

‘The Great Exodus’

On Friday 2nd April 1830 over 100 people left Logiealmond to emigrate to Canada, perhaps 8% of the population of the parish area. They were of all ages including 30 children under 14 and an elderly couple, the man aged 84. Most were related and the families included many Wylies, Harleys and Gregors. They took farm implements and the tools of their trades with them for their new life.

All but three families were Dissenters and on the previous Sunday attended their final service at the United Presbyterian Church in Harrietfield. The Minister, the Rev Alexander Young, preached and they sang the paraphrase ‘O God of Bethel’. Their white church at the west end of the village with its tall pointed windows was crowded with a congregation of around 500. It had been designed to seat 450 and so benches were added in all the passages.



Old South Church, Logiealmond (formerly United Presbyterian). Opened, 20th Oct., 1811.
Closed (for Union), 20th Oct., 1907. Removed, 1911.

From ‘Logiealmond’, David Forrester, 1944

The emigrants travelled to Perth on Friday, which was market day, and were able to say their goodbyes to many friends. They left Perth on the Saturday by the steam packet Hero, not long back in service after a refit, and it took them to Dundee.

On the following day 56 set sail in the brig Sprightly under Captain Andrew Johnstone.

Tuesday 6th, more set off in the Isabella (built in 1826, owned by Robert Clatto, master James Donaldson) arrived Quebec 24 May.

Wednesday 7th, the remaining 70-80 followed in the Margaret Balfour (250 tons, built in 1828 and owned by Bell and Balfour) under Captain John Gellatly of Dundee. It had a stormy crossing and was reported to have lost bulwarks in a gale.

All three brigs advertised their sailing as the first spring ship for Quebec from Dundee. They took cargoes including linens, as well as passengers. All sailed north past Aberdeen and through the Pentland Firth across the Atlantic to Quebec, a journey lasting about six weeks.

More followed the next year, 30-40 chiefly from Logiealmond, as noted in the Perthshire Courier.



"Emigrants at Dinner", Illustrated London News, 1844

The above account is drawn from contemporary newspaper reports and from Thomas Wylie's *Recollections and Traditions of Logiealmond* (written between 1864 and 1932).

These emigrants were not the first to leave Logiealmond to make a different life elsewhere, and far more were to follow, but this group were notable because so many went at the same time and to the same destination, Canada, initially Quebec. Their exodus was noted back home by the Church of Scotland Minister who contributed to the Second Statistical Account of Scotland for this area. Even the census enumerator in 1841 added a note to his records.

The wider context

For generations in Scotland there had been migration within the local area and further afield, from country to town, from Scotland to England and abroad, and into Scotland from Ireland and elsewhere.

Before the American War of Independence, 1775-1783, most British emigration was to the southern colonies of North America, but thereafter the northern colonies were more accessible and their settlement was encouraged by the British government, partly for fear of losing them to America.

Early British trade with Canada was for the skins and furs from the north and west. Agricultural settlement started in the more accessible east and moved westwards from the late eighteenth century, from the Maritime Provinces, to Lower Canada (Quebec), Upper Canada (Ontario) and the Prairies. Many left the Highlands for Canada from about 1800, and even more moved there from Ireland. Lowland Scots began to join them; Logiealmond is in the transition between highlands and lowlands.

initially Scots were second only to the Irish in numbers arriving in Canada. It is estimated that 16,400 Scots emigrated to Canada in the 1820s (compared with 22,600 to England and Wales), 33,400 in the 1830s, and arrivals continued through the rest of the century and into the next. From the 1840s the USA was a more popular destination than Canada

Who went and where?

Records of emigrants from Scotland and of immigrants to Canada were not compiled regularly until the mid 1830s and there are no official lists of this group leaving Scotland or arriving in Canada. We have not managed to trace the further lives of the 1830 group.

What we know of them comes from Thomas Wylie, 1846-1935, who grew up on the farm of the Shannoch in Little Glenshee. He was a migrant himself, though within the UK. He and his wife, Jessie, moved from Logiealmond to farm first at Doune in central Scotland and then Ashwell in Hertfordshire. He recorded his memories of his place of origin as well as what he had been told by the older generation, and he made significant contributions to David Forrester's local history.



Thomas Wylie, from 'Logiealmond' by David Forrester

About the 1830 exodus to Canada, he says: 'A young man, one of the McLeishs of the Shannoch, I don't know how prompted, had gone to Canada in 1814. I have been told that he had been writing home that though there were hardships there were also probabilities of making good. What talks there would be about this new country, so hard yet so promising! So in 1830 came the great exodus. I have been told that members of thirty families – my father had eight near relations among them – left in a sailing ship from Dundee, round the north of Scotland for Montreal.'

Three Gregor brothers from Greenfield joined the 1830 emigration. 'But while the Wylies remained about Montreal – (the father took up land, but the son took up engineering and became a first engineer on the great

lake steamers) – the Gregors went west to Ontario and settled in one of the best districts there. What is now called Acton.’

Acton was settled from 1825 and is now on the edge of Greater Toronto. It provided good farm land when cleared of trees, and timber contributed to the large tanning industry there. The Wylies may not have ventured so far west but the next generation moved out of farming into new areas of work.

Why did they go?

Was it push or pull? Most emigrants probably had several reasons to go and a mix of push and pull.

Thomas Wylie explains some of the motives that influenced the Logiealmond contingent: ‘After Waterloo things went all to pieces for a time. With the increased rents and no market ... things became very difficult about 1820. The Miss Drummonds had Condie [estate lawyers and advisers] out from Perth, went round all the farms. He recommended that the rents be reduced by a third. (This was told me by the late William Sprunt.) The temporary relief was of little avail. There was still little or no work nor money to pay for what might be done. There were also several dry hot years culminating in 1828. One can imagine what pondering and talking about what was to be done.’ This picks out economic depression, shortage of work and income, and a series of years of bad weather – mostly push factors.

The economy

The depression after the end of Napoleonic War 1815 was severe in Scotland. Grain prices fell as wartime trade restrictions were lifted, farm workers’ wages fell and unemployment increased. Demobilised soldiers and sailors were looking for work too. The population of Scotland was growing, and many were drawn to the expanding towns.

Changes in the timber trade created opportunities for those that wanted to emigrate to Canada. Taxes on Baltic timber were raised considerably from 1807 and so Canadian timber became much more desirable. As the shipping companies brought back the cargo, they could take emigrants on the return journey, and fares became more affordable. (A newspaper advertisement for the brig ‘Sprightly’ notes the company has Canadian

timber and wood ash for sale.) The strong market for trees could also be of benefit to the new settlers clearing land, especially if their plot was near navigable water.

Changes in Agriculture

The decades before and after 1800 were a time of great change. It came gradually to Logiealmond; it had started by the 1790s but was not complete by 1841. The old way of life where several families lived in a hamlet or fermtoun in a landscape with hardly any trees or enclosures, cooperating to provide most of their needs, was supplanted. Compact farms managed by one tenant with the fields enclosed and drained, became the landowner's objective. Labourers and skilled tradesmen were still needed to achieve the changes, but the small farmers and those with a cottage and small area of land lost out, and not all stayed.

The population of Logiealmond was growing between about 1800 and 1840. Thomas Wylie describes how, in response, much of the rough ground on the slopes above the cultivation and in Little Glenshee was broken in for agriculture establishing a small individual house with a steading. For the rest of the century and beyond population totals fell, except for a small rise in the 1890s.

All were tenants of the landowner or were their sub-tenants. Leases for farmers were usually of 19 years duration, and then the rent and conditions were re-negotiated. The new, 'improving' leases for the resulting larger farms set conditions on how the land was managed. One of the attractions of Canada was the opportunity to own land and work it according to one's own judgement. The pull factor could be strong even for the larger farmers.

Migration within the local area was common, as well as to other farming areas, or to the growing towns, but emigration was an option and Canada was the most popular destination at the time for Scots, and Logiealmond families knew of others who had gone before.

Publicity

Having been strongly against emigration in the eighteenth century, by 1800 the UK government was prepared to encourage if not subsidise emigration. Their agents provided information on different destinations

and the means to get there. For Canada they worked through land development companies that sold land, albeit with conditions on what must be achieved over the first 10 years. These included the Canada Company from 1826 and the British American Land Company from 1832.

People were wary of the official information, and sometimes with good reason. Patrick Bell, a minister from Angus, emigrated to Upper Canada in 1834 for four years, and said of the Canada Company; 'They held out great prospects to emigrants at home and coaxed and flattered every one that thought of coming to this Country.' But those that came found themselves in thrall to the company and without promised amenities – roads non-existent, bridges and mills unbuilt.

EMIGRATION
TO
CANADA.

THE BRITISH AMERICAN LAND COMPANY,
ESTABLISHED BY ROYAL CHARTER AND ACT OF PARLIAMENT, IN 1834,
Offer for SALE, in the Eastern Townships of Canada,
IMPROVED FARMS,
With Buildings; Cultivated Land, &c., ready for immediate occupation; and
UNIMPROVED LANDS.
In any Quantity, from FIFTY ACRES upwards.
These LANDS are situated to the South of
River ST. LAWRENCE,
And only distant from MONTREAL from 50 to 100 miles.
The unimproved allotments consist of Lands heretofore reserved for the Crown and Clergy, and purchased by the Company, as well as others acquired from private Proprietors, and are in Townships already settled, and possessing
Villages, Churches, Mills, Schools, &c.
As an inducement to respectable persons of small means proposing to Emigrate, the Company offer for SALE, LOTS of 50 ACRES each, to be selected by the Purchaser on his arrival,
At the low price of 10s. PER ACRE.
AND WILL GIVE
A Free Passage
From Scotland to the Land in the Eastern Townships for each
Fifty Acre allotment paid for in Great Britain.
As evidence of the superiority of the Eastern Townships as a place of settlement, the DIRECTORS have pleasure in stating, that of 35,521 Acres sold in 1843, only 263 Acres have been returned to the Company.
OF A more extended Printed Account of the Country, and all further particulars, may be had from the undersigned, who is authorized to conclude the arrangements on the part of the Company, with Purchasers.
JAMES SOOT,
27 Cowgate, Dundee.
March 18, 1844.
B. ANNAN, PRINTER.

From Dundee City Library Local history

The newspapers published long letters from emigrants with information and advice, which could be useful if you had confidence in it. One example relevant to Logiealmond is attached as an appendix, written from York, Upper Canada, which is now part of Toronto. Letters home from those you knew who had gone out before were much more trustworthy.

The newspapers also provided essential information on the passage. Sailings were advertised several months in advance and more information was provided nearer the time. They left for Canada after the worst of the winter weather, but as early as possible, so that work could be done over the summer on the land and, if necessary, a house. Conditions on board ship could be grim, due to the weather, poor preparations or the running of the ship, but improved over the years and the passage shortened when steam power was introduced.



THE TAY STEAM PACKET COMPANY

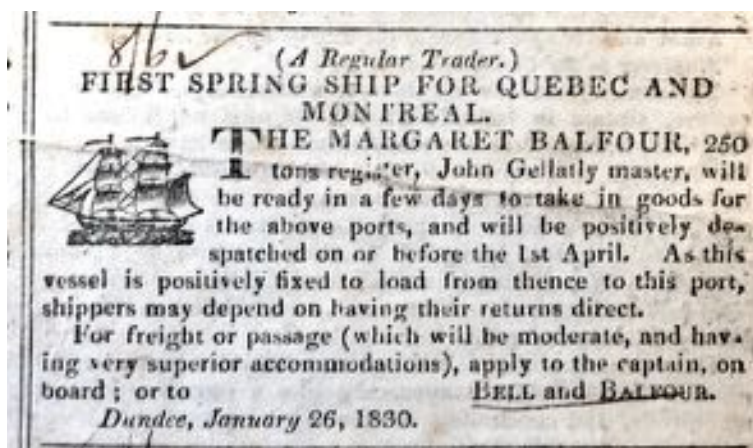
TAKE this opportunity to thank the public for the liberal encouragement they have hitherto received; and beg leave to announce, that their Steam-Packet, **HERO**, (having undergone a thorough repair, is now in excellent condition, with superior accommodation for passengers) will COMMENCE PLYING between Dundee and Perth, on Monday the 5th March next.

N.B.—Breakfast, Dinner, and other Refreshments on board, as usual.

FARES.

	Cabin.	Storage.
Dundee to Perth,.....	2s. 6d.	2s. 0d.
Perth to Dundee,.....	1s. 6d.	1s. 3d.
Newburgh to Perth,.....	1s. 0d.	0s. 6d.

Children from seven to twelve, half-price.
Ditto under seven, free.
Dundee, February 17, 1830.



(A Regular Trader.)
FIRST SPRING SHIP FOR QUEBEC AND MONTREAL.

THE MARGARET BALFOUR, 250
tons register, John Gellatly master, will be ready in a few days to take in goods for the above ports, and will be positively despatched on or before the 1st April. As this vessel is positively fixed to load from thence to this port, shippers may depend on having their returns direct.

For freight or passage (which will be moderate, and having very superior accommodations), apply to the captain, on board; or to **BELL and BALFOUR.**

Dundee, January 26, 1830.

Dundee City Library – The Dundee, Perth & Cupar Advertiser

Can you add to the story?

We know of a number of other emigrants from Logiealmond. In 1747, after Culloden, Michael Steele from Logie-Almond, late of the Atholl Brigade, landed at Port North Potomac, Maryland, to be sold as an indentured servant. 1856, Murdoch McLeod ran away to sea and eventually became a grain magnate in Australia, calling his house 'Logiealmond'. 1890, George Keay's family emigrated to the prairies of Canada, though he moved on to Vancouver, volunteered in the First World War and was killed in the battle of the Somme. 1925, Duncan Campbell emigrated from the marginal farm of 'Montreal' to Big Island Hawaii where he managed sugar plantations.

This small area has links with many parts of the world.
Can you add to the story?

8/6 ✓

FIRST SPRING SHIP.
AT DUNDEE, FOR QUEBEC,
And will forward Goods to Montreal, at Ship's expense and Shipper's risk.



THE fine first class brig **ISABELLA**, 303 tons register, James Donaldson master, will be ready to receive goods for the above ports in a few days, and will sail about 1st April. As this vessel was lately fitted up with state-rooms, and other accommodation for passengers, in the India trade, and having great height betwixt decks, she will be found a most desirable conveyance.


For rate of freight and passage—both of which will be moderate—apply to the Master on board; or to
KINMOND & HILL.

Dundee, February 4, 1830.

10/6 ✓

REGULAR TRADER.
FIRST SPRING SHIP FOR QUEBEC AND MONTREAL;

Under engagement to sail positively on 20th March;



THE remarkably fine British-built, coppered, and copper-fastened A 1 brig **SPRIGHTLY**, Andrew Johnston master.

This fine brig has comfortable accommodations both for cabin and steerage passengers; and is a most desirable conveyance to shippers who wish their goods out to an early market.

For rates of freight or passage, apply to Captain Johnston on board; or to
JOHN LOW Junr.
Trades' Lane.

The Sprightly will load a general cargo at Montreal for Dundee; and, as she can load out at that port, will avoid the great detention of calling at Quebec to fill up.

For Sale,
Montreal first and second sort Pearl, and first sort Pot Ashes; also, Memel Fir, Red Wood Deals and Deal-ends; American Pine, Ash, Birch, and Elm Timber; and Quebec Pipe and West India Staves.

Dundee, February 17, 1830.
(One interest.)

Dundee City Library - Dundee Perth & Cupar Advertiser 1830

Appendix

EMIGRATION TO CANADA, Perthshire Courier, 3 March 1831

We alluded in the course of last summer to the numerous respectable families, chiefly from Logiealmond and the western districts of this country, which had sailed for the British settlements in North America to join several colonies, composed for the most part of old friends and neighbours who had several years previously emigrated to these quarters. Many of these families carried out with them, each from £200 to £300 in cash, and it appears from the following letter that they are comfortably settled and in a thriving way. We understand a pretty extensive emigration from the same district is at present contemplating, the following particulars from a letter from a very respectable settler to his brother is dated “near York [Toronto], Upper Canada, Dec. 23d, 1830,” may not be uninteresting to many of our readers:

The provisions brought out answered very well, viz., oatmeal, potatoes, and salt beef, some molasses and plenty of good whisky. You would well to bring out some English sickles, as they answer best here, spades and hoes, and a wedge of iron for splitting rails with, as also some harrow tines about as large as square drill harrow, which form answers best for getting round the tree stumps; although one may think the field is clear then yet the stumps again take root in a few years. From such fields, however, we have good wheat without either dung or lime.

Ten or twelve years ago there was not stick cut in this neighbourhood and now it cleared fully fifty miles from the lake; we are about 14 miles from the lake. There is a street about 4 miles from the lake, which communicates with York or 70 miles along its side; there are many stores there, and there also is the chief market for our produce. For some lots in this neighbourhood, uncleared, they ask 4 dollars an acre.

I come now to give you an account of what have been doing—we have been very throng [busy] burning wood, and putting in some wheat, about a bushel to the acre; the weather has been very much against us. I had 19 men and a yoke of oxen gathering the logs of wood together for burning - the trees here are from 130 to 200 feet high, some very thick.

We kept all winter 2 cows, 3 hogs, 6 hens, 2 cats, and a dog; one of the cows cost 16 dollars, and the other 14. There are no rats here, but plenty of mice. All the work is done with oxen, they answer better than horses among the stumps and soft roads; logs of wood are as common with us as stones in your neighbourhood. There is plenty of lime and free-stone about one or two miles from us.

Those who came some time before us got lots for nothing, some of them three or four hundred acres. One of our neighbours, who once worked at the shore of Perth, is now proprietor of eleven hundred acres. The soil here is mostly strong clay, with mixture of black earth; the country generally is very level, except near the mountains, none of which are so high as those at home. Wheat is the staple commodity here; Indian corn grows very well, it is sown in drills about 2 feet apart; they sow pumpkins here and there, when ripe they resemble an orange in colour, and some of them are so large to weigh a stone - they are used at table for holding the tea. The pease they grow here are the white garden kind, and they are only used for feeding the hogs.

I am glad you think of coming out to the flesh pots of Canada. Bring all your crockery with you, as they are very dear here, and likewise some of your best flax for thread, as the flax here is not good. Give Jessie as much sewing you can, for it is a very useful accomplishment here. The old inhabitants are very kind and well-behaved; you will hardly hear any swearing; their dress at church is much the same as with you. You need not afraid to travel through the country here, for there are no robbers, and I have never yet seen a beggar; there is scarcely such a thing as a door with a lock, and many a house without even a door to close.

Provision here is plenty; wheat about a dollar a bushel; potatoes are plenty, but no fixed price; tea is 1s. quarter lb ; 74d. ; snuff and tobacco 1s. per lb. currency, but most people raise their own.

References: Contemporary newspapers

David Forrester, Logiealmond, 1944

Thomas Wylie, Recollections and Traditions of Logiealmond, 1930s

Jenni Calder, Scots in Canada, 2003

James C Docherty, Scottish Migration since 1750, 2016

T M Devine, The Scottish Clearances, 2018

