

Extracts from*

A General Description of the Island of Tirÿ in Argyle-Shire

Surveyed Anno 1768 p^r James Turnbull

(by kind permission of Argyll Estates)

To His Grace John Duke of Argyle,
The Report given herewith of the Island of Tirÿ, Your Grace's Property in Argyleshire,
by James Turnbull.

Humbly sheweth

Being employed to make a geometrical survey of the Island of Tirÿ, I have considered myself as bound in duty to execute the same in as concise and intelligent a method as possible. In order to which I beg leave to offer the following observation.

The Origin of the Name of Tirÿ

The Island of Tirÿ, according to the best tradition, was anciently part of the church lands annexed to the monastery of Icolmkill [Iona]; and on that account its name is derived from that island. As in the Irish language Tirÿ signifies the country of Icolmkill, or Jÿ as it is spelled on several of the tombs in that island.

Extent of Tirÿ

Tirÿ Island from Ben Kenvar to Kelis is in length nine miles three quarters Scots measured equal to eleven English miles; and five miles broad at west end viz. from Haynish to the old Danish fort in Hough, on the march between Hough & Balewilline – two miles broad at the east end of the Reef – 2 ¼ miles broad from east point of Scarnish to near north-east end of Balephetrish Farm – about half a mile broad at Vaull, & near two miles broad at east end of Kelis.

A General View of Tirÿ

The Island of Tirÿ is almost an uniform plain, excepting 3 larger and 3 lesser mountains, viz. Ben-Haynish, which is the largest, Ben-Kenvar & Ben-Hough – the 3 smaller hills are Ben-Gott, Ben-Balephetrish and Down Kelis. The half of the island is arable land. The other half consists of meadows, pasture, moss, blown sand, & lochs or water. Being thus variegated with different soils and colours and curiously environed with the ocean, having an extensive horizon all around and a view of part of the Shires of Argyle and Inverness on the continent, with the Isles of Jura, Colonsa, Mull, Icolmkill, Gomatra, Longa, Flada, Dutchmans Cape, Gunna, Coll, Mouk, Egg, Rum, Canna, Sky & the Barra Isles etc., makes a very agreeable appearance, especially in good weather. But in rainy tempestuous weather everything looks bleak and dismal.

Coasts of Tirÿ

The coasts of Tirÿ lie for the most part low and are for the greatest part surrounded with rocks, particularly the north and west coasts. The south and south-east coasts are more free of rocks, particularly fronting the Bays of Sorby, Baugh and Kirkapoll, the shores of which is sand. The rest of this south coast is in general rocky. The rocks around the island being partly above and part below water makes the navigation on the coast seem dangerous.

Anchoring Place

There is no anchoring place for ships around this island, excepting the Bay of Kirkapoll where vessels may ride with safety, there being excellent holding ground in some parts.

* The text in the extracts is as written by Turnbull *except* that the archaic spelling of some words has been changed to a modern spelling to make reading easier, e.g. 'plow' is transcribed as 'plough', 'grafs' as 'grass', 'jewel' as 'fuel', etc.
Transcription by Nanette Mitchell & Keith Dash.

Harbours in Tirö

The harbours in Tirö are Hianish, Scarnish, Skipinish, Down Kelis, Lonamor & Beist. Of these Down Kelis is the best, tho' a difficult entry occasioned by blind rocks (or rocks under water) off the mouth of the harbour, yet is the safest when a vessel gets in. A ship of 60 tun burden may lye here with safety. The rest of the harbours are only fit for small boats. The harbour of Hianish is the next best for small boats to be kept afloat in, this harbour has also difficult reefs owing to blind rocks without and in the entry. Scarnish Harbour is most frequented by small boats on account of its entry being rather better than the rest. The harbours of Lonamar, Skipinish & Beist are bad – in stormy weather & in time of high spring tides the surge is so great upon the shores that it is dangerous to have boats in any one of the above harbours unless they are drawn up.

Qualities of Land.

Though the tenants here differ considerably in their method of husbandry from those in the low country and south parts of Scotland, making no distinction between their Infield and Outfield, or good & bad arable, I have in the course of my survey made a proper distinction and finds there are 3474 acres of Infield ground in this island, the soil of which is in general good, being a mixture of loam, sand & clay. The Infield, all west of Kilmaluag and Heylipoll Farms, is in general a mixture of clay soil. The Infield of the farms to the east of these places is a mixture of sand, clay & loam. There are 3066 acres of Outfield, or bad arable, in this island. The soil is a mixture of sand, clay and gravel, in general a light soil a great part of it on a rocky bottom, the rocks appearing above ground in several parts.

Disadvantages Attending Their Present Method of Husbandry

Before I leave the arable ground I observe there are several disadvantages attending their present method of husbandry, which I am persuaded is a hurt to the ground and a loss to the tenants for the following reasons.

1st they keep too much ground annually in tillage without manuring it properly.

2nd they summer fallow none.

3rd they have not ploughs so proper for some of the land as would be necessary. Many of the ploughs here called Cromnagads having only one still, very light and small, drawn by five horses. Indeed considering the smallness and uncommon construction of them they do tolerably well on the light sandy ground that has been ploughed before but does not answer properly the clay and loamy soils, not taking a furrow deep enough to raise the soil or root out the weeds. Another disadvantage that attends this kind of plough is when they have strong ground to plough of any soil that's lying ley; they are sensible this plough does not answer their purpose, on which account they use an instrument called the Reisle, which is drawn by two horses and managed by two men for cutting the strong roots and surface of the ground to make easy work for the ploughs which follow it. By this method they employ four men & seven horses in ploughing their strong ground, whereas a proper plough drawn by two good horses and managed by a man and a boy would plough as much to better purpose and far cheaper than they can do by their present method, by which the tenants would be freed of 2 men and 5 horses for each plough. Now supposing at a medium 35 ploughs and 35 reisles at work at one time this would be a saving to the tenants of 70 men & 175 horses, which would tend greatly to their profit and advantage.

4th many of them plough none of their ground until the end of March or beginning of April, by which their land loses the benefit of a winter fallow.

5th they never change their seed, yea what is worse many of them sells and uses the best of their barley for malting or bread and keeps the worst for seed, a very absurd method.

Barley, small oats and rye are all the different kinds of grain that are sown here, the greatest quantity of which is barley. There have been sown annually at a medium for four years past 547 bolls and 3 pecks of barley, 507 bolls.2f.1p of oats, & 16 bolls.0f.3p of rye, the produce of which at a medium for said time after one boll sowing are as follows, viz. barley 03b.2f. 0p, oats 02b.2f.0p, rye 03b.2f.0p, this produce includes the seed. A poor increase considering the nature and appearance of the soil, but by observing the disadvantages attending their present method of husbandry, as already mentioned, much better cannot well be expected. Trials have been made of peas and white oats,

which answered very well, but no wheat have ever been sown here. I am opinion the soil in several farms would answer well for wheat, but as none of the ground is properly inclosed and the small tenants not accustomed to herd their cattle carefully excepting during the summer season, and bad harbours for shipping, for exporting any of the produce from this island, are probably the reasons why they have not made trial of this grain.

The objection of herding may be got over by obliging the tenants of each farm to herd their cattle carefully, which would enable them to sow their different grains in due time, whether the ground be inclosed or not, and so finish their harvest before the rainy season, which frequently begins here in August.

As the soil is in general a mixture of sand it is naturally warm, which makes vegetation very quick. I have been told two crops of barley a long time ago have been reaped here in one year from some particular spots. How far this report can be depended upon I cannot say, but if it has been tried it does not appear to be advantageous as that method has not been followed.

Distillery

The most of the barley that is now sold by the tenants is purchased by the distillers here, which they convert to whisky, there being no less than fifty distillers in the island. Their whisky is bought up by the inhabitants of the neighbouring islands. This trade no doubt is advantageous to the tenants in general as it is a means of bringing money into the country, but will in time be attended with disadvantages to the island if they are not restricted to a smaller number.

The 1st disadvantage attending the present method of distillery will sooner or later be a speedier waste of fuel than the island at present produces than otherwise there would be if there were fewer distillers, a great many peats and turf being burned on this account by several of the distillers who probably are nothing the better of this trade!

2nd, by having so many stills at work in the island makes the whisky very plenty, and by which the people drink more of it than otherwise they would do, which is a means of spoiling their morals and keeping them idle. Therefore by reducing the number of distillers there is a great probability even then for the tenants getting as high a price for their barley as they do at present and will put a stop to the annual consumption of a great quantity of peats & turf, which by their present method is used. Frugal regulations relating to the fuel in this island ought to be attended to, but more of this hereafter when speaking of the Moss.

Disadvantage of Too Small Possessions

I am of opinion there are too many tenants on several of the farms, which is attended with various disadvantages. The smallness of the possessions of those who have least must render the payments of their rents precarious and their straitened circumstances & small stock disable them not only from attempting any kind of improvements but from keeping good neighbourhood with those who have more lands. And it is observed that those who have the smallest possessions are likewise inclined to plough too much without observing any regular method and seem to think they can have no subsistence for themselves and their families if they allow any part of their ground to rest.

There are no less than 241 tenants and hynds in the island. As the Factor is to form a scheme for reducing the tenants to a smaller number according to the particular situation and extent of labouring of each farm, what falls next in course to be considered is to find out a method for employing the great number of hands, men & women, upon the island with advantage. Many of them are at present a burthen on the tenants for want of proper employment.

Number of Inhabitants

The exact number of inhabitants taken in November 1768 are distinguished and numbered as follows, viz. The number of tenants and hynds are 236 men & 5 women. Cottagers 104 men & 66 women. Men and women above 12 years of age excluding the tenants and cottagers are 203 men & 526 women. Boys and girls below 12 years of age 288 boys & 248 girls. The whole inhabitants of the island are in all one thousand six hundred and seventy six souls.

Number of Manufacturers & Tradesmen

The different manufacturers and tradesmen in the island out of said number are 18 men weavers, 32 women weavers, 1 lint dresser, 4 carpenters, 3 blacksmiths & 11 tailors, in all 69 manufacturers. Exclusive of these there remains sixteen hundred and seven souls. From which account there appears to be but a small number of manufacturers & tradesmen in comparison of the number of inhabitants. Yet not withstanding few or none of them are good tradesmen. It would greatly tend to the advantage of the tenants to have good blacksmiths, ploughwrights, carpenters, coopers and weavers, the want thereof is an apparent loss to them at present.

How Many of the People Might be Usefully Employed

As this island answers to the growth of flax extremely well, if proper encouragement were given to the inhabitants for raising and manufacturing the same into yarn & cloth would be a means of employing many of them with advantage who are at present in a manner idle.

Hemp would undoubtedly grow to great perfection here, which would be of general use to the inhabitants by manufacturing the same into ropes and sacks and necessary for all their purposes in husbandry, and would answer much better than the present method they have of using bent ropes & bent & straw sacks. This long rank grass called bent grows mostly on the ground that is subject to blow. It is the Factor's opinion the cutting so much of it has been in some measure the occasion of promoting the sand blowing, and the cutting of it before it throws the seed is a great means to weaken the sward and occasions a thin growth of the bent. The tenants at present are under an absolute necessity of cutting it yearly as they have no other materials to supply the purposes for which they use it.

Barley

The price of barley this and last year was 10/- the boll. This is the only grain sold here. The prices have been higher for some years past. The Tiry barley measure is computed to be equal to one boll & two firlots Linlithgow Measure.

Black Cattle

The cattle in this island are of a middling size & generally ill-shaped, except those bred by the Factor & Mr Campbell of Ardsignish. There has been no demand for cattle in this island for one year and a half past excepting some that was slaughtered about Martinmas last by traders who cures the same in barrels and hides & carries it for sale to other parts. The prices of these were considerably lower than for some years past, being sold from 20 to 30 shillings a head.

There was a great number of cattle bought up in this island in harvest 1766 by people from Mull who ferried them there and lost the greatest part of them by a distemper they took, which the cattle in this island are always subject to called the muir-ill or red water. This is a loss to the tenants here as it discourages other people from buying their cattle and exporting them alive out of the island. The cause of this distemper is owing to very little heath being here & the fine pile of grass in the island in comparison of the pasture they are brought to.

Horses

There are a great number of horses here, many of them small & ill-shaped. The reason of their keeping so many is owing to the number they use in manuring their ground with sea ware. They are under a necessity of carrying it in creils on horseback from the shores, which in some parts is coarse & stony and in other parts soft sand, and they all use horses in their ploughs. (It is thought some oxen ploughs would answer well in some parts of the island.) They have now some larger sized & better shaped horses than ever they had, the breed of a stallion which the Factor brought to the island about 10 or 12 years ago, of the breed of the Duke of Argyle's horse at Inveraray. The smallest kind of horses are sold from 15 shillings to 2 pound sterling each and the largest from 3 to 5 pound sterling, few or none of which are sold out of the island for several years past as they keep all the horses they breed for their own use.

Sheep

The sheep are in general very small, except for a few which are of the South Country & Highland breed are a good size. None of them are sent alive from the island. Some are purchased by these traders that buys their beef & carried for sale to other parts. Their wool is much spoilt by the sand. It is the Factor's opinion there are too great a number of sheep upon the island & for various reasons it seems evident to be the proprietor's interest there should be none at all if the inhabitants could dispense with the want of them and a proper method taken to supply them yearly with a sufficient quantity of wool. It is known from experience that sheep are a great means of occasioning the sand blowing (which is great in this island and increasing yearly) when pasturing on that kind of soil the surface whereof they break by scraping with their feet to reach at the root of the grass among the sand. As there is but little heath in this island, and as the ground in different parts of the pasture has the natural appearance of it but is always kept bare by the sheep pasturing upon it, the growth of which ought to be encouraged to prevent as much as possible the distemper which black cattle bred here are subject to when transported to other parts.

Meadow

The soil of the meadow ground in this island is all of a natural quality, part good & part bad. It lies mostly low, sour & wet, which in many parts might be remedied by proper draining. The people never were in use to house their cattle in winter or to make any hay till within these 14 or 15 years. They now in general, by the Factor's example in making of his hay, come to understand the method of managing that branch of husbandry to tolerable good purpose.

Pasture

The pasture in this island is in general good, it being of a rich tender quality and a short pile of grass. Red, white & yellow clover & a variety of wild plants & herbs grow naturally & spontaneously in many parts. The growth of grass here is late in the spring, quick during the summer season, and its decline remarkably so in autumn, and, by its softness having no mixture of heath, decay fast in winter.

Common Pasture

There are three great common pastures in this island. The 1st is the Reef or Great Green Plain, situate about the middle of the island. The 2nd is Drimbuigh Common, which joins with and situate west of the Reef. The 3rd is Drimdeargh Common situate east from the Reef and joins with it between Baugh and Balephetrish farms.

The 1st of these, the Reef, is a beautiful and most extensive green plain containing 1034 acres and is 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ Scots miles or 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ English miles round. There is not the least eminence in this extensive plain excepting an agreeable rising height at the west end called Knockindelgin. This great plain is all of a sandy soil. There are 50 acres on the south-west end all sand blown, which is distinguished on the plan as such. As it is a loss to have any of this plain blown, an experiment might be made on this blown part by levelling and growing grass seeds upon it, but this ought first to be inclosed with a stone fence to prevent black cattle and sheep from setting a foot upon it until it is known how it may answer. The sheep in the island, and a great many yeild cattle & horses of different farms pasture upon it during summer. The north-east end lies low and wet. The sea at spring tides comes up Phuil River as far as Balephetrish & Kenovay farms, which lays the east end of this plain often under water. When the sea comes this far up it is not above 400 yards from the north shore and directly opposite that part of the coast at Balephetrish Bay where the sea overflowed & made some encroachments on the bank at said north shore twice within these last twenty years. The sea from the north and south shores thus joining divided the island in two. The sea overflowing or making encroachments on this shore is altogether casual as it only happens in time of high spring tide and a great storm from the north, so that the like may not happen for a very long time & may in a short time, according to the abovementioned cause. If the sea on the north shore should gain about twelve yards on that part of the bank which lies lowest, and has a declivity towards the south, and a light, sandy gravelly soil, it is apprehended the sea from the north and south would join at ordinary spring tides, by which are great part of the farms of Kenovay & Balephetrish and the Reef would be overflowed and the island divided in two. The extent of this bank is three quarters of a Scots measured mile, but the part that appears to be in greatest danger is not half an English mile in length. A barhead was formerly made here to

prevent further encroachments, and that part of it on the east end of the bank stands firm, but that part which the sea overflowed not a quarter of a mile in length was broken down by the force of the surge and the stones, though some of them very large, was tossed partly over the bank to the land side and part towards the sea. Having thus described the present situation of this bank, it appears to me that the expense of a proper barricade to prevent in an effectual manner future encroachments will be considerable. But as I cannot judge what would be the most effectual plan can give no opinion of an exact estimate.

Drimbuigh Common is mostly a poor pasture, inclining in part to heath and rocks interspersed throughout, is surrounded with the farms of Heylipoll & Crossapoll on the south, the Great Common Moss on the west, the farms of Kilmaluaig, Cornaigmore, Cornaigbeg & Kenovay on the north, and the Reef on the east. By its situation it might answer to be divided among the said farms in the same manner as the common west of the Great Peat Moss has been divided among the farms on that side.

Drimdeargh Common is situate in the east end of the island having the farms of Baugh, Hianish and Scarnish on the south, Gott and Kirkapoll on the east, Vaul & Balephetrish on the north, and the Reef on the west. The soil is gravel and all upon a rocky bottom very bare & poor, a great part of it rocky, and what of it has a sward inclines to heath. The cause of Drimbuigh but especially Drimdeargh Common being so bare and the rocks so exposed to view is owing to the inhabitants cutting turf upon them annually and the soil, not being above half a foot deep in many parts, is totally destroyed. Cutting turf is very prejudicial to the common pastures and if continued will in time make the whole of this unfit for pasture and of no value. The inhabitants east of Phuill, having no proper mosses, are under a necessity of casting a great part of their turf here, which can only be remedied by lessening the number of inhabitants finding out a supply of fuel. Otherwise for such as are necessary for possessing the lands totally prohibiting the distillery in that part of the island. If vocals could be got in Mull would be of great advantage to the island in general, but particularly to this part of it.

Moss

There is a Great Moss in the west end of the island called Monighel (i.e. the White Moss) which is the only proper supply for fuel and produces peats of a good quality. It has been originally and is still in a great measure very irregularly cut, except that part of it on the south side which the Factor has drained and wrought in a regular manner by cutting it to the bottom in proper divisions from the great drain to the outside, by which means all the water runs off without stagnating in the least. The Factor observing the absurd method of managing this moss, & the inhabitants cutting their peats where they thought it would be most convenient, did about 16 years ago cause mark out a division of the moss for each farm contiguous to it and directed to drain and cut the same regularly, and then began managing his own division of it in the preceding manner. The inhabitants only followed the example for two years when they resumed their former irregular method, which with other absurd and uncommon practices that seem peculiar to them I have reason to think (from some instances I have seen of their giddy & stubborn disposition) is not an easy matter to prevent.

All the water on the west end of this Great Moss flows into Loch Phuill and on the east & north ends the water runs into Lochs Achlair & Nalaig. By having a great open drain cut around this moss, with small cross drains, would be a means of conveying away the water as much as may be necessary. And when this is done the whole inhabitants who cut peats there to be bound by their tacks or some other effectual manner to cut said moss in a distinct and proper way by which it will be preserved for the grand purpose of fuel, the saving of which ought to be seriously attended to because after this moss is exhausted the inhabitants will be at a great loss for want of fuel, the other mosses in the island being near wrought out.

Blown Sand

The sand in this island is mostly of the shell kind, the blowing of which has increased these two years past, particularly by this last winter and spring. The cause of said ground blowing is owing to dry and light quality of the soil. This light sandy soil ought never to be ploughed, but otherwise kept in pasture for black cattle only. No sheep should feed upon it for reasons given when speaking of the sheep.

There is a root called Rowgh, fit for dyeing a red colour, grows among this light sandy ground. The inhabitants were in use to dig for the same frequently in parts that never was blown before, and the first windy weather that followed increased the blowing of the sand by the surface being broken.

In order to prevent said blowing, experiments might be made on some parts of it by sowing different grass seeds & in case they grow so as to gather a sward there is a probability of its being brought to a good pasturage through time. But there is little prospect for success by this method, supposing the grass seeds should answer, unless a total prohibition be made from ploughing any of it, sheep pasturing upon it, & the inhabitants digging that root called Rowgh out of it, from which I understand it is impossible to prevent them unless they are discharged from wearing any apparel of which said colour or lit is a part. And if the law will allow they ought to forfeit said apparel & have the same burned, & the person or persons wearing the said apparel, as well as those found to be the diggers of the root, ought to be imprisoned and afterwards banished the island. And also the tenants of each farm ought to be fined for every transgression of this kind found to be committed on their ground unless they produce the person or persons guilty.

Lochs

There are twenty seven lochs in this island, the greatest of which are Lochs Phuill, Vassapoll, Heylipoll, Nalaig, Barapoll & Kirkapoll. In the course of my survey I tried the levels of the five first and sounded Lochs Phuill, Vassapoll & Heylipoll in company with the Factor. The level from Loch Phuill to the sea is eight feet eight inches, and the greatest depth, which is in the middle of the loch, is nine feet six inches. The level of Loch Vassapoll to the sea by Cornaigmore is sixteen feet four inches, and the greatest depth of this loch, which is around the isle in it, is eight feet. The level of Loch Heylipoll to the sea by Crossapoll mill is twelve feet, and the greatest depth of this loch, which is around the isle in it, is seven feet. The said three lochs were all that I thought necessary to sound as from the descent of level of the following lochs there is a great probability of there being easily drained. The level of Loch Nalaig to Loch Vassapoll is fourteen feet. The level of Loch Barapoll to Loch Phuill is four feet seven inches.

The above are all the lochs I tried the levels & soundings of. As for Loch Kirkapoll, by the appearance of the descent and a trial the Factor caused the tenants make some years ago of draining it in order to get peats, there seems to be no difficulty in draining it effectually. From which it would appear all the principal lochs in this island may be drained, & at a moderate expense, excepting Loch Phuill, which may also be partially drained, by which no less than five hundred acres of ground would be gained.

There are no fish in any of the lochs in Tirÿ excepting eels and a small kind of flounder.

Mills in Tirÿ

There is no mill in Tirÿ but one at Crossapoll, and at present not in proper repair. The inhabitants grind most of the corn they make into meal with querns or hand mills, which appears to be an expensive & troublesome method. Two women at once, & sometimes three, are commonly employed. By this means there is so much of their time taken up that it must greatly retard them from other industry. The ordinary quantity of oats grinded in one day by one of these querns & two women will be about three firlots, and about six pecks of barley. The mill at Crossapoll is not supplied with water longer than four or five months in the year, and the fall does not seem to be sufficient for the mill. Therefore it is thought that a wind mill about the centre of the island would answer best, which with a water mill at Cornaigmore, where there seems to be a better fall & a greater supply of water, would be sufficient for grinding the whole victual in the island.

These mills managed by skilful persons would return his Grace a good rent yearly & save the inhabitants a great deal of time & labour which they might employ to advantage otherwise.

A lint mill would be of use here in case of the growth & manufacturing of flax & hemp take place & promoted to any extent.

Manure

The only manure they have here is seaware, which is thrown ashore around the whole island, every farm being supplied therewith excepting Kilmaluig & Kirkapoll, and but little at Gott. There is some kelp made upon a few farms here, especially upon the shores of Kelis, Ruaig, Vaull, Saalum & Cornaigbeg.

They have horse dung for their potato ground. A great quantity of them are planted here annually, they answer well by which the people find great advantage. It is about ten years ago since they were first planted here.

Inclosing

The inclosing of ground would be of great advantage here, but as there is no proper stone quarries in the island inclosing with stone would be attended with great expense if not impracticable in many farms. The most likely method would be by ditch & hedge upon such ground as will admit of it, and before this is attempted trials might be made how thorns & trees would grow.

Draining

As a great part of the meadow, pasture & some of the arable ground lies low, & much under water in the winter season, it would be of great advantage to cause the tenants drain all such ground where drains can be properly made for carrying off the water, which sours & hurts the ground much. And as there are some parts of the grounds which the tenants for want of skills & materials cannot drain effectually, it is thought it will be the proprietor's interest to be at the expense of some tools and employ a skilful person who will work with & direct the tenants in executing such drains.

Limestone

There is a limestone quarry in Balephetrish Farm, a little south side of Ben-Balephetrish, which is all the limestone in the island. It is of a hard quality.

Clay

There is a kind of clay in some of the farms, particularly upon Scarnish, Kelis, Baugh, Balinoe & Balemartine, which the inhabitants manufacture into pitchers for boiling their victuals, called Crogans, & great & small dishes for holding their milk & other purposes.

There was about sixty ton of this clay sent by the Factor about 12 years ago to the Delf Company of Glasgow, which upon trial they found answered exceeding well. But the said company are since supplied with clay of the same quality from Ireland at a lower freight than they could have clay from this island.

Minerals

There is some appearance of copper ore upon the north-east coast of Scarnish within the high water mark a little south from Down Gott.

Fish

From the month of April to the middle of August great numbers of small whales appear around this coast. About 35 years ago 73 small whales came ashore on the west part of Kirkapoll Bay, all at one time. The coast likewise abounds with seals, great numbers appearing on the rocks at low water all seasons of the year.

The herring swarms in great shoals around the coasts of this island annually betwixt the beginning of November and latter end of December. The Bay of Kirkapoll is the best & safest place for fishing then. In the years 1766 & 1767 a good many herrings was taken in this bay – sixteen barrels being caught in a few nights time in November 1766 & about five barrels caught in November 1767 with a small number of nets. No attempts could be made this last season for said fishing on account of the bad weather.

There are cods, flounders, mullet, lythes & grey fish, or saiths, in this bay. Haddocks are sometimes got here. The same kinds of fish are to be got in most places around the coasts when it is settled weather. The coast in general produces lobsters, crabs, welks, limpets, with a few spout fish in the Bay of Kirkapoll.

Wild Fowls in Tirö

There are hawks, ravens, glads, & wild swans in the winter time come here. Wild geese & ducks of various kinds, viz. the large Scots, Till, Danish & small water ducks with some other kinds.

There are Solen geese, skarts, cormorants, barnicles, sea pyets, herons or cranes, sea larks, sea gulls or sea maws of various kinds.

There are great numbers of the green or small plover here & some of the grey or largest kind. The green plover leaves the island yearly in April & hatches in the hilly countries & returns the latter end of July, they resort much on the Reef, whaps of large & small kinds, wild pigeons in great numbers, starlings, blackbirds, larks, gold finches, corn crakes, swallows, snipes, kits or jackdaws, linnets & sparrows etc. The larks are very numerous here.

The only place of resort for the sea fowls is at the west end of Ben-Kenvar where there are three remarkable high and steep rocks adjoining with the sea which are in a manner concave called Slockvickorlim (i.e. Frelison's Pit).

Mice and rats are numerous here. But there is neither fox, hare, serpent, frog or toad etc. of any kind in the island.

(end of transcription)