

## PARISH OF FOULDEN.

PRESBYTERY OF CHIRNSIDE, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

THE REV. ALEXANDER CHRISTISON, MINISTER.

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### I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Name.*—THERE is a tradition that the parish of Foulden, or Fulden, received its name from some foul transaction, of which it was the scene during the border feuds. This origin of the name, however, does not satisfy etymologists, of whom some hold that it refers to the former marshiness, and others, to the fertility of the parish.

*Extent, Boundaries.*—It is 2 miles and 2 furlongs in length, and 2 miles and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  furlongs in breadth, and is of a compact form. The northern conterminous parish is Ayton; the western, Chirnside; the southern, Hutton; and the eastern, Mordington. The southern extremity is traced by the river Whitadder; which is here remarkable for the depth of its bed, insomuch that its banks are from 120 to 150 feet in height. The hither bank is often interrupted by deep and wild ravines, some of which wind fully a mile northward. Traversing the parish from south to north, one meets first with a strong clay, then with a sandy loam, and lastly with cultivated moor.

*Climate.*—As Foulden is highly cultivated in an agricultural point of view, as plantations and a chain of heights shelter it from every inclement blast, and as it slopes gently and continuously from its northern to its southern extremity, its people ought to be very healthy. Yet the former Statistical Account, founding, no doubt, on inadequate data, gives a very exaggerated representation of the salubrity of the parish. During my connection with it, malignant small-pox, scarlet fever, and influenza have prevailed in it. In the year 1827, eleven of its inhabitants died; and the average yearly mortality since has been five.

### II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

*Land-owners.*—Four-fifths of the land is the property of John Wilkie, Esq. of Foulden: the rest belongs to Geo. Baillie, Esq.

of Jerviswoode, and to Miss Wood of Nunlands. Nunlands is the least estate, but far above L. 50 in yearly value.

*Historical Notices.*—On the 24th March 1587, a conference was held in Foulden church between commissioners sent by Elizabeth of England to Scotland, and others appointed by our James VI. At this meeting were discussed the circumstances which, according to Elizabeth, vindicated her treatment of Mary, and, in particular, her execution.

*Antiquities.*—The only antiquity in Foulden which merits notice is an epitaph in the church-yard, dated 4th January 1592. The person whom it commemorates must have been of some distinction; for traditionary accounts of his forays are still extant. The epitaph is highly interesting as an excellent example of the quaintness of thought and style, so universal at the time at which it was written.

HEIR . LIETH . ANE . HONORABIL . MAN . GEORG .  
 FIFE . FOSTRING . PEACE . ME . BRED .  
 FROM . THENCE . THE . MERCE . ME . CALD .  
 THE . MERCE . TO . MARSIS . LAVIS . LED .  
 TO . BYDE . HIS . BATTELIS . BALD .  
 VERIED . VITH . VARES . AND . SORE . OPPREST  
 DEATH . GAVE . TO . MARS . THE . FOYL  
 AND . NOV . I . HAVE . MORE . QVYET . REST .  
 THAN . IN . MY . NATIVE . SOYL [FOVR  
 FIFE . MERCE . MARS . MORT . THESE . FATAL  
 AL . HAIL . MY . DAYS . HES . DRIVEN . OVR .  
 1592 . AN . IAN . 4 . DEPARTED . WHO . BASTEL .

RAMSAY . IN FULDEN .

AND OF . HIS AGE . 74 .

*Parochial Registers.*—The parochial registers have suffered mutilation, and had been long kept in a very slovenly manner. The earliest entry is dated 13th April 1682.

### III.—POPULATION.

In 1755, the population was 465; in 1793, it was 344; and, according to a census taken by me in July last, it was 395. Of the present population, 196 are males, and 199 are females: 73 reside in Foulden village,—the only village in the parish; and 322 in the country: 4 are bachelors or widowers above fifty years of age; and 8 are single women upwards of 45: 1, a very old woman, is blind; and 1 is fatuous.

The yearly average of births for the last seven years is 9; of deaths, 5; and of marriages, 3.

The number of families in the parish is	78
of families chiefly employed in agriculture,	55
chiefly employed in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	12

*Customs, Character, &c. of the People.*—Games, from being very common in the remembrance of inhabitants of middle age, have

fallen into total disuse. One of these obsolete games I may particularize, on account of the singularity of the goals. It was celebrated, along with many others, on Fastern's eve. The villagers were opposed to the inhabitants of the country; a large ball was tossed into the air midway between the parish church and mill; and this the former strove to lodge in the church *pulpit*, and the latter in the mill-hopper. An ancient and odd, but local usage, called *creeling*, is still kept up here. On an early evening after a newly-married couple have commenced house-keeping, the young men of the parish repair to their house; invite the bridegroom out, or, if he refuses, take the first opportunity of laying hold on him, and place a creel laden with stones on his back, with which he has to pace up and down, till the bride comes forth, and, cutting the cords, disencumbers him. By this ceremony are shadowed forth the cares which a man incurs by marrying, but of which it is in the power of a dutiful wife to lighten him. A gratuity, however, is given by all who can pay it, rather than be creeled. I presume that the actual load of matrimony is considered quite enough to be borne without the addition of this symbolical one.

At the morning and evening meals of the peasantry, their staple is oatmeal porridge and milk; their dinner consists of bread made from pease and barley, and of potatoes, seasoned with fat pork. Each family feeds at least two pigs a-year. Tea is getting more and more into use, and especially among the female heads of families; a change which, from its cost, and for other obvious reasons, is much to be regretted. The peasantry here,—as throughout the county,—are religious and moral; and, in particular, there is scarcely an instance of habitual intemperance.

Irregularity of marriage, from the facility and secrecy with which it can be contracted on the border, is very common. This has both its advantages and its evils; an illegitimate birth, on the one hand, very seldom happening; but, on the other hand, improvident and ill-assorted matches being often made.

Though favourably circumstanced in respect of the comforts and advantages of society, and not discontented with their condition, yet emigration is remarkably prevalent. There is a general misapprehension, respecting the description of emigrants from among our rural population. From this parish, at least, they, for the most part, have been the robust, the enterprising, and the provident; they have been eminently successful; and the accounts sent home by them of their prosperity have extended the emigratory spirit.

## IV.—INDUSTRY.

The number of acres, standard imperial measure, in the parish is 2976. 330 acres have never been under the plough, and are in pasture; the rest are arable, with the exception of 260, which are planted. Part of the wood in the vicinity of Foulden House is very old; but the great bulk of it is of recent origin. The trees planted are oak, ash, elm, birch, sycamore, chesnut, spruce and Scotch fir.

*Rent of Land.*—The highest rent of arable land per acre is L. 4, and the lowest is L. 1, 7s.

Twelve years is the general duration of leases.

*Rate of Wages.*—The wages of a single farm-servant, living in his master's house, are L. 5 for the summer, and L. 4 for the winter; those of a female are L. 5 for the one, and L. 2, 2s. for the other. The wages of a hind for the year are L. 4 in money, 10 bolls oats, 3 bolls barley, 1 boll pease or beans, 1600 yards of potatoes, a cow's food, and the cartage of his coals. His gains this year are valued at L. 21, 2s. He pays rent for his cottage, and this he does by providing one shearer. He is required to keep a bondager. The wages of a day-labourer are 9s. per week.

*Produce.*—

The average gross amount of wheat is 1416 bolls.

barley, 1865 do.  
oats, 3633 do.  
beans, 451 do.

The value of the wheat, according to the fiars of last spring, is	L.	2360	0	0
barley,	-	1748	8	0
oats,	-	2452	0	0
beans,	-	406	0	0
potatoes and turnips,	-	1278	0	0
grass,	-	2198	0	0
annual thinning and periodical felling of the woods,	-	175	0	0

The total yearly value of raw produce raised is - L. 10517 8 0

## V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The nearest market-town is Berwick, which is five miles distant; it is also the nearest post-town.

*Means of Communication.*—The want of a bridge across the Whitadder (the nearest being five miles distant,) and of a more gradual access to the river, has been long and much felt. This, however, is soon to be remedied. The plan of a bridge, and of a very preferable line of road to it, have been procured from Mr Jardine, civil-engineer; and towards defraying the cost, which is estimated at L. 2500, there have been subscribed from the bridge money of the county L. 500, and by the gentry L. 1500.

*Ecclesiastical State.*—The parish church was built in 1786. It

is placed in the heart of the parish, is in excellent repair, and the interior might be seated so as to accommodate the whole population. The manse was built in 1772; an addition was made to it in 1813. The site of the church and manse is peculiarly beautiful; sheltered to the east and north by the stately and ancient trees within the pleasure grounds of Foulden House; while the view to the south and west is rich and varied, and only bounded by the Cheviots and Eildons. The glebe is 8 acres in extent, and is let for L. 24 annually. The stipend is L. 59, 9s. 3d. 38 b. 2 f. 2 p. 2½ l. barley, and 77 b. 1 f. 1 p. 1½ l. oats. Those in connection with the Established church are 284, and the communicants at the last dispensation of the sacrament were 160. There are 106 Seceders, and 3 Catholics.

*Education.*—The parochial school is the only one in the parish. The teacher has the legal accommodations, and the highest salary. The quarterly school fees are 7s. 6d. for Latin, Greek, and mathematics; 5s. for arithmetic; 4s. for reading and writing; and 3s. for reading alone. The yearly amount of fees actually paid is L. 10; and of other emoluments, L. 10. Education is universal, and duly appreciated.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.*—There are 12 paupers, and their average monthly allowance is 8s. 2d. This is entirely defrayed by assessment; the church collections, with the exception of the sacramental ones, going to pay the precentor, beadle, and session-clerk. Repugnance to apply for parochial relief is very little felt,—the inevitable consequence of compulsory assessments; which, nevertheless, under due regulations, is the best, and the only equitable mode of supporting the necessitous.

*Inns, &c.*—There are no inns, alehouses, &c. in the parish. Formerly two fairs were held at the village, and were much resorted to; but now one only is held, and that, too, but nominally. The principal fuel is coal; which is procured at Berwick, and costs 6d. per boll. A cart load, such as one horse can draw, is delivered for 6s. 7½d.

Upon the whole, the parish of Foulden has fully kept pace in improvement and embellishment with the rest of Berwickshire, since the last Statistical Account of it was written.

October 1834.