

HISTORY OF



SCOTTISH SEALS  
BY WALTER DE CRAY BIRCH LL.D. F.S.A.

THE ROYAL SEALS OF SCOTLAND :

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HISTORY  
OF  
SCOTTISH SEALS.



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OF  
SCOTTISH SEALS

FROM THE ELEVENTH TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY,  
WITH UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS  
DERIVED FROM THE FINEST AND MOST  
INTERESTING EXAMPLES EXTANT.

BY  
WALTER DE GRAY BIRCH, LL.D., F.S.A.,  
LATE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

VOL. I.  
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# THE SEALS OF SCOTLAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE GREAT SEALS OF THE SOVEREIGNS.

THE earliest history of the kings of Scotland, like that of kings of other countries, is involved in obscurity. One of the latest writers on the royal Scottish genealogy gives a pedigree commencing with Alpin the Scot, whose son, Kenneth I.—called Kenneth MacAlpin—held the reins of empire from A.D. 844 to 859, in which latter year he was succeeded by his brother, Donald I. Kenneth I. left three children—Constantine I., who ruled from A.D. 863 to 877; Aed, who succeeded his elder brother, A.D. 877, and gave place to Eocha, son of Run, the husband of a daughter, the third child of Kenneth I. Eocha was succeeded by Donald II., son

of Constantine I., A.D. 889-900. To him succeeded Constantine II., son of Aed, A.D. 900-942. Malcolm I., son of Donald II., ruled from A.D. 942 to 954, and was followed by Indulf, son of Constantine II., A.D. 954-962. The next king on record is Dubh, eldest son of Malcolm II., A.D. 962-967; then Cuilean, son of Indulf, A.D. 967-971; Kenneth II., second son of Malcolm I., A.D. 971-995; Constantine III., son of Cuilean, A.D. 995-997; and Kenneth III., son of Dubh, A.D. 997-1005. To the last of these succeeded Malcolm II., son of Kenneth II. He is called Malcolm Maccinaeth, King of Alban, King of Scotia, and by other titles. He was born in or before A.D. 954, and became King of Scots in Alban, after defeating his cousin Kenneth III., in battle at Monzievaird, on the River Earn, about 25th March, 1005. In 1031, Scotia was invaded by Canute, or Cnut, King of England, and Malcolm II., with two powerful chieftains, submitted to him in 1031. King Malcolm II. died, after a reign of upwards of twenty-nine years, at the age of eighty or more years, at Glammys, on the 25th November, 1034. To Malcolm II. succeeded his grandson, Duncan the First—known as Duncan the Wise—King of Scots, or King of the Cumbrians. Shakespeare calls him “the Gracious Duncan” in *Macbeth*. He was the eldest son of the

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thegn Crinan, hereditary lay Abbot of Dunkeld, and Steward of the Isles, by his wife, Bethoc, eldest daughter of the previous monarch. After a short reign of five years and eight months, he was murdered by Macbeth, one of his commanders, at Bothnagowan, or Pitgaveny, near Elgin, on 14th August, 1040. To him succeeded his murderer, Macbeth, the mormaer of Moray, son of Finlaec, the mormaer; his mother being supposed to have been Donada, the second daughter of King Malcolm II. Macbeth met his death by the hands of his murderer, Malcolm, King of the Cumbrians, afterwards known as Malcolm III., "Ceannmor," at Lunfanan, in Mar, 15th August, A.D. 1057; and after the short reign of Lulach, son of Gillacomgan, mormaer of Moray, by his wife, Gruoch, daughter of Bodhe, and stepson of King Macbeth, who married Gruoch, on Gillacomgan's death, who was also murdered by Malcolm, at Essie, in Strathbogie, 17th March, 1057-8. The murderer\* sat upon the throne of his victims as the "Great Head," or Chief,—the last king who possessed Alban—being the eldest son

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\* In H.M. Record Office there is a remarkable seal, imperfect, in brown wax, attributed to Malcolm III., or Canmore, King of Scots. It bears a shield of arms: a lion rampant, the tail curved inwards, after a peculiar manner (to be discussed hereafter), within a double tressure flory counterflory, the Royal Arms of Scotland of a later age. This is an undoubted forgery,

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of King Duncan I. This king invaded England on several occasions, and on the last occasion he met his death at the hands of Morel of Bamborough, at Alnwick, in Northumberland, on 13th November, 1093, after a reign of upwards of thirty-five years. To him followed his younger brother, Donald Bane, King of Scots, or of Alban, at the age of about sixty years, but after six months he was deposed by his nephew, Duncan, eldest son of Malcolm III., by his first wife, Ingibjorg, daughter of Earl Finn Arnason, and widow of Thorfinn Sigurdson, Earl of Orkney. In a charter, still preserved at Durham, he styles himself "Dunecan, son of King Malcolumb, by hereditary right King of Scotia." In this king's reign the history of the Seals of Scotland begins. These seals have had considerable attention drawn to them by several writers, but no one has taken up the subject comprehensively. One of the earliest writers is James Anderson, whose *Diplomatum Scotie Thesaurus*, also known by the title of *Diplomata Scotie*, published at Edinburgh, in

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probably to be attributed to the notorious John Harding, whose work is seen again on another seal presently to be mentioned. The charter to which it has been fixed is an acknowledgment by Malcolm of Edward the Confessor's overlordship, and is dated 5th June, 1065. A moment's glance at this seal will convince the merest beginner of its spurious character. The legend, if ever there was one, has been conveniently chipped away. Of this seal there are two casts among the collections in the British Museum, described in the catalogue at p. 647.



folio, in 1739, gave engraved fac-similes of royal charters, and reproduced the seals, but he gives no description of them. Thomas Astle's *Account of the Seals . . . of Scotland*, 1792, is a work of considerable value. Henry Laing, in 1850, published at Edinburgh his *Descriptive Catalogue of Impressions from Ancient Scottish Seals . . . taken from Original Charters, etc.*," and a *Supplemental Descriptive Catalogue*, in 1866, but his descriptions are confused and sometimes incorrect. In 1895, the fourth volume of the *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* was published, the contents of which included technical descriptions of the largest public collection of Scottish and Irish seals then available to research, with numerous illustrations. There are short but useful articles on the Great Seals of Scotland by Allan Wyon, F.S.A., Chief Engraver of Her Majesty's Seals, in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Vol. XLV., for 1889.

The Seal of King Duncan II., the earliest extant Great Seal, is best known from an impression, unfortunately not perfect, preserved among the numerous Scottish documents in possession of the Dean and Chapter of Durham. When perfect the seal measured about two inches and one-eighth.

On it are observed the king riding on a warhorse turned to the right. He is attired in a kind of trellised or fretty hauberk or shirt of mail; the helmet is of the conical shape in use generally at the time, and is furnished with a *nasale*, or projecting piece for protection of the nose. In his right hand the king holds a lance-flag, the pennon of which is of two points. In his left hand he holds the strap of a kite-shaped shield, but it is only seen from the interior, so that if the king at this early time bore any preheraldic device graven on his shield, this gives us no assistance in ascertaining what it may have been. The horse is furnished with a small saddle of simple form, having a high curved pommel and crupper, and across the breast carries the breast-band or poy-trail, that is, *pectoral*, and the head-harness. Of the legend only the first and last parts remain, but from Laing's suggestion for the full legend it may fairly be read thus—

SIGILL[VM . DYNCANI . DEO . RECTORE . REGIS . SCOT]ORVM.

The part within brackets is not now existent on the seal. The charter to which this seal is appended is believed to be the earliest document of its kind relating to Scotland. It is dated, by internal evidence, but not specifically expressed,

between the month of April and the 12th of November, 1094. In it the King styles himself—"Dunecan, son of King Malcolumb, by hereditary right King of Scotia." Duncan was entrapped and betrayed to death by his half-brother, Eadmund, and his paternal uncle, Donald Bane, to Malpeder Macloen, the mormaer of the Mearns, at Monacheden, on the 12th of November, 1094, being then aged about thirty-four years.

Of Donald Bane, who succeeded to the throne a second time, on the death of Duncan, no seal is known to exist. He was deposed by his nephew, Eadgar, with English assistance, in October, 1097, and deprived of eyesight.

Eadgar, having deposed Donald, came to the throne of Scotland when about twenty-three years old. There is an impression, somewhat severely chipped, in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, which measures about two inches and three-eighths in diameter, and is, therefore, not much larger than the preceding seal of the series. Here the equestrian figure of the warrior-king is replaced by a representation of a law-giving king, enthroned on a stool or chair of state, designed with the legs terminating like the claws of an eagle. The king's arms are uplifted from the elbow, and he is attired in a loosely-shaped mantle falling down in ample

folds between the knees, and fastened with a *fermail*, or brooch, over the right shoulder. The crown is indistinct, and of circular shape, perhaps consisting of trefoils, or fleurs-de-lis, on a circlet, and finished with a cross on the top. In the right hand the king holds the royal sceptre, with the butt resting on his knee, emblematic of his sway over his subjects; in the left hand, a sword, held, not by the usual grip, but near the point, with the handle resting on the left knee. This symbolises his intention of defending his kingdom and his right against all enemies. The feet rest on a dais or platform of restricted dimensions. The legend or inscription is unconventional, and, with missing letters supplied, it reads—

IMAGO . EDGARI . SCOTTORVM . BASILEI.

Eadgar's sister, the "good Queen Maud," was married to Henry I., King of England, at Westminster, on the 11th November, 1100. Her seal is of interest, but does not belong to the series of Scottish Royal Seals; it is given in order to enable the student to compare Scottish and English seal-art at this remote period. This is a pointed, oval seal, measuring about three inches and one-eighth by two inches and three-sixteenths, bearing a standing figure of the Queen Consort

wearing a long dress, the cloak fastened at her throat, long sleeves or maunches, and headdress, all component parts of the inartistic and apparently uncomfortable attire used by royal and noble personages in the twelfth century. The queen stands on a flat platform, or corbel, and holds, in the right hand, a sceptre, with open trefoiled handle, the head of which is of cruciform shape and surmounted with a dove, symbolical of mercy, clemency, and gentleness. In the left hand we see the mound or orb of the realm, usual emblem of royalty and rule. The legend, when complete, was—

SIGILLVM . MATHILDIS . SECVNDAE . DEI . GRATIA  
REGINAE . ANGLIAE.

The use of the word *second* is probably to distinguish the Queen from Maud, or Mathildis, the first Queen Consort, wife of William the Conqueror.

With Alexander the First, who was King from the 8th of January, 1106-7, to 23rd April, 1124, a new type of Great Seal was initiated which has endured—with few but notable interruptions—to the present day. This is the duplex type, where the king, as king, seated on a throne, is delineated on the one side, and as military leader, riding to war on a charger

at the head of his host, on the other. A fine but imperfect impression of the Great Seal of Alexander I. is extant. It measures about two inches and five-eighths in diameter. It is difficult to determine whether the throne side or the rider side should be considered the obverse or the reverse, nor is it material to do so. Some of the later Great Seals, of which notice is given in their proper chronological order, appear to favour the view that the horse side is the more important of the two, and should, therefore, be called the obverse, while other seals apparently favour the opposite view, and point to the throne side as obverse.

In this seal of Alexander we will call the horse side the obverse, or principal side. Here the king is riding to the right in profile. He wears the hauberk of mail, on which the flattened rings of metal are distinctly noticeable on the stuff which fits closely to the body, with a short skirt. Beneath it are the tunic, *chaussés*, or leggings, of the same style, and spur. On his head is a conical helmet with the *nasale*, already described in Eadgar's seal. Beneath the helmet is the hood, or coif of mail, attached to the hauberk, and thrown back so as to show the king's face. In the right hand is a gonfanon, with three streamers, and Mr. Wyon, in a paper on the Great Seals of

Scotland, which was read at Glasgow during an Archæological Congress in 1888, thinks that the almost illegible design on the flag may represent St. Andrew, the patron saint of the realm, standing in front of his cross, the head towards the lance. I must confess to being unable to verify this, but it may be that impressions found hereafter will confirm or dispel the idea. In the left hand the king holds a kite-shaped shield by the inner strap or clutch, showing the inner surface only. The trappings of the horse consist of a breast-band or *poytrail*, ornamented with ball-fringe on hanging rings, a small saddle, the stirrup, and head-stalls, and, lastly, a kind of nasal projection. The legend when perfect reads—

ALEXANDER . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

The reverse of this remarkable seal—remarkable as being the first of a long series of seals which draw their design from it—shows us the king enthroned in majesty. He wears a close-fitting, cap-shaped crown, furnished on each side with a pendent tie, or chin-strap, of three tufts or buttons, perhaps a trefoil ornament. The details of the crown are not very distinct. He has the tunic with tight sleeves, the mantle fastened at the throat and adorned with a broad bordure or orphrey, on which

are seen circular studs, knobs, or buttons. In the king's right hand is a broad sword, so held that the point inclines towards the king's head, and in the left hand a mound, or orb, emblematic of royal sovereignty, topped with a long cross, as almost universally adopted by Christian kings and emperors. The throne is cushioned, its form is square, and the dais on which the royal feet rest is rectangular. In the field, or ground, of the seal, on the right hand side is a roundle, or circular plaque, charged with a device, perhaps a rosette or fleurette, but too indistinct to be defined more exactly. On the left hand side, which is broken away, there was probably a similar device. The legend is nearly similar to that above—

ALEXANDER . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORV̄.

David I., the successor of Alexander, was the ninth, and youngest, son of Malcolm III., being the sixth son by his second wife, St. Margaret, the daughter of Eadward Ætheling. His youth was spent in the English Court, with his brother-in-law, Henry I., who married his sister, Maud, or Mathildis, of whose seal some notice has already occupied our attention. David became king 23rd April, 1124, on the death of Alexander. His seal is only known by an engraving in Anderson's



*Diplomata Scotiæ*, plate xii., and a very imperfect impression attached to a charter in the British Museum. It is similar in design to that of Alexander, and is probably from the same matrix, with altered legend to suit the new king, but in the impression there is not sufficient left to prove this.

On the death of David I., at the age of about seventy-three, he was succeeded by Malcolm IV., called the "Maiden," from his youthful and feminine appearance. He was the eldest son of Henry the Earl, Prince of Scotland, and Earl of Northumberland and Huntingdon, by his wife, Ada, daughter of William, Earl of Warenne in Normandy, and of Surrey. Earl Henry, the youngest son of David I., had died in the lifetime of his father. Laing and Wyon describe this king's seal, which, from the fragmentary impression among the Panmure Charters, was apparently similar to the two foregoing seals of Alexander I. and David I. Of the legend nothing can be distinguished that will enable us to say if it had been altered to suit the king's name or not.

The next seal introduces to notice a marked improvement in the technique of the seal engraver's art. The middle of the twelfth century was undoubtedly a period of great and rapid advancement in all the arts and sciences which tended towards

the improvement of human ideas, and this is reflected in the relics which may be still handled and inspected as undoubtedly belonging to that age. Seals and coins are almost the only class of antiquities—except, perhaps, dated manuscripts—which carry their own date with them, and their details and dissected parts throw light upon the manners and customs, the history, the heraldry, the weapons, dress, armour, language, and palæography of the times to which they must be referred. The Seal of William the Lion transcends all its forerunners by size, design, conception, feeling, and delicacy of technique, all of which stamp it as far superior to what had gone before, and as possessing—in a nascent and archaic way, it is true—the germs of what the seal engraver of the next two or three centuries eventually brought to the highest perfection.

William the Lion was the brother of the preceding king, and the Earldom of Northumberland had been assigned to him by King David I., his grandfather, in 1152. He was consecrated King by the Bishop of St. Andrews at Scone, on the 24th of December, 1165. After invasion of England and capture, he surrendered the independence of the kingdom to Henry II. of England by the Convention of Falaise in Normandy, 8th December, 1174, but was subsequently released,

and his independence restored by Richard I., 5th December, 1189, and died at Stirling, 4th December, 1214, after a long reign of nearly forty-nine years.

The one side of William's seal shows the king's effigy riding on a horse springing to the right. He wears the conical helmet and *nasale*, the hauberk of mail, and the other details which we have seen on the figure of his predecessor. In his right hand is a long lance-flag, with three pennons or streamers fluttering forwards. The convex shield is furnished with a central spike, or umbo, and is supported before the king's breast by the strap slung over the rider's neck. In the left hand he holds the reins. The horse's trappings resemble those already described, and from below the body of the horse is seen the scabbard of the sword hanging from the left thigh of the king. The inscription or legend is the same on both sides of the seal—

WILLELMVS . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

On the other side of this seal we have the royal figure of the king, a somewhat tall and slender form, wearing a tunic with sleeves, a long mantle fastened at the throat and thrown behind, and a cap-shaped crown. In the right hand is the long

sword with longitudinal groove, here held nearly vertical; in the left, the cross-topped mound or orb. His throne is cushioned, the sides slope towards the top, like the pylon of an Egyptian temple; at each side of the base or plinth is a small crook-like finial, and the dais or footboard is rectangular.

The legend is the same as on the other side, but appears to be wanting the initial cross, which was, strictly speaking, the symbol or "little sign," described as the "sigillum" in most seals other than the great seals of royal personages.

To William the Lion succeeded his only son, Alexander the Second, by his wife, Ermengarde, daughter of Richard, the Vicomte of Beaumont. He had been knighted by King John of England, 4th March, 1211-2, and became king at the age of sixteen years. He died, aged fifty, on the 8th of July, 1249. He is the first King of Scots who used heraldry in his seal.

On the one side of this seal, which is about three inches and a half in diameter, we see the king riding on a horse pacing or walking to the right. He wears the hauberk of mail; the surcoat with flowing skirt, which must have trailed on the ground when he was on foot; the flat-topped helmet, with vizor, which had replaced the conical cap and *nasale* of past days; in his right hand is the sword, with a deep channel along the blade; over

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his vest is slung the strap of the convex shield, which here for the first time we find charged heraldically. It bears a lion rampant, not yet apparently confined within the double tressure flory counterflory which forms with it the royal heraldry of Scotland. It is too indistinct, on all the impressions and casts which I have seen, to speak of with absolute certainty, although Sir Archibald H. Dunbar\* sees on the shield a tressure fleurs-de-lis. Nor can we here distinguish the position in which the lion's tail is delineated, a point of some interest, as will be shown hereafter. The horse-trappings are simple: the plain saddle with high cantle, the breast-band with five pendants, and the bordered saddle-cloth behind the seat, charged apparently, as the shield, with a lion rampant, *contourné*, as heralds say, that is, turned facing to the sinister, or right hand, of the spectator, instead of to the dexter, or left hand, of the spectator, as all heraldic charges are drawn and depicted unless especially declared to be otherwise. The legend on each side of the seal is—

ALEXANDER . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

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\* *Scottish Kings*, p. 89.

On the other side the king appears in his majesty, enthroned and paramount. He is attired in a tunic with girdle, and over it a loose mantle caught up on the right knee, laid on the cushion on the left side, and hanging down behind. He has a small crown or cap; the grooved sword in the right hand, with its point inclined towards the king's head; the left hand holds the orb, or spherical mound of the world, ensigned with a long cross ornamented with two knops in the stem. The throne is cushioned, and the cover of the cushion is diapered; the panel work on the front of the throne is adorned with a small arcade. The rectangular dais is also relieved with diaper work. At each extremity of the throne is a tree of elegant design, emblematic (as every detail in seal art is, of some prominent fact) of his knighting by the neighbouring king of Plantagenet race. Durham Cathedral Chapter possesses no less than fifteen impressions of the seal, attached to original charters in possession of the Dean and Chapter; the British Museum, eight; and other seals are preserved among the Melrose Charters and other repositories of Scottish diplomata.

To Alexander II. succeeded his only son, Alexander III., born of his second wife, Marie, daughter of Enquerand III., Baron of Coucy. He came to the throne of the Scots on 8th

July, 1249, at the early age of seven years, and was set on the "throne, that is, the stone," at Scone, 13th July, 1249. After a reign of upwards of thirty-six years, he died at Dunfermline, 29th March, 1286.

King Alexander III. used two separate types of Great Seal. The first, which measures about three inches and three-quarters in diameter, represents the sovereign riding on a horse turned to the right. He is clad in the tunic of mail, covered with the loose hauberk or surcoat then in use, and holds a drawn sword in the right hand, while the left hand sustains the convex shield, held up by a strap passing over the king's neck. The armorial bearings of the shield appear to be a lion rampant within a double tressure flory counterflory, which has been borne from that time to the present as the Royal Arms of Scotland, with a slight, and perhaps unimportant, variation to which notice will be drawn presently. The caparisons with which the charger is clothed bear the royal armorials above-mentioned, but reversed, as is usually the case where heraldic bearings are represented on horse furniture. On the other side of the seal the king's figure is shown draped with a tunic and ermine-lined mantle, and a broad and deeply-grooved sword. He is seated upon a throne of elegant design, on the front of which are two small quatrefoiled

panels or counter-sunk ornaments, each enclosing a leopard's or lion's face. The legends or inscriptions which these two sides bore are unfortunately wanting. An illustration of the seal is given by Laing in his "Supplementary Catalogue," from which a good general idea of the beauty of its design, made at a time when the art of the seal-engraver was at its best, may be gathered.

Alexander III.'s second Great Seal differs considerably from those of his father and his own first type, and marks a distinct era of progress in many ways. On the one side is shown the king, riding on a galloping horse, turned to the right. His attire consists of the hauberk of mail, the loose surcoat, the flat-topped helmet with the grated vizor and fan-plume or panache. In the right hand he holds a deeply-grooved broad sword. The convex shield has its strap slung over the rider's neck; on the shield are visible the armorial bearings of a lion rampant within a bordure, indistinct, perhaps standing in lieu of the double tressure flory counterflory, which are quite manifest on the caparisons of the horse, which bears, in addition to its trappings, a fan-plume on the head. In the left hand the king holds the reins. The background is replenished with slipped trefoils, an early form of diaper work which was so favourite a device after-



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wards of the seal engravers and artists, to fill up blank spaces in seals, pictures, coins, and other objects. This seal should be compared by the student with the contemporary Great Seals of Kings Henry III. and Edward I. of England, as described in the British Museum Catalogue. Mr. A. Wyon draws attention to the resemblance also. The coins of this monarch may also be compared in some respect of design and treatment. The slipped trefoil is difficult of explanation. It may be that the triple lobe of leaflets alludes to the king being the third monarch who bore the name of Alexander, but it is only a conjecture, which I made in 1888 on the occasion of an exhibition of Scottish Great Seals at Glasgow.\* It has been shown by Mr. Wyon that the Seal of Alexander III. is remarkable in another respect. It is the first in which the horses wear a caparison. That writer points out that at first the caparison round the hind-quarters of the charger is continuous, and leaves no opening for the tail. In subsequent seals, however, a small opening is made in the cloth, through which the tail passes, and the tail itself appears to be tightly wound round with a thread close to the body of the animal.

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\* *Journ. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, vol. xlv., p. 99, n.

The side of Majesty\* shows the king upon his throne. He wears the tunic and loose overdress, with broad sleeves dropping somewhat lower than the elbow. His right hand grasps the royal sceptre, foliated at the top and of considerable length. In the left hand he holds the cord which confines the mantle to his shoulders. The long hair and the moustache of the king are clearly depicted. The carving of the throne lends itself to much elaboration. The back, the rising sides, and the fronts are ornamented with arcadings, crestings, and quatrefoiled and trefoiled openings. It also has four upright standards, each finished off at the top with a knob and a fleur-de-lis in flower. The footboard carries a foot cushion, and rests on an arcaded bracket or corbel. Under the king's feet are two small animals, perhaps intended for wyverns or lizards, facing towards each other, and each having its long tail terminated with a trefoil of the background, which is here, as on the other side of the seal, replenished with these heraldic symbols. The legend on each side of this beautiful seal is the same—

ALEXANDER . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

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\* *Brit. Mus. Catal.*, p. 6.

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The historical *fasti* of the period of Alexander III. and of his immediate successors are of much interest. The king's reign began on July 8th, 1249, and ended with his death, by a fall from his horse, near Kinghorn, in Fifeshire, March 19th, 1285-6, in obedience to the prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer, in Dunbar Castle, uttered to Patrick, seventh Earl of Dunbar, the very day preceding the tragic event.\* The king's last son, Prince Alexander, had predeceased him on January 28th, 1283-4. To him succeeded, accordingly, Margaret, "The Maid of Norway," also called "The Damsel of Scotland," only child and heir of Eric II., Magnusson, King of Norway, by his first wife, Margaret, only daughter of King Alexander III. Her reign commenced on March 19th, 1285-6, and ended with her death, without marriage, in Orkney, in the presence of the Bishop Narve and other notables, who had followed her from Norway on her way to Scotland for her marriage to Edward of Caernarvon, eldest son of King Edward I. of England, on or about September 26th, 1290. We know of no seal of this queen. To this event succeeded the "First Interregnum," which arose by reason of disputes as to who was heir to the Scottish crown. A con-

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\* *Scotichronicon*, ii. 131, l.x. cap. 43; Miller, *Hist. of Dunbar*, 22, 23.

vention to settle the heirship was held by King Edward I. with the bishops, nobles, and people of the kingdoms of Scotland and England, at Norham, on May 10th, 1291, where the thirteen claimants or competitors presented their claims personally or by proxy, and eventually the king, as arbitrator, awarded the kingdom to John Balliol, in the Hall of Berwick Castle, on November 17th, 1292. During this Interregnum a very beautiful seal had been made and used, by appointment, "for the government of the realm." On the one side of this we observe a figure of St. Andrew, the Patron of the Realm, with nimbus and tunic, fastened on the cross saltire, with which he is ever associated. The background here also is formed by a regular series of slipped trefoils or shamrocks, to which reference has already been made. It may be that, notwithstanding all that has already been remarked, this was the national plant or flower of Scotland, brought from Ireland, before the adoption of the thistle, which first appears on seals at a later date. The legend is a rhyming hexameter verse of invocation—

ANDREA . SCOTIS . DVX . ESTO . COMPATRIOTIS.

The reverse side of this very interesting specimen of native goldsmith's art of the thirteenth century brings before us a

shield of the Royal Arms of the realm, designed with exquisite skill and true heraldic feeling. The proportions of the shield itself; its slightly convex curve, seen in the few impressions which have withstood the ravages of upwards of six hundred years; the well-designed lion rampant, the principal charge, with the tail incurved or bent inwards towards the neck of the animal—a detail which belongs rightly to the Scottish lion, and is found constantly recurrent from the day of the making of this seal until the present time, with exceptions arising from ignorance, carelessness, or indifference, on the part of those who have taken upon themselves the task of reproducing the arms; the regular formation of the flory additions to the double tressure; the *semé* of slipped trefoils symmetrically disposed around the shield, and here representing, by symbolical imagery, that the government was supported by the individual members of the nation—all these several details go to make up one of the most remarkable examples which the whole series of Royal Seals of Scotland has to show to us. The legend indicates the uses and application of the seal—

SIGILLUM . SCOCIE . DEPVTATVM . REGIMINI . REGNI.

This first Interregnum, having endured for two years and

nearly two months, ended by the accession of John Balliol to the throne.

King John's reign was neither happy nor long. He was crowned at Scone, November 30th, 1292, and it was probably not long afterwards that he used the Great Seal which bears his name. The British Museum possesses a fine specimen attached to a charter without date (Cottonian Charter, v. 32), and there is also a fine example preserved in the General Register House, Edinburgh, attached to a deed dated in 1292. This shows the king on a horse galloping, or springing, to the right. He wears the hauberk and other details of mail armour, overlaid with a loosely-flowing tunic. On his head is the crowned helmet with grated vizor, three-quarters to the front; and in the right hand is a long, grooved sword, inclined towards the king's head. His convex shield is charged with the Royal Arms of Scotland, and is worn slung round his neck. The caparisons of the war-horse are charged with corresponding armorials, but reversed. It is remarkable that the hoofs of the horse were armoured with spiked nails. Anderson, in the "Diplomata," gives a very good representation of this seal. On the other side we see the king as sovereign enthroned, with robes and apparatus not unlike the details which are to be observed on the seals of Alexander III.,

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his predecessor. Here the long sceptre terminates with very copious foliation ; the left hand is laid on the royal breast, and holds the cord or ribbon of the mantle. The crown is composed of three leaves. The long hair of the king hangs down in curls over the ears. The throne is elaborate, following the fashion found on the Great Seals of England in this respect ; the back, front, sides, and projecting dais, or foot-board, being enriched with arcadings, quatrefoiled tabernacle work, saltires, and four boldly-worked finials with crocketed carvings running up the standards. A notable feature in this seal, here attendant for the first time, is the introduction of a shield of arms on each side of the throne, in the background. That on the right hand bears an orle, for the family of Balliol ; that on the left hand bears a lion rampant, perhaps with double tail, or, as it is termed heraldically, *queue fourchée*. Mr. Wyon shows that although the tinctures are not very clearly defined on the shield of Balliol, which occupies the post of honour on the dexter side of the seal, they are intended to represent a field gules charged with an orle argent, as preserved in a window placed in the Chapter House of York Minster in honour of Balliol's marriage with Isabel de Warrenne, daughter of John de Warrenne, Earl of Surrey. It is not clear to what the sinister shield refers. If it be intended

for the Royal Arms of Scotland, it is (as far as can be made out from the indistinct nature of the impression) a variant form of the royal arms hitherto and afterwards in use. With more probability the arms may be referred to his wife's paternal coat. The legend on each side is—

IOHANNES . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTTORVM.

The battle of Dunbar, which was fought between the English and Scots, and resulted in the defeat of the Scots and capture of Dunbar Castle, April 27th, 1296, paved the way for the king's abdication to King Edward I., by deed, ratified at Brechin Castle, July 10th, 1296, after a reign of three years and nearly eight months. Of the subsequent misfortunes of John Balliol we need take no account. On his abdication, the King of England took the reins of government into his own hands, and treated Scotland as a conquered country, marching from Montrose against the unorganised Scotch party, through Aberdeen, Banff, and Cullen, to Elgin and Rothes,—the tide of war swaying, now this way, now that. The stirring events relating to Wallace, Bruce, Comyn, the two sieges of Stirling Castle, and other circumstances attending this period, concern the historian more closely than



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the student of seals, to whom it belongs, however, to record the use of two very different seals. The first is that known by only one very imperfect impression, preserved at Paris among the *Archives de L'Empire*. It was issued by John Souly, *Custos Regni*, and measured about three inches and a quarter in diameter when perfect. Laing attributes this, notwithstanding the date—February 23rd, 1301-2—of the deed to which it is attached, to the national party in Scotland. Douët d' Arcq, the learned writer on French collections of seals, attributes it to the Regency. From its general similarity to French styles, and its resemblance in some degree to the Great Seal of King Philip III., it can scarcely be doubted that it was executed by French goldsmiths, and in that respect it is, of course, connected with John, who, while still an exile in that country, retained the title of King of Scots. On the reverse of this unique impression is the seal of Sir John de Soules, Knt., *Custos Regni*. The design is a figure of the king, be it John or Edward, wearing royal robes, charged on the front with the Royal Arms of Scotland. He is seated on a throne constructed after the manner availing upon French Great Seals of the period, with the long thin necks, heads, and legs of leonine animals or dogs. In the right hand is a sword held obliquely

outwards. The field or background is diapered lozengy and enriched with a small quatrefoil flower in each mesh or space formed by the intersecting lines. The legend is fragmentary—

. . . . DEI . GRACIA . REG. . . . .

Edward I., King of England, during the second Interregnum, 10th July, 1296, to 27th March, 1306, used a very beautiful seal, which appears to have been made not long after the beginning of this period. On the one side, the king appears to have presented his effigy in a way not very unlike that given in his Great Seal for England, but with a few variations. In this, which appears to be of purely English art, the king sits in majesty, enthroned, and vested in a very similar manner to the design of the Great Seal for England. The orb with cross is, however, here omitted, the small lions leaping up towards the king at the sides of the throne are also removed, and some of the details of the sceptre-top and carved work varied, but enough is left to show the hand of the master-design.

The legend is—

SIGILLVM . EDWARDI . DEI . GRACIA . REGIS .  
 ANGLIE . DN̄I . HIBERNIE.

The reverse, although it only consists of a shield of arms of England, is remarkably beautiful for the absolute perfection of its proportions. It is the despair of modern heraldic designers whose work invariably falls short of the production of this mediæval period, where their work is not a copy from an ancient original. This is shown by the heraldry we see and so often shudder at on flags and shields which are displayed to mark passing political or historical events. It was different in the old times, when art was practised for its own sake. The legend continues the sentence from the other side—

ET . DVCIS . AQUITANIE . AD . REGIMEN . REGNI . SCOCIE . DEPVSTATVM.

The accession of Robert Brus, Earl of Carrick, in Ayrshire, to the throne as King of Scots, terminated the second Interregnum. He was the eldest son of Robert Brus, Earl of Carrick and Lord Annandale, by his first wife, Martha, who was Countess of Carrick in her own right. Robert had been chosen one of the guardians of the kingdom in council at Peebles in 1299, and became king at the age of thirty-one years. He was, we are told by the historians, crowned with a golden coronet which was set on his head by the Countess of Buchan, in the presence, and with the assent, of four bishops, five earls, and the

people of the country, at Scone, on March 27, 1306. This king used two seals. The first, like that of preceding use, resembles, on the side where the king sits in majesty, that of Edward I. of England. In his right hand he holds a long sceptre fleur-de-lis at the top, and in the left hand an orb with a long cross. The king's feet rest on two long-tailed animals of uncertain form, perhaps dragons or lizards.

ROBERTVS . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

The carving of the throne shown in the seal indicates progress in the art of the seal engraver. It is more elaborate and of bolder design.

On the other side we are shown the figure of the king on horseback, galloping to the right hand, with hauberk and chaussés of mail, long and flowing surcoat, crown of three fleurs or leaves on a grated helmet. The Royal Arms of Scotland are on the shield and surcoat. In the one hand is a broad-sword, partly grooved. The horse is adorned with a fleur-de-lis plume on its head, and the caparisons charged with armorial bearings as above. Here again the progress of art is manifested, and the striking dash and rapid movement of the horse rushing to war is admirably represented. The legend is a repetition of that

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which is given on the other side.\* There is an example of this seal in the British Museum, attached to a document dated in A.D. 1316. In 1326 we find Robert Bruce using a seal of different design, and somewhat larger diameter. The side where the king sits in majesty as a sovereign manifests French influence, and here we see the king enthroned, and clad with ample vestments. In his right hand he holds a long sceptre of authority, with two knops on its stem, and an elegantly foliated top. The left hand rests on his breast, the first and second fingers extended, holding the cords on the mantle, which just appears on the shoulders. The long curled hair, the crown of three leaves or fleurs, the throne composed of two long recurved necks and heads of dogs, or dragons, on each side, are worthy of observation. Over the throne is thrown, in ample folds, a cloth of state, diapered and ornamented with an embroidered bordering. The footboard is supported on an elegantly carved bracket, adorned with foliage and flowers.

The other side of this fine seal represents the king in his

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\* It is worthy of note that the stops employed in the legends of this seal are slipped trefoils, and they point to a survival of the use of this emblem, whatever its signification may be, first introduced by King Alexander III., to which the attention of the reader has already been directed.

military capacity. He is riding on a horse galloping to the right, and wears a hauberk of mail and a short surcoat, on which may be distinguished the Royal Arms of Scotland, a reversed lion to the sinister, the proper manner of representing the royal charge on this apparel. His broad-sword has a deep groove; the shield of arms, as described above, hangs from the neck, the helmet is crowned. The caparisons of the horse are embroidered with the royal arms. Each side of this seal bears the same legend—

ROBERTVS . DEO . RECTORE . REX . SCOTTORVM.

According to one authority\* the matrix of this seal was made in 1318. Parts of the impression are rather indistinct. But there is a second impression in the British Museum, showing marks of the studs used in the matrix to fix the wax securely, and in it the top part of the crown, and the top part of the helmet, showing the flower of conventional design, which has the appearance of a thistle, are clearly shown. This representation of the thistle seems to be the earliest example of the national flower as depicted on seals. It is worthy of notice as superseding the slipped trefoil which occurs on the first seal, in use a

\* *Vetusta Monumenta*, vol. iii. p. 6.

few years previously, and then for the last time in the series. The date of the document to which this latter impression is attached is Berwick, 26 November, twenty-first year, *i.e.*, 1326.

The king died at Cardross, in Dumbartonshire, on the 7th of June, 1329, within a few days of completing the fifty-fifth year of his age, after a reign of a little more than twenty-three years, and was buried in the choir in front of the high altar of the Abbey Church at Dunfermline. He was succeeded by David the Second, his elder son by his second wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Richard de Burgo, or Burgh, second Earl of Ulster. Having been born on 5th March, 1323-4, he was but an infant of a few years of age when he succeeded to the throne; and during his extended period of rule—nearly forty-two years—he used only one Great Seal. This bears on the side of majesty a representation of David as a king enthroned. The design is not unlike that of his father's seal, which has been already described as indicating French influence. The king's feet are placed on two wyverns or heraldic lizards addorsed, that is, back to back, with their tails nowed or knotted together. The long necks of the nondescript animals, two at each side of the throne or fald-stool, are very curious, and the heads are looking upwards. In the field, on the left of the king's head, is the royal initial

letter D, exactly underneath the same letter which begins the legend—

DAVID . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTTORVM.

Laing describes a specimen of this seal among the Melrose Charters.

The equestrian side of the king's Great Seal shows the progress which the seal-engraver was making in the art at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Here the king is on a horse galloping to the right, not unlike the design of the seal of the previous king; the helmet is full-face; the surcoat, with the lion of the royal arms, is turned to the dexter, as in the shield; on the right shoulder is a rectangular *ailette*, charged with the Royal Arms of Scotland reversed. The *genouillières*, or knee-pieces, are indistinct. The legend is the same as that on the other side, but without the additional D in the field.

We have already shewn that the king only used one seal: impressions of it are extant, attached to documents dated in 1359, after the king had reigned thirty years. There is, however, a smaller seal, chipped and imperfect, believed to be deposited in the Public Record Office, a cast of which is in the possession of the British Museum. Laing, in a manuscript belonging to the same



institution, shows that it is a forgery by the well-known John Harding. It has also been thought that it may be a seal of one of the Royal Burghs, and may be compared with that of Haddington. On the one side we observe a figure of the king enthroned, with mantle, cape or tippet, crown, and sceptre terminating in a foliated ornament of three leaves. The throne consists of carved tabernacle work, with four standards or foliated finials. The footboard rests on a corbel, but has no cushion. In the field at each side of the throne is a tree, or branch of thin foliage. The workmanship is very inferior and coarsely cut. On the reverse is contained a shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland, on a diapered or hatched background. A cusped panel of ten points includes the whole design. Each side bears the same legend—

SIGILLVM . DAVID . DEI . GRACIA . REGIS . SCOTTOR.

This seal is unworthy of a place in the series of Royal Seals of Scotland, but it must be mentioned here because of the prominence which some have given to it as of regal use.

The king died in Edinburgh Castle on the 22nd February, 1370-1, and, leaving no issue, was succeeded by Robert the Second, a Stewart, or High Steward, the first king of the

Dynasty of Stewart or Stuart, which was destined to rule the fortunes, or misfortunes, of the kingdom for three hundred years. He was the only son of Walter, the sixth High Steward of Scotland, by his first wife, Margeria, or Marjorie Brus, the only child of the first marriage of Robert I. Brus, King of Scots. He was born on 2nd March, 1315-16, and, therefore, at his accession in February, 1370-1, was well advanced in years. Before proceeding to describe the seal of this king we must take cognisance of Edward Balliol, who had been crowned King of the Scots by the English and his own adherents, at Scone, on the 24th September, 1332.

Edward's Seal marks another epoch in the art. He discards the French proclivities of David, and reverts to more English styles; and although it cannot be said that the seal is so well designed as those of his contemporary, King Edward III. of England, still there is some approach towards the feeling which the seals of that king possess.

On the side of Majesty is shown a figure of the king enthroned, with long curled hair, crowned, and draped in a loose vestment girt at the waist; his mantle is fastened on the breast with a brooch; in the right hand he holds a sceptre with foliated summit; in the other he holds an orb, without cross,

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on the cushion, which is small. The throne consists of carved tabernacle work, adorned with crocketed pinnacles, the two nearest to the head of the king having a dove perched on top, facing one another. The footboard is on a carved corbel, ornamented with roses. In the field on each side we observe a small shield of arms; that on the dexter a lion rampant, for Scotland; that on the sinister an orle, for Balliol. Edward in this respect reverses the position of the shields as given in the seal of John Balliol, his predecessor. On the baronial or equestrian side of the Great Seal is shown the king riding on a horse galloping to the right. His hauberk is of mail; his surcoat short, charged with the Royal Arms of Scotland; he is crowned, and his helmet is furnished with a grated vizor; in the right hand is a broad-sword with channelled blade, fastened by a chain from the king's shoulder to the handle. The shield of the royal arms is in the left hand. The horse's trappings are embroidered with the royal arms, with the charges reversed. The fan-plume should be noticed for its early appearance on the Royal Seals of Scotland.

There is a fine impression, unfortunately not quite perfect, of this rare seal preserved in the Chapter House of Westminster. The period of its use cannot have been very long, for Edward

fled from Annan, in Dumfriesshire, with "one leg booted and the other naked," within three months after his coronation, and took refuge in England on the 16th December, 1332. He died, without issue, in 1363, but appears to have dropped out of history after his hasty flight from the kingdom.

We may now resume the main stream of the royal succession, in examining the Seal of Robert II., of which there is a fine impression preserved among the Melrose Charters. The obverse of this beautiful work resembles in many respects that of the sixth Great Seal of Edward III. of England. The king here sits enthroned, with crown fleury of five leaves; his sceptre is furnished with a foliated top, and the left hand of the king is placed upon his breast. Above is placed a richly-carved triple gothic canopy; the central part is enriched with a hexagonal turret, embattled. Each of the side canopies is finished with a crocketed pinnacle. At each side is a niche or screen of tabernacle work on a bracket of tracery, containing an arch of five cusps, in which is placed an eagle or falcon rising with open wings, designed so as to show in full face, foreshortened, and somewhat difficult to distinguish at first sight, so much so that these birds, so skeleton-like in their appearance, have been mistaken by some writers on seals for grotesque animals or

figures. The bird supports before it a shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland. Over the embattled cresting of the screen on each side is a watchman, or man-at-arms, in armour, *cap-à-pie*, leaning forward. In base, below the support of the footboard, is the representation of a cloud, hills, or rocks, resembling, in turn, the reverse of the sixth seal of his contemporary, Edward III. of England. Here we have an effigy of the king, in his military or baronial character, riding a warhorse galloping to the right. His hauberk, or coat of mail, has the short sleeve of the period; above it is the *jupon*, or short surcoat of thin linen material, embroidered heraldically with the Royal Arms of Scotland. The equipment comprehends also the vambrace and gauntlet of plate armour, and the crested helmet, bearing a lion statant guardant with long queue extended in a wavy form. This crest differs somewhat from the lion of later date for a crest, which is seen in seals about to be described, as being *sejant affronté*. Slung to the king's neck by a strap or *enarme* is the shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland. In his right hand he holds a long sword, turned obliquely towards his head. The charger is springing or galloping, on wavy, undulating ground, to the right. Its caparisons are charged with the same royal armorials which are seen borne by the king

himself, but reversed, as is the right, and usual, manner of depicting heraldry on horse-trappings. The *poytrail*, or breast-leather of the horse's gear, is ornamented with roundles. The legend is similar on each side. It reads—

ROBERTVS . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTTORVM.

This seal is of elegant conception, and contrasts well with royal seals of England and other kingdoms of contemporary date.

Robert the Second died at the Castle of Dundonald, in Ayrshire, on the 19th April, 1390, at the age of seventy-four years and nearly two months. He was buried before the high altar in the Abbey at Scone on the 13th August in the same year, after a reign of upwards of nineteen years, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Robert III., Earl of Carrick, by his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Adam Mure of Rowallan, whose age was about fifty-three years at the time of his accession. He was styled Robert III., instead of John, his baptismal name, with consent of the Estates of the Realm, on and after the 14th August, 1390, the day following the funeral obsequies of his father. His death occurred, when he was about sixty-nine years of age, at Dundonald, on the 4th April, 1406, and he was buried in front of the high altar in the Abbey Church at Paisley, after

reigning for nearly sixteen years. His Great Seal generally resembles that of his father, the previous monarch, but with certain additions, for the purpose of distinguishing the seals from each other, to avoid confusion in documents where the numeral after the king's name was not inserted. The principal point of difference is that the background of Robert III.'s seal is replenished with wavy branches of the vine, elegantly designed in a bold, freehand style of drawing, with foliage and tendrils. Over the king's crest on his helmet is placed a small mullet, or star of five points, pierced with a circular opening. The legend is not absolutely ascertained, because the best known example—attached to a document preserved among the Melrose Charters—is very imperfect at the edge, but from what remains it would seem to have resembled that employed on the Great Seal of Robert II.

Mr. Wyon remarks, on the occurrence of the field of Robert III.'s seal being ornamented with this flowing floral device, that it is after the Italian style of seal engraving, which is a peculiarity not found in the Great Seals of England, nor in those of Scotland at any earlier period. That writer thinks there can be little doubt that its presence here must be attributed to two Florentine engravers, Moulakyn or Malekyn, and Bonagius, who are

recorded to have worked in the Scottish Mint about 1364, and were at work here in 1377, and possibly longer. After they left the Mint they may very likely have remained resident in Scotland, and perhaps have left pupils or imitators after them.

As in the case of King David II., so here also, a smaller seal is extant of Robert III., casts of which are in the British Museum, where it is recorded that the original is a fine impression formerly preserved in the Chapter House, Westminster. The diameter of this is three inches. The design on the obverse resembles in a general way that of the uncertain seal of David II., but the nondescript animals or lizards beneath the king's feet are omitted, the sceptre is fleury at the top, the left hand is on the breast, and the corbel in base is ornamented with a kind of lozengy pattern. The design is enclosed within a panel of seven cusps not very regularly formed. The reverse shows the king galloping on a horse to the right, upon a ground covered with herbage. The armour is of plate. He wears the crown, and holds sword and shield of the royal arms. But the caparisons of the horse are without the armorials. The enclosing frame or panel on this side is of nine cusps irregularly made. The legend on each side is —

SIGILLVM . ROBERTI . DEI . GRACIA . REGIS . SCOTTOR.





## CHAPTER II.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY:—MURDACH STUART—JAMES I. TO  
JAMES V.

WE now come to the fifteenth century Royal Seals of the Jameses. The first of this name was the third and only surviving son of King Robert III., by Annabella, daughter of Sir James Drummond of Stobhall. He was born at Dunfermline in December, 1394, and during the lifetime of his father was styled The Steward of Scotland, and the Earl of Carrick. At the time of his accession to the throne of Scotland he was but eleven years and three months old, a captive in the Tower of London, and in the power of King Henry IV. of England. His release was not carried out until the lapse of eighteen years, when, on giving hostages for the payment of forty thousand pounds, alleged to have been expended on his maintenance, he was liberated in April, 1424, and was crowned

at Scone on the 21st of May in that year. The seal used by this monarch is principally known from an imperfect and indistinct impression preserved among the charters of Lord Pannure, attached to a deed of 1436. The obverse resembles that of Kings Robert II. and Robert III., being closely like that of the latter, but with some few variations of detail. The crown is somewhat larger, the dress of the left arm of the king is fuller, the sceptre is fleur-de-lizé, and on each side of the king's feet, within the niche, is a small lion *sejant affronté*. In the background of the seal, over the crocketed spire or pinnacle on the left hand side, just beneath the letter *c* of the word *Jacobus*, is a small mullet, probably for a cadency-mark. The reverse resembles the reverse of the Great Seal of King Robert III., but there are several departures from strict imitation, chiefly in the position given to the shield of arms, the king's left hand holding the reins, and the foliage and other little ornamentations of the background being differently treated.

The legend, when perfect, appears to have been—

JACOBVS . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTTORVM.

The period of absence from the kingdom during his imprisonment gave opportunity for the employment of a very remarkable

seal by Robert Stuart or Stewart, first Duke of Albany, and Murdach Stuart, eldest son of Robert, the Regent of Scotland, second Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland, Earl of Lennox, and Justiciary of Scotland "benorth the Forth." Robert, Duke of Albany, had been appointed Governor of the kingdom by ordinance of the Council assembled at Perth in June, 1406; after his death Murdach assumed the position of Governor of the realm, in September, 1420. His period of power was but brief. His eldest surviving son, Sir Walter Stewart, was beheaded, for treason, in front of Stirling Castle on the 24th May, 1425, and on the following day Murdach, the late Governor, with his son, Sir Alexander Stuart, and Duncan, Earl of Lennox, were decapitated on the same spot, 25th May, 1425.

One of the best notices of this personage is that given by Sir William Fraser, in his work on *The Dukes of Albany and their Castle of Doune*, Edinburgh, 1881. From it we gather many obscure points in Murdach's remarkable career. Owing to the long life of his father, the first Duke, Murdach did not succeed to any of the Earldoms until he had attained the somewhat advanced age of fifty-eight, and then enjoyed them for only a few years before the headsman's axe parted him from them for ever. He was appointed to the honourable office of Justiciar

north of the Forth by the Parliament at Holyrood, 2nd April, 1389. On 16th July, 1390, King Robert III. appointed him to be one of the conservators of a truce between England and Scotland, who were to watch over the maintenance of its provisions. His career, prosperous as it had shortly afterwards become, was, however, checked by his capture at Homildon on 14th September, 1402, when the Earl of Douglas was defeated by Percy, and he himself, with many other Scottish nobles, taken prisoner.

His liberation was unable to be procured until after much negotiation, in 1415, upon a ransom of ten thousand pounds. On the way to the north, in care of two guardians appointed by the King of England, he made his escape, but was recaptured, and probably placed in one of the castles in the north of England, under the charge of the Earl of Westmoreland, until the resumption of the negotiations in the close of the year, which brought the matter to a successful conclusion by the restoration of Henry Percy by way of exchange. On his return to Scotland, Sir Murdach Stewart assisted his father, now upwards of seventy years old, in the government of the country. On the death of the Duke he succeeded to the office of Governor of Scotland. "It has been said that he assumed this

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office as if to carry on the alleged usurpation of the Government by his father ; but there is no ground for the assertion, and the evidence is all the other way. It is far more probable that he was placed in it by the Parliament." His government appears to date from about 16th November, and not before 26th October, 1420. With his proceedings as Governor we are not concerned here ; the King's tyranny appears to have moved the Duke's family against his royal rule, and this culminated in the execution of Murdach's eldest surviving son, Walter Stewart, being tried and executed at Stirling before the King in May, 1425, followed by the similar treatment of Duke Murdach, his son, Sir Alexander, and the aged Earl of Lennox. " They shared the same fate, and with like haste ; and to add to the ghastly spectacle, on the same day five of those who had been with James Stewart, another of Murdach's sons, at the burning of Dumbarton, who had been taken and brought before the King on the 8th May, were drawn asunder by horses, and their bodies suspended on gibbets." The scene of their execution was an eminence to the north of the Castle, called the Gowling-hill, or Heading-hill, as it was afterwards called from this sanguinary scene. The event itself was one which drew from those who witnessed it expressions of deep regret and

compassion. Duke Murdach and his two sons were men of gigantic stature.

Fraser, in the work already mentioned, discusses at length the probable reasons for these executions ; Sir Walter's crime being probably that *de roborca* or spoliation of crown lands, but no record has been preserved of the crimes of which they were accused. Other reasons have been alleged, but the king evidently sought to annihilate the house of Albany, and cared little for putting forward any reason for this policy. A fine illustration of the Great Seal of Robert, Duke of Albany, as Governor of Scotland, is given by Fraser, as well as a woodcut of the Armorial Seal of the Duke as Earl of Fife and Menteith. The Great Seal resembles that of King James I., but with some slight variations and omissions, and bears the legend—

SIGILLVM . ROBERTI . DVCIS . ALBANIE . GVBERNATORIS . SCOCIE

No description of it is given in Fraser, and no mention is made of Murdach's very similar seal.

Murdach had used during his regency a seal which is known from a very imperfect impression in white wax appended to a deed dated 1423, preserved in the Public Record Office. This

is an imitation of the Seal of James I., King of Scots. The heraldic display on it is of much interest. Unfortunately the shield of arms in the niche on the dexter side has been broken away, but that on the sinister side remains. The shield is quarterly, 1.4. the Royal Arms of Scotland; 2.3. a fess chequy and label of three points for Stuart. The sceptre in the hand of James I. is here exchanged for a sword. The reverse is similar to that of the Great Seal of King James I., which has been already described. The legend is wanting. It would almost seem to have been purposely broken off.

Mr. Wyon observes that the charters which were issued during the rule of Murdach, when the estates belonging to the Crown were freely bestowed upon the partisans of the regents, did not run in the king's name, as was the custom during other regencies, but solely in the regent's name; and the seals appended to those deeds, although at first sight apparently similar to the Great Seals of recent Scottish kings, bore no effigy of, or reference to, the lawful king, but bore, on the other hand, the name, arms, and effigy of the regent. We see in this a determined attempt to supersede the king, and pave the way for the regent's assumption of full regal power and dignity, and do not wonder that throughout the whole of this period

the kingdom was full of strife and conflict. Murdach's seal, which is here reproduced, may be compared with the Great Seal of James I., and its differences noted. Its employment, no doubt, formed a powerful cause of the train of events which culminated in his downfall and death.

The seal of James I., as we are told by the same writer, is remarkable for the fact that it was in use for a longer period than any other Great Seal ever was in this country. It was made for James I. about 1414, and used by his four immediate successors of the same name as late as July, 1540, by James V. Thus it can be shown to have been in use for upwards of one hundred and twenty-five years, and this outvies the long period of use of the celebrated English seal known as the Bretigny Seal, which was employed for a hundred and eleven years.

James II. became King on the death of his father, 21st February, 1436-7, and met his death by the bursting of a cannon at the siege of Roxburgh, 3rd August, 1460, after a reign of nearly thirty years. During the whole period of this monarch's reign the seal of James I. was used, a difference being introduced by the addition of two small annulets between the feet of the king and the lions, and a similar number in the background above the crocketed pinnacles at the sides of the



king's canopy. The reverse side has also been augmented with the addition of four other annulets, one above and one beneath the neck of the horse, and two on the caparison of the hinder part of the horse, below the lion of the royal arms, and a small crown. By the use of these small differential emblems, the coinage of Scotland, which was in a very difficult and inaccurate condition of arrangement by numismatists, has been recently satisfactorily settled. The legend of a good impression of the Great Seal of James II., appended to a document bearing date of 1441, preserved among the Morton Charters, reads as follows on each side—

IACOBUS . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTTORVM.

The British Museum possesses a fragmentary impression attached to a deed of one year later, 1442, containing only the bust of the king on the one side, and part of the body of the horse on the other side, which has been conjectured to be an impression of the so-called "Quarter-Seal."

King James III. began his reign over Scotland on the 3rd of August, 1460, and, after a reign of nearly twenty-eight years, was murdered, after losing the battle of Sauchieburn (which was fought between the king's forces and the confederated lords, who

had been plotting against him, conducting these proceedings in the name of James, Duke of Rothesay, heir-apparent to the throne, whose person they had secured), in a cottage at Milton, near Bannockburn, in Stirlingshire, on the 11th of June, 1488, at the early age of not quite thirty-seven years. He lies buried near his queen, Margaret, daughter of Christiern I., King of Denmark, in the royal Abbey of Cambuskenneth, co. Stirling, where he was laid to rest on the 25th of June following the tragedy of the previous fortnight. His Great Seal is known by a few examples only. There are two in the British Museum collection, attached to original documents. The first, dated 1475, is light brown or uncoloured, and very indistinct, but it bears impressions or marks of the pins and studs of the matrix. The matrix is the same as that of his father, James II., with the addition of a small mullet added over the pinnacle which stands on the right side of the right hand annulet. The legend does not appear to have been altered, nor was it necessary that any alteration should be made. The reverse, also, is from the same matrix as that used by his father, with the further addition of a small fleur-de-lis set below the fetlock of the right foreleg of the charger, and with the same legend as described for the previous seal. The second original impression preserved in our national

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archives at the British Museum—archives which contain a vast number of unpublished\* documents relating to Scotland of the highest political and social importance—is appended to a deed dated in 1478, very imperfect and indistinct. Laing records a good impression belonging to Sir William Gordon Cumming Gordon, of Altyre and Gordonstoun, Bart. This specimen possesses the little differential additions set to distinguish the son's seal from the father's and grandfather's, very clearly shown.

On the murder of James III., his eldest son, James, born 17th March, 1472-3, succeeded to the throne, aged a little above fifteen years. He had been present with the rebel lords against his father at the fatal battle of Sauchieburn, 11th June, 1488, and was crowned as James IV. at Scone on or about 26th June in the same year. Among the many interesting events in his reign may be remembered the arrival at Stirling, on 20th November, 1495, of the impostor, Perkin Warbeck, who asserted that he was Richard, Duke of York. This personage married,

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\* A calendar of all the documents relating to Scotland, up to the time of his decease, was prepared for the late Marquess of Bute with a view to publication. We may hope that this will some day be brought to a useful issue, and thus supply a valuable help to illustrate many an obscure event in the history of the northern kingdom.

in January of the following year, the Lady Catherine Gordon, called, for her beauty, "The White Rose," and accompanied the Scottish king in an invasion of England on the 19th September, 1496. The king fell, slain, on the field of Flodden, in Northumberland, on the 9th September, 1513, at an age a little over forty years, after a restless rule of twenty-five years. The place of his burial has not been with absolute certainty identified, but it is supposed that he lies in the Monastery of Sheen, near Richmond, in Surrey. Two impressions of the seal of this king are known. The first is appended to a document dated 1495, in the British Museum. Its colour is creamy-white, and is partly opaque, and, though fairly good, is indistinct in some of its parts. This, too, shows the marks made by the pins or lugs of the matrix. The obverse of the impression appears to bear the same design as that of his father's, at least, if there be any added marks they have escaped notice; but on the reverse the annulet beneath the neck of the king's horse has apparently been altered into a slipped trefoil leaf or knot of three loops. The legend remains the same as heretofore. There is also the second, a good impression, among the Morton Charters, appended to a deed dated 1506.

This king used a so-called "Quarter Seal," of which there

is an imperfect and indistinct impression still preserved in H.M. Record Office. The design appears to be constructed from the upper half parts of a seal copied from the Great Seal described above, poorly executed and in many parts wrongly cut. The annulets and other marks of difference, which enable us to attribute the seal to the proper king who used it, are, however, omitted.

James IV. was succeeded by his third son, borne to him by his wife, Margaret Tudor, the daughter of Henry VII., and sister of Henry VIII. of England, at Linlithgow, 10th April, 1512. He was but one year and four months of age when he ascended the throne, being crowned at Stirling in September, 1513. After a period of upwards of twenty-nine years' rule, he died at Falkland on the 14th December, 1542.\* This king used two seals during his reign. The first is appended to a deed of the year 1523, preserved in the British Museum collections. The design is apparently similar to that of the previous seal of King James IV., but it is not improbable that this very imperfect specimen contained some marks of difference which had been added into parts now wanting. The type

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\* Some historians, tabulated by Sir Archibald Dunbar, give a somewhat different date of the death.

appears to have escaped the notice of Laing and others. The king's second seal is known from a fine impression—with the edge unfortunately chipped—preserved in the Chapter House, Westminster. The diameter is four inches. Its design is a poorly-executed copy of the first seal, with omission of the lions set near the legs of the king, and of the annulets, which we have noticed as having been inserted by former sovereigns. The crown is smaller, and the king's body is badly shaped. The details of clouds and hills which fill up the base or foreground of the seal are replenished with slipped trefoils, and there are other insignificant changes of detail. The legend is—

IACOBVS . DEI . GRACIA . REX . SCOTORVM.

The reverse, also, omits the small difference-marks of crown, annulets, fleur-de-lis, and trefoil. The crest is enlarged, and the foliage which spreads over the background or field of the seal is here converted from quatrefoils into trefoils—the trefoil evidently having a peculiar interest for the Scotch seal-engravers from an early period, as we have observed in treating of the seal of the Interregnum. The legend here is similar to that on the obverse. It is curious to notice that an impression of this seal of King James V., which was only used for a few

months, has been attached to a document attributed to James I., now preserved in H.M. Record Office, dated at Melrose, 3rd of April, 1424. How this has been affected one is at a loss to conjecture.





### CHAPTER III.

#### THE RENAISSANCE—MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, AND HER SUCCESSORS.

THE death of King James V. without a male heir brings us to one of the most momentous and important passages in the history of the kings of Scotland. Mary Stewart, the only surviving child of the king by his second wife, Mary of Lorraine, daughter of Claude I. de Guise de Lorraine, Duc d' Aumale, and widow of Louis II. of Orleans, Duc de Longueville, was his sole heir. She was born at Linlithgow, in December, 1542, and but seven days old when the death of her father elevated her to the royal dignity. This is not the place to discuss the political events of her life, which are known all the world over, and to none so well as to the Scotch themselves, to whom she is a cardinal point and guiding star in their memories and regrets. The queen used several seals during her reign, which lasted for upwards of twenty-four years.



One seal, probably the first, is of great interest, because it introduces a new fashion in design. The Gothic style is abandoned, making way for that known as the Italian or Renaissance style. In this we see the queen, attired in a mantle, and wearing a crown; holding the sceptre fleur-de-lizé; and seated on a throne enriched with carving and elaborate ornamentation after the method of the then new fashion which had just supplanted the Gothic *modus*. This throne is furnished with a projecting *dais*, or footboard, and there are two ornamental columns in front supporting a kind of canopy or tester over the queen's head. The legend, seen on a fine example in possession of Cosmo Innes, when Laing noticed it, is—

MARIA . DEI . GRACIA . REGINA . SCOTORV̄.

It follows the fashion of size if not of design, having a diameter of four inches. The reverse of this interesting relic bears a shield of Royal Arms of Scotland encircled, as to the lower half, with the collar of the Order of the Thistle; over the shield is the crown of three fleurs-de-lis, with other details. The supporters are two unicorns segreant, each gorged with a coronet, chained, the tail flory, holding a lance-flag charged with the saltire cross

raguly of Scotland, enfiled with a crown (that on the dexter flag uncertain). In base, on the mount, with herbage, on which the supporters are standing, is a St Andrew's Cross, raguly, of which only the lower half is shown, the rest passing behind the shield. From this mount spring two thistle-flowers, leaved, passing to the right and left below the collar. In the background on each side is another thistle-flower, slipped and leaved, ensigned with a crown. The words of the legend, which is preceded with a crowned thistle, are—

SALVVM . FAC . POPVLVM . TVVM . DOMINE,

taken from Psalm xxvii. verse 9. Anderson, in engraving this seal on his plate lxxxviii., has been negligent of accuracy in several points of detail.

The second Seal of the Queen is of French character. There is a chipped and indistinct impression of this type among the Morton Charters, attached to a document bearing date in the year 1554. On the obverse is shown the sovereign enthroned in majesty, wearing a long mantle ; a sceptre in each hand. The form of the throne is worthy of examination. It is shaped like a lyre, with carved scroll-top ends. Behind is a canopy with a valance cut in scollops and a long curtain caught up in a festoon

at each side, the dimensions of which are so ample as to fill up the background of the seal. The legend reads—

MARIA . DEI . GRACIA . REGINA . SCOTORVM.

The reverse, like that of the Royal Seals of France at the time, is of much smaller dimensions, measuring only one inch and three quarters. The design which it bears is the shield of the Royal Arms of her Kingdom of Scotland, ensigned, that is, topped or surmounted, with an open arched crown of two trefoil leaves between three small crosses and two half fleurs-de-lis at the sides, six bands in all meeting in the centre at the top. At each side of the design is a wavy scroll of elegantly-drawn foliage. There is no legend on this side. It is remarkable that Laing, in describing this seal, read REX instead of REGINA in the legend. Can it be that there was a seal bearing *Rex* which was withdrawn when the error was observed, but not before some impressions had been issued? The queen's third seal is that which she employed for Scottish matters after her marriage with Francis II. of France, to whom, while Dauphin, she had been married in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris, on the 24th of April, 1558. Francis was the son of King Henri II., by his wife, Queen Catherine de Medici. After the

death of Mary I., Queen of England, daughter of Henry VIII., Mary, the Queen of Scots, and her husband styled themselves "Francis and Mary, by the grace of God, of Scotland, England, and Ireland, King and Queen," at Paris, on the 16th January, 1558-9. This use of the style of Queen of England gave, as may naturally be expected, great offence to Queen Elizabeth, and it is not improbable that it operated very strongly among the many causes which led to the downfall and death of the Scottish queen. There is a good but somewhat indistinct impression of this third seal attached to a document preserved in the British Museum, with date of 1561-2. Its diameter is about four inches and a quarter. On the obverse is depicted a design somewhat resembling that shown on the obverse of the second seal. The queen's head turns slightly to the left. The dress is ornamented with *broderie*, the sceptres are longer, that in the right hand being fleur-de-lizé, and that in the left hand bears on its top the hand of justice, a not unusual finial of royal sceptres, and found at a much earlier period than that of Queen Mary. The throne is of the bench pattern, with carved ends. The canopy overhead has a knob or bunching at the top, and the legend is—

MARIA . DEI . GRATIA . SCOTORVM . REGINA.

For the *motif* of the reverse recourse was had again to French styles. It is small, with a diameter of about two inches. It bears a shield of arms per pale, dexter, MODERN FRANCE, *i.e.*, three fleurs-de-lis two and one, dimidiated with the Royal Arms of SCOTLAND. It is ensigned with a crown composed of three fleurs-de-lis with two crosses pattées with pearls at the ends of top and arms, and having four bands meeting at the summit in a jewel. There is no legend, but the border is carved. This seal appears to have eluded the attention of Anderson and of Laing. Wyon calls it the fourth seal, but the reason is that this writer takes into consideration as the queen's third seal that which is really her seal as Queen of France, and therefore not strictly belonging to the series of seals of Scottish sovereigns. We may, however, digress for a moment to pass it in review as bearing on the history of the Queen. Mary had become Queen of France on the accession of her consort, Francis II., on the death of his father, Henri II., which took place on the 10th of July, 1559. "Here the youthful sovereigns," writes Mr. Wyon, "sit on one seat, each holding two sceptres. Both are crowned and clothed in robes of state. Francis wears a collar and badge of some Order, which M. Luce, Chief of the Historical Section of the Archives Nationales, thinks may represent the Order of St.

Michael, an Order which in those days was highly esteemed, though subsequently it fell into disrepute. The legend on this seal is more remarkable for its assumption of titles. The sovereigns were not content with calling themselves King and Queen of the French and of the Scots, which they were in fact, but added England and Ireland to their titles, which belonged to them only by a fiction of the imagination." The queen became a widow, and Dowager Queen of France, on the death of King Francis at Orleans on the 5th December, 1560, without issue. There is a seal of Francis II. and Mary bearing the legend—"R. R. Scotorum. Delph. Delphi. Vien."—which was used during the period between the marriage, when Francis was styled the "Dauphin King," in 1558, and his accession to the French throne in 1559, but this, also, belongs to the series of French, and not of Scottish, seals of sovereigns. The queen's fourth seal is that which she employed as Dowager after the death of Francis. Two impressions of it are extant. That in the British Museum, which is appended to a document dated 1564-5, is in uncoloured and partly opaque wax, and the left side is wanting. It measured when perfect nearly four inches and a half. The second is a good impression among the Morton Charters, attached to a deed of the date of

1564. The obverse is a copy of, but slightly larger than, the design of the third seal. The sceptre, with the hand of justice, held in the right hand of the sovereign, is not so long ; that in the left hand is topped with a fleur-de-lis. Sprigs of trefoiled leaves are introduced in some places, and the valance of the throne's drapery is enriched with heads of cherubs. The legend is—

MARIA . DEI . GRATIA . REGINA . SCOTORVM . DOTARIA .  
FRANCIE.

The reverse of this rare seal bears an ornamental shield of the arms of the two kingdoms impaled, viz., of France (modern, *i.e.*, three fleurs-de-lis only) and Scotland, dimidiated. The crown is placed over it. There is the collar of S.S. and thistles, for that of the Order of the Thistle, and its pendant badge. The supporters are two unicorns, segreant, ducally gorged, and chained, each one holding a long lance set in a rest on the mount or ground below the shield, with a flag to each lance, charged with the saltire cross for St. Andrew, the national saint, enfiled with a crown. Here again, wavy sprigs of foliage, elegantly drawn, fill up the background with a pleasing arabesque effect. The legend here reproduces a favourite

motto, often employed by Scottish sovereigns on their coinage as well as on their seals—

SALVVM . FAC . POPVLVM . TVVM . DOMINE.

This seal probably owes its design to a French artist.

The study of the Great Seals of the monarchy of Scotland brings the reader now, at length, to the examination of the seals of the last ruler of the country as a separate and independent kingdom. James VI., the only son of the unfortunate Queen, by her second husband, Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, was born in Edinburgh Castle on the 19th June, 1566, and christened at Stirling on the 17th September of the same year. He became King on the abdication of the Queen, 24th July, 1567, at the age of but thirteen months and four days, and was crowned in the Parish Kirk of Stirling on the 29th July, 1567. The first seal used by James was in use very soon afterwards, for there is an impression preserved among the Cottonian Charters in the British Museum, dated in 1572, and another in the following year. It was in use certainly as late as 1592, for the same national institute possesses a specimen attached to a deed among the Additional Charters. A better impression occurs among the Morton Charters, dated 1583. On the



obverse is shown the king in plate armour, fluted and engraved, with a helmet adorned with five feathers in a plume; a drawn sword held aloft in the right hand. The head of the charger is also ornamented with a plume of ostrich feathers. The horse's caparisons are embroidered in front with a large thistle, slipped and leaved, within an ornamental border, and behind with a shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland ensigned with a crown, set between wavy branches of arabesque foliage and in an ornamental border. The background here, as in the seal previously described, is replenished with elegant sprays and curving branches of foliage. The legend, when perfect, reads—

IACOBVS . SEXTVS . DEI . GRATIA . REX . SCOTORVM.

The reverse bears the shield of the royal arms, suspended by straps from a helmet *affronté*, with ornamental mantling of thistle-leaf work, the royal crown, the royal crest, and a label inscribed with the motto—

IN . DEFENS.

The supporters are, as before, two unicorns, each gorged with a crown, chained, and ringed, with two lance-flags, one of which bears the saltire of St. Andrew crowned, the other the Royal

Arms of Scotland. Round the lower half of the shield passes the collar of the Order of the Thistle, with its proper pendant. The legend is that already used by Mary, to which attention has been drawn—

SALVVM . FAC . POPVLVM . TVVM . DOMINE.

After accession to the throne of England, on the death of Queen Elizabeth, 24th March, 1602-3, at Richmond, James VI. was, on the same day, proclaimed as "James I., King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland," at Whitehall and at the Cross of London, and at the Cross of Edinburgh on the 31st March, 1603. This necessitated the provision of a new seal, which was accordingly made. There is a fine impression preserved among the muniments belonging to the Duke of Sutherland at Dunrobin Castle. It is of larger diameter than any yet noticed, and measures about five inches and a half. Here the armorial design occupies the obverse, and the equestrian figure of the king is relegated to the reverse. Upon a mount, and sustained by two lances set saltire-wise, each bearing a flag, the one charged with the saltire of St. Andrew of Scotland, the other with the cross of St. George of England, is the shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland in combination with the newly-acquired kingdoms henceforth

and for ever to be ruled by one and the same sovereign. The shield is quarterly; in the first and fourth quarters, SCOTLAND (but the tail of the lion is, by inadvertence, turned outwards); in the second, FRANCE MODERN and ENGLAND quarterly; in the third, IRELAND. The shield is adorned below with the collar of the Order of the Thistle and its pendant badge of St. Andrew in an oval frame or panel. Outside this is the garter of the Order of the Garter, inscribed with its appropriate motto of world-wide renown. The pendant George hangs from the end of the Garter. The shield is ensigned with the Royal Crown of Scotland, a jewelled circlet and cap ornamented with frilled or crocketed hoops. The supporters also symbolise the merging of the two countries under one rule. The dexter is an unicorn of Scotland, crowned, gorged, and chained, the tail downwards; the sinister is a lion rampant of England, also crowned. The legend of this interesting seal is—

IACOBUS . D.G . MAG . BRIT . FRAN . ET . HIB . REX.

which, it will be noticed, is not the same style as that used in the Royal Proclamation on the Accession. It is also worthy of remark that the phrase, "Magnæ Britannicæ," was abandoned on some occasions by later sovereigns, who reverted to the older

formula of "Angliæ Franciæ, et Hiberniæ," as, for example, was done by Charles I., Charles II., William and Mary, and others.

The reverse of this seal contains the representation of the king on a horse springing to the right upon a hilly mount, possibly intended for a landscape of the city of Edinburgh and its environs. The rider is crowned, and he wears a breast-plate, plate armour, and long boots. The right hand, which is uplifted, wears a gauntlet, and holds a broad-sword with deeply-grooved blade, not shown to its full length, but stopping abruptly at the edge of the delineation. The caparisons of the horse consist of the saddle; a breast cloth embroidered with the national flower, slipped and leaved, within a border; the clothing of the flanks is also bordered, and shows a rose of England *en soleil*. In the background or field of the seal are set two of the badges hitherto belonging to the kings of England—a fleur-de-lis of France over the head of the horse; a Tudor portcullis, chained and ringed, over the flanks.

The legend, following an already established precedent, is a quotation from the Scriptures—

DEVS . IVDICIVM . TVVM . REGI . DA.

(*Psalm lxxii. 1*).

The four badges thus depicted on this side of the seal attest the bringing together under one sovereign of the several houses and kingdoms which they symbolize.

We now arrive at the last seal of the series used by Scottish sovereigns of which it is reserved for us to take cognizance, that of Charles I., whose birth took place at Dunfermline on the 19th November, 1600, and whose accession to the kingship of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland dates from the day of King James I.'s death, at the mansion or palace of Theobalds, in Hertfordshire, on the 27th March, 1625, after a reign of upwards of thirty-five years over the kingdom of Great Britain, and upwards of fifty-seven over Scotland. Charles I. adapted the second seal for Scotland which had been employed, as we have seen, by his father, merely altering the name on the obverse. But the reverse, although a copy, differs considerably in measurements, proportion of details, and numerous little peculiarities of style and shape, from that by which it was inspired. Here the shield of arms, as already described, is ensigned with a crown, and encircled with the collar of the Order of the Thistle, with pendant badge, and the Garter with its proper pendant, the George and Dragon. The lance-flags of St. Andrew and St. George, the unicorn supporters, and other attributes, make up

the sum of the emblems of sovereignty exhibited by this seal, which represents the last stage of pure Scottish seal art. The legend, indeed, passes over the name of Scotland in silence, as the kingdom had merged into that of Great Britain—

CAROLVS . D.G . MAG . BRIT . FRAN . ET . HIB . REX.

Charles I. employed a second Great Seal for Scotland, designed to accord with the national taste. The British Museum possesses two examples, dated respectively in 1630 and 1632. The earlier is known by a cast from a good impression recorded by Laing as being in possession of Mr. W. E. Ayton, of Edinburgh; the latter is an original in green wax, among the Additional Charters. In the obverse of this we observe the king seated on a horse springing to the left hand on rough foreground enriched with plants, and having in the background a shadowy and distant prospect of the City of Edinburgh, taken from the north, and including the outline of Arthur's Seat. The king is encased in plate armour of the conventional kind, with oval shield, long sword, feather plume, and other military symbols. The legend, after the Scottish motive, reads—

IUSTITIA . ET . VERITAS.

The reverse is a copy of that of the first seal, with proportions of details varying from those seen on that reverse. Here, for some obscure reason, which no one has explained, the phrase, "Magnæ Britannæ," gives way to the older form, and the legend is—

CAROLVS . D . G . SCOTIE . ANGLE . FRAN . ET . HIBERNIE .  
REX . FIDEI . DEFENSOR.

It is foreign to the scope of this work to pursue the series of Great Seals of sovereigns of the kingdom which had now ceased to have a separate existence. The succeeding rulers employed seals for matters connected with the public business of the country, but they were of English design and workmanship, and to the Scottish antiquary and historical student possess little genuine interest.

Connected with the foregoing are the Privy Seals, Secreta, or Secret Seals, and Signets of Scottish sovereigns. They are simple in design, but attractive and of interest. Among them may be mentioned that of Alexander III., used about 1260, bearing on the one side an effigy of the king, on the other a

triangular shield of arms of the kingdom of Scotland, with the Biblical legend on each side of—

ESTO . PRVDENS . VT . SERPENS . ET . SIMPLEX . SICVT . COLVMBIA .  
 (Matt. x. 16).

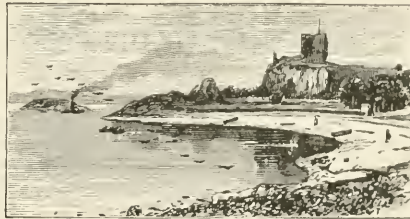
John Balliol and Robert Bruce I. use the royal shield of arms, on their Secretum. David II. has the design of two arms, vested with long maunches or sleeves, sustaining the royal shield. Edward Balliol hangs his royal shield on a tree of three branches. Robert II. places his shield within a carved rosette of elegant tracery, and ensigns it with a crown. James I. adds to the heraldry of the Secretum two lions as supporters, and introduces the cinquefoil and quatrefoil differentials which the sovereigns of this name also are shown to have placed on their Great Seals.\* James II. still uses the two lions as supporters, and adds differences of trefoils and annulets. James IV. adds, for differences, the mullet, the mascle, the crescent, and the saltire, in his Secretum; in his Privy Seal, which has been thought to exhibit French influence, a copy of the figure of the king in majesty, as on the Great Seal, is given. This curious

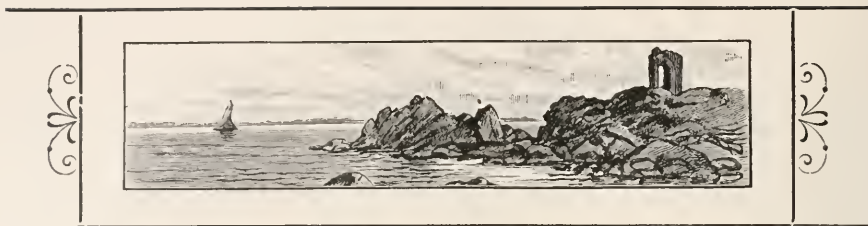
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\* Mr. John Cruickshanks, in his *Armorial Ensigs of the Royal Burgh of Aberdeen*, 1888, p. 29, gives a good illustration of the Privy Seal of James I. appended to a deed dated 25th March, 1424; it is in better preservation than that recorded by Laing for the year 1429.



seal is known as having been set in the silver butt of a knife, at one time in possession of the late Mr. Edward Hawkins, keeper of the antiquities of the British Museum. Mary still uses the two lions to support the royal arms, and introduces, as difference-marks, the triple tail for the lions, the annulet, mascle, saltire, cross, and thistle. The signet of this queen bears, above the armorial design, the motto, *IN DEFENS*, and the royal initial letters, *M. R.* James VI. keeps the design of shield and supporters which his predecessors have employed.





## CHAPTER IV.

### SEALS OF QUEENS-CONSORT AND OF OFFICERS OF STATE.

VERY few seals of the consorts of the sovereigns of Scotland have been preserved. That of Ermengard, the wife of King William the Lion, exists among the Tweeddale Charters, attached to a deed dated about 1220, but it is imperfect. Like all seals of noble ladies of the early thirteenth century, it is oval. The queen is shown standing, and draped in a tightly-fitting dress, embroidered with a pattern called by the heralds diapered lozengy, with a trefoil in each interstice, and she wears also a loose mantle. In the right hand the queen holds a flower of conventional design, consisting, it would seem, of three fleurs-de-lis set on one stem. Euphemia, Countess of Moray, the daughter of Hugh, Earl of Ross, and consort of King Robert II., used a seal, in 1375, attached to a deed among the Glammis Charters, where she is depicted as

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standing full length, with long curling hair, a dress of tight proportions, a fur mantle, and a crown of three flowers. In her right hand is set the sceptre, with top of three leaves, the left hand lies on her breast and holds the sovereign emblem, the orb or mound, unless, perhaps, the object, which is somewhat indistinct, is part of her attire. Here we observe that adjunct of the niche, with traceried panels of Gothic architecture and a carved canopy enriched with crocketed finials. The seal also bears the shield of the Royal Arms of Scotland, on the dexter side of honour; on the sinister side the shield bears three lions rampant, two and one, for the family of Ross. Queen Joan Beaufort, daughter of John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, and wife of King James I., used a seal, in 1439, which shows a lozenge-shaped shield of arms of Scotland, France, and England, set within a bordure compony, ingeniously added by the heralds, to signify the family coat of Beaufort. Her signet bears the same heraldic composition. Mary of Gueldres, the Queen of James II., in 1459 employed a seal of much beauty and of original design, probably inspired by a French or Belgian taste. The device shows an angel in a seated posture, turned slightly towards the left, with hair long and flowing, and large wings upraised and expanded, with the inner side

towards the view; draped with a long mantle, or vestment, arranged in conventional pleats or folds at the base of the seal, and supporting in front a shield of arms, held up also by the strap passing over the left shoulder of the celestial figure. The armorial bearings are:—per pale, dexter, the Royal Arms of SCOTLAND, for the *baron*; sinister, per pale, dexter, a lion rampant, contourné, queue fourchée, crowned, for the Duchy of GUELDRES; sinister, a lion rampant, for the Duchy of JULIERS, for the *feme*. Above the shield is an open crown, composed of six fleurs-de-lis, or leaves, with interspersed pearls. It is curious that the border or panel in which this interesting design is enclosed is crested and cusped on the right side only. The legend is as follows—

S . MARIE . REGINE . SCOCIE . FILIE . DUCIS . GELREN̄ . ET . Y . . . . . S . . . . .

Laing has figured this in his *Catalogue of Seals*. This same queen also used a Secretum, or privy-seal, in A.D. 1462, of which a sulphur cast is preserved in the British Museum. It bears the legend of—

SECRETUM . MARIE . REGINE . SCOCIE.

Margaret of England, daughter of King Henry VII., Queen

Consort of King James IV., used three seals, which are still extant among the British Museum collection of casts formerly in the possession of Laing. These are:—1, a letter seal; 2, a signet; and 3, a small signet or ring seal. The letter seal is particularly attractive. It measures only seven-eighths of an inch, and represents the queen, crowned, and vested in ample, flowing drapery; her face is slightly turned to the left, and before her is a favourite *brachet*, or lap-dog, leaping up to its mistress. In the background, on each side, is a rose branch, slipped and leaved, doubtless in allusion to the union of the rival roses of York and Lancaster, of which she was the living representative. Her signet exists in a fine impression among the Philliphaugh Charters. It is of armorial design, and bears the arms of her royal spouse, impaling her paternal coat, viz.: dexter, SCOTLAND; sinister, the Royal Arms of Henry VII., quarterly, 1, 4, MODERN FRANCE; 2, 3, ENGLAND. Above the shield is a Queen Consort's crown of fleurs-de-lis, crosses, and pearls, and the inscribed label, which completes the design, bears the motto—

IN . GOD . IS . MI . TRAIST.

The small signet of this queen resembles the foregoing, and

bears a shield of arms, ensigned with a crown, and flanked on each side with a wavy sprig of foliage.

An uncertain signet seal is preserved among the British Museum casts, which has been attributed by some to Queen Mary, and by others to Queen Margaret. It bears a shield of arms, per pale, dexter, SCOTLAND; sinister, party per fess, in chief three fleurs-de-lis, one and two, for FRANCE; in base, ENGLAND. The shield is ensigned with a crown composed of two crosses set between three fleurs-de-lis; and at the sides are the initial letters, M.R. It is remarkable that Mary, Queen of Scots, used similar armorial bearings to these, but in reversed position, setting the arms of Scotland in the sinister, and those of France and England in the dexter side of the shield in the counterseal of arms attached to the Great Seal of Francis and Mary, as King and Queen of France. Unfortunately there is no clue to enable us to attribute this seal to either queen in preference to the other.

Anne of Denmark, Queen-Consort of James VI., has left three seals, also in existence among the national collections. The first is a signet, impressed on an original document among the Egerton Charters of the British Museum, dated in A.D. 1603. It bears a shield of arms, per pale, dexter, Scotland; sinister,

a modification of the Royal Arms of Denmark, all ensigned with a crown ; and at the sides of the shield are the queen's initials, A.R., each crowned. The second and smaller signet bears simply the monogram of A.R., ensigned with a crown. There is much doubt if this signet is properly to be attributed to this queen. The third seal belongs to the year 1615, and measures three inches and three-eighths. It was used for the queen's royal demesne of Dunfermline, and the impression is preserved among the Mar documents, from which Laing obtained it. On the one side it bears a fine large shield of arms, per pale, dexter, Scotland, but with a dimidiated tressure ; sinister, a very intricate armorial arrangement of royal and other coats for Denmark, Norway, Ancient Sweden, Gothes or Gothland, the Vandal Ensign, Schleswick, Holstein, Stormerk, Ditmarsh, Delmenhorst, and Oldenburg ; representing, in fact, the Royal Arms of Denmark as borne by the queen's dynasty. The crown, which covers this shield, bears a cross, and there are two supporters : that for Scotland being a unicorn, gorged with a coronet, chained and ringed, on the dexter side ; that for Denmark, a wild man, wreathed about the loins, and holding a club, on the sinister side. Below is the collar and badge of the Order of the Thistle. The legend is imperfect.

The reverse bears a shield of arms : a cross flory between five martlets for Dunfermline, in Fifeshire. This is, in point of fact, the shield of arms of Edward the Confessor, King of England, as assigned to that monarch by the heralds of the middle ages. Probably this is owing to the sainted Scottish queen, Margaret, great-niece of King Edward, being the patroness of the Regality of Dunfermline. Her effigy, and the shield of Edward the Confessor's arms, appear on the Regality Seal of this ancient town, the brass matrix of which seal is still preserved in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

Very few early seals of Scottish courts are extant. One that may be mentioned here is that for the Office of King's Justice for the lands north of the Forth, found by Laing attached to a document bearing the date of A.D. 1392. The design is a shield (of arms?) charged with the royal initial letter, R, for Robertus III. Rex, within a tressure flory counter-flory, derived from that contained in the Royal Arms of Scotland. Above the shield appear the head and neck of a falcon or eagle, supporting the shield in front with its talons, "an idea," we are told in the British Museum Catalogue, "not improbably derived from the eagle supporting the shield of royal arms seen in the side-niches of the Great Seals of Scotland, as, for example, that of Robert



Stuart II." (See the illustration No. 28. The legend of this seal is apparently—

S . OFFIC . IUSTIC . EX . PARTE . BOREALI . AQVE . DE . FORTH.

The corresponding seal for the Office of King's Justice for the lands south of the Forth is later; it seems to have been made in the fifteenth century, and an impression is known to be attached to a document dated in 1590. This bears a shield of arms of Scotland, with the tail of the lion turned (as is not infrequently the case in Scottish heraldry) inwardly towards the back of the beast. The legend corresponds with that given above, but the phrase, *ex parte australi*, takes the place of *ex parte boreali* in the foregoing.

Two interesting Admiralty Seals of Scotland may be appropriately mentioned in this place. The first is that of Patrick Hepburn, third Earl of Bothwell, Lord High Admiral of Scotland in A.D. 1515. Here the family arms are combined with an anchor in the base part of the shield, to designate the admiral's office. The legend is—

S . PATRICII . HEPBURN . ADMIRAL . SCOT.

The second seal is that of James Hepburn, fifth Earl of

Bothwell, Great Admiral of Scotland, and afterwards Duke of Albany, a man historically pre-eminent as the husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. The impression of this seal belongs to a deed dated in 1558. The Admiralty device of the anchor re-appears here, also charged with a shield of the family arms of De Vaux and Hepburn quarterly. The motto here is: *KEEP TRYST*; and the legend reads—

SIGILLUM . JACOBI . COMITIS . DE . BOITHVILE . DÑI .  
HALIS . ADMIRAL.

We have now gone through the most notable seals of the classes appertaining to the royal family and the Crown officers of Scotland. Taken together, they form a very interesting and instructive series, whether looked at from the standpoint of history or that of art. It has frequently been said that the history of a nation is reflected on its seals and its coins, and Scotland is no exception to this rule. The archaic period of the seals exhibits the simplicity and severity of the manner and customs prevalent at early times in the country. The nascent and gradually awakening spirit of beauty, which inspired so many wonderful examples of architecture throughout the kingdom, reached the seal designers and engravers in their

endeavours to produce work worthy of the artistic times in which they lived. The culminating era of so-called Gothic styles found a ready response in the seal to the challenge which the ecclesiastical or monastic edifice offered to it; then came the rejection of the Gothic, and preference for Italian and Renaissance designs, which in turn were adopted by the national art workers; and finally the post-Palladian—which practically crushed all native creative talent in order to make room for incongruous, piecemeal imitations, culled at haphazard from the ruin of multifarious styles—invaded the domain of the seal designers, and strangled, we fear, for ever the native Caledonian feeling and taste which might, under more favourable conditions, have found a congenial medium on the seals of the country. We shall observe the same influences affecting in turn the seals of churches and monasteries, cities and towns, nobles and arms-bearing families, and in this way it is shown to be true that the glory of Scotland is inscribed on the seals of her rulers and her children.











No. 1. Duncan II., King of Scots.











No. 2. Edgar, King of Scots.









No. 3. Mathildis, or Maud, of Scotland.











No. 4. Alexander I., King of Scots.









No. 5. Alexander I., King of Scots.











No. 6. William "the Lion," King of Scots.









No. 7. William "the Lion," King of Scots.











No. 8. Alexander II., King of Scots.









No. 9. Alexander II., King of Scots.











No. 10. Alexander III., King of Scots.  
*(First Seal.)*









No. 11. Alexander III., King of Scots.  
*(First Seal.)*











No. 12. Alexander III., King of Scots.  
(*Second Seal.*)









No. 13. Alexander III., King of Scots.  
(*Second Seal.*)











No. 14. Great Seal appointed for the Government of the Realm  
after death of King Alexander III.









No. 15. Great Seal appointed for the Government of the Realm  
after death of King Alexander III.











No. 16. John Balliol, King of Scots.









No. 17. John Balliol, King of Scots.











No. 18. Edward I., King of England.  
*(Seal for Government of Scotland.)*









No. 19. Edward I., King of England.  
*(Reverse of Seal for Government of Scotland.)*











No. 20. Robert Bruce I., King of Scots.  
*(First Seal.)*









No. 21. Robert Bruce I., King of Scots.  
(*First Seal.*)











No. 22. Robert Bruce I., King of Scots.  
*(Second Seal.)*









No. 23. Robert Bruce I., King of Scots.  
*(Second Seal.)*











No. 24. David II., King of Scots.









• No. 25. David II., King of Scots.











No. 26. Edward Balliol, King of Scots.









No. 27. Edward Balliol, King of Scots.











No. 28. Robert Stuart II., King of Scots.









No. 29. Robert Stuart II., King of Scots.











No. 30. Robert Stuart II., King of Scots.  
(*Later Seal.*)









No. 31. Robert Stuart II., King of Scots.  
*(Later Seal.)*











No. 32. James I., King of Scots.









No. 33. James I., King of Scots.











No. 34. Robert Stuart, Duke of Albany, Governor of Scotland, etc.









No. 35. Robert Stuart, Duke of Albany, Governor of Scotland.











No. 36. Murdach Stuart, Regent of Scotland, etc.









No. 37. Murdach Stuart, Regent of Scotland, etc.











No. 38. James II., King of Scots.









No. 39. James II., King of Scots.











No. 40. James V., King of Scots.  
*(Second Seal.)*









No. 41. James V., King of Scots.  
*(Second Seal.)*











No. 42. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
(*First Seal.*)









No. 43. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
(First Seal.)











No. 44. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
(*Second Seal.*)









No. 45. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
*(Counterseal of the Second Seal.)*









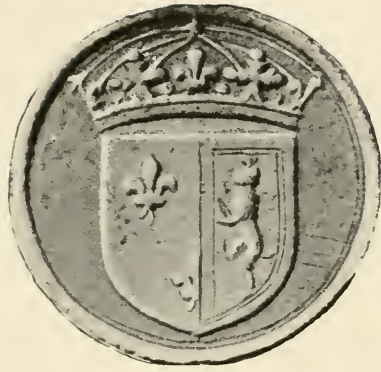


No. 46. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
*(Third Seal.)*









No. 47. Mary, Queen of Scots.  
*(Counterseal of the Third Seal.)*











No. 48. James VI., King of Scots.  
*(Seal for Scotland.)*









No. 49. James VI., King of Scots.  
(Seal for Scotland.)











No. 50. James I., King of Great Britain.  
*(Seal for Scotland.)*









No. 51. James I., King of Great Britain.  
*(Seal for Scotland.)*











No. 52. Charles I., King of Great Britain.  
*(Seal for Scotland.)*









No. 53. Charles I., King of Great Britain.  
(Seal for Scotland.)









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