

PARISH OF DRYFESDALE.

PRESBYTERY OF LOCHMABEN, SYNOD OF DUMFRIES AND
GALLOWAY.

THE REV. DAVID B. DOUIE, MINISTER.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name, Boundaries, &c.—It is obvious that this parish derives its name from Dryfe, a small rivulet that runs through the north-west side of it; Drysdale being a contraction or abbreviation of Dryfesdale. It lies in the middle of that beautiful and extensive valley commonly called the How of Annandale, and is in $55^{\circ} 08''$ north latitude, and 3° west longitude. It is 7 miles in length, north to south; at the southern extremity only about a mile broad, but at the centre $5\frac{1}{2}$, at the north end 3 miles; and contains in whole upwards of 11,000 acres. It is bounded on the south and west, which is flat and well cultivated for the space of $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles, by the river Annan, which divides it from the parish of Lochmaben; on the north-west by that of Applegarth; on the north by that of Hutton; on the east and south by the parishes of Tundergarth, and St Mungo.

Topographical Appearances.—No mountains, but some of the most beautiful hills add much to the beauty and diversity of the scenery, of the parish. The highest and most beautiful is White Woollen or Quhyte Woollen, but generally named White Wynd. The pasturage upon it being at one time very good, it used to be covered with very white sheep; from which it is supposed to have taken its name. But the lapse of a few years has created a wonderful revolution on its appearance. Instead of the once beautiful and white fleeces, we have to admire the rich luxuriance of the waving corn,—it being now almost all cultivated to the very summit. It is of considerable steepness and height, being about 1500 feet above the level of the sea. On its summit is a small verdant plain of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, of a circular form. It has now no traces of antiquity; but beacons are supposed to have been lighted on it, to warn the more northerly inhabitants of the country of the approach of the English borderers.

* Drawn up by the late incumbent, the Rev. John Henderson.

On a clear day we have one of the most enchanting and extensive views of the whole of the surrounding countries of Annandale, Eskdale, the English border, Solway Frith, part of the Irish sea, even of the Isle of Man, and part of Nithsdale and Galloway. On the north and south sides of this hill, is a range of lesser ones; these have an imposing and beautiful appearance, being now almost all cultivated. They divide the east or high part of the parish from the south or low part. At the southern extremity of this range is a rising eminence called Mount Holly. Upon the banks of the Corrie, is a small but beautiful hill named Corrie Law, commanding a pleasing and deep prospect beneath. These hills, though some of them very steep, are mostly all cultivated and covered with grain, potatoes, &c.

Hydrography.—On the west side of the parish there are two spring wells,—one called the chapel well, from its vicinity to the old chapel of Beckton: its spring is of great size, being at the greatest nearly 15 inches in circumference. The water is found to be very light and uncommonly wholesome; it is supposed to be useful in stomach complaints. The other, about three quarters of a mile farther to the south-west, near the lake called the Old Cauldron from its depth, is called the Woodkin well. It was formerly esteemed very powerful in curing and preventing the effects of witchcraft.

The only stream in the parish is the Dryfe, though the Annan, Corrie, and Milk, all touch it on their passage to the Solway Frith. The Dryfe rises in the north end of the parish of Hutton, through part of which it runs; and enters Dryfesdale, after passing a part of Applegarth. It runs a course from north to south for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, emptying itself into the Annan, in a direct line between the market-town of Lockerbie and the royal burgh of Lochmaben. It is a small rivulet, and in moderate weather its water is pure and clear. The bed is of a deep gravel, and therefore in dry seasons it disappears at some parts for about a mile. But, in rainy weather, it comes down in sudden and rapid swells, breaking down and overflowing all its banks, so that nothing in the way can resist the impetuosity of the torrent. Sheep, pigs, even cattle, and trees torn from their roots, have been seen floating on its surface.

The Annan washes the parish on the west and south for the length of $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It formerly afforded a plentiful supply of salmon, herlings, and sea trout; but these are now very scarce, owing to causes at present unknown. It abounds much in other small fish.

The Milk and Corrie diversify and enrich the east and south-east, sides. They have nothing peculiar, but like other streams contain plenty of small fish.

Geology.—No minerals or ores of any kind are found here. There are some beds of a very soft kind of freestone found at Oldwells, but not wrought. At the old cauldron near Dryfesdale gate, there is some good shell marl, which is now only wrought by the tenants on whose grounds it is found. There is also at Quaas, a quarter of a mile west of Lockerbie, at the southern end of the parish, a rock of very dark-coloured limestone, not made use of. The very great quantities of rag and whinstone supply the deficiency of sandstone. These make good, durable, and at the same time beautiful walls, when skilfully wrought.

There is little peat-moss in the parish, except some small spots on the west side.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Antiquities.—On the holm of Dryfe, as stated in the former Account, about half a mile below the old church-yard, are two very aged thorn trees, with a tumulus at their base, called Maxwell's Thorns, because they point out the place of the remarkable fight on Dryfesands, between the Maxwells of Nithsdale, and the Johnstons of Annandale. There are vestiges of strong towers at Old Walls, Kirktown-mains, Nether-place, Myrehead, and Daltonhook. There are evident remains of eight camps or forts, some square or Roman, others circular or British, and mostly built on eminences, because about 2000 years since (their age) the sides of the eminences or hills had been covered with growing wood, and the present flat or low lying and holm lands in Annandale had partly been a morass, or under water; hence we find, that the Roman roads were generally made on rising ground, when it could be got. The most remarkable are two, the one British, and the other Roman, facing each other, and separated by a narrow morass. They are built on two hills east of the village Bengall, the name alluding to the forts on the hills, signifying the hill of the Gauls. Old pieces of armour and war-like weapons have frequently been found in them, and the skeleton of a man was found in a cairn on the intervening morass, thought to have lain there for some ages; and some fragments of his dress or accoutrements were carried off as a curiosity, particularly the sandals, curiously wrought and bound around the mouths with leathern thongs, which were conveyed into England, for the Oxford Museum. There is also a Roman fort, beautifully situated upon

a large eminence, in the centre of the united and extensive holm of Dryfe and Annan, called the Gallaberry, or the burgh and station of the Gauls, for the term *Berry* is of Saxon origin, signifying "burgh, mansion, or strength." The most entire is a British one at Dryfesdale gate, occupying about two acres of ground, and commanding a most extensive prospect. Its counterpart is a large Roman one about half a mile due east, interrupted by a moor, standing on the place celebrated for the bloody battle between the army of Julius Agricola and the forces of Corbredus Galdus, the twenty-first King of the Scots, about the end of the first century. There are plain traces of the great Roman road from the borders of England, up to the vast encampments on the neighbouring hill of Burnswark, and thence crossing the parish at Lockerbie to Dryfesdale gate, and up to the Gallaberry above-mentioned, where it divided, one branch leading up through Annandale, by Moffat to Tweeddale and Clydesdale; the other branch crossing the Annan, touched an entire and beautiful double fort, on the northern margin of one of the Lochmaben lakes, called the Woody Castle, and thence passed up the west side of the water of *Æ*, through Nithsdale to the west country.

III.—POPULATION.

Amount of population in 1801,	-	1607	
1811,	-	1893	
1821,	-	2251	
1831,	-	2283	
Number of families,	-	-	478
chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	179
in trade, manufactures, and handicraft,	-	-	145

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—Of the 11000 acres of land in this parish, about 600 are not in cultivation, and seem never to have been cultivated, consisting chiefly of moss, wood, and moor. It is supposed that 240 acres might yet be cultivated; and that about 250 are at present under wood.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of land, taking one acre with another, in the parish is about L. 1; of good arable land, L. 2. The average rent of grazing is per cow or ox, L. 1, 10s. 6d.; but sometimes L. 3, 10s. is paid on some pastures; and for a ewe or full-grown sheep, about 7s. per annum.

Produce.—The average gross amount and value of raw produce yearly raised in the parish may be as follows:—

Grain of all kinds,	-	L. 7500
Potatoes and turnips,	-	3700
Hay,	-	1900

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Flax, - - - - -	50
Land in pasture, - - - - -	3900
Gardens and orchards, - - - - -	200
Thinnings of woods, - - - - -	100
Other produce, - - - - -	200
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	L. 17,550

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Lockerbie.—The market-town of Lockerbie, the only one in the parish, merits a particular description. Lockerbie is supposed to have derived its name from *Lock*, and *bie*, the Celtic name for a station or place of strength. Accordingly, there is an old square tower still standing called the Mains, which was the mansion place of the ancient family of the Johnstones of Lockerbie, a branch of the old family of Johnstone of Lochwood, the ancestor of the late Marquis of Annandale, and of the present Marquis of Queensberry, and Mr Douglas of Lockerbie. This tower had been placed on a ridge, between and almost surrounded by two large lochs or lakes,—one on the east and the other on the west, which are now drained, and are all either cultivated or in rich meadow; and it may be worthy of notice, that the great Roman road already described passed through one of these lochs, about half a mile below the tower, at a place called Blackford. From this mansion and its dependencies, it gradually increased to the size of a village; and from that, by the liberality of some of the lairds of Lockerbie in granting feus and long tacks, it has yearly increased to its present dimensions. It is now a neat cleanly town, situated in a fertile and inviting part of the country, midway between the rivers Annan and Milk: it lies 12 miles east from Dumfries, and 4 from Lochmaben, 16 south from Moffat, 17½ west of Langholm, 10 north of Annan, and 6 from Ecclefechan. The number of inhabitants is of males, 646; of females, 768; total, 1414. There are as yet no public manufactures established in the town. Many of the common people here and in the country are very expert in making many parts of their own wearing apparel.

Means of Communication.—The town and parish in general enjoy excellent communication,—the great post and turnpike road from London to Edinburgh and Glasgow, running through the town of Lockerbie and parish, for the length of three miles. On the London road, at the north-west side of the parish, is an old but strong, firm, and well built bridge, over the Dryfe; another at Scroggs, on a parish road, and over the Milk. But the one most worthy of notice is at Stullahill, on the new road from Dum-

fries by Lockerbie to Langholm, built in 1830 by the county road proprietors, at a great expense. It is indeed a great ornament to this part of the country. It is built all of good Memel timber, and consists of seven large arches, supported each by four very large perpendicular logs of wood forced into the earth, with strong beams, extending from one to another of these, with appropriate oblique supports; the whole strongly jointed together with strong cast metal, covered above with a double flooring of thick strong planks ledged with a beautiful wooden palisade, covered with a coat of white oil paint. The whole is a strong, substantial, and at the same time elegant piece of workmanship, and does great credit to the undertaker, Mr John Park of Ecclefechan.

*Ecclesiastical State.**—The parish church is a neat building, situated on a small eminence on the west side of the main street of Lockerbie, a little north from the centre of the town. It is well fitted up in the inside, and handsomely painted. Its situation being near the centre of the parish and in the town of Lockerbie, it is very conveniently placed for almost all the population. Its distance from the farthest extremity of the parish is only about three miles and a-half. It was put into good repair in the year 1751, and has since been kept so. It may contain about 750 people.

There are two important benefactions on record,—the first of L. 80, given about the year 1751 by the father of the late Earl of Hopetoun, the interest of which was to be annually paid to the parochial schoolmaster; the other a legacy of L. 65, left by John Aitchison, Esq. of Oulney, with a gift of two massive silver communion-cups, in 1761.

On the summit of the old Kirkhill, contiguous to the former churchyard, stands the present manse, a neat building; its situation is one of the most beautiful in the whole of Annandale. It was built in the year 1782, and is kept in yearly repair by the heritors. It is surrounded by a glebe of 24 acres standard measure, at present

* Previous to the year 1757, the church stood on the middle of the holm of Dryfe, now called Sandbed, one mile and a-half north of Lockerbie. Tradition says, that in the year 1670, from its closeness to that stream, it was gradually undermined and carried away by it, and that after this the church and burial-ground was rebuilt at a small distance to the south-east in 1761, on a height upon the skirts of the present glebe, or as it was then called Kirkhill, and thought to be perfectly secure from the swells of the rivulet; but in the course of time it changed its course, and ran along the foot of a scar, above which the church and burial ground stood, parts of which gradually fell into the water, in spite both of "spades and shovels," and would soon have been carried off. In 1757, it was removed to the town of Lockerbie, both as an ornament to, and for the convenience of, the town and parish.

let for L. 24 per annum. The amount of stipend, not including the glebe, is just L. 198, 18s. 6d.

There is an Antiburgher meeting-house at the south end of Lockerbie, established about ninety years ago. The minister is paid by the congregation, in general from the surrounding parishes. The stipend is about L. 95 per annum. There are two Sabbath school institutions in winter; the number of children attending that connected with the Established Church is about 120, in summer about 70. The Established Church is very well attended; the average number of communicants is 600.

Education.—There is one parochial school in this parish, besides six private unendowed ones,—three of which are taught by females. The branches of education commonly taught in the parochial schools are, Greek, Latin, French, with English, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, and practical geometry, &c. &c. In one of the unendowed schools, these are also generally taught. The salary of the parish schoolmaster is L. 34, 4s. 4d. He has every legal accommodation. Every person in the parish above fifteen years of age can both read and write. About eight young men go annually to attend the different classes at the University of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Libraries.—There are two libraries,—one a parochial subscription, and the other a circulating one, in Lockerbie; besides a public reading-room, having many of the Scotch and English newspapers of the day.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The average number of poor persons receiving parochial relief is 18,—each receiving about the average sum of from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per week. The average amount of contributions and free donations to assist the poor is about L. 25 per annum,—which, with church collections, may amount to the sum of L. 65, with the interest of L. 100*,—which is, each winter, expended by the kirk-session for coals to the poor. These are barely sufficient to supply the necessitous poor. The people are very liberal and benevolent to their own poor, but they are continually annoyed by an immense influx of vagrants and beggars from distant places. There is still a great desire on the part of some more of the poor to get their names enrolled with those that are already receiving weekly relief; and therefore they do not consider it degrading.

Jail.—There are no jails nearer than those of Lochmaben and

* This L. 100 was the legacy of Mr Aitchison of Oulney, formerly mentioned. The original sum was L. 65, which was gradually increased to its present amount.

Dumfries. The old tower at Lockerbie was last year converted into a kind of temporary lock-up house; but such is the peaceable disposition of the people of this part of the country, that not one single person has yet been lodged in it.

Fairs.—In Lockerbie, there are two fairs and ten markets.* The two fairs are, the one at Lammas, and the other at Michaelmas, when moderate tolls are levied by the proprietor. At the two markets, all are free; but besides these, there are in winter weekly markets, principally for pork, which is brought from all quarters of the surrounding country to be disposed of here. I have known the sum of L. 1000 and upwards expended by bacon-curers in one day,—which they buy in at the average price of 5s. per stone, which, when cured and dried, are sold at 6d. or 7d. per lb.

Such is the importance of the Lammas fair, that I consider a short history of it here will not be unsuitable: Lockerbie has been celebrated for its lamb and wool market for several centuries back. When the border raids had so far ceased as to allow a slight intercourse between the Scot and the southern, our sheep farmers assembled here every year, to meet with English dealers. This they called a *tryst*; but, as Lockerbie increased in population, and the friendly intercourse between Scotland and England extended itself, the fair became a greater object of importance, and was held on the top of that range of hills south of Quhytewoolen, and north-east of Lockerbie, which was granted in perpetuity as a kind of “common” to that town,—but at what time or by whom I have never met with a person who was yet able to inform me. It is a curious fact, however, that the common was once dependent on the city of Glasgow, until Lady Douglas of Lockerbie House bought the right of superiority, who charges so much per head upon all the lambs that are shewn on it; and as the charges amount in the aggregate to a considerable sum, it is let out by roup to the highest bidder a day or two before the custom is collected, and he depends for remuneration on the number of lambs

* The Lammas fair is on 2d August, old style, excepting Saturday, Sunday, or Monday, and in that case on the Tuesday following. The Michaelmas fair is on the 2d of October, old style, excepting Saturday, Sunday, or Monday, and in that case on the Tuesday following. The two markets are on the second Thursday, old style, in January, February, March, April, May. The third Thursday in June is called the Midsummer market. The next is fourteen days after the Michaelmas fair, if on Thursday, if not, on the Thursday thereafter. The next is three weeks after the last, called the Martinmas one. The other is fourteen days after that, and the last on the Thursday before Yule or Christmas, old style. The hiring market for servants for the summer half-year is in April. For the winter half year, the one fourteen days after Michaelmas. To these two markets an immense concourse of people assemble from all parts of Annandale.

exposed. In some good years, he pays L. 30 to the proprietor for one day's collection. The person that takes it was never known to be a loser by it. The common is a round hill of about 100 acres in extent. The soil is barren; in some places overgrown with whins; a large portion of it is of a spongy nature, but from its altitude it presents on the fair day a very imposing spectacle. Besides the lamb-market on the hill, there is an annual fair in the town, at which the whole county for twelve miles round is generally assembled.

Inns.—In Lockerbie there are two inns; at one of which, chaises and horses are to be hired; besides some small ale-houses. These houses are, on public occasions, frequented by many for the transaction of business, for receiving payments, &c. and on any of these days the people seem to be more regular and sober.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The appearance of the people, as respects their manners, dress, inclination to be employed, and aversion to idleness,—shews at once that, since the time of the former Statistical Account, there has been a progressive advance in these particulars. The improvement in agriculture is also proved satisfactorily by the great advancement in the rent of land since that time, viz. from 13s. 4d. the acre per annum to L. 2. The enclosed parks about Lockerbie, then set at 17s 6d., are now let at L. 3, 10s. 6d. It may also be observed, that at that time there were sixty farms in the parish let at from L. 25 to L. 100 yearly rent; there are now only about fifty, each let at from L. 60 to L. 500. The population in the town of Lockerbie has increased 71½; but in the country part of the parish there has been a decrease of 31,—which decrease may be owing, perhaps, to many of the small farms having been joined into one, and to the dilapidation of many cot houses and villages already mentioned. There is one great obstruction to every kind of trade in this part of the country,—the great scarcity of fuel. This is occasioned by a want of proper internal communication.

There are in Lockerbie—20 grocers, 1 hardware, and 4 cloth-shops, 5 surgeons with 2 apothecaries shops, 2 midwives, 5 writers, 4 messengers, 8 weavers, 13 tailors, 7 joiners, 2 wheel-wrights, 9 blacksmiths, 4 nailers, 3 watchmakers, 4 bakers, 3 fleshers, 1 barber, 3 cloggers, 2 saddlers, 2 tanners, 4 stocking-framers, 1 cabinet-maker, 8 shoemakers, 12 stone-masons; in the country part there are, 4 millers, about 100 ploughs, 400 horses, and 50 farmers.

January 1836.