

PARISH OF WALSTON.

PRESBYTERY OF BIGGAR, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND TWEEDDALE.

THE REV. JOHN WILSON, MINISTER.

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.—THE village of Walston, to which this parish is evidently indebted for its name, has been supposed to be so called* from a particular well, or spring, distant from it about half-a-mile, and at one time in some repute for its medicinal properties. It seems more probable that the name is derived not from *one* well but several; viz. the Buck-well, the Siller-wells, Walston-well, and many others, named and nameless, in the neighbourhood, from which no less than three rivulets descend in the immediate vicinity. But probable as this etymology may appear, the conjecture may still be hazarded, that, as the neighbouring parish of Dolphinton, which anciently belonged to the same proprietors, took its name from Dolfyn, a brother of Cospatrick, the parish of Walston may have taken its name from Waldef, another brother of the same Earl,† and that from Waldef's-toun, the name may have been transformed into Walyston and Walston.

Boundaries, &c.—In figure, this parish approaches towards a *trapezium*, the northern, eastern, and southern boundaries extending to about 3 miles respectively, and the western to about 2 miles. It is bounded on the north, by a corner of Carnwath, and by Dun-syre; on the east, by Dolphinton; on the south (having touched Kirkurd and Skirling in a single point) by Biggar; and on the west, by Libberton. Medwin Water, the northern boundary, flows gently to the westward, no longer in a thousand meanders, as nature dictated, but in a sunk artificial channel, straight at both extremities, and curved towards the middle abruptly and ungracefully; the difference of level between the point where it first touches the parish, and that where it leaves it, being not more than 15 feet. On this line the lowest point, as determined by actual survey, is 660 feet above the level of the sea, and conse-

* *Vide* Chalmers's Caledonia, and former Statistical Account.

† Dolfyn and Waldef, brothers of Cospatrick, Earl of Dunbar, are mentioned in the *Inquisitio Davidis*, anno 1116.

quently the highest, at the north-eastern extremity, 675 feet above the same level. From this latter point, where the March burn, which for nearly three-quarters of a mile separates this parish from Dolphinton, falls into the Medwin, the land rises at first almost imperceptibly for about a quarter of a mile, forming part of a very level and extensive vale, belonging partly to Dunsyre, partly to Dolphinton, and in a still greater proportion to Walston,—through the middle of which the Medwin glides silently along. The common boundary rises more abruptly as it runs southward, ascending the sides of the Black or Walston Mount, and about its middle point, where it crosses the top of this mountain, gains an elevation of not less than 1600 feet above the level of the sea. It then descends the sloping sides of the mount, and at its lowest point in a narrow valley, where the road from Edinburgh to Dumfries crosses that from Carnwath to Peebles, is still 833 feet above the sea level, as determined by actual survey; thence it again ascends for about a quarter of a mile, and forms an acute angle with the southern boundary line at the top of the Broomylaw, a hill of considerable elevation, where the parishes of Dolphinton, Kirkurd, Skirling, Biggar, and Walston meet in a single point. The southern boundary is considerably depressed towards the centre, reaching nearly 750 feet above the sea level, and at the western extremity gains an elevation of about 800 feet above the same level.

It thus appears that the base of this parish inclines considerably to the north-westward. The ridge of the Black Mount descending westward in repeated undulations, till from 1600 feet of elevation it reaches towards 800 feet, divides the parish into nearly equal portions, looking to the north-west and south-west. To the westward, the ridge and sloping extremities of the mountain fill up nearly the whole breadth of the parish, leaving on the Medwin at the north-west corner a mere patch of level ground; towards the centre of the parish, the sides of the mount ascend more abruptly, leaving on the north the vale of the Medwin, already mentioned, and on the south the valley of Elsrickle, at first narrow, but gradually widening in its progress eastward.

Hydrography.—The manifold springs on the northern side of the Black Mount have already been alluded to. Many of them are copious, and the water of excellent quality.* These find their

* The temperature of Walston well, and of the Siller wells, where they issue from the ground, is 44° of Fahrenheit, which would indicate an altitude of about 1000 feet for these wells;—pretty near the truth.

way to the Medwin by many rivulets or *burns*; viz. the March burn, already mentioned as forming the north-eastern boundary of the parish; to the westward of which, at the distance of about a mile and a quarter, is Winter-burn; then the Ha'-burn, the Glebe-burn, and Black-law burn, all within the space of less than a mile; and lastly, the Gill-burn, which separates the parish from Libberton on the north-western quarter. All these are conveyed by the Medwin, still continuing its placid course to the westward for about four miles after leaving the parish, to the Clyde, and by it to the Atlantic Ocean. Whereas the *burns* on the south side of the ridge,—two of which flowing from the extremities of the southern boundary, which they form throughout its whole extent, viz. Paul-yard-burn from the eastward, and Cocklaw-burn from the westward, and receiving toward the middle of the line, where they meet in the vale of Elsrickle, a burn from that village, and two others from the eastward, both of which rise on the farm of How-burn, unite in the Two-mile,* or Candy-burn, which falls into Biggar Water, a tributary of the Tweed, and thus transmit the waters of the Elsrickle, or south side of the parish, into the German Ocean.

Climate.—The climate of this parish is affected not only by the latitude, 55° 41', but also to a certain extent by its elevation above the level of the sea, and above the adjacent country to the westward. In more genial seasons, the harvests are not more than a few days later than in the vicinity of Edinburgh; while in cold and rainy seasons, they are later by as many weeks. From the cold piercing easterly winds in spring, the parish is greatly sheltered by the Black Mount, and Dolphinton Hill, its continuation eastward. These, with their shoulders and flanks protruding to the north and south, break the force of the eastern blasts, and change their direction; and vainly do the chilling *haars*, which flow like the advancing tide over the lower lands that stretch away to the mouth of the Frith of Forth, attempt to surmount their summits. Obstructed as by a mighty promontory, they float along the adjacent valleys, and present every considerable eminence with its trees or houses under the appearance of islands in a whitish lake. But picturesque as the effects of the *haars* at times may be, it is a favourable circumstance for the climate of this parish that they rarely reach it, and never entirely cover it; and to this in some degree it may be owing, that the lands in this parish, even

* "The Two-mile-burn coming fra Elsrickle bog down by Skirling, falls into Biggar Water, and then into the Tweed."—Sibbald MS. Account by Sir W. Baillie of Lanabton, and William Baillie of Carphin.

on the north side of the mount are rather earlier than those much less elevated to the eastward along the foot of the Pentlands. But while it is thus sheltered from easterly winds, it is exposed to the south-west and south winds, which blow at times down the vale of Clyde with the violence of a hurricane; and also to those from the west and north-west, which bear on their wings the vapours of the Atlantic, and ascending the hollow course of the Clyde and Medwin, sweep almost unobstructed from one end of the parish to the other. The moisture, however, which the west winds bear along, is in part averted from this parish by the range, of which Tinto and Culter Fell form the summit, and partly by the high lands to the westward of Carnwath. The following are the mean heights of barometer, &c. at the manse for three months of the current year.

	At 10 A. M.			At 10 P. M.		
	Barom.	Ther. att.	Detach.	Barom.	Ther. att.	Detach.
From 19th April to 18th May inclusive,	29.074	55°.6	51°.5	29.068	57°.3	45°.6
From 19th May to 18th June inclusive,	29.071	55°.7	52°.7	29.040	56°.4	47°.5
From 19th June to 18th July inclusive,	28.944	58°.2	54°.7	28.955	58°.5	49°.15

The barometer was kept in a room where there was frequently a fire. The detached thermometer hung in the open air in the western corner of a window looking north-west.

The climate is favourable to health and longevity, the best evidence of which is found in the comparatively rare visits of epidemic diseases, and in the advanced age which many of the parishioners have reached in a hale and active state. Within the last twelve years, not less than nine individuals have died aged eighty and upwards; and there are still living, and in the enjoyment of good health and spirits, in the village of Walston, *twain* sisters who have reached the age of eighty-four. In the village of Elsrickle there resides a lively and contented veteran of the age of eighty-three, who crosses the hill with all the agility of youth; and in the parish of Linton, a venerable patriarch, at the age of ninety-three, who left this parish in 1835, having spent sixty-six years of his life in it, sixty of which he passed in the vale of Medwin as a shepherd on the farm of Borland. Having brought up and established in life a considerable family, he is now living in his old age in comfort on the remainder of the fruits of his industry and economy. He was for many years a member of the kirk-session of this parish, and still delights to visit it, and to render his aid as an elder at the communion.

Geology and Mineralogy.—Trap rocks compose the mass of the

mount throughout its whole extent, and lie under the valley of Elsrickle. Porphyritic felspar of a very shattered description abounds on the north side, in which are found in different places veins of sulphate of barytes. On the acclivity, and at the foot of the mount on the same side, sandstone lies over the trap. On the south of the ridge, the felspar becomes more compact, and passes into clinkstone. At Harecairns, towards the west end of the parish, on the slope of the ridge, a dike of greenstone is found running north-west by south-east, and appears in two or three places above the surface in globular concretions. At this place, also, strata of white sandstone and limestone crop out. White sandstone is also found near the church, on removing a few feet of surface; and at a similar depth, at several places along the acclivity; and it dips at inclinations varying with those of the hill. On the same side of the ridge, on the farm of Borland, red sandstone is wrought for building. The lime at Harecairns was occasionally quarried and burnt by the neighbouring farmers till the year 1816, when they found it more profitable to bring burnt lime from Carnwath moor, than to cart coals from that locality, and burn the lime which was found at Harecairns. Coal has not been found in the parish, though in all probability it lies in the vale of Medwin; but from the inclination of the strata it must be very deep. Beautiful agates have been found imbedded in the trap on the south side of the hill, and also in the alluvial soil in different parts of the parish. In the vale of Medwin the alluvial deposit is of great depth, consisting of sandy loam and patches of moss. There are about thirty acres of *flow* or unconsolidated moss. In the valley of Elsrickle, or Howburn, the deposit is of a similar kind, but more adhesive, from a greater admixture of clay. In the mosses, large trunks of trees have been met with; some of them in such a state of preservation as to be used by the carpenter.

Soil.—The soil is very various, but for the greater part suitable for turnip husbandry. In the valleys, it is either a brownish loam, containing moss, or of a sandy character. On the sloping sides of the hill, it is more adhesive, free of stones and gravel, and in some places of a quality equal to the best in lower situations. The mean height of the arable land above the level of the sea is about 800 feet, and its average mean temperature 45° Fahrenheit.

There are no mines in the parish; but it is highly probable that two caves on the Borland farm, in the vicinity of Walston Well, (one of which is about 40 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 5

feet in height, and enters immediately below a vein of heavy spar,) are the memorials of abortive attempts to discover lead or more precious ores. These attempts were made in all likelihood in the reign of James V., by a company of Germans, who, in 1526, obtained from that prince a grant of the precious mines of Scotland for forty-three years, and worked in various parts of Clydesdale.* There are appearances of a similar trial on the hill above Howburn, at a place called the Tours.

Zoology.—In this department, the parish of Walston cannot boast of any of the more rare species. There are found in it the fox, the hare, and rabbit, the polecat, the weasel. The otter, the squirrel, and the ermine are seen occasionally.

About the beginning of March, or in less favourable seasons, towards the middle of that month, the whistle of the gray plover is heard from the mists of the hill, in itself unmusical, yet delightful to the ear, as the note which proclaims that the rigour of winter is gone, and that the season of soft showers and blossoms, and of the singing of birds, is at hand. Next may be heard the wailing sounds of the crested lapwing, and the scream of the curlew. Lower down, the blackbird and mavis in due time hail the coming day with their strains. The cuckoo is generally heard about the first of May; and the swallow and bat make their appearance soon after. About the middle of May, the crake of the land-rail begins to be heard. During seed-time, the fields are visited by the common gull, and also by flocks of wild geese, which at that period frequent the banks of the Medwin. Wild duck, teal, grouse, and partridges are found in their appropriate localities; as also black-cock, and occasionally a stray pheasant. The goldfinch, and chaffinch, the green and gray linnet, the yellow-hammer, redbreast, and common wren, are either resident throughout the year, or occasional visitants, and the golden-crested wren may at times be met with.†

Botany.—No plants deserving the title of rare have hitherto been observed in this parish. The following may serve as a specimen of such as are phanerogamous:—On the top of Walston Mount are found the blaeberry and red whortleberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus* and *Vitis Idæa*.) The latter may also be found so low down as about 900 feet above the sea level. Wood-sorrel (*Ox-*

* Vide History of Mines in Scotland, printed for the Bannatyne Club in 1825.

† In October 1835, the writer of this account found one of these beautiful little birds, which had found admittance at an open window, perched on the bell rope in his study.

alis acetosella) is found as high as 1400 feet above the same level. Considerably lower down, at a place called the Old Kirk Wa's, may be found the only specimen of the hazel-nut tree (*Corylus Avellana*) in the parish, and beside it a patch of woodruff (*Asperula odorata*.) On the glebe, at the height of about 950 feet above the level of the sea, are found the lucken gowan, or mountain globe-flower, (*Trollius Europæus*); marsh cinquefoil (*Comarum palustre*); water avens (*Geum rivale*); and butterfly-orchis (*Habenaria bifolia*); and lower down frog-orchis (*Habenaria viridis*); bald-money (*Meum athamanticum*); and marsh arrow-grass (*Triglochin palustre*.) On the sides of the Borland Burn, common golden-rod (*Solidago Virgaurea*); common dwarf cistus (*Cistus helianthemum*); and wood crane-bill (*Geranium sylvaticum*.) On the sides of the Ha' Burn, purple foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*); common whin or furze (*Ulex Europæus*); alternate-leaved and opposite-leaved golden saxifrage (*Chryso-splenium alternifolium* and *oppositifolium*); pilewort (*Ficaria verna*); and butter-bur (*Tussilago petasites*.) In the lower grounds, along with several of those already mentioned, marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*); wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*); common tway-blade (*Listera ovata*); white cluster-rooted orchis (*Habenaria albida*); aromatic palmate orchis (*Gymnadenia conopsea*), and yellow water iris (*Iris Pseud-Acorus*.) In the Borland moss, common mares-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), and cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*), may be found, but neither abundantly.

Genista anglica
Ononis arvensis
Euphrasia officinalis
Gentiana campestris
Linum catharticum
Draba verna
Alechemilla vulgaris
Menyanthes trifoliata
Drosera rotundifolia

Parnassia palustris
Epilobium alsinifolium
Pinguicula vulgaris
Sedum villosum
Saxifraga granulata
Spiræa ulmaria
Tussilago Farfara
Cardamine pratensis,

may also be met with in their appropriate habitats. The mountain ash (*Sorbus* or *Pyrus aucuparia*) is to be met with, eaten down by sheep, and pushing out its branches under shelter of the heather, after the manner of white clover, and nearly as small, (and in more favourable situations) as a stately ornamental tree. Were the high grounds enclosed it would speedily rush up in all directions; and at present it may be seen raising its head above the whins, which protect it from the ravages of its enemies. This tree may therefore be regarded with justice as a native of the pa-

rish, and there are three splendid brethren of the species growing in the immediate vicinity of the manse. The other trees which seem adapted to the climate and soil, and of which good specimens are to be seen on the Walston or Elsrickle sides of the hill, are, the elm, the plane, the ash, the gean, and the hawthorn. There are in the garden at the Place, formerly the manor house, two fine yew trees of considerable age, and there was also in an enclosure beside it a row of hollies of great beauty, which have lately been destroyed by sheep. Around the manse, the Place and the Old Borland, there still remain a few plane and ash trees, the survivors of a noble plantation. In Hamilton of Wishaw's Account of this parish, it is said, "it" (the property) "hath an old house seated near to the church, and well-planted with barren timber." This description is, alas! no longer applicable. It is currently reported at this day, that the greater part of the wood was cut down between 1709 and 1752, during the dependence of the lawsuit between John Baillie's heirs, and George Lockhart of Carnwath; and it is expressly stated in the records of Presbytery, that, in the year 1737, "a great many large trees growing in the kirk-yard were cut down, and sold by the principal heritor." To this period, therefore, we may refer the *clearing* which the present generation deplore, and which they cannot even hope to see remedied in their days. Something, however, has of late been done in the way of planting, and the growth of Scotch-firs, larches, spruces, and silver-firs, and also of the hard-wood with which they are interspersed, affords the greatest encouragement to the proprietors to persevere in planting and enclosing. And they must be quite aware, that, though the direct return from their plantations may be distant, the return from their fields fenced, and sheltered will be immediate and progressive.

II.—CIVIL HISTORY.

There is no account of this parish more ancient than that in Hamilton of Wishaw's account of Lanarkshire, drawn up about 1710, and lately printed for the Maitland Club, to which are subjoined by the editor, six charters relating to the revenues of the living of Walston, of date 1292-3, extracted from the chartulary of Glasgow. The account in Chalmers's Caledonia does credit to his acknowledged accuracy of research. There is no separate map of the whole parish. There are, however, excellent plans of the

different properties in the hands of the proprietors, to which the writer of this account has been kindly allowed access.

Parochial Registers.—The parochial registers consist of a volume containing marriages and births from the year 1680 down to the present time, and three volumes of acts and proceedings of the kirk-session. Of these the first commences in 1703, and is in the handwriting of Mr Lining, by whom it was kept most accurately during his incumbency. After his time, there is a great falling off, and, upon the whole, it may be said that the registers have been any thing but well kept. A volume of some importance, containing acts and proceedings of session from 1655 to 1692, and recorded to have been in existence in 1752, has since disappeared. It is reported to have been consumed in a fire, which burnt part of the schoolmaster's house, many years ago; but it may perhaps be still in existence, and if this should meet the eye of any one who knows any thing certain of its fate, it is hoped he will be good enough to communicate it to the writer.

Antiquities.—A tripod of brass, supposed to be a relict of the Roman invaders of our island, was lately struck by the plough on the farm of Borland, and is now in the possession of Adam Sim, Esq. of Cultermains. The same gentleman has also in his possession a *celt* found in this parish, the relict of another race who occupied it at a more recent period, and there is another in possession of the writer of this account, presented to him some years ago by the kirk-officer. Stone coffins have been turned up at the east end of the village of Elsrickle, and one was lately discovered containing an urn on the farm of Hyndshieland. On exposure to the air the urn crumbled into dust. On the farm of Cocklaw, there are on the high ground the remains of what has been erroneously called a Roman camp. It has consisted of two concentric circular earthen mounds and ditches. The diameter of the inner circle is 67 yards, and the outward mound and ditch are 5 yards from those within.

Historical Notices, Civil and Ecclesiastical.—In the earliest records relative to this parish, we find it a pertinent of the lordship of Bothwell; and for upwards of three centuries it was either claimed or possessed by the various individuals, who successively inherited that Lordship, or to whom it was granted by the Crown on their frequently recurring forfeitures. The lands of Walston and Elgerith, or Elgirig, (subsequently Elgerigill, and now Elsrickle), formed a barony co-extensive with the parish; and the patronage of the church has all along been conjoined with the ba-

rony, and transmitted with it to the present possessor. Like the neighbouring parish of Dolphinton, it passed from the hands of Walter Olifard, who died in 1242, successively into those of the Morays and the Douglasses.* Sir John Ramsay next obtained it, and held it for a few years, when it was forfeited and bestowed upon Patrick Hepburn, Lord Hailes. On the forfeiture of James Hepburn, the too famous Earl of Bothwell, in 1567, the barony of Walston, and the patronage of the church, once more fell to the Crown, and were granted by James VI. to John, Earl of Mar. By this distinguished nobleman, the barony of Walston, with the patronage of the church, was sold towards the commencement of the seventeenth century to Robert Baillie, merchant-burgess of Edinburgh, a son of Matthew Baillie, of St John's Kirk, who, dying at Walston in 1655,† was succeeded by his son Christopher,‡ on whose decease in 1693 his son John succeeded, who in June 1709, sold § the

* Sir Thomas Moray of Bothwell, by marriage with whose daughter and heiress the lordship of Bothwell passed into the family of Douglas, granted to Sir Robert Erskine and Christian Keith, his spouse, the lands of Walayston and Elgereth, in Lanarkshire, to be holden of him and his successors; and this grant was confirmed by a charter of David II. (vide Douglas' Peerage, Earls of Menteith). John, Earl of Mar, was lineally descended from Sir Robert Erskine and Christian Keith, and this may have been the reason why, on the forfeiture of the Earl of Bothwell in 1567, he obtained a grant of the barony of Walston from the Crown; and why that grant was excepted from a revocation made in Parliament 29th November 1591. The barony and lands of Walston, with the advowson of the church, were included in the grant of the whole property of the lordship of Bothwell to Francis Stewart in 1581, and this grant was ratified in Parliament, 29th November, in the same year, when a protest was made against the grant to the Earl of Mar. The attainder of Francis, Earl of Bothwell, in 1593, extinguished whatever right he had to the property of Walston, and left the Earl of Mar in undisputed possession of the property, temporal and spiritual.—Vide Chalmers's Caledonia. The Earl of Mar occasionally resided at Walston for his recreation in hawking, and was there in 1601 with his lady, Dame Maria Stuart.—Vide Memorice of the Somervilles. His hunting seat was a square tower, pulled down within these few years to build cow-houses, which now occupy the site.

† Robert Baillie obtained a charter from the Crown, in his own name, and that of his wife, Marion Purves, which is dated 30th November 1632. He and his son were suspected of favouring Montrose's attempt. Robert Baillie mortified 400 merks for the use of the poor of the parish.

‡ Christopher Baillie married Lillias, daughter of Sir David Murray of Stanhope, and Lady Lillias Fleming, daughter of the Earl of Wigton. He built the aisle at the south end of the church, where his father, himself, his son John, and Grizzel Rachel Baillie, John's daughter and heiress, are interred.—Vide tombstones in vault. His body was embowelled and embalmed at an expense of 400 merks. Christopher presented to the church of Walston in 1657, four silver communion cups, which yet remain to attest his liberality. On them are engraved his arms, and those of his wife; and over the shield is a cypher, in which are blended the letters, R. B.; M. P.; C. B.; L. M.; being the initials of his father's name, and that of his mother, his own, and his wife's. Christopher Baillie was suspected of malignancy in 1646, and was fined L. 9600 Scots by Middleton's parliament in 1662.—Vide Wodrow, by Burns, Vol. I. p. 272. Christopher Baillie mortified, 12th October 1660, L. 1000 Scots money, the interest of which to afford a salary to the schoolmaster; this was lost by mismanagement towards the end of last century, having been lent many years before on insufficient security.

§ Vide Morison's Decisions, 16891, and 8433.

It appears from the records of the Presbytery of Biggar, 1709, that John Baillie

batony of Walston, with the patronage of the church, to George Lockhart of Carnwath,* in whose representative, Sir Norman Macdonald Lockhart, of Lee and Carnwath, Bart. both are now vested.

The lands of Elsrickle, about one-half of the parish, were sold by George Lockhart of Carnwath, in portions, in 1722 and following years, to John Hunter, Andrew Aitken, John Craig, James Peacock, and others; and there appears in the cess-book of the county, in 1747, the following list of the heritors of Walston, with their respective valuations:—

Laird of Carnwath,	L. 724	0	0
James Harper in Elsrickle,	25	0	0
John and James Craig there,	180	0	0
John Hunter there,	40	0	0
Andrew Aitken there,	43	0	0
James Peacock there,	160	0	0
Thomas Henderson,	43	0	0
Thomas Yelton there,	18	0	0
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	L. 1233	0	0

The present heritors of the parish, with their respective valuations, are as follows:

Sir Norman Macdonald Lockhart,	L. 724	0	0
John Allan Woddrop of Elsrickle,	358	0	0
Mr John Allan Rowat,	92	13	3
Mr William White,	27	6	0
Mr James Aitken,	15	14	0
Mr Andrew White,	15	7	9
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	L. 1233	0	0

Of the above heritors only one, Mr Aitken, resides in the parish.

By a charter dated 1292, the right of patronage of the rectory of Walyston was conferred by Sir William Moray of Bothwell upon the dean and chapter of the Cathedral of Glasgow, with reservation of the patronage of the vicarage to himself and his successors. By a subsequent charter in 1293, the rectory was fixed at twenty merks of teinds, and three acres of the church lands, which were to be possessed and held by the dean and chapter for ever, freely and quietly for their common benefit, and were

was not the sole heritor of the parish of Walston, as asserted in the account of the parish drawn up for Hamilton of Wishaw. James Harper possessed the small property of Harperhall, and was the only other heritor.—Vide Record of Presbytery. In the register of deeds, at Lanark, a James Harper is found as portioner in Elsrickle, as early as 1637, and James Leishman, as portioner there, in 1698.

* An unsuccessful attempt was made to obtain a reduction of this sale by John Baillie to G. Lockhart. The law-suit was commenced in 1709, and settled by arbitration in 1752.

so held by them till the Reformation. In Bagimont's Roll, the vicarage of Walston, in the Deanery of Lanark, is taxed at L. 2, 13s. 4d., being a tenth of the estimated value of the spiritual revenues. At the Reformation, the rectorial revenues were let to the parishioners for L. 40 yearly, and it was reported by Sir David Dalgleish, who then held the vicarage, that its revenues were let for 50 merks yearly payable to him, and 20 merks more, payable to Lawrence Leschman,—a minister who had been placed in the church of Walston by the Reformers. The rectorial revenues were afterwards granted to the College of Glasgow.* In 1708, the stipend, on an average of years, did not exceed 600 merks. In 1755, it amounted to L. 58, 5s.; in 1798, to L. 77, 16s. 6d.

Ministers of Walston.—Robert de Lamberton, rector of the church of Walston, swore fealty to Edward I in 1296, and thereupon obtained a mandate for the delivery of his property. He held the benefice during his life. In 1502, Mr Edward Sinclair obtained a presentation from the King to the vicarage of Walston, which was vacant by the decease of Mr William Crichtoun. How the presentation came to be with the King does not appear.† He was succeeded by Sir David Dalgleish and Lawrence Leschman already mentioned. On the death of Sir David Dalgleish, Walter Tweedie was presented, (20th May 1567,) by James Earl of Bothwell, the patron, to the vicarage of the parish church of Walston; but Bothwell being denounced a rebel before his collation, he obtained a grant of the benefice from the Regent Murray in September 1567.‡ In the "Register of ministers in Clydesdale *sen* 1567," we find at Walston John Fotheringham, exhorter, xl merkis; Thomas Lindsay, exhorter, xl merkis. Thomas Lindsay is, in 1576, found as minister with a stipend of L. 66, 13s. 4d., and Robert Kinross, reader, with L. 16. Thomas Lindsay, as appears from his tombstone in the churchyard, died minister of Walston, 17th June 1609, and was succeeded by his son Thomas Lindsay, who died in 1654. Patrick Anderson was inducted in 1655, and ejected for non-conformity in 1663. In September 1672, he was ordered by the council, under the Act of Indulgence, to repair to the parish of Kilbirnie, and there to remain confined, with permission to preach and to exercise the other parts of his ministerial function,—which order he did not obey. In 1673, he was called before the council, and ordered to his confinement betwixt and the 1st of

* Vide Hamilton of Wishaw's Account.

† Vide Chalmers's Caledonia, notes.

‡ Ibid.

June. In April 1678, he was charged before the Council for keeping conventicles in his house in Potterrow, in the years 1674-75-76-77 and 78, and for having conversed and corresponded with Messrs Welsh, Williamson, Johnston, and other intercommunicated persons. He appeared and denied the charge; and was ordered to the Bass, unless he would presently find caution, under the penalty of 2000 merks, to remove from Edinburgh, and five miles round it, and that he should converse with nobody but those of his own family. "This," says Wodrow, and most truly, "was a very hard and iniquitous interdict." To the Bass then he went, and in the damp cells of that dreary and inhospitable rock, he, with other devoted brethren, lingered out days, and months, and years, till God quelled the power of their oppressors, and opened the doors of their prison-house. About the period of the Revolution he was orderly loosed from Walston, and translated to Dalkeith. The people of Walston, however, were far from being satisfied with his translation, and on 27th June 1689, petitioned the united presbytery of Peebles and Biggar for advice how to get back their beloved pastor. In the end of the year, he returned to his devoted people. The manner of his return was not according to strict form. But the sufferings of the venerable man, his age and infirmities, would seem to have been admitted as his justification; and on the 22d July 1690, he died minister of the parish, from which he had been so unjustly extruded, and was buried among his own people. In his absence, the cure was served successively by John Scheill, who was presented by the Archbishop of Glasgow in 1664, and died May 1677; John Reid, who was also presented by the Archbishop, *jure devoluto*, inducted 28th September 1678, and translated to Biggar 23d December 1685;* and lastly, by Robert Kincaid, who was presented by the Laird of Walston (Cr. Baillie,) inducted 28th April 1686, and was present in the Presbytery of Lanark, to which Walston was then reunited, 2d May 1688. Patrick Anderson was succeeded by James Brown, who was admitted 24th September 1691, having been formerly minister at Kilbucho, where he was ordained and admitted June 5th 1690. He was translated to Kilbucho, whence he had come, 10th September 1696. After a vacancy, Simon Kello or Kellie was ordained 24th April 1700, and was transported to Glenholm, 9th April 1703, where he died 27th December 1748. John Baillie, the Laird of Walston, refused in presence of the Presbytery to hear

* Between the years 1679 and 1685, the parish of Walston was fined L.308, 8s. —Vide Wodrow's Preface to Vol. ii.

him, or to redress his grievances, which seems to have been the cause of his removal; but so great a favourite was he with some of the parishioners, that "some women at Walston" prevented him from leaving the parish on the day first appointed for his admission at Glenholm, the 31st March. The parish again suffered a vacancy till 1705, when Mr Thomas Lining, whose name is still held in veneration, was ordained, 10th May of that year; he died 20th December 1731. In 1732, George Lockhart of Carnwath presented Mr Adam Petrie; and the presentation, together with Mr Petrie's letter of acceptance, was laid before the Presbytery at their meeting, 15th June; but there being no appearance on the part of the parish, consideration of the matter was delayed till the 13th July, when there being still no appearance on the part of the parish, the Presbytery, after due consideration, resolved by a great majority, that the *jus devolutum* had fallen into their hands! The reasons for this conclusion were stated to be, 1. The informality of the letter of acceptance; 2. Mr Petrie's not being qualified according to law. This was in all probability founded on the want of a call. "3. The want of evidence of Mr Lockhart's being qualified according to law, or being patron of Walston." The case was appealed to the superior courts, and remitted to a committee of Assembly, before which it was stated on the part of Mr Lockhart, that he was willing to pass from his presentation to Mr Petrie, and present a person who should be approved by some ministers named. The Presbytery at last agreed not to insist on the right which they supposed they had acquired, and Mr Lockhart immediately nominated Mr Patrick Hepburn, who was ordained 14th August 1734, and translated to the parish of Ayton, Presbytery of Chirnside, 14th June 1753. A presentation was laid on the table of the Presbytery in favour of John Thomson, 11th October 1753, and after considerable opposition he was ordained 20th May 1753,—a most unhappy settlement of which the parish of Walston still feels the effects. Mr Thomson appears to have been a good and even a pious man, but an insufficient and unacceptable minister. During his incumbency the congregation was dispersed,—the church at last was literally deserted,—and for many years the sacrament of the Lord's supper was not dispensed; he died 11th August 1787, and was succeeded by Patrick Molleson, who was ordained 5th August 1788. To him this parish is much indebted. He drew together a respectable congregation, and secured them to the church by his diligence and fide-

lity.* He was alive to every good work, and to his exertions not only this parish, but the neighbouring parish of Biggar, is indebted for the foundation of its library. He died full of years and honoured, 16th January 1825, and was succeeded by the present incumbent, who was ordained 22d September 1825.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of this parish has varied very little during nearly a century, as may be seen by the following statement :

Amount of population in 1755,	.	479
1791,	.	427
1801,	.	383
1811,	.	377
1821,	.	392
1831,	.	429

And by a census taken for this Account, 1st May this year, by Mr Andrew Aitken and Mr Sym, schoolmaster, elders, the population was 488. Of these, 89 reside in the village of Walston, and 196 in the village of Elsrickle ; the remainder in the country.

There are five proprietors of land of the yearly value of L. 50 and upwards.

The number of families in the parish is 102, and the number of inhabited houses the same.

The favourite games of the district are quoits and curling, in which this parish can boast of its fair proportion of good players.

The people, on the whole, enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts and advantages of society ; are moral and religious, and contented with their situation and circumstances.

The population comprehends, 1 cattle-dealer, 1 gamekeeper, 1 carrier, 2 surface-men, 1 toll-keeper, 1 innkeeper, 1 mason, 1 stocking-weaver, 1 cooper, 4 shoemakers, 3 tailors, 1 carpenter, 3 smiths, and 31 weavers, and there are employed in agriculture 65 males.

IV.—INDUSTRY.

Agriculture.—The number of imperial acres cultivated or occasionally in tillage is about 2901 ; in permanent (chiefly hill) pas-

* In 1794, he was presented to Dunsyre, at that time a better living, and the case is now referred to in the Church Courts, as a precedent for refusing translation under particular circumstances. To those better acquainted with it, however, it affords such a proof of factious opposition to a meritorious minister, as to establish that the people may err in their opposition, as well as patrons in their selection. Indeed it forms a counterpoise to the case already alluded to in Walston, and if the parish of Walston feels at this day the effects of the one, the parish of Dunsyre has been thought to be still labouring under the consequences of the other. The factious opponents of Mr Molleson's translation to that parish, after being worsted in the Presbytery and synod, where the case was thoroughly understood, obtained a victory in the General Assembly, where its specialities could not be so well known, and the parishioners of Dunsyre at this day can best tell what thanks are due to those who resisted the settlement of Mr Molleson among them.

ture 1083; occupied by plantations about 38. The highest rent obtained for land is for the crofts at Elsrickle, which are let in lots of from 3 to 8 acres at L. 2, 8s. per imperial acre. On the other hand, there is some arable land so low as 5s. per acre. About 100 acres have been added to the arable land within the last twenty years, partly by improving moss, and partly by draining the land which used to be overflowed by the Medwin, before it was diverted from its manifold windings into the straight channel cut for it in 1829.

Draining has been extensively performed, but much still remains to be done. The improved mode of furrow-draining is beginning to be practised, for which excellent stones of a suitable size can be readily obtained. The greater part of the land being uninclosed, it cannot be cultivated so minutely or regularly, as it might be if subdivided by good fences. In general, tillage is well performed, and a rotation suitable to the different varieties of soil is adhered to. The best land is cropped in a course of six shifts, while the worst is kept in pasture or broken up only when it has become fogged, put through a course of cropping, and again laid down in grass. Twenty-seven ploughs are at present employed, but their number is likely soon to be reduced, as the farmers find that the land pays better in pasturage for cows or sheep, than in white crop, and the recent late harvests have confirmed them in this opinion.

Live-Stock.—The dairy stock is chiefly of the Ayrshire breed;* there being also a cross of this with the short horns. The management of the dairy is well understood, and practised. Butter and cheese are both made on some farms, but the making of full milk cheese, of the Dunlop and Stilton varieties, is becoming more general, and what is made here, equals, if it does not excel the same kinds made in the districts from which they take their name. This is proved by the premiums of the Highland Society which have been awarded to individuals in this and the neighbouring parishes.

Produce.—

3,296 bolls of grain with fodder, at L. 1 per boll,	L. 3296	0	0
1,620 bolls of potatoes, at 5s. per boll,	405	0	0
2,800 tons of turnip, at 4s. per ton,	560	0	0
10,050 stones rye-grass hay, at 6d. per stone,	251	5	0
13,200 stones meadow hay, at 4d. per stone,	220	0	0
215 cows grass of; at L. 3,	645	0	0
96 two year olds, do. at L. 2,	192	0	0

* A cow of the pure Ayrshire breed, belonging to George White in Elsrickle, gamekeeper to Mr Woddrop, produced 16 lbs. 2 oz. of butter weekly, for six weeks successively; and during the first twelve weeks after calving, 11 stone imperial.

102 one year olds, grass of, at L. 1,	L. 102	0	0
120 calves, do. at 5s.	30	0	0
67 horses, do. at L. 3,	201	0	0
660 sheep, do. at 5s.	165	0	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 6067	5	0
Gross Rent,*	L. 2046	17	11

V.—PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Towns.—The nearest market-towns are Biggar and Carnwath, distant the one about five miles and a-half, the other about six miles from the village of Walston.

There are two villages in the parish, Walston and Elsrickle. The former, situated, as has been already mentioned, on the northern side of the hill, has been gradually dwindling away for several years; while the latter, in consequence of feus being granted by Mr Woddrop, has of late years considerably increased. Both are pleasantly situated; but Elsrickle has a decided superiority in the trees which shelter and set off its scattered cottages to the best advantage. It is a picturesque village, and requires only attention in allotting future dwellings, and plantation judiciously arranged to harmonize with the trees already in existence, to make it the prettiest village in the upper ward.

Means of Communication, &c.—There is no post-office in the parish; the nearest was, till lately, about five miles distant. A few years ago, however, there was established at Roberton, in the neighbouring parish of Dolphinton, a sub-office to Noblehouse, which is a great accommodation to the parishioners on the Walston side of the hill, being distant about three miles from the village; and also to the adjoining parishes. For this they are in a great measure indebted to the exertions of Dr Aiton, who brought the matter under the notice of the proper authorities. The turnpike roads in the parish are those from Dumfries to Edinburgh, and from Carnwath to Peebles; the former extending about a quarter of a mile, the latter about three miles and a-half. A coach runs from Edinburgh to Dumfries on alternate days, and occasionally in summer every day. The Dumfries mail and a coach from Edinburgh to Lanark run within four miles from the parish. A carrier, resident in Elsrickle, leaves for Edinburgh on Monday evening, and returns on Wednesday evening weekly. The bridges are of small span, unsuitable to their position, but substantially built. One of them, immediately to the eastward of

* The rent of the lands sold by John Baillie to G. Lockhart did not average more than 800 merks yearly while in John Baillie's possession.

Walston village, is even dangerous to those who travel in carriages; but there is a prospect of this being soon remedied to a great extent.

Ecclesiastical State.—The situation of the church and parish school is inconvenient for by far the greater part of the population; not so much from their distance, for there are not half a dozen houses beyond a mile and a-half from either, as from being on the north side of the ridge; while the greater proportion of the population is on the south side. The church was built in 1789, which date appears on a stone in the north-west corner of the north gable, as also the letters M. P. M., indicating Mr Patrick Molleson, at that time minister. And there is immediately under this another stone, inscribed with the letters M. T. L. M., and date 1598; evidently preserved from a former building erected while Mr Thomas Lindsay was minister; and standing, as it ought to do, from east to west, while the present fabric is a continuation of a burying aisle, built in 1567, and stands north and south; the whole of disproportioned longitude, and presenting its extended roof to the prevailing winds. On a stone on the north-east corner of the north gable are rudely sculptured the armorial bearings of the family of Mar, to which the barony belonged in 1598. At present, the church is in a state of good repair; and internally a comfortable, and rather elegant place of worship. Not many years ago, it was very much the reverse; but on application to the heritors by the present incumbent, it was repaired to his perfect satisfaction; and the addition of a porch to the west has improved the appearance externally, as much as it has added to the comfort within. It is seated for 170 persons. Of the sittings, 24 are common; the remainder are apportioned to the heritors, according to their valued rents. The burying aisle and gallery above it were sold in 1762 by George Lockhart of Carnwath to Joseph Allan for L. 31, 10s.;* “to be held *pro tanto* as his proportion of the area of the kirk and burial place in the kirk-yard, as an heritor of Walston,” and now belong to Mr Woddrop on the same terms. The present manse,† built in 1828, and completed in the spring of 1829, is a sufficient and commodious dwelling, suited to the living. It is supplied with excellent water, brought from a considerable distance, about two years ago, at a trifling expense; partly borne by the heritors, and partly by the minister. There

* Vide Deed of Disposition.

† On repeated trials with an excellent barometer, the ground-floor of the manse has been found to be 830 feet above the level of the sea.

is also an excellent garden wall, to the erection of which the present incumbent contributed a considerable proportion, and thus rendered it much superior to what the heritors were bound by law to erect. *

The extent of the glebe, inclusive of the site of the manse and garden, is 9 acres; its value about L. 12 per annum. The stipend amounts to L. 158, 6s. 8d., and is made up of the fair prices of 13 bolls, 2 firlots 3 pecks $1\frac{1}{2}$ lippy of oatmeal, and of 3 bolls of bear, together with L. 60, 2s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. payable by the family of Lee and Carnwath, and L. 83, 11s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. payable by the Exchequer. The minister has right to twelve days' casting of peats in the Borland Moss, and four days' casting of turf on the Borland Moor, which servitudes have not been allowed to go into desuetude.

There is at Elsrickle a small chapel fast hastening to a state of ruin. It belonged to the Antiburghers. They called a minister in 1760, who officiated there on a scanty subsistence till his death in 1791. Since that time, the congregation has joined the Established Church or the Dissenters at Biggar.

The number of persons of all ages connected with the Established Church is 313; of whom there are on an average 138 communicants. Consequently, the number of persons of all ages attending the chapels of Dissenters and Seceders are 173; there being two Roman Catholics. Of these 81 are communicants. Divine service at the Established Church is generally well attended.

Education.—There is one parochial school, and one supported partly by fees, and partly by the contributions of heads of families. The parochial school is at Walston; the other at Elsrickle. The branches generally taught are, reading, writing, and arithmetic; and geography, algebra, and Latin are also taught; but the number learning the two latter do not amount to more than three or four on an average. The parochial teacher attended college for two sessions. His salary is L. 30 per annum; and

* This is noticed here without the smallest intention of reflecting upon the heritors of this parish, who have not only fulfilled their legal obligations without a murmur during the writer's incumbency, though these, from the wretched state in which the church and manse were at its commencement, amounted to a considerable sum, but on all occasions acted towards him in the most liberal manner; but that those who come after him may know that he has done something to add to their comfort, and to beautify the place, and may be led to do more for their successors than his predecessors did for him. At his entrance the buildings were ruinous, and the glebe scourged after getting a bad name. Things are now somewhat altered for the better.

the amount of school fees from L. 10 to L. 11. He has the legal accommodations, with the exception of a garden, in lieu of which he receives L. 2, 2s. annually. The teacher of the Elsrickle school has attended college one session; and his emoluments may be valued at about L. 30 yearly. The fees at both schools for reading, writing, and arithmetic conjoined, are 3s. per quarter. All between the ages of six and fifteen can read and write, or are learning to do both. The people are in general very much alive to the benefits of education; the best proof of which is the existence of a school at Elsrickle, where the children of the south side of the parish are nearly half-educated before they reach the age when they could attend, especially in winter, at Walston, not from the distance, but from the necessity of crossing the hill in that inclement season. Both schools are well taught.

Library.—A parochial library was commenced in 1814; and at present consists of 500 volumes, which have been carefully selected, and, as their appearance indicates, read with much assiduity.

Friendly Society.—There is a Friendly Society, which was instituted in 1808, and is not confined to parishioners. It is in a flourishing condition, and must have been beneficial in its effects, promoting economy, and cherishing the feeling of independence in the district.

Savings' Bank.—A Savings' Bank was instituted at Biggar in 1832, in which a few of the parishioners of Walston have from time to time invested small sums.

Poor and Parochial Funds.—The amount of collections in church on an average of the last ten years is L. 6, 0s. 8½d. yearly. A trifling addition is annually made to this sum by money received for the use of a mortcloth, and a small charge on proclamations of banns. The only other fund available for the relief of the poor is the interest of two thousand merks, mortgaged by the Baillies, the former proprietors of the parish; and for which there is an heritable bond, of date 15th January 1720, granted by George Lockhart of Carnwath to the minister and kirk-session, and sasine thereon, registered at Edinburgh 20th February 1720, in the 115th Book of the New General Register of Sasines, pp. 221, &c. What further is required for the relief of the poor is made up by voluntary contributions from the heritors according to their valued rents. In general, 4d. per pound of valued rent, amounting to L. 20, 10s. 11½d., has been found more than suffi-

cient. On one or two occasions, however, within the last few years, a voluntary contribution of 6d. per pound of valued rent has been required. Out of this sum, however, it ought to be mentioned that several carts of coals are yearly paid for to persons not on the poor's roll, which are driven gratuitously by the farmers. The deserving poor are backward to apply for parochial relief; but here, as elsewhere, those of a different description are sufficiently ready to make application.

Inns.—An inn has lately been set up on the confines of the parish, on the Edinburgh and Dumfries road, where such accommodation was much wanted for travellers. Hitherto it has had no perceptible bad effects on the morals of the people, from most of whom it is at a considerable distance.

Fuel.—The fuel consists chiefly of coal brought from a distance of about ten miles. Peat, however, is still in use, and dug in considerable quantities.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

This parish has undergone a favourable change since the former Statistical Account was drawn up. Fences of thorn have grown up, and stone dikes have been built—many acres, as already mentioned, have been added to the arable land by draining and improving moss—and the climate in the low grounds must have been benefited by this last improvement—a commencement of plantation has been made in the west end of the parish, and the growth of the trees affords every encouragement to persevere. Some good slated houses have lately been erected at Elsrickle, on feus granted by Mr Woddrop. The gross rental is stated in the former Account to have been L. 700 per annum. It is now L. 2046.

Much still remains to be done in draining, fencing, and planting. The last particularly is needed, and would in a few years amply repay the expense. The cottages in general ought to be made more comfortable. While the inmates are in the vigour of life, and in the enjoyment of health, they may be less sensible of the defects of their habitations; but when they are labouring under disease, or the infirmities of age, more particularly in winter and spring, they feel them but too severely. The improvements necessary to render them more comfortable could be made at a trifling expense; and it is hoped that nothing more is necessary to the accomplishment of this amelioration, than to call the attention of the heritors of the parish generally to its necessity and import-

ance to the great body of the people. How can those on whom a bountiful God has bestowed an abundant portion of the good things of this world, better demonstrate their gratitude to Him, who has given them all, than by their attention to the necessities, whether temporal or spiritual, of those to whom he has been less bountiful, and whose comfort he has made in a great measure dependent upon their care and kindness? The blessings of the poor, and of those who are ready to perish are highly valued by every right thinking man, and they will not fail to descend upon the head of those, who lay out a portion of their substance in improving the dwellings where the sick and the aged await the will of the Lord of all.

May 1840. Revised August 1840.

PARISH OF SYMINGTON.

PRESBYTERY OF BIGGAR, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND TWEEDDALE.

THE REV. JOHN FORBES, MINISTER.*

I.—TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Situation, Extent, &c.—SYMINGTON is situated 30 miles south-west from Edinburgh, and 38 miles south-east from Glasgow. The parish is 3 miles in length and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in breadth. It is bounded on the north and east by the Clyde; on the south by the parish of Wiston; and on the west by the parishes of Carmichael and Covington.

The arable land lies along the banks of the Clyde, and the pasture reaches to the top of Tinto, on which there is a cairn of stones, said to be the remains of a Druidical temple. This mountain, though not the highest in Scotland, yet being about 2400 feet above the level of the sea, commands a beautiful and most extensive prospect: With the naked eye, you can see part of sixteen different counties. The village is situated at the foot of a rising ground, called the Castle-hill, which has formerly been a place of strength, and is now planted with various kinds of trees.†

Name.—The parish of *Symington* is said by Chalmers in his

* Drawn up from Notes furnished by Mr John Bell, Parochial Schoolmaster of Symington.

† Old Statistical Account.