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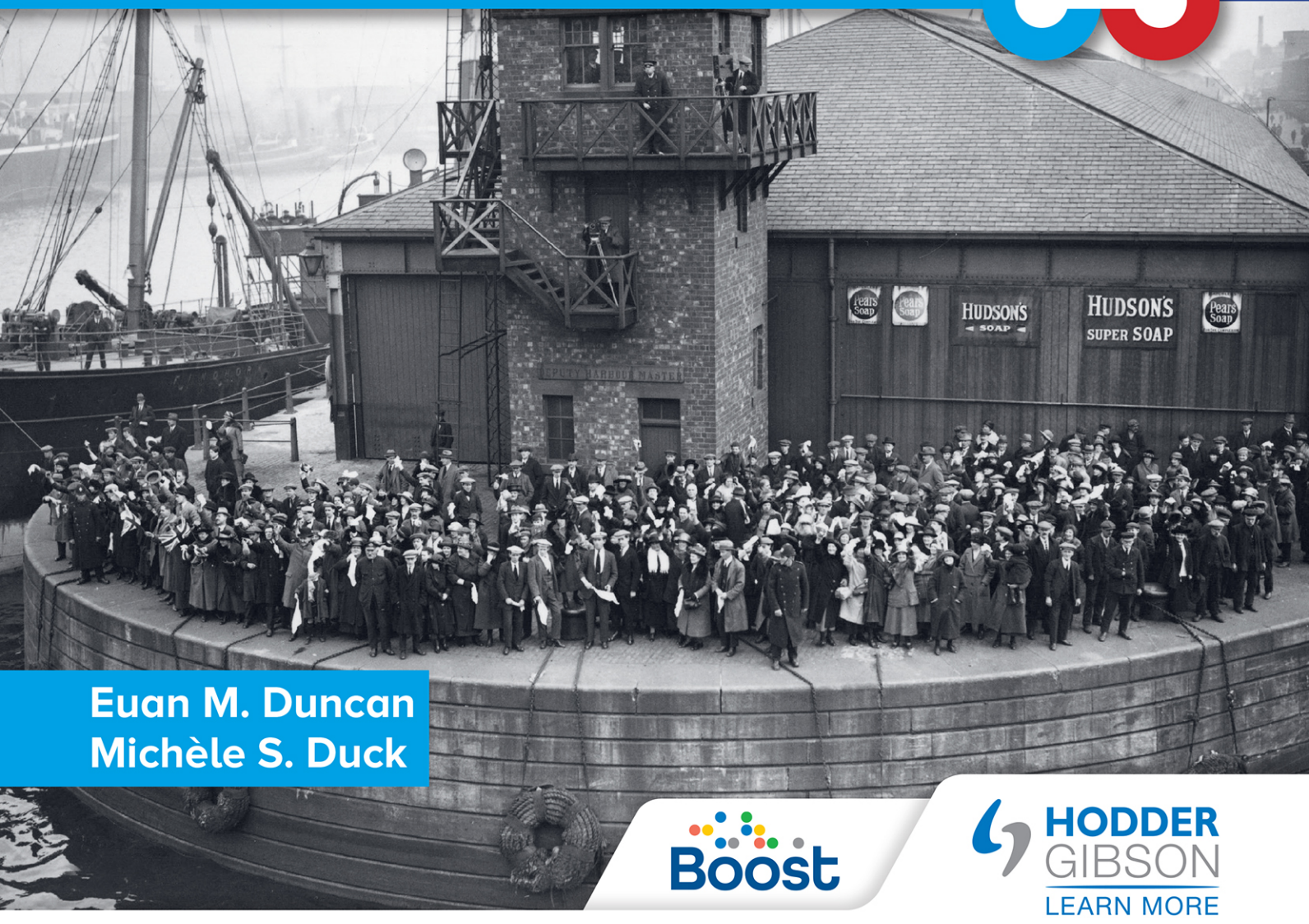

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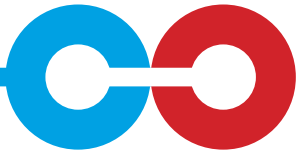

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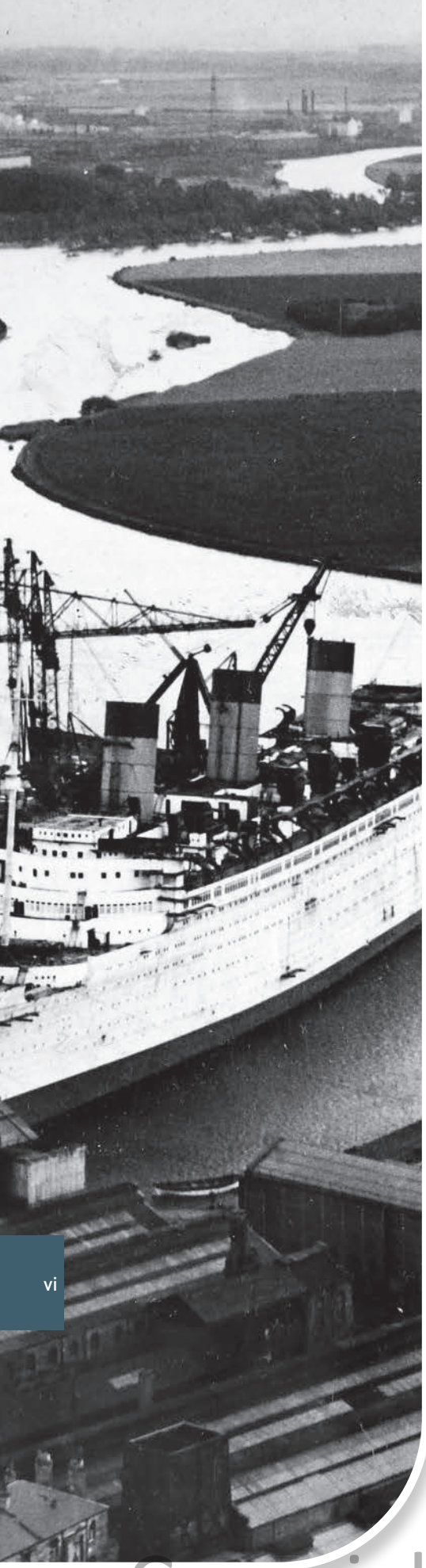

Introduction

From 1830 to 1939, Scotland changed significantly. This was a period of high migration, in Scotland as in much of the rest of Europe. It was also a time when Scotland, an active participant in the British Empire, developed a great deal during a period of industrialisation that was among the most rapid in Europe.

It was partly through large numbers of people coming to Scotland for a variety of different reasons that Scotland experienced such significant social, political and economic change. The impact of the immigrant groups discussed in the following chapters played a role in developing multiple areas of Scottish society and life. Moreover, with Scotland industrialising at breakneck speed, these immigrants played a vital role in working in these new industries, as well as providing goods and services for the working communities. Immigrants did not always receive a warm welcome, and religious and cultural tension did exist among certain groups, or within immigrant communities themselves.

But it was not just Scotland that was changing. Emigrating Scots were also playing a role in developing parts of the British Empire. Often Scots took with them industrial and agricultural skills and knowledge, helping boost the wealth and output of local communities. This often came at a grim cost, with native communities oppressed, persecuted and abused by entrepreneurial emigrants. Often, this industrial and economic 'progress' deemed the subjugation of native communities a necessity.

Whether revising for an examination, writing an assignment or deepening your understanding of a particular area, this book will help you. Each chapter covers a specific issue that could appear as a Paper 2 source question, and the information contained in the following pages will support you in writing a powerful response.

Good luck!

Chapter 1

The migration of Scots

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the reasons why Scots migrated. This will cover why many Scots migrated internally (i.e. moved to another part of Scotland) and will also discuss why many Scots chose to emigrate and leave Scotland for another land. Finally, it will set out the additional opportunities and schemes that supported Scots in their migration.

LINK TO EXAM

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Key issue 1: The migration of Scots
This chapter will support you in analysing and evaluating the relative importance of the factors that encouraged and forced Scots to migrate.

Background

During the period 1830 to 1939, Scotland changed significantly. In 1830, Scotland was primarily a **rural** and agricultural society. However, by 1850 it had become the third most **urbanised** society in Western Europe, and big cities like Glasgow were experiencing population increases of around 5000 people per year.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Scotland's total population rose quickly. In 1801, Scotland had a population of 1.6 million and by 1841 this had risen to 2.6 million. However, this rising population was not spread equally throughout Scotland and there was a great deal of movement, also known as internal **migration**, within Scotland. In 1831, the Highlands made up 13.1 per cent of the Scottish population, although by 1851 this had fallen to just 10.8 per cent, showing that many were choosing to leave the Highlands. This was a pattern repeated across the areas of the rural Lowlands as Scots flocked to **urban** centres. In fact, by 1851, 5 per cent of people living in Glasgow were Highland-born.

This movement reflected how Scotland had changed, both socially and economically. In 1851, 30 per cent of men worked in agriculture, there had been rising population numbers in rural areas, and more Scots worked in farming than textiles and mining combined. Yet, by 1901, the number of men working in agriculture had fallen by more than half to only 14 per cent, and rural Scotland saw a population decline at the same time as Scotland's overall population was growing rapidly.

This chapter will examine the following themes:

- Why were Scots migrating within Scotland?
- Why did some Scots choose to emigrate?
- What supported and encouraged Scots to move?

Figure 1.1 This map shows the boundary between the Highlands and the Lowlands. Note that these are geographical terms and do not relate to the modern council boundaries currently in use in Scotland

1.1 The internal migration of Scots

For the exam it is important to understand the internal migration of Scots and the factors that encouraged them to move within Scotland. Historians often call these 'push' and 'pull' factors. **Push factors** are those that force people to migrate, whereas **pull factors** are those that encourage migration by offering an opportunity or improvement.

This section will examine the following themes:

Economic push and pull factors in internal migration
Social push and pull factors in internal migration
Cultural push and pull factors in internal migration
Political push and pull factors in internal migration

1.1.1 Economic push and pull factors in internal migration

There were many factors pushing Scots to leave rural communities and move to the growing urban centres of the central belt. These factors worked together to encourage a great deal of internal migration in Scotland. The historian T.C. Smout explains how this worked:

SOURCE 1

The combination of rural depopulation and city growth was not peculiar to Scotland. It is what happens when **industrialization** creates demand for labour in the towns and stimulates the countryside to produce more food with fewer workers.

T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People: 1830–1950*, p. 58

This reflects the fact that there was internal migration in Scotland as it was increasingly hard for people to support themselves economically in rural work, while cities seemed to offer an attractive opportunity for them to improve their quality of life and prospects.

One economic explanation for internal migration in the rural Lowlands was because job prospects for rural agricultural workers were becoming increasingly uncertain. Between 1830 and 1851, the rural Lowlands had been experiencing a population boom, with growth of around 10 per cent per decade. Farmers had created larger, **enclosed farms** to provide enough food for this growing population and avoid famine. This meant not only that rural workers had significantly less chance of ever owning land but also that their wages would be much less secure as there were many more workers than available jobs. With less steady work or land available to own, many workers from the rural Lowlands migrated to nearby towns in search of better and steadier wages. Almost one-sixth of the population of Peeblesshire was drawn to Edinburgh in this way.

This process of internal migration was likewise accelerated by the agricultural revolution, where farming methods and technology reduced the number of workers required to make a farm productive. For example, new technology like the self-binding reaper almost halved the average number of days it took to tend an **acre** of barley between 1840 and 1914. This reduced the number of available jobs in the rural Lowlands and pushed many to migrate to the growing cities.

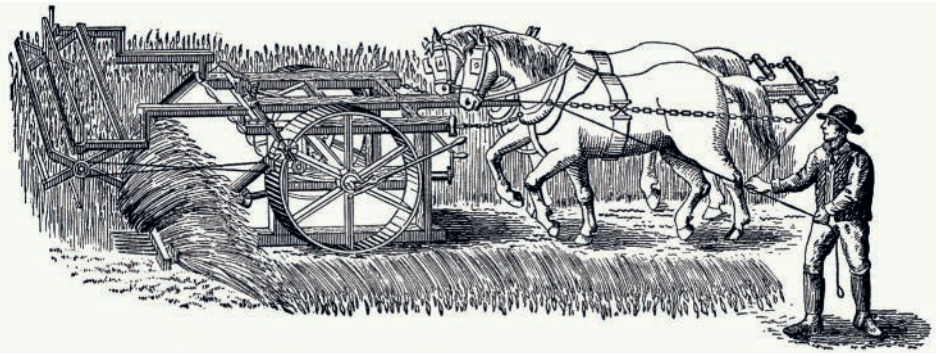

Figure 1.2 An engraving from 1888 showing a new reaping machine. Emerging technology like this sped up the harvest and reduced the need to hire so many farm workers

Moreover, rural workers quickly heard they could earn around 50 per cent more in industrial and urban centres in industries like cotton, iron, coal or manufacturing. This acted as a significant pull factor for many agricultural workers who had been increasingly struggling to find work on the emerging modern Lowland farms.

It was not only men who would have the opportunity to earn more in industrial towns. Women had several job opportunities open to them, such as in emerging factories. Other women took jobs in domestic service, working as cooks, maids, housekeepers and nannies. This further pulled some families to the towns and cities, as the earning potential of families was increased. In 1893, one reporter from the Royal Commission described the migration of some women from the farm to the city:

SOURCE 2

A young woman will get her ticket for Glasgow, pull on her gloves, laugh and talk with her parents and comrades, jump into the train … and thank her stars she left that unwomanly job [farming] for domestic service and town society.

'Report of the Royal Commission on Labour', ***Parliamentary Papers 1893*****, vol. 36, pp. 8–10**

Likewise, parts of the Highlands were experiencing economic changes that encouraged many Highlanders to migrate. In the south and east Highlands there had been a fall in the number of available farms for workers to buy, resulting in a large number of landless workers who relied on earning wages to support themselves. This was economically insecure, and the amount of work varied based on the needs of local farmers. Towns such as Campbeltown and Tarbert grew quickly as many Highlanders moved to them seeking steadier wages from industrial jobs.

Another factor in Highland migration was that people were economically dependent on the potato as a crop, and when this crop failed many had no alternative but to migrate to a city that offered more readily available food. In some places, 80 per cent of the population relied on the potato for food. When potato blight destroyed much of the Scottish potato crop between 1846 and 1856, many Highlanders migrated rather than face starvation.

Many Highlanders who chose to remain in the Highlands and keep their rural way of life were forced to diversify into fishing in order to support their families economically. In 1884, the Napier Commission reported that **crofters** made more money from the sea than the land. The Brand Report of 1902 highlighted that a crofter on Lewis made £3 annually from the sale of **croft** produce and £25 from fishing. However, the collapse of the herring export markets in Germany and Russia in the years following the First World War caused an acute economic crisis in the Highlands that pushed many Scots to migrate.

Migration was also connected to the collapse of the kelp industry on which many crofters relied. Kelp was a form of valuable seaweed that had many uses. Burned kelp was used to dye linen and assist in the production of glass and soap. Many crofters relied on profits from kelp to support themselves economically, although by 1830 the kelp industry was in sharp decline as it faced competition from imports of Spanish barilla and mined chemicals like potash.

Many Highlanders were pushed off their crofts during a period known as the Clearances. The peak of the Clearances coincided with the Scottish potato famine in the 1850s. Many crofters faced starvation and destitution after the failure of the potato crop. Some landlords, such as Macleod of Macleod, provided so much financial relief and charity to their crofters that they themselves went bankrupt. This forced them to give up their land to **trustees**. Surviving landowners and new land managers sought to quickly increase the profitability of these estates to protect them from the economic insecurity of future famines. This meant that crofters were displaced for more profitable sheep or livestock. This coerced many Highland crofters to migrate.

Although the Clearances were certainly traumatic for many, they need to be placed in the perspective of overall migration. There were no forced evictions after 1855, and between 1851 and 1891 the rural Highland population reduced by 9 per cent, compared to 29 per cent in the rural Lowlands. However, the fact that force and coercion had been used in parts of Scotland, such as Sutherland, left a lasting impression of unjust, violent coercion.

1.1.2 Social push and pull factors in internal migration

Another pull factor that encouraged internal migration was improved transport. New railways and steamboat links connected parts of Scotland and made it much easier, cheaper, quicker and less dangerous to travel. For example, the first railway reached Aberdeen in 1850 and Inverness in 1855. The so-called Far North Line was completed in 1874, spanning over 160 miles. This connected the very north of the country with the industrial Lowlands and encouraged some Scots to migrate to the towns and cities.

Many people felt the often very basic living conditions in rural parts of Scotland could be improved by moving to a city. For example, many rural Lowland workers lived in bothies, or shared housing, and many Highland Scots lived in so-called '**black houses**', with little ventilation or comfort. This pushed many Scots to migrate from a rural setting to an urban one, seeking an improvement in living conditions.

A government report in 1918 highlighted the poor living conditions experienced in parts of the Highlands:

SOURCE 3

The typical crofter's house was built by the crofter himself; it had low walls; no chimney and often no window ... only one door, used by the cattle and family alike. Rough stones covered with clay made a cold and damp floor. The croft had no paving, and the manure liquids mixed into the ground.

J.P. Day, *Public Administration in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, p. 84

The prospect of a more varied social life pulled many Scots to migrate. Rural work was seen as particularly tough, with long hours, comparatively low pay and very few holidays. On the other hand, city life appeared to promise more leisure and freedom for workers. New and exciting leisure activities emerged in cities like Edinburgh, where the first cinema in Scotland opened in 1896. This appealed to rural workers tired of a monotonous social life.

Another social factor that increased migration was the greater education of the rural population in some parts of the Highlands, making a potential move to an urban centre and finding work significantly more likely. It also resulted in raised expectations and awareness about the rest of Scotland and the world, leading many children of rural workers to seek a different way to support themselves in towns and cities. The improvement in education was especially visible in regions such as Argyll, where 70 per cent of the population was literate in 1826. This was significantly higher than the figure for the Hebrides, where only 30 per cent of the population could read. This facilitated many Highlanders from the south and west Highlands to migrate to urban centres and find work.

1.1.3 Cultural push and pull factors in internal migration

Cultural reasons also caused some Scots to leave rural settings and migrate to the cities. Seasonal migration had become significantly more common, with the children of Highland crofters often temporarily migrating to cities or the rural Lowlands during times of economic stress. Many of these Scots ended up migrating permanently, pulled by higher wages and better conditions. Many wrote letters to friends and family, alerting them to the conditions and encouraging them to migrate. While it is hard to place a figure on how many were influenced by this, it is clear from individual accounts that many Scots were encouraged in this way. This reduced the uncertainty about migration and pulled many rural workers into the industrial centres.

1.1.4 Political push and pull factors in internal migration

Although the Highland Clearances were connected to landowners wanting to increase the profitability of their land, there was also a political desire from the Establishment to 'modernise' and 'improve' the situation in the Highlands. This stemmed from the fact that some landowners saw the Highland way of life as backwards. The historian T.M. Devine highlights that 'many landowners held the view that the crofting community housed a redundant population'. Migration was encouraged as some landowners felt that moving to a new, industrial town was both inevitable and desirable.

In the later stages of the nineteenth century, the British government attempted to strengthen the rights of crofters. For example, the rights of crofters were formalised in the 1886 Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act. This set up the first Crofters Commission, a land court that ruled on disputes between landowners and crofters. However, this Act did not reverse any of the previous clearances, and land cleared of crofters for cattle or sheep remained inaccessible to crofters. This political lack of will to reverse the land redistribution of the clearances meant that the pressure on land and wages remained high in the Highlands, forcing many to migrate in search of better conditions in the urban Lowlands.

1.2 Emigration of Scots

For the exam, it is also important to understand why some Scots chose to emigrate and leave Scotland altogether. As with internal migration, factors influencing Scots to emigrate can be divided into push and pull factors. There is some overlap between migration and **emigration**. For example, a Highlander forced to leave their land due to the collapse of the kelp industry may have been pulled to Canada rather than the urban centres of the Lowlands. Therefore, when candidates are asked to respond to a question asking why Scots emigrated, the push factors from the preceding section can be discussed. However, the pull factors encouraging Scots to emigrate are different and are explained below.

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What does the cover photo show?

A crowd in Lewis wave goodbye to 260 Hebrideans leaving for Canada on board the steamship *Metagama* in 1923. Migration, emigration and the nature of the British Empire all had formative effects on Scotland and, in many ways, helped shape the Scotland we live in today.

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