

## VII.

NOTICE OF A BRONZE BELL OF CELTIC TYPE AT FORTEVIOT, PERTH-SHIRE. BY JOSEPH ANDERSON, LL.D., ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

The bronze bell now exhibited by the kindness of Rev. James Anderson, D.D., minister of Forteviot, has been brought to light by the observant eye of a worthy Corresponding Member of the Society, Rev. John Maclean, minister of Grantully, to whom we are also indebted for the discovery of the bronze bell of Little 'Dunkeld, described in the *Proceedings*, vol. xxiii. p. 118.

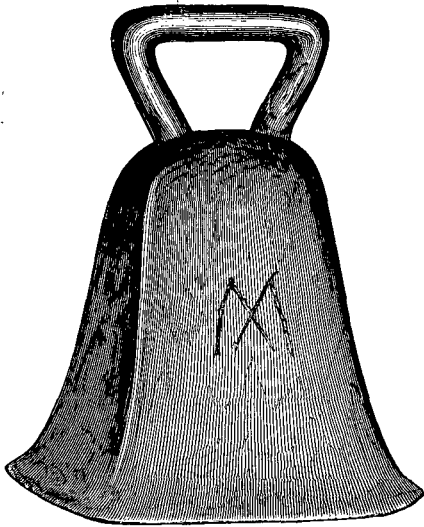


Fig. 1. Bronze Bell, Forteviot (4).

The Forteviot bell (fig. 1) strongly resembles the Little Dunkeld bell in its general character, but is larger, measuring 11 inches in height, inclusive of the handle, which rises  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches above the top of the bell. The body of the bell is thus  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height and 7 inches in width at the mouth. It is of the usual quadrangular form, with a strong, heavy handle set on the rounded top of the bell, so that the upper part of the loop is horizontal and the sides bent inwards. It makes the fifth of these Celtic bells of bronze now known in Scotland, the others being—(1) the bell of St Fillan of Glendochart; (2) the bell of St Eonan or Adamnan at Insh on the Spey; (3) the bell of St Finan of Eilean Finan, in Loch Shiel, Ardnamurchan; and (4) the bell of Little Dunkeld, before mentioned.

The bell of Forteviot differs from all the other bronze bells known in

Scotland, in having on the centre of one of its flat sides the letter M formed in relief as part of the casting. There is a quadrangular bronze bell in Ireland, which bears on one of its flat sides an inscription requesting "a prayer for Cumascach, the son of Aillell." This Cumascach was the steward of the Celtic monastery of Armagh, and his death is recorded in the year 904, so that the inscription is later than the commencement of the 10th century. Judging from the form of this letter M on the Forteviot bell, an earlier date than this could scarcely be assigned to it. But the execution is so rude that it would be unwise to lay much stress on the characteristic form of a single letter. The general design of the bell itself is suggestive of a later date than the bell of St Fillan, which is probably the oldest of all the bronze bells of Scotland, and is certainly the finest in design and workmanship. The bells of Little Dunkeld and Forteviot, however, have such a family likeness as to suggest that they both belong to the same local group, as well as to the same period of time—a period when the Celtic Church in Scotland had long ceased to be Irish in anything but its origin and traditional usages, and probably after the emergence of the Scottish Church from "servitude under the laws and customs of the Picts" in the 9th century.

Forteviot was from an early period a residence of the Pictish kings. The legend of St Andrew represents St Regulus and his followers as proceeding to Forteviot with the relics of the holy apostle immediately after their landing at Kilrymont (St Andrews) in 761. King Hungus had gone on an expedition into Argyle, but they found his three sons residing at Forteviot. These princes are said to have given the tenth part of that "town" to God and St Andrew, and the holy men erected a cross in commemoration of the gift, and gave their blessings to the place and to the royal family, whose abode it was. Then they went to Kindrochet in Braemar to meet the king on his return, and he and all his nobles prostrated themselves before the relics of St Andrew, which were there shown to them; and he gave that place to God and St Andrew, and built a church there. Then he came over the Mounth to Monichi, and there, in honour of God and the blessed apostle, he built a church; and so the king came with the holy men to Forteviot and built there a

church (basilica) to God and St Andrew. The church erected at Forteviot is styled in the legend a "basilica," while the others erected at Kindrochet and Monikie are specified by the common term "ecclesia," and the narrative goes on to say that afterwards they went to Kilrymont (St Andrews); and passing in procession seven times round a great part of that place, he gave it to God and St Andrew for the construction there of churches (basilicas) and oratories. The "town" or "urbs" of Forteviot, mentioned as the abode of the royal family, would be the king's "rath" or fortified residence, and any church erected at that time would probably be within the fortified precincts. Dr Stuart considered that this royal residence was the Dun Fothir of the Irish annals, which is stated to have twice suffered siege in 681 and 694 A.D., and he suggests that the name may mean the dun-of the district, or of the men, or of the King of Fortren, a term latterly synonymous with the kingdom of the southern Picts. Fothuir-tabaicht or Forteviot is mentioned in one of the Pictish chronicles as the place where Drust, the last king of the Picts, was killed; though other chronicles place this event at Scone. Kenneth Macalpin, the first of the Scotch dynasty, who succeeded Drust, died "in-palacio suo de Fothuir-tabaicht" in 860. In the reign of his successor Donald, "the Gaedhel established with their king in Forteviot the rights and laws of the kingdom of Aodh, son of Eocha," which Dr Skene explains as referring to the establishment of the law of succession in use among the Scots, which in its preference of the male over the female succession was opposed to that of the Picts. The transaction seems to bear a close resemblance to that recorded as having taken place in the reign of Donald's successor, Constantine, on the Mount of Belief at Scone, when "the King, with Kellach the Bishop, with the Scots, swore to observe the laws and discipline of the faith, and the rights of the churches and the Gospels."

Dr Skene states that Forteviot seems to have continued a royal residence till the reign of Donald, the son of Constantine, the fifth in succession from Kenneth Macalpin, when Scone became the capital for a time. But the ancient "palace" at Forteviot seems to have been restored by Malcolm Canmore, and continued to be, at least occasionally, the residence of his successors. In the reign of Malcolm

the Maiden (1153-65) we find a charter granted by him at Fetherteviot of the lands of Rossive and Dunduf to Radulf Frebern, and among the witnesses are the Countess Ada, the king's mother; William, the king's brother (who afterwards as king himself confirmed the charter); William of Egremont, and the usual officers of State. So late as 1306, and during the English invasion, Edward, Prince of Wales, dates a letter from Forteviot, in which he thanks Sir Aymer de Valence for his protection extended to the monks of Cupar in Angus.

At the west end of the village of Forteviot there is an eminence called the Holy Hill, from its traditional attribution as the site of the "palace" of the early kings, and consequently also the site of the early church dedicated to St Andrew, from which, and not from its regal associations, the popular epithet of "holy" must necessarily have arisen. The ruins which existed upon it in 1633, as mentioned by Adamson in *The Muse's Threnodie*, were supposed by him to be those of a castle—meaning by that the royal castle—but there is no evidence that there was ever a castle at Forteviot, and the royal residences of the time referred to were not likely to leave any remarkable accumulations of ruins, unless those of their circumvallations. It is even doubtful if the churches which St Regulus persuaded the king to "build" were edifices of stone, but they may have been succeeded at some time much nearer the 12th century by churches of stone. That there was a church of stone at Forteviot at a comparatively early date is suggested by the fact that a great semicircular arched stone was discovered more than sixty years ago immediately under the Holy Hill in the bed of the river May, which the minister of the parish in 1772 described as "continuing to sweep away yearly more or less of the remaining ruins." This stone, which is cut into the form of an arch of 4 feet span and 21 inches high, is carved in relief on the front with a cross standing on a pedestal over the centre of the arch, having on one side the Agnus Dei, and on the other a robed figure in a sitting posture, bare-headed, and with both hands holding his sheathed sword laid across his knees and his feet resting on an animal. On the opposite side of the cross below the Agnus Dei are three figures habited in the same manner, but with helmets on their heads and swords in their right hands. The stone is evidently the super-portal of a very

early church; and looking to the legend of the foundation of the church of Forteviot on the occasion of the visit of St Regulus with the relics of St Andrew, there seems no great improbability in the suggestion that here we have not contemporary, but still very early, representations of the founder, King Hungus, and his three sons, who in their father's absence "gave the tenth part of that town to God and St Andrew," and received the blessing of St Regulus for the gift. We also learn from the legend of St Andrew that there was a cross erected in commemoration of the royal gift of lands to the newly-erected church. This may be taken to be a statement of the 12th-century writer, writing in the spirit of his time. But there is a portion of the shaft of a cross still existing in the churchyard, and there can be no doubt that stone crosses were erected (and probably before this writer's time) to mark the boundaries of the lands, and possibly also the sanctuary girth, of the church of Forteviot. One yet stands on a rising ground called Bankhead, near Dupplin Castle, and about a mile to the north of the Holy Hill. It is beautifully sculptured with figures and Celtic ornament. Another cross stood about the same distance to the south of the Holy Hill, on an eminence called Dronachy, in the grounds of Invermay. It was broken to pieces some years before 1772, but it is satisfactory to learn from Mr Romilly Allen's "Report on the Sculptured Stones," printed in the present volume, that three fragments of it covered with interlaced work and key patterns have been discovered, and were shown to him by Rev. Dr Anderson. "The ornament," he says, "is well designed, and bears a marked similarity to that on the Dupplin cross."

We learn no more of the early church of Forteviot till the 12th century, when King William the Lion granted the church of Forteviot and its tithes and offerings to Richard of Stirling, his chaplain, for his lifetime, and after his death to the church of St Mary of Stirling (as the Abbey of Cambuskenneth was then styled) "for the souls of King David my grandfather, and Henry my father, and Malcolm my brother, and my other predecessors and successors." By a separate charter of the same king, the canons serving God in Cambuskenneth had four acres of land given to them in Forteviot as a toft and croft to build their houses on.

On September 20th, 1358, Thomas, rector of Forteviot, signs a

notarial instrument attesting the promulgation of the bull of Pope Innocent VI. refusing to allow the clergy of Scotland to be bound for the ransom of King David II. In 1420 Nicholas Hunter, rector of Forteviot, was secretary to Robert, Duke of Albany, governor of the kingdom.

The lands of Forteviot were in the Crown in the beginning of the 14th century, when the lands of Kurdeny and Fortuvett were given by Robert I. to Duncan Murdison. William of Forteviot appears in the Exchequer Rolls in 1358. The lands and mill of Forteviot were bestowed by Robert II. on James Stewart, one of his illegitimate sons by Marion Cardny, daughter of John of Cardny, and sister of the Bishop of Dunkeld, with remainder to his brothers John and Alexander, the latter of whom also received at the same time a grant of the lands of Lunan. In 1476 the lands of Forteviot were in the hands of Giles Stewart of Lunan.

The charters of erection of the barony of Cardross out of the ecclesiastical lands, &c., of the three monasteries of Inchmahome, Dryburgh, and Cambuskenneth, in favour of John, Earl of Mar, in 1610 and 1615, specify the ecclesiastical lands of Forteviot and the Brewlands of the same; and in 1673 Francis Hay was returned heir to his father, George Hay of Balhousie, in the lands and baronies of Balhousie and Duplin and amongst others the vill and lands of Kildonyng, the two Templar crofts of Forteviot and the ecclesiastical lands of the same.