

PARISH OF DENNY (COUNTY OF STIRLING)

Rev Mr Thomas Fergus

Name, Situation, &c. – The origin of the name Denny is unknown. The parish lies in the county and presbytery of Stirling, and synod of Perth and Stirling. It is about 4 miles in length, and 2½ in breadth. The soil, about the town, or village of Denny, and indeed throughout the greater part of the parish, is dry and sandy; but in some places, it is wet, and has a good deal of clay in it. The air is reckoned pure and healthy, and many of the people attain a good old age. Some, however, are much troubled with rheumatic complaints; and fevers frequently prevail, and are often fatal.

Proprietors, Agriculture, &c. – A fourth part of the parish belongs to one great proprietor, and another has a considerable share of it. The rest is the property of about 100 smaller heritors, feuars, or portioners; many of whom cultivate their own lands. Of late years, the farmers make use of a good deal of lime, which they chiefly bring from the parish of Cumbernauld, and some from the parish of Dunipace. Oats are the grain usually sown, with some bear and pease, but no wheat. A good many potatoes, a quantity of flax, and some clover and rye-grass, are also raised.

Population – The population of the parish of Denny, in 1755, as returned to Dr Webster, was 1392 souls. The number is now reckoned about 1400. There are, at an average, 60 births, 20 burials, and more than 12 marriages each year.

Church, &c. – The Crown is patron. The stipend is 80 bolls in meal, and L.38 sterling, in money. The church, manse, and offices, are not in good repair. After the Secession began, more than one half of the inhabitants, at that time, became Seceders of the Antiburgher persuasion; and they have had, for upwards of 40 years, a meeting-house, at Loan-head, about two miles south from Denny. More than a third part of the people are still Seceders, of one denomination or another. A few are Cameronians. There are no Papists nor Episcopalians.

Miscellaneous Observations – There are no begging poor, belonging to the parish, but there are a number of house-keepers in indigent circumstances, who receive occasional supplies from the collections, made at the church-doors, on Sunday. The men are almost all engaged in husbandry, and the women generally in spinning. A number of boys and girls are employed at a print-field, and cotton-manufactory, in the neighbouring parish of Dunipace. A large tract of land here, is called Temple-Denny, which formerly belonged, it is said, to the Knights Templars, so famous for their crusades against the Saracens. The roads, through this district, in general, are in good repair. There is an abundance of stone for building; and coals are got in quantities, sufficient not only to supply the inhabitants, but also a good part of the neighbourhood. The Carron, which divides this parish from that of Dunipace, furnishes us with some trout. The great canal, between the Forth and the Clyde, which runs along the southern part of the parish, is also, in many respects, of great benefit to the people.