

It may be of some interest to compare
~~the expenses~~ ^{expenses} ~~incurred~~
 in comparison with the large sums needed
 for upkeep & repair to day, it ~~may be of some~~
~~interest to the~~ cost of making the first roads
 in Sutherland in the early ~~to~~ years of the 19th
 ce^{ntury} seems small indeed ^{of some interest}

Expenditure on roads is the second largest item in the
 County Council ^{expense} budget for 1954-55, being exceeded only by
 Education; it ~~is~~ ^{may be interesting} curious to compare the large sums needed ^{today}
 for upkeep and repair only, with the cost of making the
 first roads in Sutherland in the early part of the nineteenth
 century.

54

the interior practically

^{to} At the the beginning of the century, Sutherland was
 roadless and there was only one bridge in the county, that
 at Broara. Travellers from the south, having braved the risks
 and discomforts of crossing the firth by the Meikle
 Ferry, when they landed, had as their only guide, the greener
 appearance of the surface and the ruts which marked the
 line for a carriage to follow, The road from Golspie to
 the Ord was no better than a rough and dangerous pathway
 running by the sea shore.

p.19 Loch

142

It was the setting up of the Parliamentary Commission
 for Highland Roads and Bridges, ~~that~~ brought about the change 17

142
 17

 159

from these primitive conditions. The genius and energy of Telford were employed in making a general survey of the Highlands, and his reports and recommendations enabled the Commissioners to direct successfully the greatest public works yet undertaken in the Highlands. Nevertheless many difficulties were encountered in laying the foundations of a ~~proper~~ road system in Sutherland. 5-7

There were no large contracting firms such as ~~xxx~~ we Mitchell know to-day. Contracts were taken up by proprietors and large farmers who knew nothing of roadmaking themselves and gave out sub-contracts to masons and others who had not always sufficient knowledge of the financial side of their business to avoid difficulties in the payment of their men and in collecting materials. 119

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Loch

Work on the roads was begun in 1807, half the expense being met by the Parliamentary Commissioners and the other half by a cess on the whole county. The cost of the road from the Ord to Golspie was estimated ~~for~~ at £10,000, and the continuation of the road from Golspie by the Little Ferry to Crieck cost £5,392, plus three bridges at Evelix

Bundle
124-

5,259.6
£ 4,624

159
134
340

Contract. Rs

£610 2

Ospisdale and Spinningdale for £544. Six smaller bridges on this road were contracted for at £100! ^{little} The Ferry was ^{was} of course in use until the completion of the Mound and its approaches in 1816. As first planned this road reached the shores of the Firth below Criech House, ⁹ where there was a favourite crossing for the cattle droves on their way ~~south~~ to the southern markets, but Telford after a careful survey decided in favour of ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ¹⁰ ~~bridgexx~~ bridging the firth at Bonar. ⁷⁹

The first report of the Local Committee for Super-intending the work on the Criech road is dated May 16th, 1810. The ⁺ members of the Committee, who included a Mr Cowie, representing the Commissioners, met "at the side of the intended new bridge at ^{Evelicks-} Evelix, where the contractors had proceeded no further than the quarrying of stones for it ". Proceeding westward, for the road from Evelix to the Little Ferry was as yet hardly begun, the committee examined the work in progress. They found fault with the foundations of the road, which had too large a mixture of clay, with the road drains which they complained were too narrow and with the

Evelicks-

Examined

190
340
<hr/>
530

separate

workmen whom they said were not careful enough to separate the sand from the gravel they were laying on the surface. The contractors were working on the section at the end of the oakwood on the ^{Laidmore} Ledmore, where the Committee thought that parapets were needed to ^{protect} travellers on the steepest part of the hillside. Finally they objected--- with some reason-- to the unfortunate Mr Cowie having taken up his residence at Goldpie, at such a distance from the work in hand that his inspections could be neither frequent nor effective.

90

Large gangs of men appear to have been ^{well} employed on the road, the ~~names of over 60 appearing on the pay sheets at Spinningdale.~~ One wonders who were John Smith, ^{Alexander Campbell} James Fraser, ^{whose name figure on the pay sheet} Donald Munro and many others, were they local men, or had they come from a distance attracted by the regular work and the wage which averaged 1/6 to 2/- a day. A typical account of the wages earned is that sent in by John Hay, mason, for work on the bridge over the ¹Autgarve burn at Ospisdale :-

£30
209

239

April 29 1811-

To John Hay, Mason, Hewing 120 feet of coping at 9d per foot£4. 10.

Time wrought at the bridge
 5 days at 3/4d£1 16. 8d
 Two journeymen 3 1/2 days @ 3/-
 A labourer 2 1/2 days @ 1/6 1/2 3/9

2 1/2

The local smiths must have been kept busy making new tools for the roadmen and repairing and sharpening old ones. Donald Grant, smith at Embo, made 18 new picks weighing about 11 lbs apiece at 8¹/₆. Wheelbarrows were also made locally and cost from 13/- to 16/- each, but tools were also bought in Tain, ~~of~~ ^{the} brought by sea from Leith in one of those small ships ~~employed~~ ~~on the coast at~~ ~~the~~ which carried anything from a load of meal ~~or~~ ^{by sea} lime to a case of books for the minister) ~~or~~ a box of fine china for Lord Ashburton at Rosehall.

97

Meal for the workmen was an important item. For the men Evelix- Criech road it was stored at Cyder Hall in the care of one Alexander Rose, who signs himself " woodkeeper".

Before the Criech Road was finished the road to Tongue was already in hand. This was not completed until about 1819, ^{& cost about £16,000} The wild country it opened up necessitated the building of barracks for the workmen and the difficulties of getting food and supplies to them must have been great. Lime for the masons, coals for the smith, gunpowder for the "blowers" , meal and tools for the men, almost everything came by sea. Meal was bought in Caithness in large quantities, a typical purchase ^{was} was 245¹/₂ bolls bought from James Craig, vidual merchant at Thurso in 1814. and

739
 224

 963

Bonar Bridge cost £12,971 - it was begun in Sept 1811 & finished in Nov 1812 - the ironwork for the bridge was cast by Bonar in 6 batches - by James & Allan & shipped to Tongue in the sloop Betsy of Rispond. cost £13,971

shipped to Tongue in the sloop Betsy of Rispond. She also carried 6 doz pick handles and 24 wheel barrows. at 21/- each. This was expensive but then the wheel barrows were made by Alexander MacKidd, whom Craig calls "the first tradesman in the country" and he says they are worth the price. The meal was stored at Tongue and carried on horseback to the men as required. Neverthe less Lewis Clark, contractor, writing on June 16th 1816, complains that he has only four days provision in hand for 150 men and that they had had no salt for a fortnight, ^{hand} which was a hardship to them. 12

Lewis Clerk was one of those who came to grief with his contract. His bridge at Lettermore had to be rebuilt and he himself, ailing and wretched writes from Alness that the is reduced to teaching a parcel of children with no salary. ^u His contract had to be finished by two other masons. ^{u13}

Telford's iron bridge at Salt? Bonar was begun in Nov 1812 -

Bonar Bridge was begun in 1811 and finished within a year, the coast road was finished and the ^{in 1813} bound was opened in 1816. ~~in 1816~~ in 1816, but the west was still cut off from the rest of the county. Lord Ashburton was making great improvements at Rosehall/rebuilding his house after a disastrous fire, planting ~~and~~ making new roads and

at the Salt was 12,971 - 220 the amount was opened in 1816,

*963
220
1183*

but if he wanted to go ^{Southern} Down

bridges on his estate, but he still had to ford the Shin river or go down to Bonar by water, in his boat the Anna Maria. ¹⁴ 25

The Shin bridge was built by Messrs Munson and Mac-
-Farlane in 1822. ¹⁵ It was designed by John Mitchell, Telford's Chief Inspector, who made frequent reports on its progress. 70 men were employed on the ^{bridged approaches} work including 20 masons and 4 carpenters, Mitchell passed on a request by the contractors that they might be allowed to bring the stone for the arches from the Moray Frith, just below Cadboll House and this request was granted on condition that the same stone was used for the string course and the ~~parapets~~ coping of the parapets. ¹⁶

Even before the roads were completed the question of repairs began to arise. John Mitchell died in 1824, worn out by the ceaseless travelling ^{entailed as Chief Inspector constant exposure} ~~and exposure~~ in any weather. He was succeeded by his son Joseph Mitchell at a salary of 500⁰ a year., plus 11/- per day for travelling charges and 8d a mile. ^{for Carriage} In his first year he travelled 4,526 miles, but he was a young man and conditions for him were much easier than they had been for his father. ¹⁸ in the early years when ~~the roads~~ the roads were still unmade. ¹⁹

15 bad weather

116

1183
211

1394

1394
200

1594

Was the gift of General Dempster of Illinois
member of the Paris Exposition for many years

~~The~~ ~~bridge~~ Telford's graceful iron bridge was ~~swayed~~ ^{destroyed}
away by floods in 1890. But a marble tablet
commemorative with an inscription commemorating
the works of the Commissioners of Roads & Bridges -
was saved & re-erected on the modern
bridge which ^{now} spans the river. This tablet
was the gift of General Dempster of Illinois - for which
It must have been a great day when the first
mail coach - carrying the mails from the
South crossed over the river

It must have been a great day when the
coach carrying the mails from the South
first crossed over Telford's graceful
iron bridge & proceeded on its way north

A white marble tablet - with an inscription
commemorating the labours of the Commissioners
of Roads & Bridges was erected on the
side of Telford's graceful iron bridge
when it was saved when the bridge
was destroyed by floods in 1890 & was
re-erected on the modern bridge that
now spans the river. This tablet

Bundle 40 included - James Davidson

Contract signed & dated 29/8/1815 for 23 bridges on the Tongue Road - beginning at the Cross & going over the 4th, 5th & 6th sections, to Bonar Bridge - 23 Bridges to be turned by 1816

He had to quarry & lead the stone, burnish the mortar - lime & other necessary materials & the tools & other instruments of workmanship required by the terms of Martinus 1816. His caution ~~James~~ ^{George} Brown of Donkwood -

Contract price £1,700.

Bundle 49 A

Samuel 1832. Thos: Peacock against D.G.

In 1810 - he was preferred as contractor for the Skibo Road - Net price of contract £4,363.

He was also preferred as contractor for Tain Rd 1813 at £8,000.

Claimed also a partner in the Tongue Rd

Contract price £15,770 - plus £145-10. making a total of £16,913-10. A sum of £1000 of £82-10. left the net contract at £16,831.

D.G. denied this.

Final inspection of Tongue Road 5th Aug: 1820. Statement for D.G.

Road Repairs

Bundle 127

Minutes of Meeting Solely Inn - 22-9-1823 -
\$400 to be raised for repairs to equal part of
Commissioner for like sum -

Lord Belville - was bought at the Ardmore sale
for 15/- & 3 plates 'Holy Family' 12-6-0 -
Mrs Stevens 5/- at the Ardmore sale -

11th May 1821.

at a meeting of the Heritors & J.P.s of the Co of S.

& seems contract for the Mail Diligence from Inverness
to Thurso. had to be renewed. Letter produced from the
Secy to the Lord of the Treasury - saying they would
relinquish the mileage duty on said Diligence, if the
Counties of S. & C. would agree to increase their
subscriptions towards the expense - in the same
proportion viz - £400 instead of £200. This was
agreed.

1818

From Estimates for the County accounts for 1818 -

200 of 4 mile stones - from the Old to Bonas Bridge
to Tongue - with the freight, carriage, measurement of
the road may amount to $\frac{2}{3}$ of 20/- each - £97 -
(They were to be made of granite) This sum of
£97 included erecting them.
For haunting Bonas Bridge - £150 - $\frac{2}{3}$ of this may
fall to the county £100.

Extract
Minutes of the Trustees, 11th Dec: 1822-

That the road leading ^{eastwards} from the Skin bridge - to be proceeded with as early as the season will permit next year - (1823)

William Ferris - contractor for the road from Dornoch to Cuttich
William McKay Goldhall offered to keep the new road from Dornoch
to the Hebble Ferry in repair from Martinmas 1822 - 23 for £3.00
James Brander was a writer in Golspie - clerk to the Trustees

Statute Statute Labour - Tax payable at 4/- a head - on all persons
labourers, fishermen, boatmen, tradesmen, artificers, journeyman
& apprentices - (excepting servants hired for the year) & all other
persons above 16 years of age - From innkeepers, carters, carriers
or other person keeping any horse, ass or mule, etc - for each such
horse, ass or mule 5^d.

£10 for repairing Strath Fleet road - ^{Repair}
From the church of Golspie to Dornoch £11
Lathes to Kildonan £24

The final inspection of the Skin Bridge, took place on
15th November 1822

Riachs Estimates - from the River Coaley to Loch Innes

8,513 - 6 - for roads
2,166 - 10 for bridges

& for roads & bridges from the Bridge skin to the
Muir of Ackendwick (?) £1,367. Total - £7047. 5 - 6
In another paper this says road from Coaley to Innes £7047

8,513 - road
2,166
10,679

Bundle 126

Accounts signed by Smith accountants - Edinburgh -

County Contribution	£7,683 - 8 - 9	(including costs return from 2 ^d Stafford Rectory)
Commissioners Contribution	5,051 - 16 - 10	
	<u>12,735 - 5 - 7</u>	

assessments on the County - (1814) 1810 -

<u>Dunrobin Road</u>	Commissioners	£5,000 - 10	} £10,000 assessed <u>1806</u>
	County	5,000 - 10	
Extra work & fences		£1,010 - 15 - 6 - 3 - 7	
<u>Total amount on County</u>		<u>£5,505 - 13 - 7</u>	

- Commissioners, same (subsequent)

The Dunrobin Road began at the bridge & terminated at Drummuir. £1104 was taken off the £10,000 for Brora bridge & Helmsdale Bridge estimate was received too late. This was credit to the County's 'General account'

<u>Drummuir to Crick</u>	-----	£5,392	} £5,936 - 19 - 8
3 bridges - Suelix Os: & Sp:	-----	544	

County assessed for £2,968 - in 1808.

Tongue Road Estimate £16,519 - including bridges
County assessed for this road 1800 --- for £8,259 - 13 - 6.

Total amounts for which County was assessed for these roads £16,433 -

Other roads intended. Crick to Portinleck - Rosehall Account with our own share.

Tongue - Borrie - Fair - to the borders of the County
Aultin head to Rainhill

Assess & Cess - Book account. Road & Road Tool Money.

as far back as ^{June} 1767 - George Hanson was paid 7/-
for his boat carrying road tools to Helmsdale -

1769 £1-4- for mending picks - wedged in the parrot
& dots.

These are payments for tools being mended
1770 onwards -

Feb 18 1770 For James Mitchell for overseeing the road

Dec 23 1769 Roderick Grant - for Overseer of the ^{£1.8-6}
roads at the Old for 3 years - 1.2.6.

Sept 17/1771. To John Macdonald for powder
for blowing rocks 8-10

Evidently the overseer - was in charge
of some sort of statute labour -

From 1767 - 74 - the total expenses were £15-15-
These are overseers on the date, Dumfriesshire, & the
& Diddle Ferry to Dornock -

1778 ~~1770~~ - 18 new wheel barrows were made at
Dots - £10-11-6-

Bundle 82 ² Alex Duchart & James Mitchell -

1800. Mitchell & Doct^w - carting horse & cart 5/ day -

Meal may have been a principal part of their diet - but potatoes, milk, mutton & cheese appear also. with butter 19 lb. cheese 3/2 (?)
32 lb. mutton 17.6.

another place says
9 lb. cheese 3/-

1809

Road from Gairdall Burn to Creech - settled with Michael McQuinn for 12/- road -

Road from Creech Farm to Gairdall - 5 miles & 63 road (?)

Sept 24

1800

1810

Mitchell & Duchart. Mitchell volter

Names of men working on road - Sp: Creech -

John Smith - James Fraser, Alex. Campbell
Alex Ross - David Ross with Mackenzie
James Stuart -

1800

Sept:

Heikle & McKenzie's account for the bridge - settled.

Bundle
9th

County Accounts

Major & Giblin's contract for Creech Rd
£4,445 - with extras - £4,443 -
Net. £ 4,363

The first payment 1809 - & last paid 1813

Fences paid for in 1813 -

These accounts made up & signed by John Blair. account

- Net
total cost of Creech
Rd. with interest etc
£4,624 -

Bundle 2282.

accounts for the bridge of Aultgarde -

April 29 1841. to John Hay, Mason - Hewing 120 feet
start working at 9^o fore - £4-10.

Tom Wright at the bridge - 8 days at 3/4 day - 16-8

Two journey men - 3 1/2 days at 3/- day each man 1-1-0

a Labourer 2 1/2 days at 1/6.

Was it incurred at the Breicle Ferry?

3-9
2-1-9
2-12

Ronald Frank

6 | 43

Bundle 81 Alex^J Salustian, Comite Foullo -

6 new picks - 64 lbs. 8^o full - £2-3

3 picks for Tom Polson - 33 lbs. 8^o 1-2

etc 18 picks in all.

Andrew Burray - E Dinton House - having
3 carts & 4 horses at 8/- day including
driver.

Other horses only 1/- hour - a day of 7 hours -

Road to the Little Ferry 9/- per Road

Maltocis - Barrows - shovels - shades a 'pinch'

to be provided by D. G. & returned when contract finished
according to sub. contract to A. Polson dated

23rd March 1840,

In 1849 in the accounts appears the 12th & last
instalment on the Fleet Horn of £1130-0-0.
June 22nd 1849

Bands - 82

Letter by Messrs Kirkpatrick & Meikle - dated 24 March
1810 offering to build bride of Felix - Gopidale
& Springdale for £600. With a 4 ft arch at Springdale
to be finished by 30th Sept. 1810.

Taini 14th Feb. 1810. Says price agreed on £600 -
but the storm of snow has prevented them working & are
to begin quarrying.

By 1st Sept^r 1810. the work was advanced & they had received
£340 - & were to get another £60.

Meal for workmen stored at Gides Hall, in the care of
Alexander Rose - woodkeeper.

1809 Nov 25. Long account with Michael O'Brien for
road sp: to Crick at 12/- per rod -
dial of tools given him.

M. & Meikle's tools account. valued

4 shovels. 4/6. each -
2 wheel barrows - 1-10.

workmen were paid various sums but seem to have
averaged 2/- day
store for the working of Gopidale Bride - bought from ^{Soulo. 2/3} ~~Robert~~

Lewis Clark Letter - Tongue 16 June 1816 -

The men have no salt for their meat - & had not had salt for a fortnight - & their was only 4 days provision of meat in hand -

3rd July - 1816 - Ready to begin the bridge at Aluabarrow
men short of meat - & there were 150 men on the line
→ there is no meat for them in the locality, & they are short of cash too - & hope they are not forgotten altogether

Bridges on the Tongue Road.

Levi Clerk - Bridge of
Alness - 1815

1815 In the account with Levi Clerk - for Mason
in Bridges on the Tongue road the following items appear

Levi Clerk's Contract - was for £1700-

- to Mr. James for timber 20
- Freight of a cart to Tongue 20
- Line of hammers from Orayshire 29 - 17 - 11
- Cash paid to Mr Orayshire Orayshire 36 - 13 - 6

Shew also 25 Bolls of Meal from Spineydale -
at 1/- per boll.

of Meal from Tongue 171 bolls between ^{Dec} 1815
to Oct. 1816. The price for this was from 2 1/6 to

2 1/2 - to 2 5/8 per boll. a total of £200 - 19 -
for meal alone -

2.06

The Bridge of deterrived had was condemned & had to
be rebuilt

A letter from Levi Clerk to say he was owing to his
not being able to attend to the work him self - He was
laid up with a bad leg - & was supporting himself by
keeping a school & teaching a parcel of children
with no salary. He had apparently no money to
pay his workmen -

In 1817 - Alex Munro & Kenneth Delean undertook
to finish the bridges & be responsible for their expenses
for the remainder of the time for £50.

26 Bridges - between Tongue & the N. Side of
the Crach - from 4 feet span to 32 ft
of 4 of 6 ft. for £94 between Bonar & Portenloch

Criech Road

Contract - between Major. D. G. & Thomas Pearson -
&

Thomas Pearson. "Formerly employed on the
Caledonian Canal."

The 3 bridges to be built - £1600 - were Guelph
Gipisdale & Spinningdale - & 6 smaller bridges
for £100 - & a small bridge at Traunglass -

The masons for this work were Robert Heikle,
Mason in Kilbrannish, Don^d Aukremzie, Mason, Tain
were to build the bridges -

There seems to have been an idea of building
the bridge over the Firth at Criech, as this was
a favourite crossing for cattle - In middle of the
passage there including the arch - was 456 yards -

50.262
29 537

79.799

Trouble Wood -

Smiles Bills 1817 -

Her meal was carried on horse back to
 the men from the store. John Ross was the
 meal carrier. a pair of shoes for his horse cost 2/6
 Pickles were chartered for 3^d each - or 4^d
 "buying a pick" 3/- # 1/6
 What were "jumpers"?

Wedges - also had to be chartered

1819

John McPherson and his son 'blew' # Robert -
 2 4 inches -

20th June 1818 - ~~alex~~ "Smiles Alex^d Durno, Smiles
 writes to the Major that he has had only 1 bag of
 coal, & is now out of coal - Can a cart load be
 sent to the Cracks; he assures the Major that the
 coal is being stolen at Lairg - He also wants 6
 Nick shafts - & 4 shovels
 Alex. Durno - received £14-5- for 94 days work -
 1 boll meal - £1-16-

The Blockers 1818 -

184 feet - of blowing at Craggy - Rock - under
 Cumming - & 11.9 under Calder

196 - 5 - having & blowing at 2/- foot. £19. 12 - 10

43.2 rock in the river at Altnaharris. 4. 6. 4

Powder from Tain £3 - 6 - 3

Quarries paid 2/6 - per Day -

7 lo. powder - 50 lb. powder - £3 - 2 - 6

Contract Price \$4,445--

Major Gobinet contracted ^{see accounts book} for the road 94
on the of the little Ferry - from Drummond to
Creek & Bonar - The contract is made out
in 1810 - & includes 3 bridges - Felix - the
Cultgar ^{at Spinningsdale,}

Revised
94-

There were difficulties connected with the
road on the N & S. side of the little Ferry, from
blowing sand. The first specification for it
it was apparently to be caulked - but
this was unsatisfactory so it was determined
to ^{gravel} metal it & to edge it with ~~the~~ turf to
keep the metal "boxed"

The 1st report of the Local Committee is dated
16th May 1810. They met "at the side of the
intended new bridge over the River Felix."

~~was~~ attended by Mr. Coors. "The person whom they
understood to be employed by Mr. Hope to
superintend as Overseer."

The Committee proceeded westward - it being
understood that there was little or nothing
done yet to be examined upon West part of the

line extending from Fovelix to the Little Ferry.

The Bridge at Fovelix had only the stones
swarmed for it -

Everywhere it was in an unfinished ~~state~~
state, & the Committee found fault with
the road drains, & also with the material
used for making the road. The workmen
not troubling to remove the sand from
the gravel.

They said Cowie had no copy of the specifications
& resided at Golspie, 12 to 16 miles from the
work.

The work must have begun very early in
1810 - but apparently large gangs of men
were at work - 70 names mentioned of men
working on the Spinningdale stretch of road -
£600 was to be paid for building the three
large bridges - & the arch of 4 feet span at
Knockglass.

The oak wood was there on the Lairdmore
& they said there were no parapets to the
great works, which made it dangerous -

Roads

Tongue Road

Bunde - 87

The lime & tools had to be got on the ground
 barrows built for the men - & meal provided
 for their food. The price of this was bought by sea
 & then carted to the site - either from Tongue or
 Bonar Bridge - One sees numerous accounts
 such as "580 bolls of lime shipped on board
 the sloop Lewis, Captain Seward - at 1/7 2/9

24th June

1815

Redhills

" to Cash paid 12 road barrows at 25/- ea: £ 15 - 2
 & carriage 2/-
 to 8 bolls oats 17/6 7 - 0
 to a quarry hammer ordered by Lewis
 Clerk, mason. 17 - "

Gun powder another item - sent by
 James Watson to Tongue - with Deal
wood

There 140 bolls at 17/- boll.
 & spades, shovels -

22nd October 1814 - James Craig - Thurso. The sloop Betsy

The sloop Betsy loaded with meal - & Rishon
 Flax meal wanted by the farmers -

26 wheel barrows at 21/-

6 dy. picks handles, there small at Thurso.

X
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Loch P.H. - Appendix. Sutherland Farms -
or farmers

Colonel Alexander Sutherland a connection of
the family - owned land both sides of Great
Knoea - lived at Culmally?
Janus Hall - farmed Scitherscross -

X
Drummuie Captain Robert Sutherland
entered it 1809 - has erected a handsome
commodious house & office -

Quinn occupied by the Sails Factor.

Torboll Captain Kenneth McKay - he also had
Kudale on the Neveer

Korwick Patrick Selbar

Coul Mr Robert Sutherland

Skello Lord Lower - managed by Bantay -
buildings erected 1811

Seelichs Mr Taylor. Sheriff Clerk -

Pitgandy - Opus Drax -

Phonynain & Prong - Hugh Seelie & Mr McKay

Cydes Hall - lately small tenants. Mr Rull.
entered 1814. tenants scattered although it
removed to Dornoch Hill.

Mr Suther was the Sails factor.

Skin Bridge

III

Locs

1820

Low Cookburton was obliged either to ford the Skin or to come up to Rosehall by water

Helmsdale Bridge - £10,87.14.32 £1087-14-32

Drumbrin Road - £3,000.2.6. £ 3000 2-6

Bonar Bridge cost £13,971.

The Round £9,000

Dougal Gillechrist
contract for Torque Rd £15,770.

half County 0
7,885.

For Creech Road -
(Drumbrin to Creech).

Riachu's Estimate for £3,513-1-8. road
road to Assynt: 2.166-10-0. bridges.

Riachu was the County Surveyor -

Bundle 84

Estimate for Skin Bridge.

£1735 - 0 - 0

(taken from report of Trustees
6/7/1822.

Estimate for Bishmore -

From Bishmore to Conference of County 450 } £669
Bishmore to Torque 219 }

Munson & McFarlane

Bundle 26

Skinn Bridge -

12th Aug. 1822 from John Mitchell.

Workmen preparing material for the arches - have begun to turn the arch on the west side - The contractors began on Saturday to set up the centering for the 2nd arch middle arch - using freestone for the outside of the arches -

Munson Contractors were - Munson & McFarlane -

22 July 1822 - John Mitchell - from Bonar Bridge -

reports: - as no rock ~~for~~ foundation of the ~~piers~~ ^{piers} ~~foundations~~ ^{foundations} were found at any reasonable depth, the foundations of the piers & abutments were secured by driving about 60 piles under each - on the tops of which & at a depth of about 2 ft below the bed of the river flat forms were laid - on which the masonry was begun & since that time the piers & abutments have been built to about 7 feet above the springing & the small arch over the hill head has been finished - Excellent materials & workmanship

asked about kinds of arches - to be taken from the shores of the Moray Firth. (opp. Cadboll House). The 3 arches should be of the same colour -

The 8 foot arch on the S. approach is now in hand

Mitchell. (Cont.) (22nd July 1822)

On the whole works about 70 men have employed including 20 masons, 4 carpenters, labourers etc
Contract not yet signed!

Estimate of works performed to Jan. 1860 - 0.0.
 Letter from Suther(?) Rhine - mentions King Stone of the arches.

The same stone used for the Bridge - or King Stone - proposed for the string course & parapets - (y^e Hunsand) by order from George Smith

Contract sent ~~to~~ ^{on} for signature 14.8.1822
 " also sent Davidson for repairs & improvements to Tongue walls.

25th Sept - Mitchell makes good report. £500 to be paid & all the works will be finished this season.

4th Oct 1822 Extracts from Minutes of Meeting 4th Dec /22
 Mr. Riach had surveyed road from Skin to dock Innes & estimated expense - roads £3,513 - 1 - 0
 Bridges £2,166. 10 - 0.

For the road from the bridge of Skin to the pier of Achesonrick
 £7,047. 5. 8.

Mitchell - 18 December 1822

The walls above & below the 8th arch on the S. side fallen & must be rebuilt - otherwise bridge forward Balkans of £435 owing.

860
 500
 £13 60
 4 35
 £17 9 5

2

James Davidson - Mason. Building bridges on the N. end of
the Tongue Rd. (continued)

Letter - dated 14th Dec^r 1816.

He says all bridges finished & pointed - but he had written
to Mitchell that the bad weather in Nov^r the pointing work could
not stand. He had to keep bridges in repair for 3 years
'Barracks' built at the Cracks for the workmen

In 16th May 1817. Peter Brown is writing to all money
going to Davidson should be paid to him - so as to prevent
him squandering it

By Jan. 1818 - the bridges all inspected (by Telford) &
declared satisfactory - but disputes about payments
still going on - evidently J. Davidson was a good workman
but dealt like a thief!

His contract was for £1700 - from which was deducted
£50 for bridges not required, & £60 for a bridge of two arches
instead of 3. £1590.

Mr. Peter Brown of Linkwood - (Mitchel. vol I p. 142-3
was the factor for the Salt of Seafield - & also for the land
of Nova - a man so "upright & honest" - brother to
General Sir George Brown 2^d in command in the Crimea

D. G. & U papers on roads.

Letter 26th Jan 1815

from James Davidson mason, offering to build 24 bridges on
the Tongue road for £2,030. (on the north end of the
Tongue road-) 8 of 6 feet span, 3 of 4 ft, 5 of 8 ft,
2 of 10 feet, 2 of 12, 2 of 24 ft, & one of 32 ft. & 1 of 3 arches
1 arch of 24 feet & 2 of 20 feet. (64 feet in all) His offer
was for to provide all Materials (?) cast-foundations &
to build the mason work.

James Davidson came from Poltalloch near Elgin.

Davidson got the contract & there are a number of letters
from him on payments. He seems to have lived on the
craik while working on the bridges. He states in one letter
that his men also came from Poltalloch.

Davidson's surety was Mr Geo: Brown. who says D. was a
good workman, who had always pleased M. Telford - "if you
keep him from the whisky." Letter dated 11th Jan 1815 from
Lintonwood -

for Bonar Bridge

Heritors Meeting 30 Aug 1811

re Roads & Bridge -

On a bond given by Mr Stafford
Lord Reay, & Colin Mackenzie

£4,868 was borrowed for

Bonar Bridge - repayable
in 5 instalments 1814-16 -

This was the County Rates
on the bridge -

4.

2.868

2.868

49.736

Saltwater Roads I

Historical. Vol. I.

P 21. 1802. Telford - employed by the Gov^{nl} to report
report on the state of the Highways - & to suggest best
means of keeping up & permanently improving the
country.

22. This report issued to the committee of the H. of C.
who issued 4 several reports to Parliament
They advised - roads & bridges, harbours for
fisheries & the Cal: Canal. to begin with

23 Recommended $\frac{1}{2}$ the ^{outlay} ~~outlay~~ borne by Government.
& the whole of the ^{at} expense of the Cal: Canal.

20/6/1803. Report June, 1803.

2 part: Commissioners appointed of the same persons

Charles Abbott. Speaker (Lord Cocheret)
Mr. Dundas. Sir W. Pulteney. J. Hurdstone Brown.

N. Vansittart (Ch: of the Exchequer).

Ch: Grant. Mr. P. for Innsbruck. W. Smith. Mr. P. Norwicke.

Telford Engineer. James H. W. S. Law agent.

John Richardson - Assistant Clerk to the H. of C.
Secretary.

At the East end of the works of the Cal: Canal the
resident ~~and~~ engineer was Matthew Davidson.

20. The laying out of roads began simultaneously
with the canal.

During 1803. the commissioners & officers for the

Mitchell Vol 1

p. 28.
1803.

Highland roads placed themselves in communication with the several counties as to the finances

The whole mountainous country, Inverness Ross. Sutherland, Caithness, Skye. had to be examined & surveyed.

Bridges over Tay at Dunkeld -
Spey at Forchales - } among the 1st
Firth of Forth at Forres.

Dumfriesshire 1st inspector. Succeeded by John Mitchell. who died 1824. he carried out & completed the whole of the roads bridges & harbours projected by Mr. Telford.

p/30

Ross-shire District under Mr. John Finlay.
Sutherland & Caithness under Peter Lawson.

Many of the contractors being county gentlemen or farmers; wholly ignorant of such business.

No roads or inns except what was to be had into. & those engaged exposed to rude weather

1821.

Construction continued till 1821.

Expenditure on roads & bridges - £540,000.
£264,000 furnished by the Gov^{mt} - £400 per mile

Repairs became a serious matter

Joseph Mitchell 1825 - 63.

Roads. Donald Saxe- parish life in the N. of Scotland

P. 108. 109

"The present excellent public road which runs through the County of Sutherland was, at the time I speak of, not in existence. In lieu thereof was a broken ruffled pathway, running by the sea shore from the Old Head to the Heikle Ferry - at Durorbin, instead of going to the North of the Castle of Dunrobin as at the present time, it descended to the sea-side passing about 2 miles to the East of the Castle, right below it & so round by the South.

Mitchell. Vol II P. 126.

"The Suath North Road from Inverness to Thurso which formed a very important part of the Highland Road works of the Board & was then a very formidable undertaking."

The water at high tide from the river Fleet was 20 feet.

Wick. The road across the Old to Wick was only finished
Old in 1817.

Population in Sutherland 1810 - 23,689.

Heikle Ferry & Little Ferry.

"The boats used for crossing these berries were of the most wretched description & they were

no landing piers or roads of approach beyond
such bridge paths or footways as sufficed
for the limited intercourse that existed in
the country.

"Also

George Sutherland of Forre, & Sir Robert Gordon of
Gordonstown disputing the Counties of Perth:
title-

1826

1826

In the 12th Report of the Commissioners for the
Repair of Roads & Bridges - the following items
are noted-

P. 2

The commissioners hope - by means of the junction
road of the Fort William & Daggan roads to supersede
in a great degree the necessity of maintaining in repair
the difficult road over the Conyarrick mountain.

3

The surface of the road (Badenoch) at Belville was
frequently overflowed & the stage coach had recently
been overturned there. (November 1825)

Floods had destroyed more than one bridge - 1 the
bridge over the Spey at Daggan bank

Toll gates have been erected at Conan Bridge -
Novar, Dees Park. Knockbreck near Tain & in the
county of Caithness - Wick & Thurso.

12th Report of the Commissioners

1826

Expenses

John Rickman paid £100 a year

Cont:

P13

Item - £22 for waterproof cloth & other materials for Great coats for Road Inspectors (1823) & for 1824. "

M^{rs} Joseph Mitchell received - salary £250 for superintending road repairs

139 ²/₃ days travelling charges for personal expenses 11/- per day. £ 76 - 16 - 4.

Expense of conveyance 4,526 miles at 8^d per mile. £ 150 . 17 . 4

Sub-Inspectors on Oct 1st 1825.

- Alex Martin, £ 86.
- James Smith, £ 105
- George McCaskane £ 113
- John Friday £ 103
- Thomas Spence £ 85
- Robert Garrow £ 155-

M^{rs} John Mitchell - (widow) saw a gratuity of £200 -

The following year Mitchell travelled only 3,642 miles!

Toll houses to be erected - L^{ts} & tolls on warden for carriage = coach, berlin, landau curried, calash chairs, chair or horse drawn by 6 horses - 4/-

4 horses - 3/- 3 horses. 2/6 2 horses 1/- 1 horse 9d!

a great many exemptions to the tolls

Lord Stafford's Improvements in the County of Sutherland
by James Loch - 1820.

He computed the Sutherland estates at 800,000 acres.
Lord Reay's at over $\frac{1}{2}$ that amount.

Names common in Suter. "In the heights & Strath of Kildonan
Gunn & Bannerman - Glespie many Hurdays
p 16 in the vicinity of Dornoch, Sutherland, Gaetray, ^{Stallues} Rots-
In Assynt, Macleod. & the tacksmen mostly McKenzies
Gordon was a common name for tacksmen all over
Sutherland. Over the river of the County Freixay

Tongue Road The Tongue Rd was begun in 1810
Completed about 1820.

Loch Scays Cromarty, Dornoch, & Loch Fleet
tribes had all to be crossed by ferries.
Only Kessock was provided with piers.

p 16 Adam Gordon, Lord of Aboyne, 2nd Son of the Earl of
Aberdeen married Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland
changed the family name to Gordon.
The name of Baillie not uncommon, was introduced
about the middle of the 15th century, on the marriage
of John 11th Earl of Sutherland with Margaret Baillie
daughter of the Laird of Darrington.

~~Street the first one established on the River~~

Fairfield
Overton
WIDEXHAM

25/10/54

Dear you for your letters and the copy of the
Land Court papers.

I have sent all the Land Court papers I have which
refer to the Land Court Record of your holding and the
making over of the same by Mrs. J. M. Sutherland, to
Mr. MacAulay and to tell the truth I am not sure which
buildings you are referring to. My recollection of your
holding is that there is a good-sized cow shed beside the
house. In this the building with the stalls and also
was put on subsequent to the original building.

Had I more papers about your buildings
and holding before I came north this spring,
I would have brought these papers with me, which would
probably have saved us all a great deal of trouble.

So I have not now got the Land Court
Record here - I cannot reply to your letter -
I am not clear which buildings you
refer to - There is a good sized cow shed
going next to the house - if I recollect an in
fact says this was repaired by the tenant who
put in the stalls - This I believe to be correct
B.U. - I have not a copy of the Record