

II.

NOTES RELATING TO THE INTERMENT OF KING JAMES III. OF SCOTLAND AND OF HIS QUEEN, MARGARET OF DENMARK, IN THE ABBEY CHURCH OF CAMBUSKENNETH. BY DAVID LAING, ESQ., FOREIGN SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY.

King James III. was slain on the 11th of June 1488, in the 28th year of his reign and 35th of his age. Nimmo, in his "History of Stirlingshire," says, "the place where this barbarity was committed is well known in that neighbourhood by the name of Beaton's-miln, said to be so called from the person who at that time possessed it; it is yet standing, though now converted into a dwelling-house, new and more commodious milns having been erected near it. The lower parts of its walls are still the same which received the unfortunate James. The stones wear the marks of antiquity, being much mouldered by the weather in the course of so many ages."¹ A view of the house is represented in the drawing by Sir James Alexander (see woodcut at p. 25); it stands on the east side of Sauchie Burn. According to Buchanan's statement,² the king's interment took place in Cambuskenneth Abbey on the 25th of that month; and this statement is repeated by other historians. The mere circumstance that Sauchieburn, where the King was slain, is within a few miles of Cambuskenneth, would have had but little influence in selecting that Abbey as the place of his sepulture in preference to the Abbey of Holyrood, where his father, James II., was interred, or to Trinity College, Edinburgh, the burial-place of his mother, Mary of Gueldres, but was undoubtedly owing to the fact that his Queen, Margaret of Denmark, had previously been buried at Cambuskenneth.

Notwithstanding the silence of most of our historians, it is quite certain that Queen Margaret predeceased her husband, probably in the town of Stirling. In the contemporary chronicle of James Gray (fol. 22),

¹ History, &c., p. 230; Edinb. 1777. Second edition, p. 256; Stirling, 1817.

² "Ea igitur consultatione dilata, Edinburgum eunt. Ibi certiores de morte Regis facti, *funus ei amplissimum faciendum curant, ad Cammiskennethum, Ccenobium Sterlino vicinum, ad vicesimum quintum diem mensis Junij.*" (Hist. lib. xiii.)

we find this brief notice:—"Obitus Margarite Regine Scotie apud Striuelin, I^m iij^c lxxxvi." In like manner, Drummond of Hawthornden says, "Margarite the Queen about these times, a good and virtuous lady, died 1486, and was buried at Cambuskynnel the 29th of February."¹ This would be the year 1486-7, which, as Pinkerton² remarks, was not bissextile; but I find a reference to another authority, which gives the day as the 27th of February. The most remarkable proof, however, of the fact is, the King's desire to contract a second marriage. On the 27th of November 1487 an indenture was subscribed at Edinburgh³ by commissioners of the two kingdoms for establishing a lasting peace; and at the same time overtures were made for negotiating three marriages—that of James III. himself with Queen Elizabeth, the widow of King Edward IV. of England, and of Prince James of Scotland (afterwards James IV.), and his brother, the Duke of Ross, with two of the daughters of the same English sovereign. But not one of these alliances was fated to take place. It is farther evident that during his reign James himself had appointed a chaplain to sing masses for Queen Margaret. On the 3d of August 1488, the Treasurer paid "To a Prest callit Schir Thomas Mersell *that sang for the Qwene in Stirling*, L.4. 0. 0." After the king's death, James IV. appointed the same priest, Sir Thomas Merschell, to perform this service, as expressed in the Treasurer's Accounts, "Item, to Schir Thomas Merschell *that singis for the King and Qwene in Cambuskynnell*," and he continued till at least November 1507 to receive his half-yearly fee of L.6, 13s. 4d. Among other payments, 5s. was given "to the cobill mane (boatman) of Cambuskynnell quhen the King past oure (crossed over)," the 27th April 1490; and three days later, "Item, to the Abot of Cambuskynnell, be a precep of the Kingis, that he lent to the King quhen he wes Prince, L.100."

The Abbey of Cambuskenneth was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and is usually assigned to the middle of the twelfth century. It was for monks of the Augustine order; and from the first had received royal patronage. The church of Kippan had been granted to the Abbey by Walter, Earl of Menteith, and Alexander, his son and heir-apparent, for

¹ Drummond's History, p. 106. Lond. 1655, folio.

² Pinkerton's History, vol. i. p. 324, *note*.

³ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 328.

salvation of their own souls, and of Matilda, the wife of the said Alexander, and for their sepulture appointed to be within the monastery.¹ There is no date to this grant; but in confirming this grant, on the 6th of April 1496, James IV. added clauses *de novodamus*, which prescribe the usual religious services for the salvation of the souls of his own most noble father James III., and Margaret his spouse, of happy memory, *whose bodies* (it is added) *rest in our said monastery of Cambuskenneth*. The following are the words of the charter, as recorded in the Register of the Great Seal, lib. xiii. No. 231:—

“Carta super Rectoria et Vicaria Ecclesie de Kippane et jure patronatus ejusdem alias data per Comitem de Menteth et nunc de nouo per Regem Monasterio de Cambuskynneth et Canonicis ejusdem.”

After reciting the words of the original grant, with reference to the burial of Alexander Earl of Menteith and Matilda his spouse within the said monastery, one of the clauses introduced is to this effect:—

“Nos igitur in honorem Dei omnipotentis prefateque gloriosissime Virginis et matris sue Marie ac pro salute animarum quondam nobilissimorum Patris et Matris nostrorum Jacobi Tertii et Margarite eius sponse bone memorie, quibus propicietur Deus, *quorum corpora in dicto nostro Monasterio requiescunt*. Necnon orationum suffragiis pro nostris Patre et Matre antedictis ac pro nobis et successoribus nostris perpetuum fiendis Ratificamus, approbauimus, &c. Apud Striueling sexto die mensis Aprilis, anno Domini Millesimo quadragintesimo nonagesimo sexto, et Regni nostri octauo.”

The various payments in the Treasurer's Accounts, of a subsequent date, during the reign of King James the Fourth, having reference to Cambuskenneth, all clearly point to the erection of the *lair* or place of sepulture within the monastery, not for his parents, but for the King himself. The following entries may be quoted:—

1501-2, March 15. Item to David Prat and the masounis that hewis the lair in Cambuskinnethe, of drinksilver, xiiij^s.

1502, June 7. Item, to the werkmen in Cambuskinnethe, of drinksilver, be the Kingis command, iiij^s.

¹ Dalzell's Analysis of the Chartularies of Cambuskenneth, &c., p. 23. Edin. 1828, 8vo.

- 1502, June 12. Item, gifin to David Prat quhen he began the laying of the lair in Cambuskinneth, xiiij^s.
- 1502, July 10. Item, in Cambuskinneth to David Prat and the masounis that workis on the lair, be the Kingis command, xxviiij^s.
- 1502, December 20. Item, to David Pret to by colouris to the Kingis lair in Cambuskynneith, xxviiij^s.
- 1502-3, February 16. Item, to David Pret payntour in part of payment of the making of the Kingis sepultur in Cambuskinneth, xiiij lib.
- 1503, May 3. Item, to David Pret in part of payment of the sepultur making in Cambuskinneth, vj lib. xiiij^s. iiij^d.
- 1508, July 5. Item, to the Almanye (the Flemish or German artist) that suld mak the Kingis lair in Cambuskinneth in marbill, xxviiij^s.
- 1508, July 7. Item, to the Abbot of Tungland to gif the man that suld mak the Kingis lair in Cambuskynneith, iiij lib. iiij^s.
- 1511, November 10. Item, to the botesman of Cambuskynnel for turning (carrying) the King our the wattir, iiij^s.
- (Same day.) Item, in Cambuskinneth to the masounis in drink-silver, xxviiij^s.

It may be added that Ferrerius, in his continuation of Hector Boece's Chronicle, in recording the death of James III. in 1488, says, "Et ad Cambuskynneith cœnobium canonicorum S. Augustini regia pompa delatum sepulturæ traditur: ubi et hodie tumulus, in quo cum Regina uxore sua conditur, magnifice olim extractus cernitur."¹

The calamitous death of King James IV. at Flodden, in September 1513, aged 41, was the means of rendering unavailing his purpose to have had his resting-place in the tomb which had for many years been in preparation. His body was carried to London, and treated with indignity, although Henry VIII. in his letter to Pope Leo X., on the 12th October, had signified his desire, on obtaining the sanction of his Holiness, to pay royal honour to his brother-in-law, by an interment within St Paul's

¹ Scotorum Historia a prima Gentis origine, &c., p. 401. Paris, 1574, folio.

Church; but the Scottish King being under the ban of excommunication, this intention was neutralised, and his body was deposited in the Abbey of Shene or Richmond.¹

The priest who succeeded Merschell to sing for James III. and his Queen at Cambuskenneth was Sir James Inglis, apparently in the year 1508 or 1509.² He continued to hold this benefice for upwards of forty years, as we learn from the Treasurer's Accounts. On account of his advanced age, between the year 1550 and 1552, Inglis seems to have resigned in favour of Sir Robert Paterson. The Reformation in 1560, of course, put an end to all such religious services.

POSTSCRIPT.

[The success which attended the operations of clearing out and tracing the foundations of the Abbey of Cambuskenneth has been greater than was anticipated. No discovery of articles of special antiquarian interest has indeed been made, but it was of importance that the actual site, the form, and dimensions of the buildings should, if possible, be ascertained, as well as the precise spot where James the Third and his Queen were interred. These points were hitherto quite conjectural, as the only visible portions above ground were two detached objects, the upper part of an arched doorway and the lofty tower. It remained, therefore, to be seen what results might attend the exploring of the raised mounds covered with greensward for the space of nearly three centuries.

I have little to add to the details given in the preceding communication by Sir James Alexander: the portion of ground enclosed as a small public cemetery unfortunately proves to have been the western part of the nave of the Church, and this necessarily precluded any exploration in that quarter. But by clearing away the earth on the exterior to the

¹ Dunbar's Poems (Supplement), vol. i. p. 281.

² Dunbar's Poems (Notes), vol. ii. p. 394.—The Treasurer's Accounts from August 1508 to August 1511 are lost.

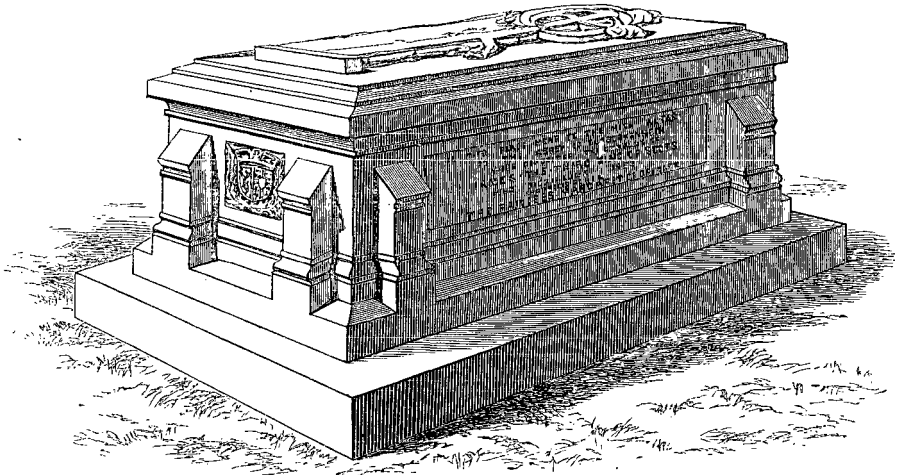
depth of about two feet, the original west door of the Church was brought to light, exhibiting its Anglo-Norman character in its moulded shafts and bases, thus materially serving to ascertain the form of the entire building. The question also naturally arises, Where was the site of this mausoleum erected by James IV.? That it was an imposing structure inside of the church cannot be doubted, and some indications still visible clearly point out the place to have been in the nave, not far from the south transept, which Mr Rothead has described at p. 24; and it seems equally certain that this sepulchral vault had been surmounted by a splendid shrine. Such a structure being near the centre of the church, might be one of the first objects destroyed, either in the hope of plunder or of employing its rich materials elsewhere.

The TRUSTEES OF COWAN'S HOSPITAL, to whom the property belongs, have shown no ordinary degree of zeal and liberality in carrying on these operations. As above stated by Sir James Alexander, they have now resolved to enclose the whole of the ground, and by new pointing and other repairs on the Tower, which has always been a picturesque object, it will be secured from the injurious effects of the weather. Such a liberal and patriotic spirit merits the praise of all true antiquaries.

Another fortunate result has likewise to be recorded. The Provost of Stirling entered into a correspondence with the HOME SECRETARY, on the propriety of erecting some monument to commemorate the place of royal interment. The Right Honourable WILLIAM F. COWPER, Her Majesty's First Commissioner of Public Works, having, upon inquiry, satisfied himself that the site was now well ascertained by the discovery of human remains in that part of the Abbey church where the High Altar must have stood, he brought the matter under the Queen's notice; and HER MAJESTY was graciously pleased to command that a suitable Monument be erected. This is now nearly completed from a design prepared by Mr MATHESON, of the Board of Works, Edinburgh (see the annexed drawing). It is composed of beautiful freestone, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height, 8 feet long, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad at the base, and 3 feet at the top.

The following inscription is cut on one side the Monument :—

IN THIS PLACE, NEAR TO THE HIGH ALTAR
OF THE ABBEY OF CAMBUSKENNETH,
WERE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF
JAMES THE THIRD, KING OF SCOTS,
WHO DIED THE 11TH JUNE 1488,
AND OF HIS QUEEN
THE PRINCESS MARGARET OF DENMARK.



On the other side :—

THIS RESTORATION OF THE TOMB OF HER ANCESTORS
WAS EXECUTED BY COMMAND OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA,
A.D. 1865.

At one extremity of the monument the Royal Arms of Scotland (the Red Lion on a field of gold) are sculptured, surmounted by a crown, and supported by the unicorns, with the motto—IN DEFENCE.

At the other, the Royal Arms of Scotland impaled with those of Denmark, surmounted by a crown, and surrounded by a wreath of thistles.

It only remains to add that, on Saturday the 23d September 1865, according to the newspaper report, the Provost of Stirling, and various other persons interested in the proceedings, assembled at the Abbey of Cambuskenneth, when the remains (as supposed) of King James III. and his Queen were deposited under this monument. From this report may be added the following extract :—“ The remains having been carefully deposited in the recess of a sarcophagus, and the mason-work of the tomb completed, Provost MURRIE of Stirling briefly addressed those present, to the effect that they had now witnessed the re-interment of James III. and his Queen in the sarcophagus and tomb ordered by Her Majesty QUEEN VICTORIA—a memorial which did great honour to the best feelings of Her Majesty. The structure was also highly creditable to the skill and taste of the designer, Mr Matheson, of the Board of Works, Edinburgh, and also to the contractor, Mr John Rhind of Edinburgh. From the beautiful situation of the memorial, and surrounded as it was by so many historical associations, he (the Provost) had no doubt it would be a favourite attraction to the numerous strangers who annually visit Stirling and its neighbourhood. The Provost then thanked those present for their attendance, and the interesting proceedings terminated. It may be added that the ground around the spot is to be laid with gravel, and the whole enclosed with an elegant iron railing.”

D. L.]