

1836 - About Kircudbright from the The Commercial Directory of Scotland

The Commercial Directory of Scotland, Ireland, and the Four Most Northern Counties of England for 1821-22 & 23, Etc

The principal town of Stewartry of the same name, is pleasantly situated on the east side of the River Dee, 6 miles from its mouth. A towering hill covered with a fine plantation overlooks the town. The Dee at this place forms a capacious, safe and well sheltered harbor. At its mouth is excellent anchorage, with 16 feet at low water. The tide which in the Solway Frith is extremely powerful, rises at this port about 18 feet at Neap, and from 30 to 40 feet at Spring Tides. Little Ross Island at the distance of 6 miles possesses a great harbor. The Dee is navigable for 2 miles above Kircudbright to the new fine bridge at Tounland, which is built with one arch of 110 feet span, and being tastefully ornamented, forms a beautiful object, in a most interesting landscape. Dee has an excellent salmon fishery, of which the town of Kircudbright possesses one third share. The proprietors of the other two shares are the Earl of Selkirk and Mr. Murray, of Broughton. It is worthy of remark that the right of fishing a certain district of the river to the extent of about 3 miles, is at present rented at 800 pounds, for annum. the salmon which is of excellent quality is chiefly sent to England. Kircudbright is distant from Edinburg 100 miles, 28 from Dumfries, and about 4 miles distant from the Mail Coach road from the latter place to Port Patrick, from which it is distant about 60 miles. It was erected a Royal Burgh in 1445 and is governed by a Provost, 2 Baillies, a Treasurer, and 13 Common Council, here is an elegant Court House and good Public School supported principally from the funds of the Burgh; also a Custom House which has under its governance the Creeks of Fleet, Balcarry Bay, and Urr. The site of the present Church belonging to the Establishment, was formerly occupied by a monastery of Grey Friars, founded in the 12th century. The Town appears to have been in former times a place of defence, having been surrounded by a wall and ditch. In the vicinity are the remains of a fortification called Castle Dykes. This Burgh in conjunction with Dumfries, Annan, Sanquhar, and Lochmaben, sends a Member to Parliament.

It is surmised that Kircudbright received its present appellation from the ancient Church of St. Cuthbert, which formerly stood at a short distance from the town, but the vestiges of which are totally obliterated. In the neighborhood are the remains of several Roman and Pictish camps. St. Mary's Isle the seat of the Earl of Selkirk, is about one mile south of the town. The principal Buildings and institutions of note are the Church, the new and old County Gaols, the public School, the News and Billiard Rooms, the County Hall, the public Library, and the Freemasons'

School, the News and Billiard Rooms, the County Hall, the public Library, and the Freemasons Lodge. The principal manufactures of this place are cotton goods, buttons, nails, candles, etc. The machine used at the ferry over the Dee is worthy of notice, being well adapted to its purpose ; it however wants the convenience of steps at the landing-places. The Market days are Tuesday and Friday. The Fairs are the 12th of August, or Friday after; the 29th of September, or Friday after. The population by a recent census was ascertained to be as follows: in the Burgh 8458. In the Country part 743. Total 3201.