

HIGHLAND CLEARANCES: TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1688: James VII of Scotland (James II of England), a Roman Catholic, is exiled and protestant William III, married to Mary, James' daughter, are crowned King and Queen. For many, James remained the true king, leading to the Jacobite Rebellions (from "Jacobus" latin for James).

1707: Scotland and England united by Treaty of Union that leads to the creation of Great Britain. All Scots now have commercial and political access to the former English colonies.

1736: Highlanders settle Darien, Georgia.

1739: First recorded evictions on Skye by Macdonald of Sleat. First migrations from Scotland to Cape Fear, North Carolina.

1745: Last Jacobite Rebellion. Jacobites are finally defeated at Battle of Culloden April 1746. Gaelic and tartan are banned.

1762: Sheep-farming is introduced into the North of Scotland by Sir John Lockhart-Ross.

1772: Emigrations from South Uist in the Outer Hebrides.

1773: Voyage of the *Hector* to Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada.

1776: American War of Independence. Britain loses the American colonies.

1784: Estates forfeited after the Jacobite Rebellion are restored to their owners.

1785: First large clearances on Glengarry's estate. Tenants emigrate to Glengarry County, Ontario. Countess of Sutherland marries the wealthy English landowner & industrialist, the Marquess of Stafford - later the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland.

1785: James Boswell publishes "*The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, L.,LL.D.*"

1786: Large-scale emigrations to Canada from Knoydart to Glengarry County, Ontario.

1790: A new breed of sheep, The Great Cheviot, is brought to Ross and Caithness. It is able to withstand harsh winters in the Highlands of Scotland and still provide plenty of meat and wool.

1792: Year of the Sheep (*Bliadhna nan Caorach*) - Landlords begin moving tenants from hills onto coastal margins providing them with land insufficient to support their families. Tenants are now expected to develop fishing, kelp-farming etc. There is insurrection in Ross and sheep are “stolen.”

1800: First clearances in Sutherland. Clearances in the western Highlands and Islands.

1801: Clearances in Inverness-shire and Morvern in Argyll.

1802: Glengarry people emigrate to Upper Canada (modern- day Ontario). Over 8,000 Highlanders emigrate to Canada and United States.

1803: The Passenger Act raises the cost of emigration in an attempt to restrict the number of people emigrating.

1807: Patrick Sellar is hired to run the estate of the Duchess of Sutherland. Sutherland clearances of Dornoch, Rogart, Loth, Clyne, and Golspie. Strathglass is cleared.

1811: Earl of Selkirk acquires land in North America – the Red River Colony, with plans to settle Highlanders there.

1812: Sellar clears districts in Assynt.

1813: Sellar clears Kildonan. Tenants leave for the Red River Settlement in what is now Winnipeg, Canada.

1814: The Year of the Burnings – Sellar clears Strathnaver. Sir Walter Scott publishes “*Waverley*” – the novel that made him the first best-selling author and that romanticized the Highlands.

1815: Napoleonic Wars end and many fighting men come home. James Loch publishes an account of improvements completed on the Sutherland Estate. Alistair Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry forms the “Society of True Highlanders.”

1816: Patrick Sellar is tried for murder in Inverness, but is acquitted.

1820: Riots in Culrain, further evictions.

1821: Clearances on Mull.

1821: Mary MacPherson (Màiri Mhór nan Oran/Big Mary of the Songs), the great poet-agitator of the Clearances era, is born in Skeabost, Skye.

1825: Kelp industry is decimated by the abolition of excise duty on salt after the Napoleonic Wars ended. Some landlords begin to sell off their estates.

1826: Islands of Rum and Muck are cleared.

1828: North Uist and Ardnamurchan in Argyll are cleared.

1830: Newspaper reports a “fever of emigration is raging in Sutherland.” Macleod evicts tenants on Skye.

1832: Cholera outbreak in the Highlands.

1836: Famine in the Highlands. Increase in famine amongst tenants requires landlords to provide relief. Some landlords charter ships to take tenants away, absolving themselves from further responsibility for their people.

1845: Glencalvie is cleared. The *Times* newspaper sends a reporter to cover the events.

1846: Potato Blight in the Highlands of Scotland leads to failure of the potato crop.

1847: Food riots.

1849: Glenelg, Tiree, and Sollas are cleared.

1851: South Uist and Barra evictions. The Skye Emigration Society is formed to help people to leave.

1852: Highland and Island Emigration Society is formed. The Land and Emigration Commissioners offer ships and assistance.

1853: Lord Macdonald clears Boreraig and Suishnish townships on Skye. Josephine Macdonell of Glengarry clears Knoydart in Argyll. Harriet Beecher Stowe visits Britain and meets the second Duchess of Sutherland.

1854: Strathcarron in Ross is cleared leading to the Greenyards resistance and the “Massacre of the Rosses.” Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes “*Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands*” in Boston, Massachusetts.

1856: Harriet Beecher Stowe visits Britain again and stays at Inveraray Castle and Dunrobin Castle.

1857: Donald MacLeod publishes his *"Gloomy Memories"* in Toronto, Ontario.

1880s: Crofters' War – sustained and popular protests to Highland landowners.

1882: Battle of the Braes – rent strikes and land raids in the Highlands and Islands. Crofters agitate for security of tenure.

1883-84: The Napier Commission hears testimony from crofters and tenants about their conditions. The Commission includes two people who can speak Gaelic.

1886: The Crofter Act is passed in Parliament, which grants security of tenure to tenants and terminates the landlords' right to evict.

1911: Sorley Maclean is born in Raasay. Considered the greatest Gaelic poet of the twentieth century, Maclean wrote many poems on the Clearances, including, most famously, *Hallaig*.

1968: Iain Crichton Smith publishes *Consider the Lilies*, a novel about an elderly woman who is evicted during the Clearances.

1973: John McGrath's *The Cheviot, the Stag & the Black Black Oil*, an iconic play on the cultural history of the Highlands, presents its first performance in Edinburgh.

1998: The Scotland Act is passed, leading to the first elected Scottish Parliament legislating for its own affairs.

2014: The Scottish referendum on independence is held. Scotland votes to remain in the United Kingdom by 55.3%.

This is not an exhaustive list but a general overview of many of the events commonly interpreted by historians, ethnographers and literary figures.