

## N U M B E R XXXIV.

## PARISH OF INVERKEITHING.

(*Presbytery of Dunfermline.—County and Synod of Fife.*)

By the Reverend Mr ANDREW ROBERTSON, Minister.

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*Name, Situation, and Extent.*

**I**NVERKEITHING, or Innerkeithing, is supposed to be derived from the Gaelic word Inver or Inner, which signifies the Mouth, and Keith; said to be the name of the running water at the east end of the town. It is of a very irregular figure. The North Ferry hills form a peninsula; the west part, formerly the parish of Rosyth; extends about three miles, and the north part about three miles and an half, from the town. These resemble two arms stretched out almost at right angles, and each of them does not much exceed a mile in breadth; the one lies between the Frith and the parish of Dunfermline, and the other between Dunfermline and Dalgety parishes.

*Town, Constitution of the Burgh, &c.*—Inverkeithing is pleasantly situated upon a rising ground above the bay of the harbour; it consists of one street, with another smaller turning off near the middle, besides some wynds. It has many good gardens. It is a very ancient royal burgh. King William, surnamed the Lion, gave them the first charter. Several

veral Kings of Scotland granted them charters at different periods; and King James the VI. by a charter, dated 4th May 1598, ratifies and confirms them all, and declares their rights and privileges, to extend from the water of Dovan to that of Leven, and as far north as Kinross. It is said to have been a very considerable burgh, of large extent, populous, and paid to government great taxes. The set of this burgh is uncommon in some things. The provost, the two bailies, the dean of guild, and treasurer, are annually elected by the counsellors and deacons of the trades. The counsellors are chosen from among the burghers inhabitants, the guildry, and even the members of the incorporated trades, who still retain a vote in their respective incorporations. The five incorporated trades elect their deacons yearly as their representatives. The town council, including the magistrates, cannot be under 20; but it is not limited to any number above it; so that the whole burghers inhabitants might be made counsellors. What is very singular, the counsellors continue in office during life and residence. There is a good town-house, built in the year 1770, containing, besides a prison, some convenient rooms for holding the bailie-courts, the meetings of council, and public entertainments. The yearly revenue amounts to 200 l. Sterling and upwards; many of their extensive rights and dues have been sold and disposed of at different times. The streets were once lighted with lamps during the winter seasons; but this has been discontinued for a long time. The present magistrates are very attentive and active in making improvements, and doing whatever is in their power for the advantage and convenience of the inhabitants. There are several markets or fairs in the year for horses, cattle, and different kind of goods, such as coarse linens, checks, shoes, &c. This burgh is represented  
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in Parliament, and sends a member along with *Queensferry*, *Stirling*, *Culrofs*, and *Dunfermline*.

*Population, &c.*—The population, by an accurate survey in the beginning of the present year 1793, amounts to,

Souls,	-	-	-	-	-	2210
The return to Dr Webster in 1755 was	-	-	-	-	-	1694
						<hr/>
Increase	-	-	-	-	-	516
						<hr/>
In the town	-	1330	Between 10 and 20			362
In the North Ferry		312	———— 20 and 50			932
In the country parish		568	———— 50 and 70			306
Number of males		1056	———— 70 and above			30
———— of females		1154	The number of families			
Under 10 years of age		580	is about			550

Many have arrived at advanced periods of life. There are several persons here between 80 and 90, and some of them going about their ordinary business. There is a man living here, but mostly confined to his bed, whose age, from authentic accounts, is 94: He was by trade a gardener, and has had five wives. The annual average of births from the parish records is about 50, and of marriages 15. There is no register of deaths kept here. The number of births and marriages cannot be exactly ascertained, as there are many dissenters from the established church, who do not insert their names in the parish register. The population has greatly increased within these few years, owing to the flourishing state of the coal trade brought from *Halbeath* and shipped here, to a considerable distillery and brewery in the neighbourhood of the town, and a branch of the iron foundry business lately introduced.

*Proprietors*

*Proprietors and Value.*—The parish belongs to the Earls of Hopetoun and Morton, Sir William Erskine and Sir John Henderson, Mr Cunningham and a few small heritors. The last gentleman is the only one of any consequence residing in it. The valued rent in the cess books is 6956 l. 16 s. 8 d. Scots. The real rent amounts to near about 3000 l. Sterling, and upon new leases would rise considerably above it.

*Appearance, Soil, and Agriculture.*—The parish, in general, excepting the Ferry hills, and a few others, is either flat or gently rising ground, the greatest part of which is strong, rich, or clay soil, and yields plentiful crops; even among these hills many places are arable, and produce moderately good crops. Towards the extremity, upon the north, the soil is cold, and a small part is muir. Some of the farms are extensive, and others of an ordinary size. The farmers are, in general, wealthy, industrious, and active: They improve and cultivate their lands to great perfection and advantage: They mostly use the new constructed ploughs, drawn by two good horses without a driver: They manure and enrich their field with dung, lime, and earth, mixed together, with seaweed, when they can obtain it, and by summer fallow. From the goodness of the ground, and the most proper mode and means of cultivation, they raise grain of all kinds, equal in quantity and quality to many parts in Scotland. The farms are not yet all inclosed and properly fenced; but, from the disposition of the proprietors, and the improvements now carrying on in that way, it is expected this will soon be the case. There is a society formed here, called the Farmer Club, the members of it belong also to most of the neighbouring parishes, and several gentlemen of landed property have joined and patronise it. The great object of it is to consider and improve the different modes of agriculture. At stated meetings

meetings they have ploughing matches; the competitors are their serfants, each man takes his ridge. When the work is done, it is examined by proper judges, and a suitable premium is given to the best, and two or three more of the ploughmen. This practice has been attended with very beneficial effects.

*Harbour, Shipping, and Ferry.*—Before the entrance of the harbour, there is a large and safe bay, which affords excellent shelter for ships in all winds. Here his Majesty's ships of war sometimes come from Leith roads, and ride at anchor to avoid the winter storms; and merchant ships from the Mediterranean formerly used to perform quarantine here. The harbour itself is a small bay; at the mouth of which, upon the west side, there lies a large Dutch built vessel as a lazaretto, where, instead of detaining ships from foreign ports, the particular goods, in which any infection may be supposed to lodge, are immediately received, aired under the inspection of a proper officer, and delivered, within a limited time, to the owners, by the express orders of the custom-house. At the head of the bay is the quay, the proper place for landing and receiving goods. The depth of water at spring tides is 13 and sometimes 15 feet. It was deepened within these few years; and a narrow channel cut farther down to admit ships up to it. This is kept pretty clear by the rivulet that runs through it at low tide. Another quay is now building, with great improvements, to accommodate the shipping. There are here sometimes between 40 and 50 vessels from different places waiting for coals, especially in the winter season. Several ships belong to this place; but none of any considerable burden. Some of them sail to foreign ports, and the rest are chiefly employed in the coal and coasting trade. Between the North Ferry and Ro-

fyth Castle is St. Margaret's Bay or Hope, so called from the Princess of that name, afterwards Queen of Malcolm III. having in her flight from England landed there. On her account, the Ferry is called the Queensferry, being her constant passage to and from her favourite residence at Dunfermline. This passage is well known to every traveller; the distance is near two miles. All the boatmen reside in the North Ferry. There are four boats and four yawls employed upon it; these belong to certain proprietors of land on each side of the Frith, who claim an exclusive right to the passage, and for which the tacksmen, besides keeping the boats in repair, pay annually about 280*l.* Sterling. The common freight is by far too low, being only a penny each passenger. There are several landing places on each side, and it is proposed to build more. This passage is safe and expeditious, and may be had at all times, excepting in a very few cases; and this only happens from high winds, together with particular and unfavourable times of the tide. There was a large boat upset some years ago, occasioned by a sudden squall, and its being fully loaded with black cattle; the boatmen were lost, and also the passengers. Upon the western boundary of the parish, is a small harbour, called Brucehaven; ships sometimes take in coals, but no other trade is carried on there.

*Manufactures and Trade.*—There is but little trade carried on here. Some small merchants, for the most part, supply the inhabitants with necessary articles; and there is a near and easy access to Dunfermline and Edinburgh. This is a very convenient situation for ship-builders. Some time ago, they met with great encouragement, but at present there is little doing in that line. A considerable whisky distillery is erected here: It belongs to a Company, and is managed by one  
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of the partners. The spirits are said to be of a fine, and even superior quality; they are sold at the common current prices; and the sale of them is very extensive. It seems to be in a prosperous and flourishing state. There is likewise a brewery, carried on to no great extent, and serving chiefly for the consumpt of the inhabitants. There is a Company who import annually from the Baltic large quantities of wood; they have extensive and rapid sales, and are very successful in that trade. The coal shipped here is by far the greatest article of trade. The coallery is at Halbeath, in the parish of Dunfermline: It once belonged to a Dutch Company; but, being attended with no advantage, they disposed of it. It is now worked by a Company of our own countrymen, who carry it on with spirit, and have brought it to a flourishing state. There is a proper waggon road laid with timber, for the distance of five miles, and kept in good repair at a great expence. Twenty-four waggons are employed; they are drawn, some by one and others by two horses, and bring down two tons each time. The coals are good, burn well, and have great heat and force; they are sold at 15 s. *per* waggon, the great coal; and 11 s. 6 d. the chows or small coal: The burges inhabitants buy them, by a particular agreement, at a cheaper rate. Twenty-five thousand tons and upwards are shipped annually; the demand is greater than can be answered; and ships frequently wait 5 and 6 weeks. There are a few salt-pans that make annually from twelve to fifteen thousand bushels. An iron foundery was lately set up. Several experienced workmen are employed in it: They make beautiful chimney grates, waggon wheels, and all kind of cast iron work for machinery and house utensils. This seems to be a convenient and advantageous situation; the metal can be brought by sea; it is near to coal; and the manufactured goods can be transported ve-  
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ry cheap, and in small quantities, by means of the coal ships, to many parts in Scotland, and by the vicinity to Leith, to any foreign port. There is a branch of the Borrowstounness custom-house established here for the convenience of the coasting trade carried on from this port, and from St. Davids, the property of Sir John Henderson, Baronet, of Fordel, and the shipping place of his great coal works.

*Ecclesiastical State, School, &c.*—Sir William Erskine, Baronet, of Torry, is the patron, having lately purchased the estate of Spencerfield, to which is annexed the right of patronage. The church was repaired and partly rebuilt within these 20 years. It is large enough to contain the parishioners. It is a little singular in outward appearance, being covered with three roofs of equal dimensions, which are supported by two rows of arches within, and the two side walls. It could easily be made a handsome, commodious, and elegant church. Upon the west side, adjoining to it, is the steeple, which seems to be very ancient, from the appearance of the stones and the form of the building. The stipend at present consists of 5 chalders victual, and 500 merks Scots, besides 4 l. Sterling, of what is called vicarage. The free teinds are considerable: There has been no augmentation since the year 1636, and a process is now carrying on for that purpose. There is no manse or garden, but an allowance for house rent is paid by the town and some of the heritors. A small house and garden at Rosyth goes by that name. There are two glebes and a small park by itself, making in all eight acres of excellent ground. The one is the glebe of Rosyth, which was annexed to this parish, and lies adjacent to that old church now in ruins; but it is proposed to have it exchanged and placed with the other, which is near the town.

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There is a tolerable schoolhouse, with a sufficient garden. The present schoolmaster\*, who is a very good scholar, has been here upwards of 40 years; he draws an annual salary of 200 merks Scots, paid by the town and heritors. He is also precentor and session clerk, for which he receives 28l. Scots, with the ordinary emoluments and dues belonging to that office. He teaches, besides the common branches of education, the languages, navigation, and the other parts of mathematics. The number of scholars is about 50, being commonly 40 in summer and 60 in winter. There are several private teachers besides. The school wages are too low, and by no means adequate to the teachers abilities and labours; although as much as can be well afforded by the poor part of the inhabitants. The number of poor receiving public charity, is not considerable. Their funds were much diminished by the failure of a person who had their money in his hands; and they now chiefly arise from the weekly collections at the church doors, which at present answer the demands.

*Religious Persuasions.*—Rather more than the half of the inhabitants in the town and parish adhere to the established church; the rest are Burghers, Antiburgers, Relief, and Cameronians. A Burgher meeting house was built here about 40 years ago, occasioned by the settlement of the late incumbent, who, it seems, though a most worthy and respectable character, was disagreeable to a great number of the parishioners; it is mostly attended by the lowest part of the people, and many of them come from the neighbouring parishes. The Antiburgers and Relief are not numerous, and attend their meeting houses in Dunfermline. The Cameronians,

\* Mr Robert Duncan, translator of Boethius on the Confutation of Philosophy.

meronians, in this place, took their rise, a few years ago, from a difference among the Burghers, many of whom, along with their minister, at that time, joined themselves with this sect: They have no proper meeting house, and are occasionally supplied with sermons, though but seldom, by their itinerant preachers. It is remarkable, that all these differences arose about church politics, they are maintained and kept up with the same spirit and zeal, and the leaders of each sect use the utmost endeavours to retain their adherents and followers, which, among such a class of hearers, are frequently attended with considerable success.

*Eminent Men.*—This parish has given birth to several persons who have distinguished themselves in their professional line. Commodore Roxburgh, born in this town, was promoted to that rank in the Russian service, and was very active and attentive to its interests before he quitted it. The famous Admiral Greig was a native of this town, was educated under the present schoolmaster, and went, at an early period of life, into the British service. While in the navy of Great Britain, he distinguished himself at the defeat of Conflans by Admiral Hawke, the taking of the Havannah, and several other engagements in that successful war. After the peace of 1762, he entered into the Russian service; and there, at the battle of Chio, contributed principally, by his advice and exertions, to the destruction of the whole Turkish fleet. Sensitive of his great professional merit, her Imperial Majesty promoted him (though a foreigner) to the chief command of the Russian navy, which he raised to a degree of respectability and importance it never before had attained. In reward of his great services, the Empress bestowed on him many honourable marks of distinction, and an estate in Livonia which his family now enjoy. In the last war, between the Russians  
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and Turks, which last were joined by the Swedes, he, in the Baltic, defeated the Swedish fleet, and had not a part of his squadron, through cowardice, refused to come into action, he probably had captured or sunk the most of them. Soon after this, he was seized with a fever, and died at Revel, on the 26th October 1788. He was no less illustrious for courage and naval skill, than for piety, benevolence, and every private virtue\*.

*Character.*

\* *Antiquities.*—Upon the top of Lethem hill, there are some large stones, placed in a circular form, said to have been a Druidical temple. King David the I. frequently resided in this place. Some persons remember to have seen the ruins of a house at the north end of the town, which commonly went by the name of King David's House, but there remains not the smallest vestige. At the North Ferry, there are the ruins of a chapel, which was liberally endowed by King Robert the I. and served by the Monks of Dunfermline. The Franciscans and the Dominicans, or the black and grey Friars, had both of them convents in this town. There is a house called the Ians, which still has peculiar privileges and exemptions, not being within the jurisdiction of the magistrates, and appears to have been one of them, from its form, vaults, high garden walls, and other buildings. Towards the north part of the parish, there is a stone set up about 10 feet high, 2½ broad, and 1 thick, commonly called the standing stone. Many rude figures seems to have been cut upon it, but are much defaced by the weather and length of time; however, two armed men on horseback, the one behind the other, appear pretty discernible on the east side. It is supposed, that after some battle between the Scots and Danes, fought near this place, some Dane of distinction had fallen, and been buried there, and this stone, as was then very commonly done, raised as a monument over his grave. In this parish is the castle of Rosyth, almost opposite to Hopeton House; it is built upon rock, and surrounded by the sea at full tide; it consists of a large square tower, and some low ruinous walls adjoining to it, but there is the appearance of larger and more extended buildings. It cannot now be ascertained by whom it was built, or at what time. Above a door, upon the north side, there is a coat of arms with a cross, a crown, &c. and M. R. 1561. Upon the stone bars of windows in the square tower, there is T. \* S. and M.

*Character.*—The people in general are sober, industrious, and attentive; they follow their several employments with assiduity and care, and earn a comfortable livelihood for themselves and families. They seem to be contented and happy with their situation in life. The better sort are kind and hospitable, diligent and active in prosecuting their business and pursuits, and are much given to company and entertainments in each others houses, but it is to be remarked, that the parties, who associate much, are united in the same political sentiments and views. Burgh politics, and the election of members of parliament, have an unhappy influence upon the morals of the people. They carry on these contests with the greatest animosity and keenness, and exert their utmost endeavours to promote the interest and cause of the favourite candidate.

M. \* N. anno 1639. Upon the south side, near the door, is this inscription, pretty entire and legible,

IN DEV TIME DRAV YIS CORD YE BEL TO CLINK  
QVHAIS MERY VOCE VARNIS TO MEAT & DRINK.

This castle was the ancient seat of the Stuarts of Rosyth, lineally descended from James Stuart, brother german to Walter the great Stuart of Scotland, and father to King Robert. The last laird of that name, having no near relations, disposed of the estate to a stranger; it afterwards became the possession of Lord Roseberry; and is now the property of the Earl of Hopeton. There is a tradition, however unfounded it may be, that Oliver Cromwell's mother, being a daughter of the family of Stuart of Rosyth, was born in this castle, and that the protector visited it, during the time he commanded the army in Scotland. It is said, there is a record in the Advocate's Library at Edinburgh, which gives an account of the struggle, the ancient Culdees maintained for their rights, lands, &c. which contains also the censure pronounced against them by the Romish clergy, in these words: *Acta in ecclesia parochiali de Innerkethyn, anno secundo regni regis Alexandri, gratiae anno 1250, &c.* and mentions the probability that this severe procedure and sentence obliged them to submit to the bishop of St. Andrew's, who by degrees suppressed their order, and established the Popish Clergy in their place.

candidate. It is much to be lamented, that religion is made subservient to these purposes, and the settlement of its ministers connected with the politics and the factions of the burgh. Here the inhabitants have supported or opposed, according as the promotion of the person was suitable or inimical to their political views; and they now stand distinguished in the records of the church, for two successive oppositions, in the last of which, and that but lately, many of the people declared against their political leaders, and would no longer obey their unreasonable and unchristian orders. However, upon the whole, the people, with a few exceptions, are religious and devout, peaceable and useful members of society, and attached to their king and country, its civil constitution, and its mild, equitable, and salutary laws.

*Miscellaneous Observations.*—The situation of this parish is healthy and chearful: There are no diseases peculiar to it, the small-pox raged last summer with great violence, and carried off great numbers of children. Inoculation is much neglected by the lower sort of the people, and many of them have an insuperable prejudice and aversion against the practice of it. Provisions of all kinds are good and plenty, but some of them dearer than in Edinburgh. The roads are well made: There is a toll bar, a mile from the North Ferry, the produce of which, with the commuted statute labour, keeps them in good repair. Near the North Ferry, there are large quarries; the stone is very hard and durable, and generally dug out in perpendicular rows. Some time ago great quantities were prepared and shipped, to pave the streets of London, but none has been carried there for some years. The Frith gradually contracts from Kinghorn; here the shore, which is high and rocky, suddenly stretches out towards the south, and brings it within a narrow compass. The water is deep, and the tides rapid, owing to the wideness and length

of the Frith above. There was a battery erected, upon this point of land to the east of the Ferry, after Paul Jones appeared, with his small squadron, and alarmed the coasts. There is a higher and a lower battery, mounting, together, 8 iron guns, 20 pounders, and 8 field pieces. In the middle of the Frith, and right opposite, stands Inch-Garvie, the old fortifications of which were repaired at that time; and 4 iron guns, 20 pounders, mounted upon them. Each gun has 100 rounds of ammunition. One man belonging to the corps of artillery lives here, to notice the works, and take care of the stores. There is no account of any remarkable battle within the parish. There was a small skirmish upon the Ferry hills, between the Scots and English in Oliver Cromwell's time. The great and severe engagement upon the following day, which was maintained with so much obstinacy and slaughter on both sides, and terminated in the defeat of the Scots, was indeed begun near this town, upon a place called Hillfield; but the Scots retreating, it was chiefly fought upon the opposite bank of Masterton, which, though not far distant, lies in the parish of Dunfermline. Upon the top of the Ferry hills the prospect is beautiful, extensive, and picturesque to the highest degree. There is a view from the Island of May to Stirling, and far beyond it, of a rich country diversified with towns, villages, castles, and noblemen's and gentlemen's seats, and bounded by the distant hills, with numerous objects, and variegated scenes on each side; the coasts of Lothian and Fife, with their fertile fields; the several little islands of Garvie, Comb, Cramond, and Keith; ships sailing in all directions, and some of them lying at anchor in Leith Roads and other places; and to complete the whole, there is a magnificent view of Edinburgh, its majestic castle and lofty buildings, together with the New Town, which is perhaps one of the most handsome and elegant in Europe.

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☛ The following additional particulars were received since the preceding account went to the press.

In the grounds of *Castland Hill*, the property of the Earl of MORRISON, a lead mine was accidentally discovered about 36 years ago. The ore is said to have been of an extraordinary fine quality. The stratum was found to be very irregular, and of unequal thickness. After being wrought for some time, it totally disappeared. A considerable sum was expended, and the working of it attended with some loss. It is, however, thought, that there is plenty of lead ore in these lands, and that it might be wrought out to great advantage.

In the beginning of last winter, a considerable shoal of *herrings* came into this bay; and, about the North Ferry, they were caught in great quantities, and the fishing continued for a long time. In the beginning of this winter, there came a still greater shoal, extending all the way from *Inch-Comb* to *Inch-Garvie*. A great number of boats, from the east coasts of Fife, well manned, and supplied with proper nets, are now employed in this herring fishing, and meet with ample success. The herrings are pretty large, and very good. They are sold at different prices, and sometimes so very low as 6 d. *per* hundred. They are carried to Edinburgh, and many other places, in a fresh state. Some merchants have sent up several vessels to take them in, properly salted in barrels; and, it is said, propose to send them to the London and foreign markets. They still continue\* in the greatest plenty, and may probably do so during a great part of the winter season. Some young *whales*, one of which has been caught, disturb the fishing, and sometimes destroy the nets.

In

\* December 9th, 1793.

In this town, there is a *tan-work*. The situation is convenient for carrying on that business. The raw hides can be got in great quantities, this being the market where the adjacent parts of the country and the shipping, both in this and the neighbouring ports, are supplied with provisions. The present work is but small; the leather made is said to be of an ordinary quality, and meets with a ready sale.

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