

PARISH OF ECKFORD.

PRESBYTERY OF JEDBURGH, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

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I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of this parish is compounded of *aec*, an oak, and *ford*, a passage over a river,—referring to the oaks which anciently prevailed in the district, and to a ford in the Teviot, within a short distance of the village, which bears the name of the parish.* It is probable that to this village the appellation Eckford was primarily confined; but that in process of time it came to be applied to the whole parish.

Extent and Boundaries.—The parish is nearly of a triangular form, with its base towards the east: and is about 6 miles at its greatest length, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ at its greatest breadth. It is bounded, on the north, by Roxburgh and projecting portions of Kelso and Sprouston; on the east by Linton, Morebattle, and Hounam; on the south, by Jedburgh; and on the west, by Crailing.

Topographical Appearances.—This parish presents throughout an undulating appearance, gradually rising as it extends towards the south, and occasionally swelling into elevations, which command an extensive view of the circumjacent country. There are no remarkable heights in the parish, but the chief eminences are Woodenhill and Cavertonhill. From Woodenhill, the spectator looking towards the west, may survey, for the space of many miles, the vale of the Teviot, with the tortuous course of that classic stream,—the neatly enclosed and highly fertile fields which stretch along its banks—the well kept and thriving plantations which here and there extend to the river's edge, and which, together with Peniel-heugh, Minto-hill, Minto-crag, and Ruberslaw in the distance,

* This ford was anciently called the ford at the *acca*. In the bed of the river near the ford, oaks of considerable dimensions have occasionally been seen. Within these thirty years, a tree of this kind, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter, was dragged out by Mr Mather of Kalemouth, and immediately on its removal he perceived another lying directly under it. About three miles farther up the river, in a deep pool, an oak is said to have been seen, so very large that its trunk in some places amounted to about 4 feet 4 inches in diameter.

form a landscape peculiarly picturesque and delightful. But not less striking is the valley of the Kale, which embraces a narrower track of country, and which, from various points of the parish, may be viewed to great advantage. This valley is interesting in a high degree, and more especially where it begins to open up in the direction of Marlefield on the west, and Linton on the east. Whether from the historical associations with which it is invested, or from the natural character of the scenery, or the beautiful range of hills which form its back ground on the south and east, it cannot be contemplated by the intelligent observer but with delight.

Climate.—The atmosphere here is for the most part mild and salubrious. The winds which chiefly prevail are from the west, but gales in severe storms, in general, blow from the south-east. Ague, once an epidemic in the district, is now quite unknown. Its disappearance may be traced to the improved system of drainage, which is now so successfully pursued in this quarter, and to the consequent diminution of those noxious exhalations which were wont occasionally to issue from the lower grounds.

Hydrography.—There are two rivers which flow through this parish, the Teviot and the Kale: the Teviot takes its rise among the heights which separate Dumfries-shire from Roxburghshire, and after running in a north-easterly direction about thirty-nine miles, in the course of which it is augmented by a vast number of tributary streams, it disembogues itself into the Tweed near Kelso. This river, immediately on entering the parish, proceeds in a northerly direction, and leaves the ancient Barony of Ormiston, consisting of 680 acres, on its northern extremity. The Kale issues from among the Cheviots in the county of Northumberland, and, after a rapid course of eighteen miles, it discharges its waters into the Teviot somewhat to the north of Eckford church. This is a much smaller stream than the Teviot, but more impetuous in its current. It runs through the parish in a north-westerly direction, and divides it nearly into two equal parts. In some places, its banks are bold and romantic in a high degree, and beautifully overhung with wood. Both these rivers are occasionally subject to sudden inundations, which, by breaking down embankments occasion considerable detriment.—There is one small lake in the parish, measuring about 13 acres in extent. It lies at the bottom of Woodenhill, a little to the south of the village of Eckford moss, and forms the bed of a marl-pit, which was once wrought in the district. It is in some places

about 30 feet in depth, and when seen at a distance constitutes a beautiful object.

Geology.—The rocks that predominate in the parish are of the sandstone and trap formation: the former occupies the lower, and the latter the higher parts of the district. Of these rocks there are several quarries, some of them of excellent quality. Many years ago, a small seam of coal was discovered at Caverton edge, in this parish; but the investigation was not carried far enough to be followed up with any beneficial result. Both peat and marl once existed in the district,—the one mostly incumbent on the other; and imbedded in these, animal and vegetable remains have been found. “In wester moss, nuts, roots, pieces of large oak and other trees have been dug up, also the scull of a bison, and the horns of a red-deer very large.” These horns, which at present are in the possession of Mr Robert Church, farmer, Moss-tower, have seven branches, and are supposed to be in weight about two stones. At what distance from the surface these remains were discovered, it is impossible now to determine.

Soil.—The soil in the parish is various: that on the lower grounds towards the Teviot is a light mould, while that on the higher grounds towards the south partakes more of a clayey character. On the same farm, however, there is often a great variety of soil; but the crops which it yields are for the most part rich and abundant.

Zoology.—This parish presents to the zoologist no rare species of animals. In the rivers, salmon and trout are in great abundance, and of excellent quality. The trout of the Kale is peculiarly delicious in its flavour. Hares, rabbits, partridges, and pheasants abound in the district, and on Ceesford moor the heathcock is occasionally seen. The starling, that most tractable of birds, visits the parish yearly, and often nestles among the rocky cliffs that overhang the Kale. Within these few years, a cuckoo was discovered in this place, in the nest of a small bird. With great care it was fed for some weeks on small pieces of flesh, and on these it seemed to thrive well. It was extremely voracious, and, so far from being discontented with its situation, always appeared quite at home.

Botany.—The parish presents, upon the whole, a wooded appearance. Almost all kinds of forest trees flourish here, and appear to be quite congenial to the soil. The most common species, however, is the fir tribe, of which there is a forest consisting of 360 acres

on Caverton edge, where the Kelso races were formerly held.* There are three aged yew trees in the churchyard, but at what time they were planted it is difficult to say. Close to the ancient mansion-house of Hall of Haughhead, stands a stately ash tree, under whose shade the children of that noted individual are reported by tradition to have been baptized.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Historical Notices.—This parish, the southern extremity of which lies within a few miles of the borders, was the scene of frequent rapine and devastation in former times. The village of Eckford, which was once a place of considerable note, was burnt by the English under the Marquis of Dorset in April 1553, along with many other places in the district. Within the bounds of this parish, there were of old several strengths or strongholds, such as Ormiston-tower, Eckford-tower, Wooden-tower, and Moss-tower; but of these the last mentioned was by far the most important. This was situated about the eighth part of a mile to the north-east of the village of Eckford, and within a few yards of the present farm-house, which now bears its name. It was so called, from a piece of marshy ground in its immediate vicinity, and is reported to have been once a residence of Hepburn Earl of Bothwell.† In an ancient chronicle, it is represented as surrounded by a marsh, and as accessible only at one point by a causeway. This the farmer at present is in the act of removing from its ancient site. On the 30th of June 1523, it was destroyed by a party of English headed by Thomas Lord Dacre; and on the same day were demolished Ormiston-tower, and a vast number of other places in the neighbourhood. On the 6th September 1544, it was burnt along with the tower and church‡ of Eckford, by an army under Sir Ralph Eure, and forty-four persons, who were found in it, fell victims to

* This, from one of the titles of his Grace the Duke of Roxburghe, is denominated the Bowmont forest.

† About fifteen years ago, some persons were employed to divide a common in this district, partly belonging to the Duke of Buccleuch, and partly to the Marquis of Lothian. A doubt having arisen, as to which of these proprietors a certain piece of ground should be assigned, an old man in the neighbourhood was examined on the question. After interrogation, he stated, that he had heard it reported, that some tenant on the laird of Buccleuch's lands here, had put out an ox to graze on the spot, but that the laird of Crailinghall, conceiving that a trespass had been committed, shot the animal. *Immediately upon this* (added the old man,) *Bothwell having girt on his armour, came up from his tower, to take vengeance on the aggressor, but before he arrived the laird had secured himself within his fortress. This anecdote certainly tends to strengthen the belief that Bothwell once resided at Moss-tower.*

‡ The ancient church bell of Eckford is at present in the belfry of the church of Carham, in the county of Northumberland. At what period it was carried off, it is difficult to determine. Probably it was at this time.

the fury of the assailants. Shortly after this, it appears to have been rebuilt; but it was again destroyed in 1570, by the Earl of Sussex, who, in the course of a few days, laid waste in this quarter a very extensive tract of country. Within these fifty years, the massive ruins of this ancient structure were unceremoniously pulled down, and that with a view of affording an easy access to materials for rearing the farm-offices which now stand near its site. The lands of Moss-tower anciently belonged to the Laird of Buccleuch, so celebrated in Border history, and is now the property of his descendant, His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch.

But the most famous fortress in this parish was Cessford Castle, * which stands on its southern extremity, and which was the ancient manorial residence of Sir Robert Ker, commonly known by the name of Hobbie Ker, warden of the Scottish middle marches, from whom the Dukes of Roxburghe are descended. † This is, at present, a mere ruin; but from what remains of it, some conjecture may be formed of its pristine greatness. The main building is about 67 feet long, 60 feet broad, and 65 feet high, and the walls in point of thickness amount at an average to about 13 feet broad. The dungeon, which is situated nearly in the centre of the fortress, is still open to inspection: it consists of a damp gloomy apartment 20 feet in length, 10 in breadth, and 13 in height, with a slanting air-hole looking toward the east. At the west end of this apartment, is a subterraneous vault, which was anciently known by the name of the *dungeon peel*, and which was probably chiefly

* Here towards the close of the sixteenth century, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, is reported by tradition to have been for a time confined. While riding in the vicinity of Edinburgh, he was seized by a moss-trooper, who, wrapping a cloak around him, mounted him on his steed, and carried him off to this fortress. Here he was detained till a law-suit, which was then pending before the Supreme Court, and in reference to which he was held to entertain opinions hostile to one of the parties, was decided. After this, he was conveyed, after a like fashion, to the spot where he had been taken up; and being set at liberty, he shortly after appeared to their great surprise and joy, in the midst of his family, who had long since conceived he had been assassinated. Some time thereafter, being on a visit at Cessford Castle, he was startled at hearing, in the act of calling for his dog, the well known voice of a shepherd, which had sounded every morning in his ear during the time of his imprisonment, and which convinced him that this was actually the very spot of it. Upon subsequent investigation he found that his opinion was correct.

† Andrew Ker of Attonburn, in 1446, was probably the first of the noble family of Ker, who occupied this castle. In that year he obtained, as is mentioned by the writer of the last Account, a charter of the barony of Cessford, from Archibald Earl Douglas, who was afterwards known by the name of Duke of Turenne or Longville. The most illustrious of his descendants, appears to have been the above-mentioned Sir Robert Ker, who was born 1570, and who is here still spoken of as one of the most powerful men of his times. In 1606, he was raised to the Peerage by the title of Lord Roxburghe, and in 1616 he was elevated to the rank of Earl of Roxburghe, and Lord Ker of Cessford, and Caverton. He died 1650. His descendant, John the third Earl of Roxburghe, was created a Duke in 1707.

intended either as a reservoir for water, or as a depository for goods. Some have averred that it was occasionally employed as a prison, and perhaps this averment is founded on fact. There is an air-hole on the south side of it, but it is so constructed that not a ray of light can possibly be admitted. This vault measures about 10 feet long, 17 feet broad, and 9 feet deep. The only entrance to it was by an aperture at the top, "and this was kept shut as necessity required, by a large stone* with an iron ring in it." The roof, which rose several feet above the level of the dungeon, was arched, but it is now completely gone. Anciently, this fortress was surrounded by an inner and an outer wall: the former has entirely disappeared, but some remains of the latter still exist. The space between these walls, as may be inferred from the history of all border strengths, was primarily appropriated for the reception of cattle, in which the wealth of the marchmen principally consisted. A moat once surrounded the whole out-works, and of this some traces are still to be seen. Probably, it was supplied with water from a spring, which lies about a quarter of a mile to the south.

This fortress, from its great importance, was often the scene of hostile invasion in ancient times. In the reign of Henry VIII. the Earl of Surrey, after destroying a number of places in the neighbourhood, attempted to take it by assault; but he asserts in a letter addressed to his sovereign, on the 21st May 1523, that, had the owner not agreed to capitulate, he would have been unable to have obtained possession of it at all. With the exceptions of Fast Castle and Dunbar Castle, he represents it as the strongest place in Scotland; but this he did, in all likelihood, to magnify his own exploits, in the eye of his capricious master. This castle, there is reason to believe, ceased to be regularly occupied by the noble family of Roxburghe, shortly before the death of Sir Robert Ker in 1650, and since that period, it has been allowed, in all probability gradually, to go into a state of dilapidation. According to the testimony, however, of Wodrow, the historian, Henry Hall of Haughhead, and some others of the Covenanters, were confined as prisoners here in 1666; but the former, through the influence of the then Earl of Roxburghe, his friend and relation, accomplished his release. The ancient key of this fortress was accidentally discovered by a boy some years ago. It was dragged out from an aperture in the inside of the wall, close to the main door, where for nearly two centuries it had probably lain undisturbed. It

* The Rev. Mr Paton, the writer of the last account, observes, that this stone and ring some persons had seen who were alive in his day.

was of a very antique form, and measured about 11 inches in length. It is now in the possession of His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe.

About a quarter of a mile to the north of the castle, in a steep bank close to Cessford-burn, is an artificial cave of considerable dimensions. It is in a very sequestered spot, and might be often passed and repassed without attracting observation. It is known by the name of Hobbie Ker's cave.

On the southern banks of the Kale, near Eckford mill, is the small estate of Haughhead, which is one of the most retired spots in the parish, and which was once the property of Robert Hall, usually known by the name of Hobbie Hall, a man remarkable both for his piety and his bodily strength. About a quarter of a mile to the south of his ancient mansion-house, which is still in a tolerably good state of repair, is a mount which measures in circumference 218 feet, and to which the appellation of Haughhead *Kipp* is given. This is composed of artificial layers of earth and stone, and is surrounded with a clump of old fir trees, which, standing out from the extremity of a belt of young plantation, gives to the place when viewed at a distance, something like a turreted appearance. Placed on the summit of this mount is a rude stone, which, according to tradition, records a triumph achieved by Hall over Ker of Cessford; when ousted in his attempt to take lawless possession of his property. The stone has been wantonly broken; but the inscription on it, which is now scarcely legible, is as follows:

Here Hoby Hall boldly maintained his right,
Gainst Reif plain force armed with lawles might,
For Twenty Pleughs harnes'd in all their Gear,
Could not his valient nobl Heart make Fear,
But with his sword he cut the formost Soam
In two: hence drove both pleughs and
Pleughmen home. 1620.

About a quarter of a mile to the east of this mount, in a deep ravine through which the Kale over a rocky bed winds its way, is a sequestered spot where tent-preachings were wont to be held by the Covenanters of old; and a little farther down, on the opposite side of the stream, near Grahamslaw farm-house, are to be seen several artificial caves of various dimensions, whither that persecuted people used to flee for refuge, in times of danger. As is mentioned by Wodrow, they had two great conventicles in Scotland,—the one at Haughhead, in this parish, and the other at Maybole, in the county of Ayr. From Henry Hall,* the then proprietor of Haughhead, an individual both of the most undaunted courage and of the most unaffected

* It is probable that this person was the son of the above-mentioned Robert or Hobbie Hall.

ed zeal in the cause of religious truth, they experienced all the countenance and protection which his circumstances could afford. This excellent person, as is well known, died while on his way, as a prisoner, to Edinburgh, in consequence of being struck with a carabine by Thomas George, Queensferry; and on his person was found a rude unsubscribed draught of a covenant, which is commonly known by the name of the Queensferry paper.*

Stone coffins have been frequently found in this parish. One was discovered in a field called the Priest's Crown on the farm of Eckford Eastmains, in 1831, containing a few decayed bones in one corner, and a small jar with some black dust in it in the other. The jar was supposed to have been a Roman one, but it was unfortunately destroyed. On the farm of Moss-tower, a medal of the Empress Faustina was found in the heart of a peat, with the inscription quite distinct. It was presented by the late tenant to a member of the noble family of Douglas. A little to the west of Caverton-hill-head cottages, are the remains of a tumulus of considerable extent, which is now nearly on a level with the contiguous field, and which is said to have been an ancient burying ground. No bones have as yet been discovered in it, but it has not hitherto been sufficiently examined; it is called *the black dike*. At Caverton† there is an old grave-yard, now scarcely ever used. Near to it stood a chapel, of which there are now no remains. It was founded by Walter Ker of Cessford, and confirmed by charter under the grand Seal in the year 1500. Close to this was a well which used to be called the Priest's well, but by this name it has almost ceased to be known.

* Near the south-west corner of the field, to the west of the manse, is a bog, which has of late been drained, and with which is connected a curious tradition. It is averred, that on this spot a smith's house, with his smithy and other appurtenances, once stood, and that the members of his family were of a very disorderly description of character. On the morning of a Sabbath, while the people from the vicinity were passing on their way to church, the whole place exhibited a scene of tumult and confusion; but on their return from it a few hours after, every vestige of a human habitation had disappeared, and nothing was to be seen but the bog, with which the spot was supposed to have been cursed. That this bog would never be drained was long believed in the district, and circumstances for a time seemed to justify the opinion. Several attempts were made for this purpose; but all proved for a time to be utterly ineffectual. On one of these occasions, however, a smith's anvil was found buried in the marsh, and this was considered as at once confirmatory of the truth of the tradition. The anvil was in tolerable preservation, and was intended to have been given to the late Sir Walter Scott, to whom an account of the tradition had been communicated. The hill, at the bottom of which the bog was situated, is called the Smithy-hill.

† The Barony of Caverton anciently belonged to Lord Soulis, who forfeited his property, in consequence of his being engaged in a conspiracy against Robert the Bruce, towards the beginning of the fourteenth century. The life of this nobleman was spared, although he was imprisoned in Dumbarton Castle till his death. According to tradition, however, he was boiled alive, on the strength of a hasty expression of the King, in a cauldron, at a place called the Ninestane rig, in the vicinity of Hermitage water.

Eminent Men.—In this parish, at Marlefield,* was born Sir William Bennet of Grubbet, a man of excellent taste and great literary attainments, and a distinguished patron of talent and learning in his day. This individual was the intimate friend of Thomson and Ramsay, and has been represented to be the Sir William Worthy of the celebrated pastoral poem † written by the latter. Indeed it is affirmed that both he and Thomson had some share in the composition of the comedy. In this parish, he lived during the greater part of his life, and by the community at large was held in high estimation. ‡

In the society of this distinguished individual, Thomson spent

* The House of Marlefield is a very spacious edifice. In front of it is a most beautiful lawn, and the grounds in its vicinity are in various places embellished with rows of magnificent lime-trees. This estate was much improved by the late tenant, Mr Ralph Oliphant, a gentleman who was highly respected in the district for his amiable and obliging deportment; and it is but a just tribute to his memory to add, that he took a deep interest in every matter connected with the welfare of the parish.

† Tradition avers that the scene of the *Gentle Shepherd* lies in the vicinity of Marlefield House; but with what truth the writer of this account does not presume to determine. Doubtless, however, many of the descriptions, as given in the poem, correspond with the character of the scenery here. On this estate anciently stood a cottage which went by the name of *Symon's House*, and here too is a field which was wont to be called *Symon's Field*. In this district, also, once resided two old women who have been represented as answering the characters of *Mause* and *Madge*. Within a short distance from Marlefield, to which Ramsay refers by name in one of his poems, is a sequestered spot called *Habbie's How*, through which, over a pebbly channel, runs a small burn or rivulet on its way to the Kale. This burn, which in some parts is confined within pretty steep banks, flowed, in the days of Bennet, close to Marlefield mansion-house; but in this quarter its course was altered many years ago through part of this estate. Along the bottom of a narrow glen flows also a small stream, which is vulgarly pronounced *Mowse's Burn*, but from what source the term is derived it is perhaps impossible now to ascertain. Near this, too, is a small eminence which is denominated *Mowse's knowe*. Here there are several craigs from which the "*Lover's loup*" may be most effectually taken. In the body of the poem, mention is made of the West-Port and Town of Edinburgh, as if these were not far distant from the scene of it; but it is well known that the tenantry here, in the time of the poet, used to drive their stock as regularly to that city for sale, as they at present do to the market at Morpeth. Of course their visits to Edinburgh in those days were of no rare occurrence. Indeed the phrase, "He was in at the Town," as referring to Edinburgh, is common in this district at the present day. Here the pastoral is reported to have been first acted, in the presence of the families of Marlefield and Clifton, and at the residence of the latter. As the above tradition exists in the parish, the writer of this account has judged it right to advert to it. Probably, however, Ramsay in the delineations of character and scenery which he gives in his admirable pastoral, confined himself to no particular district, but drew his descriptions from every proper source which at any time was most patent to his observation. Of course some licence, too, must be allowed to the imagination of the poet.

‡ Adjoining to the church, is the family aisle, where his remains are deposited; and over the entry is the following inscription, which is now much effaced:

Hoc
Monumentum
Sibi et suis bene Merentibus
ponendam curavit
Dominus Gulielmus Bennet
Eques auratus
anno salutis
1724.

some of the happiest days of his life, and was in all respects regarded as a member of the family. *

Richard Cameron, the founder of the Cameronians, was licensed at Haughhead, in this parish, to preach the gospel. In 1680 he was slain at the battle of Ayrsmoss.

Landholders.—In this parish, there are six landholders: His Grace the Duke of Roxburghe; His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch; the Most Noble the Marquis of Tweeddale; Robert Mein, Esq. of Ormiston; the Heirs of the late Andrew Wilson, Esq. of Mainhouse; and William Ker, Esq. of Chatto. Of these the Duke of Roxburghe and the Duke of Buccleuch, are by far the largest proprietors; and to them, upwards of four-fifths of the parish belong.

Parochial Registers.—Of the parochial registers there are five volumes, and the date of the earliest entry is 27th May 1694. At present, they are very carefully kept; but as the dissenters do not regularly engross their children's names into the record, the list of baptisms cannot be so complete as it would otherwise be.

Public Buildings.—Within these few years, Mr William Mather, an observing mechanic of this place, having purchased about half an acre of land from the late William Mein, Esq. of Ormiston, has erected upon it an establishment for making all kinds of agricultural implements. This is one of the most extensive concerns of the kind in this quarter of the country, and the articles which are made here will, in point of workmanship, bear to be compared with any of a like description in the surrounding district. Here Mr Mather intends to erect a saw-mill ere long; and from such, considerable benefit may probably accrue to the neighbourhood. There are three mills in this parish where corn may be ground, viz. Ormiston mill, Eckford mill, and Caverton mill; but of these the first mentioned is by far the most

* It is worthy of remark, that the poet was apt to be extremely apprehensive of supernatural spirits. If after night fall, he chanced at any time to be on his way from Wideopen, his patrimonial property, to Marlefield, he was in the habit of regularly calling at a farm-house in the vicinity of the latter, and requesting one of the inmates to accompany him to the seat of his patron. Lady Bennet, who appears to have been a person of considerable humour, used sometimes to play on the weakness of the poet. Tradition avers that, on one occasion, when there was a large party at Marlefield, she dressed up a figure in the human form, and secretly deposited it in the bed of Thomson. The unsuspecting poet deserted the figure, when on the eve of putting on his night dress, and his cries of terror proclaimed that the frolic had been successful. Rushing down stairs he entered the drawing-room in a state somewhat approaching to frenzy, and truly caused her Ladyship, who, in the impulse of the moment, threw an apron around him, to repent of the extravagance which she had committed. Within two miles of Marlefield, in the parish of Morebattle, is a hill on which Thomson is said to have written his *Winter*, and which, from its having two tops, is called *Parnassus*. Here, till of late years, his anniversary was wont to be celebrated by a large assemblage of his admirers of both sexes, from all parts in the neighbourhood.

important. There is also in this parish an excellent rice-mill, which was erected at Ormiston several years ago by the late proprietor; but, from circumstances, it has never as yet been in active operation.

III.—POPULATION.

In 1791 the population amounted to	952
1801,	973
1811,	1007
1821,	1133
1831,	1148

There are, as nearly as can be ascertained, 17 births, 10 marriages, 16 deaths, at an average, in this parish in the course of the year. All the heritors have upwards of an annual rental of L. 50 Sterling, and only one of them resides in the parish. There are 2 deaf and dumb, and 3 fatuous persons in the district. The population of this parish, in so far as can be traced, is greater at present than it has been at any previous period of its history. This increase is no doubt owing to the general improvement which has taken place on the character of the soil, and which of course renders a greater number of hands necessary for the purposes of agriculture than formerly.

Character of the People.—The people are in general cleanly in their habits, industrious in their conduct, and regular in their attendance on the ordinances of religion. They enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts and advantages of society, and may be said upon the whole, to be contented with their circumstances in life. The ordinary food of the peasantry is meal, potatoes, butter-milk, and pork of their own rearing. The bread commonly used by them is a compound of barley and pease meal, and it is considered as extremely wholesome. To these is occasionally added a little butcher meat. Poaching, both in game and in the salmon fisheries, is not unfrequently practised in the district.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—

Land cultivated or occasionally in tillage,	7728 acres.
uncultivated,	1141
in undivided common,	13
under wood,	813

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land in the parish is about L. 1, 2s. per acre. The average rent of grazing an ox or cow is L. 3; a ewe or full-grown sheep, 10s. The real rental of the parish in 1791 amounted to L. 3699, 4s. 1d. The present rental is L. 8676.

Husbandry.—The art of agriculture in this parish is in a highly improved state. The tenants are an active and industrious class of men,

and by their liming, draining, &c. are evincing a laudable anxiety still more to ameliorate the character of the soil. They are much attached to their landlords, who treat them in return with kindness and liberality. The largest farm in this parish is the Barony of Cessford, which consists of upwards of 2000 acres of land, and which has long been occupied by Mr Archibald M'Dougall, a gentleman whose ancestors resided for generations on the Roxburghe estate in this quarter, and who is well known to be one of the most skilful and intelligent agriculturists in the district. Within these thirty years, the improvements which he has effected on that property have been very great. In the course of that time, he has enclosed, at his own cost, the whole farm, drained it in the most efficient manner, and brought under cultivation upwards of 300 acres of moorland. Besides, he has removed all the old offices and cottages, and erected in a more eligible situation new ones of the neatest and most substantial kind. Independently of the expenses of liming the whole of this large farm, his outlay amounted to upwards of L. 4000.

The system of husbandry which is usually practised in this parish is the five-shift system. The turnips are partly eaten off the land by sheep, and partly stored up as provisions for fattening cattle during the winter. Of leases the usual duration is for nineteen years. The fences are in good order, and consist mostly of thorns. The farm-houses and offices are also in excellent order, and have been some of them erected within these twenty years.

Produce.—The average gross amount and value of raw produce raised in the parish, as nearly as that can be ascertained, are as follow :

575 acres of wheat, at L. 8 per acre,	-	-	L. 4600	0	0
700 acres of barley, at L. 6, 18s. per acre,	-	-	4830	0	0
1350 acres of oats, at L. 5 per acre,	-	-	6750	0	0
40 acres of pease and beans, at L. 6, 10s. per acre,	-	-	260	0	0
85 acres of potatoes, at L. 7 per acre,	-	-	595	0	0
1100 acres of turnips, at L. 4 per acre,	-	-	4400	0	0
315 acres of hay, at L. 5 per acre,	-	-	1575	0	0
3435 acres of good pasture, at L. 1 per acre,	-	-	3435	0	0
1013 acres of moorland, at 4s. per acre,	-	-	202	12	0
269 acres of summer fallow, inclusive of 69 acres of waste land,	-	-			
813 acres of wood, thinnings of do.	-	-	244	0	0
			<hr/>		
			L. 26,891	12	0

Breeds of Live Stock.—The sheep that are reared in this parish are of the Leicester breed, and every attention is paid to their improvement. The cattle which are fed here are almost all of the short-horned kind, and these are sometimes fattened to an immense size.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Villages, Market-Towns, Means of Communication.—There are several villages in this parish; but the most important are Eckford, Cessford, and Caverton. The nearest market-towns are Kelso and Jedburgh, the former being about four miles and a half, and the latter about five miles and a half, distant from the parish church. About a mile and a half of the turnpike road between Hawick and Kelso runs through the parish; and along this, a coach passes between these two places by the way of Jedburgh, every Tuesday and Friday. There is also a post which passes regularly along this line of road twice every day. In this parish, there are two stone bridges, both of one arch,—the one over the Kale near its junction with the Teviot, and the other over that stream near Eckford mill. The former was built many years ago at the expense of the county, and forms part of the great turnpike road which passes through the district; the latter is reported to have been erected, towards the close of the seventeenth century, out of the proceeds of the stipend when there was no fixed pastor in the parish. There is, besides, an elegant chain bridge, which, a few years ago, was thrown over the Teviot near its confluence with the Kale, at the expense of the Late William Mein, Esq. Ormiston, and which, independently of the advantages resulting from it, forms a beautiful and interesting object. It was designed by Captain Samuel Brown of the Royal Navy, a gentleman whose talents and genius are well known, and the workmanship was executed in the most elegant and substantial manner by Mr William Mather, Kalemouth. The bridge is 180 feet in length, and 16 feet in breadth, and is intended for carriages as well as foot-passengers. There is a pontage upon it, which is as follows: for a foot-passenger $\frac{1}{2}$ d., for a horse or cart 3d., for a gig 6d., and for a chaise 1s.

Ecclesiastical State.—The church, which anciently belonged to the Abbey of Jedburgh, is in the gift of the Crown. It is beautifully situated on the southern banks of the Teviot, about a mile from the northern extremity of the parish. It was built in the year 1662, but since then it has undergone frequent repairs. It is a neat and an apparently substantial building, and contains about 300 sittings. Close to the eastern door of the church, is appended an iron collar, which is in a state of great preservation, and which is commonly known by the name of the *jugs*. In former times, church offenders were sometimes sentenced by kirk-sessions, to stand with it fastened round their neck, and clothed with sackcloth, for several Sabbaths, in pre-

sence of the congregation in token of their repentance and humiliation. The manse* was built in 1775, but since then it has undergone several repairs. In the year 1808, some additions were made to it, but these, perhaps from want of a proper inspector, were very insufficiently executed. The chief apartment of the house is, in appearance, a very handsome one, but it has not been occupied for several winters past, in consequence of its extreme cold. The extent of the glebe is about 7 acres, and its value may be rated at about L. 1, 15s. per acre. The stipend amounts to 15 chalders, half meal and half barley, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion expenses, and forty-two pounds of cheese from the tenant of Cessford, in the way of vicarage tithes. Besides this, the minister has a servitude for turf on a piece of moor-land, which lies on the south side of Woodenhill, and which is about two miles distant from the manse. The moor belongs partly to the Duke of Roxburghe and partly to the Duke of Buccleuch, but the road to it lies through the farm of Wooden, the property of the latter nobleman. There are no dissenting or seceding chapels in the parish. There are 153 families attending the church, and 69 attending meeting-houses in the vicinity. The parish church is well attended. The average number of communicants for some years past has amounted to about 312. The number of examinable persons that worship at the parish church amounts to upwards of 520. There is one Episcopalian family, which generally attends the Established Church.†

Education.—There are two parochial schools in the parish, the one at Eckford, and the other at Caverton mill, and both teachers have the legal emoluments. The teacher at Eckford has the maximum salary, L. 34, 4s. 4½d., with fees amounting at an average to L. 21 annually. The teacher at Caverton-mill has L. 17, 2s. 2½d. with fees amounting at an average to L. 17 annually, with the interest of L. 40 of mortified money. The former has, at an average, about 70 scholars, and the latter about 46. There is also a school at Cessford, which is upwards of two miles distant from the parish schools, and which is attended at an average by 38 scholars. With the exception of a free school-house he receives only his fees, which amount to about L. 18 annually. The people are in gene-

* Close to the manse on the glebe is Eckford brae, which was a place notable for tent-preaching in former times. Thither at particular seasons immense multitudes from the surrounding country were wont to resort. Here Boston and other eminent divines used to dispense to the people the bread of life.

† Close to the entry to the churchyard has been erected by the heritors a neat cottage for the beadle, along with a commodious stable for the benefit of the parishioners.

ral alive to the benefits of education, and it is believed that there are none in the parish above six years of age who cannot read. There is also a boarding-school for young ladies in this parish; and the number that at present attend it amounts to upwards of 20. Here, they are instructed in all the usual branches of education, and to their moral and religious welfare every attention is paid. The establishment is kept by Misses Park and Spence, Upper Wooden. A Sabbath-school also exists in the parish, which, under the superintendence of the minister, is taught by the teacher of the first parish school, and several other well-disposed persons in the district.

Library.—In the parish, there are two branches of an itinerating library,—the one at Eckford, and the other at Caverton-mill. They are placed under the care of the parish teachers, and the books are lent to the people on their payment of a small sum quarterly. It is proposed, as soon as circumstances will permit, to establish a stationary library in the district.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—Regular assessments in behalf of the poor have existed for many years in the parish, and these are levied in equal proportions on the proprietors and tenants. There are at present on the roll the names of 30 paupers, and these receive at an average about 2s. per week. Besides these, there are 4 who obtain interim supply, and who are not regarded as regular paupers. There is no mortified money; and the collections at the church doors, as is almost always the case where assessments have been established, are exceedingly small. In this district, an aversion among the poor to seek parochial aid still, to a certain extent, exists. No sooner, however, is an application for charity made by an indigent individual before a meeting of the heritors and kirk-session, than the circumstances in which he is placed are at once made known to his neighbours, and the consequence is, that the sense of shame with which he once contemplated the idea of his wants, being exposed, soon comes for the most part to be diminished, if not altogether effaced. Now surely it were advisable, as far as possible, to remedy this evil; and how can this more effectually be done, than by distributing, in as delicate a way as may be, a little aid to such needy individuals, as may shrink at the thought of being regarded as regular paupers. With the concurrence of all parties, this assistance might easily be afforded out of a fund placed at the disposal of some responsible persons in the district, named by heritors and kirk-sessions for that purpose. The advantages arising from this system are so very palpable, indeed, that

PARISH OF SPROUSTON.

PRESBYTERY OF KELSO, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TEVIOTDALE.

THE REV. GEORGE CRAIG, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of this parish is of doubtful origin. Chalmers, in his *Caledonia*, gives two conjectures; one, that it may have been derived from *Sprous*, a proper name, and *Tun* a dwelling; the other, that *Sprus* in the Cornish dialect signifying “grain,” *Sprustun* may “denote the place fertile in grain.” This latter is a very appropriate derivation.

Extent, Boundaries.—In figure and extent the parish forms nearly a square of about 4 miles. The boundaries are, the Tweed on the north; the parish of Carham in Northumberland on the east; the parish of Linton on the south; the parishes of Eckford and Kelso on the west.

Topographical Appearances.—Two elevations of gradual ascent run across from north-east to south-west,—Hadden-rig through the centre, and Lempitlaw along the southern extremity. The vale between is in some places marshy, and, with the exception of a few acres on Hadden-rig, contains almost the only portion of the parish not under cultivation.

Soil.—The soil, along the river especially, is very productive, and is kept in a state of high cultivation. The Redden-haugh is famous for their extent, and for the sureness and abundance of their crops. Along the river, the soil consists of a rich loam, in

some places of considerable depth, upon a bed of sand. In the higher parts of the parish, the clayey substratum predominates. Hadden-rig above Kerchesters is the least productive part of the parish which is under cultivation. As you recede from this centre on all sides, but especially towards the river, the soil becomes warmer and more productive. This last remark regarding the soil is equally applicable to the climate.

Climate.—Comparatively bleak on Hadden-rig, the air is bracing on Lempitlaw, mild and salubrious along the river. The inhabitants, accordingly, are healthy and robust. The most prevalent distempers are fever, pulmonary complaints, and rheumatism. By this last, men and women, comparatively young, are frequently attacked, and rendered unfit for work during the rest of their lives. The cause of these distempers at once presents itself in the openness and dampness of the houses, which in most instances have originally been built with mud for mortar. Were proprietors of land to give more attention to the household comfort of those who live on their estates, they would in the end effect a considerable saving; as many, by longer health, would be enabled to provide longer for themselves and their families.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

The earliest mention made of this parish in any authentic document is found in the foundation charter of Selkirk dated 1114. It is also mentioned in the charter given to Kelso Abbey in 1128, as one of the parishes which was held *in rectoriâ* by that institution. Redden and Hadden are also referred to as contributing to the same institution. These places were probably of greater importance formerly, than they are now. Redden is mentioned as a town in connexion with Kelso, Sprouston, &c. in a writ of Protection granted by Henry VII. to the monastery of Kelso. The former importance of Hadden would appear from the permission granted to Bernard de Hawden by the Abbot of Kelso, to build a private chapel, where "he and his guests might hear divine service all the days of the year except on Christmas day, Easter day, and the feast of St Michael," when they were obliged to attend the parish church.

Hadden-stank and Redden-burn are frequently spoken of, in border history, as the spots on which the English and Scotch Commissioners met for the fixing of boundaries, and for the settling of other territorial disputes.

About the year 1540, Hadden-rig was the scene of a conflict between the Scots and 3000 English horse, in which the latter were

defeated. This was shortly after followed by an incursion into Scotland, by a large army led by the Duke of Norfolk, which, marching up the Tweed, destroyed many towns and villages. Among the latter, was the village of Sprouston, then called Long-Sprouston, extending probably, with straggling cottages, as far west as Burnfoot, which tradition says it once did. Tradition reports besides, that hearths and foundations of houses and kitchen utensils have been ploughed up in the field above the Scurry rock; from which, it would appear that the village was formerly of greater extent on that side also.

The barony of Lempitlaw, which forms the southern division of the parish, was originally a separate parish, but was, at a time which has not been ascertained, united to that of Sprouston. Part of the ruins of its church were, till recently, to be seen in the church-yard, which still continues to be the burying-place for that part of the parish.

Parochial Registers.—The oldest session records now extant bear date from 1650 till 1656, and seem to have been pretty fully and regularly kept; but they are now in a very imperfect and decayed state. The records subsequent to that period, with the exception of one interval between 1656 and 1691, are almost entire.

Eminent Men.—The late Dr Andrew Thomson was ordained minister of this parish in 1802, and translated to Perth in 1808. It is said of him, that when the alarm of invasion by the French was raised by fire-beacons on the neighbouring heights, he headed a numerous body of volunteers from the parish, and led them to Kelso, the appointed rendezvous for this district. This is the more remarkable, as the parishioners were supposed to be much infected with French principles.

III.—POPULATION.

The population would appear from the last Statistical Account, and from other circumstances, to have continued very nearly the same in amount, for the last century. Its present amount is somewhat less than 1400. In the village of Sprouston it is 420; in that of Lempitlaw 130.

The average number of persons in the whole parish,			
Under 15 years,	650	Above 50 and under 70,	129
Above 15 and under 30,	342	70,	27
30 and under 50,	352		
The number of bachelors and widowers upwards of 50 years of age,			14
of widows and unmarried females above 45 years of age,			48
of families in the parish,			295
chiefly employed in agriculture,			150
in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,			60
There are 3 fatuous, and 3 deaf and dumb in the parish.			

During the last three years there have been not less than 6 illegitimate births in the parish.

The whole of the original parish of Sprouston is the property of the Duke of Roxburghe, with the exception of Hadden and Notilees, which are the property of Sir William Elliot of Stobbs and Wells; and the farm of Softlaw, which is the property of Sir George Douglas of Springwood. Lempitlaw barony is the property of the Duke of Buccleuch.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—All the male population, with the exception of 26 weavers, 16 masons, 10 wrights, 6 tailors, 4 smiths, and their apprentices, 1 cooper, 1 baker, and 1 fisherman, are employed in agriculture, either as hinds, carters, or day-labourers. A great proportion of the unmarried female population are employed in the fields and barn-yard.

The number of acres standard imperial in the whole parish,	8207
under cultivation,	7128
under wood, principally fir,	123
lying waste,	556
of which capable of improvement.	400

Rent of Land.—The average rental of arable land per acre, L. 1, 3s. 9d.; the average rent of grazing per ox, L. 4; per ewe, 11s.

Wages.—Day's-wage for labouring men, 1s. 6d.; women, 9d.; masons, 2s. 6d.

Live-Stock.—The Leicester is the breed of sheep usually fed.

Husbandry.—Five-shift, or alternate husbandry, is generally adopted in cultivating the soil. Improvements by draining and otherwise carried forward to an average extent. Nineteen and twenty-one years are the length of the lease commonly given. The buildings and enclosures on some of the farms are excellent, on others they might be better.

Quarries.—Sprouston, till of late, was celebrated for a freestone quarry, situated about half a mile from the village, and close by the turnpike road. Kelso bridge and Abbotsford were built of its stone. A new quarry has been opened about half a mile to the south of the old one, which produces an inferior stone, and is not considered very profitable in the working.

Fisheries.—There is a fishery for salmon, which, along with a ferry for the convenience of the parishioners, is at present let for L. 71, 15s.

Produce.—

The average produce of grain of all kinds, whether cultivated for food of man or for domestic animals, may be estimated at	L. 16,537
of potatoes and turnips, at	4636
of hay at	1760
of land in pasture at	3743

Number of bolls oats raised in the parish,	9124
wheat,	3041
barley and peas,	3041

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Markets.—There is no market held in this parish; the nearest market-town, Kelso, being only two miles distant.

Villages.—Of these there are two,—Sprouston and Lempitlaw. The former is situated about 200 yards from the river, and is nearer to Kelso than to Carham parish by about a mile. It consists of 103 inhabited cottages, the school and schoolmaster's house just newly erected, and the manse. The church is in the centre of the village, and is built on what appears to be a gravelly eminence, of about twelve feet above the turnpike road. A spacious church-yard surrounds it, which, in 1814, was enclosed with an excellent stone wall five feet high. It had before that time, like many other country church-yards, been an open unenclosed space, intersected with numerous footpaths. The expense of the wall was defrayed by vacant stipend.

Lempitlaw consists of twenty-three inhabited cottages, and three one-storey farm-houses, and onsteads; one of the three being at the south-west, and two at the north-east end of the village.

Two turnpike roads run east and west across the parish; one through Sprouston and Carham to Cornhill, the other along Hadden-rig to Wooler. The parish roads are in good repair, are maintained by converted statute labour, and have lately in some places been greatly improved.

Ecclesiastical State.—Though the parish church is situated in the centre of the village of Sprouston, and therefore at one extremity of the parish, it cannot be said to be at a very inconvenient distance from any of the inhabitants. Mensilaws, an old farm-steading, now three cottages, at the extreme east, and one cottage at the extreme south-west of the parish, are between four and five miles distant. Lempitlaw district, Lurdenlaw, and Softlaw, which together contain about sixty families, are between three and four miles distance, and all the rest from one to two miles distance.

The present church was built in 1781, had the stairs to the gallery, which are inside, inclosed in 1822, and nothing now is wanting to render it a very comfortable place of worship but the flagging of the floor.

The number of families in the parish attending the chapels of Dissenters or Seceders is about 90.

The seats, 600 in number, are all free, but allocated to particular farms. Divine service is generally well attended. The average

number of communicants is 430. There is no meeting-house in the parish.

The present manse was built in 1777, is small, but at present in good repair.

The glebe, which lies between the manse and the river, contains 7 acres 18 poles. It is land of the very best quality, and of corresponding value. It has produced remarkably abundant crops.

The stipend is $14\frac{1}{2}$ chalders meal and barley, and L. 44 money.

Education.—There are three schools in the parish, the parochial and two side-schools. Of the latter, one is at Hadden, and was partially endowed by Lady Ker in the seventeenth century. The other is at Lempitlaw, and was endowed by the heritors in 1814, by appropriating for that purpose L. 100 vacant stipend. In the parish school the branches of education taught are the same as in other country schools. The schoolmaster's salary is L. 30. His emoluments from fees, which, per quarter, are, 2s. 6d. for reading; 3s. for reading and writing; 4s. for reading, writing, and arithmetic; 7s. 6d. for Latin, amount to about L. 40. He has at present no garden, but has from the heritors L. 2 in lieu thereof. In the two other schools, there is no Latin taught, but all the other branches of a common country education. At Hadden, the emoluments altogether scarcely exceed L. 15; at Lempitlaw, they may be about L. 30.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The poor are supported by legal assessment. The number on the roll is 43; their average allowance L. 3, 14s. 9d. per annum. In some cases, the allowance granted by the heritors is increased by the session. Those who have been assisted in this way during the past year amount to 16, and the average assistance to each is 11s. per annum. The average annual amount of assessments for the poor is L. 160, 14s. 3d.; of church collections, L. 10, 9s. 5d.

It has not been observed that there is any indisposition on the part of the poor to apply for parochial relief. Applications have sometimes been made,—more, seemingly, from a desire to add to the little comforts already possessed, than to remove pressing want,—more from a preference of dependence on a public fund, than of dependence on children in narrow circumstances, who, it is to be feared, too often make their parents sensible of their dependence. Such applications when rejected, are uniformly attended with a feeling of experienced injustice on the part of the applicants. Vicinity to England may in some degree account for this.

March 1837.