

## IV.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE PRIORY OF THE ISLE OF MAY,  
c. 1140-1313.

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## INTRODUCTION.

## I.

<sup>1</sup> In 1868 the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland published a volume with the title *Records of the Priory of the Isle of May*, edited by Dr John Stuart and containing the text of documents relating to that house preserved in the charter roll of 35 Edward I and in the now lost Register of St Andrews priory. The following documents supplement that collection and are in the main derived from a cartulary of Reading abbey, Egerton MS. 3031 (cited henceforward as E), which is now in the British Museum.<sup>2</sup> This source was used by Sir Archibald Lawrie who printed three charters of David I therefrom in his *Early Scottish Charters*, and these three are here reprinted<sup>3</sup> so that this collection may be as complete a supplement as possible, at least for the 12th century,<sup>4</sup> to that published in 1868. Dr Stuart's introduction requires modification on many points in the light of documents printed in his volume and in this one,<sup>5</sup> and some account of the priory of

<sup>1</sup> I have to thank Professor W. Croft Dickinson and Dr D. E. Easson for reading these pages and making many useful comments and suggestions. Mr G. W. S. Barrow has answered many queries with unflinching patience. The errors which remain are, of course, my own responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> *Catalogue of Additions to Manuscripts in the British Museum, 1921-5*, pp. 302-3. The main text of this manuscript was written in the last decade of the 12th century, and all the documents here printed from it were entered then. A good colour photograph of one page is to be found in M. R. James, *Abbeys* (Great Western Railway, 1925, p. 82), and a reduced one of a page of Scottish charters in E. E. Thoyts, *How to Decipher and Study Old Documents* (2nd ed. 1903), p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Nos. 42-4.

<sup>4</sup> The documents are numbered in continuation of those in Stuart's collection; the latter is cited as "Stuart" when no document number can be given. Citations of "No. 1" to "No. 41" refer to Stuart, of "No. 42" to "No. 59" to the text following this introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Dr Stuart denies (p. x) the reading "Inverin que fuit Averin" in favour of "Inverin que fuit Averni" and so invents a fictitious landowner called Avernus. For this he had manuscript authority, but it is contradicted by E. He had no such authority for his fictitious class of gilleserfs (pp. lxxi-lxxv) and Gilleserf is a personal name (see G. W. S. Barrow, "Dr Stuart and the Gilleserfs of Clackmannan," *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, VII, 193-5). Dr Stuart fathers upon earlier writers (such as Spottiswoode, p. lxxv, n. 1) views the very opposite of those which they held. It is now certain that St Adrian, the subject of a late medieval cult on the island, is to be identified with St Ethernan, who had his cell there in the 9th century (cf. No. 53 with Stuart, p. xv, n. 1). For a revised list of priors and a different account of the transfer of the priory from Reading to St Andrews, see below, pp. 61-70. Many of Dr Stuart's references are wrong, and in particular all references in his Preface to the documents in the "Appendix to Preface" are eight pages short of the true page number—probably because the extracts from the Treasurer's accounts were inserted after the preface was printed off.

May will, it is hoped, serve as a useful introduction to the whole collection. It is not intended to discuss the priory after it had become Augustinian and settled on the mainland at Pittenweem.

## II.

The abbey of Reading was founded by king Henry I of England in 1121 as an independent house of black monks following the customs and observances of Cluny.<sup>1</sup> The evidence to show when David I founded a cell of his brother-in-law's abbey in Scotland is meagre and of uncertain value. Four papal confirmations, the earliest of 20th June 1123, the last (of Eugenius III) datable 1145 × 53, list the possessions of Reading without mention of king David's endowments.<sup>2</sup> Adrian IV's bull, datable 1154 × 8, introduces the latter in a form which yields no evidence of monastic colonisation—*manerium quod dicitur Rindalgros . . . insulam Maii . . .*<sup>3</sup>—and not until the bull of Innocent III does the gift appear as “the priory of May with all its appurtenances.”<sup>4</sup> A priory had by then been in existence for some fifty years. It may be judged that the similar failure of Eugenius III to mention the Scottish possessions of Reading in his bull is not evidence that they must have been granted after 1145.<sup>5</sup> Papal confirmations were not an up-to-date record of the monastery's possessions, but the length of the time lag is uncertain, and probably varied. These bulls are most safely used to indicate what the first Scottish endowments were—Rindalgros (now the parish of the Rhynd), the isle of May, and from earl Gospatrick, “a house in a port.” The priority given in papal documents to Rindalgros is borne out by the Scottish evidence, for king David gave that vill—lying three miles east of Perth—between 1141 and 1150 with the proviso that if he or his heirs added to the gift, so that a convent could be maintained, then Reading abbey should send a convent to this place. The king's letter,<sup>6</sup> which can be dated by its witnesses, is addressed to the abbot of Reading, Brian fitz Count (who kept Wallingford for the empress Matilda) and the convent of Reading, and states that Rindalgros had been perambulated by the king, William Giffard, Herbert the Chamberlain, and others unnamed. Two of these persons—Brian fitz Count and William Giffard—deserve some consideration.

Brian fitz Count was a firm supporter of the empress and the occurrence

<sup>1</sup> See note at the end of this introduction for the unusual status of Reading abbey.

<sup>2</sup> Walther Holtzmann, *Papsturkunden in England*, iii [Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse, dritte folge, Nr. 33], Nos. 9, 12, 28, 85. This volume is hereafter cited as Holtzmann, *PU England*, iii. It is obtainable in Edinburgh University Library.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Papal Letters*, i, 28; Migne, *Opera Innocentii III*, ii, 1123.

<sup>5</sup> The earliest possible date of Eugenius III's bull.

<sup>6</sup> No. 1.

of his name in this context suggests that the letter belongs to a time when he exercised royal rights of patronage over Reading abbey on behalf of Matilda, a time when king Stephen was not in control of Berkshire. The years which best satisfy these conditions are 1141-4.<sup>1</sup> William Giffard appears in the witness list of king David's letter as a monk and in a position which departs from the usual hierarchy: "fratre Willelmo Giffard, Gaufrido abbate de Dunfermelin, Edwardo cancellario, Waltero de Bidun, Nicolao clerico, Dunecano comite, Hugone de Morevilla, Herberto camerario, Waltero de Lindesie, Leod de Brechin, apud Dunfermelin."<sup>2</sup> William Giffard occurs in only two other places in Scottish sources; the first, king David's gift of half Balgallin to May priory, where the witnesses are "Gregorio episcopo de Dunchelden, et Andrea episcopo de Cateneis, et Willelmo Giffard et Dunecano comite et Alfwino filio Archil, apud Dunfermelin;" and the second the same king's confirmation of the gift of Liddesdale church to Jedburgh abbey by Randolph de Sules, where the witness list reads "Willelmo Falc'. Willelmo Giffard. abbate Calcoensi Arnaldo/priore de Rading'. Eduuard cancellario regis. Engelramo cancellario comitis. Nicholao/clerico. Waltero de Bidun. Gospatric comite. Hugone de Moreuilla."<sup>3</sup> Liddesdale church does not feature in the general confirmations given by David I and earl Henry to Jedburgh abbey, August 1147 × 12th June 1152,<sup>4</sup> and de Sules' gift and the king's confirmation are to be dated within the same limits. The first four names of the last witness list present difficulties, for 'William Falc.' is otherwise unknown and Arnald was almost certainly the abbot of Kelso and not the prior of Reading. It is just possible that William Giffard by the time of this last writ was prior of Reading, and quite certain that he had some special connection with the Reading dependencies in Scotland, for in these three lists—all connected with Reading—he enjoys a priority over all but bishops. The family connections both of this William Giffard, and of the later Scottish Giffards are alike unknown.<sup>5</sup> It is possible that William Giffard, the monk, was connected with Walter Giffard, earl of Buckingham, and with his namesake,

<sup>1</sup> See the article by J. H. Round in *Dic. Nat. Biog.*, "Fitzcount, Brian." I owe this suggestion to my colleague, Mr D. A. Bullough.

<sup>2</sup> No. 3.

<sup>3</sup> S.R.O. Crown Office Writs, No. 3, each oblique stroke indicating the end of a line. The original shows traces of haste, and was folded while the ink was still wet. Printed by R. C. Reid, *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 3 ser. XXVI (1949), 155.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, CLXXXIX, CXC.

<sup>5</sup> *St Andrews*, pp. 208-10, 248-50; *Laing Charters*, No. 2; *Dunfermline*, No. 152; *Yester Writs*, Nos. 1-8, show the connection between Hugh, Walter, and William Giffard and the countess Ada, styled "domina mea" by Hugh Giffard in *Newbattle*, No. 81. These brothers were with David, earl of Huntingdon, in Northamptonshire, *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, ed. L. C. Lloyd and D. M. Stenton, Nos. 200, 220. Earl Henry had a clerk called William Giffard, who remained with countess Ada after his death (*Dunfermline*, No. 151) and who may have been engaged in controversy with William Comyn over the church of Budleigh (Devon) about 1152 (Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 144-6), but he cannot have been the monk with whom we are here concerned. (I am indebted to Mr G. W. S. Barrow for this last reference.) See also *Coupar Angus*, No. IX.

bishop of Winchester from 1107 to 1129, but there is nothing to show in what way.

Thus nothing more definite can be said than that the vill or manor of Rindalgros was granted by king David after 1141, and that the king then had in mind the augmentation of his gift and the foundation of a cell at the Rhynd. There is no reason to doubt that the isle of May and the tithe of its fishings was this augmentation, for it comes second to Rindalgros in Adrian IV's list of Scottish possessions;<sup>1</sup> unfortunately, no document survives to record the grant. Malcolm IV, however, confirmed an unspecified "gift and grant of king David as he gave and confirmed it with his charter in all things, as much lands as waters and meadows. Wherefore I order that no one do them injury nor exact anything from them, except only what was exacted in the time of my grandfather."<sup>2</sup> There had been a charter recording the "donatio et concessio" of king David, but the appeal to the custom of his time suggests that its terms were not specifically known. King William's general confirmation (1166 × 71) lists only those possessions for which earlier and individual charter evidence still survives,<sup>3</sup> but omits not only May island, but also Rindalgros. By his time the cell at the latter had come to an end, and a priory flourished on the island—a reversal of the circumstances envisaged in king David's grant of the Rhynd. It is possible that the lost grant of May isle similarly did not accord with the circumstances of king William's time.

For whatever reason a charter is lacking, its absence leaves us uncertain of the date at which king David gave May isle to Reading abbey; charter evidence permits only the dates 1141 × 50—the same as those for the grant of Rindalgros. A cell was indeed founded at the Rhynd, presumably in accordance with the declared intention of king David, for one of his writs orders the payment of tithes to "the monks of Rindalgros," and can be dated 1147 × 53.<sup>4</sup> This fact is the first and strongest argument that in granting the isle of May, the king did not intend the setting up of a priory there. The island was indeed associated with a 9th-century missionary, St Ethernan,<sup>5</sup> but there is no evidence that the king was inspired with devotion to his cult, and his name does not occur in royal charters. The foundation of a cell in addition to that at the Rhynd would seem to defeat the king's purpose that an adequate provision for the first cell should still leave a surplus of revenue for Reading abbey.

In the second place, the isle of May was ill-suited to the monastic customs of a house with Cluniac observances, and more appropriate as one of those,

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, *PU England*, III, No. 126.

<sup>2</sup> No. 10. I suspect that this confirmation was intended to cover all the possessions of the priory, and to include Rindalgros.

<sup>3</sup> No. 12. A possible exception is a gift of earl Gospatrick, for which see No. 53.

<sup>4</sup> No. 7.

<sup>5</sup> No. 53.

“desert places” sought by the early Cistercians. It was a valuable endowment, for, according to the life of St Kentigern written between 1147 and 1164, the fishings of May “abounded so much that from every shore come many fishermen, English, Scots, and men from the shores of Belgium and France for the sake of fishing, all of whom the isle of May fitly receives in its harbours.”<sup>1</sup> Apart from the emphasis in the priory writs on fishings, there is independent evidence to support this statement in a writ of king William protecting the canons of Holyrood from illegal distraint “either in *Scotia* or at the isle of May, when the men [of Holyrood] come there to fish.”<sup>2</sup> The value of May was in the shelter of its rocks and the harvest of the waters around it.

After the gift of May and its fishing to Reading abbey, a small cell was founded on the island with the duty of administering the endowment. The likelihood that this was not at first a conventual priory derives a small measure of support from those charters of David I (most of them datable × 1150) which speak only of “brethren” or “monks” and not of a “priory” of May. The same king’s charters of date 1147 × 53 speak of a prior or priory and show that a convent had been established, probably with the support of king David. In 1293 its numbers were said to have been nine,<sup>3</sup> but it is doubtful if a statement so late can be relied upon.

It seems certain that from the first the priory ran into difficulties. King David’s gift of common pasture in the shires of Kelly and Crail, and elsewhere,<sup>4</sup> of commoning on the moor of Clackmannan,<sup>5</sup> and king Malcolm’s specification of royal protection, involving the prohibition of fishing in the priory waters, building on its islands and digging or taking grass on May,<sup>6</sup> all suggest a severe shortage of pasture, for which the grant of tofts in Berwick,<sup>7</sup> Haddington<sup>8</sup> and Bele<sup>9</sup> was no relief. These burgage tenements, and especially the last, which seems soon to have been exchanged for a toft in Dunbar with berthing for one ship to carry the necessities of the house,<sup>10</sup> may be connected with the need to market the fish which came to the priory. From king David the priory received Pittenweem and Inverin,<sup>11</sup> and half of Balgallin,<sup>12</sup> but at that the stream of endowments ceased. Isolation must have been the greatest difficulty, for the priory was not merely remote from supplies in bad weather, but also exposed to piracy in good. According to the Orkneyinga saga, an Orkney pirate landed on the island at some time in the decade 1140-50, sheltering for seven days from the storm. The monks under their abbot (*sic*) Baldwin disbelieved his wholly untrue account of himself and sent for aid to the mainland. Accordingly their island was

<sup>1</sup> *Glasgow*, I, lxxxiv; Anderson, *Early Sources*, I, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Stuart, p. lxxxvi.

<sup>3</sup> No. 46.

<sup>4</sup> No. 53.

<sup>4</sup> No. 3.

<sup>7</sup> No. 6.

<sup>10</sup> No. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Holyrood*, No. 28 (1189 × 99).

<sup>5</sup> No. 5.

<sup>8</sup> No. 42.

<sup>11</sup> No. 4. Inverin is St Monans.

<sup>12</sup> No. 3. I have failed to identify this place. It may be Baglillie, which was “Balgaly” (but crown land) in the 14th century; *R.M.S.*, I, 241, 287, Appendix II, 976.

plundered before the pirate sailed on to Edinburgh, where he told his friend, king David, of his deeds. The king compensated the sufferers.<sup>1</sup> The narrative of which this forms a part is not reliable in its details, but there is no reason for rejecting its outline, and it illustrates the vulnerability of the island convent.

As a final argument of king David's intentions, it may be noted that in his grant Balgallin was to be held "as any alms are held in my land, so long as there is (*fuerit*) a convent of monks in May,"<sup>2</sup> a phrase which is usually taken as a circumlocution for "in perpetuity" but may mean the very opposite.<sup>3</sup> No other phrase of "perpetuity" occurs in the grant, nor is this phrase found elsewhere in king David's charters. Thus there is a strong suggestion, though no conclusive proof, that David I intended no priory for May island and that the convent there owed its existence to the "haphazard" colonisation carried out by monasteries of the Cluniac observance.<sup>4</sup>

Whether the interpretation of king David's intentions given here is correct or not, this final assessment, that Reading abbey colonised in Scotland with more enthusiasm than wisdom, is fairly certain, for it seems to have become apparent to the mother house a few years after the death of the old king. The monks of Rindalgros still maintained their cell in the early years of Malcolm IV, when the tithes of that vill were granted to them;<sup>5</sup> but the vill was, as king David had seen, inadequate for the maintenance of a convent, and the monks were faced with the alternatives of continuing an extra-conventual, and therefore irregular life, or leaving the vill to be exploited in some other way, and re-entering the convent of Reading (or another dependency thereof).

The decision to abandon the cell at the Rhynd was probably taken by Reading abbey, and seems to have been put into effect in or about the year 1160. The somewhat complicated reasons for this conclusion are as follows: in one of the charters printed below, Malcolm IV confirmed to "the monks of May *qui sunt de Rading*" an exchange of the chapel and tithes of Perth, which they had had for several years by gift of king David, for five merks from the reeves of Perth,<sup>6</sup> or, according to a later confirmation, five merks from the cain of ships coming to Perth.<sup>7</sup> These five merks, which Dunfermline abbey had agreed to give up, appear to be the five merks granted by David I to Dunfermline from the first ships coming to Stirling or Perth,<sup>8</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> *Icelandic Sagas* (Rolls Series, 88), I, 144; III, 149; Anderson, *Early Sources*, II, 194.

<sup>2</sup> No. 3. For *proiverunt* read *periverunt*.

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that king David hoped to move the convent from May island to the Rhynd.

<sup>4</sup> "It was the Cluniac practice to occupy an estate with half a dozen monks or less who had no stable existence or the power of receiving recruits." Some cells developed, others "dragged on a more irregular existence." Knowles, *Monastic Order in England*, 153. The history of the priory of May and the cell of Rindalgros illustrates these points well.

<sup>5</sup> No. 8.

<sup>6</sup> No. 45.

<sup>7</sup> No. 12

<sup>8</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 2.

grant still effective in 1155 × 9<sup>1</sup> but not in 1165 × 8.<sup>2</sup> The ancient appropriation to Dunfermline of St John's kirk, Perth (× 1136),<sup>3</sup> was augmented by Malcolm IV into the grant of the church of Perth and the chapel of the castle (1157 × 60)<sup>4</sup> and it so appears again in 1165 × 8.<sup>2</sup> The five annual merks from the cain of Stirling or Perth were thus limited to Perth and yielded to May priory in exchange for the chapel of Perth castle and its tithes (now given to Dunfermline), between 1157 and 1160.

How had May priory acquired the chapel of Perth castle and its tithes? The writ of David I ordering payment of tithes to the monks of Rindalgrös has already been mentioned.<sup>5</sup> It is addressed to all men of Perthshire but it cannot be taken to apply to the tithes of the Rhynd. In the first place these were granted by Malcolm IV in a charter which seems (from the inclusion of *dedisse*) not to be a confirmation,<sup>6</sup> and in the second it is unlikely that a royal writ would be necessary for the enforcement of tithes so local. The most obvious, and indeed the only, possible alternative to the tithes of the Rhynd are the tithes due to the chapel of Perth castle, which thus belonged, in the reign of David I, to the monks of Rindalgrös.

On a close examination this explains rather than contradicts Malcolm IV's confirmation of the exchange effected by the priory of May with Dunfermline abbey.<sup>7</sup> The chapel and tithes are stated to have been owned "for several years by gift of king David" by the monks of May "*qui sunt de Rading*." It is suggested that this last phrase marks the end of the cell of monks from Reading at Rindalgrös, the transfer of them and their endowments to May priory before 1160, and indicates why May priory could dispose of an endowment of Rindalgrös. It need scarcely be added that the immediate value of tithes rendered in kind at Perth would be considerable to monks at the Rhynd, but much less to monks on May island, to whom it would be a distant responsibility. Exchange for an annual cash payment was the natural consequence of the transfer suggested above.<sup>8</sup>

As a tailpiece to the history of Rindalgrös it may be noted that among the puzzles presented by the list of religious houses compiled about 1207 by Gervase of Canterbury is "the priory of Perth, black monks."<sup>9</sup> This may be a late echo of the abortive cell at the Rhynd, and was to undergo yet one more twist when the list was revised in the late 13th century. The priory of Perth turns up again, this time with "black nuns."<sup>10</sup> The parish of Rhynd now contained a Cistercian (white) nunnery, Elcho, and the revisor seems to have altered his text to make the best of a bad job.

<sup>1</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 40.

<sup>5</sup> No. 7.

<sup>6</sup> No. 8.

<sup>7</sup> No. 45.

<sup>8</sup> This annual rent was still being paid in the early 14th century (*Exch. Rolls*, I, 66, 88, 168, 264, 306, 364) but must have been compounded thereafter, as it is not mentioned in *Exch. Rolls*, II. Cf. *R.M.S.*, I, Appendix II, 1325.

<sup>9</sup> *Gervase of Canterbury* (Rolls Series, 73), II, 441; Anderson, *Scottish Annals*, p. 327.

<sup>10</sup> Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, II, pt. i, 182; Anderson, *Early Sources*, II, 698.

## III.

Under William the Lion, the priory of May acquired Pittoter,<sup>1</sup> the remaining half of Balgallin,<sup>2</sup> and minor privileges. Other scattered lands along the Fife coast came to it and its mainland possessions seem to have made ever increasing demands upon the time of the prior. There is no indication of how these lands were exploited or what they were worth, though in the later 13th century the priory was said to be worth 400 merks per annum—doubtless an exaggeration—and was sold for £1000.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately it does not occur in Bagimond's taxation of 1274 nor in any subsequent valuations until the 16th century, but that it was fairly wealthy is indicated by its acquisition in the Lammermuirs of pasturage for 300 sheep, 30 cows, 24 mares, and 10 sows.<sup>4</sup> Presumably in consequence of these extensive landward interests, as early as 1202 × 6 the prior appears as "prior of Pittenweem"<sup>5</sup>—the first of two occasions on which this title was used in the 13th century (the second being in 1270).<sup>6</sup> It is clear that the church and convent remained on May until the end of the century, but the prior must have been residing for long periods in a house at Pittenweem by the end of the 12th century, for only thus can his title be explained.

Founded from Reading, May was to that abbey in the relationship of a Cluniac dependency to the mother house.<sup>7</sup> This Cluniac relationship was not stereotyped, for in all cases ecclesiastical subjection was modified by the demands of the lay founder whose feudal or proprietary rights over the cell which he endowed could not be ignored. The visitatorial rights of the abbot of Cluny over the whole order were rarely exercised in England and in any case Reading and May stood outside this system. Reading abbey was founded with Cluniac monks, continued to follow the customs and observances of Cluny and was described as "Cluniac" in 12th-century papal documents. The abbot of Reading owed no obedience to Cluny, and Reading was not, therefore, a Cluniac house as that term is now understood; but in the 12th century, since Reading was Cluniac in custom—and particularly in its relationships with its daughter houses—there were features of ecclesiastical subjection to the founding house which it would undoubtedly seek to preserve in the case of May priory: the profession of obedience of individual monks to it, the right of visitation and disciplining, the right to appoint the prior and (what did not necessarily go therewith) the right to deprive him, and lastly the right to a money tribute, marking this subjection. In the face of this hierocratic aim, the lay founder had

<sup>1</sup> No. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Stuart, pp. lxxxvi–lxxxvii.

<sup>5</sup> Advocates MS. 15.1.18, No. 33.

<sup>7</sup> In papal letters of 1257 May was first described as a Benedictine priory and then as a Cluniac one (*Cal. Papal Letters*, I, 340, 344).

<sup>2</sup> No. 47; cf. No. 12.

<sup>4</sup> No. 24.

<sup>6</sup> *A.P.S.*, I, 102.



to assert explicitly the *ius patronatus* which was implicit and accepted in the relationship of a founder and his kin to one of the older Benedictine houses. Many 12th-century Cluniac foundation charters in England are veritable capitulations between lay founder and founding house, expressing the compromise of the Cluniac aim with the claims of the founder. Their general characteristics are to state the obligation of the mother house to maintain a certain number of monks in the cell and to limit its rights of interference in the government thereof.<sup>1</sup> In the case of May priory the payment of a tribute was not to our knowledge disputed, and in the 13th century it owed Reading sixteen merks annually.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing to show whether May could admit novices, but certainly it could clothe a dying man with the habit and accept him *in monachatum*.<sup>3</sup>

Most houses of the Cluniac order were privately founded, and Reading probably stood outside this "order" because founded by a king, who sought the benefits of reformed (Cluniac) observance without the disadvantage of external control from Cluny. But if Henry I of England was not prepared to compromise his rights of patronage with a mother house, the same does not seem to have been true of David I of Scotland. Foreseeing the sending of a convent to Rindalgrös he allowed that it should draw its needs from his endowments but the remainder was to go "to the use and disposition" of Reading.<sup>4</sup> This seems to recognise a relationship of continuing dependence, while the presence of the prior of Reading at David's court<sup>5</sup> also implies some visitation or supervision of May priory.

A different attitude is shown in king William's charter granting both halves of Balgallin to May priory, "so that the prior of May ought not to be removed at any time except for manifest fault previously adjudged before me or my successors and the bishop of St Andrews, and so that there shall be there a convent of thirteen monks of the Cluniac observance."<sup>6</sup> Determined to secure the religious benefits of the foundation, the king also asserted his rights of discipline against those of the mother house. There would be little point in forbidding Reading to remove a prior if appointments were not already subject to royal supervision or control,<sup>7</sup> and thus this charter expresses the defeat of the Cluniac hierocratic aim by the royal view of monasteries as *Eigenklöster*.

Unfortunately there are only two royal charters of date 1214-86<sup>8</sup> to set against the twenty-seven given between c. 1140 and 1214, so that little can be learned of the exercise of royal patronage in the 13th century. There are many 13th-century private charters in Dr Stuart's collection, some of

<sup>1</sup> Knowles, *Monastic Order*, 154-8. For Reading as a "Cluniac" house see *Note* at the end of this Introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Hurry, *Reading Abbey*, 180, No. LXV (Brit. Mus. Addit. Charter 19633); Stuart, xci.

<sup>3</sup> No. 25.

<sup>4</sup> No. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Jedburgh charter cited above (54).

<sup>6</sup> No. 47.

<sup>7</sup> See Bower's account (which may be influenced by latter-day nationalism) of king Alexander III's attitude to an appointment from Reading, below (61).

<sup>8</sup> Nos. 19, 20.

which suggest that Reading abbey was still intimately concerned in the business affairs of the island convent. The seal of Reading was appended, along with that of May, to several agreements<sup>1</sup> whose validity without the former would presumably have been doubtful. This accords with the fact that in the later 12th century the papacy had prohibited the alienation of May's possessions without the consent of the mother house.<sup>2</sup> On two occasions the Scottish priory litigated as procurator for Reading abbey over property in Berwick,<sup>3</sup> which seems to have belonged in fact, and perhaps in common law, to the priory, but in which the abbey had an interest in canon law. But the evidence is too slight to give any definition of this relationship. From the remonstrance to king Alexander III printed below,<sup>4</sup> it does seem that all was not going smoothly with the priory. Probably about 1256 there was trouble with the bishop of St Andrews over procurations<sup>5</sup> and, in 1257, when Reading complained to the pope of the unjust alienation and usurpation of the priory's possessions, a commission was issued to judges delegate to help in their recovery.<sup>6</sup> Eighteen months later a further commission was issued to the abbot of Dryburgh and the prior of Coldingham to secure the restoration to Reading abbey of the chapel of Perth long detained by Dunfermline abbey "with the support of the lay power."<sup>7</sup> Nothing further is known of this attempt to go back upon a century-old agreement, but it suggests that there may have been some justification for the king's later interference.

## IV.

According to Walter Bower<sup>8</sup> prior Hugh died in 1269 and Reading sent north one William, a monk of Reading, to fill his seat. But king Alexander III, although he admitted William "pro tunc", feared the danger which might arise to the realm if such a place was in the hands of an Englishman, and decided to buy the priory. To hasten the doing so, and to have quittance of the monks of Reading, William Wishart, bishop of St Andrews, paid 700 merks, and then annexed the priory to the priory of St Andrews. It is probable that Bower attributed the outcome of later negotiations to an earlier démarche, for his circumstantial details cannot be wholly false.<sup>9</sup> But it is clear from documents which Dr Stuart printed and which he can

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 31, 40.

<sup>2</sup> No. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Nos. 32, 36.

<sup>4</sup> No. 56.

<sup>5</sup> *Cal. Papal Letters*, I, 344; Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta*, cxciv.

<sup>6</sup> No. 36 (dated 31st January 1257).

<sup>7</sup> *Dunfermline*, No. 602, from Advocates MS. 15.1.18, No. 14 (13th June 1258) among St Andrews priory documents, presumably through the later appropriation of May priory.

<sup>8</sup> *Scotichronicon*, ed. Goodall, II, 110-11.

<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere in the 15th century it was alleged that "on his return from England king William appropriated to himself the [priory] of May . . . expelling the [Reading] monks from it, and assigned the island . . . to the monastery of St Andrews." *Priory of Coldingham* (Surtees Soc. 12), 250-1. This is probably a confusion of king Alexander and bishop William, for it is most unlikely that William the Lion took measures against the priory of May after the treaty of Falaise.

scarcely have read—the parliament roll of king John Balliol, and the schedule attached to it—that the sale did not take place until much later, and that it was not William Wishart but his successor William Fraser, bishop of St Andrews, who made the purchase. In the parliament of John Balliol held at Scone on 10th February 1292-3 there compeared two attorneys of the abbot and convent of Reading with a petition asking that the king and his council should give such remedy and such counsel that the house of the king of England (Reading) and the house of the king of Scotland (May) should not be parted (“descrite”) and their alms destroyed. The petition narrates in detail that Reading, of which the king of England was patron, was endowed by king David of Scotland, with the priory of May, worth 400 merks or more, to be served by nine monks of Reading. Abbot Robert de Burghgate of Reading, now deposed, with the aid of a party of his monks, now in restraint, but against the will of the older and wiser part, sold the priory, to the detriment of the king of England, patron of Reading, and of the king of Scotland, patron of May—though at this time there was no king of Scotland (com a cel tens rey de Escoce ne avoit)—to William the present (ke ceo est) bishop of Saint Andrews, for £1000, of which he paid to abbot Robert only 314 merks. But at this time he had no right to purchase the priory, for he was chief Guardian of the Realm, and sworn to guard the realm, and the estate of the king who was to come, without hurt. The petition goes on to ask for the fruits of the priory since it was alienated—in all four years on the following Palm Sunday (22nd March 1293)—and for justice.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it would appear that bishop William Fraser purchased the priory of May from Reading abbey at some date after Palm Sunday (21st March) 1288, when presumably the last payment of the annual due of sixteen merks was made to Reading. This *census* was still being paid in 1284 when ten merks from it were assigned to the countess of Warwick as a supplement to the pittance received from her for religious purposes (30th December 1284).<sup>2</sup> It is possible to narrow down the date of the alienation still further, for between November 1287 and October 1288 Edward I cited, to appear before the council on 5th July, Ralph de Broughton, whom he had appointed *custos* of Reading abbey on 16th March 1286 with the duty of relieving it from debt,<sup>3</sup> to answer for his connivance in the alienation of May priory.<sup>4</sup> Abbot Robert of Burghgate had reduced his house to bankruptcy—not altogether an unusual state of affairs in monasteries at that period<sup>5</sup>—and to help clear the mass of debt had sold

<sup>1</sup> Stuart, lxxxv-lxxxvii, where the punctuation is meaningless; *A.P.S.*, I, 445b-446b.

<sup>2</sup> Hurry, *Reading Abbey*, 180, No. LXV (Brit. Mus. Addit. Charter 19633). See also *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, ed. L. C. Lloyd and D. M. Stenton, No. 327.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92*, p. 242; Harleian MS. 1708 (Reading Cartulary), fo. 232 v.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Docs. Scot.*, IV, 1765 (P.R.O. London, C47/22/11/55).

<sup>5</sup> K. L. Wood Legh, *Church Life under Edward III*, chapter 1.

May priory with the consent of the royal *custos* and against the interests of the king.<sup>1</sup> The month-date on this writ is now illegible, but Joseph Bain surmised "May," and if he is correct the priory was sold after 21st March and before 27th May 1288, but in any case before 27th June 1288. Negotiations for the sale must have been going on for some time before it was completed, but they may have been kept secret. Probably not long after his purchase bishop William Fraser annexed the priory to his cathedral priory.<sup>2</sup> It may be assumed that the Cluniac brethren returned to Reading and that their place was taken by a convent of Augustinian canons from St Andrews.

It is unlikely that any remonstrance against these transactions was made before 1290 when abbot Robert resigned about October,<sup>3</sup> but the matter was taken up by the new abbot, William Sutton,<sup>4</sup> as soon as the "Great Cause" was decided. His proctors brought the petition which has been summarised to the parliament of king John in February 1293, but received slight satisfaction. Asked whether they would return the 1100 merks which had been paid to abbot Robert,<sup>5</sup> they refused to commit themselves and asked for time to consult their principal, the petition meanwhile standing in full effect until the next parliament or the one after. Probably attorneys of Reading appeared in the Scottish parliament of August 1293 for, on 2nd September following, Edward I cited the Scottish king to answer to him for denying justice to Reading, in that when the matter was discussed before him king John had refused to proceed any further on the pretext of an appeal to Rome by the bishop of St Andrews.<sup>6</sup> This appeal must have been made on some occasion subsequent to the proceedings of February 1293, recorded on the Scottish parliament roll. On this roll the proctors are John de Sottone, a monk, and master Hugh de Staunforth, perhaps a lawyer, while in king Edward's writ of September a different monk, Alan de Eston, is named. The sequence of events seems to have been as follows: proctors appointed at Reading on 17th January 1293 reached the Scone parliament by 10th February and then returned to Reading where the abbot and convent probably consulted the king and where a new proctor was commissioned. The appeal had been left over until a future Scottish parliament and it is probable that two proctors were again present when one met at Stirling on 3rd August, only to find justice denied them by appeal of the bishop to Rome. There was still time for them to return to England and obtain king Edward's warrant<sup>7</sup> of 2nd September to cite the Scottish king to answer for default of justice.

<sup>1</sup> The *custos* was removed on 10th January 1289 (Harleian MS. 1708, fo. 233 r).

<sup>2</sup> *Memoranda de Parlamento, 1305* (Rolls Series, 98), 192; Stuart, cii.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92*, p. 393.

<sup>4</sup> Elected between 2nd November and 27th November 1290 (*Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92*, pp. 393, 409).

<sup>5</sup> No explanation is given of this figure, which is substantially higher than the 314 merks which Reading claimed to have been paid.

<sup>6</sup> Stuart, lxxxvii; *Rot. Scot.* I, 19.

<sup>7</sup> *Cal. Chancery Warrants*, 38.

King John ignored the repeated summons before King's Bench at Westminster,<sup>1</sup> for a petition to Edward I to take direct action<sup>2</sup> seems to belong to the period immediately after Balliol's resignation (10th July 1296) though this dating is not absolutely certain and it is probable that further documents similar to this one are lurking in *Ancient Petitions*. Certainly Reading obtained re-entry to May priory, and in view of the silence of English records it seems likely that the matter had been remitted to the council of king Edward's Lieutenant in Scotland. The restitution is attested by a writ of Edward I of 1305 narrating that the cell was "delivered to the abbot . . . after the realm of Scotland came to his hands by the rebellion of John Balliol . . . and which the abbot held peacefully as a cell . . . until William le Waleys and his accomplices lately insurgent . . . in those parts ejected the abbot and his men . . ." <sup>3</sup> This restoration may thus be dated between 10th July 1296 and 11th September 1297, when the battle of Stirling Bridge was fought.

The date of the forcible deprivation in favour of St Andrews which followed and which was still unredressed in 1305 is more difficult to fix. Relevant to it is a petition from Thomas de Houburn, canon of St Andrews, who stated that he had been ousted from the priory of Pittenweem by the Scots and had since been living "at the king's alms."<sup>4</sup> His petition mentions that "it appears to him that the term [of the truce] is very long,"<sup>5</sup> and from this reference it can be dated to the earlier part of either of two periods, 30th October 1300 to 21st May 1301, or 26th January to 30th November 1302, and certainly not after mid-1302.<sup>6</sup> From a subsequent document, datable 7th February 1301 x, it appears that he was quartered on the abbey of Leicester with a horse and two grooms, and it was probably at Leicester that he wished to make his profession as a monk if he could not be received back to St Andrews.<sup>7</sup> Thomas de Houburn was a canon of St Andrews, and his occupancy of Pittenweem would certainly fall into a period after Wallace had expelled Reading and restored St Andrews; but also since he was an Englishman it must belong to a period when Edward I was in control of Fife, that is, after the battle of Falkirk, 22nd July 1298. Accordingly Wallace's action in depriving Reading and annexing the priory of May to that of St Andrews must have occurred before the battle of Falkirk and most probably after that of Stirling Bridge, 11th September 1297.

<sup>1</sup> *Select Cases in King's Bench under Edward I*, ed. G. O. Sayles, III (Selden Soc., 58), 26, No. 13; Stuart, lxxxix-xci. These are proceedings in Trinity term 1294 and Easter term 1295.

<sup>2</sup> No. 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7*, 249.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Docs. Scot.* II, 1964.

<sup>5</sup> The words in parenthesis, not in the calendared version, are translated from the original, where they can be seen under the ultra-violet lamp.

<sup>6</sup> This enables us to be sure that the expulsion of Reading was not the work of Wallace in the three years before his capture.

<sup>7</sup> *Cal. Docs. Scot.*, II, 1965.

It was not untypical of Edward I that the St Andrews convent was not deprived by him of the dependent cell which it had received so recently from his enemies. Clearly the rival rights in the matter were not easily to be judged, but the abbot of Reading after some eight years persuaded the English council to restore his seisin "so that after he have had seisin he may answer to everybody as he ought," and an order to that effect to the English officers now ruling Scotland was issued on 24th March 1305.<sup>1</sup> It was immediately effective.

Once more May priory returned to dependence on Reading abbey, and in the English parliament of September 1305 it was St Andrews priory which petitioned for its restoration "in as much as they have been evicted unjustly by the abbot of Reading", while the abbot submitted a counter petition for damages for wrongs done by the bishop of St Andrews to him and his men at Perth and Pittenweem.<sup>2</sup> Both petitions were referred to the Lieutenant in Scotland who was to do justice to the first "according to the custom of that land, notwithstanding the king's orders previously made for the parties on both sides by the lord king." This is presumably a reference to the letter close of the preceding 24th March, and to subsequent (and unknown) documents. A year later Reading abbey still had a precarious hold on its Scottish dependency,<sup>3</sup> but was complaining bitterly of the violent interferences of the bishop and prior of St Andrews. On 20th December 1309 the acting Chamberlain of (English-occupied) Scotland gave four quarters of grain to Jordan, prior of Pittenweem, for his sustenance,<sup>4</sup> perhaps because he had been expelled from his priory by the Scots. Certainly by 1313 Reading had been finally deprived for on 3rd August in that year Martin, prior of May, was litigating with Scone abbey.<sup>5</sup> In 1318 Martin agreed to the payment of the annual *census* of sixteen merks to St Andrews priory<sup>6</sup> and was clearly the nominee thereof. To his cure of the priory belongs the last document printed below.<sup>7</sup>

There is no evidence to show whether Reading had sent monks back to May island during its two brief restorations; perhaps only a prior came north to occupy the prior's house in Pittenweem—it may be significant that there is no word of maltreatment of monks in king Edward's writ of 1306<sup>8</sup>—or perhaps a convent once more occupied the lonely island. If so, it was probably for the last time. Although references to a prior of May are not infrequent after 1306, there are many more to the prior of Pittenweem. In the life of St Adrian in the Aberdeen Breviary it is said that the monastery

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7*, 249, as cited above, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoranda de Parlamento, 1305* (Rolls Series, 98), 192, where they are attributed to the Lent parliament of 1305. But these membranes of the roll have been shown to belong to September 1305 (*Rotuli Parliamentorum hactenus inediti*, ed. H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles (Camden Third Series, LI), xxx).

<sup>3</sup> No. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Docs. Scot.*, III, 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Scone*, No. 148.

<sup>6</sup> *Stuart*, xci.

<sup>7</sup> No. 59.

<sup>8</sup> No. 58.

was destroyed by the English,<sup>1</sup> and this may well be true of the buildings.<sup>2</sup> But there is no evidence that the convent of Augustinian canons from St Andrews which replaced the Benedictines of Reading ever went to the island and the complaint of the canons of St Andrews in 1305 of their ejection from "the priory of Pittenweem" suggests that their convent had been sited on the mainland at least from the time that it was restored to them (1297 × 8). In 1328-9 a payment was made on the king's behalf of eight shillings to four men to go to the isle of May to catch rabbits;<sup>3</sup> in 1550 the prior of Pittenweem in feuing out the island of May, confessed that the chief wealth of the island which had once lain in its rabbits was now despoiled through the ravages committed on their warrens by the English.<sup>4</sup>

#### NOTE.

##### *The Order to which Reading Abbey and May Priory belonged.*

In papal bulls of the 13th century (*Cal. Papal Letters*, I, 28 (1207); Harleian MS. 1708, fo. 195 r-v (1227 × 34)) Reading abbey was described as *ordinis Cluniacensis*, but in the 14th century as *ordinis S. Benedicti* (*Lettres Communes de Jean XXII*, ed. G. Mollat, xvi, s.v. "Rading"); May priory was likewise so described. In what sense were these houses "of the Cluniac *ordo*?"

It is certain that they never owed any obedience to the abbot of Cluny, though such obedience was the most notable feature of the Cluniac order in the 12th century. Yet soon after Reading abbey was founded with monks from Cluny and Cluniac Lewes, a confraternity agreement with Cluny was made, which concludes with the provision that "for the greater stability of the Cluniac *ordo* in the house of Reading . . . when an abbot of Reading dies, the convent thereof shall choose an abbot from their own number, and not from another house (*de propriis professis ecclesie sue non de alienis*). But if a suitable person is not found among them then the monks of Reading shall choose an abbot from the monks of Cluny" (E fo. 48 v (1123 × 30)). This agreement was confirmed by Adrian IV (Holtzmann, *PU England*, III, No. 127 (1154 × 8)). The close relationship of Reading abbey with Cluny and her dependencies, which this implies, has also been demonstrated for the 12th century by Dom Knowles, with examples of interchange of personnel between them. The same writer points out, too, that Reading was Cluniac in custom—that is to say in its liturgical and other observances (*Monastic Order in England*, pp. 281-2); it was an independent house with all the characteristics (other than dependence on Cluny) of a Cluniac monastery. In the case of Reading abbey *ordinis Cluniacensis* meant "of Cluniac observances." This is consistent with the fact that the abbey reproduced the relationship of a Cluniac cell to mother house in the relationship of May priory to Reading.

After 1215, as an independent abbey of black monks, Reading sent its abbot

<sup>1</sup> *Breviarium Aberdonense, pars hiemalis*, fo. lxii.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ancient Monuments Commission Report, Fife, Kinross, and Clackmannan*, 25-6. For Pittenweem priory see *ibid.*, pp. 222-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Each. Rolls*, I, 160.

<sup>4</sup> Stuart, xcvi.

to the chapter of English black monks, in obedience to the decree *In singulis regnis*, of the fourth Lateran Council (*Chapters of the English Black Monks*, ed. W. A. Pantin, I (Camden Third Series, XLV), 18, 273-6). In a century when "reform and the making of constitutions was in the air" (Knowles, *Religious Orders in England*, I, 9) a stricter distinction of the monastic "orders" was possible; those which participated in the chapters of the black monks could be distinguished as *ordinis S. Benedicti* while others participating in a different system of visitations and chapters, were "Cluniac." Reading belonged to the former group, and by the 14th century was always described as "Benedictine."

In the case of May priory, evidence is slender. In 12th-century royal charters, its monks were *ordinis Cluniacensis* (Nos. 12, 47). In 1257 it was described as Benedictine in one and Cluniac in another papal letter (*Cal. Papal Letters*, I, 340, 344). The uncertainty probably arose from two circumstances, namely continued dependence, in the manner of a Cluniac cell, on Reading, and the possible failure of the Scottish Benedictine houses (Coldingham, Dunfermline, and Iona) to implement the decree *In singulis regnis*. It may be noted that the description of May as "Benedictine" was probably derived from Arbroath abbey, that as "Cluniac" probably from May priory. In time May would doubtless have assumed regularly the designation "Benedictine," and indeed may have done so before 1288. But further information on this point is denied us by the events of that year.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTE.

*Prior Hugh de Mortimer (below, p. 69).*

The date of *Scone*, No. 30, depends on two chronicle statements—that of Hoveden that William, prior of May, was an ambassador to king John about May 1199 and that of the Melrose chronicler that a William became abbot of Coupar on 15th January "1200." I followed Dr Easson in reading this as 1200/1, but the Melrose chronicler seems to have begun the year on 25th December and accordingly his evidence means that Arnold (a witness of *Scone*, No. 30) was no longer abbot of Coupar on 15th January 1200. This leaves no year to which *Scone*, No. 30, can be attributed, unless there is an error in either Hoveden or the Melrose chronicle. The year 1199 is impossible because bishop Roger was at king John's coronation on 27th May.

Mr G. W. S. Barrow has pointed out to me that *Scone*, No. 30, is a royal grant that the canons might in future elect one of their number as abbot with royal assent and counsel, and that it is given at Forfar on 29th May. According to Bower (*Scotichronicon*, i, 513) in 1198 abbot Robert of Scone resigned and on the same day there was elected at Forfar, Reinbald, cellarer of Holyrood (not one of their number) "*sicut placuit curialibus*" (*i.e.* under royal pressure). It is very likely—indeed almost certain—that *Scone*, No. 30, was granted by the king on the occasion of this election; either therefore Reinbald was elected in May 1200 (not 1198 as Bower says) and *Scone*, No. 30, issued then (which also means that somehow the Melrose chronicle must be in error on the date of election of abbot William of Coupar) or alternatively Hoveden has given wrongly the name of the prior of May in 1199 as William. The second alternative seems to me to be correct and I would now date *Scone*, No. 30, at Forfar on 29th May 1198. Accordingly William had demitted office and been succeeded as prior of May by Hugh de Mortimer by that date.



## APPENDIX I.

*The Charters in Dr Stuart's Records of the Priory of Isle of May.*

On pages cxii-cxiv of his edition, Dr Stuart printed a "roll of charters and muniments of Scotland" drawn up at Reading abbey, italicising those entries for which he had not "discovered" corresponding charters. Some of these are however to be discovered in his text, and others are printed below. The number of the entry on the roll is followed by the number of the identified charter: 1 = 4; 8 = 48; 25 = 53; 41 = 49; 43 = 52; 52 = 37; 56 = 56; 62 = 55.

The charters printed by Dr Stuart are datable as follows:

1	1141 × 50	21	1273 × 79
2	1147 × 53	22	1274 × 79
3	1131 × 53	23	1202 × 63
4	1141 × 50	24	1227 × 31
5	1141 × 50	25	1178 × 1214
6	1147 × 53	26	1209 × 37
7	1147 × 53	27	1249 × 90
8	1153 × 60	28	1260
9	1153 × 259	29	1260
	× 62	30	1285
10	1153 × 62	31	1219 × 40
11	1153 × 62	32	1222 × 40
12	1166 × 71	33	1204 × 22
13	1203 × 10, 4th July	34	1204 × 22
14	1178 × 88	35	1242
15	1189 × 99, 17th April	36	24th October 1261
16	1176 × 77	37	1128 × 78
17	1165 × 71	38	1206 × 22
18	1165 × 71	39	1231
19	1215 × 22, 26th March	40	15th December 1225
20	17th August 1233	41	1206 × 9

These dates are based mainly on the holders of the offices of chancellor, chamberlain, archdeacon of St Andrews or Lothian, and of various bishoprics. An exception is No. 16, so datable 1171 × 78, but at Reading. King William was in England for war in 1174, on a hurried journey home in 1175, and in 1176 and 1177. It is accordingly dated to these latter years.

## APPENDIX II.

*The Priors of May.*

1. Achard, is prior 1141 × 50, and probably 1143 × (No. 4). Baldwin the "abbot" of May mentioned in the Orkneyinga Saga is omitted from this list.
2. Robert witnesses the following charters: *Holyrood*, No. 26, 1153 × 64; *St Andrews*, p. 132, almost certainly the same as p. 129, 20th November 1160 × 12th May 1161; *St Andrews*, p. 144, 1165 × 6, and perhaps at consecration of Richard, bishop of St Andrews, 28th March 1165; *St Andrews*, p. 216, 1165 × 71 (chancellor Nicholas).

3. William was named prior in two charters to May, No. 12, datable 1166 (earl Waltheof) × 1171 (chancellor Nicholas) and below No. 50, datable 1165 × 71, the latter being a special privilege limited to his lifetime, surely a mark of the king's personal favour. Taking into account the king's limitation of Reading's right to remove a prior, a struggle over the priory may be inferred, in which the king successfully appointed William as his candidate. There is no evidence to show whether or not this is the same William as he who was sent as ambassador to king John about May 1199 (Lawrie, *Annals*, p. 316; Anderson, *Scottish Annals*, p. 320). He may have been William Giffard.
4. Hugh of Mortimer. He witnesses a royal charter, *Scone*, p. 30, from a cartulary which must have wrongly extended the initial R; read Roger, not Richard, bishop of St Andrews. It is witnessed by Arnald, abbot of Coupar, who had demitted office by 15th January 1200/1 (*Coupar Angus*, II, p. 268) and by Roger, bishop of St Andrews, consecrated 15th February 1198. *Scone*, No. 30, is datable 1198 × 1200, on 29th May, on this internal evidence, but in May 1199 William was still prior of May and bishop Roger was at the coronation of king John at Westminster, so that it must be dated 29th May 1200. The mistake in the text of this royal charter misled Dowden, *Inchaffray*, pp. 250 n, and 271. (But see Additional Note, above, p. 67).

He witnesses *Inchaffray*, XXIV, 1204 ×, *Melrose*, No. 63, × 1204, and *North Durham*, CCCCLXXIII, self-dated 17th August 1204, and, in error, as Hugh de Mortun, *Arbroath Vetus*, Nos. 47, 52, both datable 1204 ×. As H., prior of Pittenweem, he acts as papal judge delegate, *Advocates MS.* 15.1.18, No. 33, datable 1202 ×. All these are to be dated × 11th April 1206, see 5.

5. John. He became prior after 17th August 1204 (see 4) and was at a synod in Perth on 11th April 1206, *Spalding Club Miscellany*, v, 209. He witnesses *Dunfermline*, No. 167, × 1210 (death of bishop Richard); *Cambuskenneth*, No. 47, 1214 (death of king William) × 1219 (death of abbot Guido); *Lindores*, XLII, 1210 (consecration of bishop Abraham) × 1222 (see 6) and not 1210 × 1214 as Dowden says, basing himself on Stuart's list of priors of May; *Dunfermline*, No. 215, and *Cambuskenneth*, No. 118, both self-dated 1215, and *St Andrews*, p. 316, self-dated 1212. This prior occurs in charters Nos. 34, 38, 41.

Ivo, apocryphal. He is known by only one reference, *Dryburgh*, No. 200, *Advocates MS.* 34.4.7, fo. 140. This MS. is very late and probably copied from another cartulary and not from the charters. "Ivo" acts with Thomas, prior of St Andrews 1200–11, between which dates there is scarcely room for another prior of May. In the same charter *Hugo miles* at the beginning becomes *Henricus miles* at the end, indicating that the copyist was guessing at full names from an initial, and hence misread I[ohannes] as Ivo.

Adam, prior of Pittenweem, listed by Stuart, citing *Balmerino*, pp. 37–8, which "is said to be dated 1221" but the only place where this "is said" is earlier in his own preface, p. xxvi, n. 3; Adam is a witness of the charter cited to Balmerino abbey, which was founded only in 1229, and he was probably the prior Adam mentioned in 1345 *Cal. Papal Letters*, III, 162.

6. Richard, prior of May, was judge delegate in an action between Kilwinning and Dryburgh abbeys in 1222 (*Dryburgh*, No. 84) and probably also acted as such in virtue of a papal commission dated 7th June 1221 (*Dryburgh*, No. 231, not of 1226 as Stuart says) although the document runs "N et Ricardus de May et de Dumfermling priores" which is taken to be an error of reversal.
7. Ralph, prior of May, in whose name runs the charter No. 32, × 1240 when Laurence had ceased to be archdeacon of St Andrews. He witnesses *Dunfermline*, No. 222, 26th April 1233.
8. John, prior of May, was acting as judge delegate on 7th May 1248, *Dryburgh*, No. 280; but thereafter he was received as a monk into the Cistercian house of

Balmerino, of which he was abbot from 1251 to 1252, according to the Melrose chronicle.

9. Hugh, prior of May in 1260 (charter No. 30), resigned according to Bower in 1269.
10. William of Gloucester, prior of May, was admitted by Alexander III, but reluctantly because he was an Englishman. There was a prior of Pittenweem unnamed on 25th October 1270 (*A.P.S.*, I, 102) and William was witness to *St Andrews*, p. 108, ×1273 (death of abbot Thomas of Lindores). As "Willelmus dictus de Glouernia" he witnesses Nat. Lib. Scot. Pitfirrane Writs No. 3.

## DOCUMENTS.

42.

*Carta eiusdem de donacione unius tofte in Hadintun.*

Dauid rex Scot' Prepositis ministris & omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue . Salutem. Sciatis me in elemosinam fratribus de Mai unam plenariam toftam in burgo meo de Hadintune dedisse libere & quiete ab omni consuetudine & seruitio . T . Andrea episcopo de Cateneis & Gaufredo abbate de Dunfermelin . et multis aliis.

David I grants to the monks of May a toft in his burgh of Haddington.

Source: E fo. 60 v.

Date: 1128 × 53.

Printed: Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, CCXXXI.

43.

*Carta eiusdem de piscibus uendendis.*

Dauid rex Scot' . Justic' . vicecomitibus prepositis . & omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue . salutem . Sciatis quod concessi monachis & suis hominibus libertatem uendendi piscem in portu suo sicut in burgo . Quare precipio super meum forisfactum ne calumpnientur de mercimoniis comparatis . plusquam de emptitio . in meo domini[c]o burgo . T . Gaufrido abbate de Dunfermelin . Edwardo cancellario . Et multis aliis.

David I grants to the monks [? of May] license to sell fish in their port as in a burgh, and orders that they shall not be impleaded for conducting trading any more than for buying in the king's demesne burgh.

Source: E fo. 60 v.

Date: 1141 × 50.

Printed: Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, CLXVI.

*Lawrie's text has been amended, apparently in order to yield the translation printed on his p. 394.*

44.

*Carta eiusdem de quietantia nauis monachorum ab omni consuetudine.*

Dauid rex Scot' omnibus probis hominibus terre sue . salutem . Mando uobis atque precipio quatinus ubicumque nauis fratrum de Mai applicauerit in terra mea sit quieta de cano & tolneo & omni consuetudine . ita ne ullus eis aut rebus

eorum forisfaciat . T . Gaufrido abbate de Dunfermelin . & Edwardo cunstabulario . apud Edeneburgh.

David I grants that wherever a ship of the monks of May shall berth, it shall be quit of can, toll and custom.

Source: E fo. 61 r.

Date: 1128 × 53.

Printed: Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, CLXVII.

## 45.

*Carta eiusdem de annua pensione v. marcarum pro capella & decimis de Pert.*

M. Rex Scottorum Episcopis . Abbatibus . Comitibus . Vicecomitibus . Baronibus . Ministris . Prepositis . & aliis omnibus terre sue probis hominibus tam clericis quam laicis . tam futuris quam presentibus . Salutem . Sciant omnes me dedisse & concessisse & hac mea carta confirmasse monachis de Mai qui sunt de Rading' . quinque marcas in perpetuam elemosinam a prepositis meis de Pert singulis annis persolendas predictis monachis de cano primo de nauibus uenientibus apud Pert . in escambio pro capella & decimis de pert . quas ex dono aui mei Regis Dauid plurimis annis optinuerunt . quas predictas marcas ante eos monachi de Dunfermelin ex dono predicti regis aui mei solebant accipere a prepositis & ministris meis de Pert . Dedi itaque & concessi predictis monachis de Maio . illas . v. marcas voluntate et consilio abbatis & monachorum de Dunfermelin . Et uolo ut predicti monachi de Maio habeant illas marcas in perpetuam elemosinam . ita bene et libere sicut aliqua ecclesiastica beneficia melius & liberius in toto regno meo habentur . Testibus his . Willemo episcopo de Morauia . Gregorio episcopo de Duncheld . & multis aliis . apud Edeneburgh.

Malcolm IV grants to the monks of May from Reading five marks in free alms, to be paid by his reeves of Perth each year from the first *can* of ships coming to Perth, in exchange for the chapel and tithes of Perth, which they held by gift of David I for several years, and which five marks, previously, the monks of Dunfermline were wont to take from the king's reeves and ministers of Perth. Malcolm gave these five marks to May with the consent of Dunfermline, to be held in perpetual alms, as any ecclesiastical benefices are held in Scotland.

Source: E fo. 61 r.

Date: 1157 × 60, and probably at the same time as *Dunfermline*, No. 40 (given at Edinburgh), which has the same two bishops at the head of its witness list.

*This charter is fully discussed above (pp. 57-58).*

## 46.

*Carta eidem ne aliquis piscari presumat in aquis monachorum absque consensu eorum.*

M Rex Scot' . Omnibus probis hominibus terre sue . Salutem . Sciatis quod recepi monachos de Maio in firma mea pace . Quare prohibeo ut nemo piscari presumat in aquis suis . nec edificia construat in insulis ad eos pertinentibus nisi per eos . nec fodiat insulam Mai nec capiat herbam in eam . T . Waltero cancellario . Roberto Auenel . Waltero de Lindes' . apud Berewic.

Malcolm IV receives the monks of May into his peace. No one is to fish in their waters, construct buildings on their islands, cultivate the isle of May, or take grass in it.

Source: E fo. 61 v.

Date: accession of Malcolm IV, 1153, × demission of chancery by Walter de Bidun, 1162 (Chron. Holyrood, 147, n.).

*The isle of May is in fact a group of three islets, and this probably explains the plural "insulis."*

## 47.

*Carta eiusdem de donatione Balegallin & conuentu monachorum.*

Willelmus Rex Scott' . Episcopis . Abbatibus . Comitibus . Baronibus . Justiciis . Vicecomitibus . Ministris . & omnibus probis hominibus tocus terre sue . salutem . Sciant presentes & futuri me dedisse & concessisse & hac carta mea confirmasse deo & Ecclesie omnium sanctorum de Mai . & priori eiusdem loci & successoribus eius & fratribus ibidem deo seruientibus in liberam & quietam & perpetuam elemosinam Balegallin per suas rectas diuisas ita tamen quod prior iste de Mai non debeat aliquo tempore remoueri nisi pro manifesta culpa que prius cognita fuerit coram me uel successoribus meis & coram episcopo Sancti Andree . & quod amodo erit ibi conuentus xiii . monachorum ex ordine cluniacensi . Quare uolo & firmiter precipio ut predicti monachi prenominatam terram de Balegallin cum omnibus tenuris suis quas Rex Dauid auus meus & rex . M . frater meus eis dederunt & concesserunt ita libere & quiete & honorifice teneant sicut aliqua abbatia liberius & quocius & honorificentius elemosinas suas tenet & possidet . in regno meo . T . Dauid fratre meo . Nicholao cancellario . comite Waldeuo . comite Dunecano . Et multis aliis . Apud Sanctum Andream.

King William grants to May priory Balgallin, with the purpose that the prior of May shall not be removed except for a manifest fault demonstrated to the king and the bishop of St Andrews, and that there shall be on May a convent of thirteen monks of the Cluniac observance.

Source: E fo. 62 r.

Date: 1166 (succession of earl Waltheof) × 1171 (death of Nicholas the chancellor).

*Granted before the general confirmation of king William (No. 12) which shows that the provision relating to the removal of the prior is not limited (as the use of "iste" might suggest) to one particular prior; "prior iste de Mai" means "the said prior of May." Half of Balgallin had been granted by king David (No. 3) but this charter seems to grant the remainder. Balgallin appears as Balgally in the rubric to one charter (St Andrews, p. 392) but cannot now be identified with certainty. It may be Baglillie near Kirkcaldy; see above p. 56, n. 12. The size of the convent prescribed shows the influence of the constitution of the Cistercian order, where exactly this minimum was laid down. There was no such provision or observance among the black monks.*

## 48.

*Carta eiusdem de quietancia.*

Willelmus Rex Scot' . Vicecomitibus . Prepositis . 7 ministris . & omnibus hominibus tocus terre sue . Salutem . Precipio ubicumque prior de Mai aut aliquis suorum fratrum aut clientum domus de Mai uenerint cum rebus domus sue quatinus sint quieti a cano & theloneo per totam terram meam . & ut licenciam habeant uendendi proprias res suas & emendi & emendi [sic] necessarias domus sue . sicut carta regis Dauid aui mei testatur & confirmat . Et prohibeo firmiter ne quis eis aut eorum possessionibus iniuriam aliquam faciat super meum forisfactum . T . Nicholao [c]ancellario . Ricardo de Moruill' . & multis aliis . apud Pert.

King William orders that wherever the prior of May or one of his monks or dependents comes with the goods of the house, he shall be quit of can and toll and have license to sell and buy.

Source: E fo. 62 r.

Date: 1165 × 71 (death of Nicholas the chancellor).

*King David's charter is No. 6.*

## 49.

*Carta eiusdem de communitate nemoris de Clacmanet.*

Willelmus Rex Scot' omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue . Salutem . Sciatis me concessisse priori de Mai & fratribus ibidem deo seruiantibus in elemosinam communionem nemoris de Clacmanet sicut carta regis Daudid aui mei testatur & confirmat . Quare prohibeo ne quis eos aut eorum homines in nemore disturbet . T . Nicholao cancellario . Ricardo de Moruill' const' . Waltero filio Alani . Et multis aliis . apud Pert.

King William confirms the rights of common in the wood of Clackmannan given to May priory by king David.

Source: E fo. 62 r.

Date: 1165 × 71 (death of Nicholas the chancellor).

*King David's charter is No. 5.*

## 50.

*Carta eiusdem ut monachi quieti sint ab auxiliis & operationibus.*

Willelmus Rex Scot' omnibus probis hominibus tocius Scotie . Salutem . Mando & firmiter precipio ut monachi de Mai teneant tenuras suas quas habent in Scotia libere & quiete ab omnibus seruitiis . & nominatim quieti sint ab auxiliis & operationibus tempore W . prioris . quamdiu ipse de domo de Mai curam capiet . T . Engelramo episcopo de Glaseu . Nicholao cancellario . Et multis aliis . apud Eneburg.

King William orders that the monks of May shall hold their lands quit from all services, namely aids and works, as long as William is prior of May.

Source: E fo. 62 r-v.

Date: 1165 × 71 (death of Nicholas the chancellor).

*This quittance is probably limited to Scotia proper, for the use of that word where in the address terre sue might be expected, and in the text infra regnum meum, cannot be accidental. Evidence about aids and works, especially bridge work, is not lacking, but the subject has not been investigated; it is here clear that the liability to them was territorial—i.e. tenurial.*

## 51.

Ada comitissa mater regis Scot' . Omnibus amicis suis & hominibus suis de Carel & de alibi & (de)<sup>1</sup> Balliis suis de Karel . Salutem Sciatis clerici & laici . me suscepisse priorem de Mai cum omnibus possessionibus quas monachi de Mai possident . in feudo meo de Carel in manu & protectione mea . Quare mando uobis & precor . & hominibus meis precipio quatinus predictos monachos de Mai in omnibus negotiis suis pro posse uestro adiuuetis . & res eorum protegatis . tenendas tam bene & libere & honorifice . sicut carta Willelmi regis Scot' . filii mei eisdem testatur & confirmat . T . Alexandro de Sancto Martino . Hugone de Mailol . & multis aliis.

Countess Ada takes the possessions of the priory of May in her fief of Crail under her protection, and orders her men and officers to help it when possible.

Source: E fo. 62 v.

Date: 1165 (accession of king William) × 1178 (death of the countess Ada).

*Alexander de St Martin was a frequent witness to charters of the countess Ada along with Hugh Balliol, whose name is here spelled erroneously Mailol.*

<sup>1</sup> Underpointed for deletion.

## 52.

*Carta Dunecani comitis de quietantia exercitus & expeditionis.*

Sciant presentes & futuri quod ego Dunecan comes de Fif concedo & confirmo hac carta mea priori de Mai & hominibus suis de tota terra sua omnem quietantiam de exercitu & expeditione sicut rex M . confirmat ei per cartam suam . His testibus Reginaldo de Warena . & Michaelae clerico . Et multis aliis.

Duncan, earl of Fife, confirms to May priory the quittance from army and hosting confirmed to them by king Malcolm IV.

Source: E fo. 62 v.

Date: 1153 × 1204.

*William the Lion gave an acquittance from "army and expedition" (No. 16) which seems (from the omission of dedisse) to have been a confirmation. Unfortunately the charter of king Malcolm referred to here is not extant, and like other charters which must have existed but whose text has not come down to us, it is not mentioned in king William's general confirmation (No. 12). A private confirmation of a royal charter, such as this is, is rare, and implies that earl Duncan, and perhaps the earls of Fife, had a special duty to perform when the host, or "common army" was called out. The earl may have led the "army of Fife." Professor Dickinson points out to me that Jordan Fantosme seems to show the earls of Buchan and Angus leading the host from their provinces in 1173 (Lawrie, Annals of the Reigns of Malcolm and William, p. 113).*

*Reginald de Warenne is identified by Sir Frank Stenton with the first of the Warennes of Wormegay, who became a monk in 1178-9 (Early Yorkshire Charters, ed. C. T. Clay, viii, pp. 26-7). But the Reginald of this charter must have been connected with the Warennes who were Fife landowners. A Reginald de Warenne exchanged lands with Laurence, son of Orm (of Abernethy), with Malcolm, earl of Fife, as a witness (Douglas Book, iii, No. 281, 1204 ×), and was a benefactor of that earl's foundation, the abbey of Culross (ante, lx, 71-2, 1217 ×). He granted Lindores, LXX (1216 × 24), LXXI, LXXII, and witnessed Lindores, LXVIII, and Scone, No. 125 (× 1223). He married Orabella, sister and heiress of Hugh Say, and died before 1247 (Scone, No. 87).*

*Michael, the clerk, may have been a clerk of earl Duncan and perhaps his relative. He has a high place in the witness lists of various charters (St Andrews, pp. 242, 246). Other references to him appear in the indices to St Andrews and Dunfermline, but he is probably not Master Michael, clerk to bishop William Malvoisin (St Andrews, pp. 155-6).*

*The manuscript reads Dunecan with no mark of abbreviation.*

## 53.

*Carta Gospatricii comitis de Dunbar . de donatione unius tofte in Bele.*

Gospatricius Comes de Dunbar . Omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue tam presentibus quam futuris . Salutem . Sciatis me concessisse & in perpetuam elemosinam dedisse Sancto Yðernino de Mai & fratribus ibidem Deo seruientibus unum plenarium toftum . iuxta portum meum de Bele libere & quiete ab omni consuetudine sicut aliquis liberius & quietius tenet in tota terra mea pro anima patris mei & matris mee . & omnium antecessorum meorum . pro salute anime mee . & uxoris mee & filiorum meorum . His . T . filio comitis Waldef . & comitissa Derd' . & multis aliis apud Dunbar .

Earl Gospatrick of Dunbar grants a toft next to his port of Bele to St Ethernan of May and the brethren serving God there.

Source: E fo. 62 v.

Date: 1140 × 59 (the latest date of Adrian IV's bull confirming the gift) and perhaps × 1153, since that bull confirms the earliest gifts of king David.

*This charter is the earliest to mention St Ethernan, the missionary whose fame lasted longer than the Cluniac priory, although the royal chancery consistently refused to name him in writs to the priory. It is also by a good many years the first in which an earl of Dunbar styled himself thus—unless de Dunbar was inserted by the cartulary scribe.*

*King William's general confirmation (No. 12) names unam mansuram cum tofto in Dunbar et applicationem unius navis ad necessaria domus sue transportanda sicut Comes Gospatricius eis dedit . . . et rex Malcolmus . . . eis carta sua confirmavit, but does not mention the toft beside the port of Bele. Presumably this port is Belhaven, beside Dunbar, and the tofts in the two charters may be identical, or an exchange may have taken place. In either case the monks of May seem to have had another charter from this earl, now lost. The general confirmation of pope Adrian IV to Reading abbey mentioned in the dating above runs: Manerium quod dicitur Rindalgros ex dono Dauid regis Scotie . cum decimis piscariis et aliis pertinentiis suis . Insulam Maii ex dono eiusdem cum decima piscium . terris et aliis pertinentiis suis . Ex dono comitis Gospatricii . domum unam in portu . . . (Holtzmann, PU England, iii, No. 126).*

## 54.

*Carta Edwardi filii Gospatricii comitis de donatione unius cheldre \ farine <sup>1</sup> singulis annis.*

Sciant presentes & futuri quod ego Ego [*sic*] Eduuardus filius Gospatricii comitis concessi & hac carta mea confirmaui deo & ecclesie de insula Maie & monachis ibidem deo seruientibus in perpetuam elemosinam . unam cheldram farine de molendino meo Beletune per singulos annos ad festum sancti Cudberti reddendam pro me & meis infantibus . nec non & pro anima uxoris mee Sibille & animabus antecessorum meorum & successorum . Waldero filio meo & herede hoc simul mecum annuente & confirmante . Quapropter uolo & firmiter precipio ut quicumque illud prefatum de me uel de meis heredibus quocumquemodo tenuerit molendinum . ante omnia & super omnia alia illam mensuram plenarie sicut prescriptum est persoluat . Quod qui disturbare uoluerit aut aliquo modo detinere . iram Dei & sancte matris ecclesie & omnium sanctorum & meam incurrat maledictionem . Ad cuius rei confirmationem . hoc adhibeo testes . Paganum canonicum de Alnewic . & Herueum canonicum socium eius . Adam de Dunbar . Waldeum filium meum . Stephanum de Hant' . Et multos alios.

Edward, son of earl Gospatrick, grants (or confirms) to May priory a chaldre of meal annually from his mill of Belton.

Source: E fo. 62 v.

Date: 1147 (foundation of Alnwick abbey) × after 1180, when Edward, son of Gospatrick, was still alive.

*From the assent of Edward's son, Waltheof (Walderus in the text), this charter is unlikely to be earlier than c. 1160. Although Edward was an extensive landowner in England (Scots Peerage, iii, 246) "Beletune" in the light of No. 53 is more probably Belton, near Dunbar, than Beal, opposite Lindisfarne.*

<sup>1</sup> Interlined.



## 55.

*Item carta eiusdem [Alexandri pape tercii] de confirmatione Leominstrie et Maii.*

Alexander episcopus seruus seruorum dei . Dilectis filiis abbati et fratribus Radingensis monasterii . salutem et apostolicam benedictionem . Cura nos admonet suscepti regiminis ecclesiarum profectibus paterna consideratione prospicere et earum iura contra malignorum incursus apostolice tuitionis patrocinio communire . Eapropter dilecti in domino filii officii nostri debitum prosequentes . et uestris iustis postulationibus grato concurrentes assensu . Leominstriam et possessiones alias siquas circa marchiam Wallie uel in ipsa Wallia habere noscimini . et insulam de Mai . et alias possessiones quas habetis in Scotia . sicut eas rationabiliter possidetis uobis et monasterio uestro auctoritate apostolica confirmamus . et presentis scripti patrocinio comunimus auctoritate apostolica artius inhiibentes . ne quis de prenomminatis cellis abbatias facere . aut de prescriptis possessionibus aliquid disponere . sine assensu abbatibus et capituli uestri aliquo modo presumat . Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostre confirmationis et constitutionis infringere uel ei aliquatenus contraire . Siquis autem hoc attemptare presumpserit . indignationem omnipotentis Dei . et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius . se nouerit incursum .

Bull of pope Alexander III confirming, to the abbey of Reading, Leominster and other possessions in Wales or the Marches, and the isle of May and other possessions in Scotland, and forbidding anyone to make these cells into abbeys, or to dispose of their possessions without the consent of Reading.

Source: E fo. 70 v.

Date: 1159 × 81.

Printed: Holtzmann, *PU England*, III, No. 300.

## 56.

. A . dei gratia Illustri Regi Scocie . eadem gratia Sancti Albani . Sancti Petri Westmonasterii . Sancte Marie de Thame . Abbates in Anglia . Salutem cum omni honore et debita reuerencia . Cum sit nobis a sede apostolica libertates . Iura . et possessiones Ecclesie Rading' Abbatis eciam et conuentus loci eiusdem in Regnis Anglie Scocie . Wallie . defendendi a malignorum incursibus . ac protegendi tam in spiritualibus quam in temporalibus cura commissa . ne filii inobediencie uideamur . dissimulare non possumus quin mandatis perreamus apostolicis in hac parte . propter quod uestre duximus excellencie in domino supplicandum deuote monentes quatinus si ad aliquorum instanciam In Prioratum de May qui ad monasterium Rading' et eiusdem loci monachos spectare dinoscitur uel res seu possessiones quascumque ad dictum Prioratum spectantes contra sedis apostolice eisdem concessa priuilegia manus extendi preceperitis . Vos hoc Regali clemencia reuocare studeatis . quantum in nobis est inhiibentes ne per uos uel aliquem de uestris eisdem monachis Rading' supra dicto Prioratu uel aliquo iure uel possessione ad illum pertinente molestia inferatur aut grauamen . Vos sic in hac parte habentes ut a deo dignam retribucionem inueniatis et quod ad defensionem membrorum suorum tantum filium sibi regenerasse sancta mater ecclesia Romana gaudeat infuturum Valeat Regia potestas uestra diu in domino .

“To Alexander by the Grace of God King of Scotland the Abbots, by the same Grace, of St Albans, St Peter of Westminster, and St Mary of Thame, greeting with all honour and due reverence. Since the care is committed to us by the apostolic see, of defending from the attacks of evil men and protecting as much in spiritualities as in temporalities, the liberties, rights, and possessions in

the realms of England Scotland and Wales, of the church of Reading, and also of the abbot and convent of the same place; lest we seem sons of disobedience, we cannot pretend otherwise than that we are proceeding by apostolic mandates in this matter; wherefore we have led the petitioning of your excellence in the Lord, respectfully warning, that if at the instance of anyone you have ordered the extending of a hand against the priory of May which is known to belong to the monastery of Reading, and the monks of the same place, or against any goods or possessions belonging to the said priory, against the privileges of the apostolic see granted to them, you shall take care to recall them with royal clemency, and as far as we can, forbidding that hurt or damage shall be done by you or anyone of your [subjects] to the same monks of Reading in the aforesaid priory or in any right or possession belonging to it. If you act in this way you shall find from God worthy reward, and Holy Mother Church of Rome shall rejoice in future that she has reborn to herself such a son for the defence of her members. May your royal power flourish long in the Lord."

Source: British Museum, Additional Charter 19630.

Size: 6 × 2.5 ins.

Sealing: tongues for three seals *par simple queue* with damaged seal in red-brown wax on centre tag. Legend: [mona]steri[i]. Device: an ecclesiastic blessing. There is a loose seal in green wax, bearing the same device, in the box containing the charter.

Endorsed: littera a conseruatoribus regi Scocie missa.

Date: × April 1286, when the news of the death of Alexander III must have reached England. This may be dated to the unwillingness of that king to admit prior William, 1269 × 73, and his subsequent attempt to buy the priory with the aid of bishop William Wishart, 1273 × 9, or to an early stage of the negotiations which were completed March–May 1288. But there may have been other occasions on which the king interfered with this "alien" priory.

*It is unlikely that this copy of the letter was sent to Alexander III, as it is one of a group of documents from Reading, and a version was at Reading when the "roll of muniments" was drawn up there (Stuart, p. cxiv, No, 56).*

## 57.

La prier . . . . [Reding] ges qi sunt del patronage nostre seigneur le rei . . . la premier fundac . . . seigneur . . . vieil premier fondeour qe aueit en Royne et compaigne Mahaud la bonne Royne file au . . . la bonne Royne sainte Margarete secome le rei Henri en sa fundacion de labbaie auandite pria ses amis qil lui aidassent a lavencem[ent] . . . aussi fist la bonne royne Mahaud de la soue part pria le rei descoce maucolm son pere qil les avancast dalcune chose et il pour dieu . . . dona en pure et perpetuele almosne lisle de Maij ouesques le manoir de Pedenwem en Escoce ouesques les apourtenances. Et pour ce qe la P[riourie de] May ouesques les apourtenances est aloignez de labbaie auandite sanz le grie et lassent et la volente et le commun consail nostre seigneur le Rei verrai patron ia de toutes partz deca et dela et de labbaie et dou couvent iointement et ensemblement et encontre la fourme dou primier doun dou Rei Descoçe prient nostre seigneur le Rei labbe el couvent auanditiz qe de si comme il ad le poer en Engleterre et en Escoçe et a lui apent a justicier et adrescier toutes choses mesprises et nomeement les tortz qe fait sont puis la mort le Rei Alisandre qil deigne comme souuerain seigneur et patron de la maison auandite faire repeler la Priorie de May qest aloigne

de sa maison de Rading' auandite sanz raison et par le poer leuesque de saint Andreu qe en ceu tens estoit gardain et maistre dou R[oyaume] Descoce auant dit.

The petition of [the abbot and convent] of Reading. [As Henry I] founder [of Reading] had as wife Maud, daughter of [Malcolm III and] queen Margaret, and as Henry in his foundation of Reading abbey sought the help of his friends in advancing the abbey, so queen Maud besought king Malcolm her father for his part to give some help. He gave in alms the isle of May with the manor of Pittenweem and appurtenances. As the priory of May had been alienated from the aforesaid abbey without the consent of the king of England, true patron, and of the abbot and convent of Reading, against the form of the gift of the king of Scotland, the abbot and convent petition the king, since he has the power in both realms and the duty to remedy wrongs, especially those done since the death of Alexander [III], that he will restore the priory of May, which was alienated from Reading without reason and by the power of the bishop of St Andrews who, at that time, was guardian and master of the realm of Scotland.

Source: Public Record Office, London, Ancient Petitions, 13701.

Size: 9.6 × 2.7 ins.

Endorsed: petitione.

Date: This was certainly presented after the overlordship of Edward I had been acknowledged by the Scottish baronage, and probably after the resignation of king John. It refers to bishop William Fraser as though he were still alive, and accordingly it is datable 10th July 1296 × 20th August 1297, though the former date is not absolutely certain.

*Henry I founded Reading abbey in 1121, but his first wife, Maud, daughter of Malcolm III, died in 1118. Her father had been killed in 1093, so that neither he nor his daughter can have had a hand in the endowment of Reading.*

*The phrase "souverain seigneur" seems to echo Edward I's style in documents addressed to Scotland—"superior dominus regni Scotie."*

## 58.

Edwardus dei gratia Rex Anglie Dominus Hibernie et Dux Aquitanie . dilecto et fideli nostro Adomaro de Valencia consanguineo nostro salutem . Querelam . . . Abbatis et conuentus de Redingges recepimus commentem quod cum quedam insula vocata Maij et manerium de Pet[in]wem cum pertinenciis necnon alia loca tam spiritualia quam temporalia ad insulam et manerium predicta in terra nostra S[cocie] pertinentia de dono quondam Regum Scocie fuissent diu est monasterio de Redingges pacis tempore assignata et cum Abbas et conuentus et predecessores sui Abbates et conuentus eiusdem loci in pacifica possessione dictorum Insule et manerii et locorum a tempore assignacionis predictae hactenus extitissent . Willelmus Episcopus Sancti Andree et Prior eiusdem loci ac quidam alii Insulam manerium et loca predicta tam spiritualia quam temporalia manu armata hostiliter inuadentes bona et catalla dictorum religiosorum in eisdem locis inuenta ceperunt et asportauerunt ac quedam de dictis bonis nequiter consumpserunt homines eorundem in locis predictis existentes verberauerunt vulnerauerunt et male tractauerunt in ipsorum et ecclesie de [Rading]ges preiudicium et dampnum non modicum et contra pacem nostram ut dicunt et prout per predictum Abbatem poteritis super hiis plenius informari . Et ideo vobis mandamus quod inquisita super dictis transgressionibus veritate . faciatis dicto Abbati de eisdem festinum iusticie complementum prout in huiusmodi casu de iure fuer[it] faciendum . Dat' sub priuato sigillo nostro apud Neuburgh in Tyndale secundo die Septembris anno regni nostri xxxiiij.

Privy seal writ of Edward I narrating that he has received the complaint of Reading abbey that May and Pittenweem were long in their peaceful possession, and that William,

bishop of St Andrews, the prior of St Andrews, and others invading the isle of May, removed the goods and chattels of Reading, consumed some, and maltreated the men of the same abbey there, to the damage of Reading and against the king's peace. He orders Aymer de Valence to give justice to the abbot.

Source: Public Record Office, London, Ancient Correspondence, XLVII/89.

Size: 8.4 × 3.7 ins.

Sealing: Trace of narrow tongue at bottom left-hand corner, and on dorse mark of seal (1 in. diameter) in red wax and of strip for sealing close.

Date: 2nd September 1306.

## 59.

Pateat vniuersis per presentes quod cum lis seu controuersia mota esset inter dominum Martinum priorem de May nomine ipsius prioratus . et pro ipso actorem ex una parte . et dominos abbatem et conuentum de Scona reos ex altera super iure decime piscariarum de Sleples et de Inchescyrethislau quas quidem decimas dictus dominus prior de May asserebat de iure communi sibi competere sicut situatas infra parochiam ecclesie sue de la Rend . et super cessacione cuiusdam annue pensionis duarum marcarum a dictis Abbate et conuentu dicto Priori soluendarum . Tandem post dictam controuersiam seu litem coram commissariis Reuerendi patris domini Willelmi dei gratia Sancti Andree episcopi diucius agitatum placuit vtrique parti consensu et auctoritate dicti Reuerendi patris Sancti Andree episcopi ac prioris loci eiusdem accedentibus quod uiri prouidi et discreti magistri Willelmus de Yathaym archidiaconus Dunblanensis . et Alexander de Kinimonth rector ecclesie de Thayenas visis meritis . et circumstanciis cause possent discutere . et plene ordinare de dicta controuersia seu contencione secundum quod melius eisdem videretur expedire fide a qualibet parte corporaliter prestita de non veniendo contra ordinationem et dispositionem magistrorum Willelmi et Alexandri prenominatorum . Qui quidem habito consilio peritorum pensatisque natura et qualitate negocii ac meritis ipsius cause diligenter inspectis . disposerunt ordinauerunt . et amicabiliter inter dictas partes composuerunt . quod dictus dominus prior de May nomine suo et prioratus sui dictos Abbatem et conuentum de Scona super dictis decimis piscariarum de Sleples et de Inchescyrethislau non inquietaret . nec perpetuo molestaret . Immo ipsos quietos . liberos . et absolutos ab omni exactione juris vendicacione . et aprestacione decimarum piscariarum predictarum pro se et suis successoribus sponte et libere inperpetuum denunciaret . Dicti vero abbas et conuentus annuam pensionem duarum marcarum in festis sancti martini et Pentechosten priori de May qui pro tempore fuerit soluendarum sicut actenus a tempore a quo non extat memoria consuetum erat sine contradiccione aliqua inperpetuum persoluent . Idem vero dominus Martinus pro se et prioratu suo et idem abbas et conuentus de Scona pro se et monasterio suo fide corporaliter prestita a qualibet parte dictam compositionem et ordinationem inperpetuum ualituram approbauerunt et ratificauerunt . Et quilibet pro parte sua ratum et firmum habuit . Renunciantes in hoc facto ex certa scientia omni priuilegio . omni exceptioni doli mali accioni in factum condiccioni sine causa beneficio in integrum restitutionis . et omnibus remediis juris canonici et ciuilibus competentibus in presenti vel in futurum competituris . In signum corroboracionis et confirmacionis huius compositionis legitime facte de consensu et procuracione parcium predictarum dictus reuerendus pater dominus Willelmus dei gratia Sancti Andree episcopus sigillum suum presentibus duxit apponendum una cum sigillo communi capituli Sancti Andree et sigillis dictarum parcium . Dat' apud Sanctum Andream die dominica proxima post festum Sancti Nicholai episcopi et confessoris . Anno gratie . m<sup>o</sup> ccc<sup>o</sup> : Tertiodecimo.

In a controversy between Martin, prior of May, for his priory and the abbot and convent of Scone over the tithes of the fishings of Sleepless and Inchyra (?) which May claims by common law as being within the parish of their church of the Rhynd, and over the grant of an annual pension of two marks payable by the abbot to the prior, the matter was long debated before the commissaries of William, bishop of St Andrews, and both parties agreed with his consent and authority, the prior of St Andrews agreeing, that William de Yetholm, archdeacon of Dunblane, and Alexander de Kinimonth, rector of Tannadice, might ordain in the matter, both parties having sworn to accept their decision. They ordained that May should not disturb Scone over the fishings, but should renounce them to Scone. Scone should pay the pension, as had been done immemorially, to May. Both parties swore to observe this.

Source: British Museum, Additional Charter 66571.

Size: 14.25 × 5 ins.

Sealing: Slits for four tags, three remaining, of which two bear fragments of seals.

Endorsed: de decimis de fischingis (15th to 16th century).

Date: 9th December 1313.

*This document is one of a group of six Scone charters, and a previous stage of this litigation will be found in Scone, No. 148. As early as 1171 × 8 Scone abbey was litigating before the king over the tithe of fishings on the Tay opposite Scone, Craig, and Kinfauns (Scone, No. 20) when its rights seem to have depended on a royal grant and an episcopal confirmation of "the tithe of the whole parish of Scone;" Scone, No. 5, May 1163 × May 1164; Scone, No. 26, 1165 × 71; Scone, No. 47, 1165 × 72. That parish included the three chapels of Kinfauns, Craig, and Rait, in the carse of Gourie (Scone, No. 48, 1165 × 78) and disputes must have arisen over the division of fishing tithes between parishes on either bank of the Tay.*

*William de Yetholm, archdeacon of Dunblane, was previously and afterwards archdeacon of Teviotdale; George Watson, "The archdeacons of Teviotdale with special reference to the deanery of Teviotdale," Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society, 1907, pp. 36-7. (I am indebted to Mr Athol Murray for bringing this article to my notice.)*

*Alexander de Kinimonth, rector of Tannadice, was later archdeacon of Lothian and bishop of Aberdeen; Coupar Angus, i, p. 241 (where the editor is reluctant to identify the holders of these offices).*

*Sleples is the island of Sleepless near the Rhynd bank of the Tay; Inchescyarethislau may be represented by Insherrit, an island slightly further downstream and near the Inchyra bank. Inchyra in the 17th century was "Inchesyraye" and "Inschryrra." See also Exch. Rolls, i, 484-6.*