

# Edinburghshire

## PARISH OF KIRKLISTON.

PRESBYTERY OF LINLITHGOW, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND TWEEDDALE.

THE REV. ADAM DUNCAN TAIT, MINISTER.

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### I. - TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

The parish of Kirkliston lies partly in the county of Linlithgow; partly in that of Edinburgh. The river Almond forms the boundary between the two counties, through the whole extent of the parish; and the south-eastern portion, lying in the county of Edinburgh, is about one-fourth of the whole.

*Name.* - The ancient name was Temple Liston. Of the compound Liston there are several instances, in the names of places in the parish, as *Old Liston*, *New Liston*, *Over New Liston*, *Hal Liston*, *E'liston* or *Il Liston* or *High Liston*, and *Kirk Liston*, the last being the name of the principal village, and of the parish. The etymology of the word *Liston* is uncertain. There is an old tradition, that a large district of country around was, at a remote period, possessed by a distinguished family of that name, and that this circumstance gave its name to the parish. But it is said, that the term *Liston* signifies in Celtic an inclosure on the side of a river, and it is not unlikely that this may be the true origin of the name of the parish.

*Extent, &c.* - The extent of the parish, in length, from east to west, is 5½ miles; its breadth from north to south, about 4½ miles. It contains 12.007 square miles. The figure is an irregular square.

*Boundaries.* - It is bounded by the following parishes, viz. on the north and north-east, by Dalmeny; north and north-west, Abercorn; west, Ecclesmachan; and a detached portion of Dalmeny, named Auldcaithie; west and south-west, Uphall; south-west, Midcalder; south, Kirknewton and Ratho; east, Corstorphine and Cramond. There is a portion of the parish, entirely separate, named Liston Shiels, lying on the slope of Pentland hills, which was annexed, *quoad sacra*, many years ago, to the parish of Kirknewton. This portion of the parish is bounded on the east and south-east by Pennicuik; on the north and north-east, by Currie; on the west by Midcalder; on the south by Linton, lying in the county of Peebles.

*Meteorology.* - The average temperature for the six years commencing with 1832, is as under.

1832	1888	1884	1835	1836	1837
45½	44¼	46	44½	43¾	43⅔ [This average is taken from daily observations in the morning and evening.]

*Climate.* - The prevailing winds are west and south-west. The climate may be termed

good, compared with that of a large portion of Scotland. There are no distempers peculiar to the district, and the parish may be said to be decidedly healthy: but it is worthy of remark, that in the small village of Newbridge, which contained at the time just 65 inhabitants, situated eight miles from Edinburgh, on the middle turnpike road to Glasgow, the mortality, by cholera, in April 1832, was greater than in any part of the county of Linlithgow, eleven deaths having occurred in the course of ten days.

*Hydrography.* - Springs of all sorts are abundant, flowing from whinstone, limestone, gravel, or layers of sand: many of these are highly impregnated with lime and iron, some with magnesia.

The river Almond, which takes its rise in Lanarkshire, flows through this parish, entering it at the south-western extremity, and flowing in a circuitous course, of about 4½ miles, to the village of Kirkliston, which stands on a bank immediately overhanging it. Its course from thence is to the north-eastward, about a mile and a-half, when it passes into the parish of Cramond, and falls into the Frith of Forth, at that village. Its bed is broad, and in many parts rocky; its depth varies considerably. After rainy weather, especially with a strong south-west wind, it overflows its banks frequently to a great extent, and, in consequence of this, large tracts of valuable land in this parish, on both sides, were often much injured.

As a remedy for this evil, very strong and high embankments have lately been raised, at a great expense, by the proprietors of the lands along its margin, and by the trustees of the Edinburgh and Linlithgow turnpike road, and the river may now be said to be kept within limits.

*Geology and Mineralogy.* - The minerals in this parish are referable to the secondary and alluvial classes. The secondary rocks, which belong to the carboniferous system, are chiefly sand-stone, limestone, and trap or whinstone. No coal has been met with, although some of the coal metals, as ironstone and bituminous shale or blaes, occur. The strata dip to the north and north-west, and vary in thickness.

In some parts of the parish, a bastard limestone occurs, of no value as lime, and very unkindly to the mason's tools, but furnishing a useful stone for building.

Many trials have been made for coal to a great depth, but without success. It is supposed, however, that there must be coal, although lying too deep for being wrought, - as ironstone and bituminous shale or blaes occur in abundance, under a bed of rock, in quality and thickness similar to that over the coal at Borrostownness, and called the roof.

The only alluvial deposits are to be found on the sides of the Almond, which consist chiefly of gravel, sand, and loam. Throughout the parish, soils of different kinds are to be found. But it may be said that the prevailing soil varies from a strong clay to a rich black mould.

*Zoology.* - Under this head, it may be stated, that when the line of the Union Canal was dug through the estate of Clifton Hall, about twenty years ago, a tusk of a *Mammoth* was found, nearly five feet long, about twenty-five feet under the surface of the ground, firmly imbedded in blue till, or tilly clay, in good preservation. A description and figure of this very interesting specimen will be found in the Memoirs of the Wernerian Natural History Society.

*Botany.* - The following list of rare plants growing in the parish and neighbouring

district of the country may be acceptable to the reader.

*Symphytum officinale*, common comfrey, road-side to the south of Duntarvie.

*Adoxa moschatellina*, tuberous-rooted moschate1, near an old mill, on the banks of the Almond, Clifton Hall.

*Euphorbia exigua*, in cornfields, to the north-east of Carlowrie.

*Lychnis viscaria*, viscous catch-fly, on Dundas Hill.

*Potentilla argentea*, silvery cinquefoil, on Craig Brae, Dundas.

*Scutellaria galericulata*, common skull-cap, on Dundas Hill.

*Malva moschata*, marsh-mallow, on the banks of the Almond.

*Genista tinctoria*, dyer's broom, on Drum-shoreland Muir.

*Hypericum humifusum*, trailing St John's wort, in a plantation on the east of Craig Brae.

*Pilularia globulifera*, pepper grass, at Philpston Loch.

*Ophioglossum vulgatum*, adder's tongue, on Drumshoreland Muir.

*Asplenium trichomanes*, common maiden-hair spleenwort, in Newliston woods.

*Asplenium ruta muraria*, wall rue, in Newliston woods.

#### FUNGI.

*Agaricus procerus*, tall mushroom, at Carlowrie.

*Agaricus cristatus*, at Foxhall.

*Cantharellus cibarius*, truffle, at Foxhall.

*Helvella mitra*, at Foxhall,

----- *leucophæa*, at Foxhall.

*Morchella esculenta*, common eatable morelle, at Foxhall.

*Morchella hybrida*, at Foxhall.

In the garden of Carlowrie, the property of David Falconar, Esq. there is a large and beautiful collection of rare plants.

## II.- CIVIL HISTORY.

*Eminent Men.* - Among eminent characters connected with the parish, may be mentioned Skene of Hallyards, unhappily distinguished by his zeal in persecuting the Covenanters. - Reid, who suffered in their cause - the celebrated John, Earl of Stair, who inherited from his mother the estate of Newliston. - Andrew Dalzel, Professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh, - and the Right Honourable Sir Robert Liston, lately deceased. Respecting Professor Dalzel, it may be worthy of remark, that he was the son of a man distinguished by his knowledge of agriculture, who came to this parish at the special desire of the Earl of Stair, when he, on returning from public life, was beginning to direct his attention to the improvement of his estate; and under his direction, the mode of ploughing in common use in the low countries, viz. by two horses or two oxen, was adopted on his Lordship's estate, in room of the old Scotch mode of ploughing, viz. by six, or eight, or sometimes twelve oxen. Under his superintendence, likewise, the first example in Scotland was given on the estate of Newliston, of the planting of cabbages, potatoes, and turnips in the fields. The mother of the Professor was a daughter of the proprietor of Linns Mill, in the south-western extremity of the parish, now part of the estate of Clifton Hall. Andrew Dalzel, and Sir Robert Liston, so deservedly eminent for his ability and success in diplomatic services, were born, the former on the 6th, the latter on the 8th of October 1742. The houses of their parents were only about half a mile apart, and they both received the elements of education at the parochial school of Kirkliston, then under the charge of Mr John Hastie, of whose talents and eminence as a teacher, Sir

Robert Liston was wont frequently, to the very latest years of his life, to speak in terms of high commendation.

*Chief Land-owners.* - These are, the Earl of Hopetoun; Mr Hog of Newliston; Mr Dundas of Dundas; Mr Falconar of Carlowrie; Mr Cameron of Foxhall (anciently) Todshaugh; Mr Ramsay of Barnton; Sir Alexander Charles Maitland Gibson of Clifton Hall; Sir James Gibson-Craig of Riccarton; Mr Cochran Wishart Baillie of Lamington. The five first mentioned possess the part of the parish lying in the county of Linlithgow; the four last mentioned, possess that portion lying in the county of Edinburgh.

The valued rent of the parish is L. 12846, 18s. Scots, whereof more than two-fifths belong to the Earl of Hopetoun, and nearly one-fifth to Mr Hog.

*Parochial Registers.* - These are of four classes: - 1. The Minutes of Session; 2. The Minutes of Heritors' Meetings; 3. The Lists of Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths; 4. The Accounts relative to the Poor's Funds. Of the first class of records, the earliest volume commences in 1647, and there are six other volumes, the latest commencing to 1817; of the second class, there are two volumes, the former commencing in 1692, the latter in 1785; of the third class, the earliest volume commences in 1675, and there are five other volumes, the latest commencing in 1817, but there is no record of deaths prior to 1816; of the last class, the earliest volume commences in 1712, prior to which period, the accounts relative to the poor's funds were all engrossed in the minutes of session, and there are five other volumes, the last commencing in 1821. All these volumes, with the exception of the first and fourth, of the first class, are in a tolerably good state of preservation, and from the earliest period, the records seem to have been carefully kept.

*Antiquities.* - At Lochend, near Newbridge, in the county of Edinburgh, some large stones are set up, where a battle was fought in the year 995, between Kenneth, the natural brother of Malcolm, second King of Scotland, and commander of his forces, and Constantine, the usurper of the Crown. About a mile and a half to the westward of Newbridge, several large stone coffins have been, from time to time, discovered. Farther down the course of the Almond, nearly two miles, on the property of Mr Ramsay of Barnton, a solitary monumental stone has been erected, in memory of the same battle, named *Catstane*, supposed to be a corruption of *Constantine*, and to have been erected to the honour of Constantine, one of the commanders in the same engagement, who was there slain and interred. When the turnpike road by Loanhead was cut through, spurs and heads of spears were found under the surface of the ground.

It is a well-ascertained fact, that Edward I. of England, when marching to Falkirk, where he completely vanquished the Scottish troops, on the 22d of July 1298, lay for some time with his army close to the village of Kirkliston. The field in which, according to common tradition, the King's tent was pitched, is immediately to the south-west of the village, on the property of Newliston.

On the estate of Clifton Hall has been found an urn of burnt clay, containing ashes; and the shape and size of two flat stones within it, seemed to indicate that a heart had been therein deposited.

In the village of Clifton, under the foundation stone of an old cot-house, was found a

Pig or Pipkin of burnt clay, with a small opening, just sufficient to admit one coin at a time. It contained between 300 and 400 silver coins, partly Scotch, partly English. In a separate field, on the line of the Canal, and on the property of Clifton Hall, was found a gold coin, in excellent preservation, about fifteen feet under the surface, bearing the inscription *Robertes II. Rex Scotorum*.

Beneath a large whinstone, immediately under the surface, a Druidical axe was discovered, in good preservation, quite sharp, apparently hidden under the stone.

In the south-west corner of the parish, on the estate of the Earl of Hopetoun, there is a baronial residence, evidently of great antiquity, named *E'Liston* or *Il Liston*, supposed to be a corruption of *High Liston*, which is said to have been, in ancient times, a hunting castle of the Kings of Scotland. James II. and James IV. are both said to have used it as such.

About two miles to the westward of the village of Kirkliston, a little to the south of the Edinburgh and Linlithgow turnpike road, stands *Niddry Castle*, a fine old ruin, at one time possessed by the Earls of Wintoun, now the property of the Earl of Hopetoun. Queen Mary of Scotland rested, and is said to have slept there, when on her flight from Lochleven to join her adherents at Hamilton, on the 2d of May 1568.

Among some old trees at Linn's Mill, close to Clifton Hall, there is a tombstone in good preservation, bearing the date of 1645: it is that of a proprietor of Linn's Mill, in whose family it had been for 300 years. The individual, over whose grave the stone is placed, is said to have been the last man who died in Scotland of the plague.

*Modern Buildings* - Of these the chief is the mansion-house of Newliston, the seat of James Maitland Hog, Esq. a large and commodious family residence, built about forty-five years ago.

In the western extremity of the village of Kirkliston, a distillery was erected twenty years ago.

### III.- POPULATION.

There are no means of determining what may have been the ancient state of the parish in regard to population.

By return made to Dr Webster in	1755,	the population was	1461
By former Statistical Account in	1792,	-	1504
By Parliamentary census taken in	1801,	-	1647
	1811,	-	1682
	1821,	-	2213
	1831,	-	2265

The great increase of population since 1811 is supposed to have been owing to the extraordinary number of labourers, chiefly Irishmen, who were employed in the parish in the years 1818, 1819, 1820, and 1821, in the construction of the Union Canal, many of whom became, from that time, settled inhabitants.

Number of inhabitants residing in villages and in the country: - Kirkliston village, 600; Winchburgh, 165; Newbridge, 90; Gogar Stane, 50; Niddry, 65; Clifton, 40; Newhouses, 20; total 1030; in the country, 1235; total 2265.

The average of births cannot be exactly ascertained, as the duty of inserting the names of their children in the parish register has been for many years greatly neglected by parents; in

this respect, however, a decided improvement is beginning now to take place. The following is a statement of the number of children baptized in the Established Church, in public and private, during the seven years beginning 1831: -

1831,	1832,	1833,	1834,	1835,	1836,	1837,
54	50	46	48	42	37	41

Average of deaths from the parish obituary: -

1830,	1831,	1832,	1833,	1834,	1835,	1836,
19	24	35	33	30	18	33

Average of marriages from the parish record of proclamation of banns: -

1831,	1832,	1833,	1834,	1835,	1836,	1837,
19	14	6	14	18	16	18

The number of families of independent fortune, stately or occasionally resident in the parish, 4.

1 insane and 1 fatuous person reside in the parish; 2 deaf and dumb, and 1 blind.

Number of illegitimate births during the last three years, 16.

*Habits and Character of the People.* - On the estate of Clifton Hall, especially, several cottages have been built on a remarkably neat plan, and most of them are kept in excellent order, by the families living in them; in other parts of the parish likewise, several places might be specified, where habits of cleanliness seem evidently to prevail. But it is to be regretted that this is by no means universal. The larger villages, and especially that of Kirkliston, are very deficient in this respect. There are in this village several houses, recently built, and these are generally kept in a clean and neat condition; but in many of the old houses, the habits of the families are still very far behind the standard which, in this part of the country, ought certainly to be reached by all; and there is little perceptible approach to it. On the whole, the people of the parish enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts of social life, and are contented with their circumstances. Outward decency of conduct is generally maintained by them - but it is to be feared that here, as in other parts of the country, the low price of spirituous liquors has been productive of most pernicious consequences, in regard to the moral habits of the people.

#### IV .- INDUSTRY.

The number of farms in the parish is 30; the number of farm-servants, stately employed in the management of these, is about 140. There are 11 wrights; 9 smiths; 5 tailors; 8 shoemakers; 5 grocers; 2 candlemakers; 4 bakers. There is one medical gentleman in the parish.

*Agriculture.*- The number of acres, standard imperial measure, in the parish, is 7722, of which the whole may be said to be cultivated, or in plantations, or in permanent pasture, with the exception, perhaps, of a small quantity of waste land on the detached farm of Liston Shiels. The plantations are not extensive; on the lands of Newliston, Clifton Hall, Carlowrie, Foxhall, Niddry and Humbie, there is a good deal of old timber, and over various districts of the parish, there are a few fine trees to be found in groupes, which point out where mansion-houses have anciently stood. Of young wood, there is only a small quantity. There is little permanent pasture - gone, indeed, if we except the lawns around the mansion-houses, and the margin of the river Almond. The prevailing sorts of trees are, beech, ash, elm, and fir; there are few oaks,

and, except in young plantations, little larch.

*Ancient state of Husbandry.* - A hundred years ago, there was no enclosed ground in the parish, except the gardens of the proprietors, the kail-yards of the tenants, and the church-yard. The boundaries of property were marked by pit-stones, or in particular places by a cairn of stones gathered from the surface of the soil: the division of a farm, if visible at all, was described by a *bank* or *gawfur*, and except in seeding or reaping, marches were little regarded; for after the removal of the crop, the cattle were allowed to range at will - this was termed *lang-halter*. About this period, a considerable breadth of land around the village of Kirkliston lay in *run-rig*, that is, in small divisions or lots, each of which had its peculiar name, and several of these, lying far apart from each other, were frequently occupied by the same individual. The first approach towards forming fields in the parish was the adjustment of these small, and irregularly-divided lots, into compact portions. About this period, the celebrated John Earl of Stair, whose public life fills so important a page of the history of his country, rendered essential service to the improvement of agriculture in this parish. Having succeeded, on the death of his mother, to the estate of Newliston, he came to reside there, about the year 1725, and devoted much of his attention to the improving and beautifying of it. The pleasure-grounds around the mansion house of Newliston, comprehending about 70 acres Scots measure, and a large extent of ground beyond these limits, containing altogether about 250 acres, were laid out and planted by him; and although the tastes and ideas of a military life seem evidently to have guided him in the whole design, more than the study of natural beauty, yet, unquestionably, the effect of the entire plan is both striking and pleasing. He cultivated chiefly by spade husbandry, and he had about 200 workmen almost constantly employed on his grounds.

At a considerably later period, viz. about the year 1767, a large district of the parish was arranged in farms, all of which were small, and the enclosing of fields became general. About this time also, regular leases began to be granted, generally for a long period, such as two or three nineteens. In these agreements the only stipulations were - the payment of the rent (a large proportion in kind,) the furnishing of carriages and capons, thirlage to a corn-mill, some improvement in the enclosing of the land, or the payment of a small grassum at the commencement of the lease. As to the course of cropping, the only requirement was, that the land should be farmed according to the rules of good husbandry. About this period the agriculture of this parish was greatly improved by the example of Mr John Allan, tenant in Loanhead, a farmer in the immediate vicinity of the village of Kirkliston. He was decidedly the best corn farmer in his day, and was the first to introduce a regular rotation of cropping, viz. naked fallow, wheat or oats, beans, barley, grass, oats, the rotation best adapted to strong soils, yet known. The use of foreign manure was introduced by him into the parish. At a later period, Mr Wilkie of Ormiston Hill, who rented two farms in the parish, the property of the Earl of Hopetoun, contributed eminently to the furtherance of improvement, by extensive drainage, and a judicious mode of cultivation. His maxim in farming was, "dry land before cropping it," - he introduced the four and five-shift rotation, always resting the land in pasture when in a clean state.

*Rent of Land.* - The average rent of land may be stated at L.2, 5s. per Scots acre. The

real rent of the parish is about L. 14,000 per annum.

*Price of Labour.* - The great proportion of farm labour is paid for by half yearly or weekly wages; drainage and work on fences, only, is let by contract. The wages of farm-servants are on an average, all things included, L.26 or L.27 per annum. Able-bodied day-labourers earn from 9s. to 11s. per week; wrights, 2s. 6d. per day; masons, 3s.; slaters, 3s. or 3s. 6d. Smithy work is frequently contracted for, and often also charged at a price per article.

*Breeds of Cattle.* - The land is generally so valuable in quality that the farmers do not find it for their interest to breed cattle; of late, however, they are turning their attention more than formerly to this branch of farming. Another reason which may have rendered them less anxious about breeding, is the vicinity to Falkirk market, where the fields and stalls are supplied with bullocks from the shires of Aberdeen, Inverness, and Argyle. Ayrshire cows are generally used for the dairy. The breed of cattle is a cross between Teeswater and Ayrshire. The breed of sheep is confined to the black-faced, Cheviot, and Leicester, with crosses between each of these sorts. Of sheep there is little stock kept - they are chiefly fattened. Sheep pasturage is yearly increasing throughout the parish, and wherever the soil admits, the sheep are fed with turnips on the grounds - this, with the free use of lime, has produced pastures of the first order.

*Husbandry.* - The general character of the husbandry is good. On some of the farms, especially the larger, it is of first-rate excellence, certainly equal to any style of farming in Scotland. About three-fourths of the land is stiff, with a large admixture of clay, and upon a retentive subsoil, and is better adapted to the cultivation of wheat and beans than turnips. As a remedy for this, drainage has been extensively employed both in the way of deep cutting, and of close or furrow-draining; and these plans have been attended with such success, that turnips are now grown in situations in which it would formerly have been reckoned quite impossible to cultivate light green crops, and the five-shift rotation is becoming every year more general. The use of the various most approved manures is now very common, and is producing a marked improvement in the culture of the soil, such as rape-cake, bone-dust, soot, and the common manures from Edinburgh. These, coupled with large quantities of oil-cake, given to feeding cattle, greatly enrich the home made manure, and are yearly giving additional weight to the crops. In the southern part of the parish there is a considerable extent of light land, well adapted for turnips, and other green crops, and of that land some portion is of the very best quality.

*General duration of Leases, State of Farm Buildings.* - The present leaseholds are all of nineteen years duration. There is scarcely an instance of a longer term. The rents are almost wholly regulated by the price of grain, as fixed yearly by the fiars of the county. Generally speaking, the land is let at a fair rate, the landlord having a full rent for his property, and the tenant being able to meet his engagements: in consequence of this, there subsists between the proprietors and the tenantry a mutual friendly feeling, which is necessarily conducive to the comfort of both parties, and to the welfare of the community at large. The farm-steadings are all convenient and suitable, and the dwelling-houses generally are commodious and good: all the steadings lately erected have been built on the most approved plan, embracing every possible accommodation for the most complete management of the land.



*Amount of Raw Produce.* - It is impossible to fix the average in such a parish as this, as it varies so greatly from one year to another, according to the extent of land that may be under pasture. The following is the average of the arable produce.

Wheat, per acre,	32 bushels imperial.
Turnips, do	20 tons.
Barley, do.	42 do.
Potatoes, do.	6 do.
Oats, do.	48 do.
Artificial hay, do.	1.5 do.
Beans, do.	28 do.

*Quarries.* - There is a stone quarry on the farm of Humbie, the property of the Earl of Hopetoun, which yields a beautiful and durable stone.

#### V. - PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

There is no market-town in the parish; the nearest are Edinburgh and Linlithgow, distant eight miles, and Bathgate, distant ten miles.

The chief villages are Kirkliston and Winchburgh, in the county of Linlithgow, and Newbridge, in the county of Edinburgh.

*Means of Communication.* - There is a post-office in the village of Kirkliston, and letters are despatched and received twice every day. Three turnpike roads pass through the parish, viz. the road from Edinburgh to Stirling, and to Glasgow by Falkirk, which lies along the northern division of the parish, passing through the villages of Kirkliston and Winchburgh, and is in length about five miles, nearly due east and west; the road from Edinburgh to Glasgow by Bathgate, which lies through the southern division of the parish, passing through the village of Newbridge, and in length about three miles and a-half, due east and west; the road from Queensferry to the last mentioned Edinburgh and Glasgow turnpike, which passes through the village of Kirkliston, and in length about three miles. On the first of these roads, there are four daily public coaches, viz. the mail between Edinburgh and Stirling, and three stage-coaches, one to and from Stirling; one to and from Glasgow; one to and from Falkirk; on the second, there are seven daily public coaches, viz. the mail between Edinburgh and Glasgow, and six stage-coaches between these cities. On all these roads, there are also carriers' waggons.

*Bridges.* - There are two over the river Almond, one on the Stirling road, seven miles west from Edinburgh; the other, on the middle Glasgow road, eight miles west from Edinburgh. They are both in good condition, and are kept in excellent repair; the former was lengthened and widened, three years ago, at considerable expense.

*Canals.* - The Union Canal passes through the parish, and there is a splendid aqueduct over the river Almond, at the south-western extremity of it. The construction of this canal was commenced in 1818, and finished in 1822; it was intended to form a junction with the Forth and Clyde Canal.

*Ecclesiastical State.* - The following is the list of ministers of this parish, since the year 1647, the date of the earliest parochial register.

Mr Gilbert Hall, 1647, time of his settlement not known. Mr James Wemyss, admitted in 1663, remained until the Revolution; Mr Thomas Miller, admitted in 1692; Mr James Houston,

admitted in 1716; Mr John Drysdale, admitted in 1748; Mr James Lindsay, admitted in 1763; Mr Charles Ritchie, in 1794; the present incumbent, in 1826.

The parish church is not in a central situation, being only one mile from the northern extremity of the parish, and three miles and a-half from the southern; the most remote point from the church is the south-western extremity of the parish, distant four miles and a-half. On this account, its situation is necessarily rather inconvenient for these portions of the parish, and during winter, and after wet weather, when the river Almond is generally flooded, and the usual fords rendered impassable, the people in the southern part of the parish suffer great inconvenience in coming to church, from the want of a bridge, as they require to make a long circuit, in order to reach either of the bridges formerly mentioned. The church is evidently of great antiquity, erected probably in the twelfth century. It was one of those belonging to the knights hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, who had great possessions in this part of the country, previous to the Reformation. There is a very fine old door-way in the south side of the building, not used now, as an entrance to the church, exhibiting a beautiful specimen of rich Saxon architecture. The bell is remarkable for the fineness of its tone; it is rung every evening at 8 o'clock, and like-wise every morning, in summer, at 5; in winter, at 6. The church underwent a complete repair in 1822, and is now one of the most comfortable in the county; it affords accommodation to 700 persons. The area of the church is divided among the heritors, according to their valuations, and the portion assigned to each heritor is subdivided among his tenants. There are about 65 sittings, left unappropriated, for the use of the inhabitants of the villages or other inhabitants, not otherwise provided with seats.

The manse was built in 1692; it was repaired and enlarged in 1808; and as it is still deficient in accommodation, the heritors have kindly agreed to make an addition to it, which is to be immediately executed.

*Glebe.* - The extent, including the garden and site of the manse and offices, is 7 acres 27 falls of excellent land; its annual value is from L. 28 to L. 30.

*Stipend.* - The amount is as follows:

	Bolls.	Firlots.	Pecks.	Lippies.
Wheat,	2	0	1	2 8/10
Barley,	135	1	2	1 3/10
Oatmeal,	152	1	2	0 7/10
Oats,	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Total,	290	2		8/10

There is likewise an allowance of L. 10 per annum for communion elements, and the incumbent enjoys, by gift from the Crown, the feu-duties of Hallyards, amounting to L. 5, 11s. 7½d. The average of the grain stipend for the five years preceding crop 1836, amounted to L. 268, 18s. 2 11/12d.

There are no chapels of ease connected with the Established Church in the parish; and there are no Dissenting or Seceding chapels. Of the families connected with the Secession, some go to Queensferry, some to East-Calder, some to Mid-Calder, one or two individuals, to Edinburgh. The number of families connected with the Established Church is about 410; the average amount of regular attendance in the parish church is from 520 to 550 individuals; the average number of communicants is about 400. The people who do attend church are, on the

whole, regular in attendance; but it is to be feared that the habit of church-going is, over the whole of this district of country, less characteristic of the people than it ought to be.

*Church Collections for Religious and Charitable Objects.* - The amount is as follows: - 1833, L. 5; 1834, L. 7, 10s.; 1835, L. 15, 15s.; 1836, L. 12, 5s.; 1837, L. 38, 0s. 2½d.

*Education.* - Of schools there are - one parochial, two partially endowed, one unendowed, one supported by individual subscription. The last mentioned is a female school, where sewing is taught, together with the ordinary elements of education. In the parochial school, reading, English grammar, writing and arithmetic, geography and Latin are taught. The school is conducted with great efficiency, and is attended by about 90 pupils. At the other schools, the same branches, or some of them, are taught. The acting parochial teacher is assistant and successor to the schoolmaster, to whom the whole legal salary pertaining to the office, which amounts to L. 84, 4s. 4½d. per annum, continues to be paid. By the liberality of the heritors, the officiating teacher possesses the dwelling-house and garden, and receives a salary of L. 10 per annum, during the life of the retired schoolmaster. The fees are paid quarterly, in advance, and may amount to L. 50 a year. The teacher has also about L. 20 a year as session-clerk, and clerk to the heritors and Statute Labour Commissioners. There are not many persons, between the years of six and fifteen, who cannot read; a large proportion of the young between these years can write; and there are very few of those above fifteen years, who are unable to read, and, in a certain degree, also to write. The people seem to be generally alive to the benefits of education. No parts of the parish are so remote from all the schools as to prevent the children from attending one or other of them. The number of schools is sufficient for the parish.

*Charitable and other Institutions.* - A Friendly Society was established in 1798, for the following purposes - 1st, To afford an allowance to members during sickness and old age; 2d, to afford payment of a sum of money, on the death of members, and their wives and widows, in name of funeral allowance; 3d, to afford payment of an annuity to the widows of members during their widowhood. This institution has maintained great prosperity, and has been productive of the happiest effects, both in promoting industry, and in ministering to the comfort of the sick and destitute.

*Poor and Parochial Funds.* - The number of persons receiving stated parochial relief is 51; the stated monthly disbursement amounts to L. 11, 10s. 10d., which sum, divided by 51, gives 4s. 6¼d. as the average monthly allowance to each pauper. Some of them receive also aid occasionally, and several, not on the roll of the regular paupers, receive occasional relief, during winter especially. The following is the amount of ordinary collections at the church door, for relief of the poor, during the five years beginning 1833: 1833, L. 26, 4s. 3½d.; 1834, L. 32, 3s. 4¾d.; 1835, L. 33, 12s. 8¾d.; 1836, L. 31, 12s.; 1837, L. 30, 8s. 4¾d. During the same period, the following sums have been collected for the purchase of coals in the beginning of winter: - 1833, L. 9; 1834, L. 15; 1835, L. 12; 1836, L. 15; 1837, L. 16, 19s. 10d. Coals have been distributed at the beginning of the season to 70 families. The kindness of the farmers in driving the coals has always enabled the kirk-session to extend far more widely, than they otherwise could, the benefits of this charity. The amount received by the kirk-session, from the hearse and mortcloth dues, during the same five years, is as follows: - 1833,

L. 17, 4s. 6d; 1834, L. 12, 9s. 6d.; 1835, L. 10, 13s.; 1836, L. 13, 18s. 6d.; 1837, L. 13, 9s. 6d. The amount derived from the sale of the effects of paupers during same period, L. 11, 14s. 1d.; the amount of expenses, necessarily connected with these sales, L. 4, 16s. 3½d.; balance available for the relief of the poor, L. 6, 17s. 9½d. The amount derived from the dues for the erection of headstones in the churchyard at 5s. 7½d. each, during the same period, L. 2, 5s. The amount derived from fines for trespasses, &c. 15s. Besides these, there are no other sources of revenue for the relief of the poor, except the contributions by the heritors, in proportion to their several valuations. These contributions are in the form of what may be justly termed, although the expression seem paradoxical, *Voluntary Assessment*. The heritors meet twice a-year, for the purpose of examining the state of the poor's funds, and fixing the assessment, necessary to meet the deficiency of the funds already mentioned; and for the five years referred to, it was found requisite to fix this assessment at the rate of L. 200 per annum. This high rate was, in part, rendered necessary by a charge of L. 21 per annum, during the above period, as the board of a lunatic in the Edinburgh Asylum. There can be no doubt that the system of supporting the poor by assessment is in all respects *evil*, - it checks the feeling of benevolence towards the poor, in the minds of those who are able to afford relief to them, - it greatly reduces the amount of collection at the church-doors; and to the existence of an assessment, is undoubtedly to be ascribed the fact, that unhappily there are very few instances of a disposition on the part of the poor, to refrain from seeking parochial relief, or to feel the regular receiving of it, as any degradation. [While truth requires this statement to be made, the writer feels great pleasure in recording an instance of a very opposite mode of feeling and acting. A poor and aged woman, on the death of her husband, several years ago, was admitted on the poor's roll, and received for about seven years, an allowance of 3s. 4d. per month. She succeeded, by the death of a near relative, to a small sum of money, and not only was her name withdrawn from the roll of paupers, but the entire amount of what she had received during the period of her destitution was repaid by her family. It would assuredly augur well for the moral condition of the country, if examples of such just and honourable dealing were occurring more frequently. Unhappily they are very rare.] It ought to be mentioned under this head, that a most useful donation to the poor has been bestowed annually at the beginning of the year, by the Earl of Hopetoun, viz. the gift of a certain quantity of oat-meal to decayed labourers on his Lordship's property, and their widows and orphan families. The amount of this charity is at present about 35 bolls, divided among 38 families. The list is revised by the kirk-session, every year, and new cases of destitution are admitted on their recommendation to the benefit of the charity. This charity is most judicious in its design, and has, for a very long series of years, afforded a seasonable relief to the wants of the destitute.

*Fairs.* - There is one held annually in the village of Kirkliston, on the last Tuesday of July; and one likewise, in the village of Winchburgh, on the first Friday of June. No business is transacted at either of them, and they may be justly styled nuisances, which ought to be abolished, as they are invariably the fruitful sources of injury to the morals and comfort of the people.

*Inns, Alehouses, &c.* - There are three inns, viz. in the villages of Kirkliston, Winchburgh, and Newbridge. At Winchburgh there are likewise post-chaises, and horses. Of alehouses, the number is very considerable: far greater than is required; and it is much to be regretted, that licences for the sale of spirituous liquors are granted by the county Justices, so indiscriminately, without any consideration of the number previously existing, as the morals of the community are greatly injured by them.

*Fuel.* - That chiefly used is coal, which is conveyed from the collieries belonging to the Duke of Hamilton, near Falkirk, to Winchburgh, by the Union Canal. A considerable quantity of coal is also driven from Benhar, and Barbauchlie, in the vicinity of Bathgate. Of late, the price of coal has been very high, and to the poor it is always much greater, than to those in better circumstances; for as they are quite unable to pay for a cartload at a time, they are under the necessity of purchasing what they use from retailers, in very small quantities, and at an enormous additional cost. For this reason very little coal is used by the poor; their fires are chiefly made from the cuttings of the woods..

#### **MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.**

There are no striking variations betwixt the present state of the parish and that which existed at the time of the last Statistical Account. But from that period, there has been a steady progressive improvement in the mode of farming; and, at the present time, there is perhaps no parish in Scotland, which, in respect of the system of husbandry pursued, is farther advanced in improvement, or more distinguished by the excellence of its management. At the same time, it is evident that the condition of the labouring classes is susceptible of great improvement, and there is no doubt that their condition would be greatly better than it is, if there were among them a greater degree of foresight, and of care in laying up from present income a provision for future want. There is among the people a distressing amount of poverty, especially in the village of Kirkliston, where some of the houses are little better than Irish cabins; and it is extremely difficult to devise any means of mitigating the evils which they suffer, without also multiplying the demands for future relief.

*October 1839.*