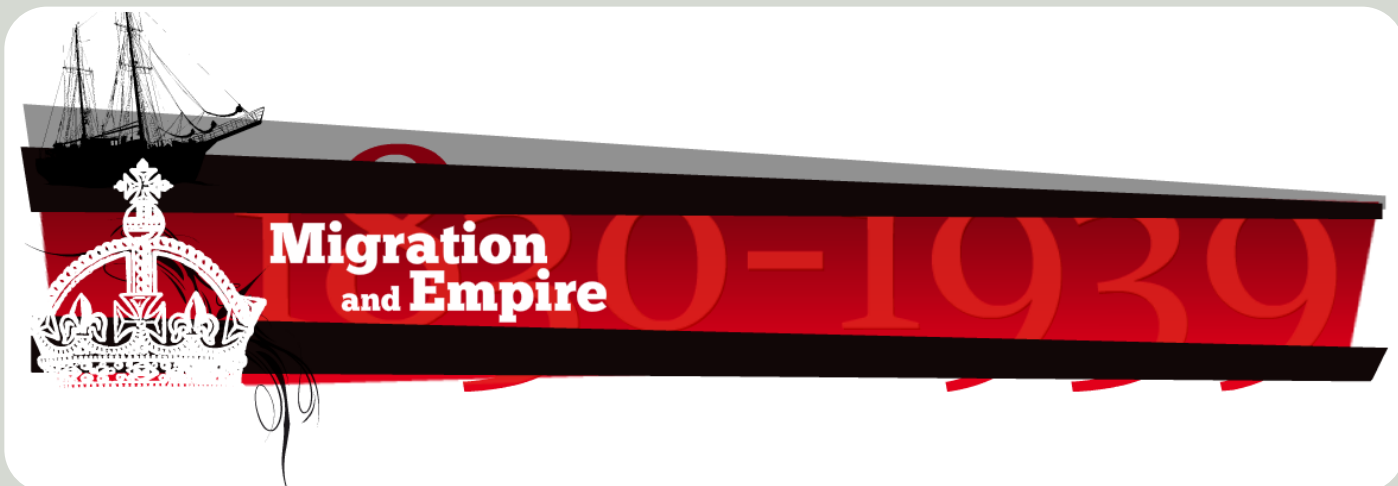


# HIGHER HISTORY

## Section 1: The Migration of Scots

The Gordon Schools Huntly.

MR DAVIDSON



## MIGRATION & EMPIRE 1830-1939

### The Migration of the Scots.

**Migration** is the movement of people within a country. Normally it is associated with the shift of people from the countryside to the towns, but it can also be a useful term to describe the movement of population from a depressed economic region to an active one.

**Emigration** is the movement of people from one country to another. It is the result of push and pull effects. The push comes from poor economic conditions or political oppression at home; the pull effect is generated by the attracting powers of the other country, including the promise of higher wages, political freedom and economic opportunity.

Migration within Scotland during the 19th and early 20th century can be divided into two different categories; Lowland and Highland Migration. Despite some similarities between the two areas, the systems of land holding, farming and employment remained significantly different - which in turn meant that those living in rural communities were affected differently by the changes that occurred during this time. Migration patterns also vary considerably as a result. In the next section we will consider each of these areas separately.



#### Coal Miners

One of the jobs done by men (and young boys) who had decided to leave the countryside and try their luck in more industrial areas.

## **Difficulties of Living Off The Land in 18th and 19th century Scotland**

Population pressures had been building up in the rural Lowlands prior to 1800. By the turn of the 19th century, rural parishes were facing the prospect that the growth in population at 10 per cent per decade might soon lead to famine. By the 1830s and 1840s the potential famine had been averted by the changes made to land ownership, but life on the land was still tough. The first three or four decades of the 19th century were characterised by discontent and agony for many of the farmers. The need to modernise saw many farms enlarged. Some merely felt the pinch of rising rents while others lost their land completely. Many who had previously relied upon their small holdings to eke out their wages now made up a large landless labour force.

Consequently, many tenants of smaller farms (even sub-tenants, or cottars) became employees on much larger farms. The typical holding was 200 acres for large farms employing six men (in the Borders, Lothian and Berwickshire extensive holdings of up to 400 acres were also common).

Once the land was divided in this way there was no scope for creating more tenants. The only exception to this pattern was in north-east Scotland. In Aberdeenshire, crofts (small farms) formed the majority of holdings. Employment on larger farms was tightly controlled and

was determined by the numbers needed to cultivate the land. This hiring system led to labourers and ploughmen contracting themselves to a farmer for a period of six to twelve months. As the farmer had to provide board and wages he was unlikely to take on more labour than was necessary to do the job. Any increase in population tightened the screw, with increasing numbers competing for a decreasing number of farm holdings or for employment in a tightly organised labour market. The status of a farmer was also decreasing due to the changes brought about through the Agricultural Revolution.

After 1840 the process of rural depopulation was accelerated in the Lowlands by the introduction of labour-saving technology, such as the self-binding reaper and the potato digger. In 1840 it took 22 man days to tend an acre of barley; by 1914 it was down to 12 and by 1951 it had dropped to 3. The temptation to flee the land was intense.

### **The Attraction of the towns:**

Migration away from rural parishes occurred not only because of rejection from the farming community. There was also a pull from the towns and cities. On moving to a town a former agricultural labourer might earn 50 per cent more in industrial work, although he was less well protected from the impact of economic depressions. Of equal importance in moving to the towns was the prospect of a more

varied social life and an end to the isolation of living on the land. As a ploughman from Dumfries put it to the Royal Commission on Labour (1893–4) “the life of an agricultural labourer is altogether colourless ... his life throughout is sleep, eat and work; no time for enjoyment as other labourers have; no half-holiday on Saturday ... no holiday as a right, only as a favour; we get from three to four a year.”

Towns provided higher wages, shorter hours, more leisure and freedom in the evenings and weekends away from the employer.

Perhaps because of a combination of these factors, between 1861 and 1891 rural employment in the Lowlands fell by around a third in spite of rising wages. This pattern continued into the 20th century and by 1914 only 14 per cent of males were employed in agriculture.

By contrast, figures from 1911 show that 50% of Scots lived in towns with an inhabitancy of over 20,000. This figure rises to over 60% when towns of over 5,000 inhabitants are considered. Below the cities there were also smaller industrial centres such as Ayr, Dumfries and Perth. The Border woollen towns like Galashiels and Selkirk and the Angus linen centres of Forfar and Dundee also had particular manufacturing functions.

### Lowland Migration

Displaced farm labourers headed for the nearest town in search of work and accommodation. By 1851, 15% of the population of Peebles-shire had made its way to Edinburgh.

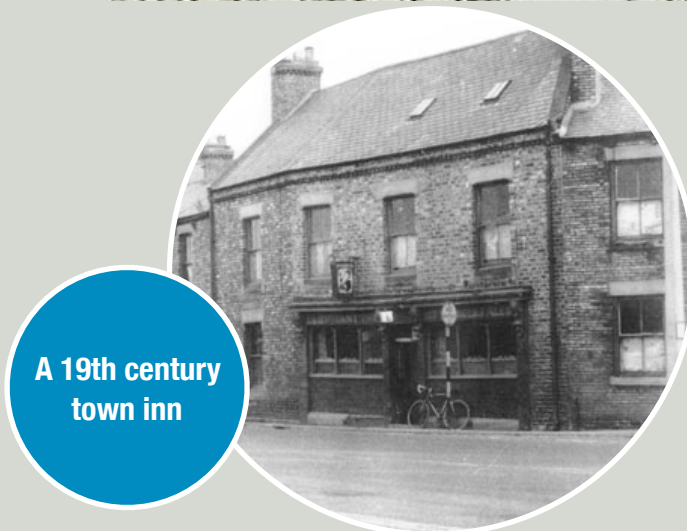
Furthermore, as many towns and cities grew they actively recruited from local rural populations or nearby smaller towns, which were often used by Migrants as collecting points or as areas of temporary residence to allow for an easier transition from rural to urban life.

Aberdeen, of all of the main Scottish towns, took the largest percentage of its migrants from its own surrounding area. Census information from the time shows that the population of many smaller towns in Aberdeenshire was “stagnant” (that is, they were not growing at a rate greater than the expected natural increase of 10% per decade) unlike the population of the rapidly growing industrial centre of Aberdeen. As you can see from the map of Huntly of 1856, Huntly wasn’t just a tiny village but neither was it a bustling town.

However, census information can prove to be misleading. The rate of population increase in rural Aberdeenshire was still high and there is plenty of evidence to suggest that many people were moving from their immediate surroundings into these

apparently “stagnant” towns. This can only suggest that similar numbers were leaving the smaller towns and heading for the city.

However, it is clear that the majority of migrants who left rural Aberdeenshire did not head for Aberdeen. Around 1/3 of migrants headed further afield, often to other rural counties or to Angus which had many industrialising small towns as well as Dundee.



A 19th century town inn

In contrast to the previous period, the years between 1861 and 1911 saw very little change to the organisation of Scottish farms. However, by the 1870s, agriculture ran into severe problems. Falling prices, particularly of grain caused the shedding of both casual and less skilled workers. Even skilled workers, who remained essential to farm production, sometimes found themselves surplus to requirements as farmers looked to reduce their expenditure during this downturn.

Furthermore, by the 1850s, the technology of power looms was destroying employment in the textile economy in numerous villages in Perth, Fife and Angus and promoting large-scale migration.

The development of the railway network allowed cheap factory goods to penetrate far into the rural areas and so threatened the traditional markets for tailors, shoemakers and other tradesmen.

As a result, craftsmen and their families joined the mass migration from rural areas by the end of the 19th century. In all rural areas, migration began to exceed the natural increase in population. Once this decline had begun, it was irreversible. As a result, rural areas of the Lowlands began shedding their population.

Between 1861 and 1901 towns (defined as places with a

population of over 1,000) were growing by an average of 13% per decade (3% higher than the anticipated natural rise of 10% per decade). On the other hand, the population in rural areas was dropping by 5% decade-by decade (despite the fact that census information shows that the natural rise in population was still 10% - or even greater - in these areas).

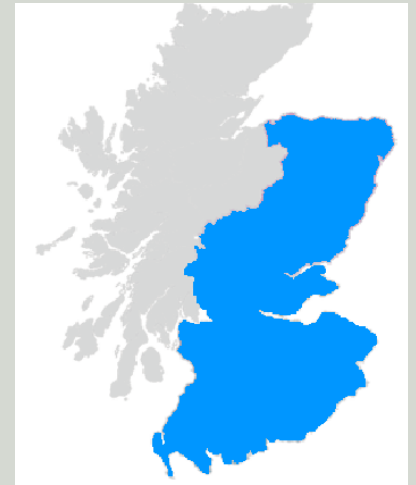
One estimate suggests that by the 1920s one half of all male workers had left agriculture by the time they were 25.

This highlights the scale of the out-migration from rural Lowland communities while also showing that many migrants were young - probably drawn by the lure of a better life in the city.

In Aberdeen for example, in 1931, 38% of its inhabitants had been born outside of Aberdeen in rural North-East settlements. Glasgow also continued to take in large numbers from Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire (even though the population of the smaller towns in these areas continued to grow - mainly as a result of immigrants from continental Europe). What started as a trickle in the mid-19th century had become a flood.

Note: Lowland migration refers to the migration of people from the less mountainous (and therefore often more agricultural) areas of the country. This includes, the Borders, Dumfries,

the Central Belt, Stirling, Fife, Angus and Aberdeenshire (as well as others) as shown on the map below.



Most of the migration trends can be seen to run along a north-south axis. To this end, communities in the South-East and the North-East sent more migrants to Edinburgh - rather than the more rapidly growing towns in the West, which were sometimes almost equidistant.

Similarly, rural communities in the South-West saw much of their out-migration heading towards Glasgow.

However, it is also clear that there were many exceptions to this generalisation.

Migration was multi-directional, and many people broke, or even went entirely against the flow of these trends.

For example, in Glasgow in the 1870s or in Dundee in the 1880s, the numbers of Scots leaving the cities actually exceeded the numbers entering them. However, despite this, the population of both cities continued to grow.

Small towns were similarly effected by this combination of natural increase and in-migration. The coal, iron and cotton towns (such as Paisley) tended to see most of their rapid growth in the early part of the 19th Century. The jute and linen towns (such as Dundee) towards the middle decades and the tweed, railway centres, holiday resorts and large scale fishing ports later in the century. For example, in East Lothian, the town of Dunbar reached a population of 3,751 by 1931.

### TASKS

Answer the following questions on migration and the Lowlands.

(1) How was famine averted in the early 19th century?

(2) (a) Describe the new system of farming and land ownership.

(b) How did this reduce the pressures on the land?

**(3) Write a detailed description of migration from rural to urban areas in the Lowlands.**

**Include:**

**Reasons for migration.**

**Patterns of migration.**



**Glasgow:  
jobs and  
attractions**

**A young  
girl in a jute  
Factory  
Dundee**



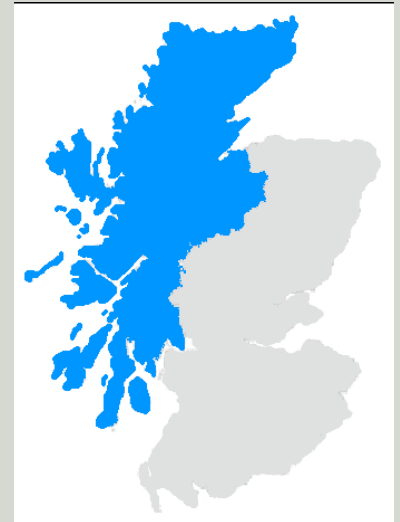
## Highland Migration

The traditional image of 19th Century migration from the Highlands of Scotland is that of the Highland Clearances. Although this was clearly a hugely significant reason for migration, the eviction of Highlanders from their homes reached a peak in the 1840s and early 1850s.

After 1855, mass evictions were rare and migration became more a matter of choice rather than compulsion. In the years between 1855 and 1895 the drop in population of the Highlands was actually less than it was in the Lowlands - and certainly much lower than it was in Ireland. The Highlands experienced a 9 per cent fall in population between 1851 and 1891, while Ireland in the same period faced a 28 per cent fall.

The Crofters' Holding Act of 1886 also gave the crofters more security of tenure and this helped to slow down the process of migration. In 1831 the population of the Highlands reached a peak of 200,955, or 8.5 per cent of the

total population of Scotland. In 1931 the comparable figures were 127,081 or 2.6 per cent.



**This is what you need to understand for Section 1:**

**Migration of Scots:-**

- **Push and Pull factors in internal migration and emigration: economic, social, cultural and political aspects; opportunity and coercion.**

Looking at the Highland Clearances helps cover these descriptors.

**Push & Pull Factors**



## **The Significance of the Highland Clearances**

The Highland Clearances transformed the cultural landscape of the Highlands of Scotland, probably forever. In the space of less than half a century, the Highlands became one of the most sparsely populated areas in Europe. Surplus tenants were “cleared” off the estates from about 1780 and the Clearances were ongoing nearly 70 years later at the time of the potato famine in 1846.

The Highland Clearances devastated Gaelic culture and clan society, driving people from the land their families had called home for centuries. Although some of the Highlanders were able to stay in the Highlands - with new towns such as Grantown-On-Spey and Kingussie accommodating some of the cleared population - vast majority of Highlanders were forced to migrate to the cities or even emigrate overseas.

## **The Highland Clearances**

Most crofters held their land tenancies on a yearly basis, thus landlords held powers of eviction. During the Highland Clearances landlords exercised the rights they held over their land to evict thousands of Highlanders.

As the 18th century drew to a close Highland landlords began to feel the need to make their land yield as large a profit as possible. Some merely increased the rent on their land while others, brought

in sheep farming on a large scale (displacing the tenants of many small-holdings in the process). Landlords introduced hardy breeds like the black-faced Linton and the Cheviot sheep which would thrive in the tough environment of the Scottish Highlands. The year 1792 is now referred to as “the year of the sheep” as it saw a huge wave of migration as a result of sheep farming.

Others created upper class sporting estates and needed to clear the land in preparation for the hunting and fishing grounds.

Often the eviction of the crofters was a brutal act but there were some landlords who bucked that trend - some even paying for the passage of those who they had evicted.

However, by 1880, the policy of mass evictions was becoming politically unacceptable.

Sheep farms were later replaced by forests, and this caused further depopulation in the Highlands as shepherds and sheep farmers moved to the Lowlands in search of employment.

## **Political Factors**

By the 1880s, the Crofters who remained on the land in the highlands were becoming agitated. Poor quality housing, deprivation and congestion meant that many of the landless population lived in poverty. This caused much distress and led to increased protests - the “Crofters War”. The government's main response to the situation in the

Highlands was the Crofters Act 1886, which gave greater security to the crofters (who could no longer be removed from their land without a just cause).

In the long run, the Act became a powerful force of conservation and condemned the crofters to a future of stagnation. Restrictions on land use allowed little room for evolution within Highland society (during a period when other industries and other parts of the country were experiencing great change and advancement). Although the Act allowed for the future enlargement of crofts these provisions proved to be inadequate.

As a result, the political motives for the Crofters Act did very little to ease the economic troubles of the Highlanders. This undoubtedly led to dissatisfaction and migration from the Highlands.

Between 1911 and 1939, the population of the Highlands fell more steeply than at any time in its history, despite the fact that the crofters had been assured security of tenure. The Hebrides, for instance, lost 28 per cent of its population in this period.

## Other Reasons for Highland Depopulation:

As in Ireland, there was a **potato famine** in Scotland in the mid 19th century (1846 - 1857). Although the potato famine in the Highlands did not have such a devastating effect as it had in Ireland (mainly due to the fact that Highlanders did not rely solely on the potato for food), it did cause starvation (especially amongst the old and the young). This paved the way for another wave of force migration. Moreover, a widespread **Cholera outbreak** further weakened the Highland population.

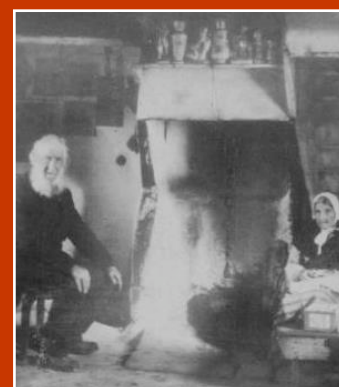
The **weather** has also been blamed - a succession of bad harvests and famine demanded a drastic solution. Crop failure following atrocious weather conditions in 1926, for example produced a major social crisis. The government were forced to intervene with emergency food supplies in Lewis and elsewhere. Many were forced to migrate.



**Rising population**, putting pressure on land and jobs, also played a part. In the south and east Highlands there was a fall in the number of tenancies, which created a large pool of landless labourers dependent on wages. The growth of industries such as fishing in Argyllshire soaked up some of the surplus labour, as did the growth of small towns such as Campbeltown and Tarbert.

The persuasive, smooth-talking **agents of ship-owners** who ferried migrant Scots to the rapidly expanding countries abroad, also added to the numbers leaving the Highlands.

**Poor housing** was another reason for depopulation. Although the buildings were substantial, the walls were made of clay and wattle, or of thickly cut turf and the roofs were thatched in heather, broom, or bracken. They were often badly built and lacking in basic essentials. In such houses dampness, cold and smoke dust were constant problems.







Evidence also suggests that **education** can be considered an important factor in the depopulation of the Highlands. By 1826, 70 per cent of the population of Argyll could read, while only 30 per cent of the Hebridean population were literate. Thus, the peasant values of the Highlander in the south and east were broken by the growth of commercialism and the improvement in education, which removed the barrier to permanent migration to the south.

As a result of foreign competition the **fishing industry went into decline**. The income of most families in the Hebrides (and many in the rest of the highlands) was dependent upon earnings from seasonal at east coast fisheries. Prices of Herring fell between 1884 and 1886 as a result of record catches and higher European import duties. As

a result, wages also went into decline. The average earnings of a Hebridean seasonal worker fell dramatically from £20 - £30 (per season) in the early 1880s to only £1 - £2 a decade later. The Russian Revolution saw an end to the massive export trade in herring to eastern Europe.

Finally, it is clear that in some cases, the final decision to go was a **voluntary** one - a desire to seek something better (either in a Scottish town city or across the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean).

All of these factors played a part in causing the Highland Clearances, and the results have had a lasting significance for the people of the Highlands, and indeed for many of those who left.



### TASKS:

Write a detailed summary of reasons for the great migration of people from the Highland areas between 1830 - 1939.

## Where did the Highlanders Settle?

Before the railways, the main form of transport was by sea. Migrants from Caithness, Orkney, Shetland and the north-east were channelled to the eastern Lowlands. Other Highlanders and the Hebrideans settled in the western Lowlands.

This pattern generally maintained itself throughout the period 1830–1940. Highlanders tended to settle in and around Edinburgh, Glasgow and its satellite towns. As early as 1801 Highlanders constituted 29 per cent of the population of Greenock.

### IT TASKS

**1) Go to the main Migration & Empire (M&E) website home page: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/higherscottishhistory/migrationandempire/index.asp>**

**2) Click on 'The Migration of Scots' and quickly read through the 3 subheadings: Migration of Scots; Scotland and the Industrial Revolution; Highland depopulation and increased urbanisation.**

**3) Click back to the Migration & Empire main page; click on 'Audio resources'; scroll to the Poem: 'The Highland Clearances' by Frank McNie;**

## read the intro to it and then listen to it. Here is the poem:

The rain that makes our Highlands green,  
tears from broken hearts,  
torn from life that's always been,  
forced to foreign parts.

The highland soul from homeland wrenched,  
blind loyalty betrayed,  
the thirst for money must be quenched,  
decency forbade.

Of what importance a family's home,  
that stands in rich man's way,  
when he needs the fields for sheep to roam,  
and his tenants cannot pay.

Forsaken is the chieftains pledge,  
to hold his clansmen true,  
force them to the waters edge,  
to a life they never knew.

No matter that they starve and die,  
improvements are a must,  
money, London fashions buy  
and sheep can fill that lust.

That rain that makes our Highlands green,  
cant wash away their sins,  
they'll pay the price when it is seen,  
murderous origins.

Damn them for their interference,  
the misery and pain,

those architects of highland clearance.  
whose families still remain.

Their dynasties still rule the lands,  
with arrogant impunity,  
lets show the blood that's on their hands,  
and cancel all immunity.

**4) How far does this poem explain the reasons for internal migration within Scotland? (Use some recall knowledge to give a fuller explanation) NOTE: If your teacher has not done some classroom instruction on source questions yet, just wait and do this later.**

**5) Open a new Tab and Google image search Thomas Faed's painting 'The Last of the Clan'. Click on a decent image.**

**6) Go back to M&E main page; click on 'Video Resources' and watch Hugh Stevenson's talk on the Faed painting. (4 mins long)**

**7) Now complete the group source task over the page (or just do it yourself). NOTE: If your teacher has not done some classroom instruction on source questions yet, just wait and do this later.**

## Group Work Source Evaluation Task:

Correct completion of this task will allow you to have a better understanding of how to answer the “How Useful” type questions that you will come across in Paper 2 of Higher History. To complete the task properly follow the instructions below...

### How to complete this task:

1. When was the source produced? Does that add or detract from the value of the source? **You must give a reason for your decision.**
2. Who produced the source? Does that add to or detract from the value of the source. Does the purpose of the source have any influence on its value? **You must give a reason for your decision.**
3. Identify the issues: Which issues are relevant to the theme? Do they help us in terms of the question? Note them down. Is the information accurate/bias/exaggerated? Does this increase or decrease the value of the source? **You must give reasons for your decisions.**
4. You now have to include in your answer the issues that would need to be covered to complete the picture relating to the question/issue.

**Source A:** Is from *Scotland: A New History*, 2004, by historian Michael Lynch.

“Highlanders had been migrating to the lowlands in numbers since at least the seventeenth century. Most were attracted by seasonal employment in Glasgow...or its satellite towns such as Greenock.

Migration depended, however, on the availability of work. Most temporary migrants in the early years of the nineteenth century were probably employed on Lowland farms during the harvest. It is fortunate that the worst years of famine coincided with the expansion of job opportunities. On many of the railways built in the 1840s, such as the line between Edinburgh and Berwick, the Highland Navvy was as common as the Irish. As job opportunities in Glasgow and nearby towns grew in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the transition from seasonal migration to permanent settlement became more common.”

**Written Task:** How Useful is Source A for investigating the reasons for Highland migration between 1830 and 1939 (5)

*In reaching a conclusion you should refer to:*

- *the origin and possible purpose of the source;*
- *the content of the source;*
- *recalled knowledge.*

## Emigration

The decision whether to leave the place of birth and to seek a new life elsewhere had always been as a result of complex factors; the pull of the towns, the push from the land, the attachment to traditional ways and the excitement of a potential new life. But for those who chose to leave Scotland altogether, this decision was made with other factors in mind such as reports from overseas and the longing for the unification of broken families. These factors proving to be significant and influential (as well as many of the others that we have just finished looking at). Until about 1855, a number of the emigrants from the Highlands were actually forced to leave the land because of evictions. In the Lowlands, the decision to move abroad was nearly always the outcome of the desire to improve one's living standards. Whatever the reason, Scotland lost between

10 and 47 per cent of its natural population increase every decade.

During the period 1921–1930, those leaving Scotland actually exceeded the entire natural increase. As in the previous section, reasons for emigration were different depending on whether you were a Lowland or Highland emigrant.

### Significance of Emigration

Between 1820 and the First World War, 2 million Scots emigrated. This was a huge percentage of the Scottish population and throughout the 19th century Scotland (along with Ireland and Norway) topped the league table of European countries with the highest rates of emigration per head. If emigration to England (749,000, 1871 - 1931) is included in these statistics then Scotland clearly emerges as the emigration capital of Europe during this time period.



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The Emigration Act of 1851 made emigration more freely available to the poorest people in society and as a result there were four great surges of emigration in the 19th and early 20th century (1850s, 1870s, the early 1900s and the inter-war period). In the 25 years from 1825 records show that there were well below 10,000 emigrants most years. From the 1850s this rose to around 20,000 and during 1875 to 1900 it increased again to between 20,000 and 30,000. By the Great War there were up to 60,000 per year and figures rose even further during the 1920s and early 1930s. Although, simply in terms of numbers, Scotland's emigrants were not as great as those from other countries in Europe (for example Germany had over 5 million emigrants and Italy had over 8 million), it was the significant percentage of Scots the emigrated that makes this issue hugely important. The Orcadian (from Orkney) novelist Edwin Muir wrote in his book *Scottish Journey* (1935) that "Scotland is gradually being emptied of its population, its spirit, its wealth, industry, art, intellect and innate character. If a country exports most of its enterprising spirits and best minds year after year, for fifty or a hundred...years, some result will inevitably follow".

Emigrants came from all parts of Scotland and various occupations (including weavers, farmers, servants and artisans). It is clear that emigration was widespread and was not simply

connected to areas of economic or industrial depression.

### **Reasons for Emigration**

(Before you begin to look at more specific reasons for emigration it is important to remember that all "push factors" of the reasons given for migration in the previous sections can also be considered as factors for emigration as many who left their homelands headed overseas rather than to the Lowland towns and cities.

For example, some emigration schemes were actually funded by those who had forced them off of their land. The Dukes of Argyll and Sutherland (as well as other large landowners) were amongst those who financed emigration schemes. Very often, these offers of funding were linked to their eviction which left many crofters with very little choice. The Highlands and Islands Emigration Society was set up to oversee the process of resettlement. Under the scheme, a landlord could secure a passage to Australia for a nominee at the cost of £1. Between 1846 and 1857 around 16,533 people of the poorest types, comprising of mainly young men, were assisted to emigrate.)

### **Introduction:**

Despite the fact that Scotland was one of the most successful industrial and agricultural economies in the world during the 19th century, the country was losing people in large numbers. All areas of Scotland were affected. The traditional link between the

Highlands and emigration (due to the Clearances and the potato famine) is a familiar one - the highlands lost 1/3 of its population between 1841 and 1861.

However, the overwhelming majority of people who left Scotland in the rest of the 19th and early 20th century came from the towns, cities and rural Lowlands. However, as Scotland was rapidly becoming an industrialised society this is not altogether surprising.

### **Opportunity:**

Opportunities abroad and the prospect of a better life was one of the main factors for emigration from Scotland. However, not all of the opportunities abroad allowed Scots to emigrate permanently. Some opportunities only leaned themselves to temporary migration. Thus, reverse migration was also common at this time.

Where the best opportunities lay was very much dependent upon where you came from or where your skills lay. For example, the USA tended to attract those from industrial communities. In the 1880s a study showed that 3/4 of Scots emigrants in the USA were from urban, rather than rural areas. Canada, Australia and New Zealand still remained very attractive to tenant farmers. Canada took the vast majority of Scots emigrants up until the 1840s. A very clear example of a major wave of emigration (that is directly linked to opportunity) is the fact that during the gold rush of the 1850s around 90,000 Scots left for Australia alone.



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## Transport

Emigration was made considerably easier thanks to the great changes that occurred to transport throughout the 19th century. The lessening of the two great constraints that had restricted emigration in the past - travel time and cost of travel - allowed many more Scots to emigrate. Emigration was transformed by the transport revolution. In the 1850s it took 6 weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean. By 1914 the average crossing time was only 1 week - this was particularly significant for skilled or semi-skilled urban tradesmen who were now able to move on a temporary basis in order to exploit higher wages or labour shortages (before this they could not afford to go without wages for the 6 weeks it would have taken to get across the Atlantic). For example, several hundred granite workers from the north east migrated annually to

American Yards each Spring, before returning to Aberdeen for the winter. This trend may also help to explain some of the reverse migration that is evident throughout this period. By 1900 it is estimated that around 1/3 of Scots who emigrated made the reverse journey sooner or later.

Arrangements were often made between the shipping and railway companies allowing emigrants to travel for free to their port of departure. Eventually, after the development of the railway network in North America, Scots could book a complete travel package to their final destination. The Chambers Journal in 1857 said that this had "robbed emigration of its terrors and must have set hundreds of families wandering." Liners such as Allan, Anchor and Donaldson completed the trans-Atlantic phase of the journey.



## Coercion

We have seen an element of coercion already - the Highland landlords who offered to pay for emigration as a way of removing crofters from the land. Although great opportunities certainly existed for Scots emigrants, others were coerced into emigration by agents of foreign firms who stood to benefit (both personally through commission based payments as well as financial benefits for the companies involved)

It is clear that coercion was used as a tactic to encourage emigration. We will focus on Canada as an example but it is clear that other countries used coercion in a similar way.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company (CPR) became active in the promotion of emigration to Canada. They recognised that the railway was not simply an easy way to transport new arrivals but was also the most effective way of opening up the wilderness and the prairies to permanent settlement and industry. In 1880 it was allocated 25 million acres of land by the Canadian Government. The land (which was between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains) was to be developed to generate a profit. As a way of ensuring that there was a much greater flow of traffic through the area, while also expanding the settlements the CPR undertook an aggressive marketing policy designed to stimulate emigration. Scotland was especially targeted due to our surplus (and highly skilled) agricultural labour force.

CPR agents travelled around the country giving lectures and providing information about emigration. The CPR also sought to make the lives of the emigrants significantly easier by offering them ready made farms (complete with housing, barns and fences) included in the sale of the land. Some of the land was even given away for free!

In 1892 the Canadian Government appointed two full-time agents in Scotland who undertook tours of markets, town halls and agricultural shows. Some of the agents were even able to deliver their lectures in Gaelic if their audience required it. In this way, many Scots were coerced into emigration by the offers they received and the aggressive nature of many of the foreign agents.

## Better Information

Better information is also a major factor that impacted upon emigration from Scotland.

The letters from emigrants to their families back home has been seen as the most significant source of information. As transport (and telegraph) systems improved postal services became more reliable. Letters that came from trusted members of the family proved to be a reliable account of life and employment overseas. Often letters home also contained enclosures (money) that could be used against the cost of emigration. This encouraged families to become reunited. The same could be said for returning migrants (many of them who followed seasonal or temporary

migration patterns) who could report on their time abroad.

It would be wrong to suggest that all of those who returned did so because the emigration experiment had failed. Many temporary migrants returned with hugely positive reports of life abroad.

The Emigrants Information Office opened in 1886 as a source of impartial advice for migrants. They offered information on land grants, wages, living cost as well as travel information.

Local newspapers also provided a significant amount of emigration information. Newspapers such as the Aberdeen Journal were active in raising interest in emigration - particularly within the rural communities of Aberdeenshire. They provided adverts for ship sailings, information on assisted passage and numerous letters and articles on North American life.

During the 1920s and 1930s the principal aim of the emigrants was to find work and wages and escape mass unemployment at home. This mostly affected the age group 16–29, skilled rather than unskilled workers and men rather than women.

Although most of the emigrants were able to make a better life for themselves and their families abroad, the impact on Scotland has been less favourable. Many of the most productive and talented Scots have left their birthplace to enrich, both economically and culturally, other countries at the expense of their own.

# Emigration KU Tasks

## The Significance of Emigration:

- (1) Describe the trend in emigration from 1850 - 1939.
- (2) Explain why emigration from Scotland was seen as so significant (give at least two reasons for your answer).

## The Reasons for Emigration:

- (1) Describe how some Highland Landlords encouraged emigration.
- (2) Which area of the country did most Scots emigrants come from...
  - (a) 1830s and 1840s?
  - (b) 1850s and After?
- (3) Describe in detail the main reasons for emigration. You should include in your answer:
  - Opportunity
  - Transport
  - Coercion
  - Better Information
  - Unemployment after WW1

## Paired Task:

**How Fully Rotation:** Use an A3 copy of the How Fully rotation sheet to help you to answer the Question at the bottom of the page. Keep the rotation going until all info is exhausted.

**Source A:** from T M Devine, *The Scottish Nation, 1700-2000* (2006).

It is clear that many of the crafts were being undermined by urban competition in the second half of the nineteenth century. Already by the 1850s, the technology of power looms was destroying the textile economy in numerous villages in Perth, Fife and Angus and promoting large-scale migration as a result. The development of a network of branch railway lines enabled cheap factory goods to penetrate far into the rural areas and so threatened the traditional markets for tailors, shoemakers and other tradesmen. The displacement of craftsmen and their families from the smaller country towns and villages became a familiar feature of the rural exodus by the end of the nineteenth century and before. While some trades vanished completely, others, such as the blacksmiths, continued to thrive as long as the horse economy survived. However, in large part, migration from the land before the 1940s has to be explained in terms of the changing attitudes of the farm labour force itself.

- (1) How fully does **Source A** illustrate the reasons for migration of Scots during the period 1830s to 1930s?  
*Use the source and recalled knowledge.* (10 marks)



# Group Task:

In Groups, produce an A3 poster on the push and pull factors in internal migration and emigration. Include these factors:

economic, social, cultural and political aspects; opportunity and coercion.

## Glossary of Terms:

*(make your own glossary of terms from this section)*

## IT Tasks

- 1) Go to the main Migration & Empire (M&E) website home page: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/higherscottishhistory/migrationandempire/index.asp>
- 2) Click on Video Sources
- 3) Click on and watch Professor Tom Devine's video The Migration of Scots, taking copious notes as you watch.
- 4) Go back to the main Migration & Empire (M&E) website home page: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/higherscottishhistory/migrationandempire/index.asp>
- 5) Click on Audio Sources and listen to the five audio clips you have yet to listen to under the Migration of Scots heading. Makes notes if necessary.
- 6) Go back to the main Migration & Empire (M&E) website home page: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/higherscottishhistory/migrationandempire/index.asp>
- 7) Click on Historical documents and have a look at the range of primary sources under the Migration of Scots heading.

We will now try to do some, or look at, examples of the type of questions you WILL see for this section, i.e.

### The migration of Scots

**How fully . . . the reasons for the migration of Scots?**

Push and pull factors in internal migration and emigration: economic, social, cultural and political aspects; opportunity and coercion.

**How far . . . the reasons for internal migration within Scotland?**

**How far . . . the opportunities that attracted Scots to other lands?**

**How far . . . the factors that forced Scots to leave Scotland?**