

CUMBRAY, an insular parish, containing the post town of Millport and the village of Newton, in Buteshire. It comprises the islands of Big Cumbray and Little Cumbray. These lie between the island of Bute and the coast of Ayrshire; and, in a general view, they are two oblongs, on a line with each other, and parallel to both Bute and the mainland. Big Cumbray is 3 miles east of Kingarth in Bute, and 1} mile west of the parish of Largs; and Little Cumbray is less than 2 miles east of the south-eastern extremity of Bute, and about # of a mile south of the southern extremity of Big Cumbray. The total parochial area is about 5,120 acres, of which about 3,000 are arable, and about 120 are under wood. The average rent of the arable land is from 15s. to 20s. per acre; but that of the rest is not more than from 2s. to 3s. The landowners are the Earl of Glasgow and the Marquis of Bute. The total yearly value of raw produce was estimated in 1840 at £5,846. Assessed property in

1860, £6,050. Population in 1831, 894; in 1861, 1,256, Houses, 207. The population in the summer season, however, in consequence of the influx of strangers for rustication and sea-bathing, is very much greater.

This parish is in the presbytery of Greenock and synod of Glasgow and Ayr. Patron, the Earl of Glasgow. Stipend, £159 4s. 8d.; glebe, £20 10s.

Schoolmaster's salary, £45, with fees. The parish church originally stood at Kirktown, a quondam village, now quite extinct, about } a mile from Millport, and was rebuilt there in 1802, with 380 sittings, but this being too small for the rapidly increasing population, a new church, of elegant form, with a handsome tower in front, and containing up" wards of 750 sittings, was built in 1837, on a rising ground, immediately behind Millport. There is a Free church, whose receipts in 1865 amounted to £462 19s. 53d. There is an Episcopalian church, called St. Andrew's chapel. There is likewise an Episcopalian Collegiate church, built in 1851, situated near the Priory, a seat of the Earl of Glasgow, and founded for a provost, a canon, and five honorary canons. There is also a Baptist place of worship. There are a Free church school, an Episcopalian school, and two schools for females. See Mittrorr.

CUMBRAY (Bia), the greater of the two islands of the parish of Cumbray. Its length, south-south-eastward, is about 34 miles; its breadth is about 2 miles; and its circumference is between 11 and 12 miles. Its immediate sea-board is a low flat beach; its ground thence is a periphery of steep banks, appearing at a little distance as if rising abruptly from the sea; and its interior is a congeries of hills, ascending gradually to a culmen of about 450 feet above sea-level, with a backbone called the Shoughends extending nearly from end to end of the island, and commanding a gorgeous panoramic view of the frith and its screens, from Ailsa and Kintyre to Cowal and the Clough. Two lochlets lie in a hollow contiguous to the very culmen, and send off thence a rivulet, large enough, with the aid of damming, to drive a corn-mill. The soil varies from fertile loam on the low grounds to thin moorish gravel on the hills. The whole island corresponds in geological structure to the old red sandstone district of Bute, and is a connecting link between that district and the adjacent mainland; and in a scientific view, it is chiefly interesting for the enormous trap-dykes with which it is traversed. "The most remarkable of these," says the New Statistical Account, " are two on the east side of the island, running nearly parallel, and from five to six hundred yards distant from each other. The one to the north-east measures upwards of 40 feet in height, 0nearly 100 in length, and in mean thickness from ten to twelve feet. The one to the southward is upwards of 200 feet in length, from 12 to 15 in thickness, and from 70 to 80 feet in height; and when viewed in a certain direction, exhibits the distant resemblance of a lion couching; hence it is sometimes called The Lion." These dykes are of a highly crystalline structure, and have withstood the effects of the atmosphere and of the sea; whilst the red sandstone on both sides of them, being more easily decomposed, has been wasted away.

The local name of these dykes is Rippel walls. They re-appear in Ayrshire, and traverse that county and the whole of the neighbouring parts of Galloway.

Big Cumbray is very interesting to the geologist and the botanist; and it would seem from the following curious extract from the minutes of the Privy council of Scotland, to have been at one time famous for its breed of hawks: “ February 2d, 1609, Sir William Stewart, capt. of Dumbartane castle, complains ‘ That Robert Hunter of Hunterston, and Thomas Boyd, provest of Inwyn, had gone to the Isle of Comra, with convocation of the leidges, and tane away all the hawks thereon.’ The lords of secret council declare, ‘That all the hauks quhilk bred on ye said ile do’ propriy belong to the king, and ocht to be furth cumand to his majeste, and that the capitane of Dumbartane castle intromet thare with yeirlie, and deliver the same to his majeste, and discharges the said Robert Hunter, and all vtheris, from middling tharewith.”

About the beginning of last century, according to the tradition of the island, there was a family of the name of Montgomery, who then possessed the greater part of Big Cumbray now belonging to Lord Glasgow, and had a mansion-house at Billikellet. Among the last of this family was Dame Margaret Montgomery, joint-patroness of the kirk, who, being on horseback at the green of the Largs, is said to have been thrown off amidst a crowd of people; but, being a woman of high spirit, she pursued the horse, and received a stroke of his foot, which proved instantly fatal. “The arms of this family”— it is stated in the Old Statistical Account—* are upon the end of the kirk, and were lately to be seen on a part of the ruins of Billikellet. About a quarter of a mile from Billikellet, there is a large stone set up on end: about 6 feet of it is above the ground. It appears to have been the rude monument of some ancient hero. There is also a place which the inhabitants point out as having been a Danish camp, though no vestiges of it now remain.”

CUMBRAY (Lirre), the smaller of the two islands of the parish of Cumbray. It is about a mile in length, and half-a-mile in breadth; and is separated from the mainland of Ayrshire by a sound of about 3 miles in breadth. It lies, like the larger island, in the parallel direction to Bute. The strata of the rock of which it is composed are distinctly marked. When viewed at a distance, they seem to lie nearly horizontal; but, upon a nearer approach, they appear to incline to an angle of some elevation. ‘They begin from the water’s edge, receding one above another to the height of 650 and the steps of stairs. Upon the south side of the island are two dwelling-houses, and an old square tower. Concerning the antiquity of this tower, nothing can now be learned; and no date or opinion, from which it might be ascertained, has been discovered. It seems to have been a place of some strength, and is surrounded by a rampart and a fosse, over which there has been a drawbridge. It was surprised and burned by the troops of Oliver Cromwell. The island was then in the possession of the family of Eglinton, in which it has continued ever since. There are still the ruins of a very ancient chapel here, which is said to have been dedicated to St. Vey, who lies interred near it: and which was probably a dependency of the celebrated monastery of Icolmkill—Upon the highest part of this island, a lighthouse was erected about the year 1750, which proved of great benefit to the trade; but, from its too lofty situation, it was often so involved in clouds as not to be perceptible, or but seen very dimly. The commissioners therefore judged it necessary to erect another, in 1757, upon a lower station, with a reflecting lamp, which is not liable to the inconvenience attending the former, and affords a more certain direction to vessels navigating the frith in the nighttime. This lighthouse is in N. lat. 55° 43’, and W. long. 4° 55’, The height of the building is 28 feet, and of the

lantern 106 feet above high water. It shows a fixed light, to the distance of 15 miles in clear weather. Population of the island in 1831, 17; in 1851, 9. Houses, 2.