

PARISH OF LILLIESLEAF.

PRESBYTERY OF SELKIRK, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TIVIOTDALE.

THE REV. DAVID BAXTER, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE origin of the name of the parish is unknown. According to Chalmers (Caledonia, Vol. ii.) it is a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon word "*clif*," (*littus vel ripa*) which signifies a haugh or bank. The name appears to have been differently written at different times. Thus in 1116, Lillescliva and Lillesclive; in 1186, Lillesclif.—Chart. Glasgow; in 1696, Liliesleafe; in 1743, Lilies-leafe; in 1750, Lilliesleafe; in 1768, Lilliesleaf.

Extent and Boundaries.—The parish is in length about five and three-fourths, and in breadth, two and one-half English miles,—comprehending upwards of 7000 acres English measure. Its form is quite irregular. It is bounded on the north by the parishes of Selkirk and Bowden; on the west by those of Ashkirk and Wilton; on the south and west, by that of Minto, where the three last parishes, and that of Lilliesleaf meet nearly at a point; and on the east by the parish of Ancrum. The river Ale, after running upwards of a mile in the parish, may be regarded as the natural boundary, for about two miles farther in its eastern course, towards the Tiviot, into which it falls.

Topographical Appearances.—There are several elongated eminences, which generally run from east to west, a considerable distance, in the form of ridges; on one of which the only village in the parish is situated. The declivities on the sides of these ridgy eminences are fertile and well cultivated. Again, there are rich valleys, and gently sloping banks, interspersed with thriving plantations and hedge-rows, which present in their combination a most agreeable aspect to the traveller. All this variety of ornament has been owing to the good taste of the proprietors.

Soil, Climate, &c.—The soils are loam, gravel, and clay, resting upon a whinstone tilly bottom; and the climate is good in the east of the parish, but somewhat colder in the west.

About forty years ago, ague was prevalent in the village,—probably owing to the effluvia of a considerable morass and pool, or rather loch, which stood on the low-lying mossy ground to the south, and in part also to the stagnant water that collected upon bad roads. Upon the draining of that loch, accordingly, this distemper in a great degree disappeared. It may be noticed, that the morass here alluded to was formerly the resort of sea-gulls or mews, in such vast numbers, that they are said to have fertilized a portion of an adjoining park still called Pick Maw Hill. The eggs of these fowls were then much sought after by the villagers.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Antiquities.—This parish seems to have had its full share in the predatory warfare of the borders, from which it is distant at the nearest point about twelve miles. Of this, the number of fortalices, forts, or towers, which had been erected, bear ample evidence. Various individuals of great age, who died within the last seventeen years, stated that, in their recollection, fourteen of these towers or forts existed, the far greater part of which were situated in the village. But the largest tower or fort was at the eastern extremity, and seems to have been the strongest and the principal defence of the place. It was situated on the highest part of the ridge upon which the village stands, and, from its being two stories in height, must have commanded a very extensive view. Its defence would also be assisted by the large pool and morass on the south, by the river Ale, and the steep ascent on the north,—while the lairds of Riddell and their retainers would furnish support on the west. Of this largest tower, the only remains about twenty-six years ago, consisted of a part of one side, which was of great thickness and strength, and of stones, which shewed that its form had rather been an oblong than a perfect square. It might have easily contained 100 men within its walls. There was also a fortalice or tower at Chapel, about a mile eastward, which was taken down about six years ago, situated in a convenient station for watching and warding, and furnished with loop-holes for guns, arrows, or missiles;—which narrowed to the inside, and gradually widened outwards.* The other towers in the village seem to have been peels (the common houses of the inhabitants in these times) which were towers of a small size, the remains of two of which still exist. This peculiar construction of houses, in the form of towers, seems to have

* There is a tradition that this tower was inhabited about eighty years ago by a witch, at whose death there happened a dreadful storm.

been dictated by necessity to the wealthy and to the poor, for when "the English advanced from Berwick to Jedburgh, in September 1521, with 10,000 men, there were six strong towers within the town, which continued their defence after the walls were surmounted. These were the residences of persons of rank, walled round, and capable of strong resistance."*

Conventicles.—During the persecutions in the reign of Charles II., when ministers and their people were prohibited by law, the one from preaching, and the other from hearing, the word of God, the moors in Lilliesleaf parish, from their retired situation, were frequently the resort of numerous conventicles; and for this offence, numbers in this parish appear to have been punished with death, imprisonment, or banishment.†

Land-owners.—The chief land-owners are, Mark Sprot, Esq. of Riddell, and William Currie, Esq. of Linthill. The parochial registers were regularly kept so far back as 1648; but having been allowed to get wet, apparently from lying in a damp situation, they are now partly illegible from decay. They appear to contain nothing of public interest.

Family of Riddell.—"The family of Riddell have been very long in possession of the barony called Riddell, or Ryedale, part

* Tales of a Grandfather, by Sir Walter Scott.

† In 1670, "His Majesty, understanding that divers disaffected persons have been so maliciously wicked and desperate as to convocate his Majesty's subjects to open meetings in the fields, and considering that these meetings are the rendezvous of rebellion, and tend in a high degree to the disturbance of the public peace, doth therefore statute and declare, that whosoever, without license and authority, shall preach, expound scripture, or pray at any of these meetings in the field, or in any house where there be more persons than the house contains, so as some of them be without doors, or who shall convocate any number of people to these meetings, shall be punished with death and confiscation of goods." Severe penalties are then denounced against the persons attending such conventicles; rewards are offered to informers; and to stimulate the activity of the magistrates, the heavy fines exacted upon conviction are awarded to them.—Cook's History of the Church of Scotland, Vol. iii. p. 326.

"In 1678, William Turnbull, brother to Walter Turnbull, in Bewlie, appeared before the council for being present at house and field conventicles, and, refusing to depone upon the circumstances of them, is banished to the plantations."—Wodrow, Vol. i. p. 525.

"In 1679, many ministers were put to trouble for conventicles, several were imprisoned, among whom Mr Archibald Riddel, brother to the laird of Riddel."—Wodrow, Vol. ii. p. 124.

Mr Riddel was eminently distinguished for piety and devotion to the service of God, by preaching in these troublous times, to the people of various conventicles, in different places, as well as Mr Blackader. "Some time before the communion at east Nisbet, Mr Blackader kept a very great conventicle at Lilsly (Lilliesleaf) moor in Forestshire. They had knowledge that the sheriff and some of the Lifeguards were ranging Lilsly moors, on the fore part of the day, upon which the meeting shifted their ground within Selkirkshire, thinking themselves safe, being out of his bounds," whither they were followed by the sheriff and his soldiers, whose ardour, however, was cooled by the firm deportment of the multitude, their fidelity and care of the minister, and the courage of the sheriff's sister, who was present, and had been an attentive hearer of the word preached.

of which still bears the latter name. Tradition carries their antiquity to a point extremely remote, and is in some degree sanctioned by the discovery of two stone coffins; one containing an earthen pot filled with ashes and arms, bearing a legible date, A. D. 727, the other dated 936, and filled with the bones of a man of gigantic size. These coffins were discovered in the foundations of what was, but has long ceased to be, the chapel of Riddell, and, as it was argued with plausibility that they contained the remains of some ancestors of the family, they were deposited in the modern place of sepulture, comparatively so termed, though built in 1110."—Lay of the Last Minstrel, Note 20, by Sir W. Scott, Bart.*

The aforesaid estates and lands of Riddell, &c. are now the property of Mark Sprot, Esq. to whom they were sold about 1823.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of Liliesleaf parish according to Dr Webster's return in 1755, was	521
In 1793 by Mr Campbell's Statistical Account,	630
June 1801 by Parliamentary return,	673
1811 by do.	755
1821 by do.	779
1831 by do. males 376, females 405,	781
In 1819-20 the population was 847, viz.	
In the country, 463, and in the village, 384, =	847

Upon the death of Sir John B. Riddell, Bart. of Riddell, in April 1819, who farmed the greatest part of his estate, the lands were immediately laid out in grass. Such a rapid change compelled those who had been employed in cultivating his extensive domains to seek a livelihood elsewhere, and hence the immediate declension of the population in the next succeeding year was 68. These lands have almost wholly continued in grass ever since. Several families and individuals have emigrated to British America and the United States, at various periods during the last ten years.

Under fifteen years, the number of persons is 279; from fifteen to thirty, country part, 112, village, 73 = 185; from thirty to

* Sir Walter adds, that "the following curious and authentic documents warrant most conclusively the epithet of 'Ancient Riddell.' 1st, A charter of David I. to Walter Rydale, sheriff of Roxburgh, confirming all the estates of Lilies-clive, &c. of which his father, Gervasius de Rydale, died possessed. 2d, A bull of Pope Adrian IV. confirming the will of Walter de Ridale, Knight, in favour of his brother Anschittil de Ridale, dated 8th April 1155. 3d, A bull of Pope Alexander III. confirming the said will of Walter de Ridale, bequeathing to his brother Anschittil the lands of Liliesclive, Whittunes, &c. and ratifying the bargains betwixt Anschittil and Huctredus concerning the church of Liliesclive, in consequence of the mediation of Malcolm II., and confirmed by a charter from that monarch. This bull is dated 17th June 1160. 4th, A bull of the same Pope, confirming the will of Sir Anschittil de Ridale, in favour of his son Walter, conveying the said lands of Liliesclive, and others, dated 10th March 1120. It is remarkable that Liliesclive, otherwise Rydale or Riddell, and the Whittunes, have descended through a long train of ancestors without ever passing into a collateral line, to the person of Sir John Buchanan Riddell, the lineal descendant and representative of Sir Anschittil."

fifty, country part, 92, village, 86, = 178; from fifty to seventy, 111; above seventy, * 28; total in parish, 781.

There are 8 unmarried men above fifty years, and 10 widowers ditto; and there are 18 unmarried women above forty-five years; and 5 resident heritors having above L. 50 of annual rent. Seven are non-resident, besides about a dozen feuars, most of whom are resident.

In December 1831, the population of the village was 380, and of the country, 425. It may be proper to observe, that the population of this parish is about 30 generally in the winter half-year, above what it is in the summer half. The chief cause of this difference seems to arise from the temptation of service in summer, when the wages to a female-servant are from L. 4 to L. 5, 10s. and the temptation to come home in winter, when the wages are from L. 1, 5s. to L. 2. A number of boys also get service in summer, who cannot obtain employment during winter. †

Character of the People.—They are in general industrious in their calling, and respectable in their station. They are also regular in their attendance on the institutions of religion, and possess a good knowledge of its doctrines and precepts. There are many who have treasured up these in their minds as principles for meditation and rules of conduct.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture and Rural Economy.—The number of English acres now in tillage is about 2600; uncultivated and chiefly mossy ground, 50 acres. There are about 2000 acres of high-lying land formerly cultivated, but now in grass for pasture, which should not be again brought into tillage, unless the prices of grain rise higher than they have been for many years past. There might be 1000 acres on the estate of Riddell added to the cultivated land in the parish with great advantage. This land having been let in grass parks during many years, there can be no doubt that capital would yield a profitable return by being laid out in its cultivation. The quantity in undivided common does not exceed two or three acres. The plantations, &c. of forest trees amount to about 600 acres, consisting of larch and Scotch firs,

* A few of the last class above eighty.

† It may be noticed, that the great number of beggars who traverse Scotland having no fixed residence, have not been reckoned in the population returns. In this parish, for a great number of years past, about fifteen, upon an average, have daily passed through it. A similar number may be found in many other parishes. They form no less than a fifty-second part of the population of these places, and are therefore a considerable omission in the Government returns.

with a proportion of oak, ash, and elm, and are in general well-managed. There is scarcely any natural wood.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of the arable farms is not easily ascertained, varying as it does from 10s. to L. 1, 15s. per acre, English. Leases of farms, granted four or five years ago, being too high, must fall at their expiry, unless the prices of agricultural produce shall have advanced. Village acres, of which there are many, have lately let at L. 3 per acre. About twenty years ago they were let at L. 5 per acre. The average price of grazing a cow upon arable land during the season, L. 5. A full-grown ox do., L. 4; and a full-grown sheep for one year 12s. But upon the 2000 acres of high-lying land, one-half of the above rates is enough.

Prices of Provisions.—Butcher-meat is about 1½d. per lb. dearer than in Edinburgh; good fowls from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. each; cheese about 6d. per lb. of 16 oz.; butter, 8d. to 10d. per lb. ditto.

Improvements.—The greatest improvement in the parish would be to lime the lands kept in tillage; but the distance being twenty-eight or thirty miles from the lime-kiln, and the expense so great, not less than L. 5 per English acre, it is doubtful whether the laying on of lime would defray to the farmer the expense of his outlay. On dry land, perhaps, it might repay; but not on clay soils. Several farmers have for some years past applied lime to their lands, and one has extended it, though in a defective quantity, over his whole farm, consisting of about 170 or 180 acres: and, from the superior crops consequent thereon, it will certainly amply repay the expense of outlay.

Produce.—The average amount of raw produce raised in the parish cannot be accurately ascertained. The following statement may, however, afford an approximation. Taking all the arable land presently in tillage at 2600 acres, and the four-course shift for the data, the amount may be thus stated:

1300 English acres in corn crop, of all the different kinds, at L. 5 per acre,	L. 6500	0	0
150 do. hay, at L. 3 per do.	450	0	0
500 do. in pasture grass, at L. 1 per do.	500	0	0
250 do. in turnip, at L. 3 per do.	750	0	0
860 do. in clean fallow.			
1000 do. in Riddell estate, good land let in grass parks, say L. 1 per do.	1000	0	0
2000 do. high-lying pasture land at 5s. per do.	500	0	0
40 do. potatoes at L. 5 per do.	200	0	0
Thinnings of plantations,	80	0	0
Produce of orchards and gardens,	50	0	0
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	L. 10090	0	0

A saw-mill driven by water has been erected several years ago

on the Riddell estate, for cutting and preparing the thinnings of wood for agricultural and other purposes, suited to the demands of the country.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication.—The nearest market-towns are Selkirk and St Boswell's, from each of which the parish is distant six English miles. A daily penny-post has been established in this parish from Selkirk, under the authority and subject to the regulations of the General Post-Office, Edinburgh: it is doing well, and promises to be of great benefit to the parish and neighbourhood. This is indeed a great acquisition when compared with the dilatory and uncertain receipt and dispatch of letters, &c. hitherto experienced.

The roads are generally good in all directions, though there are none of them turnpike, the whole having been made in a very proper manner from the statute-labour funds, at the rate of 40s. Sterling on every L. 100 Scotch of valuation, paid equally by proprietors and tenants, and they are kept in good repair.

Ecclesiastical State.—The situation of the parochial church, now in good repair, and capable of containing the parishioners, is as convenient as possible for the great body of the people. It was built in 1771, upon a deep loamy soil, lower than the contiguous grounds, and, from its injudicious situation, is consequently damp. The old church must have been of ancient erection, though the precise period cannot be traced from known records: on a stone of the eastern aisle contiguous to its ancient situation, there is the date 1110. No seat rents are demanded,—admission being free, after heritors and tenants are accommodated. L. 100 Sterling was mortgaged about a century ago to the kirk-session for behoof of the poor, the interest of which is regularly applied to its original purpose by direction of the heritors.

The manse was built very superficially in 1821 upon the lowest of eight estimates, and within the space of a year considerable repairs were found necessary, and executed to prevent the admission of rain-water through the walls, they being almost destitute of lime. The glebe consists of about eleven acres, and was lately valued by two intelligent farmers at L. 17 per annum.

The present stipend, decreed in 1820, consists of 16 chalders, and L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. A final decret of locality has been extracted, and gives as follows: L. 45, 1s. 7½d. money, including communion elements; 1 firloft, 2 pecks, 2¼ lip-

pies, wheat; 112 bolls, 3 stones, $3\frac{6}{10}$ lib. meal; 81 quarters, 6 bushels, 1 peck, and 2 quarts, barley, all paid by the fiars prices.

A dissenting chapel was erected during the incumbency of the late Mr Stalker in this parish, about twenty-six years ago: it belongs to the United Associate Synod persuasion, the minister of which is understood to be paid, along with the interest of debt upon the chapel, &c. from the seat rents and collections.

The number of persons of all ages in Lilliesleaf parish appears to be in 1834, as follows, viz. attending the Established church, about	429
Do. Chapel in Lilliesleaf of United Associate persuasion from Lilliesleaf parish, of all ages, about	249
Do. Three chapels at Hawick and Selkirk, of said persuasion, and chapel of Associate Original Seceders at Midholm, parish of Bowden,	95
Population of Lilliesleaf parish, 1834,	773

The attendants on the Established church at Lilliesleaf have continued to increase for a number of years past; and the attendants on the United Associate Chapel, as above, in Lilliesleaf, have been proportionally decreasing for several years past.

Education.—There are two schools in this parish, viz. the parochial and a private. The salary attached to the former is L. 25, 13s. 4d. besides an addition, on the teacher's proving diligent, of school-fees for a number of the poorest scholars: which addition, on an average of some years, has exceeded L. 5 annually; also L. 1, 11s. 10½d. for deficiency of garden-ground. He is also clerk to the heritors, for which he receives L. 4 annually, &c. His school fees have been stated to me at L. 17 a-year. He possesses all the legal accommodations. The heritors lately built a most excellent school-room. The branches generally taught at this school are English reading and grammar; writing, arithmetic, Latin, and French. The teacher is well qualified, and has, of late, adopted the improved system of education, which affords ground to expect a great increase to his school.

The private school is supported by a teaching-room, free of rent: and the school-fees are about one-fourth higher than those of the parochial, amounting to about L. 26 annually. In this school, viz. the private, are taught English reading, writing, and arithmetic; the latter only tolerably well, the former two in the most vulgar manner. The teacher has no education superior to a common labourer, and refuses to apply for farther information. There are none in this parish unacquainted with reading or writing.

Library.—A library was established about sixteen years ago,

consisting of books presented as donations, or purchased from the fees of admission and subscriptions.

Friendly Societies.—There were a few aged individuals (now deceased) within the last seventeen years, who derived aid from a friendly society. But no person here is now known to join any society of this sort, each looking to the parochial funds. Saving banks are in similar disrepute.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of individuals or families who receive parochial aid is 20, each, according to circumstances, receiving from L. 3 to L. 10, 8s. per annum, paid quarterly. In addition to which there are seven others who receive temporary or occasional supplies. The average annual amount obtained for their relief is, of church collections, L. 7, 6s. 4d.; interest of mortgaged money, L. 4; from mortcloth, 13s.; and of assessments on the heritors, L. 126, 10s. 4d. Total, L. 138, 9s. 8d.

Assessments were introduced about sixty-eight years ago. The heritors meet quarterly by legal intimation to assess themselves according to their rents. Assessments have undoubtedly been of great benefit when rightly applied; but they have also done much evil, wherever there has been any want of discrimination betwixt cases of real need, and clamorous applications from persons of idle inclinations. There are numbers who reckon it a degradation, and are most unwilling, to become a burden on the poor's funds, until obliged by necessity; but there are others who, from inclination to idleness, and other irregularities, forsake the honourable path of industry, and exert every species of ingenuity to be put upon the poor's roll; and, when once admitted to an interim supply, have recourse to mean and degrading shifts to be continued. Assessments for the poor being high in this parish compared to its population, and drawn almost entirely from those in wealthier circumstances, there is in consequence a diminution of church collections.

Inns.—There are four licensed houses in the village where spirits and ale are sold; one-half of this number would be amply sufficient. They are of an injurious influence upon the lower orders.

Fuel.—Coal, a little peat of inferior quality, brushwood, and thinnings of plantations, constitute the fuel of this parish; the first of which, being about thirty miles distant from the Lothian and English coal-mines, is very high in price,—higher, indeed, than in any of the neighbouring parishes, which are nearer either to the

one or the other of the mines. Peat is nearly exhausted, and confined in use to some feuars and a few tenants. Brushwood is dear as fuel; and, though very expensive, coal is by far the cheaper and more comfortable. It was remarked in the former Statistical Account of this parish, that "in the article of firing, the inhabitants must be at a greater expense than any parish of the south of Scotland."

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The more striking variations betwixt the present state of the parish and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account in 1793, are, *1st*, That the whole roads are now good and well made. *2d*, That a large extent of land has been planted with forest trees for utility and ornament. About forty years ago there were not 100 acres planted, now there are about 600; the late Sir John Riddell, Bart. having planted from 300 to 400 acres about thirty or forty years ago. *3d*, That the modern system of husbandry has now been fully introduced,—all the dry land, when in fallow, being sown down with turnip in drills, well-dunged and properly cleaned,—the clean fallow properly wrought and kept free of weeds, and dung laid thereon, and a break regularly laid down with grass seeds. Farm-steadings have also mostly all been rebuilt with stone and lime, covered with slate, and made perfectly convenient for the farm; and thrashing-machines have been introduced upon almost every farm.

All classes of the people in this parish can now find employment if they are at all willing to work.

October 1834.