

PARISH OF TYNRON.

PRESBYTERY OF PENPONT, SYNOD OF DUMFRIES.

THE REV. ROBERT WILSON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE name of this parish, according to Chalmers in his *Caledonia*, was anciently written Tyndron; *Tin-troyn*, or *Tin-droyn*, in the ancient British tongue, and *Dun-ron* in the Irish signify “the fortified hill with a nose.” The name was applied to a round hill, which is still called the Dun or Doon of Tynron.

Extent, Boundaries.—The length of this parish, according to Mr Crawford’s measurement and the county plan, is 10 miles, and its breadth 3, which gives an area of $22\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, or 11, 332 Scots acres; but I am inclined to think that it cannot be less than 12 miles in length, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ in breadth. Upon consulting the plans of the different estates, to all of which I have had access, the real measurement is found to be 11,796 acres, 3 roods, 17 falls. Tynron is bounded on the north by Penpont; on the east by Keir; on the south by Glencairn; and on the west by Glencairn and Dalry.

Topographical Appearances.—There are two ranges of hills in this parish, running from south-east to north-west. The one range terminates in the Doon of Tynron, and the other in the Doon of Maxwellton, in the parish of Glencairn. Lamgarroch and Cormiligan Bale are the highest of these hills,—which may be about 1800 feet above the level of the sea. The character of the hills is in accordance with the greywacke formation to which they belong, with the exception of Craigturrah and Croglin Craig, which are more precipitous. The climate upon the whole may be considered healthy.

Hydrography.—The only rivers are the Shinnel and the Scar. The former divides the parish into nearly two equal parts. The other forms the boundary with Penpont for about three miles on the north. Both rivers run in a south-easterly direction; but the Shinnel at the farm-house of Ford takes an easterly course until it

joins the Scar near the village of Penpont. There is a considerable waterfall in the Shinnel, known by the name of Aird-linn, a short distance below the manse,—which is very picturesque in consequence of the banks of the river being richly wooded.

Mineralogy.—The direction of the strata is generally from east to west, the dip inclining more or less to the south-east. The greywacke, which is the prevailing rock in this parish, contains a bed of clay-slate at Corfardine, which was at one time wrought by the Wanlockhead Mining Company, but has been abandoned from the inferior quality of the slate. There is also a bed of flinty slate or Lydian stone at Shinnelhead. An attempt was made at one time upon the farm of Stenhouse, near the march of Dalmakerran, to find lead; but it was soon abandoned, although some gentlemen from Wanlockhead thought it not unlikely that lead might yet be found there. Granite or any of the primitive rocks have never been found in this parish, with the exception of a small bed of disintegrated granite, which appears both on the estate of Landhall and on the Queensberry estate on the farm of Ford. The mica being of a very yellow colour, has been mistaken by inexperienced persons for gold.

Botany.—No rare plants worthy of notice. The natural woods are, oak, ash, birch, plane, mountain-ash, alder, and willow. Those planted are generally Scotch fir, spruce, silver, larch, balm of Gilead; and of late years, principally oak, and other hard woods mixed with the above varieties of fir.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners.—The principal proprietor in the parish is His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, who possesses nearly two-thirds of the whole parish.

Parochial Registers.—The first entry in the parish register is dated 17th January 1742; but the register was not regularly kept until 1828.

Historical Notices.—There was formerly a place of religious worship on the lands of Chapel, which are now united to the farm of Craigturrah; and another at Kirkconnel, which, like other places of the name, was dedicated to St Connel. The Doon of Tynron was formerly a place of strength, as the ditches on the side most difficult of access indicate. The foundations of an extensive building might lately have been traced on the top of this hill; and it is stated in Black's manuscript history of the Presbytery of Penpont, deposited in the Advocates' Library, that King Robert the Bruce, after the death of Cummin, was conducted to this as a

place of safety. "The steep hill (says the author of the manuscript) called the Dune, is of a considerable height, upon the top of which there has been some habitation or fort. There have been in ancient times, on all hands of it, very thick woods and great about that place,—which made it the more inaccessible, into which King Robert Bruce is said to have been conducted by Roger Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, after they had killed the Comyn at Dumfries, which is nine miles from this place, whereabout it is probable that he did abide some time hereafter; and it is reported, that, during his abode there, he did often divert to a poor man's cottage named Brownrig, situate in a small parcel of stoney ground encompassed with thick woods, where he was content sometimes with such mean accommodation as the place could afford. The poor man's wife being advised to petition the King for somewhat, was so modest in her desires, that she sought no more than security for the croft in her husband's possession, and a liberty of pasturage for a very few cattle of different kinds on the hill and the rest of the bounds, of which privilege that ancient family by the injury of time hath a long time been, and is deprived, but the croft continues in the possession of the heirs and successors lineally descended from this Brownrig and his wife; so that his family, being more ancient than rich, doth yet continue in the name, and, as they say, retain the old charter."

Antiquities.—There are the remains of a Roman road leading from the Doon to Drumloff, and crossing the Shinnel above Stenhouse,—along the line of which Roman urns have been found filled with calcined bones. A few silver coins were discovered concealed beneath some stones at Pingarie Craig,—principally of the reign of the Roberts, and coined at Edinburgh. Formerly, there were three Roman cairns in the parish, all of which were opened; in the one at M'Question, which was the largest of the three, were found a stone coffin with fragments of bone, and a hammer made of stone; in the one at Land, there were also found a stone coffin, with fragments of bone and a stone hammer; in the one at Pingarie, nine stone coffins were found, and fragments of bone, the whole of which, with the surrounding stones to the distance of some feet, were fused into one mass. The Rev. Peter Rae, in his manuscript history of the Presbytery of Penpont, mentions a fourth cairn. "I am informed, (says he,) that, in the Appin Hill, there is a high mount called Lamgarroch, upon the top of which there is a great cairn of

stones, under which it is reported one of the Kings of the Picts is buried."

Ecclesiastical History.—The parish church is at present in a ruinous state; but is to be rebuilt next spring. It was erected about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Nearly one-half of it was rebuilt in the year 1750, when a considerable portion of the freestone was taken from the ancient castle on the top of the Doon. According to Chalmers and the Rev. Peter Rae, the church of Tynron belonged of old to the abbot and monks of Holywood, who enjoyed the rectorial tithes and revenues, and the cure was served by a vicar. At the Reformation, the rectorial tithes of the church were let for the payment of only L. 30 a-year. To the parish church of Tynron, there belonged lands of considerable extent, which, at the Reformation, passed into lay hands; after the Reformation, the church, with its tithes, was vested in the King by the general annexation act. They were afterwards granted in 1618 to John Murray of Lochmaben, who was created Earl of Annandale in 1625, and died in 1640. They were inherited by his son James, the second Earl of Annandale. The advowson of this church was afterwards acquired by William Duke of Queensberry, who died 1695. On the death of William the last Duke, in the year 1810, the patronage went to the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, to whom it now belongs. In Mr Rae's manuscript account of the Presbytery of Penpont, I observe a Robertus Welsh, Canonicus et Vicarius de Tynron. "He was succeeded, (observes Mr Rae,) in that vicarage by Mr Taylor; and the Reformation, or establishment of the Reformed Protestant religion in the Church of Scotland having taken place anno 1560, Mr Taylor renounced the Popish religion, and complied with the Reformation, wherefore he continued in the ministry of Tynron, and conformed to the act of Parliament made in the like cases. He enjoyed the kirk-lands during his life. Upon his conforming to the Protestant religion, he married and had children, and some of his posterity, as I am informed, are still living in that parish."

III.—POPULATION.

Population in 1801,	.	.	568
1811,	.	.	574
1821,	.	.	513
1831,	.	.	493

From 1811 to 1821, the decrease may be accounted for from a considerable portion of the land having been thrown out of cultivation in consequence of the reduced price of produce. From 1821 to the last census in 1831, it may be accounted for from the dif-

ferent arrangement which then took place of the Queensberry estate, —the farms on which have been twice let during that period, and considerably increased in size, in consequence of which some families removed into towns and villages.

The number of people residing in the village is	-	-	-	80
	country,	-	-	417
The yearly average of births for the last seven years	-	-	-	10
	deaths,	-	-	7
	marriages,	-	-	5
The average number of persons under 15 years of age,	-	-	-	170
	betwixt 15 and 30,	-	-	112
	30 and 50,	-	-	119
	50 and 70,	-	-	80
	upwards of 70,	-	-	16
The number of unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers, upwards of 50 years of age,	-	-	-	11
	women upwards of 45,	-	-	22
families in this parish	-	-	-	105
	chiefly employed in agriculture,	-	-	59
	in trade, manufactures, or handicraft,	-	-	13
Number of inhabited houses,	-	-	-	90
houses uninhabited,	-	-	-	1

During the last three years there have been six illegitimate births.

There are two heritors whose lands in this parish produce upwards of L. 600 of yearly rent; three upwards of L. 300; and three upwards of L. 50.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—This parish contains 2455 acres, 2 roods, 35 falls of land, which have been cultivated; and 8935 acres, 1 rood, 3 falls which have never been cultivated. To the ground already under tillage little more could be added with any prospect of remuneration to the farmer. The number of acres under wood is 405 acres, 3 roods, 19 falls, the greater part of which is thriving natural wood.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of arable land in the parish may be stated as follows:—250 acres at L. 1, 10s. per acre; 750 at L. 1 per acre; 1455 at 12s. 6d. per acre; pasture land, 8935 at 5s. per acre. The average rent of grazing bullocks during summer may be estimated at L. 1, 5s. per head; winter fodder for ditto, L. 1, 5s.; expense during twelve months, L. 2, 10s. The average rent of grazing cows during the season may be stated at L. 3, 10s. per head; winter fodder for do. L. 2, 10s.; expense during the season, L. 6. The average rent of grazing ewes during the season may be taken at 5s. per head.

Rate of Wages.—The rate of wages during the year for men-servants fit for all farm-work is from L. 10 to L. 13, besides victuals; women, for the same period, from L. 4 to L. 6. For mowing, a man generally earns from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. per day, besides food.

During the harvest, which generally lasts five weeks, men receive from L. 2 to L. 2, 2s., and women from L. 1, 8s. to L. 1, 10s., and 3s. 6d. a-week during hay harvest. For all other kinds of work during summer, such as hoeing turnips, 9d. a-day without food.

Live Stock.—The common breeds of sheep in the parish are the Cheviot and Black-faced. The practice of crossing the Cheviot with the Leicester ram is now prevalent, and upon rich pastures may be considered as more remunerating to the farmer than the pure breed. However, this can never be advantageously carried to any great extent, as it would tend soon to diminish the pure breeds. The breeds of cattle are the Ayrshire and Galloway; but Highland cattle are grazed to a much greater extent than either. The usual mode of reclaiming waste land is by draining where necessary; and on dry soils, ploughing during summer, liming, and in the course of another year, ploughing,—taking one white crop, a crop of turnips planted with dung or bone manure, and feeding it off with sheep,—another white crop, and the ground sowed down for permanent pasture, with a sufficient quantity of ryegrass and clover seeds. But a shorter, more simple, and less expensive process is,—two ploughings at those seasons of the year when they can be accomplished with the least possible interference with the other arrangements of the farmer,—lime during the spring or summer,—and without a single white crop, at once to sow down with rape, ryegrass, and clover, when in the course of two months the land becomes ready for pasturage.—Leases are generally for nineteen years. The farm-steadings in the parish were generally erected within the last ten years, and are good and substantial. The improvements in fences, planting, and breaking up of waste land were carried on to a great extent from the year 1800 to 1812. About that period, the greatest improvers in this parish were the late Alexander Smith, Esq. of Landhall; the late James M^cTurk, Esq. of Stenhouse; and the late William Smith, Esq. of M^cQuestion. Now, the most liberal encouragement to improvement is given by His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, as also by John Walker, Esq. of Crawfordton, the principal non-resident proprietors.

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Means of Communication.—Dumfries is the principal market-town, and sixteen miles distant. There is only one village in the parish. A daily post passes through it from Thornhill to Moniaive. The roads in the parish, fifteen miles in length, are

maintained by the statute labour funds, with the exception of one mile of turnpike. The bridges at Ford, Tynron Kirk, and Pingarie, afford sufficient accommodation over the Shinnel; and the one over the Scar near the junction of the Shinnel affords sufficient accommodation over that river; they are all in good repair.

Ecclesiastical State.—The situation of the church could not be better chosen for the accommodation of the people. It is distant from the north-west end of the parish about ten miles; but the parish at that extremity is very thinly peopled. From the other extremity it is distant about two and a-half miles. The present church has been found insufficient; and a very handsome plan, furnished by Mr Burn of Edinburgh, to contain 314 sitters, has been contracted for, and is to be built next season at the expense of L. 975,—a sum, the liberality of which, (taking into consideration the small population,) reflects the highest credit upon the heritors.

My highly esteemed and much revered relative and friend, the late Rev. James Wilson, who preceded me in the pastoral office here, in his Account of the parish in the former work, makes the following observations under the head of donations to the parish and the poor: “The most remarkable donation that has been in the memory of the oldest man living, or indeed that appears from any written documents, was made in the year 1754 by Mr John Gibson, originally a native of the parish, and who in his younger years was rather in straitened circumstances. Some of his more wealthy friends, finding him possessed of a considerable share of genius, and fond of cultivating and improving it, administered to him the means necessary for this end. After a short time successfully spent in attention to his studies, he issued forth into active life; by the most perfect integrity of manners, and the most unwearied application to business, he increased both in reputation and wealth. In the latter part of his life he was married to a lady in London, by whom he had no children. He bequeathed to her all his property during her personal life, and after her death, which happened in the year 1762, L. 1500 was appointed by will to descend to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland. This Society, by their acceptance of this donation, bound themselves to pay annually to the parish of Tynron L. 35 Sterling,—L. 22 of this sum being paid by the treasurer of said Society to a schoolmaster appointed by Mr Gibson’s latter will to teach a school at or near Tynron Kirk; the school-

master found qualified by the Presbytery of Penpont, and certified to be so, to instruct in the principles of the Christian religion, to teach to read and write well, to cast accounts, to sing psalms at church and in private families, and also to teach any other parts of learning as shall be thought proper, and to be elected to his office by the minister and elders for the time being, and the heritors residing in the parish. The Presbytery examines the school annually, and upon their certificate of the schoolmaster's due election, diligence, and faithfulness in the discharge of his duty, he draws the salary above specified. The remaining L. 13, by the will of the donor, is appointed to be distributed annually by the kirk-session among twelve poor, sober, and industrious persons residing in the parish; the value of L. 6 to be given them in flax, adjudging the value of 10s. to each, accompanied with 10s. in cash, the last 20s. being still kept in the hands of the treasurer for the poor till the yarn spun from the flax is inspected by proper judges, at which time it is adjudged in different proportions to four or five of the best spinners among the twelve. This donation has an excellent effect in encouraging industry among the poorer class, at the same time that it greatly tends to relieve their wants. A strict attention has been paid hitherto in acting up to the will of the donor both in the letter and spirit. And every thing at present, both in respect of the school and the gift to the poor, is upon the best and most agreeable footing. A very commodious house of two stories in height, in pursuance of the suggestions of the donor, was raised in the year 1765, in the near neighbourhood of the parish church, by the late Duke of Queensberry, and another public-spirited heritor. One large apartment is used for the school-room, and the rest of the house appointed for the accommodation of the teacher." The school-room of the donation school here alluded to has been added to the dwelling-house of the teacher; and a large and excellent school-room has been built partly by the heritors, and partly by public subscription. It was evidently the intention of the benevolent founder of this school, that the salary should not only be equal but superior to that of any of the parochial schools,—which it certainly was at the time of its foundation; but as the salaries of the parochial schools have been several times augmented since that period, they now exceed that of the schools in question. It is therefore to be hoped that the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge will, at no very distant period, see the propriety of granting a suitable augmentation. The manse

was built in the year 1785; and two additions have been built at different times,—which render it a comfortable and very commodious house. The extent of glebe, including houses and garden, is fourteen acres, three roods, which may be valued at L. 30 a-year. The stipend is 16 chalders, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. for communion elements. Number of families attending the Established church, 73; number of persons, 246; number of families attending Dissenting chapels, 28; number of persons attending the same, 67. Divine service at the Established church is tolerably well attended, more especially in summer. The average number of communicants in the Established church, 170. Average amount of church collections about L. 15 a-year.

Education.—There are two schools in the parish, the one parochial, the other endowed. The branches of education taught in both schools, are Latin, Greek, English, writing and arithmetic. Fees for Latin and Greek per quarter, 4s.; English, 2s.; writing and arithmetic, 2s. 6d. The parochial schoolmaster has L. 25, 13s. 4d. of salary. He has a school-house, a comfortable dwelling-house, and one rood of good land. He does not receive more than L. 4 a-year of fees.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The number of persons receiving parochial aid varies according to circumstances; but may be about 20. The late Mr Wilson, in the former Statistical Account, says, “beside the weekly collections made for the poor, amounting to L. 11 or L. 12 annually, there is a small piece of landed property belonging to them yielding L. 7 of yearly rent. The number of poors’ names on the roll is 12 or 14. They have a pretty comfortable subsistence, and not one is known to go beyond the bounds of the parish as an itinerant beggar.” Only one beggar is yet known to go beyond the bounds of the parish, and the farm of Cairney Croft, the landed property above alluded to, is now let for L. 20 of yearly rent. With regard to Cairney Croft, the Rev. Mr Rae makes the following remarks: “Brownrig of Cairney Croft, though this is but small, yet I thought fit to mention it because of its antiquity. It is reported that King Robert Bruce, being in the beginning of his reign in bad circumstances, in regard the most of the gentry in the country having sworn fealty to King Edward Longshanks, had not yet joined him,—he came incognito in a morning to Cairney Croft, and asked Brownrig’s wife if she could give him any meat, for he was very hungry; to which she returned that she had nothing but *greddan* (meal and goat’s milk,) and he

replied that that was very good, whereupon she made him a *gred-dan*, which he supped very pleasantly, and then told her that he was the King; and asked her what he should give her, to which she answered that they desired nothing but their own ground they possessed, (a sign she was not covetous, it being at this day but worth fifty merks per annum, and was no doubt of small value then,) whereupon King Robert Bruce took parchment out of his pocket, and wrote a charter for the said land of Cairney Croft to the said — Brownrig, his heirs and assignees. John Brownrig of Cairney Croft, lately deceased, told me that William Duke of Queensberry was once pursuing him for his land, upon which he went to Edinburgh and consulted an advocate, who advised him to go home and search all his house, and bring him all papers he found in it; and that accordingly he returned, and noticing a *bowell* in the wall at the back of a bed which had not been opened for some ages, he opened the same, and found the said charter and some other papers, all which he carried into the advocate, who told him he needed not fear the pursuer, for he had as good a right to his land as the pursuer had to his. The said John Brownrig told me further, that William Philip, factor to Sir Robert Grierson of Lag, then proprietor of the barony of Aird, (within which bounds Cairney Croft lies,) persuaded him to give up that old charter, and take a new one holding of Lag, which in his simplicity he did. This family were weavers from one generation to another, from King Robert Bruce his days till the death of the said John Brownrig, but his sons Simon and — choosing rather to serve other men than to follow the occupation of their forefathers, have sold Cairney Croft to the kirk-session of Tynron.”

The annual amount of contributions for the poor, including Mr Gibson's mortification, may be stated at L. 50 a-year, and the annual distributions about the same sum.

February 1836.