

**THE NATURAL HISTORY OF  
A HIGHLAND PARISH  
(ARDCLACH, NAIRNSHIRE)**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649754847

The Natural History of a Highland Parish (Ardclach, Nairnshire) by Robert Thomson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ROBERT THOMSON**

**THE NATURAL HISTORY OF  
A HIGHLAND PARISH  
(ARDCLACH, NAIRNSHIRE)**



THE  
NATURAL HISTORY

OF A  
HIGHLAND PARISH  
(ARDCLACH, NAIRNSHIRE).

BY ROBERT THOMSON.

[NB. NOT Robert Boyd Thomson,  
1870 - 1947]

1) NAIRN: # #  
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GEORGE BAIN, LEOPOLD STREET.

3) 1900.

LIBRARY

757744

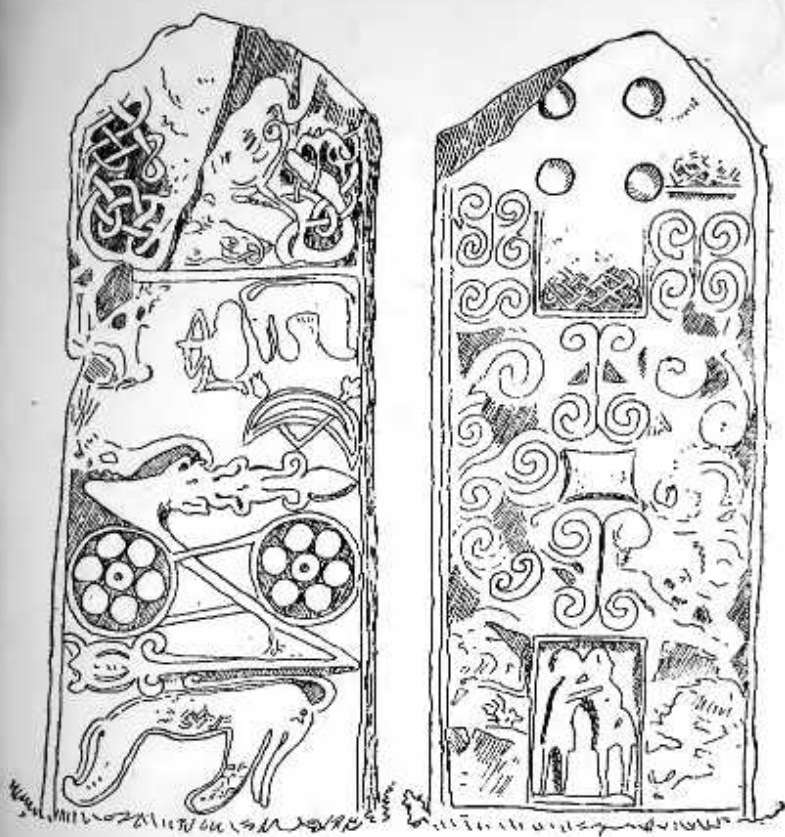
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## CONTENTS.

---

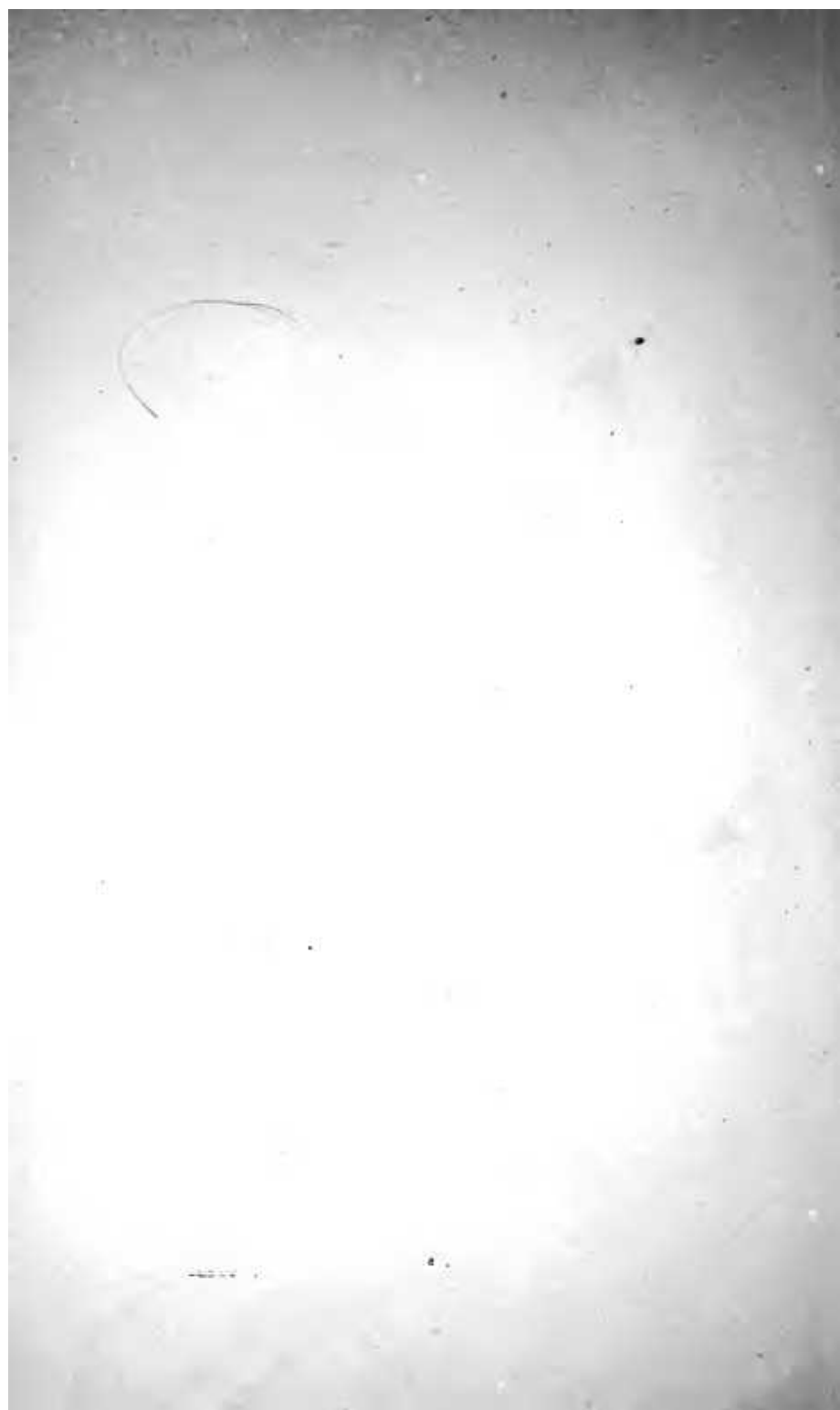
	Page.
INTRODUCTORY .. .. .	i.
CHAPTER I.—THE FLORA .. .. .	1
General Aspect of the Parish—Spring Time.	
CHAPTER II.—THE FLORA (Continued) .. .. .	17
Early Summer—Midsummer.	
CHAPTER III.—THE FLORA (Continued) .. . . .	53
Autumn—The Ferns—The Grasses—The Mosses— Fungi.	
CHAPTER IV.—THE FAUNA .. .. .	81
Mammalia, Aves et Reptilia.	
CHAPTER V.—INSECT LIFE .. .. .	131
CHAPTER VI.—PLACE-NAMES OF ARDCLACH .. .. .	152
CHAPTER VII.—GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARISH .. .. .	195
The Bell Tower—The Old Mill of Remore—Traditions —Cock Fighting—The Burying Ground—Lochindorbh —The Princess Stone—Callun Beg.	
APPENDIX .. .. .	265
A List of Plants found in the Parish of Ardclach—A List of the Macro-Lepidoptera found in the Parish of Ardclach—Systematic List of Flies—Inscriptions in Churchyard of Ardclach.	

INDEX.



THE PRINCESS STONE.





## INTRODUCTORY.

DURING the last few years of my schoolboy life, I and a companion, David Moir, became deeply interested in the truths of Astronomy as presented to us in our ordinary text-books. As the schoolmaster himself had a decided favour for this branch of science, he occasionally gave us a persual of an advanced work on this subject from his own library. In school he even allowed us to spend an hour or two daily in the practical application of the knowledge thus acquired. It was, therefore, with no small degree of pleasure mingled with some pride, that we devoted ourselves for a few months to the construction of large diagrams in colour, to illustrate the plan and various effects of the heavenly bodies. From an artistic point of view our productions were fairly creditable, and the foundation thus laid proved greatly helpful to me when extending my knowledge in this department.

After completing about a dozen sheets, we longed for a telescopic view of the orbs themselves, and cherished the hope of being considered real astronomers by our schoolfellows. Owing to the cost, a suitable instrument was hopelessly beyond the reach of our united means, and our parents, though indulgent above many, were neither able nor willing to gratify such an ambitious desire. As the result of long and careful consideration, we boldly resolved to attempt the

construction of a telescope for ourselves. Having each a mechanical turn of mind, we managed, with great care and at some little expense, to fit up a small turning-lathe at our respective homes, and were soon busy grinding lenses for our grand project. These were, of course, rather imperfect, and showed the same defects with which the early makers had to contend when they combined their handiwork for similar purposes. The greater their magnifying power the more they refracted the light of the celestial bodies, and tinged the margins with all the colours of the rainbow. By and bye, we ascertained that second-hand glasses could be had very cheap from a professional instrument-maker in Aberdeen, and accordingly we stopped grinding and replaced our own productions with articles in every respect more satisfactory. With a thirty-inch acromatic field glass, somewhat dimmed with mildew, and a half-inch eye piece, I saw the Rings of Saturn, Jupiter's Moons, and the Phases of Venus with some degree of complacency. The ordinary Man in the Moon, too, had to give place to mountains, valleys and plains all over the surface. On the 6th December 1882, I followed with great distinctness the Transit of Venus across the sun's disc, and enjoyed a sight which no one now living will ever see again.

Of the sixty-five British butterflies, from seventeen to twenty might be expected to occur in any one locality. With the exception of *Pieris Brassica*, they are all comparatively harmless. For this reason the country people entertain no feelings of hostility towards them, and generally they are great favourites wherever they occur. Among our natives, none are gaudy, but everyone is chaste and pretty. At first they appeared to me, as to the uninitiated, to be simply members of one great family, and only divided into septs according to their colours—red, white, blue, or dark brown.