

# The Landmark Trust

## THE SHORE COTTAGES

### History Album



**Written & researched by Caroline Stanford**

**Updated March 2014**

The Landmark Trust Shottesbrooke Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 3SW  
*Charity registered in England & Wales 243312 and Scotland SC039205*

*Bookings 01628 825925 Office 01628 825920 Facsimile 01628 825417 Website*  
[www.landmarktrust.org.uk](http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk)

## Basic Details

Built	c1840
Listed	Category C
Tenure	60 year lease from Welbeck Estate
Opened as a Landmark	August 2012
Project Evaluation	Keith Dyer of Lorn MacNeal Architects of Edinburgh
Building analysis	Andrew Wright
Restoration	Stuart Leavy & Carl Dowding of Landmark's direct labour team, assisted by numerous local subcontractors

## Buildings on or near The Shore (not in Landmark's care)

Icehouse	1840s	Category C
Bothy & storeroom	1840s	Category C
Berriedale Castle (ruins)		
Pair of navigation towers	e19thC	Category B

## Acknowledgements

The help of Joy Corley, Bill Fernie, Hugh Leishman, Anson MacAuslan, Sheena Mackay, Anna Rogalski and Andrew Wright are gratefully acknowledged in our research into The Shore Cottages and the preparation of this album.

## DONOR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Landmark gratefully acknowledges the support of the following, without whom  
The Shore Cottages could not have been restored.

<b>The Monument Trust</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs S Jordan</b>
<b>Mr C K Andrews</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs F Ledden</b>
<b>The John M Archer Charitable Trust</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs J H Leishman</b>
<b>Mr G A Ball</b>	<b>The Rt Hon the Baroness Linklater of</b>
<b>The Viscountess Boyd Charitable Trust</b>	<b>Butterstone</b>
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs G W Burnett</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs R Lockyer</b>
<b>Mr M M Caporn</b>	<b>Mr D MacDonald</b>
<b>Mr GG Clayton</b>	<b>In memory of Donald Mackay of Caithness</b>
<b>The Damrymple Donaldson Fund</b>	<b>In memory of Mrs J MacQueen</b>
<b>Mr F H Dewberry</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs J Miller</b>
<b>The Dunard Fund</b>	<b>The Rt Hon the Lord Phillimore</b>
<b>Mrs V M Dyer</b>	<b>Mr J S Ransom</b>
<b>Mr R B Eaton</b>	<b>Andrew Salvesen Charitable Fund</b>
<b>Mr J Elliot</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs J W Scott</b>
<b>The Englefield Charitable Trust</b>	<b>Mr B E Sealey CBE</b>
<b>Mr J R A Fell</b>	<b>The Terpsichore Trust</b>
<b>The W D Foord Charitable Trust</b>	<b>The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation</b>
<b>Mr C P Giles</b>	<b>The Tulip Trust</b>
<b>The Gloag Foundation</b>	<b>The Ulea Trust</b>
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs M Gwinnell</b>	<b>Mr W G White &amp; Ms S J M Whitley</b>
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs D J Horton</b>	<b>Miss Hazel M Wood's Charitable Trust</b>
<b>The Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement</b>	<b>Mr M Lawre</b>
<b>Mr D Holburton</b>	<b>Mr P M Webber</b>
<b>Mr W Hopkins</b>	
<b>Mr &amp; Mrs R D Isaac</b>	

We are grateful to all these organisations and individuals, and many others who supported our appeal, including Guardians of The Shore Cottages, and those who wish to remain anonymous.



*Castle of Berrydale.*

**William Daniell's view of The Shore in around 1819 the small herring fishery in full swing as women gut the fish landed by the fifies drawn up on the shingle. Daniell omits the site of the cottages, which suggests they were not yet built**

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page no.</u>
Summary	7
The Story of The Shore Cottages	11
The inhabitants of The Shore Cottages	36
Building analysis of The Shore fishing station	45
Restoration of The Shore Cottages	53
December 2012 storms	69
Berriedale Castle	71
Bibliography	74



The Shore Cottages before restoration.

## The Shore Cottages – Summary of History

The sweep of 200 years of Scottish history lies behind the group of buildings on The Shore at Berriedale on the Langwell Estate. Together, the terrace that was originally four small fishermen's cottages, the bothy with storeroom beside it, and the icehouse behind represent an unusually complete survival of a mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century coastal salmon fishing station. Yet the story of The Shore, and of Berriedale's sister settlement of Badbea two miles to the south, goes back further, to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when both were settled as part of the process of economic reorganisation across the Highlands known as The Clearances.

The Clearances were the forcible removal of crofters from the uplands by improving landlords, to make way for sheep and better agricultural practice on their land. They remain a deeply emotive subject, debated by those who emphasise the brutality and bleakness of life for the evicted crofters and those who stress rather the improving and even benevolent motives of the landlords. The Berriedale straths (or inland valleys) were cleared of crofters in the 1790s by Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, who introduced Cheviot sheep in their stead. Sir John had bought the Langwell Estate in 1788 and was a significant figure of his day: improving agriculturalist, roadbuilder, town planner, politician and founder of the *(Old) Statistical Account of Scotland*. When crofters were displaced from their smallholdings, many found a new livelihood on the coast in the herring fishery, which was booming during the Napoleonic Wars.

Sir John settled his Langwell crofters at nearby Badbea (deserted by 1911) and on The Shore at Berriedale, where William Daniell captured a picturesque scene in 1819 of fishing boats pulled up on the shingle, nets spread to dry and herring lassies up to their elbows in troughs, gutting the fish before they were 'kitted' in barrels (packed in salt).

Daniell did not include the site of The Shore Cottages in his picture, and it seems most likely that they were built c1840. Sir John Sinclair sold the Langwell Estate in 1811 to an Edinburgh lawyer, James Horne, who leased the fishing at Berriedale to Aberdeen brokers. Berriedale was already renowned as much for its salmon as its herring, the salmon being netted at the mouth of the river as they returned from the sea to their spawning grounds in rivers inland. Horne's nephew Donald inherited the Langwell Estate in 1831 and by 1840, salmon fishing had been given precedence on The Shore. Larger herring stations were by then well established at Helmsdale, Dunbeath and Wick. Donald Horne decided instead to focus on the higher value salmon, and built the cottages and (probably) the icehouse and storeroom/bothy. The annual salmon season ran for a couple of months only, the fish being despatched to lucrative markets in the big cities, packed in ice harvested from winter lochs and stored in the icehouse.

The cottages are first mentioned in the estate records in 1846, and the 1841 census records four households on The Shore, supporting a construction date of around 1840. These would have been model cottages compared to the traditional

turf-roofed byre dwellings of Caithness, and necessary to attract and keep reliable fishermen for the short salmon season.

In 1856, the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland, of Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire, bought the Langwell Estate. During our own restoration, we discovered that under the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke in 1884 (we know the date from a scribbled record left by joiner Magnus Ganson on the reverse of some panelling) the cottages were given a comprehensive refurbishment. The floor levels and roofs were raised some 300-400mm, probably because of inundations from exceptionally high tides. The principal rooms were finished with matchboard panelling, no doubt from the newly opened sawmill on the estate, and were given suspended timber floors. Under one, we found a battered woman's shoe, perhaps hidden to ward off evil spirits. No. 3 was extended to the rear at the same time, two sheds added as shared privies and a footbridge installed. No. 4 was similarly extended in the 1930s, and given a lean-to at the end of the range, since lost but whose floor remains, beautifully made of pebbles from the beach, aligned for drainage.

The cottages were inhabited until the 1950s, when, lacking electricity or mains water, they fell out of use. Their isolated position and foot-only access meant it was not economic for the estate to refurbish them. They stood empty and at the mercy of the elements until 2006, when someone who used to play on The Shore in his youth brought them to Landmark's attention. The cottages' plight and beautiful setting made us keen to help, and a lease was agreed with the estate. It was decided to keep No. 1 to its original floorplan to recreate as closely as possible the experience of living in one of these tiny cottages, and to combine the remaining three for a larger group of up to six people (the two can also combine).

The restoration was carried out by Stuart Leavy and Carl Dowding of Landmark's direct labour team, who worked with numerous local subcontractors and consultants through the course of the project. Materials were brought to site using a specially constructed barge on a fixed cable across the river. A first phase of work was carried out in summer 2010 to re-roof the cottages and make them weathertight. The original lime mortar was carefully matched, to repoint the walls and fill voids filled where the earth mortar used for their core had leached away. Lichen was removed from the exterior using a high pressure hose and the traditional limewash finish reinstated. With full funding in place, work began in earnest the following spring. Surviving timber floors were lifted and most of the original flagstones found still in situ at the primary floor level. Enough were salvageable to use as the floor for No.1; those in No. 2 are modern replacements. Underfloor heating was installed throughout that uses mostly renewable energy harvested by Air Source Heat Pumps. Windows and doors were reproduced using the remains of the originals as references. Partitions were re-created on the line of original, central subdivisions once for sleeping areas, today for bathrooms.

The Shore has always been a marginal settlement, its eventual desertion reinforcing this essential character. Today, this very isolation is part of its magic, and all who stay here will help perpetuate its story, and the wider history of Caithness.





**Aerial view of The Shore. The house overlooking the river by the footbridge was perhaps a fishing manager's dwelling (today in private ownership). Portland Terrace, on the other side of Berriedale Water, was built by the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland in 1902. The ruins of Berriedale Castle stand on the headland, which was first fortified in the 14<sup>th</sup> century but is likely to have been a Norse stronghold long before that. It was ruinous by the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Two 19<sup>th</sup>-century navigation towers are also visible south along the cliffs from The Shore.**



**Caithness is a country of wide horizons, with a magnificent coastline of layered precipices, bold headlands, caves and isolated sea stacks. Latheron parish forms the south-east coastal strip of the county. Arable land is confined to a strip along the coast 1-3 miles wide and 27 miles long. Its geology is mostly Old Red Sandstone resting on an ancient, irregular floor of crystalline and igneous rocks. Berriedale's granite outcrop is backed by quartzite and crystalline schist.**

## The Story of The Shore Cottages

The terrace of four cottages in the cove known as The Shore at Berriedale in Caithness, their icehouse, storehouse and bothy, winching gear, net drying poles and footbridge across the burn, together form a rare survival of a fully integrated mid-19<sup>th</sup> century coastal salmon fishing station. The village of Berriedale is in Latheron Parish, on the Langwell Estate, which is owned today by the Duke of Portland as part of the Welbeck Estates.

The language, the geology, the people and the way of life in Caithness really belong with those of Orkney and Shetland, not wrested from the Norwegian kings until the 15<sup>th</sup> century and which still retain a distinctive identity. Caithness is protected from the outside world by the Ord, a 1,000 foot high granite ridge thrust down from inland hills, a natural bastion against invaders. 'Over the Ord' has special significance for the Caithness native, and superstition has it that a Sinclair should never cross the Ord on a Monday or dressed in green, after a band of 300 did so in 1515 to meet their fate at the Battle of Flodden Field. Only one returned.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the story of The Shore begins, Caithness was a society of landowners and tenant farmers, not clan chiefs and followers, its atmosphere and way of life distinct from both the Lowlands and the Highlands. Caithness was

*'a countryside very sure of its own separateness, sure that its problems and methods were its own...This is a land of great winds and vast skies; its bare and treeless lines march unencumbered to meet the peculiar width and light of the northern sky... it carries with it a certain dry beauty, which can win affection and make all other landscapes seem strangely soft....A countryside where the fences and furniture are more likely to be made of flagstones than of soft wood'.<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> Rosalind Michison, *Agricultural Sir John* (1962), p. 7.



**'Agricultural Sir John' Sinclair, painted by Henry Raeburn c 1795 (left, National Gallery of Scotland) and again c1813 (right, National Portrait Gallery). Sir John is shown in the tartan trews of the Rothesay and Caithness Fencibles, a militia he founded in 1795 during the heightened tension of the Napoleonic Wars. He was a tall, long-shanked man, an aristocrat to his finger-ends, focussed on and committed to his improving projects. Not always popular, *The Times* of the day described him as 'the Great Scotch Rat, with Tail and Whiskers.'**

The Shore saw herring as well as salmon fishing, and its story is bound up with one of the most turbulent periods of economic reorganisation in Scotland, the Clearances. They are often called the Highland Clearances: today, Berriedale is administratively part of the Highlands region of Scotland, but to a true Scot these lowland, coastal areas are not truly part of the Highlands. The Clearances were the process of social engineering under which the great landlords of the 18<sup>th</sup> century colonised the Highlands with sheep, with the result that the crofters who had lived on these inhospitable lands for centuries were driven out to find new livelihoods, either on the coastal margins or by emigrating to the New World. The booming fisheries, especially herring, provided some with work and the so-called 'improving' landlords permitted new settlements along the coast wherever a shallow shoreline permitted the small luggers or fifies to be pulled up out of the sea. The buildings that remain today on The Shore are a salmon station and belong to the second wave of activity there. Yet the longer story of The Shore embodies a defining period in Scottish history, which still resonates today.

### Sir John Sinclair

The instigator of fishing activity at The Shore (although not the builder of the surviving cottages and station) was Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster (1754-1835). Sinclair is a significant figure in the Scottish Enlightenment and in wider British history in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was an improver, statistician, agriculturist, road builder, town planner, ambassador and politician. His seat was at Thurso Castle. The Act of Union between Scotland and England in 1707 and the removal of Parliament to London forced the Scottish gentry to choose between life in a local or national world. Sinclair chose the latter, serving as MP from when he was 26 years old for the next for 30 years, although his heart remained in Caithness where he returned every summer.

Sinclair designed and built the town of Thurso, but he is perhaps best known today for his pioneering work, *The (Old) Statistical Account of Scotland*, which he prepared from 1790-8 by collating the results of a questionnaire which he sent to almost 1,000 parish ministers, 166 enquiries about food sources and prices, employment, wage levels, fuel prices, changes in recent decades. Sinclair is credited with introducing the word 'statistical' into the language, a word he met in Germany in 1786, meaning 'information useful to the state.' Sinclair gave it wider meaning in English from his belief that efforts by government to promote the well-being of the people should be based on detailed knowledge of their way of life. The result ran to 21 volumes and is as invaluable to historians today as it was to the administrators of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1770, aged just 16, Sinclair had inherited one hundred thousand acres of Caithness countryside. It was mostly treeless, featureless ground without proper roads, studded with treacherous bogs, unproductive land, fit only for grazing small black cattle and a few pygmy sheep. It was home to 800 or so tenant farmers, who grubbed a meagre living from the fertile margins of these profitless acres. Mostly the farmer paid his debts with corn, eggs, chickens, a pig or two. It was essentially still a feudal system, which ticked over but did not allow for improvement. Sinclair soon set about improving and enlarging this estate. In 1788 as part of this process, he bought the Langwell estate including Berriedale for £7,000 from the Duke of Sutherland.

Sinclair participated wholeheartedly in the period of great agricultural improvement in which he lived. Agriculturists had developed the technique of burning unproductive land and then enriching the soil with lime and manure, enabling lush crops to spring from ground that hitherto brought forth only a spattering of thistles. Marshes were drained; stony ground cleared of rocks; common rough grazing enclosed, fertilised and planted with succulent grasses, and new farmhouses, cottages, mills and bleaching fields created. Critically too for the straths (inland valleys) of the Langwell estate, sheep were introduced.

History seems generally to applaud Sinclair a good improving arable agriculturalist, but in his drive to make his land generate wealth, not all were fortunate. His flocks of Cheviots were dispersed across large stretches at Rumsdale, Glutt and especially Langwell, where Sinclair displaced 300 inhabitants. The Clearances are an emotive subject today, and more people (especially the descendants of those driven off the land) are outraged by them than will stick up for any paternalism on the part of the landlords. We react to such periods from the democracy and values of our own time: men like Sir John Sinclair were men of *their* time, and acted accordingly. Sinclair himself did his best: one of his favourite toasts was 'may a common become an uncommon spectacle in Caithness', but he also maintained that 'Humanity requires that those who inhabited the estate should not be driven from their ancient possessions without having some means of subsistence.' The Clearances were part of the same process known south of the border as Enclosure, which today does not generate such strong feelings – but it does seem that the Scottish Clearances were more brutal, in part because climate and terrain were that much harsher.

According to the *Old Statistical Account* entry for Latheron, submitted by the Reverend Robert Gunn in 1794, Sinclair had introduced a flock of 2,200 Cheviots to the parish by 1793.<sup>2</sup> From 1792, displaced crofters were being settled at Badbea just to the south of Berriedale, and possibly also on The Shore at Berriedale. Agriculture was backwards in the parish and the archaic form of tenure known as rig and rennet (similar to medieval strip farming) still prevailed. And, adds the clergyman, '*If they drunk more beer and less whisky it would contribute greatly to their happiness and comfort.*'

---

<sup>2</sup> Sinclair was nothing if not resourceful. In his search for a sheep breed suitable for the Highlands, he is said to have tried to introduce Spanish Merino sheep before fixing upon Cheviots. He kitted the Merinos out in specially made leather boots against sheep-rot in the damp Scottish conditions – it did not work. Another story goes that Sinclair tried to introduce nightingales to Caithness by getting his shepherds to slip nightingale eggs imported from London into robins' nests. For one brief summer, nightingales serenaded the Caithness skies – but migrated that autumn to warmer climes, never to return.



**Top: The Cheviot sheep introduced to the Langwell Estate are of a hardy breed originating in the Cheviot Hills in the Borders and thrive in bleak, windswept hills. They graze up to 3,000 feet above sea level and can be expected to live year round on the hills.**

**Below: The site of the former settlement at Badbea, two miles south of Berriedale, established by Sir John Sinclair to house those displaced from the straths. The land slopes away towards the cliffs; life must have been bleak indeed in this windswept spot. The last residents emigrated from Badbea in 1911.**



Reverend Gunn also tells us that in Latheron parish:

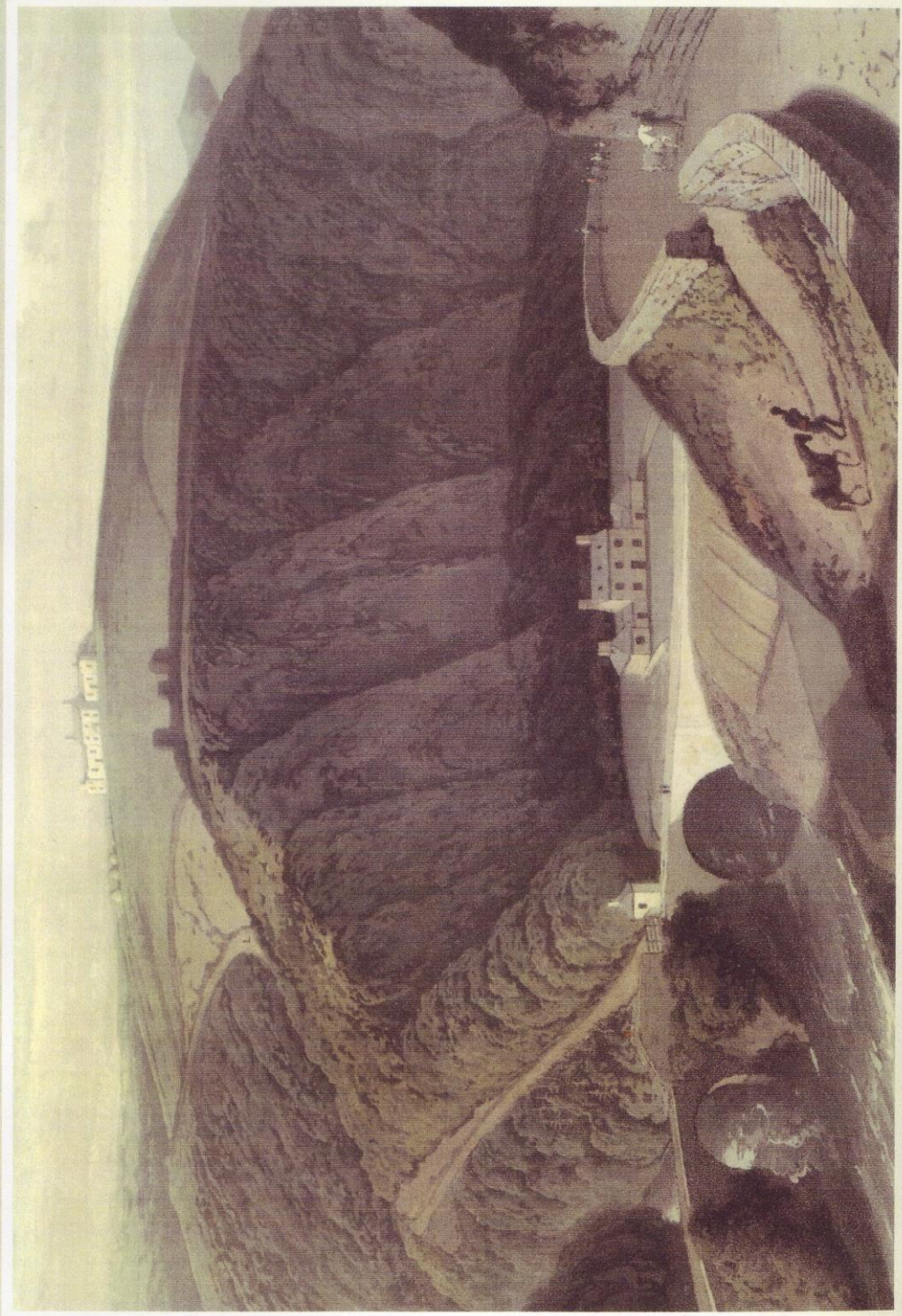
*'The cod fishing has been carried on for many years...The herring fishing was only attempted within these four years and promises to be successful. The stations are at Dunbeath and Clyth. It is commonly about the beginning or middle of July that they appear in such shoals as to induce the fishermen to shoot their nets. This fishing continues to the beginning, or even middle of September.'*

Gunn does not mention fishing at Berriedale, despite the fact that in 1769 Thomas Pennant had remarked on the reputation of the rivers at Langwell for salmon. Pennant praised the hospitality of the proprietor in 1769, a Sutherland, adding that the adjacent river brought salmon almost up to his door, and that the old castle (the ruins that stand on the headland above The Shore) was used as a lookout to observe the movement of the salmon on the approach of the shoals to freshwater as they headed inland to the spawning grounds.

In 1794, Reverend Gunn says good harbours were needed to establish a herring fishery in the parish, adding that

*'something could be done at Clyth and Berriedale for moderate expense....it would likewise be an advantage to get some fishermen to settle from other parts, and to have the present fishers confined to a house or garden, instead of labouring small tacks as they do at present, which makes the fishing but a secondary consideration to them.'*

This last comment perhaps reflects how precarious existence was, as smallholders reluctantly committed themselves to the waters in order to pay the rent.



*Berrydale, Caithness.*

**William Daniell's aquatinted engraving of the road through Berriedale in 1819. The packhorse is making its way up from The Shore; there are fine stone bridges across the Berriedale Water and Langwell River. The building in the midground is the Berriedale Inn, today's estate office. Langwell House stands above.**

There was much potential for improvement, then, for a man like Sinclair. Sinclair was a relatively paternal landlord: he tried to soften the blow to the tenants he evicted to make way for the sheep by giving them a cottage and smallholding. At Badbea, for example, 80 people from 12 families were settled. No doubt Sinclair's intentions were good, but life was very bleak. Cattle, chickens, even children had to be tethered to stop them being blown over the cliffs. The men fished from Berriedale during the season and the women walked over to gut the fish on The Shore. The village was gradually deserted by its inhabitants who dispersed across the world in search of a better life, the last resident leaving in 1911. Today, the site at Badbea is preserved in memory of the Clearances. (Caithness author Neil Gunn's novel *Butcher's Broom* provides an evocative fictional account of life during the Highland Clearances on the Duke & Duchess of Sutherland's estates; a copy will be found in the Landmark bookcase.)

Sir John Sinclair, however, did well out of his improvements. In 1811, he sold the Langwell Estate for £34,000, a four-fold increase in value in 21 years and a telling illustration of the financial benefits that accrued to the landowners during the Clearances or during these years of agricultural improvement, depending on your perspective. He sold to James Horne, an Edinburgh lawyer, whose family would own The Shore for the next 46 years.

Soon after this comes the first depiction of The Shore, by artist William Daniell. Daniell was an artist and engraver who, in 1814, set out to record the people, places, towns and villages around Britain's coastline. He completed his *magnum opus* eleven years later having travelled from Land's End to John O'Groats via the west coast, then back to Land's End via the east, gathering on his way material for a wonderful collection of 308 aquatint engravings, the last great artist's voyage through Britain before photography was invented.



*Castle of Berrydale.*

Daniell's view of The Shore, the small herring fishery in full swing as women gut the fish landed by the fifies drawn up on the shingle. Daniell omits the site of the cottages, which suggests that they were not yet built. Alternatively, perhaps he considered any earlier dwellings insufficiently picturesque for his project, since in his other pictures of fishing stations such buildings are included.

Daniell visited Caithness in 1819 as part of the Scottish leg of his voyage round the coasts of Great Britain. He travelled much of it with Richard Ayton, whose travelogue provides the words to Daniell's aquatint views. Volume IV of *Daniell's Scotland: A Voyage Round the Coast of Scotland and the Adjacent Isles*, which includes Caithness, was published in 1820 and dedicated to the Marquis of Sutherland, the figure who has gone down in history as one of the most ruthless proponent of the Highland Clearances. No mention is made of the Clearances then underway on the vast Sutherland estates, indication perhaps that the changes were considered less controversial at the time than today.

Daniell captured two views of Berriedale, one of the winding coast road and one of The Shore itself. The latter is titled 'Castle of Berrydale' and in focussing on the headland includes The Shore behind almost incidentally, showing fishing boats moored, nets (and perhaps sails) spread out to dry on the shingle, barrels filled and waiting to be filled, and herring girls up to their elbows in troughs as they gut the herring. Tantalisingly, but perhaps tellingly, the cottages' location is not included. Had there been dwellings on the foreshore in 1819, it seems highly likely that Daniell would have included them in his picture, especially if they were 'model' dwellings like The Shore Cottages.

His picture of Scotland is as a tidy, modern country; his buildings, the neat new farmhouses and settlements springing up in the Highland building boom of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is no place in his views for the shaggy-roofed crofter's cottage. Perhaps there were some on The Shore and he therefore chose to omit them; perhaps The Shore at this date was simply an easy mooring for the boats, the women walking over from Badbea to do the gutting. If there were dwellings on The Shore in 1819, building analysis, as explained below, strongly suggests that they were not the ones that survive today. What the Daniell engraving does prove is that even if activity on The Shore came to focus on salmon fishing, at this date herring fishermen did ply their work from the cove.

Here is Richard Ayton's description of the scene in this corner of Caithness:

*'One of the most pleasing changes of scene that occurred on this journey [after 'the gloomy embattled mansion, Dunbeath Castle'] was the first sight of Berrydale, looking from the road down on the two bridges; the inn with a finely wooded bank above it, and the summit of the hill crowned by the mansion belonging to Mr Horn, which commands a fine view of the Moray Firth, which formerly belonged to the venerable Sir John Sinclair, together with a landed property ranging along eight miles of sea-coast, and extending fifteen miles inland.*

*The fine salmon stream of Berrydale flows into the sea, under this castle. The glen is very beautiful, and is plentifully sprinkled with wood, though of a small kind. There were some boats returning from a good night's fishing. Each boat was manned by four men, and had from thirty to fifty cran<sup>3</sup>; the value of the cran being eleven shillings. During the season, which lasts six weeks, each boatman will earn about fifteen pounds. The beach at this moment presented a busy scene; both men and women were employed in carrying fish from the boats, and others in barrelling them.'*<sup>4</sup>

The scene is calm and perhaps picturesquely idealised: gutting was hard, smelly work and the women bound up their hands with strips of sacking to avoid cuts from their sharp knives and the herring gills, and the sting of salt.

In September of the same year, it was recorded that a fishing boat registered at Berriedale sank offshore with the loss of three lives, a tragedy of some scale in such a small community.

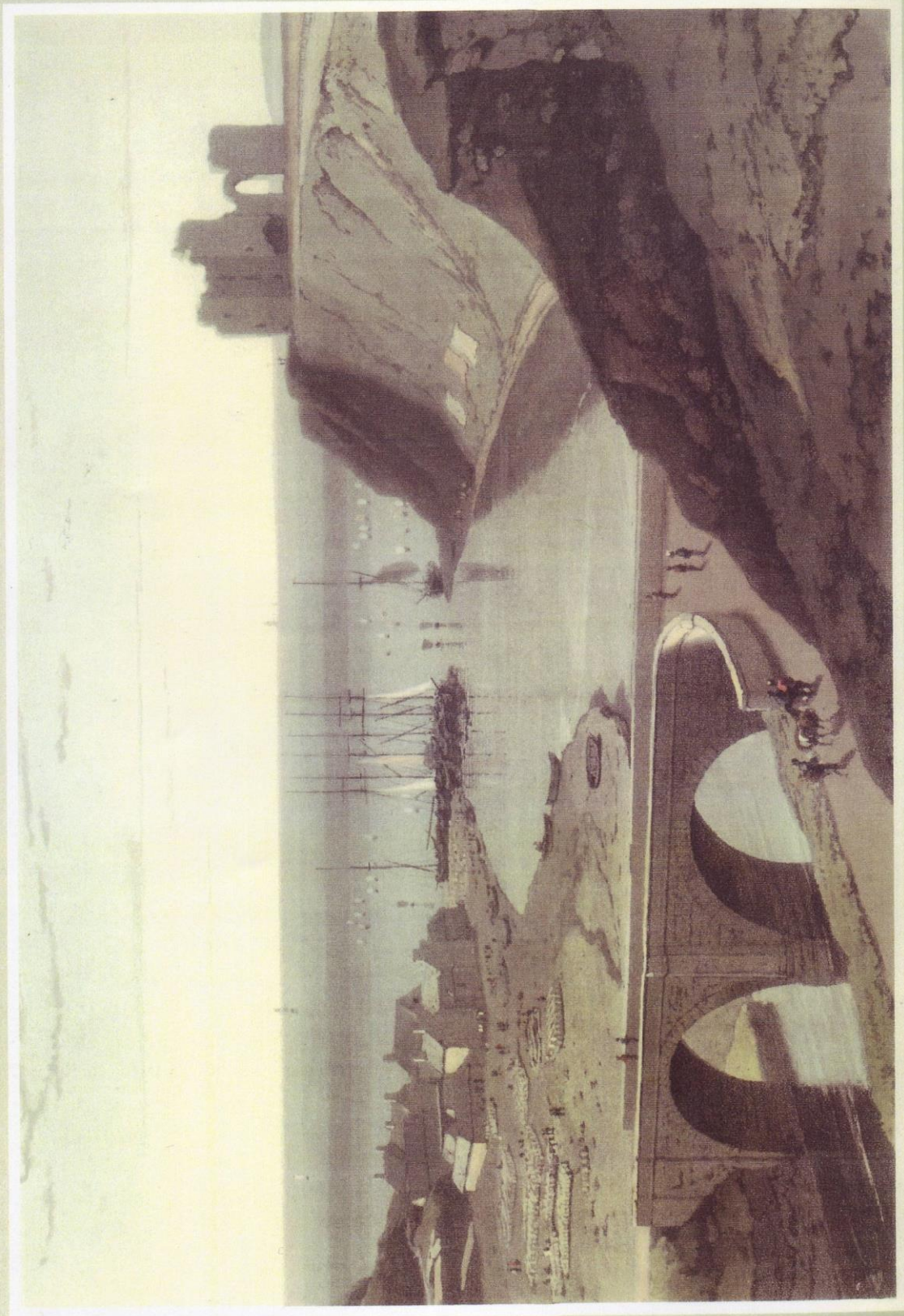
---

<sup>3</sup> A cran is the large wicker basket in which the herring were brought ashore.

<sup>4</sup> W Danniell & R Ayton, *A Voyage Round the Coast of Scotland and the Adjacent Isles*, Vol. 4 (1820), p. 261-2.



*Wick, Caithness.*



*Helmsdale, Sutherlandshire.*



Fishing at nearby Helmsdale, part of the Sutherland estates, was also well-established by now. Helped by its topography, Helmsdale developed with much greater investment and organisation than that at Langwell:

*'On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August, Mr Horn furnished a horse for continuing the tour to HELMSDALE in Sutherlandshire, which, in consequence of the bustle occasioned by the herring industry, presented a very active scene. The fishery has not been established longer than six years. ....' Though [Helmsdale is of] very recent origin, it has become a fishing station of considerable importance. It was chosen by the Marquess of Stafford as one of the eligible situations near which the small tenants upon the estate of Sutherland might be settled; and he held out to them the most substantial inducement, by erecting a pier, which has already cost 2000l, and by making the river a commodious harbour, with a view of attracting at the same time fish-curers from the south to settle here.'*

*'These munificent exertions have been attended with complete success. In the erection of curing-yards and dwelling-houses there have already been expended upwards of 12,000l. the works commenced in the year 1814, before which time the place could not boast of a single boat; nor did a house exist, nor was there a road which led thither. So rapid has been the progress of improvement at Helmsdale, that in the year 1819 there were caught 20,060 barrels of herrings, and upwards of 5246 tons of registered tons of shipping were cleared....it is a remarkably gratifying sight... to see vessels frequenting the port, and a mail coach passing through a place which but a few years ago seemed condemned by nature to sterility and desolation.'*

(Sir John Sinclair and his descendants put similar effort into developing Lybster.)

Herring and salmon fishing did not, however, sit happily together. Their seasons through the summer months overlap, and the higher value salmon, netted as they returned to their freshwater spawning grounds, were often frightened from the shore by the herring fleets.



**The fishermen set sail in small, single sail boats known as fifies. Sailing and fishing were skills many had to learn from scratch.**



**The herring lassies' work was hard and smelly, gutting as many as 40 fish a minute. Nothing was wasted: the entrails were used as fertiliser. Many were migrant workers during the season, living in hostels as they followed the fleets that followed the shoals around the coast. The lassies were renowned for scrupulous personal hygiene off duty.**

As a rule, the fisheries, whether salmon or herring, were not directly exploited by the estate owners but were let out to agents as part of the complex brokering system that underpinned the fishing industry. By 1840, the Hornes (for James's nephew Donald inherited the Langwell estate in 1831) had discontinued herring fishing from Berriedale in favour of better exploitation of the higher value salmon for which the Berriedale Water was renowned. The cessation of herring fishing from Berriedale was given as the reason for Donald Horne being able to let the Berriedale salmon fishery to Forbes, Hogarth & Co of Aberdeen for £275 in 1840. At the next, much larger fishing station to the north, Portormin (Dunbeath), where 76 herring boats were registered in 1840, the value of the salmon fishing was only £27.<sup>5</sup>

Contemporary accounts in newspapers etc suggest that salmon fishing was reasonably successful at Berriedale in the 1830s and family historians have traced at least one family living on The Shore in the early 1830s, but this is likely to have been in an earlier dwelling than the terrace. Early map evidence (a survey for a proposed turnpike in 1808 and John Thomson's county map of 1832) provides no evidence of buildings on The Shore. Perhaps Forbes, Hogarth & Co had approached Donald Horne directly for lease of the salmon fishing, technological advances in steam boats making easier the transport of salmon on ice to the lucrative markets of large cities in England and beyond.

The first estate record of The Shore Cottages comes in 1846. The 1841 census returns (taken on June 7<sup>th</sup>, significant as falling within the salmon season) do indeed record four households on 'Berriedale Shore' (these are detailed in a following chapter), two belonging to salmon fishers, one unoccupied and the fourth lived in by a millwright. At least four other heads of household in the wider village of Berriedale are recorded as salmon fishers, along with a millwright, ostler, blacksmith, innkeeper, mason, minister, schoolmaster, general merchant, tenant crofters, paupers...

---

<sup>5</sup> *National Statistical Account for Scotland*, (1840) p. 103-4.



**Salmon netting on the River Tay in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.**



**Fishing provided occupations for all generations: baiting lines, mending nets, making and mending crans and barrels.**

The numerical coincidence of four households recorded on The Shore with the number of units in the terrace suggests that they had indeed been built by 1841, the first year in which a census was taken.

It therefore seems likely that Donald Horne undertook more concerted investment into The Shore after he inherited the estate in 1831, building the terrace of cottages, bothy and storeroom and icehouse. The icehouse (of which there are many dotted along the coast) reveals the shift from the 'kitting' of fish (packing gutted fish into barrels of salt) to the supply of fresh fish kept wholesome in boxes of ice, which was cut from the lochs in winter and stored in subterranean ice houses. The storeroom was necessary to store the nets out of the short salmon season, while the bothy its first floor, which has a hearth at either end, would have been used as accommodation for seasonal workers, and to keep watch for evidence of the salmon run beginning, the turn of the tide or an improvement in the weather.

The brevity of the salmon season meant too that those who lived in the cottages had to practise alternative livelihoods, as is apparent in the account of the residents of The Shore Cottages given below. Decent dwellings were a means of attracting, and keeping, reliable fishermen on site and the row of four cottages would have exceeded the standards of existing smallholders' byre dwellings. They form part of a general move towards 'improved cottages' through the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Highlands as traditional turf- peat- or heather-thatched dwellings with central hearths, little more than hovels, gave way to well-constructed buildings with chimneys and slate roofs. The land agent Mr Huskinson (see below) was shocked by the 40 or so herring fishermen's cottages he observed elsewhere along the coast, describing them as '*miserable Huts of stone thatched with Peat and in great dilapidation.*'



Model dwellings to attract and keep fishermen, ice house and storeroom with bothy above – everything a modern salmon station of the 1840s required. The photo at the top shows The Shore after 1935, when No. 4, the end cottage, was extended. Note the little outshot at the end of the terrace, which has the carefully laid pebble floor that survives today.



A traditionally turf-roofed house near Lybster, of a sort superseded with the advent of Welsh slate, both an affordable alternative to stone tiles and an improvement on vegetal roofing materials.



**The Berriedale icehouse (its interior of well-dressed stone with carefully laid pebble floor, as shown above) is typical of many built in Caithness in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The example below is in Helmsdale, built in 1824. While larger, it is not dissimilar in form. Ice would be harvested in winter from the lochs inland.**

In 1856, Donald Horne sold the Langwell Estate for £90,000 to the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland, whose main seat was at Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had fallen in love with the Highlands on their first visit in 1842, and bought Balmoral in 1848. The Highlands became instantly fashionable among the British aristocracy, a trend the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland, otherwise a solitary and eccentric man,<sup>6</sup> was perhaps seeking to emulate. In March 1858, the Duke commissioned a report on the estate from one of his Nottinghamshire agents, Thomas Huskinson, to provide both an inventory and a list of recommended improvements. It also provides a valuable commentary on the estate at the time.

The report suggests that there had already been a movement towards more recreational use of the Langwell Estate. One of the points made by Huskinson was the potential for conflict between the exploitation of the salmon through netting from the fishing station, and the sport the fish provided for recreational rod fishing on the rivers further inland. The salmon fishery is still let to 'Mr Hogarth of Aberdeen' although its value has dropped to £200 from the £275 recorded in 1840.

*The salmon fishing has been hitherto confined to Net Fishing at the Bay, in the Mouth of the Langwell River, and cruives or traps have been placed in the streams to intercept all Fish ascending the stream.*

*Fish in large quantities have thus been caught and after being packed in ice in the Ice house in the Bay, sent by steamer to the London market.*

*The salmon fishers are a hardy race; but a serious drawback of their occupation is that it lasts half through the year only, and unfortunately it is available only during the months in which other kinds of out-door labour are abundant, and it is suspended during those months when other kinds of work also fail.<sup>7</sup>*

---

<sup>6</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland is perhaps best remembered for his network of underground tunnels and ballroom at Welbeck Abbey, commissioned in part as a work creation scheme for his estate workers in a time of economic hardship. The Langwell Estate has been owned by the Dukes of Portland ever since.

<sup>7</sup> Langwell Estate records.



It was therefore essential for both landowner and fishing agent that reliable labour was retained for the netting season as the fish returned to spawn, which then ran from February to August. When, as at Berriedale, topography prohibited suitable land being available for smallholdings, other work had to be found on the estate out of season – salmon fishers were not migrants in the way that the herring fleets and lassies followed the herring shoals around the coastline. However, Huskinson's report went on to explore how the recreational fishing might be improved at Langwell by removing the cruives.

Huskinson discussed the topic with Hogarth of Aberdeen, and seemed quite relaxed that such measures might entail a reduction in the value of the station lease of £60-80. He makes no mention of The Shore Cottages, nor of the impact such reduction in salmon netting might have on the inhabitants' livelihood.

Historic photos make clear, however, that some level of salmon netting carried on from The Shore until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The picturesque qualities of The Shore also continued to be appreciated, and around 1900 the 6<sup>th</sup> Duchess had a small timber structure erected overlooking the river mouth and the shore. It was known as the 'Duchess's Tea House' and survived some decades until it was swept away in a landslide. The 6<sup>th</sup> Duke carried out a number of lasting improvements to the estate. He built the row of cottages called Portland Terrace across the river in 1902, and put up a footbridge around the same time – until then, the only access to The Shore had been the steep track leading up behind the cottages to the main road, just as depicted in Daniell's engraving.

The last family to live in The Shore Cottages was an estate gardener, Mr Thompson, who was born in 1907. He lived No. 4 with his wife and three daughters, Hilda, Jenny and Chrissie. By 1950, salmon fishing had declined on The Shore to a single boat, from thirteen at its height. By the 1960s, all four cottages were left empty, and dereliction all too soon took hold. Their isolated setting, even if reached by the innovation of the footbridge rather than the steep scramble from



**Berriedale, around 1910. A footbridge is by now in place, together with Portland Terrace, built in 1902. Note the Duchess's teahouse, halfway down the cliff and carefully positioned overlooking The Shore. Also just visible are the two early 19<sup>th</sup>-century navigation towers, also known as the Duke's Follies or the Candlesticks, to help the herring boats orientate themselves along the shoreline. One has a recessed seat looking out to sea. In the foreground is the house for the Superintendent of the salmon fishing station. The first mention of this house in the census comes in 1861.**

the road, made them unappealing for the age of the car and not cost effective for the estate to refurbish. Left empty, decay inevitably soon set in.

Then late in 2005, Landmark received a letter from our then Regional Property Manager for Scotland, Adrienne Wilson. 'I wonder if the enclosed is of any interest to you as a possible future Landmark?', she wrote. 'I know the cottages themselves are probably of little architectural interest, but I think they're of some historical interest, illustrating as they do a time when every available harbour was pressed into use to land "the silver darlings."' <sup>8</sup> Adrienne's partner, David Brennan's mother had come from Dunbeath. David had spent holidays in Caithness as a child and remembered playing on the beach at Berriedale around the cottages on The Shore. Visiting again, he had been shocked at their plight. David and Adrienne's instincts were sound. Though humble, The Shore Cottages reflect the value Landmark has always placed on the unremarkable, as it gains meaning in its representation of a lost way of life.

Today, the heritable right to fish The Shore still belongs to the Welbeck estate as owner of the land adjacent to it.<sup>9</sup> From the 1950s, Mr Jude Jappy of Helmsdale leased this right and would catch about 4,000 fish during the season. In 1981, the right reverted to the estate but by then labour was short. Bag nets, which only had to be checked twice a day, replaced the traditional method of casting nets from boats. Today, salmon are netted at Berriedale only for two weeks in July when 60 fish are landed for Langwell House so the family has smoked and fresh salmon, and gifts for estate tenants. Today's rod season runs from 11<sup>th</sup> Feb to 31<sup>st</sup> Oct, but has never been run commercially by the estate (and is not available to Landmarkers).

---

<sup>8</sup> 'The silver darlings' are of course the herring, a phrase taken by Neil Gunn as the title of perhaps his best known novel about life in Caithness at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>9</sup> The title Duke of Portland died with the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke in 1990 due to a lack of male heirs. The estate passed to the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke's daughter, Lady Anne Cavendish-Bentinck, and at her death in December 2008, to her nephew, William Parente. The title 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Portland has meanwhile passed to the actor Tim Bentick – well known for playing David Archer in the eponymous Radio 4 series – whose father was sixth cousin of the last Duke.

## The Inhabitants of The Shore Cottages



**Names carved by the entrance doors of two of the cottages – 'A Bruce' and J (or A?) Robertson.**

In the case of dwellings as humble as The Shore Cottages, it feels particularly important to capture at least the names of those who lived there. The first mention of The Shore Cottages (or Houses) in the Langwell Estate records comes in 1846, when the tenants of the four cottages were listed as William Sutherland, Andrew Buchan, Jim Sinclair and Annie Bruce. Before this, William Sutherland is known to have been living inland on the Berriedale Strath. Perhaps he was 'cleared', or perhaps life in the well-constructed Shore Cottages was preferable to his croft. It is possible that Annie Bruce was the 'A Bruce' who left her name carved beside the entrance door to one of the cottages, along with 'J Robertson' beside another.

In 1841, the first national British census was conducted, to be repeated every ten years thereafter. These censuses are now available on-line up to 1901, and an invaluable resource for historians. In **1841**, just four households are recorded on Berriedale Shore in the Latheron enumeration district (and a household is probably, but not necessarily, the same as a dwelling).

This is at least indicative proof that the terrace could have existed by 1841. The date of the census, 7<sup>th</sup> June, is significant as falling within the salmon netting season, which ran from February to August, as indeed did all subsequent censuses.

William Leslie is listed as the head of the first household on The Shore, a 21-year old salmon fisher, living under the same roof as (or perhaps he was lodging with?) Anne Sutherland, aged 30, unmarried, with Catharine, 25 and Jamesina Dixon, 11 months. Angus Sutherland comes next, aged 30 and a salmon fisher, with wife Rose and three young daughters. Next is William Sutherland, aged 40, also salmon fisher, with wife Ann, five children and a female servant, and finally George Fraser, aged 30, a millwright, with wife Isabella and two young daughters. That salmon fishers were recorded living in The Shore gives credence to the theory that the cottages were initially built to attract and keep such men.

On March 31st **1851**, Anne Sutherland is still in residence, now recorded as Laundress, with her daughter Jamesina, now ten, and her brother James, a fisherman. However, the Macauley family is now recorded first in the row, William (fisherman and tailor) with his wife Elizabeth (helpfully a seamstress, suggesting a thriving cottage industry outside the salmon season) and their four young children. Angus & Rose Sutherland are also still in residence, now with seven children. George Fraser has moved to Berriedale Mill and been replaced by John Miller's household, a corn kilnsman, with his wife and four children.

On April 8th **1861**, four years after the acquisition of the Langwell estate by the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Portland, Robert Miller, aged 52, salmon fisher, is present with wife, daughter and two sisters-in-law. George Mackay, a labourer, has also moved in with his mother and sister. There are also Alexander Robertson, aged 43, joiner, with wife and four children; Angus Bruce, aged 73.



Scenes from 19<sup>th</sup>-century  
Caithness.

Chelsea pensioner and perhaps the most likely candidate for having carved his name at the door, living with his wife, daughter, daughter-in-law and son Joseph, a salmon fisher; and John Miller, aged 58, a labourer, with wife and adult son. There is also an additional house listed as 'Berriedale Salmon' where Alexander Tough, Superintendent of Salmon was in residence. This could either have been the bothy, or more likely the house overlooking the footbridge.

On April 2nd **1871**, seven households are recorded on The Shore, and it is harder than usual to be clear who is living where. Perhaps the bothy was also called into use as dwellings. In order of record (and it seems logical that the enumerators would start from the far end of the terrace and work back), we find Donald Sutherland, a 39-year old journeyman shoemaker resident with his wife Janet and adult son, James. The next record is of Adam McPherson, a salmon fisher, with his wife Barbara and 14 year-old daughter Margeret, whose occupation is given as dressmaker, and seven younger siblings. That a family of ten could live in one of these little cottages, before their extension, gives pause for thought. George Mackay, now 66, is still in residence with his sister, but both are reduced to the status of 'pauper.' Next comes another pauper, 77-year old Margaret Forbes (could she have been living with the Mackays?). The Robertson family of five is still in residence, as is Angus Bruce, now 83 and looked after by his 45-year old daughter Christina. Joseph Bruce, 37-year old salmon fisher, is recorded next with his wife and six children. Finally, John Miller, by now a 68-year old labourer, is listed as still in residence with his wife Janet. The presence of a relatively high proportion of elderly and poor occupants on The Shore suggests that this marginal area was perhaps being used for the estate needy.

The first four of the nine households recorded on The Shore for April 4<sup>th</sup> **1881** are remarkable for how little change there had been in the decade (as well as the longevity of some of the residents). They plausibly relate to the Shore Cottages terrace. John and Jessie Miller are still in occupation (in a dwelling with three windowed rooms – cottage No 4?), their 30-year-plus presence on The Shore witness to the stability of life on the estate at this period. Joseph and Margaret

Bruce are also still in occupation with seven children and a pauper sister of 55, all living in two windowed rooms (No 3?). Joseph's occupation is now listed as agricultural labourer rather than salmon fisher, perhaps suggesting a reduction in salmon fishing from The Shore.

The Robertsons come next, in two windowed rooms (No 2?). They are followed by another joiner, George Sutherland, with wife and a daughter, and then by George and Jane Mackay also still living on The Shore. As the Macakys and these Sutherlands are both listed having only one windowed room each, we may wonder whether No. 1 is sheltering two households, one room each. The only salmon fisher then on The Shore is listed next (so perhaps living in the bothy?), James Sutherland, son of Donald Sutherland, who is a general labourer. The next three dwellings each have six windowed rooms, suggesting that the (former?) Superintendent's house may now been joined by the other house today known as The Haven (or one on its site) plus one more. Alexander Henderson, clerk, lives with an unmarried servant, Margaret Sutherland, and then comes a Sutherland family, James, a farm servant, with his wife, seven children and two adult lodgers, a carpenter and a plumber. The last household belongs to John Armstrong, 46-year old shepherd, with wife and eight children, the eldest of whom was a gamekeeper. This is the first sign that the sheep and recreational estate activity also generated employment for those living on The Shore.

On April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1891, Donald Sutherland is listed first on The Shore, now aged 71, with his grandson Donald (no mention now of his ?son, James the salmon fisher). Spinster Christina Bruce now has one windowed room in the dwelling of Janet Thomson, a stocking maker, with Janet's daughter Annie, a dressmaker, and her two young sons. There is a different Sutherland household, a 34-year old crofter called James with wife and four young sons. Patriarch Joseph Bruce is still in residence, with five children and a two-year old granddaughter who is a Sutherland. Next comes 35-year old groom George Mackay, with his wife Isabella and their four children. Finally, the large Armstrong family is still in



residence, with two adult sons who were now gamekeepers and another, a shepherd like his father. This now seems a somewhat complicated, multi-generation household, with an unmarried daughter with a 9 month old baby, and a married daughter with two young children also in residence, to give twelve individuals now living under one roof (we can only hope they had the – former? – superintendent's house!)

Six households are listed on March 31<sup>st</sup> **1901** (the latest census available online). James Sinclair, ploughman, is listed first, with wife and two young sons. Joseph and Margaret Bruce are still on The Shore, now with just three adult children at home (a 'carter on the farm', a housemaid and a blacksmith's apprentice) and an

8 year old grandson. There is yet another Sutherland household, under cattleman Robert, with his wife Maria and her mother Abigail McDonald, and young niece. Ploughman Alexander Gunn then presents the first example of another common Caithness name, with his wife and baby daughter. Listed as the next household are four unrelated salmon fishermen, which, as the fifth household listed, plausibly suggests that they were living upstairs in the bothy. The last head of household listed in this census as living on The Shore is now James Sutherland, an agricultural labourer, with his 39-year-old wife Charlotte and nine children ranging from 14 years to two months old – another large family, perhaps replacing the Armstrongs in the house across the Berriedale Water from Portland Terrace.

As well as the snapshots of estate occupations provided by the censuses, the other very striking feature is the stability of residency, no doubt helped by the continuity of ownership and management of the Langwell Estate. The vast majority of the individuals listed throughout these sixty years were born in Latheron parish, and most also ended their lives there. Living on The Shore for 20 plus years seems the norm: Joseph Bruce, for example, appears as living there for at least forty years. Families all pile in together, absorbing the unmarried or

widowed women with their offspring and sheltering elderly relations in time of need.

To bring the roll call to within living memory, Janet Mowat, who now lives in Glasgow and was 89 in 2012 when the cottages re-opened after restoration, grew up in the cottages with her parents and elder sister Georgina. Her father worked as a stable hand on the estate while her mother looked after the two girls, living next to Sinclair and Bruce families.

'I lived at the cottages up until my teenage years when I left in 1945 to work at an army laundry in Wick, before I was sent to Glasgow, but I loved growing up there. Me and my sister had a wonderful childhood, growing up in the cottages and I have many happy memories playing in the countryside with the other children...Local people had to depend on a grocer's van and a butcher's van that used to visit once a week...There was no electricity and paraffin lamps were used. All tenants got a supply of wood and peat to keep them warm in winter – it would be wheeled across the connecting rope-bridge to the cottages.

'Often, Berriedale Braes were blocked with snow and we would get our sledges out and slide down the hairpins in the road.'

Janet's fondest memories were of the visits of the Duke and Duchess of Portland to the estate, when Berriedale would be full of visitors. The Duke and Duchess would visit the primary school and give each of the fourteen pupils an extravagant gift. Janet still treasures an oak workbox they gave to her, which she now uses as a jewellery box.

Life cannot have been easy by today's standards, but whatever changes and increases in mobility of population were occurring elsewhere, right up until living memory, life in this small corner of Caithness seems stable and largely predictable, and conducive to long life spans that might have been envied by those living in the cities and mill towns.

Building analysis of The Shore Salmon Station



**The Shore Cottages before repair.**



**Interiors before restoration. Note the wooden partitions between the two principal rooms (top), and the matchboard wall lining put up in the 1884.**

## Building analysis of The Shore Fishing Station

These notes draw on Andrew Wright's analysis of the buildings, carried out in Spring 2011 (an initial phase of work had been carried out the previous summer to make the cottages weathertight).

### Icehouse, storeroom and bothy

This group of buildings on The Shore is not only an interesting survival of a salmon fishing station, but also unusual for the integration of dwellings with more functional buildings.

Photographic evidence from the 1950s suggests that their original roof was of West Highland slate, used extensively in Latheron and Wick parishes thanks both to the accessibility of the east coast harbours and to the opening of the Caledonian canal in 1822. The ridge was finished in yellow clay, traditional in Caithness. The slates were replaced later with modern asbestos cladding, but examples of the slate remain on the dormers. The bargeboards, lead ridge and four-paned sash and casement windows were probably added in the 1900s when Portland Terrace was being constructed. The walls were probably harled at the same time.

It is possible that the icehouse and the storehouse/bothy were originally separate structures, joined to give additional covered space at the entrance to the icehouse as a despatch room. The east pitch of the roof of this single storey link, which appears on the 1871 OS map, is clad in stone slate indigenous to more northerly Caithness parishes, from quarries that operated only in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rear slope is clad in large Caithness stone slabs known locally as 'shed covers' laid flush. These too were only transported to the immediate area in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**The storeroom with bothy above, with the ice house behind linked by a small additional building.**

The gables of the storehouse and bothy are crowstepped, unlike the flush slated verges of the cottages. Crowsteps are more usually associated with 18<sup>th</sup> than 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings. It is not impossible, therefore, that this building predates the others on the site, although similar crowsteps can be seen on a salmon bothy at Portormin, so that they may have been a traditional feature for the purpose. Sandstone corbels are built out from the face of the wall to support a timber bargeboard, a highly unusual feature for Caithness found usually only on the Duke of Sutherland's estate (it will be remembered that Sir John Sinclair bought the Langwell Estate from the Duke in 1788 and the two estates remained contiguous).

The icehouse, built half into the face of the cliff in traditionally subterranean fashion for greater insulation, is a high domed structure, its inner faces finished in well-dressed stone, once limewashed. The floor is of carefully laid beach pebbles.

### The Shore Cottages

As originally built, the terrace consisted of four identical, two-roomed cottages, with a door and two windows to the front, a single window to the rear and a sleeping area partitioned between the two rooms. No. 1 The Shore faithfully retains these original dimensions.

The hypothesis emerged during building analysis, and was confirmed through the works on site, that the floor levels, roofs and wallheads of the cottages had been raised at some point, probably after inundation during exceptionally high tides. The cottages seem to have had a comprehensive internal refurbishment at the same time. That this included the fitting of matchboard panelling, was proved by the discovery of 'Magnus Ganson / joiner / Berrrydale / 10<sup>th</sup> February 1884' scribbled in pencil on the rear of one of these panels, providing proof of significant intervention in the fabric at this time.

The fact that the estate was prepared to go to the considerable expense involved in such a reworking suggests not only that the tenants' life was consistently rendered miserable by inundation, but also that the fishing station was still sufficiently financially attractive to justify the investment. The timing also fits with the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke's inheritance in 1879 as a philanthropic young man concerned to improve his tenants' lot.

There has been much debate about what the original roof finish of the terrace of cottages might have been; with some holding that they would have been thatched. This seems unlikely for such 'model' cottages built around 1840, as seems likely from the documentary evidence.<sup>10</sup> It is far more likely that they were originally roofed in West Highland slates, matching the roof of the storehouse, and fragments of which can be seen used as pinnings in the external walls. Perhaps the original slates were re-dressed and re-used when the roof was raised in the 1880s, but perhaps they were already reaching the end of their useful life by then, since around 1905 the estate reroofed the cottages in Welsh slates as part of a programme to replace the old thatched roofs throughout the parish.

The external walls were originally limewashed, as is clear from early photos, but this had all been washed away. The core of the walls is a clay-bound earth mortar. This reduced the amount of lime mortar required, which is applied sparingly and only to the face of the wall, on which there may have been a thin 'whisper harl' that had also worn away over time. Pinnings of stone had been carefully inserted to establish the course lines and infill the wider masonry joints, and in a few areas broken brick had been inserted, probably during later repairs. In both phases, the stone from the same quarry seems to have been used, matching the brown seams of calcareous flagstone exposed at the river gorge.

In front of the cottages, a sea wall was built of large stones laid vertically, with a battered face as was traditional in harbour construction but left unrendered.

---

<sup>10</sup> Dan Maudlin's recent survey of Highland buildings entitled *Modern Homes for Modern People: Identifying & Interpreting the Highland Building Boom 1775-1825*, found that of 408 new built houses and cottages surveyed,



Between this and the cottages ran a broad path, cobbled with pebbles from the beach. This rear path had been filled in, presumably at the time when the cottages were lifted, and although it was revealed during the works, the changes in floor and window sill heights meant that the levels could no longer be made to work satisfactorily. Another path ran along the rear of the cottages, and this has now been cleared.

The smooth render at the door and window jambs was also a traditional finish, here carried out in the 1880s in Portland cement, and also limewashed. The front doors had been painted in a range of colours over the years – apple green, dark green, brown and maroon were all noted.

The quality of the masonry is so good in both principal phases of the work that it is hard to make out from the exterior of the cottages that they were once 300-400mm lower than they are now. Only close examination revealed that the window cills had been lifted, the original 12-paned sash and case windows probably re-set in the new openings. The change was more noticeable internally once the decaying matchboard panelling had been stripped, since the thin coating of lime or clay plaster with a pigmented limewash used as the original finish survived. As part of the raising of levels, the wallheads were lifted and it seems the gables (weakened by carrying the flues) were largely rebuilt.

The floor levels were correspondingly raised in the 1880s, the primary stone slabs being covered with suspended timber floors in the principal room of each dwelling, with early Portland cement used for the other room. In one of the cottages, the gaps between the primary slabs were found to be filled decoratively with pebbles from the beach.

The interiors of the cottages appear to have been very similar, apart from some variation in their fire-grates and ranges, which may perhaps have been left at the

---

even at this earlier period, every single one was roofed in slates. Traditional thatched roofs were therefore already

discretion of the tenants (each cottage had a small grate in one room and a larger hearth to hold a range in the second). The relining of the walls was of high quality in both materials and workmanship – in more remote areas, tenants would reline the walls with whatever came to hand, including rough sawn boards or even re-used fish boxes, papered over with wallpaper or even newspaper to reduce the draughts. The Langwell Estate sawmill also started up in the same period so the sawn boards probably came from the estate. Only the reveals to the entrance doors were left unlined, where a dense cement render was used instead at this point of maximum danger of water ingress. Internal doors were simple lined and ledged cottage doors, with simple double-beaded plain

architraves. If there were ever traditional box beds in the cottages, these were not reinstated when the walls were lined.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Duke's concern for his tenants' welfare also extended to the construction of two pairs of privy sheds, one on a plateau behind No 4, the other more conveniently close to the south end-gable of the terrace. At No 3, an extension was built off the rear wall in the 1880s, for which the rear retaining wall had to be taken down and rebuilt where the extension jutted out. The incorporation of the same projecting corbels and bargeboard detail in this gable indicates that the extension was indeed introduced at the time of the 1880s rebuilding – to have introduced it later (for example during the 1919 re-roofing) would have caused unnecessary disturbance to the wallhead and roof structure.

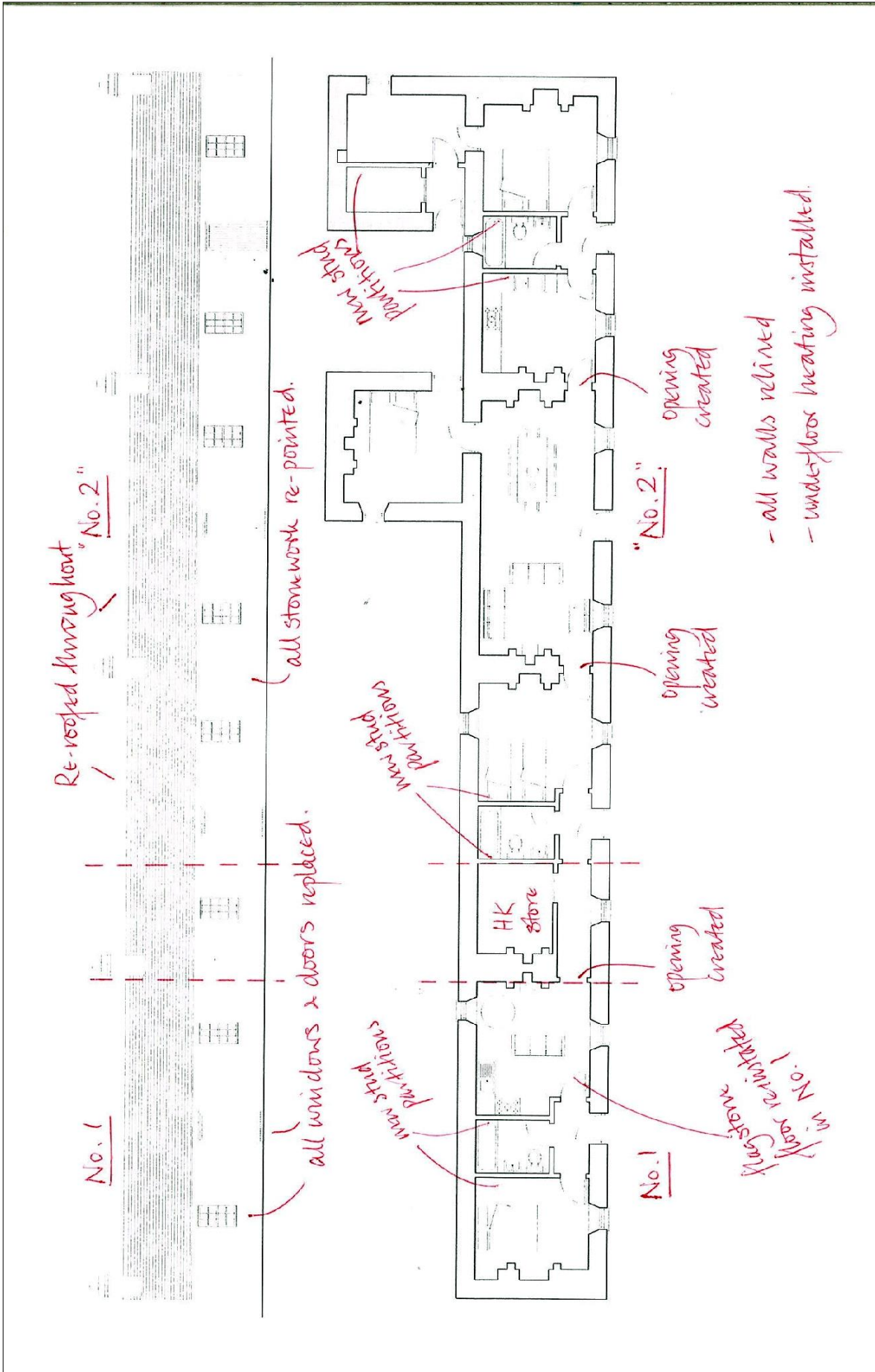
Entry to the extension was formed through a former window opening in the original rear wall, and the walls were all lined with wood panelling as elsewhere. The end room of the extension was given a hearth and suspended timber floor and a door to the rear.

The extension to No. 4 was erected in the 1930s and by 1935, during the Thompson family's occupation of the cottage and according to an early photo registered in 1935. The cut into the bank at the rear for No. 3's extension was extended and built in matching flagstone. Although the walls of the extension are built solid without any cavity, also of traditional flagstone, the construction of No. 4's extension is more obviously modern, using dense cement mortar and a wet dash cement harl externally. Modern engineering bricks were used for the door and window reveals and the tiled fireplace in the added bedroom is typically 1930s. The rest of the cottage was modernised at the same time, replacing some of the wall linings with cement render.

At some stage there was an outbuilding built into the cliff face at the green to the rear, the green probably being used to dry clothes. A further single storey lean-to was built against the north end gable wall (since lost), with a floor, uncovered during works and meticulously laid out in small beach pebbles to form both drainage channels leading towards the beach and a decorative pattern. A blocked-in opening or hearth in the cottage end-wall suggest this may have been used for a laundry copper. Steps with large flagstone treads led up to the green.

Somewhere there would have been an ashpit, although the fuel was probably peat.

The greatest risk to the cottages' survival once they had been left empty was posed by the loss of roof slates and consequent decay to the roof structure, internal finishes and partitions. The external doors survived, but the windows had been smashed and only some of the frames and sashes were still in situ. All the fire-grates and ranges had been badly damaged. Yet despite their exposed site, the core structure of the cottages was still remarkably sound after fifty years of dereliction and this gave us heart that they could still be rescued.



## The Restoration of The Shore Cottages

Careful thought went into how best to adapt this simple row of cottages to Landmark use. Should we combine all four to enable a single party to have The Shore to themselves? Or should we keep each to its original dimensions, perhaps jeopardising financial viability of trying to let four units on a single site? We knew that the original form of Nos. 3 and 4 had already been altered, and so finally decided that we would preserve No. 1's floorplan intact so that the original tiny dimensions could be experienced as one Landmark, while combining the remaining three to provide a Landmark for up to six. While in the past larger families had lived in single units, for modern holiday use this was felt to be the largest number that could comfortably co-exist.

As always, we faced a very steep fundraising target for the restoration of The Shore Cottages, and such was their plight that we took the decision in 2010 to make a start on the roof to make the cottages weathertight and prevent irremediable collapse. In the summer, Stuart Leavy and Carl Dowding of Landmark's direct labour team moved on site, to do much of the work themselves and supervise local subcontractors where needed. They had both had experience working on our Lundy buildings, and so were used to dealing with maritime conditions. The early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Welsh slates were carefully removed, in the expectation that we would be able to salvage some 30-40% for re-use.

This proved impossible and so with the blessing of the local conservation officer, we re-used similar slates from a recently demolished local hotel. Many of the rafters were found to have rotten feet, suggesting that this first phase of work had been undertaken in the nick of time to avert collapse. New rafters were introduced where needed and the roof was then fully weatherboarded before the slates salvaged from the hotel were re-hung. Wooden louver shutters were made for all the windows to allow the buildings to breathe but prevent further water ingress, and then the site was shut down for the winter while fundraising continued.



**Phase 1: re-roofing to make the cottages weathertight for the winter of 2010. Rafters were salvaged wherever possible, but many were found to be rotten. It proved impossible to re-use the slates, so comparable ones salvaged from a local hotel were used instead, shown stacked here.**

By early 2011, we had reached our funding target. The Landmark direct labour team procurement approach for Phase 1 had been so successful that it was decided that should be the route for the whole project, and Carl and Stuart moved back up north in March 2011. The estate gave us permission to use the storeroom, which served both in its original purpose and as site hut, while the ice house became a joinery workshop.

Site access and delivery of materials across the river was a major issue to resolve. We considered a helicopter, quad bike, landing craft and temporary bridge, but finally Stuart drew on his Lundy experience. With additional advice from a structural engineer, through the autumn of 2011 he designed and built a simple timber barge with four jablite-filled hulls. This was tethered to a line fixed to anchor points resined into the bedrock. The barge, promptly christened the Berriedale Venture, could only be used at high tide when the river basin was full, and at other times was dragged up onto the beach and tethered to a couple of ton bags of beach fill. Its maximum payload was 2 tons, although in practice it was never used for more than a ton at a time, which worked best in terms of manpower and subsequent transporting of the materials up to the cottages.

In May, we discovered the original path level outside the front door of No. 4, some 500mm below today's ground level. There was discussion about whether we could reinstate this level throughout, but decided that it was not practical for accessibility and internal levels (the wonderful views from the lifted windows would have been severely compromised). In the event, it was also found that the path did not survive in any case along its full length. The later decision to form steps between the original ground level and the today's level acknowledges the existence of the earlier surface.

We were also pleased to discover the cobbled surface of the path along the back of the cottages, beneath another half metre of topsoil, dug out by hand – but this did scupper the originally planned drainage routes.



**Top: Roof felt was laid over the boarding for maximum protection and the slates fixed on top. Below: the Berriedale Venture, Stuart Leavy's solution for transporting materials to site across the Berriedale Water.**



After consultation with the building regulations officer, and careful placing of rodding positions in case of any future difficulties, the drainage was rerouted through the buildings. We also discovered the pebble floor beneath the former lean-to at the north end, slim pebbles carefully laid edge-on to direct drainage away from the building. Some kind of washing or laundering use seems most likely for this outshot.

In June 2011, we addressed the question of the footbridge. The structural engineers we had consulted initially had proposed wholesale replacement, at considerable cost. The Estate also had reservations about the erection of a new bridge, likely to be considerably more visually intrusive for compliance with modern new-build standards. Mike Tough from A F Cruden of Inverness came to advise on both barge and footbridge, and after thorough assessment, decided that the existing footbridge was still fully serviceable.



**An original step to the front door and the raising of the threshold.**

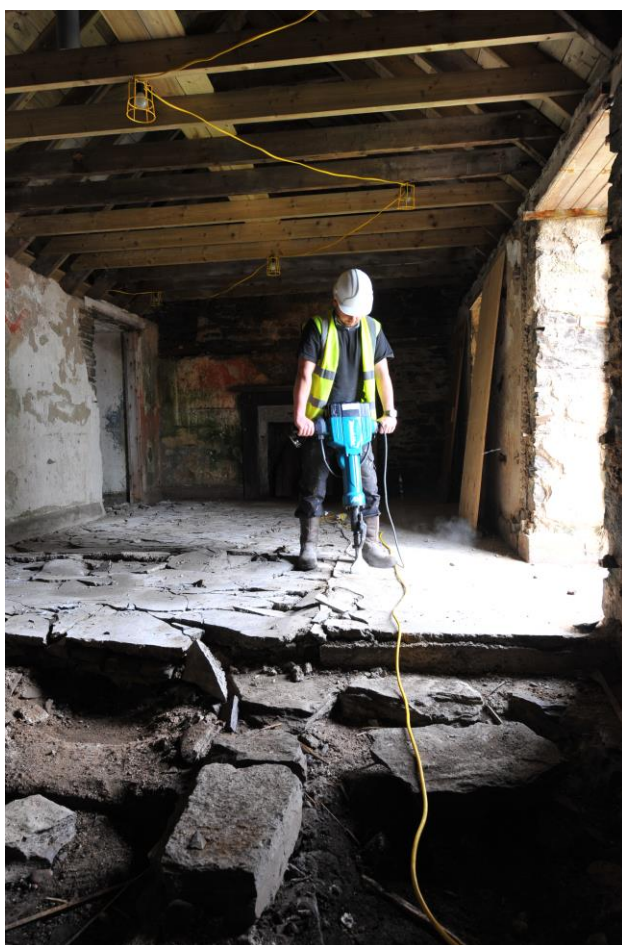


**Becky Little advises on repointing techniques. In many places, the lime mortar had been washed out so that the earth mortar that formed the core of the wall had in turn leached out, leaving large voids. These were filled with lime and filling stones.**

During repair of the walls, Becky Little of Little & Davie Construction advised on re-pointing style and technique to reflect the original. She proposed a 'striking back' technique instead of the more usual stippling of the lime (which brings the fine aggregates to the surface). This approach proved a good match to the original pointing and was used throughout the building. The original lime mortar was analysed to find the best sand to use as aggregate, which turned out to be that from a local source, Spittle Quarry. Becky also directed local conservation stonemason George Gunn who carried out most of the repointing and masonry repairs. The original core of the walls was formed of earth mortar, and where pointing had failed, the earth had leached away, leaving sizeable voids in places. The worst areas had to be rebuilt, and we filled larger cavities with lime mortar and filling stones rather than earth mortar.

Historically, the cottages were always limewashed externally. We carried out various limewash trials through the summer and it rapidly became clear that limewash would not adhere to the lichen covered walls. Leaving the cottages unlimewashed would have been historically inaccurate and also leave their porous stonework vulnerable to renewed decay. After trials with a weak bleach solution and a bristle brush, it was found that a pressure hose was the best solution to remove the lichen, before the application of several layers of traditional white limewash.

Inside, both the concrete and the rotting suspended timber floors were lifted in preparation for the installation of the underfloor heating. The timber floors were found to be set on sleeper walls that were mostly reused stone flags from the original floor beneath. Typically, the flags covered the two main rooms of each cottage, with a gap in the middle where the original sleeping area would have been (which might suggest there were originally box beds).



**Lifting the later concrete floors to reveal the original flagstones below, many of which were of massive thickness.**

**Note too the limewash/skim up to the original ceiling height only, the bare masonry indicating the height of the lift added to the cottages in 1884, when matchboard panelling was introduced.**

Most of the quite extensive areas of the original floors that remained were already damaged. As many of the flags were salvaged as possible, but sadly only enough survived intact for the floor of No. 1, in keeping with its presentation as a single fisherman's cottage to its original dimensions.<sup>11</sup> The flagstone floor brought its own problems however, as we had envisaged working off a lower level than they were set for the underfloor heating system. Their overall thickness, and indeed the variations in thickness, were also problematic and several had to be thinned slightly despite the underfloor heating firm providing us with a detail to allow the use of thicker slabs than usual over the heating elements in No. 1.

In the other three cottages, wherever areas of primary slabs remained intact but damaged, they have been left in situ with a sand blinding and the new floor slab and underfloor heating system was built up from that.

---

<sup>11</sup> No. 2's floor was initially relaid in suspended timber, to replicate the changes in the 1880s. See the updated following this section for the reason modern Caithness flags have since been laid to replace them.



**The original flagstone floor revealed. Some had been lifted to form the sleepers for the suspended timber floors inserted into the principal rooms in the 1880s. Sadly, the original flags were too uneven and patchy to serve as the floor to the larger Landmark, but those flags that were serviceable have been used to recreate such a floor in No. 1, which retains the original dimensions and layout of a single cottage.**

**Under the floor of No. 3, we found a battered woman's lace up leather shoe, its sole stoutly nailed. Such items were sometimes deliberately placed to ward off evil spirits.**

Under the timber floor of No. 3 a stoutly made but battered woman's shoe was found, no doubt contemporary with Magnus Ganson's signature and conceivably associated with journeyman shoemaker Donald Sutherland, in residence at the 1871 census. Such finds are not uncommon, objects placed (it's thought) to ward off evil spirits, although the 1880s is quite a late date for such practices. We considered donating it to a local museum, but decided that such an object's significance lies in its context, so after recording it photographically, we at first replaced it beneath our replacement timber floor. Since the dramatic 2012 storms highlighted the danger of flooding, it is now kept safely on site in a box in the cupboard of the twin bedroom of No. 2.



**Berriedale joiner Magnus Ganson helpfully left this message when he fixed the wood lining to the cottages in 1884. The sawn planks probably came from the estate sawmill, which started up around the same time.**



**Limewash trials. Note too the quality of the masonry and carefully laid courses.  
The cottages were clearly built by skilled professional masons.**



All the original joinery was carefully de-nailed and set aside in case it could be re-used. Behind it, many of the walls had sometimes quite large areas of limewash that finished at the previous ceiling height, so proving that the wood lining and lifting of the roof were contemporaneous.

There were two areas of unsafe masonry to deal with internally: the wall separating Nos. 3 and 4 and the fire surround at the northern end of No. 4. These were partially rebuilt, with the insertion of stainless steel ties where needed. Small sections of all the dividing walls were taken down to create the corridor running along the front of three of the four cottages, with doors between each room. The southern room of No. 2 is reserved as a housekeepers' store and for sound installation, two locked doors separating the two Landmarks, unless they are taken together in which case the whole range can be united.

To help stabilise the wall surface, the whole of the interior was skim plastered with lime before the new wood panelling was put up. New partition walls put up for the bathrooms. Window frames, cills and architraves were made by Woodbees of Thurso, working from fragments of the originals. Slimline double glazing units have been used for maximum insulation.

The water supply comes from the Langwell Estate's own sources, carried through a pipe that runs along the footbridge. The water is pre-filtered and treated with ultra-violet light as it enters the cottages. Foul waste is dealt with by a septic tank. The underfloor heating is heated by two Air Source Heat Pumps, which act like refrigerating units in reverse, harvesting renewable energy from the outside air that is then used to heat hot water for the heating elements. The captured latent energy vastly exceeds the small amount of electricity used to drive the extraction fans. The ASHP units are concealed in one of the former privies and in the shared 'Rod Room.'



**Sunrise, with The Shore under snow in December 2011, one of the many magnificent views of the site captured by Stuart Leavy during his months on site.**



**Carl Dowding (left) and Stuart Leavy, of Landmark's crafts team. Carl and Stuart oversaw, and largely accomplished themselves, the restoration of The Shore Cottages.**

Work on site came to an end in July 2012, as Stuart and Carl packed up their tools to head south again. They had watched seals playing the bay, and seen wide blue skies in summer and coatings of snow in winter. More than anyone, they had got under the skin of these little fishermen's cottages and the traditional local techniques used to construct them. They left the cottages knowing that their work had provided the terrace with a secure future, ready for their new lease of life as Landmarks and as an embodiment of Caithness's past.



**The December 2012 storm. Clockwise from top left: The force of the waves at Wick; some of the debris cast up on The Shore; copings stones hurled from the retaining wall; a door forced by shingle in the waves; the remains of the air source heating pump and its housing; sand forced beneath the door.**

## Severe storms hit The Shore in December 2012

Six months after the completion of the restoration of The Shore Cottages on the night of 14/15 December 2012, an exceptionally severe, once-in-a-generation storm hit North East Scotland. The forecast had been for a surge in sea level of around 0.5 metres; the eventual storm brought much higher tides, both that night and the following day, and resulted in significant damage all along the north east coast.

At The Shore Cottages – unoccupied for planned maintenance at the time - sizeable flotsam and jetsam were deposited in the cove and the quite large coping stones along the retaining wall were washed away. The high waves beat against the front doors with such force that the shingle they carried were forced between and under the doors and door frames, allowing water to penetrate. Not a great deal of water seeped through, but enough to bring with it sand and silt, and sand also found its way in around the edges of the window frames. The air source heat pump was also ripped away from its external housing. Miraculously, no windows were broken.

In the aftermath, the underfloor heating in both cottages was found to be still fully operational and the flagstone floor in No. 1 needed no more than a good clean. However, it soon became clear that the suspended timber floor in No. 2 was stained and warping as it dried and would have to be replaced – an example perhaps of the original builders understanding the challenges of their environment better than their successors. This is exactly the sort of unforeseen event whose cost the Landmark Fund was set up to meet, and The Shore Cottages' Guardians also rallied round, to our great gratitude.

A new floor was laid throughout No. 2, this time of modern Caithness stone flags. The ASH pump was replaced and has been more strongly protected, and we have put in place flood mitigation measures in place, including demountable

flood boards ready and easy to fix over the front doors, all four of which were replaced.

Watching the weather over the sea is one of the greatest delights of staying at The Shore, and we now hope we are fully prepared for even the most extreme weather events.

## Berriedale Castle

The ruins on the headland above The Shore are those of Berriedale Castle, one of many built along this northern coast of the Moray Firth, which was the scene of Norse invasion, clan feuds and baronial warfare especially between the Earls of Caithness and of Sutherland.

The headland was first fortified in the 14<sup>th</sup> century by Sir Reginald Cheyne, but is likely to have been in use much earlier. It is said to be the site referred to as Beruvik in the Viking Orkneyinga Saga. 'Bergadair' is also Old Norse for a rocky or stony dale. The castle and estate passed through the hands of several important early Caithness families.

Sources about the castle are vague and sometimes contradictory. Antiquarian James Tait Calder, writing in 1861, records that William Sutherland of Berriedale accompanied John Sinclair, Earl of Caithness, on his ill-fated invasion of Orkney in 1529, with 500 men. All were killed, many stoned to death as they sheltered on the beach on Orkney. William Sutherland was renowned as being of gigantic stature: he had a pre-sentiment he would not return from the expedition and so stretched out his plot by lying down in the churchyard at Berriedale and marking it with two stones at his head and feet, which were measured to be 8' 3" apart. William Sutherland owned Langwell at the time, and his family had long inhabited Berriedale Castle which was entered by a drawbridge, sloping from the top of a high brae, on which only two could go abreast.

Richard Ayton (artist William Daniell's amanuensis on his tour of Britain) recounts a slightly different version in 1819:

'There are fewer ancient traditions relating to Caithness than might be expected from the numerous ruined fortresses which are scattered over its territory. The last inhabitant of this [Berriedale] castle is said to have been a giant named William More. The story recorded of him strongly exemplifies the barbarous

manners which formerly prevailed in this remote district. About the end of the fifteenth century, the castle of Berrydale was inhabited by Hector Sutherland<sup>12</sup>, commonly called Hector Mul, or Meickle Hector: he was the proprietor of the estate at Langwell, where he built a house for the residence of his eldest son William who had married a very beautiful woman.

'Soon after this lady presented her husband with a son and heir, Robert Gunn, tacksman of Braemore, came over the hills to Langwell, accompanied by some of his clan, on a hunting party. A visit to its inhabitants was proposed by Robert Gunn, and the consequence was that he became deeply enamoured of the young wife of William More. On the way home, he declared to his companions that he was determined to take her to himself, and that the only means by which he could accomplish his design would be to put her husband to death. His friends agreeing in this nefarious proposal, accompanied him the next day to an ambush near the mansion of William Sutherland, where they waited until he walked forth into his garden, when Robert Gun shot him with an arrow: the confederates immediately entered the house, and placing the lady and her infant in a litter, carried them away to Braemore.

'The tradition relates, that when she ceased to grieve for her husband, she became reconciled to his murderer, and entreated that the infant should be named William, though it had been agreed that he should receive the name of his grandfather, Hector More. The Earl of Caithness, of whom Robert Gunn held the lands of Braemore, finding him much in arrear [rather, it seems, than for the murder!] sent John Sinclair of Stercook with a party of armed men, to enforce payment; but Gunn resisted them at the head of his clan, and an engagement ensued in which they were beaten off, and their leader wounded. The unfortunate mother passed the rest of her life with the tacksman of Braemore, by whom she had two sons, who were educated with the heir of Langwell.

'One day, when they were at chase, young William having killed a roe, desired his two brothers to bear it away, but they objected to the drudgery, and said that he might carry the game home himself. William, who was by this time acquainted with the tragical passage in his family history, told them, that if they persisted in their refusal he would revenge some of his father's actions upon them; and, though ignorant of the drift of this menace, they were greatly intimidated, as his stature was about nine feet, and he was strong in proportion. They carried home the roe and complained of William's threats to their mother, who communicated the affair to their father, adding that she suspected William to be in possession of the dreadful secret.

'Robert Gunn had a sister, who he proposed to give in marriage to this formidable adversary; but William rejected the offer. A feast was contrived for the purpose of ensnaring the unguarded youth; and when he was overpowered with wine, the nuptials were performed. On recovering his reason, he was enraged at the deception which had been practised upon him, and indignantly declared that he

---

<sup>12</sup> The original text seems to conflate the surnames More and Sutherland in relation to Hector and his son William – but the overall sense of the narrative is still clear.



should hold himself absolved from the engagement. Robert Gunn, to appease and reconcile him, undertook to put him in possession of the estate of Langwell; and to accomplish this promise, he and some of his adherents repaired by night to Berrydale, and concealed themselves near the rock. Early in the morning, when the drawbridge was let down, they forced their way into the castle and carried off Hector More, then a feeble old man, whom they deposited in a neighbouring cottage, from whence he was afterwards removed to the abode of his relations in Sutherland.

'Robert returned to Braemore, conducted William Sutherland and his spouse to their castle, and conferred on them the estate of Langwell. William, more and more dissatisfied with his spouse, and unable to enjoy an inheritance so iniquitously obtained, went to submit his grievance to the Earl of Caithness, who was at that time preparing in conjunction with the Baron of Rosslyn, to quell a rebellion in the Orkneys; and who, desiring of so stout a champion, promised him redress on condition that he should join in the enterprise. To this proposal the Master of Berrydale consented, and returned home to bid farewell to his friends. On parting with them at a burial ground eastward of the castle, he expressed a presentiment that he should never return from Orkney; and lying down on the heath, desired his companions to fix a stone in the ground at his head, and another at his feet, as a memorial to posterity of his uncommon stature. He then accompanied the expedition to the Orkneys, where he was slain in battle, together with the Earl of Caithness and his sons.'

The Shore Cottages Bibliography

*Report on the County of Caithness* (1911, RCHM)

Beamon, Sylvia P. &  
Roaf, Susan

*The Ice Houses of Britain* (1990)

Beaton, Elizabeth

*Caithness: an Illustrated Architectural Guide* (1996)

Calder, James Tait

*Sketch of the Civil and Traditional History of Caithness*  
(1861)

Clark, James T

*Statistical Accounts of Scotland* (1894)

Coull, Dr. J. R.

*Herring Fishing in Scotland* (1996)  
*The Sea Fisheries of Scotland*

Daniell, William

*Daniell's Scotland: A Voyage Round the Coast of  
Scotland and the Adjacent Isles 1815-1822 Vols 1  
& 2* (2006 facsimile edition).

Donaldson, J. E.

*Caithness in the Eighteenth Century* (1928)

Falconer, John

*Sail & Steam: A Century of Seafaring Enterprise  
1840-1935* (1993)

Gunn, Neil

*The Silver Darlings* (1941)  
*Butcher's Broom*

Gunn, Rev. Robert

*Old Statistical Account, Latheron, Vol. 18* (1795)

*New Statistical Account, Vol. 15* (1840s)

James Miller

*Caithness and Sutherland* (1985)

Mitchison, Rosalind

*Agricultural Sir John*

Richards, Clive, ed.

*Vintage Wick* (1989)

Sanderson, R., et al.

*The Herring Lassies: Following the Herring* (2008)

Sinclair, Rev. John

*Memoirs of the Life and Works of the late Sir John  
Sinclair* (1837)

Smith, J.S. ed

*Third Statistical Account of Scotland: The County of  
Caithness* (1988)

Stoddart, Thomas Tod     *Angler's Companion to the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland* (c 1850)

Sutherland, Iain             *Wick Harbour and the Herring Fishing* (1983-?)

*From herring to seine net fishing on the east coast of Scotland* (1985).

Trewin, N. H. & A. Hurst *Geology of East Sutherland and Caithness* (1993)

Articles on ice houses:

Rorbertson, A. Niven, 'Ice Houses of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Edinburgh and Lothian,' in *Book of Old Edinburgh Club*, 1953 vol. 27 pp.112-51.

Walker, B., 'Keeping it Cool,' *Scots Magazine*, Sept 1976, vol. 105, no. 6, pp.563-72