

TORRYBURN PARISH

CIVIL HISTORY.

There is no record, apparently, of the time when either Torrie or Crombie was first erected into a parish. The earliest notice of the former, which we have seen, is in a list of parishes said to have been drawn up in the reign of King William the Lion, quoted in a recent publication from Sibbald's History of Fife. Crombie appears to have been dependent on the Abbey of Culross. In the "Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland," Torrie and Crombie are noticed as separate parishes in the years 1581 and 1586, and it is thought that their union was effected towards the close of the same century. One of the first notices in the session records is an intimation, of date June 21st 1629, that "the session convened at the kirk of Crombie, appointed ane stent for repairing the kirk of Crombie, extending to 30 lb., to be paid by parishioners." But there is nothing in the record to enable us to, ascertain whether that church was then, or afterwards, used for public worship.

By the session records, it appears that there was a school in Torryburn in the earlier part of the seventeenth century ; for, June 17th 1632, Alexander Rae was "discharged from teaching bairns in the parish of Torrie ;" and, April 28th 1633, William Duddingstone was "received to read in the kirk before sermon, and to teach the bairns to read and write." In 1644, "the schoolmaster was found unfit to teach such a number of bairns as comes to school," and an assistant teacher was in consequence appointed. The elders appear to have gone through the parish, from time to time, "to gather money, to pay the master's house-mail and schoolhouse;" and, July 7th, 1644, mention is made of a "bond betwixt schoolmasters and session, subscribed by so many as could wreat, in name of the rest, except by Johne Dalgliesh." The fees of poor children were paid by the session, that there might be no excuse for absence from school. In illustration of the interest taken by the church at that period in the cause of education, we give the following extract from the record : "March 18th 1649, the schoolmaster being inquired if the bairns attend the school, he complained that manie faythers did withdraw their children, and the names of the bairns' faythers that were absent were given in to the session." They were "ordained to be summoned again the nixt day." And accordingly,-" March 25th 1649, compeared the faythers of the bairns that were withdrawn from the school, and promised to send them to the school owre the nixt week without faile." Whenever there was a falling off in school attendance, the elders appear to have visited their several quarters, to "deal" with the parents to send their children to school, and to keep them there as long as possible, instead of sending them away to "the herding." In 1655, there appear to have been four schools in the parish, one of which was in Torry or Newmill, and another in "Crumbietoune." And, about this time, "it was the desire of some that their bairns might he taught the Latin tounge."

While the record proves that great efforts were made by the kirk-session to promote the cause of education, so also to see that family worship was observed, that the Sabbath was sanctified, and that drunkenness, swearing, evil speaking, and lewdness were discouraged. Offenders were fined, and publicly rebuked before the congregation.

In 1643, " the Covenant was read and explained;" and, December 10th 1648, " the Covenant was renewed, and solemnly sworn to by all, and subscribed to by as manie as could writt: the rest were desyred to come in upon Tuesday following, for subscribing the same by themselves, or by some at their desire." About this period, too, so memorable in the history of our fathers, there appears to have been great anxiety to wait upon religious ordinance. Thus, June 6th 1647, it is noticed " that the kirk was too little to contain the people of the parish" and that " hundreds were constrained to ly in the kirkyard in time of sermon, about the doors and windows." An application was in consequence made to the heritors, who enlarged the church accommodation by building an aisle. After the occupation of Scotland by Cromwell, the record exhibits complaints of " disorder," occasioned " by the troubles of the time." of disorder " by Englishmen," and " by English souldiers." And, October 16th 1653, the minister reports to the session, that there were in the parish " ignorant persons, scandalous livers, persons who had not attended diets of examination, and those who did not profess to keep family worship, in all near to 200 persons."

As illustrative of the spirit of our fathers about this period, the following public collections may be noticed, which were made in the parish between the years 1631 and 1658

1631	For the distressed Germans,	L.30 - 0 - 0 Scots
1632	For the captives of Dysart and Kirkaldy,	L.4 - 0 - 0
1643	For the captives of Inverkeithing, &c.	L.26 - 13 - 4
1647	For the distressed people in Argyle,	L.133 - 6 - 8
1647	For the bridge of Cramond, and the distressed persons recommended by the General Assembly,	L.36 - 0 - 0
1651	For prisoners at Newcastle,	L.49 - 0 - 0
1652	For Lieutenant Jardine,	L.6 - 0 - 0
1652	For " the desolate toune of Glasgow,"	L.40 - 0 - 0
1652	For the captives among the Turks,	L.10 - 0 - 0
1653	For soldiers, prisoners, and others,	L.26 - 0 - 0
1656	For the town of Edinburgh,	L.16 - 0 - 0
1656	For bursars,	L.4 - 0 - 0
1656	For pious uses,	L.5 - 6 - 0
1657	For , "the Grecians, and the toune of	L.22 - 0 -

	Anstruther,"	0
1658	For the town of St Andrews,	L.24 - 0 - 0

Under the Episcopal usurpation, during the reigns of Charles II, and James VI., the discipline appears to have been maintained with considerable strictness. None of the festivals or saints' days seem to have been observed; and the communion was dispensed on a Sabbath, and sometimes on two successive Sabbaths, by appointment of the session. The first Presbyterian minister after the Revolution, Mr Allan Logan, was ordained July 24, 1695. His session consisted of thirteen elders; and discipline continued to be exercised with a very searching strictness. During his incumbency, till he was translated to Culross, in 1717, many curious notices are to be found in the record. Under this head we may notice an oath of purgation, administered, in 1703, to one Curry, who had been accused of adultery, the appearance before the session, in 1705, of one Dr Sibbald, a physician, who appears to have been a very worthless character; and the examination, in 1704, of one Lillias Adie, accused of witchcraft, who afterwards died in the jail of Dunfermline, and was buried within the flood-mark between the villages of Torryburn and Torrie. Mr Logan's great hobby appears to have been the prosecution of witches; and, April 4, 1709, Helen Kay was rebuked before the congregation for having said that the minister " was daft," when she " heard him speak against the witches."

In 1697, a great mortality prevailed in the parish, the burials that year amounting to 114. It was a time of great scarcity all over the country; and the tradition is, that the people died in consequence of unwholesome food, and of an immoderate use of a particular kind of fish which they caught in the frith. Nothing is remembered of a more modern date that is worthy of notice. Only it may be noticed, that Torryburn appears to have been in its most flourishing state about sixty or seventy years ago. As a place of enterprise it never has recovered from the effects of the failure of the then proprietor of Crombie. The coal and salt works, which had previously been in full operation, were abandoned; and, in so far as a flourishing trade invests a locality with importance and interest, it must now be said of Torryburn, that it has seen better days.

POPULATION.

By referring to the average annual number of births and baptisms, the population may be estimated at 1250 in the year 1640; at 1800 in 1670; and at 1550 in 1680. During what may be considered to have been the most flourishing period of the history of the parish, between 1770 and 1780, the population by a similar reference, may be estimated at from 1800 to 1900 souls. In 1755, the return of the population made to Dr Webster was 1635; and, in 1792, it is stated in the former Statistical Account at 1600.

Table of the population, distinguishing the sexes:

Years	Males	Females	Souls
1801	580	823	1403
1811	654	807	1461
1821	639	804	1443
1831	612	824	1436
1836	643	851	1494

In the enumeration of 1836, seamen belonging to registered vessels are included; a class excluded from the Government enumerations of the four preceding periods. These are 18 in number. The actual increase of population since 1831 has been occasioned by the reopening of Torrie colliery, and the influx in consequence into the parish of 13 families of colliers, consisting of 65 souls.

Of the population in 1836, residing in villages, that of Torryburn was 655, of Torrie or Newmill, 394; of Crombie Point, 81; and of Crombie, 47.

average annual number of births and baptisms;

Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.
1635-40	46 1/2	1771-80	92 1/2	1811-20	40 1/10
1665-70	67	1781-90	64 9/10	1821-30	39 1/5
1671-80	57 9/10	1791-1800	51 3/10	1831-35	33 4/5
1763-70	63 7/8	1801-10	41 1/10	.	.

During the last thirty or forty years, the register is not complete; parents not unfrequently neglecting to have the names of their children inserted in it while, unhappily, there are families who are altogether indifferent about religious ordinances and whose children in consequence are unbaptized. Including those which have not been inserted in the register. the average annual number of births during the last seven years may be estimated at 48 or 50.

Average annual number of marriage contracts, including those where the man or where both parties were resident in the parish, but not those where the woman only was resident.

Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.
1635-40	9 1/2	1781-90	10 1/10	1821-30	8 2/5
1652-57	14 1/2	1791-1800	6 1/2	1831-35	10 4/5
1763-70	9 1/2	1801-10	5 2/5	.	.
1771-80	12	1811-20	6 4/5	.	.

Average annual number of burials :

Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.	Years	Average Annual No.
1696-1700	62 1/2	1741-50	34 9/10	1791-1800	36 3/5
1701-10	26 1/10	1751-60	39 9/10	1801-10	26 4/5
1711-20	42 3/10	1761-70	46 1/2	1811-20	25 3/5
1721-30	42 9/10	1771-80	44 9/10	1821-30	26 4/5
1731-40	40 1/2	1781-90	44 3/10	1831-33	32

N. B.- In 1697, a year of great scarcity, the number of burials was 114. State of the population in June 7, 1841:

	Houses Uninhabited	Houses Inhabited	Families	Males	Females	Total
Torryburn Village	8	107	152	231	371	602
Torry Village	6	97	107	166	245	411
Crombie Point Village	1	14	16	17	37	54
Country, North Part	1	34	39	82	82	164
Country, South Part	5	40	46	95	109	204
TOTAL	21	292	360	591	844	1435

Of the entire population, 1097 were born in the county of Fife, ; 310 in other parts of Scotland, 25 in England, 1 in Ireland, 1 of English parents abroad, and 1 of foreign parents abroad.

Of the 360 families in the parish, 52 consisted of 1 person in each, 58 of 2, 68, of 3, 45 of 4, 46 of 5, 38 of 6, 25 of 7, 18 of 8, 6 of 9, 1 of 11, 1 of 13, and 2 of 14 persons in each.

INDUSTRY.

Families chiefly employed in:

Years	Agriculture	Trade, Manufactures and Handicrafts	All Others
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1811	61	301	4
1821	65	284	3
1831	44	120	182

In 1836, the total number of persons of all ages belonging to the agricultural class was 359 ; to other classes, 1135.

In 1831, in the return made to Government, of the male population upwards of twenty years of age, there were, agricultural occupiers of the first class, 15 ; do. of the second class, 5 . agricultural labourers, 54 ; manufacturers or weavers, 63 ; retail trade and handicraft, 81 ; wholesale, capitalists, clergy, and professional, 7; labourers not agricultural, 44 ; all other males upwards of twenty years, 128; male servants upwards of twenty years, 3 ; female servants of all ages, 35. In 1831, of the males above twenty years of age employed in retail trade and handicraft occupations there were, carriers and carters 7, slaters 7, bakers 6, carpenters 6, sawyers 6, shoemakers 6, cabinet-makers 5, publicans 5, tailors 5, blacksmiths 4, masons 3, wheelwrights 3, grocers 3, butchers 2, millers 2, plasterers 2, house-painter 1, clock and watchmaker 1, drysalter 1, earthenware 1, cattle-doctor 1, maltster 1, shopkeeper 1, flax-dresser 1, wood-merchant 1.

The number of persons thus classified in the return to Government in 1831 is much the same now. A few of the weavers are employed in the damask manufacture, for which Dunfermline has long been celebrated; but most of them keep by the cotton manufacture for the Glasgow market. This last has long been a poor trade; but being easily learned, and the workman being his own master, it is generally preferred. The tambouring and sewing of muslin give employment to a considerable number of females. But there is not that briskness in any of these department, -, which would indicate a flourishing state of trade. The extensive salt and coal works, which at one time contributed to the industry of the parish, were given up in the latter part of the last century. One colliery only now remains, in which about thirty pickmen, and thirty labourers and others, are employed.

PAROCHIAL ECONOMY.

The nearest market-town is Dunfermline, distant about three miles from the eastern boundary of the parish, and four and one third from the parish church.

The villages are, Torryburn, Torrie or Newmill, Crombie Point, and Crombie, with a population respectively of 655, 394, 81, and 47.

By means of a private post from Dunfermline, letters and newspapers are regularly received. There are upwards of four miles of excellent turnpike road in the parish ; but some of the other roads are in bad condition, and during, the winter months, in many places almost impassable. This is a great inconvenience to several families, as it respects their attendance at church ; and

the evil has recently been aggravated, since the shutting up, by the proprietor of Torrie, of a footpath, which, from time immemorial, had been understood to be a kirk road. A similar road in another part of the parish was shut up several years ago by the then proprietor of Crombie. Along the turnpike road a stage-coach from Kirkaldy, by Dunfermline to Falkirk, communicating with Glasgow by the Forth and Clyde Canal, passes every lawful day; and, by means of a boat at Crombie Point, travellers have access to the steam-vessels that ply on the Forth between Edinburgh and Stirling.

ECCLESIASTICAL STATE;- The parish church, rebuilt in 1800, is in good condition, with the exception of one of the gables, which is rent from top to bottom. It is situated at the east end of the village of Torryburn, and is not inconveniently placed for the greater portion of the inhabitants ; 1135 of the population being distant from it not more than one mile, and 1289 not more than two miles. The number of sittings, allowing 18 inches to each, is 502, the occupancy of which was found, in 1836, to be engrossed by a total population of 818. Of the sittings, 214 were formerly let, besides others let in a smuggled way by some of the farmers. But it is believed that few, if any, will be let in future ; the people being convinced, since their attention was recently directed to the matter, that the imposition of seat rents is illegal. An end, it is hoped, has thus been put to what the minister regards, and has publicly denounced, as a system of ungodly merchandise. The church is by far too small for the parish.

The manse was built in 1768, and repaired about thirty years ago. Most of the apartments are small and inconvenient.

There is no Seceding or Dissenting place of worship in the parish. The great body of the people profess to adhere to the Established Church. In 1836, the religious profession of the parishioners, including children with their parents, was as follows

	Communicants	Total Adherents
Established Church	445	1332
Other Religious Denominations	73	160
Avowed Infidels	---	2
TOTAL	518	1494

Of those professing to be connected with other denominations than the Established Church, there were belonging to:

	Communicants	Total Adherents
United Secession	57	126
Relief	7	18

Original Burghers	6	10
Reformed Presbyterians	2	3
Episcopalians	1	2
Gallican or French Church	---	1
TOTAL	73	160

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is dispensed twice a year the average number of communicants being in winter 340, and in summer 370. There are two Sabbath schools, attended by about 60 children. In the church there are two diets of public worship all the year round ; and these, for the most part, are remarkably well-attended. We trust that an increasing value is being attached to public worship as a Divine ordinance. But, for a long period, the views, in regard to this, of a considerable part of the population in the west of Fife, appear to have been extremely low. Many seem never to have thought of attending public worship, unless as hearers or spectators on a communion Sabbath. This must have been the case in Torryburn during the earlier part of the last century, when, with a population greater than at present, there were no Dissenters. So, also, it must have been in the adjoining parish of Dunfermline, where, before the Secession took place, the only place of worship was the old parish church, capable of accommodating a congregation of from 1200 to 1400, while the population of that parish was then about 8000.

There are no regularly constituted societies for religious purposes. A few individuals contribute to defray the expenses of a monthly distribution of tracts. The number of copies distributed annually is about 3400. Yearly collections are made in aid of the General Assembly's schemes for promoting the cause of Christ. These in 1839 were, for colonial churches, L. 3; for church extension, L. 3, 2s. ; for education, L. 3, 8s; for the India mission,

L.4, 16s.; for the Jews, L. 5, 4s. ; in all, L. 19, 12s. ; besides L.14 contributed by individuals to particular exertions in connection with the Church Extension scheme.

EDUCATION:-Besides the parochial school there are three others. Two of these are partly sewing schools, taught by females. The instruction in the parochial school consists of English reading and grammar, writing, arithmetic, geography, and Latin when required. The schoolmaster is qualified, in addition, to give lessons in Greek and French. His salary is L. 34, 4s. 4 1/2d. The fees, with other emoluments, may amount, to L. 46. The house provided for him is far from commodious. The school room, which is merely rented by the heritors, is unworthy of the parish. The number of children attending the several schools in the parish may be about 140. The number of children between five and fifteen years of age, who have been taught to read, is 351 ; and taught to write, 194. The total number attending school, including, those who frequent schools in the adjoining parishes, is about 210. There are three males and three females, grown up, who admit that they have never been taught to read. On the whole, the benefits of education do not appear to be so generally appreciated as could be wished ; and by many the school fees are very irregularly paid. There is a small parochial library, but not much of a taste for reading.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES: . A most useful institution of this description is " the dead-box," out of which the contributors receive a sum at the death of any member of their families to defray funeral expenses ; L.6 at the death of a grown-up person, and L.2 at the death of a child.

POOR AND PAROCHIAL FUNDS: .-During the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, the average annual amount of collections for the poor at the parish church was L.36, 4s. 9d. ; of voluntary assessment by heritors, . L.150, 11s. 1d.; and of the sum arising from mortcloths, L. 1, 15s. 8d. The extravagance of the fees for mortcloths had the effect, about ten years ago, of leading to the formation of a private mortcloth society, which is very generally countenanced. The average number of paupers on the permanent roll is 33, and the average amount of the sums distributed amongst them annually, L.141, 14s. 1d. The average annual expenditure on occasional paupers is L.3, 7s., and on the education of poor children, L.6. The highest annual rate of relief to paupers on the permanent roll is L.7, and the lowest, L.2, 12s. Coals and soup are distributed annually, in addition, to the amount of about L.31 ; and several poor children are educated at the expense of the Hon. Mrs Colville of Ochiltree, the lady of one of the heritors, to whose bounty in articles of clothing also many of the poorer parishioners are indebted. Generally speaking, the reverse of a spirit of reluctance to receive parochial aid is manifested ; and, in the villages of Torryburn and Torrie, one family in six receives occasional charity in one shape or another.

FAIRS.-There is one held annually at the west end of Torryburn village, on the second Wednesday of July. No business is now transacted beyond the sale of confections and crockery. in the evening, there is usually a horserace.

INNS, ALEHOUSES ETC;-Of these, there are not fewer than 14, not to mention another, which, although not within the parish, is within a hundred yards of its western extremity. A year or two ago, the number within the parish was eighteen ; and for the diminution which has since taken place, and, which, it is hoped, will go on progressively as the holders of licenses die out or remove, we are mainly indebted to the enlightened interference of Mr Beveridge of Inzievar.

Drawn up in 1841, Revised January 1843. (Rev. Thomas Doig)