The face of the country may be rather described as undu­lating than as hilly, though there is a range of hills, or rather downs, running from east to west through the island, with a few points of considerable elevation. There is a great variety of rural scenery, adorned with a great diversity of foliage ; and though there are few or no woods, yet, as the fields are enclosed within hedge-rows, among which fine trees, and especially stately elms, grow most luxuriantly, these, added to the beauty of the verdant fields, present to the eye of the traveller a succession of most pleasing pros­pects. The two sides of the island present each a peculiar character. The northern side is marked by every thing that is rich, lovely, and picturesque ; the southern, or the part called the *Back of the Island,* abounds in bold wild rocks, precipitous projections, ravines, fearful chasms, and other features of the imposing, and a few even of the sublime. In some parts these opposite characters are greatly mingled. There is a peculiar scenery on the south side of the island, which is so striking to all strangers as to require a special notice. It is a continued sinking of a tract of land, about seven "miles in length, and from a half to a quarter of a mile in breadth. This singular district consists of a series of terraces, formed by fragments of rocks, chalk, and sand­stone, which have been detached from the cliffs and hills above, and deposited upon a substratum of white marl. This whole *undercliff,* for such is its common name, is com­pletely sheltered from the north, north-west, and west winds, by the range of lofty downs or hills of chalk or sandstone which rise boldly from the upper termination of these ter­races, on elevations varying from four to six and seven hun­dred feet in height. The two extremities of the range are indeed higher, as St Boniface Down is 800 feet above the level of the sea, and St Catherine’s Hill on the west nearly 900 feet. The protection afforded by this mountain barrier is greatly increased by the very singular and striking abrupt­ness with which it terminates on its southern aspect. This in many places consists of the bare perpendicular rock of sandstone ; in others of chalk, assuming its characteristic rounded form, covered with a fine turf and underwood.

The chief industry of the island is applied to its agricul­ture. The soil is for the most part clay, with a mixture of loam, and in some parts of a very cold and tenacious kind ; it is however generally fertile, and the meadows produce very great crops of hay. The grain sown, whether wheat, barley, or oats, yields good crops, and affords more corn than is needed for home consumption ; and hence much flour is exported. As the harvest is ready to be gathered earlier by a few weeks on the island than in the neighbouring counties of Dorset and Hants, the labourers from them flock to reap the corn, and return sufficiently early to reach their own homes, and there also to assist in the harvest-work. The manures of the island, besides what the farm-yards and stables supply, consist of sea-weed, marl, and lime, the latter of which is copiously supplied from the chain of calcareous elevations which has been already no­ticed. There is little foreign trade, though a great number of ships of all nations have intercourse with the towns of Cowes and Ryde. Vessels from America, bound in search of a market, especially during war, commonly touch at the former place to ascertain the state of the different markets, and to communicate with London for intelligence to direct their destination. Between the Isle of Wight and Ports­mouth is the great rendezvous of outward-bound ships from London; and in war large fleets of East and West India ships are there collected to wait for convoy. The demand for fresh sea-stores is consequently very great, and the sup­ply of it very advantageous. Fowls, live sheep, milch goats, milch cows, pigs, and potatoes, are cheaper than in the Thames ; and most outward-bound vessels trust to obtain­ing such provisions at the anchorage of the Motherbank or Spithead. During the long hostilities, by this descrip­tion of trade the wealth of the island increased very ra­pidly ; and though, since the return of peace, these sources of prosperity have been much curtailed, yet others have opened or been extended. Ryde, as well as Cowes and several other spots, have become places of great resort for sea-bathing, and have gradually acquired all the accom­modations to be found in the more ancient bathing places on the shore. Of late, too, it has become the point of union for the vessels and members of the *Royal Yacht Club,* who have built a house at Cowes, and made that place the resort of some of the most distinguished persons who take pleasure in maritime adventures and expeditions. The population of the island at the enumeration of 1831 was found to con­sist of 17,205 males, and 18,226 females. The chief town, Newport, at that period, contained 4081 inhabitants. The other towns are, Brading, with 2277 persons ; Cowes, in the parish of Northwood, the population of which parish was 4491; and Ryde, in the parish of Newchurch, whose inha­bitants were 4928.

The town of Newport returns two members to the House of Commons, as before the reform act, by which the boroughs of Newton and Yarmouth were disfranchised. The free­holders of the island used to vote for the members of the county of Hampshire, but they now elect one member for the island.

WIGTON, a county situated at the south-west corner of Scotland, is bounded on the west by the Irish Chan­nel, on the north by Ayrshire, on the east by Wigton Bay and the river Cree, and on the south by the Irish Sea. It is consequently bounded by water on all sides except the north. No part of the county is above thirteen miles from the sea. Its length from east to west is thirty-four miles ; its mean breadth is twenty-four. It is divided into three districts, the Machers (flat country), lying between Wig­ton and Luce Bays ; the Rhinns (peninsula), which com­prehends the portion lying west of a line drawn between Luce Bay and Lochryan ; and the Moors, which include the remainder, being more than a third of the whole county.

The following table shews the population of the county at different dates.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1755. | 1801. |  | 1831. |  |
|  | | **Males.** | **Females.** | **Total.** |
| 16,466 | 22,918 | 17,078 19,180 36,258 | | |

The increase in the number of the inhabitants between 1755 and 1831 has been 19,792; in other words, the popu­lation has been considerably more than doubled. The number of square miles in the county being 459, there are seventy-nine inhabitants to each square mile ; the average of the whole of Scotland being about eighty. The number of families in 1831 was 7514 ; of inhabited houses, 6404; the number of persons to each family being 4·825 ; to each house, 5∙66l.

Wigton being a remote county, and having little inter­course with any other portion of the kingdom, the greater part of the present inhabitants can trace their descent through many generations ; the only exception being in re­gard to Irish settlers, who are somewhat numerous, par­ticularly in the towns and villages, and who, including their families, form about a fifth of the entire population of the county. The Gallovidians are of Celtic origin ; and so late as the time of Queen Mary, Gaelic was their vernacular language. The surnames, which prevailed in the county four and five centuries ago, and even at a more remote period, still predominate, such as Macdowall, Mackerlie, Maculloch, Mackie, Macklcllan, Macguffie, Mackinnell, Macgowan, Macgeoch, Macgill, Macracken, Macnish, Adair, Dunbar, Agnew, Stewart, Gordon, Hannay, Broadfoot, Donnan, Milroy, Milwain. While old names and old fami­lies thus obtain, very few’ new ones, except so far as emi­gration from Ireland prevails, have been introduced. But not a few of the oldest and best families were originally of