
Bitesize History - Antiquities

Tower - Kenmuir Hill 1897



Kenmuir Hill, upon whose summit there stands the Temple, like an observatory, is a prominent height near the east end of the loch. This building, which is more than one hundred and fifty years old, is believed to have been a pleasure house for the family.

The hill was used as a deer park, and in its northern vicinity there was at one time a village of Kenmuir, with a chapel dedicated to St. Bridget or St. Bride. Both village and chapel have been obliterated by Time's rude hand, but the memory of the saint is preserved in Bride's Mill, or St. Bride's, the residence of the factor on the estate, and near which there was many years ago a corn mill.



The parish church was built in 1808 on a new site opposite to the elegant west gates of Castle Semple, and on the west of Harvey's-square. It is a large building, which ought to have been square, but its corners are rounded off so as to make it an irregular-sided octagon. It is well finished and painted within, and lets to about 1130 sitters; but when packed it will hold 200 or 300 more.

There are no free sittings in the church, except part of two table-seats; and the other seats are let so dear as to be a very heavy burden upon poor persons. They vary front 4s. to 12s. a seat; and if a family be large their sittings in church are almost equal to their rent, if they have as many as they require. The reason of this is, that even with us where there is a village population of about 3000 souls, and altogether 3730 persons who profess to belong to the Establishment, there is a melancholy want of church accommodation.