

James Loch, Francis Suther, John Horseburgh, Captain Kenneth Mackay, and Angus Leslie. If we can credit tradition, Sellar was the most active and the most cruel of all; he was certainly the most detested. About 1810, Major William Innes of Sandside and John Patterson, his sheep farmer and factor, evicted a large number of families from Isauld, Skaill, Borrowston, Lybster, Skinnet, Shurery, and other parts of West Caithness. In 1812 Lord Gower and his wife drove away from their lands scores of persons who were compelled to seek a home among the Indians and bears of the Red River settlement. In 1815 they turned more of their tenants—more of the parents of the men who had been fighting against Napoleon—out of doors, especially in the parishes of Farr and Kildonan. On this occasion the selfish and tyrannical Sellar found enjoyment and pleasure in setting fire to the houses of those whom he was removing. In 1819 and 1820 the whole parish of Kildonan, parts of the parishes of Rogart and Golspie, and the districts of Strathnaver and Strathy were cleared almost wholly of their inhabitants and sheep put in their place. In the statistical account of the parish of Reay, written in 1840, we find the following statements:—"The distress at present existing in the parish is extreme. The most of the parish has been converted into sheep-farms and consequently the poor people have been ejected from their houses and lands, many of them reduced to indigence and misery, and others necessitated to emigrate to a foreign land."

Lord Gower, Marquis of Stafford and Duke of Sutherland, was an Englishman. He was to a large extent responsible for the Sutherland clearances and their horrible cruelties. It is of no use to try to throw the whole blame on his wife. The factors were bad enough, but they were only agents. John Patterson came to Caithness from Roxburgh in 1804. He was then only a moneyless shepherd. At the time of his death, which took place in 1853, he was tenant of several large well-stocked farms and had £39,000 in cash.