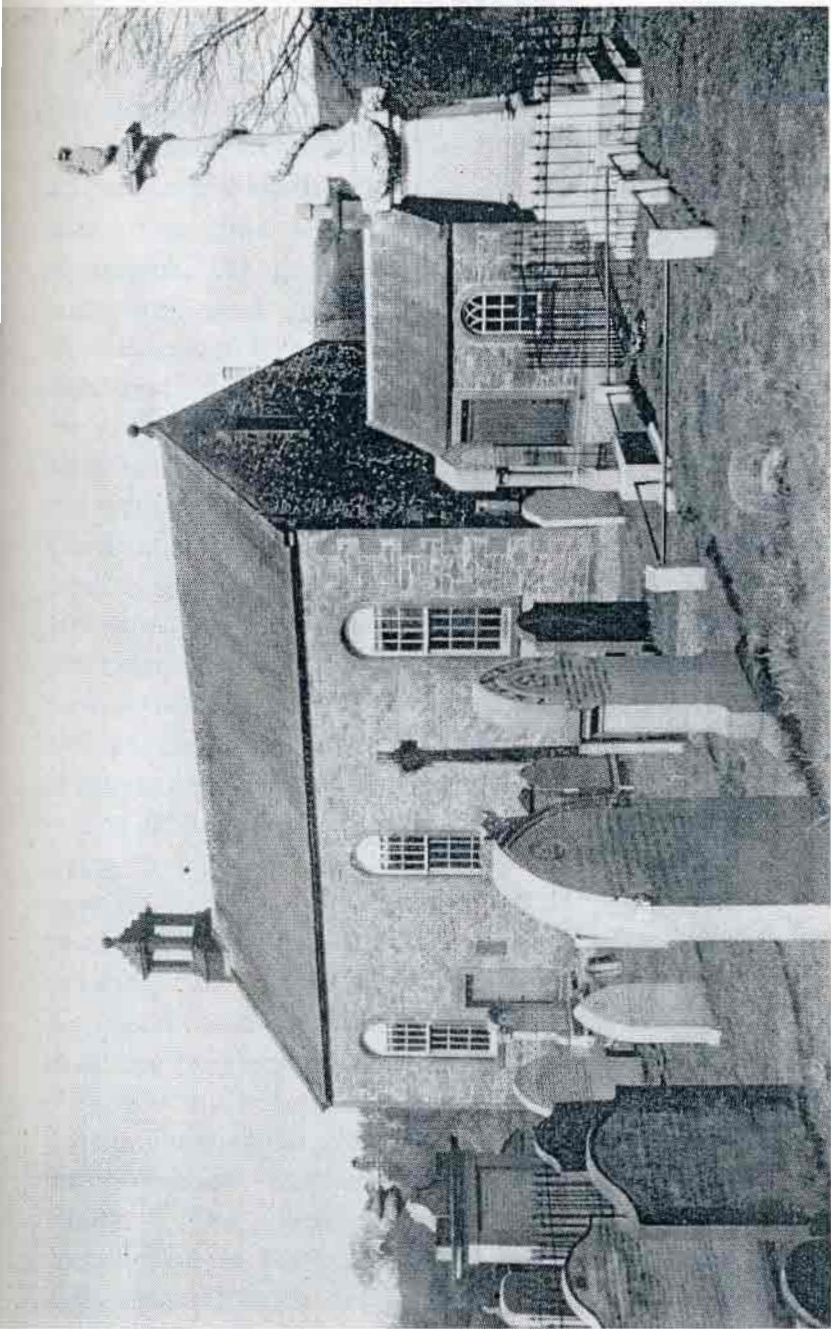


## CHAPTER III

### CHURCH AFFAIRS IN WAMPHRAY

**A**T what date a Christian church was first planted in Wamphray there seems to be no record. It was not a chapel erected by or connected with any of the large religious houses, abbeys or cathedrals, that arose in the middle ages. In the earliest mention of it, it is styled a rectory, that is, its buildings and endowments, in land or money, were the gifts of private individuals, doubtless local converts to Christianity. It is a matter of history that Christianity was introduced during the Roman rule in Britain, and since the chief Roman station was at Birrenswark, fifteen miles from Wamphray, and a smaller camp at Wamphray besides, the whole of Annandale would be acquainted with the Christian religion at an early date, and since Wamphray seems, from the number of its "circles," to have been a special stronghold of Druidism, not only Christian missionary effort, but Roman legions also would have their attention drawn to it. St. Ninian lived and taught Christianity in the Roman period. He was a Cumberland man, and would begin his work at home before he went farther afield, so we may well suppose that many a humble edifice consecrated to Christianity would be built in his native place; and in Annandale also many were erected in his day, chiefly at first on or near the Roman road. He died in 423, A.D.



THE PARISH CHURCH.

The next missionary of note who came to revive Christianity among the inhabitants of "Strathcluid" (*i.e.* Strathclyde) was St. Kentigern, or St. Mungo. He arrived in the sixth century. His first visit was a short one. The time was a time of war, but as soon as Ryderrick, the great warrior and Christian chief, had conquered and pacified that country, he sent for St. Kentigern, to resume his labours among his people. Kentigern did so, and did not again leave Strathcluid. He and his assistants at work there, Columba and his assistants at work farther north, and both backed by the influence of the powerful chief and the numbers of Christians that flocked into Strathcluid for protection, lend to the probability, almost a certainty, that before 600, A.D., the majority of the inhabitants of Strathcluid professed the Christian faith, and that wherever a church now stands, or has stood, there one was planted at the end of the sixth century. No doubt the church of Wamphray was one of these.

The king or chief, Ryderrick, outlived Kentigern, dying in 601. Their friendship had been so long and genuine, and both had worked so hard together for the weal of Strathcluid, that when Ryderrick felt his end drawing near he gave orders to bury his body beside Kentigern, and together, near or under Glasgow cathedral, the two heroes sleep.

In the early days of Christianity in Scotland, it does not appear that the great missionaries, Ninian, Kentigern, and Columba, worked under a system directed from Rome. The first mention we have of Romish jurisdiction is that noticed by the venerable Bede who says that "Easter began to be observed in Scotland at the date held by the rest of the Christian world, only

in Adamnan's day." Evidently the three men formerly mentioned, had either thought out the matter for themselves, or gone by the date current in their day. Adamnan, who lived about one hundred years later than they, was a Christian missionary, and the biographer of Columba, and being the son of a Roman, would naturally feel inclined to advocate and follow the custom of the church at Rome.<sup>1</sup>

Records concerning the church in Scotland are meagre till the twelfth century. King David I in his reign (1123-1153) revived or established the episcopate of Glasgow, and placed under it nearly all the churches in Dumfriesshire; and in 1178 Pope Alexander confirmed the power of the episcopate of Glasgow, by placing under it the whole of the churches of Annandale.<sup>2</sup>

In 1265<sup>3</sup> Wamphray church, in the Deanery of Glasgow, is taxed £2 13s. 4d. towards that deanery. Nearly one hundred years after this we find the advowson of Wamphray church in the hands of Corrie of Corrie and passed by him to Kirkpatrick of Torthorwald along with Wamphray estate in 1357. Over one hundred years after the estate and advowson fell into the hands of the Johnstones. The site of the first Christian church in Wamphray is still as great a mystery as the date of its foundation.

Two places—two miles apart—both in the glen, have, so to speak, lodged a claim to that honour.

The present parish church, stands, as may be seen

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Caledonia*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> The church in the neighbouring parish of Hutton is mentioned at a much earlier date.

at a glance, in a "deep den" encircled with hills and plantations—a veritable "Uamph-ri," or hollow of the hill. Official records show it to have been there before the Reformation, and the "Galliard's Aisle," or burial place of the Johnstones, built against the south wall of the church, stood there till 1834, when it and the small, old church were both removed to make room for the modern and larger edifice.

As the Johnstones became lairds of Wamphray in 1476 the likelihood is, therefore, that the parish church stood on its present site at that date. That, however, is more than a thousand years after the introduction of Christianity into Annandale. Many changes may have taken place in that time, but churches and churchyards are, as a rule, fixtures. Moreover, as the church and churchyard stand within the precincts of the Druidical circle mentioned by the Rev. Charles Dickson, so possibly, when the Celtic inhabitants were converted to Christianity, they and the Christian Roman soldiers in the camp near it, might have chosen to perform the solemn services of a pure and mild faith on the very spot where formerly barbaric mysteries and barbarous ceremonies were performed. So the present church may stand on, or very near to where the first Christian church was planted in Wamphray.

The competing site rests its claims on names, and an old tradition. These two things testify much and die hard.

About two miles distant up the glen, and north of Laverhay farm house, there is a field called "Chapel Lea" and a hill called "Kirkhill," said to be the glebe of an old church, and also a niche on the face of the hill near "Chapel Lea" which is said to have been the

site of the chapel. There is also a carved stone that forms the lintel of the belfry door of the present and the older church, representing the tree of hope rising from the wounded dragon, which, tradition says, was brought from the chapel up the glen, when the church was removed farther south.

These are the data which the claims of the other side rest upon. Against its claims, there is not a vestige of a ruin or sign of a churchyard at Chapel Lea and the name "Kirkhill" is not Celtic. And there is no record extant of its existence at Reformation times; still the names tell their tale of a chapel being there, and the old carved stone that has weathered the storms of centuries tells its symbolic tale. So every one interested in antiquarian lore is at liberty to form his own opinion of the claims of the rival sites.

There is no notice of Wamphray kirk, save its connection with the Deanery of Glasgow, prior to the Reformation. In 1545 its history proper begins with the order of the chief of the Clan Johnstone to Robert Johnstone, parson of Lochmaben, to place a clergyman in Wamphray kirk. That parson placed "Carruthers," a secular "priest" in the charge, with, apparently, the possession of the kirk lands belonging thereto. That act, as we have seen in a former part of the story, drew from Margaret McLellan, Lady Wamphray,<sup>1</sup> a vigorous complaint to the Privy Council against her brother-in-law, the chief, for taking from her the parsonage of Wamphray when she had "taks yet to rin." These two incidents show what church history confirms of many a parish elsewhere, that, in the overturn and con-

<sup>1</sup> In all the official records regarding her, she appears under that name and title.

fusion that necessarily followed on the Reformation, a difficulty was found in supplying each parish with a proper minister, and a still greater difficulty in obtaining from the revenue of the late church a portion competent to form a stipend to the Protestant minister.

How long Lady Wamphray and her brother-in-law haggled over this matter, and how long Carruthers remained in charge has not been ascertained. The next thing heard of Wamphray church is that it is in ruins, and Johnstone and Wamphray conjoined in one church and under one minister. Over thirty years after, in 1602, the chief of Lochwood received a mandate from the Privy Council "Under pain of King James and the Privy Council's displeasure to visit every church in his jurisdiction that needed repairs, to call a meeting of the parishioners to get them to appoint 'stentors'" to lay on a tax to meet repairs where needed. This was no voluntary affair. It was a Government order, and so a legal one, for it went on to say: "Any householder refusing to pay was subject to prosecution," and ended thus, "The King and Privy Council think that much of the louseness and barbarity of the Borderers arose from the want of the Gospel being properly preached to them." The lord of Lochwood obeyed the mandate, visited the churches, and found that of Wamphray and many others in a ruinous state.

The late Rev. Charles Dickson describes the church repaired by order of King James the Sixth, and further repaired by the heritors in Mr. Barclay's incumbency in these words—"It is so old that no person can tell when it was built. It is long and narrow—fifty-three feet by eighteen feet broad. The wall at the door is

eight feet high, and the interior one foot lower than the surface of the ground outside. The floor is gravel and closely seated, and affords a confined accommodation for only two hundred sitters. The serking and small wood in the roof and ceiling are entirely rotten, and it is damp, dirty and disagreeable in both summer and winter." For some time after the Reformation ministers were scarce, so two or more parishes were conjoined. Wamphray and Johnstone were conjoined for a number of years under one clergyman. In 1622 Wamphray church was disjoined from Johnstone, but not till nearly ten years afterwards did it obtain a properly educated and licensed minister.

The first of this order was the Rev. John Hastie, M.A., Edinburgh, who was ordained in 1632. There are no session records of his day extant, but we learn from the "Fasti," or presbytery records, that he gave a subscription towards the building of the library of Glasgow University. Apparently he had taken the side of the Royalists, and had been roughly treated by the Cromwell party then in power. He was put out of his church, and died before 1661, as Parliament at that date "granted £50" to his widow for her "husband's loyalty to the King and his sufferings therefor." His successor was the famous John Brown, M.A., of Covenanted times. He was ordained about 1655, but he graduated M.A. at Edinburgh in 1630. His name is mentioned by the Rev. Samuel Rutherford, of Anwoth, in his correspondence in 1637. For the next eighteen years nothing is known of his career till he appears as minister of Wamphray, about the year 1655. The exact date of his ordination cannot be ascertained, neither is there any account of his outgoings or incomings



among his parishioners, or with his brethren of the presbytery, till deprived of his benefice and proclaimed an outlaw by Acts of Parliament, 11th June and 1st October, 1662, for calling his brethren of the presbytery "perjured knaves and villains" because they attended the Episcopal Diocesan Synod of Glasgow.

Immediately after that, in November, 1662, he was apprehended by officers of the crown (it is said in a cave in Sauchiebank a short distance from the manse, whither he had fled to escape capture). His captors set him on a pony with his legs tied beneath the animal's body, and set out for Edinburgh. The story of the "doo" laying an egg every morning at the mouth of the cave in Sauchiebank for Mr. Brown's breakfast is a myth. Tradition reports that as the party passed through Moffat they halted at the Annandale Arms to refresh themselves, leaving Mr. Brown bareheaded sitting on the pony outside. A Wamphray man passing by took the bonnet from his own head and placed it on Mr. Brown's. On reaching Edinburgh Mr. Brown was imprisoned in the Tolbooth. After five weeks' imprisonment his health completely broke down, and in prison he signed a paper promising to depart from the kingdom and not to return thither without the permission of the King and Council. He chose Rotterdam, in Holland, as a home, whither many of his fellow countrymen had already fled to escape the cruel persecution at that time raging in Scotland. There he employed his time in literary work, chiefly theological, and in assisting his brethren in the service of the Scottish church. He never again saw his native country. He died in Rotterdam, in September,

1679—seventeen years after he was taken away from Wamphray. In his will, dated 2nd April, 1676, he gave orders that his library should be sold, and that out of the proceeds one hundred guilders should be given to the poor of the Scottish church in Rotterdam, and the remaining sum, if any, together with his largest work, the *Complutensian Bible*, he bequeathed to his friend, the Rev. Robert McCuard. This gentleman estimated Mr. Brown's character thus: "There was no minister of the church in my esteem like Mr. Brown for abilities, fixedness, faithfulness, and pure zeal according to knowledge."

It is evident then that Mr. Brown was one who preferred the retirement of the study to the stormy field of public life, and this may account for the entire absence of information regarding him from the time he graduated till he came to Wamphray, and even while there no record or tradition of his sayings and doings remains, save thanking and blessing the man who placed the bonnet on his head in the Moffat street.<sup>1</sup>

Ministers came and went in rapid succession for the next fifteen years after Mr. Brown's time. His successor was William Carmichael, M.A. The date of his ordination is not recorded. He was translated to Athelstaneford in 1665. John Swinton, M.A., followed Carmichael in 1674. Alexander Wood, M.A., succeeded Swinton, and was translated to Wester-Lenzie in 1680. No records or tradition exists of the acceptability (or the reverse) of these three clergymen to the parishioners during their fifteen years' incumbency.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Singer says that Mr. Brown's books were read and much appreciated by Wamphray folk when he was minister of the parish in 1795.

In 1680, Mr. Wysehart, M.A., was translated from Newabbey, Kirkcudbrightshire, to Wamphray. The poor, delicate man found on his arrival that there was not a pane of glass in either church or manse windows. Perhaps the luxury of glass in windows had not then reached Wamphray—certainly it was not in general use. The heritors and tenants were poor in those days, and possibly out of sympathy, too, with the highhanded ways of the Government of that day in both church and state affairs, were perfectly indifferent as to the condition of their church and manse. Poverty had been pleaded as an excuse, it seems, for the presbytery records tell that Mr. Wysehart "disbursed money to the heritors to glaze the windows of the church and manse."

Mr. Wysehart died in 1685, leaving three sisters, Jean, Mary, and Elizabeth, of whom nothing more is known.

From 1685 till 1690 there seems to have been no minister settled in Wamphray parish kirk. If there was one he had decamped in 1688. In 1690, two years after the Revolution, the Rev. Thomas Douglas, M.A., Edinburgh, was ordained minister of the parish. This was a brave man, and one whom any parish might count it an honour to have had as its minister.

Unlike John Brown he does not seem to have devoted his time and talent to literary work. He was a man of action. At the risk of capture and death, he preached here, there, and everywhere, to the persecuted Covenanters in the South of Scotland during the terrible times of Charles the Second's reign, and in the still more terrible times of his brother and successor.

It was Mr. Thomas Douglas who was preaching at

Drumclog when a shot from the gun of the watchman warned the worshippers that Claverhouse and his dragoons were approaching. The service was stopped. Every man, to the number of two hundred and fifty, drew his sword, or such weapon of defence as he carried, bravely met the foe, and won the day. Claverhouse, according to his own letter, very narrowly escaped with his life. Just three days previous to Drumclog—on the 29th May, 1679—Mr. Douglas and Robert Hamilton, brother to the laird of Preston, rode into Rutherglen with about eighty armed men, and burned, at the Cross, all the Acts of the Scottish Parliament obnoxious to civil and religious liberty from 1660 till that date, and affixed to the Cross there a "Declaration" why they had done so, and afterwards quietly dispersed.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Douglas went in, heart and hand, with Cameron, Cargill, Rutherford, and others in all their movements for civil and religious liberty, and was, at least, a consenting party to both "Queensferry" and "Sanquhar Declarations." Such a man could not escape being a marked man. He was outlawed by Government. A price was set on his head, and "letters of intercommuning" were issued against all that spoke to, helped, or harboured him. Yet such was the "charm"<sup>2</sup> that encircled his character and person that all attempts at capture failed. His friends, of course, did not give him up. His personality was too well

<sup>1</sup> Johnstone's *Treasury of Scottish Covenant*.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Douglas, and those of his faith, do not trust to "charm" of character for protection from danger; they point you to the experience of Elisha's servant, and the thirty-fourth Psalm, to explain their source of protection, till their life work has been effected.

known to many of his enemies for him always to escape notice, but they too, untempted by bribe or undaunted by Acts of Government, let the outlawed man pass till at last he got to London and was concealed there till the Revolution. This ends the sketch of his career before he became minister of Wamphray, to which charge he was appointed in 1690. He died in the end of 1695, presumably in the parish manse. His widow, who was left in "poor circumstances," "sold a debt of several merks to Mr. Taylor, her husband's successor, for five pounds sterling and a tombstone to her husband";<sup>1</sup> the latter part of the bargain Mr. Taylor never fulfilled. Some one else may have performed the pious act of commemorating his name, as the oldest inhabitant has a hazy remembrance of seeing the name of Douglas on a stone in one of the passages of the old church. The grave may have been in the church in front of the pulpit. During the five years which he spent in Wamphray Mr. Douglas was engaged in preaching, ordaining elders, and superintending the affairs of the church in the parish. And from certain hints let fall in his successor's *Vindication*, all he did, and his manner of doing it, had given satisfaction to his people. There has been nothing learned regarding the family connection, place of birth, or early education of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas. However interesting these details of the early days of these brave people may be, they pale before the valiant doings of Mr. Douglas on important, historical occasions, and the mental strain he endured when hunted from place to place, which shortened a heroic life, for he lived only to about fifty years of age. It is also

<sup>1</sup> Fasti.

not hard to imagine the never-ceasing anxiety of his wife, till the happy Revolution brought them peace and a settled home for a few years in Wamphray manse. As a widow, Mrs. Douglas remained in the parish, and was visited there by Mrs. Hepburn and Mrs. M'Millan, wives of the famous ministers of Urr and Balmaghie, in Galloway. The three ladies may have been sisters.

Mr. Taylor succeeded Mr. Douglas. He was ordained in 1697. No session records are extant concerning either Mr. Douglas or Mr. Taylor, but as the latter published a *Vindication* of his conduct after the Presbytery of Lochmaben, by order of the General Assembly, deposed him from his charge in Wamphray church, and as that book is still extant, more is known concerning the character, opinions, sayings, and doings of Mr. Taylor than of any other Wamphray parish minister of the olden time, and what the *Vindication* does for Mr. Taylor in this respect it also does for his congregation and parishioners.

In it there pass before us in a sort of jumbled panoramic procession the laird and lady Wamphray, their factor, John Henderson, and their baron officer, Gavin Johnstone; Mr. Taylor and his legal adviser, Patrick Knox; nine of his elders, viz., Peter Johnstone, Fingland; Mungo Wilson, Poldean; David Gillespie, Little Dalmakeddar; John Johnstone, Bighill; Ninian Halliday, Laverhay; John Little, Hungrils; William French, Langside; Bernard Reid, Hellbeckhill; Thomas Bryden, Aikiknowe; and the Presbytery of Lochmaben; also a band of armed men from Nithsdale, and Bessie French, a reputed witch; her brother Matthew in old Wamphray gate; Cooper Johnstone,

son-in-law to Johnstone of Bighill; James Johnstone in Pumplaburn, a reputed warlock who worked, or professed to work, wonderful cures by a process called "charming," and who seems, "honest man," to have been a pioneer of the modern nostrums, mesmerism, spiritualism, faith cures, etc.; William Halliday of Cammock, brother to Ninian Halliday of Laverhay, and many others.

An old roll of the parishioners taken at that time gives the number of inhabitants at a little over three hundred, but as the name of Wamphray House and several others are not included in it, it is thought that this is a communion roll only, or, at most, one of the examinable<sup>1</sup> people belonging to the parish church, and does not include dissenters. A census taken of church people and dissenters by order of the Lochmaben Presbytery of about the same date states that "Church people and dissenters" within the bounds of the presbytery were about "equal in every parish at that time," so the population of Wamphray at Mr. Taylor's ordination may have been about six hundred. The presbytery records also state that in every parish there was a number of Episcopalians who were not adverse to, and finally did, join the parish church.

The work of organising church affairs, ordaining elders, and so forth, would be set about at once by Mr. Douglas, and a glance at the list above-mentioned shows that Wamphray church was, as far as numbers are concerned, well officered; and further acquaintance with the men shows them to have been both shrewd and intelligent.

Mr. Taylor, the successor to Mr. Douglas, was

<sup>1</sup> Of age for the communion.

beyond all doubt a smart, business man. He was also gifted with great fluency of language, and very bold and outspoken both in the pulpit and out of it, especially in it, but as utterances were made from that place, and tolerated too in a former day, that would make a congregation in these modern times raise their eyebrows, something must be deducted in Mr. Taylor's favour, for the use and wont of the day when "spades were called spades." The first bit of secular business that Mr. Taylor turned his attention to after being placed in Wamphray was the glebe. It had no well-defined boundaries, and he fancied that Wamphray estate people both ploughed and pastured their cows on what were church lands. He spoke to Lady Wamphray on the subject. The management of the home farm that marched with the glebe, seems to have been under the direct care of her ladyship at the time, and as during her life at the Place the lands which Mr. Taylor spoke of had belonged to her husband, she did not see her way to agree with the minister's fancies, but gave orders to her ploughman, James Tait, to go on with his ploughing, and to Mary Bell, her dairymaid, to turn her cows on to the disputed pasture ground as formerly. Mr. Taylor's next step in this matter was the proper one. He reported his doubts about the glebe boundaries to the Lochmaben Presbytery. The members thereof at once appointed a committee of their number to settle this dispute. On a set day thereafter the committee of presbytery accompanied by Robert Johnstone, laird of Wamphray; Mr. Taylor the minister, and four sworn men "perambulated" the glebe, and settled its boundaries for "all time coming" in a way satisfactory to both parties con-



cerned. The "perambulations" were followed round by a crowd of men and boys.

Mr. Taylor might now have had a comparatively happy time of it in Wamphray had he been less strong in his expressions, more genial in temperament, and moderately addicted to the "soft answer," but that style of thing did not suit Mr. Taylor's mental constitution. For some time after coming to Wamphray he had preached vigorously against dissenters from the church established by law, denouncing all such "schismatics" as "emissaries of Satan" who were driving droves to that potentate's headquarters. The last phrase he put into one word, and though the threat of finding a final abode there was thought the most effective whip in those days for "driving the droves" the other way, yet even then, the elders thought his expression a "shade too strong," but on went Mr. Taylor in the same strain till he saw a "new light," wheeled round, and as hotly denounced the church as he had formerly denounced dissent. He did not leave the Established Church, but he, along with two other members of presbytery, formed what they called the "Presbytery of Protesters." The three protested against usages creeping into the church that were not practised in its purest times. They held an open-air meeting on "Wamphraymuir" and there, to a great gathering, denounced the Acts of Government concerning the "Union of the Crowns, patronage, and the Abjuration Act," and "renewed the Covenants" that day, as it was expressed. The descendants of the old rieviers dearly loved a row, and undoubtedly did not like the idea of the choice of their minister being reft from them, and their parliament also being

removed to London would kindle their ire. It seemed too like a great and successful raid by the English in retaliation for the jovial times the Scots had formerly had in entering England and driving home before them everything that had feet to walk on. It shows, however, a strange but not uncommon turn of mind that the three protesters should denounce and refuse to sign the Abjuration Act—an act expressly made to secure the Protestant succession to the throne—all because William and Mary had not been asked to sign the Covenant at their coronation. This obstinacy on the part of the High Covenanters helped to cause in 1715 and 1745 the unsuccessful attempts of the Stuarts to regain the throne of their ancestors.

The Presbytery of Lochmaben did not let these public doings of the three protesters pass unnoticed, but summoned them to appear before their brethren and answer for, or explain their ongoing. The three paid no attention to the first summons.

Meanwhile Mr. Taylor had some cases of discipline standing that required immediate attention. His nine elders received orders by a constable to appear on a certain day at Moffat before the "Commissioners of Supply" and give in the names of the unemployed in Wamphray parish. The penalty for non-appearance was £10. This order distressed the elders very much, They saw it was giving in names to the press-gang. They went to their minister for advice how to act. Mr. Taylor at once told them to pay no attention to the order. The law could summon English churchwardens, but it had no power to call on the elders of the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland to answer any such questions. They one and all were glad and agreed not

to go to Moffat on the day set. Mr. Taylor further added, "I'll write to the Commissioners of Supply and account for your absence." The £10 penalty and local terrors besides shook the faith of five of the elders in the minister's power to protect them. They appeared before the commissioners at Moffat, and all, by agreement beforehand, declared that there were no "idle or unemployed" men in Wamphray. This disobedience to the minister's advice and orders amounted in those days to a contempt of court. The five got a proper "wiggin" from the pulpit on Sunday, and were told by Mr. Taylor that their conduct was that of "Judas, and worse than Judas," and ordered them to attend the session when service was over. They attended and were told to go out of doors while the minister and their four brethren who did not go to Moffat spoke the matter over. They went out and "hung about the door." They were soon called in. The punishment agreed to by the four good boys and the minister, as due for their offence, was, "After acknowledging their fault, they were to be sessionally rebuked, and this to be publicly intimated in a discreet way for removing the public offence they had given by this practice." On hearing the sentence the five offending elders—Ninian Halliday, Bernard Reid, Peter Johnstone, William French, and David Gillespie, "carrying themselves mightily, ran out of the kirk in a huff." By and bye they and the minister became reconciled, and they all returned to their post in the session save David Gillespie, in whose place Matthew French, Wamphraygate, was elected. Another case, thought very serious in those days, awaited treatment: John Bell and David Johnstone, in Hillhouse, the farm nearest to

Wamphraygate, appeared before the session, and on oath deposed that Bessie French was a witch, and described some of her "malifices" and "gross Satanic practices," and added that her "mother before her lay under the same scandal," and, further, that "but for her friends in the session and in the parish, the minister would have been informed of this long ago."

Evidently more than a dryness had existed at this time between the Hillhouse folks and their neighbours, the Wamphraygate family. The minister seemed surprised at the information, as Bessie had been a regular attender at church and ordinances ever since he came to the parish a dozen years before; but instead of casting any doubt on the men's statements he turned round to the elders and spoke most seriously to them on their "neglect of duty in hiding from him this flagrant scandal and gross iniquity going on in the parish for so long."

In what particular line of witchcraft Bessie's forte lay there are no details, but it is clear that two hundred years ago a university education had not eradicated from the minds of the clergy a belief in the power of men and women called warlocks and witches to inflict great evils on a community, both collectively and individually. Indeed, not for a hundred years after the time spoken of, and well into the 19th century, did the belief in the power of certain old women to "spae" fortunes, hinder the butter to "gather" in the churn, and inflict worse evils, disappear from this district. It would have been more than human if these said characters had not taken advantage of the common belief in their powers to impose on the credulity of their silly neighbours, for they knew of the

general saying among them, "Creesh her loof if she ca'" and "get her gude wull," and she did ca', and got her present generally in provisions of one kind or another.

To return to Wamphray session. The minister saw his duty clearly: Bessie must be summoned before the session to meet the accusation made against her on oath by her two neighbours. The elders knew too that they must do their duty, but they felt it rather hard on this occasion, as the accused party was sister to one of their number, sister-in-law to another, and nearly or remotely akin to scores of folk in the parish. They had seen James Ferguson, the warlock, pilloried at the "Yett," and had listened with comparative composure to the minister's denunciations and admonitions launched at him while he sat on the "stool" in the church, for getting drunk, for profane swearing, and for performing cures by charming, but to see their near kinswoman undergoing the same course of discipline was a different matter. Bessie soon relieved the feelings of the elders and her friends. Even though her brother Matthew advised her to obey the summons and go before the session, as "they could clear her," she point-blank refused to do any such thing. This was another sensation for Wamphray. The minister denounced witchcraft and Bessie's contumacy from the pulpit. Bessie took to the parish, and denounced the minister and Bell and Johnstone in the house and by the way in accents sharp and language strong, declaring she would "gang" before Lochmaben Presbytery and clear her name of witchcraft, and gang she did. The presbytery, as a body more enlightened than some of its individual members, cleared her of the obnoxious

epithet and advised her to "sue her accusers for defamation of character."

The following Sunday Mr. Taylor took occasion to make reflections on his brethren in the presbytery for their laxity with regard to the great sin of witchcraft in clearing Bessie after the terrible depositions made on oath against her by the two men, Bell and Johnstone, and added that "Bessie French's kin were knit together against the Gospel" and the "laws and usages of the kirk in its purest times."

Just one other session case to show a law of that time long since abolished or now at least out of use. William French was duly proclaimed three Sundays in Wamphray kirk to a young woman in Applegarth, and, as he meant to reside in that parish after his marriage, he applied to Wamphray session for a "testificate," because the law so stood at that date that no one could leave one parish and rent a house in another without the kirk-session testifying to his respectability of character. Mr. Taylor refused decidedly to grant a testificate. One of the elders seeing the difficulty which the refusal would occasion, as no objection had been lodged against the proclamation, and no irregularity had occurred, and as the young man was of good repute, rose and moved that it be put to the vote of the session whether or not William French be granted a testificate. The elders' vote was unanimous that it should be granted. The minister rose and solemnly said, "What they had done was against the true presbyterian principles, and a sinful owning of and complying with the ministers who had taken the Abjuration Oath, and since they had so voted he could not in his conscience allow them to sit longer

in the session, or allow himself to sit with them"; so the whole of the elders were dismissed from the office.

The Presbytery of Lochmaben and Synod of Dumfries had Mr. Taylor up before them previous to this, but Patrick Knox, his clever legal adviser, was "too many" for both courts, and as yet no immorality deserving of deposition could be proved against him. Henderson, factor to the Marquis of Annandale and also to the laird of Wamphray, had in the latter's interest applied early to the Edinburgh lawyers for advice as to whether it were legal to withhold stipend from Mr. Taylor because of his refusal to sign the Abjuration Act. Apparently he had got an answer in the affirmative, for he had ceased to pay stipend, and, following his example, other stipend payers had done likewise. Mr. Taylor, though possessed of some private means, did not see the force of being deprived of his stipend, so he took legal action to obtain it, and put the laird of Wamphray and other defaulters to "horn and caption." About this time a story arose that Mr. Taylor had shifted the march stones of the glebe as fixed by the presbytery at its perambulation soon after he was appointed to the parish. This, if proved, was clearly an immoral act. The presbytery took up the case, summoned witnesses, who all swore that the march stones had been moved "considerably in on Wamphray ground." The presbytery of protesters examined witnesses in Mr. Taylor's interest, who swore they were not moved, but the volume of evidence was against Mr. Taylor. That offence, coupled with a libel from the elders in name of themselves and part of the congregation, complaining of their minister's "unedifying sermons," his high "prelatic" way in turning them out of the session, his

meddlesomeness in everything and with everybody, his abuse of the pulpit in preaching against "his enemies" and not preaching "the Gospel," and the unmeasured language in which he denounced everybody that differed in opinion from him effected his deposition.

These things and his "non-qualifying" caused the presbytery to send the case to the Assembly. That court ordered the suspension of Mr. Taylor if he did not "settle down to his work quietly and obey the law and qualify" by taking the Abjuration Oath. The presbytery sent this sentence of the Assembly to Mr. Taylor, not by special messenger of their own, but thinking it might carry more weight, sent it through Mr. Henderson, the factor to Wamphray laird. The factor sent the "baron officer, Gavin Johnstone," across from Wamphray House to the manse with it. Apparently the manse folk had been informed of what was coming, and how it would arrive, so when Gavin appeared, letter in hand, "the manse servants flew at him with sticks, and chased him with the undelivered letter across the water, pelting him with stones till he was out of reach." This happened on a Friday. On the next day, when all was quiet, Gavin "slippit" through the water, saw no one about, "rushed in by the manse kitchen door, threw down the letter on the table and rushed out across the water," this time no one molesting him. This way of sending such an important and serious missive to a minister was, as afterwards found, not in order, especially as it contained the announcement from the presbytery that the "suspension" was to be read from the pulpit on Sunday, and that on the following day the presbytery would attend in Wamphray kirk to pronounce the Assembly's



sentence. This was rather short notice to Mr. Taylor—a letter on Saturday, the contents of which were to be read in church on Sunday, and the members of presbytery to follow on Monday, but he was once more equal to the occasion. Sunday came; the kirk was full to crushing, the sermon was preached, the service ended and Mr. Taylor had not read the letter from the presbytery. There was a pause of expectation in the congregation. Mr. Henderson, amid great noise, announced the visit of the presbytery and the hour. It has been already mentioned that Mr. Taylor had put the laird of Wamphray and others to "horn and caption" for his stipend. As no one in Annandale could be prevailed on to deliver the summonses to the defaulting parties, Mr. Taylor obtained a "band of armed men from Nithsdale" to do that formal work for him.

By the happiest (!!) coincidence, the band of armed men arrived at Wamphray kirk that very day, but a little before the hour set for the members of presbytery. When the latter party came the church was choke full in both seats and passages, and the armed men were standing round the door. There was no admittance or room for the presbytery. Incensed thereat, the moderator, standing outside, pronounced the sentence of "suspension from the ministry" on Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Patrick Knox at once entered a protest for Mr. Taylor against this sentence as "informal and void," showing the moderator and others that deposition or suspension can only be pronounced after the presbytery is duly constituted. That had not been done. Moreover, the way they had sent their message to Mr. Taylor was informal; it should have been by special

messenger from themselves, and notice ought to have been given to Mr. Taylor of the reasons for his suspension. Moreover the time allowed to consider these points precluded the possibility of reply.

Mr. Knox's protest was effectual—it stopped the chief part of the proceedings. That day in the churchyard the factor paid up the laird of Wamphray's back stipend; some of the other withholders drew their purses and after "thrimmling" the money in their fingers paid part of what they owed. The scene that day had its comical side—the church full, and all near the windows standing on the seats looking out, some scowling, others laughing, the armed men standing round the door, whose very appearance had helped to produce some, if not all, of the minister's dues, Mr. Knox coolly triumphant, the presbytery and factor outwitted and staring at one another, on that cold December day with snow lying on the ground!

There was no use staying any longer where they were, so the presbytery and their friends retired from their uncomfortable position on the snow in the kirk-yard, and went to the comfortable parlour of the hostelrie at Annanholm, where the presbytery was constituted and more evidence led and the proceedings at church that day taken down.

This was the last act in the serio-comic drama that had run nearly a twenty-one year course in Wamphray, and which had kept all the South of Scotland talking for so long. The last act save one, namely, Mr. Taylor's deposition.

Every entreaty possible had been used all along to induce Mr. Taylor to fall into line with his brethren of the presbytery and with the church generally, but on

the weight of evidence in the case of the removal of the marches being proved against him, the Assembly was obliged to order the sentence of "deposition from the Church of Scotland" to be proceeded with. This was done in 1718.

Mr. Taylor retired to Eskdalemuir, a neighbouring parish, and there lived till all his libellers were dead; then he returned to Wamphray and lived at Annanholm till his death in 1745. He was buried in Kirkpatrick-Juxta kirkyard. On the way the funeral procession met Prince Charlie's highland host, under Lord George Murray. The highlanders drew up in line and saluted the funeral procession. This mark of respect made a deep impression on the company of mourners, but when they came out of the churchyard and found the best horses had been whipped away by the pious saluters, the character of the cause and its soldiers became, in their estimation, considerably damaged.

Gabriel Gullane, son of the minister of Ladykirk, followed Mr. Taylor in the pastorate. He was ordained on the 19th September, 1718. Owing to the unrest in the parish the ceremony was carried out under the protection of a party of soldiers with Bailie Graham at their head. A riot was feared as Mr. Taylor had many sympathisers and supporters in the district. It is not reported that the bailie's soldiers were provoked to draw their swords. Mr. Gullane remained in Wamphray fourteen years, and was translated to Lockerbie in 1731. His successor, Mr. Irvine, stayed ten years and was then appointed to Sanquhar. Mr. Barclay, who succeeded him, was presented by George, Marquis of Annandale, and James Johnstone of Wamphray, with the consent of John, Earl of Hopetoun.

His ordination took place on 24th March, 1744. This case is interesting as the first recorded appointment in Wamphray by a lay patron. He stayed ten years, and was then translated to Ormiston. Mr. Barclay was succeeded by Mr. Williamson in 1755. In his short incumbency of scarcely three years the poor seem to have been his special care, as there are numerous instances of the benevolent interest he took in their behalf. On his "transportation" to Closeburn in 3rd September, 1758, Mr. Gullane of Lockerbie, the former minister of Wamphray, preached and declared the church vacant. The members of presbytery, who supplied the pulpit during the vacancy, were the Rev. Messrs. Scott, Young, Marshall, Jaffray, Gullane, Nimmo, McWhinnie, and Lorimer.

The next minister of Wamphray was Mr. Barclay, a son of the former minister of that name. He was also presented by the Earl of Hopetoun. After a three years incumbency he was translated to Hutton and Corrie. During his ministry the heather roof of the church was replaced by a slate one. Mr. Barclay was followed by Mr. Barron, who was also presented by the Earl of Hopetoun, and was ordained in 1763. During his incumbency of eight years he "never took up his residence in Wamphray manse, but had lodgings in Moffat, and rarely visited his parish except for pulpit duty on the Lord's day." His health seems to have been bad, often and long. In 1765 he was ill for months. A Mr. Hutchison was the assistant during his illness. During the last year he was in Wamphray there were twenty-eight vacant Sundays in church. The collections for the poor were almost nil, and no notice is made of any for missionary purposes, and

during both his day and that of his five predecessors, the session complains of much "bad brass in the plate every Lord's day." It was sold by weight for what it would realise. Mr. Barron was translated to Whitburn in 1771.

His successor, Mr. David Donaldson, M.A., St. Andrews, was also presented by the Earl of Hopetoun, and ordained minister of Wamphray on the 7th of May, 1772. He is reported to have been a very clever preacher, but falling into dissipated habits resigned his charge on being offered £50 a year for life. His disgraceful conduct scattered the congregation. Sunday services were held in the manse kitchen, and, it is said, often with little reverence. He retired to Moffat, lived there, got married, and died nine years afterwards, in 1802. On the 26th October, 1794, William Singer was ordained assistant and successor to Mr. Donaldson. The elders ordained at and before the 22nd June, 1751, namely, John Colthart, William Halliday, Simon Halliday, Edward Anderson, Stenrishill; David Reid in Staywood, and John Johnstone, cooper in Craighead, having all died or left the church during the irregularities of Mr. Donaldson's ministry, Mr. Singer requested the heads of families to suggest names for elders to form a session, which they did. Mr. Singer was translated to Kirkpatrick-Juxta in 1799.

He was a good and able man, and in his short stay in Wamphray, he worked hard and did much to make his memory cherished and his departure regretted. This high-toned character he maintained all through life. He was an active member of the church courts, and had the honour of filling the moderator's chair in its General Assembly. He took a deep interest in the

cultivation of the land, and wrote the first agricultural report for Dumfriesshire. His successor, James Crichton, who outlived Mr. Donaldson, was only a short time in full charge. In 1805 he was translated to Holywood. Joseph Kirkpatrick was translated from Dunscore to Wamphray in 1806. Burns attended Dunscore kirk when Mr. Kirkpatrick was the minister. From the poet's letters we see that he was greatly offended by the strong language against the Stuart kings which his minister used in a special thanksgiving sermon for the Revolution. Burns seems to have thought that the Stuarts had fallen so low that to kick them now was only their own cruelties otherwise applied. Mr. Kirkpatrick, as well as Burns, did nothing by halves, and it is quite possible that his anger had waxed hot against the misrule of the two last Stewart kings, and his expressions correspondingly so on that occasion. In ecclesiastical matters Mr. Kirkpatrick generally took the side of the evangelical party, but warned his people against the extremes some of their principles might lead to if not conducted with the greatest caution and prudence. He was a great visitor and catechiser at stated times, and by all accounts very attentive to every parochial duty. In the pulpit his preaching leant to the severe side, but out of it he could be very agreeable and jocular, though at all times he spoke plainly if he thought duty called. From the inscription on his tombstone the Wamphray folk of his day appear to have thought him a model minister. His appearance is thus described by the oldest inhabitant: "He was broad-shouldered and about middle height, wore a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat, a long-backed and long-tailed coat, a

waistcoat that reached nearly to the knee, knee breeches and black stockings, shoes and silver buckles." The last of the olden-time ministers, who ruled their parish with a combination of patriarchal dignity and paternal fondness. He died in 1824.

His successor, Charles Dickson, was ordained in 1825 and died in 1853. In several ways he was a contrast to his predecessor. He was a kindly man, but grave and formal in manner. He was reckoned by his parishioners to be one of the best every-day preachers in the district.

In ecclesiastical matters he took the side of the non-intrusion party, and advocated their cause very warmly, but he did not see his way to leave the church at the Disruption. This, the majority of his congregation regretted, as he was a good preacher, a scholarly man, and, besides, a good business man. He published two sermons, one on blind Bartimeus and one on infant baptism. He wrote also the statistical report of the parish. He was an applicant for the Hebrew Chair in the Divinity Hall, Edinburgh, but was not successful. He married Margaret Rogerson, Fingland. His death occurred in 1853. Mr. Dickson was the last minister of Wamphray who observed the old-fashioned "visitations." The parish was divided into districts, and visited in rotation. In each district the minister first called on every household and invited all its members to meet him at a convenient centre. The ceremony there began by his asking each one, young and old, a question in the Shorter Catechism, a chapter was read and explained, and the meeting was then closed with prayer. This visitation was looked forward to and prepared for during the year, and kept the people up

to the mark in their knowledge of the Bible and catechism.

The successor to Mr. Dickson is the present incumbent, Mr. George Wight, M.A., Glasgow. He was assistant for a short time during Mr. Dickson's fatal illness. His ministrations pleased the congregation so well that after the minister's death the members of the church petitioned the patron, the Earl of Hoptoun, to present him to the charge. Their request was granted, and Mr. Wight was ordained in January, 1854. He attained his jubilee as minister of the parish in January, 1904. The event was celebrated by both the presbytery and his congregation, and on each occasion Mr. Wight received their heartiest congratulations, best wishes, and very handsome presents. His jubilee is the first that has occurred in Wamphray kirk since the Reformation. His incumbency has topped all his nineteen predecessors by twenty-four years. He always had and still has a Sunday school class. In his younger and stronger days he held weekly prayer-meetings in the village. His attention to the sick has ever been unremitting, and his systematic course of calls, at short intervals, on both sick and well, has all along given great satisfaction to his parishioners. In August, 1906, Mr. Wight petitioned the presbytery for a helper and successor.

From 1632-1690, the time of a mixed government of presbytery and episcopacy in the Church of Scotland, all the Wamphray clergymen bore the university stamp. All are M.A.'s.

The seven ministers of Wamphray from 1632-1695 are all M.A. of Edinburgh University. Of the thirteen from 1695 only two are graduates—Mr. Wight, M.A.,



Glasgow, 1854, the present one; and D. Donaldson, M.A., St. Andrews, 1712. The stipend of Wamphray church is at present £310, with manse and glebe.

## ELDERS.

In 1794, when Mr. Singer succeeded Mr. Donaldson in Wamphray kirk, there were no elders to form a session. He requested the congregation, as we have seen, to hand him in the names of three men whom they thought suitable for the office. The three names handed to the minister were James Shaw, tenant in Langside; William Johnstone, tenant in Saughtrees; and John Charteris, householder, Broomhills. The minister was satisfied with the men suggested; they accepted office and were ordained to the eldership. All three were advanced in middle life. From Wamphray session records we see that John Charteris was doing duty as an elder in 1806, and in that year was chosen by the session to represent Wamphray kirk in the Presbytery of Lochmaben and Synod of Dumfries. The date of his death is not known. The family of John Charteris and Margaret Murray consisted of four sons—John, James, Matthew, and Thomas. John died in Wamphray, unmarried. James married, and had a family of sons and daughters. Matthew married Jean Learmonth, had a family of two sons and five daughters, took up house in Newton Wamphray and lived and died there. Thomas emigrated to New Brunswick, and died there young. There have been many members of the learned professions among the descendants of the above John Charteris. There is a gap in the session book from 1806 to 1815. At the latter date the only surviving elder was James Shaw.

On the 23rd April, 1815, three new elders were chosen and ordained to fill the vacant places, viz., John Leslie, schoolmaster; Archibald Hamilton, tenant, Broomhills; and his brother, Joseph Hamilton, tenant, Saughtrees. The vacancies occurring in the eldership since have been filled by the following:—Mr. Charteris, schoolmaster; Mr. Rogerson, Fingland; Mr. Thomas Gillieson, Mr. Hamilton, Yr., Broomhills; Mr. Carruthers, Stenrishhill; and Mr. Rae, the present schoolmaster. As the other names have all been mentioned separately, in one capacity or another, it is only fair to say that Mr. Thomas Gillieson was for many years a most useful man in the parish. He served as a member on both parochial and school boards. He was an elder of the church, the precentor for a time, and also a teacher in the Sunday school. From youth to extreme old age he was orderly in walk and conversation, and one who clung most tenaciously to old lines of religious thought, and to old forms and ceremonies in presbyterian worship. Thomas is a "missed" man. He was attentive to his duties as an elder, and as a neighbour he was obliging, both in time of health and sickness.

In former days the precentor was a great and indispensable institution in the kirk. Seventy and more years ago, John Gibson, a slater by trade, led the psalmody in Wamphray kirk. He had a really good, tenor voice, and he knew it, prided himself on it, and was not slow to say that he had heard few or none to equal it. He had also a fairly good knowledge of music. There was no keeping upsides with him, not to say beating him, except when old Nannie Macmoran, hearing him begin a tune that she thought not adapted to the sentiment of the psalm, "skirled" up

the "Bangor" or some other more suitable tune in her opinion, and so divided the musical honours with him. A few of the young people provoked by the real or assumed musical superiority of John brought a man and woman (two "stars") from a neighbouring parish to "drown" their precentor. Unaware of the plot, or joke, and unprepared for it, John did feel a bit taken aback when he perceived that he was barely leading. During the long morning prayer which followed the psalm John put his plaid over his head and composed a new tune, pencilling it inside on the board of his Bible—this is John's version of it. When the next psalm was given out the tune was found to be so full of such wonderful trills that not a voice could follow it, so John came out at the top again. A wag of a farmer once prolonged the last note of the fourth line after it had had the proper length accorded to it. A contemptuous look was thrown at him by John, as much as to say, "What are ye braying at?" An admonition from the minister stopped the musical nonsense.

John was once asked by an elder of the church to attend a singing class that was being conducted in the school one winter by a rather famous musician. John excused himself by saying, "Me gang! I have forgotten more tunes than ever that man kenned," and John did not go. A later precentor once started a long metre tune to a short metre psalm. To change it would have shown no resource of brain whatever, so he just repeated the last two syllables of the second and fourth lines twice, and dumped through the two double verses in that way. The congregation supported him vigorously with serious mien, but laughed the whole way home from church. The precentor's genius in adapt-

ing himself to circumstances was the joke of the week.

John Gibson was very short of stature, and his weight corresponded therewith. The latter stood him in good stead at the time he fell from the roof of the manse. The minister, sitting in his study, saw something like a great bird falling past the window. In mortal terror he threw up the window and cried aloud, "John, are you killed?" "Na, a'm no killed," was the tart reply. Strange to say he was not a bit the worse for his aerial journey, but mounted the roof again and finished his job, and thenceforward watched his feet better. John's pastime was angling and fly-hook dressing.

The beadle was an entirely different person in every way from the precentor. He was tall and heavily built from head to heel, genial in speech and manner—at least he always meant to be so, but a habit of talking "shop," and a genuine wish to oblige, often made his tongue say what his head did not afterwards approve of. His figure, as has been said, was large, and his clothes, to meet a probable expansion, were always made "lucky." The old minister never bothered him to dress for Sunday duty, or stand at attention and then follow upstairs to shut the pulpit door. He just carried up the Bible below his "oxter" under the plaid, laid it on the pulpit bookboard, and retired to his seat. The old minister's successor stuck a black coat and white tie on him, and made him mount the pulpit stairs and shut the door. William did not like these innovations and they cost him many a "dom"; but he got accustomed to the new order of things. Another innovation followed, the church was artificially heated. William blamed the railways for

bringing in these new ideas. He was told to watch the thermometer and not let the heat rise above a certain point. Mistaking the point he allowed the church to be heated till everybody in it was limp—but he got used to the “mometer” and picked up that new fashion also.

The church had never in its history been heated before. It was, inside, as white as whitewash could make it, and when matched by snow on the ground and snow falling, there was too much purity to be seen, in and out, even for a kirk. The heating process can not be said to have improved church attendance, but it was more comfortable for those who did attend. The protection from cold feet on a cold winter day formerly was to wash them in cold water, put on clean stockings, and put dry wisps in the clogs, just before setting out for church.

It is not etiquette it seems for a beadle to call and enquire for a sick person, but Auld Mag, his old acquaintance and neighbour had been long ill in bed. William passed her door. A kind thought struck him, and saying to himself “I’ll turn and see Mag.” He went in, and looking by the bed end said, “How ir ye, Mag?” “Oh man, Carl, am no weel ava, I dinna think a’ll get better this time.” “Weel, a’m sorry to hear that, Mag, but a’ll lay ye in wee Mary’s grave, it’ll be ripe noo!!!” Up sprang Mag. “A’ll thraw this jug o’ water in yere face, ye muckle coarse——” But William heard no more. He was out and up the road at a quicker pace than he had turned in. He was an honest, kindly, obliging chiel, the beadle.

The church bell comes next. The incscription, or rather dedicatory words, on it are, “Gloria Deo soli.”

It was a second-hand one to begin with, but clear enough in tone when bought from Wiston kirk-session. Repairs on it spoiled its voice. It no longer sings "ding, dong," it says something like "dunt, dant." "What note has that bell?" said someone to a musical beadle. "It'll be a note likely, but not one in any scale I know," was the answer. "It's voice is a disgrace to a kirk steeple; it should be out of that."

The church session records from 1750 to 1795 throw an interesting light on the authority possessed by the church, and the extra work it had to perform, which times and circumstances have relieved it of. Besides the ordinary church discipline, the session had a hand in keeping the peace and suppressing illegal traffic; and, as there was no law for the relief of the poor then, the whole burden of maintaining the destitute, and helping those in straitened circumstances not on the poor roll, fell on the shoulders of the church. The records between the above dates reflect credit on the session for the care and diligence they exercised with regard to both the "hard up" and the entirely destitute.

The session in 1751 (the date when Wamphray church records begin) consisted of these six elders—Edward Anderson, Stenrishhill; David Reid, Staywood; John Johnstone, Craighead; John Colthart, William Halliday, Simon Halliday, Auldtown. David Reid, schoolmaster, was chosen session clerk, and John Johnstone, cooper, Craighead, was appointed precentor.

All the fines the session inflicted were church property, and all the extra authority the church held at that time to inflict fines helped to fill the purse of the church and so benefit the poor. When a breach of the peace occurred the church laid on the fine. For

instance, one, James Johnstone, for disorderly conduct in one of the hostleries was fined six shillings and sixpence. They also kept their eye on contraband trade. William Johnstone was fined five shillings for selling ale without a license. On another occasion the session netted one pound five shillings at one haul in fines from parties selling ale without a license. Defamation of character also came under their jurisdiction. "James Bryden informed the session that John Renwick and his mother, Jean Smith, and John Halliday, younger, were "telling that" he had drawn and carried away corn from a ruck at Newbigging." Bryden had to table five shillings before the session took up his case. Witnesses were brought forward and sworn, but Bryden failed to prove his libel, so his tabled money went to the poor. In all such cases as the forementioned the fines went direct to the poor box.

Proclamations, marriages, and baptisms were all by session-law performed in church, and any case of infringement on any one of these three was followed by a fine. "John Johnstone and Margaret Don were rebuked publicly for their irregular marriage, and directed to pay to the poor of the parish ten shillings sterling," whereof they "paid instantly three shillings and twopence and gave a bill for the rest." A poorer couple, for the same offence, was fined "one shilling," "whereof they collected eightpence on the spot." In disbursing the gifted money and collected fines, the session on some points observed a strict economy, on others a gracious liberality, as the following notes from the session book show: "Four bottles of wine were bought from Mr. Blaiklaw" and "spirits and loaf bread" were bought from Bet Gillespie

for the "distressed poor." The doctor was paid for attending them, their houses were kept in repair, their clothes were made, and their food provided; books were bought and school wages paid for the children, both for straitened poor and the poor on the roll, and on one occasion the cooper was paid seven shillings for making the coffin of a poor woman which, "for certain reasons, was made better than ordinar'." The Earl of Hopetoun sent donations of money, and he and the lairds of Stenrishhill and Girthhead took on loan the surplus cash the session had to spare and gave good interest for it.

The worst year on record for the poor was 1757, when Mr. Williamson was minister. In March of that year the session laid out one pound nine shillings and eightpence sterling for six pecks of oatmeal for the poor of the parish not on the roll. In April two pounds sterling were paid to John Johnstone for twenty stones of oatmeal for the poor on the roll. In May, again, the sum of two pounds five shillings and sixpence sterling was paid to John Halliday of Moorside for twenty-one stones of oatmeal for the poor, and in August following, the laird, the Earl of Hopetoun, sent five pounds sterling to be "distributed among the straitened families not on the poor roll nor begged publicly."

The economy of the church session appears both at an earlier and later date. The beadle, Alexander Potter, got for his work three shillings and fourpence a year, a pair of shoes costing three shillings, and a shilling extra at communion time. For digging a grave to the poor the fee was fourpence. After a long term of service, Alexander's fee was raised, in 1780, to ten



shillings a year. John Moffat, a tailor, was paid fourpence for "making a suit of clothes to a poor boy." The seamstress, Agnes Johnstone, got tenpence for "making two new shirts, and mending old ones to Janet Johnstone, including thread." To cooper Johnstone for "nails and workmanship in mending ye church door, and putting up stirrups for hanging the communion tables on," the sum of tenpence was paid. The cooper was precentor. No pay seems to have been given for that duty, but he got all the odds and ends of work and repairs the kirk needed from time to time and the session paid the bill. David Reid, schoolmaster, was session clerk. No pay was set apart for that office either, but the session paid him the school fees of poor children as compensation for his clerking work. Once the session gave him a shilling for his "extraordinary trouble about Janet Johnstone in Laverhay, her affairs."

The first recorded collection made in Wamphray kirk for missionary purposes took place in February, 1755. The sum of twelve shillings was taken as a contribution to the building of Alston Moor Meeting House in Cumberland. Later on in the spring fourteen shillings were collected and sent to New Jersey to help a Scotch congregation there. Mr. Williamson was ordained on the 23rd of September, 1755. Next year, on 8th November, a collection was made for "breeding students in the Irish language for the Highlands of Scotland." Twelve shillings was taken. In the same year, and by order of Assembly, a collection was recommended in all the churches to assist in building bridges over certain rivers. There had been cases of drowning of elders and others in going home from church. Two and sixpence was collected in

Wamphray towards the building of the bridge over the Tweed at Kelso. Perhaps the elders thought it enough as the Annan was at that time almost, if not altogether, bridgeless. Save a collection for Milk Bridge in 1760 (the sum on that occasion was fourteen shillings), there is no other recorded for over forty years. During the whole time of the six elders they had too good reason to complain of "bad brass" in the plate every Lord's day.

There is nothing striking in the architecture of the church; it is a neat little edifice and most happily set down on a shelving piece of ground where three knowes meet. Two streamlets pass by it (one flowing south-west, the other north-west) and meet a few yards past the mill. The church sits on the base, the mill<sup>1</sup> at the apex of the triangle formed by the two streams—two indispensable institutions to human nature as at present constituted, and where else should they be situated but near to each other?

Wamphray manse has perhaps got the finest site of any manse in Annandale. The exposure is southern, and being situated on the edge of the Linn at its most romantic spot, its views, south and west, are not only extensive but charmingly beautiful.

Mr. Wight's long residence, coupled with his taste in landscape gardening, and the work and outlay he has spent in planting trees and flowering shrubs has made the manse surroundings the most lovely imaginable.

The manse was built on its present site about the end of the 18th century. The older one, a little

<sup>1</sup> Gibson and Roddick have been the chief names in the mill since 1750.

farther down the brae, was the home of John Brown and Thomas Douglas of Covenanting story, and many more less known names. No ruins of it are left. The bogle connected with it has been long "laid."

Mr. Scott, the minister of Kirkpatrick-Juxta, had a great reputation in his day for piety, energy, and clearing houses of bogles. On a visit to Wamphray manse he was asked to rid a certain room of a bogle; Mr. Scott, Bible in hand, entered the room, and for some time a great noise as of two people wrestling was heard. Mr. Scott reappeared much exhausted. The bogle was no more heard. It was this same Mr. Scott whose horse stumbled and threw the minister over its head. "Aha, Scottie, ye're doon noo," shouted some one from behind the hedge. Scottie retorted, "I can rise again, ye fell and ye never could rise." His reverence evidently thought that it was the Deil himself who had been rejoicing at his accident.