The Reverend Andrew Urquhart and the Social Structure of Portpatrick in 1832

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For England, the task of unravelling the mysteries of historical variations in social structure is now well underway. Already there is available a substantial literature relating to the nature of the sources and methods of social structural analysis (Laslett 1966; Armstrong 1966; Wrigley 1972), and the first pioneering studies based on them have also been completed.¹ For Scotland, however, very little has yet been done, though the future holds an exciting promise.² What follows in this paper is intended as a modest contribution to the build-up of a corpus of knowledge on the structure and composition of Scottish society in the nineteenth century. It relates to the small Wigtownshire parish of Portpatrick and is based on the 'Social survey and Register of all households in the village and parish' compiled by the young assistant minister, the Reverend Andrew Urquhart, in 1832.³ By itself, of course, the social structure of Portpatrick cannot be used as the basis for any sweeping nation-wide generalisations. While the composition of Portpatrick society may turn out to be much the same as that of other parishes of similar size and type, it will no doubt prove to contain its own peculiar idiosyncracies. The full story of Scotland's social structure, both its common features and all the local variants upon them, will only emerge when a sufficient crosssection of Scottish parishes has been subjected to a similar analysis.

I

In the early 1830s the local economy of the parish of Portpatrick was particularly active and thriving. Despite the decline of the live cattle and horses trade with Ireland, upon which much of the parish's earlier prosperity had rested, and despite too the shortlived success of the herring fishery in the second decade of the nineteenth century, the community prospered under the stimulus of the mail and passenger trade with Ireland. Between 4 May 1825 and I August 1832 a total of 74,559 passengers passed through Portpatrick en route to Ireland by means of one of the two steam packets daily plying the twenty-one mile crossing, and over the same period 69,886 people made the return trip. In addition, by 1838, the Portpatrick mail packets handled between eight and ten thousand letters and newspapers each day. By permitting the direct transfer of cattle and horses from Ireland to the ports of Liverpool and Glasgow the rise of steam navigation certainly killed the intermediary role that Portpatrick had previously played in the livestock trade. But it more than compensated for this by facilitating the emergence of Portpatrick as a mail and passenger entrepot. So important did the parish become in the chain of communications with Ireland that, under government sponsorship, a start was made in 1821 with the construction of a new harbour to cope with the demand. The employment which this provided gave another timely stimulus to the well-being of Portpatrick's population. Sadly, the harbour was never to be completed. The work was still unfinished when in 1849 the Irish mail, and much of the passenger trade, ceased to pass through the parish. With their departure went much of the community's prosperity. But this was in the future. In 1832 all seemed set fair for continued economic expansion. The population which had risen from an estimated 611 in 1755 to 1,090 in 1801 as a result of the expanding livestock trade with Ireland continued to grow through the early nineteenth century under the impetus of harbour construction and the packet trade, until in 1831 it reached its peak, 2,239. Thereafter it began a long and, except for a minor resurgence during the 1850s, steady decline, to 1,136 in 1901.⁴

II

It was, therefore, to a still prosperous and bustling community that Andrew Urquhart came in October 1831, first as an assistant to the veteran Reverend John MacKenzie and then, on the latter's death in December 1836, as minister in his own right. From the beginning his participation in parish affairs greatly exceeded the normal calls of duty. In his anxiety to secure an improvement in the educational, material and moral standards of his flock, Urquhart became a tireless visitor of all the households in his parish and a keen recorder of the conditions he found in them. Historical demographers have every reason to be grateful for these fact-finding missions. Between April 1832 and December 1852 Urguhart undertook four major house to house visitations, the first starting on the 17 April 1832 and taking two years to complete, the second in 1844, a third in 1846, and a final one during the autumn and winter months of 1852.⁵ Of these the first is by far the best. The deterioration in the quality of subsequent listings was to a large extent due to the bitterness caused by the Disruption crisis of 1843, when Urquhart seceded from the Established Church to join the new Free Church of Scotland. It is significant that in both the 1844 and 1846 surveys the fullest personal details are provided for the occupants of those households whose heads belonged to the Free Church. Households headed by adults of other denominations, including those who remained faithful to the Established Church, are much less thoroughly documented. The relative inadequacy of the 1852 listing, however, is probably explained by other factors. By this date the worst rancour of the Disruption troubles had passed. Perhaps, by now, even the apparently indefatigable Urquhart had grown weary of the awesome task of household visitation and registration, preferring to leave it to the decennial visits of the official civil census enumerators.

On the whole the 1832 listing seems to have been compiled carefully and pains-

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PLATE III A page from the 1832 survey of Portpatrick parish. Reproduced by kind permission of Mr Andrew M. Urquhart and the Scottish Record Office. (The column headings after the name read: 'Nativity and Residence here, Age, Marriage, Occupation, Ch: Com:, Scholarship, School.') takingly. Except for a few occasions when they are made in pencil, the entries are recorded neatly and legibly in ink, and the separate columns relating to the names (christian as well as surnames) of the occupants of each household, their relationship to the household head, length of residence in the parish, age and marital status, occupational, literacy and schooling attainments are invariably clearly distinguishable.⁶ The general impression of reliability which the listing exudes is reinforced by comparing some of its findings with those of the independent enquiries carried out by the civil census enumerator in 1831 and by Urquhart himself in 1838.⁷ Because of certain deficiencies in the 1832 survey, to which I shall return below, a close, direct comparison between it and the 1831 and 1838 statistics is not possible. But within the limitations of such a comparison the various listings that are available for the 1830s tell a roughly similar story in respect to the total population of the parish, its age and sex composition, and the number of separate households (domestic groups) it contained (Urquhart 1845:143-5). Although we must make some allowance for error in the 1832 return it seems safe enough to assume a reasonable degree of accuracy and completeness.

Carefully compiled though the listing was, it does nevertheless pose several problems. To save himself both time and space Urquhart presented much of the information he collected in symbol form, and the meaning of the various symbols he used is not always immediately clear. Generally, however, such short-hand abbreviations cause no serious difficulty. Close scrutiny of the text is usually sufficient to make them intelligible. Where uncertainties remain these can be clarified by reference to the introductory sections of his 1844 survey in which Urquhart explained in detail the meaning of the various symbols he was then using. They appear to be the same as those applied in 1832.

Crucial to a successful analysis of census listings is the need for all such documents to draw clear distinctions between each of the different dwelling-houses and/or between each of the different household (domestic) groups recorded. Without these distinctions it is quite impossible to carry out a meaningful analysis of the average size and composition of dwelling and household units. In this respect the Urquhart listing begins extremely well. The first seventeen tenement dwellings are distinguished from each other by ruled lines running across the full width of the page, and the various separate household (domestic) groups within these tenements by ruled lines running part way across the page. Sadly, Urquhart did not continue this practice, and the bulk of the listing must be explored without its benefit. There is, therefore, no direct way of estimating the size and structure of the tenement dwellings. Fortunately, for the purposes of social structural analysis, this does not matter too much. Our principal interest lies in the size and structure of the household or co-resident domestic group, defined by Peter Laslett as 'that unit or block of persons which was recognised (by the compiler of the survey) to be distinct from other units of blocks of persons when the inhabitants of a community were listed'.* (Laslett 1969:20-2). Throughout his

*Throughout the remainder of this paper 'household' is taken to mean 'co-resident domestic group' as defined by Peter Laslett.

enumeration, though he early on dispensed with the use of ruled lines, Urquhart always left an unmistakable space between the end of one household group and the start of another so that each separate resident domestic group is clearly recognisable.

As one might expect in an undertaking of such complexity, there are occasional omissions and obscurities in the data that are recorded. In most cases these can be overcome without stretching credence too far. Thus, on those occasions when Urquhart has failed to record the number of years lived by a child in the parish the deficiency can usually be remedied by comparing the age of the child in 1832 with the number of years that one or both of its parents had resided in the parish. Missing ages too can sometimes be estimated, albeit crudely. It is, for example, reasonably safe to assume that William, ranked as the youngest of James and Ann Stewart's four children, was less than 5 years old in 1832 since James, the third surviving child in the family, is recorded as being 5 years of age by the survey.

There are, of course, instances where gaps and uncertainties cannot be filled in with any reasonable degree of confidence, and these must be left out of the analysis. I have also omitted from consideration the five households by the side of which Urquhart himself wrote 'not reckoned' or 'omitted', and a further nine households (containing at least forty-four people) the entries for which were made in pencil and are more obscure and far less detailed than the usual standard of entry. These omissions should in no way bias the results which follow, however. Out of a total population of 2,239 persons and 422 separate household units in 1831, I have been able to include 1,908 persons (approximately 85 per cent of the total population of the parish) and 392 households (93 per cent of all households) in the analysis below.

III

The age, sex and marital composition of the population of the parish of Portpatrick in the period 1832-4 is set out in Table 1 below. Before interpeting it, a preliminary word of caution is necessary. In the main, the information which the survey provides on the sex and marital status of the individuals recorded can be regarded as reasonably accurate. Occasional errors in registering the correct marital status of persons are, of course, to be expected, particularly among newcomers to the parish, but in a community as small as Portpatrick it is unlikely that mistakes of this kind would occur very often. Rather less confidence can be held in the returns of individual age, however. Not infrequently throughout the listing the age of a person is followed by a question mark, suggesting that for one reason or another Urquhart himself had doubts about its precise accuracy. Even in the large majority of cases where age was stated without equivocation, it would be most unwise to assume that it was always absolutely precise. A person's ignorance of his exact age or the deliberate falsification of his age statement may not have been common occurrences (see Tillot 1972:107-8) but they must have occurred from time to time nevertheless. Despite this, within the margins for error which must be allowed in all such analyses, the age structure suggested by Urquhart's first census is probably accurate enough for our present purposes, if only because in its broad essentials it compares fairly closely with that of the independently conducted enquiries of 1831 and 1838:

Proportion of the population of Portpatrick aged below twenty years

Period	Percentage
1831	49.3
1832–1834	50-3
1838	50-4

(The 1831 and 1838 proportions have been calculated from data in Urquhart 1845:143-4)

The age composition of the parish's population, as revealed in Table 1, contains no surprises and closely mirrors the pattern found in the few studies which are available for other areas. 43.7 per cent of all males, 36.7 per cent of all females and 40 per cent of the total population was below 15 years of age, a high youth dependency ratio by comparison with the age structures of more recent periods and one that reflects the relatively high fertility rates of early nineteenth-century society. At the other extreme, as a result of the higher mortality rates of earlier times, the proportion of the population aged 65 and above (4.6 per cent for males, 5.5 per cent for females, and 5.1 per cent for the total population) was rather lower in the 1830s than it is now. Despite this, the population of Portpatrick had a markedly smaller ratio of people in the most productive age-groups, 15 to 64 years (51.7 per cent of all males, 57.5 per cent of all most productive age-groups, 15 to 64 years (51.7 per cent of all males, 57.5 per cent of all females.

Of all people recorded in the listing a slight majority, 53.4 per cent, was female. The imbalance between the sexes varied more substantially from one age-group to another however. In the infant, child and juvenile ages (that is, below the age of 20) there were almost as many males (49.3 per cent of the population under 20 years of age) as females (50.7 per cent). Among the population aged 45 years and above the imbalance between the sexes was notably greater (46 per cent male, 54 per cent female). But the excess of females over males was most evident in the young adult population. Of the total resident community aged between 20 and 45 years, the age-group in which most people married and bore children, 57.6 per cent was female and only 42.4 per cent male.

Not surprisingly, the marked imbalance between the sexes at adult ages was reflected in the different marital composition of the male and female populations. 21.5 per cent of all males above 20 years of age were unmarried at the time of the survey. On the other hand, the proportion of unmarried women in the adult female population was noticeably higher (29.7 per cent). The proportion widowed was also significantly greater among women than men. Thus, whereas only 5.8 per cent of all males aged

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45-49	e	0.5	34	S·II	н	4.2	I	I	38	4.3	4	9.0	20	6.7	S	7-4	1	1	29	2.9	67	3.5
50-54	н	0.2	32	IO-8	1	I	2	33-3	35	4.0	S	0.8	35	L-11	II	16.2	н	10.01	52	S•I	87	4.6
55-59	н	0.2	24	1.8	6	8.3	۱	I	27	3.0	ŝ	0.5	21	2.0	I	16.2	н	0.01	36	3.5	63	3.3
60-64	н	0.2	29	9.8	S	20.8	I	I	35	4.0	6	0•3	21	0.7	0	13.2	н	0.01	33	3.2	68	3-6
65 and over	I	I	28	9.5	13	54.2	I	I	41	4.6	II	L-1	22	7-4	23	33.8	1	I	56	5.5	97	5.1
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Marital status, age and sex structure, Portpatrick 1832–1834*

TABLE I

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above 20 in 1832–4 were widowers, 12.8 per cent of all females in the same age-group were recorded as widows. The implication of these figures is clear: the marked excess of women in the adult population ensured that it was considerably more difficult for a woman to marry and remarry.

TABLE 2

Socio–occupational status	No. of households	No. of persons	Persons per household
Farmer	77	485	6-3
Craftsman	42	243	5.7
Tradesman	33	164	5.0
Labourer	194	861	4.4
No recorded			
occupation	46	155	3•4
Total	392	1908	4.9

The average size of household by socio-occupational status of the household head*

*For a list of the occupations included in each socio-occupational category see Appendix I below, p. 58.

The number of residents in each Portpatrick household in the early 1830s averaged slightly below five. But, as Table 2 shows, this average figure obscures considerable variations from one broad socio-occupational group to another. The largest households on average were to be found within the ranks of the most prosperous section of the local community, the farmer class: the smallest (except for those domestic groups headed by persons of no recorded occupation which include a high proportion of unmarried, widowed and elderly household heads) among the labouring population. The average size of households headed by craftsmen and tradesmen lay between these two extremes. In short, household size at Portpatrick seems to have varied positively with the main gradations of income and wealth: the higher the social class the greater the number of people resident in its household units.⁸

Part of the explanation for this rests with the varying number of offspring resident in households of different socio-occupational groups.

As Table 3 shows, the relatively large average size of households headed by craftsmen is almost entirely explained by the abnormally large number of resident offspring these contained. The above-average size of farmer households too owes much to the unusual number of offspring living in them. On the other hand, a good part of the explanation for the small size of households headed by people for whom the listing records no occupation clearly lies with the relatively few resident offspring they contained. The

number of offspring living in domestic groups headed by tradesmen and labourers falls close to the average for the parish as a whole, two and a half—a figure which approximates to that found in other studies.⁹

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The average number of resident offspring in households by socio-occupational status of the household head*

Socio-occupational status	No. of households	No. of resident offspring	Resident offspring per household
Farmer	72	233	3.2
Craftsman	40	150	3.8
Tradesman	30	82	2.7
Labourer	185	455	2.5
No recorded			
occupation	42	57	I-4
Total	369	977	2.6

*The term 'offspring' includes all children of whatever age and union, whether married or unmarried, living in the household at the time of the survey. Only those households headed by married or widowed persons are included in the table.

Variations in the mean size of household from one social class to another were also, however, in part due to the imbalanced distribution of the servant population throughout the domestic groups of the community.

Description of household	No. of households	No. of persons	No. of households with servants	No. of servants	% of households with servants	% of persons
Farmer	77	485	36	75	46.8	15 ·5
Craftsman	42	243	4	5	9.2	2.1
Tradesman	33	164	9	16	27.3	9.8
Labourer	194	861	3	3	1.2	0.3
No recorded occupation	46	155	3	4	6.2	2.6
Total	392	1908	55	103	14.0	5•4

TABLE 4Households with servants

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Although only about 5 per cent of the total population of the parish were registered as servants, one in every seven households had one or more resident servants. Overwhelmingly, however, the servant population was concentrated in households headed by people of relative substance, those of the farmer and tradesman class. Over 88 per cent of all servants lived with and worked for farmers and tradesmen. At least one servant was to be found in over a quarter of all households headed by trades people and in almost a half of those headed by farmers, and the presence of resident domestics helped to swell the mean size of the household unit in both these socio-occupational categories. (The age, sex and marital composition of the resident servant population is given in Appendix II.)

In passing we might note the distribution of the lodger population between the households of the various social classes.

Description of household	No. of households	No. of households with lodgers	% of all households	No. of pcople	No. of lodgers	% of all persons
Farmer	77	22	28.0	485	39	8.0
Craftsman	42	6	14.3	243	7	2.9
Tradesman	33	8	24.2	164	II	6.7
Labourer No recorded	194	36	18.0	861	60	7.0
occupation	46	13	28.3	155	28	18-1
Total	392	85	21.7	1908	145	7.6

TABLE 5

Households with lodgers*

*Lodgers are defined as all those persons who were not heads of households (wives of male heads of households are not treated as lodgers), their immediate offspring or servants.

Slightly above one-fifth of all households in the parish had a lodger among their residents; but only 7.6 per cent of the total population are defined as lodgers according to the broad definition we have adopted. (The age, sex and marital composition of the lodger population is given in Appendix III.) An indication of the relationship of the lodging population to household heads is given in Table 6 below.

Rather more than two-thirds (68.3 per cent) of the lodger population was related in one way or another to the head of the household in which they lived, the most common single form of blood or marital relationship being that of grandchild.

In Tables 7 and 8 below a more detailed look is taken at the composition of Portpatrick's co-resident domestic groups.

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The relationship of lodgers to household heads*

	Number	% of total
(a) Relation by blood or marriage		
Mother or father	5	3.4
Mother- or father-in-law	5	3.4
Sister or brother	14	9.7
Sister- or brother-in-law	5	3.4
Son- or daughter-in-law	9	6-2
Grandchild	42	29.0
Nephew or niece	II	7.6
Aunt	2	I•4
Other relationship [†]	3	2•I
Unspecified relative	3	2·I
(b) Not related‡	46	31.2
Total	145	100.0

*For the definition of the term 'lodger' see footnote to Table 5 above, p. 47.

[†]Comprising a stepdaughter, a brother's stepson, and the mother-in-law (by a former marriage) of the wife of the household head.

‡Includes one foster child.

TABLE 7

	Number	Percentage of all households
Households headed by:	· · ·	
Married couple	283	72-2
Wife	7	1.8
Husband	4	1.0
Widow	54	13.8
Widower	21	5.4
Unmarried person		
(a) Male	શે	2.3
(b) Female	14 ²³	3.6
Total	392	100-0

The marital status of household heads

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Almost three-quarters (72.2 per cent) of all households in the parish of Portpatrick during the early 1830s were headed by a man and his wife. Slightly more than onequarter were headed by single persons, more often than not females. One in two (49.5 per cent) of all single household heads was a widow.

TABLE 8

The composition of households

	Number	Percentage
Households composed of married couple and:		
(1) Offspring only	182	64.3
(2) Offspring and relatives	17	6.0
(3) Offspring and other persons	31	11.0
(4) Relatives only	5	1.8
(5) Other persons only	IO	3.5
(6) Relatives and other persons	2	0.7
(7) Offspring, relatives and other persons	7	2.5
(8) Married couple only	29	10-2
Total	283	100.0
Households composed of husband or wife and:		
(1) Offspring only	3	27.3
(2) Offspring and relatives	I	9.1
(3) Offspring and other persons	2	18.2
(4) Relatives only	-	_
(5) Other persons only	4	36-4
(6) Relatives and other persons	_	_
(7) Offspring, relatives and other persons	-	-
(8) Husband or wife only	I	9.1
Total	II	100.0
Households composed of widower and:		
(1) Offspring only	6	28.6
(2) Offspring and relatives	4	19.0
(3) Offspring and other persons	3	14.3
(4) Relatives only	I	4.8
(5) Other persons only	2	9-5
(6) Relatives and other persons	-	-
(7) Offspring, relatives and other persons	2	9.5
(8) Widower only	3	14-3
Total	21	100.0

	Number	Percentage
Households composed of widow and:		
(1) Offspring only	23	42.6
(2) Offspring and relatives	7	13.0
(3) Offspring and other persons	5	9.3
(4) Relatives only	2	3.7
(5) Other persons only	2	3.7
(6) Relatives and other persons	3	5.6
(7) Offspring, relatives and other persons	_	-
(8) Widow only	12	22-2
Total	54	100.0
Households composed of unmarried person and:		
(1) Offspring only	4	17-4
(2) Offspring and relatives	_	_
(3) Offspring and other persons	_	_
(4) Relatives only	7	30.4
(5) Other persons only	3	13.0
(6) Relatives and other persons	3	13.0
(7) Offspring, relatives and other persons	-	
(8) Unmarried person only	б	26.1
Total	23	100-0

TABLE 8—continued

By far the most common type of household at Portpatrick in the period 1832-4 (55.6 per cent of all households) was that comprising household heads and their immediate offspring only, *i.e.* the nuclear family. A further 13 per cent of all domestic groups was made up of the household head(s) living alone. In only about one in every three households (31.4 per cent) was the structure rather more complex. Of particular interest is the fact that one-fifth (20.2 per cent) of all domestic groups included persons who were unrelated by blood or marriage to the head of the household. But it was extremely rare (in 5.4 per cent of all cases) for household heads to live only with people who were unrelated to them, though the frequency of this was somewhat greater where households were headed by single persons.

IV

Because it includes information on place of birth (in so far as it distinguishes between those who were born in the parish and those who were not) and length of residence (for persons not born in the parish), the Urquhart survey permits us to say a little about the migratory habits of the Portpatrick community during the early nineteenth century. Given the frailties of human memory, however, the replies of some at least of the nonnative born residents to Urquhart's query concerning duration of residence in the parish may not be absolutely precise, and the conclusions drawn from Table 10 should be approached with this caution in mind.

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Pl	ace	of	birti	h*

	М	Native-bor	n	Non	-native-bo	orn	Total population	% of all males native-born	% of all females native-born	% of total population native-born
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes				
Adults (21 years and above)	109	139	248	277	342	619	867	28.2	28.9	28.6
Children (20 years and below)	320	330	651†	159	183	342	993	66•8	64-3	65.6

*This table excludes 48 persons (22 males, 22 females, 4 unknown sex) whose place of birth was not recorded.

†The total includes one 2-week old child of unknown sex.

That two out of every three of all those defined as children in 1832-4 had been born in the parish is not surprising. What is surprising is that the ratio of children born outside the parish was as high as one third. The explanation obviously lies in the fact that almost three-quarters of the adult population (71.4 per cent) had been born in another parish and, as we shall see in Table 10, a strikingly high percentage of these had arrived within the previous twenty years, bringing their children with them. The Portpatrick evidence gives further statistical support to the view that a substantial degree of geographic mobility is not unique to modern, twentieth-century society.

Marginally over one-quarter of all non-native born adult males and between a fifth and one-quarter of all females had moved into the parish less than five years before the survey was carried out. Altogether, 70.7 per cent of all non-native-born men and 66.4 per cent of women had come to Portpatrick within the twenty year period immediately preceding Urquhart's census. By contrast, only about one in every three adults born outside the parish had been resident in the parish for twenty years or more.

TABLE IO

No. of years of	AD M	ULTS (aged Iale	21 years an Fe	d over) male	CHII N	DREN (aged Iale	20 years an Fe	ıd beloıv) male
residence	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0-4	72	26.0	76	22•2	85	53-5	89	48.6
5-9	43	15.5	54	15-8	31	19-5	33	18.0
10-14	54	19.5	59	17-3	33	20.8	52	28.4
15-19	27	9.7	38	11.1	10	6.3	8	4.4
20-24	35	12.6	47	13-7				
25-29	4	1.4	14	4·1				
30-34	17	6·1	18	5-3				
35-39	3	1.1	6	1.8				
40-44	5	1.8	9	2.6				
45-49	3	1.1	5	1-5				
50-54	7	2.5	7	2.0				
55-59	I	0.4	I	0-3				
60-64	2	0.7	3	0.9				
65-69	_	_	_	_				
70 and over	I	0-4	_	_				
Unknown	3	1.1	5	1.5	_	_	I	0.2
Total	277	100.0	342	100.0	159	100-0	183	100.0

Non-native population: length of residence in the parish*

*This table excludes 48 persons whose place of birth was not recorded.

v

Perhaps Urquhart's chief motivation for carrying out his detailed enumeration of the population of his parish was his passionate desire to improve the educational level of his flock. Accordingly, among the many questions he asked of each householder were two relating to schooling and literacy—which of their children were attending school and which school did they attend; and to what extent were each of the various members of the household capable of reading, writing and performing simple arithmetic?

Documentation of this kind is rare for such an early period and, on the face of it at least, affords an excellent opportunity for measuring the educational habits and attainments of a local community. While we know a good deal about the varying chronological and geographic provision of educational facilities, we know very little about the degree to which these facilities were utilized or the extent to which they produced effective results. Urquhart's efforts appear to throw some light on these questions. But how much?

The difficulty is that we have no adequate means of testing the reliability of the data he presents. Even assuming that Urquhart's register is an accurate reflection of the number of children enrolled in schools of one kind or another (and to assume this we must accept that all children who were not recorded as school attenders did not in fact attend), we have no way of knowing how frequently such children went to school, or whether or not Urquhart was aware of, and made allowance for, the likely difference between enrolment and actual attendance or between those children who attended frequently and those who attended infrequently. Did he simply accept the parental word on the matter of school attendance or did he make strenuous efforts to check this out? With the best and most zealous will in the world, albeit in a parish as small as Portpatrick, it is difficult to believe that he would have had the time to carry out such checks, even assuming that he was aware of the significance of the questions. Consequently, useful though they may be, the data contained in Table II unavoidably leave much unanswered. They can, therefore, only be considered as a crude guide to the level of school attendance amongst the children of the parish. Much the same sort of problem confronts us with the material in Tables 12 and 13. Did Urguhart accept without question the statements made by people about their own or their children's reading, writing or arithmetical abilities? Or did he attempt to test the veracity of such statements? We do not know, but in view of the daunting nature of the task we can hardly suppose that he undertook his own test of the educational attainments of every individual in the parish. In any case, even if he did, what standards were being applied? How well did a person have to perform before he was accredited with the magical symbols 'r', 'w', 'a', denoting a talent sufficient to satisfy Urquhart? Here too we do not know. Urquhart did make some effort to distinguish between different levels of ability. Standing alone the letters r, w, a were meant to indicate a reasonable proficiency in reading, writing or arithmetic. Instances when the letter was bracketed, e.g. (r) were intended to indicate meagre, below average ability, whilst cases where the letter was underlined, e.g. r, were intended to imply a markedly higher than average level of attainment. Unfortunately, although the conventions Urquhart followed help us a little, we have no way of knowing exactly what standards he had in mind when classifying an individual's reading, writing or arithmetical abilities as good, proficient or poor. The conclusions based on the data contained in Table 12 and 13 are subject to these reservations.

Almost exactly half (53.7 per cent of boys, 49.6 per cent of girls) of all children in the age-group (5-14 years) most likely to attend school did in fact receive a formal education in one or other of the various schools in the parish. For both boys and girls the proportion of school attenders was highest in the ages between 10 and 14 years. Although formal schooling was more common among males than females, the difference does not appear to have been as great as is sometimes supposed. Whether the proportions given in Table 11 are better or worse than those found elsewhere in Lowland Scotland is difficult to say given the shortage of reliable statistics for other

regions. They are somewhat below the ratio of school attendance in the Border parish of Norham in 1841 where 69.4 per cent of all children between the ages of 4 and 14 years are reputed to have attended school (Gilly 1973:32-41); but they appear to have been rather better than the average for Scotland as a whole (Smout 1972:423).¹⁰

Age-group	No. of children in age-group	MALE No. attending school	% at school	No. of children in age-group	FEMALE No. attending school	% at school
0-4	132	6	4.5	143	3	2.1
5-9	130	63	48.5	116	55	47.4
10-14	125	74	59-2	114	59	51.8
15-19	83	14	16-9	108	16	13.9
Total	470	157	33•4	481	132	27•4
Total						
5-19	338	151	44.7	338	129	38-2
Total						
5-14	255	137	53.7	230	114	49-6

The number and proportion of children attending school*

TABLE II

*In 1832 there appears to have been a total of seven schools in the parish, four in the town (Crookshank's, Sample's, Gibson's and Miller's) and three in the surrounding rural area (Auchenric, Pinminnoch and one abbreviated as Hut., which I have not been able to identify). In addition the 1832 survey occasionally records the name of another parish in the column headed schooling, e.g. Inch, Stranraer and Leswalt. In these latter cases it seems reasonable to assume that the child concerned was receiving an education outside Portpatrick. Where no entry was made I have assumed that the child was not benefiting from a formal education.

The cumulative effect of this level of educational provision is summed up, as far as the deficiencies of the data allow, in Tables 12 and 13 below which summarize Urquhart's findings in respect of the levels of literacy and numeracy amongst his flock.

Professor Smout has written that 'between them, the parochial schools and the adventure schools of the Lowlands were able to maintain a rural society in which almost everyone seems to have been able to read and write'. (Smout 1972:427). Crude though they may be, the data given in Table 12 afford abundant testimony to this, particularly if as suggested in the footnote to the Table they understate the true levels of rudimentary literacy and numeracy. A mere 5.5 per cent of all males and 6.9 per

					MALE										FBMAI	C B	-			
	RИ	V.	RI	A	4	~	Illite	rate	T	otal	RW	A'	RV	4	R		Illite	rate	To	tal
Age- group	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	~	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ŝ		2.4	6	1.7	96	75-6	19	15.0	127	100-0		2.6	0	5.3	74	64.9	31	27.2	114	0-001
10-14	55	45.5	25	20.7	39	32.2	6	L-1	121	100-0	22	2-61	25	22-3	63	56-3	6	1.8	112	100-0
15-19	SI	62.2	21	25.6	œ	9.8	7	2.4	82	100-0	43	39-4	31	28-4	32	29-4	e	2.8	601	100-0
20-30	86	76-8	17	15.2	2	6.3	7	1.8	112	100-0	64	38.1	ઙ	35-7	41	24.4	3	1.8	168	0-001
31-40	64	64.0	20	20-0	IO	0.01	9	0.9	100	100-0	39	32.5	35	29.2	34	28-3	12	0.01	120	100-0
41-50	So	68.5	2	9.6	11	1.51	S	6-8	73	100-0	28	34-I	20	24.4	30	36-6	4	4.9	82	100-0
51-60	37	62.7	0	15.3	6	15.3	4	6.8	59	100-0	11	14-9	18	24.3	4	59-4	H	1.4	74	0.001
60 and																				
OVCL	36	2-99	13	24.1	S	9-3	١	1	54	I00-0	6	13-6	14	212	40	60-6	e	4.5	66	100-0
No age																				
given	I	100-0	I	I	I	I	I	1	H	100-0	н	25-0	6	50-0	н	25.0	I	I	4	100•0
Total	383	52.5	121	16-6	185	25.4	40	5.5	729	0.001	220	25-9	211	24.9	359	42.3	59	6-9	849	0.001
*This t I have any o In onl made. abiliti bc sor	able re assur ccupar y a tin y a tin Thest es of tl es of tl newhan	fers onl ned that it of suc y numb thave b heir mei tholer tu under	y to me all hou h hous ber of h cen exe mbers. n over	smbers (ischolds i cholds i ousehol cluded f It is po: by thes	of thos i in wh not no lds, cou i ds, cou th ssible t ssible t ssible t	c housel ich at le ted as bu ntaining te analy hat som quhart. es.	holds f ast on eing al twent sis on t c of th If this	or whi or whi ole to 1 ole to 1 ty-five the gro ose pe is the	ch cnt n has cad, v males unds t rsons r case th	been reg vrite or and tw hat, for tot reco	cerning gisterco perfori enty-fo one re one re rded as rded as	g literac l as liter m simpl our fem ason or s being f literac	y and r ate or le arith ales, w anothe able to	numerae numera metic h ere no e ere no e rread, v read, v	y appe te have las beer entries uhart <i>m</i> vrite or vrite or	ar to ha to been c assum pertaini ay not l ortpatr ?ortpatr	ve bec onsiste on illit ng to have thructi rick in	in made in the second cerate o literacy ested the could could the cau	e consi corde r innu r or nu ne edu in fac l in fac	stently. d. Thus merace. meracy cational et do so tt do so

Literacy and Numeracy by age and sex*

TABLE 12

THE REVEREND ANDREW URQUHART

cent of all females over 5 years of age can be regarded as illiterate, lacking even the basic ability to read. As high a proportion as $69 \cdot 1$ per cent of all males and $50 \cdot 8$ per cent of all females (a noticeably lower ratio than that among males) were able both to read and write. Over half of the male population ($52 \cdot 5$ per cent), though only a quarter of the female ($25 \cdot 9$ per cent), had at least the rudiments of simple arithmetic as well.

TABLE	13
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	N	Iale	F	emale
Degree of attainment	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<u>r</u> reads well	3	0.4	8	1.0
r reads proficiently	615	89-3	728	92.2
(r) reads poorly	71	10-3	54	6.8
Total	689	100.0	790	100.0
w writes well	3	0.6		_
w writes proficiently	441	87-5	357	82-8
(w) writes poorly	60	11.9	74	17-2
Total	504	100.0	431	100.0
a calculates well		_		_
a calculates proficiently	366	95.6	214	97.3
(a) calculates poorly	17	4.4	6	2.7
Total	383	100.0	220	100-0

Degrees of Literacy and Numeracy by sex*

*This table refers only to persons aged 5 years and above.

Of course the question arises of the actual standard of literacy and numeracy reached. As noted above Urquhart himself made some attempt to assess the precise levels of literacy and numeracy that were attained. Generally he appears to have done so consistently throughout the survey. It may be significant, however, that the relatively few people who according to him were able to read, write or calculate rather better than average all occur in the first few pages of the listing. Perhaps he soon tired of recording the achievements of the talented, maybe because he found it too difficult to distinguish between those who were above average and those who were merely averagely proficient. It is probable, therefore, that Table 13 understates the number of especially good scholars in the parish. Of all males and females who could read, write or calculate, the overwhelming majority was able to do so proficiently, in Urquhart's opinion anyway. A surprisingly low proportion of the literate or numerate population read, wrote or calculated poorly. For what it is worth, however, the number of people able to read, write or calculate well appears to have been negligible.

IV

The study of the social structure of Portpatrick in the nineteenth century is still at its preliminary stage. At the moment, so far as one can tell, its main characteristics seem to be very similar to those found in other small parishes analysed: by comparison with modern societies the age composition of the community was heavily weighted in favour of the youngest age-groups; there was a slight excess of females over males in the population, particularly at adult ages; the ratio of unmarried and widowed persons was greater among women than men; household size was small, and households were relatively infrequently shared by more than one family; there was a positive correlation between variations in household size and the social status of the household head (caused by variations in the number of offspring and servants between households of different socio-occupational classes); the extent of geographic mobility among the residents of the parish was surprisingly high. These broad similarites between the social structure of Portpatrick and that of other communities, as well as all the possible differences of detail between them, will be further investigated and, it is hoped, accounted for in future work. It is hoped, too, that work in progress on the nineteenth-century census enumerators' books of the parish will allow us to see how, if at all, the social structure of Portpatrick altered in the face of a steady decline in population from the 1830s onwards. Are we justified in assuming that changes in the size of a community have noticeable effects on the basic features of its social organisations? If so, what are these effects? Or do the fundamental characteristics of social structure remain unaltered during periods of marked demographic change? Finally, subsequent research will need to look closely at the complex issue of what effects different social structures have on the movements of population. How do the patterns of marriage, fertility, mortality and migration-the mechanics of demographic change-respond to the pressure of variations in social organisation? What changes in a community's attitudes and life styles come about as a result of alterations in its social structure? The raw data presented in this paper provide some of the information upon which to proceed. Subsequent research will provide more. When the analysis of Portpatrick has been completed we should have at least the beginnings of an answer to these questions.

Appendix I

The occupational status of household heads

(a) Farmer	Number	(c)	Craftsman	Number
Farmer	65	• • •	Shoemaker	8
Farmer and deals in swine	I		Mason	7
Farmer and tanner	I		Smith	4
Farmer and dealer	I		Carpenter	3
Proprietor at Dunsky	I		Engineman	3
Gamekeeper at Dunsky	I		Wright	3
Factor at Dunsky	I		Dressmaker	2
Harbourmaster	I		Hammerman	2
Packet agent	I		Tailor	2
Captain of a sloop	I		Cobbler	I
Captain of a packet	I		Cooper	I
Captain of a vessel	I		Diver	I
Captain of a brig	I		Fisherman and sawyer	I
			Nailor	I
Total	77		Stonecutter	I
			Spaviour*	I
(b) Tradesman			Ropemaker	I
Innkeeper	5			
Butcher	3		Total	42
Shopkeeper	3			
Schoolteacher	3	(d) Labourer	
Baker	2	`	Labourer	70
Carter	I		Spins	II
Carrier	I		Labourer at harbour	9
Clerk to harbour	I		Farm servant	8
Dealer	I		Pauper	8
Grocer and spirit dealer	I		Farms a bit of ground	б
Grocer	I		Fisherman	5
Innkeeper and farmer	I		Farmer and labourer	4
Meat dealer	I		Seaman in packet	4
Miller	I		Weaver	4
Packman	r		Gardener	3
Postmaster	I		Pensioner	3
Barber and wright	I		Boatman to packet	3
Travelling bookseller	I		Boatman and fisherman	3
Travels with goods	I		Keeps a charge house	3
Spirit merchant	I		Servant	3
Soft goods seller	I		Works in bellboat	2
Teaseller	I		Steward of bellboat	2
			Sews muslin	2
Total	33		Fireman of packet	2

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(d)	Labourer (contd.)	Number	(d) Labourer (contd.)	Number
	Boatswain of packet	2	Knits and spins	I
	Tollkeeper and occasional labourer	r	Steward of packet	Т
	Labourer and egg gatherer	ī	Washer and dresser	т
	Labourer and sells crockery ware	ī	Flax dresser	т
	Carter and labourer	I	Spins and keeps lodgers	ī
	Weaver and labourer	I	Pauper. Washes and dresses clothes	I
	Pensioner and occasional labourer	I	Pauper. Washes occasionally	I
	Pension. Keeps lodging house	I	Keeps lodgers	ī
	Watchman	I	Spins and a pauper	I
	Packet storekeeper	I	Mate of packet	ī
	Afflicted with cancer	I	Knits	ī
	Blind. Has a bit of land	ī	Cockswain to packet	I
	Weaver and farmer	I	Washes and spins	I
	Weaver and labourer	I	Keeps a cow	ī
	Forester	I	Keeps a few cattle	I
	Groom	I	Lame with rheumatism	I
	Undergroom	т	Pauper, Spins	T
	Ploughman	- T	Spins and sells needlework	т.
	Midwife	T		
	Knits and sews	I	Total	194

*The occupation of 'spaviour' (spaver or spava) was a rare one, though several other cases are known for early nineteenth-century Scotland. It refers to a person skilled in the operation of removing the ovaries from animals to make them infertile.

Appendix II

			R	MALE					FER	MALE		
	S	ingle	M	arried	Wid	owed	S	ingle	М	arried	Wid	lowed
Age in years	No.	ຶ%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
10–14	10	25.6	_	-	_	_	4	7.1	-	-	_	_
15-19	14	35.9	-		_	-	21	37-5	_	-	_	-
20–24	10	25.6	I	25.0	-	-	13	23.2	-	-	_	_
25-29	2	5-1	-	-	_	-	II	19.6	-	_	-	-
30-34	2	5-1	-	-	_	-	3	5.4	-	_	_	_
35-39	I	2.6	-	_	_	-	I	I•8	-	-	-	-
40-44	-	_	2	50.0	_	-	2	3.6	I	50-0	-	-
45-64	-		—	_		—						
65 and over	-	-	I	25.0	-	—	I	1.8	I	50.0	-	-
Total	39	100.0	4	100.0	_	_	56	100.0	2	100.0	-	_

The marital status, age and sex structure of the servant population*

*Two servants of unknown age, sex and marital status are excluded from this Table.

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Appendix III

Age in years	MALE							FEMALE					
	Single		Married		Widowed		Single		Married		Widowed		
	No.	ຶ%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	ຶ%	No.	%	No.	%	
0-4	12	27.3	_	_	_	-	20	29.9	_	_	_	_	
5-9	10	22.7	-	-	_	_	8	11.9	_	_	_	_	
10-14	8	18.2	-	_	_	-	8	11.9	_	_	-	_	
15-19	5	11.4	_	_	_	_	5	7.5	_	_	_	_	
2024	3	6.8	_		—	_	I	1.5	_	_	I	7.7	
25–29	2	4-5	4	66.7	_	_	3	4.5	4	57-1	_	_	
30-34	I	2-3	2	33.3	_	_	4	6.0	2	28.6	-	-	
35-39	I	2.3	_	_	_	_	4	6.0	_	-	2	15.4	
40-44	-	_	_	_	-	-	2	3.0	_	_	-	_	
45-49	I	2-3		_					—				
50-54	-	_	_	_	-	-	4	6.0	_	-	2	15-4	
55-59	-	_	_	_	-	_	I	1.2	-	-	I	7.7	
60-64	I	2.3	_	_	I	33-3	2	3.0	_	-	I	7.7	
65 and over	-	-	-	-	2	6 6 · 7	5	7.5	I	14.3	6	46-2	
Total	44	100-0	6	100.0	3	100-0	67	100-0	7	100.0	13	100.0	

The marital status, age and sex structure of the lodger population*

*For the definition of the term 'lodger' see footnote to Table 5 above, p. 47. This Appendix excludes one two-week old child of unknown sex, one female of unknown age and marital status, and three adult females of unknown marital status.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Professor R. H. Campbell of the University of Stirling for first drawing my attention to the existence of Andrew Urquhart's 'Social Survey and Register of all Households in the Village and Parish of Portpatrick, 1832', upon which this paper is largely based, and also for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I am also indebted to Mr A. M. Urquhart for his permission to reproduce an extract from the 1832 survey.

NOTES

- Anderson 1971; Armstrong 1968; Laslett 1965, 1969, 1970; Laslett and Harrison 1963; Lawton 1955; Tranter 1967, 1973; Smith 1970; Nixon 1970; Law 1969; Baker 1973.
- 2 See, for instance, Michael Anderson's S.S.R.C.-sponsored project based on a national sample from the 1851 census enumerators' books of Great Britain.

- 3 The present paper is part of a larger study being undertaken by the author on the economic, social and demographic structure of Portpatrick in the ninetcenth century.
- 4 For further details on the economy of the parish see Urquhart 1845:129-61; Muir 1965:484-90.
- 5 In addition, a fifth visitation appears to have been begun in Oct. 1850, but this proved to be abortive and was very quickly given up.
- 6 In the context of the early ninetcenth-century Portpatrick community, we might have wished that Urquhart had extended the range of his enquiries slightly. It is a pity for instance, in view of the notoriously high rates of illegitimacy then prevalent in Wigtownshire, that the survey does not permit a thorough analysis of the extent of bastardy in the parish. Again, in view of the geographic situation of Portpatrick, it would be interesting to have some information on the number of Irishmen and Roman Catholics in the community. Unfortunately, the Urquhart survey does not record the actual birth place of each resident. It distinguishes only between people born in the parish and those born outside. The number of people born in Ireland cannot, therefore, be estimated. Unlike the censuses of the 1840s, the Urquhart listing of 1832 does not record the religious denomination of each individual. Accordingly, it is not possible to estimate the size of the Roman Catholic community.
- 7 In the absence of any evidence to the contrary I have assumed that the Urquhart visitation of 1832-4 was devised and carried out independently of the later work he did for his entry in the New Statistical Account. Urquhart himself made no reference to any direct connection between the two. And the fact that he continued to conduct his own personal censuses of the parish through the 1840s and early 1850s may likewise suggest that his motives went beyond the preparation of material for the N.S.A. Neither reason is entirely convincing. It is hoped that future research may throw more light on this point.
- 8 Compare this with a similar finding for the Bedfordshire parish of Cardington in 1851 (Tranter 1973:93-4).
- 9 At Cardington, Bedfordshire, in 1851 the average number of resident offspring per household was 2.86 (Tranter 1973:94). At Clayworth, Nottinghamshire, in 1676 and 1688 the ratios were 2.45 and 2.61 respectively (Laslett and Harrison 1963:171).
- 10 According to G. Lewis (Scotland, a half-educated nation, 1834, quoted in Smout 1972), whereas one person in every five or six was aged between 6 and 14 years, only one person in every twelve was actually enrolled in a day school. At Portpatrick the ratio of school enrolment was one to nine.

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