

SCOTLAND

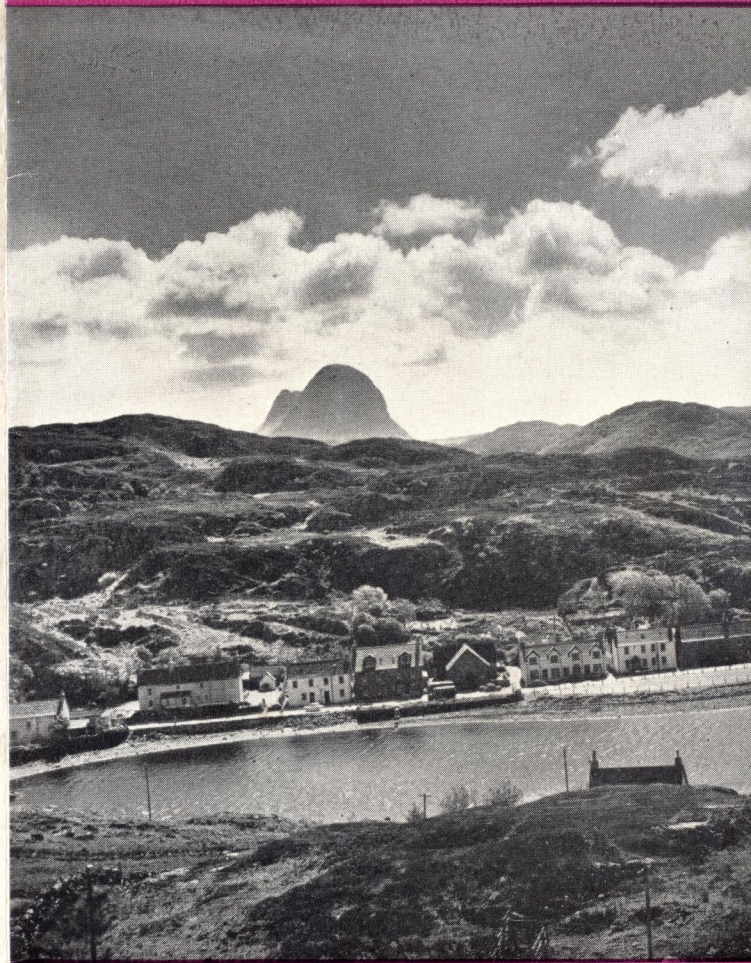
Sutherland



*Canisp and Cam Loch
Dunrobin Castle*



Ben Loyal



Lochinver

The Unspoiled County

Sutherland

Sutherland is, above all, an unspoiled county, one of the most majestic and wildest—and yet most welcoming—in all Scotland. Not more than 3 per cent. of its land is cultivated—for the rest are great mountains, lovely lochs and straths, and surrounding them all a coastline of bays and fiords, cliffs and golden beaches, bounded west and north by the green Atlantic.

Townships are few, though many crofting communities are dotted over the land. This is the land, above all, for a Highland open-air holiday, with longer hours of summer daylight than anywhere in mainland Britain.



Lairg

Sutherland stretches across Scotland, from the North Sea on the east to the Atlantic on the west, from the county town of Dornoch to the wild beauty of Assynt and the giant cliffs of Cape Wrath, from golfing and seaside joys between the Dornoch Firth to Brora to that magnet for fishermen, mountaineers and photographers that is the far north-west coastline.

On the east one enters the county across the Kyle of Sutherland at Bonar Bridge, from which a good road runs to Dornoch, a Royal burgh despite its smallness, with spacious squares. After its internationally famous golf course, its pride is its Cathedral, dating back to the 13th century. Dornoch was also the scene of the last judicial execution for witchcraft in Scotland, in 1772—but of more moment to-day is that here is a town with immense beaches offering much holiday delight.

North of Dornoch is Golspie, an attractive village, again with fine golf and sands, and the magnificent seat of the Duke of Sutherland, Dunrobin Castle, on its high terraces overlooking the sea.

Further along the coast is another resort, Brora, on the

The Smoo Cave, near Durness



Loch Inchar, near Rhiconich

salmon river of the same name, again with good bathing and good golf.

Further still to Helmsdale with its fine harbour and its salmon river, and lovely Kildonan Strath.

North from Bonar Bridge and west from Golspie the roads converge on Lairg at the foot of Loch Shin. But these are only two of the roads which meet here. This is a natural centre of Sutherland and the whole of the north of Scotland. For on Lairg no less than five roads converge: they come from Tongue in the north, from Laxford Bridge, Lochinver and Ullapool in the west, from Golspie and Dornoch, Tain and Dingwall in the east. This village stands in an almost unique position in the north of Scotland—an inland centre from which the sea lochs and mountains of the west, the wide moorlands of the north and the fine beaches and golf courses of the east can all be reached well within an hour's drive.

A few miles south are the Falls of Shin, with a famous salmon leap.

The North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, at a cost of £7½ million, has harnessed the waters of Loch Shin to provide 140 million units of electricity every year; like other projects of this Board, the dam at Lairg is a showpiece adding to, rather than detracting from, the scenery.

Cradled in wild country, and attractive in itself, it has all the ingredients at hand for the holidaymaker—fishing, golf and bathing, mountains, lochs and rivers.

If the approach to Sutherland is made along the north coast, from Caithness, the contrast is inescapable. From the coast road over wide moorland there can be seen in the west the great Sutherland peaks of Ben Hope and Ben Loyal, a fit gateway to the north-west corner of Scotland.

A more usual approach is by Ullapool on Loch Broom, and here is an amazing land. The moor rises and falls between road and sea, fretted with blue lochs, with isolated peaks—Suilven, Canisp, Stack Polly and others—rising suddenly, startlingly. By Achiltibuie, looking over the Summer Isles, to Lochinver with its busy fishing port. This is a welcoming place to which visitors return again, no matter the distance. The Lochinver Angling Club control thirty lochs where visitors can fish for a moderate charge. Climbing on the peaks of Suilven, Canisp, Cul Mor, Stac Polly, Quinag, or Ben More Assynt can be safe or exciting, depending on the route chosen.

Scourie, and offshore the uninhabited Island of Handa where kittiwakes, razorbills, fulmars, guillemots make raucous music; Laxford—it means "Salmon River" in Scandinavian—and Loch Stack, with claims to be the finest sea-trout loch in Britain; Rhiconich; Kinlochbervie, where King Haco's fleet first anchored in Scottish waters . . . and the last miles to Durness where one is on the northern coast of Scotland.

A MEMORABLE COAST

West of Durness is Cape Wrath, apt name for one of the loneliest headlands in Britain, on which a lighthouse is built. It is a memorable experience to stand on the highest cliffs in the country, with gannets wheeling overhead and the Atlantic surf hundreds of feet beneath, and see on a clear day North Rona and the Butt of Lewis on the distant horizon. The curious Smoo Caves, east of Durness, are but part of the odd architecture of the cliffs created by the endless pounding of wind and water.

At Tongue a road runs south by Loch Loyal and Altnaharra to Lairg.

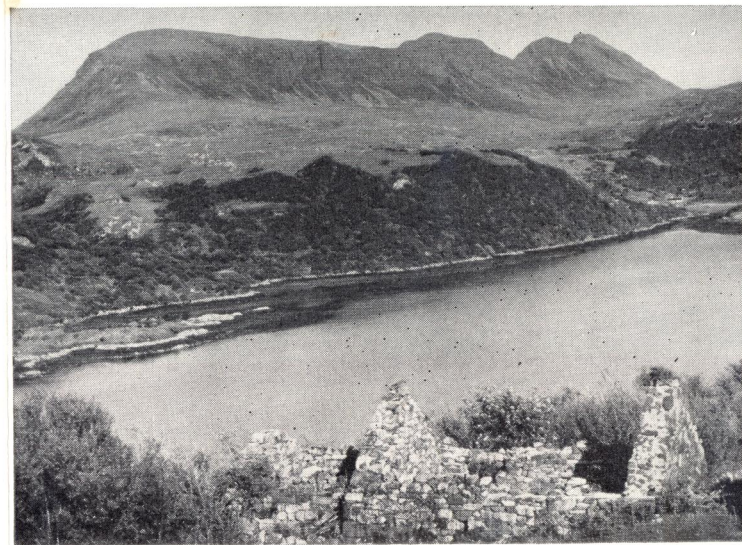
Historically as well as geologically this is an ancient land. It was originally Suderland, the "South Land" of the Vikings raiding out of Orkney, and the Norsemen were not expelled until the reign of William the Lion. The earldom of Sutherland, the oldest in the Kingdom, dates from 1228 and was first held by Hugh Freskin, who was sent—together with a Mackay from Galloway—to bring the territory under Scottish rule.

The Sutherlands were originally located in the south-eastern part of the county, and down through the years feuded incessantly with the Mackay clan, settled in the north-west. By the 19th century the Sutherlands had taken over most of the county.

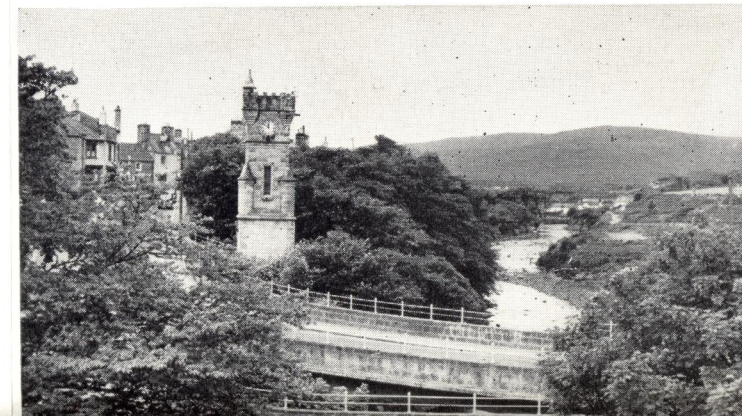
The other great family in Sutherland is that of the Macleods of Assynt. They joined with vigour in the turbulent history of the times, but are best remembered for their part in the betrayal of Montrose following his defeat at Carbisdale in 1650. He had come to raise the country and the clans for Charles Stuart, later Charles II. But, sore harried, he was taken by Macleod's men and later escorted to Edinburgh and the scaffold.



Helmsdale



Quinag and Loch Nedd



Brora

SPORT

As well as being a county of scenic beauty Sutherland offers innumerable opportunities for a wide range of outdoor activities.

For the golfer there is one of the finest courses in Scotland, that of Royal Dornoch. Golf has been established here for as long as the game has been known, and this course is the third earliest known, dating from 1616. Dornoch's golfing delights, say the experts, cannot possibly be savoured to the full in less than a week.

But this is only one of several fine courses on the east coast of Sutherland. Golspie offers a sporting course in a splendid links setting, while the course at Brora was laid

Angling on Loch Assynt



Dornoch

out by James Braid in 1924—every one of its holes has character as benefits the work of that great architect of golf courses.

As the east coast of Sutherland is well-known for its golf even more famous is the west for its angling.

It is said that a third of Sutherland is water. This alone would suggest the opportunities for the angler: but the quantity is not all—the quality of the angling is even more important, and in Sutherland that is unquestioned.

The Atlantic coast, with innumerable fiords biting into the land, is only the start. There are innumerable fresh-water lochs, of which the largest are Lochs Shin and Assynt. The Oyckell, 35 miles long, is the greatest of the county's many rivers.

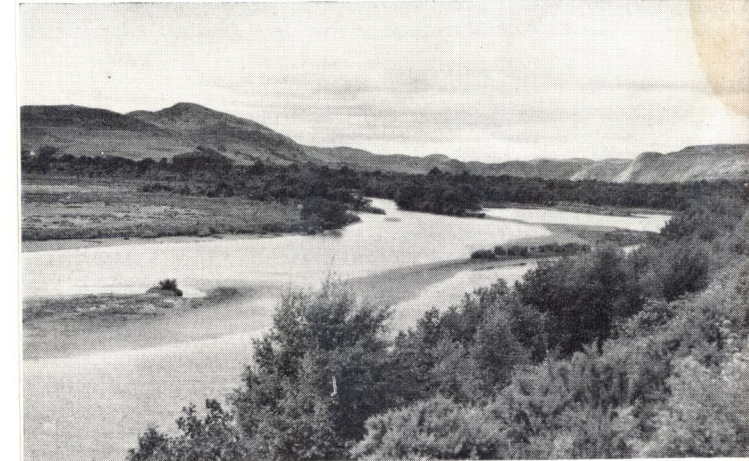
All the lochs and rivers hold brown trout; most of the rivers and some lochs have sea-trout, and fine salmon fishing is to be found in several rivers and lochs.

And there are not only the "recognised" waters. In Sutherland there are so many lochans, many of them high and remote, that the angler has that rare possibility of fishing where no other has cast a line for years.

Throughout the area there are many hotels which cater primarily for the angler, which know from long experience the hospitality looked for after the day's sport is over, and which are happy to provide it.

Other outdoor interests like swimming and sailing are obviously well looked after in the resorts which cater for seaside holidaymakers who find delight in the great beaches of the county. West Sutherland could keep the most enthusiastic mountaineer and hill-walker happy for a lifetime; the vivid colours and huge skylines provide endless joy for the photographer and the artist; while the ornithologist may well see birds here—including the golden eagle—which are rarities indeed outside the Northern Highlands of Scotland.

Near Golspie



For further information about **SUTHERLAND** see:—

Sutherland Guide—price 3/6
Helmsdale Guide—price 1/-

Lochinver & Assynt Guide—price 2/6
Golspie Guide—price 1/6

For information about Scotland generally write to:

The Scottish Tourist Board, 2 Rutland Place, Edinburgh, EH1 2YU

Obtainable from **THE AREA TOURIST OFFICER,**
Dornoch, Sutherland Telephone: **Dornoch 304**
or from any information centre in Sutherland

Royal Dornoch Golf Course

HOW TO GET TO SUTHERLAND

From Inverness by an excellent main road with a regular daily service of motor buses.

In the extreme north-west roads are usually one-way traffic with very frequent passing places: almost invariably they are admirably engineered and surfaced.

BY RAIL:

From Inverness to Lairg, Golspie, Brora and Helmsdale.

BY AIR:

B.E.A. operate services to Inverness from Glasgow with connections from London and elsewhere.

