

**“THE GREATEST IMPROVEMENT OF ANY COUNTRY:”  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ULLAPOOL AND THE HIGHLANDS,  
1786-1835**

**Michael Jeter-Boldt**

**Dr. Theodore Koditschek, Thesis Supervisor**

**ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the possible causes underlying the failure of Ullapool to develop in the half century after its founding. The study seeks to place Ullapool within a wider context, examining several interconnected aspects of economic development in the Highlands of Scotland. Several different measures, including, but not limited to, development of social overhead capital, promotion of the fishing industry, and the construction of villages, were adopted in an attempt to encourage growth in a lagging region of Britain. These measures, and their success or failure, will be analyzed through the application of recent economic theory. The measures adopted show many striking similarities with these later theories, suggesting different results might have been possible. However, it was the lack of “the greatest improvement of any country” – roads – which ultimately doomed Ullapool to failure.