

*This is the Statistical Account of the Parish from 1835.
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NEW STATISTICAL ACCOUNT : PARISH OF BLANTYRE : JULY 1835

PARISH OF BLANTYRE

Presbytery of Hamilton, Synod of Glasgow and Ayr

By Rev James Anderson, Minister

Topography and Natural History – The name of this parish is probably derived from the Gaelic, a warm retreat, - which is perfectly descriptive of the village of Blantyre, and more or less of the whole parish.

Boundaries – The parish of Blantyre is a long stripe of land, stretching nearly in a direct line from north to south. From Haugh-head on the Clyde, near Daldowie in the north to the burn between Crottangram and East Crutherland in the south, exactly 6 miles and 2 furlongs in length. The breadth is very variable: the narrowest part at Blantyre Craig, is about 3 furlongs; the widest part between Bothwell Bridge on the east, and Greenhall on the west, 2 ½ miles; the average breadth is about 1 mile. It is bounded by the parish of Glasford on the south; Hamilton and Bothwell on the east; Old Monkland on the north and Cambuslang and Kilbride on the west. It contains 5.60 square miles, 3307 Scots acres, and 4170.732 imperial acres. It is commonly divided into 24 ploughgates, of from 80 to 100 acres each.

Climate – The climate is nearly the same as in the neighbouring parishes; the average quantity of rain falling has been well ascertained both by rain-gages kept in this parish, and in other places immediately on its border. From a rain-gage kept by R D Alston Esq. of Auchinraith, we have the following results: From April 1, 1833 to March 31 1834, 35 ½ inches; from March 31, 1834 to April 1, 1835, 26 ⁴/₅ inches. During the months of April, May, June and July of this year, we have 6 ⁷/₈ inches. As compared with a rain gage kept at Castle Toward, the rain falling here is nearly one-half less.

Hydrography – The principal streams in the district are the Clyde and the Calder. The Clyde enters this parish a little below Bothwell Bridge, and forms the boundary between it and Bothwell for upwards of three miles. At the above point, it seems at some former period to have forced its way through the opposing sandstone rocks, which here nearly approximate each other. At the ferry-boat at Blantyre works, the Clyde is 79 yards broad, and immediately opposite the works, 10 ½ yards. Its average velocity is from one to three miles per hour. On 25th July, the thermometer being 76^o in the shade, its temperature was 68 of Fahrenheit. The Clyde is here a majestic river, of considerable depth, and of a darkish colour, gliding smoothly and silently along between the lofty wooded banks and beautiful and richly adorned undulating fields of Bothwell and Blantyre. Immediately below Bothwell Bridge, the banks present a thin sprinkling of wood, with occasional orchards. About a mile

and a half farther down, in a snug retreat, almost concealed by the rising grounds on either side, the lofty walls of Blantyre works appear; where a busy population, and the rushing noise of machinery, contrast strangely with the silence and repose of the surrounding scenery, and seem as if intended to bring into competition the works of nature and of art. The lofty woods of Bothwell on the east and of Blantyre on the west, with the magnificent red walls and circular towers of the old castle of Bothwell, and the shattered remains of Blantyre priory on the opposite side, on the summit of a lofty rock, add greatly to the beauty of the scenery a little farther on. The banks begin to decline before they reach Daldowie, and the river leaves the parish amidst fertile fields and wide expanding haughs. The whole, on a summer day, when the sun is shining, is inexpressibly beautiful. The Calder rises in Elrig Muir in Kilbride, and is at first called Park-burn, afterwards Calder water, and at length Rotten Calder. It enters this parish at the point where it is joined by Rottenburn, and, except about a mile at the place where the Basket ironstone mines &c. come in, forms the western boundary till it falls into the Clyde in the north at Turnwheel, near Daldowie. There are several falls or cascades in its course, and its banks are all along richly and romantically wooded. It may be from sixty to eighty feet wide, and runs on a shallow gravelly bed, and not unfrequently on the bare rock. There are other three streams in the parish, besides their feeders. The Red burn rises in the farm of Park, in the west, and falls into the Clyde a little below Bothwell Bridge. A second burn rises at Shott, a little to the south-west of the manse, and a third at Newmains – both falling into the Clyde.

The parish is in general well supplied with water. At Blantyre works, there is a well 42 fathoms deep, supplied with so copious a spring, that an unbroken and never-failing stream of water gushes through a pipe at the surface of the earth summer and winter. This pipe discharges 20 gallons of water per minute; 1200 in an hour; and the enormous quantity of 28,800 gallons in twenty-four hours. There is a mineral spring at Park, on the west side of the parish, which has long been held in high repute for sore eyes, scorbutic disorders, and a variety of other complaints. The water is sulphureous or hepatic, and tastes like rotten eggs. Besides sulphur, it contains a considerable quantity of the muriate and sulphate of lime. When taken at the well it is very strong; but when carried far, if not well-corked, the hepatic gas evaporates so completely as to render it scarcely distinguishable from common spring water. Many years ago, when sea-bathing and steam-boats were less frequent than at present, this well was resorted to by many respectable families from Glasgow and its neighbourhood. Several other hepatic springs appear on the banks of the Calder, particularly one at Long Calderwood, on the outskirts of this parish, on the lands which formerly belonged to Dr John Hunter of Loudon. Hard or mineral water is chiefly found where coal, iron, and lime prevail; and calcareous and chalybeate springs are also abundant. The average temperature of the best springs here is about 50°.

Geology and Mineralogy – The geognosy of the parish of Blantyre is similar to that of other neighbouring parishes. Owing to the break in the coal formation, which occurs between Hamilton and Quarter, none of the principal seams of coal are wrought for many miles to the north of that particular spot. Coal has, however, been wrought on a small scale at Calderside and Rottenburn; but there are only some thin seams, found beneath the seventh bed of coal, or sour-milk coal, as it is termed by the miners, all of a lean quality, and generally much interlaced with laminae of stone, blaes, and shiver. As a general rule it may be remarked, that the coal is always beneath the freestone, and the limestone beneath the seventh seam of coal, or about 73 fathoms below the upper coal. In this part of the country, however, the limestone generally comes to the surface after the other metals above it run out. Limestone is now wrought at Auchentiber, towards the upper or southern end of the parish.

There are two seams, one about 20 inches thick, and a second 3 feet thick. The space between these seams is filled up with 18 or 20 inches of blaes or pullet, full of shells and other organic remains. The upper seam is about 28 feet from the surface. It is dark brown limestone, excellent for the mason and agriculturist, but too coarse for plaster. Limestone has also been wrought on a small scale at Calderside. Ironstone abounds in this parish. At Blackcraig, near Calderwood, on the borders of the parish, seventeen seams of ironstone may be counted, the one above the other; a sight, it is believed, not to be met with anywhere else in the world. Ironstone is wrought in the Basket mines, the mouths of which are in Kilbride; but the beds of minerals run into the parish of Blantyre. The upper seam, called No. 1, consists of a small band about 6 inches thick. No 2 is about 7 inches thick, and, like all the other seams, lies in small bands or joints like flags of pavement. Between this and the upper band the seams of limestone above alluded to occur, and about 10 feet of blaes (slate clay and bituminous shale), full of ironstone balls. No.3 is from 4 to 14 inches thick; its average thickness may be about 10 inches. There is a good seam of balls between this seam and No. 2, and from 4 to 6 feet of blaes. Beneath No. 3 there is a seam called the Lunker band, which consists of great balls lying in no regular position. But the richest seam of all is that called the Whitestone, 25 fathoms below No. 3; like it, this seam lies in joints, and is of the same thickness. Clay dikes intersect the mines in different directions, which always throw the metals up or down, in proportion to their thickness. A white sort of substance, like cranreuch or hoar-frost, which almost melts away when grasped in the hand, is also occasionally found adhering to the roof and sides of the mines. This is an efflorescence of alumina, and is found in various parts of Europe in aluminous schist. The section of rocks seen at Calderside consists, first, of the upper or anvil band of limestone, about 14 inches thick. It derives its name from the lime rock being dislocated throughout, and apparently weather worn, so as to form blocks resembling a blacksmith's anvil, and some of them are not unlike the skeleton of a horse's head. These are probably some of the figured stones alluded to in the last Statistical Account. Below this band, there is a stratum of 10 feet of blaes (slate clay and bituminous shale); this is succeeded by the middle seam of limestone 2 feet thick, beneath which is 3 feet of blaes, (slate clay and bituminous shale) overlaying the under bed of limestone, which is four feet thick. There are a great many petrifications in the blaes, of which hundreds may be picked up. In the waste beside the mines where the blaes lies mouldering away under the influence of the sun and air, they occur in myriads, and are carried away in great numbers by the curious. These organic forms belong principally to the Coralloides, such as *Astroitae*, *Millepores*, *Eschare*, *Cornu Ammonis* &c, also occur. *Entrochi* are also in abundance, and are here termed limestone beads. When joined together, so as to assume a lengthened circular form, they are called *Entrochi*; when found separately, as they generally are, they are called *Trochitse*. Associated with the above beds, there are about twelve inches of a dark coloured ferruginous stone containing just so much lime as to make it valuable for Roman cement. It was analyzed some time ago, and the result proved so satisfactory as to induce a scientific gentleman in the neighbourhood to commence the manufacture of this cement, which is said to be superior to any produced in England. This stone, when submitted to the fire, falls down like gray ill-burned limestone. Not far from Calderside, a great curiosity is to be seen in the shape of part of a tree rising out of the bed of the river completely silicified. The tree inclines to the bank which the Calder had laid bare. Part of the stem only remains in an upright growing position, from which proceed two root-shoots dipping into the bed of the stream, each from 13 to 14 inches in diameter. The tree does not belong to the palm family, as is often the case in such instances, but appears to have been an elm or ash. From a specimen carefully detached, it seems to be formed of a close-

grained whitish sandstone, containing small specks of mica, and pretty closely dotted with minute spots of oxide of iron, about the size of needlepoints. Some fields adjacent to the church are of a fine rich loam. From the church to the Clyde, towards the north-east, the soil is in general a strong deep clay; and when properly cultivated is exceedingly fertile. At the northern extremity, which is surrounded by the Clyde, and where the banks become low, there is a flat which consists chiefly of a sandy soil. From the church, towards the south end of the parish, the soil is clay, but more light and free than in the lower part, and is in general of a very poor quality. In advancing farther from the church, towards the southern extremity, which is the highest land in the parish, the soil becomes gradually more of a mossy nature, and at last terminates in a deep peat moss.

Zoology – About three years ago a new fly appeared in this and some neighbouring parishes, which has become the terror of equestrians, and of the groom and hostler, on account of the severe wounds it inflicts on the horse, making him plunge and start, and often fly off at full gallop in spite of all the exertions of the rider to restrain him. It is of the dipterous order, and very much resembles the common house-fly. The wings are marked with iridescent spots and the back of the abdomen is of a light brownish colour. It is extremely vivacious, and when caught is always full of blood. It is probably the *Stomoxys culcitraus* of Fabricius. In this district it is called the cholera or new horse-fly, having first appeared in the year when the above disease began to commit its frightful ravages.

Botany - In the Clyde, that rare and elegant plant *Senecio Saracenicus* may be seen growing in great profusion along with *Convolvulus sepium*, *Tanacetum vulgare* &c. *Melica uniflora* and *Gagea lutea* are found in the woods on the Clyde; *Verbascum thapsus* at Calderwood; *Vinca major et mino*, *Geranium phceum*, *Aquilegia vulgaris*, *Veronica Montana* *Helleborus viridis*, *Draba hirsatum*, and *Ophrys ovata*, at Blantyre priory. *Paris quadrifolia* has been found on the banks a little above Calderwood, and *Malva sylvestris* is common in the woods about Crossbasket.

II - Civil History

The barony of Blantyre belonged anciently to the Dunbars of Enteckin. At the time of the Reformation, the Priory of Blantyre, like other religious establishments, was suppressed, and the benefice, which was but small, given by James VI to Walter Stewart, son to the Laird of Minto, one of his servants, and treasurer of Scotland. He was first commendator of the priory, and in 1606 was created Lord Blantyre. The barony itself was purchased by the first Lord Blantyre, and was almost all feued out in small parcels, which still hold of his descendants. The land in this parish is now distributed among forty-six heritors. The rental of the highest is L.300, and of the lowest L.5 per annum.

Eminent Men – The late John Miller Esq., Professor of Law in the University of Glasgow, had his residence at Millheugh in this parish, and is buried in the churchyard at Blantyre.

James Hutton of Calderbank, Thomas McCall of Craighead, and R D Alston of Auchinraith, have also handsome country seats.

Parochial Registers – The parochial register seems to be entire from the year 1667.

Antiquities – The principal antiquity in the parish worthy of notice is the ruins of Blantyre Priory. These are situated on a lofty rock on the banks of the Clyde, exactly opposite the ruins of Bothwell Castle. Both it and the castle are built on a fine-grained redcoloured sandstone rock, like that out of which Cadzow Castle at Hamilton has been constructed. The priory is now almost entirely fallen into decay, only one vault remaining entire, a couple of gables, with a fire-place, and part of the outer walls. It seems however, to have been the occasional residence of Lord Blantyre so late as the time of Hamilton of Wishaw, who wrote his “Description of the Sheriffdom of Lanark” about the beginning of the last century. Little account can now be given of the origin and history of this establishment. It seems to have been a cell of the Abbacy of Jedburgh* (and founded by Alexander II) to which these monks generally retired in the time of war with the English. It appears that Friar Walter of Blantyre was one of the Scotch commissioners appointed to negotiate the ransom of King David Bruce, taken prisoner in the battle of Durham 1346. Frere William, Prior of Blantyre, is a subscriber to Ragman’s Roll. Walter Stewart, Commendator of this place, was Lord Privy Seal in the year 1595, and shortly after treasurer, upon the Master of Glamis’ dismissal. This is the same who was afterwards created Lord Blantyre.

It is mentioned in the last Statistical Account of this parish, that urns have been dug up at different times in several parts of the parish; and that some of them were found in a large heap of stones. In the centre of the heap, square stones were placed so as to form a kind of chest, and the urns were placed within it. They contained a kind of unctuous earthy substance, and some remains of bones were scattered around them. Strong impressions of fire were also evident on many of the stones. About three years ago, a stone coffin of the above description, with an urn standing in one corner of it was turned up at Shott, near the parish church. A skull almost entire was found in it, and nearly the whole of the teeth are in good preservation. The urn was of baked earth, seemingly only sun-dried, five and a half inches high, and the same across the mouth. It was partially ornamented with rude impressions made on the clay when soft. Fragments of six larger urns, more highly ornamented, and better burned, were found in other parts of the field. This field is now called Arches or Archer’s Croft. Stone coffins have also been found at Lawhill, Greenhall &c. There is a singular conical hill at Calderside, which goes by the name of the Camp Know. It is 600 feet in circumference, and was anciently surrounded by a ditch. Near the same spot, a subterranean structure made of flags like the sole of an over, was lately discovered.

**Spottiswoode says it was a cell of Holyroodhouse. In Bagimont’s Roll it was only taxed L.6 : 13s : 4d. The Archibshiop of Glasgow latterly presented the Prior to his living.*

Population in	1755	-	-	-	496
	1801	-	-	-	1751
	1811	-	-	-	2092
	1821	-	-	-	2630
	1831	-	-	-	3000

By a census taken of the landward part of the parish about three years ago, (excluding Blantyre works), it appears that in the village of Blantyre there were 50 families and 255 individuals. A hundred of these were under fifteen year of age. In Old Place and Hunthill there were 23 families and 112 individuals, of whom 43 were under fifteen years of age. Barnhill contained 43 families and 213 individuals, of whom 92 were under fifteen. There were 24 families in Auchinraith, and 106 individuals, 52 of whom were under fifteen. In the country part of the parish, there were 593 souls, of whom 285 were males and 308 females; about 260 of these were under fifteen years of age. The whole population of the rural district, including villages, was 1279 souls, of whom 624 were males and 655 females.

The proclamations of marriage	in 1832 were	- 30	The births in 1832 were	- 61
	in 1833	- 32	in 1833	- 70
	in 1834	- <u>23</u>	in 1834	- <u>63</u>
	Average	28	Average	64

No register of deaths has been kept. The number of proprietors of land of L.50 and upwards is 28. Number of families by last census 514.

Number of families chiefly employed in agriculture	49
employed in trade, manufactures, and handicrafts	326

IV – Industry

Agriculture – The agriculture here is of a mixed sort, partly grain, and partly dairy. The ground is nearly all arable; not more than 500 acres remaining constantly in waste or in pasture. Blantyre moor was anciently a common, but by an agreement between Lord Blantyre and his vassals it was subdivided and greatly improved. The peat on this moor becoming dry and unfit for use, it was exchanged for Edge moss almost fifty years ago, where turf or peat for fuel is cut when required. There are four or five acres of undivided common at Blantyre farm, and a few other small patches scattered in different parts of the parish. The parish in general is richly and tastefully wooded, but no plantations of great extent occur.

Rent of Land – The average rent of land per acre is L.1; but some pieces of land let as high as L.4 or L.5 per acre. The rental of the parish is L.2579.

Husbandry - Very few sheep are kept, and the cows are almost entirely of the Ayrshire breed. The general duration of leases is nineteen years, but as most of the farmers have long tacks or feus of their lands, they are generally considered as lairds, and few leases of the above description, or to so large an amount, occur. Draining has been practised here to a great extent, and one individual has of late laid down 2500 tons of stones for that purpose. The

farm houses in general are superior to those in the neighbouring parishes. About 96 horses are kept in the parish, 450 cows; and 250 pigs.

Produce – Average gross amount of raw produce raised in the parish:

Produce of grain, hay, potatoes &c	L.4127
Pasture &c	1350
All other produce	<u>2260</u>
Total	L.7737

Manufactures – Blantyre Mills – The first mill at these works was erected in the year 1785, by the late Mr David Dale and his partner, Mr James Monteith, for the spinning of that kind of cotton yarn usually denominated water-twist. In 1791, another mill was erected for the spinning of mule-twist, both of which are driven by water power from the Clyde. The number of workers employed in the spinning mills is 458, and the total number of spindles in the mule and water-twist mills is 30,000. In the year 1813, a weaving factory was built containing 463 looms,¹ which is part driven by water and partly by steam power. At present, an extension of the looms is going forward, which will increase the number to between 500 and 600. The hours for the mill workers, five days in the week, are from six o'clock in the morning, to a quarter from eight in the evening, forty-five minutes being allowed for breakfast and one hour for dinner. On Saturday the workers only remain nine hours in the mill, making in whole sixty-nine working hours in the week.²

In addition to spinning and weaving, another branch of business has been carried on at these works for the last forty years, namely, the dyeing of Adrianople or Turkey red upon cotton yarn. It was the second work of the kind erected in Scotland, and the colours have long been celebrated for their richness and permanency.

The total number of males employed at all the works is 362; the number of females 553. The water power is estimated at 150 horse, the steam at 60, total, 210 horse power.

The village for the workers is contiguous to the works, and is pleasantly situated on a rising ground which overlooks the Clyde. The company, Messrs Henry Monteith and Company, erected a chapel seven years ago in connection with the Church of Scotland, sufficient to accommodate 400 sitters. A clergyman was appointed the following year, one-half of whose stipend is paid by the company, the other half by the sitters. The secular affairs of the chapel are conducted by a committee chosen annually, one-half of whom are Dissenters, the other half belonging to the Established church. The chapel is so arranged that during the week it is employed as a school-house. The schoolmaster is appointed by the company with a salary of L. 20, along with a free houses and garden. The rate of wages is regulated by the company. The average number of day-scholars is 136, and the average number of those at the evening class is 56.

The rapid increase of the population in this parish is entirely owing to the mills.

The people at these works are in general as healthy as their neighbours in other parts of the parish, many of them attaining a great age. This month, one the mechanics died aged ninety-four. There is an overseer at present in the service of the company, seventy-seven years of age, who has been employed forty-eight years within the walls of the mill. There

V – Parochial Economy

The village of Blantyre, where the church and manse stand is beautifully situated in a rich level country overtopped with tall trees, many of them of great age and beauty. It is 3 miles from Hamilton, 4 from Kilbride, 7 from Eaglesham, and 8 miles and 2 furlongs from Glasgow. There are in the parish about 3 miles of turnpike road, and 20 miles of parish roads, which are always kept in excellent repair.

Ecclesiastical State – The church was built in 1793, and is in pretty good repair. It affords accommodation for 360 sitters; but if galleries were erected it could accommodate 200 more. The chapel at the mills affords accommodation for 400 sitters. The manse was built in 1773, and underwent a thorough repair in 1823. It is now one of the best manses in Scotland. The glebe consists of about twelve acres, four at the manse and eight acres at Blantyre moor. The former is worth L.2 :10d, and the latter worth L1. per acre. The stipend is L.116 : 18s : 7d. in money, 86 bolls, 1 firloft, 1 peck, 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ lippie of meal, and 10 bolls, 3 firlots, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lippie of barley, including communion elements. The average number of communicants is 420, of whom 144 are heads of families. About L.10 are usually drawn at the church door at the time of the sacrament, which is distributed in the usual way among the aged and infirm. There is no dissenting chapel in the parish. Exclusive of the population at the Blantyre Works, there are 6 families, including 30 individuals belonging to the Relief, and 2 families, including 7 individuals, belonging to the Roman Catholics. Divine service at the parish church is well attended. Lord Blantyre is patron. The average weekly collection at the church door is 9s.

Education – Besides the parish school in the village, in which all the usual branches of education are taught, there are two English schools, one at Auchinraith, and another at Hunthill, and also a school for females. The number of scholars attending these schools is 123, twenty-five of whom attend the female school. The salary of the schoolmaster is the minimum, being about L. 26. Amount of parochial schoolmaster's fees per annum is L.20. All children at the proper age are taught to read, except a few belonging to the Roman Catholic persuasion at the mills.