

ELIZABETH WEYMYSS, Countess of Sutherland, eldest daughter of the third earl of Wemyss, was only thirty years of age when her death took place at Dunrobin Castle on February 20th, 1747. She had been in poor health for some time but her death had not been expected.

The Earl of Sutherland was in the south. He had gone to London in the summer of 1746 to attend the trials of the Jacobite peers and to petition the Government for assistance for his people, who had suffered heavy losses during the occupation of Sutherland by the Jacobites and who were now faced by starvation of they did not receive some relief.

In the absence of the Earl, it fell to the principle gentlemen of the county to make arrangements for the funeral of the Countess; a serious responsibility,

send harness for four horses and bridles for six and a long whip, but hoped they would be returned as soon as possible as they had no other for use. "As for a pall, they had no such thing, but had always used the one at Aldairn, which she believed

The first consideration was to provide a hearse and funeral harness for the six horses that were required to draw it. The resources of Sutherland were limited but it was decided that the carriage and wheels could be made at Dunrobin, and for the harness, the help of Lady Brodie was sought.

By boat, a letter was sent to Nairn and forwarded to Brodie House to ask Lady Brodie if she could furnish harness for six horses and a velvet pall for the coffin. The request met with the immediate response that " she would very readily lend anything that we may have that could be of use; which I shall do this night since the Boat waits, but it will be late, because I know not how soon the bearer I have sent to Borrow Black covers for horses from Darnaway will be back. I have but two and those not very good, so if I can get more it will be better. Harness for four horses Bridles for six, and a long Whip shall be sent as desired.

Sutherland General.

I

In the months that followed the defeat of Prince Charles Edward's army at Culloden it became evident that there were no rewards for those who had remained loyal to the Government. The Earl of Sutherland had raised two independent Companies for the government service and had kept a militia force in Sutherland to prevent arms and supplies from reaching the Jacobite army.

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In June, 1746, the Earl went to London to attend the trials of the Jacobite peers and to present a claim for compensation for himself and for his people who were faced by starvation if they did not receive some relief. *mess on his document the formal had been made to cultivate*

While the Earl was in the south, the Countess of Sutherland remained at Dunrobin with her children. She had wished to go to Edinburgh but was dissuaded when the principal gentlemen of the clan begged her not to leave Dunrobin.

Fraser Fort
Vol I

1

In the months that followed the defeat of Prince Charles Edward's army at Culloden, it became evident that there were no rewards for those who had remained loyal to the Government. The Earl of Sutherland had raised two Independent Companies for government service and he had kept a militia force in Sutherland to prevent supplies from reaching the Jacobite army. He had been involved in heavy expenses and had suffered further losses by the Jacobite invasion of Sutherland, in March, 1746, when he was forced to leave Dunrobin in the hands of the rebels.

In June, 1746, the Earl went to London, to attend the trials of the Jacobite peers and to press his claim for compensation on the government, but he was put off time after time and could not get a satisfactory settlement.

1
From
Culloden
Book

While the Earl was in the south, the Countess of Sutherland remained at Dunrobin. She had wished

to go to Edinburgh, but was dissuaded when the principal gentlemen of the clan petitioned her not to leave Dunrobin.

Perhaps her health had been affected by the anxieties and tragedies of the past year; by her husband's prolonged absence in the south, and by the long cold Highland winter.

Though she had not been in good health for some time,

her death was not expected, but she died at Dunrobin on February 20th, 1747. Elizabeth Wemyss, Countess of Sutherland, was the eldest daughter of the 3rd Earl of Wemyss. She had married William, 16th Earl of Sutherland, in 1734, when she was seventeen, and the Earl was twenty-six. She left two children, a girl and a boy.²

In the absence of the Earl, the arrangements for the funeral (~~of the Countess~~) had to be made by the principal gentlemen of the county, headed by Hugh Gordon of Carol, the Sheriff Substitute. It was a great responsibility, for nothing that was due to the rank of the Countess must be omitted, and at the same time expense must be considered, for the financial difficulties of the

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Earl were well understood.

The funeral could not take place until Lord Sutherland's own wishes were known; but ~~in~~ the meantime, a list of resolutions of what was felt to be absolutely necessary was drawn up.

The first consideration was to provide a fitting hearse and funeral harness for the six horses that were to draw it. The resources of Sutherland were limited, but it was decided that the carriage and wheels could be made at Dunrobin, and for the harness the help of Lady Brodie was sought.

By boat, a letter was sent to Nairn and forwarded to Brodie House, to ask Lady Brodie if she could furnish harness for six horses and a velvet pall for the coffin. The ²request met with the immediate response that she "would very readily lend anything we have that can be of use." The boat, however, must wait till nightfall, for as they could only provide black covers for two horses, and those not very good, she had immediately sent a bearer to Darnaway to borrow more. She would

send harness for four horses and bridles for six and a long whip, but hoped they would be returned as soon as possible as they had no other for use.

As for the Pall, they had no such thing, but had always used the one at Aldairn, which she believed was the best in the country, and there was always another that lay on the coffin, which had come from Forres, where, and at Findhorn, there were very good ones.

After the hearse and its furnishings were arranged, mourning had to be procured for the principal servants; for the coachman, his postillion, and for the two running footmen who would accompany the hearse. And not only for them, but for poor Lady Sutherland's little daughter, Lady Betty, and for some of the gentlemen who wished to attend the funeral.

Orders were sent to Andrew Munro, a well-known merchant of Inverness, who, with the enterprise worthy of a modern department store, seems to have been able to supply goods of every kind, from tarry rope, or salt for curing salmon, to a complete outfit of mourning.

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Patterns of suitable material were sent to Dunrobin; "swatches" of black bombazine, Norwich crepe, double allapin and black cloth, neatly pinned to sheets of paper with the names of the merchants who sold them in Inverness over two hundred years ago, and estimates for the amount of material required.

It is impressive to read that fifteen yards of black bombazine at 2/6d a yard were required for each of the women. The material is harsh and stiff and fifteen yards must have been a formidable weight to carry spread over a hoop. Even poor little Lady Betty needed ten yards of double allapin. She had cambric bibs and aprons, but broad black leather shoes black gloves, black fan and a black necklace .

The grey cloth for the footmen cost 10/- a yard and they were to have velvet capes and plush caps. The fine black cloth ordered by Dr Gordon of Golspytour cost 15/- a yard, but this was thought extortionately dear and it was requested that the price

should be reduced .

All the clothes had to be made to measures sent by letter. When finished they were "packed into three large wallets carried by three clever runners, who were sent from Dunrobin to Inverness with orders not to stop night or day till they returned." There was no leather fit for making Lady Betty's shoes to be had in the town, so they had to be made of black cloth.

Most particular directions were sent with the clothes as to how they were to be smoothed out with an iron when received as they could not fail to be much creased; which is not surprising, in view of the drastic methods that must have been used in their packing.

Having disposed of the question of mourning the "entertainment" of those who would attend the funeral must be ordered. The Inverness^{merchant} could provide more delicacies than might have been thought possible at that time. They included sugar biscuits ,plum cake

and seed cake; confections of "apricots", currants
apples, angelica, grapes, etc, and a box of sweetmeats.
Of wine,

and seed cake; confections of "apricots," currants, apples, angellica, etc, and a box of sweetmeats. Of wine there was sent twelve dozen of claret, eight dozen of sherry and one dozen of Malaga, which Andrew Munro observes is a sweet white wine fit for lady's drinking. With what was already in the ~~castles~~ cellars this was considered sufficient for those who would attend.

The wine was sent up by boat, together with more clothes, a pound of "smoking tobacco" for Lord Duffus, and new mourning shoes for Ubster and Hugh Gordon of Carrol. For bottling the wine Munro asked that bottles might be sent from Dunrobin as bottles were not to be had in Inverness for any money.

Over a month had now elapsed and preparations for the funeral were at last complete. Lady Sutherland was buried in Dornoch, 27th March 1747. In a letter to the Earl, dated 2nd April, 1747, kind-hearted Lady Duffus told him that she went to Dunrobin on the day of the funeral to be with Lady Betty and afterwards had brought

Bentinch.
Parish of Dornoch.

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A STATE FUNERAL IN THE HIGHLANDS
1747

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1160 words.

Catherine Ross
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3 prints

G. H. K. Lyon.
 as above

re payment
to petition the government for some return
of the expenses he had undertaken in raising
men for the Independent companies

A STATE FUNERAL IN THE HIGHLANDS
1747

In past times, in the Highlands, the funeral of a Chief, or indeed of anyone of social eminence, was an occasion for much ceremony, and was attended by large numbers of people beside those actually connected with the deceased. Well on into the nineteenth century we have accounts of the great numbers who gathered on such occasions, either from respect to the bereaved family or as a social duty which was expected of them. *in some cases husbands injured. Po.*

The following account of a funeral in a remote district is drawn from the letters of an ancestor, one of those on whom *among others* fell the responsibility *by* making arrangements for the burial of the wife of their Chief, William, Earl of Sutherland. Letters, which, having survived the vicissitudes of two hundred years shed some light on a part of Scotland of which but scanty records have come down to the present day.

ELIZABETH WEMYSS, Countess of Sutherland, was but thirty years of age when her death took place at Dunrobin castle on February 20th 1747. She had married William Earl of Sutherland

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in 1734, when he was twenty-six and she was seventeen. At the time of her death, her husband was in the South; He had gone to London in the summer of 1746, to attend the trials of the Jacobite Lords, and to petition the government for repayment of the expenses he had undertaken in raising men for the Independant Companies during 1745-46; in defending the county from the Jacobites, and in preventing arms and supplies from reaching the army of Prince Charles Edward from the north.

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It fell, therefore, to the principal gentlemen of the county, to make arrangements for the funeral of the Countess; a serious responsibility, for nothing must be omitted that was due to the rank of her Ladyship, and at the same time a measure of economy must be considered. For Lord Sutherland had been greatly straightened in his means by the sums he had paid out and the many difficulties he was encountering in getting any acknowledgement of the debt owed to him by the government.

Though the funeral could not take place until Lord Sutherland's own wishes were known, and though many days must elapse before even the speediest of

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at

to ford a swollen burn with the waters up to their knees.

But my story relates to an earlier period and an even more remote district. It is taken from the letters of an ancestor, one of those on whom, among others, fell the responsibility of making arrangements for the funeral of the wife of their Chief, William, Earl of Sutherland. Letters, which, having survived the vicissitudes of two hundred years, shed some light on the manners and customs of a part of Scotland of which but scanty records have come down to the present day.

ELIZABETH WEYMYSS, Countess of Sutherland, eldest daughter of the third Earl of Weymyss, was but thirty years of age when her death took place at Dunrobin Castle on February 20th, 1747. She had married William Earl of Sutherland in 1734, when he was twenty-six, and she was seventeen. At the time of her death, her husband was in the south. He had gone to London in the summer of 1746, to attend the trials of the Jacobite Lords, and to petition the government for repayment of the expenses he had undertaken in raising men for the Independent

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replies could be received from him, it was immediately decided to send letters to all those from whom advice or assistance might be expected.

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5-26

The first consideration was to provide a fitting ^{harness} hears^e and funeral for the six horses that were to draw it. In 1747, the resources of Sutherland were limited, Much damage had been ~~done~~, particularly at Dunrobin, during the Jacobite occupation of the castle and the surrounding countryside. It was, however, decided that the carriage and wheels could be made at Dunrobin, but for the harness, the help of Lady Brodie was sought. By boat, a letter was sent to Nairn and forwarded to Brodie House, asking if she could furnish harness and a velvet pall for the coffin.

The request met with an immediate response, for she would very readily lend anything that could be of use on this melancholy occasion. The boat, however must wait till

of black cloth; As no measures were sent for them it is not surprising that there was a complaint of their being a misfit. Most particular directions were sent with the clothes as to how they were to be smoothed out with an iron when received, for they could not fail to be much creased, which, in view of the drastic methods that must have been used in their packing is hardly surprising.

Having disposed of the question of mourning, the 'entertainment' of those who would attend the funeral must be ordered. Here, the resources of the castle could be considered with what was necessary to be obtained from Inverness. The Inverness merchant could provide more delicacies that might have been thought possible at that date. They include sugar biscuits, plum cake and seed cake; 'confections' of 'apricots' currants, apples, angellica, grapes etc and a box of sweetmeats. Of wine there was sent twelve dozen of claret, eight dozen of sherry and one dozen of malaga, which John Munro, merchant, observes is a sweet white wine, fit for ladies drinking. This, with what was already in the castle cellars, was considered sufficient for those who would attend.

The wine was sent up by boat, together with more clothes; a pound of smoking tobacco for Lord Duffus and

sent from Dunrobin, as bottles were not to be had in Inverness for any money.

Over a month had now elapsed since the death of Lady Sutherland and the preparations for the funeral were at last complete. One must imagine the final ceremony--the long procession of friends and the neighbouring lairds, the tacksmen and the small tenants, who would come from far and near. + In a letter written to the Earl of Sutherland by Lord Duffus he tells him that all things were well and fittingly managed, and that he himself was one of the pall-bearers.

+ Kind-hearted Lady Duffus took little Lady Betty to be with her own children at Skelbo, until such time as her father could make arrangements for her and it is to be hoped that she soon forget her mourning garments and that happier days were in store; in spite of the blank that could never be filled by any but her mother.

Letter by Lord Duffus to the Earl of Sutherland.
Published in the "Sutherland Book." Fraser. 1885.
Ed.

titular Lord Duffus
John & Eric Sutherland, called
William & C. published in the Suth.

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ancestors, one of those on whom, among others, fell the responsibility of making the arrangements for the funeral of the wife of their Chief, William, Earl of Sutherland. Letters which having survived the vicissitudes of two hundred years, shed some light on the manners and customs of a part of Scotland of which but scanty records have come down to the present day.

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It fell, therefore to the principal gentlemen of the county to make arrangements for the funeral of the Countess; a serious responsibility, for nothing must be omitted that was due to the rank of her Ladyship, and at the same time a measure

The room in which the poor young Countess lay was being used in their packing and in view of the fact that the room was the bedroom of the Countess, it was painted white and the walls were covered with paper. The room was used in their packing and in view of the fact that the room was the bedroom of the Countess, it was painted white and the walls were covered with paper. The room was used in their packing and in view of the fact that the room was the bedroom of the Countess, it was painted white and the walls were covered with paper.

new mourning shoes for Usher and Hugh Gordon of Gairloch, who were responsible for most of the arrangements. For the bottling of the wine, Munro asks that bottles might be sent from Dunrobin, as bottles were not to be had in Inverness for any money. Over a month had now elapsed since the death of Lady Sutherland and the preparations for the funeral were at least complete. One must imagine the final ceremony--the long procession of friends and the neighbouring lairds, the tackmen and the small tenants, who would come from far and near. In a letter written to the Earl of Sutherland by Lord Duffus he tells him that all things were well and fittingly managed, and that he himself was one of the pall-bearers. Kind-hearted Lady Duffus took little Lady Betty to be with her own children at Skibo, until such time as her father could make arrangements for her and it is to be hoped that she soon forgot her mourning garments and that happier days were in store; in spite of the blank that could never be filled by any but her mother.

When the Countess died, she was only 30 years of age. She was the daughter of a wealthy family and her husband was a powerful nobleman. Her death was a great loss to the country.