

UNITED PARISHES OF MONKTON AND PRESTWICK.

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. THOMAS BURNS, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

* *Name, History, &c.*—THE parish of Monkton received that name from its connection with the abbey of Paisley, that monastery having extensive and valuable possessions within the parish, which required the residence probably, and superintendence of a certain number of the monks, who, in these early times, were the only class of persons acquainted with agriculture, the construction and management of mills, &c. &c. It appears from the chartulary of the abbey of Paisley, that the original name was Prestwick; and that in 1163, when that abbey was founded, both the churches of the united parishes were then in existence, and both called by the same name of Prestwick, Prestwick church being called St Nicholas's church of Prestwick, and Monkton church, St Cuthbert's church of Prestwick. At a later date in the chartulary they are distinguished as *Prestwic de burgo*, and *Prestwic Monachorum*; and at the date of 1225 there occurs this casual notice of the latter,—*Prestwic—quæ nunc dicitur villa Monachorum*.

Both churches were bestowed upon the monastery of Paisley by its founder, Walter, the son of Alan the great steward of Scotland, in 1163, together with the whole of that rich flat of land which now forms the parish of Monkton,* with the exception of what lies on the east side of the Powburn, which probably was attached to the religious house of Ladykirk. The mill of Prestwick, now called Monkton mill, was added to this grant in 1368, when the

* *Ecclesiam de Prestwic, cum totâ terrâ illâ quam Dovenaldus filius Yweni eis perambulavit inter terram Simonis Loecardi (Symington parish), et terram de Prestwic usque Pulprestwic (the Pow burn), et secundam Pulprestwic usque in mare, et a mari secundum torrentem (the Rumbler burn), inter terram Arnaldi (Dundonald parish), et terram de Prestwic usque ad divisas Simonis Loecardi; et illam ecclesiam de burgo meo de Prestwic, cum omnibus pertinentiis suis.—Carta Walteri filii Alan fundatoris de diversis terris et eccles. iis cõfictis,—as contained in the chartulary of Paisley.*

house of Dalmulin, (Dalmelling, in the parish of St Quivox,) a house of canons and nuns of the order of Sempringham or Gilbertines, with all its possessions, (of which Monkton mill was one,) was made over to the monastery of Paisley.

There is no record or tradition extant of any house or convent in Monkton, for the accommodation of these monks. Prestwick church is mentioned in the Paisley chartulary in 1212, as a chapel, and its minister as a chaplain (*capellanus*). Monkton church was a rectory, and continued to be so down to the Reformation. From the general appearance of the present church of Monkton, and in particular from the existence of a Saxon arch over what was once the principal door, it is supposed to be the original structure: in that case it cannot be less than 700 or 800 years old. The bell bears the popish inscription of *Sancte Cuthberti ora pro nobis*, addressed to the tutelary saint of the church. It is not known when the parishes were united. It appears from the records of the burgh of Prestwick, that up to the year 1570 the union had not taken place, as the ministers of both parishes are mentioned: whereas about 1630 mention is made only of one, as being minister of both parishes. The union probably was the result of necessity, viz. the want of adequate endowments.

The parish is sometimes mentioned as the united parish of Monkton, Prestwick and Crosby. This is a mistake. Crosby never was a separate parish. In the chartulary above referred to, we have mention made of Dundonald, with its two chapels of Riccarton and Crosby. The records of the Presbytery of Ayr, bear that, in 1651, the estate of Crosby at the request of its proprietor, was disjoined from the parish of Dundonald, and, for the sake of being nearer to religious ordinances, was joined to Monkton. In 1688, however, it was again wholly reunited to Dundonald. It would appear that, subsequent to this latter date, the laird of Crosby erected the place of worship, the ruins of which still remain, for the accommodation of the neighbouring population, and it continued for some time as a preaching station, and for a while had a minister of its own.

The etymology of Prestwick, (Priest-town,) points to some ecclesiastical origin, but as to what that is, neither record nor tradition furnishes the smallest light.

Extent, &c.—The parish extends to $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in breadth, and contains between 9 and 10 square miles. It is bounded by the parishes of Dundonald, Symington, and Craigie,

on the north and north-east; by Tarbolton and St Quivox on the east; by St Quivox and Newton on the south and south-east; and by the Frith of Clyde on the west.

Topographical Appearances.—The parish is flat and level, rising to a gentle elevation along the north and north-east boundary. The length of sea coast from the parish of Newton to where Monkton joins Dundonald parish is between 2 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The coast is low, flat, and sandy, with very shoal water. Numerous bluffs and low sand-hills covered with bent, lie along the shore.

There are two inconsiderable streams in the parish, the larger of which, the Pow-burn, rising in Craigie parish, and falling into the sea at the boundary between Monkton and Dundonald, turns two corn mills in its course.

* *Geology and Mineralogy.*—There are two seams of coal in the southern part of Prestwick lands. The upper seam, which is soft, and in some places foul and mixed with pyrites, has been wrought for upwards of thirty years. It is not now wrought, being nearly exhausted. It was within 6 or 7 fathoms of the surface. The under seam, at the depth of from 33 to nearly 40 fathoms, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, is a cleaner, harder, and more splinty coal, and has been wrought for more than twenty years. It is now exhausted to the south of Kingcase dike, a dike which divides all the metals on either side of it. This dike is of green whinstone, and crosses the Prestwick lands in a direction from east to west, and at ebb-tide its course can be seen running westward into the sea. It reappears on the opposite shore of the firth, in the Island of Arran. In the opposite direction, eastward and inland, this dike has been traced upwards of 40 miles. As yet no coals have been wrought in the parish to the north of this dike. Only one stone quarry has been opened in the parish, viz. upon the Prestwick shore, from which excellent freestone, both white and red, are obtained. It is not wrought at present. The soil of the parish is various. Immediately along the sea-side, and over a considerable part of Prestwick lands, it is a light sand, so light as scarcely to be adapted for tillage. Around the village of Monkton, and towards the eastern and southern bounds of the united parish, it consists of a fine deep loam, varying from a light and very productive sand to a strong rich earthy clay, all capable of producing every species of crop of the finest quality. To the north and north-east the soil is chiefly a tenacious clay, in some places of excellent quality, and susceptible of great improvement, in others, thin and poor, resting

upon a cold bottom, and not so improveable. Very little of either is adapted to the different kinds of drill husbandry.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

At what period the union of the parishes of Monkton and Prestwick took place is not known; but in all probability it was about the time of the Reformation, or shortly after it. The original parish churches of both parishes are still standing, and up to May 1837 were used for the purposes of public worship. The inhabitants of Prestwick were entitled to have public worship performed in their own church, by the minister of the parish, every third Sabbath. These churches are both very old. In the records of the burgh of Prestwick, mention is made of a *Justice Aire* being held in the burgh church, so far back as the year 1440. The church of Monkton is thought to be at least as old as that of Prestwick. Tradition says, that it is the same fabric in which Sir William Wallace attended divine service on the occasion of his having the remarkable dream mentioned in the seventh book of Blind Harry's poem.

The parish formerly extended to the river Ayr, and comprehended the present parish of Newton. In 1777, the inhabitants of Newton, in consequence of the defective accommodation in the parish churches, erected 'a Chapel of Ease for themselves. In 1779, having purchased from Sir William Maxwell, at that time patron of the united parish, the right of electing their own minister, and the consent of the heritors being obtained, Newton was erected into a separate parish *quoad sacra*; the burgh of Newton still continuing to bear their proportion of the stipend payable to the minister of Monkton, and of the expense of keeping the church of Monkton and Prestwick in repair.

The burgh of Prestwick is very ancient, as appears from its present charter. This charter was renewed by James VI. as administrator for his son, "Henry, Duke of Rothsay, Earl of Kyle, Carrick, and Cunningham, Lord of the Isles," &c. at Holyroodhouse, 19th June 1600, and bears, that Prestwick was known to have been a free burgh of barony for the space of 617 years previous to this renewal of its charter. Kyle, one of the three divisions of the county of Ayr, was itself subdivided into Kyle Stewart, and King's Kyle: the latter, extending from the river Ayr to the river Doon, had Ayr for its head burgh; the former, extending from the river Ayr to the river Irvine, had Prestwick for its head burgh. Their charter allows them to choose a provost, bailies,

&c., to hold a weekly market, and a fair upon the feast of St Nicholas, the 6th of December.

* *Land-owners.*—The chief land-owners of the parish are, Robert Reid, Esq. of Adamton, who also is patron of the parish; R. A. Oswald, Esq. of Auchencruive; W. G. Campbell, Esq. of Fairfield; A. Murdoch, Esq. of Whiteside and Orangefield; The Duke of Portland; and Lord James Stuart. The lands of Prestwick are divided into thirty-six freedoms, of from fourteen to sixteen acres each in extent, of which from seven to eight acres may be good arable land. The rest was formerly in a state of common, but some years ago was divided and portioned out among the freemen.

* *Parochial Registers.*—The parochial registers are the records of the kirk-session, and the register of births and baptisms. The earliest entry in the latter is in 1702. The former does not extend so far back, the earlier volumes having been lost. Both are now kept with considerable regularity.

Antiquities.—There are upon the estate of Ladykirk, the property of R. A. Oswald, Esq. of Auchencruive, the remains of a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary, called in old writings, Ladykirk in Kyle. This estate was originally part of the barony of Adamton, and belonged to the family of Blair of Adamton, who were patrons of this chapel in Roman Catholic times. The building formed a square with turrets at each corner, with the chapel in the middle. One of the turrets is all that remains of this ruin.

Between Prestwick and Prestwick Toll, within fifty or sixty yards of the high road, are still to be seen the ruined walls of King-Case or King's Case, a charitable institution said to have been endowed by King Robert Bruce. Tradition says, that the Bruce, in consequence of great personal efforts in a hard-fought battle, was seized with an eruptive disease of the nature of leprosy; and that upon his recovery from this disease, under the conviction that his cure had been mainly effected by drinking of the water of King-Case well, he built this lazar-house for the accommodation and relief of such as might be afflicted with the same disorder.*

* Kingcase. The history of this charitable institution is thus given by Chalmers in his Caledonia. "At *Kilcats*, which is now called *Kincase* or *Kingcase*, on the coast of Kyle, in the parish of Prestwick, there was founded an hospital for leprous persons, which was dedicated to St Ninian. Tradition relates that the founder of this establishment was King Robert Bruce, who was himself afflicted with leprosy, the result of hard fare, hard living, and hard work. This hospital was endowed with the lands of *Robert-loan*, which is now called *Loans*, in Dundonald parish; with the lands of *Sheles* and *Spital Sheles* in Kyle Stewart, and with other lands which cannot

III.—POPULATION.

According to Dr Webster's report, the population of the united parish, including Newton, amounted in 1755 to 1163; and as the population of Newton in 1779 amounted to between 800 and 900, the separate population of Monkton and Prestwick, in 1755, could not be more than 400. The subsequent increase, to the present amount of 1818, is to be attributed partly to the improvement in the system of agriculture, and the increased expenditure of labour and capital upon the soil; and partly, and perhaps in a greater degree, to the increase of the cotton manufactures, and the influx of Irish weavers employed in them, into the parish.

The number of inhabitants residing in the country is 346; in the three villages of Monkton, Prestwick, and Prestwick Toll; there being 376 in Monkton; 758 in Prestwick; and 327 in Prestwick Toll.

There are only two gentlemen of independent fortune resident in the parish, viz. Mr Reid of Adamton, and Mr Campbell of Fairfield, both heritors in the parish.

There are in the parish ten separate properties of the annual value of L. 50 and upwards.

Number of families in the parish,	382
chiefly employed in agriculture,	98
trade, manufacture, and handicraft,	279

The number of illegitimate births in the parish during the last three years, as nearly as can be ascertained, was 14.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The number of acres, Scotch measure, in the pa-

now be specified. As the foundation charter of this hospital does not exist, it cannot be ascertained what number of persons were originally maintained in it. It appears, however, to have been governed by a guardian, or prior, and it had a chaplain. In the reign of James II., Wallace of Newton acquired the lands of Spital Sheles, which belonged to this hospital, as the name implies, and the hereditary office of keeper, or governor of the hospital, and of the lands belonging to it. In January 1515-16, all these were resigned by Hugh Wallace of Newton, in favour of his brother Adam. After the whole property of this hospital was thus granted away, the only revenue that remained to it was the feu-duties, payable from the land, in this manner granted in fee-farm; and these, amounting to 64 bolls of meal and 8 merks Scots of money, with sixteen threaves of straw for thatching the hospital, are still paid. For more than two centuries past, this diminished revenue has been shared among eight objects of charity, in equal shares of eight bolls of meal, and one merk Scotch to each. The leprosy having long disappeared, the persons who are now admitted to the benefit of this charity, are such as labour under diseases which are considered incurable, or such as are in indigent circumstances. The right of appointing these belonged to the family of Wallace of Craigie for a long time, and was purchased about 1790 (in 1787) by the burgh of Ayr, which still holds this patronage. The old hospital, which existed in the 'better days of this charity, has been long in ruins.' In the description of Kyle, by Robert Gordon, in the reign of Charles I., he mentions the chapel of this establishment; and says, that the persons admitted to the charity were then lodged in huts, or cottages in the vicinity."

ish, which are either cultivated or occasionally in tillage, is about 1800. The number never cultivated, or remaining constantly waste or in pasture is 570. There is little of these 570 acres that could, with advantage, be added to the cultivated land of the parish. The only common in the parish is that of Prestwick, which was some years ago divided and appropriated. The number of acres under wood is about 50, mostly planted.

Rent of Land.—The average rent of land in the Monkton half of the parish, including 170 acres of sand-bluffs and links on the sea side, is L. 2, 6s. per Scotch acre; and over the united parish L. 1, 17s. 3d. per acre. The average rent of summer grazing may be stated at L. 4, 10s. for an ox or milch cow; and L. 2, 10s. for young cattle.

Husbandry.—The state of husbandry in the parish may be said to be in a very advanced stage of improvement. Surface-draining in every alternate furrow, with tiles and stones, has been adopted with the best effects in some of the best land in the parish. The leases are generally of nineteen years.

The farm-steadings are generally good, and upon some of the larger farms have been erected in a very complete style, and at great expense.

Surface draining, and feeding off the turnip crop on the ground with sheep, appear to be the most important improvements lately introduced into the husbandry of the parish.

Produce.—The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish has been ascertained with a considerable attention to minuteness and accuracy, and is as follows, viz.

Produce of grain of all kinds, whether for food of man or domestic animals :			
Wheat,	-	-	L. 9,032 19 0
Oats,	-	-	2,855 17 0
Barley,	-	-	119 0 0
			L. 6,007 16 0
Potatoes and turnips,	-	-	3,092 9 0
Beans,	-	-	796 4 0
			3,888 13 0
Hay, (cultivated)	-	-	809 17 0
Pasture at L. 4, 10s. per cow,	-	-	1,867 0 0
			L. 12,573 6 0
Total amount of raw produce, L. 12,573 6 0			
The total rental of the parish is, L. 4,509.			

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.*

The nearest market-towns are Ayr, at the distance of 4 miles from Monkton, and 2½ from Prestwick; Kilmarnock, at the distance of 8 miles from Monkton, and 9 from Prestwick; and Irvine,

at the distance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Monkton, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ from Prestwick. *

Villages.—The villages in the parish are three, Monkton, Prestwick and Prestwick Toll, with populations respectively of 376, 758, and 327.

* *Means of Communication.*—The post-town is Ayr. The parish is intersected, 1st, by the great road from Port-Patrick and Ayr to Kilmarnock and Glasgow—length of this road within the parish $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles: 2d, from Ayr to Irvine and Saltcoats, &c.—length of which within the parish is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles: 3d, from Mauchline and Tarbolton to Irvine, &c.—length of which within the parish is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles: 4th, from Cumnock, and Coylton, and St Quivox, to Irvine, &c.—length of which within the parish is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The turnpike roads all intersect each other at the same point, in the village of Monkton.

Besides the mail-coach, six public coaches pass through Monkton and Prestwick every day, three early in the morning from Ayr, two of them to Glasgow, and the other to Edinburgh; and three in the afternoon to Ayr, one of them from Edinburgh, and the other two from Glasgow. Besides these, a regular diligence leaves Kilmarnock for Ayr in the morning, and returns in the afternoon, and another, three times a-week, leaves Irvine for Ayr in the morning, and returns in the afternoon.

Ecclesiastical State.—The union of the two parishes has been completed by the competent legal process before the Court of Teinds, and presbytery of Ayr. These courts, by decret dated 4th June 1834, granting authority for the suppression of the two old churches, and for the erection, on an intermediate situation, of one new church, sufficient to accommodate the united parish. A very handsome new church, accordingly, has been built on a commanding situation, adjacent to the Pow-bridge, and calculated to contain 825 sitters, that number being exactly two-thirds of the examinable persons in the parish. It reflects the highest credit on the architect, David Bryce, Esq. Edinburgh, and forms one of the most striking objects in the surrounding landscape, and one of the handsomest churches in the west of Scotland. Including the purchase of ground, gates and surrounding walls, &c. &c., it cost about L.2500, and was opened for public worship on the 14th of May 1837.

The manse was built in 1822. The glebe, including the garden and the ground occupied by the manse and offices, is about 8

Scotch acres in extent, and for the last fifteen or sixteen years rented at from L. 5 to L. 5, 5s. per acre. The stipend is 17 chalders of victual, half meal, half barley, with L. 8, 6s. 8d. as allowance for communion elements. About 600 persons* regularly attend church since the new church was opened. There are about 200 Dissenters, young and old, of all persuasions, in the parish; of these about 60 are Roman Catholics. Divine service is attended with considerable regularity in the parish church. The number of communicants is about 400. The average of collections in the old church was about L. 35 annually. The average collections in the new church cannot yet be given.

Education.—There is one parochial school in Monkton, attended by between 100 and 130 children. In Prestwick there is one private school, attended by from 40 to 50 children. There are also two Sabbath evening schools, attended by from 160 to 180 or 200 children, most of whom do not regularly enjoy any other means of education. The branches of instruction taught in the two day schools are, English reading, English grammar, writing, arithmetic, practical mathematics, and, when pupils offer, the elements of the Latin language. The parochial schoolmaster has the maximum salary, with a house, school-house, and a garden of the statutory extent. The teacher in Prestwick has the use of the town-house of the burgh for a school-house; and the burgh usually make him an annual allowance for rent of dwelling-house. The school fees, are, for English reading alone, 2s. 6d. per quarter; for reading and writing, 3s. 6d.; and for all the other branches taught, 4s. It is believed there are very few, if any, in the parish unable to read, and parents in general are very much alive to the benefits of education. The number of schools is sufficient for the parish.

Poor.—There are from 15 to 20 poor receiving regular parochial aid, to the amount of from 3s. to 4s. a-month. There are also others receiving occasional aid. The annual amount of contributions for their relief may be stated at about L. 50 Sterling, of which L. 35 is collected at the church door, L. 10 is raised by voluntary subscription among the heritors, and the rest is made up by fines, proclamation dues, &c. &c. There is still remaining among the poor a considerable reluctance to apply for parish relief, if it can by any means be avoided.

Prison.—There is one prison in the burgh of Prestwick, which is about to be rebuilt. Imprisonment is not frequent. There are four public houses in Prestwick toll, four or five in Prestwick, and

four in Monkton; a number much greater than is required, and certainly not favourable to the moral habits of the people.

Fuel.—The fuel used in the parish is universally coal, which is procured, the best of it, from the collieries in the neighbourhood of Kilmarnock, also from Newton, and from the collieries on the water of Ayr, at an expense, including carriage, of between 5s. and 5s. 9d. per single horse cart.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The most striking change in the parish since the date of last Statistical Account, is in regard to the agriculture, the mode of farming, and the amount of farm produce raised, and of the rental of the parish. At the date of last Statistical Account there was little or no wheat sown; now the annual value of wheat raised is L. 3032, 19s. In 1791 the amount of oats raised in this parish was 1315 bolls, and of bear or barley, 399 bolls; now the annual value of oats raised is L. 2855, and of barley L. 119. In 1791 there were 6 or 7 acres of turnips, and 23 or 24 acres of potatoes; now the annual amount of potatoes and turnips raised is 215 acres, valued at L. 3092. And finally, in 1791, the rental of the parish was supposed to be between L. 1800 and L. 2000; now it is L. 4509, 17s. The chief improvement in the husbandry of the parish is tile-draining in every furrow, or every alternate furrow, which might be applied to a large portion of the parish with the most important results. And the chief error in the system seems to be too frequent white-cropping, as it appears, even under the best management in other respects, to be impairing the productiveness of the soil.

Written in 1832, and revised in 1837.

PARISH OF GALSTON.

PRESBYTERY OF AYR, SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR.

THE REV. ROBERT STIRLING, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Extent and Boundaries.—THE parish of Galston is situated in the district of Kyle. Its greatest length is about 13 miles, and its greatest breadth about 4½; but its figure is very irregular, and