

many parishes regularly act upon it, while there are others so indifferent to their own interest, as in a great measure to neglect it.

Inns.—There are no public-houses in this parish. For many years, there was an inn established in the immediate vicinity of the church, and it was justly regarded as a public nuisance, by every right thinking person in the community.

Fuel.—The ordinary fuel which is used here is coal, and which is brought from a distance of twenty miles. There are several depôts in the neighbourhood, where the supply of this useful article may be obtained at about the rate of 9d. per cwt. Wood is also frequently used.

May 1836.

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 churchyard, 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,	550	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,			159
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.