

### **Scottish Emigration During the Eighteenth Century.**

The emigration from the Highlands to America was so pronounced that the Scottish papers, notably the "Edinburgh Evening Courant," the "Caledonian Mercury," and the "Scots Magazine," made frequent reference and bemoan its prevalence. It was even felt in London, for the "Gentleman's Magazine" was also forced to record it. While all these details may not be of great interest, yet to obtain a fair idea of this movement, some record will be of service.

1769. The "Scots Magazine," for September 1769, records that the ship Molly sailed from Islay on August 21st of that year full of passengers to settle in North Carolina; which was the third emigration from Argyle "since the close of the late war." A subsequent issue of the same paper states that fifty-four vessels full of emigrants from the Western Islands and other parts of the Highlands sailed for North Carolina, between April and July 1770, conveying twelve hundred emigrants. Early in 1771, according to the "Scots Magazine," there were five hundred emigrants from Islay, and the adjacent Islands, preparing to sail in the following summer for America "under the conduct of a gentleman of wealth and merit whose predecessors resided in Islay for many centuries past." The paper farther notes that "there is a large colony of the most wealthy and substantial people in Skye making ready to follow the example of the Argathelians in going to the fertile and cheap lands on the other side of the Atlantic ocean. It is to be dreaded that these migrations will prove hurtful to the mother country; and therefore its friends ought to use every proper method to prevent them." These Skye men to the number of three hundred and seventy, in due time left for America. The September issue states that "several of them are people of property who intend making purchases of land in America. The late great rise of the rents in the Western Islands of Scotland is said to be the reason of this emigration."

1772. The "Scots Magazine" states that the ship Adventure sailed from Loch Erribol, Sunday August 17, 1772, with upwards of two hundred emigrants from Sutherlandshire for North Carolina. There were several emigrations from Sutherlandshire that year. In June eight families arrived in Greenock, and two other contingents—one of one hundred and the other of ninety souls—were making their way to the same place en route to America. The cause of this emigration they assign to be want of the means of livelihood at home, through the opulent graziers engrossing the farms, and turning them into pasture. Several contributions have been made for these poor people in towns through which they passed.

1773. During the year 1773, emigrants from all parts of the Highlands sailed for America. The "Courant" of April 3, 1773, reports that "the unlucky spirit of emigration" had not diminished, and that several of the inhabitants of Skye, Lewis, and other places were preparing to emigrate to America during the coming summer "and seek for the sustenance abroad which they allege they cannot find at home." In its issue for July 3, 1773, the same paper states that eight hundred people from Skye were then preparing to go to North Carolina and that they had engaged a vessel at Greenock to carry them across the Atlantic. In the issue of the same paper

for September 15th, same year, appears the gloomy statement that the people of Badenoch and Lochaber were in "a most pitiful situation for want of meal. They were reduced to live on blood which they draw from their cattle by repeated bleedings. Need we wonder to hear of emigrations from such a country." On September 1, 1773, according to the "Courant," a ship sailed from Fort William for America with four hundred and twenty-five men, women, and children, all from Knoydart, Lochaber, Appin, Mamore, and Fort William. "They were the finest set of fellows in the Highlands. It is allowed they carried at least £6000 sterling in ready cash with them; so that by this emigration the country is not only deprived of its men, but likewise of its wealth. The extravagant rents started by the landlords is the sole cause given for this spirit of emigration which seems to be only in its infancy." On September 29, 1773, the "Courant," after stating that there were from eight to ten vessels chartered to convey Highland emigrants during that season across the Atlantic, adds: "Eight hundred and forty people sailed from Lewis in July. Alarmed with this Lord Fortrose, their master, came down from London about five weeks ago to treat with the remainder of his tenants. What are the terms they asked of him, think you? 'The land at the old rents; the augmentation paid for three years backward to be refunded; and his factor to be immediately dismissed.'" The "Courant" added that unless these terms were conceded the island of Lewis would soon be an uninhabited waste. Notwithstanding the visit of lord Fortrose, emigration went on. The ship Neptune with one hundred and fifty emigrants from Lewis arrived in New York on August 23, 1773; and, according to the "Scots Magazine," between seven hundred and eight hundred emigrants sailed from Stornoway for America on June 23rd, of the same year.

1773. The "Courant" for September 25, 1773, in a communication from Dornoch, states that on the 10th of that month there sailed from Dornoch Firth, the ship Nancy, with two hundred and fifty emigrants from Sutherlandshire for New York. The freight exceeded 650 guineas. In the previous year a ship from Sutherlandshire paid a freight of 650 guineas.

1773. In October 1773, three vessels with seven hundred and seventy-five emigrants from Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, sailed from Stromness for America.

1773. The "Courant" for November 10, 1773, records that fifteen hundred people had left the county of Sutherland for America within the two preceding years. The passage money cost £3 10s each, and it was computed that on an average every emigrant brought £4 with him. "This amounts to £7500, which exceeds a year's rent of the whole county."

1775. The "Gentleman's Magazine" for June 30, 1775, states that "four vessels, containing about seven hundred emigrants, have sailed for America from Port Glasgow and Greenock, in the course of the present month, most of them from the north Highlands." The same journal for September 23rd, same year, says, "The ship Jupiter from Dunstaffnage Bay, with two hundred emigrants on board, chiefly from Argyshire, set sail for North Carolina. They declare the oppressions of their landlords are such that they can no longer submit to them."