

KEMBACK PARISH

CIVIL HISTORY.

Remains of tumuli may be traced in one or two places, and relics have at different times been discovered, both of Roman origin, and of feudal times, but not of any peculiar interest. There are in the grounds of Kemback, the remains of an old burying-ground, but there is no trace of its history or of any building connected with it.

Land-Owners, etc.--The number of heritors is five, of whom the principal is General Alexander Bethune of Blebo.

Parochial Registers -The earliest registers are those of baptisms and burials, which both commence in the year 1735. That of proclamations begins 1st October 1783. The records appear at one period to have been made irregularly ; and there is no account of the burials from 1738 to 1750. The only session book extant commences in the year 1732, and continues with some interruption to April 1775.

POPULATION.

Years	1755	1811	1821	1831	1841
Males	-	-	-	282	-
Females	-	-	-	369	-
Total	420	625	634	651	780

The following is a table of the baptisms, proclamations, and burials for the five years preceding 1841, extracted from the registers :-

Year	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	Aver.
Baptisms	22	15	18	20	22	19
Proclamations	1	6	9	10	6	6
Burials	17	26	22	13	13	18

Number of inhabitants residing in villages,	380
in country,	400
of inhabited houses, about	160
of heritors,	5

All of the heritors reside in the parish, and are possessed of incomes above L.50.

In addition to these, there are fifty-one persons holding feus of various values, as entered in the new valuation roll of the county.

INDUSTRY.

Wages.-The average wages of farm-labourers is, for men, 1s. 8d. ; and for women, 8d. per day.

The usual number of horses kept for agricultural purposes is about fifty-four. There are nine thrashing-machines, seven of which are worked by horse-power, one by steam, and one by water.

Manufactures.- There are two mills for spinning yarns in the parish, both,occupied by Mr David Yool, and both situated on the Kame or Ceres Burn: 1. Yoolfield Mill, built in 1839, driven by a water-wheel of 39 feet diameter, and 10 feet wide, assisted, when the water is scarce, by a steam-engine. There are now employed at it 98 women and girls, earning on an average 5s. per week; 7 wrights, at 12s. 6d.; 10 men, at 12s.; 7 boys, at 4s.; 6 labourers, at 9s. ; and 30 hecklers. 2. Blebo mills, further up the stream, worked by a water-wheel and steam-engine of tenhorse power, at which are employed 4 men at an average at 13s. per week; 3 boys, at 4s. ; and 37 females, at 10s. 3d.

At Blebo mills, there is also a meal-mill, a barley-mill, and a flax scutching-mill.

At Kemback mill, on the same stream , but further down, and also tenanted by Mr Yool, a wheel of sixteen horse power impels a meal-mill, a saw-mill, and a bone-mill, by which from 500 to 600 tons of bones are ground annually, and about 150 tons of rape-cake.

PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

In the year 1446, Robertus de Ferny and Mariota Olifert, his wife, lady of Kemback, granted to Gilbert de Galbrath, rector of the church of Kemback, and to his successors, four acres of the lands of Kemback with three cows' grass, and one horse's grass for ever, to be held on condition of the rector being always bound to say two masses weekly in the said church, for them, their parents, and benefactors, " purgatorii poenas demollire, et fidelium animas in paradisi gaudiis collocare." The deed and confirmation by the Bishop of St Andrews is witnessed by James, abbot of the monastery of Lundoris ; John, archdeacon of St Andrews ; Hugo Kennedy, chaplain of St Andrews; John Beatoun, rector of Dalry; and rector of the University of St Andrews ; John de Balfour, vicar of Lynlytholk; James Treyle de Malgaske; Thomas de Wemyss de Myrtyn ; James Butellere de Rungally; Alexander do Forsith de Nydy, and others.

The following is a list of the ministers of the parish since the Reformation. The three first in the list were masters of St Salvador's, and ex officio ministers of Kemback -

1.	Mr William Ramsay was minister in 1566; died 1570.
2.	Mr James Martin was minister in 1567.
3.	Mr David Monypenny in 1578; resigned in 1595.
4.	Mr George Nairn, admitted 1596, translated to Kennoway 1604.
5.	Mr David Monypenny, who resumed the charge 1604, at the desire of the congregation, who petitioned the Presbytery to that effect on Mr Nairn's translation. He was deposed for fornication, October 7, 1617.
6.	Dr David Monro, admitted 1618; translated to Kilconquhar, 1628.
7.	Mr John Barrow, admitted 1628; conformed to Presbytery 1638; demitted 1648.
8.	Mr David Patton, admitted July 11th 1648; translated to Kettins, June 19th 1650.
.	(Vacant from 1650 to 1656.)
9.	Mr John Wardlaw, admitted July 2d 1656; deposed 1662.
10.	Mr Robert Glassford, admitted 7th September 1644 translated to Kilmeny 1667.
11.	Mr John Christison, June 30th 1699.
12.	Mr George Landells, admitted June 4, 1674; translated to Cupar 1682.
13.	Mr Alexander Edward, admitted February 22, 1682 outed 1689.
.	(Vacant from 1689 to 1700.)
14.	Mr Alexander Anderson, admitted 1700.
15.	Mr William Cunningham, admitted March 1703.
16.	Mr Alexander Walker, admitted March 1736.
17.	Dr James Macdonald, the present incumbent, admitted 1781.

It is worthy of remark, that only two inductions have taken place since 1703, a period of 139 years, and only one since 1736; Mr Walker having been minister of the parish fifty-five, and the present venerable incumbent the long period of sixty-one years.

The present church was opened for public worship in May 1814, and cost about L. 700. The manse was built in 1801.

The average Yearly amount of collections in the church for the last five years is L. 17, 3s. 5d.

Education.-There is one unendowed school besides the parochial school ; the number of scholars at both together averaging from 70 to 80. There is also a girl's school at Kemback mill, partly supported by ladies in the parish.

The parochial teacher has the full legal salary ; but the present incumbent, being incapacitated from performing his duties, the heritors at present employ another teacher in his place at a salary of

L.14 per annum. He states his annual profit from fees at L. 16; and he has also about L. 3 as session-clerk. The common branches of elementary education only are taught, there being but one pupil taking lessons in Latin.

Poor.-The number of poor regularly supplied is from 15 to 20. The amount of voluntary assessment is about L.11, 10s., besides which the session possess a fund bequeathed by one of the family of Blebo. amounting to L. 250.

Collections, L. 17, 3s. 5d. ; assessment, L. 11, 10s. ; interest of fund, L.10-L.38, 13s. 5d.

Rev. J. MacDonald (February 1843.)