



[Overview of the Pairc Clearances]

The following comments by the well-known and highly respected Free Church Preacher Dr John Kennedy of Dingwall (1819-1884) in his book 'The Days of The Fathers' were as applicable to the Islands as they were to the Scottish Mainland, which Dr Kennedy knew so well:

With few exceptions, the owners of the soil began to act as if they were also the owners of the people and disposed to regard them as the vilest part of their estate... Families by hundreds were driven across the sea, or were gathered, as the sweepings of the hillsides, into wretched hamlets on the shore. By wholesale evictions, wastes were formed for the red deer that the gentry of the 19th century might indulge in the sports of the savages of three centuries before. Of many happy households, sheep walks were cleared for strangers who fattened, amidst the ruined homes of the banished.

The crofter clearances at Park, Lochs, began at the beginning of the 19th century when the Park Sheep Farm was established in the area round about Valamus in the southern tip of the Park peninsula.

To begin with, the sheep farm was fairly small, yet some crofter families were removed from their land and homes in order to set up the farm. At that time there were crofter families resident everywhere in Park and from time to time further clearances took place as the farm expanded towards the north until eventually, some 40 years later, the farm had taken over all the land south of the boundaries of Gravir and Habost, an area of about 42,000 acres of land, or nearly two thirds of the whole area of the peninsula.

By the time the farm had reached the limit of its territorial expansion in 1843, some 35 small crofter communities were overrun and the people removed from their land in order to make room for the big sheep. Although many of the communities were small, if taken together, they added up to hundreds of families.

Precise details of the Park clearances are difficult to trace because there was little or no newspaper coverage of the removals until the large communities of Lemreway and Orinsay resisted eviction in 1842-43. More about that later.

In the absence of determined resistance by the crofters requiring the estate to take legal proceedings against them, it is not likely that journalists would travel to remote areas like Park at a time when evictions were commonplace events everywhere in the Highlands, even if they knew that evictions were pending, which is not likely.

Legal proceedings would hold out the prospect of a good journalistic story, and therefore merit newspaper coverage. However, the crofters knew very well that resistance was futile, particularly by small communities.

Some people might regard the patience and docility of the crofters of the 19th century as quite remarkable or, even a characteristic weakness in the race. It must, however, be remembered that they were quite helpless in the face of an all-powerful landlord and his willing lackeys, who were always backed up by the powerful forces of the Judiciary, the Police, the Government, the Military, and invariably the established Church which was not free, but under the influence of the landlords because of the patronage system.

In these circumstances it was very difficult, if not impossible, to organise any effective resistance lest worse might happen to them, if it is possible to imagine anything worse than to be deprived of one's home and land. And in many cases, they were forced to emigrate to an unknown overseas country, penniless, and in the clothes they and their families stood in. They were also not familiar with the language spoken in the country of their adoption. Their lives were about the only thing left that they could be deprived of.

If the clearances were to be effected without resort to legal proceedings, not only did the events escape newspaper coverage, but also there are no court records or estate records to provide information on the clearances. Neither did the estate keep records of the names of the early smallholders at Park, because smallholders held their land tenure from the local tacksmen at that time.

However, one may glean valuable information here and there, and two good sources of information on the clearances of Park is the evidence led by local people to the Napier and Brand Commissions of Inquiry in the

1880s and 1890s respectively. There is also a rich oral tradition locally handed down from generation to generation, and still remarkably preserved.

By the early 1820s the farm had expanded towards the north from the comparatively small area round Valamus, to take in all the lands south of a line drawn from Loch Brollum to Shell Head and along Gleann Airigh an Dhomhnuill to the shores of Loch Seaforth. There were about fourteen crofter communities displaced from that area of land in order to make way for the sheep.

It is well known that some of the crofters evicted from southern Park at that time emigrated, and others were planted in Aird Tong, Tolsta, Sandwick area and Point, as well as the present villages of northern Park and North Lochs.

As a rule these evicted families were settled on rough ground on the common grazings of the receiving townships. In that way Balallan grew from 26 tenants at the beginning of the 19th century to 104 tenants in the 1880s. Marvig grew from 6 tenants to 23 tenants, according to Alexander MacIannan, 18 Marvig, and virtually all the other Park townships grew similarly.

John Smith, a crofter of Balallan, aged 75, giving evidence to the Napier Commission at Keose on 12th June 1883 on behalf of the Balallan people stated that on several occasions their pasture was restricted and additional crofters were placed in their village. When John Mackenzie became factor he divided the village from 26 to 64 crofts. He also stated that 16 families were placed among them at one time when the Park tenants were displaced.

He himself was born in Eishken, Park. When asked by the chairman, if it was for his father's benefit to be removed from Park, he responded, 'Quite the contrary, but because of the oppression of the people, who were dealt with as a flock of sheep driven by dogs into a fank.'

Mr Smith's family was at Cleitir for 14 years before being moved to Balallan. It is also thought they were at Ceann Tigh Shealg and Brunigil as well as Eishken. Seaforth stated in the early 1820s that tenants evicted from Park must, and ought, to be satisfied with whatever land we can give to them.

The uprooted families of Park suffered terrible privations, as may be seen by the remarks of Alexander Craig, manager of the Seaforth Estate at Brahan on the Scottish Mainland, when he visited former crofters from Park who were settled on cultivated land at Aird, Tong in the 1820s. He was appalled at what he saw and he wrote to Seaforth as follows:

Until I saw the actual situation of the new lotters in the Aird of Tong, I had no idea of the great hardship and deprivation that the poor people endure who are forced into new allotments, without matters being previously arranged for their moving. The situation for the new lotters on the Aird of Tong at the moment beggars all description. It is worse than anything I saw in Donegal, where I always considered human wretchedness to have reached its very acme.

Normally the evicted crofters were allowed to carry away with them the timbers from the roofs of their former homes, but by the time their homes were dismantled and the timbers carried to their next destination, in this case Aird Tong, many of the timbers were irreparably broken because very often they were rotten to begin with.

Because of the exorbitant prices demanded for new timbers they could not afford to buy any and they were therefore forced to roof their hastily built poor homes with inadequate material. Alexander Craig felt that the landlord should be presenting the crofters with the necessary timber to roof their new buildings whenever he moved them, and in addition, he suggested that suitable preparations should be made at the new sites, including proper access to the proposed new habitations, before the crofters were required to leave their old landholdings.

Mr Craig concluded his remarks to James Stewart Mackenzie in the 1820s by saying that the poor people on the new lots were suffering the greatest hardship. Some of them had died; he was told, from diseases brought on no doubt by the conditions they lived in. In order to erect their cabins they removed the sward from the whole line of the intended road, and that had become a morass in which men have literally to step up to their knees in mud the moment they step out from their threshold, dangerous for both man and beast, and baffling his comprehension as to how the children contrive to get in and out of their homes.

It is to Mr Craig's eternal credit that he spoke up for the deprived Aird Tong victims of the cruel clearances from Park. Equally it is to Seaforth's lasting shame that although he was fully informed of the human degradation to which he or his employees deliberately subjected the indigenous people of Park by his improvement schemes, it seems that he did not lift a finger to improve his treatment of the poor helpless people.

Estate officials, especially the factor, made and often carried out many of the day-to-day decisions of the management of the estates. And in many cases the factor and his men excelled their master in their merciless oppression of the helpless common people.

In the early 1830s the Lewis factor proposed an ambitious scheme involving the clearance of all the crofters from the whole of the southern area of the Island, involving the Parishes of both Uig and Lochs, in order to let the land as grazing farms.

He proposed to resettle the evicted crofters on both sides of Broad Bay. Fortunately that scheme was not carried out or else overcrowding in the Island would have been even worse than it actually was.

As the oncoming flood tide of sheep pressed northwards, many of the crofters whose land was overrun moved out of the way and resettled in the crofter townships forward of the advancing front line of the sheep farm.

After a while the boundary of the farm would again be moved to yet another advanced position, again encroaching on the lands occupied by crofters, and forcing everyone in the path of the advancing sheep to move away. In that way many families were evicted several times during their lifetime.

Local oral tradition also testifies to the fact that many of the evicted families from southern Park were planted by the estate on sub-divisions of the existing landholdings in the townships of northern Park as well as other parts of the Island. This created smaller holdings which led in due course to terrible congestion and overcrowding due to the continuation of the clearances and the natural increase of the population.

The trauma of families subjected to several evictions during their lifetime was quite common in Park. George Mackenzie of Laxay was one of those witnesses who read a paper and referred in evidence to such events to the Napier Commission. He said that:

Alexander Macleod, Laxay, was compelled to abandon three different holdings and three different new houses on sites given to him by the factor. The first was at Seaforth, then at Ardantroime. He built these three houses by the sweat of his brow in three consecutive years without even a kind word in the way of aid or compensation for his labour, time and expense.

'There was another one,' said Mr Mackenzie, 'who underwent a similar disagreeable process, Angus Morrison from Laxay, who was chased by deer and sheep from Uig to Carloway and thence to Lochs'. Mr Mackenzie said that ten crofters came to Laxay with his father when he was 8 years old in about 1828.

He said:

At that time there were only 7 crofters in Laxay. Then it was divided into 17 crofts, but there are now 29 crofts in Laxay. The land is now almost entirely exhausted by continual ploughing, together with sub-dividing of crofts which makes the prospects of a crofter very dark and hopeless.

He went on to say:

Mr Mackay, the present Chamberlain, has committed very gross injustices. His own sister, who, with peculiar industry, kept her croft in good order and paid her rent regularly, was cruelly turned out of her croft 6 years ago. He would not accept the rent from her. I had to take her to myself when the land she had was given to another man.

Speaking about the prosperity and happiness of the crofters at Park, Mr Mackenzie said:

Park, which nature seemed to mean for man, with all its arable lands, hill pastures, and bays of the sea, offering grand opportunities of comfort, as a reward for human industry, was quite unprecedentedly relieved of the inhabitant population of 28 townships.

To the perpetrators of such deeds, the discontentment and bitter feelings of the fugitive inhabitants appeared as nothing at all, compared to the peculiar pleasure they enjoyed from the fact that now the sheep and the fleet-footed deer could graze on the meadows and on heaths impiously depopulated. Some of these people were evicted to America, others scattered here and there at home on small patches of land on the less thought of districts.

A crofter having the misfortune of falling under the displeasure of the factor or ground officer, however innocent the poor man may be, has not the ghost of a chance of getting along uninterrupted.

Suggesting some of the remedies necessary for the people's wellbeing and comfort he said:

To obtain the arable land and hill pasture, now under sheep and deer, at fair rents, fixity of tenure, and compensation for improvements, Park which keeps 11,000 sheep and an innumerable amount of deer, would of itself, if given to our enormous number of cottars and others, meet a vast deal of what is needed.

Mr Mackenzie was a Free Church Elder and highly respected in the neighbourhood. His paper was composed by himself and others, and read beforehand to all those who came to hear it in Laxay. It is therefore an authentic document, and all those that testified to the Napier Commission at Lochs expressed similar sentiments.

It is often alleged by the estate and some of their misguided friends that it was the crofters, and only the crofters, that were responsible for the sub-division of crofts, but the evidence clearly shows that the estate took more and more land out of crofting and planted the evicted crofters on existing crofter townships, causing overcrowding which was later on exacerbated by the natural growth of the population.

Crofters were often fined and their homes wrecked and the fires on their hearths drowned, sometimes even with their own milk, if they did not comply strictly to the instructions of the estate officials, by vacating their homes and land by a given date. That happened at Loch Shell in 1843, as we shall see later.

Kenneth Macdonald of Leurbost testified before the Napier Commission that the factor Donald Munro compelled a certain squatter's father in law to pay £5, and he threw down the squatter's house, and the constable broke all the furniture and everything that was there was scattered all over the place. At that time the sum of £5 might well have been equivalent to a year's income for a crofter. One of the first tasks performed by Donald Munro after he arrived in Lewis was to accompany the task force that was assigned to the clearance of Lemreway and Orinsay in 1843.

The name of Donald Munro, the infamous Matheson factor, lives on in both the written and oral traditions of Lewis, as the factor that excelled all factors, as the biggest tyrant of them all.

If a crofter dared suggest that he thought his rent might be too high, Mr Munro the despot was known to react instantly by raising his rent still higher, and remonstrating, 'Tasdan airson do dhréin.' (An extra shilling for your moaning).

Iain Smith, the Bernera (Lewis) Bard counselled the arrogant despot Munro in a Gaelic song, that he too was ultimately answerable to a higher authority (death) who would give equal status to each and all in the form of an Estate comprising of a shirt and two paces of green land.

'Sud uachdaran a dh'òrduicheas
Co-ionnan coir gach neach.
'S mar oighreachd bheir e léine dhuit
'S dà cheum de thalamh glas.'

Because of the deteriorating financial affairs of the Seaforth regime and the collapse of the kelp industry, the number of summonses for the removal of crofters in Lewis rose dramatically after 1818. In an effort to improve the financial affairs of the estate, commercial sheep farming was stepped up and in the twelve years after 1818 some 2,300 summonses for removal were issued for the whole of Lewis, compared with a very much lower figure for the previous twelve years.

Many tenants were however removed from their land without the formality of legal documents. Some were only given a verbal intimation of removing, and knowing the consequences of refusing to move, they complied very often without much argument. Therefore the total number of crofters cleared from their landholdings greatly exceeded the official figures.

In the early period land reclamation in Park was carried out with the 'caschrom', the forerunner of the spade. Rev Robert Finlayson of Keose in his contribution to the first Statistical Report in 1833 commented:

That notorious implement of Scottish Highland husbandry, the crooked spade or 'caschrom' is much used in this Parish. The plough is not used at all.

It must have been hard, backbreaking labour to reclaim virgin moorland with a 'caschrom', and the poor thin peaty soil of Park needed years of crop rotation and lots of byre and seaweed manure, all carried on their backs in creels, in order to bring it eventually into reasonably productive rigs, only to be evicted at the whim of an estate official, perhaps several times in a lifetime. And each time the hard-earned backbreaking labour would have to be abandoned without compensation.

Sometimes crofters were removed in order to enable the estate to provide favourite of their own with a readymade reclaimed landholding. At other times improvements were rewarded by a steep increase in the rent.

Mercifully, the Park Farm tenants 'Gillean Ruadh na Pairc', the wild Stewart brothers, left in 1842-43, and the people of Park were not sorry to see the end of them. The changeover in the sheep farm tenancy in 1843 to Walter Scott at a rental of £587 afforded the estate the opportunity to expand the farm by ruthlessly evicting between 50 and 60 families from Lemreway and Orinsay despite the difficult economic situation of the 1840s.

Among the other events that took place at that time was the Disruption of the Church, when the shackles of patronage were thrown off. About 90% of the people of Lewis joined the newly constituted Free Church of Scotland. Only a small remnant of the gentle folk of Stornoway, 'Daoine Mór a Bhaile', remained loyal to the Parish Church.

In Lochs, the whole congregation and their Evangelical Minister, Rev Robert Finlayson, at their head, joined the new denomination. Despite the hardships and deprivations of the people they made arrangements at once to build a new Church building followed by a Manse, at the newly established township of Crossbost, being in a central situation for sea communication.

It must have been a desperate sacrifice to raise the money for new congregational buildings in the economic conditions of the 1840s. Still, the people identified their priorities very clearly. They did not neglect their spiritual needs, while struggling to keep body and soul together.

One year after Walter Scott came to the Park Sheep Farm, the long reign of 234 years of the Seaforth landlord regime in Lewis came to an end in 1844 when the Matheson period of 74 years began. The Matheson period ended in 1918 with the coming of Lord Leverhulme, the last landlord to hold the whole of Lewis as one estate.

The people of Park had no regrets at the passing of the Seaforth period, particularly the last 40 years of it, which was one long continuous time of clearances. Although, on the whole, the Matheson period in Lewis was not much better, the first few years were, however, marked by wise and compassionate action, particularly James Matheson's decision to re-lot the whole of Lewis a few years after he came. That measure was designed to improve the conditions of the people by expanding townships and enlarging crofts around 1850 after the shattering events of the potato blight in 1845-46.

The potato blight caused great hardship and distress among the people of the Hebrides, as it did elsewhere, but particularly in Ireland. Blight first came from America to Argyllshire and then on to the Islands.

Ironically, when potatoes first came from Ireland to South Uist in the 1740s they were not popular anywhere in the Outer Hebrides. The landlord in Uist was said to insist on his tenants planting the potatoes. Their response at first was that, he could make them plant them, but he could not make them eat them.

It was about 1800 before the humble potato became popular in Lewis, and by the 1840s the people had come to rely on the potato crop for a significant part of their diet, and therefore the failure of the crop caused real hardship.

In fact, the humble potato is said to have revolutionised life in the Highlands. It raised the standard of living and probably saved the people from starving in the 19th century. The steep rise in the population is also partly attributed to the potato, which has all the vitamins necessary to sustain life on its own.

Even before the potato blight, the Lewis Chamberlain, Thomas Knox, stated in 1842 that he estimated that 400-600 bolls of meal would be needed for relief and that 6,000-7,000 Lewis inhabitants could be removed by emigration and the land so released by eviction and emigration should be kept as sheep grazings.

He further suggested that a great deal could be done by shifting tenants from one part of the Island to another. Obviously the indigenous people were expendable in the eyes of Mr Knox. He followed the usual estate philosophy of disposing of the unwanted people, which the estate could not make a profit and grab their land in order to make profit for the estate by planting incoming sheep farmers on it at a high rent.

During the 19th century numerous inquiries, Royal Commissions, Reports and pronouncements were made about the problems of the Highlands, none of which questioned the ethics of private landownership, which was the single basic factor at the root of all the suffering of the Highland people.

Members of the establishment or their angry sympathisers, including the Napier Report, made all these inquiries and reports and therefore the right of landowners to own hundreds of thousands of acres of land was never once questioned. Neither was their right to do whatever they liked with what was assumed to be, and still is, their own private property.

No one ever put forward the concept of the rights of the indigenous population in the land of their ancestors, except the crofters themselves, and any Government Royal Commission or any other Committee of Inquiry never listened them to.

Similarly, the universal remedy put forward by everyone was emigration and very often forced emigration. No aspect of these emigrations was planned except to herd them into a ship and dump them on a distant shore across the sea where they were expected to fend for themselves. The main reasoning of the establishment was to get rid of the so-called surplus population, and breathe a sigh of relief at their departure. Surely the land was created for the use of all the people and not for the exclusive use of the rich and powerful landlords and their big farmer friends.

The acceptance of the logic of private landownership and emigration was so universal that a great many Ministers of Religion, not only accepted the situation, but also considered it their social duty to lend their weight to that evil practice of forced emigration.

Immediately after the Disruption, Rev Roderick Reed came to the Parish Church at Keose in 1844. Shortly after coming he gave evidence to the McNeill Inquiry that reported in 1851. Among the points was that:

I am of the opinion that the resources of this Parish are not sufficient to maintain the whole of the population, and that capital could not be employed in this Parish so as to be profitable to the capitalist, and at the same time to provide permanent subsistence for the whole of the present population. And I am of the opinion that the only remedy for the present distress is a reduction in the number of the population.

At that time his Patron, James Matheson, was making arrangements to ship hundreds upon hundreds of unwilling emigrants on ships leaving from Loch Roag. The diary of his factor, Munro Mackenzie, provides the evidence. Mr Matheson was elevated to the Baronetcy by a grateful Government about that time for his so-called work for the crofter population of Lewis.

The misguided Rev Roderick Reed overlooked the fact that the only thing the people that were cleared from Park wanted was to be left alone to earn their living in their own way in the land of their birth. Roderick Finlayson of Marvig and others testified to the Napier and Brand Commissions that the former tenants of southern Park were very well off when they were there. Roderick Finlayson said that the three tenants of Ailtinish took away with them 23 cows when they left.

The good Rev Reed did not offer to lead the starving crofters of Lochs across the sea to his recommended land of promise, even although all his congregation vanished into the newly constituted Free Church. He preferred to remain within the comfort of his large Manse, still standing on the old Parish Glebe, which extended to 1,200 acres of land where all his needs were attended to by a troupe of male and female servants.

When Rev Reed took upon himself to pronounce on the so-called lack of resources for the successful employment of capital in Lewis, both he and his proprietor demonstrated that they were poor businessmen. The fact was that the herring and white fish resources round the coast of Lewis at that time was among the richest in the world and ripe for exploitation by rich capitalists like the Lewis proprietor.

A subsequent Lewis landlord, Lord Leverhulme, being a more astute businessman, saw the opportunities of exploiting the fish resources round the shores of Lewis, and instead of shipping the indigenous people off to America, he talked about increasing the population very considerably. That was 70 years later, and too late, because the First World War had by then destroyed the market for herring and sparked of a world recession.

We never heard of the surplus industrial population being shipped overseas when they could not be exploited by the establishment. Why should the native rural population of the Highlands be forced to emigrate? Would it not be more reasonable to expect the uninvited intruder landlords to remove themselves to the prairies of North America where they could have all the land they wanted.

The British Government was indifferent to the problems of the Highlands and Islands. Their first priority was imperial expansion and the exploitation and enslaving of weaker nations in order to gain access to raw material and control global markets, for the accumulation of wealth by the captains of industry at home.

Gaelic-only speaking Highlanders (quite a number of them from Park earlier on) were pressed into the army against their will and subjected to the usual propaganda of so-called patriotic service for King and Country, while in truth they were used as pawns and cannon fodder for Empire building. They were oppressing and killing poor deprived people like themselves, or being killed, while their famine stricken landless fellow crofters at home were deprived of their land and grudging humanitarian aid by the affluent establishment, on the grounds that to give aid would encourage laziness in the so-called redundant population.

The policy of crofter evictions and the establishment of commercial sheep farms on the land taken out of crofting eventually produced conditions of extreme overcrowding and at times of economic stringency, conditions of near famine.

The estate then blamed the common people for their distressed conditions and complained that it was a terrible burden to feed the lazy famine-stricken redundant and overcrowded population. In that way they tried to justify their cry, that more of the redundant population should be shifted out of their way to North America. A proportion of the evicted crofters of Park emigrated but most of them found a place somewhere within the Island.

Emigrants suffered terrible deprivation both in the country of their adoption and on the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean where they were sometimes lost, or died in the insanitary conditions they were subjected to.

The slow cargo ships, which were often used for the emigration traffic, sometimes took as long as 15 weeks to cross the Atlantic in wintry conditions. Many of the ships were lost and the poor crofter families got a watery grave instead of a promised land of milk and honey.

The ships often used for the emigrant traffic were ships used for transporting timber from the Canadian Maritime Provinces, and rather than return to Canada with an empty hold, the ship owners were content to carry British emigrants for a very small fare.

When therefore, the timber was offloaded the ships were adapted with tier upon tier of roughly made temporary bunks for the emigrant voyage. If it was stormy the hatches were battened down, and the emigrants huddled together in airless, crammed and smelly conditions with crude bucket sanitary facilities. In these conditions sickness and the death rate were very high.

During the crofters long struggle for land law reform and the land raiding that took place at Park and elsewhere, the crofters persistently maintained that they had an inalienable right to unmolested possession of the land on which they and their ancestors lived for generations, and they should not be moved at the whim of landlords.

The crofters claimed the right to occupy and work the land of their ancestors, and therefore they were being illegally deprived of their land by forcible eviction. That contention was time and time again rejected by landowners, the Government and the Judiciary, all of which denied them any rights whatsoever in their native soil.

The landowners' attitude was stated plainly by Lady Matheson in the 1880s when Mr John Murdoch of the pro-crofter newspaper 'Highlander' paid her a courtesy visit at Lewis Castle. She immediately set about him, remonstrating with him for his active support for the crofters' claims to the land saying that she could do what she liked with her own, as the land was her private property, purchased by her late husband for £175,000.

John's reply summed up the crofters' case concisely saying:

Suppose my watch was stolen by a thief and your late husband bought it that did not constitute him the owner. He would be compelled to surrender it to the rightful owner, even if it had changed hands several times. In like manner was the lands of Lewis filched from the people. Your late husband was a fool to give away his money for that which by right belonged to others.

The audience came to an abrupt end.

The following is a list of the former crofter settlements covering well over 40,000 acres, from which the early crofter families of southern Park were progressively cleared as the farm expanded northwards from Valamus until it reached the boundaries of Gravir and Habost.

The original Park Sheep Farm took over the lands of the following crofting townships about 1802:

- Bhalamus Beag
- Bhalamus Mór
- Caolas an Eilean
- Smuaisibhig
- Gleann Claidh

By 1823 the Farm had expanded to overrun the lands of the following crofting townships:

- Bàgh Ciarach
- Bàgh Reimsibhaigh
- Bunchorchabhig
- Ceannamhuir
- Gilmhicpharg
- Ceann Chrionaig
- Sgealadal Bheag
- Sgealadal Mhór
- Ceann Tigh Shealg

By 1833 the Sheep Farm had overrun the lands of the following crofting townships:

- Brollum
- Hamascro
- Mol Truisg
- Mol Chadha Gearraidh
- Ailteinish
- Buthinish

- Gearraidh Reasaidh
- Chulebreac
- Ceann Bhàigh mhòir
- Isginn
- Rias
- Àirigh Dhomhnuill Chàim
- Stromas
- Bruinigil
- Ceann a Charragh
- Ceann Siofort
- Sheildinish
- Cleitir
- Ach Ceann Tharbhaidh

By 1843 the Sheep Farm had overrun the lands of the following crofting townships:

- Orinsay
- Lemreway
- Cuiriseal
- Eilean Iubhairt

By that time the Sheep Farm had reached the boundaries of Gravir and Habost, except for the township of Steimreway which was held by the crofters on lease and was therefore left isolated like an island in the middle of the sheep farm until the estate exchanged the lands of Lemreway for Steimreway in 1857, and so ended the crofter clearances in Park.

To this day there is ample evidence of the former occupation of crofter townships all over southern Park in the shape of ridges denoting former lazybed cultivation and heaps of stones that indicate the sites of the homes of the former inhabitants.

These may be seen from the land, sea and particularly from the air. There is therefore visual evidence of the ruthless and wholesale clearance of the helpless indigenous population of southern Park at the hands of a cruel oppressor from whom they suffered manifold indignities, such as the drowning of their household fires on their hearths, and the tearing down of the thatch and roofs of their dwelling houses while they were still inside.

John Smith of Balallan said in evidence to the Napier Commission that 108 families were removed from Park. However, if we take the whole of the first half of the 19th century, the figure of 108 families is obviously a gross underestimate of all the families that were evicted from the area. Between 50 and 60 families were cleared from Lemreway and Orinsay alone in the last big clearance from Park in 1843. By that time we have the authentic record of the first census figures for 1841 to confirm the number and names of all the residents of Lemreway and Orinsay just before they were cruelly removed.

The communities situated along the shores of Loch Shell were the largest townships in southern Park, possibly because the evicted families fleeing northwards away from the expanding sheep farm swelled their numbers.

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