei ist zu analysieren, was über die Schotten und ihre Herkunft geschrieben wurde, durch welche vermuteten Sitten und Bräuche sich diese Menschen von anderen unterschieden und wie das Land, in dem sie lebten, vermeintlich aussah.

1.2.1. Die vermutete Herkunft der Schotten⁷

Schon der von den Römern im späten dritten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert erstmals verwendete Begriff der „Picti“ (bemalte Menschen) für den in Schottland ansässigen Volksstamm der Pikten zeigt das Ausmaß, in welchem diese Menschen von den Römern als anders und fremdartig betrachtet wurden. Aus Mangel an aktuelleren Quellen boten die römischen Geschichtsschreiber den frühneuzeitlichen Chronisten und Autoren von Geographica einen Quellenfundus, aus dem sie reichlich schöpfen konnten. Darüber hinaus galten in der Renaissance die antiken Autoren als absolut vertrauenswürdig und ihre Werke wurden, ohne sie auf ihre Richtigkeit zu hinterfragen, von allen bedeutenden Renaissance-Autoren herangezogen. Somit überlebte das Schottlandbild aus der Antike nahezu unverändert bis in die frühe Neuzeit. Die schottischen Geschichtsschreiber trugen ihrerseits auch wenig zur Erhellung ihrer Landesgeschichte bei. Der Chronist Hector Boece behauptete z.B. in seiner 1527 in Paris veröffentlichten *Scotorum Historiae*, dass die Skoten von „Scota“, einer ägyptischen Pharaonentochter, abstammen würden. Diese sei mit Gathelus, einem Griechen königlicher Herkunft, verheiratet gewesen und, um den Plagen Ägyptens zu entkommen, über Spanien und Irland nach Schottland geflohen.

⁷ In diesem Unterkapitel bezieht sich der Begriff „Schotten“ auf die gesamte Bevölkerung Schottlands. Der Begriff „Skoten“ bezieht sich ausschließlich auf den Stamm der sogenannten *Dalriada Scots*, der im vierten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert von Irland aus ins westliche Schottland einwanderte und in Argyll ein eigenes Königreich errichtete. Die Skoten verdrängten den einheimischen Stamm der Pikten zunächst nach Osten. Nach der anfänglichen räumlichen Trennung der beiden Stämme vermischten sich die Pikten allmählich mit den eingewanderten Skoten und gingen in ihnen auf. Erst vom neunten bis zehnten Jahrhundert an lässt sich von *einem* schottischen Volk unter der Herrschaft eines alleinigen Oberkönigs sprechen. Siehe M. Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (2. Aufl. London, 1992), S. 21-50.

Der Abstammungsmythos der Skoten aus Ägypten lässt sich zwar schon in den spätmittelalterlichen Chroniken von John of Fordun und Walter Bower finden, fand aber erst durch Hector Boece Verbreitung auf dem ganzen Kontinent. Für Chronisten wie Boece machte es durchaus Sinn, dem Königreich Schottland einen Gründungsmythos zu verschaffen, der Jahrtausende zurückreichte und Schottland auf eine Stufe mit den großen antiken Zivilisationen stellte. Schließlich galt es, den Engländern und deren Tudormythos etwas Ähnliches gegenüberzustellen. Allerdings trugen Boeces „kreativen Schreibkünste“ wenig dazu bei, auf dem Kontinent ein realistisches Bild von seiner Heimat zu zeichnen. Boeces *Scotorum Historiae* und die darin enthaltenen Mythen und Wunder dominierten das Schottlandbild auf dem Kontinent bis weit ins 17. Jahrhundert.

In Anlehnung an die klassischen Autoren und Hector Boece spekulierten die niederländischen, deutschen und französischen Geschichts- und Geographieschreiber des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts wild über die Herkunft der Schotten. Über die in den Skoten aufgegangenen Pikten schrieb z.B. der brandenburgisch-preußische Natur- und Völkerrechtler Nicolaus Hieronymus Gundling (1671-1729), dass sie ursprünglich gar kein europäisches Volk gewesen seien, sondern wegen ihrer vermuteten Bemalungen oder Tätowierungen eventuell aus Brasilien oder Madagaskar stammen könnten, weil sich die Eingeborenen dort ebenfalls zu bemalen pflegten.⁸ Die Spekulationen über die Herkunft der Skoten waren nicht minder abenteuerlich. In einer Zeit, in der das Aussehen, die Kleidung und die Sprache der Menschen die wichtigsten Kriterien für ihre Herkunft waren, vermuteten einige Autoren, dass die Skoten wegen ihres geschickten Umgangs mit Pfeil und Bogen wohl von dem legendären Reitervolk der Skythen abstammen könnten. Andere Autoren waren der Ansicht, dass die Skoten und die in ihrer Tradition stehenden Hochländer wegen ihrer Röcke von den Goten abstammen müssten. Zwar hatte keiner dieser Autoren jemals einen Pikten, Skoten, Skythen oder Goten gesehen, dennoch sprachen ihrer Meinung nach viele Argumente für ihre Mutmaßungen, so z.B., dass das Gälische der Hochländer keiner anderen europäischen Sprache ähnlich war.

⁸ Siehe N. Gundling, *Ausführlicher Discours über den ietzigen Zustand Der Europäischen Staaten*, Bd. I (Frankfurt und Leipzig, 1733), S. 689. [fortan: Gundling, *Ausführlicher Discours*]

In Großbritannien begann der englische Geograph William Camden schon gegen Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts Schottland und seine Bewohner zu entmythologisieren, indem er sich zu Recht auf die Abstammung der Skoten von den „wilden Iren“, das heißt den Bewohnern Irlands aus der Zeit vor der Landnahme durch die Engländer, festlegte. Dies half den Schotten allerdings wenig, galten doch die „wilden Iren“ in der frühen Neuzeit als das am wenigsten „zivilisierte“ Volk Europas. Besonders auffallend ist, dass in allen Theorien englischer und kontinentaler Autoren die Schotten von als besonders „wild“ und „unzivilisiert“ geltenden Völkern abstammen sollten.⁹ Die vermeintliche Wildheit der Schotten und besonders der Hochländer führte andererseits dazu, dass Reisende das Land mieden und sich die Vorurteile umso länger halten konnten. In den Geschichts- und Landesbeschreibungen auf dem Kontinent behielten die Schotten und besonders die Hochländer ihren Ruf als „wilde Exoten“ noch bis weit ins 18. Jahrhundert. Dieses Bild wurde auch in den zeitgenössischen Lexika und in den ersten Reiseführern des späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhunderts verbreitet.

1.2.2. Die vermeintlichen Sitten und Bräuche der Schotten

Die Vermutungen über die Sitten und Bräuche der Schotten waren ebenso vielfältig wie die Spekulationen über ihre Herkunft. Da kaum einer der Autoren auf dem Kontinent Schottland aus eigener Erfahrung kannte, war über die tatsächlichen Lebensgewohnheiten der Schotten fast nichts bekannt. Um diese Wissenslücke zu schließen, bedienten sich die Chronisten und Geographen eines einfachen Kunstgriffs. Sie unterschieden zwischen den Sitten und Bräuchen der alten Schotten und denen der jetzigen Bewohner. So konnten sie wiederum ausgiebig auf die antiken Autoren zurückgreifen. Darüber hinaus bot ihnen das Kapitel über die Sitten der alten und jetzigen Bewohner Schottlands aus Hector Boeces *Scotorum Historiae* eine wahre Fülle obskurer und exotischer Sitten. Folglich wurden in allen Landesbeschreibungen die vermuteten alten Sitten der Schotten wesentlich

⁹ Die Charakterisierung fremder Völker als „Wilde“ war seit der Antike ein elementarer Bestandteil der Geographie und Reiseliteratur. Es galt nicht nur die Neugierde der Leserschaft nach Exotik und Abenteuer zu befriedigen, sondern derartige Beschreibungen dienten auch der Selbstversicherung des Lesers, einer vermeintlich überlegenen und zivilisierten Kultur anzugehören.

detaillierter behandelt als deren gegenwärtigen Bräuche und es versteht sich von selbst, dass bei einer solchen Schwerpunktbildung und Quellenauswahl zwangsläufig ein antiquiertes und unzutreffendes Bild über die Lebensweise der Schotten vermittelt wurde.

Die Vorstellungen über das Leben der alten Schotten reichten vom Vorwurf des Kannibalismus, wobei die Schotten besonders die Brüste der Frauen und die Hinterteile der Männer geschätzt haben sollen, bis hin zu einem obligatorischen *ius primae noctis* der Adligen gegenüber dem gemeinen Volk.¹⁰ In Anlehnung an Boece berichtete z.B. Paul Berckenmeyer im *Curieuser Antiquarius* (7. Aufl. Hamburg, 1738), dem beliebtesten deutschen Reiseführer des Barock, dass die alten Schotten Kannibalen gewesen seien, dass es keine Ammen in Schottland geben würde und dass diejenigen Frauen, welche ihre Kinder nicht selbst stillen könnten, grundsätzlich des Ehebruchs angeklagt würden. Darüber hinaus würden alle an ansteckenden oder an Geisteskrankheiten leidenden Männer kastriert und diejenigen Frauen, welche mit ihnen Kontakt gehabt hätten, lebendig begraben. Zusätzlich würden die Gefängnisse in Schottland alle sechs Monate geleert und Diebe dürften ihr Handwerk straffrei ausüben, so lange man sie nicht auf frischer Tat ertappte.¹¹ Viele dieser eigenartigen Bräuche, so Berckenmeyer, gingen auf König Evenus III. (Ewen III.) und seine „Schandgesetze“ zurück. Derartige Berichte über die Sitten der Schotten fanden sich in fast allen auf dem Kontinent publizierten landeskundlichen Werken. Andere Autoren, wie z.B. Nicolaus H. Gundling, wussten noch hinzuzufügen, dass es im schottischen Hochland wahrscheinlich noch Heiden geben würde, die aufs dringendste der Christianisierung bedürften.¹² Mit Bezug auf die Hochländer wurde übereinstimmend berichtet, dass sie weit weniger zivilisiert wären als die im Tiefland lebenden Schotten. Sie wären besonders wild, grausam, rachsüchtig und kriegerisch und würden ihren Lebensunterhalt nur vom Stehlen und Rauben bestreiten. Sie wären die Nachfahren der alten Schotten und ihre Lebensweise und Sitten hätten sich über die Jahrhunderte kaum verändert. Dieses überaus negative Bild von den

¹⁰ Der Vorwurf des Kannibalismus ging auf den heiligen Hieronymus zurück. Neben den Schotten wurden auch die „wilden Iren“ des Kannibalismus bezichtigt. Ihnen wurde sogar unterstellt, dass sie die Körper ihrer verstorbenen Eltern verspeisen würden.

¹¹ Siehe P. Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius: Das ist: Allerhand auserlesene Geographische und Historische Merckwürdigkeiten / So in denen Europäischen Ländern zu finden* (7. Aufl. Hamburg, 1738), S. 223-224. [fortan: Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*]

¹² Siehe Gundling, *Ausführlicher Discours*, Bd. I, S. 690, 693.

Hochländern war das Ergebnis eines langen Propagandafeldzugs gegen die Hochländer, der seine Anfänge im späten Mittelalter hat. Die schottische Regierung, Chronisten aus dem Tiefland, wie z.B. der um die Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts lebende Mönch Walter Bower, und englische Autoren, wie z.B. der im späten 16. Jahrhundert lebende Geograph William Camden, betonten immer wieder den Unterschied zwischen den „zivilisierten“ Bewohnern des Tieflandes und den „unzivilisierten“ und gesetzlosen Hochländern. Als Ergebnis dieser Propaganda, die von den Autoren auf dem Kontinent ungeprüft übernommen wurde, wurden die Hochländer in der frühen Neuzeit zu den letzten „Wilden“ Europas stilisiert. Es ist daher keine Überraschung, dass Schottland in der frühen Neuzeit nicht sehr hoch auf der Liste der Reiseziele stand und dementsprechend wenig gesichertes Wissen über das Land und seine Bewohner vorhanden war. Von den Reisenden wurde das Hochland wegen des schlechten Rufes seiner Bewohner möglichst weiträumig gemieden und blieb deswegen bis weit in das 18. Jahrhundert ein unbekanntes Land. Dass die Hochländer ihrerseits auf dem europäischen Festland fast nur als Söldner in Erscheinung traten, war ihrem Ansehen im Ausland auch nicht sehr dienlich.

1.2.3. Schottlands Ruf als Land der Mythen und Wunder

Je weniger über ein fremdes Land bekannt war, desto einfacher war es, die Wissenslücken mit phantasievollen Geschichten und Mythen zu füllen. Die Fragen nach der Herkunft und den Sitten der Schotten haben bereits gezeigt, wie sehr die Geschichte des Landes und seiner Menschen von Mythen beeinflusst wurde. In der frühen Neuzeit galt Schottland als ein Land der Mythen und Wunder. Viele dieser Wunder hatten ihren Ursprung wiederum bei Hector Boece und wurden von den Autoren auf dem Kontinent bis weit ins 18. Jahrhundert ständig wiederholt und dabei immer weiter ausgeschmückt. Obwohl die Naturwissenschaften in England und Schottland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert enorme Fortschritte gemacht haben, hat sich das Schottlandbild auf dem Kontinent zunehmend von der Realität entfernt. So berichteten z.B. fast alle Autoren, dass es in Schottland eine besondere Gänseart (*barnacle goose*, lat. *Branta leucopsis*) geben würde, welche aus im Wasser treibenden Holzstücken oder am Wasser wachsenden Bäumen schlüpfen würden.

Eine andere Gänseart, die *solan goose*, würde ihre Flugfähigkeit einbüßen, wenn sie das Meer nicht sehen könnten. Die Geographica der frühen Neuzeit übertreffen sich gegenseitig mit fabulösen Berichten über Hunde in Schottland, die speziell Mörder, Räuber und Diebe aufspüren könnten, oder aber entlegene Regionen im Hochland, in denen alle Tiere mit gespaltenen Schwänzen geboren würden. Auch wäre es gar nicht unüblich, so berichteten alle Autoren übereinstimmend, auf den Shetlandinseln und den Hebriden noch Menschen anzutreffen, die bereits 140 oder gar 180 Jahre alt wären und bei bester Gesundheit noch täglich zum Fischen auf die See hinaus führen.¹³ Es ist nicht nötig alle diese Wunder im Einzelnen aufzuzählen, es ist aber wichtig festzuhalten, dass alle Wunder nur in den sehr entlegenen und besonders schwer zugänglichen Regionen zu bestaunen waren und daher kaum verifiziert werden konnten. Darüber hinaus liegt es wohl auch in der Natur der Reiseliteratur und Geographica, dass solche Wunder allein in dem beschriebenen Land zu finden sein würden und jeder Autor seine eigene Version davon zu berichten wusste. Da fast keiner der Autoren diese Wunder jemals selbst gesehen hatte und alle mehr oder weniger stark von einander abschrieben, ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass es schließlich eine kaum noch überschaubare Anzahl widersprüchlichster Schilderungen der einzelnen Kuriositäten gab. Selbst im Zeitalter der großen Biologen, wie z.B. Carl von Linné oder Thomas Pennant, war das von der schottischen Flora und Fauna in den Geographica vermittelte Bild wenig realitätsnah und ähnelte eher den Werken eines Isidor von Sevilla.

Bei der Analyse des Schottlandbildes in den Chroniken und Geographica bleibt abschließend festzuhalten, dass die wenigen Schottlandreisenden im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit oftmals nur das Tiefland besucht haben und sich damit begnügten, die Stereotype über die vermeintlich wilden Hochländer zu wiederholen. Letztlich führte dies zur Entwicklung eines Teufelskreises: Einerseits wurden Schottland und vor allem das Hochland von Fremden kaum besucht, weil das Land und seine Leute einen sehr schlechten Ruf hatten. Andererseits konnten das gängige Schottlandbild und die herrschenden Vorurteile nicht überprüft und

¹³ Siehe z.B. Berckenmeyer, *Curieuser Antiquarius*, S. 218-222. Joshua Childrey, *Britannia Baconica: Or, The Natural Rarities Of England, Scotland, & Wales* (London, 1661) ist eines der besten Beispiele wie Schottland völlig einseitig als ein Land der Kuriositäten und Wunder präsentiert wird. Siehe *ibid.*, S. 175-181.

korrigiert werden, weil es kaum neue und zuverlässige Berichte aus Schottland gab und die Autoren deshalb weiterhin auf die alten Quellen angewiesen waren. So verfestigte sich in der Öffentlichkeit allmählich ein deutlich verzerrter Eindruck von Schottland, der mit der Realität immer weniger zu tun hatte.

2. Die Berichte der Schottlandbesucher aus dem Mittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit bis etwa 1600

Das im 1. Kapitel beschriebene Zerrbild des schottischen Hochlandes und seiner Bewohner erwies sich als äußerst langlebig und fand in den Berichten der damaligen Reisenden zahlreiche Reflexe. Gleichwohl ist die Zahl der Schottlandreisenden bis etwa 1600 sehr gering und nur die wenigsten von ihnen begaben sich freiwillig auf den beschwerlichen Weg. Die meisten Besucher kamen im Gefolge militärischer Auseinandersetzungen zwischen England und Schottland. Dabei stellten die Engländer und die Franzosen den größten Teil der ausländischen Besucher.¹⁴ Ihre Eindrücke sind mit großer Vorsicht zu behandeln, da sie als Kriegsteilnehmer oder Diplomaten oft sehr tendenziöse Berichte verfasst haben, die mehr der Rechtfertigung ihres Handelns oder Propagandazwecken dienten als einer verlässlichen Beschreibung des Landes und seiner Leute. Nach Abzug der bekannten Stereotype und der individuellen Propaganda lässt sich aus den Berichten der frühen Schottlandbesucher jedoch ein Kanon gemeinsamer Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen herausarbeiten.

Zuerst einmal betonten alle Reisenden, dass es sich bei Schottland um ein rückständiges und sehr armes Land handeln würde. Die wenigen Städte wären weder groß noch prächtig und die Landbevölkerung würde in kleinen, ärmlichen Hütten leben. Der Ackerbau sei ebenfalls rückständig, dafür betonten alle Reisenden aber den großen Viehreichtum der Schotten. Solche Beobachtungen sind nicht überraschend, wenn man einerseits bedenkt, dass fast alle Besucher aus wirtschaftlich und kulturell weiterentwickelten Ländern kamen. Darüber hinaus müssen diese Bemerkungen natürlich auch vor dem Hintergrund betrachtet werden,

¹⁴ Im Rahmen der *Auld Alliance* zwischen Schottland und Frankreich erhielten die Schotten vom 14. Jahrhundert bis zur schottischen Reformation 1560 von den Franzosen oftmals militärische Unterstützung gegen die Versuche der Engländer, ihren nördlichen Nachbarn zu unterwerfen.

dass die meisten ausländischen Besucher das Land zu Kriegszeiten sahen. Nur wenige Besucher dehnten ihre Reisen über das schottische Tiefland und das Grenzland zu England hinaus aus, und gerade diese Landstriche wurden regelmäßig von den durchziehenden Heeren verwüstet. Für manchen Reisenden, wie z.B. den Italiener Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (den späteren Papst Pius II.), der Schottland im Jahre 1435 besuchte, kam der Besuch einem „Kulturschock“ gleich. Piccolomini bezeichnete die Schotten als „barbaros“ und war sehr froh, als er im nordenglischen Newcastle wieder in der „Zivilisation“ angekommen zu sein meinte. Selbst die den Schotten wohlgesonnenen Franzosen stimmten darin überein, dass Schottland ein unterentwickeltes Land sei, das nicht nur seine Unabhängigkeit, sondern auch seine bescheidenen zivilisatorischen Fortschritte einzig der Unterstützung durch die Franzosen verdanken würde.¹⁵ Lediglich aus der Zeit der Herrschaft James IV. (1488-1513), unter dem Schottland eine wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Blüteperiode erlebte, fallen die Berichte über das Land positiver aus.¹⁶ Obwohl den Schotten von nahezu allen Reisenden Armut attestiert wurde, so stimmten sie doch darin überein, dass sie ein sehr herzliches und besonders gastfreundliches Volk wären. Die fahrenden Ritter vom Kontinent waren voll des Lobes über die außergewöhnliche Gastfreundschaft der schottischen Adligen, wenn sie diese zu Turnieren in Schottland besuchten. Aber auch die einfachen Leute würden sich trotz ihrer ärmlichen Lebensumstände gegenseitig an Gastfreundschaft überbieten und um die Gunst der Fremden buhlen.

Die im Mittelalter und bis etwa 1600 vorwiegend besuchten Gegenden waren das Tiefland, das Grenzgebiet zu England und in seltenen Ausnahmefällen auch das Tiefland entlang der Ostküste bis Aberdeen hinauf. Fast alle Reisenden betraten nördlich von Berwick-upon-Tweed erstmals schottischen Boden und setzten ihre Tour über Dunbar nach Edinburgh fort. Die nördlichsten Reiseziele waren (abgesehen von Aberdeen) gewöhnlich St Andrews, Dundee, Perth oder Stirling. Die meisten Reisenden verließen Schottland wieder entlang der Ostküste, denn Glasgow

¹⁵ Siehe z.B. die Berichte von Jean de Beaugué und Estienne Perlin aus den Jahren 1548-49 und 1551-52.

¹⁶ Hierzu muss einschränkend angemerkt werden, dass die Hauptquelle für diese Zeit ein von Don Pedro de Ayala, dem spanischen Botschafter in Edinburgh 1496-97, verfasster Bericht über James IV. und sein Land ist. De Ayala war James IV. persönlich verbunden und sein Bericht an den spanischen König Ferdinand zeichnete ein sehr geschöntes Bild von Schottland.

und der Südwesten Schottlands waren bis zum späten 16. Jahrhundert von wenig Interesse für fremde Besucher. Das Hochland wurde wegen seiner Unzugänglichkeit und des Rufes seiner Bewohner als „Wilde“ völlig gemieden. Nur wenige frühe Reisende erwähnten das Hochland überhaupt in ihren Berichten und begnügten sich dann auch meist, die gängigen Vorurteile zu wiederholen. Hector Boeces *Scotorum Historiae* (1. Aufl. Paris, 1527) war das von Reisenden im 16. Jahrhundert am häufigsten benutzte Werk über Schottland. Erst gegen Ende des Jahrhunderts bekam es Konkurrenz durch William Camdens *Britannia* (1. Aufl. London, 1586). Obwohl Camden ein genaueres und verlässlicheres Bild von Schottland zeichnete, ist Boeces Einfluss noch bis weit ins 17. und besonders auf dem Kontinent bis ins 18. Jahrhundert spürbar.¹⁷ Die Besichtigung und Beschreibung der berühmten Wunder und Kuriositäten in Schottland hatte für alle Reisenden große Bedeutung, wie die Berichte des bereits erwähnten Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (1435), des dänischen Diplomaten Peder Svave (1535) und des pommerschen fahrenden Ritters Lupold von Wedel (1584) deutlich zeigen. Allerdings wurden nicht alle Wunder in natura ihrem Ruf gerecht. Immer wenn Piccolomini sich nach den berühmten *barnacle geese* erkundigte, wurde ihm versichert, dass deren Genese aus nassem Holz wahr wäre. Wenn er diesen Prozess allerdings sehen wollte, wurde er jedesmal mit der Begründung vertröstet, dass die Vögel nicht hier, sondern etwas weiter nördlich auf den Bäumen wüchsen. Der Empfehlung, sich schließlich die Genese der Gänse auf den Orkneyinseln anzuschauen, kam Piccolomini nicht nach.

Gegen Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts zogen die schottischen Universitäten auch eine größere Zahl Studenten vom Kontinent an. Dänen, Deutsche und Holländer zog es zum Studium der Theologie nach St Andrews und einige von ihnen nutzten den Studienaufenthalt auch dazu, das Land zu bereisen. Der Dreißigjährige Krieg auf dem Kontinent und der Ausbruch des englischen Bürgerkrieges führten jedoch zu einem abrupten Rückgang der Besucher in Schottland. Erst nach der Restauration 1660 begann die Zahl der Schottlandreisenden allmählich wieder zu steigen.

¹⁷ Siehe Kapitel 1.

3. Das Schottlandbild in den fiktiven Reiseberichten und Schmähchriften

Zur Analyse des Schottlandbildes in der frühen Neuzeit gehört auch eine Auswertung der rein fiktiven Schottlandreisen, die durchaus als „Lügenreisen“ bezeichnet werden können. Die Autoren dieser rein fiktiven Schottlandbesuche kannten das Land nur selten aus eigener Anschauung; dennoch spiegeln ihre Berichte in komprimierter Form wider, was man über Land und Leute zu wissen glaubte. Welche Stereotype und Vorurteile prägten das Image von Schottland? Welche Vorurteile bestanden gegenüber den Schotten und insbesondere den Hochländern?

Zunächst einmal fällt auf, dass die in allen fiktiven Reiseberichten und Schmähschriften verwendeten Motive und imaginären Erlebnisse sich sehr ähneln. Dies deutet wie bei den Geographica darauf hin, dass die Autoren der Berichte mangels besseren Wissens in großem Stil von einander abgeschrieben haben. Sir Anthony Weldons *A Perfect Description Of The People and Country Of Scotland* war die erste publizierte, ausführlichere Schmähschrift über Schottland. Obwohl dieses Werk erst im Jahr 1647 veröffentlicht wurde, so ist es doch wohl schon 1617 entstanden, als Weldon König James VI. (I.) auf einer Reise nach Schottland begleitete.¹⁸ Weldons *Perfect Description* war der Prototyp der Schmähschrift über Schottland und trug entscheidend zum negativen Image des Landes und seiner Einwohner bei. Viele Autoren von Schmähschriften, satirischen Beschreibungen und fiktiven Reisen imitierten seinen Stil, aber auch in den Berichten seriöser Reisender finden sich zahlreiche Anspielungen auf Weldon, die die weite Beachtung, die diesem Werk geschenkt wurde, widerspiegeln. Weldons wesentliche Vorurteile über die Schotten sind schnell zusammengefasst. Er beschuldigte die Schotten zunächst ein Volk von Lügnern, Dieben, Ehebrechern und Mördern zu sein. Darüber hinaus warf er ihnen vor, dass ihre presbyterianische Staatskirche, die *Church of Scotland*, Gotteslästerung betreiben würde. Zusätzlich verunglimpfte er die Schotten, indem er ihnen mangelnde Reinlichkeit vorwarf. Diese insgesamt haltlosen, verallgemeinernden Vorurteile zeigen deutlich, welche Schwierigkeiten die

¹⁸ James VI. (I.) (1566-1625), Sohn von Mary Stuart, kam nach der Absetzung seiner Mutter 1567 auf den schottischen Thron. Als die englische Königin Elizabeth I. im Jahr 1603 kinderlos starb, folgte James VI. ihr als James I. auf den englischen Thron und residierte fortan in London.

Engländer z.B. mit der unterschiedlichen Verfassung und der andersartigen Form des Gottesdienstes der *Church of Scotland* hatten.

Obwohl derartige Verleumdungen sehr beliebt und weit verbreitet waren, so wurden sie in der Realität von den Schottlandbesuchern nicht bestätigt. Der Engländer Thomas Kirk aus Yorkshire ist ein Paradebeispiel für den gewaltigen Gegensatz zwischen der öffentlichen Darstellung Schottlands und den tatsächlichen Erfahrungen Schottlandreisender. Im Jahr 1677 begab Kirk sich auf eine dreimonatige Reise, die ihn über Edinburgh und das östliche Tiefland bis nach Kirkwall auf die Orkneyinseln führte. Für seine Rückreise wählte er eine etwas mehr landeinwärts gelegene Route, in deren Verlauf er auch kurz in das Hochland vordrang. Kirk führte ein privates Tagebuch seiner Reise, in dem er sich äußerst positiv über die Gastfreundschaft und Hilfsbereitschaft der Schotten äußerte. Dieses Tagebuch war offensichtlich nicht zur Veröffentlichung vorgesehen und wurde erst im 19. Jahrhundert publiziert. Zwei Jahre nach seiner sicheren Rückkehr aus Schottland veröffentlichte Kirk eine anonyme Schmähchrift gegen Schottland mit dem Titel *A Modern Account Of Scotland; Being, An exact Description of the Country, And a True Character Of The People and their Manners* ([London], 1679). In dieser Schmähchrift wiederholte Kirk nicht nur alle erdenklichen Vorurteile gegenüber den Schotten, sondern er beschuldigte auch insbesondere die Hochländer, hinterhältig und feige auf der Lauer zu liegen, englische Reisende auszurauben und zu ermorden. In völliger Verkehrung der Tatsachen charakterisierte er die Schotten als ein Volk unzivilisierter Diebe, Räuber und Mörder und erfand einen wahren Schreckenskatalog imaginärer Gefahren, denen Fremde in Schottland ausgesetzt seien. Die Schmähchrift scheint ein Erfolg gewesen zu sein, denn 20 Jahre später erschien eine zweite, erweiterte Auflage. Über Kirks Motive ist nichts bekannt, aber es steht außer Zweifel, dass er mit seinem perfiden Bericht Weldons sehr erfolgreiche Schmähchrift zumindest imitieren und vielleicht sogar noch übertreffen wollte.

Es ist nicht nötig, auf die verschiedenen fiktiven Schottlandreisen und Schmähschriften näher einzugehen, da die Motive und Verleumdungen stets dieselben waren. Wesentlich interessanter sind die Zeitpunkte, zu denen derartige Hetzschriften publiziert wurden. Es fällt auf, dass diese Werke besonders in den

Zeiten verstärkter anglo-schottischer Spannungen Konjunktur hatten. Zur Zeit des *Darien desaster*¹⁹, der *Union of Parliaments* (1707) und nach den Jakobitenaufständen war das Lesepublikum anscheinend besonders empfänglich für antischottische Propaganda. Erstaunlich ist aber auch, wie lange sich diese Hetzschriften noch der Gunst des Publikums erfreuten. Die vermutlich um 1760 anonym veröffentlichte Schmähchrift *John English's Travels Through Scotland* (London, [ca. 1760]) erwies sich nicht nur als besonders perfide, sondern zeichnete auch ein völlig verzerrtes Bild von Schottland und seinen Bewohnern zu einer Zeit, als sich Edinburgh längst zum Vorreiter der Aufklärung (*Scottish Enlightenment*) entwickelte hatte und das Hochland und seine Bewohner im Zuge der aufkommenden Romantik zu einem der beliebtesten Reiseziele Europas aufstiegen. Mit Tobias Smollets Roman *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (London, 1771) zeichnete eine fiktive Schottlandreise erstmals ein positives Schottlandbild. Smollet, der 1721 in der an das Hochland angrenzenden schottischen Grafschaft Dunbartonshire geboren wurde, war sich der Vorurteile der Engländer über seine Landsleute bewusst und versuchte in *Humphry Clinker* diese Vorurteile aufzubrechen und abzubauen. Der phänomenale, europaweite Erfolg von *Humphry Clinker* bestätigte, dass die Zeit reif war, mit dem alten, verzerrten Schottlandbild abzurechnen, und ein realistisches Bild des Landes und des Beitrages seiner Bewohner für die Entwicklung des britischen Gemeinwohls zu zeichnen.

¹⁹ 1695 hatten die Schotten eine *Company of Scotland tradeing to Affrica and the Indies* gegründet. Über private Investitionen sollte der Bau einer Handelsniederlassung in Darien am Isthmus von Panama finanziert werden. Der Platz für die Handelsniederlassung in einem von den Spaniern beherrschten Sumpfbereich war allerdings sehr schlecht gewählt und im Jahr 1700 ergaben sich die wenigen überlebenden Schotten den spanischen Truppen. Auf Druck der englischen *East India Company*, die um ihr Handelsmonopol fürchtete, hatte sich die englische Regierung zuvor geweigert, den in Bedrängnis geratenen Schotten zur Hilfe zu kommen. Das *Darien desaster* verschlang einen Großteil des in Schottland vorhandenen Geldes und ruinierte viele Investoren zu einer Zeit, in der Schottland ohnehin an den Folgen einer Serie von Missernten litt. Die Schotten gaben den Engländern und der *East India Company* die Schuld für das Scheitern ihrer kolonialen Ambitionen. In der Folge verschlechterten sich die anglo-schottischen Beziehungen dramatisch und es kam in Edinburgh zu schweren antienglischen Ausschreitungen.

4. Die Erschließung des Hochlandes und die Entwicklung des Reisens im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert

Der Eindruck, den Besucher von einem fremden Land erhielten, hing natürlich entscheidend davon ab, wie beschwerlich ihre Reise war und welchen Komfort sie im Gastland vorfanden. Es ist deshalb nötig, sich an dieser Stelle mit der Erschließung des Hochlandes und der Entwicklung der für den Tourismus²⁰ notwendigen Infrastruktur, wie z.B. Straßen, Gasthöfen, Verpflegung etc., zu beschäftigen.

Während die *Grand Tour* auf dem Kontinent in der frühen Neuzeit ein fester Bestandteil der Erziehung junger Adliger war, so blieben dafür aber die Britischen Inseln bis ins späte 17. Jahrhundert ein vergleichsweise unbekanntes Land. England und Schottland lagen fernab der gängigen Reiseziele der *Grand Tour* in den Niederlanden, Deutschland, der Schweiz, Frankreich und Italien. Selbst die Engländer zogen es vor, auf dem Kontinent zu reisen, bevor sie sich aufmachten, die ländlichen Regionen ihrer Insel zu entdecken. Auf die Kontinentaleuropäer entwickelte Großbritannien erst im 18. Jahrhundert eine größere Anziehungskraft. Dann war es vor allem England, das wegen seiner vergleichsweise liberalen Regierungsform und der Fortschritte in Industrie und Handel Besucher vom Kontinent anzog. Schottland blieb dagegen noch bis in die zweite Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts ein relativ unbekanntes Land. Zudem hinkte die Infrastruktur in Schottland deutlich hinter der Englands zurück.

Während alle Regionen Englands im 17. Jahrhundert systematisch durch den Bau von Landstraßen erschlossen wurden, gab es in Schottland nur ein rudimentäres Straßennetz, und das auch nur im Grenzgebiet zu England und im Tiefland. Nach 1660 forcierte zwar auch die schottische Regierung den Straßenbau, aber die Bemühungen zeigten wesentlich weniger Erfolg als in England. Seit 1669 waren die Friedensrichter der einzelnen Grafschaften dazu autorisiert, die Bevölkerung für bis zu sechs Tage pro Jahr zum Straßenbau heranzuziehen, aber dieser als *statute labour*

²⁰ Auch wenn es sich bei dem Wort „Tourismus“ um einen Begriff aus der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts handelt, so kann man viele Besucher der populären Reiseziele, wie z.B. der Hafenstadt Oban, im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert durchaus als Touristen im heutigen Sinne des Wortes bezeichnen. Die Einheimischen stellten sich rasch auf die fremden Reisenden als Einnahmequelle ein und boten alle Dienstleistungen an, die man heute als „Touristenindustrie“ bezeichnen würde.

bekannte Zwangsdienst wurde nur lax durchgesetzt und oftmals gänzlich ignoriert. Auch das nach 1713 im Tiefland eingeführte *turnpike* System, die Erhebung einer Maut für Pferdefuhrwerke, trug aufgrund des geringen Verkehrsaufkommens zu wenig ein, um das Straßensystem in Ordnung zu halten, geschweige denn weiter auszubauen.

Die Erschließung des schottischen Hochlandes gestaltete sich wesentlich schwieriger. Zum einen waren die lokalen Clanoberhäupter sehr auf ihre Eigenständigkeit bedacht und versuchten deshalb ihre Stammesgebiete vor einer Öffnung nach außen und vor neuen Einflüssen abzuschotten, weil dies unweigerlich eine Minderung ihrer politischen und wirtschaftlichen Allmacht über ihre Vasallen bedeutet hätte. Zum anderen waren die geographischen Voraussetzungen für den Straßenbau im Hochland wesentlich schwieriger. Das Hochland mit seinen endlosen Bergketten, tiefen Schluchten, großen Seen und reißenden Flüssen stellte die Straßenbauer vor gewaltige Probleme. An Straßenbau durch *statute labour* wie im Tiefland war nicht zu denken, weil das Hochland zum einen viel zu dünn besiedelt war, um die nötige Anzahl von Arbeitern aufzubringen, und zum anderen die technischen Schwierigkeiten des Straßenbaus in den Bergen nicht mit einer ungeschulten und technisch unerfahrenen Bevölkerung zu meistern waren. Die einzigen „Straßen“ im Hochland waren die alten Wege der Viehtreiber, auf denen die Rinder im Herbst zu den Märkten ins Tiefland getrieben wurden. Diese Wege hatten keine befestigte Oberfläche, sie waren wegen des Viehtriebs und der hohen Niederschläge oft knöcheltief aufgeweicht und somit für jeglichen Transport auf Rädern ungeeignet. Darüber hinaus gab es keine Brücken im Hochland und alle Flüsse mussten an Furten durchquert werden. Ohne eine funktionierende Infrastruktur gab es keinen Verkehr und es konnten im Hochland folglich auch keine Einkünfte wie beim *turnpike* System im Tiefland erzielt werden. Bis zum Beginn des Straßenbaus durch das Militär um 1725 mussten alle Waren im Hochland entweder zu Pferd oder mit sogenannten *sledges*, einer Art Schlitten, transportiert werden, bei dem die Ware zwischen zwei Stangen befestigt wurde, deren eines Ende auf dem Rücken des Zugpferdes befestigt war und deren anderes über den Boden schleifte.

Wie das Straßennetz so hinkten auch die Unterkunftsmöglichkeiten für Reisende in Schottland weit hinter denen in England zurück. Zum einen war selbst

im Tiefland die Zahl der Gasthöfe, die fast immer auch die Stationen zum Pferdewechsel waren, wesentlich geringer. Die Reisenden mussten deshalb nicht nur längere Distanzen zwischen den einzelnen Stationen zurücklegen, sondern waren auch erheblich mehr in ihrer Routenplanung und Flexibilität eingeschränkt. Trafen sich mehrere Reisegruppen in einem Gasthof, so reichten die Zimmer oftmals nicht und die zuletzt Gekommenen mussten mit ihren Pferden im Stall übernachten. Darüber hinaus berichteten viele Reisende, dass vor allem in den ländlichen Gebieten die Versorgung der Pferde mit Heu und Stroh oftmals sehr schwierig war. Besonders die Betreiber der kleineren Gasthöfe hielten für Reisende nur wenige frische Pferde zum Wechseln bereit und verfügten auch nicht über ausreichende Vorräte, um die Pferde größerer Reisegruppen durchzufüttern. Mancher Reisender musste seine Tour abbrechen oder verkürzen, weil entweder die Versorgung der Pferde in entlegenen Gegenden zu schwierig wurde oder eingegangene Tiere nicht ersetzt werden konnten. Obwohl Schottland von fast allen Reisenden als ein sehr preisgünstiges Reiseland beschrieben wurde, so stimmten die Besucher aber auch darin überein, dass die Versorgung der Pferde mit Futter wesentlich teurer als in England sei. Der Komfort der schottischen Gasthöfe ließ auch zu wünschen übrig. Insbesondere englische Reisende beschwerten sich bis weit in die zweite Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts über den Schmutz in den schottischen Herbergen und bezogen dabei auch die Unterkünfte in den großen Städten, wie z.B. in Edinburgh, ausdrücklich in ihre Kritik mit ein. Die schottische Küche wurde auch vielfach kritisiert, allerdings stimmten wiederum alle Reisenden überein, dass es selbst in den schlechtesten Gasthöfen hervorragenden und preisgünstigen französischen Rotwein geben würde. Die Getränkekarte der schottischen Gasthöfe, so wurde immer wieder betont, sei deutlich besser als die der englischen.

Die Reisebedingungen im Hochland unterschieden sich grundlegend von denen im Tiefland, denn im Hochland war an eigenständiges Reisen lange nicht zu denken. Wer vor dem Beginn des Straßenbaus durch das Militär um 1725 in das Hochland reiste, musste sich zunächst mit den jeweiligen Clanoberhäuptern verständigen, durch deren Territorien man zu reisen gedachte. Im Hochland waren Reisen nur unter der Protektion der lokalen Adligen möglich. Die Clanoberhäupter und die ihnen untergeordneten Adligen stellten die Reisenden dann als ihre Gäste unter ihren

persönlichen Schutz. Sie stellten ihnen Führer und Dolmetscher zur Verfügung, da es vom Hochland keine brauchbaren Reisekarten gab und die einfachen Hochländer nur Gälisch sprachen und sich deshalb mit fremden Reisenden nicht verständigen konnten. Zur Sicherheit vor marodierenden Viehdieben, von denen es bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts im Hochland noch einige gab, versorgten die Clanoberhäupter die Reisenden falls nötig auch mit bewaffneten Eskorten. Übernachtet wurde entweder in den Häusern der lokalen Adligen oder in Zelten im Feldlager unter dem Schutz der bewaffneten Begleiter. Obwohl den Hochländern durch die jahrhundertelange Propaganda ein sehr schlechter Ruf vorauseilte, so rühmten doch alle frühen Besucher des Hochlandes, dass dieser Ruf gänzlich unberechtigt sei und die Hochländer überaus zuverlässige und gastfreundliche Menschen wären. Die vielfach gegenteiligen Behauptungen und Verleumdungen in den fiktiven Reiseberichten und Hetzschriften erweisen sich bei näherer Betrachtung als haltlos, denn keiner der von mir berücksichtigten Reisenden wurde von Hochländern überfallen, ausgeraubt oder gar ermordet. Im Gegenteil, alle Quellen bestätigen, dass das Reisen im Hochland im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert sehr sicher war. Der Engländer Edmund Burt, der sich nach 1725 viele Jahre im Hochland aufhielt, schrieb nicht ohne Grund, dass Reisende selbst mit einer größeren Menge Geldes in der Tasche im Hochland sehr viel sicherer sein würden als auf den Landstraßen Englands.²¹ Trotzdem war es sehr schwierig, die Vorurteile über die Hochländer aus den Köpfen der Menschen zu verdrängen, und nur wenige Reisende trauten sich vor der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts in das Hochland.

Die Erschließung und Öffnung des Hochlandes nach außen begann erst um 1725. An Handel oder gar Tourismus wurde dabei nicht gedacht, sondern es standen zunächst einzig militärische Interessen im Vordergrund. Die Jakobitenaufstände von 1689-90, 1708, 1715 und 1719 hatten der Regierung in London deutlich vor Augen geführt, dass sich das schottische Hochland und die den Stuarts treu ergebenen Clane ihrer effektiven Kontrolle entzogen.²² Es gelang der britischen Regierung zwar, den

²¹ Siehe E. Burt, *Letters From A Gentleman In The North Of Scotland To His Friend In London*, hrsg. von R. Jamieson (5. Aufl. London, 1822), Bd. II, S. 133-134. Dass es in England wesentlich mehr Straßenräuber als im schottischen Hochland gab, wurde auch von anderen Reisenden, wie z.B. Mary Anne Hanway im Jahr 1775, bestätigt.

²² Die Jakobiten kämpften für die Wiedereinsetzung der Stuarts auf den britischen Thron. In der Glorious Revolution 1688 hatte der Stuart James VII. (II.) den Königsthron an Mary II., seine 1662 geborene ältere Tochter aus erster Ehe mit Anne Hyde, und ihren Mann William III. of Orange

vom Earl of Mar nur wenig zielstrebig geführten Jakobitenaufstand 1715 innerhalb weniger Wochen niederzuschlagen, aber nur vier Jahre später kam es an der schottischen Westküste erneut zu einem Aufstand einiger den Stuarts treuer Clane, die diesmal von den Spaniern militärisch unterstützt wurden. Auch dieser Aufstand wurde bei Glenshiel schnell niedergeschlagen. Die britische Regierung war sich jedoch fortan bewusst, dass vom schottischen Hochland und seinen unzufriedenen Clanen eine große Gefahr für die politische und wirtschaftliche Stabilität Großbritanniens ausging.²³ Vor diesem Hintergrund beschloss die Regierung in London 1724, die Clane endgültig zu entwaffnen und das Hochland durch ein Netzwerk von Militärstraßen und Garnisonen nach außen zu öffnen. Den Auftrag dazu erhielt General George Wade. Er entwaffnete zunächst die Clane und baute anschließend mit seinen Soldaten vier größere Straßen mitten durch das Hochland: Die Militärstraßen von Dunkeld nach Inverness (Bauzeit 1728-30), von Inverness nach Fort William (1725-36), von Crieff nach Dalnacardoch (1730-35) und von Dalwhinnie nach Fort Augustus (1731) verbanden nicht nur das bis dahin unzugängliche Hochland mit dem Tiefland, sondern sie verbanden auch die drei großen Garnisonen entlang des Great Glen²⁴ in Inverness, Fort Augustus und Fort William. Es war Wades primäres Ziel, die Regierungstruppen in den einzelnen Garnisonen möglichst schnell und sicher an den strategisch wichtigen Knotenpunkten des Hochlandes zusammenziehen zu können, um eventuelle Aufstände bereits im Keim zu ersticken. Die Schwierigkeiten des Straßenbaus in den

verloren. Mary starb bereits 1694 und da ihre Ehe mit William III., der fortan alleine regierte, kinderlos geblieben war, wurde im *Act of Settlement* 1701 und im *Regency Act* 1707 die Thronfolge dahingehend geregelt, dass auf William III. Anne, die 1665 geborene jüngere protestantische Tochter von James VII. (II.) aus dessen erster Ehe mit Anne Hyde, folgen sollte und dann das Haus Hannover den König stellen sollte. William III. starb 1702. Seine Nachfolgerin Anne regierte von 1702 bis zu ihrem Tod 1714. Da alle ihre Kinder frühzeitig gestorben waren, folgte ihr gemäß der Parlamentsakte von 1701 und 1707 der Hannoveraner George I., der Sohn der inzwischen verstorbenen Kurfürstin Sophie, einer Enkelin König James VI. (I.), auf den Thron. Die Jakobiten versuchten in mehreren Aufständen, die in den Jahren 1689, 1708, 1715, 1719 und 1745-46 ihren Anfang im schottischen Hochland nahmen, die Hannoveraner zu stürzen und die katholischen Nachfahren aus der zweiten Ehe des 1688 abgesetzten James VII. (II.) mit der streng katholischen Mary of Modena auf den britischen bzw. schottischen Thron zu setzen. Hand in Hand mit einer möglichen Rückkehr der Stuarts gab es auch Bestrebungen die 1707 vollzogene Union zwischen England und Schottland wieder aufzuheben. Die Jakobiten wurden militärisch von den Spaniern und besonders den Franzosen unterstützt.

²³ Nicht alle Clane im Hochland waren jakobitisch gesinnt. Etwa die Hälfte der Clane stand auf Seiten der Hannoveraner. Die Hannoveraner wurden vor allem von den Campbells of Argyll unterstützt, die Stuarts von den verschiedenen Familienzweigen der MacDonalds.

²⁴ Das Great Glen, auch Glen Mor oder Glen Albyn genannt, erstreckt sich entlang des Kaledonischen Grabens von Inverness im Osten nach Fort William im Westen.

Bergen waren enorm, aber das Militär verfügte einerseits über das technische Wissen und andererseits über die finanzielle und personelle Ausstattung, um dieses Mammutprojekt erfolgreich zu beenden.

Die Nutzung der Straßen blieb aber nicht dem Militär allein vorbehalten. Einige wenige besonders neugierige Reisende machten sich bald auf den Weg, die bis dahin abgeschlossene Welt des Hochlandes zu erkunden. Südlich des Great Glen konnten sie die Militärstraßen benutzen, das nordwestliche Hochland und die Hebriden blieben ihnen aber zunächst noch verschlossen. Entlang der Militärstraßen begann sich auch allmählich eine Infrastruktur für Reisende zu entwickeln. Aus den Militärstationen, die für die Versorgung der Straßenbaukolonnen errichtet worden waren, entwickelten sich primitive Gasthöfe, die, wenn sie auch noch keinen großen Komfort hatten, den Reisenden zumindest doch ein Dach über dem Kopf und etwas zu Essen anbieten konnten. In den Gebieten, die vom Straßenbau noch nicht erfasst waren, änderte sich zunächst wenig. Hier waren Reisende weiterhin auf den Schutz und die Gastfreundschaft der lokalen Adligen angewiesen und es empfahl sich, sich vor Reisebeginn mit Empfehlungsschreiben an die jeweiligen Grundbesitzer einzudecken.

Trotz der ständigen Präsenz des Militärs im Hochland, kam es im August 1745 zu einem weiteren Jakobitenaufstand, der große Teile von England und dem schottischen Tiefland in Panik versetzte und erst im April 1746 von den Regierungstruppen endgültig niedergeschlagen werden konnte.²⁵ Es folgte eine erneute Phase schwerer militärischer Repressionen für die Hochländer. Die gewaltsame Befriedung des Hochlandes und der Straßenbau wurden erneut forciert, diesmal auch über das Great Glen hinaus in das nordwestliche Hochland. Südlich des Great Glen wurde das Militärstraßennetz erheblich ausgebaut, im Norden ließ Major Caulfield, General Wades Nachfolger als Straßenbauer, von 1755 bis 1763 eine

²⁵ Es ist eine gewisse Ironie des Schicksals, dass im großen Jakobitenaufstand 1745-46 unter Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) gerade die von Wade gebauten Militärstraßen es den Aufständischen ermöglichten, schnell aus dem Hochland in das Tiefland vorzudringen und am 21. September 1745 die noch nicht voll einsatzbereiten Regierungstruppen bei Prestonpans in der Nähe von Edinburgh zu schlagen. Der Anfang November begonnene Einmarsch der Jakobiten nach England musste allerdings am 5. Dezember bei Derby abgebrochen werden. Die Jakobiten zogen sich anschließend auf der Flucht vor den Regierungstruppen immer weiter nach Norden zurück, bis sie am 16. April 1746 bei Culloden in der Nähe von Inverness vernichtend geschlagen wurden. Nach 1746 stellten die Jakobiten keine Bedrohung für das Haus Hannover mehr dar.

Straße von Fort Augustus zu den Bernera Barracks in Glenelg gegenüber der Isle of Skye bauen. Diese als *Road to the Isles* bekannt gewordene Straße wurde das Einfallstor zu den Hebriden. Die von ihm 1761 begonnene Straße von Contin nach Poolewe ist wohl nie auf ganzer Länge fertiggestellt worden und die gebauten Abschnitte verfielen rasch wieder, wie den Berichten zeitgenössischer Reisender zu entnehmen ist.

Wesentlich bedeutender als der militärische Straßenbau waren für die Entdeckung des schottischen Hochlandes jedoch die angeblichen Übersetzungen der alten gälischen Heldenepen des Ossian durch den jungen Schotten James Macpherson. 1760 publizierte Macpherson in Edinburgh seine *Fragments Of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* und löste einen wahren Sturm der Begeisterung aus.²⁶ Trotz der erheblichen Zweifel an der Echtheit der Texte rückten das schottische Hochland und seine Bewohner in den Mittelpunkt des Interesses. Die wilde und rauhe Berglandschaft des Hochlandes und das vermeintliche so einfache und unverdorbene Leben seiner Bewohner wurden zum Inbegriff der Romantik. Zeitgleich führte Edmund Burkes *Philosophical Enquiry Into The Origin of our Ideas Of The Sublime And Beautiful* (London, 1757) zu einer völlig neuen Wahrnehmung des Hochlandes. War es bisher üblich gewesen, das Hochland als eine endlose Aneinanderreihung wüster, nackter und scheußlicher Berge zu beschreiben, so begannen die Reisenden in den 1760iger Jahren, Gefallen an der wilden Landschaft des Hochlandes zu finden und sahen nun im raschen Wechsel von Bergen, Flüssen, Seen und Katarakten das pittoreske Landschaftsideal der herausziehenden Romantik. In diesem Prozess kam dem Reiseschriftsteller und Landschaftsmaler William Gilpin eine besondere Rolle zu. Er reiste 1776 entlang der Route der kleinen Hochlandtour und seine reichhaltig illustrierten *Observations, Relative Chiefly To Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, On several Parts of*

²⁶ Macpherson behauptete, seine „Übersetzungen“ der Heldenepen des blinden gälischen Bardens Ossian aus dem 3. Jahrhundert anhand von alten schriftlichen Originalen und mündlich überlieferten Gedichten angefertigt zu haben. Die Mehrheit der Gelehrten bezweifelte jedoch die Existenz der angeblichen schriftlichen Originale, die Macpherson trotz wiederholter Aufforderungen nie präsentieren konnte. Es folgte ein jahrzehntelanger, erbitterter literarischer Streit, der erst 1805 endgültig entschieden wurde, als die *Highland Society of Scotland* schlüssig belegen konnte, dass es sich bei den angeblichen Übersetzungen um eine Mischung aus Bruchstücken alter, mündlich überlieferter Gedichte und Macphersons eigenen Dichtungen handelte. Die sogenannte Ossian-Kontroverse war der größte literarische Skandal des 18. Jahrhunderts und berührte die europäische Literaturszene zutiefst.

Great Britain; Particularly The High-Lands of Scotland (London, 1789) stellten das Hochland und seine Naturschönheiten einem breiten Lesepublikum vor und machten den Norden Schottlands zu einem bevorzugten Reiseziel von Landschaftsmalern und Naturfreunden.

Der Wertewandel in der Romantik machte natürlich auch vor den Hochländern nicht Halt. Das Bild vom Hochländer wandelte sich binnen weniger Jahre von dem eines unzivilisierten Rebellen zu dem eines in Harmonie mit der Natur lebenden „edlen Wilden“ (*noble savage*). Dass keine der beiden Interpretationen das Leben im Hochland richtig traf, wird bei einem näheren Blick auf die tatsächlichen Lebensverhältnisse der Hochländer schnell deutlich. Entscheidend für die neue Sichtweise der Hochländer war natürlich auch, dass von ihnen nach den blutigen Repressionen durch die Regierung im Anschluss an den Jakobitenaufstand von 1745-46 keinerlei Gefahr mehr für den Rest des Landes ausging. Die Jakobiten waren enteignet, getötet, deportiert oder ins Exil gezwungen worden, das Tragen von Waffen und Hochlandkleidung war verboten und die richterliche Macht der Clanoberhäupter über ihre Vasallen gebrochen. Für die breite Masse der Hochländer verschlechterten sich die politischen und wirtschaftlichen Bedingungen nach 1746 dramatisch und ihre Lebensverhältnisse waren weit entfernt vom dem in der Romantik verbreiteten Ideal des Menschen im Naturzustand.

Die Hochlandbegeisterung der Romantik kannte jedoch keine Grenzen und löste einen wahren Besucheransturm aus. Der Norden Schottlands galt nun als sicher für Reisende und die Militärstraßen machten das Reisen leicht. Ab 1760 stieg die Zahl der Besucher stetig und auch die privaten Großgrundbesitzer begannen, Straßen und Gasthöfe auf ihren Ländereien zu bauen. Lag die Zahl der Schottlandreisenden für den Zeitraum vom Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zum großen Jakobitenaufstand von 1745-46 im Schnitt bei nur einem pro Jahr, und ging sie im darauf folgenden Jahrzehnt sogar noch zurück, so stieg sie in den 1760igern und 1770igern auf zwei bis drei und in den 1780igern und 1790igern auf fünf bis zehn pro Jahr.²⁷ Darüber hinaus rückte das noch in der ersten Hälfte des Jahrhunderts häufig gemiedene Hochland immer stärker in den Mittelpunkt einer Schottlandreise.

²⁷ Diese Zahlen beziehen sich nur auf diejenigen Reisenden, von denen ein Bericht ihrer Reise überliefert ist. Die tatsächliche Zahl der Schottlandbesucher dürfte um ein Vielfaches größer gewesen sein.

Der wohl bedeutendste und einflussreichste unter ihnen war der walisische Zoologe Thomas Pennant. Die Berichte seiner Touren durch das Hochland und die Hebriden in den Jahren 1769 und 1772 waren die ersten Reiseberichte, die auch wissenschaftlichen Ansprüchen genügten.²⁸ Seine aufwendig recherchierten und reichhaltig illustrierten Reiseerzählungen erreichten hohe Auflagen und wurden von Generationen von Reisenden als Reiseführer für Schottland benutzt. Bald entwickelten sich entlang der von Pennant beschriebenen Sehenswürdigkeiten und Naturschönheiten, wie z.B. Wasserfällen, Seen und Bergen, die kleine und große Hochlandtour.

Die kleine Hochlandtour dauerte mit der Kutsche oder zu Pferd etwa zehn Tage und umfasste Perth, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl, Kenmore, Loch Tay, Killin, Tyndrum, Dalmally, Inveraray, Loch Lomond und Dumbarton. Die große Hochlandtour dauerte etwa vier Wochen mit der Kutsche oder zu Pferd und begann gewöhnlich in Edinburgh. Reisende auf der großen Tour reisten entweder entlang der Ostküste nach Inverness, oder sie nahmen den direkten Weg über die alte von General Wade gebaute Militärstraße von Dunkeld nach Inverness. Von Inverness folgte man dem Great Glen Richtung Südwesten nach Fort William, von wo es über Oban oder den Devil's Staircase nach Dalmally, Inveraray, Loch Lomond, Dumbarton und Glasgow ging. Zu Fuß dauerte eine solche Reise wenigstens zwei bis drei Monate, wenn man gelegentliche Abstecher zu den Attraktionen abseits der Hauptverkehrsstraßen mit einrechnet. Das Reisen abseits der großen Straßen war allerdings nur zu Pferd oder zu Fuß möglich. Die Reisenden waren dann wieder auf Empfehlungsschreiben oder auf die viel gepriesene Gastfreundschaft der einfachen Hochländer angewiesen, da es abseits der großen Straßen noch keine Gasthöfe gab. Für Tagestouristen bot sich ein Ausflug in die Seen- und Berglandschaft der Trossachs an, die als erste Region Schottlands schon im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert touristisch voll erschlossen war. Der anfangs nur mäßige Komfort der Unterkünfte besserte sich auch schnell. Gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts war die überwiegende Mehrheit der Hochlandbesucher mit dem Zustand der Straßen und Gasthöfe recht zufrieden.

²⁸ Pennant reiste 1772 nur durch die Inneren Hebriden. Er hatte ursprünglich auch geplant, die Äußeren Hebriden zu besuchen, sah aber davon ab, als ihm mitgeteilt wurde, dass eine Fieberepidemie auf jenen Inseln wüten würde.

Die „Entdeckung“ der Hebriden erfolgte mit einer leichten zeitlichen Verzögerung. Hier leistete neben Thomas Pennant vor allem Dr. Samuel Johnsons ebenso berühmter wie umstrittener Reisebericht *Journey To The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1775) Pionierarbeit.²⁹ Kutschen konnten auf den Inseln nicht eingesetzt werden und die Reisenden mussten sich zu Fuß oder zu Schiff fortbewegen. Gasthöfe gab es nur auf den größeren Inseln, überall sonst waren die Reisenden auf Empfehlungsschreiben an die lokalen Adligen und Pfarrer oder aber auf die Gastfreundschaft der Einheimischen angewiesen. Wie die Hochländer so nahmen auch die einfachen Insulaner fremde Reisende stets gerne auf und boten sich ihnen unentgeltlich als Führer und Dolmetscher an. Innerhalb der Inneren Hebriden waren die Inseln Skye und Mull die bevorzugten Reiseziele, da sie verhältnismäßig einfach vom Festland aus zu erreichen waren. Eine besondere Anziehungskraft auf Besucher übten auch die kleinen Inseln Iona und Staffa mit ihrer berühmten Abtei und der Fingalshöhle aus. Sie lagen vor der Westküste der Insel Mull und waren von Oban (Argyll) und Tobermory (Mull) per Boot einfach zu erreichen. An diesen Touristenattraktionen zeigten sich auch die ersten negativen Erscheinungen des zunehmenden Tourismus. Schon 1800 war im Sommer in der Hafenstadt Oban manchmal kein Quartier mehr zu bekommen und die örtlichen Fährleute bildeten ein Kartell und verlangten überaus hohe Preise für das Übersetzen nach Mull oder Fahrten nach Iona. Die Bewohner von Iona hatten sich ebenfalls voll auf den Tourismus als Einnahmequelle eingestellt. Viele Reisende berichteten, dass die Insulaner sie sofort nach der Landung an der Küste angebettelt hätten oder auch ihre Kinder vorschickten, um den Besuchern den Kauf von Muscheln, Steinen und anderen Souvenirs aufzuschwatzen. In der Fingalshöhle von Staffa brachen die Ruderer den Besuchern Teile der berühmten Steinsäulen als Souvenirs ab und die Besucher feuerten ihrerseits Schüsse in die Decke, um das Echo zu hören.

²⁹ Dr. Samuel Johnson machte 1773 mit seinem schottischen Freund und späteren Biographen James Boswell eine gemeinsame Tour durch die Inneren Hebriden. Johnsons Reisebericht wurde wegen seiner abfälligen Äußerungen über die Schotten und vor allem über die gälische Kultur der Hochländer heftig kritisiert. James Boswell publizierte seinen eigenen Bericht der gemeinsamen Hebridenreise ein Jahr nach dem Tod Johnsons unter dem Titel *Journal Of A Tour To The Hebrides, With Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (London, 1785). Johnsons Reisebericht befasste sich mehr mit dem Land und seinen Leuten, wohingegen Boswell ein sehr persönliches Portrait seines Reisegefährten zeichnete.

Die Äußeren Hebriden waren immer noch schwer zu erreichen und wurden nur von wenigen Reisenden in den letzten Jahrzehnten des 18. Jahrhunderts besucht. Der absolute Höhepunkt einer Hebridenreise war jedoch ein Besuch auf St Kilda, einer 50 Meilen westlich von Harris im Ozean gelegenen kleinen Inselgruppe. Deren Bewohner lebten fast ausschließlich vom Vogelfang und galten in der Romantik wegen ihrer Isolation vom Rest der Menschheit als die letzten europäischen „Wilden“ oder das glücklichste noch im Naturzustand lebende Volk auf Erden.³⁰

Nachdem in den ersten beiden Teilen dieser Studie das Image Schottlands und das Reiseumfeld untersucht wurden, rücken im nun folgenden dritten Teil der Studie die konkreten Beobachtungen der Reisenden in den Mittelpunkt der Analyse. Anhand der Reiseberichte als Quellen werden unter Berücksichtigung der neueren Forschung zur Wirtschafts-, Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des Hochlandes vier Themenkomplexe untersucht: Diese sind im Einzelnen die Analyse des Clansystems als sozialer Grundlage der Hochlandgesellschaft, die Analyse der Wirtschaft im Hochland, die Analyse der sozioökonomischen Auswirkungen zweier neuer Industriezweige (der staatlich geförderte Heringsfang und die Kelpindustrie), und abschließend die Beschreibung der speziellen Sitten und Bräuche der Hochländer. Am Anfang steht die Analyse des Gesellschaftssystems im schottischen Hochland.

5. Das Clansystem

Das Leben in Clanen (Familienverbänden) unterschied die Hochländer von den anderen Gesellschaften Westeuropas. Das Clansystem und seine Auswirkungen auf das Leben im Hochland war eines der umstrittensten und am heftigsten diskutierten Themen in den Berichten der Hochlandbesucher. Dabei reichten die Kommentare der Reisenden je nach ihrer politischen Überzeugung von einer Gleichsetzung des Clansystems mit Aufruhr, Gesetzlosigkeit und Ausbeutung bis hin zu einer Verklärung der Clane als patriarchalische Großfamilien in der Romantik. Die Berichte über das Hochland aus mehreren Jahrhunderten zeigen dabei nicht nur wie

³⁰ Auch hier wird sich bei näherer Betrachtung noch zeigen, dass das Leben auf St Kilda gar nicht so paradiesisch war, wie es sich die von der Gefühlswelt der Romantik beeinflussten Besucher vorstellten.

das Zusammenspiel der verschiedenen Führungsebenen in den Clanen ursprünglich funktionierte, sondern auch wie sich die Machtverhältnisse innerhalb der Clane in den Jahrhunderten verschoben.

Die Entwicklung des Clansystems hatte ihre Ursprünge im politischen und sozialen Aufruhr des Hochmittelalters. Die Herausbildung von Clanen war nicht auf das schottische Hochland beschränkt. Im Tiefland, aber vor allem im Grenzland zu England und in Irland bestimmten Clane noch bis ins 16. Jahrhundert das Bild der Gesellschaft. Ebenso waren die Clane nicht ausschließlich keltisch, sondern schlossen auch im Hochmittelalter zugewanderte anglonormannische, flämische und nordisch-gälische Familienverbände mit ein. Ihre gesellschaftliche und kulturelle Blüte erlebten die Clane im schottischen Hochland. Aufgrund der geographischen Unzugänglichkeit waren das westliche Hochland und die Hebriden von fremden Einflüssen abgeschottet, so dass sich eine distinktive gälische Kultur entwickeln konnte, die ihren Höhepunkt in einer quasi unabhängigen Herrschaft, der *Lordship of the Isles*, fand. Allerdings machte die wachsende Macht des Königums im Spätmittelalter auch vor dem westlichen Hochland nicht halt. Im 15. Jahrhundert verschob sich das Machtgefüge allmählich zugunsten des Königs. 1493 brachte James IV. das westliche Hochland und die Hebriden unter seine Kontrolle und löste die Vorherrschaft des vom Clan MacDonald gestellten *Lord of the Isles* formell auf. Die Auflösung der *Lordship of the Isles* beendete die Vorherrschaft der MacDonalds an der Westküste und leitete auch einen allmählichen Machtverfall der Clanoberhäupter gegenüber dem König und seiner Regierung ein. Im späten 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert erhöhte James VI. (I.) den militärischen und finanziellen Druck auf die Clane im westlichen Hochland nochmals. Die *Statutes of Iona* (1609) schränkten das militärische Aufgebot der Clanoberhäupter ein und leiteten darüber hinaus eine Reihe von Maßnahmen ein, deren Ziel es war, den internen Zusammenhalt der einzelnen Clane zu schwächen. Diese Maßnahmen verboten z.B. die Auftritte gälischer Barden und schränkten das exzessive Essen und Trinken auf Clanzusammenkünften ein. Als besonders wirksam erwies sich die Auflage, dass die

Claneliten ihre Söhne künftig zur Erziehung und Ausbildung ins Tiefland schicken mussten.³¹

Die schweren Kämpfe im Hochland während des schottischen Bürgerkrieges (1644-47) und die anschließende Besetzung durch Cromwells Truppen zwangen die Clanoberhäupter auf die Bühne der großen Politik. Pangälische Politik rückte endgültig in den Hintergrund und die Clanoberhäupter mussten sich zunächst für eine Unterstützung des Königs oder der *Covenanters* entscheiden.³² Dabei fanden die Clane keine einheitliche Position und es folgte ein blutiger Bürgerkrieg im Hochland zwischen James Graham (5. Graf von Montrose, später 1. Marquis von Montrose), Alasdair MacColla und einigen Familienzweigen der MacDonalds auf der königlichen Seite und den die *Covenanters* unterstützenden Clanen Campbell, Munro und Ross. Die Hinrichtung von Charles I. 1649 und die gemeinsame Unterstützung sowohl der *Covenanters* als auch der *Royalists* für seinen Sohn Charles II. führte zum Bruch zwischen England und Schottland und zum Einmarsch Cromwells in Schottland. Der Widerstand im Hochland 1653-54 gegen die Besetzung durch

³¹ Die gälischen Barden waren innerhalb der Clane hoch angesehen, da sie in ihren Vorträgen den Glauben an den gemeinsamen Urahnen aller Angehörigen eines Clans pflegten. *A'Chlann* bedeutet im Gälischen wörtlich „die Kinder“. So stärkten die Barden das Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl zwischen den einfachen Clanangehörigen und der sie beherrschenden Clanelite. Die Clanelite (gälisch *Fine*) zeigte im Gegenzug ihre Fürsorge für ihre Vasallen, z.B. durch große Feste, auf denen sie ihre Vasallen ausgiebig bewirteten. Diese Feste dienten sowohl der Förderung des internen Clanzusammenhaltes als auch der Zurschaustellung der Macht nach außen zur Beeindruckung und Abschreckung rivalisierender Clane. Die Erziehung der Söhne der Clanelite fand ursprünglich im Clan selber statt. So wurden z.B. die Söhne der Elite für ein paar Jahre in die Obhut besonders vertrauenswürdiger Pflegeeltern aus dem Vasallenstand gegeben, die sich durch diese Auszeichnung sehr geehrt fühlten. Durch die *Statutes of Iona* wurde ein Keil zwischen die Clanelite und die einfachen Clanangehörigen getrieben. Die Söhne der Clanelite wurden nun im Tiefland in einer Sprache (Englisch) erzogen, die von ihren Vasallen im Hochland nicht verstanden wurde. So kam es zu einer von der Regierung gewollten kulturellen Entfremdung der Clanelite und ihren Vasallen. Offiziell diente die Erziehung der Söhne der Claneliten im Tiefland der „Zivilisierung“ der Clane; man kann diese Auflage aber auch als einen staatlichen Akt politischer und kultureller Geiselnahme betrachten, mit dem sich die Regierung die Kontrolle über die Claneliten an der Westküste sichern wollte.

³² Im *National Covenant* von 1638 hatten sich Teile des schottischen Adels, der Klerus und das Bürgertum zu einem religiös-politischen Bund zusammengeschlossen, der im Namen der Reinheit des Evangeliums alle religiösen Änderungen ablehnte, die nicht durch die freie Versammlung der *Church of Scotland* bestätigt worden waren. Ein Anlass zu diesem Bund war der im Jahr zuvor gescheiterte Versuch Charles I., in Schottland ein neues *Book of Common Prayer* einzuführen, das den Gottesdienst der *Church of Scotland* dem der *Church of England* angleichen sollte. Die tiefer liegenden Ursachen waren die wiederholten Versuche Charles I. mittels der wenigen schottischen Bischöfe, welche auch wichtige Regierungsämter bekleideten, seine Macht in Schottland in Richtung einer absoluten Herrschaft auszubauen. Ebenso versuchte er ein königliches Prärogativ gegenüber der *Church of Scotland* durchzusetzen. Hierdurch sahen sich vor allem das schottische Parlament und die presbyterianisch verfasste *Church of Scotland* gefährdet, deren Zustimmung Änderungen in der Kirchenverfassung und in der Liturgie bedurft hätten.

Cromwells Truppen führte dazu, dass die Clane im allgemeinen mit der Partei des Königs und später mit dem Haus Stuart assoziiert wurden.³³

Der wachsende Druck auf die Clane im späten 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert spiegelte sich auch in den zeitgenössischen Publikationen wider. Der englische Geograph William Camden fällt in seiner *Britannia* (1. Aufl. London, 1586) ein vernichtendes Urteil über die Clane. Er behauptete, dass einzig die Lebensweise der Hochländer in Clanen für ihre unvorstellbare Grausamkeit, ihre Morde und Raubzüge verantwortlich sei. Deshalb, so führte Camden fort, wäre es notwendig gewesen, dass das Parlament ein Gesetz erließ, in dem jeder Clanangehörige für die Verbrechen eines anderen Angehörigen seines Clans zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden könne.³⁴ In einem so geachteten und einflussreichen Werk wie Camdens *Britannia*, auf das bereits eingegangen wurde, hatte die Gleichsetzung der Clane mit Gesetzlosigkeit einen verheerenden Einfluss auf deren Image. Nahezu alle bis ins frühe 18. Jahrhundert veröffentlichten Berichte über das Hochland paraphrasierten Camdens vernichtendes Urteil über die Clane, auch wenn es zu der Zeit bereits stark veraltet war. In den Augen der meisten Reisenden waren die Clanoberhäupter für die vermeintlich gesetzlosen Zustände im Hochland verantwortlich. Wegen ihrer uneingeschränkten Macht konnten sie ihre Vasallen zu den abscheulichsten Verbrechen zwingen, ohne dass sich jene der Willkür ihrer Oberhäupter widersetzen konnten. Die Kommentare von Daniel Defoe, der sich Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts als Spion der englischen Unionisten in Schottland aufhielt, zeigen sehr deutlich, welche Bedeutung die politischen Ansichten bei der Beurteilung des Clansystems spielten. Er schrieb, dass im nordwestlichen Hochland die Clanoberhäupter noch wie kleine Könige regieren würden und uneingeschränkte Macht über ihre Vasallen ausübten. Letztere würden oft keinen anderen Souverän als ihr Clanoberhaupt kennen. Dagegen hätten die Clane im zentralen Hochland (Breadalbane, Atholl, Lochaber) schon viel von ihrer einstigen Barbarei verloren und wären wegen der

³³ Eine Analyse der turbulenten Kriegszeit von 1638 bis zur Restauration 1660 und der wechselnden politischen Allianzen sowie deren Auswirkungen auf das Hochland findet sich in A.I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton, 1996), S. 88-121.

³⁴ Siehe W. Camden, *Britain, Or A Chorographicall Description Of The Most flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands adioyning* (London, 1610), Teil II, S. 39-40. Dieses Gesetz des schottischen Parlamentes vom 29. November 1581 machte die Clanoberhäupter dafür verantwortlich, dass alle auf ihrem Grundbesitz lebenden Vasallen sich an die Gesetze hielten. Für die Regierung war dieses Gesetz eine *carte blanche*, die Angehörigen missliebiger Clane zu verfolgen.

anständigen Führung ihrer Oberhäupter im Vergleich zu Camdens Zeit sehr viel zivilisierter geworden. Die größten Fortschritte in Richtung Zivilisation hätten aber die Clane in Argyll gemacht. Der Herzog von Argyll, Oberhaupt des Clan Campbell, sei sehr viel liberaler als die Oberhäupter im Norden. Deshalb würden sich auch seine Vasallen viel weniger zu Untaten und Gewalt hinreißen lassen als die unaufgeklärten und unmündigen Hochländer im Norden.³⁵

Die politische Botschaft dieser Kommentare über das Clansystem war eindeutig. Defoe wollte wie seine Whig-Auftraggeber in London, dass die politische und richterliche Gewalt der Clanoberhäupter über ihre Vasallen gebrochen wird, so dass letztere aus der vermeintlichen Unmündigkeit und Unterdrückung ihrer Herren befreit werden könnten.³⁶ Mit dieser Ansicht spiegelte Defoe klar die zeitgenössische Whig-Propaganda wider.

Tatsächlich aber muss Defoes Schilderung einer solch einseitigen Unterdrückung der Vasallen durch die Clanoberhäupter wohl stark relativiert werden. Martin Martin³⁷, der selbst von der Hebriden-Insel Skye stammte, reiste in den 1680igern und 1690igern überall durch die Hebriden und das westliche Hochland, also die Region, in der das Clansystem und die gälische Kultur ihre stärkste Ausprägung hatten. Obwohl die Blütezeit der Clane zu seiner Zeit schon

³⁵ Siehe Defoe, *Tour*, Bd. III, S. 202, 220, 224-225. Der von Defoe als so liberal und fortschrittlich gepriesene Herzog von Argyll war natürlich der wichtigste Whig-Verbündete der Hannoveraner im Hochland.

³⁶ Nach der Niederschlagung des Jakobitenaufstandes von 1745-46 wurde im Jahr 1747 die richterliche Gewalt (*heritable jurisdictions*) der Clanoberhäupter über ihre Vasallen aufgehoben, damit sie diese in Zukunft nicht mehr zur Teilnahme an Aufständen verleiten konnten. Die Jakobiten wurden enteignet und die 146 schottischen Adligen, die sich während des Aufstandes loyal zur Krone verhalten hatten, wurden mit insgesamt £493.000 Sterling für den Verlust ihrer erblichen Gerichtsbarkeit entschädigt. Der Herzog von Argyll, der führende Repräsentant der Krone im Hochland, erhielt allein £25.000 Sterling.

³⁷ Martin Martin ist eine der bedeutendsten und zuverlässigsten Quellen über das Leben auf den Hebriden im späten 17. Jahrhundert. Er wurde zwischen 1655 und 1660 auf der Hebriden-Insel Skye geboren. Er stammte aus dem niederen Clanadel und wurde gemäß der *Statutes of Iona* zur Ausbildung an die Universität von Edinburgh geschickt. Nach Abschluss seines Studiums 1681 war er von 1681 bis 1686 Tutor von Domhnall a'Chogaidh und von 1686 bis 1695 von Ruairidh Òg MacLeod of Harris. Im Auftrag der *Royal Society of London* reiste Martin in den 1680igern und 1690igern ausgiebig durch die Hebriden. Er veröffentlichte den Bericht seiner Reisen unter dem Titel *A Description Of The Western Islands Of Scotland* (London, 1703). Als Angehöriger des Clanadels und Muttersprachler war Martin mit den Lebensumständen auf den Hebriden und der gälischen Kultur ihrer Bewohner bestens vertraut. Im Juni 1697 verbrachte er drei Wochen auf der Insel St Kilda und publizierte ein Jahr später den ersten detaillierten Bericht über das Leben auf dieser besonders entlegenen Insel. Siehe auch Kapitel 6.4. Martin studierte später Medizin in Leiden und praktizierte als Arzt in Middlesex. Er starb 1718. Für weitere Informationen siehe die Kurzbiographie von Martin im Anhang Nr. 1 der englischen Studie.

überschritten war, gibt sein Bericht über das Leben auf den Hebriden doch einen sehr guten Eindruck vom Verhältnis der Clanoberen zu ihren Vasallen. Martin zeichnete ein sehr viel differenzierteres Bild vom Leben in einem Clan als Defoe und betonte sehr viel stärker die gegenseitigen Abhängigkeiten, die zwischen den Clanoberen und ihren Vasallen bestanden. Das Clanoberhaupt war der alleinige Eigentümer des Bodens auf dem der Clan siedelte. Dieses Eigentumsrecht hatte sich im Laufe der Jahrhunderte aus einer Art von Treuhänderschaft über den Boden entwickelt, in der das Clanoberhaupt den Boden für seinen Clan verteidigte und verwaltete und aus der sich für ihn die Verpflichtung ergab, alle Clanangehörigen mit einem Stück Boden zum Lebensunterhalt zu versehen. Die militärische Stärke eines Clans hing von der Zahl seiner wehrfähigen Angehörigen ab und das Clanoberhaupt war deshalb bestrebt, möglichst vielen Vasallen ein Stück Boden zum Ackerbau und zur Viehzucht zur Verfügung zu stellen. Die Vasallen waren dem Clanoberhaupt zu absolutem Gehorsam verpflichtet, dafür war dieser verpflichtet, das Leben und den Besitz seiner Vasallen zu schützen. Als Mittelsmänner zwischen dem Clanoberhaupt und den einfachen Vasallen dienten die sogenannten *tacksmen*. Diese waren nahe Verwandte des Clanoberhauptes, sie standen den einzelnen Hochlanddörfern vor, verteilten das Ackerland und die Weideflächen an die einfachen Gefolgsleute, zogen die Pachten und Abgaben für den Haushalt des Clanoberhauptes ein und dienten diesem im Kriegsfall als Offiziere in seinem militärischen Gefolge. Martin betonte ausdrücklich die gegenseitigen Verpflichtungen zwischen dem Clanoberhaupt und seinen Vasallen und gab auch konkrete Beispiele für dessen Schutzfunktion. Verlor ein einfacher Bauer sein Vieh durch einen Unfall, so ersetzte ihm das Clanoberhaupt seine Tiere, damit er eine neue Herde aufbauen konnte. Verlor ein Vasall durch Unwetter, wie z.B. Überschwemmungen, sein Ackerland oder die Ernte, so erließ das Clanoberhaupt ihm die Abgaben und Pacht. Starb ein Vasall, so suchte das Clanoberhaupt auf Wunsch der Witwe einen neuen Mann, damit der Hof weitergeführt werden konnte. Wenn Vasallen zu alt oder gebrechlich waren, um ihren Hof fortzuführen, so nahm das Clanoberhaupt sie in seine Burg und ließ sie in seinem Haushalt ihren Lebensabend verbringen.³⁸ Zudem diente das Clanoberhaupt

³⁸ Diese Beispiele Martin Martins bezogen sich auf den Haushalt von MacNeill of Barra, der durchaus als repräsentativ für die Verhältnisse auf den Hebriden im ausgehenden 17. Jahrhundert gelten kann.

seinem Clan als Richter und entschied alle Streitigkeiten zwischen seinen Vasallen. Darüber hinaus musste ein neues Clanoberhaupt zunächst auch seine Eignung zur Führung des Clans nachweisen. Dazu sei es früher üblich gewesen, so erklärte Martin, dass das zukünftige Clanoberhaupt an der Spitze einiger seiner Vasallen einen rituellen Raubzug auf das Vieh eines rivalisierenden Clans leiten würde. Diese Tradition, so schränkte Martin ein, würde allerdings seit etwa 50 Jahren nicht mehr praktiziert. Es ist somit falsch von einer einseitigen Abhängigkeit der Vasallen von ihrem Clanoberhaupt zu sprechen, allerdings begannen im späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert die Clanoberen ihre Verpflichtungen gegenüber ihren Vasallen zunehmend zu vernachlässigen.

Mit der Assimilation der Hochlandelite an den englischen Adel begannen die Clanoberen ihre Zeit zunehmend am Hof in London zu verbringen. Die doppelte Haushaltsführung führte zu steigenden Kosten und, um ihre Einnahmen zu verbessern, deshalb erhöhten die Claneliten den Abgabendruck auf ihre Vasallen. Darüber hinaus wurden die Einnahmen zumeist am Hof in der Hauptstadt ausgegeben und flossen nicht wieder in die Hochlandgüter zurück. Die Clanoberen hielten sich immer weniger auf ihren Gütern auf und vernachlässigten ihre Pflichten gegenüber ihren Vasallen, die sie zunehmend als reine Einnahmequelle betrachteten. Edmund Burt beobachtete z.B. in den 1720er Jahren, dass es einem Clanoberhaupt in Anwesenheit eines englischen Adligen sehr peinlich war, die Ergebenheitsbekundungen seiner Vasallen entgegenzunehmen. Demonstrativ wies er seine ärmlichen und zerlumpten Clansmänner zurück, um sein Gesicht nicht vor seinem englischen Standesgenossen zu verlieren.

Doch es gab noch deutlichere Anzeichen, wie die Clanoberen und die *tacksmen* sich vor ihren Pflichten gegenüber ihren Vasallen drückten. Bis in das 17. Jahrhundert war es üblich, dass sie ihre Söhne für ein paar Jahre zur Erziehung an einen besonders vertrauenswürdigen Vasallen gaben. Gleichzeitig gaben sie ihm auch eine bestimmte Stückzahl Vieh mit, um ihn für seine Ausgaben zu entschädigen. Diese Tradition verfiel im 18. Jahrhundert zunehmend und es gibt Berichte von den Äußeren Hebriden gegen Ende des Jahrhunderts, in denen davon die Rede ist, dass die *tacksmen* ihre Söhne zwar noch in die Pflege gaben, aber die

Pflegeeltern dafür nicht mehr entlohnten und sie stattdessen sogar schamlos ausbeuteten.³⁹

In der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts zerbrachen die Clanstrukturen unter den sich rasch wandelnden wirtschaftlichen Verhältnissen im Hochland. Das Hochland war mittlerweile gewaltsam befriedet und die Clanoberhäupter hatten kein Interesse mehr daran, dass möglichst viele Vasallen als bewaffneter Anhang auf ihrem Grundbesitz lebten. Das Land wurde nun nicht mehr aufgrund verwandtschaftlicher oder militärischer Loyalitäten vergeben, sondern musste wie jedes andere Kapital Gewinne abwerfen. Das war allerdings mit der bisherigen Unterteilung und Weiterverpachtung des Bodens an die Vasallen als Kleinbauern nicht zu erreichen. Ausgehend von den Gütern des Herzogs von Argyll wurden Ländereien nun großflächig zusammengelegt und meistbietend verpachtet. Dabei waren die höchsten Gewinne mit der Schafzucht zu erzielen und als Ergebnis mussten zuerst die *tacksmen*, deren Dienste als Mittelsmänner und Offiziere nicht mehr gebraucht wurden, sowie anschließend die Kleinbauern den neu eingeführten, leistungsfähigeren englischen Schafrassen weichen. Auswanderung und Vertreibung (*clearances*) gehörten ab der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts zum Alltag im Hochland. Es überrascht daher nicht, dass die überwiegende Zahl der Reisenden ein sehr negatives Bild vom Clansystem und der als Tyrannei empfundenen Herrschaft der Clanoberhäupter als alleinige Eigentümer des Bodens zeichnete.⁴⁰ Die Hochlandreisenden in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts wurden häufig mit dem Elend der Kleinbauern konfrontiert und beklagten, dass die Clanoberhäupter

³⁹ Solche Vorwürfe wurden vor allem von John Lanne Buchanan erhoben, der von 1782 bis 1790 als Missionar der *Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SSPCK)* auf den Äußeren Hebriden eingesetzt war. Seine Vorwürfe gegen die Ausbeutung der Vasallen durch die *tacksmen* sind allerdings mit Vorsicht zu verwenden, da er aufgrund schwerer persönlicher Verfehlungen in Konflikt mit der Kirche und den örtlichen Grundbesitzern geriet. Zusätzlich nahm Buchanans Verleger vom Autor nicht autorisierte Änderungen am Text vor. Für nähere Details siehe Buchanans Kurzbiographie im Anhang Nr. 1 und Fußnote 75 in Kapitel 5 der englischen Version.

⁴⁰ In diesem Zusammenhang sind die Kommentare des Verlegers oder Übersetzers (Eobald Toze) in der 1760 erschienenen deutschen Ausgabe von Burts *Letters* besonders aufschlussreich. Im Vorwort wird von der übergroßen Machtfülle und der Tyrannei der Clanoberhäupter über ihre Vasallen gesprochen, durch welche letztere von ihren Oberen immer wieder zu Aufständen gegen die Regierung gezwungen worden wären. Diese Zusätze des deutschen Verlegers oder Übersetzers, der das Hochland wohl kaum aus eigener Erfahrung kannte, gingen weit über den von Burt vermittelten Eindruck vom Clansystem hinaus und zeigen, wie negativ das Clansystem zu der Zeit auch auf dem Kontinent bewertet wurde. Siehe E. Burt, *Schottländische Briefe, oder merkwürdige Nachrichten von Schottland, und besonders von dem Schottischen Hochlande, und den Sitten, Gewohnheiten und der Lebensart der Hochländer oder Bergschotten* (ohne Ort, 1760), Sig. *3 v. – Sig. *4 v.

zwar zurecht die Gerichtsbarkeit über ihre Vasallen verloren hätten, sie aber dennoch weiterhin wie Tyrannen über ihre Clanangehörigen herrschen könnten. Der oft vermittelte Eindruck vom Clansystem als einer absoluten Herrschaft oder Tyrannei wurde natürlich auch dadurch bedingt, dass fast alle Hochlandbesucher aus Ländern kamen, in denen im Zuge der Aufklärung die Leibeigenschaft abgeschafft worden war und sich vergleichsweise liberale Regierungsformen durchgesetzt hatten, an denen auch das Besitzbürgertum beteiligt war. Letzteres galt vor allem für Besucher aus England, deren Kritik an der Macht der Clanoberhäupter oftmals besonders hart ausfiel. Die meisten Hochlandreisenden waren der Ansicht, dass sich die Verarmung großer Teile der Hochlandbevölkerung nur dadurch aufhalten ließe, dass man den Kleinbauern ausreichende Parzellen zu günstigen Konditionen und langen Pachtzeiten geben würde, so dass sie Rechtssicherheit für ihre Äcker und Häuser hätten und sich Investitionen in Boden, landwirtschaftliche Geräte und Häuser lohnen würden. Dabei wurde oftmals auf die Reform der Landwirtschaft in Dänemark verwiesen. Dort wurden die Kleinbauern vom Staat geschützt, der ihnen eine Mindestgröße ihrer Pachthöfe von vier bis sechs Hektar und eine lange Laufzeit ihrer Pachtverträge garantierte. Manche Clanoberhäupter und Großgrundbesitzer gaben auf freiwilliger Basis gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts ihren noch verbliebenen Unterpächtern langfristige Pachtverträge mit 19, 38 oder gar 57 Jahren. Im allgemeinen war es den Clanoberhäuptern und Großgrundbesitzern im Hochland aber freigestellt, ihre Clanangehörigen oder Pächter über die Laufzeiten und die Höhe der Pacht in totaler Abhängigkeit zu halten, ohne dass die britische Regierung gegen diese Willkür der Grundbesitzer einschritt.

Mit dem einsetzenden Hochlandkult im frühen 19. Jahrhundert wurden die Clane zum Synonym für ganz Schottland. Unter dem Eindruck der historischen Romane Sir Walter Scotts wurden sie nun zu patriarchalischen Großfamilien verklärt. Der von Scott organisierte Besuch des britischen Königs George IV. in Edinburgh 1822 zeigte den Wertewandel gegenüber dem Hochland sehr deutlich. Der Monarch besuchte Edinburgh in voller Hochlandkleidung (Royal Stewart Tartan), wurde von Dudelsackpfeifern empfangen und anschließend wurde ihm als „Chief of the Chiefs“ gehuldigt. Die einst verachteten und nach 1746 sogar zeitweilig verbotenen Symbole der Hochländer, wie z.B. ihre Kleidung und der Dudelsack,

repräsentierten jetzt die schottische Nation als Ganzes anstelle eines vormals als gesetzlos und rückständig betrachteten Landesteils. Der Bau der königlichen Sommerresidenz Balmoral am River Dee (Aberdeenshire) und der regelmäßige Besuch der *Braemar Highland Gatherings* durch Königin Victoria und ihren Ehemann Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha heizten den Hochlandkult zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts weiter an.⁴¹

Dem schon im späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert begonnenen Zerfall der Clane von oben herab wurde keine Beachtung geschenkt, stattdessen wurde die Opferbereitschaft der Vasallen für ihre Clanoberen und für die exilierten Stuarts in den Vordergrund gestellt. Die Massenverelendung vieler Hochländer wurde nun ganz im Sinne der Romantik und der Vorstellung von dem von der Zivilisation unverdorbenen „edlen Wilden“ als eine einfache, bescheidene und natürliche Lebensweise interpretiert. So entstand in der Romantik und im 19. Jahrhundert ein verfälschter Eindruck von den Clanen als patriarchalische Großfamilien und glühende Jakobiten, der noch bis heute das Bild von Schottland prägt.⁴²

6. Die Wirtschaft im Hochland

Das vorangegangene Kapitel hat bereits gezeigt, in welcher wechselseitigen Beeinflussung das Clansystem und die Landwirtschaft im Hochland standen. Die Aufteilung des wenigen Ackerbodens unter möglichst vielen Vasallen und die daraus resultierende Zersplitterung der Ackerflächen hatten natürlich große Auswirkungen auf die Landwirtschaft. Auch die wirtschaftlichen Veränderungen, wie z.B. die extensive Einführung neuer Schafrassen in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, hatten ihrerseits gravierende Auswirkungen auf die Bevölkerungsentwicklung und die Siedlungsstruktur. – Dieses Kapitel analysiert die Wirtschaft im Hochland, die

⁴¹ Vorbild für den Bau von Schloss Balmoral war Sir Walter Scotts Residenz Abbotsford in den Borders.

⁴² Theodor Fontane, der 1858 auf den Spuren von Sir Walter Scott durch das schottische Hochland reiste, war ein typischer Vertreter des vom Hochlandkult verklärten Schottlandbildes. Er schrieb, dass sich die Clane im großen Jakobitenaufstand 1745-46 fast ausnahmslos um Bonnie Prince Charlie gesammelt hätten und dass ganz Schottland beim Einzug der Jakobiten in Edinburgh in Jubel und Begeisterung ausgebrochen wäre. Siehe T. Fontane, *Wanderungen durch England und Schottland* (Berlin, 1991), Bd. II, S. 14-15, 212. Tatsache war, dass sich selbst im Hochland weniger als die Hälfte der Clane Bonnie Prince Charlie angeschlossen haben und dass es im Tiefland keinen Jubel und keine Begeisterung, geschweige denn nennenswerte Unterstützung, für die Jakobiten gab.

Veränderungen denen sie im 17. und vor allem im 18. Jahrhundert unterworfen wurde sowie deren sozioökonomischen Auswirkungen.

Auch hier kommt dem Reisebericht als Quellengattung eine besondere Bedeutung zu. Das Leben im schottischen Hochland war durch eine mündliche Überlieferung geprägt und viele landwirtschaftliche Arbeitsmethoden gerieten mit der Entvölkerung des Hochlandes im 19. Jahrhundert zunehmend in Vergessenheit. Fremde Besucher zeigten dagegen großes Interesse an den traditionellen Geräten und Techniken der Hochländer. Sie fertigten detaillierte Beschreibungen der auf sie oftmals fremdartig und antiquiert wirkenden Geräte und Arbeitsmethoden an, aus denen sich heute ein genaues und auch die regionalen Unterschiede widerspiegelndes Bild von der Landwirtschaft rekonstruieren lässt. Der Wert des Reiseberichtes als historischer Quelle zur landwirtschaftlichen Entwicklung wird noch dadurch gesteigert, dass viele Reisende selbst aus der Landwirtschaft kamen und deshalb die beobachteten Arbeitsprozesse nicht nur sehr fachkundig schildern, sondern sie auch mit den ihnen von zu Hause vertrauten Methoden vergleichen konnten.⁴³ Die aus den Reiseberichten gewonnenen Erkenntnisse erlauben deshalb nicht nur eine exakte Analyse der Leistungsfähigkeit der Landwirtschaft und Wirtschaft im Hochland, sondern auch ihre Einordnung im Vergleich zu anderen europäischen Ländern.

6.1. Ackerbau

Das schottische Hochland ist bis heute ein von der Landwirtschaft und Viehzucht geprägter Raum. Die Hochländer lebten bis ins späte 20. Jahrhundert fast ausschließlich von Landwirtschaft und Viehzucht und hatten über die Jahrhunderte ganz spezielle Geräte und Anbaumethoden entwickelt, die den schwierigen Bodenverhältnissen optimal angepasst waren. Diese speziell der Natur angepasste Landwirtschaft wirkte auf ausländische Besucher oftmals sehr fremd und dementsprechend detailliert sind die Beobachtungen und Aufzeichnungen in den Reiseberichten. Darüber hinaus waren im Zeitalter enormer landwirtschaftlicher Fortschritte viele Reisende speziell mit dem Ziel nach Schottland gekommen,

⁴³ Siehe vor allem die Berichte von James Anderson, Matthew und George Culley, James Hogg, Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld und James Robertson.

Informationen über die dortige Landwirtschaft zu sammeln und wenn nötig den vermeintlich rückständigen Hochländern bei der Modernisierung ihrer Produktion zu helfen.⁴⁴

Die für Ackerbau geeigneten Flächen in den Hochlandtälern und entlang der Küsten waren äußerst begrenzt. Dementsprechend stark war der Bevölkerungsdruck und deshalb wurde, um niemanden zu benachteiligen, das Ackerland unter den einfachen Clanangehörigen regelmäßig neu verteilt. Die *tacksmen* verteilten das Land an größere Pächter (*tenants*), die aber nur einen kleinen Teil des Ackerlandes für ihren eigenen Bedarf behielten und den Rest des Landes an kleine Unterpächter (*subtenants*) und Landarbeiter (*cottars*) weitergaben.⁴⁵ Die kleinen Unterpächter und Landarbeiter waren ihrem *tacksman* oder Verpächter dafür zu Frondiensten, z.B. während der Aussaat, der Ernte oder beim Torfstechen, verpflichtet. Die Weideflächen waren nicht eingezäunt und wurden von allen Dorfbewohnern gemeinsam genutzt. Jeder Pächter durfte gemäß seinem sozialen Status eine bestimmte Anzahl Rinder und Schafe halten. Auch hier gibt es keine verbindlichen Zahlen, aber ein kleiner Unterpächter durfte im Schnitt vier bis fünf Kühe und 15 bis 20 Schafe auf den Berghängen grasen lassen. Um keinen der Unterpächter bei der Landvergabe zu benachteiligen, wurden die ihnen zugewiesenen Parzellen regelmäßig neu verteilt. Dieses System funktionierte solange, wie die Clanoberhäupter auf einen großen bewaffneten Anhang angewiesen waren und deshalb möglichst viele Clanangehörige bei der Landvergabe berücksichtigen mussten. Allerdings hatte dieses System zwei gravierende wirtschaftliche Nachteile, die von Reisenden immer wieder auf das Schärfste angeprangert wurden. Zum einen kam es durch den steigenden Bevölkerungsdruck zu einer immer stärkeren Parzellierung des Bodens bis hin zu ökonomisch völlig unwirtschaftlichen Kleinstflächen, zum anderen verhinderte die regelmäßige Neuzuteilung des Landes, dass die Unterpächter in den Boden investierten. Der Bau von Einfriedungen oder

⁴⁴ Siehe vor allem die sehr ausführlichen Berichte der Brüder Matthew und George Culley, die zeitweilig auf bis zu neun großen Höfen in Nordengland innovativen Ackerbau und Viehzucht betrieben. Die Culleys reisten durch Schottland in den Jahren 1770, 1771, 1775 und 1794. Der französische Aristokrat Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld und sein franko-polnischer Tutor Maximilien Lazowski reisten 1786 auf Anraten des berühmten englischen Agrarökonomen Arthur Young ausgiebig durch ganz Schottland, um sich über die dortige Landwirtschaft zu informieren.

⁴⁵ Die Grenze zwischen einem *tacksman* und einem großen Verpächter war fließend. Die kleinen Unterpächter und die Landarbeiter stellten etwa 80 Prozent der Bevölkerung im Hochland.

Maßnahmen zur Bodenverbesserung, wie z.B. der Einsatz von Mergel oder Kalk als Dünger, lohnten sich nicht, weil die Kleinbauern wegen der Neuverteilung des Bodens die Früchte ihrer Investitionen nicht genießen konnten. Ebenso fehlten den Kleinbauern die finanziellen Ressourcen, um in bessere landwirtschaftliche Geräte, wie z.B. Pflüge oder Eggen, zu investieren. Im Vergleich zu England und dem schottischen Tiefland, wo die Landwirtschaft im 18. Jahrhundert enorme Fortschritte gemacht hat, blieb das Hochland stark rückständig.

Im Hochland wurden vor allem Hafer, Gerste und Roggen angebaut. Für den Anbau von Weizen waren der Boden und das Klima nicht geeignet. Im Allgemeinen wurde der Boden mit dem *cascrom*, einem gekrümmten Spaten aus Holz, umgegraben.⁴⁶ Pflüge konnten normalerweise nicht eingesetzt werden, weil die Böden oftmals sehr uneben und mit großen Steinen und Felsbrocken durchsetzt waren. An den wenigen Stellen, wo sich der Einsatz eines Pfluges dennoch lohnte, wurde vor dem eigentlichen Pflug noch ein kleinerer Pflug (*ristle*) vorweg eingesetzt, um im Boden verborgene Wurzeln zu durchtrennen und die Ackerkrume für den eigentlichen Pflug zu öffnen. Die wenigen Pflüge im Hochland waren – wie die meisten anderen Ackerbaugeräte im Hochland – aus Holz.⁴⁷ Erst spät wurden Pflugscharen aus Eisen und mit Eisen beschlagene Krummspaten eingesetzt. Das Umgraben des Bodens mit dem Spaten war zwar wesentlich zeitaufwendiger als Pflügen, allerdings berichteten alle Hochlandbesucher, dass mit dem Spaten bearbeitete Böden wegen der besseren Durcharbeitung deutlich höhere Erträge bringen würden. Als Dünger wurden vor allem der Mist vom Vieh und in Küstennähe Seegrass verwendet. Obwohl Kalk im Hochland vorhanden war, wurde er als Dünger jedoch kaum eingesetzt. Die britische Regierung weigerte sich bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, ein Gesetz aufzuheben, das im Norden Schottlands eine höhere Besteuerung von importierter Kohle vorschrieb und deshalb das Brennen von Kalkstein zu Dünger unwirtschaftlich machte. Diese ungerechte Benachteiligung der Hochländer wurde von allen der Landwirtschaft kundigen Reisenden heftig kritisiert.

⁴⁶ Auf den Hebriden und im westlichen Hochland wurden die *cascroms* im Kartoffelanbau noch bis weit ins 20. Jahrhundert benutzt.

⁴⁷ Siehe auch im Anhang Nr. 3 die von Alexandre de La Rochefoucauld (1786) angefertigte Zeichnung und Beschreibung der gewöhnlichen landwirtschaftlichen Geräte der Hochländer.

Die Ernte und die weitere Verarbeitung des Getreides unterschieden sich ebenfalls von den im Tiefland angewandten Methoden. Nur der Hafer wurde mit Sichel oder Sensen geschnitten. Die Gerste wurde, wie alle Reisenden übereinstimmend berichteten, mit den Wurzeln aus der Erde gerissen. Im Hochland brauchte das Getreide mindestens bis September oder Oktober zum Reifen und dann war es wegen des äußerst wechselhaften Wetters sehr wichtig, die Ernte nicht nur schnell, sondern auch möglichst trocken einzufahren. Hierzu benutzten die Hochländer ein traditionelles Verfahren, das sie *graddan* nannten. Es wurde zwar von Fremden wegen seiner offensichtlichen Nachteile immer wieder heftig gescholten, machte aber wegen des wechselhaften Wetters durchaus Sinn. Anstelle die Ähren nach der Ernte zu trocknen und zu dreschen, brannten die Hochländer die Körner aus der Ähre. Dabei zündeten sie die Ähren an und schlugen die Körner mit einem Stock erst im letzten Augenblick aus der Ähre heraus, um sie vor dem Verbrennen zu bewahren. Die so gewonnenen Körner waren zwar trocken, aber gleichzeitig verbrannten die Reste der Ähren und Teile des Strohes, das ansonsten zum Dachdecken, als Dünger für die Felder oder als Winterfutter für das Vieh hätte verwendet werden können. Obwohl es im Hochland oft an Dünger und Viehfutter mangelte, wurde dieses Verfahren in den entlegenen Gegenden noch bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts praktiziert.

Gemahlen wurden die Körner in Handmühlen (*querns*). Diese bestanden aus zwei flachen Steinen, deren unterer etwas ausgehöhlt war. Das Korn wurde durch eine Öffnung in der Mitte des oberen Steines eingeführt und durch beständiges Drehen zwischen den Steinen zerrieben bis es an den Seiten als Mehl herausfiel und mit einem Tuch aufgefangen wurde.⁴⁸ Diese Handmühlen waren den Grundbesitzern ein Dorn im Auge, gelang es den Kleinbauern doch auf diese Weise, die Abgaben für den Müller zu sparen. In der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts wurden die Handmühlen von den Grundbesitzern zunehmend aus dem Verkehr gezogen, um die Kleinbauern zur Benutzung der Wassermühlen zu zwingen. In den entlegenen Gebieten wurden die Handmühlen aber weiterhin benutzt. Zum Sieben des Mehles, so berichtete z.B. Thomas Pennant 1772 von der kleinen Hebriden-Insel Rhum,

⁴⁸ Siehe hierzu auch den Stich „Women at the Quern and the Luaghad with a view of Talyskir“ aus Thomas Pennant, *A Tour In Scotland, And Voyage To The Hebrides MDCCCLXXII*, Teil I (Chester, 1774), gegenüber S. 286. Reproduziert in Anhang Nr. 4.

wurde ein Schaffell benutzt, in das zuvor mit einem heißen Eisen kleine Löcher gebohrt worden waren und das dann über einen Reifen gespannt wurde. Laut John Lanne Buchanan war dieses Verfahren auch noch in den 1780iger Jahren auf den Äußeren Hebriden üblich. Das gesiebte Mehl wurde anschließend mit Wasser vermischt und zu kleinen Teigplätzchen geformt, die auf einer Platte gebacken wurden. Diese Kekse aus Hafermehl hießen *bannocks* und waren ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Nahrung der Hochländer.

In der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts breitete sich der Anbau von Kartoffeln von den Hebriden sehr rasch über die gesamte Westküste und das Hochland aus. Das rasche Vordringen der Kartoffel in das Landesinnere und nach Norden, sowie ihre immer größere Bedeutung für die Ernährung der Hochländer, lassen sich anhand der Reiseberichte hervorragend nachvollziehen. Der große Vorteil der Kartoffel lag in ihrer Ertragskraft. Im Vergleich zu Hafer und Gerste war die Ertragskraft der Kartoffel bis zu drei- bzw. achtmal höher. Außerdem war der Kartoffelanbau recht einfach. Im sogenannten *lazy bed*-Verfahren wurden die Kartoffeln in Reihen aus aufgehäufter Erde gepflanzt, die anschließend zur Düngung mit Seegrass bedeckt wurden. Je nach Wachstum der Pflanzen wurden die Reihen immer wieder mit Erde aufgeschüttet. Darüber hinaus lohnte sich der Kartoffelanbau auch noch auf den Flächen, die für den Getreideanbau zu klein waren. Gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, so berichteten alle Hochlandbesucher einhellig, war die Kartoffel zu dem mit Abstand wichtigsten Nahrungsmittel im westlichen Hochland und auf den Hebriden geworden. Da die Bevölkerung im westlichen Hochland trotz der Emigration und *clearances* im frühen 19. Jahrhundert immer noch stark anstieg, kam dem Kartoffelanbau eine immer größere Bedeutung zu. Die Hochländer gerieten in eine gefährliche Abhängigkeit von der Kartoffel und als die Ernte 1845 durch Pilzbefall völlig vernichtet wurde, entwickelte sich im westlichen Hochland und auf den Hebriden eine Katastrophe, die der in Irland nur wenig nachstand. Trotz der zahlreichen Hinweise in den Reiseberichten auf die immer größere Bedeutung der Kartoffel für die Ernährung der Hochländer, wurden die möglichen Gefahren dieser Abhängigkeit von den Reisenden nicht erkannt. Stattdessen sahen die meisten von ihnen in der Kartoffel ein Allheilmittel, mit dem sich die noch bis in die 1820iger

Jahre wachsende Hochlandbevölkerung billig und ohne großen Arbeitsaufwand ernähren ließe.

Insgesamt lässt sich sagen, dass die von den Hochländern verwendeten Geräte und Anbaumethoden auf Außenstehende primitiv wirkten, dennoch waren sie bestens an die schwierigen Boden- und Witterungsverhältnisse angepasst. Das im Hochland angebaute Getreide reichte aber nicht einmal zur Eigenversorgung aus. Darüber hinaus wurde in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts immer mehr Getreide zu Whisky destilliert, so dass es selbst auf fruchtbaren Inseln wie z.B. Islay regelmäßig zu Engpässen in der Getreideversorgung kam. Deshalb waren die Hochländer zunehmend auf Getreideimporte aus dem Tiefland und aus Caithness angewiesen, um durch den Winter und das Frühjahr zu kommen.⁴⁹ Diese Getreideimporte wurden mit den Erlösen aus dem Verkauf von Rindvieh finanziert.

6.2. Viehzucht

Seit dem ausgehenden Mittelalter berichteten alle Schottlandbesucher übereinstimmend von dem großen Viehreichtum der Schotten und insbesondere der Hochländer. Die Bedeutung der Viehzucht für die Wirtschaft und den Lebensrhythmus der Hochländer lässt sich aus den Beobachtungen fremder Reisender besonders gut rekonstruieren.

Neben dem Ackerbau war die Viehzucht das zweite Standbein der Wirtschaft im Hochland. Südlich des Great Glen hielten sich Ackerbau und Viehzucht in etwa die Waage, nördlich und westlich überwog die Viehzucht. Seit dem Mittelalter waren Rinder das wichtigste Exportgut des Hochlandes. Im Sommer zogen die Hochländer mit ihren Tieren in ihre einfachen Sommerhütten (*shielings*) in den Bergen, um die Rinder in den Hochlagen weiden zu lassen.⁵⁰ Im Herbst wurden die Tiere dann von den Viehtreibern abgeholt und auf die großen Viehmärkte in Crieff, Falkirk und

⁴⁹ Die Autoren des späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhunderts, wie z.B. Martin Martin und Edmund Burt, berichteten noch vergleichsweise wenig über die Notwendigkeit von Mehlimporten im Hochland. Thomas Pennant (1769, 1772) und John Knox (1786) beschäftigten sich dagegen ausführlich mit der Abhängigkeit der Hochländer von Mehlimporten. John Knox schätzte 1786, dass im westlichen Hochland und auf den Hebriden jährlich zwischen einem Viertel und einem Drittel der Gerstenernte zu Whisky destilliert wurde.

⁵⁰ Siehe auch im Anhang Nr. 2 die Zeichnung „Sheelins in Jura and a distant View of the Paps“ aus Thomas Pennants Bericht seiner Hebridenreise im Jahr 1772.

Dumbarton getrieben. Ein durchschnittlicher Kleinbauer hatte eine Herde von vier bis fünf Rindern, von denen er etwa eins pro Jahr verkaufte.⁵¹ Von dem Erlös blieb ihm allerdings nicht viel übrig, da er damit seine Pacht und die Mehlimporte für den Winter und das Frühjahr bezahlen musste. Winter und Frühjahr waren eine schwierige Zeit im Hochland, da es vielfach an Futter für das Vieh mangelte. Die Tiere wurden im Winter in die Hütten geholt und so gut wie möglich versorgt, dennoch starben viele Rinder an Entkräftung. Stroh für das Vieh gab es kaum, da es entweder bereits beim *graddan* des Kornes verbrannt war oder aber zum Decken der Hütten und zum Düngen der Felder gebraucht wurde. Außerdem berichteten Reisende auch, dass die Hochländer mangels eigener Nahrung ihre Rinder im Winter manchmal zur Ader ließen. Das Blut wurde dann mit Mehl vermischt und den Kindern als Nahrung gegeben. Im Frühjahr waren die Tiere manchmal so schwach, dass sie nicht mehr alleine auf die Füße kamen und von mehreren Männern aufgerichtet werden mussten. Sobald wieder frisches Gras auf den Weiden wuchs, wurden die Rinder ins Freie gelassen und nahmen dann rasch an Gewicht zu.

Die Schafzucht spielte im Hochland zunächst nur eine untergeordnete Rolle. Die alteingesessenen Hochlandrassen waren wesentlich kleiner als die englischen Rassen und brachten im Schnitt nur ein Viertel von deren Wolle und Fleisch. Daher gab es keinen Exportmarkt für solch „minderwertige“ Tiere und die im Hochland gezüchteten Schafe dienten allein dem Eigenverbrauch. Bei der Auswahl der Weidegründe hatten die Rinder als wichtigste Einnahmequelle der Hochländer eindeutig Vorrang vor den Schafen. Dies änderte sich in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts schlagartig. Die Textilindustrie hatte einen großen Bedarf an Wolle und machte das Hochland für Schafzüchter interessant. Die Einführung neuer Schafrassen aus Südschottland und England, wie z.B. die *Blackface* und *Cheviots*, hatte gewaltige Auswirkungen auf die Wirtschafts- und Sozialstruktur des Hochlandes. Die *Blackface* und *Cheviots* geben deutlich mehr Fleisch und Wolle als die einheimischen Rassen, sie benötigen dafür aber die besseren Weidegründe in den

⁵¹ Nach etwa drei bis vier Jahren hatten die Rinder ihr Schlachtgewicht erreicht. Die schottischen Hochlandrinder waren deutlich kleiner als englische oder irische Tiere. In den 1660er Jahren schätzte der englische Zoll den Wert schottischer Hochlandrinder nur auf etwa 60 Prozent von dem irischer Tiere, vermutlich wegen ihrer geringeren Größe.

geschützten, tieferen Lagen, die bisher den Kleinbauern und ihren Rindern vorbehalten waren. Da die Schafzüchter aus dem Süden den Clanoberen deutlich höhere Pachteinnahmen garantieren konnten als die vielen am Existenzminimum darbanden Unterpächter, wurden deren kleine, parzellierten und wenig produktiven Äcker zusammengelegt und in Weideland zur extensiven Schafzucht umgewandelt.

Der Ablauf und die Auswirkungen dieses Strukturwandels lassen sich anhand der Reiseberichte aus der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts Schritt für Schritt nachvollziehen. Zuerst verließen daraufhin die *tacksmen* ihr Land. Sie erkannten frühzeitig, dass ihre Dienste als Manager der Dörfer im Hochland in Zukunft nicht mehr gebraucht würden. Zudem verfügten sie oft noch über genügend eigenes Kapital, um sich in Nordamerika neue Höfe leisten zu können. Die kleinen Unterpächter folgten ihren *tacksmen* entweder in die Emigration oder sie wanderten nach dem Verlust ihres Landes in das Tiefland ab, wo sie sich in den rasch wachsenden Städten – wie z.B. Glasgow – als Industrieproletariat verdingten. Andere wurden oftmals gegen ihren Willen an die schmalen Küstenstreifen umgesiedelt, um im Landesinneren Platz für neue Schafe zu schaffen. An der Küste erhielten sie eine Hütte und einen kleinen Streifen Ackerland (*croft*), der in der Regel nicht zum Leben reichte.⁵² Die Größe der *crofts* wurde absichtlich sehr klein gehalten, so dass die *crofters* in erster Linie Arbeiter für ihren Grundherrn waren. Die Grundbesitzer wollten ausdrücklich keine unabhängigen Kleinbauern schaffen, sondern eine Masse billiger und abhängiger Arbeitskräfte für den Fischfang und die arbeitsintensive Kelpindustrie. Die Einführung der neuen Schafrassen hatte somit die Zerstörung der alten Siedlungsstruktur zur Folge. Die alten Hochlanddörfer wurden aufgelöst, die Täler im Landesinneren entvölkert und in Weideflächen für Schafe umgewandelt.

Die Clanoberhäupter waren an dieser verhängnisvollen Umgestaltung des Hochlandes genauso beteiligt wie die neuen Grundbesitzer aus England, die keine familiäre Bindung zu den auf ihrem Grund lebenden Kleinbauern hatten. Die meisten Hochlandreisenden, insbesondere die aus England, begrüßten die Einführung der neuen Schafrassen ausdrücklich und verwiesen dabei auf die ökonomischen Vorteile für Großbritannien als Ganzes. Sie waren der Meinung, dass es aus

⁵² Das zu einem *croft* gehörige Ackerland wurde nur von dem *crofter* selbst bearbeitet. Er brauchte sich sein Land nicht mehr mit anderen Kleinbauern zu teilen, auch gab es keine regelmäßige Neuverteilung des Bodens mehr.

nationalökonomischer Sicht sinnvoller sei, das Hochland nur zur Tierzucht und Fleischproduktion zu nutzen. Der Ackerbau durch Kleinbauern im Hochland sei unproduktiv und die nicht mehr benötigte Bevölkerung wäre zur Arbeit in den Industriestädten produktiver eingesetzt. Dass dem übergeordneten nationalen Interesse dabei eine jahrhundertealte, eigenständige Kultur geopfert würde, kam nur wenigen Beobachtern in den Sinn. Es gab aber auch kritische Stimmen, wie z.B. John Lettice und John Stoddart, die vor dem Bevölkerungsverlust im Hochland und vor den ökologischen Gefahren einer zu einseitigen Spezialisierung auf die Schafzucht warnten. Lettice wurde auf seiner Hochlandreise 1792 Zeuge der *Ross-shire riots*, eines Aufstandes der Kleinbauern in Easter Ross gegen den Verlust ihres Landes an große Schafzüchter, und warnte sehr deutlich vor den ökonomischen Gefahren, wenn eine ganze Region entvölkert würde.

6.3. Die Jagd auf Meerestiere

Neben Ackerbau und Viehzucht spielte auch der Fischfang eine bedeutende Rolle im Leben der Hochländer. In den Seen und Flüssen im Landesinneren wurden vor allem Forellen und Lachse gefangen. An der Westküste und auf den Hebriden waren Fisch, Walfleisch, Robbenfleisch und Muscheln ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Nahrung der einfachen Leute, wie fremde Besucher im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert immer wieder betonten. Im Gegensatz zu den Holländern, die in den fischreichen Gewässern um die Orkneyinseln, Shetlandinseln und die Hebriden mit Fangflotten aus großen, geschlossenen und hochseetauglichen Heringsbüsen⁵³ operierten, verfügten die Hochländer nur über kleine, offene Boote, mit denen sie nicht weiter als 10 bis 15 Meilen auf das offene Meer hinaus konnten. Deshalb war der Fischfang der Hochländer und Hebridenbewohner auf den Eigenverbrauch beschränkt. Eine eigene hochseetaugliche Flotte zum Einstieg in den lukrativen Heringsfang wurde erst in der

⁵³ Die Heringsbüsen der Holländer waren spezielle Schiffe, die Salz und Fässer an Bord hatten und auf denen der Fang komplett weiterverarbeitet werden konnte. Die Heringe wurden sofort an Bord ausgenommen, gereinigt, mit Salz eingerieben und in Fässer verpackt. Die Qualität und Haltbarkeit der so verarbeiteten Heringe übertraf die der britischen Heringsfänger bei weitem.

zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts aufgebaut und dann auch nur mit mäßigem Erfolg.⁵⁴

An der Nordwestküste Schottlands herrschten ideale Voraussetzungen für einen erfolgreichen Fischfang. Die zerklüftete Küste bot den Schiffen eine Vielzahl natürlicher Häfen und Buchten zum Schutz bei schlechtem Wetter. Die See war überaus reich an Hering, Kabeljau, Schellfisch, Leng und Makrele. Gefangen wurden diese Fische im Allgemeinen mit an Schnüren befestigten Haken und Ködern. Netze wurden kaum benutzt. Der Hering war von besonderer Bedeutung und diente vor allem im Winter und Frühjahr zur Nahrung. Da Salz im Hochland sehr teuer war, musste der Fang auf andere Weise konserviert werden.⁵⁵ Die nach dem 10. September gefangenen Heringe wurden ausgenommen, an Leinen befestigt und unter dem Hüttendach getrocknet. Auf diese Weise hielt sich der Fisch, wie Martin Martin berichtete, ohne Geschmacksverlust bis zu acht Monate. Die ärmeren Leute lebten stärker von Muscheln. Martin Martin berichtete, dass die armen Einheimischen, z.B. am Kyle of Scalpay, bei Niedrigwasser manchmal bis zu 15 oder 20 Pferdelaugen Austern sammelten. Viele arme Familien lebten damals von Muscheln, da es in den 1690igern eine Reihe von Missernten gab.

Robben und Wale boten den Küstenbewohnern eine willkommene Abwechslung. Der Robbenfang wurde gemeinschaftlich betrieben. Nahe Heisker (auch Monach Islands genannt, westlich von North Uist) spannten die Insulaner Netze in den flachen Kanälen zwischen den Inseln auf. Diese Netze verengten sich am Ausgang der Kanäle sackartig, so dass die eingeschlossenen Tiere nicht entkommen konnten. Gewöhnlich wurden die Tiere aber mit Keulen totgeschlagen. Dazu näherten sich die Insulaner ihnen per Boot gegen den Wind, umstellten ihre Ruheplätze auf den Sandbänken und Felsen und schlugen ihnen die Schädel ein. Auf diese Weise wurden jeden Oktober über 300 Robben getötet. Anschließend wurde

⁵⁴ Auf den staatlich geförderten Aufbau einer Flotte für den Heringsfang wird in Kapitel 7 besonders eingegangen. Der Heringsfang an der Nordwestküste Schottlands sollte vor allem Arbeitsplätze schaffen und die Wirtschaft des Hochlandes beleben.

⁵⁵ Das Salz zum Konservieren des Fanges wurde nur über staatliche Stellen ausgegeben. Die Besteuerung und der bürokratische Aufwand waren enorm. In der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts wiesen alle Hochlandbesucher auf die dringende Reformbedürftigkeit der Salzgesetze hin, dennoch änderte sich bis zum Ende des Jahrhunderts wenig. Bis ins frühe 19. Jahrhundert waren die unsinnigen Salzgesetze das größte Hindernis beim Aufbau der Fischindustrie auf den Hebriden.

das Fleisch in der Asche von Seegras konserviert und von den Armen im Frühjahr gegessen.

Der Walfang wurde von den Insulanern ebenfalls gemeinschaftlich betrieben. Wurden Wale in Küstennähe gesichtet, so fuhren die Insulaner auf das Meer hinaus und versuchten mit ihren Booten, die Tiere in die Buchten und auf die Strände zu treiben. Dort wurden sie dann mangels geeigneterer Waffen mit Schwertern und Pfeilen getötet. In den 1690igern wurden auf diese Weise manchmal bis zu 100 Kleinwale getötet. Das Fleisch galt als besonders nahrhaft und wurde vor allem von den Ärmern gern gegessen. Dazu wurde es in Ermangelung von Salz mit der Asche von Seegras gepudert und anschließend geräuchert.

Trotz des großen Fischreichtums ihrer Gewässer konnten die Insulaner vielfach nicht alle Möglichkeiten ausschöpfen, da es ihnen an den einfachsten Geräten und dem Salz zum Konservieren des Fanges fehlte. Als Thomas Pennant 1772 Canna besuchte, musste er feststellen, dass die halbverhungerten Bewohner weder Boote noch Haken hatten, um die reichen Fischgründe nahe ihrer Insel auszubeuten. Auf anderen Inseln konnten sich die Einheimischen kein Salz leisten, so dass ihr Fang schnell verdarb. Salz zum Konservieren war so knapp, dass Hebridenbesucher immer wieder von Todesfällen unter der Bevölkerung durch verdorbenen Fisch berichteten.

6.4. Vogelfang

Eine Ausnahmestellung unter allen Inseln der Hebriden hatte die kleine Inselgruppe St Kilda, die etwa 50 Meilen westlich von Harris im Atlantik liegt.⁵⁶ Seit Martin Martins aufsehenerregendem Bericht über seinen Besuch im Jahr 1697 genoss die Inselgruppe wegen ihrer Abgelegenheit und der vermeintlichen Wildheit ihrer Bewohner besondere Aufmerksamkeit.⁵⁷ Für die Erforschung von St Kilda kommt dem Reisebericht als Quelle eine herausragende Funktion zu. Für das 17. und 18.

⁵⁶ Die Inselgruppe St Kilda besteht aus vier kleinen Inseln, der Hauptinsel Hirta im Zentrum, den Nachbarinseln Soay, Boreray, Dun sowie einer Reihe von kleineren Felsen. Nur die Hauptinsel Hirta war bewohnt. In dieser Arbeit bezeichnet „St Kilda“ die gesamte Inselgruppe, „Hirta“ nur die Hauptinsel. 1930 wurden die letzten 36 Einwohner von Hirta evakuiert.

⁵⁷ M. Martin, *A Late Voyage To St. Kilda, The Remotest of all the Hebrides, Or Western Isles of Scotland* (London, 1698). Auch Alexander Buchan, Katechet bzw. Geistlicher auf Hirta von 1705 bis zu seinem Tod 1729, und der Pfarrer Kenneth Macaulay, der St Kilda 1758 besuchte, haben ausführliche Berichte über ihren Aufenthalt auf der Inselgruppe publiziert.

Jahrhundert sind die Berichte fremder Besucher die einzigen Quellen zur Geschichte der Inselgruppe und ihrer Bewohner. Trotz der einsamen Lage zog St Kilda eine beträchtliche Zahl von Reisenden an und dementsprechend gut lassen sich anhand ihrer Berichte die Lebensverhältnisse der Insulaner rekonstruieren. Die folgende Analyse beruht fast gänzlich auf den Beobachtungen fremder Besucher.

Das Besondere an St Kilda war, dass die Bewohner fast ausschließlich vom Vogelfang lebten. Die Insulaner bauten zwar auch etwas Hafer und Gerste an und hielten auch ein paar Kühe und Schafe, ihr Lebensrhythmus war aber völlig auf die Brutzyklen der Vögel eingestellt. Dabei spielten die Töpel und Eissturmvögel die wichtigste Rolle auf dem Speiseplan der Insulaner. Martin schätzte, dass die seinerzeit etwa 180 Bewohner mehr als 20.000 Töpel pro Jahr fingen.⁵⁸ Die meisten Vögel wurden in den Steilwänden der Hauptinsel und der umliegenden Felsen gefangen. Dabei stiegen jeweils zwei Insulaner in die Felswände und sicherten sich gegenseitig mit einem Seil aus Hanf, das außen mit gesalzenen Kuhhäuten umwickelt war, um es gegen Durchscheuern an den spitzen Felsen zu schützen. Da die erwachsenen Vögel auf den Nestern sitzen blieben, um ihre Brut zu verteidigen, konnten sie leicht mit an Stangen befestigten Schlingen gefangen und getötet werden. Die Vögel wurden dann ins Meer geworfen, wo sie vom Boot der Insulaner aufgefischt wurden. Da die Insulaner geschickte Kletterer waren, kamen tödliche Unfälle nur selten vor. Fielen die Kletterer doch einmal ins Meer, so wurden sie vom Boot wieder aufgefischt. Der Eierklau aus den Gelegen und der Fang der noch nicht flüggen Jungvögel waren zeitlich so aufeinander abgestimmt, dass die Brutperiode der Töpel dadurch um etwa drei Wochen gestreckt wurde. Wurden den Töpeln die Eier aus dem ersten Gelege gestohlen, so legten die Vögel erneut Eier. Die Jungvögel aus dem ersten Gelege wurden etwa im August flügge, die aus dem zweiten Gelege im September. Auf einigen Inseln und Felsen wurden die Eier aus dem ersten Gelege gestohlen, auf anderen durften die Töpel ihren Nachwuchs dagegen in Ruhe ausbrüten. Im August und September wurden dann die noch nicht flüggen Jungtiere aus den Nestern geholt und getötet. So vermieden die Insulaner, dass alle Jungtiere zur selben Zeit flügge wurden und sie deshalb nicht genügend Vögel als

⁵⁸ Die Insulaner versicherten ihm, dass sie im Jahr vor seinem Besuch sogar 22.600 Töpel gefangen hätten.

Wintervorrat fangen konnten. Die Streckung der „Erntezeit“ der Jungtiere um mehrere Wochen war besonders wichtig, weil das unbeständige Wetter das Anlanden der Kletterer auf den einzelnen Inseln und Felsen oftmals unmöglich machte. So konnte vermieden werden, dass eine längere Schlechtwetterperiode zum Totalverlust der „Jungtierernte“ führte. Darüber hinaus legten die Insulaner noch kleine Schlingen aus Pferdehaar aus, die sie an Steinen befestigten, und in denen sich etwa 40 bis 50 Vögel pro Tag verfangen. Die Vögel von bestimmten Inseln und Felsen wurden gleichmäßig unter allen Insulanern aufgeteilt. Die Beute von anderen Felsen wurde dagegen am Fuß gekennzeichnet und stand dem jeweiligen Kletterer zu. An Land wurden die Vögel dann aufgeschnitten, ausgenommen und in kleinen luftigen Vorratshäusern aus Stein, den sogenannten *cleitean*, getrocknet.⁵⁹ Auf diese Weise hielten sich die Vögel bis zu einem Jahr. In den frühen Berichten (Martin Martin (1697), Alexander Buchan (1727)) wird Salz als Konservierungsmittel noch nicht erwähnt, aber Kenneth Macaulay berichtete nach seinem Besuch 1758, dass die Bewohner ihre Beute inzwischen auch in Fässern einsalzen würden.

Die Eier der Vögel spielten eine ebenso wichtige Rolle für die Ernährung der Insulaner. Allerdings legen die von den Besuchern genannten Zahlen über die auf St Kilda konsumierten Eier nahe, dass die Einheimischen nur bedingt darauf geachtet haben, die auf der Inselgruppe brütenden Vogelarten nicht durch zu starken Eierklau in ihrer Substanz zu gefährden. Martin Martin schätzte 1697, dass die etwa 180 Insulaner im Schnitt mehr als 16.000 Eier pro Woche äßen. Die Eier wurden, um sie vor Feuchtigkeit zu schützen, mit der Asche von Seegrass bestreut und ebenfalls in den *cleitean* eingelagert. Auf diese Weise hielten sie sich bis zu acht Monate, bevor sie anfangen zu faulen. Das war allerdings kein Hinderungsgrund, die Eier zu essen, und Besucher betonten immer wieder, dass die Insulaner leicht faulige Eier besonders gerne aßen.

Die Berichte stimmen darin überein, dass der weitaus größte Teil von den Tölpeln stammte, da diese Art mehrere Eier legt. Der Eissturmvogel legt dagegen nur ein Ei pro Jahr und die Berichte legen nahe, dass die Insulaner nur wenige seiner Eier stahlen, um den Bestand der Vögel nicht zu gefährden. Aus den Berichten der Besucher lässt sich schließen, dass bereits im 18. Jahrhundert die Zahl der auf St

⁵⁹ Es gab insgesamt etwa 1.100 *cleitean* auf St Kilda, die über alle Inseln und Felsen verteilt waren.

Kilda brütenden Töpel aufgrund zu starker Bejagung und zu starken Eierklaus dramatisch zurückgegangen sein muss. Die Zahl der gefangenen Eissturmvögel blieb dagegen stabil, obwohl die Insulaner wegen des Rückgangs der Töpel zunehmend auf sie angewiesen waren.⁶⁰ Anzeichen von Mangelernährung und Krankheiten wurden schon von Alexander Buchan erwähnt, aber sein 1727 veröffentlichter Bericht war bereits im Druck, als eine Pockenepidemie Hirta erfasste und 88 Einwohner tötete. Als die Epidemie 1727 ausbrach, so lässt sich aus den Berichten errechnen, musste die Zahl der Insulaner bereits von ca. 180 Personen zu Martins Zeit (1697) auf 122 zurückgegangen sein, wahrscheinlich als eine Folge der rückläufigen Zahl der Töpel und der sich verschlechternden Nahrungssituation.

Wie sehr die Insulaner von den Vögeln abhingen, wird auch dadurch deutlich, dass sie die ganze Beute verarbeiteten und praktisch nichts wegwarfen. Die Pacht für die Insel wurde vor allem in Federn bezahlt, die Knochen, Innereien und Flügel der Vögel wurden als Dünger auf den Feldern verteilt, das Fett der Vögel diente als Ersatz für Butter, das Öl des Eissturmvogels wurde als Medizin gegen Knochenbeschwerden und Krämpfe benutzt und in die gesamten Hebriden exportiert. Auch die Kleidung der Insulaner wurde teilweise aus Vogelhaut hergestellt, so nähten sich die Frauen z.B. Schuhe aus den aufgeschnittenen Hälsen der Töpel. Diese Schuhe waren zwar nach drei bis vier Tagen durchgelaufen, aber die Männer schafften genügend Nachschub heran. Wenn man bedenkt, wie sehr die Vögel das Leben auf St Kilda bestimmten, so darf man sich über einen Kommentar des Geologen John MacCulloch anlässlich seines Besuches 1815 nicht wundern. Er schrieb, die Luft wäre voller gefiederter Tiere, das Meer wäre mit ihnen bedeckt, die Häuser wären von ihren Hinterlassenschaften „geschmückt“, die Dorfstraße wäre mit Federn gepflastert, die Misthügel wären aus Federn und alle Insulaner sähen so aus, als ob sie geteert und gefedert worden wären.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Dass die Zahl der gefangenen Eissturmvögel stabil blieb und nicht umgekehrt-proportional zum Rückgang der Töpel anstieg, lag wohl an der rückläufigen Zahl der Insulaner.

⁶¹ Siehe J. MacCulloch, *The Highlands And Western Isles Of Scotland* (London, 1824), Bd. III, S. 195-196.

6.5. Exkurs: Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung der Hebriden in den 1760iger Jahren

Abschließend ist es ratsam, die wirtschaftlichen Veränderungen auf den Hebriden in den 1760igern zu analysieren. Dazu bietet sich besonders der Bericht des Pfarrers und Naturwissenschaftlers Dr. John Walker an, der im Auftrag der *Commissioners for the Annexed Estates*⁶², der *General Assembly* der *Church of Scotland* und der *Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge* die Hebriden in den Jahren 1764 und 1771 ausgiebig bereiste.⁶³ Seine Zahlen und Beobachtungen ergeben ein genaues Bild von den wirtschaftlichen Veränderungen in dieser für das Hochland so wichtigen Übergangsphase. Sie zeigen einerseits die traditionellen Wirtschaftszweige der Hebriden und andererseits die wachsende Bedeutung neuer Industriezweige, wie z.B. der Schafzucht, der Kelperstellung und der Fischerei. Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass erstens sowohl auf den Inneren wie auch den Äußeren Hebriden die Rinderzucht noch wesentlich wichtiger als die Schafzucht war. Zwischen 1760 und 1770 wurden auf den Hebriden Schafe nur für den eigenen Verbrauch gezüchtet. Auf Mull und dem gegenüberliegenden Festland waren die neuen Schafrassen aus dem Süden aber schon sichtbar auf dem Vormarsch. Zweitens, auf den Äußeren Hebriden mit besonderem Schwerpunkt auf den beiden Uists und Harris, hatte der Erlös des exportierten Kelps (ein Extrakt aus gebranntem Seetang) bereits mit den Gewinnen aus der Rinderzucht gleichgezogen. Walker sagte der Kelpindustrie große Wachstumschancen voraus und es dauerte tatsächlich nur wenige Jahre, bis die

⁶² Nach der Niederschlagung des Jakobitenaufstandes von 1745-46 beschlagnahmte die Regierung die Güter der Aufständischen. Die Mehrheit der Güter wurde verkauft, um die Schulden ihrer Eigentümer zu tilgen. 13 nicht verkaufte Güter wurden durch Parlamentsbeschluss 1752 Eigentum der Krone und 1755 den *Commissioners for the Annexed Estates* zur Verwaltung übergeben. Auf diesen Gütern wurden ausgediente Soldaten und Matrosen angesiedelt, die durch regelmäßige Arbeit in der Landwirtschaft und Handwerk die umliegenden Hochländer „zivilisieren“ und zu regierungstreuen Staatsbürgern umerziehen sollten. In den meisten Fällen scheiterten diese Projekte sehr schnell, da die Soldaten und Matrosen nicht an ein sesshaftes Leben zu gewöhnen waren und oftmals mit dem ihnen vorgestreckten Geld für Häuser und landwirtschaftliche Geräte verschwanden. Die Einnahmen aus den Gütern wurden auch für den Straßen- und Brückenbau sowie zur Förderung der Textilverarbeitung im Hochland verwendet. Die Arbeit der *Commissioners for the Annexed Estates* endete 1784, als die Güter den Nachfahren der Jakobiten zurückgegeben wurden.

⁶³ *The Rev. Dr. John Walker's Report On The Hebrides of 1764 and 1771*, hrsg. von M. McKay (Edinburgh, 1980). Die *Church of Scotland* und die *SSPCK* hatten ein besonderes Interesse daran, die katholischen Clane zum „wahren“ Glauben, d.h. dem Protestantismus, zu „bekehren“. Bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts wurden die Katholiken in Großbritannien noch pauschal als vermeintliche Jakobiten der Unterstützung der exilierten Stuarts verdächtigt.

Gewinne aus der Kelpindustrie die der Rinderzucht überflügeln. Auf den Inneren Hebriden zogen die Erlöse der Kelpproduktion allmählich mit denen der Rinderzucht gleich, überholten sie aber nicht. Das Zentrum der Kelpindustrie blieb auf den Äußeren Hebriden. Drittens führten die steigende Rinderzucht und die rasch wachsende Zahl der Kelparbeiter zu steigenden Mehlimporten. Die Mehlnaptheit wurde noch zusätzlich dadurch verschärft, dass ein großer Teil der eigenen Ernte illegal zu Whisky destilliert wurde, um die steigenden Pachten zu bezahlen. Walker erkannte, dass die gestiegenen Mehlimporte langfristig nur durch einen stärkeren Kartoffelanbau zurückgefahren werden könnten. Folglich sagte er den Siegeszug der Kartoffel auf den Hebriden richtig voraus. Viertens war die Fischerei, abgesehen von Lewis, noch keine bedeutende Exportindustrie. Fisch wurde nur zum Eigenverbrauch gefangen, aber Walker sagte das enorme Entwicklungspotential der Fischerei für den Export korrekt voraus. – Die Auswirkungen des rasanten Wachstums der Fischerei- und Kelpindustrie auf das Leben im Hochland werden im nächsten Kapitel gesondert untersucht. Die Weitsicht von Walkers Prognosen ist beeindruckend. Die Zahlen, die spätere Hebridenreisende, wie z.B. Thomas Pennant (1772) und James Bailey (1787), über die Wirtschaftskraft einzelner Inseln und die Bedeutung einzelner Wirtschaftszweige gesammelt haben, bestätigen, dass Walker als einer der Ersten die fundamentalen sozioökonomischen Veränderungen auf den Hebriden erkannt und richtig prognostiziert hat. Auch der *Statistical Account* von 1791-99, in dem unter anderem die Wirtschaftskraft jeder Gemeinde von ihrem Geistlichen beschrieben wurde, bestätigt den Bedeutungszuwachs der neuen Industrien, so wie es Walker knapp 30 Jahre zuvor vorausgesehen hatte.

6.6. Fazit der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung im Hochland ca. 1600-1800

Die gewaltigen wirtschaftlichen Veränderungen im schottischen Hochland in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts waren das Ergebnis der Integration in die Wirtschaft Großbritanniens. Innerhalb weniger Jahrzehnte wurde ein jahrhundertealtes, stabiles Wirtschaftssystem, in dem es darauf ankam, möglichst viele Menschen zu versorgen, durch ein nur am Profit orientiertes Wirtschaftssystem abgelöst. Die treibende Kraft hinter diesem Systemwandel waren die

Großgrundbesitzer im Hochland, die mit ihrer Integration in die britische Elite ihre Sonderstellung verloren. Das Clansystem mit seiner rückständigen Landwirtschaft war im 18. Jahrhundert nicht mehr überlebensfähig. Diese Erkenntnis setzte sich bei den Clanoberen bereits um die Wende zum 18. Jahrhundert durch und die ersten Clanoberen begannen bereits um diese Zeit, Profitdenken über das Wohl ihrer Clanangehörigen zu stellen. Der Versuch der zwei mächtigsten Clanoberhäupter auf Skye, Norman MacLeod of Dunvegan und Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat, um 1730 mehrere hundert ihrer Vasallen, Männer, Frauen und Kinder, als billige Arbeitskräfte für die Plantagen nach Nordamerika zu verkaufen, zeigt, dass die Clanoberen schon lange vor dem großen Jakobitenaufstand 1745-46 und der anschließenden Auflösung der Clane Profitdenken vor das Wohl ihrer Vasallen gestellt haben. Hier werden die Ergebnisse der neueren Forschung zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Hochlandes durch die Beobachtungen von frühen Reisenden (Martin Martin, Edmund Burt) über die ersten Auflösungserscheinungen und den einsetzenden Zerfall der Clanbindungen im späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert ausdrücklich bestätigt. Die großflächige Umstellung einer bis dahin von Kleinbauern geprägten Landwirtschaft auf extensive Schafzucht endete für viele von ihnen in einer sozialen Katastrophe und dem Verlust ihrer Heimat. In den 1750iger und 1760iger Jahren griff der Staat ein und versuchte mit Geldern aus den beschlagnahmten Jakobitengütern die Textilverarbeitung im Hochland zu fördern, den Hochländern Arbeit zu geben und die Verelendung großer Teile der Bevölkerung zu verhindern.⁶⁴ Diese Versuche waren aber zum Scheitern verurteilt, da die Standorte der neuen Leinenmanufakturen an der Westküste schlecht gewählt waren und die in der Textilproduktion unerfahrenen Hochländer nicht mit der industriellen Produktion von Textilien im Tiefland konkurrieren konnten. Dass die Hochländer keineswegs arbeitsscheu, sondern durchaus in der Lage waren, erfolgreich Landwirtschaft zu betreiben, zeigt z.B. ihr Einsatz bei der Kultivierung des Sumpfbereiches von Blair Drummond nahe Doune. Hier erhielten landlose und von ihrem Grund vertriebene Hochländer vom Eigentümer des Bodens, Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), lange und günstige Pachtverträge für das gewonnene

⁶⁴ Es darf nicht vergessen werden, dass diese Bemühungen der Regierung nicht ausschließlich wohlthätiger Natur waren, sondern auch stets dem Zweck dienten, die vermeintlich faulen und arbeitsscheuen Hochländer zu kontrollieren und zu „zivilisieren“.

Ackerland. Der wirtschaftliche Erfolg der Kolonie zeigte deutlich, dass die Hochländer bei entsprechender Sicherheit ihrer Investitionen ein bisher nutzloses Sumpfgebiet in eines der fruchtbarsten Gebiete für Ackerbau in ganz Schottland umwandeln konnten. Leider erhielten nur wenige Hochländer eine solche Chance und die überwiegende Mehrzahl von ihnen wurde durch die Profitgier der Großgrundbesitzer im Hochland in die Verarmung oder Emigration getrieben.

7. Neue Industrien für das Hochland – Die Förderung der Fischerei und die Entwicklung der Kelpindustrie

Zwei Wirtschaftszweigen kam im späten 18. Jahrhundert eine ganz besonders wichtige Bedeutung für die sozioökonomische Entwicklung des westlichen Hochlandes und der Hebriden zu. Die Spuren des staatlich geförderten Heringsfanges und der Kelpindustrie sind noch heute in der Siedlungsstruktur an der Nordwestküste Schottlands und auf den Hebriden sichtbar. In einer Zeit fortschreitender Massenverelendung im Hochland wurde beiden Wirtschaftszweigen zugetraut, eine wirtschaftliche Kehrtwendung und die Wiederbelebung des Hochlandes einzuleiten.

Darüber hinaus lässt sich an der Entwicklung des Heringsfanges an der Westküste sehr gut zeigen, welchen Einfluss die Beobachtungen und Berichte zeitgenössischer Reisender auf die Fischereipolitik der Regierung hatten. Die Reisen des Ökonomen James Anderson (1784) und des Philanthropen John Knox (1786) an die schottische Westküste und auf die Hebriden zeigen deutlich, dass Reisende auch als Berichterstatter über den Zustand der Fischerei große Wirkung auf deren zukünftige Gestaltung ausüben konnten. In kaum einem Politikfeld des späten 18. Jahrhunderts lassen sich die Handschrift und der bleibende Einfluss von Reisenden so nachweisen wie in dem staatlich geförderten Heringsfang an der schottischen Westküste.

7.1. Die Entwicklung der Heringsindustrie an der Nordwestküste

Die natürlichen Voraussetzungen für den Heringsfang an der Westküste Schottlands waren, wie gezeigt, hervorragend, dennoch konnten sie wegen des Mangels an

seetauglichen Booten, Netzen und Salz zum Konservieren des Fanges nicht genutzt werden. Martin Martin wies bereits gegen Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts auf das enorme Entwicklungspotential des Heringsfanges hin und beklagte, dass die Regierungen in Edinburgh und London zu wenig zu seiner Förderung beitrügen. Er verwies auf die Holländer, die im 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert führende Fischfangnation, die mit ihren hochseetauglichen Schiffen enorme Profite aus dem Heringsfang um die Shetlandinseln, die Orkneyinseln und die Hebriden machen würden. Zwar gab es 1720 und 1750 Initiativen zur Förderung des Heringsfanges in Schottland, aber sie scheiterten am Widerstand der schottischen *burghs*⁶⁵ bzw. den viel zu komplizierten und unpraktischen Vorschriften zur Subventionierung und Salzversorgung der Fangschiffe. Es muss in diesem Zusammenhang betont werden, und darin stimmten alle Hebridenreisenden in ihrer Kritik überein, dass es sich hierbei um hausgemachte Probleme handelte.

Wie John Knox eindeutig bewies, verschlang die völlig unübersichtliche und ineffiziente Bürokratie bei der staatlichen Salzausgabe nicht nur mehr als zwei Drittel der Einnahmen aus der Salzsteuer, sondern benachteiligte auch die britischen Schiffe gegenüber der holländischen Konkurrenz. Salz zum Konservieren des Fanges durfte zunächst nur an wenigen, oftmals viel zu weit von den Fischgründen entfernten Stellen an Bord genommen werden. Dann mussten die Schiffe anschließend mindestens drei Monate auf See bleiben, unabhängig davon, ob sie bereits nach wenigen Tagen ihre Fangräume gefüllt hatten oder nicht. Wer vor Ablauf der Frist in seinen Heimathafen zurückkehrte, verlor die staatlichen Prämien.⁶⁶ Die bedeutendste Prämie richtete sich nach der Größe der Heringsbüse und nicht nach der Größe des Fanges. So sollte der Anreiz geschaffen werden, eine möglichst große Heringsflotte zu bauen. Als Ergebnis dieser Subventionspolitik gingen die Kapitäne aber lieber auf die Jagd nach der Prämie als nach Heringen und nutzten ihre Schiffe oftmals für anderweitige Transportzwecke. Eine stärkere Konzentration der Subventionen auf die Fangmenge erfolgte erst wesentlich später. Darüber hinaus war es den subventionierten Schiffen verboten, den Fang der kleinen

⁶⁵ Die *burghs* waren im Mittelalter gegründete Kleinstädte, in denen die Händler und Handwerker besondere Handelsprivilegien, wie z.B. Zollfreiheit, besaßen.

⁶⁶ Hinter dieser Regelung stand der Gedanke, je länger die Schiffe auf See blieben, desto besser würden die Matrosen ausgebildet. Die Regierung sah die Heringsbüsen auch als Schule für die Kriegsmarine mit ihrem ständig wachsenden Bedarf an Matrosen.

Küstenfischer aufzukaufen. Diese konnten sich das Salz zum Konservieren ihres Fanges wiederum nicht leisten, so dass alles, was sie nicht selbst an Ort und Stelle verbrauchen konnten, verdarb und ins Meer zurück gekippt wurde.⁶⁷ Letztlich mussten alle staatlichen Subventionen für den schottischen Heringsfang aus den Zolleinnahmen in Schottland selbst finanziert werden. Da diese aber stark schwankten, konnten z.B. von 1766 bis 1770 die Prämien auf die Tonnage der Heringsbüsen nicht gezahlt werden und die Zahl der Heringsbüsen fiel von 261 (1766) auf nur noch 4 (1771).

Die Benachteiligung der schottischen Heringsfischer wurde von sachkundigen Reisenden wie John Walker (1764, 1771), Thomas Pennant (1769, 1772), James Anderson (1784), William Thomson (1785) und John Knox (1786) heftig kritisiert. Die sich verschlechternde wirtschaftliche Lage im Hochland und die Massenemigration zwangen die Regierung, ihre Fischereipolitik zu überdenken. Die landlosen Kleinbauern, so hoffte man in London, könnten in der Fischerei ein neues Auskommen finden. Schließlich schickte die Regierung Sachverständige ins westliche Hochland und auf die Hebriden, um die Möglichkeiten zur Förderung des Fischfanges vor Ort zu untersuchen und Pläne zur Ankurbelung der Fischereiindustrie zu entwerfen.

Die Debatte um die Förderung der Heringsfischerei wurde von zwei Antagonisten beherrscht. Der schottische Ökonom James Anderson reiste 1784 im Auftrag der Regierung an die Nordwestküste und auf die Hebriden, um den Zustand und die Möglichkeiten der Heringsfischerei zu erkunden. 1785 berichtete er dem Parlament und veröffentlichte seine Ergebnisse unter dem Titel *An Account Of The Present State Of The Hebrides And Western Coasts Of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1785). Der schottische Philanthrop John Knox bereiste die Region 1786 und veröffentlichte seinen Bericht unter dem Titel *A Tour Through The Highlands Of Scotland, And The Hebride Isles, In MDCCLXXXVI* (London, 1787). Trotz starker persönlicher Differenzen waren ihre Vorschläge im Ergebnis sehr ähnlich. Beide setzten auf den Bau einer Reihe gleicher, auf dem Reißbrett entworfener Fischereisiedlungen. In diesen Fischereidörfern sollte zunächst ein Hafen mit Kaianlagen und Vorrathshäusern für Netze, Fässer und Salz gebaut werden. Ebenso sollten kleine Reihenhäuser für

⁶⁷ Manchmal wurden die verrottenden Überschüsse auch als Dünger auf die Felder verteilt.

die zukünftigen Fischer gebaut werden. Außerdem sollte jedes Dorf eine Kirche, Schule und Apotheke erhalten. Der Staat sollte den zukünftigen Fischern dann Boote und Netze zur Verfügung stellen, so dass der Fischfang aufgenommen werden könnte. In den Vorstellungen von Anderson und Knox würde der Fang dann vor Ort verkauft werden und die Siedlungen würden sich zu Marktzentren für ihr Hinterland entwickeln. Die lokalen Bauern sollten ihre Produkte zu den Markttagen in den Siedlungen verkaufen und der steigende Handel sollte wiederum für einen Zustrom neuer Siedler in die Fischereidörfer sorgen. Mit der wachsenden Einwohnerzahl würden sich auch Schmiede, Schuster, Zimmerleute und andere Handwerker am Ort niederlassen, um ihre Dienste anzubieten. Zunächst sollten die Siedler nur geringe Mieten für ihre Häuser und Boote bezahlen, sobald sich die Siedlungen aber als kleine Handelsstädte etabliert hätten, könnten die vom Staat oder privaten Gesellschaften vorgestreckten Investitionen durch den Verkauf der Häuser und Boote an die Fischer wieder eingenommen werden. In der Zwischenzeit sollten die Mieteinnahmen als Verzinsung ausgeschüttet werden. James Anderson schwebte vor, dass mit Investitionen von insgesamt nur £5.000 Sterling jährlich bei einer Dauer von 20 Jahren insgesamt 200.000 Menschen an der Westküste und auf den Hebriden angesiedelt werden könnten. John Knox hatte ähnliche Pläne und schlug letztlich den Bau von insgesamt 40 neuen Siedlungen im Abstand von je 25 Meilen vor. Für jede Siedlung würden £2.000 Sterling benötigt, um alle für eine Fischereisiedlung notwendigen Gebäude zu bauen.⁶⁸

Andersons und Knoxs Pläne klangen in der Theorie gut, sie krankten aber daran, dass die Siedlungen quasi aus dem Nichts ihre eigenen Absatzmärkte schaffen mussten, um sich als Markt- und Handelsstädte zu etablieren und neue Siedler anzuziehen. Die Praxis zeigte später, dass es für viele der erwarteten Handwerksberufe keine Absatzmärkte gab und der Zustrom neuer Siedler deshalb ausblieb. Die Hochländer fertigten bisher fast alle Produkte des täglichen Lebens selbst an und es war ihnen daher schwer zu vermitteln, sie fortan bei fremden Handwerkern für teures Geld zu kaufen.

⁶⁸ Der Bau von 40 Siedlungen à £2.000 Sterling markierte einen Kurswechsel Knoxs. Nur ein Jahr zuvor hatte er noch für den Bau von 8 Siedlungen à £10.000 Sterling plädiert. Die Anforderungen an die Siedlungen blieben dieselben, wie er die Siedlungen aber nun zu nur einem Fünftel der ursprünglichen Kosten bauen wollte, verriet er nicht.

Letztlich setzte sich Knox mit seinen Plänen gegen Anderson durch, allerdings war der Staat nicht bereit, die Siedlungen vorzufinanzieren, so dass nach anderen Geldgebern gesucht werden musste. Im Juli 1786 wurde unter tatkräftiger Mitwirkung von John Knox die *British Fisheries Society* gegründet. Bis zum Mai 1787 hatte die Gesellschaft £25.000 Sterling zur Förderung der Fischerei gesammelt und im Juni reisten die Direktoren der Gesellschaft an die Nordwestküste und auf die Hebriden, um nach geeigneten Plätzen zur Anlage von zunächst zwei Fischereisiedlungen zu suchen. Die Direktoren entschieden sich für den Bau von Tobermory auf Mull und Ullapool am Loch Broom in Ross-shire.

Die 1788 begonnenen Arbeiten an den völlig neuen, auf dem Reißbrett entworfenen Siedlungen in der Wildnis der schottischen Nordwestküste waren wesentlich schwieriger als ursprünglich geplant. Die Beschaffung des Baumaterials gestaltete sich schwierig, die Arbeiten verzögerten sich, die Kosten überstiegen schnell die Planungen und der erhoffte Zustrom von Siedlern blieb aus. Tobermory und Ullapool wurden zwar noch in den frühen 1790igern fertiggestellt, eine weitere Siedlung bei Lochbay auf Skye wurde aber nie richtig zu Ende gebaut. Die Hoffnungen, die Wirtschaft im Nordwesten durch den Bau von Fischereisiedlungen zu revitalisieren, zerschlugen sich genau so schnell wie die hochtrabenden Pläne von Knox und Anderson.⁶⁹ Tobermory und Ullapool zogen nicht den erwarteten Zustrom von Siedlern an und blieben weit hinter den Erwartungen ihrer Gründer zurück. Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts verkaufte die *British Fisheries Society* sogar ihre Siedlungen in Tobermory, Ullapool und Lochbay, um das Geld in den Ausbau des Hafens von Pulteneytown bei Wick (Caithness) an der schottischen Nordostküste zu stecken. Diese Siedlung, die vierte und letzte Neugründung der *British Fisheries Society*, war die einzig erfolgreiche.

Bei der Anlage von Pulteneytown achtete die *British Fisheries Society* darauf, die Fehler der Siedlungen an der Westküste nicht zu wiederholen. Diesmal bauten sie an einem Platz, wo bereits mit Wick ein regionales Zentrum in der direkten Nachbarschaft existierte und somit Absatzmärkte vorhanden waren. Darüber hinaus waren die Menschen in Caithness mit der Fischerei wesentlich besser vertraut als die

⁶⁹ John Knox blieb das Scheitern seines Lebenswerkes erspart. Er starb 1790, als sich Tobermory und Ullapool noch im Bau befanden.

Kleinbauern an der schottischen Westküste und auf den Hebriden, die bis dahin nur Fischfang in kleinen Booten für den Eigenbedarf betrieben hatten. Ebenso war es den neuen Siedlern in Pulteneytown verboten, zuviel eigenen Grund für die Landwirtschaft zu erwerben. So wurde gewährleistet, dass die Siedler hauptberuflich vom Fischfang lebten und sich nur im Nebenerwerb in der Landwirtschaft betätigten. In den Neugründungen an der Westküste wurden den Siedlern zur Existenzgründung auch großzügige Ackerflächen gegeben, so dass sie weiterhin ein von der Landwirtschaft geprägtes Leben führen konnten und nur nebenbei auf Fischfang gingen.

Obwohl viele Hochland- und Hebridenbesucher in der Förderung der Fischerei ein Allheilmittel für die schwächelnde Hochlandwirtschaft sahen, so standen sie den Plänen der *British Fisheries Society* doch oftmals kritisch gegenüber. Sie bemängelten vor allem, dass zu viel Geld in ortsgebundene Investitionen, wie z.B. Kais, Häuser etc., geflossen sein, anstatt den Küstenbewohnern zunächst einmal nur Boote, Netze, Fässer und dergleichen zu geben. Als größte Fehleinschätzung erwies sich aber die Vorstellung, dass man eine über Jahrhunderte von der Landwirtschaft und Viehzucht geprägte Gesellschaft innerhalb weniger Jahre zu einer maritimen Lebensgemeinschaft umformen könnte. In dieser Hinsicht haben fast alle Kommentatoren die Verbundenheit der Hochländer zu ihrer heimatlichen Erde unterschätzt.

7.2. Der Aufstieg und Niedergang der Kelpindustrie

Während der Fischfang vom Staat gefördert wurde, entwickelte sich die Kelpindustrie in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts unabhängig von staatlicher Unterstützung zu einem der wichtigsten Industriezweige an der schottischen Westküste. Trotz der enormen wirtschaftlichen Bedeutung sind der Aufstieg und Niedergang der Kelpindustrie bis heute nicht hinreichend untersucht worden. Die oft nur knappen und stark verallgemeinernden Untersuchungen beschäftigen sich vor allem mit den Produktionsmengen und den daraus resultierenden Erlösen der Großgrundbesitzer, wohingegen die Auswirkungen der Kelpindustrie auf das Leben der einfachen Kleinbauern fast völlig vernachlässigt werden. Hier können

Reiseberichte diese Lücke schließen. Im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert wurden die Hebridenbesucher jeden Sommer Zeugen der Kelpseason und ihre Berichte geben detaillierte Auskunft, wie die Kelpherstellung in den Mittelpunkt des Lebens der einfachen Kleinbauern und Landarbeiter rückte. Die Reisenden sahen nicht nur den Herstellungsprozess selbst, sondern berichteten auch über die Ausbeutung und das Elend der Arbeiter, derweil die abwesenden Großgrundbesitzer die gewaltigen Profite einstrichen.

Kelp wurde aus gebranntem Seegras hergestellt, war eine Hauptquelle für Jod und Kaliumchlorid und wurde vor allem in der Glas- und Seifenindustrie benötigt. Martin Martin wies bereits in den 1690igern auf die Möglichkeit der Kelpproduktion auf den Hebriden hin, aber es dauerte noch bis in die 1730iger Jahre, bis die Produktion auf den Äußeren Hebriden begann. In den 1750iger und 1760iger Jahren breitete sie sich dann sehr schnell über die gesamten Hebriden und die Westküste aus.

Die Voraussetzungen für die industrielle Herstellung von Kelp waren an der Westküste optimal. Zunächst gab es genügend Seegras und Seetang als billigen und regenerativen Rohstoff. Zum Sammeln, Trocknen und Brennen des Seegrases wurden weder hochentwickelte technische Geräte noch besonderes Fachwissen gebraucht. Es wurden lediglich Stangen mit Haken und Sicheln benötigt, um das Seegras von den Felsen zu schneiden. Anschließend wurde es mit Pferden auf den Strand gebracht und zum Trocknen verteilt. Danach wurde es Schicht um Schicht in flachen, mit Steinen eingefassten Gruben, zu einer zähflüssigen Masse verbrannt. Wenn diese abgekühlt und ausgehärtet war, konnte sie in großen Barren verkauft werden. Vom nassen Seegras bis zum fertigen Produkt verlor Kelp etwa 95 Prozent seines ursprünglichen Gewichtes, weswegen es nur vor Ort am Strand produziert werden konnte. Die für das Sammeln und Brennen notwendigen Arbeitskräfte brauchten keine besonderen Qualifikationen und konnten leicht aus der Masse der landlosen und an die Küste umgesiedelten ehemaligen Kleinbauern angeworben werden. Auf der anderen Seite wurden soziale Mobilität und die Umsiedlung der Kleinbauern aus dem Landesinneren an die Küsten durch den ständig wachsenden Bedarf an Kelparbeitern ohne Zweifel gefördert. Die schnelle Expansion der Kelpindustrie wurde auch durch die häufigen Unterbrechungen der Zufuhr aus dem

Mittelmeerraum gefördert. Unter normalen Umständen hätte in Schottland produziertes Kelp aufgrund seiner geringeren Qualität nicht mit dem aus Spanien, den Kanarischen Inseln, Frankreich, Italien oder Sizilien konkurrieren können, aber wegen der häufigen Kriege in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts mussten sich die britische Glas- und Seifenindustrie nach Alternativen umsehen.

Anfänglich wussten die Insulaner den Wert des Seegrases zur Kelpproduktion noch gar nicht richtig einzuschätzen. John Walker berichtete, dass die Bewohner von Coll und Jura in den 1750igern und frühen 1760igern das Recht, an ihren Küsten Seegras zu schneiden, für nur zwei Guineen bzw. £10 Sterling an Engländer und Iren verkauft hätten, die dann 25 bzw. 40 Tonnen Kelp produziert und zu einem Preis von £3 bis £4 Sterling pro Tonne verkauft hätten. Solche Fehler, so schränkte Walker 1764 ein, würden nun nicht mehr gemacht, da die Insulaner mittlerweile den Wert des Seegrases erkannt hätten. Wie wertvoll das Seegras in den 1760igern und 1770igern wurde, zeigt sich auch daran, dass die Grundeigentümer ihren *tacksmen* und Pächtern zunehmend verboten, Seegras an den Küsten zu schneiden. So wollten sich die Grundeigentümer die alleinige Kontrolle über die Kelpproduktion und deren Profite sichern.

Die Kelpindustrie an der Westküste Schottlands erlebte ihren Höhepunkt in der Zeit von ca. 1793 bis 1815. Auf den Äußeren Hebriden avancierte Kelp zur Haupteinnahmequelle der Grundeigentümer, die daraus enorme Gewinne erzielten. Nach einem leichten Preisverfall in den späten 1780igern und frühen 1790igern stiegen die Preise durch die Kriege gegen Frankreich und Napoleon auf zeitweilig bis zu £20 Sterling pro Tonne im frühen 19. Jahrhundert. So z.B. betrug der Nettoverdienst von MacDonald of Clanranald, dem größten Grundbesitzer auf South Uist, im Jahr 1809 £10.047 Sterling. Der Nettoverdienst von Lord MacDonald, Eigentümer von North Uist, wurde im Jahr 1812 auf £14.000 Sterling geschätzt. Diese Zahlen waren allein die Nettoverdienste aus dem Verkauf von Kelp und die Grundbesitzer verdienten auch noch anderweitig am Kelpboom. Die Produktionskosten des Kelps schlugen mit weniger als einem Viertel der Erlöse zu Buche. Die steigenden Löhne für die Kelparbeiter verstanden die Grundbesitzer, sich über höhere Pachten für die kleinen *crofts* der Arbeiter zurückzuholen.

Insgesamt brachte der Kelpboom ungeheure Geldmengen auf die Hebriden, allerdings verschwanden diese fast ausschließlich in den Taschen der Großgrundbesitzer, derweil die Kelparbeiter kaum von dem Boom profitierten. Im Gegenteil, sie und die *crofters* gerieten in eine noch größere Abhängigkeit von ihren Grundherren, und die Ausbeutung und Unterdrückung der einfachen Leute verfestigte sich weiter, wie John Lanne Buchanan anhand von erschreckenden Beispielen aus den Jahren 1782-90 von den Äußeren Hebriden, dem Zentrum der Kelpindustrie, schilderte. Darüber hinaus hatte der Kelpboom auch noch andere Schattenseiten. Durch den Einsatz der *crofters* in den Sommermonaten in der Kelpindustrie entstanden schwere Schäden in der Landwirtschaft. Hebridenbesucher kritisierten immer wieder, dass die *crofters* ihre Äcker vernachlässigten und die landwirtschaftliche Produktion zurückging. Es mangelte vor allem an Dünger, da das bisher verwendete Seegras nun ausschließlich zu Kelp verarbeitet wurde.

1815 begann der rapide Verfall der schottischen Kelpindustrie. Nach der Niederlage Napoleons standen die Hebriden erneut scharfer Konkurrenz aus dem Mittelmeerraum gegenüber. Die Entdeckung großer Kaliumkarbonat-Vorkommen in Deutschland und die Entwicklung eines billigen chemischen Verfahrens, Soda aus Salz herzustellen, führten zu einem rapiden Preisverfall für Kelp von den Hebriden. Die Preise für qualitativ hochwertiges Kelp fielen innerhalb von 20 Jahren von £20 Sterling pro Tonne auf etwa £3 Sterling. Minderwertiges Kelp von den Hebriden ließ sich kaum noch verkaufen. Anfang der 1830er lohnte sich die Kelpproduktion auf den Hebriden nicht mehr und die Einnahmen der Grundbesitzer brachen endgültig weg. Nun rächte es sich bitter, dass sie es während der Boomjahre versäumt hatten, die Gewinne in ihre Ländereien zu reinvestieren und die Wirtschaft ihrer Großgüter zu diversifizieren. Der kurzfristige Preisverfall von Kelp in den späten 1780er und frühen 1790er hätte den Grundbesitzern eine Warnung sein müssen, wie anfällig dieser Wirtschaftszweig gegenüber der ausländischen Konkurrenz war und wie sehr die Hebriden auch anderer wirtschaftlicher Standbeine bedurft hätten. Das Ende des Kelpbooms traf Grundbesitzer und *crofters* gleichermaßen. Bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts wechselten fast alle Großgüter auf den Hebriden die Eigentümer. Auf den Äußeren Hebriden, dem ehemaligen Zentrum der Kelpindustrie, blieb keine einzige Insel in Familienbesitz. Die neuen Eigentümer, oftmals reiche englische oder

schottische Industrielle, hatten keine familiären Bindungen zu den noch verbliebenen Kleinbauern und Landarbeitern und es folgte eine weitere Welle von *clearances* und Emigration. Der fast 50 Jahre währende Kelpboom hätte eine große Chance für die Nordwestküste sein können, doch die mangelnde Weitsicht und grenzenlose Raffgier der Großgrundbesitzer verhinderten die dringend nötige Diversifikation der Wirtschaft.

8. Die Sitten und Bräuche der Hochländer

Der Reiz, andere Kulturen kennenzulernen, ist seit je einer der wesentlichen Gründe, in fremde Länder zu reisen und die Beobachtungen über die Sitten und Bräuche der Gastvölker gehören zu den interessantesten Themen der Reiseliteratur. Die Reiseberichte liefern einen wichtigen Beitrag zum Verständnis des alltäglichen Lebens in Schottland in der frühen Neuzeit. Die Beobachtungen fremder Besucher über die Sitten der Hochländer sind besonders interessant, weil deren gälische Kultur im wesentlichen auf einer mündlichen Überlieferung basierte, von der viel in der Zeit der *clearances* und Auswanderungen im späten 18. und 19. Jahrhundert verloren gegangen ist.

Schon beim Überqueren der Grenze von England nach Schottland stellten viele Reisende einen abrupten Wechsel im Aussehen der Menschen fest. So wiesen alle Schottlandbesucher darauf hin, dass die Frauen und Kinder auf dem Land in Schottland im Gegensatz zu den Engländern weder Schuhe noch Strümpfe trugen und stattdessen barfuß liefen. Viele fremde Besucher hielten dies zunächst für ein Zeichen von Armut. Bei genauerem Hinsehen stellten sie aber fest, dass die Frauen ihre Schuhe oftmals mit sich trugen und sie erst beim Betreten eines Dorfes oder einer Kirche anzogen. Auf Nachfragen versicherten die Schotten, dass sie sehr wohl Schuhe besäßen, es aber viel bequemer fänden, diese nur zu besonderen Anlässen zu tragen. Ebenso wunderten sich fast alle Besucher über die eigenartige Methode, wie die Schotten ihre Wäsche wuschen. Die Frauen stiegen dazu, manchmal auch zu zweit, in große Bottiche und trampelten mit ihren Füßen auf der Wäsche herum, bis sie sauber war. Dazu schürzten sie ihre Röcke hoch, was viele männliche Reisende

zwar als anstößig empfanden, ihnen aber trotzdem Freude bereitete. Solche Szenen, von Reisenden oftmals als „Caledonian washing“ oder „Scotch trampers“ bezeichnet, spielten sich im ganzen Land und zu jeder Jahreszeit ab.

Ein Problem für Reisende stellte die strenge Beachtung des Sonntags in Schottland dar. Wer es wagte, an einem Sonntag zu reisen, wurde oftmals als Sabbatbrecher verunglimpft. Viele Fähren fuhren an Sonntagen nicht, alle Sehenswürdigkeiten waren für Besucher geschlossen und in den meisten Gasthöfen wurden Fremde nicht bedient.⁷⁰ Für Reisende war der Sonntag gewöhnlich ein verlorener Tag, an dem selbst das Spaziergehen in der Umgebung des Gasthofes von vielen Einheimischen als anstößig empfunden wurde. Die Schotten selbst beachteten bis weit in die zweite Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts den Sonntag überaus streng und das öffentliche Leben stand faktisch still. Nach dem Gottesdienst gingen die Menschen nach Hause, wo sie sich im Eigenstudium der Bibel widmeten. Da aber selbst die einfachsten Tätigkeiten an Sonntagen als anstößig empfunden wurden, herrschten hinter den Mauern oftmals gähnende Langeweile und Müßiggang. Reisende berichteten immer wieder, dass sich die Männer an Sonntagen mangels anderer Beschäftigung ausgiebig der Flasche widmeten. Erst zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts wurde die Beachtung des Sabbats etwas gelockert, sie war aber im europäischen Vergleich immer noch überaus streng, wie Schottlandbesucher immer wieder betonten.

Während die im Tiefland lebenden Schotten sich bereits in mancherlei Hinsicht den Engländern angepasst hatten, so behielten die Hochländer wegen ihrer Abgeschlossenheit noch lange viele ihrer eigentümlichen Sitten. Manche Besucher beklagten das Desinteresse, mit dem die Tiefländer Fremden begegneten, derweil die Hochländer stets für ihre Aufgeschlossenheit und Neugierde gelobt wurden. Sie waren extrem gastfreundlich, luden Reisende oftmals in ihre Hütten ein und begleiteten sie anschließend meilenweit. Dabei vergaßen sie nie, die Fremden ausführlich über die aktuellen Geschehnisse außerhalb des Hochlandes auszufragen. Die außergewöhnliche Neugierde der Hochländer nach jeglicher Art von Neuigkeiten

⁷⁰ Auf den Äußeren Hebriden ruht das öffentliche Leben an Sonntagen bis in die Gegenwart. Bis Oktober 2002 gab es an Sonntagen keine Flug- oder Fährverbindungen nach Stornoway (Lewis). Die Einführung sonntäglicher Flüge nach Stornoway im Oktober 2002 wurde von der örtlichen *Free Church* heftig bekämpft. In ihren Augen verstießen die Flüge gegen die traditionelle Sabbatruhe und die Gebote Gottes.

ist ein immer wiederkehrendes Motiv in den Reiseberichten. Alle Reisenden stimmten darin überein, dass die Hochländer äußerst bescheidene Menschen wären und außer einem Schluck Whisky oder einem Stück Tabak keine Belohnungen für ihre Dienste und Gastfreundschaft annehmen würden. Schnupftabak kursierte so hoch in der Gunst der Hochländer, dass Reisenden immer wieder empfohlen wurde, sich vor Reisebeginn mit diesem Luxusgut zu versorgen, da es quasi als Ersatzwährung im Hochland galt.

Die Aufgeschlossenheit Fremden gegenüber ging manchmal so weit, dass die Hochländer vorbeiziehende Reisende spontan zu Hochzeiten oder Beerdigungen einluden. Dabei handelte es sich um Feiern in großem Stil, zu denen Verwandte und Freunde zahlreich erschienen. Besonders beliebt waren beim einfachen Volk die sogenannten *penny weddings*. Die Gäste brachten Sachgeschenke und Essen mit, so dass dem Brautpaar keine Kosten für die Hochzeitsfeier entstanden. Zusätzlich gaben die Gäste noch eine kleine Geldspende, die es dem Brautpaar anschließend erlauben sollte, einen eigenen Haushalt zu gründen. Auch Beerdigungen waren – trotz des traurigen Anlasses – ebenfalls größere Feste. Zunächst wurde ein Bote mit der Totenglocke durch die Straßen und Dörfer geschickt, um den Todesfall zu verkünden. Dabei nannte er den Namen und das Haus des Verstorbenen sowie den Zeitpunkt der Beerdigung. Am Abend vor der Beerdigung trafen sich Verwandte und Freunde des Verstorbenen in dessen Haus und erwiesen ihm mit der Totenwache die letzte Ehre. Während der Totenwache war es durchaus üblich, in einem Nebenraum ausgiebig zu essen und zu trinken, und zu fortgeschrittener Stunde wurde auch noch im Haus des Toten getanzt.⁷¹ Die Beerdigung selber war eine sehr schlichte Zeremonie, die von manchen Reisenden deswegen auch als würdelos empfunden wurde. Im Hochland hatten die Beerdigungen wichtiger Personen einen hohen gesellschaftlichen Stellenwert. Starb ein Angehöriger der Clanelite, so wurden neben den Verwandten auch die Oberen befreundeter Clane eingeladen. Eine Beerdigung diente auch der Zurschaustellung der Macht und bei den sich anschließenden mehrtägigen Feierlichkeiten wurde auch Clanpolitik gemacht. Das einfache Clanvolk war ebenfalls anwesend und wurde auf Kosten der Angehörigen des Verstorbenen

⁷¹ Bis ins frühe 20. Jahrhundert war es üblich, die Toten bis zur Beerdigung in ihren Wohnhäusern aufzubahren. Später wurde aus Gründen der Krankheits- und Seuchengefahr angeordnet, dass die Verstorbenen abgeholt und bis zur Beerdigung außer Haus aufbewahrt werden mussten.

ausgiebig verpflegt. Am Essen und Trinken der Trauergäste zu sparen war verpönt und galt dem Verstorbenen gegenüber als unwürdig. Die Teilnehmer an großen Beerdigungen im Hochland berichteten, dass es bei den anschließenden Treffen und Gelagen oftmals zu sehr hohem Alkoholkonsum und zu Handgemengen unter den Trauergästen kam.

Die Hochländer galten als besonders abergläubische Menschen und die Beschreibung ihrer abergläubischen Rituale nahm in der Reiseliteratur einen großen Stellenwert ein. Hierzu ist allerdings vorweg anzumerken, dass man nicht allen von den Reisenden beschriebenen Ritualen und Zeremonien Glauben schenken darf. Zum einen hatte das frühneuzeitliche Lesepublikum eine gewisse Erwartungshaltung an einen guten Reiseschriftsteller, die dieser mit entsprechenden Kuriositäten bedienen musste. Zum anderen diente die Schilderung fremdartiger und vermeintlich unzivilisierter Rituale auch dem Leser zur Selbstversicherung, dass er einer überlegenen und „zivilisierteren“ Welt angehört. Dennoch lassen sich aus der Masse der in den Reiseberichten beschriebenen Praktiken einige interessante auf Aberglauben basierende Rituale rekonstruieren, die auch von einheimischen Quellen bestätigt werden.

Ein großer Teil der im Hochland verbreiteten abergläubischen Rituale ging noch auf vorchristliche keltische Bräuche zurück. Zu ihnen zählten z.B. das *Beltane*⁷² oder die Ausführung vieler Handlungen im Uhrzeigersinn. Die Hochländer glaubten, dass Hexen an *Beltane* besonders aktiv wären und ihrem Vieh deshalb an diesem Tag besondere Gefahren drohten. Um es vor den böartigen Zaubern der Hexen zu schützen, wurden Feuer entzündet und die Tiere mit einer Mischung aus Urin und Dung besprüht. Auf die gleiche Weise versuchten die Hochländer auch ihre eigenen Hütten gegen böse Zauber zu schützen. Darüber hinaus stellten die einfachen Leute zum Schutz ihrer Herden auch noch verschiedene Trankopfer, wie z.B. mit Milch gefüllte Schalen, auf, um lokale Kobolde und Zauberesen zu besänftigen.⁷³ Ebenfalls aus druidisch vorchristlicher Zeit stammte die Angewohnheit der Hochländer, fast alle Tätigkeiten im Uhrzeigersinn auszuführen. Diesem Brauch lag

⁷² *Beltane* bezeichnet im schottischen und irischen Gälisch den Maitag.

⁷³ Die örtlichen Pfarrer der *Church of Scotland* waren angewiesen, solche Opfer zu unterbinden und die Opfersteine und Gefäße zu zerstören. Ihre Bemühungen hatten jedoch nur bedingt Erfolg, da die Einheimischen diese Opferrituale oft im Verborgenen vollzogen und vor der Kirche verschwiegen.

vermutlich die Imitation des Laufes der Sonne zugrunde. Bei den Prozessionen um die Kirche anlässlich von Hochzeiten, Taufen oder Beerdigungen achtete man streng darauf, im Uhrzeigersinn dem Lauf der Sonne zu folgen.

In der mündlich überlieferten Tradition des Hochlandes war zudem das „zweite Gesicht“ (*second sight*), die Fähigkeit, zukünftige Ereignisse vorherzusehen, besonders ausgeprägt. In den meisten Fällen wurden Unglücksfälle, Krankheiten und Todesfälle vorausgesagt. Dieses Phänomen interessierte die Wissenschaft im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert ganz besonders, aber außer Martin Martin, der selbst tief in der Kultur der Hebriden verwurzelt war, konnte kein Reisender glaubhafte Belege für dieses Phänomen vorlegen. Umso reichhaltiger sind allerdings die Beispiele vom Hörensagen, in denen angeblich zuverlässige Quellen die Richtigkeit solcher Voraussagen bestätigten. Abschließend lässt sich sagen, dass der Schutz des Viehes gegen Hexerei und den „bösen Blick“ im Mittelpunkt der meisten abergläubischen Rituale im Hochland stand. In einer bäuerlich geprägten Gesellschaft, in der die Tiere den wertvollsten Besitz der Menschen bildeten, waren solche Vorstellungen und Ängste allerdings nichts Ungewöhnliches.⁷⁴ Da die meisten Reisenden jedoch aus Städten oder wesentlich weiter entwickelten Regionen stammten und zudem über eine sehr gute Bildung verfügten, kamen ihnen solche Aberglauben und die zum Schutz vor Hexerei verwendeten Gegenmittel sehr fremd und „unzivilisiert“ vor.

Zusammenfassung

Die Berichte Schottlandreisender in der frühen Neuzeit sind eine faszinierende Quelle zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Landes. Dabei gehörte bis weit ins 18. Jahrhundert eine Menge Mut dazu, dieses mythische und weitgehend unbekanntes Land zu besuchen. Bis in die Zeit der Aufklärung war das Image der Schotten noch von Mythen dominiert, deren Ursprünge oft bis weit ins Mittelalter zurückreichten. Über das Leben der Hochländer grassierten besonders hartnäckige und böartige Vorurteile und es dauerte dementsprechend lange, bis sich Reisende freiwillig in das Hochland begaben. Erst mit der Romantik vollzog sich ein grundlegender

⁷⁴ Manche der im Hochland im 18. Jahrhundert noch üblichen Rituale lassen sich auch in den entlegenen und weniger entwickelten Regionen Englands für diese Zeit noch nachweisen.

Imagewandel. Die bisher als primitiv und bösartig verteufelten Hochländer wurden nun als „edle Wilde“ betrachtet und die wilde Bergwelt des Hochlandes wurde zum Landschaftsideal der Romantik.

Allerdings bekamen die Besucher im späten 18. Jahrhundert nicht mehr viel von der traditionellen Lebensweise im Hochland mit, da sich die Region in einem fundamentalen sozioökonomischen Umbruch befand. Die Clane lösten sich auf, weil die Clanoberhäupter Marktwirtschaft und Profitdenken über das Wohl ihrer Clanangehörigen stellten. Die Hochlandbesucher wurden Zeugen, wie neue Industriezweige, z.B. die extensive Schafzucht oder die Kelpindustrie, die über Jahrhunderte gewachsene Siedlungs- und Wirtschaftsstruktur des Hochlandes innerhalb weniger Jahrzehnte zerstörten. Die Kleinbauern im Landesinneren mussten den neuen Schafrassen weichen und wurden als billige, weitestgehend rechtlose Arbeitskräfte an die Küsten umgesiedelt. Eine wirkliche Chance zum Neuanfang bekamen sie nicht. Die staatliche Förderung der Fischerei erwies sich als Fehlschlag und als der kurzlebige Kelpboom vorüber war, wurden sie erneut von ihrem Boden vertrieben und in die Emigration gezwungen. Mit dem Zerfall der Clane und dem Strukturwandel im Hochland ging auch ein großer Teil der auf mündlicher Überlieferung beruhenden gälischen Kultur der Hochländer verloren.

Die Reiseberichte der Hochlandbesucher aus dem 17. und 18. Jahrhundert zeigen aus vielen verschiedenen Perspektiven das Leben im Hochland und den schleichenden Verfall des letzten großen, zusammenhängenden keltischen Kulturraumes in Europa. Im Gegensatz zu der bislang vorliegenden Literatur über Schottlandreisen konnte jetzt das Leben im schottischen Hochland sehr viel detaillierter und damit auch verständlicher dargestellt werden. Dabei kommt dem Hochland und den Hebriden auch erstmalig die Bedeutung zu, die sie als eigenständiger Wirtschafts- und Kulturraum schon früher in der Analyse der Reiseberichte als Quellen zur Wirtschafts-, Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte verdient hätten.