

## The Trinitarians of Failford

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In pre-Reformation times there existed at Fail, not far from Tarbolton, a house of friars of the Order of Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives.<sup>1</sup> The ruins of the building lingered on down through the centuries until the 1950's when the stones were taken away for the undignified purpose of road-bottoming around Prestwick Aerodrome. With the stones went the last visible remnant of Ayrshire's most puzzling religious establishment.

It had stood on a little-used back road between Ayr and Galston, a paradox in stone—everybody knew of it, nobody knew anything about it. To local folk it was the home of the jolly "friars of Fail who made good kail": to the cerie-seeking it was the haunt of the warlock laird, a bogle appearing twice in its history as different personages as far apart in time as the days of Wallace and the era of John Knox. The house bewitched sober historians so that it became three places in one, Fail, Failford and Loch Fail, a veritable trinity of Holy Trinity.<sup>2</sup> So elusive was it that no one could find out who built it or who knocked it down. Even the proper name for it mocks at serious enquiry—call it abbey and you are wrong, call it friary and you are in error, speak of it as a convent and you flounder in verbal confusion. The house colours too are puzzling. The brothers of the Order displayed on their cloaks a cross of red, white and blue, yet the people knew them only as the Red Friars. There seems to be a spell in the very name, a spell of such potency that the device of the cross, designed expressly for purposes of differentiation, seems to lend an impish ambiguity so that even in our own sober times an erudite continental scholar has made exhaustive enquiries about the Crosier friars who resided at Fail in Irvine, only to find to his dismay that Fail is not in Irvine and that Failford never had the slightest connection with the Crutched friars whom he was so assiduously seeking.

To-day the old place has gone, seemingly determined to leave no record to contradict the defamatory vernacular doggerel which keeps jingling around its good name. Doughty men, weighty scholars of the first Ayrshire and Galloway Archaeological Society, made a mighty effort to put an end to this mystery by publishing the charters of this covert house. They laid

1. O.S. Map. Ref. 421288.

2. After the Reformation the full name of Failford was retained by the larger eastern part of the estate, and is now applied specifically to a hamlet (Map Ref. 459262) and to a farm (Map Ref. 474268); while the name of Fail was taken by the western part, containing the site of the House.

urgent hands upon the old chartulary, had it translated and transcribed, and were on the point of publication, of fossilising the elusive spirits in petrifying print, when the Society sickened and died and the charters, transcripts and all, vanished into thin air so that the shades of the bygone friars remained free from the bonds of recorded fact. There, then, is our mysterious abbey of Fail and now that it has gone, leaving not a stone behind it, perhaps one may dare to brush aside the cobwebs of time and seek the realities of Fail and its Friday-fasting friars.<sup>3</sup>

### FAILFORD AND THE TRINITARIANS

The house at Fail has been described—even in medieval charters—as abbey, monastery, friary, preceptory and convent. It should not be termed an abbey or monastery since it did not concern monks: it should not be designated friary since the Trinitarians were not, in the strict sense of the word, friars: and it will not do nowadays to refer to it as a convent since the word has come to denote a residence of nuns. The official title was "Ministry" or "House" and the correct designation is the "House of the Holy Trinity of Failford" or the "Ministry of Failford."

Spottiswoode catalogues three separate establishments under the names Feale, Failford and Loch Fail. The first, he avers, was a Cluniac cell dependent upon Paisley Abbey, while the other two were separate Trinitarian houses. Jamieson, quoting Spottiswoode, popularised the idea of a Cluniac cell so that the idea yet persists even among the local people. But there is no record among Paisley charters of the existence of any such cell and Chalmers in his *Caledonia* wisely remarked that the three names all refer to one Trinitarian house. Less wisely however, he went on to imply that there was at Fail an independent church which in the reign of Robert I was under the patronage of Sir James Lindsay.<sup>4</sup> This was an error because the church is that of the Ministry of Fail, not a separate church, as is shown in numerous charters.

The house at Failford was held by the Order of Holy Trinity and the brethren were commonly called Trinitarians because this was the shortest form of the name, since the seals used by the various houses had always a representation of the Trinity,<sup>5</sup> and since all their churches were dedicated to the Holy Trinity.<sup>6</sup>

3. See "Notes on Failford Monastery and Fail Castle" by J. P. Wilson in *Collections of Ayrshire Archaeological Society*, 1947-9, pp. 129 ff.

4. *Caledonia*, vi, p. 491.

5. Birch, *History of Scottish Seals*, ii, p. 114.

6. A fact that does not deter the *Ordnance Gazetteer* from describing the Ayrshire house as St. Mary's of Failford.



The Red Friars had on their insignia a cross coloured in red, white and blue. Despite this distinctive decoration there is often confusion of these Trinitarians with other "cross-bearing" Orders, especially with the Order of Holy Cross, also known as Crosier Fathers and—rudely—as Crutched Friars. As mentioned above, this confusion was demonstrated quite recently by the investigations of a Crosier Father into the possibility of Failford's being a house of his order.<sup>7</sup>

The Trinitarians of Failford, as already stated, were not monks, friars or canons. They were a minor branch of the great Military Orders which came into being as a result of the Crusades, so that to understand the religious house at Failford it is necessary to have a slight knowledge of the cross-bearing Orders of the 12th century.

The invasion of the Holy Land by Turks and Saracens caused all Christendom to blaze with zeal to eject the infidels and to aid pilgrims to visit the fountain-heads of Christianity. This led, of course, to the Crusades. A mixture of militarism and religious fervour caused the Military Orders to emerge at this period with the dual purpose of resisting the Turks and abetting the pilgrims. The great Military Order of St. John originated in Jerusalem where the knights held the hospital of St. John the Baptist for the care of travellers to the Holy Land. These knights wore a uniform displaying a cross of white on a black mantle. The rival order of Templars arose about 1123 with the avowed aim of defending Palestine and the pilgrims thereto. Their cross was a red one on a white mantle. Lesser orders came into being about the same time with similar purposes. Among these were the Fratres Pontifices who built roads and bridges and gave shelter to pilgrims; the Mercedarians or Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives; and the Trinitarians. The last two devoted all their energies and resources to purchasing freedom for those who had been captured by the Turks.

The occupiers of Failford were of this Order of Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives, an order which had been founded in the early Crusading period by St. John of Matha and St. Felix of Valois and which had become exceedingly popular, with the result that it was formally recognised by Pope Innocent III on December 17th, 1198. By his Bull the Trinitarians received a constitution and a distinctive form of dress consisting of a white robe bearing on the breast a red and blue cross, technically "argent a cross pattee, the perpendicular gules, the traverse azure."<sup>8</sup> The main house of the order in Scotland was at Failford.

7. See a full account of his quest in the *Kilmarnock Standard* of September 6, 1947.

8. Woodward, *Ecclesiastical Heraldry*, p. 241.

The primary purpose of the Trinitarians was the redemption of captives and so their revenue was divided into three parts: one for the order, one for the poor, and the third for redemption of captives. To keep to this triple division was not easy since establishments had to be set up and since the order had to carry its share of ecclesiastical burdens. By the fifteenth century the redemption third was reduced to a fixed quota and papal permission was granted for this reduction.<sup>9</sup>

It was a very enthusiastic order using spectacular processions, pageants and parades to interest the public in its work of mercy. It was well organised too, and in many towns it set up confraternities of tertiaries to aid the collection of alms, which were also augmented by donations obtained through the popular Holy Trinity scapular. The personal risks incurred by the friars in their journeys among the infidels were well-known and added to public enthusiasm for their work. Thus its activities attracted rich and poor alike and brought it many powerful patrons such as King Louis of France, Louis the Saint, who travelled on crusade with Trinitarians in his retinue and who gifted to the order a house in his chateau of Fontainebleau. Elsewhere similar gifts caused a wide extension of the order—Failford must have arisen from such a gift—so that by the end of the 12th century it had more than 250 houses ruled by the Minister-General from his headquarters in Paris, dedicated to St. Mathurin, which place had ousted the original foundation at Cerfroid from the position of chief Trinitarian house. Failford must have been in constant communication with this centre and it is possible that records of this are in existence still.

With the ending of the Crusades the order found other work to do in the redemption of captives from the corsairs who infested the Mediterranean, and in this work the Trinitarians concentrated their activities on Tunis and Algiers while the Mercedarians operated chiefly in Morocco. It is estimated that in three centuries the work of the friars of Holy Trinity brought freedom to more than 90,000 captives. Even after the Reformation period the work continued, as can be seen in the ransom of Cervantes in 1580, and his thankful devotion to his rescuers is testified by his burial among the Trinitarians at Madrid in the habit of a Tertiary of that order.

This, then, was the order which in medieval times had a flourishing house at Failford. But it is seldom that the "Friars of Fale" are remembered in this light. The friars live on in popular vernacular jingles which have given them a notoriety

9. C.P.R., v, p. 550.



hard to explain from verifiable evidence of their activities. There are several versions of the rimes vilifying Failford and these have become well-known from their quotation by Ramsay, Scott and Jamieson and from their appearance in Paterson and in the Statistical Account. The commonest version runs as follows:—

“The friars of Fail they made guid kail  
On Fridays when they fasted,  
And never wanted gear enough  
As long as their neighbours’ lasted.”

It is probable that this is an embellishment of an older jingle which averred that, “The friars of Fail gat ne’er ower hard eggs or ower thin kail.” But how old the rime is or how much truth is in it, no-one can tell: if the vernacular doggerel is a comment upon the mode of living at Failford it is difficult nowadays to find what the criticism is based upon. Despite the rime there is very little evidence of what the friars did in Ayrshire, good or bad. Riotous living seems hardly possible in an establishment consisting of a handful of friars, and limited by the rule of the order to three friars, three lay brothers and a superior.

History does reveal accusations against the house of Failford. The first comes about the year 1459 when the King petitioned, the Pope for suppression of Failford and made accusations of uncleanness, dirt and immorality. It is more than possible that this ill-repute of Fail had its real origin in the royal desire to annex the revenues of Failford to the new Trinity College being built under royal patronage on the outskirts of Edinburgh. [23] There is no other evidence to support the king’s charges, and it is significant that Rome did not accede to the royal request. It is the same with the accusation that the original aim of the order had become obscured with the passing of time and the suggestion that Failford may have ceased to contribute to the redemption of captives. There is not the slightest evidence for or against, and access to the accounts of the Minister-General in Paris would be the surest way of obtaining proof.

In general, however, it must be admitted that the order did not lack critics as the years went past. Polydore Vergil, writing in 1499, states that, “these certainly pious men were accustomed to beg alms for the redemption of captives but even this office of piety is fulfilled scarcely anywhere nowadays.”<sup>10</sup> Coulton stresses this decline of the original impulse by reference to the Papal Commission of 1637 for the reform of the Trinitarians in France,

where investigations revealed that whereas a third of the revenue should have gone for the redemption of captives the sum actually expended was scarcely more than one four hundredth. He avers that the Scots Trinitarians had almost ceased as a real order long before the Reformation and that they exercised no very definite function during the medieval period and were the first order in Scotland to show signs of hopeless decay.<sup>1</sup> Where this learned scholar got his evidence for Scottish affairs is a puzzle since there is very little left to record the work of the Trinitarians in Scotland and he himself admits “a rarity of documents.” Despite this it can be shown that Failford did operate as an integral part of Trinitarian organisation all during medieval times, that the Minister of Failford was Provincial of the order in Scotland, that as Provincial he did rule the other Scottish houses, and that the Minister-General in Paris was in direct consultation concerning Scottish affairs. This makes nonsense of the charge that the Trinitarians had ceased as an order long before the Reformation. The other criticism, that the order exercised no very definite function, is difficult to refute because there is no record of provincial meetings or of transactions with the Minister-General and these wants make it improbable that much will ever be known of Failford’s contribution towards redemption of captives. But the order had other subsidiary functions, such as providing a church and an hospital, and these the Ministry of Failford did indeed carry out.

The church of the house of Failford is mentioned in several charters and one reference reveals that it was here that chapter meetings of the Scottish province were held. [37, 44] Nothing is recorded of the spittal—or hospital—existing at Fail for the old and infirm, except that at the time of the Reformation it supported two old men inside the house and four old bedesmen outside the establishment. [61] The existence of a spittal at Failford is puzzling since these institutions were originally intended for lonely places where travellers would be in need of rest and refreshment. The present-day village of Failford is in a quiet corner of Ayrshire but could not by any means be described as the kind of region necessitating a spittal. It should be remembered, however, that the district has changed a lot since medieval times. In 1165 Fail was next to the “bare moor of Kyle” which was donated to the monks of Melrose, and this barren moorland would be sufficient to explain the erection of a spittal. Moreover this halting-place would be on a “main traffic artery of medieval Ayrshire,”<sup>2</sup> since the old Irvine Valley route through Newmilns to the east of Scotland started at Ayr and proceeded via Whitletts, past Fail, and across the ford over Fail Water, following the road we now

10. *De Rerum Inventoribus*, vii, c. 4 as quoted in Coulton, *Scottish Abbeys and Social Life*, p. 227.

1. *Opus cit.*, p. 30.

2. *Collections of Ayrshire Archaeological Society*, 1947-9, page 89.



know as Route A 719. Thus, as a ford point in a moorland region, the siting of a spittal at Failford in early times is quite comprehensible.

The connection of Failford with magicians is two-fold. In the times of Wallace a constant visitor to the Minister there was Thomas the Rhymer and it is said that he died in retirement in Failford.<sup>3</sup> The last holder of the office of Minister, Walter Whiteford, was known as the "Warlock Laird" and the unchaney ongoinings at his funeral have been described by Joseph Train in "Strains of the Mountain Muse."<sup>4</sup>

Many difficulties about the Trinitarians in Scotland would be removed by the finding of those charters of the house which are not irretrievably lost. They were in existence up to this century and were actually transcribed for publication in the *Collections of Ayrshire and Galloway*. With the untimely ending of the old Society the transcripts and charters disappeared and have not yet been traced. Without them no satisfactory history of Failford is possible and the following essay is merely a substitute based on miscellaneous charters and documents drawn from many sources. The references have been calendared for the satisfaction of students who may wish to pursue further aspects of Trinitarian activities.

#### THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE

The history of any establishment must begin with an account of its foundation and here the lack of charters becomes painfully evident. When did the Trinitarians settle at Failford and who gave them the land on which their house was built? Two beliefs are common. The first springs from the fact that there is a map showing Fail as a monastery in the reign of David I. This is a popular map: it was set out by Professor Skene in his "Celtic Scotland" for the purpose of, "illustrating the state of the church in the reign of David I." It has been copied by Cosmo Innes, by Sir Archibald Dunbar in his superb book on "Scottish Kings," and by J. M. McKinlay in his well-known "Ancient Church Dedications." Thus the map is easily accessible, which is a pity for it is thoroughly inaccurate. The reign of David I was from 1124 until 1153, and the map shows Paisley, Crosraguel, Dalmilling and Fail as monasteries at that time. Yet Paisley belongs to the reign after David's, and Dalmilling and Crosraguel come half a century after David's death. It would not be very convincing to use this map as proof that Failford was in existence before 1153.

3. See Wallace, edited Jamieson, ii, line 288.

4. Cf. *Old Ayrshire Days*, p. 75.

There is a second theory which is perhaps the traditional belief, for it is given by early historians such as Spottiswoode and Brockie and repeated by their successors. According to this belief Andrew Bruce introduced the Trinitarians into Failford in the year 1252. But who was Andrew Bruce? I can find no Bruces holding land in Kyle-Stewart in this early period. As for the given date of 1252, there are no charters to deny or confirm; and the first recorded evidence of a religious house at Failford comes in 1337. [4] It may be, however, that in two later charters there are hidden clues to the time of erection. In the royal petition of 1459 to have Failford suppressed and the revenues given to Trinity College [23] it is suggested that the suppression be carried out "non obstantibus felicis recordationis Bonifacii Pape VIII." If that means that the house of Failford had a charter from Pope Boniface VIII, Fail must have been in existence in the time of that pontiff, 1295 till 1303. Again, in 1500 when the Minister, William Houston, was in danger of losing his benefice, he caused to be made a transumpt of a bull of Pope Nicholas V. [33] The contents of the bull are not divulged but it may have contained some safeguard for Failford given in the time of Pope Nicholas V who reigned from 1447 till 1455.

Another line of attack could be tried out. If we could discover who owned the lands of Barnweill before 1300 we could guess at the founding family with a fair amount of certainty. But we have only fragments of knowledge to guide us here. Three great Kyle names are connected with the early days of Failford: the Stewarts, the Wallaces and the Lindsays. If Andrew Bruce was not the founder, then it is probable that a member of one of these powerful families was.

The first claimant must surely be the overlord of Kyle-Stewart, a Stewart of the royal house-to-be. This family must have strong claims because of its Crusading connections. One member perished at the siege of Damietta in 1249, and another must have built the spittal of St. Thomas, at Spittalhill near Symington. Such Crusaders would be in close contact with the military orders and with the Trinitarian friars, and this contact would be sufficient to explain the setting-up of a house of the order in Stewart domains. The foundation by a Stewart would explain certain facts concerning Failford and also certain traditions. It would account for all the Trinitarian possessions being in Kyle-Stewart and for Fail's holding of the churches of Barnweill, Galston and Symington. It would support the claim made by James IV that his ancestors had founded the house [40] and would explain the tradition that members of the Stewart family had been buried in the monastery.<sup>5</sup>

5. *Collections of Ayrshire Arch. Soc.*, 1947-9, p. 138.



The other claimants are the Wallaces and the Lindsays of Craigie, both of which families are closely connected with all the early charters of the ministry. The Wallaces owned lands in the vicinity of Failford from a very early date. This is seen when Adam Gilbertson was given Tarbolton by Alan Stewart before 1197, for among the witnesses are William Lindsay and Richard Wallace, both probably adjoining proprietors. [1] That Richard Wallace was lord of Riccarton is the accepted view; but he also may have owned Barnweill, for he is found giving a large parcel of land in this area to the monks of Melrose—a parcel with one of its boundaries the burn of Fale. [2] Barnweill does appear in one of these early charters under the name of Berenbouell: alas for the “Barns burn weill” legend. From the very first charters concerning the ministry, the Wallaces and the Lindsays appear closely connected in its affairs. The recorded history of Fail begins with a dispute centred on the patronage of Tarbolton church. The Lindsays of Craigie and Thurston were present in 1337 when John Graham, lord of Tarbolton, donated to Failford Ministry his right of patronage to the church of Tarbolton. [4] Later he bestowed it on Robert Graham of Weyliston in Tarbolton who in 1342 transferred it to Melrose Abbey. [6] This meant that both Fail and Melrose had a claim to the revenues of the church of Tarbolton and a dispute followed. In November 1342, John de Graham admitted that he had given the right to Failford some years previously and that he had received a present of a white horse from the Minister, who had now taken it back. John now acknowledged that he had no right to give the patronage to Failford since he had already given it to Robert Graham. However he also confessed that he had for a second time given the patronage to the Trinitarians, after being coaxed to do so by the Minister. He admitted himself at fault for doing so. [7] In 1368 the overlord, John Stewart, confirmed the grant to Fail and there the matter should have ended. But the dispute must eventually have been settled by a compromise, because in 1414 the patronage of Tarbolton kirk was held jointly by the triple patron, Failford, Melrose and the lord of Tarbolton, shortly before the church became a prebend of Glasgow Cathedral.<sup>6</sup>

The Wallaces and the Lindsays are again in evidence at the next major recorded event in Failford history. This was in 1359 when the “monastery of Fale” was gutted by fire and all the charters of the Lindsays of Thurston lost in the blaze. [13] Why did the Lindsays store their charters in Fail? Were they patrons of it? In 1385 Sir John Lindsay of Thurston had a royal gift of the patronage of the church of Fale, [14] which seems to

6. *Muniments of Melrose*, ii, No. 518.

indicate that the Crown was patron of the house. But the position of the Wallaces in this is not clear. Sir John Wallace had married the heiress of Lindsay of Craigie and the union of the two old families led to a new coat of arms, showing a white lion rampant on a blue field quartered with the chequer of Craigie. [14] Now this is an interesting coat of arms because there is in one of the fireplaces of Blairquhan House an old tombstone taken from Failford in the 19th century, and this stone shows a lion. It could be proof of Lindsay or Wallace burials at Fail—but did not the Stewart arms also display a lion?

#### THE LATTER DAYS

In 1459 Fail ran into its greatest danger. It was threatened with suppression, and its struggle for independence lasted till the eve of the Reformation. In 1459 the Queen, Mary of Guelders, had a plan for a great new college and hospital to be erected near to Edinburgh. It was to be called Trinity College and the Queen thought it not amiss that Trinitarian revenues should provide the necessary income. Her aim was to have the houses of Holy Trinity in Scotland suppressed and their moneys diverted to her new foundation. Holy Trinity of Soltra fell victim to her schemes and Failford barely escaped. We have already seen that in a petition to the Pope the vilest charges were levelled against the inmates of Fail, charges ranging from gross immorality to neglect by the Minister-General abroad. Suppress the house at Failford and transfer the revenue to Trinity College was the royal plea to Rome. Pius II consented to send a team of investigators with power to suppress the establishment and transfer the friars to other Trinitarian centres. [23] This would have ended the Trinitarians in Scotland, since Failford was the headquarters of the order there. The ruse nearly worked and in 1460 annates had been paid in Rome for the benefice of Failford in anticipation of the removal of the Minister and friars. [24] But Failford managed to survive this assault on its liberty—we do not know how—and continued on its stormy career as chief house of the Order of Holy Trinity in Scotland.

Did these royal assertions of depravities lead to the riming jingle against the friars? Was there any foundation for the charges of misconduct? This is a difficult period in Failford history. In 1445 a priest called John Kendale, who had been in charge of Adamton preceptory, a miracle shrine of Our Lady not far from Failford, had gone to Berwick and joined the Trinitarians there. In the same year he petitioned Rome for the deposition of Thomas Morton, Minister of Failford, and the transfer of the ministry to him. He charged the minister with keeping a concubine at Fail, with having six children by her,



and with using the friary revenues for her maintenance. He also accused him of neglecting the religious services in the house and failing to keep an adequate number of friars in residence. [21] Charges of such a nature are common in petitions to Rome and are by no means always veracious. But since Kendale paid annates for the benefice in 1447 it would seem that he did manage to prove his assertions and did become minister, a fact supported by the record of a John, minister of Failford, incorporated at Glasgow University in 1453. So it would seem indeed that there had been faults at Fail, but what of the royal accusations? The errors of the loose-living minister had been rectified by the appointment of another head of the house, and there is no record of Kendale repeating his predecessor's excesses. The fact that Rome took no action seems sufficient proof that the Queen's allegations could not be substantiated.

Having failed in one plan the royal family now tried another. At the next vacancy of the Ministry the King contrived to get a Commendator installed as a kind of steward who would collect the income and manage the affairs of the house until the vacancy was filled. The installation of a commendator for life would block any further appointments. Thus in 1477 there are two claimants for the ministry—James Dollas and Friar John Mure, head of the Dominican Order in Scotland, whom the King had had installed as commendator. Dollas had papal provision to the ministry, but Mure had been set there by the King. Both were accepted in Rome [26-31], perhaps Dollas as Minister and Mure as commendator. In fact, Dollas seems to have accepted a pension of £8 out of the revenues of Failford for the sake of peace. [31] We hear no more of Dollas, but Rome had not finished with Mure. In 1487 the Pope deposed him from his commenda because he had wrongly stated the value of Failford in his petition. Probably another claimant was challenging his office, but there are no details and it may be that Mure continued to hold Failford until his death.

No sooner was this dispute ended than Failford ran into further strife. By 1500 a friar, William Houstoun, had become Minister and again the house plunged into stormy waters. For many years Houstoun's rights were challenged by the Minister of Houstoun, a friar called Thomas Dickson. The root cause of the dispute is not clear, but it may be that Dickson claimed that his ministry of Houstoun should have been the chief house of the Trinitarians. Repeated papal courts failed to settle the issue. [35] Matters became worse and in the bitterness of the quarrel Houstoun was forced to excommunicate two of his Failford friars who had fled from the Order, probably taking

with them the seal used by the Provincial of Scotland. [37] This would have been a dangerous loss if the seal had come into possession of the rival minister. Here again was a moment ripe for royal interference. James IV wrote to the Pope stating that Failford had fallen into decay since the death of Commendator Mure and that William Houstoun was not a true friar but an intruder. James had persuaded the rival claimant, Thomas Dickson, to resign his rights into the hands of the Pope so that His Holiness could grant the ministry to the new head of the Dominicans, David Anderson. [39] Another commenda was planned for Fail. The King did not worry unduly about the truth of his facts. A further letter to Rome stated that the suit had lasted fifteen years, which can hardly be true, since Friar Houstoun does not appear as minister of Fail until 1500, although it is possible he was in office before this. The King's version of the dispute is barely accurate. He states that Thomas Dickson had been nominated by the Minister-General and that Houstoun had been intruded into the benefice with the aid of powerful laymen, a strange plea by a King of the calibre of James IV. Again, the King pleads for the ministry to be given to the Dominican prior and for settlement of the dispute within Scotland. He does not send the letter directly to the Pope but to the Cardinal who was auditor of the Rota, and at the end of his letter there is an unblushing promise of a bribe. [40] Some of the royal charges against Houstoun are very weak, for instance the allegation that he was not a friar, proved false by the fact that in all the charters where his name appears he is described as Friar William Houstoun, Minister of Failford. Moreover, the King's insincerity is evident in his attempt to intrude a friar of a different order into the ministry. Once more the King failed; the death of Thomas Dickson in 1513 seems to have ended the matter and William Houstoun continued his duties as Minister of Fail and Provincial of Scotland in spite of royal disfavour. [42]

The death of Thomas Dickson left a vacancy in the ministry of Houstoun, and Friar William, acting as head of the Scottish branch of the Order, now appointed his nephew, Christopher Houstoun, to the vacant ministry. In 1528 he wrote to Rome seeking the appointment of this nephew as his co-adjutor and future successor [42], a most unwise proceeding as events were soon to show. By 1532 the nephew had attempted to seize the office of provincialship and to excommunicate his uncle. Nor was this the worst he was to attempt, for he had also invaded Failford with a body of supporters armed with balistas, bows, mangonels and all sorts of offensive arms, and had broken down the gate and the doors in an attempt to oust the minister. [45] The details of the contention are not clearly recorded, but enough



evidence exists to show that once again the right to be provincial was being fought out between the ministries of Houstoun and Failford. The minister of Failford eventually appealed to the Papal Nuncio, Sylvester Darius, then busy in Scotland, but there is no document to show what happened. It would appear that the Nuncio cut the Gordian knot by appointing a new head of the Order in the person of John Hamilton, a protege of the King. [46]

Probably the new minister was related to Sir James Hamilton of Finnart, who in 1530 had exchanged his lands in the east of Scotland for those of Barnweill, Ochiltree and Symington [48], and by so doing had become a powerful landholder in the vicinity of Fail. But this is not a criticism of the new minister, who seems to have had the desire to fill his office well and who, at the very beginning of his ministry, with the King's support, sought permission from the Minister-General to travel abroad to study conditions at continental houses of Holy Trinity. [47]

The Hamilton influence is again apparent when in 1538 another vacancy occurs. This time Sir James had a gift of the temporalities of Fail and drew its income for himself until a new appointment had been made. [48] The new minister was to be another Hamilton, this time an eighteen-year-old candidate called James. [49] The beheading of Sir James at Edinburgh on August 16th, 1540, put an end to Hamilton occupancy of Failford, but the influence remained, this time indirectly through the house of Glencairn.<sup>7</sup>

It was to this Glencairn family that the King now turned for a new head of the Trinitarians. He wrote to Rome and to the Minister-General nominating an illegitimate son of the Earl, one Robert Cunningham, a twenty-two-year-old cleric, of approved character and literacy. [50] Thus, for the first time for years, the Minister of Failford had the backing of the Pope, the Minister-General, the King and the important local nobles. With such support he should have enjoyed an excellent tenure of office; but he lived to see the upheavals of the Reformation and the end of a vital religious establishment at Failford.

This young nobleman was the most prominent of all the ministers of Fail. He became a friar [52], took a degree at St. Andrews University, had a seat in Parliament and was a guest at the royal coronation in Stirling in 1567. [67] He appears as a friend of the Wallaces and Hamiltons—Johanna Hamilton was married to his brother, the heir of Glencairn—and to both families he feued away many Failford lands. His

7. R.S.S., ii, 3622, footnote.

only setback seems to have been in the early part of his ministry when he was outlawed and deposed because of his appearance, in battle array on the burgh-moor of Glasgow in the army of the Earl of Glencairn in opposition to the Governor. [54] He must, however, have been pardoned soon after, for by 1549 he was back in office. [56] It is possible that his status as son of Glencairn saved Failford from destruction at the Reformation, although this is contrary to the history of the time as given by John Knox. [60] In this stormy period Cunningham managed to retain his benefice and revenues, with a deduction to support the new minister class, and in addition he enjoyed a pension from the Queen. [70] During his ministry much of the property of Failford was set out in feu, and an independent estate developed from the large portion given in 1574 to William Cunninghame of Caprington. [71] Before his death the break-up of Failford had been effected and no later holder of the benefice was ever to possess the full extent of the pre-Reformation holdings.

On his death in 1576 the ministry was given by the King to William Wallace, brother of John Wallace of Craigie [72], but it had by this time been stripped of the parish churches it had held and these had been handed over to qualified ministers. [73] Despite these changes the minister of Failford was still the legal head of the Trinitarian Order in Scotland, and he can be found acting in this capacity on many occasions. He still resided at Fail and the King had confirmed to him the feu of the manor and house with a limited amount of property next to it [78], and to these remnants he added pieces of land in Kyle-Stewart that had formerly belonged to the friars. [75] That he still had control over the other lands of the Trinitarians is seen in the dispute of 1601, when he was forced to go to law against the tenants of Carbello in the parish of Auchinleck to compel them to pay their share of the ecclesiastical tax levied by the King. [81] The actual position of Trinitarian holdings is obscure at this period of transition, and although the lands were now claimed by the King in place of the dispossessed friars the minister managed to retain parts of the temporal estate of the ministry. [83]

During the period of episcopacy in the early seventeenth century, the King gifted the ministry to the Episcopalian cleric, Mr. Walter Whiteford, who later became in 1634 Bishop of Brechin. [88] This appointment was challenged by the heir of William Wallace, the previous minister, who had died in 1617, but Parliament decided in favour of Whiteford. [89] For a short time Mr. Walter exercised the duties of his office but was deposed by the General Assembly in 1638 and fled to England, where he died in 1643. [89]



This is really the end of Failford as a religious or semi-religious establishment; and the estate of Failford, with the monastery as centre-point, fell to Sir William Cochrane of Cowdoun in 1646. [91] From then on the major portions of the possessions of the Red Friars develop as two separate estates, one held by the Cunninghams of Brownhill, the other passing to the Cochranes of Dundonald. [93, 94] The former religious buildings fell into decay as the years passed, until by 1842 only a gable and part of a wall remained to mark the site of the House of Holy Trinity. The passion for antiquities which was a feature of the nineteenth century led to a revival of interest in the site, and relics of the ministry were carefully preserved by the proprietors, although it was now too late to be sure what these relics indicated. [101] Old tombstones from the monastery have been conserved and furnish material for debate among those desirous of rebuilding the history of the Trinitarian settlement. [101] The place itself, however, has disappeared so completely that no reconstruction of it, even on paper, can now be attempted.<sup>8</sup> Much of the story of Fail has still to be written but the above sketch will prove that a complete account of the "Friars of Fale" would add much to the annals of our shire.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE ORDER

The Order of Holy Trinity was ruled from Paris, where the Minister-General resided. He had control of all Trinitarian affairs. To facilitate his work the houses of the Order were grouped into Provinces, each ruled by a Provincial. Scotland became a province at some unknown date and the affairs of all the Trinitarian establishments in Scotland were controlled by the minister of Failford, who was Provincial for the Scottish branch of the Order. It is not known how many Trinitarian houses there were in Scotland, but it is certain that Failford was the principal house, and that the minister of Failford, in his capacity as Provincial, ruled the other houses in the kingdom. Thus Failford was the Scottish headquarters of the Order of Holy Trinity and the most important house of the Order in all Scotland.

Under ideal conditions all Scottish affairs would have been handled by the minister of Failford, and he would have reported once yearly to the Minister-General in Paris. There is no record of these meetings. The appointment of the Scottish Provincial should have rested with the Minister-General, which means that the minister of Failford should have been appointed by the head of the Order or, at the very least, his appointment should have had the approval of this Minister-General. Similarly, the heads

of all the subordinate houses in Scotland should have been chosen by the Scottish Provincial, that is by the minister of Failford. But the Order was never allowed to function as had been planned, mainly because of patronage disputes involving the King, the Pope and rival claimants for ministries. The Minister-General never seems to have had a free hand in the appointment of the Scottish Provincial. After the papal reservation of conventual dignities provision passed to the Apostolic See, and the authority of the Minister-General was bypassed and appointments were sought at Rome [40], while in extreme cases the office of Minister-General was attacked and criticised on the pretext that supervision over Scottish houses was lax because of the superior's residence abroad and neglect of visitation. [23] On other occasions appeal was made to the Minister-General, usually when the King was in conflict with the minister of Failford and attempting to circumvent his authority as Provincial. [47, 50] There is very little known of these Ministers-General and Friar Nicholas, Doctor of Decrets, is the only one appearing by name.

The minister of Failford should have made all the appointments to the subordinate Scottish houses. Here again patronage disputes flouted his authority and caused endless quarrels. When attempts were made to annex Trinitarian revenues to other establishments the King over-rode the authority of the Scottish provincial and made direct appeals to the Pope and to the Minister-General. This is very evident in the suppression of the ministry of Houstoun and its annexation to Holy Trinity of Peebles in 1542, after years of royal intervention. All Trinitarian houses show this royal interference and the wonder is that the minister of Failford managed to retain any control over the Scottish affairs of his Order. This control, however, was never surrendered, and the minister of Failford can be seen supervising new appointments, acting in matters of discipline and witnessing all transfers of Trinitarian property. In 1513 he invested the new minister of Houstoun, which ministry was "at his disposal by virtue of his office of provincialate" [42]; in 1528 he admitted Symon Gray as minister of Holy Trinity of Aberdeen [44]; and even when the King had procured the appointment of a royal nominee to a Scottish house, the collation was admitted to belong to the minister of Failford. [50] But at other times his rights were challenged by the King and he had difficulty in retaining his office. Each year about Whitsuntide the Provincial should have held a chapter meeting with the heads of all the Scottish houses and glimpses of these meetings are to be seen in 1505 [37] and 1528 [44]. The first concerned a matter of discipline over certain renegade friars, while the other concerned the installation of a new minister to Aberdeen. The numbers of friars taking part is small, three and six only appearing.

8. *Collections of Ayrshire Arch. Soc.*, 1947-9, p. 135.



The position of the minister of Failford as guardian of all Trinitarian possessions in Scotland can be seen before and after the Reformation, as his consent was necessary for transfers of property.

It is not apparent why Failford should have been the home of the Provincial and chief house of the Order. It is doubtful if it was the largest establishment and it was by no means as well known as Holy Trinity of Peebles. Perhaps it possessed more revenue than any other house, for it was well endowed, as can be proved from a study of the lands in its possession. Whatever the reason, the Provincial of the Order of Holy Trinity resided at Failford and from there guided Trinitarian affairs in our realm.

#### THE MINISTERS OF FAILFORD

A chronological list of these ministers shows clearly the difficulties incurred through patronage struggles, difficulties which at times nearly wrecked the Order and caused its suppression.

- |           |  |                     |
|-----------|--|---------------------|
| 1252      | Archibald Spenser  | [by tradition only] |
| 1338      | John   | [5]                 |
| 1344      | John   | [8]                 |
| 1413      | Andrew of Cargill  | [17]                |
| 1406-1436 | John de Andreston?   | [16]                |
| 1432      | Friar Thomas de Morton. He was elected by the friars of Failford and had his election confirmed by the Scottish Provincial (?) Later he had confirmation from Rome. [19]   |                     |
| 1446      | Friar John Kendale. He was preceptor of Ladykirk of Kyle, became a Trinitarian and accused Thomas de Morton of evil-living. Probably he became minister on the deposition of Morton. A Friar John of Failford was incorporated at Glasgow University in 1453. [20, 21, 22] |                     |

John White is given as minister by Chalmers for the year 1470. This is probably a misreading of an entry in the Burgh Records of Prestwick, where one John White of Fail gave a donation to an altar in Prestwick Church. There is no proof he was minister of Fail.

Pre 1477 James Reid. In 1477 a new minister was appointed to Failford, when the benefice was vacant through the death of James Reid. [27]

- |      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| 1477 | James Dollas (Wallace ?). He had a mandate of provision with reception of the habit on October 19th, 1476. [26]  |  |
| 1477 | Friar John Mure, O.P. Commendator. There was a struggle going on at this time and Dollas accepted a pension from the fruits of Failford. Mure was deposed later for not giving the true value of Failford in his petition to Rome. [27, 32]  |  |
| 1487 | William Auchinleck. [32]   |  |
| 1500 | Friar William Houstoun. His rights were challenged by Friar Thomas Dickson and the dispute ended with the death of Dickson in 1513. A second fierce dispute with Houstoun's nephew, Christopher, who had been made co-adjutor in 1528, led to armed invasion of Failford in an attempt to depose the minister. Again the King attempted to intrude a Dominican into the ministry. [39]   |  |
| 1532 | John Hamilton. On May 17th, 1532, he had a precept of admission to the ministry to which he had been lawfully provided by the Pope and by the Papal Nuncio, Silvester Darius. [46]   |  |
| 1540 | Robert Cunningham. When the ministry became vacant by the death of John Hamilton the King claimed the right of presentation "by reason of foundation and prelacy." He presented Robert Cunningham, an illegitimate son of the Earl of Glencairn, then twenty-two years of age and a priest in Glasgow diocese. The King wrote to the Minister-General notifying him of this presentation and asking his approval. On the same day he wrote to Cardinal Ghenucci in the Papal Court to ensure that there would be no opposition in Rome. [50, 51]     |  |
| 1576 | William Wallace. The King presented him to the benefice of Failford with its dignities and patrimony and requested the Archbishop of Glasgow to give admission to him. [72]  |  |
| 1619 | Mr. Walter Whiteford. He was of the Episcopal party and was Sub-Dean of Glasgow. In 1620 he became a Doctor of Divinity and in 1634 he was made Bishop of Brechin. He was deposed by the General Assembly in 1638. The minister, William Wallace, had died in 1617 and his son claimed the benefice but was refused by Parliament. At the end of the Episcopal period the King gave Failford as a temporal lordship to Sir William Cochrane of Cowdoun in 1646. This gift was irredeemable and so ended Failford as an ecclesiastical establishment. |  |



## FAILFORD REVENUES

The ministry had two sources of income. It held churches from which it drew the rectorial teinds; it possessed lands from which it drew rents and feus.

The spiritualities came from these churches. In Ayrshire the friars had received the patronage rights of the parishes of Barnweill, Galston and Symington. The rectorial teinds of each went to the upkeep of the Ministry. Proof of these three churches as part of the patrimony of Failford is seen in 1576 in the reservation of the stipends for ministers for these parishes from the fruits of the benefice of Failford. [63]

Outwith the shire were other churches possessed by Fail. These were Torthorwald and Garrel [Garwald] in Dumfriesshire and Inverchaolan in Argyle. [72] Proof of Inverchaolan is given by Chalmers<sup>9</sup> and of Garrel in the Great Seal Registers.<sup>10</sup> Failford seems also to have had the patronage of a chapel of St. Andrew together with some lands in the parish of Dirltoun in East Lothian. [77]

Other Trinitarian houses held parish churches and drew the teinds of them. Holy Trinity of Berwick had the parish kirk of Kettins, while Scotlandwell ministry had the churches of Moonzie and Carnock.

In such tied parishes the friars could act as vicars and serve the churches but did not always do so. Barnweill, Kettins and Torthorwald were served by friars but the others appear to have been administered by ordinary priests. There does not exist any known reason for the distinction, although it is possible that, owing to fewness of numbers, only one friar could be spared from each house.

The temporalities of Failford came from rents and feus of the lands held by the monastery. All these lands were in the Kyle-Stewart district of Ayrshire and formed the lordship of Failford which was managed by a bailie. There is a complete account of the value of the lands in 1574.

A large part of the lordship lay around the monastery and consisted of the following properties:—

1. Brownhill, Byrehill, Spittalside and Bourtreemailing, occupied by 17 tenants who paid a total rental of £12 4s 6d + 74 bolls

<sup>9</sup>. *Caledonia*, vi, p. 491.

<sup>10</sup>. *R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 1868.

2 firlots of meal, 17 bolls of bear, 19 ½ bolls 13 pecks of horse-corn, 55 hens and 289 loads of peat. The Brockie MSS. gives £12 14s 6d, 44 bolls of meal and 89 loads of peat instead of the above figures.

2. The houses, yards and lands of Blacklands valued yearly at £3 7s 4d, 26 bolls of bear, 6 bolls 6 pecks of meal, 3 bolls of horse-corn, 40 loads of peat and some white wax, according to Brockie. The other valuation was 16 bolls of bear, 2 stone of white candles and 31 hens.
3. Fauldingcroft, Quarrelflat, Barnflat, Whiteyard, Kilyard, Netherbog Meadow, and 30 acres of arable land next the loch. These were valued at £5 6s 8d per year.
4. The Fail Loch with the dam, multures, etc., and the land next to it which brought in £1 6s 8d.
5. Fail Mill, with mill-lands, multures, etc., which were worth 18 bolls of meal and 4 bolls of flour per annum.

In all these lands the rents could not be separated from the teinds.

In 1574 all the above were set in feu to William Cunningham of Caprington for the above rents augmented by 20/-, with an extra £20 at the entry of an heir. Sasine was to be given at Brownhill. To enable payment in money instead of kind, prices are given—meal 8/- a boll, bear 10/- a boll, flour 10/- a boll, hens 6d each, candles 2/6 a stone, and peat 2d a load. [71] This portion of the lordship now developed into a separate estate with Brownhill as the principal mansion. In 1663 it was owned by Cunningham of Brownhill. [93]

The manor-place and house of the monastery were retained by the minister along with certain lands called Westyard, Welltour Yard, Gardens, Eastyard, Birkyard and 10 acres of arable land on the south of the house. This was held in feu for 40/- per year. [78] Another part of the lordship was the 20/- land of old extent of Law with the 7 acres called Huntflat which together with the Blackfauld Meadow were set in feu to John Stewart of Halrig and Helen Cunningham, his wife, in 1559, for a payment of 53/4. Stewart also received a house called the Welltour and 8 acres in the Fauldingcroft at a feu of 26/8. [59] The Brockie MSS. calls the 7 acres the Hameflat.

The office of bailiery brought in an income too. In 1596 it was held by John Wallace of Carnell, who was bailie over the lands of Spittalside, Failford, Vinnirhill, Hillhouse, Spittalhill,



Wasford, Trinitylands, Crosbie and Carbello. [80] According to Brockie this was feued at 32/- a year. This office of bailie shows the other lands owned by the Trinitarians to be Carbello, Crosbie, Torshaw, etc., and they can now be treated as separate units.

Carbello is a property in the parish of Auchinleck and lies in the valley of the Glenmure Water above Lugar. It was subdivided into minor properties each worth 5 merks. In 1596 the 5 merk lands of Carbello, called Gas and Welltrees, were held by George Shaw of Glenmure. In 1602 they had passed to Joseph Stewart of West Polquharn through the forfeiture of William Cunningham of Tourlands. [82] Their rental is not given. In 1587 John Boswell, son of John Boswell of Auchinleck, had the feu of the 5 merk land of Carbello called Duncanhumere for a yearly payment of £3 13s 4d. [76] In 1606 John Wallace sold to George Reid in Over Craigston the 5 merk lands of Carbello called Stanebriggs. They were held of the King in place of the minister of Failford for £4 3s 4d. [84] In 1631 Mr. Walter Whiteford, minister of Failford, gave to Robert Farquhar of Gilmilnscroft a charter of the 5 merk lands of Carbello called McLellandstoun. [90] Brockie gives the rent of Gas and Welltrees as 26/8, 30 stone of cheese and 3 stirks, 10 hogs. He also refers to a 5 merk land of Bogheid in Carbello. In 1601 the tenants of Carbello refused to pay certain taxes imposed by the minister of Failford and the suit gives the names of the tenants. [81]

Crosbie is a property at the Troon end of Dundonald parish. It is difficult to deal with, because it was sub-divided into Minister's Crosbie, Auldtoun of Crosbie, Nethertoun of Crosbie, Midtoun of Crosbie and Crosbie-Bannatyne.<sup>1</sup> It is hard to ascertain how much of it belonged to Failford. In 1592 the King gave to William Wallace of Failford the 12/6 lands occupied by William Neill in the £5 lands of Auldtoun-Crosbie called Ministeris Crosbie. The rent was 8 bolls of bear at £3 a boll. The minister also got a rent of 2 bolls from a similar 25/- land held by John Neill. These lands had been part of Failford and had been held of the King, after the Act of Annexation, by William Cunningham of Tourlands. In 1592 the lands were seized and sold to the minister for £518 13s 4d because of non-payment of feus. [79] In 1596 the King gave George Shaw of Glenmure the 20/- land of Auldtoun-Crosbie, occupied by William Neill, Alexander and John Cunningham, which had an annual value of 16 bolls of bear at £4 13s 4d a boll with duplication of 1 boll 5½ pecks. It had been held by Cunningham of Tourlands but had now been sold to George Shaw for £1320 as part payment of debt of Cunningham's for spoliation. The price includes other lands.<sup>2</sup> In 1603 John

Wallace in Burnbank had a feu of the 36/- lands of Auldtoun-Crosbie, which had belonged to Cunningham, for a rent of £6.<sup>3</sup> In 1603 the King gave to William Wallace of Failford the £5 lands of Auldtoun of Crosbie with the manor, grainmill, mill-lands, waylaid and dams which had belonged to Cunningham. The reddendo was to be £25 6s 8d with an augmentation of 6/8. [83] There is a reference in Brockie which is difficult to decipher. It gives the feuing to James Cunningham of the £5 lands of Crosbie with the mill and the fishings of the "thrown wand." The rental was fixed at £25 6s 8d and 24 salmon.

In 1592 the King feued to Archibald Fergushill of Sauchrie the one merk land of Harperland which had been held by the Fergushill family from the minister of Failford, and which had fallen to the King by Act of Annexation. The rent was 13/4 with an augmentation of 3/4.<sup>4</sup> This was a part of the 40/- land in Fullarton estate.<sup>5</sup>

A piece of land in the burgh of Ayr was also held by Archibald Fergushill, provost of Ayr, from the Trinitarians, and it was sold to John Fallusdale in 1543 for £100. It lay in the vennel leading to the hills of the burgh, between the tenement of the Laird of Carnell and that of Kennedy of Knockreoch. [52] Brockie refers to it as Trinity House, Ayr, and as such it must have given its name to the street leading to it, Trinity Vennel.<sup>6</sup>

Wasfurd was a piece of land in Kyle-Stewart valued at 5 merks 10/-. In 1549 it was feued to Mr. Michael Wallace, and in 1581, by the minister of Failford, to William Wallace of Wasfurd. [74] It is now known as Waxford.

Torshaw, also in Kyle-Stewart, was feued in 1557 to William Hamilton, son of Hamilton of Raploch. About the Reformation period it was held by John Power for a feu-duty of £3 3/- with an augmentation of 2/-.

Trinity-Lands, a 2½ merk land in Symington parish, bearing the right to two souns of pasturage in the toun of Symington, was feued to John Wallace of Menfurd for 33/4 with an augmentation of 6/8.

1. Cf. Mason's *Protocol Book*, p. 228.  
2. *R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 463.

3. *Ibid.*, 1487.  
4. *R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 2234.  
5. *R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 202.  
6. *Royal Burgh of Ayr*, p. 73.



## Calendar of Documents

### Relating to Fail, Barnweill, Galston and Symington

#### DOCUMENTS RELATING TO FAIL

##### 1. Pre 1177.

Charter by Alan, son of Walter the Steward, donating to Adam, son of Gilbert, the lands of Torbolton, Previck, Drumley and Milnefinlen. The lands lie between Menekedere, and the lands of Ar, as far as the marches of Berenbouell, and by the marches of Mauhelin as far as Ar. Adam also received the lands of Roderbren, Brenego and Nenterkan.

*Witnesses.*—Godfrey of Ros; Reynald, son of Inmudus; Alan, son of William; Robert Crok; William Passelewe; William of Lindsey; Peter of Curry; Malcolm Loccard; Ricard Walens; Arthur of Ardrossan; James of Diafan; Reynald of Ros; Alexander the chaplain; Richard, parson of Donde; Alan Crok.

*The Lennox*, 2, p. 1.

This is the first mention of Barnweil (Berenbouell), the rectory of which later belonged to Failford. Most of the witnesses are local landholders, and one of them probably owned the land on which Failford convent was built. Special note should be taken of the vassals, Wallace and Lindsay, who have an intimate connection with Failford in its early days.

##### 2. 1165-1214.

The burn of Fale is one of the boundaries mentioned in the gift of the lands of the Bare Moor of Kyle to Melrose Abbey by Richard le Walais.

*Liber de Melros*, 1, No. 69.

There is no mention of a property of Failford.

This bare moor given to Melrose could explain the location of a spittal in the area.

If Richard Wallace owned Barnweil, then the adjoining property to the bare moor, the erection of Failford and the gifting to it of the rectories of Barnweill and Symington—both in possession of Wallaces—could be explained on the assumption that Wallace was the founder and patron of Failford.

##### 3. 1252.

Andrew Bruce introduced the Trinitarians into Failford.

This is the common belief but there is no charter evidence to support it.

##### 4. 1337 January 7.

John de Grame, lord of Torbolton, wishes eternal salvation in the Lord. Know ye that I for the salvation of my soul and that of Isabella, my wife, etc., and for all the faithful dead, have given granted and by this present charter have confirmed to God and to the House of Failford, the minister, brothers and their successors, of the Order of Holy Trinity and Captives, in the place serving God, etc., the right of patronage and advowson of the church of Torboltoun as freely, quietly and fully as any right of patronage is granted or possessed by anyone in Scotland.

Done at Failford, January 7, 1337, before these witnesses—Sir David de Lindsey, lord of Crawford; John de Lindsey, lord of Craigie; Friar Alan of Torbolton, prior of the house of Friars Preachers in Ayr; John de Lindsey, rector of Torbolton Church; Adam Inglis, vicar of Dundonald; John de Crawford, of Cumnock; Alexander de Rath; Adam and John, chaplains of the Minister and Friars of Faleforde.

*Collections of Ayr and Wigton*, 2, p. 147.

##### 5. April 11th, 1338.

John de Grame, lord of Torbolton in Kyle-Stewart, has seen and examined, word by word, a certain writing exhibited by Friar John, minister of the House of Failford, sealed with his seal, not annulled or vitiated or in any way suspect, containing the above grant.

*Ibid.*, p. 147.

The charter has been copied in full from an original in Register House, Edinburgh.

##### 6. July 11, 1342.

Charter by Robert of Graham, lord of Weyliston, in the barony of Walterothilkyle, within the tenement of Torbolton, granting to the church of St. Mary of Melrose the right of patronage of the church of Torbolton, which the granter possessed by gift of John of Graham, lately lord of Torbolton, true patron thereof, and by confirmation of Robert Steward of Scotland and the Chapter of Glasgow, the see being vacant. Dated at Machlyn, July 11, 1342, before Sir Robert, Steward of Scotland, overlord of Torbolton; Sir John Stewart of Prewyc; Sir John Stewart of Darnley; Duncan Campbell; John Lindsey of Thoriston; Alexander of Rahayt; Robert Wallace, sheriff of Ayr; James Boyde; Nicholas, son of Walter; Patrick, son of Hugh.

*Scotts of Buccleush*, 2, p. 5.



7. November 25, 1343.

John of Grahame, lately lord of Torbolton, in the parish church of Torbolton on Tuesday, the feast of St. Katherine the Virgin, having confessed, said that if ever he has given or granted any right of patronage to the minister and house of Fale, which was three year past or thereabout . . . which right of patronage he has granted purely and simply and with the confirmation of his overlord, the Steward of Scotland, to Robert of Grame, lord of Welyston, by means of letters patent signed with his own seal. The same John of Grame confessed in my presence [Adam of Kinghorn] and in presence of the subscribing witnesses, that the minister of Fale gave him one white horse in consideration of the grant of right of patronage, which horse after a lapse of time the said minister took away by force from the said John of Grame, and that because he understood that John de Grame had, formerly and more fully as before-said, already granted the right of patronage to Robert Grame of Welyston and wished to defend and favour that as was right. Regarding which confession Master John of Wedale, monk of Melrose, has sought from me that a public instrument should be made to himself for the greater certainty of those to come. Done at Torbolton, before Master Thomas of Jedworth, Cistercian monk; John Doget, chaplain; John, son of James; John called Gretheuyd; Gilminus the tailor; John the cook; with many others specially called for the purpose. And I, Adam of Kingorn, imperial notary, etc.

*Liber de Melros, 2, No. 457.*

8. February 21, 1344.

John of Graham, son and heir of Sir John of Graham, lord of Robertson, in the barony of Cunninghame, wishes eternal salvation, etc. Since, after mature deliberation in the path of justice, those things are withdrawn which through impetuosity of mind, facility, or ignorance of law, are rashly entered into; and Friar John, minister, master of the Holy Trinity of Fale . . . led away and allured by a very pernicious covetousness persuaded me, who am ignorant of law, by his flatteries, not without a most evil gift, that in defiance of law I should altogether annul my former donation, rightly made, of the patronage or advowson of the church of Torbolton to my beloved cousin, Robert of Graham, lord of Welston, along with the land of Unthank, in name of endowment or glebe . . . Nevertheless I a second time made a gift of the said patronage to the said house and brothers as I was induced which error indeed . . . I recall, and submit myself for my so great fault to suffer the correction of those who are

interested, as is becoming. In testimony whereof I append my seal and the seal of Newbotyl . . . at Torbolton on February 21, 134 . .

*Liber de Melros, 2, No. 458.*

9. 1357, May 16.

Charter of resignation by Robert, Steward of Scotland, to Sir John Stewart of Crookston, his cousin, of the fee of the principal tenement of Torbolton in the barony of Kyle, on the resignation of John of Graham, former lord of the same.

*The Lennox, 2, p. 28.*

10. 1361, January 10.

Charter by John Stewart, lord of Kyle-Stewart, to his cousin, Sir John Stewart, of Darnley, of the lands of Torbolton and Drumley.

*Ibid., p. 33.*

11. 1365.

A royal gift of £3 6s 8d for two terms to the friars of Holy Trinity at Fale.

*Exchequer Rolls, 2, p. 208.*

12. 1368.

Confirmation by John Stewart, Earl of Carrick, of the charter of confirmation of John de Graham of the patronage of Torbolton to the ministry of Failford. The witnesses include Hew de Eglinton, John Lindsey of Thoriston, Adam Fullarton of Crosby, John Wallace of Riccarton and Finlay of Auchinleck.

*Collections of Ayr and Wigton, 2, p. 147.*

13. 1359, July 21.

Sir John Lindsay, of Thurston, knight, has confirmation of the lands of Murletter (Murthill) in Forfarshire. The charter was granted by a court of the king's tenants under the sheriff at Perth on July 21, 1359. This court found that Lindsay's writs to the lands of Murletter had been totally destroyed by burning in the monastery of Fail.

*R.M.S., 1306-1424, App. 1, No. 145.*

The "burning of Failliekyll" is mentioned in the same volume in Appendix II, No. 1339.



## 14. 1370-1, February 26.

Sir John Wallace, of Riccarton, received the lands of Murletter from John Lindsay.

*R.M.S.*, 1306-1424, App. 1, No. 145.

The above references raising questions about Fail are of great interest. Why did Lindsay keep charters in Fail Monastery? It might be that a Lindsay was the founder of Fail, and that the family retained the patronage. This view is strengthened by the confirmation in 1385 to James de Lindsay of the patronage of the church of Fail. (*R.M.S.*, 1306-1424, No. 763.)

There is, however, a strong connection between the Lindsays and the Wallaces. Sir John Wallace had married the heiress of Sir John Lindsay of Thurston and Craigie. His son, John, succeeded to Craigie and Riccarton, and a new coat of arms came into being, a coat showing a white lion rampant on a blue field quartered with the chequer of Lindsay of Craigie. (*Book of Wallace*, p. 37.)

The coat of arms on the tombstone taken from Failford in the nineteenth century, now in the fireplace of Blairquhan House, shows a lion rampant. This suggests that Wallaces were buried at Fail and were possibly the patrons.

## 15. 1406.

King Robert asks for a benefice in the gift of the minister of Fail to be given to William Strait.

*C.P.R.*, 1, p. 623.

## 16. 1406-1436.

Sir John de Andreston, minister of Fail, and Friar Roger are witnesses to a Melrose charter *re* Ochiltree Church.

*Liber de Melros*, II, p. 517.

## 17. 1413.

In a Wallace charter *re* the water of Kelly Burn a witness for John Wallace, of Craigie, is Friar Andrew of Cargill, minister of Fale.

*Register of Panmure*, p. clxiii.

## 18. 1428.

Witnesses to a Coupar-Angus charter are John de St. Andrea, rector of the parish church of Kettins, provincial of the Trinitarians in Scotland.

*Coupar-Angus Charters*, No. cxxv.

This must be John de Andreston mentioned above. As head of the Trinitarians he was *ipso facto* the rector of Kettins Church.

## 19. 1432, May 15.

On the vacancy of the Ministry of Failford by the death of the former minister (unnamed) the friars elected Friar Thomas de Morton as minister and he had his election confirmed by the Scottish provincial. Thomas, doubting the validity of the election, supplicated Pope Eugenius IV to confirm the same and provide him anew to Failford which is an elective dignity with cure of souls, principal house of the Order in Scotland, and worth £100 of old sterling.

Quoted by Dr. A. I. Dunlop from Vatican sources and printed in *Kilmarnock Standard*, Sept. 13, 1947.

The Minister's confirmation should have been by the Minister-General of the Order. Morton as Minister of Failford was Provincial of Scotland, so could not confirm his own election.

## 20. 1445, December 14.

John Kendale, preceptor of the Chapel of the B.V.M. of Adamton, became a Trinitarian at Berwick.

*C.P.R.*, IX, p. 568

## 21. 1445, December 14.

The abbots of Holywood and Crosraguel and the provost of Lerida receive a Papal mandate stating that John Kendale wished to become a Trinitarian. The Pope has been informed by Kendale that Thomas Morton, minister of Failford, has, after and against his superior's monitions to put her away, publicly kept as his concubine a certain woman by whom he has had six children. He has dilapidated and converted to his and her pernicious uses fruits and goods appointed for the repair of the House and for the redemption of captives. He has failed duly to serve the House in divine offices and has not kept therein a fixed number of friars for the celebration of divine service in accordance with its primeval foundation and endowment and the statutes and customs of the Order. If Kendale will accuse Thomas before them and if they find the above to be true, they are to deprive him and collate and assign the ministership, conventual and elective (value not exceeding £80 of old sterling) to John Kendale after has has been duly received and made his profession. He is to get Failford, whether it become void by the deprivation or by resignation of Morton or by any other way.

*C.P.R.*, IX, p. 568.



## 22. 1453.

Friar John ——— professed . . . of Falefurde was incorporated at Glasgow University.

*Munimenta Univ. Glas.*, II, p. 62.

## 23. 1459.

The King and Queen of Scotland complained to the Pope that the friars of Failford, instead of acting for the redemption of captives, engage in uncleanness, dirt and immorality so publicly and notoriously that there is great rumour among all Scotsmen that, because of exemption from ordinaries and the negligence of their superiors and because of their involvement in evils which are not corrected and which are beyond correction, the friars cannot be brought back to decency and to observance of their rule. Moreover, the Queen has built a certain great hospital with a church and houses, etc., and a number of dignities therein, and has endowed the same with great gifts. The queen wishes the house at Fail suppressed, the minister removed and the revenues assigned to her new hospital.

Pope Pius II delegates the bishops of Glasgow and Galloway and the dean of Glasgow to be judges, and to inquire into the truth of the assertions by a summary arraignment of the minister before them without fuss. If they find the charges to be true they are to suppress the house of Failford, put the friars into other houses of the Order and assign the house and its rents to the hospital erected by the Queen. The value of Failford is given as not exceeding £70 sterling.

The ending clause is significant. It reads "non-obstantibus felicis recordationis Bonifacii Pape VIII." If it means "notwithstanding the bull of Pope Boniface VIII" it may be taken to prove that Failford was in existence in the time of Pope Boniface VIII, who was Pope from 1295 until 1303. But it probably means "notwithstanding constitution of Pope Boniface VIII."

*Vetera Monumenta*, pp. 421-2, and *C.P.R.*, xi, p. 403.  
See also Coulton, *Scottish Abbeys and Social Life*, p. 228.

## 24. 1460, May 23.

James Gray, chancellor of St. Andrews, pays the whole annates of the House of Fale, Order of St. Trinity, worth £70 sterling, which is to become void by the removal of the minister and brothers, and which is to be united to the hospital of Holy Trinity, founded by Mary, Queen of Scotland, in the diocese of St. Andrews.

*Apostolic Camera and Scottish Benefices*, p. 139.

That Failford was **not** united to the church and hospital of Trinity outside Edinburgh is evident from succeeding charters.

## 25. 1470.

John White, minister of Failford.

*Caledonia*, vi, p. 130.

This is a mistake due to an entry in Prestwick records in which John White of Fale appears.

## 26. 1477, April 3.

James Dollas, preceptor called the minister of the preceptory of Fayl or Fayleforde, Order of Holy Trinity, etc., under the rule of St. Augustine, as principal, paid annates of the said preceptory which was worth £70 sterling, and which was void by the death of the late James Reid, formerly preceptor.

He had a mandate of provision with reception of the habit on November 19th, 1476, and gave a promise to pay within six months.

*Apostolic Camera and Scottish Benefices*, p. 188.

## 27. 1477, April 23.

Friar Thomas Douin, Order of Friars Preachers, acting in the name of Friar John Mure, of said Order, paid annates for the preceptory called the ministry of Failford, a conventual dignity worth £30 sterling, void by the death of the late James Reid. He has a provision in commendam at Rome on March 31st, 1476.

*Ibid.*, p. 188.

## 28. 1477, April 23.

Quittance to Friar John Mure, O.P., for 34 florins as composition for the annates of the preceptory called the ministry of Failford by reason of commendam.

*Ibid.*, p. 250.

## 29. 1477, April 23.

From John Mure 34 florins as annates of the provostship of the preceptory of the ministry of Failford.

*Ibid.*, p. 90.

## 30. 1477, October 10.

James Dollas (Wallace ?), minister of Fayle, is procurator *re* annates of the parish church of St. Germain, called the hospital of St. Germain, in St. Andrews diocese, which is worth £40 sterling.

*Ibid.*, p. 189.



The hospital of St. Germain in the parish of Tranent has been a puzzle to historians. *The Ordnance Gazetteer* says that it was held by the Knights Hospitallers from the 12th century. Chalmers states that it belonged to the Knights Templars and its lands were given by James IV to King's College, Aberdeen. Papal records show that it was of the order of the Star of Bethlehem. (*C.P.R.*, i, p. 599 and 639.) After the Reformation the lands were still held by the King's College of Aberdeen and they had belonged to the Preceptor of St. Germani de Stella Betheliemitica. (*R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, No. 759.)

Perhaps St. Germain's was under a Trinaritian ministry.

31. 1478, February 17.

James Doles, priest of St. Andrews diocese, has two bulls anent an annual pension of £8 sterling from the fruits of the preceptory of Failford by reason of a certain concord as by a bull of January 25th, 1477.

*Ibid.*, p. 191.

32. 1487, July 23.

Peter Altisen, apostolic notary, in name of William Auchinleck, clerk of Glasgow diocese, pays annates for the preceptory of Failford, worth £50 or £60 sterling, void by the deprivation of John Mure for surreption through non-expression of the true value.

*Ibid.*, p. 220.

The King having failed to annex Failford to Holy Trinity of Edinburgh seems to have managed to have it bestowed in commendam on Friar John Mure of the Dominican Order. This friar was a bachelor of theology, confessor and orator of the King, and vicar-general of the Dominicans in Scotland. (*R.M.S.*, 1424-1513, No. 1164.) On the erection of a Scottish province in 1487 he became the first Provincial of the Order.

33. 1500, June 5.

Friar William Houstoun, minister of Failford, causes a notary to make a transumpt of a bull of Pope Nicholas V, addressed to the abbot of St. Facundus. The contents of the bull are not given. The transumpt is drawn up in Failford church about 10 a.m. on June 5th, 1500, before Sir Archibald Finlay, chaplain, George Wallace, Archibald Armourer, and Edward Akinhede.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, 2, p. 31.

There is here the problem of why the Minister wanted a copy of this bull. No details are given to hint at its purport. The monastery of St. Facundus was an O.S.B. foundation in the diocese of Liege. The abbot of St. Facundus was mandatory; the mandate may have concerned Fail.

34. 1500, October 5.

Robert Cunningham, painter, accepts John Wilson as his apprentice and servant for five years. He is to teach John all the points of the art of painting. Sir Robert Wilson binds himself to pay £1 and one boll of oatmeal each year to the painter and to warrant the residence of the pupil with the painter for five years. The agreement is drawn up in the church of the house of Failford before Sir William Rankinson, Robert Tunno and John Smyth.

*Ibid.*, No. 10.

35. 1502, December 19.

A suit between Friar William Houstoun, minister of Failford, and Friar Thomas Dickson, minister of Houstoun, both of the Order of Trinitarians, is heard by Mr. Thomas Campbell, rector of Cumnock, canon of Glasgow, as judge delegated for this cause by the Roman See, sitting in court in the Metropolitan Church of Glasgow. The procurator for William Houstoun, a Mr. Ninian Douglas, asked for an instrument on the judgment given.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, 1, No. 77.

The cause of dispute is not given, although it was obviously a disputed succession.

36. 1504, October 5.

Friar William Houstoun, minister of the House of Failford, appeared upon a certain piece of land belonging as he asserted to the House of Failford, since in times past the tenants of the lands had cut turf and masses of earth in it and brought them to the loch of Fail to stem an outbreaking of the loch and of the lade of the mill of Failford lying between the said loch and the water thereof on the north and west sides and the lands of the abbot of Melrose on the east; declaring that the piece of land like all the other lands of Failford had never been sown or infected with the "gulde," yet he could see seeds of the gulde in large quantity upon the march on the said piece of ground; so he protested solemnly that the finding of such seed on the said land should not prejudice him or his successors, or the House of Failford, as to the acquiring any right in the said land to the abbot of Melrose, whose lands adjoining the said piece were wholly covered by the said seed of the gulde.

A witness on the spot is William Wallace, brother of Hugh Wallace of Craigie.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, No. 125.



On the same day Robert Tunno, tenant of the Abbot of Melrose, stated that he and his father had always enjoyed the said piece of land and that they had always used it for digging turfs and masses of earth therein for the formation and closing of their ditches and dikes.

*Ibid.*, No. 126.

Gulde or gule was the corn marigold (*chrysanthemum segetum*). It was a pernicious weed and acts of parliament laid heavy penalties on a farmer planting it. (Cochran-Patrick, *Medieval Scotland*, p. 183.)

37. 1504, October 11.

Instrument narrating that Friar William Houstoun, minister of Failford, compeared in the church of Failford in the presence of friars Thomas Morton, vicar of Torthorwald, William Miller and James Dene, forming the chapter for the time, holding in his hands a precept of denunciation and excommunication against Friars Edward Richardson and John Dickson of that house and Order, on account of their flight and retirement from the said place of their profession without the permission of the superiors asked and obtained, and excommunicated them and denounced them as excommunicated on account of their apostasy and furtive acts perpetrated by them as he asserted. Further, he declared that in the previous year he had lost by theft or otherwise the seal of his office of provincialate, solemnly protesting that the seal or any writings ever sealed by it should not prejudice him or his office or have any force or effect in judgment, or without, in times to come. Done in the choir of Failford after high Mass about 12 noon, before Friars Thomas Morton, William Miller and James Dene.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, No. 127.

38. 1506-7, January 2.

Instrument narrating that Friar William Houstoun, minister of Failford, for certain reasonable causes had formerly appointed Mr. John Walles, vicar of Linlithgow, and William Barclay and James Wischard, his procurators in a certain cause of apprising moved against him by Friar Thomas Dickson, and which was still pending undecided before Mr. Walter Small and John Young, judges sub-delegated by George, bishop of Dunkeld, judge-delegate, and that he now by the express tenor of this instrument expressly recalled the said appointment. Done in the house of the vicar of Linlithgow in the manse and glebe of the vicarage thereof at 9 a.m., Sunday, January 2nd, 1506.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, No. 197.

39. 1507, July 2.

Letter of James IV to Pope Julius II.

Failford of the Order of Holy Trinity, amply endowed by the king's ancestors, has suffered gravely through prolonged litigation between Thomas Dickson and William Houstoun, and since the death of the provincial of the Blackfriars who was commendator, has gone from bad to worse. The provincial contrived to maintain and repair a part of the house normally monastic, but things have gone so far that the end must come unless there is succour. William, a secular clerk, intruded himself and remained litigating at heavy cost to the place, and has prevented succession by Thomas, a brother professed of the Order and canonically provided, partly by powerful intervention, partly on the pretext of renewed litigation. Out of pity for the house and sick of the contest Thomas proposes to resign his right into the hands of the Pope. The king now asks the Pope to admit the resignation, advocate and remit the case from the rota owing to the poverty of Failford to judges delegate who are in view of the merits, and, if justice follows, to provide David Anderson, the new provincial, with dispensation from the Order, as commendator for life. David's character and business ability the king fully expects will be the saving of the place and will restore monastic order.

*Letters of James IV (Scot. Hist. Soc.)*, No. 114.

40. 1507, July 20.

Letter of James IV to Cardinal of Alessandria, auditor of the Rota.

When the ministry of Failford, a house founded by the king's ancestors, became vacant by the death of John Mure, provincial of the Blackfriars and commendator of Failford, Thomas Dickson, a Trinitarian, had the ministry conferred upon him by the General of the Order. William Houstoun, a secular clerk, was intruded with the help of laymen and had Thomas, who was prosecuting his right, imprisoned. After a sentence against William, appeal was made to Rome. The appeal was deserted and Thomas raised an action of desertion and nullity which had proceeded some way short of conclusion when William, deceitfully and falsely asserting his presence in Rome, procured the reference of the case to the Rota, and a decree of inhibition depriving the delegates of all cognition so that he might worry the pursuer by the long delay in process. Deceit ought not to help a man nor should conduct so culpable open the way to ecclesiastical benefice. Thomas grew



sick of a litigation which had dragged on into its fifteenth year and referred his right to the king, in order that he, in view of his ancestral interest in Failford and the devout intention of the founders, should see to the provision of a suitable administrator who might be competent to maintain the divine service and the appropriate suffrages of the Order. James at last took pity on Thomas. He has chosen a man of proved character and judgment in David Anderson, successor of John Mure and provincial of the Black Friars, to be commendator of Failford, to whom he asks that Thomas's right should be transferred by resignation at the court of Rome with derogation of the suit. He urges anew that the case should be advocated from the Rota and remitted to judges in Scotland for summary decision without appeal, so that Failford may be saved from ruin and that, if need be, the judges may make provision in favour of the said provincial with dispensation to hold the ministry in commendam, a stimulus to the reformation of the convent after the manner of his predecessor. James implores the cardinal, who can influence the course of justice, to succour the place, in view of his unrivalled skill in law, stretching a point in the remit to judges in Scotland and in derogation of the suit. The king will gladly bestow on him a fitting reward. In the absence of the protector (Cardinal of St. Mark) the king thought him the right one to approach.

*Ibid.*, No. 119.

41. 1509, December 3.

Instrument on the resignation by Sir Edward Tayt, procurator, in the name of Friar Edward Richardson, vicar of Torthorwald, of the said vicarage into the hands of James, archbishop of Glasgow, who immediately conferred the same upon Friar James Dene by placing his ring upon the finger of the latter. Done in the church of Glasgow on December 3, 1500, before Sir Martin Rede, chancellor of Glasgow, Mr. Matthew Steward, vicar of Maybole, Thomas McClellane, Thomas Sibbald and John Symonton, clerics.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, No. 393.

Note that Friar Edward Richardson had been excommunicated by his provincial in 1504.

42. 1513, April 7.

Instrument on the investiture given by Friar William Houston, minister of Failford, provincial-general in Scotland of the Order of Holy Trinity for the Redemption, etc., into the house of Houston in St. Andrews diocese. vacant by the death of Friar

Thomas Dickson, and at his disposal by virtue of his office of provincialate, to Friar Christopher Houston, friar of the said Order, in the person of Sir William Lyttistare, procurator for the said Christopher, by delivery of the biretta, and giving him care and management of the said house. Done in Glasgow, etc.

*Ibid.*, No. 629.

43. 1528, March 21.

Instrument narrating that William Houston, minister of Failford, constituted and named Friar Thomas King, James Chortesium, John Danpelo . . . Grimberti and others, in writing, his procurators to compare before the Pope in Rome or elsewhere and to crave Friar Christopher Houston, his nephew, as his co-adjutor and future successor.

*Protocols of Gavin Ros*, No. 856.

This protocol is mutilated and the date is uncertain.

44. 1528, November 7.

Instrument narrating that William Houston, minister of the house of Failford, and provincial-general of the Order in Scotland, received, approved and ratified a devout religious friar, Symon Gray, a professed member of the Order, as minister of the place and convent of Aberdeen, being formerly elected by the convent, and confirmed him as perpetual minister of the said convent of Aberdeen for the whole of his lifetime. Moreover he gave, and granted the cure, rule and administration of the place and convent, lands, possessions and all other emoluments to the same Friar Symon, so chosen and confirmed, his oath of faithful administration of the office being first received. Done at Failford before

Friars Walter Bowman, John Dickson, Quintin Strang, John Moffat, John Allanson and Hector Houston.

*Ibid.*, No. 912.

Note that Friar John Dickson had been excommunicated in 1504.

45. 1532, May.

A defective instrument narrates that Christopher Houston, pretending to be provincial of the Order of Holy Trinity in Scotland, promulgated a certain sentence of excommunication. The minister of Failford, feeling himself hurt, grieved and



oppressed, appealed from this sentence to a venerable man, Silvester Darius, Apostolic nuncio, for the following reasons:—

- (1) Because the said Friar Christopher never was nor is a member of the Order, nor did he ever publish his faculty or . . . to the appellant.
- (2) Because no letters citatory . . . by virtue of which any sentence of censure could justly be pronounced.
- (3) Because the said Friar Christopher personally present among certain others to the number of forty persons with the intention of invading the said Sir . . . in his said house of Failford did cruelly invade the same with arms, namely balistas, bows, hand mangonels and other offensive weapons, and they broke the gates and doors at the persuasion of the said Friar Christopher. Done at Failford, May, 1532, before

Friars John Dickson, John ———, ——— Mure, Quintin Struthers and Robert Gavin, religious, and Arthur Hall of Fulbar.

*Ibid.*, No. 1316.

46. 1532, May 17.

Precept of admission to Friar John Hamilton, minister of Fail, to the ministry of the same, legitimately provided by His Holiness the Pope and Silvester Darius, his apostolic nuncio.

*R.S.S.*, 2, No. 1267.

47. 1532, June 8.

Letter of King James V to the Father-General of the Order of Holy Trinity. This states that John Hamilton by his assiduous service to the king merited nomination to the Pope with the consent of the holder, for the priory of Failford, but now that provision has followed he desires at the threshold of profession to go abroad and visit notable houses of the Order with the intention of making himself more intimate with the rules and more careful to observe them. He asks the consent of the Father-General.

*Letters of James V*, p. 224.

48. 1537-8, January 9.

A royal letter makes a gift to James Hamilton of Finnart, knight, of all and whole the temporality pertaining to the ministry of Fayle, now vacant, and being in the king's possession until the time when the said ministry is lawfully provided.

*R.S.S.*, 2, No. 2439.

This was the period of the rise of Hamilton of Finnart. In 1530 he had exchanged East Wemyss for Barnweill, Ochiltree and Symonton (*R.M.S.*, 1513-46, No. 980), and later sold it to William Hamilton. He would thus be a great landholder next to Fail. The ministers of Failford now become Hamiltons.

49. 1537-8, January 9.

Letter of James V to Pope Paul III. The ministry of Failford is now vacant. It was instituted by the king's ancestors and it falls upon him to select a head. He has chosen James Hamilton, a noble in his nineteenth year, mainly because of his marked application to letters and his very promising character. The Pope is asked to give the necessary dispensation for administering the house and to grant it in commendam for life.

*Letters of James V*, p. 341.

50. 1540, August 20.

Letter of James V to the Minister-General of the Trinitarians. The ministry of Failford is vacant by the death of John Hamilton and the provision is said to belong to the head of the Order. The Crown is wont to present to these ministries by reason of foundation and of prelacy. The king has decided to name Robert Cunningham, twenty-two years old and a clerk of Glasgow diocese, but illegitimate, though of approved character and literacy, and the king requests the minister-general to take the necessary steps towards provision.

*Ibid.*, p. 412.

51. 1540, August 20.

Letter of James V to Cardinal Ghenucci. The king announces his nomination of Robert Cunningham. The Pope is not to be troubled in the matter and the cardinal is requested to see that Failford is duly and lawfully conferred. The solicitor will furnish further details.

*Ibid.*, p. 412.

52. 1543, March 4.

Robert Cunningham, minister of the House of Failford of the Order of Holy Trinity, provincial of the Order in Scotland, sells, for £100, to John Fallusdail and Katherine Dalrymple, his spouse, a tenement in the burgh of Ayr in the vennel leading to the burgh fields between the tenements of the Laird of Carnell and Thomas Kennedy of Knokreoch. The tenement, held of the Queen in free burgage, is lying waste.



Done at the place of Failford before several burgesses of Ayr and Henry Preston, notary.

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 601.

Failford had other lands in the burgh of Ayr near the Curtecan burn and next St. Leonard's (*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, No. 34).

53. 1543, March 30.

The Queen confirms a charter of Friar John Allanson, minister of the house of Holy Trinity of Aberdeen, who with consent of Friar Robert Cunningham, minister of Failford and provincial of the Order, sets in feu to Alexander Menzies, burgess of Aberdeen, the lands of Ferryhill worth 42 bolls of victual. The reddendo is 50 bolls of victual and three suits of court at the three head courts held in the House.

*R.M.S.*, 1513-46, 2910.

54. 1544, May 30.

A letter made to Robert Hamilton, son of James Hamilton of Stanehouse, of the gift of the abbey and ministry of Failford, with all fruits, profits, etc., and donation of benefices, for all the days of his life, which pertained to Mr. Robert Cunningham, son of the Earl of Glencairn, but was now vacant and decerned to pertain to our sovereign lady by reason that the said Mr. Robert came in company with the said Earl in arrayed battle with displayed banner in contrar the governor and his folks upon the burrowmure of Glasgow.

*R.S.S.*, 3, No. 808.

55. 1545-6, January 31.

Kilmaurs charters are signed at the monastery of Failford. The witnesses are Hugh Cunningham, Mr. Adam Wallace, Mr. Michael Wallace, etc.

*R.M.S.*, 1513-46, 3206.

Alexander Cunningham, Master of Kilmaurs, had married Johanna Hamilton. This may explain the succession of Ministers of Failford from Hamiltons to Cunninghams. The presence of Wallaces indicates a bond between Hamiltons, Cunninghams and Wallaces.

56. 1549, October 19.

Robert Cunningham, minister of Failford, feus to Mr. Michael Wallace, brother of the late William Wallace of Craigie, and to Jonet Adair, his spouse, the five merk lands of Wasford in Kyle-

Stewart. The reddendo is five merks with an augmentation of one merk. Done at the House of Failford before

Sir Robert Houstoun and Henry Preston, notary public.

*R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 510.

57. 1553.

Sir Robert Cunningham, former minister of Failford, is incorporated at St. Andrews University.

*Records of St. Andrews University*, p. 258.

58. 1557, December 8.

The King, in 1593, confirms a charter of the late Robert Cunningham, minister of Failford. The charter feued to William Hamilton, son of the late Thomas Hamilton of Raploch, the 49/8d lands of Torshaw in Kyle-Stewart.

*R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 2266.

59. 1559, April 20.

On the 26th May, 1566, the King and Queen confirm a charter of Robert Cunningham, minister of Failford, provincial of the Order, who, with consent of his convent, for a sum of money for the reparation of the House sets in feu to John Stewart, younger son of William Stewart of Halrig, and Helen Cunningham, his spouse, in conjunct fee:—

The 20/- lands of old extent of Law, with the seven acres and lands called Huntflat or Longhuntflat, extending in all to thirty acres on the north side of the Byre of Failford. A meadow called Blackfauldmeadow, in the parish of Barnweill, lordship of Failford, bailiery of Kyle-Stewart.

The reddendo is three merks of old rent with an augmentation of one merk, etc. The charter is given at Failford on April 20, 1559, before Sir John Miller.

Another charter is confirmed on the same date, in favour of the same persons. It gives in feu:—

The house called the Well Tour, with a garden at the back of the house, once occupied by Andrew Menzies, now by Robert Houstoun.



Eight acres in the Fauldingcroft, bounded by the Syke of Robert Broun on the north and Failford Mains on the south.

The reddendo is 20/- of old rent with an augmentation of 6/8d.

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 1732.

60. 1560.

At the Reformation period Robert Cunningham remained as minister. He had a seat in Parliament in 1560, and was a natural son of the Earl of Glencairn.

*History of Affairs of Church and State*, p. 257.

According to John Knox the house at Failford was cast down at this period (*History*, Book III, Vol. 1, p. 635). But there is no proof of this. It seems unlikely, since the Minister of Fail was a son of Glencairn, one of the Earls who had charge of the suppression of religious houses in the area.

61. Two poor men lived in the convent and had £22 yearly for subsistence. Four old beidmen of the convent lived out of the place and each had eleven bolls of meal, twelve bolls of malt and eight merks of habit and eithing silver.

*Caledonia*, iii, p. 491-3.

62. The value of Failford at this period is given:—Cash, £174 6s 7d; Bere, 3 chalders; Meal, 15 chalders, 4 bolls.

*History of Affairs of Church and State*, p. 185.

63. Third of the Ministry of Failford, £58 2s 2½d.

Third of bere of Ministry of Failford, 1 chalder.

Third of meal of Ministry of Failford, 5 chalders, 1 boll, 1 firloft, 1½ pecks.

*Thirds of Benefices*.

64. £130 is allowed for the stipends of the ministers of Galston, Symonton and Barnweil, which pertained to the Ministry of Failford.

Third of the chaplainry of Galston is £6 13s 4d.

Third of the vicarage of Symonton is £8 17s 9½d.

65. The minister, Robert Cunningham, in 1562, gave a return of the value of Failford. It was worth per year:—£174 6s 8d, 3 chalders of bere, 15 chalders, 4 bolls of meal, 30 stone of cheese, 10 hogs (young sheep), 3 stirks and 2 dozen salmon.

Paterson's *Kyle*, 2, p. 486.

66. 1564-5, March 9.

To Andrew Bannatyne, messenger, for passing from Edinburgh with letters of proclamation at the market crosses of Ayr, Irvine, Renfrew and Rutherglen, and to the abbots of Crosraguel and Kilwinning and Paisley, and to the minister of Fail to compare before the Commissioners in Edinburgh on the 23rd of April to come concerning the setting of kirklands in feu since the "lviii year of God" 6/-.

*Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer*, p. 355.

67. 1565 and 1566.

Robert Cunningham minister of Failford, has a pension of £50 a term from the King.

*Ibid.*, pp. 341, 370, 449, 515.

He is notified to appear in Parliament.

*Ibid.*, pp. 370, 449.

68. 1567.

Robert Cunningham minister of Fail, is at the royal coronation in Stirling.

*Register of Privy Council*, 1, p. 538.

69. 1567.

The Commissioners appointed to supervise assignation of the stipends of ministers report that "the minister of Failford is ill-payit."

*Book of the Universall Kirk*, 2, p. 104.

70. During this period the minister of Failford had a yearly pension from the Queen's casualties of £100 for life until he should be provided with a benefice worth £100 per year.

*Crosraguel Charters*, 1, p. 177.



## 71. 1573-4, February 16.

Robert minister of Failford and his convent set in feu to William Cunningham of Caprington :—

The lands of Brumehill, Byrehill, Spittalside, Bourtreemailing (occupied by John Broun, Mariota Speir, Thomas Cumnock, Janet Purdie, Finlay Kirkland, Adam Mure, Michael Broun, Thomas Dreghorn, Robert Stewart, John Auchlair, John Stewart, John Howieson, Robert Hume, Roger Wilson, William Nicoll, John Wilson and Robert Broun, tenants and cottars).

Buildings, houses, gardens, fields and lands occupied by William Cunningham, Andrew Menzies, Patrick Nicoll, Alexander Auldrie, Thomas Mackie, Isobel Cunningham, James Wilson, Thomas Grieff, John Cumnock, smith, Patrick Makie, John Broun, Agnes Hunter and Jonet Stewart, cottars.

Three acres called the Blackland, occupied by the minister.

The lands, acres, meadow, marshes, gardens, arable lands called the cornland, non-arable lands called the unland, occupied by the minister, namely :—

Fauldancroft, Quarrellflat, Barneflat, Whiteyard, Kilyard, the Nether Bogmeadow, with the arable lands of the same lying next to the loch on the south and extending to 30 acres, with the loch called the Failloch, with its dam, etc., with the bogs, moors, marshes and non-arable lands (called the unerd) lying at the head and sides of the loch, together with the grain-mill of Fail, the mill-lands, astricted multures, sucken and knaveship, etc., with the loch, dam, aqueduct, waterstand, and close, with earth, turfs and stones for repair of the mill, and with the teinds of the lands which have never been separated.

The reddendo payable to the minister is :—

Brumehill, etc., £12 14s 6d, 74 bolls, 2 firloths of oatmeal, 17 bolls of barley, 19 bolls, 13 pecks of horse-corn, 55 poultry and 289 "vehiculas glebarum."

Houses, etc., and Blackland, £3 7s 4d, 16 bolls of barley, 6 bolls, 6 pecks of oatmeal, 3 bolls of horse-corn, 31 poultry, 2 "petras albarum candelarum cum vehiculis glebarum" as old rents.

Fauldencroft, £5 6s 8d.

Loch, etc., £1 6s 8d.

Mill, 18 bolls of oatmeal, 4 bolls of barley.

There is to be an augmentation of 20/- with a payment of £20 at the entry of an heir.

The lands are to be held with one sasine at Brumehill.

Values for the victuals are given :—Oatmeal is 8/- a boll ; barley, 10/- a boll ; horse-corn, 4/- a boll ; poultry, 6d each ; petras alb. cand., 30d ; vehic. gleb., 2d.

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 2195.

## 72. 1576, April 18.

James VI concedes to William Wallace, brother of John Wallace of Craigie, for life the benefice of Failford with its dignities and patrimony, vacant by the death of Robert Cunningham, last minister of the same, and requests James, Archbishop of Glasgow, to give admission to him.

There are reservations listed :—To the minister of Torthorwald, £40 ; to the minister at Interquillan, £16 13s 4d ; to the minister at Galston, the whole vicarage ; to the minister at Symonton and Barnweill, the whole vicarage.

*Ibid.*, No. 2555.

## 73. 1577-79.

When Failford became vacant all the parish kirks were disposed to qualified ministers, together with the whole fruits or at least such a reasonable part as may give honest living. The king is to present and collate.

*Register of Privy Council*, 3, p. 177.

## 74. 1580-1, March 7.

Seisin proceeding upon a charter of feu-ferme granted by William, by divine permission minister of the House of Failford, to William Wallace of Wasfurd and Marion Schaw, his spouse, in conjunct fee, etc., the five merk ten-shilling lands of old extent of Wasfurd in the bailiery of Kyle-Stewart. The charter is subscribed by the minister and sealed with the common seal of



the chapter of his monastery of Failford, at Craigie, before John Wallace of Craigie, Hugh Wallace of Boghead, William Schaw in Hillhouse, etc. John Mason is the notary and Michael Wallace, brother-german of William Wallace, also a notary, is present.

*Protocol Book of John Mason*, p. 165.

75. 1582, January 15.

William Wallace, minister of Failford, renounces a disposition made to him by David Neill in Auldtoun of Crosbie selling to the minister David's "maling and rowme" in Auldtoun of Corsbie, callit Ministeris Corsbie, presently occupied by David and extending to an 18/- land with houses, yards and biggings, etc. David had also sold to the minister all his goods and gear in the mailing.

*Notarial Note-book of John Mason*, p. 245.

Crosbie in Dundonald parish, next to Troon, was sub-divided. A part called Crosbie-Bannatyne belonged to Ninian Bannatyne of Cames (*Protocol Book of John Mason*, p. 151).

76. 1587, April 1.

William Wallace, minister of Failford, provincial-general of the Order of Holy Trinity, feus to John Boswell, second son of John Boswell of Auchinleck, the five merk lands of Carbello, called Duncan-Zemmer, occupied by John Fisher, John Skilling, Lawrence Richard and William Richard, in the bailiery of Kyle-Stewart.

The reddendo is five merks of old rent with an augmentation of 6/8d.

*R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 1280.

77. 1588, August 1.

Mr. John Arthur, advocate, gets the lands, the friarlands of Dirltoun, called Chapelyards, extending to 10 merks, in the vill of Dirltoun, which belonged to the minister and convent of Fail and Prior of Dirltoun.

*R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 1568.

See also *R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 1875, and  
*R.M.S.*, 1609-20, 1859.

78. 1591, June 2.

The King gives in feu to William Wallace, minister of Failford, brother-german of John Wallace of Craigie, the manor, place and

house of the monastery of Failford with the gardens of the same called the Westyards, Welltoun Yard, Gardens, Eastyard and Birkyard and a piece of arable land extending to ten acres in the parish of Barnweill. These belonged to the monastery of Failford in former times. The annual feu is 40/-.

*Ibid.*, 1876.

79. 1592.

William Wallace, minister of Failford, buys lands in Minister's Crosbie, which used to be parts and pendicles of the Ministry of Failford.

*R.M.S.*, 1580-93, 2307.

80. 1596, April 9.

John Wallace, of Carnell, is hereditary bailie of Spittalhill, Failford, Vinmirhill, Hillhouse, Spittalside, Minister's Wasfurd, Trinitylands, Minister's Crosbie and Carbello.

*R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 428.

81. 1601.

William Wallace, minister of Failford, for his relief of his part of the late taxation of 100,000 merks voted to the King by the estates, has raised letters of horning against (1) William Crawford, of Lochnorris, to pay the minister's collector 10 merks for the five merk lands of Gas and Weltrees; (2) George Douglas, of Pennyland, to pay 10 merks for the five merk lands of McClellandston; (3) John Boswell, of Duncanhumere, to pay 10 merks for the five merk lands of Duncanhumere; (4) George Reid, in Craikston, to pay 10 merks for the five merk lands of Stanebriggs. The whole lands make up a 20 merk land of old extent in the parish of Affleck as part of the patrimony of the abbacy of Failford. The tenants protest that the letters are general not special to each individual. They assert that the minister is greedy and asks two merks for every merk land, although they cannot be charged more than one merk. They have offered one merk but he has refused this offer. The case is continued.

*Register of the Privy Council*, vi, p. 239.

82. 1602, December 14.

The King concedes to Joseph Stewart, of Wester Polquharn, the 5 merk lands of Gas and Weltrees in the parish of Auchinleck, which have fallen to the King through the forfeiture of William



Cunningham of Tourlands. The lands are to be held of the King in place of the minister and convent of Failford.

*R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 1378.

83. 1603, October 21.

The King feus to William Wallace, minister of Failford, the £5 lands of Auldtoun of Crosbie with the manor, grain-mill, mill-lands, liberties, waylaid and damming, which had belonged to the Ministry of Failford. The reddendo is £25 6s 8d.

*R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 1488.

84. 1606, April 26.

The King confirms a charter of John Wallace of Carnell selling—without redemption—to George Reid in Craigston the five merk lands of old extent of Carbello in Kyle-Stewart, occupied by John Vallance, John Brenyeane and John Skilling. The King holds the lands in place of the commendator of Failford. The reddendo is £4 3s 4d.

*Ibid.*, 1732.

85. 1607, February 28.

The King concedes to Thomas Kirkpatrick, of Closeburn, the 40/- lands of Lochirmoss in Dumfries which belonged to Melrose Abbey, and the kirklands and glebe of the parish kirk of Garrell in Dumfries, which belonged to the abbot and convent of Failford.

*Ibid.*, 1868.

86. 1607.

Failford had lands in the burgh of Haddington.

*Ibid.*, 1875.

87. 1613.

William Wallace of Failford.

*Robert Brown Protocols*, vii, p. 109.

88. 1619, November 20.

A warrant by James VI from Newmarket to Treasurer the Earl of Mar narrating that he has bestowed the whole benefice of Failford on Mr. Walter Whiteford, but understands that some persons under surreptitious gifts are laying claim to parts thereof. He

commands him to be careful not to sanction any infetment or confirmation of the benefice or part of it to any person.

*Historical MSS. Commission : Earl of Mar and Kellie*, p. 88.

Walter Whiteford was the son of James Whiteford of that ilk. He was minister of Monkland and sub-dean of Glasgow. He then became rector of Moffat while still holding his sub-deanery in commendam. In 1620 he became a doctor of divinity. In September, 1634, he was made Bishop of Brechin and was deposed by the Assembly in 1638 and fled to England, where he died in 1643 (*Spottiswood's History*, p. 167).

89. The minister of Failford, William Wallace, had died in 1617, and his son claimed the benefice. Parliament confirmed the King's gift of it to Whiteford in 1621 and in 1633.

*Caledonia*, vi, p. 493.

This is the period of episcopacy and Whiteford became minister of Failford because of this.

90. 1631, March 28.

Mr. Walter Whiteford, doctor of sacred theology, minister of Failford, gives a charter to Robert Farquhar of Gilmilnscroft of the five merk land of McClellanston in the parish of Auchinleck to be held of the minister in feu.

*R.M.S.*, 1634-51, 90.

91. 1646, March 18.

The King concedes and donates anew to Sir William Cochrane of Cowdoun, knight, and to his heirs and assignees irredeemably the benefice, temporal and spiritual, of Failford with its lands, superiority, patronages, etc., vacant by the demission of Mr. John Whiteford, last minister. To be held with one seisin at the manor-place of Failford. The reddendo is one penny blench.

*Ibid.*, 1633.

92. 1662, March 3.

Mr. Thomas Wallace, junior, of Failford, advocate, has a gift of the £16 lands of Cairnhill, Auchindinnan, Hunthall, etc. These now become part of the barony of Craigie.

*R.M.S.*, 1660-68, 212.



93. 1663, September 4.

Charter of grant of lands to Mr. John Cunningham of Brownhill. The lands are :—

£5 lands of old extent called Laglan-James, with the manor-place, mills, woods and fishings in King's Kyle.

He also holds in conjunct fee with his wife, Margaret Murray, the lands of Bromehill, Spittalside, Bourtreemailing with the tower, fortalice and manor-place of Brounhill.

Three acres called the Blacklands.

All the cornlands.

The unarable lands, viz. :—Fauldland Crofts, Quarrelflats, Barnflat, Whityard, Kilyard, Netherbigmeadow, with the arable lands thereof lying near the place of Failford, extending to about 30 acres.

The loch called the Failloch, etc., with the marshland, the non-arable lands, the vineyard at the head and side of the loch, the grain mill of Fail, etc.

Together with the office of bailie of Failford, Brounhill, Spittalside and all the lands of the minister of Failford in the parish of Barnweill.

The lands had been held by Andrew Cunningham of Laglan, James Cochran, bailie of Ayr, and the late Mr. Adam Cunningham of Preveck. They were resigned to Mr. John Cunningham on the 19th October, 1662. They had been held by John Cunningham of Brownhill, of the minister of Failford, but now of the King, and had been resigned at Edinburgh in favour of Mr. John Cunningham and his spouse, Margaret Murray. They were held with one sasine at the manor-place of Laglan.

*R.M.S.*, 1660-68, 525.

The tombstone of one of this family of Cunningham was at Fail and is now at Blairquhan House. The arms on it are still decipherable.

94. 1690, October.

William, Earl of Dundonald, was served heir of his father in the benefice of Failford, as well temporality as spirituality.

*Caledonia*, vi, p. 493.

95. 1797.

The Statistical Account has few details. The monastery—said erroneously to be a cell of Paisley—had near it a small hamlet of cottages.

*O.S.A.*, ix, p. 453.

96. 1819, September 9.

Farms to let on the estate of Failford :—

Lady-yard and Largie	...	...	124½	Scots acres.
Auchinweet	...	...	81½	"
Adamcroft	...	...	107	"
Woodend	...	...	40	"
Woodhead	...	...	51	"
Easter Smithston (part)	...	...	50	"

Apply Smithston House, Mauchline.

*Ayr Advertiser*, September 9, 1819.

97. 1820, May 11.

To be sold by private bargain the lands and estate of Failford or Fail, lying in the parish of Torbolton, comprehending the farm of Failford Precint, Fail Mill, Fail and pendicle of Fail, Fail Meadow, Redwray, Clockstone, consisting of about 336 Scotch acres of rich arable and meadow ground, enclosed and divided by thriving fences, excellent situation for building a mansion-house, contains ruins of Failford Abbey, the estate is free of stipend, except a trifle. It is nearly £100 of freehold valuation. Apply to the proprietor at Milton, near Maybole.

*Ayr Advertiser*, May 11, 1820.

98. 1822, October 3.

Building leases for 499 years continue to be granted at Failford on very moderate terms. The situation is most desirable, being at the junction of Air and Fail Waters, on the road from Mauchline to Air, etc. Stone and wood can be had on the spot on moderate terms. Apply at Smithstone House.

*Ibid.*, October 3, 1822.

99. 1840.

Three cinerary urns were found at Fail Mill and gifted to the Mechanics' Museum, Ayr, by Mr. Andrew of Fail Mill.

*Arch. Coll.*, i, p. 41.



100. 1842.

The estate is now the property of Colonel Thomas Hunter-Blair, of Brownhill and Dunskey. The name of the monastery and estate varies but is most frequently Failford. In the county valuations it is Failford. Nothing of the monastery remains save one gable and part of a side wall of the manor-house of the minister (p. 751). The monastery is at the west end of the loch in the suppressed parish of Barnweill. Three small plains, flooded during winter months to feed three small mills, are dignified with the name of lochs—Lochlee, Fail Loch and Torbolton Loch. Lord Portland has relieved the tenants of Milburn from thirlage and the mill is now silent. Lochlie is being converted into arable land and it is to be hoped that a similar fate awaits the other two lochs.

*N.S.A.*, v, p. 743.

101. 1852.

When new roads and a bridge were being made in the Fail area several discoveries were made. The old ford was discovered to be about 80 yards downstream from the bridge, and nearly in line with the road from Redrae. A new bridge was built over the Fail. To reduce the gradient from the bridge the contractors had to cut through the abbey graveyard and lift and inter remains. At the door of the cottage called Fail Castle Farm was found a large stone coffin containing the remains of a man. The stone coffin was broken and lifted in two pieces. The bones were re-buried in a marked spot. The lid of the coffin was sent to Blairquhan House, because Sir Edward Hunter-Blair owned Failford. A tombstone was also sent there. These lay in the gardens till 1922, then they were placed inside the house where they now are. The position of the tombstone may be explained by the discovery in 1888 of the foundations of a large doorway beneath the floor in the centre of the old farmhouse. It is suggested that this was the main doorway to the abbey. The coffin was next this doorway.

*Collections of Ayrshire Arch. Soc.*, 1947-49, p. 137.

102. 1950.

On the coffin lid appears what seem to be the royal arms of Scotland, the shield bearing the double tressure, Lion Rampant, and the Sword of State. The point of the sword has gone because of the breaking of the stone. The lid may be attributed with reasonable certainty to the late 14th century. The author suggests that it was the coffin of Walter Stewart, second son of Robert II and Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan. Nothing is known of him beyond the fact that he married Isabella, Countess of Fife, and died without issue.

The tombstone bears arms, Dexter, a shakefork between three mascles. Sinister, three collars. These are the arms of John Cunningham, Dean of Guild of Ayr, and Barbara Hunter, his spouse, married about 1660. There is no proof that this is his tombstone.

A holy water stoup found at a farm near Failford is now at High Greenan. It is of grey sandstone, rectangular in shape, and measures 11 inches in length, 9 inches in width, and  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches in depth.

*Collections of Ayrshire Arch. Soc.*, 1947-49, pp. 137, 138.

103. 1952.

Recently all the ruins have been removed to furnish road material for Prestwick Aerodrome. A few stones were saved and now form a little grotto in the Catholic Church at Annbank.

#### DOCUMENTS RELATING TO BARNWEILL

104. Pre 1177.

Torbolton is contiguous with Berenbouell.

*The Lennox*, ii, p. 1.

105. 1275.

Barnweill does not appear in Bagimond's Roll.

106. 1500.

A marriage contract is arranged in the villa of Barnweill.

*Ibid.*, No. 120.

109. 1508.

Resignation by John Riddale, perpetual parish clerk of the church of Holy Cross of Barnweill, into the hands of Friar William Houstoun, minister of the house of Failford, as into the



hands of the rector of the vicarage of the said church, of all right which he had to the parish clerkship of that church and the administration, regulation and carrying of holy water in the same parish, by delivery of the aspersion commonly called "the holy water stik." This resignation having been made, the office of clerkship with all its privileges and emoluments was given to Paul Wallace, son liberal of George Wallace in Symington. Meanwhile George Wallace, Paul Wallace and the said John Riddal left Failford and entered Barnweill Church. There they requested Friar John Michelson, curate of Barnweill parish, to deliver the stik, etc., to Paul Wallace as a sign of his title of possession. Which the said John, with the consent of the parishioners there present, as an obedient son did, and again taking the aspersion from the hand of Paul, the latter followed him, bearing the holy water stoup, he sprinkled and bedewed the parishioners present with holy water and so inducted him. This done George Wallace, the father of Paul, requested instruments. Done separately at the churches of Failford and Barnweill before William Wallace, brother of John Wallace of Craigie, Robert Wallace, Alexander Symontoun, Edward Legate, Cuthbert Revoch, William Gilmour, and Martin Caldwell, on April 29th, 1508.

*Diocesan Registers*, ii, p. 67.

Then William Houstoun, minister of Failford, asked for an instrument to show that the resignation, etc., had been made into his hands as rector and vicar of Barnweill. He also forbade the resignation to be made to anyone else.

*Ibid.*, p. 68.

108. 1561.

£130 is allowed for the ministers' stipends of Barnweill, Symington and Galston.

*Thirds*, p. 95.

109. 1566.

Sir John Miller, exhorter, has a stipend of £40.

*Register of Ministers*, p. 39.

111. 1574.

Robert Gaw is reader.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 77.

112. 1574.

Barnweill, Tarbolton, St. Quivox, Prestwick and Monkton are under one minister, Mr. John Nisbet, who has a stipend of £133 6s 8d. Robert Gaw, reader at Barnweill, has a stipend of 13 bolls of meal and the kirklands.

*Wodrow Miscellany*, i, p. 320.

113. 1576.

The vicarage of Barnweill is reserved for the minister.

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 2555.

114. 1576-80.

David Alanson is reader at Barnweill.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 77.

115. 1580.

Robert Cunningham is minister.

*Ibid.*, p. 77.

116. 1615.

Robert Somerville, M.A., is presented to the vicarage by James VI.

*Ibid.*, p. 77.

117. 1628.

John Ferguson, minister.

*Register of Sasines*, 1617-34, p. 169.

118. 1662.

Mr. Robert Wallace, minister of Barnweill, famous for his large stomach, got the bishopric of the Isles, though he understood not one word of the language. He was a relative of the Chancellor and that was enough.

*History of the Sufferings*, i, p. 102.

He died in 1675. The Latin on his tombstone is still legible (Hewison, *Bute*, ii, p. 290).



119. 1673.

The parish of Barnweill was suppressed. Parts of it went to Craigie and Torbolton. The new parish of Stair received part of the revenues.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 77.

This is one of the few suppressed parishes in Ayrshire. The ruins of the church still stand on the top of the hill, hidden in a cluster of trees. It has been called the Kirk in the Wood, because of this shelter belt. The graveyard is still intact. In the gable of the church was an inverted font, though it could not be found recently. The bell was removed by a local gentleman about 1879 (*Kilmarnock Rambles*, p. 39). The name Berenbouell existed long before the days of Wallace, so that the naming from the burning of the barns of Ayr is impossible. The most interesting feature of this old kirk is its situation on a high ridge within a few hundred yards of a "motte," which is an excellent example of this early type of fortified home. The motte is in perfect condition and must one day be investigated. The proximity of church and motte is an object lesson in the origin of parishes from the early villis of the shire.

#### DOCUMENTS RELATING TO GALSTON

120. 1275.

Tenth of vicarage is £4.

121. 1444.

Edward de Cunningham, vicar.

*Muniments of Irvine*, i, p. 7.

122. 1456.

Letters of John Stewart, lord of Darnley, donate the chaplaincy of the B.V.M., founded in the Tower of Galston, to Sir John de Setoun, on the death of Sir Patrick Fleming, last chaplain thereof. Along with the chaplaincy went the lands of Lanfene with other lands next the chapel, to be held of Lord Darnley by John de Setoun for life. On June 4, 1456, Sir John de Setoun was inducted by Alexander Stewart, brother of Lord Darnley. The letters received royal confirmation on May 11th, 1471.

*R.M.S.*, 1424-1513, 1019.

123. 1466.

On the 13th of June Alan de Cunningham, clerk, principal, paid annates of the perpetual vicarage of Galston, worth £20 sterling, void by the deprivation of Edward de Cunningham. He had been provided to the vicarage on June 1st.

*Apostolic Camera*, p. 156.

124. 1469.

On March 16th William Marshall paid 13 florins for the annates of the vicarage of Galston

*Ibid.*, p. 286.

125. 1470.

On March 16 William Marshall, perpetual vicar of Cadder, principal, paid annates of the perpetual vicarage of Galston worth £11 sterling, void by the cession at the Apostolic See of Patrick Leech, the apostolic letters not having been made out. He had been provided on 14 September.

*Ibid.*, p. 159.

126. 1470.

On March 30 Alan Cunningham, clerk of Glasgow diocese, following the Roman Court, paid annates of the vicarage of Galston (£10 sterling) void by the death of Edward Cunningham. He was a colitigant for this benefice.

*Ibid.*, p. 161.

On April 5 there was given a bull for Patrick Leech, priest, anent provision to the perpetual vicarage of Galston (£14 sterling), void by the resignation of Edward Cunningham and provided to Patrick by a bull dated at Rome on December 19th, 1469.

*Ibid.*, p. 161.

127. 1480.

Martin Bannachtyn, chaplain, is a witness to a Galston charter.

*R.M.S.*, 1424-1513, 1466.

128. 1483.

William Marshall, priest of Glasgow diocese, has two bulls anent an annual pension of £10 Scots (worth 15 gold ducats) reserved to him from the fruits of the parish church of Galston for the sake of concord.

*Apostolic Camera*, p. 210.



129. 1489.

The King grants to Mr. John Charteris for life the lands of Lanfene. Mr. John had applied as chaplain of the B.V.M. chaplaincy of Galston for possession of the lands, although he could not find the charters of mortification due to war, etc. The King agrees because the lands of Lanfene had been mortified by his ancestors from times beyond the memory of man to the chapel of the B.V.M. at Galston, whose presentation belonged to the Lord of Darnley.

*R.M.S.*, 1424-1513, 1905.

130. 1500.

The tenth of the vicarage was £3 8/-.

*R.E.G.*, Appendix I, Part III.

131. 1518.

John, Earl of Lennox, redeemed the lands of the Mains of Galston with the tower and fortalice from John Campbell of Cessnock. Done in Galston Church before Mr. Thomas Heslihop, Sir George Blair, Sir Ninian Montgomery and John Lockhart of Bar.

*Protocols of Gavin Ros*, No. 232

132. 1522

John, Earl of Lennox, Lord Darnley, sells to John Lockhart of Bar and Margaret Stewart, his spouse, the lands of Lanfene, extending to five merks in the parish of Galston

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 2415.

133. 1527.

Mr. James Douglas promised faithfully to fulfil all the things contained in letters obligatory between him and the minister of Failford, as to the sum of £10 yearly to be paid to the minister and convent and obliges himself to act as principal. George Tait and Alexander Lockhart are to stand as sureties in the court books of the Official of Glasgow.

*Protocols of Gavin Ros*, 797.

134. 1527.

On the same day the minister of Failford and the convent chapterly gathered obliged themselves that as soon as the pension of £20 yearly to be paid to Mr. ——— shall be extinguished by

his death, promotion or otherwise, they shall discharge Mr. John of the sum of £10 . . . if any impediment shall arise, so that Mr. John Douglas shall be unable to enjoy the vicarage of Galstoun they shall likewise exoner him and his cautioners, or if he die they shall also discharge the sureties.

*Ibid.*, 798.

135. 1530.

Sir Alexander Arbukill marries Andrew Shaw, son of John Shaw of Sornbeg, to Ellen Ros, daughter of George Ros of Hanyng, in the chapel of Galstoun, called the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Galston.

*Ibid.*, 1090.

On February 3rd, 1551, Sir Alexander Arbukill, curate of Galston, drew up this lady's will and arranged for her burial in Galston Church.

136. 1555-6, January 9.

Ane letter to Hew Campbell of Loudoun, knight, of the gift of all goods, rentals, etc., which pertained to George Campbell of Cessnock and now pertaining to our sovereign lady by reason of escheat of the said George, through being of the said George denounced as our sovereign lady's rebel and put to the horn by virtue of her Highness's other letters in four forms, purchased at the instance of Mr. Robert Creighton, parson of Sanquhar and chaplain of the chaplainries of St. Nicholas called New Wark and of Our Lady of Galston called Lanfene, for non answering and obeying of the said Mr. Robert of the fruits, rents and profits of the said chaplainries.

*Register of the Privy Seal*, iv, 3104.

137. 1561.

£130 is allowed for stipends of ministers of Galston, Symington and Barnweill.

*Thirds of Benefices*, p. 95.

138. 1561.

A third of the chaplaincy of Galston is £6 13s 4d.

*Ibid.*



139. 1561.

The vicarage, worth five chalders of victual, was let for fifty merks (£33 6s 8d), which was much below its true value. The parsonage teinds brought Failford 9 chalders 2 bolls victual.

*Caledonia*, vi, p. 517.

140. 1563.

John Barron, minister.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 39.

He had a stipend of 200 merks payable by the minister of Failford (*Register of Ministers*, p. 39). He had come from Geneva in 1560 and went to Whithorn in 1567. The kirk session records, starting in 1563, refer to him as minister of Cessnock and Barr-Galstoune.

141. 1568.

Rankin Davidson, reader.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 39.

He was referred to as minister.

*R.M.S.*, 1546-80, 2541.

142. 1574.

Galston and Mauchline were under one minister, Peter Primrose, with Rankin Davidson as exhorter with a stipend of £33 8s 10½d.

*Wodrow Miscellany*, i, p. 321.

143. 1568-70.

William Campbell, tutor of Cessnock, is at the horn for the chaplaincy of Galston.

*Thirde of Benefices*, p. 267.

144. 1578.

Patronage belongs to Campbell of Cessnock.

Paterson's *Kyle*.

145. 1578.

The patronage of the church passes to Robert Stewart.

*R.M.S.*, 1547-80, 1785.

146. 1592-1641.

Alexander Wallace, M.A., minister, presented by the King to the vicarage.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 39.

147. 1598.

George Campbell of Cessnock has the 40/- lands of Galston with the privilege of having two fairs at Galston church annually, one on June 30th, the other on November 18th.

*R.M.S.*, 1593-1608, 655.

148. 1628.

Thomas Muir, reader.

*Presbytery Records*.

149. 1665.

Sir George Campbell of Cessnock had—*inter alia*—the 40/- land of Galston with tower and fortalice, with the patronage of the chapel and chaplaincy of Galston. He also had the teinds, vicarage and parsonage of all the gifted lands. He was to pay one penny blench for the patronage of Galston church which formerly belonged to Lord Cochran.

*R.M.S.*, 1660-68, 842.

150. 1787.

The patronage belonged to Miss Scot of Scotstarvit, who became Duchess of Portland.

*Caledonia*, vi, p. 517.

151. 1808.

The old church was taken down and the materials of it, excepting the clock and the bell, were sold for £150. The clock and the bell, which bore a date of 1596, were built on to Cessnock Castle. The new church was opened on June 18th, 1809. The site was retained.

*History of Galston Parish Church*, 1909.

152. 1891.

Galston and Riccarton boundaries were re-adjusted.

*Ordnance Gazetteer*, ii, p. 633.



## DOCUMENTS RELATING TO SYMINGTON

153. 1165, 1173.

Simon Loccart had lands next Monkton.

*Paisley Charters*, p. 5.

154. 1175, 1214.

Jordan, parson of Symontoun.

*Muniments of Melrose*, i, p. 63.

156. 1210.

Malcolm Loccard gives Paisley Abbey six acres of land in Symontoun of Kyle, next to the lands of Robert Croc on the east. Among the witnesses are Adam, son of Gilbert, Alan de Montgomery, William de Lindsay, William Paisley, Peter de Currie, John Hose, Robert Croc, Henry de Nes, etc.

*Paisley Charters*, p. 70.

This is proof that the lands were held by the Lockharts and that Simon Loccart originated Symington. The adjoining proprietors are interesting, since they show early occupiers of Ayrshire lands. Adam, son of Gilbert, held Tolbolton; Alan Montgomery held Eaglesham; Peter de Currie held Bargour; John Hose held Craigie; Henry de Nes held Adamton; and Robert Croc held lands west of Symington which must have been Crosbie. Crosbie must be named from the Croc family, as is shown by the old spelling of the area as Crocebie.

157. 1225.

Jordan Lockhart, cleric, is witness of a charter at Ayr.

*R.E.G.*, p. 117.

This could be the parson of Symington shown above.

158. 1252.

Symington church is granted to Failford.

*Pont's Cuninghame*, p. 293.

There is no proof of this date of alienation.

159. 1259.

Andrew, vicar of Symington, is a witness at Ayr.

*Paisley Charters*, pp. 136-7.

160. 1275.

A tenth of Symington vicarage is £2 13s 4d.

*Bagimond's Roll*.

161. 1486.

Andrew Herries has lands of Symington with advowson of the church.

*R.M.S.*, 1424-1513, 1654.

162. 1500.

Sir Edward Cargill, curate of Symington.

Hugh Wallace, perpetual parish-clerk of the parish church of Symington, compeared personally in the said church on a certain Sunday before the time of High Mass, the parishioners being assembled, and resigned his right to the said office of clerkship by delivery of styk and stop and holy water as the custom is into the hands of Sir Edward Cargill, curate for the time being, required to that effect on behalf of the parishioners; which resignation being made and duly received the said curate by the special command of all the parishioners (none reclaiming or objecting) gave and delivered the said clerkship of Symington by delivery of the stick, stoup and holy water to John Chalmers, alias McMulane, in name and on behalf of William Wallas, well-born son of said Hugh Wallas, receiving the said clerkship for ever; and invested the said John with the real, actual and corporal possession of the clerkship on behalf of the said William; meanwhile the said John, carrying with him the holy water, ministered to the curate who proceeded from the entrance of the choir and around the font and back again to the said entrance chanting the antiphony *Asperges Me Domine*: upon which transaction Dame Margaret Rutherford asked instruments on behalf of the said William Wallas, her well-born son. Done in the church of Symington about 11 o'clock in the forenoon on October 18th, 1500, before George Wallace in Symington, John



Tait in Knockindale, Adam Sodgiornar, Maolcolm Sklater, John Syms, John Riche and John Lindsay.

*Diocesan Registers of Glasgow*, ii, p. 8.

The office was held in the Wallace family. Hugh Wallace who resigned was brother of the laird of Craigie, while his successor was the son of the retiring clerk.

163. 1522.

Sir William Rede, curate of Symington.

*Prestwick Records*, p. 50.

164. 1530.

James Hamilton of Finnart exchanged East Wemyss for Symington, Barnweill and Ochiltree. Later he sold it to William Hamilton.

*R.M.S.*, 1513-46, 980.

165. 1532.

A transaction *re* a terce concerning the Cunningham family was enacted at Symington church before Robert Adamson, priest, and others.

*Protocols of Gavin Ros*, No 1327

166. 1561.

Third of Symington vicarage is £8 17s 9d.

*Thirds of Benefices*.

167. 1561.

The minister of Failford has £130 for the parishes of Symington, Barnweill and Galston.

*Ibid*, p. 95.

168. 1563.

James Lindsay, reader, has a stipend of £13 6s 8d.

*Ibid*, p 264

169. 1565.

William Simonton, tacksman, is at the horn for the vicarage dues.

*Ibid*, p. 268.

170. 1566.

The goods of Sir John Miller, vicar of Symington, are being inquired into.

*Accounts of Lord High Treasurer*, p. 487.

171. 1567-70.

Mr. Robert Cunningham, minister of Failford, is at the horn for the vicarage of Symington.

*Thirds of Benefices*, p. 268.

172. 1574.

Dundonald, Crosbie, Craigie and Symington churches are all under one minister, George Campbell, who has £100 and the kirklands. John Miller is reader at Symington and has £20 and the kirklands.

*Wodrow Miscellany*, I.

173. 1598.

Robert Cunningham of Dankeith in Symington parish took to the Moderator of Ayr Presbytery the King's presentation of John Cunningham to the vicarage of Symington. At the same time William Wallace, minister of Failford, presented royal letters in favour of William Wallace, M.A.

Paterson's *History of Ayrshire*, p. 479.

The dispute occurred on the death of Sir John Miller. William Wallace was presented by the king and was minister till at least 1626 (*Fasti*, iii, p. 74). Sir John Miller is described as vicar in 1566 and as reader in 1574. But in 1567 there was a reader called Thomas Carrington (*Register of Ministers*, p. 39).

174. 1600.

About this period the kirklands of Symington belonging to the vicarage extended to a 40/- land set in feu to John Cunningham of Caprington for a payment of 46/8.

*Brockie MSS.*, p. 82.



175. 1613.

The duplication of rental of the kirklands collected by the bailie of Kyle-Stewart was £4 13s 4d.

*Liber Responsum*, 1600-13, folio 300.

176. 1750.

The church was repaired.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 73.

179. 1797.

The church completely repaired and a bit added.

*N.S.A.*, v, p. 569.

178. 1919.

The old church was restored.

*Fasti*, iii, p. 73.

179. 1955.

The church is very well-known as the only intact Norman church in the shire. It has become a place of popular pilgrimage and the visitors' book in the porch has a long list of names in it. Although the church is certainly Norman, there is no evidence to give it a definite date of erection and too much importance should not be laid upon the metal plate inside the church which avers that it was built in 1160 and restored in 1919. The church is now well cared for and many gifts have come to it, so that it now has a stone sedilia, font and stained glass windows. The yard has no medieval stones but there can be seen some interesting types of cherub and skull variety not far from large Celtic crosses of modern erection. Inside the church are traces of the original building, *e.g.*, the window apertures are still marked by scars in the stone, while marks on the walls show where the rood-screen used to divide the chancel from the nave. Masons' mark are also in evidence and the ancient woodwork is of major interest. Outside are traces of a south porch and the sole remnant of medieval sculpture, a gargoyle with a human face much defaced by weathering. For a full account see *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society*, 1951, pp. 38-40.

The founder of the parish was probably Simon Lockhart and his dwelling-place may have been the small round mound at the foot of the village which was flattened out in the early 19th century. Another motte with ruins on it stood at Helenton, but nothing is known of its history.