

ART. VI.—*Notice respecting an Ancient Ship discovered in a Garden at Stranrawer in Galloway.*

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[Read December 9. 1822.]

THE accompanying very curious notice of the discovery of an ancient ship, I copied, some time ago, from a manuscript account of the Bishopric of Galloway, in the possession of Thomas Goldie, Esquire, of Dumfries.—Who was the author of the manuscript is not known.

The ship was discovered at Stranrawer; and of the particulars recorded regarding that parish, I need only advert to that which mentions the Bishop of Galloway as being the patron of it. This fixes the composition of the manuscript previous to the abolition of episcopacy in Scotland; and, if I mistake not, it elsewhere bears internal evidence of having been written subsequent to the year 1670. The extract from the M.S. is as follows:—

11th, Stranrawer (called also the Chappel.) This is a burgh royal lately enrolled. They choose annually a provost, two bailies, a dean of guild, and a treasurer, with several other councillors. It lies upon the bay called Loch Ryan, and is commodiously seated for trade by sea. It is but a little town, but indifferently well built. Their houses are kept neat and clean within, and their meat well dressed, by reason of their correspondence with Ireland, being only about four miles from Portpatrick. They have a considerable market here every Friday, and two yearly fairs, on the first Friday of May and last Friday of August, called St. John's fair in harvest. This parish is of a small extent, having nothing but the town belonging thereto; being environed with the parish of Laswalt on the west and south-west; and with the parish of Inch on the east and south-east; which two parishes meet at the south side of the town, and out of them this parish of Stranrawer is erected. On the north side it lies open to Loch Ryan. The Bishop of Galloway is patron hereof.

On the east side of the town there is a good house pertaining to Sir John Dalrymple, younger of Stair, called "Castle of the Chappel," where also is a chapel now ruinous, from whence all the east side of the bourn is called the Chappel.

In this town, last year, when they were digging a water-gate for a mill, they lighted upon a ship, a considerable distance from the shore, into which the sea, at the highest spring-tide, never comes. It was lying transversely under a little bourn, and wholly covered with earth a considerable depth; for there was a good yard, with kail growing in it, upon the one end of it. By that part of it which was gotten out, my informers, who saw it, conjecture that the vessel had been pretty large; they also tell me, that the boards were not joined together after the present fashion, and that it had nails of copper.

It is much to be regretted that this discovery had not been inspected by more curious eyes, and the particulars more accurately recorded. The nails of copper almost irresistibly lead back the mind to a very remote period.

The conjecture regarding the size of the vessel, having been formed from "that part of it which was gotten out," would imply that the whole of it was not removed or uncovered; and, if so, there appears no great improbability in supposing that the materials, which had endured from the remote ages when copper nails were used for such purposes, may also have withstood the decay of 140 or 150 years longer. The remains of the vessel which were left *in situ*, if not since removed, might perhaps still be recoverable.

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[*Note.*—The manuscript from which Dr Kennedy transcribed the above extract is evidently a copy of the Description of Galloway, written by Andrew Symson, minister of Kirkinner, in the year 1684; and of which an elegant and correct edition has been recently printed for the first time, from a manuscript copy revised and enlarged by the author in 1692. The discovery of the ancient ship alluded to must therefore have been in the year 1683.]