

PARISH OF ANCRUM.

PRESBYTERY OF JEDBURGH, SYNOD OF MERSE AND TEVIOTDALE.

THE REV. JOHN PATON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name and Boundaries.—THIS parish was originally named *Alne-crumb*, from *Alne*, the ancient name of the river, and *Crumb*, a crook or bend, than which there could have been no name more descriptive of the situation of the village of Ancrum, which is placed on a rising ground on the south side of the Water of Ale, where the river takes a peculiar bend, and runs in a circuitous direction, till it discharges itself into the Teviot, about half a mile below. The parish is about six miles long and four broad, and is bounded on the south by the river Teviot, which divides it from the parishes of Jedburgh and Bedrule; on the east by Crailing and Roxburgh; on the north by Maxton and St Boswell's; and on the west by Minto and Lilliesleaf.

Topographical Appearances, Hydrography, Soil, &c.—The lower part of this parish is beautifully diversified, presenting every variety of irregular surface; and though it contains no hills, properly so called, it rises in some places into eminences of considerable height. On the Water of Ale especially, which is here and there o'erhung by steep and rugged rocks, partly of naked rock, and partly clothed in wood, there meets the eye a succession of scenery in the highest degree romantic and picturesque. Towards the upper extremity, however, the appearance of the parish becomes less interesting, from the general flatness of the ground, and the absence of any thing in the landscape peculiarly striking.

The only rivers are the two already mentioned,—the Teviot and the Ale,—the former being the southern boundary of the parish, and the latter intersecting it from west to east; and both of these streams, in addition to their acknowledged beauty, have been long celebrated as affording abundant sport for the angler.

The soil of this parish is extremely variable, including every variety, from the most barren to the most productive. Its average

quality, however, is good; and on the banks of the Teviot, especially, it is not excelled, in respect of depth and richness, by that of any district of Roxburghshire.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Historical Notices, &c.—This parish consists of the two united parishes of Longnewton and Ancrum, the former of which was annexed to the latter, towards the end of the seventeenth century. Of the old church of Longnewton there are now no remains, but its burying-ground is still made use of by some of the inhabitants of that western district.

The church of Ancrum anciently belonged to the Bishopric of Glasgow, of which University, indeed, many of the lands here still hold: and Longnewton was subject to the same Episcopal superintendence, though its revenues belonged to the monastery of Jedburgh. It appears from the documents referred to in "Caledonia," that, upon the dissolution of the establishment of Lindisfern, Ancrum with Teviotdale was annexed to the see of Glasgow, and that Teviotdale was erected into a separate archdeaconry in 1238.*

At one period, there were two villages here, distinguished from each other by the names of Over and Nether Ancrum. The former stood on the north side of the Ale, in the immediate vicinity of Ancrum House, according to the usual precaution adopted in these feudal times, when juxtaposition and mutual protection were so essentially requisite between the Lord of the Manor and his vassals. Of this village, however, nothing now remains, except one or two dilapidated houses, bearing date 1592. But on the opposite side of the river, still stands the other village referred to, though most of it appears to be of a more modern erection. Both of these villages were burned to the ground during the destructive expeditions of Sir Ralph Evers in 1544, and the Earl of Hertford in 1545.

The most remarkable event of a historical nature connected with this parish is the battle of Ancrum Moor, which was fought about a mile and a-half to the north of the village; but on the particulars of this battle it seems unnecessary to enter, as there are notices

* There are various documents relating to the parish of Ancrum in the Chartulary of Glasgow; in particular, there is, in the early part of the thirteenth century, a curious charter by Radulphus Burnard of Faringdune (Farnington,) in which he grants "Deo et beato Kentigerno et domino Waltero Epo., Glasguen et omnibus successoribus suis," in perpetuum focale de Peteris mois de Faringdune ad domum suam de Alnecrumb," &c.

of it to be found in almost all the Scottish histories, the fullest account being given by Tytler. We may just mention, that it took place in the year 1545, and arose out of an inroad into Scotland by Sir Ralph Evers, and Sir Bryan Layton, for the purpose of taking possession of the territories of Teviotdale and the Merse, which had been conferred upon them by a grant from Henry VIII., and in which battle they were defeated with great loss. It may be added, that it was on this occasion that the gallant Earl of Angus (Bell the Cat) whose property in the Merse and Teviotdale was thus in such eminent peril, said of Evers and Layton, when he heard of their threatened incursion; "If they come to take seizin in my lands, I shall bear them witness to it, and perhaps write them an investiture with sharp pens and red ink."

Antiquities.—This parish presents prominently few objects of curiosity to the notice of the antiquary. But like the rest of the border country which saw the original inhabitants, the Romans, the Danes, and the Saxons, successively dispute its possession, it contains various scenes calculated to awaken a deep interest. Of this description are the ruins of the Malton walls, which enclosed, at no distant period, an acre and a-half, within the area of which were visible various vaults and subterraneous passages, but of which there is now nothing to be seen except a small remnant of the outer wall.* According to tradition, this was once an establishment of the Knights of Malta, or Knights Hospitallers of St John; and though there is not in Keith or Spottiswoode, any notice of any religious house or hospital at Ancrum, we learn from various sources, that a religious establishment existed there as early as the reign of David I. But be the tradition right or wrong in reference to this building, it is evident, that the adjacent field has been used for the purpose of interment, human bones and entire skeletons having been frequently turned up by the spade and plough.

Near the Malton walls, in the opposite grounds of Ancrum House, and for a considerable way up the Ale, are also to be seen various caves, amounting in all to fifteen, hewn out of the rocky banks of the river in the most inaccessible places. These caves have doubtless been intended and used for places of concealment in the times of the border wars. And many of them must have

* Since the above was written the remnant referred to has fallen to the ground, its decay having been doubtless hastened by the extraordinary severity of the past winter: so that nothing now remains of the "Malton walls" but a heap of rubbish, and in all likelihood within a short period there will not be even a stone left to mark the site of this relic of antiquity.

been well adapted for the purpose, having not only been extremely difficult of discovery and access, but having been provided with fire-places and apertures in the roof to carry off the smoke, and commanding a plentiful supply of water. But the days are happily gone by, when, from the predatory habits of the borderers, such hiding-places were rendered necessary; and, as a pleasing contrast to their original destination, it may be mentioned, that they were often resorted to for retirement and meditation, by the author of the "Seasons;" and one in particular, named "Thomson's Cave," is pointed out as his favourite retreat, and which is situated in the immediate vicinity of the manse, of which the poet was the frequent inmate during the incumbency of his friend Mr Cranston.—Maiden Lilliard's tomb may also be considered as an interesting relic of the olden time. At the battle of Ancrum Moor, above-mentioned, a Scottish woman of this name distinguished herself by her singular valour; such being her undaunted gallantry, that she continued to fight when covered with wounds, and even after both her limbs had been struck off. In honour of her memory, the spot where she fought and fell, and on which she was buried, is marked by a monument, the original of which has almost all been destroyed, but in whose stead a new one was lately erected, on which is inscribed the original epitaph, which runs thus:

Fair maiden Lilliard lies under this stane,
Little was her stature but great was her fame;
Upon the English loons she laid mony thumps,
And when her legs were cuttit aff she fought upon her stumps.

There are likewise on the hill behind Ancrum House the remains of a British fort, consisting of three circular divisions or rows of large whinstone boulders; and at Harestanes, near Mounteviot, there stood within these fifty years the remains of a Druid circle, but which now, with the exception of one solitary stone, have all been removed. And in the centre of the village green, there stands an ancient cross, which one of the most learned architectural antiquaries of the present day thinks may be pronounced as old as the reign of Alexander III.

Mansion-Houses.—There are three principal residences in the parish: Ancrum House, the seat of Sir William Scott, Bart. a fine old baronial-looking mansion, standing in the midst of an extensive park, in which are to be seen some of the finest trees in the south of Scotland,* and whose picturesque effect is much increas-

* The following is the measurement of some of these trees, the measurement being taken several feet from the root:

Beech, in circumference,	-	13 feet.
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ed by the additional beauty of a numerous herd of deer; Chesters, the more modern residence of William Ogilvie, Esq. a large and handsome building, erected about forty years ago, and delightfully situated on the banks of the Teviot, at the mouth of a deep glen or dell, which stretches up behind the house, beautifully wooded on both sides; and Kirklands, the elegant seat of John Richardson, Esq. occupying a most romantic position on a wooded height over the water of Ale, which, sheltered by the picturesque green knolls and grey rocks and woods of Ancrum, forms an appropriate addition to the striking and beautiful scene of the church and old bridge, and mill immediately below it. This house, which has been recently erected after a design by Blore of London, is of the Tudor style of architecture, and of the reign of Henry VII.

Eminent Men.—“Worthy famous Mr John Livingston,” as he was fondly termed by his contemporaries, was, by an act of the General Assembly, settled minister of Ancrum in the year 1648. He was one of the three ministers sent over to King Charles II. in Holland in 1650, to make arrangements regarding the coming of that monarch to Scotland, and to treat with him in various important matters, both civil and religious, before his admission to the exercise of his government. In 1662, Mr Livingston, with many other ministers, was deposed for non-conformity, and having been also sentenced to banishment, he went over to Holland, where he occupied himself in his favourite pursuit, biblical literature, till his death, in August 1672, in the seventieth year of his age. For farther particulars of this remarkable man, “who was honoured by the Lord to be an instrument in the conversion of thousands,” reference may be made to a manuscript of his in the Advocates’ Library, and which is entitled, “A brief Historical Relation of the Life of John Livingston, Minister of the Gospel at Ancrum, with his memorable Characteristics, exemplified in the Lives of a considerable number of eminent Divines and private Christians in Scotland.” His biography is contained in the *Lives of Illustrious and Distinguished Scotsmen*, by Robert Chambers, and several particulars relating to him are to be found in Wodrow’s and Kirkton’s *Histories of the Church of Scotland*.

Land-owners.—Proprietors of land of upwards of L. 50 Scots valuation: Sir William Scott of Ancrum, Bart.; Sir George Douglas

Lime, in circumference,	-	27 feet
Weeping ash, do.	-	20 feet 8 inches
Walnut, do.	-	10 feet
Willow,	-	18 do. 5 inches

These are merely specimens of a great many of a similar size.

of Springwood-Park, Bart.; The Duke of Roxburghe; William Ogilvie, Esq. of Chesters; Earl of Minto; Honourable J. E. Elliot; Captain Brown of Park; John Sibbald, Esq. of Pinnacle; Major Pringle, of Rawflat; The Marquis of Lothian; John Richardson, Esq. of Kirklands; John Purvis, Esq. of Whitehouse.

III.—POPULATION.

The total amount of the population in this parish is 1454, of which about 550 are inhabitants of the village of Ancrum, and the remainder scattered throughout the other districts. The return to Dr Webster in 1755 gave 1066; and at the date of the last Statistical Account, there were 1146 souls. The increase of the population since these periods is to be attributed to the gradual improvements in agriculture, and the additional demand for farm-servants and labourers.

Number of families in the parish,	284
chiefly employed in agriculture,	154
in trade, manufactures or handicraft,	61

Character and Habits of the People, &c.—The people of this parish are in general well-behaved, industrious, and contented with their situation and circumstances.* The cottages of the working-classes are cleanly and comfortable, their food, though plain, is sufficiently plentiful, and almost all of them have the means of gratifying that laudable desire, so characteristic of the peasantry of Scotland, of appearing at public worship on the Sabbath, respectably attired. But their several degrees of comfort vary, of course, according to the number of their family, the rate of their wages, and their habits of economy: and we have doubtless among us many instances of indigent old age still exerting its remaining strength in the praiseworthy pursuit of an independent though scanty livelihood, or wholly subsisting on private and parochial charity.

There is no species of amusement to which the parishioners are especially attached, with the exception of the game of "ball," which is played only on one particular day of the year, in the month of February, the young men of one district being pitched against those of another. Similar games are also held annually, and about the same season, in some of the neighbouring parishes, and seem to create a considerable interest amongst the young men of the district.

* It must, however, be admitted, that this commendation cannot be applied to all, —there being not a few whose character is not only unworthy of praise, but whose reprobate conduct is much to be regretted, as well on their own account as on account of the morals and reputation of the parish generally.

The practice of killing salmon by the spear and torch is here carried on to a great extent, especially during close-time, and the numbers of foul fish that are annually taken in this way are very considerable. Poaching for game is also practised, though not to the same extent.

During the last three years there have been 20 illegitimate births; but in 8 of the cases, the parties were afterwards married.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The system of husbandry pursued here is in all respects similar to that of the surrounding districts. The five-shift rotation of cropping is that which is generally followed, and the common duration of leases is nineteen, and varying from that to fifteen years.

The rent of the arable land varies of course with the quality of the soil,—in some cases reaching as high as L. 4, and in others descending to 12s. per acre. The average rent, however, of all the arable land in the parish may be stated at L. 1, 3s. per acre. The real rent of the parish is L. 8698.

Rate of Wages.—A farm-servant's wage, every thing included, averages L. 28 per annum; that of a labourer 1s. 8d. per day in summer, and 1s. 6d. in winter; of a carpenter 2s., and of a mason 2s. 6d. per day. Single men residing in the farmer's house receive from L. 7 to L. 8, and women from L. 6 to L. 7 per annum, victuals included.

Live-Stock.—The kind of live-stock generally reared in this parish is what is commonly called the short-horned breed of cattle, and the Leicester breed of sheep, or a cross between the Leicester and Cheviot breeds. And the rate of grazing is as follows: A cow, L. 3, 10s.; a three year old, L. 2, 10s.; a two year old, L. 2; and a year old, L. 1, 10s. each: and a ewe, L. 1 per annum.

Acres under cultivation.		
Number of acres in	wheat,	1080
	Barley,	528
	Oats,	1716
	Turnips,	794
	Potatoes,	107
	Hay,	458
	Pasture,	2052
	Fallow,	602
	Peas and Beans,	161
Total under cultivation,		7496 acres.
In wood		820 acres.

Quarries.—Of these there are two in the parish in constant operation, the one consisting of red, and the other of white free-stone, the former belonging to the Honourable John Elliott, and

the latter to Mr Ogilvie of Chesters, and both of these stones being of superior quality, there is a large demand for them throughout the surrounding district.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Markets—Means of Communication, &c.—Though the parish has no market-town within its own bounds, it is very favourably situated in this respect, there being no fewer than five markets in the neighbourhood for the sale of grain, and to all of which there is good and easy access. Jedburgh, however, which is about six miles from the centre of the parish, may be reckoned the market to which the parishioners principally resort. It is also the post-town. The principal village in the parish is that of Ancrum, the inhabitants of which are almost all earning their livelihood in the usual agricultural or other employments of a country population. Some of them, however, are more independent than others, from the possession of a few patrimonial acres of land, and which in various instances have descended from father to son, for several generations. Throughout the whole parish, the means of communication enjoyed by the inhabitants is remarkably good, it being intersected in all directions by roads leading to the neighbouring districts: and along its eastern extremity for several miles, runs the turnpike road from Edinburgh to Newcastle, along which, summer and winter, stage-coaches are passing and repassing twice a day.

Ecclesiastical State.—Although the church is only about a mile from the eastern extremity of the parish, it is conveniently situated for the great proportion of the population; and even of the parishioners in the western district, there are few who are above three, and none above four miles distant from it. It was built in 1762, was thoroughly repaired about five years ago, is a comfortable place of worship, and affords accommodation to about 520. The sittings belong exclusively to the heritors.

The manse was built in 1751, since which period it has received two additions, the last of which was made in 1833. It is now a comfortable and commodious house, and being delightfully situated on one of the steep banks of the Ale, and surrounded on all sides by magnificent woods, and every variety of hill and dale, is perhaps not surpassed, in respect of local beauty, by any manse in Scotland. The glebe contains about 10 acres of arable land, besides a considerable quantity of natural and other wood, and is worth L. 30 per annum.

The stipend consists of 16 chalders of victual, and L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements.

There are 284 families in the parish, and of these there are, on an average, 160 families who attend the parish church. The remainder belong to one or other of the Dissenting meeting-houses in the neighbourhood. The average number of communicants in connection with the parish church is 470, and among these are to be found almost all the constant inhabitants of the parish, and the great majority of the tenants, so that the Dissenters consist principally of the fluctuating population of hinds and other farm-servants, a great proportion of whom change every year, and of whom, therefore, an accurate return cannot well be obtained. Upon the whole, however, it may be stated, that while there is no addition to the inhabitants of the parish, the number of its communicants in connection with the establishment is annually increasing.

The parish church is the only place of worship, and though it is generally well attended, yet it is much to be regretted that there are not a few of the parishioners whose attendance upon the public ordinances of religion is rare and irregular.

There are no Bible or Missionary Societies in the parish, but there is an annual collection in the church for missionary or other religious purposes, which yields on an average about L. 6.

Education.—There are three schools in the parish, the parochial, and two others. Of the latter, there is one which is endowed; having been formerly the parish school of Longnewton, where it is situated, and still retaining the provision which it had previously to the annexation of the parish of that name to the parish of Ancrum. Its endowment consists of L. 11 per annum, with a good house and garden, for the accommodation of the teacher; and its patronage is vested in the proprietor of the barony of Longnewton.

In all these schools the ordinary branches of education are taught, viz. English, English grammar, writing and arithmetic; in addition to which, in the parish school, instruction is given in Greek, Latin, French, geography and practical mathematics. For these latter branches, however, the demand is very limited.

The parish schoolmaster has the maximum salary, the legal quantity of garden ground, and a good house, consisting of four apartments. He also receives the annual interest arising from a sum of L. 50, which was left by a former resident in Ancrum, for behoof of the parish teacher, on the condition that he gives in-

struction in church music to some of the poorer children in the village.

The school fees are, 2s. per quarter for reading, with 6d. additional for writing and arithmetic; and 5s. for Latin; the other branches being charged in proportion, according to the agreement which may be entered into between the parents and teacher. The average number of scholars attending the parish school is about 90, and the amount of school fees is under L. 30 per annum.

The average number of scholars attending all the schools together is about 220, and to each of them there is attached a well-attended Sabbath school.

The parents in general seem anxious to avail themselves of these opportunities of getting their children instructed, and there are no instances in the parish of individuals upwards of fifteen years of age who cannot read or write.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of persons on the poor's roll is about 30, and their aliment is obtained by regular assessments upon the heritors, for which purpose they meet quarterly and assess themselves, according to the amount of supply required. The amount of assessment may be stated at about L. 150 per annum, paupers receiving from 1s. to 4s. each per week, according to the necessity of the case.

In addition to this, however, there are also the ordinary Sabbath day collections, amounting on an average to L. 15 per annum, over which the heritors claim no control, and all of which, with a small exception required for other purposes, is annually distributed by the kirk-session in occasional allowances of coals, meal, or money, among paupers requiring more than their ordinary aliment, or as interim supply to necessitous persons not on the roll.

The poor in general are far from being backward in seeking parochial relief, and the feeling of degradation in reference to such applications is neither so prevalent nor so strong as it was in former times.

Inns.—There are 6 inns or public-houses in the parish. Of these, there are two in the village, and two within a quarter of a mile of it; and, there being no fairs or markets in the parish, there are at least three of these ale-houses which might well be dispensed with. Their influence on the morals and circumstances of those in their immediate neighbourhood, who are in the habit of frequenting them, is very injurious.

Fuel.—Amongst the lower classes the use of coals is limited,

the carriage being very expensive. The nearest coal-hill is thirty miles distant, and the driving alone costs 9s. for a single cart-load. Fire-wood, however, is abundant in the neighbourhood, and may be procured for a comparatively moderate price, at the numerous sales of that article, and being thus less expensive and more easy of access than coals, it is more generally made use of for fuel than the latter, especially among the labouring classes, and many of whom are also in the habit of laying up for this purpose furze, turf, or peat, all of which are to be had in the neighbourhood,—the two former on the common moor for the mere labour of cutting them,—and the latter from the adjoining districts at a very small cost. It may be added, that, for the convenience of the public in this district, there are several depots of coals within a few hours drive, and at one of which (Crailing) only four miles distant, there are coals to be had through the year at from 6d. to 8d. per cwt.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The only striking variations which are apparent between the present state of the parish, and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account, consist in the improved system of agriculture, and in the additional extent of plantation. Here, as elsewhere, draining is now better understood, and more generally and efficiently practised than it formerly was, though much yet requires to be done in this respect.

The distance from lime, and the consequent heavy expense of obtaining it, remains yet, as it has hitherto been, the great obstacle to the reclaiming and improvement of the land in this neighbourhood. It may, however, be stated, that there is every prospect of this obstacle being so far obviated by the proposed formation of a railway from Berwick to Kelso, and from thence up the vale of the Teviot, and by the establishment of which, it is not to be doubted, many important advantages, besides the reduction of the price of lime, would accrue to this district of country.

April 1837.