

The Spittals of Ayrshire

The Hospitals of Celtic and Medieval Times

WILLIAM J. DILLON, M.A.

Long before the written history of our shire begins, the Christian religion had emphasised the necessity for care of the sick, the poor, and the traveller; and each age, in response to this teaching, had found its own system of meeting such needs. Hospitals had their place in these systems, from at least Celtic times.

A study of the hospital facilities of the medieval system as it functioned in England has been made by Rotha Mary Clay,¹ and as no comparable piece of research exists for Scotland we are to a great extent dependent for guidance upon this splendid English volume with its surprising record of widespread and specialised institutional methods of dealing with disease and poverty and even with such modern-looking problems as the welfare of "fallen women" and the boarding-out of orphans. Moreover this fine book acts as a corrective against the tendency to look at a few traces of an ancient way of life and conclude that one is seeing the whole picture.

There is no whole picture for Scotland. Very recently the late Dr. Easson, a member of our Society and a very good friend to it, appended a list of hospitals to his excellent work on the Scottish monasteries.² His list is not exhaustive, his information is far from complete, and his treatment of the spittals of Ayrshire not wholly satisfactory.

It would, however, be difficult for anyone to give satisfaction about Scottish spittals and the system of which they formed part. No book has been written on the subject as a whole and isolated histories of individual spittals are apt to blind us to the fact that spittals were only part of a system in which their work was supplemented by other forms of relief given by institutions such as monasteries and houses of friars. One of the tenets of monasticism was that free food should be provided daily to the poor and that

free lodgings should be made available at every monastic house for the benefit of passing travellers—a difficult idea for us to-day. Thus each abbey in Ayrshire would be bound to make provision for the needy and the wayfarer. Crosraguel, we know, had an infirmary for its sick monks,³ but we have no proof of its charity to the outside public. That Kilwinning Abbey had an almshouse is still verifiable locally, as the Almswall Road of to-day represents the Alms-house-wall of former times.

But in addition to this there is written proof that Kilwinning monks did assist the poor. As early as 1329 the revenues of the vicarage of Beith were allocated to this abbey for the maintenance of the monks and the poor living there.⁴ In the early years of the sixteenth century there is indisputable evidence that a dole of food, called "Sanct Marin's meit," was given to the poor of the locality.⁵

The ruins of our abbeys, showing the sites of guest-houses and almshouses, is additional confirmation of the part that the monasteries played in the welfare system of their age. As for our friaries there is little evidence of their activities in the shire, but perhaps care of the needy by the Franciscans in Ayr is indicated by a burghal reference of 1586 to "twa personis that was in the luggis (lodges) of the Greyfreris."⁶

Additional proof that there was in Ayrshire an organisation of charity similar to the English system described by Miss Clay is to be found in technical terms scattered haphazardly throughout documents concerning the county. The terms are meaningless to-day because the system of charity which they indicate is no longer with us. To-day, because this system has vanished completely, we must search out meanings for the Maison-Dieu at Maybole; the bedesmen at Kincase, St. Leonard's and Failford; the Pardoner at Ladykirk; the Proctor for St. Anthony's of Leith who was resident in Ayr; and the leper doles featured in the Obit Book of that same burgh. References to these will appear in the text of this essay.

Spittals represent the hospital facilities of this old system. It is to be emphasised that there is a vast difference between a spittal and a modern hospital. In all ages society has its own particular ways of organising to meet the needs of travellers,

³ *Crosraguel Charters*, II, p. 98.

⁴ *Vatican MSS.*, No. 488.

⁵ *Acts of Lords of Council*, 1501-54, p. 564.

⁶ *Ayr Burgh Accounts*, p. 157.

¹ Rotha Mary Clay, *Medieval Hospitals of England*, 1909.

² D. E. Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses, Scotland*, 1957.

sick persons, the helpless poor and other kinds of unfortunates. Spittals in their day represented social organisation of this type. Miss Clay has divided the English spittals into five main groups, her classification appearing as follows:—

- (1) Leper houses;
- (2) Lodgings for travellers and pilgrims, deliberately sited to fulfil their purpose;
- (3) General purpose hospitals combining several kinds of relief;
- (4) Specialised houses concerned with particular needs and catering for persons such as the blind, the orphaned and so on;
- (5) Homes for the old and infirm, a foreshadowing of our own eventide homes.

A word of warning is necessary here. Although one finds specialisation, particularly where segregation was necessary, as in the case of lepers, it was more common to have combination of facilities where this was possible, a device which enabled many spittals to cater for the poor and for travellers as well. It is impossible to be definite about the function of the spittals in our shire, even when records do remain. Kincaise seems to have been a leper house from a very early date, but there is reason to suggest that it was in use before leprosy came to Scotland. As far as can be judged from written evidence St. Leonard's was a general-purpose spittal looking after the poor and travellers. There is no indication of the size of our spittals. Miss Clay's volume shows varying sizes but none so large as those found on the continent, a good example being Lubeck which had a sick-room 280 feet long with beds arranged on each side.⁷ There is little likelihood that there ever was in Ayrshire a spittal of such dimensions, but we have no remnants to prove or disprove our theories.

It is difficult to assess the number of spittals in Ayrshire. Kincaise, St. Leonards, Failford and Symington are verifiable beyond question. But were there others in the shire? This brings us to the bitterly controversial problem of place-names. What are we justifiably to infer from a place-name containing the element, spittal? Dr. Easson had a deep distrust of evidence

from this source, but there is more to the matter than he would admit. A spittal indicated solely by a place-name may suddenly stand revealed as a reality when a lost charter comes to light. This is evidenced at Symington where for long years the name, Spittalhill, indicated the whereabouts of a former hospital. Dr. Easson would have none of it. Then, very recently, there was found the transcription of an early Dundonald charter⁸ which proved beyond dispute that a spittal existed here and that it was dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket. It would be fairly safe to assume that in many cases these place-names do bear honest witness to the existence of former spittals, but to get confirmation requires the evidence of charters or similar documents. Where the name exists without direct written reference to an actual spittal, it is best to suspend judgment for the time being. In Ayrshire this caution will have to be exercised in the case of Irvine, Kilmarnock and Stewarton.⁹

It is quite a popular idea that spittals are always to be found in lonely places. This conception may spring from knowledge of a place like Soutra, which is indeed in a lonely spot, not far from Edinburgh, yet on the summit of a hill among bleak moorlands. Or it may be influenced by the romantic appeal of Alpine hospices, popularised as havens where the traveller could find solace among monks, large St. Bernard dogs and small kegs of brandy. But spittals are only to be found in lonely places when there is a necessity for their being so sited, when there is a definite work of charity to perform. An excellent example of this is to be found in the valley of the Moena, where the hospice of St. Pellegrino delle Alpi sits about 6000 feet above sea-level on a pass on a direct route between Germany and Italy. The prior in charge of this spittal was under obligation to ring the bell on winter evenings as a guide to travellers, to keep a dog ready to go out and track, to plant long poles to mark off the road when it was buried in snow, and to give three days free board and lodgings to the poor.¹⁰ It is doubtful if any Scottish priors had similar obligations, but it cannot be doubted that assistance from a nearby hospice would be a godsend to travellers attempting to ford a river in the pitch dark of a medieval night.

Where a road crossed a river a spittal would be of maximum service to travellers especially at flood periods. Thus it is quite usual to find spittals beside bridges or fords as rest-points for

⁷ Wilhelm Lubke, *Ecclesiastical Art in Germany*, 1877, p. 109.

⁸ To be published in the next volume.

⁹ See p. 20.

¹⁰ Fra Tomasini, *Irish Saints in Italy*, p. 359.

travellers. St. Leonards at Doonslee and Failford by Tarbolton were definitely sited at fords across the nearby waters. Kincase was on the old shore road between Ayr and Irvine, not far from the treacherous Pow Burn with its floods and quick-sands. These three spittals could be classified as halt-points near fords, and although their histories show specialisation for lepers and the sick, their original foundations may have been influenced by the existence of a crossing-place. On the other hand, far from being in lonely places, certain hospices were deliberately placed on main traffic routes so that they could serve the needs of people on pilgrimage to some particular shrine or holy place. The very early continental spittals were expressly erected for the use of pilgrims on their way to Rome. In 850 St. Donatus set up a hospice in Piacenza for Irish pilgrims; in 853 a solitary, Eusebius, founded near Lake Constance a hostel for the maintenance of Rome-bound pilgrims.¹¹ The continent has innumerable instances of Irish saints setting up such hospices, and as this practice may have been familiar to the early Irish church in Scotland there is little to prevent a belief that it was St. Medana who first founded Kincase.¹² In medieval England, long after this Celtic period, pilgrimage hospices flourished and the old Roman road leading to Canterbury was studded with them. In Ayrshire it would not be difficult to fit our spittals into a pattern based upon pilgrimage to Whithorn. Other theorists would make spittals dependent upon adjoining burghs and on this assumption, Ayr would be served by Doonslee, Prestwick by Kincase and Maybole by its Maisondew. There really can be no definite answer to the question of the siting of our local spittals. If foundation charters were extant—and none is—it is probable that it would be evident that the paramount reason for the choice of the site was the intention of the founder.

In medieval times hospitals were founded by individual benefactors. To-day we are for the most part content to leave care of the poor to the welfare state. But the state as responsible party for the care of the unfortunate is a modern idea. The original guardian of the poor was the church and under its teaching and influence private persons founded and endowed establishments to dispense charity. Irish saints founded hospices, bishops set up spittals, and kings and nobles erected similar institutions. This feeling of personal responsibility was reinforced by the belief that poverty was an apostolic virtue and not a social evil,

as we have come to regard it to-day. Thus in Celtic and medieval times private individuals of all ranks and classes founded—or refounded—places for the care of the poor whose prayers, pleasing to heaven from the very poverty of the supplicants, would gain merit for their benefactors. In Ayrshire we cannot be sure of one founder. According to tradition Kincase was founded by Robert the Bruce, but it is more than probable that it had been in existence long before his day and that his endowment of it took the form of a refoundation. Doonslee may also have been a royal foundation or the Burgh of Ayr may have had a hand in its setting-up, but it was left to John Gray, an eminent medical man, to come to its assistance when things were not going well. Charitable impulses arising from the Crusades caused the foundation of many hospitals, and in our shire this is exemplified at Symington and Failford.

It was difficult to enforce strict adherence to the terms of the original endowment. Neglect of the wishes of the founders had to be met with constant vigilance. The intrusion of a non-leprous person into the leper-house of Kincase in 1524 led to a suit before the Lords of Council in Edinburgh. Not only did the Lords order the removal of the non-leper but they gave orders that the Archbishop of Glasgow should send his Commissaries or his Deans to inspect Kincase and remove all who were not lepers and fill their places with true leprous persons. There was constant parliamentary legislation to reform hospitals,¹³ and even amid the multitude of other worries in 1549 the Provincial Council of the Church ordered each Bishop to investigate the state of all the spittals in his diocese and ensure that the terms of the foundation were being satisfied.¹⁴ The records of the Presbytery of Ayr also demonstrate this vigilance; in one instance they show a commission from the Lord Chancellor to the Burgh ordering the Magistrates to visit the hospitals of Kincase, Ayr and Maybole.¹⁵

When a founder set up an hospital he usually endowed it with sufficient funds for its upkeep. In days before banking it was difficult to find a secure method of providing an annual payment, and the common practice was to grant a piece of land from which would come yearly a rent in cash or in produce. It was with an annuity of this kind that Bruce endowed Kincase, the lands furnishing the money, meal and straw lying in the parishes of

¹¹ *Irish Saints in Italy*; also Fr. John Ryan, *Irish Monasticism*.
¹² See p. 22.

¹³ *Life and Times of James Kennedy*, pp. 407, 408.

¹⁴ *Statutes of the Scottish Church*, p. 119.

¹⁵ *History of the County of Ayr*, II, p. 382.

St. Quivox and Dundonald. The security provided by such a method is demonstrated by the fact that this endowment lasted from the days of Bruce until the twentieth century. That the spittal of Symington must also have been endowed with lands is proved by their mention in the Dundonald charter, while properties owned by St. Leonard's can also be traced down the ages. A by-product of this holding of lands by a spittal is the appearance of a continuing place-name showing possession by the hospital, as in the case of Spittal, Spittalhill and Spittal Meadow.

To collect these rents in cash or kind an agent, called a bailie, was employed by the hospital. He gathered the annuals and paid them over, retaining the fee agreed upon at his appointment as bailie. At a later date he might come into actual possession of the lands on payment of an annual amount equivalent to the original endowment. Thus, in Ayrshire, we find mention of the bailie of Kincase and of John Wallace of Carnell, bailie of Failford.

But a grant of land or a rental from land was not the only method of financing a spittal. A benefactor could seek at Rome a papal permit to have an indulgence granted on special feast days, such as that of the patron saint, to all who visited the hospital chapel and gave alms. This was the method employed by John Gray in 1425 in his attempt to improve the financial position of St. Leonard's at a time when poverty had almost put an end to its usefulness. Special agents for the collection of such revenues were called pardoners or proctors, and we have one example of each in our shire, the mysterious Pardoner of Ladykirk, and John Currie, Proctor of St. Anthony's, by Leith, who resided in the burgh of Ayr. The latter was probably a district collector for this spittal, which had close connections with our county town from the days of friar Michael Gray, an Ayr native who became famous as head of this hospital for sufferers from St. Anthony's fire, an inflammation caused by a diet of bad rye.

It is necessary to note that spittals were primarily ecclesiastical institutions rather than medical ones. They were administered by clerics and supervised by local bishops. Apart from the fact that the priest was the all-round professional man of those days, and could well organise the medical needs of a spittal, each hospital was also a Mass-centre, service of which was only possible by a priest. Such clerics commonly held the title of prior or preceptor, so that in Ayrshire we find the prior of Kincase and the preceptor of St. Leonard's. It is a great pity that we have

no records of Symington spittal where the dedication suggests that the hospital was administered by an Order of friars. The organisation of spittals as ecclesiastical places also accounts for the naming of the inmates as beidsmen or bedesmen, meaning those who are bound to pray. Payment for maintenance in a spittal was spiritual, the habitants being vowed to specified prayers for the souls of the founders. At Soutra in Catholic times the residents were obliged to recite prayers to Our Lady, while in Protestant days these were changed to the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. We have mention of bedesmen at Kincase, St. Leonard's and Failford, but there is no record of the stipulated prayers.

The following is a list of spittals, authentic or traditional, in the shire:—

KINCASE.—Authentic. Verified by charters as a leper-house, dedicated to St. Ninian.

DOONSLEE.—Authentic. Verified by charters as a general-purpose hospital, dedicated to St. Leonard.

FAILFORD.—Authentic. Verified as part of the organisation of the Trinitarian house there. In 1560 two poor men lived in the convent and had each £22 yearly for maintenance. Four old bedesmen lived outwith the place, each having 11 bolls of meal, 12 bolls of malt and 8 merks of silver.¹⁶ In 1596 John Wallace, of Carnell, was bailie of the Failford estate, which included the lands of Spittalside and Spittalhill.¹⁷

SYMINGTON.—Authentic. Verified, by one charter reference, as a spittal dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket.

MAYBOLE.—Authentic. Verified, by one charter reference, as a Maison Dieu with lands inside the burgh.¹⁸ Dr. Easson thought that it might have been connected with the College of Maybole.

¹⁶ *Caledonia*, III, p. 491.

¹⁷ R.M.S., VI, No. 428.

¹⁸ R.M.S., IV, No. 2746.

MAUCHLINE.—Doubtful. One charter refers to the place, house and hospice of Mauchline.¹⁹ Dr. Easson suggested that it may have been a lodging for visiting monks.

IRVINE.—Doubtful. It is indicated solely by the place-name, Spittal Meadow, occurring in 1542 in a list of burghal annuals.²⁰

STEWARTON.—Doubtful. It is indicated in various charters which show lands called Spittal in the lordship of Stewarton.²¹

KILMARNOCK.—Doubtful. When Archibald, lord of Douglas, had a royal gift of the lands of Kilmarnock in 1491, the royal confirmation speaks of the patronage of the churches, chapels and hospitals in its lands.²² I can find no other references to a spittal in this parish.

CALENDAR OF DOCUMENTS

ST. NINIAN'S OF KINCASE

The ruins of the chapel of this old spittal in Prestwick are still preserved. The hospital is first mentioned by name in 1451, but it was in existence long before this date. Popular tradition attributes the foundation to Robert the Bruce who endowed it with lands now known as Loans, in Dundonald parish. No charter of foundation survives, but references in later charters make it very probable that Bruce did gift these lands to Kincase. This does not necessarily mean that the king founded the spittal. The name, Kincase or Kilcase, belongs to a language period long before the days of Bruce, and if it can be equated with the chapel called in ancient records Chilnecase then there is good reason to believe that an early Irish saint, Medana, was the first founder of Kincase.

In recorded times Kincase was a leper-house. Its proximity to Prestwick was a constant source of worry to the magistrates of this tiny town and stringent laws against communication with

the diseased inmates feature regularly in the minutes of burghal meetings. As a leper-house Kincase should have accommodated only those stricken with the dread malady, but several law cases show attempts to intrude non-leprous unfortunates. The last definite reference to leprosy at Kincase occurs in 1693, and when the disease had finally disappeared the hospital lingered on as a refuge for poor persons who were maintained there by the ancient annual rents of meal and money. In this fashion the spittal survived until its revenues were transferred to the poorhouse in the burgh of Ayr.

The main support of the hospital came from rents payable from lands in the parishes of St. Quivox and Dundonald. The Dundonald revenue was due from the properties we now know as Loans, Crossburn, and Hillhouse, and payment by the tenants of holdings there is verifiable in testaments of the early 17th century. In 1783 the burgh of Ayr purchased this revenue and the right of presenting pensioners to the hospital. Later, about 1824, when the spittal had ceased to function, the revenue was transferred to eight inmates of the poorhouse in Ayr. A hundred years later the superior of the lands, the Duke of Portland, got quit of this ancient burden by payment of a lump sum in lieu of the annuals.

Control of the affairs of the spittal seems to have been in the hands of the family of Wallace of Newton from a very early date. This family held the offices of keeper and governor of the house and bailie of the lands. With these offices went the right to admit or refuse admittance, subject to supervision by officers of the church. When the burgh of Ayr bought the office of bailiery of Robertlone, with it came the sole right to present pensioners to Kincase.

The priest in charge of the spittal was called the Prior of Kincase. Only two are recorded—George Young in 1508 and Arthur Wallace in 1538.

DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO KINCASE

1. The name Kincase belongs to the Celtic period. The variants of it, Kincase and Kilcase, suggest that the original name was Kilnecase. A parallel is to be found in Symington parish where the variants, Dalkeith and Dankeith, sprang from the name, Dallincath.

Charters of Friars Preachers of Ayr, pp. 45, 10.

¹⁹ R.M.S., III, No. 1369.

²⁰ *Muniments of Irvine*, II, p. 192.

²¹ R.M.S., II, No. 583; IV, No. 2270; V, No. 2283.

²² R.M.S., II, No. 2072.

2. In the 5th century an Irish saint, Medana or Modwenna, founded seven churches in Scotland, the first at Chilnecase, the second at Dundonald. Skene thought Chilnecase to be Candida Casa, but Watson believed that it represented Kincase near Prestwick.

3. 1208 - 1214

A Gilbertine charter lists fisheries on the shore between Ayr and Irvine, and among them is one called Spittalcraig. The locality is apt for Kincase which is on the shore between Ayr and Prestwick.

Ayrshire Collections, Vol. 4, p. 61.

4. Wallace is supposed to have visited Kincase.

5. According to tradition Robert the Bruce founded this spittal as a leper house. The tradition varies but the old version was that the king, exhausted after a day's hunting, fell asleep on Prestwick Moor and contracted leprosy.

Prestwick Records, p. 127.

6. 1451 - 2, February 14th.

James II grants in feuferm to Hugh Wallace and his heirs, for ever, for faithful service, the spittal house (domus hospitalarius) of Kilcase with the lands of Spittalscheils in the barony of Kyle-Stewart in the shire of Ayr, as this spittal house was given and feued in olden time by the king's predecessors . . . to be held of the king and his successors as Stewards or Scotland . . . paying annually 8 merks in equal parts at the feasts of Pentecost and St. Martin and 16 thraves of straw at the feast of Martin.

R.M.S., II, No. 528.

7. 1470, May 10th.

Hucheon Wallace holds the moor of the commonland of Prestwick burgh "fra the grai stanes merchand with the landis umquhill of Kingcass quhilk the communitie of the Newton of Are haldis of the said place of Kingcass in annuall, and sa passand to a place callit Sanct James Corss, and sa evinly passand to the see, and syne cumand up fra the grai stanes forsaid to the moss sdie, lefand sufficient gait betwix the moss and the bordour of the said mur till a plas callit the hous apoun the mur, or the heid of Boydis pottis, and syne evinlie ower again passand to the se . . . for the quhilk he acht zerli to the saide burghe of Prestwick, gif it be asked, three pepir cornis in annuele."

Prestwick Records, p. 9.

8. 1470.

Kincase paid a pound of wax annually to St. Andrew's light in Prestwick church.

Ibid, p. 6.

9. 1470.

It is statut that na man inhabitant the said burgh, or woman, commune or intromit with the sic folk of Kingcase under pain of exiling the said burgh when they are ourtain be ane enquest that upon.

Ibid, p. 15.

10. 1477, December 1st.

Ann Kerd repairs to Kingcass. Andro Sawyer repairs to Kingcass.

Ibid, p. 27.

11. 1479, April 26th.

Andro Sawyer reparis to Kingcase daily and nightly and his wife and bairns. Ann Kerd apoun the samyn wise and her seik son that is a lipper repairs daili in her hous. Marion Sym reparis to Kingcas apoun the samyn wise and hir dochtir.

Ibid, p. 28.

12. 1481, November 13th.

Andro Sawyer is fundin daili reperand to Kingcase and is abill till infect the hale toun, and weris the seik folkis clathis and bonnetis.

Ibid, p. 29.

13. 1496.

Ann Sawyer, elder, Marioun Miller, Elane Broun and Ann Duncan are ilkane severale in amerciamentis for the selling of ale and intromettin with the folkis of Kingcase agane the statuts of the towne.

Ibid, p. 33.

14. 1497, November 6th.

The bailies in court accused Elene Broun that scho reparit in Kingcase and sald them hir gudis and coft thar mele and thar gudis.

Ibid, p. 35.

15. 1507-8, March 6th.

George Young, prior of Kincase, accused Thomas Greyf of four bolls of beir. The said Thomas granted 24/- but denied the beir.

Ibid, p. 40.

16. 1516.

The king, as Steward of Scotland, sets in feu to Adam Wallace and his heirs the lands of Spittalscheils in the barony of Kyle-Stewart. He also grants to him the office of keeper and governor of the house and hospital of Kilecaise and the bailieship of the same . . . with the lands of the said hospital which had been resigned by Hugh Wallace, brother of the said Adam, . . . paying annually therefor 8 merks and 16 threaves of straw.

R.M.S., III, No. 62.

17. 1524, May 30th.

Anent the supplication gevein in be Robert Thomsoun against Adame Wallace of the Newtoun that quhare my lord governour thre yeris syne promittit to the said Robert the first beidmannis place that happinit to vaike in the hospitale of Kyncais besyde Aire, becaus he is mutilat of his hand and may nocht labour to wyn his leving as my said lord gouvernouris writing under his signet and subscriptioun manuale maid to him thairupon beiris. And sen he optenit the said writing twa bedesmenis places has vaikit and the said Adame had dispoit thaim to utheris. The saide Adame allegit that the said hospitale is of auld foundit for lepir men and is and has been occupiet and usit be lepir men and that the foundation was in the register of Paisley. Thairefore the lordis assignis to him the fift day of the next sessioun with continuation of dais to produce the said foundatioun or the auctentik copy of it to be sene and considerit be thame that thay may mak the samin be observit and keipit in tyme tocum : with certification to the said Adame, an he do nocht, the lordis will decerne lettres and compell the said Adame to ressave the said Robert in ane beidis mannis place in the said hospitale of Kincais conforme to my lord governouris writing.

Acts of the Lords of Council, 1501 - 54, p. 201.

18. 1524, September 2nd.

Supplication by Adam Wallace, bailie of Kincais, against Robert Thomsoun, mutilat of a hand, whom Albany put in a

leper's place, "the said hospitale beand foundit to lepir men and usit and brukit be thame sen the decese of king Robert the Bruse." Wallace produced the king's writing requiring the lords to preserve the condition and they discharged the effect of the writ procured by Thomson. Glencairn took instruments on the king's writing, "that gif ony innovation war maid in the hospitale of Kincais be inputtin of uthiris nor lepir men he ordanit the samin to be re-formit."

Ibid, p. 207.

19. 1530, May 28th.

James V gives Spittalscheils, etc., and the bailieship of Kincase to William Hamilton of Macnairston. These had been held by Adam Wallace of Newton in feuferm and on May 11th had been appreciated and sold to Hamilton for 240 merks as part of a debt of 506 merks. Regress is granted to Wallace.

R.M.S., III, No. 944.

20. 1535, July 30th.

Anent our soverane lordis lettres purchest at the instance of John Howe, beidman of the hospitale of Kincais, aganis Hew Wallace of Newton besyde Aire, that quhare he has bene ane beidman within the said hospitale be the space o thre yeiris and observit all things conforme to the foundatioun, nevertheless the said Hew pretended him to be balze of the said hospitale of his auctorite aganis God and gude conscience maisterfullie put the saide Johnne furth of the said hospitale at the feist of Candilmes last bipast and has tekin his leving fra him. And hereupon the said Johnne purchest our soverane lordis writingis under his signet and subscriptioun manuale chargand the said Hew to imput him in the samin agane and to pay his dewities of termis bigane and siclik in time tocum as he was answerit of befor, the quhilk the said Hew disobeit. The said Johnne Howe beand personalie present and the said Hew Wallace comperand be Maistir Henry Laudir his procuratour quha allegit that the said hospitale was infest and foundit for lepir men and sa has been usit be lepir men in all tymes bigane, and that the said Johnne was na lepir man. The Lords of consale undirstandis that the said Johnne Howe suld have na place into the hospitale of Kincais nor na profit nor beidmannischip tharin becaus the samin is foundit and usit be lepirmen in all tymes bigane and nane utheris and knawis perfiltie that the said Johnne is na lepir man and tharfor the said Hew suld nocht restor him therto and ordanes lettres be

direct to the archbishop of Glasgow, ordinar of the diocesy, to caus his commissary or deynis to vesy the said hospitale and gif ther be ony persouns in the samin utheris nor lepir folkis to remuff tharfra and input lepir men tharintill according to the foundatioun and mak the samin to be observit and kepit eftir the tenour tharof.

Acts of Lords of Council, 1501 - 54, p. 443.

21. 1538, September 10th.

James V confirms a charter of Arthur Wallace, prior of the hospital of St. Ninian of Kincase, and of his convent, by which for great sums of money he gave in feu to Edward Stewart, son of the late Hector Stewart of Raise, the 8 merk land of old extent of Robertlone, extending in rental to 4 chalders of oatmeal and 32 merks of ferme : and the 8 merk lands of old extent of Schelis extending to 8 merks in the bailiery of Kyle-Stewart. Reddendo for Robertlone 4 chalders of meal and 32 merks, and for Schelis 10 merks. Done at the place of Kilcase before Mr. Gavin Hamilton and Peter Algeo, notary public.

R.M.S., III, No. 1836.

22. 1538, September 13th.

Precept of charter of confirmation to Edward Stewart *re* the charter of donation and feufferme made to him by the religious man (*per religiosum virum*) Arthur, prior of the hospital of St. Ninian called Kincase and the convent of the same.

R.S.S., II, No. 2713.

23. 1539, May 10th.

Confirmation to William Hamilton of Sanquhar of the lands of Schelis and the office of bailie of Kincais and the feued lands and burdens of the same.

R.M.S., III, No. 196.

24. 1556, December 9th.

William Hamilton of Sanquhar gives to his son, William Hamilton of Glenmure, the lands of barony of Sanquhar-Hamilton with Newton Castle. Among the gifts are the lands of Spittal-schelis and the office of bailie of Kincais and Robertlone.

R.M.S., IV, No. 1125.

25. 1583.

The king presents Campbell and Mason, beidesmen, to the hospital of Kincase founded as it bears by his highness predecessors.

Brockie MSS., p. 369.

26. 1584 - 5, January 1st.

William Hamilton of Sorn and Annabel Wallace give all the lands of Sanquhar-Lindsay to James, earl of Arran, and Elizabeth Stewart, his spouse.

Mason's Protocol Book, p. 174.

27. 1597.

Prestwick magistrates decree that no sheep be kept on the lands of Kincase.

Prestwick Records, p. 83.

28. 1603, November 8th.

Testament of Margaret Wallace, relict of the late John Wilson in Loans, within the parish of Dundonald . . . Item, to William Leggat and . . . Wallace, seik lipper folkis in Kingcais, 2 bolls of meil of the ferme and dewities pertaining to them in 1602, price of the boll £5.

Ibid, p. 129.

29. 1606, November 27th.

The will of Robert Dook includes a debt "to the seik folkis of the hospital of Kincais for the ferme of the lands of Lones for the crop and yeir of God 1606 aucht bollis meill and four merkis of money."

Ibid, p. 129.

30. 1608.

Katherine Neill and James Dickie, lepers, quha with danger of infectioun of utheris, hantis frielie the cumpanie of uthers in this parochin as thoch thai war clein, be chargeit be the officer to gae tae Hew Wallace in Boigside and agrie wi him for places in Kingcase.

Extract from Dundonald Kirk Session Records, published in Wyllie, *Ayrshire Museum*.

31. Circa 1620.

Robert Gordon, describing Kyle for Blaeu, mentions Kincase and states that those admitted to its charity were lodged in huts or cottages in the vicinity.

Paterson, *History of County of Ayr*, II, p. 381.

32. 1620, December 21st.

Hugh Wallace of Craigie has the office of bailie of Kincase and Robertlone.

R.M.S., VIII, No. 722.

33. 1623, June.

The latter will of William Dowok in Lones shows "Jonet Anderson, beidwoman in Kingiscase, who is to receive ane boll meill for the Beltane term last bypast, worth £12."

Prestwick Records, p. 129.

34. 1631.

The Wallaces of Craigie have the office of bailie of Kincase.

R.M.S., VIII, No. 1765.

35. 1650.

Wallace of Craigie feued the lands paying the annuals of Kincase to Wallace of Gallrigs (now Newfield). Later these lands came to the Fullartons of Fullarton.

36. 1693, March 11th.

The procurator-fiscal of Prestwick burgh complains to the burgh court of the intruding of the lepers of Kingscaise upon the privileges only proper to the burgesses and freemen by resorting to the shore and taking up and gathering and disposing of certain timber and other wrack. And casting and taking away greater quantities of peats and turfs off the common and moss belonging to the town. The magistrates ordain that none of the lepers shall dispose of any timber or wrack from the shoreside within the privilege of Prestwick or cast peats or turf or anything else for building and repairing their house without liberty asked and given under penalty of £100 toties quoties.

Prestwick Records, p. 91.

37. 1740, May 24th.

William Alexander in Kincase having applied to the Prestwick magistrates for the privilege of a yard as now enclosed by their allowance formerly and of the piece of ground from the house he inhabits southwards to the coal road, they allow him the same during his life. They allow the same privilege to his spouse, Elizabeth Shearer, in case she survive him and live in the hospital of Kincase. They are to pay 2/- sterling per annum and keep a dike about the same.

Prestwick Records, p. 93.

38. Circa 1775.

Armstrong's Map shows Kingcase as a ruin.

39. 1783.

The magistrates of Ayr bought "all and whole the office of bailiery of Kincase of Robertlone with the sole and absolute right of presenting pensioners to the hospital."

Ibid, p. 129.

40. 1798, February 13th.

Colonel William Fullarton of Fullarton, author of the Account of Agriculture in the County of Ayr, raised an action in the Court of Session against the above purchase. The petition is said to be in the Town Clerk's office in Ayr. Mr. Gillespie quotes a large part of it.

Gillespie, *Dundonald*, II, p. 571.

41. 1824.

Publication of Prestwick Records.

"The revenue as now exigible by the magistrates of Ayr consists of 64 bolls of oatmeal and 8 merks Scots of money; the whole is bestowed upon eight inmates of the poor's house of the town. The straw is no longer enacted."

The editorial note on page 127 states that the hospital was sited half-a-mile south of the burgh. Some fragments of a building supposed to be the chapel were all that remained of the original domicile of this ancient institution. The chapel was 36 feet long,

17 feet wide and the walls $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick. At the east end of the ruin several of the graves of the pensioners might yet be perceived. People then alive remembered the pensioners to have inhabited cottages around the chapel, but of these not a vestige remained. The well of the convent, as it was sometimes called, was lined with coarse stonework and was still kept in order and used. There was no longer any leprosy so the benefits were given to other diseased persons.

When the estate of Craigie had been brought to judicial sale (1783) the magistrates of Ayr acquired the privilege separately of "All and whole the office of bailiery of King's Case and Robertlone with the sole and absolute power of presenting pensioners to the hospital of King's Case as hath hitherto been in use by Sir Thomas Wallace Dunlop, late of Craigie, and his predecessors, together with the remains of the hospital and about two acres of land adjacent." The late Colonel Fullarton whose family had come into possession of the lands of Lones had claimed the right as belonging to the property but the court decided against him.

42. 1852.

The old hospital is in ruins. The revenues went to "eight objects of charity" in equal shares of 8 bolls of meal and 1 merk Scots each. There were no lepers, so those benefitted were in indigent circumstances or those suffering from incurable disease.

Paterson, *History of County of Ayr*, II, p. 381.

43. 1924.

The Duke of Portland whose family had bought Fullarton in 1803 was paying the magistrates of Ayr 64 bolls of meal and 32 merks Scots for all and whole the lands of Crossburn, Robertloan, Loans, Hillhouse and Townhead of Loans. In 1924 he redeemed this annual with an outright payment.

Gillespie, *Dundonald*, I, p. 144.

ST. LEONARD'S OF DOONSLEE

This hospital stood among the common lands of the burgh of Ayr on the way to the River Doon. Probably it served as a hostel for travellers, but one document of 1425 proves that it received and maintained poor people.

To-day there is no trace of the building. Various references show that it stood as a ruin until at least 1824, but by 1847 these ruins had been removed and the stones used to build part of the wall round the old racecourse.

There is no record of the foundation of St. Leonard's and no indication of the original founder. It is first mentioned in 1420 at a time when its upkeep was causing concern. The Governor of Scotland had made an agreement with the bishop of Glasgow that it should be united with other lands in Dumfriesshire. At the same time a prominent priest and medical authority, perhaps a native of Ayr, was seeking to help the impoverished hospital by writing to Rome seeking an indulgence to raise funds. The revocation of the union with the other lands may indicate that Gray's petition was successful and that the indulgence did help to restore the fortunes of St. Leonard's.

By 1547 the spittal had come into possession of lands in the burghfield of Ayr which brought in an annual income of over £3. Possession of the lands can be traced over a long period down to their ownership by the burgh of Ayr by the royal gift of 1614. The king was patron of the hospital and had presentation of its chaplains, so that royal registers provide the names of many of the priests who were masters of the spittal, with the official title of Preceptor of St. Leonard's. Seven priests are recorded in the early 16th century but earlier preceptors are unknown.

DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO ST. LEONARD'S OF DOONSLEE

44. There is no record of the foundation of this hospital.

45. Pre 1420.

St. Leonard's hospital had been united with the lands of Colinhatic in Dumfriesshire by an agreement between Robert, Duke of Albany, and William, Bishop of Glasgow. The charter of donation is not extant but the union can be inferred from the charter of 1442.

46. 1425, July 11th.

John Gray, master of arts, master of medicine, archdeacon of Galloway, seeking his own weal and striving to convert an earthly into a heavenly treasure, desires and intends, both with

his own goods and with the offerings of Christ's faithful, to repair, endow and preserve the hospital or chapel of St. Leonard, near the burgh of Ayr, which is at present ruinous and endowed with rents so poor that the poor cannot be received and maintained there as was customary. He has already begun and supplicates that the Pope would grant a relaxation of seven years and as many quarantines of enjoined penance to all and sundry of Christ's faithful of both sexes who visit the said hospital on the Friday of St. Leonard, its patron, and on other feastdays, wont to be given by chancery, and who stretch out helping hands.

Scottish Supplications to Rome, 1423-28, p. 105.

John Gray was an important cleric and doctor. He held the archdeanery of Whithorn, the prebend of Ashkirk, the prebend of Le Mans, and the prebend of St. Martin of Tours (*Scottish Supplications to Rome*, 1423-28, I, p. 211; II, p. 91). In 1425 he was royal ambassador to King Charles of France, and he had been on an embassy to Rome in 1412 (*Ibid.*, II, p. 91, and *Exchequer Rolls*, IV, p. 163). Although a priest he had permission to practise and teach medicine (*Scottish Supplications to Rome*, 1423-28, II, p. 108). There is the possibility that he was a native of Ayr since a John Gray, cleric, of Ayr, appears in 1427 (*McFarlane's Collections*, II, p. 337).

47. 1442, June 7th.

Charter of James II relating to the hospital of St. Leonard and the lands of Colinhatrig. James, by the grace of God King of Scots, to all honest men who see these present letters greetings. For certain reasonable causes we and the reverend father in Christ, John, bishop of Glasgow, have decreed that the union of the hospital of the blessed Leonard in the shire of Ayr and the lands of Colinhatrig, given in alms, in the shire of Dumfries, made by the late Robert, duke of Albany, Governor of Scotland, and the reverend father, William, bishop of Glasgow, is now dissolved. The gift of the said hospital to us and to our successors, and the said lands of Colinhatrig to the said bishop and his successors—as they were before the said union—shall remain free and revert, notwithstanding the aforesaid union, which we have dissolved, broken and by these present letters annulled . . .

Given under our great seal at Edinburgh on June 7th, 1442.

Registrum Episcopatus Glasguensis, No. 347.

48. 1506, May 25th.

Letter of gift of the hospital of St. Leonard's of Doonslee, next the burgh of Ayr, made to Sir David Auchterlonie, chaplain, vacant by the demission of Sir Florence Auchinleck, last chaplain and possessor of the same.

R.S.S., I, No. 1266.

Sir Florence Auchinleck is the first recorded chaplain of St. Leonard's. He is probably a member of the family of Auchinleck of Auchinleck, since in 1492 he acts as procurator for Sir John Auchinleck of that Ilk (*Acts of the Lords of Council*, p. 292). The priest who was to succeed him was an Auchterlonie, which family was related to the Auchinlecks since Alexander Auchterlonie of that Ilk was married to Jonet Auchinleck.

49. 1511, November 29th.

Letter to Sir George Blair anent the chaplaincy or hospital of St. Leonard, situated next the burgh of Ayr, vacant by the death of the late Florentine Auchinleck, last chaplain, master and possessor of the same. The hospital is at the gift of the king "pleno jure," and is to be held by the said Sir George Blair for all the days of his life, with all and sundry its lands and possessions. He is to take upon himself the burdens and service use and wont of the said chaplaincy or hospital according to the terms of its foundation. Included is a mandate to the sheriff of Ayr to induct Sir George into possession of the said chaplaincy or hospital and its lands.

R.S.S., I, No. 2339.

There are several priests of the name, Sir George Blair, at this period; e.g., notary in Ayr in 1505 (*Charters of the Friars Preachers of Ayr*, No. 48); vicar of Dailly in 1517 (*Registrum Episcopatus Glasguensis*, No. 493); parish-clerk of Ayr in 1528 (*Protocol Book of Gavin Ros*, No. 923).

50. 1529, September 28th.

Letter to Mr. William Hamilton anent the gift of the chaplaincy founded within the chapel of St. Leonard's in the territory and

lands of the burghfield of Ayr, with all its lands, annual rents and profits, now vacant by the death of the late Sir John Campbell, chaplain and last possessor of the same.

R.S.S., II, No. 342.

This may be the sole chaplaincy of St. Leonard's or it may be a second chaplaincy founded at the altar in the Hospital. Sir John Campbell is not recorded elsewhere. At a later date, 1540, a Sir John Campbell was Dean of Carrick.

51. 1543, October 15th.

Letter to Mr. Bernard Hamilton anent the chaplaincy of the chapel of St. Leonard's, lying within the territory of the burgh of Ayr, for all the days of his life, now vacant by the demission of Mr. William Hamilton, archdeacon of the chapel of Stirling, last possessor.

R.S.S., III, No. 504.

On October 7th Mr. William Hamilton had been made archdeacon of the Chapel-Royal of Stirling in succession to Ninian Spottiswood (*R.S.S.*, III, No. 498). During this period the same William Hamilton was Dean of the Faculty of Arts in Glasgow University (*Munimenta Alme Universitatis Glasguensis*, II, pp. 286, 288).

Mr. Bernard Hamilton was a brother of William Hamilton of Sanquhar, knight (*R.S.S.*, III, No. 2477 ; IV, Nos. 1539, 2620). He graduated at Glasgow University in 1540. Later he became Minister of Scotlandwell, a Trinitarian house subject to Failford. This is the time of the rise to power of James Hamilton of Finnart, whose brother, William, obtained from him the baronies of Sanquhar, etc., adjoining Failford, a fact that may account for the promotion of Mr. Bernard to Scotlandwell.

52. 1546, November 20th.

The Queen gifts to James Hamilton in Bogwood a piece of land called Whitestanes, occupied by Alexander Galloway, lying between the lands of the laird of Craigcaffy, the lands of Clongall, Ladylands and the lands belonging to the Dominicans

of Ayr. And a piece of land, about 40 acres in extent, occupied by Thomas Sawyer, on the south side of the chapel of St. Leonard, between the lands of the Minister of Failford, the Carrouchanburn at its new bridge and the common of the burgh of Ayr. And the lands called Lampotfauld, 3 acres in extent, occupied by Leonard Clerk, lying between the Sclaitbog, the Spittalbog, the lands of Garrot-riding and the Twa Stane Croce. All these lands lie in the burghfield of Ayr and belong to the Queen and her predecessors.

R.M.S., IV, No. 34.

The following charter suggests that James Hamilton gave these lands to the hospital of St. Leonards.

53. 1546 - 7, March 22nd.

The Queen confirmed a charter of Mr. Bernard Hamilton, preceptor of the chapel of St. Leonard within the territory of the burgh of Ayr, which set in feu to Alexander Lockhart, burgess of Ayr, and to his heirs and assignees, the lands of Whitestanes, occupied by Adam Dunbar, and the lands called Lampotfauld, occupied by Leonard Clerk. The lands lie in the territory of the burgh of Ayr and extend yearly to 58/- with a grassum of 58/- every seventh year. The preceptor is to be annually paid £3 6s 8d with duplication of the feu-ferm at the entry of an heir.

The charter was given at Ayr on January 29th before

William Hamilton of Sanquhar, knight.

Stephen Preston, notary.

Sir Thomas Raith, chaplain and notary.

R.M.S., IV, No. 79.

These are the recorded lands belonging to the hospital. To-day there is a tradition that the lands of Chapelfauld belonged to St. Leonard's. They did not; Chapelfauld belonged to the Holy Rood altar in the parish church of Ayr.

54. 1548, July 28th.

Letter to Sir Thomas Raith anent the chaplaincy of the chapel of St. Leonard in the territory of the burgh of Ayr, for all the

days of his life, now vacant by the demission of Mr. Bernard Hamilton, last chaplain and possessor of the same.

R.S.S., III, No. 2889.

Bernard Hamilton had been promoted to the Ministry of Scotlandwell (*R.S.S.*, III, No. 2477).

55. 1548, October 12th.

Instrument narrating that Sir Thomas Raith, chaplain, having in his hands a letter of gift under the Privy Seal, dated 28th July, 1548, of the chaplaincy of St. Leonard in the territory of the burgh of Ayr, proceeded to the chapel of St. Leonard and by touching the horns of the altar inducted himself to the chapel and chaplaincy and to all its lands, rents, etc. On all of which he asked instruments.

Done at St. Leonards before

William Wallace of Barnweill.

Adam Wallace of Dullars.

George Kessane.

David Nicholson.

Ayrshire Collections, Vol. 3, p. 63.

It would seem that the Wallaces succeeded the Hamiltons as patrons of St. Leonard's.

Sir Thomas Raith had been a sangster in the choir of Ayr in 1535 (*Ayr Burgh Accounts*, p. 74). He was also a notary and was employed by the burgh on its business even as far away as Edinburgh (*Muniments of Ayr*, No. 26). In 1550 he had a royal gift of the goods of Patrick Hucheson who had died in illegitimacy. In post-Reformation times he had an annual pension of 20 merks paid by the burgh for his past services (*Muniments of Ayr*, No. 59).

56. Post 1560.

Preceptory of St. Leonards.

The comptroller charges him with the feu-duty of the lands of Whitestanes, extending to a 10/- land or thereby, set in feu to George Jamieson for 46/-.

And for the lands and meadow pertaining sometime to the said chaplainry set in feu to William Wallace, son of William Wallace of Dullars, for 47/-.

Brockie MSS., p. 83.

57. 1595.

The king conceeds in feu to William Wallace, second son of William Wallace of Dullars, the lands and meadow formerly belonging to the preceptor of the chapel of St. Leonard in the territory of the burgh of Ayr, lying between the lands of Holy Cross, the lands belonging to the House of Failford and other specified lands. Of all of which William Wallace, senior, and his predecessors were old and native possessors beyond the memory of man. Paying annually 45/8¹₂d with an augmentation of 15d, in all 47/-.

R.M.S., VI, No. 342.

This grant may indicate the death of Sir Thomas Raith, the chaplain in possession.

58. 1598, June 6th.

John Lockhart sells to George Jamieson, burgess of Ayr, the lands of Whitestanes extending to a 10/- land of old extent (occupied by Thomas Cunningham, formerly by Adam Dunbar). The lands are held of the king in place of the preceptor of the chapel of St. Leonard in feu-ferm for a payment of 44/6 with duplication, etc.

Ibid, No. 723.

59. 1602, May 12th.

The laird of Culzean was murdered by the laird of Bargany's partisans who hid in ambush in the sandhills "beyond Sanct Lennardis Cheapell."

Historie of the Kennedyis, pp. 56-58.

60. 1614.

Ayr burgh has a royal gift of all the former lands belonging to the friars. Among the listed friarlands are the chaplaincy of St. Leonard's chapel, sometyme situat and founded within the territory of the burgh, with the lands called St. Leonards lands, once occupied by Adam Wallace and now by George Angus . . .

the lands of Lampotfauld occupied by John Power in Dalmilling . . . the lands of Whitestanes occupied by the late Adam Dunbar and now by Thomas Cunningham in Whitestanes. All these lands had belonged to St. Leonards. Whitestanes paid an annual of 30/-.

Charters of the Friars Preachers of Ayr, No. 67.

61. 1628.

The preceptory of St. Leonard's.

Particular Register of Sasines, I, p. 361.

62. 1820.

The Cess Roll for Ayr shows Whitestanes as a property of 16 acres rented at 25/- an acre to Mr. Buchan who paid £20. Lampotfaulds and Clayhole (Sclaitbog?) consisted of 5 acres rented at £3 per acre.

Dr. Auld's Process, p. 33.

63. 1824.

St. Leonards still subsists.

Keith's Catalogue, p. 476.

64. 1847.

The ford across the Slaphouse Burn is traceable about two hundred yards west of Slaphouse. On the rising ground near to this a religious house anciently existed, dedicated to St. Leonard, the ruins of which were removed within remembrance. The place where it stood is still called Chapel Field, and a few houses, where a cross road leads to the beach, bear the name of Chapel Park Cottages.

History of the County of Ayr, I, p. 199.

65. 1897.

The chapel stood in meadowland on a site near that which is at present occupied by the church of the same name. Its stones were eventually used in building part of the wall round the racecourse.

Pagan, *Annals of Ayr*, p. 4.

SPITTALHILL, SYMINGTON

Until very recently the farm of Spittalhill on the Symington-Kilmarnock road had suggested, from its name only, that there had at one time been a medieval hospital in the vicinity.

Since there was no confirmation in any written document this evidence of the existence of a spittal was of doubtful value. Then in 1952 there came into the possession of the Society a transcript of an old Dundonald charter—to be published in our next volume—which contained a reference to the lands of the hospital of St. Thomas of Aconia. This is sufficient proof that the name Spittalhill did commemorate an actual spittal; a minor Ayrshire mystery had been solved. A search of the farmlands has revealed not the slightest trace of any ruin that could be equated with a medieval building. If the Drumchiber burn, also named in the charter, could be located, search for the site of the spittal would be much simplified. There is no other evidence of this spittal or of when it ceased to function.

The dedication to St. Thomas of Aconia is an intriguing one. This is the great saint, Thomas a Becket, under the title given by the Crusaders who knew his hospital in Acre, founded in 1189 and famous as the church of St. Thomas a Becket in Aconia. An order of friars ran this spittal and from it spread outwards, coming to London, where they had another famous hospital. For our purposes at the moment all that need be noted is that there was an Order of St. Thomas of Aconia dealing with spittals, and that houses of this Order date from the third Crusade.

From the charter it is obvious that this Order had a house somewhere near the lands of Dundonald, and that it was functioning at the date of the charter, which is roughly 1300. Who then founded this spittal? Obviously it was some person with a knowledge of the Crusades. This would suggest the Dundonald Stewarts, the Lockharts of Symington, or the Crocs of Crosbie, all with definite Crusading connections.

Taking the Stewarts first: Alan, son of Walter, went with Coeur de Lion to the siege of Acre (*Boece*, XIII, f. 276). In 1246 Walter of Dundonald was on Crusade under the Earl of March. In 1249 John Stewart, brother of this Dundonald lord, died at the siege of Damietta. In 1270 John Stewart, brother of Alexander the High Steward, was on crusade with Louis the Saint. It is thus very evident that the lords of Dundonald knew the fame of St. Thomas the Martyr and had met the Order set up in Acre under his patronage. At this period Symington was owned by the Lockharts. About 1210 Malcolm Loccard gave to Paisley Abbey six acres of land in the vill of Symington (*Paisley Charters*, p. 20), thus proving the ownership of this estate. If the spittal was in Symington territory the Lockharts must have a strong

claim to be its founders. But a more intriguing foundation would be that of Robert Croc, owner of Crosbie and Crookston, who figures regularly in Paisley charters between 1190 and 1239. That his lands touched Symington is proved by Loccart's gift to Paisley of the six acres lying next the lands of Robert Croc. This is evidently Crosbie estate and it was ecclesiastically under jurisdiction of Paisley Abbey, which had received the church of Dundonald and its chapels of Crosbie and Riccarton in an early grant from the Stewart. This same Robert Croc had a licence to have a chapel in the spittal he had built in his territory, and the licence was from Paisley Abbey. It has usually been assumed that Croc built this spittal in his lands of Crookston but there is no evidence whatsoever of a spittal there. This makes it very probable that Croc built his spittal in his Crosbie estate and that it was indeed the spittal dedicated to St. Thomas of Aconia. His Crosbie estate touched Symington; any chapel in his Crosbie estate needed a licence from Paisley; he had Crusading connections. He is a very probable founder of our "Symington" spittal.

DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SPITTALHILL OF SYMINGTON

66. 1170, December 29th.

Thomas a Becket was murdered.

67. 1173, February 21st.

Thomas a Becket was canonised.

68. 1189-92.

Alan the Steward was on the Third Crusade with Richard Coeur de Lion.

69. 1190.

The siege of Acre took place. Acre was also known as Acon or Aconia. A chaplain present at the siege took an oath that if the Crusaders managed to break into the city he would found a church, dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket, and a churchyard for the burial of dead Crusaders. When the city did fall so many joined the chaplain in this work that Coeur de Lion organised the workers into an Order called the Order of St. Thomas. The brethren of this Order were under the rule of St. Augustine and

wore a habit of white with a large red cross, charged in the middle with a white scallop to differentiate the Order from the Knights Templar. Soon afterwards an hospital and chapel were founded in London in honour of Thomas a Becket and given over to the Order now called the Brothers of the Hospital of St. Thomas of Canterbury of Acon.

Walter Besant, *Medieval London*, II, Chap. 7.

Later in Papal documents this house is referred to as "the house of St. Thomas de Aconia in the city of London, of the Order of Cruciferi, under the rule of St. Augustine (*C.P.R.*, XI, p. 114).

70. c. 1190 x 1239

The prior of Paisley grants a licence to Robert Croc giving him permission to have a chapel in the hospital which he has built in his territory. The licence is given "infirmis fratribus hospitalis quod Robertus Croc construxit in terra sua." There is a provision *re* burials . . . "cum vero aliquis de fratribus aut de mercenariis eorum ibi moriatur corpus defuncti deferatur apud Passelet."

Paisley Charters, p. 77.

71. 1204.

Walter II became Steward. He was known as Walter of Dundonald.

72. c. 1210.

Malcolm Loccard gave 6 acres in Symington which lay next the lands of Robert Croc.

Paisley Charters, p. 70.

This proves that the Loccards owned Symington at this date. Before 1173 Simon Loccard's lands (Symington) touched Monkton (*Paisley Charters*, p. 5). It is very probable that Croc's vill was Crosbie and stretched from Troon right up to Symington. So Spittalhill, if founded by Croc, was not originally in Symington but adjacent to it.

73. 1246.

Walter Stewart perished on crusade.

74. 1249.

James Stewart, brother of Walter, died at the siege of Damietta.

75. 1283.

James became High Steward.

76. 1298.

John Stewart was killed at Falkirk.

77. 1283 x 1298.

A Dundonald charter of James Stewart is witnessed by John Stewart, which dates it as between 1283 and 1298. This charter mentions "terra hospitalis Sancti Thomae de Aconia" as touching lands of Dundonald.

This spittal, dedicated to St. Thomas of Aconia, is probably the one commemorated to-day by the place-name, Spittalhill, in Symington. This is the only charter reference to a spittal in the area.

The spittal must have been founded between 1190 (the start of the Order) and 1283 (the date of the charter).