

## THE DARIEN SCHEME.

Source: *An Historical Account of the Settlements of Scotch Highlanders in America* by J. P. MacLean

The first body of Highlanders to arrive in the New World was as much military as civil. Their lines were cast in evil waters, and disaster awaited them. They formed a very essential part of a colony that engaged in what has been termed the Darien Scheme, which originated in 1695, and so mismanaged as to involve thousands in ruin, many of whom had enjoyed comparative opulence. Although this project did not materially affect the Highlands of Scotland, yet as Highland money entered the enterprise, and as quite a body of Highlanders perished in the attempted colonization of the isthmus of Panama, more than a passing notice is here demanded.

Scottish people have ever been noted for their caution, frugality, and prudence, and not prone to engage in any speculation unless based on the soundest business principles. Although thus characterized, yet this people engaged in the most disastrous speculation on record; established by act of the Scottish parliament, and begun by unprecedented excitement. The leading cause which impelled the people headlong into this catastrophe was the ruination of the foreign trade of Scotland by the English Navigation Act of 1660, which provided that all trade with the English colonies should be conducted in English ships alone. Any scheme plausibly presented was likely to catch those anxious to regain their commercial interests, as well as those who would be actuated to increase their own interests. The Massacre of Glencoe had no little share in the matter. This massacre, which occurred February 13, 1692, is the foulest blot in the annals of crime. It was deliberately planned by Sir John Dalrymple and others, ordered by king William, and executed by Captain Robert Campbell of Glenlyon, in the most treacherous, brutal, atrocious, and bloodthirsty manner imaginable, and perpetrated without the shadow of a reasonable excuse—infancy and old age, male and female alike perished. The bare recital of it is awful; and the barbarity of the American savage pales before it. In every quarter, even at court, the account of the massacre was received with horror and indignation. The odium of the nation rose to a great pitch, and demanded that an inquiry be made into this atrocious affair. The appointment of a commission was not wrung from the unwilling king until April 29, 1695. The commission, as a whole, acted with great fairness, although they put the best possible construction on the king's order, and threw the whole blame on Secretary Dalrymple. The king was too intimately connected with the crime to make an example of any one, although through public sentiment he was forced to dismiss Secretary Dalrymple. Not one of those actually engaged in the perpetration of the crime were dismissed from the army, or punished for the butchery, otherwise than by the general hatred of the age in which they lived, and the universal execration of posterity. The tide of feeling set in against king William, and before it had time to ebb the Darien Scheme was projected. The friends of William seized the opportunity to persuade him that some freedom and facilities of trade should be granted the Scotch, and that would divert public attention from the Glencoe massacre. Secretary Dalrymple also was not slow to give it the support of his eloquence and interest, in hopes to regain thereby a part of his lost popularity.

The originator of the Darien Scheme was William Paterson, founder of the Bank of England, a man of comprehensive views and great sagacity, born in Scotland, a missionary in the Indies, and a buccaneer among the West India islands. During his roving course of life he had visited the isthmus of Panama—then called Darien—and brought away only pleasant recollections of that narrow strip of land that unites North and South America. On his return to Europe his first plan was the national establishment of the Bank of England. For a brief period he was admitted as a director in that institution, but it befell to Paterson that

others possessed of wealth and influence, interposed and took advantage of his ideas, and then excluded him from the concern. Paterson next turned his thoughts to the plan of settling a colony in America, and handling the trade of the Indies and the South Seas. The trade of Europe with the remote parts of Asia had been carried on by rounding the Cape of Good Hope. Paterson believed that the shorter, cheaper, and more expeditious route was by the isthmus of Panama, and, as he believed, that section of the country had not been occupied by any of the nations of Europe; and as it was specially adapted for his enterprise it should be colonized. He averred that the havens were capacious and secure; the sea swarmed with turtle; the country so mountainous, that though within nine degrees of the equator, the climate was temperate; and yet roads could be easily constructed along which a string of mules, or a wheeled carriage might in the course of a single day pass from sea to sea. Fruits and a profusion of valuable herbs grew spontaneously, on account of the rich black soil, which had a depth of seven feet; and the exuberant fertility of the soil had not tainted the purity of the atmosphere. As a place of residence alone, the isthmus was a paradise; and a colony there could not fail to prosper even if its wealth depended entirely on agriculture. This, however, would be only a secondary matter, for within a few years the entire trade between India and Europe would be drawn to that spot. The merchant was no longer to expose his goods to the capricious gales of the Antarctic Seas, for the easier, safer, cheaper route must be navigated, which was shortly destined to double the amount of trade. Whoever possessed that door which opened both to the Atlantic and Pacific, as the shortest and least expensive route would give law to both hemispheres, and by peaceful arts would establish an empire as splendid as that of Cyrus or Alexander. If Scotland would occupy Darien she would become the one great free port, the one great warehouse for the wealth that the soil of Darien would produce, and the greater wealth which would be poured through Darien, India, China, Siam, Ceylon, and the Moluccas; besides taking her place in the front rank among nations. On all the vast riches that would be poured into Scotland a toll should be paid which would add to her capital; and a fabulous prosperity would be shared by every Scotchman from the peer to the cadie. Along the desolate shores of the Forth Clyde villas and pleasure grounds would spring up; and Edinburgh would vie with London and Paris. These glowing prospects at first were only partially disclosed to the public, and the name of Darien was unpronounced save only to a few of Paterson's most confidential friends. A mystery pervaded the enterprise, and only enough was given out to excite boundless hopes and desires. He succeeded admirably in working up a sentiment and desire on the part of the people to become stockholders in the organization. The hour for action had arrived; so on June 26, 1695, the Scottish parliament granted a statute from the Crown, for creating a corporate body or stock company, by name of the Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies, with power to plant colonies and build forts in places not possessed by other European nations, the consent of the inhabitants of the places they settled being obtained. The amount of capital was not fixed by charter, but it was stipulated that at least one-half the stock must be held by Scotchmen resident in Scotland, and that no stock originally so held should ever be transferred to any but Scotchmen resident in Scotland. An entire monopoly of the trade with Asia, Africa, and America was granted for a term of thirty-one years, and all goods imported by the company during twenty-one years, should be admitted duty free, except sugar and tobacco, unless grown on the company's plantations. Every member and servant of the company were privileged against arrest and imprisonment, and if placed in durance, the company was authorized to invoke both the civil and military power. The Great Seal was affixed to the Act; the books were opened; the shares were fixed at £100 sterling each; and every man from the Pentland Firth to the Galway Firth who could command the amount was impatient to put down his name. The whole kingdom apparently had gone mad. The number of shareholders were about fourteen hundred. The books were opened February 26, 1696, and the very first subscriber was Anne, dutchess of Hamilton. On that day there was



subscribed £50,400. By the end of March the greater part of the amount had been subscribed. On March 5th, a separate book was opened in Glasgow and on it was entered £56,325. The books were closed August 3rd of the same year, and on the last day of subscriptions there was entered £14,125, reaching the total of £400,000, the amount apportioned to Scotland. The cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, in their corporate capacity, each took £3,000 and Perth £2,000. Of the subscriptions there were eight of £3,000 each; eight of £2,000 each; two of £1,500, and one each of £1,200 and £1,125; ninety-seven of £1,000 each; but the great majority consisted of £100 or £200 each. The whole amount actually paid up was £220,000. This may not seem to be a large amount for such a country as Scotland, but as already noted, the country had been ruined by the English Act of 1660. There were five or six shires which did not altogether contain as many guineas and crowns as were tossed about every day by the shovels of a single goldsmith in Lombard street. Even the nobles had but very little money, for a large part of their rents was taken in kind; and the pecuniary remuneration of the clergy was such as to move the pity of the most needy, of the present; yet some of these had invested their all in hopes that their children might be benefited when the golden harvest should come. Deputies in England received subscriptions to the amount of £300,000; and the Dutch and Hamburgers subscribed £200,000.

Those Highland chiefs who had been considered as turbulent, and are so conspicuous in the history of the day have no place in this record of a species of enterprise quite distinct from theirs. The houses of Argyle, Athol, and Montrose appear in the list, as families who, besides their Highland chiefships, had other stakes and interests in the country; but almost the only person with a Highland patronymic was John MacPharlane of that ilk, a retired scholar who followed antiquarian pursuits in the libraries beneath the Parliament House. The Keltic prefix of "Mac" is most frequently attached to merchants in Inverness, who subscribed their hundred.

It is probable that a list of Highlanders who subscribed stock may be of interest in this connection. Only such names as are purely Highland are here subjoined with amounts given, and also in the order as they appear on the books:[13]

26 February, 1696:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| John Drummond of Newtoun                                     | £600 |
| Adam Gordon of Dalphollie                                    | 500  |
| Master James Campbell, brother-german to the Earle of Argyle | 500  |
| John McPharlane of that ilk                                  | 200  |
| Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstown                             | 400  |
| Sir Colin Campbell of Ardkinlass                             | 500  |
| Mr. Gilbert Campbell, son to Colin Campbell of Soutar house  | 400  |

27 February, 1696:

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| John Robertson, merchant in Edinburgh | 300 |
|---------------------------------------|-----|

Matthew St. Clair, Doctor of Medicine 500

Daniel Mackay, Writer in Edinburgh 200

Mr. Francis Grant of Cullen, Advocate 100

Duncan Forbes of Culloden 200

Arthur Forbes, younger of Echt 200

George Southerland, merchant in Edinburgh 200

Kenneth McKenzie of Cromartie 500

Major John Forbes 200

28 February, 1696:

William Robertstone of Gladney 1,000

Mungo Graeme of Gorthie 500

Duncan Campbell of Monzie 500

James Mackenzie, son to the Viscount of Tarbat 1,000

2 March, 1696:

Jerome Robertson, periwig maker, burgess of Edinburgh 100

3 March 1696:

David Robertstone, Vintner in Edinburgh 200

William Drummond, brother to Thomas Drummond of Logie Almond 500

4 March, 1696:

Sir Humphrey Colquhoun of Luss 400

5 March, 1696:

James Robertson, tylor in Canonget 100

Sir Thomas Murray of Glendoick 1,000

6 March, 1696:

Alexander Murray, son to John Murray of Touchadam, and deputed by him 300

7 March 1696:



John Gordon, Captain in Lord Stranraer's Regiment 100

Samuell McLelland, merchant in Edinburgh 500

11 March 1696:

Aeneas McLeod, Town-Clerk of Edinburgh, in name and behalfe of George Viscount of Tarbat, and as having commission from him £1000

17 March, 1696:

John Menzies, Advocate 200

William Menzies, merchant in Edinburgh 1000

19 March, 1696:

James Drummond, Writer in Edinburgh, deputed by Mr. John Graham of Aberuthven 100

Gilbert Campbell, merchant in Edinburgh, son to Colline Campbell of Soutar Houses 200

Gilbert Campbell, merchant in Edinburgh, son to Colline Campbell of Soutar Houses 100

Daniel McKay, Writer in Edinburgh, deputed by Captain Hugh McKay, younger of Borley 300

Patrick Campbell, Writer in Edinburgh, deputed by Captain Leonard Robertsone of Straloch 100

20 March, 1696:

Alexander Murray, son to George Murray of Touchadam deputed by him 200

Sir Colin Campbell of Aberuchill, one of the Senators of the Colledge of Justice 500

Andrew Robertson, chyrurgeon in Edinburgh, deputed by George Robertstone, younger, merchant in Glasgow 100

Andrew Robertson, chyrurgeon in Edinburgh 100

James Gregorie, student 100

George Earle of Southerland 1000

21 March, 1696:

John McFarlane, Writer to the Signet 200

23 March, 1696:

John Forbes, brother-german to Samuell Forbes of Fovrain, deputed by the said Samuell Forbes 1000

John Forbes, brother-german to Samuell Forbes of Fovrain 50

James Gregory, Professor of Mathematiques in the Colledge of Edinburgh 200

24 March 1696:

Patrick Murray of Livingstoun 600

Ronald Campbell, Writer to his Majesty's Signet, as having deputation from Alexander Gordoun, son to Alexander Gordoun, minister at Inverary 100

William Graham, merchant in Edinburgh 200

David Drummond, Advocate, deputed by Thomas Graeme of Balgowan 600

David Drummond, Advocate, deputed by John Drummond of Culqupalzie 600

25 March, 1696:

John Murray of Deuchar 800

Sir Robert Sinclair of Stevenstoun 400

John Sinclair of Stevenstoun 400

26 March, 1696:

Helen Drummond, spouse to Colonel James Ferguson as commissionate by him 200

James Murray of Sundhope 100

John Drummond of Newtoun 400

John Drummond of Newtoun, for John Stewart of Dalguis, conform to deputation 100

March 27:

Alexander Johnstoune of Elshieshells 400

John Forbes, brother-german to Samuell Forbes of Fovrain, conform to one deputation by Captain James Stewart, in Sir John Hill's regiment. Governor of Fort William 100

Thomas Forbes of Watertoun 200

William Ross, merchant in Edinburgh 100

Rachell Johnstoun, relict of Mr. Robert Baylie of Jerviswood 200

March 28:

John Fraser, servitor to Alexander Innes, merchant 100

Mr. John Murray, Senior Advocate 100



John Stewart, Writer in Clerk Gibsone's chamber 100

Mr. Gilbert Campbell, merchant in Edinburgh, son to Colline Campbell of Soutar Houses 200

Mr. Gilbert Campbell, merchant in Edinburgh, son to Colline Campbell of Soutar Houses, (more) 100

James Gordon, Senior, merchant in Aberdeen 250

Thomas Gordon, skipper in Leith 100

Adam Gordon of Dulpholly 500

Colin Campbell of Lochlan 200

Thomas Graeme of Balgowane, by virtue of a deputation from David Graeme of Kilor 200

Patrick Coutts, merchant in Edinburgh, being deputed by Alexander Robertsone, merchant in Dundie 200

David Drummond, of Cultimalindie 600

John Drummond, brother of David Drummond of Cultimalindi 200

30 March, 1696:

James Marquess of Montrose 1000

John Murray, doctor of medicine, for Mr. James Murray, Chirurgion in Perth, conform to a deputation 200

William Stewart, doctor of medicine at Perth 100

Patrick Campbell, Writer in Edinburgh, being depute by Helen Steuart, relict of Doctor Murray 100

James Drummond, one of the Clerks to the Bills, being deputed by James Meinzie of Shian 100

Robert Stewart, Junior, Advocate 300

Master Donald Robertsone, minister of the Gospel 100

Duncan Campbell of Monzie, by deputation from John Drummond of Culquhalzie 100

John Marquess of Athole 500

John Haldane of Gleneagles, deputed by James Murray at Orchart Milne 100

Thomas Johnstone, merchant in Edinburgh 100

William Meinzie, merchant in Edinburgh 1000

Alexander Forbes of Tolquhon 500

|  |      |  |
|--|------|--|
| Robert Murray, merchant in Edinburgh   | 200  |  |
| Walter Murray, merchant in Edinburgh   | 100  |  |
| Master Arthur Forbes, son of the Laird of Cragivar                               | 100  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate  | 100  |  |
| Barbara Fraser, relict of George Stirling, Chirurgion apothecary in Edinburgh    | 200  |  |
| Alexander Johnston, merchant in Edinburgh  | 100  |  |
| Sir Robert Sinclair of Stevenstoun, for Charles Sinclair, Advocate, his son      | 100  |  |
| The said Thomas Scott, deputed by Patrick Ogilvie of Balfour                     | 400  |  |
| The said Thomas Scott, deputed by Thomas Robertson, merchant there (i.e. Dundee) | 125  |  |
| The said Thomas Scott, deputed by David Drummond, merchant in Dundee             | 100  |  |
| Mrs. Anne Stewart, daughter to the deceased John Stewart of Kettlestoun          | 100  |  |
| 31 March, 1696:  |      |  |
| Sir Archibald Murray of Blackbarrony   | 500  |  |
| William Stewart, clerk to his Majesty's Customs at Leith                         | 100  |  |
| Christian Grierson, daughter to the deceased John Grierson                       | 100  |  |
| Jesper Johnstoun of Waristoun  | 500  |  |
| Alexander Forbes, goldsmith in Edinburgh   | 200  |  |
| Master John Campbell, Writer to the Signet                                       | 200  |  |
| Thomas Campbell, flesher in Edinburgh  | 200  |  |
| Archibald Earle of Argyll  | 1500 |  |
| James Campbell, brother-german to the Earle of Argyll                            | 200  |  |
| William Johnston, postmaster of Hadingtoun                                       | £100 |  |
| Sir James Murray of Philiphaugh  | 500  |  |
| Andrew Murray, brother to Sundhope   | 100  |  |
| William McLean, master of the Revelles   | 100  |  |
| John Cameron, son to the deceased Donald Cameron, merchant in Edinburgh          | 100  |  |



|   |      |  |
|---|------|--|
| David Forbes, Advocate  | 200  |  |
| Captain John Forbes of Forbestoune  | 200  |  |
| Afternoon:  |      |  |
| Sir Alexander Monro of Bearcrofts   | 200  |  |
| James Gregorie, student of medicine   | 100  |  |
| Mungo Campbell of Burnbank  | 400  |  |
| John Murray, junior, merchant in Edinburgh  | 400  |  |
| Robert Murray, burges in Edinburgh  | 150  |  |
| Dougall Campbell of Sadell  | 100  |  |
| Ronald Campbell, Writer to his Majesty's Signet   | 200  |  |
| Alexander Finlayson, Writer in Edinburgh  | 100  |  |
| John Steuart, Writer in Edinburgh   | 100  |  |
| William Robertson, one of the sub-clerks of the Session                                     | 100  |  |
| Lady Neil Campbell  | 200  |  |
| Mary Murray, Lady Enterkin, elder   | 200  |  |
| Sir George Campbell of Cesnock  | 1000 |  |
| 7 April:  |      |  |
| Thomas Robertson of Lochbank  | 400  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for Hugh Robertson, Provost of Inverness, conform to deputation    | 100  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for James McLean, baillie of Invernes, conform to deputation       | 100  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for John McIntosh, baillie of Invernes, conform to deputation      | 100  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for Alexander McLeane, merchant of Invernes, conform to deputation | 150  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for Robert Rose, late baillie of Invernes, conform to deputation   | 140  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for Alexander Stewart, skipper at Invernes, conform to deputation  | 150  |  |
| Robert Fraser, Advocate, for William Robertson of Inshes, conform to deputation             | 100  |  |
| 9 April, 1696:  |      |  |

James Drummond, one of the Clerks of the Bills, for Robert Menzies, in Aberfadie, conform to deputation 100

John Drummond of Newtoun, depute by John Menzies of Camock, Advocate 200

Archibald Sinclair, Advocate 100

Patrick Campbell, Writer in Edinburgh £100

John Murray, doctor of medicine, for William Murray of Arbony, by virtue of his deputation 200

Colen Campbell of Bogholt 100

William Gordone, Writer in Edinburgh 100

14 Apryle:

The said Thomas Halliday, Conform to deputation from William Ogilvie in Todshawhill 100

16 Aprill:

Patrick Murray, lawful son to Patrick Murray of Killor 100

Walter Murray, servitor to George Clerk, junior, merchant in Edinburgh, deputed by Robert Murray of Levelands 150

John Campbell, Writer to the Signet, for Alexander Campbell, younger of Calder, conform to deputation 500

Captain James Drummond of Comrie 200

April 21:

James Cuming, merchant in Edinburgh 100

James Campbell of Kinpout 100

James Drummond, Under-Clerk to the Bills, depute by Archibald Meinzie of Myln of Kiltney 100

Robert Blackwood, deputed by John Gordon of Collistoun, doctor of medicine 100

Robert Blackwood, merchant in Edinburgh, deputed by Charles Ogilvy, merchant and late baillie of Montrose 200

James Ramsay, writer in Edinburg, commission at by Duncan Campbell of Duneaves 100

Captain Patrick Murray, of Lord Murray's regiment of foot 100

May 5, 1696.

John Haldane of Gleneagles, conform to deputation from Thomas Grahame in Auchterarder 100



John Drummond of Newtoun, depute by David Graeme of Jordanstoun 100

Samuel McLellan, merchant in Dundee, conform to deputation from William Stewart of Castle Stewart  
100

May 14, 1696.

Andrew Robertstone, chirurgeon in Edinburgh, conform to deputation by George Robertstone, Writer in  
Dunblane 100

May 21, 1696.

John Drummond of Newtoun, for Lodovick Drummond, chamberland to my Lord Drummond 100

May 26, 1696.

Thomas Drummond of Logie Almond £500

June 2, 1696.

Robert Fraser, Advocate, by virtue of a deputation from Robert Cuming of Relugas, merchant of Inverness  
100

Robert Fraser, Advocate, in name of William Duff of Dyple, merchant of Inverness 100

Robert Fraser, Advocate, in name of Alexander Duffe of Drumuire, merchant of Inverness 100

June 4, 1696.

John Haldane of Gleneagles, depute by John Graham, son to John Graham, clerk to the chancellery  
100

Adam Drummond of Meginch 200

18.

Agnes Campbell, relict of Andrew Anderson, his Majesty's printer 100

July 10.

John Drummond of Newtoun, for Dame Margaret Graham, Lady Kinloch 200

John Drummond of Newtoun 200

James Menzies of Schian 100

Mungo Graeme of Garthie 200

21.

Sir Alexander Cumyng of Culter 200

31.

Mr. George Murray, doctor of physick 200

Patrick Campbell, brother to Monzie 100

August 1.

James Lord Drummond 1000

Friday, 6 March, 1696.

John Drummond of Newtoun 1125

Saturday, 7 March, 1696.

John Graham, younger of 1000

Daniel Campbell, merchant in Glasgow 1000

George Robinsoune, belt-maker in Glasgow 100

John Robinsoune, hammerman in Glasgow 100

John Robertson, junior, merchant in Glasgow 500

Munday, 9 March, 1696.

Mattheu Cuming, junior, merchant in Glasgow 1000

William Buchanan, merchant in Glasgow 100

Marion Davidson, relict of Mr. John Glen, Minister of the Gospel 100

James Johnstoun, merchant in Glasgow 200

Thomas Johnstoun, merchant in Glasgow 200

George Johnston, merchant in Glasgow £200

John Buchanan, merchant in Glasgow 100

John Grahame, younger of Dougaldstoun 1,000

Tuesday, 10 March, 1696.

Neill McVicar, tanner in Glasgow 100

George Buchanan, Maltman in Glasgow 100

Saturday, 21 March, 1696.



Archibald Cambell, merchant in Glasgow 100

Tuesday, 24 March, 1696.

John Robertstone, younger, merchant in Glasgow, for Robert Robertstone, second lawfull sone to Umqll  
James Robertstone, merchant in Glasgow 100

Tuesday, March 31, 1696.

Mungo Campbell of Nether Place 100

Hugh Campbell, merchant, son to deceast Sir Hugh Campbell of Cesnock 100

Matthew Campbell of Waterhaugh 100

Thursday, Agr the 2d of Aprille.

Mungo Campbell, merchant in Ayr 100

David Fergusone, merchant in Ayr 100

Wednesday the 15th day, 1696.

Captain Charles Forbes, of Sir John Hill's regiment 200

Captain James Menzies, of Sir John Hill's regiment 100

Captain Francis Ferquhar, of Sir John Hill's regiment 100

Thursday, 16 Aprile, 1696.

Captain Charles Forbes, of Sir John Hill's regiment 200

Fryday, 17 Aprile.

Lieutenant Charles Ross, of Sir John Hill's regiment 100

It is more than probable that some names should not be inserted above, as the name Graeme, for it may belong to the clan Graham of the Highlands, or else to the debateable land, near Carlisle, which is more likely. We know that where they had made themselves adverse to both sides, they were forced to emigrate in large numbers. Some of them settled near Bangor, in the county of Down, Ireland. How large a per cent, of the subscribers who lived in the lowlands, and born out of the Highlands, would be impossible to determine. Then names of parties, born in the Highlands and of Gaelic blood have undoubtedly been omitted owing to change of name. By the change in spelling of the name, it would indicate that some had left Ulster where their forefathers had settled, and taken up their residence in Scotland. It will also be noticed that the clans bordering the Grampians were most affected by the excitement while others seemingly did not even feel the breeze.

The Darien Scheme at best was but suppositious, for no experiment had been tried in order to forecast a realization of what was expected. There was, it is true, a glitter about it, but there were materials within

the reach of all from which correct data might have been obtained. It seems incredible that men of sound judgment should have risked everything, when they only had a vague or general idea of Paterson's plans. It was also a notorious fact that Spain claimed sovereignty over the Isthmus of Panama, and, even if she had not, it was unlikely that she would tolerate such a colony, as was proposed, in the very heart of her transatlantic dominions. Spain owned the Isthmus both by the right of discovery and possession; and the very country which Paterson had described in such radiant colors had been found by the Castilian settlers to be a land of misery and of death; and on account of the poisonous air they had been compelled to remove to the neighboring haven of Panama. All these facts, besides others, might easily have been ascertained by members of the Company.

As has already been intimated, the Scots alone were not drawn into this vortex of wild excitement, and are no more to be held responsible for the delusion than some of other nationalities. The English people were seized with the dread of Scottish prosperity resulting from the enterprise, and England's jealousy of trade at once interfered to crush an adventure which seemed so promising. The English East India Company instigated a cry, echoed by the city of London, and taken up by the nation, which induced their parliament, when it met for the first time, after the elections of 1695, to give its unequivocal condemnation to the scheme. One peer declared, "If these Scots are to have their way I shall go and settle in Scotland, and not stay here to be made a beggar." The two Houses of Parliament went up together to Kensington and represented to the king the injustice of requiring England to exert her power in support of an enterprise which, if successful, must be fatal to her commerce and to her finances. William replied in plain terms that he had been illy-treated in Scotland, but that he would try to find a remedy for the evil which had been brought to his attention. At once he dismissed Lord High Commissioner Tweeddale and Secretary Johnston; but the Act which had been passed under their management still continued to be law in Scotland.

The Darien Company might have surmounted the opposition of the English parliament and the East India Company, had not the Dutch East India Company—a body remarkable for its monopolizing character—also joined in the outcry against the Scottish enterprise; incited thereto by the king through Sir Paul Rycaut, the British resident at Hamburg, directing him to transmit to the senate of that commercial city a remonstrance on the part of king William, accusing them of having encouraged the commissioners of the Darien Company; requesting them to desist from doing so; intimating that the plan had not the king's support; and a refusal to withdraw their countenance from the scheme would threaten an interruption to his friendship with the good city of Hamburg. The result of this interference was the almost total withdrawal of the Dutch and English subscriptions, which was accelerated by the threatened impeachment, by the English parliament, of such persons who had subscribed to the Company; and, furthermore, were compelled to renounce their connection with the Company, besides misusing some native-born Scotchmen who had offended the House by subscribing their own money to a company formed in their own country, and according to their own laws.

The managers of the scheme, supported by the general public of Scotland, entered a strong protest against the king's hostile interference of his Hamburg envoy. In his answer the king evaded what he was resolved not to grant, and yet could not in equity refuse. By the double dealing of the monarch the Company lost the active support of the subscribers in Hamburg and Holland.

In spite of the desertion of her English and foreign subscribers the Scots, encouraged in their stubborn resolution, and flattered by hopes that captivated their imaginations, decided to enter the project alone.



A stately house in Milne Square, then the most modern and fashionable part of Edinburgh, was purchased and fitted up for an office and warehouse. It was called the Scottish India House. Money poured faster than ever into the coffers of the Company. Operations were actively commenced during the month of May, 1696. Contracts were rapidly let and orders filled—smith and cutlery work at Falkirk; woollen stockings at Aberdeen; gloves and other leather goods at Perth; various metallic works, hats, shoes, tobacco-pipes, serges, linen cloth, bobwigs and periwigs, at Edinburgh; and for home-spun and home-woven woollen checks or tartan, to various parts of the Highlands.

As the means for building ships in Scotland did not then exist, recourse was had to the dockyards of Amsterdam and Hamburg. At an expense of £50,000 a few inferior ships were purchased, and fitted out as ships of war; for their constitution authorized them to make war both by land and sea. The vessels were finally fitted out at Leith, consisting of the Caledonia, the St. Andrew, the Unicorn, and the Dolphin, each armed with fifty guns and two tenders, the Endeavor and Pink, afterwards sunk at Darien; and among the commodities stored away were axes, iron wedges, knives, smiths', carpenters' and coopers' tools, barrels, guns, pistols, combs, shoes, hats, paper, tobacco-pipes, and, as was supposed, provisions enough to last eight months. The value of the cargo of the St. Andrew was estimated at £4,006. The crew and colonists consisted of twelve hundred picked men, the greater part of whom were veterans who had served in king William's wars, and the remainder of Highlanders and others who had opposed the revolution, and three hundred gentlemen of family, desirous of trying their fortunes.

It was on July 26, 1698, that the vessels weighed anchor and put out to sea. A wild insanity seized the entire population of Edinburgh as they came to witness the embarkation. Guards were kept busy holding back the eager crowd who pressed forward, and, stretching out their arms to their departing countrymen, clamored to be taken on board. Stowaways, when ordered on shore, madly clung to rope and mast, pleading in vain to be allowed to serve without pay on board the ships. Women sobbed and gasped for breath; men stood uncovered, and with downcast head and choked utterance invoked the blessing of the Beneficent Being. The banner of St. Andrew was hoisted at the admiral's mast; and as a light wind caught the sails, the roar of the vast multitude was heard far down the waters of the frith.

The actual destination of the fleet was still a profound secret, save to a few. The supreme direction of the expedition was entrusted to a council of seven, to whom was entrusted all power, both civil and military. The voyage was long and the adventurers suffered much; the rations proved to be scanty, and of poor quality; and the fleet, after passing the Orkneys and Ireland, touched at Madeira, where those who had fine clothes were glad to exchange them for provisions and wines. Having crossed the Atlantic, they first landed on an uninhabited islet lying between Porto Rico and St. Thomas, which they took possession of in the name of their country, and hoisted the white cross of St. Andrew. Being warned off for trespassing on the territory of the king of Denmark, and having procured the services of an old buccaneer, under whose pilotage they departed, on November 1st they anchored close to the Isthmus of Panama, having lost fifteen of their number during the voyage. On the 4th they landed at Acla; founded there a settlement to which they gave the name of New St. Andrews; marked out the site for another town and called it New Edinburgh. The weather was genial and climate pleasant at the time of their arrival; the vegetation was luxuriant and promising; the natives were kind; and everything presaged a bright future for the fortune-seekers. They cut a canal through the neck of land that divided one side of the harbor from the ocean, and there constructed a fort, whereon they mounted fifty cannon. On a mountain, at the opposite side of the harbor, they built a watchhouse, where the extensive view prevented all danger of a surprise. Lands were purchased from the Indians, and messages of friendship were sent to the governors of the several Spanish

provinces. As the amount of funds appropriated for the sustenance of the colony had been largely embezzled by those having the matter in charge, the people were soon out of provisions. Fishing and the chase were now the only sources, and as these were precarious, the colonists were soon on the verge of starvation. As the summer drew near the atmosphere became stifling, and the exhalations from the steaming soil, added to other causes, wrought death among the settlers. The mortality rose gradually to ten a day. Both the clergymen who accompanied the expedition were dead; one of them, Rev. Thomas James, died at sea before the colonists landed, and soon after the arrival Rev. Adam Scot succumbed. Paterson buried his wife in that soil, which, as he had assured his too credulous countrymen, exhaled health and vigor. Men passed to the hospital, and from thence to the grave, and the survivors were only kept alive through the friendly offices of the Indians. Affairs continued daily to grow worse. The Spaniards on the isthmus looked with complacency on the distress of the Scotchmen. No relief, and no tidings coming from Scotland, the survivors on June 22, 1699, less than eight months after their arrival, resolved to abandon the settlement. They re-embarked in three vessels, a weak and hopeless company, to sail whithersoever Providence might direct. Paterson, the first to embark at Leith, was the last to re-embark at Darien. He begged hard to be left behind with twenty or more companions to keep up a show of possession, and to await the next arrival from Scotland. His importunities were disregarded, and, utterly helpless, he was carried on board the St. Andrew, and soon after the vessels stood out to sea. The voyage was horrible. It might be compared to the horrors of a slave ship.

The ocean kept secret the sufferings on board these pestilential ships until August 8th, when the Caledonia, commanded by Captain Robert Drummond, drifted into Sandy Hook, New York, having lost one hundred and three men since leaving Darien, and twelve more within four days after arrival, leaving but sixty-five men on board fit for handling ropes. The three ships, on leaving Darien, had three hundred each, including officers, crew and colonists. On August 13th, the Unicorn, commanded by Captain John Anderson, came into New York in a distressed condition, having lost her foremast, fore topmast, and mizzen mast. She lost one hundred and fifty men on the way. It appears that Captain Robert Pennicuik of the St. Andrew knew of the helpless condition of the Unicorn, and accorded no assistance.[14] As might be expected, passion was engendered amidst this scene of misery. The squalid survivors, in the depths of their misery, raged fiercely against one another. Charges of incapacity, cruelty, brutal insolence, were hurled backward and forward. The rigid Presbyterians attributed the calamities to the wickedness of Jacobites, Prelatists, Sabbath-breakers and Atheists, as they denominated some of their fellow-sufferers. The accused parties, on the other hand, complained bitterly of the impertinence of meddling fanatics and hypocrites. Paterson was cruelly reviled, and was unable to defend himself. He sunk into a stupor, and became temporarily insane.

The arrival of the two ships in New York awakened different emotions. There certainly was no danger of these miserable people doing any harm, and yet their appearance awakened apprehension, on account of orders received from the king. After the proclamations which had been issued against these miserable fugitives, it became a question of difficulty, since the governor of New York was absent in Boston, whether it was safe to provide the dying men with harborage and necessary food. Natural feelings overcame the difficulty; the more selfish and timid would have stood aloof and let fate take its course: there being a sufficient number of them to make the more generous feel that their efforts to save life were not made without risks. Even putting the most favorable construction on the act of the earl of Bellomont, governor of Rhode Island, who was appealed to for advice, by the lieutenant governor of New York, the colonists were provoked by the actions of those in authority. Bellomont, in his report to the Lords of Trade, under



date of October 20, 1699, states that the sufferers drew up a memorial to the lieutenant governor for permission to buy provisions; would not act until Bellomont gave his instructions; latter thinks the colonists became insolent after being refreshed; and "your Lordships will see that I have been cautious enough in my orders to the lieutenant governor of New York, not to suffer the Scotch to buy more provisions, than would serve to carry them home to Scotland." [15] On October 12th the Caledonia set sail from Sandy Hook, made the west coast of Ireland, November 11th, and on the 20th of same month anchored in the Sound of Islay, Scotland.

The story of the Unicorn is soon told. "John Anderson, a Scotch Presbyterian, who commanded a ship to Darien in the Scottish expedition thither and on his return in at Amboy, N. Jersey, & let his ship rot & plundered her & with ye plunder bought land." [16]

The St. Andrew parted company with the Caledonia the second day after leaving the settlement, and two nights later saw the Unicorn almost wholly dismantled, and on the following day was pursued by the Baslavento fleet. They put into Jamaica, but were denied assistance, in obedience to king William's orders; and a British admiral, Bembo, refused to give them some men to assist in bringing the ship to the isle of Port Royal. During the voyage to Port Royal, they lost the commander, Captain Pennicuik, most of the officers and one hundred and thirty of the men, before landing, on August 9, 1699. [17]

The Dolphin, Captain Robert Pincarton, commander, used as a supply and trading ship, of fourteen guns, on February 5, 1699, struck a rock and ran ashore at Carthagera, the crew seized by the Spaniards, and in irons were put in dungeons as pirates. The Spaniards congratulated themselves on having captured a few of "the ruffians" who had been the terror and curse of their settlements for a century. They were formally condemned to death, but British interference succeeded in preventing the sentence on the crew from being executed.

On the week following the departure of the expedition from Leith, the Scottish parliament met and unanimously adopted an address to the king, asking his support and countenance to the Darien colony. Notwithstanding this memorial the British monarch ordered the governors of Jamaica, Barbadoes and New York to refuse all supplies to the settlers. Up to this time the king had partly concealed his policy. No time was lost by the East India Companies in bringing every measure to bear in order to ruin the colony. To such length did rancor go that the Scotch commanders who should presume to enter English ports, even for repairs after a storm, were threatened with arrest. In obedience to the king's orders the governors issued proclamations, which they attempted strictly to enforce; and every species of relief, not only that which countrymen can claim of their fellow-subjects, and Christians of their fellow-Christians, and such as the veriest criminal has a right to demand, was denied the colonists of Darien. On May 12, 1699, there sailed from Leith the Olive Branch, Captain William Johnson, commander, and the Hopeful, under Captain Alexander Stark, with ample stores of provisions, and three hundred recruits, but did not arrive at Darien until eight weeks after the departure of the colonists. Finding that the settlement had been abandoned, and leaving six of their number, who preferred to remain, but were afterwards brought away, the Hopeful sailed for Jamaica, where she was seized and condemned as a prize. "The Olive Branch was unfortunately blown up at Caledonia" (Darien). [18]

The Spaniards had not only become aggressive by seizing the Dolphin and incarcerating the officers and crew, but their government made no remonstrance against the invasion of its territory until May 3, 1699, when a memorial was presented to William by the Spanish ambassador stating that his sovereign looked

on the proceedings as a rupture of the alliance between the two countries, and as a hostile invasion, and would take such measures as he thought best against the intruders. It is possible that at this time Spain would not have taken any action whatever, if William had pursued a different course; and seeing that the colonists had been abandoned and disowned by their own king, as if they had been vagabonds or outlaws, the Spaniards, in a manner, felt themselves invited to precipitate a crisis, which they accomplished.

In the meantime the directors of the Darien Company were actively organizing another expedition and hastily sent out four more vessels—the Rising Sun, Captain James Gibson; the Hope, Captain James Miller; the Hope of Barrowstouness, Captain Richard Daling; and the Duke of Hamilton, Captain Walter Duncan; with thirteen hundred "good men well appointed," besides materials of war. This fleet left Greenock August 18, 1699, but having been delayed by contrary winds, did not leave the Bay of Rosyth, Isle of Bute, until Sunday, September 24th. On Thursday, November 30, the fleet reached its destination, after considerable suffering and some deaths on board. These vessels contained engineers, fire-workers, bombardiers, battery guns of twenty-four pounds, mortars and bombs. The number of men mentioned included over three hundred Highlanders, chiefly from the estate of Captain Alexander Campbell of Fonab, most of whom had served under him, in Flanders, in Lorn's regiment. During the voyage the Hope was cast away. Captain Miller loaded the long boat very deep with provisions, goods and arms, and proceeded towards Havana. He arrived safely at Darien.

A large proportion of the second expedition belonged to the military, and were organized. Among the Highland officers are noticed the following names: Captains Colin Campbell, Thomas McIntosh, James Urquhart, Alexander Stewart, — Ferquhar, and — Grant; Lieutenants Charles Stewart, Samuel Johnston, John Campbell and Walter Graham; Ensigns Hugh Campbell and Robert Colquhoun, and Sergeant Campbell.

The members of this expedition were greatly disappointed on their arrival. They fully expected to find a secure fortification, a flourishing town, cultivated fields, and a warm reception. Instead they found a wilderness; the castle in ruins; the huts burned, and grass growing over the ruins. Their hearts sank within them; for this fleet had not been fitted out to found a colony, but to recruit and protect one already in a flourishing condition. They were worse provided with the necessities of life than their predecessors had been. They made feeble attempts to restore the ruins. They constructed a fort on the old grounds; and within the ramparts built a hamlet consisting of about eighty-five cabins, generally of twelve feet by ten. The work went slowly on, without hope or encouragement. Despondency and discontent pervaded all ranks. The provisions became scanty, and unfair dealing resorted to. There were plots and factions formed, and one malcontent hanged. Nor was the ecclesiastical part happily arranged. The provision made by the General Assembly was as defective as the provision for the temporal wants had been made by the directors of the company. Of the four divines, one of them, Alexander Dalgleish, died at sea, on board of Captain Duncan's vessel. They were all of the established church of Scotland, who had the strongest sympathy with the Cameronians. They were at war with almost all the colonists. The antagonisms between priest and people were extravagant and fatal. They described their flocks as the most profligate of mankind, and declared it was most impossible to constitute a presbytery, for it was impossible to find persons fit to be ruling elders of a Christian church. This part of the trouble can easily be accounted for. One-third of the people were Highlanders, who did not understand a word of English, and not one of the pastors knew a word of Gaelic; and only through interpreters could they converse with this large body of men. It is also more than probable that many of these men, trained to war, had more or less of a tendency to fling off every corrective band. Both Rev. John Borland and Rev. Alexander Shiels, author



of the "Hynd let Loose," were stern fanatics who would tolerate nothing diverging a shade from their own code of principles. They treated the people as persons under their spiritual authority, and required of them fastings, humiliations, and long attendance on sermons and exhortations. Such pastors were treated with contempt and ignominy by men scarcely inclined to bear ecclesiastical authority, even in its lightest form. They mistook their mission, which was to give Christian counsel, and to lead gently and with dignity from error into rectitude. Instead of this they fell upon the flock like irritated schoolmasters who find their pupils in mutiny. They became angry and dominative; and the more they thus exhibited themselves, the more scorn and contumely they encountered. Meanwhile two trading sloops arrived in the harbor with a small stock of provisions; but the supply was inadequate; so five hundred of the party were ordered to embark for Scotland.

The news of the abandonment of the settlement by the first expedition was first rumored in London during the middle of September, 1699. Letters giving such accounts had been received from Jamaica. The report reached Edinburgh on the 19th, but was received with scornful incredulity. It was declared to be an impudent lie devised by some Englishmen who could not endure the sight of Scotland waxing great and opulent. On October 4th the whole truth was known, for letters had been received from New York announcing that a few miserable men, the remains of the colony, had arrived in the Hudson. Grief, dismay, and rage seized the nation. The directors in their rage called the colonists white-livered deserters. Accurate accounts brought the realization of the truth that hundreds of families, once in comparative opulence, were now reduced almost to beggary, and the flower of the nation had either succumbed to hardships, or else were languishing in prisons in the Spanish settlements, or else starving in English colonies. The bitterness of disappointment was succeeded by an implacable hostility to the king, who was denounced in pamphlets of the most violent and inflammatory character, calling him a hypocrite, and a deceiver of those who had shed their best blood in his cause, and the author of the misfortunes of Scotland. Indemnification, redress, and revenge were demanded by every mouth, and each hand was ready to vouch for the claim. Never had just such a feeling existed in Scotland. It became a useless possession to the king, for he could not wring one penny from that kingdom for the public service, and, what was more important to him, he could not induce one recruit for his continental wars. William continued to remain indifferent to all complaints of hardships and petitions of redress, unless when he showed himself irritated by the importunity of the suppliants, and hurt at being obliged to evade what it was impossible for him, with the least semblance of justice to refuse. The feeling against William long continued in Scotland. As late as November 5, 1788, when it was proposed that a monument should be erected in Edinburgh to his memory, there appeared in one of the papers an anonymous communication ironically applauding the undertaking, and proposing as two subjects of the entablature, for the base of the projected column, the massacre of Glencoe and the distresses of the Scottish colonists in Darien. On the appearance of this article the project was very properly and righteously abandoned. The result of the Darien Scheme and the cold-blooded policy of William made the Scottish nation ripe for rebellion. Had there been even one member of the exiled house of Stuart equal to the occasion, that family could then have returned to Scotland amid the joys and acclamations of the nation.

Amidst the disasters of the first expedition the directors of the company were not unmindful of the fate of those who had sailed in the last fleet. These people must be promptly succored. The company hired the ship *Margaret*, commanded by Captain Leonard Robertson, which sailed from Dundee, March 9, 1700; but what was of greater importance was the commission given to Captain Alexander Campbell of Fonab, under date of October 10, 1699, making him a councillor of the company and investing him with "the chief

and supreme command, both by sea and by land, of all ships, men, forts, settlements, lands, possessions, and others whatsoever belonging to the said company in any part or parts of America,"[19] with instructions to lose no time in taking passage for Jamaica, or the Leeward Islands and there secure a vessel, with three or four months' provisions for the colony. Arriving at the Barbadoes, he then purchased a vessel with a cargo of provisions, and on January 24, 1700, sailed for Darien, which he reached February 5th, and just in time to be of active service; for intelligence had reached the colony that fifteen hundred Spaniards lay encamped on the Rio Santa Maria, waiting the arrival of an armament of eleven ships, with troops on board, destined to attack Ft. St. Andrew. Captain Campbell of Fonab, who had gained for himself great reputation in Flanders as an approved warrior, resolved to anticipate the enemy, and at once mustering two hundred of his veteran troops, accompanied by sixty Indians, marched over the mountains, and fell on the Spanish camp by night, and dispersed them with great slaughter, with a loss to the colony of nine killed and fourteen wounded, among the latter being their gallant commander. The Spaniards could not withstand the tumultuous rush of the Highlanders, and in precipitate flight left a large number of their dead upon the field. The little band, among the spoils, brought back the Spanish commander's decoration of the "Golden Fleece." When they recrossed the mountains it was to find their poor countrymen blockaded by five Spanish men-of-war. Campbell, and others, believing that no inequalities justified submission to such an enemy, determined on resistance, but soon discovered that resistance was in vain, when they could only depend on diseased, starving and broken-hearted men. As the Spaniards would not include Captain Campbell in the terms of capitulation, he managed, with several companions, dexterously to escape in a small vessel, sailed for New York, and from thence to Scotland. The defence of the colony under Fonab's genius had been heroic. When ammunition had given out, their pewter dishes were fashioned into cannon balls. On March 18, 1700, the colonists capitulated on honorable terms. It was a received popular opinion in Scotland that none of those who were concerned in the surrender ever returned to their native country. So weak were the survivors, and so few in numbers, that they were unable to weigh the anchor of their largest ship until the Spaniards came to their assistance. What became of them? Their melancholy tale is soon told.

The Earl of Bellomont, writing to the Lords of the Admiralty, under date, New York, October 15, 1700, says:[20]

"Some Scotchmen are newly come hither from Carolina that belonged to the ship Rising Sun (the biggest ship they set out for their Caledonia expedition) who tell me that on the third of last month a hurricane happened on that coast, as that ship lay at anchor, within less than three leagues of Charles Town in Carolina with another Scotch ship called the Duke of Hamilton, and three or four others; that the ships were all shattered in pieces and all the people lost, and not a man saved. The Rising Sun had 112 men on board. The Scotch men that are come hither say that 15 of 'em went on shore before the storm to buy fresh provisions at Charles Town by which means they were saved. Two other of their ships they suppose were lost in the Gulph of Florida in the same storm. They came all from Jamaica and were bound hither to take in provisions on their way to Scotland. The Rising Sun had 60 guns mounted and could have carried many more, as they tell me."

The colonists found a watery grave. No friendly hand nor sympathizing tear soothed their dying moments; no clergyman eulogized their heroism, self-sacrifice and virtues; no orator has pronounced a panegyric; no poet has embalmed their memory in song, and no novelist has taken their record for a fanciful story. Since their mission was a failure their memory is doomed to rest without marble monument or graven image.



**To the merciful and the just they will be honored as heroes and pioneers.**

**FOOTNOTES:**

[13]The Darien Papers, pp. 371-417.

[14]"Darien Papers," pp 195, 275.

[15]"Documentary and Colonial History of New York," Vol. IV, p. 591.

[16]Ibid, Vol. V, p. 335.

[17]"Darien Papers," p. 150.

[18]"Darien Papers," p. 160.

[19]"Darien Papers," p. 176.

[20]"Documents Relating to Colonial History of New York," Vol. IV, p. 711.