

Northern Chronicle Oct 16. 1912

3½ widders, peats, services, shearing, hens, eggs, and fox money. For the three-farthing land he pays £2 14s 11½d which includes £1 2s 6d as conversion of victual and Customs ... 10 1 8½

[Stipend paid from Skibo to him as Minister of Creich is £49 17s 6d Scots and nine bolls 1 peck 3 lippies one third lippie of victual half meal half bear. There is also paid £2 12s 6d Scots as proportion payable out of the Estate of £20 Scots of grass money following the glebe.]

John Campbell widower aged 40 Two years rent paid as grassum for seven years tack ... 2 17 9½
Robert Denoon married aged 30. Years rent as grassum ... 1 17 11½
James Gair married aged 70 for one penny land. Two guineas as grassum for his three years tack 3 7 511-12

Swordale.

William Campbell married aged 40. He paid as grassum when he entered after Geo. Calder £3 11s 5d 4 10 1 4-12
George Calder married aged 50. Tenant for 32 years. Swordale is a sixpence half-penny land and he holds jointly with his son William—grassum £5 13s ... 3 11 9 1-12
John Grant married aged 27 for a half-penny land. Grassum £1 17s 5d ... 1 17 410-12
Robert Calder married aged 40 paid one pound as grassum ... 1 19 11½
John Mackay married aged 40 years grassum £1 10s ... 1 19 11½
Hugh Munro aged 30 his father Donald got Tack 20 Feb 1779. Grassum £5 ... 4 15 0 4-12
Robert Ross tenant Swordale married aged 60 Paid grassum £1 17s 3½d ... 1 17 3½
Alexander Munro, smith married aged 39. Grassum £2 8s 11½d ... 2 8 11½

Tulloch.

Donald Calder married aged 51 tenant in Migdoll possesses a three farthing land of Tulloch which is a sixpenny land, grassum £1 17s 11d ... 2 5 6 8-12
Alexander Grant married aged 75. A years rent as grassum ... 2 14 2 8-12
Katherine Logan widow aged 60 (Alexander Macleod in Cambus-avie outgoing tenant) No grassum 1 17 2½
Ann Campbell widow of William Ross aged 60 no grassum ... 1 17 2½
James Sutherland 'Cainer of the Water of Bonar' aged 40 married [His mother Margaret Macleod] including a farthing of Quarter grassum £2 10s ... 4 7 0 3-12
James Murray married aged 41 'Cainer of fishings' grassum £2 18s ... 2 18 0 5-12
Donald Sutherland married aged 40. £2 10s as grassum ... 3 1 8 8-12
Christian Munro widow of Murdoch Mackay aged 40 grassum £2 ... 2 19 8 4-12
James Campbell married aged 45. Two years rent as grassum ... 1 17 2½
Alex. Chisholm unmarried aged 27. £1 10s grassum ... 2 14 6½

Little Creich.

George Rainy minister of Creich married aged 40. A Two-penny land and three-farthings of a penny land. For the two-penny land he pays £7 6s 8½d whereof £3 is conversion of 6 bolls victual and as conversion of 2 winterings,

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When William Gray of Jamaica purchased the estate of his forbears (he was cousin of the chief family) he found the tenantry grumbling at high rents, grassums or entry money, and the hardship of having the rents converted to that scarce commodity—sterling money. The abstract of the rent roll in April, 1781, which is given below, shews this gradual conversion. Another source of complaint was in connection with peats. The tenants had to supply peats to the laird or tacksman of the Mains of Skibo. These peats were only worth from £3 to £4 stg., but the winning and driving of peats entailed great labour. The tenants had to provide a peat stack of four faces, each face being fifteen feet in breadth, five feet in length or depth, ten feet in height to the easing of the stack, and five feet in the depth of the roof.

Lieut. Walter Gray managed the estate of Skibo on behalf of his brother, and he tried to induce the tenants to take tacks and to improve their holdings. His efforts met with little success, as the people clung tenaciously to old fashioned methods. On the neighbouring estates of Overskibo and Ospisdale the proprietors carried out extensive improvements. The Skibo Grays lacked the means to lead the way in this respect, so that the tenants could not be stimulated to improve like those on other properties. Unfortunately, the Grays got entangled in financial difficulty by monetary transactions with an Anglo-Indian named Hugh Inglis. They were so crippled that the estate had to be sold in 1786 as already noticed. It must be explained that these Grays, although cousins, were not the representatives of the family of Skibo. During the last few years pedigrees have been printed shewing various Glasgow Grays, Gunns, and Bannermans as descendants of the Skibo family through Gilbert Gray, brother of George Gray, father of the last laird of Skibo. Needless to say, neither the Grays, Gunns, nor Bannermans descend from that Gilbert Gray, for he did not marry Jean Ross as alleged. His wife was Margaret Rose, or Ross, as she is so named in various documents. She signs her name "Margret Rose," and is so called by her husband in 1733, but in 1740 her surname appears as Ross. It is therefore clear that Gilbert of the Skibo family has been confused with a Gilbert Gray of unknown origin, who by Jean Ross, his wife, had children four and five years after the Skibo Gilbert's death if we credit the printed genealogy!

The abstract rental gives the names and ages of the tenants as on 17th April, 1781. The people suffered so much by ravage of foxes that a levy was made for maintenance of a fox-hunter.

Rental of Skibo, 1781.

Migdoll.

	£	s.	d.
Robert Gordon married aged 30	2	17	2 2-12
Rent (including conversion of Customs, etc.)	2	17	2 2-12
Robert Mackenzie married aged 40 (for a penny land) Paid £6 6s grassum; wintering, shearing, wedder, chickens, hens, and fox money, and services converted and included	3	19	10 4-12
George Leith (per Alexander his son unmarried aged 25) bedridden for three years. Grassum £7 17s. Customs converted	4	14	1 4-12
John Leith married aged 47 (holds 5 farthing land) came from Breachvoul Whit Sunday 1779. Grassum £6 6s	4	14	4 9-12
George Campbell married aged 30 [Janet Ross mother] grassum £3 3s	1	19	11 2-12
Hector Leslie married aged 35 [son of Wm. Leslie]. Grassum paid £3 3s. Holding damaged by water	3	3	7½
Evander Mackay Miller, married aged 30	0	19	0 8-12
Do. for Mill of Migdoll	2	4	5 4-12
Do. 24 bolls oatmeal at 10s or a conversion of	12	0	0
Do. 12 bolls Bear meal at 8s or conversion	4	16	0
Do. 3 Wedders at 4s	0	12	0
Do. 1 Hog or	0	6	8

Signature in rent book (W. Murray)

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