

YESTERDAY'S NEWS.18

The shooting season is with us again. Game shooting became increasingly popular as an elite sport in the second half of the nineteenth century. The first gamekeeper to appear on a Tiree census was Donald MacFarlain, who was living in Balemartine in 1881. The island went on to become one of the most famous shooting destinations in Britain.

Shooting

'Mr J. A. Mottram [from Knutsford, near Manchester], who has had the shootings on the island for a few years now, has left, and another shooting tenant, Captain Gold, has arrived. Tiree is famous for snipe shooting and great bags of snipes fall to the Captain's gun every week.' (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 20 November 1886, p. 6)

Wildfowl shooting in Tiree

'MacLaine of Lochbuie sends to *Rod and Gun* some statistics which certainly lend reasonableness to the claim of Tiree, on the estate of the Duke of Argyll, to have the best wildfowl shooting in Great Britain. Along with Colonel Burnley Campbell of Balliemore, and Major Campbell of Inverniel, he recently shot over the island for a week; and the total of the joint bag of snipe, mallard, gadwell, widgeon, woodcock, golden plover, lapwing, teal, moorhen, coot, water-rail, curlew, turnstone, stint, redshanks, greenshanks, rock dove, and ring dotterel amounted to 717.

The birds killed or observed in Tiree since 1886, says the same authority, include the peregrine falcon, the merlin, the kestrel, the sparrow-hawk, the short-eared owl, the missel thrush, the fieldfare, the song thrush, the redwing, the blackbird, the hedge sparrow, the redbreast, the stonechat, the whinchat, the wheatear, the goldcrest, the pied wagtail, the white wagtail, the meadow pipit, the rock pipit, the skylark, the snow bunting, the common bunting, the yellow hammer, the chaffinch, the house sparrow, the mountain or tree sparrow, the greenfinch, the common linnet, the mountain linnet or twite, the starling, the raven, the carrion crow, the hooded crow, the rook, the swallow, the wren, the cuckoo, the rock dove, the partridge, the golden plover, the ringed plover, the lapwing, the turnstone, the sanderling, the oystercatcher, the common heron, the common curlew, the whimbrel, the common redshank, the common sandpiper, the greenshank, the bar-tailed godwit, the black-tailed godwit, the common snipe, the jack snipe, the knot, the purple sandpiper, the land-rail, the water-rail, the moorhen, the common coot, the grey phalarope, the greylag goose, the white-fronted goose, the barnacle goose, the brent goose, the hooper swan, the Polish swan, the common sheldrake, the shoveller, the gadwall, the wild duck, the teal, the widgeon, the eider duck, the black scoter, the common pochard, the scaup duck, the tufted duck, the long-tailed duck, the golden eye, the smew, the red-breasted merganser, the gocander, the great crested grebe, the Slavonian grebe, the little grebe, the great northern diver, the black-throated diver, the common guillemot, the black guillemot, the little auk, the puffin, the

razor-bill, the common cormorant, the shag, the gannet, the sandwich tern, the common tern, the Arctic tern, the lesser tern, the black-headed gull, the kittiwake gull, the common skua, the Richardson skua, the Fulmar petrel and the stormy petrel.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 14 February 1891, p. 3)

‘Mr Gunnis, shooting tenant, has given most instructive and valuable lectures regarding his thrilling adventures in South Africa by the aid of a powerful magic lantern in the Heylipol and Cornaighmor Schools to crowded houses.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 1 March 1902, p. 6)

‘The shooting tenants are enjoying good sport on the island at present and are comfortably put up at the Hotel. Tiree is one of the best snipe shooting islands in Britain, and affords good winter sport.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 4 January 1902, p. 6)

‘Mr Bowerman, shooting tenant, and party are expected to visit the Island shortly. He is a keen sportsman and has inherited the fine sporting estate of Killilan and Coriach in the county of Ross.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 25 January 1902, p. 6)

‘The shootings in Tiree have been taken for a part of the winter by Lord Elphinstone. There is every appearance of as good sport being obtained as in former years. A recent advertisement described Tiree as the best snipe shooting ground in Europe.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 19 December 1903, p. 6)

‘Lord Elphinstone, of Carberry Towers, Musselburgh, and Mr Cobbold of Ipswich, joint tenants of the Tiree shootings, arrived here on Thursday last week. The *SS Countess of Bantry*, by which these gentlemen travelled, had rather a stormy passage to and from the island, but effected a good landing at Gott Bay. His lordship and Mr Cobbold have as usual made Scarinish Hotel their headquarters.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 11 November 1911, p. 6)

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Caption: A shooting party at the Temperance Hotel around 1912.

‘Mr Gunnis and party have arrived at Scarinish Hotel. For many years Mr Gunnis was tenant of the Tiree shootings. It is expected that Mr Gunnis will remain here for a period of six weeks, during which he and his party will devote much of their time to the shooting of wild duck.’ (*Oban Times and Argyllshire Advertiser*, 16 August 1913, p. 6)

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