

EDINBURGHSHIRE

PARISH OF CRANSTON.

PRESBYTERY OF DALKEITH, SYNOD OF LOTHIAN AND TWEEDDALE.

THE REV. ALEXANDER WELSH, MINISTER.

I. - TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

Name.- The name of the parish of Cranston or Cranstoun, in the charters of the twelfth century, was written *Cranestone*, the Anglo-Saxon, *Craenston*, signifying the crane's district, or resort. The river Tyne, where it intersects Cranston, is even now frequented by cranes, that find shelter in the woods, and fish in the water.

In the twelfth century, Cranston was divided into two manors, Upper Cranston and Nether Cranston, which were afterwards distinguished as New Cranston and Cranston Ridel. The church stood at Nether Cranston, which was the larger of the two manors. This district was granted by Earl Henry to Hugh Ridel. From him it obtained the name of Cranston Ridel, which distinguished it till recent times. Hugh Ridel granted to the monks of Kelso, the church of Cranston, with its tithes and other pertinents, for the soul of David I., and for that of Earl Henry, his lord; and it continued with them till 1317. During that long period, they enjoyed the revenues of the rectory, while the vicar served the cure and received the vicarage tithes. Adam de Malsarveston was vicar of Cranston during the reign of William the Lyon. In 1296, Hugh, the vicar of Cranston, swore fealty to Edward I. The church of Cranston was early of great value; and in the ancient taxatio, it was valued at 60 merks. The barony of Cranston Ridel continued with the Ridels till the reign of David II., when it passed, successively, by various transmissions, through the Murrays to the Macgills, who acquired the church of Cranston. Sir James Macgill, in 1651, was created Viscount Oxenford and Lord Macgill of Cousland. He dying in 1663, left the whole estates and patronage to his son Robert, who died without male issue in 1706. By another series of heirs, these estates and the patronage came to Lady Dalrymple Hamilton Macgill, spouse of the late, and mother of the present Sir John Hamilton Dalrymple, Bart. There was of old a chapel at Cranston, which served the lord and tenants of the manor. The monks probably retained this chapel till the Reformation dissolved such connexions. The manor and chapelry of Cousland were annexed to or merged in the parish of Cranston at the Reformation. The chapel stood on the south side of the village of Cousland, where its remains may still be traced, with its almost forgotten cemetery. It was probably dedicated to St Bartholomew, as some lands near it retain the name of Bartholomew's Firlot.

Extent, &c. - The parish of Cranston extends about 5 miles in length, and 3 in breadth. It is bounded by the parishes of Inveresk and Ormiston on the east; by Crichton and Borthwick on the south; and by Newbattle on the west and north. It contains 4778 acres, and is somewhat

in the form of an hour-glass, being very narrow in the middle.

Topographical Appearances, &c. - There are neither mountains nor hills, but the face of the parish is unequal; and the gentle swellings of the ground, the picturesque valley of the Tyne, the noble seats on its banks, with the intermixture of enclosures and plantations, render it very beautiful. The prospects from the higher grounds are rich and extensive. The climate is mild and salubrious. The river Tyne runs through the parish from south to north, and though here but a small rivulet, it widens in its progress before it falls into the Forth at Tynningham near Dunbar.

Quarries of freestone or sandstone and limestone, and several coal-pits, belonging to Sir John H. Dalrymple, and William Burn Callender, Esq. are wrought in various places, and make a good return. Coals are sold at 10d. per load, lime at 1s. 10d. per boll. Many petrifications have been found, and even some live toads are said to have been found imbedded in the solid limestone rock. A great many boulders were dug out of the new line of road between Pathhead and Fordel. The direction and dip of the strata and beds of coal are in some places from north to south, in others from east to west; the depth of the pits is from 14 to 25 fathoms; the thickness of the seams is from 16 inches to 4 feet. The soil consists partly of clay, and partly of light land. The whole is arable, fertile, and well adapted for producing all kinds of grain. There are some very large trees in the grounds of Oxenford Castle and Prestonhall. At Cakemoor there is a plane tree 26½ feet round at the base. The soil appears to be most congenial to larch, beech, and elm.

II. - CIVIL HISTORY.

Land-owners. - The chief land-owner is General Sir John H. Dalrymple, who has rather more than two-thirds of the parish,- the next is William Burn Callender, Esq. of Prestonhall; after him Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, and Alexander Mackay, Esq. of Blackcastle.

Parochial Registers. - The parish registers are now regularly kept, - they are not voluminous. The baptismal register goes back to 1682; that of marriages to 1784; the session record to 1783; the former session records are lost.

There is a history of the parish in manuscript, which, I believe, is now in the Advocates' Library. It was written by the late Sir John H. Dalrymple, father of the present Baronet. The religious house at Cousland, formerly mentioned, was burnt by Somerset when he invaded Scotland with a powerful army, to enforce the marriage of the beautiful Queen Mary with the young King of England.

The lands of Cakemoir, though disjoined from Cranston by the parish of Crichton intervening, belong to this parish. The ancient part of the mansion house of Cakemoir consists of a square tower, four storeys high, with bold projecting battlements surrounding the roof. This building, still entire and inhabited, is doubtless of great antiquity. The extraordinarily thick and massive walls, as well as the style of architecture, shew the early age in which it was built. Though there is no certain information, when, or by whom it was erected, there is little doubt that it must have been by the Wauchopes of Cakemoir, for they appear to have held the lands at least for 300 years, before they were purchased by the present proprietor, Mr Mackay of Blackcastle. In the tower there is an apartment called Queen Mary's room, which, it is said,

that unfortunate Princess occupied, after having escaped, disguised in man's apparel, from the Castle of Borthwick, when that fortress was invested in June 1567, by Lord Home and his confederates, and before she went to join her husband Bothwell, at Dunbar. This tradition seems well founded. Various documents show that the lands in the immediate neighbourhood formed part of the Lordship of Crichton, which, at the time referred to, belonged to Bothwell, Queen Mary's husband; and that the Wauchopes of Cakemuir were Bothwell's vassals, consequently were designed, according to the custom of that age, his servitours or servants.

Modern Buildings. - These are, Oxenford Castle, the magnificent seat of General Sir John H. Dalrymple, on the west bank of the Tyne, the grounds around which are very picturesque; Prestonhall, the splendid mansion of William Burn Callender, Esq.; on the opposite bank Chesterhall House, rather an old building, also belonging to Sir John H. Dalrymple, Bart. An elegant Gothic church, of freestone, was erected in 1825; and a very elegant manse, of freestone, in the manor style, was built in 1830.

III. - POPULATION.

According to Dr Webster's report, the population amounted to 725; in 1792, it was 889; in 1831, 1030. The increase is partly owing to the improved state of agriculture, the farmers being obliged to employ a greater number of hands, and partly to an additional number of colliers being required. The number of the population residing in villages is about 417, the rest reside in the country. The average number of recorded baptisms for the last seven years is 18, of marriages 7. There is no record kept of the deaths.

The average number of persons under 15 years of age, is	428
betwixt 15 and 30,	279
30 and 50,	185
50 and 70,	102
upwards of 70,	36
The number of individuals of independent fortune,	5
landed proprietors of rental L. 50, and upwards,	4
unmarried men, bachelors, and widowers, upwards of 50 years of age, is supposed to be about	10
The number of unmarried women upwards of 45 is about	12
The average number in each family is	4½

There are 2 fatuous persons in this parish.

Number of illegitimate births within the last three years, 4.

Character of the People. - The people in general are cleanly, industrious in their habits, and content with their circumstances; they enjoy, in a reasonable degree, the comforts and advantages of society; are commonly well-behaved, and pay attention to the public ordinances of religion. The principal part of their food consists of oatmeal and potatoes. Poaching in game does not prevail to any great extent, so far as known to me.

IV.- INDUSTRY.

Agriculture. - It was in this parish that the first example of the drill husbandry was given. Sir John Dalrymple, great grandfather to the present Baronet, was the first person who introduced into Scotland the sowing of turnip, and the planting of cabbages, in the open field.

He, along with Mr Cockburn of Ormiston, established a society for the improvement of agriculture. All the parish is in cultivation, except 200 or 300 acres on the farm of Cakemuir. A mildew infects the banks of the Tyne, and sometimes does considerable damage to wheat and oats. There are about 250 acres under wood. The trees generally planted are larch, beech, fir, and elm, which are managed with great care.

The average rent of arable land is from L. 2, 10s. to L. 3 per acre. A cow's grass costs L. 6.

Wages. - Masons and wrights have about 15s. a week in summer, and 12s. in winter. Hinds and labourers have about 10s. in summer, and 9s. in winter.

Leases. - The general duration of leases is nineteen years. The farm buildings and enclosures are in very good condition. The mode of farming in general has been very much improved of late. The average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish may be stated, as nearly as can be ascertained, as follows:

3000 imperial bolls of potatoes at 7s. per boll.

150 acres of turnips, say at L. 5 per acre, consumed on the ground.

23,000 stones of hay.

600 acres of arable land in pasture, at L.6, per cow, and 11s. per sheep.

1800 bolls of wheat, old measure.

2400 imperial quarters of oats.

700 imperial quarters of barley.

350 imperial quarters of pease and beans.

The produce of gardens and orchards may be about L. 800.

The annual thinning of wood is about L. 2 per acre.

V.- PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

Market-Town, &c. - The nearest market-town is Dalkeith, which is distant about three miles and three-quarters. The villages in the parish are Cousland, Chesterhill, and Preston. The means of communication by turnpike roads are very good. There are two excellent turnpike roads which run through the parish, the one about a mile and a-half, the other a mile and three-quarters. Four public carriages travel daily on the high road, besides waggons. The fences are in a very good state of repair.

Within the last three years, two new bridges have been erected in this parish, by the trustees of the Dalkeith district of roads, for the purpose of shortening and improving the line of the London road by Cranston church, and the village of Pathhead. Cranston Dean Bridge is 46 feet in height, and consists of three semicircular arches of 17 feet span; the whole building is of ashler, and the piers being only 3 feet in thickness, the bridge has a very light appearance. Lothian Bridge, erected over the Tyne on the south boundary of the parish, is 82 feet in height, and consists of five semicircular arches of 50 feet span, surmounted by ten segment arches of 54 feet span, and 8 feet of rise. The piers are 8 feet thick, by 28 feet broad, but hollow in the centre, as are also the abutments. The whole building is of ashler, presenting a happy combination of durability and lightness, and adding much to the ornament of the adjoining grounds. The erection of the bridges was suggested by General Sir John Hamilton Dalrymple, Bart. convener of the trustees of the Dalkeith district of roads. They were designed by Thomas Telford, Esq. engineer, and built by Mr James Lees, mason.

On the same line of road an embankment over the Cotty-burn, about half a mile to the north of Cranston church, is now made, the extreme height of which is 54 feet. By these operations, the line of road from the north end of the village of Pathhead, to the top of Fordel bank, a distance of about two miles, is shortened fully 1200 yards; the access is rendered much easier, and many fine prospects of the beautifully wooded and highly cultivated country in the neighbourhood will be opened up.

Ecclesiastical State. - The situation of the parish church is about three miles and a half from the eastern extremity of the parish, and three-quarters of a mile from the western extremity. It was built at the sole expense of General Sir John Dalrymple in 1825, and is a very neat structure of freestone, in the Gothic form. It can accommodate between 300 and 400 persons. An elegant new manse, in the manor style, with very commodious offices, was built in 1830 at the sole expense of William Burn Callender, Esq. The extent of the glebe is 10 acres, 3 roods, 17 falls, 4 ells, Scotch measure; it is let for L. 2, 10s. an acre. The stipend is 17 chalders, with the usual allowance for communion elements. There is also about L. 20 arising from the interest of L. 550, which was given to the living by William Burn Callender, Esq. of Prestonhall, in lieu of the coal on the old glebe. Divine service at the Established Church is well attended; there are generally above 200 present. The average number of communicants is 254. The average annual amount of church collections is about L. 8. About 62 families belong to the Established Church; and about 86 are Dissenting or Seceding.

Education. - There are 3 schools in the parish, viz. the parochial school, an unendowed school in the village of Cousland, and a sewing-school; there are also 2 Sabbath schools. The branches of instruction generally taught are, English, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping. The salary of the parochial schoolmaster is the maximum. His fees may amount to L. 15. or L. 20 a year. He has also L. 3 a year as session-clerk. He has the legal accommodations. There are very few persons, indeed, above fifteen years of age, who cannot read or write. The people, in general, are alive to the benefits of education.

Library. - A parish library was instituted in 1830, which promises to be highly useful to all classes.

Friendly Society. - There is only one Friendly Society, which must be of great benefit to the working classes, and tends to lessen the number on the poor's roll.

Poor. - The average number of persons receiving parochial relief is about 22, who are paid, on an average, 4s. per month. The average annual amount of contributions at the church-doors is about L. 8. The hearse and mortcloth dues last year amounted to about L.3. There is L.16, 16s. 6d. of yearly interest arising from L. 357, left by some charitable persons in behalf of the poor, which capital was invested, some time ago, in the public funds. The rest of the money that is required for the support of the poor is made up by assessment upon the heritors and tenants. Some of the poor consider it degrading to seek relief from the parish funds, others do not. The assessment amounts to about L. 60 per annum.

Alehouses. - There are 8 alehouses, which have no good effects upon the morals of the people.

October 1839.

